

Ticino is hungry for border-workers

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Even during the most terrible crisis of the last twenty years, this phenomenon is endless. The increase in **Ticino border-workers is now has a constant trend** and, after the first six months of 2012, the **Italian labour force has exceeded 54 thousand** members (according to the most updated figures by the Federal Statistical Office, in June 2012 the workers were 54,586). It is a massive immigration, if we consider the fact that the Ticino population is **less than 337 thousand inhabitants**. Furthermore the growth does not feel the effect of the crisis: if we compare this years figures to 2011, we can see **an increase of more than 6%** in the number of workers. It only seems, because the crisis did not spare Switzerland and, particularly in Ticino, the most affected areas have been the ones occupied most of all by border-workers, like business and tourism, but also construction area and industry. Consequently, **there are many Varese and Como workers who lost their jobs**: from June to July 2012, according to regional Cgil (Italian General Confederation of Labour) figures, the border-workers with a reduction in working hours and wages were 118. On one hand the Ticino proximity has represented for long a sort of **“external social valve”**, as defined by Chamber of Commerce general secretary **Mauro Temperelli**, during a recent interview for **“Corriere della Sera”**. On the other hand, it is also a penalising element. According to Province of Varese president, **Dario Galli**, the Switzerland proximity should give border areas **the acknowledgment of territories with a particular form of autonomy under special statutes**: “We have to face a “neighbour” that attracts the most skilled workers. They also trained in Italy but then they make their contributions abroad. There is more: with the current tax regime we cannot be a match for Ticino, which now attracts also the entrepreneurs. Now also companies find favourable conditions in Switzerland. We must have the possibility to establish special rules in order to work in this area. We have more right than other regions to do it.” He explained some weeks ago, during a meeting about provinces role.

In addition to the number of border-workers in Ticino, also the number of **Italian workers in Switzerland** keeps on increasing and in June it reached the number of 60,392 (+6.3% more than 2011). Italian workers are the most in Switzerland, after French workers who exceed the number of 137 thousand. According to Ticino League, it is an unbearable situation: “We still have to add to spread figures the ones connected to owner-drivers, freelance, self-employed, i.e. other border-workers who have increased during few years. At the end of 2011 there were 15 thousand short job notifications. It is an unjustified increase, without any explanation in Switzerland economy. It has been at the expense of artisans and Swiss companies. The Council of State has to stop the issue of new G permission, at least the ones connected to desk

workers. It is a strong act that cannot be postponed anymore and that wants to be an alarm bell.” Says National Councillor Bignasca party, Lorenzo Quadri. What would happen if border-workers stayed at home for one day?

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