1October 2022

Improvements in use of administrative
data for migration statistics

NEW CITIZENS IN ITALY: NUMBERS, CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIORS

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Background

- In Italy. during the last decade. the public discussion about migration has been mainly focused on the emergency of new arrivals by the sea.

- Over the years. however. the population of foreign origin who live permanently in Italy has grown considerably. Population with a migratory background has become a stable part of the Italian society. As a matter of fact. many people with a foreign origin have become Italians. especially the ones who have been residing in the country for a long time.

- Despite their important role both from social. economic and demographic prospective. few and partial information were available about the "new Italians".

- In 2021. the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat). by integrating different data sources. made available new data about this target-population. These new information allow us: 1) to quantify Italian residents who have acquired the Italian citizenship at one specific point in time. 2) to study their main socio-demographic characteristics. 3) to follow some of their behaviours over a period of time.

The research project

o Two research projects developed in Istat:

a) "Reception, integration and citizenship: new approaches for the analysis of migration paths and models"

b) "A measure of Italian emigration through integration and analysis of administrative data"

o Cooperation with the University of Naples Federico II and other research institutes and universities

Data and methods

1. The estimation procedure involves the integrated use of the different data sources

2. Product: a single longitudinal archive consisting of individual records.

3. Starting from the stock 2011 individual census data, the first step consists in checking and merging the data coming from Ministry of Interior (necessary to obtain detailed information on the type of acquisition) with the acquisitions identified by a longitudinal analysis of the individual variable "citizenship" in the population register. The database at the end of this step, therefore, consists of all the individuals who have acquired the citizenship included those who are not resident anymore.

4. In a second step, in order to estimate the number of the new Italian citizens (stock), the data on the acquisitions of citizenship were integrated with that from the new micro-demographic accounting information system. The integration makes it possible to identify the foreign resident population at birth and to observe whether or not these individuals have acquired citizenship over time, have died, emigrated abroad or have moved on the Italian territory.

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New citizens by first 20 previous citizenships and some characteristics

Former country of citizenship	V.a. (thousands)	% by citizenship	Acquisit. x 100 foreig.	% acquis. < 2012	% by marriage	% born in Italy
Albania	215,6	14.2	50.1	16.0	12.4	29.9
Marocco	199,4	13.1	47.6	19.7	15.7	37.2
Romania	92,4	6.1	7.9	34.0	31.5	14.9
Brazil	58,7	3.9	116.0	50.0	25.1	1.7
India	44,4	2.9	28.5	17.9	8.8	30.4
Argentina	39,1	2.6	391.8	85.8	20.7	1.2
Perù	37,5	2.5	39.4	31.1	24.3	18.6
Tunisia	37,1	2.4	38.4	31.2	17.3	39.5
France	33,3	2.2	105.5	97.3	34.9	2.4
North Macedonia	28,9	1.9	49.2	10.3	9.2	34.1
Ukraine	28,6	1.9	12.1	47.5	42.5	5.5
Germany	27,6	1.8	74.0	96.5	39.8	4.6
Russia (Fed.)	27,3	1.8	66.7	66.2	44.8	2.1
Egypt	27,1	1.8	20.3	39.5	21.2	36.2
Senegal	26,4	1.7	24.3	8.5	10.6	32.7
Moldova	25,5	1.7	18.1	19.4	31.6	13.1
Pakistan	25,5	1.7	20.7	5.4	7.7	33.2
Poland	24,2	1.6	26.7	67.0	53.7	8.9
Ecuador	23,2	1.5	30.5	21.9	24.6	19.6
Philippines	21,1	1.4	12.7	29.2	20.7	46.5
Others	474,1	31.3	31.0	56.5	29.9	18.1
TOTAL	1,516,6	100.0	29.1	40.0	23.9	22.1

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Demographic structure of foreigners, new citizens and Italians from birth. Italy, beginning 2020
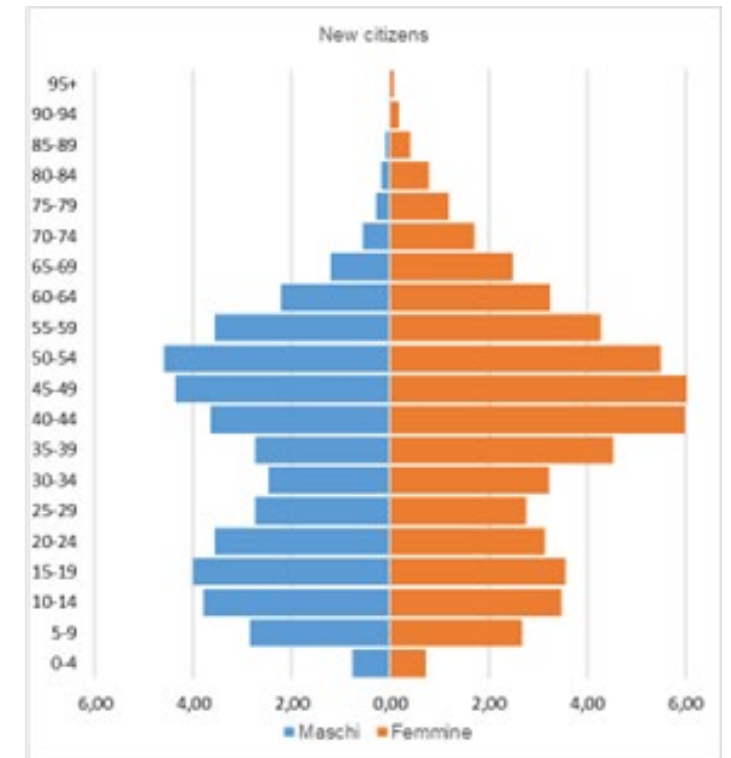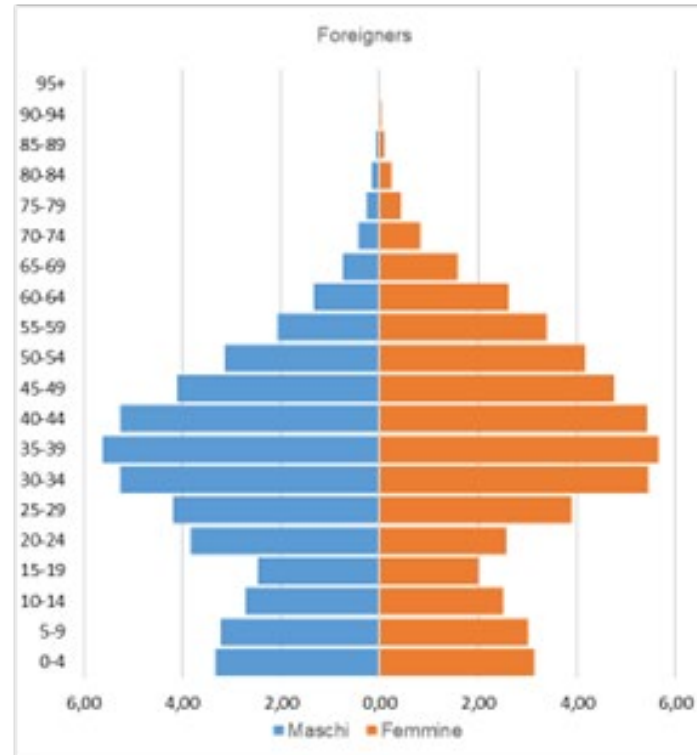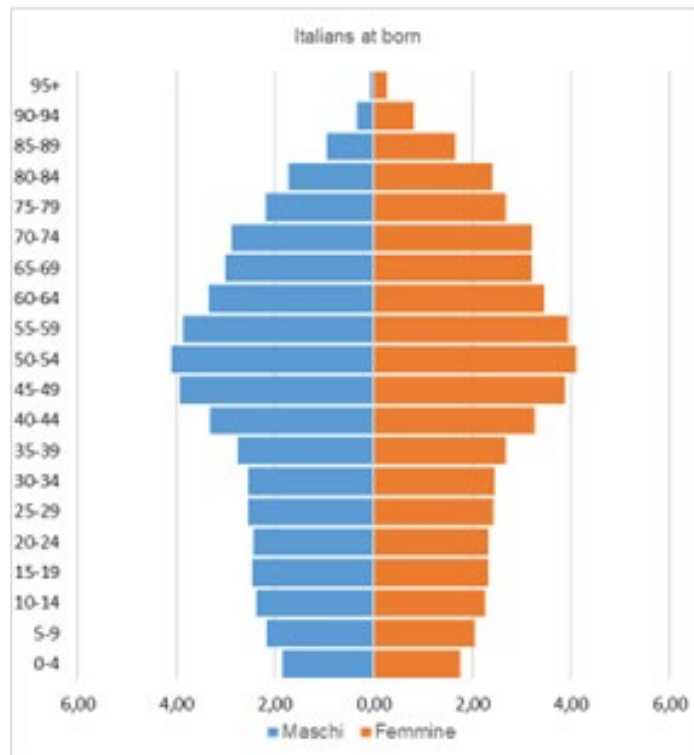
Results of the logistic regression model on the probability to become Italian citizen for the cohort of foreigners over 14 years who entered Italy in 2002 (point estimation)

(A) ALL VARIABLES ARE SIGNIFICANT (LIMIT: 5%).
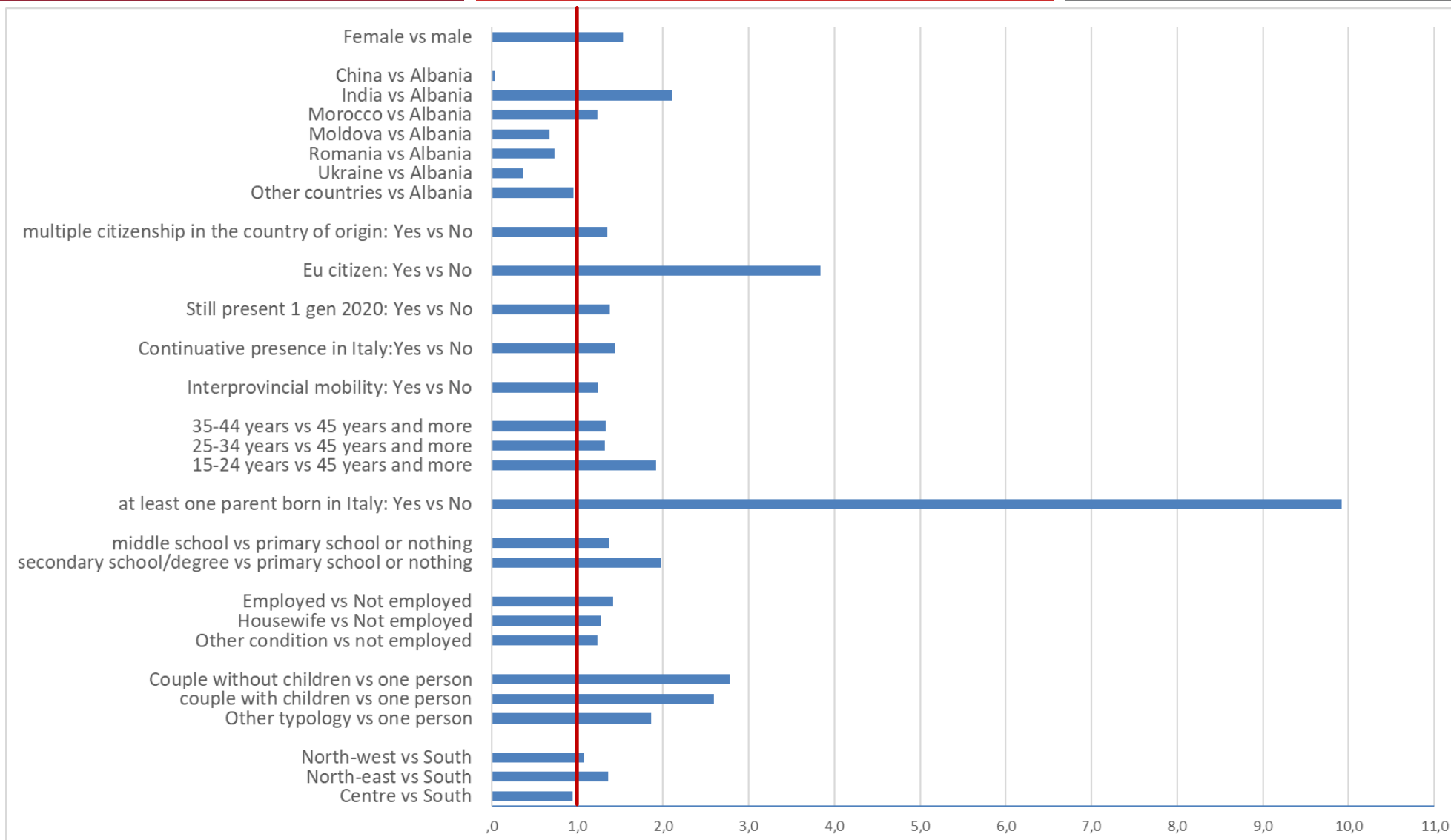
Results of the logistic regression model on the probability to emigrate abroad between 2012 and 2019 for non-Eu born foreign adult residents at the 2011 Census (point estimation)

(a) All variables are significant (limit: 5%).

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Discussione points

o Integrated and longitudinal database allows more reliable and comprehensive analysis for monitoring the demographic and social dynamics regarding the population with a foreign background. The case of "new Italian citizens" is emblematic and it shows how the integration of data coming from administrative sources is crucial to provide new information about the increasing complexity of migration phenomenon and integration process of foreign citizens.

o From a statistical point of view, should be stressed the importance of distinguishing the new citizens from the nationals at birth to monitor the integration processes of those who have acquired the citizenship and have a realistic picture of the population and its dynamics.

o If the integration process is monitored only for people with foreign citizenship, the resulting picture may be misleading. The example of international emigration from Italy clearly points out the importance of considering the demographic dynamics of the "new Italians".

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Discussione points

o The analysis points out how the acquisition of citizenship in the European context is changing its meaning and it could be useful a discussion about the use of "acquisition of citizenship" as an indicator of definitive settlement in a specific country.

o Some extremely efficient indicators in the past could have partially lost their explanatory capacity or - in any case - have partly changed their meaning.

o In general, the research projects underlines the importance to exploit administrative data and also the need to strengthen the cooperation between the National Statistical Institute, other administrative bodies and the universities in order to improve the availability and the quality of data.

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Thank you!

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