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Enhancing Attractiveness for Highly Skilled Migrants: A Comparative Study of Targeted Policies and Incentives in Italy and Germany

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Abstract

In the dynamic landscape of global migration, nations seek to attract highly skilled migrants to invigorate their economies and promote innovation. The present study investigates the impact of specific policies and incentives implemented by Italy and Germany directed at high-skilled migrants.

Although the two countries possess historical appeal, modern developments show that Germany has demonstrated to be more capable in attracting high skilled talent. This research analyses the effectiveness of targeted immigration policies and incentives to enhance Italy's attractiveness compared to Germany.

With a blending of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the study focuses on a heterogeneous sample of highly skilled foreign workers. The survey sample is composed of people from various cultural and political backgrounds who have chosen Italy or Germany as their destination country. In the form of video interviews or written questionnaires, the respondents offer insights into their motivations, expectations and experiences. The anonymity of the answers guarantees honest feedbacks, supporting a rich understanding of the migration experience.

The first part of the research explores the relevant strategies and policies that both countries currently have in place using existing literature, while the second examines the dynamics and bureaucratic issues that obstacle high-skilled migrants after their arrival in the receiving country by analyzing the results obtained from the interviews.

Moreover, the answers provided by the survey participants also reveal a deep view of the determining factors that high-skilled migrants consider as priorities for the choice of their destination. A cross-analysis highlights the positive aspects of the two countries, underlining which are the crucial aspects that shapes migration choices.

Finally, the study provides pragmatic recommendations to Italian public bodies to make more efficient procedures and interactions with this category of workers in order to increase the appeal of the Country, by supporting a more personalized approach in accordance with the multiple expectations of these migrants.

This research aims to provide a substantial contribution to the current discourse on global migration dynamics and provides input for specific policy deliberations aligned with the evolving needs of skilled migrants. To ensure that nations fully valorize the talents of these qualified people, it is undoubtedly necessary to attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the key factors that influence their decision-making processes.

Introduction

Immigration is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that has economic, social, cultural and political implications for migrants' countries of origin and destination.

In particular, immigration of people with high levels of education and professional skills can have positive effects on the development, innovation and competitiveness of host economies; but it can also generate human capital losses and brain drain for sending countries.

Formulating effective policies in response to migration obviously requires knowledge of the factors that cause it. Hence, the need to focus on the protagonists of these migrations and the reasons why individuals migrate. The decision to migrate depends, in a nutshell, on the difference between the expected income over the life cycle in the country of residence and in the country of possible destination, net of migration costs. Clearly, elements of a non-monetary nature are also relevant and should be included in the analysis of migration decisions, however, studies conducted so far focus mainly on monetary factors.

Migration has become a crucial issue for many countries in recent years, with the movement of highly skilled individuals across borders now considered a significant contributor to economic growth and development. Governments around the world recognize the importance of attracting and retaining skilled migrants to fuel innovation and maintain their competitive advantage in a rapidly changing global economy. As a result, competition for highly skilled workers has become increasingly intense and countries need to develop targeted policies and incentives to attract this talent. Therefore, my research interests revolve around understanding the factors that influence the migration of highly skilled people from one country to another and how governments can develop policies to attract and retain these people.

In Europe, Italy and Germany are two countries experiencing significant demographic changes, with an ageing population and a shrinking workforce.

For this reason, both countries are facing an increasing demand for highly qualified workers in various sectors.

To meet this need, the Italian and German governments have implemented various policies to attract and retain highly skilled migrants, despite their efforts, Germany has

been more successful than Italy in attracting talent and there is evidence to suggest that the gap between the two countries is widening.

Italy is at the bottom of the list in terms of attracting highly skilled workers, the least attractive countries for skilled migrants are those with generally low-skilled environments.

The reasons for this situation are certainly multiple and have distant roots, but they certainly revolve around our country's underinvestment in education, training and research and development, slow bureaucracy and language and cultural barriers.

Italy is a country that in recent decades has experienced a strong growth in the foreign presence on its territory and in its labour market. However, most immigrants in Italy have a low level of education and are concentrated in sectors with low specialization and productivity.

Factors influencing this choice include economic and employment conditions in the host country, career and training opportunities, migration and integration policies, the quality of public services and the social perception of immigrants.

According to the research hypothesis, the implementation of targeted policies and incentives will increase Italy's attractiveness for high-skilled migrants compared to Germany, will be tested by examining the existing policies and incentives in both countries and identifying the key factors influencing high-skilled migration decisions. This study aims to examine the factors influencing the migration of highly skilled people and to determine how targeted policies and incentives can increase Italy's attractiveness for this group of migrants compared to Germany, in order to provide evidence-based recommendations to help policymakers in Italy and other countries to attract and retain highly skilled migrants.

CHAPTER I

1.1 Analysis of the existing literature on attracting highly skilled immigrants.

The United Nations defines a migrant as "a person who has moved to a country other different from their country of origin and has resided in that country for more than a year." In recent years, a new category of migrants has emerged: in addition to the types of migrants best known and discussed in the media (such as irregular migrants, refugees and asylum seekers), the category of highly skilled migrants is gaining ground in the common imagination. They now account for an important percentage of international migration and are also at the center of the attraction policies of most developed governments.

International migratory flows are a result of intricate geopolitical, economic, and social processes. Originally, the formation and perpetuation of this mass movement developed between countries that already had well-established ties, e.g. of a colonial nature. The main causes of migration of highly skilled people can be easily summarized as follows:

- the increase in the average age in some developed countries has caused a difficulty in generational turnover in the labor market and at the same time has opened up new possibilities for qualified people to seek 'fortune' in these countries with working conditions that are favorable to them;
- globalization has undoubtedly facilitated the movement of people, also making integration easier as cultural differences in different parts of the world have narrowed;
- the formation of the labor market in which technologically and scientifically competent people are essential.

At the same time, the liberalization of markets in newly industrializing countries encouraged temporary or permanent migration of managers and technicians of multinational companies from developed to developing countries.

The end of the 20th century was thus marked by the development of a new global labor market characterized by increasing competition to attract foreign talent and highly skilled professionals, giving rise to the thorny issue of skilled migration, better known

and identified by the expression 'brain drain'. In fact, most developed countries have entered into fierce competition in trying to attract skilled migrants, increasingly favoring the migration of highly qualified personnel. Additionally, some countries have passed legislation to make it easier for foreign experts, researchers, and technicians to enter their countries.

International competition is due, on the one hand, to the more developed nations' persistent chronic shortage of human resources for science and technology, which has worsened over time due to both demographic decline and a decline in the enrolment of students from these countries in science faculties. Simultaneously, many emerging countries have established high-level higher education systems capable of producing highly qualified personnel; however, the economies of these countries are frequently unable to provide these personnel with an adequate labor market capable of absorbing the labor supply produced.

In more developed countries, the exponential increase in the migration of highly qualified people is much more evident; in fact, poorer and developing countries are facing a literal brain drain.

The term 'brain drain' refers to the phenomenon that occurs when highly educated and professionalized people move to other countries in search of opportunities.

They primarily do this for financial and professional reasons. In other terms, it refers to the emigration of brilliant or highly competent people, taught in the mother country, to foreign countries. The expression 'brain drain' was coined in the 1950s to define the large-scale migration of scientists from Europe, Canada and the Soviet Union to seek their fortune after the Second World War in the USA. Today, this term refers to the exodus of academics and highly educated employees from developing to developed countries, characterizing the net loss of skilled workers in so called Third World and Eastern European countries in particular.

The causes of this kind of migration are to be attributed to the problems that plague the countries of origin: in countries whose economies are not yet properly developed, politics is affected in most cases by corruption and human rights violations such as gender inequality, violence, persecution and limited freedom of expression and academics. These factors, as well as inadequate infrastructures, create incentives for people in these countries to move from their home territories.

Information on migration flows by skill level is extremely rare and complex to obtain in a comparable way across countries.

Currently, migration policies that favor the entry of highly skilled workers are gaining popularity, mainly due to the increasing demand from various companies. These companies lobby governments for political support to fill gaps in the labor market through the arrival of foreign workers. Although the practice of adopting migration policies focused on business needs is not new, one only must think back to the recruitment programs for foreign workers of the 1950s and 1960s, the main difference lies in the fact that today's employers demand increasingly specific skills that often require higher education or other highly skilled competences. These skills cannot be fully met by the national workforce. In response to these demands, governments have decided to implement various types of targeted and selective immigration schemes to facilitate the international recruitment of desired workers.

Recent advancements in immigration policy, on the other hand, indicate a mix of demand-oriented and supply-oriented strategies, attempting to balance competing objectives such as the quantity of immigrants and employability. As a result, supply-driven immigration policies that enhance both the number of highly qualified immigrants and their skill mix in the international labor flow are becoming more frequent. Demand-driven systems, on the other hand, have a limited and potentially detrimental influence because they frequently rely on case-by-case assessments of labor market needs (such as labor market tests) or occupation-specific assessments (such as shortage lists). Immigration policies in Europe, in particular, have prioritized the economic and social integration of immigrants over the total quantity of immigrants recruited.

Highly skilled worker migration is both a burden and an opportunity for European countries, which must strive to attract and retain the talent required for economic and social progress. Italy and Germany have diverse policies and incentives for high-skilled immigrants, as well as varied outcomes in terms of flows and stocks of this type of migrant.

According to the OECD International Migration Outlook 2022, 12% of the people who emigrate to Italy are highly qualified, while in Germany this figure is around 22% (the OECD average is 36%).

This data underlines the fact that Italy is less attractive to highly qualified migrants, and this could be since the people who arrive here cannot find job opportunities appropriate and consistent with their level and type of education. According to the 12th Report 'Foreigners in the Italian Labor Market', the over-skilling rate for non-EU workers in Italy is estimated at 67.1% recording the second highest share of overqualified not UE citizens (behind Greece 69%). This means that the majority of highly skilled migrants in Italy cannot find a job commensurate with their education. According to the Eurostat study the over-qualification rate for foreign workers in Germany was 30%. This means that Germany manages to better utilize the skills of skilled migrants than Italy.

A high over-skilling rate shows a waste of skills and a poor value placed on the skilled labor force, since the over-skilling rate assesses the percentage of workers in a profession below their educational level.

The worth of highly trained workers from other nations in Germany and Italy is difficult to assess precisely, but some indicators can help.

According to the OECD's Indicators of Talent appeal (ITA), Germany ranks 15th among OECD countries in terms of appeal to various kinds of skilled migrants, whereas Italy ranks 31st.

The choices of highly skilled migrants can be influenced by many different factors such as quality of life, economic conditions, cultural aspects, security, the labor market with its tax system, education and health systems. Germany has an advantage over Italy, particularly in terms of work prospects, taxation, and research quality. Italy, on the other hand, has advantages in terms of quality of life, ease of admission and residence and migrant social perception.

At the same time the graphic below, that compare two countries according to the OECD's Indicators of Talent appeal (ITA), shows in which measure Germany is more attractive for: highly educated workers, entrepreneurs and University students.

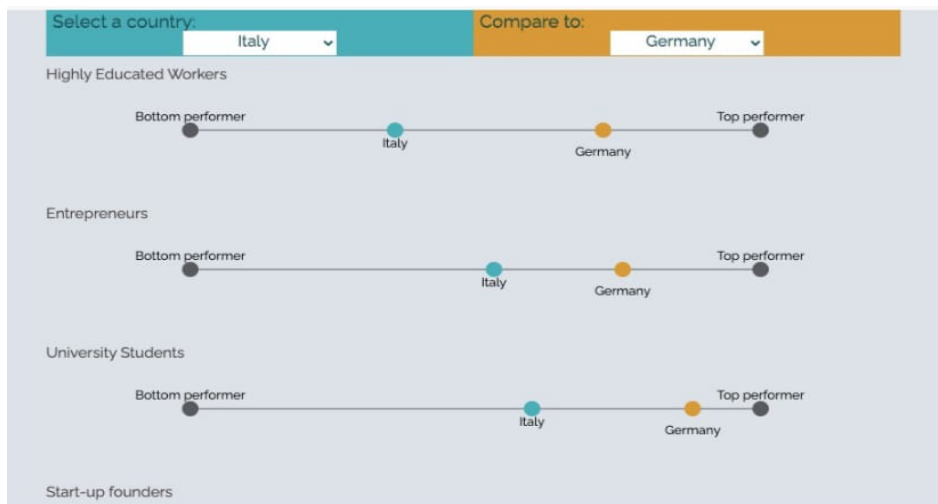


Table 1 – Comparison Italy and Germany according the OECD's ITA

1.2 Review of policies and incentives implemented in Italy and Germany to attract highly skilled immigrants.

Italy and Germany are two countries with different characteristics in terms of policies and incentives for highly skilled migrants, as well as outcomes in terms of flows and stocks of this category of migrants, although both countries have to follow, at least partially, EU policies.

The EU faces significant challenges in the context of immigration and labor policies. In order to promote economic competitiveness and social integration, the EU introduced the EU Blue Card, an initiative to facilitate the immigration of highly skilled workers from third countries. It is a special residence permit that allows highly qualified foreign workers to work and reside in EU Member States. It is an instrument for the attraction and mobility of talent from third countries, which aims to promote the EU's competitiveness and innovation in the global context.

1.2.1 EU BLUE CARD

The EU Blue Card was first introduced in 2009 as part of a comprehensive reform of migration policies. Its aim was, and still is, to address the emerging skills gap in the EU, where many industries and sectors had a shortage of highly skilled workers. The Blue Card aims to attract highly qualified workers to meet this demand.

Its main objective is to promote the movement of highly qualified workers in the EU through a simplified admission and residence process, which includes reducing bureaucratic requirements and making it easier to obtain a work permit.

The EU Blue Card gives the same rights and working conditions to foreign workers and their family members (i.e. partners, minor children and dependent parents) as to EU nationals, ensuring an adequate level of social protection and equal treatment in terms of pay and working conditions.

To obtain an EU Blue Card, the foreign worker must meet certain requirements, including:

- be in possession of a work contract or a job offer in one of the EU countries with a minimum duration of one year, and a gross annual salary of at least 1.5 times the national average salary;
- hold a higher education qualification issued by a competent authority in the country of origin, after an education of at least three years, or a higher vocational qualification recognized in the host country;
- have a good knowledge of one of the official languages of the EU;
- not be subject to grounds for exclusion or expulsion from national or EU territory.

It has a maximum duration of two years when combined with an employment contract of indefinite duration or is valid for the duration of the contract plus three months when combined with a fixed-term contract. However, it can be renewed for subsequent periods, provided the requirements are met.

The new EU Blue Card directive was adopted by the EU in October 2021 and must be transposed by the member states by November 2023; it provides for more flexible admission criteria, a lower salary threshold, easier movement between EU countries and faster family reunification for highly qualified workers from third countries. It is designed to make the EU Blue Card more attractive and competitive compared to existing national systems so that it can approach the attractiveness of countries such as Canada, the United States or Australia.

Data from the European Commission established that Germany was the country that used this instrument the most with more than 50000 emissions. Italy, on the other hand, has not yet transposed the EU Blue Card directive, having issued just over 2000 Blue Cards, and relies on the flows decree to regulate the entry of non-EU workers, a discretionary and contingent instrument that does not guarantee stable and transparent planning of migration policies.

Table 2 - Blue Card Residence Permits in Europe (2013-2020)

| Country | Blue Card 2013-2020 (sum) | Annual average 2013-2020 | Incidence on Work Permits % | Distribution % |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Germany | 51815 | 6477 | 16,6% | 63,9% |
| French | 8015 | 1002 | 3,8% | 9,9% |
| Poland | 5875 | 734 | 0,2% | 7,2% |
| Luxembourg | 3212 | 402 | 24,8% | 4,0% |
| Italy | 2131 | 266 | 1,0% | 2,6% |
| R. Czech Republic | 1964 | 246 | 0,9% | 2,4% |
| Austria | 1433 | 179 | 5,2% | 1,8% |
| Lithuania | 1054 | 132 | 1,5% | 1,3% |
| Romania | 987 | 123 | 2,3% | 1,2% |
| Bulgaria | 913 | 114 | 8,0% | 1,1% |
| Other | 3667 | 458 | 8,7% | 4,5% |
| European Union | 81.066 | 10.133 | 1,3% | 100,0% |

1.2.2 FLOWS DECREE

The flows decree is an instrument that the Italian government uses to regulate the entry of non-EU foreign workers into Italy for subordinate (seasonal and non-seasonal) and self-employment reasons. It is a decree of the President of the Council of Ministers (DPCM) that is issued periodically based on the criteria indicated in the three-year planning document on immigration policies. The flows decree establishes maximum entry quotas for the different economic sectors and categories of workers, taking into account labor market needs, housing availability, reception and integration capacities and bilateral agreements with countries of origin. The most recent flows decree was published on 17 January 2023 and provides for a maximum quota of 69,700 entries for the year 2023, of which 44,000 for seasonal workers and 25,700 for non-seasonal and self-employed workers. Applications for work permits must be submitted by employers through a telematic procedure managed by the Ministry of the Interior. Before submitting the application, the employer must check with the competent employment center that there are no workers already on the national territory available to fill the position offered. The authorization is issued within 30 days of the submission of the application, unless there are obstructive reasons, and allows the foreign worker to apply for an entry visa at the Italian diplomatic representation in the country of origin within 20 days of the application. The flows decree has been criticized by some experts and associations who consider it an ineffective, discretionary and bureaucratic mechanism to regulate migration flows. Among the main criticisms are: the poor correspondence between the established quotas and the real needs of the labor market, the lack of stable and transparent planning of migration policies, the complexity and slowness of the procedures, the limited attractiveness for highly qualified workers, the lack of tax incentives or bureaucratic facilities and the failure to take into account the needs of migrants and their rights.

1.3 The Italian government's initiatives

In Italy, the main institution responsible for promoting the attraction of the foreign labor force is the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, which has focused on initiatives to facilitate the attraction of highly qualified professionals, through the bureaucratic facilitations already mentioned, such as the flows decree and the Blue Card to facilitate the issuance of visas and work permits, as well as social and cultural integration programs to facilitate the adaptation of migrants to Italian society.

Analyzing the legislative and public policy interventions for the mobility of high-skilled professionals in the Italian system, it is possible to distinguish between the outgoing dimension, based on legislative measures, regulations, programs, plans and actions to accompany the internationalization of the skills of students and professionals (above all in the spheres of teaching, training and research) and the incoming dimension, aimed at providing forms of entry into Italy for highly qualified individuals.

Focusing on the incoming policies, it emerges that the projects undertaken are continuous and long-lasting over time, although not always consistent and structured in identifying the recipients of public choices and the professional and fiscal modalities with which to guarantee the arrival of qualified professionals.

The first actions taken were implemented with Ministerial Decree No. 13 of 26 January 2001 and were mainly aimed at the academic sector and in particular at encouraging universities to sign contracts with foreign or Italian scholars and experts who had been permanently engaged abroad for at least three years in teaching or in scientific activities. The initial incentive for Italian or foreign researchers to return or enter Italy consisted of the availability of several places in Italian universities, built around a specific interest of Italian academic institutions to take advantage of high professionalism and expertise, gained in international innovation contexts.

Also active since 2009 is the Rita Levi Montalcini program, a program set up by the Ministry of Universities and Research to attract foreign researchers by offering a three-year contract and funding for their research projects. To participate in the call for applications, participants must have held a PhD degree for at least three years, but no more than six, and have worked abroad in a university or research center for a minimum of three years. The candidates are examined by a ministerial committee and then

approximately 24 winners are selected for each year (depending on the funds allocated to the project each year).

In more recent times, however, it is possible to note how the provisions of the law and subsequent plans and projects have broadened the spectrum of beneficiaries: targeting not only researchers and university lecturers, but also employees and self-employed workers with a university degree and professional experience abroad. Sometimes even the nature of the incentive has changed, flanking the offer of professional opportunities with incentives of a fiscal nature.

In fact, D.LGS 147/2015 (art.16) established tax benefits by giving the possibility of taxing at 30% the income for the category of so-called 'inpatriate workers'. This term is used to define workers who move their residence to Italy for work reasons and are not resident in Italy for the five tax periods prior to the transfer and who undertake to reside in Italy for at least 2 years and who are in possession of high qualification/specialization requirements, such as a three-year degree, or who meet the requirements set out in Legislative Decree of 6 November 2006 n206. In 2019, the rule was amended by the Growth Decree, maintaining the possibility of taxing the income of "inpatriate workers", both self-employed and employees, at 30%, and also giving the possibility of taxing the income at 10% if workers are resident in one of the southern Italian regions of Sicily, Sardinia, Calabria, Campania, Basilicata, Apulia, Molise and Abruzzo.

In addition, some conditions for obtaining the reduced income taxation have changed, for example the worker does not have to have tax residence for the previous two tax periods and no longer for five periods; the duration of these benefits is five years, but can be extended for a further five years if the workers become owners of at least one residential property unit in Italy or if the workers have at least one dependent minor child.

It can therefore be said that all the laws, decrees and programs created from 2001 until 2019 to facilitate the attraction of highly qualified workers from abroad and encourage researchers to work in Italy through a reduction in taxation, have not had much effect and have been, in terms of results, not very incisive. Moreover, it can be deduced that it is often the lack of funds for research that is the prevailing factor that drives away those who want to dedicate themselves to research from the Italian system; for this reason,

tax reduction measures can be considered as a very limited incentive to attract Italian and foreign researchers from abroad.

ANNEX LAWS- Incoming mobility by categories of subjects and by type of incentives

BOX N°1 TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS

LAW 230 OF 2005 (ARTICLE 1, PARAGRAPH 9): Direct calls for university professors serving abroad: The following types of direct calls are provided:

1. scholars permanently engaged abroad in research or teaching activities at university level for at least three years, who hold an equivalent academic position in foreign university or research institutions;
2. those who, having already carried out a period of at least three years of research and teaching in Italian universities as part of the Brain Return Program by direct call authorized by the MIUR, have achieved scientific results consistent with the place for which the call is proposed;
3. scholars who were winners in specific high-qualification research programs, funded by the European Union or by the MIUR and identified by the latter with a specific decree, after consulting ANVUR and CUN;
4. scholars of high and recognized scientific merit, previously selected through national procedures, and in compliance with criteria aimed at ascertaining the excellence of individual scientific research paths. These are, for example, direct calls under the Natta Fund provided for in Article 1, paragraphs 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212 of Law 208 of 28 December 2015.

DM 15 JULY 1997 Requirements for direct call of university professors "for clear fame" for scholars who:

1. have been occupying a similar position in foreign universities for at least three years;
2. have been awarded other scientific awards in the international arena;
3. have held management positions in qualified international research institutes for at least three years.

D.M. N.96 OF 23.04.2001 (ART.5) Special incentives for the call, by state universities, of foreign or Italian scholars and experts permanently engaged abroad for at least three years in teaching and scientific activities

D M 20 MARCH 2003 RETURN OF BRAINS foreign or Italian scholars and experts permanently engaged abroad for at least three years in teaching and research. in possession of the title of PhD or equivalent.

DECREE-LAW 30 SEPTEMBER 2003, N. 269 Urgent provisions to promote development and for the correction of the trend of public accounts - article 3 incentives for the return to Italy of researchers residing abroad)

DECREE-LAW 29 NOVEMBER 2008, N. 185 Urgent measures to support families, work, employment and business and to redesign the national strategic framework in anti-crisis function. (OJ n.280 of 29-11-2008 - Suppl. Ordinary n. 263) decree-law converted with amendments by l. 28 January 2009, n. 2 - art. 17 incentives for the return to Italy of scientific professors and researchers residing abroad. Application of the tax credit for research activities in case of assignment by a foreign client.

LEVI MONTALCINI PROGRAM- (since 2009) CALLS FOR THE RETURN TO ITALY OF YOUNG RESEARCHERS WITH

PHD for no more than 6 years and for no less than 3 years with commitment abroad in a University or research center for at least 3 years.

LAW 30 DECEMBER 2010, N. 240 Rules on the organization of universities, academic staff and recruitment, as well as delegation to the government to encourage the quality and efficiency of

the university system. -art. 18 Call of tenured professors abroad - art. 23 paragraph 3 foreign contract teachers of clear fame - art. 26 regulation of exchange readers.

DECREE-LAW 31 May 2010, n. 78 Urgent measures on financial stabilization and economic competitiveness - article 44 incentives for the return to Italy of researchers residing abroad - converted into law 232 of 11/12/2016 art. 1 paragraph 149 .

LEGISLATIVE DECREE 25 NOVEMBER 2016, N. 218 Simplification of the activities of public research bodies pursuant to art. 13 of the law 7 August 2015, n.124 -art. 16 recognition of international merit of Italian or foreign researchers with very high scientific qualification in the disciplinary fields of reference who have distinguished themselves for exceptional merit or who have been awarded high scientific awards in the international arena

DECREE-LAW 30 APRIL 2019, N. 34 Urgent measures of economic growth and for the resolution of specific crisis situations - art 4 patent box - art. 5 brain re-entry .

BOX n°2 WORKERS:

"IMPATRIATE WORKERS WITH A DEGREE (ART. 2 L. 238/2010)

1. in possession of a degree (three-year or master's degree); for qualifications obtained abroad, the declaration of value of the qualification issued by the consular offices is required;
2. continuously carried out a work or study activity outside Italy for the last twenty-four months or more;
3. citizens of the European Union or of a non-European State with which a double taxation convention in tax matters is in force;
4. self-employment or employment activities in Italy;

MANAGERS AND WORKERS WITH HIGH QUALIFICATION AND SPECIALIZATION (ART. 16 OF LEGISLATIVE DECREE 147/2015)

1. non-tax residents in Italy in the five tax periods prior to the transfer;
2. work in an enterprise resident in the territory of the State by virtue of an employment relationship established with that company or with companies that directly or indirectly control the same enterprise, are controlled by it or are controlled by the same company that controls the enterprise;
3. work mainly in Italy (>183 days a year)
4. managerial roles or those with high qualification or specialization requirements
5. possession of the requisites provided for by Legislative Decree 6 November 2007, n. 206, limited to the exercise of the professions regulated therein

IMPATRIATE SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS (LEGISLATIVE DECREE 147/2015)

Self-employed persons who meet the following requirements:

1. not fiscally resident in the territory of the State in the five tax periods preceding the transfer;
2. with a commitment to remain in Italy for at least two years;
3. with work mainly in the Italian territory.

LAW 30 DECEMBER 2010, N. 238 Tax incentives for the return of workers in Italy

LEGISLATIVE DECREE 14 SEPTEMBER 2015, N. 147 Provisions containing measures for the growth and internationalization of companies (art. 16 special regime for impatriated workers)

GROWTH DECREE" ART. 4 D.L. 34 DEL 30.04.2019

1.4 Germany's initiatives

In Germany several institutions and laws promote the attraction of the highly skilled foreign workforce with projects that simplify immigration procedures for skilled professionals, offering them job opportunities and a favorable environment for integration, including language assistance services and support for integration into the German labor market.

The first actions taken in Germany to regulate immigration were implemented in 2005 with the issuance of the Immigration Law. This decree law denied migrants from non-EU countries the possibility of being hired as simple workers, except for certain categories of workers specified in another decree such as: nurses, IT specialists and seasonal farmers.

The decree-law was a first step to encourage the immigration of highly skilled workers, as it provided three new facilities for skilled people. Firstly, it gave foreign students who had graduated in Germany the opportunity to stay in the country for a further year to look for work.

It also gave qualified workers and high-ranking executives the right to take up permanent residence instead of renewable residence permits.

Finally, it gave entrepreneurs who invested at least one million of Euro in the company or created at least ten jobs the possibility of obtaining an unlimited work permit, but only after three years of residence.

In 2009 with the introduction of the Labour Migration Control Act, Germany lowered the income threshold required to obtain an unlimited residence permit to guarantee unlimited residence for highly qualified workers.

From 2020, the 'Fachkräfteeinwanderungsgesetz' came into force, i.e. the law regulating the entry and thus the selection of skilled labour from non-EU countries. The aim of the reform is to attract 400,000 qualified workers from abroad to cope with the loss of labour caused by the ageing population.

This law gave qualified migrants who do not necessarily have a university degree the opportunity to enter the German labour market, extending the possibility to people with professional qualifications.

However, this requires recognition of the title or professional qualification and, as some experts have pointed out, this process is very complex and costly for both the company and the worker.

The decree also sanctions the abolition of the 'labour market check' that required checking that there were no other German or EU nationals capable of performing a given task before making it available to non-EU nationals.

In addition, there are other requirements such as, for example, knowledge of the German language with a minimum B1 level, the possibility of self-support for the duration of the stay, and finally, the job obtained must involve a minimum of thirty-five hours per week, to avoid mini jobs.

One criticism levelled at this reform was that the required criteria, although they could guarantee the suitability of applicants, still limited the potential influx of valuable labour within the country.

For this reason, some important changes were introduced in 2023 including:

- anyone with a university degree will be able to enter any skilled occupation, without the requirement to demonstrate knowledge of the German language;
- anyone with at least two years of work experience and a professional qualification will be able to immigrate as a skilled worker, the qualification no longer having to be recognized by the German government;
- an opportunity card is introduced for people who do not yet have a concrete job offer, but who have potential for the labour market, based on a points system which is determined by: qualifications, language skills, work experience, connection to Germany, age and any potential partners or spouses.

1.4.1 BMWK

The German government, under the leadership of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (BMWK), is trying to improve its internationalization through actions aimed at attracting highly skilled migrants; developing a strategy that observes the best international standards to be guaranteed to skilled workers.

The strategy consists of five activities:

- Analyzing the needs and potential of candidates to ensure their functionality to the needs of the market, identifying occupations with a particular skills shortage and regions with an insufficient number of skilled workers.
- Expand consulting and information services: 'Make it in Germany', the federal government's portal for skilled workers and companies, will become a central point of contact.
- Create opportunities for skilled workers from third countries and, if necessary, make additional training opportunities available, e.g. by providing German language courses.
- Provide support to strengthen efforts to recruit professionals from third countries; with the support of the Federal Employment Agency, the federal government and companies are testing recruitment processes for selected professions and partner countries in order to build lasting immigration pathways.
- Promoting Germany's appeal as a host country for professionals under the label 'Make it in Germany'. This includes a public relations campaign with the entry into force of the Skilled Immigration Act.

1.4.2 MAKE IT IN GERMANY

Make it in Germany is the portal of the German federal government that has been active for more than ten years and is aimed at skilled workers from all over the world. The aim of this portal is to inform and facilitate skilled migrants wishing to work and live in Germany.

The portal is aimed at professionals from all sectors and potential international students who can find information on: how to get a visa, how the German system works and other necessary information on the legal and bureaucratic aspects of the employment process. In addition to the information service, Make it in Germany simplifies the job search by publishing job directories that inform in which regions a job is available and in which sectors they are looking to recruit.

Another useful service is personalized advice focusing on the job search in Germany and the qualifications or documents needed to start a business there.

The portal can also be useful for employers and companies to find important information on how to integrate foreign professionals.

1.4.3 BA

The Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA) is the public body responsible for managing the labour market in Germany. Its mission is to promote employment, training and integration of both German and foreign workers.

The BA offers a range of services and opportunities for highly skilled migrants, including:

- The mediation and placement of skilled workers from other countries, through the online Job Board portal, which publishes job vacancies available in Germany and allows applicants to register their professional profile.
- The promotion of German language learning opportunities, through vocational training programs that combine the study of German with the development of specific skills for the labour market.

- Economic support for skilled workers from other countries, through the payment of benefits such as unemployment benefit, child bonus or family allowance, provided that the beneficiaries meet the legal requirements.
- Information and advice on how to enter the labour market or start a business in Germany.

In 2020, a pilot project was launched (in cooperation between the BA, the BMWK, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and several foreign chambers of commerce), which aims to test and develop a process to attract foreign professionals from partner countries such as Brazil, India and Vietnam.

The aim is to establish and test the necessary networks, structures and processes. In this way, immediate and effective action can be taken as soon as the demand for skilled workers on the labour market increases significantly again.

The project deals with the entire immigration process, from recruitment to the recognition of qualifications, from visas to the integration of professionals into companies and German society. The project focuses on occupational categories with a high demand for labour, e.g. telecommunication technicians or software developers.

The advantages for German companies participating in the project are:

- Gain access to a pool of skilled and motivated workers from Brazil, India and Vietnam, with expertise in high need sectors.
- Receive personalized and continuous support throughout the immigration process, from candidate selection to application for recognition of qualifications to visa application to integration.
- Benefit from an international network of partners facilitating cooperation between German companies and foreign workers.
- Contribute to the development of an ideal and sustainable model for the immigration of highly qualified personnel that can be replicated and expanded in the future.

CHAPTER II

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter considered all the main initiatives implemented by the Italian and German governments to encourage the attraction of highly qualified migrants within the two countries were considered.

What has emerged is that while the German government is becoming an increasingly popular destination for skilled foreign workers, even representing the country with the highest number of EU Blue Cards issued, the Italian government seems to have a less marked presence in this sector and could benefit from greater alignment with European standards or from the implementation of targeted reception policies.

However, during this period of research, I realized that it is difficult to find material concerning interviews with this target segment of migrants that could instead be very useful to understand what are the main problems in which this category of workers clashes after their arrival in destination country and also what the working aspects might be.

By adopting an approach based on detailed interviews and analysis, a kind of practical and concrete guideline could be outlined to be used in the formulation of appropriate attraction policies, tailored to the needs and aspirations of this segment of highly skilled migrants. In addition, a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities these workers face in the destination country could fuel the development of more efficient and effective reception services, thus contributing to improve overall integration and maximize the benefits of attracting international talent for both countries.

The fundamental objective of this study is to provide solid support for the following research hypothesis: "The adoption of targeted policies and incentives will have a positive impact on Italy's attractiveness to Germany with regard to highly skilled immigrants."

To arrive at a valid confirmation of this hypothesis, it is essential to address an important research question: "How do targeted policies and incentives influence the preferences of highly skilled immigrants between Italy and Germany as their preferred destinations?"

In an attempt to comprehensively answer this research question, I have undertaken a methodological approach based on conducting a set of targeted interviews with highly qualified migrant individuals, who currently reside in both Italy and Germany.

2.2 The study population

The data in the present study were obtained from a study population of 26 highly skilled migrants (16 residents in Italy and 10 residents in Germany).

A highly qualified migrant is defined as an individual from a third country with a three-year degree.

Among the subjects there are both workers and people who have decided to continue their studies by attending master's degree courses or research PhD courses in the target countries.

The population contains people from both developed and developing countries, as well as countries subject to dictatorial rule and international sanctions.

The qualified migrants interviewed residing in Italy come from: Argentina, Armenia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Gambia, India, Lebanon, Montenegro, Peru, Russia, Ukraine, Vietnam. Those residing in Germany come from: Austria, Chile, Ecuador, India, Italy, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia.

This heterogeneous sample allows a more meaningful understanding of the various factors that motivate migrants from different cultural and political backgrounds to choose the country of destination.

In addition, subjects with different areas of specialization were selected to make the research more meaningful.

The search for the target individuals to be interviewed in Italy took place in collaboration with Ca' Foscari Alumni, an association founded to bring together the University's former students that can count on a wide network of professionals spread over more than 85 countries. While the search for target individuals in Germany took place with support of people I know.

2.3 Research Methodology

The two methods of conducting interviews are those of video calls that allow you to collect all the information necessary for the research; the other methodology used is a written online questionnaire accessible via a link that is sent to you. The online questionnaire was created through the QualtricsXM platform, which allows you to create custom surveys, questionnaires, and surveys and polls to collect data from your target segment; the platform also offers tools to analyze the collected data and gain meaningful insights. Graphs, charts, reports and dashboards can be created to display trends and important information. The methodology is chosen depending on the availability of the participants. The written questionnaire will have the same series of questions that will be asked during the video call interviews.

The questionnaire includes a mix of multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The questions are aimed at obtaining valuable information on specific areas that need improvement from the perspective of highly skilled immigrants, enabling destination countries to make informed policy decisions and improve their attractiveness to this demographic.

To ensure that responses are not distorted in any way, respondents will be kept anonymous. This will allow them to express their opinions and criticisms without fear of repercussions.

The questionnaire-interview consists of the following 29 questions:

Q1



What is your home country?

Q2

What is your destination country?

- Italy
- Germany

Q3

What is your age?

- Under 25
- From 25 to 40
- Over 40

Q4

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

Q5



What is your area of specialization?

Q6



What motivated you to move to this particular country and how did you make the decision to move?

Q7

Did you receive any incentives or offers from the destination country to move?

- Yes
 No

Q8

If yes, which kind of incentives?

Q9

What are the advantages that you were looking for in the new country compared to your home country?

Q10

Have you found that your expectations and motivations for moving to this country have been met?

Q11

Rate how much these factors influenced your choice of destination country:

| | None at all | A little | A moderate amount | A lot | A great deal |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| ※ Economic opportunities(Job prospects, wages, etc) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ※ Political stability and security | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ※ Cultural links | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Family riunification | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Immigration policies | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Climate and environment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Education | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Health care | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Language knowledge | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Quality of life | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q12

How would you rate the job opportunities in the destination country in your field?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor

Q13

How satisfied are you with your current work environment and job role?

- Extremely dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Extremely satisfied

Q14



What challenges did you face after moving and how did you overcome them?

Q15



Did you experience cultural shock or adaptation problems in the new country and in the new place of work?

Q16



Did you feel supported by the government and society in the destination country during your immigration process?

Q17



What advice would you give to public bodies to facilitate and speed up the immigration process?

Q18



What do you think are the most important factors for successful integration into the new community?

Q19

Do you plan to stay permanently in the destination country?

- No
- Maybe
- Yes

Q20



If not, what are the main reasons for your eventual return?

Q21



What advice would you give to other highly skilled immigrants who are thinking of moving in your destination country?

Q22

How would you rate the overall immigration process of the destination country?

- Efficient and streamlined
- Adequate, but some improvements needed
- Slow and cumbersome
- Unclear and confusing

Q23



What specific aspects of the immigration process could be improved to make it more attractive to highly skilled migrants?

Q24

Did you encounter any challenges related to obtaining a work permit or visa?

- Yes
- No

Q25



What changes or additions to work permit and visa policies would encourage highly skilled immigrants to choose their country of destination?

Q26

Did you face any difficulties in having your foreign qualifications recognized in the destination country?

- No
 Yes

Q27



If yes, please describe the challenges you encountered.

Q28



How can the destination country enhance its support to help highly skilled migrants find suitable employment opportunities?

Q29



Please provide any other suggestions or recommendations you have for the destination country to improve its appeal to highly skilled migrants.



 Import from library

 Add new question

[Add Block](#)

End of Survey

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Your response has been recorded.

2.4 Data analysis

At first, demographic variables (age, gender, country of origin) will be considered to draw a demographic profile of the respondents.

Then a cross-analysis of key variables will be carried out to explore the relationships between the different factors: for example, cross-tabulating motivations with destination choices to see if there is a correlation.

Responses regarding motivations for migration will be analyzed and the percentages of respondents who cited career prospects, quality of life, political stability, etc. as their main motivations will be calculated. Graphs or diagrams will be created to visually represent these statistics.

A key step will be to identify common challenges mentioned by respondents (e.g. obtaining a visa, recognition of qualifications). Likewise, collect and quantify the suggestions for improvement made by the respondents so that similar suggestions can be grouped together to identify general ones.

A qualitative analysis will also be conducted by examining and classifying the open-ended responses into themes, identifying recurring themes or most mentioned suggestions, in order to create a list of priority recommendations based on frequency and relevance.

I will then summarize the main insights and sentiments expressed in the qualitative comments.

I will attempt to provide a context for the findings based on my interpretation by explaining why certain trends or patterns emerged based on my understanding of migration dynamics.

Finally, by summarizing the main findings and insights from the analysis, I will try to provide actionable recommendations for destination countries: these should cover areas such as immigration procedures, integration support, recognition of foreign qualifications and more.

CHAPTER III

The questionnaire collected a total of 26 responses, 16 of which were from migrants who chose Italy as their destination, while 10 chose Germany as the destination of their migration. We will start analyzing the data by subdividing them according to the country of destination.

3.1 Germany quantitative analysis

In the case of Germany, a sample demographic was selected consisting of 60% male and 40% female individuals under 45 years of age from 7 different countries. The respondents belong to different professional disciplines, including engineering, psychology, international relations, finance, linguistics, research and music.

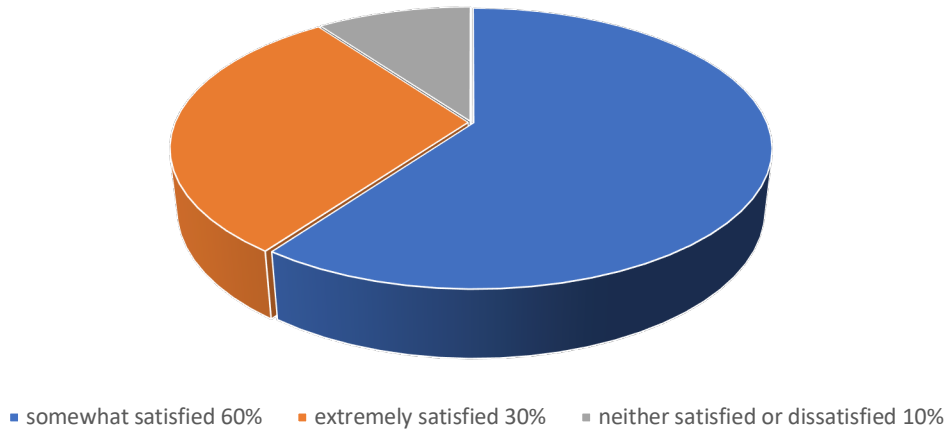
It is important to note that none of the respondents received incentives to move to Germany, but at the same time all respondents rated the job opportunities in this country in a range between 'Good' and 'Excellent', specifically 70% Good and 30% Excellent.



The high rate of positive evaluations of job opportunities in Germany indicates that most highly skilled immigrants see the country as an attractive place for their career. This result can be attributed to various factors including: a strong economy, an open labour market and specific opportunities in their field of specialization.

At the same time, it was assessed that 9 out of 10 people consider themselves satisfied with the work environment and their role in the new country, while only one person stated that he/she was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the environment and his/her work role (6 somewhat satisfied, 3 Extremely satisfied, 1 neither satisfied or dissatisfied).

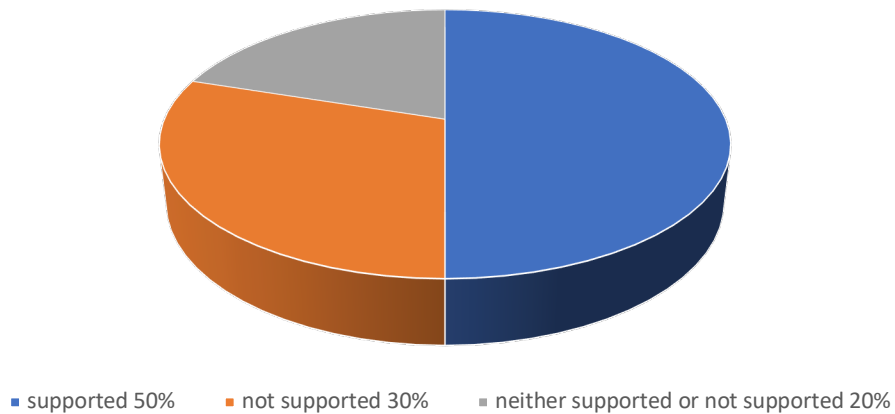
Level of satisfaction in the work environment



The high percentage of migrants who consider themselves satisfied with their working environment and role is a positive finding, which suggests that most highly skilled immigrants adapt well to their new professional environment in Germany. Overall, the results suggest that the working environment and opportunities in Germany are very attractive for highly skilled immigrants, which certainly motivates the country's advantage in attracting international talent.

The 50% of the respondents stated that they felt supported by the government and society during the immigration process, 30% stated the opposite and the remaining 20% were neutral saying that they felt neither supported nor opposed.

Perception of government and society



This substantial difference in responses could be attributed to different immigration regions and a consequent change in migrants' perceptions of society: in fact, there may be more open or restrictive local communities that influence these perceptions.

Based on this analysis, it could be suggested to the German Government to examine more thoroughly whether there are indeed regional differences that influence the perception of high-skilled immigrants and, if so, to consider adopting more uniform or targeted policies according to the needs of each region.

Further research or surveys to collect more data on perceptions of support among high-skilled immigrants in different regions are recommended, as this work could help provide a more in-depth view of the situation of high-skilled immigrants in Germany, enabling the Government to adopt more targeted and better policies for the integration and support of this population.

Encouragingly, the 70% of respondents did not experience culture shock or adaptation problems in their new workplace, which can be considered a good indication of the ability of German society and population to welcome and successfully integrate foreigners.

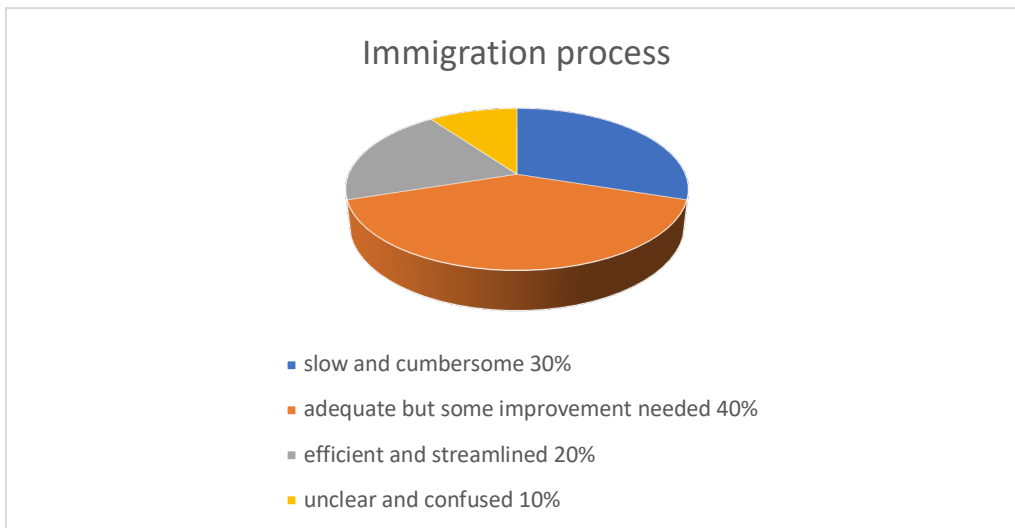
However, it is equally important to address the concerns raised by the remaining 30% who had problems with adaptation and culture shock, including racism and several difficulties in approaching people. These issues can have a significant impact on the experience of highly skilled immigrants and their well-being; therefore, the German government and local authorities should take reports of racism and hostility seriously and take measures to combat these issues.

Cultural outreach and anti-discrimination programs may be needed to educate the population on these issues.

For those who have experienced culture shock or racism, it may be helpful to make psychological support available to deal with the stress and emotional difficulties associated with these experiences.

Despite some concerns, such as 30% who called it "slow and cumbersome", 40% rated the immigration process as "adequate but some improvement needed". Only the 20% defined it "efficient and streamlined" and the other 10% "unclear and confusing". These data suggest the need to improve the efficiency and fluidity of the immigration process to attract and retain international talent.

The specific causes of this perception are mainly bureaucratic problems, such as: the lack of clarity on the part of public bodies in requesting the necessary documents that creates extended waiting times or other obstacles that contribute to this negative perception.



On the other hand, the results that emerged in the section for obtaining a residence permit and visa and for the recognition of qualifications are certainly positive, as 90% had no problems either in obtaining a permit/visa, or in the recognition of their qualifications. This figure can be considered positive since half of the people interviewed came from non-EU countries.

These results reflect an efficient immigration procedure and a well-managed qualification recognition process, which is crucial to attracting international talent.

Overall, quantitative data suggest that Germany has significant successes in attracting and integrating highly skilled migrants, but there are also challenges to be addressed, such as improving the efficiency of the immigration process and addressing racism and social hostility. Continuing to monitor and improve these aspects can help make Germany an even more attractive place for international talent and support its economic growth.

3.2 Germany qualitative analysis

3.2.1 Motivations

The motivations that prompted the interviewees to move to Germany are all fairly homogeneous and economic in nature: in fact, great career opportunities and higher salaries compared to their home countries in relation to the cost of living were cited as the main motivations.

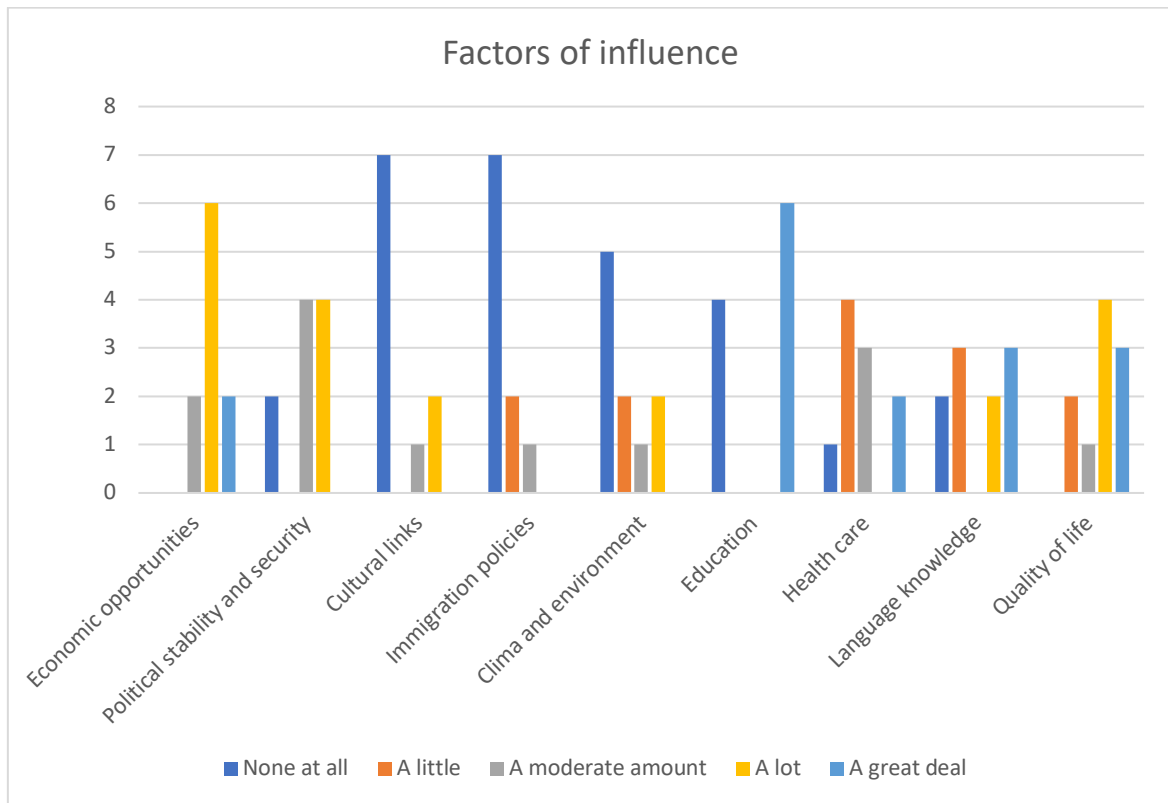
In addition, some of those interviewed had already had the opportunity to study in this country and after finishing their studies decided to apply, successfully, for open job and research positions.

There are also those who moved to Germany for family reasons, i.e. to be near their spouse.

As emerged from the quantitative research, the factor that most influences the choice of destination, in this case Germany, are economic opportunities (such as job prospects, salary, etc.) and political stability combined with the security of the country; another

very important aspect for the migrants interviewed is the quality of life. A very curious fact, however, is that the factor of education divided the respondents sharply, in fact, 60% of respondents considered it a very important factor, while the remaining 40% did not consider it relevant at all.

Other factors that were not considered very important by the respondents, as the graph below shows, are: immigration policies, cultural links, climate and environment.



3.2.2 Comparative advantages

The study also investigated the comparative advantages sought by migrants through qualitative research that allowed them to grasp the nuances of their aspirations and the opportunities they seek.

One of the most obvious aspects that emerged was the search for a better future in terms of job opportunities and pay. Germany offers competitive wages and excellent working conditions, especially in highly specialized sectors such as engineering and scientific research, so it is a place where skills are recognized and adequately rewarded. Another key reason that emerges is the desire to learn and grow within the new country: in fact, many migrants see Germany as a place where they can learn a new language and acquire extensive interdisciplinary experience. This diversification of skills is crucial in an increasingly interconnected world.

Germany is renowned for its advanced healthcare system, high-quality education and good quality of the environment, all of which contribute to a better quality of life for migrants and their families.

For this reason, many migrants said they were looking for a decent salary, economic stability and social security.

Social security in Germany offers a safety net that reassures skilled migrants, providing them with a solid foundation on which to build their future. At the same time, finding a job in line with their training and skills proved to be a priority within the survey.

In addition, the work culture in Germany promotes a healthy work-life balance, making it another factor that attracts many skilled migrants.

High-quality education is another important reason: Germany hosts some of the best universities in the world, and this is an opportunity that attracts many skilled migrants who aim to stay within the country once they finish their studies. In addition, the country offers an ideal environment to expand its network of professional contacts in an international context.

Finally, high-level study opportunities and an abundance of jobs cannot be ignored.

3.2.3 Challenges and difficulties

Although Germany offers many opportunities to skilled migrants, we cannot overlook the challenges and difficulties they face on their path to integration; The testimonies collected through my research offer an interesting overview of the daily reality of those who try to build a new life in a foreign country.

One of the main obstacles mentioned is adaptation to the German bureaucratic system. This system can be complex and requires a certain degree of understanding of procedures. However, many migrants have overcome this difficulty by seeking support from local friends, family or through online resources. This underlines the importance of support networking and information sharing among migrants.

In addition, interaction with the local community and the process of obtaining permanent residency can entail additional bureaucratic and social challenges.

Another significant challenge is finding accommodation. Especially in major cities where high rents and the scarcity of cheap apartments make it difficult for migrants to find adequate housing. This situation can cause stress and financial uncertainty, testing migrants' resilience.

The emotional aspect should not be overlooked: many migrants speak of nostalgia for their homeland, for family ties and for friends left behind.

For this reason, none of the respondents said they were sure they wanted to stay permanently in the new country.

Adapting to new rhythms and lifestyles can take considerable time and effort and may not always lead to positive results.

3.2.4 Influencing factors

Another fundamental aspect on which we investigated is that of what were the factors that allowed a successful integration by migrants; In addition, the migrants interviewed were asked to share advice for those who intend to undertake such an experience, these tips are valuable for anyone who is thinking of settling in a foreign country.

The research highlighted the following:

- The first and most obvious key factor for good integration is the learning of the local language, the language learning path can be challenging but it is a valuable investment for long-term success: speaking the language of the host country, migrants can communicate effectively, access job opportunities and actively participate in social and cultural life.
- Another key point is not to try to create your own separate community or to join only people with customs similar to your country of origin, since integration requires interaction with the local culture and building different relationships. It is crucial to abandon preconceptions or stereotypes about the new society, as they can hinder positive interaction and mutual understanding between migrants and residents. Being open and willing to challenge these preconceived ideas can foster better adaptation.
- Some respondents also pointed out that improving support for migrants' families can help create a more stable environment for the adaptation and well-being of all family members.
- Building a network of local contacts is essential: this means getting in touch with the local community, looking for opportunities for collaboration in work or study and actively participating in public life. An open and inclusive attitude can help to overcome initial difficulties.

Suggestions were also received to improve the immigration system: such as better working conditions for immigration administrators and more language assistance for immigrants.

In addition, less practical advice was also received, such as not to give up in the face of the first difficulties and to always keep in mind the reason why the migration path was undertaken.

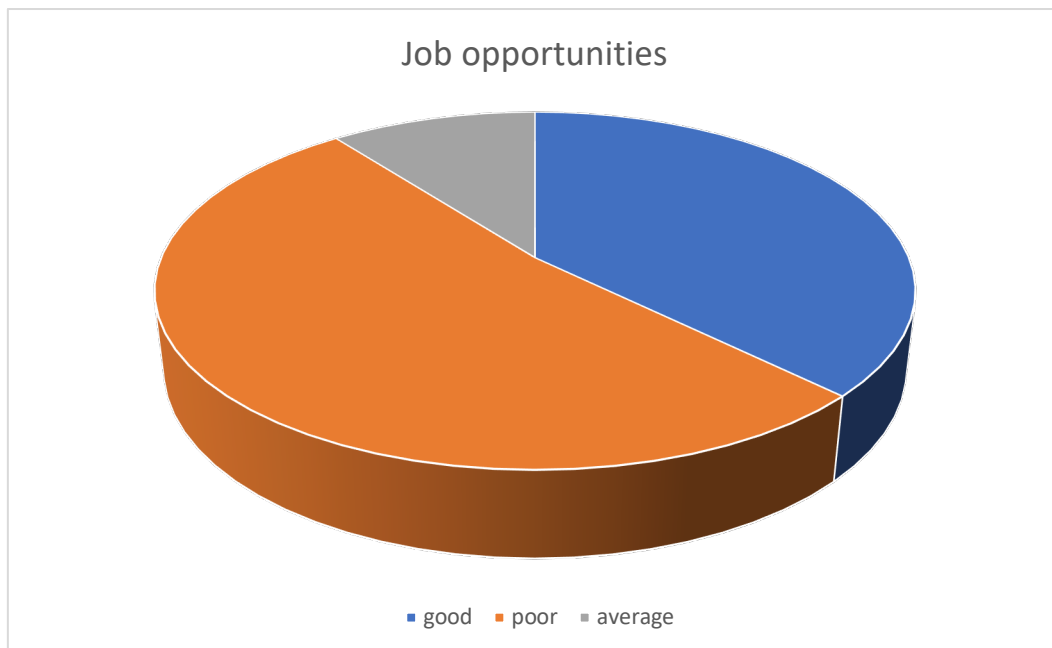
3.3 Quantitative analysis Italy

The demographic composition of the sample as regards Italy is as follows: 10 female and 6 male, all under 40 years of age and from 12 different countries; the professional areas covered are: data science, natural science, material science, entrepreneur, clothes design, economics, NGO's, communication, finance, global development, management, system engineering, robotic engineering, journalism, linguistics.

The young age of the participants could be a positive indicator that Italy is an attractive country for young talent.

The participants did not receive any incentives to move to Italy for work, but those who went to the country to continue their studies received scholarships defined as adequate in proportion to the Italian cost of living; this too could be considered a positive element in promoting the attraction of young talent through university education in this country.

Only 5 people described the job opportunities within the country as 'good', while 4 people described them as 'average' and the remaining 7 as 'poor'.



This first data should already serve as a wake-up call to suggest that the Italian labour market is not highly competitive or open to highly qualified professionals from other countries.

On the basis of these findings, it is important for Italy to consider corrective measures to improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of the labour market for highly

skilled professionals, considering that less than one third of respondents have a positive opinion of the opportunities they encounter.

A dialogue between the private sector, public institutions and civil society organizations could be essential to identify specific challenges and develop solutions to improve integration and job opportunities for highly skilled migrants.

A detailed analysis of the answers concerning the job satisfaction of high-skilled migrants in Italy reveals a complex picture.

It is positive to note that 2 people consider themselves "extremely satisfied" with their job and the role they occupy.

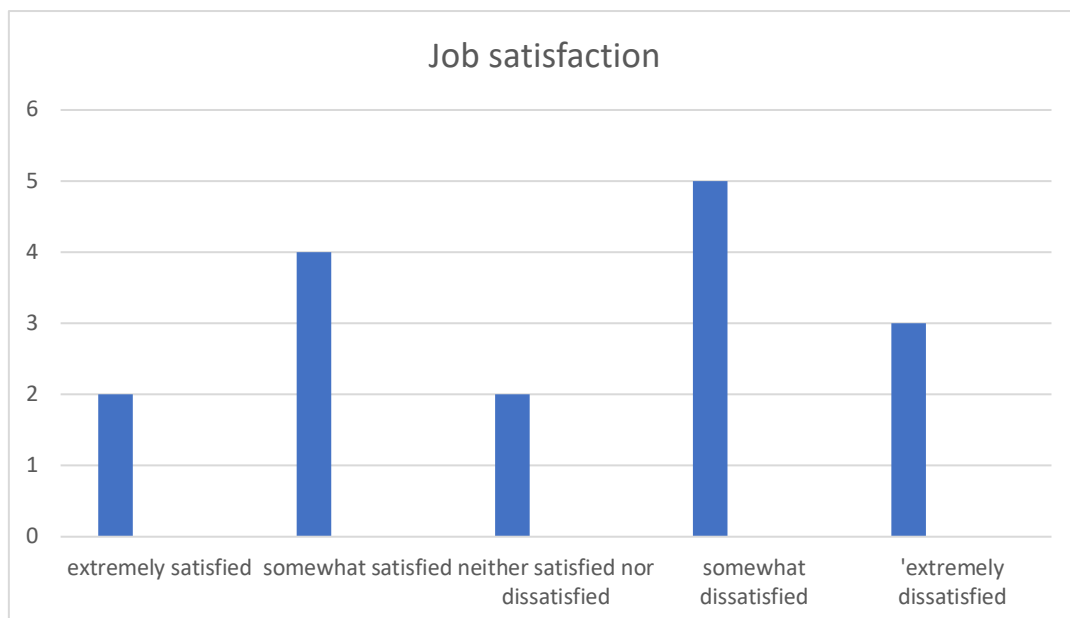
These individuals seem to have found a professional environment that corresponds to their expectations and objectives.

Another 4 people who consider themselves "somewhat satisfied" indicate moderate but not extreme satisfaction. This group may be open to improvements or may have realistic expectations for their working environment.

Another 2 persons declare themselves "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" and might represent a group of workers who do not have a strong opinion about their work situation or who might be in the process of adapting.

The negative side is represented by 5 people who consider themselves 'somewhat dissatisfied'. This suggests that these people might encounter challenges or dissatisfaction related to their work in Italy, but they do not describe these as extreme.

The 3 people who consider themselves 'extremely dissatisfied' report a high and worrying level of dissatisfaction. These people could face serious problems or difficulties in the Italian working environment.



The dissatisfaction of half of the respondents must undoubtedly be considered a worrying indicator for the attraction of foreign talent. Investigating in more depth, it emerged that many people are dissatisfied with their jobs and roles because they are very often over-qualified for the jobs for which they are required. Other critical elements according to the interviewees are the almost total lack of career opportunities within the country and inadequate salaries for leading a comfortable life.

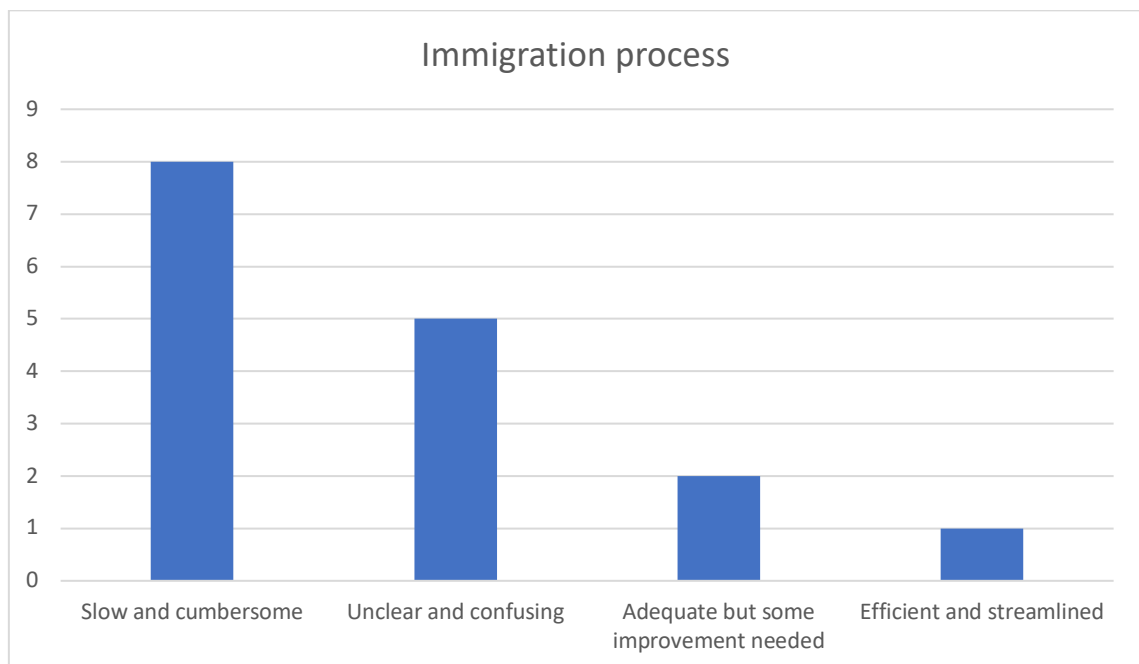
The fact that 8 out of 16, the 50% of respondents, assessed the immigration process as "slow and cumbersome" indicates that there is a widespread perception of obstacles and delays during the bureaucratic process. This certainly negatively affects Italy's attractiveness for international talent.

Most people stated that they had experienced problems with Italian bureaucracy and online government services.

An additional 5 people, more than 30% of the sample, described it as "unclear and confusing" indicating a lack of clarity and comprehensibility in the process. This could be due to the documentation not necessarily being provided in English to migrants, thus creating complications and misunderstandings about the obligatory steps to be taken.

The opinion of only 1 person who rated the process as "efficient and streamlined" is a significant minority and it should also be considered that it came from the only person interviewed who came from an EU country, so the process was certainly facilitated by the rules in place that allow for the free movement of people within member states.

The 2 people who considered the entire immigration process "adequate but in need of improvement" represents too small a number to consider that the system adopted so far is functional and sustainable for a country whose goal is to attract qualified personnel from foreign countries.



There is a clear need to review and improve the immigration process in Italy for highly skilled immigrants. This could include simplifying bureaucracy, reducing waiting times and providing clearer and more accessible information.

An important step to identify areas requiring specific improvements could be the involvement of highly skilled immigrants in decision-making and policy review.

The aim should be to make the immigration process more attractive and welcoming for international talent, while improving efficiency and clarity.

Another worrying fact is that only 32% of people claimed not to have experienced any kind of culture shock, on the contrary, about 68% of respondents said they had experienced a culture shock.

The main aspects that negatively affected foreigners in Italy were two:

- racism, which was also manifested by some of the “Questura” employees; this is a scourge that has plagued society for far too long and which the government should seriously combat with appropriate sanctions against anyone who manifests racist episodes in any sphere of society;
- exploitation in the workplace practiced mainly by small and medium-sized companies in the form of not paying for extra hours or offering unpaid internships for jobs where no special qualifications are required and there is no chance of future employment. The European Community, and specifically the Italian government, should ban these types of contracts, since very often young graduates, foreigners and nationals, are offered internships for unskilled and simple jobs, just to avoid paying a full salary with all the benefits it entails (holidays, sickness, leave, etc.). These types of contracts distort the labour market, benefiting only business owners who can continue to hire staff in the form of interns without a numerical limit and without the obligation to pay them a salary. It is fair to point out that these types of contracts reduce the supply of decently paid jobs to provide training that is very often not provided.

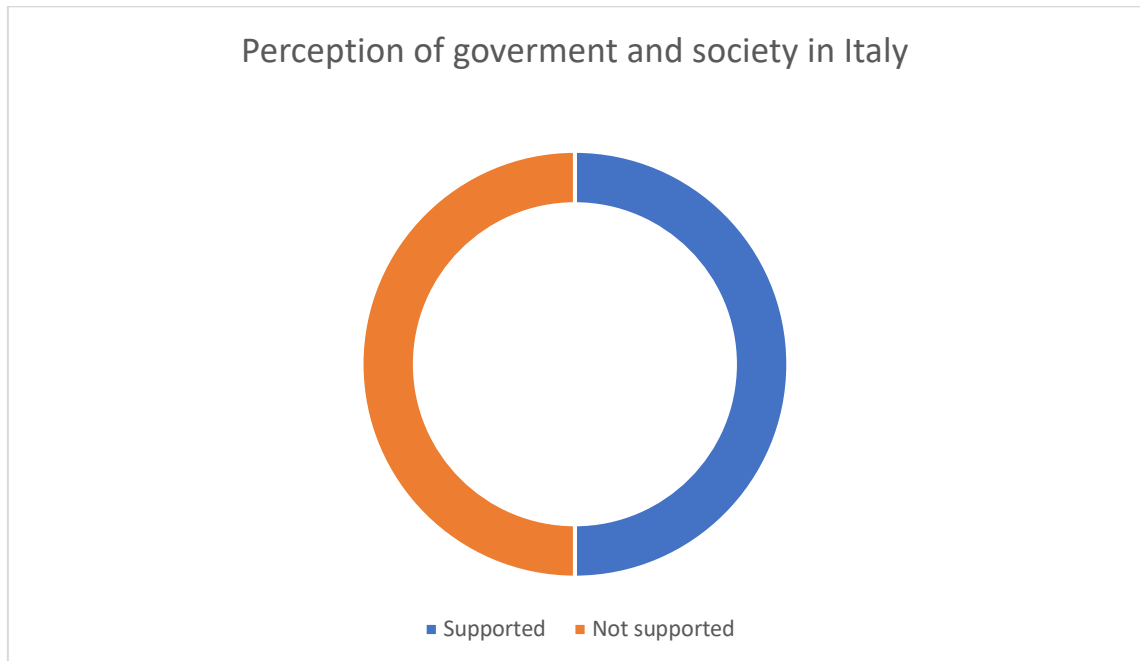
The 50% of the respondents stated that they felt supported by the government and society during the immigration process. In particular, the positive role of universities in assisting foreign students was mentioned.

The fact that foreign students found in the university a reference body to resolve doubts and obtain all necessary information on documentation is a strength. This support can be crucial to ensure that students can focus on their studies and are able to successfully integrate into Italian academic life.

It was also mentioned that the process for obtaining residence permits for students is simplified compared to that for labour migrants, which can be a positive incentive for international students.

Despite these positive results, there is still a 50% of people who did not perceive the necessary support during the immigration process. This indicates that there are areas

where the government and society could improve assistance and support for highly skilled immigrants.



The difference in perception between foreign students and labour migrants can be noted. To improve the attractiveness of the country, the government could consider applying some of the student facilitation practices to high-skilled workers as well.

The 50% of the respondents had problems with obtaining a visa for various reasons: some stated that the problems were due to unclear instructions that result in a large loss of time; others attributed the problems to an exaggerated segmentation of the process that requires them to make numerous appointments to carry out the various steps necessary for the immigration process (e.g. an appointment to make the application, one for biometric data and one to collect the document).

Finally, another problem encountered was that of the financial guarantees required, which were considered too high by people from less developed countries.

In contrast to this figure is the one concerning the recognition of academic qualifications, as more than 80% of the respondents found no problems in the recognition of academic qualifications.

This data highlights once again that Italy is more capable of attracting young talents who need to complete their studies than it is of attracting already trained talents looking for a job.

Moreover, most respondents who are completing their studies in Italy consider this country merely a stage to enrich their knowledge and then emigrate again to other countries with a more attractive labour market and better working conditions. This indicates that, although Italy may attract young talents for education, it may find it difficult to retain these talents once they have completed their studies.

3.4 Qualitative analysis Italy

3.4.1 Motivations

When analyzing what motivated skilled migrants to choose Italy as a destination, it emerged that quality of life played a key role in their choice. Many migrants were motivated by curiosity and a desire to learn and experience a new culture and a different lifestyle. The work or study experience in Italy is seen as an opportunity for personal growth and cultural enrichment, and moreover, the customs and traditions of Italian culture represent a myth around the world that attracts many people curious to emulate this lifestyle.

At the same time, the factor of education within the country was very important, in fact, for many the decision to move to Italy was based on specific research into the quality of education and the value of the education offered in the country, the fact of being able to take advantage of study programmes offered in English and at affordable prices was another factor taken into consideration.

Italian universities are recognized for their academic excellence, which has influenced the choice of those wishing to pursue advanced study; the opportunity for scholarships and financial facilities has been a key factor for some migrants in choosing Italy as a study destination.

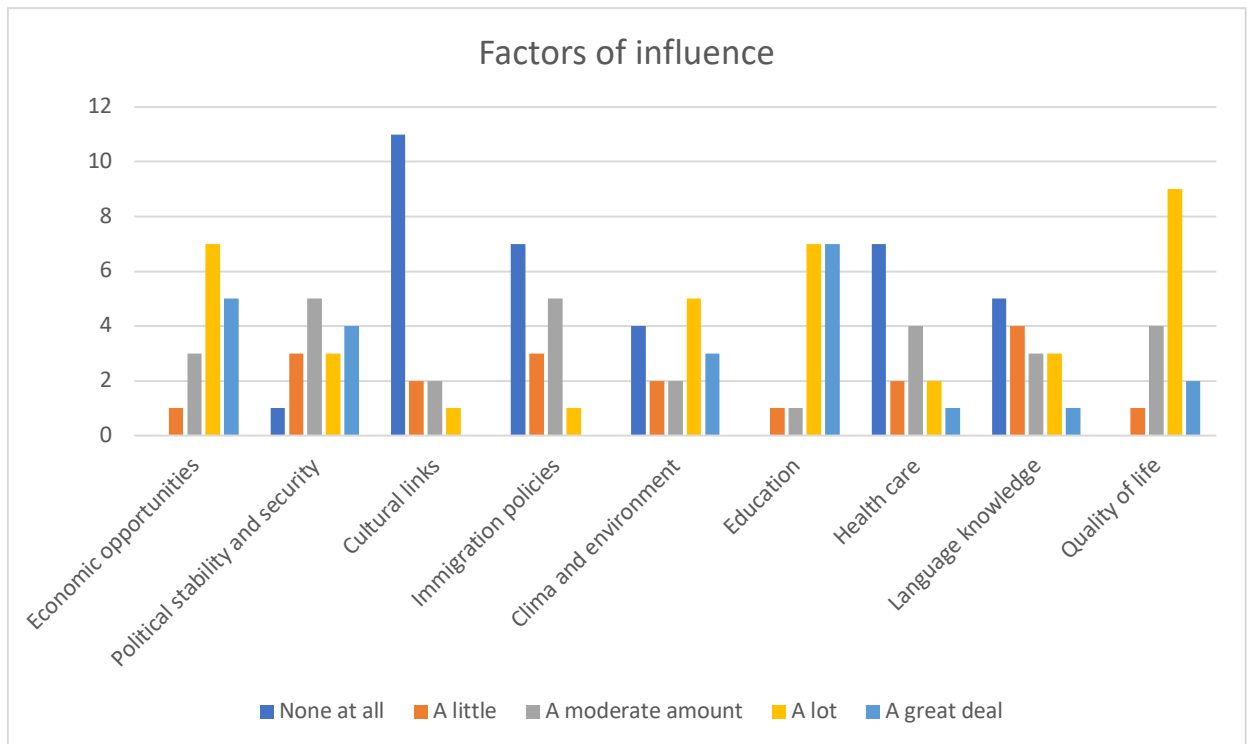
Economic conditions in some countries of origin were also a contributing factor: the difficulty of finding job opportunities and the economic crisis prompted many to seek better prospects in Italy. A stronger social protection system, higher wages and Italy's unique culture were considered attractive factors.

In contrast, cultural ties and immigration policies did not strongly influence the choice of destination.

A niche of migrants chose Italy because they had already achieved an intermediate level of Italian before moving, this language competence made adaptation to the new environment easier.

So did other migrants who had Italian roots, with cultural aspects often handed down from past generations, and this cultural and linguistic connection sparked a deep interest in Italy, its language and culture.

Moreover, in some cases, the presence of family members in Italy played a decisive role as the possibility of having a family support network made the arrival and adaptation to the new country easier.



3.4.2 Comparative advantages

This research also sought to reveal the main comparative advantages migrants seek in their country of destination.

Many migrants from regions with high rates of crime and violence seek a safer country in Italy, where they can live without constant fear for their safety and that of their loved ones.

Italy also offers relative stability, both economic and political, which can be a rarity in some parts of the world. This vision of stability is perceived as fundamental to building a solid future for oneself and one's family.

In addition, a better quality of life, higher salaries and a more pleasant climate than in their home countries are sought after in Italy.

The cultural aspect also plays a significant role: Italy is renowned for its rich artistic history and world-famous museums, and this cultural heritage has been cited as a source of inspiration and appreciation by many skilled migrants.

It is not only cultural beauty that is important, but many people in fact report being also attracted by the opportunities for higher education in Italy, with access to scholarships, university canteens and other transport-related bonuses. A quality education system is a driving factor for those seeking to improve their skills and knowledge.

The topic of multiculturalism is also relevant, as many consider working with people from different cultural backgrounds and studying in a foreign language to be personally and professionally enriching.

3.4.3 Challenges

It is important to realize that, despite the skills and qualifications of these people, the integration process in Italy can be an arduous and complex path and can present challenges and difficulties along the way. In the qualitative analysis, the main challenges faced by participants were mentioned.

These include:

- **Complexity of Immigration Procedures:** many skilled migrants complain about the complexity of Italian immigration procedures, even if they speak the language. The perception of having to constantly struggle to stay in the country creates a sense of insecurity. Moreover, as non-EU nationals, they often must deal with different and more complex procedures than EU citizens, which requires significant efforts to obtain correct information and assistance.
- **Bureaucracy and long waiting for Residence Permit:** bureaucracy can be a significant obstacle for skilled migrants in Italy. Many times, they do not receive clear explanations about the procedures and face long waits for a residence permit, which can last for years. This creates uncertainty and anxiety.
- **Language barrier:** despite skills, the language barrier can still be a challenge, as very often employees in public offices do not have an adequate level of English. Furthermore, to work in some sectors, it is essential to know Italian. Language can also be an obstacle to finding housing and integrating into the community.
- **Social isolation and lack of support:** many skilled migrants feel isolated due to the lack of an immediate supportive community, the lack of networking opportunities and the difficulty in making contacts can further complicate the integration process.
- **Financial problems:** some migrants have experienced financial problems, often due to the absence of work or the costs associated with the integration process. Some have had to resort to loans or help from friends to meet expenses; in addition, finding suitable accommodation can be problematic due to high costs or lack of availability, which can further strain migrants' economic stability.

3.4.4 Influencing factors

We discussed the comparative advantages, motivations and challenges that migrants face once they arrive, but there is another key aspect to explore: integration success. One of the key themes that emerged from the research was the factors that contribute to the successful integration of migrants in Italy.

Migrants shared some valuable strategies and tips that may be useful for anyone considering embarking on such an experience.

Again, the key point highlighted by the migrants is knowing the culture of the host country; the Italian language was identified as a crucial skill for successful integration, but at the same time, it is equally important to understand Italian traditions, social norms and mentality, as they are a predominant aspect of everyday life in the country. Not understanding the customs rooted in the Italian mentality makes it difficult to integrate into such a traditionalist society.

Some also feel that Italy is not always welcoming to foreigners and hope that there are welcoming initiatives to improve the general outlook, such as programmes, policies or actions to facilitate the integration and reception of migrants within a host country.

These initiatives may be promoted by the government, non-governmental organizations, local communities or other institutions. Some examples could be Mentoring programmes to match migrants with local mentors who can offer guidance, support and friendship during the integration process; organizing cultural events, festivals or activities that promote mutual understanding between the local community and migrants; promoting awareness among the local population about migrants' problems and needs to promote a more welcoming and inclusive environment.

A very important aspect mentioned by interviewees is mutual listening between the local community and migrants; promoting greater mutual listening requires constant efforts by all stakeholders, including local governments, civil society organizations and citizens themselves.

Initiatives can be proposed to help create a more inclusive environment based on mutual understanding and respect between the two parties, such as informal meetings (dinners, discussion groups or cultural events) between members of the local community and migrants, where they can share experiences and knowledge.

Migrants gave some advice to other people wishing to embark on the same path. The results were very similar to those obtained in Germany, advising mainly on learning the language, getting to know the culture, building a local support network, being open and respectful and actively participating in social life.

In addition, it was recommended that before moving, one should thoroughly research job opportunities, legal requirements and the availability of services in the destination country.

This last aspect seems to me emblematic of the real state of health of the Italian labour market: although the perception of Italy in less developed or developing countries is that of a thriving economy with many opportunities to offer, the reality is quite different. As a matter of fact, Italy struggles to make the most of its talents,

who increasingly find it difficult to find a job that matches their studies and consequently decide to seek greater fortune abroad.

For this reason, it is crucial for migrants about to move, to check the real opportunities in the country, so as not to run into difficulties and problems that were easily foreseeable before their arrival.

3.5 Cross-analysis

Through a comparative analysis that crosses the data obtained in Italy and Germany, it is possible to conduct an in-depth examination of the experiences, perceptions and opinions of skilled workers from both countries. This approach makes it possible to identify similarities and differences in migrants' perspectives, offering a more complete view of the labour dynamics between the two nations.

Firstly, it is crucial to underline the marked disparity in the perception of job opportunities in the two countries: in Germany, all respondents to the survey presented a positive picture of the available job opportunities, while in Italy the majority of respondents expressed negative opinions about it. This discrepancy could be attributed to several factors, including labour market conditions, the quality of positions offered, and the expectations of skilled workers.

In addition, satisfaction with the current environment and the role played within the organization they work for also showed huge differences: in Germany almost all respondents considered themselves satisfied with this aspect; while in Italy half of the participants said they were dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with the new role or work environment.

Yet, if we look at the factors that had influenced the choice of the destination country for the participants, we can see that Italy was chosen mainly for the factor of economic opportunities, like Germany. Consequently, it is useful to reiterate that the perception of the Italian labor market that migrants have before arriving in the country is distorted with respect to the real state of affairs.

Underemployment, that is, the presence of workers who would like to work more, is a persistent problem within the nation, as is the problem of the many young graduates who are forced to accept low-skilled jobs.

In addition, Italy has a relatively high unemployment rate compared to other EU countries and a long history of job insecurity, with a high number of temporary workers, which has led to poor employment stability for many workers.

The aging population is another economic challenge facing Italy with an increasing number of pensioners and a shrinking workforce. In this context, the effective use of the resources represented by skilled migrant workers plays a key role in addressing these challenges. Enhancing migrants' skills and experiences can help mitigate underemployment and provide a solid basis for addressing an ageing population, fostering economic growth and long-term stability. Therefore, it is essential to promote policies and initiatives that foster the integration of skilled migrant workers into the Italian labour market, recognizing their potential contribution to the socio-economic progress of the country.

It can be seen that the main factors determining the choice of Germany as a destination were mainly of an economic, political and security nature. These elements are of

fundamental importance as they contribute to creating a favorable environment for the development of a solid and lasting professional career.

On the other hand, the factors that influenced the choice of Italy as a destination country have different nuances. First of all, the education offered at the public level has been a determining factor that has made Italy a popular destination for many students and researchers looking for a place to perfect their academic and professional paths.

Other factors of considerable influence include climatic conditions, the natural environment and the overall quality of life. This suggests that people who choose Italy as their destination prefer to attach more importance to everyday aspects than Germany, where immigrants seem to prioritize issues related to the work and administrative context.

3.6 Guidelines

The ultimate objective of the study is to improve the Italian immigration system by providing advice to Italian public bodies on how to simplify procedures related to the entry and integration of skilled workers from other countries.

Simplifying the process could not only bring economic benefits, but could also enrich the culture of the community. Skilled immigrants bring with them not only technical skills, but also new perspectives, traditions and ideas that can stimulate innovation and growth in all sectors of society.

A key point to bring innovation within the immigration process is the need to make this process more efficient and digitalized.

Further digitalize the immigration process to reduce reliance on paper and simplify procedures for those who do not have a SPID digital identity.

This can easily be achieved through online procedures: for example, transferring most of the application procedures to the “Questura” on digital platforms would save applicants valuable time and simplify the process for them.

In addition, adding payment terminals directly within the Police Headquarters could prevent applicants from having to go to the Italian Post Office to pay the necessary invoices. This would shorten the process by improving accessibility and convenience for migrants.

Another problem encountered concerns long queues and long waiting times, to address this issue it could be suggested to:

- increase the staff at the Immigration Offices to reduce waiting times and thus guarantee a faster service;
- create a functional and sustainable appointment network that allows applicants to have appointments at a defined time that allows them to avoid further waiting once they arrive at the competent offices.

To simplify interactions with the authorities, online assistance could be improved, so as to allow migrants who do not have clear the steps necessary to complete the immigration process to solve their doubts easily online, thus avoiding that they arrive at

the competent offices without the necessary requirements to carry out all the practices correctly.

Through initiatives such as:

- the implementation of a chat bot to answer migrants' online questions;
- the establishment of an FAQ (Frequently Asked Question) section that contains the questions most asked by migrants towards employees of public bodies;
- the adoption of a Q&A mechanism to provide applicants with maximum information more quickly and efficiently;
- hiring staff dedicated to managing telephone and e-mail inquiries effectively.

It could decongest the influx in public offices of people with the sole need to ask for information or with the necessary documentation that is not suitable or incomplete.

Many qualified migrants have pointed out the difficulties related to residence permits for students, in this regard one could think about issuing a special visa for a period of duration appropriate to their study cycle, such as two years instead of one in the case of students attending two-year Masters, to avoid problems related to the expiry of permits.

A fundamental point that emerged in the research, which unites both respondents for Germany and respondents for Italy, concerns the linguistic issue: very often migrants arriving in Italy cannot speak Italian. It is essential to provide broader support in terms of language learning and other skills to facilitate integration. It would be very useful to provide free language courses for migrants arriving in the country and wishing to learn Italian, to allow them to get in touch with local social initiatives and providing probably the most important tool for the success of a good integration.

In addition, the need for broader support for migrants to simplify their daily lives was underlined, for example reducing waiting times to obtain residence permits, would allow migrants to travel abroad or carry out internships/work experience outside the host country.

Finally, I stress the need to recognize migrants' qualifications adequately, not only from a formal point of view, but above all from a practical side: offering fair contracts and competitive wages that reflect their real experience and competence.

These tips offer a simplified overview of the challenges faced by skilled migrants in Italy and some of the solutions proposed to simplify the immigration process and improve their experience.

3.7 Limits of research

Within each field of study and research, it is essential to recognize and analyze the limitations that accompany the investigation. The present thesis represented a journey into the exploration of the norms governing the attraction of highly skilled migrants to Italy and Germany, but it is essential to underline that any research effort is inherently subject to borders and restrictions. These limitations not only offer a realistic perspective

on what has been achieved, but also constitute a starting point for future research and refinement.

During this thesis, considerable efforts have been made to fully understand the problems encountered by migrants once they arrived in the country of destination. However, like any research, this one also has limitations that must be carefully considered.

These limitations may result from methodological constraints, technical limitations, theoretical choices or the availability of resources. In this section, I will try to explain the main limitations of my research.

Through an honest and thoughtful discussion of the limits, I intend to provide readers with a complete picture of the challenges faced during the research path.

In addition, this section serves as a testament to the intellectual honesty and critical awareness that are fundamental to the practice of academic research.

The main limitations of the research are the following:

- Limitations of the analysis sample: one of the main limitations of this research concerns the size and composition of the analysis sample. Gathering meaningful responses was a challenge, and the sample obtained may not be fully representative of the reference population. This could affect the generalizability of the results and limit the external validity of the study.
- Age restrictions of respondents: a second limit concerns the age of the participants involved in the study. As the research methodology was based on the distribution of an online questionnaire, a bias towards relatively young respondents emerged. This resulted in the exclusion of a potential group of older individuals from participation, thus limiting the general representativeness of the data collected and the possibility of obtaining a complete overview of the subject matter.
- Lack of personal interaction: a further significant limitation of this research was the lack of personal interaction with respondents, resulting from the use of an online questionnaire as the main data collection tool. This approach resulted in a shortage of context and opportunities to clarify any ambiguities in the responses provided by participants. The absence of direct dialogue and deeper in-depth analysis may have limited the ability to obtain qualitative insights and to fully understand the context of the responses. Therefore, it should be considered when evaluating conclusions and interpretations of the results, since there may be uncertainty associated with the complete understanding of the answers without the possibility of direct interaction with the participants.
- Failure to survey regional differences: a further relevant limitation of the present research concerns the failure to investigate possible regional differences in participants' perceptions and responses. The analysis carried out focused on a national basis, but did not elaborate on whether there were significant variations between different administrative regions. This limitation may have led to an excessive generalization of the results on a national scale, without the ability to identify any nuances or regional differences that could be relevant to the complete understanding of the phenomenon examined. The lack of inclusion of an analysis of regional differences may have limited the ability to identify possible

geographically specific patterns or trends, and this should be taken into account when considering the implications and applications of the results at national level. In the future, it would be useful to conduct further research to explore these regional differences and better understand how they may affect perceptions and responses related to the topic of study.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate and answer the fundamental question: "To what extent do targeted policies and incentives influence the preferences of high-skilled immigrants between Italy and Germany as their preferred destinations?". Through the administration of a questionnaire to 26 high-skilled immigrants residing in Italy and Germany, the motives, determinants and challenges that guided these individuals in their immigration process were explored.

The results of this survey revealed distinct and clear trends between the two destination countries under investigation. Policies adopted in Italy have proven capable of attracting young foreign talent who have chosen the country to complete their academic studies or engage in scientific research. However, these policies have proven to be less effective when it comes to attracting highly skilled workers, mainly due to a labour market that often requires an in-depth knowledge of the Italian language and due to a notoriously slow and complex bureaucratic system.

On the contrary, the policies adopted in Germany proved to be functional and effective, eliciting a high degree of satisfaction among survey respondents. In particular, high-skilled immigrants appreciated the economic opportunities offered by the German country and its reputation for security and stability.

These results highlight the need for an in-depth analysis of immigration policies targeting high-skilled workers in both countries, with a particular emphasis on optimizing Italian policies to make the country more attractive to this category of migrants. In addition, they suggest the relevance of policies that facilitate the integration of migrants through language learning programmes and the recognition of qualifications, in order to maximize the benefits of the presence of high-skilled workers in national economies.

The conclusions of this thesis are based on an analysis of the impact of specific policies and incentives adopted by Italy and Germany to attract highly skilled immigrants. The primary objective of the study was to provide pragmatic recommendations to Italian public bodies to improve the efficiency of processes and interactions with high-skilled migrant workers, with the aim of making Italy a more attractive destination for this category of migrants.

These recommendations are based on a tailor-made approach that takes into account the different expectations of these migrants and aims to create a favorable environment for their integration and contribution to the host country.

First, digitalization of the immigration process was suggested to speed up and simplify procedures. This innovation would not only reduce bureaucracy but also make Italy more competitive internationally in attracting highly skilled foreign professionals.

In addition, increased staffing in public offices has been proposed to ensure a faster and more efficient service in handling migrants' paperwork. A functional online booking system could further improve the experience of highly skilled migrants by reducing waiting times and simplifying administrative procedures.

With regard to online assistance, a better availability of resources to help migrants understand and navigate the immigration process was recommended. This would help those who may have doubts or uncertainties about the steps required to complete the immigration process.

The idea of considering the provision of a special visa with a duration appropriate to the study or work cycle of highly skilled migrants was put forward, making Italy even more attractive to this category of individuals.

The provision of free language courses was recommended to foster migrants' integration into Italian society and facilitate their communication and interaction with the local context.

Finally, the importance of recognizing migrants' qualifications was emphasized, not only formally but also through adequate employment contracts and competitive wages that fully reflect their experience and skills, thus encouraging their full participation and engagement in the Italian economy and society.

In conclusion, these recommendations aim to improve Italy's attractiveness as a destination for highly skilled migrants, contributing to the country's economic and cultural development. However, to be successful, close cooperation between the public sector, the private sector and civil society will be crucial to effectively implement these integration policies and make Italy a welcoming place for those who wish to contribute to its progress.

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