Smart Governance: urban regeneration and integration policies in Europe. Turin and Malmö case studies

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Abstract— Integration policies point out not only the objective of social cohesion but also the need to strengthen foreign community leadership, so that they can actively contribute to local socio - economic development. This implies a considerable degree of coordination between the public bodies, the communities, the social and economic operators. Local governments find it more and more difficult to manage the substantial immigration phenomena by efficient integration policies. The topic of integration of the foreign community, though part of Europe 2020 Strategy as concerns an inclusive growth, is not widely treated by smart cities, more inclined to work on smart and sustainable growth. The paper proposes some examples that can provide local authorities insights for the adoption of integration policies within an integrated development process and it illustrates the case studies of "Barriera di Milano" regeneration program in Turin (Italy) and of some neighbourhood regenerations in Malmö (Sweden). In particular, the paper discusses some tools of smart governance applied to urban regeneration interventions, such as community empowerment actions within a strategic planning process and community involvement methods through the practise of living labs and urban farming. The smart aspect of the operations consists of the adoption of integration policies functional not only to promote social cohesion but also to promote local economic development through immigrant community empowerment.

Index Terms— integration policies, living labs, local economic development, multiethnic society, smart city, smart governance, strategic planning, urban regeneration, urban farming

1 Introduction

Enrichissons-nous de nos différences mutuals(Paul Valéry)

The substantial migration of our time emphasizes the instability of physical, political and cultural boundaries as traditionally conceived and contribute to delineate an inherently multi-ethnic society [1].

Cities reflect the most impressive changes in sociodemographic and economic dynamics and are the places where arbitrariness and unfairness in wealth distribution between the "winners" and "losers" of globalization [2] emerge more strongly.

If on one hand immigration involves the spread of cultural diversity [3], on the other it shows public bodies' difficulties in managing the necessary integration policies: low levels of employment of immigrant workforce, growing unemployment and high rates of over-qualified immigrants, social exclusion, disparity in academic performance, tension on the part of indigenous communities and widespread poverty of many foreign communities are the most obvious indicators of issues which are still unresolved and pressing in many European countries [2], [4].

Integration policies are inscribed in Europe 2020 Strategy targets for inclusive growth [5], [6], [7], [8].

Furthermore, the recognition of cultural identity and diversity as values for the European Union is not only the basis for a more integrated society but also the starting point for concrete processes of economic and social development [4], [9].

To cope with the epochal changes and correlated urban problems, for about twenty years the term smart city has been debated.

The term smart city, from the first definition of a purely "digital" city [10], [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], [16], [17], [18], [19], over time has evolved into a "holistic" vision that covers different fields of interest: environmental protection, economy, mobility, governance, participatory policies, inclusion and social innovation [20], [21], [22], [23], [24], [25], [26], [27], [28].

City and community are conceived as closely interrelated organisms, so the development of the land cannot be separated from the enhancement of the human system that inhabits it.

To support the evolution of European cities towards smart cities [29], the European Community has implemented various strategies of governance, such as specific forms of financing [30], [31] including "Smart Cities and Communities" focus as part of "Horizon 2020" program [32], [33] and policies aimed at promoting collaboration between Member States [34]: according to these instruments of governance, the main operating fields for smart cities relate to sustainable growth including urban mobility, energy efficient districts, integrated processes, open data,... [35], [36] and to smart growth in the sense of strengthening stakeholders' and citizens' knowledge [37], [38], [39].

The operational areas related to inclusive growth with particular reference to integration policies for foreign communities are less explicit [40], [41].

The issue of inclusion is one of the matters Public Administrators cannot ignore, especially because of the huge diffusion of urban segregation and social exclusion areas which

lead Public Bodies to deal with the widespread presence of migrant communities and might offer strategic opportunities for urban regeneration.

This paper discusses some case studies in which smart governance procedures have been adopted in urban regenerations.

The examined contexts are characterized by a significant presence of foreigners and are heavily degraded from an environmental, social and economic point of view: the cases of Barriera di Milano neighborhood in Turin, Italy, and of some neighborhoods in Malmö, Sweden, are illustrated. The smartness of the interventions is based on the adoption of integration policies conceived not only to promote social cohesion but also to enhance local economic development through the strengthening of immigrant communities.

The first case discusses community empowerment tools as part of a strategic planning process. In the second case, community involvement practices are examined, with a focus on living lab methodologies and the development of systematic practices of urban farming, both on the purpose of physical redevelopment, increasing the sense of belonging to the place, stimulating resilience and self-sufficiency in the community.

The paper notes that efficient integration policies require a substantial effort by Public Administrations, in terms of networking with foreign communities, social and economic actors; it also outlines some issues related to the possible use of urban farming as a means of integration in urban regeneration processes and proposes some possible insights.

2 SMART GOVERNANCE TOOLS FOR INTEGRATION

2.1 Strategic Planning

The evolutionary process towards smart cities, due to the complexity of urban problems, requires the adoption of a strategic, planned approach by public bodies in order to rethink the city according to a long-term vision and an integrated approach to environmental, economic and social development [29].

Moreover, the need to define the most effective tools with respect to the consolidated programming models refers to the concept of strategic planning. The "strategic planning" is a process of planning, generally held by institutional or economic bodies, by which the objectives of a system are defined and the means are identified compatibly with the existing resources [42], [43], [44], [45].

The peculiarity introduced by strategic planning, pioneered by several European governments for some time and in Italy for about a decade [46], is the innovative approach compared to traditional planning, characterized by a sectoral approach to urban development and generally based on top - down logics: strategic planning on the one hand aims to address social, environmental and economic issues in an integrated way and on the other assumes, for the concrete pursuit of goals, a greater dialectic with traders by reducing authoritative attitudes of the Public Bodies in fa-

vour of negotiation with stakeholders [47], [48].

2.2 Living labs

For papers accepted for publication, it is essential that the electronic version of the manuscript and artwork match the hardcopy exactly! The quality and accuracy of the content of the electronic material submitted is crucial since the content is not recreated, but rather converted into the final published version.

All papers in IJSER Transactions are edited electronically. A final submission materials check list, transmission and compression information, and general publication materials can be found at: The concept of living lab (living laboratory) has been known for some years now and is widespread in Europe [49],[50].

A living lab is a forum for research and innovation, in which end-users' active involvement allows the codesigning of new services, products and social infrastructures [49].

A living lab is characterized by some distinctive features such as open innovation [11], [51], leading role of the end user, application of research to real-life, economic interest of the partners and sustainability of processes and products [50].

In particular, a Living Lab is an explicit call for competition: the dialogue between the parties is not perceived as a mere occasion of conciliation and mediation but rather as an exchange in a real "arena" where the parties voluntarily aspire to hegemony over the others. The concept of codesign is therefore understood as a "polyphony" of voices, each one different as for extraction and purposes, who meet and turn antagonism into agonism, conflict into constructive dispute [52], [53].

Living labs have a wide range of applications concerning design-promotion-production of services and products in the field of energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, ICT, social innovation and integration, and are often supported by information technologies. Regardless of the scope of interest, the value of the living lab in integration policies is inherent in the multi-disciplinary approach aimed at achieving both "social innovation", in terms of production of innovative goods and services, and "socialized innovation" in terms of empowerment of the community beneficiary of the services [54].

2.3 Urban Farming

Today, many immigrant communities are concentrated in urban areas characterized by widespread socio-economic and environmental degradation and by many abandoned areas with a high potential for reuse; moreover, many immigrants often come from rural contexts, bringing in the host country a possible background of expertise in the field.

A possible field of study for a Public Administration wanting to implement integration strategies related to urban regeneration may be promoting urban agriculture [55], [56], [57], [58], [59], [60], [61], [62] in multi-ethnic areas to be redeveloped, by empowering the specificities of the different communities, their spirit of initiative and entrepre-

neurial ability and then by interpreting cultural diversity as a resource for local economy development.

Urban and peri-urban agricultural practices allow, in addition to the environmental and social vantages [59], [63], [64], [65] also benefits in terms of local economic development [66], [67], [68].

Within integration policies, urban farming can be functional to promote a more sustainable system of production, distribution and consumption of food as well as to stimulate increasing awareness and competitiveness of foreigners, thanks to the development of more structured professional skills in the field of food production [65].

3 Two case studies

3.1 Strategic planning and integration policies: "Barriera di Milano" (Turin) regeneration

The case study is particularly representative of an effective strategic planning approach, in which an essential chapter of the regeneration program is dedicated to integration policies.

Since World War II, Turin has been the focus of a substantial flow of migration: first, from southern Italy because of the employment opportunities offered by the established industrial structure [69] and in recent decades from the "global South" [70].

Barriera di Milano is a popular district in Turin, where over the years a multi-cultural human landscape has gradually replaced the native community.

Today, Barriera di Milano is one of the most attractive places for foreign communities thanks to the favourable conditions for the settlement, including affordable housing offers and a good supply of public services [71].

Despite the inherent problems of integration, the district is heavily experienced by the community: through the program "Urban - Barriera di Milano", the City Council is investing to enhance urban quality, attractiveness and economic competitiveness in the site [72], [73], [74].

"Urban – Barriera di Milano" is a plan concerning 34 coordinated and integrated initiatives, financed through the public and private resources. The interventions, undertaken since 2011, must be completed and reported by the end of December 2014.

The program, fully sponsored and prepared by the Administration of Turin, is based on three strategic areas of intervention: "Axis 1, physical - environmental" [75] concerning the redevelopment of public space; "Axis 2 - employment" [76] concerning the improvement of local economy and employability; "3 axis, socio - cultural" [77] concerning the strengthening of cultural and social cohesion.

The peculiarity of the intervention is the recognition of immigrant community as strategic to promote local economic development. The program intends to encourage greater participation of immigrants in local socio-economic processes, through a more competitive professional background.

In detail, integration policies are included in "axis 2 employment" and "axis 3, socio-cultural".

In "Axis 2", among several initiatives, Extra-Titoli in Barriera project offers foreign residents in Turin support to obtain in Italy recognition of academic qualifications and professional competence achieved abroad [78]; Occupabile a Barriera project is a set of tools and services to support the qualification of human capital and promote the employment of Italian and foreign resident population in the area, with particular reference to women [79].

In "3 axis" initiatives for strengthening cultural and social cohesion are enabled: Promozione della cittadinanza attiva, integrazione e coesione sociale project works to promote experiences in serving the community by vulnerable groups of the population, including the elderly, young people, foreigners and to enhance space re-appropriation, interpersonal relations, mutual understanding and integration between old and new residents, through activities possibly animated by the citizens themselves [80], [81].

3.2 Local policies for integration: Malmö

Sweden has been characterized by impressive phenomena of immigration for the last few decades [82].

In Malmö, fifty years of substantial immigration have profoundly altered the urban landscape, defining a city profile dotted with large areas of segregation and social exclusion: the disparity in terms of access to rights - home, work, education - results in an explosive trouble in many neighborhoods and turns into real actions of urban warfare [82], [83].

Several areas, historically inhabited by the working class, now increasingly multiethnic and strongly degraded (Augustenborg, Rosengård, Herrgarden, Lindängen, Seved, Segevång, Holma-Kroksbäck, ...), are now the massive scope of urban regeneration operations undertaken by the City Council [84].

In these contexts, City Administration has implemented important strategies in the field of migration management. The peculiarity of the approach consists especially of adopting a "multi-level" governance model, which provides:

- adherence to international cooperation projects in the field of integration [85], [86];
- network of initiatives at the municipal level aimed at combating socio-cultural discrimination [82], [87], [88];
- activation of synergies among local municipal representatives, migrant associations, NGOs, in a process of consultation among the social partners at the neighbourhood scale. At the local level in particular, the city of Malmö has adopted a policy strongly focused on integration and community involvement in public decision-making. For this purpose, five-year programs (Områdesprogrammen) were adopted in different neighbourhoods [89], [90]. In these programs, different initiatives have been launched to stimulate social innovation and investments in the physical environment and the socio-economic structure, through various methodologies among which there are living labs and urban farming.

Community involvement: the living labs

The living labs initiatives undertaken by Malmö Administration are very different, because of the extensive experience of the city in adopting such methods [91].

Particularly interesting for this paper are mainly those ones conceived to regenerate the local socio-economic context and trigger new forms of participation, integration and entrepreneurial initiative in the conflicting areas.

In these cases, information technologies are used as interactive tools able to convey expressive vocations of users and are functional to build a greater sense of belonging of the residents to their neighbourhood.

An interesting case is shown by Rosengård neighbourhood, currently recognized as the symbol of immigration and urban segregation [83], [87], [92], [93], [94], [95].

"Sustainable Rosengård" Program sponsored by the City Council, proposes a concrete improvement of environmental quality and housing, along with the enhancement of social and economic attractiveness in the district [95], [96], [97].

The Living Lab "The Neighborhood" active in the district of Rosengård and Fosie, coordinated by the University and with the participation of the City Council and a number of economic operators, is responsible for creating a platform for co-production of services and social innovation, aimed at involving foreign community and stakeholders in developing investments in the two districts [98].

Several projects have been implemented through the Living Lab.

"Parapolis" project has explored the ways by which citizens' participation in urban regeneration processes can be implemented through the use of computer technology: through workshops, ideas and suggestions were collected from citizens and stakeholders in relation to the transformation of public space and then turned into visual representations [99].

"URBLove" project was aimed at building a digital platform in which young people could hypothesize interactive routes in the neighbourhood and invite others to explore it. The aim was to let the younger know unexplored areas and to involve them through "gaming" [100].

With "Neighbourhood Technology" project, MKB social housing cooperative has redeveloped several residential buildings and public spaces, in synergy with the company ICT-Fi Do, Rosengård residents and the youth organization RGRA [101].

With "Hållbara Hilda" project, the Hållbara Hilda social housing cooperative has activated a shared path with the locals for the renewal of a number of housing estates, in order to ensure a better quality of living and reduce environmental impact [102].

With "Herrgards Kvinnoförening", initiative the women's association "Herrgards Kvinnoförening" has been improved, in order to be more specialized in the production of handicrafts and local food with the aim to provide hospitality for war refugees: in this way, on one hand the association plays an important role in terms of social inclusion, thanks to refugee involvement in daily activities in which

they might acquire and exercise the basics of the Swedish language, and on the other it is stimulated to enhance its entrepreneurial spirit to become more competitive in the catering and textile industries [103].

Stakeholders networking: the role of urban farming

The peculiarity of urban farming practices undertaken in regeneration interventions by the City Council is the systemic approach which goes beyond the reuse of single plots on volunteer purposes to develop economically significant business projects on the neighbourhood scale, through a coordinated design of areas to be devoted to agriculture and complex networking among stakeholders (foreign communities, housing associations and NGOs).

The scope is to strengthen the sense of social cohesion and to provide the community with the tools for their own selfsustaining and for employment.

In particular, the City Council has set up in Seved, Lindängen and Rosengård, a structured network of actors involved in urban farming - land-owners (City council and local housing cooperatives (MKB), urban farming organizations ("Stadsodling i Malmö"), residents. The locally grown crops today are distributed in bars and restaurants of different districts [104], [105], [106].

In Rosengård, where a special training center in the food sector was set up, the initiatives of community involvement concerned mostly the weakest, that is women: an initiative of business start - up of immigrant women in the food sector has been undertaken in synergy with organizations and social enterprises [107], [108].

4 Conclusions

In a future when physical and cultural boundaries should be less and less stringent, a challenge for a smart city is to push cultural differences to excel to actively contribute to a smart, sustainable and inclusive development. The role of foreign communities in local economic development in particular is absolutely crucial.

There are different smart governance procedures that can be taken to implement effective integration policies: from a strategic planning process which includes empowering community projects, like in Turin, to community involvement tools through living labs or urban farming, like in Malmö.

All models imply significant coordination effort by the public, which must play a complex role in mediating with traders and the community [109].

If the activation of a strategic planning process or a living lab require articulated procedures, the use of systematic practices of urban farming in order to promote local economic development and integration incur even higher difficulty from both cultural and procedural points of view.

From a cultural point of view, the issue of immigrants involvement in agricultural practices is very "delicate" because today agriculture is more and more populated by foreign workers, a socially and economically disadvan-

taged category, with low bargaining power, often outside the regular and full respect of rights, according to a widespread production system based on the use of labor of seasonal and low cost immigrants [110].

Moreover, from a procedural point of view, it would be necessary for a public body to operate a "change of scale" and go beyond the vision of a single urban garden that, though socially meaningful, due to its circumscribed nature does not contribute to the strengthening of a wider system of benefits and interests related at least to the neighbourhood scale.

Then, a policy extended to the territorial scale and coordinated at the institutional level, aimed at strengthening self-sufficiency and resilience of local realities, through the welding together of the small manufacturers, retailers, small and mid-sized businesses, artisans and professionals rooted in the territory [111] would seem more effective.

From an operational point of view, for a Public Body it would then be essential to define an overall project concerning urban areas to be dedicated to urban farming, to promote training activities for immigrants in synergy with agricultural cooperatives and with professional institutes, to stimulate entrepreneurial initiatives in synergy with social enterprises.

Finally, to better enhance immigrants' professional skills, a mapping of the main backgrounds, skills and cultural specificities of the various foreign communities could be useful to focus on the potential of employment and address the consequent occupational policies. This objective requires a considerable organizational effort that goes beyond the simple "quantitative" enumeration of immigration and digresses in the ground of "qualitative" profile of the foreign communities. It would be essential to enable complex and multidisciplinary analysis, from statistical evaluations to urban sociology, which require an objective financial commitment by public bodies but which could contribute to a more coherent framework of related initiatives.

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