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## Double emigration: geographical and cultural? The participation of Italian women in the German labour market

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### ABSTRACT

Already at the beginning of the fifties on the initiative of Italy, negotiations began between the Italian and German governments for the recruitment of migrant-workers, which ended in 1955 with a bilateral agreement between the two countries. Through this recruitment policy and because of the labour-market (Industry and Building) the Italian migration was composed prevalently of men. Female immigration happened in the setting of family reunification and less as an independent movement project. After years of stagnation of Italian emigration in the eighties it may also be noted that, since the early nineties, there has been a revival of immigration to Germany. This and modernisation processes in Italy changed the gender composition of the Italian immigration flow to Germany: the distance between male and female immigration is decreasing. A peculiarity of the Italians in Germany is the low occupational participation of women in comparison with other women from EU countries. However, we could observe regional differences, which depend on the migration typologies and the dominating economic structure in the areas. The paper will analyse these different aspects (immigration-processes, migrant-typologies and labour-market participation) by female Italian migrants.

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## Introduction

The immigration of foreign workers to Germany, until its stopping in 1973, was characterised by a series of bilateral agreements about the recruitment of ‘*Guest workers*’ with several countries of the Mediterranean area. It may be noted that, since the early nineties, there has been a revival of Italian immigration to Germany, who, unlike the Italians of the fifties and sixties, are no longer employed in the industrial sector. This and processes of modernisation in Italy changed the gender composition of the Italian immigration flow to Germany: the distance between male and female immigration is decreasing. In the last years the migration was often a form of new European mobility favoured by

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the process of European integration, Germany is now confronted with a migration from South Europe caused by the economic crisis and imposed by need.

A peculiarity of the Italians in Germany is the low occupational participation of women in comparison with women from other EU countries. The data will be compared with the data of women of Spain and Greece, who had a similar migration typology to Italian women: they from countries from which Germany recruited migrant workers and from them is coming the new migration so called new European mobility. In contrast to women from Spain and Greece, Italian women were rarely recruited as workers, therefore women from both other countries show a higher employment rate. However, we can observe regional differences, which depend on the migration typologies, the dominating economic structure in the areas and the social-cultural milieus/backgrounds of the migrants. The labour market and the employment policy Germany favours the employment of foreign women (so lately in the care sector) but many of the new jobs have the same structures of the past, which favours employment of men. These factors could prevent Italian women from more participation in the labour market and so from promoting their *cultural mobility*. The paper will illustrate the immigration processes by Italians, and the migrant-typologies and labour-market participation by female Italian migrants.

### **Migration to Germany: a short overview**

Already at the beginning of the fifties, on the initiative of Italy, negotiations began between the Italian and German governments for the recruitment of migrant workers, which ended in 1955 with a bilateral agreement between the two countries. It followed an analogous agreement with other countries, that is Turkey, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yugoslavia. The policy of the German government regarding immigrants in these years was founded on the principle of rotation. Through this recruitment policy and because of the labour market (industry and building) the migrant population was composed prevalently of males. Nevertheless, more and more immigrants tended to establish themselves in Germany instead of going back to their native countries. Because of the oil crisis and the crisis of the mass industries in 1973 the German government stopped his policy of recruitment. As a consequence, migrants began to bring their family to Germany (Prontera 2009). Female immigration happened in the past also prevalently in the form of family reunification and less as an own independent movement project.

Summarily we may notice diverse periods of immigration and so diverse types of migrants that sometimes are characteristic for a determinate period:

- The guest-worker period (1955–1973)
- The period of family reunion and settling
- The period of the east-west migration after 1989
- The period of the new European mobility-immigration.

The number of people from an immigrant background living in Germany is estimated at 15 million and will increase. Recently, aside from the actually refugee-seekers movement,

Germany is confronted with a young migration from the countries of South-Europe like Spain, Greece or Italy. These young people, often with a good professional education, are looking for a better quality of life in the cities of Germany (Pichler 2013, Tirabassi and Del Prá 2014).

Because of the economic and financial crisis in the south of Europe a lot of young or less young people from Greece, Spain, Italy and other European countries have started to again move to the well-off Germany. According to the data of the OCSE Germany was in 2013 with circa 465,000 immigrants after the United States of America the country that has attracted in the last years the most immigrants. Compared with 2012 the migration rate has increased in the year 2013 by 13% (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2014), and according to the data of the Statistische Bundesamt (Federal Office for Statistics), Germany had in 2014 a positive migration balance of 519,300 persons. Before the immigration of refugees from Syria etc. it was principally a European immigration: more than two thirds (76.8%) of the immigrants came from a European country, while internal migration within the EU Countries corresponded to 61.5%. The immigration from those countries that suffered by the crisis increased significantly. Confronted with 2012 there is an increase of 34.5 from Italy (47,455 arrivals) and of 17.1 from Spain (28,980 arrivals) (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2014).

### Italians in Germany

Until the end of the fifties, circa 50,000 Italians moved to Germany and their number increased with the cease of immigration of German people from the East territories controlled by the Soviet Union and 1961 with the construction of the 'Berlin Wall': Germany needed workers and started to recruit more and more 'guest workers' from Italy. The number of Italian workers increased constantly, apart from a short recession period 1966–67 with more repatriation, in the end it reached the peak of 450,115 Italian employees in 1973. After that because of the 'oil crisis' and the recruitment stop the number of Italian employees began to decrease. When in 1966 Italians represented 30.4% of all the migrant employees in Germany, 1978 their percentage/rate had decreased by 15.4% (288,643 employees) and 1983 by 13.9% (238,850 employees).

At first the Italian migration was characterised by a certain commuting depending on economic cycles and the demand of the labour market. The fact that they were citizen of the EEC<sup>1</sup> favoured certainly the movement between both countries. This aspect common to this generation of migrants with the so-called 'nuovi mobili', who were also moving into Europe from one labour market to another, was also favoured by low cost flights.

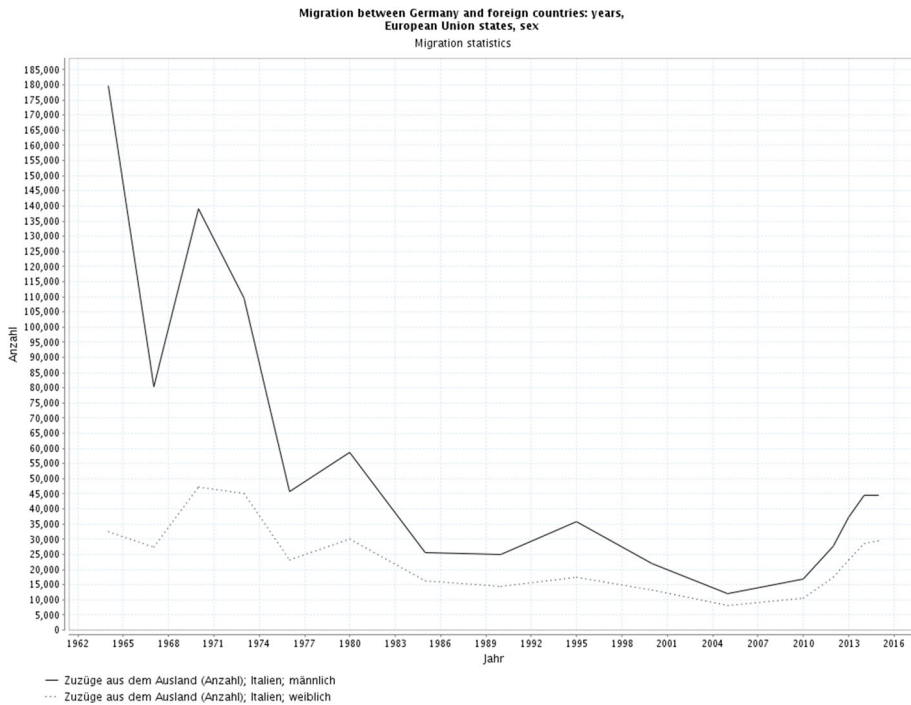
Destinations of this migration were the industrial regions of western Germany, particularly the Munich area (factory BMW), Stuttgart area (Mercedes factory, Bosch etc.), Frankfurt area (Airport, Opel factory), Colonia (Ford factory etc.), and the Saarland Region (mining industry, steel industry). Characteristic is the case of the city of Wolfsburg (Volkswagen) due to recruitment policy in favour of factory employment

of Italian workers: unlike in other industrial areas, in Wolfsburg Italians are the largest foreign group and the city is again destination of the new Italian migration (Pichler 2004).

A different type of migration characterises the Italian community in Berlin. Berlin has always attracted people because of its peculiar cultural and social situation, with the result that the group of Italian immigrants who arrived in Berlin is quite different from groups who emigrated to Western Germany, formed mainly by so-called *Arbeitsmigranten*, this especially as Berlin's industry prevalently recruited workers coming from Turkey and from Greece. The particular political, economic and social characteristics of the city have favoured the immigration of different and heterogeneous types of Italians who, with their different habits and lifestyles, contributed to the development of the community with new economic, social and cultural activities. Also among the Italian 'girls' who arrived in Berlin at the turn of the sixties/seventies, we can find people who migrated not only for economic reasons, but were impelled by curiosity to know different realities. For some of them from Southern Italy emigration meant building something of their own, to become emancipated and not having to account to anyone. Berlin's Italians were and are active prevalently in the ethnic economy: restaurants, specialty shops, wine bars.

After a period of stagnation in the seventies and eighties, during which the Italian communities were stabilised through family reunification, in the nineties we can observe an Italian revival of emigration to Germany. The increase in arrivals is constant: from 24,502 people in 2010 to 57,191 in 2015 (Federal Statistical Office). Initially it was a 'new European mobility' helped by the integration process through the various cooperation projects such as the Erasmus Project. With the financial and economic crisis in Europe a new internal migration period has started dictated by need and want. Among the newcomers there are not only young, single and graduate persons, but also many people with a secondary school diploma, and many households. Roughly there can be established three categories or types of Italians in Germany, according to these migratory processes: the generation of *Gastarbeiter*, their descendants with more and more hybrid identities, and 'the new movers' (Pichler 2013, 2015).

The diagram (figure 1) shows the flow of migration to Germany since the seventies until today. After the economic crisis of 73 the number of arrivals is reduced and early 2000 also the gap between male and female migration. This trend may indicate a form of *normalisation* and *modernisation* regarding the migratory movements, and indicate at the same time processes of individualisation – precisely in the case of female migration, not more migration with the family or in the frame of family reunification but as an individual project. Lately there is an increase of Italian immigration to Germany and also the gap between female and male immigration is increasing; despite the transformation of the labour market the employment of women in the growing service sector could be favoured. This fact could also indicate that an increasing number of householders choose as in the past to be the first in Germany, assess the situation (work, home, school for the children) and then be joined by their family.



With nearly six hundred thousand people on the 31 December 2015, the Italian community represents 8.5% of foreigners and is after the Polish community (740,962 people) the largest among those coming from one EU country (see Table 1).

If we add people of Italian origin but with German or both citizenships, their number amounts to 776,000 people, with 322,000 females (41.9%)<sup>2</sup> (Statistisches Bundesamt 2015).

Destination of the new Italian migration to Germany are partly the western, economically strong regions in which one could observe an increase of the Italian population. But it is especially the city-state of Berlin, which has had a significant upswing of the Italian population in recent years. Berlin has – based on the respective population in 2013,

**Table 1.** Italian population in Germany according to selected Regions and gender on 31 December 2015.

Region	Total	Men	Women	
	Total	Total	Total	%
Saarland	18,889	10,655	8,234	43.6
Baden-Württemberg	178,068	101,719	76,349	42.9
Hamburg	7,100	4,250	2,850	40.1
Nordrhein-Westfalen	135,921	79,955	55,966	41.2
Hessen	70,754	40,791	29,963	42.3
Niedersachsen	26,951	16,670	10,281	38.1
Bayern	96,656	58,877	37,779	39.0
Rheinland-Pfalz	29,499	17,230	12,269	41.6
Berlin	16,938	9,907	7,031	41.5
Deutschland	596,127	349,991	246,136	41.3

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2016).

with an intense migration surplus of 24.7% – the highest per capita immigration ahead of Baden-Württemberg (20.2%), Hamburg (19.9%) and Bavaria (19.1%) (Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2014).

### **The crisis, the new *Gastarbeiter* and the participation in the labour market**

All these processes, together with the German economic prosperity, have helped to increase employment among EU immigrants: between 2009 and 2013 by 54%. Nearly 90% of new immigrants from the EU are of working age between 15 and 64 years. In the same period also increased the number of people with Spanish nationality (plus 51.4%), Greek (plus 33.3%) and Italians (plus 18.6%) employed in their workplace with compulsory social security.

From March 2015 to March 2016 the employment rate of people from the so-called United GIPS (Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain) increased by 5.2% (Italy 6.1%) while that of the new EU countries by 21%, in the same period however was also rising the percentage of people who have requested a social allowance: 4.9% for the GIPS countries and 24% for the new EU countries. The foreigners employed with social insurance are mostly men and younger than Germans (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2016) (Table 2).

But where are the new jobs coming from? If we take the date of December 2015 compared to December 2014, the largest number of jobs, 22.5%, has been created in the temporary employment sector by temporary employment agencies, after that in the business-logistics, 17.9%; in the construction trade; 16.1%; and in gastronomy 14.2% – that is in sectors with a certain precariousness and typical for low wages (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2016a) Foreigners are working in Germany disproportionately as temporary workers: their share is in the temporary agency sector 17.4%, while they account for 11.1% in all other sectors. In addition, here men and younger workers are overrepresented and compared to their German counterparts are employed for a shorter time. (Brücker 2015).

The new Italian immigrants are also in many cases employed in sectors that do not require any qualifications, are precarious, and in the low-wage sector: for example in the cleaning industry, in call centres, in some segments of the food industry or in the care sector. Recently several agencies also with the support of the government began to recruit nursing staff from different countries of the South of Europe. According to a recent study, Spain is the country where the German care establishments have searched most

**Table 2.** Employment of migrants December 2015 change compared to prior year in %.

Regions	Change compared to prior year in %
Hamburg	+9.5
Niedersachsen	+15.6
Nordrhein-Westfalen	+9.0
Hessen	+10.5
Rheinland-Pfalz	+12.0
Baden-Württemberg	+10.3
Bayern	+12.8
Saarland	+9.2
Berlin	+17.4
Germany	+12.0

Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2016a).



workers in the past three years. Sixty-one percent of companies are actively recruiting international nursing staff. They are followed by Poland (19%), Croatia (16%), Romania (14%), Italy (13%) and Greece (12%). Sometimes nurses are employed by temporary employment agencies and then lent to the different hospitals that need them, where they have to work sometimes under their qualification (Bonin et al. 2015). The new migrants contribute also to make up for the demand for labour which is not covered (and often avoided) by the local population, and this function brings them to the role played in the past by *Gastarbeiter*.

And thus unlike in the fifties and sixties, migrants are no longer employed in industry but in the service sector and here the gastronomy and food trade sectors. Even the Italian population in Germany is now predominantly employed in the service sector: among the 237,675 Italians who worked at 31 March 2016 with compulsory social security 69.3% (164,771) were occupied in the service sector and 31.2% (72,605) in the manufacturing sector (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2016b) (Table 3).

Furthermore, we can observe a sort of international division of work, for which each ethnicity occupies determined niches. Analogously, one can speak of an occupational ethnicisation, which implies an economic specialisation by immigrants, so Italians in the gastronomy. This division of work became so ingrained in one's imagination that the phrase 'been to the Italian' (war beim Italiener) means to have gone to lunch or dinner in an Italian establishment. But what seems to be a resource could be a restriction, if through this stereotypes the access to other sectors is made difficult (Pichler 2013).

### The labour participation of Italian woman

The employment rate (*Erwerbsquote*) of women in all European countries is lower than that of the men (70.1%) and it is in the EU in 2014 by 59.6%. The differences in the employment rates of women and men in Europe are considerable. It reached employment rates by 70% only in the two Scandinavian countries in Sweden and Denmark as well as in Germany and in the UK. Italy and Greece recorded in employment rates gender differences of 16–18 percentage points. In Greece and Italy this reflected the fact that these countries had the lowest or the second lowest employment rate of women, each under

**Table 3.** Number of employees and activity rate of German and Italian population in Germany in the economic sector (Manufacturing/ Service Sector) at 31 March 2016 in selected Regions.

Region	German			Italian				
	Total	Manuf. %	Service Sector %	Total	Manufact. %	Service Sector %	Gastronomy %	Trade %
Hamburg	833,360	16.0	83.9	3,581	-	89.1	20.6	17.1
Niedersachsen	2,625,922	39.9	69.1	10,135	32.6	67.1	22.8	8.7
Nordrhein-Westfalen	5,922,405	27.3	72.3	44,845	33.0	66.9	13.0	14.2
Hessen	2,121,225	24.7	74.9	27,950	22.2	77.7	15.6	16.1
Rheinland-Pfalz	1,232,092	31.2	68.1	10,202	29.4	70.3	18.0	13.5
Baden-Württemberg	3,815,193	36.0	63.7	78,652	39.8	60.0	9.1	14.4
Bayern	4,618,181	33.5	66.0	41,689	23.2	76.7	22.8	14.4
Saarland	337,562	32.0	67.8	5,933	43.8	56.1	8.4	14.7
Berlin	1,194,332	14.0	85.9	8,834	4.7	95.3	33.4	13.2
Germany	28,175,580	28.8	70.5	237,675	30.5	69.3	15.7	14.1

**Table 4.** Italian full time employment male and female at 31 March 2016 in selected Regions.

Region	Total	Male		Female	
		Absolut	%	Absolut	%
Hamburg	3,581	2,270	63.4	1,311	36.6
Niedersachsen	10,135	6,841	67.5	3,294	32.5
Nordrhein-Westfalen	44,845	29,394	65.5	15,451	34.5
Hessen	27,950	17,778	63.6	10,172	36.4
Rheinland-Pfalz	10,202	6,667	65.3	3,535	34.7
Baden-Württemberg	78,652	50,235	63.9	28,417	36.1
Bayern	41,689	27,345	65.6	14,344	34.4
Saarland	5,933	4,014	67.7	1,919	32.3
Berlin	8,834	5,426	61.4	3,408	38.6
Germany	237,675	150,947	64.8	81,527	35.2

Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2015a, 2016b).

50%, and these two southern European countries are particularly hard affected by the economic and financial crisis (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2015, Eurostat 2016, Brenke 2015).

As abovementioned, in Germany the gender difference is somewhat lower than the European average. In particular the employment rate of German women is still considerably higher compared to foreign women. Thus, the employment rate in 2014 of the German women is 78.6% higher than that of foreigners, at 69.1%; women with an immigrant background have an employment rate of 60%. Thus, less than two thirds of women of working age with an immigrant background are available in the labour market (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2016a).

The employment rate (Erwerbsquote) includes not only the people who carry out a full-time job with compulsory insurance but also those who are looking for a job as well as all people in atypical jobs, such as the so-called Minijobs where no one enjoys social insurance in case of illness or unemployment. More indicative for the actual participation in the labour market are the data about occupations with compulsory insurance. These show to what extent and how women in the labour market are included, what chance they have and what is their role. It may also be a sign of how the society offers equal opportunities to immigrants in general and also towards immigrant women. If we take the data on participation in the labour market (occupations with compulsory insurance) of the German population, the difference between women and men it is not so wide, and it could indicate a certain achieved parity: male 52.6%; female 47.4% (31 March 2016). It is different if we look at the data among immigrants: male 61.9%; female 38.1%; by the GIPS (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain) 62.9% to 37.1%; and if we look at the data about Italians in Germany the difference increases (Table 4).

Also as described above, the service sector is becoming increasingly important for Italian immigrants for their jobs, and one consequence of this may be additional employment opportunities for women. If we look at the data in Table 4 we can see that in the typical regions of the 'Gastarbeiter' as the Saarland and Niedersachsen, where as we have seen in Table 2 the manufacturing work is still relatively important for the Italian population, the participation of Italian women in the labour market (employment with compulsory insurance) is among the lowest. The rate of participation in the work of women is some points higher in the regions that have become centres of services like Hamburg (see also all business activities etc. tied around the harbour) and Hessen with airport HUB. But even in Baden-Württemberg where in addition to the automobile industry and its

**Table 5.** Female rate in full-time employment in %: German, Italian, Spanish, Greek at 31 December 2014 and at 31 March 2016 in selected Regions.

Country/Region	Germans		Italians		Spanish		Greek	
	2014	2016	2014	2016	2014	2016	2014	2016
Hamburg	47.2	47.2	32.7	36.6	43.4	42.7	40.2	39.8
Niedersachsen	46.3	46.7	31.6	32.5	40.0	39.7	33.8	33.7
Nordrhein-Westfalen	46.0	46.3	33.7	34.5	40.9	40.3	38.9	38.5
Hessen	46.4	46.6	36.0	36.4	42.0	41.6	40.0	40.0
Rheinland-Pfalz	47.5	47.8	33.9	34.7	40.3	38.4	34.0	34.7
Baden-Württemberg	46.2	46.4	35.6	36.1	41.3	41.8	39.6	39.4
Bayern	46.8	47.0	33.6	34.4	43.2	43.8	39.5	39.6
Saarland	45.9	46.6	32.3	32.3	38.3	35.1	37.3	38.0
Berlin	52.0	51.8	37.7	38.6	47.5	47.6	40.1	39.6
Germany	47.2	47.4	34.6	35.2	41.8	41.7	38.6	38.4

Source: Bundeagentur für Arbeit (2015a, 2016b).

suppliers the clothing industry is established, the number of Italian woman pursuing an occupation with social insurance is higher than in other regions. The clothing industry, especially, has always recruited women and also Italians.

The city of Berlin has the highest percentage of Italian women employed in an activity with compulsory insurance; surely it depends on, as described above, the migration process, the types of people who compose the community and purely structural factors such as the labour market of Berlin. In Berlin we had in the past a female migration often coming with their own project and not following the family and that is the case until today. This could facilitate the propensity to seek a full job, which is not a complementary activity, as we will see below, to the family budget but as its objective. Another factor that may facilitate the employment of women (and that as we will see below also applies to German women in Berlin) is the transformation of the labour market in Berlin in recent years. After the reunification, Berlin lost a lot of jobs in industry because production was replaced or because the government stopped supporting it and factories and industries stopped production. Although the field of innovative services is not yet as developed (however, the number of start-ups is ultimately increasing) the traditional service sector could certainly offer more possibilities for women. So according to the data of the Statistical Office of Berlin in 2013, 38% of Italian women with a regular employment were employed in the areas of trade and gastronomy, and 35% in the services sector (fairs, call centres, security, cleaning) (Table 5).

The participation rate of Spanish and Greek woman has decreased somewhat in some regions, but unlike the Italians, the Spanish and Greeks have a higher participation rate in the labour market and that is also attributed to the recruitment policy, which in the past favoured the occupation of Spanish and Greek emigrant woman. These practices may have introduced and developed in Greek and Spanish households in Germany the cultural and behavioural patterns that promote, influencing the next generation, a job search for a certain autonomy.

As noted above many new jobs have been created in areas that are considered typically female, but often the jobs are characterised by part-time employment (Table 6).

The data can be a confirmation of the fact that for Italian women living in the typical regions of labour migration, women's work is intended as a supplement the family budget, a part-time job that allows them to perform their function as housewife in the family; and this applies also for German women.

**Table 6.** Female rate of part-time employment by woman in %: German, Italian, Spanish, Greek at 31 December 2014 and at 31 March 2016 in selected Regions.

Country/Region	Germans		Italians		Spanish		Greek	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
Hamburg	60.1	60.0	46.5	48.0	56.9	55.8	54.7	53.5
Niedersachsen	65.6	64.1	55.4	55.1	57.7	58.9	52.6	52.0
Nordrhein-Westfalen	64.9	63.5	57.3	57.3	61.5	59.4	60.1	59.8
Hessen	63.7	62.3	56.9	57.6	64.2	62.5	60.4	61.7
Rheinland-Pfalz	65.1	63.4	57.6	57.5	67.0	64.5	62.4	62.2
Baden-Württemberg	64.9	63.3	62.2	61.4	66.1	66.0	62.0	61.0
Bayern	67.1	65.3	54.5	54.3	61.5	62.2	61.3	62.2
Saarland	65.2	63.7	62.3	61.6	61.9	70.2	57.7	69.7
Berlin	54.8	54.2	44.6	46.7	56.6	55.6	50.5	52.7
Germany	63.8	62.3	57.7	57.6	61.9	61.0	59.3	59.5

Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2015a, 2016b).

Also with regard to the data on part-time work, Berlin and Hamburg are exceptions. In both regions part-time employment of Italian women is lower than that of Italian men. The typology of the Italians in Berlin and Hamburg and the labour market may be a motive for this tendency. Italo-Berliners are often single and they do not share the typical family role, be it woman or man, where the man is the *breadwinner* of the family. Italians come to Berlin not only due to economic constraints but to realise some life projects (supposedly in the creative industry), often a short-time project; they need also flexible work-times, and for that Italian gastronomy is an important sector, offering them a first job, but often a part-time job. The same applies to the call-centres, or in the new digital sectors of many start-ups. But all these jobs cannot be classified purely as typical for women or men so the competition between the sexes for a job in this sector of part-time jobs might be higher than in other regions of Germany, and apparently in this case the men are the ‘winners’ of the competition, even if for a part-time job.

## Conclusion

As seen above, the participation of Italian women in the German labour market differs in part from region to region depending on migration processes. One factor that plays an important role in their labour inclusion is the reason for their migration: as family reunification or as their project even if recruited as workers. Already a survey from 2008 about female immigrants coming from Italy, Turkey, Greece and Poland noted that:

The Immigration motif affects the participation of women. In all groups at the time of the survey proportionately more women, who came to Germany for the purpose of taking up employment work or search for one, as women who have entered the country in the wake of reunification. (Stichs 2008, pp. 23–24)

Even the data about Italian women in Germany could confirm this relationship between migration patterns and the type of participation. In typical regions of emigrating male workers, the presence of women in the labour market is lower, often in the part-time sector and understood as a complement to the family budget. While Spanish and Greek women also came under the bilateral agreements on recruitment of foreign workers, they have a higher participation rate.

The situation is different in Berlin, where the formation of the Italian community has taken place in different contexts and conditions: Not so much labour migration but rather individual factors. Also in recent years the number of Italians in Berlin has almost tripled; new immigrants bring with them very different cultural models than those of immigrants in the sixties and seventies, which definitely can encourage the propensity to a job.

If these are factors of cultural character or cultural patterns that can affect participation in the labour market, the economic transformations that occurred have contributed to enhance the service sector, also increasing jobs in sectors often occupied by women. In fact, in regions where manufacturing labour is still relatively important for the Italian community, like in Saarland, women's participation is lower than in other regions.

It is difficult to give a clear answer to the question implicit in the title of a *cultural migration* also understood as greater participation in the labour market in Germany of Italian women in comparison to Italy. In comparison with women in Italy, the Italian women in Germany have a bigger presence in the labour market; however, if we compare the number of Italian women in a job with compulsory insurance, their participation is lower in comparison to Italian men and also in comparison to Spanish, Greek and German women. Several factors influence and contribute more or less to promote female participation in the labour market. It is certain that in comparison with the past, migration patterns have changed as well as the cultural models of the migrants: now it is a European mobility, with a transnational habitus, while the Italians living in Germany have an increasingly hybrid identity. However, the types of jobs offered not only to Italians in Germany at times recalls the practices and policies of the past: immigrants and also female employees make up for the jobs that are not occupied by locals, and often the typologies of these precarious jobs favour the employment of men.

## Notes

1. In 1957 the Treaties of Rome were signed, which represented the beginning of building on the EU and which introduced gradually free movement for citizen members of the EEC.
2. The Greek population in Germany amount to 339,931 people; women 154,610 (45.5%), Spanish 155,918 including 75,190 women (48.2%). The highest proportion of women among these groups is due to a different gendered migration pattern from these countries. Germany recruits from these two countries also female workers, who were employed in the low-wage industries like the textile and clothing industry, and food- and beverage industry. In 1973 for example among the Spanish workers women had a rate of 30.8%, among the Greek workers, 43.6 and among Italians, 25.2% (Motte et al. 1999).

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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