Grenoble
Vorreiterrolle bei der Inklusionspolitik

by Laura Colini, Filippo Furri

Content

1. Zusammenfassung und Erkenntnisse

Key Takeaways

1

The main highlights of Grenoble do not concern a specific policy, but rather the whole political agenda of the current (2021) left-green mayor Eric Piolle, who invested in a more resilient city – economically, structurally, socially, and environmentally.

2

Grenoble has a tradition of investing in service provision and consultation (such as a migrant council closely working with the municipality), which makes it a city rooted in solidarity with migrants.

3

The campaign for extending rights to all residents according to the principle of unconditional reception is one of the most interesting approaches other cities can learn from Grenoble.

What is unique about the city?

Fighting for migrant rights: Grenoble has been particularly active in fighting for the recognition of rights for migrants. One important factor is a large network of organisations working with the municipality on several initiatives involving consultation, information, and service provision.
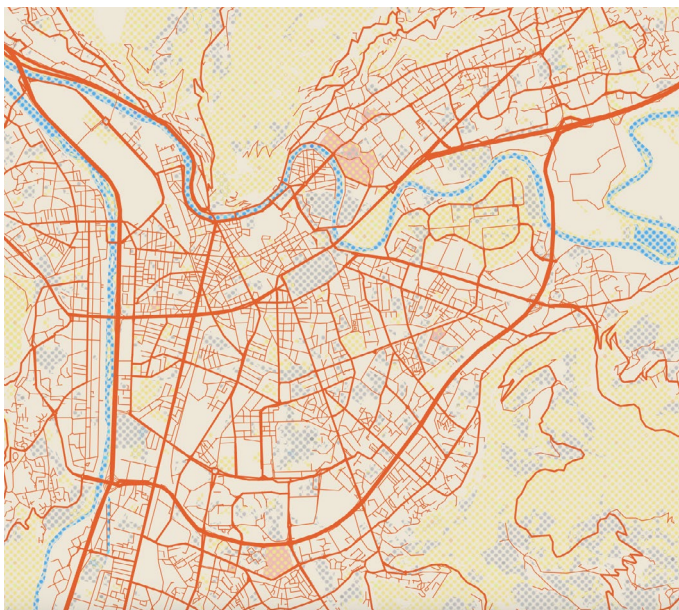
What is the focus of local migration policies?

Unconditional reception: The current green-leftist local government is redirecting its local politics of inclusion from the defence and protection of specific rights for migrants and refugees, towards extending rights to all residents according to the principle of unconditional reception. The recently created online solidarity platform is an example of how the municipality coordinates and matches demands and offers between the

migrant population and local NGOs. While the municipality is eager to promote inclusive universal policies, there is less support coming from the Isere Department, the supra-government level of the municipality.

Political activities and advocacy beyond the city level?

Mayor Piolle's first administration made explicit the "welcoming" dimension of the city of Grenoble ("Une ville pour tous" - A city for all, 2014), with the city taking a stance more explicitly in terms of hospitality in 2015. Since then, it has been one of the most active cities in France and is a member of several city networks favouring migrant rights. In 2018, Grenoble was among the nine founding cities of ANVITA, the National Association of Welcoming Cities and Territories.

Population

158,454

Location

Grenoble is the capital city of the Isère département, in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, in southeastern France.

Mayor

Éric Piolle (Europe Écologie-Les Verts)

"**Whether it is Italian and Greek migration at the start of the 20th century, Armenians, Spanish Republicans, French repatriated from North Africa, Chileans or, more recently, at the beginning of 2015, by the signing of an appeal by academics for Syrian students, Grenoble has always been at the side of those fleeing repression and political violence.**"[1]

Éric Piolle, Communiqué de presse ville de Grenoble, 7 Septembre 2015

1 French original: "Qu'il s'agisse des migrations italiennes et grecques du début du XXe siècle, des Arméniens, des Républicains espagnols, des Français rapatriés d'Afrique du nord, des chiliens ou, plus récemment, début 2015, par la signature de l'appel des universitaires pour les étudiants syriens, Grenoble a toujours été aux côtés de celles et ceux qui fuient la répression et les violences politiques." https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/auvergne-rhone-alpes/accueil-refugies-grenoble-s-inscrit-reseau-villes-solidaires-801833.html

2. Local background and context

Grenoble is a city of about 160,000 inhabitants situated in the Alps, in southeastern France. The city is characterised by a vibrant and active civil society, with a variety of organisations providing support to migrants. In 2016, the network Migrants in Isère ("Migrants en Isère") was created. 18 associations became a member and organised the General Estates of Migration[2] ("États généraux des migrations"). Afterwards, a series of propositions about hospitality and integration were published and directly addressed local representatives. Although the municipality acts welcoming towards migrants and asylum seekers, that does not prove true in the case of the Isère department, which is often accused by NGOs of restricting migrant rights, particularly of migrant youth and unaccompanied minors.[3] It has been reminded several times of its obligation to protect minors by the Council of State and even convicted by the administrative court of Grenoble (Tribunal administratif de Grenoble, 2017). The municipality, led by a left-wing mayor from the Green party since 2014, created a platform to coordinate support to migrants, and is also part of a network of French cities called "Welcoming cities and territories."[4] The Migrants' Hub (Plateforme Migrants) is also an important tool put in place in 2015 by the municipality in coordination with civil society actors. It gathers offers of support for French classes, donations, accommodation, and legal support. However, the mayor was also criticised in the spring of 2020 for not having supported young migrant adults during the lockdown with accommodation, and for not allowing them to demonstrate after the lockdown was over, invoking public health reasons.[5]

A vibrant local movement

In late 2019 and early 2020, the support to migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and foreigners in general was at the heart of the work of many activists and civil society actors. In the neighbouring 14 mountains and valleys too, many collectives and organisations were created, especially to provide accommodation for asylum seekers due to the lack of state accommodation. Fourteen collectives provide accommodation at families and citizens' homes, connected with the NGO Welcome Asylum Seekers ("Accueil Demandeurs d'Asile" (ADA)). Even more collectives of this type exist in Isère, including accommodation networks in parishes and individuals hosting independently.[6] In the last years, according to Emmanuel Carroz, deputy mayor in charge of policies in the area of memory and international migration for the city of Grenoble, Grenoble has proved to be particularly active in providing support to migrants, also thanks to a large network of organisations that have collaborated with the municipality."[7] Selected civil society initiatives will be mentioned in the following section.

2 The États Généraux des Migrations is a process that today involves hundreds of local or national collectives and associations that are active on the ground alongside the foreign population. These actors coordinate throughout France and organise public events to denounce current policies and act as a driving force for radical change in migration policies. https://www.lacimade.org/etats-generaux-des-migrations-grenoble-le-3-decembre-2016/
3 https://www.lacimade.org/presse/coronavirus-suspension-des-activites-de-la-cimade-et-demandes-transmises-au-gouvernement/
4 http://unevillepourtous.fr/ (Retrieved in 2021)
5 https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/politique/droit-au-logement-contre-eric-piolle-pour-le-droit-de-manifester-1592764826
6 https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1481430/FULL-TEXT01.pdf
7 Emmanuel Carroz, Interview, December 2020.

3. Selected local approaches

3.1 Information and Consultation

Due to the city's welcoming tradition and the presence of foreigners of different origins (as of 2017, mainly from Africa (49.7%) and Europe (37.6%)[8]), the city of Grenoble has invested in providing information and consultation mechanisms. These have lasted over twenty years, always having been adapted according to the changing needs of the migrant population.

In 1998, the city has published the guide "Résidents étrangers, comment accéder à vos droits" (Foreign residents, how to access your rights). While many cities have similar guides, Grenoble's has been constantly updated over the course of twenty years, recently adopting a new title "Citoyen(ne)s étranger(e)s, vous avez des droits! (Foreign citizens, you have rights!).[9] The guide is intended to be a legal tool for social workers, volunteers, associations accompanying migrants, asylum seekers and foreign residents. It contains legal and administrative information relating to the "rights that foreign citizens can access: right to residence, right to asylum, right to private and family life, right to French nationality," together with general rights (work, social protection, family benefits, pension, accommodation, etc.).

The Consultative Council of Foreign Residents of Grenoble ("Conseil Consultatif des Résidents Etrangers Grenoblois-CCREG") has played a special role since 2000. The CCREG has "the vocation to open a space for discussion to people of foreign nationality who care about municipal life."[10] "This council, which convenes once a month or when called by its members, is co-chaired by an elected official and a resident. Its members are made up of non-French residents of Grenoble, the newly naturalised associations working in the field of foreigners' and integration law, and community associations. At the mayor's request or on its own initiative, the council reflects on the city's projects and on subjects concerning all Grenoble residents, including foreign residents. At the end of this collective reflection, the opinions are submitted to the Municipal Council, where they are debated."[11] According to interviews with local NGOs, the council still exists today but is no longer as active in municipal decision making as it has been.

3.2 Public participation: Grenoble Solidarity Platform

The "Solidarity Platform" was established between 2016 and 2018 by the CCAS (Municipal Center of Social Action) and covers a broad range of services for all (food, accommodation, health/hygiene, training, legal support, day centres, etc.). The "Plateforme Migrants" operates within the Solidarity Platform, allowing the coordination of volunteers, of the associative world, and of charitable movements to help migrants from Grenoble and neighbouring cities.

8 https://www.ades-grenoble.org/wordpress/2017/01/13/etrangers-et-immigres-a-grenoble/ (Retrieved in 2021)
9 https://www.parcourse-mploi-bassingrenoblois.org/guide-citoyennes-%C3%A9trangeres-vous-avez-des-droits
10 https://www.grenoble.fr/94-conseil-consultatif-des-residents-etrangers-grenoblois.htm
11 https://villes-territoires-accueillants.fr/wp-content/uploads/.2019/02/.OCU_livret_autorites_locales_2_-_Des_municipalites_qui_agissent.pdf (Retrieved in 2021)

In concrete terms, the platform makes it possible to relate the numerous offers coming from city residents in contact with the CCAS and specific associations, with the possibility of making accommodation available as well. Numerous associations are involved in this platform, from the collective "Migrants en Isère", which brings together 15 associations such as ADA[12] ("Accueil des demandeurs d'asile" - Asylum seekers reception), APARDAP[13] ("Association de Parrainage Républicain des Demandeurs d'Asile et de Protection" - Republican patronage of asylum and protection seekers association), the Cimade, CISEM[15] ("Coordination iséroise de solidarité avec les étrangers migrants" - the Iseroise coordination of solidarity with migrant foreigners), and many other associations for the defence and support of migrants in the area. During the first ten months following its inauguration it has collected 350 proposals (volunteer work, school support, housing) and guaranteed the accommodation of about thirty people ("Organisation pour une Citoyenneté Universelle (OCU)")[16].

Organising solidarity during the pandemic: The platform allows access to a series of useful documents, such as the "Vous avez des droits" guide mentioned above. During the city's anti-Covid mobilisation phase, Grenoble integrated the device with an additional "Voisins, Voisines" platform to foster solidarity and reinforce mutual support among people in close proximity. In November 2020, the platform "Volontaires Solidaires de Grenoble" was created.[17] This is an online platform to match demands and offers from residents. The platform was very helpful during the pandemic to facilitate relations and above all to limit travel and contact, in accordance with confinement measures. Thanks to a precise geolocation system solidarity can be organised locally. It can be used by all residents including migrants and refugees, even though the platform is only available in French.

Advocacy and network activities

The first administration of mayor Piolle explicitly emphasised the "welcoming" dimension of the city of Grenoble ("Une ville pour tous" a City for all, 2014). If the Piolle administration's program was presented as inclusive and participatory, the city began positioning itself more explicitly in terms of hospitality in 2015. Since then, it has been one of the most active cities in France and is a member of several city networks in favour of migrants rights. In 2018, Grenoble was among the nine founding cities of ANVITA, the National Association of Welcoming Cities and Territories.

12 https://www.ada-grenoble.org/
13 https://www.apardap.org/
14 https://www.lacimade.org/
15 https://www.le-tamis.info/structure/coordination-iseroise-de-solidarite-avec-les-etran
16 https://o-c-u.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Accueillir_des_migrant_e_s_livret-2_16x24c-m_O-C-U.pdf
17 https://www.grenoble.fr/1700-volontaires-solidaires-de-grenoble.htm
18 http://www.lavantpost.info/migrants-grenoble-hebergement/ (Retrieved in 2021)

In 2015, the city did not experience a high influx of asylum seekers, despite the high numbers of people reaching Europe over the same period. Local associations, pushing the public debate to welcome and support newcomers, declared that migrants were discouraged from entering France due to the restrictive and complex French bureaucracy for asylum seekers.[18] From 2015 onwards, Grenoble has also been a fulcrum for mobilisation at the university. A refugee committee was created and a large number of actions to support and integrate refugees into the university community is underway.[19]

From local solidarity...

In the following years, namely between 2016 and 2017, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region has witnessed an increase of 35% in the number of asylum applications, with a 52% increase in Grenoble (Secrétaire général pour les affaires régionales Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, 2018)."[20] Consequently, during the first Piolle administration, the city's solidarity/welcoming dimension was consolidated both from the point of view of internal activities and collaboration with local associations (2016 solidarity platform), and from the point of view of external activities (Organization of General States of Migration 2016). These include networking (becoming a member of the city network ANVITA in 2018), and collaboration with other cities (MC2CM network).

...to municipal networking

More specifically, in 2015, Grenoble participated in the network of solidarity cities (EUROCITIES), and that same year, the city was proclaimed "Terre d'accueil" (Land of welcome), following the appeal of Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve who invited French mayors to organise the reception of refugees.[21] In 2016, it welcomed the first States General of Migration (EGM),[22] organised by the collective "Migrants en Isère," together with 17 other associations and organisations (Mdm, Cimade, LDH,et al ..). The First States General on Migration was an opportunity to formulate proposals and solutions to submit to elected officials.

In 2018 Grenoble was among the 9 founding cities of ANVITA. Cities and Territories, established on the initiative of the mayor of Grand-Synthe following the Convention Nationales sur Accueil et les Migrations (National Convention on Welcoming and Migration) in March 2018: "When the State, within the framework of its competences, organises the reception in a territory in connection with the community and civil society, experience proves that inclusion is possible and enriching. On the other hand, the State is failing, the municipalities and the territories remain quite alone with the associations and the citizens, in the front line to face the humanitarian emergency. It is up to us, in our territories, both to act in the image of the history and the culture of hospitality in France and to call on the State to assume its responsibilities."[23]

A city of dissent

Still in 2018, Grenoble dubbed itself "Ville delinquante solidaire" (City of Dissent),[24] during its award to the activist Cedric Herrou, in the name of an "unconditional welcoming system practised by the city and opposed to the "délit de solidarité"[25] (Offence of solidarity) – used to describe a French law[26] that criminalises those assisting illegalised immigrants.

Between 2019 and 2020, Grenoble joined the project City-to-City. "As part of the City-to-City Migration in the Mediterranean (MC2CM) project, the International Centre for the Development of Migration Policies (ICMPD), UCLG and UN Habitat have launched a "call for proposals for targeted actions of cities. The objective of this call for proposals is to fund actions that help promote rights-based urban migration gover-

19 https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.21832/9781800412958-010/html; https://www.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/education/special-status/migrants-refugees-asylum-seekers/migrants-refugees-asylum-seekers-784858.kjsp
20 https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1481430/FULLTEXT01.pdf
21 https://ccfd-terresolidaire.org/nos-publications/fdm/2019/311-decembre-2019/migrations-acceuil-grenoble-6493
22 EGm is a network of organisations of French civil society in support of migrant populations. https://eg-migrations.org/
23 "Founding manifesto of ANVITA: (French original:)"Lorsque l'État , dans le cadre de ses compétences, organized the accueil sur un territoire en lien avec la collectivité et la société civile, l'expérience prouve que inclusion est possible et enrichissante. En revanche, l'État est défaillant, les communes et les territoitoires restent bien seuls avec les associations et les citoyen.ne.s, in première ligne pour faire face à l'urgence humanitaire. "The nous appartient, sur nos territoires, à la fois d'agir à l'image de l'histoire et de la culture d'hospitalité en France and d'interpeller l'État pour qu'il assumes ses responsabilités". https://villes-territoires-accueillants.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/CHARTE_ANVITA.pdf (Retrieved in 2021)
24 On May 28, 2018, Éric Piolle presented the medal of the city of Grenoble to Cédric Herrou, who was convicted in August 2018 by the Court of Appeal of Aix-en-Provence for helping migrants in the Roya Valley (Alpes-Maritimes department). On this occasion, the mayor revealed the content of a letter to the prosecutor, in which he explained that the actions of the municipality to receive refugees could also be punished as "solidarity crimes" under current law http://unevillepourtous.fr/2018/05/31/grenoble-ville-delinquante-solidaire/ (Retrieved in 2021)
25 https://verfassungsblog.de/the-solidarity-offense-in-france-egalite-fraternite-solidarite/
26 Code of Entry and Residence of Aliens and the Right to Asylum, article L622-1 du Code de l'entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d'asile. https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/id/LEGISCTA000006147789/2009-04-08/

nance systems and advance social cohesion in the Mediterranean region."[27] The project made it possible to elaborate the "Grenoble migration profile," with the aim of reinforcing local governance based on rights and based on objective data.

During its second term (which started in 2020), the city administration plans to develop further reception and integration projects. These include a museum of migration, a resident card for access to services, maisons de l'hospitalité (hospitality houses), and to proceed in the direction of inclusive and participatory policies.

5. Update: What is new in 2023?

◆ In December 2022, the city of Grenoble, together with ten other French cities of the ANVITA network, set an example for a solidarity reception policy in France. With the 'Cérémonies de parrainages républicains' (so-called 'sponsorship ceremonies'), they have taken on a symbolic sponsorship for more than a hundred refugees in cooperation with local associations. Although this is not legally, it sets a strong example in the fight for the right to citizenship of refugees.[28]

◆ Grenoble has also taken measures in recent years in favour of the right to housing for all to address the high level of homelessness in the city, not at least among young refugees. To date, the city accommodates people in municipal shelters, of which more than half are financed by the municipality's own funds.[29] Despite numerous cries for help by civil society and letters from the region's mayors to the national government, the state is not fulfilling its legal obligation to provide sufficient emergency accommodations.[30] Instead, the city of Grenoble is making agreements with migrant collectives of squatters to legally provide them with municipal housing and has set up a mobile legal team to enforce the right to housing ("Droit au logement et à l'hébergement opposable (DALO)").[31]

[27] French original: "Dans le cadre du projet Migrations ville-à-ville en Méditerranée (MC2CM), le Centre international pour le développement des politiques migratoires (ICMPD), CGLU et UN Habitat ont lancé un " Appel à proposition pour des actions ciblées de villes". L'objectif de cet appel à propositions est de financer des actions qui contribuent à promouvoir des systèmes de gouvernance de la migration urbaine fondés sur les droits et de faire progresser la cohésion sociale dans la région méditerranéenne."
[28] https://www.anvita.fr/fr/actualites/notre-plaidoyer/view/ceremonies-de-parrainages-republicains-18-decembre-2022
[29] https://www.anvita.fr/fr/nos-membres/les-pratiques/view/grenoble-actions-pour-le-droit-au-logement
[30] https://www.francebleu.fr/infos/politique/occupation-d-ecoles-a-grenoble-l-etat-est-defaillant-juge-l-adjointe-christine-garnier-8090725
[31] https://www.anvita.fr/fr/nos-membres/les-pratiques/view/grenoble-actions-pour-le-droit-au-logement

The **Moving Cities** project provides an in-depth research of progressive cities in Europe, exploring their most inspiring and successful approaches to migration policies. Find more city reports at www.moving-cities.eu/en.

Read more about the project and how it is funded on the website: https://moving-cities.eu/about