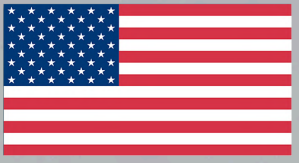


Soul of Nations

THE SOUL OF NATIONS FOUNDATION'S
AFRO-EUROPEAN RESEARCH JOURNAL— FEB 2022



SOUL



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CREATING BELONGING AND REIMAGINING FUTURES

AFRO-ITALIANS AND CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS

BY BENEDICTA DJUMPAH

In December 2017, the Italian Senate failed to vote and approve the proposed reform number 2092 of the Italian Citizenship Law number 91/1992, due to the lack of the legal number of Senators present on the discussion to permit reform. This reform would have granted the right to Italian Citizenship to people of foreign origins born in Italy or who arrived in the country before age 12. According to 91/1992 Citizenship Law, someone who is born to foreign parents in Italy has to wait till they are 18 to become Italian citizen and prove continuous residence on the Italian territory throughout this time. One also has to apply within a certain time frame. For those born abroad, having migrated with their parents to Italy at a very young age, it is required that they undergo the same process as their parents.

Although national policy may be defined as color blind, in practice, and at a local level, the Italian school system's universalistic approach still encourages inequality. Through this work, my objective is to raise consciousness and awareness for all. The outcome of this research hopes to underline and renew the need for Italian citizenship law reform that creates belonging for those born or raised within Italy, including Afro-Italians. In order to imagine a future for Afro-Italians, the research aims to address issues within the educational system and heal the wounds it has caused.

LAZIO, Continued on page 4



DARZEN ZIGIC / THE BRINK FOR THE SOUL OF NATIONS FOUNDATION

THE LIFE AND NEEDS OF REFUGEES DURING COVID-19

A FOCUS ON THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

BY JESSICA EDEME

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to the surface present aggressive undertones toward non-Italian residents and the LGBTQIA+ community, in terms of access to the national health system. According to Il Giorno, in February 2021, when everyone was wondering which categories would be eligible to receive the vaccine first, the Ligurian Local Sanitary Firm (ASL) of La Spezia included homosexuals, prostitutes

among the 30 categories most subject to risk. Putting homosexuality as an at-risk factor on the basis of non-scientific evidence represents a dreadful form of discrimination. During this

Just as it is important that Italy supports the resettlement of asylum seekers, it is equally vital that resettlement infrastructure to sustain high-quality health services and health protection.

firing of medical and policy professionals responsible for this form of public ostracization toward the LGBTQIA+ community. However,

same period, Codacons, a nonprofit association for the defense of the environment and the rights of users and consumers, threatened to

advocate for the

there is no evidence that these offenders faced repercussions. The discourse around migration is too often referred to as a crisis that requires immediate solutions, rather than a circumstance that can be empathetically and humanely managed. It also lacks a proper distinction between displaced people and second-generation Italians, who also face systemic racial discrimination. Something has been done to improve the condition of the migrant population, particularly after the overhaul of Salvini's decree and the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic. However, legal and bureaucratic loopholes are consistently putting the lives of the most fragile at risk.

VENETO, Continued on page 4

MIGRANT AND LABOR MARKET RIGHTS IN ITALY

THE MYTHS, FACTS AND REALITY

BY ANAS MGHAR

Since inception, humanity has been accustomed to the process of emigration; moving from one place to another in search of pasture and water sources and in search of means of subsistence. According to 2021 estimates from the World Economic Outlook Database of the International Monetary Fund, Italy has a per capita GDP (gross domestic product divided by the number of inhabitants), equal to 38.17 thousand dollars.

In 2016, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) prepared a report from the study of migrant profiles, drivers of migration as well as migration trends which detailed the profile and conditions in which immigrants arrived in Italy. Leading by the objective of informing and contributing with greater evidence for the discussion on immigration, they aimed to cover information passing from the country of origin of these groups until evidencing their economic, work, educational situations, and expectations. In this report, it was evidenced that economic or work reasons are the main driver of the migrants interviewed, who are hoping to improve their living standards or leave harsh working conditions behind.

In the context of Italy, in 2001, Ambrosini pointed out that the Italian case is characterized by immigrant inflows who were overwhelmingly regularized after arriving illegally and, therefore, were not selected before arrival. This created what has been called 'subordinate integration', resulting in unequal opportunities in terms of housing, work, health, education, and political participation. Implementing the model of subaltern integration, which channels immigrants towards certain sectors, reserving fewer rewarding functions for them. As pointed out in several academic debates and precisely described by Venturi and Villosio in 2018, immigrants in Italy have always been complementary to nationals rather than a substitute.

However, most immigrants are interviewed for work opportunities irregularly and highlight the lack of information and access to the regular labor market as the biggest obstacles they face. For instance, as pointed out by the report, most of the asylum seekers in the Italian reception centers are not aware that they are legally entitled to work in Italy with their temporary residency permit. In addition, the process for issuing documents that allow these people to be integrated in Italian daily life is usually slow. Despite this, they aspire to stay in Italy and invest in their skills and abilities.

PIEDMONT, Continued on page 5

PARTNERSHIP WITH ASSOCIAZIONE BLACK HISTORY MONTH FLORENCE

A NEXUS FOR BLACK CULTURAL IDENTITY IN ITALY @SRISA

CO-FOUNDED BY JUSTIN RANDOLPH THOMPSON

The Soul of Nations Foundation is proud to be contracting an Italian collective called The Recovery Plan, administered by the Associazione Culturale BHMF, through Soul Center for the Arts and the Advocacy and Research Program to help support Afro-Italian artist residencies, co-lead artist workshops, and help to guide the local artistic and research production process. The Recovery Plan is a Black cultural center that



MARCO BADIANI / THE FLORENTINE FOR BHMF

In December 2022, the Soul of Nations Foundation provided a grant to the Association to support new Afro-Italian artists for joint programming. Visit the center at Via Santa Reparata 19R, Florence.

fosters transnational exchange around Afro-descendent cultures and peoples employing research, production and documentation in relation to cultural production as a means for examining the history and contemporary legacy of Blackness in a global context.

Inaugurated in September 2021, the Recovery Plan is a space for critical thinking and recovery from historical inaccuracy and the recovering of histories that still await narration. The Recovery Plan hosts a range of events, seminars, workshops and residencies designed to reflect upon Italy as a historic site for cultural exchange. Presented as a range of platforms, this initiative is a rallying of voices designed to facilitate cross-cultural research and dialogue through the art exhibitions, performance, lectures and educational workshops.

LAZIO

JUS SANGUINIS, AFRO-ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS AND 'THE RIGHT OF BLOOD'

LAZIO, From page 3

The current Italian citizenship Law 91/1992 and its acquisition is based on a principle of *Jus Sanguinis* (the right of blood), which reinforces the idea that citizenship equals nationality. Someone born to one Italian parent or is of Italian descent, and has no bound with the Italian soil or culture, has an easier pathway to Italian citizenship compared to someone born or raised in Italy to foreign parents. In the early 1990s, when this law was presented, it may have seemed like an attempt to acknowledge the changing reality of Italy, going from a country of emigration to a country of immigration, but it was actually created to maintain the ties with the Italian descendants in Latin America, especially Argentina.

Currently, based on the 91/1992 Citizenship Law, someone who is born to foreign parents in Italy has to wait until they are 18 to become an Italian citizen, proving continuous residence on the Italian territory throughout this time and applying for citizenship within a certain time frame. For those born abroad and migrated with their parents to Italy at a very young age, they have to undergo the same process as their parents that chose to migrate, hence proving that have been resident for 10 years in the country of Italy and show proof of income for the last 3 years minimum of €8,263,31 for a single person apply for the citizenship; this can delay the access to citizenship. These requirements are hard to meet at age 18 in a country like Italy where also youth unemployment is almost at 30% and migrant families faced huge income disparities compared to natives.

According to IDOS research in 2018, there were over 1.3 million new generation Italians. For a breakdown of the nationalities of the new generation Italians, we would need to look at the nationalities of students with foreign passports as Italy does not collect data on race and ethnicity. Among the 51.1% of them, we can find 4 nationalities: Romanians count for almost one-fifth of the total of students 19.2%, followed by the Albanians who are the total of 13.6%; then Moroccans students 12.4%; and the Chinese nationals with 6.0% share. Immediately afterwards there are groups with more presences contained: with percentages higher than 3%, Filipinos, Indians and Moldovans; and with higher shares at 2%, Ukrainians, Pakistanis, Egyptians, Tunisians, Peruvians and Ecuadorians. The remaining countries of citizenship of foreign students (about 180), on the other hand, are around 2%. Looking at the four school grades of the Italian Schooling system, there are passports that record higher percentage shares in some degrees and lower than average and this depends on the historical presents of each migrant community.

The Treccani Encyclopedia defines Afro-Italian as an adjective to describe a person "who has African and Italian origins; related to Africa and Italy". However, many people who identify with this term, Afro-Italian is a noun that Italians of African descent chose to define themselves.

It is about self-determination and challenging the idea that the Italian citizenship law tries to reinforce, which is that being Italian is a matter of blood, and inherently, being white. The challenge of belonging for new generation Italians, also defined as "second generation", is recognized by politicians and society, but the responsibility or fault of this challenge is often shifted mainly to the new generation and their condition of being in-between cultures: one of the families of origins and the culture in which they have been raised. For this reason, they have been perceived by politicians, especially from the



BENEDICTIA DJUMPAH, SIAMO (WE ARE), ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN FOR THE SOUL OF NATIONS FOUNDATION

especially from the Far Right, and institutions as a threat to national security. A case is the 2017 course to sign to the Prefect (police chief) career which read, "Citizenship for second-generation: starting point or the arrival point of the integration process? When marginalization generates terrorism: *de iure condendo* (constitutional law) perspective and possible solution."

Italy has a State-funded school system that has played and still plays a role in shaping its citizens. Italy is divided and administered by 20 Regions that have the responsibility to provide directly, often delegating to Provinces and Municipalities, services and assistance to students. Also, private schools do receive funding from the State and the regions. The private schools include 86 international schools, 22 of which are in Milan and 21 in Rome. The mandatory education years include primary and secondary school from age 6 to 16 and this applies also to minors with foreign passports, no matter the legal immigration status of their parents. Does the school system help with the inclusion process or does it reveal the systemic racism that is present within Italian society? How does this exclusion present itself within the school system? Looking at the data of students remaining or leaving the school system, their choice of secondary education and career aspirations we could get some insights.

It is key to look at data from the Italian Ministry of education and research institutes, which are country-based and also include regional breakdowns, that have focused their studies on new generation Italians, migration institutes and independent research. The report from the Ministry of Education on students with no Italian citizenship referring to the 2019/2020 academic year at a national level, identifies that the majority of the students are born in Italy. From age 6 to 13, there is no distinction in the enrollment rates between Italian students and the students without Italian citizenship, but there is a disparity when it comes to the ages of 16 and 18 for Italian students and for students with no Italian citizenship, reported at 81,1% and 73,2% respectively.

In June 2022, an online questionnaire on citizenship and belonging was distributed via social media, mainly Instagram and Whatsapp, to a small group of Afro-Italians, and 44 people have submitted a response. It was specified inside that it was preferred for Afro-Italians with both foreign parents because mixed-race Afro-Italian with one Italian parent do not face the challenge regarding citizenship, as they acquire citizenship by blood. The challenge with the questionnaire submission may be trying to

identify the right audience. The end goal is to collect data that will help structure a possible mentorship program for Afroitalians teens between the age of 16 to 18 years old. This population can be engaged most likely via social media, mainly through Instagram and TikTok, or youth groups contrary to associations or collectives in which there are mostly young adults. For this reason, young adults talking about their experiences as teens for the survey were taken into consideration.

Based on this survey were able to discover the following: 36.4% of respondents were from the Veneto region, followed by the Lombardy at 27.3%, Emilia Romagna at 15.9% and Lazio at 9.1%. Among the respondents, 70.5% did not obtain Italian citizenship between the age of 16 and 18. Among the 29.5% that obtained their citizenship, 76.6%

obtained citizenship through their parents thus becoming an Italian citizens before age 18, and only 23.1% obtained citizenship through formal application at age 18. When asked if citizenship places a very important role to create a sense of belonging, 59.1% strongly agreed, 29.5% believed it's quite important, 10% believed that it plays a small role. Among the respondents, 65.9% felt Italian, 25% had no response, and 9.1% said no. When asked if school played an important role in making them feel a part of Italy, 36.4% said that the school played an important role in making them feel a part of Italy, 31.8% said it plays a minor role, and 31.8% said no. Regarding work-life aspirations, 84.1% said that their career and life aspirations were shaped by their own dreams and aspirations, 9.1% said they were based on societal expectations, 6.8% said they were

based on their teacher's recommendation. Among the respondents, 95.5% said they would like to meet Mentors of African descent in different workforce, political and social sectors. The online survey has shown that many Afroitalians do struggle to access Italian citizenship between the age of 16-18 and this has an impact on the sense of belonging. The data also shows that the Italian School system is still struggling to create a sense of belonging as the majority of the respondents said that only in part or not the school system has played a role in creating belonging. Despite the challenge of citizenship, the Afro-Italian respondents can imagine their futures; the challenge for this group is not creating aspirations, but materializing them.

There is also a need to better define the forms that institutional racism takes in Italy because the focus of anti-racism is often on interpersonal racism and on the injustices that occur overseas, especially in the United States. The European social democratic bliss and the universalistic approach have favored colorblind policies. In order to imagine a future for Afro-Italians, the research needs to address issues within the educational system and the wounds and inequalities it may cause.

"I obtained the [Italian] citizenship at 12 and this made me feel like an Italian and a European citizen. I participated in projects, had experiences abroad before I was 18 which helped me to develop the vision of the world that I have now. This is why I strongly believe in the fact that citizenship plays a fundamental role."

For this reason, Italy should work to create brave and safer spaces where young Afro-Italians can reflect on their identities and see themselves in various professions with mentors, especially since the State does not fully understand its role and responsibility in creating belonging.

VENETO

LOOPHOLES IN ITALIAN UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE

VENETO, From page 3

According a 2021 report produced by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) on COVID-19 transmission reduction and vaccination in Italy, approximately 800,000 immigrant groups and ethnic minorities showcased low rates of vaccination. Among this total, nearly 200,000 people requested their health status certificates, only to forced endure bureaucratic limbos that don't allow access to the national health service. Since majority of immigrants do not possess *codice fiscale temporaneo* (temporary fiscal code), which grants access to the portal for vaccination reservations in certain Italian regions, this measure does not allow local *Questuras* (police headquarters) the option to analyze and fulfill health requests. ____

In February 2021, the *Agenzia Italiana del Farmaco* (AIFA) found it necessary to protect more fragile populations by proposing that immigrants in possession of *Straniero Temporaneamente Presente (STP)*—a code issued by certain Italian regions that allows foreigners without a *permesso di soggiorno* (resident permit) could have access to essential and emergency health services. In June 2021, Francesco Paolo Figiuolo, extraordinary commissioner for the COVID-19



ARTUR WIDAK / GETTY IMAGES FOR THE SOUL OF NATIONS FOUNDATION

emergency, published a decree stating how uninsured residents could become vaccinated, which brought forth hope to the community. However, civil society urged the public official to elucidate whether this decree also referred to fragile individuals, since there was debate regarding the vaccinations of tourists. If communication is not clear, it gets harder to convince people of social fragility and in some cases with low education about

the benefits of the vaccine thus furthering the systemic discrimination of Afro-Italian healthcare access. Legal and bureaucratic loopholes put the lives of the most fragile at risk. Exclusionary citizenship laws continue to neglect the fundamental rights. Although certain positive amendments have been advanced under Italian Law, the journey toward a fair and humane migration policy is still a prevalent struggle worth fighting for.

PIEDMONT

WORK-LIFE BALANCE, MIGRANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ITALIAN ECONOMY

PIEDMONT, From page 3

Every year, millions of people are forced to leave their home countries and find refuge in other countries due to many reasons. Giving a huge rise to the numbers of asylum seekers, refugees, and internally displaced people (IDPs) around the world. Displacement worldwide varies in terms of its patterns, size, protection issues, and durable solutions. Humanity has known since its inception the process of emigration; moving from one place to another in search of pasture and water sources and in search of means of subsistence, which explains the natural movement of individuals and groups from one place to another, whether within the same country or beyond its state borders to achieve economic, scientific, or even political gains. However, humanity itself has experienced other types of forced migration in which some human beings have been forced to leave their countries of origin, because of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and volcanoes, etc., or because of human disasters, crimes such as wars, religious, political, and ethnic persecution, etc. Historically speaking, peoples' movements were quite limited to factors such as race, ethnicity, and religion. However, in the 21st century, displacement is taking different patterns such as urbanization, food and climate change, population growth, insecurity, and energy and water supplies, causing instability and forcing displacement. These factors could vary in their effects, some might affect whole communities' regions and others might only affect small areas, while some might affect whole populations and others might affect small groups of people.

Since the 1990s, Italy has received and hosted migrants seeking refuge from wars and abuse, as well as those seeking better economic prospects in all its regions. From the 1990s to 2019, Italy received 868.818 asylum requests per person and in 2019 the total was 43.783. The economic and employment crisis that has affected the Italian production system and the labour market in recent years and during COVID-19 has brought out the centrality of the foreign component in the labour market with evidence, not only because of the importance that foreign workers have had and continue to have in carrying out specific duties. This criticality of the foreign labour market, even if apparently not a priority, requires setting adequate solutions in order not to disperse or underutilize a wealth of skills which, if properly connected to the world of work and training, could correspond, at least in part, to the professional needs of all those companies' facing changes in the new digital economy. Despite the apparent need for foreign labour as described above, refugees often find themselves engaged in unskilled work with incommensurate pay due to the length and nature of the asylum application and approval process, as well as other bureaucratic processes. There is a lack of specific and up-to-date information on refugees in Turin, in terms of education and professional experience, as detailed in the literature review section.

Chart: Italian economy vs. Italian migrant economy: Comparison between the wealth produced by immigrants in Italy and the GDP of the EU27 countries. Elaborations by the Leone Moressa Foundation, 2021. Adding up the other income items for public funds (personal income tax, VAT, local taxes, social security contributions, etc.), a value of 28.1 billion is obtained. On the other hand, an impact for public spending of 27.5 billion is estimated. The balance, therefore, is positive (+600 million). Foreigners are young and have little impact on pensions and health, the main items of public spending. But low-skilled jobs and low social mobility can lead to a worsening of the situation in the long run.



ANTONIO CALLANI / AP FOR THE SOUL OF NATIONS FOUNDATION

According to a report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2016), some of the refugees arriving in Italy have a degree and previous professional experience and speak several languages. However, most of them do not have a job or work under exploitative conditions, in unskilled or semi-skilled sectors, this challenge is exacerbated by the lack of recognition of the academic and professional qualifications and skills of each refugee. Based on the issues above, this research aims to address the lack of information on refugees with an objective to have an in-depth assessment of refugees with particular focus on factors relating to their employment and challenges. Such concern and importance of research are reinforced by the Italian Council for Refugees (2016) which emphasizes the lack of coordination among the authorities and organizations dealing with the labour market integration of refugees is a key obstacle faced by asylum seekers and refugees.

According to the OECD, until the mid-1990s, the number of people migrating to Italy was relatively small compared to the international scene. However, with the persistent demand for foreign workers in low-skilled and low-paid jobs, combined with

conflicts in nearby countries, the number of immigrants in Italy has grown rapidly over the past 15 years. By 2019, foreign migrants represented 8.7% of the population and 10.6% of the total workforce; 60% of them were in the North, 25% in the Center, and only 15% in the South (ISTAT, 2019).

Analyzing from a historical perspective, especially in post-recession periods, the type of demand from foreign labour is generally linked to the prevailing economic model in the country and may be different according to the choices of growth path that each nation chooses to follow. On the one hand, as argued by Schumpeter (1989), a country's economic development may be conditioned to investment in technological innovations, production processes and human capital. On the other hand, as described by Lewis (2011), the country can choose to maintain the same type of products and technologies and replace investments with less qualified workers, taking advantage of the immigration wave. In the case of Italy, whether toward economic growth or to face a financial crisis, the path chosen is usually like the second option, driven by cost reduction, tending to look for low-skilled migrants to maintain low-skilled production.

Every year, millions of people are forced to leave their home countries and find refuge in other countries due to many reasons. Giving a huge rise to the numbers of asylum seekers, refugees, and internally displaced people (IDPs) around the world. Displacement worldwide varies in terms of its patterns, size, protection issues, and durable solutions. In this research-paper, I will shed the light on the major issue of Labor Market right with a particular focus on Turin. I will discuss the issue, its causes, characteristics, consequences, and dynamics, and draw attention to some case studies within the Piedmont region, and the numbers of migrant people that seem to be invisible to the outside world.

Historically speaking, people's movements were quite limited to factors such as race, ethnicity, and religion, however, in the 21st century, displacement is taking different patterns such as urbanization, food and climate change, population growth, insecurity, and energy and water supplies, causing instability and forcing displacement. These factors could vary in their effects, some might affect whole communities' regions and others might only affect small areas, while some might affect whole populations and others might affect

small groups of people. Unlike countries like the UK and arranged next to other Southern European countries, immigration on Italian lands began to manifest itself in a context characterized by a negative demographic evolution and the need for additional labor only in some productive sectors such as agriculture, domestic services and civil construction. Thus, prevailing a work scheme composed of foreign workers in low-skilled jobs and with low wages, even when well educated, usually in the form of irregular employment. (Venturini & Villosio, 2018)

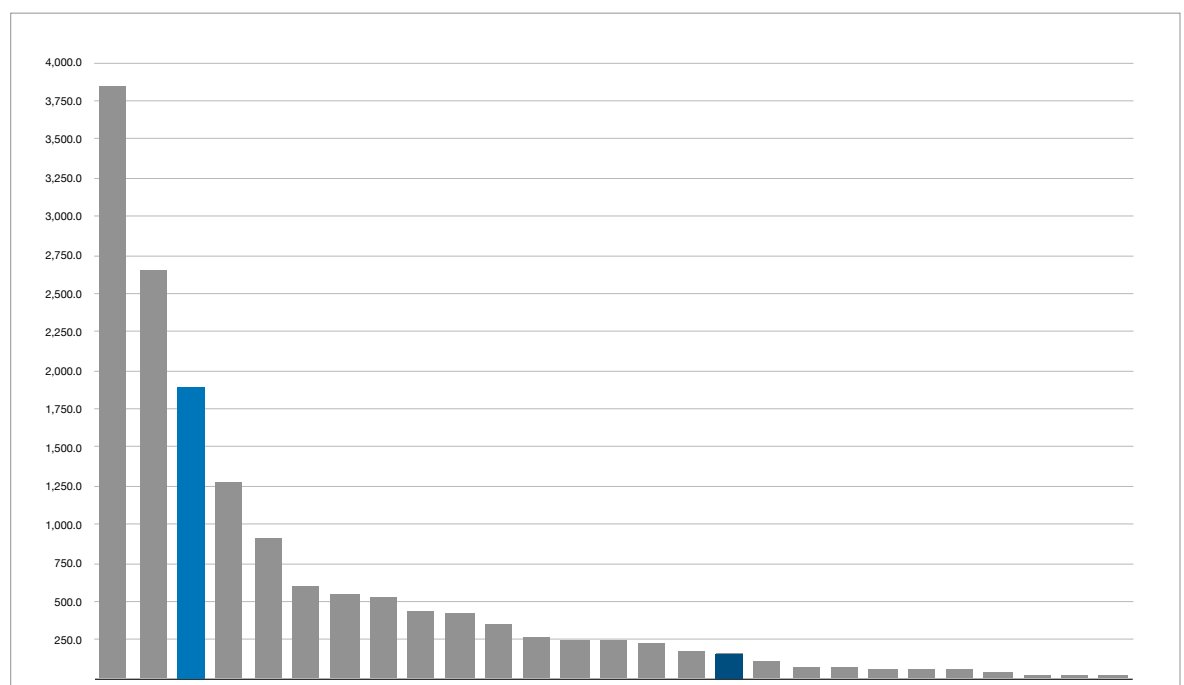
In this context, Ambrosini (2001) points out that the Italian case is characterized by immigrant inflows who were overwhelmingly regularized after arriving illegally and, therefore, were not selected before arrival. This created what has been called 'subordinate integration', resulting in unequal opportunities in terms of housing, work, health, education, and political participation. Implementing the model of subaltern integration, which channels immigrants towards certain sectors, reserving fewer rewarding functions for them. As pointed out in several academic debates and precisely described by Venturini and Villosio (2018) immigrants in Italy have always been complementary to nationals rather than a substitute.

In 2016, the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2016) prepared a report from the study of migrants' profiles, drivers of migration as well as migration trends which detailed the profile and conditions in which immigrants arrived in Italy. Leading by the objective of informing and contributing with greater evidence for the discussion on immigration, they aimed to cover information passing from the country of origin of these groups until evidencing their economic, work, educational situations, and expectations. In this report, it was evidenced that economic or work reasons are the main driver of the migrants interviewed, who are hoping to improve their living standards or leave harsh working conditions behind.

In educational and work terms, it was pointed out in the IOM 2016 report, that most of the people interviewed have some professional and educational qualifications. At least 20% of the people interviewed have a high school diploma or a university degree and in the linguistic field, a majority speaks at least one European language, with 60% of respondents fluent in English, 23% in French, **PIEDMONT, Continued on page 6**

EU Countries GDP (billion)

Germany	3,846.4
France	2,639.3
Italy	1,888.7
Spain	1,281.4
Netherlands	913.8
Poland	596.6
Sweden	541.2
Belgium	521.8
Austria	433.2
Ireland	425.9
Denmark	356
Finland	269.7
Romania	248.7
Czech Republic	245.6
Portugal	228.5
Greece	188.8
Migrants of Italy	180
Hungary	155.8
Slovak Republic	105.1
Luxembourg	73.3
Bulgaria	69.9
Croatia	57.2
Lithuania	56.5
Slovenia	53.6
Latvia	33.7
Estonia	30.6
Cyprus	24.6
Malta	14.6



RESEARCH FELLOWS



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PIEDMONT

PIEDMONT, From page 5

and 8% declared that they were unemployed before leaving since the majority worked in their homeland and had skills and experience that could contribute to their rise in life in Europe. This evidence contributes to the understanding that the scarcity of resources and the lack of jobs are not necessarily the drivers for migration, but rather the hope of improving the quality of life.

However, most immigrants interviewed work irregularly and highlight the lack of information and access to the regular labor market as the biggest obstacles they face. For instance, as pointed out by the report, most of the asylum seekers in the Italian reception centers are not aware that they are legally entitled to work in Italy with their temporary residency permit. In addition, the process for issuing documents that allow these people to be integrated in Italian daily life is usually slow. Despite this, they aspire to stay in Italy and invest in their skills and abilities. As shown by IOM (2016), 74% of respondents wish to increase their knowledge levels, through the learning of the Italian language as well as professional or vocational training or even entering university, in a way that empowers them, contributing to their educational and professional future.

Based on the academic arguments presented and statistical sources mentioned above, there are reasons to consider that there is room for the development of projects focused on the professional development of refugees. Investing in the Integration of qualified refugees into the Italian skilled labor market can lead to a substantial contribution to Italy's economy.

The objective of this research project is to investigate refugees, in terms of their education and professional experience and the difficulties they face in finding a formal and adequate job. By deeply researching the groups of refugees in Turin, I expect to collect data on the regional refugee population to analyze and better understand the situation in which they live, and to discover their ambitions as well as their challenges in terms of having recognized their skills and qualifications to find a commensurate job. Specifically, this project will find out the age, gender as well as countries of origin of the refugees in Turin. Secondly, the project seeks to assess the education and professional profiles of the refugees as well as the jobs they have been engaged in so far. Finally, the project will determine the challenges that refugees encounter while seeking jobs as well as their perceived skills and knowledge gaps that may hinder them from accessing the formal labour market. The project will provide significant information to a wide range of stakeholders; particularly the vulnerable and ostracized refugees and local governments.

GERMANY

LANGUAGE BASED DISCRIMINATION

GERMAN XENOPHOBIA OR LACK OF EDUCATION?

BY OUMOUM AIDARA

Around 19.3 million people in Germany have an immigrant background, according to Destatis, Germany's Federal Office for Statistics. Germany's current population is estimated to be over 80 million people, according to the World Bank. While the proportion of the population having a migrant



OUMOUM AIDARA, WIR SPRECHEN (WE SPEAK), ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN FOR THE SOUL OF NATIONS FOUNDATION

single language. With a monolingual population, Germany is still a monolingual country requiring a good knowledge of

significant impact on colonized societies.

When we look at discriminatory linguistic attitudes in Germany, we can see a strong link between accents and racism. An accent simply refers to one's way of speaking, the way one sounds when speaking, the way one uses phonological features such as stress, rhythm, tone and intonation. Contrary to popular belief, it is not just foreigners or immigrants who speak with an accent. Everybody speaks with an accent. Non-accent is nonexistent. According to studies on the German housing market, speaking a devalued (considered less prestigious) language or with an accent raises the risk of discrimination and makes it more difficult to acquire a viewing appointment and, ultimately, rent or buy an apartment. This indicates that those who speak with a Turkish accent are more likely to be discriminated against than those who speak the most Standard German. Afrosensus conducted an online poll with roughly 6,000 respondents to find out what it's like to be black in Germany. 83.4 percent of respondents indicated they had been discriminated against in the housing market. While this data doesn't tell if it was language based discrimination, it is clear that it was racist and xenophobic. As immigration enriches countries around the world, an increasing number of citizens speak multiple languages. This emphasizes the categorization and marginalization of bilinguals and multilinguals. There is now a misunderstanding about what it means to be a native speaker, which supports the illusion that there is a single idealized language.

This research work was based on the analysis of several different papers on Imperialism in Germany, European nationalism and ideology, language discrimination, and racism. It was backed up by statistics from which we gathered information. To support the research, interviews were performed as part of the study. This study discovered that prejudice, nationalism, and xenophobia are all challenges in Germany, and it is not just regarding nationalism and the idea of having a monolingual state and a self-centered ideology, but very wide discrimination that affects the perception of others based on the way they speak.



OUMOUM AIDARA, WIR SPRECHEN (WE SPEAK), ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN FOR THE SOUL OF NATIONS FOUNDATION

migrant background accounts for 1/4 of the total population, this does not indicate the number of non-white Germans already living in the country. Germany, despite having such an ethno-diverse population, is not as open-minded as it claims to be. There have been several instances of violence against non-white people throughout history (for example the Holocaust or Africa's colonization). Racism and discrimination are still extremely widespread in today's society. One type of this violence that we don't often discuss is linguisticism. Linguist Tove Skutnabb-Kangas coined the word in the 1980s, defining it as ideologies and institutions that are utilized to legitimize, implement, and reproduce an uneven allocation of power and resources across groups defined by language.

Is linguisticism in Germany Due to Xenophobia or Lack of Education? According to German law, no one shall be discriminated against because of their gender, ethnicity, language, or place of origin. When discussing Linguicism, it is important to know that monolingualism is speaking a

German for integration and naturalization. On an institutional level, Germany is still very nationalist although German is not the explicit language (it only is the most spoken language and the one associated with the country) as the Germany constitution does not have any statement on the matter. The Association of the German Language and various petitions organized by popular demand have tried but failed to make German the official language of the Federal Republic of Germany. Given the country's war history, Nazism, and current disputes about right-wing and extreme far-right parties, the idea of incorporating the term into the constitution is unusual.

Following German, other Western European languages such as French and English are frequently taught in the country. These languages are usually complimented when compared to languages from nations considered third world by the west. My theory is based on the social image of Western languages as superior as a result of colonialism and imperialism, which had a

ADVOCACY & RESEARCH PROGRAM

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The Advocacy and Research Program is a one-year hybrid fellowship designed to provide opportunities for young research Fellows to identify ways of best leveraging civil society's skills, tools, and access to investigate and monitor policy reform strategies. The Soul of Nations Foundation partnered with the U.S. State Department, the Human Rights Engagement Fund, the U.S. Consulate Florence, the U.S. Embassy Berlin, the U.S. Embassy Luxembourg, the Municipality of Florence, and the Recovery Plan to commission research report from emerging scholars to impact the migrant community and African diaspora in Italy through youth-led

research initiatives that focus on countering *Afrophobia* and increasing the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that successful advocacy, research, and inclusion program development and delivery must include all affected parties and be based on real dialogue by vulnerable parties and cooperation between government agents and local community members and grassroots organizations. Achieving this goal will require bottom-up, culturally appropriate, local engagement, rather than short term, top-down, centrally designed, and imposed models. Through the Advocacy and Research Program, research Fellows will have the

opportunity to broaden their perspective of human rights and freedom by exploring methodologies of impact and effectiveness.

Global Research Fellows are tasked with devising regional working papers that help to further queer solidarity, climate justice and anti-blackness protective measures in their region. Fellows are also tasked with creating advocacy campaigns to increase the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms through outreach and by providing this information through a variety of media. The Advocacy and Research Program was devised in 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic out of the global outcry to address social and political

injustices against Black and Indigenous people.

The Soul of Nations Foundation was advised by the U.S. Department of State's Human Rights Engagement Fund to create an international program framework to provide young change advocates with greater policy instruction and capacity.

The Advocacy and Research Program currently operates in Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, and the United States. Undoubtedly, successful advocacy, research, and inclusion program development and delivery must include all affected parties and be based on real dialogue and listening, bilateral cooperation, and respect.



BINTA DIAW, PAYSAGE CORPORELS SERIES, 2019.

Soul of Nations

