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EU-ASIA DIALOGUE

Shaping a Common Future for Europe and Asia –

Sharing Policy Innovation and Best Practices in Addressing Common Challenges

Research Paper

Integration Policies in Italy - A Multi-Stakeholder Approach

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Integration Policies in Italy - A Multi-Stakeholder Approach

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Abstract

The integration process of immigrants in Italy is extremely complex because of the structural features of the Italian labour market, which differ according to the local realities and immigrant groups. Moreover, the issue of integration was embedded in the conflicts of Italian politics. Over the last twelve years, the political context has largely influenced integration policies (and their absence): the Italian model of "reasonable integration" suggested in 2000 has not been implemented, while, in the meantime, migration policies have been characterised by a populist approach, which has been abandoned only recently. In 2011, the Monti government made a first attempt to reintroduce the issue of integration of migrants as part of a national policy, establishing a new Ministry for International Cooperation and Integration, headed by Andrea Riccardi. This decision was hailed as a major turning point, a signal that immigration was finally seen as a resource for Italy. The new Letta government has even appointed a Minister for Integration – Cécile Kyenge, an Italian citizen born in Congo. The appointment of Cécile Kyenge signifies that parts of the political elite have recognised that immigration is not an emergency or occasional phenomenon, but one of the structural characteristics of the Italian society.

At the moment, integration policies are still mainly the task of the local authorities and the civil society. An outdated citizenship legislation and racism are not the only problems the new Ministry of Integration has to face. An ineffective system matching labour supply and demand, lack of resources even for urgent integration policies, and costly policies of deportations will also have to be reconsidered.

The Italian case can be interesting for other countries with regard to the experiences accumulated by the private-social sector. The public sector cannot be expected to solve the integration problem without relying extensively on, and leveraging on the resources of, the *private and non-governmental sector*. These sectors – i.e., employers' and workers' groups, religious groups, civic, ethnic and immigrant organisations, private foundations, and the various community-based non-profit entities – have extensive experience with various aspects of newcomers' integration and can serve as crucial resource for immigrants. They should not, however, take over the responsibilities from the state concerning crucial tasks such as housing, employment, health or education. But positive cooperation between these two sectors should be developed.

Introduction

Italy became an immigration country at the end of the 1970s, after one hundred years of emigration; it is estimated that, between 1870 and 1970, 26 millions Italians left, directed mainly towards the American continent and, after World War Two, towards Northern Europe. This shift took place because of major changes in the international division of labour and the passage from the "Fordist" era to "Post-fordism" in developed societies. In spite of controversial definitions, Fordism and post-Fordism represent different industrial models that can broadly describe the changes that took place in the Italian economy in the 1970s and 1980s: large-scale mass production, concentrated in the so-called industrial triangle (Turin, Milan, Genoa) were progressively replaced by a cluster of small firms and workshops scattered in the Central and Northeast regions of the country, producing a vast range of products suitable to new consumption models. Arriving in the middle of this economic change, migrants to Italy didn't respond to the labour force needs of a declining heavy industrial sectors: migrants, reaching Italy under the pressure of "push factors" and of the restrictive

migratory policies imposed by Northern European countries, filled manual and unqualified jobs, recently rejected by nationals, either in services to private persons (domestic work) or in small and very small enterprises, active in traditional productive activities, tourism, and agriculture (many of these jobs being part of the informal sector of the economy, which is especially relevant in the country, being estimated at between 25 and 30 per cent of the GDP)[1].
This type of incorporation into the receiving country's labour market characterizes what the sociologist Enrico Pugliese (2006) and the geographer Russell King (1999) defined as the "Mediterranean model" of migration. Other features of the model are: the importance of the female migratory component (fuelled by a strong demand in domestic service and especially elderly care); the high number of migrants' nationalities, originating from different continents and expressing highly differentiated migratory trajectories; the absence of a clear legislation and, finally, poor management of migratory processes by national or local authorities, at least in a first phase. In the Italian case, this last aspect (inadequate legislation and policies – both in flow management and integration) has been particularly resilient (in comparison, e.g., with the Spanish case). A sign of this inadequacy has been the persistent "stock" of irregular migrants – difficult to estimate in quantity – that has forced the governments to implement regularisations or amnesties every four to five years (1986, 1990, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012). In fact, many of the present-day legal immigrants gained their regular status by resorting to regularisation, at some point during their stay in Italy.

Migratory policies have been introduced slowly, and too late, to respond to a changing international context (namely the fall of the Berlin Wall and the shift of Eastern Europe to a market economy); have lacked a coherent approach (namely because of the different political majorities that have ruled the country and the exploitation of racism for electoral reasons by some political forces) and, last but not least, have failed to match labour force supply and demand. As for integration policies, they have only partly accompanied local processes, partly been spontaneous, and partly been due to a number of various agents (mostly from civil society). The recent appointment of a Minister of Integration – a lady, Cécile Kyenge, of Congolese origin and of Catholic religion – represents a shift in the political will to deal with the issue, but it does not reflect a clear vision for what concerns the role and the future of immigration in Italy nor a well-defined program for integration policies. As pointed out by Mr. Alessandrini – head of national coordination for Politics Social Integration of Foreigners at CNEL (National Council for Economy and Labour) – a "lack of a policy with a comprehensive approach that covers, at the same time, immigration, education and labour" can be recognised.[2]

This paper aims to offer a broad analysis of the integration policies and the integration processes in Italy, placing them in the complex economic and political context that has characterized the country in the last thirty years. Many dimensions have to be taken into account: structural factors (economy, regional differences, North-South dualism and institutional decentralisation); recent Italian political history, marked by a long populist season under the centre-right governments directed by Mr.

[1] According to the Italian Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) and the Bank of Italy (*Banca d'Italia*), the informal economy accounted for 14-16% of the GNP in 1998-2000. Other sources have estimated it at between 27-29%, with the highest rate 29.4% in 2003 (Eurispes). Today it could reach around 30% of the national product, according to various estimates of scholars and international organisations. See The World Bank data: http://rru.worldbank.org/Documents/PapersLinks/informal_economy.pdf. See Gabriele Battaglia, tesi on line, available at: http://www.tesionline.it/default/tesi.asp?idt=8003, accessed on 15th September 2009.
[2] Alessandrini spoke at the presentation of the IX° "Rapporto sugli indici di integrazione degli immigrati in Italia", Report on the indicators of integration of immigrants in Italy, prepared by the CNEL (National Council for Economy and Work) in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (General Direction of Immigration and Integration Policies), 22 July 2013. Sociali (Direzione Generale dell'Immigrazione e delle Politiche di Integrazione). As for the CNEL, see note 26. http://voce.com.ve/2013/07/23/immigrazione-il-difficile-percorso-dellintegrazione/

Berlusconi and supported by the xenophobic party of Mr. Bossi, the Northern League; the role of the civil society (namely secular and Christian NGOs and trade unions) and of the Catholic Church.

The Migratory Flows towards Italy: A Landscape that Changed over the Years

The shift of Italy from emigration to immigration country dates from the late 1970s; however, it was in the second half of the 1980s, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the transformation of Eastern European societies and economies, that the immigrant population had a spectacular growth, from a few hundred thousand to the five million of today[3]. The changes in the international context have conditioned the origins and the typologies of the flows: during the 1990s, migrants coming from Africa and Asia – predominant during the 1970s and 1980s – were replaced by Eastern Europeans. After EU enlargement, flows from non-EU member states were replaced by those from EU member states – namely Romania and Bulgaria. Since a few years ago, Romanians – with around one million people (997,000 in 2011, according to the Caritas Dossier 2012) – represent the biggest immigrant group in Italy[4]. They are one fifth of the around 5,000,000 registered foreigners at the end of 2011 – about the same number as in 2010, when they were 4.919 million residents (Caritas Dossier, 2010). It is curious to note that variations in flows have provoked an interesting semantic change in the definition of the immigrants, who, until the end of the 1990s, were called "*extra-comunitari*" (non-communitarians). The term was used both as an official definition and in popular discourse, having even become an insulting remark in xenophobic speeches. Following the entry of Eastern European countries in EU – with the consequences that this had in relation to the typologies of migratory flows – the terminology was revised. Today, EU migrants represent an estimated number of 1,373,000, 87% of whom come from the 12 countries which became EU members after the enlargement process.

Europe is now the most represented source of origin among foreign residents in Italy: 51% with a breakdown between EU (27.4%) and non-EU (23.4%) citizens. Europe is followed by Africa (22.1%), Asia (18.8%) and America (8.3%)[5], the last ones constantly dropping. Among the non-EU European residents (1,171,163), Albanians are the most numerous (491,495), followed by 223,782 Ukrainians; 147,519 Moldavians; 101,554 Serbs and Montenegrins; 82,209 Macedonians; 37,090 Russians, and between 20,000-30,000 Bosnians, Croats and Turks (each). With regard to the African continent, at the end of 2011, Moroccans turned out to be the largest immigrant community, with 506,369 residents (the most numerous one). The other large African communities come from Tunisia (122,595), Egypt (117,145), Senegal (87,311), Nigeria (57,011), Ghana (51,924), followed by Algeria (28,081) and Ivory Coast (24,235), with about 15,000 residents, and Burkina Faso, with 10,000 residents or less from Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mauritius and Somalia. In total, there are 1,105,826 African residents (Caritas Dossier, 2012).

All these groups present very different demographic features with respect to male/women ratio and the presence of children. The balance between the presence of women and of men is completely uneven: at the two extremes, we find Ukrainian nationals (women are by far the majority: 25 and 26 males per 100 women) and Senegalese residents (369 males per 100 females in 2009; 329 in 2010). Other "feminized" national groups are Poles (42 and 41 males per 100 females), Moldovans (50 and 51 males per 100 females), followed by Peruvians, Ecuadorians and Filipinos (ISTAT data). The "feminization" (or the opposite "masculinization") of national groups is linked to the type of incorporation into the Italian labour market. Domestic work has, in fact, attracted most of the female immigration since the late 1970s. This trend could eventually be reversed in the next few years, for two reasons: the family reunification processes that follow the settlement of some groups; the economic crisis pushing Italian women to return to domestic work.

[3] Over the last twenty years, and before the crisis, Italy, with Spain, received the largest number of immigrants among all the European countries.

[4] For a couple of years, the Italian government has tried to reduce the free movements and to introduce special laws allowing deportations of EU citizens, without succeeding.

[5] A few thousand people from Oceania and stateless persons do not reach 0.1%.

We do not have accurate statistics dividing migrant women coming for family reunification from those settling in Italy for reasons of work. However, other data offer a picture of the presence of families and of migrants alone. According to Caritas, in 2009, migrants who lived in families with a spouse were 44.4% and single parents with children were 4.6%. This means that only 50% of the migrants lived in families[6]. Of the other 50%, 19.7% lived alone, 12.6% cohabited with friends, while over 17% lived in co-residence with employers. The latter group mostly consisted of women in domestic works. This trend continues: just a little bit more than 50% of the immigrants live with their families. Migrants living alone are still a considerable number, partly because of the high percentage of immigrant women in domestic work, who leave their families in home country. However, in spite of the difficulties migrants face when leaving their families, the number of minors of foreign origin, born or socialized in Italy, is constantly growing[7]. Estimations include 933,000 minors of foreign origin, of which 570,000 were born in Italy. Pupils and students of foreign origin in Italian schools are 673,592 (Caritas Dossier 2012; Repubblica[8]; MIUR[9], 2011). The MIUR data show the spectacular growth of children of immigrants in Italian schools during 1990s: they were only 30,000 in 1992-1993. They are around 670,000 nowadays, experiencing a growth of 25% per year.
Migrants are not equally distributed all over the national territory. Over 60% are currently living in the North, 25% in the Centre and less than 15% in the South. The regions with the highest immigrant presence are Lombardy and Lazio, due to the two big urban concentrations of Milan and Rome. The North-South dichotomy in national economic development affects immigrants' distribution on the Italian territory.

The employment rate is difficult to evaluate because of the weight of the shadow economy. However, it has been and still is higher for both immigrant men and women than for Italians of both genders. The labour market participation rate of immigrant women is about 53%. This is well below that of migrant men (82%), but is higher than that of native-born Italian women (46%). Data on labour participation of immigrant women[10] are higher in Italy than in most European countries. This situation may change quickly as the crisis is strongly affecting the Italian economy: very recent data (June 2013) show that unemployment is growing among foreigners, reaching the number of 318,000 persons in the second half of 2012 and 385,000 in the first half of 2013 out of 2.334 million active foreigners[11]. Moreover, this indicates that the percentage of unemployment is now higher among foreigners than among Italians. This is a recent trend as until 2010 the opposite was true. At the same time, the demand for domestic work force has been growing after a brief and limited decline in 2010 and 2011.

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[6] From 1970s until early 1990s, immigration in Italy was predominantly composed of men and women in their active age, who came on their own and stayed alone, having extremely different national origins, from Sri Lanka to Morocco, from the Philippines to Senegal, from Tunisia to Poland, working in services and in the informal economy. A few groups represented an exception: Chinese in Tuscany and Tunisians in Sicily, who migrated in families, but both communities were quite separated from the Italian society. Nowadays, the number of immigrants living in families is growing.

[7] As far as the second generation is concerned, this presence is extremely diversified, including children born and grown in the receiving society, teenagers reunified after having completed their socialisation process in their country of origin, children of mixed couples, etc. No simple definition can include them all; for this reason, Italian scholars are very skeptical about the notion of "second generation". While most experts agree that this is made up of children of immigrants, either born in the receiving or sending country, but joining parents in early age and having an important part of their socialisation and schooling in the receiving country, scholars also insist on the need to distinguish among different typologies.

[8] See also:
www.repubblica.it/solidarieta/immigrazione/2012/01/27/news/la_cittadinanza_ai_figli_degli_immigrati_e_una_follia_e_un_assurdit_non_darla-28850095/

[9] Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca (Ministry of Education, University and Research).

[10] With respect to women's employment, differences among groups are very important: women of some nationalities have only come for work and have a labour rate similar to that of men, while other national groups, who came through family reunification, remained out of the labour market.

[11] Rapporto semestrale sull'andamento del mercato del lavoro degli immigrati in Italia, Direzione Generale dell'Immigrazione e delle Politiche di Integrazione, Ministry of Labour. Based on Istat (National Institute of Statistics) these data – published in June – have been then incorporated in the publication of the Annual Report on the labour market of immigrants in Italy (see Note 2) that is scheduled in July.

During the 1970s and 1980s, migrants have mainly been employed in tertiary (peddling, domestic work, small cleaning enterprises and catering) and primary sectors (fisheries and some agricultural activities), often in the black labour market (Travaglino-Reyneri, l99l; Ambrosini, 1999). Over the years, however, migration has progressively become a structural factor in the Italian economy and, more generally, in Italian society, where demographic turnover is only guaranteed by immigrants' presence. Due to the demographic changes that have been taking place since the 1990s (ageing population and low birth-rates in the North and the Centre), immigrant labour force is needed not only in the informal economy, but also in small and medium-sized factories (especially in the North-East and North-West) as well as in construction (both formal and informal). The entire Italian economy would be paralyzed nowadays if it weren't for immigrants: construction and agricultural industries, small industries in the North-West and North-East and care services (for children and, increasingly, the elderly) strongly need an immigrant labour force (Ambrosini, 1999). However, sectors where immigrants are employed mainly need low-qualified and low-paid workers. Sociologist Maurizio Ambrosini contends that immigrants' subordinated position is functional to the Italian economy and presents the concept of "subordinated integration" as a key to understanding the acceptance of immigrants in Italian society. In spite of growing unemployment among foreigners, the crisis has not radically changed the situation: unqualified jobs are still needed, while the informal economy, very present in the sectors where migrants are employed, is constantly growing as a consequence of the austerity policy imposed by the EU[12] that have perverse effects, such as the closing down of small and medium-sized enterprises through excessive taxation. For many companies and for many workers, the black labour market has become the only solution to surviving.[13] So far, the crisis has not pushed Italians to accept the existing jobs in domestic services: "The service sector continues to show a growing demand. In fact, the comparison between the third quarter of 2012 and the same period of the previous year shows that the number of foreigners employed in domestic services has grown by 75 thousand units while the employment of Italian nationals has decreased by 12 thousand units."[14]

However, growing unemployment has had an impact on the indicators of integration. According to the CNEL[15], "Compared with 2009, the reference year of the previous report, the geography of the Italian regions with the highest potential of integration has changed considerably, and not only because the grid of indicators has expanded and has been further refined, but mainly because two years later – during which time the economic and employment crisis has gradually worsened, with a more and more systemic character – in Italy the conditions of social integration and employment of immigrants (as, indeed, of the Italians) have experienced a general and widespread deterioration." (CNEL. 2013)[16]

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[12] There is now a big debate in Italy about the negative impact of the austerity policies imposed by the European Commission; however, the voices that are critical against austerity policies represent the majority of the political forces. The action of the Monti government is seen more and more negatively both by economists and politicians. This analysis by Paul Krygman is now shared both by the Five Stars Movement of Beppe Grillo and by the mainstream parties such as Sel, sinistra, ecologia e elibertà, Gauche, Ecologie and Freedom of Nichi Vendola: "For Mr. Monti was, in effect, the proconsul installed by Germany to enforce fiscal austerity on an already ailing economy; willingness to pursue austerity without limit is what defines respectability in European policy circles. This would be fine if austerity policies actually worked — but they don't. And far from seeming either mature or realistic, the advocates of austerity are sounding increasingly petulant and delusional." Paul Krugman, Op-Ed Columnist, Austerity, Italian Style by Paul Krugman, published: February 24, 2013. The Popolo delle Libertà –Freedom's People of Silvio Berlusconi, opposes as well austerity policies.

[13] http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Attualita/News/Pagine/Ires-Il-mercato-del-lavoro-immigrato.aspx

[14] "In controtendenza il comparto dei servizi alla persona continua a manifestare una domanda nettamente in crescita. Sempre nel confronto tra il terzo trimestre 2012 e lo stesso periodo dell'anno precedente, infatti, gli occupati nei servizi domestici ed alle famiglie crescono di 75 mila unita considerando i lavoratori stranieri mentre diminuiscono di 12 mila unità considerando gli occupati di nazionalità italiana. http://www.stranieriinitalia.it/statistiche-2_4_milioni_di_lavoratori_stranieri_sono_il_10_degli_occupati_16869.html

[15]http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/archiviodocumenti/indici-di-integrazione/Pagine/IX-rapporto-indici-di-integrazione.aspx

[16] "Rispetto al 2009, anno di riferimento del Rapporto precedente, la geografia dei territori italiani a più alto potenziale di integrazione è sensibilmente mutata; e non solo perché la griglia degli indicatori si è ampliata e ulteriormente perfezionata, ma soprattutto perché a due anni di distanza – durante i quali la crisi economico-occupazionale è andata progressivamente acuendosi, sempre più un carattere sistemico – in Italia le condizioni di inserimento sociale e lavorativo degli immigrati (come, del resto, degli

The Implementation of a Restrictive Migratory Policy: The Quota System

All Italian governments which have been in power since 1980s have been unable to "manage" the migratory flows and to implement integration policies for immigrants in the country. The measures that were taken before 1998 mainly focused on regularisation of irregular migrants and border control: the word "integration" is mentioned here and there in two laws enacted from 1986 onwards, i.e., Law 943/1986[17] and Law 39/1990[18] (Campani, 1999). In 1998, the centre-left government of Prime Minister Romano Prodi attempted to define an effective national migratory policy to respond to the new challenges created by migration: the issuing of Law 40/98,[19] called Turco-Napolitano after its promoters, represented the promise for a new season. In the introductory report of the bill, the three goals of Law 40 are defined as follows: "counteracting illegal migration and the criminal exploitation of migratory flows; implementing precise policies concerning legal entries, which must be programmed and regulated; setting up realistic integration paths for new immigrants and foreign residents in Italy"[20].

As far as management of the flows is concerned, Law 40 introduced the principle of an annual quota system, administered by the Ministry of Labour – for new immigrants, as well as an annual quota for temporary workers entering the country from 20 days to 6 months. This quota system should have corresponded to the needs of the labour market in a profitable meeting of supply and demand. An innovative aspect of the Law was the "sponsor system", inspired by the Canadian model, which should have allowed the entry of a limited number of foreign citizens (a percentage foreseen in the quotas) for a six-month period for job-search purposes, provided that another individual (an Italian citizen or a foreign citizen regularly residing in Italy) – the "sponsor" figure – guaranteed accommodation and coverage of living/health costs throughout the foreign citizen's stay. Another new feature introduced by the Law was the "Centre for Temporary Stay and Assistance" (CPT), a structure for the detainment of irregular migrants (i.e., undocumented/improperly documented migrants), in which they could be held for a maximum of 30 days before being expelled from Italy. The Law searched in fact for a balance between a relatively open approach towards new arrivals (via the sponsor) and the repression of irregular migration (through the CPT).

In 2001, the arrival into power of the centre-right government marked a shift towards a public discourse against migration and caused the abandonment of the "rational" policies attempting to match the supply and demand of labour force and combining repression of irregular migration and integration (Campani, 2001). "Populism" – that is, using high emotional topics to obtain consensus – is the notion that can better describe the features of the Italian centre-right government: finding an external enemy is a traditional instrument to build consensus. That is what Berlusconi did, indicating as enemies, communists, judges and immigrants. A member of the leading coalition at that time, the Northern League – a party born around the idea of defending the interests of Northern Italy and evoking "secession" (later transformed into "federalism") – used and abused the anti-immigrant rhetoric to catch votes.

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italiani) hanno conosciuto un generale e diffuso peggioramento". IX Rapporto del CNEL sugli Indici di integrazione degli immigrati in Italia, Realizzato dal Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS su incarico dell'ONC-CNEL - Luglio 2013.

[17] Law no. 943 of 1986 "Norms related to the employment and treatment of foreign working immigrants and against illegal immigration" focused mostly on work matters and introduced, for the first time, procedures for the legal registration of workers (divided, from then on, into "regular" and "irregular" cases).

[18] Law no. 39 of 1990 "Urgent norms and regularization on the political asylum, entry and residence of foreigners".

[19] Law no. 40 of 1998, which became the Unified Act on Migration, Law Decree n. 286/98, *Testo Unico sull'Immigrazione.*

[20] From the report to the D.D.L. n.?, introduced in the Chamber of Deputies on 19 February 1997. It subsequently became Law 40/98.

One of the first actions of the newly elected government was to change Law 40, introducing a restrictive interpretation of the quota system[21]. Law 189 of 2002, i.e., "Modifications to the regulation on asylum and immigration", maintained the core policy of the quota system, but tightened the measures, making it extremely difficult to obtain a regular stay and work permit. On the basis of Law 189, which is still in force and is the main piece of legislation regulating the incoming flows**,** entry for employment reasons is limited to those cases in which an employer explicitly requires the worker. The possibility of legally residing in Italy (the "residence permit") must be acquired in the country of origin and depends on the possession of a work contract and from the employer's guarantee that the migrant has an accommodation in Italy and that his/her travel expenses for returning to his/her home country at the end of the work contract are already paid. The *Sportello Unico per l'Immigrazione*, (Single Immigration Desk, SUI), based in Police Headquarters, is the only service authorized to grant the permit. This can take several months, given the fact that the office has to ensure that no Italians all over the national territory are willing to take on that job. The maximum duration of the residence permit is two years in case of indefinite employment contracts. In case of renewal, the same time-span of two years must be respected[22]. Only after six years of un-interrupted residence in Italy, is it possible to apply for a longer stay permit[23].

The number of new work permits that can be given every year is established through a quota system that defines the maximum number of entries of foreign workers in Italy on an annual basis. Labour shortages are identified by a specific system (the *Sistema Informativo Excelsior*), while additional input is given by employers' associations. However, it is the government, namely the Ministry of Labour and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, which annually sets the maximum number of workers that may enter the country in the following year and issues one or more official decrees establishing quotas and distributing them among working categories and geographic areas. Moreover, specific nationalities are privileged as a "reward" (through bilateral readmission agreements and cooperation projects) for being "partner" countries that assist Italy in the fight against irregular immigration. Priority is also given to foreigners with Italian origins and to foreigners who have participated in Italian-sponsored training courses in their home countries. It must be stressed that, during the years of the centre-right government, the quota numbers were always kept below the estimations of the Excelsior and employers' requests.

This restrictive legislation was severely criticised by the manufacturers' association when it was implemented. They asked the government for more flexible procedures to hire foreign workers in a period of strong decline of local available workforce[24]. However, their requests were not met. The rigid legislation continued: it didn't allow a rational match between supply and demand in the Italian labour market, but it satisfied the xenophobic and populist approach of the Northern League

[21] Other policies of the right-wing government concerned bilateral agreements both on labour-readmission with "partner" countries (e.g., Albania and Morocco) and border controls. The penalization of both illegal entry and direct or indirect facilitation of the entry of undocumented persons in Italy has been introduced in 2008.

[22] The renewal of the residence or stay permit (permesso di soggiorno) has also become more strict. Previously the renewal of the "between jobs" residence permit had no time limits and was left to the relevant police Offices. With the law 189, the renewal is possible only if the immigrant has an employment: "in an economic system characterised by a large quota of informal economy – such as the Italian one – the link between employment and renewal of the residence permit represents a continuous risk of relapse in the field of illegality. According to the data of the work inspectorate, 26.1 percent of migrants employed in the black economy would have a regular position as regards the residence permit" (Zincone, 2001, p. 28).

[23] There are in fact three kinds of stay permits: a) the short term residence permit (permesso di soggiorno) whose length depends on the duration of the job contract held by the migrant; b) the long-term residence permit (carta di soggiorno), which can be obtained after six years of regular residence in Italy; c) the family reunion permit for spouses and children. All three are renewable. Prior to 2002, immigrants could obtain the carta di soggiorno after five years of regular residence in Italy, instead of the six years that are now required.

[24] Severe criticism was expressed by the manufacturers of Veneto. "Our businesses do not only need workers, but specialised workers which could be introduced in our country easily and not through complicated and bureaucratic procedures as our country's present ones" (Rossi Luciani: ecco perché la Bossi-Fini non ci piace. An interview with Mr. Luigi Rossi Luciani, President of the Manufacturers' Association of Veneto, published in Cittadini dappertutto, October 2002).

who was in power at that time. Moreover, this rigid legislation did not discourage irregular migration, which continued and even increased. In fact, one of the consequences of what can be considered the general "mismanagement" of migratory flows through Law 189, has been the constant presence of a "stock" of irregular immigrants[25]. This has obliged the anti-immigrant centre-right government to grant two new amnesties in 2006 and 2009.

The contradiction between a strict entry system and periodic use of regularisations was explained by the centre-right coalition through blaming the widespread, undocumented presence of migrants on the mistakes of previous governments. "In fact, regularisation has always been a provision of Italian immigration policy reform. Each change in legislation since 1986 – at roughly four-year intervals – has been accompanied by mass regularisation, although in each case the government thunders that 'this is the last regularisation'" (Chaloff, 2005, p. 4). In fact, governments usually deny that further regularisation is foreseen and dismiss rumours about further amnesties. It should be noted that regularisations are common in Italy in areas other than immigration. "There have been numerous tax amnesties, employment 'emersion' regularisations for undeclared workers, and even amnesties for illegally constructed buildings" (Chaloff 2005, p. 4). Aware of contradictions produced by this rigid legislation, the present government, which has a limited political mandate being a technical government, proposed a new amnesty in October 2012.

Integration Policies: An Uncertain Path

Before 1998, integration was not an issue for national policies: nevertheless, it could not be avoided by local administrations. Since 1970s, local institutions (regions, provinces and municipalities) had started to co-operate with networks of NGOs, both secular and religious (such as CARITAS), which were active in the reception of migrants (managing centres, soup kitchens, etc.), services for information and counselling, organisation of training courses and programs of intercultural education for Italian schools.

By issuing Law 40/98, the national government expressed the ambition to outline a national frame for integration and to centrally coordinate policies implemented by local institutions, on which, by the way, depends on the structural policy of integration (e.g., housing, and assistance) (Campani, 1999). The crucial role of local authorities and voluntary associations was not questioned: on the contrary, the Decree of the President of the Republic (DPR) of 5 August 1998, implementing Law 40, gave them an important role in the field of assistance for immigrants. The State, however, wanted to be a point of reference: the Ministry of Social Affairs was charged with establishing priorities for integration policies with the Regions. In this document, integration is defined as: "a process of non-discrimination and recognition of differences, that means a process of hybridisation and an experimental tool of new forms of relationships and behaviours in the continuous attempt to maintain universal principles and specificities, in the constant and everyday attempt of keeping together universal principles and specificities, of preventing situations of marginalisation and ghetto that threaten social equilibrium and cohesion, and affirms the universal principles as the value of human life, dignity of the individual, the recognition of women's freedom, protection of childhood, to which there are no possible exceptions, even for the sake of differences" (CNEL[26], 2001).

[25] In the end, the difference between quotas and the labour market needs is solved by irregular migrants working in the shadow economy.

[26] The Consiglio Nazionale dell'Economia e del Lavoro -CNEL-(National Council of the Economy and the Work, CNEL) is foreseen by the Italian Constitution that defines it in article 99: "Organ for counselling to the Chambers and the Government in the subjects that are foreseen by the Law. It has the initiative of proposing laws and can contribute to the elaboration of social and economic laws according to the principles established by the Law." It is composed of 121 counsellors: twelve experts, chosen among the representatives of the economic, social and juridical cultures; 44 representatives of the workers, the working class, 18 representatives of self-employed, 37 representatives of the enterprises and companies and 10 representatives of NGOs.

The DPR created a National Fund for Migration Policies Resources – the financial instrument for the implementation of integration policies, appointed an existing institution to monitor the integration policies and processes, and created a new institution for advising the government on integration policies. The already quoted CNEL, a Constitutional institution, composed of representatives of the civil society, was officially in charge of monitoring integration policies. The new institutions were the National Commission for Immigrants' Integration Policy, composed of a group of well-known scholars, aimed at proposing a set of integration policies adapted to the Italian context and developing an "Italian integration model". The Commission for Integration Policy made the attempt to develop a specific model of integration for Italy, taking into account the experiences of other countries and the specificities of the Italian context. The members of the Commission, called the Italian "model" of integration "reasonable integration". The pillars of reasonable integration are two fundamental interconnected principles: recognition of individual integrity and a low conflict-potential integration[27] or the prosecution of positive interaction with local population (Zincone, 2000, 2001).

The general elections in 2001, bringing the centre-right coalition into power, marked the end of "reasonable integration". Even if Law 40 was not suppressed, but just amended (most of the rights granted to regular migrants were not questioned[28]), the integration project, which the law aimed to implement, was *de facto* abandoned. The new government's approach to migration was years away from reasonable integration: cultural pluralism was rejected in the name of assimilation. A sign of the scarce interest for integration policies by the new government was the severe reduction in the budget for integration measures in the National Fund for migration policies, whose scarce resources were all consecrated to counteract illegal migration flows, practically to finance deportations. The indiscriminate compulsory escorting of expelled migrants to the border meant an investment of huge financial resources and the massive employment of police forces.

Reduction of funding also concerned the sector of education for the integration of immigrants' children. Law no. 189 of 2002 did not change the basic articles of Law 40 on education of foreign children, but the centre-right government cut the necessary funding to implement them and, through the Ministry of Education, put obstacles against schools and teachers who wanted to implement them. The articles of Law 40, still in force, represent however a good basis for the integration of foreign children in Italian schools. Article 36 explicitly refers to the right of education for foreign children and to preservation of languages and cultures of origin: "School community receives linguistic and cultural differences as a value to establish a basis for reciprocal respect, exchange among cultures and tolerance; in order to reach this goal, it promotes and encourages initiatives aimed at reception, protection of culture and language of origin and implementation of common intercultural activities" (art. 36, comma 3).
Art. 38 (paragraph 1, U.T.), according to which all foreign minors living in Italy, independently from the fact of being regular or not, are subject to mandatory education. The same legislation applies to the right of education for Italian students.
Art. 42 explicitly refers to language courses and the culture of origin organised by immigrants' associations, which should be supported by local authorities (for example financing immigrants' associations). The same article for the first time introduces and recognises the "cultural mediator" in order to simplify relations between administrations and foreigners belonging to different ethnic,

[27] Committee for Migrants' Integration Policies, *Second report on migration in Italy*, edited by G. Zincone, year?
[28] Migrants with a regular residence permit are entitled to enjoy civil rights (Art. 2) and some social rights as well. Migrants with a regular residence permit are granted equal access to the medical assistance of the National Health Service (Art. 32); equal pension conditions and the possibility to maintain social insurance contributions even in case of repatriation (Art. 40). However, social rights are still not really equal to the ones of the Italians: There are a series of institutional discriminations that do not allow equal access to the welfare, for example the unemployment treatment, maternity, disability and accident on work.

national, linguistic and religious groups. Art. 45 states that foreign minors in compulsory education must attend the classroom corresponding to their age[29].

Integration Policies: Local versus National

The attempt of Law 40 to inaugurate a national Italian migratory policy failed. Because of the political change, the Law was not implemented – both in the part concerning a rational management of immigration flows as well as the part on integration policies. During the years of the centre-right government, national integration policies were virtually "frozen". As a consequence of that, as before 1998, local authorities[30] became (and still are) the main agents for processing some forms of local integration through the *Assessorati alle Politiche Sociali* (Town Boards for Social Policies), or the *Assessorati al Lavoro* (Town Boards for Labour Policies) which have been given competence in immigration.

Local administrative actions towards immigrants may vary from one place to another, but they are centred on common issues and tend to give similar answers: the need for living quarters (hostels) for newcomers, attempts to help families on housing, support to associations and offer of meeting spaces, specific counselling on health problems (mainly for women on contraception, abortion and pregnancy), training of cultural mediators, and promotion of intercultural activities in cooperation with schools. One of the main tasks of local authorities consists of transferring limited resources coming from the State[31] or in giving financial help to NGOs active in assisting immigrants, like CARITAS, or immigrants' associations. This has certainly encouraged the development of an associative life among immigrants. Several local authorities tried to frame a coherent policy, based on synergies between the public services and NGOs. With respect to the relationship with NGOs and associations, there are different approaches: one that considers migrants as vulnerable groups that have to be supported mainly by Italian NGOs, and another one that insists on active participation by immigrants' associations. In the last years, many Regions have passed laws on immigration which are often in contrast with national policy. For example, Regions such as Emilia Romagna and Toscana – historically managed by left-wing administrations – have approved regional laws on social integration of foreign immigrants based on the principles of equality of rights and duties, acknowledgement of citizenship rights and the goal of "encouraging trajectories of democracy and of representation for immigrants". These Regions are also pushing for the recognition of immigrants' right to vote in administrative election.

An important debate exists in Italy on the importance of the local dimension of integration. In the absence of national policies, some scholars like Mr Giuseppe De Rita, Director of the Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali (Centre for Social Investment Studies, CENSIS[32]), wondered whether it would

[29] This article intends to fight against the practice, which unfortunately is quite common in Italian schools, to insert foreign children who don't speak Italian, in the first class of the primary level, independently from their age. Article 45 of the Realisation Regulation (D.P.R. 349/99), named "School enrolment" ("*Iscrizione scolastica*") establishes that the foreign student must be registered in the class corresponding to the personal age. This registration can happen at any time of the school year, as reaffirmed by the following M.M. 311/99 and 87/00. However, the same legislation gives the Teaching Body (*Collegio Docenti*) important evaluating and proposal powers in this issue. Among others, these include the possibility to register students in a class which doesn't correspond to their age, with a previous evaluation of the academic curriculum of the minor in the country of origin, the degree obtained or his individual ability. Foreign minors who are irregular or lack personal documents are registered with reserve, without limiting their educational path to obtain a degree.

[30] For example, the municipality of Florence organized a full system for teaching Italian to foreign children. Some municipalities also organized elections to choose immigrants' representatives in Municipal Council etc.

[31] Work integration is a domain in which the Regions are particularly called to act in line with the Ministry, because localities differ greatly regarding labour insertion and have specific needs. Each region receives funds for social policies and decides what to do/where to apply them.

[32] Censis, Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali, is a center for socio-economic research, founded in 1964. Since 1973, it has become a Foundation, thanks to the participation of big institutions, both private and public. Since 30 years ago, it has developed studies, counselling, evaluation and proposals in the main sectors of social life, such as work, education welfare, environment, economy, local and urban development, public governance, communication and culture.

be possible to talk about a particular model of integration: would it not be easier to renounce it, given the variety of interactions between Italians and immigrants, as well as labour integration according to territorial differences? According to Mr Giuseppe De Rita, the absence of national integration policies is certainly a factor that has been put on the shoulders of the local authorities. However, the difficulty in defining an integration model also depends on the specific features of the Italian nation-state such as the importance of regional and cultural differences, the complex relationship to the idea of the nation after the experience of fascism, the inefficiency of the state apparatus and the bureaucracy.

Other scholars insist on the fact that local experiences vary according to immigrants' communities. In Italy, there is a high number of immigrants' nationalities, incorporating different forms of integration according to their positions in the labour market. The interaction between specific communities and local reality can be defined through various typologies: for example, as "non-conflicting integration" or "subordinated integration" (Ambrosini: 2003).

Not all scholars agree on the extreme fragmentation – territorial and communitarian – of the experience of immigrants' integration in Italy; however, the local dimension is generally recognized in Italy. Some experts consider, in fact, that, even in spite of the absence of national integration policies, common processes of integration have taken place at national level through NGOs, associations and trade unions. In fact, the integration process in Italy would be the result of interaction between immigrant communities and civil society, represented by secular and religious NGOs, associations and trade unions. According to some scholars, namely Franco Pittau of the CARITAS, the Italian "model" of integration would be then characterized by the prevailing role of the civil society versus the public institutions, especially for what concerns the national state. It would indeed be possible to talk about processes of national integration, even if the state has not organised systematic integration policies, precisely because civil society has taken a role.
The Monti government made a first attempt to reintroduce the issue of integration of migrants as part of a national policy, establishing the new Ministry for International Cooperation and Integration, headed by Andrea Riccardi, founder of the Community of Sant 'Egidio, a Christian organization active in international cooperation projects. This decision was hailed as a major turning point, a signal that immigration was finally seen as a resource for Italy. However, while the Monti government introduced a new approach to immigration that was no longer representing immigration as a threat or as an emergency (which was the case during the years of the center-right governments), it failed to reach any concrete result in terms of integration. In the context of budget reduction and spending reviews, the Monti government was not able to make investments in integration programmes for immigrants.

The Monti government represented a shift with regard to the acceptance of the need for a reform of the Italian citizenship law towards recognition of the *jus soli* for immigrants' children. This was possible as consensus between the center-left and some members of the centre-right is growing on this issue. This is also the first matter on which the new Minister for Integration, appointed by the Letta government and nominated in May 2013, has engaged her Ministry.
The appointment of a Minister of foreign origin signifies the acknowledgement that immigration does not constitute an emergency or occasional phenomenon, but is instead one of the structural characteristics of the Italian communities. Together with changing the citizenship law, the new Minister wants to fight against racism.
However, on-going racist attacks and discrimination against foreigners, even the Minister herself, suggest that racism is a deep-rooted problem in parts of the society and abused by some political forces. Thus, it will take a long time to resolve this challenge to integration.

Second Generation, *Jus Sanguinis* and Education Problems

The integration of the second generation in Italy is debated in connection with two main issues: citizenship legislation and school education. Acquisition of Italian citizenship is governed by a 20-year-old law (Law no. 91 of 1992), which is based on "*ius sanguinis*" (bloodline) and is one of the most restrictive in Europe. In order to be eligible to apply for citizenship, a foreigner must prove continuous residence in Italy for ten years, and to show an income of around €8,000 a year (€11,000 with a dependent spouse, plus €516 for each child), which is considered enough to ensure self-sufficiency. Citizens of the EU need only four years of residence, while five years are requested for stateless persons and refugees. According to the law, proceedings should not last more than two years. In practice, the number of years the applicant has to wait before receiving citizenship is at least four.

For immigrants' children who are born in Italy, the only possibility to get Italian citizenship is to wait for the age of the majority, when they can apply, hoping to get it after a short delay. The well-known soccer player Mario Balotelli is an example of this procedure: despite being born in Italy, having attended Italian schools and having played in the youth teams of his city, he was not allowed – as a foreigner – to play in the national soccer team until he was over 19 years of age. Frustration vis-à-vis obtaining Italian citizenship is one of the main problems second-generation immigrants face. With the present government, there are hopes that the law will be changed because there is a certain agreement among the moderate political parties.

However, another problem is represented by the scarce capacity of Italian schools to deal with diversity: the consequences are the bad results of foreign children in comparison with natives – even in the case of communities such as the Chinese, who generally show brilliant school results in most immigration countries – both in Europe and North America.

Since 1989, when the number of foreign children in Italian schools was limited, the Ministry of Education has paid attention to language issues and intercultural approach, by enacting several memorandums stressing the linguistic needs of foreign students and fixing guidelines for intercultural education. For example, the memorandum "Intercultural dialogue and democratic living together: the projectual participation of the school" (Dialogo interculturale e convivenza democratica: l'impegno progettuale della scuola), Ministerial Memorandum 73 of 2 March 1994, starts from an idea of intercultural education as the best answer to a multicultural society, and it indicates all steps that a school must take in a diverse context. Effective strategies span from creation, inside the school, of a relational atmosphere that will favour integration among students and between them and teachers, to a new didactic organisation both in methodology and contents. Law 40/98 incorporated these suggestions, in different articles, making explicit reference to the right to education of foreign children and to preservation of languages and cultures of origin.

Since 2001, however, under the centre-right government, the Ministry of Education has stopped promoting intercultural education. Good practices survived at the local level, in some schools and thanks to individual teachers, who could count on networks such as the Intercultural Centres (Centri Interculturali), promoted by local authorities, associations and NGOs. There are three "historical" Intercultural Centres: Cidiss in Turin (Centro Interculturale Città di Torino), supported by the Municipality; the CDLEI in Bologna (Centro Documentazione e Laboratorio per una Educazione Interculturale), a cooperation between the University, the Municipality and the Provincial Governments; and the COME Centre in Milan, linked to CARITAS. These three centres "paved the way" for other intercultural centres, working to gather documentation, provide orientation, train teachers and promote networking on the territory. Intercultural centres have thus become a focus for documentation, training, intercultural mediation, networking and, at the same time, production of

didactic materials providing fundamental support to educators dealing with immigrant children on a daily basis. Local authorities (Municipalities, Provinces and Regions) contribute to most of the funding guaranteeing the survival of these centres and allowing them to operate. Occasionally, centres manage to obtain funding from the European Union by participating in its programmes. During the last few years, teaching of Italian as a second langue and the production of the relevant didactic materials have absorbed much of the resources of Intercultural Centres.

Teaching of Italian as a foreign language also concerns adult immigrants, who can study in one of the 389 CTPs throughout Italy. These centres are part of a national policy of the Ministry of Education, but the quality of their work strongly varies at the local level, as it depends on the "vitality" of local context and on relationships established with local authorities. CTPs are very flexible in their programs and can establish conventions and agreements with local agencies. Immigrants are important users of CTPs' services, though their presence varies regionally: in Northern Italy they represent up to 35% of users, while in Southern Italy the majority of users are local unemployed Italian citizens. The main requests by immigrant users concern the development of Italian language skills, compulsory education diploma and vocational training. Cécile Kyenge has often declared that she considers school as the fundamental starting point for integration.

Migrants and Locals: Typologies of Integration

From the mid-1990s onwards, various studies analysed the settlement processes of different immigrant communities and their interaction with Italian society, investigating outcomes in terms of integration. These studies were both qualitative and quantitative and data became increasingly accurate. From 1991 onwards, CARITAS has produced an annual statistical dossier annually, by which existing data sets were presented and the main trends in the migratory process in Italy were interpreted.

According to national groups and the local Italian context, processes appear to be extremely differentiated, as Italy has received a very large number of nationalities. The same community may have different migratory trajectories and, consequently, diverging integration processes, on the basis of local labour market or attitudes of local population. Neither immigrants nor the receiving society are opposite, homogeneous blocs: paradoxically, every immigrant, in every reality has a different trajectory towards integration. Moreover, the integration process, in its totality, is influenced by co-presence, within the same community, of regular and irregular migrants. The status of being a legal resident or irregular migrant is extremely important for integration.

Empirical researches focussing on specific communities in local realities have shown multiple dimensions of integration, referring to different spheres of social life: work and culture seem often to be different dimensions in relationship with integration processes. In order to interpret the variety of interaction between local realities and immigrant groups, together with individual trajectories empirical research shows, a complex idea of integration should be used. Variety in meanings reflects, on the one side, the empirical analysis, showing the multiple trajectories in the processes of settlement and in the interaction with the receiving society, and, on the other, it corresponds to "models", which are the expression of political approaches, discourses and interests. Pushing analysis to its end, some Italian researchers wonder if the concept of integration may have a "core", being independent from the political discourse and the interplay between various actors. On the basis of a few empirical studies, Erika Cellini (2002) has tried to systematize a few typologies of integration (and interaction with the Italian society): "non-conflictual communitarian integration", "partially conflictual communitarian integration" and "subordinated integration". The first two concepts refer to two communities presenting a high level of communitarian cohesion, such as the Senegalese and the Chinese. The Senegalese community was studied by the Trade Unions'

Research Institute (IRER) in Lombardy (Marchetti, 1994): it is characterised by the preservation of cultural traditional elements and by the vitality of traditional social forms and economic organisation. A variety of researches have pointed out the importance of the Murid Brotherhood, an Islamic sect that has a high level of control of its members and also plays an economic role, helping the social promotion of its members. The research considers that co-presence of the tendency to reconstruct forms of organisation and sociability of the country of origin with some openness towards Italian society represents a feature of the Senegalese community, which cannot be found in other communities. The tendency to reconstruct forms of organisation and sociability of the country of origin can, in fact, produce conflicts with the Italian society. For this reason, the form of integration of the Senegalese is defined as "non-conflictual communitarian integration".

The "partially conflictual communitarian integration" concerns, on the other hand, the Chinese community. The Chinese also tend to develop a process of integration on a communitarian basis, centred on the family enterprise. This strategy has not been especially favourable to interaction with Italian local communities as a variety of researches in the areas where Chinese are settled (Milan and Tuscany especially) have showed. Conflicts have been common, even if there has been, through time, a progressive adaptation (Campani, Carchedi and Tassinari, 1994). If, in Tuscany, conflicts have not developed, this has been due to intelligent policies developed by Tuscany Region and the Municipality of Prato. "Subordinated integration" refers to the Filipino community in Milan, which is mainly composed of women doing domestic work and who have developed very low autonomy.

An interesting case showing how typologies of integration should be referred, both to specific groups and local realities, is represented by Tunisians, who, in the towns of Northern Italy, have a high presence of immigrants with deviant behaviours (mainly as drug-dealers). On the contrary, the Tunisian immigrant community in Mazara del Vallo, Sicily, where they are fishermen and live with their families, experience positive interactions with local people. The same national group may have heterogeneous or even completely different migratory trajectories and, consequently, integration processes on the basis of local labour market or attitudes by the local population.

Civil Society Organizations and NGOs: Their Role in Integrating the Migrants

The role of the organisations of the so-called "private social" sector has been crucial in the field of assistance and aid given to immigrants in Italy, not only before laws on migration had been passed, but also after a certain number of laws had been issued (respectively in 1986, 1990, 1998 and 2002). This has to do with the fact that, traditionally, the Italian State has delegated many welfare activities to the private social sector, linked to the Catholic Church and, less frequently, to other religious or secular associations. This tradition has been paradoxically reinforced by a reform of welfare in 1990s which aimed to be "modern", applying the liberal idea of "light state". The role of NGOs is quite crucial in legal assistance: NGOs have provided assistance during amnesties. They also assist with residence and work permit procedures, family reunification and access to all public and private services, even if legal casework, including representation at court, is seldom offered. Only cases of migrant women forced to prostitute and minors waiting for rehabilitation are being taken up. Another sector where NGOs have played an important role is health. In theory, healthcare is guaranteed for all by law. Still, not all immigrants, especially irregulars, can deal with the bureaucratic Italian health system. There have been important efforts by hundreds of voluntary doctors and social workers, who set up special surgeries treating more patients than the public health system. They have also raised awareness among medical and nursing staff in public structures. As for housing, NGOs responses have been insufficient. While a few organisations (mostly Catholic) offer temporary accommodation facilities, no general action to help immigrants in one of the crucial problems has been taken. As for employment, NGOs make use of networks of

relations and acquaintances to help immigrants who are looking for jobs. Catholic NGOs are the most active, taking on a role of selection and guarantee for the employers.
However, while it is true that NGOs and associations of religious or non-religious inspiration have played and continued to play a leading role in assisting immigrants in Italy, many immigrants have not benefited from any help. They have often relied upon their own resources or small groups which were formed through local networks or chains of support, mainly along ethnic or national lines (Ambrosini, 2001).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The integration process of immigrants in Italy is extremely complex because of the structural features of the Italian labour market, which differ according to the local realities and immigrant groups; moreover, the issue of integration was embedded in the conflicts of Italian politics. Over the last twelve years, the political context has largely influenced integration policies (and their absence): the Italian model of "reasonable integration" suggested in 2000 has not been implemented, while, in the meantime, migratory policies have been characterised by a populist approach.

The civil society, through NGOs and associations, in collaboration with the local authorities, has certainly played an important role in the integration of the migrants. However, the absence of a national framework had, and has, many negative effects: ineffective system matching labour supply and demand, which produces irregular migration; lack of resources even for urgent integration policies; costly policies of deportations; and outdated citizenship legislation. All these points will have to be reconsidered by a future government that will abandon the populist approach to migration. The whole system of quotas has to be reformed, going back to the original project of Law 40/98; sponsorship should be reintroduced; and the "reasonable integration" agenda should be re-started, after a lost decade. Citizenship legislation should be urgently changed; this is a priority, finally allowing children born and socialized in Italy to become Italian citizens.
The Italian case can be interesting for other countries with respect to the experience accumulated by the private social sector. The public sector cannot be expected to solve the integration puzzle without relying extensively on, and leveraging on the resources of, the *private and non-governmental sector*. These sectors – i.e., employers' and workers' groups, religious groups, civic, ethnic and immigrant organisations, private foundations, and the various community-based non-profit entities – typically present extensive experiences with various aspects of newcomers' integration and can serve as crucial resource for immigrants (Papademetriou, 2003). They should not, however, take the place of State functions in respect to crucial tasks such as housing, employment, health, and education, but a positive articulation between these two sectors should be developed.
The recent choice of creating a Minister for Integration means that, beyond the great efforts made by local institutions, territorial and civil society, there is a need to start a discussion on national policies. The racist reactions against the minister show that disrespect for foreigners is now very present in Italy, legitimized by the political discourses and practices that have been implemented in the last twenty years.

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