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## Press Release

# 7<sup>th</sup> Migration Observatory Report "Immigrant Integration in Europe"

*by Tommaso Frattini (University of Milan and Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano)  
with Piero Bertino (Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano)*

The Migration Observatory of Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano (LdA) and Fondazione Collegio Carlo Alberto (CCA) in Turin has published the seventh annual report on the economic integration of immigrants in Europe, written by Tommaso Frattini with Piero Bertino. The report will be presented on Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> March at 16:30 CET at CCA in Piazza Arbarello 8 (to register for the in-person event [sign up here](#); to follow online [sign up here](#)).

Apart from providing up-dated annual data referring to employment integration of migrants, the report, this year, also includes a monographic section "Citizenship Acquisition and the Naturalization Premium" on naturalization patterns of immigrants in Europe and on the labour market differentials between naturalized and non-naturalized immigrants. We show that naturalized immigrants have a considerable naturalization premium. They enjoy a higher employment probability, are employed in more prestigious and better paid occupations and earn higher wages than non-citizens even when employed in similar occupations. Naturalization premiums is highest for immigrant women and for those from outside the EU.

The report, available at <https://dagliano.unimi.it> (to download the pdf click [here](#)), is based on an original analysis of microdata from the European Labour Force Survey (EU LFS) 2021.

The report will be presented as part of the international conference on "[Immigration and Citizenship](#)" which will take place from 9.30 to 18.00 CET at Collegio Carlo Alberto in Turin.

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The following topics will be discussed: i) socio-economic consequences of naturalization by Maarten Vink (European University Institute) and Christina Gathmann (Luxembourg Institute of Socio Economic Research); ii) interplay with the marriage market with Jerome Adda (Università Bocconi) and Yajna Govind (Copenhagen Business School); iii) the consequences of naturalization for refugees by Francesco Fasano (Università di Milano e Centro Studi Luca d'Agliano) and for migrants women reproductive health by Gilberto Turati (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore).

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Key findings are summarized below.

## Citizenship acquisition and the naturalization premium

Out of the 50 million foreign born residents of a European country in 2021, more than 40% were nationals of their country of residence, a share that has been growing over time. For instance, according to Eurostat, in 2021, more than 900 thousand foreign citizens have acquired the nationality of a European country, up from the more than 780 thousand who naturalized during 2020.

### *Naturalizations Patterns in Europe - size*

#### *More than 2% of immigrants naturalize in Europe every year*

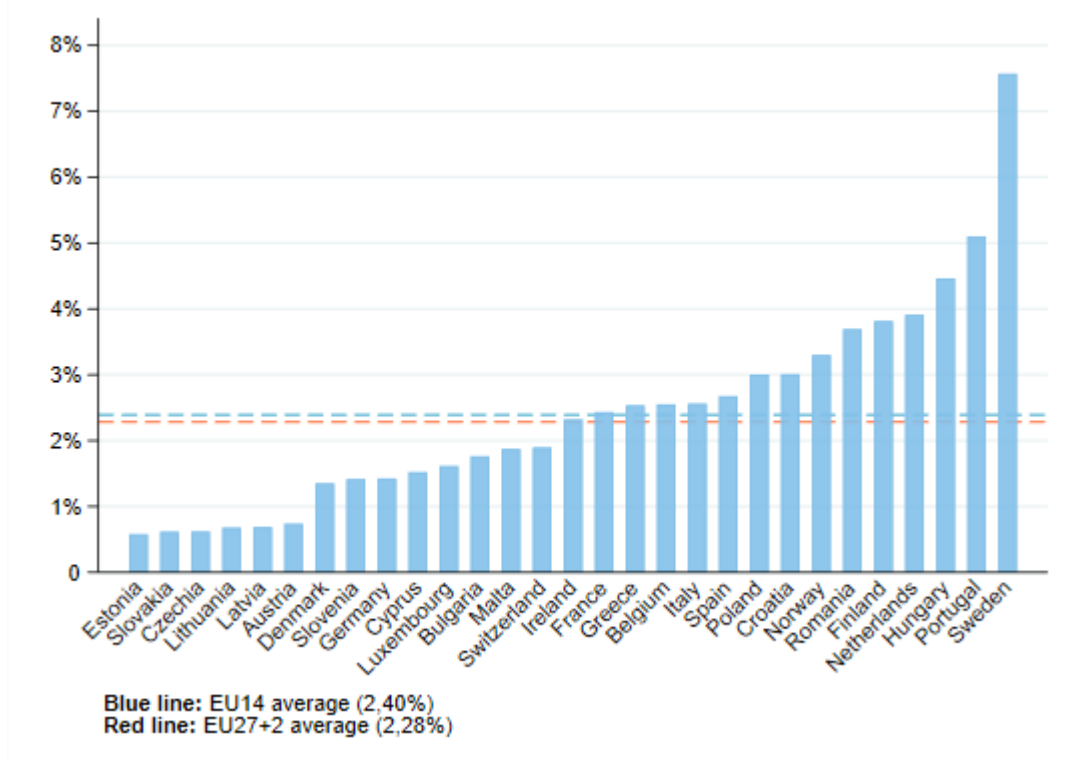
Over the years 2001-2011, about 2.3% of all foreign citizens in European countries have acquired the nationality of their current country of residence in every year. Spain stands out for having naturalized the highest number of immigrants over this period, slightly more than 1.4 million, followed by Italy (1.37 million), Germany (1.27 million) and France (1.2 million). However, relative to the size of their foreign-born population, they are aligned with the European average while Sweden is the country with the highest annual naturalization rate: more than 7.6% of immigrants in Sweden naturalized every year. three times the European average.

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*Average share of non-citizens that was naturalized each year between 2011 and 2021*



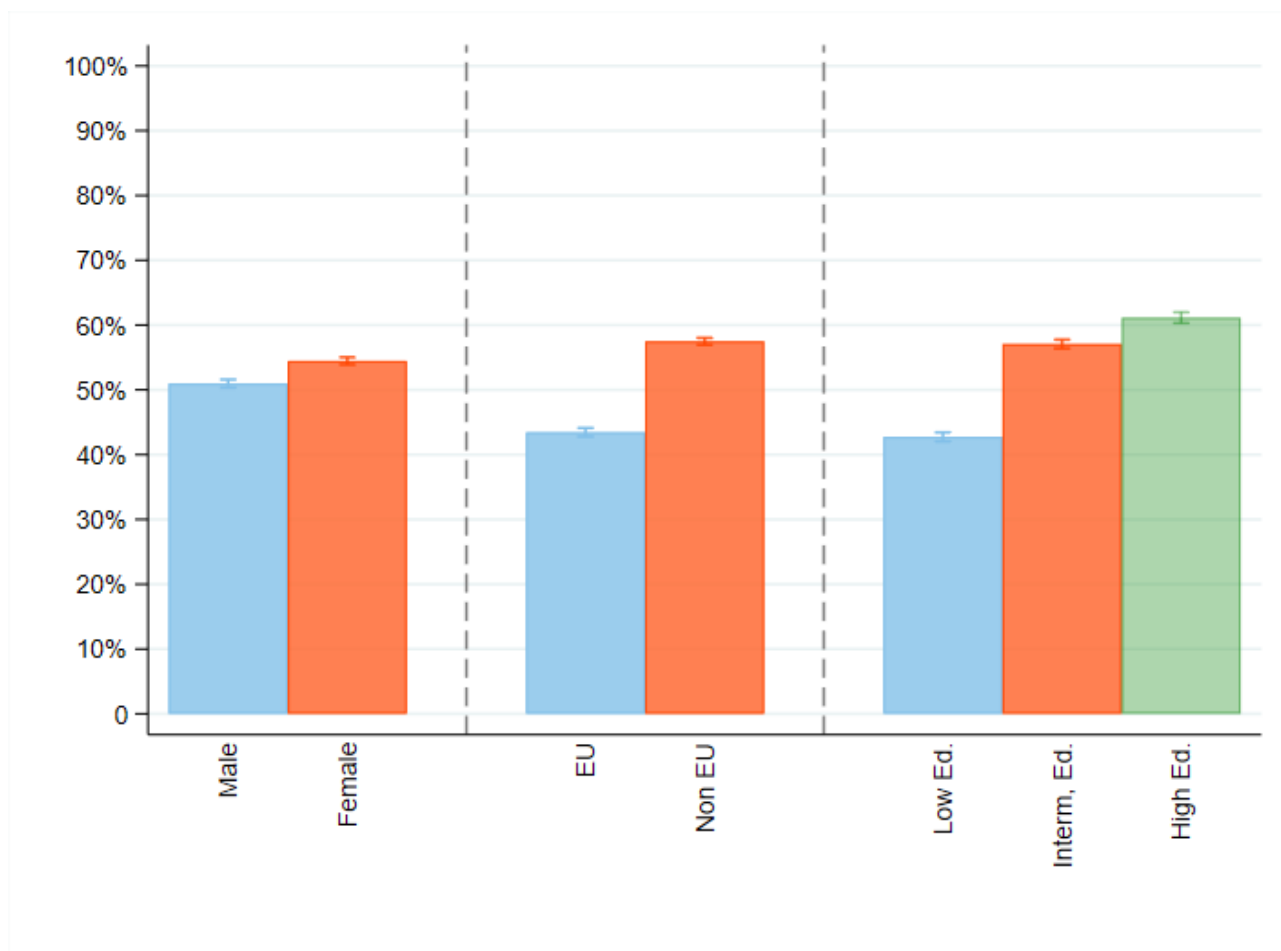
***Naturalizations Patterns in Europe - characteristics***

***Naturalizations are more frequent for women, non-EU and tertiary educated immigrants***

Immigrant women are slightly more likely than immigrant men to be citizens of their host country. Among long-term immigrants (who have been at least ten years in the host country) 54.5% of women, but only 51% of men, are naturalized citizens. The differences in propensity to naturalization are even larger between immigrants from different countries of origin and with different educational levels. In fact, 57.5% of long-term non-EU migrants, but only 43.5% of EU long-term migrants are citizens of their country of residence. Likewise, there is a clear educational gradient in the likelihood of naturalization, which increases markedly with educational levels starting from 43% of low-educated long-term migrants, to 57% among those with intermediate education and up to 61% among the tertiary educated.

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*Share of citizens among long-term migrants by sex, origin and education (2021)*



***The role of national naturalization policies***

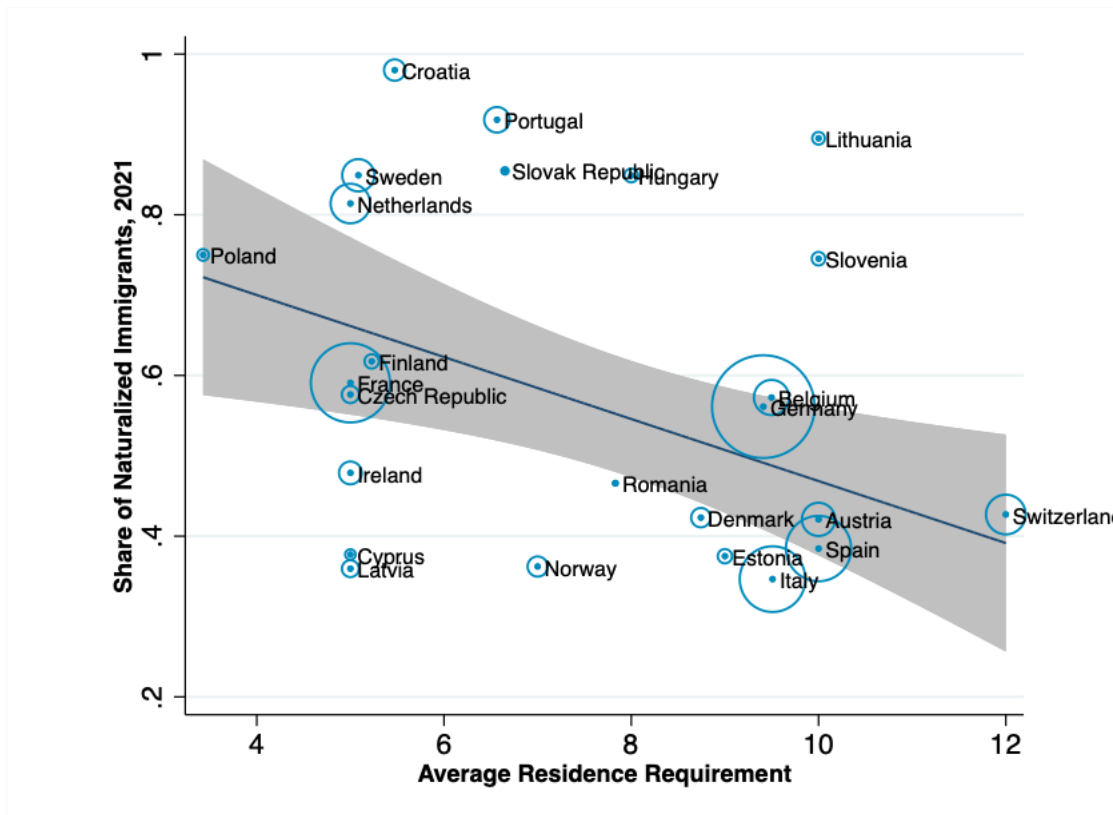
***One additional year of residency requirement is associated with a four percentage points lower share of naturalized immigrants.***

On average, European countries require a minimum of 7 years of residence before immigrants can apply for naturalization, but there is a considerable amount of heterogeneity. Among all European countries, Switzerland stands out for being the only one with a requirement of 12 years, the highest in Europe. Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Slovenia and Spain, each requiring 10 years of residence are also among those imposing the most demanding requirements. The country with the shortest residency requirement is instead Poland (3 years), followed by 12 countries

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requiring at least 5 years. Cross-country differences in strictness of residency requirements for naturalization are reflected in differences in propensity to naturalization: one additional year of residency requirement is associated with a four percentage points lower share of naturalized long-term immigrants.

*Share of naturalized long-term immigrants vs average residence requirements*



*Employment*

*Naturalization is associated with higher employment probability for immigrants*

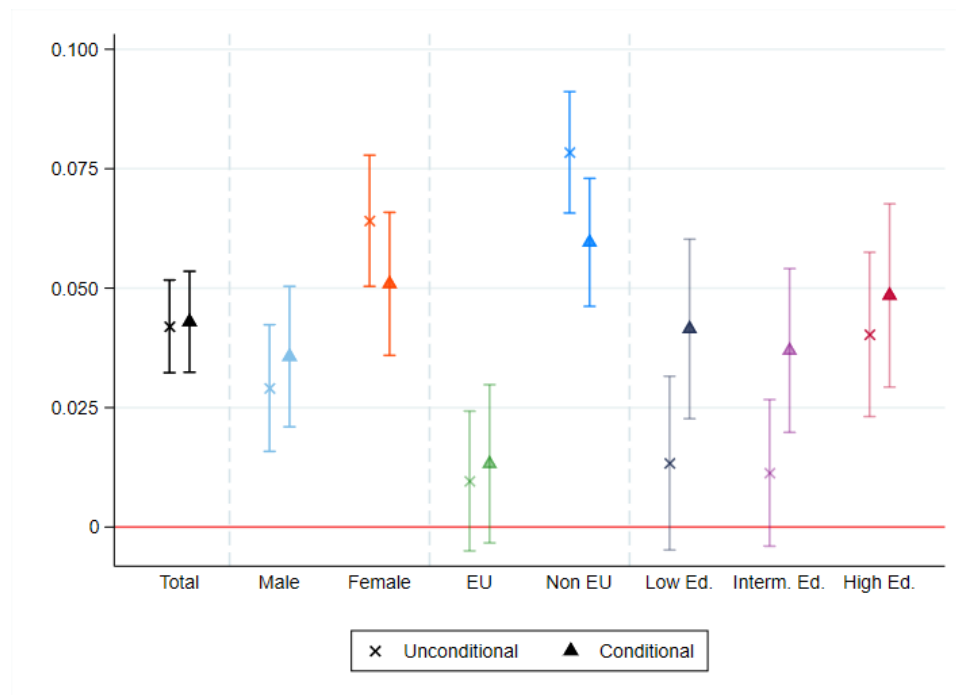
Throughout Europe, naturalized long-term immigrants display significantly higher probability of employment than those who have not naturalized: in 2021 this “naturalization premium” was as high as 4.2 percentage points.

The naturalization premium is higher for women (6.4 p.p.) than for men (2.9 p.p.).

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Likewise, citizenship is associated with an almost 8 p.p. higher employment probability among non-EU immigrants, whereas there are no differences in employment probability between naturalized and non-naturalized EU immigrants. Differences in age, gender, education, origin and years of residence between naturalized and non-naturalized migrants can explain about one fourth of the premium.

*Differences in employment probability between naturalized and non-naturalized long-term immigrants, unconditional and conditional on individual characteristics - by sex, origin and education (2021)*



**Occupational Distribution**

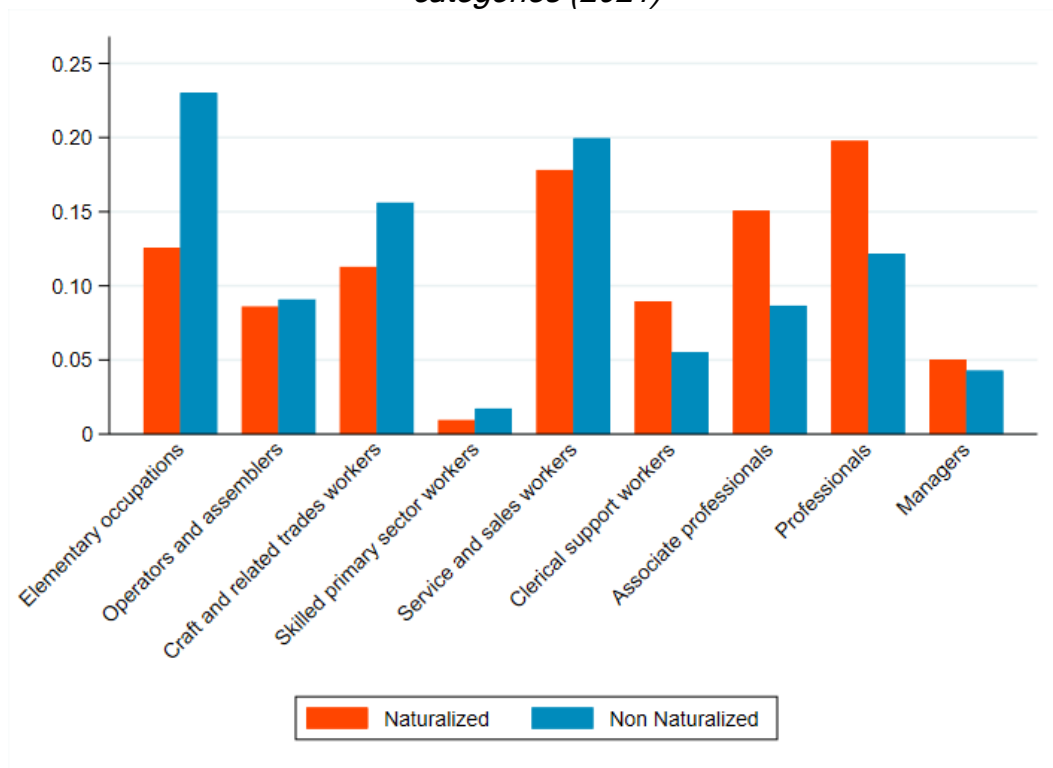
***Naturalized immigrants are less likely to have an elementary job than the non-naturalized***

Naturalized immigrants are almost half as likely as the non-naturalized to be employed in a low-pay elementary occupation (13% vs 23%). They are also disproportionately more likely to be employed in high-pay occupations like professionals, associate professionals and managers (40% vs 30%). These

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patterns are common to almost all countries with a significant immigrant presence. However, more than half of this occupational naturalization premium is explained by more favourable characteristics of naturalized relative to non-naturalized immigrants.

*Distribution of naturalized and non-naturalized long-term immigrants across occupational categories (2021)*



### Income

#### *Job characteristics explain more than half of the income advantage of naturalized immigrants*

Naturalized long-term immigrants are 4.9 p.p. less likely than those who did not obtain the host country nationality to be in the bottom income decile. Only 0.3 percentage points, less than 6% of the overall gap, is explained by differences in individual characteristics such as gender, education, origin, years of residence between the groups. Instead, 56.5% of the gap (2.8 p.p.) can be traced down to the differential occupational distribution of naturalized and non-naturalized migrants. The

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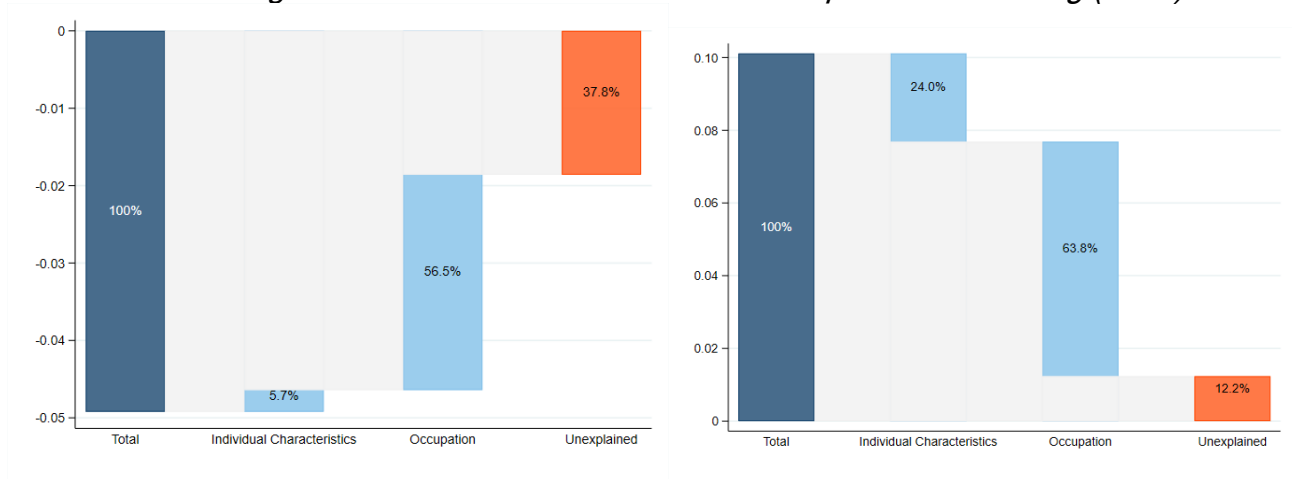
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remaining 38% of the gap instead remains unexplained.

Hence, the income naturalization premium is primarily associated with access to better and more rewarding occupations than with differences in earnings within the same broad class of occupations.

*Differential probability of being in bottom (left graph) and top three (right graph) income deciles between naturalized and non-naturalized long-term immigrants: overall and after accounting for individual characteristics and occupational clustering (2020)*



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