

Chicago-Turin Lab:

Addressing the Costs of Segregation through Peer Learning and Exchange

September 2020



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Outcome Statement

To empower city professionals and appointed officials who work for the Cities of Chicago, Illinois and Turin, Italy, through a transatlantic peer exchange, to re-write structures, systems and policies that create inequitable outcomes for residents caused by socio-spatial segregation based on one's race or ethnicity.

Background Information

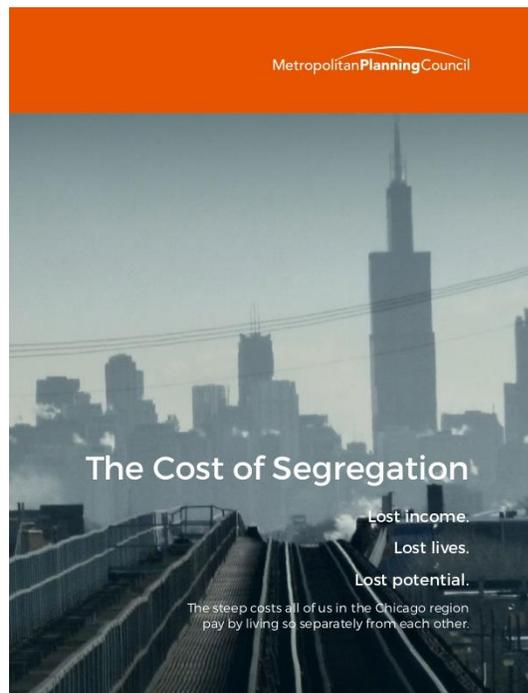
Stemming from the work of the first Vibrant Neighborhoods Forum (VNF) that explored how civic engagement can be leveraged to address social disadvantage in neighborhoods segregated by race, ethnicity and/or income, GMF funded an additional piece of research in Turin, Italy "Does the Cost of Segregation Bridge the Atlantic", to examine whether residential clustering may be leading to socio-spatial segregation of Turin residents by race, ethnicity or country of origin.

This research has its origins in the first VNF, where Marisa Novara (at the time, the Vice President of the Metropolitan Planning Council but now Commissioner at the Department of Housing, City of Chicago) was invited as a presenter and co-facilitator for an exchange between three U.S. cities—Detroit, Memphis and New Orleans and three European cities—Turin, Brussels and Cologne. At the first meeting in Detroit (September 2017) Novara, who designed and led the multi-year Cost of Segregation study (in partnership with the Urban Institute) in Chicago, presented the findings. The findings made plain that:

- Segregation not only affects Chicago's low-income communities or communities of color; everyone in Chicago pays a price, measured in lost of income, lives and education.
- Chicago's social fabric and economy will be stronger if there are opportunities to live, work and go to school with one another across race and ethnic lines.

Novara's presentation sparked discussion among all six cities about the ways in which their communities experience segregation by race and ethnicity (among other identifiers). Following on her presentation, and in preparation for the second convening in Brussels in March 2018, Novara and GMF staff asked that the European VNF participants present data with maps from their respective cities on where people live, looking especially at their immigration/migration/refugee flows.

Given that Turin, over the last three decades, has witnessed substantial growth in new immigrant populations from Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Sahel, Asia and South America, Novara and Simone Mangili, a senior member of the Turin Mayor's office and alumni of numerous GMF initiatives, proposed adapting some of the lenses and methodologies developed by the Metropolitan Planning Council in the production of the Cost of Segregation report and applying them to the Turinese context. The GMF mini-grant allowed Mangili and Novara to investigate whether residential clustering may be leading to marked socio-spatial segregation. Moreover, if so, whether such segregation may be leading to the marginalization of the immigrant population in the economic and political life of the city.



The first phase of the study of Turin is now completed. The findings suggest that there are significant concentrations of residents in communities with relatively higher indicators of social disadvantage and that this, in turn, is correlated with a high number of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers (especially in certain tracts of the Aurora and the Barriera di Milano districts of Turin). The indicators used to establish socio-economic status and disadvantage include unemployment, income and educational attainment. Health and safety were also considered using limited data in this first phase.

The initial analysis has presented trends but was not designed to establish definitive causal relationships, i.e., whether (and if so, to what degree) policy and practice contribute to the correlation between spatial segregation and social fragility. With funding from GMF Cities, the City of Turin will embark on a second phase of the research to begin in September 2020 to answer these and other central questions, including the persistence of indicators of social disadvantage in second generations, the role that participation of new communities in the political life of the city could play in advocating for innovative policies, and the true extent of the collective economic costs represented by phenomena of social fragility in segregated communities.

A Role for Comparative Analysis and Practice

Reflecting back to the work of the Vibrant Neighborhoods Forum (which was the impetus for the subsequent research funded by GMF and conducted in Turin), the strength of transatlantic relations really comes down to the initial response to the presentation on the cost of segregation and the follow-up request for data on spatial segregation in participating European city's neighborhoods. It is important to acknowledge that the United States has had a unique and particularly extreme experience with race and racism—from Native American genocide, to the enslavement of Africans, to laws that made it perfectly legal to separate where people could live by race. The European participants in the Vibrant Neighborhoods Forum expressed difficulty relating to the challenges of the U.S. experience considering the vastly different histories with regard to discrimination based on race and ethnicity.

But as the emerging evidence suggests, segregation and its effects are presenting themselves in the European context due to in-migration from various parts of the world over recent decades. European cities cannot hide behind the reason that because of different historical starting points in the U.S. and Europe, we should dismiss lessons learned. The challenge that we embrace with this project is to move past the obvious differences in our history and experiences as cities and countries, and to now use the Chicago and Turin-based research as a jumping off point for a needed examination of how each city can change the structures, systems and policies that created inequitable outcomes for European and American residents by race, ethnicity or country of origin. What changes to policy and practice are needed to counter the effects of historically bad policy and practice and how should the city professionals and appointed officials in the cities of Turin and Chicago best initiate change?

Project Proposal

To answer these crucial questions, GMF Cities proposes an exchange between Chicago, Illinois and Turin, Italy to deepen city professionals and appointed officials' understanding of and appreciation for the effects of segregation by race and/or ethnicity, and explore how to build, strengthen or bolster policy and practice responses to counter these.

The objective will be to leverage such an exchange to prompt Chicago and Turin to assess current practice and its effect; to explore how to expand on or improve current best practice; and where practice is absent, to explore what practices are needed to address the social and economic costs of segregation

The Chicago-Turin Lab will apply what was learned from the research conducted during the first phase and that being conducting during the second phase in Turin and the findings based on The Cost of Segregation study in Chicago and provide the institutional support to address a broader transatlantic phenomenon through peer

exchange. Specifically, participating city professionals and appointed officials will explore how to provide, improve or expand on current policies and practices to address the social and economic cost of segregation through peer exchange. The convenings with the participating cities will provide an opportunity to share and disseminate promising practices.

Specific topics will include how cities can leverage state and federal dollars more effectively to address the cost of segregation; regulatory barriers and how to overcome them; and how to overcome institutional bias in city bureaucracy. Participants will come to this work with unique cross-cultural competencies and a passion for increased transatlantic experience.

Project Goals

- Leverage the research that details Chicago and Turin's local context, develop goals and strategies to address the potential costs of segregation, and identify good practices and policies for doing so
- Share/transfer methods, experiences and know-how across the Atlantic in both directions
- Adapt lenses of analysis used in the U.S. to a local European context to bring into focus potential similarities and opportunities for shared learning
- Raise awareness and generate a public dialogue regarding the potential costs of spatial segregation and solutions, to individuals and society as a whole

The project will develop new thinking on 21st century leadership, specifically in consideration of the potential obstacles that impede new leadership to emerge from vulnerable populations. Such obstacles may be highly context-specific and are surely a result, at least in part, of complex socio-economic and socio-cultural phenomenon. However, similarities and trends may exist in Chicago and Turin and we aim to assess these while recognizing differences, and to identify approaches, methods and dialogues that work well in some communities and could be applied elsewhere.

The project will also create new dialogues around these phenomena, in particular that of socio-spatial segregation, beginning with the exchange of experiences across the Atlantic but also with the application of analytical methods to build up a local knowledge base around it. The project will also promote social and economic diversification and foster emerging leaders.

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