

THE ANALYSIS OF THE CONTEXTS OF RE-USE AND THE METHODOLOGY OF TRANSFER

Following a brief description of the different contexts of re-use of products of the project with a desk type analysis of the reference scenarios typical of Emilia Romagna, Sicily, Offenach (Germany), Alsace (France) and Switzerland, on the following items: percentage of foreign population in this territory, its origin and place in the economy, knowledge of the local language as a prerequisite for the job, offering language courses by the companies willing to hire workforce.

EMILIA ROMAGNA

The percentage of foreign residents on 1/1/2011 was 11.3% of the population. At the level of Italian territorial distribution, the incidence is the highest, followed by Umbria, Lombardy and Veneto. 14.5% of total foreign residents in Emilia-Romagna was born on Italian territory: the 'second generation' grows at higher rates than the overall foreign population and, since the phenomenon of immigration in our country from abroad is relatively recent, foreigners born in Italy are for the most part still minors. In Emilia-Romagna we need to signal a generational imbalance which is the result of more than 30 years of decline in fertility that, among other things, happened temporally earlier than the rest of Italy and that, in recent years, has also stopped thanks to the fertility of immigrant women: in a situation of aging of the population and limited generational replacement of classes in working age, more space for insertion of immigrants can be created. The fact that Emilia-Romagna is not only attracting more and more strangers, but it also continues to attract a substantial part of migration within the country, may indicate precisely the presence of a situation of 'vacuum' where immigrants have less difficulties entering.

Foreign nationals have settled mainly in the provinces of Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena and Bologna. The main countries of origin of the residents are Morocco (14.58%), Romania (13.11%) and Albania (12.69%). Among the top twenty nationalities in terms of presence in the region the top female-dominated nationalities are Ukraine, Poland and Moldova.

In 2009 in the Emilia-Romagna a total of 308,685 workers and foreign workers were occupied with employment contracts. Of these, 26.2% is placed in the industry (which includes: food, textiles, leather, wood, paper, petroleum, chemicals, rubber, general processing, metal, mechanical, electrical, transport, other industries). The we have 13.5% in transport, 12.2% in construction, 9.4% in agriculture. The countries of origin most represented in the employment are: Romania, Morocco, Albania, and China. There are not only workers: according to data from Infocamere - Chamber of Commerce, on

31/12/2009 the foreign owners of firms were 31,101 i.e. 7.3% of all active businesses in Emilia-Romagna. The sectors where foreigners most start up are the buildings, followed by trade and manufacturing activities. As for the countries of origin most represented in sole proprietorships, we find Albania, Morocco, China, Romania. A significant proportion of foreigners work in the black economy and this is a phenomenon that is sometimes intertwined with that of illegal immigrants without a residence permit, but sometimes it is distinct, since the figures are ok from an administrative standpoint, but not in terms of legal employment. In any case, it is fair to say that most of the adult foreign workers have a regular employment. This regional figure is still higher than the national average, confirming the fact that the production system of Emilia-Romagna is a key driver in the activation of migration flows.

There are no obligations or minimum requirements of the Italian language that are valid for all companies who employ foreign workers. Considering the level of proficiency of a language a pre-requisite to employment is up to each company. It has to be noted that in general, foreign workers are hired for low-skilled jobs, so companies do not have specific expectations with respect to knowledge of the Italian language because they need to learn simple and repetitive work activities that can be taught and learned even with low levels of knowledge of Italian: it happens that a large percentage of foreign workers learn the Italian right in the workplace. On December 9, 2010 came into force the Decree of 06.04.2010, which provides, for non-EU citizens older than 14 who want a long stay residence permit for EC, the obligation to demonstrate that they possess a level of knowledge of Italian at least corresponding to level A2 of the Common European Framework for language proficiency approved by the Council of Europe. The level is assessed by a test divided into three parts: understanding a written text, listening, and a written exam. This obligation, although not directly aimed at forcing the attendance of language courses, has seen a dramatic increase of the number of participants to the many free language courses in the area. In Emilia-Romagna the exams are coordinated by the Prefect and from February to May 2011 over 3,800 foreigners sat the test. 70% of them were promoted, and this goes to show the fact that the Italian language courses for foreigners in the region work well. Over 7000 applications were submitted, but only about 5600 were valid. The tests were conducted in 258 sessions at the 30 permanent regional centres in the region.

There are no official statistics concerning the Italian language courses offered by companies to their foreign workers. It is to be noted that generally companies invest in training of more high-skilled profiles and roles than "simple and repetitive jobs in which foreign workers are usually employed.

The businesses have the opportunity to have their workforce access Italian courses in two ways: a) fully paid by the company, b) funded by the province or region of origin through the European Social Fund. In the latter case, the funding accessed by the company usually follows the De Minimis rules, therefore the company contributes to the share of the cost of the courses through the "lost income" which is generated by the attendance to these courses by the worker during the working hours. The contributions are therefore not cash. As a general rule we can say that it is the initiative of individuals, namely the companies themselves, which defines whether or not there is the possibility for foreign workers to attend Italian courses. It must be noted that, in general, companies prefer to invest on the technical expertise necessary for these workers and not on the knowledge of Italian.

SICILY

The most recent surveys confirm a very limited presence of migrants in Sicily than the Italian average and in other southern regions. The immigrants register by the ISTAT as residents in Sicily in 2008 were 2.3% of the total population and 2.9% of the immigrant population resident in Italy, with a total of 114,632 foreigners. Following EU enlargement, since 2007, the first residential community in Sicily has become the Romanian one (17.8%), followed by the Tunisian (15.1%), Moroccan (9.6%), Sinhalese (8%) and Chinese (4%). The migrants are concentrated in major urban areas, so the provinces of Palermo, Catania and Messina take in more than the half of the foreign residents. With regard to gender composition, in 2007, there was an overtaking of the female component (52.6% in 2008). The largest community of migrants is the Romanian with over 40,000 people spread across the region, followed by Tunisian (over 16,000), Moroccans (over 12,000) and Sinhalese (over 10,000). The employment of migrants is distributed unevenly among the various economic sectors, with a high propensity to be used by agriculture, fisheries and trade, while activities such as home care and housing are less receptive to the migrant labour in Sicily than elsewhere in Italy. 72% of foreigners in Sicily is employed in agriculture or low-tech manufacturing sectors. In Sicily, English is still the most used language by foreigners, even if the obligations related to the Decreto Legge 04.06.2010 (which grants an EC long-term residence permit for those who have passed a test of proficiency of the Italian language) increased the number of immigrants able to communicate in Italian. In fact, starting from January 2011, almost all Sicilian provinces have scheduled Italian language courses required by the decree. In particular, the people responsible for the university of the province of Agrigento, have illustrated the initiative to sign a Memorandum of Intent with the University for Foreigners of Siena, in order to promote courses for the receiving of certificates of

knowledge of the Italian language for foreigners. The Regione Sicilia last May through the Department of Family, Social and Work Policies- Department of Labour – Servizio II Emigration and Immigration Service issued a public notice dedicated to the presentation of projects for the spreading of the knowledge of the Italian language among non EU citizens legally present in Italy with total funds of 229.300 €. The Department for Social Policies of the Province of Palermo in the last 10 years has promoted a series of initiatives for the social inclusion of immigrants in Sicily particularly with the project (approved in 2010) “Multipurpose Centre of the Province of Palermo for immigrants” in Palazzo Orlando to provide career orienteering services, language classes, legal assistance, and cultural mediation activities to foreigners in the territory. Companies that organize and make Italian courses for their own foreign employees are a few, and the courses are not handled by specialized and qualified professionals: the reason is that, usually the foreign staff in local companies cover low-skilled roles, and therefore language courses are not a priority.

The ALSACE

France has nearly 5 million immigrants living in the metropolitan area, which accounts for 8,2% of the total population, with a situation of equal distribution between men and women. Of these, 3.5 million are foreigners, while 1.5 million have become French by naturalization or marriage, then there are 500,000 foreign immigrants, born in France to foreign parents, including those become French with the coming of age. A particular situation is that of those people seeking asylum. In 2010, France granted the refugee status to 10,300 people (from Mali, Iraq, Iran, Somalia and Eritrea); therefore More than 160,000 people with a refugee status are currently living in France. The French situation is different from that of neighbouring nations for two reasons: it is the destination of immigration since the mid-1800, and it is a country that does not currently have population problems. The peculiarity of France are the large numbers: for example, there are 13.5 million French people of foreign origin (22.5% of the population) if we consider the origin of at least one parent. The composition of the foreign population is as follows: 41% from Africa (predominantly from Algeria), 39.2% from Europe, 13.7% from Asia (predominantly from Turkey) and 6.1 % from America and Oceania.

In Alsace, the immigrant population represents the 7.4% of the total (1.8 million inhabitants in 2009), the region is third place among French regions for foreign presence, with a clear majority of people from Turkey (22.5%), followed by Germany, Morocco, Algeria, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia (North Africa, therefore, actually accounts for 36.3% of total foreigners). The Turkish population in Alsace represents 40% of Turks in France. The percentage of people from Eastern Europe is also increasing (Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Armenia, Bosnia). Although Alsace is one of France's most industrialized regions (with small and medium sized companies in the engineering, chemical and plastics, food processing, automotive fields), Alsatian manufacturing companies employ foreign personnel only marginally who are, among other things, often second or third generation. The sectors with a large foreign labour are in fact the construction, cleaning, security, catering, hotels, and temporary work. In France there is the so-called "contract of welcome and integration" to promote the integration of foreigners admitted for the first time in France and who intend to reside permanently; public authorities that oversee the integration of French finance courses. The French Ministry of Education certified at different "DELF" levels the knowledge of the French language as specified by the European Framework for languages. For businesses there is no real legal obligation, as for other instances, to provide the language tools to their workers, however, there is

the opportunity to access funding for language training courses in collaboration with associations that work in the French territory for the integration of the foreign workers.

THE OFFENBACH REGION

In 2010 there were 6.75 million foreigners in Germany, broken down as follows: more than 1,600,000 Turks, followed by Italians (over 500,000), Poles (over 400,000), Greek, Croatian, Russian, Serbian, Austrian, Bosnian, Dutch. The Offenbach region has the highest percentage of foreigners in Germany. In Hesse the percentage of Turkish population is equal to 23.9% of foreigners, followed by Italians (8,6%). Offenbach has 11,080 companies registered by the Chamber of Commerce: of these 31.8% are involved in business to business and marketing 27.9%, 10.3% transport and communications, 9% belong to the housing and financial sector, only 5,1% is manufacturing.

Among manufacturing companies, 102 are involved in building engines and 38 fall in the chemical industry. In the region there is a high concentration of companies involved in industrial design and graphics, for the presence of the HfG University (University of Art and Design), as well as by virtue of a long tradition of typography and conditions favorable to young entrepreneurs.

In Germany, only immigrants from countries outside the European Union, the European Economic Area or Switzerland need a residence permit which, for long terms, requires additional bureaucratic steps. Foreigners in Germany can only work if their residence permit provides so. Only permanent permission is not limited by time, but requires a permit of residence of at least five years and people still need to respond to numerous additional requirements, including a good knowledge of the language, and only in case of highly skilled workers there can be an exception in relation to the full compliance with all requirements. To obtain a residence permit, and therefore be allowed to work, people must have attended a so-called "integration course". These courses are composed of a language programme and a part of orientation for a duration of 645 lessons, which can become 945. The reality however is that many immigrants remain in Germany for years without having learned even the most basic linguistic formulas. In the 50s German companies took foreign workers as "guests", with the assumption that they would return to their countries of origin at the end of the contract, thus operating without any linguistic investment on them. If they lost their job, they had no chance of finding another one. Today the figure of the foreign worker who is not formally qualified but very skilled due the long field experience, over 50, and unable to speak in German still

persists and is joined by younger foreign workers that, if of second generation speak the language perfectly, if of first attend classes for the integration, in addition to their professional training that enables them to have more possibility to keep they job.

SWITZERLAND

Foreign workers are a key component of the Swiss population. They represent about 23% of it and between 25% and 30% of the active workforce. The role of immigration in Switzerland has changed over the 60 years following the end of World War II. From an early stage when immigration was very encouraged, we have moved to a progressive regulation of inflows. Now there is a complex system of residence and work permits. The most recent approach is the "approach of the 3 circles", aimed at selecting immigrants based on their origins and facilitating the arrivals from neighbouring countries (1 cycle), then from the other EU countries (2 circle) and only at last from countries outside the EU (3 circle). During the last decade of the 90s the measures that allowed the family reunion for long-term residents and to remain even in case of job loss led to a gradual stabilization of immigrants and an increase in the share of foreign nationals born in Switzerland. Only in the late 90s, however, the Swiss legislation finally admitted the need for a genuine policy of integration into local society. Also the profound economic transformation at the national level in the last 30 years has resulted in a progressive stratification of the foreign population, generating various problems of integration. Only citizens who come from neighbouring countries are considered "manageable" under the so-called "cultural proximity" in the newly-arrived. But the proportion of immigrants from countries outside the EU has also increased and is now close to 9%.

Currently, the flows are mostly directed to the service sector, but industry still absorbs a large proportion of foreigners, in some cases up to 80% of the workforce.

We can consider the Swiss context relatively favorable to a "fluid" integration of the immigrant workforce, but there are some contradictions that create problems between the components of the native and immigrant labour. Meanwhile, there are large horizontal segregations of foreigners due to the occupational specialization of certain ethnic groups and nationalities. The segmentation of the communities of foreigners hampers social mobility. The growing competition in the labour market, due to the deregulation and weak contractual protection of wages, causes pressures which give rise to racism-oriented discomfort and misunderstandings in some members of the workforce.

Nevertheless, the integration in the workplace is a crucial instance of the broader social integration, even if it is an issue on which there is a general lack of awareness in

Switzerland. In the years after 2000 the integration has become even more difficult because of the greater articulation of the workforce and the complexification of the need for communication and interaction related to organizational changes. The Fordist model has been replaced by new models that require a broader skills base and flexibility in terms of relational skills and ability to adapt to changes. The industry has begun to implement the concepts of "lean organization" and "learning organization" .

It is increasingly essential to master both written and spoken language, and the adherence to corporate codes of increasing complexity is now required. As a result, immigrants have swelled the ranks of the unemployed and assumed an ever greater social exclusion, expressing frustration over the increased segmentation and segregation. But immigration remains a vital resource for the structural health and wealth in Switzerland, even if the natives perceive it almost exclusively as a gradual process of assimilation of foreigners to the local context, that only by virtue of this adaptation can play a complementary role in the community and at work. As long as the interactions between natives and foreigners were reduced, and the foreigners had the opportunity to climb the social ladder, there have been no major problems, but in recent times the phenomenon of segmentation and segregation erased the possibility of horizontal and vertical mobility not only of the first, but often the second generation of immigrants, creating a widespread sense of discrimination, in the early stages of qualification and selection for the access to the labour market and during the career.

The experimentation

The experimentation was conducted in four manufacturing companies in the Emilia Romagna Region; in Sicily 19 immigrant workers and 12 local workers of the building and services sectors were involved in inter-company training activities (the manufacturing sector in Sicily does not have significant numbers, often far from the average not only nationwide, but in Southern Italy as well); in Germany 3 manufacturing companies were involved; while in France 11 workers from different sectors (manufacturing, building, high tech) were involved in inter-company training. More in-depth analysis of the single cases can be found on the CD.

THE TRIAL IN EMILIA ROMAGNA

The underlying theme of experimentation in Emilia Romagna is represented by the trainer who performed it, Adil El Marouakhi, director of the Intercultural Centre Mondinsieme Foundation, established by the Municipality of Reggio Emilia in 2001 with the aim of working on the processes of cultural integration, working with both Italians and foreigners to help cohesion and social participation.

The experiment was performed in 4 manufacturing companies whose characteristics are briefly outlined below in relation to the activities performed.

CASE 1

The company specializes in the recovery of recyclable materials, has 75 employees, including 50 foreigners (i.e. more than 65%), almost all employees of a cooperative "outsourcee" dealing with everything which is not office work.

The majority of foreigners are from Sub-Saharan Africa (Senegal and Burkina Faso), Eastern Europe and Colombia. They are all first generation immigrants, who joined by word of mouth and kinship (the latter often caused problems so now the company no longer hires relatives of workers already inserted). The immigrant workforce is considered by the management a great resource, both because the Italians do not have any more candidates to enter the workforce, and because immigrant workers are "hard workers", veritable workaholics.

The limit of migrant workers, according to the direction, is their difficulty in making common sense-oriented organizational initiatives, in fact they merely obey the instructions without asking why, and without changing their behaviour even when it might be better to act otherwise. Another problem is the language (although the company has organized base courses of Italian) especially for safety-related behaviours: although training has been made in that sense, immigrant workers tend to underestimate its importance. Until the implementation of the Facilitator the figure that intervened in those cases was the management with the young boss who has seen the utility of the Facilitator inside the company mostly in the area of safety and to communicate the "organizational common sense".

The search for consensus on the role of Facilitator was made involving over 30 workers with a survey whose aim was to monitor the conditions in the company, the expectations of the new figure and the awareness of the importance of helping to build a climate of cooperation and well-being in the workplace. From this extended involvement it has been concluded that the margins of improvement reported by foreign workers could also have been given by local colleagues (e.g. lack of a bath for women, dangerous pedestrian routes, request of shifts in some departments, the cold in winter).

Specific problems related to multiethnicity emerge where there are:

- Complaints relating to failure to offer Italian language courses designed exclusively for employees (who learned Italian has learnt it directly in the workplace);
- The sense of loneliness that comes from not understanding the language used by others (most of the workers speak French at work) and the risks of misunderstandings and arguments always linked to the use of the native language that excludes some of the interlocutors in case of coexistence of multiple ethnic groups (in the company 5 languages are spoken: Italian, French, English, Wolof, Arabic. All workers report that they use the native language to talk about personal things, though aware of triggering uncomfortable situations and that the use of Italian avoids professional and personal misunderstandings);
- The difficulties of conciliating Ramadan and prayers with periods of peaks of production.

Among the positive aspects we have the direct relationship between owners and workers which may lead to high flexibility even in the presence of family commitments, informal relationships, full availability to exigent circumstances, attention to the personal

needs or those of the family, respect of religious practices and own culture in all its aspects. The signals and the language of safety are made clear by signs in foreign languages to facilitate the use of protective equipment and adoption of the best practices for risk reduction and prevention of accidents.

The company has trained 3 employees to the role of Facilitator of intercultural relations. Among them the former Vice-President of the Islamic Community of Parma has stood out for his distinct attitude, inclination, and personal charisma, so he has already been informally given a function of reference for the specific needs of foreigners in the company, which supports, in the workplace and outside, paperwork, finding accommodation, etc..

In this company, the Facilitator is definitely a Facilitator of communication, as well as a Facilitator of work and organizational learning to support business processes and as a Facilitator of relationships to overcome cultural misunderstandings and problems that arise from interpersonal relations. This is a figure who can serve as examples to their countrymen, as an integrated resource in the existing organizational culture, and encourage the same positive evolution in his working colleagues of foreign nationality. One of the most significant results of the experiment, reached by consensus, was the "legitimation" of the French as the language of mediation in the company as an alternative to the dialects and minority languages, with the agreement that the use of it has no segregation or exclusion intent of those who do not speak it, but rather the facilitation of communication and relations between natives and foreigners and among foreigners of different languages.

CASE 2

The company produces anti-rust products, enamels, alkyd, polyurethane, epoxy and acrylic single and two component products, both traditional and high solids. It has 25 employees, 4 of which are of foreign origin (3 from Ghana and 1 from Togo) but the 80% of Italian workers is in geographical mobility from Southern Italy.

Before the experiment, the frictions among Italian workers and workers from southern Africa were particularly acute, characterized by misconceptions and misunderstandings, with cases of accentuated absenteeism. The southern component of the workforce, that has also expressed its numerical and cultural dominance under the RSU in the company, always used the foreigners as "safety valve" for their own experience of oppression endured as immigrants from southern Italy. The result of the power of the southern workers produced a paradoxical creation of alliance between foreign and local workers. Foreign workers signalled as particularly unpleasant the recurring use of derogatory and offensive terminology to address them especially with jokes that often bordered in the offense and personal vilification. The management, after a first attempt to intervene directly to resolve the issue of misunderstandings due to the different origins of their workers, preferred to avoid regular confrontation in order not to exacerbate the dynamics of conflict present in the company.

The safety rules were often ignored, partly because of lack of understanding and poor use of the Italian language.

The company has identified 2 Facilitators, one of which a partner, responsible for the entire production process, which has a constant and daily contact with the native and foreign labour, and a boy from Ghana who, even before being officially invested with the role, had always informally worked as a tutor for other foreign workers, so much so that they recognized him as an indispensable point of reference.

The training started from the valorization of workers' personal stories, by highlighting success stories, culminating in an agreement on strategies to overcome the limits of interculturality. The proposal, directly made from foreign workers, in accordance with the socio-Facilitator, was to create posters to hang in the company (in Italian and English, to emphasize that the problem affects everyone, and there's in someone right and someone wrong) to indicate the points that have a specific value-oriented meaning (e.g. "Fooling around is beautiful without offending", or "People have a name and you should use it when calling them")

CASE 3

The company is specialized in rubber molding for automotive, fitness, pumps and water treatment in the Hydraulic, Pneumatic, Pharmaceutical, and Agricultural field. In the molding department there are five Brazilians, a Ghanaian and three Italians.

Despite a good working atmosphere and a management very present and prone to informality, before the experiment frictions were on the agenda, as the company is based in a shed where there are other two companies, also with a multi-ethnic

workforce. The workers of the three companies have direct and daily contacts, such as operating shared machinery or managing common waste recycling. In these contacts the interculturality does not help because also the language becomes a triggering factor for conflicts and the respect for the rules becomes a sort of "cross border" issue. The problematic relationship among the foreign components or between native and foreign workers was to be found, before the trial, among employees of different companies, rather than inside the same company, forced to live together and share a relationship of proximity and equipment.

The company owner has identified the factory supervisor of Brazilian origin as a Facilitator. A linguistic approach was shared with him to make the rules due in all circumstances, regardless of boundaries. One of the proposals that emerged from the trial was, therefore, the design and implementation of signs in Italian, English, Arabic and Brazilian, to hang in the hall shared by the 3 companies, with reference to standards of good relations based on mutual respect.

The proposal of the workers and the Facilitator has given strength to the owner in negotiating the terms of coexistence with the holders of the other two groups present in the plant: the training has shown how workers are not always a source of problems but they themselves are, when asked, a resource for solving them. From the experimentation has also emerged that the language difference is not always a handicap, but it may sometimes, if properly valorized, be a tool for peaceful coexistence.

CASE 4

The company manufactures industrial body components for fridges and classic wheeled transport, and has a total of 60 workers, 40 of whom are involved in the production. Of these, 9 are foreigners (3 Senegalese, 2 Sri Lankans, 1 Spanish, 1 Bosnian, 1 Albanian and 1 Kosovar). Over the next 6 months the company will experience a general reorganization, with the reduction to a single production centre, and a second plant which will become home to the warehouse, assembly and shipments.

In case of problems the management, in the person of the owner's wife, used to intervene. In the company there used to be attitudes of rebellion, disagreement, misunderstanding of instructions in Italian and a high turnover of foreign workers. The employees, even when they possessed the technical skills needed by their role, refused to exercise the leadership towards the subordinated workers of their department, for

fear of creating frictions (e.g. in the management of compulsory leave), delegating the most uncomfortable aspects to the owners. What used to lack was a culture of dialogue, confrontation, leadership. The fact that a woman used to have to deal with these unpleasant aspects was a source of further friction since, especially for the foreign staff, it is difficult to recognize a certain authority in a feminine figure.

The work inside the company is very rigid and fragmented, characteristics ascribed to the majority of metal working firms: this does not encourage interpersonal relationships, which are particularly critical among the staff coming from Eastern Europe, characterized by "balkanized" historical relationships and that have seen, in their experience of migration, a worsening of their professional status, while the African staff, younger, shows more enthusiasm and willingness to learn because they have no previous experience or organizational reference models. During the trial activities, an initial diffidence was detected toward the figure of the trainer, who was suspected of being the spokesman of the owners and their instrument, and only a constant confrontation allowed the workers to overcome this issue, leading to good results both with the production manager (Italian, young, open to dialogue and consensus building), and his vice (of Spanish origin, but who has lived in Italy for a long time). At the end of the training, the common goal identified by the workers involved to try and enlarge the area of confrontation. A special target was to avoid the personalism, and instead try to always have as a reference point a broader horizon of relations that ignores the individual and aims to build a good atmosphere of work. It should also be noted that, thanks to the activities of training made, the company has decided to implement a language course for an employee of foreign origin with difficulty in reading the data sheets in order to prevent production mistakes, understand the economic consequences of such mistakes and take full responsibility.

THE TRIAL IN GERMANY

The trial was made in 3 manufacturing companies whose characteristics related to the actions implemented are described hereafter.

CASE 1

The company manufactures soap, and the owners are already at the fifth-generation. It employs 90 people (75% women), with foreigners from Italy, Spain, Turkey, Greece, Morocco, Russia, Colombia. 75% of them are first-generation immigrant. The production manager reports that it is gender that has a great impact on daily life in the company, given that 95% of staff are female. The levels of integration, both for workers and first and second-generation, are extremely varied, and not only about the language skills: the workers of the second generation have a more professional experience related to vocational training whereas the first-generation can claim expertise on the field. The conflicts are mostly related to a different view of everyday life. The company tried several times to provide training, but without success, and the workers never gave their willingness to spend time outside of working hours to learn, and on the other hand, the company is not favorable to "sacrifice" working hours to training. Usually in case of conflict (which occurs even if the rules and areas of activity are very clearly defined), the way chosen of intervention is to separate the contenders, until the person in charge has discussed with them the situation and made a mediation. The majority of workers is over 50 and has worked with the company for over 30 years, so the corporate identity and sense of belonging is very strong; organizational conflicts are very much related to the work flows (rotation of the positions in production) and to holidays. Each worker refers to his/her manager to solve a conflict. Because it is a family business (the majority of workers enter because someone already working in the company has referenced them and often whole families work in the company) maintaining order and productivity are the main focus of the organization, which also pays particular attention to the individual needs when it is necessary to operate mediations.

Seven workers have been trained (2 Italians, 1 Spanish, 1 Turk, 1 Russian, 1 Serbian and 1 German, who is the "team leader"). The contents of the training were focussed, according to what was pointed out as perceived needs, on the understanding of the migratory phenomenon and on the importance of the language also to gain access to vocational training useful to get a certification as specialized worker, on the cultural differences (culture as a system of values, prejudice) on life in a multicultural company, (the importance and the requisites to have a good atmosphere in the workplace and the

situations which hamper communication and solution strategies of critical situations in the firm). The training was conducted through open discussions, role plays, and focus groups. The atmosphere during the training was very open and communication very fluid. All workers recognized in the German leader (although male and younger) the potential "Facilitator" for his abilities and aptitudes, proven in the field, toward the development of positive ethnic relations. Since he knows very well the flow of production he can support workers in organizing their jobs better, and not only, because he is also able to promote an atmosphere of cooperation and reduce conflict. He is able to explain the rules to other workers, including those related to safety, hygiene and health at work. In fact, the training just underlined the awareness of the importance of the role of Facilitator both for the workers and the Facilitator himself, who already existed in the company although informally, and at the same time provided an opportunity to bring out the strengths and weaknesses in the organization of internal work, and communication needs. All participants gave positive feedback on the experience of training, which seemed to them more of a conversation than a real training session, and the sense of belonging to the community of the enterprise workforce came out stronger.

CASE 2

It is a chemical plant belonging to a large multinational company with its headquarters in the U.S., which has over 400 employees on site, with 15% of foreign workers from Italy, Spain, Poland, Russia and Colombia, 30% of first generation; the personnel is qualified and work in production (engineers) or in administration. Seven workers were involved (1 Italian, 1 Swiss, 2 Poles, 3 Germans). The plant has stood there for a long time but it has seen a succession of different companies that have always produced hair dyes; workers in production have always followed their normal turnover, each time adapting to the different company profiles. Most of the 200 production workers is German and comes from the region where the company is located.

Saxon recorded a low number of immigrants and even in larger cities it shows the characteristics of provincial life-type and foreign workers are forced to adapt to this provincial climate and "embrace" the local traditions. The plant employs 19 foreign workers, all with responsibilities. The multinational company invests heavily in the training of managers, even in terms of conflict management and communication strategies. In any case, the contrasts are not tolerated, but immediately cut off and resolved by the management. The plant manager believes that the training given in terms of diversity management is already sufficient, covering all issues of conflict management, as these issues are part of the "Set of 10 Rules" of the enterprise. Workers in production are much more marginally involved in the formation and the company promotes a strong vertical internal mobility: there is strong support to people deemed suitable to grow with a very structured internal mentoring system. The production workers are older than the average and have considerable seniority. Foreign workers in the production are very rare and come after attending vocational training courses offered by the company itself. Two of those involved in the experiment are second generation, fully integrated in the Saxon way of life. The multi-ethnicity affects mostly the management, that is American, Eastern European, Italian, Taiwanese and South American, and must necessarily prove a great capacity for adaptation, in particular language interaction is very difficult. Most workers involved in the formation is less than 30 and has a low seniority. The sense of belonging to the company is strong because they know that their job is highly sought and the result of a strict selection. The few conflicts are related to differences in mentality rather than the organization of work, which is very structured and characterized by strong vertical hierarchy - everyone refers to the team leader for settling disputes.

Criticity is related to the fact that different departments of the plant live a separate life, as if they were different worlds. Workers do not meet even during breaks or lunch. During the rare occasions in which the worlds meet precious moments of exchange and comparison arise. Training is seen as an important moment and opportunity to "peek" into the world of colleagues. This situation does not recognize a real role of Facilitator, who takes on connotations linked to the informal resolution of disputes between colleagues interested in promoting a good working atmosphere. The training sessions focused on the following contents: the characteristics of the company (its particular history, that only local workers know. One of the older workers told to others the various steps associated with different business profiles that have followed over time in the management of the production); cultural differences (culture as a system of values, the values of belonging to the land and the host country, the prejudice); multicultural life in a company (the importance and prerequisites for a positive climate in the workplace, situations that hinder communication, strategies for solving critical situations in the company). The training was conducted through open discussions, techniques of "story telling", role plays, focus groups. The younger managers involved in the training took part with enthusiasm. Important feedback came from the only person employed in production, a young Saxon woman, who gave his colleagues the key to understanding cultural differences, so it can be identified as a potential Facilitator in business. The management seems far from the world of production, mainly because of lack of linguistic interaction that affects everyone, even the Germans. The cultural and generational distance does not allow managers to prevent conflicts before they explode. All participants found the topics discussed interesting, showing that they particularly enjoy role-play situations, which allowed them to do some soul searching in a funny as well as useful way.

CASE 3

The company designs, manufactures and trades electronic and microelectronic components for the automotive, communications, aerospace vehicles and transport. It is part of a multinational which has 2800 employees around the world, with its headquarters in the U.S. and offices in Asia, Egypt and Malta. The site of involved in the trial, located in central Germany, has 12 employees, 45% of whom are of foreign origin, mostly Lebanese and Indian, and 70% of employees are male. The core business of the establishment is the automotive sector. The workflow is standardized in all branches of the world and the assistant manager in Germany is responsible for supervising it and managing the interaction of several groups of workers of the "European Region" (including Egypt). The company, rigidly structured, with a strong vertical hierarchy, promotes a company policy against discrimination and harassment based on color, race, religion, nationality, sex, age or disability. Nevertheless, the construction of a good working atmosphere is a daily struggle. The critical point is reported on the fact that a rule does not prescribe the means to solve problems, indeed the very fact of establishing rules of behaviour can be a source of conflict. The cultural conflicts arise when people do not share the same opinions and cannot make case for their opinions, so that to put an end to the discussion, they resort to insult and the exchange of opinions is transformed automatically into conflict. At this point, different reactions occur depending on the ethnicity of workers: a German tends to follow a procedure designed to address their requests as required by company policy, Asians solve the problem outside the factory, African workers tend to close the communication, and so on. In any case, the result is a decrease in productivity caused by the deterioration of the working atmosphere. The problem common to workers involved in the experiment, all with responsibilities, is a good interaction with colleagues who live and work in other parts of the world, with different codes of communication, different perceptions of the principles of mutual respect, different skills and ways of respond to complaints. The role of the Facilitator in this company context, should focus precisely on the issue of prevention / resolution of conflicts, and could be acted out by team leaders, because they were invested with the role in virtue of their inclination to personal communication and intercultural latent skills.

Four workers were involved in the trial (the Lebanese assistant manager and 3 German team leaders), and the focus of the moments of dialogue and confrontation was the understanding of the other.

The assistant manager himself has lived as a migrant, having worked in many countries and is able to speak a multitude of languages but despite a degree in engineering

acquired in Germany, has struggled to find a job because of his Arabic surname: He began working as a simple worker in a chemical plant in a group of workers of Turkish origin, being in even greater difficulties for his not being Muslim. The participants were guided to think over the rules and emotions, especially on the different ways to express them depending on the different cultural background. The discussion has included the observation that, in a provincial context, the conflict can often "exit" the company and affect friendships and family relationships. The general feeling has led to the conclusion that to build a good team, people must find an "empathetic" way to approach their colleagues. A method emerged from the discussion and proposed by the group was to promote events and opportunities to give workers and management a chance to meet (e.g. basketball tournaments, opportunities to cook together, open days and so on). The person with the best characteristics to the profile of the Facilitator appeared to be the assistant manager himself (who aspires to be recognized as a leader, but at the service of his colleagues, and he already enjoys the respect and consensus needed to perform the role).

THE TRIAL IN SICILY

CASE 1 – INTER-COMPANY TRAINING

In Sicily, 19 native and 12 immigrant workers were involved in activities of inter-company training. As a result 5 Facilitators were trained. Although the project aimed at involving manufacturing companies, we had to face the fact that this type of business is rather scarce in Sicily (in the top sectors, namely textiles and clothing, food / beverage, leather, wood and furniture, there are significantly low numbers, often even very distant from the average of the South as a whole). Only involving other sectors, such as construction and services for business, therefore expanding the scope of the project, was it possible to reach the numbers needed to make a significant and valuable experimentation. Despite Sicily may be the closest and most natural "gateway" for certain kinds of immigrants, in fact, it really does not offer a large pool of labour, and the immigrant workforce mostly ends up on farms, cleaning and portering and, to a lesser extent, in construction companies. The fact alone that it was possible to conclude the trial is in itself a success, given the high turnover of employees. Despite the authors of the trial were referring to Confapi Sicily Syracuse, the seat was Confapi Sicily in Palermo, as that companies who welcomed the project were those who mainly invest on the territory of the regional capital. Another feature was represented by the mechanism of company

involvement in the trial, which was possible only through the mediation of labour consultants, who in the Sicilian provincial reality, represent consolidated reference points for small companies: they support the owners in the management of personnel, give advice on the recruitment of staff and even deal with the management of accounting. Through them nine companies were involved in the project (two industrial laundries, fruit and vegetable trading company, a food company, a sugar company, a company in the tourism sector, three in the building sector): they employ staff from Africa, Sri Lanka, Albania, Romania and Venezuela. Two of the nine companies, located in Syracuse, attended the training through a videoconference, located in the premises of Apisiracusa. The flexible schedule, close to business needs (with training on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning), and the modules of the project proved to be successful for the involvement of participants.

The macro-goal, pursued since the planning stage, was the need to divulgate the importance that the role of the Facilitator in multi-ethnic businesses could take, where it is especially important to develop a synergistic and integrated approach aimed at continuous improvement of the organization of work. The trainer of reference was an organizer of intercultural encounters of Tunisian origin, who facilitated the "culture of dialogue" among the immigrants themselves, even if different in culture and religion. He also provided an encouragement for the social integration as he placed himself as a reference that, if asked, can point the right way to follow in case of bureaucracy in a foreign land.

The training was focused on the following contents: soft skills (with particular focus on communication and management of intercultural relations), organization and finance (finalized to the transfer of organizational culture and sense of belonging to the company), safety culture (such as transfer the importance of legislation to other workers). The teaching methods were characterized by very sensible modules which favoured the practical and experimental aspects, rather than the sciolistic ones.

Employers who gave their availability to the training of workers reported, at the end, a clearer autonomy in their work cycle, growth in the sense of responsibility and belonging to the company and an acquired awareness that the training can be, for the workers, a tool of growth, knowledge and specialization.

THE TRIAL IN FRANCE

CASE 1 – INTER-COMPANY TRAINING

In France 11 workers of different nationalities were involved in inter-company training activities (7 French, 3 Cameroonians, 1 Moroccan), employed in companies of different sectors (manufacturing, construction, high tech). The companies reported common issues related to religious holidays, the linguistic misunderstandings (with consequences in terms of loss of time and lost productivity), tensions between neighbouring ethnic groups (e.g. employees of the former Yugoslavia).

The contents of the trial were provided with the aim to implement the role of the Facilitator in various companies, timing and planning the activities, the participants to be involved, the methodologies for monitoring and assessing the activities he can do inside the company. During the training, both the potential activities of the Facilitator and the techniques for the evaluation of his work were examined, including training for new recruits and meeting management.

The results of the trial showed that the Facilitator should:

- make his/her role clear, comprehensible and transparent including the details needed to contact him/her
- facilitate the social integration of newly hired foreign workers also creating/using a bilingual leaflet with the aim to better understand the role of the Facilitator
- facilitate the professional integration of newly hired foreign workers, contacting them to assess their needs and get the right people to meet them

The results demonstrated how it is better to use a non-directive method to relate to foreigners, using questionnaires with open questions, adopting an informal approach focused on active listening to create a positive bond. It has to be emphasized that the Facilitator should not substitute the selector. The Facilitator should then find the resources to solve potential problems, first contacting their superior to ensure the quality of welcoming of the colleagues, the cook (in the case of dietary restrictions), the safety officer and the company physician, in this case in order to ensure full understanding of the rules (for example through the use of pictograms). In any case, to be effective, the Facilitator should have brief meetings with their superior to identify training needs in accordance with the degree of experience and skills of foreign workers which he may have helped to bring out. In terms of cultural integration, the Facilitator should be well aware of those good practices required in the organization of travels, entertainment, social events, parties and gifts (e.g. to avoid alcohol and pork in particular cases). At the base of the work of the Facilitator there is the planning of regular meetings with the workers, also in order to explain them his/her role and function, in

addition to specific problems. From the trial emerged specific rules for the organization of these meetings, especially to ensure rapid transfer into practice of the decisions taken in these meetings. The Facilitator should evaluate his/her work annually through the use of simple grids of detection of the activity, making the results public, and in turn signalling his/her training needs. In the case of abandonment of employment, he/she must leave a written record of his/her job description, to facilitate the handover. The outcome of the trial, as far as the powers which the Facilitator must possess in order to exercise his/her role are concerned was: availability, interpersonal skills, openness to new cultural horizons, the spirit of observation, organizational skills, discretion, a good knowledge of the organization of the company and its social rules, the ability to find information, the propensity to report to his superior, the ability to persuade. The Facilitator, in general, must be perceived as a professional value and credited in the company where he/she operates, both among colleagues and superiors.

THE TRIAL IN SWITZERLAND

CASE 1

The trial was conducted in an organization of social services (caretakers of the elderly), which has 300 workers (99% of staff are women), 90% of foreign origin (coming from the Balkans and Eastern Europe, South America, and to a lesser extent Asia and Africa). The organization, created to facilitate the integration process of foreign (and Swiss) women at risk of exclusion from the labour market and society, acts as a meeting place for women and users of home care services and treatment but also between women from different cultural, linguistic, and religious groups. Today he/she is undergoing a period of transformation that has made training very useful: on one side he/she has to manage the growth and diversification of services, at the institutional level, interacting with local services and social care with an increasingly wide and varied number of users, on the other side he/she should adopt a policy of human resources capable of avoiding to minimize (or ignoring) the differences but rather to enhance them as a possible factor of organizational development and quality.

The progressive overcoming of the informality with which the Association was once managed (directly by migrant women), due to the increasing complexity of work processes and mandates, has reduced the space for the organization of side events (intercultural banquets and events, etc.) once made to integrate the various components of the workforce. For this, the Association has expressed the need to strengthen their intercultural competence, understood as ability of those who run and work in organizations to focus properly and face the relational situations in which people find themselves having to move beyond the patterns of their own culture.

The main objective of the intervention was to facilitate those cross cultural relations that occur in the internal organizational and the relationship with the users, and make them aware and productive. In operational terms, the training aimed to pave the way for the construction of cultural skills, seen as a shift from an "ethnocentric" approach of interpersonal relations (whether they are "hierarchical", collaboration or customer service) to an "etno-relative" approach open for the acceptance and integration of differences.

The trial involved 12 people who have key functions in various fields in the management of the relationships within the organization and between collaborators and users, namely the management (Chairman, Director and Head of Administration and Human

Resources), 2 coordinators of Cantonal Social Services and 7 office workers of the Association, partly active in the field.

The route, which used an experiential and reflective approach, was to encourage the learning of a series of behaviours, and the building of core competencies in sensitivity of intercultural relations: the ability to read the own belonging to a variety of contexts and roles and to identify the influence of native culture in the way we think and act, the ability to understand that also the behaviours of other people are culturally determined and to welcome differences as a reality with which to compare, the ability to relate with people bearers of different cultures in order to build shared and acceptable solutions to common problems, without taking for granted the solution suggested by our own or others' cultural belonging, the ability to manage change resulting from our interaction with the environment and with people from different cultures positioning ourselves in a critical but open and curious position, and build new horizons and inter-cultural references. The route used the biographical experiences of the participants and educational artefacts (including a video) as a source for cognitive elaboration by comparison and exchange. The fundamental aim was the construction of a solid collective identity based on the belonging of the various components involved to a single organizational and "corporative" reality and characterized by a clear and shared mission. The trial has touched, among others, the following issues: the sense of belonging (create closeness, let people reflect on personal representations); inventory of intercultural encounters (bring out the experiences of intercultural meetings and the possible criticalities), the illegal traveller (reflect on the conflict originated from the comparison with diversity, develop an ethno-relative awareness); intercultural problem solving (define a strategy based on ethno-relative adaptability), the consolidation of role identity (the participants as intercultural professionals).