

# **WP4. STATE OF THE ART ANALYSIS ON INTERCULTURAL TRAINING ON THE WORKPLACE**

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## Introduction

More than 232 million of people – about 3% of the World population – left its country of origin in 2012 to live in another country. Europe and Asia – with more than 70 million of migrants each – are the continents who host the major number of migrants, the equivalent of 2/3 of the total population. At the beginning of 2013, in Italy there were 59.685.227 people, of which 4.387.721 (7,4%) with foreign citizenship. The number of foreign residents has increased of more than 334.000 units (+8,2% in respect with the previous year). For every 10 foreign residents, about 3 come from the European Union.

According to the **Caritas - Migrantes research “XXIII Rapporto Immigrazione 2013-2014” (2014)**, the main nationality represented in Italy is the Romanian, who has nearly 82.000 entries, followed by the Chinese (20.000), the Moroccan (about 20 thousand) and the Albanian (14.000)<sup>1</sup>. Net migration rates are positive in all regions of Northern and Central and negative in all regions of the South and the Islands, confirming the attractiveness of the subdivisions between North and South. In general, the average age of an immigrant in the country is 30 years for male and 33 for female. The territorial distribution confirms the increasing foreign presence in the North (61.8%), in the Centre (24.2%) and in the South (14%).

According to the **last national census by ISTAT (2013)**, the foreign resident population in Tuscany is represented by 364.152 people otherwise distributed among Florence, Prato, Pisa and Arezzo.

Among the most important numerically nationality there are Romanian, Albanian and Chinese which together represent about the 60% of foreign residents in Tuscany. Romania and China are the top two nationalities of foreign-born workers (252.000), followed by Albania and Morocco, and pupils with a non-Italian citizenship present in the Tuscan schools are about 62.449 of which 33.8% in primary schools (Caritas- Migrantes, 2014).

The last **MIPEX research in 2012**<sup>2</sup> found previous government’s integration policies to be the best among Europe’s major countries of immigration. But in more recently years, Italy has lost that place to Spain, for its continued commitment to economic, family, and social integration, despite the recession. Italy’s new policies, especially the **Security Law “Pacchetto sicurezza” n° 94, 15 July, 2009** made conditions in the country slightly less favorable for integration.

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<sup>1</sup> Compared to 2011: Moldovan citizens (-41%), Ukrainians (36%), Peruvians (-35%) and Ecuador (-27%), while there is an increase of African citizens (+1.2%), some Asian nationalities, and especially of those communities subject to military conflicts in the countries of origin (Nigeria, Pakistan, Mali and Ivory Coast).

<sup>2</sup> MIPEX - Migrant Integration Policy Index: <http://www.mipex.eu/>

According to the MIPEX survey, immigrants are generally presented as responsible for general social problems, with debatable statistics and without evaluations of policies' impact on integration.

While EU law slightly improved Italian antidiscrimination laws, equality policies remain the weakest in Europe: Italian government is inactive on voting rights and citizenship reform, compared to other new immigration countries.

From a brief analysis of the current integration policies, we can observe a favorable labour market mobility and family reunion, new long-term residence requirements to encourage language learning and integration, a difficult access to nationality, new legal conditions out of step with general societal realities, an anti-discrimination law which slightly improves to meet EU standards, voting rights still absent for non-EU residents, and weak education policies aimed to pupils with migrant background.

So, Italy is becoming an increasingly multicultural and multilingual country, and its progress depend in large part from these new presences. Every year 6.000 foreign students graduate in Italian Universities, demonstration of the fact that immigrants are moving from mere labor force to a stable demographic presence. And what are the effects of these demographic trends on businesses? While the foreign workers may face more difficulties in relating to the company and colleagues (for language and cultural issues), they represent an important resource for the company, for their different experiences, visions and ideas.

## Resources for intercultural training local and regional level

According to the **XI Report on Indicators for the integration of immigrants in Italy (2011)** edited by CNEL and the Ministry of Labour, Tuscany is among the regions that offered the best conditions of immigrants in the employment field, after Emilia Romagna and Liguria. In fact, the Tuscany Region has traditionally been committed to promote the inclusion of foreign citizens in the area, paying attention to inclusion and social care, professional training and education. This is confirmed by the **Regional Law 29/2009 for the reception, integration and protection of foreign citizens**, which was approved after a long process of consultation by the Government of the Region of Tuscany. Moreover, the Region of Tuscany has a specific tool of policy planning, the **Piano di Indirizzo Integrato per le politiche sull'immigrazione 2012-2015**, where are described actions and goals to reach for the integration of immigrants residing in Tuscany.

In the field of intercultural communication, in line with the principles of pluralism, the **Region of Tuscany** facilitate dialogue between parties in respect of the linguistic and cultural differences, in the logic of promoting effective interaction processes that represent a fundamental prerequisite for the construction of a plural and cohesive community , based on the contribution of people of different language and origin and compliance with the constitutional principle of equality. The Regional Law 29/2009 provides in this regard that the region will promote the development of intercultural communication (Article 6 , paragraph 27) which is designed as a tool to ensure the resident foreign population access to local services, in combination, to enhance the knowledge of the languages and cultures of countries of origin.

With particular reference to the first aspect, the acquisition of language skills and civic education promote an active and conscious use of local services.

On the 10th of January 2007, the Tuscany Region signed a **regional agreement with the Trade Unions, aimed at connecting training and work policies**, with the objective of the development of professional skills required to work in innovative and productive enterprises.

In this way, the Region of Tuscany connected several funds interventions, linking the activities of the public sector to the private, and putting together the **Fondo Interprofessionale** (Interprofessional Fund) with the resources of the **European Social Fund**. The initiative was the first step forward strategic effort to promote the unification of training tools for all workers<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> These political initiatives are due to the fact that foreign workers give a substantial contribution to the Tuscan economy (manufacturing, construction, business services and personal care services). Since 2000, the total amount of foreign workers in Tuscany has more than tripled, to reach in 2013 the number of 350.761 units (Caritas 2013).

According to the **IRPET research “Immigrazione e Lavoro in Toscana – Regione Toscana, Rapporto 2011”**, the vocational training aimed to immigrant is one regional priority, particularly since 2000.

It should be noted that the phenomenon of vocational training for foreign population is a field of analysis very difficult to classify. The statistical data, where available, do not allow to grasp the complexity of a relatively recent phenomenon .

According to the IRPET research, which studied representative sample of target group, during three years (2007-2009), training activities show a marked ethnic characterization. In fact, over half of the course participants belong to three nationalities: Romanian (26%), Moldavian (14%), who are often involved in the work of personal care assistance, and Albania (14%).

About 40% of foreign students states they have attended training courses on topics related to the personal care assistance: 16% of them attended training courses in health assistance and the 17% language courses, which are the most joined by immigrant students.

Foreigners, compared to Italians, enjoy more funded course and /or recognized by the Region of Tuscany, an aspect that can be interpreted either as a result of choosing training paths to enable the recognition of formal qualifications. It could confirm successful public policies promoted by the Region in the field of vocational training for immigrants. On the contrary, nearly one third of Italians attended courses organized by companies or organizations in which they work, while only 13% of foreigners are able to attend it.

So, according to IRPET research, there is a clear majority of foreigners, about 70%, who participate in training activities mainly or exclusively outside working hours whereas the corresponding proportion of Italians stood at 50%.

The picture that emerges in relation to the Tuscan context, is that the training activities for immigrant seems to generally not be integrated with the work activities. It can therefore be assume that there is a national labor market that still invests little in immigrant workers qualification with respect to Italians.

From a point of view of specific local and regional policies and practices in the field of training on the workplace, we can identify different training paths generally offered which now represent established practices within the training system.

- Training on workplace safety;
- Training on Italian language and culture;
- Training on employment and local services;
- Training on specific professional competences.

The special attention to the issue of workplace safety is justified by the fact that migrants have a higher incidence to be involved in a workplace accident. This is because foreign people work in activities generally more dangerous and also because of problems of communication and professional preparation to the specific job. Moreover, immigrant workers are more present in the agriculture and construction sectors, which are the most exposed to the phenomenon of high accident risks.

In this regard, we should note the good practice of **La Toscana Impianti (LTI) in Rosignano Solvay (LI)**<sup>4</sup>, which operates in the engineering sector, focusing on design, build, install, maintain industrial plants in various fields. For the company, working in safety has become a priority objective, so over the years has proved to be a positive example in the field of workplace safety, by making investments and initiatives on the topic, especially with specific training paths, for all workers.

The innovative methodology of the training programs was the “on the job training”: in this way workers were able to learn the technical skills of the job and also to understand what are the risks, learning to manage them. The training is done by an experienced worker, able to teach, using the *mentoring or peer-to-peer* approaches. Before entering to the workplace, however, the new worker is asked to make a specific training conducted by the responsible of safety, through the use of lectures, audio-visual tools and other technical supports<sup>5</sup>.

As an example of training for all kind of workers, we should quote the **project “Filiere Valore”, made by a network of organism and the big fashion company Gucci**, which was financed by **Fondimpresa**. The project didn’t involve just Gucci company, but also a big network of small and medium enterprises who work with Gucci, CO.Se.FI - Consortium for the Training services to Companies, Confindustria Toscana and Trade Unions.

Thanks to this initiative many small and medium enterprises have benefited from the training programs on technical and managerial aspects, social responsibility and **employee management**.

The contents of the training focused primarily on creating a strong corporate culture (business strategy, production planning, process control, innovation and organization), and topics related to **social responsibility and staff management**. The activities were carried out both in classroom and

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.irpet.it/storage/pubblicazioneallegato/333\\_Immigrazione\\_lavoro%20unito.pdf](http://www.irpet.it/storage/pubblicazioneallegato/333_Immigrazione_lavoro%20unito.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> For more initiatives on the theme of training courses on safety on workplace, visit *Prato Migranti* website [http://www.pratomigranti.it/archivio4\\_guide-utili\\_4\\_11\\_0\\_1.html](http://www.pratomigranti.it/archivio4_guide-utili_4_11_0_1.html)  
[http://www.pratomigranti.it/index.php?id\\_oggetto=4&id\\_cat=4](http://www.pratomigranti.it/index.php?id_oggetto=4&id_cat=4)

through e-learning tools, as well as in the daily coaching in the workplace, so that the knowledge and skills were transferred at various levels of organization.

Another interesting study-case is the "**Per.La Donna**" project developed in the town of Empoli , in collaboration with the Province of Torino and the Region of Lazio in 1999-2000.

The project wanted to respond in part to the integration need of foreign women working in Italy, through training courses and consulting activities about entrepreneurship.

Within the target group, the project identified four women, who became a point of reference and a support for **social integration and employment of women in the local territory**.

The group was trained in a specific 40 hours (8 sessions of 5 hours each) training course and with additional 50 hours of contact visits to major public and private entities in the social sector operating in the area.

During 2004-2005, the **Direzione Generale dell'immigrazione e delle politiche di integrazione** selected a number of pilot projects for the training of foreign workers in their countries of origin, before entering to Italy, who would be hired by businesses or families of the regions involved in the project.

Among the projects, there was one undertaken in collaboration with the Region of Tuscany and concerned workers in the domestic sector coming from Sri Lanka. The Italian Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Region of Tuscany and the diplomatic delegation of Sri Lanka in Italy signed in July 2004 a special agreement which included the commitment of the partners to carry out a **project of job orientation and placement** in Italy to more than 100 workers from Sri Lanka, who then found a job in the area of personal assistance and care in Tuscan families (specifically in the provinces of Florence, Pistoia, Prato and Siena).

The training course was about technical competences, Italian language skills, cultural issues and information about local services and national laws.

A good example of training on employment and local service is represented by the **Provincia Project**, part of a national network for inter-territorial cooperation and inter -institutional initiative and aimed **to promote social integration and employment of immigrants** arriving from other countries.

The project, funded by the European Fund for the Integration of third country 2007-2013 -Action 1, is supported by 16 Italian Provinces, including Pisa and Florence. Among the proposed actions, there is



a training course in Italian language and culture, a career-orientation and job placement program and initiatives for the promotion of immigrant integration in local territories.

In a survey conducted by the project it was observed that the training for immigrant has characteristics and settings completely different from other forms of training programs, because there are different needs and motivations of participants. In fact, the need of training is conditioned by contingent problems related to housing, finding a job, and more often for the sustainability and the maintenance of the necessary requirements for the renewal of a residence permit.

For this reason, the project designed interventions and training programs that took into account immigrant training needs.

In this context, the Province of Pisa:

- Made a needs analysis survey and individuated services offered by the Region in terms of employment and integration services;
- Organized Italian language courses for foreigners with final CILS certification exam, career guidance and vocational modules;
- Made a laboratory for the creation of a video resume;
- Organized an Information point about employment services at the Intercultural library of the Province.

The **TRIO project** is a free e-learning platform ([www.progettotrio.it](http://www.progettotrio.it)) for lifelong learning, especially thought for adult education and vocational training. On TRIO, the user find about 1.700 self-learning resources about different subjects.

A great amount of resources is especially dedicated to foreign users: **Italian language courses, civic education and vocational training with attention to intercultural issues**. There are also resources on staff management, which take into account the intercultural aspects, and other resources on intercultural education.

The materials are thought for a self-learning method, but public institutions, such as employment centers, use the TRIO platform with face-to-face classroom, or blended methods.

## Resources for intercultural training – national level

The short history of Italy as a country of immigration, along with its strong dependence on the changing moods of political majorities, accounts for a model of integration which is more difficult to pinpoint than in other European countries. The prevailing trend is to devise policies promoting a balance between the safeguarding of identity and integration, and in general “cultural life” of immigrant communities is considered a domain of ‘socio-culture’, thus being only an optional aspect in cultural policy making.

For this reason at national level it can be difficult to identify specific practices in intercultural training for immigrant workers, co-workers and employers<sup>6</sup>. In fact, the major consideration in the field of intercultural policies regard education to multiculturalism in schools and aimed to children of migrant workers. The intercultural education is taken into account by numerous researches, practices and projects, especially in the regions of Reggio Emilia, Piemonte, Veneto and Tuscany.

Obviously, this depends on the meaning we want to give to the expression of “intercultural training”, so we will try to identify literatures, practices, and projects **that contribute in some way to the labor integration of immigrant workers.**

The **Article 23 of the Testo Unico sull’Immigrazione** provides that the annual programming of entry quota for immigrant workers is based on a preferential basis for whom is living abroad and have completed special education programs and training in his/her countries of origin. The article is in this sense, the legal framework within which to organize, in collaboration with the competent ministries, training projects abroad.

With the adoption of the **Ministerial Decree on the 22 of March, 2006**, the Ministry of the Interior launched the **Guidelines for the organization of training courses**. According to the new provisions of the training courses abroad can be arranged by regions, provinces, municipalities, national organizations of employers or trade unions, international organizations or institutions and associations working in the field of immigration for at least three years.

The courses must be aimed at the training of professionals needed in a given sector or in a geographical area, or to recruit staff for Italian companies operating abroad which often require skilled local workforce. The program must also necessarily include the teaching of Italian language

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<sup>6</sup> According to an article by **Lucia Fanelli and Frédérique Sylvestre “Intercultural Training in Italian Companies”** if we compare the demand of Intercultural Training of Italian companies with the European or American ones, it’s evident how is much less important and developed. In general, Italian enterprises leave to workers the responsibility for the management of intercultural relations, and even the major Italian companies even if they create multicultural teams they do not support them with proper training, enhancing diversity.

and culture. The Article 23 should encourage the establishment of mechanisms that work in favor of the equilibrium between domestic demand and supply of foreign labor, promoting the activation of training paths that meet the needs of the local labor market and prepare the reception of migrants who aspire to enter Italy for work purposes.

The most recent political change, which is having a big impact on the training of migrants, is the **Legislative Decree n. 179, issued the 14th of September 2011, and in force/effect from the 10th of March 2012**, which establish new roles for the *Integration Agreement*, with the idea of promote a better process of integration through the knowledge of the Italian language and civic principles of fundamental rights and duties.

The *Integration Agreement* is aimed to foreigners over the age of sixteen who enter Italy for the first time and it contemplates a system of credits that can be increased through the acquisition of certain knowledge (the Italian language, civic culture and civic life in Italy) and the carrying out of certain activities (vocational education and training, qualifications, enrollment in the national health service, signing of a lease or purchase of a home, etc.). Obviously this law is having consequences on the system of vocational education and training and on the adult education, which now have increased the number of free courses of Italian language and culture providing specific paths of civic life and culture in Italy<sup>7</sup>.

Regarding this, the Italian government has started the new organization and design of training services and contents aimed to adult immigrants at national level, through the financial tool of the **EIF - European Integration Fund**. Every year there is a public call made by the Ministry of the Intern, *Avviso Pubblico per i piani regionali per la formazione civico linguistica dei cittadini di Paesi terzi*, which gives the opportunity to each Region to create a territorial network , leads by the Government of the Region or the Provinces, with public organisms, NGOs, associations and non-profit, cooperatives, trade unions and employers' associations, universities, the Regional Education Office, Permanent Territorial Centres (CTP) and training organizations<sup>8</sup>.

The national project provides training courses for teachers and members of associations, courses of Italian language and civic culture for adult immigrants, support in career guidance and information about local public services, facilitating and promoting the participation of immigrants through services such as babysitting, linguistic and cultural mediation and public transports.

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<sup>7</sup> The agreement provides that within two years the foreign people reaches the quota of at least 30 credits in order to stay on the Italian territory . These, in addition to being accumulated, may also be lost in some cases such as the committing of crimes or serious violations of the law.

<sup>8</sup> Projects are part of the strategy in the field of civic education language to implement the Agreement of integration and the provisions relating to the language test for long-term residents.

Within the framework of projects financed by the EIF, the Ministry has allocated a line of funding for the international exchange of good practices for the integration of foreign citizens. Among the projects presented in the last call, it is worth mentioning the project presented by the **Università per Stranieri di Perugia “Formazione, lavoro e integrazione: dalla voce di datori di lavoro e lavoratori migranti alle buone prassi. Un percorso di ricercazione a livello europeo”** (*Training, work and integration: by the voice of employers and workers migrants to good practice. A path of applied research at European level*), which is still in progress.

Regarding the training in Italian language and culture, only aimed to immigrants, we can mention the national project **Cantieri d’Italia – l’italiano di base per costruire la cittadinanza** (*Shipyards of Italy - the Italian base to build citizenship*), a television program<sup>9</sup> produced by the Ministry of the Interior, in collaboration with RAI - Italian Television, for the language training and civics of migrants. Moreover, to provide a flexible and innovative tool, it can also followed on the website that contains, in addition to video streaming of each episode, texts, exercises and self-assessment, the regulatory guidance and services.

In addition to language and culture courses, the kind of training provided at national level specifically aimed to migrants workers is the vocational training, regarding technical competences, frequently combined with Italian language courses, workplace safety education and information about rights and duties of workers. These kind of courses never involve joint participation of immigrant workers, Italian co-workers and / or employers<sup>10</sup>.

The book by Laura Zanfrini **“Programmare per competere. I fabbisogni professionali delle imprese italiane e la politica di programmazione dei flussi migratori”** (Programming to compete. The professional needs of Italian companies and the programming policy of migration flows, edited by Franco Angeli in 2001) analyzes the result of the collaboration experience between Unioncamere and ISMU Foundation and the Excelsior surveys carried out in the years 1999 -2000 about the recruitment of workers from non-EU countries . The Excelsior Information System<sup>11</sup> was started in 1997 by Unioncamere, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the European Union, and it

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<sup>9</sup> The program was aired until February 2011, now it’s possible to download episodes on the official website [www.cantieriditalia.rai.it](http://www.cantieriditalia.rai.it).

<sup>10</sup> A more open approach to different stakeholders, is conducted by UNAR – National Office Against Discriminations, which trough the Project **Diversitalavoro** (<http://diversitalavoro.it/>), and its information and awareness campaigns, try to spread a culture of respect of diversity at workplace.

<sup>11</sup> <http://excelsior.unioncamere.net/>. Excelsior is an Information System that provides forecasts on labour market trends and needs of enterprises.

allows an annual survey of recruitment plans of more than 100 thousand companies over a period of 12-15 months. The survey concerning the period 1999-2000 has provided a special section dedicated to the recruitment of staff from non-EU countries for the first time. These results confirm the structural nature of the need for immigrant labor in relation to widespread and pronounced difficulty in finding staff. They also highlight the geographical diversification of needs in relation to the different degree of dynamism of local production systems and their productive vocation. The survey also points out the marked tendency of some sector to be characterized by some origin group of immigrants: especially in the construction and in the personal care assistance.

At the same time, however, the results show a progressive extension of the phenomenon of foreign presence in a number of sectors, in parallel to the process of stabilization of the immigrant population in the area. It also appears a request supported by figures of skilled workers and technicians and personnel involved in activities of assistance to the people, a trend that involves the need to invest in the professionalization of foreign workers, with ad hoc training (technical and professional skills).

The first part of the research **"Paths of integration of immigrants and active labor market policies " (2005) edited by ISMU Foundation<sup>12</sup>**, provides a systematic survey of the policies adopted both in the European Union, both in Canada, USA, France, Germany, Great Britain, Portugal and Spain, on the topic of integration .

The goal was to identify, through qualitative methodologies, best practices and critical issues. The analysis reveals several topical issues of policy convergence:

- the need to start integration policies tuned to the needs of local territory.
- private organizations appearing privileged partners for the planning and implementation of integration policies;
- active labor market policies are oriented to the optimization of the meeting between demand and supply of labor through vocational training programs or input selection on the basis of the needs of local systems.
- a great attention to language learning and, recently, also for training aimed at the transmission of national values.
- recognition of the importance of cooperation with the countries of origin for migration.

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[http://www.lavoro.gov.it/AreaLavoro/Immigrazione\\_SpostatoInAreaSociale/Documents/00\\_Percorsidiintegrati\\_0nedegliimmigrati\\_volume\\_Intero.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/AreaLavoro/Immigrazione_SpostatoInAreaSociale/Documents/00_Percorsidiintegrati_0nedegliimmigrati_volume_Intero.pdf)

The focus on the Italian case, and in particular on the relationship between Italian labor market policies and the labor market, analyses four case studies. The first takes into account the Region of **Veneto**, concerning the role of vocational training in the paths of incorporation of migrants in employment, a training field still marginal. However, experiences show that the training system in Veneto is under a process of transformation, one of the most dynamic in Italy, where there is an increased demand for training expressed by immigrants and the tendency of firms to reward the qualification and the demands of new professional certifications.

The analysis highlights some essential conditions to ensure the quality of the training :

- Ability to diversify, without separating , the provision of training for migrants;
- Ability to work in a network between public, private and third sector, enhancing migrant associations;
- The precise identification of training needs;
- Presence of a strong training system, with experience in work integration;
- Integration of training, social and labor policies, for a closer correlation between economic and social integration.

The case study carried out in the **province of Turin** explores the transition to the active life of the second generation (children of immigrants born in Italy or in pre-school age). To avoid the danger of an intergenerational transmission of disadvantages, as reported by international experience, it would be appropriate to intervene with specific training programs and experimenting new ways of working on three priority areas : a) The efficiency and transparency of the demand/supply of labor ; b ) The company management, where the exploitation of the differences may be functional to the internationalization strategies of business; c) An educational institution system, which should promote the democratization of the social mobility opportunities.

**Officine Einstein** has developed an innovative methodology about the promotion of inclusion policies in Italian enterprises and public institutions. The project consists in adopting a strategy of "engagement of multiculturalism" and, therefore, adopting the appropriate means of communication and involvement that can improve the organizational climate by facilitating the flow of information and the sharing of the corporate objectives, helping to increase employee satisfaction and more generally, improve business efficiency. The proposal by Officine Einstein, is based on an experimental **workshop "Lavoratori stranieri in azienda: comunicazione e coinvolgimento"** (*Foreign workers in*

*enterprises: communication and involvement*)<sup>13</sup> realized by Impronta Etica<sup>14</sup>. The pilot project has produced 3 different tools: a guideline for the realization of a *job description booklet*, the *reception questionnaire* for the identification of the needs of foreign workers, an important tool for the analysis and the functional definition of policies and specific paths to be implemented to make more effective communication between the company and foreign workers, and the *welcome kit*, a practical support tool for the first integration of foreign workers within the company and in the community.

The method of work identified 3 fundamental phases: the selection, the entry and the training, the permanence and the growth. During this three different phases the company should made a context analysis, considering priorities, problems, solutions, goals and results, making operational an audit plan and monitoring the achievement of results.

The pursuit of the overall objective of the workshop was split into several specific objectives related to specific areas of action and different levels of complexity. Here are the most important:

- Responding to the needs of the workplace integration, socialization, personal and professional communication , mutual understanding, achievement and satisfaction;
- Identify paths that will enhance the potential of workers and seize the opportunities offered by the management of diversity;
- Make the internal communication processes the most effective and efficient;
- Stimulate production processes and sharing of new ideas;
- Increase involvement, a sense of ownership and responsibility;
- Improving the environment and the working environment;
- Improve the company's reputation among its stakeholders through a more responsible management of human resources;
- Reduce conflicts or difficulties in relationships with colleagues and superiors, breaking down stereotypes and prejudices.

Moreover, in 2009 it was also published the toolkit **“La Multiculturalità, un valore per l’impresa. Esperienze e programmi a confronto: uno stimolo al miglioramento della vita in azienda e della redditività”** (Multiculturalism, a value for the enterprise. Experiences and programs compared: a stimulus to the improvement of climate in the company and profitability)<sup>15</sup>, realized within a multidisciplinary workshop which involved a group of corporate backers of the **Fondazione Sodalitas**

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<sup>13</sup> which results are described on the guideline “Comunicazione e coinvolgimento dei lavoratori stranieri in azienda: strumenti e buone pratiche” (*Communication and involvement of foreign workers in enterprises: tools and good practices*).

<sup>14</sup><http://www.officineeinsteineu/organizzazione-aziendale/35-archivio-di-comportamenti-aziendali/159-diversity-management.html>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.sodalitas.it/impresa\\_e\\_lavoro/Multiculturalita.aspx](http://www.sodalitas.it/impresa_e_lavoro/Multiculturalita.aspx)

- Autogrill, Banca Popolare di Milano, Costa Crociere, IBM, L'Oreal and Pirelli & C. - with the collaboration of UNAR, which awarded the best company in the field of integration policies and practices of foreign workers with the "**Premio nazionale per le buone pratiche aziendali per l'integrazione dei lavoratori stranieri**" (*the National Award for best business practices for the integration of foreign workers*). These initiatives were part of the **European Year of Multicultural Dialogue (2008)**, which promoted a reflection on the management of multiculturalism in business with the aim of:

- gathering and sharing experiences of companies and stakeholders;
- promoting, through the dissemination of best practices, a culture of inclusion, showing how attention to the multicultural dimension can be translated into a competitive strategy for the companies;
- allowing companies who want to or need to establish their own policies and strategies of multiculturalism, to compare the different perspectives and to identify the most appropriate path for their own reality.

**The Web portal "Integration of Migrants - living and working in Italy", co-financed by the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (EIF)**, was undertaken by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education, University and Research and with the support of Italia Lavoro SpA.

The fundamental objective of the web portal is to provide information to migrants on services for integration: Italian language and culture, housing, work, health, intercultural mediation, opportunities for children with foreign origins and second generations of immigrant. The portal is also a reference point for national integration policies, and promote the connection information between the government (central and local) and private entities and social organizations working in the field. Among the main activities, there is the development of networks of institutions dealing in migration issues: networks of associations, municipalities and ANCI<sup>16</sup> network, Regions, Provinces and Trade Unions.

The research described in the book by **M. Monks "Culture in diversity, culture of diversity . A survey in the world of enterprise" (Quaderno ISMU n. 1/2012)** investigates the practices of recognition, integration and enhancement of cultural differences in a group of Italian companies with a significant presence of foreign staff coming from countries with a strong migratory pressure.

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<sup>16</sup> ANCI is the National Association of the Italian Municipalities.



The research reflects on how the model of Diversity Management of cross-cultural orientation developed at the international level is applicable in the Italian context.

In particular, it reflects on whether to adopt a conception of an "extended" approach to diversity (based on inter-individual differences) or of a "group" approach (focused on collective identities and affiliations), on the ability of the Diversity Management approach to generate benefits for the various stakeholders involved (companies, workers, co-workers, and the social context) and on possible obstacles in the implementation of organizational policies of diversity .

The hypothesis is that the outcome of the practices of Diversity Management depends on the widespread conceptions about the diversity in the organization. It is therefore explored the organizational management of different origins (national, ethnic, religious etc.), and the cultural character of individual and social factors underlying a greater or lesser recognition of any type of diversity (gender, age, professional experience, etc. ).

Four organizations, in Northern Italy, were chosen as a sample, for the significant amount of human resources of foreign origin, for the commitment shown in the management of cultural diversity of the staff, and also selected in order to ensure the heterogeneity of firms by size, sphere of activity and geographical area. The investigation focused specifically on the following issues:

- the historical and strategic organization;
- the climate and culture of the organization;
- practices of human resource management;
- perceptions about the emerging socio-cultural diversity in the workplace;
- experiences and actions of Diversity Management and their impacts.

The study provides valuable information, highlighting examples of good practice and making them available to the common reflection. Overall, the research supports the idea that transcultural training could be used as a strategic level for the benefit of enterprise performance. The study also confirms that, in Italy the business world is characterized by the reduced structuring initiatives in Diversity Management. So, it is difficult to imagine that the appreciation of differences can be transformed to a management strategy , in terms of the processes of planning and evaluation of interventions in the field of staff management. This trend towards greater codification of practices of organizational functioning could create the conditions for a circulation of knowledge and best practices among Italian businesses.

## Resources for intercultural training – international level

According to the **Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006** on key competences for lifelong learning, intercultural competence is one European priority to be achieved in the every learning context, from childhood to old age, as part of the general social and civic competences, which support individuals to participate in social and working life, in an effective and constructive way. “Intercultural competence” means understanding of codes of conduct and customs in the different environments in which individuals operate, which equips individuals to engage in active and democratic participation.

Numerous recent policy papers and recommendations of international organizations, such as **The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (Council of Europe, 2008)** have also expressed this need very clearly. There are several initiatives at European level to encourage training courses, international projects, materials and tools to develop and increase intercultural competence among European citizens<sup>17</sup>.

In the framework of the *Copenhagen Process*<sup>18</sup>, the **Bruges Communiqué of 7 December 2010** on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020, provides long-term strategic objectives for European cooperation in VET aim to respond to current and future challenges. In this document, intercultural competence is seen as a priority to be achieved in order to boost mobility, and it's important to *ensure the provision of language learning and intercultural competences in VET curricula*, in order to the promotion of equity, social cohesion and active citizenship, as underline in “**Education and Training 2020**” (ET2020) strategic framework.

**Recommendation No. R (84) 18 on the training of teachers in education for intercultural understanding, notably in a context of migration** make the intercultural dimension and the understanding between different communities a feature of initial and in-service teacher training, and in particular, teachers training should take into account migrant communities cultural expressions, the prevention of ethnocentric attitudes and stereotyping, strategies for approaching, understanding and consideration to other cultures, awareness of social exchanges existing between the country of origin and the host country not only in the cultural field but also in their historical dimension, consciousness of the economic, social, political and historical causes and effects of migration.

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<sup>17</sup> One interesting project is the European Diploma in Intercultural Competence, financed by the Lifelong Learning Programme <https://www.jyu.fi/hum/laitokset/viesti/en/research/projects/edicc>

<sup>18</sup> The Copenhagen Declaration (Declaration of the European Ministers of Vocational Education and Training, and the European Commission, convened in Copenhagen on 29 and 30 November 2002) set the priorities of the so called **Copenhagen process** on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET). This process aims to improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of VET in Europe.

Moreover, according to the Recommendation, State Members should encourage the development and use of appropriate materials to support the intercultural approach in the training of teachers, encourage the holding of national and international seminars and courses on the intercultural approach.

In the **Recommendation 1625 (2003) on Policies for the integration of immigrants in Council of Europe member states**, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe express the idea that integration policies should have the *dual aim of providing immigrants with the means to function in the society where they live and develop their potential while preserving their cultural and ethnic identity, and familiarising the non-immigrant population with the rights of immigrants, their culture, traditions and needs.* [...] The Assembly therefore recommends that every Member States establish integration programmes for those immigrants who have recently arrived, which should include language tuition, information on the way of life and customs of the host society, and access to basic services such as health, housing and legal advice.

The main European Programs and Funds which provide financial support to develop intercultural training courses are the **Lifelong Learning Programme**, the new **Erasmus Plus**, and more specifically connected to the labor market, the new EU **Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)**, which integrates and extends the coverage of three existing programmes (**Progress - Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity, EURES - European Employment Services, and the European Progress Microfinance Facility**) and supports employment, social policy and labour mobility across the EU. Therefore, the **European Social Fund (ESF)** supports projects designed to help people improve their professional skills and careers.

From a point of view of good practices in the field of intercultural competence training in the workplace, we have a substantial number of case-studies.

The European project **The InnoSupport Project (2003 – 2005)** is based on a practical guide to support innovation in small and middle enterprises (EU Programme Leonardo da Vinci- [www.innosupport.net](http://www.innosupport.net)) The Aim of the InnoSupport project is to transfer learning materials in the context of the project's partners countries - Italy, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany and Portugal - in order to reinforce the competences of middle management professional profiles in SMEs and allow them to acquire and strengthen innovation management techniques. Among these competences for the innovation, there is the intercultural competences, which, are both a challenge and an opportunity for companies. According to the Project, intercultural competences are seen as the ability to behave and to act

properly in a certain situation<sup>19</sup>. In this sense, success depends to a large degree of attitude, empathy, motivation, and values.

The project uses self-assessment test/checklist aimed to employers or managers, to focus the issues, and then propose possible idea to organize training course according to the need of the enterprise, and international good practice. There are good references and some resources as a guide to plan a training course in the own enterprise.

Different methodologies were used by the **EU project “ICT - Intercultural Training for Social Integration”(2003-2005)**, which created a learning environment through web tools aimed to train future trainers in intercultural competences.

The project was made by 14 different educational institutions representing six European countries, and its aim was the development of a training model including manual and training guidelines for specialists working in the area of social integration. It provided trainers need’s analysis in country partners, “best practice” examples relative to the theme of “intercultural competence“ for the respective countries, and then, from the conclusions it was drawn a competence profile that specifies the particular competences the workers should possess. The competences were preserved in the form of training modules<sup>20</sup>, containing topics such as language, culture, social competence, relevant laws and legal stipulations. Therefore, the modules includes guidelines for the teaching method and lesson plan, intended as a support for the trainer.

An interesting research was realized by **The European Intercultural Workplace Project (2004-2007)** which kept together partners in 10 European countries (Italy, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Great Britain) to investigate challenges posed by an increasingly intercultural work environment. The project, funded by EU Leonardo da Vinci Programme II, intended to highlight key issues for managers, employees and customers from host and immigrant cultures in public, private and education sectors. Firstly a survey was conducted to analyze the

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<sup>19</sup> According the project definition, intercultural competence is “*First of all it means to act in an adequate way in situations when dealing with representatives with different cultural background – employees, business partners, clients. This competence is based on an attitude, to accept that people are different. It means to be open to the idea that my way of thinking and acting is not the only possible way. And that different thinking and actions can lead to the same or even better results. It means to respect other ways of thinking and acting. Intercultural competence requires a personal attitude that my way of thinking and acting is not better or worse than that of my foreign colleague, business partner or client - it is simply DIFFERENT. It’s the idea that I will be able to deal with those differences as a challenge and an opportunity where we both can learn and take profit from it. It never means communicate and act from a position of superiority such as: I know best and I’ll show you how to proceed. It also means to know about socially based standards, habits, communication styles in other countries or cultures – like dress codes and nutrition habits, distance and proximity, greeting rituals, etc.*”

<sup>20</sup> file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/09\_03\_11 ICT\_HAndbuch\_FV\_en.pdf

situation in each partner country, then it was realized an empirical case studies in those economic sectors most in need of attention in the individual partner countries and providing a comparative analysis between sectors on a national and trans-national level across partner countries. Finally, the project produced a set of human resource development training modules reflecting best practice and local needs, with the aim of informing and educating the workplace target groups and policy makers<sup>21</sup>. The **EUROPE AT WORK: Diversity in the European Workplace Training Manual** is available in 9 languages and is designed for a wide range of users: personnel officers, human resources development managers, and management training consultants, Trades Unions representatives, other employee representative bodies, and individuals in general. The **EUROPE AT WORK: Diversity in the European Workplace DVD** consists of an introduction and 13 scenarios which present samples of intercultural conflicts in the form of mini-dramas.

During the 2008, the **European Year for Intercultural Dialogue**, many initiatives dealt the themes of intercultural competence and immigration, even in the field of business. One example of that, is represented by two European workshops, coordinated by Impronta Etica, “**Mainstreaming Diversity**” and “**Recruitment and Ethical Management of Foreign Workers**”, focused on two key aspects of the vast diversity in the world of business. During the workshops it was also represented two examples of responsible management: **L'Oréal France**, which presented the great opportunities represented by the integration of diversity management within and across companies focusing primarily on the management of processes such as recruitment, training, reconciliation of family life and work, internal and external communication, evaluation, internal mobility and Key Performance Indicators; and **Obiettivo Lavoro**, which showed how you can recruit and manage foreign workers in a responsible manner, ensuring compliance and the full integration of immigrant workers, determining the benefits of economic, social and ethical issues for society<sup>22</sup>.

The **TIPS Project "T- learning to Improve Professional Skills for intercultural dialogue" (2008)**, was part of the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue initiatives, and involved four European countries: Austria, France, Greece, Italy and Poland, coordinated by the Italian Consortium FOR.COM and funded by the Life Long Learning Programme Leonardo da Vinci.

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<sup>21</sup> The project produced three sector-specific booklets on education, healthcare and SMEs [http://immi.se/eiw/texts/EIW\\_Sector\\_Specific\\_Booklet\\_on\\_SME.pdf](http://immi.se/eiw/texts/EIW_Sector_Specific_Booklet_on_SME.pdf). Therefore, it produced a manual and a DVD with the title *EUROPE AT WORK: Diversity in the European Workplace* <http://immi.se/eiw/training.html>.

<sup>22</sup> These were part of the 21 workshop that were made during the 2007/8 to translate commitments of the European Alliance into concrete practices. “**The European Alliance for Corporate Social Responsibility**” was promoted in 2006 by the European Commission together with CSR Europe, Business in Europe and UEAPME (European Association of Craft and Small and Medium Enterprises).

The TIPS project has developed a training course for people interested in working in the field of cultural mediation, in order to acquire useful skills and ability to work and interact with migrants and immigrants. European partners were selected on territorial criteria, which reflect the reality of migration flows and different practices of integration in Europe. In order to develop a training program meeting the needs of professionals in the cultural mediation, TIPS project carried out a comparative research between mediators and professionals working in the field of cultural mediation.

The contents of the course were:

- practical information on the use of the three platforms;
- exploration of the characteristics of the profile and the code of conduct of the cultural mediator;
- presentation of the basic principles of psychology, theories and areas of application in relation to cultural mediation;
- provision of an overview of the legal structure of the European Union, and in the partner countries Austria, France, Greece, Italy and Poland;
- the role of cultural mediation;
- facilitating the integration of immigrants in the host countries.

In the **Manuale sull'integrazione per i responsabili delle politiche di integrazione e gli operatori del settore (2010)** published by the Direzione Generale della Giustizia, della Libertà e della Sicurezza of the Italian Government, there is a long list of best practise across Europe in the field of intercultural issues, which we will describe briefly.

- The **city of Vienna** has been able to increase the number of apprentices from immigrant through the use of flyers and advertising in multilingual websites. All learners receive information on diversity and follow a module on intercultural education.
- The **Development Partnership to live and work together in the city of Linz** (Austria) has realized a successfully information campaign which attracted the interest of employers, especially from SMEs, and of local policy makers, with regard of the analysis of the benefits of a cross-border labor market and the development of an intercultural training for union representatives and workers with immigrant backgrounds.

- The **Pangea Development Partnership** is a project implemented in the **Spanish region of Castilla-La Mancha**, which has included migrant associations, NGOs, local and regional public authorities with the aim to reach immigrant people of this rural area, putting them in relation with the integrated and specialized training services and consulting services, as well as programs for ongoing support in the workplace. Awareness-raising measures are associated with the research of the “intercultural barometer”, conducted on issues such as socio-economic and cultural contribution of the migrant population in a certain municipality.
- The **European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)** provides its members with a research report and an action plan on collective contracts with respect to issues of interest to migrant workers and ethnic minorities, to be used as tools for integration policies and practices in the workplace<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.etuc.org/issue/migration>

## Conclusions and remarks

The training for foreign population is a field of analysis very difficult to classify: apart from the limited statistical data, there are few specific researches which analyze the complexity of the phenomenon, especially when we talk about intercultural competence, which still belong almost exclusively to the school world.

Language learning and vocational training for immigrants are quite widespread in the country, while those training programs more specifically related to the development of **intercultural competences with the aim of integration of immigrant workers, represent at the moment just a sporadic practice.**

Policies and practices for intercultural dialogue **exclusively aimed to foreign workers, and training courses are organized outside of the working environment**, generally at employment centers, which shows on the other hand a **good public training and service system for immigrants**, and a **good public system which provide funding and grant** in order to support private and public initiatives in the field of training.

**Training courses in intercultural competences as part of staff management plan** or company strategy are very limited: in fact, Italian business world is characterized by **reduced structuring initiatives in Diversity Management, in terms of planning and evaluation of interventions in the field of staff management.**

Intercultural training courses are generally provided for the **internationalization of the company** and **are addressed to managers**, in order to develop better relation with foreign markets and clients.

From a point of view of good practices, we can state that **at local and regional level there is a good system of training aimed to immigrant people**, but specific practices in intercultural training on the workplace are limited or not documented, while there is a high consideration of public institutions of training needs, information services, employment centers, cultural mediation services, civic education, and so on, for immigrant citizens and their children.

**At national level**, there are more experiences in the Central and Northern regions such as Piedmont, Veneto, Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna, especially concentrated around the 2008, the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. Piedmont and Emilia Romagna has develop and well documented training courses, materials, and methods, which represent fundamental resources to take into account for the organization of a training course on intercultural competence.

**At the European level** there are many practices and methodologies developed and appropriately documented, which can be great points of reference for the construction of international networks and for the establishment of relations with countries that express similar needs.



From this reflection, is possible to make some considerations to take into account in order to promote policies and practices for intercultural training on the workplace.

- The active parts in the integration process should be identified in the **stakeholders responsible for general issues in the labour market** in the areas of vocational training, career guidance, work mediation and employment. These topics include trade unions, associations of employers, institutions dealing with vocational training centers and career guidance to the world of work in the media at the national level, which determine the environment in which we can encourage employers to train their employees in new skills and intercultural skills;
- There is a need of **training in intercultural competences for teachers and trainers** in order to be prepared on pursuing training programs on the workplace, and **of learning materials** which should take into account specific methodologies and teaching approach.
- Adapting education systems to diversity is challenging for Europe, especially for new immigration countries like Italy. Its education system has as many strengths as weaknesses. Beside civil society projects, **the Italian education and training system is not actively supporting new opportunities on intercultural education or/and training.**
- The importance of **training within a comprehensive system of career-orientation, vocational training**, starting from **the countries of origin**, provides an effective programming and a more qualified employment of immigrants. The establishment of mechanisms that work in favor of the equilibrium between domestic demand and supply of foreign labor would promote the **activation of training paths that meet the needs of the local labor market and prepare the reception of migrants who aspire to enter Italy for work purposes.**
- Best practices highlight fundamental work phases to take into account while providing intercultural training: **the selection, the entry and the training, the permanence and the growth.**

- Every kind of initiative on this topic, should include a **need's analysis study**, in order to make a **context analysis considering priorities, problems, solutions, goals and results, monitoring the achievement of results, and evaluation**.
  
- The main general objectives of an intercultural training course should:
  - respond to **the needs of the workplace integration, socialization, personal and professional communication, mutual understanding, achievement and satisfaction**;
  - promote an **effective and efficient communication** on the workplace;
  - stimulate the **sharing of new ideas** and innovation;
  - increase **involvement, a sense of ownership and responsibility**;
  - **improve the environment** and the working environment;
  - **reduce conflicts, breaking down stereotypes and prejudices**.
  
- Intercultural competence is based on an attitude, **on the idea that dealing with diversity is a challenge and an opportunity**, so that a greater codification of practices could create the conditions for a circulation of knowledge and best practices among **Italian businesses, which will benefit internally with a more productive workforce, and externally with the ability to deal with foreign markets and clients**.
  
- In order to spread contents, methodologies and materials, **it's fundamental to document and report good practices in the field of intercultural training** on the workplace, and **share outcomes with public and private stakeholders**.

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