Mediterranean City-to-City Migration
Dialogue, Knowledge and Action

Thematic Peer-to-Peer Meeting

Interinstitutional coordination in migration governance:
Towards improved multilevel cooperation

Lyon - 12 & 13 December 2017

Background paper

This background paper introduces general concepts and provides a basic framework for discussion of the theme of multilevel governance. It has been drafted by Irene Ponzo, Deputy Director of International and European Forum for research on migration (FIERI) for the purposes of the Mediterranean city-to-city Migration project (MC2CM) peer-to-peer meeting to take place in Lyon on 12-13 December 2017.

The concepts introduced will be further developed and expanded during the meeting discussions.

INTRODUCTION

The exploration of migration policy-making in multilevel governance political settings is still in its infancy, despite being a growing research field[1]. Because of that, it is characterised by a certain degree of conceptual vagueness. In any case, compared to the more traditional approaches to migration policies, the multilevel governance perspective has greatly contributed to the understanding of the role played by local actors, both public and non-public, in the policymaking concerning migrant integration.

1. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

1.1 Basic definitions

Governance: policymaking through networks and negotiation among actors, both public and non-public, beyond the formal division of responsibility established by laws (versus compliance in hierarchical and State-centre modes of government). Governance refers not only to formal decision making processes but also semi-formal and informal ones and can include non-public actors. An example of this kind of processes is the governance setting developed in ***Tunis*** to allow undocumented migrants to access healthcare: access is provided for via cooperation agreements between public institutions, civil society organisations and international organisations.

Vertical dimension of governance: it refers to the involvement of different levels of government (e.g. supra-national, national, regional and local). This dimension is evident in EU relocation of refugees in ***Lisbon*** which involves three levels of government: the EU, the Portuguese national government and the City of Lisbon. Following its commitment to receive refugees after the 2015 EU relocation programme, the Portuguese

[1] Scholten, Peter, and Rinus Penninx. 2016. "The Multi-Level Governance of Migration and Integration." In *Integration Processes and Policies in Europe – A Three-Way Process?*, edited by Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas and Rinus Penninx, 91–108. New York: Springer; Zincone, Giovanna, and Tiziana Caponio. 2006. "The Multilevel Governance of Migration." In *The Dynamics of International Migration and Settlement in Europe. A State of the Art*, edited by Rinus Penninx, Maria Berger and Karen Kraal, 269–304. IMISCOE Joint Studies Series. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

government created a national Office for Support to Refugee Integration which oversees local implementation of the program and provides technical support to local institutions that are in charge of providing services.

Horizontal dimension of governance: it refers to the relations between actors located at the same level of government. This dimension is exemplified by the Migration Unit that brings together three key Services of the Metropolitan City of **Turin** (Education and Training, Labour, and Social Policies and Equal Opportunity) in order to developed an integrated approach towards migrant integration. The horizontal dimension is evident in the Subsidy Strategic Plan of **Madrid**, a cross-departmental mechanism for the allocation of funding for civil society social actions, including measures for migrant integration.

1.2 Multilevel governance: minimal conditions

In order to consider a specific policy-making arrangement as an instance of multilevel governance, it should fulfil some minimal conditions[2]:

a. the emergence of non-hierarchical networks among actors (i.e. the "governance" dimension);

b. the involvement of different levels of government (i.e. the "multilevel" dimension);

c. the involvement of non-governmental actors (though this aspect assumes a different relevance in the scientific literature and from empirical cases)

1.3 The different meanings of multilevel governance

Multilevel governance can be regarded from an analytical or a normative perspective. Furthermore, it may be viewed from an empirical lens, which has gained relevance in the last decades in the field of migrant integration[3].

Multilevel governance from the normative perspective
Multilevel governance is conceptualised as a non-hierarchical and cooperative way of governing where actors belonging to various governmental levels get together on a voluntary basis in order to solve problems. This process leads to policy convergence across levels of government and fosters the development of a consistent approach towards migration.

Multilevel governance as an analytical perspective
Multilevel governance is conceptualised as policymaking through non-hierarchical negotiation among actors belonging to various governmental levels where the degree of coordination is not taken for granted, conflict might be an option alongside with collaboration, and policy inconsistency and contradictory measures on migrants' rights and integration are regarded as possible outcomes. This perspective considers how migration policies concretely unfold at the intersection of the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the multilevel governance. In doing so, it generally pays attention to the dynamics of power that might lead to asymmetrical configurations, and to party politics which can produce different frames and logics of action at different levels of government.

Multilevel governance as an empirical phenomenon
The multilevel governance of migration can be regarded as an empirical phenomenon which has gained relevance in the last decades since actors from different levels of government have been increasingly acting together to deal with migration issues. This process has gone along with a growing weakness of the nation State. On the one hand, in the last decades States have attempted to shift their responsibilities on migration *up* (towards international and supra-national institutions), *down* (towards local authorities), and *out* (towards non-public actors). On the other hand, international institutions, local authorities, and civil society organizations have mobilised to gain influence over the decisions on migration. The increasing multilevel governance on migration, meant as an empirical phenomenon, is generally the result of these multiple processes.

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[2] Caponio, Tiziana, and Michael Jones-Correa, "Theorising Migration Policy in Multi-level States. The multilevel governance perspective." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, published online in August 2017.

[3] Caponio, Tiziana, and Michael Jones-Correa, "Theorising Migration Policy in Multi-level States. The multilevel governance perspective." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, published online in August 2017; Zincone, Giovanna, Penninx, Rinus, and Maren Borkert, *Migration Policymaking in Europe: The Dynamics of Actors and Contexts in Past and Present*, Springer.

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2. THE MECHANISMS WHICH LEAD TO MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE OF MIGRANT INTEGRATION

The multilevel governance arrangements are generally the result of top-down and/or bottom-up policy processes[4].

Top-down processes develop:

- from higher levels of government to lower ones and/or

- from public to non-public actors.

Examples of top-down processes are those observed in **_Tangier_** and **_Beirut_**.

In Morocco, where local migration/integration initiatives are decided at national level and municipal authorities are not routinely engaged in design or implementation, the ongoing national institutional reorganisation is giving more autonomy to regional authorities and, as a consequence, a greater voice to cities. For instance, this institutional development has led to the establishment of the Council of the Region of Tangier's public expression of interest on migration which is expected to foster multilevel governance of migrant integration with a greater involvement of local actors including the city of Tangier.

Beirut is one of the main target areas of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan jointly established in 2015 by the central government and UN agencies to coordinate international and local responses to refugees. The city of Beirut, as other Lebanese Municipalities, is involved both indirectly with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities which participate in a number of working groups, and directly as a key actor of the Plans' implementation together with civil society and private sector.

Supra-national government

National government

Local government

Non-public organisations

Fig. 1 – Top-down processes

Bottom up processes are initiated:

- by lower levels of governments and/or

- by non-public actors.

An example of multilevel governance developed through bottom-up processes is that concerning the involvement of **_Amman_** in the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) 2016-2018 coordinated by the Ministry of Interior to meet the humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees and of the Jordanian population impacted by the arrivals. Initially Amman was not involved in the Plan. However, lobbying by Amman towards the central government, reinforced by the city's involvement in the MC2CM project and the financial requirements set by international donors, has prompted the Ministry to formally invite Amman to participate in the JRP planning.

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[4] _ibidem_

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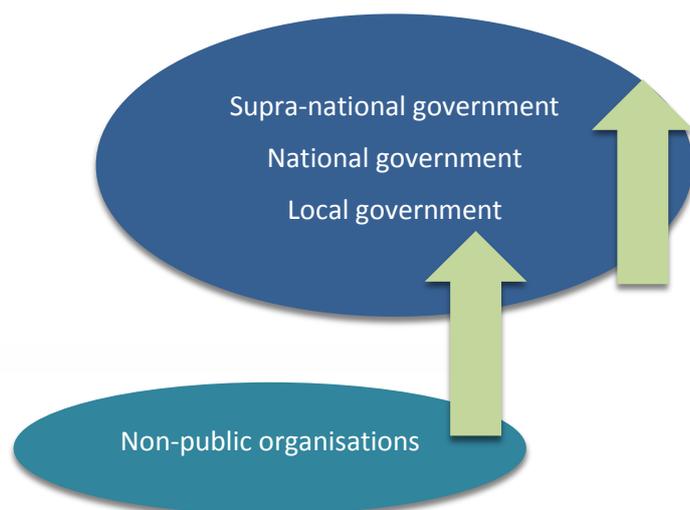
Fig. 2 – Bottom-up processes

Top-down and bottom-up processes are often simultaneous. For instance, through a top-down process, the Department for Integration and Diversity in *Vienna* engages civil society actors in coordination meetings on migration and integration with the aim of developing a common vision and priorities for local integration. At the same time, local NGOs are generally affiliated with specific political parties and have close relationships with individual Councillors, thus being able to exert a strong influence on policy-making and priority-setting through a bottom-up process.

3. IDEAL-TYPICAL CONFIGURATIONS OF MULTILEVEL SETTINGS

Scholten[5] has developed a typology that distinguishes between four ideal-typical configurations of relations between government levels on migrant integration: centralist, localist, decoupled, multilevel governance, which are explained in more detail below:

The *centralist* ideal type exhibits a clear hierarchy and division of labour between government levels. It involves a top-down relationship between the different levels of government, such as control mechanisms to ensure that policy implementation at the local level follows central rules and reflects the central policy frame. The centralist type is expected to produce policy convergence between the different levels of government.

In the *localist* ideal type policy competencies follow the principle of subsidiarity; that is, what can be done locally should be done locally. Local governments do not simply implement policies: they formulate policies, develop local policy agendas, and exchange knowledge and information horizontally with other local governments. The localist type may lead local governments to frame migrant integration policies in a specific local way producing policy divergence between the national and the local level, and between the various entities.

The *decoupled* ideal type is characterized by the absence of any meaningful policy coordination between levels. Hence, migrant integration policies at different levels are dissociated and may even be contradictory. This type can lead to policy conflicts between government levels and tend to diminish policy effectiveness.

The *multilevel governance* ideal type refers to interaction and joint coordination between the various levels of government without clear dominance of one level. This requires forums or networks in which organizations from different government levels meet and jointly engage in meaningful policy coordination on equal footing. The multilevel governance type is likely to engender some convergence between policy frames at different levels, produced and sustained by their mutual interaction. An example of this ideal type is that of *Vienna* which, thanks to its dual status of both city and federal province, participates in consultation with the national government via the 'Conference of Provincial Governors', in national negotiations on allocation of federal funding for migrant integration, and in exchange and coordination platforms with other provinces in a wide range of policy areas, including integration and naturalisation. In Scholten's classification, **multilevel governance is meant as a normative setting which fosters policy coherence through mutual interaction between the different levels of government.**

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[5] Scholten, Peter. 2016. "Between National Models and Multi-Level Decoupling: The Pursuit of Multi-Level Governance in Dutch and UKPolicies Towards Migrant Incorporation", *Migration & Integration*, 17, 973-994

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4. THE EVOLVING ROLE OF CITIES IN THE MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE OF MIGRATION

4.1 The increasing activism of cities

Over the past decades, cities have become increasingly active in developing their own integration philosophies and aware that migrant integration policies are crucial in order to preserve their viability as communities and all residents' wellbeing. In fact, it is at the local level that migrants develop social networks, start their own families, find a job, access services, integrate in their host communities, etc. It is also at this level that negative as well as positive aspects of diversity are experienced most concretely. The greater activism of cities has several implications in terms of multilevel governance of migration.

First of all, local governments have made efforts to lobby at the national level, and both institutionalised and informal relations between national and local governments have evolved in several countries over the past decade. Obviously, more relations do not always meant more cooperation, and disagreements between cities and national governments have risen or increased on several issues such as the management of undocumented migrants or policy implementation[6]. Even when no conflicts arise, cooperation between local public and non-public actors has allowed cities to expand the national approach towards migrant integration. For instance, the City of *Lyon* follows the prevailing French model which emphasizes full and equal access to services regardless of ethnic background. At the same time, being aware that migrants' access to mainstream services may be challenging, it explicitly relies on civil society organisations to develop targeted actions to assist migrants to access general services. The City of *Tangier* has begun to cooperate with local NGOs in order to provide reception to migrants and develop other migration-related activities. The Metropolitan City of *Turin*, despite a recent reduction in resources and competences in the field of migrant integration, is working to foster cooperation among the various Municipalities with the aim of reinforcing and harmonizing measures for refugee integration.

Another consequence of the above-mentioned activism is that cities have turned to new partners outside the national arena in search for knowledge and resources for their policies. For this purpose, they have established migration-focused networks (e.g. Intercultural Cities, Cities of Sanctuary, and to a certain extent the *MC2CM city network* itself) or developed specific working areas on migration within the existing ones[7] (e.g. Eurocities) in order to exchange know-how, and to lobby supra-national institutions, such as the EU, in this policy field[8].

These developments altogether have evolved towards a reinforcement of multi-level governance of migrant integration.

4.2 Challenges and opportunities

The increasing multilevel governance of migrant integration is an opportunity for cities to gain voice and power in decision-making processes beyond their formal competences. This process is generally reinforced when local authorities cooperate with peer-institutions of other cities and with non-public organisations, within the country and at transnational level.

At the same, the growing multilevel governance brings about risks for local actors since they might be called to play a key role in migrant integration on rather informal basis without being provided with adequate resources and decision power to develop proper measures.

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[6] Scholten, Peter, Entzinger, Han, Penninx, Rinus, Verbeek, Stijn (Eds.). 2015. *Integrating immigrants in Europe*, Springer; Scholten, Peter, and Rinus Penninx. 2016. "The Multi-Level Governance of Migration and Integration." In *Integration Processes and Policies in Europe – A Three-Way Process?*, edited by Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas and Rinus Penninx, 91–108, Springer

[8] *Ibidem*

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