FILEF, ITALIAN MIGRANT WOMEN AND AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONS

Paper presented by FILEF at the Frederick May Conference held in Sydney.

Comments and enquiries concerning this paper should be directed to FILEF
423 Parramatta Road
Leichhardt, NSW 2040
(02) 568-3776

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Introduction

FILEF (Italian Federation of Migrant Workers and their Families) is an organisation of Italian migrants founded in Italy, in 1967, to safeguard the rights of Italian migrants at home (by legislative measures) and abroad by encouraging them to actively participate in all spheres of activity in their host countries so that within a framework of equality they could become fully integrated into that society.

Many progressive forces and personalities contributed to its foundation - communists, socialists, independent left - among which is to be particularly remembered the figure of Carlo Levi, prominent Italian artist, senator of the Republic and president of FILEF from its foundation to his untimely death.

It was Carlo Levi who contributed most to define FILEF's role and function. He said migrants all over the world had been treated too often as mere objects and factory fodder. The time had come for them to become increasingly active subjects in society and to play a determinant part in shaping the future through their conscious participation in all aspects of social, political and cultural as well as productive life. FILEF was to be an instrument for this active participation in pursuit of equality and social justice.

The strength and the relevance of these concepts stimulated migrants to create their own community organisations wherever they lived and worked. In 1971 FILEF was established also in Australia by a group of Italian migrant workers in Melbourne, the city with the largest number of Italians (36%)*, and a year later it was established also in Sydney, Adelaide and Brisbane.

The chief goal of each of these organisations is to assist Italian migrants in organising themselves around issues and problems concerning them, thereby promoting their participation in all aspects of Australian society. This process encourages the integration of Italian migrant workers and their families within the host society and provides the organisational conditions to enable them to defend and extend their rights along with the rest of the labour movement. At the same time FILEF attempts to provide community services and resources to make participation possible.

Having this as an object, it is not surprising that FILEF has taken an active part in initiatives aimed at improving the social, political, economic, and industrial circumstances of migrant workers. To promote these initiatives FILEF began publishing a regular newspaper, Nuovo Paese, which is also distributed by a number of trade unions to their Italian members throughout Australia. The provision of information is important because without relevant information, it is virtually impossible for migrants to participate fully in the life of the host country.**

The Migrant Workers' Conferences

In its 14 years of existence, FILEF has campaigned not only for the rights of Italian migrants but for the rights of all migrant workers. FILEF pays particular attention to the industrial rights of migrant workers because it recognises the union movement as a major vehicle for democratic change in Australia. The right to participate in the workforce is of the utmost importance to migrants. However, a person's rights should not be confined to the workplace. Equally important is the right for migrants and their families to participate outside the workplace. (For the purpose of this paper, the term migrant refers only to migrants of Non-English speaking background unless otherwise stated).

Shortly after its establishment, FILEF played an active role in organising, along with other migrant groups and a number of unions, the first of the Migrant Workers' Conferences which were held between 1973 - 1975 in Sydney, Melbourne and other cities.

These conferences provided migrants with the opportunity to speak out on their problems, aspirations and, above all, on the inequalities facing migrant workers.

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* All figures quoted in the text of this paper derive from the 1981 Australian Census, unless otherwise stated.
** In 1985, the Ethnic Affairs Commission of Victoria prepared a report on the developments of information provision to migrant workers. The report concluded that over the last thirty years, little attention had been given by Government Departments, Unions and Employer Organisations to the information rights of migrant workers.
The demands made by migrant workers at these conferences brought to the fore their needs and aspirations, and gave impetus to activists in the community and in trade unions to address the reality of a multicultural workforce rather than to persist with the tacit assumption that there existed a homogeneous, monocultural, monolingual, male dominated workforce in which everyone could fully participate if they so wished. For the first time, after decades of immigration to Australia, this assumption was put into question publicly and collectively.

Diversity of the Australian workforce

Although Australia had, since the introduction of the post war immigration policy, increasingly acquired an ethnically heterogeneous character, it was only in the early 70's that the reality of the composition of Australia was put into discussion. The Whitlam Labor government placed migrants on the political agenda with the introduction of multiculturalism as a national policy during its brief term of office between 1972-75.

Today, over 20% of the population in Australia is born overseas, and of these at least 60% are born in non-English speaking countries. Without doubt, migration has wrought significant changes upon Australia's population and in particular its workforce. In 1985, the workforce comprised nearly one million migrant workers. The majority of migrants work in the manufacturing, construction, and service industries. There is a clear preponderance of migrants in the unskilled and semi-skilled categories. Apart from Aborigines, migrants occupy a disproportionate ratio of those jobs which are the least desirable, most hazardous, poorer paid, and physically arduous. Migrant workers form more than half of the workforce in the manufacturing sector, and an even higher proportion in specific industries. The clothing industry, for instance, comprises at least 80% migrant workers, most of which are migrant women. Most migrant women are employed as cleaners, production and process workers or machinists. In 1975 as many as 45% of Italian women worked as labourers, production or process workers (CURA, 1975). The majority of these women (75%) are married, many with dependent children. Even so, their participation rates are much higher than that of Australian-born mothers. (Richmond in Bottomley, 1984 p.3).

Following the decline in manufacturing in the 80's many migrant workers have lost their jobs. A large number of women consequently have resorted to outwork, working at home in isolation, on exploitative rates of pay, with no security and hardly any control over working conditions. It could well be argued that the full force of current economic difficulties is falling on migrant workers, especially migrant women workers because they occupy the lowest structural position in Australian society.

The question of migrant workers, particularly migrant women workers in the paid workforce, has yet to be adequately addressed. The facts demonstrate that migrant workers continue to be under-represented in the professions and white collar sector, whilst they remain over-represented in the lowest level of the industrial workforce, where in many cases conditions have deteriorated rather than improved (Labour Force Statistics, ABS 1983). The effects of the economic crisis of recent years and the absence of a long-term strategy to expand the industrial base in Australia, have been strongly felt in the blue collar industries, especially in the manufacturing sector, vehicle building industry and construction industry, all of which employ very high numbers of migrant workers. For instance, (from 1974 to 1976) the manufacturing industry lost 25,000 jobs in only two years.

Given that there are few training and retraining programmes to facilitate the re-entry into the workforce of retrenched workers, it is clear that migrant workers cannot easily escape the severe effects of the drastic shrinkage of Australian industry. Retraining programmes should take into consideration that many of the retrenched workers are migrants and should cater for their specific needs and take into account their background. Retraining programmes should, furthermore, be an integral part of an industrial plan so that the workers are trained for occupations where a need exists or is to be created.

On a number of occasions in recent years, Filef organised meetings with Italian workers and representatives of a number of unions who were concerned with the ailing state of the Australian industry to discuss industrial problems faced by migrant workers. These meetings were always very well attended, indicating that many migrant workers are interested in discussing both their immediate industrial problems and broader economic and political issues that affect them.

* In 1982/83 ABS figures indicated that, throughout Australia there were 58,468 officially recorded outworkers, but the figure is likely to be higher. The Clothing and Allied Trades Union estimated that there were 60,000 outworkers in 1983 in Victoria and N.S.W. alone.
These, and other meetings such as the Migrant Workers' Conferences of the 70's alone are sufficient to dispel the view that migrant workers do not have an interest in anything outside their immediate families and community, a view which is sometimes put forward as an apology.

The first migrant workers' meetings and conferences of the 70's stimulated a number of studies on migrants in the workforce and the condition of their workplace. The results from these studies were not very surprising for migrant workers and migrant community organisations such as Filef. These were merely an affirmation of what had long been known to those who had a first-hand experience with the reality of the factory and the migrants who worked in them. Nevertheless, these studies are extremely important as they provide activists in the labour movement and migrant communities with the empirical basis for change. Some of these studies documented the especially disadvantaged section of the migrant workforce, that is, migrant working women.

It has often been said that migrant working women are at the bottom of the industrial heap because they are disadvantaged on three counts: class, ethnicity and gender (Collins '84). They are, again apart from Aborigines, the most disadvantaged sector of the workforce and society in general. They simultaneously have to face the problems faced by women in general, as well as the problems faced by all migrants and workers. However, these factors leading to inequality cannot be divided.

Childcare

For many migrant women the question of childcare, for instance, is extremely important, at least as important as issues such as salaries or working conditions. In New South Wales in 1982, a State Government report indicated that there were 400,000 children under the age of 5 but that the existing childcare centres could cater for only 1% of these children. One third of these children went to non-government funded childcare centres which, at the time, charged a minimum weekly fee of $70. Clearly, this created a difficult situation for migrant working women or women who would have liked to work but were unable to exercise their right to work because they had no one to look after their children, or could not afford to pay private childcare fees.

Such problems have always concerned Filef, which has tried to face them with initiatives of its own as well as by stimulating a wider debate. For instance, Filef in Adelaide opened the first multicultural childcare centre in the late seventies.

Concerned by a similar situation in Victoria, the Filef women's group in Melbourne opened a debate on the importance of workplace-based childcare and initiated a project for the establishment of such a service in North Coburg, an industrial area of Melbourne, where there was a total lack of childcare services.

This initiative was supported by five trade unions covering clothing trades/textile workers, metal workers, miscellaneous workers and furnishing trades. With the collaboration of representatives from unions serving those areas, the Filef women's group organised a series of meetings in which this issue could be raised directly with Italian migrant working women and after workers expressed a great need for such a service, the Filef women's group formed a working party which included representatives from unions, local council, Filef and migrant women workers. The Coburg Council supported this project by providing land near the Government Clothing Factory which was selected because of the large number of migrant women that it employed and because it was a publicly owned factory.

Even though there was much support for the project, over 18 months of struggle were necessary to secure funding from State and Federal Governments. During this time the Liberal Minister for Finance announced his intentions to sell or lease the factory to private firms. Filef organised factory meetings, lobbied government and sought the support of unions. The women working in the factory fought the privatisation proposal for over 18 months until, in 1983 the decision was revoked by the newly elected Labor government and shortly after, the Minister for Social Services announced that it would provide funding for the maintenance and running of the centre.

* The distribution of childcare centres in 1981, in New South Wales privileged those suburbs where the majority of residents are high-middle income earners, whilst those with the largest number of medium-low income workers, like the western suburbs, were severely disadvantaged. In the suburbs of North Sydney, Waverly and Manly there were 3.5 children for each place available in the local childcare centres, whilst in the suburbs from Bankstown to Penrith, there were between 13 - 22 children for each available place. (Nuovo Paese, May 1982).
The Anne Sgro Children's Centre* was officially opened in July 1984. Sixty three children participate in a programme designed to reflect their cultural backgrounds and languages. The activities of the centre involve the parents as well. The parents constitute the largest portion of the centre's management committee which also comprises representatives from unions, local council, employers, local community and workers from the centre.

This is the only childcare centre that has involved Federal government, local government, unions and workers. Prior to the establishment of the centre, migrant women had repeatedly expressed their concern and had clearly stated that their priority was childcare close to their place of work. (CURA 1975, Galbally Report 1978, National Women's Advisory Council 1980).

This Centre is important because it represents the initiative taken by a group of migrant women that has gone beyond research. It asked the opinions of the workers as a basis for the realisation of a concrete solution to one of the most most pressing concerns. This project is also important because it provides a concrete example of migrant participation; clearly, migrants are more than willing to participate in the decisions which affect them, whether this be in or out of the workplace, provided they are given the opportunity, resources and support to enable them to become fully involved.

The language barrier

Unquestionably, language difficulties present a major barrier to effective communication and to participation for migrants. In fact, this was one of the first obstacles to participation to have received recognition by unions and Government. In 1973, at the first Migrant Workers' Conference in Melbourne, Filef made strong recommendations for English language classes on the job for migrants on the ground that they have a right to participate in their workplace, and that such participation was not possible unless communication difficulties faced by migrant workers were overcome.**

Some unions took up this issue and began campaigning for on-the-job English language classes. There was also a dramatic increase in the literature which highlighted the communication difficulties experienced by migrants. Following these changes, a great deal of importance was placed on the development of interpreting and translating services and on the employment of bilingual staff at major service delivery points (Australian Association of Adult Education 1973; D.I.E.A. 1973; Hearn 1974; Henderson 1975, Halpenny 1976, Nuovo Paese 1972 - 1986).

In 1984, the trade union movement took up the issue of English-on-the-job, as an industrial right, leading to a landmark decision in March 1985 to incorporate provisions for paid English language instruction within the NSW Sewerage Employees' Award. The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and State Labour Councils were not alone in endorsing this issue: In 1984, the NSW Government affirmed its commitment to extend its English on the job training in the public sector. The concept has even gained support from the Confederation of Australian Industry Industrial Council.

For migrant women, perhaps the single most important commitment has been the unprecedented agreement reached between Fenner Fashions and the NSW Clothing & Allied Trades Union. The agreement enables migrant women to attend English language classes and commits the employer to make a direct contribution of $10,000 towards the wages of the women whilst they attend classes. Undoubtedly, these changes are positive. However, one must assess their effectiveness in the reality of the workplace. One must assess whether or not they achieve what they set out to do, that is, increase migrants' ability to participate. Clearly, whilst fluency in English is a precondition to full participation, English language classes on the job do not in themselves offer a solution.

It must be remembered that there are many migrants in non-unionised sectors of the workforce. Many are employed in factories that are too small to support the introduction of English classes on the job (even if the employers were to be in favour of such a move). Many migrant women are outworkers and thus are totally excluded. In addition, I suspect that few migrants would participate if English language classes are an end in themselves rather than a means by which migrants can improve their communication skills so as to be more able to participate and defend their interests and their rights. However Filef is convinced that the issue of English on the job will not be satisfactorily addressed unless accompanied by a general demand around the "right to study" for all workers.

* Named after FILEF's representative on the Working party.
** Nicolaou (1986) has identified as many as 53 main languages spoken by workers in NSW.
Health and safety in the workplace

Closely connected to the language barrier is the problem of occupational health and safety. Although no official records of the incidence of job-related illness or industrial accidents based on birthplace are kept, there have been a number of studies and reports which suggest that migrants are particularly prone to becoming victims in these areas. The level of industrial accidents in Australia is unacceptably high. In 1983, about 300 fatal accidents and 125,000 injuries were registered in South Australia alone (Nuovo Paese, 1983). Much evidence points to a failure on the part of migrants to understand the health and safety regulations, often only available in the English language, and to a lack of policing of such regulations by employers, governments and unions.* However, these statistics also put into question the way in which the work is organised. Work injuries are not caused by the negligence of the workers, as employers would have us believe, but on how the work is organised, especially during overtime, night shifts, by the fast pace that workers are required to work at and by old machinery.

Responses to migrants' needs

The Migrant Worker's Conferences were historical events that preluded to a number of notable changes. In terms of the response by Unions to the needs expressed by migrants the most significant of these responses was the establishment of a Trade Union Migrant Worker's Centre in Melbourne, funded by 14 unions. The Centre informs workers of their rights as well as providing legal advice. Migrant workers may seek aid independently or be referred to the Centre by their unions. For the first time Unions pooled their resources to respond specifically to their migrant membership.

Other significant changes include:

- Workers' Health Centres (funded by both Government & Trade Unions)
- Telephone Interpreter Service
- Multicultural Television and Ethnic Radio
- National Health Care System
- Grants to community agencies for bilingual social workers: GIA Scheme
- Migrant Resource Centres
- Establishment of Ethnic Affairs Commissions
- Womens' Health Centres
- Legislative Changes (eg. Anti-Discrimination Act)
- Migrant Workers' Rights Scheme

This array of services probably sound more comprehensive than they are in practice. In many cases, these services are either inadequately resourced or insufficiently funded on short-term precarious basis, thus somewhat limiting their availability and effectiveness.

I would like to briefly refer to three of the above that are specifically related to migrant workers and Filef.

Grant-In-Aid Scheme:

Following recommendations made by the Galbally Report, the Department of Immigration and ethnic Affairs increased established programmes under which migrant and community groups could be funded to carry out welfare and community development work. In the past these programmes have focused on the provision of welfare services based mainly on individual casework. In the early 80's there was recognition of the limitations that were imposed by this approach and the Scheme was altered to include the fostering of community development and self help groups. In 1984 Filef received funding under the GIA scheme to help it further develop its community based programmes which include working with Unions and Italian workers so as to inform Italian workers of their rights and encourage their participation.

Workers' Rights Scheme:

In 1981 the Federal Government made available to ACTU funding for one full-time worker responsible for encouraging unions to address the needs of their migrant membership. In 1984, the Labor Government introduced a grant-in-aid scheme specifically for the Trade Union movement.

* According to the 1981 Census, there are 1.7m persons in Australia who use a language other than English to carry out their main daily commitments. Of these, 47,000 do not understand English, whilst 221,000 do not read or write English.
This scheme was to enable unions to better inform migrant workers about their rights within the workplace, the role of unions, and Australian work practices and conditions so that unions can serve their migrant membership more effectively and thus facilitate greater participation by migrants in union structures. Currently 14 unions receive funding under this scheme.

**Workers Health Centres:**

Although only eight of these centres have been established throughout Australia, they have played a vital role in the issues of occupational health and safety and migrant women workers. Beside providing medical treatment, the centres carry out research which is then utilised to raise union and workers' awareness of the hazards in the workforce. For instance, their research on Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI) and the dissemination of the findings formed the basis of a successful campaign to have RSI recognised as work related by the medical profession. This was extremely important for women, especially migrant women, who are the most affected because it is they, who are mainly employed in unskilled, repetitive jobs. In 1983, in NSW 90% of the women affected by tenosynovitis were migrant (Nuovo Paese, June 1984).

Last year, Filef organised a bilingual public meeting in Sydney, in collaboration with the Lidcombe Workers' Health Centre, the Tenosynovitis Association, and some unions, so as to bring together Italian women who had RSI and discuss with them their situation. The intention was to develop a support and action group similar to one in Victoria.*

**AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONS**

At its national conference in 1979, ACTU seriously debated the trade union's relationship with its migrant membership. At this Conference the ACTU adopted a policy which lead to the establishment of migrant workers' committees within trade unions, and encouraged Labour Councils to adopt similar policies. The conference marked a turning point in the trade union movement. Previously, it had preferred not to address what they saw as problems related to only a specific sector of the labour movement as they feared it would create a division amongst the ranks.

However, by 1981, when the ACTU sponsored a Migrant Worker's Conference in Melbourne, these policies were yet to be reflected in the reality of the workplace. Too often, policies are made without provisions for their effective implementation and consequently remain, in the majority of cases, only on paper.

At the ACTU 1981 Conference, Filef expressed its concern over the enormous gap between union policy formulation and implementation and advanced concrete proposals that could contribute to bridge this gap. Filef proposed that autonomous, Trade Union based and sponsored, Migrant Workers' Centres be established to ensure implementation of ACTU migrant policy. Filef stressed the need for these Centres to build a close relationship between migrant workers, unions, the ACTU and migrant community based groups. The employment of bilingual workers was seen as crucial to the success of these Centres.

The Conference adopted this policy. However, it has yet to be implemented. Apart from some isolated examples, trade union structures have not changed significantly to allow for greater participation of migrants in the workplace. The fact that these policies have not been implemented does not not necessarily mean that trade unions have not taken initiatives in this area, but rather the fact that they have not made efficient use of worker based migrant groups in the community.

The fact that the level of migrant workers' representation at the level of union officials has not changed notably in the last decade (Hearn 76, Nicolaou 86) could point out the need for trade unions to re-examine, together with migrant workers, their policies, their methods of implementation, and their priorities. An increased participation of all workers in the union movement is of great importance. More so today, when Australian industry is confronted by dramatic technological innovations and a general economic crisis, and unions are coming under continuous attacks.

Some trade unions have understood this situation and have made a concerted effort to take important steps towards increasing rank and file participation. The Clothing & Allied Trades Union is a good example of this.

The C&ATU has an extremely high female membership from 85-90%, the majority of which are migrant (at least 65%), but until two years ago the majority of union officials were male and not of migrant background. As a result of a concerted effort made by the union to have more direct contact with migrant workers, there are now 8 elected migrant women officers in addition to 3 women industrial officers and 16 male union officials. It is important to note that in the last two years, no male union officials have been elected or nominated. This is not the result of a positive discrimination policy but of having done much ground work with the migrant membership as well as migrant community groups.

Conclusion

Today, there seems to be a greater awareness within a broad section of the general community and trade unions for the needs of migrants.

Now there are more promising premisses for a serious collective effort to work out strategies for further changes to increase the participation of workers in their unions and within the workplace. These concrete changes could include the pursuit of the right for unions to enter workplaces, particularly where some workers have indicated they would like the union to come in; the right of workers to paid study leave; the right of workers to meet in the workplace without victimisation of the workers; the right of workers to receive information in the workplace; the right of workers to discuss work related matters e.g. health and safety issues, in paid work time, stipulated in the awards, and in the workplace beyond the present stringent limitation to the 1/2 hour lunch break, which is totally insufficient to achieve workers participation in decision making.

Strategies such as these could constitute a positive answer to the present attack unions have been subjected to. The future of the union movement requires the expansion of democratic and participatory conditions.

The workforce is heterogeneous, as it has been said, but there are common problems around which unity can be built. A unity which can lead to the understanding of the different problems faced by various sectors of the workforce and to a willingness to struggle around them.

Thus the question of migrant women workers' participation and problems such as language, childcare, occupational health and safety, and so on, should be confronted within their general context, that is as part of the necessity to give all workers the opportunity to express their needs and to participate in the solution of the problems confronting them, their industry and the nation.

Vera Zaccari

Filef Sydney

2 September 1986

Sydney University
Third Australian Conference on Italian Culture and Italy Today
SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS OF
ITALIAN BORN PERSONS IN AUSTRALIA
AS INDICATED BY 1981 CENSUS

There were 275,883 persons in Australia who were born in Italy. The
male/female ratio was 54:46.

Over 84% were concentrated in the 12 urban centres examined. The
largest proportions were counted in Melbourne (36%) and Sydney (22%)
representing 4% and 2% of the total population of each centre.

Whilst almost 5% were less than 20 years of age, 26% were over 55.

A large majority of residents (80%) had been in Australia for at least 15
years. Less than 2% had been in Australia for 3 years or less.

In the 5 - 14 age group, 81% spoke a language other than English at home
Of those aged 15 years and over, 86% spoke a language other than English
at home. Whilst almost 7% of the 5 - 14 age group either did not speak
English well or spoke no English at all, 27% of those aged 15 years and
over were in these categories.

Of those persons 15 years and over, 1% were still at school and 14% had
obtained a trade or some other qualification. The largest proportion of
qualified males had obtained a trade certificate (16%) compared with 2%
of females, and a further 2% of females had obtained a certificate other
than a trade certificate.

At the time of the Census, the labour force participation rate was 63%.
Nearly 43% of married females participated in the labour force,
compared with 36% of other females.

A total of 133,900 persons were employed in full-time or part-time
work. Of these 97,400 were male compared with 36,500 females.

The unemployment rate of persons born in Italy was just over 4%.

More than half of employed persons (51%) work in various trades,
production-process work or were engaged as labourers. The largest
proportions of both males (59%) and females (33%) were in this category.

The largest proportion (30%) of those employed were engaged in
manufacturing. The highest numbers of both males and females were in
this group.

Whilst the largest proportion of males (36%) were in the $8,001 -
$12,000 income bracket (which at the time constituted the average annual
earnings in Australia), the largest proportion of females (28%) was in the
$1 - 4,000 income bracket. Just under 27% of females had no income,
compared with more than 3% of males; whereas over 6% of males and
less than 1% of females had incomes over $18,000.

Source: Profile 81, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.
SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS
OF MIGRANT WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS
MARCH - MAY 1982

In 1982 there were approximately 2,567,600 employees in trade unions. This represented 49% of all wage earners. Migrants from non-English speaking background (NESB) had significantly higher membership than migrants from English speaking countries.

A total of 778,700 migrants of NESB participated in the workforce. Of these 468,700 were members of trade unions (60%). Overall, the proportion of employees in trade unions declined between 1976 and 1982. However, this was not true of some migrant groups. Italian union membership rose by 26,800.

The majority of Italian workers were union members (67%).

It is to be noted that even though there has been an overall decline in the percentage of total workforce who were trade union members, the proportion of migrants as union members to overall membership has increased.

One of the factors accounting the high unionisation of migrant workers is that they are concentrated in workplaces which traditionally have compulsory union membership. Compulsory union membership established by agreements between trade unions and management.

ALL EMPLOYEES: WHETHER TRADE UNION MEMBER
AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>U.K. or Ireland</td>
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<td>Canada, N.Z., USA, or S. Africa</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Main non-English speaking countries</td>
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<td>61</td>
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Source: Trade Union Statistics ABS April, 1983 (Cat. # 6325.0)
**PRIORITY ISSUES ACCORDING TO 200 ITALIAN MIGRANT WORKERS***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question: According to you what are the major issues unions should be trying to resolve? (in order of preference)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. National Health Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Creation of new job opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Reduction in the pensionable age to 60-55</td>
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<td>4. Full wage indexation</td>
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<td>5. Maternity leave</td>
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<td>6. Reduction in working hours (35 hours)</td>
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<td>7. Wage increases</td>
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<td>8. Free Childcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Modernisation of machinery</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Increased paid sick leave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Question 4. from survey by Filef conducted in 1981 - see Nuovo Paese 31 July from 200 respondents in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide. The order of the items in the table is the same as that appearing in the original questionnaire.

**TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP 1976 & 1982**

**SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS**

**ALL EMPLOYEES WHO WERE TRADE UNION MEMBERS AND OCCUPATION**

**MALE AND FEMALE MEMBERSHIP (1982)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation:</th>
<th>1976</th>
<th>1982</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of members (000)</td>
<td>% of all employee in same category</td>
<td>Member of trade union (000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, technical, etc.</td>
<td>360.3</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin., executive, managerial</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>443.8</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>106.7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming, fishing, timbergetting et.</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and quarrying</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communication</td>
<td>190.6</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades &amp; production-process workers and labourers, n.e.c.</td>
<td>1,038.8</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service, sport, and recreation</td>
<td>258.9</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,512.7</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Trade Union Statistics ABS April, 1983 (Cat. # 6325.0)
### All employees by country of origin, gender and marital status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>TOTAL persons</th>
<th>TOTAL males</th>
<th>TOTAL females</th>
<th>MARRIED persons</th>
<th>MARRIED males</th>
<th>MARRIED females</th>
<th>% married women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>3,788.3</td>
<td>2,303.9</td>
<td>1,484.4</td>
<td>2,270.7</td>
<td>1,430.9</td>
<td>839.8</td>
<td>56.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other English-speaking</td>
<td>620.8</td>
<td>376.9</td>
<td>243.9</td>
<td>441.5</td>
<td>279.6</td>
<td>161.9</td>
<td>73.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non English-speaking</td>
<td>778.7</td>
<td>513.6</td>
<td>265.1</td>
<td>595.3</td>
<td>396.8</td>
<td>198.4</td>
<td>74.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>133.9</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>109.7</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>78.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of all the workforce</td>
<td>5,187.9</td>
<td>3,194.4</td>
<td>1,993.4</td>
<td>3,307.5</td>
<td>2,107.4</td>
<td>1,200.1</td>
<td>60.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Trade Union Statistics ABS April, 1983 (Cat. # 6325.0)

### ITALIAN WORKERS BY OCCUPATION 1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>MALES</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>FEMALES</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>PERSONS</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical &amp; Related Workers</td>
<td>4162</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1712</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>5875</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative, Executive &amp; Managerial Workers</td>
<td>6219</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>6849</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Workers</td>
<td>3404</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7835</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>11241</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td>6642</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5551</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>11994</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers, Fishermen, Hunters, Timber Cutters &amp; Related Workers</td>
<td>7875</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3054</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>10929</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners, Quarrymen, &amp; Related Workers</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers in Transport &amp; Communication</td>
<td>6350</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>6597</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesmen, Production Process Workers &amp; Labourers</td>
<td>67395</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>16116</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>83510</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service, Sport &amp; Recreation Workers</td>
<td>6625</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>9103</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>15720</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Armed Services</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequately Described or Not Stated</td>
<td>4236</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5155</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9391</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>113420</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>492489</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>162632</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced from ABS, 1981 Census.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIRTHPLACE</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL</th>
<th>MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS</th>
<th>CLERICAL WORKERS</th>
<th>SALES WORKERS</th>
<th>FARMERS AND FISHERMEN</th>
<th>MINERS AND QUARRY WORKERS</th>
<th>TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>TRADES, PRODUCTION &amp; PROCESS WORKERS</th>
<th>SERVICE SPORT AND RECREATION</th>
<th>ARMED SERVICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K &amp; IRELAND</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREECE</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YUGOSLAVIA</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIETNAM</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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