



# Inclusion Pathways of Migrant Mothers in Italy: A Case Study in City of Florence

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## Introduction

The increasing international migration flows have brought the **inclusion** of migrants to the centre of European debate and national policy agendas (Commissione Europea, 2021). In this context, migration flows are marked by a strong feminisation and, in the Italian case, women have played a pioneering role in shaping the country as a destination for immigration (Tognetti Bordogna, 2012; Silva, 2019). Nevertheless, women's specific condition has long been rendered invisible. Adopting a **gender perspective in migration** studies has made it possible to highlight differentiated expectations and lived experiences (Kofman, 2004; Vianello, 2013), and to show how migrant women face forms of **intersectional discrimination** linked to skin colour, social class, ethnicity, language, religion, legal status and other identity markers (Ambrosini, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989; Campani, 2000). A further factor that significantly shapes women's migratory experiences, and has only been partially investigated, concerns the transformation of **motherhood and parenting responsibilities in the migration context** (Favaro, 2003; Silva, 2011).

## Aim

The overall objective of this doctoral research is to understand, from a **pedagogical perspective**, the processes underlying the inclusion pathways of migrant mothers in conditions of social vulnerability in Italy.

## Methodology

**Method:** Qualitative

**Epistemological context:** Ecological-naturalistic approach

**Strategy of research:** Case study

**Research tools:** Documentary review, mapping, focus group, in-depth interviews, participant observation.

## Fieldwork

Field research was conducted during the second doctoral year through a **case study in the Metropolitan City of Florence**.

### Context

- A documentary review and analysis of data on migration in Florence, with a specific focus on families and women;
- a mapping of organisations and services that support migrant-background mothers in the city;
- 2 participant observation at interinstitutional roundtables involving local services, carried out within the framework of the Phoenix Prin project.

What are the educational and training needs underlying the inclusion pathways of migrant mothers in conditions of vulnerability?

### Perspective of practitioners

- 1 Focus groups with professionals (educators) working in support services;
- 3 participant observation in training activities for these practitioners, in the context of the Phoenix Prin project.

### Perspective of the migrant mother

- 20 in-depth interviews with migrant-background mothers living in conditions of social vulnerability;
- 3 participant observation during training courses addressed to migrant mothers in the context of the Phoenix Prin project.

## Preliminary results



- **Diversification of services.** The research reveals a range of services including Italian L2 courses, job orientation, legal support, social and housing assistance, empowerment initiatives, and autonomy-building programs.
- **Fragmentation.** The findings indicate fragmentation and the absence of a coordinated network of services across the territory.



- **Integrated continuous training.** Results highlight the need for professionals to acquire tools for establishing trust-based relationships with families, particularly regarding intercultural competencies.
- **Time constraints.** Data show that personnel require more time to adequately care for relationships with service users.
- **Inter-institutional coordination.** The study identifies the need for effective coordination among institutions.



- **Reception system.** Findings reveal challenges and resources within the reception system, particularly regarding cohabitation arrangements.
- **Work-life balance.** Results indicate a strong desire for employment that reconciles family life, especially among mothers parenting alone.
- **Social networks.** The research demonstrates the need for friendship and social networks.
- **Educational pathways.** Data show a desire to rebuild life projects and initiate or resume educational pathways consistent with their prior competencies and qualifications.

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