Governing Urban Diversity:
Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today's Hyper-diversified Cities

Governance arrangements and initiatives in Milan, Italy

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Contents

1   Introduction

This report aims at assessing initiatives, actions and organisations focussing on diversity in Milan (Italy), and their governance arrangements. Barberi*s et al.* (2014 analysed interviews to stakeholders and national and local policy documents. The authors maintained that a discourse on diversity in Milan (and in Italy in general) was quite fragmented, mostly focussed on reducing negative effects of diversity on social cohesion and secondarily on supporting its social participation and inclusion against inequality.This also means that a discourse on recognition and appreciation of diversity and its potential positive role is much less present. Barberis *et al.* (2014) highlighted that, even though there was no evidence of a general and strategic discourse on diversity, nonetheless there were common trends, building up an integrationist approach (that was usually labelled as 'intercultural' in policy discourses and interviews)[1] more implicitly and incrementally than by design.

At the same time, the analysis of policy strategies and of the governance structure of diversity-related urban policies showed that there is quite a wide scope for bottom-up action coming from civil society. However, innovative practices may be hard to generalize and spread, given a problem of coordination among actors, and the lack of resources dedicated to this policy area.
This was our starting point to find and analyse initiatives that focus on diversity.

First, identifying measures and actors that were best examples of the main trends mentioned above (i.e.: grassroots activism and the role of civil society; integrationist approach) – and this was not so hard, since many interviewees contacted for Barberis *et al.* (2014) started exactly from specific initiatives to epitomize their view on diversity (as a consequence of a poorly generalized discourse on diversity itself).

Second, identifying innovative actions that start to go beyond existing arrangements, providing potential path breaks and new developments for the next generations of diversity policy in the urban area of Milan. In particular, those trying to create new governance arrangements; elaborating on long-term sustainability; providing a more nuanced discourse within or beyond the present integrationist and residual discourse on diversity.

We focussed in particular on neighbourhood-based initiatives that take or took place in the Northern part of Milan (to a large extent, corresponding to districts 2, 9, and 8). Though, to focus on ripple effects of new arrangements, we also accounted for some city-level initiatives that may potentially and positively affect practices of living together also in the case study neighbourhoods.
The aim of this chapter is to analyse ten initiatives that meet the above-mentioned criteria, by answering two main research questions:

- How is diversity conceptualised within the governance arrangements? In particular, we focussed on the relation with the general Italian integrationist approach (that usually considers more the negative dimensions of diversity, and the challenges to social cohesion), and innovations (if any) going towards a more complex view of diversity, in terms of acknowledgement of intersectionality and hyper-diversity (Tasan-Kok *et al.* 2013);
- Which are the main factors influencing success or failure of the governance arrangements? Given the outcome of Barberis *et al.* (2014), we focussed mainly on

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[1] For this reason, following Barberis *et al.* (2014), in this report we will use the terms "integrationist" and "intercultural" as equivalent when talking about diversity policy in Milan. So, we will refer to a "intercultural/integrationist" discourse.

sustainability and inter-institutional ties – an issue that proved to be sensitive for many interviewees.

Summing up the results brought about a third and transversal research question:

- Can we identify new ideas for *innovative policies* and governance concepts?

To answer these questions, we have analysed documents (including projects, websites, press releases, newspaper articles), and interviews with 14 privileged witnesses operating within the selected ten initiatives, with different roles (promoters, financiers, executors). For the case of 'City of Sun – Friends of the Trotter Park', also field notes from a 6-months observation were used. In that case, fieldwork was conducted by Sarissa Napolitano.

The initiatives were selected within a long list, that was put together by collecting worthy of interest cases, i.e. those more likely to influence future policy trends on diversity, because more debated in the public discourse and/or producing new governance arrangements and/or allowing potentially a longer-term sustainability:

(a) in policy strategy documents (e.g. in the Municipal Programme for Roma, Sinti and Travellers 2012-2015; in the Plan for the Welfare Development of the Municipality of Milan 2012-2014; in the programme of the candidate for mayor that won the elections in 2011);

(b) in interviews with the 15 officials, policy-makers, policy strategists, members of business organisations, local in-migrant associations and other NGOs conducted for Barberis *et al.* (2014);

(c) by the members of the Italian Policy Platform, that were explicitly inquired on this issue.

As we said in Barberis *et al.* (2014), there is a predominance of attention on social cohesion, and this has an effect on the type of measures selected, that results also in the structure of the chapter: the governance arrangements are presented in section 2, divided according to their main target (social cohesion in 2.1; social mobility in 2.2; economic performance in 2.3). The first one is largely predominant on the other two, thus it will be much longer, including more cases. This does not mean that measures with a main focus on social cohesion do not include an attention on social mobility and economic performance, but that the two latter are secondary in their structuring. And also, this does not mean that there are no initiatives connecting diversity and economic performance (just to mention two that came out in interviews for Barberis *et al.* (2014), e.g. Latinoamericando, a yearly Southern American festival; or training for to-be immigrant entrepreneurs set-up by Formaper, a spin-off of the Chamber of Commerce in Milan). Though, they were not considered as answering the above-mentioned criteria as the ten we report below. Finally, section 3 will summarize the main results, before wrapping up in the conclusions (section 4).

2   Governance arrangements

2.1   Arrangements targeting social cohesion

G.Lab – Citizenship Laboratory

Strategy, focus and organisation
G.Lab – where 'G' stands for Generations and refers to new generations from an immigrant background – was an information and guidance desk and a project lab. G.Lab has been opened by the Municipality of Milan in collaboration with G2 Network – the most important local and national association of youth from an immigrant background in Italy. The Municipality provided

facilities, while G2 Network provided the staff. So it is a city-based initiave, with its HQ in the city centre.
G.Lab started in March 2013, and the experiment came to an end in December 2013, even though with the intention to extend its duration longer.

As a front-office, it was aimed at supporting youth and families from an immigrant background, teachers, social workers and other relevant stakeholders to favour access of these new generations to local services; naturalization procedures; study and job opportunities. It provided information, but also guidance, going with the young claimants and/or with their family to the relevant office, e.g. to apply for citizenship at the Municipal Register Office (Uccella, 2013). As a lab, it was aimed at promoting diversity and social mix as a value, i.e. providing an arena where to discuss and share the condition of being in-betweeners (Foreigners-Italians), and strengthening the collaboration between the Municipality and G2 Network in the organisation of events, projects and initiatives.

G.Lab was located within the Informagiovani (Youth information centre) in the very heart of the city, to avoid a "*ghettoizing targeting*" and to provide a "*symbolic impact, giving a new life and a new image*" to Informagiovani itself (respondent: Key official – Municipality of Milan, Mayor's Office). When G-Lab will be reopend (there is a competitive call for NGOs underway in June)[2], it is planned to move it into the new 'House of Rights', where different initiatives for anti-discrimination and promotion of rights and diversity will be located.

G.Lab was funded by the Ministry of Labour and Welfare within an experimental programme, agreed with the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) and with the Municipalities of Rome, Milan and Prato. The aim was to assess immigrants' needs, produce good practices to meet them, and build a kit to transfer good practices to other four "tester" municipalities. Youth from an immigrant background was identified as one of the target groups, together with education, Housing, Health, Work and Intercultural Mediation (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche sociali, 2012-2014).

This initiative aims at strengthening social cohesion since it acknowledges and legitimises the public role of new generations from an immigrant background, supporting their naturalization and the value of their diversity as a positive social transformation. In this respect, it was also a space of democratic engagement since the two partners behind G.Lab – the Municipality of Milan and G2 Network – campaigned together for a more inclusive national law on citizenship and naturalization.

Perception and use of the concept of diversity
G.Lab fostered an idea of diversity as constitutive part of a new Italian identity, with a strong focus on being part of the local community ("being Milanese"), besides the legal status. It promoted the naturalization and recognition of those who are "*Italians* de facto*, even though not* de jure" (Comune di Milano, 2013a; 2013b). Though, we can see it as an expression of the above-mentioned intercultural/integrationist more than a multicultural approach: indeed, despite being 'group-based' initiative, it did not acknowledge specific ethno-cultural backgrounds, but the importance to position a specific type of diversity – a generational diversity of young people who are stuck in-between immigration and citizenship – within the Italian national and local identity.

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[2] The new call funds an info point for one year, with a funding of € 45,000 (whose 58% with earmarked funds for childhood policy, 11% as partners' co-funding, 31% as wages of civil servants collaborating into the project) (Comune di Milano 2014a).

The focus on hyper-diversity was largely implicit. Though, the attention was not just on people from an immigrant background, but on youth and on the specific identity mix that they represent. Some members of the staff (all females), mentioned also an attention to the gender and religious dimension in dealing with the cases: for example, G.Lab organized also events on LGBT second generations, as well as on religious minorities (Salah, 2013). So, immigrant background, age, attitudes and gender do conflate in the idea of diversity behind the recognition of new generations from an immigrant background.

So, diversity was the very focus of the initiative, addressing both the negative characteristics attached to it (unequal rights, lack of information and guidance) and promoting its positive dimensions (mixed identities and pluralism as resources for social cohesion and development).

Main factors influencing success or failure

According to interviewees, the success of G.Lab was due to its effectiveness in answering unmet needs of the target population,e.g. supporting the naturalization – when operating: G.Lab was an effective aide for the Municipal Register Office, not prepared for providing guidance or rights, and to manage this increasing inflow of youths asking for naturalization. Interviewees maintain that its effectiveness came from two main factors: peer support and a close relationship with the local administration – that increases accessibility and ease problem-solving.

Though, the project came to an end, in a way that can be considered a failure, since the needs that it had to cope persist and need to be faced without interruptions. Largely promoted and advertised, it created expectations of a long-term, enduring and steady support, while it was connected to short-term funding and projects:

> *"The problem is the economic sustainability, in a context of retrenchment that affects social initiatives overall. The Municipality is relying very much on participation, activism and volunteering – even too much"* (respondent: Member – G2 Network).

This means that the coverage and duration of the service is largely unpredictable, and this may sound discouraging: political backing to new generations has not always been matched with actual prioritization of resources. At best, after the new call we mentioned above, the Lab will operate again for one year, after having been closed for 6 months.

Another weakness may concern the targeting: given the national legal framework that allows an easier naturalization just for those born in Italy, and given also the profile of the staff involved – belonging to second generations born or grown up since an early age in Italy – G.Lab was not so able to deal with newcomer adolescent immigrant youth and their integration problems.

Conclusions

The project can be considered innovative because it provided recognition of new generations from an immigrant background with direct involvement and participation of these new generations themselves, and an attention on the promotion of mixed identities as part of the local and national identity. This boosted the accessibility to rights, but also the effectiveness of local administration in answering a need for information and guidance that was largely unmet before the opening of G.Lab.

Future developments are mainly meant to find resources to grant a longer-term duration to the initiative. Interviewees hoped to pool resources to reactivate G.Lab by mid-2014 (and this actually happened), in the meanwhile few of the functions it had have been recovered within an anti-discrimination project. Interviewees expect also a stronger inter-sectoral involvement of other

branches of the local administration, to provide ready answers to the needs of the target population, and to relate them to other diversities as part of the richness of a multicultural city.

In this respect, they also expect the inclusion of a diversity focus into the normal operations and mandates of municipal offices, which may be helpful for a more effective accessibility, besides the role of G.Lab itself.

Peoples' Orchestra "Vittorio Baldoni" (Orchestra dei popoli "Vittorio Baldoni")

Strategy, focus and organisation
Peoples' Orchestra 'Vittorio Baldoni" (PO) is an orchestra made up by children and teens from a minority background and Conservatory students. It started from a Memorandum of Understanding between The Charity House Foundation and the Conservatory of Milan, which instituted two courses of violin and accordion dedicated to Roma children. From then on, the initiative grew, becoming a proper Orchestra that involves 60 children from Eastern Europe, Near East, Central and South-Eastern Asia, South America, Oceania, as well as Italy too).

Nowadays, four partners are involved in the project: The Charity House Foundation, the Conservatory of Milan, the Foundation House of Arts and Spirit, and a confessional charity. The initiative is also sponsored by the Municipality of Milan and co-funded by Cariplo Foundation. Also this initiative is a city-based one, involving minority youngsters from all over Milan, though affecting also the case-study Northern districts, where one of the promoters (The Charity House) and some Roma encampments are located.

This project explicitly aims to foster social cohesion and social mobility through the means of music and training. The performance of the Orchestra, indeed, is just the last step of an articulated process with different related actions. This is the case of the 'Vivaio dei popoli' (Peoples' Nursery), the section of PO targeting children aged 7 to 12 that never received a music education: they are taught with classes in the Conservatory on Saturdays, and at school during the week. This initiative aims to improve social participation through the appraisal of talents and the support to individual skills and stories. In their words, promoting partners aim at overcoming marginality and exclusion, though without generating dependency nor stigmatizing children and their families, but enlightening excellence and merit. As the President of the Charity House Foundation says:

> *"[…]another criterion that has driven us and that still drives the CHF in a lot of situations is the theme of excellence […] used in order to overcome assistentialism, emergency-related actions or chronicization of the need for aid and of dependency."*

As mentioned above, the PO starts its activity involving Roma children only. The CHF had already had experience of activities with Roma minority, as they created, in collaboration with Milan Center of Solidarity and the Solidarity Village, a project aimed to answer Roma housing demand in the area of Milan.

The concept grounding the project is *'active participation'.* Interviewees called the efforts made both by minority' families involved in the project via their children, and by partners of the project, "*active citizenship path*". The former have to try becoming "*active members of the Italian society*", the latter have to provide the means to support the empowerment of these families.

Perception and use of the concept of diversity

The project mainly focuses on diversity of origin, but also take other kinds of stigmatized and disadvantaged diversities (likely related to it) into account, e.g. socio-economic disadvantage and urban ghettoization. The Roma, indeed, are highly stigmatized, and physically separated: encampment and settlement practices play a huge role in the construction of Roma marginality. In this sense, the experiences that CHF had in the field of housing demand of Roma people made their members particularly aware of problems related to these factors. Given this, PO seems to take into account stigmatized diversity in quite a multiple way – even though considering it mostly a disadvantage. Promoters seek to invert this vision underlining talents and skills of the involved children, as an empowerment action. The risk is that, being able to reverse the stigma, they maintain a stereotyped (even if positive) vision of the other.

Main factors influencing success or failure

According to CHF president, the main weakness of the project is its insecure economic sustainability. Today it is funded directly by CHF, whose deed is charity actions, and indirectly by the members of the Conservatory, that teach classes upon a mere refund (if any).
Recently, the promoting partners have been looking for other funding sources (e.g. EU calls), in order to continue this experience and spread it to other municipalities: indeed, there is a request from other towns close to Milan to bring this initiative to their schools.

One of the strengths of the project is the great success that the final concert of the Orchestra met, generating large and positive attention on the Orchestra and its members. Their gig has been attended also by some VIPs (e.g. the Italian singer-writer Franco Battiato) and the promoters consider this as a factor positively impacting on public opinion. Thus, this may help in achieving better social cohesion by cooling down harshest negative stereotypes.

Though, as a risk of failure, we can see that the talent is usually considered exceptional: as shown by researches on minority stars in sports, this may not affect 'normal' members of minority groups, that continue to be stigmatized. Attention on talent may divert attention from structural factors of disadvantage toward individual ones, that may turn into a blaming of individual (un)willingness to integrate. This may apply also to a group so heavily stigmatized in Italy as the Roma. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that at least PO constructed one of the few positive discourses on Roma in Italy. The project lays in a contested and difficult ground between assimilation and ghettoization: keeping the proper balance to build interaction on the one side, and promoting minorities and their specificity on the other is a complex endeavour.

Conclusions

This project seeks to create social cohesion and social mobility, empowering disadvantaged groups. sic education is considered a good option, that helpfostering talented children and youngsters from minority backgrounds. Promoters are aware that these actions are of a mainly symbolic nature; at the same time, they maintain that this kind of measures has anyway an actual outcome on the society at large, and on the community where children live. The involvement of families (children have to be accompanied by a parent to music classes) creates a space of encounter, a mutual recognition and a chance for new interactions.
Innovative elements can come from the collaboration between institutions operating in different fields (welfare and charity, culture), and in the effort to include members of excluded minorities into one of the most important and reputed institutions in the city, i.e. the Conservatory. On the other hand, such an innovative path can be undermined by the limited chance of overturning structural conditions of disadvantage of the Roma minority.

Cenni Changes[3] (Cenni di cambiamento/traces of change)

Strategy, focus and organisation

Cenni Changes (CC) is a project of urban regeneration that keeps together two sides: architectural and social. The initiative started with an international competition announcement, promoted by the Social Housing Foundation (SHF), to select the best renewal project meeting social and aesthetic criteria defined by the Foundation itself. The idea was to build some apartment blocks mixing people from different backgrounds and social classes, to live together and create spaces of encounter and social cohesion: these goals have to be achieved by creating communal areas and community animation (Fondazione Housing Sociale, 2012). Thus, this is a neighbourhood-based initiative. As the construction site was started, also the social part of the project was kicked off, with the selection of to-be dwellers.

The project involves a number of partners: besides the promoter SHF, a Foundation whose aim is to set and manage social housing projects, Lombardy Real Estate Fund is the sponsor partner, made up by different financiers engaged in social housing investment (among the others: Cariplo Foundation, Region Lombardy, Telecom Italia, banks). The Fund is managed by Polaris Real Estate IMCO Inc., an Investment Management Company. While SHF manages architectural renewal, social issues are up to a social housing cooperative society, i.e. DAR=CASA, whose deed is to provide low cost accommodation to people in need (see the dedicated chapter).

10% of the apartments have been entrusted to the Cariplo Foundation, that co-finances NGOs willing to buy them. The grant is provided via a competitive call to NGOs making the best residential projects. Another 10% of the apartments are allocated from the municipality of Milan (so, there is also a public partnership in the project) at a "social rent", i.e. low, fixed rent for welfare recipients. All the others apartments have been allocated through a competition notice by the cooperative DAR=CASA. This resulted into a mix of dwellers, most under 35 years, but also with a not negligible number of retired tenants (mostly among the social rent ones).

The move to the new apartments was accompanied by DAR=CASA, with meetings and social events with the to-be tenants before and during their settlement, to increase socialization chances. DAR=CASA provides the tenants with continuing support, managing common areas and their use, and programming events and actions. Though, the idea is that in a while the tenants will have to manage independently socialization activities (Infodar, 2013).

Perception and use of the concept of diversity

Diversity is at the very basis of the project. The initiative, indeed, is an urban regeneration one, that aims to qualify this area via an organized social mix and a juxtaposition of diversities in the same buildings. Young people, old people, people from different socio-economic status and different backgrounds share common spaces (specifically designed and managed for this purpose). There seem to be a trust in the positive effects of diversity and in its capability in foster social cohesion, but at the same time promoters consider that the process of inclusion and integration is not spontaneous, and needs to be steered and promoted by experts.

The mix of quite a number of diversities in the housing project and in the related socialization activity may be hinted to as an attention to hyper-diversity, to the plurality of urban experiences and inhabitants, that also need fine-tuned housing policy ('standard' public housing is mixed with other forms of social and subsidized rental) and a specific attention to social cohesion.

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[3] The name of the project is based on a calembour between Via Cenni – the name of the street involved in the regeneration process – and "cenni", that in Italian means "traces" so "traces of change", i.e. "Cenni di cambiamento".

Main factors influencing success or failure

According to the interviewed member of SHF, the main weakness concerns funding. Nowadays, even if there is a public-private partnership, public actors provide mainly organisational support but poor or no funding: the project is actually funded mostly by private financiers. Up to now, this has ensured the sustainability of the project, but in a long-term perspective the lack of a structured social housing policy supported by the public sector may challenge the sustainability and reproducibility of projects like CC.

The main strength of CC is the combination of an architectural and social action, achieved thanks to a strongly integrated network of actors. Indeed, the creation of spaces of encounter, realised with the specific aim to foster social cohesion and managed by specific professionals, can have an actual positive impact on the new inhabitants, and their participation into the local community. Though, this factor of success is also the one requiring resources that usually are not foreseen in renewal projects. According to the interviewee, the public sector, conversely, is focusing on the refurbishment of the existing building stock, not so much on investments in new social housing projects, also due to the crisis – but existing buildings are more difficult to change, to create meeting places for socialization.

Conclusions

CC is an example of urban regeneration involving a public-private partnership (even if with a stronger weight of the private sector, involved in a 'social market'), that aims to foster social cohesion creating spaces of encounter, focusing directly on diversity and on an attention on social mix. The good cooperation in such an articulated and complex network may be insured by the strong links among some of them. For example, among associates and shareholders with embedded ownership; among those sharing a common cultural background in social economy; among those sharing trust coming from long-lasting activity, collaboration and belonging to strong "pillars" of local society (e.g. Catholic NGOs). The cohesion action may be favoured by the selection of tenants, that actually excludes very disadvantaged groups, but focuses more on that in-between group of those not poor enough to access public housing and not rich enough to access housing market on their own.

This kind of actions can achieve a relevant result in terms of innovation if long-term sustainability of social and housing projects are taken into account. In the case of CC, the type of partnership involving actors with different mandates but common backgrounds can favourably support a positive outcome for social and housing mix efforts.

DAR=CASA[4] (DC)

Strategy, focus and organisation

DAR=CASA (DC) cooperative society, already mentioned above, deserves further attention. It is a housing cooperative with shared ownership, funded in 1991 to give a home to immigrant workers settling in Milan. As the time went by, the target group was widened, including also Italians in need, who can not afford to rent a house in the market. Nowadays, DC is engaged in two missions: (1) regeneration of public real estate or construction of new buildings to be rented at subsidized price to people in need (their core business, where they have a long-lasting expertise); (2) management of social issues in apartment blocks and neighbourhoods involved in social projects.

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[4] 'Dar-Casa' is a wordplay, where 'Dar' is the transliteration of Arabic دار (home), and 'Casa' means home in Italian as well. At the same time DAR is an acronym for 'Diritto A Restare' (Right To Stay), since the cooperative society was born to cope with immigrants' housing problems.

Within the first mission, renewal of (underused) existing public estate is preferred to the construction of new buildings, since it is less expensive and more suitable for a small-sized cooperative society. In these cases, privileged partners are the Department for Metropolitan Area – Municipality of Milan, and the Regional Agency for Public Social Housing (ALER).

The latter mission is quite a new field for DC. Only recently they engaged with two projects: *Cenni* Changes (mentioned above) and 'Social Residence' (20 flats for people in need whose management has been entrusted to DC after a tender issued by the Municipality of Milan). So, the first one is a project involving a great network of private and public partners (as said above) while the second is an action promoted solely by public actors. In these projects DC is responsible for forms of community development and social participation, promoting social mix and activation of diverse urban populations.

Perception and use of the concept of diversity

DC was created with a specific attention on migrants' right to decent housing and related problems. Nowadays DC interest shifted toward all people in need, covering different kinds of disadvantage: e.g. people in economic hardship, asylum seekers, immigrants, evicted people. Each need has its own treatment and specific rental regime. Thus, diversity is under scrutiny mainly as a condition of disadvantage. Though, CA's attention for fostering social cohesion, empowering relational skills of to-be tenants, and providing spaces of encounter and social inclusion in building blocks they manage or build show also an attention to potentialities of diversity (if properly managed). Diversity management is more and more considered in recent projects issued by DC.

Main factors influencing success and failure

According to DC vice-president, the strength of DC's projects is the attention on social dimensions of housing disadvantage: the factor behind successful action is an understanding of estate management not only as a business, that grounds an attention to the needs of dwellers. As a consequence, the attention for social issues turns anyway into an economic advantage, since tenants' solvency increased and the blocks are looked after properly. The neighbourhoods DC manages have a low rate of late payments (also thanks to lower rents), and DC vice-president maintains that this is due to good terms kept with tenants. In her words:

> *"Definitely, the theme of social management (hence, of paying attention to the inhabitant rather than to the practicalities related to the estate issue) brings some benefits from a lot of points of view, first of all that of arrearage. I mean, notwithstanding the difficult conditions of the families we deal with, as we constructed an intervention [...] based on the relation with the dweller, we are able to contain the arrears within some limits."*

The main weakness, similar to the one reported for '*Cenni* Changes', is the lack of an effective framework of housing policy and of a structural and consistent action by public actors. Social housing is mainly limited to scanty, small-scale, short-term experiments and projects that limit their effectiveness and impact. Since the experimental housing projects are usually located in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and blocks, such a weak investment may negatively affect the success of the projects themselves.

Conclusions

The initiatives implemented by DC aim to foster social cohesion and economic performance of people in disadvantaged conditions. DC tries to reach this goal providing housing with cheap rents and/or managing diversity and social issues together with housing problems – that also increases disposable income of target groups. Given the crisis and the attention that the public ac-

tors are paying to the regeneration and renewal of existing building stock, the way DC manages blocks is likely to provide a viable solution to social and economic management of public housing. As mentioned for the previous case, a decisive value added is the capacity to achieve a proper long-term sustainability of the measure: the scale of the project and the network of actors involved can be a positive factor in this respect.

City of Sun – Friends of the Trotter Park

Strategy, focus and organisation
'City of Sun – Friends of the Trotter Park' (CSFTP) is a volunteering association founded in 1994 by parents and teachers of the school 'City of Sun', located within the Trotter Park in the area of Via Padova. The school in the park was created in 1922 (on the site of a former trotter) to allow disadvantaged children to be taught in a healthy environment. By the time the association was created, many facilities in the park were run down and abandoned, so the association was born to lobby for the preservation and renewal of this historical heritage and school (ISC Casa del Sole, 2011).
For this reason, events and initiatives organised by CSFTP mainly target the park itself, the close neighbouring area, and the children: adults are a target group mainly in relation to their children – as parents and grandparents.

Since 1994, the strategy of the association has changed, according to the changes in the managing board, and in the area itself. At first, the focus was on education, cultural heritage and environmental activities; later, also the political engagement added up, connected with the mobilization for public education in early 2000s. Finally, the focus shifted more towards community commitment and social cohesion, also to reverse the stigmatization of *Via Padova* made by anti-immigration politicians.

In-migrant diversity was first coped with in 2003, through 'Words in play', as a way to provide educational support to foreign children and parents, that public educational institutions did not help enough. Later, the goal shifted: from activities targeting immigrants, to activities involving all children and parents from different social and cultural background and origin, with the aim to create spaces of encounter and tools for social cohesion.

The last stage in this transformation has been the strong support CSFTP gave to neighbourhood pride and acknowledgement against the negative politicization of the area of *Via Padova*, where immigration rate is among the highest in Milan. The most meaningful event in this respect is a street party called 'Via Padova is better than Milan', whose aim is to show the rich social fabric of the area, where diversity is a value. The starting point was the killing of a 19 years old Egyptian youngster, Abdel Aziz El Saied: this fact grounded a law and order and stigmatizing reaction by the local administration. Local associations counteracted it by showing the problem in Via Padova was not the foreigners, but the lack of public action in social integration.

All the above-mentioned foci layered in CSFTP's actions in the last decades, and today all are part of its mission., The above mentioned priorities have a common ground in volunteering, free access to grant larger participation, activism and lobbying toward the perceived inaction of public institutions in order to revitalize a unique place of the city (in a way, some activities may be considered as a way to draw public attention on the condition of the park and the school). Most important initiatives criss-crossing the different goals of the association, including social cohesion and promotion of diversity, are:

- the teaching farm;

- the above-mentioned 'Words in play' [*Paroleingioco*], a project of intercultural after-school support, cultural encounter and language learning for parents and children;
- *Orchestrilla*, a project of intercultural musical education;
- Trotterbook [*Librotrotter*], a self-managed children's library that collects donated books, whose aim is also to provide a cultural space of encounter for different families, including migrant ones;
- Party in the park [*Parcoinfesta*], a series of events aimed at making the park a meeting point for different social groups, with activities like games for the children, food events, exchange of used stuff, community gardening.
- TNT and Multicomics, two theatre festivals
- Stage in the park [*Parcoscenico*], an amateur acting company

Besides these projects, CSFTP contributed – with lobbying activities, but also with volunteers' work – to refurbish some buildings and facilities in the park, used for educational and cultural events. The resources to manage such a number of activities come from the collaboration with the school, fees that the members of CSFTP (270 in 2013) pay yearly, pre-tax donations, and competitive calls (issued by Cariplo Foundation, Municipality and District).

Perception and use of the concept of diversity

At the beginning, CSFTP was not meant to focus on intercultural or other diversity-related issues. Though, in-migration has been a traditional issue in the surroundings of *Via Padova* (first from the towns and countryside around Milan; then from Southern Italy; more recently from around the World). Both focussing on past heritage and contemporary situation, differences in social class and cultural background have been apprised in the association's activities, since the park is at the crossroads between middle class, working class and migrants' blocks.

All in all, CSFTP's point of view on diversity is based on the acknowledgement of diversity as a constitutive part of the neighbourhood and the park, that has been long a meeting place of people from different social classes, origins, backgrounds – including gender (since some activities target socialization among women from different backgrounds). As the President of the Association claims:

> "*Beside integration, I would consider social cohesion as a goal of this association: the school, the association, other institutions – here [in the park] there's a world, like a fish tank. That is: a microcosm where different species and plants live together – and that has a reason in its diversity, since diversities together made up its beauty*".

The park is the core element of CSFTP identity, seen as a meeting place of different populations, whose mix is variable in time. In this respect, this interpretation may hint to a discourse aware of intersectionality and hyper-diversity, since different dimensions of diversity are considered as building blocks of local identity, and its specific lifestyle that has to be nurtured through a personal and collective engagement that support social cohesion (Associazione "La città del sole – Amici del Parco Trotter", 2000).

Main factors influencing success or failure

According to the interviewees, one risk factor is the statute of the association: volunteering has been a fundamental resource, granting good-natured motivation. At the same time, it caused discontinuities in the action of CSFTP. Nowadays, the association is undergoing an inflamed debate on the hypothesis to change its statute and in the balance between different goals and roles (e.g. volunteerism vs. professionalism).

The smaller group of active members set the tone of priorities and goals – also in conflicting way: the balance between top-down control and bottom-up participation is quite frail. For example, notwithstanding a great attention on cultural diversity, the involvement of minority members in managing the association and programming the activities is still limited.

Also, fund-raising may be an issue in maintaining some activities. Usually most of the projects require limited funding (and a lot of volunteering), but the reduction of transfers and calls may affect continuity and extent of some measures.

As for the factors that may positively influence CSFTP success, the capacity to consider diversity as a constitutive part of Trotter identity (hence flexible and accommodating different groups) is quite remarkable. Spaces of interaction created seem effective, since coping with needs common to different target groups (e.g. after school activities) without 'segregating' specific categories of users.

Conclusions

CSFTP is an interesting case of an NGO evolving its scope and goals in time, adapting its perception of diversity with the transformation of the area where the association is located. Diversity is seen mostly as a positive feature: not by itself – since CSFTP is also producing action to enhance cohesion and encounter, which is not taken for granted – but as a factual element of the place that makes up CSFTP identity, and hence shall be accommodated in the pride of belonging to such a unique place.

Within the landscape of neighbourhood associations in Milan – new ideas can come from CSFTP, especially in the ability to frame local history and tradition in more recent outcomes – including migration, and diversification in general – thus building an open identity. Potentially, this can bridge welcoming and participation of diverse social groups in a neighbourhood, even though the effectiveness of such an effort can be limited by the lack of specific resources and skills in dealing with social change.

Milan World-City Forum

Strategy, focus and organisation

Milan World City Forum (MWCF) is a permanent working table where local authorities and representatives of Milan foreign communities meet. It has been settled in December 2011, with the aim to have foreigners living in Milan as a support for visitors that will reach Milan for Expo 2015 from all over the world.

At the beginning, its main goal was to train volunteer international guides, and to share projects and ideas for cultural events to be produced during the Expo. These projects had to be made via public-private partnerships and social participation of people from different cultural backgrounds living in Milan. Actually, some projects were implemented after consultations with MWCF. One of these, for example, is the Museum of Cultures (to be opened in Fall 2014), whose aim is to sensitize people towards intercultural issues, recognizing the value of cultural diversity through art.

The promoter of MWCF is the Department for Culture of the Municipality of Milan. The strategy of the initiative is that of fostering 'bridging and bonding social capital of minorities', according to the former Alderman for Culture. Indeed, MWCF is meant to be a place where people from different backgrounds preserve their culture, and at the same time share it crossing cultural boundaries.

The perspective adopted is that of empowering migrant communities, providing a space of encounter and of democratic deliberation involving natives and foreigners, in order to promote their participation in the public decision-making process. Thus, MWCF may be considered also as a policy for diversity and recognition of multiple voices: promoters maintain that such a recognition leads to a profitable use of social and financial resources dedicated to welcoming guest for Expo 2015 – hence matching social cohesion and economic performance.

Perception and use of the concept of diversity

This initiative is based on the concept that diversity could be an asset and an economic resource if suitably managed. Even if the focus is solely on diversity related to ethno-national backgrounds, projects implemented show quite an awareness for the multiple dimensions of diversity, involving different target groups (adults, children, families, foreigners and natives), and using arts as a tool to talk about the value of cultural diversity. The perspective seems somehow more integrationist than multicultural, with the appraisal of 'interculturality' that considers social cohesion as a primary point in acknowledging diversity. Actually, the aldermen interviewed maintain that diversity may be a problem, but if suitably managed and accommodated it is a resource enriching the city.

In this respect, the intercultural discourse can have also a nuance acknowledging diversity as a constitutive part of city identity and lifestyle, thus with a sort of attention for hyper-diversity. Though, as we mentioned in Barberis *et al.* (2014), the Italian intercultural discourse is still quite ambiguous and blurred, laying in a middle ground between recognition and assimilation.

Main factors influencing success or failure

Nowadays the most important outcome of the MWCF is the creation of a second-level association, made up by representatives of migrants' and intercultural associations (about 80). This new association can have a stronger role in advocacy, bargaining and programming, given its dimension, much bigger than any member association. Thus, we can consider that the factor behind its success is a solid networking of micro-associations, in an arena that allowed going behind individual goals and activities.

Though, on the other hand, some of the expectations and original goals that grounded MWCF were not met: in particular, the strong link with Expo 2015 is still missing. This was partly due to the fact that MWCF was left bereft of its promoter and supporter, when the previous alderman for culture resigned; partly due to the lack of coordinated planning between Expo management and side events. So, at the moment MWCF has an unclear task, and the investment on related policies does not seem consistent with the expectation raised among the participants.

Conclusions

MWCF is an initiative aiming to create spaces of encounter and democratic deliberation, and to promote diversity and recognition of multiple voices in the policy-making process. It has a participatory model of governance, involving public and private actors, representing Milan society and its many minorities.
Potentially, it could be an innovative framework to foster the role of diversity in the city of Milan, promoting the positive social, political and economic role minorities have in the city life. Though, this governance structure is affected by a poor institutional frame on MWCF tasks, and by a limited cooperation between actors (especially the managers of Expo 2015).

About Niguarda [RiGuarda Niguarda[5]] (AN)

Strategy, focus and organisation

About Niguarda (AN) is an area-based project of community development and community animation. Funded within a competitive call issued by Cariplo Foundation, aimed at 'building and strengthening bonds in local communities', it lasts between May 2013 and April 2016.

The promoters are seven NGOs, partnered by local authorities (Housing Department – Municipality of Milan; District Council n. 9): mainly social cooperatives and associations active in community animation, youth policy, intercultural mediation and education, and consultancy on immigration issues). Also the Ecomuseum Milan North (whose goal is to appreciate the social, cultural and environmental heritage of the area, in collaboration with the local community) is a member of the partnership behind AN.

The aim of the project is the enhancement of social cohesion, by changing the public image of the neighbourhood via self-help and community participation, and supporting the engagement of the local community, especially the youth. The increase in cooperation and the support to an inclusive identity that takes into consideration neighbourhood diversity (to be achieved with an active use of public spaces, starting from the opening of a community centre), are the main goals of the project.

The seven partners, with the support of volunteers and other institutions and NGOs, have been managing 12 activities, coordinated via 4 thematic roundtables (neighbourhood and housing; welcoming diversity; youth; and networking) (Diapason, 2013): 'Read, do, play' aims at using public places for cultural and social activities (e.g., bookcrossing and gaming); the 'Social Day', targeting pupils of secondary schools, is aimed at supporting volunteering and social causes; 'close parents' is aimed at creating self-help groups among parents that may experience difficulties (families with new-borns; with disabled children; immigrants dealing with family reunion); 'supportive women' is an action to empower immigrant women through art; "colourful Niguarda" is aimed at putting together youth and elderly to map the social and cultural heritage of the neighbourhood; 'tell about yourself' is an intercultural lab on diversity and identity for teens; 'training and information' is a set of refresher courses for professionals and volunteers working with immigrant users; 'becoming mediators' is a training activity for youngsters interested in becoming tutors of immigrant newcomer peers; 'stitching and stitching up' is an action to create intercultural (women's) groups in mutual learning using needlecraft as a common ground; 'neighbourhood compilation' is aimed at acknowledging and appraising local amateur musicians; 'xenophilia' is an action to promote international cooperation and volunteering among upper secondary school students; 'neighbour's grass... is mine, too!' is aimed at organizing community parties in public spaces.

These planned actions have been integrated with other small events and activities that come up as chances of participation and spontaneous activism. A fine tuning was needed also because the district has been stage of shocking events that could jeopardize community life: on 11 May 2013 three people were killed and two injured by a person with mental problems, whose immigrant background and undocumented status was strongly underlined by political entrepreneurs of fear;[6]

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[5] Actually, the original name is a calembour, between "riguarda" (concerns) and ri-guarda (look again), meaning both a care for the neighbourhood and the aim to change the collective image of the area.

[6] The political entrepreneur is an actor that looks for political advantages (votes, popularity, career...) by supporting discourses and measures that pleases that rise his/her consent. The political entrepreneur of fear is the actor, who achieve this goal by creating, inflating, and/or tickling fears in his/her potential constituency (Olson 1965; Dal Lago and Palidda 2010).

on June 2013 the parish summer camp was closed after intimidation from drug dealers (Ghezzi, 2014).

Perception and use of the concept of diversity
Diversity is at the very core of the project, with a complex understanding of it that may be considered aware of intersectional issues and of a hyper-diverse environment. On the one hand, different kinds of diversities are taken into account: age, gender, origin and background. On the other hand, these diversities are both considered in their interaction (with actions aimed at putting together youth and elderly, natives and migrants) and in their intersection (focusing, for example, on the specific condition of immigrant women and 'second generation' youth), also with a strong attention on lifestyles (e.g. on cultural production through music; on the use of public spaces; on different ways of making social relations according to different group characteristics; on the promotion of solidarity at local and international level). The discourse on diversity is based on the idea that it may be positive as long as there are conditions for interaction, reciprocity and solidarity.

Main factors influencing success or failure
Potential factors of success may come from a rich network that gathers experts and volunteers, with a sound division of labour and collaboration among actors. Also, the network seems quite open and sensitive to changes, since different activities have been fine-tuned in progress, with the involvement of other local players. The fact that the targets are different and mixed may have protected this action from negative politicization and schismogenetic processes when criminal offenses mentioned-above happened.

The main question mark about projects like AN concerns their long-term sustainability. On the one hand, this project can enjoy a longer duration than other activities (e.g., those funded by the European Fund for the Integration of non-EU immigrants, that last less than one year), on the other hand the competitive call issued by Cariplo Foundation also rated ripple effects and sustainability. Some of the activities may have a spontaneous continuation: the project is a kick-off for self-help, peer social relations, intergroup contacts. On the other hand, more structural dimensions (e.g. the management of the community centre, the role of community animators) may require a longer-term support that it is difficult to foresee.

Conclusions
As a wide-scope project of community development and animation that includes diversity in its very core aim, AN shows the possibility to enhance social cohesion and creative spaces of encounter also in complex environments where a negative mood toward diversity may develop. The use of a wide, skilled and motivated network sensitive to the district's social conditions and diversity is the prerequisite for the structuring of a large but consistent set of actions targeting different populations and their interaction.
This is a potentially innovative point that may turn a weakness in Italian policy-making (short-term, small-scale projects) in a strength, e.g. by coordinating little and fragmented initiatives into a common vision.

2.2   Arrangements targeting social mobility

Diversity-at-work Career Forum (Career forum "Diversitalavoro")

Strategy, focus and organisation
The Diversity-at-work Career Forum (DCF) is an initiative aiming to improve chances and capabilities of specific disadvantaged groups in the labour market. Thus, it is an initiative targeting diversity management to favour labour participation of discriminated-against targets. In this respect, DCF can be considered as an initiative targeting social mobility, since it aims at enhancing social and economic resources and relations for some disadvantaged groups, changing their public image and promoting their social participation.

It is organised as a *career day*, matching supply and (discriminated) demand. It took place for the first time in 2007 in Milan. Hereafter it was repeated in other Italian cities (Rome, Naples, Padua and Catania) (Unar, 2014). DCF is organised, after several months of preparations through a dedicated website (www.diversitalavoro.it), once a year in Milan. It takes place in the city centre and has more than a city-level dimension, but the territorial distribution of events is aimed at having local ripple effects. There, firms can upload their job vacancies and candidates their curricula. Candidates' best matching vacancies are invited for a job interview at the career day.

The partners involved in the implementation of this initiative are both from civil society and public sector: the promoter is UNAR (National Office Against Discrimination), with Sodalitas Foundation (engaged in business social responsibility), Adecco Foundation for Equal Opportunities, and People (a firm specialized in organizing career days). After the first year, when it was launched with public funds, the project became economically independent thanks to payments from participating firms. The partners in the project have an advocacy role, but also 'gatekeep' between target groups and the labor market.
Today, target candidates belong to three categories: foreigners, disabled, and transgender. When the initiative started, the target group only consisted of the first one; thus the initiative is gaining in scope.

Perception and use of the concept of diversity
The project explicitly addresses diversity in the three forms mentioned above (foreigners, disabled and transgender), so there is an attention for the issues related to ethnic and cultural background, physical and mental disadvantage, and to gender. This juxtaposition of diversities in a sole event may lead to some sort of attention towards hyper-diversity – even though it is not explicitly addressed nor problematized in terms of intersectionality. Also, there seems to be not so much attention on 'labelling' practices and the choice to put together different types of diversities.

Being the promoter of the national anti-discrimination office, the primary conceptualization of diversity is based on critical and negative dimensions of disadvantage and discrimination. Indeed, DCF focuses on problems that target groups may meet in the labour market access.

Though, the aim of DCF is to reverse this situation with positive discrimination, in order to bring out capabilities and talents of target groups, and to create job opportunities to them. In this sense, diversity may also have a positive side if properly acknowledged. Actually, the discourse underlying DCF is that diversity could be a value, once neutralised prejudice and access barriers. What is more, it may be a factor fostering economic performance.

Main factors influencing success or failure

According to the interviewed expert from UNAR, DCF has the positive effect of increasing the number of target group members in the labor market. '*Impact*' on the labour market and '*concreteness*' are terms used to describe the main strengths of DCF.

The *impact* on the labor market is measured with the number of firms and candidates taking part into the career day, and the share of candidates that find a job thanks to DCF. In 2013, selected candidates were 1000, and participating firms were 40; job interviews were 16.000.

This may be based on a specific background factor, i.e. the public-private partnership that allows the participation of a number of important business groups. The number and profile of partners ensure an effective collaboration, being the roles well defined, according to the interviewee and the document analysis.

Though, just 6% of the candidates have found a job in one of the participating firms. The share is low, but slightly increased in comparison to 2012 (+1%), and this is considered satisfactory enough by promoters. In this respect, as a factor of weakness, the involvement of firms seems more symbolic than actual. In this respect, effectiveness pertains more the public image of some diverse group and their actual labour participation. Thus, a risk of failure comes from the possible gap between targets' expectation of labour market inclusion, and actual chances. Another factor of weakness is the low (if any) participation of small and medium-sized enterprises, which make up the largest part of Italian economy. Just large firms take part into DCF. As a consequence, one of the goals for the next editions is to increase the role of SMEs.

As an example of success, it may be considered that the inclusion of transgender population was due to claims from members of this group themselves, after the first year of activity. Thus, DCF proved to be open to different diversities and supporting empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, the involvement of business world may increase the attention toward business social responsibility and advantages of diversity in recruitment. This issue has been underlined with the institution of Diversity & Inclusion Awards, honouring enterprises, which recruited people via DCF.

Conclusions

This initiative is an example of a public-private network that cooperates in an integrated way. The actual impact on society at local level seems quite moderate in terms of economic performance, but potentially interesting in terms of social mobility and quite successful in acknowledging discriminated-against minorities as potentially successful economic actors. By shedding light on discrimination in the labour market, DCF increases awareness in the society at large, among economic actors and the disadvantaged groups.

Italy China Career Day (ICCD)

Strategy, focus and organisation

Italy China Career Day (ICCD) is promoted and organized by Italy China Foundation (ICF), a non-profit organisation whose aim is to establish economic relationships between Italy and China, in collaboration with Associna, an association of "second generation" Chinese; Assolombarda, a regional business association; Almalaurea, an inter-university consortium; and with the partnership of the Consulate of the Popular Republic of China (Fondazione Italia-Cina, Associna, 2014).

ICCD is a career day aiming to put Italian firms and young people in touch with people who have Chinese origins (or having any kind of relationship with China). It takes place once a year in

Milan since 2011. Candidates who are targeted by this initiative are mostly young people with a Chinese background (people of 'generation 2' or 'generation 1,5'), with high educational qualifications, that may benefit from the social and economic contacts taken in this initiative to improve their social position and to be recognized as skilled and valuable professionals.

Even if it is organised as a proper career day, with a preparatory on-line phase through a dedicated website, it aims to provide also a strong training opportunity both to firms and candidates. Before the ICCD was born, there were already other career days targeting Sino-Italian people but, according to the interviewees, they did not have training as a key point. The training offered by ICCD consists in seminars about Chinese and Italian cultural issues.

According to ICF manager interviewed, the training about Chinese and Italian 'work culture' makes up the most innovative part of the project, and an important focus for the promoters. The attention about this issue comes from the personal experience of those managing ICF, and their understanding of Chinese culture. This grounds their focus on intercultural communication between Italian firms and young Chinese job-seekers (and, in general, between Italians and Chinese). The aim is to overcome specific and reciprocal stereotypes and prejudices, that are considered to come more from poor knowledge and acquaintance than from cultural distance. So, ICCD is also meant to overcome discrimination risks, provide information about China and Chinese to Italians, and about the "*western world*" to Chinese, thanks to cross-cultural skills and experiences that members of ICF consider to have.

In past editions, ICCD was funded by sponsors. Now the main funding source is a fee that firms pay to participate; this makes the project economically independent.
The number of participants is considered satisfactory by the promoters. In the last edition, that took place on January 15th, there were 398 candidates and 16 firms participating (all large firms). Among the participants, 152 were selected for a job interview at the career day. ICF does not register data on the number of candidates that find a job through ICCD, so it's impossible to evaluate its impact on the labor market.

Perception and use of the concept of diversity
The focus of ICCD is group-based, hence considering a very specific diversity, i.e. ethno-national background. It targets those combining Italian and Chinese backgrounds. What is more, targeting those with a high educational level, mobile, mixed-background professionals, implicitly we can see a focus on a kind of hyper-diversity. This also means that the initiative has not that much a focus on discrimination and the intersection of class and ethnic disadvantage.

Given this focus, the main aims of the project can be seen in fostering social mobility and – somehow as a consequence – also social cohesion, i.e. increasing socio-economic relationships between Italy, China, Italians and Chinese through the role of Sino-Italian youngsters.
Though, this understanding of culture may be also a potential risk, since it may lead to reverse negative stereotypes with positive ones, that are nevertheless stereotypes, too – oversimplifying the complex hyper-diverse experience of mixed-background professionals.

Main factors influencing success or failure
Among the factors behind the success of this initiative, we can mention the partnership with important economic actors, but also the positive visibilization of a minority group often victim of negative stereotypes about its assumed self-isolation. The strong focus on mixed backgrounds may foster the idea of cultural diversity as part of new generations of Italians – a discourse that still is hardly supported in a monoethnic national political culture (Calavita, 2005).

As a potentially negative factor behind the initiative, we can point out that the goal is more symbolic than effective. As we mentioned above, we can use as a proxy the fact that ICCD's economic return cannot be assessed. This lack of data may be interpreted also as a low priority given to this issue: it may not be the main success factor. As mentioned for '*Diversitalavoro*' above, the symbolic significance (the aim of changing discourses on a specific kind of diversity) is more relevant, while the effect on market participation can be considered a long-term goal.

Thus, the lack of a thorough monitoring of outcomes can be considered as a weakness of ICCD, also grounded in the small dimension of the promoting organisation, and the lack of expertise in assessment. As a consequence, improving outcome data is among the aims of ICF for next editions.
To overcome negative consequences of small dimensions of ICF, the organisation is interested in using more consistently new ICT tools (e.g. social media) to get easily in touch with participants. Furthermore, as for *Diversitalavoro*, the lack of SMEs involved is a weakness that the promoters want to address for the next future.

Conclusions

Rather than in diversity management, this project is engaged in the *intercultural* management on the workplace. This may be considered the main peculiarity and innovative point of ICCD. Even if the range of diversity considered by the ICCD is narrow, it is an interesting project for the peculiar intertwining of career day format, training, and the creation of cross-cultural skills to foster mutual recognition, hence social cohesion, and social mobility through an economy-driven initiative.

2.3   Arrangements targeting economic performance

Tira su la clèr[7] (Raise the shutter)

Strategy, focus and organisation
Raise the shutter (RS) is a tender issued by the Municipality of Milan in November 2013, whose results have been published in January 2014. Its aim is to improve the economic performance of peripheral dilapidated areas, located both in the northern and southern neighbourhoods of the city: there, the Regional Public Utility Society for Housing owns quite a number of empty shops and workshops, that were part of public housing projects, but have been closed for long. To re-use them, the municipality is providing the selected participants with a subsidized rent (up to 90% less than the market price for the first 5 years); free grant (covering up to 25% of the opening business costs), favourable credit conditions (up to another 25%), and a municipal guarantee fund to access bank loans (for the remaining 50%). All in all, the municipal support sums up to a maximum of € 500,000. This investment can be considered as targeting economic performance, since it supports business opportunity in disadvantaged areas, enriching the social fabric of the area with new, diverse functions and persons.

To achieve this goal, the Municipality had to collaborate and agree a road map with the Regional Public Utility Society, since this is not the standard way public estate is allocated.
The target group is made up by small and micro-enterprises (existing or to be established yet) that are interested in opening offices in the involved areas. Applicant firms (42) were requested to provide a project and a business plan, which was ranked to allow the best projects to access 9 lots (Comune di Milano, 2014b).

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[7] The name of this initiative is in Milanese dialect, and means "Raise the shutter"

Due to the dilapidated conditions of the neighbourhoods and housing projects where the lots are located, RS can be considered as a micro-level regeneration project: economic initiative should be part of the revitalization of the area, increasing the diversity of functions, users and inhabitants.

Perception and use of the concept of diversity
In this case, the concept of diversity is quite different from what we have seen in the other nine case studies, and refers to the 'neighbourhood diversity' we mentioned in Barberis *et al.* (2014, 18): here, diversity is seen as positive; to enrich disadvantaged, stigmatized and mono-functional districts, a mix of new inhabitants can improve the economy performance of the area, and the circulation of resources, new ideas, and new activities can revitalize the area, with a positive effect on social cohesion, too.

Diversity is taken into account (a) in the tender, as far as the target businesspeople is considered (young and women applicant received an additional score: a young women could get up to 28% of her final score from these criteria); (b) in the selection, that resulted in a mix of traditional and innovative firms active in quite different sectors (from greengrocers to video production, from vintage car restoration to 'green' businesses dedicated to gardening and 'no-oil' mobility).
In this respect, the underlying idea seems quite based on (commercial) diversity as an engine for new and plural lifestyles, that may positively affect the social and economic life of peripheral housing projects.

At the same time, this 'positive' diversity goes hand in hand with a 'problematic' one, i.e. the actual condition of disadvantage of target neighbourhoods, inhabited by families at risk (materially deprived, elderly, immigrants). Though, this diversity does not come out in the public discourse supporting the project, and it is an unsaid background to municipal action.

Main factors influencing success or failure
Given the early stage of the project, this dimension is hard to assess. It may have a positive impact on the (self-)perception of the neighbourhood as a place of opportunity. The measure grants also a mid-term sustainability (subsidies last for some 5-6 years), which could be enough to allow firms to become profitable: this came with a relatively low investment by the municipality. € 500,000 means some € 10,000 per year per business, more as loss of earnings than as a direct cash investment, money that can return as taxes if the firms are profitable.

The factors behind this potential success are an effective partnership between public actors that grounded a flexible and purposeful use of public estate that was left somehow abandoned for a long time, and an interpretation of diversity as enriching also in 'weak' neighbourhoods.

As for the factors that may influence the failure, on the one hand there's the poor connection with the otherwise diverse inhabitants of the involved areas, and the fact that interviews and press releases on this project never mention its contextualization in larger renewal projects. Actually, the three areas where the shops are located are undergoing other social investments (e.g. social housing and/or community animation – even, the community centre set by the above mentioned initiative 'About Niguarda' is literally surrounded by one of the lots of the RS call), but an explicit coordination cannot be found. The Municipal Department for Housing is promoter, sponsor or supporter of most of them, but the other actors involved (NGOs, firms, inhabitants) do not seem to be involved in a larger strategy. So, as a negative factor we may consider the risk of uncoordinated actions that may lead to unexpected outcomes if different approaches to diversity frame different actions.

Conclusion

RS is an example of initiative aiming to foster economic performance of the city through the regeneration of underused public estate in peripheral areas. Its main innovation is in the allocation criteria defined in the call. At the same time, even the attention on economic performance of dilapidated housing projects is quite a new focus for Milan, and may show a change in the type of public aid (from passive to activating and empowering). Though, this general goal could be undermined by a limited coordination with other actions ongoing in the same neighbourhoods.

3   Synthesis and analysis of the results

Synthesis of the investigated governance arrangements
The ten cases reported above (and summarized in the following table) – notwithstanding their different approach, focus and target – do often share some common trends. On the one hand, this came from the selection criteria: as we stressed in section 1 and in Barberis *et al.* (2014), there's an implicit but anyway quite shared vision of an intercultural/integrationist approach among relevant stakeholders. As a consequence, their suggestions of good practices and innovations are framed within that discourse.

On the other hand, consistencies among cases show the micro-level working of the Italian integrationist model, and at the same time its contradictions in actions and the efforts to overcome them.

Most of the initiatives – also with other primary focuses – are concerned with social cohesion. Discourse on social mobility and economic performance is less present, and in any case mostly subordinate to social cohesion worries.

How do the initiatives achieve this social cohesion? The idea that was shared the most is that social contact and mix are a basic condition for success, and hence there should be a specific attention on that side, since its achievement is not spontaneous at all.

Table 1: Contribution of the governance arrangements towards the three main objectives

Governance arrangements	Social cohesion	Social mobility	Economic performance
G.Lab – Citizenship Laboratory	***	*	
Peoples' Orchestra "Vittorio Baldoni"	***	**	
Cenni Changes	***	**	*
DAR=CASA	***	**	*
City of Sun –Friends of the trotter Park	***	*	
Milan World-City Forum	***		*
About Niguarda	***		
Diversity-at-work Career Forum	**	***	*
Italy China Career Day	**	***	*
Tira su la clèr		*	**

 * = low contribution; ** = medium contribution; *** = high contribution

Conceptualisation of diversity
The just mentioned effort to foster social cohesion via social contact and mix is not by itself a proxy of an integrationist discourse. It may become such for the nuances it has, since in quite a

number of cases the concept of diversity is ambiguously seen as both a resource and a problem, with a different balance between these two sides.

Though, often this seems to imply that diversity should be kept under control, and mix and social contact are a way to achieve this goal. This results from the many interviewees that, both in this report and in Barberis *et al.* (2014), consider a specific targeting of minorities only as ghettoising, and creating too much separateness at societal level. Sometimes, fostering mixes and social contact seems to be connected with a fear for negative politicization that may hit diversity policy and minority targeting, or with an implicit nativism that requires those classified as locals to be involved as policy targets, too. Many actors involved are sensible to a pluralization of diversity, that cut across different groups and categories in complex ways, difficult to classify: this challenges the integrationist idea of a core we-group to be selectively protected, with partial concessions. The in-betweeners like "second generations" and the similar disadvantages affecting different groups (including many Italian citizens – even middle class – like in the case of access to decent housing) require a more nuanced view of diversity. Some actors (e.g. DAR=CASA and the "Friends of the Trotter Park") clearly changed their perspective on diversity in the years – from minority target groups very clearly defined, to an open-ended plurality of profiles sharing a place, and/or a need.

Interestingly enough, this often happens by boosting a micro-local identity, where a small portion of the city (the Trotter park, a mixed housing project) is considered to enjoy a special statute of 'places of diversity', where encounter is possible thanks to the dedicated support of NGOs and local institutions that help managing (controlling?) how diversity is displayed.

Notwithstanding some limits, this has a positive effect on the awareness and *construction of a discourse on diversity* as hyper-diversity. Even though just few of the projects we selected may be considered as explicitly focusing intersected profiles as hyper-diversity, most have anyway quite an attention for cross-cutting identities through genders, social classes, backgrounds, origins, lifestyles.

So, quite a number of initiatives treat diversity as a source of social disadvantage, but – in the frame of an awareness of hyper-diversity – with a growing attention on possible advantages that come from social variation, diversity-related complexity, new social profiles. It could be the employability of Sino-Italian educated youngsters, with transnational contacts and tastes, or the enriching experience of sharing stories and traditions in a city deliberative arena or in a neighbourhood park, where a pinch of reciprocal exoticism does not create just positive or negative stereotypes, but also the idea of living in a vibrant, worthwhile context.

As a limit to this perception, we can see that in some cases diversity is considered positive, acceptable and enriching when it's not too much related to inequality. Rarely there's an appreciation of minorities, especially those stigmatized, by themselves: the appreciation comes when those identified as 'diverse' are seen in their 'normality' of being parents active in the local community and educational environment, or good tenants, or high-end transnational professionals. Thus, the two discourses on inequality and recognition stay largely separated.
As mentioned for Peoples' Orchestra, the integrationist pathway between assimilation on the one hand, and exclusion on the other is narrow and bumpy.

Localisation of the main factors influencing success or failure
What *success factors* can we identify in our ten case studies? Probably the main point here is the effort to reverse negative stigmatization of minorities and/or neighbourhoods, to produce an effec-

tive discourse of the value of diversity: to achieve this goal, some factors seem common to different successful initiatives.

For example, having a quite large network of small- and medium-sized organisations – with none acquiring a strong impositive role – creates a social mix already among the promoters, and may increase a sensibility toward diversity and social change, and an attention for social participation, for a bottom-up action. As a consequence, also surveyed initiatives are often small-scale: in some cases, e.g. at Trotter Park or Niguarda Neighbourhood, we can consider – as one success factor – also the hammering bombing of the area with a plurality of tiny, cheap, low-threshold and accessible measures. We can define this way as a *"guerrilla policy-making"*, in this sense considering both the pace and characteristics of initiatives, and their 'critical' approach to segmented diversity and integration. This increases the chance of reaching different target groups.

Obviously, there are also large players (e.g. the Cariplo Foundation, or the Municipality), but they act mainly in a subsidiary way, living room to bottom-up ideas through open calls. In this respect, this kind of network often requires some sort of endorsement by local authorities: even though they cannot provide many resources, they legitimize on-going actions.
Though, here there is also room for some failure risks.

First, we have mostly initiatives that do not seem to be able to structurally reverse a negative view on diversity and its possible disadvantage, scaling up and generalizing. Initiatives seem to have an effect on very limited areas – often just a block: more general effects are mostly symbolic.

Second, complex networking, especially when involving public institutions, raise high expectations exactly on the structural reversal of any eventually disadvantaged situation. Though, public authorities seem not able to systematically contribute to successful measures. Unmet expectation may reduce individual and organisational commitment.

This is a serious problem connected to the third failure factor, namely the issue of sustainability that is considered as the main factor that affects the success of considered actions negatively. Because of this lack of resources, indeed, most of the initiatives are short-term, with poor or no chance to become institutional in the longer run – in some cases also because of an institutional framework itself considered as constrictive (e.g. in the field of housing, but also in the continuing support to cultural and social initiatives funded by the Municipality, like G.Lab or the World City Forum). So, some "bottom-up" actions programmed by small-sized actors are sometimes unrealistic, and based on a very short-term assurance of resources and continuity. Symbolic value has a more important role than actual effectiveness, rarely monitored.

Identification of new ideas for innovative policies and governance concepts
The above-mentioned cases seem to show quite some room for innovation in the construction of a new (more nuanced, and pluralist) discourse on diversity, and in the organisation of diversity policy (starting from small-scale plural experimental networks). Though, we can also see some risks in the chance to spread and support such innovations. In this respect, most successful innovations are those based on peer self-help, where public institutions may help in kicking off the initiative, but they are able to self-sustain themselves with limited resources.

To combine sociability and social mix, most innovative cases are those taking into account the intersection of many diversities, and a peer-to-peer relation among actors, where none assumes a dominant role: successful intercultural social relations should not be asymmetric (Bennett, 2013). Awareness of hyper-diversity limits positive and negative stereotypes, reducing categorization in favour of identification (Jenkins, 1997). In this way, involved people are more defining the situa-

tion rather than defined by the situation, and this can be helpful even in contexts of high tensions: conflict and stigmatization tend to create an ethnocentric discourse, that oversimplifies diversity. Though, this does not fit with the much more complex everyday life people experience in a mixed neighbourhood – as the reactions to negative politicization in Via Padova and Niguarda neighbourhoods show.

Identifying common or complementary needs and interests helps building spaces of encounter boosting participation and bridging the gap between social cliques.

4   Conclusion

Wrapping up main issues emerging from the ten case studies selected in Milan, we can identify some general trends. In particular:

(a) the focus on social cohesion is much dominant over the others (social mobility and economic performance);

(b) this may be related to the implicit but dominant integrationist/intercultural discourse, that accepts diversity but does not encourage recognition and emphasis on plural dimensions of society (Syrett and Sepulveda, 2012; Koopmans *et al.*, 2005);

(c) though, the ambiguity of an integrationist discourse in a country that has a weak policy strategy and focus on diversity results in an ambivalent position in-between assimilationism, pluralism, and segregation;

(d) as a consequence, local initiatives have to deal with a complexity of hyper-diversity non adequately mirrored and supported by policies;

(e) the main answer is the creation of spaces of interaction and encounter, where to try to put into practice social mix and interaction.

Most successful cases seem able to reverse – or at least challenge – negative stigmatization of diverse groups and areas through a vibrant networking of small-scale actors and actions, and with an attention on intersecting plural groups, identities and needs. Compared to the policy discourse analysed in Barberis *et al.* (2014), this means that small-scale initiatives reported here have a stronger attention on recognition. Though, the long-term success of these arrangements may be jeopardized by a perceived lack of sustainability – first, mostly, but not only in financial terms – and of long-term effectiveness in contrasting and reversing structural disadvantages beyond short-term and small-scale arenas that most case initiatives share

So, on the other hand, we can identify a strong link between policies analysed in Barberis *et al.* (2014) and arrangements analysed here: this consistency is not so much tied with the prevalent strategy (an integrationist one), but to its blurred boundaries. That is: where a focus on integration faded into non-policy. The lack of a strategic investment, prioritization and legitimization of diversity weakens local practices in the long run.

Policy makers should learn from these arrangements, their success and failure, the awareness of a rich diversity that cannot be reduced to standard macro-categories (an awareness that may also increase policy effectiveness by allowing a better targeting), and the need for an explicit support to and recognition of diversity. In this respect, for some target groups there has been a significant evolution in the local policy arena and in local initiatives: for example, "second generations" are more and more considered as members of Italian society with all their complex background – even though the road towards a full recognition is still long (more at national than at local level). For others, the Roma, for instance, a working balance between recognition and participation is far from being achieved.

To conclude with, it is important for policy-making that:

(a) the shift from non-policy to a clear path to social participation is defined;
(b) that grand visions portrayed by some progressive actors are matched with daily policy practice: a big risk for policies and initiatives is to rise expectations that cannot be met.

Symbolic investments are not enough, since disillusion and frustration can raise the conflict.

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6   Appendix

List of the interviewed persons

- Member – G2 Network, Milan
- Official – Mayor's Cabinet, Municipality of Milan
- Official – Social Policy Department, Municipality of Milan
- Executive Director – Social Housing Foundation
- Vice-President – DAR=CASA
- Director – Department for Metropolitan Area, Municipality of Milan
- President – Association "Amici del Parco Trotter"
- Member of the board – Association "Amici del Parco Trotter"
- Alderperson – Department for Culture, Municipality of Milan
- Ex Alderperson – Department for Culture, Municipality of Milan
- Person in charge of the Permanent Training School – "Fondazione Italia Cina"
- Expert – "National Anti-discrimination Office (UNAR)"
- President – Charity House Foundation
- Director – Department for Economic Innovation and Smart City

List of the participants of the round-table talk

Date: June 17, 2014

Place: Bignaschi Foundation, Milan

- Postdoc – University of Milan-Bicocca
- Member of the Board – "City of Sun – Friends of the Trotter Park"
- President – "City of Sun – Friends of the Trotter Park"
- Director Executive, Social Housing Foundation
- Responsible of Social Area – DAR=CASA
- Vice-President – Associna