

How Italian Elder Care and Immigration Policies Disproportionately Provide Job Security to Female Migrants

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ABSTRACT

Kelsey L. Fraser: How Italian Elder Care and Immigration Policies Disproportionately Provide Job Security to Female Migrants (Under the Direction of Rahsaan Maxwell)

Between the years of 2005-2013 foreign-born females living in Italy enjoyed a period of relative job stability despite the fact that the labor market endured a number of external shocks (i.e. the economic crisis, increased migrant flows, low levels of economic growth). In this time period, the unemployment rate of foreign-born females rose seven percentage points, while other vulnerable groups (e.g. foreign-born men, youth) in the Italian labor-market experienced a more dramatic rise in unemployment. This thesis will explain this relative job stability during this time period through an examination of Italy's elder care and immigration policies, and how the concentration of female migrants in the care industry has shielded them from the impacts of the economic crisis. In the end, the stability that foreign-born females have experienced is a positive, but does not eliminate the other vulnerabilities that female migrants face in their day-to-day lives. This thesis will argue that in order for the Italian state to prevent a long-term problem and maintain Italian society's preference for home care it will be necessary for Italy to create legislation that moves care work out of the informal sector. This will facilitate the integration of female migrant care workers into society and make the growing care sector more attractive to other groups within the labor market.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The women of the world who, for one reason or another, chose to put others before themselves inspired this thesis. I have always been intrigued by the issue of work and family reconciliation, which ultimately led to me choosing a thesis topic relating to this area of social policy and its intersection with female migration. While this thesis only studies a small phenomenon, it touches on why a decent work environment isn't just something determined by the employer/employee relationship. It relates to the alignment of government policies, private sector policies and societal preferences. Without changes in the policy priorities and preferences in a society, decent work, equality, and greater job security will continue to be a distant reality.

I would like to thank the scholastic communities that have helped me finish this project, including the University of Siena, the University of Bath, and most importantly the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The TAM program has challenged me and given me the political science backbone I was looking for, while at the same time given me a chance to research and explore a wide array of topics that interest me. I would like to personally thank Dr. Rahsaan Maxwell of UNC, who has provided excellent guidance, challenged some of my original assumptions, and given me swift and clear feedback throughout this process. It has been a pleasure working under you on this thesis.

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Introduction

Italy as a traditional familial state has been challenged by new social risks that have emerged and are eliciting a response from both the state and society. For the Italians, the most pressing social risk relates to the state's rapidly aging population. Italy currently possesses one of the oldest populations in Europe; a status that will require increased attention as traditional sources of elder care labor in the state dwindle. Population aging is not only a concern for the Italians, it is an issue of concern across European states where low fertility rates and longer life expectancies have altered population demographics. What makes the Italian case different is not only the government's lack of direct reform to formal elder care policies, but its quiet support of migrant labor as the informal solution for the state's care needs.

This thesis will explain the lack of a significant rise in the unemployment rate for foreign-born females living in Italy between 2005-2013. While other vulnerable groups in the Italian labor market experienced sharp increases in unemployment during these years, migrant females were less affected by the external shocks that negatively influenced overall employment in the Italian state. This paper will make the case that the relative job security experienced by female migrants in Italy is a result of the interplay between Italian long-term elder care policies, immigration policies, and societal preferences. The interplay of these policies and societal norms contribute to the high concentration of migrant women who are employed in the care sector. Overall, this concentration has helped protect foreign-born females as a whole during a time when unemployment rates for all employment groups were and still are on the rise.

To begin, the paper will discuss the increased pressure that new social risks and Italy's aging population are placing on the Italian state. Then an overview of the feminization of migration in Italy will be given to provide a greater understanding of why the care sector is dominated by female migrants. Next, this thesis will compare job security by looking at changes in unemployment rates for foreign-born women, foreign-born men, and youths in Italy between 2005-2013. These three groups are arguably the most vulnerable within the Italian labor market. This will display the stable position that foreign-born women had within the labor market between 2005-2013.

A summary of Italian long-term elder care and immigration policies will be put forth in order to reveal the disproportionate protection that migrants working in the care sector (predominantly female) benefit from. Although this job security is an encouraging outcome for migrant women living in Italy, it is merely a short-term positive consequence. These policies do not protect migrant care workers from unfavorable working environments or regulate their profession due to the fact that the majority of care work finds its place within Italy's vast underground economy. Therefore, in order to provide female migrants with opportunities to integrate themselves more formally into the Italian economy and society, these policies need to be reviewed and challenged. To conclude, an argument will be made that in order for Italy to maintain its society's preference for home care, it will be necessary for Italy to take steps to move care work out of the informal sector. This will help to integrate female care workers into Italian society and make the growing care sector more attractive to other groups within the labor market. |

Chapter I – New Social Risks in Italy

Italy is commonly referred to as a familial welfare state. Similar to other southern European nations, the family is expected to be the primary source of care for family members. This includes both the young and the old who are unable to care for themselves. Due to the endurance of traditional gender roles in Italy, where the male is the ‘breadwinner’ and the female is responsible for maintaining the household, the burden of care is primarily placed on the females within a household. This includes spouses, daughters, and daughter-in-laws (Da Roit et al., 2007, pg. 657). As demographic, economic, and socio-cultural changes have presented themselves within Italian society, new social risks have emerged for the Italian state to address. These new social risks have undoubtedly begun to alter the traditional family values and gender roles that have endured in Italy, but have not radically upset the status quo in the daily lives of Italians as of yet.

For Italy, the most pressing social risk relates to the state’s rapidly aging population. Italy has one of the oldest populations in the world. The proportion of the population over age 65 is rapidly increasing. At the current rate of aging, the proportion of the Italian population aged 65+ is estimated to reach nearly one third of the state’s total population by the year 2040 (See Table Below).

Estimated Proportion of Italian Population Aged 65+ and 80+

Percentage of Italian Population Aged 65+

2014	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060	2070
21.3	22.3	25.1	28.8	29.9	30.0	31.3

Percentage of Italian Population Aged 80+

2014	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060	2070
6.3	7.1	8.0	9.2	11.8	13.2	12.7

Data Source: Eurostat

Extracted: 03/07/2015

To further complicate Italy's rapidly aging population, the state has seen positive growth in female employment coupled with a delay in retirement (Eurostat, 2007). This has significantly reduced the number of potential familial caregivers, who have traditionally provided informal care in Italy.

The emergence of these new social risks has challenged the sustainability of current welfare state policies, but Italian attitudes and preferences for home care have held off dramatic reforms by the government. Instead the traditional 'family' model of care, where the matriarch has provided for the care and domestic needs of the household, has transitioned into a 'migrant in the family' model. The hiring of cheap migrant labor as a means of long-term elder care has become a common practice within Italian households. This phenomenon has been quietly

supported by policy measures put forth by the Italian government over the past 30 years. (Bettio, 2006, pg. 272).

Chapter II – Female Migration to Italy

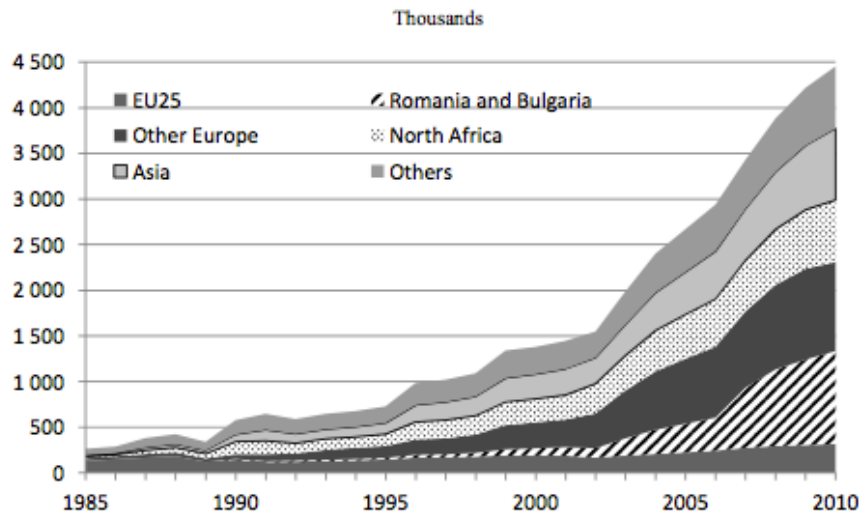
A. Origins and Arrival

The feminization of migration into Italy over the past forty years has been driven by a high demand for low-skilled workers and growing levels of female employment outside of the home (Bettio, 2006, pg. 272). Female migrants from all parts of the world have come to Italy to meet the demand for cheap labor in low-skill sectors. Another draw for female migrants in recent years has been the prospect of family reunification. Women and children are joining their husbands who had previously migrated to Italy upon the legalization of the husband's worker status (OECD, 2014, pg. 15). Upon arrival, many of these women who have reunified their families in Italy seek employment within the labor market. As previously mentioned, the majority of these migrant women find work in the care or domestic labor sector.

Following the formation of the new republic in 1948, migration flows into Italy primarily came from neighboring nations. Starting in the 1970s, new patterns began to emerge. Large flows of migrants arrived from Morocco, Tunisia, and the Philippines. Beginning in the 1990s, the majority of labor migrants were arriving from Africa and Albania, followed by large inflows from Ukraine and Romania towards the end of the decade. Migrants from Latin America and other Asian nations began arriving towards the late 1990s. In the late 2000s, the majority of migrants arriving in Italy were Romanian and Bulgarian. This pattern emerged following their countries' accession to the European Union

(OECD, 2014, pg. 44). The chart below displays the origin of migrant flows into Italy between the years 1985 and 2010.

Foreign population by regional nationality between 1985-2010



Source: OECD (2013), *International Migration Outlook 2013*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2013-en.

Despite the news coverage that has highlighted Italy’s porous sea borders and dangerous attempts by desperate refugees to reach the European shores by boat, most migration into Italy does not occur in this fashion. The majority of migrant workers who come to Italy enter legally by means of a tourist visa, student visa, or on a trip to visit relatives or friends who have previously settled there. These migrants overstay their visa, searching for or taking up employment in Italy’s vast underground economy. A study completed in 2005 by the IREF looked specifically at the entrance of migrant care workers into Italy. This study found that 63.1% of the migrant care workers surveyed entered Italy on a tourist visa, which they had overstayed. 18.4% of the respondents entered Italy completely undocumented. The remaining 20% of those migrant care workers surveyed entered through

legal channels provided by the government, which include the provision of family reunification or employment visas (IREF, 2007).

B. Push and Pull Factors

The majority of migrant women who arrive in Italy are economically motivated and come in search of labor market opportunities. The Italian state is an ideal location for this because it has a high demand for low-skilled labor. Moreover, Italy has a thriving underground economy tied with low levels of law enforcement. This makes it easy for illegal migrants to remain invisible.

When it comes to push factors, the most common factors that drive females to leave their home country are political and economic instability. Asylum applications in Italy have fluctuated during different time periods throughout the last 40 years, but humanitarian migrant arrivals are small in number in comparison to economic and family migrants (OECD, 2014, pg. 44). Additionally, the notion that care and domestic work is “naturally feminine,” has influenced some countries of origin to begin to specialize in exporting female care migrants to European countries. An overwhelming number of female migrants have arrived in Italy in waves from the Philippines, Cape Verde, Poland and Ukraine in direct response to the demand for low-cost migrant care following their home government’s push for women from these countries to enter global care chain (Bettio, 2006, pg. 276).

C. Female Migrant Concentration in the Care Sector

While employment of native Italian women is reasonably diverse across occupational sectors, the same cannot be said about the occupations of foreign-born women living in Italy.

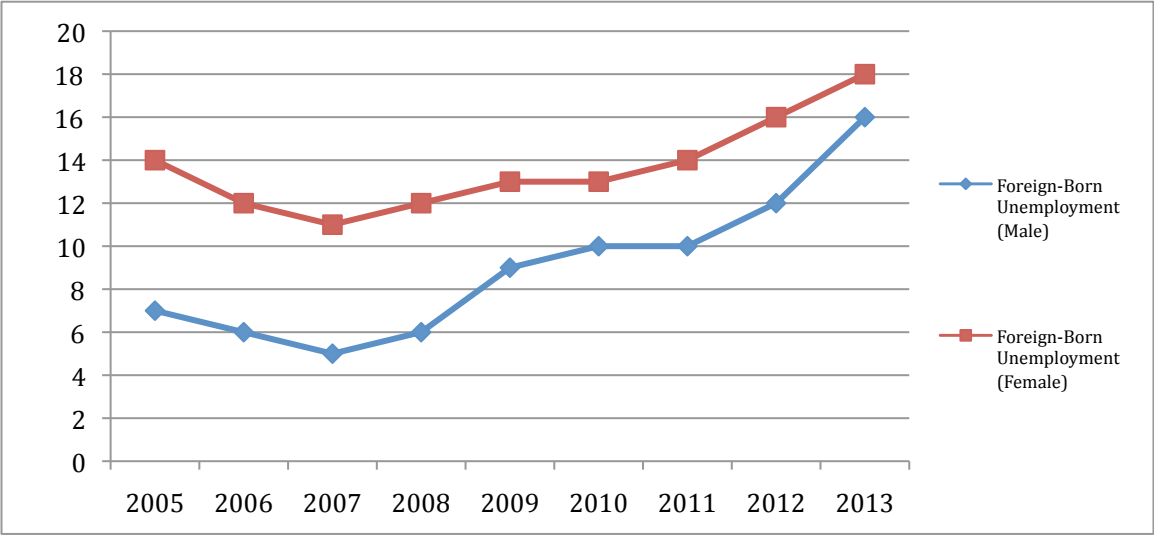
Migrant employment concentration in personal care services has become increasingly visible in Italian society, with one out of two migrant women employed in this sector (OECD, 2014, pg. 20). While the care sector employs well above 50% of female migrants living in Italy, only 8% of all native-born females in the labor force are employed in the sector (OECD, 2014, pg. 76). Following the 2002 migrant regularization, which helped the state to more accurately document the number of migrant domestic and care workers in Italy, the Italian government ranked the number of care workers by origin and gender. Unsurprisingly, female migrants were at the top, followed by Italian women, then migrant men, and then Italian men (Castagnone et. al., 2013, pg. 22).

Chapter III – Employment Outcomes 2005-2013

A. Unemployment Rates

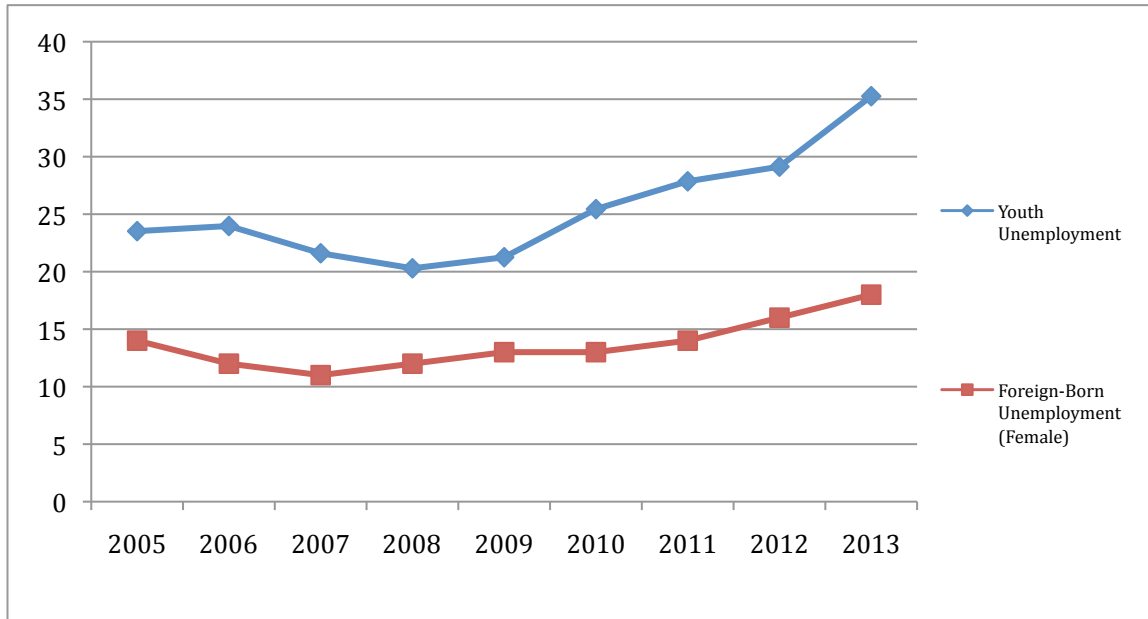
The following charts provide a comparison of the unemployment rates of foreign-born women, foreign-born men, and native youths of both genders between 2005 and 2013. These three populations are arguably the most vulnerable groups within the Italian labor market. For all three groups considered, the rise in unemployment begins in 2007 or 2008 and continued to grow through 2013.

Foreign-Born Unemployment (Gender Comparison)



Data Source: OECD Database
Extracted: 03/18/2015

Foreign-Born Female / Youth Unemployment Comparison



Data Source: OECD Database
Extracted: 03/18/2015

Foreign-born females saw a seven percent rise between the years 2007 and 2013. Youth unemployment, which on average is higher than that of both male and female migrants living in Italy, experienced a much sharper rise (fifteen percentage points). As a result, we can assume that Italian youths entering the labor market have more difficulty finding employment than all competing labor groups in the state.

Overall, the unemployment rate of foreign-born women living in Italy is more than that of foreign-born men. This is to be expected given the fact that women in Italy have a much higher unemployment rate than men amongst natives. However, foreign-born men were affected to a greater degree by the impact of the financial crisis. The unemployment rate of foreign-born men rose more sharply than that of foreign-born females from 2007 onwards, 11% and 7% respectively.

The difference between male and female migrants in terms of job security relates to their sectors of employment. While men are predominantly employed in sectors that rely on increased productivity to produce jobs, women's employment does not rely on this same factor. Male migrants are predominantly employed in industry, construction, and manufacturing, while female migrants are highly concentrated in the care sector (OECD, 2014, pg. 69). The three sectors that migrant males are most commonly employed in are sectors that were greatly affected by the economic downturn. Thus, the occupational concentration of men in vulnerable sectors made migrant men obvious victims of the financial crisis.

Furthermore, the Italian government has stabilized the care sector through its continued use of cash-for-care subsidies that are commonly used in Italian households to offset and/or reduce the cost of hiring outside help to meet their care needs. Foreign-born males and youths largely do not benefit from these policies since they are directed towards the care sector that has appeared to be socially designated as a occupation for female migrants.

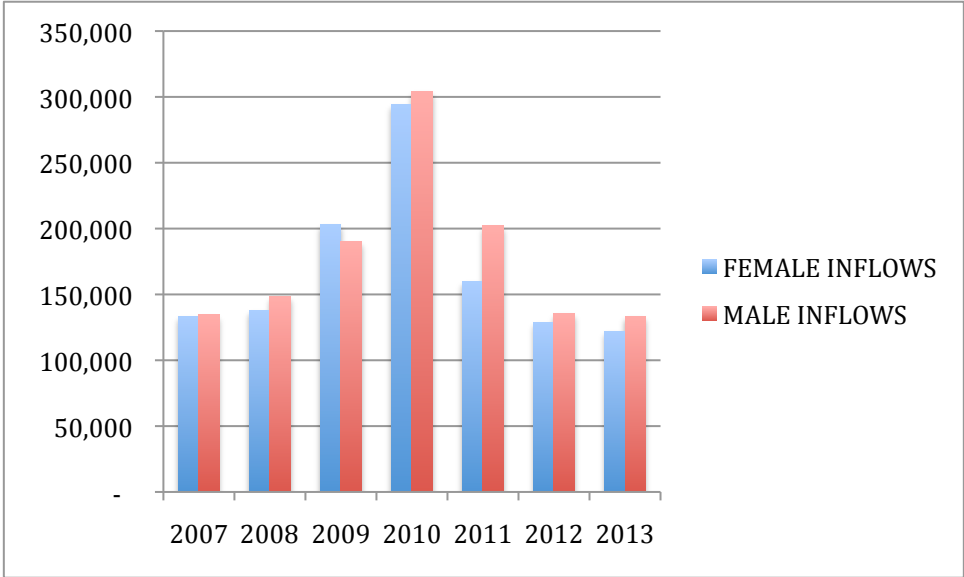
Female migrants were afforded a degree of protection due to their concentration in the care sector (OECD, 2014, pg. 21-22). The demand for female migrant labor stems from other structural aspects present in Italy. Additionally, since it is difficult to increase productivity in an anchored occupation such as care work, it easy is to see why the care sector was impacted less by the financial crisis than sectors such as manufacturing and construction that commonly employ male migrants in Italy. Overall, the unemployment rate of foreign-born women has maintained greater stability due to their concentration in the care sector and the preservation of this type of work being deemed "naturally feminine." This fact

has helped to offset the economic downturn that has clearly affected other low-skill sectors in the Italian economy.

B. Migration Flows and Youth Labor Market Entrants 2007-2013

Between 2007-2013 the foreign population living in Italy grew by over 2 millions persons. Growing migrant inflows could explain the rising levels of unemployment due to increased competition for jobs amongst migrants, but it does not explain why the rise in unemployment was so dramatic for male migrants and less pronounced for female migrants in Italy. The rise in permanent migrant inflows was relatively evenly distributed between males and females with 1,248,274 and 1,178,470 documented entrances of non-EU citizens respectively (See Chart Below). This nullifies the argument that the onset of greater male migrant inflows has contributed to the dramatic rise in unemployment of foreign-born males in Italy between 2005-2013.

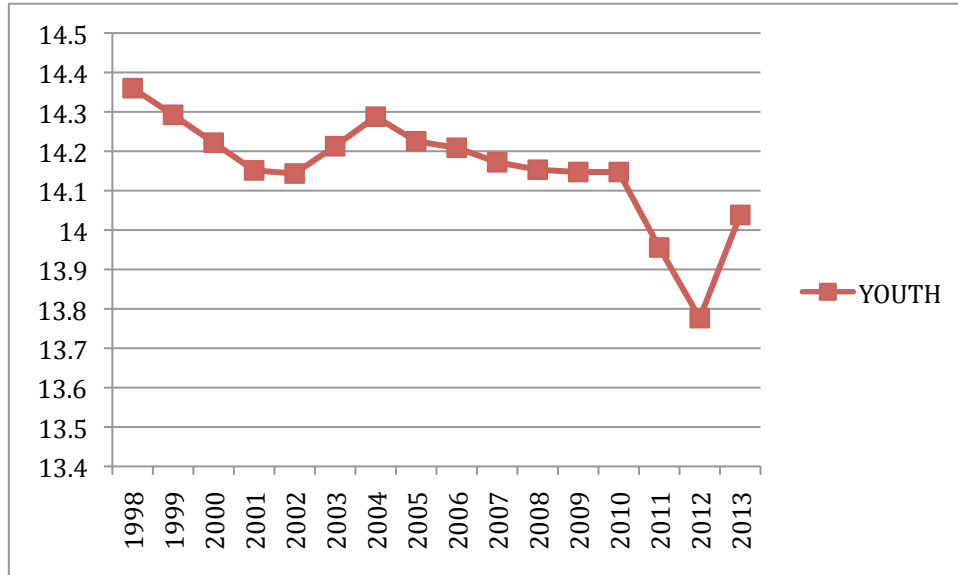
Annual Inflows of Non-EU Citizens (Documented)



Source: Immigrants.stat (<http://stra-dati.istat.it/?lang=en>)

It can also be noted that as the Italian population continues to age, the population distribution changes (See Chart Below).

Young Population (Under Age 15) as a Percentage of Total Population in Italy



Source: OECD
Extracted: 04/01/2015

The proportion of youth entering the labor market each year is slowly declining and thus should lead to lower unemployment rates amongst youths (Blanchflower & Freeman, 2000, pg. 4). Instead, conditions for youths in the labor market worsened between 2007-2013. As the youth population contracts and the migrant population expands, the employment outcomes for these groups are not displaying the expected results. While all groups saw a rise in unemployment with the onset of the global financial crisis, youths who are becoming a smaller proportion of the Italian population are seeing rising unemployment rates. On the other hand, migrants have been less affected by the financial crisis despite increased inflows.

C. Education Levels

Unemployment rates of foreign-born persons are lower overall than those of natives in Italy. This is due to the segmented nature of the Italian labor market that allows labor shortages and high unemployment to occur simultaneously (Reyneri, 2010, pg. 72). The only group of migrants that has higher levels of unemployment than natives in Italy is highly educated migrants (OECD, 2014, pg. 21). Thus, it cannot be argued that highly educated women who arrive in Italy have better labor market outcomes than women with low levels of education. Migrants with low education attainment fair better in the Italian labor market overall. This is due to continued demand for low-skill workers within Italy's most prominent industries (i.e. agriculture, low-skill manufacturing, personal services).

Most immigrants arrive in Italy with low levels of educational attainment, but can easily find work in low-skill sectors or within the informal economy. Education levels vary according to origin of migrants, with many of the Northern African and Asian migrants arriving with at most a primary school education. Less than 10% of migrants arriving in Italy have a tertiary education. Hence, it is no surprise that most migrants, male or female are employed in low-skill sector that until the financial crisis hit provided ample job opportunities for migrants. In comparison there are very few native Italians who have less than a secondary education (OECD, 2014, pg. 37-38).

What is surprising is the relative stability that female migrants have maintained in the Italian labor market in comparison to well-educated youths. Youths have low unemployment rates because they are unable or unwilling to enter into low-skilled sectors where the state's demand for labor currently resides. Since the majority of labor demand is in low-skill sectors,

the Italian labor system needs to invest in industries that are more suitable to the capabilities of its population. Italian youths are well educated, but are disadvantaged by the labor market conditions that have not responded appropriately to the needs of the population. Overall, youths are better educated than foreign-born migrants. This nullifies the assumption that higher education levels are a factor that played into the relative job stability experienced by foreign-born females.

Chapter IV - Italian state policies that provide disproportionate job security to female migrant care workers

The next section will focus solely on how Italian elder care and immigration policies have maintained the demand for migrant labor to meet national elder care needs, while also providing a sense of job security to female migrants who are overwhelmingly employed in this sector in comparison to other groups within the Italian labor force. The argument will be made for the need to widen the conversation regarding elder care reform in Italy in order to ameliorate the migration policy cycle that has emerged from the state's legacy of little involvement in caring for its aging population. It is important to recognize and tease out both the short-term and long-term consequences of policy decisions in these two sectors, as well as the imminent need for substantial reforms to facilitate the move of care work out of the informal sector to benefit society as a whole.

A. Legal Responsibility and 'Cash-for-Care'

The Italian welfare regime was built upon the assumption that care needs would be the responsibility of the family. This tradition has continued to influence the level of engagement that the Italian government puts into responding to the needs of its rapidly aging population. Essentially, the Italian state has developed a tendency towards non-involvement in elder care, and the Italian population has not mobilized to demand more from the government in terms of long-term elder care services. This "familial" responsibility is even written into the Italian

civil code, which suggests that the state should only have to intervene when all possible familial avenues of care have been exhausted. The Italian civil code, which was reformed in 1975 designates that the next of kin that is responsible for the care of elderly relatives extends to, “spouses, children, parents, siblings, sons and daughters-in-law, and parents-in-law” (Naldini, 2004, pg. 122). This extensive range of familial responsibility minimizes the liability of the Italian state, and has helped to maintain a strong sense of familial conscientiousness among its citizens.

Today, Italian policies towards elder care are based on cash transfers provided to citizens in need of care, commonly referred to as a ‘cash-for-care’ scheme. There are three different schemes in which elderly Italians can claim cash benefits for their care needs. The first is a means-tested disability pension in which qualified individuals receive approximately 255 Euros a month. The second allowance, which is not means-tested, is known as the ‘*indennità di accompagnamento*,’ which literally translates as ‘attendance allowance’. This allowance pays 472 Euros a month to eligible citizens, and 756 Euros a month for blind citizens. Lastly, depending on the region of Italy that a citizen lives in, they may be eligible for an additional means-tested allowance that pays out between 300 and 500 Euros a month (Di Rosa, 2011, pg. 14). It is estimated that the monthly cost of a live-in migrant care worker who provides around the clock care is between 700 and 900 Euros per month. Therefore, if elderly Italians are eligible for one or more of the above cash allowances, it significantly reduces or offsets the entire cost of their care needs (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 8).

The ‘*indennità di accompagnamento*’ is the most widespread ‘cash-for-care’ payout among elderly Italians. This cash allowance began in 1980 and was originally created solely to serve the care needs of severely disabled individuals. Soon it was expanded to serve the needs of

the frail elderly (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 6). It is a state funded allowance that is managed and administered by regional and local authorities. The funding structure allocates a great deal of discretion to these regional authorities in determining whether individuals are eligible for care funding.

The ‘indennità di accompagnamento’ has the greatest influence on the marketization of private home care and contributes to the state’s reliance on migrant care workers. It should also be noted that this cash allowance is paid in addition to the generous pensions that Italian citizens receive from the state. What makes this ‘cash-for-care’ policy different from similar schemes in place in other European states is that the Italian policy encourages informality. This is a result of the fact that there are no strings attached to how this money is spent by individuals and families who receive or manage the allowance (Nare, 2013, pg. 606).

B. Lack of Development of Institutionalized Care

As a result of this lack of stipulations for the use of the allowance, many Italians turn towards the grey or underground economy and hire migrant care workers on low wages. This ultimately creates a demand for irregular migrant workers, the majority of whom are female, to take on home care positions for a lower rate of pay, in sometimes unfavorable conditions. These employees crowd out traditional native care workers who engaged in formal work caring for the elderly, due to the fact that migrant women are willing to accept a much lower wage.

Additionally, it allows the employers of care workers to hire individuals informally, which reduces the cost of pension contributions and alleviates the employer of the bureaucratic tasks necessary when it comes to formally hiring an employee. Migrant care labor has also opened up

the private care market to middle and lower class Italians who might not be able to afford to hire someone to satisfy their care needs without the care allowance (Bettio, 2006, pg. 281).

The 'cash-for-care' scheme used in Italy prevents the development of public or private institutionalized care, because individuals and families are more likely to turn the cheap migrant labor before they turn to a public or private care facility. Institutionalized care in Italy remains underdeveloped and does not have the capacity to cope with the need or demand for their services from the general public in the case of a dramatic increase in the demand for these services. On average, only two percent of the Italian population aged 65+ uses institutionalized care. This includes capacity at both public and private institutional facilities (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 6).

The problem here is that while roughly ten percent of Italy's elderly population receives the monthly 'indennità di accompagnamento', based on their proven need for constant care, only two percent can turn to institutional care in the case that their families are unable to meet their care needs (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 6-7). Thus, the remaining eight percent must find alternative options to meet their need for constant care. The relatively small demand for institutionalized care, despite the growing population in need of care services, is also largely attributed to the preferences of the Italian people and the legacy of government non-involvement. Since there is no urgent need to increase the capacity or improve the quality of institutionalized care across Italy it is unlikely that the preference for private home care will change quickly or dramatically. The lack of institutional development is a factor that enables the demand for migrant care workers to remain constant.

C. Overview of Italian Immigration Policy

Italian immigration policy over the past 25 years has shown a number of contradictions, whilst also exhibiting a large degree of continuity. Despite the fact that Italian governing coalitions have spanned the political spectrum during this time frame, the direction of immigration policy has not experienced any revolutionary changes.

Italy uses a permit system for the regulation of migrant workers within its borders. Due to its need for cheap labor, and despite the state's high unemployment rate it, Italy has a quota that changes year-to-year based on projected demand. In addition to the quota of working permits that changes yearly, the Italian government has become accustomed to administering ad-hoc regularization programs due to the state's need for increased documentation of migrants residing within its borders and, more recently, Italy's reliance on migrant care workers. Ad-hoc, mass regularizations have been used by the different governing coalitions despite growing negative attitudes towards migrants throughout Italy. Through the use of makeshift policy actions such as these regularization campaigns, the Italian state contradicts public rhetoric (Zincone, 2006, pg. 347). Such permissive welfare state policies are needed to satisfy the demand for migrant care workers, but at the same time challenges the growing anti-migrant sentiment that is visible in Italy (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 10).

The Turco-Napolitano law of 1998 was the first piece of contradictory legislation. This act took a hard-line approach to the growth of undocumented migration in Italy. It created the first detention facilities that brought in arrested migrants prior to their expulsion. The law contradicted its hard-line policies by creating yearly immigration quotas and supportive measures for immigrants already present in the state. The reasons behind these contradictory

measures within the same legislation are three-fold. First, the European Union was putting a great deal of pressure on Italy at this time due to its entrance into the Schengen area. Italy's porous borders became EU - or at least Schengen - borders and thus the European Union had increased pressure on Italy to beef up border security (Zincone, 2006, pg. 352). Furthermore, the Italian public supported the restrictive measures and the creation of detention centers due to increased anti-immigrant sentiments that stem primarily from a lack of successful migrant socialization across Italy. The measures that supported migrants within the Turco-Napolitano law were a reaction to interest groups pressing for regularization and quota provisions within the legislation. In addition to the quotas that were created, 220,000 undocumented migrants were regularized with the passage of this bill (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 14-15).

The relationship between welfare state reforms and immigration policies can be seen in the legislative proceedings that took place between 2000 and 2002 regarding these two policy sectors. In 2000, when the center-left coalition in Italy tried to pass a comprehensive social services and assistance act, the act did not contain or even address the topic of elder care reform. In 2002, after no reforms occurred, another mass regularization occurred which specifically targeted the care sector. The Bossi-Fini law was an extension of the 1998 legislation, which contained restrictive elements, but also addressed the state's reliance on migrant care workers. This law was passed by the center-right coalition and made up for the lack of attention given to elder care in the attempt social services reform of 2000. In the end, the Boss-Fini law regularized over 316,000 undocumented migrant care workers (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 2).

The Bossi-Fini once again tightened restrictions regarding the legal entrance of migrants into Italy and expanded the capabilities of detention centers for the holding and expulsion of migrants. It also was the first piece of Italian immigration legislation to specifically target care

workers. The targeted part of this law allowed all Italians who had hired a person from outside of the European Union to assist in the care of an elderly or disabled person to apply for the regularization of the migrant whom they hired (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 16).

While anti-immigration sentiments were demanding a hard-line response to the growing number of migrants within Italy, many Italians mobilized in early 2001 and 2002 demanding the regularization of their migrant care workers. This lobby was strong; making use of the fact that politicians with loyalties that spanned the political spectrum employed migrant workers for their care needs (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 15). This vocalization is interesting because it highlights the fact that Italian citizens are politically mobilized regarding immigration issues, but noticeably less politically responsive towards necessary elder care reform. The two are innately connected due to the state's reliance on migrant care workers, but it seems that immigration issues are the hot button that mobilizes citizens. It is intriguing that migrant care workers seem to escape the negative public sentiment directed towards immigrants, solely as a result of the sector in which they are employed. Due to the personal nature of care work, it seems likely that Italians develop a relationship with their care worker and they are willing to fight for them, but they are not willing to fight for all migrants living in Italy.

No public officials have made negative statements towards migrant care workers publicly (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 17). It seems that both Italian politicians and the Italian people recognize their preference for and dependence on migrant care labor and see this phenomenon as something immune to the growth of xenophobia in the state. This contributes to the vicious policy circle that was previously mentioned, where neither the public nor politicians are eager to mobilize in favor of necessary welfare state and elder care reforms but they are willing to fight to retain the current situation. This allows the unsustainable policy cycle to forge ahead.

Lastly, the Bossi-Fini Law's direct focus on migrant care workers opened the door for the necessary inclusion of migrant home carers in future political debates regarding immigration issues. It was the first vocal recognition of Italy's dependence on migrant care labor, which has continued to be on display in Italian immigration measures to this day. For example, Italy's decision to grant immigrants from Romania and Bulgaria full employment rights in Italy in 2006 was a direct response to the demand for migrant care workers (Van Hooren, 2008, pg. 17). Two more regularizations occurred in 2006 and 2009. The 2006 regularization legalized 500,000 migrants, but did not specifically target domestic workers or home carers (Salis, 2012, pg. 8-9).

The 2009 regularization specifically targeted home carers and domestic workers and was necessary due to changes in the Italian penal code. It came following the passage of Law no. 94, which introduced irregular entry and residence as a criminal offense. This threatened irregular migrant workers whose employment is concentrated in the domestic and care sectors. The 2009 regularization specifically targeted migrant care and domestic workers who were recognized as 'good' or beneficial to the Italian welfare state. Without this regularization there would have been serious consequences for irregular domestic and care workers, who could have face criminal charges (Salis, 2012, pg. 10).

Law No. 94 which was passed in 2009, also requires all migrants who are applying for a resident permit to sign an agreement stating that they will learn the Italian language, learn the basic norms of citizenship in Italy, provide respect for the state's charter for citizenship values and integration, and educate their children. With the passage of this law the integration of migrants began to be decided by a state-determined points based system. When a migrant attempts to renew their residence permit they must prove that they have made sufficient progress towards this goal, otherwise their permit could be revoked (Castagnone et al., 2013, pg. 19-20).

Essentially, measuring progress is arbitrary and depends on the evaluator of each migrant, creating more inconsistency in the immigration framework. This law unjustly creates stipulations for the renewal of legal resident permits for migrants who are holding jobs. It seems as if this law was a measure to satisfy the growing anti-immigrant sentiment in Italy, without compromising the state's reliance on female migrant workers to meet its needs for long-term elder care.

Chapter V -- Analysis

A. Correlation between Government Policies and Job Security for Female Migrants

So how exactly do Italian elder care and immigration policies contribute to the relative job stability that foreign-born females have enjoyed in comparison to other vulnerable labor groups? The first answer to this question relates to the fact that care in Italy is markedly regarded as feminine. The acceptance and targeting of female migrant care workers through the repeated use of ad-hoc regularizations displays how the both the state and Italian society has continued to buy into traditional gender roles within the household. The Italian state welcomed female migrants and has continued to draw them to Italy to mitigate its lack of sufficient services for the elderly. Essentially the Italian state is promoting the globalization of “traditional women’s work” in order to maintain the status quo.

Additionally, female migrant care workers filled the care gap that was emerging in Italy as women were entering the workforce. This prevented any substantial development of government or private institutional facilities for elder care. As a result, institutionalized care became too expensive, and there was no demand for expansion of institutionalized care or improvement in its quality. The ‘migrant in the family’ model was the easiest solution for all parties involved, including the Italian government. The public acceptance of this model allowed the Italian government to put off large-scale reforms to elder care policies. For the Italian public, it allowed the reconciliation of work and family life for Italian women, while

still maintaining a female presence for the provision of care needs. Lastly, the demand for low-skill labor in this sector allowed the growing number of migrant women coming to Italy to quickly find work.

Since men are largely not involved in care work, and one out of two female migrants are employed in this sector, we can assume that the relative stability in their unemployment rate is due to their concentration in the care sector. Efficiency cannot grow dramatically due to the nature of the work. Therefore there is constant need for more care workers as the Italian population ages. For these reasons the concentration of migrant females who come to Italy and end up in the care sector undoubtedly played a huge role in the relative stability of the unemployment rate for foreign-born females during the economic crisis.

The continued use of ad-hoc regularizations instead of a more comprehensive approach to immigration policy by the Italian government has had the opposite affect to that intended. Each time a regularization of illegal migrants is granted by the Italian government there is a subsequent rise in flows of migrants who are entering Italy. (Bettio, 2006, pg. 275). While this may be due to a combination of reasons, it is visible that female migrants are well aware of the demand for their services in the care sector. They are willing to accept low wages and bad conditions in hopes of gaining a legal residency of a work permit down the road.

B. Long-Term Policy Impacts

While the ‘migrant in the home’ model has saved the Italian government a considerable amount in terms of economic and administrative resources, their approach is a short-term solution. This short-term solution has been achieved at the expense of women.

Female migrant care workers are not only left on the bottom economically, but also left socially isolated with a lack of opportunities for occupational mobility or advancement (Castagnone et al., 2013, pg. 8).

Italy continually incentivizes migrants to settle in Italy with their repeated use of ad-hoc regularization programs. The use of ad-hoc regularization programs by the Italian government cannot be deemed a valid substitute for the development of an efficient national migration system. Although the use of these irregular legalization programs is well intentioned, they have short-term and long-term negative consequences for Italy. The frequent regularizations are rewarding illegal migrants and attracting new migration flows at the same time.

How long can the Italian government target migrant care workers for regularization without adequately addressing the weaknesses in elder care and social services for the elderly? It seems that either the population is already aging faster than the government can address problems relating to this demographic, or they simply chose to ignore the problem in its entirety. The fact that native Italians are politically mobilized when their source of care is put into jeopardy shows their lack of faith in government services, but it also displays the lack of faith in their government to reform and meet the needs of its citizens. Additionally, female migrants cannot rely on the Italian government to support their long-term integration into Italian society, which increases their vulnerability to changes in norms and policies.

C. A False Sense of Security for Female Migrants?

Although female migrants do enjoy greater job security than other vulnerable groups in Italy, their concentration in the care sector does make them vulnerable in other ways.

Native families often take advantage of the vulnerability of migrant care workers. These employers are well aware that their employee will have no legal recourse for unfair treatment due to their status as an illegal migrant in Italy. Helma Lutz describes the work environment for most migrant care workers by writing that:

The intimate character of the social sphere where the work is performed; the social construction of this work as female gendered area; the special relationship between employer and employee which is highly emotional, personal and characterized by mutual dependency; and the logic of care work which is clearly different from that of other employment areas (2008, pg. 1).

As a result of the fact that female migrants engaged in care work are often employed informally (that is, without a formal contract or legal status), they are overwhelming subjected to unfavorable working conditions. This is true when compared to both their migrant counterparts who are legally employed in the care sector and also those female migrants who are employed in another form of employment. Being employed in the underground economy means that female migrant workers do not benefit from any form of sector regularization or legal recourse with regards to their employment situation.

Female migrant care workers are vulnerable to even the smallest of economic, social or political changes as any of these could have an impact on their employment. Women who enter this occupation are also faced with precarious conditions due to the duality of the Italian labor market. This relates to the fact that care services are primarily located within the informal or underground economy (OECD, 2014, pg. 15). Female migrant care workers are also extremely at risk if the demand for migrant care and domestic labor were to decline (OECD, 2014, pg. 20). Although this is unlikely, due to the rapidly aging population, it is nevertheless a concern due to the number of female migrants who are employed in this sector. The fact that one out every two migrant women are working within this sector makes

half of the female migrant population dependent on the nation's continued need for care workers.

The high concentration of female migrants in the domestic and elder care sector within the informal economy also alters long-term employability and professional growth opportunities for these women. Women are excluded from workplace regulation by the state due to their invisibility within family homes. This affects the socialization of these migrant women, and adversely affects their ability to learn the Italian language and develop social connections in Italy. Their informal employment also means that they receive very little job training and do not participate in up-skilling activities (OECD, 2014, pg. 73). This severely restricts a migrant's occupational mobility and limits their chances of wage progression in the future.

In addition to the macro-level vulnerability that female migrants face as a result of their concentration in the personal service sector, there is micro-level vulnerability that relates to the personal nature of care services. Upon arrival in Italy, many migrant care workers live with their employer, which makes it difficult for the care worker to control working conditions (OECD, 2014, pg. 77). Working conditions for persons employed in informal settings such as households are difficult for local and national authorities to inspect and regulate. Additionally, cohabitation with the employer prevents migrant care workers from seeking alternative forms of employment and integrating themselves into the formal economy.

In the end, although foreign-born migrants have been less affected by the economic downturn, they are still a very vulnerable group in the Italian labor market. Their primary presence in the informal economy is something that needs to be altered in order to allow the

overwhelming number of migrant females working to integrate themselves both economically and socially into Italian society.

Conclusion

The process of economic restructuring that was inevitable due to globalization has combined with Italian elder care and immigration policies to create a sexual division of labor in the field of care work (Scrinzi, 2010, pg. 45). Although care work offers job protection when faced with external shocks, it does not provide long-term protection for these female migrant care workers and other vulnerable groups that are present within the occupation. In the short-term, the lack of a dramatic rise in unemployment of foreign-born females is not because foreign-born females are more attractive employees, are more skilled, or have been targeted by labor activation policies. The overall job security that all foreign-born females experienced in comparison vulnerable labor groups is a result of their concentration in the sector, their continual acceptance of low wages and unfavorable working conditions, the informality of care work, and Italian society's continued acceptance that care work is "naturally feminine" and not a responsibility of the state. The government's acceptance of the 'migrant in the family model' and their continued use of 'cash-for-care' and mass regularization policies add another layer to the overall job security that is maintained by female migrants in Italy. But, the Italian government has not taken action to protect the huge number of female care workers in other ways. Care work is located in the informal economy, which provides very little opportunity for government regulation of wages and working conditions.

Since the demand for care workers is stable, one measure that is important for the Italian government to take is put forth legislation that would move the majority of care work into the formal sector. This would help to protect female migrant care workers from the other vulnerabilities they face in their occupation. The informality of care work and the acceptance of low-wages by migrant females crowded out native care workers. Bringing the majority of this work back into the visible economy would not only provide more protection to the female migrants, it would also draw native workers back into the sector. Although care work may not be the most desired position for native job seekers, the rapidly aging population produces a constant demand for care labor. More competitive wages and job security could act as an additional draw to Italians who are actively seeking employment.

It would take an interdisciplinary approach from the Italian government to move care work out of the informal economy. First, some incentive would need to be provided to both them employer and employee to regularize the working status of the migrant care worker. The immigration system would need to be changed to offer a more streamline approach, instead of the ad-hoc use of regularization campaigns. Lastly, in order to better regulate home care, regulation and funding mechanisms for the ‘*indennità di accompagnamento*’ need to be restructured. Regulation of the allowance should come from an independent body, seeing as many regional authorities have taken advantage of the discretion that they are given to determine qualifications for the cash-for-care benefit. Additionally, a standard living wage should be set for care workers whether they live with their employer or live independently. Hours worked need to be regulated more closely by authorities, so that care workers are not expected to provide 24-hour services if they live with their employer. All of these measures would make the improve the working conditions for care workers and have a positive impact

on their quality of life in Italy. In addition, better regulation of the care sector and higher wages would attract more native workers to work enter and enjoy the relative stability found in care work.

The Italian government's current policies do not provide a long-term solution to the unfavorable conditions and lack of social protection that the predominantly female migrant care workers experience in their daily lives. The time for change this is now, as the demand for care work is only going to get increase as the proportion of elderly Italians in need of care continues to grow.

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