

The Foreign Immigrants' Employment in the Caserta Labour Market: Irregularity and Economic Discrimination in a Southern Italian Province

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Introduction and aim

Today Italy is one of the main European receiving countries. Almost 4.7 million foreigners from developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe live in Italy (Cesareo, Blangiardo, 2009). They represent about 8% of the population living in the country. Although the number of family reunions and the size of the second generation are rapidly increasing, labour immigration remains still the driving force of the phenomena. these observations. The success in the labour market represents the necessary condition for the stable settlement.

In Italy one can find large differences between the Italian territories regarding their labour markets and their integration possibilities for immigrants. In the Center and North the percentage of foreigners on the whole resident population is higher than in the rest of the country (in some areas more then 10%). This is mainly due to the fact that there are more job opportunities, not only in the metropolitan areas but also in the industrial districts and in the other towns of medium and little demographic dimension. In contrast to that it was shown that the presence of foreigners is much lower (3-4%) in the South and on the Islands and does not offer many occupational possibilities and is mainly limited to seasonal or casual works with an high risk of employment instability (Sabbadini, Albissini, Pintaldi, 2007; Strozza, Forcellati, Ferrara, 2008).

In the South of Italy the province of Caserta represents one of the main areas that attract immigration: in total 26,000 resident foreigners live here, the number increases to almost 40,000 if the whole foreign population (legal and illegal) is considered. The province of Caserta also represents a perfect example of the Mediterranean migration model characterized by instable jobs, mainly as seasonal employment (agriculture and tourism), building industry and family service (elderly care, baby sitter, colf) (King, Zontini, 2000; Pane, Strozza, 2000; King, 2002; Boffo, 2003; Strozza, Ferrara, 2008; Strozza et al., 2009). The instability and the exploitation that characterized the labour market in this province, as the other regions of the South and on the Italians Islands, makes this area a *transit area* for the migrants who stay temporary and then move to the North of Italy (Reyneri 2007; Strozza, Orientale Caputo, 2007; Strozza, Forcellati, Ferrara, 2008). The increase of the foreign population and the start of a stabilization process in the province of Caserta

(Strozza, Ferrara, 2007) are probably due to new occupational possibilities that allow a stable settlement in this area.

The aim of this work is to analyze the employment situation for foreign immigrants on the labour market in the province of Caserta. We also want to investigate the differences by gender, by status of residence (with or without legal residence) and by citizenship. We will focus on the regularity and the stability of the employment situation, evaluating which factors characterize more the immigrants in the different situation. A thorough analysis will be done on the situation of economic discrimination and exploitation of labour for difference status of residence.

Data & Methods

We use data from a sample survey “Integration of immigrants in the province of Caserta”, which is carried out since December 2009. The sample selection was made using a centres of aggregation method (Blangiardo, 1996) and it consider 1,200 foreigners from developing countries and from Central and Eastern Europe (also the new countries of the European Union). The interviews are conducted with a questionnaire of about 100 closed questions. The form contains a detailed section on the personal labour market situation: employment category, occupation, working time, regularity of the job, and all the other characteristics of the job (stability, salary/earnings, and so on). The interview focused on casual employees (as daily job) and multiple-employees (more than one employment at the same time) also in different position (dependent and self-employment). This is due to the fact that one can find high job instability and a high proportion of casual employees in the South of Italy and especially in the province of Caserta.

The data allows us to individualize if there is a condition of exploitation of labour. After a descriptive analysis, using a multinomial logistic regression (Hosmer and Lemeshow, 2000) we can estimate which demographic (gender, age, family and friends network), human and social capital (education, language knowledge), migration (legal status of residence) and employment characteristics affect the different levels of exploitation status (none, medium, strong).

Using the multiple linear regression we will estimate the wage function for various socio demographic profile of the foreign immigrants (as gender and status of residence). We will also apply decomposition methods (as those proposed by Oaxaca and Blinder) to evaluate which part of the differential pay is attributable to the different socio-demographic characteristics of the considered groups and which part to the economic discrimination.

Expected Results

Given the results of earlier research we expect to find a strong heterogeneity by citizenship. We assume to find the same for the different foreign communities in Italy. We also expect that different migration histories explain different status of employment. In addition to that we also suppose that different levels of integration and different legal status can affect the risk to have a continuing employment. The expected results are linked with the Mediterranean migration model that is typical in the case of Caserta. Given the Mediterranean model we assume high employment instability, especially for activities in the agricultural sector (seasonal jobs), in the building industry and in the family service sector.

The instable employment conditions can be the cause of exploitation of labour. We also have to consider the strong gender difference in the type and level of occupation, which in the area of Caserta can be summarized in a better opportunity for men. The combination of gender, citizenship and employment should confirm the “ethnicization” (Ambrosini, Lodigiani, Zandrini, 1995; Zanfrini, 2002) and the presence of selective groups in the labour market. For example it was shown in previous studies (for instance, Orientale Caputo, 2007) that in the province of Caserta only Albanians are employed in the harvesting and manufacture of tobacco, while Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are enrolled in the sector of the bovine breeding. Women, especially those from Central and Eastern Europe mainly work in the family service sector.

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