European Intercultural Workplace: Italy

Leonardo da Vinci
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This report contains an overview about the current situation in Italy, as shown in publications by institutions, media and the government. The report forms part of a package of case studies and national reports all drawing on the expertise of the international membership of the European Intercultural Workplace Project.

Updates and additional material are welcome, and any misrepresentations or wrong attributions will be corrected as soon as they are known.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

European workplaces are experiencing major transformation. Economic and political changes in Europe over the past decades have resulted in a vast increase in the cultural diversity of those living, working and being educated within its borders. The expansion of the EU coupled with labour shortages in many parts of the continent have brought about a steady increase in mobility both within and from outside the EEA. This trend is likely to continue and expand, as workplaces grow into microcosms of a culturally diverse society.

Cultural diversity is fast becoming the norm in most areas of life in Europe. Even for those with little interest in foreign cultures or in mixing with others culturally different from themselves, many everyday situations now necessitate intercultural interactions, whether in the workplace, public services or educational institutions. In this new context, people at all levels of the workforce – managers, employees, customers – from host and migrant communities, find themselves in new roles with new challenges for which they have not necessarily been prepared or trained to deal with. Such interactions require a new mindset and a repertoire of skills beyond what was adequate for interaction within one’s own cultural group. Organisations often need to re-think existing policies and procedures, in order to better meet the needs of and benefit from the opportunities offered by a new culturally diverse workforce. Questions of equality and racism, identity and values assume a new importance and urgency, as intercultural communicative competency becomes a vital priority in all areas of life.

So, how well are workplaces in Europe responding to this new reality? How similar are the challenges and opportunities presented in different sectors and states? What pitfalls to be avoided and examples of good practice can be shared between EU countries? What intercultural training needs exist and how best can these be addressed? These are some of the key questions that inspired the development of the European Intercultural Workplace (Eiw) Project (2004-7). Originally conceptualised in DCU, Ireland, Eiw was developed and expanded through a network of ten European partners, and its implementation was made possible by funding granted by the EU Leonardo da Vinci Programme. A core outcome of the project is the establishment of an overview of work practice across Europe based on national situational analyses and workplace case studies. The identification of intercultural training needs and good practice responses will
inform the production of effective intercultural training materials to a common European standard.

The European Intercultural Workplace (EIW) partnership draws together 10 institutions from northern and southern Europe, established EU members and more recent Member States, countries with a long experience of integrating foreigners into the workforce and others for whom this is a new situation. This complexity allows us to have a wide-ranging, experienced and fresh perspective on the issues involved.

The current publication is divided into two parts: (1) A National Situational Analysis and (2) Case Studies. The Situation Analysis examines the current situation in Italy, investigating issues such as the dynamics of immigration, territories and sectors where immigrants are employed, as well as government, business and civic responses to these situations, and particularly representative areas and economic sectors for the EIW. The Case Studies are designed to assess the situation and conditions on the ground. In Italy, we have examined the areas of health and social services, secondary and university education, SMEs and multinational companies. We endeavoured to consider workplace issues from the perspective of Management, Employees and their Representatives, other stakeholders.

The primary aim of this report is to identify examples of good practice and make recommendations that will assist policy makers and practitioners in their attempts to create a harmonious intercultural workplace and foster a culture of learning. It also aims to provide information for workers intending to move to Italy and Italian employers in need of foreign labour of the policies and steps that need to be taken for an easier and more effective process of integration into the workplace.

This report is by no means exhaustive; in the inevitable selection process we faced constraints that will have left a lot of relevant material unearthed. The EIW Project partners would like to hear feedback from you, the reader and final user, on the information presented. Please visit the European Intercultural Workplace website for further discussions and consultations (www.eiworkplace.net).
GLOSSARY

Acculturation – The modification of the culture of a group or of a single individual as a result of contact with a different culture. (http://www.answers.com)

Asylum Seeker – often an individual who leaves their own country for their safety, often for political reasons or because of war, and who travels to another country hoping that the government will protect them and allow them to live there: (http://www.freesearch.co.uk/dictionary/asylum-seeker). An asylum seeker applies to a State to be recognized as a Convention Refugee under the terms of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Most European countries are signatories of the Geneva Convention. Asylum seekers have the right to remain in such countries while their applications for Refugee Status are being processed, and to continue to live there afterwards, if granted Refugee Status.

Beneficiary – a person, institution or other grouping of people that benefits from the actions described in a case. (http://www.bEEP-eu.org/)

Bilingual – a person who is competent in two languages

Case (study) – the description of and application of methods to a specific situation. A case study must involve one or more objectives and a description of the activities (methods and processes) carried out in pursuit of these objectives. (http://www.bEEP-eu.org/)

Client – the party for which services are rendered (e.g. by a research team). (http://www.answers.com). In traditional commerce and in the marketing and provision of services, a client or customer consumes or benefits from a product or service. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/) Within the remit of the EIW project this can also apply to less traditional examples of a client such as school pupils, for example.

Convention Refugee – see Refugee below

Cross-cultural – the term cross-cultural is generally used to describe comparative data and studies of a limited number of cultures. For example, when examining attitudes towards work in the US and in Japan, then that is a cross-cultural study. It is sometimes used interchangeably with the “Intercultural” (see Intercultural).

Cultural diversity – variety and richness of communities with distinct systems of norms, beliefs, practices, and values. (http://www.cadi.ph/glossary_of_terms.htm) See Ethnic diversity

Discrimination – involves formally or informally classifying people into different groups and
according the members of each group distinct, and typically unequal, treatments, rights and obligations without a rational justification for the different treatment. If there is rational justification for the different treatment, then the discrimination is not invidious. The criteria delineating the groups, such as gender, race, or class, determine the kind of discrimination. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/)

Education sector – The education sector includes primary, secondary and third-level educational institutions such as colleges and universities which are organized on a regional / national basis or independently such as tuition companies.

Equal opportunities – two key elements of the general principle of equal opportunities are the ban on discrimination on grounds of nationality (Article 12 of the EC Treaty, formerly Article 6) and equal pay for men and women (Article 141 of the EC Treaty, formerly Article 119). It is intended to apply to all fields, particularly economic, social, cultural and family life.

The Treaty of Amsterdam added a new Article 13 to the Treaty, reinforcing the principle of non-discrimination, which is closely linked to equal opportunities. Under this new Article, the Council has the power to take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Adopted in December 2000, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union includes a chapter entitled "Equality" which sets out the principles of non-discrimination, equality between men and women, and cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. It also covers the rights of the child, the elderly and persons with disabilities. On the subject of non-discrimination, the Charter states that: "Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited." (EU glossary of terms)

Ethnic background – origin in an ethnic group (see below)

Ethnic diversity – diversity of people with different national backgrounds

Ethnic group – a group of people who identify with one another, or are so identified by others as a group who believe themselves to have a common historical origin. The distinguishing features of the group may take any of a number of forms -- racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious -- and may be more or less porous. Because of these features, members of an ethnic group are often presumed to be culturally or biologically similar, although this is not in fact necessarily the case. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/)

Foreigner – a person born in or coming from a foreign country (OED)

Good practice – the use of a method, tool, technology etc. which is generally regarded as 'practices which are good (e.g. for learning)', i.e. practices which either achieve their own objectives and/or have a beneficial impact on their environment, for (and more important) provide useful learning experiences which are likely to stimulate creativity, ingenuity and self reflexivity on the part of the user. Contrast with best practice that has been shown to be the 'best' in a given situation as a result of benchmarking and other analyses. (http://www.beep-eu.org/).

Immigrant – a person who comes as a permanent or long-term resident to a country and intends to reside permanently, and not as a casual visitor or traveler. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/)
Intercultural – the term intercultural is sometimes used synonymously to “cross-cultural” (see above) to describe comparative data and studies of a large number of cultures, or studies that try to identify dimensions that are not culture specific. For example Hofstede's work is crosscultural, as it describes cultural dimensions applicable for all cultures. Intercultural is also used to describe interactional data arising in a situation where members of different cultural backgrounds.

Intercultural communication – communication between persons who have different cultural backgrounds.

Intercultural communication education – includes learning about different cultures, both culture general and culture specific information. The focus is not so much on habits and religious customs, but rather on cultural similarities and differences in communication patterns, including body language; as well as in attitudes, values and norms in areas such as relation to authority and showing respect and politeness; time orientation; gender roles; collectivism and individualism.

Intercultural company – an enterprise that employs people from different nationalities, cultures and/or racial backgrounds.

Intercultural workplace – a working environment in which people of different nationalities, cultures and racial backgrounds are employed. Also a work environment that deals with clients/customers from different cultures.

International worker – a term used by some organisations to refer to workers from minority ethnic communities, who have come from overseas to work in the country. This term is by some considered more interculturally sensitive than other terms such as terms ‘non-national’ or ‘foreign national’.

Institutional racism – the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. (Lawrence Inquiry committee investigation of London Metropolitan Police)

Life-long learning – continuous acquirement of knowledge, skills and competencies (in an environment of constant change).

Migrant Worker – an economic migrant is a person who voluntarily leaves his or her country of origin (often for economic reasons). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/)

Minority – a group within a country that differs in culture, ethnicity, race, religion or national origin from the larger part of the population.

Mother tongue – usually the first language(s) acquired as a child or sometimes the language of the mother of the child

Multinational – a business organization which operates in many countries

Multiculturalism – Multiculturalism or cultural pluralism is a policy, ideal, or reality that emphasizes the unique characteristics of different cultures in the world, especially as they relate to one another in immigrant receiving nations. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/)

Non-national – a person who is not a citizen of the country they are residing in on a short or long-term basis. This term is commonly considered inappropriate nowadays, being both inaccurate and interculturally insensitive in implying a person has ‘no nationality’ – they are
just nationals of a different country. The terms ‘foreign national’ or ‘international worker’ are considered preferable.

On-job training – the process of being taught a specific skill in the workplace

Participant observation – a research method where the researcher is both an observer of and a participant in a given communicative event such as a transaction in a retail shop. The observations can be made more or less systematically depending on the purpose of the study at hand.

Prejudice – false and negative belief about something (often people or groups of People)

Private sector - the part of the economy not under direct state control (OED)

Public sector – The Public Sector is the part of the economy concerned with providing basic government services. In most countries the public sector includes such services as the police, military, public roads, public transit, primary education and healthcare for the poor. The public sector might provide services that non-payers cannot be excluded from (such as street lighting), services which benefit all of society rather than just the individual who uses the service (such as public education), and services that encourage equal opportunity.

The Public Sector is made up of national government, local governments, government-owned or controlled corporations and government monetary institutions. Local, state, and federal government agencies and services, such as schools and libraries.

Racism – any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_icerd.htm

Refugee – The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as a person who is outside the country of his/her nationality and unable or unwilling to return to it, "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights www.unhcr.org)

A person who, "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it". (Article 1 of the Geneva Convention, 1951)

Social capital – possession of socially or socio-economically relevant immaterial resources (e.g. social networks, social skills with regard to creating social contacts, education or training in organizing and managing social/socio-economical groupings etc)

SME (Small to Medium Size Enterprise) – enterprises with less than 250 employees and a turnover of less than 40 million Euro. Divided into micro enterprises (less than 10 employees), small size (11-50 employees) and medium (51-250). (http://www.bEEP-eu.org/)
Social inclusion – inclusion in a social group – a policy of social inclusion could mean commitment to an ethos of fairness and equality within a given society. www.inspire.edin.org/pages/glossary.htm

Social justice – right of all individuals and groups of individuals to equity, fairness and equality. (http://www.cadi.ph/glossary_of_terms.htm)

Social partner – a term used by the European Commission for employer and employee organizations who engage with the Commission in a dialogue with a view to developing a common approach to EU economic and social policies. It encompasses Trade Unions, Trade Associations, Chamber of Commerce, and (peripherally) Professional Associations. (http://www.bEEP.eu.org/)

Sojourner – a temporary resident; a person who stays for a short period of time in one place

Study – an analytical piece of work that may include surveys or analysis of a group of case studies. It is a more general concept than case study which is a study of a particular situation. (http://www.bEEP.eu.org/)

Workplace education – education in the workplace – e.g. systematic instruction to furnish or acquire further knowledge about the working environment and ways in which to apply good practice.
PART 1: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

1. General background
1.1 The Multicultural Presence in Italy
1.1.1 Introduction

The research, presented in the following pages, intends to survey the intercultural phenomenon in the workplace in the three sectors - private, public and education/training - as pointed out by the “Leonardo da Vinci” programme partnership - “The European Intercultural Workplace”.

The research, supported by a national biography and supplied with data and information of recent publications, gives a privileged analytical/descriptive sample of the current national outlook.

Following a general description of the immigration phenomenon in Italy and through the presentation of the statistical data and sources from the economic, civil, political and mass-media community, the three sector surveys will subsequently be described and analysed. The analysis within each sector is then completed with an in-depth view of the peculiar areas for Italy within the conclusions of part I, and followed by an on-the-field view on the EIW in part II.

1.1.2 The National outlook

Italy has found itself for at least twenty years being overwhelmed by an entangling web of migrating flows, which have determined a marked foreign population growth process. Such flows have made, as of now, this foreign presence an indelible component and a structural trait of Italian society.

Actually, the data available and the results of the most recent research activity can only tell many things about the migration phenomenon in our country and most of all help - stereotypes, misleading distortions or prejudice aside - to define the essential characteristics from an economic, occupational and cultural profile.

Although this growth process of the immigrant population is in our country a phenomenon which has now taken root, we must state that the report drawn up by the OCSE “Employment Outlook 2001”, certifies that Italy is the European country with the lowest percentage of foreign workers within its labour force. In fact, even if it is increasing, (the index has increased from 1.3% in 1988 to 1.7% in 1998); this percentage is quite below the one recorded in other countries such as France (6.9%), Austria (9.9%), Germany (9.1%) and Luxemburg.
The collected data analysis shows a strong presence of foreigners in our country, a presence that, with the last regularising process, is strengthened even more. In Italy, and particularly in the more economically dynamic realities of the country, the immigrants’ regular work placement is not a particularly hard process. Two orders of elements work towards this direction:

1. The immigrants’ inclination to work, in the means of adapting ability to conditions and to the jobs offered, since job seeking and the possibility of an income represent the main goals upon arrival in our country.

2. The social-economic system which draws evident benefits from the employment of immigrants’ manual labour (employers and firms, but also Italian families).

Work integration appears a relatively easier process and at a greater length carried on especially in the North of our country, even if sometimes such occupational integration – “economic citizenship”, for that matter – still seems to be unseen by those not working on the issue and also more generally to a consistent portion of the public opinion.

As a matter of fact, the aforementioned equilibrium, which the economic citizenship is based on, could show some unstable elements, such as:

a) the fact that first generation immigrants in our country have an ability to adapt is taken for granted

b) the predictable change of the immigrants’ second generation attitudes and behaviour, due to better education, socialising to the new society’s cultural models and the relative changes in lifestyles and consuming habits;

c) the strengthening of the ethnic integration process of the immigrants entering the work field, which actually risks jeopardising our labour market, furthermore reinforcing the secondary work sector, increasing the labelling of a series of jobs (considered as being bad and therefore badly paid, even if carried out by Italians) and thus increasing the risk of new forms of competition with the weakest groups in Italian society (particularly in the informal economy area).

1.1.3 The foreign population in Italy

Despite the increase, Italy remains among other European countries, as having the lowest percentage of foreigners in its overall population; as of 1\textsuperscript{st} January 2005\textsuperscript{1} the total number foreign residents in Italy is 2,402,157 (1,226,712 males and 1,175,445 females). In relation to the previous year, on the same date, those registered at the registry offices have increased by 411,998 (+20.7\%) and by 852,784 in relation to 2003.

\textsuperscript{1}Istat (Italian Statistics Institute); *The foreign population resident in Italy, 2005*
This increase is higher than the one of 214,484 (+16.1%) recorded over more than 14 months which have elapsed between the Census of 21st October 2001 and that of 1st January 2003. There are around 650 thousand immigrants who have obtained validation of the regularising request application: the latter have attained a visa starting from the beginning of 2003 and have then gradually enrolled at the registry office throughout the year.

If, in fact, as of 1st January 2005 the legal foreign population can be estimated as more than 2.7 million, if we also consider the minors who are not included in data on visas, the number of the resident foreign population is nearly equal to 2 million. Throughout 2004 this gap should have been greatly reduced, as those registered would have been entered in the resident population group.

The country of origin list is led by Romania (244,377), Albania (240,421), and Morocco (231,044), followed by Ukraine (117,161), which has gained many positions within the regularising process, and China (104,952), which has by now overtaken the Philippines (76,099).

1.1.3.1 Territorial distribution of the foreign population

In the national context we are witnessing a heterogeneous distribution over the national territory of foreign population; in the northern districts/regions, a particularly lively change is taking place.

From the territorial distribution point of view, the foreign population resides in the:

- North: north-west 33,5% and north-east 24,7%
- Central regions 27,8%
- South 10,4%
- Islands 3,6%

Source: ISTAT, 2004

The incidence of foreign population, relating to the resident population, is higher in the North-East (5.0%); the North–West follows with 4.7% and the Centre with 4.3 %. In the South and the Islands, instead, the percentage of foreigners equals respectively 1.3 and 1.2%.
1.1.3.2 Minor foreign population
As of “Caritas Migrantes Dossier” on immigration survey, minor foreign resident in Italy in Jan 2005 are 491,000. Among these, 29,000 are newcomers, coming from native countries and 48,000 are newborn in Italy. About 17,6% of the total foreign resident population is formed by minors. The percentage has recently increased by two points (15,6% in 2003). All the north-western (except Liguria) and north-eastern (except Friuli-Venezia Giulia) regions are above the national average: usually about 19% (20% in Emilia – Romagna and 22% in the Veneto region). In the central regions, on the other hand, Lazio has one of the lowest values (10.9%) and just Marche comes to be different (21%, the second place after Veneto, In Italy).
All the southern regions contexts, except Abruzzo, Puglia and Sicily, are below the national average.

1.1.3.3 Number of foreigners legally employed
In Italy there is an evident lack of information regarding non-EU immigrant employees, both concerning the number of those employed and about the work paths of individual subjects. It is always difficult to analyse the statistics regarding immigrant manpower present in Italy.
From the Istat Census in the year 2005, 1,224,000 people with foreign citizenship had been resident in Italy for 15 years. Among theses we can conclude that, about:
- 58% appear to be employed
- 8% seek employment
- 5% study
- 17% are housewives/husbands
- 3.5% are retired

Employment amongst the foreign population reached a maximum within the 40-44 age category with 70.2% of the population claiming to be employed or that they have carried out at least one hour of paid work or family/home help, in the week prior the Census date; followed by 69.5% in the 35-39 age category and 69.0% of the immigrants surveyed are in the age category between 45 and 49.

1.1.3.4 Nationality of employed foreign workers
The highest percentage of the employed foreigners (42.0%) comes from:
  a. European countries, in particular coming from:
      - 9.5% from the 15 Union States
      - 2.9% from new member States
29.6% from the rest of Europe (including Bulgaria and Romania, before they joined UE)
b. 29.5% is of African origin, in particular coming from:
   • 18.9% from North Africa
   • 8.3% from Western Africa
   • 1.8% from Eastern Africa
   • 0.5% from mid-Southern Africa
c. 17.6% is of Asian origin, of which 9.8% from Eastern Asia
d. The remaining 10.9% of employed foreigners:
   • 10.6% from USA:
   • 9.2% from central and south America
   • 0.3% from Oceania.

1.1.3.5 Foreign workers' employment sectors
As concerns the economic activity fields that have employed foreign manual labour, Caritas report data certify that:
   • 21.7% of the foreign employed workers is engaged in the industrial sector
   • 43.7% in other sectors
   • 27.2% in the commerce and trade sector
   • 7.4% in the agricultural sector
Those foreign Countries which, percentage wise, the largest number of employed foreigners resident in our Country belong to are:
   • Morocco (11.8%)
   • Albania (10.8%)
   • Romania (10.4%)
   • Ukraine (5.3%)
   • China (4.7%)
   • Philippines (3.4%)

**Tab. 1.1.1** Visas distributed in Italy, by continent.
1.1.3.6 Nationality of unemployed foreigners

The unemployment rate related to foreign citizens, which equals 12.1%, surpasses the survey for the entire Italian population (11.6%) with 0.5 percentage points. Particularly, people looking for their first job consist of 1.9% (20,178) of foreign citizens from the age 15, compared to 2.0% (963,210 subjects) related to the total residents, whereas in relation to the unemployment figures looking for a new job, foreigners (3.8%, 41,353 subjects) overcome the surveyed subjects altogether (2.5%, 1,216,262 subjects) with 1.3 percentage points.

Resident foreigners looking for a job come from:
- European countries, 45.5%
- Africa 30.4% (of which: 20.2% from Northern Africa)
- Asia 10.6%
- America 13.3% (of which: 12.2% from central-south America)
- Oceania 0.2%

Finally, regarding the students with foreign citizenship, 43.7% is of European origins.

1.1.4 The foreign workers in Italy: future perspectives, challenges and difficulties

The statistical file about immigration, drawn up by Caritas, certifies that in our Country there is an immigrant for every 22 inhabitants. The increasing number of foreigners, recorded in these last years has inevitably drawn greater attention, from the civil, economic and political part of society, to the problem of integration of immigrant populations.

In addition, the Dossier data also confirms just how essential foreign people now are to the national productivity system; in 2004, 1 out of every 6 people hired is a foreign citizen.

The data supplied by the Ares 2000 Observatory, points out how important foreign citizens’ work is for the expansion of Italian wealth; wealth annually produced by the 800 thousand

### Table: Permits Issued

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<th>CONTINENTI</th>
<th>1° gennaio 1992</th>
<th>1° gennaio 2000</th>
<th>1° gennaio 2003</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Numero</td>
<td>comp. %</td>
<td>Numero</td>
<td>comp. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europa</td>
<td>206,656</td>
<td>31,8</td>
<td>530,237</td>
<td>39,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>227,531</td>
<td>35,1</td>
<td>389,532</td>
<td>29,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>116,941</td>
<td>18,0</td>
<td>256,612</td>
<td>19,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>94,298</td>
<td>14,5</td>
<td>161,237</td>
<td>12,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>2,612</td>
<td>0,4</td>
<td>2,420</td>
<td>0,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apolodì</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totale permessi</td>
<td>648,335</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>1,340,555</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Fonte: elaborazione Istat su dati del Ministero dell’Interno*
non-EU immigrants who work in Italy equals 70,000 billion (3.2% of the Gross National Product), and furthermore if we consider the last 5 years, the contribution was around 320 thousand billion. If those 530,000 foreign citizens “illegally working” would have had a regular work contract and so doing would have emerged from illegal work, the contributory yield over the last year would have been 5,300 billion.

The First annual report about immigration and integration, explicitly states that “Europe must prepare to depend more and more on immigrants and to upgrade their integration in its own fabric of society both economically and socially.” The report also suggests that the member States undertake a change of direction regarding the restrictive policies in force in several countries, emphasizing the fact that the positive contribution of immigration to the European economy cannot be neglected, and that this contribution is also little and badly used, the cause being the lack of being prepared reported especially among those countries which are more inclined to this phenomenon.

The data that we are in possession of, delivers quite a distressing picture of the situation experienced by the immigrants in the workplace; in 2003 alone they experienced 107,000 injuries (1 out of 9), 129 casualties. At this point a clarification of methodological order is needed: there is no existing official data that certifies the number of immigrants employed in the illegal work field.

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**Tab. 1.1.2 Injury Cases Involving non-UE Immigrant Workers According To Country Of Birth And Sex (A) Reference Years- 2002-2004.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of birth</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>19,010</td>
<td>1,876</td>
<td>20,101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>10,106</td>
<td>1,171</td>
<td>11,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>3,689</td>
<td>1,091</td>
<td>4,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>6,005</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>6,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex-Yugoslavia</td>
<td>4,235</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>5,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>4,277</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>4,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,807</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>1,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1,546</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1,856</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>1,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>26,078</td>
<td>8,420</td>
<td>35,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78,609</td>
<td>14,137</td>
<td>92,746</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a) data up-dated as of 15 March 2005. The new state members (May 2004) are included

2 Source: Inail (Italian Board for industrial injuries Assistance) data about cases reports of injuries on the workplace, n. 4 April 2005
Evidently, not only is foreign manpower employed in riskier sectors, but it also more frequently disregards industrial-injury regulations. From this we gather how very frequently the foreign worker is exploited, and how employers are both insensitive to the integration issue and to the immigrants’ manual labour safety rules. Immigrants’ illegal work substantially regards the agricultural/farming (38%) and the service industry sectors; we must add to this that the Italian situation presents a disjointed picture of immigrants’ professional training, characterised by lack of planning, fragmentation of the job offer, temporal discontinuity and financial instability. The country suffers undoubtedly from a series of limitations that come from both the territorial districts’ programming (financing cuts, but especially a lack of continuity of financing, aside from the excessive bureaucracy implied) and from the regulations and directives coming from the European Social Funds.\(^3\)

Our country is living a visible contradiction; a survey conducted at European level, aimed at monitoring xenophobia and racism levels, presented to the European Parliament Commission to Culture and Education by Beatrice Winkler, director of the “Centre against racism and xenophobia” in Vienna, states that Italians confirm themselves among those European populations which are more tolerant towards the immigration phenomenon. Nevertheless, some reliable data is missing about the inter-cultural aspect issue in the workplace; this is justifiable because very frequently immigrant manpower is engaged in those sectors in which there is not particular attention paid to the inter-cultural aspect and to the foreign worker’s integration\(^4\).

Italian large industry has still not opened its doors to foreign populations, which continue to be employed in jobs little or hardly qualified, risky and too frequently badly paid.

It’s not a casual fact that the European Commission is exhorting Member States to study better “the competency and manual labour deficiencies” which are reported at a national level, so as to facilitate a more rapid and efficient participation of immigrants’ in the labour market. This process must also be supported by evaluation of the professional competencies and qualifications of the immigrants, in order to guarantee the best use of capabilities.

Considering the growing importance of the phenomenon of immigration for the European economy and society, the European Commission asks its State Members to pay more attention to favour integration, in particular offering support to learn the national language, guaranteeing political rights at a social level, reducing the extremely high risks of poverty

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3 Istat, 2001 Census: the Professional condition and the work market in Italy
4 Second report on immigrants’ integration in Italy-- Professional training for the immigrants: An instrument for integration.
5 --2003 Annual report; European Observatory on racism and xenophobia phenomena
and social exclusion which encumber the non–EU citizens, in favour of shelter and combating discrimination.

Within this scenario which is still in “evolution” and is multi/prospective, the European Programme “Leonardo da Vinci” “The European Intercultural Workplace” project, intends to furnish a valid and efficient reply to the problem of the multiculturalism of the workplace, in order to involve people and to promote intercultural dialogue in a working atmosphere.

In fact, occupation-wise, the regular employment of immigrants is increasing more and more conspicuously as the Inps (National Institute for Social Insurance) and the Ministry of Employment note as regards the starting work of non-EU citizens.

Furthermore, recently we have witnessed a reduction of the number of enrolments at the Unemployment Office which indicates further consolidation and integration of the offering of work to non-EU citizens in the country.

During the process of recognition of the immigrant citizen on behalf of the community of arrival, the insertion into the world of work represents a fundamental element. Work is, and has always been, an aspect of the utmost importance in feeling part of the recognition of one’s own rights to citizenship.

1.2 Government response

The year 2000 was, without doubt, the year in which Italy finally realised that it has an important request for work on behalf of immigrants, not only via the alteration of the legislation as regards legal entrance into the country for work reasons and with the increase of flows of immigrants, but through a more general recognition of the problems linked with immigration.

Upon such considerations, Italian legislation concerning migratory policy has been inspired and that together with the law on the “Discipline of immigration and regulations on the condition of the Foreign Citizen” of 6th March 1998 (the so-called “Turco-Napolitano” law), the “Amalgamated Law on the measures concerning the discipline of immigration and regulations on the condition of the foreign citizen” of 25th March of the same year and the relating “the executive decision” (31st August 1999), has given Italy for the first time a complex and unitary legislative system for the regulation of migratory flows.

Such a system gets help, therefore, from a double consideration of the necessity to refer to the non-EU workforce and of the willingness to harmonise entrances of such on the basis of true capabilities offered by the economy and by the society as a whole. Along with such awareness, however, is also the consideration, that once they are in the Italian territory, foreign citizens cannot have the same rights which are granted to Italian citizens (both in 5 Isfol 2001: The work of the immigrants planning of the flows and insertion policies
the work environment and in one which regards assistance), recognizing in such a formal way (even via a series of exceptions like, for example, the impossibility to access positions within the public administration), an equality of treatment between Italian and foreign citizens.

The Legislative Decree n. 286/98, “The Amalgamated law of the rules concerning the discipline of immigration and regulations on the conditions of the foreigner”, foresees the institution of a computerised registry office with foreign workers which, furthermore, has already been initiated at the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies. Such a register foresees the predisposition of a databank via the use of a unique model with a collection of the main personal details of the person who intends to seek occupation in our country.

Such a project is outlined both in the draft law of “The alteration of the regulation on the subject of immigration and asylum” (Draft law 795/2001) which intervenes on the above quoted Legislative Decree n. 286/98, introduced by the President of the Council of Ministers, and in the indications contained in the “White paper on the labour market”, published by the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies in October 2001.

The latter, analysing the situation of the national labour market making the considerations stated in the communication of the Council its own and by the European Parliament on 11th July 2001, quotes one of the main priorities of intervention, as being the necessity to “reinforce the battle against illegal immigration” through a tightening of the punishment and the reinforcement of the link between the authorization on entry to the country and the permanence and actual existence of an occupation.

In this perspective, the call for a “more efficient and speedy” planning of the inflows of immigrants should be read, also via a greater involvement of the social actors and the Local Authorities. In such planning activity, particular attention is paid by the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies to the necessity of ensuring the non-EU workers who are already enrolled in the lists of the Unemployment Office “an adequate introduction into the labour market”, a condition that is considered as being a prioritised and preliminary study to the authorization of new entrances of immigrants.

In conformity with what has been anticipated in the “White paper on the Italian work market”, the introduction of the “residence contract”, in reason of integration “founded on the true insertion into the world of work”, is one of the novelties of major importance which is contained in the bill n. 795. Such a contract, which finally represents, as a further kind of contract applicable to non-EU citizens alone, requires, the “guarantee, on behalf of the employer, of an adequate accommodation for the worker” and the “commitment to reimburse travel expenses for the return journey home”, otherwise the agreement will be curtailed.
The new definition of the “residence contract” stemmed, furthermore, from the will which had already been specified of rendering the relationship between the residence and work even closer (a correlation, furthermore, which has already been well explained in the Legislative Decree n. 286/98). The institution, however, of a kind of contract which, in fact, unites the concept of an occupation with that of the residence in the country, cannot do other than highlight the contradiction between the possibilities of undersigning a contract of employment with the foreign citizen which is formally “open-ended” and its concrete execution which cannot but integrate the extremes of a fixed term contract.

In Italy, there is also the need to state that the recent transferral of competencies and powers to regional – provincial and local authorities will allow a greater union between work policies for the weaker groups, including legal immigrants, and social integration policies; the fight against undeclared employment, the legalisation of illegal employment, the administrative simplification of procedures, which is the cause and not the effect of illegal immigration; the recourse to the Unemployment Offices during the guidance phase of professional re-qualification, which is particularly necessary to immigrants who are without any kind of parental network or friends who constitute the true resource for the insertion of Italian workers in the work market;

The governments of all the member States of the European Union are elaborating provisions to put into force the directives on the equality of treatment, in the workplace.

The Italian government, during the last few years in line with provisions coming right from the European Union, has approved the following decrees and laws:

| Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers 17th December 2004 |
| Transitory planning of the entry flows of the non-EU workers into the State territory for the year 2005. |
| - Law. n. 222 - 9/10/2002 |
| Conversion into law of the decree-law of 9th September 2002, n. 195 with modifications, mentioning urgent measures regarding the legalisation of unauthorised work of non-EU citizens. |
| Published in the Official Journal n. 240 dated 12/10/2002 |
| - D.L. n. - 09/09/2002 |
| Text of the decree law of 9th September 2002, n. 195, in co-ordination with the law of conversion 9th October 2002, n. 222, mentioning: “Urgent measures to be taken concerning the legalisation of the illegal employment of non-EU citizens”. |
| Published in the Official Journal n. 240 dated 12/10/2002 |
| - Law n. 189 – 30/07/2002 |
| Modification to the legislation concerning immigration and asylum -(Bossi-Fini law) |
| Published in the Official Journal n. 199 dated 26/08/2002 |

In relation to the answers given by the Italian Government, it is opportune to mention briefly but exhaustively the 2002 Bossi-Fini Law n. 189.

The law, the subject of continual controversies and violent debates, establishes that:

1. The residence permit for work reasons, is granted following the stipulation of the residence contract for work reasons, the duration of the residence permit can vary in relation to:
a) one or more seasonal agreements on wages and conditions, the total duration of which is equal to nine months;
b) a fixed duration salaried agreement on wages and conditions, the duration of which is equal to one year;
c) a salaried open agreement on wages and conditions, the duration of which is equal to two years.
2. A multi-annual residence permit can be issued to the foreign citizen who gives evidence of having been to Italy for at least two consecutive years in order to carry out seasonal work, even if repeated jobs, of up to three years, for the length of time that he/she has benefited from during the previous two years with a single provision.
   The relative entry visa is issued every year. The permit is immediately revoked should the foreign citizen violate the provisions of the present amalgamated law.
3. Furthermore, foreign citizens who are in possession of a residence permit for self-employment reasons on the basis of documentation issued by the competent Italian diplomatic or consulate representative stating that the citizen has the necessary requirements can stay in the State territory. The residence permit is not valid for more than two years. The competent Italian diplomatic or consulate representative which issues the entry visa for work reasons, also informs the Home Office and the INPS (National Institute for Social Insurance), through digital technologies.
D.L. n. 195 - 09/09/2002
Urgent measures concerning the legalisation of unauthorised work of non-EU citizens.
Published in the Official Journal n. 211 dated 09/09/2002

On the basis of initiatives undertaken by Regions and Local Authorities, with the precise aim to favour integration of resident immigrant communities, there are many interesting cases for their innovative content. The Emilia-Romagna region, for example, has a regional law on the social integration of foreign citizens “based on the principle of equality of rights and duties”, with the precise aim of “facilitating paths of democracy and representation of immigrants”.

A new regional law is also in approval phase in Florence. This law, that will substitute the one approved by Tuscany in 1990, will serve to" make aspects of welcome of immigrant citizens and the full recognition of citizenship rights, to start work, to obtain housing and education more precise”.

Again in Florence, there is a vast training programme under way, run by the Region and funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, that will teach Italian to approx. 40,000 immigrants resident in Tuscany, that is nearly half of the extra-community citizens present in the regional area. And again, in Ferrara, the Municipality has just defined the purchase of apartments for extra-community citizens working in local companies, and in Bologna, the Observatory of immigrants run by the Municipality, Province and Prefecture is elaborating a “map” of unease and housing needs of immigrants.

1.3 Civic response
During the last few years, the national community has and is still carrying out a series of activities and local and regional initiatives, with the intention of favouring integration and the active insertion of the foreign population resident in Italy.

6 www.minwelf.gov.it
For example, a series of regional and provincial observatories have been organised to record the evolution of the immigration phenomenon and, at the same time, take decisions to adopt measures and provisions for the integration and active insertion of the resident foreign population.

Furthermore, a multitude of information desks and offices have been set up throughout the national territory to provide assistance to foreign workers, to favour the social integration of non-EU citizens and to take an accurate picture of the unauthorised immigration phenomenon. These initiatives take particularly place in geographical areas, which must daily face the widest part of the immigration phenomenon and are run, on the one hand, through UE projects, and project financing by nonprofit consortia of cooperatives and foundations, and on the other, through self financing, by the single cooperatives, social enterprises and associations. The scenario is interesting because of a number of initiatives run by the nonprofit within the city belts. These initiatives, as we will read further on in the document, are basically the mirror of a widespread approach: the informal social networks, feed themselves spontaneously and generate the real backbone of the territory.

Associations of foreigners can participate in initiatives and services in the field of immigration also with the support of public funds. These associations, that in the first phase of their activities have had mainly a “cultural self expression” function, facilitating the meeting of co nationals, the celebration of feast and events and other social gathering, in recent years have begun to invest in their capacity to act as a bridge between the origin communities and the political institutions of the country of residence affirming their identity in the society that hosts them. There is an interest in this role that could be undertaken more structurally by the immigrant associations, which is also shown by the Regions: the Veneto Region for example began the first regional course in May 2003 to train heads of immigrant associations “to facilitate the relationship among institutions and associations”.

The promotion of immigrant associations, that is an indirect integration tool, should not be confused with the recognition by a system of representation of foreigners in institutions and centre of interest. This system would instead constitute the choice of a direct integration as it concerns the political sphere and not the civil one. The representation of interests of immigrant guarantees a dialectic and democratic comparison which is indispensable for the success of full political integration. On this front, the general orientation is that immigrants can access numerous system of interests already present in our country. However, there are those who attribute the pluralism of Italian organisms, political and unions, and their actions, aimed at “competing for” the
representation of immigrants, one of the reasons for which immigrants defect from a unitary representation at national level.

Amongst the most important initiatives, it is also interesting to introduce, as an example of good practice, those created by the INAIL (National Institute for Industrial Accident Insurance) and the Confartigianato (Italian Craftsmen Association).\(^7\) This is a communication project, aiming at informing foreign staff as regards safety regulations within the construction business. The initiative is really praiseworthy, given that:

1. an immediate and very direct way of communicating has been preferred. Written text has been substituted by cartoons, so that there is greater understanding.
2. the most important safety regulations have been translated into the main languages of the countries of origin of the foreign population (English, French, Arab, Spanish, Albanian).

### 1.4 Business Community response

In the present national scenario, immigration is now, a “normal” and structural component of the Italian productive and economic system. The economic community is becoming more and more interested in this phenomenon; immigrants produce income, they save money and transfer money to their countries of origin.

Moreover, the intensification of growing immigrant entrepreneurship can be added to this: in 2003, there were 145,000 companies run by immigrants, of which around 35,000 operate in the craft sector.

Adequate solutions and interventions which propose the growth of self-employed foreign workers are necessary in order to face the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship, in terms of economic and social integration. This, it is opportune to remember, can be of benefit to the growth and development of the same local systems of our country, in which immigrant entrepreneurs work with vivacity, competency and great aspirations of success.

A very considerable economic dimension is structurally connected to the phenomenon of migration and immigrant entrepreneurship. Even if they certainly cannot suppress wide segments of social exclusion and poverty, immigrants produce income, save money and above all generate high flows of remittances. Considering the importance of the foreign population within the entire Italian economic system, we will illustrate two initiatives promoted to favour and support immigrant entrepreneurship.

As regards solutions coming from the economic community, here follow proposals of initiatives and research commissioned by authorities and institutions.

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\(^7\) Craft Industry; Non-EU citizens. *Accident Preventions*. 2002
1. Within initiatives called “immigrant banking”, the Banca Popolare di Bergamo (Popular Bank of Bergamo) started a project called Welcome in 2003, which has the main aim of understanding and identifying the needs and difficulties that an immigrant has as regards the bank. The bank recognised the growing need to understand a large segment of the population that can be found in Bergamo. The most important initiative is the creation of a multiethnic “pilot” desk, situated next to the Police Headquarters and in an area of the city in which there is an extremely high number of immigrants.\(^8\).

2. The initiative promoted by the Ministry of Employment, the European Social Fund, the Ethic Bank and by Confartigianato (Italian Craftsmen Association), is entitled “New instruments for the fight against discrimination. Access to credit and to bank services for immigrant entrepreneurs”, supported by research entitled “Immigrant entrepreneurship: Features, routes and relationships with the banking system”. The project has given foreign entrepreneurs the possibility to benefit from particular economic and financial concessions, and in the meantime to fund research activity on the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship.

3. “Micro-credit for women immigrants”, a project promoted by the “Resource Foundation for Women”, in 2003 has offered the possibility of developing the culture of entrepreneurship in women immigrants. Micro-credit can represent one of the most efficient ways of fighting financial exclusion of some disadvantaged individuals.

The project has made more than 200 contacts and granted 56 applications. Loans for €117,350.00 have been guaranteed of which €93,800 have already been distributed (the average sum per initiative is approximately €7,800) and until now with a 100% “percentage of disbursement”.

It is interesting to note the geographical provenance of the women who have applied for this project:

- 29% Africa
- 7% Eastern Europe
- 5% Middle East
- 41% South America
- 18% Asia

1.5 Academic Community Response

There are three basic answers that the academic community proposes as regards intercultural workplace:

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\(^8\) Final report 2004: Immigrant entrepreneurship: features, courses and relationships with the banking system.
1. In our country, there are 42,000 foreign students enrolled at Universities with an incidence of 2 foreign students for every 100 Italian university students. There is a ratio of 12 in Great Britain, Austria and Belgium, 10 in Germany, 8 in Sweden and France, 4 in Spain and the U.S.A. In particular, in the capital city alone more than 14,000 foreign students study. Particular attention is given to the integration of these students, by means of the institution of specific periods of work experience as well as advice and assistance. In some Italian universities, there are information desks and offices, created especially for foreign students, who have more difficulties than Italian students.

2. Italian universities commission many studies and research in order to detect the level of sensitivity as regards intercultural workplace in general and also undertake sociological investigations and experiments to draw attention to the phenomenon. In the meantime, an absence of data emerges regarding research activities to analyse the phenomenon of the intercultural workplace, and on the conditions of the foreign worker. Other than Italian Universities, private research institutes have also carried out research on multiculturalism. In this way, one should present the results of the research carried out by the Social and Economical Research Institute of Rome, to analyse the foreign worker’s condition in Italy. From this research one can deduce that:

Immigrant workers have a high level of education, but once inside the national context they are generally employed in sectors for which they are hardly or scarcely qualified; this mismatch between the levels of certified education and training and the levels of job classification, seems to be due, only in part, to the lack of the equivalent qualification of competencies and knowledge possessed.

Furthermore, research also shows that in terms of promotion within the workplace, foreigners are nearly always obstructed and do not have a professional qualification, simply remaining mere blue collar workers. The case of the “San Raffaele” Hospital in Milan where many foreign nurses and doctors work is a rare case in Italy, as we will see within the following case studies.

The measures which are mainly adopted by employers are:

1. A contribute to predisposition of accommodation for foreign workers
2. The organisation of language courses within the workplace, during hours which do not cause conflict with the company’s production.

In the final pages, the research states that nothing is done in favour of the companies that choose to employ foreign workers, and furthermore that companies do not introduce measures to fight racism, as it seems that relationships of mutual tolerance

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9 I.R.E.S. 1997; Case studies of good practice for the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and the promotion of equal treatment in the workplace.
tend to emerge naturally. Measures taken to develop respect for religious and cultural differences are minimal and extremely informal within the workplace.

In the Alva co-operative in Turin for example, foreign workers have the right to a supplementary and consecutive week’s holiday, which allows them to return to their country of origin. This is not paid leave.

Measures taken to encourage ethnic minorities to become conscious of their rights are very different. In the Foundries Cooperative in Modena, for example, there is a foreign member of the Delegation of the Company Union, who represents the foreign workers.

Recent researches carried out by the National Observatory against Xenophobia states that there had been 301 cases of violence against immigrants. 14% of these had taken place within the workplace.

3. Master’s degrees and university courses on multicultural dialogue.

Another solution supplied by the academic institution is that of master’s degree courses, seminars, meetings and debates on the phenomenon of intercultural workplace. These are aimed at making intercultural dialogue easier as well as creating a favourable climate for young people on such a theme. In addition to this, the solution supplied by Italian universities is that of creating specialised professions in intercultural mediation, favouring the specialisation of such professional competencies.

In this sense, it has been necessary to create and update both the competencies and knowledge of this new vocational profile. It aims to help dialogue and multicultural understanding, make the meeting easier, avoiding any eventual misunderstandings and resolving conflicts linked with cultural heritage.

Universities also aim to train professional individuals capable of taking both risks and opportunities in a pluralistic and multicultural context, in order to manage situations and communities distinguished by the presence of immigrants belonging to different ethnic groups, cultures and/or religions. Professional competencies of this nature can be used in educational, social, economic, associational and institutional environments.

1.6 Media Response

From specific research undertaken periodically in Italy, the media specifically dedicates 172 radio programmes, 20 TV shows on national TV and 29 newspapers to foreigners in Italy. The Census\(^\text{10}\) involves local land radio - TV channels, printed paper and online media with programmes and contents for foreign communities. An evolving reality has

\(^{10}\text{Etnocommunication ethnic media Observatory.}\)
emerged, with immigrants not only vesting the clothes of workers but also of consumers of a cultural offer. The radio is, above all, the means that has the most evident increase in the offer of ethnic programmes. There were 172 programmes on 113 channels against 86 programmes and 46 channels in the 2004 Census. The majority of programmes surveyed have been around for many years, confirming the stability of demand, as a consequence of foreigners settling in the Italian social fabric. In direct relation to the territorial distribution of foreigners in Italy, the majority of programmes (89 programmes on 51 channels) are shown in the North, with peaks in Veneto and Lombardy. The Centre follows with 41 programmes (24 channels) and finally the South and the Islands (42 programmes on 38 channels). The programmes reviewed were mainly weekly (122) or daily (41). The contents are mainly informative (81 programmes). It is, however, opportune to distinguish the news programmes (41), rich with news mainly from Italy and from the countries of emigration, press reviews of the main daily newspapers from the countries of origin of foreign communities, from the programmes that accompany the news, also information and news services and also surveys, social news, success stories and episodes of intolerance, testimonies of living in Italy. 40 programmes belong to this second category. There are 57 musical programmes that propose artists that come mainly from South American countries and from Africa. There are 24 cultural and entertainment programmes dedicated to foreigners: investigation and debate on the environment, society, gossip, literature, politics and history of the foreign communities in Italy. Religion is of secondary importance with only 10 programmes, mainly proposed by religious organisations or organisations involved with social issues. The majority of programmes (75) are in Italian. Furthermore, 38 are in one of the languages of the main foreign communities; amongst these, Spanish, Portuguese and Tagalog (the language of the Philippine communities), followed by English, Romanian, Arab, Bengalese and Cingalese. Finally, there are 35 programmes shown in more than one language, generally one or more of the most diffused community languages of those communities present in the area covered by the channel. From a TV point of view there is a contraction due to the major difficulties in producing a TV show, more than a lack of demand. In the previous survey, there were 26 shows for immigrants, transmitted by 26 channels. The data updated in February 2006 instead shows 20 programmes on 18 channels. Once again the North has the most programmes (12), followed by the Centre (4) and the South (4). There are 15 news and information programmes, in which as well as the news from Italy and abroad, there is considerable space and debate given to immigration that involves institutions, associations and foreign communities from the place. There are also cultural and entertainment shows (4), with spots on literature, history and the society of the country of origin. Finally, only
one show is totally dedicated to religion (1). The hosting is mainly in Italian (9) or mixed (9). Two shows are totally in a different language (Albanian and Polish). Out of 20 programmes, 16 are weekly, two are shown twice a week. The remainder are shown six days a week.

As regards print, there are 29 newspapers totally dedicated to foreign communities. They exceed 1 million readers in total per month, with a total circulation of more than 500,000 copies monthly. There are 26 monthly publications, 2 weeklies and one published every fortnight. All the publications are in other languages: the most diffused is Spanish (7 publications), then English and Portuguese (3 publications each), and then Chinese, Albanian, Ukrainian and Romanian (2). The remainder are written in Punjabi, French, Polish, Bulgarian, Pakistani, Russian, Tagalog, Arab. These publications are distributed throughout the country, in local newsagents where there is a greater ethnic concentration, in phone centres, in meeting places for foreigners and in diplomatic embassies and consuls.

Here follows the data concerning another main official survey specifically on images of immigrants on TV with interesting points, even if not very comforting, on the reading of the binomial immigration and labour. After having monitored a sample of programmes for 6 weeks out of 2 years on the Rai (Rai 1, Rai 2 e Rai 3), Mediaset (Canale 5, Rete 4 e Italia 1) and La7 – the most followed broadcasting companies - it emerges how the TV has represented immigrants in a monothematic way: in news broadcasts and nearly always exclusively connected to criminality. The presentation of the immigrants is nearly always in the news section (95.4% of cases in 2001 and 88.3% in 2002) and this presentation is full of meaning, as it is nearly always in the leading headlines: in fact, we have gone from 90.8% of cases in 2001 to 80.9% in 2002. The progressive acquisition of importance from the point of view of political connotation of the theme of immigrant labour, as the weight of the latter increases in the public opinion: the presence in the internal polices section of programmes goes from 2% in 2001 to 16% in 2002. There is also a negative evoked-set as regards the immigrant that provides an interesting analysis perspective: the role of the immigrant in fact is changing in the perception of the media, as it has gone from 39.6% in 2001 to 48.4% of cases in 2002 on TV as victims of negative actions and correspondingly on the other hand, less actors of the action itself: of 38.3% of cases in 2001 to 29.7%, in 2002. The most talked about subjects concerning immigrants were, anyway, criminality and illegality (56.7%); surpassed in 2002 by the theme of clandestineness (61.9%), that added to the themes of prostitution and prison makes 75% of cases. As concerns the

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11 Censis (2002)
context of the presence of immigrants on TV and the combination of the theme of immigration with specific themes in which their situations are presented, in 30.9% of cases it concerns their community of origin, in 29.1% the world of crime. It is interesting to note how the combination with the theme of labour has a dignified presence with a value of 9.7%, as concerns the context in which the immigrant is presented, but unfortunately the work of the immigrant as a subject is not considered. In fact, the trend which is already weak is decreasing (from 1.6% to 1% of cases). In this panorama, one can say that in most cases immigrants are mentioned through stereotypes. Furthermore, immigrants are hardly ever called on TV as experts, at most it mentions them or they are interviewed as directly interested parties and in the light of data already given. In conclusion, one should point out that in terms of distribution of the different television headlines, that the majority of space to immigrants is given by the Rai, whose 3 channels give 60.4% of the total space dedicated to subjects related to immigrants, more than double with respect to the private Mediaset channels (27.7%). A special mention is for La 7, that, alone, covers nearly 12% of the total.

Tab. 1.1.3 – Immigrants on TV according to programmes (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>88.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News column</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrated magazine on customs and society</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate/Talk show</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific programme on immigration</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satire</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political tribune</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 1.1.4 – Immigrants on TV: distribution by theme in news (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal politics</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headlines</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>80.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of negative action</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor of negative action</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total negative actions</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object of positive action</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor of positive action</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total positive actions</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor of a neutral action</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object of a neutral action</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total neutral actions</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 1.1.6 – Immigrants on TV: subjects treated prevalently, 2001 (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminality / Illegality</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration (in general)</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural aspects</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and shows</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance/solidarity</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution/exploitation</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of country of origin</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prisons</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tab. 1.1.6a - TV: subjects treated prevalently, 2002 (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clandestinity</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminality/illegality</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration insertion</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural aspects</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and shows</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance/solidarity</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution/exploitation</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of country of origin</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prisons</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 1.1.7 – Immigrants on TVE: the context in which they are presented (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community of origin</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal world</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of Muslim religion</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribunal/world of justice</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour world</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/ university/training institutes</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exponents of Catholic church</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions, Public authorities, police force</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports world</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total does not equal 100 because more than one answer was possible

Tab. 1.1.8 – Immigrants on TV. How mentioned (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of facts, actions, situations (informative)</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of facts, actions, situations (informative)</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>72.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interpretations/comments
Denunciation

Total

Narrative:
Descriptive – informative
Problematic – cognitive
Demonstrative or tendentious

Total

Resorting to stereotypes:
Absent
Present
Partially present

Total

Tab. 1.1.9 – Immigrants on TV: spaces given to express themselves personally (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guests on a show</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewed as directly interested party</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewed as a witness</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulted</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoted</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulted as experts</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 1.1.10 – Immigrants on TV: distribution of programmes by channel (val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rai 1</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rai 2</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rai 3</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rai</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reutequattro</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canale cinque</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italia uno</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Mediaset</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tab. 1.1.11 – Immigrants on TV: minors and adults (v.a. e val. %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>v.a.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minors</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>43,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>56,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2. Examination of the situation in private, public and education sectors**

**2.1 Cultural Diversity in the Private Sector**

**2.1.1 Introduction: methodology**

The analysis of the phenomenon of intercultural workplace in the Italian private sector needs a short methodological introduction, that will be developed in the conclusions of part I. This is considered to be essential in order to approach the macro-economic situation and subsequent accurate contextualisation: territorial peculiarities, specifics of the economic model, distinguished by the dualism between the few large companies which resorts to the roles of banks, trade unions and the Welfare State – and the small and medium enterprises - a reflection from both a sociological and anthropological point of view of a wide and striking capability to create and entertain economic relations. The characterisations of the sector, the problems linked to the difficulty to operate in-depth, in terms of a qualitative interpretation of statistical data, are only a few of the questions to take into consideration.

First of all, it is important to highlight the great heterogeneity of the models and systems present within the private sector in our country. As you will be able to see in further detail in the following paragraphs, in fact, the territory is a key variable Italian development. The first consequence of this, on a scientific level, is the difficulty to classify and catalogue territories according to homogeneous parameters. There are an infinity of cases which are
difficult to map, in virtue of a particular view which needs, in the great majority of the cases, ad-hoc micro analyses.

Add to this the tendency of many Italian studies in economy on a local basis that privilege the qualitative approach to the quantitative approach: a wealth of details and a highly precise analysis. However, this is sometimes detrimental to the consistency of numeric data, comparability and the systematic way of the gathering data both due to frequency of gathering and also due to the mass of data available. That is to say, specific detailed studies prevail over singular phenomena or over particular realities, with an inclination towards a vertical analysis, whilst there are not as many wide range studies, “aerial photographs” of the system capable of supplying a total representation of the phenomena. It is necessary to take these elements into due consideration, which inevitably supply the co-ordinates to collect information which will be introduced in the following paragraphs. In the light of these considerations, the intention pursued has been two fold: on one hand, to respect the Italian analytical specificity, with great attention therefore to “detail” – see conclusions of part I for an in-depth analysis of the most representative areas within the three sectors Private, public and educational - ; on the other hand, one has always tried to maintain the “general”, summarising functional quantitative data in order to allow an organic reading of the detailed singular cases.

2.1.2 The reference context: intercultural workplace in the private sector

In order to clarify the meaning of intercultural workplace in the private sector, two initial explanations are necessary: what one means by “private sector” needs to be clarified and subsequently also the decline of the phenomenon of intercultural workplace within the private sector.

By the “private sector” one commonly means the grouping of productive activities developed via the initiative of single or associated individuals. The classification which follows contains the main activities which belong to the kind of private work and this starts with a distinction of the three classic sectors:

- **Agriculture**: which consists of all private activity linked with the direct cultivation/growth of natural products, including breeding and fishing; it is a sector which is entirely characterised by private initiative.
- **Industry**: This includes all activities of the transformation of basic or intermediate products, via the carrying out of industrial working processes or craftsmanship. Within the industrial sector, one can identify individual sectors according to the kind of goods produced; the private initiative plays a very important part: one thinks of the procedures of privatisation initiated as from the 1990’s which have been of interest to important big
companies; today the direct presence of the public individual in the capital of industry is clearly decreasing – and introduces interesting ideas especially within the public utilities world.

- Tertiary: a “residual” category, containing all the so-called “service” activities, the consistency of which is in continual growth (in the first half of 2005 the turnover of services has seen an average increase of around 3% with respect to the first half of 2004\textsuperscript{12}) Within the tertiary sector, one can distinguish amongst some of its main services: transport and communication activities, commercial activities, hotels and restaurants, the financial activities of banks and insurance companies, education, the health sector, the arts and entertainment sector. It is in this macro-category that the distinction between public and private becomes more compelling, since some of the services are doubly present in both the public and private sectors (just think of the fields of education and health).

The analysis will concentrate mainly on the industrial manufacturing sector, for three main reasons. The first is closely linked with the purpose of the project: the Italian specificity of the productive sector (SMEs) in question with respect to the European scenario makes it, in fact, very interesting, within the framework of a trans-national project of comparison, a specific analysis for such a specificity. The second reason instead concerns the specific historical moment that the system of Italy is going through today. A moment which, in a difficult international framework at an economic level, introduces elements of particular complexity which impose a detailed consideration upon what has been the model of industrial development until now and on its possible future transformations, probably necessary in order to withstand new global challenges. The third is a more “operative” reason. This reason induces us to momentarily put the service sector aside, which will however find particular in-depth study in the following chapters dedicated to both the public sector and to the field of education, even if by looking at it in a different prospective.

Once the meaning of the private sector has been clarified and the field of observation of this present chapter has been outlined, it is important to focus on the meaning of the phenomenon of intercultural workplace within the very limited private sector. The reference to the themes of comparison and of integration is implicit, but it deals with declining these conceptual universes in a more precise way.

If we look at the Italian social-productive structure, we can identify certain characteristic traits, that can be useful as a reference point during the interpretation of intercultural workplace in the private sector. In particular, in this country high levels of masculinity can

\textsuperscript{12} Source: ISTAT, 2005.
be seen – with great disparity between men and women, which is still strong today regarding access to the world of work. Added to this, there is also a tendency towards conservatism – and, therefore, an accentuated reticence in the opening towards something new. Low levels of individualism – given the high inclination towards associations – and towards the power of social standing - in virtue of a good level of democracy and accessibility to different opportunities open to all citizens; on the other hand, the values of the availability towards uncertainty are average – there remains a contradiction between an inclination towards bureaucracy with an abundance of laws, and the tendency towards a lenient and relaxed attitude to the existing law.

Having taken these aspects, which define the theoretical framework, into consideration there are two main perspectives, from an operative point of view, which we can quote during the analysis:

• On one hand, the physical closeness between people belonging to different cultures must be considered, which more and more significantly, takes place within the workplace, and particularly in the industrial sector– in offices, but above all on the production line. At this point, we should sensitively ask ourselves about integration amongst different people, bearers of profoundly different cultural aspects and therefore we should consider the phenomenon in its “micro” dimension;

• On the other hand, the growing number of opportunities of meetings/comparisons between different cultures is to be considered due to the effect of worldwide globalisation, which brings foreign companies into Italy and takes Italian companies abroad, creating in this way a continual fusion and flow of cultural systems. At this point, one is faced with the need to enlarge the perspective and to undertake observation on a “macro” level, with an analysis which focuses on the impact of this mixture of cultures with the Italian one.

In light of these considerations, it was felt that we should concentrate our attention on certain aspects of the phenomenon of intercultural workplace within Italian companies, in order to be able to compose a combined reading of the two micro and macro dimensions. In particular, in the following paragraphs that, in our opinion, can be considered “the framework of intercultural workplace” will be illustrated with respects to the Italian industrial sector: how many foreign workers are present in Italy and where they work, what levels of internationalisation and opening of Italian companies are as well as the presence of foreign companies in Italy.
Before concentrating on certain aspects, it is, however, indispensable to give a brief analytical outline of the specificity of the Italian productive system, functional to understand the observations that follow.

2.1.3 The specifics of the Italian productive system
As already mentioned previously, the Italian productive system is extremely compound and heterogeneous, marked by the existence of particular productive realities linked with specific territories; a total reading therefore results as being reductive, as it necessarily implicates the loss of a lot of information connected with specific local situations. In the following paragraphs, we will focus on the most important aspects which are, at the same time, comparable, with the aim of supplying a useful and faithful photograph of the richness, and often also the differences, which characterise the Italian productive economy. We will thus concentrate on four aspects: large industry, the industrial district model; the presence of foreign and multinational companies; the new tendencies of the industrial world linked with recent changes in the international economic scenario.

2.1.4 Large-scale Industry
Even if large-scale industry does not numerically represent the most important part of the Italian productive system, important names which have contributed to the growth and the development of the Country however do exist; one only has to think of Olivetti and Fiat, the colossal ENI, Finmeccanica, Pirelli, TIM/Telecom, Cirio, Italcementi, Fincantieri, Trenitalia, Enel and Fininvest, to mention but a few. It is, however, possible to identify certain elements which have characterised these realities of the industrial world, considered useful to picture the system of the great industry in Italy. First of all, we are dealing with capitalism of a “homely” nature, in other words, it is closely linked to the role and power of some important families which run the most part of these colossal industrial organisations, often creating a kind of rigidity on the securities market. Besides these families, other famous figures are the banks, which have, more than anything, supported large-scale enterprise and which, today, have joint ownership.

Other than these two “structural” elements, which have contributed in a significant way to the shape and the structure of the large-scale company, it is also necessary to point out two features of the Italian social economical context, which have had and still have today a considerable impact on large industry: it has essentially been able to count on a favourable legislation. On the contrary, the large-scale company has had to compare itself with the substantial representation of the trade unions present in Italy and therefore has to accept
continual dialogue with the worker’ trade unions, both on an institutional and practical level.

One can say that if, on one hand, these characteristics of the large-scale enterprise have favoured “conservatism” and have not facilitated renewal, opening and dynamism, on the other hand, the willingness for innovation and the rethinking of a historically established example seem more and more dominating just like the main route via which these large-scale companies can create further opportunities for themselves and have an important role even at international level. The intercultural style within these companies reflects this: are based on a domestic managerial style and on activities which are mainly articulated in our country- except for ENI- foreign presence is very contained and mainly qualified from a technical point of view- above all Italcementi, Fincantieri and to a lesser extent Enel -. The intercultural communication style is according to managerial logics, but the use of the English language is reserved only for technicians that work abroad and for general management. Respect of religious freedom is guaranteed in fact by internal circulars that discipline and harmonise the exercise of practices during working hours. The Italian female presence is not of a minority and in numbers which are even more contained and in a immigrant women hold low operative positions.

2.1.5 Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and Industrial Districts

The Italian productive system has its own distinctive trait in the high concentration of small and medium enterprises, a striking phenomenon especially when compared to the reality of other European industrialised countries. In many cases, this has caused people to speak, of an “Italian defect”: 77% of employees in companies (3,714,882) work in small and medium enterprises; in the last 25 years, companies with more than 500 employees have lost, as a whole, more than 1.5 million employees. It is important to state that by a small-medium enterprise one is referring to an enterprise with less than 250 staff and an annual turnover of less than 40 million Euros.

The other important feature of the Italian productive system is represented by the productive and industrial districts, which we can define as being “social territorial entities characterised by the active co-presence, in a limited, naturally and historically determined territorial area, of a community of people and a population of small and

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13 Source: Istat 2002
14 Source: Confindustria reasearch centre, 2002.
15 As we can see in the case studies, literature and research in Italy do not always agree in identifying parameters for SMES: here we have referred to the main classification based on criteria recognised by Community policy as regards state assistance.
medium enterprises”\textsuperscript{16}. The district is characterised by the presence of a multitude of medium-small companies\textsuperscript{17} which operate within a limited territory, from which they obtain resources for their own growth. The district companies, which in fact have learnt how to see within the territory, not only a place in which to find low cost, qualified personnel, and competencies for the organisation of the productive procedure, but also a means\textsuperscript{18}, a communicative infrastructure capable of distributing variety and the richness of articulated dialogue which are at the basis of their competitive advantage. Distinctive traits of industrial districts are mainly production for the B2B (Business-to-Business) market, the flexibility towards a wide variety and variability of requests, a reduced time-to-market, a rather frequent breakage of warehouse stock, a reduction in price of goods produced at the end of the season in order to maintain competitiveness.

The understanding between the economic model and the social structure constitutes, therefore, one of the characteristic elements of the industrial district. Economic relationships intertwine with social ones: the physical contiguity and the sharing of common meeting places favour the creation of long-term relationships based on understanding and on respect for diversity, on comparison, on trust; the building-up of a reputation, as this is a sign of trust built in time, rendering the development of economic relationships easier. Across the territory, furthermore, information rapidly circulates, by using informal and direct channels of face-to-face communication\textsuperscript{19}. Thanks to this, transaction costs are reduced, there are reduced risks of opportunism, the intertwining of relationships and interactions among the different subjects of the chain increase.

On the other hand, the overlapping of economic procedures and social variables is at the basis of the continual renewal of this system. The high internal mobility of work favours, for example, the foundation of new companies by ex-employees which reproduce what they have learnt in new organisational groups, whilst the reputation of trustworthiness and the provision of moral capital allows the new entrepreneurs to rapidly create a close network of relationships with the original companies and with the other knots of the district network.

This is the main feature of the district, a direct consequence of the deep rooting in the territory and of the understanding between the social and the economic world: companies

\textsuperscript{16} Becattini, 1989

\textsuperscript{17} Generally, the polarised or “indotto” district distinguishes itself: a bigger company supplies work to a chain made up of many other smaller companies (e.g., sofas with Natuzzi or Etna valley in Sicily) and distributes the final product after the quality control in performed; the “coopetitive” district, made up of average/ small-medium sized companies sharing the supply chain, but, at the same time, in competition with each other and equipped with a rather complete organisational structure (e.g. the district of the Montebelluna sport system); the atomistic district made up of mainly small or tiny companies which have a minimal structure (e.g. the textile district of Prato).

\textsuperscript{18} Rullani, The Economy of the Knowledge, Carocci, 2004.

\textsuperscript{19} Like in Investigation on the diffusion of technologies within the Small and Medium Enterprises, relating to contacts with strategically local and foreign suppliers with a subcontracting chain, Tedis, Venice International University, 2004.
in the district become a network, like nets in which the many knots are very closely connected\textsuperscript{20}. The productive unit is created by the single company, but the productive cycle extends outside the confines of the factory and is fed by the entire network. In this way, companies can specialise in one or a few phases of the productive procedure, whilst the value chain spreads over the entire district territory (Micelli, 2000). These features, in different ways and measures, link the many industrial districts which are the salient trait of the productive model, mainly in the centre-North of Italy but, during the last few years, more and more, also in the South. The figure below shows the diffusion of the main Italian districts.

\textsuperscript{20} Micelli, Networks or moreover “without” technologies, 2000.
The theme of interculture in the work place in SMES of productive agglomerates and industrial districts – one of the main sources that attract immigrant workforce, mainly unqualified, even if as we will see in the conclusions of part 1, this trend is changing- is faced with good sense and the good will of people- the main asset in organisations of this size-. In the majority of cases, organisational models, neither organic methods based on a European Intercultural workplace in SMES, as there hardly ever exists a function that is specifically responsible for human resources in the company unless for administrative-bureaucratic aspects (holidays, wage slips and time off, accident practices and illness, payment of contributions). The diffusion of knowledge of the Italian language amongst immigrants is low, the use of other languages struggles to diffuse itself in a capillary way. There are many ethnicities present, but the numeric presence is even more notable for some SME workers – people from the Maghreb, workers from East Europe and Indians –: this is due to the sharing of an organisational vision and “minimalist” interpersonal relationships nearly exclusively based on productivity and the proficient use of work time. Collaboration is fed essentially by the need to transfer tacit knowledge on the production process. The respect of religious practices is sufficiently widespread, as is the frequent attention each time there is a company canteen to offer a diversified menu.
2.1.6 Foreign companies in Italy

Besides the fundamental and characteristic phenomenon of industrial districts, one should also examine another dynamic, the understanding of which is functional for the aims this analysis: the presence of multinational or foreign companies in Italy. The following data can be useful in order to shed light on the phenomenon.

At present, there are 1,843 Italian companies with shareholders abroad; these correspond to 2,955 productive establishments, 560,088 employees, and a turnover of approximately 140 billion euros. There are 1,079 multinationals present with productive activities. The companies with majority shareholding are clearly more frequent, involving 86.6% of companies. As regards methods of privileged investment, we find a very significant preference for takeovers, detrimental to the starting-up of new enterprises, which have met with a progressive deterioration from the 1990s to the present day. As for the geographical distribution of foreign enterprise shares in Italian companies, 65.6% of the employees in the foreign companies are attributed to Western European companies, against 28.2% of those in North America, 3.4% in Japan and 2.7% of those in the rest of the world. Looking at this in more detail, the U.S.A. are still the leaders of the investing countries with 25% of the total number of investing companies. During the last ten years, amongst the European Union Countries, there has been a decrease in the French share, and an increase of the German share. Finally, looking at the distribution on sectors, there has been a high foreign shareholding in the high technology sectors (electronics and telecommunications), and also in the pharmaceutical and chemical sectors, whilst as regards territorial concentration, we can observe a main concentration in the North-West area and in particular in the Lombardy region, which absorbs approximately a third of the industries.\(^{21}\)

The data presented shows, therefore, how considerable the presence of foreigners in the Italian productive framework is, and during the past few years it has continued to make further progress. If we look at the last few decades, in most of the cases, foreign investors have been enticed by the richness of our territories, mainly made of knowledge, of “know how”, of the social fabric, that is to say those same peculiarities that are at the basis of the Italian districts’ success, and therefore have chosen to insert themselves into the already greatly developed territorial network. An important case is represented by the districts of the sport-system of Montebelluna, of the industrial components in the Vicenza district, or in the textile industry of the area around Prato, where multinational companies or small foreign leader companies have set up their own enterprises, with the aim of defending the development process of the new product which characterises the network of companies present in those territories.

2.1.7 New trends

The model of the industrial districts and the presence of foreign multinational companies in Italy are a consolidated phenomenon in the Italian productive system, and have developed since the war until the present day.

During the past few years however, the economic scenario has been influenced by important transformations which have urged people to question consolidated entrepreneurial formulae and the traditional procedures of economic development. Economic globalisation, the widening of the markets, the elimination of barriers separating Countries and the instauration of a new logic of collaboration and integration are the most evident aspects of ongoing change.

Small enterprises, districts, which deal in “made in Italy” articles are rapidly changing, in order to meet with new challenges. The local and national roots find themselves comparing each other with the new forms of internationalisation. A productive system based on the variable factory, which produces material objects, is dematerialising, concentrating on the non-material aspects of the productive chain: knowledge used, relationship channels, symbolic meanings associated with objects\(^{22}\).

In some cases, companies have learnt how to react by developing independent paths of international reorganisation of their own supply chain and commercial networks, and so fitting their own development model into the widest possible global context. In many other cases, however, the district model has found itself unprepared when having to face a challenge which seems to aim at these same aspects which have been at the root of its success: the small size of companies seem to become an obstacle which prevents them from carrying out the “leap” towards global dimension; the quality based on the craftsmen’s abilities, linked with experience, seems to become an obstacle with respects to investment technology, innovation and research; the strategy connected with the limitation of costs is no longer sufficient in order to cope with international competition which manages to lower the final prices even more.

These, in short, are the challenges that the Italian productive system has to face. It has firstly had to reconsider itself as well as the formulae that have made it famous for decades. As one can imagine, we are dealing with challenges that are unavoidably connected with international opening procedures. Therefore, it is the very ability to compare and integrate with people who are “diverse”, with "others", that is an important factor.

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\(^{22}\) Rullani, 2004
2.1.8 Intercultural context and intercultural workplace

The aim of the following paragraphs is to fit the theme of intercultural context into the framework of the Italian production system outlined above. The privileged intercultural contexts will therefore be analysed, that is, those physical but above all social spaces, in which we greatly highlight the theme of intercultural workplace in the private sector: the Italian companies with a great number of foreign workers; the Internationalised Italian companies; the multinational companies in Italy. Each of these contexts connects itself ideally and yet in a different way, to the due main dimensions of interculturalism as regards the industrial sector: immigration, on the one hand, and internationalisation on the other.

2.1.9 Italian companies with a high concentration of foreign employees

There are approximately 650,000 immigrants who have obtained authorisation of the application to legalise their situation in Italy: these have obtained their residence permit as of the beginning of 2003 and have gradually become registered at the appropriate office of the Town Hall during the course of the year. The time offset between the obtaining the residence permit and the registration at the Town Hall determines a great difference between the foreign populations which are legal and those which are resident. In fact, if as of the 1st January 2004 the legal foreign population could be estimated as having been more than 2.5 million individuals, taking into account also minors which are underrepresented in the details of residence permits, the total resident foreign population is, as mentioned above, equal to nearly 2 million people. During 2004, this gap should have been reduced, as the legalised immigrants have been gradually absorbed into the number of the resident population. The increase of foreigners who live in our country is also due to the continual increase of children being born with foreign citizenships – children of parents who are both foreigners and who are resident in Italy -, which can be translated into a natural surplus balance of 31,132 individuals. The growth of the foreign population due to natural flows is clearly inferior to that determined by migratory flows (411,970 individuals), but it is significant if overlapped with the natural negative balance of residents with Italian citizenship.23

As regards the insertion of immigrants into the labour market (fig. 2), the total number of engagements, in 2004, was 448,094, the most part of which came from the private industry sector.

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Data on company owners and shareholders is also interesting (55,211), a high constantly increasing number which is a sign of a progressive integration of foreign workers into the territory, who, especially in the main cities, conquer their own space in which they succeed in developing their own entrepreneurial initiative.

In these cases, “communities within the community” are created: that is the foreign sub-communities – with immigrants coming from homogeneous areas– within the Italian community they can manage to organise themselves independently, yet without mingling or really integrating with local groups, to the extent that the most part of these new companies are commercial exercises thought of just for the immigrant community itself, and that however aim to create an island within the foreign territory, where the original culture of the population remains intact – we can mention Asian, Indian, or Chinese communities, deeply rooted in cities like Milan or Rome, where they have even created quarters of their own, but that are in expansion in medium-sized cities such as Brescia and Padua.

If within the environment of the immigrants’ private initiative the levels of integration are still low, as is the inclination towards self-preservation, and therefore towards the emphasis of borders, of diversities, as ways of confirming one’s own identity in a foreign context, the situation which is created inside local companies which call for non-EU workers is different however. In these work contexts, “mixed” spaces are created, in which not only Italians and foreigners live and work side by side, but also foreigners of different origins.

In order to further understand the phenomenon, it is useful to observe the geographic distribution of the presence of immigrants in Italy. The majority of foreign citizens is
concentrated in the North of Italy (58.7%); the Central part of Italy follows (28.3%), the South (8.9%) and the Islands (4.1%). The North East, with more job opportunities, constitutes a source of attraction for immigrants, whilst the Islands are considered to be more of a passing-through zone. The Lombardy region hosts the greatest number of immigrants (23%), followed by Lazio (15.8%), Veneto (10.2%) and by Emilia Romagna (10%)\(^{24}\). In the North-East areas and the Lombardy region, the request for foreign workers is very high and in continual increase, an unavoidable solution to the “escapism” of local workers as regards tedious, difficult jobs, which are considered less and less inviting. In these territories, right where the district model has found its main fortune, integration between local and foreign personnel has become a necessity, a fundamental variable for the survival of many companies. In the territories around Vicenza and Padua, like near Brescia, therefore, large and deeply rooted foreign communities have formed and which have been attracted there due to the many job offers available. Amongst the nationalities present in our territory, Moroccans are the most numerous, followed by Albanians and Romanians, then Philippinos and the Chinese. The religious beliefs of foreigners who were legally present at the end of 2002 was divided as follows: 690,523 were Christians (half were Catholics, a third were Orthodox Catholics and an eighth were Protestants), 553,007 were Muslims, 4,203 were Jews, 39,416 were Hindus and 37,489 were Buddhists\(^{25}\).

Many different “examples” of integration have been created, resulting from the matching between the capability of getting used to the local territory and the reactive flexibility of the immigrant population. The results are all, moreover, the fruit of a “bottom-up” procedure, i.e. they have developed outside precise rules at a political or regulative level, and they can, thus, be considered as the fruit of the initiative of single individuals: in this sense the aforementioned typically Italian tendency of “particularism” is confirmed.

Integration is, however, mainly the fruit of the direct comparison of people of different nationalities who find themselves working side by side, and, when they manage to succeed, it is the result of the ability to face a series of practical, daily problems. Firstly, language: often immigrants arrive in Italy without knowing how to speak Italian, and on the other hand, when they find themselves in the same factory as people coming from other countries, it creates a linguistic mixture. This risks establishing contacts only with those people who speak the same language as they do. Secondly, there are religious problems: the respect for the different religious practices and their practice creates quite a lot of confusion as regards working routines (the example of Ramadan is perhaps the most obvious but it shows a situation which is really difficult to manage), and it imposes a matter

\(^{24}\) Source: Caritas Statistical dossier and the Migrantes Foundation “Immigration 2003”

\(^{25}\) Source: Ibidem
of the utmost importance, not only in relationships between workers, but also in relationships with the employers. Finally, we ask ourselves a multitude of questions linked with the most general of cultural diversities: from the role of woman within different cultures, to personal habits, to the way in which they have contact with others and last, but not least, the consideration of work itself.

As is easily understood, here we are dealing with very practical problems, which however involve different levels (Interpersonal relationships amongst equals, but also between operative structures and management), and that can also deeply influence not only the quality of work, but also the social atmosphere both inside the factory and, more generally, outside, in the surrounding territory. It is obvious how such problems have important relapses also in the civil society in its entirety, and therefore the solutions and the answers cannot be searched for only within the single productive micro-cosmos. For this, the most interesting realities at Italian level are those in which, not only the company, but the entire surrounding territory, has become involved in order to manage this cultural transformation. Undoubtedly, in the cases in which integration can be considered successful, the ability of the various actors involved when facing the theme of immigration and the integration of the immigrant workforce in the workplace, not as if they were facing a problem to solve but as a possible wealth to valorise, is evident.

2.1.10 internationalisation and Italian companies

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, in the Italian economy, the local production organisation system, made up mainly of small and medium enterprises, is of considerable importance and has represented a factor of important competitive advantage. With respects to other countries, in fact, these small and medium enterprise conglomerates specialised in traditional sectors (e.g. light industry and other mature sectors) have been able to ensure considerable economic performances, exceeding structural establishment limits – in terms of specialisation and scales of economy– of which it would otherwise be deficient.

Apart from a general economic importance, it is the specificity of international market openings procedures – in particular in the industrial districts which characterise the productive chains of the made-in-Italy label – to render the local production organisation a fundamental aspect to examine in detail. Above all, this is the same for the commercial opening. In fact, there are many different analyses which confirm the other inclination towards the export of industrial districts. Even if during the last two years one has seen the export business in evident signs of difficulty, the district formula seems, in reality, to still
represent an important resource of the Italian economy both in terms of occupational
dynamism, and in order to ensure advantages compared within international commerce.
Vice versa, the economic theory and indicators deriving from this have traditionally put the
contribution of small and medium enterprises in second place, as a leading factor of
innovation and internationalisation of national economies. Economic literature on
productive internationalisation procedures has mainly dealt with large companies,
characterised by an example of multinational management, assuming therefore the
vertically integrated large companies as the main subject of investigation. The
internationalisation of production is, in this perspective, an extension abroad of the
company’s owners’ borders. Consequently, the instrument which allows the company to
spread its control over the production activities carried out abroad is that of direct foreign
investments, which is expressed both by means of the creation of new productive implants
(green fields), and via the acquisition (of controlling or minority shares) of the capital of the
foreign company.
To base the analysis of the international projection of the Italian economy only on the
multinational dimension seems however reductive and inadequate, as the relative
information concerning direct foreign investments furnishes a measure which does not
consider different forms of international integration, joint ventures, and more generally,
non-equity operations. A total evaluation of the companies’ international dimension must
consider the foreign projection not only of production, but of the entire evaluation system.
When observing the company as a system of relationships which are selected and
managed to produce the maximum value for the client in terms of bids, internationalisation
expresses the way in which a company refers to foreign markets in order to represent the
most appropriate way the network of relationships, acquaintances, competencies and
useful resources are capable of realising the final output (from an operative point of view
but also by means of immaterial resources, such as Research and development, design,
patents etc.) and distributing it to clients.
The complicated picture of the international dimension of the district companies can be
reconstructed at least in part due to certain indicators\textsuperscript{26}: the value of exportation; the
capability of the structured commercial amenities of the foreign markets; the referral to
international productive networks for the realisation of the output. With respects to these
three values, a significant picture of the main companies’ international openings of the
local development systems emerges (fig. 3). With respects to downstream markets,
companies have a strong vocation for exporting, with an average of 44\% of exportation
compared to the company turnover, as mentioned previously, as well as a growing ability

\textsuperscript{26} Source: Tedis – Formez Observatory, 2004.
to encourage market outlet, with 37.4% of companies which have learnt how to develop at least partial forms of direct market control by means of commercial branches, franchising networks and their own sales outlets. With respects to upstream markets, productive internationalisation, upon which the Point project has mainly concentrated, totally involves 28.7% of companies. Such a value is even more important when referring to the North East and to the mechanical and fashion industries.

Tab. 1.2.1 The internationalisation of production in Italy by region and districts (Source: Tedis – Formez, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Area</th>
<th>Internationalisation</th>
<th>% on total</th>
<th>% on total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v.a.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>v.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-Furnishings</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Agriculture</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asides from numbers, it is interesting to highlight the existence of important cases of the internationalisation of entire districts, or part of them, with the beginning of trans-national integration procedures which have involved, not only companies, but an even larger network of individuals, including local Italian institutions and those of the country of destination, Chambers of Commerce, and the associative industrial world. We can quote, for example, the Samorin Project, in Slovakia. The aim of the project, started in 2003, and promoted by the Industrial Association of Vicenza, is to recreate within an area of 500,000 square metres a relations system which exists within a typical North-Eastern industrial district in the mechanical and electronic sectors. This has the aim of carrying out an internationalisation procedure of the “system”, which proposes to exceed the scarcity of the resources of the singular small and medium enterprises, so as to offer a solution aimed at opening new Eastern European markets and being so close to the end market, without however, having to exclusively follow cost reduction policies. At present, 14 companies have been involved for a total investment cost of 12 million Euros.
There are other similar cases— at Timisoara in Romania, the Brčko project in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Uberlandia project in Minas Gerais in Brasil -, which are witnesses of an increasing outward opening of the Italian productive system.

The international opening of Italian small and medium enterprises constitutes a key aspect in the cultural integration processes, for two kinds of reasons. Firstly, because the comparison on a large scale with other cultures within the original territories of this latter group contributes in a significant way to favour malleability and the opening towards something “different”. We consider Italy as not having a long tradition of immigration in its own territory, and therefore it is not yet mature enough to face and manage the problems and difficulties of comparison with different populations. Historically, on the other hand, Italy, has not experienced - or has only partially experienced- differently from the other European powers,— the season of colonialism, and therefore has had less opportunities in which to measure itself, and to mingle with cultures different to its own. Still today, the strong “particularism” which characterises the Italian cultural system, with deep regional differences, whether provincial or municipal, do not always correspond with an ability to welcome and integrate radically different cultural systems. Obviously this is a step that must be taken: Thus, the initiatives which companies are taking to open in new territories, not only in terms of commercial exportation, but of a real transferral of a “network of knowledge” are an important sign.

The second reason, closely connected to the first, is represented by the fact that the cultural integration process can be considered to have been completely “initiated” only when a culture, in this case the local Italian one, opens itself to others in two directions: by welcoming a “different” individual within its own territory— and by integrating with the “different” individual within “another” territory.

2.1.11 Multinational companies in Italy
As has already been mentioned in the previous paragraphs, there are 1,079 multinational companies present in Italy. Looking at these realities from the point of view of intercultural workplace means assuming a different perspective with respects to that followed up to this point in the analysis. Within the multinational companies present in Italy the theme of intercultural workplace is not introduced in terms of the insertion of the foreign workforce into the productive cycles; the cultures which in fact are compared are not those of workers coming from unlike geographical origins, but those of the mother-company on the one hand, and those of Italy on the other, to which the majority of human resources belong, often also of the management, employed in the Italian main or branch office.
A comparison which is, therefore, mainly between an organisation and its reference “cultural system”– the mother-company – and groups of people belonging to a different cultural system – the Italian human resources which are employed within the company. Both realities live together in this reference world, with different weights depending on the strength of the discipline or the controls carried out by the mother-company. It is, however, unavoidable that a wide range of occasions of comparison between the three cultures present themselves, the “corporate” one of the Country hosting the company, that of origin of resources working in it: such occasions however mainly regards management, personally involved in conventions, meetings, visits with the mother-company, which create a “land of exchange”.

The origins of most of the multinational companies present in Italy are to be taken into consideration: as has been mentioned, these are mainly European or American companies – even if there is also a growing presence of Japanese and Chinese enterprises--; cultural differences are therefore inferior to those when integrating with oriental, African or Arab populations.

To conclude we can also speak about intercultural workplace in this case, but in very shaded tones and colours, for the two previously mentioned reasons: on the one hand, the fact that it is a “virtual” comparison, between people and organisations; and on the other for the kind of cultural examples involved, in many ways similar to the Italian, in that it is linked to the “western” line of thought.

2.2 Cultural Diversity in the Public Sector

2.2.1 Reference Framework: the public sector

Before facing the theme of intercultural workplace within the public sector, it is necessary to define the reference framework for analysis: the public sector introduces some specifics and peculiarities, some cases are typically Italian, which require some fundamental preliminary observations. In particular, it is necessary to focus on three aspects.

First of all, it is necessary to clarify what is meant from the economic and sociological point of view as the “public sector”, starting from its overlapping with the “private sector”. The


28 The matter of the distinction between “public” and “private” has already been mentioned in the previous chapter on private work, and is studied here in more detail focusing specifically on “public”. They are Public Law Authorities, former Law Decree. 17th March 1995 n. 157, the bodies, complete with state of legal entity, created in order to satisfy specific aims of general interest which are not of industrial or commercial nature, and whose activities are mainly financed by the State, by the Regional or the Local Authorities, or by other public bodies or law authorities, or whose management is put under their control or whose administrative bodies, management or surveillance are made up of, at least 50% of components appointed by the same public individuals. Subsequently, in a easy-to-follow way, there is a list of the main bodies of public law: special companies, institutions and societies as in Art. 22 of the law dated 8th June 1990, n. 142, as well as public limited companies with a prevailing private capital as in Article 12 of the law dated 23rd December
public sector can be distinguished in two main sub-sectors: the central Public Administration and the Local Authorities. These can both be imagined as a network of articulated, complex structures, often linked closely to a private universe. If therefore, on the one hand, the border between public and private is a significant one, since the two worlds refer to different regulations and practices, on the other hand, there are many “frontier areas” where these two territories mix with each other: think of the many special companies, of consortia or the private legal form public utilities, with public-private issue of shares– which see the co-presence of public and private individuals– or, even, of the great industrial groups once belonging entirely to the state and which are now rapidly becoming privatised companies (e.g. Trenitalia, ENEL).

In the following paragraphs we will study in detail the more specific connection between the two sub-sectors – The central Administration and the Local Authorities. It is to be considered that such a structure is subject to frequent and continual changes, due to the modifications which influence legislation. It is not the aim of this document to outline the transformation– even if recent– undergone by public structures. It results as being rather useful to supply a “snap shot” of the main existing structures, with reference to the legislation which is presently in force. As regards the Central Administration, the following table shows the different Ministries and their organisation.29

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29 We refer to the following legislative dispositions: Legislative Decree 300/1999 (identification of the new Ministries); L. 137/2002 (the government’s possibility to enforce subsequent legislative decrees in order to modify the structure of the singular Ministries); L. 186/2004 (provisions for the modification of certain Ministries); subsequent Legislative Decrees enforced according to the Law n.137/2002.
### Tab. 1.2.2 The division of ministerial first-level structures (Source: The Department of Civil Service)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment and protection of</td>
<td>6 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the territory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage and cultural activities</td>
<td>4 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 general regional management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>General secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Office</td>
<td>5 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management (the number has not yet been specified)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Infrastructures</td>
<td>4 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 general regional management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive Activities</td>
<td>11 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and University Education</td>
<td>2 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33 central general management offices and peripherals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>3 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and social policies</td>
<td>General secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defence</td>
<td>Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>4 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 general management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural and forestry</td>
<td>2 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policies</td>
<td>7 general management offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy and Finance</td>
<td>5 departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58 general management offices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Various central Ministries correspond to structures which are operative on the territory, inside which further levels of division and complexity are introduced and which constitute the sub-sectors of public work. A list of the main Ministries follows:

- **Education**: state schools, including the institutes of primary education, secondary schools of both lower and upper levels, universities, apart from other specialist pre- or post-university training authorities;
- **Health**: hospitals, ASL (Local Health Authority), social services and agencies which are socially operative;
- **Defence and Safety**: Police and the Armed Forces;
- **Transport**: in this sector, the tendency towards privatisation has been very significant during the last few years especially as regards national transport (Trenitalia, The Motorway Society), but in the public sector colossal companies still hold tight (Alitalia), other than the local transport societies (often special or municipalized companies);
- **Art, culture and entertainment**: state-owned cultural-artistic heritage, theatres, museums and places destined for the use of public entertainment owned by the public, public TV and radio;
- Territory: public lands department and its relative management;
- Environment: natural parks, reserves, protected state or regional environments;

Instead, Local Authorities are public government structures on the territory, and therefore: the Regions (20, of which 5 have a special statute, with a superior level of independence recognised at a statutory level in virtue of the peculiarity of their territory, and 2 independent provinces); the Provinces (103); the Municipalities (8,101, are thus divided: 5,836 with less than 5,000 inhabitants, 1,792 with a number of inhabitants ranging from between 5,000 and 20,000, 431 with a number of inhabitants ranging from between 20,000 and 100,000 and 42 with more than 100,000 inhabitants); The Mountainous Communities (local authorities made up of mountainous and partially mountainous communes, also belonging to different provinces, for the valorisation of the mountainous areas; there are 356 recognised mountainous communities); such Authorities are internally structured based on the complexity and size of the reference territory, and then act as collectors of vast networks of external bodies (agencies, special companies) which promulgate their own power either directly or indirectly.

Speaking of Local Authorities, it is necessary to mention the combination of law transformations which have influenced them during the last ten years; a process fruit of the radical mutation of the institutional concept of the Local Authorities’ role, which has found its culmination in the Law dated 15th March 1997 n. 159 (the Bassanini Law) which puts into force the so-called “Administrative federalism of an unaltered Constitution”, and, furthermore, in the modifications of the V Title of the Constitutional Paper– operated by the Constitutional Law dated 18th October 2001 n. 3 -, with which the Local Authorities are given vast fields of intervention for the society. Therefore, they are forced to fully recuperate quality, efficiency and managerial effectiveness. In this framework, therefore, there emerges the centrality of the professional capabilities and the role of responsibility which is assumed by the managers and along with them the entire body of the human resources involved.

The features outlined regarding the recent legislative evolution of Local Authorities offer a suggestion to mention the second consideration which we should make before introducing a more specific analysis of the theme of intercultural workplace within the public sector, so as to clearly see the specificities of “public work” today.

Public work in its entirety– both at a central and at a local level – has been taken over during the past few years by an important reform to improve the efficiency of the public administration and unification with the private employment relationship discipline. This
transformation process has led to the new definition of new rules as regards the employment relationship, the system of the trade union system, the jurisdiction concerning the job disputes which, today, is attributed to an Ordinary Judge. In particular, the discipline of management has been influenced by very significant changes, aimed at strengthening the principle of the distinction between political discipline and technical-operative management duties and stamping in managerial activities, especially in organising of human and instrumental resources, features of flexibility, responsibility and independence. As regards human resources more generally, the intention is that of overcoming the formalistic administrative example, by adopting measures aimed at giving the administrations and management responsibility concerning the organisation and evaluation of human resources. For this reason, the Department has, in its recent past, put a series of “system” actions into play in collaboration with Universities in order to improve entrance training; the directive regarding training in order to improve the quality and efficiency of training operations; the initiation of an observatory on the management of public administration personnel; a monitoring of the Ministries’ administrative and managerial activities directives for 2002.

In this perspective, as an employer, the public administration must become gradually more virtuous, carrying out competency analyses, taking care of relationships with the initial and permanent training worlds, guaranteeing training and the involvement of staff, especially by means of internal communication, just as it must also support the administrations to elaborate performance evaluation systems and encourage wage incentive systems.

The final consideration concerns the relationship between the public sector and the citizen-user. The past few years have witnessed a significant reconsideration of this relationship, in a perspective which is more and more “user-oriented”, aimed at the citizen-user, who becomes the “nucleus” around which one tries to build a selection of services that the public sector should guarantee. The tendency is therefore to move from an approach based on offering a certain package of services, to an approach based on the comprehension of citizens’ requirements and needs, to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness. It is an aim which is very difficult to put into practice, especially when considering the heterogeneity and the complexity of the universe of the beneficiaries of the public services. Due to this intrinsic difficulty, a procedure is being considered which, up until now, has been talked of more than actually put into practice, but which should be carefully considered, especially as regards the impact it has on the theme of intercultural workplace.
2.2.2 Public sector and the intercultural workplace

After having supplied a simplified framework of the public sector, the following paragraphs will be dedicated to outlining the position of the theme of intercultural workplace within the public sector, firstly with a brief review of the main effects that the recent socio-cultural transformations linked with globalisation have had on the public sector together with the rapid movement of people, the migratory phenomenon, then with a clarification of the perspectives from which one can observe the theme of intercultural workplace in the public sector.

2.2.3 The effects of the socio-cultural changes on the public sector

The public sector is deeply influenced by socio-cultural changes, and by means of discipline and legislation policies, it contributes to addressing and directing these changes. There are three transformations connected with the theme of intercultural workplace on which it is necessary to concentrate our attention to understand in which way the public in Italy has contributed to favouring or determining such transformations and, vice versa, how these have influenced the organisation of public works.

First of all, the path of integration within the European Union: here, we are dealing with a slow process, which has been going on for years now, being at the origin of the progressive opening of the frontiers between EU countries, with the consequent freedom of circulation of people and therefore with the increase of cultural exchange opportunities, comparisons with different cultures, integration (e.g. consider the opportunities within the educational environment, linked with Erasmus and Socrates projects). We can say that the public sector has accepted such changes and has favoured them in the meantime, by means of a vast legislative discipline which favours and supports the possibilities of cultural exchange between EU-citizen countries and at the same time the rights of the EU-citizen go alongside those of the Italian citizen (note how amongst the requirements of admission to any public competition, Italian citizenship is today equivalent to that of any other EU country).

Secondly, the progressive increase of the migratory flows towards Italy (+ 28.4% from 2003 to 2004\(^{30}\)). It deals with a crucial phenomenon for Italy for several reasons: first of all, the relative novelty of the phenomenon, for a nation which up until less than 30 years ago had never seen migratory flows towards the country and now finds itself having to manage with integration problems without having any definite examples to follow. Then, as regards the real difficulties of integration and absorption of the new cultures coming into the country, as mentioned previously, it is still “green” and without a mature history of

opening itself towards something considered as being “different”. As for the urgency that
the immigration problem causes for Italy due to its specific territorial shape, where the
peninsular form and so the presence of mainly coastal frontiers create a kind of “outpost”
for embarkation of a great number of illegal immigrants into Europe, with all the numerous
safety problems connected. These include reception, control, relationships with the
countries of origin; finally as for the apparent contradiction between the necessity to limit
the entry of non-EU citizens and the continually increasing request for immigrant workers
on behalf of an industrial framework which, especially in the North-East, sees one of the
most important elements for its very survival in these resources.
All these are very important matters, which mainly influence the public sector’s attention,
which, even before the civil society, is called upon to find solutions and answers for such
dilemmas. In such a way, the recent legislative dispositions are to be considered (the
aimed at regulating immigrant entrance; on the other hand, similarly, efforts made by the
public sector should be considered which are favouring the integration procedure of
immigrants within the community of arrival and consequently within society: there are
many cultural integration projects especially in schools, Italian language courses for
foreigners, the introduction of courses or seminars on creeds different to the Catholic
religion, communal leaflets which are distributed in several languages, etc.
Finally, the productive internationalisation, which, as explained in the previous chapter,
brings about wider and wider international opening procedures of our companies abroad
(often in countries with very different cultures to ours) and vice versa regarding dialogue,
even if only on a commercial level, of foreign companies towards our country (China surely
represents the most obvious case today). Also with respects to these phenomena the
public sector is called upon to supply guidelines, in order to indicate directives; the
impression is however that, when considering the theme of European integration, the
orientation of the public sector has been that of a maximum opening, with the tendency of
favouring and supporting the phenomenon. With respects to immigration, a more marked
route has been taken instead, a “watch-and-wait” for the next evaluation and system of
regulations, aimed at creating obstacles and limitations31. As for the matter of
internationalisation, the public sector has still not clearly decided which attitude to take; a
feeling of uncertainty however prevails, which influences both legislation and executive
provisions. This is more than understandable, when taking into consideration the “youth” of

31 Here we do not intend to express a judgement of merit with respects to these two positions, which answer,
on the other hand, different problems and needs: the intention of the writer is to objectively state ongoing
tendencies which are present today, as they can be perceived by an analysis of the policies enforced at
present.
the internationalisation phenomenon. Certainly, the public sector’s ability to assume a true governance of these phenomena, not only that of internationalisation, constitutes today an important and crucial challenge, especially aimed at real cultural integration.

2.2.4 The dimensions of intercultural workplace within the public sector

We will now try to look in detail at what we mean by intercultural workplace within the public sector. In this paragraph, we will look at the public sector in its entirety, according to the co-ordinates given, and therefore remaining at a general analysis level, so as to be able to apply this to several public sub-sectors. In the following paragraphs, with the intention of fully understanding the peculiarities of the theme of intercultural workplace within the public sector, a focus upon one sector in particular - the health service - will be demonstrated – identified as being particularly important for the present study.

To face the theme of intercultural workplace within the environment of public sector, particular attention in two clearly different and complementary dimensions is required: that of relationships at work, between colleagues or between individuals who share a common workplace (“interculture” at work) and that of relationships between operators and clients (intercultural workplace in a wider sense).

In Italy, within the public sector, the phenomenon of “interculture” at work is still very slow to emerge: we can observe a very limited presence of foreign workers, or those coming from different cultures, within public offices or more generally in jobs which belong to the civil service. This is due to two main reasons. Firstly, as we have mentioned several times, the immigration phenomenon is still very new to Italy: homogeneous and consolidated cultural communities do not exist or are only now beginning to come into existence, and which keep their own cultural specificity but at the same time are fully integrated into society. Italy, for the immigrant, is still mainly a “country of transition”, in which to find a source of income for a life which often remains strongly anchored in the country of origin. Consequently, most of the immigrants are employed in manual jobs, especially in the factory assembly chain. On the other hand, educational qualifications are not compared to the same level of instruction obtained in the country of origin and the public competitions create a further “entrance barrier”, and so it is not uncommon to see graduates in their country of origin to find themselves having to carry out basic jobs. So, due to the fact that the range of jobs in the public sector are linked to the educational qualification possessed, or they coincide with white-collar worker or general clerk positions, we can understand why most immigrants do not occupy these jobs.

The second reason is less clear, and concerns collective behaviour and opinions: a rather conservative mentality is still present in Italy, which does not make the overcoming of
cultural barriers any easier; as the development of a multi-ethnic society has still not taken place, it is difficult that the insertion of people coming from different cultures within the most important structures of the same society be welcomed naturally. These considerations do not create conflicts with some important exceptions: other than the more and more frequent use of individuals coming from cultures which are different to the Italian culture for all those “exhausting” jobs which still are considered to come under the heading of public sector – ranging from road maintenance services, refuse collection, cleaning of public services – surely deserve the attention of the insertion of a certain number of professional figures: this is so in the health service, of nurses, which make up an important category of qualified people within this sector, which we will deal with in more detail in the next paragraph.

The Intercultural workplace is a very different thing, with reference to the relationships between the public authorities, and therefore the people employed within the structure and the public itself. The public individual finds himself/herself having to face, more and more frequently, people who are not Italian: people of foreign origin who have acquired Italian citizenship, but who are also illegal immigrants, community citizens who have established themselves in Italy or who only stay here for a certain period, foreign students, simple tourists or travellers.

If, as we have seen previously, the public sector shows, as least in its intentions, a growing interest in the needs of the consumers who benefit from the services offered, at the same time, as revealed in the figures above, if the presence of foreigners in Italy should constantly increase, then it is evident that it is the very interaction between the public offices and consumers coming from different cultures which becomes one of the privileged contexts for the intercultural workplace. The interaction between these people forces people who work in the public sector to face different needs and requirements, and therefore ways of thinking, mentalities and cultures which prove to be very different from those of Italians. The main spaces for this exchange are naturally the front-offices – for example the Public Relations Offices (URP), but more generally all public front-offices –, where dialogue between Public Administration and consumers is foreseen: this is true for all sectors of the Public Administration as occasions of interaction with people of foreign nationalities present themselves in the most different and varied contexts possible.

Moreover, there are environments, which for the kind of service offered, can see both occasions of cultural confrontation and depth of such exchanges emphasised, and into which, a further detailed study is necessary, for the aim of this analysis. The education service and, as mentioned beforehand, the health service will be dealt with: we will speak
about the first sector in detail in the next chapter, whilst the following paragraphs will be dedicated to the second service.

2.2.5 Focus on the Health Service: the general structure of the Health Service in Italy
Interest in the health service with respects to an analysis on “interculturalism” seems indicated by two main reasons, strictly connected to the two categories which we have introduced.

As for “interculture” at work, the health service constitutes an interesting exception to the public sector’s tendency towards the scarce presence of foreign workers. The exception mainly regards the important role of the nurse and the caregiver, carried out more and more by people who are not Italian: the latter is a specific Italian phenomenon, which is the explanation for certain anomalies of the system, and that for this reason deserve a detailed study.

As regards “interculture” at work, health service structures are surely one of the main interfaces between the public sector and foreign people resident in Italy, as the health service represents the answer to one of the primary needs of the individual. For this very reason, hospitals, Local Health Authorities (Asl) or social services are often a window which offers an outlook also onto that world of unauthorised and often illegal immigration, which also includes an important slice of the presence of non-EU citizens in Italy and the problem is still not very easy to manage. On the other hand, health is also part of the individual’s intimacy, and therefore often interaction between the socio-medical operator and the patient cannot remain at a superficial level, even if it requires profound intellectual and emotional involvement. This involves mainly discussion by whoever has the duty of taking care of people’s health: socio-medical operators often find themselves having to face practical language problems, but also communication difficulties in the widest sense; but they must also personally face radically different cultural universes with all the problems which can derive from these.

Before looking at these aspects in detail, we will try to define the limits of the reference framework: the following chart illustrates the health service structure (with the representation also of the private health service).

Fig. 1.2.3 The Italian Health Service (elaboration by the Ministry of Health)
2.2.6 “Interculture” at work: medical personnel, nurses and caregivers

The graphics in figure 2.3 show the weight of the nursing staff with respects to total staff employed within the national health service: of a total of 659,854 employees in the Local Health Authorities (Asl) and in the National Health trusts, 262,807 are male/female nurses (39.82% of the total amount)\(^{32}\).

Fig. 1.2.4 National Health Service employed staff (Source: Ministry of Health, 2003)

\(^{32}\) Source: Ministry of Health, General management of the information system, Office of Statistical Management (data 2003).
Instead, in figure 2.4, the division of the total amount of nursing staff is shown (746,824 employees) amongst the various health service structures. Apart from the Local Health Authorities (Asl) and the National Health trusts (AO), also the public health care amenities, the hospitalisation and health care Institutes are directly managed by the Local Health Authorities (Asl). Residential psychiatric institutes, and officially recognised structures, that are University Teaching hospitals, Scientific research institutes, hospitalisation and health care, classified or similar hospitals, private qualified institutes and amenities managed by the Local Health and research authorities. Out of the total amount, 75.1% is represented by female staff.

Fig. 1.2.5 Distribution of the medical personnel within the National Health Service (Source: Ministry of Health, 2003)

In 2002, there were 2,600 foreign nurses coming from more than 50 States throughout the world – especially from Romania and Poland. Everything is left, to suppose that, in the meantime, this figure has tripled. This is also due to the abolition of entry limits into Italy with permission to work as nurses: the category in fact is now inserted into the special
“figures” exempt from having a definite numeric target. It deals with a precious presence for the National Health Service, considering the increasing lack of personnel that the Italian nursing staff can no longer cover. The main reason for this is in the missing link between scarce recognition, both in terms of job satisfaction and in wages that the profession of nursing has today in Italy, as well as high investments, both in terms of years of study and of emotional involvement that the professional practice requires. It deals, especially in certain areas of the country (mainly in the North), of a real emergency, which, in the past two years, has caused the Ministry of Health to delegate the competency of the approval of professional qualifications to many regions, with the aim of accelerating the procedure of recognising the professionalism of foreign workers.

It is therefore evident how the theme of cultural integration is particularly new within health structures, and especially regarding many professional nurses, amongst which we can find a mixture of roots and many different cultures.

If the multi-ethnic personality of the army of nurses in Italy is the main definite aspect of intercultural workplace in this sector, one should not forget the strong “Pro Europe” implicit thrust within the practice of this profession. They will open themselves to the “European challenge” is very strong amongst nursing associations, i.e. to continually extend dialogue with nurses from other EU countries and to facilitate the creation of a true European network, which finds its strongest points in sharing and cultural exchange in order to stabilise the profession due to the strong stimuli that nurses receive both on a professional and above all emotional level. It has continual need for growth and renewal. Certain initiatives follow this pattern: the exchange between Italian and community nurses within the Eures project; the idea of dedicating the 14th National Nursing Congress, in Rome in October 2005, to the theme: “The Italian nursing profession in Europe: the meeting and comparison of aims and values.”

The figure of the caregiver deserves partial consideration. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, it is an “army” of workers, but furthermore of invisible female workers, who are often underpaid, and illegal to boot, despite the attempt of the recent act of indemnity foreseen by the Bossi-Fini law to highlight a continually increasing phenomenon.

There are about one and a half million caregivers in Italy, 85% of home help and domestic caregivers are non-EU citizens. As we are dealing with a profession that Italians no longer wish to do, but which is still extremely important, especially as regards

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33 As foreseen by the Bossi-Fini Law n.189/2002, Art. 22.
34 The Eures Project (European Employment Services), promoted by the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies has the aim of creating a international co-operation network in order to promote and facilitate the free circulation of workers within the European economic territory.
35 The information refers generically to caregivers, home help and domestic assistants, given the difficulty to trace clear and precise distinctions amongst these profiles, also due to the lack of precise regulations in our country.
assistance for the elderly, it is becoming more and more popular to consider the ongoing socio-cultural changes (the lengthening of the average lifetime, the increase in the number of women workers, who are no longer “caregivers” in the family, passing from the extended family to the mono-nuclear family). 40% of these individuals come from South America, Salvador, Peru, Ecuador, 30% are from the Philippines, 10% are from India (in particular from Sri Lanka), whilst the rest are from East Europe, (Romania, Bulgaria and ex-Yugoslavia). We are dealing therefore, with professional figures without real assistance, but which above all undergo a de-qualification (we often deal with people who are graduates in their country of origin, but here their educational qualifications are not recognised) which certainly does not contribute to favour socio-cultural integration process. If we add to this the difficulties that these women must face as to the process of uprooting from their own country (we are talking here usually of married women with children, who leave their family in their country of origin, hoping to be reunited with them soon but this often requires years of separation), one can understand how caregivers in Italy represent one of the main cultural integration problems. This is not only due to the obvious need to meet problems halfway and the suffering of these people, but above all because these constitute an important resource for the wellbeing of a society like the Italian society, which is getting older and older from a registry office point of view, and therefore needing a “caregiver”. As long as these individuals do their best, then social and cultural integration represents a difficult but essential intermediate passage.

2.2.7 Intercultural workplace: the relationship with customers
Another crucial question which cuts across the health service and the theme of intercultural workplace is that regarding the meeting of health workers with people belonging to other cultures. The following tables offer a cross-cut of the situation, illustrating the numbers of patients who are not Italian and who have been admitted to hospitals. Obviously, we must add the cases which present themselves to the Local Health Authority offices (AsI) active on the territory and the interventions of the social services to these.

Tab. 1.2.3 Admissions to hospital of foreign patients per territory (Source: Ministry of Health, 2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Cases of admission to hospital of non-Italian</th>
<th>National cases of admission to hospital</th>
<th>Cases of admission of non-Italian patients every 1,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

36 Source: Corriere della Sera – Corriere Lavoro, September 2002.
There are many complicated problems raised by the care and assistance of non-Italian patients. They range from communication difficulties (mainly due to language), to most delicate aspects of religion or the specific traditions of a population. In many cases, these

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of origin</th>
<th>Admission to hospital of non-Italian patients</th>
<th>Var. % 1998-2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe E U</td>
<td>35,627</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>5,771</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>59,573</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>26,514</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>71,184</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>5,962</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central-South America</td>
<td>22,593</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stateless</td>
<td>9,376</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>238,317</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many complicated problems raised by the care and assistance of non-Italian patients. They range from communication difficulties (mainly due to language), to most delicate aspects of religion or the specific traditions of a population. In many cases, these

**Tab. 1.2.4** Total admissions to hospital of foreign patients per area of origin (Source: Ministry of Health, 2001)
can cause conflicts with the medical practices used within our health service: often just finding mediation between the request for care and the respect for cultural specificity of the individual constitutes the most difficult challenge, and facing such a dilemma, the initiative is still left to the single health worker.

Beyond the real problems which emerge from interaction between health amenity and foreigners—some of which will be brought up in the work packages following this project, via the focus group activity and interviews which will allow us to study in detail matters mentioned in the first screening phase. It is important from here on to emphasise the centrality of the variable territory with respects to the phenomenon of the treatment of foreign patients: there are many profound differences in Italy between one territory and another as to the number of cases of foreigners being cared for within the health sector and with respects also to the complexity of the management of the phenomenon. This depends both on the concentration of foreigners in a certain area, and on the characteristics that the foreign presence assumes in that area—Countries of origin, the presence of cohesive communities, the level of integration with the local community, the presence of illegal immigrants, etc. In this way, it is difficult to extract true examples, since each territory introduces its own specifics, with solutions studied or invented especially for this purpose: the case of the Reggio Emilia Local Health Unit Authority (Asl) represents an emblematic case: the commencement of a cultural integration process has been, in this case, the fruit of the synergic action of an informal dimension and of a classic organisational approach which works on the professionalism of the operators who work within the medical structures.

2.3 Interculture in the Educational sector

2.3.1 Reference Framework: the educational sector

The school represents the “heart” of any civil society. It is the place where future members of the same society are trained and brought up. It is, therefore, an essential mechanism for a country-system, since the centrality of training as part of the development of the individual is recognised. So, the possibility of cultural, economic, scientific growth, along with social development, and inclination towards renewal are all closely connected with the “school” variable. One understands, therefore, the importance of the educational sector also with respects to the delicate theme of intercultural workplace: it is really the school which is the first great “test bench” where the possibilities of a future society which integrates components that are not culturally homogeneous are experimented. This is due to the fact that the school is the place in which the main actors are people who are still in the development phase and so are more adaptable to change and are without pre-existing
mental ideas which supply important opportunities of comparison with things which are “different”, recognising true richness in them. It is the ability to create moments of true integration between the children of today which are the challenge of integration amongst the adults of tomorrow. We understand therefore why it is right inside the scholastic universe that, during recent years, the largest number of projects and initiatives linked with the theme of intercultural workplace have been started: that is exactly why we have noticed the potential of school environments and the need to start here order to reconsider our system of civil society. For these reasons too, the educational cluster deserves particular attention. Before analysing the true aspects within intercultural workplace some indications are necessary with respects to the Italian education system in its entirety.

The Italian education system presents certain important features, partially due to the historical evolution of schools in Italy. The way it is structured today is partially linked to recent legislative developments which symbolise consistent changes within the education system. In the following paragraphs, the education system structure, still in force today, will be illustrated, only briefly mentioning the main points of the non-government bill. With the aim of clearly understanding the reference framework, it is equally important to consider the state of transition in which the entire system is in today. A sign which, beyond that of the intrinsic contents of the reform, is of a strong inclination towards a great renewal.

2.3.2 The education cycles

At present, the education system, as is foreseen by the law dated 28th March 2003 n. 53, is divided as is illustrated in table below.

**Tab. 1.2.5 The organization of the Educational system**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of years of attendance</th>
<th>Obligatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Junior</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary (1st level)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Secondary (2nd level)</td>
<td>Professional Institutes</td>
<td>3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical Institutes</td>
<td>3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art Institutes</td>
<td>3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher-training Institutes</td>
<td>4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grammar school</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>3-year Diploma</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As is shown in the chart, at present, compulsory schooling is forecast for a total of 9 years up until the age of 15 (5 years of primary school, 3 years of lower secondary school, 1 year of upper secondary school). The introduction of the obligation of the first year of upper secondary school represents the first step towards the lengthening of the scholastic permanence of adolescents – who, as we can see later, in further detail, represents one of the aims of the reforms which are at discussion phase at present. The upper secondary school offers several study courses, leading to three main kinds of education: an education which emphasizes the practical side of work, aimed at the future profession (professional institutes), another which is more technical/specialist (Technical, teacher training, art institutes,) and yet another which is more theoretical (grammar schools). The charts below show the distribution of students through the various education system stages and the division, also in percentages, of students enrolled at upper secondary schools: particularly with respects to this latter data, we can observe the consistency of the students enrolled, firstly at technical institutes, at professional institutes and then at scientific grammar schools.

Tab. 1.2.6 Students enrolled during the 2001-2002 academic year (Source: MIUR, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students enrolled by order of school –</th>
<th>Students enrolled at the upper secondary school by kind of Institute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic year 2001/02</td>
<td>Academic year 2001/02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery School</td>
<td>940,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>2,531,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary School</td>
<td>1,704,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Secondary School</td>
<td>2,448,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,624,526</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Grammar school</td>
<td>223,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Grammar school</td>
<td>427,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher training institutes</td>
<td>168,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.88%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical institutes</td>
<td>934,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Institutes</td>
<td>555,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutes of Art and Design</td>
<td>59,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Grammar school</td>
<td>34,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,448,389</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100 %</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important to look at this information considering however the alterations foreseen by the re-modification project of the entire education system which is today under examination by Parliament: during the past two years, in fact, a deep reconsideration has been developed as regards schools in Italy, which has brought along with it a series of non-Government bills still in the approval phase (in particular we can consider the Draft delegate Law “General rules regarding education and essential levels of the system performance”\textsuperscript{37}, promoted by the Minister of Education).

The reform intends to greatly modify the present structure of the education system, starting from the education system and the types of institutes. First of all, an extension of compulsory schooling up to the age of 18 is foreseen; furthermore a subdivision of upper secondary schools into two separate systems is programmed: that of grammar schools, widened and developed in their training offer to prepare students to enter the university world: That of professional education, of the variable duration of 3 - 5 years, to create specific professions to be introduced into the world of work, and the management of which is of regional competency.

2.3.3 State and Private School

The other important distinction necessary to comprehend the functioning of the Italian educational system is that between state and non-state school, a difference which marks the entire training procedure and that crosses various educational institutes.

The enforcement of the law of 10th March 2000 n. 62 has sanctioned the creation of a unique national education system, of which the non-State educational institutions have the same status as officially recognised schools, with the main aim of expanding the training offer and the consequent generalisation of education, from childhood throughout the entire duration of an individual’s life. For the “officially recognised schools” one intends the non-State educational institutions, including those of Local Authorities, which, from nursery school up until secondary school, correspond to the general education systems and are coherent with families’ educational needs and respect quality and efficiency requirements, verified by the Educational Administration. Officially recognised schools, since they carry out a public service, must formulate an educational project which is coherent with the principles of the Constitution, a professional training plan in conformity with existent educational systems, as well as institute collegial bodies and welcome disabled students.

Non-State schools can be distinguished even further in schools which are managed by local authorities other than the State (the municipal boards as regards nursery schools, the

\textsuperscript{37} Non-Government bill known as the “Moratti reform”, named after the present Minister of Education.
provincial boards as regards upper secondary schools) and schools managed by private, lay or religious institutions.

Non-State primary schools are divided into: authorised private schools (administered by citizens with legally recognised educational qualifications, and in possession of the authorisation issued by the headmaster based on government regulations), officially recognised schools (administered by authorities or associations which have a legal identity status), subsidiary schools (opened by private individuals, authorities or associations, with the authorisation of the Director of Studies in the place where another state or officially recognised school does not exist, and maintained by partial State funding).

Secondary schools can assume legal denominations only if they have teaching aims and systems which conform to the corresponding State institutions; they can be divided into legally recognised schools or accredited schools according to the guarantees of equivalence which are foreseen by the State schools.

2.3.4 The effects of the socio-cultural changes on the Educational sector

The Italian education system, as has been mentioned previously, is going through an important transition phase, the results of which are not totally clear and foreseeable. On the other hand, it should be underlined how this present situation is not new and unexpected, but it represents the starting point of a reconsideration process initiated more than ten years ago. The reasons for such a course can be identified within the progressive awareness, on behalf of the system itself and the need to respond to the many encouragements towards change coming from an external environment in rapid evolution.

In fact if, on the one hand, the school as a place of aggregation of young people, has partially contributed to producing the socio-cultural changes of the last century, on the other hand, the school as a system has worked a lot, and still does so, in order to adapt to such changes; among these the phenomenon of immigration, the progressive mixture of different cultures within the society and globalisation are surely to be considered.

Before entering into the specific analysis of what intercultural workplace within Italian schools is today, it is opportune to briefly mention the meaning of the cultural mutations that we have mentioned regarding the world of education. The aspects on which it is worth lingering are those of the progressive opening of frontiers between countries, the reduction of distances and the acceleration of communication and travelling time: what interests the aims of this study is the unexpected transformation of the world into what McLuhan has called the global village, with all the consequences that derive from it, first of all the

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38 Regulations established by the Legislative Decree of 16th April 1994, n. 297 (VIII Title, Non-State education).
increase of migratory flows from countries which are very far away from Italy, both geographically and culturally, and the increased transferral of people between countries of the western area, a transferral which today also tends to continually concern other areas which are economically developed or developing, but which are culturally more distant (Japan, China, Eastern Europe). With respects to the educational universe these phenomena, which represent the two sides of the same coin, have assumed different meanings.

The increase of migratory flows, for a country like Italy, which up until the 1970s was substantially foreign to mixture with cultures different to its own, has meant a progressive openness of society, which, especially in compulsory schooling, has been reflected via the growing presence of foreign students. On the other hand, the increased transferral has been translated into students who have an increased series of opportunities of study-holidays abroad, cultural exchanges with students from other countries, years of study spent in distant countries. The possibilities that in the past few years have been combined assuming several kinds of formulae but which have been internationally recognised (the Erasmus, Socrates programmes, and others which we will speak of in more detail later).

The school has been forced to face these unexpected changes: in particular the primary and lower secondary schools have had to cope with the increase of foreign students in the classroom, whilst in upper secondary schools and in universities, the recourse has become more and more frequent to cultural exchanges amongst students. The following paragraphs will be dedicated to quantifying such phenomena, to analyse the resulting effects, plus the resources and the instruments created by the school in order to find a solution to these changes.

2.3.5 The intercultural contexts

As seen in the charter dedicated to the study of the private sector, it is necessary to identify, within the world of education, what we have defined as intercultural contexts, that is those real spaces which are above all conceptual ones, which can be studied from the point of view of “interculturalism”. These are contexts which are directly connected to the above mentioned socio-cultural changes: school classes, especially within compulsory schools (primary and lower secondary schools), in which multiculturalism is a fact which is becoming more and more ordinary; special cultural exchange programmes amongst students belonging to different countries which involve a growing number of students in upper secondary schools and universities; foreign schools in Italy, which create isolated recesses but which are of great interest to the phenomenon of the mixture between Italian and foreign students.
2.3.6 Classes as places of multiculture

The increase of foreigners who live in Italy is therefore determined mainly by three reasons: a “bureaucratic” reason linked to the recent and intensive procedures of legalisation which allows light to be shed on the presence of foreigners, which previously were kept in the dark and on the brink of illegality; a reason connected with the increase of migratory flows (+ 411,970 units), in constant increase during the past few years; and finally a “demographic” reason, that is the continual increase of children born to foreign citizens resident in our country (regular surplus balance of 31,132 units). The increase of foreign citizens is determinant for the growth of the Italian population, which would otherwise have a debit balance, due to the extremely low number of births which characterise our country. The number of births within foreign families is a countertendency. The chart below summarises this information, and supplies moreover other important data, essential to analyse intercultural workplace in schools: the number of immigrant minors. As of the 1st January 2004, there were 412,432 foreign minors, equal to almost 21% of the total foreign population: the number of minors present in our country is in rapid growth (in the 2001 census they were 282,224), hand-in-hand with the increase of the foreign population and in particular, the most stable component represented by residents. However, with respects to the Census, the mass percentage of this class of the population has diminished due to the fact that (from 21.3% to 20.7%) the inflow of new residents in 2003 is characterised above all by adult individuals, as has already been mentioned due to the considerable amount of legalisation.

Tab. 1.2.7 Demographic indicators of the foreign population resident in Italy, year 2003) (Source: ISTAT)

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39 The data shown in the following paragraph has been extracted mainly from reports of the Ministry of Education, University and Research – General Management for Information Systems and the General Management for the student “With non-Italian citizenship” (2004) and “Investigation into the results of students with non-Italian citizenships” (2005).

The table that follows illustrates numbers relating to the presence of non-Italian students in schools in our country. Foreign pupils at school during the year 2004/2005 were 360,000, 4.2% of the total school population. Source: Ministry of Education, University and Research, Oct 2005. The increase has been considerable over the past 10 years (there were 30,000 during the 1992/93), but it is considerable also with respects to a year ago (+ 50,000).

Fig. 1.2.6 The trend of the foreign pupils in Italy (Source: ISTAT-MIUR, 2004)

The chart that follows shows the incidence of pupils without Italian citizenship in school populations in schools by type of school, distinguishing between State and non-State institutes.

The data shown refers to “pupils without Italian citizenship” and not to “foreign pupils” (even if this term may be used, as in correct usage); consequently the relative data is not shown for “adopted” pupils, neither are children of mixed races, nor nomad pupils with Italian nationality.
90.5% of foreign pupils can be found in State schools, whilst the remaining 9.5% is enrolled at non-State educational institutions: the distribution mirrors the relationship between the two educational populations, which means that foreign pupils are distributed in a homogeneous way within both the State and non-State structures; with the exception of nursery schools, where we can observe a presence of foreigners in private schools, a consequence of the high number of non-State nursery schools in the North, where the concentration of foreigners is more consistent.

The highest percentage of foreigners is found in primary school (40%), which is a sign of concentration of very young foreign citizens, that will soon constitute an interesting base for the new society growing up. Another interesting piece of data is that relating to the geographical distribution of pupils of non-Italian citizenship. The geographical area of the country with the highest percentage is in the North-East, with an incidence of 6.1% and a maximum peak of 8.5% in the first year of primary school; the gap separating the Centre-North (average percentages around 5.5%) and the South (0.9%) and the Islands (0.7%) remains very high. The main concentration in the North can be found especially in certain provinces, such as Mantua, Vicenza, Reggio Emilia, Piacenza, Brescia and Modena.

Finally, there are some indications as regards the countries of origin of the non-Italian pupils (figure 6). In Italian schools, there are 191 citizenships out of 194, a very high figure, which gives us immediately the ideal of the composite and varied nature of classes in Italian schools. The heterogeneousness interests not only big cities, but also small provinces: e.g. in the schools in the province of Bergamo, there are 118 citizenships, 109 in Perugia, 90 in Pesaro, 80 in Siena, 78 in Latina.
The countries which are most represented by foreign pupils are Albania, Morocco, ex-Yugoslavia; following these there are many pupils from Romania (27,627 presences) and from Ecuador (10,674). Romania, in particular, has almost doubled its presence, and has a certain number of students within the schools in the provinces of Rome, Viterbo, Latina, Turin and Padua.

In the past, Romania has been the host country for Italian citizens, and on the other hand, today there are an extremely high number of companies (especially in the North-East) which have opened establishments in Romania, and there are several cultural and linguistic affinities (Romanians speak a neo-Latin language, for this reason they easily learn Italian). The presence of citizens from Ecuador is found especially in the big cities of the Centre-North (above all in Genoa, where they represent 50% of foreign pupils), and there is a prevailing female presence, especially made up of domestic help assistants and home caregivers, who establish themselves in Italy and within a few years try to put into action the legal procedure which will reunite them with their families.

**Fig. 1.2.7** Foreign pupils by area of origin – historical series (Source: MIUR-ISTAT, 2004)

In conclusion, analysing the data shown in this paragraph, it is possible to identify the main features of the Italian model of presence of foreigners in the educational system. There are two specific aspects which characterise our country.

First of all, the presence of foreign students is uneven and differentiated in the national territory, with a major concentration in the areas of Northern Italy. Localism seems as though it is a distinctive trait in our system, and the variable territory assumes an important value: the main concentration of foreign students coincides with those areas which present the most consistent flows of immigrants, due to the structure of the productive fabric (a
high concentration of industries that require low-cost workers) and the social system (the ability to host, understood as the offer of accommodation structures, cultural opening, etc). One can therefore speak of a variegated, polycentric, “widespread” model, in which the attraction poles are not only in big cities but also in the small ones and in towns too. Furthermore, as, more generally concerns the distribution on a national level, we can observe a majority of foreign pupils in the schools on the planes or also in the lower parts or the most populated areas of our valleys (Bergamo, Brescia, Vicenza): the South of Italy – which, as a total image, is seen as the natural harbour of immigrants–above all, it is the location of transition and of initial reception, whilst the North is the place of establishment. The second characteristic regards the rapidity with which the Italian education system has been invaded by change: a consideration which clearly emerges from the examination of data of small cities which, up until ten years ago had never had, apart from exceptional cases, significant numbers of foreign pupils. The features of the Italian model seem to be evident when compared to most EU countries, and in particular France, the land which has hosted immigrants for more than 150 years, with an average stable presence of foreigners in the 1900’s of approximately 6-7% of the population. As in France, a centralised country which has tried to make differences uniform, we consider the specificity of Italy’s regional independencies and local demands, in a clearer way than before. Diversity and fragmentation can represent both an element of richness as well as a problem. It is an element of richness, due to the fact that in each territory the presence of foreign students assumes its own unique characteristics. This means, first of all, respect for diversities and inequality, but it also means that in each territory a process of mutual adaptation is taking place between the peculiarities of the territory itself and elements of new products coming from the grafting with “other” cultures. In this way, the permanence of diversity cannot be considered a resource. On the other hand, from a strictly pedagogical point of view, it is obvious that high heterogeneity (both as geographic areas of origin and as differences as regards the Italian territory) has effects: organising a school with many different nationalities, and therefore belonging to groups with different languages and religions, may be more difficult. On the other, the impossibility to adopt a unique national model which forces each reality into making significantly greater efforts towards awareness and consideration.

The information illustrated up until now offers us a slice of the Italian distribution model and of the presence of foreign students in schools. However, little is said as regards the true ability of schools to welcome and integrate pupils with different religions, languages and cultures within its walls. It is, on the other hand, the duty of the school to act as a “social integration laboratory”, and its aim is to teach civic education and to build paths not only
aimed at welcoming, but also to make the most of single individuals, in an enrichment process involving everyone.

With the aim of better understanding where Italy is exactly along the integration path—which is constantly developing and can never be considered finished, it is useful to take into consideration the data relating to the school results of non-Italian pupils, which represents a good indicator for the measurement of integration.

From the observation of the school results of Italian students compared to those of foreign pupils (figure 7) we can see the constant lack of success at school of pupils within the different levels of education. The gap between the levels of promotion of foreign and Italian students of –3.36 at primary school, -7.06 at lower secondary school, -12.56 at upper secondary school. This national data is the result of different situations amongst different kinds of schools, provinces and regions. In the different kinds of upper secondary schools, we can see that teacher-training education as well as that of scientific and classical subjects, sees a greater number of students promoted (80.3%), whilst professional institutes see a lower percentage (70.4%), a parallel situation to that of the Italian students, in order to show an example of the similarity in educational courses between Italians and foreigners, obviously influenced also by the use, contents, programmes and styles of teaching. On the other hand, we must mention that 40% of foreign students who attend secondary school have chosen to attend a professional institute. As regards school results in the territory, the regions where there is a smaller gap between Italian and foreign students are Friuli Venezia Giulia for the primary school (-1.13), Emilia Romagna for the lower secondary school (-4.94). The elements which characterise the provinces with the highest rates of promotion of foreign students with respects to Italians are the geographical area (Central-North regions) and size (they are either small or medium-sized provinces).

Another interesting piece of information is that relating to the impact of the presence of foreign students on the final results of the entire school population: in compulsory schooling, the situation of the highest rates of success in schools with foreign students is rather generalised; vice versa in upper secondary schools, results in institutes with foreign students are slightly inferior to those where only Italian students attend.

2.3.7 Mobility of students and cultural exchanges

During the last few years, opportunities for students throughout the world to stay on and continue their studies have multiplied and there are several international programmes and conventions to allow cultural exchanges within schools. This is surely an element of success on the path towards cultural integration in an environment in which the school has known how to transform itself into a place to experiment dialogue and comparison
amongst different cultures. The high number of exchanges, the increase in requests year after year for such exchanges, the fact that the opportunity for study-holidays deal essentially with life on the “campus”, a moment in which the exchange and the comparison amongst cultures is characterised, and then transformed, often into “launch vehicles” towards periods of work experience abroad, are all positive indicators of the phenomenon.

As regards Italy, the number of Italian students who have taken advantage of the possibility of studying abroad, by means of different projects foreseen within the international co-operation environment in which our Ministry of Education, University and Research participates, were equal to 15,225 in 2004\textsuperscript{42}. The main destinations were Spain (4,826 students), France (2,665), Germany (1,896) and the United Kingdom (1,602). The chart in figure 8 shows the flow of foreign students towards Italy (10,982), with the division per country of origin.

\textbf{Tab. 1.2.9} Foreign students in Italy (Source: MIUR, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>N° foreign students present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>3493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liechtenstein</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumania</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{2.3.8 Foreign schools in Italy}

The last intercultural context we will look at refers to a niche phenomenon, but in our opinion it is interesting as a sign of continually increasing international co-operation and

\textsuperscript{42} Source: MIUR, 2004
the opening of frontiers of which the very cultural exchanges amongst students are an example, as mentioned previously. Speaking of foreign schools in Italy means referring to those institutes, present in certain large Italian cities, founded and managed by foreigners and therefore adhering to different programmes, having a different organisation and structure, in that they refer to rules and cultures of the country of origin. Such schools are interesting for our study for two reasons: first of all, they are places for the training of foreigners resident in Italy who want to keep in contact with their country of origin, and for this reason they represent an important example of the “maintenance of diversity within integration”. Secondly, it must be emphasised how such institutes are not only attended by foreigners, but also by Italian children (especially in English or American schools), who take a particular course of bilingual studies, and who from their early childhood have to face a culture different to their own. We are undoubtedly dealing here with a phenomenon of a “privileged” nature, which belongs to the “elite” portions of society, and therefore certainly not indicative of a mass tendency. It is equally significant for the contribution that these linguistic and cultural mixture experiments give to children and adolescents which will probably contribute to the formation of the future Italian ruling class.

3 Conclusions of the situational analysis

3.1 Conclusions
3.1.1 The global picture

In the light of the data and the information contained in the previous chapters, one can identify characteristic aspects of the phenomenon of interculturalism in Italy, useful, if then collated to look for similarities in the three macro sectors (private, public, education) to complete the picture.

Some conclusions will be presented in the pages that follow, to provide points to create a global analytical picture that introduces further useful elements to see the specifics of the three sectors; examples of good practices, the latent needs or those manifested by the individual sectors in terms of training.

3.1.2 Intercultural workplace in Italy: social and economic changes in the three sectors

The three sectors, private, public and education have recently had to face socio-economic changes accompanied by an evolution of the phenomenon of the intercultural workplace in Italy.
1. A migratory flow in slight increase toward our country above all from the Maghreb via the south of Italy and from Asia. Welcome has taken place in large cities and an even more interesting aspect that will be described later, in provinces, mainly in the North east of Italy, a macro area that constitutes the mirror of a dotted Italian model “diffused” in the area. This has created a new factor for which the National Health Services – called mainly into action by the elderly, newborn babies and for pregnant women and the not-for-profit that acts in a complementary way to the National Health Services have slowly begun to face providing services to people from a relationship point of view, with an audience characterised by a series of interesting and new variables in respect of indigenous populations- for example, a new perception of the concept of “care” and “taking on” of a role at times different from the immigrant family in terms of contribution in benefiting from services for the family, a greater availability of nursing staff offered by immigrants, often not regulated, that induces further daily reflection on the concept of legality.

2. A constant demographic growth trend of immigrant populations. The increase of young immigrants, children of the families already present in the country, that go to school has initiated interesting dialogue and comparison in schools, between parents and teachers and the civil society which is completely new for our country, that today is still in an initial phase of metabolisation, first of all the role of the teacher (to date mainly Italian, given the conservativeness of the Public Administration in the education world and the consequent slowness to receive teachers from other countries)- of its possibly available staff and class mates- as mediators between different cultures and as a vehicle to transmit the Italian language, an inevitable element to allow communication for didactical and learning reasons.

3. A new connotation of the question of productive internationalisation and globalisation of the economy, that has heavily affected the Italian productive model in recent years, made up of flexible but fragile bodies - small and medium enterprises, a connecting fabric of the Italian entrepreneurship- In particular a more common availability of the work force coming mainly from extra community countries- some of which since January 2007 are part of Europe- has first of all supported industrial growth, above all in the North, feeding an increase in the productiveness of the system- but not only of the single individuals making up the allocated work force, given the low-profile competencies that characterise the offer of labour and the permanence of traditional production means- to this phenomenon there has also progressively been a tendency towards delocalization of production mainly towards Balkan countries. – during the
second half of the 90s- and from approx 1999 towards the far-east (China, India and Indochina).

In recent years, these phenomena have lead to an immediate increase in opportunities for contact for Italy both from an economic point of view and that of sharing social spaces and life with people from different cultures in our Country, with an enrichment of cultural and society models and organisational forms both for the profit and nonprofit sectors, that offer services and employment opportunities to those from other countries with different reference cultures and provenance as also for Italian citizens.

In this sense, two distinct but reciprocally interrelated dimensions, useful to frame this situation “in movement”- to obtain via an analysis, first of the sub sectors and then cases, paradigmatic examples chosen in the panel- in the light of a European interpretation, that refers to the optical and economic evolution taking place in the European Union, for example, in the unification of the monetary process and in that of free circulation of goods and people, and the world dimension, that gives the widest possible comparison between cultures, in which Italian society is more and more in contact for a series of reasons, such as, the induced in terms of economic globalisation and media action. For example the knowledge that border countries with Italy, both in the Maghreb and in the Balkans, have of our country thanks to access to Italian television channels. Connected to this, the evolution of the internet network providing information has considerably changed the prospective of the average Italian in the last 10 years, opening it to the entire world and contemporaneous events that characterise our social and political life can be read in the entire world, all with a continual increase in the speed of transfer of information.

Thus, in the light of these interpretation keys with which Italy is faced, the theme of interculturalism and its effects on interculture in the workplace, has some specific traits in Italy that it is worth briefly remembering:

- the contained number of the phenomenon, difficult to compare with other project partner countries (see data from ISTAT and CNEL surveys);

- a vast presence of immigrants (without statistics) and thus cannot be monitored without residence permits (see Caritas Migrantes annual document);

- the “youth” of the phenomenon of immigration: in Italy it started at the end of the 70s and thus does not have a consolidated history behind it;
- the particular geographical conformity of Italy that with its high number of coastal kilometres, is particularly exposed to landings by sea, and that is often a point of landing for those who want to move from south or south-east towards Europe, a theme that recalls socio-political aspects such as the management of arrivals, initial welcome and the phenomenon of illegal immigrants;

- the consistent paradox in the counter position between the objective difficulties to manage consistent flows of immigrants and the request for an increasing number of immigrants, expressed by various parts of our economic system, while the number of residence permits granted has, up to 2006 been below those requested (see data from Interior Ministry given) – enterprises need a work force to put into their productive circuits; the health system needs foreign nurses to overcome the gaps left by local staff; assistance to the elderly and the disabled more frequently requires the figure of foreign “carer”, as the traditional family structure that was able to face theses caring situations is no longer present, and these situations are more frequent due to the ageing of the population;

- the “particularism” and the “fragmentarianism” those fundamental characters of immigration in Italy. On the one hand, in fact, immigration is characterised for having difficultly approachable characteristics, comparable and homogenised in different areas, and on the other, there is a generalised tendency to consider and face all the political, economic and social phenomena with an absolutely local key- so called parochialism prospective. Thus, also the response to the needs for integration of immigrants, assumes different characteristics according to the territory in question. We can also add to this how immigration in Italy has a multiform and by effect varied characteristics, both of the so-called localism) and of the plurality of foreign citizenships found among the immigrants present in our country. Diversity and plurality are surely a potential element of wealth, but also in the embryonic phase of things, a factor of complexity: this constitutes another paradox of the Italian reality.

- as a consequence of some of the previous points, the lack of a consolidated integration culture in the real sense of the term, or rather the lack of awareness of what integration of different cultures in society means without eliminating his/her specific aspect, but valorising those differences and valorising the maintenance of that diversity, as an opportunity for reciprocal growth. Often in Italy, the lack of an
“integration culture” has been substituted by attention at the time of assistance and care, inspired by Catholic values and the tradition of welfare expressed by our society, that however runs the risk of assuming too limited a meaning. The general tendency—and we underline general, i.e. a vision of togetherness, with respect to which there is no lack, as we will see in the cases, of many exceptions in society-and thus towards a real model of assimilation, in organised universes—whether they are, as proposed in the successive cases, the workplace, places of learning, meeting and socialising for people of different cultures, spaces in which the person meets the institution and benefits from services that it offers, times when the immigrant offers a service to people of Italian culture and provenance, such as caregiving—for people from other countries and of different cultures. Values, behaviours, attitudes and action methods of an ever present and nearly always strong stratification of the culture of our country and of local territories are, in fact suggested by Italians and proposed to immigrants, -see the successive paragraphs to understand the concept of territory- that offer welcoming services to immigrants. On the contrary, unfortunately there is a certain difficulty in these organised and socialisation contexts to work in terms of osmosis, comparison and exchange for reciprocal enrichment.

As regards the responses that the three sectors have been able to give facing change, some general considerations can be listed:

- first of all, one should point out that to date the responses given to social-cultural changes in act have been rather weak and limited. Only in recent years has a stronger debate been held on these themes. They are beginning to considerably penetrate the political agenda and reach the attention of the media thus of the public opinion without being distorted. Also, more recently, the first pilot projects that are above all in the educational field are beginning to take shape as regards these issues.

- to date one has felt the lack of “systemic” responses, i.e. responses produced both at system-Country level and at economic, industrial sector and public sector system level in their entirety. With respect to these, there have been a prevalence of “territorial” responses: one has mentioned the importance of the “territory” variable with respect to the phenomenon of integration; and it is the key variable also in activation processes to face the needs posed by immigrants or more generally by the situations of comparison with different cultures: the most significant initiatives are taken at local level or by effect of activation of local Public Authorities for example, in the health sector the Asl and the
individual Districts that operate in the territory, or by the initiative of particularly illuminated individual enterprises. This tendency is in line with the local character that we have identified as a constituent of the phenomenon of immigration and interculture in the workplace, in places of learning, and in places where the collectivity benefits from a publicly or privately organised service, where there is an interpersonal component (and in Italy, please forgive the stereotype, in effect everything passes via people). This is then understandable and in part also positive, as the individual territories are aware of the specific problems that concern them and are able to prepare ad hoc responses; on the other, the lack of a wider synergy is felt, that of a systemic involvement of all those actors that are called to confront a theme which is ever more important for the social and economic development and wellbeing of the Country.

3.1.3 Common elements in the three sectors

We can identify some questions that run transversally to all three sectors and that during the analysis undertaken in the three previous chapters have been presented several times.

First of all, we would like to point out the strong inter-connection between the three sectors in question with respect to the theme of interculturalism. In effect the analysis has created reflection on the fact that it is not possible to consider the theme in an isolated way, as the theme of interculture in the workplace tends to run transversally to the private, public and education sectors. Immigrants, are more numerous in territories with high production density, and in particular in the North East Regions where there is a greater presence of industrial/production districts (we would like to point out an aspect that will be analytically described later i.e. that in Italy, enterprises, whether industrial or services are prevalently medium or small and operate, as we have said, on a local and territorial basis, continually working in close contact with each other from a transactions and communication point of view: this phenomenon is defined as an industrial district and for anyone thinking of working in our country should be borne in mind to understand the logics of running of enterprises and the requirements that are posed to staff in undertaking their jobs).

In these organisational realities, there is the problem of integration of foreign workers with the Italian workforce, but the possibility to integrate with these workers passes first of all for the capacity to successfully manage important issues such as communication and comprehension, knowledge, acceptance and reciprocal contamination of different uses and customs. In particular, as regards communication, one can see the general tendency
in above all operative type roles, which affect foreign workers in which workers speak nearly exclusively one language, Italian and this is even more so in official written communication. Italians do not speak English and often immigrants do not know Italian and thus it is difficult to face this issue. Thus, in this approach and knowledge process both public institutions and schools have a primary role. They should prepare both future generations for a multi-ethnic society, and favour the integration processes of their parents by educating their children. This example shows how the possibility of developing real integration processes necessarily requires a joint effort from different actors, and how this cannot fully take place if those who operate in the private sector or in public structures providing services to the community and above all, schools are not involved.

One can see how problems emerging in organised situations in the three macro sectors and in the sub sectors- workplace, provision of public services, educational and learning spaces, are: related to religious differences: the needs of a community with places of worship where they can express their faith; different values and habits that can impact on daily practices, both at work and on hygiene- medical and food norms, and consequently the need for services and structures able to meet habits imposed by different religions, for example Muslim or Jewish butchers, present only in large cities in approximately the year 2000 and now instead present also in less populated provinces in which there is an immigrant work forces.

Often elements of reflection are posed by questions regarding equality of values, for example, different conceptions of the role of the woman, that highlight totally contrasting themes in Italy with compulsory education up to 16 years of age or in provision of medical services, undertaken mainly by male- doctors in our Health Service.

3.1.4 The industrial manufacturing sector: characteristics, practices and training needs

In the sector in question, there are some sub-sectors of particular interest with respect to the theme of interculture, that will be later analysed further in the case studies. The manufacturing sub-sector, the social- medical sub-sector that involves health and nonprofit cooperatives, the reference areas in which one can subdivide the educational universe: reference areas of obligatory schooling and university education.

The manufacturing sector represents that part of the industrial system that transforms raw materials into finished products where by raw materials we mean, on the basis of the origin, the raw materials that can be obtained directly from nature. The internal articulation
of the sector is very variegated: in the manufacturing sector, in fact one develops all kinds of very different and complex products, - in Italy often hand made-, characterised by a prevalence of human activity in the work cycle, with respect to tools. To introduce useful elements to understand the case studies, we can subdivide the manufacturing companies into those that produce by order: engineer to order – if design and production are custom - or make to order – if the product is created on the basis of clients’ instructions; assemble-to-order: storage of semi finished products and components that are assembled in relation to the clients' orders; make to stock. In relation to the different methods to create the product, there are different values given by the human capital allocated in the production lines, in which the aspect of specialisation (79% among specialised workers and site managers for new jobs foreseen in 2007) is to date, important, and above all is judged as being “difficult to obtain” (in 42% of medium sized enterprises; with a peak of 45% in small enterprises, Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere, 2006). Conversely, concerning plans for the intake of immigrant staff in the short-term future, the de-specialisation factor in the service industry holds significance: it is predicted that 41% of new staff will be unqualified (Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere, 2006).

Italy has four sectors in the category of manufacturing, which operate on an international level and offer numerous job opportunities to immigrants: industrial mechanics and automation, agriculture and food, fashion and clothing, and home furnishings – all of which carry a lot of weight in terms of revenue, employment and the number of companies in the country’s general economy. With regard to mechanical production, Italy leads the field in the design and manufacture of tools (metal industry machinery, chemicals, electrical appliances, textiles and food) and components for producing motors, valves and fittings and metalwork machines, an area in which Italy is third placed in the world. The “fashion system” includes the manufacture of accessories such as leather goods (clothing and footwear), eye products, jewellery and cosmetics. Alongside these high quality macro-industries, Italy also ranks highly in more specialised, technological areas including: luxury cars, cruise ships, helicopters and aerospace manufacture, defence, specialist chemicals and pharmaceuticals, diagnostics and biomedicine. Altogether these sectors employ 3 million, 167 thousand people, around 60% of the total number of employees working in industry in the country (Istat 2005). SMEs make up 1.84% of the manufacturing employment total. The 199 districts with operational SMEs, officially recognised by Istat (the Italian Central Institute of Statistics), employ more than 2 million manufacturing workers and generate 27% of the GDP – not including their suppliers – 38% of manufacturing value added, and 46% of manufacturing exports. The primary area for
manufacturing in Italy is the north-east, which includes Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli-Venezia Giuglia and Emilia-Romagna.

The north-east represents an emblematic case for the development of the country: it reflects the typical features of what has been defined the “Third Italy” – or rather, the Italy of widespread enterprise. For example, the province of Treviso, represented by the Social Cooperative “Together we can” discussed in part two, comprises 96 towns which include 117 industrial zones; SME clusters defined as local productive systems or manufacturing districts, which, with the 155,000 new jobs created in Italy between 2004 and 2006, contend with both the industrialisation of the traditional Milan-Turin-Genoa industrial triangle, which took on around 160,000 new foreign workers in the same period (Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere 2006), and with Italy’s sponsored industrialisation in the south. This region has fairly homogeneous social and economic characteristics, in relation to small enterprises and industrial districts – regional clusters specialised in one industry or another. The industrial development of this area was born entirely from the environment, adapting to the natural dispersion of settlements and urban centres, without any strong political regional focal point and employing (for years, the principal target was full employment) labour resources and competencies from the immigrant workforce on a mass scale.

The political laissez-faire has shaped a considerable yet inharmonious economic growth, with no direction and which is essentially chaotic. During the ‘80s and ‘90s – significant in the aforementioned manufacturing industry – it first used local labour, before relocating production to eastern European countries, its workforce originating mostly from New European and eastern European countries (and therefore illegal in terms of residency permits) and, to a lesser extent, from Maghreb. The north-eastern region of Italy could be considered a laboratory of multicultural jobs (explanations on the methodology are illustrated at the start of part two of this document): the organisational innovations used in business and the workforce composition – made up of Italians (around 3/5 of the intake from 2003 to 2006) and immigrants (around 2/5 of the annual intake, starting from 2003 – source: Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere) – tested in this region, have anticipated trends that are today present in other sectors and in other regions of Italy. In the last thirty years, the north east has transformed its appearance as an area “lagging behind” other regions in the north-west, showing an increase in the percentage of the population employed in agriculture and casting off the shackles of the farming exodus – falling productivity, low salaries, unemployment, emigration – to create a situation of
growth and appeal (Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Emilia-Romagna are the first two regions to take in new labour in Italy in the last two years; source Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere). The development of north-east Italy must be seen as a unique case with regard to historical trends, as it reflects neither the traditional model of industrialisation (focused on large business) nor the new trends towards tertiarisation (associated with metropolitan areas such as Milan and Turin). The region has invented an unconventional model of growth and competitiveness made up of small businesses, common enterprise and industrial districts, with little tertiary industry.

The conception of the region that comes with this model goes beyond one of its purer "spatial" connotations of mere physical space, a container of resources in which the company chooses to locate its productive processes and conducts its own activities. Even factors of location, such as the presence of infrastructure, do not seem to completely and exhaustively describe all the dimensions and the relative stimulative capacities for developing company competitiveness, in regard not only to economic aspects but to relational, social and ecological variables. The region is considered as a group of socioeconomic relations capable of supporting companies in realising their competitive strategies and offering them all kinds of advantages and benefits, related not only to economies of scale, but to economies of proximity – businesses being close together and forming part of the whole production process, despite often pursuing rival economic interests – and of reputation.

Unlike Milan, Paris or London, north-east Italy does not have a great metropolitan hub: the productive system is condensed into a myriad of small centres (the major cities have a population of 200-300,000 residents) or dispersed into what was once countryside, but which is today seen differently, having developed into a built-up, multicultural campagna. The region has become a single macro-city, with no main centre or urban features, but overflowing with residential, industrial and tertiary settlements arranged into infinitely repeated modules, which occupy the space entirely. People now live and work not in the countryside or the city, but in a dilated, multicultural working and sociable space, inclined towards assimilation rather than integration: a type of city without a centre, with no borders. Within this space, the protagonists who interact with one another and who contribute, either directly or indirectly, to tackling the issue of integration between different cultures in the region and in the workplace, are essentially: companies, nonprofit organisations (mainly organised civil societies and catholic associations) and public institutions from the social health sector.
The companies, mostly small or medium-sized, adopt different kinds of behaviour and styles: those more organised and well-structured – see case ZF below – follow a managerial bearing imposed according to the respect of formal cohabitation regulations based on integration, and precisely define the rules to be followed. Businesses owned and run by families – which are not necessarily so small, proven by the case of Ravagnan – operate in a different organisational environment, encouraging contact between workers from different cultures and focusing more on the logic of assimilation rather than the development of diversity.

The good practices that set this sector apart – which analyses will show are particularly characteristic, proven in case studies – in this region can be framed in a reflection on two levels, focused on the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility. As we’ve said, there are essentially two types of business, which have prompted the choice of panel in this section: on the one hand, family-moulded businesses that take a “direct” approach to work relations, but are casual regarding responsibilities towards the insertion of their workers into society, starting from the working environment. On the other hand, more structured businesses with a semi-national set-up; i.e. unbound by organisational cultures that reflect the values, organisational bearings and management styles of a specific country, belonging to international value chains. For the first type of business, there are specific employees – typically Italian and generally female – who deal with problems of insertion; who do not have the training to deal with the main issue of multicultural integration and so help by stimulating attitudes, values and behaviours typical of the region in which the headquarters of such businesses are based. In essence, they indirectly create a mind set and a “model” of Italian behaviour, and they encourage the assimilation of immigrant workers thereto. The second type of business follows a whole series of mechanisms based on managerial practice, that are influenced by politically and socially correct logic and which seek to minimise conflicts and rivalry deriving from various aspects, satisfying the needs of people from cultural minorities and implementing sets of regulations drawn up according to business logic, influenced by superb management plans. The work environment is, in the two cases, the reflection of these two alternative yet “artificial” situations.

The main challenge, in this sense, is essentially to open up work environments to integration, acting on variables such as business culture, through the activity of professional manufacturer and union associations, if these exist within the company.
The fundamental needs, on which to base training requirements for people of different cultures and from other countries, firstly concern the diffusion of information on practices that immigrants need to be aware of in their everyday social and working life (residency and family “reunification” permits, work contracts and INPS (Italian Social Security) relations for pension contributions—which in Italy are almost compulsory, relations with banks and financial institutions, trading and business contracts, leasing or purchasing a property and practices related to domestic economy, insurance, management of relations with the treasury, etc.), which in Italy are, on average, more laborious than in other European countries, given the pivotal role of bureaucracy in Italian society. Secondly, they include basic pointers in the use of Italian, in both spoken – with its regional declinations popularly known as dialects, but which in truth are actual languages – and written form – for official deeds; thirdly, such requirements include the knowledge of different cultures in the area, according to where one decides to live – which is an important factor given the “spread-out city” characterisation – and in the workplace. With regard to the responses given by both employers and institutions, the effort that needs to be made is mainly in terms of communication, rather than training. In particular, urgent communications sometimes – when strictly necessary – need to be translated into other languages, though such translations can be difficult to obtain into Balkan and non-European languages. Nowadays, opportunities to learn the Italian language are not so frequent, often not publicised and it can prove difficult for immigrants to find the time to do so because of their jobs, which are often very demanding and time-consuming (figures from Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere, quoted below).

The health and social welfare sector, together with nonprofit organisations, as seen in the following paragraph, act as an important local cushion that allows immigrants to assemble a portfolio of essential information for approaching the world of work, and to prepare themselves by developing the knowledge and basic competencies (language, other aspects of interpersonal communication and work procedures, time management) useful for their insertion into employment and for tackling situations of illness or psychophysical distress.

3.1.5 The health and social welfare subsector: training practices and requirements

The second characteristic sub-sector of the public macro-industry on the issue of interculture in the workplace concerns health. Public administration is still rather closed
towards the intake of immigrants (and so this is yet to happen), if not from an exploitation of services viewpoint, then because of internal intercultural issues. Services in the health sector are more influenced by aspects of interculturalism than in any other sector. In reality, the health service, which in Italy is offered publicly and used at practically zero cost by all European citizens for matters both general (provided by Medici di Medicina Generale or general practitioners, also commonly known as medici condotti, or medical officers) and in some regions – such as Emilia Romagna, which also operates home care schemes – exceptional (emergency cases dealt with by hospitals), is maintained through symbiosis with a nonprofit system that offers social and health services in addition to the classic health care provided by the Servizio Sanitario Nazionale or SSN (National Health Service), which is dependent on city councils and managed through widespread structures, which, in particular, we will discuss shortly.

The real challenge for the public sector in the next few years is to become more available, and on all levels – not only for social health workers but also for doctors and especially G.P.s – to immigrants, not only through nonprofit organisations, but through systems such as Azienda Sanitaria Locale or ASL (local health centres) and hospitals.

To understand the role of health in Italy, we need only describe how the organisation of the SSN is divided, made up of multiple entities and units on different institutional levels, all of which contribute as a whole to achieving the main objectives regarding the health of citizens. Together, they form part of the National Health Service, in addition to the Ministry of Health, assisted by the Consiglio Superiore di Sanità or CSS (Higher Council for Health Care) and other national entities, which include:

- The Istituto Superiore di Sanità (National Institute of Health); a public entity which, in matters concerning the Ministry of Health, performs technical-scientific functions and duties, including technical coordination. This is a technical-scientific branch of the National Health Service, which carries out research, experimentation, testing and training functions related to public health;
- The Istituto Superiore per la Prevenzione e Sicurezza del Lavoro (National Institute for Protection and Safety at Work); a public entity which, in matters concerning the Ministry of Health, performs technical-scientific functions and duties, including technical coordination. This is a technical-scientific branch of the National Health Service and is the national centre of reference for information, documentation, research, experimentation, testing and training in relation to health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace;
• The Agenzia per i Servizi Sanitari Regionali (Agency for Regional Health Services) performs support functions for regional activities, comparative evaluations on the cost and productivity of services provided to citizens, identifies dysfunction and wastage in the management of staff, material resources and supplies, and promotes innovation and experimental health matters;

What proves particularly important for immigrants and for citizens from third countries, to benefit fully from the service, is that the system reaches all residents on the national platform, through:

• Regions (and Autonomous Regions with Special Statue), which program and organise all services and activities aimed at healthcare in the region, coordinate the activity of local health centres and hospitals and control their operation;

• Local Health and Welfare Agencies, which program and organise healthcare in their surrounding area and guarantee its provision through both public and accredited private structures (with rebates for citizens using paid ticket services). ASL (Local Health Centres) are entities with public legal character and organisational, administrative, equity, accounting, managerial and technical autonomy, whose function is to organise healthcare in their surrounding area and to provide it through public structures such as the Distretti Sanitari (Health Districts) – see the Scandiano case – and hospitals or accredited health professionals. There are around two hundred of these, which guarantee all services defined on a national scale as essential levels of care (the minimum level of service guaranteed to the citizen).

• Hospital Trusts: national or regional hospitals made into trusts due to their specific characteristics. Hospital Trusts can be regional or inter-regional hospitals, which are made into Trusts based on their particular characteristics. There are over a hundred Hospital Trusts operating on a national level, whose function is to provide health services to citizens following the correct systems and procedures through the effective use of the resources available.

Public institutions in the health and social welfare sector are generally called in to intervene in situations of occupational accidents, underprivileged conditions (illness, depression in situations of financial instability and homelessness) alcohol abuse or, very often, sexual abuse – remembering that the birth/death rate in Italy is positive, thanks to the presence of immigrants and hence the increased use of hospital wards both neonatal and by immigrants from other Countries. In this sense, the good practices used most often are visual poster notifications and info-points – seldom multilingual in the true sense of the
word – to distribute services among towns, local health centres and hospitals themselves, with the assistance of translators, which is still frequent but only in more extensive systems in bigger cities. Conversely, as is the case in the Scandiano Region, the health sector offers many employment positions – 35,000 people from other countries employed in the sector in 2006 (Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere), in nursing and, indirectly, as “care workers” providing treatment for illness, particularly to the elderly. As already mentioned, a fact rather typical of care giving is that the work is very rarely official, in the sense that there are no checks on specific qualifications, and caregivers rarely have residency permits.

The description below of the characteristics of the nonprofit world allows us to extensively illustrate the areas of synergy and interception between public and nonprofit health. In particular, the following paragraphs will show how a significant number of organisational systems that deal with immigrant integration into nonprofit systems are set-up on a ‘macro scale’, forming the pillar of the Italian welfare economy. The paragraphs will also describe the set-up, on a ‘micro scale’, of a myriad of small fields that develop and promote issues such as the insertion into work of people from weaker or underprivileged areas of society (immigrants are inserted into posts which in 38% of cases are paid according to the person’s level of hardship), and integration and training on aspects which form the premises for the intake of immigrants into job positions, and which enable them to take an active part in life in the country.

The nonprofit system is an economic sector which, combining the logic of public activity with the efficiency of the private organisation, produces goods and services according to principles of community, collective benefit, internal democracy and attention to the various forms of social exclusion. The most typical operational trait of the sector is that it makes no profit. The operation of a typical nonprofit organisation is not based on a complete absence of profit, but on the contrary; once this profit is made, it is reinvested in activities characteristic of social benefit incorporated under legal regulations. Nonprofit, social economy or social enterprise sectors are all synonyms that identify their economic field, closely related to the company objective, placed as a third element between the state monopoly on public services (health, education, transport, etc.) and the free market, represented by private companies.

It is not, on the other hand, correct to identify the nonprofit sector exclusively as a residual phenomenon between public and private, because it is able to provide the necessary response to certain needs which public intervention and profit-seeking subjects cannot.
In summary, nonprofit organisations have the following characteristics:

- they are formally constituted (through charter, statute or other);
- they are governed by private law, separate from public affairs;
- they are autonomous, under an organisational and managerial profile, with no external control;
- they do not distribute any profits deriving from their activity between their members;
- they have a substantial presence of volunteer personnel;
- they are typically undenominational and free from any political influence;
- their objective is of social benefit;
- they have a democratic-participatory governing structure;
- they stimulate the production of goods and services that generate “positive externality”.

The points made above prove that the absence of profit alone is not sufficient to identify the true nature of the nonprofit sector: the social benefit and their objectives of unity, along with the democracy of the organisations and their substantial volunteer presence, constitute traits more appropriate to their structure and external activity. The term “nonprofit” does not imply that these organisations cannot benefit from their activity, but simply that any profits made must not be distributed among their constituent members but reinvested in activities carried out by the organisation or put towards the financing of social benefit initiatives.

There are also some standard corporate forms that come under the nonprofit blanket:

- associations
- social cooperatives
- social enterprises
- foundations
- voluntary committees and organisations
- non-government organisations (NGO)

which are all focused on health, social care, union relations, education and culture, the protection of rights and political activity, promotion, the international solidarity movement, philanthropy and the promotion of volunteering.

The main situations into which immigrants are accepted and offered prospective employment and services are, in order:
- Voluntary associations and organisations (e.g. organised civil societies)
- Social enterprises (recently formed),
- Non-government organisations (NGO);
- Social cooperatives.

In particular, the association is a stable organisation, formed by a number of people who, using available resources, share a common goal, of a non-economic nature (e.g. for cultural means, care-related, recreation, etc.). Freedom of association is recognised by art. 18 of the Italian Constitution. Recognised associations gain legal character through acknowledgement from the governing authority, the granting of which implies the lawful control of their objective followed and the congruence, in the same respect, of the resources available to the association.

Voluntary organisations are governed by law 266/91. This is a framework law which governs voluntary work in a broad sense, referring all further specifications to regional laws. Today, although relatively late on, all Italian regions have a regional law on voluntary work. The law defines voluntary activity as a personal, unforced, free and non-commercial activity, carried out with intentions of solidarity. The law does not establish a specific legal form for voluntary organisations, but affirms that all those carrying out nonprofit activities are of good character. Most voluntary organisations therefore carry the form of associations.

The statutory requirements set forth by law are: non-earning of profits, structural democracy, electiveness and gratuitousness of appointments, free provision of supporter services, clarification of admission and exclusion criteria for supporters, their rights and obligations, budget formulation.

One part of the law also controls the connection between work and voluntary service. Volunteers are entitled to a reimbursement of expenses from their work (some regional laws set reimbursement limits). Moreover, voluntary organisations can use employed or self-employed workers within limits strictly related to their main activity.

The contribution of voluntary associations and organisations to the issue of interculturalism in the workplace mainly consists in the mediation of trust. This bringing together of people from different cultures is done through the organisation of training courses – typically free basic- and advanced-level Italian language courses for foreigners – and intercultural recreational initiatives, which create opportunities for people and families to meet and interact. There is also the addition of support activities on specific issues related to
everyday life, particularly for underprivileged people: translations, information, food services, free nurseries, etc.

According to Legal Decree no. 155 from 24\textsuperscript{th} March 2006, “Governing the social enterprise, in accordance with law 118 from 13\textsuperscript{th} June 2005”, any private organisations may attain the title of Social Enterprise provided, in conformity with Book V of the Civil Code, that they carry out essentially and on a permanent basis economic activity organised for the production or exchange of goods or services of social benefit, with a general interest.

The title Social Enterprise cannot be attained by public administrations, in accordance with art.1, comma 2 of Legal Decree no.165 from 30\textsuperscript{th} March 2001 and subsequent modifications thereto, nor by organisations whose constitutive activities restrict, even indirectly, the provision of goods and services to their partners, associates or participants. To ecclesiastical entities and to those of religious denomination, with which the State has stipulated pacts, agreements or understandings – particularly present and active towards immigrants who are often part of disadvantaged categories which benefit from social services and from the support of integration into employment in the region on which the case studies have been chosen – the standards set forth in the Decree aimed and limited to the development of activities of social benefit shall apply, provided that a regulation is drawn up as a scrittura privata autenticata (“certified private deed”) which includes conditions from Legal Decree 155/2006.

The goods and services considered to be of social benefit are generally related to:

a) social care, health and welfare;

b) services instrumental to social enterprises, provided by entities which make up more than seventy per cent of organisations that use a social enterprise.

Non-governmental organisations (NGO) participate in the cooperative assistance of developing countries\textsuperscript{43}. Their role within Italy’s nonprofit sector is to build a bridgehead to reach citizens from other, perhaps, developing countries, enabling them to carry out their activities in synergy with Italy.

According to that set forth by law and in the relative Regolamento di Esecuzione (general administrative order), non-government organisations that operate in the field of

\textsuperscript{43} They are governed by law 49 from 26.02.1987, denominated “New discipline for the cooperation of Italy with developing countries”, which controls all affairs regarding Italian cooperation with such development.
cooperation with developing countries can obtain recognition of suitability with a Decree from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following the enforcement of Legal Decree no.29 from 03.02.1993, once the idea of an interoffice work group (formed by representatives from the NGO, Legal Authority and the Unità Tecnica Centrale (Central Technical Unit)) has been put forward to the Directorate General for Development Cooperation, the objective of which is to verify possession of the necessary requisites, as well as the completeness and formal correctness of the documentation presented by the NGO, the recognition act is then signed by the Directorate General for Development Cooperation.

Social cooperatives, on the other hand, are governed by Law 381/91. This is a framework law which refers all further specifications to regional laws. This concerns a particular type of cooperative enterprise, both for the activities it carries out and for the people it involves. Of the legal forms assumed by nonprofit entities, social cooperatives represent the more “enterprising” section, based more on economic initiatives and the creation of jobs. There can be two different types of social cooperative:

- social cooperatives for socio-educational and support services (cooperatives commonly referred to as “Type A”)
- social cooperatives for the occupational insertion of underprivileged people (cooperatives commonly referred to as “Type B”).

Type A cooperatives – which constitute just over 50% of social cooperation – often with the contribution of qualified immigrant workers, as inferred by the case study on Treviso’s “Together We Can” cooperative – assist mainly elderly and handicapped people and underprivileged children through home care services; run elderly residences, infant day-care, family centres, nursing homes, kindergartens, community centres, housing communities and provide services through day and welcome centres.

Beyond that, today, a large number of social welfare services not carried out directly by local administrations – town councils – are guaranteed through the attribution of contracts to social enterprises, who have often even set-up direct relations with the private demand for these services. Unlike those of Type A, Type B cooperatives reinsert underprivileged people – including unqualified immigrants who, in this case, are beneficiaries of the services – by means of an organisational formula specially adapted to the demands of such people, and of social benefit. The social cooperative is founded on the notion that an

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44 For anything governed by neither the framework nor by regional law, refer to the regulations on cooperation.
underprivileged person, if suitably assisted and supported by ordinary workers trained in this respect, can be educated in the use of the Italian language – an essential training requirement – put into employment and can work in a productive context not simulated, but organised according to company criteria.

Cooperative working thus becomes an occasion fundamentally focused on socialising and training and, at the same time, a place to learn specific abilities and work techniques. The aim of the cooperative is to create a permanent auxiliary workplace. Even faced with specific personal situations, the worker will remain in permanent work, without falling back into the unpaid work system. As with Type A cooperatives, income from Type B cooperatives derives primarily from public clients, due in part to the difficulty in obtaining personnel from private entities. Growth opportunities for Type B cooperatives seem to depend mainly on their capacity to develop their own “market”, choosing to operate in sectors where they will be up against few competitors, putting emphasis on the quality of their people services and enjoying significant cost benefits thanks to tax relief. However, just like Type A cooperatives, those of Type B also have their weak points, which are:

- difficulty in obtaining commitment from private entities;
- difficulty in structuring management through the use of profit-based methods;
- problems related to limited resources for investment and development;
- The precariousness of many staff received from public administration, influenced often by the scarcity of resources and the lack of clarity on which the relation between public and private must be based, which determines the continuity of immigrant employment insertion courses.

Therefore, cooperatives essentially focus on:

- social benefit from the occupational reinsertion of immigrants from underprivileged backgrounds;
- the creation of effective and replicable work insertion models.

The scenario in which social enterprises now find themselves is significantly different to that of the past. The growth in the number of social enterprises throughout Italy represents the first important milestone to demonstrate the achievement of this type of establishment and of the efficacy of its activity in support of immigrants. Social cooperation is now common across all regions of Italy, losing, at least in part, the sporadic nature that characterised the first phase of development after the approval of Law 381. Social cooperation today represents one of the most vital components of the nonprofit sector in
Italy: following a revision (CGM) of data from Istat and the Ministry of Employment, at the end of 2005 there were around 6,000 social cooperatives in Italy, of which 55% were Type A, 40% were Type B and 5% were mixed (mostly consortiums). These enterprises employ around 158,000 people, of which almost 15,000 are in underprivileged situations and follow courses for occupational insertion into Type B cooperatives. As well as paid workers, these social cooperatives are assisted by a further 23,000 volunteers. With regard to project financing and subsidies, from public or private funding or grants, it is specified that:

- 12.9% of nonprofit institutions, in general, operate based on a predominantly public funding and 87.1% based on predominantly private funding
- 58.8% of social cooperatives operate based on a predominantly public funding and 41.2% based on predominantly private funding.

### 3.1.6 Compulsory schooling and universities: educational characteristics, practices and requirements

The third area, which is the latest to be approached, representing the general educational or scholastic sector, is that of the segments of compulsory schooling and university education. The school system in Italy is state-run, despite existing, for every order and level of school, thanks to private institutes. In 1997, with the reform of the education and training system, compulsory schooling was raised to the age of 16. The reform also introduced compulsory training up to the age of 18, which can be taken through the school education system, the professional training system or through an apprenticeship (principal technical training vehicle for unqualified immigrants, Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere 2006). In March 2003, a reform project was approved that redefined compulsory training, combining it with compulsory schooling, establishing the diritto-dovere ("right/duty") to education and training for at least twelve years and, in any case, to the attainment of a qualification by the age of eighteen.

Secondary education is subdivided – after the age of 14 – into just 2 courses, one part secondary education taught in 8 main categories – art, classical studies, economics, languages, music, science, technology and human sciences – part professional education, comprising professional training and apprenticeship work. Furthermore, the work-school rotation system was introduced into the fold. Students between fifteen and eighteen years old attending secondary school or receiving professional education can choose this
training method to gain first-hand experience in the world of work. According to the reform, the education and training system is set-up thus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>School level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2½/3-5 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Infant school</td>
<td>Compulsory unit</td>
<td>Primary cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5½/6-13 years</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>Primary cycle (primary school and grade I secondary school)</td>
<td>Compulsory unit</td>
<td>State exam: admission into secondary cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-18 years</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Compulsory grade II secondary cycle</td>
<td>Secondary education (art, classical studies, economics, languages, music, science, technology and human sciences) or Professional education (professional training or apprenticeship)</td>
<td>Certification for completed educational course or certificate of qualification: entry into upper technical training, admission into final year of secondary cycle or work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19 years</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Optional grade II secondary cycle</td>
<td>Broadening of content on selected course</td>
<td>State exam and admission into university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from 18 upwards</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>University or superior technical training.</td>
<td>Various specialisations</td>
<td>Three-year degree or work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Various skills, research doctorates and specialisations</td>
<td>Specialist degree or work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After graduation</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Research doctorates, specialisations and Masters levels I and II</td>
<td>Various specialisations</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reform is to be introduced gradually. In the academic year 2005/2006, the new regulations were brought in for just infant schools and primary schools both public and private. The new regulations were also applied partly to grade I secondary schools. Grade II secondary schools and professional education are still governed by the old regulations, which are now subdivided into high schools, technical institutions, professional institutions and professional education.
Compulsory schooling is becoming crowded by the growing presence of immigrant children in classrooms, mainly attributable to three causes: a “bureaucratic” cause, related to the recent massive standardisation processes that allow the emergence of foreigners who before were in the shadows and bordering on illegitimate; a cause related to the increase in migratory flows (a number estimated by the Italian Ministry of University and Scientific Research of around 400,000), which has been constant in recent years; and a third “demographic” cause, or rather the persistent increase in births by foreign citizens resident in Italy (standing at just over 30,000 by legal immigrants). Multiculturalism has therefore become an increasingly crucial element in school classrooms, with the consequent need to guarantee the proper integration of mixed students – as already mentioned, one of the characteristic traits of immigration in Italy is the presence of multiple nationalities, meaning that within the same class, especially where immigration rates are particularly high such as the north, children of different origins and from different cultures must coexist – which requires the re-planning of programs, daily organisation and particularly the teachers’ approach to pupils, in consideration and evaluation of the cultural implications. This involves some very delicate issues, implying a new perspective for the teacher as a mediator of culture, who must be knowledgeable of diverse cultures and religions and have different psychosocial competencies in intercultural areas, but must also have an indefinite and impartial awareness of relational and emotive competencies, focused on the capacity to listen and on non-verbal communication. It has been said that today, such background – due to budget problems – is nurtured mainly thanks to the initiative of individuals, rather than with organic and pervasive programs.

Universities on the other hand are bulging with opportunities to test the effects of the two-sided phenomenon which we defined in the previous paragraphs as internationalisation and globalisation, generally understood as the opening of boundaries – in particular – European and for foreign study opportunities. In recent years, opportunities for Italian students to travel abroad to pursue their studies have been multiplying and, likewise, a great many international programs and agreements have been set-up to allow students of other nationalities to do the same in Italy. This certainly represents an interesting talking point on the path to cultural integration; a topic which sees schooling as a highly beneficial and influential place for developing conversation and comparing diverse cultures. The increasing number of exchanges, the constant rise in applications, the fact that study-abroad programs are turning into actual career opportunities – these are all positive indications. On the other hand, the overall extent of the phenomenon is still very contained, and adjusting the system shows signs of structural weakness. Difficulty in
finding posters in other languages and multilingual staff in universities, for example, and the fact that the level of maturity in creating a university learning environment is still low. In this sense, the situation in big-city universities is on average more advanced, when looking at the services offered. Researchers, in the great majority of cases, do not receive a budget sufficient enough to enter areas of research that allow them to travel – an issue that is often the topic of debate in the media, from local and national newspapers to national television – and so they are very often forced into moving abroad.

The university system, which controls the VIU case, in addition to private universities and international university consortiums, is run through a total of 76 university education institutions, broken down as follows:

- 51 state universities and 12 free universities located throughout the nation;
- 3 state polytechnics (Bari, Milan and Turin);
- 4 state university institutes (Naval and Oriental in Naples, motor science in Rome, architecture in Venice) and one private (Naples);
- 2 Universities for Foreigners (Perugia and Siena)
- 3 superior schools (2 in Pisa and 1 in Trieste)

During the academic year 2001-02, there was a didactic reform of university courses. The reform was applied to the first year of new university courses. This means that Italian universities now teach based on both the previous and the newly introduced regulations. The reform will implement the following titles:

- **Laurea** (L) (Degree) – achieved upon completion of a three-year course, and is accessed with a superior secondary school diploma;
- **Laurea Specialistica** (LS) (Specialist Degree) – gained upon completion of a two-year course, which is aimed at giving the student an advanced-level training. This is accessed with the three-year degree and, in some cases, with the possession of certain curricular requirements, with a background check of university education;
- **Laurea Specialistica a ciclo Unico** (LSU) (Single-cycle Specialist Degree) for study courses run under European Union regulations, which provide three-year degree courses (medicine and surgery, veterinary medicine, dentistry and dental prostheses, pharmacy, chemistry and pharmaceutical technology, architecture, construction/architectural engineering, are specialist, single-cycle degree institutes, accessed with the superior secondary school diploma;
• *Diploma di Specializzazione* (DS) (Specialisation Degree) – gained upon completion of a specialisation course, which aims to provide the student with the knowledge and abilities necessary for carrying out specific professional activities. This can be started exclusively upon application of specific legal standards or European Union directives (e.g. medical specialities, legal vocations, secondary school teacher training). Accessed with the Specialist Degree;

• *Dottorato di Ricerca* (DR) (Research Doctorate) – this course aims to provide the necessary competencies for carrying out highly-qualified research activities, at universities, public or private institutions. It can be accessed with the Specialist Degree, or with any study title gained abroad and considered eligible;

• *Master Universitario* (University Master’s Degree) – issued only upon completion of a scientific specialisation course and permanent and repeated training started by universities. These can be first- or second-level courses, subsequent to gaining the three-year or Specialist Degree.

A further innovation introduced by the reform is the *Credito Formativo Universitario* (CFU) (University Educational Credit), which is gained upon passing the exam or through other forms of assessment. This credit requires 25 hours of work by the student. The average amount of work experience carried out in a year by a full-time university student is conventionally set at 60 credits. For example, for students intending to enter the Italian university system, the necessary credits for gaining the university titles described are as follows:

• Degree (L), 180 credits, including any related to the compulsory knowledge of an E.U. language other than Italian;

• Specialist Degree (LS), 120 credits, in addition to those gained by the student with the Degree and any other relative recognition valid for the Specialist Degree course;

• Single-cycle Specialist Degree (LSU), 300 credits, or 360 for the faculty of Medicine;

• Specialist Diploma (DS), the number of credits is determined by the ministerial decrees and must be between 300 and 600, including any already gained by the student, plus any other relative recognition valid for the Specialist Degree course;

• Level I and II Master’s Degree, at least 60 credits in addition to those gained for achieving the Degree or Specialist Degree.

To encourage student movement, access to further education and to make it easier to gain academic and professional recognition from educational titles issued in any given country,
the European Union has created a certificate called the “Diploma Supplement”, issued by universities in bilingual editions. As well as certifying the status of studies carried out and completed by the student, it is supplementary to the official title gained upon completion of a university or higher education institution study course. The Diploma Supplement conforms to the European model developed by initiative of the European Commission, European Council and Unesco, with the issue requirements determined by university academic regulations. It is composed of eight sections: information identifying the holder of the qualification, information identifying the qualification, information on the level of the qualification, information on the contents and results gained, information on the function of the qualification, additional information, certification of the Supplement and information on the national higher education system. For curricular, examination, refresher and professional advancement requirements, it is possible, for anyone with a qualification issued for completion of five-year superior secondary and university studies, to register for single tuition courses. With regard to immigrants from outside the E.U. – unless they hold managerial roles and work in professions related to scientific research or intellectual professions, which make up 10% of the total number of non-EU staff working in Italy in 2006 (source: Excelsior Information System, Unioncamere 2006) – it is specified that equivalence is a laborious and highly complex exercise, universally regarded as the knot that needs to be undone for so-called intermediate professions (white-collars to be inserted into the private sector).

3.1.7 Summary of prospects and general educational needs

In light of the views described in this document, it is possible to identify the main good practices and educational needs that exist within the private and public sectors and in a schooling context, which will be examined analytically below, looking at the issue of interculture in the workplace, in places of learning, meeting and socialising for people from different cultures, in spaces where the person meets the institution to benefit from the services it offers, and in situations where the immigrant offers a service to people from Italy and the Italian culture.

Going against the interpretation of the concept implemented into typical sectors of the economy and society, it is gathered that the evolution of the issue of interculture in the workplace shall play a crucial role in the modernisation of Italy in the coming years, with a strong probability of new and interesting prospects for foreign citizens working in Italy.
Were this not to be the case, then Italy would see a progressive and considerable decline in the quality of its products, the level of services offered to citizens and, last but not least, the social climate.

The private sector, in particular, would reach a crossroads: disintermediated on the global market by productive entities capable of setting-up in larger-scale economic fields, it cannot – in the best case scenario – focus on more qualified human resources to sustain the competitive advantage of other industrial companies through constant innovation. For immigrants, this would help; in the logical hypothesis of curtailing operational costs – remember that the Unioncamere data quoted in the previous paragraphs clearly shows how the contracts of people from foreign countries stipulate low wages – on the one hand the resolution of problems related to equivalence, while on the other a demand for increasingly higher qualifications, together with a considerable rise in training courses, most of which technical, at the same time that the traditional industrial model is abandoned. However, in a more negative scenario, facing a rigidity from the changing industrial system, internal supplier chains would be gradually externalised to competing countries, forcing the shift of less qualified immigrant labour into the Italian service industry, or increasing international movement, for which it fails to re-qualify. The public sector would slowly begin to open up employment competition to people from foreign countries, from office positions through to medical or paramedic staff, taking on staff directly rather than just through the nonprofit sector. It is no great secret that in Italy, which has an average birth rate below zero, this trend shows no signs of change, and that the population is gradually getting older. This puts an increasing stress on citizen services, and means that the health service, which makes up the highest portion of public spending, today seems incapable of sustainment, and for this reason bears no weight in the issue of the presence of so-called “care workers” without residency permits, who indirectly maintain the high level of health services provided to citizens. This same direction of opening up and leaning towards the adoption of this intercultural model should also be taken in compulsory and superior-university schooling, with a decisive and contemporary action, in the changeover period, towards the development of the intercultural competencies of teachers already involved.

In summary, the educational needs shown in the private sector, to be developed in future, firstly concern the knowledge of the Italian language for adult immigrants and care workers, along with an effective improvement in the knowledge of other European languages by Italians, particularly youths. Secondly, such needs concern information on
the function of institutions and public services, as well as a mutual knowledge of religious practices, exploiting the bridges built mainly by the Catholic Associationism of the nonprofit sector. Moreover, other aspects that need to be addressed and which require educational support, particularly to get the best out of teamwork, concern the perception of time-keeping, authority and conflict management.

In the public sector, on the other hand, educational needs relate to the knowledge of medical and nursing aspects for those working in such profession without qualifications – a widespread occurrence for which each case is judged on its merits – and of the use of non-verbal communication tools such as illustrative pictures, especially for first aid, combined with the capacity for learning through the use of gesticulation to help the patient describe their symptoms. Meanwhile, structural measures are being considered to improve verbal communication, such as the provision of a more widespread translator support by the health service, as well as an increased presence of reliable mediators to provide social services to immigrant individuals and families, with a thorough knowledge of the cultures of these people, along with a thorough diffusion of free Italian language courses for adult immigrants.

The nonprofit sector, which provides services on a free basis, shall be required to better-structure its training courses and, likewise, to improve capacity to manage its constituent organisations which handle the insertion of underprivileged citizens and immigrant services following rational, corporate criteria, to allow the sustainment of such people on the market and to increase their opportunities to operate alongside the public sector.

In schools, on the other hand, the training of teaching staff – as well as, ideally, opening their doors to foreign teachers – should probably not just be individual, with self-explanatory multimedia video support material; it should focus on broadening teacher knowledge, with periodic seminar meetings on topics both transversal – obedience of the rules, the concept of authority and hierarchy, the role of women in society, the perception of time, the concept of cleanliness, social activity, teamwork – and vertical, on specific ethnicities, involving both Italian and immigrant families with children at school. This would help to mature intercultural relational competencies. Meanwhile, additional help could certainly come from specific “country kits”, with cards and suggestions for an improved knowledge of different cultures, as well as foreign language courses and training to provide a more in-depth knowledge of non-verbal communication, allowing teachers to communicate on the same wavelength as listeners who don’t have a good control of the language, thus improving their understanding.
In any case, civil society will be required to act as a cushion, having to continuously broaden its knowledge of the particularities and specificities of the different cultures with which it coexists. The demand for contrast, on both a national and trans-national level, is met through the opportunity to grow in real-life cases in which successful integration models or practices have already been tested.

Part 2. Case Studies

1 Introduction

The description of the situation in the three macro sectors (public, private and education) and the in-depth view in some selected internal areas, particularly representative of the Italian situation, given throughout the conclusions of part I, is fundamental for introducing the second part of the work. This section will highlight relevant situations and aspects, on an exemplary and paradigmatic basis, with respect to the subject of multiculturalism in the workplace, in schools and other places where people of different cultures come together and socialise, in places where people come into contact with institutions and make use of their services, and in situations when immigrants offer their services to people of Italian culture and origin.

An element to which we must necessarily return to illustrate the cases in hand regards the criteria used to choose the geographic location of the case studies, which are fundamental for linking the analysis drivers with the distinctive features of Italy. In fact, without dedicating close attention to the existence of our country’s fundamental socio-economic aspects, such as regional, language and tradition-related concepts, the profound links between corporate political lobbies, the contribution of political parties and civilised society to integration, the uncharacteristic welfare state concept and the influence of the Catholic political culture on economic decisions, the importance of trade unions in multicultural social and work-related decisions, and the historical process of subsidising public enterprise, anyone who intends to examine and describe the aspects characterising multiculturalism will find himself/herself completely unequipped to do so and will, therefore, be unable to approach the subject in our country.

The significant areas were chosen in the first part of this document on the basis of these variables. They were selected from within the three public, private and educational sub-sectors, in order to provide a greater understanding of the phenomenon of multiculturalism. In the first place, the world of small and medium manufacturers, which
employ most of the legal immigrants who live in our country; this world differs significantly from that of small and medium enterprises in the rest of Europe in terms of the work and organisational context. In the second place, public health, is the only area of the public sector to cater for an acceptable number (although low compared to the rest of Europe) of immigrant patients. Moreover, and to a lesser extent, the health sector employs immigrants as nurses, paramedics, linguistic mediators and care-providers, as can be seen in the case studies. However, indirectly involved – but very active from an on-the-field perspective - the there are also illegal thousand immigrants without a permit to stay in the country. In the third place we have the nonprofit sector: the so-called social economy, committed to the integration of those legally defined as disadvantaged, and thus worthy of assistance (including immigrants), offering tax relief to companies and cooperatives who employ them. Last but not least we have the educational sector which, as the case studies will note, is the most significant in terms of the size of the phenomenon, both as regards the relationship with users from different cultures (the children of immigrants, who are often Italian citizens, and international students staying in Italy) and as regards employees (the innovative figure of the cultural mediator). The six case studies have been chosen from within these economic sectors, as exemplary studies able to represent typical Italian situations. In the private macro sector, we chose ZF Marine of the ZF group, and Ravagnan, respectively a media company belonging to a multinational group and a small family-owned manufacturing company that operates on the international market, making products to order and characterised by a strong partnership between multicultural design teams. In the public macro sector, we chose the Scandiano Local Health Authority from Emilia Romagna, and Insieme si Può, a medium-size cooperative from the Treviso area, involved in the private welfare sector, which complements the public sector. In the educational macro sector, we chose an international university, Venice International University, and the Giuriolo di Arzignano middle school in Vicenza, located in a particular industrial area which is witnessing a slowdown after years of overdevelopment.

We applied a qualitative methodology, meaning that the cases should be read as a summary of the typical situations found in the workplace and school/university, in representative economic sectors as regards multiculturalism and in areas where there is a sufficient multicultural presence to justify the analysis. We deliberately excluded large cities such as Milan and Rome, where the subject of multiculturalism is interpreted in more of a social key than in a social/work-related key and, equally importantly, in as much as the

45 Cf. for example the Veneto Regional Law No. 23 of 2006, which examines a new understanding of the expression “disadvantaged categories”.
phenomenon is not monitored by institutional sources: many of the immigrants are there illegally and it is, therefore, not easy to assess the situation. Although this is not the place to examine the subject in question in any depth, when defining the area within which the case studies were chosen, we should remember that the term area does not simply refer to the geographical location, but a variable mixture of all the factors listed above: language (dialects, not jargons), traditions (not folklore), social status (influence and/or indirect intervention of the public in the private economy), concept and role of social relations, etc., which generate distinctive contexts as regards aspects of multiculturalism in the workplace and at school/university. We used the periodic survey from the most important institutional source in the field, the CNEL.\textsuperscript{46} Let us re-examine the elements that led us to choose these specific cases linked to the respective areas: three types of summary indicators from the accredited Caritas Migrantes file, containing seven each in their turn. These are supplied annually by the primary sources in Italy and used to assess the receptive capacity of an area\textsuperscript{47}: 1. Polarisation index, which measures each area's capacity to attract and maintain within the foreign population present on a national level; 2. Social stability index, which measures the degree of stability and quality of the inclusion of immigrants in the.

\textsuperscript{46} An institutional body for consultancy, envisaged by the Constitution of the Italian Republic - Art. 99 -, which works for the Chamber of Deputies and the Government on matters of economic and social legislation. The Council stays in office for 5 years. The Chairman is appointed, from amongst a selection of external candidates, by means of a Presidential Decree. The CNEL is comprised of one hundred and twenty-one councillors: twelve experts, chosen from amongst qualified exponents of the economic, social and legal culture; forty-four employees' representatives from the public and private sector; eighteen self-employment representatives; thirty-seven business representatives; and ten representatives from welfare associations and voluntary organisations.

\textsuperscript{47} 1. Polarisation index (measures each area's capacity to attract and maintain within the foreign population present on a national level): 1.1 Presence indicator (% of the national total): source Ministry of the Interior; 1.2 Incidence indicator (% of the overall resident population): sources Ministry of the Interior and ISTAT; 1.3 Increase indicator (variation in % between 1993 and 2003): source Ministry of the Interior; 1.4 Permanence indicator (% of foreign minors out of the total of resident foreigners): source ISTAT; 1.5 Stability indicator (% with intention to settle in the country out of total foreign residents): source Ministry of the Interior. 1.6 Long residence indicator (% foreign residents here for at least 10 years out of the total of foreign residents): source ISTAT; 1.7 Internal migratory receptivity indicator (% positive internal migratory balance of foreign residents): source ISTAT; 2. Social stability index (measures the degree of stability and the quality of the insertion of the immigrants in the local social fabric): 2.1 Residential problems indicator (% foreigners from countries under strong migratory pressure in residential conditions of serious overcrowding): source ISTAT and census data; 2.2 Secondary school education indicator (% foreigners registered at secondary schools out of the estimate of nineteen-year-old foreign residents): sources Ministry of Education, University and Research (academic year 2001-2002) and ISTAT; 2.3 Deviance indicator (% reported foreigners out of total staying in the country): in this case too, it is a "negative" indicator, meaning that areas in which the phenomenon is lower are considered better, in terms of placement in the table and score. Sources ISTAT and Ministry of the Interior; 2.4 Family reunion indicator (% of those staying in the country for family reasons out of the total of those staying in the country): source Ministry of the interior; 2.5 Household settlement indicator (average number of households with at least one foreign member out of every 1,000 resident households): source ISTAT; 2.6 Citizenship acquisition indicator (average number of acquisitions of Italian citizenship out of every 1,000 foreigners staying in the country): source Ministry of the Interior; 2.7 Birth rate indicator (average number of new foreign births over the year per every 1,000 foreign residents): source ISTAT; 3. Employment index (measures the degree and quality of foreign participation in the local employment system): 3.1 Overall unemployment indicator (overall unemployment rate): source ISTAT; 3.2 Foreign manpower demand indicator (% estimate of the demand for foreign manpower out of the estimated manpower demand): the source is the Excelsior survey system of Unioncamere and the Ministry of Employment; 3.3 Job market absorption potential indicator (% foreigners hired on a permanent basis out of a total of permanent job placements): source INAIL; 3.4 Work market dynamism indicator (% positive balances between hirings and firings out of the total hirings, relative to foreigners only): source INAIL; 3.5 Work force employee indicator (% of foreign employees out of the total of foreign workers): source INPS; 3.6 Average pay per capita indicator (average annual pay of foreign workers per capita): source INPS; 3.7 Entrepreneurship indicator (% of businesses with foreign owners out of the total of adult foreigners staying in the country): sources Unioncamere and CNA.
local social fabric; 3. Employment index, which measures the degree and quality of foreign participation in the local employment system. By cross-referencing the assessment of these indicators, we can observe the overall integration potential by regional areas. By comparing the last two reports, the top ten places in the national classification are predominantly occupied by Northern Italian regions: Veneto, Emilia Romagna, Trentino Alto Adige, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lombardy and Piedmont always achieve higher values for these complex indicators and we, therefore, decided to choose cases that illustrated this local regional scenario.

To be specific, the individual cases were examined by means of questionnaires distributed within organisations, and by means of in-depth face-to-face interviews of one and a half to two hours each with representatives of the organisations, during which we examined subjects suggested by the area of investigation, and with focus groups, which discussed the subjects tackled during the individual interviews in the form of an open debate.

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48 Distributing the sample as evenly as possible between men and women.
49 Substantiated by the area of investigation.
2.1 Case Study: Small, Family-Run Manufacturing Firm

2.1.1 Introduction and Methodology

The decision to focus on a small, family-run manufacturing firm, which operates on an international level, such as Ravagnan, should be seen as representative of a typical scenario in the Italian business fabric and representative of an area. This kind of company offers particular job opportunities to immigrants, practically in full employment since the late 1990s\textsuperscript{50}, and should be examined because of the distinctive features it offers in terms of multiculturalism. Within the Italian context, Ravagnan provides a typical example of a link in a vast and widespread economic and social network, known as the “local production system” or “industrial district”. The area, with its physical, human and intellectual resources, is one of the main assets of the local production system and of the district. Small companies, such as Ravagnan, which are primarily concentrated in a band that makes a turnover from 5 to 50 million euros\textsuperscript{51}, are distinguished by the fact that they do not have a strong organisation and operate directly through their employees (the reader should bear in mind that this is not a generalisation, but a specific fact). All the main organisational studies show that, in Italy, the relations between SMEs are constructed by the people that work within the companies or partner them on an external basis. As part of the daily unfolding of these relations, SMEs gain non-formalised, tacit knowledge of a primarily technical type, related to know-how and patents and, in their turn, small new companies, which boost the economic circuit. Immigrants constitute a fundamental basis for this circuit and are mostly employed on the production line, doing jobs to which young Italians tend not to aspire. Although these jobs require very little technical specialisation, many of the immigrant employees have technical diplomas, and sometimes even degrees, from their own countries, but have trouble gaining a certificate to demonstrate their Italian equivalent.

Since its foundation in 1962, Ravagnan has been located a few kilometres outside the centre of Padua, a city that has suffered from a series of immigration-linked social problems over recent years: lack of accommodation, social exclusion and a growing crime rate. The outskirts of Padua offer job opportunities and the chance for assimilation, rather than integration, into the social fabric.

We should remember that 15,000 registered immigrants and almost 30,000 illegal immigrants work in Padua, accounting for just under 10% of the population of around 450,000 people, including the small towns on the outskirts of the city. To this we can add

\textsuperscript{50} Source: Veneto Lavoro.
\textsuperscript{51} See also note, related to the case ZF.
60,000 students. Of the 15,000 legal immigrants, around 5,000 are Romanian, 2,500 are Moldavian, around 2,000 are Albanian, 1,600 are Tunisian and Moroccan, 1,500 are Nigerian and the others come from the countless different ethnic backgrounds usually found in the region of Veneto.

Ravagnan began with the systems division, adding its other divisions in the 1980s, on the basis of a logic of product line differentiation and expansion. In the 1990s, Ravagnan produced a spin-off company, Tecnoelettra, which specialises in the design and supply of electrical and automation systems, making it increasingly independent from suppliers and able to develop turnkey systems. In fact, since then Ravagnan has guaranteed a high standard of quality in its products, exploiting the strong technical skills in some key points of the organisation, including those of immigrants, and working together with external inspectors and controllers, quality and ISO experts, primarily from Northern Europe. Its production is managed on an order basis, meaning that each production order from clients is a project unto itself, involving people with a range of skills and characteristics from a multicultural point of view. In the 1990s, Ravagnan also opened a production plant in Mexico, Ravagnan De Mexico S.A., as part of its development process. The company currently produces: heat exchangers, components for the iron and steel sector, kilns and systems for the treatment of water and fumes. Ravagnan employs 167 people. In addition to the management, partners and associates, it employs 60 people in its offices and 100 on its production lines as operators and carpenters (65 in the boiler works and 35 in the systems division). In its main base in Limena (Padua), it employs 17 foreign workers, from five different ethnic groups: Romanians, including some in middle management, Moroccans, Bangladeshis, Senegalese and Malians. There are a total of seven workers from Morocco, Bangladesh, Senegal and Mali and, as will be described in greater detail below, they do not speak either fluent Italian or English. Only the Romanians possess rudiments of Italian and English.

As regards the methodology, a preliminary interview was held with the company management, sharing the objectives of the EIW project and establishing the panel of people to be interviewed (4) and those to be asked to fill in a questionnaire (30). The management demonstrated interest in the project and asked to be kept informed about the overall results. A focus group was held at the end of the interviews, tackling the subjects}

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52 Cf. the useful definitions in the conclusions of the first part of the document, which help to understand how the area is organised, in this case from the productive point of view.
discussed in the individual interviews and working along the lines of the questionnaire. The
groups comprised both men and women.

Preliminary interview: Management
Individual interview: R&D Manager (male, Italy)
Individual interview: HR Manager (female, Italy)
Individual interview: Test-Engineer, Welding, (female, Romania)
Individual interview: Specialist Worker (male, Romania).
Focus group: R&D Manager (male, Italy), Production Manager (female, Romania),
Specialist Worker (male, Romania), HR Manager (female, Italy).
Questionnaires: 25% response.

2.1.2 Challenges

**Collaboration** between departments is the key element that emerges from the company.
As we have already mentioned, this is linked to the method of organising production on the
basis of orders for water treatment systems (engineering firms) and boilers (manufacturers
of pressurised systems). The work teams involve line workers with operative duties, and
clients. The clients are predominantly engineering firms, which provide Ravagnan with the
project specifications. They are represented by an inspector, who follows the development
of the order in Limena for a period that ranges from 2 to 6 months, even occasionally
stretching to 1 year. There are also interesting figures from independent agencies, from
abroad: these inspectors check that the end product complies with the relative safety
standards. The teams in question include qualified professionals with managerial skills,
operating in keeping with a standard pattern of behaviour: oral and written use of their own
language (German, or another Northern European language), the language of the other
party (Italian) and a third language (typically English, in which the official documents are
drafted); they proceed with caution during all forms of interaction, ensuring that they follow
the politically correct procedures specific to the international managerial culture; use of
equally formal work methods, such as consolidated project management techniques and a
standard approach to problems solving; use of communication technology, etc. The
contact persons within the company, who typically belong to the middle management, are
both Italian and immigrants and follow these patterns carefully. When they are not native
Italian speakers, they tend to be quieter and only speak when called upon to do so, mainly
when they have to make decisions. The workers are indirectly involved in the team. They
are asked to provide their opinion on technical matters, learning their duties and problem
solving methods on the field from senior Italian workers. In this case, they speak a dialect which has all the connotations of a language, except that it is not written. This language is picked up very quickly by the immigrants involved in operative roles. In the questionnaires, they claim that they also use it outside work. However, their autonomy in terms of handling relationships is not improved by taking this approach. In fact, they state that they can use it in everyday life, but not in formal relations, such as relations with institutions: banks, public administration, etc. Another very interesting aspect of the language we have defined as a dialect is that, often, during operative duties, the technical terminology used by the immigrants is a distortion of the word used in dialect, which echoes its sound and aids understanding, and is accompanied by the use of gestures, considered to be highly efficient by those who interact with them (one interviewee states: “they can also make themselves understood through gestures, which helps them”).

As regards the challenges linked to the contribution of Italian workers to fuelling a multicultural work environment, we can observe a “maternal” type organisational approach, mirroring the family-run business culture and a management style dominated by informality and the transfer of procedures and rules through social control. In the light of the production-to-order structure, which is commonly found in north-eastern and Italian small and medium enterprises, the objective is to maximise collaboration between people and bring any disputes (not specifically mentioned in the questionnaire) directly to the attention of the Human Resources management. The “maternal” organisation style (“I have been working here for 40 years: we try to establish a close relationship with employees, and no one has ever been fired from here. There are three generations of the same family amongst our employees,” say the HR Manager) is implemented in the actions of the management as regards the respective company contact persons, both Italian and immigrants, and also at other levels of the organisational structure, such as in the production line by Italian specialist senior workers as regards the immigrants (who are often much younger). In short, precise recommendations on how to proceed and how to act are often transferred (“We have nothing when we arrive here: we need to be taught. After 3 or 4 years we settle in, and this takes place, with a few small differences, for all the ethnic groups who live here today," says one interviewee. “Our propensity to consume –

53 This particular situation recalls the so-called “grammelot” language, a term of uncertain origin which perhaps derives from the composition of the French words grammaire, mélée and argot, used to describe the practice of reproducing sounds of other languages without knowing the relationship between the signifier and the meaning. History tells us the “grammelot” originated here, in the area around Padua, thanks to Angelo Beolco, known as “il Ruzante”. Dario Fo – Nobel Prize for Literature 1997 – has introduced this linguistic practice to the theatres of the world. He defines it as follows: “the insertion of a limited number of key words and its gesture, that are identifiable to the audience, conveys a sense of semantic value and thus a sense of real speech to the otherwise nonsensical sounds”.
and to **investments**: buying your own house - is different,” says a Romanian worker. “It is something that I also observe in colleagues of other nationalities and cultures, except those from Senegal and Bangladesh, who are part of bigger communities here and spend a lot of time together, as well as providing each other with mutual support, rather than opening a bilateral channel and sharing methods, behaviours, values and customs, both inside and outside the workplace”.

As regards **time**, both the interviews, and a specific response from the immigrants in the questionnaires, emphasised that there is a different perception of time, which is primarily manifest in the difficulty of organising holidays and establishing shifts with any degree of certainty. In particular, the line workers from the Maghreb area often return from their holidays 10-15 days later than agreed before their departure. As regards respect for behavioural customs and practices and those linked to **religion**, during the period of Ramadan it becomes necessary to allocate the production shifts differently amongst the human resources. In fact, an attempt is made to avoid subjecting Muslim workers to continuous tiring and exhausting duties in terms of energy expenditure, given their relative weakness and the risk of dehydration. These matters entail an open-minded approach to managing the human resources, which reflects, at several levels simultaneously, the needs and multicultural characteristics of the work force (“We feel social responsibility on a company level,” says the Technical Office Manager).

As regards the **role of women** within the organisation, a parenthesis should be opened on the subject of the importance and central nature of the technical culture in Italian small and medium manufacturing enterprises, well represented by companies from this area and, in particular, by Ravagnan. The technical culture and, more in general, the model of doing, which permeates behaviour during work and free time in terms of values, constitutes an absolute value, used as a measure against which to compare other people. In practice, during interpersonal relations, generally speaking everyone, Italian or otherwise, is judged positively or negatively on the basis of their technical ability, their “know how” and their production potential within an organised environment. Women, therefore, are also considered “primarily on the basis of their ability”, as was stated during the focus group, “just like everyone else in the company and, generally speaking, in this area, whatever their culture and origin.” The relationship between the different cultures on the production line is formed autonomously and is not governed by any specific forms of conduct recommended by the company. In terms of **integration**, the interesting point to be analysed, in this sense, is that the immigrants who work at Ravagnan and who have been
living in Italy for longest (15-20 years) are often very conservative and reproduce the behaviour of their Italian colleagues in an accentuated fashion. They say that “those who want to work, who want to settle down and who respect others, do not encounter major problems.” Statements of this type are even more commonplace when the immigrant has never changed job in Italy, and is therefore even more established within the local and company culture. On the other hand, working aids integration (if we understand integration to mean assimilation), and professional qualification, in its turn, begins to be a distinguishing element, which contributes considerably to boosting the possibilities of finding a job: this is the claim made by a worker responsible for the utensil machinery and parallel lathes, who participated in the focus group as someone with a technical education and 20 years of work experience in the same sector in Romania.

The question of public decorum was highlighted by several interviewees as very important. Not looking after oneself, leaving one’s work area dirty and untidy, and not looking people in the eyes when greeting them is considered to reflect unhelpfulness and is an element of potential “deviance”: “This is where I learnt to adapt to circumstances and respect the environment. It is terrible to see your fellow citizens throw rubbish on the floor just a short distance away from a bin…”.

2.1.3 Good and Bad Practices

In addition to providing a way to transfer knowledge relative to a specific task from an expert to a less able and generally younger person, an apprenticeship is also a type of job contract in Italy, constituting the basis of a widespread form of interaction, with the objective of developing a multicultural environment. In this case, as emphasised by the

54 The apprenticeship is an educational contract, in which, in addition to paying a salary for the work carried out, the employer also guarantees professional training for the apprentice. Italian Legislative Decree 276/2003 pinpoints three types of contracts, with different ends: apprenticeship for the fulfilment of compulsory education, which makes it possible to achieve a professional qualification and encourages the entry of young people into the work place; a professional apprenticeship, which makes it possible to achieve a qualification through training in the work place and technical/professional teaching; the apprenticeship for the acquisition of a diploma or further education courses, which makes it possible to achieve a secondary school, university or further education qualification and a superior technical specialisation. The contracts are targeted at young people and adolescents of over 15, mainly aged between 15 and 18 years old. The apprenticeship applies to all sectors of business, including the agricultural sector. The overall number of apprentices hired cannot exceed 100% of the qualified and specialist personnel already employed by the employer. Employers who do not employ qualified or specialist workers (or employ fewer than three), can take on up to three apprentices. Different limits apply to small manufacturing firms (Law 443/1985, art. 4). The contract lasts for a maximum of 3 years, established on the basis of the qualification to be achieved, any qualifications the apprentice already possesses, professional and educational credits acquired, and the balance of skills developed by the public services for employment or by private accredited parties. The professional apprenticeship may last from 2 to 6 years, on the basis of that established in the collective contract. It is possible to add the periods of apprenticeship carried out as part of compulsory education to those of the professional apprenticeship. The duration of the apprenticeship for the acquisition of a diploma or further education courses must be established, as regards training, by the regional authorities in agreement with the social parties and educational institutions involved.
interviews and questionnaires, work shadowing is particularly effective for developing technical, interpersonal and linguistic skills, especially in the use of dialect. "I have always been well-treated in the work place," says a Romanian welder. "Both by my colleagues and my employer. They were very patient, they showed me what to do and they supervised me because I didn't know the language. I have always been able to ask questions to the Head Mechanic." The positive aspect that emerged from this practice is that, by working together in the field, observation and technical training through shadowing come together, as do different mind sets, which are often conservative, such as those of the senior Italian worker and the immigrant. The apprentice frequently asks questions during the day, fuelling the socialisation process based on assimilation, rather than integration, with the skills and customs of the senior Italian employee. The main area for improvement at Ravagnan, and in other companies in the area, is a greater focus on gaining a solid linguistic grounding in Italian for immigrants – more than in the local language, called dialect - for the Italian workers. In fact, knowledge of the Italian language enables the immigrants to be autonomous when handling relations with public offices and institutions (especially banks), meaning that they only need to consult the Human Resources Office for aspects linked to counselling for bureaucratic and financial type problems. The Human Resources Office has developed some interesting practices along the lines of "learning by doing" and behaviour: it helps immigrants produce the documentation to be provided to the public administration, it helps them organise their accommodation and acts as a guarantor for banks when taking out mortgages to buy their own homes. The empirical findings showed a tendency, from examples such as this and other similar ones, to assimilate habits such as the propensity to invest in property, which is typically Italian and is transferred indirectly to the immigrants. During his interview, a Romanian welder made the following comment: "By working, I have come to understand that we want everything now: we have a different mind set. We need to plan our future and make long-term investments." The negative aspect of these practices is the simple "reinforcement" of social behaviour coinciding with that of widespread Italian provincial culture, and not reciprocal contamination.

In order to seek a solution to forms of behaviour that have an adverse effect on work organisation (intercultural organisational behaviour), the Ravagnan Human Resources Office has taken steps to check and make telephone calls towards the end of the summer holiday period and has prepared a series of alternatives – based on mutual collaboration and solidarity - for the replacement of line workers from Maghreb, when they delay their return from their holidays. In this sense, it has been emphasised that the workers from
Maghreb often tell their work colleagues that they plan to return to their home country as soon as possible (so called “soft links” with the territory). As regards respect for religious practices, it should be stressed that the fast – especially as regards drinking – followed by Muslims during Ramadan (the Technical Manager says: “During that period they take their packed lunch home and eat it at the end of the day”) would seem to suggest shifts that take this into account, in order to prevent a drop in concentration and possible accidents in the workplace.

The behaviour and responses given by company employees regarding relations between the sexes is conditioned by the production type, which requires physically strong people, meaning that most of the work force is made up of men, and by the strong focus on a technical background during work shadowing and the breaking down of any barriers. The female engineer from Romania, whom we interviewed, says that she has "always been esteemed and listened to since she joined the company, because of her technical background and specific experience." On the other hand, whenever the immigrants who work for the company need to contact the external world for personal reasons, they (especially the Muslims) seem to display a certain degree of perplexity regarding the advice and difficulty of listening and opening up, according to other parties. However, according to the interviewees, this behaviour does generally not occur when the worker comes from Eastern Europe.

The questionnaires show that interaction between people within the company (social relationships inside the workplace) primarily, but not exclusively, takes place between Italians (“… they often confide in us and ask us for advice. The Italians, perhaps due to embarrassment, are unlikely to discuss their personal problems.”). The reasons behind this are the fact that they do not have a good grasp of a shared language, and the diversity of the subjects of conversation. However, this is a positive aspect in terms of relations with professionals from their cultures when they are suppliers or clients (“When they come here, the German inspectors always have fun: we change restaurant every evening…”). The canteen (divided into three shifts: office workers, line workers and latecomers) and the breaks, as well as the interaction with the human resources managers in particular, provide an opportunity for interaction, and the latter is the most exploited. Outside work, the various ethnic groups rarely mix. However, the interviewees believe that they are sufficiently prepared to relate to a multicultural work environment.
2.1.4 Recommendations

As we mentioned when choosing the panel, the size of the city presents particular phenomena as regards the subject of multiculturalism. These phenomena regard a purely social dimension, rather than a social/work-related dimension, which is the specific subject of this project. The city of Padua especially, rather than its hinterland, where Ravagnan is located, is experiencing a particular increase in crime (living space, vs workspace). Over the last year, the local and national media has focused on "Via Anelli", located near to the centre, which has been described by the media and the local population as a "ghetto". The local government should therefore be focusing on investing to create a harmonious multicultural society, to prevent exploitation and to prevent foreigners from being seen in a negative light by society. In this sense, in addition to nonprofit activities, the workplace is meant to become the starting point for resolving this situation. In small, hardworking concerns such as Ravagnan, language could be an interesting subject for further exploration. A greater command of English amongst all employees could facilitate work with international clients, and lay the foundations for communication with other cultures. At the same time, Italian employees and workers, in this company and in other small and medium enterprises, are generally lacking in another perspective, that is to say a delicate operation that involves progressively opening the mind set of the conservative local culture and paving the way for two-way osmosis with the values and mind sets of the countries from which the immigrant workers originate. In order to act in this area, an interesting opportunity is to promote greater exchange between the so called “bottom-up organised, civil society” and the work place in the company and, in general, in SMEs. This could be achieved on a continuous basis through events and opportunities for exchanging and coming together, beginning with very simple elements such as the use of multimedia materials, the production of multilingual bureaucratic and administrative reports, themed, ethnic-type after-work events that also involve employees' families, alongside an effort that works on the company culture and does away with the current problems in multicultural relations, which exist throughout our country according to sociologists. Help from the local and national media in showcasing similar examples would be of undoubted assistance. Collaboration with trade unions, as informed players that either directly, in the companies which they represent in plenty, or indirectly promote a message of union between different cultures in the work place, together with support from qualified professionals from the world of welfare, who bring their experience to micro-contexts of learning and growth, such as SMEs like this, would certainly assist with planning courses of learning about multiculturalism in the workplace, firstly for Italians, but also for immigrants.
Our final consideration regards the prospects for the future (the so-called “scenario thinking”), on which we focused in our last question in our face-to-face interviews and in the focus group. The real question regarding small and medium enterprises is whether the conditions of local economic growth will continue in the future. Thus far, these conditions, through work and the production line, have created a preferential spot to accommodate the immigrant work force. Likewise, the interviewees are questioning the possibilities for the future in relation to the transfer of production to other countries (location of the intercultural workplace). Italy is progressively delocalising certain supply chains in many sectors, and we are beginning to observe, in companies similar to Ravagnan, and especially for the less qualified professions, a “horizontal turnover” from some sectors to others, for those who decide to remain. All this is taking place prior to the expected entry onto the work market of large numbers of second generation immigrants, who are better qualified, who were born in Italy and who are currently finishing their education.
2.2 Case study: Large enterprise, Italian headquarters of a multinational

2.2.1 Introduction and methodology

As described in the conclusions of the first part of the document and as shown in the previous case, the Italian private industrial sector, well represented by the manufacturing sub sector, is made up exclusively of small and medium enterprises. In this context there is the analysis and illustration of the ZF spa case that is part of the German group ZF Zahnradfabrik Friedrichshafen. The ZF group is divided into four divisions that develop and produce, respectively, transmission groups and axles for 1) vehicles; 2) special vehicles, commercial vehicles and trains, 3) for machinery for agriculture, construction, buses and lorries and 4) for marine propellers - Car Driveline Technologies, Commercial Vehicle and Special Driveline Technologies, Off-Road Driveline Technology and Axle Systems, Marine Propulsion systems -. Furthermore, it measures itself with the Car Chassis Technologies unit, in the design and development of instrument panels, with Powertrain and Suspension Components, in the development and production of suspensions, mechanisms for lorries, shock absorbers and with Rubber-Metal Technologies, in the production of vehicle accessories. The Aviation Technologies division is slightly smaller with respect to the former ones, nearly each of which has 6,000-7,000 staff, and with approximately 300 staff working on transmission systems for helicopters. The total number of staff in the world is approximately 60,000. The site in Caselle di Selvazzano, Padua (ZF spa) is one of the main Italian group plants, with a turnover of 73 million Euros and 310 staff and is, thus, a medium sized enterprise, but is nevertheless structured according to a philosophy and logic of a large structured enterprise. ZF spa calculates, designs and produces marine gears, power transmissions and gears. At the basis of the affirmation of ZF spa in Italy and abroad is the flexibility of its structure, that allows it to design and produce mechanisms that respond to clients’ needs, both as regards standard products and developing a specific product. The main products are gear boxes, marine reverse gears, reducers for turbines, gears for railway transmissions, couples of conics, high speed gear boxes. The technical-productive organisation is subdivided into 3 sectors: marine, design and production of marine reverse gears and components (V-drives).

Due to its size and contemporaneously to its territorial location, ZF spa is closely linked to its local production system. This area is a space in which both technical knowledge is generated of the diffused local supply chain and themes and practices in the intercultural workplace, as at all levels of the organisation there is a strong presence of resources coming from other countries and cultures and this feeds, as one can see from the answers
to the questionnaires, a creative interaction circuit, that contributes to consolidate the organisational culture. In the plant in Padova there are people from 14 different ethnic backgrounds: workers from Romania, Morocco, Albania, Nigeria, India, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Algeria, Senegal, Argentina; the middle management is mainly Italian and the management typically from the rest of Europe – Germany, France, Austria and the Netherlands.

As we will see in the illustration of the case, one of the central aspects that characterises ZF spa are the following: attention of all the organisation to the management excellence – dialogue style in the sharing of organisational problems of a very inter-cultural environment. In this system, the two elements that lead to equilibrium and act as a guide for company strategies are, respectively the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) system and the trade unions.

EFQM is a management methodology rich with aspects, that contemporaneously is based on typical concepts of the paradigm of "organisational excellence", as interpreted by the business economic world (intercultural organisational behaviour): recalling a strategic results based orientation that can be used by all organisational stakeholders, an involvement of all the actors that participate in the company, an organisational focus on the development and involvement of people, in a logic of innovation and continual organisational learning. This proactive attitude means that the company does not define its own strategic, organisational, production and management activities allowing itself to be “drawn” by the norms of the economic sector in which the company operators, but rather aligns itself spontaneously to the high standards required by the market.

The unions, in general, as mentioned earlier when we discussed the different meanings of the territory in Italy, are a fundamental aspect in the negotiation of workers’ rights and more generally in the harmonising of organisational dynamics. In particular, more than the aspect of collective contracts, in companies such as ZF, characterised by a managerial style which is typically managerial, the active worker members of the union are bearers of a message of equality and respect of diversity that, combined with their frequent commitment in the social field, constitutes a fundamental basis to guarantee dialogue between different ethnic groups and contemporaneously, contributes to give a practical form to the concept that has been defined as welfare state. The research team, to favour the representativeness of affirmations, considered giving voice to some Union members – one of which is Indian, mirror of a diffused tendency to Union membership, today felt strongly by immigrants – in the interviews and the focus groups, so as to have a global
interpretation of the characteristics, needs and challenges of all the ethnicities present in the company. An emblematic statement should be mentioned, that helps to interpret the (inter)”cultural” atmosphere of SMEs are made during the interviews with the head of the human resource department: “Companies like ours, and, in general, SMEs, have difficulty in understanding that the theme of interculturalism should be faced in their own interest. Proactive behaviour, listening to the unions and associations that work in the nonprofit sector in the area, and that have some activists among our staff are important to consciously tackle the theme and feed the cohesion of the organisation”.

A preliminary interview was undertaken with staff in the Human Resource Department to describe the objectives of the “EIW” project and to define a panel suitable for analysis needs. The management showed interest with respect to the research results, requesting, a project summary as soon as possible, in the dissemination phase, for example. As well as distributing questionnaires, four in depth interviews were made of approximately two hours each and a global focus group was held, during which the most representative profiles on the theme of interculturalism in the company was tackled: the group was made up of both men and women.

The answers and the dialogues have been transcribed. There are no names for privacy reasons. The description that follows is a summary of the challenges, good and bad practices and recommendations, formulated in a scenario logic, emerging from the questionnaires, the personal interviews and the focus group.

Preliminary interview: Human Resource Department Head
Individual interview: Specialist worker, male, India
Individual interview: Human Resource Department Head, female, Italy
Individual interview: Worker, Union activist, male, Italy
Individual interview: Clerk and union representative, male, Italy
Focus group: Human Resource Department Head, Worker and union representative, Specialist worker, Clerk and union representative.
Questionnaires: 30% answered

55 The reader should consider in this case study, that the company employees 310 staff (instead of 250) and generates a turnover of 73, (instead of 50) million Euros, but this limits (in brackets) defined in Europe to classify SMEs, are often perceived in a slightly different way in Italy, because the context of clusters, local production systems, industrial districts, and supply chains is peculiar and different, too. Proof of this is that the most important Italian Observatories on SMEs in our country, consider 100, and, sometimes, 150 million Euros as a proper limit, useful to define companies with a homogeneous SME characterisation in terms of problems, perception of the characteristics of an intercultural workplace, organisational structure, values, methods and technological tools being implemented…
2.2.2 Critical issues emerging

“For this company diversity is a fundamental value. What we are trying to do with a daily commitment is to gather the most compatible sides of diversity and cultivate /nurture it in a way which is coherent to company values-/ethics” and also “…recently, in the EFQM course, we held some focus groups on the theme of values in the company, involving eighty staff. The result in terms of importance and urgency among ethical values was that interculture was not in the first places, because it was considered an aspect which is acquired”. These are two of the statements that the head of the Human Resource department opened the focus group with that clarify the position of the company on the theme of interculturalism in the workplace. This does not mean that there are not problems in the valorisation of diversity in the organisation, but undoubtedly there is a certain awareness of the intercultural theme, so much so that ZF, in the local industrial Association, is represented as a company of excellence also on this theme. Nevertheless, companies like this offer the opportunity to also reflect on the rest of the entrepreneurial fabric on the perception of how much more can still be done in the surrounding territory to create work spaces which are interculturally integrated.

First of all, language does not seem to be a dividing factor as in many other local companies- often of the same size and with the same organisational characteristics-: the language used in dialogue between managers is English, while in formal communication in production Italian prevails over the dialect that instead characterises the rapid interaction on a daily basis above all while one is undertaking technical duties in the field. With the advent of a Swiss-German Managing Director with work experience in the USA, with open views, titles were abolished: his message brought the structure to concentrate even more on the importance of dialogue— “…the workers are heard in the assembly, before taking structural decisions that concern the company”, say the workers – and we use the two common languages for communication. The union delegate reminded us how there is a negotiation taking place between Unindustria Padova56 and the local union delegations to use the 150 hours training for workers to teach the Italian language to 21 foreign members of staff in the company. Italian prevails in the written language also in the so-called “grey” literature: internal circulars. The menu in the canteen is both in Italian and in English, union communications to staff members are also translated into Arabic. Considerable importance is given by many of the interviewees to non verbal communication but also as a support element to language: in substance, one should remember that in some cultures being

56 The local association for industrial enterprises, affiliated to the national circuit Confindustria.
emphatic can lead to misunderstandings if not connected to words. The integration of people from different cultures who work in ZF, with the culture of the host country benefits also from particular shrewdness as regards the management sector. They make considerable investments in terms of time of Human Resource staff at welcoming and insertion in the host environment: banking problems are faced and solved together, social services and local institutions are shown, any housing issues or similar are solved. These, in a country with a high level of bureaucracy and with low levels of attention paid to levels of service given to citizens are sometimes particularly complicated. The interviews show this last aspect from the voice of the Head of Human resources, who states “we are living a complicated experience of bringing some young Chinese ladies to work in Italy but it is a drama: nobody has the competencies needed, no one knows if documents are correct; not even the police station can help us……”. In order to react to phenomena of inertia and bureaucratic complexity, in order to access institutional information sources and solve their problems (bureaucratic) connected to work, the immigrants coming from the cultural area of Maghreb, verbally exchange information in their community as regards legislation, procedures to produce documents and existing cases, that, the activist union workers says “they know very well”. The questions asked by the Maghreb workers at the different institutional counters or the nonprofit ones on work and insertion in society were precise and striking (it is defined: “a sort of fist fight of knowledge and experience…”). There is not a lot of faith in the majority of cases in the institutional front-line operator: the meeting is concise and often the person coming from a different culture does not manage to explain the point of the question, say colleagues in the questionnaires stating their life stories in brief comments. The interviewees state that many women use services from a counter to solve issues concerning daily life relationships: the “sportello donna” of the unions provides statistics, says the union representative, that illustrate how 89 women out of 100 who access the counter are foreign. In this sense, as stated later in the “recommendations” section, experience in the field suggests that there is more and more attention to preventive training for operators from an intercultural point of view, opening this type of service- from the offer side – to the foreigners themselves, so as to facilitate interaction and efficacy of the same. From a point of view of relationships between people of different sexes, there are no immigrant women in the company, thus the situation affects mainly Italian women who interact with the foreign worker. The situation is very fluid, with frequent interactions and is characterised by “reciprocal respect” – as in the following comments - above all when the woman has a certain responsibility in the organisational structure.
Another statement made, regarding the relationship with institutions on homogeneity in the issuing of a residence permit: an Indian worker for example, remembers that citizens coming from India have only benefited from 2% of the total permits issued, even though they are an important segment of the labour force, above all for certain industrial sectors. This matter, as stated in the first part of the document, has undergone a change in tendency in global numerical terms since 2006.

An important point to understand how ZF is placed in relation to the territory that surrounds it is the ambivalence and the importance of the role of the union activities, as advocates of dialogue. A large number of them have underlined in interviews how they have committed themselves for years in associations that face the very theme of “disadvantage” and of the meeting point between different cultures, not with a philanthropic logic typical of large profit making organisations, but rather with a solidarity logic, that many sociologists and students of political science interpret with the name of Catholic and Communist solidarity culture (a vision, the first that was formerly defined as “diocesan” during the focus group). A singular example, taken from a life experience of an interviewee is relative to a meeting point on Bangladesh, that had the theme of valorisation of diversity in a logic of reciprocal comparison and integration, via a banquet with typical products of this country and a debate, that started with an illustration of uses, customs and history of this country. During this meeting, an activist union representative in a nonprofit association accepted to have his face painted, as happens in solemn feasts in Bangladesh (kajal). The next day, he/she realized that the colours were indelible and thus spent a day personally facing the theme of perception of diversity.

A final theme, that will be tackled later, is the question of the future, defined as scenario thinking\(^{57}\) by those who work in innovative methodologies for social project design. ZF is about to open a plant in China and the staff and other local stakeholders ask themselves what their future will be at transaction time and what organisational changes there will be probably of a global re-allocation of resources in the group. In particular, at all levels of the structure one asks oneself what can be the implications in relationships between people, in the case in which the needs of the corporate lead in the short term to review also in terms of turnover the commitment/involvement of resources in the structure, above all bearing in mind the presence in operative roles of immigrants. It is in this sense interesting to quote one of the statements made: “Even if there are strong values in the company, cohesion is high and people take trouble on interculturalism, in the end it will be the economy that decides...”.

\(^{57}\) Cfr. www.gbn.com
2.2.3 Good practices

A theme underlined by questionnaires, interviews and focus groups is how a good practice is that of knocking down the wall in passing the technical knowledge between people of different cultures. This passage has just been completed, using the “stigmatisation”: inside the company, whenever the single operator keeps on his/her own his tacit, operational knowledge – tipically methods to be implemented within the manufacturing production system, that were accumulated by the operator in years of on-the-field experience58 – this has been socially represented as negative. In other words, all the communications, inside the company in the last years have shown as “short-sighted” the senior operator who did not favour the transfer of knowledge. Every “organisational bottleneck”, blocking the natural knowledge transfer process, was considered not in line with medium-long term company strategies. The theme, from an intercultural point of view, is absolutely interesting: in critical cases faced in the company, the senior operator showed less difficulty in transferring information and technical details regarding his/her duties to a younger foreign colleague than to an Italian.

So, these variables:

- the role of company communication 1) internal – see last example – and 2) external – the role of the union activists in other nonprofit realities in the area we have previously discussed – to share different approaches to the theme of interculturalism

and

- the connection of these actions with attitudes that constitute the basis of the company’s philosophy, summarised in the words “being a pro-active part of a context of organisational excellence” quoted in the returned questionnaires, are all very important to understand the organisational culture of ZF spa, in which one faces the theme of interculturalism as a lever for innovation and continual company performance improvement. ZF is representative of a situation in which the learning of the individual (organisational learning, that is generated through the continual sharing of work tasks among people belonging to different cultures), is organisational learning and takes place as there are principles (not coercive rules) – that give the idea of a path to follow.

ZF, furthermore, does not act in a separate way from the external environment. One describes in the previous paragraph the double role of the union activists:

58 See als the important note 55 on Apprenticeship, related to the case study Ravagnan.
contemporaneously, they operate in the company in the promotion of the theme of interculture and within the nonprofit as a personal interest outside of work activities. This aspect, that constitutes a typical example of how the theme of solidarity is interpreted in Italy, constitutes an important link in the progressive creation of an intercultural work place. These people, in fact, bring their social experience from the external environment into the company micro society and change the positive experiences of a collaborative and project type, matured in the company, also externally to the company, reinforcing the efficacy of third sector action.

The philosophy that is called in question in the actions of ZF, so dear to companies of an Anglo Saxon culture, is that of Corporate Social Responsibility. This consists of the integration on a voluntary basis, by the company, of social and environmental concerns (stakeholders in a wide sense, and not only shareholders), in its commercial operations and its relationships with parties directly or indirectly affected by the business. All of the good practices related to CSR followed by ZF are, thus, based on the methods with which the company and society are part of a virtuous circle. The benefits that ZF is able to give to the intercultural society are commitment for integration and ethics of its choices. Both profit from one another. As regards this matter, before illustrating some of the recommendations that could be suggested to ZF, of how to act in a more and more notable way in the territory, in continuity with what has been done until now on the theme, it is worth remembering a quotation of a worker: “ZF is concerned with the territory and has always made choices that are coherent and conscious in its regards, both in a local and global logic.”

2.2.4 Recommendations
There are various intervention methods that are more or less direct on the theme of interculture that involve local society - the so called “territory”, extensively described in the first part of the National Report – and that are coherent with its philosophy and the illustrated set up of a multinational structure such as ZF. In many cases corporates, more than the Italian site of the company, design initiatives of this type, but in short, they can be of two main types. On the one hand, donations that concern the so-called philanthropy, the manifestation of which is the support of a set cause via sums and events; on the other, foundations, that foresee the indirect administration via managers who manage the patrimony and investments. Among these, cultural sponsorships on promotion initiatives of the theme of interculture, could, in particular, be initiatives to undertake locally, foreseeing the combination of an event or to a nonprofit making company, in the social
field and together, intercultural: for example ethnic feasts and exhibitions that involve the communities of origin of the workers and that provide a comparison message for citizens - see the introduction to Ravagnan - the situation in cities and in the urban belt of Padua. Social marketing initiatives, integrated in commercial enterprise activities could also generate medium-long term social marketing initiatives, integrated in the company’s commercial activities, could also generate medium-long term projects, creating via partnerships of reciprocal benefit with nonprofit organisations involved in intercultural issues in the work place and of “disadvantage”, a theme contemplated in an extensive way also by the recent law 23 of the Veneto Region, 2006. The positive aspects that the company would obtain from this behaviour defined as “ethically correct” is the improvement of relationships with all external subjects to the enterprise, and greater internal cohesion, useful above all in times of organisational change. In a time in which international strategies require careful evaluation of where to allocate one’s company functions, generating a link with the territorial stakeholders is fundamental to render the decision-making process participative and to consider the impacts on the different company areas. We would like to point out, as an example, that the majority of immigrants are in the production area of companies and this area is the part that most frequently Italian production companies are de-localising towards countries such as China (location of workplace).

At the same time, in order to maximise the benefits of a company philosophy oriented towards inclusion and the valorisation of different cultures in the work place, of which ZF is a leader, it is advisable to develop tools that help transfer good practices on integration also to other local companies. Certifications and EFQM are certainly a means of public recognition of one’s ethics: nevertheless transfer is a fundamental aspect to allow propagation, surpassing conservative aspects and the closure of a wide part of the Italian entrepreneurial culture. Amongst other things, via local industrial associations, one could organise a series of project initiatives that allow some professionals of ZF to act as tutors on this theme for companies which are less sensitive to this issue- many SMEs do not have an international managerial culture- but also providing an opportunity for comparison on specific aspects. For example, the priorities and factors to consider in taking strategic decisions that have an impact on human resources, regarding interculture.

In the organisation, some simple, direct interventions that could contribute to further feed an intercultural culture are: written communication to all levels in different languages, for example signs and internal literature, mainly in Italian, the progressive creation of a middle
management from different cultures perhaps giving priority when taking somebody on at the end of a career to children of immigrants working in the company. Furthermore, a greater opening in the participation of organisational roles also to female managers, possibly from different cultures is surely useful to reinforce organisational behaviour in a global intercultural light. Also a *counselling* service to transfer operative experience to the work place of people from different cultures could help other immigrant workers in other local companies to share the problems faced at work, above all at the beginning when joining.

As we mentioned in the paragraph on challenges, **specific training**, perhaps undertaken by qualified staff, also of different cultures, on how to manage work relations with people from different cultures (e.g. Muslim, above all when a question of relationships between different sexes), could be very helpful. Highlighting some possible sections, the beneficiaries in the company could be: human resource staff, line managers working closely with foreign workers, workers who are not Italian-. The central themes, instead as indicated by the participants in the survey, could be the following: interpretation of non verbal communication, time management, the concept and respect of rules and hierarchy and *problem solving*.

2.3 Case Study: Health District of the Italian National Medical Service

2.3.1 Introduction and Methodology

As described in closing, in the first part of the document when the specific details of the sector were mentioned, the National Medical Service in Italy is financed by the public – the State, citizens with specific local and national contributions, and temporary integrations that are required according to the income category to which the patient belongs and the age of reference of the patient. This is managed by the regional governments.

The principal cost of the *welfare State* is actually what is dedicated to the subject of health care in a wider sense. Health care and social care are currently being discussed as the two questions are tackled in a connected manner by the structures, which are directly and indirectly involved exactly with this aspect in the country, the Local Social and Health Units, which make up the bureaucratic and administrative interface, the Health Districts and Hospitals that disburse the treatment, and the municipal governments that manage, often by delegating to the Districts to supply the service. Local social and health units and Health Districts have financial autonomy and they decide which actions to distribute the
finances to according to the budget made available by the regional government, which they negotiate with the central authority by following the principle of fairness and according to careful analyses of the indicators that mirror the territory. The negotiation of the Area Plans is the fundamental moment when the various representatives of the social parties and institutions that are important in the area, after having made comparisons at a meeting around a table, issue the country’s policies and social-health priorities. The subjects of the treatment of social-health aspects of workers that come from different ethnic backgrounds (than an Italian background) often emerge in these documents and they define the actions and services to be disbursed for these individuals.

Generally speaking, the treatments can be different with regard to the pre-selected course for the delivery of care that is mainly in hospital or, instead, home care. The health district of Scandiano, in the province of Reggio Emilia, Emilia-Romagna region, located in the central north of the country, has embraced the choice of home care in recent years – when the type of social-health service is associated with a given need for treatment or the illness allows it – as the home and family are regarded as being fundamental values that are able to offer a dignified area for treatment and being looked after in a wider sense for the patient.

At the same time, in supplying these services, the link and the extremely strong collaboration with the social operators that belong to the nonprofit sector is characteristic of our country and especially of some territories, which constitute an example for antonomasia. This synergy allows the social-health services to have quality and a level of elevated coverage, as well as lightening the state costs for healthcare as the burden of the service will be rebalanced, making it the responsibility of the local community.

Ausl (Local Health Unit Company) of Reggio Emilia has approximately 3,700 employees, and originated from the statutory fusion by law in 1994 by the Emilia-Romagna Region. The regional territory has both an industrial and consolidated cooperative structure, as well as a vibrant social context that is well-known for its tendency towards integration. Ausl’s boundaries include 45 municipalities – some in the hills and some on the plain – and approximately 500,000 inhabitants. During the course of the interviews, it has been said of the local culture that “all the inhabitants are citizens”. Citizenship isn’t a fact pertaining to vital statistics for the local population. To live in this territory means to already share the citizenship for the majority of the inhabitants, and this “involves the embracing of one’s duties, such as being informed of one’s rights and participating in the debate of the form that local laws should be taking”, as said in the interviews. Five large hospitals gravitate
within the territory covered by Ausl and the Regional Laws (Regional Law Emilia-Romagna 19/1994 and Law 2/2003) establish what the roles are of the Districts and the reciprocal links between Ausl, the hospitals, health districts and the related areas of competency.

The objectives of the District of Scandiano are the supply of social and medical services in the pertaining territory, following the principles of “fairness, appropriateness and accessibility”. The District must also monitor the requirements related to the population’s health, plan the range of social and medical services on offer, inform about medical prevention and prevention of illnesses and be involved in integrating the actions of different organisations in the territory, which we have mentioned, including the municipal governments. The Area Plan, as we suggested, is the territorial master plan that gathers together and formalises these aspects, after a political comparison. The District of Scandiano extends across the area of the municipalities of Baiso, Casalgrande, Castellarano, Rubiera, Scandiano and Viano, covering a population of 70,000 people. As you will read in the next few lines about the emerging subjects, the theme of interculturalism in this representative reality of Italian Health basically refers to the relations between the medical personnel who are mainly Italian and the foreign patients, but also among Italian patients and the paramedic staff, both the official staff who operate within the nonprofit sector, as you will read in the case of the “Insieme si può” (“Together we can”) cooperative, and the unofficial staff from other cultures. It should indeed be remembered that a high concentration of staff without contracts and specialisations is in the areas of widespread well-being like this one, which is dedicated to care-giving. This is called “the caregiving population”, present in a conspicuous number – hundreds of thousands throughout Italy, as come shown by the Caritas estimates. These caregivers, mainly from eastern European countries, such as the Ukraine, Poland, Moldova, Estonia and Russia, typically speak Italian and look after the elderly. Unfortunately, they did not accept to take part in interview in order to not reveal their illegal position. In the majority of cases, these people do not have permits to stay.

A preliminary interview was carried out with the Health District Director with the aim of describing the objectives of the EIW Project and to define the panel. The Director said that he would be very interested to see the project’s results and to discuss the comparison elements that emerge as soon as possible. A focus group saw the participation of all the main representatives that tackle the theme of interculturalism because of their role and four in-depth interviews were carried out prior to this, which lasted for approximately two hours each with representatives. Seventy paper questionnaires were distributed to the
structure’s people or to those who work with the municipal government on social services for immigrants. The group called into action (see the following list) included both men and women.

Before the focus group, the analysts gathered together the empirical evidence in the area. They were sent to the negotiation session of the Area Plan as non-participating observers. An informal interview — a word-related task was not carried out on expressed request — regarding the state of the art in social politics and in the personal counselling of the immigrants was carried out to an street educator and this was another interesting interpretative idea.

Each of the interactions had syntheses in the appropriate feature of the questionnaire shared between the partners or written out in the case of the focus groups. As requested by the interviewees, their names were not shown. The description that follows is an exact summary of the challenges, good and bad practices, and the recommendations that were formulated in a logical scenario, emerging from the questionnaires, the one-on-one interviews and the focus group.

Preliminary interview: District Director
Individual interview: Mayor of Scandiano, female, Italy
Individual interview: Union (CISL), assigned to the Area Plan, male, Italy
Individual interview: Union (FIM), assigned to the Area Plan, male, Italy
Individual interview: Immigrant Services Manager, Municipality of Scandiano, female, Italy.
Focus group: Director, male (Italy); Doctor, male (Italy); Paramedic personnel manager, Obstetrician, female (Italy); Social Services Manager for the Municipality of Scandiano, male (Italy), Technical Social Services Manager for the Municipality of Scandiano and former Mayor of one of the municipal governments in the Health District, female (Italy).
Responses to the questionnaires: 32%, mainly by individuals belonging to cultures different than Italian.

2.3.2 Critical issues emerging
In this case, the dynamics of the intercultural rapport emerge clearly in the fruition of social services both provided by foreign caregivers\textsuperscript{59} to typically elderly Italian citizens and provided by Italian medical staff to immigrants. The \textit{intercultural workplace} is therefore read coherently with how the situation is laid out in our country, enlarging the concept of the \textit{workplace} and also including the main players providing the services. The same

\textsuperscript{59} Illegal immigration, and a black market for assistance of elderly people.
outlook will also be adopted in the nonprofit sector and in schools, as you will see as follows, which present similar characteristics and situations.

A deficit of knowledge of the basics of the Italian language has been shown by all the medical and paramedic staff who were interviewed as one of the main barriers in providing fundamental services, such as social and health services and, as a side-effect, for social integration. The situation that occurs typically when foreigners go to a general practitioner – the so-called “medical officer” – is the inability to describe their symptoms, making the process of diagnosis extremely complicated. The role of a professional is seriously put to the test. “It certainly isn’t easy when a whole Chinese family arrive in front of you, not one of them speaks your language and they all want to come into your practice together…”, said a doctor during the focus group. The responsibilities of providing medical care are consistent and, on the other hand, the probability of forming an incorrect interpretation of the symptoms is high when the linguistic variable is outside the interlocutors’ power. Secondly, even when the communication may be effective, aspects take over that regard different methods of treatment. The medicine and functional set-up of western medicine are perceived in a different way by those who consider the body as a unitary organism, where the body and internal life constitute, for example, a closely cohesive binomial. “Traditional western medicine is set down according to a different logic,” said the doctors interviewed “for a complaint, after having seen your doctor, you are often obliged to see a round of specialists until you find one who can place your problem from a functional (specific) point of view”. Scepticism that is sometimes united with a personal interpretation – “Sometimes dangerous,” the doctors being interviewed add about the treatment methods, which are aspects that often occur, especially when the service providers are from the East (China, the Indo-Chinese area and India). A relevant aspect then concerns the doctor-patient relationship when the former is a man, as often happens, and the latter is a woman. From the results of the interviews, it emerges as an interaction that a basis of reciprocal trust is unable to exist between the two and the help of paramedic and nursing staff is useful in consolidating the relationship in this sense. “They feel unsafe and don’t say a word. It is difficult for them to accept your visits. They hardly describe their symptoms. They don’t help you to build up their case history…”

Instead, when the relationship between foreign caregivers and elderly Italian patients is examined, the dynamics that manifest themselves are different. The language does not present a significant problem in terms of communication. The people from the areas mentioned, above all, the Ukraine, Poland, Moldova, Estonia and Russia, have no
particular problems in learning Italian, which is the only language possible for communication, given that the elderly hardly ever speak English. It also emerges here, as we have seen among the immigrant workers that work on production lines in industrial companies, the need to adopt the common language used in everyday life, especially in a context of home life: dialect is the most commonly used language, even more so than Italian. This aspect causes the subsequent problem of integration. If one moves from the province, or even more so if from the region, the immigrants have to learn another dialect and start the learning process again. It should also be remembered that the caregivers have often been awarded with second-level learning qualifications and sometimes even with degrees in their countries of origin, not necessarily in the areas of medicine or social sciences, therefore the question of equipollence is also posed clearly. The caregivers find themselves up a bureaucratic complexity to have their qualification recognised and to increase the value of their professional profiles, which often ends negatively. Carrying out their profession by learning and gaining experience in the field, normally without having the necessary professional skills, benefiting from the demands of the market, which is not able to be completely covered by the public health and the nonprofit sector. As regards the dialogue and the sharing of values between the elderly and the caregiver, the interviews emphasise how the lifestyle and, in particular, the simplicity in terms of consumption that is typical of the elderly in Italian provinces is one of the shared aspects and it finds agreement between those using and those providing the service: “…the elderly here in the province live with very little, just like us”, a person from outside the European Union said in a questionnaire. The food is instead a critical point in the sense that “the caregivers,” as a professional nurse said, “tend to over-feed the elderly”. Someone added an explanation that does not perhaps have an anthropological basis, but it is worthwhile to include: “…because they are not professional nurses and they do not have experience in the areas of nutrition”.

2.3.3 Good and bad practices
As regards the good practices related to the resolution of linguistic problems linked to the providing of a service of public use, such as the social-health service, the solution that is informally followed by foreign patients is in the form of being accompanied and helped by friends with wider ranging language skills. The formal route instead involves providing a professional to carry out technical translations by the district. Nevertheless, as has emerged from the interviews, the large number of entities present and the difficulty of allocating a specific budget for these costs make it improbable, as said by the operators interviewed, to set-up a multilingual service for all front-line activities. A series of intelligent
solutions exist to complement this service, which have been prepared by the public relations office and are fundamentally based on flexibility for preventative information written in simple language and in an informal style with a series of associated illustrations. At the same time, as an experiment, some doctors have been provided with boards with visual illustrations of situations that correspond with the most common symptoms with regard to standard illnesses. These will be shown to the patients when necessary and have captions that briefly contain a description of the symptom and illness. They are translated into the languages of the majority of the nationalities residing locally. The work had required some of the doctors’ time during the editing process, but it has had a highly positive effect in the initial stages of the experiment. At the same time, there has been a considerable improvement in the effectiveness of the communication by working on some gestures, which cover similar meanings in different cultures and that help to describe the patient’s symptoms. This practice had been elaborated by studying the relationships between meanings – words in different languages – and meaning – explicit drawings in a cartoon form – together with other anthropologists. A further example, which is symbolic of the need to tackle the theme of the treatment of people with prudence and taking advantage of the supporting knowledge of professionals, is when the report is about an intercultural guiding principle is as follows: “It was a recent occurrence that a newborn child, son of parents from outside the European Union with Romanian origins, was signalled by a nurse as the child had a series of marks on his arm. Concerned that he had been the victim of violence or maltreatment, the nurse consulted the social services, who advised the nurse to ask an anthropologist. The anthropologist’s immediate response was that it was a tradition of some Romanian communities to draw a symbol in ink on the arm of the firstborn son, which would wish him well for his life”.

Experiences such as these make the opportunity to benefit clear also from the opportunity to carry out international projects to compare different intercultural approaches to caregiving. In this sense, Reggio-Emilia is a land of experimentation that is among one of the most advanced and open in Italy, both for the drawing up of pilot projects as a referent point for the elaboration of regional social-health policies and for the its predisposition to be compared on the level as an international benchmark.

The Area Plans are, as we have said, the preferred space to gather facts and the planning of social-health services from the point of view of fairness, which one could activate with a multicultural declination. So that this instrument becomes the bearer of a useful practice, it is therefore fundamental when it is drawn up that it ensures full representation in the
different moments linked to the nationalities in the territory. This aspect can be implemented if there are trusted mediators in the foreign population who can be harbingers of facts expressed by them. The mediator is generally the trade union, but it also often an association or a social cooperative in the territory. The synergy with representatives of the municipal government’s social services is however fundamental to combine the bottom-up of the facts of this interpretation to a local direction of an institution type.

The municipal government’s counter service (front-line personnel) is another fundamental tool, which has been organised to open up the institutions and to start up a continual rapport with the working foreign population in the territory. As remembered in other cases, the rapport with bureaucracy and the laws is complex and multi-faceted in our country and it is sometimes one of the main facts expressed by foreign residents in their everyday lives, which could also be the object – as will be recalled in the following paragraph – of training courses for specific figures who are able to make this type of dialogue flow better, which is that of the front-line operator both being able to provide information as well as being proactive in gathering the information by means of questionnaires and the ability to listen. It should be remembered that citizens, associations and other non-for-profit organisations mentioned actively act also by means of other types of initiatives to gather facts and to dialogue actively with foreign workers and Italian citizens belonging to other cultures in the territory. Celebrations and meetings in the territory “in tents” organised by a different title and theme, but always with the same minimum common denominator: the way forward towards bi-directional integration are the preferred convivial moments in these areas to feed these exchanges.

2.3.4 Recommendations

The theme of the recommendations articulated in the case study, and also partly in the educational sector, is centred on professional figures, their skills and the training facts that are to be implemented. Indeed, when the territory demonstrates a certain maturity, as is the case in this area, in tackling the themes that contribute to the reaction in an intercultural environment in the workplace and in supplying the services to the main residents in given spaces, the reflection almost automatically shifts towards these factors. We spoke earlier about the role of anthropology in understanding behaviour and in explaining it. A further help, also mentioned by some managers during the interviews, could come from the reinforcement of this locally, through the interpretation of phenomena and behaviours, by the creation of a permanent research team in force at the municipal government and Ausl, and linked to young university researchers. For example, being able
to gather these aspects together in a continuous manner as “consulting committees” and then joining together their uses, supporting the transfer of knowledge of these aspects simply to the citizenship of Italian culture, with various types of communication channels, including artistic ones.

An already existing figure, but which could be developed further, is the street educator (professional operators). This individual is involved with the insertion of foreigners into the working world and the management of problems emerging during this process. Above all, his/her skills are educational and behavioural, and this returns to a further reflection about the need for the supporting professional involved with the insertion to not only know about working themes and “inclusive” behaviours to assist the insertion, but also a deep knowledge of the culture of the country from which the person to be inserted comes from, which as we will see in the case of education, forms the basis of another figure, who is called the cultural linguistic mediator and created from the dependence of local institutions and sometimes also of the social-health field, but who has up to now worked almost exclusively in schools.

The street educator therefore plays an important role in the creation of EIW, but this role is not widespread. The hope is that this individual could him/herself be a foreigner. Other professionals on the front-line are the operators set aside to listen at the counters. These counters that we are talking about in this case do not exhaust their business by communicating standard information in many different languages, instead they represent the first moment of contact to direct the foreign workers towards possible listening groups with other people who are experiencing the same situation, so that they can continually monitor, formalise and examine within the Area Plans. For example, an exact listening requirement emerged for Muslim women in their needs linked to social-health care and they asked for the competent operator on the front-line personnel, and also the social professional or doctor who subsequently able to help them with specific question, to be a woman (sex). Also in this instance, many of the people interviewed said that it would be very useful to have a doctor from the same culture or one who has a deep understanding of the country of origin.

In order to complement this, also said by those interviewed, it is hoped that translators (language) will be introduced at individual and associate medical practices. The latter are widespread in the area and are useful in supporting the division of costs for this type of service, structures such as hospitals, Accident & Emergency, above all, given that this is
the first port of call for accidents at work and this is an area with a high level of industry. It is the second European centre for the production of tiles and the health districts help with the diagnosis and treatment.

The greatest challenge, both institutionally and professionally, refers to the caregivers. The number of foreign workers allocated to this role is considerable in the territory and constitutes the mirror of a larger trend, which covers the whole of our country as we said earlier in the in-depth description of the representative areas within the private, public and educational sectors. Unfortunately, there are no clear procedures nor, at the very least, slight procedures to guarantee the **equipollence** and this fuels the illegality. At the same time, the health costs is a considerable burden and something that the welfare is no longer unfortunately able to manage completely by itself, also due to the increase of the average age of the population and the rise in the quality levels of the service. This indirectly forces – as said by the interviewees – a need to redistribute the burden of health also to individuals: the families of citizens that pay the caregivers illegally. It is because of this that the illegality of these people is tolerated. Often they do not have **permits** to stay, as well as not having the qualification to carry out the medical profession. Nevertheless, at the same time, as is happening in other territories (as we see in the case of the cooperative “**Insieme si può**”), the nonprofit world is trying its best to contribute to the resolution of individual cases of recognising equipollence and also in making the caregiver legal. Taken from the public as orders – ex art. 14 so called Biagi Law – contracts of outsourcing of certain social-health and hospital services, such as for example, regarding the care of the elderly, the caregivers are about to gain a regular work contract and permit to stay, in such a way that allows contributions to be paid against accidents at work and towards pension funds. These operations can be formalised, returned and equipped with a training system, which isn’t just in terms of technical training but as a kit for an easier approach to bureaucratic problems of equipollence and the gaining of standard knowledge of the health laws of our country.

With regard to the quid made by one of the interviewees, “all the inhabitants are citizens”, other hopeful moments include the multiplication of the possibilities to carry out territorial planning that is also participating in with the active involvement of foreigners and Italians belonging to other cultures. The encouragement of participation in the planning where foreigners also take part should occur particularly with the involvement of families and new generations, who are often already Italian citizens, which is an important engine for the widening of these virtuous circuits.
2.4 Case study: Co-operative enterprise

2.4.1 Introduction and methodology

The nonprofit sector, commonly called the Third Sector in Italy is particularly important for the contribution that it provides to a consolidated welfare and to a balanced distribution of the assets of the so-called social economy. The Italian nonprofit sector has a particular connotation that can be distinguished by the approach, both of the Anglo-Saxon philanthropy and of the social economy of Eastern European countries belonging to the extended Europe of today. If the problem of the redistribution of wealth in modern, capitalist society is often organised via solid structures, with distinctive management competencies, that act according to managerial criteria, instead solidarity is experienced in Italy as an organised movement of politics, the church and Unions, via citizens’ associations to the benefit of a beneficiary who is unable to generate for different reasons, a level of productivity aligned to market standards. The collective taking on of the problems of people who are not self sufficient, who have difficulties in sustaining high levels of productivity, is substantiated in the adoption of inclusive logics, oriented to favour the integration in society of these disadvantaged people via work accompaniment. Intervention to solve the question of imbalance thus, takes place via the logic of welfare that creates the conditions to initiate an insertion route, overcoming the idealistic inspiration of charity and involving in as active way as possible, the beneficiary and the process facilitators. Also the social responsibility of profit making enterprises – that in Italy due to Law 30/2003 can forage via the mechanism of allocation of orders to cooperatives, fundamental actors of the nonprofit sector, that concern themselves with the so called disadvantaged groups amongst which extra-community citizens with a job and a housing situation which is precarious- thus assumes, a different importance to that of its origins in North Europe. Here it moves from the assumption that there is a link between ethics and work, essentially guaranteed by the lever of the norms of national and regional laws. In Italy, thus, the organisation of the solidarity economy has always been based on politics, on relationships of trust and on the quality of interpersonal relationships. A glance at the legislation on employment insertion, that imposes companies to take on, in set percentages varying according to the size of the company itself, workers coming from disadvantaged groups, and to the recent creation of the Institute of social enterprises, creates the mirror of that cultural substrata of Catholic and left wing matrix that expressly asks of citizens, people of the community to raise their heads from their own individual reference area (“backyard”) and to operate as active citizens and promoters of an inclusive system. The Welfare State acts in the direction of improvement of the meeting between disadvantaged demand and
labour supply to weak groups 1) exploiting, in the limits defined by central government, the opportunities for public funding, essentially Employment centres- under the jurisdiction of the Province – and Services for Labour integration – subordinated to territorial reference Ulss and related to the management of particular categories affected with specific difficulties; 2) reinforcing the links with private structures that are directly obliged by law and take on a certain number of people from protected groups, or indirectly guarantee support to employment of foreigners due to their need for resources with specific characteristics- as stated in the first part of this document-, or due to an orientation towards CSR (acts of liberalness); 3) via the social private sector: cooperatives, consortia and the newly founded social enterprise that often obtain in trust as qualified outsourcers of public health structures, of orders. The management of activities of the social private sector constitutes a very important absorption lung for foreign workers: both for those who are not qualified and for those waiting for recognition of qualifications from their country of origin, and for some qualified professional categories who provide services to people. The most commonly used organisational form in the nonprofit sector to undertake these activities to support labour is, mainly, that of a cooperative. Its legal recognition took place with Law 381/91 "Disciplining of social cooperatives" and establishes that the beneficiaries of actions are those disadvantaged components, members and non members. Social cooperatives thus operate for the general benefit of the community and in favour of social integration via employment. They can fundamentally undertake two types of activity: there are A type social cooperatives that have the aim of fulfilling the general interest of the community in the human promotion and social integration of citizens, via the management of socio-medical and educational services; B type cooperatives that instead fulfil the general interest of the collectivity in human promotion and social integration of citizens via the undertaking of diverse activities- agricultural, industrial, commercial or of services- for labour insertion of disadvantaged people. Disadvantaged people should constitute at least 30% of the workforce of the cooperative. There is also the social cooperative with diverse aims, that fulfil both the management of socio-medical and educational services and the undertaking of diverse activities for the labour insertion of disadvantaged people. A condition to belong to this sub-category is that the type of disadvantage and/or intervention area should be such as to require coordinated intervention for the efficacious fulfilment of the aims. One should note how in 1991, the year specific legislation was approved, there were approximately 2,000 social cooperatives, while at the end of the year 2000 there were approximately 7,000 (ISTAT 2001 data). The members of a B type social cooperative can be member workers who work for a wage; voluntary members who undertake
activities without receiving a salary; financing members who grant capital to the cooperative in order for it to yield.

“Insieme si può”, case study object of observation of the nonprofit sector, represents the archetype of social cooperation for the reality of the Italian province: it has its central seat in Treviso – a provincial territory characterised by a strong presence of small and medium enterprises, that attract important flows of extra-community work force – and it is active in the regional territory in the training sector, and social services. It has been involved in the socio-employment insertion of disadvantaged groups since 1983 (foreigners, long term unemployed, physically disabled, etc...). This is one of the biggest A type cooperatives with approximately 900 member workers and 153 work sites in different sectors: support to the mentally disabled (that involves 8% of activities undertaken of the 900 member workers), to disadvantaged children (5%), training to disadvantaged workers (3%), cleaning of public and private buildings (26%) and (45%) caregiving to the elderly. Of the 900, 190 are foreign member workers who come from 34 countries: Romania is the country with the biggest number of members with 35 people, followed by Moldavia, with 19 people, Albania with 17, the Ukraine and Morocco with 15 each and Croatia with 11. More specifically the distribution of duties of women is the following: out of 190 foreign workers, 127 look after old people, just over 20 are nurses, 35 are involved in cleaning of public buildings – often healthcare sites and hospitals -. 92 of these resources have a secondary school diploma or a degree. These activities are a complementary example with respect to what has been identified when speaking about the Health sector case. The foreign caregivers in this case have a legal residence permit and as we will see, thanks to the medication of the cooperative, manage to operate cultivating a professional specificness and freeing themselves in a sector where there is a notable demand.

The research on the case was undertaken according to the methodology used in the others: the management manifested interest with respect to the research results, requesting as soon as possible a project summary, for example in the dissemination phase. As well as distributing questionnaires, five in-depth interviews lasting approximately two hours and a global focus group was held, during which the most representative figures on the theme of interculture in the organisation took part: the group was made up of men and women. Furthermore, approximately fifty paper questionnaires were distributed to be completed in a standalone form. Contrarily to the other cases, there was not a great return of these questionnaires. The answers and the dialogues were transcribed. Names are not present for data protection reasons. The description that follows is a precise summary of
critical aspects emerging, of good and bad practices and of recommendations formulated in a prospective (or scenario) logic emerging from the questionnaires, the individual interviews and the focus group.

Preliminary interview: Vice-Chairman
Focus group: Specialist nurse (the Elderly), Nurse, Intercultural language mediator, HR Manager, Training Manager, Staff manager (the elderly)
Individual interview: Nurse, female, Cuba
Individual interview: Nurse, female, Ukraine
Individual interview: Intercultural language mediator, female, Nigeria
Individual interview: Human Resource Manager, male, Italy
Individual interview: Staff Manager (the elderly), male, Italy
Returned completed questionnaires: few.

2.4.2 Critical issues emerging
The role that today foreign workers have in workspaces such as “Insieme si può” is important, as they operate in contact with people belonging to families who have decided to continue to live together with old people. In effect, they are called, with a strong element of trust in the relationship, to substitute the family members who are at work during the day - that is an absolute value locally, for which often people dedicate 10/12 hours a day to this activity -. This activity is divided into a sort of illegal parallel market, or via the services offered by the nonprofit sector and, on the other hand, by the public management of socio-medical services.

The first critical aspect in the case concerns the use of the Italian language by the foreigners. The diffusion of languages such as English or French is not as widely used in people who receive care from the foreign member-workers of the cooperative, thus, the command of the latter of the Italian language is, as already specified, of a dialect, fundamental for interaction. If one bears in mind the fact that the target of old people for example is particularly chatty and that the quality of the service is related to precise communication of needs and symptoms, a wide autonomy in the use of language is unavoidable. The first month, for these reasons is considered to be a fundamental time, often a source of potential burnout. The technical terminology is, more generally, the vocabulary of the medicine used during the work and does not constitute, as emerges from the interviews a particular problem, due to their similarity, due to Greek roots. In particular, the caregivers do not say that they do not have particular gaps as: “the diagnosis, in
technical terms, and the names of drugs refer to the main ingredient, thus the words do not change”.

The second critical issue proposed by the actors interviewed concerns the recognition of their studies in their country of origin (equipollence) and the methods of connection between courses taken previously and their possible professional reconversion. It was noted how the majority of problems concerning equivalents still needs to be tackled seriously by the institutions concerned. “To date there is no basic condition to create a real intercultural workplace that is able to provide equal starting conditions, in the labour market” states a young foreign nurse. In recent years, a support in the accompaniment of the management of bureaucratic application forms for the recognition of equivalency of qualifications has been given to many of the foreign members of the cooperative, but the process in question is very expensive and it was decided to limit it as much as possible.

The theme of professional qualification and re-qualification (training needs) in cooperatives such as “Insieme si può” is interpreted according to the approach of lifelong learning and in this sense there are many opportunities, with methodologically solid courses: the organisation feels this aspect is an important strong point: one aims for the development of technical competencies to constantly improve the service to clients. The possibility to differentiate the course for those who need to create the basis as they come from another profession and those, instead, who before arriving in Italy undertook a profession in the medical or a similar para-medical field but in another discipline is important. Furthermore, one should highlight how, among the training needs, the development of soft competencies- related in general to emotional, cognitive, relational and management aspects- can be further reinforced; for example via greater space for comparison and exchange of practices among the foreign member –workers who operate in the field providing services to people.

As regards the peculiar characteristics and the distinctive competencies of foreign workers, it is interesting to see how one can see from the following comment of one of the Responsible Heads: “Even if this is of Marca Trevigiana a territory that in recent years has generated a notable number of new enterprises, gemmated in the traditional industrial supply chain – the textile sector with Benetton, the technical shoe sector and the sportsystem with Lotto, Diadora and Alpinestars, for example -, today the people who demonstrate most adaptability locally, attitude to self-entrepreneurship and the will to obtain the results whose benefits can be extended to the entire community, are the foreign workers. They have learnt very quickly and today constitute a formidable stimulus for Italians who test themselves in the same fields and risk remaining at the starting post…”.
From a point of view of people involved and methods of articulation of care services for people, one can see how there is a strong prevalence of women (sex) among the member workers: 94%, whose provenance is mainly from the former eastern Europe. This prevalence in percentages, as explained in the introduction also sees a standardised series of competencies, usually requested by the duties that are given to them. The foreign caregivers did not show any particular problems from a discrimination point of view of influences and conditioning on behaviours held towards them, neither by those being cared for, nor by colleagues due to their sex. The only request that nevertheless partially pools foreign men and women, even if the latter are stronger, is that of a more representative and decision making capacity, to hold roles with more responsibility in the organisation.

As regards team work and the relationship between worker and the hierarchy/organisation, the interview with the head of human resource management highlighted how there is a substantial initial difficulty in coordinating intercultural resources and teams, due mainly to the different perception of time and organisational rules, experienced in “Insieme si può” in a very different way, for example by the Maghreb people from Africa and the workers coming from former Eastern European countries. The initial period in question, however, is more a period of adjustment and reciprocal adaptation. In reality, these specific aspects are contemplated in the allocation of duties and shifts, for which the global efficiency of the cooperative does not have any difficulties, and what is more important, does not try to impose them.

2.4.3 Good and bad practices
According to what the company heads say, the average duration of an efficacious learning course in the language for a foreign worker is approximately one year, and this requires a specific investment for foreign professionals. They constitute a category of their own, as concerns learning times, the workers from Romania, who beat these times by half, for different reasons apparently related to habits, values and similar structure of the language. In undertaking a learning course, the foreign professionals often find themselves in difficulty as regards the offer of Italian courses that are not sufficiently differentiated by levels on the basis of their training needs. For example, one of the foreign nurses interviewed states: “in the courses we find ourselves in groups with teachers who do not always know the activities and duties of our profession. It could be caregivers, of foreign extraction who take a part of the module or course” and adds: “…even if in the end in our daily practice our main problem is that of recreating the meaning of the work in dialect, that
when speaking can be central to the understanding of the needs shown by old people, the main beneficiaries of the service”.

An interesting aspect that characterises this cooperative in particular and makes it an important pilot centre in the area is the participative method (organisation of the intercultural workplace), based on extended meetings in which one can transfer knowledge and practices, as well as discuss problems encountered and alleviate the burnout of the caregivers.

Debates, periodical reciprocal comparison and the adoption of tools for the rational management of activities are the main supports adopted to face critical issues emerging in work time management, nevertheless always in a logic of accompaniment, that avoids as far as possible strains and enforced assimilation in cultural terms.

As many of the member-workers are long-term residents, that want to settle in the host country, they request from the Italian Government the permission to see their family reunited (family reunion). In the last five years support in the management of relationships with Institutions and the bureaucracy has been given the staff of the cooperative to support these requests. As today the requests are multiplying and there is a wider knowledge of the procedure diffused among the foreigners, the activity tends to be delegated. The reflection is that one could also make this practice a training module with documents attached, to be given in a simple way to member-workers who request it but also to other foreigner residents.

Curiously enough, a practice which is not yet standardised is that of the monitoring of statistics on immigrants in work, compared with job applications presented by other foreign citizens: thus to date, it is not possible to understand how attractive the cooperative is as a tool to generate real work opportunities nor what percentage of applicants do not manage to enter the organisation and above all what the reasons for lack of perfection between the agreement between potential member and cooperative are.

The theme of respect of religious practices and food do not seem to be objective of debate as people do not offer their services in the cooperative but at the clients’, thus they have a certain autonomy and freedom in organising themselves.
A general element of interest, mentioned during the interview with a Russian nurse is the appreciation for the attention towards an inclusive model (perception of integration) in our country: “When I saw what support teachers do here in schools and how the school tries to make all the children work together, regardless of their physical and mental characteristics and their command of the language, I understood what could be done for integration”.

The activity of the cooperative gives real support to activities for foreigners to generate new enterprises coherently with the attitude shown towards development.

Another very interesting practice is that of art therapy, a particular service that is offered as a specific element of the cooperative and consists of contributing through members-workers (of the co-operative) to reconstruct a creative space with painting, sculptures for people with particular difficulties, above all of a psychological nature or related to addictions. Theatre therapy, in particular, is another practice that is used with the elderly to combat solitude: it can involve the telling of episodes of one’s life, but also improvisation times to trigger self analysis on some pathological episodes of a psychosomatic nature and exercises that have the objective of reviving energy via group exercises and movements.

2.4.4 Recommendations

As regards language, the suggestion that seems to appear from the interviews is that compatibly with budget opportunities, one should try to organise courses that contribute to perfecting different skills (spoken and written command), but at different levels and sublevels and with further investigation that allow the extension of the lexis of daily life and universe of the audience that the foreign professionals encounter. In particular, it would be opportune to offer a larger space in the transfer of competency starting from language, benefiting from the competencies of foreign staff that have already done this course. The accompaniment of traditional classroom course with an e-learning platform could be useful for requests for modules of didactic contents and allow the member workers of the cooperative to study at times which are compatible with their shifts and working hours, offering them the support of the virtual classroom, tools for synchronous communication, as well as interactive questionnaires with final evaluation tests.

From a point of view of feeding exchange of knowledge and further improvement of management, using the participative style, from the interviews, two very explicit recommendations are made: the first is that of increasing the frequency of meetings
between professionals who face similar problems and one should start to formalise and code what emerges during these meetings, the second is also to progressively open the participation of foreign member workers in positions of responsibility. In fact a further representative element of the will to allow the cooperative to become an integration tool, would be that of further opening the organisation to foreign actors.

As regards the contribution that the member-workers should hopefully give the cooperative, in parallel with respect to the professional role that the caregivers usually have, it emerges how the latter are more frequently asked to be more available and to manage small projects funded by the Region or by local Institutions. This allows the alleviation of fundraising for the management and to define a little at a time the organisational basis to manage the cooperative via many small projects of integrated action in the community, that have the foreign member workers as a reference, important actors for their enterprise and determination – as stated - in operating in contact with the territory.

A general recommendation, made during the focus group, is on the theme of the relationship between initiatives undertaken in socio-medical fields and the general state of wellbeing and development of the economy of a territory such as this one that represents a typical situation for the majority of Italian provinces. One asks local administrations involved in the relationship with industrial activities that gravitate in this territory, and entrepreneurs – via the adoption of logics of Corporate Social Responsibility - to reflect in an enlightened way on two essential aspects to feed an intercultural workplace. The first is the link found in various studies of the World Health Organisation between investment in the social sector and improvement of quality of life, as it avoids that people fall ill due to negligence and abandon: this suggests to the local economy to continue in the reinforcement of organisations such as the social cooperative in question, managed in Italy, mainly by foreign workers. The second is the two-fold link between the rate of economic development and quality in an intercultural climate. Economic growth feeds the number of daily hours dedicated to work activities- that by definition in this territory being of the property of the family itself is not delegated to others- and reduces time for care of family members and people belonging to disadvantaged groups of the family of origin. Correspondingly, the demand for services to people increases, managed mainly by foreign workers. On the other hand, instead, if the economy slows, the concern was stated that in a directly proportional way, the investment in the social sector could be reduced and probably the relational climate with foreigners would deteriorate.
2.5 Case study: Middle School

2.5.1 Introduction and methodology

The “Antonio Giuriolo” middle school— for children between the ages of 11 and 14 years of age, and foreign students can be up to 18 year of age -, is in Arzignano, in the province of Vicenza, an industrial area in the Veneto Region, that has been one of the main destinations of migratory flows since the 1960s.

The municipality where the school is based has approximately 25,000 inhabitants in a 35 square kilometre area and is made up of plains and hills. Its panorama shows the diffused agricultural tradition diffused un tempo qui. Today, there are more than 2,000 SMEs in the territory that belong to the tannery, marble and manufacture of industrial components sectors.

As we said before, immigration is not a new phenomenon: in the last 50 years immigration was initially internal from the south to the north of the country, then from India, Maghreb and countries of the former Eastern European countries. In fact, there are 61 different immigrant communities in the area who come form Serbia-Montenegro, Bangladesh, India, Albania, Ghana, Morocco, Senegal, Rumania and from Burkina-Faso. The percentage of resident foreigners is approx. 15% (local census data 2003). Many immigrants live here with their families and their children go to school- with an intensity which has been considerably higher during the last 10 years, with respect to the past, according to the Deputy-Head Teacher- of a middle school and study in the typical traditional courses of Italian schools, which are of a Ministerial matrix and organisation.

Up to the end of the eighties when there was a strong industrial development, the parents of Italian and foreign children preferred guiding their children into work as soon as they had finished secondary school while today the majority of adolescents continue their studies and go to secondary grammar school as opposed to technical schools.

The “Antonio Giuriolo” school in Arzignano is a medium-large reality, if compared to others in the province that has 36 classes in three institutes and approx. 900 students. In this context, adult basic literacy training activity has also provided for about 10 years now. The school also delivers a series of projects that it undertakes together with a public and private collaboration network created over the years on didactical subjects in all of Italy, thanks to the spontaneous initiative of its managers and teachers. The “Motterle” and “Zanella” Institutes in Arzignano – that merged for budgetary reasons in September 1999 –
accept students who come from the municipalities of Arzignano and Nogarole and use public transport as a means to travel. The “Beltrame” Institute in Montorso, instead, is a reference point for students in Montorso, Ponte Cocco and Zermeghedo. The mission of the school is based on the theme of reciprocal respect via the definition of shared rules, conceived under the banner for the search for integration and enrichment. The competencies of young people that one wants to develop are cognitive and relational. Staff and management decisions are “participated”. More specifically, partners are often asked to participate in a process of continual improvement in the planning of tutoring services and obligatory and facultative training activities. Among facultative activities, a specific mention of the didactics to improve intercultural communication, that levers mainly on the development of creative themes, on the theatre and environmental laboratories to recreate the relationship with the territory that has had elements of profound discontinuity in this area due to the hypertrophic development of industrial activities.

Specific supports are planned in favour of immigrant families, in particular to overcome structural gaps in the use of the rudiments of the Italian language. There are also refresher courses and integrative afternoon courses for students to increase knowledge on the basis of founding subjects. In the organisation, a set of qualitative-quantitative evaluation criteria are periodically defined and reviewed to gauge training needs and evaluate the distance between defined and real knowledge levels. This is done in agreement with the actors who contribute diversely to support the learning process as facilitators.

Among the main facilitator figures one should highlight the **intercultural language mediator** due to its importance and innovativeness: this profile, of recent conception, is considered to be an important aspect in the intercultural network of the European “common house”. In fact, his/her work, as we will see in the case, is the basis of the daily, systematic opening of spaces for interaction and exchange between different cultures in communicative micro-cosmos which are often “borderline” from a sociological point of view. They are usually bearers of conservative behavioural clichés and are rather closed. They make listening skills and the wealth present in other cultures emerge.

The survey on the case was undertaken with the same methodology used in the former cases: the Head teacher showed interest in the research and in sharing its results, requesting a project summary as soon as possible. As well as distributing questionnaires, five in-depth interviews were held lasting approximately two hours each- two of prior agreement on the subjects and the panel with the Head teacher and Deputy head teacher-
and a global focus group, during which the most representative figures in the organisation on the theme of interculture were involved: the group was made up of both men and women. Furthermore, approximately 70 paper questionnaires were distributed to be completed autonomously by the interviewees. The return of these questionnaires was considerable. The answers and dialogues were transcribed. Names are not indicated due to data protection laws as requested by the interviewees. The description that follows is an analytical summary of critical issues emerging, the good and bad practices and the recommendations made in a prospective (or scenario) logic, emerging from the questionnaires, the interviews and the focus group.

Preliminary interviews: Head teacher and Deputy Head teacher/teacher, female, Italy
Preliminary interviews: Arts teacher, female, Italy
Preliminary interviews: Intercultural Mediator, female, Albania
Preliminary interviews: Head of Parents’ Committee, female, Italy
Focus group: Deputy Head teacher and teacher (Italy), Intercultural Mediator (Albania), Representative of Parents’ Association (Italy).
Questionnaires returned: 30% of those distributed.

2.5.2 Critical issues emerging
According to the Head Teacher, the teacher and parent representatives, the main problem to lay the foundations for comparison and total integration is that of acquiring the basics of the Italian language. 68% of second generation immigrants, from internal school estimates, do not speak fluent Italian and 85% do not use it in written form. If you consider the average percentage of immigrants registered is 21% (internal data 2006), that in some classes reaches peaks of 70%, the rate of local illiteracy in young generations from different cultures is decidedly high for our country. Some children were not born here and their partners have only recently moved here, thus in recent years they have begun to receive a bi-lingual education. If we extend this group, instead, the youngest were often born in Italy, the global number is approximately 300,000 and it is increasing at a rate of approximately 10% each year. The reflection that one makes, given the tightness of school budgets today, is how to help the so-called “bridging” generation, made up of minors, children of at least one immigrant parent, who have mainly arrived here to reunite their families. These children, in fact, are the first to face the theme of the extension of their linguistic and cultural identity with great support. The newborn Italian citizens, children of immigrants, on the other hand, have a different road ahead of them, as they do not experience the leave-taking from their country of origin and because in nursery and
primary schools, the teachers and head teachers say they have a series of extra supports. In fact a teacher interviewed states: “…when you speak about didactic material to use, do you refer mainly to primary schools? For middle schools, obtaining the necessary funds is a nigh on impossible task and their value is close to zero …”. Furthermore, the head of the Parents’ association states: “We, as a Committee, for example, do not have the funds to support integration processes. And thus, we have never really invested in this theme”. The “bridging” generation thus, experiences the theme of identity in a strong way, as it spends most of its time together with Italian contemporaries in a linguistic universe based on the latter and struggles to find its autonomous collocation. Many children belonging to this group are a few years older than their classmates- typically they are more than 14 years of age, often between 6 and 18 – and, according to what is highlighted in the interviews, they communicate with difficulty with them, in a phase of life which is already very complex. In fact, the Deputy Head teachers who is also a teacher states:” Today, the number of children from other cultures in the classroom can reach 15/20 out of 27/33 pupils. These children are often a group of their own, on which the influence of the teacher is negligible. This happens because there is a lack of specific training for teachers, because there is not a general attention to elaborate and adopt a method, neither are there terms for comparison”. Thus, there is a latent need for comparison and to view good practices of integration projects in similar communities in Europe. The Italian students, on their part, are not used to adopting an intercultural prospective in their use of language and in communication in general: it is very unusual that they have studied or undertaken a medium-long term period abroad, thus they do not have any experience of different languages, cultures, habits and customs. They mainly speak the dialect and in this linguistic scheme they also bring their classmates from different cultures, who in the best of hypotheses, i.e. if there is interaction, get used to this language structure and wrongly reproduce it in written form when they want to write in Italian. Other students who come from nearby countries, instead, learn faster, because they are used to hearing our language in Italian television programmes in their countries- for example, Albanians and some people from the Maghreb - or, in other cases, by simply exploiting the fact that their language of origin contains linguistic structures that are similar to those of the Italian language. Indians and people from Bengal, instead have greater difficulty in mastering our language.

The parents of immigrant children, on the other hand, are not present at representative level in the Parents’ Association. The head teacher says the reason seems to be the lack of time of the foreign parents who often work locally and do long hours. One should note
that, often, these people do not speak Italian, but there is a responsibility in the lack of involvement, of the Association itself: says the Parent Association’s representative: “there is no participation of the parents’ of immigrant children”, and continues: “I organised a meeting on the protection of children’s’ rights and distributed 900 photocopies to all the students, with the hope that they would give them to their parents. 12 came. Only one was foreign”, but to our question “Had they been translated into different languages?” the answer was “No, only in Italian”. Often, foreign parents are not informed about Italian courses organised in the school and other times they are too tired to attend in the evenings or if they do shift work. In the same way, the Italian parents do not even speak English. As regards this, the cultural mediator says: I think participation depends on how you work in the school to encourage it. For example, in primary schools in the area, the mediators of all the nationalities present are called to explain the didactical programmes in the different languages at the meeting at the beginning of the year: parent participation in this school has never seen anything like this. I think the school does not consider the possibility of having foreign parent representatives”.

Communication in the building is nearly all multilingual; nevertheless circulars and official information, also to families, is only in Italian. The interviews have shown how communication to the immigrants on events and news on the school life are often difficult to transfer due to frequent change of address.

In substance, important aspects emerge from the interviews that make one think that the road to take towards immigration in the school is still long. Learning processes are very traditional, teachers are often called to transfer basic linguistic competencies, but do not have the knowledge to do so. Furthermore, work methods have been elaborated for a different audience to the one of today and often there is a lack of the necessary change of prospective to set off mechanisms that help create a real intercultural learning place. For example, the cultural mediator says:”In a primary school, we presented the dressing of an Indian bride together with the Indian mediator. This procedure took an entire group several hours, but had a great result and created culture and enthusiasm”.

On the theme of integration, the main actors are, thus, the students themselves: their adaptability and flexibility allows them also to manage not only when learning, but at school, in formalised traditional schemes that are unable to contribute to their learning today and when faced with the written word, show great difficulty.
In general the intercultural approach cannot be considered structured, because it requires more than bureaucratic steps and involving the intercultural linguistic mediator. This profile is available on written request to the Ulss, while elsewhere in some cases they are municipality staff and in others of the counters that Provinces have as regards employment. A second reason that renders the involvement of the mediator problematic is the structural lack of budget, both general, and specific for this type of intervention. One should also highlight the surprising fact that many teachers, even if aware of the possibility of involving a mediator do not know what procedure they should follow to activate this important type of synergy.

2.5.3 Good and bad practices
The many activities organised thanks to the good will of some teachers and the basic solidarity approach that has an eradicated tradition in this territory since the Second World War, has allowed one to face the theme of integration between different cultures in schools with contained, but substantially positive results to date. For example, an emblematic basic good practice of the relationship between the school and diversity, that without doubt works in favour of inclusion is the equal distribution of the students of different cultures – above all those belonging to the “bridging generation” – in the various classes. Via the contribution of the group, one is trying to overcome any delays in teaching due to language problems, and more generally, of insertion. This fundamental aspect generates, on the other hand, small incidents along the way, for example exhibitions of “intolerance” towards some social behaviour (e.g. some episodes as concerns personal hygiene were mentioned).

What in general terms, is unsatisfactory and needs structural choices to support it is surely the quality of teaching. With respect to the use of accompaniment methods of communication in teaching that exploit the pre-verbal, teachers find themselves in great difficulty, as with regards to use in difficult situations of a frank language that could be English. Except for some virtuous examples, the teachers, in substance, are left alone and are unprepared for the change of speed induced by the intercultural variable, that is conceived as exogenous and often, is put aside without being faced systematically. The average age of teachers that is constantly increasing- a phenomenon that is even more notable in other schools outside this territory- and the bottlenecks in joining – new intakes have been at a standstill for several years- are not elements that lead one to formulate rosy hypotheses with respect to the future of teaching.
Language courses for adults, designed and delivered by associations that operate in the territory- sometimes of catholic matrix, in other cases as emanations of local movements- are a good chance to reduce parents' linguistic gaps, that could be a big help in feeding an intercultural workplace, but there is a need for greater attention to the active involvement of the Parents’ Association. If the problem is lack of funds to organise activities- one should remember the statement made by a representative of the Parent’s Association, “Personally, I have never tackled the problem of obtaining funds to support the integration process.” -, bad practice to avoid regards the scarce publicity of public funding opportunities available. The need is surely that of working towards the simplification of the complexity of the message and a greater impulse of these explanations towards the actors who effectively could elaborate projects. Furthermore, a systematic opening to the comparison of external projects already undertaken on the theme of integration in schools both in Italy and abroad, also and above all with experience visits on the field could clarify to all the teaching body and to the parent association the possible reference horizons and objectives.

In this sense, as mentioned in the introduction, an interesting practice is the one used by ministerial institutions that aims to generate a new vocational profile, the mediator, in its different declinations on profiles of: street educator, social conflict mediator, linguistic mediator. When its declination specifies both the profile of the linguistic-cultural mediators, the provenance of the professionals in question is nearly exclusively from countries of origin of the children and the families that are being helped. The professional acts as a link in a social and educational network and involves all the local actors. He/she is a counsellor that monitors and analyses students’ needs- above all of those belonging to the so called “bridging generation” and generates communication links:

- Acting in terms of mentor, by undertaking assessment of training needs and organising a coherent training course, providing feedback to the individual assisted;
- Acting as regards language: as an interpreter typically in emergency situations of new arrivals. This skill should preferably be used for bureaucratic -institutional aspects;
- Favouring integration: support in social behaviour so as to avoid and manage conflicts, as an expert “peace educator”;
- Acting as an intercultural animator: not only a front-desk reference for information but also an animator of multi-cultural relationships inside and outside the workplace.

His/her distinctive competencies are of four types:
- emotional: empathic capacity to favour the tales of interlocutors, correctly perceiving the life and background of the daily life of the people being assisted, creating the basis to allow the immigrants to make small autonomous choices and to be self-determined;

- technical-cognitive: expertise in the use of the language used by the person being assisted- possibly mother tongue- and the anthropologic background needed, with respect to the culture of origin; knowledge of laws and project opportunities to support interculture in the work place (one of the specific requirements, on the basis of which the selection of the profile is made);

- relational: ability in dealing with people to assist, with their families, with ethnic communities and local institutions, creating moments of intercultural meeting, contributing with psychological, sociological and linguistic assistance to aliment the awareness and links with values and beliefs of the different cultures involved in the comparison;

- managerial: capacity to define objectives, analyse existing material concerning the intercultural situation, define the social route and that of development of the individual together with the children and people being supported in synergy with the services existing in the territory: fundraising: solution of bureaucratic and administrative rights issues, searching for and writing projects on governmental and European calls together with relative budgets.

Among the bureaucratic-administrative problems to face, one of the most important, as we stated before, is the one regarding the involvement of the mediator himself/herself. In substance, few people know that there is one and even less know exactly how he/she can help.

As regards the relationship between the sexes, with respect to which some teachers had pointed out difficulties in accepting female authority by the Serb-Montenegro and Albanian students, it seems that role plays and group work, in which one favours situations of synergy among people of different sexes, are of a certain utility. In this case, the model that is adopted is the one that forces the foreigner to assimilate the culture of the host country, above all due to the fact that the teachers are nearly all female.

2.5.4 Recommendations

With respect to the theme of language and more generally of communication, the basic recommendations concern tutorship to transfer knowledge on efficient methods to teach
basic written and oral Italian to students. An improvement in internal policy should concentrate on the increase of multilingual signs in schools - above all as regards safety -, on highlighting events of interest to all students in the school, on using multilingual circulars and on opening didactic spaces on themes of transversal intercultural themes, using stories, traditions and the food of the countries being hosted and on integration.

As regards the harmonisation of interpreting the relationship between the sexes, one should work to support local Catholic associations that are the only ones to operate actively in the territory, promoting and organising initiatives of intercultural socialisation and helping foreign women to have an active part in the family and social life.

As regards the availability of physical spaces to allow students to meet, share their interests and cultivate their personal development, the teachers have repeatedly pointed out that they are more promoters of integrative activities. As we will point out in the following lines, if opportunely promoted, they could also constitute an element of distinction of the school with respect to others. We can link the respect of rules to this theme, that in a micro context even if contained in global numbers in terms of total multicultural presence, has seen numbers increase and asks to be able to operate behind a "protection framework" - as defined in the interview -. Clarity of rules in a learning context but also awareness concerning their promulgation are thus a fundamental step on which to work carefully, to create the basis of future work: in the sense, one advises to take on a small task force, in a participated elaboration logic, made up of all the actors involved in the training process who have experience on the theme of characterisation of an intercultural environment, without any stereotypical proposal being made, as highlighted by the mediator and that undermine the presuppositions of wealth.

Undoubtedly, the most interesting effort that should be perpetuated on the theme of interculture in the work place and in places of learning, at least in terms of medium-long term prospective adopted by the Institutions, has been the linguistic intercultural mediators. In this sense, a useful and stimulating route has been spontaneously set up by groups of professionals and teachers to define, as we saw in the previous paragraph, the competencies and fields in which this figure could be involved. This patrimony should be further coded and disseminated, so as to train people with these characteristics. The recommendation in particular is to create a consolidated response to the training needs manifested. In fact, one should develop specific courses that act, as well as on the competencies described in the previous paragraph on:
• interpersonal efficacy at intercultural level: this consists of increasing the capacity of understanding the needs and behaviour of immigrants in the intercultural support programme and to be a constructive counsellor – not simply a front-line actor in social relations, in place and on behalf of the immigrant via:
  o the constant and punctual gathering of the immigrants’ points of view and at the same time, of colleagues who work with them;
  o a contribution to create, by the immigrant and his/her family, relationships based on transparency and collaboration;
  o help in the articulation and behaviour of the immigrant being assisted in a way which is coherent with the situations and characteristics of other workers who deal with them;
• management of intercultural events and meetings in schools: capacity to render organic and coordinate the message of intercultural communication, focussing on the agreed target and needs using processes of inclusive communication by:
  o the highlighting of winning characteristics of an integrated place of learning and work, bringing teachers, students and their families to a positive reciprocal comparison, to manage interests, values and different opinions to reach joint objectives;
  o helping to make the priority of intercultural communication emerge, in a synergic way with respect to the standard learning objectives of the school;
  o the stimulation of willingness to transfer and share information flows, knowledge and intercultural competencies among colleagues;
• feeding of the consensus on projects that gather and present material, suggestions and solutions to problems in the intercultural work place and a place of learning by:
  o highlighting strong points of a solid intercultural workplace and the weak points in a fragmented collaboration space different to this one;
• management of intercultural teams: capacity to contribute to selection, management and start up of teams that involve intercultural resources, by:
  o consolidating the attention to the theme of interculture by valorising intercultural characteristics of colleagues and their energies;
  o creating links between the behaviour and results from a point of view of the intercultural climate, referring it to real and describable facts.
• Management of the capacity to negotiate: constantly looking to the opening of spaces for negotiation on themes of interculture, to fulfil the objective to create a European Intercultural Workplace by:
o A continual interpretation of the context in evolution and its variables, on the basis of the generation of alliances between colleagues to create an intercultural workplace.

2.6 Case study: University

2.6.1 Introduction and Methodology

As described at the end of the first part of the document, in the description of the details of the micro-sectors, universities in Italy are mainly public structures. They have financial autonomy, but the majority are also linked in two ways in terms of their finances to the University Ministry and the Research. This gathers together all the students coming from other countries of the European Union and, in some cases, from outside the EU. Each university included in the former subset, sets aside a number of available places every year, which is called "contingent". Clearly, the students from other EU countries are not included in this rule. The extra-EU students must present their application form for one specific degree course only, using procedures that are different according to their status (residency, permit to stay, qualifications etc.). Every year, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs issues the specific arrangements to present the application form and for subsequent registration, taking the requirements into account. For extra-EU students, the qualification of studies achieved in the country of origin must be translated, authenticated and produced in a legal form by means of the authentication by country of origin Consulate representatives. The access of extra-EU foreign citizen students and non-residents is mainly allowed to those with the following: holding regular permit to stay or formal work contract or a specific tourist visa and, irrespective of residency, has been in Italy for a year and has obtained an Italian secondary school qualification.

Private universities and university consortia also allow the opportunities for foreign students to be widened and they use other criteria, which are negotiated in planning with the international structures with which they are linked, in harmony with those described so far. Venice International University is an association founded in 1995 as an initiative of the Universities of Barcelona (Spain), Venice (Ca’Foscari and IUAV, Italy), Duke (North Carolina, USA), Waseda (Japan), Munich (Ludwig Maximilians, Germany), Tel Aviv (Israel) and Tsinghua (Beijing, China). VIU offers two semesters for undergraduates. The courses are held completely in English and are organised by discipline. Attendance is free for students who are regularly registered at the member universities. The VIU campus is located on the island of San Servolo in Venice’s lagoon, situated opposite St. Mark’s Square and it was used for healthcare during the time of the Serene Republic. The other
lines of business that characterise the training and research programme at VIU are international postgraduate programs (PhD and Masters), the advanced training programs, conferences and workshops. There is also a specific department that is involved with research, which is called TEDIS, Centre for Studies on Technologies for Distributed Intelligence Systems. Its main focus is the monitoring of the theme of innovation by means of an annual survey about the diffusion of network technologies in small and medium sized companies that belong to the so-called local production systems and production districts, the Observatory, which is equipped with a series of research and accompanying projects for the implementation of subjects of innovation applied to the Research and Development of service companies and local manufacturers. Together with the “Assinform” survey and Netconsulting, the Observatory is now the most quoted source on this specific theme in Italy. The image of the aspects of this place’s intercultural learning and research is emphasised as follows, organised by the growing numbers of attendance: 150 undergraduates per year from the following countries: USA, China, Spain, Germany, Japan, Israel; and 70 graduates from China, Turkey, Egypt; Sweden, Croatia and Mexico. As regards international cooperation, 450 Chinese students stay for specific courses, which mainly have members of the Chinese Public Administration as a target. However, the TEDIS Centre is currently managing a project that has gathered together 32 people from South America (Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Argentina and Brazil) on the island.

The location of VIU in Venice was motivated by the special interest that is covered both from a geographical and cultural perspective within the intercultural exchange network that historically links the east and west: the door to the east and the window onto the Mediterranean Sea. To be specific, the island of San Servolo has a prestigious role due to its particular historical value. It is located in the centre of Venice’s lagoon, 10 minutes from St. Mark’s Square by boat and 5 minutes from the island of Sant’Elena, where the La Biennale of Art and Architecture is based and also 5 minutes from the island of Lido, where the cinema exhibition is held. The island was originally the home of the Venetian family, Calbana, and it was the location of a Benedictine monastery in the medieval period. The building works on the island were developed and taken up again over the centuries by its inhabitants. San Servolo remained as a monastery until the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was transformed into a hospital. The island faces out onto the calm waters of the lagoon, covering an area of 16,000 square metres, half of which were once used as gardens: an oasis in a unique urban setting. The students can study, work and relax in an amazing park, which unwinds opposite the skyline of the city of Venice. Visitors and students enjoy an island of extraordinary opportunity. Describing the output of the
interviews, the environment and its relations are different from what they experience in their learning space at the universities in their countries of origin. The special location actually resembles the modern aspects of the buildings to the peace and silence atmosphere appropriate to an environment of effective and functional learning. At the same time, the campus supports activities and multicultural exchanges conceived as a unique large “inclusive space”. Hundreds of students from the different countries mentioned meet every year in this site where international cooperation projects are also hosted, as we said, and therefore groups of professionals meet who are involved in the management and organisation of central and local public administrations as a community of entrepreneurs from all over the world. Their objective is to exchange practices, knowledge and to start up projects, taking advantage of this intercultural space to dedicate their time of learning and creativity. The operation of this structure obviously requires a young professional staff who are organised and energetic, live close to the visitors and work towards a daily reflection about the aspects that characterise the “intercultural inclusive space” and the dynamics understood with it.

In order to create an image of this reality, a preliminary interview was conducted with the supervisor of the organisation. During the interview, the main aspects of the EIW project were discussed and the panel was defined jointly to be the object of the subsequent observation of the field. The supervisor expressed an interest with regard to the sharing of the project’s results and asked specifically to be contacted during the dissemination stage of the results. A focus group was organised to understand the reality of the first students of all the representatives of the organisational functions involved in the supplying of service to the guests during four in-depth interviews conducted by people lasting for approximately two hours each. The panel saw a **predominance in female participants**, which however reflects the percentage of the organisation’s composition exactly. See the detailed list enclosed as follows.

As expressly requested, only the roles of the people interviewed have been shown, and not their names.

Preliminary interview: Supervisor of the Organisation, Italian
Individual interview: Undergraduate manager, female, Irish
Individual interview: Helpdesk students, female, Italian
Individual interview: Logistics manager, male, English
Individual interview: Educational Area Manager, female, Italian
Focus group: Undergraduate Manager (Irish), Helpdesk students (Italian), Logistics manager (English), Educational Area Manager (Italian)
Questionnaires: 13.3% answered of those distributed

2.6.2 Critical issues emerging
The first aspect that emerged in a substantial manner from the empirical evidence is that of different acceptances of interculturalism by the staff and students. The staff at VIU and, generally speaking, many of whom were interviewed for the Italian cases within the EIW project, carrying out a professional support role with the management and organisation in the contexts of work and service characterised by interculturalism, were very aware of the way in which to present themselves as being neutral in the contexts in which they test themselves. This neutrality consists in the suspension of judgement, in an ability of passive non-participating listening, in not letting out one’s own thoughts, in the analytical close examination of every detail that emerges from interpersonal relations, often leaving aside the viewing of the context as a whole. On the contrary, as was said by the same interviewees, the interesting factor and the source of growth in intercultural contexts is typically the wealth that emerges from contrast and active participation in the dynamics of the environment itself. This is one of the critical points that is emphasised by the young professionals at VIU who realise how stimulating the campus’s context is, while at the same time not diving completely into its depths and experiencing the aspects as they have a specific role. “The staff are indirectly asked to be neutral, but the young people compare themselves very much indeed…” and again, “The didactics expressly plan that the lessons propose moments of comparison and collective involvement from the arrival of the guest students”. The student relations manager recounts, “Often they have just arrived, the expression of opinion that is quite direct of every little bafflement and the level of verbal aggression is heated, especially for the Americans, who are used to a high level of attention and service, but them they calm down by themselves as soon as the first opportunities to meet other guests occur”.

With regard to the theme of comparison and conflict as a way of placing oneself, some individuals, such as Israelis, for example, bring questions to life at first blush in a visceral manner, but are then the first supporters of participated and shared initiatives, such as international study groups. They form mixed couples and the Israelis often find a European partner. On the other hand, the interviews say that the Japanese, perhaps because of linguistic difficulties, are a bit timid and tend to keep their own company.
The language used for teaching and in the communication between the guests is English; the staff also uses Italian. All the signs and communication related to safety and rules for the use of common structures are in English, Italian and Chinese. There is also a series of professionals made available to the organisation who know the other languages of the guests and are called upon for specific situations, but this occurs only very rarely.

An extremely interesting subject is that of the relations with the rules and bureaucracy. The organisation’s supervisor says, “Sometimes the meeting of different positions only happens after a rule has been issued on the expressed request of the majority of the guest community. On other occasions, the composition of different instances happens instead because of weariness after strenuous and repeated negotiations”. “As regards the time,” the supervisor goes on to give an example related to the importance of the policy of negotiation, which calls on the aspect of time: “there is a problem with asking for the documents of the South American partners with whom we are working on an international cooperation project because they have a qualitative perception of time and they come up with a different excuse every time. If we didn't have an agreement with them, I would end up with nothing”. The island’s space as an environment for learning and intercultural cohabitation is definitely a very positive example, even if it is particular, given that it facilitates, a little due to the presence of a conspicuous number of young people who are bearers of a less conservative message, a little due to the type of staff support in the resolution of day-to-day problems, as a reason for the setting of their stay as a guaranteed service by means of a twinned organisations with their university of origin. What is perhaps missing is the integration of the island and its guests with the territory surrounding it in a wider sense: the integration with the culture and social life in the city of Venice is considerably reduced. The contact between the cultures is resolved in a mere moment of visiting and temporary hospitality due to the mostly utilitarian perception that Venetians have about tourists: links, friendships, relations of cultural exchange and work are not often generated in the territory.

Three different communication drivers can be set up: those inside the “protected” environment of the campus, mediated and supported by an open climate that is full of stimuli, those between the guests and the territory surrounding the outside of the island, which are mainly weak links as you will read in the following paragraph, and those of the guests with the rest of the world with the communication that take advantage of digital channels. The universities of origin and the guests’ families of the guests are only called
upon by the organisation when the situation expressly requires it, but there are different procedures according to the cultures to which they belong.

A curiosity regarding the attraction and choice of this base for studies: the female presence constitutes the overwhelming majority of the guest students, while the ratio is reversed for the guests connected to research projects and projects of international cooperation. The racism was not mentioned and did not emerge from the empirical evidence.

2.6.3 Good and bad practices
The policy followed by the institution to manage this environment for research and intercultural learning is therefore articulated, as we already mentioned, according to two lines: the neutral type of constant listening and the patient mediation that encourages comparison where possible. There any many practices adopted to enable the times and possibilities for comparison and to render them concrete. They apparently seem to be immediate: the obligation of mixed rooms (integration) where students coming from different cultures stay, the arrangement of large areas for leisure time, the mandatory organisation of mixed study groups, the shared kitchens (a symbolic aspect of the host country) available for more rooms that cause the visitors to share the communal spaces, the freedom to organise parties with organisational support by the organisation only by request only, allowing bottom-up set-ups to prevail, the organisation of a newsletter to illustrate the cultural range and entertainment of the city and the organisation of team sports. Nevertheless, all the people interviewed who are involved in the organisation of the structure recall all of these aspects at various times; they are maintained and accompanied with great balance and care. It should be emphasised that VIU has expressed a decisive preference for a female majority in the staff who are involved with these aspects.

A series of supplementary initiatives were started up to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of VIU, which involved all of the guests in person. For example, ethnic-themed dinners were organised and accompanied by theatrical shows, which made the visitors write narratives that tapped into stylistic features, characters and methods that are traditional in each of the guest countries.

To help with the coming into positive contact of the host country’s culture, even though, as we have said, the language of reference for interpersonal relations is English, Italian
courses are organised that last for ten mandatory weeks at the beginning of each semester with a duration of six hours per week. The subjects that are tackled during these courses are Italian and local history, which are taken advantage of as a lever to deepen the anthropological details of Italian and Venetians in particular.

Returning to the subject of rules, these are negotiated with the twinned universities or shared with the organisations that are part of the visiting communities involved in the shared projects. After the initial stay of the staff belonging to the local public administration, the Chinese were asked, rather curiously, not to spit or to make disturbing noises in public, while they in turn asked to be let off long lunches or dinners as they cannot tolerate spending too much time at the dinner table. The rules are thought through as subtended and standardised, but not coercive elements in defining the coordinates of this intercultural environment. In other words, the objective is to do this in such a way that it does not render the intercultural environment artificial and forcibly sanctioned. In addition to the open spaces offered to have personal time and profess their own religious practices and the arrangement of facilities from the point of view of communication to allow those living at the organisation to be autonomous and to be aware of the services offered (the signs and official communication are in a lingua franca defined by convention with the university of origin: English) and adjustment before departure at the member universities with the guest students (distribution of a handbook), specific procedures with regard to the various countries are called into practice when necessary. For example, when a Japanese student had problems from an educational perspective, he autonomously went for a meeting with a lecturer from his own country. If the problem had instead occurred during the insertion and the student had been American, before making the student interact with a psychologist, the member university should be contacted, which in turn contacts the parents, then only on following their instructions, should a psychologist be contacted.

2.6.4 Recommendations
In summary, the opportunities for development in this environment, which is interesting due to its dynamics and the care with which the approaches for the management of interculturalism have been established over time, are related:

- to languages,
- to synergy with supporting professionals, individuals with listening skills regarding specific problems of insertion,
- to the possibilities to further reinforce the links with the city and territory in a wider sense,
- to the progressive re-balance between the female and male ratio among VIU’s guests,
- to the opportunities of modelling tool of the approach for the possible dissemination in environment with similar characteristics, starting with Italy.

As regards the work on the shared languages of the guest countries as a cohesion element, it should be noted that both the student representatives within the VIU organisation during this analysis, which, on the other hand, the students themselves before this project, expressed their preference in some measure to widen the range of language courses offered. With the objective of increasingly meeting the spirit of inclusion and sharing of the island itself, further training needs to be satisfied that complement this could be those relating to the illustration of the host country’s history and its anthropological study, perhaps starting with a popular basis of the cultures that have their roots in these countries.

As regards the accompaniment of the insertion stage during the interaction with the VIU components during the analysis phase, hypotheses and comparison requests emerged with other cases taken into consideration in Italy about the EIW project. Staff professionals demonstrated curiosity regarding solutions that are similar to those already implemented in other organisations to resolve adjustment problems that are specific to the environment and the culture of the host country. In particular, the psychological counselling is the aspect that has been more deeply pondered about, such as aides with which to approach the guest with a solid background related to the culture of origin. Specific training courses to refine these skills were taken into consideration, for example, in resolving the recent case of a Japanese boy. The distinctive skills of this figure, which also constitutes an innovative profile on the outlook of the work offered, are relational, interpersonal and anthropologically-based techniques.

With regard to the opportunity of strengthening the link with the host territory in a wider sense, also including the whole city of Venice in this, a tense effort is already underway towards the development of the possibilities for integration. “Venetians are inattentive: a visitor to Venice is always seen as a tourist. This also applies for the island’s guest”, this element was also mentioned in one of the questionnaires. In this sense, initial contact has already been taken with animators and guides who are residents, which we however hope
will become spontaneous and self-supplying. The real challenge for growth and reciprocal intercultural exchange is that of giving the opportunity to guests that wish to mix with the local social life, also outside the protected environment, to help them to carry out interviews and to secure opportunities for work in Italy, for example. At the same time, the VIU organisation believes that a longer stay could be useful in increasing these opportunities and it is trying to create the conditions to offer these.

The progressive re-balance between the male and female presence among VIU’s guests is another theme that should be emphasised and was indeed done so during the reflection. Greater communication therefore as a different articulation of the training offered, which are aimed at courses that are typically selected by men, could probably help to build a different perception in potential guests and to attract more men than women. Nevertheless, generally speaking, it should be remembered that this type of site appeals more to a female audience. This notation is carried out as the predominance of a female presence is believed by many of the interviewees to be a critical factor in contributing and enriching the intercultural space on the whole, “…both for a natural arrangement in reading and interpreting the needs in a key dynamic, as well as for the flexibilities in tackling questions with the objective of integration”.

Finally, as regards the opportunities of the modelling tools for the approach for a possible dissemination of the practices that characterise it in environments that present similar characteristics, the elements that emerge are very interesting, but mainly young. “We realise that we have matured a certain amount of experience in the field over the last few years, during which time the question of intercultural work spaces has taken on considerable speed, but we believe that our experience is very young and that it is growing. We also enjoy the extraordinary opportunities to use the active collaboration from even before our guests arrive on the island with the universities of origin, which already view their objectives by law and intentions embodied within the rules that preside in the government of this space. The logic that is adopted whenever questions appear that test the work and intercultural learning space are resolved using the mutual adjustment,” the organisation’s supervisor says. The overall size of the organisation will be considered and adjusted, as regards what was gathered in the interviews. Therefore, this equilibrium can be demanded and discussed again both in the instances that the number expands the number of rules (not of the membership) existing with other universities, aggregating them with other universities from different countries, or increasing the international projects (which constitute one of the guiding principles considered to be important for the future) or
increasing the number of students, increasing the stay to longer periods or changing the rapport between the sexes that exists today among the guests.

2.6 Conclusions

Field analysis activities and the successive formalising of the elements emerging from the case studies are fundamental aspects to complete the overview of Italy. One should remember that at the beginning of this document we illustrated some general data, needed to provide an initial snapshot of the phenomenon of interculture at national level and then we gradually look at the specifics with the analysis of the theme of interculture in the workplace in the three reference sectors: public, private and education. Thus, we have arrived at the analytical description of the situation in as much as particularly important to understand the elements of specific aspects of our Country. Here is a summary of the further sector-specific and contemporaneously, territorial, aspects highlighted: for the private sector, the strong prevalence of SMEs, working mainly in the manufacturing industry that is the main element of attractiveness for workers coming from abroad; for the public sector, the area of social-medical services given to resident immigrants highlight the central role of the welfare state in the organisation of social and economic relationships; for the educational world, the reflections on the different levels of education, fundamental if one considers that the vast majority of immigrants’ children are in the first educational phase and that, on the other, many residents in Italy belonging to other cultures are university students- these have had the precise intent of representing the reference scenario in which the case studies are structured, emblematic examples of interculture in the work place.

Thus, the case studies, set in this global perspective are a further aspect to demonstrate- via the storytelling of actors who work daily in the field facing and experiencing the theme of interculture in the workplace- the operativeness, the problems and the good practices of the Italian situation. The output is, thus, absolutely useful, with different nuances and methods, to all actors involved in the organisation of the work space and the delivery of services on an intercultural basis as it can allow: 1) immigrants and people of different cultures to reflect on their own experience sharing themes and problems that others, other communities and other territories in Italy are, like them, living and facing, generating practices and adopting solutions above all from a training point of view, 2) Institutional operators and actors of the entrepreneurial word, to acquire knowledge with respect to the critical aspects that accompany the theme of EIW, in training initiatives and methods to
implement the management of relationships with immigrant citizens and workers, openly
and sensibly valorising opportunities for exchange that different cultures offer; last but not
least 3) citizens, to widen their horizons, often conservative, and to understand on which
competences to act in training terms to open their own attitude, behaviour and approach to
people and workers from other cultural backgrounds.

In particular, the case studies have shown the following aspects. In the private sector, one
should differentiate the problems and practices emerging from the small and medium
manufacturing enterprises from those of the large company. The ZF case, hybrid,
“bridging” the two types, due to the fact that it belongs to an international group, but also in
its dimensions only slightly larger than the general limits given by the EU for SMEs, allows
one to reflect on both fronts, while the Ravagnan case represents a typical example of a
family-run company. Trying to find a wider interpretation key, the large enterprise, in Italy,
substantially “eludes” the theme of interculture, using the English language as a neutral
language, third with respect to the languages of the people who work in them. In their daily
lives they implement behavioural standards at organisational level - that follow managerial-
type coded paradigm - to privilege formal, politically correct aspects in the intercultural
relationship, but substantially, without a cultural rooting in a specific country. ZF is different
with respect to this paradigm and provides further elements of reflection: its relationship
with the territory and with stakeholders for example, lead it to carefully cultivate
relationships with the supplying SMES, the unions, local non-profit actors operating on the
theme of integration. This allows it to adopt an approach which is substantially devoted to
integration, sustained by basic values of CSR and inspired by managerial excellence
(EFQM model). It is also reinforced by the socialisation characteristic of the suburban
territorial context in which it is based, contrasting with what emerges in the nearby city (the
media case of “ghetto” in via Anelli in Padua). Instead, the assimilation structure in SMEs,
a representative actor of the Italian entrepreneurial fabric, is stronger. These tend more
and more to set about themes of interculture in the work place, according to logics of
opportunity: Ravagnan operates with a strong emphasis on collaboration, due to the type
of product and production process that characterises it. Thus it starts by paying attention to
the language issue, when necessary- for example in interfunctional groups made up of
professionals from different cultures, while they leave aside the local dialect as the most
spoken amongst production staff -, to then tackle the organisational aspect – solutions to
problems related to different perceptions of time, that require limiting the problem of shifts
due to the exercise of religious practices and the contingent of returning from holiday –. In
relationships with staff, human resource management proposes typically Italian models
and values: the cult of saving and the priority emphasis on the objective of buying a house, making an assimilation model prevail, with a familiar basis- the technical knowledge transfer towards the young worker, mainly of extra-community provenance, with respect to his/her duties, which starts from the younger Italian specialist worker (mainly local) and the successive creation of a mentoring model in the relationship between them, also sanctioned by the main contract type (apprenticeship). The training needs that emerge from these cases are: rudiments of the written and spoken Italian language so as to lay the basis for full autonomy in social relationships and with the Institutions; training to provide knowledge with respect to values, habits, behaviour, perception of the system of rules in organised universes in the culture of those of who are of different ethnicity present in companies, perhaps undertaken with the collaboration of representatives of unions and category associations (handicrafts, industrial and retail).

In the public sector of an a AUSL Health District in Emilia Romagna, there is a social cooperative in Treviso, which has allowed us to face the theme of the delicate role between the equilibrium of the welfare-mix in participating areas which are interesting from the intercultural, social and employment context point of view of our country. On the one hand, services to immigrants offered in public spaces and structures and by social private companies to support immigrants and on the other employment opportunities that again the social private sector, offers for immigrants often with qualifications but not specifically qualified in providing services to people.

The critical themes highlighted by the two case studies are different. In the first place language and more generally communication between doctors (nearly always Italian) and patients with a reflection on the reduced diffusion of translation services in medical practices external to the large hospital structures and on alternative communication channels (signs, gestures, pictures) for the correct interpretation of symptoms, that are accompanied by specific training for use. Interesting practices have emerged: 1) from comprehension – via an analysis team with anthropological competences- as to how moments to celebrate traditions are lived, for example births and the rites and symbols that accompany them; 2) from the comparison between the functional vision of western medicine and the systemic one, mainly above all of eastern cultures, from which the patients benefiting from the public medical services come; 3) from the relationship between male doctor and female patient, above all of Muslim religion. Correspondingly, some of the main training that could be organised to reinforce the good practices are: behavioural intercultural training to nursing and paramedic staff, accompaniment training (coaching, mentoring) tailored to both intercultural communication and of a
multidisciplinary technical type (e.g. exploiting programmes of the ECM, (Continuing Education in Medicine) to general practitioners and to specialist hospital doctors. Furthermore, some critical aspects concern communication and in a wider sense, the relationship between paramedic staff (immigrant caregiver often clandestine, that constitute a black market in the offer of services to people- hundreds of thousands in all the Italian territory) and elderly Italian patients that mainly communicate in the local dialect: for example the question of hyper nutrition and the imbalance from a protein and vitamin point of view in eating. With this connotation of the situation, that faithfully photographs the reality mainly of clandestine caregivers in Italy, we have the virtuous example – much less frequent -, of legal female workers who are part of a cooperative that works on themes of equivalence and contributes to the successive formulation and delivery of a retraining course in the employment field specifically for services to people. As well as a reinforcement and a greater diffusion of training of this type, another important aspect, that should be socialised and promoted by training and successive facilitation to start up new enterprises, is the theme of interdependency and adaptability in problem solving, that concerns immigrant workers and differentiates them with respect to Italians, in the cooperative.

In the educational sector, the key elements are those of particular segments of students, the so called “bridging generation”, with respect to which the interesting solution adopted to consolidate the creation of their intercultural curriculum, is accompaniment via the new figure of the linguistic intercultural mediator. The introduction of these professionals and the generation of a certain number of small and very small projects promoted by local school networks animated by willing teachers, with the sponsorship of the Provveditorati agli Studi and the public social services for the ULSS, constitutes both an exportable good practice, and in general an absolute novelty both for the level of attention paid to the question and to the profound meaning that this has in the sector in which it has been conceived.

In fact, in Italy the educational sector, above all as regards “compulsory” schooling is a (nearly totally public) space characterised from a sociological point of view by a high level of conservativism (immobility), favoured by the structural ageing of the teaching body (nearly total block of new appointments), by a scarce turnover (updating) and by limited exchange of knowledge and experience on other national and international intercultural cases, both among teachers and among Institutions.

The positive experience of the “Giuriolo” middle school is challenging in as much as placed in a highly industrial area and with a high number of immigrants of different ethnicities. It is,
furthermore, a very interesting case as it is in total countetendency with respect to the general aspects mentioned previously. The characterising elements of the case in question are diverse, but amongst these, surely the proactive role of the teachers is important and that of the linguistic cultural mediators called into action by them (and offered to the structure by the local social services of the local ULSS) in the continuing generation of opportunities for intercultural exchange via a creative and updated didactics devoted to valorising diversity, overcoming any objective difficulties of linguistic inadequacies. In this sense, the experiences described have demonstrated the central role of pictures and gestures, as well as words, above all via integrative didactics, but also the prevalence of reciprocal narration of intercultural experiences, in place of the servile adherence to syllabuses. The developing role has also been noted of the parent associations in the creation of opportunities to meet with immigrant parents (in this sense, one recommends increasing them and making them more available both in didactics and in the level of differentiation, and in times of courses for the latter) and above all the contribution of Italian students, a key part in the promotion and facilitation of integration. Training on conflict mediation could be fundamental both for parents and for teachers and for Italian and immigrant students, but also training courses on the perception and respect of rules in an intercultural environment, on the role of women in society and the development of shared social activities and intercultural team working for students, as for non verbal communication courses, English and Italian didactics for absolute beginners and for Italian teachers. All this while we wait for an opening for immigrant teachers.

A very different situation, even if regarding the same sector, is the one examined in the VIU, Venice International University: the very facts that have lead to the foundation of this international university have their roots in the ambition to integrate mind sets, learning cultures and processes, in a common space, a hotbed of reciprocal wealth. One should remember that the university students, researchers and foreign professionals operating in loco, constitute another important segment which concerns the consideration on the potential of the cultural osmosis in the educational sector and more generally, of our country. In fact this is a question of human and intellectual capital which is fluid and rich, that can constitute a very important basis to extend reflection and export good intercultural practices that have an effect on other segments of Italian society. Here too, as observed in the examples of the large company, the communication question is also resolved by using English as the official didactic language and in general for the island. The learning and use in daily practice of other languages, is nevertheless spontaneous and frequent and has the aim of extending spaces for inclusion. Mutual adjustment is the basic principle used for problem solving, even if students and visitors previously agree rules via the transfer of the
latter from their structures of origin, before they land on the island. Great attention is given to the accompaniment of insertion, via a staff of young professionals and counsellors who live in the intercultural environment in question and also to mediation of issues when necessary, collaborating with the universities and institutes of provenance.
All the structures are organised in such a way as to embrace the characterising aspects of freedom of expression, for example as concerns religious practices and as concerns food (a differentiated canteen). Cases of racism or of stigmatisation of somebody different have never taken place, due to the fact that there is no model, but a plurality with whom to interact. The dress code has no limits: the only rule is decency. As concerns the perception of time and relationships and collaboration, we can see how the visions are sometimes of difficult composition and require constant work towards reciprocal adaptation. The opportunities that emerge in this case could be above all in the exportation of opportunely modelled good practices to other similar environments.
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