

*ITALIANI NUOVI OR NUOVA ITALIA?*  
ATTITUDES TOWARD GRANTING CITIZENSHIP TO SECOND-GENERATION  
IMMIGRANTS IN CONTEMPORARY ITALY

By

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To my family and friends, and especially to my husband Dwight

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By

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Italy is home to an ever-growing population of children of immigrants born and raised in the country, but who do not have Italian citizenship due to the restrictive citizenship regime in place. Although many children of immigrants have the opportunity to apply for citizenship upon their 18th birthday, a series of conditions and provisions render the process difficult and preclude many of them from applying at all. This has led to the creation of a marginalized community of individuals socialized in Italy, yet lacking full membership into the Italian society. Efforts aimed at reforming citizenship policies have surfaced from time to time, but none has been put into effect for nearly two decades. Intrigued by the timid legislative responses addressing inclusion into the national and political community for an ever-growing segment of the population, this dissertation explores Italians' views about granting citizenship to second-generation immigrants in Italy. In doing so, the present work builds on the existing bodies of literature on immigrant generations, citizenship, and public views towards immigrants, and employs a mixed-method approach. First, survey data from 2007, obtained from Istituto per gli Studi sulla Pubblica Opinione, and a set of corresponding contextual

indicators are used to investigate individual- and aggregate-level determinants of support for extending citizenship to the second-generation immigrants. The results from the multilevel binary logistic regressions indicate that, in general, Italians are in favor of relaxing citizenship policies. Additionally, it is found that personal contact and perceptions of group threat are important predictors of such attitudes and that extension of citizenship to the second-generation immigrants is lessened in the Italian regions with higher economic outputs, greater immigrant concentrations, and more electoral support for right-wing parties. Second, survey data analysis is complemented by an analysis of group interviews, which I conducted in the city of Genoa in 2008. In line with the findings from survey data analysis, it appears that Italians do support extending citizenship rights for the children of immigrants, though this is conditional primarily upon having a steady employment and a clean criminal record. Overall, this dissertation makes a contribution by addressing an under-investigated (yet highly timely) topic in a country of recent immigration, as part of a broader scholarly effort aimed at understanding the causes and manifestations of attitudes towards expanding minority rights.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Born and raised in Rome, Italy, Alessandra Samira Mangoud Saleh received her degree in social work and began searching for employment, as mandated by her visa status of resident alien. In 2004, she received a temporary work contract with the municipality of Rome, had declared her citizenship status as a part of the hiring process, and expected it to be renewed when it expired in 2006, along with those of her 12 Italian coworkers. However, while all her coworkers' contracts were renewed, hers was not, due to her lack of Italian citizenship. Although there are policies meant to protect her employment status, they were disregarded and she was fired, nonetheless. She filed a lawsuit against the municipality of Rome for discrimination, and her case was widely discussed on blogs by and for second generation children of immigrants (G2, Associna). Due to Italy's citizenship policy, having been born and raised in Italy is not sufficient grounds to receive citizenship. Alessandra had not known that she only had a year to apply for a facilitated path to citizenship once she turned eighteen, and was forced to begin the naturalization process from the beginning, the first step being to establish 10 years of uninterrupted legal residency in Italy.

In January of 2009, continuing a long effort to push citizenship reform, a group of second-generation immigrants met with Gianfranco Fini, the then President of the *Camera dei Deputati* (lower chamber of the Italian Parliament), in order to lobby for the reform of citizenship laws. The G2 group, an organization of second-generation youth born and/or raised in Italy, has lobbied the Italian governments since 2007, aiming to make citizenship more accessible to minors who are born and who grow up in Italy. Currently, there are several proposals in discussion to amend the 1992 law governing

citizenship (Bigot and Fella 2008; Marchetti 2010), some of which propose an easier path to citizenship for those born on Italian soil.

### **1.1 Preamble**

Immigration issues have long been featured in the headlines of Italian newspapers and national news segments (Triandafyllidou 1999). Sensationalist headlines report mass boat landings in Lampedusa or hail the new raids on “baby gangs” of immigrant youth by the local police (Queirolo-Palmas and Torre 2005). Occasionally, there are articles in the cultural section, highlighting festivals that celebrate immigration, although these are far rarer than those highlighting immigrant criminality. Recently, a new theme has begun to find its way on the news: the presence of second-generation immigrants in Italy (Zincone 2010). Speaking Italian without foreign accents, yet so “different” in their appearances, these youths talk about issues of belonging and exclusion, particularly of daily difficulties they face due to the lack of citizenship (Andall 2002; Colombo 2007; Crul and Vermeulen 2003).

The presence of the second generation signals that Italy is reaching a new phase in its demographic makeup due to immigration (Mantovani and Martini 2008; Queirolo-Palmas and Torre 2005). As of the 2001 census, legally residing immigrants in Italy numbered 1.3 million, of which almost 300,000 were minors. In 2010, the Italian Office of Statistics reported a total of 4,235,059 foreign residents, representing 7% of the total population (ISTAT 2010), with more than 860,000 minors (Caritas 2009). These figures exclude undocumented migrants, as it is notoriously difficult to gather statistics estimating undocumented migrant presence (Massey and Capoferro 2007).

In 2006, more than 500,000 minor children of immigrants resided in Italy (Eduati 2006). These numbers exclude children of immigrants who have already reached 18

years of age and have not applied for citizenship, as their classification reverts to that of a regular immigrant. In a country of 58 million people, the combined first- and second-generation immigrants account for over 6% of the population; the size of the second generation will continue to expand, leading to an even more sizeable percentage of Italy's population.

Because *en masse* immigration to Italy dates to the 1970s (Mantovani and Martini 2008), it is only recently that the second generation has become visible. Previously, the numbers of children of immigrants in Italy were negligible and did not impact Italian society in any large measure. The Italian state grants a special status to minor children of legally established immigrants, guaranteeing them access to schooling, health, and access to public services, further obscuring any issues of exclusion or marginalization. Access to these services provides a minimum of safety and stability for children, and prevents the formation of a second generation without schooling or in poor health. .

This special status is effective until children of immigrants reach the age of 18. Every year, increasing numbers of second-generation youth turn 18 and gain the legal status of adults. In order to continue to reside in Italy, they must apply for citizenship, if they are able to satisfy the requirements, or apply for a residency permit separate from that of their parents. Although they have been raised and, quite often, born in Italy, these youths continue to be treated as immigrants, and thus not full members of Italian society.

The dichotomy of being raised in a country, and yet being legally excluded from it, presents many challenges for the second generation (Rumbaut 2004). Being denied political inclusion (through voting, representation, etc.), economic security (e.g., it is

more difficult to find legal employment without citizenship), and social recognition as members of Italian society (for example, through media characterization as “other”), has prompted the children of immigrants to push for citizenship policy reform and for greater inclusion in the Italian society.

Although recent reform efforts have been made in immigrant and immigration policies, specifically in gaining legal entry and work permits for immigrants (see the 1998 Turco-Napolitano law or the 2002 Bossi-Fini law), one area that is particularly ill-equipped to deal with Italy’s new social reality is citizenship law. The most recent law governing citizenship dates to 1992, which was a restrictive modification of the previous law, passed in 1912. Neither laws envisioned the presence of a large population of second-generation immigrants in Italy, and thus have left their legal status in limbo. This makes sense in the case of the 1912 law, as Italy was still an out-migration country and had no reason to believe that it would become a destination country. However, by 1992, significant immigration was already underway in Italy, thus the passing of a citizenship law emphasizing co-ethnic ties in a broader Italian diaspora while restricting access to an existing immigrant resident population is short-sighted (Zincone 2010).

The current situation in Italy resembles one that has been seen in other Western European countries: the presence of a marginalized second generation and few legal reforms aimed at aiding integration. However, a line of research suggests a growing trend towards the liberalization of citizenship policy in European countries (Joppke 1999, 2005, 2008b). Germany’s reform in 2000 and Greece’s reform in 2010 are paramount examples of laws which extend the legal recognition of second-generation immigrants as citizens in countries where previously this had not been the case. As a

new country of migration, will Italy continue its restrictive policies and maintain a citizenship model based on descent? Or, alternatively, will the pressure to reform its laws and grant citizenship status to the second generation result in a new, more inclusive, citizenship regime?

## **1.2 Research Questions and Methods**

This dissertation examines Italians' attitudes towards granting citizenship to the second-generation immigrants. The following research question guides this study: Do Italians support granting citizenship to second-generation children of immigrants? In order to answer this question, there are several aspects that will be examined: What individual and macro-level factors influence attitudes towards immigrants and citizenship in Italy? Are there regional differences in these attitudes? Also, how do Italians understand citizenship, and under what conditions are they willing to grant it to second-generation youths?

The above questions will be answered through a mixed-method approach. First, I conduct a multivariate analysis of public opinion using data from a 2007 survey conducted by the ISPO (Istituto per gli Studi sulla Pubblica Opinione). Given Italy's strong regional history (Levy 1996), I attempt to discern sub-national differences in public opinion patterns, as well as the impact of contact and group threat. In addition, I analyze 14 interviews of Italian nationals conducted over the summer of 2008, exploring their willingness to extend citizenship to the second generation in detail. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods allows for both breadth and depth in exploring the research question.

While much research has been conducted on anti-immigrant sentiment and on the interplay between immigration and citizenship policies (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010;

Dal Lago 1999; Faist, Gerdes, and Rieple 2007; Fonseca, Caldeira, and Esteves 2002; Joppke 1999, 2005, 2008a; Kymlicka 2003; Mielants 2006; Ribas-Mateos 2004; Silverstein 2005), little is available centered specifically on Italy. Additionally, most public opinion surveys conducted in Italy have yet to incorporate questions regarding children of immigrants, instead of focusing on attitudes towards first-generation immigrants (Diamanti and Bordignon 2005). Of those that have integrated such questions (ISSP 2003<sup>1</sup> or the European Social Survey<sup>2</sup>, for example), Italy has been, regrettably, excluded.

The group interviews aim to complement the survey data analysis, by allowing for an exploration of the reasons supporting a particular position. In this case, the interviews explore the reasons why Italians support or not extending citizenship towards the second-generation immigrants. If feelings of prejudice against immigrants are tied to their cultural practices originating in other countries and their “otherness,” would Italians feel prejudiced toward the second generation –people who have been raised on Italian soil by attending Italian schools, speaking the Italian language, and adopting Italian cultural practices? Would Italians feel differently about granting citizenship to youth who, although children of immigrant parents, are born and/or raised in Italy? Group interviews will allow me to ask questions that are not present in the dataset, but that have a direct bearing on the subject of citizenship policy reform.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.issp.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/index.php>

### **1.3 Contribution of the Dissertation**

The implications of citizenship reform are far-reaching. Immigrant integration is a constant theme in Italian public discourse, and facilitating naturalization would be one step towards meaningful integration in society (Faist et al 2007; Jabbar 2000; Joppke 1999). Further, reforms would carry added weight, considering that Italian citizenship grants not only benefits and rights within the national borders but also within the European Union. Having Italian citizenship means not only being able to live and work in Italy, but also in any other EU country.

This dissertation also contributes to the study of issues relevant to second-generation immigrants in Italy, a nascent area of research (Caponio 2008). Citizenship is a key factor in the exclusion or inclusion of the emerging second generation in Italy, and influences their presumed integration. Recent reforms in Greece, discussed in Chapter 4, hint that Southern European countries may expand access to citizenship to at least part of the second generation. By examining the issues among Italians and second generation youth in Italy, this research adds to the context shaping reform efforts.

This research, then, is broadly located at the intersection of attitudes towards immigrants and citizenship policies. Using Italy as a case study (because of its unique position as a country of new migration with difficult access to citizenship for its growing population of immigrants), I examine what factors shape public opinion towards citizenship policy reform and attempt to better understand Italians' attitudes towards granting citizenship to the second generation.

## **1.4 Structure of the Dissertation**

Chapter 2 examines the history of immigration to Italy, the phenomenon which laid the foundation for the emergence of a second generation. The chapter talks about Italy's transition from a country of emigration in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to one of immigration in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and gives some demographic insight into immigrant presence in contemporary Italy. At the same time, it also presents the legal context that influenced immigration policy from the 1980s onwards.

Chapter 3 focuses on the emerging second generation in Italy, tracing its origins and then highlighting some distinctive features. The available research on second generation youths in Italy is presented. The chapter covers demographic data, as well as information on educational and labor attainment, associationism, and the research available in Italy on second-generation immigrants.

Chapter 4 focuses on scholarship on citizenship. It presents theoretical perspectives on citizenship, outlining the dimensions of citizenship and the types of citizenship regimes. It also details the laws that have shaped citizenship policy in Italy, from the formation of the Italian state until the present day. Finally, the chapter examines research on the link between attitude formation and citizenship policy.

Chapter 5 presents the data, delineates the methods, and specifies the analyses conducted of both the survey and the interview data. It explains the origins of the dataset used and the subsequent multivariate analysis conducted. It also describes the process of arranging and analyzing group interviews.

Chapters 6 and 7 report the findings of the survey data and group interview analyses, respectively. Chapter 6 explores the results of the survey data analysis, testing the hypotheses regarding what factors affect Italians' attitudes towards granting

citizenship to second-generation children of immigrants. Chapter 7 focuses on the findings from the group interview analysis, reporting participants' views of citizenship and exploring the motivations behind liberalizing or restricting access for second-generation immigrants.

Chapter 8 summarizes the findings and presents the implications of this research. Theoretical and policy implications are considered. Several issues influencing support or opposition to liberalizing access to second generation are discussed. Areas for further research are presented.

## CHAPTER 2 IMMIGRATION TO ITALY

. Although in-migration is still a fairly recent development, it is necessary to understand the historical and legal context of immigration to Italy because it frames the issue of citizenship reform for second-generation youth. This chapter will chronicle the history of immigration into Italy and the legal responses that the Italian state has enacted. Such an excursus is the *sine qua non* for exploring the conditions that led to the formation of a second generation in Italy, and for understanding the legal and social context that has led to their marginalization.

### **2.1 Immigration to Italy- Historical Trends**

Italy has a long history of migration, being considered one of the most prolific sending countries (King and Andall 1999) at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, immigration to Italy can be traced back earlier, during the Middle Ages, given that several Italian cities were located on major trade routes. Historically, many Italian regions have been targets of immigration flows. For example, Sicilian immigrants were quite diverse, being represented by African slaves in the 1500s, whole Greco-Albanian communities opting for re-settlement, and by Spaniards (Bonifazi 2007). The Italian city-states also attracted significant migration, Venice being the prime example in this respect. Founded on maritime trade, the city-state of Venice implemented a veritable guest-worker policy from the 1300s to the 1500s in order to fill the need for workers (Bonifazi 2007). Rome, on the other hand, attracted and continues to attract immigrants from all over the world because of its unmistakable association with the Catholic faith (Bonifazi 2007).

In addition to historical records, the presence of linguistic minorities is a testament to Italy's migratory experience. There are Albanian- and Greek-speaking communities in Southern Italy, Serbo-Croatian speakers in the region of Molise, and Occitan-speakers in Calabria, all reminding of the considerable diversity and the rich history of immigration to Italy. Often, though, communities are almost completely absorbed over the generations, erasing traces of immigration throughout Italy's history. Official recognition of linguistic differences is rare, although possible, as in the case of the region of Trentino Alto-Adige/ SüdTirol. There, a considerable percentage of residents (about 69%) are primarily German speakers; German is the veritable home language and is used in schools and official business (ASTAT 2007).

However, throughout most of the 19th and 20th centuries, Italy was a net exporter of migrants, becoming an importer only in the 1970s (Caritas 2003, Mantovani and Martini 2008). Because of its relatively recent conversion to a receiving country, Italy is categorized as a new country of immigration<sup>3</sup>. It behooves anyone interested in immigration to Italy, then, to understand the history of Italian migration writ large, as well as the context of how and when Italy became a destination country as opposed to a sending one.

## **2.2 Three Phases of Migration in Italy**

Scholarship on Italian migration has focused on either the period of Italian emigration in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century or on the most recent years of international migration to Italy. Very few resources covering the period of time when immigration to Italy was a fledgling phenomenon exist. Therefore, there is little consensus as to how to

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<sup>3</sup> There are countries in Europe in which in-migration is, still, a newer phenomenon (e.g., the Czech Republic, Slovenia, or Hungary).

best describe and understand that period of time. To do that, some scholars have chosen a parsimonious model, based on the three phases of migration in Italy in the post-WWII period (Bonifazi 2007). Others (Caritas Pavia 2009) have embraced a more detailed model, delineating 5 phases over the years, from insignificant immigration and to the normalization of the immigration phenomenon.

I choose to present Bonifazi's model (2007), which separates the phases of contemporary migration to Italy according to migration inflows, an approach which permits understanding the broader context. The first phase, defined as prior to 1970, denotes a period of low levels of immigration and substantial emigration of Italians in search of labor to other European countries. The second phase encompasses the period from 1970 to 1980, during which time the out-migration of Italians drew to a close and foreign immigration started to become numerically significant. The final phase, from 1980 onwards, is characterized by significant and substantial inflows of foreigners, thereby making immigration one of the most prominent political and social issues in Italy.

### **2.2.1 Pre 1970s and Italian Migration**

The first phase, from the post-war years to the beginning of the 1970s, is one where rebuilding efforts accounted for significant labor migration within Europe, Italians included (Caritas 2003). At the same time, many Western European countries began temporary guest worker programs (e.g., Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, or Sweden). Italy, on the other hand, had access to cheap labor internally and did not need to institute a formal guest worker program to meet the industrial and rebuilding needs of an expanding economy (Pastore 2002). During this period, significant internal migration of Italians from the poorer Southern regions to the

wealthier, industrialized, Northern regions occurred (King and Andall 1999, Pugliese 2002). Because of this, Italy started experiencing the particular North/South racism that still exists today (Petraccone 2000). On the international stage, however, Italy was a net exporter of migrants during this period of time, and did not experience any significant influx of immigrants.

### **2.2.2 1970s- 1980s: The Beginning of International Immigration**

International immigration to Italy began in earnest during the early 1970s to the early 1980s, a period characterized by economic stagnation (Bonifazi 2007). Although counterintuitive due to the economic hardships present in Italy in the 1970s, people from non-EU countries increasingly sought to immigrate to Europe, and Italy found itself to be both a destination for immigrants and a gateway to the rest of Europe (Caritas 2003).

Immigration to Italy during this time can be explained by both national and international factors. Nationally, the lack of a political and legal framework regulating immigration is a pull factor. Researchers note that many immigrants risk being undocumented, calculating that eventually there will be a wave of regularization (Zincone and Caponio 2008). The only laws regulating foreigners in Italy dated back to the Fascist regime, reflecting the strong statist control and expulsion of immigrants, but without any consideration of long term issues, such as labor market needs (Bonifazi 2007). Italy's relaxed border controls and miles of easy-access shorelines, when compared to other European countries, add to the explanation of why it had become a destination country (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000).

Internationally, during this time, migration flows shifted from being demand-oriented to supply-oriented phenomena (Bonifazi 2007), whereby immigrants were no longer only guest workers, but also agents deciding to migrate without formal

recruitment. Because Italy never instituted a guest worker policy, the shift to supply-oriented migration merely continued the trend that had begun in the 1970s. Several European countries that were traditional destinations for migrants instituted restrictive immigration laws, thus making Italy easier to immigrate to, by comparison (Pastore 2002). Bilateral agreements between Italy and home countries influenced migration patterns from Somalia and Cape Verde, while a shared Judeo-Christian culture also facilitated immigration from the Philippines and El Salvador (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000).

During this period, immigration overwhelmingly consisted of domestic laborers and asylum seekers (Caritas 2005) and the numbers were very low – the phenomenon was so new that, in fact, statistics on immigrants started to be gathered only with the year 1970 via the tracking of the *permessi di soggiorno* (residency permits). According to the Dossier Statistico Immigrazione (Caritas 2005), from 1970 to 1979, immigrants in Italy went from a little under 144,000 to 200,000 - a very slight increase in numerical presence.

Several countries of origin were represented in the initial migration wave to Italy. The primary sending countries were neighbors along the Mediterranean Sea, especially the Maghreb. Economic crises in many African countries spurred the migration of many individuals (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000). Moroccans, Tunisians and Egyptians – predominantly young and middle-aged males – opted to relocate to Italy and specialized in filling certain economic niches; Tunisians were prevalent in the fishing industry in Sicily, Egyptians in small industries in the northern regions, and Moroccans specialized in ambulatory vending over the entire country. Young female migrants also came to Italy

in order to fill the need for domestic work and elder care, as urban Italian women entered the paid labor market in increasing numbers. Filipina, Eritrean, Somali, and Cape Verdean women immigrated for that purpose (Andall 1999, Anthias and Lazaridis 2000, Maciotti and Pugliese 2003). During this time, immigration was seen by politicians and portrayed in the mass media as indicative of labor problems, the question being asked “How, in a country plagued by chronic unemployment, can there be labor migration?” Sciortino and Colombo’s (2004) chronicle of the public discourse on immigration highlights the fact that there were two categories of immigrants present in the public imagination: the “foreigner,” a western, wealthy individual well integrated in the power elite and often meddling with national politics and the “immigrant,” a low wage, exploited non-western worker doing the menial work in Italian society. This division persists in the classification of immigrants as *intra-* or *extra-comunitari* (immigrants originating from countries within the European Union or from beyond the EU borders).<sup>4</sup> The *extracomunitari* “immigrant” workers were seen both as exploited by unscrupulous Italian businessmen and as the cause of xenophobic reactions on the part of the Italian public (because of the labor force competition and the backwards or provincial Italian mindset). Overall, though, immigration to Italy had not reached the scope or the numerical presence to generate the kind of interest that would peak in the 1980s and continue to the current day.

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<sup>4</sup> There are several legal differences governing the two types of immigrants, *intracomunitari* enjoying several benefits when compared to *extracomunitari*, such as reduced visa requirements and shortened waiting times for naturalization, in addition to very different media portrayals.

### **2.2.3 Immigration from the 1980s to Now**

The third phase began in the 1980s and continues to this day. This is a phase where immigration to Italy is really thought to have commenced in a sustained and numerically significant way, characterized by increasing complexity and diversity in immigrant makeup, as well as the development of legal measures aimed at controlling migration flows (Pastore 2002, Caritas 2003). Immigrants to Italy rose dramatically from 1979 to 1980 - from 205,000 to 298,000, a 45% increase in just one year. This substantial surge was due in part to a change in the way immigration statistics were gathered - whereas prior to 1970 only visas in excess of 3 months were counted, in 1980 visas in excess of one month were included in the count (Caritas 2005).

During this time, three types of immigrants became particularly visible in the Italian society: (1) men from the North and Sub-Saharan Africa working illegally in Southern Italy as fishermen, carpenters, street vendors or on the tomato harvest; (2) women from Eritrea, Somalia and the Philippines as domestic workers; and (3) Chinese entrepreneurs running restaurants or cottage industries and employing fellow nationals of both sexes (Zincone & Caponio 2006; 2). It is notable that, although immigration to Italy had been slowly increasing throughout the 1970s, it is during the 1980s that we see greater racial diversity of immigrant flows from all over the world, and the racial otherness of the immigrant is more conspicuous in Italian society (Andall 2002).

## **2.3 Immigration and Immigrant Policies**

During the first years of sustained in-migration, there were no direct policies governing immigration to Italy. This has resulted in Italian policies being passed largely as reactive measures to existing conditions (Zincone 2006). Most laws which have been

passed introduce measures to curb immigration, but also to grant amnesties to immigrants who already reside and work in Italy irregularly.

### **2.3.1 Statute no. 943 /1986**

Statute no. 943 of December 1986 was the first legislative act attempting to regulate immigration to Italy. By this point, immigrants were seen as competing with Italians on the labor market (Sciortino & Colombo 2004), and this legislation aimed at protecting Italian workers from “unfair” competition. Work permits were issued to immigrants on the condition that the position could not be filled by an Italian citizen, and movement between jobs was severely restricted for permit holders (Zincone & Caponio 2008). At the same time, this act introduced the first amnesty program, regularizing the immigration status of illegal immigrants by granting them access to health care, public housing, and education for children (Zincone & Caponio 2008).

### **2.3.2 The Martelli Law, no.39/1990**

The rapid increase in immigrants and the unpreparedness of the Italian state to accommodate them yielded the passing of new legislation. In 1990, the Martelli administration passed the Martelli Law (no.39/1990). It included further measures to legalize and integrate immigrants already present on Italian soil, while attempting to restrict further immigration into Italy. It also established temporary accommodations for immigrants legally entering Italy. A number of left-wing organizations, unions, and the Catholic Church formed an “anti racist” pact to support the passing of this law (Morje Howard 2009). The amnesty allowed almost 235,000 immigrants to regularize their status.

Although, on the one hand, some measures liberalized immigration laws, the Martelli law also tightened state control over immigration: it increased the number of

countries needing a visa, it allowed greater control over expulsions, and made maintaining a regular status difficult for immigrants (Bonifazi 2007). While this law seemed to be the first step to a liberalization of immigration laws in Italy, the resulting backlash and xenophobic reaction to increasing numbers of asylum seekers propelled the rise of anti-immigrant platforms (Morje Howard 2009, Parati 2005).

### **2.3.3 Statute no.91/1992**

In the 1990s, Italy reached the quota of more than 1 million immigrant residents, with a notable influx of eastern European immigrants, especially from Albania, due to the collapse of the Albanian economy in the early 1990s, and ex-Yugoslavia, due to the civil war (Caritas 2005). Additionally, migration flows from Peru, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan began to form (Zincone & Caponio 2008). During this time, the public discourse on immigration shifted from a focus on labor force competition to a fierce politicization of the issue and the characterization of immigration as an arena of social conflict (Sciortino & Colombo 2004). Specifically, immigration became an issue widely covered in newspapers, which have shifted the main focus from the exploitation of the immigrant by unscrupulous companies and employers to concerns about tides of immigrants overflowing into Italy and the security risks they pose to Italian society. Immigration became an issue in many political platforms, especially in the right-wing and regional parties (Alleanza Nazionale and Lega Nord).

The results of the shift in public opinion and political platforms can be seen not only in the laws regulating immigration flows, but also in the 1992 law reforming citizenship. The law, no. 91 of 1992, strengthened the link between Italian citizenship and Italian descent, while also making it more difficult to gain citizenship through residency. Non-EU immigrants now have to reside in Italy for 10 years instead of only 5

before, in order to qualify for Italian citizenship. Second-generation immigrants are required to have uninterruptedly and legally lived in Italy for their first 18 years in order to be eligible for citizenship. In effect, the law privileges the descendants of Italian emigrants at the turn of the century, facilitating the process for them to claim citizenship, while, at the same time, restricting access to citizenship through residency for immigrants without any ancestral Italian link.

#### **2.3.4 The Dini Decree, no.489/1995**

The Dini administration passed a decree in 1995 (no.489/1995), which was considered an emergency measure to accommodate the influx of refugees from the neighboring countries of Albania and the former Yugoslavia, along with the once colony of Somalia. More than 248,000 immigrants took advantage of the granting of permits for “humanitarian reasons” (Zincone 2006). It also simplified the process for family reunification (Al-Azar 2010). Of importance is the fact that the Dini decree shifted the responsibility of verifying legal residency to the police. Immigrants were now required to provide proper identification to the police or face up to six months incarceration. The tougher measures introduced by the Dini decree often translated into deportation proceedings for immigrants who had committed only misdemeanors, often without the possibility of judicial appeal (Dal Lago 1999, Parati 2005).

#### **2.3.5 The Turco Napolitano Law, no.40/1998**

The next piece of legislation regulating immigration flows into Italy was the Turco-Napolitano law (no.40/1998), again instituting quotas and discouraging irregular immigration to Italy, while attempting to integrate immigrants legally present on Italian

soil. The law is the first to introduce the *centri di permanenza temporanea* (CPTs)<sup>5</sup>, also known as detention centers. The quota system instituted a means for “Italian citizens or foreigners legally living in the country, regional or local authorities, trade unions or recognised voluntary associations” to sponsor an immigrant, thereby granting a temporary permit in order for him or her to seek employment (Zincone & Caponio 2006: 4). The act also instituted an amnesty, whereby more than 220,000 immigrants were granted regular permits.

### **2.3.6 The Bossi-Fini Law, no.189/2002**

In 2001, the administration changed and Berlusconi’s right-wing coalition came into power. This coalition instituted immigration law reforms, known as the Bossi-Fini law of 2002 (no.189/2002). This act restrictively reforms the Turco-Napolitano law and introduces stricter measures controlling regular migration and making irregular immigration a criminal act. Obtaining a residency or work permit, and later citizenship, is conditional on proof that the immigrant has either a job or the means for self- support. The law also abolishes the sponsorship option introduced under the previous act. In order to combat illegal immigration, the act attempted to introduce severe measures, such as immediate deportation without a hearing (only a judge’s approval would have been necessary). Several measures<sup>6</sup> were found unconstitutional, however, and had to be softened by the government (Zincone and Caponio 2008). The act succeeded in tying the quota for nations to consider their cooperation in stemming illegal entry to Italy; thus, if a country cooperated heavily to prevent illegal immigration of its citizens to Italy

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<sup>5</sup> These centers are holding places for all immigrants who have been ordered to be deported or who have been turned away at the border while expulsion orders are finalized.

<sup>6</sup> The Bossi Fini Act attempted to enact some strict measures that were struck down, such as immediate deportation without a trial and mandatory imprisonment due to failure to comply with an expulsion order.

it was allowed a higher quota (Al-Azar 2010). In addition to the increasingly restrictive measures, however, the Bossi-Fini law instituted an amnesty program, granting regular status to more than 634,000 immigrants.

### **2.3.7 The Security Measure, no.94/2009**

The latest law to reform immigration statutes, passed in July 2009 (no.94/2009) by Berlusconi's right wing coalition, also adds several restrictive measures. The main aim, similar to the many laws passed before, is to curb illegal immigration. This law criminalizes illegal entry into Italy, allowing for fines of up to 10,000 Euros and deportation, while extending legal detention up to 6 months. Most importantly, marriage to Italian citizens - the principal way by which immigrants have traditionally gained Italian citizenship - has been made more difficult. Now, in order for an immigrant to marry an Italian citizen, he or she must show a valid residency permit when applying for the marriage license and must wait longer (2 years, as opposed to 6 months) to gain citizenship.

This law also regulates the responsibility of other Italian residents to report illegal immigrants (for example, by penalizing anyone who rents apartments or homes to illegal immigrants). Immigrants must now show valid residency permits when making money transfers, and the operators of the businesses must report to the authorities any immigrant who cannot produce a permit within 12 hours, under penalty of law. Continuing the trend, the administration instituted another amnesty wave in September of 2009, which allowed for the regularization of domestic workers, and received over 295,000 applications.

### **2.3.8 Common Trends among Italian Immigration Laws**

Overall, the legal context signals divergent tendencies in the attempts aimed at controlling immigration flows in Italy. Laws are passed fairly regularly, every four or five years, in response to changing administrations and new attempts at controlling immigrant flows. Whether passed by center-left or center-right administrations, immigration laws have taken a consistent two-pronged approach. The first consistent feature is a progressive restriction of immigration to Italy, both through restrictive quotas for legal immigration and through increasingly strict measures combating illegal immigration. The second is the expansion of rights to immigrants already present in Italy: immigrants have gained increasing access to public services provided by the state (health care, education, etc.) and the amnesty programs have allowed a number of illegal immigrants to regularize their status. Although the way these legislations came about have differed - some administrations passing largely unilateral edicts while others bargained with the opposition and consulted civil societies - the laws themselves follow a fairly predictable path: restriction of entry and amnesty waves (Zincone 2006).

The regularity of the passing of immigration laws speaks to the importance of immigration into Italy, as well as to the permanence of the flows. Regardless of restrictive immigration reforms, people still immigrate. In light of this and other factors, immigration can be considered a structural phenomenon in Italy. The flows that began in the 1970s have expanded, and now Italy has a diverse and well-established immigrant population, with new and changing flows from all parts of the world. The section below describes in some detail the demographic characteristics of present-day immigrant population in Italy.

## 2.4 Immigrants in Italy Today: Demographic Details

Italy's immigrant population has doubled every ten years since the 1970s, with a reported population of 4,235,059 foreign residents in January of 2010, representing 7% of the total population (ISTAT 2010). Immigrants in Italy come from a diverse group of sending nations, with Romania (796,477 residents), Albania (441,396 residents) and Morocco (403,592 residents) representing the most numerous nationalities. China, Ukraine, the Philippines, Tunisia, Poland, India, and Moldova join them to make up the 10 most populous nationalities in Italy as of 2008 (ISTAT 2009).

The national origin of the migration flows has changed over the years. Although data are often difficult to find for the period between 1970 and 1990, they reveal that, initially, the most significant flows originated from the Maghreb and West Africa. This trend continued in the first few years of the 1990s, until Southern and Eastern European migration became more prominent. The gender composition of a migration flow also reveals some interesting aspects, as immigrants are often able to access different occupations and legal statuses depending on their gender. For example, some female migrants may become caretakers and domestic workers, positions which are often eligible for regularization in the amnesty programs. Politicians recognize the effective need for domestic workers, and so the path to legalization and citizenship is often easier for these women as compared to the male immigrant who may work as an ambulatory vendor or as a construction worker. A look at the table 2-1 helps understand the shifts in migration flows over the last 20 years.

In the early 1990s, Morocco and Tunisia topped the list of residency permit holders, and both flows were overwhelmingly male (90%). The US and the Philippines accounted for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> most prolific sending nations. The data from 1997 show

some shifts in migration patterns to Italy. Overall migration increased, as can be seen by the growth in total residency permits issued, even just by looking at the top ten sending countries. There was an increase of more than 135,000 residency permits issued to the top ten countries from 1992 to 1997. In 1997, we also see the beginnings of migration from Southern and Eastern Europe. Residency permit holders originating in Albania increased almost threefold from 1992 to 1997 (ISTAT 2009). Romania enters the top ten list, although at the bottom spot. The shift is clearly marked in the figures for 2002, when Albania and Romania join Morocco as the top three sending countries of residency permit holders in Italy. Remarkable also is the numerical increase, overall: whereas in 1992 the sum of the top three nationalities holding residencies totaled a little over 166,000, in 1997 it leapt to almost 238,000 and in 2002 it amounted to 407,500. There are shifts in migration flows from certain countries discernible in the data, such as Romania's ascendancy in the ranks as the years pass - absent in 1992 among the top ten sending countries, it is barely present in 1997, in the top three in 2002, and then goes on to be second most populous nationality in 2007. As of 2009, Romanian is the most populous nationality in Italy (ISTAT 2009). It also bears noting that it has been a fairly egalitarian migration flow in terms of gender distribution, with a slight majority of women over men migrating to Italy since the very beginning (Caritas 2009).

Although neighboring countries predominate in its current migration flows, it is also important to note that there are several countries which are very distant geographically from Italy and yet are represented in the top ten residency holding nationalities. This denotes that Italy is a destination country not only in the immediate region, but globally as well and contributes to the growing racial and ethnic diversity in Italy. China, the

Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, and the US have all been important sources of flows over the years, bringing cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity to Italy. Currently, there is a strong migration of Southern and Eastern Europeans to Italy, both from EU member countries (Romania, Poland) and non-EU member states (Moldova, Ukraine, Albania).

The gender composition of migration flows tells a story about immigrant groups (Pessar 1999). A largely male migration flow, such as that of Morocco and Tunisia in 1992 or that of Senegal in 2002 affects the perception of the groups and the future of the migration flow. Single, immigrant males are generally perceived to be more threatening than families or immigrant women. The potential for intermarriage to Italian women is also higher among this group than if migration flows have a more equal gender distribution. On the other hand, the decision to migrate is often a household decision as opposed to an individual actor's and migration flows characterized by single males have a great potential for future family reunification by fiancés, wives and children (Kofman 2004).

On the other hand, migration flows that are more equally distributed, or even female-dominant, such as the Philippines in 2002 or the Ukraine in 2007, indicate that women are generally finding jobs on their own, and consequently these immigrant groups tend to be viewed in less negative terms. Women tend to fill positions that deal with the care of Italians, whether as nurses or as domestic workers (Andall 1999), making them less of a threatening group to Italians. On the other hand, this also affects the migration flow by limiting the potential for family reunification. It is precisely the fact that women tend to take low-paying jobs, which sometimes require them to live in as

domestic workers, that lowers the chances of their being able to show enough income and a proper residence to begin family reunification procedures.

#### **2.4.1 Regional Distribution**

Italy has a long history of regional differences, in social, political and economic aspects. Regions vary greatly along any of these lines. Generally speaking, the Northern regions are more industrialized and economically better off than the more agricultural Southern regions. The unemployment rate can be used to show the dramatic economic distinction between regions. Although the national unemployment rate is 6%, the Northeast and Northwestern regions average 3.4%, while the Southern regions average 10.5% in 2007 (ISTAT 2009). The great diversity in regions translates into great diversity in the regional distribution of immigrants.

Overall, the Northeastern (Trentino Alto-Adige, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna - 36%) and Northwestern (Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta, Liguria, Lombardia - 29%) regions have a combined 65% of all immigrants present in Italy, while the Center regions (Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio) have 23%, the Southern regions (Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria) have 9% and the Islands (Sicilia, Sardegna) have 3%. While the distribution of immigrants points to differences between the Northern and Southern regions, it also varies within the northern regions themselves. With the exception of Lazio, whose capital, Rome, is also the nation's capital and has the highest number of foreign residents, most immigrants are concentrated in Italy's northern regions. For example, as of 2009, Lombardy has over 904,000 foreign residents, almost double the number of the next most populated region, Veneto (with over 454,000 foreign residents) (ISTAT 2009). Table 2-2 at the end of the chapter presents the data for the regions.

While regions differ in size, and also in the sheer numbers of resident immigrants, looking at the percentages gives a clearer picture of the density of immigrant presence in each region. The northern regions show higher percentages - averaging between 7 and 9 percent, while the southern regions have much lower percentages of immigrants relative to the autochthonous population – between 1.8 and 3 percent. Umbria, a region located in the center of Italy, is the exception to the rule, as it has 9.61% immigrant residents.

#### **2.4.2 Immigrants and Work**

Beyond the raw numbers, it seems important to look at the reasons immigrants cite for coming to Italy, as reflected in the residency permit applications. Data for 2008 reveal that most immigrants in Italy are present in order to work (60% of all immigrant residency permits), with the next largest group present due to family reunification (33%) (ISTAT 2009; OECD 2009). Of those who are in Italy to work, most (85%) are employees of a private or public sector business, while 13% are self-employed, and a much smaller fraction (2%) are looking for work. This latest statistic is consistent with the most recent immigration law, the Bossi Fini act, which closely tied residency permits to employment.

Italy's regional economies are partially responsible for the uneven settlement of immigrants over the Italian territory, with the distribution differing according to nationality and gender (King and Andall 1999). The northeast of Italy specializes in industrial work, specifically in small- to medium-size companies producing clothing, optical and luxury goods, while the northwest specializes in manufacturing, with stakes in the automotive, naval and steel industries. Immigrants often work as manual laborers in factories or in the lower service sector, as cleaners or movers, and tend to be male (Ambrosini 2001).

Central Italy also specializes in industrial labor, while the Southern regions are more invested in the agricultural and fishery sectors, with some incidence of hospitality industry (Ambrosini 2001; Bonifazi 2007). The tourism and hospitality industry also accounts for significant labor sectors in the Center and Northern regions (Ambrosini 2001).

The regional division also draws different groups on immigrants. For example, research has confirmed that the majority of Filipino and Cape Verdean immigrants are women employed in the domestic work and elder-care sectors, generally prevalent in the northern and central regions and especially in big cities (Ambrosini 2001; Andall 2000; Parrenas 2001). Similarly, West African men tended to settle in the northeast, in order to work in the factories there (Morrone, Mazzali and Pistolese 1999) or migrated to Emilia Romagna in order to take part in the seasonal ambulatory vending on the tourist coasts (Riccio 2001).

Like immigrants in other economically-advanced countries, incoming migrants to Italy often perform jobs that adhere to the three Ds<sup>7</sup>: dirty, dangerous and demeaning (Connell 1993). Italy has virtually no recruitment of professional migrants, the only exception being in the nursing field (Ambrosini and Molina 2004). On the other hand, there is a relatively high incidence of immigrant entrepreneurship, whereby many immigrants are self-employed in niche economies.

The prevalence of low skill workers and of unskilled jobs for immigrant workers speaks to what has been called *integrazione subalterna*, or a subordinate integration model (Ambrosini 2001). This denotes the fact that Italians tend to accept immigrant

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<sup>7</sup> In Italian, the jobs are categorized as the five Ps: *pesanti, precari, pericolosi, poco pagati, penalizzati socialmente* – tough, unstable, dangerous, poorly paid, and socially stigmatized (Ambrosini 2001).

laborers only as unskilled workers who should “happily” resign themselves to do the work that Italians no longer desire to do – factory workers, caretakers, etc and who occupy a position at the bottom of the social ladder (Ambrosini 2004). As can be seen from the immigration policy reforms detailed in the previous section, there is a distinct trend toward making immigration to Italy less easy to accomplish, in most cases being tied to a job.

## **2.5 Immigration as a Permanent Fixture of Italian Society**

The data reported above serve to establish the context of immigration in Italy. Research confirms that immigration to Italy is now a structural phenomenon, part of societal reality, and shows no signs of abating. In fact, if anything, the data indicate that immigration to Italy is becoming more permanent and entrenched (Colombo, Leonini and Rebughini 2009).

One way to understand the permanence of immigration to Italy is to look at demographic changes in the immigrant population. Many regions in Italy have established observatories on immigration which collect and disseminate data on immigrant residents. The Observatory in Emilia Romagna, a prolific observatory, publishes regular reports online regarding the regional immigration context, and has found significant shifts in the period from 2001 to 2009. Immigrants in Emilia Romagna average a longer stay over time, up from 4 years in 2001 to more than 7 in 2009. There is also a marked increase in home ownership (22% in 2009) as opposed to renting with other immigrant families, another indicator that immigration tends to be permanent (Blangiardo and Mirabelli 2010).

As the demographic statistics and historical context show, immigration to Italy is an ongoing phenomenon. While the migration flows from different sending countries will

create diversity in the Italian society, the trends do not indicate that immigration to Italy will cease in the foreseeable future. This also signals that, as immigrant populations settle and make Italy their new home, their children will be born and be raised in Italy.

Piemonte's observatory notes that immigrants tend to have more children than Italians, thus contributing to elevating the national fertility rate (Rapporto 2008). The presence of the second generation signals that, demographically, Italy is reaching a unique phase in its makeup due to immigration, featuring a stabilizing first generation and an ever-increasing second generation (Mantovani and Martini 2008; Queirolo-Palmas and Torre 2005). The presence of the children of immigrants and the challenges they face in contemporary Italy is becoming an increasingly important area of study (Caponio 2008). The next chapter will discuss the historical context and demographic presence of the second generation in Italy.

Table 2-1. Top ten nationalities with a residency permit.

	Country	Total	% Female
<hr/>			
1/1/1992			
1	Morocco	83,292	9.8
2	Tunisia	41,547	9.0
3	USA	41,523	65.3
4	Philippines	36,316	67.2
5	Germany	26,377	58.2
6	Yugoslavia	25,848	37.0
7	Albania	24,886	14.1
8	Senegal	24,194	2.9
9	Egypt	18,473	14.2
10	UK	17,351	57.9
<hr/>			
1/1/1997			
1	Morocco	115,026	20.6
2	Albania	66,608	27.1
3	Philippines	56,209	67.2
4	USA	44,873	66.9
5	Tunisia	40,002	17.2
6	Yugoslavia	33,005	37.5
7	China	31,615	43.7
8	Senegal	31,543	5.2
9	Germany	30,772	58.9
10	Romania	26,894	51.7
<hr/>			
1/1/2002			
1	Morocco	167,334	32.0
2	Albania	157,646	38.6
3	Romania	82,555	51.8
4	Philippines	67,258	65.3
5	China	61,452	46.9
6	Tunisia	53,034	24.1
7	USA	44,653	65.2
8	Yugoslavia	39,278	41.9
9	Sri Lanka	38,413	43.9
10	Senegal	37,806	8.8
<hr/>			

Table 2-1. Continued

1/1/2007	Country	Total	% Female
1	Albania	282,650	43.5
2	Romania	278,582	54.1
3	Morocco	258,571	37.0
4	China	122,364	47.1
5	Ukraine	118,524	83.2
6	Poland	78,930	71.6
7	Philippines	76,413	61.8
8	Tunisia	64,870	28.8
9	India	57,122	38.2
10	Serbia and Montenegro	55,701	42.5

Source: Istat 2009.

Table 2-2. 2009 Regional distribution of foreign residents<sup>8</sup>

Region	Number of foreign residents	% of total population
Piemonte	351,112	7.92%
Valle D'Aosta	7,509	5.91%
* Lombardia	904,816	9.29%
Trentino Alto Adige	78,861	7.74%
* Veneto	454,453	9.30%
Friuli Venezia Giulia	94,976	7.72%
Liguria	104,701	6.48%
* Emilia Romagna	421,482	9.72%
* Toscana	309,651	8.35%
* Umbria	85,947	9.61%
* Marche	131,033	8.35%
Lazio	450,151	8.00%
Abruzzo	69,641	5.22%
Molise	7,309	2.28%
Campania	131,335	2.26%
Puglia	73,848	1.81%
Basilicata	11,526	1.95%
Calabria	58,775	2.93%
Sicilia	114,632	2.28%
Sardegna	29,537	1.77%

Source: Istat 2009.

\* Denotes higher percentages.

Table 2-3. Reasons for immigrating as stated on residency permits

Reason for immigrating	Percentage of permits issued
Work	60%
Family reunification	33%
Student	2%
Humanitarian	1%
Religious duties	1%

Source: Caritas 2009.

## CHAPTER 3 CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS IN ITALY: THE GROWING SECOND GENERATION

As seen from the previous chapter, immigration is both diverse (in terms of composition) and a permanent facet of contemporary Italian society. The appearance of the second generation is a natural extension of increasing numbers of permanent first generation of immigrants in Italy. As they settle, members of the first generation form families and have children (or bring over their already existing family members). As the previous chapter delineated, immigration to Italy became a significant phenomenon only since 1980. The second generation has thus only recently gained visibility, both in literal terms and in academic research. This chapter will introduce the reader to issues pertaining to the growing second generation, beginning by defining the terms and giving an overview of theories of integration, and finally presenting data on the existing second generation in Italy.

### **3.1 Second Generation: Defining the Term**

At first, the term “second generation” seems deceptively simple - it means the children of the first generation of immigrants in a particular host country (Rumbaut 2004). These children are born in the host country to immigrant parents and are raised and educated in their country of adoption. But lived experience provides for nuances along all these dimensions. For example, what of the child born in the parents’ home country but brought over as an infant, therefore largely raised and educated in the host country? Or, what of the child born in the host country, but sent in his teens to live with his grandparents in the parents’ home country? Further, what about the children born of one immigrant parent and one native parent - should they be considered second

generation or native Italians? Researchers (Rumbaut 2004, Portes and Zhou 1993) argue that the different life histories affect the adaptation of the child in the host society.

All of these situations add nuance to the term second generation, and fall under different legal categories in the Italian system. There are several categories of children of immigrants that are legally differentiated and carry differing rights: children born in Italy of two immigrant parents, children immigrating due to family reunification, minors who immigrated alone (and thus are placed in the care of the State), refugee children, international adoptees, and, finally, children with one immigrant and one Italian parent (Favaro 2000). For example, children with one Italian and one immigrant parent are considered Italian citizens, and thus have all of the accompanying rights, but may still be included in tallies of foreign residents. Similarly, research on second-generation immigrants spans the breadth of all these different experiences. The legal confounding of different categories of children of immigrants into one term has the potential for confusion: some studies may include only children of two immigrant parents born in Italy in their sample, while others may include both children not born in Italy and children with one Italian parent. This leads to a great muddying of the term, and an unclear operationalization can mean confusing results.

### **3.1.1 The Decimal Approach**

One approach attempting to reconcile these nuances is that of Rumbaut (2004). Using the United States' experience of immigration, he advocates for a clearer operationalization of the term through categorizing children of immigrants by the amount of time they spent in the host country and the life stage at which they entered the host country. Thus, the second generation is defined as those born and raised

entirely in the host country, while the first generation is defined as adults aged 18 or older, foreign born and socialized in the home country, who chose to migrate.

Rumbaut categorizes these children of immigrants by using the decimal system, in order to approximate the relative distance of each group from the second generation; along a continuum spanning from 1 to 2, these would be the “in-between” generations. Thus, the 1.75 generation is the group closest to the second generation in terms of outcomes: it consists of children who arrive in early childhood, from age zero to 5, who generally have no memory of their home country, and are almost entirely socialized in the host country. Too young to read or write in their home language, the adaptive experience of these children closely resembles that of the group of children born and raised in the host country (second generation). Generation 1.5 is composed of foreign-born youths who arrive between the ages of 6 and 12, and so they have had some schooling in the home country (they have learned to read and write in another language). Finally, generation 1.25 is made up of foreign born youth between the ages of 13 and 17, who may or may not have come with their families of origin, who may or may not attend secondary school or may go directly to work. Their adaptive experience more closely resembles that of the first generation (Rumbaut 2004). Rumbaut’s system aims to avoid semantic confusion by distinguishing among distinctive generational cohorts, and to add complexity when research talk of the second generation.

### **3.1.2 Critiques as it Concerns the Italian Context**

This system highlights important categories affecting outcomes within the population of children of immigrants that the term second generation does not always encompass, because the general term second generation obscures differences in adaptation and legal status. However, this system is only partially relevant to the second

generation in Italy, because it is based not only on similarity of adaptive experiences, but also on distinctions between foreign born and native born that make sense in the US context and not in the Italian context. The citizenship regime in the U.S. allows for *jus soli*, where those born on US soil are automatically granted citizenship, while those who are foreign-born can acquire citizenship, either through naturalization or marriage. In the Italian context, this distinction between foreign and native born becomes irrelevant, as no children of immigrants, whether true second generation or the in-between generations, are given citizenship at birth. This shared status as non-citizens brings children of immigrants together, because all of them – foreign born or native born - will have to obtain residency permits and deal with the limitations of being a non-citizen in their youth (Colombo, Leonini and Rebughini 2009). However, the distinction between the in-between generations and the true second generation becomes clearer in two instances: (1) when the children reach the age of 18 and (2) when speaking of proposed legislation to amend citizenship law in Italy.

Once children of immigrants turn 18, those who were born to legally residing parents and whose birth was immediately recorded may ask for Italian citizenship. If they meet certain criteria, they are typically granted citizenship, although not without delay and considerable bureaucratic twists and turns. Some of the conditions include the following: documented continuous residence in Italy, financial independence, and a lack of criminal record. No such opportunity exists for the “in-between” generations, as they were not born in Italy: their only opportunity to attain citizenship is through residency or marriage.

Secondly, the distinction becomes obvious when analyzing proposed legislation to amend Italian citizenship laws. In almost all cases, the proposed legislation to facilitate the acquisition of citizenship for children of immigrants has focused only on the native born and not on the foreign born. Thus, even the generation 1.75 children who may have immigrated as young as a few months of age would not be eligible for citizenship no matter which, if any, of the proposed legislations passes. Further, public opinion surveys about Italians' position on granting citizenship to children of immigrants have so far focused on children born on Italian soil and have largely excluded the in-between generations. As we will see below, associations of second-generation youth tend to lobby for change for both native and foreign born children of immigrants, highlighting the importance of socialization in the Italian society as the key factor in determining belonging. These associations support the reforms to allow *jus soli* in order to allow access to citizenship for children of immigrants born in Italy. Even though attaining such reform would not be considered a full victory, as it leaves out children born elsewhere but raised in Italy, any citizenship reform that increases access for children of immigrants would be heartily welcomed.

The rest of the information presented on second-generation immigrants will take into account both those born in Italy and those born in other countries but who moved to Italy as children. This is partially due to data sources (such as the ISTAT) not differentiating between these "foreign" minors and partially because, until the minors reach 18 years of age, the experiences of children of immigrants are similar. However, where the data allow, distinctions between true second -generation youth (children born in Italy of two immigrant parents) and the in-between generations will be made.

## **3.2 Theories of Second Generation Adaptation**

There are several approaches within the sociological literature on migration, from Gordon's assimilation model to Zhou and Portes' segmented assimilation, that explain and predict the process of adaptation of immigrants within a host society; most with an emphasis on the second and subsequent generations. Many of the approaches have been developed in relation to the US context, and thus will be presented and then evaluated for their suitability to explain the Italian second generation experience.

### **3.2.1 The Classic Assimilation Model**

The assimilation model emerged from the Chicago School sociologists, namely Robert Park (1950), Milton Gordon (1964), and Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (1963). The model was based on analyses of turn-of-the-century European migration to the U.S. and theorized that assimilation was a natural, desirable process of incorporation into American society. Among these scholars, "race was conceived as a social category, and ethnicity was understood as the result of a group formation process based on culture and descent" (Omi and Winant 1994, p.15). This allowed for the transcending of race or ethnicity as it was conceived, making assimilation to the dominant group possible.

Gordon (1964) presented 3 main ways in which immigrant groups can assimilate: the melting pot, cultural pluralism, and Anglo-conformity. Of the three, he viewed Anglo-conformity as the "descriptive reality" (Feagin and Feagin 2006), the model which best explained the incorporation of immigrants into American society. Gordon set out seven dimensions of assimilation, separate stages which may take place at different times or which may not take place at all. These dimensions are: cultural (the adoption of the host society's cultural patterns), structural (the entry of members of an ethnic minority into

primary group relationships with the majority group), marital, identification, attitude-receptional (absence of prejudice), behavior-receptional (absence of discrimination), and civic assimilation (Gordon 1964). Gordon predicted that all immigrant groups will undergo cultural assimilation, but that cultural assimilation does not necessarily lead to other forms of assimilation. Gordon emphasized the importance of generational assimilation, stressing that it would most often span three generations, eventually leading group members to intermarriage with the majority population and entering the main institutions of society (Gordon 1964).

Thus, the classical assimilation model has 3 main characteristics: it assumes a natural, linear process by which immigrant and ethnic groups come to adapt to a host society, it assumes that such assimilation is desirable and the best path to social mobility, and that it can apply to any ethnic group, regardless of historical context or racial classification (Gordon 1964). Consequently, this model has been criticized for its emphasis of ethnicity over race – implying that ethnic differences will not hinder assimilation while ignoring that racial differences would impact the same assimilation process, ignoring power differences between groups, the limitations of the immigrant analogy (which focuses on European immigrant groups and ignores existing minorities, such as African-Americans and Native-Americans), and its tendency to blame the victim for failure of assimilation (Feagin and Feagin 2006; Omi and Winant 1994; Portes and Zhou 1993; Rumbaut 1997; Zhou 1997a).

### **3.2.2 The Assimilation Model in the Italian Context**

The assimilation model holds promise when applied to the Italian context. Gordon's seven dimensions of assimilation indicate areas of interest to examine when looking for adaptation. His focus on the second and third generations as vehicles of

integration is anecdotally confirmed in the statements of many second-generation youth in Italy, who affirm their belonging in the Italian society even as they maintain cultural differences.

However, the model is largely based on the concept of Anglo-conformity within the US, and the alternatives of the melting pot and cultural pluralism do not accurately describe the current Italian context. Italy, as a new country of migration, isn't a good candidate at present for a melting pot model, nor has it instituted any sort of directives towards the cultural pluralist model. While Anglo-conformity, then, would be appropriate, the model does not adequately theorize the possibility of assimilation in any direction other than that of the majority, an issue which is addressed below.

### **3.2.3 The Segmented Assimilation Model**

Some theorists challenged aspects of the classic assimilation model, revising it to suit the needs of post-1965 migration flows to the US. The most prominent of these challenges is provided by Portes and Zhou's (1993) segmented assimilation model. In their original article, Portes and Zhou (1993) distinguish post-1965 migration to the US as being qualitatively different from migration at the turn of the century (in terms of immigrant group characteristics, as well as the receiving context), and contend that their modifications to Gordon's classical assimilation model present factors necessary to understand contemporary immigrant incorporation (Portes and Zhou 1993:76).

Based on large ethnographic studies of 1.5 and second generation youths in California and Florida, Portes and Zhou (1993) set out three patterns of assimilation based on the vulnerability and resources available to each immigrant group. The first pattern of assimilation is similar to the classic assimilation model: growing acculturation and parallel integration to white, middle class America. The second pattern is the

complete opposite, called downward assimilation: assimilation to the nation's underclass, adopting an adversarial attitude and experiencing permanent poverty. Finally, a third pattern involves rapid economic advancement while preserving the values of the tight knit immigrant group (Portes and Zhou 1993). Their innovation lies in acknowledging that there can be many ways in which immigrant groups assimilate, and that the dominant group in society is not necessarily the target group.

Further, Portes and Zhou (1993) develop a "typology of vulnerability and resources" that can help determine the risks of an immigrant group assimilating downward. The first determinant is the official orientation to the immigrant group, which can be either benevolent or hostile (i.e. governmental policies aiding the first wave of Cuban migration to Florida versus hostile government policy toward Haitian immigrants or Marielitos). The second determinant is whether an immigrant group is subject to prejudice and discrimination or whether they enjoy public sympathy (or are simply ignored). This can be based on many factors, and the authors give the examples of sympathy based on political conditions (Hungarians fleeing communism) and cultural affinity (illegal Irish immigrants in 1980s Boston enjoyed sympathy from the established Irish community there). Finally, the social and cultural capital of the co-ethnic community, including material resources such as job placement services, can determine the risk of upward or downward assimilation. An immigrant group that encounters official hostility, prejudice and discrimination, and does not have a strong receiving community, is more likely to experience downward assimilation than a group which does not experience these conditions.

Portes and Zhou's segmented assimilation attempts to answer some of the criticisms leveled at the classical assimilation model. Their approach is more sensitive to the historical context and the social structural factors that condition an immigrant group's experience in the United States, taking a more holistic approach than the classical assimilation model. They also conceive of assimilation as diverse, as beneficial to the immigrant group in terms of social mobility and wealth or as detrimental, leading to poverty and marginalization. Most importantly, they offer a "third way" of assimilation that involves economic advancement and cultural maintaining of immigrant/home-country values, recognizing that racism and discrimination may hinder the upward assimilation of non-white immigrant groups (Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997a).

Particularly helpful is their attentiveness to the governmental response to migration flows and the resources available to a particular group upon arrival, measured by societal reception and co-ethnic group strength. Portes and Zhou (1993) distinguish between receptive, indifferent and hostile governmental policies aimed at each immigrant group. For example, the Cubans immigrating to South Florida in the 1960s had a receptive governmental reaction<sup>9</sup>, while the Marielitos of the 1980s faced hostile governmental policies.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, societal reception also played a key role in the immigrant groups' adaptation. Following the earlier example, American society was generally sympathetic to Cubans in the 1960s, while they viewed the later wave of Marielitos largely as criminals. Finally, the diversity, size and organization of the co-ethnic community also influence how a group proceeds to assimilate. For example, the

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<sup>9</sup> For example, loan programs enabling college education and resettlement aid.

<sup>10</sup> Internment in camps as officers determined their criminal history, and none of the helpful governmental programs aimed at resettlement of their earlier counterparts.

Cuban community was large in terms of number and diverse (in levels of educational achievement, social capital, etc), thereby providing a strong base for reception in both the 1960s and the 1980s, while the Haitian community was not as strong, which affected the integration of Haitian immigrants in South Florida.

However, the segmented assimilation model has also been criticized on the grounds that upward assimilation is linked to Anglo-conformity, conceptualized as the most desirable form of incorporation (Alba and Nee 1997). Critics contend that it confounds the process of assimilation with the consequences of assimilation, making it difficult to assess its validity empirically (Xie and Greenman 2005). Finally, segmented assimilation assumes an adversarial or oppositional culture among native ethnic groups, primarily inner-city African Americans, with little exploration of the possible causes of such an oppositional stance or of its occurrence in White American communities (Foner 2002; Perlmann and Waldinger 1997).

#### **3.2.4 Segmented Assimilation in the Italian Context**

The segmented assimilation model offers important refinements to the Italian context. Immigration to Italy consists of several migration flows originating from all over the world, bringing racially and ethnically diverse people to settle in Italy. The attentiveness to race and ethnicity present in Portes and Zhou's model (1993) adds complexity and an opportunity to better understand differential outcomes in immigrant groups. For example, the establishment of successful, ethno-national communities in certain Italian cities (e.g., the Chinese community in Prato) contributes to the validity of the "third way" of assimilation proposed by the model.

A particularly intriguing concept within the segmented assimilation model is the idea of second-generation opposition. However, in contrast to Portes and Zhou's model

(1993), where oppositional stances impeded integration and spelled largely negative consequences for the research participants, research in the Italian context hints to a less detrimental function. Andall's study (2002) of Afro-Italians showed that many of the participants in her study experienced instances of everyday racism and were constantly reminded of their exclusion from the larger Italian society. While many were identified as Italians when they were children, they began to identify more and more with ethno-national identities (Eritrean, in her case study), as a response to the discrimination they faced. This identity shift is an oppositional response to a society which deemed them as outsiders, symbolically completing a mutual rejection in a discriminatory society.

At the same time, these youths also identified as Western, which led many to look outward to other European nations for a future life. The participants stated that, while they did not foresee many opportunities for their future in Italy, they did look to Germany or England as possible societies in which they could integrate and build a future. While this may seem as negative, because the youth do not envisage a satisfactory future for themselves in their home society, it does present them wider opportunities in an international context.

### **3.2.5 Wanted but not Welcome, Insiders vs. Outsiders**

Several researchers have developed the notion that immigration into wealthy societies is often "wanted but not welcome" (Ambrosini 2004; Hirschman, Kasinitz, and DeWind 1999; Zolberg 1987), highlighting the inconsistent reaction of the host population; accepting of low-skilled immigrant workers into the labor market (often the informal one, in Italy's case) while also denying them social integration. Ambrosini (2004) highlights that this dichotomy is often present in the North-Eastern regions of Italy, where industrial labor participation by immigrants is high.

The insular outlook of Italians regarding immigrants and their children was investigated by Paul Sniderman and colleagues (2000) using a nationally representative survey of prejudicial attitudes. Aimed at better understanding Italians' attitudes towards immigrants, this study found that many Italians were prejudiced against outsiders. Immigrants' race or ethnicity did not particularly weigh upon Italians' attitudes, as they felt equally wary of North Africans, Eastern Europeans, or Sub-Saharan Africans. This presents an interesting line of inquiry, as there are temporal shifts in immigrant groups targeted for discrimination: in the 1990s it was Africans, later it was Albanians, now it is Romanians (who also happen to be EU members, complicating the picture even further.) The racial and ethnic makeup of these immigrant groups differ- Africans are perceived to differ from Italians along racial lines, while Albanians differ along ethnic lines, but are racially similar (Romania 2004).

These results indicate that prejudice plays a large role in the possible adaptive experiences of the second generation. The wanted but not welcome scenario implies that, in order to remain in Italy, the second generation should assume their parents' occupations, because this mode of economic integration is expected by Italians (Ambrosini 2001). The insider/outsider distinction poses a problem to the assimilation of the second generation, because their perceived lack of shared cultural and historical values with Italians marks them as permanent outsiders (Ambrosini 2004).

### **3.3 The Second Generation in Italy**

In order to frame the debate about granting citizenship to children of immigrants, a picture of the socio-demographic presence of children of immigrants in Italy is needed. Official statistics collect data on *minori immigrati* (immigrant minors), a category which includes children of immigrants born in Italy, as well as those who immigrated due to

family reunification, those who have migrated alone, the children of refugees, adopted minors, and the children of mixed Italian-immigrant marriages. This lends itself to a particularly muddy picture: when the focus of any legislation is the children born in Italy, it would serve the purpose to give a detailed account of this group. However, official data do not make this distinction when tracking children of immigrants for things like integration. I present the available data to differentiate the children of immigrants born in Italy from the others included in official data, but it is nonetheless helpful to understand the general context in which these children are living their lives.

### **3.3.1 Demographic Details**

The latest data on children of immigrants in Italy places them at 862,453 in 2008, with more than 70,000 annual births in Italy and more than 40,000 children immigrating under family reunification (Caritas 2009). This number represents a great increase in births on Italian soil in just under 15 years: in 1993, there were 7000 children of immigrants born; in 2000 that number had crept up to almost 26,000, and in 2008 it had nearly tripled to more than 72,000 (Caritas 2009). During the same time period, the number of births attributable to immigrants in Italy also grew significantly: while in 1993 there were 12.2 births per 1000 immigrant residents, that proportion grew to nearly 20 per 1000 in 2008. Table 3-1 presents these data at the end of this chapter.

Percentage-wise, these children represent more than 22% of regularly resident immigrants in Italy, with the bulk of them residing in Lombardia (25% of children of immigrants), Veneto (13%) and Emilia Romagna (11%). This partially mirrors the regional distribution of first-generation immigrants shown in the previous section. The top three regions, all in the North of Italy, represent 49% of all children of immigrants (Caritas 2009).

Determining the national origin of these children of immigrants is not directly possible, as the ISTAT does not gather this information. However, the *Immigrazione Dossier Statistico* (2009) has reconstructed the national origin of those aged 14 and under, on the basis of their presence on their parents' residency permits. Using data from 2006, when EU citizens were also counted, the Dossier found that the top national origins of children of immigrants are Morocco, Albania, Romania, China, and Tunisia – reflecting the largest nationalities present in Italy. As expected, these closely mirror the distribution of first-generation migrants, both in regional residence and national origin - they are, after all, a very real extension of their parents.

### **3.3.2 Political Participation: Second Generation Associations**

Because many second-generation youth often do not have citizenship, and thus do not have the right to vote, they participate in Italian political life using different avenues. There are several non-profit associations of second-generation youth which have gained national prominence and joined the national debate on citizenship reform. Often, these associations have taken part in both the petitioning of citizenship reform, through meetings with parliamentary representatives all the way to the president of the Republic himself. They are often consulted for comment in news coverage of second-generation issues, and organize and co-sponsor lectures, exhibits and events in major cities all across Italy. Their web presence also allows anyone interested in these issues to join and become a party to the internal debates, as well as remain informed of current issues. Their opinion is sought after in panels organized by city councils and research centers. Although it cannot be said that all second-generation youths in Italy have heard of these organizations, much less that they belong to one or more of them, the associations' public role is important enough to mention and describe.

### **3.3.2.1 Rete G2- Seconde Generazioni**

The Rete G2 (<http://www.secondegenerazioni.it/>) is an apolitical organization of self-defined “children of immigrants” who consider themselves part of the second-generation of immigration in Italy (different from the second generation of immigrants). The members generally range in ages from 18 to 35, and are of all nationalities and ethnicities. Founded in Rome in 2005, but with a network now reaching major cities (like Naples, Milan, Genova, or Bologna), the G2 network has two main aims: to address the rights unavailable to second-generation youths because of a lack of Italian citizenship, and to promote an understanding of identity on the basis of more than one culture. Between 2006 and 2007, representatives of the network were invited by the Ministry of the Interior to give their opinion on the reform of the current immigration and citizenship laws.

The network has produced many venues of participation for the reform of citizenship laws in Italy. Participants organized many local events contesting the current citizenship law, produced a wealth of multi-media products (a CD, a “fotoromanzo,” radio series broadcast in Milan and online), and encourage both Italians and children of immigrants to participate. Their online discussion forum has hundreds of entries, and sections dedicated to tracking incidents of racism and discrimination, daily life difficulties for those who do not have citizenship, as well as a dedicated section for journalists and researchers to solicit interviews and study participants.

### **3.3.2.2 Associna**

Associna was founded in 2005 by a group of children of Chinese immigrants, lending a national platform to Sino-Italians and the particular experiences of these youth. The website for the group (<http://www.associna.com/>) states that their aim is to

help people better understand Chinese culture, as well as the lived experience of these new Italians of Chinese origins. The group addresses many issues, from the perceived isolation of Chinese communities to the discrimination and difficulties imposed by the current citizenship regime.

The aims of this group are less specifically political than the G2, which focuses on citizenship regime reform. However, Associna is often a partner in many of the same exhibits and lectures as the G2, sometimes co-sponsoring events. Representatives of Associna are also often quoted in newspaper articles and popular magazines when covering second generation issues.

### **3.3.2.3      Giovani Musulmani d'Italia**

Founded in 2001 by a group of Muslim youth, the GMI seeks to help young Muslims living in Italy and who claim a “100% Italian belonging,” in the sense that being Muslim or of foreign origins and feeling Italian are not mutually exclusive. This group is heavily geared towards young people, ages 14-30, and seeks to give them tools to better negotiate their identity and integration into Italian society. Although not as prominent as the G2 and Associna, this group is becoming more sought after by the media, especially in discussions of religion and society.

## **3.4      Research on the Italian Second Generation**

The presence of the second generation in Italy as a large and important issue is still emerging, thus academic research on this population is only recently becoming well-established (Colombo et al 2009). There are several thematic clusters representing the bulk of the research conducted on the second generation: education (Mantovani and Martini 2008; Queirolo-Palmas and Torre 2005; Queirolo Palmas 2006; Ricucci 2008; Rossitti 2006; Strozza 2008), intercultural communication (Martinez 2006), integration

and identity (Ambrosini and Caneva 2009), work (Ambrosini 2004; Fondazione Andolfi 2005). Further, comparative work on second generation within Europe is emerging (Ambrosini and Molina 2004). Key dimensions of this research are the presence and outcomes of the second generation in the education and work sectors.

### **3.4.1 The Second Generation and Education**

The educational attainment of children of immigrants in Italy is a very important area to understand, both because it is a primary agent of socialization in the lives of youth and because of the impact it has on their outcomes in society. Its significance has spurred the academic interest (e.g., Ambrosini and Molina 2004; Queirolo-Palmas 2006; Ricucci 2008; Rossitti 2006) shown in this thematic area. Although the newest law regulating immigration (no. 94/2009, discussed above) may have detrimental effects on the ability of children of immigrants to attain a high level of education, especially for those who are irregular, education is a right afforded to all children. Statistics show a strong increase in the numerical presence of the second generation in Italian schools. There are almost 630,000 students with nationalities other than Italian currently attending school, about 7% of all students). Of these, the largest increase has been among students born in Italy – the true second generation. Their numbers swell in the pre-schools and elementary schools, respectively 73.3% and 45% of all non-Italian students (Caritas 2009).

There are indications that speak to the difficulties facing second-generation youth in Italian schools. When tracking students without Italian citizenship, there is a clear trend towards fewer and fewer students graduating to the next educational level. Italian schools have examinations that determine a student's eligibility to graduate into the next level of education - these are taken at the end of the 5th grade, at the end of the 8th

grade, and, finally, at the end of high school. Data show that the percentages of non-Italian citizens taking each exam decreases with educational level: from 7.4% of all students at the elementary school level to 6.7% at the middle school level, and to 3% at the high school level (Caritas 2009). This decline can be attributed to several factors. The first is demographic - there are fewer children of immigrants at the higher educational levels because there are numerically fewer children of immigrants of that age group relative to the autochthonous population. Secondly, although demographics may play a role, the decline is also a symptom of lower educational outcomes for children of immigrants in Italy (Ravecca 2009, 2010). The disparate outcomes of children of immigrants versus native Italians have been researched, and there are several explanations: that different levels of social and cultural capital account for differences (Ravecca 2009) and that the requirement of an individual residency visa upon the age of 18 (rather than remaining on their parents') forces students into the job market (Caritas 2009). Finally, there is also a strong trend for non-Italian citizens to enroll in professional or vocational high schools (78% of second generation students vs. 59% of Italians), as opposed to the high schools, which are geared towards college preparation (Caritas 2009; Fondazione Andolfi 2005; Ravecca 2009).

The governmental reaction to high geographic concentrations of second generation and children of immigrants in schools, spurring the flight of their Italian classmates, led to the passing of a new measure. In certain regions (Lazio, Piemonte, Toscana, Friuli), where concentrations of immigrants are very high, and especially in some cities (Roma, Milano, Prato), there were incidences of classrooms with extremely high concentrations of non-Italian-citizen students and of classes without any Italian

students at all. This led to fears of low-achieving students and inadequate socialization into Italian society, due to the lack of Italian classmates (MIUR 2010). The Ministry of Education has introduced a cap of 30% non-Italian-citizen students per class, set to take effect in the 2010-2011 school year. This is seen as “the first step to integration” and as a way to avoid the ghettoization of non-citizen students. Only a few schools will be exempt from the cap, and will be granted exemptions either due to the presence of additional instruction in the Italian language and culture for foreign students or because the majority of the students without Italian citizenship are actually born in Italy, and thus can already speak Italian (MIUR 2010).

This represents one of the first governmental responses to the growing presence of second-generation children in schools, even as they are generally exempted from counting towards the 30% cap. The stated motivations are to better facilitate integration at the earliest ages and to avoid the marginalization of the children of immigrants by putting them into separate classes. This measure does not, however, address the disparate educational outcomes of the second-generation youth, nor how it affects their position once they enter the job market.

### **3.4.2 Second Generation and Work**

Educational outcomes affect second-generation youths’ ability to find regular work, which is also an important measure of integration in the Italian society and of personal satisfaction. Upon reaching the age of 18, children of immigrants are required to apply for their own residency permit separate from that of their parents. As laws regulating immigration have become more and more restrictive, the attainment of a regular job that will permit second-generation youth to maintain a residency permit becomes crucial to their ability to remain on Italian soil. Although the residency permit

can be granted due to a job or to continuing studies, the high incidence of second-generation youth in vocational schools as opposed to high schools hint to the importance of labor force participation.

Surprisingly, there has been little research to date examining the economic and workforce integration of second-generation youth in Italy. While educational integration and outcomes have been documented (Ricucci 2008; Rossitti 2006), the transition of second generation from school to the workforce has not. Research also shows that there is little institutional support given to students, as even their schoolteachers do not know how to or even favor the conversion of a residency permit into a work permit for their second-generation students (Fondazione Andolfi 2005).

What little research has been done on the occupational hopes of second generation indicates that they do not aspire to continue in the same “three D” jobs – dirty, demeaning, and dangerous (Connell 1993) - as their parents often have, but rather to more prestigious and better paid positions (Ambrosini 2001; Demarie and Molina 2004; Fabiani 2005; Fondazione Andolfi 2005). The Fondazione Andolfi conducted a national pilot study on second-generation youth’s labor aspirations, interviewing fifteen to eighteen year olds in both vocational and high schools. The study found that 48% of the respondents intended to continue their studies in order to obtain a college degree, while 32% intended to look for a job immediately after finishing their education. The youth expected to become professionals (a general category of specialists that include jobs such as architect, lawyer, etc), doctors, tour operators, and technical operators. While these young individuals had no illusions about the difficulties

of finding work in Italy, and the time that it usually takes (an average of 5 months of looking to find one's first job), they nonetheless felt very positive about their chances.

Anecdotal reports, however, speak to the difficulties faced by the second-generation youth in the labor force. Without Italian citizenship, some of these youth are ineligible to hold positions in governmental offices. When some exceptions are made and the youth are hired, citizenship notwithstanding, their status may put their positions in jeopardy at renewal time.

The opening sketch in the introductory chapter detailing Samira Mangoud's hiring and subsequent firing due to citizenship status is but an example of how citizenship status can weigh upon the occupational careers of the second generation. Other factors may hinder the successful integration of second-generation youth to the labor market. Italy has a relatively high unemployment rate, and it is even higher for second-generation immigrants (Demarie and Molina 2004). This can be explained by a number of reasons: higher proportions of second-generation youth in vocational schools, less social capital to ease the way into the job market, and discrimination (Ambrosini 2001; Andall 2002; Demarie and Molina 2004).

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has painted a picture on the presence of second-generation children of immigrants in today's Italy. Their demographic impact is evidenced by the staggering proportions of "true" second-generation youth (children of immigrants born in Italy) in the lower school grades as opposed to the higher grades, reflecting contemporary higher birth rates and higher percentage of children of immigrants per births in Italy (see Table 3.1).

As the presence of second-generation youth became a reality that cannot be ignored, the social consequences of complicated access to citizenship also come to light. The integration of the second generation sets a precedent for the mutual adaptation of immigrants and the host society (Demarie and Molina 2004). The difficulties faced by the second-generation youths because of the lack of Italian citizenship can lead to greater marginalization. The reform of citizenship law to sanction the principle of *jus soli*, on the other hand, would aid in quicker and better integration. The next chapter explores the theoretical foundations of citizenship and the relevancy to the Italian second generation, along with potential factors influencing Italians' willingness to reform citizenship policy.

Table 3-1. Children born to immigrant parents (both) and nativity rate

Year	Number of children born	Birth Rate/1000	Year	Number of children born	Birth Rate/1000
1993	7,000	12.2	2001	29,054	22.9
1994	8,028	12.2	2002	33,593	23.1
1995	9,061	12.7	2003	33,691	19.0
1996	10,820	13.3	2004	48,925	22.3
1997	13,509	14.5	2005	51,971	20.5
1998	16,901	16.0	2006	57,765	19.7
1999	21,186	17.8	2007	64,049	20.1
2000	25,916	19.0	2008	72,472	19.8

## CHAPTER 4 PERSPECTIVES ON CITIZENSHIP

This chapter examines the research on citizenship, detailing several theoretical models of citizenship. I then provide an overview of the history of citizenship policy in Italy. I also address research on attitudes towards citizenship policy and reform.

### 4.1 Citizenship

Traditionally, citizenship has been thought to encompass a legal status, rights and obligations, and to denote a sense of belonging to the geographically-bounded space of a nation-state (Bloemraad, Korteweg and Yurdakul 2008; Brubaker 1992; Faist 2000). Notions of national identity, state sovereignty and social belonging that are tied up as parts of citizenship are now challenged by the ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse groups entering and settling as a result of immigration flows. It is important, then, to define what constitutes citizenship and what challenges immigration brings to it.

#### 4.1.1 Dimensions of Citizenship

Citizenship can be conceived as having four dimensions: legal status, rights, political (and other forms of) participation in society, and a sense of belonging (Bloemraad et al 2008). The very basic understanding of citizenship pertains to the legal status of a person within a nation-state. Citizenship regimes serve to define who is entitled to hold the nationality of a particular country, and are based on the principles of *jus sanguinis*, *jus soli*, or a combination of both. *Jus sanguinis*, or citizenship by descent, defines citizenship based on family relationships, as a status that can be passed on to offspring and emphasizing a biological and ethnic link between citizens of a nation. This definition usually excludes migrants. *Jus soli*, on the other hand, emphasizes territory, granting citizenship to those born on the soil of the nation state

and favoring a civic understanding of membership. This definition offers immigrants a greater chance of social inclusion. Citizenship regimes can also be a combination of both, for example in the United States, where citizenship is granted via descent from American citizens or by virtue of being born on US soil.

Another important dimension of citizenship is that of rights: holding citizenship means that there is a relationship between the individual and the state, with each party having rights and obligations to the other. The state guarantees basic rights for the individual, such as a right to residency on the national territory, and often includes some social entitlements as well: access to healthcare, pensions, etc. Conversely, the individual agrees to his or her obligations to the state: to pay taxes, to complete mandatory education, to obey the laws, to participate in the defense of the nation in instances of military conflict. The focus on rights emphasizes the contract between the citizen and the state, and promises a measure of equality between all citizens (Bloemraad et al. 2008; Tilly 1996).

The next dimension of citizenship focuses on the political aspect, highlighting the participation in local and national governance afforded to citizens. Political participation in nation-state governance is a way for individuals to interact in society and strengthen the relationship between individual and state, and, via the state structures, with other members of the society. It must be noted, however, that political participation has not always been granted to all citizens. Historical examples show that gender, race, religion and class provide lines of exclusion from political participation, regardless of citizenship status (Kymlicka 1994, 2003).

Finally, citizenship encompasses a sense of national belonging, tied closely to national identity and social and cultural cohesion, an institutionalized form of solidarity (Faist 2000). This dimension of citizenship is inherently exclusionary: the in-group-out-group dichotomy serves to define who is entitled to citizenship and who is not. Immigration poses a particular challenge to this dimension of citizenship, as the presence of diverse groups contests the often mono-cultural understanding of society based on a single imagined community (Anderson 1991). Immigrants also represent an out-group present within national borders, which serves to strengthen nationalistic tendencies of the native population (Lubbers, Gijsberts and Sheepers 2002).

#### **4.1.2 Citizenship Models**

Employing the four dimensions of citizenship, then, several models of citizenship regimes have been advanced. The most widely used model of citizenship is the national model, which is based on citizenship tied to a bounded territory and a bounded population within a nation-state, with little influence from minority groups (Marshall 1950). This model emphasizes the role of the state in granting and controlling citizenship, and may take the shape of a regime based on *jus soli* or *jus sanguinis*, and also focuses on assimilation into a unitary political culture of a nation-state (Faist 2000).

The next model is that of multicultural citizenship. This model emphasizes the recognition of ethnic pluralism and group-based, collective rights within a citizenship regime (Faist 2000; Kymlicka 2003, 2007). Proponents of this model argue that previous understandings of citizenship regimes are grounded on rigid assumptions about membership and participation based on individual rights. Furthermore, this line of theorizing argues that the concept of citizenship providing a common identity ignores the distinctive needs of certain groups (such as women or racial and ethnic minorities).

This incongruence, according to Kymlicka (1994), necessitates group-differentiated citizenship: instead of focusing on equal rights for all individuals, this model emphasizes the group-based rights that minorities may need in order to integrate in a way that is not exploitative of and destructive to distinct social groups. Critics of this perspective charge that, in fact, such rights have been eroding (Joppke 1999, 2001) and that the multicultural model is not practical to implement.

The increased focus on the nexus between immigration and citizenship has given rise to the model of transnational citizenship. In this conceptualization, the border-crossing expansion of social spaces is contributing to enriching individual and collective identities, leading to an increase in dual citizenship and dual nationality (Faist 2000; Vertovec 2004). The increased tolerance of dual citizenship, both on the part of sending and receiving countries (although often biased towards one's own nationals), points to the increased influence of immigration on nation-states (Faist et al. 2007). Critics of this model highlight the potential conflict between multiple loyalties due to holding dual citizenship, although research has shown that this is often a way to acknowledge the symbolic ties of the first generation to the country of origin (Faist 2000).

Finally, scholars have proposed a postnational model of citizenship, where rights derive from individual personhood instead of belonging to a nation-state. Proponents point to the expansion of global human rights, of international bodies governing rights (such as the European Court of Justice or the United Nations Organization), and the granting of political and social rights regardless of citizenship status as proof that a postnational model is emerging (Soysal 1994). However, critics of this view point to a lack of empirical support for this model, as well as to the potentially exclusionary effect it

may have on second and third generations, who may wish to be fully integrated in the host country via citizenship (Joppke 1999).

The four models represent what can be considered ideal types of citizenship regimes, and research on immigration has attempted to theorize how these types would adjust to the presence of immigrants within a nation. Beginning with the national model, which emphasized a static and rather bounded notion of citizenry and nation-state, scholars have attempted to understand how historical changes, such as increased immigration, have affected political and social inclusion within a nation-state, and whether such belonging can transcend national boundaries. In the practical application of national models, especially those based on *jus sanguinis*, the trend has been to exclude immigrants from citizenship. On the other end of the scale, the transnational and postnational models theorize a more liberal inclusion of immigrants, granting either dual citizenship or transcending citizenship as a requirement for inclusion altogether. Each model has differing implications for the status and outcomes of first and second generation immigrants. In order to evaluate the relevance of these theoretical models, we turn to empirically based analyses of citizenship regimes and immigration.

#### **4.1.3 Liberalizing or Restrictive Citizenship Trends?**

The foremost analysis of immigration and citizenship regimes has been undertaken by Christian Joppke (1999, 2003, 2005, 2008b). Examining trends across Europe, Joppke addresses the widespread notion that citizenship regimes have become more liberal over time. He underscores three directions in which liberalization has occurred: first, access to citizenship for second and subsequent generations has been made easier across Western Europe, except for a few outliers (Portugal and Ireland, as well as Italy). Second, naturalization requirements have been softened, reducing

residency requirements and providing a right to naturalization if the requirements have been filled, such as in Germany and the Netherlands (Joppke 2008b). Third, dual citizenship is tolerated by increasing numbers of nations (Faist et al. 2007).

For instance, the Greek bill reforming citizenship policy, approved by parliament in March of 2010, indicates a liberalizing trend. Greek citizenship, up until this reform, was based primarily on descent, and acquiring citizenship through naturalization was difficult. The reform clearly eases access to citizenship, especially to children of immigrants. It instituted double *jus soli*, granting automatic acquisition of Greek citizenship if one of the parents is born and permanently resides in the country, a measure which guarantees that third-generation children of immigrants will be Greek citizens regardless of the parental nationality. The bill also introduced citizenship by declaration, available to children of immigrants born to parents legally residing in Greece for more than five years, to a child of immigrants who has completed at least six years of Greek education, upon a common declaration by the parents to their municipality. If the parents did not present a declaration, the child may do so between the ages of 18 and 21 (Christopoulos 2010). On the other hand, while access to citizenship is now easier for the second-generation children of immigrants, those who seek to naturalize based on residency face new requirements: knowledge of the Greek language, familiarity with Greek culture, history and civilization, as well as a possible test of integration into the Greek society.

Other researchers argue that there have been restrictive turns in Europe, where the requirements for naturalization have been raised in countries with sizeable immigrant populations (Bauböck et. al. 2006). These authors point to the restrictions

made on regimes that were based primarily on *jus soli* (Ireland, for example), which have often added a residency requirement for the immigrant parent in order to grant citizenship to the second generation. The reform of family reunification policies and the addition of language and cultural elements to citizenship requirements, such as in Denmark and the Netherlands, are all examples of restrictive turns in citizenship regimes (Joppke 2008b).

There are often contradictory measures within any citizenship regime reform, wherein one dimension may be restrictive while another may be more liberal. A classic example is Italy's 1992 Act which modifies its citizenship policies. This act doubled the residency requirement for foreign nationals, from 5 to 10 years (EU nationals excluded), a restrictive turn when compared to the previous law. However, the act also allowed dual citizenship and facilitated citizenship acquisition by descendants of Italians. Certainly, then, it is difficult to measure whether citizenship regimes are becoming generally more or less accepting of immigrant populations. The example of Italy reveals that different immigrant groups receive different treatment, as a description of the Italian citizenship regime will show.

#### **4.2 Citizenship in Italy**

The Italian model of citizenship is based primarily on *jus sanguinis*, where descent is privileged and family ties are the keys to obtaining citizenship. It is most easily claimed by proof of Italian ancestry or by marriage (Koenig-Archibugi 2003). Acquiring citizenship by any other means is quite difficult, both in letter and in practice. In order to obtain citizenship in Italy through naturalization, an immigrant must prove that he or she has maintained 10 years of continuous and legal residence in Italy (5 years in the case of EU nationals). Documenting such a long and uninterrupted period of residency is

often difficult due to inability of obtaining proper documentation. The principle of *jus soli* is not formally sanctioned and, although dual citizenship is allowed, it is primarily a tactic to maintain ties to the emigrant Italian communities rather than to facilitate immigrant naturalization in Italy. The numbers speak out about the cumbersomeness of this process, as, for instance, in 2007 there were only 38,466 immigrants who attained Italian citizenship: 31,609 obtained it through marriage and only 6,857 obtained it via naturalization (Ministero dell'Interno 2008). This section traces the evolutions of citizenship in Italy, beginning with the foundation of the Italian state in 1861 through the present day.

#### **4.2.1 Foundation of the Italian State, 1860s – 1920s**

The Italian territory prior to the formation of the State in 1861 was long dominated by a system of city-states and kingdoms, leading to distinct regional identities and a fractious population. Italy's statehood came relatively late, as compared to neighboring countries (Zincone 2010). The concept of citizenship only pertained to the regulation of civil and political rights within the new nation, and any notion of belonging to the state was irrelevant (Zincone 2010). In 1865, the Civil Code regulated nationality on the basis of *jus sanguinis*, because there were still many people of Italian descent who resided outside of the borders. It also did not permit dual nationality but, in practice, Italian citizenship was often extended to children of Italians born abroad. As mass emigration became a prominent phenomenon at the turn of the century, retaining citizenship for emigrants was seen by the Italian governments as a measure to promote ties to their ethnic motherland and thus encourage remittances (Prato 1910, quoted in Zincone 2010).

The first reform to citizenship, Act no. 155/1912, was thus geared to facilitate the repatriation of Italian emigrants. Reacquisition of Italian nationality was made easier for those who lost it upon naturalization in another country, and dual citizenship was allowed for the children of Italian emigrants born abroad. These measures were intended to maintain strong ties to emigrant communities and encourage the repatriation of now successful emigrants (Zincone 2010).

#### **4.2.2 The Rise of Fascism and Colonialism, 1920s- 1940s**

This period in Italian history saw the rising importance of race and ethnicity as determining access to citizenship. Italy colonized parts of modern day Libya, and combined areas of Eritrea, Somalia, and Ethiopia into Italian East Africa (Betts 1975; Lowe 2002). From the outset, children of Italian fathers and African mothers were granted Italian citizenship as long as their Italian fathers acknowledged them (Zincone 2010).

The rise of Fascism in 1922, beginning with Benito Mussolini's coup d'état, signaled the beginning of racism in the regulation of Italian citizenship. This was heightened in the period leading up to World War II, with the introduction of Italy's racial laws (Bonifazi 2007; Zincone 2010). In 1938, measures depriving people of Jewish ethnicity the right to reside in Italian territories if not already a citizen and retracting the citizenship for Jews who had acquired it after January of 1919 were implemented. Later that year, in defense of the "Italian Race," a decree was emanated (Zincone 2010). This decree further prohibited Jews from owning property and severely restricted their employment, but it also regulated Italian citizens' relationships with colonial subjects. The decree prohibited Italians from marrying colonial subjects and voided already existing marriages, preventing the children of such unions from accessing citizenship,

and supposedly maintained racial purity among Italian citizens. Racist citizenship policies were in effect in Italian East Africa, where children of unknown parents could only be granted Italian citizenship if their physical traits denoted two white parents (Zincone 2010).

#### **4.2.3 The Italian Republic, 1940s – 1980s**

The Italian constitution's regulation of citizenship can be considered a response to Fascist extremes. It included measures to protect the right to citizenship of all races by including a clause that prevented discrimination based on race, gender, religion, or politics (Zincone 2010). The greatest push for reform in these years was based on gender discrimination in citizenship: in its original formulation, only fathers could pass on their nationality if married to a foreigner. Italian women married to foreigners could not pass on Italian citizenship to their spouses or children, but often also lost their Italian citizenship. This was reformed in 1975, by an Act (no.151/1975) allowing women to retain Italian citizenship, and in 1983, by an Act (no.123/1983) allowing the transfer of nationality by Italian married women to their families.

These reforms brought the issue of dual nationality to the forefront of citizenship debates (Zincone 2010). While some bilateral agreements allowing dual citizenship had been made between Italy and countries with high concentrations of emigrant nationals, such as Argentina, acceptance of dual citizenship was far from being widespread. There were concerns of dual loyalties, as well as duties such as obligatory military service for males that would be hard to enforce for holders of dual nationalities (Zincone 2010). These tensions existed from the times of mass emigration in the early 1900s, but they began to gain importance again in the 1980s, as immigration to Italy became an important phenomenon.

#### **4.2.4 Modern Citizenship Policies, 1990s to Now**

Although Italy started to promulgate immigrant and immigration policies in the 1980s, none of the early measures directly affected citizenship acquisition. Current Italian policy regarding citizenship dates to the 1992 Act (no.91.1992), which formally sanctioned dual nationality but made the acquisition of citizenship via *jus soli* more difficult (Arena, Nascimbene and Zincone 2006; Joppke 2008b; Zanfrini 2007).

Continuing trends from the turn of the century, citizenship was liberalized for descendants of Italians, aimed at facilitating the return of co-ethnics (Joppke 2003, 2008b; Zincone 2010). Foreigners who could claim Italian ancestry and had access to proper documentation proving the Italian citizenship of one's ancestor, such as an Italian birth certificate, would be able to begin the process of reacquisition. In June of 2009, the Security act passed (no.94/2009), adding several restrictions to the acquisition of citizenship (Zincone 2010). In an effort to prevent fraudulent marriages with the sole purpose of acquisition of citizenship on the part of the foreign spouse, the act lengthened the waiting period from 6 months to 2 years before the application for citizenship can be made. A fee of 200 Euros was introduced for the acquisition of citizenship. Additionally, the foreign spouse must present a valid residency permit when applying for the marriage license, further discouraging the marriage between Italians and irregularly resident immigrants.

#### **4.2.5 Current Citizenship Law and the Second Generation**

Applied to the second-generation immigrants of foreign descent, the current policy results in children born on Italian soil to immigrant parents not being granted Italian citizenship; rather, they can inherit the citizenship (and immigrant status) of their parents. The provision from the 1992 Act allow them to request Italian citizenship only

after reaching 18 years of age and after satisfying numerous conditions (such as no criminal record, continuous legal residence on Italian soil, financial independence and social integration). Merely satisfying these requirements is by no means a guarantee that their citizenship request will be approved. In addition, they only have a one year window, from the age of 18 to 19, to apply for citizenship based on residency since birth. Should they fail to do so, they would have to go through the naturalization process applicable to all foreigners.

This situation presents significant challenges to the second generation who are raised in Italy and generally identify themselves as Italian, and yet are not citizens of Italy (Ambrosini 2005). These second-generation immigrants face issues of precariousness, insecurity in one's continued ability to remain in Italy, fears of deportation, and difficulty in finding and keeping jobs, as exemplified in several studies (Angel-Ajani 2003; Colombo 2007; DeGenova 2002; Mantovani and Martini 2008; Ricucci 2008; Rossitti 2006; Strozza 2008). Further, they are subject to several restrictions that clearly demarcate them from their Italian peers. For example, many Italian schools take trips into neighboring countries, which the second-generation youth often must forgo because of visa and permit issues. These differences serve as day-to-day experiences of marginalization (Ambrosini 2005). The current citizenship regime allows young people from abroad - born and raised in other countries - to adopt Italian citizenship on the basis of having an Italian ancestor, while denying access to citizenship to youth born and raised in Italy.

#### **4.2.6 Attempts at Reform Since 1992**

The issue of citizenship reform for immigrants and children of immigrants has only recently gained wide political interest. Reform attempts that address access for children

of immigrants in Italy are of recent times and have largely stalled in the political process. The political costs of pushing forward a controversial reform are clearly part of the reason why reforms have not been successful (Zincone 2010).

The first attempt to relax nationality law in favor of children of immigrants came in 1999, when Livia Turco (co-author of the 1998 reform to immigrant and immigration laws) proposed that children born and residing in Italy ought to receive Italian citizenship at the age of 5. Included in the draft was a requirement that the parents also need be legally resident for 5 years, and double *jus soli* for the second generation was introduced. These proposals were in line with current European trends, but the proposal was blocked by the Council of Ministers as “untimely,” as the leftist D’Alema administration did not want to take the political risk of backing it (Zincone 2010). Interestingly, the requirement that parents be legally resident mirrors reforms recently enacted in Greece (Christopoulos 2010).

The next notable attempt at reform came with the Prodi administration in 2006. The Minister of the Interior Amato drafted a proposal liberalizing citizenship access to the second generation (Bigot and Fella 2008; Zincone 2010). This was the first time that associations of second-generation youth (G2, specifically) were consulted in the drafting of the reform (Marchetti 2010). The Prodi administration was ousted in 2008, precluding any advancement of the reform bill. The current Berlusconi administration is also considering citizenship reforms, but it is very uncertain in which direction these will go (Polchi 2008). An ideological difference in the ruling *Popolo della Libertà* (PdL) party coalitions sets the stage for difficult negotiations of citizenship reforms.

Favoring liberal citizenship reform is Gianfranco Fini, a leader of the right-wing *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN) until 2009 and now heading the *Futuro e Libertà per l'Italia* (FLI) party. A conservative party with historical ties to the fascist movement (although it denounced Fascism in 2003), AN supported family values, the centrality of the family in social life, and a sense of patriotism and national pride. Fini was co-author of the 2002 immigration reform, which took a hard stance against illegal immigration. On the other hand, he supported granting local voting rights to legally residing immigrants, a position that backs social and political rights even for non-citizens (Corriere della Sera 2003).

Fini's party submitted a bipartisan proposal for citizenship reform, in essence adopting Amato's proposal from 2008. The bill received some support in the center-right governing coalition, but found great opposition from coalition partner *Lega Nord* (LN)<sup>11</sup>. Because supporting the bipartisan reform proposal could mean losing the support of *Lega Nord*, a restrictive counter-proposal was submitted.

The issue of citizenship reform is a "hot political issue" (Zincone 2010) and a cleaving matter between factions in the PdL party. Traditionally, the concept of nationality has been geared towards maintaining ties with the emigrant Italian community worldwide. Recently, Italian politics have recognized the pressing need of citizenship reform for the immigrants present on the national territory. The Italian public has become more aware of the issue of citizenship as well, making the political costs of passing reforms much less expensive in terms of voter support than they have ever been. Public opinion plays a role in policy formation, and the next section will address both the formation of attitudes and the role of public opinion.

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<sup>11</sup> *The Lega Nord* is regional party that is heavily anti-immigrant, anti-Islam, and an important partner in maintaining the current Berlusconi administration.

### **4.3 Perspectives on Formation of Attitudes**

Much research has focused on the analysis of public attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policies, and specifically on anti-immigrant prejudice, using cross-national, large scale survey data analysis. When researching attitudes towards policies that affect minority groups in society, it is imperative to also include analyses of racism and prejudice expressed by the dominant group (Jackson, Brown, Brown and Marks 2001; Krysan 2000; Sears, Sidanius and Bobo 2000; Sniderman, Peri, De Figueiredo and Piazza 2000). Analyses of anti-immigrant sentiment have focused on a number of important factors that influence individuals' opinions on immigrant and immigration policies. In attempting to understand the determinants of anti-immigrant sentiment, both individual- and structural-level factors have been examined. Below are some of the main areas in which research has been conducted.

#### **4.3.1 Individual-level Determinants**

Sociological analysis often posits that one's position within the social structure affects their attitudes. Beyond the effects of basic demographic factors such as age, marital status, or gender, analyses of individual-level variables on attitudes have focused on education (Coenders and Scheepers 2003), economic self-interest (Burns and Gimpel 2000; Citrin, Green, Muste and Wong 1997; Fetzer 2000a), symbolic threats and identities (Ceobanu and Escandell 2008; Sides and Citrin 2007), and self-reported racism (Jackson, Brown, Brown, and Marks 2001).

##### **4.3.1.1 Contact**

At the individual level of analysis, one of the most tested lines of inquiry refers to the contact hypothesis, which was originally developed by Gordon Allport (1954). Allport posited that the quality and quantity of contact between majority and minority groups,

helps to lessen prejudice and negative attitudes. Prejudice is lessening if such contact is based on the two groups having equal status, if there is cooperation between the groups, approval of the contact by authorities and the presence of common goals (Pettigrew 1997, 1998; McLaren 2003). When this contact evolved into friendships with immigrants, it had a significant impact on reducing individuals' anti-immigrant attitudes (Mantovani and Martini 2008; McLaren 2003; Volpato and Manganelli Rattazzi 2000). Studies have also found that, if contextual economic circumstances are favorable, close contact lessens anti-immigrant sentiment and that its effect also changes over time (Escandell and Ceobanu 2009).

When using the contact hypothesis to research anti-immigrant sentiment, it is imperative to recognize that not all forms of contact are equal. Research has shown that there are several categories of contact between immigrants and nationals, distinguished by frequency and intensity. Hamberger and Hewstone (1997) provide three categories of possible contact: family, work, and occasional.

In the Italian context, the contact hypothesis should be an interesting variable, because of the heterogeneity of the first and second generation and the wide regional disparity in density. For example, a case study conducted among high-school students in Vicenza, an industrial Italian city in the northern Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, shows that certain types of contact reduce prejudice (Volpato Rattazzi 2000). The researchers found that a large percentage (44%) of their sample indicated having friends among immigrants, which reduced their prejudice towards immigrants. Moreover, they found that neighborhood, or occasional, contact resulted in lower prejudice if the respondents were voluntarily seeking out contact with immigrants residing and working in their

neighborhoods. However, if such occasional contact were simply a result of circumstance, rather than agency, then prejudice was unaffected. This case study also found that increased racial diversity did not correlate into greater contact for immigrants across racial groups- while one community had significantly more African immigrants than the other, the contact between Italian and immigrants of African origins did not increase, and consequently did not reduce prejudice.

#### **4.3.1.2 Political leaning**

In addition, a series of studies focusing on the rise of the right-wing vote in Europe have shown that political leaning (Left or Right) is an important individual-level trigger of anti-immigrant sentiment (Arcuri and Boca 1996; Fetzer 2000a; Krysan 2000). As far right-wing parties experienced a revival in the 1990s and early 2000s, researchers began to draw a link between the rise in “extreme right” parties and anti-immigrant sentiments (Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers 2002; Semyonov, Raijman, and Gorodzeisky 2006).

#### **4.3.2 Structural-level Determinants**

At the macro-level of analysis, numerous studies have drawn inspiration from the group threat perspective. Early research hypothesized that realistic group conflict (for example, the presence of a large immigrant population competing for the same economic resources as dominant-group members) would lead to the development of elevated levels of anti-immigrant sentiment. Research has found that perceived group threat (Escandell and Ceobanu 2009; Quillian 1995, 2006; Scheepers, Gijsberts and Coenders 2002) rather than realistic conflict may be a better predictor of anti-immigrant attitudes. This means that individual and group perceptions of threat coming from

immigrants, regardless of their putative nature (objective or subjective), will impact expressed anti-immigrant sentiment.

When analyzing data that deals with dominant group attitudes toward immigration and immigrant policies, research has also taken into account the gendered and racial boundaries that are influenced by the process of migration (Dal Lago 1999; Ong 1996; Silverstein 2005). Theorists examining prejudice and xenophobia in Europe acknowledge that, while the historical context may differ from the US, where most of the research on prejudice is based, many of the outcomes and attitudes are “racism by another name” (Andall 2002; Angel-Ajani 2003; Collins 2000; Essed 1991, 1996; Goldberg 2006; Waters 2006), and require an analysis of “the structural dimensions of racialization as well as [an insistence] on its word-systemic character” (Bonilla Silva 2004, p.189). This is to say that, although prejudice may take on different forms in different national contexts, it is important to understand the specifics of each national context and the role played by racialization and, especially in Europe, ethnicization. The next section will highlight the relevant bodies of work on immigration, attitudes and citizenship focusing on the Italian context.

#### **4.4 Attitudes toward Immigrant and Immigration Policies in Italy**

Research on immigration and anti-immigrant sentiment in Italy mirrors the developments in broader research at the European level. Some studies have investigated the role played by the individuals’ political leanings (Arcuri and Boca 1996; Bonifazi 1992), whereas others have focused on the larger political context influencing individual attitudes (Andall 2007; Sniderman et al 2000).

Perhaps the most influential study on attitudes towards immigrants in Italy, with a substantive focus on prejudice, is that of Sniderman et al. (2000). Based on computer-

assisted telephone interviewing, the authors examined Italians' attitudes towards immigrants, including views on racial-ethnic relations (some questions specifically referred to immigrants of Northern African and Eastern European origin). The authors hypothesized that Italians would have different levels of anti-immigrant sentiment when the immigrant groups were of different racial origins. However, they found that Italians had comparable levels of anti-immigrant sentiment regardless of immigrants' racial background, because both groups were considered outsiders to the Italian society and thus equally subject to anti-immigrant sentiment. Interestingly, the authors also found that prejudice was not only the bastion of those who identified as right-wing supporters, but that some on the political left also exhibited some anti-immigrant sentiment. This challenges the impact that political leaning may have on individuals' attitudes and presents an interesting variable to consider in the analysis of the survey data.

**The role of race and ethnicity.** The study by Sniderman and his colleagues brings the importance of race and ethnicity into question in the Italian context. After all, their conclusions suggest that all foreigners are unwelcome in the Italian society, regardless of racial or ethnic status. However, racial and ethnic difference does play a role in attitude formation, as exemplified in several studies. Andall's (2002) inquiry into the everyday experiences of Afro-Italians shows that darker skin is a marker that singles people out for discrimination. Italians have also been shown to relate racial and ethnic "otherness" to particular skills and abilities, reasoning that Filipinas and Cape Verdean women are better at caring for the elderly because their culture and ingrained attitudes suit them for that type of job (Ambrosini 2001). This serves as a rationalization for maintaining women of color in poorly paid, high intensity occupations.

On the other hand, several foreigners blur the line because they are racially similar but ethnically different. Albanians in the 1990s, and later Romanians, were particularly demonized in the press (King and Mai 2009, Romania 2004). Albanian immigration to Italy began en masse in the early 1990s, as Albania suffered an economic crisis that destabilized the entire country. Italy's geographic proximity, as well as shared cultural elements (Italian TV broadcasts, for example, reached some parts of Albania) made it an ideal destination country. However, in the media, Albanians were branded as criminals and illegal immigrants, dirty and untrustworthy (Bonifazi and Sabatino 2003; King and Mai 2009). Albanians were “‘perilously close to Italians in physiological terms’, and ‘dangerous’ precisely because this figure reminded Italians of their own disavowed southern past of poverty, emigration and brigandage” (King and Mai 2009). Importantly, many Albanians are able to “pass” as Italians by modifying their dress and accents (Romania 2004). Romanian immigrants now suffer similar demonization, with frequent media reports of criminal activity. The studies suggest that not only are attitudes towards immigrants and immigration policies important to consider when researching citizenship reform, but that attitudes regarding race and ethnicity are important as well.

This comparison across racial and ethnic groups raises that question that perhaps attitudes will vary according to whether the immigrants are from EU member states are considered third-country nationals. Certainly, the citizenship regime makes a distinction between EU and non-EU immigrants in terms of access to citizenship, facilitating access for EU nationals while restricting access for non-EU nationals. Does this distinction also bear out as an important factor in attitude formation? Cross-national comparisons have shown that, in fact, non-EU foreigners may be more salient, and thus

better indicators of group threat (Lahav 2004; Semyonov *et.al.*2006). In these studies, the use of non-EU foreigners as targets of anti-immigrant sentiment led to statistically significant results. In the case of Italy, ethnographic studies such as the one conducted by Sniderman and colleagues (2000) suggests that while non EU foreigners who are racially different are certainly targets of anti-immigrant sentiment, so are citizens of now-member states. Italy presents a murkier picture in the examination of the significance of racial and ethnic difference on anti-immigrant sentiment. To further complicate matters, religious difference, especially being Muslim, promotes anti-immigrant sentiment as well (Strabac and Listhaug 2008).

#### **4.5 Attitudes towards Immigration and Citizenship in Italy**

Italian research has theorized citizenship in various ways, concentrating on citizenship as identity (Gattino, Miglietta, Ceccarini, and Rollero 2008) and as intercultural communication (Jabbar 2000, 2001; Martinez 2006). The majority of Italian research is based on the study of active citizenship, with researchers studying immigrants' practices and integration in the educational, political and social contexts, rather than investigating the effects of attaining citizenship as a legal status.

There are very few studies specifically addressing Italians' attitudes towards citizenship policy in Italy. Noteworthy in this context is Diamanti and Bordignon's (2005) cross-national longitudinal study on attitudes towards immigration and citizenship, which debuted in 2000 and was followed by subsequent waves in 2001, 2002 and 2005 (Diamanti and Bordignon 2005). The studies encompass different countries in each wave (the latest comparing "Old Europe" countries of France, Germany, and Italy with "New Europe" countries of Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary).

Diamanti and Bordignon's (2005) investigation of attitudes about citizenship, however, is limited to asking about specific political and social rights, as opposed to the legal status of obtaining citizenship. Thus, respondents were asked whether legally established immigrants who also pay taxes should have the right to a) vote in local elections, b) vote in national elections, and c) access the national healthcare system. While these are important aspects in order for immigrants to better integrate and participate in the local and national contexts, they do not presuppose the granting of citizenship in order to access these rights. In Italy, it is already possible for legally-established migrants to vote in local and European elections, and emergency access to the national healthcare system is supplemented by free clinics available in some cities.

These questions did not ask respondents whether they favored granting citizenship status to immigrants, which would not only encompass the voting and healthcare rights included in the survey, but also grant a more equal and protected legal status to the immigrants (Jabbar 2000). The implications of granting citizenship differ from those of giving them only a set of limited rights, as asked in this survey. Thus, while meritorious, this research project fails to explore the willingness of Italians to have citizenship granted to immigrants, as opposed to favoring their access to certain rights without necessarily giving them the equal legal footing that citizenship would afford them.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed several fields of research that contribute to the understanding of the relationship between public opinion, policy reform, and citizenship issues. The chapter explored the dimensions and forms of citizenship, as well as the

historical development of citizenship policy in Italy. Then, the role of public opinion and the factors that influence it were discussed.

This work aims to bring together the sociological knowledge on citizenship with the work on attitudes towards immigrants and immigration policies in order to fill a gap in the literature. Specifically, focusing on attitudes towards granting citizenship status to immigrants, as opposed to continuing the focus on active citizenship practices, this work will address an understudied subject, pushing beyond social- or identity-based studies that dominate the Italian body of knowledge on citizenship.

## CHAPTER 5 DATA AND METHODS

The main research question to be answered is: Do Italians support granting citizenship to second generation children of immigrants? Related, what individual and macro-level factors influence attitudes towards citizenship in Italy? Are there regional differences in attitudes?

The best approach to answer the above research questions is a mixed method one. Thus, I first use public opinion survey data (conducted by the *Istituto per gli Studi sulla Pubblica Opinione*) to analyze factors influencing contemporary attitudes toward immigration and citizenship policies. I examine both individual- and macro-level factors presumed to impact these attitudes. The second approach is to gauge Italians' views on citizenship policy by means of group interviews. This enables an in-depth examination of the "whys" behind attitudes, especially as they pertain to children of immigrants born and/or raised in Italy.

This chapter is divided into two sections: the presentation of the survey data and the presentation of the group interviews. The section on survey data delineates the characteristics of the dataset, lists the hypotheses, presents the dependent and independent variables, and provides the variables to be used in the hierarchical analysis. The section on the group interviews presents the methods used to gather and interpret the data.

### **5.1 Survey Data**

#### **5.1.1 The Dataset**

Finding a suitable dataset that addresses the question of citizenship extension to the second generation was a difficult process, as many of the public opinion datasets

conducted in Italy do not specifically do that. The more commonly available nationally representative datasets, such as the Eurobarometer<sup>12</sup> series or the European Social Survey<sup>13</sup>, have yet to include questions on citizenship for the second generation. The International Social Survey Programme<sup>14</sup> contains a module (2004) where such a question was asked, but Italy did not participate.

The dataset utilized in this dissertation was provided by the ISPO<sup>15</sup> (Istituto per gli Studi sulla Pubblica Opinione), a leading polling institute founded in Milan by several academics in the 1980s and headed by Prof. Renato Mannheimer, a professor of sociology at Milano-Bicocca. The ISPO, which specializes in political and social behavior and attitudes, conducts research on behalf of various clients, both in the public and private sector.

The survey used in this dissertation was conducted in February of 2007 for the intended use of the Ministry of Interior. The sample (N= 2,000) was nationally representative of Italians over the age of 17 in terms of gender, age, educational attainment, occupational status, and geographical location. The survey consisted of face-to-face structured interviews, with the answers recorded via computer.

The survey data asked about respondents' opinions on a number of issues surrounding immigration, including residency permits, the right to vote in local elections, detention centers, as well as extending citizenship to children of immigrants. Several waves of the survey have been conducted, but only one asked the question regarding citizenship.

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<sup>12</sup> For more information see [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm)

<sup>13</sup> For more information see <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

<sup>14</sup> For more information see <http://www.issp.org/>

<sup>15</sup> For more information see <http://www.ispo.it/>

This dataset was complemented with regional-level data collected via available Italian statistical records (ISTAT). Regional level measures were gathered for GDP per capita, percentage of foreign residents and percentage of right-wing votes.

### **5.1.2 Hypotheses**

There are several hypotheses tested in the analysis of the survey data, each pertaining to factors identified by the literature review as impacting people's attitudes. In concert with available measures in the original data, the first model of the analysis tests the effects of socio-demographic variables. Age, gender, income, educational level, and labor force participation are introduced as factors presumed to influence people's willingness to grant citizenship. It is believed that a lower age, income, being female, having reached a high level of education and currently being a student would all positively affect Italians' willingness to extend citizenship to second-generation youth, as has been found in other countries (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010).

The second model tests the predictive power of people's perception of immigrant group size, drawing on research that implicates perceived group threat (Quillian 1995, Ceobanu and Escandell 2008; Semyonov, Raijman, and Gorodzeisky 2006; Sides and Citrin 2007). It is hypothesized that people who perceive that a large number of immigrants reside in Italy would be less likely to extend citizenship to second-generation youth.

The third model introduces variables tapping the effect of personal contact between Italians and immigrants on the dependent variable, in terms of having family members or friends among immigrants. It is hypothesized that Italians who experience meaningful personal contact would be more willing to extend citizenship to second - generation youth.

The subsequent models introduce regional-level variables into the analysis. The fourth model tests the effect of regional GDP per capita on the dependent variable, the assumption being that in more affluent regions (those with higher GDP) people will express more support for extending citizenship to the second generation (Burns and Gimpel 2000; Citrin, Green, Muste and Wong 1997; Fetzer 2000a). The fifth model tests the effect of actual immigrant presence in the region on the dependent variable. It is assumed that a greater percentage of immigrant residents would lead to lower support for extending citizenship to the second generation. The sixth model tests whether or not greater percentage of votes won by far right-wing parties translates into lower support for extending citizenship to second generation youths.

### **5.1.3 Variables**

#### **5.1.3.1 Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable in the model is derived from a question asking respondents to opt for the statement with which they most agreed: To allow children of immigrants who are born in Italy to have citizenship, or to only allow children whose ancestors are Italian to have citizenship. The question is originally worded as “Which position do you align yourself most with: we should grant citizenship to children of immigrants born in Italy, like many other nations do OR we should only allow children with Italian ancestors to have citizenship.” A third response choice of “Don’t Know” was also included.

After the exclusion of missing cases, the original categories were recoded to denote willingness to extend citizenship to second-generation children of immigrants, with those answering that they would grant citizenship as Yes, those favoring Italian ancestry as No, and those answering don’t know remaining the same. Of the 2000

respondents, 54% answered Yes, 21% answered No, and the remaining 25% answered Don't Know. The respondents who answered Don't Know were retained for the analysis on the assumption that they represent a distinct group without a clear-cut opinion on the matter. Thus, the analysis consists of a series of paired comparisons aimed to capture the inherent differences between each pair: first contrasting those who answered Yes (coded as 1) to those who answered No (coded as 0), then those who answered Yes (coded as 1) to those who answered Don't Know (coded as 0), and finally those who answered No (coded as 1) to those who answered Don't Know (coded as 0).

### **5.1.3.2 Independent Variables: Micro and Macro**

In order to test the hypotheses previously outlined, several individual- and regional-level variables were selected. The next section will describe the variables, how they are defined and how they were asked. The mean value for each variable is reported in table 5.1.

**Socio-demographic variables:** Several independent variables are thought to affect attitudes toward citizenship, at the individual level. Standard socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and level of education are included in all models. Age is rescaled to have 18 years of age be equivalent to 0, with each one-unit increase in age corresponding to one year above the age of 18. Being male is coded as 1, female as 0. Income is measured in increments of Euro 2,500, the lowest category being 0 – 2,500 Euros. Once the income bracket surpasses 45,000 - 50,000 Euros, it is measured in three larger categories (50,000 to 75,000 Euros, 75,000 to 100,000 Euros, and more than 100,000 Euros).

Educational level is measured as having reached education at the elementary level, middle school level, high school level or to some college and above. As these

categories are ordinal, that of “some college” was made the reference one, and the other categories were coded dichotomously. What may strike the reader as interesting is that college graduation rates in Italy are rather low when compared to the total number of enrolled students. In the 2001-02 academic year, the graduation rate for those enrolled in universities was a meager 9.97%; in the period the survey was taken, the academic year 2006-07, the rate had increased - but only to 16.62% (MIUR 2007). This is a feature of the Italian education system, where students follow tracks upon entering high schools, which are divided among vocational, technical and college preparatory schools, limiting the eligibility of some students to choose university degrees.

Labor force participation is measured in 5 categories: active, housewife, student, retired and unemployed. Participants were asked in which category they would place themselves. These categories are meant to indicate an individual’s role in relation to the labor market. Active indicates full participation in paid labor, housewife indicates no participation, student indicates participation in an educational sphere that will eventually feed into the labor market. Retired indicates past participation, while unemployed means that the respondent was recently employed and is looking for work, which indicates past participation and intent to participate again. As with educational level, this measure was recoded into dichotomous measures for each category; active in the labor force was made the reference category and omitted from the analysis. Those who responded ‘don’t know’ were excluded from the analysis.

**Attitudinal variables:** The survey asked two attitudinal questions of interest for this analysis, one concerning the respondent’s perception of immigrant group size and

one asking whether the respondent has had contact with immigrants. Both variables allow me to test the contact hypothesis outlined by Allport (1954) and Pettigrew (1998), as well as the importance of perceived group threat (Quillian 1995).

The questions regarding contact asked “Would you say you are regularly in contact with immigrants that, with respect to you, are: a member of your family, for example a son or adopted nephew” and “a friend of yours or your family's (for example, a classmate of your child).” The responses to these questions have been dichotomized, with yes coded as 1 and no coded as 0. The fact that the questions emphasized the type of contact people had with immigrants made them very valuable for inclusion in the model, as they had the potential to measure the effect of positive, non-competitive contact on attitudes.

The questions regarding immigrant group size asked “If you had to indicate, approximately, how many non-EU immigrants - regular and irregular - are living in Italy, you would say they are about ...” and the answer choices ranged from “0 to 500,000” to “more than five million”, measured in increments of 500,000 people. The aim was to discover whether people under- or over-estimated the number of immigrants present in Italy. According to Quillian's (1995) work on perceived group threat, respondents' perceptions of group size (linked to group threat) is an important factor in anti-immigrant attitude formation, hence the introduction of this variable in the analysis.

**Regional level variables:** At the macro-level of analysis, numerous studies have drawn inspiration from the group threat perspective. Early research hypothesized that realistic group conflict (for example, the presence of a large immigrant population

competing for the same economic resources as dominant-group members) would yield to elevated levels of anti-immigrant sentiment.

In order to account for some of the structural influences on attitudes, I complemented the individual-level data with a set of corresponding regional-level variables (GDP per capita, percentage of immigrant residents, and right-wing vote). All variables were grand-mean centered for ease of interpretation in the paired analyses. The variables for GDP per capita and percentage of immigrant residents were aggregated using economic data available online through the Italian Statistical Institute (ISTAT) from its databases of economic and demographic data, Sitis and GeoDemo<sup>16</sup>. Regional GDP per capita was measured in thousand Euro increments.

The variable measuring percentage of immigrant residents was calculated by dividing the number of immigrants holding a valid residency permit by the total population of the region, again using data available through the ISTAT. These data present just a glimpse of the actual immigrant population, as it only accounts for legal residency permit holders and not immigrants who have overstayed such permits, or never obtained one at all.

The variable measuring the percentage of right-wing vote by regions was constructed using national election results available online through the Ministry of the Interior<sup>17</sup>. Results from the election in immediately preceding the survey, the parliamentary elections of September 2006, were analyzed and compiled. I calculated the percentage of votes gained by three far right-wing parties in the lower chamber of congress: the Lega Nord, Alternativa Sociale Mussolini, and Fiamma Tricolore (Golder

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<sup>16</sup> For more information, go to Sitis <http://sitis.istat.it/> and GeoDemo <http://demo.istat.it/>

<sup>17</sup> Data available at <http://elezionistorico.interno.it>

2003). These three parties were chosen because they are nationally recognized and received a large enough percentage of the vote to warrant their consideration.

### **5.1.3.3 Collinearity among Independent Variables**

Several independent variables have the potential for multi-collinearity. For example, gender may capture some of the same information as the labor status “Housewife”. Given that the term Housewife is gender specific, and not the gender neutral category of homemaker or stay-at-home spouse, there is certain to be some of the same data captured by both variables, and one would expect a multiplicative effect. Of the 278 respondents who declared their status as housewife, only 2 were men. Important to note though, that while the vast majority of housewives are women, the majority of women are not housewives. Therefore, there is some difference in the data that is captured by data on gender and data on occupation. However, the interaction term produces no statistically significant effect on the dependent variable. More importantly, neither gender nor housewife have statistically significant effects as individual variables, thus there is no basis for the evaluation of interaction terms.

Along the same lines, the variable measuring one’s perception of immigrant group size may also co-vary with the macro-level variable noting right-wing political vote. Studies have found that anti-immigrant sentiment increases alongside support for right-wing political parties (Semyonov et. al. 2006). However, there is an unclear causal arrow between the two variables, meaning that one’s perception of immigrant group size is as likely to affect one’s voting behavior as one’s voting behavior is to affect one’s perception of group size. In this dataset, there is no way to determine which variable moderates the other, and therefore only an acknowledgment of covariance can be made, rather than an exploration of causation.

#### **5.1.4 Limitations**

As with any data set, there are certain constraints when doing secondary analysis. The first and most significant problem with the dataset is that there are too few cases for the regions of Molise and Valle d'Aosta, forcing them to be left out of the analysis. While there are comparable situations in nearby regions, it is an unwanted situation to have to omit some regions because of lack of sufficient cases.

Secondly, while it is fortunate to have found a dataset that asks directly about attitudes about granting or denying citizenship to the second generation, the answers are only measured dichotomously (as agreeing or disagreeing). This limitation is addressed through the use of group interviews of Italians and second-generation children of immigrants. There, I investigate specific attitudes towards citizenship and the second generation as well as gauge the intensity of favorability toward reform.

As for the macro data available, there are two main limitations: the absence of irregular migrants, and the data constraints on models incorporating these data. It is unfortunate that the statistic for immigrant residents is unable to account for irregular migrants. The fact that they are irregular makes them inherently impossible to track through official measures like residency permits. While there are many estimates regarding the size of the immigrants irregularly residing in Italy (Caritas 2009), they are highly inconsistent. The dataset also placed limitations on running a fully specified model, as each macro-level indicator had to be run separately because a full model was running out of degrees of freedom. Running a full model would have not been able to yield robust statistics.

## **5.2 Group Interviews**

The second section focuses on contemporary views towards citizenship reform, aimed to supplement results from the dataset analysis. I conducted 14 semi-structured group interviews of Italians, touching on topics elicited by the survey questions and the relevant literature, as well as allowing participants to guide the conversation and name issues they deem important (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). Through the use of interviews, I attend to the deeper meanings behind attitudes towards citizenship reform, although generalization to the larger Italian population is not possible (Charmaz 2006). While the dataset only measures willingness to reform citizenship regimes, interviews allow for an exploration of the nuances one's attitude towards citizenship policy reform. Specifically, the interviews can better address the reasons why someone might support or reject citizenship policy reform, and the reasons justifying that position.

### **5.2.1 Sampling**

The interviews were conducted in Italy over the summer of 2008. The participants ranged from age eighteen to sixty, 8 women and 6 men. I interviewed participants who were over the legal voting age- 18 years- because they would be able to affect citizenship reform through the political process by influencing election results. The group interviews ranged from 2 to 5 participants, and took place primarily in coffee shops and in people's homes.

The city of Genova was picked because it is both average and exceptional. Genova represents an average city in Italy in terms of demography: it is the capital of the region of Liguria, and thus a main city nationwide (equivalent to a state capital in the United States), but it does not boast an immigration presence as high as Rome or Milan, which would be considered outliers in the Italian landscape. Genova is a city that has

experienced relatively intermediate levels of immigration, as evidenced by the percentage of immigrant residents (ISTAT 2009) and hosts a similar proportion of children of immigrants. Genova is also exceptional, in that the region of Liguria boasts the highest support for extending citizenship across all the regions (74% of those polled, ISPO 2007). Genova's average is even higher than the regional average, with 82% of those polled supporting extending citizenship to children of immigrants born in Italy (ISPO 2007). This presents a perfect setting in which to explore the nuances of support for liberalizing citizenship policy, as the majority of the population espouses that position.

The participants were recruited primarily through snowball sampling, by posting flyers and internet messages over the summer of 2008 in Genova, Italy. I also approached people in public spaces, such as piazzas and train stations, where they would be waiting for someone and had a few minutes free to hear about my research and decide whether they wanted to participate. Once they agreed to participate, a date and location for the interview was scheduled. In two cases, the participants were willing to conduct the interview right away, and they were done in nearby coffee shops.

My experience in recruiting participants by talking to them in public spaces also led to an unanticipated difficulty - how do I determine who is Italian and who is not? Who do I approach to participate in the study? For example, should I exclude people of color because they are not likely to be citizens? That would mean that I automatically make the assumption that people of color are not Italians, and thus I would have excluded potential participants (Andall 2002). I chose to approach all people who looked to be

over the age of 18 and simply ask whether they were Italian citizens or not, leading to the inclusion of one person of color in the sample.

Further, there are several definitions of who is considered an Italian citizen and who is considered a child of immigrants, and these categories are not always mutually exclusive. This denotes some of the complications that arise out of not recognizing all children born in Italy as citizens. One participant, Simon, is a perfect example: He was born in Italy to an Italian mother and a Jamaican father, has resided in several countries, and defies easy categorization. He could have been included in the study because he was a native born Italian with Italian citizenship, but he could also have been excluded because he was a child of an immigrant parent and thus also a second-generation youth. I chose to be inclusive of different experiences, and he participated in the group interview.

The interviews aimed to elicit further discussion on citizenship, while also bringing the focus squarely on granting citizenship to the second generation. The participants were asked to complete a short survey to collect socio-demographic data. Then, the participants were asked questions regarding their own attitudes towards reforming citizenship policy and on granting citizenship to second-generation children of immigrants. The questions asked were guided by the research questions and by the factors that the review of the literature suggested would be important. Thus, I chose to ask about people's backgrounds and well as their opportunity for contact with immigrants or children of immigrants. A copy of the instrument is included in the appendix.

Following an active interviewing approach (Holstein and Gubrium 1995), I conducted and recorded 5 semi-structured group interviews, ranging in size from 2 to 5 participants per interview. The interviews touched on topics elicited by the survey data, such as whether participants had personal contact with immigrants, and whether they perceived there to be a large number of immigrants in Italy or not. The active interviewing approach also allowed participants to guide the conversation and name issues they deemed important (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). A flexible interview guide provided internal consistency as to the topics covered between each interview, guaranteeing that the same questions were asked of each participant. The semi-structured guide also allowed the participants to elicit and explore new topics, by freeing me to follow the participants' lead in the conversation and gently steering it back to the main topic if the discussion strayed too far.

### **5.2.2 Coding and Analysis**

The interviews were transcribed and coded line-by-line, in order to elicit themes and concepts from the transcripts. While there was a thematic focus on issues concerning citizenship and the second generation, close attention was placed on coding close to the data in order to maintain a rich, grounded analysis. By drawing out codes and key themes from the transcription and maintaining the codes close to the data, I avoid imposing themes or abstract meanings.

The transcribed interview data was coded using Atlas.ti software. This is a software program that allows for coding of several different documents at once, as the transcriptions are loaded into one thematic unit. The codes generated in one document can be used in another, thus creating links between the documents.

I adopted a coding method that merged a priori and inductive coding (Miles and Huberman 1994). This allowed me to code for themes similar to what was found in the extant literature (for example, codes mentioning contact or group threats) while allowing other themes to emerge from the interview data. These codes were then grouped into larger families of codes. For example, when participants mentioned the conditions they felt should be placed on citizenship for second-generation youth, I coded each instance with a very specific code (“having a job” as a code) and then merged the codes from all the transcriptions into a large family called “conditions for citizenship.” Coding close to the data facilitated retaining the richness of the interviews. Grouping them into families allowed for easier analysis and the formation of larger themes across interviews. Throughout the coding process, I maintained memos - a continual writing down of one’s analytical thoughts while mired in the coding process. This permitted noting linkages between families of codes and between interviews, helping to build the larger analysis (Bernard 2000).

### **5.2.3 Reflexivity**

Throughout the research process, I developed and maintained awareness of the frames of reference that would influence my research and my conduct in guiding the group interviews. I was specifically reflexive of my status as both a native Italian and a child of an immigrant in Italian society. Several researchers note that a shared background and familiarity of the context can be an asset to researchers (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). For example, a shared background can ease the rapport that develops between an interviewer and the participants, freeing them to speak more easily.

My position as a researcher within this context was a complicated one. I was born in Italy to an Italian father and an American mother, and lived in Italy for the first decade

of my life. I moved to the United States at the age of 10 with my mother, all the while maintaining close contact to my father and my Italian family, through phone calls, letters and frequent trips during school breaks. This all contributed to a strong Italian identity on my part, something that is challenged by the sheer amount of time spent in the U.S. in comparison to that spent in Italy. Although I identify as an Italian, I also recognize that many of my values and beliefs are shaped by American culture, blurring my status as an insider/outsider (Collins 1986).

This hybrid identity and experience was clearly shown through the interview process: the fact that I could speak and understand Italian was a great asset to my ability to create rapport with the participants, but some terms (especially slang) were unfamiliar and marked me as an outsider when I asked the participants to clarify what they meant. In some cases, though, this was also an advantage. For example, while there was a shared context and frame of reference for the majority of the issues, my unfamiliarity with some of the concepts forced the participants to explain them to me in depth, as opposed to assuming that I knew what they meant.

#### **5.2.4 Limitations**

The findings from the interview data are not generalizable to the greater Italian population, as they are based on a small group of participants from one Italian city. In addition, the majority of the participants range between the ages of 18 and 33, certainly not representative of the Italian population as a whole. However, these interviews are meant to complement the findings of the nationally representative survey in exploring the beliefs that underlie people's support for or against citizenship reform. By exploring in detail a section of the population that should be most likely to support citizenship reform, one can better understand the nuances of support. That is, interviewing those

most likely to support liberal citizenship reform will facilitate a better understanding of what conditions, if any, are placed on extending citizenship to the second generation.

There is also an issue of timing - the issue of citizenship reform waxes and wanes in its prominence on the national stage. Citizenship was not as prominent in national debate in 2008 as it was in 2009, when several bills seemed to have a chance at reforming citizenship policy. On the other hand, reform has taken a backseat to Italian political scandals in 2010 and 2011, even with the emergence of a strong political backer in Gianfranco Fini. People's knowledge of and opinions on this issue may have changed since I conducted the interviews, and there is no way to account for that change in the present research.

### **5.3 Mixed Methods**

The usage of mixed methods in sociology has several advantages (Bourdieu 1988; DeVault 1996; Mahoney 2000; Mahoney 2004; Ragin 1987). I draw on the strengths of each approach, integrating the specific analyses in order to present as thorough an understanding of the issue of citizenship reform as possible.

One of the challenges in conducting mixed methods research is implementing an integrative synthesis of the two research methods rather than a pluralism of methods (Groeben and Rustmeyer 1994). That is, rather than simply using several methods to ask the same question, one must aim to have each method's results complement and enhance the rest. The analyses I present in this research are meant to complement each other. Thus, I conduct an analysis of survey data to provide a glimpse of the factors (micro and macro) influencing contemporary attitudes citizenship, allowing a breadth of scope impossible through interviews alone. I complement this analysis via group interviews, in order to gather "thick" data on the micro level. This enables

exploring questions of meaning and daily experiences that are unavailable in the public opinion survey. By using both methods, I present a more complete analysis than would be possible through only one method.

Table 5-1 Mean values and standard deviation for variables

Variable	Mean (St. Deviation)
Age	29.06 (16.70)
Gender	0.48 (0.50)
Income	8.27 (3.93)
Education:	
Elementary	0.27 (0.44)
Middle	0.37 (0.48)
High	0.29 (0.45)
Labor force:	
Housewife	0.16 (0.37)
Student	0.09 (0.29)
Retired	0.21 (0.41)
Unemployed	0.06 (0.24)
Perception of group size	3.41 (1.91)
Contact (Family)	0.18 (0.39)
Contact (Friend)	0.38 (0.49)
GDP per capita	20.71 (5.01)
Immigrant residents	5.06 (2.66)
Right-wing vote	4.59 (3.58)

Values reported include recoded variables

## CHAPTER 6 SURVEY DATA FINDINGS

This chapter outlines the findings of the survey data analysis. I will begin by explaining the multi-level models used in the analysis, report the findings, and then discuss the implications of the findings.

### 6.1 Analytical Models

I test the effects of several micro- and macro-level factors on Italians' attitudes about granting citizenship for second-generation youth. As explained in the methods chapter, the micro-level factors include fairly standard socio-demographic measures: age, gender, level of education, income, and occupation. In addition, perception of immigrant group size and family or friendly contact with immigrants are considered when testing whether either impacts one's position towards granting citizenship to the Italian second generation (Quillian 1995, Pettigrew 1998). The subsequent models incorporate three macro level factors, namely GDP, actual immigrant group size, and percentage of right wing votes in the lower house of parliament in the previous election.

The first model includes only the socio-demographic variables, in order to establish their effect on Italians' attitudes alone. The second model adds the respondents' perception of immigrant group size. The third model expands to include whether the respondents have had either family or friend contact with immigrants within their families or circle of friends. Models four, five and six add the regional-level variables individually.

The equation corresponding to the individual-level of analysis is specified using the logit link function:

$$p_{ij} = \Pr(Y_{ij} = 1), \quad (6-1)$$

$$\log\left[\frac{p_{ij}}{1-p_{ij}}\right] = \beta_{0j} + \sum_{q=1}^{13} \beta_{qj} * X_{qij} + r_{ij}, \quad (6-2)$$

where  $Y_{ij}$  is the response of an individual  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2, \dots, n_j$ ) in the  $j$ th ( $j = 1, 2, \dots, 18$ ) region of Italy on the outcome variable,  $X_{qij}$  ( $q = 1, 2, \dots, 13$ ) is an individual-level variable  $q$  for case  $i$  in unit  $j$ , betas are level-1 coefficients ( $\beta_{0j}$  the intercept and  $\beta_{qj}$  is a vector of slopes), and  $r_{ij}$  is a level-1 residual.

The level-2 equation can be formally written as:

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \sum_{s=1}^3 \gamma_{0s} * W_{0sj} + u_{0j}, \quad (6-3)$$

where  $\beta_{0j}$  is the intercept estimated in equation (2),  $W_{0sj}$  ( $s = 1, 2, 3$ ) is a regional-level predicting variable,  $\gamma_{00}$  is a level-2 intercept,  $\gamma_{0s}$  is the vector of slopes for the level-2 predicting variables, and  $u_{0j}$  is a level-2 random effect.

## 6.2 Findings

Tables showing the results for each paired model are reported at the end of this chapter. Each paired comparison consisted of six models of increasing complexity. As delineated above, the first model includes only the socio-demographic variables, in order to establish their effect on Italian's attitudes alone. The second model adds the respondents' perception of immigrant group size. The third model expands to include whether the respondents have had either family or friendly contact with immigrants. Models four, five and six add the macro-level variables one by one, the effects of which are estimated net of the variables at the individual level.

### 6.2.1 Model Comparing Those Who Favor Liberal vs. Restrictive Citizenship

The first mode from table 6.1 indicates that, of the socio-demographic variables, age, income, and being a student positively impact the willingness to grant citizenship to

second-generation youth, while having an education only to middle school decreases one's willingness to grant citizenship. Holding all variables constant at zero, respondents were 1.79 times more likely to favor granting citizenship to children of immigrants than retaining the current citizenship regime. The respective conditional expected log-odds correspond to a probability of 64% of favoring citizenship for the second generation.

Age exerted a statistically significant effect ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) on the dependent variable. With every year over the age of 18, the log odds increase by  $b=-0.02$ . Similarly, having a higher income significantly ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) increased the log-odds ( $b= 0.05$ ), translating into higher odds (1.88) of favoring citizenship for the second generation. Being male reduced the log-odds of favoring citizenship, but was not significant.

One's level of education also impacted the likelihood of favoring citizenship, and in reference to the excluded category of achieving a university degree, lower levels of education lessened the likelihood of granting citizenship to second generations. The log-odds were reduced by reaching an elementary school education or less ( $b= -0.31$ ) or a high school education or less ( $b= -0.20$ ), although the effects were not significant. Reaching a middle school education significantly ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) affected the log-odds ( $b=-0.45$ ), reducing the chance that a respondent would favor granting citizenship to the second generation to 1.14 times.

Similarly, one's relationship to the labor market affects the likelihood that they would favor granting citizenship to children of immigrants. Within the context of the reference category of "Active" in the labor force, the other categories exerted a positive effect on the likelihood of granting citizenship. Being a housewife increased the log-

odds of favoring citizenship reform, as did being retired or unemployed. However, these results were not statistically significant. Being a student significantly increased the log-odds ( $b= 0.88$ ), yielding a probability of 81% of students being more likely to favor granting citizenship to the second generation than not.

The second model adds perception about the immigrant group size as a predicting factor of attitudes towards citizenship policy. This factor is statistically significant ( $p \leq 0.001$ ), and has an inverse effect on the dependent variable. Thus, the larger the immigrant group is perceived to be, the less likely the respondent is willing to grant citizenship to children of immigrants. Specifically, the introduction of the variable significantly lessens the log-odds of favoring citizenship ( $b= -0.17$ ), net of other variables in the model. Put differently, this results in a 53% probability that those who perceive a large number of immigrants will be less likely to favor granting citizenship to the second generation, as compared to 79% of those who do not. The introduction of perception of immigrant group size leads to a loss of significance for some of the variables introduced in model 1. They remain similar in their effects, although the level of education one reaches is no longer significant and neither is age. Being a student (as compared to being active in the labor force) remains significant, although its impact is lessened ( $b=0.73$ ).

The third model introduces the variables denoting family or friendly contact. Family contact exerts a small increase in the log-odds ( $b= 0.14$ ), but the effect is not statistically significant<sup>18</sup>. Friendly contact has a significant effect ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) on the dependent variable. This variable increases the log-odds ( $b= 0.45$ ), which corresponds to a

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<sup>18</sup> Family contact, when introduced separately from friendly contact, is significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . Its effect vanishes once friendly contact is added to the model.

probability of 83% of favoring granting citizenship. For respondents who do not have any type of friendly contact, the corresponding probability is only 76%, holding all other variables constant.

The three subsequent models individually introduce regional variables (GDP per capita, percentage of immigrant residents, and percentage of right wing vote), each of which lends significant predictive power to the models. Results for the fourth model show that, as GDP lessens, support for extending citizenship rises. Although this relationship is statistically significant ( $p \leq 0.001$ ), it is small in magnitude ( $b = -0.05$  for each increase in thousand Euros). The individual -level variables remain virtually unchanged from the previous model in their effects. However, holding all other variables constant, being retired attains statistical significance ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), increasing the likelihood that one would favor granting citizenship by 1.79 times.

The fifth model introduces the regional level variable measuring the percentage of immigrant residents. This variable exerts a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable ( $p \leq 0.001$ ). As the percentage of immigrants decreases, the respondents are more likely to favor granting access to citizenship ( $b = -0.11$ ). The individual level variables remain virtually unchanged from the previous model.

Finally, the sixth model introduces a variable measuring the percentage of right-wing vote. This variable has an inverse ( $b = -0.04$ ) statistically significant ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) effect on favoring granting citizenship to immigrants. As the percentage of right-wing vote decreases, the respondents in a particular region are more likely to favor granting citizenship. This means that, where there is a greater percentage of votes going to right-wing parties in congressional elections, respondents are .95 times less likely to favor

granting second-generation youth access to citizenship than not. As in the previous model, being a student or retired indicates a greater likelihood of favoring granting citizenship to second generation than not, and perception of greater immigrant group size increases the likelihood of wanting to restrict access to citizenship.

### **6.2.2 Model Comparing Those Who Favor Liberal Citizenship vs. Don't Know**

Table 6-2 reports the results of the paired multilevel model comparing respondents who favor granting citizenship to children or immigrants to respondents who answered that they did not know whether they felt citizenship should be liberalized or maintained restrictive. The first model introduces socio-demographic variables, of which age, education and being unemployed had statistically significant effects on one's position on citizenship. Holding all other variables constant, being older raises the respondent's likelihood to favor liberalizing citizenship (an increase of  $b = 0.02$  for each year older than 18,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), with the conditional expected log-odds corresponding to a probability of 78% of favoring citizenship reform than not. Being unemployed also significantly ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) increases the likelihood that respondents would favor reform as opposed to not knowing, increasing the probability to 88% for the unemployed over those who are not.

Having attained at least an elementary school education has a statistically significant effect ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) on the dependent variable. Having attained an elementary school education decreased one's chances of supporting liberal citizenship reform ( $b = -1.55$ ) as opposed to no having attained at least an elementary school education. Having attained at least a middle school education also significantly impacts the dependent variable ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), decreasing support for liberal citizenship reform ( $b = -0.67$ ).

The second model adds the perception of immigrant group size to the model, which has a significant effect, slightly reducing one's likelihood of favoring liberalizing

citizenship. Holding all other variables constant, respondents who perceived immigrant groups to be larger were only 0.86 times as likely to favor reform as those who did not perceive immigrant groups to be large. Once this measure is introduced, the significance of being unemployed is lost in the model, but the educational variables retain statistical significance as in the previous model.

The third model introduces measures for contact with immigrants, either family or friend-based, which did not have any significant effect on the respondent's likelihood to favor one view over the other. This is in contrast to the first paired comparison, where contact of a friendly nature significantly impacted the likelihood of favoring reform. In keeping with the previous model, age and level of education continue to significantly impact likelihood for favoring reform.

Of the macro-level variables tested, only percentage of immigrant residents and percentage of right wing votes had a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable. GDP per capita, introduced in model 4, does not hold any explanatory power. Model 5 introduces a variable measuring the percentage of immigrant residents, which significantly decreases the likelihood of respondents to favor reform in regions with greater percentages of immigrant residents than not, holding all other variables constant. Although relatively small, this effect translates into respondents living in regions with high immigrant residents being 0.93 times as likely for favor reform as to answer don't know. Model 6 introduces a measure for percentage of votes given to right-wing parties in the previous national election, which slightly decreases the likelihood (0.95 times as likely) that respondents would favor liberalizing reform, holding

all other variables constant. In all three models, age, perception of immigrant group size and level of education remained statistically significant variables.

### **6.2.3 Model Comparing Those Who Favor Restrictive Citizenship vs. Don't Know**

Table 6-3 reports the results from the third paired comparison, that between those who favor restricting citizenship and those who do not have an opinion. Model 1 introduces the socio-demographic variables, of which reaching an elementary education level has a statistically significant effect ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) on the dependent variable.

Respondents who attain only an elementary school level education are only 0.22 times as likely to favor restrictive citizenship as those who do not. Similarly, being a student has a statistically significant effect ( $p \leq 0.05$ ), where those who are students are only 0.36 times as likely to favor restrictive citizenship when compared to those who are not, holding all other variables constant.

Models 2 and 3 introduce the other individual level variables, perception of immigrant group size and measures of contact with immigrant groups. These variables do not attain statistical significance within either model. In fact, with their introduction, being a student loses its statistically significant impact on the dependent variable. Attaining an elementary level education remains significant in both models, although it decreases in magnitude.

Models 4 through 6 introduce the regional-level variables. None of these regional-level variables reach statistical significance, suggesting that the difference between respondents who favor restrictive citizenship and those who do not know what position to choose is unaffected by happenings at the regional level. For the first time, relative to the other paired comparisons, perception of immigrant group size does not exert a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable, and neither do the contact or

macro-level variables. This suggests that there is little difference in the respondents who answered 'don't know' and who wish to maintain a restrictive citizenship policy.

### **6.3 Discussion and Conclusion**

The paired comparisons between the three groups of respondents (those who favored reform, those who favored the current restrictive regime, and those who answered they didn't know which they preferred) reveal intriguing results. I will first discuss the variables with significant explanatory power in each comparison. Subsequently, I will discuss what the paired comparisons tell us about the similarities and differences between the three respondent groups.

Looking at all three comparisons, several predictors are statistically significant; however, none maintained significance across all three tables. This hints that the groups of respondents are, indeed, different and that variables impacting one group may not affect another in determining their attitudes towards citizenship policy. It seems worthy, then, to identify and discuss the measures which reached statistical significance according to each paired comparison.

#### **6.3.1 Model Comparing Those Who Favor Liberal vs. Restrictive Citizenship**

Table 6-1 yielded the greatest number of statistically significant predictors. Of the socio-demographic predictors, having reached a middle school level education and the status of currently being a student (in reference to being active in the labor force) were the most influential. Achieving a middle school education decreases the chances of favoring reform as opposed to not having achieved at least a middle school education, while currently being a student increases the chances that respondents would favor liberalizing reform.

Individuals' perception of immigrant group size remained a significant predictor of attitudes for this paired comparison. The analysis found that for each unit decrease in perceived group size ( $b = -0.17$ ), the likelihood of favoring liberalizing reform increased. This finding is consistent with other research on the effects of perceived group size (Quillian 1995), where those who overestimate the size of immigrant groups are more likely to perceive threat from the same. In line with other studies (McLaren 2003), those respondents who overestimated immigrant group size also felt threatened by them, and would be less likely to favor legitimizing the second generation by extending citizenship to them.

The subsequent models found that the added measures of contact yielded surprising results. What was stunning was that contact of a friendly nature, such as being friends with an immigrant or having immigrant classmates, was significant, while contact within a familial context, such as having an immigrant related by marriage, contrary to expectations, was not. This can be due to several factors. The rates of intermarriage and international adoptions remain low in Italy, leading to lower levels of family contact. In essence, the phenomenon may not yet be widespread enough to yield significant results. On the other hand, the increasing presence of immigrants in the larger Italian society, and especially of the second-generation children in Italian schools, provides ample opportunity for friendly contact among most Italians. However, the factors above do not explain the lack of statistical significance in the case of those with actual family contact, even if these cases are few in number. This is an area that merits further inquiry.

The macro-level variables, although statistically significant in their effects, did not have as large an impact on the respondents' attitudes as the individual-level variables. The direction of the measure for GDP per capita was also surprising. The model shows that per each 1,000 Euro unit decrease in GDP per capita at the regional level, respondents were more likely to favor citizenship reform. Intuitively, one would hypothesize that in settings with more auspicious economic conditions the willingness to accept others would increase, and that immigrants would be viewed as less of an economic threat during boom times (Burns and Gimpel 2000; Citrin, Green, Muste and Wong 1997). In this case, however, the results show that in better economic settings, Italians are less likely to want to extend citizenship to the second generation. While the effect is relatively small ( $b = -0.05$ ), it has a statistically significant and cumulative effect due to the per-unit increases or decreases in GDP. This points to the possibility that economic competition between Italians and immigrants or their children may not necessarily play as important a role as has been theorized (Schneider 2008).

The measure for immigrant resident percentage confirms that, as immigrant residents increase in a region, Italians are less likely to favor reform. This is in line with the work done on objective group threat (Hopkins 2008). The effect is moderate ( $b = -0.11$ ), and corroborates the results found with the measure of perception of group size.

The percentage of right-wing votes reduces the likelihood that Italians will favor citizenship reform. Thus, the lower the percentage of votes given to right-wing parties, the higher the support for inclusive citizenship reform. This confirms much of the research linking support of far-right wing political parties to prejudice against immigrant groups (Fetzer 2000b).

### **6.3.2 Model Comparing Those Who Favor Liberal Citizenship vs. Don't Know**

In this paired comparison, age remained a significant predictor throughout the six models. The analysis showed that the older the respondent, the more likely he or she is to favor extending citizenship, indicating, perhaps, that respondents are more likely to have time to form an opinion or to become educated on the issue as time goes by.

The level of education reached was an important factor in predicting people's attitudes towards citizenship reform. In this analysis, those who reached either an elementary level or middle school level education were significantly less likely to favor reform, especially those who only reached an elementary level education. The magnitude of having reached an elementary education is particularly large and consistently statistically significant across the 6 models. This is in line with the studies showing that more educated individuals tend to be less prejudiced (e.g., Coenders and Sheepers 2003), and thus would favor a more liberal citizenship policy.

As in the previous model, one's perception of immigrant group size decreases the likelihood of favoring citizenship reform, as does the actual percent of immigrant residents. Conversely, those respondents in regions with a higher percentage of immigrant residents were more likely to not know which side to pick. In this model, then, the impact of individual perceptions of group threat paralleled the impact of realistic group threat, as measured by the actual percentage of immigrant residents. This suggests that being closer to immigration either makes one more likely to see the nuances, and thus not choose a side; or, perhaps, that there are simply more people who are uneducated about the subject or unaffected by the debate, and thus hold no opinion. In contrast to the previous comparison, however, contact loses all explanatory

power, indicating that a significant difference between respondents who favor policy reform and respondents who do not know which position to choose does not exist.

### **6.3.3 Those Who Favor Restrictive Citizenship vs. Don't Know**

As noted in the findings section, this paired analysis provided very little in the way of significant effects distinguishing these two groups. Having reached an elementary school-level education significantly decreased the likelihood that respondents would favor retaining the current citizenship regime. This suggests that those respondents who reached an elementary school education truly are a distinct and separate group favoring neither reforming nor retaining citizenship policy. Overall, save for being a student (significant only in the first model) and having reached elementary education, no other significant measures were found in the analysis: neither perception of immigrant group size, nor contact, nor any of the three regional-level variables reached significance.

### **6.3.4 Conclusion**

As the discussion of the findings above imply, no one particular variable remained statistically significant across all paired comparisons. In order to better visualize their significance, I present the results of the three paired comparisons in table 6-5 at the end of this chapter. That not one variable's impact was statistically significant for all three groups suggests that there are indeed differences between those who support extending citizenship, deny it, or don't know which position to choose.

The findings show that the hypotheses set forth in the previous chapter were, for the most part, supported. Some of the variables introduced in the first model as controls are statistically significant. Certain socio-demographic factors exert statistically significant effects: people who are younger, have a higher income, are female, have

high educational attainment and are currently students are more willing to extend citizenship to the second generation than those who do not fit those characteristics.

The hypothesis testing whether individuals' perception of immigrant group size affected their attitudes was also supported in two of the three paired comparisons. This shows that those who perceived there to be larger groups were less likely to favor extending citizenship to children of immigrants. The final individual-level variables measuring contact also supported the hypothesis, but only in part. The variable measuring friendly contact had a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable in two of the three paired comparisons. In these cases, friendly contact increased Italians' willingness to extend citizenship to the second generation. On the other hand, family-based contact did not significantly affect the dependent variable, not supporting the hypothesis.

Of the macro level variables, percentage of immigrant residents offers a glimpse into whether realistic group threat affects people's attitudes. In two of the three paired comparisons, this variable attained statistical significance and in the third it maintained its direction even though it did not attain statistical significance. The effect is clearly shown in the distribution table (6.4), available at the end of the chapter. Clearly, respondents from regions with higher percentages of immigrant residents are less likely to favor extending citizenship than either restrict it or answer don't know.

Similarly, the percentage of right-wing vote also remained significant in two of the three paired comparisons. In contrast to percentage of immigrant residents, the picture this measure paints is a varied one. In two regions, Lombardia and Veneto, the percentage of right wing vote is far higher (12%) than any other regions. However, this

doesn't translate into drastically lower support of second generation citizenship. Even with such high support for right wing parties, the Lombardy and Venetian residents were still rather middle of the road in their support for citizenship when compared to other regions – some who only had 1.5 or 2% support for right wing vote. This suggests that perhaps support for right wing parties is predicated on other social and political issues, or that perhaps the supporters in these regions distinguish between the anti-immigrant rhetoric aimed at illegal immigrants and the legally residing second generations.

The measure of GDP per capita also presents some interesting findings. When comparing regions, there is a clear and recognizable trend- regions in northern Italy are richer than those in southern Italy, in some cases by more than €10,000 per capita. However, when comparing GDP and support for citizenship, a murkier picture arises. The paired comparisons showed that when GDP was a significant predictor of support for second generation citizenship, it did so in an inverse way. Basilicata is a perfect example- a region with relatively low GDP per capita (€ 15,273) and very high support for second generation citizenship (72.2%). On the other end of the spectrum, Lombardia has the highest GDP per capita (€27,875) and one of the lowest percentages of support for second generation citizenship (53.4%). Both examples follow the relationship discovered in the paired comparisons. However, there is at least one region – Liguria- that has a moderate GDP (€21, 859/capita) and boasts the greatest support for second generation citizenship (73.6%). This presents a divergent case from the trend, and speaks to the importance of regional level analyses. Several factors may account for Why GDP doesn't affect attitudes in this region, most prominently that of distinct

historical legacy. Liguria has been a seafaring region since the Middle Ages, is now host to Italy's largest port and perhaps its history of trade influences people's attitudes.

The most intriguing result may in fact come from the comparison of the respondents who favor restrictive citizenship regimes and those who answered 'don't know.' The analysis shows that there are very few differences between these groups, and that few of the factors included in the model have any explanatory power. Research suggests that there is potential to convert 'don't knows' into restrictive supporters, especially if there is mobilization of the right-wing parties around immigrant issues (Burstein 2003, Morje Howard 2009). If the respondents who answer 'don't know' are simply unaware of the nuances of the issue, or that citizenship is a contested issue at all (as some of the interview data confirms), the opportunity to try to win over those individuals to a political side is there. If the respondents who answered 'don't know' (25%) were to become supporters of restrictive citizenship policy (joining the 21% of the sample who responded in this manner), there would be a much more contested public opinion on this issue, making it harder for liberalizing reform to occur (Morje Howard 2009). The next chapter examines the themes that emerged from the group interviews, which seek to supplement the findings of the survey data analysis.

Table 6-1 Statistics from the multilevel logistic models predicting citizenship to second-generation immigrants in 18 Italian regions – Yes No comparison

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds -	Exp (B)
Constant	0.58* (0.24)	1.79	1.31*** (0.33)	3.74	1.13** (0.36)	3.10	1.20** (0.44)	3.33	1.17** (0.44)	3.24	1.23** (0.40)	3.42
<i>Individual level</i>												
Age	0.02* (0.01)	1.02	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01
Male	-0.07 (0.19)	0.93	-0.06 (0.20)	0.94	-0.05 (0.20)	0.95	-0.09 (0.20)	0.91	-0.10 (0.20)	0.91	-0.07 (0.20)	0.93
Income	0.05* (0.02)	1.05	0.03 (0.02)	1.03	0.03 (0.02)	1.03	0.02 (0.03)	1.02	0.03 (0.03)	1.03	0.03 (0.02)	1.03
<i>Education<sup>a</sup></i>												
To elementary	-0.31 (0.32)	0.74	-0.16 (0.49)	0.85	-0.11 (0.52)	0.89	-0.14 (0.20)	0.87	-0.18 (0.52)	0.84	-0.18 (0.53)	0.83
To middle school	-0.45* (0.20)	0.64	-0.17 (0.19)	0.84	-0.17 (0.20)	0.84	-0.14 (0.20)	0.87	-0.15 (0.20)	0.86	-0.19 (0.21)	0.82
To high school	-0.20 (0.17)	0.82	0.17 (0.15)	1.19	0.15 (0.14)	1.16	0.16 (0.13)	1.17	0.17 (0.13)	1.18	0.14 (0.14)	1.15
<i>Labor force participation<sup>b</sup></i>												
Housewife	0.02 (0.26)	1.03	0.35 (0.28)	1.42	0.35 (0.30)	1.41	0.29 (0.31)	1.34	0.27 (0.32)	1.32	0.37 (0.31)	1.44
Student	0.88** (0.34)	2.41	0.73* (0.39)	2.08	0.78* (0.38)	2.18	0.77* (0.36)	2.17	0.77* (0.36)	2.16	0.76* (0.38)	2.13
Retired	0.05 (0.25)	1.05	0.49 (0.30)	1.63	0.55 (0.30)	1.73	0.58* (0.30)	1.79	0.55* (0.29)	1.74	0.54* (0.29)	1.71

Table 6-1. Continued

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds -	Exp (B)
Unemployed	0.34 (0.28)	1.40	-0.06 (0.26)	0.94	-0.02 (0.28)	0.98	-0.04 (0.35)	0.96	-0.06 (0.31)	0.94	-0.04 (0.28)	0.96
Perception of immigrant group size	—		-0.17*** (0.04)	0.84	-0.17*** (0.04)	0.84	-0.18*** (0.04)	0.83	-0.18*** (0.04)	0.84	-0.18*** (0.04)	0.84
Contact (family)	—		—		0.14 (0.22)	1.15	0.07 (0.25)	1.07	0.09 (0.22)	1.09	0.11 (0.22)	1.12
Contact (friend)	—		—		0.45** (0.16)	1.56	0.55** (0.19)	1.73	0.48** (0.17)	1.61	0.44** (0.16)	1.56
<i>Regional level</i>												
GDP per capita	—		—		—		-0.05*** (0.01)	0.95	—		—	
Immigrant residents	—		—		—				-0.11*** (0.03)	0.89	—	
Right wing vote	—		—		—		—		—		-0.04** (0.01)	0.95
Regional-level random effect, $u_{0j}$	0.5226		0.8335		0.9624		1.1568		1.2673		1.1038	

\*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$  (one-tailed test).

Standard errors are reported in parentheses. The regional-level variables “GDP”, “Immigrant residents”, and “Right wing vote” are grand-mean centered. The regional-level random effect for the intercept-only (unrestricted) model is 0.0483.

<sup>a</sup> The reference category is “Some college or higher.”

<sup>b</sup> The reference category is “Active.”

Table 6-2 Statistics from the multilevel logistic models predicting citizenship to second-generation immigrants in 18 Italian regions – Yes DK comparison

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)
Constant	1.26*** (0.31)	3.52	1.84*** (0.39)	6.29	1.89*** (0.47)	6.63	1.91.** (0.49)	6.75	1.90*** (0.51)	6.73	1.96*** (0.52)	7.11
<i>Individual level</i>												
Age	0.01* (0.01)	1.01	0.01* (0.01)	1.01	0.01* (0.01)	1.01	0.01* (0.01)	1.01	0.01* (0.01)	1.01	0.01* (0.01)	1.01
Male	0.16 (0.14)	1.17	-0.05 (0.14)	0.95	-0.06 (0.14)	0.94	-0.07 (0.14)	0.93	-0.07 (0.14)	0.93	-0.06 (0.14)	0.94
Income	0.01 (0.02)	1.01	0.03 (0.03)	1.03	0.02 (0.03)	1.03	0.03 (0.03)	1.03	0.03 (0.03)	1.03	0.03 (0.03)	1.03
<i>Education<sup>a</sup></i>												
To elementary	-1.55*** (0.40)	0.21	-1.23* (0.61)	0.29	-1.25* (0.62)	0.29	-1.24* (0.62)	0.29	-1.26* (0.62)	0.29	-1.27* (0.63)	0.28
To middle school	-0.67* (0.31)	0.51	-0.48* (0.24)	0.62	-0.48* (0.24)	0.62	-0.48* (0.24)	0.62	-0.48* (0.24)	0.62	-0.46* (0.25)	0.63
To high school	-0.31 (0.28)	0.73	0.00 (0.24)	1.00	-0.05 (0.26)	0.95	-0.06 (0.27)	0.94	-0.07 (0.28)	0.93	-0.07 (0.28)	0.93
<i>Labor force participation<sup>b</sup></i>												
Housewife	-0.08 (0.15)	0.92	0.23 (0.20)	1.25	0.21 (0.20)	1.24	0.20 (0.21)	1.23	0.21 (0.21)	1.23	0.21 (0.21)	1.24
Student	-0.15 (0.26)	0.86	-0.03 (0.26)	0.97	0.04 (0.24)	1.04	0.02 (0.25)	1.02	0.01 (0.25)	1.01	0.01 (0.26)	1.02
Retired	0.25 (0.33)	1.29	0.21 (0.23)	1.24	0.13 (0.23)	1.14	0.14 (0.24)	1.15	0.15 (0.24)	1.16	0.14 (0.24)	1.15

Table 6.2. Continued

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Log-odds	Exp (B)										
Unemployed	0.71*	2.03	0.41	1.51	0.55	1.73	0.55	1.73	0.56	1.75	0.60	1.81
	(0.35)		(0.36)		(0.37)		(0.37)		(0.37)		(0.39)	
Perception of immigrant group size.	—		-0.15**	0.86	-0.15**	0.86	-0.15**	0.86	-0.15**	0.86	-0.15**	0.86
			(0.04)		(0.05)		(0.05)		(0.05)		(0.05)	
Contact (family)	—		—		-0.05	0.95	-0.05	0.95	-0.06	0.95	-0.07.	0.93
					(0.30)		(0.30)		(0.30)		(0.31)	
Contact (friend)	—		—		0.00	1.00	-0.02	1.02	0.03	1.03	0.01	1.01
					(0.19)		(0.20)		(0.20)		(0.20)	
<i>Regional level</i>												
GDP per capita	—		—		—		-0.02	0.97	—		—	
							(0.02)					
Immigrant residents	—		—		—				-0.07*	0.93	—	
									(0.04)			
Right wing vote	—		—		—		—		—		-0.05**	0.95
											(0.02)	
Regional-level random effect, $u_{0j}$	0.7202		0.9080		1.3951		1.4130		1.4894		1.4993	

\*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$  (one-tailed test).

Standard errors are reported in parentheses. The regional-level variables “GDP”, “Immigrant residents”, and “Right wing vote” are grand-mean centered. The regional-level random effect for the intercept-only (unrestricted) model is 0.0483.

<sup>a</sup> The reference category is “Some college or higher.”

<sup>b</sup> The reference category is “Active.”

Table 6-3. Statistics from the multilevel logistic models predicting citizenship to second-generation immigrants in 18 Italian regions – No DK comparison

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)
Constant	0.58* (0.31)	1.78	0.14 (0.40)	1.15	0.56 (0.44)	1.76	0.58 (0.44)	1.79	0.60 (0.44)	1.82	0.53 (0.44)	1.69
Individual level												
Age	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01	0.01 (0.01)	1.01
Male	0.20 (0.13)	1.23	0.16 (0.12)	1.17	0.16 (0.14)	1.17	0.16 (0.14)	1.17	0.16 (0.14)	1.17	0.15 (0.14)	1.16
Income	-0.05 (0.03)	0.95	-0.01 (0.03)	0.99	-0.01 (0.03)	0.99	-0.02 (0.03)	0.98	-0.02 (0.03)	0.98	-0.01 (0.03)	0.99
Education <sup>a</sup>												
To elementary	-1.53*** (0.35)	0.22	-1.11** (0.42)	0.33	-1.19** (0.39)	0.30	-1.17** (0.38)	0.31	-1.16** (0.38)	0.31	-1.16** (0.39)	0.31
To middle school	-0.20 (0.23)	0.82	-0.16 (0.25)	0.85	-0.15 (0.25)	0.86	-0.15 (0.25)	0.86	-0.15 (0.25)	0.86	-0.17 (0.25)	0.84
To high school	-0.04 (0.24)	0.96	-0.04 (0.24)	0.96	-0.05 (0.23)	0.95	-0.05 (0.23)	0.95	-0.05 (0.23)	0.95	-0.05 (0.23)	0.95
Labor force participation <sup>b</sup>												
Housewife	-0.32 (0.24)	0.73	-0.23 (0.42)	0.79	-0.21 (0.41)	0.81	-0.18 (0.42)	0.84	-0.17 (0.43)	0.84	-0.17 (0.41)	0.84
Student	-1.02* (0.47)	0.36	-0.56 (0.42)	0.57	-0.68 (0.42)	0.51	-0.65 (0.42)	0.52	-0.66 (0.42)	0.51	-0.63 (0.42)	0.53
Retired	0.07 (0.34)	1.08	-0.42 (0.25)	0.65	-0.45 (0.27)	0.63	-0.43 (0.27)	0.65	-0.43 (0.27)	0.65	-0.44 (0.27)	0.64
Unemployed	0.67 (0.43)	1.96	0.80 (0.60)	2.22	0.72 (0.69)	2.06	0.77 (0.68)	2.15	0.78 (0.67)	2.19	0.77 (0.69)	2.16
Perception of immigrant group size	—	—	0.03 (0.05)	1.04	0.03 (0.05)	1.03	0.03 (0.05)	.03	0.03 (0.05)	1.03	0.03 (0.05)	1.03
Contact (family)	—	—	—	—	-0.11 (0.34)	0.90	-0.11 (0.34)	0.89	-0.11 (0.34)	0.89	-0.10 (0.34)	0.90
Contact (friend)	—	—	—	—	-0.27 (0.29)	0.76	-0.30 (0.29)	0.73	-0.31 (0.29)	0.73	-0.29 (0.28)	0.75

Table 6-3. Continued

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)	Log-odds	Exp (B)
Regional level												
GDP per capita	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.02 (0.01)	1.02	—	—	—	—
Immigrant residents	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.05 (0.03)	1.05	—	—
Right wing vote	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.02 (0.02)	1.02
Regional-level random effect, $u_{0j}$	0.5291		0.7162		1.0496		0.9656		0.9505		1.0084	

\*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$  (one-tailed test).

Standard errors are reported in parentheses. The regional-level variables “GDP”, “Immigrant residents”, and “Right wing vote” are grand-mean centered. The regional-level random effect for the intercept-only (unrestricted) model is 0.0483.

<sup>a</sup> The reference category is “Some college or higher.”

<sup>b</sup> The reference category is “Active.”

Table 6-4 Distribution of citizenship attitudes and macro-level indicators by region

Region	Citizenship for second-generation immigrants			Percentage of immigrant residents	GDP/Capita 2006-2007	Right Wing Vote
	Yes	No	DK			
Piemonte	55.8%	23.8%	20.4%	6.4%	€ 23,632	7.54%
Lombardia	53.4%	29.6%	17.1%	8.0%	€ 27,875	12.90%
Trentino	60.9%	17.4%	21.7%	6.6%	€ 26,806	5.43%
Veneto	57.8%	20.8%	21.4%	7.8%	€ 25,110	12.20%
Friuli	56.5%	17.4%	26.1%	6.4%	€ 23,901	8.59%
Liguria	73.6%	18.9%	7.5%	5.3%	€ 21,859	4.88%
Emilia Romagna	61.3%	22.6%	16.1%	8.0%	€ 26,661	4.88%
Toscana	65.5%	15.0%	19.5%	6.9%	€ 23,532	2.17%
Umbria	47.6%	19.0%	33.3%	7.9%	€ 20,365	2.10%
Marche	51.9%	22.2%	25.9%	6.9%	€ 21,901	2.41%
Lazio	62.6%	20.9%	26.6%	6.5%	€ 25,382	2.30%
Abruzzo	59.5%	18.9%	21.6%	4.1%	€ 17,753	2.24%
Campania	56.3%	16.7%	27.1%	1.8%	€ 13,715	1.50%
Puglia	67.4%	14.5%	18.1%	1.4%	€ 14,238	1.87%
Basilicata	72.2%	13.9%	13.9%	1.4%	€ 15,273	2.03%
Calabria	67.2%	16.4%	16.4%	2.1%	€ 14,077	2.45%
Sicilia	52.9%	22.5%	24.6%	1.8%	€ 14,245	5.50%
Sardegna	58.1%	17.7%	24.2%	1.3%	€ 16,557	1.62%

Table 6-5 Variable significance across paired comparisons

Variable	Yes-No	Yes-DK	No-DK
Age	SS	SS	NSS
Gender	NSS	NSS	NSS
Income	SS	NSS	NSS
Education:			
Elementary	NSS	SS	SS
Middle	SS	SS	NSS
High	NSS	NSS	NSS
Labor force:			
Housewife	NSS	NSS	NSS
Student	SS	NSS	SS
Retired	NSS	NSS	NSS
Unemployed	NSS	SS	NSS
Perception of group size	SS	SS	NSS
Contact (Family)	NSS	NSS	NSS
Contact (Friend)	SS	NSS	NSS
GDP per capita	SS	NSS	NSS
Immigrant residents	SS	SS	NSS
Right-wing vote	SS	SS	NSS

SS indicates statistical significance, NSS indicates that the variable was not statistically significant.

## CHAPTER 7 GROUP INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The findings reported in this chapter are a selection of themes that emerged from the data. The quotes are all from native Italians with Italian parents, unless otherwise noted, and pseudonyms were used. I present findings which first relate to the individual-level factors that were examined in the survey data, such as perception of immigrant size and contact; I then go on to present themes that have emerged from the interviews.

### **7.1 Comparison to the Survey Data**

Analysis of the interviews offers some interesting demographic results. I first present the findings that link the interview data to the analysis conducted in the previous chapter. By examining the roles that factors like perception of immigrant group size play on people's attitudes towards citizenship policy, I begin to draw the links between the survey and the interviews.

#### **7.1.1. Control Variables**

Younger respondents were more likely to be favorable of granting citizenship to second-generation immigrants, and were more aware of the hardships that this group faces than older respondents. This has been found in other studies of Italians' attitudes as well (Diamanti Bordignon 2005). In fact, older respondents in my sample, those aged 30 and older, tended to not even be aware that second generation did not have easy access to citizenship, and were often incredulous when the requirements were explained to them. On the other hand, a number of younger (29 and below) respondents cited the fact having classmates and friends who were second generation as a factor in their awareness and opinions towards citizenship reform. While this distinction in age is somewhat arbitrary- after all, the difference between a person aged 29 and one aged 30

may be negligible in and of itself- the categories hint to a generational difference. Specifically, the ages of the respondents hint that there is a difference between cohorts of Italians who have had immigrant classmates versus those who have not. This suggests that interpersonal contact has a strong impact (friendship specifically), as an important factor moderating attitudes towards citizenship (Allport 1954; McLaren 2003; Pettigrew 1998).

I did not find that any of these remaining control variables (gender, income, or education) impacted the participants' views toward extending citizenship to second-generation youths. Men as well as women expressed support for extending citizenship. Neither income nor level of education reached resulted in different opinions expressed by the participants.

### **7.1.2 Labor Force Participation**

Given the small sample, I did not have participants representing each of the various labor force categories available in the survey data (unemployed, housewife, etc.). Thus there cannot be a true comparison between the two along these lines. However, the findings from the interview data suggest that those who are currently students express fewer reservations about extending citizenship to children of immigrants as opposed to those who are no longer students. The participants in my study who were students at the time of the interview were either university students or in their last two years of high school. They tended to present stronger, less qualified support for extending citizenship to the second generation, as Michela (a student at the local university) does when she says the second generation should have citizenship because "it's unfair [that they don't have citizenship], they work just the same as we do".

Those who were not students at the time of the interview also supported extending citizenship, but quickly qualified their support by claiming that there should be controls placed on who is given citizenship. For example, Roberta, who works, finds that while, in principle, the second generation should have citizenship she “can’t talk about this [without] getting a rotten feeling... the situation is already hard enough for us Italians, without finding this added burden [of immigrants competing for resources] on our backs.” Clearly, Roberta offers a more complex, if not contradicting, position. While she supports extending citizenship, she also worries that the scarce resources available to Italians - jobs, pensions, etc - will be compromised by the addition of new citizens. Others, as is discussed in section 7.2.2, offer conditions of a moral nature to be placed on the potential citizens, ensuring that no lazy, delinquent immigrants should be able to access citizenship.

### **7.1.3 Perception of Immigrant Group Size**

During the interviews, several participants talked about the prevalence and concentration of immigrant groups in certain towns, making a comparison possible to the variable measuring one’s perception of immigrant group size in the survey data. The survey data analysis found that as people perceive immigrant groups to be larger, support for extending citizenship lessens. This relationship is also found in the interview data.

Adriana and Roberta’s conversation regarding citizenship and immigrant groups provides an intriguing example. The two both agreed that the current citizenship regime was ‘complicated’ and should be reformed to allow for greater numbers of children of immigrants to receive citizenship. Immediately following this statement, however, Adriana started to hesitate and qualify her answer, saying that although she has a

favorable opinion she knows that not everyone shares it. She goes on to describe conversations that she had with friends who live in smaller towns and who are faced with large groups of immigrants posing a security threat to the town:

[There is a town near Genova] where people up to 5 years ago left their front doors unlocked, now they find these young guys, all Albanian, from [Eastern Europe], those places, they get there and they're always drunk from morning to evening, maybe they beat their wives, they're loud all the time, they steal, they don't work... I mean, do you understand what I'm saying? ...Even in Mondovì [a small town on the outskirts of Genova] we were there one night, and there were some absurd people, without any shoes, drunk, with beers in hand. I mean, Mondovì was always a real quiet town with little shops and the church in the square. Now, if you had a 13-year-old daughter, would you let her go out? - Adriana (28 years old)

The implications of Adriana's example are clear: there are large groups of immigrant men who are publicly drunk and boisterous and who are taking over small towns, and they pose a threat to Italians, especially Italian girls. Adriana's characterization of the small towns surrounding Genova clearly shows that some immigrant groups are seen as homogenous, delinquent threats to the tranquility of society. Further, mirroring the discourse found in the larger media (King and Mai 2009), Adriana focuses on immigrant groups from Eastern Europe, the latest group to be singled out for discrimination in Italian society.

The participants in the interviews were favorable to extending citizenship to the second generation. All except one spoke of conditions that should be placed on extending citizenship in order to avoid the scenario presented by Adriana. The conditions are discussed in detail in section 7.2.2.

#### **7.1.4 Contact**

Of the variables that were tested in the survey data analysis, the one measuring contact was the most discussed in the interviews. A majority of participants reported

having contact with immigrants. The circumstances surrounding the nature of this contact varied among participants; seven out of the fourteen reported having immigrant classmates, two reported working with immigrants, and three participants had family members who are immigrants.

Most participants reported having immigrants among their friends rather than as family members. Seven participants reported friendships that developed with classmates, ranging from contact at the elementary school level through university-level. The younger participants, those aged 18 through 20, reported having immigrants as classmates at the elementary school level, while the older participants (those aged closer to 30) reported having classmates at either the high-school or university level. This can be interpreted as a demographic function: children of immigrants are becoming an increasingly larger percentage of the population. This leads to an increased number of children of immigrants in schools as time goes by, facilitating contact at younger and younger ages. Margherita comments that:

When I was [in school] you didn't have mixed classes, like you have today. That helps because you learn from when you're a child, you're socialized into seeing that we're all the same... Now in kindergarten you play with an Italian child, you play with a Moroccan child, with an Australian child, a Chinese child! - Margherita (33 years old)

Here, Margherita talks about the changes in Italian schools, highlighting that she did not have any immigrant classmates as she progressed through the educational system. She also draws a link between having friends of different origins and the potential for increasing tolerance and equality.

Other participants specifically talked about how having immigrant classmates made them more aware of the issues surrounding citizenship. Several participants cited having immigrant friends as the reason they were aware of the conditions needed to

acquire Italian citizenship. Enrico was very well versed in this matter, recounting that his immigrant friend was not born in Italy, and thus had to apply for citizenship based on residency, requiring a waiting period of 10 years; while his friend's sister was born in Italy and thus was able to request citizenship at the age of 18. Similarly, Esther recounts her friend's experiences that clued her in to the difficulty of not having Italian citizenship presents for children of immigrants:

[I have a friend] who has Peruvian citizenship, she has an Italian ID but not a visa. So her citizenship doesn't allow her to travel outside of Italy, she can only travel between Italy and Peru, and nowhere else. She asked for a visa to go on vacation a while back, but she still hasn't gotten it. ...Starting with school trips, where she was turned away at the border because they didn't let her in, she really resents these differences. – Esther (20 years old)

In both cases, Enrico and Esther became more aware of the intricacies of Italian citizenship policies - the travel restrictions, the differences in eligibility between children of immigrants born in Italy versus not - through their friendship with children of immigrants.

In two cases, participants reported working with immigrants. One participant, Adriana, worked in a clothing shop owned by a Spanish company, and found that the workforce there was much more varied than anywhere else she had worked. She hypothesized that, perhaps, the fact that this was a large company led to more acceptance of immigrants as employees:

Adriana: ...At work we are more multi-ethnic...

Me: Meaning?

Adriana: [Company] is a Spanish chain, so we have some Spaniards, a Peruvian, one who is from Ecuador, at work it's a different reality. Maybe because it's a big company, they're more likely to hire immigrants.

Roberta: Maybe it's because Spaniards are more open...than Italians. – Adriana (28 years old) and Roberta (28 years old)

Roberta offers another explanation; that perhaps it is because the company is Spanish that one can find so many immigrant employees. As she explains later in the interview, she views Italian society as very closed and marginalizing, whereas she perceives Spain to be more open and accepting of immigrants.

Finally, of my sample, three people reported having an immigrant as a family member. Two participants have one immigrant parent. Both Simon and Viola were born to Italian citizens, their respective mothers, and thus they are automatically Italian citizens. While Simon doesn't feel that his parents' immigration status affect his views towards citizenship, Viola admits that it does. A third participant indicated having adopted brothers who immigrated from Russia. Adriana's parents adopted the siblings as children, rather than infants, and their experiences in Italy have affected Adriana's position on citizenship. She says that "having these experiences at home, with people who lived in a totally different country than ours, with my brothers, I am surely more favorable [towards extending citizenship]".

Viola presents a combination of types of family contact, as she has both an immigrant parent and is related to another immigrant by marriage. Her father is British and her mother Italian, so she had dual citizenship until she turned 18. Upon turning 18, she lost her British citizenship and retained her Italian citizenship. She relates that it didn't feel like a loss to her, she was not attached to her British citizenship. On the other hand, this loss of citizenship did not affect her feeling of belonging:

Absolutely, having an English father and most of all, being born there, gave me different experiences. It's like having 2 homes. At times I feel an incredibly strong need to go to England, like it's coming from deep inside of me... Even though I've lived in Italy almost my whole life, I absolutely feel half [Italian] and half [British]. - Viola, (30 years old, one immigrant parent)

Viola clearly elaborates that her British identity is unhampered by the loss of citizenship, and that having an English father has strengthened her belonging. This is clearly an example of positive family contact, in the sense that she has a healthy relationship with her immigrant father and that it fostered ties between her Italian and British identities.

On the other hand, Viola recounts her contact with an immigrant by marriage in different terms:

My uncle's experience, he married that [South American]bitch who then brought her son over, who was a juvenile delinquent, well even with the huge amount of delinquency that 70% of immigrants bring with them (I hate to say it, but it's true)... Even if you can't generalize to everyone from a few examples, I guess I can say that those who are born here –but only from honest, hard-working parents- and without a police record should have the right to have citizenship, but for everyone else, they can all go home! -  
Viola, (30 years old, one immigrant parent)

Clearly, Viola's encounter with her aunt by marriage was a negative one, and even more interesting is that part of the blame goes to the son she brought to Italy from her home country. Viola seems to use them as an example that a majority of immigrants are delinquents, a position that is often reiterated by news accounts and media images of immigrants in Italy (Triandafyllidou 1999). An intriguing contrast emerges when one takes into account the different national origins of the immigrant family members- a British immigrant, from and EU member country, versus a South American aunt by marriage, more completely outside of European borders. This evokes a distinction between *intra- and extra-comunitari*. However, she still supports extending citizenship to the second generation, if only with increased conditions to supposedly ensure their good moral fiber.

Several other participants indicate that, while they may not have immigrants among family or within their circle of friends, there are occasions of regular contact.

Lorena gives a perfect example: every time she visits her mother, she interacts with a Chinese family that works in the nearby piazza. The family works at a stand in the permanent market, selling trinkets. Lorena has come to count them as acquaintances, although not yet friends, partially due to the language barrier - the parents do not speak fluent Italian. She also interacts with their 6-year-old son, who speaks Italian fluently and thus is better able to converse than his parents, and has come to regard him affectionately and take an interest in his scholastic achievements. Lorena's interaction with the Chinese family is an example of something that is not quite friendship, but is still a meaningful interaction that leads to greater awareness of citizenship issues. Lorena is aware that the little boy does not have citizenship and thinks it is unjust since he was born and raised in Italy:

It isn't fair that he's singled out because he's a child of immigrants, he goes to an Italian school, he was born here, so he should have citizenship. –  
Lorena (26 years old)

As seen in the examples above, a relationship emerged from the interview data linking contact to knowledge about and attitudes toward citizenship issues. Those participants who had positive, friendly contact with immigrants and children of immigrants were generally aware of the difficulties their friends faced without Italian citizenship. They also supported extending citizenship rights to the second generation. On the other hand, Viola's example shows that even negative contact does not necessarily turn people's support away from extending citizenship to children of immigrants.

## **7.2 Emerging Themes**

The previous section examined the factors tested in the survey data analysis. However, additional factors and themes emerged from the interview data. There are 3

major areas in which the interviews shed light on the citizenship debate: how Italians define citizenship, the idea of conditional citizenship for the second generation, and the significance of race in imagining the future of Italian society.

### 7.2.1 Definitions of Citizenship

As elaborated in section 4.1, there are four common dimensions of citizenship: legal status, rights, political and other forms of participation in society, and a sense of belonging (Bloemraad et al. 2008). Responses from the participants closely mirrored these dimensions, with elements of each present in their definitions, as discussed below.

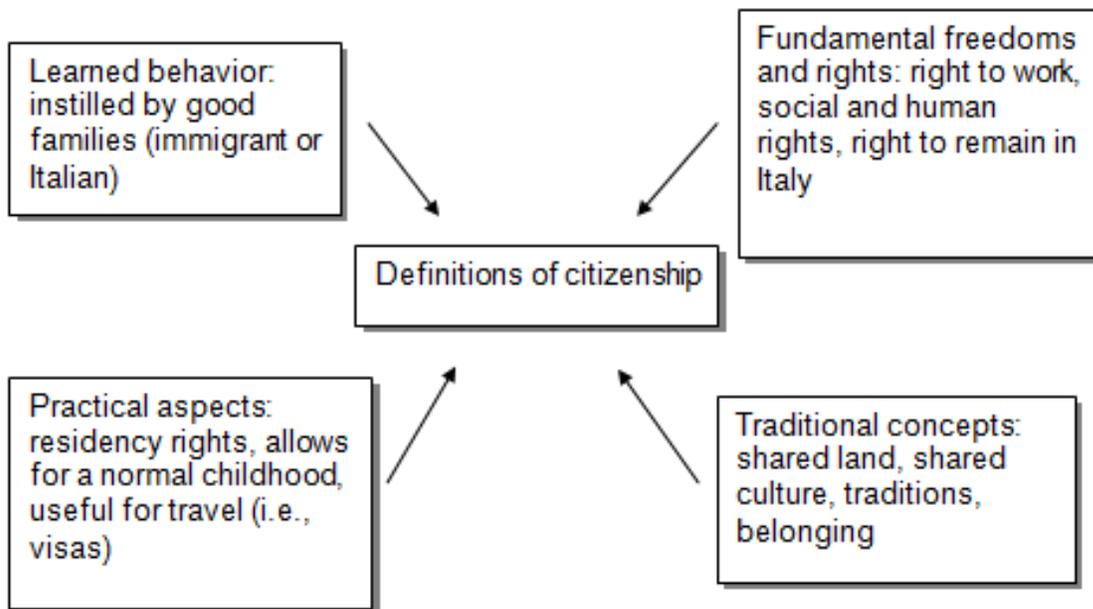


Figure 7-1 Four principal themes in participants' definitions of citizenship

Most respondents first defined citizenship as a practical necessity. This definition of citizenship highlights the bureaucratic need to get an accurate count of who is present in Italy, of conducting a census, of preventing voter fraud by defining societal membership, or of regulating travel. When giving their definitions, the respondents often

preceded the statement by noting that in an ideal world, citizenship and thus division of people would not be necessary:

Everyone should be a citizen of the world, as far as I'm concerned. These problems shouldn't exist. If they exist it is because of the organization of various societies, because otherwise there would be chaos. - Margherita (33 years old)

There is an apparent contradiction in many participants' definitions of citizenship.

Margherita demonstrated a reluctant acceptance of the necessity of citizenship, even as she felt that everyone should be free to move about as they please. Throughout the interviews, participants needed to clarify that, while they believed that citizenship divided people into groups (those who have it and those who do not) and was therefore wrong, it was also a necessary evil.

Respondents also defined citizenship along the dimension of belonging: they evoked images of a group of people bound together by territorial boundaries and shared ideologies and cultures. This is almost a textbook definition of citizenship, Enrico added an element of obedience to belonging when he stated:

Well, citizenship means belonging to a country, belonging as a nation but also as really respecting the country, the rules that there are in the country, the tradition that exists in the nation, and the freedoms or lack of freedoms that there may eventually be in the country. - Enrico (29 years old)

Enrico presents a static vision of citizenship and society, where belonging to a society means accepting the rules, without the hope of challenging them if they were found to be wrong.

While 10 out of the 14 participants stated that, in principle, they felt that people should be citizens of the world, only one respondent was ready to do away with the notion of citizenship altogether:

[Citizenship is] a sort of roof, together with other people, where we share aspects of normal life, ideological concepts, limited to the territory... it's not a such a good thing, we shouldn't be saying 'I am Italian' or 'I am French'. - Andrea (20 years old)

Andrea continued to forcefully argue for the abandonment of citizenship and traditions throughout the interview, reasoning that, if they caused conflict between people, then it would be better to leave such traditions behind. He was the only participant to adopt an unequivocal stance in regards to citizenship: he felt it was antiquated and led to conflict, and thus should be abolished. While many of the respondents also felt that citizenship could be divisive and therefore negatively impacted society, none called for a rethinking of the whole system.

Finally, there was one participant who defined citizenship as something that is learned and passed down through the generations, but as something only 'good immigrants' or Italians can provide:

But it also depends on the learning that they receive in the parental home. For example, the gypsies are nomads. And they are without a home, even though they now have public housing. And babies are born to parents who may steal... in any case, if these kids were sent to Italian foster homes or institutions they would have been brought up with Italian citizenship. - Simon (Italian with one foreign parent, 19 years old).

Simon implies that citizenship is something one learns from his or her parents. He is in favor of granting citizenship to children of immigrants, but only if they receive the right kind of civic education, which he states can definitely be provided by Italian families and institutions such as orphanages. He equates Gypsies with an example of bad civic education and, worse, teaching delinquency to their children, thus giving a poor example of citizenship. Italians, on the other hand, are capable of teaching good citizenship. Here, citizenship is a learned moral stance, and only some are capable of teaching it. Notice that Simon does neither mention nor address the fact that there are

Italian families that steal, or who may not be giving their children the right kind of civic education; rather, he engages the stereotype of Gypsies being criminally inclined.

### **7.2.2 Conditional Citizenship**

As seen in the quote from Simon, there is considerable complexity in the participants' attitudes toward granting citizenship to the second generation. The respondents, while favorable to granting citizenship, set forth varying types of conditions that need to be fulfilled before second-generation children of immigrants would be able to acquire citizenship. Simon cites the need to withhold citizenship from those who commit crimes, who come to sell drugs or simply do not have the intention to work. He says:

If people were to come here and work, and work hard to live here, then I think it is good to give them the right to have citizenship. But if a person comes here, doesn't do anything, deals drugs, and ruins the Italians people, no. Simon (Italian with one foreign parent, 19 years old).

Other respondents similarly linked the granting of citizenship to what might be termed their legality – whether or not they have followed the laws and expressed that society should “be careful who you give [citizenship] to,” in order to protect Italians from dangerous and potentially corrupting foreigners.

Respondents also indicated that citizenship for the second generation should be tied to their parents' legality, specifically linking the parents' work status as important in determining whether their children should have access to citizenship. Luca states

It is right that the parents should have a job. Because if they want to be a whole family in Italy without doing anything, it doesn't seem right. - Luca (20 years old).

Margherita explicitly draws a connection between parental work status and the children's access to citizenship when she says:

But there should be some guidelines, whereby someone who is born here, their parents work here, so they should have Italian citizenship. If two people come here, and one gives birth here... I don't know - Margherita (Italian, 33 years old)

The link between work and citizenship is made even clearer by Enrico (29 years old), who states that denying citizenship to second-generation children of immigrants (it is not right, because they work just like we do)'.

Participants recognized that, while they were calling for parents to be legally employed in order for the children to qualify for citizenship, finding legal employment in Italy is difficult, and even more so if one is an immigrant. Luca, who expects that the first generation be legally employed in order to grant citizenship to the second generation, recognizes that 'it is very unlikely that the parents will be legally employed, because here in Italy an immigrant who works legally is practically impossible to find. He goes on to discuss the presence of the informal labor market in the Italian economy and to rail against the exploitation of immigrants on behalf of big companies. Luca, like the other participants, does not try to reconcile the two opposing situations, accepting the fact that immigrants should have legal employment to gain citizenship but also thinking that it is very difficult to near impossible for an immigrant to find legal employment.

This is an example of multivocality, and should not be viewed as denoting people's conflicting viewpoints. Rather, the active interviewing method encourages multivocality because it represents the myriad ways in which people assign meaning to their worlds (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). For example, people may draw on the information they glean from the news to conclude that immigrants are more prone to delinquency (as crimes by immigrants are more heavily reported and emphasized), while at the same time drawing on friendships with the second generation to say that the immigrants they

know are “good people.” Holding seemingly conflicting views indicates that people change the perspective from which they construct meaning of a certain situation, accessing different stocks of knowledge.

### **7.2.3 Race and Citizenship**

The citizenship status of the second generation in Italy also implies changes in a presumed national identity (Joppke 2008). Participants first seemed unwilling to recognize that there is such a thing as an Italian national identity.

Pietro: Italy, from a racial point of view, is a contradictory country.

Andrea: I think there are already too many differences in Italy.

Luca: There are already internal differences among Italians. We’ve always been a country made up of regions, and each region feels Italian for their own reasons.

Andrea: We don’t really have a sense of nationhood... because who says ‘I belong to the Italian nation’? Or to belong to ‘the Italian people’... nobody says that. I mean, you only feel Italian when you are at the stadium watching the national team! - Pietro (18), Andrea (20), Luca (20)

Participants emphasized the importance of regional identity over a national one. Even allowing for great regional differences within Italians, the participants do allude to a vague sense of national identity in certain situations. The imagined Italian identity is predicated on a White, Christian identity (Andall 2002, Goldberg 2006), automatically excluding the darker-skinned Muslim or Hindu, for example. Participants in the study confirmed that this is still the case.

I think the average Italian person will never look at a black person and say ‘That’s an Italian’... even if that person is born here! Even if it is not an acquired nationality... It’s imagining a white Italian, Mediterranean or with Mediterranean features, not of color. - Giancarlo (19 years old)

Several studies (Ambrosini 2004; Andall 2002) have outlined the marginalization second generation experiences along the color line, and this position does not

acknowledge the racial diversity that has always been a part of Italy (Snowden 1971). Even though some hope that racial discrimination will lessen and disappear as time passes and generations of Italians and immigrants grow up together, the fact that a 19-year old believes that race still plays a major role in identifying who is an Italian citizen speaks to the importance that race will play as a factor in attitudes towards citizenship and belonging.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

There are several factors affecting attitudes towards citizenship that emerge from the interview data. The interviews offer an intriguing perspective on the degrees of support and the nuances that participants offer in their assessment of citizenship policies.

Where the survey data merely asks whether there is support or not, the interviews show that support is usually qualified. Thus, the participants talk about measures guarding against immigrant illegality and assuring that only hard-working, honest immigrants are allowed to have access to citizenship for their children.

As Italy's immigrant population continues to increase and the imagined Italian identity is put into question, and as children of immigrants reach maturity in greater and greater numbers, the challenges presented to contemporary citizenship policies increase (Polchi 2008). Italian participants in this study generally favor granting citizenship to second-generation youth. However, there are several conditions, especially a concern with immigrant legality and the work status of the first generation, that need to be fulfilled in order for the children to access citizenship. Further, the significance of race in citizenship presents the possibility that, even if granted citizenship, second-generation youth may continue to be excluded from the imagined Italian community.

## CHAPTER 8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Italy represents an intriguing case study when examining issues of second-generation children of immigrants and societal integration. As a relatively new country of migration, Italy mirrors some of its Southern European neighbors. Demographically, Italy has the second lowest birth rate in Europe, at 8 births per thousand and a net immigration rate of 2 migrants per thousand people (ISTAT 2010). Italy's total fertility rate is an alarming 1.32 children per woman, well below the replacement rate of 2.1. All of these practical considerations indicate that there is a very basic need for Italy to grow its population in order to fund the services it provides to its citizens. Pensions, health care, and other services must be sustained by a stable workforce, and the numbers show that there will not be enough native born Italians to do so. The increasing second generation in Italy, of children of immigrants socialized within Italian society and attending Italian schools, represents a population ready to be integrated in the Italian legal system. However, currently, the majority of children of immigrants are not Italian citizens.

Given the exponential increase of children of immigrants in Italian society, researching their citizenship status is a timely and important question to ask. As the reality of a growing second generation affects the Italian society in its earnest, their current legal marginalization will become a key political and social debate. This dissertation addresses one aspect of citizenship policy in contemporary Italy: the lack of access for native-born children of immigrants and the willingness of Italians to liberalize (or restrict) this policy. The issue of citizenship for children of immigrants in Italy is a relatively new area of research, and the impact of public opinion on citizenship policy

newer still. After presenting an overview of immigration in Italy, a history of immigrant and immigration policies as well as an overview of the research on citizenship and citizenship policy in Italy, this dissertation addresses the question of whether Italians are willing to extend citizenship to the second generation. Specifically, the following research question was asked: Do Italians support granting citizenship to second generation children of immigrants? Subsequently, what individual and macro-level factors influence attitudes towards immigrants and citizenship in Italy? Are there regional differences in attitudes? And lastly, how do Italians understand citizenship, and under what conditions are they willing to grant it to second generation youths?

I utilize a mixed method approach to answer the research questions. I conducted a multivariate analysis of a nationally representative dataset that asked respondents about their willingness to grant citizenship to children of immigrants or the lack thereof. I complemented the survey data analysis with group interviews of Italians, asking about their understanding of citizenship policy and whether they would be willing to grant more liberal access to children of immigrants.

The main finding from both the survey data and the group interviews was that most Italians favor liberalizing access to citizenship for children of immigrants born and raised in Italy. Support for citizenship changes if the children are born elsewhere, or are raised elsewhere, even if a majority of their time is spent in Italy. This implies that the political costs of extending citizenship to children of immigrants born in Italy are potentially low, as a majority of society favors liberalization. Looking to the future, it becomes increasingly clear that the Italian government will need to address the issue of a growing second generation marginalized by the current policy.

## **8.1 Theoretical Implications**

Citizenship policy is considered one of the major indicators of a country's liberal or restrictive tendencies in immigrant and immigration policy (Morje Howard 2009). The integration of the second generation is similarly viewed as an important step to assimilation (Gordon 1964). Factors affecting attitudes towards citizenship policy also draw from the work done on anti-immigrant sentiment. Thus, this inquiry into the factors that affect people's attitudes toward citizenship policy and children of immigrants in Italy contributes to several bodies of literature.

### **8.1.1 Determinants of Anti-Immigrant Sentiment**

The first area to which this dissertation offers a contribution is in the area of anti-immigrant sentiment in Italy. The quantitative and qualitative findings confirm the importance of perceived group threat as an influence on people's attitudes (Quillian 1995; McLaren 2003). The survey data measured respondents' perception of immigrant group size as a proxy for perceived group threat, which remained a statistically significant factor. As hypothesized, the larger the immigrant group in Italy is perceived to be, the less likely the respondent is to favor supporting citizenship.

Similarly, participants in the interviews confirmed the importance of perceived group threat as it relates to attitudes about citizenship. Participants stated their support for extending citizenship, but almost in the next breath began noting that some should not be eligible, and that those would be the "unworthy" crowds of delinquent immigrants. Adriana and Roberta's interview provided examples of their perception of group threat, as they described provincial towns overrun by teeming masses of drunk and threatening immigrants, recalling the images of a nation overflowing with boatloads of immigrants flooding Italian towns. This language is indicative of both the homogenization of

immigrant groups and the exaggeration of the actual threat posed by the same (Santa Ana 2002).

The research also provides a test of the contact hypothesis in the Italian context. The results from both the survey and interview data offer a glimpse into a distinction between family versus friend contact. In the first paired comparison of the survey data analysis, friendly contact was a statistically significant predictor of a respondent's opinion on citizenship policy. Family contact never attained statistical significance in the analyses. This suggests that contact theory (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998) may be even more context-specific than previously thought. For example, one can hypothesize that if Italians have immigrant family members, the issue of citizenship may not be relevant in their daily lives, because it is granted to the immigrant through marriage to an Italian citizen. In this case, the issue of citizenship may not ever be a contested one. Friendly contact (which may be a personal friend or even a classmate of one's child), on the other hand, was a significant predictor across the main model. This suggests that, perhaps, there is something in the level of acquaintance that allows Italians to better understand the complications of citizenship policy.

The interview data findings confirm the survey data results, suggesting that, perhaps, family contact does not always have an impact on people's attitudes towards citizenship. Where one participant had positive family contact and another had a negative experience, both gave similar evaluations of citizenship policy reform. Both participants felt that citizenship should be made more accessible to children of immigrants but with limitations addressing legality and occupational status in place. Further, although family contact never reached statistical significance, even friendly

contact fails to reach significance in the remaining paired comparisons. What does this mean? Theoretically, friendly contact should be significant in swaying people to the more inclusive and liberal position on citizenship reform (Mantovani and Martini 2008; McLaren 2003; Pettigrew 1998; Volpato and Manganelli Rattazzi 2000). However, it does not bear out in all of the paired comparisons. This suggests that, perhaps, those who answer “don’t know”, as opposed to either supporting or denying extending citizenship to the second generation, experience friendly contact in a different way or under different circumstances than those who favor reform or from those who favor restrictive citizenship.

The macro-level variables were measured at a regional level to account for sub-national differences in their impact, given Italy’s strong regional economies and the differential impact of immigration in each region. The regional-level variables behaved in the expected manner, although GDP per capita was an exception. Based on previous research, I hypothesized that a higher GDP would result in increased support for citizenship for children of immigrants. This would indicate that, as resources were less scarce, the native-born population would be more likely to extend access to the same resources. However, the measure showed an inverse relationship, where an increase in GDP corresponded to a lower likelihood that Italians would favor extending citizenship to children of immigrants. This, perhaps, indicates an egoistic effect: as the wealth increases, Italians are more likely to want to restrict access to it.

On the other hand, the survey showed that, as support for far-right parties increased regionally, support for extending citizenship to the second generation decreased. This is consistent with the literature examining the impact of far-right wing

(Fetzer 2000b, Semyonov et. al. 2006), which finds that far-right wing parties tend to also be anti-immigrant. It is also worthwhile to distinguish between the anti-immigrant rhetoric of different far right parties- studies have found that articulations of cultural prejudice are more supported by the public than outright racism (Wilkes et. al. 2007).

By including a variable for actual regional percentage of immigrant residents, I measure the impact of realistic group threat (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010). This measure differs from the individual-level variable, which asked about perceived, rather than actual, group sizes, and thus measured perceived group threat. By taking into account the empirical reality through the measure of immigrant residents, I address the impact of realistic group threat on Italians' attitudes. In accordance with other studies on the matter (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, Quillian 1995), the present analysis found that, as the percentage of immigrant residents increases, support for extending citizenship to the second generation decreases.

### **8.1.2 Citizenship Policy Reform**

Another area this dissertation contributes to is citizenship policy and the integration of second generation youth. A clear consequence of an exclusionary citizenship regime is downward assimilation or ethnic niches (Portes and Zhou 1993). If second generation youths, born in Italy and raised in Italian society and schools, are not given the opportunity to participate as full members of society, they begin to fulfill some of the typology of vulnerable groups according to Portes and Zhou (1993). The lack of citizenship can be enough to preclude assimilation, or integration, into society on an equal level. The resources available to a citizen versus a noncitizen, such as freedom of movement and travel, or freedom from dealing with permit renewals, preclude an equal starting point, and thus equal integration, for members of each group.

The findings from group interviews hint to the myriad definitions of citizenship and the emergence of conditional citizenship. This concept describes the attitudes of most individuals participating in the interviews- an outlook that would favor liberalizing citizenship rules, but that, at the same time, places restrictions on whom should be granted access. For example, although most of the sample favored liberalizing citizenship for children of immigrants, several also claimed that the children should be born to parents who are legally resident, or that the opportunity to obtain citizenship should be linked to a steady work history. This attitude mirrors the political reforms that have taken place in Western Europe over the last decade, discussed in detail in the next section. This research has contributed to addressing a gap in current research at the nexus of citizenship policy, public opinion and second-generation immigrants.

## **8.2 Policy Implications**

The finding that many Italians favor liberalizing reform has several policy implications. First, people's support for extending citizenship to children of immigrants reduces the political costs of pushing for reform by any of the political parties in power. Although some parties, especially led by the *Lega Nord*, might co-opt the proposals and institute restrictive turns, public opinion support for citizenship reform could provide enough momentum for a concrete bill.

Mark Morje Howard conducted an important comparative study of citizenship regimes across nations (2009), and found the interplay between immigration rhetoric and political parties to be very important in predicting whether citizenship policy will be reformed in a liberal direction or not. Morje Howard places Italy among the more restrictive regimes, citing the most recent citizenship law in 1992, which diminished access to Italian citizenship, save by *jus sanguinis*. He writes that the presence of a

strong far-right party prevents the passing of liberalizing reform, and Italy's *Lega Nord* and *Alleanza Nazionale* are good examples of such parties. However, the AN party's shift to championing the right to citizenship of the second generation has the potential to change the dynamics in Italy's present administration, even as Berlusconi's party has essentially stalled any attempt at reform (Polchi 2008).

However, at the writing of this research, there is indication that the current Berlusconi administration is under stress, despite having withstood a no-confidence vote. Should the administration fall and a new coalition take its place, there is potential for citizenship reform to be politicized once again as a hot-button issue. A mobilization of the Lega Nord on this issue, for example, may polarize the respondents who answered 'Don't Know' (Morje Howard 2009), driving some to favor restrictive reforms. The passing of the security bill in 2009, which restricts access to citizenship by marriage, indicates that there is increasing preoccupation with who is acquiring citizenship and through what means, indicating that political mobilization is possible in the not-so-distant future.

The concern with legality and residency status of immigrant parents emerging from the group interviews is represented in several of the proposals introduced in the Italian parliament. It is likely that any reform in Italy will include a residency requirement on the part of the immigrant parents, mirroring reforms in other European countries. Reforms in Germany in 2000, Ireland in 2004, and Greece in 2010 have all introduced measures that grant citizenship to the second generation, provisional on the sustained, legal residency status of the immigrant parents, among other things (Vink and deGroot 2010). The second generation, then, would have to rely on their parents' residency status to

even be considered for citizenship. This would be a combination of *jus domicili* and *jus soli*, where birth on the territory (as well as a number of years of legal residency) are required. At the same time, if such a reform were to pass, it is likely that there will also be some sort of amnesty or regularization of the children of immigrants who already reside in Italy, given the trend of fairly regular amnesty waves in Italian politics (see discussion in section 2.3.8).

### 8.3 Future Research

The findings of this research point to several avenues for future research. As mentioned above, a pressing issue will be how to address the fates of children who migrate with their parents to Italy, as opposed to being born there. There seems to be a conceptual leap for respondents, because, although they can be very supportive of citizenship reform for children born in Italy, this goodwill often fades if the child was not born in Italy. And, further, the institution of even an exclusive *jus soli* policy would not resolve the citizenship status of the 1.5 generation (Rumbaut 2004). This issue exists in all immigrant destination countries, something that even the United States is dealing with currently. One possible approach is exemplified by citizenship policy reform in other European countries (e.g., Greece, see Christopolous 2010), where a minimum residency period before parents can apply for citizenship for children not born on the country's soil was introduced.

Another area meriting more inquiry is the wishes of children of immigrants themselves. As some groups organize for increasing access to citizenship, anecdotal evidence reveals that there is not a single, unified voice on the subject. Some children of immigrants do not aspire to become Italian citizens. Whether out of rebellion or out of careful consideration, belonging to the Italian state is not always important to all children

of immigrants. The role of discrimination and of “second generation attitude” (Andall 2002) seem to be potential factors impacting their positions, and thus their reaction to citizenship policy reform.

And, finally, it would be intriguing to discern the difference of effects between family and friendly contact. Why did not having an immigrant family member significantly impact respondent’s attitudes towards citizenship? Perhaps there is something peculiar to the family relationship that precludes any effect on attitudes towards immigrant policies. Or, perhaps, it is the topic of citizenship which is not affected by having an immigrant family member, as citizenship would almost always be gained easily once an immigrant marries an Italian citizen or is adopted by one. Still, there is a story to be uncovered there.

This dissertation is a first step in addressing the gap of research on the issue of citizenship for children of immigrants born in Italy. The presence of the second generation is newly visible, as are the issues surrounding their integration into Italian society. By examining the willingness of Italians to extend citizenship to children of immigrants born in Italy, I aim to better understand the potential for citizenship policy reform and the direction which this reform might take. This research has shown that a majority of Italians support extending citizenship to children of immigrants born in Italy, even as they advocate for some restrictions to be placed in any reform attempt, instead of allowing unfettered access. The trends across Europe show a convergence of citizenship policy reforms, centering on allowing children of immigrants born within the borders of a particular nation access to citizenship conditional on parental residency requirements (Vink and deGroot 2010). This convergence hints that, perhaps, Italian

citizenship reform is not too far off in the future, and that any reform is likely to liberalize access from its currently restrictive character (Morje Howard 2009). Further, while obtaining citizenship may not be a sufficient condition of integration for the second generation, it is a necessary one. An equal legal status, with all of the freedoms and obligations that follow, is the basis for a path to integration for Italy's immigrant population and their children.

APPENDIX  
INSTRUMENT FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Interview guide for semi-structured interviews and focus groups

**Italy, immigration, and citizenship**

The questions below are guiding questions that will influence the interviews. As the interviews/focus groups are semi-structured, I will touch on all of the topics but let the conversations flow as much as possible.

**Topic: Background**

Can you give me a brief personal history? Specifically, please talk about where you born and where you grew up.

Did you have any classmates that were immigrants?

**Topic: Citizenship**

What do you think of when I say citizenship?

How much does the issue of citizenship play a part in your life? Would you say it affects your life daily? Not at all?

Are you aware of the conditions that one needs to fulfill to attain Italian citizenship? If so, how did you come to know about them? If not, does it concern you? Explain.

Do you feel that the laws should be changed? If so, what would the new criteria be? Who should be eligible and why? If not, why not?

Do you think children of immigrants born in Italy should have the right to citizenship? Why or why not?

Do you feel that the issue of racism and discrimination plays a part in the debate about citizenship policy? Please explain your answer.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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