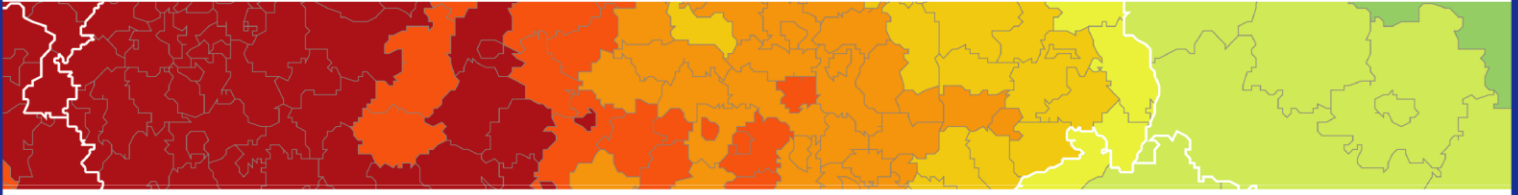


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



MIGRATUP - Territorial and Urban Potentials Connected to Migration and Refugee Flows

Targeted Analysis

Synthesis Report

Version 15/09/2018

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Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics

1 Introduction

The ESPON project titled “Territorial and Urban Potentials Connected to Migration and Refugee Flows” is the first one specifically devoted to the analysis of the implications for territorial cohesion deriving from the so-called refugee “crisis” that peaked in 2015. Indeed, this research was developed in the aftermath of the important migration phenomena that in the last years have reshaped the geopolitical roles of the countries throughout the European continent. These migration flows have primarily regarded asylum seekers fleeing war-torn and poverty-stricken countries such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet, this research shows that economic migration was, too, an important component of the flows that often found its origin precisely in Europe’s neighbourhood: most notably, in the Western Balkans.

The area investigated by our project, the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions, provide a comprehensive geographical scope to analyse and assess the impacts of migration and refugee flows, since it includes altogether countries of arrival, transit and destination of these flows. The geographies encompassed by the project include also the countries traversed by the “Balkan Route”, what became known as the main gateway to Europe for hundred thousand migrants and asylum seekers – and the path along which some of the most dramatic events took place. It is important to underline that the research team has decided to include also Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244) and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) to the country coverage as “Countries of Interest” (CoI), in order to provide stakeholders and policymakers with a more exhaustive overview.

Within the described geographical space, the team has performed an analysis of the main migration dynamics, whose outcomes underlines that migration flows are characterized by diversity and multidirectionality, to the point that it is possible to single out at least the following patterns: 1. internal flows within each country; 2. internal flows within the macro-regions and CoI; 3. external flows to the macro-regions and CoI; 4. secondary, or onward migrations of those who have been denied protection.

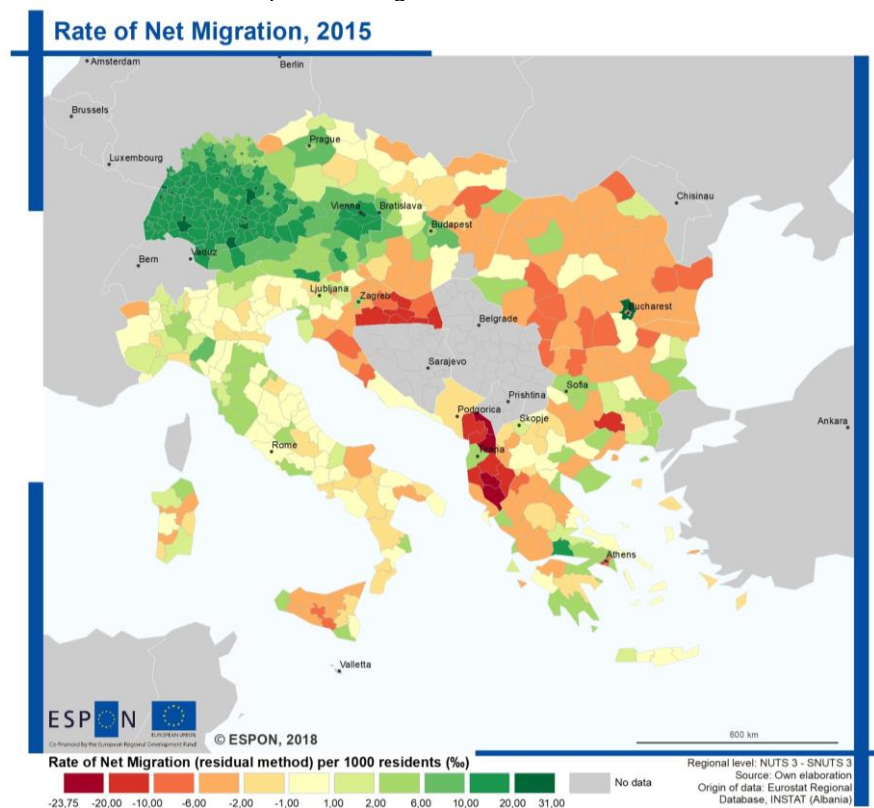
In order to possibly improve our knowledge as well as management capacity concerning this variety of mobility patterns, the team has also explored territorial attractiveness and socio-economic typologies, in the attempt of identifying factors that can help explaining challenges and opportunities across the macro-regions and CoI and how the future of territorial cohesion may look like. Depopulation of rural areas, aging population and urbanization represent in fact growing concerns for policymakers at the different governance level that require a well-informed debate. Many of the emerging issues are also tackled in the eight case studies complementing the project.

The main analytical and cartographical findings about these abovementioned aspects are presented in this report in a concise fashion. Please refer to the Main or Scientific Reports for a deeper examination of the concerned issues.

2 Main findings

2.1 Type I - Internal flows within each country

Map 2.1 Average rate of natural increase



We observe the following patterns of migration:

- Internal migration along the south-north axis, like the well-known case of **Italy** (the most negative rates are those of Caltanissetta, Enna, Nuoro, while the dark green NUTS 3 correspond to Parma, Bologna and Firenze); in **Croatia**, internal migration is prevalently from eastern regions towards either Zagreb or the coastal Istria County in the western part of the country (the only two NUTS 3 that recorded positive values).
- In the majority of cases, it is possible to note centripetal tendencies, corresponding to increasing urbanization, to the disadvantage of rural areas: this is the case of **Albania** (10 out of the country's 12 NUTS 3 present negative values); the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)**; **Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244)**, **Romania**, **Serbia**, **Slovakia**: in these countries, capital cities and the surrounding areas and/or few large cities have especially attracted most of the total residence changes recorded in 2015.
- In the other countries, internal migration patterns are of a mixed kind because several NUTS 3 display positive values besides the capital (e.g. Kyustendil and Varna in **Bulgaria**; Středočeský kraj in **Czech Republic**; Győr-Moson-Sopron and Fejér counties in **Hungary**; Posavska and Savinjska in **Slovenia**).
- All NUTS 3 territories of **Austria** and **Germany** are characterized by positive and very positive rates of net migration.

2.2 Type II - Internal flows within the macro-regions

Due to the lack of data collection by public authorities, the cartographic production for this second type of flow had to be limited to Italy, Croatia, Slovakia and Slovenia. These are the findings of our data collection concerning the period 2008-2015:

- In the case of Italy (Map 3.4), the large proportion of registered immigrants previously resided in Romania, Albania and Moldova.
- As for Croatia (Map 3.5), people that moved in, have previously resided mostly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by Germany and Serbia.
- In Slovakia, mobility originating in neighbour Czech Republic is predominant (32%), followed almost equally by previous residents of Hungary and Romania.
- More than 40% of the people who moved in Slovenia came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) are other two relevant countries of previous residence (Map 3.6).
- According to IOM data related to regional regular migration in the sub-period 2009-2013, flows were mainly determined by economic, educational or family reunification reasons¹.

2.3 Type III - External flows to the macro-regions

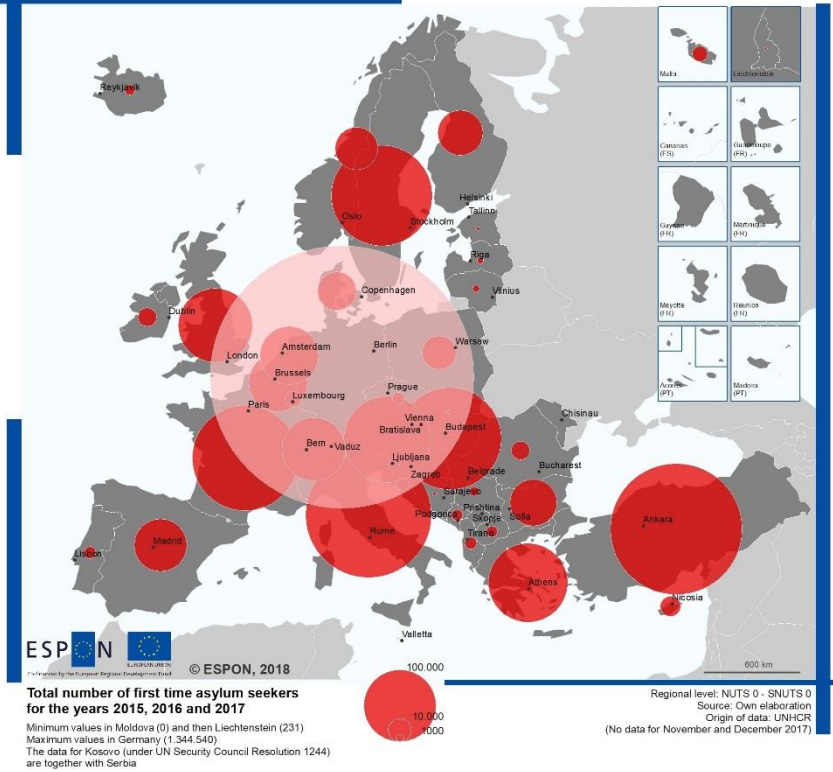
Who are the asylum applicants crossing the Western Balkans?

- According to UNHCR demographics data on persons of concern, the majority have been young adults (aged 18-34), with males outnumbering females (except for Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Serbia). Croatia, Slovenia and Romania present the lowest number of females in external flows (respectively, 24%, 28% and 30%). Particularly, against a general negative trend in flows in Bosnia and Herzegovina, females represented the 57% of the total number of refugees in 2016. Females outweigh males also in Serbia, though only for 0,5%. It may be interesting to note also the situation in Albania, where males doubled females in 2014 whereas males and females were almost the same in numbers during 2016. However, the gender balance has remained uneven throughout the whole period under scrutiny in the two macro-regions. Adults aged 18-59 make up the largest portion in all the countries under study. Yet, the number of minors has remained steady in most countries, while it has grown in Albania and in Croatia and it dropped in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In particular, in Albania from 56 in 2014 (10%) to 3.711 in 2016 (48%) while in Croatia from 44 in 2014 (18%) to 177 in 2016 (22%). On the opposite, in Bosnia and Herzegovina minors have decreased from 809 in 2014 (12%) to 378 in 2016 (7%). We lack to a great extent insights on education and professional skills. We can gain some (partial) information on education utilizing qualitative sources. According to interviews conducted by IOM in 2017, over half of respondents reported having completed secondary education while 13% reported not having obtained any formal level of education (+9% than in the same period of 2016). People mainly reported relying on stable sources of income before leaving their country of origin (except Afghans) and having taken debts to finance their journey. However, overall levels of reliance on stable employment are lower than those observed in December 2015 (IOM, 2018a).
- According to overall arrivals data from UNHCR, Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq are the most represented countries both in 2015 and in 2016.

¹ See Slobodan Cvejić and Marija Babović, *Migracioni tokovi u zemljama zapadnog Balkana*, IOM, Belgrade, 7 Nov. 2014.

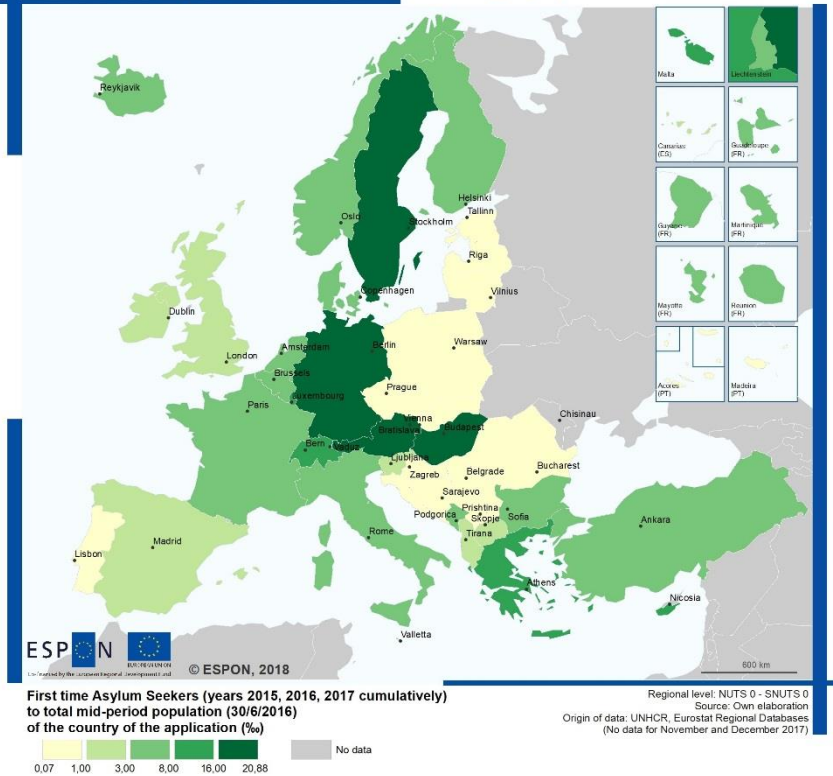
Map 2.2 First time asylum seekers by country, 2015-2017

First time Asylum Seekers, 2015 - 2017

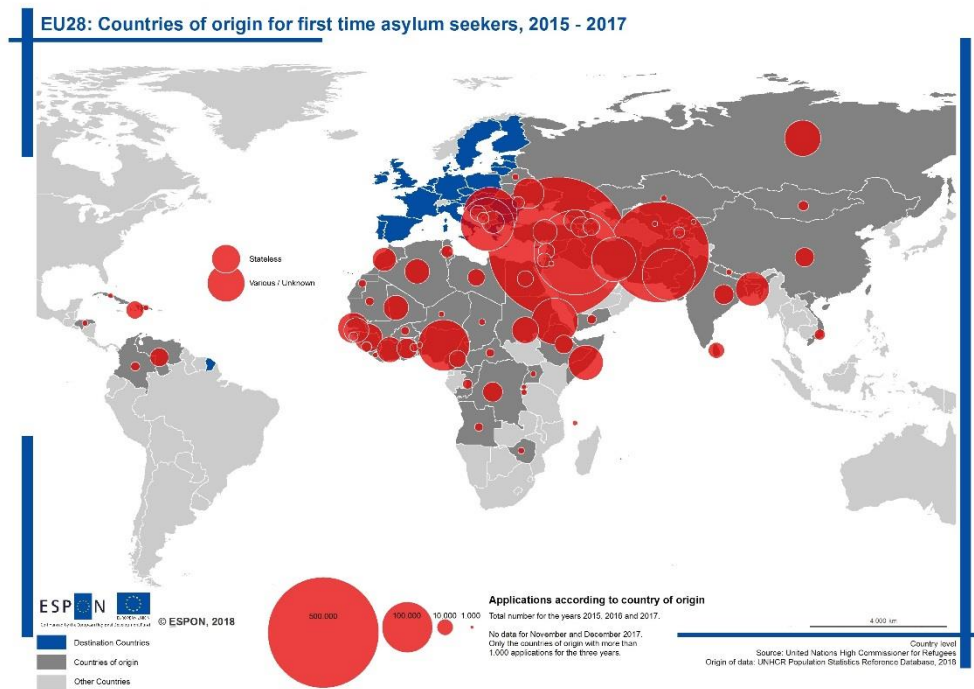


Map 2.3 First time asylum seekers in relation to country population, 2015-2017

First time Asylum Seekers to total average population



Map 2.4 EU28: origin countries of asylum seekers



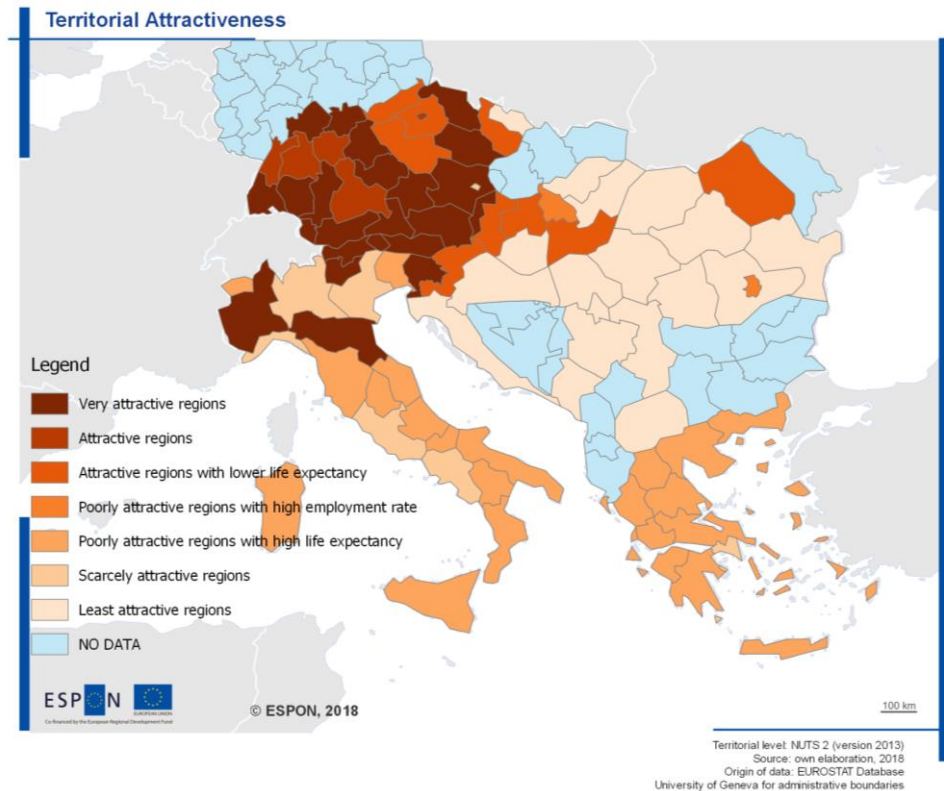
2.4 Measuring territorial attractiveness

Attractiveness may be connected to several socio-economic indicators, but our analysis will focus only on 3 parameters taken from the NUTS 2 indicators present on the Eurostat Database. Of the several indicators that could offer a good contribution to the identification of attractiveness patterns, indeed, only a limited amount is present on the Eurostat Database for all the countries of the area and updated to the year 2015. As an example, schooling is updated only to 2012 and cannot thus be of use for an analysis of the 2015 situation. Other indicators, such as the number of active enterprises, the population at risk of poverty or suffering severe deprivation and the number of available beds in hospitals are available only for a too limited number of countries to be of use for a full comparison between our countries. As a consequence, the analysis has focused on 3 main indicators: **(i) life expectancy, (ii) employment of the active population (20-64), and (iii) population density**. After defining the 8 areas, each NUTS 2 region was attributed a value from 1 to 8, which has allowed the cartographic representation. The NUTS 2 resulting attractive are most of the territories in Austria and Germany (Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria); the two regions of Severovýchod and Jihovýchod in Czech Republic; Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen, Provincia Autonoma di Trento, Piemonte and Emilia-Romagna in Italy; Zahodna Slovenija in Slovenia. As for the weakest NUTS 2 in respect to the attractiveness analysis here proposed, these are all NUTS 2 of Croatia and Serbia; Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM); most of the Romanian territories (excluding Nord-Est and Bucuresti – Ilfov); parts of Hungary (e.g. the Great Plain and North); Moravskoslezsko in Czech Republic.

2.5 Territorial Typologies

A set of 3 indicators was eventually selected in respect to year 2015, with the main goal of identifying both economic and social aspects: age structure, unemployment index and per capita GDP ppp.

Map 2.5 Map of territorial attractiveness



2.6 Case studies

A sample of case studies have been selected to deepen understanding of territorial experiences that engage with addressing territorial challenges by means of an active management of migration flows and offer of integration measures. Operationally, eight case studies have been identified in close collaboration with project stakeholders and they reflect the contexts of urban areas; rural areas; border areas; and regional spaces. For each of them a short description of the context (i.e. starting conditions, concrete actions performed, integration objectives) is provided together with the reason for such a choice. Moreover, the findings are integrated in the existing literature when this is available. Interviews have been carried around three main themes: i. local data on migration and refugee flows; ii. challenges and opportunities for the specific territory; and iii. specific policy recommendations drawn from the case study. As expected, this case study analysis is closely connected to Task 2 of the study, in other words with the need to identify key territorial features that are believed to attract migrants and refugees. The case studies took place in Athens (Greece); Belgrade (Serbia); Budapest (Hungary); regions Emilia-Romagna and Calabria (Italy); the regional space of the Western Balkans; finally, two case studies concerned border areas (Mórahalom,

at the border between Hungary and Serbia and the border between the Italian Region Friuli Venezia-Giulia and Slovenia).

2.7 Policy recommendations

Building further on data collection, territorial typologies and case studies, a number of specific policy recommendations are made for improving migration management in the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions, also taking into account territorial needs in the framework of the EUSAIR and EUSDR strategy and the ETC programmes. The team believes that the data gaps observed on the different migration dynamics represent a serious limitation for the development of more effective policies. Data should be seen indeed as pre-requisite for such task. Therefore, before looking into the specific recommendations formulated as outputs of our analysis, it is useful to provide an overview of data shortcomings and means to improve it:

2.7.1 Data gaps

- The digitalization of residence change procedures, in a way that would give citizens the possibility to register their movement online. This is predicted to encourage many others to do so.
- More efforts are put in place at national statistical offices to start collecting and distributing data on immigrants (by country of previous residence) and emigrants (by country of next residence), consistently with Eurostat guidelines. Existing data should be harmonized and made publicly available.
- Current categorizations available at Eurostat (Immigration by: citizenship; country of birth; country of previous residence. Emigration by: citizenship; country of birth; country of next residence) are ambiguous in terms of territorial origin of the immigrant/emigrant. Database improvements should make possible data crossing to retrieve, for example, also the territorial origin of those immigrants/emigrants born or holding citizenship of a specific country. By the same token, datasets about countries of previous/next residence should also specify country of birth and/or citizenship of the person moving.
- The European Union Labour Force Survey (EU LFS) should expand to include all EU candidate and potential candidate countries.
- The elaboration of an instrument, common to all authorities in the macro-regions and to the entire EU, for the systematic collection of information about skills and education of asylum seekers.
- The identification of the asylum seeker in a database allowing to keep track of the same person.
- Improved collaboration and sharing of information among countries.
- Accordingly, migration-related funds at the EU level should better reflect collected data and focus more on (long-term) integration rather than first reception.

2.7.2 Migration and integration

- The realization of systematic surveys and databases containing socio-economic information about newcomers, which can be accessed and updated at any time by public authorities.
- The establishment of mechanisms for the matching of territorial needs with immigrants/asylum seekers skills, in order to estimate their employability in local markets and manage migration accordingly.
- Further promotion of the territorial dispersal and reception approach for asylum seekers integration, which provides instrumental social contexts for interactions with local residents.

2.7.3 Territorial cohesion and attractiveness

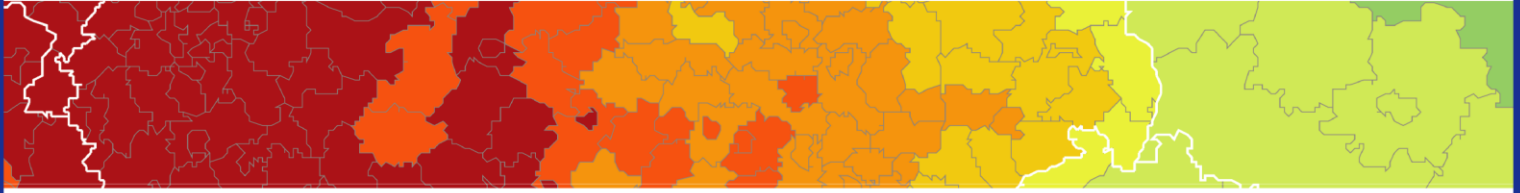
- The differentiation of policies targeting urban and rural contexts, although aimed at the same goal of territorial cohesion. Challenges are in fact different. Evidence from both migration dynamics and case studies highlights that, especially in rural areas, the different types of migration are essential

for the survival of local economies (e.g. agriculture), for the countering of socio-demographic trends (e.g. ageing), and for preserving as well as valorising these territories (e.g. hydrogeological risks). Policies should support and promote the re-vitalization of rural and inner areas.

- Some of the least attractive regions may be found among the regions that present the weakest socio-economic development as well, and that the two weaknesses combined might likely lead these areas to experience constraints to their territorial development in the future, thus obstructing cohesion, unless some territorial planning is carried out including both national and regional actions, taking into account institutions, stakeholders and the population. This would allow an effective implementation of the European Commission's Regional Development and Cohesion Policy for the years 2021-2027 which is especially aimed at empowering those regions who need to catch up with the rest of the EU in respect to territorial development.

2.8 Case studies evidence and recommendations

- The loss of young people in rural areas lead to fewer innovative businesses and to a decrease in services provided by the State.
- More attention should be given to skills assessment and qualification recognition, including the development of new tools for skills assessment. In fact, it emerges that accurate data about who migrants are, why they come and leave, their level of education and their skills are greatly missing. On top of that, the team stresses the necessity to include in apposite databases information regarding the newcomers' rural or urban origin, the information on the declared reasons for migration (e.g. conflict; climate change; cultural-historical links; economic opportunities), as well as the own-estimated chance to come back to the country of origin. For as much as both personal and circumstantial conditions may change over time, the collected information could be useful for at least two purposes: (i): further profiling of newcomers' skills and (ii): the creation of indicators to elaborate scenarios and projections about return migration, in combination with socio-economic data.
- Enhanced knowledge of migrants' profile and life background is understood as a starting point to match skills with available job opportunities. For example, linkages could be established between the immigrants' and refugees' skills and notable territorial challenges such as the (prevention of) risks connected to climate change. Such approach would avoid the long-lasting loss of human capital that often follows migration and resettlement.
- Special attention should be paid at protecting physical and mental health of both migrants and refugees. The vulnerability of and trauma experienced needs to be early considered, particularly in relation to providing free health services.
- Cities and small villages are key actors for integration. Both need to have policies that build resilience and promote integration according to the local context. Nowadays cities are called to play a crucial role in making migration an asset for local development; yet, as the Italian case studies have showed, rural villages may offer an easier process towards integration. Here, affordable house opportunities may be found together with an essential life style, also increasing mutual understanding and fostering a sense of belonging to a community. However, in the long run, the lack of stable jobs might push people to move again if policies for economic growth are not enacted.
- Transport, digital communication infrastructures and job opportunities are fundamental aspects to attract people. Further investments on basic services are needed for long-term integration and for avoiding loss of territorial attractiveness (access to health services; housing).
- Targeted training should be carried out following two main direction: on the one hand, by empowering migrants to strengthen their CV by including the variety of experiences they have in their own life (a documentation for this purpose has been tested by the project DI&DI supported by LLL project Leonardo and can be spread Europe-wide; on the other hand, training in specific sectors (e.g. tourism, agro-forestal sectors and environmental protection) should be provided both for locals and migrants, as a way to both strengthen social cohesion and respond to specific territorial needs emerged from the interviews.



ESPON 2020 – More information

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