



HOUSING FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES IN ROME: NON-PROFIT AND PUBLIC SECTOR COOPERATION IN THE RECEPTION SYSTEM

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Housing for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Rome: Non-profit and public sector cooperation in the reception system.

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The paper intends to investigate the functioning of the reception of asylum seekers and refugees in the particular context of Rome. It is analysing the advantages and shortcomings of Rome's recent adherence to the SPRAR (Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati) in terms of reception capacity and quality, capacity of integration and the building of networks of actors. The establishment of a new executive board in Rome and current judicial reports provide a background against which to assess the effects of national, regional and local regulations on asylum in Italy, also in view of possible change. In the first Chapter, we will discuss the interventions aimed at the applicants for protection in Italy. In the second part of the paper, we will analyse the specific context of Rome, and the forms of cooperation between the different actors involved in the SPRAR reception system of asylum seekers and refugees. The analysis is based on a research activity carried out in September and October 2014 in the context of a Masterthesis. The situation described is in constant development and might have evolved since.

Keywords: Reception facilities for migrants, International protection and asylum, Non-profit participation in social assistance, Non-profit and public sector cooperation.

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L'accoglienza dei richiedenti asilo e dei protetti internazionali a Roma: modalità di cooperazione tra Ente locale e Terzo settore.

Marco Accorinti, Anne-Sophie Wislocki*

2016, p. 45 IRPPS Working paper 86/2016

Il paper si propone di indagare alcune questioni emerse da un'analisi sul sistema di accoglienza presente a Roma, facendo emergere aspetti che possono essere dannosi per l'integrazione dei beneficiari di protezione internazionale in Città. La novità introdotte dall'amministrazione romana e le cronache giudiziarie forniscono uno sfondo sul quale è sembrato possibile valutare gli effetti delle normative nazionali, regionali e locali in materia di asilo in Italia, anche in vista di un possibile cambiamento. Nella prima parte del testo, si presentano gli interventi rivolti ai richiedenti protezione in Italia. Nella seconda parte, viene analizzato il contesto specifico locale e le forme di integrazione tra coloro che sono coinvolti nell'accoglienza dei migranti forzati nell'ambito del sistema SPRAR. Si tratta quindi di un'analisi di una situazione locale, che si basa su una ricerca svolta nel 2014 e che è ancora in fase di sviluppo.

Parole chiave: Accoglienza migranti, Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati (SPRAR), Terzo settore e cooperazione sociale, Interazione tra ente pubblico e terzo settore.

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Introduction

Studies on migration policies in Italy are relatively new as well; they have mostly analysed the effects of new migration flows on the nation-state, and in particular the management of this issue at a local level (Bonifazi 2013). The Immigration policy, which regulates the entry, residence and citizenship of foreign nationals in Italy, has been traditionally run at a central level by the Ministry of the Interior. Over time, such policy has evolved side by side with the policy concerning migrants, that is, integration measures. By contrast, integration measures have mostly been managed at a local or, in some cases, regional level, and only minimally within programmes funded by the European Social Funds at a central-ministerial level. Interventions financed by the European Fund for the integration of third-country nationals (EIF) – set up by Decision of the Council of the European Union No 2007/435/EC, on 25 June 2007, within the framework programme on solidarity and management of migration flows for the period 2007-2013. In particular, local interventions have been based on the recognition of social rights for those who have entered and/or are in the country legally. These measures have concerned different aspects of life: health, social assistance, right to housing, right to education, etc. However, on the one hand, as regards the enforcement of the rights of foreign nationals, there often have been news reports of the resentment of the Italian people and of forms of discrimination, even by the institutions granting welfare benefits to foreign nationals (Spinelli 2014). On the other hand, to a certain extent, international rules and European directives signed and transposed by Italian Governments have “imposed” non-negotiable procedures and reception systems for some categories of migrants.

Besides, migrant policies have mainly concerned foreign nationals with illegal or uncertain status, i.e., those who were on the territory of the country without any entitlement, as well as persons falling within protected categories, who were admitted to remain in the country on a temporary basis. The Law called “Martelli”, in 1989, considered only “political asylum seekers” as a vulnerable category. Then, Law 40/1989 introduced specific rules on the protection of unaccompanied minors and of women who are victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation for the first time. The Law currently in force, the so-called “Bossi-Fini” Law, has structurally changed the presence of foreign nationals in Italy. Moreover, this law tackled the issue of asylum seekers, changing the procedures for refugee status recognition. It also reaffirmed the three key principles underlying the Single Act on Immigration: setting migration quotas, fighting illegal immigration and granting a wide range of rights aimed at integrating regular migrants (the right to integration).

However, for a category of migrants, entry quotas cannot be set. According to Castels and Miller’s reading of immigration in a globalised setting (2012), there may be migrants who are the “victims” of global processes; migration is also a form of expulsion from a country, whereby citizens of that country actually seek refuge in another.

The paper intends to investigate the functioning of the reception of asylum seekers and refugees in the particular context of Rome. It is analysing the advantages and shortcomings of Rome’s recent adherence to the SPRAR (Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati) in terms of reception capacity and quality, capacity of integration and the building of networks of actors. In this paper, we refer to those who flee their countries to seek asylum in Italy. The

first comprehensive definition of the legal concept of refugee (or beneficiary of international protection) was formulated by the UN General Assembly and adopted on 28 July 1951 through the Geneva Convention. This Convention was made enforceable in Italy by Law No 722 of 24 July 1954, which defines “refugee” a person who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the former country of his habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it” (Article 1a). The scope of application of the Convention is therefore limited to cases of individual persecution. At the time of adoption, in fact, reference would be made to the experience of World War II, since major collective emergencies and mass flights were still to come (Maciotti and Pugliese 2003).

Moreover, under European regulation, a third-country (non-EU) national applying for international protection to the Government of one of the Member States is considered as an “applicant for international protection” until a relevant decision is taken. As such, he/she is entitled to a temporary residence document that is valid throughout the duration of the procedure and cannot be converted into another type of permit. Hosting countries grant different types of protection. Refugee status is usually recognised to those who meet Geneva Convention requirements, and temporary protection to those who do not fall within the definition of refugee, but may face serious danger if repatriated. In Italy, protection applications (examined by the Territorial Commissions, coordinated by a National Commission) may have three possible outcomes: “refugee”, “subsidiary protection” and “humanitarian protection”. Refugee status, subsidiary protection and the relevant residence permits that are currently issued in Italy are defined by decrees transposing European regulation. Equivalent titles are issued in all European Member States. Humanitarian protection status arises, instead, from national regulation, and not all Member States issue similar titles. There is also another type of protection, which is not granted following the examination of individual situations, the so-called “temporary protection”, which is recognised to groups of people coming from the same country or the same geographical area. This title is issued by the Government. This is an exceptional procedure, guaranteeing immediate and temporary protection in the event of a mass and imminent influx of non-EU displaced persons who cannot go back to their country of origin. Temporary protection measures can be adopted for major humanitarian needs, on the occasion of conflicts, natural disasters or other particularly serious events in countries that do not belong to the European Union (The Italian State adopted this procedure in 90ies, with Albanian, Yugoslavian, Somali and in 2000 with Kosovar nationals).

Below are some figures that help explain the extent of this phenomenon compared to the number of non-Italian nationals who are in the country. More than 31,000 applications for international protection were submitted in Italy in 2008 and more than 63,000 in 2014, as against a total number of 4,922,085 foreign nationals legally residing in Italy. However, institutional sources do not always provide consistent data. Moreover, it should be pointed out that 2008 and 2011 were years of major humanitarian emergencies, which resulted in a

significant increase in the number of people who were forced to leave their lands and seek new hosting countries.

Therefore, on the one hand, there has been an increase in the percentage of the foreign population that settled in Italy mainly for economic reasons and significantly contributed to the gross domestic product over the years. On the other hand, a comprehensive body of rules on this matter has not been developed. The lack of comprehensive legal framework covering the situation of non-Italian citizens, protected by international treaties, has led to the Italian solution by resort to “a state of emergency”. This means taking extraordinary measures for implementing reception and protection interventions (not limited to the social sphere). This solution makes it possible to overcome financial constraints, which have been a serious problem over the past few years, especially in relation with welfare benefits. The most recent and representative example may be the North Africa Emergency (ENA) in 2011. Another important experience in assistance, it was made with the so-called Mare Nostrum operation, which ended on 31 October 2014.

However, emergency-based measures, decided at a central government level, have affected the local communities: local entities have not always pursued the objective of creating the conditions for assuring assistance and protection to forced migrants and to the beneficiaries of international protection. Studies on the integration of immigrants into local communities consider a set of indicators: education, knowledge of the Italian language, training, access to health care and welfare services, and especially integration into the labour market, integration into the educational system and some aspects of social stability (such as access to the real estate market, granting of citizenship and family reunification). These are, for the most part, requirements for accessing welfare services at a local level.

The establishment of a new executive board in Rome and current judicial reports provide a background against which to assess the effects of national, regional and local regulations on asylum in Italy, also in view of a possible change. In the first part of this text, we will discuss the interventions aimed at the applicants for protection in Italy. In the second part, we will analyse the specific context of Rome, and the forms of cooperation of actors involved in the reception of forced migrants.

This analysis is based on a research activity carried out in September and October 2014 in the context of a Masterthesis. It is important to take into account that this reception system is in constant development, as the Administration is currently taking measures on the management of reception centres. Hence, the picture we will present is uncertain, as it is still in the making. Yet, it may be useful to understand the current evolutions linked to the implementation of the SPRAR in the city of Rome.

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CHAPTER I

ASYLUM: POLICIES AND SERVICES IN ITALY AND IN ROME

The chapter intends to analyse the link between asylum (international protection) and the welfare system in Italy, with a focus on the reception system, which is the first “place” of assistance for those who flee their countries and seek help. We also intend to determine the scope of the phenomenon under study. Moreover, even if quantitative data account for only a part of research studies on migrants, it is worth recalling that each story of forced migration is a case in itself. Any assistance intervention should take into consideration the elements related to the involvement of the family in the decision to migrate, which involves sacrifices and difficulties.

Hence, before describing the reception system provided by the Italian welfare system (section 1.3), we will try to present the specific features of the Roman case (section 1.2), which will be further elaborated in Chapter 2. An analysis of the link between forced migration and social policies in section 1.2 will give some background for further analysis.

1.1. Forced migration and the welfare system

According to some authors (Ascoli 2011; Ranci 2005), immigration has been a factor contributing to the differentiation of the welfare demand in Italy over the past few decades. As mentioned above, the presence of foreign nationals has increased significantly and has changed the country’s demographics. Moreover, this has resulted in more cultural diversity, for instance, in compulsory schools. As rightly argued by Giovanna Zincone, immigration is an “agent” of change, which modifies the system, forcing it to adjust to the new needs of the foreigners. However, the immigration that imposes stress on a system is also a “reagent”, highlighting the system’s distinctive features and shortcomings. Hence, studying the ways in which the welfare system responds to the presence of immigrants makes it possible to grasp the on-going transformations of the social system and of the way the welfare system works in particular (Zincone 2000).

Moreover, Castels and Miller (2012) propose the theory of the “differentiation of migration”, as a distinctive feature of current migration movements. The authors point out that most countries are affected by an increasingly complex composition of migration flows, rather than by a single type of migration process. These migration flows differ in terms of underlying reasons, social and demographic characteristics and migration patterns. The authors seem to argue that the responses of a welfare system cannot be studied without taking into consideration the different types of migrant.

Therefore, considering the relationship between a welfare system and forced migration makes us understand the reasons underlying migration. In addition, a distinction must be made between refugees and applicants for international protection, on the one hand, and on voluntary migrants, also called “economic migrants, on the other hand. The former are compelled to leave their countries of origin to flee conflicts and persecution, whereas the latter move to seek a better life. Those who seek international protection are distinguished from economic migrants “on the basis of the reasons that motivate their leaving and the involuntary nature of their choice» (Hein 2010, p. 7). Economic migrants usually set out on their journey with a plan. They

have a goal of settling in a hosting country for a short, medium or long term and often receive support from the so-called “migration chains”. These are informal social networks created by migrants, consisting of family members, friends and acquaintances who live abroad. They provide useful information to prospective migrants; they may give them money to pay for the journey and play a crucial role in the integration of the newly arrived. They help the migrants find an accommodation and a job, and tackle bureaucratic procedures and personal difficulties in the hosting country (Castels and Miller 2012, p. 52).

By contrast, applicants for international protection, given the nature of their migration, can rarely avail themselves of the support of migration chains (hardly in Italy). They often lack a real plan when they set out on their journey. They are compelled to leave their countries, often all of a sudden, because they are no longer protected there and are victims of abuse, violence and torture or because they live in conditions of uncertainty and danger, considering the areas of war and armed conflicts (Hein 2010).

These migrants are not necessarily single men. Indeed, there is an increasing number of families involved, as well as many unaccompanied minors who flee or who are pushed to migrate by their parents, hoping they can find a better and safer life.

The applicants for international protection often have irregular status when reaching the country. In fact, “restrictive border rules do not allow entry in countries of potential refuge” (ibidem), but allow applications for protection to be lodged only after crossing the borders of the State, as is the case with Italy. We do not intend to elaborate here on what Castels and Miller call the “migratory industry” (Castels and Miller 2012, p. 232), that is to say, the considerable profits that criminal organisations make with migrant smuggling and trafficking. Traffickers help foreigners leave their country in return for money, often a lot of money, which the latter usually agree to pay, subjecting themselves to a situation of real servitude (Castels and Miller 2012). The effect of an irregular market, affecting those who are entitled to be protected, has been unveiled to the support services of not-for-profit organisations. Dozens of prospective refugees who have been in Italy for 10-12 months without having applied for international protection show up at these services.

Once they have arrived in Italy, applicants for international protection, just like any migrants, have to face different values, models and behaviour, compared to their countries of origin. This often requires a daunting task of re-socialization: difficulties to overcome without the support of families and social networks. Migrants experience a condition of “double absence” (Sayad 2002). In fact, they are suspended between two cultures. They separate from their culture of origin, even though they keep a strong tie with it and a sense of belonging. At the same time, every day they enter into contact with have a relation of exchange with a culture they do not feel they belong to yet. In the case of forced migrants, whose choice to leave everything behind was not free, this situation of stress adds to a situation of trauma, “not in the negative sense of the term, but in the psychoanalytical sense, a trauma that induces necessary defensive, adaptive or structuring reorganisations” (Moro et al. 2009, p. 198). Moreover, there are often cases of personal violence, extreme traumatic experiences and torture. The consequences of migration are not always negative or pathological. Some people overcome a crisis and manage to get through their migratory experience. Others are more vulnerable, and

experience a great deal of suffering, expressed in different ways, at a somatic level, for instance, or with depression (ibidem). As described by Fiorella Rathaus from the Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (CIR), the Italian Council for Refugees, “once they have arrived, they face precarious conditions as a way of life, dependence on the State and the absence of a consistent support system. These are all risk factors for their physical and mental health” (Hein 2010, p. 7). Those who seek international protection first and foremost ask not to be refused entry, not to be repatriated, not to have to go back to the place they have fled; they ask to be able to live in a place where they do not fear for their safety and do not face threats, violence or torture.

Then, once they have applied for asylum, they know they have to wait for the Commission’s decision; and it takes a lot of time for the Commission to interview them and to come up with such a decision. Moreover, the outcome may be negative; and in this case, the process is not over.

For the reasons outlined above and for others that will be dealt with later on, forced migrants account for an increasingly important segment of the demand for welfare services at a local level. This situation is creating additional constraints for those who have to make the welfare sector work at different levels, especially following structural reforms and considerable spending cuts, which are forcing different players to revise strategies, actions and relationships between themselves. Another main aspect is well described by Hein, CIR founder and director, “It is necessary to regulate the right to asylum separately from the right to immigration and the rights of foreigners. [...] Immigration is subject to planning, which may include setting quotas. By contrast, the entry of asylum seekers can never be subject to planning. It cannot follow a logic of setting a ceiling, nor can it depend on the personal characteristics of the person involved, such as knowing the language, or on having financial resources for one’s living or on educational qualifications” (Ibidem, p. 66). The right to protection is a subjective right, enshrined in international, European and national law, and as such, it is intrinsic in the welfare state.

When analysing welfare interventions for the category of forced migrants, a second characteristic is that the services can be considered from different perspectives. In social research, a common approach is to consider how specific the services are with respect to the target/ category of migrants, that is to say:

1. Exclusive services: intended for forced migrants,
2. Specialised services: intended for foreign migrants,
3. Universal services: intended for the general population (including foreigners).

These are three broad categories that identify different types of welfare intervention. They imply specificities, not so much in terms of access, which are not considered here, but in terms of the provision of services to people who have different rights and the same needs as all individuals (Busso et al. 2013). In other words, even though theoretically foreigners who are not asylum seekers should not access exclusive services for asylum seekers, in practice, they do use services that include migrant support mechanisms in situations of emergency. Moreover, under Italian legislation, there are interventions that provide assistance to people irrespective of their

legal status or of the reasons why they are in the country (the most emblematic case is the protection of unaccompanied minors).

Over the past few years, a part of the political debate has highlighted that the mingling of the three types of social service mentioned above is almost inevitable, and some of their specificities cannot be overcome since the immigrant population is increasingly assimilated with the Italian population. However, the picture in Rome is complex, with intertwining issues linked to social demand and welfare supply. The local government has to take stock of this.

1.2. Some data on applicants for international protection in Rome and in the Lazio Region

To focus our attention on the reception offered to both the applicants for and the beneficiaries of international protection in Italy, we have decided to discuss what has happened in Rome, the capital city, which has a well-established tradition of welfare interventions. Therefore, we will provide some statistics on their presence in the Lazio Region and specifically in Rome.

Rome has always been an important magnet for foreign citizens, due to its geographical position, its being a metropolis and a European capital hosting national and international institutions and the well-established presence of some national communities. In fact, Rome receives a constant and massive flow of new migrants and applicants for international protection. In addition, there are those who seek or who have already been granted international protection in other areas in Italy who go to the Capital hoping to find new and better opportunities. CIR's social workers claim that 8,000 refugees pass through Rome every year: some are in transit and others intend to settle there.

As stated, it is difficult to give a snapshot and some figures regarding migration. This phenomenon is very changeable by its very nature, and the persons concerned are very mobile. This is all the more so if we refer to the situation in Rome. Moreover, in addition to the reasons outlined above, there is a widespread practice of informal reception in the territory of the capital city. Large settlements and occupied areas of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection crop up unplanned. According to a recent study conducted within an ERG project, "establishing the numbers of informal reception with certitude is extremely complex, also due to the increasingly remote and hidden places where it conceals itself. There is a constantly growing thrust to the fringes and to invisibility" (Caritas di Roma 2012), due to the difficulty of integrating refugees socially and economically and the inability or impossibility of the national reception system to meet all the requests. According to the estimates of the dossier "I rifugiati invisibili" (Invisible refugees) produced by the Foundation IntegrA/Azione and published in May 2012, "more than 1,700 people live in large squatter settlements of refugees in Rome".

An institutional source, the Annual Report of the System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) 2013, indicates the number of residents in each Italian Region. These figures refer to non-EU nationals who live in Italy legally and have been granted a residence permit, therefore with reference to the foreign population as a whole, and not only to the beneficiaries of international protection. Moreover, this report provides data on the regional distribution of reception facilities for refugees and applicants for international protection. It

includes the percentage of persons received in each Region over the total number of people received in Italy, and the percentage of hosted persons over the total number of persons received in the Region by type of facility. It is worth mentioning, however, that the types of reception facility for refugees and applicants for international protection covered in the report do not include those that depend on municipal reception systems, like the one existing in the Municipality of Rome. With respect to the non-EU nationals who live in Italy legally, Lazio ranks third with 348,276 recorded presences (equivalent to 9.6% of the total), preceded by Lombardy with 74,134 (26.8%) and Emilia-Romagna with 453,585 (12.5%). As regards the numbers of applicants for and the beneficiaries of international protection hosted in each Region, the SPRAR report indicates that percentage-wise the Lazio Region ranks fourth (8.5%), preceded by Apulia (24.3%), Calabria (12.8%) and Sicily (21.9%). These three Regions are well known for the considerable number of migrants arriving on their coasts. With respect to the type of reception facilities considered in the report, Lazio is the Region that receives the highest number of refugees and applicants for international protection in the centres of the SPRAR network, i.e., 1,609 (23% of all the persons hosted in the same centres at a national level), followed by Sicily and Apulia.

The last page of the *Quaderno statistico* for 1990-2012 on the Ministry of the Interior's website provides statistics on the applications for international protection examined by the National Commission for the Right to Asylum and the Territorial Commissions for the Recognition of International Protection from 2005 (the year when the territorial commissions were created) until 2012, by territorial commission and by type of outcome. In this time period, Rome's Commission, which has jurisdiction over the applications for international protection submitted in the Regions of Lazio, Umbria and Sardinia, examined 26,116 applications, with a positive outcome for 14,415 (refugee status: 4,307; subsidiary protection: 2,521; and humanitarian protection: 7,587.) The data of the ten Territorial Commissions for the Recognition of International Protection in Italy reveal that from 2005 to 2012 Rome's Commission examined the highest number of applications.

Another information source is the Immigration Office of the Municipality of Rome. It provides data on the applications received by type of residence permit. These data show that the number of persons with residence permits related to international protection application or status amounted to 2,514 in 2013. The first ten nationalities of people who applied at the Immigration Office in 2013 are Bangladesh (926), Afghanistan (606), Mali (229), Eritrea (225), Nigeria (180), Egypt (155), Somalia (144), Pakistan (133) and Ivory Coast (102). As regards gender, only 11% of those who sought reception are women.

Finally, interesting data for estimating the presence of refugees and applicants for international protection in Rome are supplied by Associazione Centro Astalli. This Association receives applications by those who wish to elect their domicile at the Association's address. Receiving these applications is a service provided on a daily basis at Via degli Astalli 14/a and is one of the main activities linked to the initial reception of asylum seekers and refugees. This is the first contact that many men and women escaping wars and persecution have with reception facilities, and then with governmental offices in the city. There are approximately 10,000 people who have a document stating "Via degli Astalli 14/a" as their residence address.

In 2012, 6,952 people applied to elect their residence at the Astalli Centre. Out of this number, 1,141 needed the address to apply for international protection, whereas the remainder needed it to take up domicile in the Municipality of Rome, or obtain their health insurance card and fiscal code or a residence permit issued by the Questura (the local police authority).

To conclude, here are the data given by the Councillor to Social Support and Solidarity of the Municipality of Rome in the meeting “Rome, the capital of reception, SPRAR reception system: thoughts and proposals” held on 10 February 2013. According to the Councillor, there are 6,000 applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection in Rome on a regular basis, while the number of persons in transit range between 16,000 and 20,000.

Even though we cannot add up data from different sources, a picture has emerged of a constant presence of persons who have benefited from international protection in Rome over the past five years. These figures are expected to grow, also as a result of an increase in the reception capacity along with the possibility to find a job in a Capital.

1.3. The Italian reception system

The national reception system for the beneficiaries of international protection is characterised by a variety of facilities. These differ in terms of managing bodies (public or third-sector), of objectives (initial or second phase of reception); of mode of operation (welfare or programme-based); of size (from collective centres to individual apartments); of the type of services offered; and of the nature (national or local) of the network of which the reception centre is part.

The complexity and heterogeneity of the system is mainly due to the long absence of an organised law on asylum. In fact, the current system has been built in compliance with fragmented provisions, a layer of laws and decrees, without a long-term political and economic plan. Most reception interventions were put in place on an urgency basis, in order to respond to humanitarian emergencies. Moreover, until the end of the 1990s, the experiences of reception were limited to specific groups or were delegated to initiatives taken by Third-sector organisations and local authorities. It took ten years from the first Asylum Law to arrive at an initial structuring of the reception system with the National Asylum Programme (PNA) first, and with the System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) later.

In short, the PNA launched in April 2001 by UNHCR, the Ministry of the Interior and the National Association of Italian Municipalities, was born from the centres, according to a need for coordination, mostly funded locally; only with the Bossi Fini Law were then defined (and funded) at the national level, by the Ministry.

To figure out how the system works, a first distinction can be made between national centres (funded by the Ministry of the Interior, which will be called “governmental centers” to distinguish them from those of other local authorities), SPRAR centres and reception facilities promoted by the Third sector or by local authorities (Regions, Municipalities). Each typology is different in terms of reception capacity, length of stay, reception conditions and services provided, but the most part of them are run by Third sector organization.

1.3.1. Governmental reception centres

Governmental reception centres were set up to respond to considerable and growing immigration flows of different nature (people seeking protection, economic migrants, etc.), which have been a matter of concern for Italy for about two decades. Suffice it to think of the coast of Lampedusa, but also of Apulia, Sicily and Calabria, where many migrants have arrived by boat. There are different types of governmental centres, according to the categories of hosted migrants: Reception centres (CDAs), First reception centres (CPSAs), Centres for Identification and Deportation (CIEs), and Reception Centres for Asylum Seekers (CARAs). Even though asylum seekers may be hosted or detained in CDAs and CPSAs for the purposes of initial aid and assistance, or in the CIEs during the time their asylum application lodged after receiving a removal decree is examined, the CARAs are the only solution that can actually be considered “reception”. Moreover, CARAs are the only centres that are part of the reception system for asylum seekers and refugees.

The centres are planned and opened by the Central Directorate of civil services for immigration and asylum, under the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration in the Ministry of the Interior. Their operation is entrusted to the Prefectures (territorial government offices), which make agreements with bodies, associations or cooperatives to which these services are contracted out.

CPSAs, established by the Inter-ministerial Decree of 16 February 2006, are located in border areas (the most well-known CPSA is in Lampedusa). There, migrants first set foot on Italian soil. CPSAs are intended to provide aid and reception to migrants that have just arrived in the country. In these centres, the fingerprints and photographs of the migrants are taken, their intention to apply for international protection is confirmed and then they are transferred to other centres to define their individual status. CPSAs are “transitions” centres, and the above decree does not lay down the conditions and length of stay, which is usually very short.

CDAs (CPSAs being a specific type of CDAs) were set up in 1995 by Law No 563, to respond to the emergencies of the refugees arriving by boat from the former Yugoslavia. Such law (called “Apulia Law”) authorised the Ministry of the Interior to take urgent measures aimed at providing initial assistance to the irregular migrants who had reached national territory without means of subsistence. Such measures were to be provided while law-enforcement authorities initiated administrative and identification measures to define whether the migrants had to be removed, refused entry, guided to apply for asylum or authorized to stay due to their non-removable status. The Apulia Law does not set forth a time limit for the stay in such centres; it just establishes that first assistance and reception operations should last “the time strictly needed” to allow for the adoption of relevant measures. This law does not even specify reception conditions or the rights of the migrants, such as, for instance, whether they are authorised to leave the centres at will.

There were five such centres operational at the beginning of 2014, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Reception centres (CDAs) and First reception centres (CPSAs) in Italy in 2014.

<i>Province</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Type of centre</i>	<i>Number of available places</i>
Agrigento	Lampedusa	CPSAs	381
Cagliari	Elmas	CPSAs	220
Caltanissetta	Contrada Pian del Lago	Reception centre (CDA)	360
Lecce	Otranto	Initial reception centre	n.a.
Ragusa	Pozzallo	CPSAs	172

Source: Ministry of the Interior, December 2013.

The Centres for Identification and Deportation (CIEs), so named in Legislative Decree No 92/2008, are the former detention facilities (CPTs), set up in 1998 by the Turco-Napolitano Law. These are facilities where the following categories of migrants are detained: migrants who are in Italy illegally and who are subject to removal orders; migrants who applied for asylum when subject to removal or refoulement orders; migrants who fulfil the conditions set in Article 1(f) of the Geneva Convention; and migrants who have been convicted in Italy for one of the crimes indicated in Article 380 (1) and (2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure or for crimes concerning drugs, sexual freedom, facilitation of illegal immigration to Italy or of illegal migration from Italy to other States, or for crimes aimed at recruiting people for the purposes of prostitution or exploitation of prostitution, or minors to employ in illegal activities. As staying in a CIE is a form of limitation of personal freedom, those who are staying there cannot leave and their detention must be confirmed by a Justice of the Peace. The detention period, initially of 60 days, was extended to 180 days by Law No 94/2009 and to 18 months in total by Law No 129/2011.

At the beginning of 2014, there were 13 operational centres, with a hosting capacity of 1,900 people, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Centres for Identification and Deportation (CIEs) in Italy in 2014.

<i>Province</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Number of available places</i>
Bari	Palese, Airport Area	196
Bologna	Caserma Chiarini (barracks)	95
Brindisi	Località Restinco	83
Caltanissetta	Contrada Pian del Lago	96
Catanzaro	Lamezia Terme	80
Crotone	Sant'Anna	124
Gorizia	Gradisca d'Isonzo	248
Milan	Via Corelli	132
Modena	Località Sant'Anna	60
Rome	Ponte Galeria	360
Turin	Corso Brunelleschi	180
Trapani	Serraino Vulpitta	43
Trapani	Località Milo	204

Source: Ministry of the Interior, December 2013.

CARAs, established in 2008 by Legislative Decree No 25 (Procedure Decree), are centres hosting asylum seekers who fulfil the requirements of Article 20 of the same decree, i.e., those who do not have an identification document, or who tried to escape border controls or who applied for asylum application after being found to stay in the country illegally. The length of stay in these centres depend on the time needed for identifying the asylum seekers and for deciding on their applications; at any rate, by law, it should not exceed 35 days. However, in practice, as the asylum procedure may take more than 35 days and or there may be no vacancies within the SPRAR (see below), applicants are usually hosted in the CARAs for longer, with their consent, until the relevant Territorial Commission has taken its decision. People housed in a CARA may go out during the day, but have to remain in the centre during the night. For personal reasons or reasons linked to the examination of their application, they may request a temporary leave to the Prefect in order to stay out of the centre for a longer period. Any unjustified absence from a CARA results in the termination of the reception.

At the end of 2013, there were 8 CARAs in Italy, with a hosting capacity of approximately 3,800 people, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Reception centres for asylum seekers (CARAs) in Italy in 2014.

<i>Province</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Number of available places</i>
Bari	Palese, Airport Area	774
Brindisi	Restinco	125
Caltanissetta	Contrada Pian del Lago	96
Crotone	Località Sant’Anna	875
Foggia	Borgo Mezzanone	856
Gorizia	Gradisca d’Isonzo	138
Rome	Castelnuovo di Porto	650
Trapani	Salina Grande	260

Source: Ministry of the Interior, December 2013.

CARAs were set up to be instrumental in offering initial reception to a high number of asylum seekers who had arrived by boat. These centres were established in facilities that formerly had other uses, such as industrial buildings or military airports. CARAs are often located in isolated and remote areas, with poor connections with the town centres. In these facilities, basic accommodation is provided to a high number of people, but, due to a lack of resources, services such as legal and social guidance, cultural mediation, healthcare, and protection of vulnerable categories are not always available, even though they should be. Sometimes even the accommodation is poor: common spaces are limited, and often outdoor, and toilet facilities are insufficient in number.

1.3.2. The Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees

The SPRAR is a network of centres for the second phase of reception, aimed at integrating refugees in the community after initial assistance. This system was promoted by the Ministry of the Interior and local authorities, in collaboration with humanitarian organisations, and set up by the Bossi-Fini Law in 2002. The SPRAR system stems from the experience acquired with

project Azione Comune (common action), the National Asylum Programme and the isolated experience gathered through the efforts of local authorities, NGOs and similar organisations. SPRAR's objective is to set a decentralised system of asylum seekers' reception, protection and integration within a national network, in order to guarantee high reception standards and consistent services across the country.

Local authorities participate in this network of reception plans on a voluntary basis. They use the resources available in the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services for their implementation. At a local level, the local authorities that have joined the SPRAR implement integrated reception interventions with the support of third-sector organisations. Therefore, alongside with food and accommodation, they provide information, assistance, guidance and social support, helping the beneficiaries familiarise themselves with the local community and access local services. Moreover, local authorities organise activities to help with learning Italian and adult education; children of compulsory school age are enrolled in schools; and legal advice is given on the international protection procedure and on the rights and duties of beneficiaries with reference to their status. With the aim of helping each person develop their autonomy, SPRAR's local integrated reception plans include services aimed at the social and economic integration. In this regard, training and vocational retraining are provided, and measures are taken to help access housing.

The SPRAR system is based on a close link between local reception plans and a specific reception centre, represented by the Servizio Centrale and entrusted by the Ministry of the Interior to the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI). This link between the local and the central levels makes local reception plans part of a multi-level (local and national) network, with specific roles and responsibilities assigned to each level. The Servizio Centrale coordinates the system, monitors interventions, supports the plan implementing teams and manages access to the various reception centres. In fact, one cannot access these reception centres on one's own, but each case should be submitted to the Data Bank of the Servizio Centrale. The following can make submission: CARA workers, the offices of local authorities belonging to the SPRAR network, programme managing bodies, local or national protection associations/organisations and Prefectures. The Servizio Centrale is also responsible for monitoring the presence on the territory of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection. It also creates and updates a database on the interventions implemented at a local level. Moreover, the Servizio Centrale coordinates and provides consultancy to the SPRAR special reception services that are devoted to the so-called "vulnerable categories", such as unaccompanied minors, disabled persons, the temporary disabled, people who need residential, health, specialist and long-term care, the elderly, mothers with children and the victims of torture and violence.

The SPRAR system is like a constellation of local reception plans. In 2011, there were 151 reception plans (111 for regular beneficiaries and 40 for the so-called vulnerable categories.) Overall, in 2011, the SPRAR network made 3,976 (funded) reception places available, and there were 128 local authorities running reception plans (110 Municipalities, 16 Provinces and 2 Unions of Municipalities). Local interventions are implemented in very different urban and social contexts, from cities to small towns, from metropolitan areas to country towns. Most

reception centres are small; in fact, the 638 facilities that operated in 2011 housed an average of 6 beneficiaries. Local authorities usually entrust the operation of reception centres to third-sector organisations.

Reception options are varied, from small flats co-managed by small groups of people or families (74%), to collective centres (20%) and assisted living facilities (6%). This accommodation is usually located in or near populated areas, usually with good public transport. There, the guests are offered services aimed at developing their individual resources and favouring integration through contacts with the local community. The SPRAR provides services mainly in the following areas: healthcare (18.8%), social assistance (18.4%), language and cultural mediation (18.2%), work placement (13.2%), multicultural activities (10.7%) and legal guidance (8.5%).

According to the Guidelines of the Ministry of the Interior (Ministerial Decree 22 July 2008, amended by Ministerial Decree 5 August 2008) asylum seekers stay in the SPRAR centres until notified of the Territorial Commission's decision. In the case of a negative decision, lodging an appeal allows the appellant to remain in the centre until he/she is allowed to work according to Article 11(1) of Legislative Decree No 140/2005, or if his/her physical conditions do not allow work, Article 5(7) Legislative Decree 140/2005). At any rate, the length of accommodation in a reception centre is 6 months in the case of recognition of international, subsidiary or humanitarian protection. For the beneficiaries of protection belonging to ordinary categories, such time may be extended for 6 months or longer under exceptional and duly motivated circumstances, including on-going integration programmes, subject to prior authorization of the Ministry of the Interior through the Servizio Centrale (Central Service). In particular, the length of reception for vulnerable categories may be extended based on proven needs, subject to prior authorisation.

In 2011, 2,999 people left the SPRAR reception network, the reasons being the following: successful completion of autonomy and integration processes (37%), dropping out (30%), end of the reception period (28%), removal from a reception centre (4%) and assisted voluntary return (1%). The percentage of people leaving the centres because they have successfully completed an integration process decreased compared to 2010 (when it was 43%). In fact, it has become increasingly difficult to access a labour market that has become tougher, as a result of the negative economic cycle experienced by our country. In 2011, 732 people applied for an extension after the 6-month period, with the following motivations: job search, failing health conditions, on-going traineeship, administrative reasons, the search for accommodation and paid internship under way.

As concerns funding sources, at the time of the National Asylum Programme, financial resources came from the ERF (European Refugee Fund) and from the allocations of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers related to the "Eight-per-Thousand" income tax Fund. This latter fund has a specific item concerning interventions aimed at assisting asylum seekers and refugees in Italy. Then, the FER funds up to 2008 were injected into the National fund for asylum policies and services (FNPSA), which was set up under the Bossi-Fini Law (2002). The Eight-per-Thousand Fund has continued to be used as an extraordinary source. The FNPSA, run by the Ministry of the Interior, gives grants to local authorities submitting reception plan

proposals for the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection. The guidelines, criteria and procedures for applying annually for such funds were set out for the first time in Decree 28 November 2005. This decree implemented Legislative Decree No 140/2005, transposing European Directive 9/2003/EC (Reception Directive). Before such decree, the “system rested on a provisional regime, which provided for a support to local authorities through the extraordinary Eight-per-Thousand Funds, assigned to ANCI, which, in turn, would allocate these resources to the local authorities through a public call for proposals”. The Decree of 2005 contains indications on eligible services, service standards, conditions for applicants’ eligibility, use of saved amounts, audits and possible revocation. These indications were amended by Decree 27 June 2007 and Decree 22 July 2008, establishing that a call for proposals for local authorities had to be launched every three years. Moreover, Decree 5 August 2010 amended the previous Decree, according a priority to the reception proposals for the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection devoted to vulnerable categories, which may also require highly specialised services.

The resources assigned from the central government do not cover the whole cost of the reception plans; the local authorities are called to partake in the expense, co-funding at least 20% of the overall cost.

The Decree of the Ministry of the Interior of 20 July 2013 regarding the submission of applications for FNPSA grants for 2014-2016 was published on 4 September 2013. The reception capacity of the system was expanded to 16,000 places, as established by Decree 17 September 2013 by the Head of the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration, implementing the Decree of the Ministry of the Interior of 30 July 2013.

Such an expansion of the SPRAR network has also involved the reception system of the city of Rome, as announced by Ms Ivana Bigari, senior official of the Municipality of Rome, during the meeting “Rome, Capital of Reception: the SPRAR Reception System”. In fact, 2,581 new SPRAR places will be added to the current capacity, to reach a total of 3,560 places. Ms Bigari said that the additional capacity would be subdivided as follows: 2,143 places for single men, 102 for single women, 262 for families, 74 for one-parent families, and 6 for mentally disabled persons, for a total of 38 projects in the Municipality of Rome, and 10 in neighbouring areas. These collective centres and flats will be organised and run by 18 managing bodies. The actions for managing reception, monitoring reception plan implementation, setting up a database, and maintaining the relationships and cooperation with the stakeholders, the Servizio Centrale and other Bodies will be coordinated by the Immigration Office of the Municipality of Rome.

1.3.3. A third reception option

In addition to the SPRAR and governmental centres, there are other forms of reception arranged by local authorities to host foreigners who are in Italy legally for reasons other than tourism, who are temporary unable to cater for their accommodation and subsistence needs, as provided for in Article 40 of the Turco-Napolitano Law. The recipients of these initiatives may include the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection, even though the Law does not require the local authorities to open such facilities nor to provide for the reception and assistance of this group of people. This situation resulted in the creation of reception centres that

are often disconnected from intervention planning at a national level on the one hand, and that have affected the lack of dedicated resources on the other hand. The statutory aim of these reception centres, which are often run by third-sector organisations, is to make their guests self-sufficient in the shortest possible time. When possible, these facilities should provide the social and cultural services that may favour autonomy and social inclusion, opportunities to learn the Italian language, vocational training, cultural exchanges with the Italian population and health and social assistance. In practice, however, due to lacking resources, reception standards often fail to meet regulatory provisions: they may vary from centres offering only basic reception to others offering support and guidance, from centres open 24h to others that are open during the day and then close at night.

Large metropolitan areas, like Rome (which will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter), Milan, Turin and Bologna, have reception networks that are mainly or exclusively dedicated to the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection. These facilities are not part of the SPRAR and “have access rules and reception capacities that are very particular and not comparable between them”. These are local systems of reception and social integration that have characteristics of strong local autonomy.

Still, in 2007, under agreements between the Municipalities and the Ministry of the Interior, some multifunctional centres were set up in some metropolitan cities, namely Rome, Milan, Florence and Turin. Such multifunctional services “provide services collectively to asylum seekers, refugees and beneficiaries of humanitarian protection”. This organisational model has been specifically designed for the cities that are confronted with a great inflow of people, attracted by the opportunities that may be offered by large urban centres. In addition to reception, multifunctional centres provide medical and psychological assistance, as well as vocational training and tutorship services, aimed at favouring processes of social integration into the fabric of the city.

Access to these local reception systems is based on waiting lists and there is often a very long waiting time; this compels asylum seekers and refugees to temporarily resort to accommodation services for homeless people or for “cold weather emergencies” or to live on the street or in illegal self-organised settlements, which are often problematic socially.

As regards the management of emergencies, an important role was played by the Civil Protection, which was requested by the government to implement a migrant reception plan related to the North Africa Emergency (ENA) on 12 February 2011. This experience came to an official close on 31 December 2012; however, some of the Centres that were opened at that time are still operational.

To close this introductory part and in anticipation of the next chapter, we present Table 4, with data on the reception centres for applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection that have agreements with the Immigration Office of the Municipality of Rome. These centres are located all over the territory of Municipality, even though not in all the Municipi (administrative areas). Table 4 lists the centres that had agreements in place with the Municipality and the number of persons hosted and discharged in each centre in 2013, according to a direct survey.

Table 4 - Some information about reception centres for beneficiaries of international protection in Rome in 2013.

<i>Managing body</i>	<i>Centre</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Number of persons received</i>	<i>Number of persons discharged</i>
Acisel	Casalotti	Single men	166	152
Ati Domus Caritatis – Arciconfraternita del S.S. Sacramento e S. Trifone	Casa San Bernardo		50	44
	Pietralata		130	122
	Casa San Benedetto		44	24
	Serra San Bruno		193	170
	Casa San Francesco		68	68
	Sant' Alessio		42	30
	Passolombardo	Single men	256	232
	Casa Domanico	Women with children	136	135
Centro Astalli	Casa di Giorgia	Single women and women with children	37	35
	Pedro Arrupe	Families	23	22
	San Saba	Single men	28	25
Caritas	Ferrhotel	Single men	86	66
	Monteverde	Single women	56	50
Consorzio Eriches 29 – Cooperativa sociale 29 giugno	Baobab	Single men	160	120
	Casa Nur	Singles and families	188	178
Virtus Italia Onlus	Raddusa	Single men	109	83
Associazione culturale Zero in condotta	Centro Ammr Bhavan	Women with children	8	4
Coop. Sol. Co.	Zurla	Families	25	24

Source: 2014 Data from the Immigration Office of the Municipality of Rome.

CHAPTER II

RECEPTION FACILITIES IN ROME IN 2014

This case-study is analyzing the Sistema di Protezione per Richiedenti Asilo (SPRAR) in Rome, and takes a particular look at the co-arrangement between the municipality and the third sector actors that carry out the reception tasks. To a certain degree this case study will also address other types of reception facilities and issues concerning not only Rome, but also the entire Italian territory, in order to provide an image, which is as comprehensive as possible. The field research has been conducted in September and October 2014 in Rome, in the context of a Masterthesis, which has been defended in May 2015 at Sciences Po Paris (Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris).

After having exposed in a first step the methodology that has been used for this case study (2.1.), the chapter will concentrate on the increase of reception facilities in Italy and Rome in particular (2.2.), addressing also the fragmented structure of the national reception system and the prevalent lack of reception places. Following these rather general observations it will concentrate more concretely on the impact of the SPRAR in Rome, particularly in terms of institutionalization, standardization and quality (2.3.). Finally, the informal network that has been developed over the years by the third sector and which is playing an important role of support to the SPRAR centers, will be addressed (2.4.).

2.1. A field-research in Rome: goals and methodology

2.1.1. Introduction – Why Rome?

The functioning of the SPRAR system in Rome will be taken as example to analyse public – non-profit sector cooperation for the reception of asylum seekers. It is impossible to claim that there would be one representative example for reception in Italy. Due to the differences between regions, and also between cities and the countryside, there is nothing such as a typical Italian case. Nevertheless many of the features of the Roman system are also valid for the SPRAR system in general, and it is a very interesting case, as it has only recently joined the SPRAR network.

From 2002 onwards the SPRAR system spread throughout the entire Italian territory, but big cities such as Rome and Milan were for a long time not part of the SPRAR system (INT02). This was mainly due to the fact, that this new reception model seemed more adapted to small cities and rural areas, with small numbers of refugees. As has been elaborated in chapter 1, refugees in these cities were accommodated in different centres, often very big ones, with standards differing significantly from SPRAR. The situation started to change, when many new reception facilities were created during the North-African Emergency (Emergenza Nord Africa – ENA) in 2011. As the arrivals on the Italian coast increased again significantly from 13.267 arrivals in 2012 to 42.925 arrivals in 2013 (UNAR 2014), an expansion of the SPRAR system was decided. This allowed to increase the available places for reception of asylum seekers and refugees from 3000 to 19510 places, out of which 13020 ordinary places (posti ordinari) and 6590 extraordinary places (posti aggiuntivi) (ANCI et al. 2014). Furthermore, Rome and Milan joined the network which entailed an important increase for the system as Rome alone had 3436

SPRAR reception places in August 2014 (ANCI et al. 2014). In order to increase as rapidly as that the capacities of the SPRAR network, many former ENA-centres have been transformed into SPRAR centres. Furthermore many of the other existing reception facilities have joined the SPRAR system.

The importance of Rome for migrants has already been described in the first Chapter (1.2). Traditionally Rome is considered being a transit city, favoured by asylum seekers and refugees. Historically this is also due to the fact that before the creation of the different territorial commissions, Rome hosted the only Commission for the determination of the asylum status and therefore all asylum seekers had to present themselves there. Rome always attracted the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, who hope to find support and work more easily in such a big city. Furthermore many national communities are present in Rome and can provide important support to their countrymen (Ministero dell'Interno 2010). The challenges concerning reception of asylum seekers and refugees are as diverse as the opportunities that such a big city can offer. For a case study Rome is also of particular interest, because the main actors are all present and very different realities of reception facilities are located close to each other. It needs to be underlined, that this situation is not representative of the Italian situation as a whole. On the other hand the diversity of Italy's regions is such, that there is nothing such as one Italian situation, but many different situations depending on the territory's characteristics.

The first challenge for Rome is the high number of asylum seekers arriving, which has particularly increased since October 2013, as everywhere in Italy. These high numbers lead to administrative difficulties, mainly in the process of the asylum demands and the issuing of papers, which leads to prolonged waiting periods (INT09). Another challenge is the concentration of asylum seekers and refugees in some parts of the city, which are mostly poorer and sometimes more insecure neighbourhoods. In these problematic neighbourhoods the acceptance and capacity to integrate refugees, is not always given. Furthermore poorer neighbourhoods rarely offer many activities for leisure, which would allow the refugees to integrate more easily (INT19). Some operators also underline the risk that the refugees can be attracted by illegal activities, a risk that is obviously less important in smaller towns (INT10, INT13). Finally, as Rome is a big city, there are many organisations that offer services such as language courses, legal advice and integration programmes. This is at the same time a chance for reception centres but also a challenge. Despite the fact that there are many, they are barely enough to respond to the demand (INT13). Unfortunately, even though integration programmes are well organized, in times of economic crisis, with increasing unemployment, integration is very difficult to achieve, simply because jobs are difficult to find, especially for refugees.

Because of the importance of Rome for arriving asylum seekers, the recent changes in the Roman reception system and the particular challenges faced by a big city, it is particularly interesting to analyse how the entrance into the SPRAR system influenced the reception system of the city and how it is perceived by the social workers and those responsible for the centres.

2.1.2. Overview

The case study was conducted from mid-September to mid-October 2014 in Rome and was mainly based on a series of 20 semi-directed interviews, conducted with different actors of the

reception system in Rome. In order to protect the confidentiality of the information received through these interviews they have been anonymized throughout the publication.

The primary aim of the interviews was to gather information on the application of the theoretical guidelines, including the challenges and difficulties faced by the centers and the perception of the relationship and cooperation between public and non-profit actors. Secondly they were supposed to provide some information on the recent developments of the reception system in Rome that has been the object of many changes, which cannot be found yet in the literature. Finally some other actors that are not part of the reception system were interviewed to gain a better overview on the Roman network for refugee reception, as there is much informal cooperation between those associations and the reception facilities. Those actors could also express their perception of the functioning or dysfunction of the SPRAR centers in Rome and the quality of services provided.

a. Identification of interview partners

The identified key actors of the reception system in Rome are on an institutional basis, the Ministry of Interior, the Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), the Municipality of Rome, the Servizio Centrale, which is in charge of the coordination of the SPRAR system and the Roman Immigration Office (Ufficio Immigrazione), which is in charge of the distribution of reception for asylum seekers in Rome. Furthermore, there is also the Prefecture, which is in charge of most other types of reception outside the SPRAR system. On the side of the associations, the main associations represented in Rome and generally in Italy, are the Caritas and Centro Astalli, being the two main Catholic organizations that take charge of refugees, the Italian Council for Refugees (CIR) and ARCI. Then there are also International Organizations, such as UNHCR, Save the Children and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), that play a role in the arrival of the refugees, particularly on the coast, but which have not been taken into account in the analysis, because they do not take part in the SPRAR system. Finally many social cooperatives are in charge of the management of reception facilities of the SPRAR system. The most important of those are Domus Caritatis (former by Arciconfraternita SS. Sacramento e S. Trifone), Cooperativa 29 giugno, Eta-Beta, Consorzio Eriches and Magliana 80.

In the frame of this study, unfortunately not all above identified actors could be encountered. In some part this was explained by the fact, that I was in Rome during a very busy time concerning asylum seekers, as huge numbers arrived and the system was being restructured at the same time. Some of the cooperatives did refused interviews, which might be linked to the fact that they seem to have been involved in a scandal, called “Mafia Capitale”, that arose in the Italian Media in December 2014.

b. Organization of the Interviews

The study is based on 20 interviews. Two of them took place with Institutions (Servizio Centrale and Ufficio Immigrazione), eight were led with the responsible persons of reception facilities (seven SPRAR and one CPSA) and ten other interviews were conducted with other actors that are implied in the reception network. These were associations that provide legal advice, language classes or other supporting services for asylum seekers and refugees.

Although the questions were generally adapted to each interview and particular case, it can be said, that it addressed three major blocs of information. The first one concerned the daily work of the organization, the structure, capacity of people helped, the number of people employed etc. The second part concerned the recent changes, related to the Emergency Nord-Africa and the increase of SPRAR centers in Rome since 2013. The final part addressed institutional relations, asking about cooperation mechanisms, problems or difficulties with the public authorities, but also with other organizations.

All interviews took place in the Office of the interviewed person and were semi-directed in order to leave enough room for the person to express concerns, difficulties, challenges that were of importance in his point of view. In five cases I had the chance to conduct the interview in the reception center, which gave me the possibility to do also some observation and to have a more concrete image on how these centers appear.

c. Representativeness of the interviews

The Interviews that have been conducted picture relatively well the complexity and diversity of the Roman reception system for Refugees, but unfortunately it cannot be said that they can provide a comprehensive and representative image of the situation for a series of reasons. First of all this study only focuses on the SPRAR centers, despite the fact that several other types of system do exist in Rome parallel, as described in Chapter 1. Furthermore, this study might even not be representative of all SPRAR centers, as only six interviews with SPRAR centers could be conducted, which represents about 11% of all 55 SPRAR centers in Rome (INT04).

The centers visited in the frame of this study welcomed between 15 and 80 asylum seekers and refugees, most of them between 30 and 50, whereas the majority of centers in Rome welcomes 60 to 80 refugees (INT09). It can therefore be supposed, that more exemplary centers responded to the request, whereas those, which are more criticized, and also those who might be involved in the scandal of “Mafia Capitale” did not accept an interview.

2.2. A sudden increase in reception facilities

2.2.1. Increases in Italy and Rome in 2013/2014

From 2011 to 2013 Italy had increased arrivals of refugees from the northern African countries, following the Arab Spring. As has already been explained earlier an emergency situation was declared, which allowed activating funds of the civil protection to support the reception of those arriving asylum seekers. Many reception facilities were therefore created by the prefectures, outside of the SPRAR centers, and mainly delivering only the most basic services. Another important flow of migrants followed the ENA emergency reaching 43000 arrivals in 2013 only by sea and thus an emergency procedure similar to the ENA procedure was started (UNAR 2014). This time the governmental action was not limited to emergency accommodation, but also the SPRAR systems’ capacities was increased. As described in Section 1.3.2. between November 2012 and the end of 2013 the SPRAR network reached a capacity of 9500 places, compared to previous 3000 places. The 6500 places that were added could all be financed by the extra fund of the civil protection. The Ministry of Interior was becoming conscious of the fact that the SPRAR needed a regular increase of places and announced to

finance 12000 regular places from 2014 on, keeping also the 6500 extraordinary places, so that there were actually 18500 places (INT09). The tendency in increased arrivals of 2013 was even enhanced in 2014, where 83.000 migrants reached Italy by sea (UNAR 2014). In reaction to this important number of arrivals another 2000 places were activated in September/October 2014, so that the SPRAR system counts now a total of around 20000 reception places (INT09).

Following the increased arrivals and the end of the ENA measures, Rome also decided to increase its numbers of reception capacity, from originally 1800 places for asylum seekers and refugees, to 2600 places. In this way between May and September 2013, in the context of the so-called “ampliamento 2013”, 800 extraordinary reception places were suddenly added to the existing system for those asylum seekers who had recently landed on the Italian coast. In January 2014 Rome officially became a member of the SPRAR system, showing in this way its interest in delivering reception services of good level to asylum seekers and refugees. Therefore a call for tenders was organized asking the third sector organizations to propose projects of accommodation. Following this call for tenders the original 1800 places were more or less transferred to the SPRAR system, many of the “extraordinary” projects of 2013 also participated in the tender and became regular SPRAR centers, to reach a final number of 2581 SPRAR reception places in Rome in January 2014. Some other 500 additional places were added in July 2014, as the SPRAR asked the municipalities to increase their capacities (INT04).

Nevertheless the entry of Rome into the SPRAR system took place with some limits on the administrative and practical level. This is due to the fact, that Rome alone with 3000 places now has as many places as the entire SPRAR system in 2012 before the increase. Contrary to all other municipalities who take part in the program, the distribution of asylum seekers and refugees into the different SPRAR is not managed by the Servizio Centrale but by the Ufficio Immigrazione, who shares its database with the Servizio Centrale. This means also that no asylum seekers or refugees from other regions will be sent to centers in Rome and vice versa. The places in Rome are reserved for those arriving on their own to Rome (INT04) and the number of 3000 places has been defined according to the number of persons, who were waiting in Rome for accommodation. Those asylum seekers and refugees in Rome are “often persons that had left another center, coming from the south, coming from first arrival centers of the Ministry of Interior, because Rome, such as other big cities, but mainly Rome, is a place of arrival for these persons”. (INT16)

The extension of the SPRAR system to Rome did not go unnoticed; on the contrary it is at the origin of important changes in the reception service provision. Maybe the most visible effect was simply the increase of reception places. This is of great importance, particularly to the refugees and asylum seekers themselves, as those who ask now for reception can be provided with reception almost immediately, whereas before there were waiting-lists of two to three months at the Ufficio Immigrazione (INT04). Rome is therefore responding to the existing needs and manages to increase the chance of integration for all those asylum seekers and refugees who can be accommodated and accompanied in the SPRAR centers. Many refugees who obliged to stay longer than initially foreseen in different first reception centers could be transferred into a SPRAR center. This was possible as a consequence of the increase of reception places, although most of them were not transferred to Rome, but somewhere else in

Italy. This is a very important and positive aspect, as the SPRAR centers can offer more possibilities for integration, formation and progress towards autonomy than the other centers, as will be shown later. In this way for many refugees their time of stay in first reception centers could be reduced (INT12). Nevertheless there is a risk that during the next wave of asylum seekers and refugee arrivals, Rome will face a similar situation to that of the past years, with waiting lists and lots of people sleeping at Termini Train Station. It might happen that not enough places will be free for the new arrivals, as the aim of the SPRAR is to allow the users to stay until they are autonomous. Therefore they need a job and autonomous accommodation, two requirements which are particularly rare at this moment of crisis in Italy (INT04).

For this reason operators pointed at the importance of increasing integrative services, even more than continuing the increase of reception capacities. It would now be important to concentrate on the operative possibilities, possibilities of education, training and overall housing, allowing also a higher turn-over of refugees in the centers. “De facto there are is no social housing today. (...) You inscribe on a list today and receive reception in 10 years. (...) For persons who ask for reception it is like a divine grace (if they get an accommodation) and this is not feasible”. (INT04) Increasing the reception capacities only, without providing opportunities of housing and working after the exit of the center, therefore would make no sense.

2.2.2. Fragmentation of the system

As already explained briefly in the introduction, the SPRAR system is not the only reception type for asylum seekers and refugees. Indeed the whole national reception system is complex and fragmented. The most important structural problem is that it is mainly based on a logic of emergency (UNAR 2014). Starting at the Kosovo Emergency, followed by the ongoing emergency of the Horn of Africa (Somalia and Eritrea particularly), to the Emergency Nord Africa (ENA) in 2011 and since 2013 the new mass arrivals at the southern coast are also often referred to as emergencies. With still more Syrians and also Iraqis fleeing the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) the next wave of refugees could already be expected in 2015, nevertheless many have complained that the Italian State is not able to plan an adequate response in advance (INT15). In a certain way it can be considered that the reception system has been enhanced with each emergency, and most of the newly introduced reception facilities have then been kept. This happened particularly with the creation of the PNA following the Kosovo Emergency and also in the last two years with the reaction to the increased arrivals, being the increase of reception places in the SPRAR system. It has also led to an important failure and strongly criticized intervention during the ENA as many very costly centers were created, without any standards and any quality control, leading to rather catastrophic results (Giovanetti 2013).

The entire reception system has been created in the past 15 years and consists today mainly of three types of centers, each following its own logic. The Centri di primo soccorso e accoglienza (CPSA) and Centri di Accoglienza (CDA) have already been described in the first Chapter. They are under the control of the prefecture and managed by third sector organizations, mostly big unions. This type of center should only be a transitory reception until the legal status of asylum seeker is determined and a more stable reception is found (Osservatorio Migranti).

Nevertheless asylum seekers de facto stay there sometimes for a whole year (INT12). As soon as the migrant is considered an asylum seeker he should in theory be transferred to a Centro di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo (CARA), still managed by the prefecture in cooperation with a third sector organization. And after the positive decision of the commission the refugee should be transferred to a SPRAR center, which is managed by the municipalities. Asylum seekers can also be transferred at an earlier stage to the SPRAR, or be admitted from the beginning onwards. This is not regulated in a very strict way and practice has been very different according to the situation. For several years very small numbers of asylum seekers could be found in SPRAR centers, which hosted mainly recognized refugees, whereas now, with the increased arrivals, but also the increased places within the SPRAR system, many asylum seekers are admitted in the SPRAR. Next to this system of three different kinds of centers, there are also other centers managed by the prefecture, such as for example those financed with help of the EU for refugees returning to Italy because of the Dublin Regulation (Dublinati) (INT16). Then sometimes the municipalities also have their own centers, which are oftentimes open to all migrants and therefore welcome also a certain number of refugees. Rome has around 900 such places, which are opened to all types of migrants and therefore welcome economic migrants who are not eligible for the SPRAR, or also asylum seekers, when the SPRAR is overcrowded (INT16). Some associations also offer emergency shelter without discrimination to all those who are in need and thus also to refugees.

As the Ministry of Interior is lacking structural funds for the reception of asylum seekers, the practice of delegation of responsibility to the Protezione Civile has been developed. This means that the Protezione Civile is enabled to take ad hoc measures and create temporary reception solutions with help of the prefectures. It has been proven that these ad hoc measures are far costlier than regular reception facilities, without delivering the same quality of services (Giovanetti 2013). With the important increase of arrivals in 2014, a new emergency mechanism, similar to the one of ENA has been put in place and currently 24.400 asylum seekers are hosted in extraordinary reception facilities which are managed in convention with the responsible prefectures. Furthermore in southern Italy 4 caserns will be made available for migrant reception and will be able to host up to 2400 persons (UNAR 2014). As all these centers are managed outside the SPRAR system, it seems that the municipalities are sometimes not even aware that the prefecture has opened a center (INT04). As an operator stated concerning this issue “there are so many persons (involved). Doing everything and doing it in a way that everyone knows everything, we did not yet manage to do it, but we will manage to do so”. (INT04) Until that moment we can speak about different parallel existing reception systems that co-exist without much cooperation. There are no binding standards for the centers that are not part of the SPRAR and the responsibilities between the public institutions are fragmented, which doesn't make it possible to speak about a coherent national system. This coherent national system, defining the course of asylum applicants would be needed in order to propose good reception conditions to all arriving asylum seekers.

2.2.3. Lack of reception places

Despite all these huge efforts to increase the reception facilities in the SPRAR system and also through the prefectures, the Italian reception system is still fundamentally lacking reception capacity. All in all the Italian reception system hosted about 50.000 migrants in July 2014, 24.000 of them in centers opened to respond to the emergency situation of mass arrivals in 2014 (UNAR 2014). The regular reception facilities are “able to respond more or less well to 20 or 30.000 persons per year. We are already at about 140.000 arrivals (estimations in October 2014), so obviously it is not enough. We need to find the capacity to respond and to be able to give reception and protection for at least 60.000 persons a year”. (INT05) The increase of the SPRAR system was a first step in the right direction, but in view of the high numbers arriving it was not much more than a mere drop in the ocean. This means that a very large group of asylum seekers finds reception outside of the official system. Having a look at the numbers of arrivals and those who filed an asylum claim in Italy a huge discrepancy becomes obvious. In 2013 there were about 43000 arrivals by sea, but only 27000 asylum claims, a tendency that can also be observed in 2014, when between January and July 83000 migrants arrived by sea, but only 25000 asylum requests were made. Particularly the number of Syrians claiming asylum in Italy is very low, around 700 in 2013, compared to almost 12.000 in Germany and more than 16.000 in Sweden (UNAR 2014). These numbers show clearly that the arriving migrants know that in other countries reception and integration is easier and only cross Italy, without being registered.

A certain number of the asylum seekers that are not staying in official reception will probably stay for a certain time in centers of the “social emergency”, which are centers of the municipalities (mainly present in the big cities) for the homeless, Italians or foreigners. Furthermore, the good functioning of the Diaspora networks should not be underestimated. At least in Rome many of the arriving asylum seekers and refugees have the opportunity to stay temporarily with their countrymen (INT16). This obviously depends heavily on the strength of the community, as some are less present in Italy than others and have different possibilities of providing support (INT10). But many operators considered it as one of the major solutions for asylum seekers and a very important one, because “otherwise Termini Station would be overcrowded” (INT14). Most transitory migrants will stay in squats (UNAR 2014). In 2012 a study was conducted estimating that 1700 refugees were staying in the four biggest squats of Rome, the biggest being “Salaam” located in Romanina, close to the university Tor Vergata with about 800 refugees at the moment of the study (IntegrAzione 2012). These squats form more or less well organized communities with sometimes good levels of self-management and integration of the refugees, thus creating “real multicultural spaces”(INT15). Though, some of these centers face dramatic sanitary problems (Polchi 2014) and the risk of isolation and marginalization are very high (IntergrAzione 2012). There has been no other comprehensive study on this topic again since 2012, nevertheless some recent newspaper articles indicate that apparently these occupations continue to exist even after the increase of reception facilities in Rome in 2014 (RomaToday 2014, Polchi 2014).

2.2.4. Towards a more coherent approach?

In order to give an answer to the many critiques regarding the fragmentation and dysfunction of the Italian reception system, the government together with the regions and municipalities decided on a national plan “to face the extraordinary flow” of migrants in July 2014 (Intesa by Conferenza Unificata Stato – Regioni, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri 2014). The first element put in evidence is that it is indeed again the response to a situation that is seen as extraordinary, but the changes that are proposed seem to be nevertheless of a more structural nature, that are not limited in time. The decision recognizes that the prefectural reception facilities did not involve the territory and thus could lead to “embarrassments and tensions”, therefore it emphasizes the need of coordination on national and regional level, including a national plan of distribution of the refugees in all regions. Furthermore it recognizes the importance of speeding up the administrative procedures and asks for an increased number of Territorial Commissions, which has been put into practice with the law n.119 of August 22nd, 2014 (Decreto-Legge n. 119, 2014). The reception system that is proposed seems similar to the existing one as it would be again a system based on three levels: relief and rescue in CPSA centers in the regions of arrival, followed by first reception facilities, which would then be regional HUB centers managed in cooperation with the regions and then the SPRAR system. Finally the timely transfer from one type of center to another should be guaranteed and facilitated by another increase of the SPRAR network. Until the end of 2014, except the change in the law regarding the Territorial Commission, no laws have implemented the other proposed changes.

The third sector, with the Tavolo Asilo as its representative body, doesn't support this conception of the reception system, with its different steps of accommodation. In their opinion there should be “accoglienza punto” (INT09). Most civil society actors don't agree with this division in first and second reception, particularly as there is no coherence between the different centers. “Instead at Lampedusa the objective is one, in the CARA it is something else and in the SPRAR it is different again”. (INT09) The third sector organizations are in favor of having only SPRAR centers or “there should be the same standards, the same guidelines, the same approach and the same motives” in all centers, in order to allow a coherent integration process for the asylum seekers (INT09). This means that the objective of integration into Italian society should be set from the beginning on and the centers should provide services in accordance to this.

2.3. Institutionalization, Standardization & Quality

After this short oversight on the difficulties in the construction of a comprehensive and coherent reception system for the high numbers of arriving asylum seekers, the following sections will focus on the analysis of the implementation of the SPRAR system in Rome.

The SPRAR can be indeed considered as an exemplary reception model which is based on a successful cooperation between the public and the third sector. It has already been explained that the origin of the SPRAR was an initiative of the civil society that has quickly found recognition and interest on multiple levels: the Italian local and national public levels, as well as the European level. It is able to satisfy the need of funding on the other hand the need of delivering essential services for the wellbeing of the society on the other hand. As it has been

shown, the real cooperation takes place on the local level, but there are also some possibilities of being heard and influencing at the national decision-making level, although these possibilities are still relatively weak. Finally the institutionalization of the SPRAR system has introduced the Servizio Centrale as intermediary between the Ministry of Interior and the municipalities and third sector organization. This has then also allowed to set and implement a certain number of standards, enhance transparency, but also entailing increased bureaucratization.

2.3.1. Bureaucratization

The bureaucratic aspect has grown in importance because the system asks for more reporting and accountability (INT18). For the third sector organizations this meant an important impact and influence on their work, on the management level, but also in the delivery of services (INT02). In order to provide better services, the number of operators has increased with the entrance to the SPRAR system. Interestingly there seems to have been no impact on the implication of voluntary helpers (INT18), but their possibility of involvement depends completely on the working philosophy of the association.

The SPRAR imposes important bureaucratic efforts on the third sector organizations. First of all the cooperation agreement is only valuable for 3 years, then a new tender is organized and all third sector organizations need to apply again. Furthermore the centers participate in a national database that needs to be updated with relevant information and finally they have to do regular reporting (Servizio Centrale 2009). In creating a clear legal framework with procedures that have to be followed, concerning the tendering and also the reporting and accounting part, there has been an evolution away from the “mutual accommodation” model, which was more dominant previously. This idea was developed by Ranci (1999), suggesting that the government supports third sector organisations financially for their activities, but without any control on the way money is spent. The attribution of money in this model is more linked to patronage, than to efficiency of the project. Access to funding is now based on capacity of management of such a project and less on networking or having influence. Therefore it can also be considered that this institutionalization has allowed moving towards greater transparency of the whole process.

However, the recent scandal around Mafia Capitale has shown, that despite all the tendering and other efforts to make the selection process transparent and fair, this cannot always be guaranteed. The criminal group, called Mafia Capitale, has managed to infiltrate different levels of decision making and administration of the Roman municipality in order to push forward the participation of a network of social cooperatives in the management of the CARA Castelnuovo di Porto (near Rome) and apparently also a series of SPRAR centers (Fusani 2014). This Mafia network misappropriated important parts of the funding that was supposed to reach the asylum seekers. Nevertheless it can be hoped that these are isolated criminal cases, which are not supported and tolerated by the system. Abuses, such as the one made by Mafia Capitale, are now prosecuted.

2.3.2. A heterogeneous starting point

Such a sudden increase in reception places and centers, and the entry into a standardized system as the SPRAR, has had important consequences for the Roman centers. The

organizations that had participated in the tender were very different, some of them already doing reception since many years and with high standards, others entered into this field with the ENA. Many of those newly entering the SPRAR network de facto did only very basic services, “room and board type” without language classes, not to speak about social services or vocational training, although they were also given the SPRAR guidelines as orientation, but without any obligation (INT09a). Many centers entered the system “as they were” and “there were very good and not so good ones”. As through the SPRAR there are stronger controls, “let’s hope that they will become better, because the Servizio Centrale will come and control in addition to the Ufficio Immigrazione. (...) Perhaps they will all become fantastic!” (INT04)

Due to the sudden increase of reception facilities, and the particular situation of Rome, being a very big city, the diversity of centers is very important. On the one hand the diversity is visible in the location of the centers, but also in their size and management, which depends heavily on the type of organization and the operators themselves and their commitment. In September 2014 Rome had 55 different reception facilities, spread over the entire city, some being located very centrally, others at the periphery of the city. In some cases this can be considered as problem, as some centers are located in poor and already problematic neighborhoods and “hence the persons are less willing to accept them, which creates problems” (INT04).

With the aim of transferring the existing centers into the SPRAR system, some of the centers that have been integrated into the SPRAR system do not really correspond to the official SPRAR criteria due to their size. Many centers in Rome welcome from 60 to 80 asylum seekers, whereas the SPRAR foresees rather a maximum of 30 to 50 persons in one center. There is one very particular case, the controversial ENEA center, which welcomed about 400 asylum seekers and refugees, and has apparently been integrated into the SPRAR system. This center has been involved in various scandals and it is difficult to know exactly what happened now, as the website is not accessible anymore and no responsible could be contacted. Nevertheless it still seemed to exist in October 2014 and according to the Servizio Centrale it has been integrated into the SPRAR (INT09). As Rome had suddenly accepted such an elevated number of reception places in the SPRAR system, it had no other choice to accept that these big centers would enter into the system. According to the operator of the Eta Beta cooperative, otherwise Rome would not have been able to welcome so quickly so many people (INT10).

The reception in apartments, which is considered by the Servizio Centrale as the ideal solution for accommodation, is very rare in Rome. The attitude of a responsible of ARCI is that they “have an insignificant number (of asylum seekers) compared with the Roman numbers, but we want to start an alternative model to these huge centers, which in our opinion do not allow to ensure protection, to follow the asylum seeker during the administrative procedure and to insure at the same time the minimum standards of reception”. (INT11) Indeed, in this study only one center in Rome has been identified and included, which proposed reception of refugee families in a very autonomous form of apartment (INT15).

The Servizio Centrale considers it as an experimentation and “challenge” to figure out, whether it is possible to assure the same quality of reception and reception services in these bigger Roman centers that entered the SPRAR system now for the first time. “It is still too early to tell, as until February they were not working with the SPRAR guidelines. Therefore we will

see. (...) It will take some time to bring the modalities and operators on the same line. Then in some cases it will work out well, in others it might not go well, then we will have to intervene”. (INT09) It seems that the Servizio Centrale is currently putting lots of energy in formation and case to case guidance, as not all centers have yet integrated the SPRAR methodologies. This difficulty appears particularly strongly in Rome and the Servizio Centrale therefore also cooperates with the municipality in order to pave the way towards more homogeneity (INT09a).

Many operators interviewed during the study were skeptical about the big centers. “A SPRAR in order to work well, to deliver in a good way all the services, cannot have more than twenty, thirty users.(...) otherwise it falls on the operators, who need to work more in order to guarantee the same level of services”. (INT10) Another operator explained that they had already difficulties to follow adequately all their 14 users, wondering how in a big center, one single tutor could adequately follow 20 persons. “One person that is thinking about 20 persons is not the same as 4 persons thinking about 20 persons”. (INT15) Nevertheless some had another approach, stating, that bigger centers also had more resources (as they receive a fixed sum per diem per person) and that with a good management it should also be possible to do qualitatively high reception for refugees, with good services in a bigger center (INT13).

Finally a factor that is not negligible is the impact of the type of organization on the quality of the center management. Organizations that have always been committed to help the most disadvantaged generally offer services with relatively high standards. This can be observed independently of them being religious or secular. Some are specialized in supporting refugees and oftentimes they also do an important work of advocacy, such as do CIR, Caritas and Centro Astalli. They have therefore little difficulties adapting to the new guidelines. Other actors of the SPRAR system enter a new field and have therefore sometimes less commitment to the issue. “There are organizations, social cooperatives, as well as big unions, which are not only involved in integration and assistance, sometimes they have also other purposes. Therefore, let’s say, with those the management is more difficult, because they are really very big structures, even at national level, and are not always interested in the question of reception and integration”. (INT09a).

2.3.3. Inadequate delivery of services and non-respect of the guidelines

The SPRAR system with its guidelines is a very well-thought project, which manages to deliver high-quality support to asylum seekers and refugees and to offer them good possibilities of integration, if those guidelines are respected. For some organizations entering the SPRAR meant to implement important changes in their way of delivering services, and in general to increase their services. For others it contained only minor changes, such as adding the pocket money or bus ticket (INT02). When important changes are required, time is also needed, as it is in a certain degree also about changing the attitudes, mentality and working philosophy of the staff. One operator said: “We are a bit at the beginning and the reasoning is still a bit as before, but we are in the transition-phase. It has been 5 or 6 months that we are in the SPRAR, but step by step we are for sure going into the direction of improvement of our offer, also qualitatively, regarding a relatively particular target group”. (INT18) Unfortunately it seems that not all centers have adopted this attitude of willingness to adapt to the guidelines and thus they simply

do not respect the guidelines. Particularly in Rome with its high number of centers and the many new implementing partners, this respect of the guidelines seems to be a particular challenge.

As it has already been mentioned previously some centers decided not to offer language classes, but to rely completely on external actors (INT10). In such it is not a bad idea, but it is not foreseen as such and others have underlined the risk in these cases that some less motivated asylum seekers would not attend those external classes (INT13). A lawyer of the organization ASGI complained that many centers would not have good legal advice. In many cases this legal support would be given by a social assistant unfamiliar with these issues. Therefore the asylum seekers would be badly prepared for the interview at the Commission, despite the apparent support provided. Also in these cases the centers then have recourse to external voluntary lawyers, which should only be the case in cases of appeal to the decision (INT03). Finally many reception facilities provide only little help for integrative measures, such as vocational training and job-seeking.

Most centers explain their difficulties in delivering all these required SPRAR services, with a lack of funding: “The resources that are available are nothing compared with what we should and what we could do”. (INT10) All centers agree that a higher pro diem allowance would allow “to pay more attention to the quality of the services, of the staff, to organize more activities and obviously the work would be of a higher level” (INT10). Others found the solution in spending more, using funds of the organization, because they consider it as important to be able to deliver good quality services. In all centers it seems to be a common standard that operators earn very little, and most prefer gaining little rather than decreasing the services they provide to their users (INT13).

Exteriorization of services to other local actors has of course an advantage for the reception facilities. Despite the huge offer of services and the large number of organizations in the Roman network, these are almost overwhelmed by the large numbers of asylum seekers that come to receive support. That the numbers of reception places has been increased doesn't mean automatically that the capacity of the services present on the Roman territory, have also increased. Therefore if the reception facilities do not provide essential services but send their users to external actors “the system risks to collapse” (INT13).

2.3.4. Inacceptable waiting time

Not only some third sector organizations hamper with their attitude the smooth functioning of this co-arrangement, also the public sector contributes with its own difficulties. The increase of bureaucratization has not only been a challenge for the third sector organizations, but also for the municipalities, which are confronted with the obligation of concluding important numbers of cooperation agreements with the third sector organizations. Furthermore the increase of migrant arrivals and asylum requests, has overwhelmed an unprepared administration. The resulting slowness of the administrative process has led to excessively long stays in the reception facilities and thus limits the possible turn-over of asylum seekers in these centers.

Concerning the CDA/CPSA and also the CARA centers, those are mostly very big centers with only little integrative measures and services, as they are conceived for short stays, and therefore a broad array of services doesn't seem necessary. It becomes problematic, when

people start to stay a year or more in these centers, because of the length of the procedure or because there are no other available reception places (INT12). Having many people in a small space, without anything to do and with the fear to be turned down, bears great conflict potential. Even in the SPRAR centers in which there are more proposed activities and smaller communities, the operators consider the waiting time and this uncertainty as the major challenge for the good cohabitation of the users (INT10). In the SPRAR centers an additional problem for starting a process of integration and building projects for the asylum seeker is the uncertainty whether asylum will be granted or not, creating in some cases problems of motivation (INT11). In other (rather exceptional cases) the refugees are already almost autonomous, only the official documents are missing to allow them to leave the SPRAR center (INT13).

Furthermore, the time foreseen in the SPRAR and the length of the bureaucratic process are in a certain way incompatible. An asylum seeker has the right to receive a work permit six months after having made the asylum request. The Roman Questura is the biggest in Italy and receives the largest number of asylum requests, without being able to process them in a timely fashion and it is therefore “a total chaos” (INT03). Overwhelmed by the workload work permits are not delivered (INT09), as it is presumed that in the meantime the document of international protection would be ready (INT13). As it was explained in the introduction, it is not the Questura which is taking the decision if international protection is recognized or not, but the Territorial Commission. The 10 Commissions on the Italian territory are also overwhelmed by the numbers of requests. So all in all with the administrative delays of the Questura and the Commission, most operators reported that an asylum application takes about a year, without appeal (INT10). Then it still needs about 3 months following the decision to deliver the document of international protection. With a stay of 6 months in a SPRAR center after the recognition of international protection, there are only 3 other months to find a job and new reception in order to be able to live autonomously (INT13). Most consider that already 6 months would be short for a whole integrative process, adding the administrative difficulties, they claim a longer regular reception time in the SPRAR centers (INT11).

The Italian government is taking first measures to make the process quicker, as the decree-law n.199 of August 22nd 2014 announced the doubling of the number of Territorial Commissions from 10 to 20 (Decreto legge n. 199, 2014) which has taken place in November 2014. Not only the administration taking the decision on the asylum claim is too slow, the administrative process for the signature of the cooperation agreement between the municipality and the third sector organizations and the transfer of funding is also very slow and risks to impede the good functioning of the system. Particularly in Rome the process to sign the cooperation agreements between the municipality and the third sector organizations has been very long. This is mainly due to the fact that there has been a complete change of the system in Rome when joining the SPRAR, increasing significantly the workload, while the number of persons working on this stayed the same (INT09a). Although there has been some comprehension by the operators, these administrative delays have had important impacts for the implementing partners, as they were confronted with payment delays of up to six or seven months (INT13). For a small non-profit organization this can have catastrophic consequences, as not all have their own funds allowing them to get through the waiting period. During this

period some “are not able to pay their operators, sometimes they are even not able to pay the pocket money to the asylum seekers and refugees” (INT11). Others have been less understanding and claim for a quicker process in order to accelerate the money transfer from the Ministry to the municipalities and finally to the implementing partners (INT11).

2.4. Creation of an informal network

2.4.1. Responding and adapting to diverse needs

One of the particular features of the SPRAR system is the involvement of local actors. This involvement is crucial in order to be able to respond to the real needs, as those local actors are closer to the recipients of the services and are able to adapt to their specific needs. Furthermore local actors, public as well as from the third sector can make use of the existing local resources, by working in networks and cooperating with other actors of the public, private and third sector.

This clear involvement of local actors is also a source of support for the third sector organizations, as they feel recognized and get the possibility of adequately supporting the asylum seekers and refugees. None of the other parallel existing reception systems has this support of civil society; on the contrary, they are strongly criticized. “We have always supported the SPRAR model because it puts the local authority at the center, the municipality and also the territory. And then the system offers more protection of the involved persons, from the refugee to the implementing organization (...). And all the other forms of reception that have been developed recently have shown that they are not able to keep up with the SPRAR and they have produced so many problems (...). Since the Emergenza Nord Africa we have a parallel system of the prefecture. At each negotiating table we ask that this system should be merged into the SPRAR”. (INT11).

So the SPRAR is in fact a network of municipalities that is coordinated and supervised by a central organ, the Servizio Centrale. The municipalities are all part of ANCI, which is therefore their platform for any form of exchange. But the implementing partners, the third sector organizations, do not really have a platform or institutionalized network in order to communicate, to work together or to exchange best practices. The Servizio Centrale coordinates the exchange of best practices, but all other forms of cooperation need to be done on initiative of the organizations and their operators or coordinators. Little cooperation is done on national level, except in cases of nationally organized organizations such as ARCI, who do much training and best practice exchange inside their own organization, sometimes opening it for other SPRAR members (INT11). On a local basis nevertheless, cooperation inside the third sector has a crucial role, as is shown in this section using the example of Rome.

The actors of this informal network are on the one hand the reception facilities themselves, on the other hand a series of associations and voluntary organizations and finally also all kind of private sector actors such as little shops and businesses. The reception facilities play a crucial role in this network, as they have also the task to activate the network and partners, which can help in providing best possible services to the asylum seekers and refugees they host (Servizio Centrale, Manuale Operativo). Furthermore some of them propose activities, training and formation for persons that are exterior to their center. In general it can be said that the network

not only allows most reception facilities to deliver services of higher quality, but also to “exchange ideas and to grow. (...) It also helps to experiment different paths” (INT15).

Many of the reception facilities rely heavily on the services that can be proposed by voluntary organizations on the Roman territory. Some asylum seekers will take language classes exterior to their reception center, either in addition to those proposed in their center, or because their center doesn't propose any (which according to the SPRAR guidelines should not be the case, but nevertheless exists a lot). Other associations offer guidance for employment and vocational training, which is also a service that should be provided by the SPRAR centers, but which many still have difficulties delivering in a good way. ASGI, an association for legal studies on migration, is also playing a major role, as many of its lawyers give legal advice to the asylum seekers, particularly in more difficult cases, where the legal services of the reception center are not competent any more. These actors can be considered as being part of a general Roman network, known by most of the SPRAR centers. Then there are more local arrangements, which each SPRAR has, or at least should, have made with local partners, in their neighborhood for example. These partnerships are particularly important in the field of sports and vocational training, including internships and other forms of work experience (INT19). Finally there is also the entire health sector, which is taking part in this network. This is done partly on an obligatory basis, as the law says that each asylum seeker has access to the national health service (Servizio Centrale, Manuale Operativo), but some centers even strengthen this cooperation, using their network or building a network, for example with English and French-speaking doctors or very specialized institutions, that respond to a particular need (INT15).

Using the network is considered by most of the actors, as an efficient way of using available resources. “It is our mission to activate the network, to find common resources and no to disperse them”. (INT18) Following this logic, it might indeed be more useful to provide some services outside a center, in order to reach a greater number of persons and allow the centers in this way to concentrate on other efforts. This might particularly be the case in very specialized services, such as vocational training or particular health services. In these cases most of the SPRAR centers see their mission in orienting towards existing facilities and services on the territory, as they cannot provide all individualized services within their budget. This is also foreseen by the Servizio Centrale. Furthermore the philosophy is to push users to greater autonomy, as they will also be able to use these services, once they have left the center. “Implication of the territory is fundamental. Make conventions with services that are already present on the territory, instead of inventing new services, helps to promote the autonomy of the users. Therefore not to accompany (the user) everywhere, but to have the availability of the operator to accompany and to give orientation. Orientation to the services is fundamental because, if you inform, then the person can decide what to do or not to do”. (INT11).

It is an informal network because it is mainly based on personal relationships between operators. Even taking into consideration only the Roman network (without these neighborhood arrangements) there exists no formalized network of organizations that would meet regularly or get organized in a certain way. Not even a public list of the associations that are involved in services for asylum seekers and refugees exists, although the organization Programma Integra is doing an effort to assemble and spread the information about proposed activities. The Servizio

Centrale noticed that some operators are lacking information and training on how to use the network and try to give support and training (INT09a). Though once you know a few, you quickly know all of them. During the conduct of the study, once a few key actors were identified, it was quickly possible to identify the key partners of most reception facilities, as names such as Asinitas (language classes), ASGI (legal advice) and FCEI (vocational training) were cited repeatedly.

Therefore the motivation and commitment of the operators are key to the functioning of the network. “It works very well if you find on our side, on the side of the other organizations and of the municipality persons, which are open to work together”. (INT18) Lots of communication, openness to other projects and networking is needed in order to make full use of the network. Particularly the activation of neighborhood partnerships might create even more difficulties, as these activities also include actors, who have maybe never dealt with refugees before and have no particular interest in refugees. Although all interview partners underlined the chance of having such a well working network in Rome offering so many possibilities, some of them also emphasized the fact that there is such a high demand, that the services are overburdened.

The network does not only include voluntary organizations, but also public services from the municipality, mainly in the health sector or concerning educational services (when children go to public school, or adults take language classes in public schools). Here the level of cooperation is different, as the commitment is very different. Therefore cooperation may be more difficult and some complained that there is not enough exchange of information or information efforts by the City, as for example some health services do not even know about the SPRAR system and their particular needs (INT19).

2.4.2. Integration

All these different activities and the networking have one single aim: to integrate the asylum seekers and refugees in the Italian society and to give them all the possibilities and tools to do so. There is a variety of techniques and approaches to this end. Each reception center develops its own project that is adapted to its geographic situation and to the needs and particular demands of its users. As it has been explained throughout this chapter, the main added value of the SPRAR system is its philosophy of “accoglienza integrata”, meaning a complete support and accompaniment from the arrival until autonomy of the asylum seeker or refugee. This help, which is going far beyond room and board, takes into consideration all the aspects and difficulties of the person. Very important is also the fact that support doesn’t stop at the moment in which the asylum seekers is recognized as refugee, but particularly in this delicate moment helps him to get started. The standards of small structures and many supportive services, provided by a network of actors are very favorable for the good functioning of this project.

Particularly in this moment of economic crisis, welcoming foreigners is not an easy task. Therefore many centers make an important effort in trying to integrate in the neighborhood. They open their centers in order to become an active part of the neighborhood and to be perceived positively. Indeed, all the centers visited during the study, underlined their good relationships with their neighborhood. In some cases it seemed nevertheless more difficult than in others, mainly due to already existing tensions. This might also be related to the fact, that the

study covers mostly small centers, which are probably not very disturbing and whose operators are not tired of taking initiatives to enter in contact with the neighborhood. “We want the people to come. The people of the territory, the neighbors, the concierge. We believe that inclusion works that way, that our hosts give hospitality to other persons. We have already a very good relationship with the pharmacy and the supermarket next to the house. (...) We did already three or four dinners in order to invite people, since we arrived in June and we are planning a neighborhood party in the courtyard the 13th of June, because that is the World Refugee Day. Because the first mediation, the encounter with the citizens is first the (people of your) staircase, then the house next door etc”. (INT15)

The Servizio Centrale as well confirmed the impression that in most cases the SPRAR centers have no major problems with their neighborhood, although there have been critiques and negative reactions against reception facilities. But these critiques were mainly directed against the big centers, CSPA and CARA and particularly those, which had been created ad hoc in order to host the refugees from the ENA (INT09a). Concerning the success of integration, there are yet no statistics specific to Rome on the successfulness of integration, but throughout the interviews it seemed that there were always a certain number of success-stories next to less successful outcomes. In its 2011 Report the SPRAR showed that about one third of the refugees left the SPRAR centers and were successfully integrated, another third gave up and almost one third had to leave without being successfully integrated because the duration of stay was not extended (Servizio Centrale et al. 2014).

CHAPTER III CONCLUSIONS

3.1. Lessons from the roman system

The case study on roman reception centers took place at a crucial moment for the Italian reception system, as its receptive capacities have been increased importantly in 2014, particularly the SPRAR which has been increased from 3.000 places to almost 20.000. Despite these very positive changes, there is still an important lack of facilities and the reception system remains fragmented, as the SPRAR is not the only type of accommodation.

For Rome, the year 2014 was not only crucial because of the increase of reception places for asylum seekers and refugees, but overall because it joined the SPRAR system. Rome did not only increase its number of reception facilities and places for asylum seekers and refugees, but through the adherence to the SPRAR it committed itself also to adhere to a higher degree of standards than before. This has had several impacts on the management of the reception facilities and the relationship between third sector and public sector. The starting point of the Roman SPRAR is a very heterogeneous group of reception centers, some of them having already long experience and standards which are similar to the SPRAR, and others which only joined this field of activity recently or participated in the Emergenza Nord Africa ENA, providing only very limited services. Therefore, despite huge efforts of the Servizio Centrale, it cannot yet be said that the case of the Roman reception standardization has been successful, as an important part of the centers do not yet comply with the expectations of the guidelines.

Adherence to the SPRAR system has furthermore led to an increase in bureaucratization and professionalization of the reception centers. A shift towards staff with high levels of experience and education has taken place, also in Rome. But not only do reception centers have more bureaucratic tasks to fulfill, as the municipality of Rome is also confronted with a higher administrative burden. In this first year of SPRAR, it seemed to have been overwhelmed by the tasks, entailing important delays in the signing of conventions with the third sector organizations as well as in the transmission of funding, which has caused many difficulties for the third sector organizations that needed this funding to run the center. Furthermore, the centers are struggling with long waiting time for the release of documents and the results of asylum requests. Many asylum seekers wait about a year for an answer, creating feelings of insecurity and potential tensions within the centers.

Finally the Case study has shown the crucial importance of informal networking between third sector organizations in the delivery of reception services. It is one of the tasks of the SPRAR centers to activate other local organizations and services in support to the work of their center. These additional services should mainly be in the field of vocational training, employment and other integrative measures. De facto in Rome it also touches language classes, health services and sometimes even legal services. This network allows the centers to respond better to very diverse individual needs. Furthermore, the support in orientation towards existing structures allows pushing asylum seekers towards autonomy and integration in the urban context.

All in all it can be said, that this study has shown that the introduction of the SPRAR system is possible even in big cities. The standards can be adapted to medium big facilities, but

nevertheless in big cities as well, the aim should be to find solutions to host refugees and asylum seekers in rather small facilities. In this way a rather good reception quality can be assured. The importance of the network around the centers should not be underestimated. Therefore operators need to be trained in order to be able to make the best possible use of this network and to build up their own network. On the administrative side it needs to be underlined that administrative procedures need to be speeded up in order to reduce waiting time. This would make the system more efficient and allow a higher turn-over in the reception facilities, favor integration and also save money.

3.2. Some remarks on the public and private partnership for managing reception in Rome

In the previous sections, we have tried to present the complex picture of the reception system for the beneficiaries of international protection in Rome. This descriptive investigation, even though not comprehensive, has revealed a need for greater integration between public services and third-sector organisations at a local level. In particular, comparing the management of ENA 2011 and the new prospects of the SPRAR system may give an opportunity to pinpoint strengths and shortcomings. Against this backdrop, a key role has been played by the reception centres run by third-sector organisations.

The migrant reception system in Italy, with Rome standing out for its largest capacity (according to what has been stated by the Servizio Centrale), is characterised by a high level of complexity, which can be mainly ascribed to three sets of reasons. First and foremost, there are multiple bodies that contract out and finance the operation of reception facilities (Municipality of Rome, former Province of Rome, Lazio Region, and Ministry of the Interior and European Union). Then, there are different types of facility, which vary in terms of type of people hosted, length of stay allowed by the regulation, and especially the time of their establishment. Besides, even though the SPRAR centres were conceived for the second phase of reception, they are increasingly providing initial reception services. Finally, these centres differ, depending on when they host the migrants, that is to say, at which point in time along their path towards autonomy and status definition (transit/initial reception/second phase of reception facilities and semi-autonomy).

Another complication of the migrant reception system, not only in Rome, but also all over Italy, is linked to the social, political and legislative context, which gave rise to the opening of each type of reception. In this regard, the main distinction is between ordinary and extraordinary measures (i.e., extraordinary CARAs, extraordinary SPRAR centres, tent cities, hotels, farms, former barracks or other places used as makeshift shelters.) This distinction is closely related to the concept of “state of emergency”. When an official or unofficial state of emergency is declared, it is possible to deviate from ordinary procedures, use “exceptional” instruments and not to apply “traditional” assessment criteria, based on ordinary regulatory standards.

As described above, in the city of Rome there have been different types of reception centre. At present, however, the city’s entire reception system is being reorganised, following the expansion of the SPRAR system. Since August 2013 (according to our reconstruction), more than 30 SPRAR ordinary or extraordinary reception centres have been opened in the Province of

Rome. Almost half of them have been built from scratch; the others are the result of the conversion of existing reception facilities (i.e. ENA 2011 Adults, ENA 2011 Minors, both run by the Prefecture of Rome, traditional reception centres of the Immigration Office, reception projects promoted by the ERF, and Dublin Centres). This overhaul has had different implications. Firstly, it changed the configuration of the reception system in Rome, which is now mainly aimed at asylum seekers and at the beneficiaries of humanitarian or international protection. Secondly, at least on a theoretical level, standards and services in the facilities have become more consistent and the gap between supply and demand has been reduced.

On the basis of the perceptions gathered through interviews to the staff working in these reception centres, some remarks can be made on the quality of the service provided and, generally, on the system.

First of all, it is clear that the tasks of social workers have changed because the users of the reception centres have changed and have more integration needs. At the same time, the extension of the services provided by reception centres seems to have made social work easier by overcoming past constraints. In fact, the managing bodies have to offer more support activities (for instance, they should provide local public transportation passes, and, as a result, their guests can move around the city and are no longer bound to inactivity in reception centres). However, not all social workers say that are trained to work within a network. They need training and refresher courses. Moreover, the profile of the reception worker should be defined, particularly in the area of immigration, as the reception worker seems to be a sort of factotum.

This set of reception centres, which can hardly be considered as an “organic” system yet, consists of small facilities (some of which have existed for a very long time), but also of an increasing number of reception centres hosting even more than 80 people. The latter are also the result of the increased capacity requested by the SPRAR Servizio Centrale. One may wonder whether the financial resources have been properly planned between the reception facilities and the local authorities in view of such an expansion of the system. Moreover, will such resources be available at the right time for the investment of the managing bodies, and/or for the flows asylum seekers who are expected to arrive in Rome? A doubt remains, but we do not have elements to claim that the standards established in the SPRAR Manual will have to be guaranteed by the managing bodies and confirmed by public administration (by both the Municipality of Rome and the Servizio Centrale). In fact, social workers report that they have considerable latitude in their daily work and that, in practice, the managing bodies keep some autonomy in deciding how to provide the statutory services (within the available budget). Besides, time is a factor. To favour programmes with asylum seekers in the reception centres, the factors that prevent planning should be tackled (that is, the time it takes the Commissions to decide on asylum cases).

At a more general level, it is feared that an increased capacity and the opening of some reception centres that have agreements with a limited number of third-sector organisations may create autonomy issues for the managing bodies and difficulties in governing the system. Moreover, if all the third-sector organisations chase the best-funded services and provide similar services, how would it be possible to integrate interventions? Without joint planning and governance, the system risks being inefficient and failing to respond to the migrants’ social

needs that are currently unmet. Likewise, the experience of ENA 2011 may indicate that emergency intervention practices are not unusual in Rome. This approach replaces a necessary policy by public bodies. If action is often taken through “practices”, which are easier than “policies”, the fact remains that actions are needed to suitably respond to the increasingly demand for asylum in Italy.

In an interview, the Head of the Immigration Office of the Municipality of Rome, said that the project submitted to the SPRAR in Rome has the provision that some reception centres that have agreements with the Municipality of Rome will continue to report to the same Immigration Office, whereas others will join the SPRAR system. The latter will probably include the Centro Polifunzionale Enea. At any rate, the Municipality of Rome intends to keep a network of reception centres of its own, not under the SPRAR. In fact, it has to respond to the needs of persons other than asylum seekers as well, such as, for example, former minors who leave the reception system for unaccompanied minors and continue to need assistance. According to the Head of the Immigration Office, the reception system proposed to the Ministry of the Interior would consist partly of facilities funded by the SPRAR and partly by other integration services, involving not only the SPRAR, but also the city of Rome in general. Moreover, until now, 80% of funding has come from the local government of the City of Rome and 20% from other governmental and European sources. By contrast, the Head of the Immigration Office estimates that with the implementation of the new SPRAR projects, 60% of funds will come from the local government and 40% from the SPRAR. The ranking published in January 2014 indicated that for 2,581 reception places, for a yearly overall cost of €5,732,207.17, the contribution from the national fund will be equal to €28,497,513.17 and the co-funding from the local authority will amount to €7,234,694.00.

The resources allocated to accommodation-related interventions and to the beneficiaries of international protection account for the bulk of public intervention for foreign nationals in Rome. However, this is also a clear signal that forms of public intervention and welfare mix are heavily based on an emergency approach (mainly for temporary reception centres), without a real social policy, and that complex issues such as assistance to foreign residents are passed on to municipal services. For these reasons, the Roman Municipality recently complained that the local government of the city planned interventions and services for asylum seekers (for example) without involving the political and administrative bodies of the area in which these new services and reception centres are to be set up. The same goes for the sudden evacuation of shanty towns by the police, as the assistance for the displaced persons will then fall on the local Social Service.

Scant attention seems to be paid to the integration between central and municipal services, which may become an obstacle to guaranteeing citizenship rights for all and to promoting the integration of citizens and groups of foreign nationals. From an operational perspective, the cut in public expenditure may be a condition favouring outsourcing as a cost containment option, rather than a consistent application of the subsidiarity principle. However, in terms of planning, this approach may weaken the decision-making power of public institutions, which are increasingly unable to use the financing of services as a source of legitimization and as a negotiation tool (Busso et al. 2013).

Based on this analysis of available interventions and considering the expected increased demand for social services by migrants, it should be highlighted that the growing selectivity in the distribution of financial resources between public, private and non-profit entities, allocated through the mechanism of public tenders, does not seem to be the way to improve the efficiency of the entire system. Nor does it ensure the inclusion and recognition of resident and/or temporary resident immigrants (as is the case for asylum seekers who access the reception system).

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