

# MEIC

## Migrants Economic Integration Cluster

From wicked problems to clustered solutions

Research team  
Cristiana Di Pietro  
Folco Cimagalli

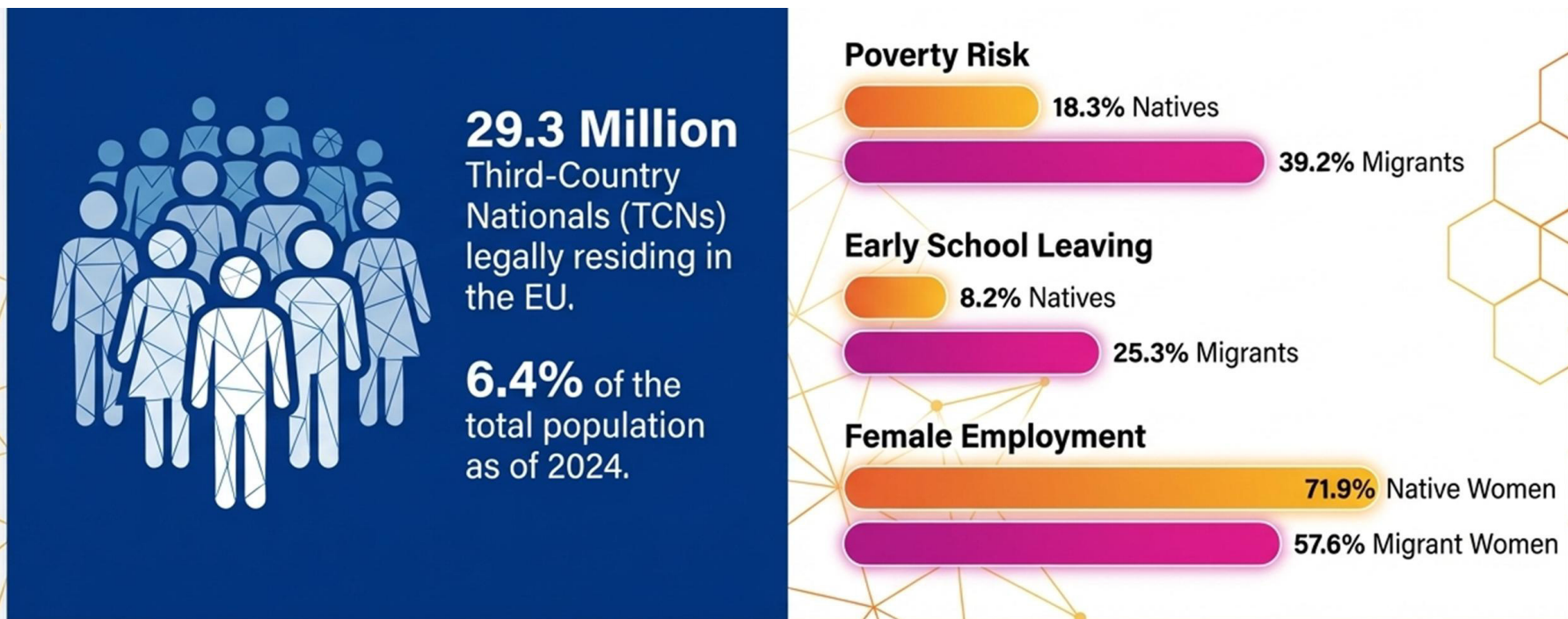


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- 1) The Integration of TCNs: What Data Show
- 2) Integration: Some Definition
- 3) The MEIC Model and Its Theoretical Foundations
- 4) LIME Project: Definition of MEIC Methodology
- 5) Factors That Facilitate MEIC's Development

# The Integration of TCNs: What Data Show

Key facts and figures on integration and inclusion (EU-27, 2023)\*



Eurostat data, 2023, published in 2024 and *Eurostat (EU Labour Force Survey)*. Migrant population in this graph corresponds to population born outside the EU whose parents were also born outside the EU (first generation migrants), whereas native population corresponds to population born in the country whose parents were born also in the country.

# Integration: Some Definitions

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- ❖ **Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU** (EU Council Document 14615/04)
  - Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.
  - Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union.
  - Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible.
  - Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration.
  
- ❖ **Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027** (EU COM -2020- 758 final)
  - Fostering social cohesion and building inclusive societies for all
  - Integration and inclusion are key for people coming to Europe, for local communities, and for the long-term well-being of our societies and the stability of our economies (... integration being both a right and a duty for all)

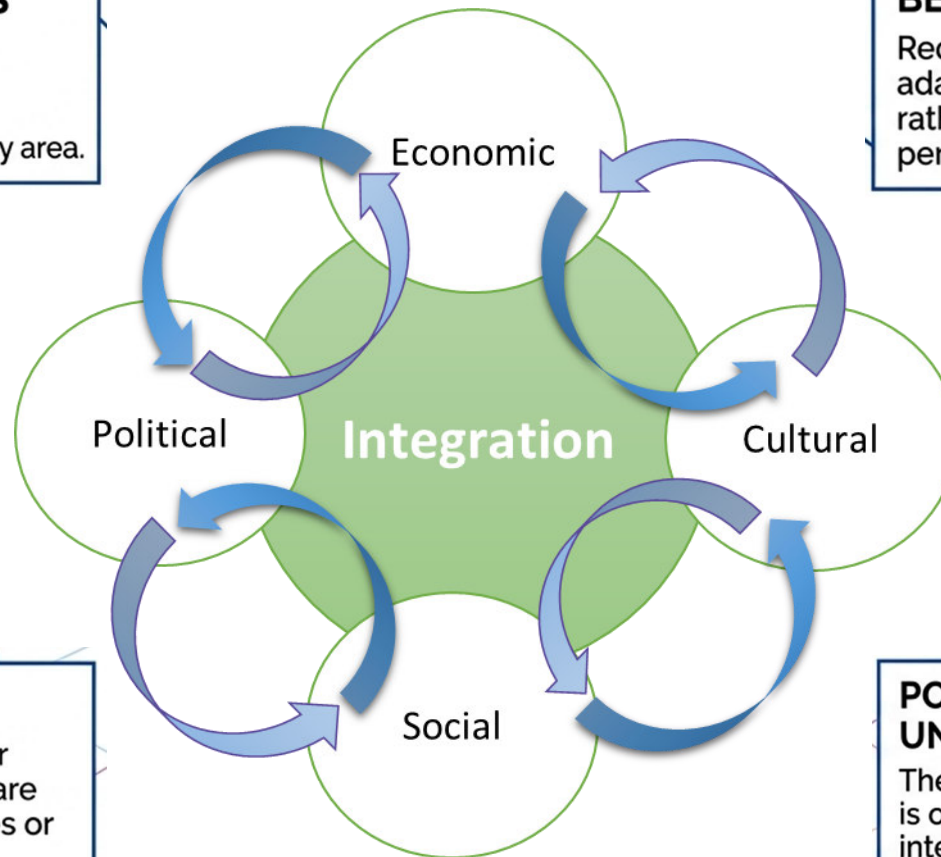
# Integration: A 'Wicked Problem'

## FLUID BOUNDARIES

Operates simultaneously across multiple societal subsystems. Cannot be contained to a single policy area.

## BETTER, NOT OPTIMAL

Requires continuous adaptation and improvement rather than a singular perfect fix.



## UNIQUENESS

No two local contexts or migrant populations share the exact same variables or needs.

## POST-SOLUTION UNDERSTANDING

The true nature of the problem is often only understood after interventions are tested in the field.

**Key Insight:** Wicked problems cannot be solved by solitary actions or macro-policy generation alone. Top-down, isolated solutions are structurally mismatched to the reality of integration.

# Where Integration Actually Happens

## MACRO

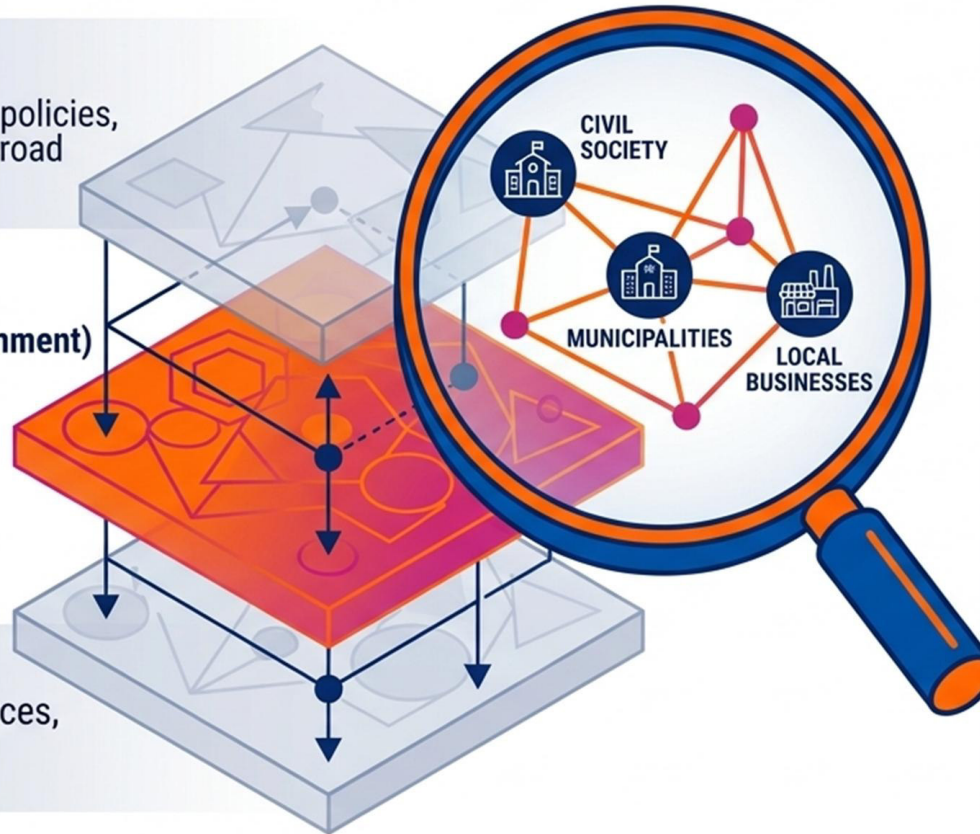
Dynamic national and EU policies, macroeconomic trends, broad cultural shifts.

## MESO (The Local Environment)

The critical layer where inclusive actions are facilitated and macro policies are translated into micro realities.

## MICRO

Individual migrant resources, material needs, personal relationships.



## STRUCTURAL IMPERATIVE

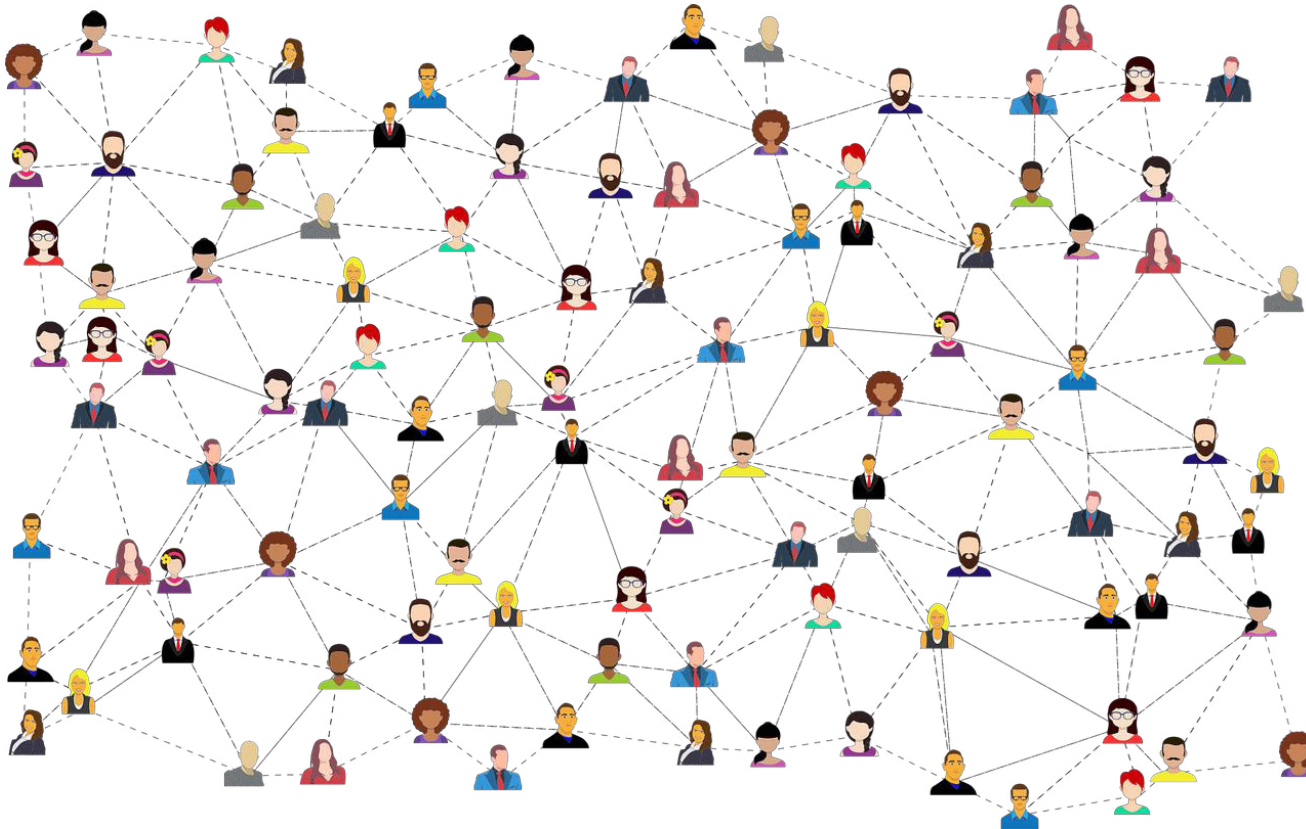
Effective integration requires an environment capable of bridging abstract policy and individual reality.

This is the exclusive domain of local authorities and CSOs.

Without the Meso layer, the system breaks.

# Theoretical framework of MEIC

- Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 1993)
- The Strength of Weak Ties (Granovetter, 1973)
- Sociological Theory of Responsibility (Cesareo, 2017)

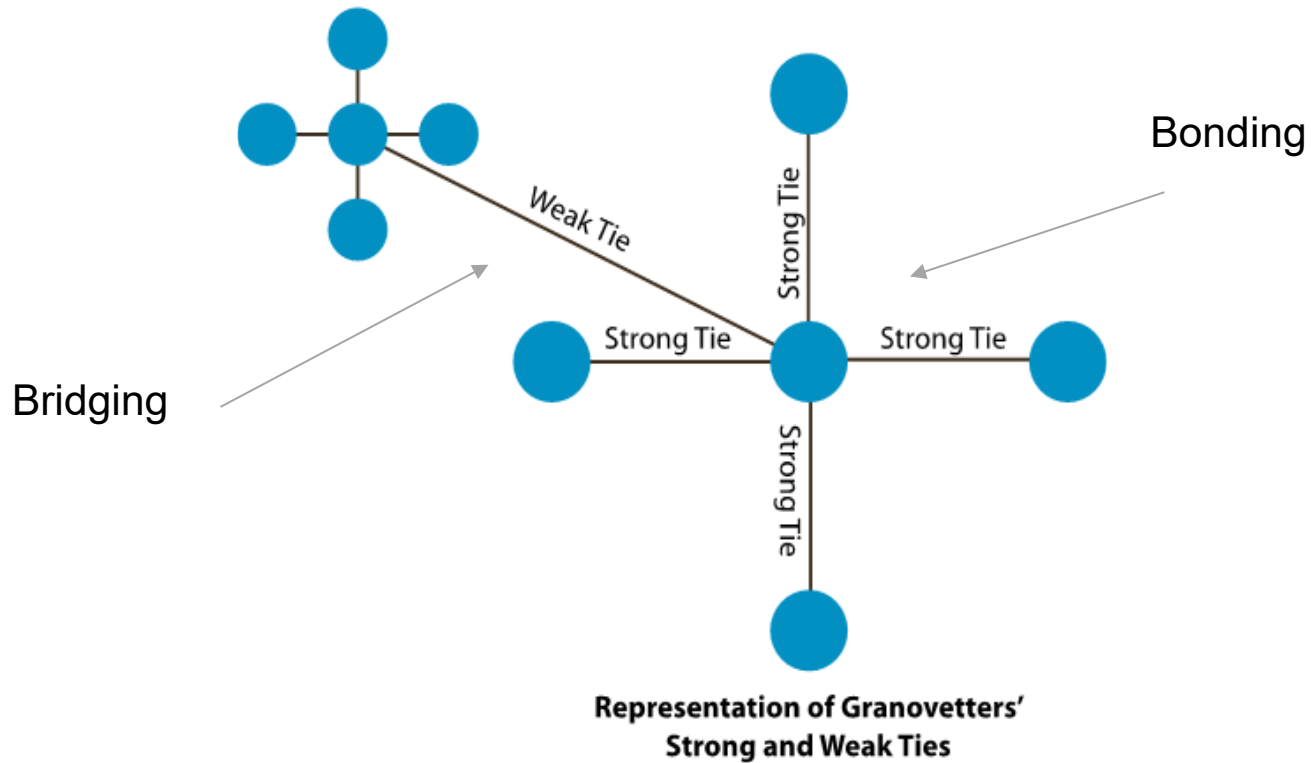


# Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 1993)

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- *Social capital* refers to the set of relationships, norms, and values that facilitate cooperation within a community.
- Social relationships promote the sharing of information and coordination, reducing issues of information asymmetry and opportunistic behavior.
- A high level of social capital contributes to:
  - Facilitating collective action: social networks can mobilize resources and support for common initiatives
  - Building trust: mutual trust between partners is essential for effective collaboration
  - Promoting cooperation: shared norms and common values can encourage cooperative behavior.

# The Strength of Weak Ties (Granovetter, 1973)



# Sociological Theory of Responsibility (Cesareo, 2017)

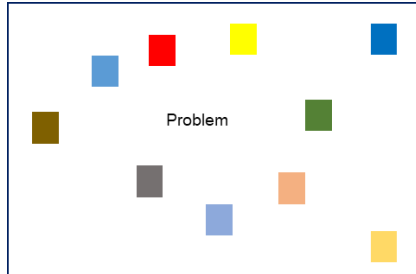
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- The concept of responsibility can contribute to reshaping territorial welfare ('Responsible Welfare').
- Responsibility (individual and organizational) is a key perspective for overcoming:
  - Centralized views of the public actor
  - Hyper-liberal visions
- The perspective of responsible welfare promotes the assumption of responsibility by the subjects called upon to produce well-being, in a logic of et-et (both/and) and not aut-aut (either/or).

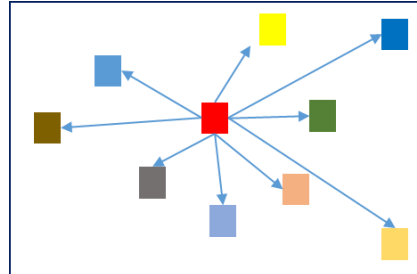
# The social responsibility of territory (Peraro e Vecchiato, 2009)

- The social responsibility of territory represents an evolution of the concept of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), promoting a systemic and collaborative approach to sustainable development.
- It recognises the interconnection between the actors in a territory and the need to work together to address complex challenges and create shared value.
- It promotes participatory governance and community empowerment, stimulating processes of personalisation and innovation in services.

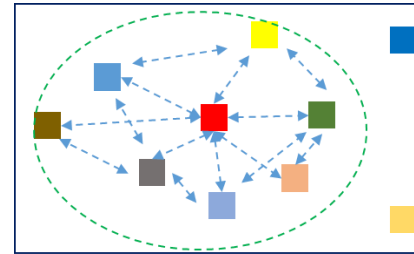
# The Activation of Network



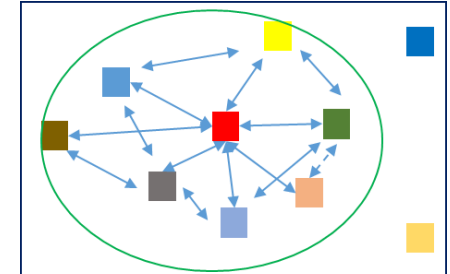
Time 0: a problem occurs



Time 1: one of the actors promotes activation



Time 2: construction of a social space of proximity



Time 3: the network is activated

## TIME 0: PROBLEM OCCURS

Severe labor shortages alongside high migrant unemployment.

## TIME 1: PROMOTION

An actor, e.g., a local CSO, promotes network activation.

## TIME 2: CONSTRUCTION

Building a social space of proximity. Identifying partners, defining rigid rules.

## TIME 3: ACTIVATION

The network is fully operational and executing concurrently.

# Different Networks

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Networks are therefore horizontal models wherein members define rules and share resources to achieve a common goal through continuous interaction (Agranoff, 2003)

It is possible to identify three types of networks, each with its own specificity, as follows (Mandell, 2010):

- **Cooperative networks** focused on the exchange of information and/or expertise. They are based on informal and short-term relationships.
- **Coordinated networks**, focused on integrating services for solving complex problems. Its participants take substantial risks, also because of the high interdependence. They, therefore, develop a shared action plan to which all members are committed.
- **Collaborative networks**, refer to organizational structures where activities are managed in a centralized manner or through formal coordination mechanisms. Characteristics: Formal Structure (there are defined rules and procedures for coordinating activities); Operational Efficiency (the goal is to maximize efficiency through clear coordination of actions among members).

# MEIC: The Migrants Economic Integration Cluster

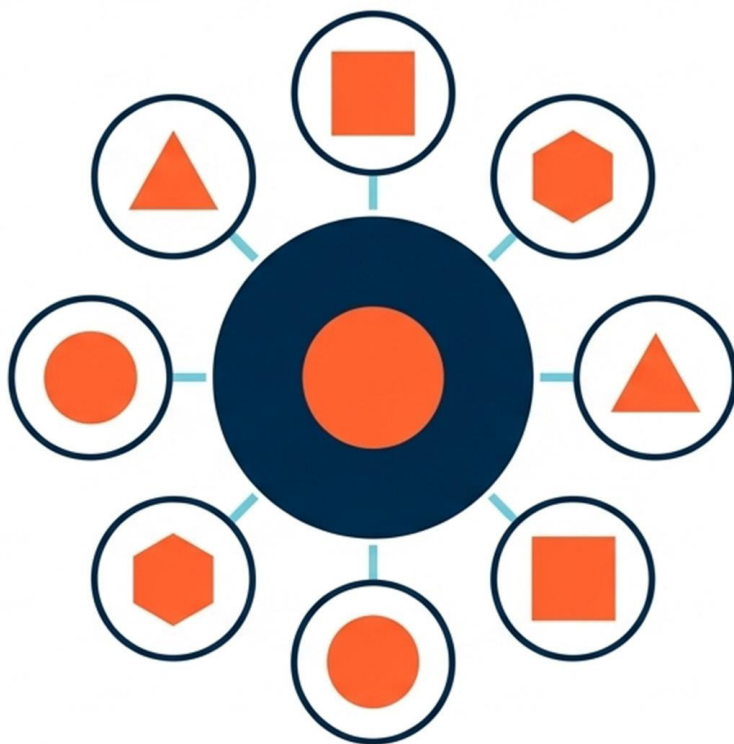
MEIC is a structured service-network connected to a multiplicity of partners in a geographical and relational dimension of proximity, developed via the LIME project

## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER

Unites Public, Private, Profit, and Non-profit actors.

## DEFINED RULES & ROLES

Moves beyond casual networking to a rigid, formal operational structure.



## MULTI-SECTORAL ACTIONS

Crosses economic, political, cultural, and social lines.

## SHARED RESOURCES

Pools knowledge, funding, and local operational capacity.

<https://www.limeproject.eu/en/resources/>

# The LIME Project



# The Performance of Network: Italy and Spain

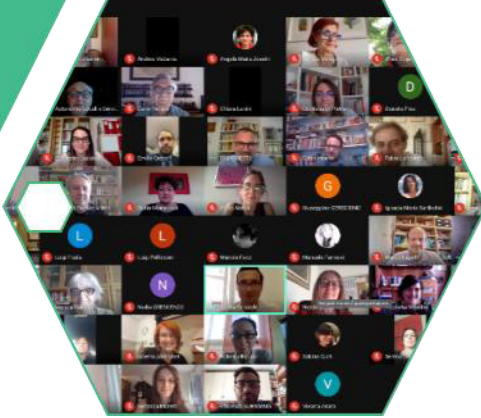


20 Stakeholders joined “Employers together for integration”



20 TCNs in business training

80 TCNs signed a contract

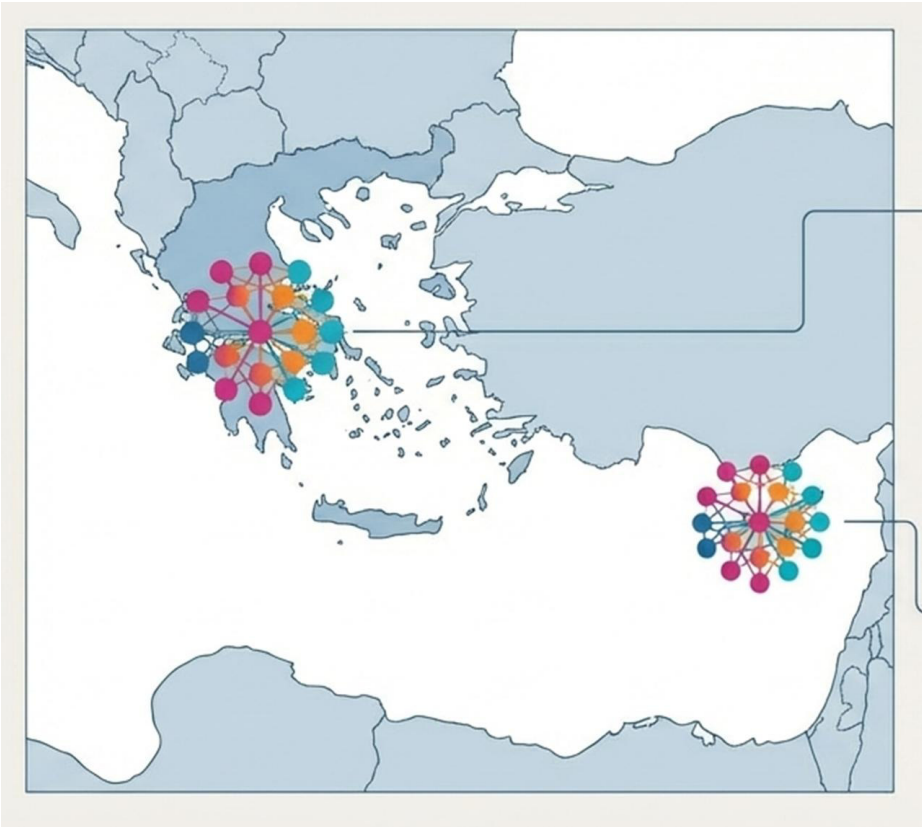


## Key Findings

Public administration remains the key actor for the labour inclusion of the TCNs. Nevertheless, public administration governance of migrants' integration seems inadequate: the fragmented regulatory framework does not allow for a clear inclusion strategy beyond emergency and humanitarian action.

Although social actors have direct experience of integration as a complex and multi-dimensional process, the organizations' awareness of being part of a team and sharing vision and goals is still weak. Territorial networks are, therefore, immature and poorly structured, so much so that horizontal relations are still linked to spontaneous solidarity practices and cannot enhance their social capital.

# AMIL: Scaling The MEIC

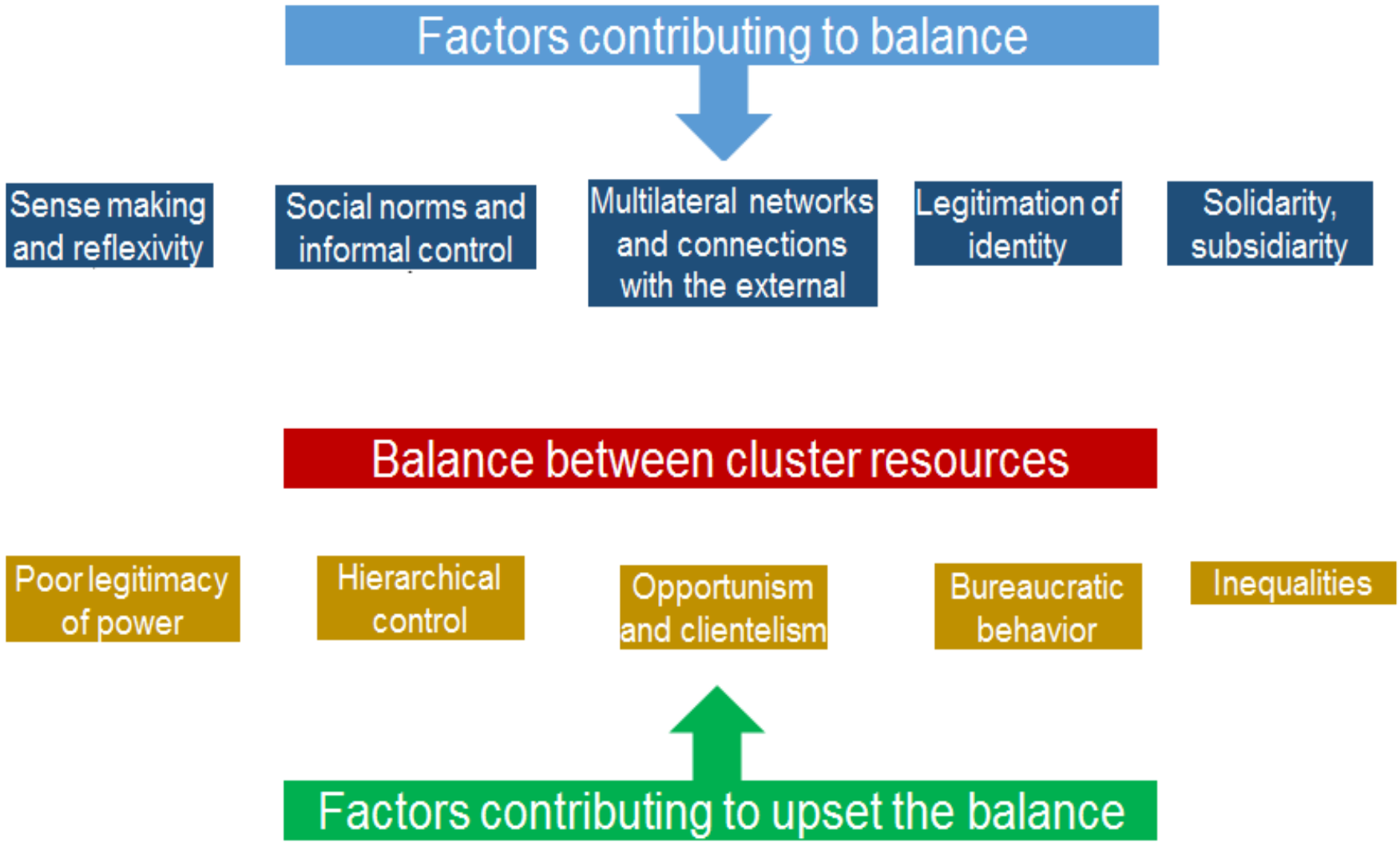


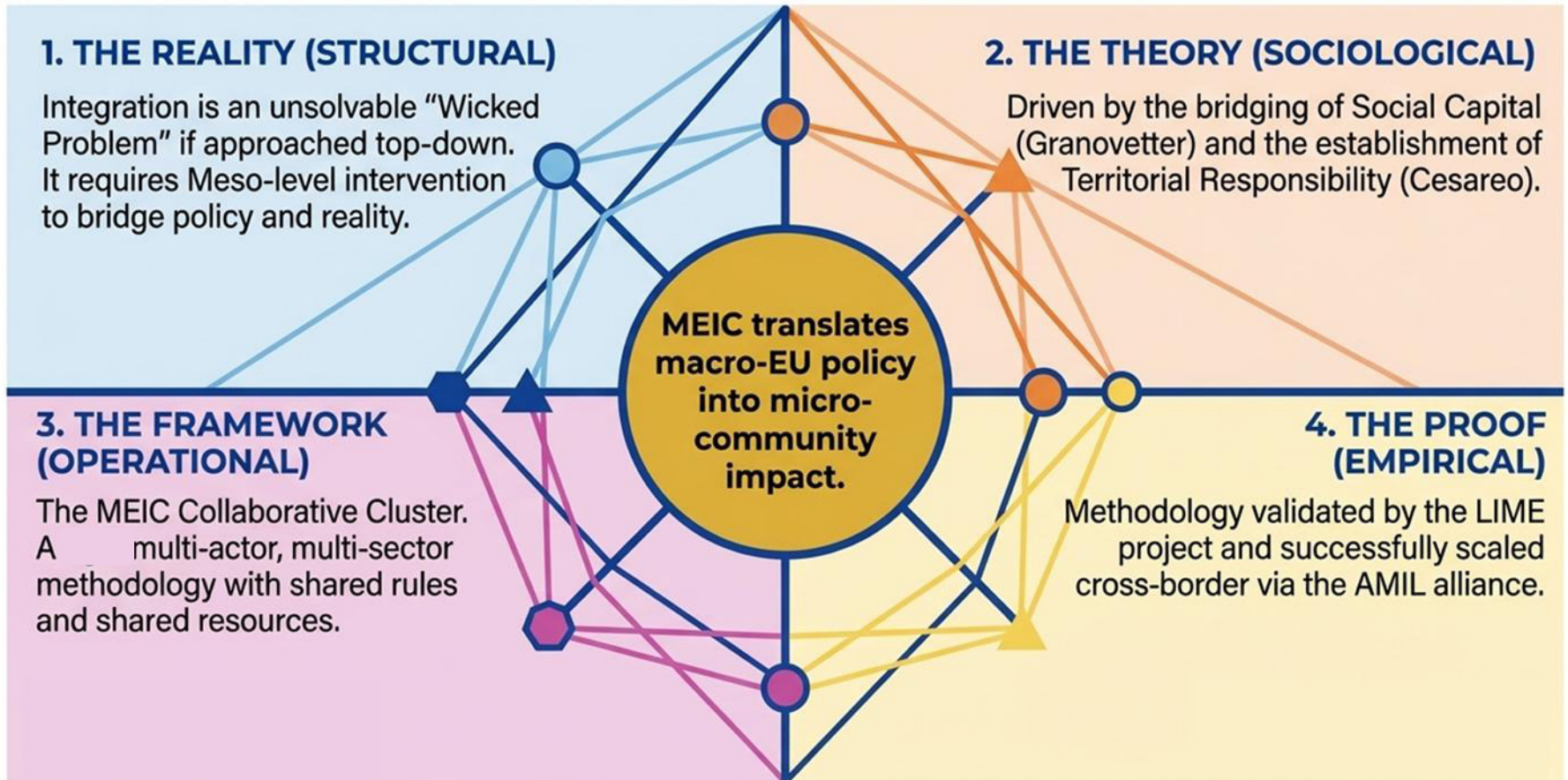
ITALY

GREECE

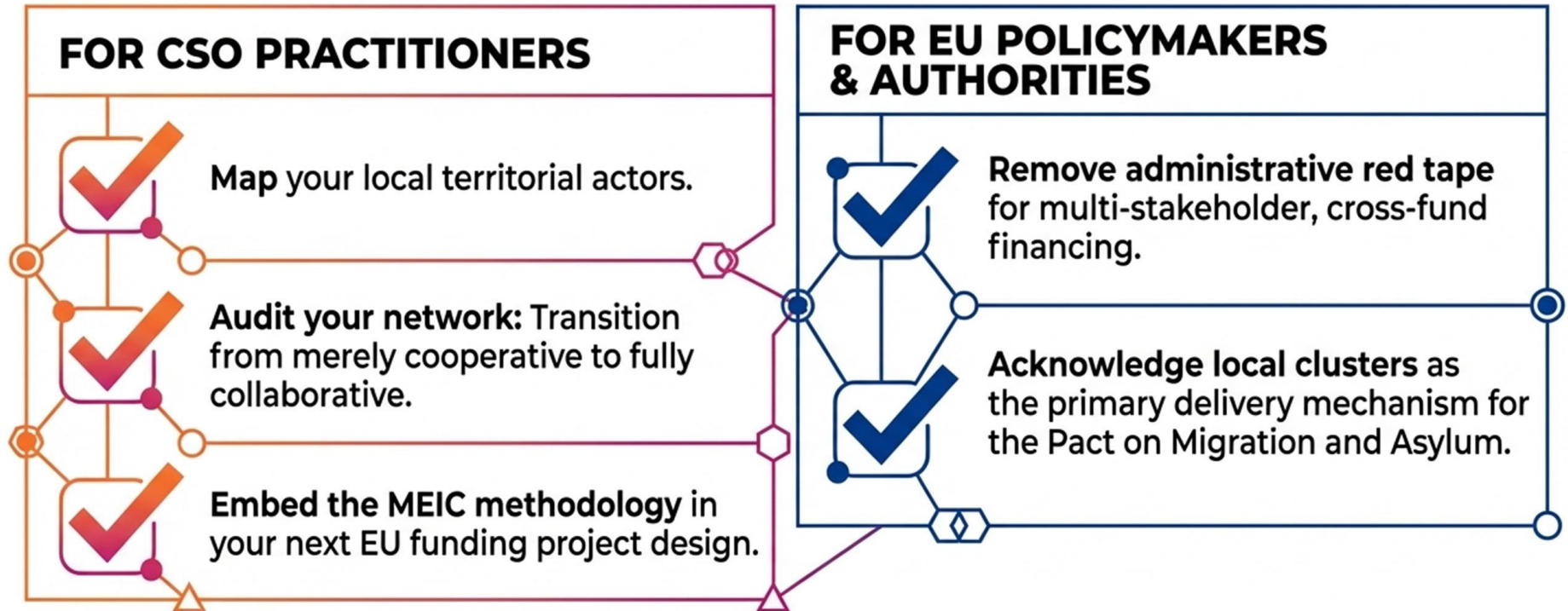
CYPRUS

# Factors contributing to balance of cluster





# Some Recommendations



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# THANK YOU!

[c.dipietro@lumsa.it](mailto:c.dipietro@lumsa.it)

