

## Integrating Cities II

### Workshop 3 “A new home: the role of housing in integration”

Monday 5 November 2007

Rapporteur: Sergio Urbani

Moderator: John England

Speakers:

- . Claudio Bossi, *President of “Lo Cordata”, Italy*
  - . Hubert Krieger, *CLIP / European Foundation for Improvement of Working and Living Conditions*
  - . Pere Picorelli Riutord, *Cataland Land Institute, Government of Catalonia Spain / European Liaison Committee for Social Housing (CECODHAS)*
  - . Gabriele Rabaiotti, *Department of Urban Design and Planning, Milan Polytechnic*
  - . Gianni Verga, *Commissioner for Housing Policy, City of Milan*
  - . Ali Rabarison, *Director Department International Relations, for Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), The Netherlands*
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The workshop illustrated the point of view of researchers, public policies experts as well as case studies, mainly referred to the Italian and the Spanish regions, on housing policies dedicate to the inclusion of immigrants. All speakers had a very operational approach; the result was a pragmatic discussion, that provided to the audience lots of ideas and of interesting messages. Among these, some were widely shared and some other represented different positions on a topic.

The key shared messages and learning form the workshop were:

- “where something happens, there is a partnership”; a partnership can be:
  - o public – private (the typical PPP scheme)
  - o public – public, with different level of public Institutions (local, regional and national level) working jointly on a specific task

The management of partnership schemes requires the development of new professional skills and capabilities, i.e. to clearly define roles, duties and benefits, to negotiate complex agreements and monitor their execution
- “understanding and measuring the impact of policies”
  - o starting from a definition of “quality of services”
  - o providing quantitative measures (indicators) of such a quality
  - o monitoring and, most important, benchmarking services provision
- “there is no integration without a place for integration”
  - o integration improves the life standards for the whole community: in this social housing presents significant overlaps with urban renewal, or at least represent a relevant component of it
  - o there is a preference for small and scattered brown field projects
  - o public spaces are the key diver for urban and social quality

- “from traditional instruments to new instruments”
  - o the most common traditional instruments are subsidies and tax incentives
  - o the leakage of public resources highlights the relevance of new instruments such as easing the access to finance (i.e. mortgages), PPP schemes o attract private resources, networking efforts to share enabling know-how

Messages and learning representing different positions:

- “Allocation policies: QUOTA vs NON-QUOTA based”
  - o QUOTA based allocation policies may discriminate citizens in their access to housing, a situation not acceptable in the European Union regulatory framework
  - o NON-QUOTA based policies may not be effective in preventing the so called “ghetto” effect
  - o One interesting suggestion was to address policies not only to the most vulnerable citizens but also to increase retention of middle-class population in critical areas
- “Ownership vs rented housing”
  - o It is commonly accepted that housing ownership increases inclusion in the community and attachment to the neighbourhood. Nevertheless different social targets may demand different proposals: many migrants consider their staying as temporary

An optimal housing policy for inclusion of immigrants should additionally balance different approaches and measures:

- voluntary – compulsory
- hard – soft measures
- public responsibility, immigrants responsibility

An optimal policy should also be flexible (supporting bottom-up initiatives), holistic, adaptive and diverse. Possible needs and answers are complex and in evolution; for this reason the discussion focussed then more on tools of general application, such as:

- providing each neighbourhood with one-stop-shops for immigrants
- set clear complain procedures
- set indicators, as said, to measure the quality of services
- monitor the evolution of such indicators

Other interesting indications coming form the workshop where:

- in case of complex project grants should be provided together with advise, as in Spain
- job opportunities and housing opportunities are equally relevant
- existing public real estate can be used as a source of value to support new housing schemes, as in Milan