



Inter-Agency Task Force on
Social and Solidarity Economy

The Crucial Role of Social and Solidarity Economy in Partnership with Local Governments in Hosting Refugees and in Achieving SDGs

Case Study of the City of Madrid in Spain

Sonia Franco Alonso

*Education Multiculturalism Human Rights - EMDH
Spain*

Ana Ballesteros Pena

*University of A Coruña and University of Toronto
Spain/Canada*

June 2019

Draft paper prepared in response to the
UNTFSSSE Call for Papers 2018

**Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals:
What Role for Social and Solidarity Economy?**

The responsibility for opinions expressed in this document rests solely with their author(s), and availability on the SSE Knowledge Hub for the SDGs (unsse.org) does not constitute endorsement by the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSSE), or its institutional members, partners or observers, of the opinions expressed in it. No publication or distribution of this document is permitted without the prior authorization of the author(s), except for personal use.

This document is made available on the SSE Knowledge Hub for the SDGs in the form and language in which it was received.

Abstract

Migration is a global phenomenon that concerns all countries and through which it is possible to reduce the poverty of migrants themselves in their countries of origin and host countries, as well as to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs in their original and host communities. If we focus on migration and host countries, this involves the different levels of the State but above all, by proximity, it concerns in a very special way the local level, close to the day-to-day life of the citizens in the guarantee of their rights and regarding the quality of life of migrants, particularly vulnerable for asylum and refugee seekers. That is why, local governments, as Madrid City Council, have a concrete responsibility to provide social protection and foster the integration of all migrants and refugees in their host societies. The case study of the city of Madrid shows us that SSE has a crucial role in combating some of the significant difficulties facing refugee and migrant populations, such as overcoming social exclusion and xenophobia, and accessing decent work. However, despite migration can be a powerful poverty reduction tool, which can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, SSE in Madrid has not served over the past four years as a catalyst for this.

Keywords

SSE, SDGs, Local governments, Migration, Refugees, ODA

Bio

Sonia Franco Alonso

Specialist in designing, managing, monitoring and evaluating social, human rights and international development cooperation projects for public administrations, international organizations, civil society and the private sector.

Ana Ballesteros Pena

Specialist in social research and project evaluation, both in the public and private sectors, in the areas of migration, drug addiction, gender, penal and penitentiary system, labour market and international cooperation, among other topics.

Introduction

The movement of people between different countries and continents is a constant and global phenomenon that has been undergoing historical transformations depending on a multitude of economic, social, cultural and geostrategic factors. An estimated 258 million people are international migrants¹, and in our increasingly interconnected world, millions more are impacted through family ties, economic exchanges and cultural connections. Migrants represent approximately 3% of the world's population, but they produce more than 9% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), some USD 3 trillion more than if they had stayed at home². According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) nowadays "nearly one person is forcibly displaced every two seconds as a result of conflict or persecution"³.

Within this framework, and particularly in the case of Spain, beyond the different migratory flows that have arrived in the country more intensely since the 1990s, it is necessary to highlight the recent arrival of refugees from very different countries. However, the deficiencies of the Spanish protection system have been pointed out in a multitude of reports from the academia⁴, civil society⁵, the Ombudsman⁶, the Council of Europe⁷, etc. The major weaknesses of the Spanish protection system are the following:

- The system is not designed according to integration needs and is characterized by its non-operativeness.

¹United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), *The Sustainable Development Goals Report* (New York, NY, USA, 2017).

Available from:

<https://undesa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=9f608346a69644c387ddc9df29f12b43>

²International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC), *Global Migration Indicators* (Berlin, Germany, 2018).

Available from: Insights from the Global Migration Data Portal www.migrationdataportal.org

³United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Figures at a Glance. Statistical Yearbooks* (Geneva, Switzerland).

Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

⁴Iglesias, Juan; Urrutia Asua, Gorka; Buades Fuster SJ, Josep; Estrada, Cecilia; Vicente, Trinidad, *Acoger sin integrar. El sistema de acogida y las condiciones de integración de personas solicitantes de asilo y beneficiarias de protección internacional en España* (Bilbao, España, 2018).

Available from:

<https://repositorio.comillas.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11531/25887/Acoger%20sin%20integrar%5b5%5d.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁵ Amnistía Internacional, *El asilo en España: un sistema de acogida poco acogedor* (Madrid, Spain, 2016).

Available from: https://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/resources/ai_asylumspain.pdf

⁶ Defensor del Pueblo - Spanish Ombudsman, *Asylum in Spain International Protection and Reception System Resources* (Madrid, Spain, 2016).

Available from: https://www.defensordelpueblo.es/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Asylum_in-Spain.pdf

⁷ Council of Europe, *Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Spain, 18-24 March 2018* (Strasbourg, France, 2018).

Available from: https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016808d2c31

- Lack of foresight and vision in the medium and long term. There is no asylum and refugee policy as such: the "Spanish system moves to the blow of tragedy".
- It does not fit into the European Union's common asylum system because it does not exist as such.
- Spain's policy on migration (whether of asylum seekers or not) is fundamentally centered on the armoring of borders.
- Reception and integration have been delegated by the State to Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), what has often led to the misconception that the State is no longer responsible for the realization of rights. However, it is still the State that is primarily accountable for its human rights responsibilities.

In 2017⁸, Spain recorded the greatest number of international protection applicants since the first Spanish Law of Asylum (1984), rising to 31,120. However, the percentage of people who finally got a positive reply almost halved compared to 2016. The system of international protection that processes applications and programmes for accommodation and inclusion are saturated. At the end of February 2018, there were 42,025 people waiting for a decision on their case.

The population that has applied for asylum or that has been recognized with the status of refugee or subsidiary protection has the possibility of working under the same conditions as Spanish citizenships. And in fact, their incorporation to the labour market constitutes a fundamental concern for them and is identified as a key element in their integration process. The barriers faced by this group are diverse: on the one hand, the ignorance of the language or the misalignment of their abilities with respect to the needs of the local market, and on the other hand, the barriers associated with the persistence of racist and xenophobic attitudes, as well as labour discrimination against foreigners. However, the Spanish State has been unable to date to adequately assume its employment obligations and responsibilities as it does not allocate sufficient funds for this purpose.

Within this framework, Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) must become a successful strategy to promote the labour integration of refugees given the values it defends. This line of intervention would contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically to SDG 1, SDG 8, SDG 10 and SDG 16, as we will see in detail below, and should be conceptualized within the framework of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)⁹.

This paper is focused on the experience of the city of Madrid since 2015, when the City Council Government explicitly expressed its willingness to welcome the refugee population that was arriving. In parallel during these four years, the local government has developed different

⁸ Source: Anuario Estadístico del Ministerio del Interior de España/ Statistical Yearbook from the Spanish Ministry of the Interior.

Available from:

<http://www.interior.gob.es/web/archivos-y-documentacion/documentacion-y-publicaciones/anuarios-y-estadisticas>

⁹ United Nations, *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Part II. Global compact on refugees* (New York, USA, 2018).

Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf

initiatives to promote the social economy, through local and international projects, and in 2018 presents its Social Economy Strategy. The key purpose of this paper is therefore to analyze the extent to which the initial Refugees Welcome's message, from the Madrid City Council, impregnated local social and solidarity economy policy and how the different initiatives in this field managed to reach refugees and asylum-seekers and, in parallel, also if somehow the social and solidarity economy entities, which on many occasions also develop lines of intervention in the field of international cooperation, developed a surveillance work on the way in which this local government carried out the immigration policy and how it reported on immigration regarding the Official Development Assistance (ODA).

International framework: the GCR and the SDGs

On the one hand, in 2016, the United Nations (UN) undertook a process of analysis, debate and reporting towards a GCR which has been adopted in 2018, with the intention that States parties to that GCR should assume obligations towards refugees. The starting point was the agreement on a Comprehensive Refugees Response Framework¹⁰ (CRRF) and the main milestones were set out in the Roadmap¹¹ published on 17 May 2017¹².

In this international context, States are those that grant asylum status, but Cities are actually in the forefront of addressing the humanitarian context, often with very limited resources. Cities play therefore a key role in integrating refugees into both society and the economy, and some of them have nowadays publicly declared participatory hosting policies that are very different from their States. The UN organizations have highlighted the role of both the local authorities but also the private sector in the protection of refugees¹³.

Interestingly, the GCR recognizes the need to equitable burden-and responsibility-sharing among all United Nations Member States, “(...) but together with other relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to: international organizations within and outside the United Nations system, including those forming part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent

¹⁰ Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/comprehensive-refugee-response-framework-crrf.html>

¹¹ Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/towards-a-global-compact-on-refugees.html>

¹² In this very same vein, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) has been working on different drafts (after consultations with the international bodies involved and with civil society, including SSE, a zero draft was published in February 2018, and a draft one was released in April 2018) that focus on policies that manage in a global, legitimate and effective way this reality that is acquiring new profiles and therefore requires new responses, beyond the basic international instruments (The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols.

Available from: <https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/geneva-conventions/overview-geneva-conventions.htm>

¹³ The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants¹³, adopted in 2016, meant the assumption that the responsibilities over migrants and refugees have to be internationally shared. It also gave to UNHCR the task of building upon the CRRF in order to develop a “global compact on refugees”. The compact has been endorsed by the General Assembly before the end of 2018. The Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, was held in Marrakech, Morocco on 10 and 11 December 2018. This Intergovernmental Conference was convened under the auspices of the General Assembly of the United Nations and held pursuant to the “New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants” which decided to launch a process of intergovernmental negotiations leading to the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

Movement; other humanitarian and development actors; international and regional financial institutions; regional organizations; local authorities; civil society, including faith-based organizations; academics and other experts; the private sector; media; host community”.

By recognizing that, very frequently, are local authorities and other local actors first responders to large-scale refugee situations, and among the actors that experience the most significant impact over the medium term, the GCR advocates for the need to support these actors. And within this framework, the GCR makes the case for the exploration of public-private partnerships but encouraging the private sector to advance standards for ethical conduct in refugee situations, to share tools to identify business opportunities in host countries, and develop country-level private sector facilitation platforms where this would add value. Although the GCR does not mention explicitly SSE, the text “invites the international community to foster inclusive economic growth for host communities and refugees. States and relevant stakeholders will offer resources and expertise to promote economic opportunities, decent work, job creation and entrepreneurship programmes for host community members and refugees, including women, young adults, older persons and persons with disabilities (...)”, aspects with are included inside this alternative of the current capitalist system.

On the other hand, the SDGs as the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all also pay attention to refugees’ situation and their social integration, including the economic, to host communities. Within the main targets of the SDGs, we can identify the following links between refugees and economy:

SDG 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

1.3. Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

1.5. By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

SDG 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

8.8. Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

SDG 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.

10.2. By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

10.3. Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

10.7. Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

SDG 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

16.7. Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

16.b. Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Spanish context: main figures

Since 2013 and especially as a result of the so-called “refugee crisis of 2015 in Europe”, there has been a progressive increase in applications for international protection in Spain. In the period 2007-2016, refugees in Spain barely represent 1.22% of the total number of applicants from the European Union (EU). This proportion has hardly changed in the last two years despite the increase in applications¹⁴. Thus, in 2016 Spain only took in 1.29% of all refugees who entered the EU: a proportion far removed from Spain's economic and political weight in the EU. In contrast, Germany hosted 34.41% of asylum seekers in the same period 2007-2016¹⁵. In addition, the 11,165 Syrian refugees hosted in Spain during the war and displacement crisis (2011-2016 period) barely represent 0.16% of the five million Syrian refugees hosted in countries neighboring Syria (Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq, etc.).

It should be pointed out that the applicants in Spain in this period of time come from more than 120 countries. The main nationalities of origin are: Syrian (26% of the total), Ukrainian (16%) and Venezuelan (11%). Other key sociodemographic variables are: majority male population (63% men and 37% women), working age (22% under 17 years, 54% between 18 and 34 years, 23% between 35 and 64 years and 1% over 65 years).

With regards to the evolution of the political and administrative response to people seeking and benefiting from international protection in Spain, the fact is that the increase in the number of asylum seekers seriously strained the very precarious Spanish international protection system, causing its crisis in 2015. This led to a situation of lack of protection for many of them, who finally opted to continue their journey towards northern Europe¹⁶. Factors, such as the lack of protection and reception, especially at the southern border, the lack of installed capacity for the reception and processing of asylum files, closely linked to the budget cuts produced during the economic crisis, as well as the continuous political hesitations regarding the system and model of international protection, contribute to the understanding of the Spanish situation.

In fact, in September 2017, the Government of Spain only resettled 631 of the 1,499 refugees committed from neighboring countries: 44% of the total agreed, two years after the decision of the Council of Europe. Regarding relocation from Italy and Greece, the government has only relocated 8% of the quota committed in September 2017: 1,257 out of 15,888.

¹⁴ Source: Anuario Estadístico del Ministerio del Interior de España/ Statistical Yearbook from the Spanish Ministry of the Interior.

Available from:

<http://www.interior.gob.es/web/archivos-y-documentacion/documentacion-y-publicaciones/anuarios-y-estadisticas>

¹⁵ Source: Eurostat - Asylum statistics. Available from: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics

¹⁶ Defensor del Pueblo - Spanish Ombudsman, *Asylum in Spain International Protection and Reception System Resources* (Madrid, Spain, 2016).

In 2015, 3,240 applications for international protection were resolved in Spain, of which only 31% were accepted, and the vast majority under subsidiary protection status. Thus, in the worst year of the refugee crisis, 69% of applications were rejected. In the EU, the average acceptance in the same year was 52%. These figures are undoubtedly very low. Taken literally, they would speak of the country's low commitment to EU-driven solutions for the refugee population. Spain is currently lagging considerably behind in the processing of applications.

Legislative framework in relation to the right to refuge and asylum in Spain: keys in the employment context

In Spain, specifically, Law 12/2009¹⁷ states that the right to asylum (art. 2) is the protection afforded to non-EU nationals or stateless persons who are recognized as refugees under the terms defined in article 3 of this Law and in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, done at Geneva on 28 July 1951, and its Protocol, signed in New York on 31 January 1967¹⁸.

In accordance with Additional Provision Twenty-First of the Act, persons applying for international protection shall be authorized to work in Spain after six months from the filing of their application, provided that the application has been admitted for processing and has not been resolved for a reason not attributable to the person concerned.

The granting of the right to asylum or subsidiary protection implies, among other rights:

- Authorization to reside and work in Spain indefinitely under the same conditions as Spaniards. Therefore, the national employment situation does not apply.
- Access to nationality with five years of legal residence (article 22 of the Spanish Civil Code) for those who obtain refugee status.
- Access to Social Security.

However, despite the favorable legal framework, in Spain the majority of asylum seekers and refugees, who are subject to international protection, are concentrated in the most vulnerable positions of the social precariousness, even below the population of foreign origin¹⁹. An ethno-stratification process characterized by precarious work, economic insecurity and residential segregation in the popular and multi-ethnic neighborhoods of the Spanish urban and

¹⁷ Ley 12/2009, de 30 de octubre, reguladora del derecho de asilo y de la protección subsidiaria/ Law 12/2009, of 30 October, regulating the right to asylum and subsidiary protection.

¹⁸ Refugee status (art. 3) is recognized to any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, membership of a particular social group, gender or sexual orientation, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or to a stateless person who, lacking a nationality and being outside the country where he previously had his habitual residence, for the same reasons is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (...).

The right to subsidiary protection is granted to persons from other countries and to stateless persons who, without qualifying for asylum or being recognized as refugees, but in respect of whom there are serious grounds for believing that if they were to return to their country of origin in the case of nationals or, in the case of stateless persons, to their former habitual residence, they would face a real risk of suffering some of the serious harm (...).

¹⁹ Iglesias, Juan; Urrutia Asua, Gorka; Buades Fuster SJ, Josep; Estrada, Cecilia; Vicente, Trinidad, *Acoger sin integrar. El sistema de acogida y las condiciones de integración de personas solicitantes de asilo y beneficiarias de protección internacional en España* (Bilbao, España, 2018).

metropolitan periphery. This precarious social integration of the asylum seekers and refugees leads to processes of social exclusion in some cases, because refugees start trajectories marked by social disaffiliation, persistent unemployment and the emergence of residential situations and income limits. Situations of exclusion that need stable social, economic and personal support.

City of Madrid Case Study

Since 2015, Madrid City Council carried out various initiatives, both declarative and practical, aimed at addressing the situation of refugees. Throughout this section, the main key lines that took centre stage will be traced, based on the information that has been able to be compiled. An initial precaution has to do with the quality and quantity of the data available. As there is no document that compiles the initiatives promoted and the statistics, the lines of action included in this section exemplify the measures developed, but without claiming to be exhaustive.

Regarding the institutional declarations, promotion of networks and platforms, since 2015, particularly as a result of the Mayor of Barcelona launching the International Cities of Refuge Network on 28 August 2015, several city councils in Spain and abroad, including Madrid, joined this initiative. This was accompanied by a symbolic act that led to the deployment, both in its headquarters and in other municipal offices, of a large poster where was written "Refugees Welcome".

Within the same framework of the declaratory line, on September 30, 2015, all political parties comprising the municipal plenary of Madrid approved the institutional declaration "Madrid city, land of asylum" in which the City Council undertakes to strengthen the network of reception of refugees²⁰. Within the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), in April 2016 the Spanish Network of Municipalities for the Reception of Refugees (Red Española de Municipios de Acogida de Refugiados) was created. The aim of this network is for the member town councils to provide newly arrived people with a dignified life beyond the first emergency reception and to guarantee their incorporation and integration in cities. Of particular interest is the FEMP Institutional Statement regarding municipal coordination of refugee assistance²¹.

In the same vein, the Madrid City Council joins the "Safe Passage" Manifesto, signed by a multitude of social organizations, trade unions and political parties from all over Europe²² and

²⁰ To do so, the document claims the collaboration with organizations working to defend the Right of Asylum from a non-assistentialist approach, focusing on the autonomy and dignity of refugees.

Available from:

<https://www.madrid.es/portales/munimadrid/es/Inicio/Actualidad/Noticias/Madrid-ciudad-tierra-de-asilo/?vgnextfmt=default&vgnextoid=c7cd6949ce5df410VgnVCM1000000b205a0aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=a12149fa40ec9410VgnVCM100000171f5a0aRCRD>

²¹ Available from:

http://www.femp.es/sites/default/files/multimedia/declaracion_institucional_refugiados.pdf

²² The document urges the EU and its Member States to order the creation of humanitarian corridors, and to make it possible, on the basis of respect, for these people to be granted asylum among the 28 Member States of the European Union.

also endorsed the Resolution on Refugee Women, approved by 181 social organizations on 23 April 2016²³.

Regarding the practical implementation of this showcase of initiatives as a policy, as part of the Strategic Plan for Human Rights of the Madrid City Council (2017-2018)²⁴ is established as one of the goals, within the framework of the initiative of Shelter Cities and municipal competences, different measures to guarantee the rights of asylum seekers and refugees. Specifically, as part of the direct competence of the City Council, highlights the adoption of a “Plan for the reception and care of asylum seekers and refugees, so that, they can find in Madrid a new city in which to live with dignity”. This Plan for the reception and care of asylum seekers and refugees had to include measures to guarantee comprehensive social care for these people, especially those who arrive in the most vulnerable situations, women victims of violence, refugee girls and boys, as well as their equal access to municipal services and programmes. This Plan should at least include measures for labour insertion, housing and legal advice through the appropriate management formula. However, this Plan for the reception and care of asylum seekers and refugees was never published²⁵.

At the same time, Madrid City Council had publicly given the figure that between 2016 and 2018 has earmarked 4 million Euros to co-finance projects aimed at improving the lives of refugees. The City Council said it has granted grants to assist refugees, mostly affected by the conflict in Syria, with the intention of improving their lives, especially at the critical time when they have been forced to leave their country.

Specifically, according to Madrid City Council, the Spanish Refugee Aid Committee (UNHCR) received € 1,350,000 for the development of 4 projects aimed at assisting refugees from the Syrian conflict in Jordan, Lebanon and other nearby countries. The United Nations Agency, UNRWA received € 1,050,000 for the execution of 4 projects. The Spanish Red Cross received € 700,000 for the development of 2 projects aimed at covering the basic needs of Syrian refugees living in the camps of Ritsona and Skaramagas in Greece. In addition, the Spanish Commission for Refugee (CEAR) received € 900,000 to support a project aimed at covering the need for decent housing and legal assistance for Syrian refugee individuals and families who have arrived in Athens (Greece).

Either way, these figures only have to do with assistance that is supported abroad, outside Spain. The data regarding the service provided by the City Council in the city of Madrid were neither clear nor detailed throughout the mandate. The reality that has been emerging is that Madrid City Council has only been counting throughout this period with 973 places distributed in "emergency" shelters, designed for people in street situations and immigrants (both foreigners

²³ Available from:

<https://coordinadoraongd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Resoluci%C3%B3n-sobre-mujeres-refugiadas-CEDAW.pdf>

²⁴ Available from:

https://www.madrid.es/UnidadWeb/Contenidos/Descriptivos/ficheros/PlanDDHH_Madrid.pdf

²⁵ At the close of this article, on World Refugee Day, 20 June, this Plan was not published. It is important to note in this regard that the party that ruled the city of Madrid during 2015-2018 will no longer be the party that governs the next term, therefore, all indicates that it will not be published as the new party does not contemplate such initiatives in its government program.

and locals). The system has been saturated since the beginning. Furthermore, Spanish Ministry of Labour and Migration, responsible for ensuring the reception of refugees and asylum seekers through shelters run by NGOs, admit that their own network is saturated.

At first, as a result of the so-called “refugee crisis of 2015 in Europe”, on December 1, 2015, the Madrid City Council launched the temporary shelter "Mejía Lequerica" which has 130 beds and which, until recently, has been the only shelter of the city council network exclusively for asylum seekers and refugees which is managed by the Spanish NGO CEAR²⁶.

In any case, the matter is that the housing emergency that has been going through the city of Madrid for almost four years has gradually made its City Council react. For this reason, with the aim of offering an alternative to the street, the municipality announced in January 2019 the opening of the “El Vivero” shelter, a 120-seat hostel managed by the Spanish NGO Asociación Comisión Católica Española de Migración (ACCEM). There, from now on, some asylum seekers and refugees and beneficiaries of international protection who are living in the city of Madrid in a street situation, due to the collapse of the different levels of administration competent in the area (state, regional and local), who, because of that, were forced to frequent the services of parishes and social entities, now have this new temporary service of the municipality. However, it is important to point out that all of these centers provide housing, but not the social or psychological support that refugees and asylum seekers very frequently need.

On the other hand, it is also important to mention the existence of the Integration manual in the City of Madrid²⁷, which includes a particular section focused on employment in which it is specified that people who are legally in a position to work can access employment services on an equal footing with other citizens. However, it is important to underline that the text does not include any measure conducive to guaranteeing equal access to these services.

CEAR Madrid NGO together with other Madrilenians NGOs that form part of the collaborative space of "Refugio por Derecho Madrid" (Shelter by Right Madrid), on the same World Refugee Day, June 20, publicly recalled the fundamental role of municipalities in terms of reception and social inclusion of refugees and applicants for international protection. For these NGOs, the involvement of Madrid City Council is essential in the implementation, among others, of measures in terms of awareness, training of the local population and the promotion of social, cultural and political participation of the refugee population. Likewise, "Refugio por Derecho Madrid" organizations insisted that the municipalities, as a local administration, and specifically, the Madrid City Council, have the best conditions to carry out a work of cooperation and intermediation between the Community of Madrid and the Central Government, generating shared spaces and policies between the three Administrations that ensure an integral intervention towards this population.

²⁶ Madrid City Council is also working with the NGO CEAR on the Comprehensive and Emergency Reception Plan for people under temporary protection in Spain and migrants in situations of extreme vulnerability.

²⁷ Available from:
<https://www.madrid.es/UnidadesDescentralizadas/Inmigracion/EspInformativos/MadridConvive/Observatorio/Publicaciones/Gu%C3%ADa%20de%20recursos/MICM2014.pdf>

"Refugio por Derecho Madrid" organizations require the reinforcement of the commitment made by the Madrid City Council two years ago, 9 May 2017, in which it made visible its involvement in the reception of refugees at the "Encuentro de Municipios Madrileños Comprometidos con el Refugio" (Meeting of Madrid Municipalities Committed to Refuge), held at the headquarters of the Madrid City Council, and in which city councils from all over the Madrid Region (Comunidad de Madrid) participated. In this commitment, the city of Madrid assumed with its signature, a set of initiatives aimed at contributing and supporting the real inclusion of refugees in the long term, with the involvement of the citizenry. Among other measures, there were included active collaboration in the process of first reception, implementation of mediation initiatives for access to housing in the second phase of reception, as well as facilitating stable housing solutions through municipal initiatives, promotion of local employment or the provision of funds for official development aid aimed at working on the causes that cause forced displacement of the population.

In the same vein, these organizations considered that it is essential to create a Municipal Commission of Reception that allows, together with the entities specialized in Asylum and Refugee Policy, the integral and effective coordination of the actions. And it is there, as part of these elements of mobilization and sensitization that it fits SSE, understood as "the group of private companies formally organized, with autonomy of decision and freedom of adhesion, created to satisfy the needs of their members through the market, producing goods and services, insuring or financing, and in which the eventual distribution of profits or surpluses among the members, as well as the decision making, are not directly linked to the capital or to the contributions contributed by each member - one vote corresponding to each one of them - or are carried out in any case through democratic and participative decision-making processes"²⁸.

Due to their own idiosyncrasy, these organizations, that fit into this definition as SSE, can play a key role in order to claim the political will of the municipalities in this matter. And likewise, developing other initiatives to favour the participation and involvement of all citizens in order to promote solidarity and coexistence attitudes, that have already been demonstrated by the citizens of Madrid on many occasions. In this regard, it is important to always keep in mind that the Solidarity Economy, which is born from the Social Economy, "it is a project of collective action (including strategic practices of transformation and daily reproduction) aimed at counteracting the socially negative tendencies of the existing system, with the perspective - current or potential- of constructing an alternative economic system that responds to the ethical principle of reproduction and development of life (...)"²⁹.

²⁸ The social economy also groups together those private organizations formally organized with decision-making autonomy and freedom of adhesion that produce non-market services in favour of families, and whose surpluses, if any, cannot become the property of the economic agents that create, control or finance them. Chaves Ávila, Rafael and Monzón, José Luis. *La Economía Social en la Unión Europea*. European Economic and Social Committee. (Brussels, Belgium, 2012). Available from: <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/qe-30-12-790-es-c.pdf>

²⁹ Coraggio, José Luis. *La Economía Social y Solidaria (ESS): Niveles y alcances de acción de sus actores*. (Portal de Economía Solidaria, 2015). Available from: https://www.economiasolidaria.org/sites/default/files/reaslibrary/attachments/La_Economia_Social_y_Solidaria_Niveles_y_alcances_de_accion_24_5_15.pdf

As for Madrid, a relationship indicator between SSE and the city of Madrid has been the "Social and Solidarity Economy Strategy of the city of Madrid 2018-2025" that Madrid City Council made public in 2018³⁰.

Also with this same spirit, an interesting example is the MARES project³¹. It is an employment and social economy project that has been developed since 2015 in Madrid under the auspices of Madrid City Council and co-financed by the EU. MARES emerged as an innovative pilot project for urban transformation through social and solidarity economy initiatives, the creation of local and quality employment and the promotion of another city model. The MARES project stands out especially as a blueprint experience in some popular neighborhoods of Madrid.

MARES works in four districts of the city of Madrid: Villaverde, Vicálvaro, Puente de Vallecas and Centro. The MARES project is developed around urban and economic resilience, that is, the capacity of people together with technologies and ecosystems to adapt to unforeseen situations. Translated in the city of Madrid, this capacity refers to the numerous experiences that citizens have developed to face the crisis: self-employment initiatives, recovery of spaces in disuse or networks of economy or mutual support. Thus, among the central objectives of MARES is the creation of companies, the generation of a productive and community fabric and the promotion of good citizen and institutional practices that lead to a much more sustainable, healthy and cooperative city. MARES, therefore, is not only a project of employment and social economy, but a project of urban transformation through the social economy. In short, "a city for all people" in the same spirit of the SDGs "no one behind" and 2030 Agenda.

Both the Social and the Solidarity Economy Strategy of the city of Madrid 2018-2025 and the MARES project were configured, therefore, as excellent opportunities to articulate an alliance between local public authorities and SSE entities in the defense of the rights of refugees and in the creation of opportunities for them to be effectively incorporated into host societies.

Likewise, both the MARES project and the Solidarity Economy Strategy could fit in with the City Council Human Rights Plan in the specific sense of guaranteeing equal access to rights for refugees. Particularly when SSE defends putting people's lives and needs at the centre. However, the reality observed over these four years is that there has been no communication between them; there was no visible bridge.

Therefore, it does not appear that SSE developed by Madrid City Council in Madrid responded appropriately to the new realities that emerged in the context which, as we have seen, include and must also fully integrate the lives of asylum seekers and refugees living in the city.

This seems at this moment a great lost opportunity, bearing in mind that the essential framework already existed. However, given that it was not made explicit, since it only remained in mere declarations, its adequate and necessary integration was never made. It is clear, for example, that the initiatives supported by the MARES project did not include a clear identification of this

³⁰ It is important to note that this fit with the spirit and the very line of work of the outgoing government of the city of Madrid, no longer the current one.

³¹ Available from:
<https://maresmadrid.es/>

opportunity, in such a way that they are concretized in specific lines of action that include asylum seekers and refugees living in the city of Madrid.

The Government of Madrid City Council, throughout its mandate, despite its goodwill, the existence of the framework and certain interesting initiatives of SSE, has not been able to respond to the reality. That is to say, in its political action the City Council did not take into account neither the fact that the incorporation to the labour market appears as one of the main motivations in the arrival of the immigrant population nor the importance of the employment to normalization, since having a labour contract is the best safeguard against the exclusion and the main mechanism of acquisition of rights in the Spanish society. Since foreign citizens need to get a job as soon as possible, not only because they need to have an income, but also in order to have a regular administrative situation.

The current situation in Madrid is very different. There is a new government that has recently begun its mandate, on 15 June 2019. It is a mixed government with a deeply conservative ideology that has the support of the extreme right party. For this reason, this whole period described can only be read, as we pointed out, as a lost opportunity, since the outgoing government, despite its apparent work on behalf of SSE, as well as in the framework of the SDGs, has not been able, throughout its four years of mandate, to take advantage (we do not know whether due to a lack of vision, skills or commitment, probably a mixture of everything) of SSE, for the sake of solidarity and integration of immigrants living in Madrid, and specifically of asylum seekers and refugees.

Key conclusions from the analysis

Migration is a global phenomenon that concerns both developing and developed countries. Migration can clearly reduce poverty for migrants themselves, their families, and their origin and host countries, as well as improve other development outcomes for both individual migrants and their communities³² (both in their home communities and in the hosting communities). Taking this into consideration and under this prism, SSE has a crucial role ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making at all levels in inclusive societies, then its principles and practices aim to reintroduce values of equity and justice, humanize the economy and foster people's participation.

If we focus on migration and developed host countries, this involves the different levels of the State and the public administrations but above all, by proximity, it concerns in a very special way the local level of the administration, close to the day-to-day life of the citizens in the guarantee of their rights and regarding the quality of life of migrants. Therefore, for that reason, local governments, as Madrid City Council, have a specific responsibility to provide social protection to and foster the integration of migrants and refugees in their host societies.

Taking into consideration what characterizes SSE and what local authorities should do for their citizenships, what role should play SSE and other stakeholders regarding migrants and specifically refugees and asylum seekers? In the case study of the city of Madrid there has been

³² P. Lucci, D. Mansour-Ille, E. Easton-Calabria and C. Cummings, *Sustainable cities: Internal migration, jobs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, ODI Briefing (London, UK, ODI, October 2016).

observed that SSE has a crucial role in combating some of the significant difficulties facing refugee and migrant populations, such as overcoming social exclusion and xenophobia, and accessing decent work. However, despite migration can be a powerful poverty reduction tool, which can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, SSE in Madrid has not served so far as a catalyst for this.

Since May 2015 (almost at the beginning of the outgoing Government of the City of Madrid electoral term), the Madrid City Council³³ tried to stage the implementation of a public policy on the hosting of asylum seekers and refugees, expressed publicly through the motto “Refugees Welcome”. However, civil society and other main actors have repeatedly and publicly denounced the limitations of this approach, which has sometimes not gone beyond a mere declaratory will and whose approximation to the real needs of migrants and refugees in Madrid has been merely charitable and sometimes not even that.

Moreover, the lack of coordination between the different administrative levels involved in Madrid (the City of Madrid, the Madrid Community and at the State/central level) and the absence of an assumption by the competent administrations of the assigned functions has also hindered the proper exercise of municipal powers over persons residing in the municipality.

In parallel, since the beginning of its mandate, the Madrid City Council Government took significant steps in the promotion and impulse of SSE in Madrid, materialized international projects, such as the MARES project, and in the approval of its own Social and Solidarity Economy Strategy for the City of Madrid in 2018.

Given that asylum seekers and those with refugee status enjoy labour rights similar to those of the autochthonous people in Spain and considering that their particular situation connects them directly with the principles of the social and solidarity economy, the search for synergies between the two processes would have been essential. However, what has been observed so far is that the initiatives in the area of SSE and the approved texts, as the mentioned Social and Solidarity Economy Strategy of 2018, have not mainstreamed in practice the proclamations contained in the “Refugees Welcome” motto, the City Council Human Rights Plan and other normative texts of the Madrid City Council.

This has been a great missed opportunity to make SSE organizations an effective and efficient tool to the social insertion and the labour activation of disadvantaged groups, among them a certain fraction of the most vulnerable international immigrants. The intrinsic characteristics of SSE organizations confer them particularities, differentiating them from other economic agents in general, because they make it possible for groups with special difficulties, such as the most disadvantaged immigrants, to access normalized employment after a period of accompaniment and through the real performance of a job. Nevertheless, SSE organizations have not been taken into account as useful mechanisms to achieve optimum levels of social and labour integration through active participation in Madrid. This participation could have had very good repercussions on achieving a higher level of social justice in the face of social exclusion, as well as the construction of a more inclusive, cohesive and just society, resulting in a factor of for the integration of the most vulnerable group of immigrants.

³³ Its mandate is about to be fulfilled, in May 2019 the next municipal elections will be held.

Consequently, due to this insufficient vision, prioritization and fit during these almost four years of its mandate, the Government of Madrid City Council, in its alliance with the representatives of SSE in the city of Madrid (for which it has established a specific strategy), has lost a golden opportunity to contribute to the fulfillment of the SDGs, especially with regard to the mentioned SDG 1, SDG 8, SDG 10 and SDG 16. As a result, it has missed the crucial opportunity to strengthen sustainable future for all, paying special attention to refugee's situation and their social integration, including the economic, to host communities.

Lastly, in relation to the intrinsic role of the representatives of SSE in Madrid, as part of de civil society and the productive economy, SSE have not either taken advantage of their room in order to be vigilant about how local authorities provide answers and practical solutions to the migration challenges by protecting refugees' fundamental human rights and their right to build a new life. That is, neither about the keys that are behind the Official Development Assistance (ODA) reporting eligibility in the field of migration nor for the contribution to SDGs, seen as a global public good, with multiple objectives including development but also with a dangerous possibly migration control. In this regard it would have been essential for SSE in Madrid to have been vigilant because only those activities whose primary purpose is to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries should qualify as ODA and could also not be considered to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Therefore, all activities that pursue first and foremost providers' interests (e.g. restricting migration) are excluded from ODA and certainly these neither contribute to meet the SDGs and targets by 2030.

Bibliography

Amnistía Internacional. “El asilo en España: un sistema de acogida poco acogedor”. Madrid: Amnistía Internacional, 2016.

Ayuntamiento de Madrid. “Estrategia de Economía Social y Solidaria de la ciudad de Madrid 2017-2025”. Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2018.

Available from:

https://diario.madrid.es/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/ESTRATEGIA_MUNICIPAL-DE-ESS.-240918.pdf

Boček, Tomáš. “Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Spain, 18-24 March 2018”. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2018.

Available from: <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/qe-30-12-790-es-c.pdf>

Chaves Ávila, Rafael and Monzón, José Luis. “La Economía Social en la Unión Europea 2012”. European Economic and Social Committee. Brussels: CIRIEC, 2012.

Available from: <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/qe-30-12-790-es-c.pdf>

Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR), “Informe 2018 de la Las personas refugiadas en España y Europa”. Madrid: CEAR, 2018.

Coraggio, José Luis. “La Economía Social y Solidaria (ESS): Niveles y alcances de acción de sus actores”. Portal de Economía Solidaria, 2015.

Available from:

https://www.economiasolidaria.org/sites/default/files/reaslibrary/attachments/La_Economia_Social_y_Solidaria._Niveles_y_alcances_de_accion_24_5_15.pdf

Defensor del Pueblo - Spanish Ombudsman. “Asylum in Spain International Protection and Reception System Resources”. Madrid: Defensor del Pueblo, 2016.

Iglesias, Juan; Urrutia Asua, Gorka; Buades Fuster SJ, Josep; Estrada, Cecilia; Vicente, Trinidad. Acoger sin integrar. El sistema de acogida y las condiciones de integración de personas solicitantes de asilo y beneficiarias de protección internacional en España. Bilbao: Instituto de Derechos Humanos Pedro Arrupe, 2018.

Lucci, Paula; Mansour-Ille, Dina; Easton-Calabria; Evan; Cummings, Clare. “Sustainable cities: Internal migration, jobs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, *ODI Briefing*. London: ODI, October 2016.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). “The Sustainable Development Goals Report”. New York: UN DESA, 2017.

United Nations, “Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Part II. Global compact on refugees”. New York: United Nations, 2018.