



*“Improving the role of WB Municipalities  
in managing migration along the EU external borders:  
CEI FPM & records from the MIGRALONA project”*

IMES Conference  
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On behalf of CEI MFAs, meeting in Ohrid (MK) in June 2015, the CEI Executive Secretariat started operations on the governance of migration and established the **CEI Focal Point Migrations** at its HQ in Trieste (Italy).

Upon the Goal 1 - Good Governance of the current CEI PoA, Objective 1.1 focuses on **Processing & exchanging experience on large scale migration:**

“In order to tackle the economic and social impact of current migration on CEI countries, the challenge of organising effective reception capacity for asylum seekers, as well as assistance and active cultural and social integration of migrants should be faced on the basis of a **structural approach** while respecting the CEI Member States’ national competences. ... Among its Member States, the CEI has registered different typologies of migration flows: i.e. the Balkan and Mediterranean Routes of asylum seekers and irregular migrants; but also the massive flow of mostly skilled young people leaving the Western Balkan countries, Italy and Croatia; and the sensitive situation in the CEI Eastern Members (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova). ...”

- ✓ Since the 2015-2016 crisis **the territorial dimension of migration management** went to the top of the international agenda focusing the improvement of methodology for reception and integration of the asylum seekers and refugees.
- ✓ **NALAS** as the association of the SEE Municipalities, **MARRI** as the Regional Centre of the WB6 Ministries of Home Affairs and the **CEI Secretariat** in parallel with other international organizations raised **the issue of the regulatory, financial and operational framework for the best collaboration between the central and the local public administrations and the public-private partnership needed with specialized CSOs for the assistance to the people in need of international protection.**
- ✓ **“Strengthening collaboration between the local and the national tiers in the management of migrations”** is the motto of the project MIGRALONA addressed to illustrate and promote the advantages of a spread-out reception & integration system for the migrants in the WB region.
- ✓ **The action, co-financed by the Italian Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia** and implemented by the Focal Point Migration of the CEI Secretariat, aimed to improve the governance of migration along the Balkan Route in order to prevent new emergency and develop capacity of relevant bodies.

- ✓ *The **MIGRALONA project** overviewed the state of the art of reception and integration of migrants through six workshops in the WB region: over hundred-eighty representatives of relevant ministries, towns and municipalities with their associations, CSOs and local offices of the international organizations rallied for benchmarking their experience with the model of the spread-out assistance of migrants implemented in Italy until 2018.*
- ✓ *The campaign disseminated the rationale and operational features of the **Italian SPRAR Programme** through the witnesses of Mayors and CSOs operators from Friuli Venezia Giulia region.*
- ✓ *An important achievement has been finalized in Skopje (MK) on 14 – 15 March 2018 along with the Regional Workshop closing the MIGRALONA project: participants shared **a Position Paper** with records and conclusions to be further considered by decision makers in the WB6.*

*The followings were highlighted :*

- ✓ *the spread-out reception and integration system became the mainstream of Italian migration policy through **decades of negative experience** on the impact and costs of concentration centres;*
- ✓ *the **actors of the system** remain the State, the Municipalities and the CSOs providing specialized assistance; third parties, like the FVG Region does, can provide side support for integrative or pilot actions;*
- ✓ *the **operational lines of the Italian system are two, top-down and bottom-up**: the top-down approach is managed directly by the Ministry of Home Affairs through the **Prefectures**, the bottom-up was the SPRAR programme where the **Municipalities** were invited to start their own projects funded and monitored by the Ministry of Home Affairs.*
- ✓ *the **SPRAR model** creates new work places in the Municipalities, where implemented, and demand driven jobs for legal advice, translators, cultural mediators, psychologists, etc. Moreover the Municipalities voluntarily engaged in hospitality benefit of **financial incentives**.*

- ✓ **The closing of the Balkan Route in 2016** brought to reduced figures of people entering the WB region, whereas migration within and from the region remains meaningful.
- ✓ The migration management mostly **stalled at the stage of emergency time**. Thus the costs of assistance have very little return to the involved communities. Similar conditions feature the **reception of WB returnees** too.
- ✓ **Humanitarian facilities** were established with funding by the EU, international organizations and bilateral donors. Effective reception centres for asylum seekers waiting for status are existing and financial support is delivered to status refugees. But **planned cooperation with the bodies representing the territory is lacking**.
- ✓ **State support** to hosting municipalities is weak and mostly on case by case basis. Local governments are querying on the fact that **the costs they bore for migrants assistance are restored in delay or not at all**. No incentives from the relevant bodies dealing with migration are available for Municipalities.
- ✓ Whereas the role of international organizations is generally praised by the State authorities, there is evidence of a **low development of locally rooted CSOs and social enterprises**.

- ✓ *Until 2017 the slow pressure of new comers was an opportunity to upgrade the regulatory system and to strengthen the awareness and capacity of PA at central and local level and of CSOs and the public at large.*
- ✓ *Moving from humanitarian aid into resilient integration of migrants, should be a **WB topic**: the mainstream is the collaboration of the central level with the local governments.*
- ✓ *To cope with the **demographic decline** from the WB region, planned actions should be delivered for feeding the resilience of communities impacted by the arrival of migrants by leveraging on skilled CSOs through improved public-private partnership.*
- ✓ *The **collaboration** between state and local public administrations can be fostered by the experience of civil society organizations.*
- ✓ *A system for **assessing costs** should be established by standardizing current average costs.*
- ✓ *The **hosting Municipalities** can be awarded with extraordinary funding per hosted capita.*
- ✓ *To face the **problem of irregular people** wandering the region, it could be considered to provide them, vulnerable groups in particular, with legal identity and related visibility beyond the obligations of international conventions.*
- ✓ *To improve the rate of RAS willing to stay in the WB region, the **local attractiveness** can be improved with measures for social inclusion through labour and entrepreneurship.*
- ✓ ***Twinning projects** should be enhanced for exchanging good practices.*

- ✓ *The interest raised by the MIGRALONA project advocates for the design of a **regional pilot action**, where relevant State administrations together with good-willing recipient Municipalities supported by skilled CSOs could experience the methodology of spread-out reception and integration by implementing concrete activities on the field.*
- ✓ *A draft **project concept** is available.*
- ✓ ***Actions for fund-raising** at international level are going-on by initiative of NALAS & MARRI and are supported by GIZ.*





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**Thank you!**

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