Case Studies of Good Practice for the Prevention of Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia and the Promotion of Equal Treatment in the Workplace

Italy

WP/97/42/EN

EUROPEAN FOUNDATION
for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

CASE STUDIES OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR THE PREVENTION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND XENOPHOBIA AND THE PROMOTION OF EQUAL TREATMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

ITALY

by

Istituto Richerche Economiche e Sociali (IRES),

Rome

WP/97/42/EN

April 1997

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CHAPTER 1

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

1.1 Quantitative estimate

The average increase in the number of foreigners in Italy over the last twenty-five years has been approximately eight percentage points a year, with the figure rising from 143 838 in 1970 to one million in 1997. The highest rate of increase occurred during the periods 1986-1988 and 1990-1992, with the figures rising by close on 200 000 on both occasions (from 450 227 to 645 423 between 1986 and 1988, and from 781 138 to 925 172 between 1990 and 1992); these increases coincided with legal provisions[1] governing the registration and regulation of immigration - Law 943 of 1986 and Law 39 of 1990. A similar, though less dramatic, rise in the figures coincided with the third and most recent provisions concerning the regularisation of immigration, Decree Law 489 of November 1995, which led, in January 1996, to an increase of 10.5% in the 991 419 permits registered at the end of 1995. These figures are no cause for alarm and seem quite realistic as a reflection of steps to legalise "slight" irregularities.

The number of foreigners recorded in Italy at the beginning of 1997 thus amounted to precisely 1 095 622, though this figure does not include foreigners who are in Italy without a residence permit; this figure can only be estimated and Caritas calculates it to be approximately 250 000-300 000.

Over the last 10-15 years there has been much, often polemical, debate on the number of irregular immigrants.

Some sources consider there were already more than a million, possibly even two million, foreigners in Italy in 1990, when Law 39 was passed; according to other sources, the figure was somewhere between 800 000 and 1 500 000 in November 1995. Caritas estimates suggest that, in 1995, the number of irregular immigrants was equivalent to about a third of the number of legal immigrants, of whom there were 922 000. And, indeed, some 248 950 applications for regularisation had been received by 31 March 1996.

The discussion of figures is a traditional element of the debate on immigration in Italy, and it has long been the case that political groups and ordinary citizens opposed to the presence and social integration of foreigners in Italy have claimed that the figures are very high and that foreigners have no positive contribution to make to society. According to some close observers of immigration in Italy (9), the suggestion that there is a very large number of foreigners in Italy helps to foster negative attitudes and stir up xenophobic fears about domestic law and order and the future of Western society. This plays upon the negative feelings that tend to be more typical of Italian citizens who enjoy fewer social and cultural advantages. The confusion, moreover, between immigrants who do not have a residence permit and criminals is

[1] The first legislative provisions concerning immigration in Italy date from 1986. Before that, in 1982, the Ministry of Labour had laid down regularization procedures that blocked the hiring of new foreign employees and had also issued provisions to regularize the position of existing foreign employees.

instrumental in establishing a connection between immigration and criminality that is highly prejudicial to the positive development of any form of social integration.

The question of the criteria and rules governing entry and residence has been hotly debated over the past few years, partly because, as we all know, Italy has a brief and somewhat tarnished history as an importer of labour.

The reversal of the demographic balance that occurred during the 1970s hit a country that was in many ways unprepared to tackle such a new and complicated task as the integration of foreigners in a social-protection system that, except as regards stable, regular male employment, provided few guarantees even for native Italians.

We shall return to this question later in this first general part of the report, in the section on the current debate on the immigration bill recently tabled by the Minister for Social Affairs. What we want to point out here, in this introductory section, is that it is only over the last 15 years that Italy has had to face the question of whether and how to regulate entry flows; and, even while the debate raged, many foreigners were already arriving in Italy, with plans to stay for varying lengths of time.

Although the planning of entry flows provided for under Law 39 of 1990 was not immediately implemented, Italian law nonetheless succeeded in making the grant of residence permits dependent on applicants either having already secured a regular job or coming into Italy to be reunited with their family, and subject to the applicant having adequate earnings and accommodation.

The contradiction between the authorities' limited ability to monitor entry flows and the strict conditions governing residence led to the influx of a particular group of immigrants who are very mixed in many respects but for whom the common denominator is that they do not have the prerequisites to secure Italian hospitality. This situation now applies to two distinct groups: immigrants who are irregular only in that they do not have a residence permit, and illegal immigrants who are specifically involved in illegal activities punishable under the Penal Code. Of the two cases, "slight" irregularity can actually be created by the system for reuniting families, which is rather woolly in some respects, or by the fact that workers have been recruited under fixed-term contracts.

Overall, the two regularisation procedures that were introduced by Italian governments during the 1990s led to some 500 000 permit applications, of which a little fewer than half were successful (228 567). Of the applicants, 81.7% were from people in employment, 13.1% from people registered on job-seekers' lists, and 5.2% from people wanting to be officially reunited with their family.

Employment is the main motivation for immigration to Italy. In 1996, permits to undertake employed work accounted for more than 60% of all permits and permits to undertake self-employed work accounted for some 3% by far exceeding the third motive for immigration, i.e. "family reasons", which accounted for 18.7% of all applications (absolute figures and variations over time indicated in Table1).

Table 1 Number of immigrants in Italy, by reason for residence

	1981	1987	1995
Employment	96 717	149 430	347 068
Self-employment	7 230	10 893	33 045
Family reasons	63 024	100 979	174 993
Study	75 207	107 262	61 831
Religious reasons	28 067	39 175	57 485
Court rulings and imprisonment	47	439	5 576
Awaiting adoption	-	-	9 282
Total	**31 665**	**572 103**	**991 419**

Source: Caritas, based on data from the Ministry of the Interior

In terms of social and marital status, foreigners resident in Italy can be divided into the following groups (Caritas, 1996): more than 55% are men in the middle age brackets (69.4% are aged 19-40, 20.2% are aged 41-60, 7.3% are over the age of 61, and only 3.1% are under the age of 18); most are married (51.3%), 34.1% are married without children and only 9.1% are married with children.

If we take school-attendance figures and the number of mixed marriages as indicators of social integration, the situation of immigrants in Italy looks quite positive. The annual rate of growth of the school population is averaging 25% (3), compared with a rise in the number of residence permits of less than 10%. The aggregate figure for student registrations in 1996 indicates a registered foreign-student population of some 40 000; on the basis of the previous figures for 1994, we know that most of these students are in the first few classes of the school cycle (19 256 out of a total of 34 498 students registered in 1994). The past few years in particular have seen the number of mixed marriages increasing at a higher rate than the rate of issue of permits: between 1984 and 1994, the number of mixed marriages rose from 5400 to more than 11 000; some 70% of these were civil weddings, with an increase of more than 10% between 1993 and 1994.

On the other hand, in 1995, the Osservatorio Nazionale contro la Xenofobia [National Anti-Xenophobia Observatory] recorded 301 incidents of violence against immigrants (11 fewer than in 1994). More than 60% of these incidents took place in the street or on public transport, 12% occurred in the workplace, and the remainder took place in public places, homes or cars.

1.2 Geographical areas of origin

According to the most recent data provided by Caritas, the breakdown of the foreign population in Italy registered in 1996 indicates very high proportions of non-EU nationals (86.1%) and immigrants from developing countries (77.8%), with only 19% coming from EU Member States or other developed countries (15.1%). Most immigrants in Italy come from countries that are relatively close. Italy has 176 503 immigrants from Western Europe (EU and non-EU), 158 586 from the Balkan States, 94 610 from former Yugoslavia, 63 966 from Albania and 198 910 from North African countries. Overall, it is the number of immigrants from Africa that is rising at the highest rate, with the figure being two percentage points greater in 1996 than it was the previous year; the second highest growth rate is among Asian immigrants.

Immigrants in Italy are of 180 different nationalities, are mostly men (55.3%), mainly young single men. According to Caritas estimates, in terms of religion, Catholics are the largest group among immigrants (31.2%), followed by "other" Christians (25.2%), Muslims (30.4%), Buddhists and Shintoists (3.3%), Hindus (1.9%), Jews (0.7%), Confucianists and Taoists (0.7%), animists (1.2%), and a percentage (5.3%) of miscellaneous others.

The large number of Africans, particularly from North Africa, is reflected in the predominance of the Moroccan community (119 481 immigrants), which was already evident in 1996. The second largest foreign community in Italy, on the other hand, is the Albanian one (63 976), which doubled in size during 1996 because of the political problems in Albania. It is difficult to predict the trend in emigration from Albania at the moment, but the substantial worsening of the situation in Albania over recent months would suggest further growth that would be difficult to manage. The third and fourth largest foreign communities are of immigrants from the Philippines (57 071) and the US (54 652). Next, in order of decreasing size and numbering between 45 000 and 30 000, are the immigrant populations from Serbia, Germany, Senegal, Romania and China; and then, again in order of decreasing size and numbering between 27 000 and 20 000, come the immigrant populations from Poland, France, Sri Lanka, the UK, Egypt and Peru.

Table 2 Immigration by continent of origin; data for 1997 and 1995; absolute figures and percentages of total

	Absolute figures	% of total	Absolute figures	% of total
Europe	426 017	38.9	404 265	40.8
Africa	314 924	28.8	265 026	26.7
America	154 822	14.1	152 496	15.3
Asia	195 405	17.8	164 218	16.6
Oceania	3 613	0.3	4 543	0.5
Total	**1 095 622**	**100.0**	**991 419**	**100.0**

Sources: Caritas, Dossier statistico immigrazione 1996 [Immigration Statistics 1996], based on data produced by the Ministry of the Interior and Anticipazioni dossier statistico 1997 [Immigration Forecasts 1997]

1.3 Geographical and labour-market distribution

1.3.1 Routes to integration

Ever since immigrants became a stable component of the labour market in Italy, it has commonly been held that Italian unemployment and immigration are the terms of a paradox that is apparent rather than real (17). Earlier studies of labour-market segmentation and migration in several parts of Europe indicate that immigrant employment in Italy meets the demand for secondary labour in marginal and peripheral activities, particularly in the area of undeclared employment. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, immigrants were willing to work in traditionally unstable and relatively unregulated sectors, such as agriculture, the building trade and personal services; in other words, they were willing to take jobs that were highly precarious and insecure and were therefore not wanted by Italian workers - jobs that might be taken only by young people in Italy's more prosperous areas as a way of combining employment and study or as a first step into the labour market, before moving into a better position.

It was also during those early years of analysis of migration in Italy that it began to emerge that there was a tendency for immigrants to move around within the country, moving from the islands and the South, or even from Rome, to the North. Although immigrants from North Africa - and, now, Albania - have tended to reach Italy from the Southern Mediterranean, they soon realise that the richer areas in the North can offer more job stability in industry and better support in terms of service structures. Foreign communities already established in Italy have played a considerable role in this respect, providing their fellow nationals with useful information on the areas they need to go to, local employment systems and the benefits offered by regional or local services in the various areas; sometimes, they may even be able to provide their fellow nationals with direct contacts to aid their occupational advancement and social integration. It is worth mentioning here that Rome has always been a place that is readily accessible by many different modes of transport - by air, rail, road and boat - but it is also a more accessible destination on the psychological level because of old colonial links in some cases and, more generally, it is a city that attracts people through its historical interest, its many

dimensions and the many role models it can offer for those who need them. In Rome alone, there are now 160 different foreign nationalities.

These are just a few of the features of immigration in Italy, though some aspects have changed significantly as a result of developments over recent years. Things have changed since the early years (14), when immigration into Italy was marked by a heavy female presence, largely comprising - especially in the very early days - domestic workers who often lived with the families for whom they worked, usually in urban areas, and who had usually emigrated alone, already in possession of a contract of employment or at least a contact with a private or religious organisation. Those early waves of immigration were also marked by large numbers of labourers, usually male, Moslem Tunisians, who were employed as casual labourers or on a daily basis on daily pay in the agricultural sector in Sicily and who were therefore not covered by any of the minimum standards governing labour; and former Yugoslavians, who were employed in a similarly precarious way in agriculture and the construction industry in some areas of Northern Italy. Right in the wake of these first waves of immigrants came itinerant workers, initially Senegalese, who were also no threat to Italian workers since, to a degree, they actually invented this form of labour distribution with its particular methods and players. These types of activity were often undertaken by foreigners who were passing through the South with a more ambitious plan, aiming at least to reach Northern Italy.

Table 3 Foreign citizens, by geographical area; absolute figures and percentages; 1995 and 1996

Geographical area	Foreigners (a.f. - 1995)	% distribution (1995)	Foreigners (a.f. - 1996)	% distribution (1996)
Northern Italy	507 755	51.2	553 194	50.4
Central Italy	319 827	32.3	334 077	30.5
Southern Italy	98 685	10.0	209 351*	19.1*
Islands	65 152	6.6		

Sources: Caritas, Dossier statistico immigrazione 1996 [Immigration Statistics 1996], based on data collected by the Ministry of the Interior, and Anticipazioni dossier statistico 1997 [Immigration Forecasts 1997]
* data for 1996 is provided in aggregate for the South and the Islands

In terms of percentages of the total population, in 1995, foreigners accounted for 2.0% in Northern Italy, 2.91% in Central Italy, 0.70% in Southern Italy and 0.97% on the islands. These figures are low, and yet they are in inverse proportion to the geographical distribution of the few incidents of violence against immigrants (301 in 1995, according to data collected by the Osservatorio Nazionale sulla Xenophobia [National Xenophobia Observatory] and reported by Caritas). The largest number of acts of violence against immigrants occurs in Lazio (Central Italy), which accounts for close on half of all incidents, followed by Campania (14.1%), Tuscany (10.3%), Liguria (6.8%), Veneto (5.5%) and Piedmont (4.7%). It would appear, even if only on the basis of this small amount of evidence, that there is no direct correlation between immigrant density and the alleged symptoms of rejection.

1.3.2 The labour market

The general distribution of immigrant employment in Italy largely mirrors the sectoral and geographical distribution of indigenous employment.

This general picture is confirmed by the most recent calculations made by Caritas (1996) on the basis of INPS data for 1995. According to these figures, 48.1% of immigrants are employed in industry, 17.3% in the construction sector, 8.8% in the service sector and 25.7% in commerce, agriculture and other sectors. Industrial employment prevails in the North, accounting for 50% of all immigrant employment there, with immigrant employment figures in this sector being lower in other areas of the country (45.1% in Southern Italy, 36.1% in Central Italy and 30.7% on the islands). This is confirmed by the figures on placements in employment. The highest percentage of placements in 1995 was in the industrial sector (44.0%), mostly in the regions of Northern Italy (51.1%); the service sector was in second place, accounting for 37.5% of placements, with the highest proportion of these being in the regions of Central Italy (46.2%); and agriculture accounted for 18.5% of all placements, with relatively higher concentrations on the islands (57.8%) and in the regions of Southern Italy (38.2%).

A similar picture emerges from CGIL figures (5), gathered through its various structures. According to the CGIL survey, in Northern Italy, some 40% of immigrants work in industry and 20% in the construction sector, whereas, in Central and Southern Italy, they tend to work in the service sector (40%) and agriculture (30%). Even where they are in regular employment, immigrants are often employed under seasonal contracts (40%) or part-time contracts (14%), though 46% are covered by standard permanent contracts of employment.

We also need to consider private domestic work, which continues to be of considerable significance. The most recent data available refer to 1993. Of all the foreigners registered as being in Italy that year (987 405), 58 954 were employed in domestic jobs, accounting for 24.3% of all domestic workers in Italy. Broken down by geographical area, the proportion of all domestic jobs filled by immigrants is falling in the North (29.7%) and South (32.4%) but rising significantly in Central Italy (32.4%). Most immigrants working in this sector are women, who account for 72.8% of all immigrant workers in the sector.

Some Caritas figures, which we reproduce below, correlate sector of activity and nationality of origin:

- industry: 70.6% Central and Southern Africa; 29.7% Middle East;
- construction industry: 26.1% North Africa; 4.3% North America;
- services: 20% North America and Oceania; 4.8% North Africa;
- commerce and other activities: 46.9% Middle East; 13.2% Central and Southern Africa.

1.4 Public role, trade-union activities, private non-profit-making activities and national communities of immigrants: prospects and actions concerning the social integration of immigrants

This is not the appropriate place for a detailed analysis of the degree of coverage and the adequacy of the Italian social-security system.

We shall simply take a moment to mention the fact that public-sector involvement in the Italian welfare system is only relatively recent and that this is reflected in the problems currently assailing the system of services, with heavy geographical discrepancies not only from one region to another but also between the small areas covered by the different institutions, which have different working styles and whose services vary in terms of both quality and quantity.

In this context, labour organisations, particularly the trade unions, and Church bodies have played an important role in supplementing the benefits available under the public system. Worker-side self-protection with regard to working conditions and terms and conditions of employment has largely substituted the traditionally weak role played by the State, including by means of the reciprocal support arrangements among the various categories of employed workers, which have gradually led to the emergence of structured social rights connected with work, such as health protection, the right to rest days, job stability and protection of retired workers in their old age. Women's domestic and reproductive role and family stability have also long been the other main pillar of the Italian welfare system, which generally guarantees a high level of security and considerable social support for the various subjects around whom the system has been structured: adult male workers with stable, regular jobs and their families. In this context, the charitable works of the Church have focused on more disadvantaged groups who lie outside the labour market and have been inadequately covered by a social-welfare system that has historically been under-funded and in deficit - groups whose size has been contained within socially and ethically sustainable limits.

The picture that now emerges from a brief observation of the range of activities and services provided for immigrants is of a situation that has been heavily influenced by the approach we have described but which is characterised by a new push towards the creation of a system of public, non-profit-making services that operates effectively in terms of social integration. What has emerged is a certain distinction between the types of services offered by trade-union structures (on the CGIL model) and those offered by the voluntary sector, whereby workplace and legal protection is provided by the trade unions, and other forms of support and assistance are provided by other structures (5)[2]. There would also appear to be marked differences in the culture underlying service provision, with some bodies being marked by a highly specialised and technical approach, "whereby users tend to be seen as just another case to be dealt with, thus denying their individual cultural characteristics, (...) while other services are heavily user-oriented, with their workers being much more involved, even from a professional viewpoint, in the human relationship" (18, p 17).

[2] From what we can surmise on the basis of the initial information gathered for a study currently being conducted by IRES within the EU's Horizon programme on services for immigrants, it would seem that integration of the various service-providers is somewhat limited, with each body having a high degree of specialization.

In this respect, it should be pointed out that many organisations and initiatives in the non-profit-making sector, which has recently been expanding and is of ever greater interest to social researchers and the political powers in Italy, have turned their attention to immigrants (10); this notwithstanding, there still seems to be a situation in which "the precarious nature of welfare structures for immigrants make their problems all the more visible. To a certain extent, it might be claimed that the visibility of immigrants is in direct proportion to the failure to solve their problems. In other words, homeless immigrants are, by definition, more visible than immigrants who have managed to find housing; immigrants who do not have permanent work and do the best they can to earn a living as itinerant traders appear to be far more numerous than those who have found stable employment and are only really noticed in the areas in which they live" (14, p 95).

As we have already said, when we speak of integration routes in Italy, we are not using the word "route" in a merely metaphorical sense: immigrants literally follow a geographical route to employment. In richer Northern Italy, where the labour market might be able to offer immigrants employment, and even regular, stable employment, albeit at the lowest levels, local social-service systems are beginning to tackle the situation in a more appropriate way, with social citizenship being perceived, perhaps not as a right, but at least as a goal to be worked towards by taking every opportunity to close the gap. The situation is quite different in Southern Italy, where methods may range from encouraging immigrants to enter informal employment[3] to actually urging them to embark on the next step of their migratory path to the North. Apart from the limitations of the local economy, the specific problems encountered by immigrants can be attributed to a lack of any specific policy and the inadequacy of bureaucratic channels: many powers and responsibilities are delegated to other structures and, even recently, relations with institutions have coincided with the monitoring functions exercised by the police (7).

Given the current state of research in this field, it is difficult to identify the relationships between ethnic and cultural solidarity networks and the services provided by Italian social and institutional agents. According to research conducted in the early 1990s (14), ethnic and cultural identity is expressed in three fundamental ways: ethnic entrepreneurship; solidarity among immigrants from the same geographical area; and community welfare networks, which are active in encouraging relatives and friends to migrate. In some cases, these forms of expressing ethnic and cultural identity have led to the emergence of forms of self-protection along union lines, as in the well-known but certainly not unique case of the Filipino community, whose members, without any outside help, have developed a minimum-pay policy and refuse to work for less than the established minimum pay levels.

As regards union action in the true sense, that is, action taken by the Italian trade unions, we need firstly to point out that the Italian trade unions were among the first Italian social actors to implement actions aimed at immigrants, as workers. Historically, the first bilingual leaflets produced in Italian and Arabic were those distributed by the CGIL to agricultural workers in

[3] In Southern Italy, the situation regarding integration is "easier and less dramatic (...), in that people accept the rules of informal employment, whereby they give up any expectation concerning recognition of basic rights in the workplace, because there is a greater chance of rapid inclusion in the system than there is in Northern Italy (...). The art of getting by in this way is attracting new protagonists (...): those who have little and expect little" (Mottura, p 113).

Sicily (15). During the 1980s, the CGIL then launched regular activities to register and include foreign workers (usually highly educated ones) in their bodies at regional and occupational-category level; this same period saw the introduction of new organisational models, with a view to the specific organisation of immigrant workers within the trade union and exchanges of experiences[4]. There were examples during the 1990s of special bargaining at regional and company level. Previous years had seen the development of criteria and establishment of organisational centres to deal with the new phenomenon of immigration, but it was the 1990s that saw the strongest development of trade-union action, initially coinciding with implementation of the Martelli Law (Law 39/1990), which, among other things, gave rise to some significant steps to regularise immigration in Italy. Until the 1990s, trade-union cultural and policy initiatives concerning immigration had mainly focused on collaborating with voluntary-sector organisations to support these new socially and occupationally disadvantaged members of society, even though, or perhaps because, it was evident to the trade unions right from the start that a whole combination of features, including their weak position in Italian society, meant they were complementary to rather than in competition with the indigenous labour force. During this phase, initiatives focused on foreign workers as people to be protected and unionised. Tripartite bargaining (with employers and local authorities) concerning housing for immigrant workers was also conducted, particularly in areas of Northern Italy where most immigrants had gradually become concentrated. Since then, and perhaps this is the phase we are in now, judging by the small amount of analytical work conducted, it would seem that a whole range of support activities that trade unionists felt were necessary have been dismissed as inadequate, even by trade unionists involved in activities associated with immigration[5].

[4] A survey of CGIL activities with regard to immigration, including in terms of the structures set up and the presence of immigrants in CGIL bodies, CGIL 1996.

[5] It emerges from a study conducted on the trade unions and immigration that: "Issues associated with immigration have been given relatively little weight in the training activities conducted by trade-union bodies at confederal and industry level, and have also been the subject of debate, in that they have seemed to focus on information and policy guidelines rather than serving as proper training courses to provide workers with skills. Most of the workers interviewed had not attended ad hoc courses to provide them with specific training, either before or since starting their job" (Mottura, 1996, p 61).

1.5 The new immigration bill

Parliament is currently debating several bills: one tabled by the Prime Minister and various Government ministers; another tabled by MPs from the Partito Popolare, which forms part of the majority; and a third tabled by MPs from Alleanza Nazionale, which is part of the opposition.

Signatures are currently being collected in support of the three bills. It would be impossible and pointless to try to describe the situation in full here, but it may be worth summing up the fundamental points of the Government's bill:

- the Government's bill makes provision for the explicit formulation, or explicit recognition, of some of the civil and political rights laid down by the UN Charter, which are therefore, under the Constitution, already implicitly included in Italian law;
- it provides for the rights of political refugees to be transferred;
- it provides for the introduction of a six-year residence permit for people who are already in possession of residence permits for a shorter period and who have housing, work and an income;
- it provides for immigrants to have the right to vote after six years of continuous, regular residence in Italy;
- it makes provision for simpler rules on the re-uniting of families and more stable and predictable planning of entry flows, which are never to be set at zero, as has happened, except with regard to domestic helpers, over the past six years;
- it also makes provision for more effective (and highly criticised) rules on deportation, subject to monitoring by the courts.

In practice, it is very difficult to predict whether some of the more delicate provisions, such as the right to vote, will be accepted by Parliament and whether the basic enacting decrees and bilateral agreements will actually be issued and signed. It is also difficult to predict whether the courts will rule the repressive sections to be unconstitutional.

In any event, this bill is an attempt to improve the rights of regular immigrants and step up action against irregular immigrants, within the framework of planned entry flows. Refugees would not be included in the quotas.

Table 4 The 60 largest communities of foreign citizens in Italy (at 31.12.1995)

Country	Absolute figures	Percentage variation	Numerical variation 1994/1995
Morocco	94 237	1.75	1 620
USA	60 607	6.86	3 893
Yugoslavia	51 973	5.21	2 575
Philippines	43 421	6.65	2 575
Tunisia	40 545	-1.58	- 651
Germany	39 372	6.27	2 322
Albania	34 706	8.71	2 780
UK	27 694	4.76	1 259
France	27 273	6.06	1 550
Romania	24 513	21.23	4 292
Senegal	23 953	-2.69	- 662
Brazil	22 053	12.58	2 464
Poland	22 022	16.34	3 093
Egypt	21 874	3.03	644
China	21 507	10.38	2 022
Sri Lanka	20 275	8.49	1 586
Croatia	18 944	10.84	1 852
Switzerland	18 237	3.11	462
Spain	17 847	8.86	1 452
Somalia	17 389	6.06	994
Macedonia	15 426	49.25	5 090
Greece	14 821	3.77	539
India	14 629	9.70	1 293
Ghana	12 550	-0.76	- 96
Argentina	10 494	-0.75	- 197
Bosnia-Herzegovina	10 224	18.84	1 621
CIS	10 197	22.34	1 862
Peru	10 025	14.95	1 304
Ethiopia	9 895	0.67	76
Colombia	9 626	16.64	1 373

Country	Absolute figures	Percentage variation	Numerical variation 1994/1995
Dominican Republic	8 652	10.24	614
Japan	8 290	13.98	1 017
Austria	8 110	9.912	683
Iran	7 956	-1.03	- 82
Netherlands	7 378	7.50	515
Mauritius	6 564	1.10	72
Pakistan	6 535	7.48	455
Nigeria	6 343	2.68	166
Bulgaria	6 181	11.38	632
Bangladesh	5 541	7.88	405
Hungary	5 511	18.05	843
Portugal	5 323	5.86	295
Turkey	5 220	7.82	379
Mexico	5 095	11.58	529
South Korea	5 053	24.85	1 006
Belgium	4 820	6.19	281
Cape Verde	4 688	9.50	407
Lebanon	4 625	1.20	55
Czech Republic	4 596	1.58	2 065
Slovenia	4 107	2.29	92
Algeria	4 020	3.63	141
Canada	3 942	4.01	152
Venezuela	3 924	1.78	69
Australia	3 908	5.19	193
Sweden	3 729	14.17	463
Israel	3 683	1.07	0
San Marino	3 556	1.08	38
Chile	3 554	1.02	38
El Salvador	3 195	6.57	197
Jordan	3 124	0.93	129

Source: Caritas, Dossier statistico immigrazione, based on data produced by the Ministry of the Interior, 1996

CHAPTER 2

CASE STUDIES

The immigration of foreign nationals to Italy has become a structural phenomenon.

As we said in the first part of this report, immigrants are not evenly distributed throughout Italy. Over time, immigrants have tended to move into the regions of Northern Italy, where the economy is stronger and where services are more highly developed than they are in other parts of the country.

Immigration in Northern Italy is beginning to alter the very social fabric of large and medium-sized urban areas, where the numbers of non-EU nationals has created problems for the civil authorities, raising delicate issues concerning the integration of foreigners.

For these reasons, our choice of enterprises for the case studies necessarily focused on the regions of Northern Italy, where foreigners are more highly integrated both occupationally and socially, more or less on a par with Italian industrial workers, even though they tend to be in the lower job classifications.

It is worth mentioning from the outset that national collective agreements in Italy do not make provision for any specific measures concerning the occupational integration of non-EU nationals; any measures of this kind are introduced by company agreements, through special considerations in respect of housing problems, language difficulties, geographical distance from country of origin, and religious beliefs.

2.1 Methodology

In conducting the case studies, we first made telephone contact with regional union leaders to identify enterprises with a high proportion of foreign workers. We then contacted the heads of these enterprises and asked them if they would be willing to provide information. In accordance with the criteria laid down in the guidelines concerning a common methodology, we devised and used two interview models: one for representatives at enterprise level and the other for representatives from outside the enterprise (e.g. regional union leaders, local officials responsible for social and immigration policy, etc.). We also had discussions with Italian and foreign workers.

In addition to the economic data provided by enterprises, we also gathered various information documents, publicity material and bibliographical material that were made available to us by our expert witnesses (statistics, articles, publications, previous research on immigration and integration at local level). It was impossible to gather any standardised economic data on the features of the workforce, since each enterprise uses different survey methods.

In all, we conducted 18 interviews, six of which we recorded[6].

[6] The interview guidelines and list of interviews conducted are contained in the annexes.

Main features of the enterprises studied

Name of enterprise	Sector	Size	Location	Number of interviews
Azienda Fonderie Cooperative	heavy engineering	medium-sized (200 employees)	Modena Emilia Romagna Northern Italy	5
Azienda Cooperativa Alva	agri-foodstuffs	medium-sized (200 employees)	Turin Piedmont Northern Italy	8
Ospedale San Raffaele	hospital	large (3500 employees)	Milan Lombardy Northern Italy	5

2.2 Enterprises and expert witnesses

2.2.1 Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena

Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena [Modena Foundries Cooperative] is an iron foundry within the heavy-engineering sector. The enterprise has two plants, one in Modena and the other in Ferrara. Most of the enterprise's production activities take place at the Modena plant, with the Ferrara plant providing support and services for the main plant.

Our interviews were conducted at the Modena plant, and our interviewees were:

1. Gianni Moretti, Chairman of Cooperativa Fonderia di Modena;
2. Gabriella Tazzioli, assistant in he personnel office;
3. Essie Dwohoh Yaw, Ghanaian worker;
4. Sammy Adjei, Ghanaian worker;
5. Fausto Cigni, head of the Ufficio Stranieri [Department responsible for Foreigners] of the Camera del Lavoro di Modena [Modena Chamber of Labour]; and member of the Consulta Nazionale sull'Immigrazione [National Immigration Advisory Body] of the Consiglio Nazionale dell'Economia e del Lavoro [CNEL - National Council for Economic Affairs and Labour].

The enterprise is a market leader in Europe in the foundry sector. In Italy, the market in this sector is divided between the Texit Group (Fiat Group), which controls 50% of the market,

and some eight other foundries of a size similar to Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena, which, between them, account for the remaining 50% of the market.
The enterprise has enjoyed considerable growth over the past three years, with its turnover rising from LIT 30 000 million to LIT 50 000 million, but it is unlikely to see this kind of growth in the future, because of market saturation and the effects of market globalisation.

Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena was founded 47 years ago, when it had a total of ten employees, all of them natives of Modena. Over its lengthy history, the enterprise has lived through all the minor and major migrations that have taken place, which can be divided into three main phases:

- the 1950s and 1960s, when staff were recruited from the countryside surrounding Modena;
- the period up to the 1980s, when the bulk of the workforce comprised immigrants from Southern Italy;
- the period since the mid-1980s, in which the enterprise has begun to hire immigrant workers.

Staff turnover is high because of the kind of work carried out, which is very hard and tiring.

In all, the enterprise has 195 employees, including 38 women; 160 employees work at the Modena plant and 35 work at the Ferrara plant. There are 44 non-EU workers, three of whom are women (see table below).

Italians			**Foreigners**		
Men	**Women**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**
112	35	**147**	41	3	**44**

The predominant nationalities in the enterprise are those of Central Africa (Ghana and Nigeria) and North Africa (the Maghreb, Tunisia). Workers' origins are coincidental and do not imply any specific skills.

The non-EU nationals employed by the enterprise tend to be young and to have a high level of education: most of them have higher-education diplomas and some are university graduates. Despite this, they are all classified as blue-collar workers; some have reached the top of the grade.

The most common religions are Islam and Christianity. All of the enterprise's workers from the Maghreb are Moslems, though only three are practising; these three stop work at five o'clock in the afternoon to pray to Mecca for five minutes. The Christians among the enterprise's foreign workers are not Catholics but Seventh-Day Adventists.

2.2.2 Cooperativa Alva

COOP ALVA [Cooperativa Agricola di Lavorazione, Vendita e Approvvigionamento - Agricultural Processing, Sales and Supplies Cooperative] is an enterprise specialising in poultry products, and particularly the slaughtering and butchering of chickens.

It is a cooperative with five establishments: three abattoirs in Cambiano, Dogliani and Pianfei; a brooder-house in Sangano; and administrative offices and head office in Fossano. The largest of the abattoirs is the one in Cambiano, which is where we conducted our interviews.

We interviewed:

1. Francis Cosio, managing director;
2. Ugo Oliviero, outside CISL representative;
3. Laura Merlino (Italian blue-collar worker);
4. Fabrizio Murador (Italian blue-collar worker);
5. Arcangelo Sordo (Italian blue-collar worker);
6. Youssef Mejdove (Moroccan blue-collar worker);
7. Saqil Mohammed (Moroccan blue-collar worker).

The enterprise holds the sixth-largest market share in the sector, with an annual turnover of LIT 100 000 million.

In 1993, Cooperativa Piemonte Polli went bankrupt and Cooperativa Alva negotiated to lease the abattoir in Cambiano, taking on all the workers who had been dismissed and placed on mobility lists. The workers re-hired in this way included some non-EU nationals.

Although the enterprise is a cooperative, workers are not members, but simply employees; the poultry-farmers are the only members. It is important to point out that there are two categories of workers in the enterprise: permanent workers employed under permanent contracts of employment and temporary workers who are taken on for a fixed period on a seasonal basis. This is because the agricultural sector is governed by special rules that allow for this type of hiring. The enterprise has a total workforce of 200 employees.

Table 5 Number of employees at 28 February 1997, broken down by place of work, grade and gender

Plants	Managers			White collar workers			Permanent blue collar workers			Temporary blue collar workers			Total		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
Cambiano	0	0	0	1	3	4	51	22	73	14	3	17	66	28	94
Dogliani	0	0	0	0	1	1	12	21	33	0	0	0	12	22	34
Fossano	2	0	2	8	8	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	8	18
Pianfei	1	0	1	0	3	3	13	17	30	2	2	4	16	22	38
Sangano	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	5	15	0	1	1	10	6	16
Totals	**3**	**0**	**3**	**9**	**15**	**24**	**86**	**65**	**151**	**16**	**6**	**22**	**114**	**86**	**200**

Source: Coop ALVA

Table 6 Number of employees at 28 February 1997, broken down by place of work, grade and nationality

Plants	Managers			White collar workers			Permanent blue collar workers			Temporary blue collar workers			Total		
	It.	For.	Tot	It.	For.	Tot	It.	For.	Tot	It.	For.	Tot	It.	For.	Tot
Cambiano	0	0	0	4	0	4	55	18	73	6	11	17	65	29	94
Dogliani	0	0	0	1	0	1	33	0	33	0	0	0	34	0	34
Fossano	2	0	2	16	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	0	18
Pianfei	1	0	1	3	0	3	30	0	30	4	0	4	38	0	38
Sangano	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	15	1	0	1	16	0	16
Totals	**3**	**0**	**3**	**24**	**0**	**24**	**133**	**18**	**151**	**11**	**11**	**22**	**171**	**29**	**200**

Source: Coop ALVA

Table 7 Number of employees at 28 February 1997, broken down by length of service and nationality - Cambiano abattoir

Grade	Up to 1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4 years or more	Grand total
Italian white collar workers			2	2		4
Foreign white collar workers						0
Total white collar workers	0	0	2	2	0	4
Italian permanent blue collar workers	1		6	48		55
Foreign permanent blue collar workers			2	16		18
Total permanent blue collar workers	1	0	8	64	0	73
Italian temporary blue collar workers	6					6
Foreign temporary blue collar workers	11					11
Total temporary blue collar workers	17	0	0	0	0	17
Overall total	**18**	**0**	**10**	**66**	**0**	**64**

Source: Coop ALVA

Table 8 Number of employees at 28 February 1997, broken down by job classification level and nationality - Cambiano abattoir

	White-Collar Job Classification Levels			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Italian white collar workers	2	1	1	4
Foreign white collar workers	-	-	-	-
Total white collar workers	**2**	**1**	**1**	**4**

Source: Coop ALVA

Table 8a Number of employees at 28 February 1997, broken down by job classification level and nationality - Cambiano abattoir

	Blue-Collar Job Classification Levels					
	Ordinary	**Skilled**	**Highly skilled**	**Specialised**	**Highly specialised**	**Total B-C workers**
Italian *permanent* B-C workers	-	38	1	15	1	55
Foreign *permanent* B-C workers	-	18	-	-	-	18
Overall total *permanent* B-C workers	**-**	**56**	**1**	**15**	**1**	**73**
Italian *temporary* B-C workers	5	-	-	1	-	6
Foreign *temporary* B-C workers	11	-	-	-	-	11
Overall total *temporary* B-C workers	**16**	**-**	**-**	**1**	**-**	**17**

Source: Coop ALVA

Table 9 Number of employees at 28 February 1997, broken down by gender and nationality - Cambiano abattoir

Grade	White collar workers	Permanent blue collar workers	Temporary blue collar workers	Overall Total
Italian	4	55	6	65
Foreign	0	18	11	29
Total	**4**	**73**	**17**	**94**

Source: Coop ALVA

All the non-EU nationals that work for the enterprise come from Morocco, with the exception of one Argentine. The enterprise's non-EU workers are not distributed evenly among its three establishments, and their distribution depends on the location of each establishment. For example, at the abattoir in Cambiano, which is in the Province of Turin, foreign workers account for a quarter of the workforce, whereas there are no immigrant workers at the abattoirs in Dogliani and Pianfei because they are in the Province of Cuneo, which has a small immigrant population.

The enterprise's foreign workers are all Moslems and are all young, aged between 25 and 35. They are mainly single; those that have families are married to women of the same nationality; there are no mixed marriages.

With regard to levels of education, a few of the enterprise's foreign workers are university graduates and most of them have a higher-education diploma, and yet they are all classified as blue-collar workers.

2.2.3 Ospedale San Raffaele

Ospedale San Raffaele [San Raffaele Hospital] is a private hospital and research institute. Its main premises in Italy are in Milan and further premises were opened in Rome a year ago. It is an international foundation with establishments abroad, in Brazil, India, Cuba, Poland, Angola, Cameroon, Bolivia and the Philippines. The hospital is recognised as a research body by the Italian State. It has an annual turnover of LIT 400 000 million.

We interviewed:

1. Dr Mambretti, managing director;
2. Pasquale Magro, company union representative;
3. Roberto Giudici, regional union representative;
4. Kazadi Kabolambi, qualified nurse;
5. Marilou De La Fuente, qualified nurse.

The enterprise has a total workforce of 3400 employees at its premises in Milan and Rome: 3300 employees in Milan and 100 in Rome. Women account for 69% of the total workforce. The enterprise has 120 non-EU workers, 80% of whom are women. Of these 120 non-EU workers:

- 45% come from Asia;
- 23% from Central and South America (Peru);
- 16% from non-EU Europe (Poland, Albania, Romania, Switzerland and Austria);
- 13% from Africa;
- 3% from North America and Australia.

The nationality most strongly represented in the workforce is Filipino. The predominant religion is Catholicism, with just one Buddhist and three Moslems.

The breakdown by job classification level is as follows:

- about 100 of the enterprise's foreign workers are classified as qualified nurses (obstetricians and ward sisters/charge nurses), who are classified as white-collar workers;
- 20 foreigners are classified as blue-collar workers and work on the catering, cleaning and ward services side of the hospital;

- two of the enterprise's foreign workers are laboratory technicians and are classified as qualified workers, at the same level as the qualified nurses.

The enterprise's foreign workers tend to be young, and fewer than half of them are married. As the managing director mentioned during our interview with him, Filipinos and South Americans tend to marry partners of their own nationality, whereas the number of mixed marriages is on the increase among the other nationalities.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDIES: DESCRIPTION OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES

3.1 Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena

3.1.1 Social and geographical context

The numbers of foreigners in both Modena and Emilia Romagna as a whole are higher than national averages, though there are some major differences from one area to another.

Table 10 Foreign citizens in the Emilia Romagna region, as a percentage of the total resident population

Region	Resident population 01.01.1996	Foreigners, 1996	Foreigners as % of total population
Emilia Romagna	3 924 456	82 212	2.09

Source: Caritas figures, Dossier Statistico sull'Immigrazione, based on data collected by the Ministry of the Interior and ISTAT

Modena and the surrounding province are a pole of attraction for immigrant workers because of the number of small and medium-sized enterprises in the industrial and craft sectors that are located there and because of the quality of the services on offer.

For the first time in Italy, immigrants in one of Modena's Communes, Novantola, have been able to elect their own representative to the Commune council, thus giving rise to a unique situation that is being seen as a pilot project. Many years ago, it was also the Province of Modena that was the first to develop company-level bargaining on specific issues concerning foreign workers.

After Bologna, which is the regional capital, Modena is the province with the largest immigrant population - a population that has grown considerably over the past few years, rising from 1400 in 1987 to 6000 in 1990 and 20 000 in 1997. The total population of Modena and the surrounding province is 607 000.

There are now few irregular immigrants in the area: under Decree Law 489/95, also known as the Dini Decree, the situation of 2223 immigrants in Modena was regularised, with 2060 of them being in employment.

Of the 20 000 foreigners currently resident in the area, 12 000 are integrated in the labour market and 3500 are children; there are no clear figures on the remainder.
The foreign labour force has become a vital resource for the local economy: "*If all the immigrants were sent home, our economy would come to a grinding halt*", we were told by the local-authority representative we interviewed.

Table 11 Permits issued to foreigners in the Province of Modena, November 1996

Foreigners resident in Modena Province	**16 231**	**%**
- men	9 270	60.0%
- women	6 511	40.0%
Declared Reasons		
Employment	9 544	58.8%
Family reasons	2 751	16.9%
Inclusion on job-seekers' list	1 273	7.8%
Tourism	747	4.6%
Study	526	3.2%
Self-employment	365	2.3%
Special reasons, possibly incl. work	242	1.5%
Elected domicile	209	1.3%
Awaiting adoption	158	1.0%
Other	416	2.6%
Total	**16 231**	**100.0%**

Source: Modena police.

Table 12 Applications for regularisation and main nationalities, Modena

Country of origin	Number	%
Morocco	392	23.6
Ghana	268	16.1
Albania	245	14.7
Tunisia	98	5.9
Nigeria	118	7.1
Philippines	123	7.4
China	39	2.3
Romania	49	2.9
Turkey	48	2.9
Poland	44	2.7
Other countries	240	14.4
Total	**1 664**	**100.0**
% of provincial total	**71.6**	

3.1.2 Sectors of employment

As we have already said, 12 000 of the 20 000 foreigners in the province are integrated in the labour market. With the exception of the public sector, they are employed in all sectors of the production system: heavy engineering, construction, agri-industry, textiles, ceramics[7], commerce and tourism.

Immigrant men are more likely to be in employment than are immigrant women. A survey conducted by the regional branch of the CGIL [Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro - General Confederation of Italian Workers] revealed that 20% of immigrant workers have a degree but are nonetheless classified in lower grades.

[7] Sassuolo is the main industrial ceramics district in Emilia Romagna.

3.1.3 Immigrants in the eyes of the indigenous population and local institutions

As the local-authority representative we interviewed said: "(...) *in the collective imagination, immigrants are seen as prostitutes, pushers and criminals. On the whole, the people of Modena welcome immigrants who are working but want those who are criminals to be sent home. It is not an attitude you can define as racism. It is still very common for people to think of immigrants as marginal or parasitic. Many of Modena's citizens see the foreign community as either disruptive or dangerous*".[8]

In view of the growth of the immigrant population in the area, local bodies have collaborated in planning and implementing various actions, with the housing situation being given top priority.

In 1990, the three Italian trade-union confederations - the CGIL, CISL and UIL - tackled the "immigration issue" by introducing the first list of bargaining proposals concerning non-EU workers. The trade unions asked the local authorities to help in identifying all the buildings that could be converted into hostels, providing a total of 300 places. Employers' associations agreed to bear the cost of this project. Modena currently has some 40 hostels providing a total of 720 places, and a mosque has been set up in a disused factory.

Funds have been set aside to finance training courses for non-EU immigrants, with these courses focusing particularly on literacy, information on the services offered by the national health service, and preparation for work. The CGIL has set aside LIT 18 000 000 to finance the translation into English, French and Arabic of booklets on the occupational health service provided by Unità Sanitarie Locali [USL - Local Health Units].

[8] An opinion poll on non-EU immigration was conducted in Modena in 1991, with some 1000 questionnaires being distributed. These are some of the most common and telling responses: "I'm a racist and I'd send then all back where they come from"; "it's a serious problem giving rise to all sorts of difficulties - their religious beliefs and ways of life make them not only difficult to integrate but also potentially dangerous"; "I'm not a racist but I believe the differences in culture, way of life and religion are too great and prevent Africans from being truly integrated in Italian society"; "it is not that we are racist, but simply that we need to defend our own interests"; "foreigners have never done anything to upset me". A study was conducted in 1992 and the results were published with the collaboration of the Modena local authorities, under the title "The social integration of non-EU workers in Modena". Some 60 questionnaires were distributed among non-EU workers in the Modena area. Of the main findings, we reproduce here just some of the information that emerged as regards immigrants' perceptions of racial discrimination. It emerged that the various nationalities perceive discrimination in different ways: 20% of Moroccans, 26.5% of Tunisians and 42.8% of Ghanaians did not feel discriminated against in any way. Racial tension is felt most strongly by immigrants from the Maghreb, who feel that local people's attitudes toward them are different. The places in which non-EU workers are most aware of discrimination are public places (80.5%), such as bars and buses, whereas only 19.5% of respondents said they felt discriminated against in their place of work. Some 36.7% of respondents felt that the people of Modena were quite "hospitable", whilst 45% of them said they had received a welcome that was "not very" hospitable; this response seemed to be linked mainly to the housing problems experienced by most immigrants.

3.1.4 Positive actions

As the enterprise's chairman said, "*the positive actions undertaken to promote the integration of non-EU workers can be attributed to the enterprise's internal organisation. There is no specific project; we have simply taken on immigrants to meet our production needs. Everything the enterprise has done for its immigrant workers is the result not of company-level bargaining but of the independent deliberations of the Board of Directors*".

The main problems experienced by non-EU workers are associated with language and housing.

Rented accommodation in the area is very expensive and many workers live outside Modena, where rents are lower. In the face of the considerable problems caused by landlords' wariness, the enterprise undertook to find apartments for its non-EU workers, thus solving, at least in part, the housing problem. Contracts were drawn up in the name of the enterprise, which then sub-let the apartments to its workers, with the landlords' consent. In this way, the enterprise managed not only to help workers to find accommodation but also to forge closer relationships with them.

To help workers learn Italian, the enterprise organised a one-year language course for all non-Italian-speakers; attendance was optional and all costs were borne by the enterprise, which invested LIT 30 million in the scheme. Attendance rates were high, and most of the workers who attended the course could speak Italian quite well by the end of it. The enterprise's chairman told us that "*initially, members' meetings were conducted in English so that everyone could take an active part; now, meetings are held in Italian*".

To respect the religious traditions of Moslem workers who do not eat pork, arrangements were made to ensure that alternatives were always available at the enterprise canteen.

The enterprise's cooperative and participatory structure and the compulsory monthly contributions made by all its members have also enabled the enterprise to set up certain facilities for workers, such as the provision of low-interest loans and financial aid. According to the chairman, "*being a member of the enterprise also involves certain obligations: workers are required to attend the meetings that are held every three months to discuss company issues concerning the budget, accounts, summer close-down, arrangements for the Christmas period and workloads*".

3.1.5 Relations among workers

According to the chairman: "*Non-EU workers are integrated in the enterprise as a whole. In our departments, Italians and Africans work on the same machine, though, as a general rule, and particularly during the lunch break, non-EU workers tend to form a separate group, so they can speak their own language. One non-EU worker played an active part on the Board of Directors for a while, and one member of the plant-level union structure is an African*".

According to non-EU workers: "*(...) I am married and live in Italy with my wife, who doesn't work; both my children were born in Italy. My wife was a Court secretary in Ghana, and came to Italy in 1993. I am a university graduate and was an English and geography teacher when I lived in Ghana. I'm a Pentecostalist. I left my country because of the difficult*

economic situation. I've been working in this enterprise for three and a half years; I enjoy my work, though it's very hard. Before I started working here, I worked as a carpenter. I am happy working here; the enterprise helps me if I need anything; for example, they gave me a loan to go back to Ghana for a month.

The worst thing about living in Italy is finding somewhere to live; I live in Reggio Emilia because rents are very high in Modena.

Some immigrants do some bad things, but not us; I see people in shops clutching their bags because they're afraid we're going to steal them. Here, at work, I have really good relationships with the other workers; we're all friends.

For the first few years, it was difficult to learn the language; I attended the Italian course organised by the enterprise for two months. I speak English in the canteen."

Essie Dwohoh Yaw, 34, Ghanaian, in Italy since 1991, working for the enterprise since 1993.

"*(...) I have a degree in biology. My wife, who doesn't work now that we're living in Italy, was a hairdresser in Ghana and came to Italy four years ago. My children were born in Italy. I am a Catholic. I've been working for this enterprise since 1993.*

At work, I have good relationships with everyone; outside work, there's some racism. The biggest problem is housing and I have to pay a very high rent; a friend shares the apartment with me and my family to help keep the cost down. I learned Italian mainly from my friends at work and I attended the Italian course organised by the enterprise for three months. I'm on the Workers' Council, as the trade-union delegate for foreign workers".

Sammy Adjei, Ghanaian, in Italy since 1991, working for the enterprise since 1993.

3.2 Cooperativa Alva

3.2.1 Social and geographical context

Cooperativa Alva is in Cambiano (a Commune of the Province of Turin, Piedmont). There is a high concentration of immigrants both in the city and in the region of Piedmont.

Table 13 Foreign citizens in the Piedmont region, as a percentage of the total resident population

Region	Resident population 01.01.1996	Foreigners, 1996	Foreigners as % of total population
Piedmont	4 288 866	72 183	1.68

Source: Caritas figures, Dossier Statistico sull'Immigrazione, based on data collected by the Ministry of the Interior and ISTAT

Turin comes fourth, after Rome, Milan and Naples, in terms of the number of non-EU immigrants living in the area. Trends in the number of immigrants in the city are in line with the trend at national level: there were some 2000 non-EU immigrants in the city in the 1970s, some 7000 in the 1980s, and the size of the immigrant population peaked at 29 800 following the Martelli Law (Law 39/1990). The past five years have seen the immigrant population in Turin double in size, as is shown in the table below. Immigration is, therefore, relatively recent in Turin and is constantly shifting and changing, both in terms of the total number of immigrants and in terms of immigrants' country of origin. The non-EU nationals living in Turin come from some 140 different countries.

Table 14 Foreigners in Turin and the Province of Turin

Year	Number of foreigners	Number of non-EU nationals
1979	3 662	Approximately 50%
1986	11 083	75 000
1997	42 000	36 000

Source: Turin local authorities

Table 15 indicates the predominant nationalities in Turin; the figures are more or less in line with those at national level, with the largest foreign communities being Moroccan and Chinese.

The most recent amnesty revealed new entry flows from Eastern European countries, mainly Romania and Albania, and from Nigeria.

Table 15 Foreigners resident in Turin at 03.02.1997, by nationality

Country of origin	Men	Women	Total
Morocco	4 785	1 368	6 153
China	650	542	1 192
Yugoslavia	433	384	817
Philippines	341	612	1 021
Somalia	291	514	805
France	314	412	726
Egypt	680	192	872
Senegal	674	45	719
Tunisia	555	139	694
Peru	384	886	1 270
Iran	274	137	411
Brazil	218	379	597
Albania	410	214	624
UK	175	178	353
Germany	132	162	294
Spain	61	246	307
Romania	438	340	778
Nigeria	146	397	543
Greece	157	75	232
Ghana	134	91	225
Ivory Coast	160	109	269
USA	88	74	162

Country of origin	Men	Women	Total
Bosnia-Herzegovina	88	82	171
Other	1 416	1 586	2 902
Total (144 nationalities)	**11 547**	**8 074**	**19 621**

Source: CED, Turin local authorities.

3.2.2 Occupational and social integration of immigrants in and around Turin: successes and limitations

In Turin, non-EU immigrants tend to be integrated in traditional sectors, such as industry, services (as carers, particularly for the elderly, and in domestic work) and agriculture. There are three channels of recruitment: the Ufficio di Collocamento [Employment Office], contacts with voluntary-sector organisations, and friendship networks.

Table 16 Placements between 01.01.1994 and 31.03.1996

Sector	1994			1995			1st six months, 1996		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Agriculture	32	3	35	41	-	41	35	2	37
Industry	822	45	867	1 058	121	1 179	260	15	275
Services	700	557	1 275	580	399	979	125	38	163
Total	**1 554**	**605**	**2 159**	**1679**	**520**	**2 199**	**420**	**55**	**475**

Source: UPLMO, Turin.

An initial analysis of the data gathered by the Ufficio di Collocamento reveals that, although immigrant workers tend to have a high standard of education, they are employed in low grades. The high percentage of general blue-collar workers is a reflection of a job supply that is limited entirely to the lower job-classification levels, which is perpetuated, albeit in a very indirect way, by the non-equivalence of higher-education diplomas. If we analyse the data recorded in the register at the time of inclusion, we find that more than 50% of immigrant workers have a degree. Recent research has also shown that high standards of education are becoming increasingly marked as a feature of the immigrant labour force.

One of the main problems facing non-EU immigrants in the city of Turin is the housing situation. Non-EU immigrants are tending to settle in the areas populated by Italian workers who migrated from the South to work for FIAT during the economic boom of the 1960s.

The local authorities have tried to tackle the problem by building new homes in outlying districts over the past few years, but new immigrants are still concentrated chiefly in the central parts of the city, which, as we said earlier, were the first areas to be populated by migrant workers from the South.

At present, new immigrants are initially housed in dilapidated buildings whose owners have no hesitation in charging inflated prices; in some cases, landlords rent out individual bed places.

The two districts in which most of Turin's immigrant population lives are San Salvario and Porta Palazzo, the home of the city's largest market. Both these areas are suffering from serious social problems. In our interview with him, the head of the Ufficio Stranieri [Office responsible for Foreigners] of the Turin local authorities agreed that there was a need for effective housing policies and argued that responsibility for managing these policies should not rest solely on the shoulders of local authorities, especially since, under regional legislation in Piedmont, immigrants who have been resident in Turin for a year or more are entitled to apply for public housing.

3.2.3 Policies and actions of local institutions

The local authorities have organised various schemes over the past few years to tackle the main problems facing non-EU immigrants: housing and employment.

In response to the housing problem, the local authorities have taken specific action to help immigrants by setting up a Fondo di Garanzia [Guarantee Fund] to facilitate access to housing[9]; this project has received a total of Lit 300 million in funding from the municipal authorities of Turin, the regional authorities and the European Union. Some 80 contracts have been entered into in the region, 35 in the city of Turin.

Generally speaking, the local authorities' policy concerning the housing crisis is to avoid creating immigrant "ghettoes". New projects are focusing on building public-sector family homes, as is provided for by the new regulations. There are two hostels for men and some emergency accommodation for single mothers, but there is no organised facility for families.
The local authorities are tackling the employment problem, the other fundamental difficulty faced by immigrants, by contributing to the establishment of vocational training courses and language courses to promote social integration. In the 1980s, the local authorities organised Italian courses in some of the city's private schools, making use of the 150 hours of training specified by an ad hoc law of 1972; they also set up an experimental literacy scheme for foreigners, which was later established as a permanent project.

[9] The purpose of this fund is to support the voluntary-sector associations that serve as social intermediaries between landlords and tenants: these associations locate housing for immigrants, enter into a contract and then officially sublet to immigrants, thus by-passing landlords' unwillingness to rent directly to immigrants. The guarantee fund guarantees the contract for up to three months' arrears, thus protecting associations against default and covering transition periods.

Special vocational training courses for immigrants have also been organised, with funding from the regional authorities and the European Social Fund, covering traditional occupations, such as mechanical, electrical, welding and catering work. Trial projects have also been conducted in the agricultural sector and attempts have recently been made to set up computer courses.

Finally, AMMA, the local association of the Unione Industriale degli Imprenditori Metalmeccanici [Industrial Union of Employers in the Heavy-Engineering Sector], has organised a training course for liaison officers to be employed by its members whose task is to develop and maintain relations with immigrants' countries of origin. The aim of the course is to train people in higher grades, who, because of their background, skills and knowledge of several languages, can serve as a vital resource. This course organised by the Unione Industriale has raised expectations and shown that immigrants are no longer employed only in the marginal or lower segments of the labour market.

3.2.4 Service network

The transformation of the city caused by the presence of new residents of different cultures has led the local authorities not only to set up special services for immigrants but also to devise and implement projects, activities and proposals that are to the benefit of the entire community.

In terms of new bodies, the authorities have set up the Consulta Comunale Elettiva per i Cittadini Stranieri [Elected Communal Foreign Citizens' Advisory Body] and the Centro Interculturale [Multi-Cultural Centre]. The establishment of the elected advisory body is an important step in the direction of recognising foreign residents' right to vote in local elections, and is in line with action being taken in other Italian cities, such as Rome and Florence, where there are plans for the election of special councillors.

Turin has a long tradition of collaboration between public and private services in the social welfare sector. Ever since the creation of a network of support services and centres, the local authorities have very often worked and cooperated with the city's voluntary sector and private associations, particularly those connected with the Catholic Church. The network of services set up in the late 1980s has tackled local poverty by making use of existing resources, such as shelters, which have taken in increasing numbers of immigrants. Special centres have been set up for single men and women with children, who account for a high percentage of immigrants. Collaboration with the Catholic Church has taken the form of economic aid, agreements with Catholic associations and contracts for the management of centres. As the local authority representative told us, "*in Turin, cooperation between the various services works well, though there is an increasing call for the public authorities to take direct responsibility for basic welfare services rather than relying solely on the voluntary sector*".

The local authorities also cooperate with partners outside the voluntary sector: cooperation with the trade unions focuses on specific areas, such as work, the legal protection of workers, dispute settlement, and improving information and advisory services. The local authorities also work closely with institutional bodies, such as the police and local ministerial bodies: the Ufficio Provinciale del Lavoro [Provincial Labour Office], Ispettorato del Lavoro [Labour

Inspectorate] and Istituto Nazionale per la Previdenza Sociale [INPS - National Institute of Social Insurance].

3.2.5 Immigrants in the eyes of the local population

A recent survey conducted by *La Stampa*, the top-selling daily newspaper in Turin, revealed that, according to the people interviewed, all of whom were Italian, the most serious problem in the city is immigration. As the local authorities' representative said, "*(...) immigrants are not Turin's greatest problem, but they are certainly seen that way, and public opinion matters. There aren't really very many immigrants in Turin, since they account for only about 2% of the total population, but people still say there are too many of them (...) We are going through a difficult period in Turin, because, although there aren't too many immigrants and although it is certainly possible to integrate them all in our society, local people think there are too many of them. The solution to this problem lies not in the hands of the trade unions or the local authorities but in the legislative framework and a serious administration policy: a good law might not be enough, but good administrative structures would help enable us to manage the whole situation in a more appropriate way. We should be seeing immigrants as a useful resource now: they speak various languages, they are capable of being integrated in the world of work at higher levels and of becoming more competitive. People are saying that immigrants are "stealing work" from Italians, but that just isn't true at the moment, though there may well be some areas of competition between immigrant and Italian workers in the future*".

3.2.6 Hiring and recruitment policies

More non-EU than Italian workers are employed under fixed-term contracts. According to the enterprise's managing director, this is because "*it is difficult to find Italian workers who are willing and able to work for limited periods; the Italians who are prepared to accept this type of work and contract are usually students who want to work during the summer months and young first-time job-seekers. It is increasingly difficult to find Italian workers who are available for this type of work: working in an abattoir is tough, especially in view of the climatic and environmental conditions with which workers have to cope. Also, the enterprise does not have a shut-down period, because poultry sales rise during the summer months and seasonal workers, virtually all of whom are immigrants, are taken on to cover for permanent workers who are taking leave. This is why, over the past few years, new recruits have all been immigrant workers, who are the only ones willing to work in this way*".

The enterprise does not take any specific action to promote the integration of immigrants, either when they are first recruited or while they are working for the enterprise.

The enterprise does not follow any particular procedures in recruiting workers: obviously, it requires immigrants to have a regular residence permit and a basic knowledge of Italian; the ability to read Italian is required only of people employed to work in the despatch department. The enterprise has no contacts with local voluntary sector associations for the recruitment of new workers. There is a "word-of-mouth" system among non-EU immigrants, whereby people will simply turn up at the enterprise, looking for work; but the enterprise is unable to meet the

demand for work and takes on just 10 workers for every 100 requests for work it receives. Staff turnover is high and workers often leave their job after only a few days.

3.2.7 The role of the trade unions

The trade union has secured an agreement concerning the holiday period, which has established a differentiation in entitlements: all workers are entitled to three consecutive weeks' leave; non-EU workers are entitled to an extra week, in the form of unpaid leave, so that they can return to their own country for short periods. Many Moslem workers take time off during Ramadan, which is not recognised as a public holiday in Italy.

The trade-union representative we interviewed mentioned the relationship between immigrant workers and the trade union, highlighting the fact that non-EU workers have needs and demands that differ from those of Italian workers, and the fact that they have more faith in the trade union because they have a greater need for immediate protection. This same interviewee told us that non-EU workers initially found it difficult to adapt to working methods and the rigid rules that have to be respected, such as those concerning working hours, sick leave and returning to work after holidays. Foreign workers have a high attendance rate at trade-union meetings, though they do not all take an active part because of language problems.

Language and religious differences have not caused any integration problems, partly because the immigrants working for the enterprise have already worked elsewhere and have been in Italy for some time. The Workers' Council has never been asked to put forward any special request for prayer breaks.

3.2.8 Relations among workers

According to the enterprise's managing director, there have never been any incidents of xenophobia or racism: "*immigrants tend to keep themselves to themselves and usually form small groups based on shared language; the immigrants chat amongst themselves, as do the Italians. All in all, we've had no particular problems, since both groups respect and tolerate each other*".

According to the trade unionist we interviewed, "*xenophobia is born of the belief that immigrants steal work from Italians, but Italians don't want to do this kind of work and see it as hard and marginal. It is in the future that we shall see real integration problems, when non-EU workers start to occupy market areas in competition with Italian workers. But that's undoubtedly a problem that will be felt wherever there is a large population of non-EU immigrants and not just in individual areas*".

According to workers: "*I feel that immigrant workers are well integrated and not in any way mistreated; we may exchange words every so often, but that's normal and happens between Italians, too. We have accepted them and chat about this and that - football, cars. The obvious difference is the religious one: Moslems have a view of women that is quite different from ours; they don't respect women. I've never felt put down by them; it's a relationship of equals.*

Most of them are on fixed-term contracts and just a few have permanent contracts of employment. Before I got my permanent contract, I worked here for two and a half years on a fixed-term, seasonal contract.

Immigrants have a different pace of work; they are calmer than we Italians.

They don't all speak Italian very well, but we manage to understand each other. They speak French and Arabic. I often ask them about Morocco, because I know they get homesick.

Virtually all of them left Morocco because of the political and economic situation. Morocco has an absolute monarchy. There are very few mixed marriages.

There were a few non-EU workers in the enterprise back in 1989 but it was in 1991 that more began to arrive.

I don't have any difficulties with them. I have an aunt who works in Kenya, so I understand their problems. The work we do here is hard; it leaves you physically exhausted. There are 12 of us working in my department, mostly men, including four non-EU workers. It's a cold and draughty place to work (...)."

Laura Merlino, 27, Italian, working for the enterprise since 1989.

"I've been working with non-EU workers for a long time now; I can remember the first non-EU worker arriving here ten years ago. They have difficulties with the language and not all of them understand what's going on at union meetings.

They have a different way of working: Italians work faster, immigrants take their time - they work at a different pace. They tend to group together even though they are well integrated; they understand the way we think and are really quick to learn; I see them as workers just like all the rest of us, as colleagues - if we bump into each other outside work, we'll stop and have a chat, no problem. I've noticed that most of them are good, hard workers.

Their culture is different. Some of them have gone home on a visit and come back to Italy with a wife; and I've heard them telling the others that their mother had found them a wife. Some of them have children who were born in Italy. I'm more friendly with some than with others, but I have a joke with all of them. We talk to each other, even if we have different ideas: for example, during the Gulf War, the Moroccans supported Saddam and the Italians were against him (...)."

Fabrizio Murador, 30, Italian, working for the enterprise since 1984.

"Before starting work here, I was doing undeclared work. Then I was taken on here on a fixed-term contract. In Morocco, I graduated in French literature. I'm a practising Moslem. I miss my country. I left Morocco because I couldn't find work there, but I'm hoping to go back and set up my own business. I live in Turin with my wife, who isn't working, and we have a daughter who was born in Italy. My wife has a Moroccan diploma in information science. She arrived here a year ago; I was really unhappy here without her. The work I do here on the production line is very tiring. I don't have any problems with the Italian workers; I don't experience any racism here at work. I've made friends with some of my colleagues and we visit each other's homes. There is a Moroccan community centre in Turin but I don't go there because I'm tired when I get home from work and want to spend time with my family. We speak Arabic at home."

Youssef Mejdove, 35, Moroccan, working for the enterprise since 1990, in Italy since 1988.

"*Before I started working here, I was a bricklayer and worked on the general market. I have a biology degree from a Moroccan university. I left Morocco because I couldn't find work there. I don't think I'll go back to Morocco; I'd like to, but it would be very difficult. I came to Italy on my own and my wife joined me here two years ago; we have a child who was born in Italy. My wife isn't working. We live in Trofarello, a village not far from here. I'm a practising Moslem and there are a lot of things we can't do because of our religion. There are special shops that sell the kind of food we eat; for example, there are five butcher's shops in Turin that sell meat that is suitable for Moslems - the animal has to be killed in a certain way. I've applied to the local authorities for public housing but nothing has come of it. I get on well with my colleagues at work and the ones who know me seem to like me; they trust me because I work hard. I've got Italian friends, too, and I don't have any problems with them or with the work I do here. Holidays are the only problem, because we have religious holidays that are not recognised in Italy, which means that a lot of Moslems go sick so that they can observe them. I went back to Morocco for a month in August. On Sundays, I go to Porta Palazzo to spend time with my Moroccan friends; we talk about our culture, our work and our families. Many Moroccans are doing horrible, illegal jobs (...)*".

Saqil Mohammed, 37, Moroccan, working for the enterprise since 1990, in Italy since 1988.

3.3 Ospedale San Raffaele

3.3.1 Social and economic context

After Rome, Milan has the largest population of non-EU immigrants in Italy. According to Caritas figures[10], there are 158 084 foreigners resident in the Province of Milan. Some 69.7% of the region's foreign population lives in Milan.

Table 17 Foreign citizens in the Lombardy region, as a percentage of the total resident population

Region	Resident population 01.01.1996	Foreigners, 1996	Foreigners as % of total population
Lombardy	8 924 870	213 747	2.39

Source: Caritas figures, Dossier Statistico sull'Immigrazione, based on data collected by the Ministry of the Interior and ISTAT

The immigrant population of Milan began to grow during the 1990s. Many immigrants have settled in the city, which has therefore undergone profound change over the past few years.

The past few years have seen a drop in Milan's total population as a result of the exodus to the country and the drop in the birth rate. According to Commune records on the resident population, the population declined from 1 515 775 in 1985 to 1 348 484 in 1995 - a drop of 11%. The foreign population grew by 132% over the same period, rising from 27 550 to 64 086. Foreigners account for 4.8% of the total population.

[10] Figures at 31 December 1995.

Table 18 Foreigners resident in Milan, by area of origin (31.12.1995)

Middle East	3 655
East Asia	16 169
Total Asia	**19 824**
European Union	11 881
Eastern Europe	4 201
Rest of Europe	2 563
Total Europe	**18 645**
North Africa	12 058
Southern Africa	3 187
Rest of Africa	2 220
Total Africa	**17 465**
North America	2 008
Central America	1 755
South America	4 069
Total America	**7 832**
Oceania	**129**
Overall total	**64 086**[11]

Source: Ufficio Stranieri, Milan local authorities

The biggest community is that of Egyptians, followed by Filipinos, Chinese and Moroccans.

Once again, the main problems faced by non-EU immigrants in Milan are housing and employment.

Immigrants tend to be employed in the service sector: in restaurants and cleaning enterprises and on building sites. The highest concentration of non-EU immigrants is in the central parts of the city, where they find work as porters, domestic workers or carers for the elderly.

[11] Although this is not the place to go into the details of survey methods, we should point out that there is a large discrepancy between the figures given in the table, which were compiled by the Milan local authorities, and those compiled by Caritas, which is a very reliable source of information, for the same period and area, with Caritas figures being higher by some 10 000.

Housing for immigrants is just another problem to add to the general housing problem in the metropolitan area. The difficulties arise from high rents and prejudices about trustworthiness, which means that few people are willing to rent accommodation to non-EU immigrants.

The Milan local authorities have set up two hostels especially for immigrants, which are run by Caritas.

3.3.2 Hiring and recruitment policies

Ospedale San Raffaele recruited its first non-EU workers in 1987, the year after the first amnesty in Italy. However, most of its non-EU workers were taken on between 1990 and 1993, when the public-sector crisis had not yet made itself felt and the private sector was having difficulty in recruiting nursing staff. The second national amnesty also took place in 1990. The integration of non-EU workers has been managed directly by the hospital's management, without any trade-union involvement.

To begin with, foreign staff were recruited abroad; the hospital houses the Associazione Italiana per lo Sviluppo della Solidarietà fra i Popoli [AISPO - Italian Association for International Solidarity], which is a body that organises cooperation with developing countries and sets up hospitals in cooperation with these countries, through various joint foundations: Italian/Filipino, Italian/Indian, Italian/Polish and Italian/Brazilian. AISPO suggested to the hospital's management that foreign workers be integrated in the hospital staff. This suggestion was taken up, partly because, in 1991, the Ministry of Health issued a legislative provision under which it became possible to take on foreign nurses, provided their foreign qualifications were recognised as being equivalent to Italian qualifications[12].

There are very few more recent recruits, since staffing levels are adequate and also, as the hospital's director told us: "*We are taking on fewer non-EU workers because the supply of Italian workers has increased, whereas, before, Italians didn't want to work in hospitals. The job market in the health sector is going through a difficult period: public-sector hospitals have suspended open competitions, and early retirement (the "baby pension" - after 19 years 6 months and 1 day), which used to lead to a very high staff turnover, is less common*".

The supply of both Italian and foreign workers has greatly increased. Recruitment of non-EU staff is based on a selection of the numerous applications received, estimated at about 30 a day. The other channel of recruitment is through relations with religious organisations, particularly Caritas; the hospital recently took on a Polish switchboard-operator who was in serious financial difficulty and was recommended by a voluntary-sector association.

3.3.3 Positive actions

With the agreement of workers and the trade union, the hospital, which is a private company, applies the same collective agreement as is used by the public health service. The only

[12] Anyone who wants to work as a nurse in Italy must now have a university diploma in nursing.

difference in the treatment of Italian and foreign workers is the deduction (about 0.6%) made from foreign workers' pay by the Italian Government to fund compulsory repatriation.

When it hired its first non-EU workers, the hospital organised Italian courses for them (basic Italian and technical and scientific terminology).

The hospital's director told us that "*our concern was mainly for our patients, who need to be understood immediately if they are in difficulty. At first, we had some incidents of racial intolerance and some of the patients would use offensive language, such as 'Hey, darkie, come here'. But now our foreign workers are fully accepted and we no longer have any unpleasant incidents*".

To ease the housing problems of its staff, both Italian and foreign alike, management bought a building that is close to the hospital, provides 200 bed places and can easily be reached by public transport; employees pay a rent that is well below market prices. It is used almost solely by nurses. Before this residence was set up, employees who needed accommodation were housed in the hospital's workers' hostel, which, instead of offering individual apartments as the new residence does, comprised double or triple rooms with a shared kitchen.

3.3.4 Relations among workers

"*(...) I emigrated straight to Italy. I went through the secondary education system in Zaire and then studied nursing for three years.*

When I arrived in Italy, I landed in Rome, but I stayed there for just two weeks before moving on to Naples.

I studied with the Don Bosco Salesians, who helped me to come to Italy. The Father Superior of the parish was from Naples and, since I didn't know anyone in Italy, he told me to go to his brother's in Naples. I was in Naples for a year, studying Italian, because I wanted to go to university.

From Naples, I moved to Turin, where I took a computer course, because it would have been difficult for me to get a place at university and I had a permit to study at vocational training college. I had come into the country legally, with the intention of undertaking vocational training. Then I took another course in Cuneo for community workers to working with handicapped children. I found a job in Pavia and spent two years working for ANFAS, an association that cares for Mongoloid children.

There was a shortage of trained nurses in Italy at that time and the regional authorities were allowing non-EU nationals to enrol in nursing training, so I did three years' training to qualify as a nurse. I got my diploma and I've been working at Ospedale San Raffaele for about three years now. When they employed me, I asked to work on the psychiatric ward, because it was work I enjoyed and in which I had experience. I worked on the psychiatric ward for a year and a half, and then I felt ready for a change. I was transferred to the urology department, where I worked for about a year. Then I had some health problems: I

had a heart attack and had to undergo surgery. I'm working in outpatients now. I love my work; I feel as though I'm doing something useful.

I didn't work when I was in Zaire. I came to Italy alone. My family is poor - there are 11 of us. My father made sacrifices for us; he sent me to the Salesians, who offered study grants to those of us who did well at school. I haven't been back to Zaire for four years. I live in the hospital residence in Cologno; I pay LIT 310 000 a month and share a room with another nurse. The residence is for any employee who has a housing problem. Rents are very high in Milan. I'm a practising Catholic. I don't have any problems at work, but that's because the people here are nice. I was very lucky to spend some time living in Naples because I learned so much there; where I come from is quite similar to Naples, both in terms of the culture and in terms of the friendliness of the people. I learned how to become a part of the local community. I make friends quite easily. I have a brother who is a priest and lives in Germany, and I go to visit him every so often. My visits to him have shown me that foreigners living in Italy are in a better position; they can find a place in the community and will be accepted if they can command respect. People in Germany are less open. Lots of people helped me when I first arrived in Italy.

There's a community of Zairese in Milan and we get together, though I have more Italian than Zairese friends. I also spend time with my work colleagues outside work.

I'm a qualified nurse and I'm classified in grade 6 or 7.

In Milan, the local people are much more wary of us than they are in Naples. That's partly the fault of immigrants who have got into all sorts of trouble: crime, drugs, mugging, drug-pushing.

Most of the non-EU immigrants who work at Ospedale San Raffaele are well integrated. I work an eight-hour shift.

At Ospedale San Raffaele, there are equal opportunities for Italians and immigrants. No distinctions are drawn between Italians and foreigners. We have the same rights as Italian workers. We have paid leave, and the hospital grants loans both to Italians and to foreigners. Our contracts of employment are the same as those of Italian workers. In Milan, most immigrants are employed as manual workers in the construction industry; they have no legal rights and there is a lot of undeclared employment. Immigrant women take on undeclared employment as domestic workers. I'd like to do the course to become a charge nurse.

Some patients have told me they prefer the immigrant nurses to the Italian ones but, when I was a student nurse, I was told to go away by a patient who didn't want to be looked after by a black.

The police in Milan are racist. Some people believe in the political ideas propounded by the Lega [National Front]. I had some problems when I first arrived here. I came from a different culture, where the men and women are different from Italian men and women and where the customs are different. In a city like Milan, you can live in an apartment without ever knowing who lives in the flat above you.

The political situation in my country is very difficult at the moment; people are killing each other.

I have enrolled to study political science at the University of Pavia. I don't like the trade union because it's political; I'm not a union member; if I have a problem, I go straight to the head of nursing (...)."

Kazadi Kabolambi, 36, in Italy since 1984, working at the hospital since 1994.

"*(...) I am Filipino. I haven't visited any other Italian city; I came straight to Milan. In the Philippines, I worked with the Camillian Fathers, who helped me to come to Italy. Ospedale San Raffaele asked the Fathers about potential employees and they sent me here. I came to Italy with a friend for three months in 1987; I really love it here.*

I'm a Catholic. I'm married to an Italian but I haven't taken Italian nationality yet; I must ask at the Embassy what I need to do.

When my documents were translated, it was written down in black and white that I have a degree in nursing sciences. I studied in the Philippines.

I did a year's training at Ospedale San Raffaele to learn the language; I went to Italian classes from Monday to Friday to learn technical terminology. I'm a qualified nurse, working in the solvents department. At first, I lived in the hospital residence, but I got married two months ago.

There are about 30 Filipinos working at the hospital, mostly women. I go back to the Philippines every year for a month's holiday.

I get on well both with my colleagues and with the patients. And I'm happy outside my working environment, too. There's always a queue for permits at the police station; one of the officers was very rude to me when I went to collect my marriage documents.

My family (mother and sisters) are all in the Philippines.

The hospital's management took care of the formalities concerning my documentation. I've always had a regular permit.

There are 13 Filipino communities and seven Filipino banks in Milan. We do voluntary work in one community and help Filipinos who are irregular immigrants in Milan.

Many Filipinos work as domestic workers and some work for a few firms.

I'm happy here. There are several Asian shops. To start with, I found it difficult to get used to Italian food and had constant stomach ache: you Italians eat so much, whereas we're used to eating little and often.

I left the Philippines because I could earn more in Italy. I often go out with colleagues from work (...)."

Marilou De La Fuente, 37, in Italy since 1990.

CHAPTER 4

EVALUATION OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The surveys conducted in the three enterprises examined confirmed some of what we already knew about the situation of immigrants in the workplace in Italy and also revealed some other aspects that are less evident from the literature.

We already know, and the case studies confirm this, that immigrants tend to be taken on to meet employers' needs rather than because of any wish to include these new members of society in the labour market.

Despite having achieved a high standard of education in their own country, foreign workers tend to be employed in lower grades in Italy. This mismatch between certified levels of training and job classification levels seems to be only partly due to the non-equivalence of educational qualifications. We have found that, in terms of promotion, immigrants are virtually always blocked once they reach the top of the job classification for blue-collar workers (at the Fonderie Cooperativa Modena, for instance). Ospedale San Raffaele in Milan is a positive exception, in that, even though it is a private enterprise, it applies the collective agreement covering the public health service and has included a considerable number of foreigners in white-collar job classifications.

The measures taken to help immigrant workers essentially concern some kind of housing aid and the organisation of language courses in the workplace, at times that do not conflict with the organisation of production; there is never any question of giving some form of priority to immigrants (for instance quotas).

The general impression is that nothing is done that is not to the advantage of the enterprises that choose to take on immigrant workers. Enterprises do not introduce measures to combat racism, though it would seem that relations of mutual tolerance tend to emerge quite naturally; and measures to ensure the respect of religious and cultural differences are minimal and extremely informal. At Cooperativa Alva in Turin, for example, foreign workers are entitled to an additional, consecutive week's leave to enable them to return to their own country, but it is unpaid leave.

As regards respect for religious holidays and practices, it is up to the individual to make the necessary arrangements: immigrant workers take leave or go sick. And it should be noted that, under their contracts of employment, seasonal workers are only paid for these absences if they have worked for at least 51 consecutive days.

The situation concerning measures to encourage ethnic minorities to become aware of their rights is very different in the three cases we studied: at one end of the scale, we have Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena, where the member of the Rappresentanza Sindacale Aziendale [RSA - plant-level union structure] responsible for representing foreigners is an immigrant worker; at the other end of the scale, we have the real "do-it-yourself" attitude towards the issues raised by immigrant employees, as demonstrated by the management of Ospedale San Raffaele in Milan.

There is little need to reiterate our comments about the lack of integrated packages of measures or about the fact that enterprises tend to take ad hoc action rather than launching on-going measures, such as monitoring activities.

Compared with the precariousness of the impoverished tertiary sector, of itinerant trading, of undeclared employment in the agricultural sector or of jobs in the private domestic sector, the situations we have studied seem very good.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Immigration policy in Italy is governed, as far as the most important aspects are concerned, by two different regulatory traditions: that of the workers' movement and labour law, which is completely universal and guaranteed; and that of State legislation on citizens' civil, political and social rights, which is based on a nationalistic sense of heritage and a widespread tendency to make rules so that they can immediately be broken.

However, the part that is regulated by labour law is heavily limited by the existence of a large amount of undeclared employment, including among Italians, which generates wealth for both Italian and foreign citizens without being subject to any regulations and is based on unrestricted market forces and a system in which there is very little mutual trust.

The part that is regulated by general State legislation is tempered by periodic recourse to amnesties every five years or so (1986, 1990, 1996), which enable hundreds of thousands of people whose permits have lapsed or who entered the country illegally to make their situation legal. The various amnesties account for virtually the entire number of foreigners who are resident in Italy as regular immigrants. The most recent amnesty took place last year and helped some 250 000 people to place their situations on a regular footing, a little less than a third of all the immigrants present in the country.

As workers, regular immigrants go through the same placement procedures and are covered by the same employment-protection measures as Italian citizens. Even irregular immigrants enjoy treatment similar to that experienced by Italians, except that relationships with more recent arrivals may be less trusting.

To a certain extent, ways of dealing with the minor differences that exist have been the subject of this study - a subject we have tried to cover in the case studies and in the brief chapter on evaluation. What has not been covered here is the crucial role played by local institutions.

Despite immigrants' strong work motivation, it is evident that civil institutions have an important role to play in terms of support and social integration.

The lack of comparability of regional systems is a factor that limits universal social rights - a limitation that can currently be overcome by immigrants only thanks to their resources as individuals or as groups, and their ability to identify the areas and institutions that are most likely to be able to guarantee their civil and social dignity.

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ANNEX 1

LIST OF EXPERT WITNESSES

I. Cooperativa Alva Pollo Giusy

1. Francis Cosio (managing director)
2. Ugo Oliviero (external trade-union representative, CISL)
3. Maurizio Pia (head of the office responsible for foreigners and travellers, Turin local authorities)
4. Laura Merlino (blue-collar worker - Italian)
5. Fabrizio Murador (blue-collar worker - Italian)
6. Arcangelo Sordo (blue-collar worker - Italian)
7. Youssef Mejdove (blue-collar worker - Moroccan)
8. Saquil Mohammed (blue-collar worker - Moroccan)

II. Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena

1. Gianni Moretti (chairman of Cooperativa Fonderie)
2. Gabriella Tazzioli (assistant in the personnel department)
3. Essie Dwohoh Yaw (blue-collar worker - Ghanaian)
4. Sammy Adjei (blue-collar worker - Ghanaian)
5. Fausto Cigni (head of the office responsible for foreigners, Modena local authorities)

III. Ospedale San Raffaele, Milan

1. Dr Mambretti (head of the department responsible for personnel recruitment and development)
2. Kazadi Kabolambi (qualified nurse)
3. Marilou De La Fuente (qualified nurse)
4. Pasquale Magro (CGIL trade-union representative at enterprise level)
5. Roberto Giudici (head of the office responsible for foreigners, Milan local authorities)

ANNEX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Positive actions to facilitate immigrant workers' access to employment and training and to combat discrimination, prejudice and xenophobia in the workplace

Expert witnesses to be selected:

1. member of the personnel management office;
2. another representative of the enterprise;
3. member of the Workers' Council;
4. workers (Italians and immigrants);
5. local trade-union representative;
6. local authority officer responsible for social and immigration policies;
7. possibly another person responsible for social and/or regional policies (housing, training, health, other);
8. possibly a representative of an immigrants' association.

Interview guidelines (especially for expert witnesses 1-4)

Place and date

Information on the interviewee

- job (official title);
- length of service;
- type of activity (method of conducting representative and/or work activities).

Brief description of social and geographical context, with reference to the labour market and immigration, in particular

- labour market situation:
- characteristics of ethnic minorities (countries of origin, religious beliefs);
- historical trends and reasons for immigration;
- approximate percentage of population accounted for by immigrants;
- typical migratory plans/periods of residence.

Information on the enterprise

- sector;
- characteristics of the establishment;
- enterprise's market position;
- turnover;
- rate of growth;
- length of time enterprise has been employing immigrant workers;
- whether, through collective bargaining, the national agreement for the sector concerned contains any specific provision for the protection of immigrants, and whether the enterprise has introduced any measures additional to those agreed for the sector.

Characteristics of the workforce

- number of employees (men and women);
- number of immigrants (men and women);
- civil status;
- predominant age groups;
- historical trends, main countries of origin and reasons for immigration;
- breakdown of workforce by occupation and job classification level (a/i);
- levels of training.

Hiring and recruitment policies

- brief description;
- approximate date when immigrant workers were first recruited and description of any changes that have taken place in the climate of and procedures for recruitment over time;
- current hiring and recruitment procedures (description of path from contact to contract, indicating any form of intermediation and describing the role, if any, played by associations and any specific positive actions concerning the recruitment of immigrant workers; if any positive actions are taken, describe their nature and the reason for them, and the reactions of the local population);
- ethnic groups: which ones and reasons if not coincidental;
- occupational profiles; which ones and reasons if not coincidental;
- job classification levels: similarities with and differences from those of Italian workers, and reasons;
- any problems (language, integration in social and civil life, xenophobia, other);
- role of the trade union and/or specific associations in integration practices;
- other cases of immigrant workers being hired by other local enterprises.

Equal-opportunities policies

- brief general description;
- in particular:
  - actions to facilitate integration: if yes, the reason for such actions and the form they take;
  - actions to facilitate language learning: if yes, the form they take;
  - actions to help immigrants find housing: if yes, the form they take;
  - actions to aid integration in social and civil life;
  - introduction of measures that allow for religious and cultural differences;
  - positive actions to promote ethnic minorities;
  - anti-discrimination education for Italian workers;
  - initiatives to combat racial violence;
  - other positive measures to combat discrimination;
- the proposals or processes that led to the launch of an equal-opportunities policy: description, with particular reference to market/advantages, principles, other;
- description of the roles played by the various actors (enterprise, trade union, individual workers, others);
- monitoring of equal-opportunities policies; if such monitoring exists, the way in which it is conducted.

Positive actions to facilitate immigrant workers' access to employment and training and to combat discrimination, prejudice and xenophobia in the workplace

Expert witnesses to be selected:

1. member of the personnel management office;
2. another representative of the enterprise;
3. member of the Workers' Council;
4. workers (Italians and immigrants);
5. local trade-union representative;
6. local authority officer responsible for social and immigration policies;
7. possibly another person responsible for social and/or regional policies (housing, training, health, other);
8. possibly a representative of an immigrants' association.

Interview guidelines (especially for expert witnesses 5-8)

Place and date

A. socio-economic context, brief description, data;
B. industrial relations;
C. immigration rate in the province and its impact on regional and national figures;
D. where immigrants live;
E. main ethnic groups;
E. regular/irregular immigrants (estimate);

F. number of immigrant workers (male and female);
G. sectors in which immigrant workers are employed;
H. number of enterprises employing immigrant workers;
I. any differences in the types of work undertaken by local and immigrant workers;
L. equal-opportunities policies;
M. bargaining provisions (occupational integration, housing, pay);

N. positive social actions: vocational training courses, language courses, housing programmes, protective measures, other);
O. positive social actions: actors involved (political parties, associations, trade unions, local authorities, schools); concrete examples;
P. social problems associated with the presence of immigrants;
Q. positive effects, adverse reactions: concrete examples;

Documentary evidence (company-level agreements, publications, other).

Implementation

- description of the various phases or stages; description of the actors involved (social partners or institutional representatives, including any role played by local associations of/for immigrants, ethnic communities); other bodies involved (prefectures, embassies, others);
- analysis of results: description of objectives achieved; analysis of results achieved in relation to intended results, including in terms of coverage;
- analysis of any difficulties.

Structure of hiring and recruitment policies and/or equal-opportunities policies

- ways in which integration policies can be seen as structural:
  - are they backed by a specific organisational component (special department, on-going activities, other)?
  - are they part of an anti-discrimination programme or of some kind of defined programme?
  - other observations.

Effects of integration

- description of impact on internal indigenous employment:
  - rejection/acceptance/unexpected effects/other observations;
- multi-cultural life (concrete examples);
- problems or negative situations: concrete examples and reasons;

Documentary evidence (company-level agreements, publications, etc.)

ANNEX 3

INTERVIEWS

Cooperativa Fonderie di Modena

29 January 1997

Interviews with:

I. Gianni Moretti, Chairman of Cooperativa Fonderie (recorded);

II. Gabriella Tazzioli, assistant in the personnel office;

III. Essie and Sammy, immigrant workers;

IV. Fausto Cigni, head of the department responsible for foreigners within the Modena Chamber of Labour (recorded).

I. Gianni Moretti

Information on the interviewee
My name is Gianni Moretti and I have been chairman of the cooperative since 1994. I started working in the enterprise in 1975, more than 20 years ago.

Social and geographical context
Our enterprise is an iron foundry. Because of the nature of our business, the work is very hard, though less so than it used to be. Relations with the labour market have always been very tense.

The foundry was set up 47 years ago and initially employed just 10 workers, all of them natives of Modena. Over its lengthy history, the enterprise has lived through all the minor and major migrations that have taken place, which can be divided into three main phases:

- the 1950s and 1960s, when staff were recruited from the countryside surrounding Modena;

- the period up to the 1980s, when the bulk of the workforce comprised immigrants from Southern Italy;

- the period since the mid 1980s, in which the enterprise has begun to hire immigrant workers from two very specific areas: Central Africa (Ghana and Nigeria) and North Africa (the Maghreb and Tunisia).

Our workers from the Maghreb tend to be Moslems and we have two or three practising Moslem workers who leave their posts at five o'clock, remove their shoes and pray to Mecca

for five minutes. Most of the others are Christians - Seventh Day Adventists or Pentecostalists, not Catholics. Their culture is essentially Anglo-Saxon because they have been dominated by the British. They are strict observers of their faith and their respect for monogamy is absolute.

We currently employ a total of 200 workers, 70 of whom are immigrants.

Information on the enterprise

The enterprise is in the heavy engineering sector and is an iron foundry producing parts largely for the motor industry (tractors, lorries, transport).

This is our main production plant, but we have another plant in Ferrara that services the main plant. It is easier to find workers in Ferrara, since it is recognised by the EU as a socially disadvantaged area, which means that there are incentives for investment.

We are a leading enterprise in the area and a product leader in Europe.

We have an annual turnover of LIT 50 000 million. In the foundry sector in Italy, there is the Texit Group, which is part of the Fiat Group and has a 50% share of the market, with the remaining 50% being covered by about eight foundries of a similar size to this one.

We have enjoyed considerable growth over the past three years, with our turnover rising from LIT 30 000 million to LIT 50 000 million even though market conditions have not always been favourable.

We are unlikely to see this rate of growth continue, and this for two reasons: 1) the market is now saturated and 2) we are beginning to feel the effect of the globalisation of the Middle-Eastern and East Asian markets. So it is highly unlikely that we shall see another big increase in output and this is not an enterprise in which employment levels will ever outstrip rate of growth.

We have been employing immigrant workers since 1985.

Characteristics of the workforce

We currently employ a total of 195 workers: 160 at this plant and 35 at our plant in Ferrara. We have 38 women employees and 44 non-EU workers, three of whom are women.

Our immigrant workers have an average age of 30; they are young and well educated. They have received high levels of education in their own country and have higher-education diplomas. They are all employed as blue-collar workers. Some of them have reached the top of the blue-collar grade, Grade V.

They tend to bring their wives with them, because they can undertake undeclared employment as domestic workers or in factories; fewer of them have brought children with them.

Hiring and recruitment policies

We hired our first immigrant workers in 1985. There are no problems as far as equal opportunities and equal treatment are concerned.

The fact that our immigrant workers come from the same countries is purely coincidental and does not mean that people from a specific country are seen as having particular skills. We make use of the jungle drums here: workers will bring along a friend and, when a worker we trust introduces a friend, we tend to trust the friend, too. Of course, we've been let down a few times, but, generally speaking, attendance rates are very high. At one time, we had to put up a notice saying that we weren't hiring any more workers. Everyone in the area knows we take on immigrants and even the Caritas centre sends people to us. We never use agencies.

The only local people we have working here are in middle and top management posts; a few local youngsters may come to work here before doing their military service, and some of them stay on.

We have quite a high staff turnover.

I don't know if it's because of their culture or nature or out of pure need but our Central-African workers are very loyal and tend to stay with us; we're even employing some of their sisters and wives now. They tend to leave their families in Africa because it costs too much to bring them over here. And there are legal obstacles: Ghanaian workers, for example, have to prove they have accommodation with a two-year lease before they can apply for their wife to join them in Italy. And, when they do apply, it's usually about a year and a half before they get permission.

We have experienced three main difficulties concerning the integration of immigrant workers: 1) particularly at first, there were language problems; 2) when they go back to their own country, they tend to stay for a long visit to make the cost of the journey worthwhile; this causes organisational problems, because we can't shut down for a whole month. We shut down for three or four weeks in August. They give us doctor's notes but they tend to be for illnesses they've already had; we had the same problem with workers from Southern Italy, who would produce doctor's notes when they were going home for a visit; 3) and, of course, the problems we see out there in society tend to be mirrored, at least partially, at work: there has always been a belief that immigrants are different or even inferior - it's just part of a whole belief system. But I think this feeling has become much less strong over the years as people have had more contact with immigrants; there are just a few Italians who are still trapped in this way of thinking, less educated people and some Southern Italians. Of a total workforce of 200 people, we have just one or two workers who still think in this way. Of course, there are some arguments; when they're eating in the canteen, immigrant workers tend to sit together, and they tend to stick together when they're working, too. They want to be able to speak their own language while they're eating and so they form groups on that basis; but when they're working, Ghanaians, local people from Modena and Southern Italians will all be working on the same machine, and there aren't any problems. For example, there was a time when things were being damaged and stolen in the men's locker-room and nobody accused any of the immigrant workers, as they would have done in the past. In the end, we discovered it was an Italian worker who was responsible. Nobody had assumed it was the blacks who were stealing things,

which is what often happens in Modena. We had a Moroccan worker we had to sack because he was selling drugs; he appeared in court for it, too.

One of the members of the plant-level union structure is a non-EU worker.

Other enterprises in this area also employ immigrant workers; we have actually found non-EU workers for some of the workshops we use. The ceramics industry in Sassuolo has a lot of non-EU workers, too.

Equal-opportunities policies
Everything we do is based on the enterprise's activities.

There is no specific project; we have simply taken on immigrants to meet our production needs.

The main problems experienced by non-EU workers are associated with housing and language.

To solve the housing problem, at least partially, we, as a company, found apartments without any difficulty. We rented two apartments in the company's name and then sub-let them to our employees, with the landlords' consent. In this way, we managed not only to help workers to find accommodation but also to create a more stable employment relationship with them: on the one hand, it is difficult for them to stop working for us because they are effectively in tied housing but, on the other hand, they're now in a position to bring their wife to join them. It took us six months to find the apartments; nobody wanted to rent to immigrants. Housing in the area is very expensive and some people prefer to live further away, where rents are lower.

Language is a problem, especially for the Ghanaians; immigrants from the Maghreb tend to speak better Italian. Our foremen are working class and speak very poor Italian with a strong accent. We organised a one-year language course for all non-Italian-speakers; attendance was entirely optional. Classes were arranged to fit in with shifts and attendance rates were high. It was an investment that cost us LIT 30 million; we paid the entire cost and did not look into the possibility of funding from elsewhere. Most of the workers who attended the course could speak Italian quite well by the end of it. They didn't speak during the first few meetings, but I understand they're beginning to speak Italian to each other now.

At first, the enterprise's main motive was need; now, it is to do with meeting other cultures. It is simply people of different colours working and living together.

When we hold social dinners, it's an opportunity for our immigrant workers to display their traditional clothing and some of them arrive wearing robes and turbans.

The other thing I'd like to mention is that all the enterprise's workers are members, because we are a full cooperative. Everyone accepts the cooperative's rules and enjoys the associated benefits, which include low-interest loans and financial aid. We offer our workers loans at very low rates, though we allow them only a few million lire each year, otherwise they would not be able to pay them off. They also have the advantage, or disadvantage, of taking part in the enterprise's decision-making. As members, they pay a monthly contribution, whose amount is

laid down in the articles of association (LIT 200 000 per month); at first, immigrant workers did not really understand what the contribution was for, but now they're all in favour of it.

The enterprise's sense of social responsibility takes precedent over collective bargaining: everything the enterprise does for its workers (training, loans, etc.) is the result not of collective bargaining but of the independent deliberations of the Board of Directors.
We have never dismissed anyone. Our immigrant workers are beginning to understand the significance of being members of the cooperative. At one time, we had a black member on the Board of Directors, but he left because of language difficulties; that was in the early days. Now, things are going better and I'm quite convinced that, sooner or later, we could well have a black chairman or a black foreman or manager.

(...) I've been invited to two weddings and had an official invitation to a funeral. Modena sports centre was hired for the funeral; the sports centre can take up to about 5000 people and, all through the afternoon and evening, it was full of the dead person's relatives and friends from throughout the area, all belonging to the same religion and wearing traditional clothing. The wedding was a beautiful, American-style one, with everyone wearing the most wonderful colours. They had hired a room for the service and the entire ceremony was accompanied by beautiful music and singing and wild dancing. The bride is not allowed to show her face and is given away by her father (...).
(description of the ceremony)

II. Gabriella Tazzioli - assistant in the personnel office

(NB Gabriella took me on a guided tour of the plant and all its departments; virtually all the blue-collar workers are black, with the exception of the foremen, who are all white.)

The canteen caters for the requirements of some of our Moslem workers who, because of their religion, do not eat pork. Alternative dishes are always provided for them.

At Christmas, the enterprise gives out food hampers, which do not include the traditional stuffed pig's trotters, in respect of the Moslems' beliefs.

The enterprise organised an Italian course for all its workers because there was a serious language problem, especially since, because this is a cooperative, all workers are obliged to attend meetings and express their opinions; before the language course, members' meetings were held in English because so many of the workers did not speak Italian.

Every month, each worker's pay envelope contains a list of the most important events concerning the enterprise. Extracts from minutes of the meetings are pinned up on the notice board.

Members' meetings are held every three months to discuss the following issues:
- the budget;
- the accounts;
- summer close-down and the Christmas period;
- workload.

Departmental meetings are also held, depending on individual requirements.

In August, the enterprise shuts down for three weeks; all work stops and the machines are serviced.

The enterprise operates on the basis of three shifts, two of seven and a half hours and one six-hour shift.

Many of the workers live in the hostel, but there's no canteen there. They pay a minimal rent.

III. Non-EU workers

(NB They are very difficult to talk to because they do not speak Italian very well; nor had they been told anything about the research we were doing, so they did not understand what we were asking them or why.)

Essie Dwohoh Yaw

I am 34 and I'm Ghanaian. I've been in Italy for six years. I'm married and am over here with my wife, who is not working, and my two children, who were born in Italy. My wife was a Court secretary in Ghana, and came to Italy in 1993.

I am a university graduate and was an English and geography teacher when I lived in Ghana.

I left my country because of the difficult economic situation.

I've been working in this enterprise for three and a half years. I work in the apron-conveyor department; I'm a forklift-truck driver. There are another 30 or so workers here who also come from Ghana.

I enjoy my work, even though it's very hard.

Before I started working here, I did various other jobs: I worked in a small furniture factory, in the varnishing department, and I've worked as a carpenter.

I live in Reggio Emilia because rents are very high in Modena.

I'm happy working here; the enterprise helps me if I need anything; for example, they gave me a loan to go back to Ghana for a month. I go back to my country every two or three years because I still have relatives there.

I'm a Pentecostalist.

The worst thing about living in Italy is finding somewhere to live; I pay LIT 800 000 in rent.

Some immigrants do some bad things, but not us; I see people in shops clutching their bags because they're afraid we're going to steal them.

Here, at work, I have really good relationships with the other workers; we're all friends.
For the first few years, it was difficult to learn the language; I attended the Italian course organised by the enterprise for two months. I speak English in the canteen.
There's a shop in Modena that sells African food.

Sammy Adjei

I'm from Ghana and I've been in Italy for six years. In Ghana, I qualified in biology and worked in the tobacco industry. My wife, who isn't working now she's here in Italy with me, used to be a hairdresser in Ghana. She came to Italy four years ago and our children were born here. I am a Catholic and I live in Modena.

I've been working in this enterprise since 1993. I work in the "core" department; I'm a machine operator.

At work, I have good relationships with everyone; outside work, there's some racism. The biggest problem is housing and I have to pay a very high rent (LIT 1 300 000); I live in the apartment with my family and a friend who shares the cost of the rent with me (LIT 700 000). I earn LIT 1 500 000, with LIT 200 000 being deducted as my monthly contribution to the cooperative.

I learned Italian mainly from my friends at work and I attended the Italian course organised by the enterprise for three months.

I'm on the Workers' Council, as the trade-union delegate for foreign workers. I work with the trade union.

I applied to the local authorities for public housing but my application was turned down.

I went back to Ghana for a month last August.

IV. Fausto Cigni

Information on the interviewee
Member of the Consulta Nazionale sull'Immigrazione [National Immigration Advisory Board] set up by the Consiglio Nazionale dell'Economia e del Lavoro [CNEL - National Council for Economic Affairs and Labour]. Currently responsible for labour-market issues at the PDS (Social Democratic Party) in Modena. Until December 1996, head of the office responsible for foreigners of the Modena Chamber of Labour.
(recorded interview)

The presence of immigrants in Modena and the surrounding province

If we are going to discuss immigration in Modena, we need first to look at the figures. The total population of Modena and the surrounding province is 607000.

- 1987: 1400 foreigners, mainly students;
- 1990: 6000 foreigners;
- 1997: 20 000 foreigners.

Of the 20 000 foreigners currently resident in the area, 12 000 are integrated in the labour market, 3500 are children and the remaining 500000 are drug pushers, prostitutes, etc.

Irregular immigrants

There are not many illegal immigrants at the moment. Under the Dini Law, the situation of 2223 immigrants was regularised, with 2060 of them being in employment. The situation of many black prostitutes was also regularised under this law.

Reasons for trends

Immigrants don't arrive in Modena because it's close to the sea; Modena tends to be their second or third destination in Italy and their route here might have been, for example, from Sicily to Campania and finally to Modena. They come here because we have a labour market that needs them.

Socio-economic context

The immigrant labour force is not one of wasters and failures. We conducted a survey and it emerged that 20% of immigrant workers have a degree. But then, also, some of them are illiterate. There are certain jobs that local people just don't want to do, which is why we need immigrant workers. They're not stealing jobs from Italians. There are no major conflicts within the labour market, and I'm convinced everything will continue to be fine for as long as immigrants are doing work that nobody else wants to do; but when they start moving up to the second and third levels of the labour market, then things will change.

The scene is constantly changing, because Italy needs its immigrant workers and because the immigrant labour force has become a resource.

The real tragedy is that, in the collective imagination (although things are a little different in Modena), immigrants are seen as prostitutes, drug pushers, criminals; even the citizens' committee against drug-pushing and prostitution says "immigrant workers - welcome; criminals - go home". That's not racism. In some parts of the city, there are problems (drug-pushing, prostitution, petty crime). In 1993, there were 20 Nigerian prostitutes; by 1996, there were 120 of them. That means the market has changed. I sometimes get the feeling there's a lot of political rhetoric about these issues on both the Left and the Right.

Industrial relations

Anti-racism isn't something you can buy. Here in Modena, 1000 people were found to be sleeping in a disused factory a kilometre and a half away; there were no toilets and the CGIL offices became their bathroom. At that point, steps had to be taken if there was going to be any

real integration. Let's start from the fact that all these people were working and the first to profit from the situation were the employers.

In 1990, we agreed to set up a CGIL/CISL/UIL regional dispute procedure, calling on employers' associations to put their money on the table so that the provincial authorities could set up a hostels fund, using a mixture of funding under the Martelli Law and funding from the associations. We held 200 meetings in factories to present the list of claims.

It was a great cultural event; there was a very lively debate and some serious bargaining. The dispute attracted a great line-up: everyone, from the mayor to the former bishop of Modena (who played an important role), and even the La Malfa republicans who were against the Martelli Law, backed us.

On 3 August 1990, we signed the agreement under which the employers' associations - apart from Confindustria and the agricultural employers' associations - made LIT 30 million available alongside the CGIL/CISL/UIL. The fund was set up at the provincial authorities, and the local authorities submitted projects concerning disused schools and other usable spaces; and, as advisors to the provincial authorities (voluntary sector, lay, Catholic and employers' associations and public bodies), we made decisions on the basis of a mixture of funding under the Martelli Law and funding from the associations.

LIT 120 million000 000 were allocated by the Camera di Commercio [Chamber of Trade] for training courses and courses were launched in literacy and health issues (for instance Modena has for three years now had a clinic that is open to everyone but is, on certain days, open only to immigrant women, including illegal immigrants).

Modena and the surrounding province have about 40 hostels providing places for a total of 720 people. We have established criteria governing eligibility for these places, which are essentially based on geographical distribution (i.e. someone who is working in Carpi and living in Modena has to apply to the hostel in Carpi, and hostels give priority to the elderly, people who have a regular residence permit and people who are working). A place costs between LIT 90 000 and LIT 120 000 a month.

What we are talking about here is the whole concept of representation: I'm a trade-union activist and represent workers employed by enterprises.

In 1993, we made a claim against employers running porterage cooperatives who were working for 42 enterprises in Modena. There were 40 regular immigrants and 40 illegal immigrants - former drug addicts and ex-prisoners - in a total workforce of 180. These enterprises were working for LIT 3 000 less than all the other cooperatives and these workers were integrated in the production cycle. Illegal workers were earning an average of LIT 400 000-500 000 a month. The CGIL/CISL/UIL will be the plaintiff in the court case that is to take place in October 1997.

In the absence of any national guidelines, the CGIL/CISL/UIL, the voluntary sector and Caritas have tried to respond to the situation. In 1990, the CGIL had 723 immigrant members; by 1996, it had 1820.

There are currently about 40 non-EU members of plant-level union structures; they are not simply representing foreigners but are trade-union delegates.

Main ethnic groups
Maghrebin, Moroccan, Tunisian, Ghanaian, Nigerian, Filipino and Albanian.

Sectors in which immigrants are employed
Immigrants are employed in all sectors of production, with the exception of the public sector:
- heavy engineering;
- agri-industry;
- construction;
- commerce;
- tourism;
- cleaning enterprises;
- porterage;
- textiles;
- ceramics.

The sectors with the most immigrant workers are the heavy-engineering sector, the construction industry and agri-industry.

It is mainly immigrant men who work, since Maghrebin (Morocco and Tunisia) culture takes a different approach to female employment and prefers to see women in the home; by contrast, women from Central Africa are accustomed to working and are integrated in the labour market.

Irregular, undeclared employment is common. The “caporalato” system (under which people pay bribes to gain employment, only to be subsequently exploited as their work is undeclared) is widespread among non-EU workers and in particular in the construction industry. There is the housing problem, there is discrimination - it's a feature of a developed society.

The PDS in Modena has elected a Senegalese man who is an Italian citizen onto the local council.

Positive social actions
Ramadan begins in January and ends in March. It is important to allow Moslem's a day's holiday, with unpaid leave. Many enterprises do this, but it is not covered by national collective agreements.

If immigrant workers are to return to their country for their holidays, they need at least five weeks' leave, and these five weeks can be obtained by accumulating hours off. These are just little things that give the impression that we are moving towards a multi-racial society.

To protect health and safety at work, it is important to have warnings and notices up in more than just Italian. There are notices in five languages outside the casualty department in Modena.

The first training course organised by the Modena Chamber of Labour (for Maghrebin, Moroccan, Tunisian, Ghanaian and Nigerian immigrants), with simultaneous translation, was to explain to immigrants about pay slips, what to do in the event of illness, the most basic things. Of the 30 people who attended that course, 24 went on to become trade-union representatives within enterprises.

In many enterprises that operate a continuous shift, it has been agreed that shifts during Ramadan will be arranged in collaboration with the Workers' Council and immigrant workers.

The CGIL has spent LIT 18 million on translating booklets on the industrial-medicine service provided by Unità Sanitarie Locali [USL - Local Health Units] into French, English and Arabic, one of the purposes of this being to solve the problem of accidents at work.

In 1993, we set up a CGIL/CISL/UIL regional dispute procedure, calling for hostels to be turned into proper housing - if a hostel is nothing more than a dormitory, we can hardly talk about integration.

And if Moslems don't eat pork, then we simply have to decide that every canteen has to provide meals that don't contain it. Local shops are beginning to sell some foreign specialities (and a trader doesn't do anything just out of the goodness of his heart - he knows there's a market).

There's also racism between non-EU immigrants of the same ethnic group or nationality.

A mosque has been built in a disused factory. Everyone wants their own special meeting place.

Employers in Modena prefer workers from Central Africa to those from the Maghreb.

In the construction industry, an Italian labourer earns LIT 150 000 a day, whereas a regular immigrant earns LIT 80 000 and an illegal immigrant earns LIT 50 000.

The people of Modena want immigrants to be active members of society. There are many mixed marriages.

Now, the real problem is with the Albanians (violence, prostitution). The sex market has moved away from the black girls and is now focusing on the Albanians, and action has been taken by the police and local committees.

In the drug world, there is a direct connection between Tunisia and Italy's criminal underworld. We need national legislation. These issues are being tackled in company-level agreements but are not being covered by national collective bargaining. Giving immigrants the right to vote would solve a lot of problems.

"*If all the immigrants were sent home, our economy would come to a grinding halt*."

Cooperativa Alva Pollo Giusy

Turin, 19-20 March

Interviews with:

1. Francis Cosio, managing director (recorded);
2. Ugo Oliviero, external trade-union representative, CISL (recorded);
3. Maurizio Pia, head of the office responsible for foreigners and travellers, Turin local authorities (recorded);
4. Laura Merlino (blue-collar worker, Italian);
5. Fabrizio Murador (blue-collar worker, Italian);
6. Arcangelo Sordo (blue-collar worker, Italian);
7. Youssef Mejdove (blue-collar worker, Moroccan);
8. Saqil Mohammed (blue-collar worker, Moroccan).

1. Francis Cosio

Information on the interviewee
I am a director of Cooperativa Alva and am responsible for labour and financial affairs.

I have been managing director for four years. Before that I was a manager. I've been working in the cooperative since 1983.

Situation of the labour market in the agricultural sector and the context
The labour market varies widely. We have four establishments...

Our abattoir in Cambiano has a different labour market from the others because they are in the province of Cuneo, where enterprises do not employ non-EU workers, whereas the Cambiano abattoir is in the municipality of Turin; non-EU workers account for close on 20% of our workforce there.

It all depends on the catchment area. Here, we are close to the big city (Turin) and there is public transport. In Cuneo, we don't have any non-EU workers; we can still find Italian ones. Here, the workforce is predominantly male whereas, in our other establishments, we have mostly women workers.

Slaughtering is damp, dirty work and most of our workers could probably find better jobs. The working environment complies with Law 626, but it's still chilly work, because meat has to be worked at low temperatures.

You'll find non-EU workers in building firms, doing roadworks, all the places where the work is hardest. Working conditions are tough. These kinds of jobs are always available for non-EU workers.

For how long has the cooperative been employing immigrants?
We took the lease on this building four years ago, in 1993. This abattoir already existed but had gone bankrupt; it used to be called Cooperativa Piemonte Polli, but it went into compulsory liquidation. Coop ALVA leased the company from the liquidator and we took on those workers on the mobility list who were all former workers of the bankrupt company who had been made redundant and put on the mobility list. We tried to re-employ the same people.

We have a fairly high staff turnover. We have two types of workers: those on permanent contracts of employment and those on fixed-term contracts. In the agricultural sector, you can take on seasonal workers for short periods. We use seasonal workers to cover for permanent workers who are on leave. The abattoir is open all year round, but there are peak periods, particularly during July and August, when more chicken is consumed by the tourist sector.

We cover for our permanent workers during the holiday period by taking on seasonal workers, most of whom are non-EU immigrants. It's difficult to find Italians who are prepared to take a job for just two or three months, though we sometimes have first-time job-seekers or students who want to work to earn some money during their holidays.

Hiring workers under fixed-term contracts is our safety valve and we may call again and again on people we have found to be good, honest workers.

Recruitment area
There's always been a word-of-mouth system among non-EU workers. We used to use the numerical-recruitment system, asking the employment office to provide us with a certain number of workers of a particular category or skill level. We hire only regular immigrants. Now, we hire workers on the basis of a list of all the people who are forever knocking on our door, looking for work. We don't make use of any voluntary-sector organisations and have never been asked to hire workers by them. We might hire 10 out of every 100 workers who come to us looking for a job.

Lately, we have been hiring only non-EU workers because they're the only ones looking for work.

Production cycle
Slaughtering, evisceration, butchering, preparation and packaging are processes that go on every day.

Characteristics of ethnic minorities
All our immigrant workers are Moroccan. They are all Moslems. We've never had any problems about working times and have never had any special requests to do with their religion. They're all young, between the ages of 25 and 35. Some of them are university graduates. But not many of them have higher-education diplomas. Most of them are married and they tend to work here for a few years and then go home.

In Morocco, blue-collar workers earn LIT 70 000-80 000 a month; in Italy, they earn LIT 1 450 000 a month. A lot of them work in Italy and send money back to their families.

Our workers have to be able to use our machines, because the whole production process is mechanised. They don't have to have any particular qualifications or skills. It's strange that all our immigrant workers are Moroccan, because Moroccans seem to have more of a bent towards trading.

As far as I know, there are no problems between our Italian and immigrant workers, though that doesn't mean they get on perfectly with each other all of the time. They tend to form groups, with the Italians sticking together and the immigrants sticking together. But that seems quite normal and human to me; it's very difficult for immigrants and Italians to be friends because they have different character traits and cultures. Immigrants want to keep themselves to themselves.

They usually already speak Italian when they start working here. We need our workers to understand Italian and, in some departments, we need them to be able to read and write it (for example, in the dispatch warehouses, where you need to be able to distinguish between different types of product). They pick up the language quickly.

Characteristics of the enterprise
We are part of the agri-foodstuffs sector and have three abattoirs.

Leaving aside the three big groups, Aja, Amadori and Pavo, we are in fifth or sixth position on the national market. Our annual turnover is around LIT 100 000 million. Our output has soared over the past few years. The cooperative was launched in 1983, when we were slaughtering 70 000 chickens a week; now we're slaughtering about 280 000 a week. Our output peaked in 1995, when we were slaughtering 340 000 chickens a week, but it has tailed off again since. Economically, this is a very unstable sector and there are enormous price fluctuations. We distribute chickens only in Italy - in northern and central regions. We supply two enterprises that sell the chickens.

Characteristics of the workforce
See charts: total, job classification levels, nationality, gender.

Because of the structure of the enterprise, which is four years old, it is difficult for anyone in a high-level post to leave. The problem of career paths will be tackled over time.

The enterprise has five establishments: three abattoirs in Cambiano, Dogliani and Pianfei; a brooder-house in Sangano; and administrative offices and the head office in Fossano.

Company purpose
Agricultural cooperative specializing in processing, sales and supplies [Cooperativa Agricola di Lavorazione, Vendita e Approvvigionamento - Coop ALVA].

Workers are not members of the cooperative, they are all employees. Only the poultry-farmers are members.

Collective bargaining
There is no collective bargaining at national level.

At company level, we have introduced just one differential: over the holiday period, our Italian workers are allowed to take three consecutive weeks' leave, whereas our non-EU workers are allowed to take three weeks, plus one week of unpaid leave.

Incidents of racism
We haven't had any such incidents. The few arguments there have been have been between Italian workers.

2. Ugo Oliviero

Information on the interviewee
I represent the trade union outside the enterprise; within the enterprise, we have workers' representatives. I have been the representative responsible for this enterprise since 1993. All the enterprise's non-EU workers are Moroccan.

Demands and problems
Immigrant workers have problems understanding union rights and duties and the fact that this enterprise is in the agricultural sector, which is covered by an entirely separate welfare system, means they have difficulty understanding how to claim sickness benefits. They have practical problems. There are very few language problems.

Immigrant workers' needs are different from Italian workers'; for example, they need holiday arrangements that enable them to return to their country for a relatively long period.

The national collective agreement contains no specific provisions for non-EU workers.

There is a whole section on leave in the company-level agreements.

Many non-EU workers take leave during Ramadan to avoid any problems at work.

Most of them live in Turin and tend to have their own homes. Some of them have brought their families over to Italy with them.

I also monitor other enterprises in the area. Some of them are hiring immigrants, especially now and particularly in the horticultural sector. Immigrants are usually taken on to do jobs that Italians refuse to do, and sometimes they're hired because they're cheaper.

Most of the immigrants in the area are Moroccan, Albanian and Romanian.

The work they do doesn't appeal to Italians, so there's no sense that they're stealing jobs from Italians. That's usually where xenophobia comes from, the belief that immigrants are stealing jobs from local people. But, here, they're taking on work that local people just don't want to do.

Immigrants tend to ghettoize themselves. They trust the trade union and depend on it - they need immediate protection. They have problems adapting to working methods: the rigidity of working hours and holiday arrangements. They come from a different culture and simply cannot grasp that it's a real problem if they don't turn up for work; they can't see that it's a problem if they don't let the enterprise know straight away if they're ill. All the health and safety notices at the enterprise are in Italian only. Immigrants who come to work here have already had other jobs in Italy and know the rules. None of them has any serious language problems, though there are always a few who don't understand everything at union meetings, which they generally attend. Those who manage to secure permanent jobs tend to settle in Italy. But, at the moment, those who are employed as seasonal workers are unlikely to have their jobs made permanent. Fixed-term contracts can be renewed only twice a year. Seasonal workers receive sick pay, provided they have worked for at least 51 days. Generally speaking, few women immigrants go out to work; and those who do tend to take on domestic work. There are some agricultural enterprises that hire husbands and wives.

There's a lot of undeclared employment in the area and 50% of employment in agriculture is undeclared - it's a problem that affects everyone. The biggest problem is exploitation, because employers try to get away with paying them as little as possible.

Coop ALVA is constantly monitored by the Unità Sanitaria Locale [USL - Local Health Unit].

Trade-union meetings are called every two months.

3. Maurizio Pia

I've been working here since 1984. This department was set up in 1982 and I've been department head for three years. Before that, I was a shopfloor worker. The department employs 16 people: eight in the section responsible for foreigners and eight in the one responsible for travellers.

Immigration trends in Turin have been more or less in line with national trends, with immigration becoming really visible in the early 1980s: there were only about 2000 non-EU immigrants here in the 1970s, but the figures soared in the early 1980s. There were about 7000 of them before the first amnesty. The figure peaked at 29 800 (Martelli Law). Since then, the number of residence permits being issued has fallen but there's been no real drop in the number of irregular immigrants. The official figures have gone down, giving the impression of stability.

Industry in the Turin area hit a real economic crisis in 1993 - the situation was far worse than in other parts of the country. The first tentative signs of an upturn in employment began to emerge in 1995 and we are seeing some slight increases now, but they're a sign of stability rather than any real growth. So that, although 12 558 job-seekers found work in February, that figure simply balanced out the number of people laid off.

The official figure according to the Ministry in Rome is around 35 000; and Turin has a total population of 950 000.

The main ethnic groups come from Morocco, Somalia, Yugoslavia, China, Brazil, Senegal, the Philippines, Albania, etc.

The highest number of applications for residence under the last amnesty came from Moroccans, with the number of regular Moroccan immigrants doubling, so that we have more immigrants from Morocco than from any other country. The last amnesty saw some new groups applying for residence - Romanians, Nigerians and Albanians. There is still a flow of illegal immigrants into Italy, especially from China.

When the amnesty closed, it was estimated that 80% of irregular immigrants had applied for residence. We reckoned there were about 8000 irregular immigrants in and around Turin before the amnesty. This figure tallied with police estimates. There has been a constant influx of immigrants since March 1996. We are responsible for managing the hostels, which also take in irregular immigrants for short periods. The figures are rising all the time.

Sectors of employment

Recruitment still tends to be in traditional sectors: industry and the service sector in Turin; agriculture, catering and personal services (domestic work, care of the elderly, etc.) in Cuneo.

Fiat and Iveco have frozen any recruitment.

AMMA, the branch of the Unione Industriali [Union of Industrial Employers] covering the heavy engineering sector, recently organised a training course to train people, who have links with immigrants' countries of origin, for its member companies. The idea was to train people who, because of their background, skills and knowledge of several languages, could serve as an important resource. This idea, launched by Unione Industriali, gave rise to considerable expectations and showed an awareness of the fact that immigrants are no longer employed only in secondary sectors of the labour market (the course is being run at the moment).

Immigration policies throughout Europe are tending towards border closure, and Italy is moving in this direction, too, with plans to introduce framework legislation that gives rights to regular immigrants and lays down strict rules for new arrivals. Immigrants who have managed to obtain a residence permit and get into "fortress Europe" should count themselves lucky.

Employment office figures show that a high percentage of immigrants are general blue-collar workers. But that's simply because they register themselves as such because diplomas or degrees that are not recognised as being equivalent to Italian ones cannot be accepted. So, immigrants tend to be placed in low-skilled jobs. If we look at the information immigrants give when they register, we see that a very high percentage of them, more than 50%, have diplomas and degrees. For the past year or two, applicants have been required to provide documentary evidence of their qualifications, so these figures are reliable. Research on the subject has also shown that immigrants have high levels of education, especially those who have arrived in Italy more recently.

The social problems associated with immigration are crime, prostitution (Nigerians and Albanians) and petty crime.

Housing conditions in Turin are still very worrying. Immigrants are settling in the districts that were home to the immigrants from Southern Italy who arrived here to work for Fiat during its economic boom in the 1960s. Apart from those living on the new housing estates on the outskirts of the city, most immigrants have settled in the city centre, in the areas in which immigrants from the South first lived, where the housing stock is in a dilapidated state. When they first arrive, new immigrants tend to live in crumbling buildings owned by unscrupulous landlords, who rent them out by bed space. Crime and prostitution are rife in these districts. The problems raised by these risk districts are really serious.

The worst districts are San Salvario and Porta Palazzo, which is where Turin's largest market is.

We need special housing policies for immigrants; it is not an issue that can be left entirely up to local authorities.

Under a regional law, immigrants who have been resident here for a year can apply for public housing. A survey has shown that, of 11 000 applications received, 1800 were from immigrants; if this is compared with the proportion of the total population for which immigrants account, they obviously face much greater problems with housing. Applications are being processed now.

A special measure for immigrants has been the establishment of a fund to guarantee access to housing. This fund, which we have been asked to manage, provides back-up for associations acting as intermediaries between landlords and tenants. The association locates housing for immigrants, enters into a contract with the landlord and then, with the landlord's permission, sublets the property to immigrants. The purpose of this is to get around landlords' reluctance to accept immigrants as tenants.

This system works as long as immigrants can afford to pay their rent; but sometimes they stop paying their rent, and then the association is left with an arrears problem. The guarantee fund guarantees the contract for up to three months' arrears and, therefore, helps immigrants who cannot pay their rent for a while. This scheme has received funding totalling LIT 300 million from the municipality of Turin, the regional authorities and the EU. Some 80 contracts have been signed in the region and 35 in Turin.

The fund still exists, with the association putting tenants and landlords into direct contact with each other. The question now is whether to continue in this way or to integrate the fund with other methods.

We are not thinking of building a "mega-estate"; we don't want to create immigrant ghettoes. We are also planning to set up a "social housing agency", which would serve as an intermediary between tenants and landlords with a view to social integration. In addition to providing a free intermediation service, this agency would also offer an advisory service for

those immigrants whose financial situation is stable enough for them to secure a loan to buy a small place of their own. This agency might also manage the guarantee fund.

Building projects focus on social housing, as is provided for by the Government bill. This will comprise initial housing for newly arrived immigrants and subsequent homes for families. We have some hostels for men and a few emergency places for women with children, but there are no organised facilities for families.

In the mid-1980s, we organised language courses in private schools, which were run by the local authorities; and we also organised literacy classes and courses in Italian language and culture. These trial courses made use of the 150 hours facility and have now become an established literacy course for foreigners.

With regard to vocational training, there is now consolidated experience with specific courses for immigrants, which receive funding from the regional authorities and the European Social Fund. These cover traditional jobs, such as mechanical, electrical, welding and catering work. A few trial courses have also been run in the agricultural sector. Steps have recently been taken to diversify the courses on offer, which have tended to focus on semi-skilled manual jobs, and special courses are now being offered in areas such as information technology. A course for inclusion on the Registro Esercenti Commercio [REC - Trade Register] was run in 1993, but has not been followed up. Immigrants were encouraged to attend the course and their names were included on the register, but the next step, the granting of an operating licence by the local authorities, was blocked. And waiting lists were frozen, so there's little demand for the course now.

There are about 90 Chinese restaurants in Turin.

The actors

Ever since a network of hostels and centres for immigrants was first set up, we have worked closely with the voluntary sector and various associations, particularly those linked to the Catholic Church. There is a long tradition of cooperation between the private and public sectors in the provision of social welfare services in Turin.

The network of services set up in the late 1980s made use of existing resources to alleviate situations of poverty. There were, for example, hostels that took in ever increasing numbers of immigrants. Special hostels were set up for single men and for women with children, because these were the dominant groups among immigrants. Cooperation with the voluntary sector has continued ever since, with the local authorities providing support in the form of financial aid. We are now discussing entering into formal agreements with voluntary associations to manage hostels and centres. Cooperation takes other forms, too: networking, information exchanges, joint projects. On the whole, this cooperation works, though there is an increasing call for the public authorities to take responsibility for basic services rather than continuing to rely solely on the voluntary sector.

We have also had good links with bodies outside the voluntary sector, such as the trade unions (information services, events, joint research and analysis), and other institutions, such as the police and local ministerial bodies (Ufficio Provinciale del Lavoro [Provincial Labour Office],

Ispettorato del Lavoro [Labour Inspectorate] and Istituto Nazionale per la Previdenza Sociale [INPS - National Institute of Social Insurance]), to set up procedures for the application of rules, memoranda and national regulations that comply as closely as possible with people's needs. Cooperation with the trade unions has concerned their specific areas of competence (for instance labour, legal protection of workers, industrial disputes) or joint information and advisory services set up by the local authorities and the trade unions.

There is still a problem as regards the recognition of qualifications. Immigrants speak several languages, are capable of being integrated at higher levels within enterprises and may well begin to compete for jobs with Italians. Some people claim that immigrants are "stealing jobs from Italians" - at the moment, that simply isn't true, but there will certainly be some competition in the future. This cry about stealing jobs is one of the slogans of the xenophobic element in society. With local elections coming soon in Turin, the daily newspaper with the largest readership here, *La Stampa*, has been asking people what they see as Turin's greatest problem. People's answer has been: "immigrants". Immigrants are certainly not Turin's biggest problem, but that is how they're seen and that's what counts.

There aren't many immigrants in Turin. People say there are too many of them, but they actually account for only about 2% of the total population. That's a relatively low percentage if you compare it with other European cities. But it's definitely a thorny issue. By the time the figure reaches, say, 6%, the immigrant population will be well integrated; but the problem is reaching that point.

We are going through a difficult period. Although there aren't too many immigrants in Turin and although they can quite readily be integrated, local people still believe there are too many of them. And this is not something that can be dealt with by the trade unions or the local authorities alone. We need a legislative framework and a serious administrative policy. A good law might not be enough, but we do need good administrative structures if the whole situation is to be properly managed.

4. Laura Merlino

I am 27 and I've been working here since 1989. I used to work in the evisceration department; now I'm in the packaging department.

I feel that immigrant workers are well integrated and not in any way mistreated; we may exchange words every so often, but that's normal and happens between Italians, too. We have accepted them and chat about this and that - football, cars.

Moslems have a view of women that is quite different from ours; they don't respect women. I've never felt put down by them; it's a relationship of equals.

Immigrants have a different pace of work; they are calmer than we Italians.

Most of them live in Turin and Moncalieri.

Most of them are on fixed-term contracts of employment; just a few have permanent contracts.

They don't all speak Italian very well, but we manage to understand each other. They speak French and Arabic. I often ask them about Morocco, because I know they get homesick.

Virtually all of them left Morocco because of the political and economic situation. Morocco has an absolute monarchy.

There are very few mixed marriages.

There were a few non-EU workers in the enterprise back in 1989 but it was in 1991 that more began to arrive.

I worked here for two and a half years on a seasonal (fixed-term) contract before being given a permanent contract.

I don't have any difficulties with them. I have an aunt who works in Kenya, so I understand their problems.

The work we do here is hard; it leaves you physically exhausted. There are 12 of us working in my department, mostly men, including four non-EU workers. It's a cold and draughty place to work.

5. Fabrizio Murador

I'm 30 and have been working here for 13 years. I work in the butchery department, where there are 20 of us altogether. I live 4 km from here. I've been working with non-EU workers for a long time now; I can remember the first non-EU worker arriving here ten years ago. They have difficulties with the language and not all of them understand what's going on at union meetings.

They have a different way of working: Italians work faster, immigrants take their time - they work at a different pace. They tend to group together even though they are well integrated; they understand the way we think and are really quick to learn; I see them as workers just like all the rest of us, as colleagues - if we bump into each other outside work, we'll stop and have a chat, no problem. I've noticed that most of them are good, hard workers.

Their culture is different. Some of them have gone home on a visit and come back to Italy with a wife; and I've heard them telling the others that their mother had found them a wife. Some of them have children who were born in Italy.

I'm more friendly with some than with others, but I have a joke with all of them. We talk to each other, even if we have different ideas: for example, during the Gulf War, the Moroccans supported Saddam and the Italians were against him.

6. Arcangelo Sordo

I've been working here for 24 years. I'm in the packaging department. There are eight of us in my department: two Italians and six Moroccans. I don't have any problems with them. The young ones integrate more easily. They are treated in the same way as we Italians. There are exchanges of words every so often, but that's normal. They are Moslems, but not all of them are practising. I've never argued with any of them - or, at least, only the ones who don't work hard enough, and then it doesn't make any difference if they're foreign or Italian.

7. Youssef Mejdove

I come from Morocco and I'm 35. I've been in Italy since 1988 and I've been working in this enterprise since 1990. I work in the slaughtering department. Before starting work here, I was unemployed and doing some undeclared work. Then I was taken on here on a fixed-term contract. In Morocco, I graduated in French literature. I'm a practising Moslem. I miss my country. I left Morocco because I couldn't find work there, but I'm hoping to go back and set up my own business.

I live in Turin with my wife, who isn't working, and we have a daughter who was born in Italy. My wife has a Moroccan diploma in information science. She arrived here a year ago; I was really unhappy here without her.

The work I do here on the production line is very tiring. I don't have any problems with the Italian workers; I don't experience any racism here at work. I've made friends with some of my colleagues and we visit each other's homes. There is a Moroccan community centre in Turin but I don't go there. We speak Arabic at home.