Host-stranger relations in Rome, Tel Aviv, Paris and Amsterdam. A comparison of local policies toward labour migrants

Alexander, M.A.
6. Rome

1. Introduction

Rome presents an interesting example of a city's transition from a typical Non-policy response to a policy that aspires to integrate a permanent migrant presence into a "multiethnic city" -- at least in theory. Much of the migrant presence in Rome in the 1970s and 1980s can be characterised as Transient. However, during the 1990s the migrant population in Rome nearly doubled and clear signs of settlement appeared. Today there are an estimated 200 - 260,000 foreign non-EU residents in Rome (around 8-9 percent of the city population), most of whom can be defined as "labour migrants".1

Until the early 1990s the municipality of Rome ignored the growing migrant population in the city. In 1993 City Hall adopted a new integration strategy, based on the outsourcing of nearly all migrant services to Third Sector entities2: Catholic and lay organisations, unions, migrant associations, etc. The Municipality remains directly responsible for coordination and partial financing of these specialised services, as well as making its own services available to foreign residents. The espoused policy aims at the full integration of migrants while allowing them to retain their cultural characteristics.

However, the findings of the case study raise questions regarding this delegation strategy: is it the most efficient way of integrating migrants, in a city where civic (non-state) organisations are more experienced and efficient than the public sector? Or, is it a variation of the previous Non-policy, when the Municipality avoided dealing directly with migrant needs except in emergencies? The following sections address this question, using the typology proposed in Chapter 4 as an analytic framework. Sections 2 and 3 summarise the national and local contexts, respectively, for the development of local policy toward migrants in Rome. Section 4 describes this process, identifying two main phases of host-stranger relations and policy responses, separated by a brief transitional phase at the beginning of the 1990s. The subdivision into policy domains and issue areas is only used in subsection 4.3, which describes the Rome's new policy, after 1993. Section 5 summarises the findings of the case study and addresses the question raised above.

2. The national context

2.1 Immigration to Italy

Within Europe, Italy is considered the first among a group of new immigration countries that were until the 1980s sources of, rather than destinations for, labour immigration. Significant labour migration began in the mid-1970s when the northern European countries stopped authorising guestworker immigration. Due to its geographical location and lax border

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1 For elaboration on these terms (Non-policy, Transient, labour migrants), see Chapters 3 and 4.
2 Third Sector will henceforth refer to all organisations outside the governmental and private sectors.
controls, Italy became the backdoor entry for economic immigration to Europe. Most migrants stayed only for a short time in Italy before heading northwards. But some remained, and by the beginning of the 1980s Italy became a net labour importer (King and Rybaczuk 1993). This recent immigration is part of what Koser and Lutz (1998) termed "the new migration", coming from diverse parts of the world and including a large ex-Soviet and Balkan contingent.³

During the 1980s immigration to Italy increased rapidly with the highest levels recorded between 1984-1990. At this time illegal immigration (through organised smuggling) and the illegal employment of migrants became "endemic" (Sciortino 1999: 237). In the 1990s the migrant presence in Italy took on permanent features including family reunification, enrollment in schools and employment bureaus. There are now an estimated 1,687,000 legally resident foreigners in Italy (of which an estimated 75% are of non-EU origin), and an unknown number of irregular migrants. Regardless of status, the migrant population in Italy is primarily a labour migrant presence.⁴ The vast majority are single young adults and most are well-educated in relation to the work they do in Italy. Italy's ratio of foreign residents to natives (1:35) is still low in comparison with veteran immigration countries (France 1:15, Germany and Belgium 1:10), but for Italians the change over the past decade appears momentous.

A fundamental feature of labour migration in Italy is the irregular status of most migrants (unauthorised residency and/or irregular employment).⁵ This results from a combination of two factors: Italy's restrictive immigration regime, and its large underground economy which means a dual (formal/informal) labour market.⁶ Immigration legislation enacted during the 1980s and 1990s made it difficult to employ foreign workers legally and worthwhile for employers and foreign workers to avoid formal employment, especially considering the inefficiency of state controls. The fact that immigration occurred at a time of economic restructuring in Italy, which created demand for labour in the underground economy, compounded this (Calavita 1994, Reyneri 2001). Estimates of the number of migrants employed in the underground economy range from 350-400,000 and up to 40%-60% of the migrant population, or a sixth of Italy's total informal labour sector (Calavita 1994, Caritas 2001). According to Sciortino (1999: 257), much of Italian immigration policy can be explained by the dual market system, as periodic regularisations serve to "regulate the flow of

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³ See Chapter 3, section 1.
⁴ Of the legal migrants, 60.5% had residency permits for work reasons (Caritas 2001). Most irregular migrants are also labour migrants and their families.
⁵ Frequent regularisations (which are often temporary) confuse the picture between the status of regular and irregular migrants. An estimated three out of four migrants in Italy have been irregular at one time or another (Reyneri 2001).
⁶ Italy's dual labour market consists of a rigid and highly regulated official economy, consisting of very large, unionised firms and public sector jobs, and a large shadow economy estimated to employ up to 17% of the labour force (Sciortino 1999).
migrants from the irregular to the regular market." Changing this would open the Pandora’s box of the Italian underground economy.

2.2 Host-stranger relations in Italy

Italians...pride themselves on their racial tolerance, on their lack of prejudice. But...Italians had no reason to harbour racial prejudice or show it because they had with the exception of the small Jewish communities no long history of distinct racial groups living among them. Rapid immigration and growing economic strains could test quite how deep the much vaunted tolerance of the Italians really is, and how ready society is to welcome strangers in its midst. (Charles Richards, The New Italians, 1994: 256)

In the modern era the Italian peninsula was remarkably homogenous in racial and religious terms. ‘Italianness’ was defined in terms of culture and common lifestyle rather than an ethnic basis, and even during the Fascist period the ideology of a racial basis for Italian nationhood never truly took root. Instead, host-stranger relations in Italy have been based more on regional differences within the country. In the postwar era the gap between the impoverished Mezzogiorno (southern regions) and the relative wealth of the north resulted in large internal migration. Until two decades ago the most common Strangers in northern Italy were labour migrants from the south. In the 1970s the national budget included an item for the integration of "immigrati" from the south, and southern Italian migrants working on construction sites in Milan needed a middleman who could bridge between the Calabrian or Sicilian dialects and the Milanese dialect. In southern Italy it was northern Italians, representing business interests or government, who were the most visible Outsiders.

The presence of overseas migrants as a new type of Stranger is thus fairly recent, and connected directly to the 'new migration' (above). This is expressed in the term extracomunitari which is used to denote the non-European and east European immigrants. While technically referring to non-EU migrants, it "also had strong overtones of exclusion, of describing those who lay outside of the national community" (Ginsborg 2001: 62). Indeed, the reception of the extracomunitari has been on the whole negative, although much less publicised, in comparison with for example Germany. According to Ginsborg (ibid: 64), "the Italian population...was quite unprepared for, and hostile to, the idea of a multi-ethnic Italy."

This reaction dates back to the arrival of labour migrants in the mid-1970s. At first, foreign immigrants consisted of seasonal agricultural workers in southern Italy and domestic help and migrants employed in various informal services in the north. Many were transit migrants who remained for a short period. This period (mid-1970s-80s) has been labelled the ‘invisible stage’ of immigration in Italy (Caritas 2000: 1485).

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7 Today he would be called a cultural mediator. Personal communication with Barbara Da Roit.
8 Italian films offer countless depictions on the theme of North-South host-stranger relations, e.g. the young policeman sent from Rome to serve on a Sicilian island in Respiro.
9 This is elaborated in section 3, below.
Over time, immigrants settled increasingly in urban areas (today nearly half reside in six major cities). This aggravated the already serious housing shortages in the Italian cities, as the migrants concentrated in the same areas that had only recently absorbed large inflows of internal migrants from the south. The result is that foreign newcomers now compete with poor Italians over low-cost housing and overloaded public services. While their role in the secondary labour market is more substitutive than competitive (cf. Reyneri 2001), the "war between the poor" remains a key feature of host-stranger relations in Italy (Pallida 1998).

Immigration was recognised as a political issue in Italy in the early 1980s but rose to the top of the public agenda only during the 1990s. While the public discourse in the 1980s related to immigrants as a labour market phenomenon (i.e. as competition for jobs or as an economic necessity), during the 1990s immigrants were redefined as a public order problem (Calavita 1994). This marks the 'visible stage' in which immigration became a major and permanent issue linked to growing fears of public security.

Several factors shaped the increasingly hostile discourse on immigration during the 1990s. The first was the total inadequacy of official responses to immigration. This was highly publicised in the arrival of boatloads of Albanian refugees in 1991 (the 'first Albanian crisis'), followed by 'waves' of refugees from Somalia, Ruanda and Yugoslavia and a 'second Albanian crisis' in 1997. Although relatively small in numbers, the way in which these migrants arrived and the inability of official systems to deal with them, accompanied by a great deal of media exaggeration, resulted in their being viewed in crisis terms.

The turning point in public awareness toward immigrants was the 'Pantanella crisis'. In July 1990 more than two thousand migrants of various nationalities occupied the former Pantanella bread factory, an abandoned building near Rome's Central Station (Termini). Most of the migrants were homeless and undocumented, awaiting an amnesty, and the occupation was their response to the introduction of the Martelli law (below). Their plight attracted local and national attention, highlighting the desperate situation of migrants' irregularity and lack of housing in Italy. After months of frantic negotiations, during which the municipality of Rome had to call for assistance from the Ministry of Interior, they were evicted in January 1991. Most were eventually rehoused in hostels on the periphery of the city (see below). The Pantanella incident highlighted not only the presence of illegal immigrants and their precarious situation, but also the government's inability to deal with it (Caritas 2000).

Many researchers (Quassoli 2001, Reyneri 2001, Sciortino 1998) have pointed out the link between the exclusionary nature in which Italy absorbed labour migrants (into the informal economy, without civic status, no provisions for housing, etc.) and their image in the host society. Reyneri (2001: 26) analyses several ways in which work in the underground economy, which in itself is "quite legitimised by social consensus" in southern European countries, is stigmatising when connected to migrants. According to Quassoli (2001: 13), the "criminalisation of certain types of immigrant" has been pursued by the media, local citizens and the police, who have made them the scapegoats for a general feeling of insecurity at the
local level. The migrants' irregular status is easily connected to criminality as the *extracomunitari* are associated with the shadow economy, street peddling, petty crime, homelessness and squatting. These phenomena or irregularity existed in the host society as well, but it is the *combination* of the labour migrants' irregularity and Otherness that disturbs many Italians. As Sciortino (1999: 254) noted,

...the cultural diversity has -- regardless of the real situation -- been extremely overemphasised, in order to turn immigrants into a symbolic category easily differentiated from the natives, and functioning as a reserve "other".

Increasingly the policy debate regarding the migrant presence is put in terms of public security and order, and expulsion seen as the solution.10 "Moral alarm" and "moral panic" have been used to describe the atmosphere in Italy regarding immigration throughout the 1990s (Sciortino 1999, Caritas 2000). This has coincided with the general crisis that the Italian political system has undergone in the 1990s, which also gave rise to two anti-immigrant parties. The neo-fascist *Alleanza Nazionale* and the populist *Lega Nord* exploited the apparent breakdown of Order to further politicise the issue of immigration. The economic recession of the mid-1990s made it easy to turn these Strangers into scapegoats for rising unemployment levels. However, the 1990s also witnessed the first large pro-immigrant rallies in Italy. Anti- and pro-immigrant sentiment has since become embedded in the Right-Left divide of Italian politics, ensuring that immigration remains high on the political agenda.

2.3 The Italian immigration regime

Italy's national immigrant regime in the 1980s and 1990s was shaped in reaction to recurring immigration 'crises', creating the sense of a continuous series of emergency ad-hoc policies. An obvious, noticeable gap appeared between national policy documents, based on restricting immigration and limiting their measures to legally resident migrants, and the reality of a large, stable irregular migrant presence, especially noticeable in the cities. Immigration policy has focused on tightening control over the country's borders while responding to emergency situations (e.g. Albanian boat refugees), but its immigrant ('integration') policy has been described as ineffective and laissez-faire (CERFE 1997). After ignoring the phenomenon for almost a decade, a flurry of administrative decrees and laws were enacted in the 1980s-90s.

The aim was to limit labour immigration through stricter border controls and restrictions on the legal employment of foreigners, regularise those migrants already residing in the country through periodic 'amnesties', and extend formal rights and obligations to the legal foreign workers. This culminated in 1998 with Act 40, which attempted to unify the preceding legislation. Act 40 in effect declares Italy as a country of immigration, however, the law's

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10 Based on research in two Bologna neighbourhoods, Quassoli notes (2001: 4-7) that feelings of "abandonment by the institutions and lack of safety" are especially strong among residents of the poorer quarters. These residents represent "a sector of the population which exemplifies the unease and sense of insecurity with regard to the 'foreigners' (in the wide sense of outsiders) who were so well identified by Bauman (1997), and which affects those who have few cultural and economic resources...". 
many lacunae regarding rights of entry and residence (i.e. its definition of legality) make implementation of its lofty integrationist aims extremely problematic (see Box 6.1).

Instead, this legislation has resulted in the exclusion of most labour migrants from the legal framework, by dint of unlawful entry, residence, and/or employment. Meanwhile, measures for the integration of legal migrants, including liberal social rights, are often not applied due to bureaucratic mismanagement. For example, national funds allocated for the primary reception of immigrants (in itself a short-term solution) were inadequate and did not reach the local authorities in time due to bureaucratic inefficiency (CESPI 2000: 857-865).

Thus, while theoretically controlling residency and work conditions, the Italian immigration regime in fact allows migrants to live for years without supervision. And without effective sanctions against employers, the legislation only created more illegal migrants, reinforcing their exclusionary position. In the eyes of the host society, most labour migrants were assumed to be illegally residing in the country, and the periodic regularisations only strengthened the feeling that Italy was incapable of coping with this ‘invasion’ of immigrants (Pallida 1998, Sciortino 1999). It was in this gap between the national-level legislation and the local-level realities that the Third Sector -- and some local authorities -- developed their own responses to migrant settlement.
Box 6.1 Immigration legislation in Italy, 1982 - 1998

1982 Ministry of Labour decree. The first decree regarding labour immigrants, prohibited the issuing of work permits for importation of workers from outside the EC. The first attempt to legalise irregular migrants through an amnesty programme. The regularisation failed (only 12,000 applications) and the permit restrictions led to an increase in illegal entry and employment.

1986 Act 943 ‘Foreign workers and the control of illegal immigration’. Act 943 extended various rights (working hours and social insurance) to legal foreign workers and created another regularisation scheme (118,000 regularised). It was adopted in part because of pressure on the government from unions, Catholic and civil rights organisations, to stop the widespread exploitation of migrant labour. The law created more incentives for employers and migrants to evade formal employment, and its restrictions on entry resulted in more illegal immigration.

Act 39/1990 (the Martelli law). A "patchwork of provisions" passed during an unsteady coalition. It included another regularisation programme (235,000) and more rights on paper for legal migrants, but the brunt of the law dealt with further restrictions on legal immigration.

1995-6 (the Dini decree). Another attempted reform in immigration policy, dealing mainly with expulsions, was a failure. But the success of its amnesty programme (nearly 250,000 regularisations) highlighted the huge number of illegal migrants inside the country.

Act 40/1998 (the Turco-Napolitan law). The most serious attempt to unify the various decrees and laws of the past into one legal framework. The aims: an orderly flow of migration into the country and the establishment of a comprehensive national integration policy. On paper, the law is among the most liberal in Europe. Broad social rights are extended to all legally resident foreigners including non-EU labour migrants and refugees; antidiscrimination measures are authorised in various sectors; multi-culturalism is welcomed. But rather than defining norms for regularisation of irregular migrants, Act 40 created successive circulars and decrees on regularisation, leading to uncertainty and inconsistency in policies, and delegating implementing to local authorities and the civic sector. In effect this formalises the situation already existing on the ground.

Act 189/2002 (the Bossi-Finni law), enacted by the new government of Berlusconi, creates more restrictions on legal entry and on the employment of foreigners, but also proposes a very large regularisation of existing migrants. If this latest amnesty is approved, the number of legal foreign residents in Italy will rise by over 50% increase over the current amount.

Up to 1999 there were over 900,000 applications for regularisation in Italy.

3. The local context: labour migration in Rome and local policy responses

Rome is the Italian city with the largest number of immigrants...Any nostalgia for some by-gone time of ethnic homogeneity simply lacks sense, is indeed unrealistic: we cannot just stop the large migratory inflows. But we can, and we must, manage them with rigour, pragmatism and an open mind. [We can do this] by making the most of the opportunity and the richness that "the other among us" has always provided. (Mayor Francesco Rutelli, "Oltre l'accoglienza", Ufficio Speciale Immmigrazione, Municipality of Rome, 2000, my translation).

The local policies of Rome toward its migrant population present an example of how this city copes with the situation described in the previous section. Although the northern Italian cities experienced foreign migrant settlement several years earlier, Rome today has the largest concentration of stranieri in Italy, with an estimated 200,000 or more foreign residents, most of whom are labour migrants.11 In relative terms, too, the percentage of foreigners in Rome’s population (over 7%) is the highest in Italy.

3.1 Immigrants in Rome
3.1.1 Immigration history

Historically, Rome has always had its share of ethnic Strangers. Beginning with its role as caput mundi, capital of the world’s first truly multi-ethnic empire, and continuing in its role as seat of the Catholic church, the city has served for over 2000 years as a destination for pilgrims, clergy, diplomats, artists and others -- some of whom stayed on. Modern Rome is no longer as important but still serves as the capital city of two states (Italy and the Vatican State), resulting in a proliferation of diplomatic and church-related institutions, as well as hosting several international organisations (e.g. the UN’s FAO) that employ thousands of foreign staff. But it is only in the last two decades that these traditionally ‘welcome guests’ have been supplemented by a new kind of newcomer: overseas labour migrants. Labour migrants are attracted to Rome as a gateway into the EU, as a religious capital (for Christian migrants), and above all as a busy metropolis with a large informal economy. The latter feature makes Rome a destination especially for irregular migrants. While some move on within 1-2 years, others stay on. For them, Rome offers a relatively tolerant atmosphere as well as a network of migrant services offered by church and civic organisations.

Postwar immigration to Rome can be roughly divided into two periods: the transient or ‘invisible’ phase from the mid-1970s 12 to 1990, and the stable or ‘visible’ phase after 1990. The Pantanella episode (see above) is often given as the turning point (Accorinti 1998).

Except for a few small established communities (Filipinos, Egyptians), most of the migrants in the first phase stayed in Rome for a period of several months before moving

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11 The second city is Milan (124,000 foreign residents); the third Turin (under 50,000).
12 Before the 1970s there was a small but steady arrival of mostly female migrants from Cap Verde, Philippines and the Horn of Africa, hired as domestic helpers.
northward in search of better work opportunities than those offered in Rome's informal labour economy. Often the change from irregular to regular status (through regularisations) was followed by migration to another city. In addition, Rome served as a main transit station for refugees and asylum seekers awaiting recognition of their status by the High Commission on the Status of Refugees in Rome, before moving to other countries of asylum. The transient nature of much of the city's migrant population is still significant today.¹³

The 1980s were characterised by an increase in predominantly irregular migrants, especially from Africa. Many found work in restaurants, hotels and street vending. Family reunification, chain migration and troubles in the Horn of Africa increased the number of migrants in the second half of the decade, but it was the 1990s that saw a jump in immigration to Rome. Between 1991 and 2001 the number of registered foreign residents in Rome more than doubled to nearly 170,000 and the number of irregular migrants presumably followed a similar pattern (Figure 6.1).

![Figure 6.1 Registered foreign residents in Rome, 1991-2000](image_url)

Source: Municipality of Rome 2001
www.comune.roma.it/dipsociale/rapporto_demografico/pagina_rapporto_home.htm

It was also in the 1990s that significant signs of migrant settlement appeared in the city. In this ‘second phase’ the migrant presence in Rome acquired "stable if not permanent" features, as many re-assessed their migratory projects (Caritas 2000: 1488). Compared to the 1970s-80s, the nature and composition of the city’s migrant population also changed during the 1990s. There was a rise in the number of migrants from East Europe and the Balkans, as well as South Americans, and a relative decline in the proportion of Africans and Asians (Collicelli at al. 1998).

¹³ A recent survey of migrants registered at the Caritas Foreigners Centre (Centro Stranieri) showed that of 29,537 respondents, sixty percent said their final destination was outside Italy (Caritas 2000: 1488).
Four components have been identified (Accorinti 1998, Caritas 2000) in the current migration phase in Rome (in addition to transit migrants awaiting decisions on their refugee status):

- regular (legal), stable settlement: existing communities, generally well accepted in the host society, maintaining links with the home countries (Filipinos, Chinese, Egyptians, Palestinians);
- irregular (illegal) stable settlement: working in the informal economy in low-skill jobs such as street peddling (e.g. Bangladeshis and Pakistanis, Albanians);
- regular (legal) temporary and unsettled: migrants with work permits, employed as domestics and other low-skill jobs (East Europeans, Latin Americans);
- irregular (illegal) provisory or temporary: migrants without work permits, some moving back and forth between Italy and their country of origin ('pendular migrants', e.g. Poles).

3.1.2 Migrant population and characteristics

169,000 foreigners with residency permits (stranieri residenti) live in Rome, comprising 6.4 percent of the city’s 2.65 million residents (31.12.00).\(^\text{14}\) Estimates of the number of undocumented foreigners living in Rome vary from 30,000 to over 150,000, bringing the total foreign population in Rome to anywhere between 200,000 and 320,000 regular and irregular foreign residents. The discrepancies are partly a matter of how ‘foreigners’ (stranieri) are defined. For example, some estimates include gypsies and residents from OECD countries while others do not. According to the head of research on immigration at Caritas, the number of labour migrants (excluding gypsies and residents from OECD countries) is probably around 200,000, of which 30,000 (15%) are irregular (interview F. Pittau).\(^\text{15}\)

Rather like the city’s architecture, the migrant population of Rome is a jumble of various strata that create a lively and confusing picture. As characteristic of the "new migration", it is extremely heterogeneous in ethnic origin as well as in migratory project. Rome’s migrant population includes various kinds of transit migrants as well as those settling (with or without residence permits), foreigners who have come for study or religious purposes (some of whom stay on), labour migrants and their families, refugees and asylum seekers.

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\(^\text{14}\) According to Caritas’ Dossier Immigrazione 2001, the 151,221 resident foreigners appearing in the municipal Registrar for 2000 are supplemented by those whose residency permits were approved by the end of 2000 but did not yet register at the municipality, plus migrant youth registered under their parents, bringing the total to nearly 170,000 resident foreigners by 31.12.00 (interview F. Pittau).

\(^\text{15}\) Caritas is generally considered to be the most reliable source in Italy for data regarding immigrants. Estimates by the municipality are higher. According to one municipal publication there are 220,000 foreign residents with permits with another 40,000 awaiting residency permits ("Oltre l'accoglienza", 2000). The city’s website estimates the migrant population at up to 260,000 (www.comune.roma.it/sdp sociale/rapporto_demografico). The chief advisor at the Department of Social Affairs estimates there are some 300,000 non-EU residents in the city, including gypsies, Americans and Japanese (interview E. Serpieri).
The ethnic composition is also extremely diverse, with well over 100 countries represented and no dominant ethnic group, or even continent of origin (Figure 6.2). The five largest ethnic communities (Filippinos, Romanians, Poles, Bangladeshis and Albanians) make up only 30.7% of the total.\(^{16}\)

**Figure 6.2 Registered foreign residents in Rome, by continent of origin (31/12/01)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continent</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>31.241</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>25.056</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>54.514</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>30.724</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>26.002</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>169.064</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Caritas di Roma, *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2001*, p.400

Despite the attention given to ‘waves’ of asylum seekers, most of the migrant population in Rome can be classified as labour migrants plus their family members, in terms of their motives for migration.\(^{17}\) The majority are single young adults (between 20-35 years of age)

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\(^{16}\) Currently, the largest communities are: Filippines (23.175), Romania (19.362), Poland (12.022), Bangladesh (9542), Albania (8271), Peru, India, USA and Spain (7000 each), Egypt (6000), China, Sri Lanka, France, U.K., Morocco (5000 each) followed by Germany, Brazil, Nigeria, Yugoslavia, Tunisia, Colombia, Mexico, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Macedonia and Ecuador (4000-2000 each). Figures are for legal residents, Province of Rome, 31/12/2000. There is no breakdown by ethnic origin for the city of Rome, but the city makes up 90% of the foreign population of the Province of Rome (Caritas 2001).

\(^{17}\) Of registered migrants in Rome Province (of which 90% in Rome), work was the primary motive for residence (55%) with another 15% for family reasons, 19.6% reside in Rome for religious reasons and only 0.8% are
and they tend to come from urban backgrounds and have a high level of education (70.8% with secondary or university education) (Caritas 2000).

In terms of employment, Rome’s large informal labour market makes it attractive as a first stage for many labour migrants. There are no statistics on the number of migrants employed in the informal economy, however, the ‘submerged economy’ is estimated to employ about a quarter of the labour force in Rome, and the incidence of migrants is assumed to be much higher.\textsuperscript{18} Certain ethnic niches have developed, most notably in domestic services, where migrants (nearly all women) make up three quarters of the local labour market. Immigrants from Latin America, East Europe and the Far East with higher educational levels are willing to wait longer for more adequate jobs (Caritas 2000). Gender is a major factor, with most of the women working in domestic services, while men work in various temporary jobs such as construction, gardening and street peddling. Over 130,000 foreigners are formally registered as employed in the Province of Rome (2000), of which 8.9% as self-employed. Close to 20,000 are registered as unemployed (5.5% of total unemployment in the province), demonstrating that joblessness is a major problem (Pittau 2001).

The unifying characteristic of labour migrants in Rome is their precarious situation. Most live in conditions of poverty, finding work in the informal economy where they are again open to exploitation. An estimated 2500 migrant women work as prostitutes in the city, controlled by Italian and foreign criminal organisations (Accorinti 1998). A significant number of minors in the migrant population are estimated to miss school in part or entirely. As the state provides little to no protection, migrants in Rome rely on voluntary organisations for bed and board in the short-term. In the long term, they have to survive through self-help networks and their own efforts (Korac 2003). With or without residency permits, the majority of Rome’s migrant population is forced to find lodging in flats rented at black market prices (at best) or sleep in makeshift shelters (at worst). On any given night, as many as 6-7000 are "sleeping on the streets" (interview E. Serpieri). These conditions were first highlighted in 1990 by the Pantanella incident. A decade later, the Caritas dossier (2001: 401) reported on dozens of "mini Pantanelas", mainly in the centre of the city, with hundreds of migrants living in extremely precarious conditions.

The dominant factor in the pattern of migrant settlement is the availability of affordable lodgings, due to the severe housing shortage in the city. A 1996 survey of 6200 regular and irregular migrants revealed a diffused pattern of settlement throughout the city -- migrants find housing wherever they can, often in disused or abandoned areas (cited in ibid). There are however two general settlement directions. The first is in the area south of Termini central train station, containing the neighbourhoods with the highest percentage of foreigners in the

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asylum seekers (Caritas 2001). Only 12.5% of the registered migrant population are minors, mostly from the Chinese, Filipino and Cap Verdiean communities (Pittau 2001).

\textsuperscript{18} One indication of this is that only a third of the migrants registered as employed also appear on the national insurance rolls, meaning that two thirds are employed informally (Caritas 2001).
city. The other is a large zone extending to the north of the city (Map 6.1). However, migrants can be found in all parts of the city, spread fairly evenly between the central, intermediate and outer residential areas (25%, 32% and 43% of the migrant population, respectively). Migrant settlement has been increasing in the intermediate and especially in the peripheral neighbourhoods (Caritas 2000, elaboration on data of Municipal Statistics Office).

Map 6.1 Distribution of registered foreign residents in Rome, by districts (1999)

More than 6% of total population
between 4% and 6% of total population
less than 4% of total population

Source: Municipality of Rome 2001
www.comune.roma.it/dipsociale/rapporto_demografico/pagina_rapporto_home.htm

There are no signs of 'foreign enclaves' in Rome, even in areas with the highest concentration of migrants, although some areas are characterised by specific ethnic groups. The highest incidence of foreign residents is recorded in Districts I (the centro storico, 12.2%)
and XX (north, 9.2%), followed by Districts II and XVIII (over 6% each). The relatively high concentration of foreign residents in District I is not due to any particular community, rather it reflects a stabilised settlement of migrants from various countries. If Rome has an 'ethnic neighbourhood' it is the Esquilino in District I (Box 6.2). The concentration of migrants in Esquilino over the past decade has led to a certain amount of gentrification and some tensions between indigenous and ethnic populations (see section 4.3.4, below).

Box 6.2 The Esquilino: Rome's 'multi-ethnic quarter'

The Esquilino is a once-elegant neighbourhood, just south of Termini Station, which experienced significant loss of population in the 1970s and 1980s like many central city neighbourhoods. Its proximity to the central station and the large number of abandoned houses and shops attracted migrants who rented or squatted apartments during the 1990s. The Esquilino was thus transformed into Rome's first "international quarter" with "side-by-side shops of Filipinos and Bengalese, Eritrean cafes, Chinese restaurants, Indian and Pakistani video stores, small African import-exports and various other businesses of East European and EC citizens" (Accorinti: 36). The centre of the neighbourhood, Piazza Vittorio, became Rome's main ethnic market, with a mix of indigenous and migrant merchants and customers.

The revitalisation of this deteriorated neighbourhood attracted a bohemian crowd in the 1990s, which started a gentrification trend. In the mid-1990s the municipality undertook several beautification projects in the neighbourhood. Recently it relocated the market from Piazza Vittorio to new facilities, following complaints by residents. According to the municipal website, District I reflects the localisation of globalisation processes more than any other area in Rome, and its multiplicity of ethnic groups may make integration more difficult.


3.1.3 Migrant organisation

In general, migrant associations in Rome are fragmented and lack organisational continuity. Only a few communities are well organised (e.g. Senegalese, Filipinos, Bangladeshis) while others (e.g. East Europeans) display little cohesion. Thus, despite the large overall migrant population, active migrant associations number only in the dozens. According to a Censis report, this has to do with the characteristics of the migrants themselves: fragmented into many communities; many migrants are transient and do not invest the energy in mobilisation; many are undocumented and fear to demand recognition. Finally, "many have the Church rather than the state as their reference point" (21.5% have

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19 Concentrations of foreign residents from wealthy countries also affect the statistics (e.g. in District I, which includes both types, often in adjoining neighbourhoods). (Caritas 2000: 1524) Nine other districts contain between 4-6% foreign residents and the remaining districts less than four percent (Municipality of Rome 2001:25).

20 A study carried out in 1994-5 (Ires) counted 230 migrant organisations, but many were on paper alone or did not continue. According to a municipal survey (USI), as few as ten percent of listed organisations were actually active (cited in Collicelli 1998). A later survey by Ires (1998) refers to only 48 associations (34 mono- and 14 pluri-national), with an average participation of less than 100 persons per organisation (cited in Pittau 2001).
residence permits for religious reasons) and so do not need to mobilise politically (cited in Collicelli 1999: 2).

However, the weakness of migrant mobilisation in Rome is also a result of the local political opportunity structure. Migrant mobilisation began around the mid-1980s, with small organisations providing various services to their communities (cultural/recreational, advocacy and mediation with institutions). In the 1990s funding began to flow from the national and regional levels to civic organisations, following a national policy of subsidiarity and delegation of services. However, most migrant associations could not meet the formal requirements and bureaucratic procedures, and were thus unable to compete with Italian voluntary organisations that monopolised the field of services to migrants. After a period of growth, migrant associations entered a period of crisis in the mid-90s, due in part to lack of institutional funding (Accorinti 1998, interview N. Tang).

Until now, very few migrant associations have their own premises and most rely on rented or donated offices, usually under the wing of Italian associations such as Caritas and labour unions. Accorinti summarises (ibid: 53-4) that migrant associations now limit their role to that of intermediaries between their communities and Italian civic organisations. This means that Italian NGOs advocate in the name of the migrants vis-a-vis the host society and its institutions, while migrant associations are left to provide (some of) the cultural and social services (below).

3.2 Local host-stranger relations

In some contrast to the generally negative description of host-stranger relations in Italy (see above) Romans are known for their traditional tolerance-cum-indifference toward Strangers. This attitude is embodied in the Roman-dialect expression, "nu me po’ frega de meno" (roughly translated: I couldn't care less). The inhabitants of a city that has always hosted visitors from far-off are accustomed to foreign students and clergymen, diplomats and artists. When these strangers were supplemented by labour migrants, the same attitude was applied to them. However, this attitude is conditional:

If there are too many on the bus the slogan is quickly forgotten and if one is not ready for cultural change, the first consideration one makes is that there are too many 'others'. In sum 'I couldn't care less' as long as there is no competition (Misiani 1999: 12, my translation).

In fact, Rome has experienced some violent anti-immigrant incidents, mostly in the peripheral areas (e.g. the working class suburb of Nuova Ostia) where competition for cheap housing between migrants and poor Romans was strongest. Discrimination in the labour market is also commonplace, especially against darkskinned Muslims (Caritas 2000).

But Rome is also host to many expressions of empathy toward the newcomers. One explanation can be found in the Italian civic tradition of helping the weakest (in lieu of State

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21 This is based on my interviews as well as observations of others (Misiani 1998: 12, Caritas 2000: 1520).
involvement). This has found expression in both Catholic and Communist ideals of social solidarity that have mobilised Italian civic society over the past decades. The former is particularly strong in Rome. The city boasts a highly developed network of Catholic civic organisations that activate thousands of volunteers in helping 'the downtrodden'. Since the 1980s much of their attention has focused on the migrants who now occupy the bottom rung of the socio-economic ladder in Italy. Catholic street-level activism is supplemented by significant Left-wing political activism in the capital. Thus the largest pro-migrant rallies in Italy have taken place in Rome. While directed at the national government, these have created an encouraging political environment for pro-migrant policies at the local level.

As noted above, during the ‘invisible phase’ of immigration there was little awareness of labour migrants as a new type of newcomer. Most were assumed to be transient, and many in fact were. In the late 1980s the migrant presence became increasingly visible in the capital, but it was the 1990-91 Pantanella crisis that marked the awakening of public awareness to the possibility that Rome was not just a gateway but a final destination for migrants. The drama of the events as amply covered in the local media brought to the fore the debate on the place of migrants in Italian society, raising feelings of solidarity but also strengthening their image as outsiders and lawbreakers.

In the 1990s, as the migrant presence in Rome more than doubled and become more pervasive, the traditional Roman attitude of tolerance-cum-indifference toward strangers has given way to increasingly polarised attitudes. The realisation of permanence of these newcomers has led to an ambivalent response among residents, described as "compassion together with repulsion and a propensity to criminalise [migrants]" (Caritas 2000:1525, based on survey results). As noted above, this image has been continually strengthened by the marginal economic and social position of the migrant population. In Rome, they are most visible when seen sleeping in parks and engaged in informal (and officially illegal) economic activities such as street peddling. A 1996 survey of 1200 residents commissioned by the municipality showed that "the immigrant has come to be perceived as something different (qualcosa di diverso), not integrated, having no part in the social fabric of the city" (cited in ibid: 1534, my translation). According to the director of USI (the municipal office for migrants), the survey revealed that "Romans were not xenophobic, but they were uncomfortable with the irregular situation and expected the municipality to do something" (interview C. Rossi).

3.3 Institutional and Political context
3.3.1 Institutional context

Rome’s local migrant policies are embedded in a governmental hierarchy composed of national, regional, provincial and local authorities. The City of Rome is located within the Province of Rome, which is part of Lazio Region. The City and Province are virtually
synonymous in area and population. The Italian constitution divides authority between the different levels of government but in fact there is much confusion and overlap of competencies. There has been a process of devolution transferring more authority to the provincial and regional levels but the main nodes of power remain the national government and local authorities, with integration policies increasingly delegated to the local level.

The subsidiarity of migrant policy was institutionalised in the 1990s. Act 39/1990 created a national fund for migrant reception centres, to be set up and managed by local authorities. The regional authorities were made responsible for distributing the national funds to different local authorities, in effect deciding where the migrants would be accommodated in each region, according to prepared plans. However, enacted policy differed considerably from espoused policy due to administrative and political problems, so that funding often did not reach the local level, as in the case of Rome (CESPI 2000: 856).

Act 40/1998 further decentralised Italian migrant policy, placing most of the responsibility for integration on the local level. But, while the northern region of Lombardy presented a tri-annual plan (1998-2000) and could thus allocate national funding to its cities (as outlined in the law), Lazio Region was slow and its distribution was more reactive, delaying funds from reaching the city of Rome (ibid).

Institutional problems characterise not only the Lazio region but the City of Rome as well. Palidda (1998: 124-5) has suggested a "tentative typology" of integration in Italian cities which is based on the local economic and institutional context. He contrasts between "cities that are clearly benefiting from economic growth and with effective initiatives [for migrant integration] implemented by local authorities" (such as Bologna), and "cities with an underground economy that are still suffering the repercussions of administrative mismanagement in the past". The latter refers to Rome, among others.

The City of Rome is governed by a mayor and sixty councillors (elected from party lists) who comprise the City Council. Since 1993 the mayor is directly elected and appoints the city's aldermen (assessore) from the city council, each of whom is responsible for a division. The mayor also appoints councillors to serve as 'delegates', a kind of alderman without

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22 Foreign residents in Rome constitute 90% of the foreign population in Rome Province, which in turn makes up 90% of the foreign population of Lazio Region.

23 Decentralisation formally began in 1986 with Act 943 which "tacitly delegated" responsibility for integration policy to local authorities and civic associations. Act 943 called on local agencies "to facilitate, through the civic service [associations], any exigencies of [migrant] integration into the community, eventually including institutionalised consultation" (cited in CESPI 2000 856, my translation). This vagueness is typical of Italian legislation.

24 Out of 30 million lire budgeted, only 3 million reached the Lazio region, of which only 2 million lire reached Rome, only in 1992 (Misiani 1999).

25 Act 40 created a 'National fund for migration policy' to be divided between government ministries (about 20%) and local authorities (about 80%). To receive this national funding, regional authorities must submit budgeted proposals based on existing or planned local integration policies (by local authorities or civic organisations). As usual, the mechanisms of decentralisation are not clearly outlined in the law, creating uncertainty and overlapping competencies (CESPI 2000: 862-3, 875).

26 At the time of writing, Rome's municipal administration comprised thirteen departments and nine extra-departmental offices (Legal Office, Urban Projects Office, etc.).
portfolio in a specific policy area. The Mayor together with the Board of Aldermen are responsible for the overall direction of municipal policy. Some political decisions may also be made through the City Council, in decisions regarding e.g. long-term funding and important public initiatives. Policy is thus in effect decided by the mayor and his appointed aldermen and delegates.

Policies affecting migrants in Rome are largely decided within two divisions: Social and Human Services Policy (Dept. V), and Education and Training Policy (Dept. XI). The alderman heading these divisions are assisted by appointed advisors (consulenti) who are also very involved in policymaking. Overall migrant policy in Rome is made in the Special Office for Immigration (Ufficio Speciale Immigrazione – USI), established in 1993. Formally, USI is part of the Social and Human Services Policy division, but it operates as a semi-autonomous unit with its own budget and staff and separate premises. This institutional arrangement has functioned with little change since 1993, with Claudio Rossi as the acting director of USI since its establishment. Recently, Mayor Veltroni created a new ‘Delegate for Multiethnic Policy’ (delegato per la politiche alla multietnicita)\(^\text{27}\), with signor Rossi appointed as her official consulente. The new delegate position was being set up at the time of writing, and it is too early to see how it will influence migrant policymaking.

The city of Rome is divided into nineteen districts (città) with elected district councils. City districts have several departments (Technical, Administrative and Social-Educational-Cultural-Sport), and serve as the Municipality’s ‘front office’ in direct contact with residents. Decentralisation has shifted more functions to the city districts, which have increasing autonomy primarily regarding social assistance (Collicelli et al. 1998).

### 3.3.2 Political context

Roman politics is closely linked to national politics. In the postwar period the local political context was dominated by two parties, the Christian Democrats (Dc) and the Communists (Pei). In the mid-1980s the Communist-led administration was replaced by a Centre-Left coalition of Christian Democrats and Socialists (Psi), with the Communists in opposition. In the early 1990s the Italian political system was shaken by widespread corruption scandals, known as ‘Tangentopoli’.\(^\text{28}\) This led to the collapse of the Christian Democrat and Socialist parties and the rise of two new parties, the populist Northern League and the neo-fascist Alleanza Nazionale. For the remainder of the 1990s the Italian political system was in profound crisis.

\(^{27}\) Councillor Franca Eckert Coen, from Veltroni’s faction.

\(^{28}\) “Tangentopoli” (Bribesville) was the nickname given to Milan, where the kickback system between the political parties and business was first exposed on a massive scale in 1992. The corruption investigation spread to the rest of the country and led to the downfall of the leaders of all the leading parties and a shake-up of the entire political system.
In Rome this was reflected in the collapse of the ruling coalition under Mayor Carraro (Dc) in 1991, with the Pantanella crisis as one symptom of this breakdown. A second Carraro administration (1992) lasted less than a year. In response, the government appointed a transitional administration, headed by an appointed Commissioner (Commissario) - a not uncommon practice in Italy. The Commissario administration lasted a year, until November 1993. In the 1993 municipal elections, mayors were directly elected for the first time in Italy, and in Rome Francesco Rutelli was elected mayor at the head of a Left-Centre coalition. Rutelli ruled for two terms until he resigned in 2001 to run for prime minister. He was replaced by Walter Veltroni who continues to rule with the same coalition. Thus Roman politics over the past decade have been characterised by a Left-wing majority in city council and a Right-wing opposition which is led by the Alleanza Nazionale.

1993 can thus be regarded as a turning point in the Roman political scene, as well as marking a turning point in local migrant policy, as described below. The following section describing local migrant policies is thus divided into two periods, pre- and post-1993, with a transition period between.

4. Local migrant policy in Rome

4.1 Non-policy, mid-1970s to 1990

From the first appearance of labour migrants in the mid-1970s until 1990-91 the municipality of Rome had no real policy regarding the migrant presence. At first, the municipality may have been simply unaware of their presence among the many other transient residents in the city. In the 1980s as the number of migrants increased the attitude in City Hall could be described as wilful ignorance. Municipal actions toward migrants were limited to ad-hoc solutions to minor crises, i.e. clearing migrant squats following complaints by neighbours. This period is described in the Caritas report (2000: 1481) as "spontaneity bordering on fatalism of the emergency policies". The only significant action in this period was the establishment of a two-person unit (social worker and secretary) set up after the first regularisation programme in 1986, to assist applicants in obtaining residency and work permits as mandated by Law 943. According to one source, this unit was later dismantled (Misiani 1999: 4); according to another, a "Foreigners Office" (Ufficio Stranieri) continued to exist but with little or no effect (Accorinti 1998: 41, 44).

Interestingly, at the beginning of the 1980s two studies were carried out by the city’s research department (Ufficio studi e programmazione) on the migrant phenomenon. The Santori report (1983) outlined the development of Rome into a multi-ethnic city based on the latest census, and indicated the need for a long-range policy. This was followed by a second

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29 The first Carraro coalition (12/1989 - 4/1992) was based on the Christian Democrats, Socialists, Social Democrats and Liberals.
30 In 2001 Rutelli contested the Italian premiership and lost to Silvio Berlusconi. Rutelli now heads the main Left opposition in Italy.
study that noted the problems facing immigrants in Rome as well as the first expressions of xenophobia in the city, and put them down to the absence of an integration policy. Based on a comparison of migrant policies in other European cities (including Amsterdam and Paris), the Ferrarotti report proposed an integration policy that would extend various rights to immigrants, while noting the limits of Italian national policy. Both studies were, in effect, ignored (Misiani 1999).

In the same period (1980s) a variety of Third Sector organisations increasingly turned their attention and resources to addressing the basic needs of the growing migrant presence. The powerful Catholic organisation Caritas was and remains the most important of these, setting up reception and assistance structures for immigrants.31 Other religious organisations (Evangelicals, Jesuits, etc.) and literally hundreds of religious charities in Rome (parish associations, convents, etc.) provided basic services such as food, beds and medical treatment. They were supplemented by secular voluntary organisations (e.g. Casa dei diritti sociali) and the powerful trade unions (CGIL, CISL and UIL). In the second half of the 1980s the three unions each established special sectors to deal with foreign workers. These evolved into offices in Rome advocating for migrant rights and offering various services of a mediatory nature, as well as encouraging migrant mobilisation (offering office facilities, etc.). Union activity paralleled to some extent the role played by the Catholic and voluntary organisations toward the migrants, and indeed the Third Sector was characterised by cooperation, if not actual coordination, between the various bodies (Accorinti 1998: 38-56).

The municipality was aware of these activities and the needs they were addressing, but as with other problems of a socio-economic nature (e.g. homelessness) it was easier to leave them to the better organised and more experienced Third Sector than attempt to tackle them directly.32 In education, for example, migrant children were placed in local charitable institutions that normally cared for children rejected by the formal educational system due to behavioural and family problems. By the early 1990s some of these day-care centres (run by nuns and priests of the Caritas and S. Egidio charities and subsidised by the municipality) had more migrant than indigenous children. This ran counter to the new policy of the Ministry of Education which promoted the integration of migrant children in the schools.33 Meanwhile, the appearance of older migrant children in local schools "caught the city unprepared", with teachers demanding help and extra resources (interview P. Gabrielli).

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31 Caritas is an enormous Catholic organisation that specialises in social issues. It has branches throughout Italy and beyond. The Rome diocese of Caritas includes hundreds of lay employees and volunteers involved in social activism.

32 Political corruption also played a role in local authority negligence of this and other areas in which there was no kickback money to be made (cf. Ginsborg 2001: 181-186).

33 From the early 1990s the Ministry of Education gave the green light through various policy circulars for the integration of foreign children in the school system. Circular 205, for example, allowed schools great flexibility in promoting 'intercultural education' and suggested dispersing pupils between classes to avoid 'ghettoizing' the foreign pupils. But it was only Act 40 (1998) that made local authorities responsible for obligatory education (ages 6 to 15), including migrant children (interview E. Todisco).
A later interview with the Alderman for Social Affairs (Giovanni Azzaro, 1989-1992) reveals the situation in the municipality at the end of the 1980s:

...there was no budget item regarding the specific question [of migrants]. There was no organisational structure, excepting an office of two junior employees who dealt above all with the question of refugees. There was no culture of assistance for migrants. When I became alderman, this problem was not presented to me as a priority nor did I receive indications [from others] of its emergence. In sum, the municipal administration was not in a condition to confront the problem that exploded in 1990, when I was told that the Pantanella building had been occupied by extracomunitari.  

(quoted in Misiani 1999: 4, footnote 7, my translation)

4.2 Transition, 1990-1992

The half-year-long Pantanella crisis (7/1990 - 1/1991, see above) culminated with the evacuation of the migrants from the building and the first concrete and sustained steps by City Hall to find lodging solutions for migrants (the Pantanella evacuees). This was done in a crisis atmosphere, with various ad-hoc solutions considered, such as housing them in disused school buildings. Finally, the municipality hired two private hostels on the city outskirts in which the Pantanella evacuees were placed. This arrangement turned out to be wholly inadequate and charges were later raised of shady dealings between the hostel owners and the Carraro administration. The hostels were later closed down by the Commissioner. The municipality then tried (1992) to set up a joint agency (together with Caritas and the labour unions), to rent private dwellings in the city and sublet them at subsidised cost to the migrants. This attempt failed as well. Meanwhile, most migrants continued to live in rented flats, abandoned buildings, hostels run by civic organisations and in growing numbers on the street (the Termini train station became and has remained a focal point of migrant homelessness).

In the aftermath of Pantanella, public sentiment was that "something must be done" (interview C. Rossi). The attitude within the Municipality had also changed. City Hall started to recognise that Rome was not just a transition point for migrants moving northwards, but a place of migrant settlement as well. But while beginning to to face up to this, the migrant presence was still largely perceived as a public order problem within the Carraro administration. It was only under the appointed transitional administration that migrants in Rome were redefined as a "social problem that must be addressed with a long-term policy" (ibid). Nevertheless, at the end of 1992 the Alderman for General Affairs proposed that an office be established to deal specifically with the foreign population in Rome. Just before Mayor Carraro was replaced by the Commissario, City Council approved the establishment of the Special Office for Immigrants (Deliberazione no. 313, Consiglio Comunale, 27.11.92).

4.3 A new migrant policy, 1993 -2001

The Ufficio Speciale Immigrazione (henceforth USI) began operating in February 1993 as a quasi-autonomous unit within the Division of Social Affairs and Health. Although set up to deal with the migrant presence (overwhelmingly composed of labour migrants at that time),
the office included sections dealing with gypsies\textsuperscript{34}, refugees and asylum seekers, and returning Italian emigrés. The new office had a staff of just over twenty, of which ten dealt with immigrants (\textit{immigrati}) i.e. not with the other population groups. In practice, there appears to be a mixing of services for immigrants and refugees/asylum seekers.

The two terms of the Rutelli administration enabled a period of continuity so that we may speak of a single policy phase lasting from 1993 until at least 2001. During this period the principle actors responsible for municipal migrant policy, besides the mayor, were the Councillor for Social Affairs and Health (Adriano Piva) and the acting head of USI, Claudio Rossi.\textsuperscript{35} The Councillor for Educational Policy (Fiorella Farinelli) also played a major role. At the time of writing it appears that the new Veltroni administration (elected June 2001) is continuing the Rutelli policies, despite some changes in the Social Affairs and Education divisions. The size of USI’s staff has slightly diminished to just under twenty, of which seven now deal with immigrants. USI’s budget has risen from 1.78 billion lire in 1993 to 12.76 billion lire in 2000 (USI Direzione, 2001).

Rome’s migrant policy since 1993 adopts a two-pronged approach:\textsuperscript{36}

1. Making general welfare services available to migrants (\textit{l’assistenza sociale}). USI coordinates the provision of social services to migrants, i.e. making services provided by national and regional law to all residents of Rome, accessible also to eligible migrants.

2. Providing migrants with specific integration services (\textit{sostegno all’integrazione}). The main policy tools for providing specific integration services are ‘reception centres’ which provide lodging and various integration services, ‘education centres’ for migrant children, and a vocational orientation agency. These targeted services are managed by Third Sector organisations which provide the services through contracts with USI. In addition, the city’s Education Division provides pedagogical tools for schools with foreign pupils.

Rome’s new migrant policy is based on a strategy of delegation, i.e. institutionalising the provision of integration services through local Third Sector entities. This leaves the municipality primarily with a coordinating and supervisory role. The role of USI, as the main municipal agency responsible for migrant policy, is to manage the outsourcing of migrant services to local NGOs, coordinate and oversee the services provided, and channel government and municipal funding. The actual daily management of the services is up to the subcontracted organisations. This delegation strategy is not particular to Rome’s new migrant policy, and characterises social services policy in Italy since the 1980s.\textsuperscript{37}

During the first Rutelli administration, the main aim of this policy was to establish a network of orientation structures and reception centres that would prevent ‘new Pantanellas’.

\textsuperscript{34} The gypsies (\textit{nomadi}) were largely immigrants as well, arriving from the various parts of Yugoslavia, Albania and later from Romania.

\textsuperscript{35} Rossi’s official title was \textit{Responsabile, Ufficio bilancio e programazione} in USI. Rossi was the acting director of USI and not the formal director-general (a common phenomenon in Italian administration).

\textsuperscript{36} Interviews C. Rossi and F. d’Amore: Comune di Roma 2000.

\textsuperscript{37} Personal communication, Barbara Da Roit.
By the mid-1990s an array of integration services was outsourced to civic organisations, including a few migrant associations. Following national legislation (the 1990 Martelli law), most of the integration services were provided through the reception centres. In the second Rutelli administration, City Hall aimed to expand the local migrant policy "beyond reception"\(^{38}\) to longer-term integration. Integration services were expanded and the municipality streamlined the channelling of government money provided through Act 40 (1998) to civic organisations to which these services were outsourced. The Veltroni administration aims at involving migrants in decision-making, but it remains to be seen to what extent this espoused policy will be enacted.

In the following sub-sections the various components of the new policy are described, following the ordering scheme (policy domains and issue areas) of the typology.

### 4.3.1 Juridical-political domain

**Civic status**

National immigration policy, as noted above, has resulted in a large proportion of immigrants in Italy living for years in an irregular status. At the same time, periodic ‘amnesties’ opened the door for increasing numbers of undocumented migrants to become regularised (Box 6.1). Regularised migrants receive temporary stay permits (which can be renewed), providing access to basic social services. One of the aims of the new municipal policy is to institutionalise this process. Until now, it is the Third Sector organisations which have assisted migrants in the complicated bureaucracy this involves. Since 1994, assistance in obtaining residency status and information on rights is provided directly by USI to all new immigrants in Rome (who must register at the USI office). This is one of the few services that the municipality provides directly to migrants.

However, it appears that the bulk of the work in this area is still delegated to NGOs who provide assistance through the reception centres or in their offices. The difference is that now this work is coordinated and subsidised through USI (which, in effect, channels government money that the Municipality receives). In the late 1990s USI set up a cultural mediators service to assist migrants in their contacts with public services and government agencies (see below). USI now has a pool of cultural mediators who may be called upon to accompany migrants encountering problems in various stages of the serpentine bureaucratic process, such as residency registration.

This service only relates to regular (or regularising) immigrants. Tens of thousands of irregular migrants in the city continue to depend on NGOs that specialise in the rights of irregulars. The largest of these is Caritas, which provides all newcomers in Rome who register and pass an interview at its ‘Foreigners Centre’ (Centro Stranieri) with a Caritas ‘identity card’. This not only gives them access to various Caritas services (health, soup kitchens, ...
hostels, Italian courses, etc.) but also serves as a kind of alternative ID card. In 1999, 13,560 immigrants (regular and irregular) from 101 countries were thus registered, providing them with an informal semi-regular status that is recognised by various authorities, at least within Rome (interview M. Accorinti).

**Migrant representation and organisations**

Consultative councils to represent migrants were set up in Italy in the second half of the 1990s. A Provincial Forum of the Foreign Community has existed on paper since 1996, and Act 40/1998 decreed the creation of consultative councils at the regional level. These were to include municipal officials and NGO representatives including migrant associations, but have had little to no relevance (ibid).

In Rome, the possibility of migrant representation in city council first came up in 1994, in a proposal to assign one non-voting councillor who would represent all the foreign residents in the city. This was strongly opposed by the local Right-wing opposition, and the Alleanza Nazionale launched a court appeal (which was rejected) against the proposal. After prolonged debate the proposal was approved but never implemented, in a typically Italian fashion, due to bureaucratic delays and its impracticality. According to USI’s director, “the idea became uninteresting” because, despite good intentions, one councillor could not possibly represent the needs of all the foreign communities in Rome, from labour migrants to EU nationals, foreign students and clergy residing in the city (interview C. Rossi). The new Veltroni administration has espoused a policy of involving migrants in developing the city’s integration policy. In 2001 the new mayor proposed to have four non-voting councillors (conseglieri aggiunti) who would represent only the non-EU residents in the city (EU residents now have local voting rights), plus one councillor in each of the city district councils, i.e. 23 non-voting councillors in all. These would be elected by the (non-EU) migrant communities. At the time of writing, municipal regulations were being reformulated to make such a proposal possible.

Claudio Rossi, now Advisor to the newly appointed Delegate for Multi-ethnic Policy, believes that elections for the migrant councillors could take place within a year, but admitted there are problems, not least perplexity among migrant activists about the representativeness of these councillors. Meanwhile, he has set up a working group that includes migrant representatives and other NGOs to address these questions. This may evolve into some kind of permanent forum (“assemblea”) that would include the migrant advisory councillors together with representatives of migrant associations. This initiative, however, was still in its infancy at the time of writing.

Meanwhile, the municipality’s relation to migrant mobilisation is limited to an essentially delegatory function with a few migrant organisations, and an ‘observatory’ in USI that monitors the migrant organisations in the city. While Rossi has “occasional meetings” with migrant associations, there is still no formal structure in the relation between the city and migrant organisations. This has to do in part with the relatively low level of migrant
organisation in Rome as described earlier, but is probably due more to a general tendency in City Hall to maintain informal working relations with the migrant organisations, apart from its contractual relations with those organisations providing services.

4.3.2 Socio-economic domain
Reception centres for primary lodging

The two most basic, immediate needs of migrants arriving in Rome are to find shelter and work. The first need is obvious, the second derives from the absence of any minimal income or welfare provision (welfare benefits are low to non-existent, for Italians as well). The core of Rome’s new migrant policy are reception centres (centri di accoglienza) that provide new migrants with several months’ lodging and meals, plus several services. According to Act 39:1990 (the Martelli law), local governments became responsible for providing primary lodging to immigrants (including refugees/asylum seekers) for a period of up to nine months. The context for this was the disastrous housing situation of immigrants, which the Pantanella occupation in Rome highlighted.

On this background Rome conceived a new lodging policy, based on a network of reception centres to be run by ‘custodian organisations’ (organizzazioni affidatarie) and supervised by USI, with funding provided by the city from the budget allocated by Act 39. The first contracts were signed with several Catholic and lay NGOs in 1994, for a dozen centres providing about 300 beds. This arrangement has continued until now. Since 1995 USI has published half a dozen ‘public announcements’ (bande pubbliche) to organisations for provision of the reception centres, with the services they should include (e.g. board, basic medical and orientation services, etc.). The public announcement provides the general framework while all the rest, including the size of the centre, location, type of clientele (e.g. single men or families) and budget is planned by the organisation, which submits a proposal to USI. If approved by the alderman, a contract is signed between USI and the organisation, for one-two years. Most of the organisations run more than one centre, and there has been almost no turnover in the organisations involved (Caritas, Jesuit Refugee Service, Case dei Diritti Sociali, etc.)

Although the municipality claims to have developed the network of services offered to migrants, in many cases it was the organisations that initiated and proposed a service to USI, or already ran an existing service (lodging, canteen, etc.) which was adjusted to meet the municipal requirements. Often the services offered by the organisation were greater than those required by the municipality. Indeed, contracts for services are often based on provision of a set number of beds, meals, etc. for clients referred by USI, in an already existing NGO service. Concurrently, the organisation continues to serve other ‘clients’ (e.g. indigenous homeless) in the same structure.

\[99\]

\[95\] Currently there are 15 such centres (in 18 structures) with a total of 489 beds (about half for single men and half for single women and single mothers with children).
The 15 reception centres offer lodging for some 1200-1500 people per year (Municipality of Rome 2000). Newcomers place a request at the USI office and are put on a waiting list. When a place is vacated, USI refers the next person on the list to a specific centre. But the huge gap between the demand and supply of places results in a waiting time of up to 1.5 years (interview C. Russo). It is precisely in this first period that newcomers most desperately need this service.

Reception centres as service centres

The idea behind the reception centres as devised in 1993-4 was to provide primary lodging and reception services primarily to labour migrants. In addition to bed and board (1-2 meals), the centres offer a set of reception and orientation services, including accompaniment of bureaucratic processes (requests for permits, national health insurance, etc.): basic medical and psychological aid. Italian language courses, orientation toward job and house searching for adults and scholastic orientation for minors. These services were developed over the years in response to demonstrated needs of migrants (most were initiated by the NGOs and then proposed for municipal funding within the contracts, others were proposed by USI). This scheme was based on constructing a ‘personal project’ for each lodger (e.g. psychological and vocational counselling, orientation toward finding permanent accommodation) with the aim of his/her ‘insertion’ into Italian society. The target population was to be labour migrants who had failed to find lodging and work on their own, and would ‘end up in the street’ if not helped. The lodging period was designated as three months followed by another eight if necessary. This included migrants expected to eventually leave Rome as well as those expected to settle in Rome.

This reception scheme, designed for the labour migrant population, became obsolete from the mid-1990s due to the influx of asylum seekers and refugees into Rome. As there were no specific lodging facilities for this population (often arriving in desperate circumstances), USI directed them to the centres. As a result, labour migrants now occupy less than 10% of the places in the centres. Refugees and asylum seekers, however, have very different needs than the original target population. While the labour migrants were mostly young single adults, the new ‘clients’ include many families, minors (often unaccompanied) and elderly. Their needs are more immediate, including grave medical problems. and unlike most of the labour migrants, they do not have a minimal knowledge of Italian. The 3/8-month ‘personal project’ scheme did not fit this new population, and by 1997 the centres were “in crisis” (interviews E. Serpieri, C. Rossi).

USI has tried to adjust to this new population by fixing the staying period to nine months. But for asylum seekers who now make up the majority of lodgers, this is insufficient. Altogether, the needs of this population (e.g. medical treatment) are far greater than

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30 Eligibility requirements include arrival in Italy within the last 3 years (five years for refugees/asylum seekers) and a residency permit.
41 For example, Italian language courses were originally initiated by NGOs using volunteer teachers. They are now partly funded by USI.
anticipated under the original reception centres scheme. This raises the costs per ‘client’ beyond those calculated in the contracts by which USI funds the services, so that the NGOs are forced to cover the difference. Meanwhile, municipal funding for the centres, already considered insufficient by the organisations, is decreasing (interviews G. Russo, F. Campolongo, M. Accorinti).

The solution proposed by City Hall is a new refugee centre, to be opened in 2002. This will permit the municipality to house asylum seekers and refugees for a short period and then refer them to reception centres in other cities where the pressure is not as great. The reception centres will then lodge less refugees and more labour migrants. However, considering the numbers involved, this will still be insufficient.

A recurrent criticism regarding the reception centres policy is that all the services it offers are inaccessible to newcomers outside the centre, including those on the waitlist, i.e. during the first weeks/months when they are most required. More seriously, the policy continues to ignores the irregular migrant population, which makes up most of the homeless in the city. This means that inevitably the vast majority of migrants in Rome are left to their own devices to find work as well as shelter. Again, it is the Third Sector organisations that must cope with these needs as best they can.\footnote{2}

**Cultural mediators service**

One of the main initiatives of Rome’s new migrant policy is a cultural mediators service, based on similar initiatives in other European cities. ‘Veteran’ migrants go through a months-long training programme run by an Italian NGO,\footnote{3} thereafter, the accredited "linguistic-cultural mediators" work part-time at the USI office as well as being assigned to the reception centres and specific tasks. The project began in the mid-1990s and now includes some sixty cultural mediators. As the pool of mediators grows (by about twenty each year), the service should expand to include mediation services at the city district level (in areas with a high proportion of foreign residents). For 2002, the municipality budgeted some two billion lire (about one million euros, from national funding) to provide cultural mediators in all the neighbourhood health clinics (interview E. Serpieri).

**Labour integration service**

Unlike the guestworkers who arrived in northern European cities in the 1960s and were directly recruited into large industrial plants, labour migrants in Rome have to find work in a labour market dominated by small and medium-sized firms operating largely on personal connections, and a large shadow economy. While migrants can find work in various ‘dirty, demeaning and dangerous’ jobs, they face difficulties finding work that suits their background and training. To improve the fit between the labour migrant population and the local labour market, the trade unions and the municipality (USI) established *Agenzia Chances* in 1995. The service is meant to provide migrants with information and orientation on finding

\footnote{2}{A number of municipal homeless shelters are also open to all comers, Italians and migrants, regardless of legal status.}

\footnote{3}{CIES - Centre for Development Information and Education.}
work as well as aiding potential entrepreneurs. With a staff of ten, the agency is jointly
financed by the unions and the municipality (the latter budgeting the equivalent of nearly

Six agency branches in the city (most in trade union offices) receive some 10,000 migrants
per year. Based on these, the agency has created a data bank on migrant work demands and
skills. However, Agenzia Chances can only provide general orientation to (legal) migrants, as
Italian law prohibits public agencies from dealing in job mediation. The service also offers
vocational orientation courses, but these serve a tiny proportion of unemployed migrants
(some 350 a year) and entrepreneurs (eighty individual and twelve cooperative enterprises set
up with the agency's help, according to its director) (interview A. Scalso).

The effectiveness of this service is questioned by many. Its vocational training courses are
considered inappropriate for most migrants who need to find immediate work of any kind.
The shortcomings of the service are not blamed on Agenzia Chances (as noted above, it is
prohibited from mediating between employers and migrants) but on the national context,
specifically the de jure or de facto inaccessibility to the legal labour market for most migrants.
Beyond questions of utility, this migrant-targeted service has the mark of a Pluralist policy,
based on the assumption of permanence and the need to integrate migrants in the city over the
long term.

Education
Catholic activists began raising public awareness of the problems faced by migrant
children in Rome in the early 1990s. As noted above, the previous administration was unable
and unwilling to cope with this problem, beyond subsidising some of the charities. In 1993
the Rutelli administration proclaimed the integration of migrant children as one the priorities
in its new migrant policy. The new education policy toward migrants is based on two tracks.
The first involves setting up a network of separate educational facilities for migrant children,
to address their specific educational and cultural needs. These centres are run by civic
organisations, and some are organised by ethnic origin (e.g. African children). The second
track relates to the integration of foreign children within the existing school system, and
helping schools adapt to a multi-ethnic student body. As an espoused policy, this is clearly
Pluralist. In terms of enacted policy, the municipality has taken some steps.

The first track began in 1994 with seven summer schools involving 150 children. In 1996
the first three annual centres were active and by 2000 there were 24 annual educational
facilities: six day-care centres (for pre-schoolers) and eighteen 'educational centres' (for
school-age children), with over 800 children participating. All the centres are run by NGOs,
including a few migrant organisations. USI funds and supervises the centres through yearly
contracts with the NGOs. Since 1999 five of the 'educational centres', all of them run by
migrant organisations, focus specifically on the need (raised through the migrant
organisations) to provide special support to migrant children with potential integration
problems. The five centres are divided by "culturally homogenous regions" (sub-saharan

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Africa, South America, etc.). The justification for this approach, as it appears in the municipal publication ('Oltre l'accoglienza', p. 4), reveals a clearly pluralist approach to integration:

If the awareness of one's own identity, also the foreigner['s own self-awareness], is not stable, then recognition [of others] becomes difficult, acceptance unclear, exchange impossible. And in this case, the response may be of flight, of revenge, of assimilation, but not of integration. Based on this theme, five of the centres pay particular attention to reinforcement of the [children's] language and culture of origin...

Regarding the integration of foreign-origin pupils in the public school system, the municipal policy also follows a Pluralist line based on support for 'inter-cultural' pedagogical activities. In 2000-01 there were 12,368 migrant children (2.1% of the student body) registered in schools in the Province of Rome, an increase of 33% over the previous school year. Foreign pupils are found in some three-quarters of the schools in the city, with an average of only five percent foreign pupils per school. However, some schools have thirty and even forty percent foreign students (this may include foreign students from wealthy countries as well). More importantly, an estimated 2500 foreign children are outside the school system (Caritas 2001, Pittau 2001).

In this second track, the Rutelli administration (specifically the Alderman for Education) initiated several projects, including training teachers in intercultural pedagogy. During the first five years these initiatives were "fragmentary" and mostly funded from other programmes. Apparently, the municipality realized that extra-curricular teaching hours funded by a government project were being used mostly for helping foreign pupils, so it formalised the practice (interview R. Attento). In the second Rutelli administration a more systematic approach was adopted. In 1998 a small 'Intercultural unit' was set up within the Education Division's Psychopedagogic Service. According to one official, the aim is to "go beyond the reception of migrant children, to raising consciousness of multiculturalism..getting people used to pluralism in the schools" (interview P. Gabrielli). The Intercultural unit produces teaching materials, multi-lingual pamphlets for migrant parents, coordinates courses for teaching Italian to foreigners, and is involved in various multicultural projects within the school system (see below).

But according to a school director, most of the initiatives for dealing with the presence of migrant children in local schools (e.g. setting up language labs) come from the schools themselves. Until now the municipal Education Division appears to serve more as a support service for schools and a channel for government funding, rather than providing the city's schools with an overall strategy on how to integrate migrant children. The relatively limited measures taken until now in this area are apparently a result of the local authority's limited capabilities and resources rather than a lack of willpower (interview R. Attento).
4.3.3 Cultural-religious domain

Rome's migrant policy since 1993 is unabashedly Pluralist in its rhetoric. According to the publication "Oltre l'accoglienza" (p. 6, my translation).

In these [past] years we have definitely understood that a correct and efficacious integration passes necessarily through the acknowledgement on equal conditions of the values of the 'other'.

The long-term integration of migrants is described as a two-way process in which the municipality must "come to terms with negative stereotypes and prejudices" by promoting the "awareness of the conditions and culture of the others and making them aware of ours..." (ibid).

The new policy includes several initiatives under the heading of "cultural integration": making courses on Italian language and culture at Rome's Popular University accessible to migrants at very low prices; a "documentation centre on immigration and interculture" (documenting migrant culture in Rome, planned publication of writings by migrants, etc.) and the cultural mediators service (above). Most of these initiatives are well-meaning but affect a very small segment of the migrant (and indigenous) population.

The municipality also takes credit for an "Information and Consultation Centre on Migrant Women's Rights" (Centro di informazione e consulenza sui diritti delle donne immigrate). The latter was opened in 1999 on the premises of Caritas' "Centro Stranieri", and is managed jointly by migrant and indigenous women's organisations. This raises again the question, to what extent is this a result of municipal policy, apart from the financial support the city provides? A "multicultural centre" has also been proposed, but until now most organised meeting places for migrants are provided by civic organisations.

As noted above, the new Intercultural Unit supports projects that raise awareness in schools and has several initiatives of its own. The most ambitious project is a multicultural festival for schoolchildren, begun two years ago. The four-day Festa di Intermundia takes place in Piazza Vittorio, the geographical centre of migrant life in Rome. In addition, a planned "cycle of monthly manifestations" (sports, debates and the like) was meant to "promote the visibility" of the migrant communities in Rome in 2001 but had little visible impact (interviews P. Bacchetti, M. Migliano).

So far, large cultural events organised by the municipality have rarely included the participation of artists and performers from the migrant communities. These publicly organised expressions of multiculturalism tend to stress the folkloristic features and are used more as touristic events. This appears to demonstrate an exploitative rather than a truly genuine 'embrace of difference', at least in this issue area. The real campaigns in Rome to raise public awareness of the migrant presence and tolerance of their Otherness remain in the hands of the religious and secular civic organisations (Collicelli et al. 2000, Caritas 2000).

For example, the introduction of halal menus in schools with a significant number of Muslim pupils is planned for the next school year. 2002-3.
4.3.4 Spatial domain

Private housing, squatting and irregular settlements

Housing is probably the most difficult problem for migrants in Rome. There is a severe housing shortage, with demand for low cost housing far exceeding supply. Of the estimated 200,000 or more migrants in Rome, most find lodging in overcrowded flats (often using informal kinship networks), some live in abandoned buildings, others in irregular settlements on the outskirts of the city, and an estimated 6000-7000 sleep on the streets. Of the latter, almost all are irregular migrants (interview E. Serpieri). As noted, the reception centres provide short-term solutions to only a fraction of the migrant population.

Non-Italian tenants (especially irregular migrants) are commonly exploited with no interference from the law against illegal practices such as overcrowding and overpricing. Migrant squatting of abandoned houses began in the 1980s and came to the public eye in the 1990s, Pantanella being the most famous case. The Pantanella eviction was exceptional—the municipality has traditionally turned a blind eye to the phenomenon, evicting squatters only when conflict with local residents became too strong to ignore. From 1999 the municipality has apparently taken a stronger stance against the phenomenon in the city centre, but some migrant squats were regularised in the periphery.

In the peripheral areas of Rome, illegal slums (borgate abusive) have existed for decades and these offered another alternative. Municipal policy toward these settlements alternates between benign neglect, periodical regularisations and evictions. One example is the settlement of ‘Casilino 700’, an old airfield occupied by several thousand gypsies plus several hundred Moroccan migrants. In 2000 the city cleared out this settlement, transferring a thousand of the gypsy inhabitants to a newly constructed caravan camp nearby. The remaining squatters, including the Moroccan migrants, moved to another burgata nearby (interview M. Brazzoduro).

Social housing

Until recently, non-EU residents were not eligible for social housing (rent-controlled public housing) in Rome. In 2000 the municipality opened a new waitlist for public housing planned or under construction, extending eligibility to all low-income residents of Rome and specifically including residents from countries outside the EU. While symbolically important, this had no practical effect on the migrant population. The reason is that demand for public housing far exceeds supply, so that the chances of obtaining a rent-controlled flat are miniscule for newcomers (including Italians from outside Rome). Currently, public housing

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45 For example, Bangladeshi migrants (both regular and irregular) rent flats in Esquilino for 150-250,000 lire per room, living as many as twenty in a flat (interview M. Brazzoduro).

46 The current ‘Plan for Economic and Popular Housing’ (PEEP - approved 1987) approved zoning for the construction of 92,000 rooms, of which only a part would be Case Populare. As of 1997, only a few thousand units had actually been constructed.

47 By law, a waiting list exists for eligible candidates, based on criteria including residency permit and income levels. The criteria are ultimately determined by the municipality.
accounts for only 6-7% of the housing stock in Rome.\textsuperscript{48} This stock is fully occupied and there is almost no turnover, at least such that reaches the social housing waitlists. This is due to the prevalent custom of occupants 'handing over' their flats when they leave to relatives or others, making the waitlists largely irrelevant.\textsuperscript{49}

In sum, social housing does not pose a solution for the housing problems of the migrant population. Nevertheless, the public announcement giving migrants access (in theory) to public housing, together with the regularisation of migrant squatters in public housing in Rome’s peripheral neighbourhoods (repeating the actions carried out in the 1970s for Italian squatters), caused resentment among the indigenous poor. In their eyes, public housing should be reserved for Italians only (interviews C. Conti, M. Brazzoduro).

\textbf{Open spaces policy}

Concentrations of migrants in certain public spaces in Rome have created "stigmatised spaces" (Caritas 2000: 1526). The most common use of public space is, unfortunately, the presence of homeless migrants in parks and other open areas. These are converted into small camps at night. An example is the Colle Oppio park overlooking the Coliseum, where hundreds of migrants congregate during the day and sleep at night under plastic awnings. For the most part, the municipality condones such 'irregular settlements', lacking any alternative solutions. In other areas the congregation of migrants is discouraged, especially if complaints by residents reach a critical mass. A particular case occurred in Piazza Vittorio in Esquilino (Box 6.2), which has long hosted the local open-air market. With a large number of unlicensed stalls run by migrants, this became known as Rome's 'ethnic market' (although many of the merchants are indigenous). As the neighbourhood gentrified, local opposition to the irregular market grew and a number of residents committees campaigned to 'clean up' the area.

It is difficult to gauge the extent to which the controversy over Piazza Vittorio contained a xenophobic element, beyond the obvious NIMBY reaction (Not In My Back Yard) to the unlicensed market stalls. According to a local newspaper,

some residents use such language as 'inclusion' and 'multicultural', while others complain about 'the attempt to occupy the territory.' In response the leaders of the immigrant communities claim that when they arrived 90 percent of these shops were abandoned (Wolffstan, 2001).

City Hall ignored the protests of Italian residents for several years, until they organised to withhold their local taxes. In September 2001, the municipality finally set up two alternative sites for the market stalls, nearer to Termini station. It appears that the municipal response to

\textsuperscript{48} This includes some 25,000 units owned by the Municipality and some 65,000 units owned by a public housing institution, IACP, which manages the \textit{Case Populari}, or social-rent flats.

\textsuperscript{49} Due to the severe housing shortage in Rome and a native distrust of the allocation system, many flats were squatted immediately on (or even prior to) their completion. After prolonged negotiations during the 1970s, the squatting was regularised. A system then developed by which social housing flats were illegally handed over (for a 'fee') by their occupants to the next occupant.
the Piazza Vittorio debate was an attempt to accommodate all the sides, including the immigrants, after delaying for as long as possible.

5. Summary

Rome's policy reactions to migrant settlement since the 1970s can be divided into two main periods, separated by a two-year transition. The first phase can be summarised as a Non-policy response while the second is more difficult to identify in terms of the typology.

As a gateway city to Europe, Rome has had transitory migration for decades as well as a significant presence of other foreigners, but labour migrant settlement only began in the 1980s and became significant in the 1990s. Until 1990 the municipality of Rome was unaware of, or wilfully ignored, the growing presence of immigrants in the city. Despite two internal reports in the early 1980s describing the necessity of a long-term integration policy, the city made no attempt to formulate, let alone implement, any such policy.

In the Juridical-political domain, the only action undertaken was 2-person unit set up to assist in the regularisation process as required by the 1986 law. The municipality took no part in the public debate that preceded the law, in which civil rights organisations and unions lobbied the government to incorporate immigrants into the legal framework and thus limit the extent of irregularity. In the Socio-economic domain, the city took no actions regarding the enrollment of migrant children in its schools, although it did support some Catholic charities providing childcare. The growing presence of migrants in the informal labour market (most visible in street peddling) and the local housing market (overcrowding, squatting) were also ignored. Only in extreme cases did the city react with ad-hoc solutions when these situations could no longer be ignored.

In sum, a typical Non-policy reaction characterised this period, which lasted for over a decade. Why so long? One explanation is that migrant needs were not yet of a sufficient volume to arouse the attention of the municipality. This appears unlikely at least from the mid-1980s, when many civic organisations in Rome set up or expanded their existing services in response to obvious migrant needs. City Hall was not unaware of these activities, and indeed channelled some public funding to them. A more plausible explanation for municipal inaction is that Rome's local authority was simply incapable of dealing with the problems arising from the migrant presence. This fits Palidda's (1998) third "scenario of integration" (in this scenario, lack of integration) in cities characterised by a large underground economy and administrative mismanagement, such as Rome.

However, another possibility suggests itself, based on prevalent attitudes toward the labour migrant phenomenon within the municipality. Misiani (1999) and others observed the low awareness within the local political class toward migrants prior to 1990. In this the local authority reflected local society and to a large extent attitudes in the national government, during what Accorinti termed the 'invisible' phase of immigration. Low awareness may be part of the answer, but the analytical framework proposed in this book allows us to refine this.
The host-stranger relations model raises the possibility that municipal decision-makers were not completely unaware of the increasing number of labour migrants in the city, but that they continued to regard them as transient. Considering the historic dominance of other transient foreigners in Rome (clergy, students, diplomats), and the city's role since the mid-1970s as a temporary station for labour migrants heading north, this assumption is plausible. As far as the local authority was concerned, labour migrants were one more type of transient Stranger, temporarily in the city.

Indeed, much if not most of Rome's migrant population until the mid-1980s can be characterised as transient, and even now temporary or pendular migrants make up a significant proportion of foreigners in Rome. In this regard, the Non-policy reaction of Rome may be an understandable reaction, at least up to a point. From the late 1980s, however, a noticeable gap appears between the changing migrant situation (growing numbers and signs of settlement,) and the city's continued Non-policy response. The gap between the growing needs of the new population, and the inadequate response by local and national authorities, was partly compensated for by extensive Third Sector activity. Indeed, the substitutive role of civic society is one characteristic of the Non-policy phase, as we see in the other case studies.

Rome's Non-policy phase came to an end in the 1990 Pantanella crisis. The following two years (1991-1992) can be described as a transition period. This also corresponded to a change from one administration to another, in which City Hall was temporarily ruled by a government-appointed Commissioner. In this phase, key players in the municipality increasingly acknowledged the permanence of the migrant presence and the need to address it with long-term solutions. As a first step toward the new policy a 'Special Office of Immigration' (USI) was established. On the ground, however, the post-Pantanella years were characterised by ad-hoc ‘emergency policies’ and the new migrant policy was only implemented after the administration of Mayor Rutelli took office in 1993.

The latest phase in Rome's policy reaction continues until now, in a decade in which City Hall has been governed by a Left-Centre coalition. The Rutelli administration (1993-2001) adopted an official long-term integration policy which openly recognised the migrant presence as permanent. The new policy proclaims Rome as a multi-ethnic city in which the migrants should be fully integrated, without losing their cultural identity. The rhetoric of the Veltroni administration (2001 - present) continues in the same vein. In terms of espoused policy, then, this phase falls within the Pluralist policy type.

The city's enacted migrant policy, however, is based on a strategy of delegating most of the migrant-specific services to the Third Sector. Many of these services were already in place prior to 1993, initiated by (primarily Catholic and trade union) organisations. Other services (e.g. the "education centres" for children) were developed as a result of the new policy. Some are managed by migrant organisations. The summary that follows, of municipal actions across the various policy domains, shows that Rome's new "integration policy" cannot be easily labelled as a Pluralist-type response, as City Hall would claim.
In the Juridical-political domain, several changes are noticeable since 1993. In the area of civic status, the municipality provides some assistance to migrants in the bureaucratic process involved, either directly (at USI) or indirectly (in the reception centres). Regarding migrant representation, a 1996 proposal for one non-voting migrant representative on city council was impractical and never implemented. A new proposal is now being pursued, for 23 non-voting councillors, representing only non-EU residents, in the city and district councils. If implemented, this move clearly represents a Pluralist-type policy. However, at the time of writing this proposal was in its infancy and migrant organisations appeared sceptical.

Meanwhile, the municipality’s relations with (a few) migrant organisations remain limited to their role as service providers. In short, there is a large gap in the Juridical-political domain, between the espoused policy which is clearly Pluralist, and the enacted policy.

In the Socio-economic domain, the new policy is based on delegating nearly all the services to NGOs, mostly within the framework of the reception centres. These services are almost entirely managed by civic organisations and many existed before the municipal policy. The amount of financing and coordination that is provided by City Hall is also a matter of debate. Clearly there is a difference between municipal involvement before and after 1993, but there remains a large gap between the municipality’s intentions on integration, and its actual involvement on the ground. Municipal funding for migrant-related services falls far from meeting actual migrant needs and some of the services are seen as ineffectual, to the point of being largely symbolic (e.g. Agenzia Chances). Finally, the new migrant policy only relates to migrants with residency permits, and thus continues to ignore a significant proportion of the city’s actual labour migrant population.

The delegation strategy adopted by Rome is not problematic a priori, but the question arises to what extent is City Hall taking credit for the work of civic organisations and simply channelling the funding provided by the State? In other words, is the new migrant policy largely continuing the old (Non-)policy of avoiding responsibility and letting others do the work?

As far as the municipality is concerned, the delegation strategy is the most efficient way to meet migrant needs, considering the weakness of local public services in contrast to the proven experience of local NGOs in this area. According to USI, the problem until recently was the dispersed character of these services, with various organisations having different agendas, clientele and resources. With the new policy, the local authority sees its role primarily as initiating, coordinating and financing migrant-targeted services, rather than providing them directly.

The civic organisations providing services to migrants have a different view. There appears to be a consensus (common throughout Italy), that the Third Sector can better provide migrant services than the public sector. Both sides also have a vested organisational interest in this arrangement. There also appears to be agreement that the establishment of USI has improved the provision of services for regular migrants, as a result of the coordination and the
extra funding provided. However, NGO representatives note that some, if not most, of the services that the municipality claims as part of its new migrant policy were initiated by civic organisations, and were operating before 1993. Furthermore, the public funding provided through USI which should theoretically cover 100% of the costs in fact covers much less, while creating more bureaucracy.\(^{50}\)

Some activists also question the utility of USI's coordination efforts. The most damning critique raised by NGOs regarding the new migrant policy is that the overall basket of services set by the municipality (whether subcontracted to them or provided directly by USI and other municipal agencies) is altogether insufficient, in light of actual migrant needs. A primary example is the lack of places in reception centres. These criticisms expose the gap that exists between Rome's espoused policy, which is clearly Pluralist since 1993, and its enacted policy in the Socio-economic domain as well.

In the Cultural-religious domain, municipal initiatives under the label of "cultural integration" may be well-meaning but affect a very small segment of the population (e.g. subsidising university courses on Italian language and culture and setting up a documentation centre on the migrant communities in Rome). The migrant women's centre, for which City Hall takes credit, was an NGO initiative which is managed by civic organisations on the premises of Caritas. The establishment of an "Intercultural Unit" in the Education Division, and its activities to promote pluralist attitudes within schools, clearly represent a Pluralist-type policy, even if its actions are limited by resources. Finally, there is a large gap between municipal rhetoric and enacted policy regarding the promotion of public awareness and tolerance of cultural Otherness. Here the few municipal actions appear to be more public relations exercises than substantive efforts to sell the new vision of Rome as a multi-ethnic city.

In its Spatial policies, Rome's inaction regarding long-term housing, the presence of informal migrant settlements and other uses of public space appears to be a continuation of the previous Non-policy, alternating between benign neglect and evictions. Despite a symbolic change (making migrants eligible for social housing waitlists), there has been no real change. One outcome is that regular and irregular migrants face the same problems (and lack of public assistance) in finding lodging in Rome. City Hall's inaction in this area can be considered a result of the general context (lack of local authority control over the housing market), rather than attributed to its attitudes or expectations toward migrants. In short, while City Hall acknowledges the settlement of a significant migrant population, it cannot do much about it in terms of their housing needs.

Summarising municipal actions in each policy domain, we see that in some issue areas the local authority has taken substantial actions, while in others the changes are more cosmetic. Clearly, Rome's migrant strategy since 1993 differs from the previous Non-policy phase:

\(^{50}\) Public funding covers between forty to fifty percent of the real costs of services provided to migrants, according to some NGO representatives (interviews G. Russo, M. Accorinti).
migrant settlement is acknowledged; a long-term policy has been adopted; a municipal unit with a budget is coordinating it; various measures have been implemented. But while the espoused policy is clearly Pluralist, the delegation strategy that the city has adopted, which leaves most of the implementation on the ground (and most of the planning and development of new services) in the hands of civic organisations, raises questions. Can we place Rome's policy response over the past decade in the same category as that of cities such as Amsterdam? It would be stretching the typology to characterise this as a Pluralist-type policy.

Instead, we may characterise this phase (1993-2002) as one of an espoused Pluralist policy which has only been partially enacted. The reasons for this, however, are rooted more in the context of a weak local authority and a strong Third Sector, rather than in municipal attitudes toward labour migrants. In the latter, Rome has made a substantial leap from a Transient-type to a Pluralist-type attitude.