



SGI Europe joins stakeholders in Bari to present labour market study on migrant workers in Puglia

Brussels/Bari, 31 October 2025 – SGI Europe took part today in the public event “*Labour Market and Foreign Workers in Italy and in Puglia*” organized by Fondazione SMILE Puglia in Bari in the framework of the EU-funded project [LABOUR-INT III](#).

Held at CGIL Puglia’s premises in Bari, the event gathered representatives of EU-level social partners, as well as institutional representatives, national civil society and migrant communities to present the results of the research “Study of the Labour Market in Puglia”.

The study, developed by experts of the Italian partner organizations, offers a detailed picture of the labour market in the Italian region of Puglia and it highlights the contributions of migrant workers to the economy, the sectors with the highest labour demand, and the barriers to labour market integration. In 2024, migrant workers represented 4.7% of all employed persons in the region, with a particularly strong presence in agriculture, tourism, and services to enterprises. Alongside the opportunities, the research highlights well-known critical issues: language barriers, poor recognition of qualifications and skills acquired abroad, mismatch between supply and demand, conditions that can fuel the phenomenon of the working poor. Hence the proposal to strengthen effective active policies: guidance, targeted training, quality internships, and support for business creation.

The findings are the result of both quantitative and qualitative research, including surveys, desk research, fieldwork and interviews with Italian employer organizations (Confartigianato, Confindustria, Legacoop, Coldiretti, etc.) and focus groups with local actors involved in migrant reception and labour orientation, such as Arci, Don Bosco, Etnie, CAPS and ActionAid.

The response from the local area exceeded the project’s expectations. SMILE Puglia completed the three planned job training courses for migrants residing in Puglia and, given the high interest and demand to enroll in such training, the organization is considering launching a fourth course on logistics, with two editions.

This collaborative effort and positive outcome reflect the multi-stakeholder approach promoted by LABOUR-INT III, which brings together employers, trade unions, public authorities, training providers and civil society to work towards a common goal: supporting the integration of third-country nationals into the labour market through coordinated, practical pathways from reception to employment. By connecting different perspectives and levels of governance, the project aims to turn inclusion into real and sustainable job opportunities, ensuring that migration contributes to both economic growth and social cohesion across Europe.



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