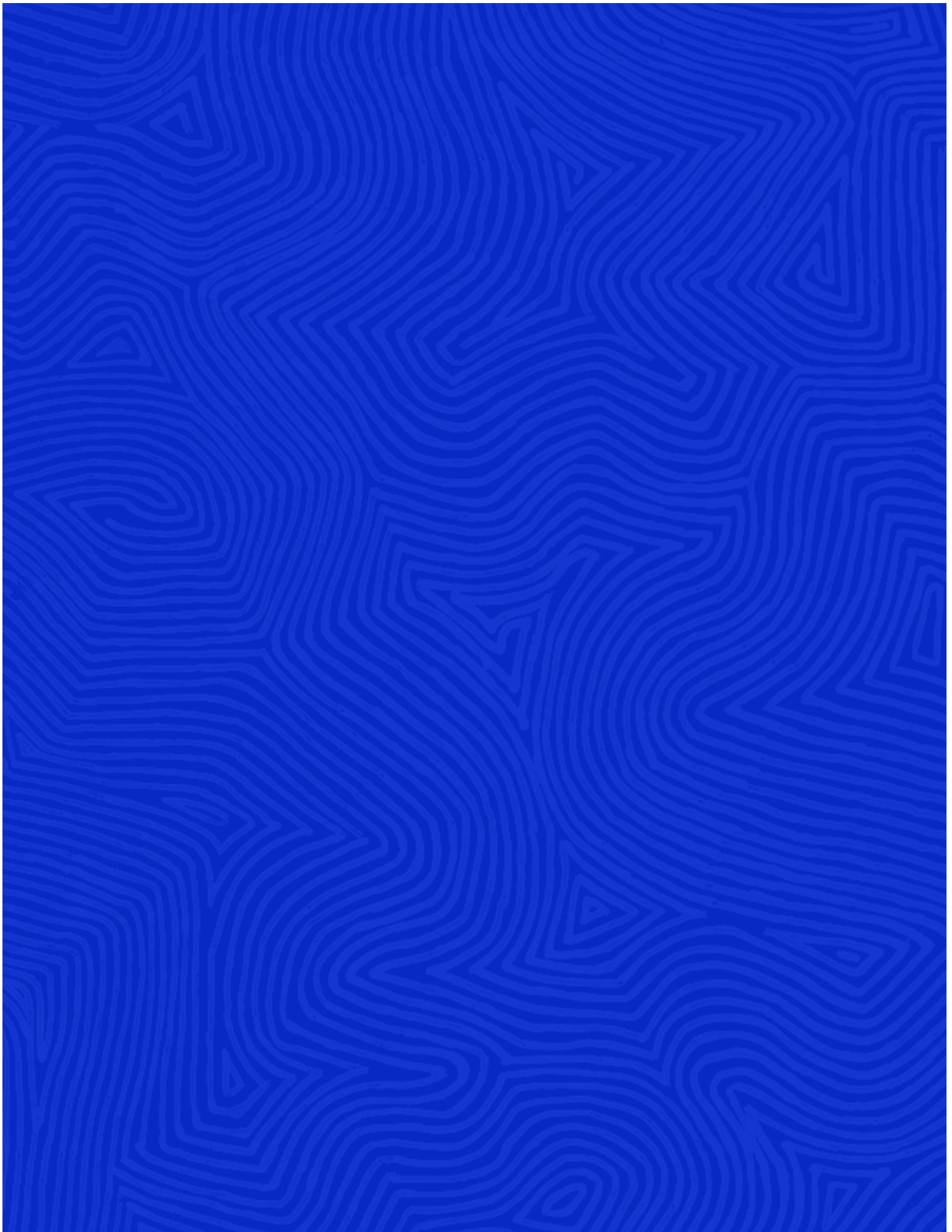


# *Soul of Nations*

ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH PROGRAM  
ITALIAN FELLOWSHIP RESEARCH JOURNAL – 2022



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Indigenous Advocacy and Research  
Program supported by the Human Rights  
Engagement Fund

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# Creating belonging and imagining futures: Afroitalians and citizenship rights

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Benedicta Djumpah

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*[Recent alumnus of the Policy School (Scuola di Politiche) of Enrico Letta, Student Life Coordinator at Temple University Rome]*

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 the voting of the 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.<sup>1</sup>

Why was this reform needed? The current Italian citizenship Law 91/1992 and its acquisition is based on a principle of *Ius Sanguinis* (the right of the blood), which reinforces the idea that citizenship equals nationality. Someone born to one Italian parent or is of Italian descent, and has no bond with the Italian soil or culture, has an easier pathway to Italian citizenship compared to someone born or raised in Italy to foreign parents. For the time in which this law was presented, in the early 90s, it may seem 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.

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Migrations reveal a constitutive contradiction at the heart of liberal democracy between the of individual freedom based on the idea of the universal equality of all human beings and the demands of nation-states to control their national boundaries and to define the criteria for inclusion and exclusion while at the same time guaranteeing the possibility of effective possession of universal human rights.

Currently based on the 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 and has to apply within a certain time frame. For those born abroad and they have migrated with their parents to Italy at a very young age, they have to undergo through the same process as their parents that chose to migrate, hence prove that have been resident for 10 years in the country of Italy and show proof of income for the last three years minimum of € 8.263,31 for a single person apply for the citizenship, this can delay the access to citizenship.

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1. <https://www.ilpost.it/2017/12/24/ius-soli-numero-legale/>

These requirements are hard to meet at age 18 in a country like Italy where also youth unemployment almost at 30 percent<sup>2</sup> and migrant families faced huge income disparities compare to natives<sup>3</sup>. According to IDOS research in 2018, there were over 1.3 million new generation Italians<sup>4</sup>.

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 Far Right, and institutions as a threat to national security. A case is the 2017 course to access the Prefect (police chief) career: “Citizenship for second generation: starting point or the arrival point of the integration process? When marginalization generates terrorism: *de iure condendo* perspective and possible solution.”<sup>5</sup>

### Exclusion in the Italian school system

This research aims to understand in which way the Italian citizenship law contributes to the exclusion of Italians of foreign origins, especially Afropolitans and aims to analyze how these inequalities are present within the school system.

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1. <https://www.ilpost.it/2017/12/24/ius-soli-numero-legale/>

2. <https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2020/02/18/807025154/ciao-italia-why-italys-youth-are-leaving-in-droves>

3. <https://www.prefettura.it/FILES/docs/1173/RedditoImponibile.pdf>

4. <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/20200/over-one-million-italians-are-without-citizenship--idos>

5. <http://culturaprofessionale.interno.gov.it/FILES/docs/1260/TESTO%20INTEGRALE%20De%20Mutis.pdf>

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**P**overty has frequently been used as justification for social revolutionary terrorists, who may claim to represent the poor and marginalized without being poor themselves. Although not a root cause of terrorism, poverty is a social evil that should be fought for its own reasons.

The research also aims to analyze how the delayed access to Italian citizenship law impacts the sense of belonging and career aspirations of the Italian Youth.

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 which 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<sup>6</sup>. The private schools include 86 international schools, 22 of which are in Milan and 21 in Rome<sup>7</sup>.

The mandatory education years include primary and secondary school from age 6 to age 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

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6. [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/early-childhood-and-school-education-funding-39\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/early-childhood-and-school-education-funding-39_en)

7. [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/early-childhood-and-school-education-funding-39\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/early-childhood-and-school-education-funding-39_en)

itself within the school system? Looking at the data of students remaining or leaving the school system, and their choice of secondary education and career aspirations, we could receive great insight.

## Methodology of data collection

In order to achieve these aims, it would be key to look at data from the Italian Ministry of education and from research institutes that have focused their studies on new generation Italians, migration institutes and independent research.

There can also be a possibility to submit an online questionnaire on citizenship and belonging to a small group of 50 Afroitalians. The challenge with the questionnaire submission may be able to identify the right audience. The end goal is to collect data that will also 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, 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 may be taken into consideration.

From a human ethics standpoint, it may be challenging to write the questions in a clear manner that can encourage minors to fill out the questionnaire. Usually, in the case of minors, and in other cases, consent from parents is required, but as they are above the age of 16 this should not be an issue. Due to timing, any fieldwork will concentrate in the city of Rome and some youth centers and faith centers may be contacted for research purposes. The relevance of this research may derive from its area of attention, by focusing specifically on Afroitalians, rather than general research on new generation Italians.

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**C**itizenship is a project, a tension, a shared perspective with everyone that in this country can imagine a collective and altruistic future for humanity regardless of creed.

Often research papers refer to “Second Generation” by looping together the experience of children of immigrants without looking in detail at the differences for example between those of Chinese descent, Eastern European with or without EU passports, and of African descent. Looking at these differences is important because each passport has a different power and the citizenship law of the country of origin can influence belonging and citizenship choice.

There is also a need to better define what shapes does institutional racism take in Italy as the focus of anti-racism is often on interpersonal racism and on the injustices that occur overseas, especially in the US. The European social democratic “bliss” and the universalistic approach have favored colorblind anti-racist policies and have failed to identify population ethnic and race data analysis at a state level, and Italy is not excluded from this approach.

**D**espite the national policy may be defined as color blind, in practice, and at a local level, the Italian school system's universalistic approach still fosters inequalities, and through this work, the objective is to bring them to light. 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 Afroitalians.

In order to imagine a future for Afroitalians, the research needs to address issues within the educational system and the wounds it may cause. For this reason, my advocacy campaign wants to create brave and safer spaces in person and/or online in which young Afroitalians 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.

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In the transformed world political context of today, it is more essential than ever that the critique of democracy in the name of difference developed by oppositional intellectuals be formulated so carefully that these thoughts cannot be exploited for nationalist, tribalist, and xenophobic purposes. It is imperative that the politics of the 'differend' not be settled beyond and at the margins of democratic politics.

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# The life and needs of asylum seekers and refugees in Veneto during COVID-19

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Jessica Endeme

*MA with First Class Honors in Politics & International Relations*

*[Dissertation: 'The Powerful Presence of What Is Absent': The Colonial Other and Racism Represented in Italian High School History Textbooks]*

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, and it lacks a proper distinction between displaced people and second-generation Italians, who also face systemic racial discrimination.

The lack of unanimous clarity of how hate crime erodes the quality of data produced by the Italian crime recording and data collection system, both published by public officials or organizations. As a result, different bodies use diversified and incompatible methods of recording and data collection, generating incomparable data. This consistent misinformation is often due to the sentiments of fear and threat weaponized by some political leaders, such as far-right former interior minister Matteo Salvini.

In 2020, the Italian Senate ultimately revised the infamous Immigration and Security Decree signed by Salvini in 2018 that decreased protection measures for asylum seekers and granted serious legal consequences for individuals and NGOs assisting them. However, although some positive amendments have been advanced, the journey towards a fair and humane migration policy is still quite long.

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Just as it is important that Italy support the resettlement of asylum seekers, it is equally vital that resettlement infrastructure supports and includes mechanisms for meeting the unique needs of this group, specifically, high-quality health services and opportunities for health protection.

For instance, the time necessary for citizenship application submissions has been shortened to three years instead of four, still remaining far too long. On top of that, asylum seekers continue to have access to Italy's reception and integration system provided by municipalities and NGOs.

According to the « Reducing COVID 19 transmission and strengthening vaccine uptake among migrant populations in the EU/EEA » report produced by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) issued during the month of June 2021, some migrant groups and ethnic minorities showcased low rates of vaccination. These individuals in the condition of health and social fragility in Italy amount to approximately 800,000: around 500/600,000 irregular immigrants, about 45,000 homeless, and according to the last census, about 200,000 people who have requested their papers but who find themselves into a bureaucratic limbo that does not allow them to access the national health service



since the *Questuras* (police headquarters) have not yet analyzed their requests. These people do not yet possess a *codice fiscale temporaneo* (temporary fiscal code), which gives one access to the portal for vaccination reservations, but not in all Italian regions.

In February 2021, The Agenzia Italiana del Farmaco (AIFA) had suggested that to cover more fragile populations would be necessary to allow access to irregular immigrants owning an *Straniero Temporaneamente Presente* (STP) number – a code issued by Regions that allows foreigners without *permesso di soggiorno* (residency permit) to access essential and emergency health services. The same would apply to citizens of the Union in social fragility owning *Europeo Non Iscritto* (ENI), a code that not all Regions concede.

### **Reform, confusion and setbacks**

What brought a bit of hope was a note of the extraordinary commissioner for the COVID-19 emergency Francesco Paolo Figiuolo that was published and titled “How to vaccinate those without the *tessera sanitaria* (health insurance card)” Italian civil society had urged the public official to elucidate whether this note 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.

The systemic discrimination of non-Italians is further portrayed by many hospitals’ policies regarding recruiting medical professionals. Since March 2020, doctors who do not have Italian citizenship but possess the *permesso di soggiorno* with habilitation to work can be hired for public administration and health services, thanks to *Art. 13 of the Decreto Cura Italia*.

Nevertheless, few hospital administrations and sanitary companies include citizens of countries outside of the European Union in their calls for bids. National Italian newspaper, *Repubblica* wrote in December 2020 that at the time there were 77.500 health professionals who were of foreign descent. This number included 22,000 doctors and 38,000 nurses, and many underpaid physiotherapists and pharmacologists working in private institutions.

As analyzed above, something has been done to improve the condition of the migrant population, particularly after the overhaul of Salvini’s decree and the break out of the COVID 19 pandemic. However, legal and bureaucratic loopholes put the lives of the most fragile at risk. Furthermore, exclusionary citizenship laws and hiring policies at hospitals continue to neglect the fundamental rights of second- generation youth.

### **A focus on the LGBTQIA+ community**

Regarding the discrimination of the LGBTQIA+ community, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the surface further aggressive undertones to the community, in terms of access to the national health system. For instance, in February 2021, when many were wondering which eligible groups would receive the vaccine first, the Local Sanitary Firm of the city of La Spezia in Liguria put homosexuals, prostitutes and drug addicts within the 30 categories most subject to risk (*Il Giorno* 2021). There is no doubt that putting homosexuality as a behavior at risk on the basis of no scientific evidence represents a dreadful form of discrimination. However, from my research amongst national newspapers, there is no evidence these people were actually punished.

Endeme.

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**T**he aim of my research is to investigate how the Veneto region has (or has not) implemented the national guidelines regarding access to the health system for vulnerable categories, such as undocumented immigrants and refugees, with a special focus on the condition of the LGBTIQ+ community. Through the advocacy campaign, the aim is to shed light on this information and raise public awareness on the issues this community faces.

The aims of the study will be achieved through conducting thorough research on both secondary sources (i.e., newspaper articles, academic journals, video interviews, etc) and primary sources.

With the regard to human ethics, all interviewees will be provided with adequate information about the field of research, the purpose of research, who has funded the project, who will receive access to the information, the intended use of the results, the treatment of their personal data, and the consequences of participation in the research project. In fact, consent will only be accepted if freely given, informed and in an explicit form (i.e., through a written participant consent form before the start of the interview).

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# Migrants and labor markets right in Italy: facts and reality

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Anas Mghar

*MA in Business Administration from the University of Sassari; MA in Global Studies and International Relations from the University of Turin*

*[Current Research Fellow of the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo]*

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.

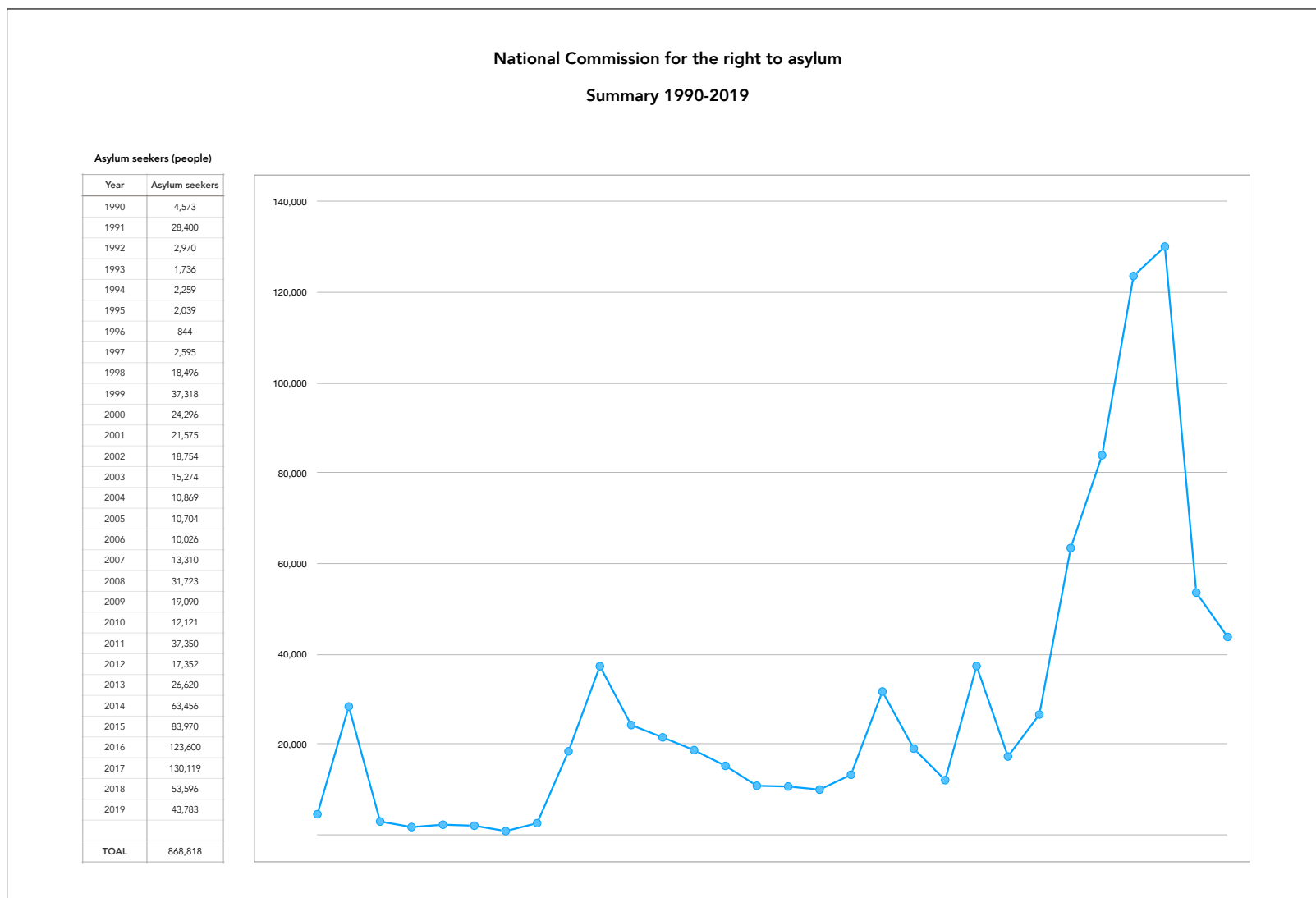
However, humanity itself has experienced other types of forced migration in which some human beings have been forced to leave their countries of origin, because of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and volcanoes, etc., or because of human disasters, crimes such as wars, religious, political, and ethnic persecution, etc. Historically speaking, peoples' movements were quite limited to factors such as race, ethnicity, and religion. In the 21st century, displacement is taking different patterns such as

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Humanity has affirmed the emigration process since its inception move from place to in search of pastures and water sources and in search of livelihoods, which explains the natural movement of individuals and groups from one place to another, within the same country or beyond its border.

urbanization, food and climate change, population growth, insecurity, and energy and water supplies, causing instability and even worse 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.

The number of foreigners living in Italy is virtually unchanged, both in the number and in the incidence on the overall population, with an increase in residents, contrary to the belief that the country would be besieged and invaded by foreigners, net of internal movements their number has remained stable at around 5 million since 2013. 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.

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.

The objective of this research project is to investigate migrants, in terms of their education and professional experience and the difficulties they face in finding a formal and adequate job inside the Italian territory. I expect to collect data, analyze them to understand the situation in which they live, their ambitions as well as their challenges in terms of having recognized their skills and qualifications to find a commensurate job. 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 migrants as well as the local government and relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

### **Causes of migration**

Displacement worldwide varies in terms of its patterns, size, protection issues, and durable solutions, in the first instance, forced displacement is concerned with the involuntary and forced movement of people away from their homes and social ties due to different reasons such as ethnic conflicts, civil wars, natural disasters, infrastructure and development projects and activities, and many others, which could impact and change whole communities on both racial and economic levels, and could cause demographic and geographic shifts in the regions. However, an underlying question permeating my thoughts is why people would leave their livelihoods and their homes for the sake of an unknown future. This draws my attention to the main factors that are forcing people to leave their homes.

For a more detailed comparison, let's take the main migration routes involving Italy today, limiting ourselves to those from Africa, because it is from here that most of the landings come (arrivals from Eastern Europe, by land, today have less impact, even if they are not non-existent, but above all they are much less visible). Let's imagine them as rivers that gradually increase in size and flow thanks to the meeting with new tributaries.

There are many reasons and incentives for migration depending on the number of people migrating. However, there are human causes common to migration such as: Poverty, this is one of the main causes of migration, in particular for those who seek to leave Global South countries to the global north countries; The deterioration of economic conditions, unemployment, famine; Arbitrary authoritarian regimes, political persecution, lack of freedoms, and fear of the authority in power; Religious extremism in certain societies and the persecution of religious and sectarian minorities, which have started to develop and spread in many regions of the world, and to commit terrorist acts against minorities; Racial, sectarian, and religious discrimination practiced by certain regimes and societies; Ethnic cleansing, massacres, and genocide.

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.

## Italian Labor Market

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 migrant's 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 and around 11% speak Italian. In addition, only 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 included in Italian daily life is usually slow. In the last 10 years, residence permits have decreased by 83%, from 600,000 (2010) to 106,000 (2020).

The first obstacle that migrant labor encounters is that of recruitment by intermediation agencies. The selection is often vitiated by discrimination linked to elements

such as the name considered foreign or the residence (in neighborhoods with a strong presence of minorities); secondly, there are difficulties in recognizing academic and professional qualifications obtained outside the EU, and the situation is aggravated by the absence of networks and personal relationships in a clientele market.

Another discriminatory form is the religious one, of course, where the employer only asserts what he holds right and any gain and profile for him and for his productive economic activity: In many sectors, prejudices have been found in hiring Muslim workers with reasons such as the physical decline that respect for Ramadan entails for these workers and the repercussions on the quantity and quality of the work carried out in that period.

Another dilemma that people who are not originally Italian's face is the placement: Most foreign workers are classified at the lowest levels, even though they perform duties which, according to the provisions of the respective collective agreements applied, would belong at higher employment levels. Sub-classification at the time of hiring is therefore one of the most frequent and unanimously recognized discrimination.

Foreigners are also particularly penalized in accessing the housing market, both for rents, due to the frequent and declared unwillingness of owners to rent to foreigners, and for purchases, due to the difficulties in obtaining a mortgage. It follows that almost 2 out of 3 foreigners live in rent, often in cohabitation, and only 1 out of 5 in owned houses (of limited average size and above all in popular and suburban residential contexts), while the rest live either with their employers or with relatives and friends, sometimes even in overcrowded conditions.

### **Contributions to the Italian economy**

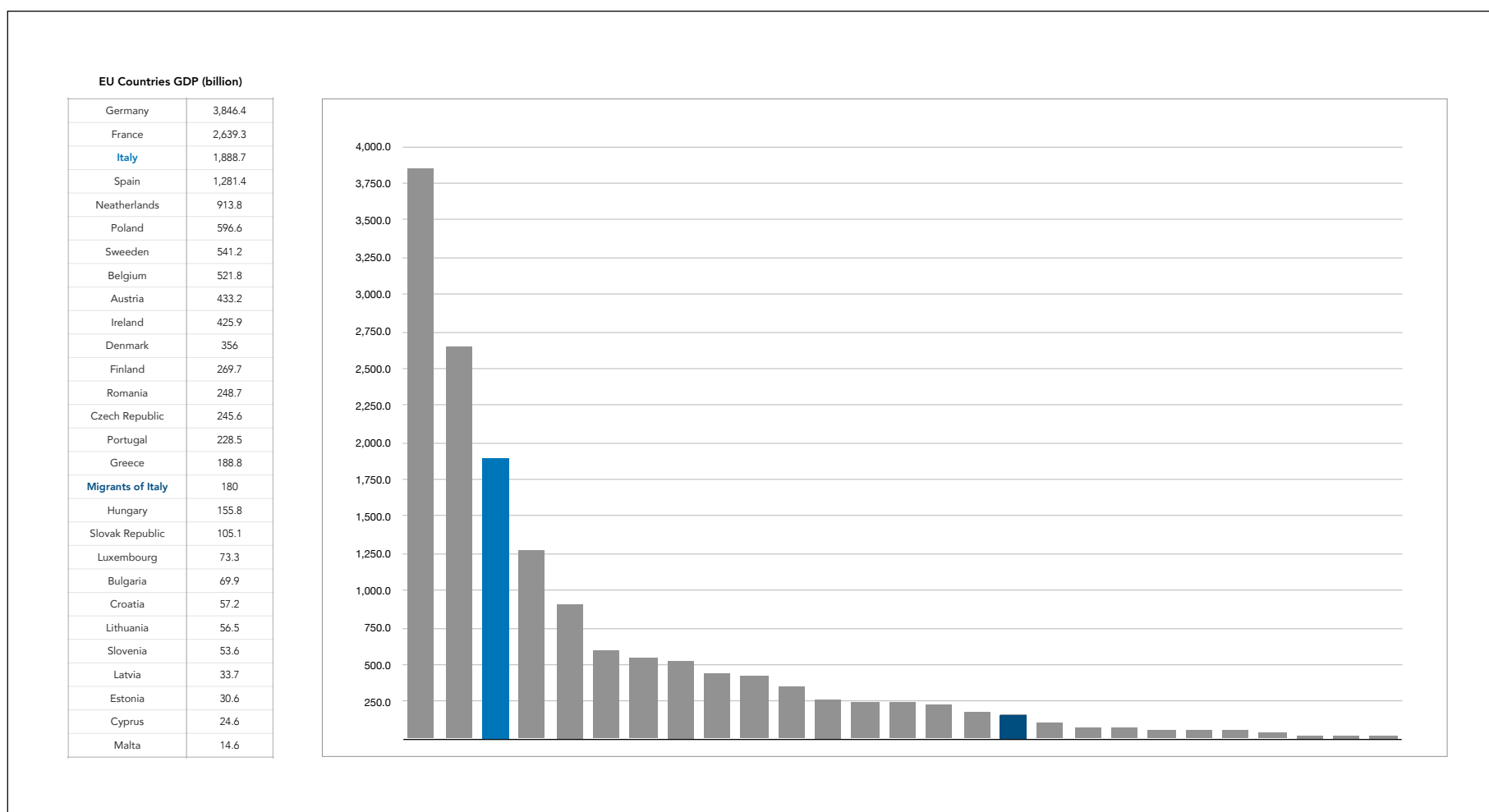
Over the last few years, the centrality of the foreign component in the labor market has emerged with particular evidence, not only because of the importance that foreign workers have had and continue to have in carrying out specific tasks, but also by virtue of the compensatory effect they generated: albeit with slight increases, in the cycle of the economic crisis, the EU and non-EU workforce counterbalanced, up to 2015, the contraction in employment that affected the Italian component.

In a country that is aging (7 births against 11 deaths per thousand inhabitants), the migrant is an indispensable workforce in many sectors. From a social security point of view, immigrant workers pay around fifteen billion in annual contributions, guaranteeing positive balance for INPS funds<sup>1</sup>. Overall, the added value produced by immigrant workers amounts to 180 billion - 9.5% of the national added value. Imagining that they were a nation unto themselves, with 180 billion in value produced, the 2.3 million migrant workers employed in Italy would rank 17th among European countries, with a higher GDP than countries such as Hungary, Croatia, or Slovenia.

Let's see the GDP per capita data. According to estimates, updated to 2021, 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. The average GDP per capita of the European Union is 34 thousand dollars, that of the countries of the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) is 18.61

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1. <https://www.inps.it/>



thousand dollars (if we add Pakistan and Afghanistan it still drops), and that of sub-Saharan is 1.83 thousand dollars<sup>2</sup>.

Foreigners residing in Italy increased sharply in the first decade of the 21st century: in 2002 they were 1.34 million (2.4% of the population), in 2012 4.32 million (7.2%). Recently Italy registered a stable rate in the last 8 years around 5 million (8.5% of the population). Foreign taxpayers in Italy are 2.3 million and in 2020 they declared income for 30.3 billion and paid IRPEF (Personal Income Tax) for 4.0 billion.

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.

The COVID crisis has so far mainly affected precarious workers and supply chains characterized by extensive use of seasonal work (eg tourism, agriculture). For this reason, foreigners suffered a much stronger loss in the employment rate (-3.7 points) than that of Italians (-0.6 points). Despite this, foreigners produce 9% of GDP and are decisive in many sectors.

### Chart:

Comparison between the wealth produced by immigrants in Italy and the GDP of the EU27 countries. Elaborations by the Leone Moressa Foundation, 2021.

2. <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDPDPC@WEO/OEMDC/ADVEC/WEOWORLD/MEQ/NAQ/EUQ>



Considering all this analysis, due to the nature of the demand expressed by the Italian economic-productive system, mainly oriented towards low-skill professionalism, migrant workers are an important resource. This criticality of the foreign labor market, even if apparently not a priority, requires to set up adequate solutions in order not to waste (or underuse) a wealth of skills which, if adequately reconnected to the world of work and training, it could correspond, at least in part, to the professionalism needs of the Italian economy. Despite the devaluation that migrant labor suffers, it continues to be a fundamental element of the production system. It therefore becomes essential to remove the constraints that discriminate against workers of foreign origin and to act to have their work recognized.

The objective of this research project is to investigate migrants, in terms of their education and professional experience and the difficulties they face in finding a formal and adequate job inside the Italian territory. I expect to collect data, analyze them to understand the situation in which they live, their ambitions as well as their challenges in terms of having recognized their skills and qualifications to find a commensurate job.

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 migrants as well as the local government and relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Ultimately, it would be enough to take a map of the world, visualize the countries of origin of migrants attempting the Mediterranean route, to see if we (we Italy, we Europe, we West, we developed countries, even non-Western ones) have something to do with it, somehow, in their problems. Especially if we do not limit ourselves to those in which we are directly involved in war terms and to which we sell weapons, but we include those in which our relevant economic interests are present, we would make some discoveries interesting. Which would help us better understand why so many people emigrate or would like to, and why from us.

# Soul of Nations Foundation, Inc.

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The Soul of Nations Foundation is a for-purpose 501(c)3 organization that aims to uplift Indigenous peoples through various forms of media, innovative strategy, and youth-led initiatives. Our mission is to progress Indigenous and BIPOC communities through the arts, research, and scholarship. We envision a world where all Indigenous communities and people of color are respected as contemporary societies and have greater access to equal opportunities in the following sectors: social, creative, academic, and economic.

Incorporated in November 2016, the Soul of Nations Foundation has a four-year track record of successful programming for lower- and middle-income Indigenous and African communities. Our level of organizational expertise for positive youth development is enhanced by partnerships with governments, policy-making and opinion leaders, academic and research institutions, and like-minded grassroots organizations; all of which are key influences on shaping initiatives that ensure the possibility to collaborate and connect authentic community voices at the local, national and international level. Over the past five years, the Soul of Nations Foundation has held art and research exchange programs in Europe, East and West Africa, South America, and the United States.

## The Human Rights Engagement Fund

The Soul of Nations Foundation is partnered with the U.S. State Department's Human Rights Engagement Fund for the Indigenous Advocacy and Research Program. The Indigenous Advocacy and Research Program aims to impact the migrant community and African diaspora in Italy through youth-led research initiatives that focus on countering *Afrophobia* and increasing the

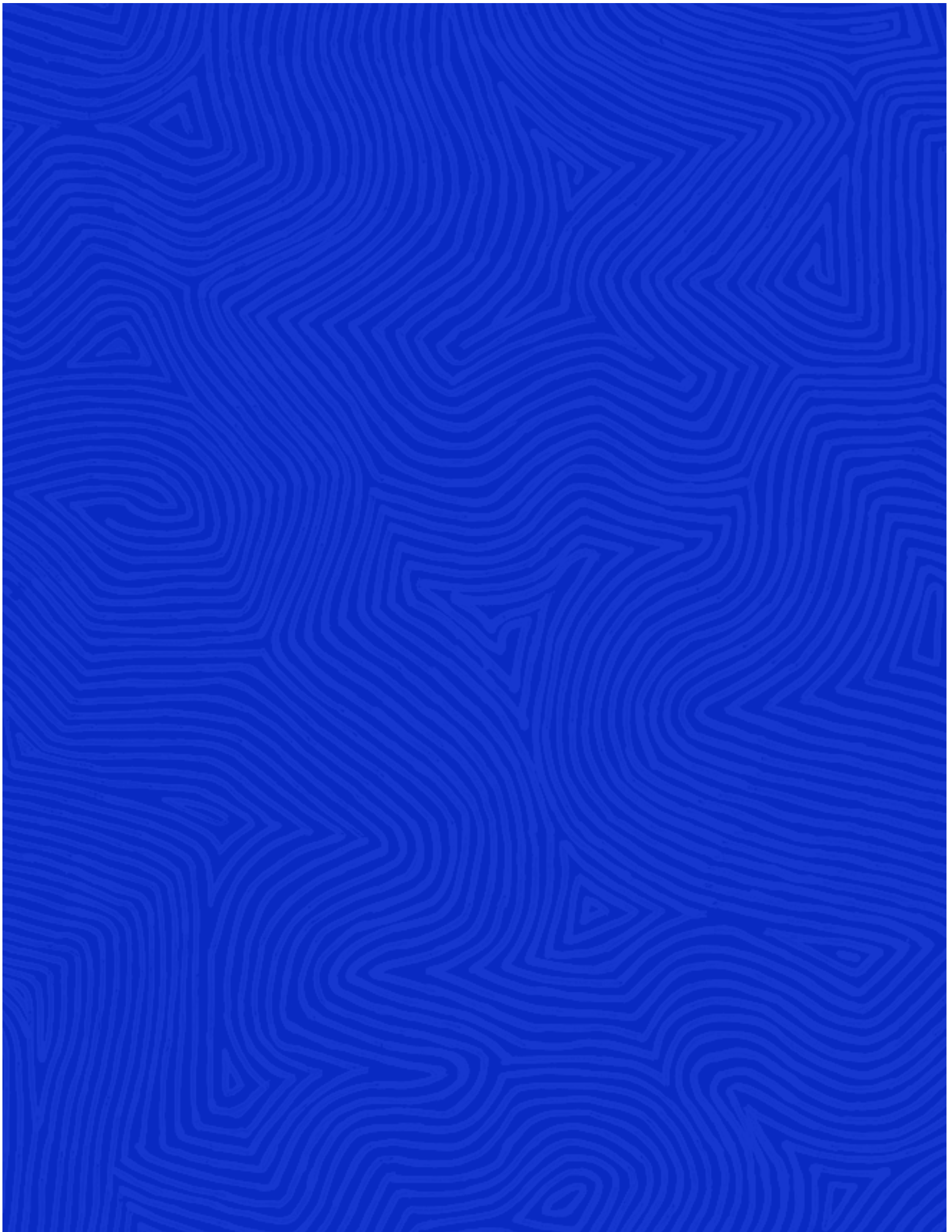
respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Research Fellows will identify ways to best leverage civil society's skills, tools, and access to investigate and monitor the systemic treatment of Afro-Italians and the migrant population in Italy of African descent, and support peaceful and intellectual advocacy efforts through a variety of media. Fellows will also develop and support a sustained virtual discussion forum to devise ways of engaging the public and relevant stakeholders involved with ongoing human rights reforms in Italy.

The Indigenous Advocacy and Research Program is administered under Soul's Policy Network Initiative. This initiative aims to provide a platform for young voices of color to lead as a catalyst for conscious thought, inclusive discourse, and policy reform to impact Indigenous nations and BIPOC communities through youth-led research initiatives that focus on human rights, governance, and environmentalism. Programs offered through the Initiative will aim to lead the development of progressive public policy around the world. To this end, the Policy Network Initiative will focus on empowering at-risk minority communities through guided strategic implementation.

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