

***Return Migration among Italian Migrants in Belgium***  
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*Objectives*

We try to capture attachment to home and integration to the host country affecting international return migration process by :

- examining the impacts of national legislations
- recovering the regional dimension of a spatial demographic system where return migration is a dynamic component

*Sources*

We combine origin-data with destination-data concerning the Italian-Belgian migratory relationship.

On the origin-side, we have had direct access to the Register of Italian population abroad A.I.R.E. operated by the Italian Government.

On the destination-side, we have obtained data relating to Italian Migrants from the Belgian Population Register (GéDap - UCL).

*Method*

We develop an empirical model structured along three lines sketched above :

- a. evaluating the demographic profile of Italian migrants in Belgium by sex and age
- b. measuring Italian immigrants' answer to Belgium's legislation changes on access to citizenship
- c. integrating return migration into a multiregional system to be able to consider all interdependencies between vital and migratory behaviour

*Results*

a.

The increase in the female-to-male ratio marks transformations in the migratory strategy of the family in favour of an individual migration.

b.

The Gross Naturalization Rate is a synthetic index allowing to analyse the effects produced by changes in legislation on naturalization (in Belgian case, from a Gastarbeiter approach toward an European integration model).

c.

Two demographic systems are simulated :

- national : Italy – Belgium
- regional : Sicily - rest of Italy - Wallonia – rest of Belgium

following two hypotheses : 1. integration : immigrants adopt the demographic regime of destination region ; 2. separation : immigrants keep the demographic regime of origin region.

*Conclusions*

Immigrants' assimilation into the host society has a regional profile : the relationship between their attachment to home and length of stay may be so weak that the ties of their origin may become dominant.