

Cultural Integration of Immigrants in Europe

Yann Algan, Alberto Bisin, Alan Manning, and Thierry Verdier

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Cultural Integration in Italy

Alberto Bisin

Eleonora Patacchini

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter explores economic and cultural integration patterns for different immigrant groups in Italy, from first to second generations and across age cohorts. The chapter produces descriptive statistics regarding the differences of immigrants with respect to natives in terms of education, employment, female participation rates, marriage, divorce, exogamous marriage rates, and completed fertility rates. The analysis does not show evidence of slow integration patterns for immigrants into Italy, though inter-marriage rates between immigrants and natives are very low. Severe data limitations, however, suggest caution in the interpretation of these results.

Keywords: cultural integration, Italy, immigrants, education, employment, marriage, divorce

4.1 Introduction

While immigration is a recent issue for Italy, flows have been steadily increasing over time, with a significant increase during the last ten years. This has induced general concerns regarding, for example, increased ethnic and religious diversity. The integration pattern of immigrants is in fact often perceived by natives to be excessively slow and the persistence of ethnic identities is viewed as a threat. Such a perception is evident in the recent debate in the press and in the results of national elections, which have seen the success of anti-immigration platforms.

To ground this debate, it is important to have a better understanding of the economic and cultural integration patterns for different immigrant groups in Italy. The study of integration patterns in Italy, however, is severely limited by the availability of data. The existing studies have exploited dedicated data, for example those collected by Fondazione ISMU (Iniziative e Studi sulla Multietnicità) and those collected by Caritas. Using ISMU data, Blangiardo and Baio (2010), for instance, have been able to construct an index of integration for specific groups of immigrants, with respect, for example, to education and religion; see also Golini *et al.* (2004). Finally, a government committee (Commissione per le politiche di integrazione degli immigrati) has produced two descriptive studies, the first and second reports 'Sull'integrazione degli immigrati in Italia' by Zincone (2001, 2005). They contain a thorough review of the various immigration policies in the last ten years in Italy and a discussion of their effects on legalization practices and procedures.

In this chapter we exploit available information from the revision of the Italian Labour Force Survey (ILFS) questionnaire in 2005. This data **(p.126)** allows us to provide a first evaluation of the integration of immigrants in Italy. Specifically, we study immigrants by wave of immigration, gender, and cohort, in terms of education, employment, and female participation rates, and to a lesser extent in terms of marriage, divorce, inter-ethnic marriage, and completed fertility rates. Appropriate data on more detailed indicators of cultural integration of immigrants, such as attachment to ethnic and religious customs and traditions, political preferences, and attitudes towards natives are yet to be collected in Italy.

Our empirical analysis does not show evidence of slow integration patterns for immigrants into Italy, though inter-marriage rates between immigrants and natives are very low. For instance, while Asian and Africans immigrants have little education on average at immigration, the level of education increases substantially in their second generations, and particularly so for the younger cohort of African women. Similarly, second-generation immigrants do not seem to have female participation rates significantly different from Italians and they do not seem to show more traditional attitudes towards family formation nor appreciably higher fertility rates. First-generation immigrants show a probability to be employed which is only slightly lower than natives, while second-generation immigrants do not show a significantly different probability of finding a job compared to natives. We tentatively interpret these results as evidence that economic and cultural integration of immigrants does not seem to represent a particular issue in Italy.

Our results, however, need to be taken with more than some caution. First of all, as will be discussed below, an important peculiarity of the Italian immigration experience is the pervasive presence of illegal immigrants. The immigrants that we observe, the legal immigrants, are possibly the more integrated ones. In

particular, legal immigrants are those who have 'emerged' from statistical obscurity because they are working. A recent survey of both legal and illegal immigrants, which was carried out between October and November 2009 in eight cities in Northern Italy documents the presence of a sizeable and non-random portion of illegal immigrants (see Boeri *et al.*, 2011).

Second, immigration being a relatively new phenomenon for Italy, most of our second-generation immigrant sample (72 per cent) are children (below 15 years old). An analysis of marriage and divorce rates, as well as about trends of inter-ethnic marriages can thus only be performed for first-generation immigrants. Finally, the ILFS does not directly report the country of origin of the respondent's partner (nor his or her citizenship) and the number of children is confidential (the answer is not reported in ILFS data files). We therefore impute this information from the household roster, merging data for the **(p.127)** respondent and other family members. As a consequence, we cannot capture information on children or partners that live outside the household.

Our results are therefore far from being conclusive about patterns of integration of the immigrants in Italy. We interpret them as preliminary evidence, conditionally on data availability.

This study is organized as follows. We will first highlight some peculiar aspects of the immigration phenomenon in Italy, in Section 4.2. In Section 4.3 we introduce our data and describe our sample. The empirical model and the target outcome variables are detailed in Section 4.4, while in Section 4.5 we collect our main descriptive evidence and estimation results. Section 4.6 concludes.

4.2 Italian immigration in the European context

Immigration began relatively late in Italy, after the oil crisis of 1973–1984, when England, Germany, and especially the neighbouring France closed their frontiers to immigration. Since then, the flows have been steadily increasing over time, with a massive increase of the foreign population during the last ten years; see Calavita (2006) for more details on demographic trends. Notwithstanding the recent growth, the stock of immigrants remains relatively limited in Italy compared to the other European countries. As reported by the Italian Office of National Statistics (ISTAT), in 2007 immigrants scarcely reached 5 per cent of the resident population in Italy, compared to 8.8 per cent for Germany, 6.2 per cent for Spain, and 5.2 per cent for Great Britain. In France immigrants accounted for 5.9 per cent of the population in the 1999 Census. Such a national average in Italy hides, however, marked geographical differences. While in the centre-south the fraction of immigrants in the population is 1.6 per cent, in the north it reaches 6.8 per cent, making the north of Italy more similar to the European average (for further details see ISTAT, 2007).

The fraction of immigrants in the population reported by ISTAT, however, refers necessarily to registered immigrants, a subset of all the immigrants living in the territory, because of the pervasiveness of illegal immigration in Italy, which in turn is due to the difficulty of controlling the country's extensive borders and to its sizable informal economy. Immigrants seem to be particularly sought after in the markets for private care and domestic services as well as in the small family enterprises where unregistered labour can be easily employed. The pronounced territorial disparities in registered immigration shares might **(p.128)**

be due to the uneven distribution of the share of illegal immigrants by region, as the informal (underground) economy is particularly widespread in the south of Italy. Finally, the Italian immigration laws have exacerbated rather than contained illegal immigration. They have been mainly aimed at regularizing the status of those already illegally residing in Italy, rather than at regulating new legal entries. As a consequence, illegal immigration represents possibly the main viable form of immigration into Italy.

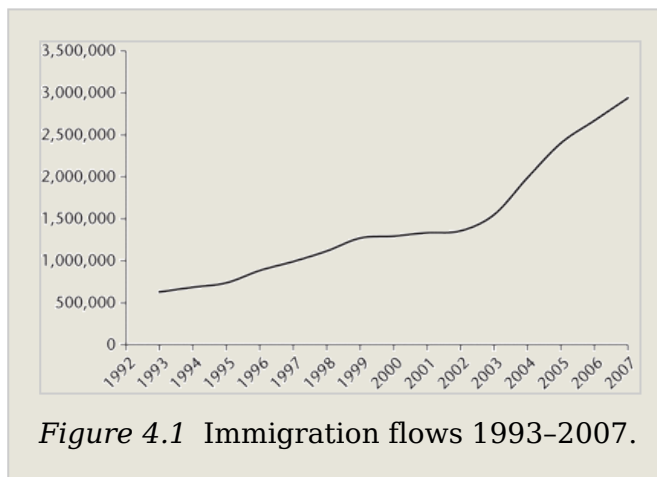


Figure 4.1 Immigration flows 1993-2007.

Figure 4.1 shows the pattern of Italian immigration since 1993, when the immigration flows started to be significant. The large increase after 2003 is only apparent, and it is due to a specific legislation allowing immigrants to regularize their status in 2002 (L.189/2002 and L.222/2002). More than 650,000 immigrants did so. Between 1995 and 2005, the increase in the immigrant population in Italy was about 300 per cent, doubling between 2001 and 2005. In 2007 the registered immigrants in Italy were 2,938,922 (ISTAT, 2007).

4.3 Description of data

We pooled data from the Italian Labour Force Survey (ILFS) for the years 2005-2007. Since 2005, such a survey contains information on each surveyed respondent's country of birth and citizenship. However, the Italian citizenship can be acquired in various ways, for example **(p.129)** marrying an Italian citizen or after ten years of legal residence in Italy. We thus do not use citizenship to identify first and second-generation immigrants as well as natives. More specifically, we define first-generation immigrants on the basis of the country of birth, that is, as individuals born outside Italy. Consistently, we define second-generation immigrants using the country of birth of the parents, that is, as individuals with at least one parent born abroad. The native reference group consists of Italian citizens born in Italy whose parents were born in Italy. The ILFS contains information on country of birth of immigrants at a very detailed level, distinguishing between 162 countries. We adopt a categorization into six

regions: Northern Europe, Southern and Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, North and Central America, and South America. We do not include immigrants from Oceania due to small sample size, as well as immigrants from an unknown country of origin. Second-generation immigrants are assigned to a given area if at least one parent is from that specific area.

Table 4.1 reports the sample proportions for native Italians and for immigrants by generation and country of origin (in parentheses is the share of females in each group).

Around 94 per cent of our sample consists of natives, slightly more than 4 per cent are first-generation immigrants, and less than 2 per cent are second-generation immigrants. First-generation immigrants mainly come from Southern and Eastern Europe (33 per cent), Northern Europe (27 per cent), and Africa (17.50 per cent), this last group is predominantly from Maghreb. Female are slightly more numerous among first-generation immigrants, with the only exception of immigrants from Africa. As we noted, the low percentage of second-generation immigrants is due to the fact that immigration is a relatively new

Table 4.1 Immigrants by country of origin, generation, and gender.

Sample proportions in %		
Natives	94.03 (52.01)	
Immigrants	5.97 (53.54)	
	First gen.	Second gen.
of which	4.19 (55.79)	1.78 (48.32)
Northern Europe	26.99 (58.89)	45.75 (48.80)
Southern and Eastern Europe	32.66 (58.72)	16.48 (48.08)
North and Central America	3.84 (67.06)	5.51 (47.45)
South America	9.84 (59.47)	10.07 (50.35)
Asia	9.26 (49.24)	6.63 (45.54)
Africa	17.41(44.45)	16.54 (47.32)

We report in parentheses the share of females in each group.

(p.130)

Table 4.2 Immigrants by age and generation.

Sample proportions in %		
Years	First gen.	Second gen.
0-14	8.89	72.08
15-24	11.10	19.75
25-34	22.78	6.09
35-44	28.36	1.32
45-54	15.17	0.40
55-64	6.15	0.25
65-74	4.19	0.11
75+	3.37	0.01

phenomenon for Italy. In fact, looking at Table 4.2, which reports the distribution of immigrants by age, it appears that most of our second-generation sample (roughly 72 per cent) are children below 15 years of age.

The inspection of our sample of immigrants by years since arrival in Italy (Table 4.3) reveals that most of them have stayed in Italy for either more than 11 years (53.21 per cent) or less than four years (22.21 per cent). Given the pervasive illegal nature of the Italian immigration, one possibility is that the question of the ILFS questionnaire on years of residence in Italy is perceived as asking the years of 'legal' permanence in Italy rather than the years of effective stay on the Italian territory. Under such hypothesis, our data are by and large capturing the share of the regularized immigration after the new laws in 2002 and the older wave of immigration after the oil crisis, in the 1990s. This is consistent with the fact that the largest share of first-generation immigrants that report a permanence in Italy of more than 11 years comes from Northern Europe (roughly 33 per cent).

Table 4.3 Immigrants by years since arrival and country of origin.

Sample proportions in %	
Years	
Less than 4	22.21
More than 11 of which	53.21
Northern Europe	33.12
Southern and Eastern Europe	20.33
North and Central America	3.61
South America	6.88

Sample proportions in %	
Asia	11.15
Africa	24.91

(p.131) 4.4 Empirical set-up

The differences of immigrants with respect to natives along various economic and cultural characteristics are estimated using a regression analysis on two model specifications. For each dependent variable representing a relevant economic or cultural characteristic, the first specification estimates differences with respect to natives for first and second-generation immigrants from different regions of origin. The second specification compares differences with respect to natives for two age cohorts (born before 1970 and after) for each immigrant generation and region of origin. Both specifications include as controls, when relevant, the level of education, and a quadratic function of age and time dummies. Each model is estimated separately for males and females, thus giving an evaluation of the immigrant to native gender gap for each of the economic and cultural indicators considered.

The economic and cultural indicators considered in the empirical analysis (dependent variables) are defined as follows:

- Education rates. The ILFS does not report at which age respondents left full-time education, but the level of qualification achieved. We then select respondents older than 19 and define a dummy variable, taking value 1 if the respondent has at least an high school diploma (i.e. a five-year secondary school degree) and 0 otherwise.
- Employment rates. We select respondents between 16 and 64 years of age and define a dummy variable taking value 1 if the respondent is employed and 0 otherwise.
- Female participation rates. We select female respondents between 16 and 64 years of age and define a dummy variable, taking value 1 if the female is employed or unemployed (i.e. searching a job) and 0 otherwise.
- Marriage rates. We select respondents older than 25 and define a dummy variable taking value 1 if the respondent is or has been married and 0 otherwise.
- Divorce rates. We keep the selection of respondents older than 25 that are or have been married and define a dummy variable taking value 1 if the respondent is no longer married (i.e. divorced) and 0 otherwise.
- Inter-ethnic marriage rates. The ILFS does not directly ask the respondents about the country of origin (nor the citizenship) of his or her partner. We obtain this information from the household roster,

merging the information on the respondent and of the individual **(p. 132)**

Table 4.4 Summary data description (%).

	Natives	First gen.	Second gen.
Education rates	34.89	44.42	70.86
Employment rates	93.43	91.00	85.74
Female participation rates	48.22	55.31	33.16
Marriage rates	81.33	77.76	5.45
Divorce rates	1.78	3.64	—
Inter-ethnic marriage rates	19.76	61.88	—
Completed fertility rates	0.73	0.65	—

registered as wife/husband or partner of the respondent. Maintaining the selection of respondents older than 25 that are or have been married, we define a dummy variable taking value 1 if the respondent is or has been married to someone from the same country of origin and 0 otherwise.

- Completed fertility rates. The direct question on the number of children is confidential and the answer is not reported in ILFS data files. We once again obtain the information from the household roster, counting for each family the number of individuals registered as children. We then assign those children to the female which is registered as wife or partner in the same household roster. We consider only females older than 40 years. We exclude children from previous relationships so that we are sure to assign children to the correct mother, but we do not clearly capture children that live outside the household. Our results on completed fertility rates are thus only indicative and need to be taken with caution. Measurement errors can be large.

Table 4.4 shows the various rates for our sample of natives, first and second-generation immigrants. Such rates are further disaggregated (by gender and immigrant country of origin) and analysed in more detail in the following section.

4.5 Results

We summarize here the main results of our empirical analysis.

4.5.1 Education rates

Table 4.5 reports the level of education of natives, and of first and second-generation immigrants, by gender and region of origin. It reveals **(p.133)**

Table 4.5 Education—descriptive statistics.

	% High school and above				
	male		female		
Natives					
		36.70		33.26	
Immigrants					
		First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
of which	40.55	64.05	47.32	79.57	
Northern Europe	46.82	63.25	48.81	78.15	
Southern and Eastern Europe	40.32	66.03	51.25	78.21	
North and Central America	61.03	81.58	59.66	75.00	
South America	51.99	60.31	54.88	82.06	
Asia	31.60	64.71	37.44	79.03	
Africa	31.16	62.33	30.35	83.85	

a rather high education level of first-generation immigrants and a remarkably higher education level of second-generation immigrants. As far as natives are concerned, about 37 per cent of men and 33 per cent of women have at least completed high school education. Looking at first-generation immigrants, three groups (Northern Europe, North and Central America, South America) show a higher degree of education compared to their native counterparts. Only immigrants from Asia and Africa seem to be significantly less educated than Italians. This evidence is true for both males and females. Immigrant women have on average a higher degree of education than immigrant men. They also appear to be more educated than their native counterparts, with the proportion with a high school diploma of roughly 60 and 55 per cent for those coming from North and Central America and South America, respectively. Also, the number with high school education is above 50 per cent for females from Southern and Eastern Europe. Second-generation immigrants are not only on average more educated than first-generation immigrants, but they are also more educated than natives, regardless of the region of origin. The difference in education between first and second generations is particularly marked for immigrants from Asia and Africa, that is, for immigrants with relatively low first-generation levels of education. For both males and females, the education rate of Asian immigrants in Italy roughly doubles between first and second generation and it more than doubles for African immigrants.

This descriptive evidence, however, is partly due to age differences between groups, as is revealed by our regression estimation results contained in Table 4.6. This table reports the estimation results of a probit regression analysis where the dependent variable is the probability of having a high school diploma, using the two model specifications **(p.134)**

Table 4.6 Immigrants' education gap with respect to natives—all immigrants.

	All		Pre-70		Post-70	
	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
Northern Europe	0.0435*** (0.0036)	0.0669*** (0.0106)	0.0815*** (0.0044)	0.1150*** (0.0287)	-0.0496*** (0.0061)	0.0493*** (0.0113)
Southern and Eastern Europe	-0.0098*** (0.0033)	0.1150*** (0.0188)	0.0951*** (0.0046)	0.0566 (0.0412)	-0.1416*** (0.0039)	0.1217*** (0.0211)
North and Central America	0.1474*** (0.0105)	0.2227*** (0.0400)	0.2068*** (0.0127)	0.2670*** (0.0738)	0.0255 (0.0168)	0.1952*** (0.0472)
South America	0.0777*** (0.0065)	0.0490** (0.0209)	0.1315*** (0.0079)	0.2325*** (0.0855)	-0.0430*** (0.0103)	0.0270 (0.0212)
Asia	-0.1286*** (0.0049)	0.0684 (0.0423)	-0.0416*** (0.0074)	0.5308*** (0.0987)	-0.2350*** (0.0049)	0.0146 (0.0418)
Africa	-0.1285*** (0.0035)	0.1045*** (0.0189)	-0.0589*** (0.0049)	-0.0237 (0.0415)	-0.2413*** (0.0038)	0.1233*** (0.0212)
Observations	1,433,892		Observations 1,433,892			
Pseudo-R ²	0.136		Pseudo-R ² 0.138			

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: quadratic in age, time dummies.

described in Section 4.4. Tables 4.7 and 4.8 collect the evidence for males and females separately. We show the marginal effects for each country of origin separately by males and females and generation of immigrants, with respect to their native counterparts, once the influence of (a quadratic function of) age and time effects is controlled for. Looking at Table 4.6, regarding first-generation immigrants, we find that not only those coming from Asia and Africa have a lower probability of being educated than natives, but also those coming from Southern and Eastern Europe. This latter result, however, is due to an age-cohort effect, which reveals that it is the younger first generation of immigrants for this area which has a substantially lower level of education than Italians. This tendency is true for all groups, with the exception of the younger first-generation immigrants from North America for whom the difference with Italians is not statistically significant. Interestingly, we also find a similar tendency for second-generation immigrants. Indeed, we find that it is the older second-generation immigrants that tend to have a much higher probability of having a high level of education than Italians. However, this is true for immigrants coming from Northern Europe, America, and Asia, whereas for those coming from Africa and Southern and Eastern Europe it is the younger second-generation cohort of immigrants that seems to be more educated than Italians.

(p.135)

Table 4.7 Immigrants' education gap with respect to natives. Probit estimation results—males.

	All		Pre-1970		Post -1970	
	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
Northern Europe	0.0169*** (0.0057)	0.0449*** (0.0138)	0.0482*** (0.0070)	0.0379 (0.0365)	-0.0496*** (0.0093)	0.0387*** (0.0148)
Southern and Eastern Europe	-0.0670*** (0.0051)	0.1071*** (0.0240)	0.0331*** (0.0073)	0.0617 (0.0495)	-0.1877*** (0.0059)	0.1152*** (0.0274)
North and Central America	0.1482*** (0.0188)	0.2937*** (0.0525)	0.2202*** (0.0233)	0.1540 (0.1225)	0.0245 (0.0290)	0.3237*** (0.0589)
South America	0.0584*** (0.0105)	-0.0025 (0.0265)	0.1181*** (0.0129)	-0.0236 (0.1139)	-0.0644*** (0.0163)	-0.0084 (0.0270)
Asia	-0.1451*** (0.0071)	0.0540 (0.0544)	-0.0684*** (0.0104)	0.3134 (0.2077)	-0.2494*** (0.0079)	0.0303 (0.0551)
Africa	-0.1222*** (0.0051)	0.0468** (0.0238)	-0.0701*** (0.0065)	-0.0648 (0.0512)	-0.2451*** (0.0066)	0.0655** (0.0267)
Observations	675,451		Observations 675,451			
Pseudo-R ²	0.0870		Pseudo-R ² 0.0883			

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: quadratic in age, time dummies.

The results by gender (Tables 4.7 and 4.8) reveal notable peculiarities. In particular, we find that, on average, first-generation women from Southern and Eastern Europe have an higher level of education than their Italian counterparts, whereas men from these regions exhibit a lower level of education, and this is due to the much lower level of education of younger first-generation men. We also find that the higher probability of second-generation immigrants from South America being highly educated with respect of natives depends entirely on women. While second-generation South American men do not show any significant difference with respect to Italians, second-generation women are much more educated, especially those from the first (older) cohort. Taking the results as a whole, we can distinguish the first-generation immigrant from North and Central America as a particularly highly skilled immigrant group, followed by immigrants from Northern Europe; whereas Asian and Africans are the least educated, although their education increases substantially in their second generations and in particular for the younger cohort of African women (with 24 per cent higher probability of being more educated than Italians). **(p.136)**

Table 4.8 Immigrants' education gap with respect to natives. Probit estimation results—females.

	All		Pre-1970		Post-1970	
	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Secnd gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
Northern Europe	0.0651*** (0.0048)	0.1158*** (0.0174)	0.1106*** (0.0057)	0.2345*** (0.0457)	-0.0580*** (0.0077)	0.0822*** (0.0183)
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.0239*** (0.0043)	0.1414*** (0.0309)	0.1409*** (0.0060)	0.0496 (0.0752)	-0.1253*** (0.0049)	0.1464*** (0.0339)
North and Central America	0.1434*** (0.0126)	0.1489*** (0.0575)	0.2072*** (0.0153)	0.3397*** (0.0919)	0.0027 (0.0197)	0.0327 (0.0634)
South America	0.0882*** (0.0083)	0.1486*** (0.0364)	0.1447*** (0.0100)	0.5042*** (0.0931)	-0.0450*** (0.0128)	0.0997*** (0.0366)
Asia	-0.1136*** (0.0067)	0.1137 (0.0705)	-0.0120 (0.0106)	— —	-0.2241*** (0.0060)	0.0117 (0.0667)
Africa	-0.1379*** (0.0048)	0.2170*** (0.0328)	-0.0402*** (0.0078)	0.0560 (0.0731)	-0.2381*** (0.0041)	0.2408*** (0.0370)
Observations	758,441		758,434			
Pseudo-R ²	0.190		0.192			

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported.

*** p(0.01,

** p<0.05,

* p<0.1

Controls: quadratic in age, time dummies.

4.5.2 Employment rates

Table 4.9 reports the employment rates of natives, and first and second-generation immigrants, by gender and region of origin. There are two notable facts here. First, first-generation immigrants show employment rates quite similar to Italians. Immigrant men from Southern and Eastern Europe and from Asia have higher employment rates than their native counterparts. Second, second-generation immigrants do not seem to enjoy higher rates of employment than first-generation immigrants.

The results of our regression analysis, controlling for education, (a quadratic of) age and time dummies, are contained in Table 4.10. In Tables 4.11 and 4.12 we report the evidence disaggregated by gender. Marginal effects for each region of origin are reported. First-generation immigrants show a probability of being employed which is only slightly lower than natives. First-generation Asians have even an higher probability of being employed than Italians, and this is due to the performance of the younger cohort, with roughly a two per cent higher probability for females and three per cent for males. Such evidence is in line with our descriptive statistics (Table 4.9). Second-generation immigrants do not seem to have a significantly different probability of **(p.137)**

Table 4.9 Employment rate—descriptive statistics.

	Employment rates				
	Male		Female		
Natives					
		94.66		91.64	
Immigrants					
		First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
of which	94.12	86.53	87.15	84.51	
Northern Europe	93.37	86.82	88.59	86.79	
Southern and Eastern Europe	95.14	89.08	86.84	87.39	
North and Central America	93.84	73.81	88.93	88.00	
South America	93.72	89.82	88.23	70.37	
Asia	96.02	90.91	91.04	80.00	
Africa	92.87	83.28	80.14	83.19	

Table 4.10 Immigrants' employment gap with respect to natives—all immigrants.

	All		Pre-1970		Post-1970	
	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
Northern Europe	-0.0204*** (0.0025)	0.0089** (0.0039)	-0.0134*** (0.0032)	0.0067 (0.0163)	-0.0297*** (0.0041)	0.0099** (0.0039)
Southern and Eastern Europe	-0.0136*** (0.0021)	-0.0047 (0.0083)	-0.0484*** (0.0038)	-0.0511 (0.0319)	0.0101*** (0.0021)	0.0017 (0.0083)
North and Central America	-0.0186*** (0.0066)	-0.0403* (0.0215)	-0.0256** (0.0100)	-0.0060 (0.0553)	-0.0122 (0.0087)	-0.0427* (0.0229)
South America	-0.0284*** (0.0043)	-0.0058 (0.0097)	-0.0512*** (0.0065)	-0.1326 (0.0925)	-0.0019 (0.0052)	-0.0011 (0.0093)
Asia	0.0134*** (0.0029)	0.0144 (0.0140)	-0.0048 (0.0051)	— —	0.0279*** (0.0031)	0.0143 (0.0141)
Africa	-0.0339*** (0.0032)	-0.0222** (0.0095)	-0.0446*** (0.0044)	-0.0138 (0.0321)	-0.0193*** (0.0045)	-0.0219** (0.0098)
Observations	675,942		675,933			
Pseudo-R ²	0.0751		0.0760			

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

being employed compared to natives. A slightly higher probability appears only for second-generation immigrants from Northern Europe, and such result is entirely due to the younger second-generation cohort of women which has a 2 per cent higher probability than their native counterparts of being employed. The distinction by gender shows **(p.138)**

Table 4.11 Immigrants' employment gap with respect to natives—males.

	All		Pre-1970		Post-1970	
	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
Northern Europe	-0.0102*** (0.0029)	0.0007 (0.0046)	0.0027 (0.0036)	0.0026 (0.0193)	-0.0246*** (0.0048)	0.0014 (0.0047)
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.0119*** (0.0020)	-0.0173 (0.0110)	-0.0167*** (0.0044)	-0.0433 (0.0348)	0.0263*** (0.0017)	-0.0127 (0.0113)
North and Central America	-0.0015 (0.0080)	-0.0769** (0.0305)	-0.0149 (0.0139)	— —	0.0078 (0.0091)	-0.0834** (0.0324)
South America	-0.0107** (0.0051)	0.0180*** (0.0070)	-0.0287*** (0.0081)	-0.0625 (0.0961)	0.0076 (0.0058)	0.0201*** (0.0066)
Asia	0.0166*** (0.0029)	0.0233** (0.0110)	-0.0022 (0.0057)	— —	0.0291*** (0.0026)	0.0236** (0.0108)
Africa	-0.0168*** (0.0032)	-0.0286** (0.0116)	-0.0326*** (0.0046)	0.0098 (0.0308)	0.0043 (0.0039)	-0.0305** (0.0122)
Observations	398,445		398,433			
Pseudo-R ²	0.0807		0.0820			

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

another exception in the younger cohort of second-generation immigrants from South America: while males seem to have higher probability of being employed than their parents and their native counterparts, females show the opposite evidence, with more than a 6 per cent decrease in the probability of being employed.

Such results are quite interesting if compared to our evidence in Tables 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8. Tables 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8 report on the education level of the immigrants in Italy, whereas Tables 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12 analyse their performance in the labour market, keeping constant the level of education. Immigrants from the two regions of origin with higher levels of education than natives, North and Central America and Northern Europe, do not perform equally well in terms of employment prospects, always showing a lower probability of being employed than Italians. Some improvement can be found only for the younger cohort of second-generation women from Northern Europe which shows approximately a 2 per cent higher probability of being employed with respect to its native counterpart. Also, the remarkably high skill level of second-generation women from South America does not seem to be correlated with employment prospects. Table 4.12 shows, respectively, a non-significant and a significantly negative difference (–6 per cent) in the probability of being employed with respect to native **(p.139)**

Table 4.12 Immigrants' employment gap with respect to natives. Probit estimation results—females.

	All		Pre-1970		Post-1970	
	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
Northern Europe	-0.0302*** (0.0043)	0.0217*** (0.0066)	-0.0274*** (0.0055)	0.0060 (0.0308)	-0.0347*** (0.0069)	0.0237*** (0.0066)
Southern and Eastern Europe	-0.0361*** (0.0036)	0.0109 (0.0129)	-0.0736*** (0.0061)	-0.0972 (0.0736)	-0.0059 (0.0041)	0.0201* (0.0122)
North and Central America	-0.0215** (0.0096)	0.0209 (0.0249)	-0.0225* (0.0136)	-0.0355 (0.0920)	-0.0203 (0.0136)	0.0305 (0.0234)
South America	-0.0375*** (0.0067)	-0.0733*** (0.0267)	-0.0654*** (0.0098)	-0.2635 (0.1736)	-0.0032 (0.0083)	-0.0634** (0.0261)
Asia	0.0040 (0.0061)	-0.0168 (0.0376)	-0.0119 (0.0095)	— —	0.0195*** (0.0074)	-0.0209 (0.0397)
Africa	-0.0869*** (0.0077)	-0.0147 (0.0161)	-0.0954*** (0.0106)	-0.0456 (0.0624)	-0.0763*** (0.0112)	-0.0108 (0.0163)
Observations	277,497		277,490			
Pseudo-R ²	0.0782		0.0789			

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

women. On the contrary, the only immigrant group with a higher probability of being employed than native Italians is Asians, which is one of the two least educated immigrant groups. Asians thus seem to have a higher probability of being employed than Italians, and this is true in particular for the younger first generation of immigrants which also show the highest education gap with respect to Italians.

4.5.3 Female participation rates

Table 4.13 reports the female participation rates of natives, first and second-generation immigrants, by gender and region of origin. It appears that first-generation immigrant women participate more in the labour market than their native counterparts (with the only exception being African women), whereas second-generation women participate less than their native counterparts. This picture, however, changes and acquires more nuances in our regression analysis.

Once differences in education, age, and time dummies are accounted for (Table 4.14), we find that second-generation immigrants do not seem to have female participation rates significantly different from those of their native counterparts. Only South American females seem to **(p.140)**

Table 4.13 Female participation rate—descriptive statistics.

	Participation rates female	
Natives	48.22	
Immigrants	First	Second
of which	55.31	33.16
Northern Europe	53.57	30.82
Southern and Eastern Europe	59.10	46.75
North and Central America	57.62	26.60
South America	59.79	25.29
Asia	53.22	25.64
Africa	46.16	41.70

participate less, and this evidence is mainly due to the younger cohort (that has an approximately 12 per cent lower probability of participating in the labour market than native females). It is worthwhile noting that South American females are a particularly highly skilled immigrant group. The remainder of the immigrants groups do not show any marked peculiarity by age cohort, signalling that this tendency might represent mainly a specific cultural attitude. First-generation immigrant females tend to

participate less in the labour market when coming from Northern Europe, North and Central America, and Africa. They show a non-significant difference with respect to the native rate when coming from South America and Asia, whereas first-generation females from Southern and Eastern Europe tend to participate more than their native counterpart. This latter result is due to the higher probability of participation of the younger cohort. Also, the younger cohort of first-generation women from South America seems to be more active in the labour market than their Italian counterpart. The negative difference for women from North and Central America is due to the particularly lower probability of participation of the older first-generation cohort. The results for Northern Europe, Africa, and Asia (lower participation probability in the first two cases and a non-significant difference in the third one) remain qualitatively unchanged by age cohort, pointing also in this case towards cultural differences by wave of immigration and region of origin rather than by age cohort. Such cultural attitudes do not seem to attenuate in younger cohorts of women coming from these regions, given that their probability of participating decreases further with respect to their native counterpart. **(p.141)**

Table 4.14 Immigrants' female participation gap with respect to natives. Probit estimation results—females.

	All		Pre-1970		Post-1970	
	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.	First gen.	Second gen.
Northern Europe	-0.0586*** (0.0051)	0.0020 (0.0126)	-0.0564*** (0.0062)	0.0534 (0.0494)	-0.0635*** (0.0091)	-0.0014 (0.0130)
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.0176*** (0.0048)	0.0380 (0.0246)	-0.0016 (0.0065)	0.0782 (0.0907)	0.0408*** (0.0072)	0.0349 (0.0256)
North and Central America	-0.0603*** (0.0124)	-0.0451 (0.0412)	-0.0835*** (0.0154)	-0.0041 (0.0962)	-0.0215 (0.0207)	-0.0544 (0.0458)
South America	0.0138 (0.0086)	-0.1176*** (0.0249)	-0.0005 (0.0106)	-0.0748 (0.1410)	0.0406*** (0.0146)	-0.1188*** (0.0253)
Asia	0.0099 (0.0095)	-0.0326 (0.0473)	0.0188 (0.0126)	— —	-0.0020 (0.0146)	-0.0658 (0.0487)
Africa	-0.0830*** (0.0072)	-0.0170 (0.0237)	-0.0540*** (0.0097)	0.0115 (0.0776)	-0.1229*** (0.0108)	-0.0196 (0.0249)
Observations	571,770		Observations 571,763			
Pseudo-R ²	0.150		Pseudo-R ² 0.150			

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

Table 4.15 Marriage and divorce—descriptive statistics.

	Marriage rates		Divorce rates	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Natives	78.26	84.05	1.58	1.93
Immigrants (first gen.) of which	74.41	80.25	1.88	4.90
Northern Europe	68.16	80.51	0.76	4.01
Southern and Eastern Europe	79.84	78.90	2.45	6.83
North and Central America	69.56	79.04	3.27	2.90
South America	68.15	75.85	2.66	4.57
Asia	79.03	85.09	0.38	2.37
Africa	75.93	83.91	1.38	3.52

4.5.4 Marriage and divorce rates

As described in Section 4.1, second-generation immigrants in Italy are very young. Only 8.18 per cent of the sample is older than 25; not even six per cent of which is or has been married (less than 150 individuals).

Our analysis on marriage and divorce rates will thus concentrate on first-generation immigrants only. First, we collect in Table 4.15 some descriptive statistics. They seem to suggest that immigrants do not show a more traditional attitude towards family formation than Italians. **(p.142)**

Table 4.16 Immigrants' marriage and divorce gap with respect to natives. Probit estimation results—first-generation immigrants.

	Marriage			Divorce		
	All	Pre-1970	Post-1970	All	Pre-1970	Post-1970
Northern Europe	−0.0153*** (0.0045)	−0.0078 (0.0054)	−0.0300*** (0.0082)	0.0039** (0.0019)	0.0042** (0.0020)	−0.0002 (0.0065)
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.0927*** (0.0027)	0.0481*** (0.0049)	0.1257*** (0.0026)	0.0092*** (0.0020)	0.0084*** (0.0022)	0.0136** (0.0054)
North and Central America	0.0242** (0.0121)	0.0079 (0.0166)	0.0473*** (0.0169)	0.0142* (0.0073)	0.0130* (0.0076)	0.0235 (0.0241)
South America	−0.0213** (0.0084)	−0.0321*** (0.0105)	0.0010 (0.0136)	0.0064* (0.0035)	0.0064* (0.0036)	0.0065 (0.0133)
Asia	0.0960*** (0.0043)	0.0801*** (0.0066)	0.1121*** (0.0052)	−0.0111*** (0.0012)	−0.0108*** (0.0014)	— —
Africa	0.0321*** (0.0042)	0.0203*** (0.0052)	0.0582*** (0.0066)	−0.0023 (0.0015)	−0.0016 (0.0016)	— —
Observations	630,523	630,523	Observations	499,346	498,256	
Pseudo-R ²	0.267	0.267	Pseudo-R ²	0.0216	0.0213	

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: occupation, education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

Indeed, for both males and females, and for most immigrant groups marriage rates are lower than their native counterpart, whereas divorce rates are much higher, the only exceptions being Northern European and Asian men.

When controlling for age, education, (a quadratic in) age, and time dummies, however, we find that the immigrants have a higher probability of getting married. This evidence is contained in Tables 4.16, 4.17, and 4.18. They show the regression analysis results when using the probability to be married or the probability to be divorced as dependent variables, for all immigrants and for males and females separately. Only Northern Europeans and South Americans marry less than Italians. All the other groups show a higher probability to get married, and the tendency to marry more is particularly pronounced in the younger cohort. Turning our attention to divorce patterns, our estimation results confirm the suggestive evidence in Table 4.15. All immigrant groups have a higher propensity to divorce than Italians. Asians are the only exception in this regard, and their lower probability to divorce is entirely due to males. Interestingly we do not find any marked difference between age cohorts.

(p.143) 4.5.5 Inter-ethnic marriage rates

We start by presenting the endogamy rates of natives and immigrants by country of origin in Table 4.19. The proportion of respondents whose spouse or partner comes from the same country of origin is naturally highest for Italian natives, reaching more than 80 per cent. But is also almost 70 per cent for Asians. Endogamy rates are also high for immigrants coming from Southern and Eastern Europe and from Africa.

As explained above, we cannot appreciate the existence and extent of a process of cultural integration of immigrants on the basis of differences in endogamy rates between first and second generation because of the small sample size of married second-generation immigrant individuals. Nevertheless, we can estimate difference between age-cohorts in our sample of first-generation immigrants, distinguishing between region of origin and also gender. Our regression results are contained in Table 4.20. While Northern European immigrants and those coming from North and Central America seem to be more open toward marrying a spouse from a different country in the younger cohorts, none of the other groups show any tendency toward cultural integration in this respect. The evidence is not different by gender. The only notable

Table 4.17 Immigrants' marriage and divorce gap with respect to natives. Probit estimation results—males.

	Marriage			Divorce		
	All	Pre-1970	Post-1970	All	Pre-1970	Post-1970
Northern Europe	-0.0153*** (0.0045)	-0.0078 (0.0054)	-0.0300*** (0.0082)	0.0039** (0.0019)	0.0042** (0.0020)	-0.0002 (0.0065)
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.0927*** (0.0027)	0.0481*** (0.0049)	0.1257*** (0.0026)	0.0092*** (0.0020)	0.0084*** (0.0022)	0.0136** (0.0054)
North and Central America	0.0242** (0.0121)	0.0079 (0.0166)	0.0473*** (0.0169)	0.0142* (0.0073)	0.0130* (0.0076)	0.0235 (0.0241)
South America	-0.0213** (0.0084)	-0.0321*** (0.0105)	0.0010 (0.0136)	0.0064* (0.0035)	0.0064* (0.0036)	0.0065 (0.0133)
Asia	0.0960*** (0.0043)	0.0801*** (0.0066)	0.1121*** (0.0052)	-0.0111*** (0.0012)	-0.0108*** (0.0014)	— —
Africa	0.0321*** (0.0042)	0.0203*** (0.0052)	0.0582*** (0.0066)	-0.0023 (0.0015)	-0.0016 (0.0016)	— —
Observations	630,523	630,523	Observations	499,346	498,256	
Pseudo-R ²	0.267	0.267	Pseudo-R ²	0.0216	0.0213	

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: occupation, education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

(p.144)

Table 4.18 Immigrants' marriage and divorce gap with respect to natives. Probit estimation results—females.

	Marriage			Divorce		
	All	Pre-1970	Post-1970	All	Pre-1970	Post-1970
Northern Europe	-0.0022 (0.0031)	-0.0000 (0.0037)	-0.0047 (0.0054)	0.0157*** (0.0018)	0.0169*** (0.0019)	0.0012 (0.0047)
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.0246*** (0.0026)	-0.0266*** (0.0043)	0.0733*** (0.0025)	0.0399*** (0.0023)	0.0399*** (0.0026)	0.0404*** (0.0055)
North and Central America	0.0189*** (0.0068)	-0.0094 (0.0097)	0.0599*** (0.0081)	0.0075* (0.0039)	0.0050 (0.0040)	0.0235* (0.0138)
South America	-0.0166*** (0.0056)	-0.0349*** (0.0072)	0.0175** (0.0081)	0.0145*** (0.0029)	0.0156*** (0.0032)	0.0045 (0.0079)
Asia	0.0587*** (0.0043)	0.0174** (0.0074)	0.0967*** (0.0037)	0.0037 (0.0028)	0.0036 (0.0030)	0.0037 (0.0073)
Africa	0.0212*** (0.0041)	-0.0432*** (0.0069)	0.0824*** (0.0035)	0.0195*** (0.0030)	0.0217*** (0.0034)	0.0073 (0.0063)
Observations	715,498	715,498	Observations	611,963	611,963	
Pseudo-R ²	0.162	0.164	Pseudo-R ²	0.0701	0.0702	

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: occupation, education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

Table 4.19 Proportion of marriages where the partner shares the same country of origin.

Natives	80.24
Immigrants (first gen.)of which	38.12
Northern Europe	6.84
Southern and Eastern Europe	54.70
North and Central America	5.00
South America	27.68
Asia	68.67
Africa	55.42

exception are the immigrants from South America, who seem to be more inclined towards exogamy, if females, and highly reluctant if males.

4.5.6 Completed fertility rates

Because of the young age of second-generation immigrants in Italy, second-generation women older than 40 years of age with children are almost non-existent in our sample (less than 0.2 per cent). Therefore also in this case we concentrate on first-generation immigrants only. **(p.145)**

Table 4.20 Interethnic marriage. Probit estimation result—first-generation immigrants.

	All post-1970	Males post-1970	Females post-1970
Northern Europe	0.3359*** (0.0057)	0.4100*** (0.0149)	0.2742*** (0.0052)
Southern and Eastern Europe	-0.1926*** (0.0154)	-0.3584*** (0.0178)	-0.0881*** (0.0195)
North and Central America	0.3356*** (0.0073)	0.4096*** (0.0284)	0.2661*** (0.0051)
South America	-0.0115 (0.0226)	-0.2314*** (0.0385)	0.0603*** (0.0219)
Asia	-0.2869*** (0.0199)	-0.2467*** (0.0270)	-0.2853*** (0.0286)
Africa	-0.2618***	-0.0322	-0.3636***

	All	Males	Females
	post-1970	post-1970	post-1970
	(0.0178)	(0.0287)	(0.0246)
Observations	45,588	18,464	27,124
Pseudo-R ²	0.148	0.114	0.204

Marginal effects and standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: occupation, education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

The results of our analysis are collected in Tables 4.21 and 4.22. Starting with some descriptive statistics (Table 4.21), it appears that immigrants in Italy have lower completed fertility rates than Italians. Only Northern Europeans show a higher fertility rate. When controlling for education, occupation, age, and time dummies, we find that all groups tend to have less children than Italians, with the exception of African women, whose fertility rate is not statistically different from that of Italian women. Such results, however, need to be taken with caution because of possibly large measurement errors in this variable due to the limitations of the ILFS data, as explained in this section.

Table 4.21 Completed fertility rates—descriptive statistics.

	Fertility rates Women older than 40 years
Natives	0.73
Immigrants (first gen.) of which	0.65
Northern Europe	0.93
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.42
North and Central America	0.52
South America	0.56
Asia	0.60
Africa	0.54

(p.146)

**Table 4.22 Completed fertility rate—OLS estimation results.
Immigrants' gap with respect to natives—females older than 40.**

	First gen.
North Europe	−0.0839***
	(0.0096)
Southern and Eastern Europe	−0.4365***
	(0.0105)
North and Central America	−0.2011***
	(0.0265)
South America	−0.2367***
	(0.0166)
Asia	−0.2184***
	(0.0221)
Africa	−0.0183
	(0.0157)
Observations	520,371
R ²	0.605

Standard errors (in parentheses) are reported;

*** p (0.01,

** p (0.05,

* p (0.1.

Controls: occupation, education, quadratic in age, time dummies.

4.6 Conclusion

Our empirical analysis of the cultural and economic patterns of integration of immigrants in Italy does not reveal a solid grounding in the data of the perception that integration is occurring at particularly slow rates. Severe data limitations suggest caution in the interpretation of these results.

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