

Master in Advanced European and International Studies

European Policy and Governance – Trilingual Studies

The member states' role to promote gender equality for immigrants in the European Union: more relevant than European policy? The case of Italy and Germany.

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2022

To mom and dad, my grandparents, and friends. For being by my side unconditionally, with the most love and trust I could ever ask for.

To Susann, for being a great support in this process, pushing me to always give my best, and being an invaluable guide throughout this year.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

Immigration and gender equality are both hot topics in the current academia and policy-making fields. With different political ideologies fighting over different measures and approaches to them, it has been forgotten to a certain extent that they are basic human rights that should be promoted disregarding who is in power. The European Union, as a democratic entity that believes in the rights of migrants and in the equality of men and women, has developed certain directives and policies to promote these values amongst the different member states that are part of it.

These policies also recognise that gender inequality is a more present reality within immigration sectors of the population that arrive at the different European countries, and that this gender-based difference needs to be tackled as it is a multilayered issue.

So the question is, why are there differences in gender equality in the different EU member states, despite the EU directives and regulations that are meant to be applied and become effective in all member states equally? In this research project, a hypothesis has been developed that approaches this topic from a point of view that has been overseen for decades, in order to provide a new perspective in which the gender gap between male and female immigrants could be reduced.

The main hypothesis is, therefore, the following one: even if the European Union has put into practice directives and legislation to promote gender equality amongst immigrants, the legislative power of the member states is so great in applying these directives that the outcomes in gender equality vary from one country to another.

This idea comes from the apparent differences in integration among immigrant women depending on their country of residence and the fact that the national level of the territory they reside in is a much more determining factor in their wellbeing than that of the European level.

The relevance of this topic is ever-growing, as the immigration flow within the European Union and how it is to be tackled is a current discussion, and debate on how the member states should cope with it represents the day to day in European dialogues, and the highest rank priority in their policies. Due to this trendy issue, it is vital to approach it from the many variables that come hand in hand with it, such as gender equality. This research study is therefore also aimed at creating an alert that will call for further analysis and for new policy measures in the future.

In the existing literature, there are barely any studies that analyze, first of all, the difference in gender equality for immigrants in comparison to that of the population born within the country. And there are even fewer researchers that have focused on comparing countries within the European Union, countries that should be more homogeneous in the data portraying gender equality, especially if considering that both Italy and Germany have been founding members of the EU. Also, the correlation between the examination of the legislation at the European and national level gains more worth if analysing the existing data, in order to be able to establish some cause and effect logic.

Choosing to compare two countries such as Italy and Germany was also an instrument to provide for clearer differences in the expected outcomes of this analysis. By taking them as a case study, it is the intention of the author to make a contrast between two countries that traditionally have different patterns of immigration coming from different parts in the world in very different conditions. But the reasons behind this choice go even further: they are countries that have different cultures, political structures, and different economies. This constellation of factors certainly difficults a systematization and a pattern-establishing routine when it comes to determining why the national sovereignty “filter” makes a difference in implementing European directives: they may not have the same resources or infrastructure to carry them out, the gender equality gap may already be noticeable enough also for native born population. But it is not the aim of this study to establish an equation that proves this, but rather analyse the different aspects of gender

equality for immigrants within the country, and how successfully or unsuccessfully governments try to go along European guidelines. It is more of a basis, a call for further research and for policy makers, to realise that there is layers of society that suffer the most and that this needs to be addressed in a systematic, empiric manner.

To prove or dismantle the hypothesis, first a general approach to what gender and gender equality need to be provided. It is the opinion of this author that no matter the biological traits of each gender, the societal construction around it (assigned roles to men and women, differences in their rights or treatment) is a consequence of centuries of cultural, religious, economic, political... suppression of women. Therefore, gender equality is nowadays a goal to achieve in most democratic and forward-thinking countries, although it is so systematically rooted in our societies that is not changeable from one decade to the other, but rather from generation to generation.

An overview of the evolution of migration and of the policies developed by the European Union and by Germany and Italy independently will be provided in order to understand the differences between both of them. Then, an analysis of the data, the more empirical part of this research, will take place.

The criteria used to analyse the level of gender equality of immigrants residing in Germany and Italy is that provided for the Gender Equality Index, in which three big areas of relevance are identified: Health, Empowerment, and Labour Market. They will be taken as a basis to then analyze the data portrayed by the European Institute for Gender Equality, one of the few sources that have a gender-based immigration data basis. There is expected a lack of data on the field of Health, not because it is not published by the institutions that collect it (such as the OECD), but because this data is generally not collected at all: gender is not viewed as an aggravating factor for immigrants, refugees or asylum seekers in a methodological way.

The aim of this data analysis is to make a correlation between the different actions and legislation created by Germany and Italy, inside the framework of the EU legislation, and the differences in outcomes in indicators for gender equality for immigrants. Even if it cannot be denied that some basic differences in wealth or culture between both countries also have an effect on the outcome, it is expected that these differences will be more clearly determined by the political and legislative measures of each member state.

In conclusion, this research wants to add value to the gender dimension in immigrants but, most of all, to raise awareness of the need for more integrated measures within the European Union, in order to ensure that the human rights standards are the same throughout its territories without letting other factors condition it.

2. WHAT IS GENDER EQUALITY? HOW CAN IT BE MEASURED?

2.1. Definition of Gender Equality.

Gender equality is a term that has been only recently introduced to debates in many scientific fields. The reason behind this is that the term “gender” itself was only coined in the United States in the 1970s as a substitute for “sex”, the one that was used until that moment. It allows for the physical attributes to be dismissed from a topic that is much more relevant for sociological studies, as it is rooted in characteristics that are not given by birth, but rather acquired through education and the society in which the individual grows (Rolleri, 2013).

There are three main theories that, according to Rolleri (2013) aim to explain how the construction of gender as a set of attributes took place, in a way that is unrelated to biological features but rather linked to identity. The first one is the *Evolutionary theory*, which is strongly based on the reproductive patterns of male and female individuals. In this case, throughout history women have

tended to place their maternity responsibility above a working life, while men would be more successful in the reproductive chain if they pursued mating practices with various sexual partners. It also takes into account the physical and hormonal aspects of female and male bodies that cause differences in character and attributes. This has led, according to this theory, to the current social practices in which women are regarded as the ones that should stay home and pursue childcare, while men seem to be able to partially evade that responsibility and work. The *Social role theory*, on the other hand, is perhaps less understanding of a reality in which gender is being acknowledged as more and more fluid, as it states that there is only a male and a female gender and that they have fixed attributes to each one that can not be interchanged. Last but not least, *Social constructivism*, the theory that this author considers being best able to describe patterns of gender practices and ultimately the causes for gender inequality, gender is an idea that is built through experiences and interactions with other individuals and within society. That means that human beings are not born with it, so there is no natural explanation for the roles and characteristics that male and female individuals are supposed to follow. This theory is also commonly accepted amongst many relevant international organizations such as the United Nations, NGOs, and the US government...

These very different theories about gender prove that it is an ongoing debate for which experts struggle to find the one and only truth, and it can pose problems in the policy-making process if gender is disregarded as a biological trait because of the possibility of changing those social mechanisms that generate gender inequality can be regarded as unuseful or unnatural. Nevertheless, and as stated above, in this research study the author considers gender to be an accumulation of social, cultural, political, economic and religious practices that have resulted in the idea that male and female individuals have been assigned certain roles within society. It is understandable that some gender traits are rooted in biological traits but, with societal evolution in traditional standards, it is seen that gender is not always biologically justified, in the case of transgender people that do not identify themselves with the body they were born with. Everything that accumulated around these biological

characteristics, like the role of each gender within society, their character and personalities, their capabilities... have been the result of centuries of a patriarchic system in which the roles were fixed and enhanced by religious arguments, cultural traditions, and applied to other spheres like economy or politics.

It is directly connected with the concept of *Gender equality*, defined by Roller (2012: 4) in the following way:

“Gender equality is a social condition whereby women and men share equal rights and a balance of power, status, opportunities, and rewards. Gender equality can be broadly operationalized by men and women having 1) equitable access and use of resources, 2) equitable participation in relationships, the household, the community, and political arenas, and 3) safety or freedom from violence”.

This definition, which is very straightforward in what gender equality entails as a reality, is fairly exempt from idealism and succeeds in identifying the three key aspects in which gender equality can be promoted and analyzed.

Before getting to explain what those indicating factors of gender equality are, it is also important to explain what *Gender inequality* is, the counterpart of the above-defined concept and, unfortunately, a reality that still exists in our days: proof of it are societies that do not grant or violate women’s rights or daily scenarios where the woman is seen, for example, as a man’s property (microsexism), and many more. Gender inequality is nothing else than a pattern of practices or beliefs that support the idea that both genders are capable of performing a role in society that they were assigned by genetics or biological traits. That means believing that women are the ones responsible for nurturing and taking care of children, while men should provide money to maintain them. It also presupposes, for example, that men are by nature stronger, more capable leader figures, while women can often fall into the trap of emotions and sentimentalism. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines it in the following words:

“Legal, social and cultural situation in which sex and/or gender determine different rights and dignity for women and men, which are reflected in their unequal access to or enjoyment of rights, as well as the assumption of stereotyped social and cultural roles. (...) These affect their status in all areas of life in society, whether public or private, in the family or the labour market, in economic or political life, in power and decision-making, as well as in social gender relations. In virtually all societies, women are in an inferior position to men.”

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), gives another definition of gender that is complementary to the above, as both together include, in the opinion of this author, the key points that need to be understood regarding the notion of gender equality or inequality:

“Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to people based on their assigned sex. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women, men or other gender groups, but to the relationship between them. Although notions of gender are deeply rooted in every culture, they are also changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures” (IOM, 2015).

That means that this set of prejudices or ideas about a substantial difference between men and women affects the treatment and position that they hold in real life. But it is also important to remember that it affects the relationship between both genders, and that is not exclusive to women. Gender inequalities are something that, if not condemned in certain countries of the world, like in Yemen (where women need the approval of their male guardian to marry or have access to health care, for example), is constantly on the agenda of the European Union guidelines and is aimed to, at least, be reduced in frequency and severity.

All in all, it is undeniable that gender inequality occurs in many different spheres, all of which should be taken into account in order to understand the degree of equality or inequality: as depicted in the following subchapter, the three great fields of health, empowerment and labour market. These are the clearest conditions in which the inequality can be assessed as they are directly

linked to the societal differences between men and women, and can also be quantitatively analysed.

2.2. Measurement of Gender Equality.

Measuring something as simple as the concept of gender equality is, in no way, an easy task. It is a term coined to depict a sociological phenomenon, and it is no wonder that there has been debate as to how it can be measured in a quantitative way, with data that can be obtained to depict the real image of this issue. The Human Development Report Office, for example, releases on a yearly basis the indicators that can be used to measure gender equality, like the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). The latter is perhaps less broad and inclusive to the reality, as it shows the chances that women have to be promoted to positions of power, and that is very specific and not that helpful for this research. The former, nonetheless, measures the achievements made by countries in eliminating the differences between men and women.

For this research, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) is going to be the basis for an empirical study of the gender inequalities among immigrants that reside in Italy and Germany. It is a measurement method that, published since 2013, aims at measuring the level of social equality or inequality within the European Union and its member states. Developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality, its goal is to provide an empirical background for more gender equal policy making within the EU. ¹It is now the moment to explain how this index can be of help towards measuring this.

In this index, the first layer that is key to determining which factors are useful to show the most exact results are three main dimensions from which factors will be drawn: **Health, Empowerment** and **Labor market**.

- **Health:** two factors: **maternal mortality ratio** and **adolescent birth rate**.

¹ The Gender Equality Index can be found online, in:
<https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-index-2021-report>

The link between gender and health is of vital importance, as gender in many cases determines the needs that individuals have related to the healthcare system, especially in critical situations such as sanitary emergencies. It is not rare to find countries in which women and girls do not have power of decisions over their bodies, and they sometimes have to undergo unintended pregnancies (also in cases of rape), Sexual Transmitted Diseases, cervical cancer... All of these are aggravated when the access to the health care system (like the example of Yemen above) is combined with the lack of health education regarding, for example, contraception. But this is not the only sphere: also countries or territories with strong links to religion may regard certain practices, like the use of contraceptives, as something to be avoided, leaving the women with very little options. In this case, if the health education level of the women is low, or the options regarding contraception methods are restricted or not easily accessible, the adolescent birth rate shows a higher level than that of countries that promote awareness and facilitate the above mentioned elements for women.

In regards to maternal mortality ratio, infrastructure dedicated to women when giving birth is key but also dependent, for example, on the economic means of the country they reside in. Also, the access to medicines and medical care, and the attention given to those women before, during and after the pregnancy is involved.

- **Empowerment:** in this case, the **female and male population with at least secondary education** and **female and male shares of parliamentary seats** are analyzed.

The level to which female and male individuals have equal rights and opportunities to access secondary education (let alone university studies) is something that depicts perfectly the role that gender plays in society. Even if by itself is very representative of the chances that women and girls get, it becomes much more meaningful when linked to labour force statistics, as it can be analyzed whether those women that have

completed their education have obtained the same kinds of job positions as the men that have done the same (in fact, the European Commission estimates that more women graduate from a college education than men in Europe).

Also, analyzing the shares of parliamentary seats shows whether women have the same chances as men to achieve positions of power within the governmental institutions, and the level to which they are politically represented and have a voice in the policies and paths followed by that government.

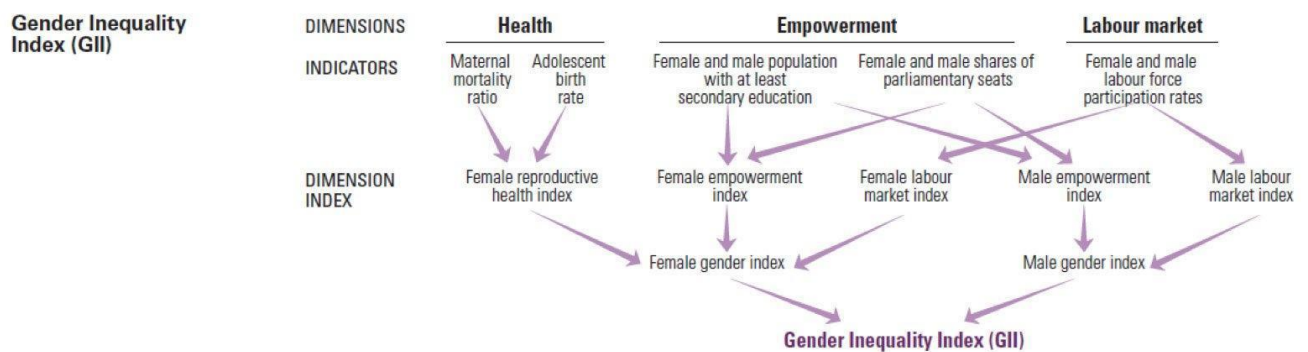
- **Labour market: female and male labour force participation rates.** This is identified as the third domain in which gender inequalities between men and women can be observed, and is also interconnected with the two previous criteria mentioned above. The European Commission estimates that there is an unemployment gap of 11,3%, that is, the number of women in the active labour market is 11,3% lower than the number of men in the same conditions. This is caused to a great extent by the private responsibilities that women carry (childcare, care of the elderly, etc). Also, there is a lack of data on the informal participation of women that dedicate themselves to childcare, among others, such as illegal working contracts that are not reflected in the statistics.

Another reality of this domain is that there is a clear gender pay gap, and according to the European Commission, within Europe, a stagnant period has been maintained in which this pay gap represents 14,1%. This means that women earn, on average, 14,1% less than men for the same job or position and that many women work in low-paid sectors.

Regarding work-life balance, the *EU's Directive on work-life balance for working parents and carers* provides for a framework in which both female and male parents share the same responsibilities and have the same legal provisions when it comes to domestic care, childcare and care

of the elderly, life family members. This project, nonetheless, has not still been able to reduce the gender gap in salary, or women's representation in positions of power: in 2018, less than 7% of the board chairs and CEOs were women (European Commission, 2019: 4), and they were usually part of the health, education and social care sectors, with lower pay than engineering, science and others. This sphere is further conditioned by the population with a migration background, as gender roles may be different, in some cases stronger, and therefore be also present in the countries of arrival of, in this case, an European Union that is openly working towards deeper gender equality.

All of these factors are interconnected and can produce an accurate image of the level of gender equality in a country, as seen in the following chart:



(United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Reports)

This illustrates the complexity of the measurement of this index, but also the close relationship between several aspects of society that can result in different outcomes for the equality of men and women.

For this research study, and given the limitations in obtaining data on this topic, the Gender Equality Index elaborated by the European Institute for Gender Equality will be used. It is an index that rates from 1 to 100 several aspects of the above mentioned criteria, and those are:

- In the field of health:
 - Self perceived health, good or very good.
 - Population who don't smoke.
 - Population not involved in harmful drinking.
 - Population doing physical activities.
 - Population consuming fruit and vegetables.
 - Population with unmet needs for medical examination.
 - Population with unmet needs for dental examination.

- In the field of work-life balance and education:
 - Graduates of tertiary education.
 - People participating in formal or non-formal education.
 - People caring for and educating their children or grandchildren, elderly or people with disabilities, every day.
 - People doing cooking and/or household, every day.
 - Workers doing sporting, cultural or leisure activities outside of their home, at least daily or several times a week.
 - Workers involved in voluntary or charitable activities, at least once a month.

- In the field of economic situation:
 - Mean monthly earnings (expressed in euros).
 - Mean equivalised net income (expressed in euros).
 - Percentage of people at risk of poverty.

Both data will be analyzed separately in order to identify remarkable differences, and will then be contrasted in the final chapter in order to draw conclusions that could confirm or refuse the initial hypothesis.

2.3. Gender equality and immigration.

Until this point, the concept of gender equality and its measurement, that is, the methodology that will be used in this research, have been discussed. But the level of gender equality that is going to be measured for both Italy and Germany is that of the immigrants that arrive in those countries, within the jurisdiction of the European Union. The reason for this is that any type of inequality becomes even more acute when it comes to minorities within a society, especially for immigrants.

What is migration, and what is its connection with gender? Jolly and Reeves (2005: 16) explain it in the following terms:

“Migration journeys take place within countries, regions and internationally and involve many different people all with their own motivations. Decisions to migrate may be forced, in situations of conflict and disaster, or they may involve different degrees of choice and agency, and combinations of motivation and coercion. They are always, however, made in response to a complex mixture of social, economic and political pressures, incentives and norms”

The decision to migrate is, therefore, deeply affected by social norms like the construction of gender, and this has a repercussion on the role that men and women pursue in their country of destination.

“Les femmes travaillent dans les services domestiques, dans la prostitution, dans l’industrie de pointe ou dans les secteurs industriels à forte demande de main-d’œuvre et à faible productivité. Bref, dans des activités peu ou non qualifiées. Dans cette partie du livre, un article traduit d’Arlie Russel Hochschild expose le concept de «fuite des soins», qui renvoie à une caractéristique du monde économique contemporain et qui intègre une dimension de genre : des jeunes femmes qui, dans leur pays d’origine, s’occupent habituellement des enfants, des personnes âgées et des malades, émigrent dans les pays riches, où elles travaillent en tant que domestiques, nourrices, aides à domicile ou aidessoignantes dans les maisons de retraite ou les hôpitaux. Autrement dit, les migrantes entrent dans le «secteur de la prise en charge des autres», caractérisé par une forte demande de travail.” (Verschuur, 2007: 121)

BRIDGE (2016: 3) explains it like this:

“Once a migrant or refugee has made their journey and is residing in a new city, region or country, gender and age characteristics continue to influence their experiences and the impacts of their migration. Health and wellbeing, education prospects, employment, access to services – all are affected by migrant status; new inequalities are created, as well as positive opportunities.”

So, as we can see, the issue of gender equality for migrants has a two-way perspective. On the one hand, there is the background from which those migrants arrive in a country, which certainly conditions their role in the new society they become part of. On the other hand, the country in which they arrive, and its socioeconomic features, may determine whether the gender equality gap is bigger or smaller, depending on the legislation, infrastructure and funds dedicated to promoting those equality values. One of them may be, for example, the ageing population of a country. In cases where that is an existing issue, the government may find it difficult to provide an extended care public service for the elderly, and many women immigrate to find a job in that field or apply for it once they are already residing in the country. This is just one of the many examples that could be given to portray how conditioned this gender equality level may be by surrounding factors, and that can act as intervening variables in this research.

And finally, it is important to highlight the role of gender in the process of immigration which is displayed in many different forms. Querton (2012) argues that the asylum application process (already a complicated one for those arriving from another country that don't speak the language of the destination country or are familiarized with the legal procedures linked to that application process), is even more so for women or girls that are fleeing their country because of gender-based violence or sexual exploitation, as “the concept of persecution used to determine refugee status has not been interpreted to include gender-specific forms of harm”.

All in all, as it will be shown in the upcoming chapters, gender affects the quality of life of immigrants, creating a gap between men and women that could

be potentially reduced by efficient policies in the country of destiny, as explained in the following subchapters. Even if the scope of migration covers the first, the second and third generation of immigrants, the focus will be on the population that was born in another country, that is, the data will portray immigrants of first generation.

2.4. Competences and legislative measures developed by the European Union regarding gender equality and immigration.

Throughout this section of the research, it is of vital importance to define the competencies in legislation regarding the promotion of gender equality for immigrants that both the European Union and Italy and Germany as member states have. This will be of help after the data analysis, when more information about the gender equality levels of immigrants for both countries are obtained, because in that way the current policies can be assessed, and further steps could be formulated to improve the situation.

The European Union, a very complex organization that comprehends 27 member states, operates at the same time at a supranational and an international level. The mechanisms with which this organization, unique in the world, functions, are certainly complicated to understand at a first glance. Its main organs, the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, and the European Parliament, take part in very complex legislative and executive procedures that then have as a result different guidelines that the member states need to adopt. Nevertheless, these guidelines can be of different nature, affecting the compliance that the member states need to pursue: Regulations, Directives, Decisions, Recommendations and Opinions. They vary from imposing a legal obligation to the countries or enterprises within the European Union, to being not binding and a mere suggestion that the member states can choose to follow or not follow.

There are several legal mechanisms at the disposal of the European Union that, if well designed alongside the national responsibility of member states, can promote a more extended gender equality for immigrants: “References to previous Communications and texts on immigrant integration policy in the European Union should be remembered as they form legal tools and design a specific framework to develop a common base for immigrant integration policy” (Martiniello, 2006: 3). For example, back in 1999, the European Council expressed its intention to design a set of policies that would promote equality for all EU citizens, no matter their country of origin (or if they were born outside of the European Union). Therefore, the *Charter of Fundamental Rights* was signed in 2001, eliminating the differences between citizens of European origin and third-country nationals in most cases. Other documents closely related were also published and agreed upon (on family reunification, against discrimination...).

The European Commission published, in 2015, the *European Agenda on Migration*. It was a set of policies that stated for the first time in a clear way the objectives and the need for cooperation. With key measures related to border securitization, integration and regularization of immigrants, it was a first step towards addressing the topic in a more effective and realistic way. Nevertheless, regarding needs specific to gender, they developed it with a gender-blind perspective, which may not be the best option for reaching gender equality for migrants. A progress report on the same project was published in 2019, and this gender-blind perspective had still not been corrected.

In 2016, another plan was redacted by the European Commission in which many more policy areas such as education, culture and employment were ranked as important and in which gender was one of the vulnerable groups that could face more difficulties in regard to the integration and equality of the third-country nationals:

“Through this action plan, the European Commission commits to engaging in a dialogue with Member States to ensure that the gender dimension and the situation of women migrants are taken into account in planned policies and funding initiatives. (...)”

In terms of gender equality commitments, the Europe 2020 strategy included a target for reaching a 75 % employment rate amongst people aged 20-64. The European Commission's strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 reinforced this objective by stating that in order to reach it, special attention needs to be given to the labor market participation of migrant women" (EIGE, 2022).

Also, the *European Commission's strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019* , in which immigrant women were one of the spheres in which they compromised to work on. The gender equality strategy that followed it, for the time period of 2020-2025, focused even more on the integration of female immigrants and asylum seekers in the society they arrive in.

These guidelines represent little more than a vague spirit or intention to develop further policies towards which the member states have a legal obligation, so the following step is to look at the actual directives or laws that have been passed to promote these values. It is important to highlight that all these laws are "directives", that means that they are goals set by the European Union, but each member state has the power to decide how to adapt them to their own national legislation.

- **Council Directive 2003/86/EC** of 22 September 2003: it explains the conditions for family reunification to be granted, with a special focus on the rights of women and children involved.

"The directive allows Member States to impose conditions on family reunification, such as complying with pre-entry integration measures or attaining a higher minimum age for spouses. These provisions aim, for instance, at protecting migrants from forced marriage and enabling them to be more independent and participate in the labour market of the host society". (EIGE, 2020).

- **Council Directive 2003/109/EC** of 25 November 2003: it allows for immigrants that have resided legally in any territory of the EU to be granted the status of a long-term resident.

- **Council Directive 2009/50/EC** of 25 May 2009 (the EU Blue Card Directive): specifies the conditions for those immigrants that arrive at the EU with the aim to find highly qualified employment.
- **Directive 2011/36/EU** of 5 April 2011: this directive is aimed at fighting against human trafficking and victim protection by prosecuting criminals. It is designed with a gender-conscious approach, acknowledging the differences in needs of women and men in this field.
- **Directive 2011/98/EU** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011: it expresses the need for a single application procedure, permit and rights for immigrants that arrive to an EU member state to work or reside.
- **Directive 2011/95/EU** of 13 December 2011:

“(...) The Revised Qualification Directive, sets standards for the qualification of third-country nationals as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted. The directive calls for taking into account ‘the specific situation of vulnerable persons such as minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence’ (Article 20) and provides for access to healthcare (Article 30) for these groups” (EIGE, 2020).

- **Directive 2012/29/EU** of 25 October 2012: it develops standards for victims of crime during the whole legal procedure, but also their rights, protection and the need for them to be appropriately informed throughout it. Human trafficking as particularly threatening to women is also contemplated in this directive.
- **Directive 2013/32/EU** of 26 June 2013: “on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection calls for gender-sensitive application procedures for asylum” (EIGE, 2020).

- **Directive 2013/33/EU** of 26 June 2013: it provides for a set of standards for the reception of third-country female nationals, with special care for those seeking international protection. Again, the need for a gender-specific set of policies is expressed in this directive:

“Therefore, they should take appropriate measures to prevent assault and gender-based violence, including sexual assault and harassment (Article 18). The directive also calls for adequate training of staff in reception centers who should be aware of ‘the basic needs of both male and female applicants’ (Article 29).” (EIGE, 2020).

- **Directive 2014/36/EU** of 26 February 2014: this directive concentrates on the conditions for admission for low-skilled workers from third countries.
- **Directive 2014/66/EU** of 15 May 2014: “sets the conditions of entry and residence of migrants taking part in intra-corporate transfers.” (EIGE, 2020).
- **Directive 2016/801** of 11 May 2016: “on students and researchers sets new rules for the entry and residence of migrant students and researchers, school pupils, trainees, volunteers and au pairs.” (EIGE, 2020).

Apart from these directives, in February 2014 the European Parliament developed a resolution regarding the discrimination that women migrants may suffer due to their gender, but also regarding other spheres such as their legal status or their race. It argued the importance that immigration policies should be considered as something independent of human rights, healthcare and education, amongst others, thus providing better minimum standards for female immigrants. It also stated that member states need to pursue a follow-up on reports of physical abuse in detention centres, and that this should be supported by NGOs, that should also receive more funding from the European Commission and the member states.

“In June 2015, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post-2015 (2014/2152(INI)), which

acknowledges the situation of migrant women and recommends that the Commission undertake various actions. In particular, the resolution stresses the importance of campaigns and initiatives to promote the active participation of migrant women in society. This includes the need for a gender-sensitive asylum and migration policy and the recognition of the threat of female genital mutilation as a reason for asylum.”

(EIGE, 2020).

Furthermore, new resolutions have remarked on the importance of policies that are gender-based, also referring to the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967, in which sexual orientation and gender identity are also perceived as a sensitive added layer of vulnerability for immigrants.

“In April 2016, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on women domestic workers and carers in the EU (2015/2094(INI), recognising that the majority of domestic workers and carers in the EU are migrant women, many of whom are in an irregular situation, and calling for, inter alia, (1) the professionalisation and skill recognition of the relevant workforce; (2) the recognition of domestic work and care services as normal work; (3) the ratification of ILO Convention 189 on the rights of domestic workers (which has been ratified by only six Member States so far); (4) domestic workers and carers’ right to unionise and to bargain collective agreements and (5) a set of policy measures to be put forward by the European Commission.”

(EIGE, 2020).

In 2019, the last recommendation from the European Parliament was based on the conditions of female immigrants that were experiencing a raise in gender based violence, amongst other types of discrimination.

As previously explained, these directives serve as an orientation for the member states that then need to “convert” them into their national legislation and design programs that can fulfill these goals. These EU directives are therefore applied and designed for all member states, so they can be considered an independent variable for this analysis, while the measures that Italy and Germany as sovereign countries decide or are able to pursue are a dependent variable.

But, what about the economic resources that the European Union provides for, in order to set these directives and projects into motion? They have developed the so-called Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, which is currently established for the period 2021-2027. With a grand total of 9.9 billion euros, it aims at fulfilling goals regarding to immigration, border control and other related issues, amongst which is the topic of gender equality in relation to third-country nationals. It has four main objectives that are explained by the European Council (2020) in the following terms:

“To strengthen and develop all aspects of the common European asylum system, including its external dimension. /To support legal migration to the Member States, including by contributing to the integration of third-country nationals. /To contribute to countering irregular migration and ensuring effectiveness of return and readmission in third countries. To enhance solidarity and responsibility sharing between the Member States, in particular towards those most affected by migration and asylum challenges.”

These funds are meant to be equally distributed among member states, and also aimed to be dedicated to integration programs that are relevant to this research, such as language courses for those arriving in a European country. But how are these funds allocated? The majority of EU funds can be distributed in a shared, direct or indirect procedure and, in this case, the majority of this fund is allocated through a shared procedure in which the money is directed to national initiatives. That means that the countries develop in many cases their own projects or infrastructure to fulfill the EU goals and directives, and they receive money that they can distribute amongst those projects in the way that they consider optimal.

It is important to highlight that this fund has become more flexible since its last implementation in the period 2014-2020, offering the parties involved to reschedule the money according to new priorities or issues that may arise in such a long period of time. Also, there is a system of checks and balances pursued mostly by Union Actions that can raise proposals or evaluations on the allocation of these funds, and the EU also supports a strong integration in which local and regional authorities are consulted regularly.

In the *Commission Implementing Decision of 25.11.2021 on the financing of components of the Thematic Facility under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and adoption of the Work Programme for 2021 and 2022*, the allocation of these funds is specified with a great level of detail. It is curious to see that the issue of gender is raised exclusively regarding human trafficking, in which the importance of a gender-based perspective is explicitly explained. As for the use of these funds for health initiatives, education, etc, the only gender perspective is obtained from the European directives previously explained. It is therefore obvious that both the European legislation and the funding resources need to be regarded as complementary in their aims and goals.

Overall, the European Union has become more aware of the need to develop gender-based policies. Their focus is especially on the most vulnerable sectors of immigrants, such as refugees or female victims of abuse. These directives and legislation leaves, nonetheless, some degree of independence for the national governments to develop their own laws and adaptations of these guidelines. In the next chapters, the national laws and their data representing the outcomes in gender equality for immigrants will be analyzed, something key to understanding the degree of power that member states really have in these policies.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE CASE OF GERMANY.

3.1. Current immigration tendencies in the country.

Whether Germany is a “country of immigration” or not, Green (2014) argues, is not that much of a debate anymore if looking at the trends in immigration flow in the last century. It is one of the main countries that receive immigrants in Europe, with an astonishing increase in these trends since 1945. Before this period, there was a huge immigration flow that only sank partially during the crisis of the 1920s. Alongside this, it was part of the German

population that would emigrate towards countries like the United States but, after the Second World War, 12 million refugees and 4 million people from German origin arrived in the country from mainly Eastern countries.

From 1955, and the rise of the concept of *Gastarbeiter*, guest workers, it was not only ethnic immigrants anymore, but also migrants that changed countries for work reasons. This went on until the suspension of that labour status in 1973, but did not prevent those migrants that were residing already in Germany to stay, rather pulling their families towards the country: almost 2.6 million more. Also, Germany became in 1973 one of the few countries that allowed Jewish immigration from countries that belonged to the Soviet Union.

By 1990, the RFA, West Germany, had almost 5 million non-national inhabitants (mainly from Italy, former Yugoslavia and Turkey) that made up almost 8% of the population. The distribution of these immigrants across the country was, nevertheless, far from homogeneous: it was in the bigger cities like Frankfurt, Munich or Cologne that the percentage of non-national inhabitants would be as high as 20% of the total population. (González-Gómez, 2011: 11).

These immigration trends were relatively high if taking into account the political situation of a divided Germany that would struggle between different approaches to ruling, economic systems... so it comes as no surprise to find that most of these immigrants would stay in West Germany, the capitalist side. So, after the fall of the Berlin wall and the reunification of the nation, the number of immigrants rose greatly: 6.7 million in 2010, 1.6 million of them being of Turkish origin (González-Gómez, 2011: 12):

“Germany therefore has the largest foreign population in absolute terms in Europe, and one of the highest in relative terms too. It is also increasingly diverse: whereas, during the 1980s, the non-national population was dominated by the eight countries with which Germany had signed recruitment treaties in the 1950s and 1960s, there were 30 nationalities with more than 50,000 citizens residing in Germany in 2010. Perhaps more importantly, with over 4.3 million resident third country nationals (TCNs) in 2010, accounting for around one-fifth of the total number resident in the EU,

Germany also has by far the highest number of nationals who are most affected by immigration regulations in the EU” (González-Gómez, 2011: 14)

The demographic problem of low natality rates, that affect numerous countries in the EU, has also been part of Germany’s societal structure for years now. That is why the government, in 2012, expressed the need to attract a high-skilled migration that could prevent some of the effects of the low natality rate, which sank in 2019 to 1.54%, according to the Eurostat (2020), by comprising a higher number of people that work and contribute to taxpaying from where all social services, as well as the welfare state, find funding.

“Immigration policy measures try to attract young and economically successful migrants as an answer to an ageing of the population. Countries such as Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Poland due to low fertility rates and increasing life expectancy, will experience a substantial decrease in their working-age population in the next 50 years. Additionally, immigration is increasingly being viewed in relation to skill biased technical change. The increase in highly skilled labour in OECD countries is beyond the likely supply capacity of their domestic labour markets.”

(González-Gómez, 2011: 3).

In the last twenty years, after the peak in immigration and the number of asylum seekers reached after the Cold War, the number of immigrants decreased slightly but continued to be a reality in the country with a relatively stable level of immigration, an average of 900,000 persons a year (González-Gómez, 2011: 16). These numbers, nonetheless, are evened out in the last years by the also high level of emigration, that in some cases has evened out the number of people arriving and departing from the country. The reason for this, it may not come as a surprise, is the weakening economic situation that Germany (and many other countries of the European Union) have undergone with the crisis of 2008, the Covid-19 crisis, and a rising rate of unemployment.

Also important to this analysis is to point out that the immigration that the country experiences is usually composed of people that stay in the country on a long-term basis: in fact, the average period of residence was of 19 years in 2010 (Eurostat, 2012), meaning that many of the non-national inhabitants in

the country have resided there and been part of the German society for a long time.

Regarding the citizenship status of those immigrants, the Destatis, the official German portal for statistics, also contributes with some important figures:

“Roughly 10.6 million foreigners were living in Germany at the end of 2020. The Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) reports that slightly more than one in ten people (12.7%) living in Germany had no German citizenship on reference day 31 December 2020. Turkish people accounted for the largest group (1.3 million people; 12.4%) of the total foreign population. They were followed by Syrian (787,000; 7.4%) and Polish citizens (774,000, 7.3%).” (Destatis, 2021)

One in every ten immigrants in Germany have no German citizenship, meaning that they either have no legal status or that they are residing there on a temporary basis (Destatis, 2022). This figure, if taking into account that most of these immigrants are not of European origin but rather third country nationals, can really affect the analysis of gender equality for immigrants in this research. The reason for this is that those that do not reside legally or do not have at least an European citizenship that may grant them services such as social care or healthcare, face worse conditions than those that do, and the number of people in this situation is high in Germany according to the last statistics.

This section can not be finalised without taking a closer look at the latest figures available on immigration data in Germany: all of these figures have been obtained from Destatis, the official German Federal Statistical Office portal that reflects upon economic and demographic aspects of the country, amongst others.

As of 2020, almost 11,5 million inhabitants in Germany were foreign, 6.1 million of them being men, and 5.3 million being women. Less than half of these immigrants are of European origin and those that are come mainly from Poland. Third-country nationals arriving in Germany are mainly (but not exclusively)

from Turkey, Africa (there is no disaggregated data available as to which countries specifically) and Syria.

3.2. National gender equality on immigration and refugee laws in Germany.

Having examined the policies developed by the European Union at a supranational level, it is now time to look at what Germany as a sovereign state has developed throughout the years in matters of laws regarding immigrants and refugees, and whether these are gender-specific or rather gender blind. These laws are always developed following the European general guidelines that provide, in this case, a framework of values and milestones that should be pursued. They leave some freedom, nonetheless, for the member states to accommodate these policies in order to fit their national political system, and what is realistic for them to achieve.

This will help measure, first of all, the degree of adherence to the European directives, but also to determine to which extent national sovereignty or legislation may or may not affect the level of gender equality for those immigrants that reside in the German country.

From the 1970s, Germany became a very attractive destination for asylum seekers due to its strong economy and for its legislation. Between 1977 and 2002, the country received almost 3 million applications for asylum but over 40% of those applications were rejected (Green, 2013: 345) in a very short period of time. This level of rejection of applications for asylum was caused mainly because of the limited scope of the existing legislation for granting asylum, disregarding for example gender-based violence such as genital mutilation.

Nevertheless, and due to economic and humanitarian crises, alongside the need of Germany to welcome more high-skilled workers, the legislations in the country have changed greatly in the last decades. This is partly caused by the swift in mentality of the German state that, traditionally a colonial country,

refused until relatively late being a “country of immigration”, but rather of emigration. Opposing this, when looking at the net migration rates in Germany, it comes as no surprise that it is, in the present, positive: there is more immigration than emigration in the country, confirming the statement that it is, in fact, a country of immigration. It is undeniable, nonetheless, that this notion has conditioned policy making regarding immigration and refugee laws for years, affecting millions of people.

Germany Immigration Statistics - Historical Data		
Year	Migrant Population	% of Total Population
2015	12,005,690.00	14.88
2010	11,605,690.00	14.43
2005	10,299,160.00	12.68
2000	8,992,631.00	10.98
1995	7,464,406.00	9.15
1990	5,936,181.00	7.52

Germany’s growth in net immigration in the past 40 years shows an almost tripled amount of immigrants, confirming it’s indeed a country of immigration.

Source: World Bank, 2020.

Regarding gender-based policies developed by the country, these have been widely criticized throughout the years. For asylum and refugee figures in Germany, there is a quantitative difference in the number of men and women that arrive in the country: 45% of women versus 55% of men (Statista, 2021). One of the many possible reasons for that is, when seeking asylum in Germany, women face a higher risk of mistrust of the motives for which they want to flee their country of origin, whether they are political, religious or gender-based abuse. Another possibility is that women do not have the safety or the economic independence to emigrate by themselves, so they have to do it in the company of a man.

In any case, it is also really important to understand the policies that the German government adhere to when admitting refugees in Germany, as part of their national legislation:

“The German Asylum Procedure Act recognizes such sexual and psychological or emotional violence as grounds for asylum, yet women may be unwilling to recount the details of their traumatic pasts, especially to male immigration officers. So, when female interviewers and interpreters are absent, female asylum-seekers are largely unwilling to tell their stories and their applications are rejected. (...) It is widely thought that this is due to the difficulty women face in proving gendered claims. (...) A second reason for the gender disparity in German admittances is its 2016 family reunification policy, the Act on Processes in Family Matters and in Matters of Voluntary Jurisdiction. Under this law, both husbands and wives must be present on German soil by the time this protected status is granted . This means that wives who arrive after their husband’s receipt of legal refugee status face tougher conditions and the possibility of denial, even though men frequently “blaze the trail”- by testing new territories before putting their families through often dangerous travels. German policy, that is, defeats the logic of family reunion.” (The Gender Policy Report, 2019).

This means that, though the current policies in Germany take into account gender-based violence in the country of origin, the procedures by which women have to testify or prove that they have in fact suffered from it are tedious and difficult for them. This is aggravated if taking into account their culture of origin or religion, against which they may be taking a position by denouncing those events. This can be added to the fact that the attention they receive when applying to asylum is carried out by male officers or people that lack a background in psychology (amongst other fields), being unable to attend those women by granting them a feeling of security when telling their stories or reasons for seeking asylum.

On the other hand, the Act on Processes in Family Matters and in Matters of Voluntary Jurisdiction has a certainly worrying policy of granting refugee status only if both husband and wife are present in Germany when applying for it. This can have various effects, the first one being that women that apply for it after their husbands are rejected and therefore have to remain in the country of

origin (or alternatively emigrate to another) facing the risk of further violations of human rights. The latest statistics show that 230,000 women and children are currently blocked in the border to Germany as a result of this policy (Lamprey, 2018), facing a higher level of vulnerability towards gender-based violence. They are kept in reception centres which, due to the congestion that they undergo, are exceeding their hosting capacity and lacking basic standards of hygiene and security for those women.

The other possibility for these women is that they decide to arrive and stay in Germany as illegal immigrants, lacking access to basic rights and high-skilled jobs, alongside many more consequences.

Regarding other policies implemented by the German government to promote gender equality, that could potentially also benefit immigrants and refugees, an official governmental report from 2019 explains the latest legislation adopted and the milestones that are considered key, those pursued after the 25th anniversary of the Beijing declaration in the World Women Conference, and how they have adopted those guidelines to fight, amongst others, against gender based violence such as genital mutilation. It should be noted that a large number of these policies are in direct relation with the criteria that was previously explained in this research as to measuring the level of gender equality, that will be applied to immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers throughout this analysis.

In order to promote gender equality in working life, women in Germany are more prone to taking time away from work if they are married or have children, and this situation is aggravated if their jobs are part-time. For this, the government has included a clause in the Part-Time and Fixed-Term Employment Act to cover issues such as childcare provision, in hopes of mitigating the situation.

Also, regarding the disparity in income between women and men (which will be analysed in the data section) and the more difficult access to high-position jobs for women, the so-called Transparency in Wage Structures Act was passed

in 2017, alongside the Act on Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions in the Private and Public Sectors. These laws provide, amongst other measures, for quotas of at least 30 percent of the boards of certain companies and for the Federal government. For the promotion of women's participation in the political life, the Act on Inclusive Parity implemented by Brandenburg, more equality is legally provided in the access to electoral lists, in which the number of men and women must be equal.

For the reconciliation of family, care and work, a huge improvement was seen after “the introduction of parental allowance in 2007 and, starting in 2015, the option of flexible receipt of parental allowance and the introduction of four additional partnership months and a significant expansion of child daycare provision” (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 2019). Furthermore, parents have a right to a childcare place since the moment in which their child turn one year old.

“With the Act on Better Reconciliation of Family, Care and Work, the provisions of the Caregiver Leave Act and With the Act on Better Reconciliation of Family, Care and Work, the Family Caregiver Leave Act were combined and enhanced. The period of short-term absence from work was supplemented, for example, with the possibility of claiming care support allowance. A right to family caregiver leave was introduced which can involve an employee being partially released from work and reducing their working week to a minimum of 15 hours for a period of up to 24 months. And since 2015, employees may be released from work to provide care outside the home for close under-age relatives in need of care and to accompany close relatives in their final phase of life. For the period they are released from work, employees have a right to receive an interest-free loan. The provisions of the Caregiver Leave Act and the Family Caregiver Leave Act enable flexible combinations to meet individual needs. This also creates the right conditions to enable men to assume more responsibility in providing care.” (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 2019)

For gender based violence against women and girls, the German government adopted the legislation provided by the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, introducing an all-time available hotline to help in cases of

emergency, as well as what has been called the “no means no” rule, providing further legal support in cases of sexual abuses. The German federal government has made clear the need to enforce these measures and to adopt them at both a national and a regional level in the country. Other laws such as the Prostitute Protection Act have also been passed.

Specific legislation for women refugees are still scarce in the German Basic Law, most of them as part of different integration projects, and though the refugee flow in Germany is increasing greatly as previously explained, there is still an urgent need for revision of these measures and their efficiency, and they need to be further developed in order to be gender conscious. Part of the measures that are already in the path of having a positive effect on the lives of these women and their children have been designed by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (2019: 10):

“The strategy, which is designed to be developed and enhanced over time, contains measures in four action areas: Protection against violence and assistance in refugee accommodation, information, counselling and assistance for refugees, protection of pregnant refugees, integration and building independent livelihoods. With this strategy, both the Länder and local authorities receive assistance in providing protection and integration for women refugees and (their) children who live in refugee accommodation centres and have experienced violence”.

There are several positive aspects of these measures that need to be taken into account. The first one is the collaboration between the Federal government and organisations like UNICEF, that can promote an effective implementation and provide for further *in situs* efficiency. Also, funding is dedicated to developed programs that can help the integration in society of women immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, such as language training and orientation (a key aspect if third-country nationals want to apply for the German citizenship, but also to have access to better jobs and more independency), migration counseling or local projects like sports or “structural funding for migrant umbrella organisations” (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 2019: 10).

Most of these projects, it should be noted, are gender-blind, but there are some special ones designed to promote trust and engagement in women from all kinds of backgrounds, and are used as a previous step before including them in further integration programs.

The German government has also admitted that there is a bigger gender gap in the labour market for migrants or refugees than for women that are of German origin. For this, three main projects are currently functioning: the Integration through Qualification, the programme “Strong Careers - Mothers with a Migration Background Start Out”, and DaMigra, the Association of Migrant Women’s Organisations.

The Integration through Qualification has as a goal to improve the prospects of women immigrants in the working field by helping them not only in the process of recognising their qualifications (such as university degrees obtained in countries outside of the EU, that may be difficult to get recognition for in the country of arrival), but also in orientating and training them in order to be adapted not only to a new society, but to a new working reality to which they may not be used to or that they may not know how to target properly in order to find good jobs.

The Federal government programme “Strong Careers - Mothers with a Migration Background Start Out” is more focused on those women immigrants that have children, and aims at empowering them to be able to pursue a career that is considerate of their skills and knowledge while providing training courses.

DaMigra, to end with, the Association of Migrant Women’s Organisations, is a non-gubernmental organisation that collaborates toward the rights of women refugees and immigrants by supporting them, for example, in campaigns for working life success.

Finally, the German government instituted in 2006 the independent Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (ADS), a system of checks and balances to control, monitor and evaluate cases of discrimination of various kinds, among

which is gender-based discrimination. Though many of the discrimination happened at a multidimensional level, that is, not only for one reason like sexual orientation but for several of them combined, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (2019: 12) argues that:

“The most frequent cross-sectional category is gender: This occurs in combination with age, when women are not employed due to the possibility of them becoming pregnant or when it is mostly lesbian women who are subject to homophobic sexualised hostilities and attacks.”

In relation to this, there are several platforms and projects that concentrate, amongst others, on women with disabilities or women that belong to the LGTBIQ+ community. Overall, Germany as a federal state has implemented a large number of initiatives and dedicated funding to promoting rights for refugees and immigrants, promoting gender equality and facilitating the insertion into the society of those female immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. They are usually used for the implementation of the European Social Fund. These programmes, effective or not (this will be evaluated in the following section), are undeniable in line with both the European directives and the recommendations and milestones set by the UN, and are constantly reviewed by both gubernamental organisms as well as feedback from non-profit organisations and from the civil society. They are as well a part of the Basic Law, Article 3 II GG, according to which the Federal government is obligated to promote gender equality within the German society.

3.3. Data and statistics for gender equality on immigrants in Germany.

As previously said, many international organizations such as the United Nations, as well as researchers, complain about the lack of data segregated by sex and country of origin that is persistent in the European Union. This data is not only scarce and hard to come by, but is also not published publicly: only through a formal request to the organizations that have it can it be obtained in order to analyse it.

Nevertheless, the European Institute for Gender Equality provides a very detailed Gender Equality Index that is segregated to the different spheres in which gender can play a role for immigrants. This data is the one that will be analysed in this research, for both the cases of Germany and Italy, and it will serve to illustrate the effect that national policies have in comparison to those developed by the European Union. It is important to remind the reader that the Gender Equality Index is calculated based on the achievements related to the specific field, and it is rated from 1 to 100, 1 representing total inequality and 100 being total equality between men and women. This data is also segregated based on the following criteria:

- Native born, data for female population and male population in Germany, and compared to female and male population in the European Union.
- Foreign born, data for female population and male population in Germany, and compared to female and male population in the European Union.
- EU born, data for female population and male population in Germany, and compared to female and male population in the European Union.
- Non-EU born, data for female population and male population in Germany, and compared to female and male population in the European Union.

These statistics are not always complete: in certain cases, the national governments or the organizations in charge of providing that data decide to not make it public, or do not even collect that kind of data at all: it is even more difficult when taken into account that it is a multilayered dataset in which not only gender is considered, but also the country of origin. It is important to remind that, in this part of the analysis, all of the data portrayed has been obtained from the Gender Equality Index developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality, with is updated every year with the latest information.

In the first place, the factor of health, one defined previously in this research when the methodology was detailed. When explaining the variables that are of importance to analyse the degree of Gender Equality for immigrants, many key concepts related to Health were brought up, such as the infant mortality rate, and the adolescent birth rate... this data, nonetheless, is not available by any organization, or simply doesn't exist. As a consequence, and the Health topic being the most affected by this lack of data, only information about the self-perceived health can be found.

For both the female native born and non-native born in Germany, the satisfaction with the self perceived health status ranks at 64 percentual points, which means that there is no difference between nationals and non-nationals. In the case of men, also the score is the same disregarding their country of origin, but in this case it is of 66 points, slightly higher than the female population.

It's now time to take a look at the field of empowerment, for which luckily there is more information available that can be useful for this research. Although some of this criteria may seem to be more related to the balance between work life and personal life, they depict the level of equality between men and women in relation to the equal distribution of household tasks, or how they manage to combine both of them in order to have free time and pursue actions that make their quality of life better in general.

In this section, more noticeable differences can be appreciated from the data portrayed. In the case of graduates of tertiary education, native and non-native born women in Germany have a rating of 22%, while native born men have a 30%, and foreign born a 24%. This shows that the same percentage of women have tertiary education no matter their origin but, although still a higher rate for men, there is a difference of six percentual points between those born in or outside of Germany. This will be especially interesting when taking a look at the criteria linked to the workforce, with which the degree of equality or inequality will be seen taking into account that women have almost the same degree of tertiary education.

In the case of people participating in formal or non-formal education, native born women rate at a 15%, native born men at a 16%: foreign born women, on the contrary, amount to only 10%, and foreign born a 11%. This shows that, although the difference is minimal between men and women in this field, those foreign born certainly have fewer chances of participating in education in Germany, whether it is for a lack of access or for personal choices.

Two very interesting sections are now to be analysed. In the case of people caring for and educating their children or grandchildren, elderly or people with disabilities, every day, the differences between the native born and the foreign born population are obvious. The female native born population ranks at 25% and the male native born population ranks at 19%, but this inequality gap gets even bigger when taking a look at the foreign born female population, with a 33% of it that completes this task, and the foreign born male population, still at a 19%. It shows that the same amount of men, no matter their country of origin, pursues tasks of child or elderly care, amongst others, at the same level: women, on the other hand, do this much more often, and women immigrants even more, so an inequality there is clearly found.

The same happens with the section of people doing cooking and/or household, every day: native born women do it at a 71%, while native born men only contribute in this aspect at a 30%. If this is already a great inequality indicator, given that women take that responsibility based on gender roles, it is even more concerning for the non-native population: women rank at 85%, while men rank at only 26%. This is often a burden that women have to take up and that, in many cases, translates into them not being able to pursue a full-time professional career aside from their education level.

In relation to the perception of workers on the amount of time that they can dedicate to sport, cultural or leisure activities outside of their home, native-born women in Germany rank at a 21% and men at a 25%, a difference that can be caused by the women engaging in more responsibilities in regards to child or elderly care, or household activities. It is surprising to find, nonetheless, that female immigrants not only rank higher than male immigrants, 27% in

comparison to 24% of the latter. The reason for this may be that, in comparison to their country of origin, they perceive as though their working conditions are better enough to be able to enjoy more free time.

In regards to the workers involved in voluntary or charitable activities, both native and non native women rank 3% higher respectively to men (16%-13% for native born population, 13%-10% for foreign born population), which shows that women are in general more involved in society welfare, and also that immigrant women do not necessarily get involved at such a level because of a lack of time or a lack of sentiment of belonging towards Germany, the country in which they are residing.

It is now time to take a look at the field of working life especially, and how the gender gap affects immigrants in comparison with native Germans in the different aspects of it. First of all, the employment rate depicts some data that is already of importance to this study. In the case of native born, the employment rate of female Germans is of 45% while male Germans rise up to 61%, already a noticeable gap. This difference, nonetheless, is even more noticeable for immigrants: female immigrants have an employment rate of 36% while male immigrants have one of 60%. This means that women that have emigrated to Germany have less the amount of opportunities or access to working life, despite the female immigrant sector of the population having the same degree of education as their male respectives.

In regards to the number of people employed in education, human health and social work activities, it comes as no surprise to see that the female population in general represents a higher tier of this data, given that they are jobs that have traditionally belonged to women due to gender roles and society (33% for female Germans, 10% for male Germans, 29% for female immigrants and 7% for male immigrants).

Another noticeable difference is found in the ability of the workers to take one hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters. For the native born, the difference is of only 2 percentual points, 16% of

women versus 18% of men. In the case of the non native population, nonetheless, this difference is of 10 points, 18% for women and 28% for men, showing that for women it is much more difficult to take time off work if needed on an occasional basis, also because of the conditions under which they are working.

The career prospects index, depicting the future opportunities that workers can have access to in order to have a more prosperous job or with better conditions, native born women rank at a 66%, native born men at a 68%, and foreign born women and men 61 and 65% respectively, another case in which the gender gap is more noticeable for immigrants.

Finally, it is time to take a look at the financial resources. With the mean monthly earnings, the average for female Germans is of 2364 euros, while for men it is of 3447 euros, a net difference of 1083 euros in net salary between men and women. This difference rises up to 1202 euros in the case of foreign born population, a pay gap caused by gender due to which women earn an average of 2237 euros and men 3439 euros.

The last indicator that needs to be taken into account is the percentage of the population that is at risk of poverty. As could be expected, immigrants have a higher risk of entering into the poverty circle, even if the country they're residing in is part of a developed economy with plenty of resources. Nevertheless, there does not seem to be a difference in risk regarding gender: 16% of native women vs. 14% of native men, 18% of immigrant women vs. 16% of immigrant men. This indicator seems to be, according to this statistics obtained from data from the Eurostat, not greatly affected by gender or the country of origin, even if at first the opposite would be expected.

To sum up, the greatest differences that can be appreciated in the Gender Equality Index between gender and country of origin are perceived in the Employment Rate, the income distribution, the childcare, elderly care, and household care rates. In the next chapter, when the case of Italy is analyzed with the same criteria as followed for the case of Germany, it will be confirmed

whether there are in fact differences in data for this criteria, and whether they correspond with the differences in legislation of both countries.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE CASE OF ITALY.

4.1. Immigration trends in the country.

In this next chapter, the case of Italy, its immigration trends and possible issues will be analysed in order to be capable of describing the nature of immigration it undergoes.

First of all, it should be noted that the migration flow trends of Germany and Italy are quite different. Unlike Germany, which has always experienced a high input of migration as well as an output that is still not that high, Italy was a country of emigration until the 1970s. This happened because people emigrated to other countries with a more solid economy, mainly for working reasons, and those countries of destination were mainly European ones (like Switzerland or Germany).

In the 1970s, nevertheless, this changed, and the country started showing positive net migration balances: that is, more people immigrating towards the country than emigrating out of it. Calvanese (1988) argues that it is due to the internationalization of the labour market, and it is an effect of the Italian membership in the EU that took place in 1958 and of a common market that was being built in those years. The repercussions of these measures were felt a little bit later in Italy and other Mediterranean countries than in other regions of Europe but it definitely played a role in making it an attractive destination for migrants.

The country is more complex in a regional sense than Germany, as the differences between the North and the South are easily noticeable when taking a look at the labour market, the nature of its industry and yes, its migration flows,

as traditionally it is the North that receives more immigration and the South that suffers from a more acute emigration, even if this is not always the case.

The immigration that Italy receives from third countries comes mainly from developing countries. These immigrants arrive in a clandestine way especially from the northern coast of Africa or from Latin American countries, and face conditions that are worrying, to say the least:

“As Mingione rightly observes, the rise in the supply of Third World workers (due to demographic, economic and political reasons), the rapid, uncontrolled growth of demand in the secondary sector of the labour market, and the waves of clandestine migratory flows, should be considered amongst the principal reasons behind the conditions of emargination and poverty in which these immigrants today find themselves.(...) We should further add that making the immigrants’ presence official has not necessarily meant making their work status official. This is confirmed by the 50% or so of declarations having been made through immigrants registering as unemployed: that is, we are talking about a majority of street peddlars who had to resort to this form of registration in order to officially declare their presence, and also those workers with an illegal work status, who wanted to somehow justify their presence in Italy.” (Calvanese, 1988: 185).

These trends of migration have changed in the last decades, and Italy, giving its first steps towards becoming a country of immigration, saw these numbers triple in the first decade of the new century.

First of all, there has been a swift in the characteristics of this immigration flow, that have on the one hand improved certain sectors such as the agricultural one, thanks to the new labour force arriving from other countries, but also causing a great migratory pressure on Italy. It is geographically a country that attracts immigrants to its borders and makes it very vulnerable, even more if taking into account the last economic crises and the lack of efficient legislation to control illegal entries in the border. Calvanese (1988) explains that legislation developed by one country has a direct effect on the immigration flows of another country. This is clearly noticeable when

looking at the more strict legislation set by Germany in the 1970s, when they cancelled a clause that was pretty non-restrictive when allowing workers from third countries into Germany. This measure just encouraged immigrants to, instead of migrating to countries that are economically more stable and have more jobs to offer, they just arrived to the nearest one in an illegal way: that is why many of them chose Italy instead of Germany at that point in time.

“Over the years, not just a few non-EU15 immigrants entered the country without a permit (either by crossing frontiers or by landing clandestinely on the southern coasts); but by far the largest number of unauthorised immigrants entered Italy on short-term visas (for tourism or study purposes, for example), and then overstayed in spite of expired documents. As the number of claims for asylum has been very low, the quota system (implemented in 1995) has been quite scanty, and family reunions have become noteworthy only since 1999, the overwhelming majority of immigrants entered Italy (mainly by overstaying) for working reasons, but without a proper permit of stay, (...) unauthorised labour migrants tend to enter countries where it is easy for them to live and work for a long period of time, even without a work permit.” (Fullin, 2010: 123).

This has turned Italy into one of the most vulnerable countries to immigration of the European Union, and also one with not that many resources or infrastructure to be able to cope with it in a sustainable manner. That is why migration is at the top of the political agenda of Italy since the 1990s, and is also now that is continuously transmitted to the European Union in an attempt to make this a common issue that needs to be tackled with not only at a national level.

Despite the legislation, one thing can not be denied: people migrate to these countries and work maybe illegally because there are employers that decide to take them in, in many cases violating the legislation on working hours and minimum wage, and resort to it as a mechanism to save expenses in the workforce and fill in those jobs that nationals do not want to do. This is why, also, figures show that immigration increases during periods of crisis. There is an unbalance between supply and demand, and employers, manufacturers and service providers prefer to cut expenses if possible by employing illegal workers,

thus motivating immigration due to the increasing demand, mainly in agriculture, construction and tourism.

Also, and regarding the high rate of emigration of Italy, is important to highlight that many of those emigrants returned to the country in the 1970s, being another factor to the increase in population in most regions.

The change of millenium brought by new trends in the migration flow of Italy: Tragaki (2012: 4) explains that “the most striking increases were registered in inflows coming from Ukraine (1268%), Romania (834%), Ecuador (462%), Poland (252%) and India (198%)”. This enormous increase of immigration turned Italy from a not very popular destination for migrants within Europe to one of the five main countries that receive third country nationals, making up to 10 percent of the total population of the country according to ISTAT. The effects on demographics has been clear since the beginning: not only the natality rate of an ageing country like Italy has increased, but also the constant flow of arrivals has allowed for the average age of the population to decrease.

All in all, and regarding the last trends of migration in the country, Eastern Europeans are the main ones that compose the immigrant population in Italy, followed by Indians and Latin Americans. This marks a difference with Spain, a similar country from the same region and similar economic structure and immigration rate, that has a tradition of being a colonialist country and therefore pulls a higher portion of the population of those countries that were one part of its jurisdiction. Italy is more attractive to other parts of the world as it does not have that tradition and tends to be more multicultural.

A trend that can not be overlooked is the feminization of the immigrant population, a phenomenon that affects in general all Southern countries but more accutely in Italy. This unbalance in gender is not shared by all nationalities of migrants, but mainly to Eastern Europeans and Latin Americans (Tragaki, 2012: 6).

It is of great interest to look at the reasons for this, not that clear in other countries like Germany for example. Italy as a country, and other Southern regions such as Spain or Greece, struggle more on a general basis to provide social welfare services such as childcare or housekeeping. And again, migration flows change depending on the situation not only of the country of origin, but also the demands of the country of origin, where those migrants will need to find a place in society and, most importantly, a job position. So the struggle of Italy to provide these services at a public and national level, services that have traditionally been assigned to female workers and not male workers, has caused for more women to migrate and find a job as family carers or housekeepers.

These jobs are, again, generally illegal or not adapted to the regulation and rights of the workers, so the result is a high rate of women that are older than the average immigrant, that take up jobs that are underpaid and do not offer them any advantages like holidays or sick days.

Finally, the concentration of this population throughout the country has not been more homogeneous in the last years than in the end of the last century. Still many, even if arriving to Italy through the Southern coasts, prefer to go to the North, and the reasons for this are explained by Tragaki (2012: 9):

“Economic and social disparities between centre–north and south modulate disparities in different types of immigrants. The regional distribution pattern of irregular migration is completely different to that of legally present foreigners. Mostly gathered in the southern parts of the country, irregular migrants are overrepresented in Crotone, Nuoro and Syracuse. This is related to the informal sector, predominant in the south, but also with the territorial earning gap: wages of irregular migrants in the south are one-fifth lower than the equivalent in the central or northern regions.”

So, what is seen is that immigrants arriving to Italy face a multi-level challenge that is conditioned not only by their country of origin, their gender, and other factors previously explained in this research, but they are also deeply affected by the region of Italy in which they settle. The division between North and South, the industries that each of them concentrate on, and the level of wealth that is clearly superior in the North is something that conditions, first of

all, Italian nationals. But for minorities such as immigrants coming especially from countries outside of the European Union (that is, not enjoying the advantages of a common market and legal working conditions guaranteed), this negative effect multiplies. Even if this trend of acute difference of migrant concentration between the North and the South of Italy seems to be slowly disappearing in the last years, the effects of this still ongoing trend will be analysed specifically for the level of gender equality. It is expected that it will be one of the main reasons for the higher level of inequality between men and women.

Finally, the 2010s have been even harder years for Italy as a country that suffers more pressure from immigration that it may be able to withstand. The Lampedusa Island, not far from Tunisia, had a processing centre for immigrants and asylum seekers that would arrive in Italy, and this centre was undergoing a really high demand that could not continue forever. This issue worsened with the Arab Spring and the Syrian Civil War in 2015, when more and more immigrants escaped to Italy from their conflicted countries.

3.2. National gender equality on immigration and refugee laws in Italy.

It is now time to take a look at the immigration policies that are currently operating in Italy. As a member state of the European Union, this legislation needs to be in accordance with the general guidelines provided by the European directives that have been previously described in this research.

Even if immigration is considered a shared competence in the EU (Article 79.1 of the TFEU), the efforts made in the last years to promote a sustainable solidarity mechanism have been rejected by countries such as Poland and Hungary, and only partially respected such as Austria and the Czech Republic. This mechanism proposed an estimation of the number of immigrants each country should give asylum to based on 50% of the GDP and 50% of the population size.

First of all, Italy, as part of the European Union, ratified the Schengen Treaty and joined the Schengen zone in 1997, being, therefore, part of a collective of countries within the European Union that do not require its citizens for a passport to travel, among other demands. Thus, and in combination with being also a member of the single market, Italy allows for a free movement of citizens from one European country to another: those European migrants that arrive from a country that is part of the Schengen area to Italy can work and reside there without a VISA, with the same rights that they enjoyed in their country of origin.

Before taking a look at the specific national legislation on the issue, the political atmosphere of Italy needs to be addressed. The government of the country has changed radically in the last years, with the appointment of the so-called Governo Technico in 2021, and Mario Draghi at the front of it. It has been a difficult period in which populist parties such as Cinque Stelle have developed discourses of hate towards immigrants and other collectives, and policies in these lines have at times been proposed. Also, the special situation of Italy's immigration flows and its inability to tackle with them properly due to a lack of funding and infrastructure have raised the issue at an European level, in search for a more comprehensive framework of solidarity.

In October of 2020, a new decree on migration and security was passed by the Italian government and Sergio Mattarella, the former Italian President. This Immigration Decree no.130/2020 "introduced a new special protection permit, added the possibility for asylum seekers to register with the city registry and reformed once more the asylum reception system" (European Commission, 2021).

On the other hand, an Immigration and Security Decree was proposed by Matteo Salvini, leader of Cinque Stelle and Interior Minister, one that was heavily criticised. This decree abolished the humanitarian protection granted to those individuals that for a series of reasons could not obtain the status of refugee or any kind of subsidiarity protection, but that for imperative personal (but reasonable) motives had to stay in Italy. Matteo Salvini argued that this

humanitarian protection was not being used appropriately and, in many cases, was a clause being abused, so it was taken out of the legislation. This law had been adopted in the past by Luciana Lamorgese, Interior Minister under the Conte presidency, and it:

“broadened the conditions under which migrants can apply for humanitarian protection, introducing a new special protection permit under the Lamorgese Decree. This new permit lasts two years and is eligible for conversion to a work permit, as was the abolished humanitarian protection permit. (...) Ms. Lamorgese also added the possibility for asylum seekers to register with the city registry – in accordance with the Constitutional Court’s position - and reduced processing times for citizenship applications for naturalisation and marriage from 48 months to 36 months.”

(European Commission, 2021).

Also, under the Salvini Decree, the reception systems that were carried out by regional governments and independent NGOs to help refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants arriving in Italy were downsized, and excluded asylum seekers from the possibility of taking part in these projects. These asylum seekers would as a consequence be hosted temporarily in large first-arrival and temporary centres that do not offer more than basic conditions on a temporary base. Luckily, this Decree has been slowly overturned afterwards, allowing for example for refugees to stay in the country if they are at risk of suffering from any kind of violence if they return to the country of origin.

In regards to policies for gender equality and in relation with immigration and refugee laws, Italy is one of the countries that adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) in 1995, like Germany. It has also agreed to other mechanisms such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and others at an European and International level (the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the Council Directive 2000/43/EC against discrimination towards people of racial or ethnic origin...). All of these guidelines and aims must be in accordance to the Article 3 of the Italian Constitution, which provides for equality for all citizens no matter their origin, gender, language, etc.

Article 51, on the other hand, establishes that: “ Any citizen of either sex is eligible for public offices and elected positions on equal terms, according to the conditions established by law. To this end, the Republic shall adopt specific measures to promote equal opportunities between women and men”. Article 27 provides for a legal basis to combat pay gap and to ensure protection for women and their children.

Italy also developed in 2006 the National Code of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, a further step for more homogeneous legislation to promote equal opportunities for women and men, and for more gender awareness when it comes to passing and applying laws.

Also, a system of checks and balances to oversee the effect of the implementation of this measures and projects was established in coordination with the European Union, the United Nations, organisms such as the OECD or national NGOs, at a regional, national and international level. furthermore, the figure of the National Equality Councillor was created to analyze the equality of opportunities for women in the workspace. To establish a liaison between the governmental institutions and the civil society, the National Commission for Equal Opportunities became more specialised in issues of gender.

Specific to gender issues of migration, the National Office against Racial Discrimination tackles discrimination not only based on gender, but also on race, culture, religion or ethnicity. Then, the National Code of Equal Opportunities in combination with the European Directives promote equal opportunities, especially for employment.

Italian legislation is pretty specific regarding violence against women, family conciliation, healthcare and other aspects that can be of importance when analysing and promoting gender equality. Nevertheless, the country still lacks efficient legislation to ensure that minorities such as immigrants or refugees do not see a higher risk of gender discrimination:

“However, while recognising the progress achieved to promote women's rights in Italy, attention must be given to how gender equality still faces resistance in Italy;

there is a growing trend of reinterpreting and re-orienting the notion of gender equality in terms of family and maternity policies. With regard to asylum rights, the same report underlines that the absence of effective vulnerability screening procedures, which do not allow the correct identification of victims, can lead to expulsion or repatriation – in violation of the non-refoulement clause. Recent policies aimed at stopping sea rescues and strengthening the deterrence of potential migrants, combined with the closure of Italian ports for migrants arriving with rescue boats at sea, are increasing the risk of repatriation in the future.” (Lopriemo et. al., 2020: 3).

In Italy, as well as in many other European countries, the statistics and data available that are gender specific to migrants are very limited. It is therefore hard to evaluate certain aspects of their integration and living conditions in a quantitative level, and this has repercussions on the legislation that is developed and on its efficiency, as it becomes more and more difficult to target the main issues without a proper objective framework. Women refugee and migrants usually arrive in Italy with their families and assume the role of caretakers, and men constitute their main representation in the public sphere and in the workspace. Also, several NGOs lack a gender-specific approach to their policies and projects, something that only worsens their situation and the efficiency of the treatment they may receive.

Regarding housing policies, for example, there is a lack of support from the national level in terms of support and help for refugees and asylum seekers, something that is expressed by (Lopriemo et. al., 2020: 5) in the following way:

“There is a considerable gap between what is required by the few regulations and what can be achieved in practice. In this regard, it is important to remember that women applicants for international protection and refugees have specific reception needs, both in the departure and arrival countries. Locations where they can be accommodated are often overcrowded, promiscuous and lacking protected spaces. This exposes women and girls to multiple risks: suffering further violence, being sexually exploited, and experiencing inadequate health care. Paradoxically, women who escape violence and persecution come to reception centres that are almost as dangerous.”

The conditions and basic rights that should be provided in these reception centres are regulated by the European directives, taking into account

gender, family unity, respect for the physical and mental health of the refugees or asylum seekers... and articles such as the Article 17 of the Legislative Decree no. 142/2015 gives even more importance to considering the needs of women in more vulnerable situations like pregnancy, or being victims of gender-based violence. Nevertheless, the Italian legislation and actual realisation of these goals run short in effectiveness.

An example for this is the legislation change in 2018, according to which the status of asylum seekers or refugees that arrive in reception centres has now changed from that of applicants to that of holders of international protection. Under this denomination, they are exclusively placed in the Extraordinary Reception Centres, and women that have been victims of gender-based violence or human trafficking for sexual exploitation, for example, fall under this denomination too. The issue is that these centers are under bad conditions where there is not enough personnel to provide for the adequate services for them (Lopriemo et. al., 2020: 15). They do only receive primary help like accommodation and food, but no psychological or medical help is provided for them. Despite this, they do benefit from housing orientation once they arrive there.

“In addition to new and existing problems with the housing conditions in the first and second reception period, there are also problems in subsequent phases. These problematic situations increase when public authorities do not prepare adequate strategies and plans for housing. Individuals who are willing to rent apartments to applicants for international protection and/or refugees are becoming increasingly difficult to find. For refugee women this means living at risk of violence in overcrowded and often promiscuous environments with unfamiliar men. Women, if alone and with dependent minors, are mainly unable to earn adequate incomes to afford rent in areas with good quality schools and socio-health services once they leave the reception system. Segregation of residential accommodation certainly represents an obstacle to any integration process.” (Lopriemo et. al., 2020: 6).

In regards to integration in the labour market, it becomes a bit difficult to develop efficient policies when the lack of statistics is taken into account: the number of illegal immigrants is probably much higher than the figures released

by the ISTAT and that makes it harder to understand the real inflow of illegal workers. Nevertheless, it is estimated that many immigrant women take part in the labour market, but those women have mainly arrived alone in the country and do not have to provide care for their children because their families remained in their country of origin. The difference in the level of integration in the labour market of single mothers in contrast with women that came to Italy without their families can rise up to 30% in especially southern regions such as Calabria (Lopriemo et. al., 2020: 16).

These women take up jobs mainly in the sectors of unskilled manual work and services and personal care, and they are vulnerable to labour exploitation or abuses in their workplace. The lack of centralised policies that could improve their situation at a national and more homogeneous level is only partly solved by the Directorate General for Immigration and Integration Policies of the Labour Ministry. Its endeavour is to supervise the Employment Centres (CPI) that operate at a regional level and whose aim is to allocate workers in different job positions depending on the demand of the moment and also to develop labour policies. Only recently the gender bias was included in their perspective, but only this has more impact in the private sector that also provides for reception systems for immigrants and refugees.

“This problem, in the contexts analysed, concerns above all women, who are forced to leave the integration process faster because they cannot manage the internship/family/work relationship or because they have easier access to certain job positions, even if not always legally. However, out of more than 800,000 regular domestic workers, the foreign component represents almost 70% of the total workforce (IDOS, 2019): Women do not attend because they find work more easily, as caregivers and as domestic workers, and often their parents provide care for their children. [...] We're trying to create a course to allow these women to attend even for a few hours per day. (Cultural Mediator n.2, Catanzaro).” (Lopriemo et. al., 2020: 9).

The central government in Italy has also developed different policies and action plans to counterpart practices like the Caporalato, when illegal immigrants are capted by small scale criminal organisations to work in sectors such as the agricultural one under really precarious conditions. Alongside these

policies to combat them, there are also programs like the SIPROIMI network to help in the different stages that lead those immigrants to take up those jobs.

Regarding other aspects of integration, like the linguistic one, Article 4-bis of the TUI states that third-country nationals need to have an A2 level of Italian at least to be able to remain longer than a year in the country. The Provincial Centres for Adult Education, which operate at a regional level and with a regional budget, and the Reception System Protection System for International Protection Holders and Unaccompanied Foreign Minors offer those language courses in order to promote integration of the immigrants also in the educational level. The lack of sufficient budget, nonetheless, makes it a difficult endeavour not only to provide for sufficient educational integration programmes but also to do it taking gender into account. The obstacles that women have to face to attend these courses are in many cases greater than those of men, especially if they have to take care of their family members, or to participate in them while having a job: “The low participation of refugee women in adult education courses, according to the reports of social workers of SIPROIMI projects and CPIA teachers, is explained by the discrimination experienced by refugee women in which gender intersects in complex ways with educational backgrounds, ethnicity and trauma” (Lopriemo et. al., 2020: 12).

Although there is a general will to combat sexual and gender violence in the country, the new legislation that began in 2018 made the stay in first reception centres even longer and, as already said previously, these centres lack enough resources to protect women and members of the LGTBIQ+ community from sexual abuse or other forms of violence. In fact, the IOM released some very alarming data depicting that 80% of Nigerian women that arrive in Italy or the European Union have a chance of suffering from this kind of violence. To combat this, the law 119/2013 has been passed, in an attempt to protect those women and even granting them a special residence permit if they have suffered from domestic violence. Furthermore, the National Strategic Plan to Combat Men’s Violence Against Women is especially dedicated to women arriving from other countries in the form of immigrants, refugees or asylum seekers. Also, the

National Commission for the Right to Asylum is in charge of supervising the arrival of these migrants to ensure their safety along the process.

4.3. Data and statistics for gender equality on immigrants in Italy.

As previously done with the case of Germany, the data and statistics that could procure insight on the level of gender equality of the immigrants residing in Italy will now be shown. This data was collected by the Eurostat but has been processed by the EIGE, the European Institute for Gender Equality and, as stated before in this research, is one of the few data sources existing that is segregated not only by gender, but also by country of origin. The different fields related to gender equality that it shows, as well as the contrast that can be appreciated in the different countries of origin of the population that is being analyzed, makes it a perfect indicator that can be used to confirm or deny the hypothesis formulated. All of the figures shown below have been obtained by this Gender Equality Index.

First of all, it should be reminded how this Gender Equality Index is designed: a percentual score from 1 to 100 is given to a series of indicators, the lowest score representing total inequality between men and women, and 100 being an ideal maximum level of equality between the two genders.

For the field of health, the same issue as in the case of Germany is faced: the data available is not only limited but also does not show the main indicators such as the adolescent birth rate, simply because those statistics are not collected nor by the governmental institutions nor by any other organization. This certainly difficults the analysis of this field, and is something that proves the necessity for further data collection in order to develop adequate policies and to be aware of the reality of this context.

In the context of health, self perceived, good or very good, it is shown that Italian women rank lower than Italian men, 69 versus 75. This difference in 6 percentual points becomes narrower in the case of foreign born population,

women rating it at a 84 percent and men at a 86: like in the case of Germany, one possible explanation would be that the health system in their countries of origin is not universal or has the same quality as the Italian one that, if not among the best within the European Union, is relatively efficient.

For the rest of the criteria foreseen by the EIGE, like population who don't smoke, population not involved in harmful drinking, population doing physical activities and population consuming fruits and vegetables, there is no data available. The one related to health access, that is, population with unmet needs for medical examination and population with unmet needs for dental examination, the available statistics are poor and do not seem trustworthy due to the low share of people consulted, so it will not be taken into account in this study for the case of Italy.

On the positive side, there are some very relevant and trustworthy data available on the remaining target fields chosen for this research. In the case of knowledge, attainment or participation, where the level of education that the population is depicted, there is some interesting insight to look at. The ranking for tertiary education in the case of Italian women is higher than that of Italian men, 16 to 14. This difference is even higher in the case of foreign born population that reside in the country, with women ranking at 15 points and men at 10. It is very important to keep this in mind when further analysing the factors related to the employment rate, and the kind of jobs that men and women pursue.

As to people participating in formal or non-formal education in the present, Italian women pursue this at a rank of 14, while Italian men at a 13. This participation rate is nonetheless lower for immigrants, foreign born women with a rate of 9 and men with a rate of 8. The difference here is clearly a matter of country of origin, not so much depending on the gender of the individual.

As expressed several times already in this research, it is key for this analysis to look at the time and care activities that the population pursues. The reason for this is that, despite a higher number of women that have tertiary

education if compared to men, due to gender roles and societal constructs they are the ones that tend to stay home, and take care of children or elderly people, thus sometimes being able only to have a part time job, if not completely dedicating themselves to the task. In any case, and even if the women are able to have a full time job while they tackle with these activities, their free time is significantly reduced and, as a potential consequence, their ability to better integrate them into society and enjoy a better quality life.

In the case of native born women, it ranks at 34 the number of them that care for and educate their children or grandchildren, elderly or people with disabilities, every day. Native born Italian men, on the other hand, only do this at 24 points. But this difference becomes more acute in the case of foreign born population, with 50 points for women and 31 points for men. This difference is also remarkable (not only regarding the country of origin, but also gender) in the ranking for people doing cooking and household activities. Italian women have 81 points, while Italian men only 19. Foreign born women have 84 points in this case, and foreign born men 23. The fact that this difference between genders is sustained in both native and foreign born population, with an astonishing difference between genders but not such a big conditionality based on country of origin, has a cultural explanation. Italy, as a Mediterranean and more traditional society than Germany, especially in the southern territories of the country, probably has less progressive societal rules than northern countries. The role of women, if certainly changed especially in the last century, may still be regarded as the one being responsible for taking care of family and the household, and that reflects clearly in this data.

If the caretaking activities that are so time-consuming are taken as a cause, the consequence can be appreciated when analysing the time dedicated by the population to social activities, where the effects become visible. In the scope of workers doing sporting cultural or leisure activities outside of their home, at least daily or several times a week, women of both native and foreign origin rank lower than men. This is no surprise as they are taking up more responsibilities at a societal level, but this difference in gender is aggravated when looking at the country of origin. For native born women, they rank at 24,

while men at 28. Foreign born women, on the other hand, only have 12 points, while foreign born men have 26 points. This means that the slight difference of two points that can be appreciated between native born and foreign born men is nothing compared to women that are foreign born, as they have 50 percent less chances to pursue free time activities, do sport in order to achieve a better quality of life, and just take up different leisure activities.

For workers involved in voluntary or charitable activities, at least once a month, a phenomenon can be appreciated that is quite similar to the case of Germany, and it is that women in general tend to be more involved in charities or projects to better the society they reside in: italian born women have 13 points, men 11 points, while foreign born women have 8 points and foreign born men 6 points. The difference is more dependent on the country of origin in this case, and this is a consequence of a not so deep level of integration into society, but also of language constraints, cultural differences, and even lack of time and resources on the side of the foreign born population.

On to more technical aspects like the working life, where a gap between the level of education of the population and the actual possibilities that they have to get a job can be appreciated, the gender difference is expected to be more acute. The data confirms this already in the employment rate, with italian women having a percentage of 31 and men of 50. In the case of foreign born population, the employment rate for women is 38 percent and for men 69 percent. There is therefore a huge difference not only according to the country of origin, with the foreign population having a greater number of workers, but there is a difference of almost the double of foreign born men working in comparison to foreign born women. This means that those women that are not working stay at home taking care of the household and their families, not having the opportunity to take part in the active labour market, making their own earnings and gaining more independency.

A similar phenomenon to the case of Germany can be appreciated in the percentage of people employed in education, human health and social work activities, as women tend more often to dedicate themselves to this field: 28% of

Italian born women versus 8% of men, and 13% of foreign born women versus 4% of foreign born men. This is also an indicator of the fields in which traditionally women have taken part compared to men, and also has an effect on their wealth as education and humanities are usually lower-paid fields than others such as engineering or sciences.

In regards to the ability to take one hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters, both native and foreign born women face less flexibility: native born women rank at a 20%, men at a 22%, and non-italian born women at 13%, while men at 16%. This means that if these activities or urgent matters can not be tackled during working hours, they need to be solved outside of the workplace, taking up even more free time for the individuals affected, but also limiting the freedom of the women that may need some extraordinary exemptions from work to solve emergencies.

One surprising factor in regards to the results shown is that of the career prospects index, as it would be presumable that women rank lower than men. In the case of native born women this is true, 52% in contrast with 56% of the male population. But opposite to this are foreign born women that, even if ranking lower than native born with a 45%, have 4 more percentual points than foreign born men.

The money and financial resources field is now to be analysed, as the distribution of wealth alongside other factors is very enlightening to understand the economy independency that women can have. For mean monthly earnings, italian born women have 1982 while men 2640; foreign born women 1271, and foreign born men 1695. It is clear that the income gap when taking gender into account is huge for both of them, disregarding their country of origin. Something similar happens with the mean equivalised net income, italian women with 19646, men with 20630, foreign born women 14134 and foreign born men with 14145. It is therefore an inequality that depends more on whether they are italian born or not, and the inequalities that this provokes.

In the case of the economic situation, on the opposite side, the difference is multilayered, that is, based on gender and country of origin. In the percentage of the population at risk of poverty, Italian women rank at 19% and Italian men at 16%. Foreign born women, on the other hand, raise the percentage up to 35% and foreign born men up to 32%. This shows that women have more chances to face poverty just by their gender, but that they suffer a much higher risk if they have not been born in Italy.

Finally, the last data to be looked at is the income distribution, in which both men and women of Italian origin rank at 17%, being there no apparent difference between genders. That is not the case for foreign population, in which women rate at 16%, two points lower than foreign born men, proving that the income distribution is not as equitable and that may reflect in the power of purchase parity, amongst other factors.

To sum up, in the case of Italy, the greatest gender inequalities for immigrants if compared to those of native born Italians are found in the Employment Rate, the rate of risk of poverty, the income distribution, the percentage of graduates of tertiary education, the child, elderly and household care rates, and the time that the population dedicates to leisure activities.

5. CONCLUSION.

Since the beginning of this research study, the main goal of it, as well as the question that sparked the curiosity of the author in order to develop an analysis not only of data but also of legislation and of migration narratives, was made clear. It all started from a simple question: what is the role of national governments in the implementation of legislation developed at a European level to improve the conditions for gender equality for immigrants? From there, several more details appeared, and a methodology was developed. The idea, the hypothesis, nonetheless, always remained the same: that those policies developed by the European Union are eventually implemented by the Member States and, if the latter do not succeed in applying those guidelines and including them properly in their legislative process, or do not dedicate enough funds and infrastructure, the gender gap between immigrants in comparison to native born population might grow bigger.

This comes from the idea that, despite a very well organised European Union, the integration is not that well developed, and the national sovereignty is still very conditioning in the mise-en-place of policies that are very much needed, such as those to guarantee the equality of men and women.

Furthermore, and as explained in previous chapters, this is the case of a multilayered intermesh of factors (being an immigrant from outside Europe and having to integrate in a new society, being a woman having to fight through rooted gender roles...) that shows a problematic that has not so widely been tackled nor by the policy-makers, nor by the societies, nor by the academia. This has been proven in several cases, when segregated data by gender and country of origin was not existing or not published by the governmental bodies that collect it. The inexistence of this data is already very indicative of how little these factors are taken into account when developing new policies to promote gender equality or the integration of migrants, as the policy makers are not able to rely on basic figures that would show them the harsh reality of the gender differences from which immigrants suffer even more than native born Europeans.

By taking Germany and Italy as the case studies in this research, obvious differences in the data were observed. After analysing the history of migrations of both countries and the policies that they each individually have decided to pursue according to the European directives, there are some conclusions that can be drawn from this process that confirm the initial hypothesis of this research. If the German and the Italian legislation is compared, there is no doubt that Germany is elaborating more efficient policies towards a good integration of the immigrants that arrive to their territories. There is some reasons for this that are exclusively dependent on the resources and wealth of the country, superior to that of Italy, but there is some other aspects that need to be considered. In the case, for example, of reception centres and their management, Germany controls them at a national level, even if it is a federal country in which there is a shared rule of the different Länder. This provides for a more efficient distribution of resources between the poorer and richer regions of the country.

Italy, on the other hand, manages reception centers at a regional level: no wonder the poorer parts of the country such as Calabria, also the ones that suffer from a more acute immigration influx, are not able to provide for the necessary medical, psychological, or integration tools that migrants, especially migrant women, need.

All in all, there is a general forgetness of how important it is to develop gender-based policies for immigrants, but the legislation in Germany, if far from ideal, is more succesful in implementing a system of checks and balances within the country to try and prevent gender inequalities for third country nationals. Also, they provide for many more integration programs, to learn the language and help immigrant women build a stronger career in their country of residence. This has an effect in the data outcomes, as immigrant women in Germany tend to have better work perspectives, and enjoy more working life and personal life balance.

In the case of Italy, the ever changing political atmosphere has caused an inconsistent set of policies regarding immigrants and women that put at risk

human rights, as the swift from an apparent progressivism to a conservatism that wants to limit immigration in a way that is not appropriate. The governmental bodies instituted by the Italian government are, as well, more of an anecdotic position in which they try to enforce the National Code of Equal Opportunities in some way.

This criticism, if harsh, projects an overall different atmosphere in which women immigrants and refugees find themselves when arriving to member states of the European Union. The interesting thing now is to see how the data reflects these differences in policies, what outcomes they produce. And it comes as no surprise that, overall, Germany performs better than Italy in what comes to the level of education of their immigrants, and their current participation in educational life, thanks to the accesibility that educational and empowerment programs that Germany provides in comparison to the ones offered by the Italian state.

The gap in gender between immigrants residing in Germany is also smaller in relation to the amount of free time compared to the gender gap portrayed in Italy, and this can be due to the more flexible working system in Germany and to the legislation that the country has developed in terms of work and family reconciliation. But much more important is the child and household care ratio: female immigrants in Italy are much more bound to this task than their German equivalents, therefore the gender gap is greater, and without taking into account the informal working female population of women that work in caretaking and household care sectors. Italy has a general lack of personnel and infrastructure to provide for professional childcare, for example, as sources such as the newspaper *La Repubblica* (2022) has been denouncing for some time.

Even if the employment rate is higher for Italian women, they have lower career prospects if compared to German female immigrants. The risk of poverty for these Italian female immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, is also noticeable greater than that of Italian female nationals, but also than both female and male German immigrants. The fiscal policies and the legislation

related to the active population seem to be much more effective in Germany than in Italy: in this last country, there is a great deal of informal participation of women, and that is also reflected in the Gender Equality Index.

Finally, the gender gap for immigrants for the mean monthly earnings is bigger in Germany, but the income distribution is less egalitarian in Italy. This means that the policies in Germany to favour a smaller pay gap are not as effective as those in Italy, but in the latter there is a systematic gender gap in salary.

After taking a look at these differences, and given the portrayed national legislation performance and the data on the gender equality of immigrants, a cause-effect relationship can be suspended. It is also confirmed that comparisons are something necessary in order to see what member states could improve in terms of gender equality for immigrants. It is a shame, certainly, the lack of data for the field of health, and other criteria that would have been of great relevance to this research.

On the other hand, the initial hypothesis could be confirmed: the standards for gender equality for immigrants are different depending on the member state that these immigrants reside in. It just proves that the European legislation, as well as other conventions at an international level, provide for guidelines that are not (or can not be) necessarily followed by each member state to the same extent.

What does this mean? Well, drawing conclusions from this research, some ideas come up that could, in the future, mitigate not only the gender inequalities amongst migrants in Europe, but also the inequalities that can be seen from one country to another. It is not a matter of blaming the member states, but rather of designing realistic policies that could be more efficient on all EU territories. So what can the European Union at a supranational and international level do? This author is convinced of a deeper integration of social affairs and policies. If the issue is the baseline of each country, their difference in wealth and infrastructure, then these inequalities regarding immigration

and gender equality (if not social affairs in general) should be tackled by the European Union as a whole. Promoting a set of minimum standards throughout all European countries, and providing for the needed funds so that all affairs related to immigration and gender equality fall under the jurisdiction of the European Union. Even if this would mean a potential reform of the TFEU and the TEU, it is necessary to integrate these competencies into the three main bodies of the European Union that, serving itself from local, regional and national authorities, could provide for much more efficient ways to prevent gender inequalities and immigration injustice.

The one, final conclusion that should be drawn from this research, and that serves as a call for further studies on this specific topic is the following: the member states of the European Union have much more determining power on EU policies regarding gender equality for immigrants. The only solution for a better, higher set of standards throughout the whole community would therefore be further integration of these competencies towards a supranational level in which cooperation would prime amongst the member states and better results would be achieved.

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