The governance of immigration has been presented in recent literature as a multilevel process, where different actors play a role (Scholten et al., 2018). In particular, scholarship has observed a growing determination and coherence of efforts by policy makers to achieve more control on immigration. Here takes place “the devolution of decision making in monitoring and execution powers upward to intergovernmental fora, downward to elected local authorities, and outward to private actors such as airline carriers, shipping companies, employers, and private security agencies” (Guiraudon and Lahav, 2000: 164). As a consequence, not only national governments, but also local institutions are more involved in immigration policies, not only on the more traditional ground of provision of services, but also in the more recent and harsher ground of migration control. Fearing in particular terrorist attacks, cities are rising borders and walls against the settlement of unwanted aliens (Graham, 2010).

This development encompasses a contradiction with a trend in which local policies in Europe have been often considered more open than national policies, more oriented towards a pragmatic reception of immigrants and to the admission to local services also of immigrants in dubious or irregular position from a legal point of view. Local policies of exclusion have not found much space in the academic debate, while positive aspects of local policies have been more often studied (CLIP Network, 2010; Penninx et al., 2004; UNESCO, 2010). Northern Italy, however, has supplied many materials to research on local policies of exclusion. I would like to talk in my presentation how local policies of exclusion have been redirected in recent years towards a particular category of immigrants, namely asylum seekers, representing them as dangerous, undeserving and welfare scroungers. But these policies do not remain unchallenged. On the other side, local actors from the civil society mobilize in favour of the reception of refugees and immigrants, included those who are not entitled to a legal residence status.
My second argument, consequently, is that the governance of immigration, especially at local level, can be defined as a battleground, in which different actors take part, according with various economic interests, social bonds, moral values and political beliefs. The practical governance of immigration and asylum is influenced by these different interests and visions. In this framework, a complex “borderwork” (Rumford 2006) occurs, involving not only national States and EU institutions but also a wide range of other actors: international humanitarian agencies; NGOs and civil society organizations; public administrations and local authorities; and private citizens and local societies. I will focus on the local level of this multilevel and multistakeholder process, highlighting both the construction of political borders at the municipal level and the fact that borderwork is also a site of bottom-up citizenship practices: a locus of engagement that constitutes communities (Cinalli and Jacobson, 2017). The different implications and meanings of borders become particularly evident when focusing on the so-called “refugee crisis” and the relative response.

**Maurizio Ambrosini**, Phd in Sociology (1989), is Professor of Sociology of Migrations at the university of Milan and Chargé d'enseignement at the university of Nice-Sophia Antipolis (France). He is the editor of the journal "Mondi Migranti" and the Director of the Summer School of Sociology of Migrations of Genoa. He is the author of more than 250 articles, chapters and books in this field, published in different languages and on several leading scientific journals. His handbook, *Sociologia delle migrazioni*, is adopted as the textbook in many Italian universities. Recently he published *Irregular Migration in Southern Europe: Actors, Dynamics and Governance* (Palgrave, 2018). In 2017 he has been appointed as an expert at the National Council of Economy and Labour (CNEL) of Italy.