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**Social and Economic Characteristics of
Self-employed Italians in Germany**

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Abstract

Although entrepreneurial research has recently grown with respect to immigrant self-employment, there is still little empirical information on the situation of self-employed immigrants in Germany, and even less on the position of single nationalities. The following article presents findings on the social and economic characteristics of Italian self-employed in Germany in comparison to the characteristics of German and other immigrant self-employed, as well as Italian employees in Germany. Italians, representing a large and widely accepted immigrant group in Germany, display strong and still-growing self-employment activities. Particularly, as gastronomers and retail traders they frequently offer typical Italian products not only to their own ethnic community, but also to wide sections of the German population. Their propensity to work on their own account is even stronger than that of Germans, although they have to work longer hours to run their businesses. On the other hand, however, their qualification level, on average, is very low; consequently, the majority of them can be found in labour-intensive and highly competitive economic sectors that are also characterised by high risk of business failure.

<http://www.cser.it/SE-IT2005.htm>