

# **In-group self-discrimination. A survey experiment on the Italian North-South divide**

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## **Abstract**

We study the North-South divide in Italy, a paradigmatic case of within-country differences, to investigate whether regional differences in cooperation and trust stem from individual characteristics or contextual factors. We conducted a survey experiment with 2400 Italians under three conditions in different scenarios: a) no information about the counterpart's region, b) knowing that they share a region, and c) knowing that they are from the opposite area. No regional differences were found in the no-information condition, but a significant decrease in trust emerged when Southerners interacted with fellow Southerners. Our results suggest that in-group self-discrimination and negative expectations drive regional differences.