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KEY FINDINGS

Corridor Report on Italy: The Case of Moroccan and Ukrainian Immigrants

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Traditionally an emigration area, Italy has also been a country of immigration since the late 1970s. Due to recent intense immigration, it is today one of the most important immigration countries in the European Union. There were more than 4.9 million foreign residents in Italy as of 1 January 2014, a number which rises to around 6 million when non-resident regular and irregular immigrants are included. They represent around 10% of the total population residing in the country.

This report looks at the level of integration of Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants living in Italy with specific attention to the role played by origin and destination determinants. These two communities are among the largest migrant groups residing there, being respectively the 3rd and 5th most numerous groups. They differ in





terms of demographic characteristics and migration patterns, as well as with regard to the emigration and diaspora policies of their countries of origin.

Dating back more than 30 years, Moroccan immigration is still quantitatively important. Initially characterised by single young males, it continues today through family reunification channels of females. The stabilisation of Moroccan migration to Italy is confirmed by a high share of minors. In contrast, Ukrainian migration started only in the late 1990s. It became quantitatively important following the 2002 regularisation of irregular migrants' status, after which it continued to grow. Ukrainian migrants are mainly composed of women aged 40 and more, who often left their husbands and children behind in order to provide them with financial support from abroad. They are mainly employed as elderly care workers in private households. Recently there has been a slight shift toward more permanent migration for Ukrainian women. This has happened in part because mixed marriages are becoming increasingly frequent, and in part because minors are reuniting with their mothers in Italy in order to complete their studies or look for a job.

To measure the integration of Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants, Di Bartolomeo et al. (2015) built composite indicators of integration within the INTERACT project. They gauge integration on three dimensions – namely labour market, education and access to citizenship – allowing for ranking of different corridors along these lines. Indicators are normalised between 0 (lowest integration) and 1 (highest integration). Indexes are then computed in relation to the performance of natives in each country of destination, thereby neutralising the effect of the national context. They have been named 'absolute' and 'gap' indexes, respectively (for details see Di Bartolomeo et al., 2015). Figure 1 presents the results of the study for Italy.

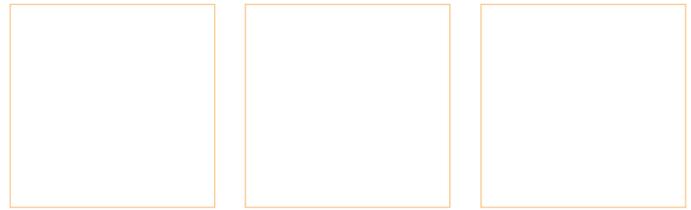


Table 1. INTERACT composite indicators of integration: Italy

Country of birth	Labour market		Education		Access to citizenship
	Index	Gap Index	Index	Gap Index	Index
Morocco	0.79	0.87	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ukraine	0.89	1.00	0.23	0.28	0.08

Source: Di Bartolomeo et al., 2015

Labour Market

Both Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants living in Italy show high levels of integration into the labour markets, both in comparison to other migrant groups in Italy and to other corridors. Few migrant corridors perform better (Indian migrants in United Kingdom; Russian and Turkish migrants in Germany). Once controlled for natives' performances (gap Index), they are even at the top positions of the Labour Market Index. Very high employment and activity rates – even higher than their native counterparts – and quite low unemployment rates are the main drivers of these results.

Education

In the education dimension, things do differ. At an international level, Ukrainians living in Italy show good levels of integration even when controlled for natives' performance. Ukrainian migrants, like other migrants originating in post-Soviet states, are endowed with exceptionally high levels of education, which frequently result in their being over-qualified for jobs. In contrast, Moroccan migrants living in Italy tend to be less qualified than other migrant corridors. Indeed, they are in the last positions of both the absolute and gap indexes.

Citizenship

The last positions of the Access to Citizenship Index are occupied by Moroccan, Spanish, and



Ukrainian migrants living in Italy. Italian citizenship is extremely difficult to acquire for both recent migrants (Ukrainians) and well-established communities (Moroccans).

Explanatory factors

Origin and destination macro-determinants of integration have different effects and strengths depending on the dimension. In the labour market, the extremely positive performances of Moroccans and Ukrainians seem to be due more to destination than origin factors. Indeed, with few exceptions, similar positions in the indexes are found in all migrant communities living in the same destination country. At the same time, different performances are shown by the same national group across different countries.

Italian labour market specificities and migration history seem largely to explain this pattern. Attracted by a huge demand for low qualified workers in certain economic sectors, migration to Italy is still largely composed of first-generation working migrants with very high employment and activity rates, higher than those of natives. Accordingly, origin determinants have presumably a lower impact. Specifically, bilateral agreements and preferential quotas assigned to Moroccans do not seem to be making any difference.

On the other hand, the role played by organisations and networks appears relevant in helping migrants find employment. This employment is not necessarily good or well-remunerated, but it is employment nonetheless. The same is observed at a local level, where labour migrants – especially women – are targeted by specific initiatives. In the education dimension, origin determinants – in terms of conditions at home – seem instead to make the difference. With very few exceptions, migrants from the south-eastern Mediterranean all rank in the low-median part of the educational dimension, whereas migrants born in the rest of the world are usually higher up in the rankings.

The effects of policies and NGOs in the country of origin are less clear. Organisations working to help Moroccans in Italy focus on people studying abroad

and increasing the recognition of Moroccan degrees and qualifications, the most critical aspects. These groups and policies have little influence over the question of citizenship, as this is the (well-guarded) prerogative of the Italian state.

Of course, integration is also affected by the individual characteristics of migrants. Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants display different levels of integration, particularly within the Italian labour market, because of the existing differences between them in terms of: migratory trend, model and strategy, demographic characteristics, and modalities of settlement. Immigrants’ integration increases during the stay in the host country. However it is not sufficient to simply let time pass, as the older migrants become the more difficultly they have with integration. For this reason, the integration of immigrants at very young ages is indispensable. Women are generally more significantly integrated than men; higher levels of educational attainment are associated with higher levels of integration. Looking at migrants-origin ties, evidence at individual level shows that both Ukrainian and Moroccan migrants seem less inclined to integrate when they possess stronger (economic, affective, and familiar) ties in the country of origin.

Conclusions

This report looked at the level of integration of Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants living in Italy in three dimensions. It tried to shed light on the levels and determinants of integration for each group, with a specific focus on the roles of destination and origin factors. The latter include the ties between migrants and their country of origin, the characteristics of migrants, diaspora and emigration policies at origin, and the engagement and role of organisations. As a whole, the ‘labour market’ and ‘access to citizenship’ dimensions seem much more linked to destination determinants. Here Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants perform similarly, with both groups scoring among the best performers in labour market integration and among the worst in access to citizenship. Regarding labour market integration, the core determinant is found in the Italian labour market

structure, however the role played by local institutions and organisations seems relevant as well. With respect to the latter, the restrictiveness of Italian citizenship law drives these results.

In contrast, the relative integration of Moroccan and Ukrainian migrants in the education dimension seems more linked to origin factors. In this dimension, Ukrainian migrants do perform substantially better than Moroccans. Furthermore, the results of this report find that existing ties between migrants and their countries of origin may also impact integration. The report found that the lower the (affective, economic, cultural) ties with the country of origin, the higher the probability of being integrated.

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INTERACT

Researching Third Country Nationals' Integration as a Three-way Process - Immigrants, Countries of Emigration and Countries of Immigration as Actors of Integration

The INTERACT project studies the impact of sending countries on migrant integration. It looks at the ways in which institutions and organisations in origin countries thicken transnational bonds by developing tools to boost financial transfers, maintain cultural heritages, enhance migrant political participation, and protect migrants' rights. It seeks to understand how these efforts impact migrant integration, as well as how origin country policies complement or contradict the integration measures of receiving country governments.

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