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The evolution of migration flows in Europe and Italy

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Abstract

The present work offers a detailed description of the recent European and Italian migration experience. In the last 150 years, Northern Europe first, and Southern European countries later on experienced the transition from emigration to immigration countries, and host today large shares of developing countries' population. By means of official data, we describe demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the migrant population both in the European Union as a whole, and in Italy and we give some insights regarding the effects the recent crisis had on the conditions of the immigrant population.

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1. Introduction

Among demographic phenomena, international migration has been one of the most debated in advanced countries in recent years, because of its social and economic consequences. The rapid surge in the stock of foreign born population in destination countries fueled worries about immigrants taking jobs from native workers and about potential depressing effects on wages due to the increased competition on the labor market. In addition, ethnic diversity between natives and immigrants brings about crucial issues concerning social and cultural integration of migrant communities into host countries' societies.

Despite the long-lasting effects of the recent crisis on the European economy, the migratory pressure at the borders of the European Union (EU) has not diminished yet. The foreign (extra EU) population on 1 January 2013 reached 20.4 million, representing 4.1% of the EU-27 population.[1] The largest stock of immigrants were in Germany (7.7 million persons), Spain (5.1 million), the United Kingdom (4.9 million) and Italy (4.4 million).

The aim of the present work is to describe the historical evolution of migration inflows to Europe and, more in detail, to Italy. Northern European countries completed their transition from emigration to immigration countries between the 1950s and the 1960s, starting to attract large migration inflows from Southern Europe and Northern Africa. Italy, together with Greece, Portugal and Spain transformed itself in a destination country later on, in the last decades of the 20th century.

The same transition is now starting, or is about to start for Eastern European countries. Their citizens are still migrating to Western Europe, but at the same time these countries, that recently entered the European Union, have started to attract people from neighboring countries in the ex-USSR and Central Asia. The first part of this article looks at the European experience, revisiting its past migration history (Section 2) and describing in detail the demographic, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics of its foreign-born population today (Section 3). The second part focuses on Italian migration, analyzing the transition from emigration to immigration country (Section 4) and highlighting the peculiarities of Italian foreign born population: the globalization of origin countries, the feminization of inflows and the effects of the crisis on migrants' economic performance (Section 5). Section 6 concludes.

2. The history of European migration

2.1. From the post-colombian period to the era of mass migration

If you wanted to depict the more recent phases of European migration history, the beginning of the analysis could date back to the late nineteenth century, when Europe started to experience mass migration, in particular to the Americas. About 55-60 million Europeans left in the period 1820-1940; 38 million of them moved to the United States (King, 1993).

It is interesting, however, to make a brief *excursus* of what happened even before the era of mass migration. The discovery of the Americas gave rise to continuous flows of migrants to the New World between the sixteenth and the eighteenth-century, even though the size of such flows were not comparable to what happened afterward. Migration from Europe took place on a voluntary basis, but the majority of people that moved to the Americas were involuntary migrants: either slaves from Africa or indentured servants and convicts from Europe. If we

[1] See Eurostat: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu.

Table 1: *Emigration rates from selected European countries, 1850-1910 (number of emigrants per thousand inhabitants)*

	1851-1860	1861-1870	1871-1880	1881-1890	1891-1900	1901-1910
Austria-Hungary			2.9	10.6	16.1	47.6
Great Britain	58	51.8	50.4	70.2	43.8	65.3
Denmark			20.6	39.4	22.3	28.2
France	1.1	1.2	1.5	3.1	1.3	1.4
Germany			14.7	28.7	10.1	4.5
Ireland			66.1	141.7	88.5	69.8
Italy			10.5	33.6	50.2	107.7
Norway	24.2	57.6	47.3	95.2	44.9	83.3
Portugal		19	28.9	38	50.8	56.9
Spain				36.2	43.8	56.6
Sweden			13	32	14.1	13.9

Source: Hatton and Williamson (2005).

consider the period from 1492 to 1820, slaves, servants and convicts accounted for 82% of migrants, while free migrants accounted for less than 18% (Hatton and Williamson, 2005). The situation changed dramatically and very quickly during the nineteenth century; in 1880 almost 81% of total emigration to the Americas was represented by free migrants. The same happened to European migration to Australia, where the first Europeans settlers were mostly convicts. Sydney indeed was founded in 1788 as a penal colony.

Between 1846 and 1876 total emigration from Europe involved on average 300,000 people a year. Then the era of mass migration began: in 1890s the figures more than doubled, and in the early 20th century the annual flow rose to over a million people per year (Hatton and Williamson, 2005).

Much of the increase is explained by the increasing emigration from southern European countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal), which was negligible in the previous decades and accounted for the largest share of outflows after the turn of the century. In the first decade of the twentieth century the rate of emigration was equal to 108 persons per thousand inhabitants from Italy, and to 57 people per thousand population from Spain and Portugal (Table 1).

Even during the era of mass migration, the United States continued to be the predominant goal, although Latin American destinations such as Argentina and Brazil started to play a central role in the last decades of the nineteenth century, followed by Canada in the early years of the twentieth century.

The main factors that contributed to the advent of mass migration can be identified as follows (Hatton and Williamson, 2005):

- A significant reduction in transport costs, in terms of time, economic resources, and risks associated with overseas journeys. Technological progress allowed to build ships that were faster and safer (steamships) and the improved sanitary conditions helped to reduce mortality rates on board. At the same time, "third class" fares became affordable also for the poorest strata of European societies. In addition, the construction of railway lines on the mainland made big ports (Le Havre, Marseille, Hamburg, Antwerp, Genoa, Naples)

easier to reach and the establishment of shipping companies operating regular passenger service allowed to plan overseas journeys more efficiently.

- A reduction of emigration restrictions that had been imposed in many European countries, including England, Ireland, Germany and Sweden, and the introduction of subsidies to encourage citizens to move overseas. The British government, for example, launched a plan of generous subsidies to encourage its citizens to move to Australia.

- The last great European famine, which took place in Ireland between 1845 and 1849 and caused the emigration of at least 1.5 million people, mainly to the United States.

- A general increase in wage levels across Europe, as a result of the process of industrialization that spread from England to the mainland. Better living conditions could result in a reduced incentive to emigrate, on the one hand, but on the other hand they allow more and more people to afford an overseas move.

2.2. The XX century and the recovery of flows after World War II

The outbreak of the First World War brought an end to mass migration. The combined effect of two world conflicts, the Great Depression in-between, and the simultaneous launch of restrictive immigration policies by the US government, which introduced literacy tests and immigration quotas from Southern Europe, caused a sharp drop in European emigration. This decline mainly involved outflows from Southern and Eastern Europe, while those from Northern Europe remained almost constant in the period.

The end of World War II, however, marked a new turning point in the dynamics of European migration. The global economic scenario had changed dramatically; in the 1950s, a non negligible share of the European population was still migrating to the Americas and Australia. Western Europe, however, was gradually transforming into an immigration area. The economic boom and the consequent labor shortages in the early 1960s led some countries to open their labor markets to foreign workers (the so-called "guest workers") through programs of active recruitment. France, Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Belgium and the Netherlands all recruited workers from Southern European countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Yugoslavia) and North Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria). The main direction of the flows, within Europe, became therefore the South-North axis. Between 1957 and 1972, the share of foreign-born workforce in Germany increased from 0.6 to 11.2%. The total number of foreign residents in Europe rose from about 4 million to 10 million individuals between the early 1950s and the 1970s.

The first oil shock in 1973, and the global recession that followed, stimulated the adoption of restrictive immigration policies and a drastic reduction in the recruitment of foreign labor; European host countries even introduced specific plans to encourage migrant workers to return home. Due to all these reasons, the intra-European flows declined sharply.

The geography of world (and European) migration was irrevocably changing once again.

First of all, the growing migratory pressure from developing countries contributed to the transition of Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece) from a land of emigration to a region of immigration. A specular change, then, involved Latin America, that became gradually a land of emigration, due to the stagnant economic situation and the rise of military, repressive regimes.

Third, the end of colonialism in Africa and in Asia and the gradual improvement of living conditions there enabled people to move to the former homeland, because of linguistic and cultural affinities. France and England, but also the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany received consistent flows of migrants from their ex-colonies.

Fourth, the demand for foreign labor increased dramatically in the Persian Gulf countries, thanks to the economic boom fueled by oil revenues; in the early 1990s, the seasonal flows from Asia involved more than one million workers per year.

Finally, the communist regimes collapsed, causing substantial East-West migration flows in Europe, which somewhere resulted in real mass exodus (e.g. Albania in the early 1990s).

2.3. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the transition and the EU eastern enlargement

Under the communist regimes, emigration from Eastern Europe was extremely limited. According to a report by the United Nations (2002), "by 1950 the newly established communist regimes Imposed strict emigration controls. Migration to countries with established market economies was practically forbidden. Migration between centrally-planned economies occurred on a very limited scale".

In the second half of the eighties a gradual opening up of countries such as Poland and Romania predicted the imminent collapse of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. Migration flows that followed were massive: in 1989 approximately 1.2 million people emigrated from Eastern Europe. The conflicts in the former Yugoslavia also contributed to the inter-European migration route during the last decade of the last century.

On May 1, 2004, eight former Soviet bloc countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary, from now on EU-8) did officially join the European Union, along with Malta and Cyprus. Concerns about economic, social, cultural and political consequences of free labor mobility in an enlarged EU spread in the old member States, both in the general public and among policy makers. These fears were mainly driven by the potential increase in competition in the labor market and for welfare benefits.

Despite the EU's fundamental principle of free movement, a transitional period of up to seven years has been set, during which the access of citizens from the EU-8 to the labor markets in the old member states could be restricted. Only Britain, Ireland and Sweden avoided these transitional measures, guaranteeing EU-8 citizens the right to work in their labor markets from the very beginning; Germany and Austria, that were likely to host the largest share of post-enlargement migration flows due to their location at EU-15 Eastern border, decided to apply the transitional regime until 2011.

The number of EU-8 citizens officially residing in the EU-15 rose from about 893,000 in 2003 to over 1.91 million at the end of 2007 (Brücker and Damelang, 2009; Brücker, et al., 2009), with annual average inflows of 250,000 people. These values are in line with several forecasts from the pre-enlargement period: Boeri and McCormick (2002), for example, estimated that in the first decade after the enlargement, the average flows from the new member states to the EU-15 would consist of 300,000 people a year. Pre-enlargement estimates also suggested Germany and Austria as main destinations, due to traditional pull factors such as geographical proximity and the effects of migration networks.

The official figures, however, revealed a different picture: over 60% of immigrants from the EU-8 were attracted by Great Britain and Ireland, due to the immediate labor market

Table 2: *Migration flows from Eastern Europe to EU-15 countries, 1998-2009 (percentage share)*

	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Ireland	Greece
Migration from UE-8, 1998-2003	3,5	0,8	29,5	6,1	5,4
Migration from UE-8, 2004-2009	1,3	1,7	13,7	12,1	0,2
Migration from UE-2, 1998-2006	1	0,1	-0,1	0,4	3,3
Migration from UE-2, 2007-2009	1,9	0,7	6,3	0,7	6
	Spain	France	Italy	Luxembourg	Netherlands
Migration from UE-8, 1998-2003	13,3	0,6	7,2	0	1,4
Migration from UE-8, 2004-2009	6,5	0,2	5,4	0,5	3,1
Migration from UE-2, 1998-2006	57,8	3,6	28,3	0	0,3
Migration from UE-2, 2007-2009	17,1	1,5	46,5	0	1,4
	Austria	Portugal	Finland	Sweden	UK
Migration from UE-8, 1998-2003	2,3	0,2	1,4	-0,4	28,5
Migration from UE-8, 2004-2009	1,8	0,1	1,1	2,7	49,5
Migration from UE-2, 1998-2006	0,8	1,3	0	-0,1	3,3
Migration from UE-2, 2007-2009	4,9	2,6	0,1	0,8	9,5

Source: Fertig and Kahanec (2013).

liberalization, while traditional destinations such as Austria and Germany lost their importance as countries of destination (Brücker and Damelang, 2009; Brücker, et al., 2009; European Commission, 2008). As Table 2 shows, between 2004 and 2009 49.5% of outflows from EU-8 to EU-15, had the United Kingdom as final destination, while 12.1% of EU-8 migrants went to Ireland. Migration to Germany accounted for 29.5% of the overall East-West intra-European flows in the period 1998-2003, while this figure dramatically dropped to 13.7% after the enlargement. The literature labeled "diversion effect" this unexpected change in the geographical pattern of European migration (Barrell *et al.*, 2010; Galgóczi *et al.*, 2009; Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2009).

In 2007, Bulgaria and Romania (EU-2) entered the EU; their citizens were not granted the freedom to work in any of the EU member countries upon accession; all member States chose to apply the transitional regime until January 2014.

Inflows from Romania and Bulgaria increased a lot in the early 2000s, thanks to bilateral agreements with specific countries, such as Spain and Italy, and to several regularization processes that took place there (Brücker, et al., 2009). Table 2 indeed shows that Italy and Spain were already receiving large flows of migrants from Romania in the pre-accession period (1998-2006). When Romania entered the EU, such flows became even larger and did not experience any relevant slowdown with the outbreak of the global economic crisis in 2008.

Table 3: *Foreign-born citizens in EU-27 as of 1 January 2012*

	Foreign-born citizens					
	Total		EU-27		Non-EU	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
EU-27	32967,0	6,5				
Austria	1332,8	15,8	550,5	6,5	782,3	9,3
Belgium	1699,2	15,3	797,1	7,2	902,1	8,1
Bulgaria	88,1	1,2	32,9	0,4	55,1	0,8
Cyprus	200,3	23,2	108,5	12,6	91,8	10,6
Czech Rep.	390,8	3,7	138,2	1,3	252,7	2,4
Denmark	531,5	9,5	169,2	3,0	362,3	6,5
Estonia	210,8	16,0	19,8	1,5	191,0	14,5
Finland	260,9	4,8	93,3	1,7	167,5	3,1
France	7358,2	11,3	2131,4	3,3	5226,9	8,0
Germany	9931,9	12,1	3453,4	4,2	6478,5	7,9
Greece	1259,9	11,2	320,7	2,8	939,2	8,3
Hungary	465,6	4,7	316,2	3,2	149,4	1,5
Ireland	685,5	15,0	504,7	11,0	180,8	3,9
Italy	5457,8	9,0	1747,7	2,9	3710,1	6,1
Latvia	298,0	14,6	30,4	1,5	267,6	13,1
Lithuania	147,8	4,9	18,1	0,6	129,7	4,3
Luxembourg	216,2	41,2	164,7	31,4	51,5	9,8
Malta						
Netherlands	1906,3	11,4	473,1	2,8	1433,2	8,6
Poland	674,9	1,8	265,2	0,7	409,7	1,1
Portugal	853,8	8,1	212,1	2,0	641,7	6,1
Romania	193,5	0,9	87,1	0,4	106,4	0,5
Slovak Rep.	156,9	2,9	131,8	2,4	25,1	0,5
Slovenia	230,1	11,2	21,4	1,0	208,7	10,2
Spain	6555,0	14,2	2353,4	5,1	4201,6	9,1
Sweden	1426,4	15,0	489,5	5,2	936,9	9,9
United Kingdom	7625,8	12,1	2575,7	4,1	5050,1	8,0

Source: Eurostat (2014b).

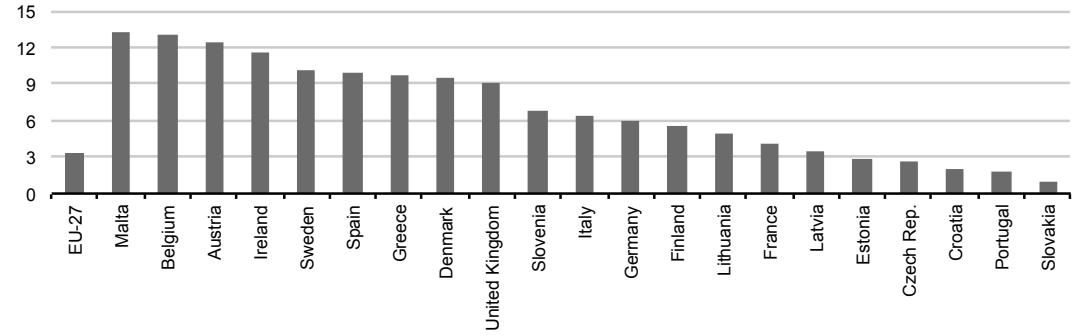
3. European foreign-born population

3.1. Size, origin and demographic structure

At the end of 2011, 6.5% of the EU-27 resident population is represented by foreign-born citizens, summing up to 33 million people (Table 3); of these, two-thirds come from countries outside the European Union.

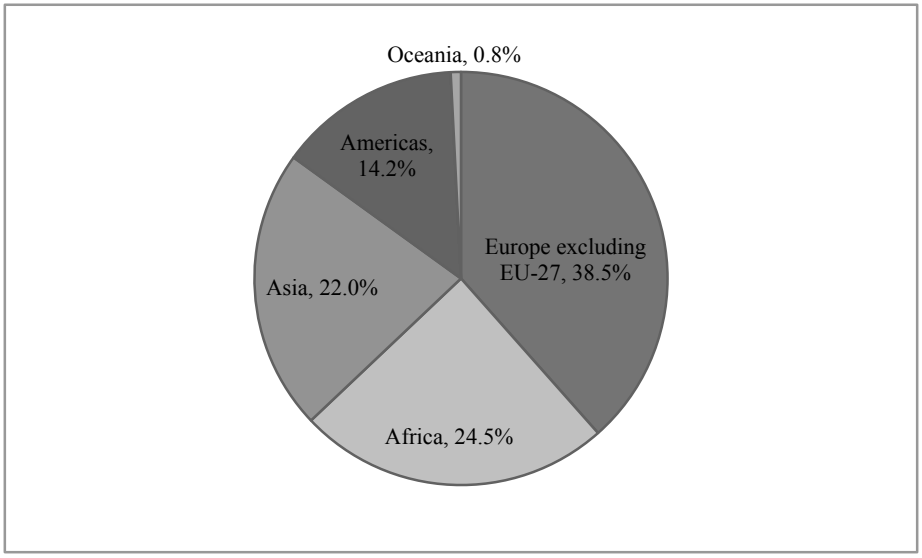
The share of foreign-born population ranges from 0.9% in Romania to 41.2% in the case of Luxembourg. Estonia and Latvia host the highest share of extra-EU citizens (Russians), followed by countries such as Spain and Cyprus, which play a strategic role at the Southern

Figure 1: *Foreign-born residents per thousand inhabitants in EU-27 as of 1 January 2012*



Source: Eurostat (2014b).
Notes: Outliers (Luxembourg and Cyprus) have been excluded from the Figure.

Figure 2: *Extra-EU citizens in EU-27 as of 1 January 2012, by region of origin (percentage share)*



Source: Eurostat (2014b).

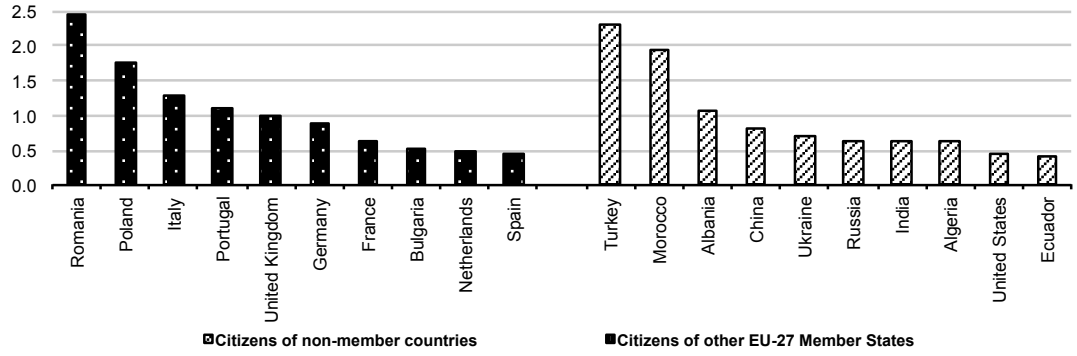
European borders.

Italy is slightly above the European average, with 9% of foreign-born population. Figure 1 shows that in the EU-27 there are on average 3.3 foreigners per thousand inhabitants. Excluding outliers such as Luxembourg and Cyprus (39.1 and 27.1 foreigners per thousand inhabitants, respectively), the figure ranges from 13 immigrants in Malta and Belgium to 0.9 in Slovakia, while Italy is located around the median value, with 6.4 immigrants per thousand inhabitants.

If we consider the composition of the foreign population by region of origin (Figure 2), 38.5% of immigrants come from extra-EU European countries, followed by Africa (24.5%), Asia (22%) and the Americas (14.2%). Oceania, due to its geographical distance, accounts only for 0.8% of the foreign population in EU-27.

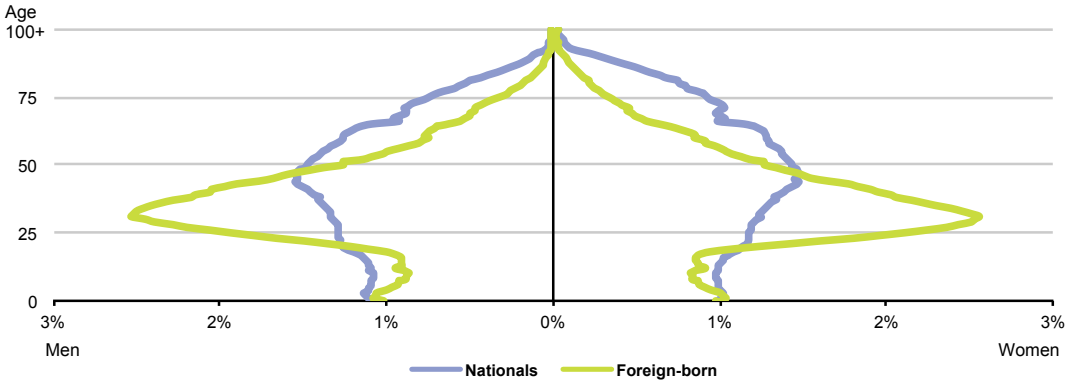
Looking in detail to the different nationalities, Figure 3 shows the most represented countries among foreign-born population in EU-27, by distinguishing between non-EU and EU countries

Figure 3: *Main nationality groups in EU-27 as of 1 January 2012 (million)*



Source: Eurostat (2014b).

Figure 4: *Age structure of native and foreign-born population in EU-27 as of 1 January 2012*



Source: Eurostat (2014b).

(i.e. EU citizens living in a country other than their country of origin). Among EU countries, Romania ranks first with 2.4 million people, followed by Poland with 1.8 million and Italy with 1.3 million people living in the rest of the EU. These data clearly show that the free movement of people, within the European single market, has became a reality. As for the non-EU citizens, the most represented country is Turkey with 2.3 million citizens currently living in the EU-27, followed by Morocco and Albania, with 1.9 million and 1.1 million citizens, respectively. These are all neighboring countries, located just outside the external borders of EU-27: geographical proximity, together with the strength of political, economic and trade relations between countries, plays a key role in determining the direction of migration flows on a global scale.

Figure 4 shows the structure by age of the native and the foreign population in EU-27. The two pyramids differ mainly in the working age segment, where the percentage values for the foreign-born are substantially higher than those for the natives. The highest share among foreign-born population is recorded at 31 years, both among males and females (2.5-2.6% of the total population). For the native population, instead, the highest share corresponds to 44 years, both among females and among males (1.5%). Overall, the pyramid scheme is much more evident among the foreign-born population: the share of foreigners that are older than 75

Table 4: *Over-education among native and foreign-born workers in EU-27, 2008 (percentage share)*

	Natives	Foreign-born	From:	
			Other EU-27 countries	Non-EU countries
EU-27, total	19	34	29	36
Recent immigrants	-	43	37	47
Long term immigrants	-	29	24	32

Source: Eurostat (2011).

years is on average about 3.3 times lower than the corresponding value for native women, and about 2.5 times lower than for native males.

3.2. The labor market performance

The European labor market has been heavily affected by the global economic crisis that depressed the world economy from 2008 onwards. If some countries were hit immediately, other countries, including Spain and Italy, were relatively resilient to the financial crisis of 2008, and then suffered a lot between the 2010 and 2011, due to the combined effect of the global recession, the sovereign debt crisis and the crisis of the banking system.

Foreign-born workers have been severely hit by the global recession in many OECD countries (OECD, 2009, 2010), due to their concentration in "cyclical" sectors such as construction, manufacturing and retail. Furthermore, foreign-born workers are over-represented in precarious and informal jobs, often without any kind of protection or social safety nets (OECD, 2009, 2010, 2012). The employed foreign-born workforce in Europe increased by 6.3% between the first quarter of 2008 and the third quarter of 2011, while employment among native workers fell by 2.6%. In contrast, both groups saw their employment levels fall in the United States between 2007 and 2011, although the decline was more pronounced for native workers than foreigners – 5.6% and 3%, respectively (OECD, 2012).

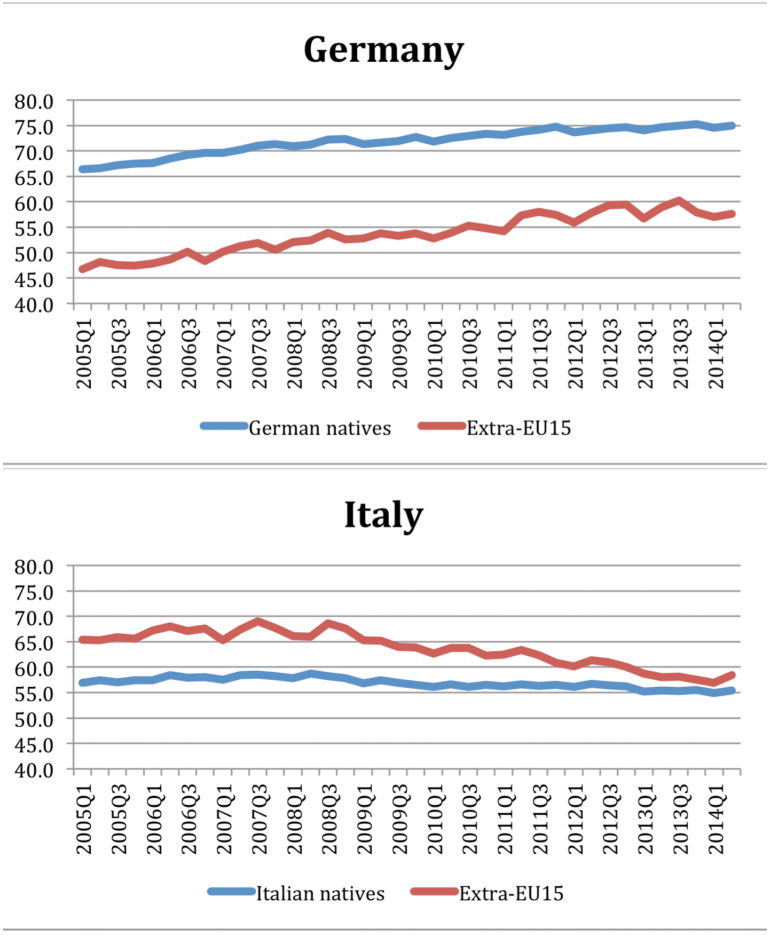
In Europe, however, the picture differs a lot across countries. There are countries such as Germany (Figure 5) in which employment rates of natives are regularly higher than immigrants; however, the gap of almost 20 percentage points before the crisis narrowed in recent years, thanks to an efficient internal labor market and the good performance of German exports.

The situation in Italy is quite different. Pre-crisis employment rates of foreign-born workers were on average 10% higher compared to native workers. Between 2006 and 2013, the decline in native employment was 2%, while immigrants' employment rates decreased by 9-10% so that the figures for the two groups were almost equivalent in 2013.

Based on data from the national Labour Force Surveys (LFS) from all EU countries, Eurostat provides detailed information on the extent of over-education among the foreign-born workforce. The most recent data for 2008 show that the problem of over-qualification is extremely widespread in the EU-27: 34% of (employed) foreign-born workers in fact have a job for which they are over-qualified, compared to 19% of the native workforce (Table 4).

Recently arrived extra-EU foreigners have the worst performance in terms of over-qualification (47% of employed workers); although their stay in Europe somehow mitigates the problem, the figure in the long run is still ten percentage points higher than in the case of the native

Figure 5: *Employment rates for natives and extra-EU15 immigrants in Germany and Italy, 2005-2014*



Source: Labour Force Survey, Eurostat (2014a).

population (respectively, 29% and 19%).

4. Italy: from an emigration to an immigration country

4.1. A brief history of Italian migration

Italy has experienced mass emigration, internal migration and mass immigration in less than 150 years. Italy is first and foremost an emigration country. Between 1846 and 1932 it experienced a significant process of mass emigration involving about 11,1 million of people towards the Americas, firstly from the northern regions of Liguria, Piedmont, Veneto and Lombardy and afterwards from Sicily, Apulia, Calabria, and Campania (Livi Bacci, 1998).

After the World Wars Italy experienced both emigration, mostly towards northern Europe, and internal migration from the poor agricultural South to the industrial region between Turin, Milan and Genoa. Over a century (1876-1976), Italy provides almost 24 million of migrants to the Americas, Australia and North Europe (Rosoli, 1978).

Italy becomes an immigration country in the mid-seventies, although the arrival of foreign citizens began many decades before.

Indeed, until the 19th century, the adoption of a liberal open-borders policy acted as a pull factor for many foreigners (the Italian Civil Code of 1865 guaranteed foreign residents the same civil rights of Italian citizens). The scarce information about foreigners before the political unification of 1861, however, does not allow to capture the intensity of the immigration phenomenon (Einaudi, 2007). Data become available with the Census of 1871 which identifies about 60 thousand foreign individuals, representing around 0.2 percent of the Italian population.

The main nationalities were Austro-Hungarian, German, French, Yugoslavian and Swiss, but also non-European ones like American, Russian, Argentinian, Brazilian, Turkish and Chinese; foreigners residing in Italy were not only modest workers, but also wealthy businessmen, members of the religious orders, as well as "*'elective residence' immigrants, attracted by Italy's image as a Mediterranean land rich in history and natural beauty*" (Colombo and Sciortino, 2004).

During the economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s emigration coexisted with a weak immigration phenomenon; the improved living conditions of the Italian population and the development of the welfare state progressively softened the propensity to migrate among native population. This phenomenon created a demand for foreign workers, that were highly mobile and, differently from the native workers, ready to accept unskilled and low-paid jobs (Einaudi, 2007).

A first pull factor attracting migrants to Italy is represented by the ex-colonial ties; the first Tunisians to Sicily and the small inflows from Eritrea (an Italian colony from 1890 to 1941) in the 1960s followed Italian entrepreneurs, businessmen and families who returned from the colonies (Colombo and Sciortino, 2004). Migrant women arrived from East Africa due to the ex-colonial ties, but also from catholic countries in Latin America and Asia supported by Catholic organizations and employed mainly in the domestic sector (Andall, 2000; Parrenas, 2001). In the 1960s, seasonal workers from Tunisia arrived in Sicily and were employed mainly in fishing (in Mazara Del Vallo) and agriculture (in the area around Trapani).

Other relevant categories of immigrants arriving before the 1970s were political refugees from Vietnam and Chile and students from Iran and Greece. During those years the attention towards immigration was scarce as the political debate was focusing on the return of Italian emigrants from European countries.

The migratory balance in Italy became positive for the first time in 1973 (Veugelers, 1994). The restrictive immigration policy adopted by traditional immigration countries of Northern Europe, in the aftermath of the oil crises, diverted migration flows to Southern European countries. Flows towards Italy intensified also thanks to the lack of an immigration policy.

According to the 1981 Census, about 321 thousand foreign residents were living in the country (ISTAT, 1981). Such figures were higher compared to the number of officially resident migrants, suggesting the existence of undocumented immigrants, which would become a substantial feature of the immigration phenomenon in Italy (Maciotti and Pugliese, 1991).

Since the 1970s, the foreign population has rapidly increased over time. According to the Ministry of Interior, the residence permits increased from 147,000 in 1970 to 450,000 in 1986 (Bonifazi, 1998). The first big inflow of approximately 700-800,000 migrants arrived in Italy between 1984 and 1989; half of them stayed on illegally (Mauri and Micheli, 1992).

The Census of 1981 showed clearly the increase of the immigration phenomenon in Italy. The most important migrant groups were from Africa (mainly men from Muslim countries like Tunisia, Morocco and Senegal) and Asia (Philippines). Afterwards, migrants from Eastern Europe, in particular those from Albania, Yugoslavia and Romania, became the fastest growing group.

Unlike European traditional immigration countries, where immigration was supported and promoted through active recruitment, Italy did not have any formal channel of entry. The new arrivals were spontaneous, based on the individual initiative or supported by small religious organizations (Einaudi, 2007). The lack of an immigration policy had two main effects: a strong heterogeneity of the composition of migrant population and a high number of irregular migrants.[2]

5. Italian foreign-born population

5.1. The composition of migration flows

The composition of migration flows in Italy changed rapidly over time (Table 6). The main foreign groups between the 1970s and the 1980s had been replaced in the early 1990s by immigrants from Africa and Asia, which became the main continents of origin of immigrants in Italy.

Compared to other European countries, one of the peculiarities of Italian immigration was the fragmentation and globalization of origins. Although this characteristic still persists today (192 different nationalities), the weight of each nationality changes significantly over time; if in the 1970s, for instance, the first 10 nationalities accounted for 12.8% of the total migrant population, twenty years later they covered 40%; today the first five nationalities alone represent half of the immigrant population.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Italy became a major destination of many Eastern European migrants. In the early 1990s migrants arrived from Albania, the Former Yugoslavia and Poland. Intensive flows from other Eastern European countries started in the early 2000s, in particular from Romania, Ukraine and Moldova and they had a significant impact on the age and gender structure of the foreign population in Italy.

During the 1990s, the amount of foreign residents have more than doubled, increasing from 556 thousand individuals (0.6% of the total population) in 1991, to about 13 million in 2001 (2.3% of the total population). According to the last Census, immigrants in 2011 were about 4 million individuals and represented 6.8% of the total population. The latest available data show that at the beginning of 2013 immigrants were 4.4 million (7.3% of the total population).

Romanians represent the largest group with 823,100 residents, followed by Albanians and Moroccans with respectively 451,437 and 407,097 residents (Table 6). It is rather clear that, with the exception of the Chinese community, migration is determined mainly by geographical proximity; Europe (53%), Africa (21%), Asia (18%), the Americas (8%) and Oceania (0.1%) (Figure 6).

[2] For a detailed analysis of the Italian legislations and the debate on migration see Ambrosetti and Cela (2014).

Table 5: *Foreigners' distribution across Italian regions*

Census 1871		Census 1921		Census1951		Census 1981		Census 1991		Census 2001		Census 2011	
Veneto	12,983	Venezia Giulia	32,234	Lazio	21,235	Lombardy	45,049	Lombardy	77,298	Lombardy	319,564	Lombardy	947,288
Lombardy	11,684	Venezia Trident	25,415	Lombardy	10,183	Lazio	29,186	Lazio	61,345	Veneto	153,074	Veneto	457,328
Piedmont	9469	Lazio	11,364	Trentino A.A.	4,735	Tuscany	18,114	Emilia-R.	28,876	Lazio	151,567	Emilia-R.	452,036
Tuscany	7531	Lombardy	10,953	Friuli-V.G.	4,107	Emilia-R.	16,086	Tuscany	28,059	Emilia-R.	135,946	Lazio	425,707
Campania	4368	Liguria	10,501	Liguria	2,870	Sicily	14,785	Veneto	25,471	Piedmont	110,402	Piedmont	359,348
Liguria	3883	Tuscany	5664	Piedmont	2,434	Campania	13,420	Sicily	24,939	Tuscany	108,702	Tuscany	321,847
Rome	3761	Piedmont	5113	Campania	2,047	Veneto	12,684	Piedmont	24,709	Sicily	49,399	Campania	148,119
Sicily	2676	Campania	3437	Emilia-R.	1,916	Piedmont	11,586	Campania	16,991	Marche	45,175	Marche	133,207
Emilia	2627	Veneto	1268	Tuscany	1,827	Liguria	9,253	Liguria	11,125	Campania	40,430	Sicily	125,015
Sardinia	573	Sicily	1238	Veneto	1,070	Apulia	6,943	Friuli-V.G.	9,122	Friuli-V.G.	38,122	Liguria	111,416
Marche	445	Sardinia	852	Sicily	929	Abruzzo	6,334	Apulia	8,925	Liguria	35,950	Friuli-V.G.	96,879
Apulia	438	Umbria	365	Marche	787	Trentino-A.A.	5,575	Trentino-A.A.	7,897	Trentino-A.A.	30,326	Umbria	87,715
Umbria	263	Marche	359	Apulia	333	Marche	5,338	Marche	7,371	Apulia	30,161	Trentino-A.A	85,100
Abruzzo-Molise	110	Abruzzo-Molise	216	Umbria	319	Friuli-V.G.	4,979	Umbria	5,578	Umbria	27,266	Apulia	82,680
Calabria	98	Calabria	63	Abruzzo	248	Umbria	3,809	Sardinia	5,491	Abruzzo	21,399	Abruzzo	68,091
Potenza	15	Basilicata	9	Calabria	218	Sardinia	3,495	Abruzzo	5,414	Calabria	18,017	Calabria	65,809
				Aosta Valley	92	Calabria	2,420	Calabria	4,899	Sardinia	10,755	Sardinia	30,672
				Sardinia	85	Molise	849	Molise	974	Basilicata	3,416	Basilicata	12,928
				Molise	58	Basilicata	693	Basilicata	910	Aosta Valley	2,630	Aosta Valley	8,419
				Basilicata	54	Aosta Valley	339	Aosta Valley	765	Molise	2,588	Molise	8,023
Italia	60,924	Italia	110,440	Italia	47,177	Italia	210,937	Italia	356,159	Italia	1,334,889	Italia	4,027,627

Source: Einaudi (2007) for the period 1871-1981; own elaborations on Istat data for the period 1991-2011.

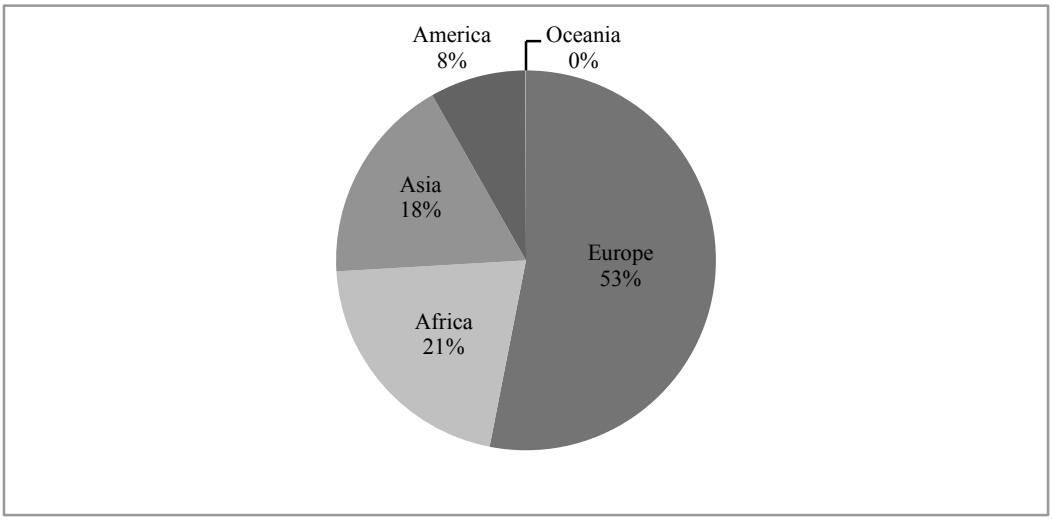
Table 6: *Foreign nationalities in Italy (1970-2005): residence permits at 31 December. First 20 nationalities.*

Country	1970		Country	1985		Country	1990	
	a.v.	%		a.v.	%		a.v.	%
Usa	26,452	18.00	Usa	51,075	12.07	Morocco	77,971	9.98
Germany (FRG)	16,988	11.56	Germany (FRG)	37,237	8.80	Usa	58,138	7.44
Switzerland	11,971	8.14	Greece	28,839	6.82	Germany (FRG)	41,623	5.33
Great Britain	10,855	7.38	Great Britain	27,914	6.60	Tunisia	41,234	5.28
France	9,574	6.51	France	23,739	5.61	Philippines	34,328	4.39
Spain	7,058	4.80	Switzerland	18,172	4.30	Yugoslavia	29,790	3.81
Yugoslavia	6,460	4.39	Yugoslavia	13,862	3.28	Great Britain	26,553	3.40
Greece	6,055	4.12	Iran	13,025	3.08	Senegal	25,107	3.21
Australia	2,504	1.70	Spain	12,571	2.97	France	24,406	3.12
Argentina	2,068	1.41	Poland	7,909	1.87	Greece	20,992	2.69
Israel	2,005	1.36	Philippines	7,621	1.80	Switzerland	19,970	2.56
Canada	1,972	1.34	Ethiopia	7,196	1.70	Egypt	19,814	2.54
Iran	1,752	1.19	Austria	7,191	1.70	China	18,665	2.39
Brazil	1,406	0.96	Egypt	6,958	1.64	Poland	16,996	2.18
Egypt	847	0.58	Netherlands	6,129	1.45	Iran	14,630	1.87
Somalia	472	0.32	Venezuela	5,620	1.33	Spain	14,394	1.84
Ethiopia	376	0.26	Romania	5,380	1.27	Brazil	14,293	1.83
Tunisia	353	0.24	Tunisia	4,352	1.03	Argentina	12,839	1.64
Philippines	265	0.18	Morocco	2,364	0.56	Ethiopia	11,946	1.53
Morocco	136	0.09	Albania	923	0.22	Sri Lanka	11,454	1.47
Total	146,989	100.00	Total	423,004	100.00	Total	781,138	100.00

Country	1995		Country	2000		Country	2005	
	a.v.	%		a.v.	%		a.v.	%
Morocco	81,247	11.14	Morocco	162,254	11.76	Romania	271,491	12.87
ex-Yugoslavia	73,538	10.09	Albania	146,321	10.60	Albania	256,916	12.18
Usa	44,830	6.15	Romania	69,999	5.07	Morocco	239,728	11.37
Philippines	36,007	4.94	Philippines	65,073	4.72	Ukraine	115,087	5.46
Tunisia	30,666	4.21	China (PRC)	60,143	4.36	China (PRC)	114,165	5.41
Germany	30,235	4.15	Tunisia	45,972	3.33	Philippines	74,987	3.56
Albania	30,183	4.14	Usa	45,528	3.30	Poland	73,191	3.47
France	21,006	2.88	Yugoslavia	40,151	2.91	Tunisia	61,540	2.92
Senegal	20,816	2.85	Senegal	39,170	2.84	Serbia - Montenegro	52,272	2.48
Great Britain	20,505	2.81	Germany	35,667	2.59	India	51,832	2.46
Switzerland	16,270	2.23	Sri Lanka	33,789	2.45	Peru	48,717	2.31
China (PRC)	16,200	2.22	Egypt	32,381	2.35	Senegal	47,085	2.23
Sri Lanka	16,010	2.20	Poland	30,419	2.20	Egypt	46,834	2.22
Egypt	15,530	2.13	Peru	30,142	2.18	Ecuador	45,156	2.14
Spain	14,513	1.99	India	30,006	2.17	Moldova	45,006	2.13
Romania	14,212	1.95	France	25,470	1.85	Sri Lanka	42,524	2.02
Poland	13,955	1.91	Great Britain	23,424	1.70	Macedonia	40,441	1.92
Brazil	12,985	1.78	Macedonia	22,504	1.63	Bangladesh	37,381	1.77
India	11,984	1.64	Bangladesh	20,820	1.51	Pakistan	34,539	1.64
Ghana	10,010	1.37	Ghana	19,650	1.42	Germany	32,897	1.56
Total	729,159	100.00	Total	1,379,749	100.00	Total	2,108,908	100.00

Source: Einaudi (2007) for the period 1970-1990; own elaborations on Istat data for the period 1995-2005.

Figure 6: *Migrant population in Italy in 2011, by region of origin (percentage share)*



Source: ISTAT (2012).

Table 7: *Demographic indicators for the native and the foreign population, 2001 and 2011*

Indicators	2001		2011	
	Foreigners	Italians	Foreigners	Italians
Sex ratio	98	93.7	87.6	94.1
Aging index	18.9	134.9	11.6	163.6
Dependency ratio	28.4	45.3	32.2	51.1
Replacement ratio	36.8	118.7	35.5	137.9
Average age, females	31.4	43.1	32.3	45.7
Average age, males	30.4	40.1	29.7	42.6
Average age, total	30.9	41.6	31.1	44.2
% population aged 0-4 years	8	4.5	8.4	4.3
% population aged 0-14 years	18.6	14.1	20.2	13.6
% population aged over 75	1.4	8.5	0.7	11.6

Source: ISTAT (2012).

Foreign residents are younger than the native population: the average age is 31.1 years, compared to 44.7 years for Italians. About 21.7% of migrants is less than 18 years old, compared to the 16.5% of the natives. The largest share of foreign population is in the 30-50 age group; only 9% is aged 55 and over and 2.7% is over 65. For the Italian population the age structure is exactly the opposite: one fifth of natives is aged 65 and over.

Trends are extremely different between migrant and native population (Table 7); the gender ratio decreases for migrants and increases for natives. The aging process is stronger for the Italian population that the foreign one. Nevertheless, according to Istat population projections, the proportion of older migrants over 65 will rapidly increase in the future reaching 8.7% in 2031 and about 19% in 2051. The aging index will increase to 111.8 in 2050 for foreign population and to 263 for natives.

Table 8: *Foreigners resident population in 2011. Top 15 nationalities*

Country of Origin	Total	%	% F	$\%\frac{M}{F}$
Romania	823100	20,4	56,6	76,7
Albania	451437	11,2	47,8	109,2
Morocco	407097	10,1	45,9	118,1
China	194510	4,8	49,2	103,3
Ukraine	178534	4,4	79,5	25,8
Moldova	130619	3,2	66,6	50,1
Philippines	129015	3,2	57,1	75,0
India	116797	2,9	40,5	146,7
Peru	93905	2,3	60,0	66,6
Poland	84619	2,1	73,9	35,3
Tunisia	82066	2,0	39,7	151,6
Equador	80645	2,0	58,7	70,3
Bangladesh	80639	2,0	33,1	201,8
Macedonia	73407	1,8	45,3	120,9
Senegal	72458	1,8	26,9	271,3
Total 15 Countries	2998848	74,5	53,1	88,3
Total Italy	4.027.627	100,0	53,3	87,6

Source: ISTAT (2012).

5.2. Gendered patterns of migration flows and fertility rates

One of the peculiarities of migration flows to Italy and other Southern European countries, is the increasing female presence, boosted by a strong demand of domestic workers and caregivers. The presence of a weak welfare state shifts the burden of elderly and child care on the families thus creating a strong familistic welfare that relies mainly on foreign labor (King, 2000).

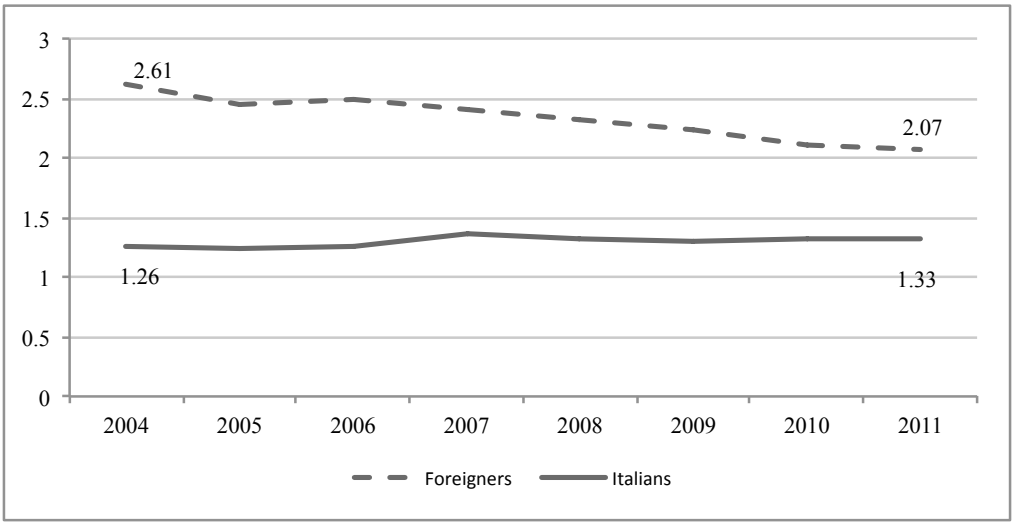
The female presence in Italy increased from 47 percent in 1991 to 53.3 percent in 2011, due to family reunification processes and the increasing presence of "breadwinners".

The feminization of migration flows generated a balanced gender composition of the foreign population; at the national level, the female presence is slightly higher (53.3% in 2011) than that of male migrants. However, there is a considerable variability within each community. Females come mainly from Catholic countries, males from Muslim ones. The strong differences in the gender ratios between nationalities are shown in Table 8.

Some nationalities coming from Africa and Asia are essentially male dominated, being the average gender ratio respectively 151 and 119 men for Africa and Asia. The opposite happens for others communities such as Ukraine, Poland, Moldova, Peru for which females outnumber males. In particular migration from East Europe is female dominated. In this respect, the extreme case is Ukraine, with a gender ratio of 25 men every 100. Other communities, such as Romania, Albania and China, have a more balanced gender composition, which is probably the result of long-term migration patterns and family reunification processes.

According to Istat, foreigners give a substantial contribution to overall population growth in Italy. The number of foreign residents is indeed growing due to new arrivals from abroad (321,000 individuals in 2012), but also due to new births in foreign households residing in Italy;

Figure 7: *Fertility of Italian and foreign women, 2004-2011*



Source: Ortensi (2012).

these represent 15% of the total number of births in 2012 (79,894 foreign births).

On the other hand, the total fertility rate (TFR) of the foreign women is rapidly decreasing from 2.6 in 2004 to 2.1 in 2011, while the TFR of Italian women remains stagnant at 1.3 (Figure 7). The slowdown in TFR among female migrants might be partly explained by the difficulties in reconciling family and job compared to native women (Ortensi, 2012; Ortensi and Farina, 2012).

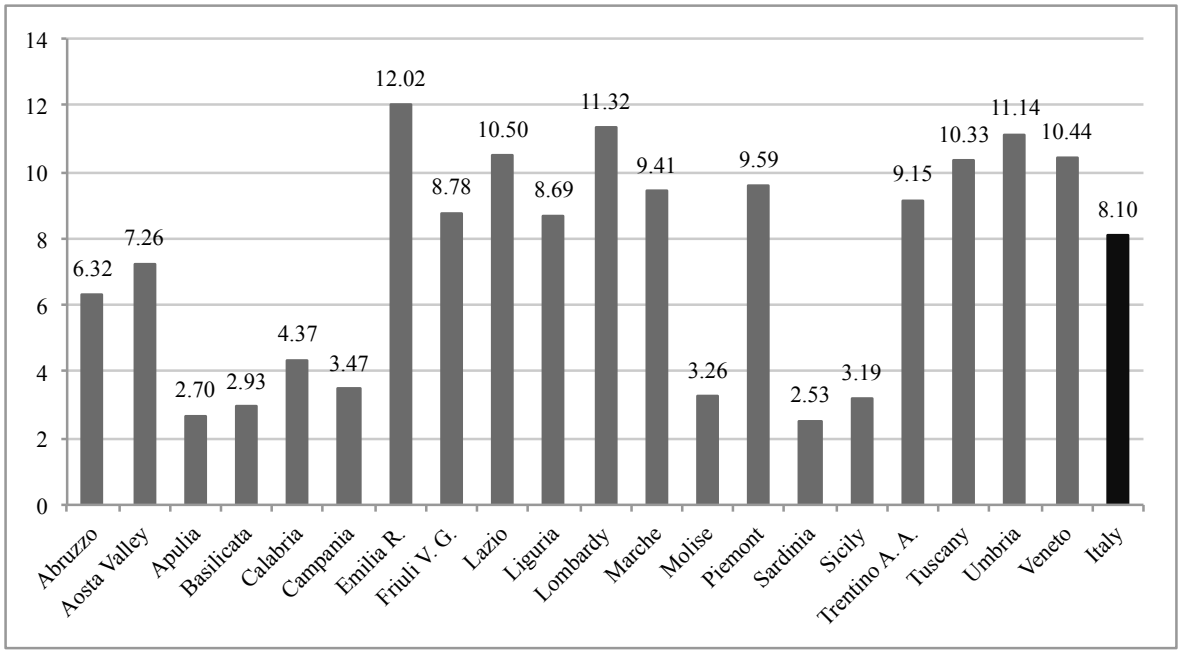
5.3. Geographic distribution

Immigration has differently affected Italian regions, both in relation to the spatial distribution and to the concentration of different nationalities. Southern Italy is characterized by marginal migration, the so-called 'immigration of poverty' (Vallat, 1993), or by illegal migration, employed mainly in seasonal and temporary jobs. The Southern regions represent for many migrants the gateway to Italy and the first step towards the Northern and Central regions. Migrants tend to cluster in the main cities, where there are more job opportunities, more services and where it is easier to benefit from the support of ethnic networks. However, as time spent in Italy gets longer, thanks to the regularization process and to family reunification, migrants have a territorial distribution similar to the natives' one. Data from the 2011 Census indicate that about half of immigrants reside in small size cities; this share is higher in North Eastern and Southern regions.

The 86.6% of foreigners is concentrated in the North (35% in the North-West, 27% in the North-East) and in the Center (24%), while only 14% of migrants live in the South. Lombardy hosts 23.5% of foreign residents (8.2% in the province of Milan), followed by Veneto (11%), Emilia Romagna (11%) and Lazio (10.6%).

At the national level, the incidence of foreign population (foreigners on the total number of residents) rises from 6.8% in 2012 to 7.4% in 2013 and 8.1% in 2014; the highest incidence (on the total population) is in the North-East (10.1%), while it is slightly lower in the North-West (9.7%) and Central Italy (9.1%). The values are much lower in the South and in the Islands

Figure 8: *Share of foreigners in the total resident population as of 1 January 2014, by Italian region*



Source: http://demo.istat.it.

(3.1% and 2.6%, respectively), although with an increasing trend (+12% in the South and +10.9% in the Islands compared to the previous year). Looking at a more dis-aggregated territorial level, the highest incidence is in Emilia Romagna, where foreigners account for 12% of the total resident population, followed by Lombardy (11.3%) and Umbria (11.1%). In relation to the age composition of the foreign population, Lombardy and Veneto are the two regions where the majority of foreign minors reside.

5.4. The effects of the recent crisis

Between 1990s and 2000s OECD countries experienced a phase of employment growth in which immigrant labour had a determinant role. Immigrants' share in net job creation between 1997 and 2007 was at least 60% in Italy (OECD, 2009). The great recession caused a sudden change in this positive trend and hit the labour market conditions extremely hard. Specifically, the long-lasting effects of the economic crisis have negatively affected the integration of immigrants. The Annual Report on the Economy of Immigration (Fondazione Leone Moressa, 2013), shows that the unemployment rate of foreign population rose from 8.1% in 2008 to 14.1% in 2012; approximately 382,000 immigrants lost their job, although the rate of employment is still higher among foreigners (60.6%) than natives (56.4%). The crisis changed the economic and employment prospects of immigrants in Italy by affecting also the degree of labor market competition with native workers, especially for temporary and precarious jobs in the service sector. This situation forced many immigrants to leave the country (32,000 return migrants in 2011), thus causing a shortfall of approximately 86 million euros in terms of unpaid contributions (IOM, 2013; Fondazione Leone Moressa, 2013).

However, the number of employed foreigners increased both in absolute and relative terms – although at a slower rate compared to the pre-crisis period – up to 10% of the total employment,

Table 9: *Activity, employment and unemployment rates in 2008 and 2013 (percentage share on population aged 15-64)*

	Activity rate		Employment rate		Unemployment rate	
Year	Foreigners	Italians	Foreigners	Italians	Foreigners	Italians
			Males			
2008	87.1	73.5	81.9	69.5	6	5.6
2013	81.8	72.4	68.2	64.5	16.6	11
Var %	-6.1	-1.4	-16.7	-7.2	176.7	96-5
			Females			
2008	59.9	51	52.8	46.8	11.9	8.3
2013	60.1	52.6	49.3	46.1	18	12.4
Var %	0.4	3,2	-6.5	-1.5	50.9	48.9

Source: Bonifazi and Livi Bacci (2014).

with the highest concentration in the service sector (62.1%). This increase is primarily linked to the aging process of the Italian population, that caused a sharp rise of the demand of labor (female labor, mainly) in the elderly and family care services. At the same time, there is evidence of a lower degree of concentration in sectors that were traditionally immigrant-absorbing industries and had been heavily affected by the recession, such as the construction sector (Bettin, 2011).

In addition, data on foreign enterprises show the entrepreneurial spirit of the migrant population; at the end of 2013, 8.2% of Italian enterprises (497,080 firms) are managed by immigrants, with an increase of 9.5% relative to the end of 2011 (IDOS, 2014). Foreigners show a strong capacity for self-financing, thanks to the strong support of family and community networks.

Migrants' entrepreneurship is a reality that "*deserves greater support, given that the aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs are committed to innovative fields and prone to import/export activities that can be beneficial both to Italy and to the countries of origin*" (IDOS, 2013). Indeed, Brzozowski *et al.* (2014) analyze transnational ties and the performance of immigrant entrepreneurs and show that transnational entrepreneurship might be beneficial for both home and host countries, as it stimulates cross-border business initiatives, which would not exist otherwise, and boosts capital accumulation.

6. Conclusions

International migration, with its social and economic consequences, has nowadays become a crucial issue for all advanced countries. European countries in the last decade had to cope with large internal East-West migration flows, besides the migratory pressure at their external borders due to the Arab spring, the Syrian conflict and the still severe and widespread poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The great recession affected immigrants' economic prospects due to their involvement in

pro-cyclical industries (e.g. construction sector) and more in general to their role as temporary workforce. However,push factors in many countries of origin, such as harsh economic conditions, civil conflicts and political oppression, have been out-weighting the less attractive prospects Europe – and Italy, in particular – offer to immigrants due to the recession.

In the near future, EU countries will face the challenges raised by demographic changes and their long–term labor market and immigration implications. The range of policies that can be adopted across Europe and the scope of any cooperation strategy with third countries has to cope with an increasing negative public and political perception of migration. So far, European governments have mainly targeted long-term immigration, in order to foster integration, with the ultimate goal of citizenship. However, they have generally not been successful in finding an effective mix of integration policies. Even more has to be done with respect to short-term immigration, to address the potential turnover in migrant populations from neighboring countries.

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A. Appendix: Tables

Table 10: *Incidence of foreigners on total resident population (%), 1991-2001-2011*

Region	1991	2001	2011
Piedmont	0.6	2.6	8.2
Aosta Valley	0.7	2.2	6.6
Liguria	0.7	2.3	7.1
Lombardy	0.9	3.5	9.8
Trentino A.A.	0.9	3.2	8.3
Veneto	0.6	3.4	9.4
Friuli V.G.	0.8	3.2	7.9
Emilia R.	0.7	3.4	10.4
Marche	0.8	3.1	8.8
Tuscany	0.7	3.3	9.9
Umbria	0.5	3.1	8.6
Lazio	1.2	3	7.7
Campania	0.4	1.7	5.2
Abruzzo	0.3	0.8	2.6
Molise	0.3	0.7	2.6
Apulia	0.2	0.8	2
Basilicata	0.1	0.6	2.2
Calabria	0.2	0.9	3.4
Sicily	0.5	1	2.5
Sardinia	0.3	0.7	1.9
Italy	*0.6*	*2.3*	*6.8*

Source: Census data, ISTAT (1992, 2002, 2012).

Table 11: *Foreign population by region of residence (%), 1991-2001-2011*

Region	1991	2001	2011
Piedmont	6.9	8.3	8.9
Aosta Valley	0.2	0.2	0.2
Liguria	3.1	2.7	2.8
Lombardy	21.7	23.9	23.5
Trentino A.A.	2.2	2.3	2.1
Veneto	7.2	11.5	11.4
Friuli V.G.	2.6	2.9	2.4
Emilia R.	8.1	10.2	11.2
Marche	7.9	8.1	8
Tuscany	1.6	2	2.2
Umbria	2.1	3.4	3.3
Lazio	17.2	11.4	10.6
Campania	1.5	1.6	1.7
Abruzzo	0.3	0.2	0.2
Molise	4.8	3	3.7
Apulia	2.5	2.3	2.1
Basilicata	0.3	0.3	0.3
Calabria	1.4	1.3	1.6
Sicily	7	3.7	3.1
Sardinia	1.5	0.8	0.8
Italy	*100*	*100*	*100*

Source: Census data, ISTAT (1992, 2002, 2012).

L'evoluzione dei flussi migratori in Europa e in Italia

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Sommario

Il lavoro offre una descrizione dettagliata dell'esperienza migratoria che ha coinvolto in tempi recenti il continente europeo e, più nel dettaglio, l'Italia. Nell'arco degli ultimi 150 anni, sia l'Europa nord-occidentale, sia i paesi del Sud Europa si sono trasformati da paesi di emigrazione in paesi di immigrazione, ospitando oggi quote rilevanti di immigrati provenienti dai paesi in via di sviluppo. Attraverso l'utilizzo di fonti ufficiali, il saggio illustra le caratteristiche demografiche e socio-economiche della popolazione straniera nell'Unione Europea, e in Italia, e offre alcuni spunti di riflessione riguardo agli effetti della recente crisi sulle condizioni economiche della popolazione immigrata.

Classificazione JEL: *F22; J61*

Parole Chiave: *Migrazioni; Mobilitità del lavoro.*