

Fondazione ISMU

Edited by  
Vincenzo Cesareo

# The Twenty-first Italian Report on Migrations 2015



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**McGraw-Hill Education**

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This Report was written under the direct supervision of Secretary-General Vincenzo Cesareo, as Editor-in-Chief, with the assistance of Editorial Board members Gian Carlo Blangiardo, Giovanni Giulio Valtolina, Laura Zanfrini, Ennio Codini, and Mariagrazia Santagati, and with the editorial coordination of Elena Bosetti.

The following Report is a selection of the Italian version.

ISMU Foundation is an independent research centre founded in 1992. It is committed to conducting research, as well as providing consultancy, training and education, in the area of migration and integration. To develop a better understanding of these phenomena, it provides its expertise to research projects on all aspects of multiculturalism in contemporary society.

It works with national, European and international organisations and institutions, in both the private and the public sector. It is inserted in academic networks, it cooperates with welfare and healthcare agencies, and it exchanges with libraries and documentation centres in Italy and beyond.

ISMU organises conferences and seminars on migration and produces a wide-range of publications. It has its own Documentation Centre (CeDoc) – which, over the years, has built a comprehensive collection of volumes, periodicals and audio-visual material to contribute to the sharing of information on migration.

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# The New Scenario of Migrations

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by Vincenzo Cesareo

## 1. Ongoing transformations

The phenomenon of migration in Italy is undergoing transformations to such an extent that it seems plausible to speak of the end of a cycle and the beginning of a new one. These dynamics are linked firstly to geopolitical transformations and conflicts taking place in regions of the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa; secondly, on the domestic front, to the considerable impact the economic crisis has had on the future growth prospects of the Italian labour market.

From an analytical perspective, six points must be considered to outline this new scenario: a) the marked increase in migration flows, b) the sharp decrease in the number of people entering the country to seek work, c) the consolidation of family units, d) the overall increase in emigration from Italy, e) the significant presence of migrants from new EU countries in Italy, f) the importance of internal migration.

### a. The unprecedented growth of migration flows across the Mediterranean

Though the use of the Mediterranean route is wildly acknowledged, what constitutes a significant break from the past is the high number of migrants and international protection seekers who arrived in our country between 2014 and 2015.<sup>1</sup> The size and intensity of these flows to-

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<sup>1</sup> In the summer of 2015, a heated debate occurred in the international press over the use of the terms "refugee" and "mi-

wards Italy are part of a wide-ranging migration phenomenon that involves the whole of Europe and originates in various regions of the world - regions that are affected by deep political and economic instability (North and Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent).

As for the arrivals, in 2014 the number of migrants who arrived in Italy amounted to 170,000 - a record high even if compared to previous peaks, such as the one of 2011 following the so-called North African Emergency. In 2014 Italy was in fact the main country of landing for those migrants who, taking advantage of the chaotic situation in Libya, decided to travel to Europe by sea. In 2015 the number of people arriving remained high: 154,000 migrants had reached Italy by sea. However, because of the dangers of crossing the stretch of sea separating Libya from Italy, a growing number of migrants, in particular from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, decided to travel to Europe via the Greek islands in the Aegean sea, and then travel north across the Balkans and re-enter Europe crossing the Hungarian border. Thus, in 2015, Greece became the main landing country: 855,000 arrivals recorded (UNHCR, 2015b).

What we have illustrated so far leads us to examine Italy's main role as a country of transit for the migration flows in the European Union. This role, well established by now, has been confirmed by events in 2015 and by the images of migrants camped outside the main train station

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grant" to define those fleeing across the Mediterranean and the Balkans. Some commentators and representatives of international and humanitarian organizations drew attention to the often negative connotations of the term "migrant", and proposed using the term "refugee" instead, as this would clear up any misunderstandings about the fact that the people arriving at Europe's door are largely fleeing wars and fundamental human rights violations. However, the term "migrant" as such does not carry any negative connotation, as it simply denotes the act of migrating, regardless of the reasons behind it. Therefore, all those moving to a country or place different from their country of origin, whether on a temporary or a permanent basis, are migrants. Within this usage, migrants belong to a very broad category, which in turn comprises a plurality of subcategories that are mostly determined by their legal status. This is why we opted for the generic term "migrant" in reference to people passing through EU borders, regardless of their legal status.

in Milan or stranded at the border between Italy and France in Menton. The figures released on asylum seekers show that Italy and Greece are in fact not the desired destination of all the migrants who arrive there: Syrians and Eritreans, for instance, intend to continue their travel towards countries such as Germany or Sweden, which are preferred because of the presence of relatives, an alleged more dynamic economy and, especially, a more open policy towards asylum seekers, in particular Syrian refugees. Back in 2013, for instance, Sweden had unilaterally decided to offer permanent residence permits to all Syrian asylum seekers as the country's civil war continued to (see ISMU's 2014 National Report on Migration); in the summer of 2015 Germany, too, decided to welcome all asylum seekers arriving in their country from Syria, despite the limitations imposed by the Dublin Regulation.

Concerning the transformations taking place in Italy, the marked increase in arrivals recorded between 2014 and 2015 has also meant a significant change in the composition of the flows, and in particular a substantial increase in asylum seekers. In the two-year period 2008-2010 the number of international protection seekers who arrived on the Italian territory reached a historical low, both in absolute terms and in terms of percentage, compared to the total number of arrivals. After the peak in applications for asylum recorded in 2011, which coincided with the protests that have become known as the "Arab Spring", in the following two-year period the number of applications dropped again, before starting to increase exponentially in 2014, the year that saw a groundbreaking 65,000 applications (an increase of 132% compared to the 28,000 applications in 2013). During 2015 84,000 applications for asylum were filed in Italy, making Italy the fifth country after Germany and Hungary for the number of asylum applications in Europe (EUROSTAT, 2015a).

The increase in migrants arriving by sea and the resulting increase in applications for international protection are the consequences of ongoing wars in Syria and Iraq (which have led to one of the worst humanitarian crisis in decades), of violent conflicts and of brutal acts committed by the regimes in power in many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa (Eritrea, Somalia, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo). In this regard, the significant efforts made by the Italian government with the search and rescue Mare Nostrum Operation must be acknowl-

edged. The Operation was launched after the tragedy that took place in Lampedusa in October 2013. The fact that, in 2014, many migrants were rescued and therefore managed to reach Italian shores is undoubtedly the result of the remarkable deployment of means put in place by Mare Nostrum, whose operations could also be carried out in international waters. However, it is also necessary to keep in mind that 2014 and 2015 were record years not only for the number of asylum seekers who arrived in Italy and Europe, but also for the number of those who died in the Mediterranean sea - estimated at around 3,500 in 2014 and 3,771 in 2015 (OIM, 2015). Because of the ongoing conflicts, the worsening conditions in countries ruled by authoritarian regimes, the political instability in Syria, Libya and Nigeria, it is reasonable to forecast a further increase in flows towards Italy and other European countries in the near future. These circumstances point to a new phase for immigration in Italy and, more generally, in Europe, making it possible to outline a new scenario characterized by the several implications and challenges that this Report intends to analyze in depth.

#### **b. The significant decrease in the number of people entering Italy in search of work**

The number of entrances for work reasons in Italy is constantly declining: in 2010 the entrances of non-EU citizens with work permits were 360,000. Three years later the number dropped by 76%: only 85,000 non-EU citizens entered Italy for work reasons. This variation is mainly due to the long-term effects of the economic crisis, which no longer make Italy a top-desired destination to look for a job. There is in fact no demand for unskilled labour in the Italian job market; furthermore, its low demand is fully met by immigrants already present on the Italian territory. This scenario is behind the choice of the Italian government to considerably reduce the quotas set by the so-called Flows Decrees, the main entrance channel for foreign nationals in Italy.

#### **c. The consolidation of family units**

Family reunification is a third relevant factor that must be taken into account. Data released by the Interior Min-

istry covering the period up to July 31, 2015, reveal that, out of 4,010,992 foreigners legally residing in Italy, 1,205,412 became resident as a result of family reunification, about 30% of the total number (1,410,178 with an employment contract, while 241,620 are self-employed). According to an estimate by the ISMU Foundation, as of January 1, 2015 the number of families composed of 3-4 members is higher than one-person households: 674,000 against 540,000. The above-mentioned figures point to a new scenario and confirm what previous ISMU National Reports on Migration had already in part forecast. While, in the recent past, immigration in Italy was mainly the result of individual and short-term projects, linked to both economic reasons and the search for work, immigration patterns in our country are today reflecting the gradual change in migration projects, which more and more involve families, and which are consequently characterized by a growing stabilization. With regard to this process, some particularly significant indicators must be highlighted. Firstly, 56.3% of non-EU nationals legally residing in Italy hold a long-term residence permit (up 46.3% in 2011). Secondly, the number of foreign nationals who acquire Italian citizenship is growing steadily. Citizen acquisitions are mostly concentrated in the age group of under-15s. The relatively little attention that is generally given to the dynamics of family reunification must not lead to presume that family reunification represents a mere bureaucratic procedure; on the contrary, it entails many negative aspects from a social perspective. The person who intends to undergo the process of family reunification in Italy must in fact modify his or her own system of relations inside and outside the family unit, come into closer contact with Italian institutions, bureaucracy, and social services. Family reunification constitutes a significant challenge with regard to the integration of the people involved, in that it means adapting, in a short period of time, to new systems of relation within a socio-cultural context that is often very different from the context that the person experienced in his or her country of origin.

#### **d. The increase in emigration from Italy**

The economic crisis has diverse consequences and influences migration projects in various ways. In Italy the

crisis also affects emigration patterns. When taking into account the changes in the migration flows concerning Italy, a fourth element that must be considered is indeed the increase in the number of people, both Italian and foreigner, that decide to leave Italy and emigrate. The number of Italians residing abroad is on the rise: while in 2012, 4,662,213 Italian nationals were registered at the Registry of Italians Resident Abroad, in 2014 the number reached more than 5 million (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 2015). Furthermore, there has been an increase in the number of foreigners who, having resided in Italy for various years, decide to move elsewhere - that is to their country of origin, or to other European countries. ISMU has calculated that, in 2014, a total of about 300,000 foreigners legally resident in Italy left the country.

In this regard, the case of the Great Britain is particularly indicative: in the period between March 2014 and March 2015 more than 57,000 Italians (up 37% compared to the previous period) applied for British national insurance. According to the Registry of Italians Resident Abroad, 250,000 Italians reside permanently in the city of London alone.

Thus, Italy is paradoxically both the destination chosen by many migrants who decide to live here permanently and are then joined by their relatives and the country of transit for numerous migrants who decide to move elsewhere. With reference to the emigration of Italian nationals, the possible positive effects of the "brain drain" phenomenon must be acknowledged, in that people who decide to move back to Italy bring with them an enriched experience of study or work abroad. This form of migration must furthermore be considered in the light of the growing mobility produced by globalization.

#### **e. The significant presence in Italy of migrants from new EU countries**

A fifth element which must be stressed in the analysis of the changes in migration dynamics in Italy is the growing presence of migrants from new EU countries, namely citizens from countries that have recently become members of the European Union, in particular from Romania. As of December 31, 2014, 1,131,839 Romanian nationals were registered as legally residing in Italy - up 36% compared to

2011 - a figure that makes Romanians the largest foreign community in Italy: more than one fifth of the total foreign nationals living in Italy is in fact from Romania. A large 26% of the foreign population - 129,000 foreign residents in Italy - is from the three countries that have recently joined the EU: Romania, Bulgaria and Poland. To this figure, we must add the citizens from countries from which Italy no longer requires an entry visa, such as Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Moldavia. Freedom of movement enjoyed by the citizens of the above-mentioned countries contributes to the growth of circular migration: these foreign nationals live and work in Italy for a period of time, and then return to their countries of origin. These workers gain rights in the Italian social and welfare sector, for instance in the area of healthcare and in the pension and social security area.

#### **f. The increase in internal migration**

Finally, there is a fifth element that must not be disregarded: the growth of internal migration, a historically endemic phenomenon in the Italian scenario. According to the SVIMEZ Report on Southern Italy's economy issued in July 2015, from 2011 to 2014 more than 1,600,000 people moved from the south to both central and northern Italy. In addition, considering the number of people who moved back to the south in the same period - 923,000 units - the net migration rate in Southern Italy was of 744,000. The same Report highlights that about 70% of internal migrants are young people, 40% of whom hold a university degree. These figures indicate a worrying trend, especially in the light of the equally worrying figures concerning economic growth, unemployment - especially youth unemployment - and poverty levels in the south of Italy.

What has been illustrated so far shows how migration in Italy is becoming a more complex and diversified phenomenon. As a consequence, it requires a broad reconsideration of the existing legal framework in Italy, which needs to be modified with regard to a series of key points: the Italian law for citizenship acquisition, access to the job market, regulations on how to apply for residence permits, especially considering the important role now played by family reunification. Before analysing the main guidelines for a reform of this kind, it is how-



ever necessary to fully grasp the growing differentiation that concerns the legal status of foreign nationals residing in Italy. Indeed, such a complex scenario has come into being not only because of the rapid change in migration patterns, but also because of the way different legislative instruments implemented at different levels of government - national and European - overlap.

## **2. For an affective European policy on immigration and asylum**

In the light of the role played by mobility in the future of the European constitution, we would like to describe what we believe should be the pillars of a reform of the present European policy on immigration and asylum. In the attempt to go beyond a short-term approach, which focuses only on emergency situations, it appears necessary to tackle some structural problems that weigh on the present political and legal system, with the aim of developing proposals for a long-term solution.

### **a. Tackling the root causes of migration flows**

The scope of migration flows in the Mediterranean, both in terms of quality and quantity, clearly signals an unprecedented situation and stresses the challenges that an effective model of governance of the flows must tackle. Saving lives is an essential priority for the EU; it is therefore necessary to take all possible measures in order to carry out this mission. In this regard, the development of the Triton Operation is a positive result. At present, this project involves search and rescue operations that continue the work previously carried out by the Mare Nostrum Operation, regardless of the initial reluctance shown by member states to implement the program - which entered into effect only after yet another tragedy at sea that took place in the Mediterranean in April 2015.

It is however becoming increasingly clear that a permanent solution to the challenges posed by the trans-Mediterranean flows requires addressing the root causes of the phenomenon. Wars, conflicts, violations of human rights, and extreme poverty are the main 'push factors'

that fuel migration across the Mediterranean. These factors demand a complete overhaul of the guidelines of foreign policies aimed at such a challenging objective. It's fundamental for European member states to develop a consistent and common foreign policy, by acting together on the international and regional scene, and by establishing solid partnerships with the main countries of origin and transit of these flows. It is also necessary to acknowledge that the increasingly global nature of the flows requires an approach that must be equally global: while the EU must account for what takes place at its borders, it is also necessary to activate all available diplomatic channels so that a genuinely multilateral approach to the problem may be developed. More concretely, in order to obtain a reduction in asylum applications - and work towards a reduction in forced migration - it is necessary that all principal actors at a regional and international level commit to implementing measures to end conflicts and tackle the serious violations of human rights taking place in the countries of origin of asylum seekers. Migration flows are the final effect of a series of very specific causes, and efforts must be concentrated on removing them in order to obtain significant and lasting results. More concretely, everything possible must be done to end wars, to put an end to religious, political and ethnic persecutions, and to intervene in new and more effective ways to reduce poverty deriving from desertification, climate change, famines, corruption, and the indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources in the countries of origin.

According to Paul Collier, achieving this objective would require interventions on the "social model" of the countries of origin, understood as "the aggregate of a nation's institutions, rules, norms and organizations" (Collier, 2015: 27), a proposal that has sparked heated academic debate. According to Collier, fostering a sense of the State, reducing clannish insularity, making the educational system more effective, combating corruption and stimulating democratization processes in those countries, is essential. In order not to reduce such a program to only wishful thinking, and to prevent it from giving rise to surreptitious neo-colonial interventions by rich countries, it is essential to foster the development of ruling classes that are also made up of subjects from the diasporas. This is undoubtedly a complex challenge that will inevitably require a long time if it is

to be taken on in a meaningful way. As early as 1950, the Schuman Declaration - a document that was one of the cornerstones in the process of European integration - stated that "with increased resources, Europe will be able to pursue the achievement of one of its essential tasks, namely, the development of the African continent". Sixty-five years later, the "essential task" identified by French statesman Robert Schuman remains a challenge of primary importance for the EU and for the international community. To this end, countries of origin and destination as well as international cooperation organizations must work together not only to increase the amount of aid being disbursed, but also to review the methods and aims used to distribute such aid, which has often achieved disappointing results.

The relationship between migration and development has been widely explored and many best practices have been identified in recent years in concert between national governments, international organizations and NGOs. The first element that emerged from the research that has been conducted is the central role that migrants' remittances to their countries of origin have played in the creation of human capital - therefore facilitating access to education and healthcare - and as a factor in poverty reduction (Rosser, 2008). Diaspora groups have also been recognized as important actors due to their ongoing bonds to their countries of origin and destination. Several investigations and concrete experiences have also demonstrated that, with appropriate policies, highly qualified migrants residing abroad can actively contribute to the development of their countries of origin, while limiting the negative effects of the 'brain drain' (IOM, MPI, 2012).

A lot can still be done in both cases. With respect to remittances, a better market regulation is required to further decrease the costs of money transfers, informational campaigns on the most efficient channels to transfer funds are needed, as well as easier access to the banking system of those who are still excluded from it, especially in the poorest countries. With regard to Diasporas, flexible visa and residency regulations, tax breaks for foreign residents who invest in their countries of origin, and facilitating the transferability of pension and health care rights have all been recognized as effective in favoring the exchange of resources and know-how. However, it is also clear that bilateral and

multilateral partnerships between countries of origin and destination need to be further reinforced in order to guarantee the effectiveness and continuity of these initiatives.

Above and beyond political programs and policy strategies, in order to achieve concrete results we must develop and spread a "culture of shared solidarity on the planetary level", one that will raise our awareness of the ever more profound interdependency that binds us to one another. As Pope Francis said in his encyclical *Laudato si'* (Praised Be): "we must raise the awareness that we are a single human family. There are no borders or social and political barriers allowing us to isolate ourselves, and for the same reason there is no room for the globalization of indifference" (Pope Francis, 2015: 43). It is only by effectively influencing the causes - thereby preventing people from being uprooted from their homelands by serious economic hardships or political, religious and ethnic persecutions - that we can posit a decrease of forced migrations. Even in the case of such a favourable hypothetical scenario, migrations will certainly continue to be a relevant phenomenon on a global scale: indeed, in our era of globalization, human mobility will foreseeably become more and more substantial. We must work therefore to reduce forced migrations as much as possible, while at the same time promoting voluntary migrations through forward-thinking and large-scale policies.

#### **b. For an authentically European asylum policy**

Taking action to address the root causes of these migration flows will not however eliminate the reasons that drive hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers to leave their home countries and seek refuge in Europe, either in the short or the medium term. As a matter of fact, many countries in Africa and in the Middle East are, torn apart by civil wars or oppressed by authoritarian regimes. This is why even if Europe were to take further action and develop processes of pacification, democratization and development, a great many people would still find themselves fleeing towards Europe's frontiers in the coming years. As it has already been pointed out, the scenario is such that one cannot rule out the possibility

of a further increase in flows, due to the persistence, aggravation and combination of ongoing crises.

Given this situation, the inadequacy of the European Union's norms and measures has become universally obvious, especially with regards to the Dublin Regulation. If one were to follow it to the letter, Italy and Greece (as countries of first arrival) would have to host a significant number of asylum seekers and help them integrate - which is definitely an unrealistic option. When the German government opened the nation's borders to all Syrian asylum seekers at the end of August 2015, de facto redistribution processes were already taking place as unidentified persons travelled within the Union towards their destination of choice. Clearly, there is the need for an organic European strategy of burden-sharing, one that will take into account each country's different possibilities for reception.

However, this is not the only point: another issue must be tackled boldly, that is the establishment of safe routes to Europe for those fleeing their own countries. Much is being said about rescues at sea and combating human trafficking, but clearly it is only by opening up new channels of legal arrival to the EU for those needing international protection that it will be possible to prevent the tragedies that inevitably stem from illicit mass travel.

To this end, governments that are well-disposed towards resettlement strategies should be encouraged, while an effort should be made to reconcile individual states' rationales in preferring more "suitable" newcomers with the humanitarian rationale of privileging those most in need. In addition, debate and experimentation should be resumed in order to allow asylum seekers to present their applications - and therefore to obtain humanitarian entry visas if they are deemed in need of protection - in countries bordering crisis areas. The logistical difficulties inherent in such initiatives are obvious, as are the possible risks that they might further increase the flows towards Europe; at the same time, the unacceptable chaos characterizing the current movements towards Europe calls for every effort to be made to develop channels for a safe and orderly passage, albeit gradually and with the necessary caution.

With regard to the above-mentioned redistribution of asylum seekers, much has been said about quotas - what criteria should be used to calculate them, how to involve

all member states in the solidarity effort - and how to quickly and efficiently identify the asylum seekers in their country of first arrival. Nevertheless, an issue of the utmost relevance has been overlooked, that is, what criteria should be used to identify the people to be resettled in different countries. In other words, how will the people to be relocated actually be chosen? And what criteria should be used to decide their destination countries? These are delicate and not merely technical questions, as they have to do with fundamental choices touching on the relationship between reception and integration. Clearly, the selection process must take the preferences of individual asylum seekers into account; at the same time, it is unrealistic to think that the system can work by unlimitedly complying with such preferences. On a broader level, the chances for integration of individuals and families, the presence of ethnic or family networks, and language and professional skills are also to be considered. All this must be reconciled with the need for rapid processing, as keeping thousands of people waiting for a destination for months is inhumane.

Another unavoidable problem is managing reception in member states. The current EU scenario is extremely diverse: some countries, like Germany and Sweden, have set up processes and facilities that are overall up to the task; others, like Italy, are objectively struggling with the emergency, while others still - as in the case of Greece - are utterly inadequate in providing reception that respects even the most basic human rights. On its own, the European Directive on reception, with its often loosely indicated "minimum standards", has not been able to generate a tangible asylum seeker reception model that is truly uniform across the states of the Union. Therefore, work must be done in the coming years to develop appropriate European initiatives - at both the regulatory and the financial levels - to promote standardized reception measures capable of creating similar conditions in all the member states, while respecting the distinctive features of the different welfare systems.

In the future, many European countries will find themselves having to receive a significant number of asylum seekers every year, which in turn will require the effective long-term labour, school and social integration of an ever-growing diverse population. Only a truly European reception policy will prevent failures that could bring about negative social consequences in some territories.

The notion of integration leads us to another issue calling for an adjustment in European regulations: the free circulation of refugees. Current regulations keep individuals and families "blocked" in the host country for years, even after they have obtained refugee status. This is both strategically unreasonable and incoherent with the logic of the free circulation of persons, one of the linchpins of the European Union. Indeed, even if a rational distribution of asylum seekers among member states were to be achieved, the evolution of the economic situation and other factors will continue be such that it will always be possible for a refugee to find better life conditions in a country different from the country of arrival. One solution to some of the distortions that characterize the current system could be a refugee title that would allow the migrant to settle immediately in any country in the Union. Obviously, the fear is that in doing so the majority of refugees would decide to settle only in some countries, that would then face disproportionate economic and social burdens. However, those obtaining refugee status or subsidiary protections have presumably already reached a certain level of integration and economic self-sufficiency, and should therefore be considered more in terms of a resource than a "problem" for their host country. It is to be hoped therefore that the principles of freedom and of better resource allocation - which lie at the heart of the principle of freedom of movement - will prevail over short-sighted national interests that are too often exclusively focused on the short term.

The ISMU Foundation has developed a wide-ranging analysis of the issue of European asylum policy, which is laid out in a specific document<sup>2</sup>.

### **c. For an integration strategy**

With regard to policies and measures aimed at guaranteeing the integration of the immigrant population into its destination society, host countries have two options. The first is the adoption of so-called "indirect policies" whereby the entire population (without distinction between nationals and migrants legally residing in the country) benefits from programs and policies - such as

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<sup>2</sup> Available at [www.ismu.org](http://www.ismu.org).

council housing programs in many local contexts. The second entails "direct policies" targeting a specific part of the population - with reference to foreigners, language classes or cultural mediation are just a couple of examples.

Indirect policies are classified by experts under the mainstreaming approach. Now more than ever, this type of response to the needs of the population is still under debate. Supporters of this approach say that needs must be met no matter who the person in need is, while those who privilege ad hoc measures for the immigrant population point to the risk of the so-called "shadow effect", the risk that specific needs might go unmet.

Both approaches have positive and negative aspects, which is why a "mixed approach" is the preferable option - as shown in an ISMU Foundation study on the governance of integration policies in Europe (Knowledge for INtegration Governance - KING).<sup>3</sup> While mainstreaming is an objective to be pursued, it appears to be more effective to implement intermediate stages to develop, for example, ad hoc measures targeting the specific needs of immigrants or some of their categories (such as refugees and asylum seekers) alongside broader solutions in response to the needs of the population as a whole.

The above-mentioned study also analyses another form of policy mainstreaming - which is not being as hotly debated but which is nonetheless crucial - that calls for integration policies to be tackled at all levels of government and by all relevant public services, as established in the EU Common Basic Principles on migrant integration adopted by Union member nations (Common Basic Principles n. 10). Mainstreaming therefore consists of a horizontal dimension, requiring synergy between those responsible for integration policies (for example health, work, housing, economic development), and a vertical dimension entailing cooperation between levels of government - especially local, national, and supranational. The cooperation framework developed within the European Union can play a fundamental role in both dimensions. With regards to the vertical one, even in the absence of formal European jurisdiction on integration, the framework can act as a stimulus at a national and local level by proposing

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<sup>3</sup> Further details are available on the website of the project [www.king.ismu.org](http://www.king.ismu.org).



joint actions and strategies, also through EU funding for the development of integration initiatives. As for the horizontal dimension, the various European institutions are called upon to act together to develop policies on asylum or access to the job market for third-country citizens, which, as mentioned above, can significantly affect integration processes.

The EU should therefore promote vertical and horizontal cooperation and orient the dialogue between the parties, but in order to do so an authentically political European Union is necessary. As Marc Augé<sup>4</sup> recently reminded us, we need Europe to be stronger, more self-confident, and show more solidarity, otherwise it runs the risk of not making sense: Europe needs to act with a solidarity capable of generating useful measures in dealing with the emergency, and most of all, it needs to prepare collective global responses.

#### **d. Combating hostile attitudes towards immigrants**

The above-mentioned proposals clash with the climate of diffuse hostility towards immigrants now permeating European societies, in which political parties are fielding electoral programs that are highly restrictive of immigration with sometimes explicitly xenophobic arguments. These programs - which display marked similarities despite the differences that characterize the various national contexts - boil down in most cases to rather unstructured requests for a "renationalization" of migration policies and the questioning of the principle of free movement within the Schengen area, with a return to security-based and restrictive rationales. However, the rapid and unexpected post-Arab Spring collapse of the cordon sanitaire erected in North Africa should act as a warning: the failure of the strategy of "outsourcing" in collaboration with authoritarian regimes that were often entirely disrespectful of human rights, clearly proves that narrow, short-sighted rationales are wholly inadequate in dealing with the range and complexity of migratory phenomena, whose current epicentre is the Mediterranean.

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<sup>4</sup> Interview excerpt from La Repubblica newspaper, June 16, 2015: 83.

In terms of attitudes, some data emerging from recent public opinion surveys are cause for concern. In Italy, worry over the increase in arrivals by sea in 2015 heightened rapidly, especially over security issues. According to a Demos & Pi survey, the percentage of the population that believes immigrants pose a public security threat grew from 33% to 42% in the first six months of 2015, while the percentage of those concerned over immigrants' impact on Italian culture and identity was almost stable. Interestingly, concern over security has grown back to percentages similar to those of 15 years ago, at the beginning of the new millennium, although these concerns did actually peak during the 2007-2008 electoral campaign, when "defence" against immigrants became a banner for some political parties. In particular, an IPSOS survey shows that 38% of Italians believes a connection between migration and terrorism is possible, and that immigration constitutes a serious threat to Italy's security, while 39% thinks it essential to identify and detain immigrants in their countries of departure; probably, it is because of these beliefs that the number of Italians who are in favour of welcoming foreigners is very low, a mere 16%. Of course, also weighing in are considerations on the economic burden of the search, rescue and reception operations, about which public opinion should be informed correctly. In fact, ISMU Foundation breakdowns showed that the Mare Nostrum Operation cost each Italian citizen just under two euros per capita a year. The reception measures that followed, based on average hypothetical costs of 35-40 euros a day for 60,000 immigrants a year, cost Italians about 11 euros per capita a year. 94% of the funds are allocated to social service operators and service providers (primarily food and lodging) and approximately 6%, or under one euro a year, to the migrants.

This return of concern over immigration is not just an Italian problem. A European Observatory on Security survey showed immigration is considered a priority problem especially in Germany and Great Britain. A Eurobarometer study carried out in the first six months of 2015 showed the percentage of European citizens concerned over religious extremist terrorism grew by 16 percentage points in 4 years, from 33% in 2011 to 49% in 2015. European citizens also think that the management of the Union's external borders is a cause for concern: an impressive 81% of respondents said this is one of the most important chal-

lenges facing the Union. As for the future: 76% of respondents said securing EU borders will become even more of a key issue, or at least that it will not become irrelevant to the security of European citizens. Wars and political instability in many regions bordering on EU countries are another cause for alarm: 82% of respondents think these factors are destabilizing to their own continent because they cause masses of people to flee armed conflict and political or religious persecution in search of areas where it is possible to live in peace. These security concerns are further borne out by the fact that 47% of European citizens surveyed by Eurobarometer believe police or other forces of law and order do not do enough to combat human trafficking.

How to explain this growing hostility towards immigrants, not just in Italy but in general in European public opinion? Certainly, both exogenous and endogenous objective factors - such as ISIS proclamations in the first case and the long-term effects of the economic crisis in the second case - significantly contribute in moulding European citizens' perceptions. From a broader perspective, it could be argued that increasing expressions of closure and refusal towards immigrants have to do with the accentuation and the spread of an ever more exasperated individualism within contemporary Western societies. The distinctive traits of this hyper-individualism - which theorists have named "minimalist narcissism" (Cesareo, Vaccarini, 2012) - are a mistrust of others and the future, egotistical enclosure in the present, and withdrawal into the self. Here is a type of human being who is indifferent to everything, whose way of relating to the world is dominated by a levelling of all axiological superiorities and of any qualitative distinction. The spread of this "minimalist narcissism" with its lowering of expectations - first and foremost those of a moral kind - could explain the indifference, the meagre participation, and the disengagement in the face of the drama of hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing towards Europe and the terrible conflicts taking place at our borders. Even terrorist acts no longer spark the taking up of an ethical stance, but rather a mixture of fear and fatalistic resignation.

Above and beyond the nihilistic drive smouldering at the heart of European societies, and the myriad ways in which this drive makes itself manifest, public debate on immigration in the media can be boiled down to three pre-

vailing attitudes: a humanitarian one marked by feelings of brotherhood and a total willingness to welcome migrants; a utilitarian one, marked by rational assessments of convenience and calculations of the advantages and disadvantages, costs and benefits stemming from a greater or lower degree of openness to immigration; and finally, an attitude of fear and hostility marked by an intransigent closure towards foreigners, who are viewed as "enemies" endangering an alleged collective identity. Such a perception is even more widespread in times of existential uncertainties and employment insecurity, as sociologist Zygmunt Bauman recently pointed out.<sup>5</sup> With the exclusion of the third kind of attitude and its inevitable baggage of fanaticism and ideological aberration (which, it must be remembered, are a sad part of the European continent's past), the real challenge lies in the identification of realistic strategies that can reconcile the "open door" option, i.e. receiving the many who currently see Europe as their only chance for a future, with the actual social and economic sustainability of this reception. Therefore, the challenge is not to adopt the "either-or" logic but the "and-and" logic, as hard as it is to identify. Such a logic must never forego the principle of respecting universal human rights, which are a pillar of our shared European identity, and which to this day are often not respected. As President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella affirmed, we must face the current migration crisis with "wisdom and humanity".<sup>6</sup>

### **e. The European "demos" and migration challenges**

From this analysis migration policies, and especially asylum policies, are an undoubtedly decisive test for the future of Europe. As we said, massive migratory flows will foreseeably affect the European continent in a significant way in the short and medium term. However, given the data on the ageing of European populations, organized and efficient management of these flows will allow in the

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<sup>5</sup> Interview excerpt from La Repubblica newspaper, June 16, 2015: 13.

<sup>6</sup> Speech by President of the Republic Sergio Mattarella at EXPO Milan 2015, June 5, 2015  
<http://www.quirinale.it/elementi/Continua.aspx?tipo=Discorso&key=83>.

long term to transform the new and diverse refugee populations into a strategic resource.

For example, without the demographic contribution of immigration, Italy would see its population decrease from the current 60 million to 53 million by 2045, while in the same period Germany's population would fall by 10 million, from 80 in 2015 to 70 million in 2045 (UN Population Division, 2015; "zero migration" hypothesis). As a consequence European countries need to adequately equip themselves to tackle the difficult challenge of immigration in a spirit of responsibility and solidarity, knowing that the demographic dynamic of the past - which is indelibly written into the age structure of today's and tomorrow's population - will inevitably cause gaps in the generational renewal of the workforce. In our country, that deficit will amount to 100-200,000 units a year over the next 2-3 decades, and in the EU-28 will add up to over one million units.

To this end, the above-mentioned proposals for an authentically European asylum and immigration policy should call into question the existence of a common European identity and a sense of belonging to the same European demos as an indispensable premise for real solidarity among European citizens. A widely shared position is that the absence of this identity, which could guarantee a solidarity-based bond between the members of a political community, would prevent the European Union from adopting significant redistribution policies, or in other words, from asking citizens of one member state to take on the burden of supporting the citizens of other member states when they are in trouble.

The controversies over asylum seeker relocations are a testament to the difficulties of building a European identity. The political classes and public opinion of numerous member states perceive such decisions as being imposed from above and as lacking in true democratic legitimacy.

In the midst of this uncertainty over a shared identity and an authentic and substantial feeling of belonging to a European "community", the Union's borders become the symbol and metaphor of the tensions coursing through the continent—tensions that put at risk the very pillars of the European edifice, beginning with people's freedom to circulate among European countries without restrictions, as sanctioned by the Schengen Agreement. While that freedom is a fundamental Union conquest, nevertheless we note

how states that feel a threat to their sovereignty give in to the temptation of insularity, regressing back to their borders and placing the need to control them over individual liberties. Nevertheless, borders, however necessary, should not consist of insurmountable walls - real or metaphorical - making any exchange impossible; on the contrary, they should be like doorways, acting on the one hand as a demarcation and on the other allowing communication and openness, and making inclusion and reception possible.

The question of the existence or not of a common European identity, as well as the traits and the shape such identity should take, is too broad and complex to be discussed here. What on the other hand must be stressed here is that the search of a common identity and a European demos, conceived in the image and resemblance of that of national states, risks being a sterile and in some ways counterproductive exercise, because it could even lead to fueling a national sense of belonging. On the contrary, a desirable scenario would be the emergence of a different idea of European identity, one based not on stable and definitive pre-political categories or founding myths, but rather on recognizing what unites us as Europeans in explicitly political terms, that is, the participation in a shared long-term project, with the awareness that common problems can only be dealt with by uniting forces and sharing responsibilities. This awareness does not and must not imply giving up or breaking away from one's past, cultural roots and traditions, which are a precious heritage for the future as well. On the contrary, the most authentic sense of the European demos resides precisely in the aspiration of different peoples of establishing mutual cooperation so as to guarantee liberty, justice and wellbeing, while fully respecting irreducible diversities. The crisis we are witnessing today at our borders, with hundreds of thousands of people fleeing towards the European Union in search of peace and rescue, show how this project - conceived 70 years ago on the ruins of a Europe torn apart by conflicts as terrible as those raging in the migrants' homelands today - is more relevant than ever, and must be pursued with tenacity and commitment.



# The Statistical Aspects

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by Gian Carlo Blangiardo

## 1.1 Persistent growth in new scenarios

The ISMU Foundation estimates on the size of the foreign population in Italy as of January 1st, 2015, indicate the presence of 5.8 million migrants. Of these, 5 million are regularly domiciled in an Italian city (residents), while the rest appear equally distributed between those who are legally in Italy but not residents (not recorded in the Population Register) and irregular migrants (see Table 1.1).

Overall, in 2014, the number of foreigners has increased by 150,000. This figure is made up by two-thirds of legal residents and one third irregular migrants. The latter figure may be partially due to the wide discrepancy between the 170,000 migrants who disembarked on Italian shores during the course of the year and the 65.000 asylum applications filed during that time.

Irregular immigration, which previously took place mainly through the practice of overstayers, seems therefore to have taken on channels and characteristics that are rather more striking than in the past, even while reflecting the uncertainty of migratory projects and trajectories that - as is well known - often strive for a final destination that isn't necessarily Italy itself.

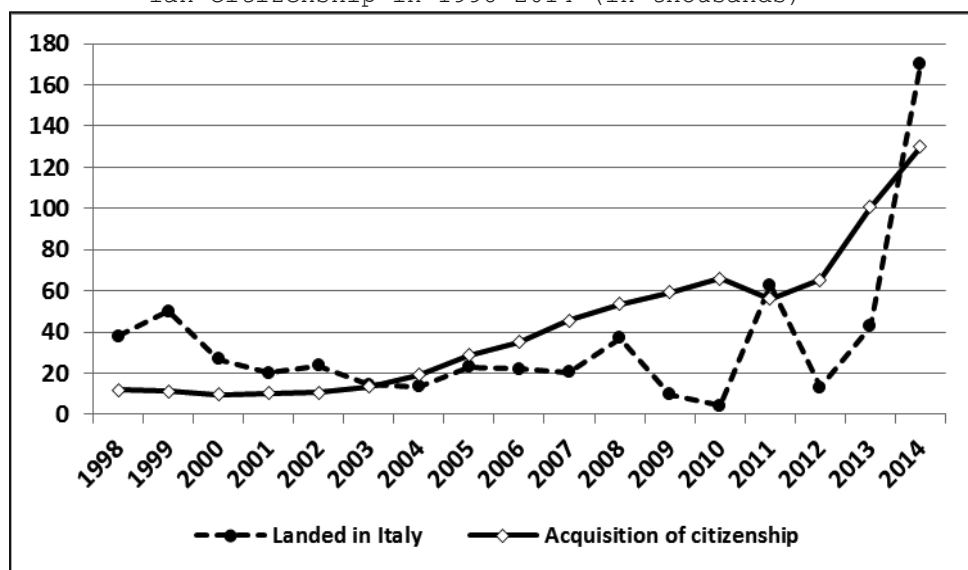


**Table 1.1** - Foreigners in Italy as of 1st January 2014 and 2015, by residency status

Residency status	2014	2015
	Thousands	
Residents	4,922	5,014
Regular non-residents	394	401
Irregulars	350	404
Total	5,666	5,819

Source: ISMU analysis of ISTAT data

In any case, while arrivals by sea have significantly increased the foreign stock in Italy in 2014 - something which is going to be confirmed for 2015<sup>1</sup> - a further significant element that should be accounted for is the formidable increase in acquisitions of Italian citizenship (Graph 1.1).

**Graph 1.1** - Foreign arrivals in Italy and acquisitions of Italian citizenship in 1998-2014 (in thousands)

Source: compiled by ISMU using data from the Ministry for Interior and Eurostat

<sup>1</sup> According to data released by the Interior Ministry, 98,982 people landed on Italian shores from January 1 to August 6, 2015, compared to the 96,336 during the same period in the previous year.

The numerical consistency of this phenomenon - which has had the opposite effect on the numbers of foreigners - has grown, albeit without great media attention, beyond the symbolic threshold of the 100,000 units in 2013.

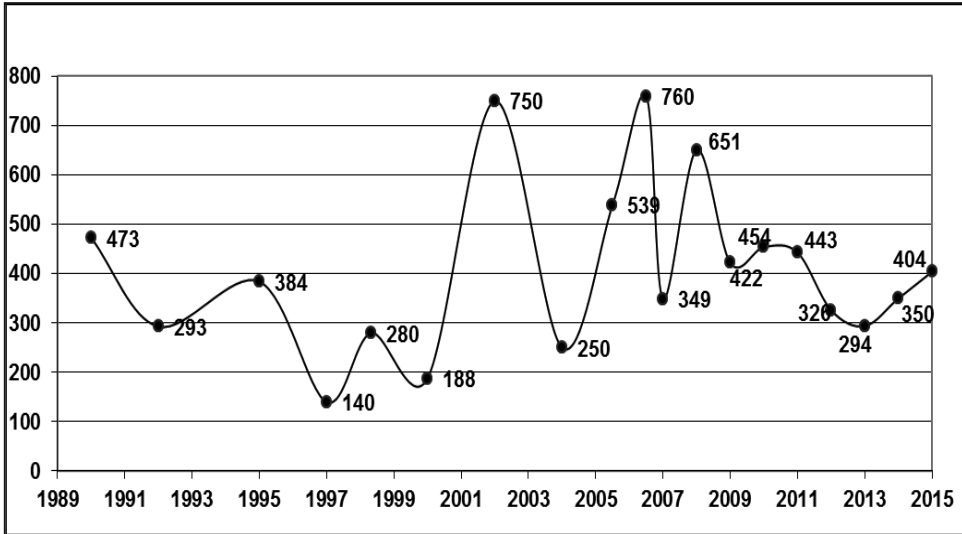
This trend was further confirmed with 13,000 cases the following year. In fact, while 213,000 foreigners "disembarked" in Italy in 2013-2014, another 231,000 attained Italian citizenship during that same time period.

The moderate increase in the number of undocumented foreigners (Graph 1.2) - which make up less than 7% of the total, a figure that can be considered relatively low - takes place within a context that shows some progresses among those foreign communities which have historically been more established across the Italian territory.

If we consider the evolution of the phenomena which have determined the number of foreign residents over the course of the 21st century (Graph 1.3) we realize how, for a long time (2002-2012), variations in population were driven solely by the positive migration balance of the Population Register year after year, fostered by recurrent amnesties. Elements which indicate a degree of settlement and integration into Italian society, such as births and citizenships, have progressed almost at the same rate, so that a natural positive balance (more births and fewer deaths) and cancellations due to citizenships obtained basically compensated each other. In the last two years (2013-2014), however, there have been signals which seem to indicate we have reached a turning point. This is not only because the migratory balance, which began a downward trend beginning in 2007, has returned, in 2014, to levels which are similar to those of the beginning of the 21st century (prior to the Bossi-Fini amnesty), but also because of the decisive contribution made by the acquisition of Italian citizenship in influencing the low rise in foreign residents.

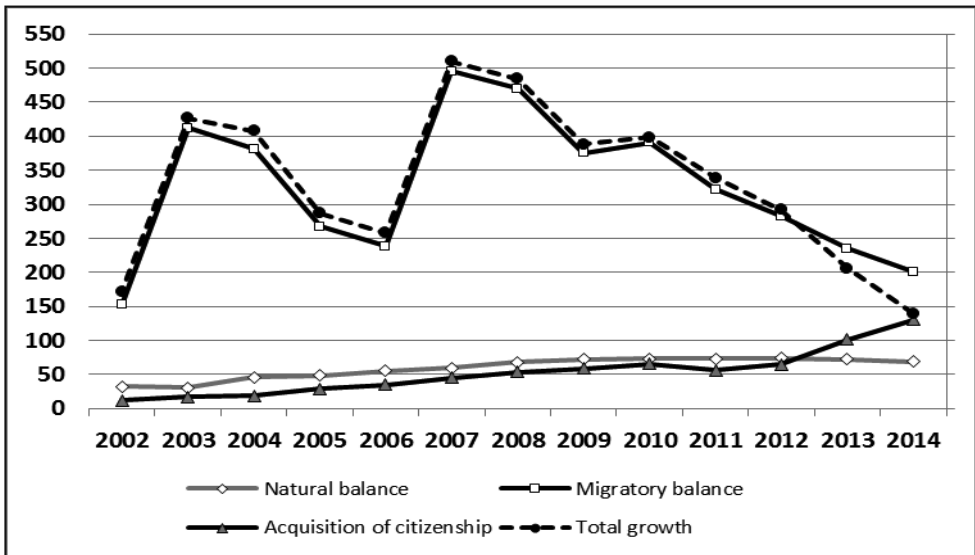
A halt on immigration, the stabilization of births, and most importantly, the growing number of "new" Italians, are most likely the elements driving a new adjustment phase among the contingent of "traditional" immigrants. An adjustment, however, which bears the weight of the new and increasing migratory pressure coming from the South of the globe, amply evident in the most recent data on arrivals by sea.

**Graph 1.2 - Foreign irregular residents in Italy in 1990-2015 (in thousands)**



Source: ISMU estimates in different years

**Graph 1.3 - Registry balance of foreign population resident in Italy in 2002-2014**



(\*) Including other registrations in the Population Register resulting from Population Census adjustments.

Source: compiled from ISTAT data

It is a commonly held opinion that the migratory flows coming from Africa, especially the Sub-Saharan regions, will most likely not only not be reduced, but may very well increase in the coming decades. Currently 962 million people live south of the Sahara, which are to become 1.2 billion in the next 10 years and 1.6 billion in the next twenty. According to the latest United Nations estimates (United Nations, 2015), the population of those aged 20-39 in that area will likely grow by 203 million within the next two decades, and if they won't be able to find enough jobs in their native countries, it is highly likely they will consider escaping to Europe, of which Italy is the natural frontier (Blangiardo, 2015).

## **1.2 A profile of foreigners currently in Italy**

Turning to an analysis of the main characteristics of foreigners currently living in Italy, data from the Population Register - which accounts for almost nine tenths of the total stock - shows that the overwhelming majority, or 22%, is Romanian, followed by Albanians (10.1%) and Moroccans (9.2%). During 2014, Egyptians showed the most substantial growth (+8%), followed by Nigerians (6.5%), Pakistanis (+6.2%) and Sri Lankans (+5.8%). On the opposite front, moderate decreases were recorded among Moroccans and Tunisians (-1.3%) followed by Albanians and Indians (-1.1%).

In terms of gender in 2015, consistently with data from previous years, women outnumbered men slightly coming in at 52.7% - with a range of variation going from 27.4% among the Senegalese to 79% among Ukrainians - while the age distribution shows a continuous, gradual trend towards middle adulthood, with the median age<sup>2</sup> of 32 for males and 35 for females, up one and three years respectively compared to 2005-2015. During the same time period, however, the number of foreign minors has also increased significantly, both in absolute terms (from 503,000 to 1.085 million), and as a percentage of residents (from 20.7% in 2005 to 21.6% in 2015). This high-

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<sup>2</sup> The median age is an index that describes the age distribution of a population: the median age divides a population in two halves, one half of the population is younger than this age and the other half is older.

lights the fact that there has been a progressive transformation of immigration, from labour force to an out-right minority population that is increasingly composed of families - a trend which has been anticipated several times in previous ISMU Reports (Blangiardo, 2014).

The first results of a report published by the National Institute for Statistics (ISTAT) on the Conditions and Social Integration of Foreign Citizens in 2011-2012 across the national territory - with an in-depth study of the cities of Rome, Milan and Naples (ISTAT, 2015a) - provides interesting and original data regarding family settlements of foreign residents in Italy. The data show that approximately four out of five residents (more in the case of the female population) in the country are couples who live together, with or without children, or single parents with children (Table 1.2). Approximately 20% of residents do not live in a family unit and often are single, typically in large cities: this is so for one-third of foreign residents in Milan and Rome, and this figure reaches 40% in Naples.

There is also a difference between the three great metropolitan areas and the rest of the country with regards to other types of families. Big cities appears less friendly to couples with children, but more inclined to welcome single-parent families, especially if the parent is female. Couples without children make up 10.6% of residents overall, with variations in metropolitan areas, from a high of 11.7% in Naples to a low of 7.8% in Milan.

A closer look and a breakdown by nationality reveal profound differences in the ways in which the project of family settlement plays out in different communities. While 46.3% of Ukrainians and just 8.8% of Chinese migrants do not live in family units, the latter, along with Egyptians, come first in terms of couples with children (73.2% and 74.5% of residents, respectively), whereas Ukrainians come last at 24.6%. Among Peruvians, 23.2% live in female-led single-parent families, while this is rare among immigrants from Bangladesh and Egypt (0.7%).

The preponderance of single-parent families clearly impacts upon the presence of minors in family units, with 10% of foreigners under the age of 18 living with one parent (which, in four out of five cases, is the mother), and here too the phenomenon is accentuated in metropolitan cities, reaching 15% in Milan and almost 20% in Rome and Naples. In the capital, one out of six minors lives

with his or her mother only, while in Naples it is one in seven, and in Milan one in eight.

**Table 1.2** - Family conditions of foreign and foreign minor residents in Italy (%). Years 2011-2012

	Type of family unit					Total in thousands
	No family unit	Couple with children	Couple without children	Single male parent	Single female parent	
<i>Gender</i>						
Males	23.6	61.2	8.7	2.5	4.1	1,884
Females	19.8	58.2	12.3	0.6	9.2	2,152
Total MF It.	21.6	59.6	10.6	1.5	6.8	4,036
MF Milan	34.9	45.6	7.8	1.4	10.4	178
MF Rome	33.0	46.4	9.8	1.9	9.0	225
MF Naples	39.9	35.3	11.7	2.0	11.2	32
<i>Nationality(*)</i>						
Philippines	24.1	52.4	10.7	1.9	10.9	117
Egypt	23.6	74.5	1.2		0.7	81
China	8.8	73.2	8.1	4.5	5.5	186
Peru	19.4	46.4	9.2	1.8	23.2	86
Ukraine	46.3	24.6	16.7	0.6	11.8	178
Sri Lanka	24.0	56.9	13.9	0.3	4.9	72
Romania	24.6	52.1	15.1	1.0	7.1	855
Bangladesh	26.5	65.8	6.0	1.0	0.7	73
Poland	31.9	42.8	17.4	0.8	7.1	95
Other	18.7	64.9	8.8	1.6	6.0	2,294
<i>Minors aged:</i>						
0-5	0.0	94.0	-	1.1	4.9	397
6-17	0.4	87.0	-	1.8	10.8	547
Italy 0-17	0.2	90.0	-	1.5	8.3	944
Milan 0-17	0.0	85.4	-	2.5	12.1	36
Rome 0-17	0.1	81.1	-	1.7	17.1	41
Naples 0-17	0.8	81.1	-	3.7	14.3	5

(\*) The nationalities listed are just those that are the most common in the three cities considered; six of them are included into the 10 most frequent nationalities at the national level.

Source: ISMU analysis of ISTAT data

### 1.3 Some steps forward on the path towards integration...

In any debate on the reality of foreign immigration in Italy and on the process of integration it implies, it is important to have the necessary elements to assess its

progress, and possibly gather suggestions that can accelerate the process. To this end, data and numbers provide two interesting starting points for reflection, which refer specifically to the issues of stability and inclusion.

The first element is provided by the data on the continuous increase in residents with long-term residency permits - a status which, on the one hand, offers those who attain it some bureaucratic advantages and a more secure condition for their migratory project; on the other, it posits itself as the formal manifestation of a first step towards permanent settlement, and over the long term, of achieving definitive membership within the community of the host country.

According to statistics from the past four years, the percentage of non-EU foreign citizens - the only ones who are required to have a valid residency permit - who possess a long-term residency permit has surpassed the symbolic 50% threshold. The 2014 data shows that 56.3% of documented residents has reached this condition, up 10% from 2011.

Among the most represented nationalities, the quota of long-term residents is particularly high among minorities who have generally been present in the country for a longer period - such as Albanians, Egyptians and Moroccans - and is relatively lower among more recent minorities, such as Moldavians. A rather modest incidence (40.4%) is also recorded among the Chinese, for whom we can hypothesize trajectories of domestic and international mobility and turnover practices that are perhaps more intense compared to other nationalities.

Over and beyond the data on long-term residents, another element that appears to point to progress made in inclusion within Italian society is the continued increase in acquired citizenships - a phenomenon we discussed previously - and especially in those acquired by entire family units, within which children under 18 are surely the most identifiable statistically. To this end it is enlightening to observe how in the period 2008-2013, approximately one in four new Italians (24.2%) was aged under 15, with a high of 30.1% in 2013 (the last available year).

## 1.4 ..while others struggle to find their way

Just as the guarantees that come with long-term settlement and naturalization are determining factors for progress on the road towards the integration of foreigners in Italian society, instability and lack of security make this aim totally unfeasible. This is what happened and is still happening to the (by now) hundreds of thousands of people who have disembarked in Italy over the past few years. In the 2005-2015 decade, a little over half a million people reached our country by sea in an unauthorized way - of whom over 300,000 in the last three years; in this case it is difficult to reconstruct their migratory route and identify their ultimate destination.

According to data gathered in Lombardy by the Regional Observatory for Integration and Multiethnicity (ORIM) - a local source, but which can nonetheless be considered a "case study" that may reflect the characteristics and dynamics also of the national situation (Ortensi, 2013: 135-141; Blangiardo, . 2015b) - in 2015 there were some 26,000 people (or 2.5% of adult immigrants present in the region) with a residency permit granted for humanitarian or international protection: not many more than ORIM's 2012 estimate of 25,000 (2.6%). Of these, 65.4% came from Sub-Saharan Africa (with Eritrea, Mali, Nigeria, and Somalia in the top spots) and approximately 30% were Asian (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Syria). Another 5% came from North Africa - down from 14.7% in 2012, in spite of new stock from Libya - mainly from Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia. Compared to data from 2012, the number of foreigners with humanitarian permits from Sub-Saharan Africa does not vary significantly (62.7% in 2012) - though in 2015 we must include some nationalities not recorded in 2012, Mali, for instance - while the figure of those from North Africa has decreased, going from 14.7% to 4.5% despite a new stock by Libya. On the Asian front, an increase of ten percentage points is due to the appearance of Pakistani and Syrian asylum seekers alongside Afghans and Iraqis.

ORIM's 2012 report on the characteristics and living conditions of this segment of the population showed a stark prevalence of unmarried males without children, most of them with only primary education or no formal qualification. The report also found elements of precariousness in terms of social inclusion (Table 1.3), with



40% living in reception centres, 23% in a shared rental or with friends or relatives, and 9% living in specifically allocated public buildings or finding shelter where they could. In fact, autonomous lodging is available to less than one in four "refugees".

Finding work is also noticeably more difficult: the unemployment rate is four times higher among those seeking asylum or protection than among their fellow nationals, ending an unemployment status is harder than for others, and finding a job - whether legal or illegal - is definitely more problematic.

**Table 1.3** - Characteristics of the asylum/protection seeking population (RAP) aged 15 and over in Lombardy as of July 1, 2012

	RAP	Total immigrants
Men to every 100 women	826	102
Average age	30	35
% unmarried	69.1	31.3
% with primary education or no formal degree	22.3	11.3
% with independent accomodation	24.3	76.2
% guest or renting with other immigrants	22.7	14.1
% unemployed	60.7	13.4
% with an undocumented job	9.9	9.7
Average income among those employed	800 €/month	1,000 €/month
% intending to move elsewhere (within 12 months)	37.4	15.4
% to another state	21.6	4.6
% to country of origin	7.5	6.5

Source: ISMU-ORIM data

Those living in reception centres appear to be especially disadvantaged, with a 90.4% unemployment rate compared to 41.3% among those in other forms of accommodation. In addition, living in reception centres makes settling into the local territory and creating the informal ethnic network - which, to this day, remains one of the main ways to find a job - arguably more complex.

Actually, if we were to extend this picture of precariousness from Lombardy to the national system of first- and second-tier reception, it would be difficult to imagine that a real process of integration of migrants is currently underway, or even beginning. Although it is certainly true that this task - in itself not an easy one - is made harder still by the constant surge of emergency situations, which run from identifying sufficient eligible facilities, to organizing the distribution of migrants across the peninsula, to respecting timetables and procedures not only in terms of logistics but also to "inform, follow up, assist and provide guidance to refugees and asylum seekers, in order to facilitate their individual socio-economic integration" (Ministry for Internal Affairs - National Association of Italian Cities; ANCI 2014a). All this within the context of an ever-increasing phenomenon.

At beginning of August 2015<sup>3</sup>, there were 91,000 people requesting asylum/protection in reception centres across Italy - approximately 25,000 more than at the end of the previous year - almost all of them living in temporary facilities (Table 1.4). The overall rise in the number of immigrants, up approximately 38 percentage points across the whole nation, reached, in 2015, three-figure increases in seven Italian regions (Abruzzo, Liguria, Lombardy, Trentino Alto Adige, Tuscany, Valle d'Aosta and Veneto), due to the marked growth in the number of people being hosted in first-tier temporary reception facilities. Those living in centres run by the System of Protection for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) - which should represent the normal progression in the development of inclusive reception - are 20,000, with significant differences in regional quotas: in 2015 they made up 20% of the total in Lazio and Sicily, almost 10% in Calabria and Puglia, and 5% in Campania, Lombardy, Piedmont, and other regions.

In any case it is comforting that there are signs that the SPRAR system is being extended to more parts of the country, "with 381 local bodies offering to set up such facilities, compared to 128 in 2013" (Interior Ministry - ANCI, 2014b: 5).

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<sup>3</sup> On the basis of the most recent data available at the time of publication of this Report.

Also significant is a marked upsurge in the past two years of places being made available as a result of territorial initiatives. These are still weak beginnings, but they reflect a growing attention towards refugees and asylum seekers and, at the same time, the intention of tackling the problem not just from the standpoint of providing reception, but also and most of all, of helping them to rebuild a life.

**Table 1.4** - Foreign migrants in reception centres, by type of centre and by region

Regions	As of August 6, 2015			As of December 30, 2014			Total
	Temporary facilities	First-tier reception	SPPAR (*)	Temporary facilities	First-tier reception	SPPAR (*)	
Sicily	5,523	4,611	4,409	5,440	4,464	4,865	14,769
Lombardy	10,200		948	4,333		949	5,282
Lazio	2,910	854	4,569	2,805	875	4,791	8,471
Campania	5,743		1,040	3,706		1,948	5,654
Piedmont	5,006		889	2,343		782	3,125
Veneto	5,492		303	1,809		303	2,112
Puglia	1,760	2,137	1,741	1,572	2,426	1,882	5,880
Tuscany	5,031		549	1,887		549	2,436
Emilia R.	4,330		782	2,643		889	3,532
Calabria	1,653	1,548	1,781	1,683	1,236	1,155	4,074
Friuli V.G.	1,849	270	323	1,180	203	323	1,706
Marche	1,883	105	538	1,252	87	538	1,877
Liguria	2,288		311	956		313	1,269
Sardegna	2,082	253	88	894	301	88	1,283
Abruzzo*	1,587		217	637		227	864
Molise	976		405	713		443	1,156
Umbria	1,050		364	672		373	1,045

Regions	Temporary facilities	First-tier reception	SPRAR (*)	Total	Temporary facilities	First-tier reception	SPRAR (*)	Total
Trentino								
A.A.	1,253		149	1,402	463		149	612
Basilicata	703		382	1,085	449		408	857
V. d'Aosta	152			152	62			62
Total	61,471	9,778	19,788	91,037	35,499	9,592	20,975	66,066

(\*) System of Protection for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR). Second-tier reception centres to "inform, follow up, assist and provide guidance to refugees and asylum seekers, in order to facilitate their individual socio-economic integration".

Source: ISMU analysis of Ministry of Interior data

# The Labour Market

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by Laura Zanfrini

## 2.1 Migrants' inclusion in the Italian labour market: lights and shadows

To introduce our analysis of last year's trends, it is convenient to recall some features characterizing migrants' inclusion in the Italian labour market; features which have become more and more evident during the economic crisis period – in which, both the migrant population and its active component have grown at an extraordinary rate.

Within the industrial sector, the foreign workforce responded to the need for a generational turnover of workers, filling poorly qualified positions and ensuring the survival of businesses which otherwise would have failed due to their low levels of competitiveness. Migration thus contributed to the good performances registered by the Italian manufacturing system in the years before the crisis (De Arcangelis et al., 2015). At the same time, however, it has concurred to maintaining one of its traditional weaknesses – namely, the high incidence of personnel employed in manual and poorly qualified positions – inhibiting the growth of competitiveness and innovation, particularly crucial in a medium-term perspective. This explains why precisely those sectors which had abundantly resorted to migrant labour have been dramatically affected by the economic crisis: indeed, migrants are the most affected by the business failures, and 10% more likely to be dismissed compared to their Italian counterparts (OECD, 2015). Moreover, the most recent estimates

regarding future hirings (Unioncamere-Excelsior) confirm a downward trend in businesses' attitudes towards hiring migrants.

If we turn to the demand for private employment within the home, the abundant offer of migrant labour has completely transformed the Italian system of care, while at the same time reinforcing its privatistic and familistic traits. The management of migratory flows, together with the nature of Italian care policies (based on subsidies given to families with members in need of assistance, but without any control on how the money is spent), and the lack of any formal requirements for this kind of job have fostered a system where little interest in professional skills goes hand in hand with a widespread tolerance towards undeclared work (Soleterre, IRS, 2015). Occupation in this sector - which is certainly the most ethnicized - has yet to be reduced, despite the growing economic difficulties faced by Italian families. Quite on the contrary, it is interesting to note that the number of Italians employed in care work has also expanded significantly: a further demonstration of the dramatic impact of a crisis which has reshaped the labour offer, pushing the entrance in the market of new categories of workers (such as a low educated woman whose husband lost his job).

Within the agricultural sector, in 2014 the number of migrant workers surpassed that of natives by 14%: indeed, migrants almost trebled their number (relative to natives) since the beginning of the crisis. Despite a small quota of native workers who have "returned" to the sector because of the occupational crisis, the contribution of migrant workers has been fundamental in mitigating the decline in the number of employed workers, particularly regarding activities characterized by high seasonality, low qualification, intensity of work and heavy duties. The last forecasts by Unioncamere-Excelsior estimate an incidence of migrants among new hired workers between 23% and 32%, together with a very high request for seasonal workers (almost 300,000 in 2014). Considering its occupational relevance, it is fundamental to give the right attention to the degradation which has invested the sector during the last years. The pressure to reduce labour costs, together with the large influx of new migrants (many of whom come from EU countries, particularly Romania) have concurred to the intensification of competition and to further worsen working conditions (for a deeper

analysis see Inea, 2014; Zanfrini, 2015a). Currently, despite their status as EU workers, Romanians, Bulgarians and Poles enter the "migrant labour market", concurring to the failure of system of management based on 'yearly quotas' and, de facto, vanquishing any deterrent potential of those sanctions put in place for those who employ undocumented migrants. All this within the peculiar Italian "geography" of migrant labour: if cases of workers' rights violation are amply documented also in the Northern regions (sometimes also by cooperatives managed by the migrants themselves, who accept very low remunerations), in the South both undeclared work and wages significantly below the statutory minimum are the norm.

With regards self-employment, unaffiliated and freelance work, migration has contributed significantly to maintaining the levels of independent occupation - another typical trait of the Italian development model -, with a positive rate of new business creation among migrants even during the "darker" years of the crisis, thus counterbalancing the general trends. In 2014, the number of businesses headed by a foreign-born entrepreneur reached 335,452. On the other hand, enterprises launched by migrants have accentuated some traditional weaknesses of the system - this is particularly evident in some sectors, such as transportation and construction - contributing to a downward trend both in terms of prices offered and margins of profit. In 8 cases out of 10 enterprises managed by migrants are individual businesses, which take advantage of the low entrance barriers of those sectors most affected by the difficulties in ensuring a generational turnover. Thus, as well as supporting the process of business creation (though credit access, bureaucratic simplification, infrastructures and so on), there is a need for an effective control and management of this entrepreneurship phenomenon driven by demand and generated by the pressure to reduce labour costs and to limit workers' rights and protection.

Moreover, migration has reinforced two ancient plagues of the Italian labour market: the North-South dualism and the strong contiguity between the formal and informal (undeclared) economies. The first phenomenon is clearly evident in the symmetrical conditions of migrants' participation in local labour markets. If in the North - where the largest share of regularly employed migrants are concentrated - we can observe a "normal" situation,



with migrants more exposed to the risk of unemployment compared to natives, in the South migrant workers are, paradoxically, at an advantage. But this "advantage" is merely due to their acceptance of working and salary conditions that are so poor they are considered unacceptable even in such degraded contexts as many provinces of the Italian South. And this is without considering the extraordinary pulling power of the submerged economy, so widespread and rooted that it represents - particularly in some sectors - the typical destination of migrant workers, be they legal or undocumented, from Europe or the Third World.

However, it is quite evident that undeclared labour is not a prerogative of the Southern regions: from the top to the bottom of the boot many occupational sectors benefit from the large presence of migrant workers employed partially or entirely "off the books", and largely recur to contractual solutions at the limit of legality or applied in a very improper manner. This produces a drastic worsening of working and salary conditions, which negatively influences both migrant workers' hope of stabilisation and the proper functioning of a competitive economy. New arrivals from abroad, by inputting on the market a large, irregular workforce, have given a new lease of life to a phenomenon which, in any case, is not merely a prerogative of undocumented foreigners, but largely involves migrants from the EU.

In light of this, migrants' contribution to the Italian economy and society is at risk of being jeopardised. Currently, migrants' segregation in low income jobs produces a limited capacity for fiscal contribution, even without considering the widespread phenomena of fiscal and social security evasion. Massively employed in mature and declining sectors, migrant workers' occupational - and human - destiny is subject to great challenges, as the crisis has abundantly demonstrated. The proliferation of businesses who are able to survive only thanks to their strict margins of profit is reason to worry given that, in various sectors, the generational turnover among entrepreneurs seems to come with a general decline in the quality of goods and services provided. The widespread use of poorly guaranteed contractual solutions enlarges the number of those who are potentially excluded from the area of industrial citizenship, bringing new challenges to the welfare systems for the poorer and more vulnerable

members of society, who are already struggling. Finally, migrant workers' employability seems to be fundamentally based on their availability to fill "bad" jobs, with obvious implications in terms of discrimination and of scarce increase in productivity. In other words, the extraordinary growth of migrant employment, and its fundamental contribution to the GNP, represents only one side of the coin.

## 2.2 Migrant workers in the labour market: the most recent trends

Most recent data confirm a set of trends which have been becoming clearer and clearer since the beginning of the economic crisis.

**Table 2.1** - Activity rate, employment rate and unemployment rate, by gender and worker nationality (Foreigners and Italians); 2005-2014

	2005		2008		2011		2013		2014	
	For	Ita	For	Ita	For	Ita	For	Ita	For	Ita
Activity Rate										
Men	87.5	74.0	87.1	73.6	84.0	72.1	81.4	72.6	81.3	72.8
Wom	58.0	50.0	59.9	51.0	59.1	50.7	60.4	52.8	61.1	53.6
Tot	72.9	61.9	73.3	62.3	70.9	61.4	70.3	62.7	70.4	63.2
Employment Rate										
Men	81.5	69.4	81.9	69.5	75.4	66.7	67.9	64.5	68.1	64.3
Wom	49.1	45.1	52.8	46.8	50.5	46.1	49.3	46.2	50.2	46.4
Tot	65.5	57.2	67.1	58.1	62.3	56.4	58.1	55.3	58.5	55.4
Unemployment Rate										
Men	6.8	6.2	6.0	5.6	10.3	7.4	16.6	11.1	16.1	11.4
Wom	15.4	9.8	11.9	8.3	14.6	9.1	18.3	12.6	17.7	13.3
Tot	10.2	7.7	8.5	6.7	12.2	8.1	17.4	11.7	16.9	12.2

Source: Rilevazione continua sulle forze lavoro, various years

Regarding migrants' economic activity rate (Table 2.1), we have witnessed a further reduction in the positive gap compared to natives, parallel to the growing incidence of migrants for family reasons. If the EU as a whole is ex-

pected to register a significant reduction in the volume of the active population (a trend which "officially" began in 2014), Italy is one of those countries who faces the specific challenge of needing to support the growth of the activity rate, for both native and foreign workers. Equally important will be the capacity to exploit migrants' human capital, in order to increase labour productivity.

Two aspects ought to be highlighted, however. Firstly, once disaggregated by age, activity rates turn out to be only apparently advantageous for younger migrants: in actual fact, unlike their Italian counterparts, they leave school early and enter the labour market (the rate of early school leavers is "only" 13.5% for Italians, reaches 27.1% among EU migrants and increases to 34.4% among non-EU migrants). If we also take into account the larger incidence of NEET among young foreigners, we can identify a very critical segment of the migrant labour offer. Moreover, even if they gain access to employment more easily than their Italian counterparts (thanks to their vocational educational background), they face more difficulties in stabilising their occupational condition, and suffer higher rates of unemployment and overqualification (OCDE, 2014).

The second aspect to be taken into account is the gender composition of the inactivity phenomenon, which is even more pronounced than within the Italian population. Among the 1.2 million inactive immigrants, more than 70% are women. Women are excluded from the labour market mainly because of difficulties in balancing work and care responsibilities. If we consider their weaknesses in terms of human capital, we can appreciate how it will be difficult to increase their rate of participation. To this we must add the tremendous incidence of young people in the NEET group among certain migrant communities: among Bangladeshi women 8 out of 10, and almost 7 out of 10 young women among Pakistanis, Moroccans and Egyptians. If we now turn to analyse occupational trends we find that in 2014 there was a further increase in the number of employed foreigners (+111,000), and a reduction in that of employed natives (-23,000), albeit markedly weaker than the trends registered in the previous years. Despite this, migrants' employment rate continues to be characterized by a negative trend, with a progressive reduction in the percentage of foreigners employed and in

the positive gap compared with the corresponding Italian rate (which, in any case, is particularly low).

Finally, the number of unemployed migrants has also continued to grow (despite the modest reduction in 2014), making the issue of sustaining their re-entry in the job market increasingly dramatic. In 2014, this number reached 465,700 unemployed persons (almost 11,000 more than the previous year) and at a rate of 16.9% (17.4% for non-EU workers). We can outline two typical figures of the unemployed migrant: one is represented by a man, previously employed in the industrial or building sector, who lost his job because of the economic crisis; the other by a woman who entered the labour market following the main family breadwinner's loss of a job. Both represent a challenge to public employment services and their ability (or lack thereof) to support and foster the employability of the most vulnerable workers. Suffice it to say that only 0.3-0.4% of employed foreigners found their job through a public employment service.

If we consider the qualitative dimension of migrant labour, the first phenomenon to highlight is the high level of segregation. More than 70% of foreigners are employed as manual workers, and less than 1% as managers or supervisors. If we look only at migrants who possess a high level of education (tertiary or post-lauream), only 36.7% (compared to 83.9% of their Italian counterparts) are employed in an intellectual or technical position, whereas 23.2% carry out a non-specialized manual job. In light of this data we can understand the reason why many migrants (23.6%) experience a downward mobility after their arrival in Italy (ISTAT, 2015b), and many more experience a downward mobility compared to their condition before emigrating.

Another aspect concerns migrants' low levels of qualification. As repeatedly noted in previous editions of this Report, in the last 20 years, migrants have become the "typical" recruitment basin for many poorly qualified jobs, thus generating their progressive ethnicization. Traditionally seen as the proof of a structurally discriminatory labour market, which inevitably pushes migrants towards low-salary and low-status jobs, this process is actually also the mirror of a migration which is - for the most part - "weak" in terms of human capital. Without neglecting the existence of a large over-qualification phenomenon, what emerges is the picture of a country who is mostly able to attract a poorly quali-

fied workforce. The comparison with the situation of some other European countries is striking (Table 2.2). At the same time, those (few) highly qualified migrants are the only ones who register employment rates lower than their native counterparts, confirming how Italy is particularly “friendly” towards foreigners with lower educational levels.

**Table 2.2** - Distribution of educational attainment in the labour force by level and immigrant status, 2010

	Immigrants			Compared to native-born		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Austria	28	53	20	13	-14	1
Belgium	32	32	36	12	-8	-4
Check Republic	12	64	24	6	-13	7
Denmark	26	38	36	0	-4	4
Estonia	3	55	41	-7	0	7
Finland	25	49	27	10	2	-11
France	40	32	28	19	-14	-4
Germany	32	46	21	21	-15	-6
Greece	49	38	13	19	-3	-16
Hungary	14	52	34	0	-12	12
Italy	42	45	12	7	-2	-5
Netherlands	33	37	30	7	-6	-2
Poland	--	50	46	--	-16	20
Portugal	48	32	20	-18	14	4
United Kingdom	14	47	39	-5	2	3
Spain	43	34	23	0	12	-12
Swedish	26	37	37	10	-15	5
EU 27 Average	25	44	31	3	-5	3
OECD Average	25	42	32	4	-6	2

Source: OECD, 2014, p. 70; only some countries

In this context, migrants tend to have a low income-generating potential: in 4 cases out of 10 their salary is less than 800 euro, and only 0.6% of non-EU workers gain more than 2,000 euro per month. This circumstance obviously reduces their potential contribution to the tax and pension provision system, and pushes a significant share of employed migrants to look for a second job.

Considering this situation, the importance of any initiative aimed at making migrants' skills and the competences more evident and transparent, particularly those acquired in informal and non-formal contexts, and to give value to and fully exploit their peculiar knowledge and abilities, cannot be overstated. These are precisely the aims that are at the core of the DIVERSE project, to which we will now turn our attention to in the final section of this chapter.

### **2.3 The DIVERSE project: reinventing the Italian (and European) approach to immigration**

The DIVERSE - Diversity Improvement as a Viable Enrichment Resource for Society and Economy - Project, co-financed by the European Integration Fund<sup>1</sup> and coordinated by the research centre WWELL of the Università Cattolica of Milan, was carried out in cooperation with 14 partners (including the ISMU Foundation) in 10 EU countries: Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

Its basic aim was to overcome the axiom of a "natural" complementarity between migrant and native workers, enhancing a shift from the perception of migrants as a contingently instrumental workforce to the conception of their human capital as a structural resource for the economic and social development of European societies. In order to realize this objective, a set of activities were implemented, aimed at both inquiring and promoting: the recognition and exploitation of migrants skills, knowledge and competences, acquired in formal, non formal and informal settings; a wider awareness, among different types of organizations (profit, non-profit and public), of the importance and potentialities of Diversity Management strategies; improving migrants' social participation and civic and voluntary engagement with the aim of developing an inclusive European society and in order to change the common perception of immigrants as people in need of help and assistance.

The project ended in June 2015, with the dissemination of the findings of the transnational analysis (see

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<sup>1</sup> Grant Agreement No. HOME/2012/EIFX/CA/CFP/4248 \*30-CE-0586564/00-20.

Zanfrini, 2015b) and a set of precious indications aimed at realising a "qualitative leap" in the Italian and European model of integration (see: [www.ismu.org/diverse](http://www.ismu.org/diverse)). Looking at the Italian report (Zanfrini et al., 2015) we can observe, first of all, how the Italian system for the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad is characterized by an extremely complex legislation, which involves a wide range of actors and agencies, depending on the purpose for which recognition is sought. Above all, the main critical element is represented by the poor awareness and preparation among the civil servants engaged in the various stages of the procedures. Migrants residing in Italy, for their part, show a limited propensity to apply for recognition because they are discouraged by the cost and length of the procedures, by the fact that the outcomes appear uncertain, and by the belief that employment opportunities are scarcely accessible to immigrants who aspire to a skilled job.

With respect to the recognition of non-formal and informal knowledge, we must note the improper delay with which the State has defined the national framework of qualifications, thus contributing to the heterogeneity of regional situations and of the rules and procedures in force in each. Within this scenario, Lombardy – the region on which the field work was based – stands out due to the existence of some interesting experiences on three fronts: the offer of technical assistance to migrants willing to apply for recognition of their qualifications in the field of nursing and health care; the recognition of informal knowledge through a model that allows to certify single individual skills rather than entire professional profiles; and spontaneous actions by employers' organizations, which has generated interesting experiences in the certification of non-formal and informal knowledge, also in sectors – such as construction and care – that exhibit a significant incidence of migrants.

Nevertheless, there are many critical factors and weaknesses, which can be approached through a set of suggestions. The most fundamental indication is regarding the need to break the vicious circle made up, on the one hand, of employers who are insensitive towards the opportunity to enhance migrants' educational capital and pool of expertise, and, on the other hand, of migrants, many of them are reluctant to invest time and money in the recognition procedures. This calls for: a capillary action of consciousness-raising among the entrepreneurial

class, so as to undermine stereotypes and prejudices about the "place" of immigrants in the labor market; a parallel campaign of awareness raising among those migrants potentially involved; the development of quantitative and qualitative research on the phenomenon at stake, in order to provide reliable information on the value of skill and competence recognition in the Italian labour market.

If we turn to consider the second main issue we can observe how, up until now, Italian businesses and other organizations have given little attention to the application of Diversity Management (DM) principles where migrant workers are employed. Moreover, the few (albeit, sometimes, very interesting) existing practices have received only modest attention by both academic scholars and business consultants. This mainly reflects the fact that the recourse to migrant workforce in Italian organizations is substantially determined by the need to fill specific job vacancies in low-skilled professional and organizational positions. This "complementarity approach" to migrant work keeps on underlying organizational managers' attitudes and, even before that, their views (tacit or explicit) about migrants' role in and contribution to the workplace. This typically takes place, in daily organizational life, through the - usually unintentional - adoption of perceptions and stereotypes about migrants' prerogatives and attitudes.

Among those factors which facilitate DM practices we find: socially-oriented organizational cultures, stemming from various sources such as traditional paternalistic philanthropy; a propensity to build partnerships and networks with other local actors, also located beyond the boundaries of the organization's business environment; informal processes linked to participative leadership styles and collaborative organizational climates which favour openness to innovation and exchanges. On the other hand, factors hindering DM practices include: a pressures to reduce costs, which has been further exacerbated by the current economic crisis; an underdeveloped use of more formalized and systematic tools for planning and implementing DM actions; the traditional absence, within the Italian context, of a "culture of evaluation" with respect to implemented programs and initiatives. In this scenario, the first recommendation concerns the need to change the perception of migrants as an adaptable, low-cost workforce, through the increased awareness of the



organizational advantages inherent in a new perspective conceiving diversity as a resource. This must be achieved: at the organizational level, through specific training initiatives devoted, firstly, to awareness raising and, secondly, to the development of the cross-cultural competences which are needed to manage a heterogeneous human capital. A second suggestion concerns the opportunity to highlight the tacit dimensions of organizational cultures and practices which already revolve around the values of inclusivity and diversity valorisation.

With respect to the third issue, neither local authorities nor civil society actors seem to be fully aware of the role that migrants' formal engagement in volunteering could play in supporting the process of integration, as well as - obviously - contributing to the performance of volunteer organizations themselves and, consequently, to the social, civil and cultural development of the local community. In legislative terms, the provision of an entry visa to Italy for volunteering reasons and of a reward system for residence permit renewal which assigns specific weight to volunteering activities would be important innovations, if only at a symbolic level. Any debate on this issue, however, is hindered by the lack of data and studies on migrants' participation in mainstream associations. According to experts and key informants, this presence seems to be rather modest, due to the lack of specific recruitment campaigns but also to the widespread perception of migrants as users and beneficiaries of voluntary organizations, rather than as a pool of competences and experiences to be exploited for the improvement of organizational performance itself. Only in rare cases, indigenous organizations have launched ad hoc projects for the involvement and promotion of migrants, but these examples show how engagement in volunteering can be crucial for the empowerment, integration, and social perception of migrants. The picture is different with regards to "ethnic" associations: they are numerous and fairly attractive, albeit characterized by some well-known weaknesses in financial and organizational terms and seldom preferred over other organizations in the allocation of competences and funding from public bodies.

Finally, there is a need to - resolutely - foster a cultural transformation in the models of reception and support aimed at migrants, still prevalent in a large part of both civil society and in the institutional do-

main. What seems to be urgent, here, is the development of a new mindset that leads to view immigrants not only as persons in difficulty and in need of an urgent response or, primarily, economic help, but rather as new actors in a plural society who are able, if successfully accompanied, to activate potentialities and resources, thereby contributing to a common growth. Within this framework, what appears to be pivotal is civil society and institutions' capacity - and determination - to read, acknowledge and shed light on immigrants' untapped potential.



# 3

## Education

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by Mariagrazia Santagati

### 3.1 The students with non-Italian citizenship

The most recent data available on the Italian educational system have been extensively detailed in the latest MIUR/ISMU Foundation report, *Foreign Students in the Italian educational system. Between difficulties and achievements. National Report 2013/14* (by Santagati and Ongini, 2015)<sup>1</sup>. This paragraph will present the main Italian data on this issue, but the focus of the chapter will be on some European indicators concerning the educational trajectories of students with an immigrant background, analyzed using a comparative approach (sources: Eurostat and OECD PISA 2012).

The enrollment of “foreign students” (this means “without Italian citizenship”) has increased constantly and progressively during the last decade and attendance has more than doubled, going from 307,141 students in 2003/04 (3.5% of the total school population) to 802,844 in 2013/14 (9%).

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<sup>1</sup> This is the fourth publication of the ISMU Report (cf. MIUR, ISMU, 2011; 2013; 2014). The ISMU Foundation has a MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Italian Ministry of Education and each year produces a report. Moreover, ISMU participates in the National Observatory for Interculture and the Integration of Foreign Students created on 9th September 2014.

**Table 3.1** - Foreign students in the Italian Educational System. 2003/04-2013/14. A.V. and %

School year	Total	Per 100 students	Increase in A.V.
2003/04	307,141	3.5	-
2004/05	370,803	4.2	+63,662
2005/06	431,211	4.8	+60,408
2006/07	501,420	5.6	+70,209
2007/08	574,133	6.4	+72,713
2008/09	629,360	7.0	+55,227
2009/10	673,592	7.5	+44,232
2010/11	711,046	7.9	+37,454
2011/12	755,939	8.4	+44,893
2012/13	786,630	8.8	+30,691
2013/14	802,844	9.0	+16,124

Source: ISMU analysis on MIUR data

**Table 3.2A** - Students with non-Italian citizenship by school level. 2003/04-2013/14. A.V. and %

S.Y.	A.V.			
	Pre-primary	Primary	Lower Sec.	Upper Sec.
2003/2004	59,500	123,814	71,447	52,380
2013/2014	137,650	283,233	169,780	182,181

**Table 3.2B**

S.Y.	%			
	Pre-primary	Primary	Lower Sec.	Upper. Sec.
2003/2004	19.4	40.3	23.3	17.1
2013/2014	20.9	35.3	21.1	22.7

Source: ISMU analysis on MIUR data

As for distribution across school levels, primary school still receives the greatest number of registrations among non-Italian students (Table 3.4), followed by upper and lower secondary schools and, finally, by pre-primary schools. Over the past decade, primary schools went from 40.3% of the total foreign student population in 2003/4 to 35.6% in 2013/14, while an opposite trend was recorded in upper secondary schools (the number of students increased in the same period from 17.1% to 22.7%).

If we analyse the data in terms of students' country of origin, we can see that in 2013/14 Romanians are still the largest group (154,621), followed by Albanians

(107,847) and Moroccans (101,176). Regarding gender, females are less numerous than males, making up 48% of the total (385,365). The only exception is upper secondary school, where females are more prevalent. In terms of geographic distribution, Lombardy is still the region with the largest number of foreign students (197,202), followed by Emilia Romagna (93,434), Veneto (92,924), Lazio (77,071) and Piedmont (75,276).

It is important to underline that children born in Italy represent the majority of these students. In fact, in 2013/14, for the first time, they represent 51.7%(415,283) of all foreign students. Between 2007/8 and 2013/14 there was an exponential growth of native-born students in secondary schools, where these presences have tripled.

**Table 3.3** - Native-born students without Italian citizenship. 2007/08-2013/14. A.V. and %

	A.V. (07/08)	A.V. (13/14)	Per 100 students (07/08)	Per 100 students (13/14)
Pre-primary	79,113	140,840	71.2	84.0
Primary	89,421	182,315	41.1	64.4
Lower secondary	22,474	64,338	17.8	37.9
Upper secondary	8,111	27,790	6.8	15.3
Total	199,119	415,283	34.7	51.7

Source: ISMU analysis on MIUR data

The largest number of foreign students born in Italy live in the North West. In 2013/14, in this area there were 167,182 children with an immigrant background born in Italy (40.2%), followed by 123,142 in the North East (29.6%), 93,094 in the Centre (22.4%) and 31,865 in the South and the Islands (7.8 %). The region with the highest number of native-born students is Lombardy (more than 110,000).

If we consider newcomer students, between 2007/08 and 2013/14 their number dropped from 46,154 to 30,825. Between 2012/13 and 2013/14, however, there was a new surge (+7,989), which can be partly explained by the significant rise in family reunifications and an increase in the arrival of unaccompanied minors (10,536 in 2014). Unfortunately, we still lack data on school entry for unaccompanied minors, asylum seekers and refugees. Even if the presence of these students is partly connected to the ar-

rivals “emergency” and its management, ensuring their access and right to education is a fundamental challenge in order to foster the citizenship of new generations in Italy.

### **3.2 European benchmarks for education and training: a comparison between native-born and foreign-born students**

In order to investigate the specific conditions of foreign students in the Italian educational system, we will use a comparative approach, referring to some data from the EU’s Europe 2020 Strategy (2010-2020), which follows the Lisbon Strategy (2000-2010). Both these strategies give countries’ Education and Training systems a leading role aimed at empowering the European Union to become a socio-economic system able to combine competitiveness, excellence and equity (Santagati, 2015a). In order to increase the quality of its human capital, Member States agreed on common benchmarks. By 2020 the objectives are to:

- 1) extend preschool attendance of ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) to at least 95% of children aged 4 to 6 (or to the start of compulsory education);
- 2) limit early school drop out (with the aim of reducing Early school leavers between the ages of 18 and 24 to below 10%);
- 3) reduce the number of 15-year-old Low achievers in Reading, Maths and Science (identified in the international OECD PISA survey) to under 15%;
- 4) increase the number of students who complete Higher Education (with the aim of ensuring that at least 40% of all 30-34 year-olds have a degree);
- 5) expand Lifelong Education for adults (ensuring at least 15% of 25-64 year olds are attending a training course at any one time).

These indicators allow for a dual comparison between natives and immigrant students, and between Italy and other European countries. Let us cast a glance on educational trajectories of immigrants in the Italian context. In the next paragraph the first three objectives of Europe 2020

will be examined, focusing on the educational experience of minors.

### **3.2.1 Participation in early childhood education**

The recent Eurydice/Eurostat report on ECEC in Europe indicates that all disadvantaged children have a lower participation in preschool educational provision (European Commission, 2014). However, Eurostat did not divulge the different participation rates for native and immigrant children. In 2012, among the EU28, 93.9% of children (ranging from age 4 to the start of compulsory education) attended ECEC, rising to 99.2% in Italy and 100% in France and Malta; the average number of children attending ECEC drops to its lowest levels in Croatia (71.7%) and in Greece and Finland (approximately 75%). This rate - which is considered essential in order to prevent Early school leaving and to fight the risk of poverty and social exclusion (EACEA, 2009; Bilgili, Huddleston, Joki, 2015) - is very high in European countries. However, the results of the OECD PISA 2012 study give us some additional information: the data confirm that, at the beginning of the 21st century, non-immigrant students were more likely to attend ECEC for more than a year compared to first/second generation immigrants. On average, in Europe the difference in participation is approximately 12 percentage points less for the children of immigrants. In Italy (-27.9), Great Britain (-35.1 in Wales) and Iceland (-28.2) this distance appears particularly high, while there was not a significant difference between immigrants and non-immigrants in approximately 1/3 of the European education systems.

Although the data is not that recent, many other analyses show that children with an immigrant background and from families with low SES are less involved in social and educational preschool services. Moreover, even if they attend school, these kinds of students tend to access a lower-quality offer compared to their peers (as demonstrated in Italy: see Del Boca, 2010). Since ECEC participation positively influences the development of language, basic learning skills, and the literacy process, effectively laying the foundation for students' future academic success, these aspects are relevant for the children of immigrant families who often face multiple linguistic and cultural difficulties to achieve good aca-



demic results. Therefore, the earlier these children are exposed to the new language, the more easily and quickly they will learn. If they live in a difficult context, with poor family interactions, ECEC can offer an environment for socialization and learning (Vandenbroeck, Lazzeri, 2013). The access to preschool, on the other hand, is not to be understood as a simple consequence of parents' free choice, but is rather the result of an environment that limits or provides opportunities, conditioned by the training supply (availability of services, affordability, accessibility, and absence of barriers, etc.). Although the condition has improved and ECEC participation in Italy has grown since the beginning of the century, especially with the rise of the second generation, it is still necessary to reflect upon and invest in ensuring access to high-quality, multi-ethnic preschools.

### **3.2.2 Early school leavers**

A second indicator considered in the comparative analysis of native and foreign students is that of Early School Leavers (ESLs). ESLs represent the subset of 18 to 24-year olds who do not have a secondary education degree or a professional qualification and that do not attend school or VET courses.

A downward trend of ESLs has characterized Italy from 2000 to the present day. ESLs went from being 25% to 17% of young people aged 18-24 in 2013, but the proportion is still very high, far from the goal of Europe 2020 and well above the European average (similarly to other Southern European countries). Moreover, the percentage of ESLs among young people born abroad is double that of natives. Foreign-born students face multiple risk factors that lead them to leave school early (eg. economic deprivation, low educational expectations, scarce support from their families, conflictual relationships with peers, misunderstandings with teachers, etc.: Nouwen, Clycq, Uličná, 2015). In 2013, Italian ESLs are 11%, while among non-natives the percentage rises to 22.7%. The UK is the only country in which foreigners have lower rates of ESLs compared to natives (9.9% versus 12.8%).

**Table 3.4** - Percentage of Early School Leavers from education and training aged 18 to 24, by country of birth

Countries	ESL - Tot		Native-born		Foreign-born	
	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010
EU28	11.9	13.9	11	12.8	22.7	26.5
AT - Austria	7.3	8.3	5.7	5.8	18.5	21.2
BE - Belgium	11	11.9	9.5	10.7	21.7	21.9
BG - Bulgaria	12.5	13.9	12.6	13.9	-	-
CY - Cyprus	9.1	12.7	7.2	7.5	16.4	26.3
CZ - Czech Rep.	5.4	4.9	5.4	4.7	9.1	13.2
DE - Germany	9.9	11.9	8.6	10.2	-	-
DK - Denmark	8	11	8	10.6	8.8	16.7
EE - Estonia	9.7	11.6	9.7	11.6	-	-
EL - Greece	10.1	13.7	7.4	9.4	36.5	43.6
ES - Spain	23.5	28.4	20.3	25.1	38.3	42.9
FI - Finland	9.3	10.3	8.9	9.7	17.4	21.1
FR - France	9.7	12.6	9.2	11.7	17.8	24.5
HR - Croatia	3.7	3.7	3.2	3.8	11.6	-
HU - Hungary	11.8	10.5	11.8	10.4	-	-
IE - Ireland	8.4	11.5	8	10.7	10.4	16.3
IT - Italy	17	18.8	14.8	16.2	34.4	40.7
LT - Lithuania	6.3	7.9	6.3	8	-	-
LU - Luxembourg	6.1	7.1	5.3	6	8.1	10.2
LV - Latvia	9.8	13.3	9.8	13.5	-	-
MT - Malta	20.9	25.9	20.7	26.2	25.5	-
NL - Netherlands	9.2	10	9	10	11.2	11.3
PL - Poland	5.6	5.4	5.6	5.4	-	-
PT - Portugal	19.2	28.7	19	28.8	20.5	27.3
RO - Romania	17.3	18.4	17.4	18.4	-	-
SE - Sweden	7.1	6.5	6.3	5.9	12.2	10.8
SI - Slovenia	3.9	5	3.5	4.5	16.4	20
SK - Slovakia	6.4	4.7	6.4	4.7	-	-
UK - United Kingdom	12.4	14.9	12.8	15.5	9.9	10.2

Source: Eurostat, 2010-2013

The gap between native and non-native students, on the other hand, is particularly high in Greece, Italy and Spain; indeed, where the percentage of ESLs is greater, so is the difference between natives and foreigners. In these countries, despite improvements over the years, in 2013 ESLs were still a large portion of all foreign stu-

dents in Spain (38.3%), Greece (36.5%), Italy (34.4%) and Malta (25.5%). The difference, however, is much lower in countries such as the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal.

The most recent data published by Eurostat also confirms foreigners' disadvantage when it comes to school dropout: in Europe ESLs in 2014 fell to 10.2% among natives, but are still more than double that figure (23.2%) among foreigners, and the number is even higher among non-EU nationals (25.5%). It is therefore necessary to intervene with specific measures in favour of a generation that is likely to be absent from education, training and, often, also from work - bearing in mind, in the perspective of active citizenship, that this is a group that is likely to be eclipsed also from public and institutional spaces of participation (Santagati, 2015b; Lodigiani, Santagati, 2016).

### **3.2.3 Low achievers**

The final indicator we shall take into consideration is the failure in acquiring basic skills, which corresponds to the group of Low Achievers, as identified through the OECD PISA program. The rate indicates the percentage of 15 year olds who fail to reach a sufficiency level (2) in Reading, Maths and Science, and have difficulty in demonstrating their knowledge and using it in different situations. According to the last PISA data (PISA, 2012), and considering the 27 participating EU countries, on average, in Reading, Low Achievers are 17.8%, in Science 16.6% , and 22.1% in Maths. The best performing country in all three disciplines is Estonia, while the worst are Bulgaria (Math and Reading) and Romania (in Science).

The goal for Europe 2020 is for Member States to have less than 15% of students who are Low Achievers (JRC-Crell, 2014). Taking country of origin into account, many studies highlight the persistent disadvantage of students with an immigrant background (Colombo, Santagati, 2014). According to OECD PISA 2012, in European countries natives with poor reading skills were approximately 16.2%, whereas among foreign-born students the percentage rises to 30.6%.

**Table 3.5** - Percentage of Low Achievers in Reading, Maths and Science. OECD PISA 2012

	Reading			Maths			Science		
	Tot	Na-tive	For-eign	Tot	Na-tive	For-eign	Tot	Na-tive	For-eign
EU	17.74	16.21	30.69	21.94	20.46	36.30	16.47	15.09	29.86
AT	19.49	17.82	35.80	18.65	17.17	34.65	15.78	13.83	35.12
BE	16.08	13.65	31.35	18.96	16.34	37.19	17.71	15.08	35.81
BG	39.39	38.59	52.61	43.76	42.96	53.90	36.90	36.15	48.08
CZ	16.87	16.77	18.89	20.96	20.90	21.55	13.78	13.40	20.83
DE	14.49	12.05	32.34	17.74	15.65	36.81	12.21	10.40	28.82
DK	14.64	13.05	27.92	16.84	14.90	36.14	16.69	14.85	34.63
EE	9.12	8.55	17.66	10.54	10.09	18.28	5.04	4.63	9.40
EL	22.63	20.83	37.36	35.69	33.71	53.35	25.52	23.86	39.39
ES	18.34	16.09	30.63	23.61	20.71	42.13	15.70	13.37	28.32
FI	11.35	9.90	36.30	12.27	10.81	36.61	7.9	6.25	31.77
FR	18.92	16.56	41.03	22.35	19.85	46.45	18.74	16.53	41.72
HR	18.70	18.11	25.25	29.87	29.35	35.68	17.29	16.61	25.76
HU	19.72	19.34	17.84	28.06	27.78	20.03	18.04	17.51	15.89
IE	9.59	9.24	10.02	16.90	16.97	15.27	11.09	10.96	10.36
IT	19.50	17.34	41.26	24.67	22.86	43.65	18.70	17.00	37.62
LT	21.20	20.92	19.55	26.02	25.67	29.06	16.08	15.92	13.65
LU	22.17	19.75	29.82	24.33	21.34	34.51	22.22	18.85	34.01
LV	16.98	16.79	27.52	19.94	19.77	27.61	12.36	12.22	9.15
NL	13.99	12.83	25.21	14.79	13.61	25.48	13.12	11.92	23.03
PL	10.58	10.53	5.75	14.39	14.43	5.33	9.01	8.90	10.81
PT	18.81	17.18	24.33	24.91	23.32	32.16	18.99	17.57	23.54
RO	37.26	37.05	51.15	40.82	40.74	35.65	37.33	37.18	40.59
SE	22.72	19.23	45.69	27.07	23.51	51.59	22.23	18.65	45.80
SI	21.14	20.16	36.87	20.09	19.14	41.86	12.88	11.91	32.43
SK	28.22	27.99	31.67	27.46	27.00	37.78	26.85	26.45	39.51
UK	16.62	15.38	18.76	21.81	20.74	23.58	14.97	13.72	18.37

Source: OECD PISA 2012

In Maths the gap is even greater, with 20.4% of Low Achievers among natives and 36.3% among those born abroad. Both Bulgaria and Romania are characterized by very high rates of Low Achievers, with more than 50% of students with an immigrant background falling into this category, for both Reading and Maths. Other countries have high rates of Low Achievers in Reading, such as Swe-

den (45.6%), Italy (41.2%) and France (41%), where the disadvantage gap for foreigners is still wide. In Maths too there is a high number of foreign Low Achievers in many countries: Bulgaria (53.9%), Greece (53.3%), Sweden (51.5%), France (46.4%), Italy (43, 6%), Spain (42.1%) and Slovenia (41.8%). There are four exceptions, however, where the proportion of foreigners is lower than that of natives (in 2012): this is the case of Hungary, Ireland, Poland and Romania. In Italy, the share of Low Achievers in Reading among those born abroad exceeds that of natives by 23 percentage points; in Maths and Science this distance is reduced at around 20 points. However, the highest share of Low Achievers can be found among foreigners in Maths (43.65%), followed by Reading (41.26%) and Science (37.62%). The Italian educational system, on the basis of these data, seems to be not very effective, on average, due to the low level achieved both in terms of educational integration of foreigners and the poor equity (Manenti, Perillo, 2015).

### 3.3 Conclusions

Within this slightly worrisome scenario, which is nonetheless showing some signs of improvement, there is still much that needs to be done after the application of the Italian Law n. 107 called "A good school", in 13 July 2015. We will have to wait for some time to understand if this reform of the National System of Education and Training can be effective in reducing those socio-cultural inequalities which often penalise foreign students. Recently, the ISMU Foundation, after analyzing Italian educational policies within the international project MIPEx (Migrant Integration Policy Index), recommends investing in prevention and contrast policies to Early School Leaving. This could be achieved through measures aimed at increasing the rate of youth employment through VET and on-the-job training, as well as further developing an intercultural approach to education which would help foster positive school climates (Besozzi, Colombo, 2012), and support teachers and other school staff.

In conclusion, the contribution of indicators analyzed in the present chapter allows us to emphasize some crucial aspects regarding data selection and analysis.

First, the importance of taking the space-time coordinates into account, as fundamental analytical dimensions in the integration process are confirmed. Databases that enable the reconstruction of historical trends now become a necessity: these data can go beyond a "still photography" account of the phenomenon, allowing the researcher to monitor improvements and problems, from the moment of arrival to the stabilization in the host society, for both first-time migrants and subsequent generations. The availability of comparative data that will allow the researcher to situate the Italian case in an international context also becomes crucial in order to highlight strengths and weaknesses of the national system. The comparison, as shown in many studies on second generations (Crul, Schneider, Lelie, 2012; Alba, Holdaway, 2013; Stevens, Dworkin, 2014), may shed light on the role played by institutions of the host society in the process of school integration in different national and regional contexts.

Secondly, the analysis outlined here is part of an approach and a wider scientific debate that aims to try and "measure" integration (see the review of Jedwab and Soroka, 2014). Identifying indicators of integration is a relevant part of the operationalization of this concept and necessary for use in empirical research. For an advancement of the study of the integration process at the methodological level, it seems appropriate to further clarify the dimensions of educational integration in multicultural contexts already highlighted by several Italian studies (Cesareo, Blangiardo, 2009; Boccagni, Pollini, 2012; Besozzi, Colombo, Santagati, 2013). Although agreeing on shared benchmarking is not easy, this effort has to be made in order to understand the very complex process of integration. In schools like elsewhere, integration consists of separate analytical levels that are intertwined in the manifestation of the phenomenon. It therefore becomes crucial that future research take into account both the students' subjective/personal level and the institutional level in terms of the role of schools and practices aimed at foreign students.



# The Health of Migrants

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by Nicola Pasini and Veronica Merotta

This chapter focuses on the relationship between migration and health at a time when the Italian National Healthcare System (NHS) is undergoing a transformation and policy-makers are trying to streamline resources and re-think how healthcare services are organised and provided to citizens.

Through a comparative analysis, the chapter touches upon issues related to access and use of healthcare services by immigrants, also in consideration of their legal status and touches upon the relationship between the central governments and regional authorities, which is often tense.

The final part of the chapter focuses on the actual and perceived health condition of migrants in Italy, on their habits and on the system through which migrants access health services. To this end, a comparison is made between migrants from Countries with a Strong Migratory Pressure (CSMP), migrants from Industrialised Countries (IC) and Italian-born citizens.

## **4.1 The Italian healthcare system - attempts at streamlining and the centrality of patients**

Over the past decade, life expectancy in European societies has steadily increased. Despite being an important achievement of public healthcare systems, this entails major challenges in a framework where there is a scarcity of resources. The increase in the elderly population is



indeed often used to justify cuts on public healthcare services. The Economic and Financial Document (*Documento di Economia e Finanza - DEF*) aims to make the Italian welfare and healthcare system more efficient through several targets (e.g. reducing the impact of healthcare expenditure on the GDP) and a set of measures for the 2015-2017 period which should amount to a 10 billion euro saving (2,3 billion in 2015). Some experts consider these measures to be a threat to the concept of universalism: not only would their application lead to a decrease in equality, quality and citizenship rights, but also, for the healthcare sector, to higher fees, longer waiting times. At the same time, many have argued that this trend would bear high social costs, as it would lead to a drop in access to medical care and certain prescription drugs (Maciocco, 2015), less prevention and delayed access to the healthcare system. Data on people foregoing care shows that one in ten patients fails to seek medical treatments primarily because of the long waiting times in the National Healthcare System (NHS) (Istat, 2015). The aforementioned reform has received criticism not only from economists and academics working on healthcare policies, but also from MPs from the centre-left coalition party, who have strongly opposed it as being excessive. Italy is one of the few EU Member states who has steadily reduced public expenditure on healthcare staff and services since 2010, together with Greece, Spain and Portugal.

In the light of this criticism, it becomes essential to understand which targets public administrations should follow. Should they focus on efficiency by pursuing a sustainable system, or should they aim at effectiveness by providing needs-driven services to improve the health conditions of citizens?

The measures introduced recently seem to aim at enhancing the efficiency of the NHS, through three strategies: public expenditure reduction, financial co-partnerships and selection of service beneficiaries. The Italian healthcare system is introducing a cost for the user (the so-called "ticket") to an increasing number of services, and is strengthening inclusion/exclusion mechanisms (Marro 2015, Ferrera, 2015) that use legal status as a discriminatory element to exclude "vulnerable" groups of migrants (irregular minors, reunified family members and

the elderly) and irregular migrants (Merotta, Pasini, 2014; Pasini, 2014).

## **4.2 Migrants and the current NHS – trends**

A considerable part of public opinion perceives immigration as a cost and an illegitimate abuse of the national welfare system. Recent studies conducted in some European countries and in Canada highlighted that almost half of the people surveyed believe immigrants receive more healthcare and welfare benefits than they contribute to through taxation (Miraglia, 2013; Eurobarometer 2010).

National and regional government's choice to adopt policies of social exclusion towards migrants builds on the same assumption. Despite the widespread belief that migration is a burden for the welfare system, migrants actually bear tax and economic weight for the welfare system in the short term (FRA, 2015). This is not an everlasting relation as, in the long term, young healthy migrants living in Italy will age, need care services and demand the pension contributed to.

### **4.2.1 The EU approach**

The political approach displayed at recent EU summits seems to follow the equations "legal migration = inclusion" and "illegal migration = exclusion" (Gilardoni et al., 2015, [www.king.ismu.org](http://www.king.ismu.org)). The second equation relates to security concerns at the national policy level, namely expulsion and detention policies for irregular migrants. On the other hand, the first equation is not as clear, given that every Member state has given an independent interpretation of what "legal migration" is.

At the Member states level, there are two possible approaches: legal exclusion (Sweden) and conditional inclusion on the basis of economic participation and contribution to services (UK). At the local level, some cities have preferred adopting the human rights approach by including all vulnerable people into their policies, be they legal or illegal (Lyon, Gent, some municipalities in the Brussels region). Other cities preferred complying with guidelines from national and European policy-makers and adopting restrictive anti-migrant policies.

### **4.2.2 The Italian case - national and regional trends**

The right to health and access to medical treatments for migrants is a controversial issue in Italy, and this is not only due to the inclusion-exclusion issue. The legal framework is indeed composed of different pieces of legislation that regulate migration and migrant rights, with healthcare being regulated by several Ministries and at different institutional levels (central government, regions, local authorities). This leads to significant differences in treatments and services offered based on:

- Legal status, with EU and regular migrants on the one hand and irregular migrants, migrants with an expiring permit, (un)accompanied minors and asylum seekers on the other hand.
- Membership to specific sub-groups (e.g. parents of reunified families, minors with irregular parents).

Communication also plays a fundamental role. Media reports and newscast contribute to the portrayal of migrants as malicious and to spreading the idea that migration is an emergency, by resounding the alarm of epidemic outbreaks.

To address this lack of clarity that hinders access to services, the Italian regional authorities created a cross-regional working group in 2008. Among other things, the working group has led to an important agreement between central government and regional administrations (2012) and has created a monitoring mechanism which oversees the application of legal norms at all levels of governance.

## **4.3 Health conditions and the perception of health among the migrant population**

### **4.3.1 Health conditions**

Compared to Italian-born citizens, migrants access hospital services to a lesser degree, be they ordinary or day-hospital services. Exceptions are hospitalizations for infectious and parasitic diseases and for complications occurring during pregnancy, delivery and post-partum

(Ministry of Health, 2014). Migrants from countries with a strong migratory pressure (CSMP) access hospital services because of biological (pregnancy, delivery) or related reasons (abortion) as well as for work-related reasons (traumas) and reasons related to low socio-economic conditions (respiratory, digestive and neurological diseases; nutritional and psychiatric problems) (Agenas, 2013).

In the area of motherhood and childhood, women from CSMP show significant inconsistencies in the access to services, although this is one of most critical sectors to ensure the protect migrants' health. The insufficient access of CSMP migrants to mother and childcare services and the broader use of Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy (VIP) compared to migrants from Industrialised Countries (IC) seems to confirm this trend.

In terms of infectious disease, the extra-ordinary monitoring mechanisms set up in 2011 to monitor the risk of epidemics identified some cases of infection, although none of them led to a health emergency.

The tumor incidence among CSMP migrants appears to be lower than among Italian-born citizens and IC migrants.

In conclusion, data on chronic illnesses suggests that the rise in the number of these types of health concerns is due to the increasing age of CSMP migrants (27% among 50-69 year-old migrants) and is higher among low-income migrants (17%). This pattern also applies to IC migrants and to Italian-born citizens.

#### **4.3.2 Access to services**

Access to emergency care is particularly high among un-registered migrants. This is a result of foreign-born citizens' lack of proper knowledge of how local healthcare services operate, which is a result of insufficient and inadequate migrant-friendly offers and information (Tognetti Bordogna, 2004).

Communication and red-tape are the major obstacles to accessing and enjoying healthcare services. As a matter of fact, 14% of foreign-born citizens over the age of 14 find it hard to report their symptoms to their doctor, and 15% report having difficulties in understanding what their doctor says (ISTAT, 2014). Red-tape is a limiting factor too, with 12% of foreign-born citizens aged 14+ not coping with all the steps required to access

healthcare services. This is a major issue for Chinese (20%), Indian (19%), Moroccan (18%) and Philippine (14%) migrants.

Public Advisory Centres are more widely used by CSMP women than by IC women thanks to their sensitivity to multi-ethnicity. However, public authorities are increasingly cutting down the number of these Centres in the context of a spending review.

### **4.3.3 The perception of health**

A 2011-2012 study conducted by ISTAT (Italian National Statistics Institute) highlighted that almost 9 out of 10 foreign-born citizens consider their own health conditions good or very good, compared with 8 out of 10 Italian-born citizens (ISTAT, 2014; Campostrini et al., 2015).

The profile of the average "optimistic" CSMP migrant is a young man with a medium-high level of education and solid economic conditions, in stable employment and with no chronic illness (ibid.). The same profile applies to the Italian-born and IC migrant population.

In terms of country of origin, migrants coming from Asia and extra-EU countries report a higher rate of positive self-perception (80% and 78% respectively), while only 6% of migrants coming from North Africa report having bad health conditions (Ibid.).

## **4.4 Conclusions**

The demographic forecasts on Italy show that the Italian population will decrease while migration and welfare costs - particularly healthcare services - will increase. However, the need to streamline public expenditure on health requires a definition of what the new pillars and beneficiaries of the healthcare system should be.

In this framework, the myth of a welfare model based on universalism is no longer sustainable, and this opens a debate on who "deserves" to receive healthcare and who does not. This is an issue on which the healthcare systems of the main developed democracies are currently reflecting on. Although the public debate has always focused on the issue of access to healthcare by specific categories of migrants (irregular migrants, minors with

irregular parents and reunified family members), the topic has gained further attention and relevance in light of the recent migration crisis and the budgetary streamlining in the healthcare sector.

National and regional policy-making is increasingly taking account of the exclusion-inclusion pair in addressing the beneficiaries of the healthcare system. Future policies will need to focus on how to ensure all vulnerable groups are included in services, and especially migrants at greater risk of social and economic exclusion.



## Normative Aspects

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The current scenario brings back to mind ancient images. The talk is of a "situation" and of "emergency measures". It appears it not the time for organic interventions, whereas the manifestations are the typical phenomena which emerge in emergencies: fear, controversy, disregard for human rights, higher costs, corruption.

It feels like going back to the first years of mass migration. At the time migrants were essentially workers, whereas today we have almost exclusively asylum seekers. Another difference is the constant reference to the EU. In the past attitudes were shaped essentially in terms of national responsibility; on the contrary, today the tendency is to see Italy as the victim of a phenomenon which she cannot manage on her own, and which should be approached collectively by all members of the EU.

Moreover, a certain discouragement is coming to the fore more than it has in the past: many simply believe that current migratory flows are unmanageable and are only the first sign of a great wave which will hit Italy and Europe and in the face of which no normative response will work and the choice will be between a desperate attempt to respond with drastic political-military measures and surrendering to chaos.

In truth, in the first half of 2015 the migratory flows towards Italy, and Europe in general, have been similar to those of the same period in 2014. Likewise, in the vast and complex international scenario that determines the migratory exodus, there currently do not appear to be radical changes which might affect current numbers, leading to the feared migratory wave.

In any case, what remains is the sensation of being faced with an unmanageable phenomenon. This is also due



to a legal aspect. Whereas, when faced with migrant workers, a Nation State can choose - to a certain extent - who to give access and work permits to, in the case of asylum seekers, according to the Geneva Convention, at least in principle, borders cannot but be left open and, considering also the Dublin Regulation, there is a prescription also regarding the management of asylum applications, with relative assistance costs according to the EU directive.

This may be true, but it does not lead to the belief that the phenomenon of asylum seekers cannot be regulated with the reasonable aim of achieving a better situation than the current one. And it is possible and fit to do so overcoming the problematic idea that one in managing an emergency. And without minimising the relevance of some form of European solidarity - dealt with in another chapter of this Report - Italy can independently adopt some efficient measures. Finally, we must consider that the "refugee emergency" must not make us forget that the migratory phenomenon is and will be broader than the dramatic arrival of asylum seekers and consequently broader must also be any consideration on normative developments.

## **5.1 Asylum seekers**

We are currently faced with 60-70 thousand applications for asylum each year. Even higher is the number of those that reach Italy as "refugees". It is well known that Italy, for many, is but a transitory country along a route aimed at seeking asylum status in Germany or Sweden.

Without considering the first phase of sea rescue operations, which is now managed by European programmes, this scenario poses, first and foremost, the problem of initial reception. In this area, in the past few years, Italy has developed a very fragmented organization with the development of some CARA (Asylum Seeker Reception Centres) - mainly in the South - various other permanent centres and, finally, some specific facilities set up in connection with peaks in arrivals.

In 2014-2015 we have seen the first signs of change. Firstly, we have the idea of redistributing reception centres across the national territory. Then we have the idea of reducing migrants' stay in these centres - often referred to as hub in the documentation - as much as pos-

sible, in order to ensure a rapid passage to more permanent reception facilities. This has been possible essentially thanks to the State-Regions' Conference Agreement of 10 July 2014.

In principle, such an approach is commendable. At the moment, however, this has not generated an organic network of reception centres: the CARA network - which has also been at the centre of much criticism - has not been developed across the peninsula; nor has a different, organic network been implemented, focusing instead on facilities managed by the Ministry for Internal Affairs via prefectures in the "emergency" mode mentioned above (in order to get an idea of the evolution let us consider that at the beginning of 2015 CARAs hosted only 9,000 people whereas there were over 30,000 places in the Ministry-managed centres, according to prefect Morcone's Senate audition of 10 February). A permanent network of transitory hubs leading to second-level reception facilities is yet to be implemented. Another issue that is yet to be resolved is the systematic identification of refugees in order to apply for the Dublin Regulation - a fundamental element of trust at the European level and necessary element for any form of intra-national solidarity.

The Law Decree n. 142 of 18 August 2015, which dictated the new norms on the reception of asylum seekers, appears to have set the basis for an organic network of first reception centres (which would include also existing facilities), made up of "governmental hubs" developed together with Regions and local authorities. The Decree specifies that the person should remain in these hubs only for the time necessary to proceed with identification, verbalisation of the asylum application, and a sanitary health and vulnerability check, then proceed with access to the SPRAR (System of Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers) network.

The idea of reducing early reception to a brief "transition" - which could be a sensible plan - makes the issues of the SPRAR's fitness even more relevant. With a new set of measures the process of quantitative development of the system (which now has over 20,000 places available) has continued. With the Decree n. 119/2014, converted with the Law n. 146/2014, 60 million euros were allocated for the enlargement of the SPRAR. With two decrees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (23 December 2014 and 27 April 2015), in particular, a set of addi-

tional places have been devised specifically for non-accompanied minors.

The issue of the SPRAR's fitness on the qualitative level has yet to be resolved. There is not only the obvious need for appropriate and respectable facilities - which is not always satisfied - but also the need for places that actually foster integration processes, ensuring hosted persons achieve good levels of linguistic skills as well as a good knowledge of the Italian context plus, where relevant, the development of specific professional skills. In this perspective the idea, put forth by some local actors, of proposing asylum seekers be involved in various forms of voluntary work can be functional (as well as making the presence of these persons more "useful" and socially acceptable) but it is clear that the strategy must be more structured as the German experience testifies well.

Moreover, there are two fundamental issues regarding reception that still need to be resolved. The first is connected to modes of reception. Whatever the possible agreements at the European level, Italy is faced with - and presumably will still be faced with - the need to assist thousands and thousands of foreigners each year. Faced with this scenario and considering also the best foreign experiences and the various dysfunctional actions which have taken place in Italy, it appears reasonable to ask if it is advisable to continue along the path followed thus far and confirmed by the Law Decree n. 142, which predisposes only reception measures in appropriate facilities. In many other European countries, together with these measures - which are somewhat indispensable - others are developed, from a mere economic contribution to the foreign person to forms of hospitality in apartments or with families. These are typically less expensive forms of reception and which, in many cases, may turn out to be more effective in terms of integrations.

The second issue is connected to time. In optimal conditions reception should target - wherever possible - only those who are indeed refugees and should last only for the time necessary to ensure the person can live independently in the new country. What has happened in Italy, on the other hand, is that it has become the norm - and not the exception - for administrative procedures of asylum applications to last over a year, not to mention the incredibly long waiting times for any re-examination requests in the case of an unsuccessful application. This

creates a situation where many people are participating in reception programmes for an extended period of time without really having any right to international protection (which is evidently a waste of resources); furthermore, this typically determines an increase of people "on hold" in the reception circuit well beyond a reasonable time of permanence in such a condition.

In November 2014 the new norms on asylum applications aimed at speeding up the procedures have come into place: examining commissions went up from ten to twenty; unless expressly requested by the applicant or the president the interview is to take place in front of only one commissioner (see Decree n. 119/2014 cit.). These are useful measures but which cannot, in and of themselves, on their own, resolve the issue. The new regulations for the procedure (Dpr n. 21 of 12 January 2015), contains important and useful directives. Finally, with the aforementioned Decree n. 142 a set of changes have been introduced also at the procedural level. Only the experience of the next few months will be able to say if we shall have more reasonable timeframes on applications

In conclusion, some final remarks on asylum seekers. We ought to bear in mind that, in 2014-2015, the attention was focused on reception, but in the medium to long term, when many definitive responses will start to come through, there will be the inevitable problem of those whose application for international protection has not been successful. Some may receive a permit for humanitarian reasons, but many others will not (unless the definition of humanitarian reasons is distorted beyond recognition). Considering the high number of applications, every year thousands and thousands of foreigners, often after a long stay in Italy, and accompanied by reception-integration measures, will go from being asylum seekers to being irregular migrants.

In the past, in many European countries - even in some countries with generally severe norms regarding irregular immigrants - similar situations led not to forced repatriations but rather in more or less ambiguous forms of tolerance. It is difficult to say what the Italian answer will be in the current situation, but there is no doubt that repatriation will hardly appear reasonable in the case of a long stay in Italy and integration programmes

## 5.2 Beyond international protection

There are no news regarding the legislation of immigration for work motives of non-EU citizens. Two factors have concurred to overshadow the issue: on the one hand, the dramatic nature of refugee (or so-called refugee) flows; on the other hand, the economic crisis, which has made Italy less attractive (even for undeclared work - we need only to consider the reduction in building activities), and has therefore determined a significant reduction in the flow of workers.

In such a context - as well as the normal entry of non-EU seasonal workers (in May 2015 a procedure was opened for 13,000) - an interesting line of action of the Ministry of Labour aimed at allowing entries for work-training has continued to develop. In November 2014, with the publication of the relative Decree in the Official Gazette, the possibility of new entries for vocational training or internships (15,000). At the end of the programme the study permit can be converted into a work permit.

A similar approach is intrinsically laudable, and may well appear adequate in a context where, as aforementioned, migration for work motives has been significantly reduced.

But we certainly cannot exclude that in the next few years the conditions for a new surge in migratory flows will not exist. The lack of attention to the issue of a relative legislation must then be overcome because, as we have many times highlighted in the various past editions of this Report, the current legislation has always been inadequate in managing entry for work motives and thus, if flows were to peak once again without new regulations, the inevitable consequence would be the generation of irregular immigration - as has already been the case in the past.

Considering that entries for work reasons are a heterogeneous phenomenon in terms of needs and regulation (and not having borne this in mind is one of the handicaps of the current legislation), particular attention should be dedicated to the legislation of entries for carework, given that it is a sector with truly particular needs (consider only the specific relevance of the trust factor) and which is destined to become important also for the ageing of the population.

There are no news on the normative plane also for the other, traditionally important, migratory channel, namely that of entries for family reunification. Unlike migrants for work motives, they have continued to develop yet without innovations in terms of legislation. Indeed the latter, unlike that of entries for work, has turned out to be overall not inadequate considering the needs, yet not without its critical issues - consider, for instance, the long timeframes, or the lack of accompaniment for minors that are reunited with parents often after a long separation - on whom the legislator ought to intervene.

Regarding the chapter "integration", there are no ample spectrum interventions. In this regard, moreover, there is no lack of issues worthy of attention.

For instance: what have been the results and what are the perspectives of that agreement of integration that was introduced some years ago among much criticism? The experience has cast light and shadows. This has been a very modest programme compared to similar foreign experiences (in linguistic terms the aim has been a mere A2 spoken level Italian, for instance), which has been subjected to a sort of downgrade when a large number of subscribers (that is, those who entered as a result of family reunification) were excluded from the verification of compliance, and which now must face the uncertainties connected with the maintenance of financial resources for relative courses. The legislator appears to face a choice: to proceed along the road of a reduction of the institute, reducing it to few formal obligations; or, on the basis of experience (and of "richer" models such as the German one) develop it, offering and ensuring all newly arrived migrants a significant programme.

There continue to be uncertainties on the rights of immigrants in terms of the Welfare State. For example, the last Stability Law (Legge di Stabilità) includes a "baby bonus" of up to 106 euro a month for three years for children born in 2015 in low income families. The benefit has been granted also to non-EU foreign families, as long as they have a long term EU permit or recognized asylum status. This solution is surprising considering a longstanding legislation of the Constitutional Court according to which a long term EU permit cannot be used for similar measures as a factor of discrimination (essentially because this permit supposes some socio-economic integration whereby these measures are conceived for people in some form of socio-economic difficulty). There is

a clear lack of a shared sense of justice in terms of the inclusion of foreigners in the Welfare State.

Also beyond the perimeter of the Welfare State, regarding the issue of integration, there are signals that should stimulate the national legislator to further thought.

In January 2015, for example, the Region of Lombardy approved a law on new places of worship with restrictive measures such as the respect of minimum distance from pre-existing buildings of worship and the requirement of "congruity" with the "Lombard landscape". This has generated much criticism as well as the recourse to the Constitutional Court. It is fair to ask, given that the issue is religious freedom, if it should not have been the national legislator to regulate the matter considering the different interests at stake.

Finally, in 2014-2015 the 20-year-old debate regarding a potential reform of citizenship law has continued in the House of Parliament. In September the Chamber of Deputies has begun the exam of a text of the Commission that includes, among other things, citizenship as a birthright for the children of foreign parents with a longstanding residence permit, the possibility, for the other children of foreigners born in Italy or for those arrived as a result of family reunification, to obtain citizenship after five years of schooling. The latter solution follows the logic which the ISMU Foundation has been proposing for some time now, namely that of allowing the children of migrants to become citizens before legal age in relation with school attendance, which is for them a central element of civil integrations. The idea of citizenship upon birth in relation to parental residence permits, on the other hand, raises some concerns. As we have argued time and again in our yearly reports and in other contexts, when dealing with minors, rights should not be connected to citizenship. Moreover, the connection between acquisition and permanent permit gives the latter a value that has no basis in minors' true growth processes. Finally, with the acquisition of citizenship at birth we lose the occasion to connect citizenship with school attendance, something which is much more significant for a minor's integration process than his being born from parents with a permanent permit.

# 6

## Italian Society and Migration

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by Giovanni Giulio Valtolina

In 2015, migration has once more regained the centre of the political agenda, both in Europe and in Italy, following the significant increase in the number of migrants entering Italy through the Mediterranean sea. The geopolitical crisis in the Middle-East and in other areas close to the European Union, along with the persecution of religious minorities, have pushed individuals and families to migrate, in order to find a better future for themselves and their children. This migratory pressure, emphasised by a sensationalistic media coverage, has caused a significant change in Italians' attitudes towards migration, as emerges clearly in the data presented.

### **6.1 Italians' attitude towards immigration**

Among the different studies carried out in Italy during 2015, one of the most interesting was conducted by ISPI and Rainews (2015) in occasion of the European Council of June 25-26, and focused on the European agenda for migration. The findings highlights a scenario which the researchers defined by as "worrying": the percentage of public opinion who believe immigration to be as the main menace for Italy is almost twice that recorded by previous surveys (from 13% to 25% of those interviewed). These data appear even more significant if compared to those on



the economic crisis, which has decreased 26% since December 2014. At the same time, Islamic terrorism fell from 35% to 21% in the period between March and June 2015. Even the significant increase of new arrivals is not enough to justify this trend. According to the researchers' analysis, this tendency is due to the strong emotional - and irrational - charge of the message coming from different political leaders. Furthermore, this very negative perception appears to be exacerbated by the new arrivals, along with the recent scandals involving some Reception Centres and the intransigent attitude of rejection of most EU countries. According to the study's findings, Italians are not able to understand who is in charge of the main decisions - the EU, single States, or even the regional level - and which are the most efficient instruments in order to contrast this perceived emergency: army intervention, rejection, finding an agreement with transit countries, hospitality.

As shown in table 6.1, the percentage of people interviewed who perceive immigration to be Italy's main threat is now 25% of the sample, more than the percentage of those that consider the main menace to be Islamic terrorism. The economic crisis continues to be viewed as the most threatening but the percentage is clearly declining.

**Table 6.1** - Main threat to Italy. December 2014-June 2015. Percentage value

	2014 - December	2015 - March	2015 - June
Immigration	13	13	25
Economic crisis	67	35	40
Islamic terrorism	8	35	21

Source: Ispi-Rainews, 2015

Even more interesting the fact that, as shown in table 6.2, only a scant minority of the Italians interviewed - 2% - considers immigration as a resource for the country, with a remarkable decrease compared with the studies carried out until 2013 (Ipsos-MORI, 2013; Valtolina, 2013). In contrast, 67% of the sample deems migration to be a threat to national security; and among these, 38% believe that it could even enhance the risk of terroristic infiltration, despite the lack of empirical evidence to sup-

port this concern. Finally, less than 30% believe that it is an inevitable phenomenon, which doesn't pose a direct threat to Italy and that must be managed in the best way possible.

**Table 6.2** – Immigration as a threat to Italy. Percentage value

	%
Immigration is a threat and is linked to terrorism	38
Immigration is a threat but is not linked to terrorism	29
Immigration is not a threat; it is a resource	2
Immigration is not a threat and it is inevitable	28
I don't know	3

Source: Ispi-Rainews, 2015

According to the 39% of the sample, the best way to face immigration is represented by "hard" interventions, based on the rejection of migrants and eventually on the recourse to the army (Table 6.3). The same percentage believes it would be more adequate to promote agreements with transit countries, in order to stop migrants before they reach Italian coastlines. Finally, only 16% of the interviewed sample believe that welcoming refugees is a duty.

**Table 6.3** – The best way to face immigration. Percentage value

	%
Military intervention	17
Rejecting migrants	22
Stopping migrants in transit countries	39
Welcoming migrants	16
I don't know	6

Source: Ispi-Rainews, 2015

The last part of the Ispi-Rainews enquiry focused on the evaluation of governmental action. 73% of the sample reported a negative or a very negative judgement, compared to a modest 2% who positively evaluated what Italy is currently doing to face immigration. Researchers believe that these opinions are significantly influenced by the

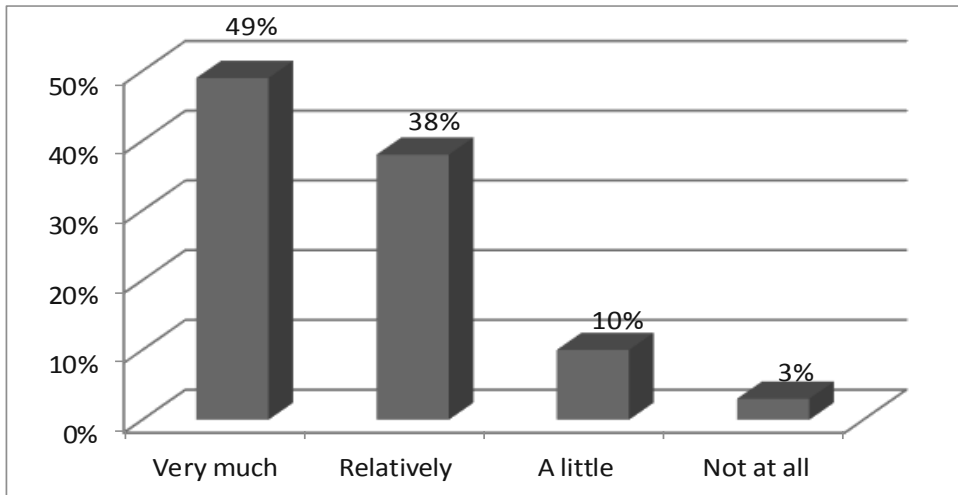
huge media coverage of the continuous flow of arrivals during the summer and by the scandals related to the management of some Reception Centres. Similarly negative, but with a lower percentage compared to the previous one (67%), is the evaluation of governmental action in Europe: the percentage of those who report a positive or very positive judgement is only 26%. Based on these outcomes, Ispi researchers observe how Italians seem to acknowledge the value of some political initiatives - the activation of the Eunavfor Med naval mission, the increase in resources devoted to the Frontex mission, along with the triplication of financial support to the Triton mission - and to be aware that many of the difficulties connected with the management of the phenomena are due to the obstinate protection of national interests by other EU countries. Finally, Italians "strongly disagree" with the idea of building new walls in Europe: more than 70% of those interviewed, informed of the Hungarian proposal to erect an "anti-migrants wall", expressed this opinion.

Such an ambivalent attitude also emerges from the research carried out by Demos and Pi, in June 2015. As a result of these findings it is possible to observe how the concern over immigration has rapidly increased during the first semester of the year, particularly as far as the issue of security is concerned. If in January 2015, 33% of the sample declared themselves "worried" or "very worried"; this percentage reached 42% in June 2015, the same value which was registered in 2007. At the same time, the perception that migrants represent a risk to employment has remained stable - around 34-35%. On the other hand, the vast majority of the sample is in favour of granting citizenship to children born in Italy from immigrant parents (75%); frowns upon regions and municipalities refusing to host their quota of migrants (56%) and blames EU countries who close their borders and don't want to receive their share of migrants (73%).

Another survey that it is worthy of consideration is the SWG enquiry, carried out in April 2015, addressed to investigate the potential link between international events where the self-proclaimed Islamic State is at centre stage, and the revival of Italians' negative attitude toward immigration. During 2014 and 2015, Isis has been involved in a growing number of military and paramilitary. Currently it appears to be made up of a set of movements and groups, who have found a common resource,

sufficient to create an aggressive front in various regions of the Middle-East and Africa, and to gain the control of significant areas in different countries. According to the SWG researchers, Italians have experienced what was happening in Iraqi and Syria and then in some African countries with increasing intensity. But it is only after the Paris attack that the awareness of a threat not restricted to a far away place is became clear. In other words, migration issues must be understood in the context of an international scenario coloured by the danger generated by these new forms of terrorism. Conflicts produced by Isis and its allies are the catalyst that leads thousands of persons to flee their home country, generating a migratory pressure headed to Europe and particularly to Italy. Italian and European institutions shouldn't underestimate the significance of the process engendered by the Isis campaign Isis. More than 80% of those interviewed declared themselves worries about Isis (Graph 6.1), and particularly about the possibility of terroristic attacks in Italian cities, the emergence of forms of guerrilla movements within the Italian borders, along with the defeat of moderate

**Graph 6.1** – Level of preoccupation regarding the surge of ISIS.  
Percentage value



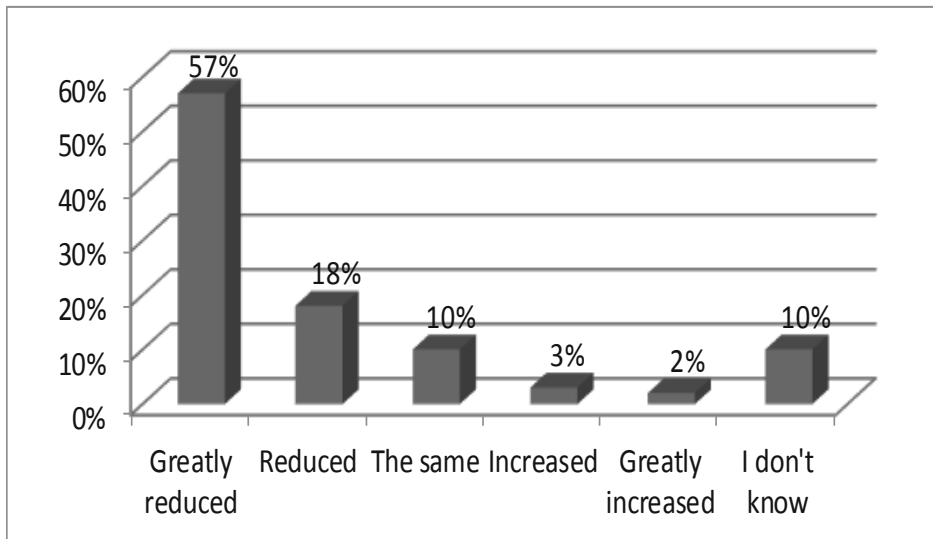
Source: SWG, 2015

Arab governments which would open the way to distressing world scenarios. In the face of a very real possibility

that Isis terrorists could attack Italy, Italians opted, firstly, for a diplomatic and European solution, with only one out of four who believes a military action to be necessary. After the Libyan events and Isis military success, the option for military intervention has become the most chosen, supported by a third of participants.

Considering these data, the SWG researchers remark the deep uneasiness permeating Italian society and which is deeply connected with the issue of immigration. Indeed, half the sample calls for an intervention to block migrant arrivals from the Mediterranean Sea and three out of four ask for a reduction in the volume of entry fluxes (Graph 6.2).

**Graph 6.2** – How should the flux of migrants be regulated in Italy today. Percentage values



Source: Swg, 2015

Moreover, expectations for actions targeted at preventing terroristic attacks are very clear, whereas very few of those interviewed believe it is useful to cooperate with moderate Muslim communities, as shows in table 6.4.

Finally, apart from the concerns generated from a high migratory pressure and the perception of an unstoppable phenomenon, the SWG study outlines how most Italians believe that the vast majority of Arab countries is composed predominantly by fundamentalists. Indeed, only 28%

of Italians believe that fundamentalism represents just a minority in many of the areas from which migrants originate.

**Table 6.4** – Most appropriate ways to prevent terroristic attacks by Isis. Percentage values

	%
Strengthening migrant control at the borders	36
Controlling mosques and Islamic centres	16
Enhancing security around potential targets	15
Close collaboration with moderate Islamic communities	23
Other	3
I don't know	7

Source: SWG, 2015

In conclusion, the presented studies clearly suggest that the massive increase in the number of migrants who crossed the Mediterranean Sea during 2014-2015 seems to be the most important variable reshaping Italians' attitude towards immigrants. Along with the high mediatisation of this topic, the instrumental use of migration by many different political leaders has plainly not fostered a positive and rational understanding of this epochal drama.



# Italy, Europe's Frontier: the Certainties and Uncertainties of International Protection

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by Marina D'Odorico

The year 2014 was characterized by a dramatic and continuous rise in the number of people who have had to leave their homeland because of conflict, persecutions and violence. Recent statistics have confirmed that this situation has continued also in 2015.

In 2013, the data produced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated the number of so-called "forced migrants" to be 51.2 million across the world, higher than the level reached in the period following the second world war. Twelve months later, this number grew further to an incredible 59.5 million, approximately the size of the population of Italy or the UK.

This situation is visible to all and for months now has represented one of the main topic of international debate with countries - such as Italy - who demand support from both the European Union and from other Member States. At the root of the request for greater solidarity is the belief that, based on the principle of united Europe, the management of specific situations, such as the reception of those who arrive by sea or by land seeking international protection should be managed at the supranational level.



As already highlighted in the previous ISMU Report, almost two years down the line, the situation is in need of a solution. Indeed, those nations positioned at the edge of the European Union should be considered "Border States" and thus not left to their own devices to manage a situation which affects, more or less directly, all or almost all Member States.

In line with such an analysis the present chapter aims to highlight the main issues connected to the reception of migrants who have arrived in Italy - or, it would be more correct to say, in Europe.

## 7.1 Italy, Europe's frontier

According to the last statistics, the number of those who applied for international protection in Italy in 2014 and in the first months of 2015 has reached almost 95,000.

**Table 7.1** - Number of asylum applications in Italy and in the South European countries

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*
Italia	10.050	40.355	17.350	26.620	64.225	30.115
Spagna	2.740	3.410	2.580	4.500	5.940	2.280
Grecia	10.275	9.310	9.575	8.225	9.435	5.480
Malta	175	1.890	2.080	2.245	1.350	725
Portogallo	160	275	295	505	445	430
Cipro	2.875	1.770	1.635	1.255	1.745	830

\* The data refer to the Q1 and Q2 of 2015

Source: EUROSTAT, 2015

This number has more than trebled compared to 2013 because of the conflict and persecution currently underway in many countries, as highlighted in chapter 4.2. The EU and individual Member States are all affected by this phenomenon, but Italy, due to her geographical position, represents - as already declared in previous ISMU Reports - one of the main entry channels to Europe and because of this is faced with the need to manage the reception of many more than its single share of asylum seekers. In other words, over and beyond the sheer size and the quantitative management of the phenomenon, it is important to consider also the more qualitative aspects of the issue.

As a transit country, Italy is faced with the role of ensuring first aid and reception also to those who arrive in Italy, but with the aim of reaching other European countries. This opens two possible scenarios: in the first, the migrant manages to leave Italy before being identified and thus registered in the Eurodac system. In this case, the asylum application will be filed in the country which, most likely, represented the main destination of that person's migratory project. In the second scenario, a migrant leaves Italy to apply for asylum in another European country, but is sent back because he or she had been previously identified by the Italian authorities. In this case, according to the Dublin Regulation, the State who is responsible for welcoming and evaluating that person's asylum application is the first safe State physically reached by the migrant.

According to the data provided by the border police from the Lombard seaport of Malpensa, only in January 2015, 101 persons returned to Italy, with an average of three arrivals per day. In this case, too, the numbers help us understand the phenomenon. According to data provided by the UNHCR, during 2014 thousands and thousands of people fled from the coasts of Lybia, and over 170,000 Lybians arrived in Italy. In the same period, just over 64,000 asylum applications were presented in Italy. This difference in numbers leads us to believe that approximately 100,000 people, after their arrival, have avoided making themselves known to the Italian authorities in order to bypass the identification process and reach their chosen destination. Cities like Rome and Milan represented the main crossroads of these transits.

## **7.2 The principle of solidarity between territories: The internal situation in Europe and in Italy**

Article 80 of the TFEU says that "the policies of the Union (...) and their implementation shall be governed by the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, including its financial implications, between the Member States". For some years now, this principle represents one of the issues which has lead Member States to point the finger towards one another when trying to deal with the issue of the "shared" management of migrants who

arrive in countries who are more geographically exposed. Italy, who is part of this latter group, has tried time and again, in its political efforts in Brussels, to ensure that this principle be respected and put into practice, but with little success. Only recently, on 25 June 2015, the Italian government's proposal to set up a mandatory repartition system, among all Member States, for those migrants who arrive in "border countries", based on quotas, received a further rejection. The proposition was harshly criticized by the Baltic and East European countries, and the minimal agreement reached called merely for the redistribution of 40,000 migrants already present in the EU and entitled to protection, plus 20,000 asylum seekers chosen outside the EU, using a system that allows for ample margins of choice. One month later, on 16th July 2015, with 42 votes in favour and 14 against, the EU Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee asked the 28 Member States to adopt the previously proposed "mandatory system" of asylum seeker repartition, thus demonstrating the "solidarity and responsibility" quoted in Article 80 of the TFEU.

The situation took a first, successful turn in September 2015 with the Council of Europe's adoption of temporary measures in favour of Greece and Italy in the sector of international protection. These measures called for the creation of an exceptional system for the temporary displacement of asylum seekers in evident need of international protection from Greece and Italy to other Member States, over a two-year period.

Although the desired outcomes have not arrived and, on the contrary, it has become evident once again that the project of a united Europe is still more of an illusion than a reality, these measures can at least be considered as a first important step towards the revision of the Dublin Regulation, in the hope that a truly more European management of the phenomenon will follow.

The same, however, is true for Italy as well. As requested by the EU, the Italian government had decided to manage the arrival of migrants on the Southern coasts of the peninsula through a mandatory redistribution system across all Regions. The system entailed the transfer of migrants to those regions who have not yet reached their maximum capacity, with the possible, further requisition of public buildings, including army barracks, should there be a lack of places. This decision has led to conflict and resentment in Italy, much as it has in Europe,

especially within smaller cities. The criteria for redistribution are those initially proposed by the EU: population (which will count for 40%), the GDP (another 40%), the rate of unemployment and the number of asylum seekers already present (10% each). The way transfers were organized, however, often with little warning to those cities who were asked to receive migrants, were the major factor of revolt not only among local authorities but among the population.

### **7.3 The Italian reception system divided between certainties and uncertainties**

If we consider the number of applications for international protection received by Italy in 2014 and in the first 6 months of 2015, the number of rejections represented, respectively, 40% and 50% of the total. On the other hand, those who received some form of protection, according to the last Report of the Service for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR, 2015), is subdivided as follows: the greatest propensity was towards the recognition of Humanitarian Protection (28% and 25% respectively), followed by Subsidiary Protection (22% and 19%) and finally of Refugee status (10% and 6%).

The Geneva Convention and the EU directives regarding procedures, reception and, especially, qualifications, outline the parameters for the recognition of one form of protection versus another. They are, however, criteria that give a single state the freedom to act in a more or less restrictive manner, especially in terms of the decision to grant Subsidiary or Humanitarian Protection. Italy, in this regard, is often accused by "stricter" States of granting protection too easily even to those whose applications would be rejected in other European countries.

The Italian propensity to recognize Subsidiary or Humanitarian Protection, however, may also have another, less charitable, explanation. Indeed, these forms of protection, unlike the allocation of Refugee status, offer less stability, even though recent norms have diminished the level of uncertainty, bringing the position of the beneficiary of Subsidiary Protection closer to that recognized by the Geneva Convention. In fact, ensuring Subsidiary or Humanitarian Protection allows the single Member State the possibility of reconsidering the applica-

tion at a later time and withdraw this benefit in case the cause which lead to forced migration in the beneficiary's country of origin has ceased.

**Table 7.2** - Asylum seeker application outcomes in Italy. Percentage values

	Refugee Status	Subsidiary Protection	Humanitarian Protection	Rejection	Total
2014	10	22	28	40	100
2015*	6	19	25	50	100

\* First six months of 2015

Source: ISMU analysis of SPRAR (2015) data

The above highlights the complexity of a situation characterized by the presence of a high number of asylum seekers in situations of danger, which cannot be repatriated, but which do not fully satisfy the criteria to be granted the maximum state of protection. Speaking of reception means speaking of arrivals by sea and the distribution of migrants among Italian regions or European States, but what is the real situation of reception over and beyond emergency situations and first aid?

Looking beyond the numbers that offer a picture of the situation from a quantitative point of view, the picture of reception in Italy is defined also and especially by policy. The two aspects are connected and the increase in arrivals has indeed collapsed the already weakened Italian reception system made up of the SPRAR and of millions of other, more or less structured, facilities. For this reason, the main decisions taken by the Italian government were geared towards the management of this emergency. Already in June 2014 the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with the Communication n. 7418 of 20 June, ordered the creation of further reception places in various regions through the development of temporary Extraordinary Reception Centres. This strategy was backed up the following month by a National Plan devised to face the extraordinary flow of non-EU citizens and aimed at the development of criteria for the subdivision of asylum seekers at the national level.

Finally, the application of the Law Decree n. 142 of 18 August 2015 added some important - yet not decisive - innovations, especially regarding reception. The request to

do without facilities such as the CARA (that is, centres offering reception of Asylum Seekers) was not successful, but emergency centres were introduced; likewise, the range of motives that require asylum seekers to be kept in identification and expulsion centres has been broadened, as has the period of time they can be withheld.

The other changes brought on by the new regulation, which could potentially impact on the reception system, is related to the possibility of working after a 2-month period (as opposed to the 6-month period of the previous legislation). This is an important reform, much awaited, which will enable the creation of integration processes which are truly based on giving value to personal agency.

A further problem is represented by the reception of specific categories of asylum seekers or protection beneficiaries. The first case is represented by the so-called Dublin cases: those who, although resident in a Member State, are expelled and sent back to Italy, the country which, according to the Eurodac system, is considered responsible for their management. In 2014 Italy approved 13,300 requests for "re-admission" out of 15,760. These people, once back in Italy, risk being relegated in a "non-reception" limbo, given that the issues connected to the lack of places in specific facilities, as aforementioned, makes it difficult to ensure they will receive adequate support and assistance. Moreover, we must consider that these are people who, very often, had begun to take the first steps towards integration in the Member State they lived in up until that moment and have therefore been uprooted, once again, from what they considered to be their "safe home".

For these cases, although specific norms to protect exist, individual measures have nonetheless been activated. For example, the City of Milan, during the emergency situation of Spring 2015, created an ad hoc reception centre, in order to deal accurately and sensitively with their specific situation. Despite these local efforts, the integrated reception of this category of migrants - "twice" forced - remains one of the critical aspects that must be dealt with when revising the law both at the European level, with the reform of the Dublin Regulation, and at the national level, in terms of the reception of European directives.

Finally, due to their particular needs, it is worth dedicating a special note to the reception of the vulnerable. Looking at the characteristics and needs of each

specific group is beyond the scope of this chapter, but the case of unaccompanied foreign minors deserves some attention. It is important to remember that in Italy, more than in other countries, the sensitivity to this category of migrants is high, as is the attempt to offer them specific forms of protection. More specifically, unaccompanied minors who apply for asylum status are subject to immigration law, even though experts emphasise the need for a legislation specifically dedicated to the reception of all minors who face migration alone, be it voluntarily or forced. Indeed, the presence of clear and binding guidelines could lessen the differences in the type of approach and strategy adopted in different countries.

In conclusion, therefore, the Italian reception system appears characterized by great certainties yet equally great uncertainties. If, on the one hand, it appears certain that Italy is a country with a great history of reception - let us remember, for example, the great mobilization of the population in periods where the request for help in facing the emergency was greatest - on the other hand, paradoxically, this system is uncertain precisely because it is based on the management of an emergency.

## **7.4 Conclusion**

The management of migration flows - for asylum or other reasons - has often been characterized by the "emergency" factor. Already in the years when Italy was the destination of an "economic" migration, the urgency was that of managing flows and contrasting illegal entries and irregularities. Today the emergency is connected with the control of those who arrive seeking protection as a result of human rights violation in many countries, on the one hand, and, on the other, of the closure of legal entry channels for work motives due to the economic crisis.

As already highlighted in this Report (Chapter 5), what would be useful, instead, is the development of a strategy aimed at dealing with the problem rather than merely with the emergency, adopting a long-term perspective, with the objective of managing the phenomenon in its entirety. One possible route, as suggested in the introductory chapter of this Report, would be that of incrementing the synergy between the various actors involved at

the different levels of governance. With specific reference to the issue of asylum, it appears to be a issue fraught with challenges, both inside and outside of our national borders. What we are referring to here is the difficulty in respecting the principle of solidarity, managing to look at the management of the phenomenon using a global as opposed to a local approach.

The reform of the Dublin Regulation will undoubtedly represent a step forward towards the creation of common system of asylum based on the solidarity among States but, without falling prey to useless pessimisms, the path towards a real shared management of applications and of reception seems to still be long and fraught with challenges.





# Migration in the Mediterranean: Dynamics and Governance Issues

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by Roberto Cortinovis

The dramatic increase of migration flows across the Mediterranean represents one of the biggest challenges that the Member States of the European Union (EU) had to face during 2015. Following yet another tragedy occurred off the Sicily Channel in April 2015, which saw the death of more than 800 migrants, EU leaders promised a more coordinated and effective management of migration towards Europe. In parallel, the urgency to take action was increased by an unprecedented surge in the scale of those flows, in particular across the Eastern Mediterranean route, from Turkey to the Greek Aegean islands. The European Agenda on migration, presented by the Commission on May this year, set the stage for the next steps to be taken by EU policy-makers both in the short and long term. Following these developments, the objective of this contribution is to describe the central dynamics that characterize migration flows in the Mediterranean and to discuss some of the governance issues the management of these flows pose. The first part describes the main routes used by migrants to reach Europe across the Mediterranean, presenting key statistical data and the dynamics that have impacted upon the recent evolution of these routes. The following part takes into consideration one specific area of migration governance at the EU level, the so-called external dimension of EU migration policy.

It is argued that the further development and expansion of this policy area, which includes initiatives adopted by the EU to ensure cooperation of countries of origin and transit of migrants, is crucial in order to provide for an effective answer to the current migration scenario unfolding in the Mediterranean.

## **8.1 Trends and dynamics of Mediterranean flows**

### **8.1.1 Migration routes in the Mediterranean**

Migration across the Mediterranean Sea is not a recent phenomenon. During the early 1990s, for example, Italy experienced the sudden arrival of tens of thousands of migrants from Albania as a consequence of the collapse of the communist regime in that country. In the same period, the Spanish government introduced visa requirements in order to halt migration from North Africa, a phenomenon dating back to the 1960s (Fargues & Bonfanti, 2014). A 2013 study collecting the statistical data provided by the European countries overlooking the Mediterranean Sea estimates a yearly average of about 44,000 landings on European southern shores from 1998 to 2013 (Fargues, Bonfanti, 2014). The situation unfolding during 2014 and 2015 represents, however, an unprecedented increase of trans-Mediterranean flows: 216,000 landings occurred in 2014 according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. That is a number three times higher than that recorded in 2011 in conjunction with the Arab Spring's events (UNHCR, 2015a). The data regarding 2015 shows a further steep increase in the number of arrivals: about 410,000 between January and September (Ibid)<sup>1</sup>.

When focusing on the evolution of migratory routes across the Mediterranean during the past two years, we can observe the strong pressure experienced along the Central Mediterranean route, which originates in Libya and ends on the Italian shores, and the Eastern Mediterranean route, which starts from the Turkish coast and reaches the Greek Aegean islands.

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<sup>1</sup> Data gathered by UN High Commissioner for Refugees relative to 2015 refer to the period January 1<sup>st</sup> - September 14<sup>th</sup> 2015.

The Central Mediterranean route, in particular, was the main channel used by migrants to reach Europe in 2014, with over 170,000 arrivals on Italian shores recorded during the year. In 2015, some 153,000 migrants landed on the Italian coasts, mainly nationals of Eritrea, Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan. The Central Mediterranean route proved to be also the most tragic in terms of number of people who perished at sea, with approximately 3,270 deaths estimated in 2014 and 2,620 deaths from January to the beginning of September 2015 (IOM, 2015).

At the same time, the Eastern Mediterranean route gained increased relevance over 2015. While during 2014 about 44,000 migrants landed in Greece via sea from Turkey, in the first nine months of 2015, 318,000 arrivals were recorded. These figures highlight the centrality acquired by this route as a privileged access to Europe for migrants that come from the Middle East and Central Asia, mainly Syrians, Afghan, Pakistani, and Iraqis (UNHCR, 2015a).

### **8.1.2 Political and socio-economic variables**

According to Monzini (2007: 180), there are three interdependent variables that play a key role in determining migration dynamics in the Mediterranean: the migration pressure originating in the countries of origin; the management and control policies adopted by transit and destination countries; and the strategies operated by organizations involved in migrant smuggling (which are influenced by the effects produced by the first two variables).

Regarding the first variable, the perpetuation and worsening of the conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq, as well as conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa such as those unfolding in Somalia and Nigeria, have caused massive movements of asylum seekers towards Europe. In particular, the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, has produced a devastating effect on the dynamics of migration flows in the Mediterranean Sea. According to the UNHCR, the number of people who need humanitarian aid as a consequence of the conflict reached 12.2 million in 2015, out of which 7.6 million are internally displaced within Syria and about 4 million are refugees hosted in the neighbouring countries, mainly Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. Compared to the magnitude of the phenomenon, it

is important to remember that EU States have welcomed so far only a limited quota of Syrian refugees: 428,000 by August 2015 (UNHCR, 2015b).

The Central Mediterranean route was one of the main channels chosen by Syrians in 2014, when 42,000 arrivals were recorded. However, it is important to remember that migration flows in the Mediterranean Sea are constantly changing. In the last part of 2014 and during 2015, increasing insecurity experienced by migrants in Libya, along with visa restrictions adopted by neighbouring countries such as Egypt and Algeria, forced an increasing number of Syrians to search for alternative routes, in particular the Eastern Mediterranean route, on which over 222,000 Syrians transited during the first nine months of 2015 (UNHCR, 2015a)<sup>2</sup>.

The reference to the situation in Libya draws attention to the second variable mentioned above, that is the role of control policies implemented by transit and destination States in order to prevent migration. As a result of the military and political disorder that occurred in Libya after the fall of the Gaddafi's regime in 2011 and the consequent absence of an effective state authority able to control the borders, Libya became a main hub for migrants coming from the Middle East and the sub-Saharan Africa who want to reach Europe by sea (Toaldo, 2015).

Although the instability that arose in the post-revolutionary phase created the conditions for a further increase in migration flows from and towards the country, the centrality of Libya as a hub for African flows grounds its roots in a set of factors that predated the fall of the Gaddafi regime. The 'open door' policy that Libya adopted towards migrants in the 90s, together with the work opportunities created by the Libyan oil economy, determined a constant flow of migrants into the country, in particular coming from sub-Saharan Africa. The flow of migrants into Libya continued, through the proliferation

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<sup>2</sup> The trends relative to 2015 indicate that an increasing number of migrants that arrive in Greece from Turkey (a relevant share of which are Syrians) continue their journey along the 'Balkan' route, through Macedonia and Serbia, and then re-enter the EU via the Hungarian border. The following data shows the entity of the phenomenon: about 102,000 migrants were recorded along the Hungarian border in the first seven months of 2015, out of which 34,000 just in July (Frontex, 2015).

of human smuggling, also when the Libyan regime, under increasing pressure from European States and in particular Italy, shifted to restrictive migration policies during the first decade of the 2000s (Toaldo, 2015:7).

The evolution of the routes used by immigrants to reach Europe is strictly connected to the third of the above-mentioned variables, which points to the activity of the smuggling organisations that operate along these routes<sup>3</sup>. This aspect acquired a central relevance in the agenda of the European leaders in 2015, as testified by the launch of the military operation 'Eunavfor Med', whose objective is to disrupt the 'business model' connected to the human smuggling and trafficking in the South Mediterranean Sea (Mananashvili, 2015). However, empirical evidence gathered so far demonstrates that the organisations that favour irregular immigration are part of a complex social and economic phenomenon that requires a deeper understanding of the causes that lie behind it. In particular, studies that have explored the business model operated by the smugglers have shown that smuggling organisations are fluid and hierarchically unstructured and rely on informal and flexible networks that hold well-established links with the local economies. Within these organisations, there are actors with different functions: passeurs, who handle the transportation of migrants; 'organisers' who deal with logistic issues (for example taking people from one collection point to another); intermediaries in the countries of origin of the potential migrants whose job is to establish a first contact between offer and demand (Altai Consulting, 2013: 53)<sup>4</sup>. In some

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<sup>3</sup> The present paper explores the dynamics related to migrants' smuggling, without taking into consideration human trafficking, a much more serious crime which implies transporting migrants with the use of force and for the purpose of exploitation. It is important to remember though that both these forms of illegality are often connected and not easy to distinguish (Caneva, Ambrosini, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> In a news story on human trafficking in Libya, the British Newspaper *The Guardian* reports the following account recorded in the city of Zuwara: 'No one has the name 'smuggler' written on their chest. Anyone here who has no money can sell their apartment, buy a boat, and organise a smuggling trip. By the time of the next trip you'd already have regained half the cost of the apartment. It's a very easy formula.' (*The Guardian*, 2015).

cases, smuggling organisations evolve into “service providers” agencies similar to tour operators, able to offer clients a ‘package’ that covers all different phases of their journey from the country of origin to that of destination (Achilli, 2015).

Although episodes of human trafficking and kidnapping for ransom are largely recorded, especially in the current Libyan context (Altai Consulting, 2013: 59), the fact that the business of migrant smuggling is so widespread and rooted in the local economy challenges the validity of a mere military approach to the problem, embodied by the ‘Eunavfor Med’ operation launched by the EU in 2015. On the contrary, as many contributors have already highlighted, it would be more beneficial to pay attention to the reasons that push an increasing number of migrants to rely on the smugglers’ services and to envisage legal channels for entering the EU territory, especially for migrants in need of international protection (de Haas, 2015).

## **8.2 The governance of migration: the external dimension of EU migration policy**

In light of the dynamics outlined in the previous part, it appears clear that the effective management of migration flows in the Mediterranean Sea is related to the further development and coordination of various interconnected policy areas. Necessary components of this comprehensive approach include efficient asylum and reception systems, admission policies that can maximise immigration benefits for both countries of origin and destination, and policies to tackle irregular immigration that at the same time can guarantee the respect of human rights of migrants. The following section aims to explore a specific component of migration governance in the Mediterranean Sea, the so-called ‘external dimension’ of EU migration policies. The external dimension includes those EU initiatives aiming to expand the scope of migration policies outside EU borders by ensuring the cooperation of countries of origin and transit of migration flows.

The external dimension of migration policies is often associated with the concept of ‘externalisation’, that is the attempt to co-opt third countries into controlling migration flows (Boswell, 2003). This theoretical ap-

proach was formulated following a set of policies adopted by the EU from the late 80s onward, which were characterized by a strong focus on migration control, such as the conclusion of readmission agreements and joint management of external borders in cooperation with third countries (Lavenex, 2006).

In recent years, the EU has committed to expanding the reach of its external dimension, on the basis of the so-called 'root causes approach', namely a strategic approach aiming at tackling the push factors of migration flows. In particular, the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM), firstly adopted in 2005 and then revised in 2012, lays down a comprehensive strategy for the development of the external dimension of EU migration policies (Council of the European Union, 2012). The main goal of the GAMM is to face all relevant aspects of migration in a balanced and comprehensive way, in partnership with third countries. This approach is also at the basis of the European Agenda on Migration adopted by the European Commission in May 2015, which aims to define the main lines of action in the field of migration to be adopted by the EU in the coming years. The Agenda, that is strongly influenced by migration crisis unfolding in the Mediterranean Sea, emphasizes that:

To try to halt human misery created by those who exploit migrants, we need to use the EU's global role and wide range of tools to address the root causes of migration (European Commission, 2015).

In the last part of 2014 and during 2015 some important initiatives were launched at the EU level in order to strengthen the cooperation with the main countries of origin and transit of migrants. The next section will focus specifically on those initiatives addressed to African countries.

### **8.2.1 The Rabat and Khartoum processes**

The effort to strengthen dialogue at the regional level with the African countries on migration issues was pursued through the Rabat and Khartoum Processes under the impulse of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the EU (from July to December 2014).



The Rabat Process, launched in 2006, includes the 28 member states of the European Union, the countries of Northern, Central and Western Africa, the European Commission and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The goal of the Rabat Process is to promote a coordinated and balanced approach to migration among the partners and in particular to strengthen the synergies between migration and development. The Rome Declaration, adopted on November 27th 2014 during the 4th EU-African Ministerial Conference, is structured on four pillars: 1) organising mobility and migration; 2) improving border management and combatting irregular immigration; 3) strengthening the synergies between migration and development; 4) promoting international protection<sup>5</sup>.

In the context of the same EU-Africa Ministerial Conference, a new platform for regional dialogue, the EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative, also called the Khartoum Process, was created. The Khartoum Process gathers the EU member States and the governments of Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Tunisia. The Joint Declaration launching the initiative focuses on combatting irregular immigration and human trafficking through an increased cooperation and exchange of know-how between police and border control authorities in the countries of origin and transit<sup>6</sup>.

The Khartoum Process was criticised due to its 'asymmetry': in other words, for not addressing evenly the four GAMM pillars, in favour of a predominant focus on combatting illegal immigration. Criticism was also raised on the choice of having countries like Eritrea and Sudan, responsible for systematic violations of human rights and democratic principles, involved in the dialogue (Morone, 2015). Overall, it seems fair to conclude that, compared to the wider platform for cooperation established in the

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<sup>5</sup> See: Rabat Process, Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development, Rome Declaration, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014, online:

[http://processusderabat.net/web/uploads/cms/EN-Rome Declaration & Programme.pdf](http://processusderabat.net/web/uploads/cms/EN-Rome%20Declaration%20&%20Programme.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> See: Khartoum Process, EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative, Rome Declaration, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2014, online: <http://italia2014.eu/media/3785/declaration-of-the-ministerial-conference-of-the-khartoum-process.pdf>.

context of the Rabat Process, the Khartoum process will have to be substantially expanded in order to evolve into a comprehensive partnership on migration with East African countries.

### **8.2.2 Mobility partnerships and regional protection programmes**

Besides an analysis of the programmatic declarations of the Rabat and Khartoum Processes, it is necessary to consider the so called 'operationalization' of the two processes, which means the specific available tools, resources, and the actors responsible for their implementation. To this regard, the Rabat Process emphasises that the cooperation framework developed at the regional level is functional to creating specific tools aimed at increasing bilateral and multilateral cooperation<sup>7</sup>. The next section will illustrate two of the tools implemented by the EU to this end: Mobility Partnerships and, with specific reference to asylum, Regional Protection Programmes.

According to the Commission, Mobility Partnerships (MPs) represent one of the privileged tools to translate the GAMM into practice (European Commission, 2009). The goal of MPs is to establish partnerships with the countries of origin and transit of migrants through concrete initiatives that include legal immigration, migration and development, and tackling illegal immigration. MPs have been signed so far with three African countries: Cape Verde, Morocco, Tunisia<sup>8</sup>.

The MPs are concluded as non-legally binding political declarations subscribed by the European Commission, the concerned third country and those EU Member States that

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<sup>7</sup> See the internet website of the Rabat Process: <http://www.processusderabat.net/web/index.php/support-projects-activities/infographic-mobility-partnerships-and-common-agendas-on-migration-and-mobility-in-the-rabat-process-region>.

<sup>8</sup> See the internet website of the European Commission: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/eastern-partnership/mobility-partnerships-visa-facilitation-and-readmission-agreements/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/eastern-partnership/mobility-partnerships-visa-facilitation-and-readmission-agreements/index_en.htm).

have voluntarily agreed to take part. Besides the Joint declaration, the partnerships include an 'Annex' that lists the concrete projects that the parties commit themselves to carrying out in the different areas of cooperation.

MPs have been criticised because, in spite of what their name would suggest, include only limited initiatives aimed at increasing mobility in the EU, in particular through the creation of new labour migration channels. On the other hand, the partnerships require the third country concerned to commit itself to tackling irregular migration by stipulating a readmission agreement with the EU, usually in exchange for visa facilitations to the benefit of its citizens (Lavenex, Stucky, 2011).

Regarding asylum, in 2005 the EU launched the Regional Protection Programmes (RPPs), which are conceived as flexible and multi-dimensional frameworks of cooperation with the main regions that host refugees (European Commission, 2005). In the framework of RPPs, a series of projects have been implemented with a view to strengthen the asylum systems of target countries, in particular by creating new infrastructure and training public officials and NGOs personnel dealing with refugees (Cortinovis, 2015: 9). RPPs have been launched so far in North Africa, the Great Lakes region, and in the Horn of Africa.

In 2013, moreover, a Regional Protection and Development Programme (RDPP) was launched in the Middle East, targeting Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq, with the objective of supporting those countries in managing the high number of Syrian refugees they host. This last programme is different from the former programmes because of its focus on development: in particular, the initiatives therein envisaged aim to favour socio-economic integration of refugees by providing them with livelihood opportunities. This new approach is an answer to issues that were identified in previous RPPs, in particular the lack of coordination between development and asylum policies and, more broadly, the lack of a specific strategic vision behind the various initiatives included in the programmes (Ibid.: 10).

The European Agenda on Migration mentioned above includes, among its objectives, a further expansion of the RDPP formula in North Africa and in the Horn of Africa and supplies to this end another 30 million euros for the years 2015 and 2016 (European Commission, 2015:5). Howev-

er, as the Commission itself pointed out in another circumstance, in order to evolve into fully-fledged partnerships with the main countries of 'first asylum', the RPDPs must be supported by the Member States with further investments, both politically and economically (European Commission, 2013: 12). In particular, a challenge to be addressed in the future will be to ensure ownership of partner countries in the implementation of the programmes: to reach such a goal, however, it is fundamental to strengthen political dialogue with third countries' authorities and to give a substantive demonstration of 'solidarity towards those countries currently hosting the largest number of refugees, in particular by resettling a bigger quota of refugees from those countries in the EU.

### **8.3 Conclusion: a truly global approach?**

The first section of this contribution has described some of the main geopolitical and socio-economic dynamics that characterise the migration scenario in the Mediterranean Sea: in particular, the situation in Libya and the long-term effects of the Syrian war have been taken into consideration. Besides, it was shown that human smuggling in the Mediterranean Sea is managed by a complex network of actors that is rooted in the communities and economies of the countries of origin and transit, which challenge the effectiveness of a purely restrictive or control-oriented approach to the problem. This circumstance, together with the "mixed" character of migration flows in the Mediterranean Sea, draws attention to the plurality of the causes that shape the nature and composition of these flows, highlighting the necessity of creating appropriate governance instruments in order to face this complexity (Van Hear, 2011).

In this respect, the EU has committed itself to developing a Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, which aims to create long-term partnerships with the countries of origin and transit of migrants. When looking at the details of this approach, however, a basic asymmetry is evident. In fact, priority has been given so far to initiatives aiming to contain migration flows, while less action has been taken to create new channels of legal access to the EU and to maximise the impact of migration on the development of third countries. However, a long-term

strategy to face the challenges of migration in the Mediterranean requires balancing this asymmetry by adequately covering all the policy dimensions involved in the governance of migration.

# Banlieues, Islam and Radicalisation: Between Facts and Myths

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by Giulia Mezzetti

## 9.1 Banlieues: back in the spotlight

Between 2014 and 2015, Islamic terrorism was responsible for various events in Europe: the assault on the Jewish Museum in Brussels (24 May 2014), the massacre in the Parisian satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo and the taking of hostages in a kosher supermarket in Paris (7-9 January 2014), the failed homicide of cartoonist Lars Vilks and the attack on the Great Synagogue in Copenhagen (14-15 February 2015), the assault near a gas production plant near Lyon, with the macabre decapitation of a victim (26 June 2015) and, finally, the Paris attacks of 13 November 2015, when 130 people lost their lives. The authors of these acts all seem to share a common characteristic: they are all second-generation immigrants, who grew up and were socialized in the European countries where these attacks took place. To these episodes of terrorism, we must add the flows of young Europeans - composed born by second generation immigrants and by European natives - towards the so-called "Islamic State" in Syria and Iraq.

Such phenomena raise the issue of the motivations that drive young people of immigrant descent to adhere to Jihadism, questioning the process of migrant integration, the treatment of Muslim minorities in European societies and the efficacy of the policies adopted in these do-

mains. Among the events listed above, the cases which, more than others, have shaken European public opinion – emotionally and symbolically – are certainly the Paris attacks of early and late 2015. In France, the debate spurred by these dramatic events focused on the “banlieues”: places characterized by significant levels of segregation and a vast socio-economic disadvantage, where Islam has a peculiar relevance for young second-generation French citizens of North African, Turkish and African origin, who are amply represented in these suburbs (most attackers came from these areas). In particular, following the tragic events of January and November 2015, some have hypothesised a correlation between the attacks and the segregation of this part of the French population<sup>1</sup>, thus providing a territorial interpretation of the increased visibility of Islam and establishing a link between the latter and the phenomena of radicalisation and terrorism. This has offered a new lease of life to the political and intellectual debate on the banlieues, ten years after the most violent and widespread uprisings of recent French history, which had taken place in these areas<sup>2</sup>.

The present chapter explores the links and the reciprocal, potential connections between the living conditions of the banlieues, the forms of the so-called “religious

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<sup>1</sup> With reference to the January 2015 attacks, the French Prime Minister Manuel Valls spoke of the existence of a “territorial, social and ethnic apartheid” regarding the immigrant population, which is “victim of discrimination”, “relegated in peripheral areas”, that are dominated by “social misery”, with the risk of creating new “ghettoes”. Cf. “Valls évoque ‘un apartheid territorial, social, ethnique en France’”, *Le Monde*, 20.01.2015, [http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2015/01/20/pour-manuel-valls-il-existe-un-apartheid-territorial-social-ethnique-en-france\\_4559714\\_823448.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2015/01/20/pour-manuel-valls-il-existe-un-apartheid-territorial-social-ethnique-en-france_4559714_823448.html) (last access 19 July 2015).

<sup>2</sup> For example, the Socialist party deputy Malek Boutih suggested that so-called “sensitive neighbourhoods” (as the more problematic and deprived urban areas are called in the French administrative and political jargon) be “put under special administration” in order to avoid their transformation into “fertile ground” for the spread of radicalisation phenomena; cf. [http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2015/01/20/malek-boutih-plaide-pour-la-mise-sous-tutelle-de-quartiers-sensibles\\_4559596\\_823448.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2015/01/20/malek-boutih-plaide-pour-la-mise-sous-tutelle-de-quartiers-sensibles_4559596_823448.html) (last access 19 July 2015).

revival" (also ultra-Orthodox) among part of the young Muslims who live there, and the phenomenon of terrorism. The aim is to distinguish between "facts" and "myths" within the public opinion's representations of these issues. Firstly, I will analyse the nature of the relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and the spread of religious practices. Secondly, I will try to explore the possible existence of links, on the one hand, between terrorism and the banlieues' social conditions, on the other hand between terrorism and the increased religiosity of young Muslims.

As we shall see, although there is some evidence suggesting that banlieues' segregation can be connected to Islamic religious revival and to the phenomenon of terrorism, studies conducted on this issue highlight that such an analysis is not sufficient and could be potentially over-simplified and misleading. Firstly, because this could translate into a stigmatization of the banlieues as an undifferentiated and uncontrolled entity that may easily become "fertile ground" for Jihadist recruitment. Secondly, establishing a cause-and-effect relationship between immigrants' segregation and Islamic terrorism is reductive and problematic, in light of the complexity of the terroristic phenomenon and of its evolutions. Thirdly, a closer examination seems to suggest that the violent radicalisation inspiring terrorism should not be associated to the increased religiosity of young Muslims from the banlieues.

The analysis of the French case can be enlightening for various reasons. France was not only the victim of recent and dramatic terroristic attacks, but is also the European country that has witnessed the highest number (in absolute terms)<sup>3</sup> of young people leaving for Syria to become foreign fighters. France is also an emblematic case in the EU with respect both to the treatment of the Muslim minorities (Foner, Alba, 2008) and to the paradigmatic

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<sup>3</sup> According to the estimates of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation at King's College, approximately 1,200 people left France to become foreign fighters in the so-called Islamic State. Denmark is the country with the highest number of people leaving for Syria, relative to population. Cf. <http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/> (last access 19 July 2015).



ic socio-spatial segregation that immigrants and their descendants encounter.

## **9.2 Banlieues, discrimination and recourse to religion**

Studies on the conditions of life in the French banlieues identify two separate dynamics, which, in this context, intertwine and reinforce each other: on the one hand, mass unemployment, which has spread among the immigrant population since the second half of the 1970s; on the other hand, the concentration of such unemployment in specific, circumscribed areas. These two phenomena have tended to create a cycle of perpetuation and reproduction, the one resulting from the other (Avenel, 2010). The immigrant population that was massively employed in large French industries in the post-war period and had settled in the vast social housing districts, which had been built in the outskirts of urban areas near the industrial plants, was left jobless following the colossal deindustrialization and economic crisis that ensued the Oil Shock of 1973. In the subsequent decades, unemployment became endemic in those areas where the immigrant population was concentrated. The physical and social distance of residents from work opportunities in the city, the significant spread of discriminatory behaviour in the job market, the educational difficulties of students with migrant background and, finally, the development of a parallel economy (based on drug dealing) all contribute to explain this dynamic of reproduction (Avenel, 2010), which has even led to an increase in the levels of segregation (Pan Ké Shon, 2011). Thus, spatial relegation soon became social relegation, that in a vicious cycle which is difficult to break and which has been affecting children and grandchildren of first immigrants for a long time<sup>4</sup>. In these areas the opportunities for social mobil-

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<sup>4</sup> In the so-called "Zones Urbaines Sensibles" (ZUS) the proportion of large families and people with a foreign nationality is significantly higher (up to three times) compared to the national average. While the French national unemployment rate is of approximately 10%, in the ZUS it reaches 23%, and up to 42% for young people aged 15 to 24, compared to 23% in the rest of the country (ONZUS, 2014). This is particularly significant if we consider that the most represented age range in these areas

ity are significantly lower, to the extent that it is possible to speak of "social determinism" with respect to the conditioning exerted by segregation (Kepel, 2012a).

What emerges from the public debate, however, is a different representation of the economic and social problems of the banlieues. The concentration of immigrant workers in industrial peripheral neighbourhoods and especially the progressive impoverishment experienced by these areas, together with the emergence of large scale violence and deviance phenomena, have reinforced the image of "Otherness", already historically associated with the banlieue, considered the threatening "dark side" of modern cities since their origin. At the same time, as the degradation of these neighbourhoods grew, the emergence of the first conflicts connected with the building of mosques and of the so-called "affaires du foulard" made the presence and rootedness of Islam in these areas gradually more visible and evident. As various scholars have pointed out, this is when an explanation of the problems of the banlieues centred on the cultural and religious variable has progressively made its way to the fore. The crystallisation of the public debate on the compatibility of Islam with claimed French "values" and laïcité has led to a representation of the integration of Muslim immigrants as "failed" (Fredette, 2014) and to attribute to individuals and to their religion the responsibility of their supposed refusal to integrate and of their presumed desire to live "parallel lives", separate from and in opposition to the rest of society, in territories - the banlieues - which have been "stolen" to the République. "Islam" has thus become one of the main elements of the concept of "banlieue", which, in turn, has morphed into a category of collective representation with a strong symbolic valence. This stigmatization has transformed the banlieues into the symbol of complete social and cultural otherness (Avenel, 2010), assigning a negative identity to the populations inhabiting them, who are considered radically "different", problematic and "unintegrable".

Such characterizations of the Muslim immigrant population and of the banlieues play a dominant role in the affirmation of a religious identity for many young people

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is that of the under-25s. School drop-out is soaring and there is a higher tendency among students of immigrant origin who reside in these areas to choose VET and less qualified educational routes.

who live in these places. Indeed, it is true that, as many different studies have shown, such particularly deep-seated forms of relative deprivation endured by many young people of migrant origin represent the first reasons for their turn to religion and their recourse to more or less Orthodox forms of Islam. However, the social-economic disadvantage affecting these French citizens of migrant origin, alone, cannot account for the motives behind the "religious revival" and the adherence to severe and ultra-Orthodox versions of the Islamic religious practice, such as the one of the Salafi movement. Over and beyond social conditions, what seems to be essential is precisely the relationship with mainstream French society and the discrimination perceived by these young people. The empirical studies conducted demonstrate that the lives of these people, often so turbulent and precarious, present recurrent traits, such as the impossibility of finding a job, the perception of education as useless, a day-to-day existence, sometimes with delinquent behaviour. In particular, these studies place the accent on the so-called galère (i.e., the day-to-day presence of violence, of difficult family relations, of clashes with the symbols of the State, embodied in policemen or teachers, perceived as "racists" - Khosrokhavar, 1997; Shirali, 2007), on unemployment (Kepel, 2012a; 2012b), or on educational difficulties (Kapko, 2007; Arslan, 2010). These aspects are all interrelated and, in many cases, lead to an appeal to religion, so as to become "born-again" Muslims. The strong identity crisis deriving from the impossibility of imagining one's future translates, for many, in a genuine spiritual need, in a peculiar demand for religion and in a sincere and profound religiosity. Indeed, religion responds to the need for deliverance, justice, peace and a moral order thanks to the structured dimension of religious practice (Shirali, 2007), restores pride and faith in one's abilities and renews individual honourability (Kapko, 2007; Kepel, 2012a). What is of crucial importance in all these experiences, over and beyond the objective living conditions in the banlieues, is precisely the painful perception of discrimination and racism manifested "by the French" (Khosrokhavar, 1997; Shirali, 2007; Arslan, 2010; Kepel, 2012b), which generates a strong sense of injustice and humiliation. The spiritual comfort granted by religious participation and the possibility of creating a positive social image within the religious community thus

allow for a fulfilment of the Self, able to reclaim that "honour", which has been denied by the receiving society.

In such perception of discrimination and racism, the isolation and the socio-spatial segregation of the banlieue play a crucial role. Indeed, statistical data show that what determines a high degree of religiosity is not so much individual precariousness, but rather the collective experience of precariousness, unemployment and social disadvantage (Lagrange, 2014). From the point of view of a young person who has grown up in a segregated neighbourhood, seeing one's experience of unemployment and racism reflected in that of many other peers and recognising that these experiences represent the norm, leads to believe to be part of a minority which is deliberately marginalised. This *collective experience* is interpreted in light of a conflictual dynamic between a "periphery", and a "centre" (represented by the receiving society): in this depiction, such "centre" stigmatizes the "youths of the banlieues", assigning them a negative identity *a priori*. The "centre", by considering immigrants' religion incompatible and irreducibly "other" (in the terms described above), is perceived as holding a power of exclusion, to the extent that it can deny these young people the opportunity to develop a positive identity. Thus, precisely the fact that they turn to religion should not lead us to think that the "mere" development of more effective social policies would automatically end their religious aspirations (Shirali, 2007) - provided that the latter represent a "problem" in the first place. Actually, for those who experience this turn to religion, true religiosity and genuine spirituality build upon the need to construct a positive identity. For this reason, leftist ideology, which was once enormously popular in emarginated neighbourhoods, even among immigrants, has lost its appeal, not only because leftist associations and grassroots movements, which held a strong assimilative capacity, have greatly weakened (Kepel, 2012b), but especially because coordinates and references have changed: "for these young people, disadvantage is no longer placed on a social plane, but rather on an identity plane. There is no longer a demand for an ideology to create a fairer society, but a request [to religion] to give a global sense to individual life" (Khosrokhavar, 1997: 186). In this way, the turn to religion, while responding to an authentic spiritual need and translating into a conscientiously lived religious practice, can facilitate, for

some, the creation of an (op)positive identity, able to reverse the dynamic of "peripherisation" and of the real and symbolic marginalisation affecting the banlieue and its youths. For some, this choice takes on the extreme forms of the Salafi practice, which implies a refusal of one's host country and of modern Western society as "unholy", "impure" and "depraved" - terms borrowed from the religious language to refer to the conflict with society. They respond to stigmatization by creating a closed-off "counter-world", founded on uncompromising, ultra-Orthodox and ultra-conservative religious norms, which disavow French society and its values (Adraoui, 2013), yet without the aim of destabilising it. Within the closed-off Salafi religious community, faith is not only a reaction to the surrounding environment, viewed as hostile, but transforms into the construction of a subjectivity able to achieve freedom through religious practice, which leads the Salafi practicing Muslim to distance himself from the rest of society, but without clashing with it (Khosrokhavar, 1997).

### **9.3 Banlieues and radicalisation phenomena**

As highlighted so far, a part of the young people from "sensitive neighbourhoods" shows an authentic demand for religion, which translates into the adoption also of extreme versions of the Islamic faith. Such demand is often more the result of the stigmatization they perceive (which is considered responsible for their socio-economic disadvantage) than of the actual, dire living conditions of the banlieues. Thus, the question that would immediately arise regards the potential spread of radicalisation among these "re-Islamized" youths - as if radicalisation were the ultimate result of deep social malaise and the natural solution of a rigid and intense religious practice. Indeed, the political response to the January and November attacks of 2015 in Paris identified a relationship between socio-economic exclusion, religious practice and radicalisation. However, in order to understand the connection between these elements, it is necessary to distinguish different levels of analysis. Firstly, we must clarify that the term "radicalisation", as it is commonly used, is highly ambiguous and may be misleading. Radicalisation has two meanings: on the one hand, it

indicates the process of turning to extreme positions and ideologies; on the other, it refers to the use of violence in a political sense. These two aspects must be considered separately. Although in a number of cases there has been indeed a passage from the former to the latter, we must bear in mind that, in several other cases, the adoption of extremist positions does not imply the use of violence, and violence does not necessarily derive from the acquisition or development of extreme ideas (Sageman, 2011).

This distinction is true in general and applies to whatever form radicalisation has taken historically (i.e., anarchism or other political ideologies). With respect to the Muslim world, a clear example is that of the Salafi movement. As aforementioned, taking part in the Salafi movement may qualify as an extremist position, due to its ultra-conservative norms, which are in open contrast with the rest of society. The young people from the French banlieues who adhere to Salafism, however, have no interest in any form of political action (voting, creating a political party, etc.), nor in the destabilization of the French institutional order, despite the fact that the latter has no legitimacy in their eyes. Their sincere demand for religion and their way of living their faith imply taking a distance from society in order to concentrate on one's subjectivity, as members of a faith community that, in their view, is "elected" and "superior" to the "impure" outside world, which they despise. The Salafi route is taken by those who voluntarily do not want to be involved in political affairs: indeed, the version of Salafism that has greatest success preaches quietism and apolitism (Adraoui, 2013), which are wholly incompatible with the idea of a violent radicalisation (Khosrokhavar, 2014). The "unholy" earth one lives in is to be ignored, avoiding all possible contact with society outside of the Salafi community, but it is not to be attacked or confronted in a violent fashion. Subscription to the Salafi movement can thus be considered as a form of radicalisation, but only in the first meaning of the term.

If we consider the second meaning of "radicalisation", referring to the use of violence, on the other hand, a second level of analysis concerns the profiles of persons actually involved in terroristic acts. A study of the lives of "Jihadists" appears crucial in order to understand the causes behind the recourse to violent action.

In various cases, the stereotype of the *banlieusard*, with a turbulent life, "sans père ni repère" ("without father nor reference points"), of the young person who is off the rails, without a life project, who has accumulated failures, who feels he or she is the object of stigma and disdain as an "Arab" or a "Muslim", who has been the victim and/or the perpetrator of violence, who has been a gang member, psychologically fragile and angry at an "unjust" society, has indeed corresponded to the profile of some young people who reach Syria as foreign fighters or who have committed terroristic acts (Roy, 2004; Khosrokhavar, 2014; 2015)<sup>5</sup>. The route to radicalisation for these subjects starts with the "discovery" of Islam, often facilitated by the proximity of radical preachers. This "conversion", however, consists in the immediate adhesion to the radical ideology and is based on a profound lack of knowledge of the Islamic faith<sup>6</sup>: indeed, often their religious socialization is recent and fragile<sup>7</sup>. This means that there is no connection or passage between a genuine spiritual need and the practice of violence. Those who commit acts of terrorism, in the vast majority of cases, have sought out the ideological and violent fringes directly, without any real maturation process as a Muslim, unlike those who truly feel a deep religiosity (Roy, 2004; 2015; Geisser, 2015). Such maturation would

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<sup>5</sup> Consider, for example, the cases of Mohammed Merah (Toulouse attack, March 2012), Mehdi Nemmouche (Bruxelles attack, May 2014), Chérif and Said Kouachi and Amedi Coulibaly (Paris attacks, January 2015). The turbulent lives of these individuals all have in common various episodes of delinquency and violence, as well as periods of detention in jail.

<sup>6</sup> Before leaving to fight in Syria, two young Britons bought the books "Islam for dummies" and "The Koran for dummies", an eloquent sign of their ignorance regarding religious content and their low level of knowledge in this regard. Cf. "What the Jihadist who bought 'Islam for Dummies' on Amazon tell us about Radicalisation", "The Huffington Post United Kingdom", 21.08.2014

[http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/mehdi-hasan/jihadist-radicalisation-islam-for-dummies\\_b\\_5697160.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/mehdi-hasan/jihadist-radicalisation-islam-for-dummies_b_5697160.html) (last access 19 July 2015).

<sup>7</sup> This has been found also in a study conducted on German foreign fighters, whose violent radicalisation process prior to reaching the "land of Jihad", in a large number of cases, had been brief (just over a year) (ICSR, 2015).

imply some actual knowledge of religious contents, which in turn, would protect from the Islamist ideological manipulation<sup>8</sup>.

This implies that the hypothesis of a continuity between the practice of Islam - especially within contexts of segregation - and the spread of violent radicalisation seems to be based on false premises, which derive, firstly, from a consideration of the growth, spread, and visibility of Islam as problematic "in and of itself". Indeed, in dominant public discourse, the manifestation of religion among young French Muslims represents a problem. It is considered incomprehensible in light of the socialization in a secularized country, especially when the rigid observance of religious orthodoxy imposes precepts, obligations, and prohibitions that appear "stifling" or "anti-modern". Terrorism is thus simply "perceived as the extreme manifestation of a religion, Islam, which already poses problems, [assuming the existence of] a spiritual, ethnic and ideological kinship between the simple Muslim worshipper and the radical Jihadist; as if both belonged to an imaginary continuum of "Islamicness", which goes from the more pacific to the more violent. In the public discourse [...] the essentialist temptation occurs frequently: Jihadism is treated as the radical quintessence of a religion which is already considered intrinsically problematic" (Geisser, 2015:11). On the contrary, some scholars have emphasised that there is no compact, homogeneous "Muslim community" opposing the rest of society, of which terrorists would be the avant-garde (Roy, 2015).

The radicalisation towards violence of these young people, therefore, must not be associated to the religiosity of young French Muslims. It is true that some terrorists whose life stories have been reconstructed do, in fact, fall under the typical image of the "young banlieusard", and may share some elements of their personal history and the perception of stigmatization from the rest of society with other young Muslims who turn to religion. But what

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<sup>8</sup> This seems to be confirmed also by a study conducted by the British secret services on the profiles of terrorists and published on The Guardian, which emphasises that empirical evidence suggests that a stable and consolidated religious identity actually shields from violent radicalisation. Cf. "MI5 report challenges views on terrorism in Britain", 20.08.2008, The Guardian - <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2008/aug/20/uksecurity.terrorism1> (last access 19 July 2015).



leads the former to take part in Jihadism - a radical movement that operates an ideological exploitation of religious content as a justification for violence, must clearly be distinguished from religion and from true religious practice. For these disinherited people, the attraction exerted by Jihadism appears to be motivated precisely by the violence it preaches, which invokes a conflict with the "Western" world, of which they feel the victims and at which they are resentful. In these youths, such religious ideology legitimises, by "sacralising" it in retrospect, their need for violent action against society - something which, often, they have already practiced in other forms, within gang membership, for instance. Precisely the inclination towards violence appears to be a key element in the recruitment process. Significant similarities have been found between the motivations that encourage young people to become part of extremist religious groups and of criminal groups. These similarities lead to the hypothesis that radicalisation, understood as the adhesion to violent ideologies, is a consequence of the entry in extremist groups, rather than the cause (Dandurand, 2014). As it has been pointed out by some scholars, it is possible to affirm that these youths had already been radicalized towards violence before their "Islamization" (Roy, 2015b) and, thus, that they are "Muslims *a posteriori*" and not authentic believers. In other words, we are not assisting to a "radicalisation of Islam", but rather to an "Islamization of radicalism" (Roy, 2015b).

We must look elsewhere - and not to sincere religious practice - for the causes of the radicalisation among these young people. Research in this area, however, is still in its early days. So far, the identification of recurrent "typical profiles" has turned out to be an extremely difficult research pattern. It appears impossible to identify one or more specific "profile" of the Islamic terrorist or of the foreign fighter (European Commission Experts' Group on Violent Radicalisation, 2008; Bakker, 2011; ICSR, 2015). Social class, cultural backgrounds, psychological traits and personal motivations all vary greatly among the individuals studied. As the newscasts have highlighted, part of those young people who leave for Syria and become terrorists is made up of middle class individuals or converts. This fact is highly surprising, because the middle class person is imagined as having a stable life, and having no reason to "lash out"

against society. The turbulent experience of life in the banlieues thus appears to be far from the only determinant for joining the cause of Jihadism. Indeed, the high number of converts among foreign fighters seems to indicate that violent radicalisation concerns a marginal fringe of young people *in general*, and not the heart of the Muslim population (Roy, 2015a) and that this radicalisation can be considered as the expression of a "nihilist and generational revolt" (Roy, 2015b). On the basis of the (scarce) available data and information regarding the lives of those young people who leave for Syria, we know that they are often adolescents, both French and of immigrant origin, male and female, without any contact with local Islamic communities or mosques, often coming from atheist or not very religious families, or in deliberate conflict with the Islam practiced by their parents, and have been recruited on the Internet (Bouzar et al., 2014).

Regarding these precise phenomena, several hypotheses have been advanced on the motivations driving these youths to take part in the so-called "Islamic State". One theory considers the "authority crisis", that is, the dilution and the dispersion of parental presence. This represents a significant problem for adolescents, who would need clear and well-defined authority figures, instead of the great freedom they are granted (Khosrokhavar, 2015). Another hypothesis links the desire to reach Syria with something akin to a form of "revolutionary romanticism", connected to a humanitarian sentiment, which would drive these young people to offer help to the Syrian population, oppressed by the regime. In some cases, such "romanticism" has turned into disillusionment, once the reality of the situation on the ground has been acknowledged, (Khosrokhavar, 2015). Others use different explanatory factors, looking at the role of surveillance and control exercised by the State and the theories of violent escalation/de-escalation in order to explain the increase in radicalisation phenomena, or the lack thereof (Bigo et al., 2014). All these explanations, however, albeit offering some important elements, appear quite unsatisfactory in relation to the rapid changes and the growing complexity of the dynamics that cause violent radicalisation.

Faced with the impossibility of identifying typical profiles, some reach the conclusion that every case of radicalisation is different and should be analysed indi-

vidually. The interaction between psychological and structural factors appears so complex that some even argue that psychology may offer more elements of analysis as opposed to sociology (Vidino, 2014). Others, conversely, call for the inauguration of a "sociology of terrorism", able to explore current manifestations of political violence both in a diachronic and synchronic perspective (Geisser, 2015). Indeed, between the 19th and 20th Centuries, anarchists represented a menace in terms of political violence, having been responsible for the murder of a monarch (Umberto I of Italy), of an American President (Mc Kinley) and of a French President (Carnot); in the 1970s, Italy and Germany witnessed a rise in political violence of the extreme left; white supremacism has been responsible, at different times, for various slaughters, like the Utoya massacre at the hands of Anders Breivik on 22 July 2011.

Turning to more recent phenomena, scholars note a set of tendencies that are common to various forms of violence (individualization, theatricalization, attacks on civil society, etc; cf. Geisser, 2015). In understanding Islamic terrorism, considering these elements would significantly relativize the religious variable, around which the debate is currently cristallized - with the risk of playing into the hands of Jihadists themselves, legitimating the register of theological justification they use. In order to avoid this trap, we may thus need to invert the causality within the couples "religion-politics", "faith-violence", "Islam-terrorism" (Geisser, 2015).

## **9.4 Concluding remarks**

What link is there between Islam, terrorism and the banlieues, then? The hypothesis that establishes a correlation between the phenomenon of Islamic terrorism and banlieues' living conditions and segregation is based on the hope that it is possible to prevent violent radicalisation with an ambitious social policy agenda, which could improve conditions of degraded and segregated neighbourhoods, on the mistaken assumption that there is a connection between the rise in religiosity and terrorism. The formulation of this hypothesis, however, seems to be based on a set of false premises.

Firstly, as aforementioned, it is a fact that in the banlieues many young people of immigrant origin manifest a high level of religiosity. The social conditions in which they are immersed, however, represent part of the explanation of their religious expression. These, alone, are not sufficient. What is of crucial importance is the perceived stigmatisation and marginalisation operated by mainstream society - in media representation, in political debates - because of their culture and their religion, to which the responsibility of their "non-integration" is attributed. In this case, adopting large-scale social policies - albeit necessary and desirable - would not help "cure" this "religious fever". But this is indeed the heart of the matter: the increased religiosity of young Muslims is not an evil which must be cured and should not represent a problem in and of itself. Precisely this proscription of religious practice, operated by mainstream society, is experienced as a form of "domination" and leads to the maintenance and the strengthening of those religious practices themselves - as occurred in other moments in history (Lagrange, 2014).

It is also a fact that the conditions of life in the banlieues contribute to shape, for many young people, life trajectories which are "off the rails", with a past of delinquency and banditism, which for some may lead to Jihadism, as the search for an answer to the disadvantage they live. However, it is not only the youths of the banlieues who adhere to Islamic ideological fanaticism: thus, banlieues are not the sole responsible for the violent radicalisation of many young people who leave for Syria. Therefore preventing these forms of radicalisation means conducting much broader and in-depth studies of the underlying causes and, consequently, adopting a set of wide-ranging policies, targeting different aspects. Such policies should certainly contemplate a vigorous plan aimed at restoring dignity in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, but this should not be the only action.

Finally, the fact that the increased religiosity among young Muslims in the banlieues is connected to terrorism appears to be a "myth", a misleading representation that risks stigmatizing Islamic religion and segregated populations once again. A sincere search for religion, although it may lead to the development of oppositional identities and forms of social refusal (such as that of the Salafi movement, which, in any case, represents an extreme minority), does not coincide with, nor tends to

transform into, violent actions against society. We must thus distinguish different levels of analysis and avoid mobilising and reaffirming the myth of the banlieues as the "receptacle of the evils in French society" (Avenel, 2010). This does not mean denying the degraded living conditions of these areas. At the same time, however, the concept of "banlieue" should not serve to indicate, symbolically, what is foreign, marginal, and banned, from cities, but especially, on a metaphorical plane, from the nation, from the demos, and from democracy.

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