Montreal, 21-23 May 2014

BUILDING INTERCULTURAL CITIES
ITALY

Before the Nineties, there was no law on immigration or any intercultural framework. The immigration juridical framework is influenced by political propaganda. From a country of emigration to a country of immigration...
1989: Law for foreign children at school
1990: Martelli Law (first law on migration issues)
1992: Law on citizenship (ius sanguinis)
1998: Turco-Napolitano law (right to school and health)
2002: Bossi-Fini law (illegal migrant persecution)
ACTION: the Regional level

In 2003 and 2004, Region Emilia-Romagna signed the first regional law for immigration and cohesion, focusing on social, cultural and participatory integration.
Cities and municipalities are main stages where social change calls for a new governance. In 2001, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia is one of the first in Italy to open a Centre for the Development of Intercultural Relation.
REGGIO EMILIA

Inhabitants: 172,525

Whom foreigners: 31,500

Percentage: 18% // Regional: 11% // National: 5%

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REGGIO EMILIA

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1 1868 from Europe, 1 1097 Africa, 7500 from Asia, 950 from South America
Countries (about 150 nationalities): Morocco, Albania, Romania, China, Ukraine, Egypt, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, Nigeria

PEOPLE
ANALYSIS

Demographic situation is variable. There is a copresence of two processes: new arrivals and cultural minorities getting rooted in the Italian society. How building a community?

Dealing with interculturality means dealing with process.

Contrary to people’s beliefs and perceptions, many migrants come also from Europe. Interaction is not an issue concerning only the relation between locals and foreigners, but also among different migrants’ communities, not isolated.

Such variety and complexity imply the use of mediation strategies not to reduce migrants’ cultural resilience, but to make them more participants in building the community life.

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INTERCULTURAL CITY

In 2008, the process to enter in the Intercultural Cities Program enables to compare the impact of its policies at the European level.

INVESTMENT:

In 2011, strong investment of the Municipality in intercultural policies with the creation of the Mondinsieme Foundation – Intercultural Centre of the City of Reggio Emilia.

NETWORKING:

- Since 2012, collaboration with Japan Foundation
- Since 2011, collaboration with US Embassy in Rome
- Since 2011, agreement with the Kingdom of Morocco
- Since 2011, creation of the Italian Network of Intercultural Cities

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Mission

Work on integration as a bidirectional process in a cross-cultural perspective and on life experience: migrant is not someone who needs assistance, but someone who has something to offer to the society.

Vision

Focus on the individual and on life experience.
If cultural diversity is considered as a value, we focus on relational need. Favour the process of social construction (construction of a new sense starting from what people have in common). Controlled subsidiarity against autoreferential approach.
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Due to migration and global mobility, there is a need to increase the value and the impact of diversity and narrative capital. This involves enhancing the intercultural métissage of youngsters with Italian and foreign origins.

It is important to prevent and fight any kind of racism, discrimination, and exclusion.

Advocating women initiatives and cooperation in intercultural education and fighting any kind of cultural and religious extremism.

Supporting active participation of all the people, Italian or foreign, in cultural, economic, political, and social activities of the city.

Promoting intercultural management skills of decision makers, leaders, operators, and workers of public and private bodies.

Increasing the value and the impact of diversity and narrative capital due to migration and global mobility.
ACTIVITIES

Services provided by the office of cohesion and social security: the register of apartment blocks, education in neighbourly relations, the wide-ranging zoning plan, refugee asylum-seeker, the Italian language-teaching network, health access.

Services provided by the Intercultural Centre: Intercultural strategy design, work on involvement of associations, on education at school, on cultural diversity and diversity advantage promotion, on languages of origins.
THE ROLE OF PARTICIPATION

What is important are enhancing intercultural métissage between youngsters, Italian and second generations.

- Language courses for Senegalese, Tamil, Arabic children and women
- Enabling knowledge of children education institution for migrant families
- Training for police
- Diversity advantage in public and private companies
- Enhancement of their global network
- Health services
- Safety at work

Focus Group and meetings for project on:

Involvement of 41 associations.

Foreigner are not anymore target, but makers of the process of integration now becoming more collective. From minorities to community thanks to the

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A CASE STUDY

Election of the representative of associations: a young lady with Arabic origins had been voted by first generation of migrants, Italians, and youngsters.
The role of education

School is the place where practicing cultural diversity and action against discrimination and racism, enhancing the role of the students as active citizens that respect, include, and meet other people.
PRACTICES

Involvement of student association
Intercultural Network of High School
Intercultural educational workshops
Spring Against Racism
Arabic language courses and visit study to Morocco
Tutoring in mother tongue to prevent scholastic failure
Activities to facilitate school/families mediation
International events involving: Unesco, RKF, US Embassy in Rome, …

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Involvement of student association
Intercultural Network of High School

INTERNATIONAL EVENT: MUNDINISEME

Practices
The role of media, art, and leisure among people with migration background is an incredible source of knowledge and a potential for improvement for the community they live in. The narrative capital of people with migration background is an integral part of building intercultural cities.
PRACTICES

- Cross cultural media project and strong use of social media
- Inside/Out, MultiWalks: street-art and youth generations
- Women’s Africa at the Civic Museum
- Anti-discrimination campaign
- Sport to reduce exclusion
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PRACTICES
OBSTACLES

- Budgetary constraints for spending review and financial cuts
- Political relations and coordination with other departments of the municipality
- Rumors and discriminating propaganda
- Strengthening networking in order to build partnerships able to attract resources (financial)

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Municipality

Political relations and coordination with other departments of the municipality

Budgetary constraints for spending review and financial cuts
STRATEGIES IN PERSPECTIVE

Intercultural approach focusing on cultural and educational needs of communities

Enhancing networking at local, regional, national, and international level

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Citizenship: thinking that the citizenship change people’s status is wrong, what really counts is the awareness of belonging to a territory and its community; such awareness has to arise in both the local community and in the cultural minorities.

Political Participation: there is at least one candidate with foreign origins in all the electoral list for the administrative election on May 25, 2014.
The story of Nida, the story of Xhesika, the story of second generation, the story of a generation already Intercultural.

Tomorrow

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