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DIVERSE
Diversity Improvement as a Viable Resource for Society and Economy?

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Diversity as an Unexpected and Unwelcomed Phenomenon

*Europe has not really chosen to become so much “diverse”*. Its very heterogeneous composition is the result of:

- The establishment of former colonies following the decolonization
- The transformation of temporary guest workers into stable residents and even into citizens
- The arrival of their family members
- The emergence of minority groups following the redefinition of national borders, particularly after the implosion of the Soviet empire, which transformed previous citizens into TCNs
- The growing influx of humanitarian migrants
- The unexpected migratory transition of Southern European countries
- The progressive enlargement of the EU borders
- The emergence of the issue in the political nationalistic agenda even in countries traditionally tolerant of the “others”
The *diversity* of “Diversity” in the European landscape (1)

- Dutch society, one of the oldest immigration countries in the European context, traditionally considered as tolerant of the “other”, has recently seen this perspective succumb to new nationalistic agendas of a “growing minority”.

- Germany, despite the presence of millions of “migrants” started slowly, only after its reunification, to assert its role as a migration country and it is now involved in the challenging process of accepting its multiethnic composition.

- Italy, after a long and important tradition of out-migration, has in the last 25 years been forced to cope with a rapid change of roles: in the common perception, this tremendous transformation has not been viewed as a demonstration of the power of attraction exerted by the national economy, but as proof of the failure to manage migratory flows.

- In Estonia, one of the most significant problems is that of Soviet-era immigrants who lost the citizenship in the restored Republic of Estonia, becoming strangers in the country where they were been living for a long time.
The diversity of “Diversity” in the European Landscape (2)

- The concept of “diversity” has different contents and meaning in the various national contexts, mirroring the peculiarity of each country’s nation-building process, its migratory history and the current political framework which gives special emphasis to particular issues and topics.

- Common is the issue of how to manage the inclusion of individuals not selected according to their skills and cultural characters.

- The category of TCNs, has often proved to be very problematic, providing no empirical evidence of the data on an observational level, and unable of identifying the main victims of discrimination and exclusion.

- The need to resort to this category may even artificially build problems and shape practices, with an outcome exactly opposite to that of creating an European integrated society.
The “Unresolved Paradox”
of the European Legacy (1)

Contrary to the Settlement Model, typical of the American experience, the European Temporary Work Model:

- Exhibits the “aversion” to the prospect of a stable settlement of immigrant families and communities

- Contains within itself the reasons for legitimizing a differential treatment towards the “Guest Workers”
  - by limiting their access to social security systems
  - denying them political rights
  - encouraging their “natural” concentration in the lower layers of the professional stratification
The “Unresolved Paradox” of the European Legacy (2)

The temporary work model contained within itself the reasons for:

- Legitimizing a differential treatment towards the “Guest Workers” and postpone the problem of the inclusion of non-nationals in the community of citizens…

- …but also producing an overrepresentation of immigrants and minorities in the categories at risk of exclusion, evidencing
  - “what is not working” in the policies of inclusion and of individual empowerment
  - a strategic question for the survival of democracy and the development of knowledge economies

- and giving up the opportunity to benefiting from their contribution to the long-term economic, social and institutional development of the European society
The “Unresolved Paradox” of the European Legacy (3)

The European approach to immigration is traditionally characterized by the “schizophrenic” attempt to bind together two contradictory philosophies:

- The “economicistic” philosophy on which the systems of entry (and stay) are regulated, explicitly or implicitly based on the idea of complementarity between autochthonomous and immigrant labour.

- The philosophy of solidarity and equal opportunities, consistent with its historical focus on human rights, that has supported the extension to foreign workers and their family member a wide set of rights and protective measures, transforming guest workers into “denizens”.
At the Core of the European Paradox in Managing Migration

- In the European context, the entry of migrants has been traditionally conceived to face specific staff or skills shortages and therefore it has been demand-driven and conceived to face specific staff or skills shortages.

- As a consequence, the entries have been led to severe phenomena of segregation and over-qualification, and have been discouraging the investment in the migrants human capital development.

- While appearing useful in the short term, this model could in time result in social and economic costs for receiving countries, if not managed with an eye on the future and on its overall sustainability.

- Moreover, it has generated an imbalanced model of integration, inhibiting migrants involvement in the social and political life of their hosting communities.
Workers Activity, Employment and Unemployment rates in Italy, by citizenship (2016)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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## 15-24 year-old NEET rate in Italy, by citizenship, gender and condition (2016)

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<tr>
<td>Totale</td>
<td>16.9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totale NEET</strong></td>
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<td>28.2</td>
<td>19.0</td>
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The Approach to Labour Migrants (1)

- Entry and work permits continued to be generally issued only if no native or already resident worker is available for the same job, according to the principle of complementarity.

- TCN workers are perceived as a possible solution in front of:
  - population ageing (in almost all countries)
  - scarce internal mobility (e.g. Hungary, Sweden)
  - specific job vacancies/shortages (e.g. Italy, Finland), particularly in healthcare sector (e.g. Estonia, The Netherlands, Sweden); specific employers’ requirements (e.g. Sweden, Poland)
  - significant flux of out-migration of young and educated workers (e.g. Hungary, Estonia, Poland)

- In some countries the permit to stay is even linked to the original employer or job (Estonia, Poland), inhibiting occupational and professional mobility.

- Also in countries which have adopted a liberal migration policy (e.g. Sweden) the possibility of entry continues to be subordinated to a specific employer request.
The Approach to Labour Migrants (2)

- Equal opportunities are often considered as the main pillar of DM practices, with a special focus on some categories of workers (e.g. Roma in Hungary, Soviet-era migrants in Estonia, humanitarian migrants in Sweden, Moluccans in The Netherland,…)

- Special programs to retain foreign students and/or to attract highly educated migrants are more and more diffused (e.g. The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal)

- In the countries experiencing relevant flux of out-migration, the issue of attracting and retaining foreign talents has gained a place in the public debate (e.g. “smart migration policy” in Estonia; Hungary)

- Insertion models differ significantly, but discrimination (negative or positive) is everywhere a consequence of the process of social and institutional construction of TCNs’ role

- The issue of SKC recognition is usually marginal or completely absent from the public agenda, whereas the awareness of the advantages provided by DM practices is scarce
The Role of Immigration for a Smart and Inclusive Growth

*Labor demand and shortages need to be properly monitored and assessed, but they also need to be “oriented” by means of specific initiatives and policies*

- Acknowledging the role of human capital and investing in the qualification and development of the (migrant) workers
- Holding back risk factors that could turn migrants into a disadvantaged group, supporting their long-term employability and their professional mobility
- Considering the migrant as the typical European citizen with a composite and versatile biography that need to be transformed in an empowering condition
- Stimulating the promotion of companies’ strategies aligned to the perspective of Diversity Management, transforming individual differences in an added value for the organizational performance and the local development
The Role of Immigration for the Common Wellbeing and Cohesion

A particular attention must be devoted to the process that “transforms” a temporary worker into a citizen, by:

- Transmitting the idea that being a citizen of a society should involve a greater awareness both of
  - one’s own rights – starting from the right to be treated as equal –
  - one’s duties – starting from fiscal morality and fare access to welfare –, including that of participating in the social, cultural and political life of the country, by contributing ideas, capabilities and projects

- Correcting the actual imbalanced integration model, by supporting the role of migrants in the public sphere thus enriching the quality of European democracies

- Promoting a shift in the common perception of migrants and of their role in the European landscape
How to reinvent the European integration model

It thus emerges the need of a new integration model, able to overcome the limits of the current one which is characterized by:

- A tendency to collectively represent TCNs’ work and economic role in terms of an asymmetric complementarity with autochthonous labour, a perception which is fuelled by – and simultaneously favours – immigrant concentration in specific, mainly low qualified, job sectors.

- An over-emphasis on the economic and labour dimension, perceived as the key element for justifying TCNs’ presence in the host countries, and paradoxically inhibiting the development of migrants’ potential and their participation in public life.
Advancing the exploitation of TCNs’ **formal, non formal and informal skills, knowledges and competences**, with particular reference to those linked to their migratory background

Improving awareness of the advantages provided by **Diversity Management practices** in different kinds of enterprises and organizations

Supporting **TCNs’ role as proactive individuals**, favoring the expression of their potential in both the economic and the civil spheres, with a particular emphasis on their contribution to voluntary non-profit organizations
DIVERSE - Main Lines of Activity

- Filling the knowledge gap about:
  - The recognition of Third Countries Nationals skills, knowledges and competences
  - Diversity Management Practices implemented by profit, public and non-profit organizations
  - Third Countries Nationals civic involvement and participation in voluntary organizations

- Designing and testing of a provisional multi-stakeholder (participated and transferable) audit scheme for TCNs’ SKC assessment, with particular focus on competences linked to the migratory background

- Activation of previously assisted TCNs as providers of public interest services within mainstream volunteer organizations

- Implementation of a rich calendar of dissemination and awareness raising initiatives, addressed to a heterogeneous spectrum of stakeholders (see www.ismu.org/diverse)
DIVERSE
Direct Beneficiaries

- Third Countries Nationals (TCNs)
- Organisations of the civil society
- Local communities of 10 EU countries

- Estonia
- Finland
- Germany
- Hungary
- Italy
- The Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Spain
- Sweden
Impact of SKC Recognition

- Gives TCNs the opportunity to test their skills against the labour market standards and to adjust to them, improves the process of staff recruitment.

- Reduces the risk to be employed in the informal/grey economy; reduces the degree of ethnicization of the labour market, and the risks of social dumping; improves TCNs self-esteem and their attitude towards the hosting society.

- Reduces time needed to become established in the labour market, speeds the path to qualified employment and allows the access to other learning opportunities.

- Contrasts the phenomenon of over-qualification; enhances TCNs career and salary mobility, supports the process of internationalisation.

- Retains skilled migrants enhancing their contribution to the financial sustainability of the social protection system.

- Contrasts the common assumption about TCNs role, permitting EU to benefit of a human capital that often was financed by the sending countries.
Critical Inferences

The line distinguishing EU and non-EU citizens, together with a series of other lines exiting from the national systems of civic stratification, constitutes a major factor of discrimination and of under-evaluation of migrants’ human capital.

Language, nationality, migratory seniority, social status are all factors concurring in producing discrimination, and generating a “sifting effect” between those who are able to get through the procedure and those who cannot, so questioning the level of “democracy” of European democracies.

TCNs represent a “mirror” betraying the inadequacies and shortfalls of our systems of recognition, and offer an emblematic example of the paradoxes generated by the application of the conditionality principle to the access to citizenship rights.

There emerges the need to break the vicious circle inhibiting SKC exploitation, spreading the awareness that recognition is a form of individual and social investment.

- Improve the process of recruitment and the capacity to attract talented employees, eventually from all over the world, according to a meritocratic logic.

- Improve the capacity of retention and the sense of belonging to the company; increase motivation and need for achievement.

- Improve the organizational climate, generate “inclusive organizations”; offer new solutions in terms of work and life balance; reduce absenteeism and burnout syndrome.

- Make the workplace more stimulating and attracting for all workers, improving the level of sensitiveness with regard to situations and problems of other people/countries and enriching the process of collective learning.

- Display the attention to specific (disadvantageous) categories (e.g. refugees, Roma), coherently with the policies of CSR.

- Offer to the employees the chance of international careers.
Impact of DM Practices on the Organizational Performance

- Improve the process of brainstorming and of problem solving
- Increase team’s performances and creativity thanks to TCNs experience of bridging cultures
- Support the process of knowledge transfer through the exchange of experiences acquired in different contexts; enrich the offer (e.g. in academic institutions)
- Enlarge the basin of potential clients and users, at local and international level; improve the capacity to meet specific needs expressed by the ethnic and immigrant communities and to offer products and services associated with the theme of “diversity”
- Enhance the brand/company image; permit to obtain awards and rewards
- Sustain the process of company’s internationalisation; open the possibility to externalise/delocalize some activities
Impact of DM Practices on Local Development

- Enrich the process of human capital development and training
- Attract talented migrants and eventually highly salaried workers
- Enhance the urban symbolic economy; feed social innovation
- Enhance the process of internationalisation of European economy, thanks to the availability of professionals with intercultural skills and international exposure
- Help to attract investments from abroad and to build transnational connectivity
- Constitute a primary vehicle for the full realization of citizenship rights in multiethnic societies, contributing to current processes of social integration and cohesion in the territories involved
Critical Inferences

- Mirroring common expectations towards migrants’ role, there is a very scarce attention – in both research, organisational practices and institutional initiatives – assigned to the “diversity” connected with the migratory background.

- Since migrants’ main “talent” is their high adaptability, there emerges a need for a reflection about the types of “diversity”, values and conceptions of the common good we intend to enact through diversity-oriented practices.

- The success of DM organisation practices is influenced by the attitude of the hosting community and by the institutional environment, but on the other side the same organisational behaviour contributes to shape the local context and its culture.

- As the idea of “managing diversity” is spreading globally under the influence of models from the Anglo-Saxon experience, there is a risk that this process of diffusion may generate indifference to local variations of “diversity at work”, and particularly to their European expressions.
Key Challenges to Face (1)

- Confront TCN migrants as **ideal types on which to text procedures and disposals** aimed to make every person a key actor to be involved in the process of construction of an integrated society, where each individual must be put in the condition to realize her/his life project, keeping together the self-achievement instances and the responsibility for the common wellbeing.

- Promote the **inclusion** and the **empowerment** of millions of individuals not selected according to their skills and cultural characters: the bet at stake is not how to “adjust” migrants’ profile to the professional needs defined according to standardized descriptions, but how to allow the emergence of competences and abilities not already inventoried.
Key Challenges to Face (2)

- Monitor the general quality of occupation and guarantee the essential dignity of each man and each woman according to the concept of “Decent Work”; contrast regressive processes and social dumping phenomena

- Give visibility and exploit the role of civil society actors in reinventing the European model of integration

- Enhance a profound change in the common perception of migrants and a greater awareness about the potential of the “Diversity Value”

- Finally, translate the “diversity” of the European society into a source of economic, social and cultural enrichment
To know more about the DIVERSE project:

- *The DIVERSITY VALUE. How to reinvent the European Approach to Immigration* edited by Laura Zanfrini
  (freely accessible at: http://www.ateneonline.it/zanfrini)

- www.ismu.org/diverse