

1 Summary

The main purpose of the project's work packages is to investigate unexplored determinants and sometimes consequences of these migratory flows. Understanding what drives migration and how migration is related to social and economic outcomes is necessary to develop proper migration policies.

The relationship between crime and migration is controversial, hard to establish, and thus prone to ideological views. Should illegal immigrants be given citizenship, or at least the right to work? In a first package, Paolo Pinotti and I plan to estimate the causal effect of immigrants' legal status on criminal behavior, exploiting exogenous variation in migration restrictions across nationalities driven by the last round of the European Union enlargement. Unique individual-level data on a collective clemency bill enacted in Italy five months before the enlargement allow us to compare the post-release criminal record of immigrants from newly admitted countries with using pardoned inmates from other countries as a control group. Preliminary results, based on difference-in-differences in the hazard rate of rearrest between members of the two groups before and after the enlargement, show that obtaining legal status lowers recidivism, particularly so for non-violent offenders and in areas that provide legal immigrants relatively better labor market opportunities.

Organized crime, in particular the Italian mafia, immigrate in a specific way. The Sicilian mafia, the 'Ndrangheta, and the Camorra are exporting their business all over the world. How can we contrast this expansion? To look for an answer to this question Eleonora Patacchini and I will analyze the Italian mafia in the U.S.. This project is the first empirical attempt that uses information about criminal linkages within the US mafia to understand the rules of the mafia, and to empirically identify its key players. Some preliminary results highlight the relative importance of family, culture, and business relations.

On top of cross-national migration some countries experience massive migration flows within their borders. The grand majority of Italy's internal migration happened in the 1960s and 70s from the South to the North-west. Despite increasing disparities between these regions, migratory flows have almost ceased (Faini et al., 1997). In this work package Enrico Moretti, Filippo Taddei and I are going to investigate this puzzle using Bank of Italy's Survey of Household Income and Wealth (SHIW) and registry data. Our hypothesis is that the puzzle is in part be due to a wealth-effect that is driven by fertility patterns coupled with steadily growing real estate prices.