

Fondazione ISMU

Edited by
Vincenzo Cesareo

The Twenty-second Italian Report on Migrations 2016



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ISMU Foundation (www.ismu.org) is an independent research centre founded in 1991. 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 migrations 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 (Ce.Doc.) – 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 Challenges of Migrations in 2016: a Broad Glance

by Vincenzo Cesareo

1.1 Migration and the European Union

1.1.1 The facts

An appraisal of the main events which have taken place over the course of 2016 cannot begin without some considerations on the Mediterranean migratory crisis, which has been dramatically consistent over the course of the past two years. After the arrival of over 1 million migrants through the Mediterranean in 2015 – the highest number ever registered – 2016 has also been characterized by a consistent influx: between 1st January and mid October 318,000 people have reached Europe by sea. Compared to 2015, however, 2016 has been characterized by a significant change: the reduction of flows towards Greece, which has been evident since January, has led to a drastic reduction in arrivals from May onwards – as a result, mainly, of the agreement between the European Union and Turkey signed on 20th March 2016. The number of migrants who reached Greece from 1st January 2016 is 168,000, compared to approximately half a million in 2015. On the contrary, the flows towards Italy have not registered any dramatic changes: data gathered up to mid October indicate 145,000 migrants have landed on the Italian coasts in 2016, a figure similar to that of the previous year. The Central Mediterranean route has thus returned to be the main access route to Europe.

This reduction in migratory flows, however, which can be partly explained by an increased cooperation between the European Union and Turkey during 2016, has not eluded the pressing issues connected to the way the migratory crisis has been managed overall by national governments and European institutions. Despite the numerous legislative proposals, summits, and diplomatic actions, a

common European policy on immigration and asylum is far from emerging and being reflected in specific and common choices. This process is hindered also by the persistent divisions between Member States and a culture of “compromise” which now appears to be a chronic malaise of the European decision-making process.

Over and beyond the structural problems that affect the common system for asylum requests and the contradictions that characterize the EU strategy regarding countries of origin and the transit of migrants, which I will discuss in more detail below, the political picture in 2016 has been further complicated by two significant circumstances. The first is the decision adopted by some Member States to reintroduce checks along their internal borders, with the aim of preventing the arrival of migrants and asylum seekers arriving from Italy or the Balkans in their national territory. The debate which has accompanied this decision, characterized by an exchange of accusations between “continental” and “frontier” States regarding their shared responsibilities in the crisis, has highlighted the weaknesses of the Schengen system, one of the pillars of the European project, faced with the impact determined by the rise in migratory pressure. The second circumstance is the victory of the “leave” vote in Great Britain’s national referendum held in June 2016 and the role that immigration, and all issues related to immigration, has had on determining the result of the vote. This impact has been recognized by the former British Prime minister David Cameron who, leaving his last summit with other heads of state in Brussels, argued that the Brexit vote was primarily determined by the preoccupations of the British people on the influx of immigrants to the UK, both from the EU and beyond.

These two events, apparently unconnected with one another (let us bear in mind that the UK, who has always been sceptical regarding the EU’s potential to cooperate on migration issues, has never been part of the Schengen area), may instead be interpreted as symptoms of a broader issue, which calls into question the political, cultural and social bases on which the European project was founded. The argument put forth in the present contribution is that migration, and the complex challenges which come along with it, represents a testing ground with respect not only to immigration and asylum policies, but also to those founding principles which represent Europe’s future potential. Indeed, in a speech on the state of the Union held in September 2016, the President of the European Commission Jean Claude Juncker stated that the EU today is facing an “existential” crisis.”

1.1.2 Rethinking Schengen

The crisis which invested the Schengen system was determined by the decision undertaken by certain Member States to reintroduce checks along their internal borders with the aim – according to the official statement of the nations involved – of responding to the “unmanageable and uncontrollable arrival of citizens from

other countries” in their national territory. According to some analysts, although formally coherent within the current legislative framework, this systematic reintroduction of internal controls, which has been extended over various months, represents a betrayal of the “spirit” of Schengen, according to which all those who are inside the Union are authorized to circulate freely without being subject to any kind of border control. Therefore, behind this choice, there is first of all the temptation of unilateralism to satisfy the requests of public opinion in different countries, which are increasingly intolerant of immigration.

There is thus reason to believe that the tensions surrounding the Schengen agreement represent the litmus test of the EU’s difficulties in finding an effective and coordinated response to the increase in migration flows. In this regard, the role of the aforementioned agreement between Turkey and the EU on the Schengen debate, aimed at stopping migrant entry along the East Mediterranean route, is significant. The agreement, strongly supported by Chancellor Merkel, can be interpreted as coherent with the German approach to an EU strategy. Indeed, the political logic, which underpins the agreement with Turkey, and the need to reach it at all costs, is connected to the belief that this was necessary to “save” Schengen, interrupting the flow of migrants along the Balkan route. The agreement thus represents the core axis of a pan-European strategy, which includes also a set of measures aimed at supporting Greece and Italy, such as the creation of hotspots, a plan for the reallocation of asylum seekers who had reached those countries and the creation of an EU Coast and Frontier Guard. The failure of this strategy could have led to a unilateral closure of borders with more exposed countries, with potentially explosive consequences for the European political and institutional framework. This is in addition to the stark refusal of some East European States to take on a quota of asylum seekers present in Italy and Greece within their national territory, as requested by the redistribution plans developed by the European Commission. Hungary, in particular, called a referendum on 2nd October 2016, asking its citizens to express their opinion in favour or against the reallocation plans.

These negative scenarios have all been avoided, however: internal border checks have formally been reinstated within the current existing legislation and the Hungarian referendum did not reach the necessary quorum (only 43.23% of the Hungarian population voted). Nonetheless, the events of 2016 clearly show how two of the fundamental elements of the European integration process – overcoming national borders and solidarity between Member States – cannot be taken for granted. Let us consider the issue of borders more specifically. It became evident that the Schengen agreement is not something Member States consider a seminal achievement, to be defended at all costs; rather, it represents an allegiance which can be reconsidered in relation to migratory dynamics and, especially, with respect to shifts in individual States’ internal political debate.

The cultural and political climate of many European capitals in 2016 seems to be far from that of the early 1990s, when the Schengen system was first imagined and applied and the speeches of European leaders were alight with a cosmopolitan and globalist spirit. The fall of the Berlin Wall foreshadowed a time

when borders would become an irrelevant element in the relations between countries, renewing the perspectives for the European integration process. In light of all this, the terms of the current debate are thus in strident contrast with the principles and aspirations of the first Schengen era.

1.1.3 *Brexit* and migration issues

Similar, if not bleaker, considerations regarding the future of the European project can be made on the basis of the Brexit referendum results, which sanctioned the United Kingdom's choice to leave the European Union. An in-depth analysis of the dynamics of the British vote and of the specificities of the complex and turbulent relationship between the UK and the EU, which has no doubt already been marked by peaks of tension in the past, is beyond the scope of this paper. But let us simply remember the Thatcher years and the Iron Lady's frequent reference to the "rebate" issue: a revision of the contributions paid by the United Kingdom to the EU budget. What must be emphasised here is the central role of immigration within the British referendum campaign and the ways in which the pro-leave supporters have been able to use it in order to support their cause for the UK's exit from the EU. At first glance, this circumstance appears paradoxical if we consider that the UK has occupied a "privileged" position during the immigration crisis. If we look at the 2015 statistics, when asylum requests in the EU exceeded one million (a record number), those presented in the UK were just under 39,000, 3.9% of all requests. A much lower percentage compared to Germany (36%), Hungary (13%), Sweden (12%) and even Italy (6.9%). Despite the relatively modest burden sustained by the UK in terms of asylum requests in the past few years, pro-leave supporters have heatedly denounced the EU's responsibility in aggravating the effects of the crisis, first and foremost by fostering an 'open door' policy viewed as "foolish" – adopted unilaterally and for a limited period of time only by Germany – which contributed to attract a high number of migrants to Europe.

This argument can be criticized under a number of aspects. Firstly, it overestimates the influence of European policies on the complex dynamics which determine migratory flows. Let us only consider the fact that, despite criticism to a supposedly 'open door' policy in Europe, over four and a half million Syrian refugees continue to live in neighbouring countries – Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan – often in much more precarious legal, political and social conditions compared to most European countries.

The other argument on migration put forth by pro-leave supporters, according to whom European norms would preclude the UK the right to limit entry to European citizens, on the other hand, is absolutely sound. There is no doubt that the principle of free circulation represents one of the binding agreements of the European project, inextricably linked with the concept of European citizenship sanctioned with the Treaty of Maastricht. Consequently, leaving the Union represents a necessary condition in order to no longer be

subject to that agreement. For leave supporters, the high number of European workers, especially from Eastern Europe, which the UK witnessed – particularly after the enlargement of the EU in 2004 – has had negative effects on the generous British welfare system and worsened the job prospects of young Britons¹.

Without delving into a cost-benefit analysis of Brexit on the British economy and welfare system, we ought to stress that the referendum result seems to have been affected not only by purely economic aspects, but also – and perhaps especially – by other issues, connected with a sense of insecurity that is affecting European societies more generally at a time of great migrations. There is reason to believe that, in the British case, a set of specific issues connected in general with migratory phenomena, but which differ both in chronological terms and in terms of the underlying causes, have contributed to exacerbate the climate of “moral panic” which pro-leave supporters fed off of. The first is connected to a set of longstanding unresolved issues regarding the integration of ethnic minorities in the UK and the recognition (now widely accepted also within public opinion) that the multicultural model, which for a long time represented the official British policy on migration, has degenerated into a sort of “segregated communitarianism”, where ethnic and religious communities tend to conduct a separate and disconnected existence, increasingly estranged from the society they reside in. The second and more recent issue is related to a rise in preoccupations regarding the undesirable effects of European migration, especially in terms of economic insecurity and greater competition in occupational terms, which would “condemn” young Britons to a future of growing precariousness. Finally, there are fears related to a new flux of asylum seekers (often refereed to as bogus asylum seekers in the British public discourse) and to the event, regularly emphasised by British tabloid newspapers, that they may one day “invade” the UK.

Needless to say, the three aforementioned issues clearly refer to very different historic, political and social processes. In many cases, moreover, it appears difficult to identify even a weak causal link between the actions of the EU and the development of these phenomena. Let us bear in mind, for example, that the EU still has a very limited role in the definition and implementation of integration policies, which remain in large part a prerogative of single Member states. As aforementioned, it is also difficult to identify a direct role of the EU in facilitating the entry of asylum seekers in the UK, given that it has never been part of the Schengen system and given that since 1999 the UK has benefited from an opt-out clause regarding European legislation on asylum requests.

¹ Over three million European citizens live in the United Kingdom, including 700,000 Poles.

1.1.4 A nationalistic revival in Europe?

Over and beyond the multiple causes that underpin the problems illustrated above, there is no doubt that the fears and preoccupations connected with these issues have contributed significantly in creating a favourable political climate for the revival of nationalistic sentiments, not just in the United Kingdom. Eurosceptical political forces are rising in many European countries: consider only the case of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), the success of the Front National (FN) in France and that of Alternative für Deutschland (AFD) in Germany. These forces share restrictive positions concerning immigration: a drastic reduction in the number of those allowed entry, firstly, but also a “nativist” position regarding the adoption of citizenship and an assimilationist ideology regarding the integration of minorities, which supports the idea of a ‘monoculturalism’, where a single, prevalent culture is privileged at the expense of other minorities. The political programmes of these parties are based on a rejection of the primary effects of globalisation, not only in economic terms but also regarding increased human mobility and ethnic and religious diversities, and an opposition to any sort of “external” power, especially of the European Union, considered responsible for limiting national sovereignty and promoting interests which are not those of the nation state.

The success of populist movements has its roots in a complex set of causes, which we ought to consider very carefully. A relevant role is played by the difficulty of European societies – historically quite homogeneous from a cultural and ethnic point of view – in dealing realistically with difference and otherness, something that is increasingly becoming one of their distinctive elements. Nonetheless, some responsibility for the current situation must be attributed to the European ruling classes and the so-called mainstream parties, for having ignored for too long the demands of those parts of society most affected by the social and economic costs of immigration – which, in part, are absolutely legitimate. Moreover, faced with the advance of populist forces, in order to avoid losing votes, governing parties in many States have preferred to adopt a similar strategy of using the EU as a scapegoat, instead of stressing the need to continue down the road of European cooperation in order to develop a common response to migration and its management.

1.2. Open questions and perspectives

1.2.1 Migratory flows and the future of Europe

As highlighted above, in the United Kingdom immigration was the dominant issue during the Brexit referendum campaign. A first and important lesson we can learn from Brexit and, more generally, from the advance of euro-sceptical movements in Europe, is that the “functionalist” option, focused on the economic

benefits of the European integration process, is no longer able to generate that widespread consensus (albeit often passive in nature) which characterized the first decades of the European project. In a climate of longstanding and unrelenting economic uncertainty and faced with the challenges of migration, a good chunk of European citizens seems now to look once again at the nation state as one of the last pillars of stability and security.

This circumstance naturally leads to a renewed debate on the nature of the European Union as a “political” project. In this regard we ought to note how, despite the euro-scepticism that has always underscored the UK’s approach to an “ever closer Union”, a very British pragmatism seems to gain growing consensus across the various institutional seats in Brussels, to a certain extent representing a common sentiment in the present political scenario. Faced with the fear of a “disintegration” of the European Union generated by Brexit, it nonetheless appears increasingly clear that the project of a political Europe has been too quickly and dangerously put aside by those same European leaders. They have not been able to develop a vision comparable to that of the Union’s founding fathers. In crisis after the French and Dutch “no” votes in the 2005 referendum on the European Constitution, the representatives of Member States opted for business as usual, relinquishing the opportunity to argue for and support their pro-European choice in front of the electorate.

Immigration policies call into question issues that touch the core of belonging to a political community such as borders (not only physical but also symbolic), internal security, national identity, and which highlight the *vulnus* of a political process that seems to have lost its vision and inspiration. It is precisely on the Union’s political weakness that euro-sceptical movements and parties constructed their alternative discourse: a return to sovereignism, imagined as the only alternative to the destructive potential of globalisation, including the destabilising effects that large scale migratory phenomena bring along with them.

Faced with the advance of euro-sceptical forces, therefore, the only other possibility, no matter how complex or challenging, is to renew the European project (Martinelli, 2013; Ferrera, 2016). It may be objectively difficult and perhaps counterproductive, in the current climate, to imagine an in-depth revision of the founding Treaties, with the aim of accelerating the integration process. As a long sequence of episodes demonstrates, public opinion maintains a widespread and deep scepticism regarding the possibility of “more Europe”. On the contrary, in order to regain trust in the population, it is necessary that the Union demonstrate it is able to deal efficiently with the most pressing problems – from immigration to terrorism to the economic crisis and unemployment, especially among the younger generations – which currently afflict European societies. In this regard, the management of the migration crisis at the European level during the past three years has clearly shown how a short-sighted and egotistical pursuit of particularistic interests by certain national governments inevitably suffocates the potential for European cooperation, spreading the image of the Union as a sterile bureaucratic machine, increasingly distant from

the real needs of the citizens. What has been dramatically lacking so far has been real political responsibility among European leaders, and an ability to deal with the migration crisis while at the same time respecting the fundamental principles of the EU, in a spirit of solidarity and shared responsibility. Without such common action, it is difficult to imagine how the increasingly large and worrisome gap between the Union, its institutions and its citizens can ever be bridged.

It is thus necessary to consider what the necessary premises are in order to re-evaluate in a more positive light the relationship between immigration and the future of Europe. This will be possible, first and foremost, only if the Union succeeds in developing a clear and truly shared immigration and asylum policy. On the one hand, such a policy must ensure the respect for human dignity through efficient aid and rescue operations aimed at preventing the inordinate number of deaths at sea of the past few years²; on the other hand, it must ensure the regularization of entry, as a pre-requisite also for internal circulation in the Schengen area.

Second, it is recommended that single Member States be called upon to undertake intense measures both in terms of taking timely actions aimed at fostering the integration of recently-arrived migrants and of consolidating social cohesion, in order to ensure the peaceful cohabitation of native and non-native citizens. As the dramatic events connected to the terrorist attacks of the past three years remind us all too well, this requires not only the necessary and welcome structural interventions connected to political and housing policy (the case of the French banlieues has become emblematic in this respect), but also cultural interventions, connected to schooling and education, support for families, and interventions aimed at preventing radicalisation and extremism, targeting both jihadist and European xenophobic groups.

1.2.2 An integration based on interculturalism

The term integration is often used without specifying what this entails, simply emphasising the necessity and urgency of finding programmes to foster its development, aimed especially at the second and third generations of immigrants. This is an official recommendation, supported by specific funding allocated by European institutions³ and widely shared by Member States, at least in terms of declarations of intent.

While bearing in mind that the term integration has been discussed and even criticized (cfr. Cesareo, Blangiardo, 2009), there is reason to support its intrinsic heuristic utility and its legitimation, both because it has officially been adopted by European institutions and Member States, and because we have been able to

² During 2016 (from January to mid October), 3,650 persons died in the Mediterranean sea; in 2015 the number of those gone dead or missing amounted to 3,771 and in 2014 to 3,500.

³ For example, the European Commission's Asylum, Migration, Integration Fund (AMIF).

observe the perverse effects deriving from an increased deficit in integration, in terms of social cohesion and, more generally, of peaceful coexistence between different ethnic and cultural groups.

That said, what do we mean by integration? We would argue that the definition developed and verified empirically by the ISMU Foundation through a research based on a national sample (Cesareo, Blangiardo, 2009), partly replicated in 2013, remains particularly useful in this regard. Using the present day as a temporal reference and putting it into context vis à vis the various local territories that make up the European Union, integration represents that multidimensional process geared at peaceful coexistence, within a specific socio-historical context, between culturally and/or ethnically different individuals and groups. It is founded on the mutual respect of their ethno-cultural differences, on condition that these do not infringe upon universal human rights and do not undermine democratic institutions. The two fundamental achievements of human rights and of democracy, albeit imperfect and in constant need of support and protection, must never be put into question in a process of integration thus understood, where the focus is on the person. Coherently with the fundamental anthropological choice undertaken by the ISMU Foundation, the immigrant is not considered merely as an abstract and fungible individual, but rather as a “person” with his or her intrinsic dignity, uniqueness, concreteness, culture, and his or her dynamic history and relations. Moreover, on the basis of this definition, integration is always at least to some extent also a two-way process, which calls into question not only immigrants but also citizens of the receiving country.

Moreover, we must promptly specify that the aforementioned definition is far from supporting a position of cultural homogeneity (so-called monoculturalism), promoted by some neo-nationalist movements who have recently gained ground in Europe. On the contrary, integration is about fostering a pluralism of cultures and ethnicities, and their opportunity to meet and engage with each other. This pluralism represents a precious resource that can make a society richer and more dynamic, so long as the primacy of universal human rights, with respect to the values and models of particular groups, is guaranteed, and all groups demonstrate a real support for and belief in democratic political institutions. These two requirements, which represent the two pillars that qualify integration, enable us to argue that this definition is still valid, also at a European level, especially at a time when both pillars need strengthening, in light of the currently growing radicalization phenomena. As Charles Taylor (1993) suggests, in order for a democracy to work, it is necessary that everyone share some elements of a common identity, more specifically a political identity, which can generate ample consensus among citizens, and which becomes evident in terms of solidarity for those facing great difficulties.

Moreover, there is a strong relationship between human rights (value profile) and democracy (political profile), as the former represent an essential requirement for the development of the latter, coupled with a contrast to

discrimination and the rule of law⁴. Such a definition also enables us not only to distance ourselves from homogenizing neo-nationalistic regressions (monoculturalism), but also from those multiculturalist approaches that present all the risks, which have become so evident lately, deriving from possible formation of ethnic enclaves (radical communitarianism). The most realistic and effective option thus remains that of cultural pluralism, which may come into being either in a consensual or in a conflictual fashion. Although, clearly, we would hope for the former, the latter may also be positive in that it can generate innovation and change (Coser, 1967).

The choice of cultural pluralism (consensual or conflictual) can itself represent a valid pre-requisite in order to adopt and spread that interculturalist model often emphasised, recommended and applied also by the ISMU Foundation in order to support those societies which are becoming increasingly multiethnic and multicultural. In this regard, we ought to remember that the distinctive element of the interculturalist perspective consists in fostering the dialogue between people from different cultures rather than exasperating differences, in order to put together universal human rights with the recognition and appreciation of differences. Whereas multiculturalism, in its multiple forms, puts the accent on cultural differences, and assimilationism tends towards a more or less forced homogenisation and thus towards monoculturalism, interculturalism fosters relationships between different cultures, founded on bidirectional, symmetrical and personal exchange. Similarly, whereas the multiethnic society includes various distinct and separate minority cultures within a larger social formation, the interethnic society includes a plurality of contacts, relationships and exchanges between different cultures, which can give rise to change and transformation.

The indispensable premise in order to activate an intercultural project consists in the fact that its supporters are able to give valid reasons for their requests. Not only, these reasons must be presented in such a way that people of different faiths or cultures can understand and accept them as reasonable and thus worthy of being taken into consideration. The core aspect of this vision is based on the primacy of the person with respect to both State and community: the subject becomes the founding element of the community relationship. In this perspective, different cultures are called upon to share and acquire a set of fundamental values such as liberty, human dignity and respect for life, which are

⁴ "Granting individual liberties has been the philosophical basis of the liberal State, which has undergone a democratization process during the 20th century, first via a formal democracy (universal suffrage, representative system) and later via a so-called substantial democracy (with institutions such as mandatory education, public social security, the national health service, proportional or progressive taxes on wages and capital transfer), passing from a mere rule of law to a Social State. In such a historical context, citizenship within Western European national States is borne out of a long and complex process which emerges both as a result of political (public) identity – independently from particular (individual or group) identities (religious, ethnic, geographical and territorial, cultural), which have no public relevance – and the birth and the development of the Law; through the Constitution and the rule of law, as that which is the same for everyone" (Pasini, 2011: 40-41).

valid for all human beings (Cesareo, 2000). In other words, the intercultural approach adopts that “strong idea of humanity” suggested also by the anthropologist Marc Augè as a new point of departure to re-think social ties, in the face of advancing extremisms and radicalizations.

This choice necessarily implies a double openness: an openness to meeting the other and an openness to constructive dialogue, in the terms mentioned above. It implies also the automatic exclusion from dialogue of those that do not share the anthropological assumption illustrated above and the modern principle of democratic citizenship. In other words, according to this vision, that partially draws upon John Rawls’ theory of an “overlapping consensus” (1994)⁵, dialogue is possible only between “reasonable” agents, that is between those who are able to identify a nucleus of fundamental political values, recognized as basic premises in order to meet other ethical, cultural and religious perspectives. This implies the exclusion of those who, adopting “dogmatic” or “fundamentalist” positions, as Rawls defines them, refuse this “hard core” of values as a starting point for dialogue. To the extent that this core is shared, cultural differences are not neutralized or deactivated – that is, put aside as potential menaces to the integrity of consensus – but are mobilised, on the basis of the Rawlsian thesis, according to which citizens affirm the ideals of public reason with internal motivations based on a “comprehensive” and “reasonable” doctrine (Rawls, 1994). This is similar to Habermas’ (1998) position, which favours a liberalism that on the one hand promotes individual rights, but on the other does not recognize any cultural collective rights, despite emphasizing the different traits of each culture. The contribution of different groups, with their cultural diversities and their interpretations of the world is thus not only fruitful but necessary, as it enables a real and genuine democratic process that reflects a multiplicity of voices. This is what Tocqueville, one of the founding fathers of the pluralist approach that places value on associations and intermediate interest groups, also conceived as an essential source of freedom.

As mentioned before, whereas multiculturalism, in its various expressions, puts the accent on cultural differences, interculturalism puts the accent on the relationships between different cultures, founded on a two-way, symmetric and personal exchange. It is this characteristic that makes the intercultural card appear to be the one to play for the future of immigrant inclusion in Europe, which needs to foster an openness to dialogue both within the institutions of host countries and within the second and third generations of immigrants, who will be fruitfully able to share an intercultural perspective if placed in the condition to do so thanks to an efficient investment on the socio-cultural plane.

If we accept that a constructive meeting between members of different cultures requires a common intent to work towards reciprocal understanding, based on each party’s original identity, we must assume that all the members are aware of their own identities. Herein lies the difficulty in developing cultural

⁵ On the comparison between liberal and communitarian approaches cf. Cesareo, Vaccarini, 2006: 42-68.

actions through the aforementioned interventions. Europe is characterised by a widespread nihilistic disenchantment that consists in believing in nothing and implies the neutralization of values and the annulment of individual and collective identities (Cesareo, Vaccarini, 2012). The Other, however, can only be understood in comparison to the Self. If the point of departure is nothing, what Otherness can there be? Once again, this interrogation highlights how, drawing from a specific question, connected to the application of an intercultural approach, immigration raises certain issues within the host society, in this case the question of a European identity that necessarily and urgently needs to be reconsidered.

1.2.3 Relaunching the European project

The results of the Brexit referendum, the intensification of terrorist attacks, the rise in immigrants and refugees, considered by a large part of the public opinion as “out of control” and “excessive” – in popular perception, this phenomenon assumes proportions which are vastly superior to the real figures⁶ – as well as the stagnating economic crisis (which no doubt continues to have an impact on the issues analysed in this Report), have focused the attention of politicians and scholars on the aforementioned issues.

With respect to the role of the EU, there is an ample convergence regarding its current inadequacy in dealing with issues which European citizens consider crucial. In order of importance, the primary issue is immigration (for 48% of European citizens), followed by terrorism (for 39%) and the economic situation (for 19%)⁷. Although the European Union is often considered the only scapegoat,

⁶ The opinions of young Europeans in this regard are significant. According to a study conducted by the Toniolo Institute (2016), over half of the young Europeans interviewed (55.4%) believes that immigrants in Europe are “too many”, 33.3% believes they “are neither too many nor too few” and 2.8% believes they are “few”. Among the countries where the study was conducted (Italy, Germany, France, Spain, and the UK), Italy is the country with the greatest number of respondents who believe there are “too many” immigrants (68.8%). Interpreting the results of the study, the researchers suggest that these feelings among young Europeans cannot be boiled down to a radical hostility towards immigrants in Europe. Rather, the results should be interpreted as an indicator of broader difficulties faced by younger generations, of which immigration represents only part of the problem.

⁷ Regarding the Italian situation, interesting data can be gathered from the online public consultation on “The Status and the Future of the European Union”, commissioned by the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies and conducted by ISTAT in February-August 2016, in which over 10,000 citizens took part. What emerges from this consultation is that migration appears to be the area where the EU’s intervention is considered the most inadequate (69%), followed by economic growth and occupation” (55.6%). In response to the question regarding what sectors should the EU be more impactful and united in, 64% indicated migration, once again, over and above occupation and contrasting poverty. It is significant, moreover, that in response to the question on what are the most important benefits that the EU has granted its citizens, 50% mention the “free movement of persons”. At the same, the results of the aforementioned study (cf. footnote 6), conducted in July 2016 by the Toniolo Institute, regarding young Europeans’ opinions on the European Union, also appear significant. What

it is important nonetheless to bear in mind that the governments of Member States continue to maintain a determining role within the decision-making processes of the EU, through those institutions that represent them, namely the Council of Europe and the Council of the European Union.

In prospective terms, positions tend to diverge significantly. On the one hand, we have the intention, embodied in particular by Euro-sceptical forces, to “break the lines” and exit or even abolish the European Union, considered the cause of the current crisis. The aim is to regain the quota of power handed over to the EU and return to managing unresolved issues autonomously, at the national level. Herein derive the regressive neo-nationalistic and populist forces that are gaining significant consent and which should not be underestimated. This particularistic return to the Nation-state, far from offering a solution, could aggravate the situation, as migrations represent a global phenomena that no State can think to tackle and resolve alone.

On the other hand, albeit still critical of the EU’s actions, there are those who loudly invoke a brave relaunch of a united Europe, considered the only real opportunity not only to overcome the economic crisis, but also to effectively deal with a post-Brexit scenario and block any risks of further departures, to contrast terrorism, to regulate migratory flows and to increase the influence of European Member States at the international level. The desired perspective is thus that of a “stronger Europe”, on condition that European institutions are enabled to act effectively, with adequate decision-making powers.

Faced with these two alternatives, here outlined briefly, there is reason to consider the second valid and worthy of being pursued, albeit bearing in mind all the critiques advanced by many regarding what has (not) been done so far. A position which favours this choice appears wholly necessary precisely in specific reference to migration. Consequently, European countries need to decide what interventions they wish to adopt, with urgency and a healthy dose of realism, aware that migrations represent, by their very nature, an issue which crosses national borders, and thus must necessarily be managed at the European level.

Once the strategic and irreplaceable role of the European Union is reaffirmed, in order to regain the faith of European citizens at least on this specific and crucial aspect, it is necessary for the Union to demonstrate concretely that it is able to grant its citizens a fair degree of safety and security. More specifically, it appears that the priority is to undertake the following actions:

- a) It is necessary to adopt a common policy, shared by all Member States (or at least by a majority of States), regarding the regulation of migratory flows, the reception of refugees, the relocation of those applying for international protection (where formal criteria already exist but are rarely adopted). In

emerges from the data is that 59.9% of the young Italians interviewed envisages the birth of a “United States of Europe” in a positive light, despite the fact that these same respondents are critical of the inadequate management of different issues by the EU. Similar percentages are found also in other countries: a similar opinion is expressed by 53.1% of young Germans, 46.8% of young French people and 61.7% of young Spaniards.

this perspective, it is necessary also to deal with issues such as the repatriation of irregular migrants as soon as possible. This needs to be managed at the European level and not by individual states, for example strengthening the Frontex agency, as intended;

- b) Ensuring the external borders of the Union are efficiently managed and all operations are the responsibility of a single frontier agency, possibly made up of personnel from all Member States. As highlighted, the existence of safe and secure European borders represents the only efficient antidote to the temptation of restoring national frontiers, jeopardizing the important achievement that Schengen represents. This does not imply that walls should be built to defend the so-called "Fortress Europe". On the contrary, it is desirable to have access to "doors" and "bridges" to ensure that mobility that has always characterized the history of humanity and that qualifies the present day more specifically;
- c) Returning once again to the idea of integration proposed above, at the European level, this must always be a process that takes place while respecting universal human rights within single democratic States, where each individual's personal freedom is ensured. As aforementioned, human rights and democratic institutions represent two essential requirements in order to develop an efficient "intercultural" model, understood as both a cause and effect of a successful integration. Moreover, the option in favour of interculturalism may facilitate also the search for that soul that Europe seems to have lost, yet which it desperately needs in order to renew and renovate itself. On the other hand, this can only happen through a significant cultural endeavour and a moral spirit able to generate a new humanism, clearly adapted to the present day and fuelled by the European continent's extraordinary heritage in terms of civilization, but also by the innovative contribution of different cultures and other populations. This is what has taken place many times over during the course of the history of humanity, especially as a result of the arrival of immigrants and refugees;
- d) Due to the heterogeneity of causes and geographical origins of current migratory flows, Europe must develop a farsighted policy which takes into consideration these different factors, especially the socio-economic, cultural and political conditions of immigrant and refugees' countries of origin and of transit countries. The ISMU's Twenyt-first Annual Report has already focused on this necessity, but it is essential we repeat it here, because it is becoming increasingly urgent. Consider the future of Africa, for instance, where we are not only assisting to the emergence of a true "demographic bomb" (Cf. Ch. 2), but there is also a significant and persistent level of conflict: six of the fourteen bloodiest wars currently being fought in the world (ie. those who have caused the death of more than one thousand people) are taking place here;
- e) There is a need for a more significant role of the European Union on the issue of Islam in Europe, and for the creation of a platform for dialogue and exchange between representatives of Muslim communities and institutions,

with the explicit aim of developing a fully European Islam, both regarding mutual institutional recognition, able to foster the peaceful inclusion and development of local Muslim communities, and in terms of an identification with European democratic values.

The analysis conducted so far thus leads us to draw some broader conclusions on the future of Europe, which supersedes the arena of political choices and acquires philosophical significance. It is possible to identify two classical positions, one in opposition with the other. The first, more pessimistic and biological in origin, can be traced back to the work of Oswald Spengler, according to whom civilizations evolve like organisms through the natural cycle of birth, growth and death. In this perspective, the European civilization, subject like all others to the “natural law of great civilizations”, has already gone through the phases of rising, growth and greatness and is currently going through its moment of decline, from whom there is no return (Spengler, 1922). Such a fatalistic and resigned vision, albeit in a revised edition, is still shared among a certain number of observers and analysts and is often associated with the stalemate reached by the European project and, especially, with the fall in the ideal inspiration it was based on.

At the same time, the Nobel prize winner Amartya Sen, speaking of the current challenges of the European project, argues that “in the long run the EU must review its policies and reconsider its mission, also in light of the Ventotene Manifesto of 1941: the priorities of the European federalist movement were not banks and currency, but peace and a gradual social and political integration” (Corriere della Sera, 14 August 2016). Sen’s words point in the direction of another perspective, which we could call “voluntaristic”, connected with the ideas of Arnold Toynbee. According to Toynbee, the Western world is indeed facing a crisis, but can get back on its feet and regain strength thanks also to “creative minorities” and “exceptional personalities” (Toynbee, 1958: 28). In this perspective, in order to survive (also as a political project), Europe needs to acquire a new acceptance or understanding of itself: and this can come precisely from multiculturalism, as something that requires us to think of ourselves anew, in order to understand what is ours and what our core values are as the starting point to appreciate the significance of what the Other can offer.

As the poet T.S. Eliot stated, “we must grow with openness to diversity, but we can only do it if we return to our roots”. This is in contrast with the spread of a nihilistic attitude, for whom everything has the same value and there is belief in nothing. This is perhaps the only way to save, develop and improve that “European exceptionality” mentioned by Jacques Derrida after the Twin Towers attack in 2001. Derrida believed Europe had a specific role to play in the conflict against Jihadism and Al Qaeda, due to its peculiar history: “the experience which Europe has inaugurated, from the Enlightenment onwards, regarding the relationships between politics (...) and religion, no doubt remains unfinished, relative, complex, but it has left the European political space (...) with some signs which are absolutely original, which cannot be found in the Arab world, nor in

the Muslim world, in the Far East, or even in the US democracy” (Derrida, Habermas, 2004: 173-174 – our translation).

To 15th century-Europe is owed the rise of modern Humanism: such a brilliant invention should be re-designed today as a new Humanism innovatively based on what it was in the past and possibly allowing the EU to re-emerge as a leading figure. In this perspective, it becomes fundamental to motivate and mobilise people of good will, either with or without a religious belief, from the most sensitive areas of civil society and not-for-profit organizations, to contribute to its creation. This must be done on one condition: that absolutely all citizens, both of European and immigrant origin – over 5 million immigrants have acquired the citizenship of a European state between 2009 and 2015 (Eurostat⁸) – share the same two requirements without reservation, enabling them to become the pillars for civil coexistence and ensure social cohesion. More specifically these are: a) in terms of shared values, the recognition of fundamental human rights, granted to every person from the moment he or she is born, independently of ethnic, cultural or religious origin; b) in political terms, the steadfast adhesion to democratic life and its institutions, which may present drawbacks and shortcomings, but which, to this day, represents the best route to ensure the freedom of all citizens.

One of the tasks awaiting us in the near future is that of ensuring citizens of immigrant origin, both as loyal European citizens and as representatives of different worlds, are granted the bases and the conditions in order to give their unique and original contribution, whose added value is in their difference, to the “European project”. Integration, in the definition proposed above, can represent the necessary precondition in order to transform the presence of immigrants in a real asset. This way, there would no longer be a need to conceive of the relationship between Europe and immigration in “either-or” terms, where the survival of the former is ensured at the expense of the latter or vice versa. On the contrary, setting the bases for an authentic integration of immigrant citizens enables us to enter an “and-and” logic, with the precise intent of “saving Europe” and of regulating migratory flows.

To recap and conclude the analysis conducted thus far, the project for Europe can have a chance of being re-launched and consolidated only if and to the extent that EU institutions will be able to ensure the following, with respect to immigration:

- 1) Interventions at the socio-structural level, in areas such as housing, labour and policies to contrast social and spatial segregation;
- 2) Interventions at the normative level, for the definition of clear regulations regarding border management, in order for these to be secure and controllable. This would ensure a greater level of certainty, at a time characterised by a generalized level of uncertainty;

⁸ The Italian figure is equally significant: despite the restrictive criteria on citizenship in Italy, over one million foreign migrants obtained an Italian citizenship in the past 15 years (cf. Ch. 2).

- 3) Interventions at the cultural level, aimed at fostering integration as specified in the present contribution, but also geared at assuming safety as a “common good”, thus as something indivisible and which belongs to everyone, and requires the effort of all, both at the individual and at the collective level, in order to strengthen social cohesion across all European countries. Only in this way will it be possible to answer the pressing demand for certainties and security which is spreading among the European populations and to contrast growing nationalistic and populist forces.

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Statistical Aspects

by Gian Carlo Blangiardo

2.1 A “blurred” growth

According to estimates, the foreign population present in Italy as of 1 January 2016 is slightly below 5.9 million; of these, 5 million are entered in the civil registry of an Italian town (residents); the remaining population is almost equally distributed, as it happened last year, between legally staying non-residents and illegally staying persons (Table 1).

A comparison of the same figures relative to 1 January 2015 shows a moderate increase in terms of absolute numbers (+52,000) and in terms of density -9.27% in 2014, 9.47% in 2015 and 9.58% in 2016.

Table 1 – Foreigners in Italy as of 1 January 2014-2016 by type of presence

Type of presence	1 Jan. 2014	1 Jan. 2015	1 Jan. 2016
	(thousands)		
Residents (entered in the registry)	4,922	5,014	5,026
Legally staying non-residents	394	401	410
Illegally staying persons	350	404	435
<i>Total number</i>	<i>5,666</i>	<i>5,819</i>	<i>5,871</i>

Source: ISMU elaboration of ISTAT data

The (albeit small) positive variation of foreigners in 2015 – declining by approximately one third relative to the previous year (Table 2) – seems to be accounted for by the growth of illegally staying persons (+31,000). Supposedly, this group includes a considerable share of those who arrived illegally in Italy but are still here, without having the possibility or the desire to obtain a residence permit¹. However, the increase of residents has been offset by a large

¹ The accounts of arrivals by sea and acceptance procedures indicate 154,000 entries in 2015 and 84,000 asylum seekers (Eurostat, 2016). Since it is legitimate to assume that only part of

number of people receiving the Italian citizenship (a whopping 178,000 people were cancelled from the registry of foreigners, for this reason, in 2015). This is important to actually assess and realistically interpret such figures. In fact, according to natural movements only (births-deaths) and migration (immigrants - migrants), the increase of foreign residents in 2015 was not equal to 12,000, as the overall balance shows, but to 190,000. This would raise the number of people in the country up to 230,000, with a 4% growth (only one percentage point less compared with the corresponding value recorded in 2014).

Table 2 – Variation of the foreign population in Italy. Years 2014 and 2015

	2015	2014
	<i>(thousands)</i>	
A- Increase in the number of those present	52	153
of which:		
Residents (entered in the registry)	+12	+92
Legally staying non-residents	+ 9	+ 7
Illegally staying persons	+31	+54
B- Granting of Italian citizenship	178	130
Actual increase: A+B	+230	+283
% corresponding variation	+4%	+5%

Source: ISMU elaboration of ISTAT data

In conclusion, it can be assumed that the progressive maturation/stabilization of the migration phenomenon in the Italian society – with the granting of citizenship as its most evident expression – contributes to disguise its growth, which by itself appears to be slowed down by unfavorable cyclical factors. As to these latter, the analysis of the registration of foreign residents confirms that in 2015 migration was less attractive and fewer people could actually pursue a migration project, as repeatedly declared by the Foundation's recent Reports (Blangiardo, 2016). It is no coincidence that the most recent data show a drop in the registration records of foreign citizens; at the same time, cancellations are increasing in number. Between 2014 and 2015, the positive value of the net migration balance dropped by almost 20% and was accompanied by a modest (although significant) reduction of the birth rate. This latter kept increasing at a steady pace. The births of foreigners reached a peak of 80,000 in 2012; then, they began to drop with a downward trend: 78,000 births in 2013, 75,000 in 2014 and finally 72,000 by 2015. It should be noted that while the contribution of foreigners remains undoubtedly key in the meager birth rate of our country, it is not as a panacea to reverse the current trend. Amongst others, the immigrant

the gap has been offset by movements toward other countries, it can be reasonably stated that a share of that difference contributed to an increase in the total number of illegally staying persons.

population seems to quickly adjust to the reproductive model of its host society. Suffice it to remember that while in 2008 the average fertility of foreign women was estimated at 2.65 children per woman, in 2012 it dropped to 2.37 and slipped under the threshold of two children (1.97) already last year, to further drop to 1.93 in 2015. Foreign citizens are progressively adopting the Italian reproductive model. However, this is not surprising, given the particularly difficult conditions experienced by couples. More often than not, both partners work and, unlike Italians, they can hardly count on grandparents to care for their children.

As to the general mobility pattern described by demographic data, it is still important to point out that while 147,000 people left our country in 2015, approximately 102,000 were Italian citizens. Hence, the foreign component still represents a minority in terms of cancellations to move abroad (less than a third of the total). However, it should be emphasized that, amongst our countrymen, the number of those who, although having an Italian citizenship at the time of cancellation from the registry, were not born in Italy is increasing: more than 20,000 in 2014 and 25,000 in 2015. In most cases, these persons of foreign ancestry emigrate elsewhere or return home after a stay in Italy during which they obtain citizenship. Their children, born in our country², should add up to the total number.

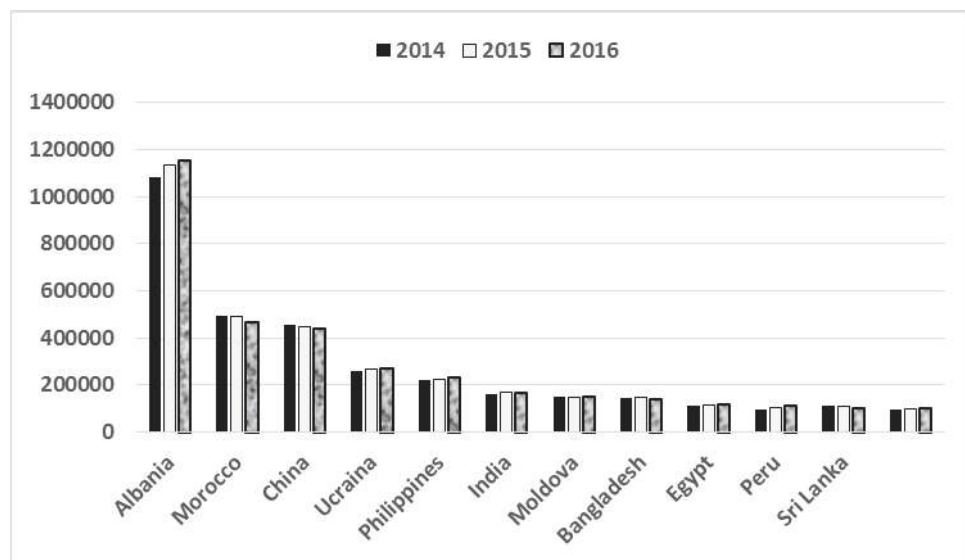
2.2 Countries of origin

Leafing through the atlas of foreigners living on the Italian territory by means of registry data (which *de facto* cover more than 85% of the total), we immediately notice an overwhelming primacy of Romanians. With little more than a million and 150,000 residents, they account for 22.9% of the total (Diagram 1). They are followed by almost half a million residents from Albania (9.3%) and Morocco (8.7%); approximately 270,000 residents from China (5.4%) and 230,000 Ukrainians (4.6%); about 150,000 Filipinos (3.3%), Indians (3%) and residents from Moldova (2.8%).

In 2014-2015, there has been a marked growth of those coming from Egypt (+14.4%), Sri Lanka (+7.7%), Bangladesh (+6.8%), Romania (+6.5%), China (+5.6%) and Ukraine (+5.3%); on the other hand, residents coming from Albania (-5.7%), Peru (-5.6%) and Morocco (-3.8%) significantly decreased. However, the decline of these latter is partly due to those who obtained the Italian citizenship.

² The profile of the countries of birth suggests a behavior typical of Latin Americans with an Italian ancestor. They stay in Italy for a short time, only to obtain citizenship on the grounds of "jus sanguinis" after submitting the required paperwork to the civil registry (Istat, 201: 6).

Diagram 1 – Main nationalities of foreign residents in Italy. 1 January 2014-2016 (thousands)



Source: ISMU elaboration of ISTAT data

Already in 2014, in fact, in spite of a decrease of 11,000 residents for the three countries together, considering the natural movement and migration only (therefore excluding cancellations after obtaining the Italian citizenship), they actually grew by 43,000. Such a picture is even more evident for 2015 data. For instance, according to the registry data Albanians decreased by approximately 23,000. At the same time, 36,000 became Italian citizens, implying an increase of 13,000 units actually due to the balance of mobility flows and natural movement. The same applies to Moroccans. Apparently, they decreased by 12,000 whereas they actually increased by 21,000; the same goes for Tunisians (from -367 to +4974). As to Peruvians, the effect of citizenship simply explains the substantial fall of residents (-5,000), but this does not lead to a positive balance on the front of movements (natural and migration).

Geography aside, demographic data as of 1 January 2016 (Table 3) confirm that the vast majority of foreigners live in the northern regions (58.6%). Yet, this rate moderately declined in 2014-2015: a slight increase in the north-west (+13,000) was offset by a sharper decline in the north-east (-22,000). As a matter of fact, on a national level the growth of residents between 1 January 2014 and 1 January 2016, rather than in Central Italy (+29,000) mostly happened in the South: +58,000 in the South and +26,000 in the Islands. However, it should be noted that 2015 demographic findings show, compared with the previous year, a general slowing down in the growth of the number of foreign residents, or an increasing decline, in every major geographical area.

Table 3 – Foreign residents by territorial distribution. Years 2014-2016

	As of 1 st January					
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
	(thousands)			%		
North West	1,702	1,725	1,715	34.6	34.4	34.1
North East	1,253	1,252	1,231	25.5	25.0	24.5
Center	1,250	1,276	1,279	25.4	25.4	25.4
South	512	542	570	10.4	10.8	11.3
Islands	205	219	231	4.2	4.4	4.6
<i>Italy</i>	<i>4,922</i>	<i>5,014</i>	<i>5,026</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: ISMU elaboration of ISTAT data

Yet, even in this case the “loss” of foreign residents due to their becoming Italian citizens plays a decisive role in the positive growth that derives from mobility flows (spatial and natural) of such population group. In fact, if you deduct those who became Italian citizens from the demographic balance, 59,000 residents were living in the North West and +38,000 in the North East in 2015. Such figures remain quite substantial – +34,000 and +20,000, respectively – after deducting the natural balance. At any rate, with respect to the migration pattern, it was especially the South to be quite dynamic in 2014-2015. It is quite true that the initial absolute levels were relatively lower than elsewhere; however, the migration rates in the South and in the Islands are more than double than in the Center North, characterized by a long-standing, more pronounced migration tradition. Yet, it is not yet clear to what extent this might be due to an unforeseen weakness in the center and north of Italy, as a result of the persistent economic crisis. It could also be due to a consolidation of their regular presence in the South, perhaps also favored by the marked territorial characterization of entry flows because of landings (Istat, 2016: 8).

2.3 The non-EU Universe

As to the presence of non EU citizens, the most recent data indicate that slightly less than 4 million had a regular residence permit as of 1 January 2015. It seems reasonable to assume that on the same date in 2016 the order of magnitude was substantially unchanged, while taking into account an estimate of about 150,000 people receiving the Italian citizenship during 2015.

The dynamics of the new residence permits reflects the trend, already anticipated, of a slowing down of the flows; above all, it highlights the progressive impact of family reasons (Table 4).

Table 4 – New residence permits by reason of their release. Years 2010-2014

<i>Reason for release</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
			<i>(thousands)</i>		
Work	359	125	71	85	57
Family	179	141	117	105	101
Study	26	31	31	27	24
Asylum/humanitarian	10	43	23	19	48
Other	24	22	22	19	18
<i>Total</i>	<i>598</i>	<i>362</i>	<i>264</i>	<i>255</i>	<i>248</i>
			<i>%</i>		
Work	60.0	34.5	26.9	33.3	23.0
Family	29.9	39.0	44.3	41.2	40.7
Study	4.3	8.6	11.7	10.6	9.7
Asylum/humanitarian	1.7	11.9	8.7	7.5	19.4
Other	4.0	6.1	8.3	7.5	7.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: ISMU elaboration of ISTAT and Ministry of the Interior's data

In 2010-2014, these latter accounted for 41% of new permits, while employment permits fell to 23%. They are almost the same as asylum and humanitarian permits (19%), whose strong growth is linked to the phenomenon of landings and new immigration flows.

The sharp, rapid decline of new residence permits for work reasons is partly explained by the persistent economic crisis and by the decreased attractiveness of the Italian labor market; at the same time, there is a continued growth of long term permits (therefore without repeated renewals) mostly related, more than other types, to the figure of the immigrant worker.

In the last five years, the incidence of long term residents has indeed increased by eleven percentage points: in 2011, it was equal to 46.3% of non-Community citizens and rose to 57.2% in 2015.

With regard to the structural aspects of the universe of non EU citizens, as of 1 January 2015 data on their origin show a strong concentration of six nationalities accounting for about half of the total, namely: Morocco (13.2%), Albania (12.7%), China (8.5%), Ukraine (6%), Philippines (4.3%) and India (4.2%). Overall, the gender ratio is quite balanced (51% males and 49% females), with persistent, profound differences between the different nationalities. Some groups are markedly geared toward women, such as Ukraine (80%), Brazil (74%) and Moldova (67%); others typically show a male dominance, like Senegal (74%), Bangladesh (72%), Egypt (70%) and Pakistan (69%). Lastly, as far as age is concerned, a massive presence of minors should be underlined. They represent about a quarter (24%) of non-community individuals legally staying in Italy (944,000)³; over 600,000 were born in our

³ The incidence of minors out of the total number of residents is, on the same date, equal to 21.6%; it dropped to 21.2 % the following year, probably as a result of the high incidence of

country from nationals of third countries starting from 2002. During the 2014/2015 school year, there were 614,000 non-EU students (Ministry of Labor, 2015). As to the main countries of origin, the highest incidence of minors can be observed from North Africa (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia), with peaks exceeding 30%, while the lowest numbers correspond to Ukraine (8.8%) and Moldova (17.8%).

With respect to the dynamics that characterize the non-EU universe, the so called “unplanned flows” become increasingly important. These people generally arrive by sea. They flee from countries overwhelmed by dramatic events, or simply from an unbearable poverty. In the last five years, the number of migrants landed on our coasts almost tripled: from 63,000 in 2011, in a turbulent scenario linked to the “Arab Spring”, to 154,000 in 2015, after reaching a peak of 170,000 during the previous year. A comparison of data about the first seven months of 2016 (93,000 cases) with the same period of 2015, suggests that the final balance is expected to be similar to last year’s flow. On the other hand, landings of unaccompanied minors are not as steady. As of 15 July 2016, they were 11,520: in little more than six months, only 7% less than the total number recorded in 2015 and 12% less than in 2014. Quite understandably, this is an emergency on top of a generalized emergency, requiring the utmost attention.

As to the countries of origin in the 2014-2016 period (until the end of July), the ministerial sources – which refer to the statements released by the same immigrants after landing – show a sudden decrease of Middle Eastern countries and a strong growth of sub-Saharan nationalities (Table 5). While Syria in 2014 accounted for a quarter of arrivals, it fell to 5% in 2015 and in the first seven months of 2016 it seems to have disappeared from the main nationalities involved in such phenomenon. At the same time, beside Eritrea – which kept a leading position throughout the three-year period – Nigeria climbed up to the top ranking (from 5 % in 2014 to 18% in 2016). The latest data (albeit partial) are quite concerning with respect to the strong growth of African origins. This certainly reflects an explosive combination of countries tormented by wars and persecutory regimes and by extreme poverty. This should be seen within a context of demographic growth resulting from a young population. In our globalized world, these people seem to be increasingly aware of the lack of a future outlook and of the existence of some opportunities that they can catch only “beyond the sea”.

As a consequence, Italy is forced to manage, by means of several types of facilities, the fate of a growing number of people – 22,000 were received at the end of 2013, 66,000 one year later, and then again 104, 000 in 2014 up to the current 146,000 (as of 23 August 2016). Yet, many migrants do not fulfill the requirements to obtain reception according to the legislation in force. In the last

three years, asylum applications have increased from 63,000 in 2014, to 84,000 in 2015 and 61,000 in the first seven months of this year.

Table 5 – Migrants landed on the Italian coasts by citizenship (as declared). Years 2014, 2015 and 2016 (as of 31 July)

2014		2015		2016	
Countries	%	Countries	%	Countries	%
Syria	25	Eritrea	25	Nigeria	18
Eritrea	20	Nigeria	14	Eritrea	13
Mali	6	Somalia	8	Gambia	7
Nigeria	5	Sudan	6	Ivory Coast	7
Gambia	5	Gambia	5	Sudan	7
Palestine	4	Syria	5	Guinea	7
Somalia	4	Mali	4	Somalia	6
Senegal	3	Senegal	4	Mali	5
Bangladesh	3	Bangladesh	3	Senegal	5
Egypt	2	Morocco	3	Egypt	3
Others	24	Others	23	Others	22
	100		100		100
<i>Total (thousands)</i>	170	<i>Total (thousands)</i>	154	<i>Total (thousands)</i>	93

Source: ISMU elaboration of Ministry of the Interior's data

However, their outcome is often negative: out of 161,000 applications examined in the three year period (2014-2016), 56.2% was rejected and the refugee status was granted only to 6.2% of applicants. Subsidiary and humanitarian protection were acknowledged, respectively, in 15.6% and 22.1% of cases. It should also be pointed out that, probably due to some changes in the countries of origin, in the course of the three-year period the rejection rate has also been rising. In 2014, 4 out of 10 applications were rejected. In 2016 (according to the latest available data), 6 out of 10 were rejected whereas with respect to 2014 some form of *status* was acknowledged to half as many applicants, with a sharp decrease in the recognition of the two forms of protection.

2.4 Conclusions

The growth that “is there but cannot be seen” is the real novelty in the field of migration, as described by the analysis of statistics for this new year. Yet, what surprises is not the order of magnitude of this phenomenon, which certainly does not achieve the figures recorded before the crisis. Indeed, it is amazing how it took shape and managed to stay hidden. Nearly 200,000 foreigners added in 2015, powered by a mix of migration and natural balance, with a 3:2 ratio. At the same time, nearly as many people obtained the Italian citizenship. In other

words, we can consider this as the point of arrival of a migration path that ends with the inclusion into the host society. Certainly, statistical data have enriched the Reports of our Foundation, year after year. These latter have been reporting for a long time the progression of such sequence, with or without the crisis: access to the residence permit (legal stay), stable permit (long term resident), naturalization (new citizens). Strangely enough, the recent fast-paced events are taking place within a framework that is creating a clear divide among foreigners in Italy: those who made it (or at least are struggling to succeed) and those who are still in search of a place where they can live.

Such dichotomy is particularly evident looking at the 66,000 minors who became Italian citizens in 2015. More often than not, they do have a family, in spite of those who keep criticizing law no. 91/1992. During the same year, over 12,000 unaccompanied foreign minors (Ufm) landed in our country. In the best case, they have been placed within some form of reception centers. Furthermore, according to official statistics, at the end of 2015, over 6,000 Ufms were “missing”.

On the other hand, the legitimate satisfaction for having reached “more landings to citizenship than landings on the coasts” in 2015, should not lead us to believe that everything is and will always be under control on the front of migration. The figures reported in this chapter imply a new migration course in Italy. This consists of manageable flows and a better integration, but the dynamics of a globalized world may surprise us, not necessarily in pleasant way.

The latest statistics published by the United Nations (United Nations, 2016) highlight that in the last fifteen years migrants at planetary level have increased by 41%, i.e. twice as much as the rate of increase of the world population. The same source documents and warns that the poorest countries – mostly located in sub-Saharan Africa – not only are unlikely to loosen a migration pressure of “economic” nature toward Europe, but could even strengthen it in the coming decades. According to demographic projections, there will be 400 million more inhabitants between now and 2036; of these, 166 million will be young adults aged 20-44. This means that, from now on, in the deep south of the world it is necessary to create on average at least 8-9 million more jobs each year only to absorb the additional supply resulting from the population growth of the younger population of working age. And a failure in this regard can only produce new candidates to an emigration dictated by the need to survive.

Therefore, it is not the dramatic situation of a country like as Syria – although it deserves the utmost attention and an unconditional commitment – to raise concern and call for an urgent action by the developed world, first and foremost by Europe. It is the fate of the population of a whole continent to be at stake. This phenomenon does call for a global action. In the seventies, the *World Plan of Action* (Colombo, 1975) was put together in order to counteract – ultimately with success – the upcoming demographic bomb resulting from the exponential population growth. Today, we need to put in place another specific *plan of action* aimed at disarming a new emerging mechanism on the front of international mobility. On the other hand, we know all too well that the medicine to control the migration flows from Africa is inextricably related with the improvement of

economic and living conditions in the South of the world. In other words, we need to minimize those imbalances which, amplified by the antennas of globalization, encourage people to escape from poverty to try and reach a glittering world.

We therefore welcome any initiative introducing rules that can transform emigration: from a dramatic abandonment of people's homeland to a (temporary) experience allowing enriched human resources to go back to their countries of origin, ready to foster development.

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The Regulatory Aspects

by Ennio Codini

On a legal level as well, developments have mainly involved asylum.

In 2015 Italy was again a land of aid and humanitarian assistance, because most of the migrants who landed on the country's coasts then reached other European countries to seek protection there. But there has always been a strong drive to slow down these intra-European flows. As a result, controls/blocks have been set up or announced at the internal borders of Ventimiglia as well as the Brenner Pass. And with the Roadmap of 28 September Italy has had to commit to systematic identification of migrants upon their arrival. All of this has led to an increase in requests for protection submitted to Italian authorities, with the ensuing obligation of fully taking responsibility for these people. Despite the fact that intra-European flows are inevitable, it is unthinkable and against all logic regarding European solidarity for Italy to manage all the migrants who have landed on our coasts, so much so that in order to regulate and share these flows identification alone is not sufficient and is now flanked by the mechanism of relocation.

However, there have been very few relocations so far, less than 900 between 1 January and 11 July 2016. In just the first four months of this year there were over 200,000 requests for asylum in Germany (equivalent to 60% of all those submitted to the EU during the same period), since there were many unregulated arrivals from Italy and other countries. But, in any case, there was an increase in requests for asylum to Italian authorities: in the period of January-July 2016 alone there were more than 60,000, while in 2015 there had been around 84,000.

Regarding identification, the problem has arisen as to where and when this should be done, also considering subsequent distribution of migrants based on whether or not they actually plan to request asylum, the chances for relocation and the opportunity to be taken in.

At the same time, the increase in requests for protection has raised a series of questions – or made them more dramatic – regarding acceptance/integration,

the procedure for examining the requests and management of cases of rejection, as discussed in another chapter of this report (Chapter 3.3).

The section that follows examines these and other far-reaching issues. Here, however, it would be impossible to dwell on specific issues, significant as they may be. For example, there are the consequences of the European Court's decision of 2 September 2015 declaring that the sums charged for residence permits are unlawful when they are disproportionate compared to "what Italian citizens pay for similar services". In August 2016 this led the Court of Milan to order the State to refund the overpayment of the 245 euros charged for permanent residency. Even earlier, on 24 May, the Regional Administrative Court of Lazio ruled that the ministerial decree charging 80–100 euros for an ordinary residency permit was unlawful. This paved the way for a large number of possible actions for damages (since millions of foreigners paid these sums over the years) and requiring much lower fees in the future. We can also mention, to raise an entirely different issue, the interesting judgment of the Court of Appeal of Milan, which found the behaviour of a recruitment firm discriminatory when it refused to interview an Italian Muslim woman for leafleting work at a trade fair because she refused to remove her veil, thus overturning a first instance judgment of the Court of Lodi and holding that while this was a job in which "image" counted, the protection of one's religious identity must prevail.

3.1 The hotspot system

Returning to the issue of asylum, to proceed to identify the migrants who have reached Italian coasts, a circular dated 6 October 2015 establishes six hotspots also to identify migrants who have not requested asylum (to be sent to the centres for identification and deportation in view of their return to a third country), asylum applicants who are destined for relocation and those who are to be processed by the acceptance system.

The regulations were laid down through administrative acts starting with said circular (which finally established the SOP or Standard Operating Procedures). The development of these structures and functions without specific ad hoc rules at legislative and then regulatory level has raised doubts, given that they involve public powers which include limitations on personal freedom and the protection of a fundamental right such as that of asylum. More generally, problems have been reported regarding the safeguarding of human rights stemming from inadequacies in the regulatory framework and/or failure to comply with it.

In particular, regarding the right to asylum, what has also emerged is the risk that, between the hotspots being the beginning of the path to international protection and the mission entrusted to them of identifying non-asylum-seekers, this creates a lack of protection since migrants are led to ask for protection because of the advantages involved, even when the claim has little or no

foundation. At the same time, however, the authorities – dealing with enormous flows – are tempted by the idea to do all they can to ensure that many will not ask for protection and will thus be deported (Vassallo, 2016).

3.2 Procedures for examining protection requests

In the period of January-July 2016 the competent local administrative commissions in Italy issued decisions regarding over 50,000 applications. In itself, this is positive because there is a certain numerical balance between new requests and decisions. It is also essential that all applications be examined immediately and decided at administrative level quickly.

There are also questions regarding the criteria followed by the commissions in the face of granting refugee status or subsidiary protection in less than 20% of cases. It must be noted that the criteria seem quite different at judicial level before courts of law, where appeals are accepted in two cases out of three. In particular, the decisions show that for the courts, as opposed to the opinion of the administrative authorities, certain territories of origin of many of those requesting asylum should currently be considered unsafe for all or for particular groups and hence those persons should be afforded subsidiary protection, which is instead denied by the commissions: Punjab in the case of Shiites (see Trieste Court of Appeal judgment no. 455 of 15 July 2016) and northern Nigeria (id. judgment no. 553 of 9 August 2016 as well as the Court of Potenza order of 26 July 2016 and the Court of Bari order of 14 July 2016).

These court judgments raise two points. The first concerns the rational operation of public power: while, as observed, courts tend to overturn the commissions' frequent rejections, there is an excess of work that can be termed futile, entailing the use of numerous resources by courts to cancel the results of an activity by the commissions that is equally expensive.

A second point by contrast involves the nature of the flows. As noted, the commissions grant refugee status or subsidiary protection in less than 20% of cases. However, it must be borne in mind that another 20% or so are granted residence in terms of humanitarian protection. If we then add the numerous cases in which the appeal against the commissions' rejections of requests is upheld by the courts and the point of how the reasons set forth in these judgments are valid for a large number of those requesting asylum, we can conclude that most of the latter effectively have a right to some form of protection. This must be emphasised in the face of the widespread idea that asylum seekers are instead prevalently just economic migrants who have arrived illegally: this is not the case.

3.3 The fate of those without a right to protection

The conclusion of the foregoing section should not overshadow the problem represented by the large number of migrants, especially with an eye to the future. After landing on the Mediterranean coasts of the EU, they end up staying in Italy as well as other European countries *sine titulo* as they have not requested asylum or, more often than not, because the request was turned down with a final unappealable decision.

In some cases, the prospect is that of being returned, often based on agreements in place with their country of origin and/or the short time of their stay in Italian territory and there being specific reasons of public interest. Above all, however, since this involves tens of thousands of new cases annually, even if these particular conditions do not exist, it is not realistic that all or nearly all of these migrants can be removed, even if this is what Italian law requires today. After all, the prior experience of countries where there is a culture of respecting the rules, such as Germany and the Netherlands, shows that, in the face of large influxes of asylum seekers, over time there arises a significant group of migrants who are tolerated, so to speak.

However, this is a serious problem, particularly in a context such as the Italian one that is currently oppressed by widespread illegality and tensions tied to migratory processes. This is a problem that cannot be ignored by pretending that the prospect of removing “everyone” is realistic, nor can this be resolved with indiscriminate amnesties, which would run the risk of seeming – and, to a certain extent, being – factors that encourage flows and would end up stably bringing into the population also those with little or no chance of positive integration.

3.4 The experiment of humanitarian corridors

There have long been discussions on the possibility of letting into Europe asylum seekers with a valid visa in order to help them avoid the plight of illegal travels by land and sea, but also to rationalise flows in some way. In a context in which the latter are excessive, however, it may seem unthinkable that a country might be willing to grant humanitarian visas, through its diplomatic missions or in some way, to all asylum seekers who want to reach that nation. Even if the visas were to be based on prior vetting of the legitimacy of the applications, such a measure would widely be viewed as excessively encouraging flows in general and in particular towards the country adopting it. At the same time, however, in the face of these tragedies it is equally intolerable to close the door completely on granting humanitarian visas and many places have encouraged the development of experiments to test the practicability of such an instrument, at least in particular settings. This Foundation has also expressed its views along these lines.

In past years Italy did not develop any initiatives. The period of 2015–16 finally saw the launch of a pilot programme, the first of its kind in Europe and involving a thousand asylum seekers in two years, from Lebanon (Syrians), Morocco (sub-Saharan Africans) and Ethiopia (Eritreans, Somalians and Sudanese), deriving from a memorandum of understanding between the Italian government and the Comunità di Sant'Egidio, the Federation of Evangelical Churches and the Waldensian Round Table. The beneficiaries must be people “in a state of vulnerability”. First of all, they must be identified by the aforesaid associations, and then, in cases in which there has been a positive assessment by the Interior Ministry through local diplomatic authorities, they are granted a visa for humanitarian reasons, which allows them to come to Italy and then submit a request for asylum, as they are assisted by these associations, which shoulder all related responsibilities.

In some ways, the project re-proposes the models already tested by Switzerland, for example, with the grant of a humanitarian visa in specific territories on the basis of prior evaluation of the admissibility of the application for asylum, on the part of the State through its diplomatic representatives. This also seems to be original because of its reference to particular categories of people and the role ascribed to associations in identifying possible beneficiaries and managing both the journey and reception-integration.

3.5 Avoided issues: from entry for work to citizenship

As said above, on a legal level as well, developments have mainly involved asylum.

This can seem highly justified by the quantitative prevalence of the relative flows compared to others that are incoming and the tragic circumstances in which they develop.

Nevertheless, once again there is a risk that the proposals and initiatives will concentrate on the emergency, overlooking future issues that are highly relevant.

For example, we can consider entry for work reasons. There are no special initiatives to modify the law. Indeed, the economic crisis has led to a drastic reduction in flows. Moreover, as mentioned, the refugee emergency has drawn attention to it and we must also consider that, in the coming years, many asylum seekers will enter the job market and occupy some of the same positions that would be open to migrants with employment visas. All of this explains another decree on flows for 2016 (Prime Ministerial Decree of 14 December 2015), which envisages fewer than 18,000 new permits for non-seasonal jobs involving employees or self-employed aimed almost entirely at foreigners already residing in Italy who plan to convert the permit they already possess.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that, regarding the future role of those currently seeking asylum on the Italian job market, the tasks largely carried out by immigrants will likely not involve them: we can consider healthcare jobs that, in recent years, have almost exclusively involved women, whereas current

asylum seekers are mainly men. More in general, however, we must observe that it is reasonable to hope that, in the coming years, the flows of refugees will slow down and that there will be an economic revival, since it is certain that in particular sectors with a high presence of immigrant labour there will be an increase in need, as in the aforesaid case of healthcare. Moreover, the experience of past years has fully demonstrated – as emphasised a number of times in previous reports – the overall inadequacy of current regulations regarding the entry of foreign workers: when the market demanded influxes, they mainly developed illegally, then leading to mass amnesties. In part, this inadequacy is also responsible for the current mingling of aspiring workers from Africa with refugees.

Another important but neglected issue involves the law on citizenship. Reforms have been on the table for years, and this Foundation has also offered contributions along these lines. While it is true that more and more immigrants and children of immigrants have acquired Italian citizenship, it is also true that, in many ways, current regulations are inadequate with respect to the objective of promoting paths of integration and, if anything, they are an obstacle in some ways. In autumn 2015 the Chamber of Deputies approved a reform bill discussed in the last report, highlighting both positive and critical aspects. In the following months, the Senate could in turn have approved the text passed by the Chamber of Deputies, which, over all, would have represented progress, save the opportunity for later amendments and additions, or could have modified/improved it. Instead, the project essentially remained parked in the halls of Parliament.

3.6 Conclusions

We have mentioned the various issues to be addressed. For the hotspots, it seems essential for the government to take on political responsibility, and it must take the initiative for primary legislation and then implementing regulations: it is unacceptable that the rules governing these facilities/activities are entrusted entirely to officials. Moreover, what was said regarding the safeguarding of rights also demands above all specific attention to the fact that everyone must be given the chance to ask for protection – the problem of specious applications exists but it must be addressed by giving rapid responses and not by arbitrarily denying the possibility of asking – and, more in general, the adoption of all measures that can prevent the separateness of these structures/activities from social life translating into the possibility of denying rights based on a well-known risk: a useful solution might be that of mitigating this separateness through the utmost transparency.

As to the divergence between commissions and courts regarding recognition, or lack thereof, of a right to protection, we feel it must be tackled first of all by administrative bodies, carefully assessing the possibility of unifying their interpretation in cases of doubt – as is also the case for other activities where

similar divergences occur – so as to avoid as much as possible that their decisions will be overturned by courts and thus frequently challenged.

As to the problem of the many migrants who have landed on Italian coasts and are staying in the country *sine titulo*, based on what we have observed above it seems that the development of re-admission agreements and more streamlined procedures to examine applications would certainly be useful instruments to encourage return. Nevertheless, we cannot avoid the serious issue of the many who are not repatriated for a number of reasons. In this regard, the most correct solution, which was promoted a number of times in previous reports, seems to be envisaging a permanent chance for regularisation – in compliance with Directive 2008/115/EU – assessing each case on its own merits but based on established criteria for the path and chance at integration.

Lastly, regarding the issue of asylum, it must be noted that the results of the experiments with humanitarian corridors must be assessed carefully to proceed – albeit cautiously – along this path, using the experience that has been gained in order to expand the channel that has already been opened or also to envisage others with the same partners or adding new ones.

As to entry for work, based on the above analyses we think it would be appropriate at least to start planning some form of change to the law. In the previous reports it has been noted a number of times that we need to move beyond the idea followed so far of a single model linking entry, residence permit and employment contract, acknowledging the fact that the natural dynamics of the market require different models for different kinds of activities. In short, for example we could proceed with the matter of healthcare, which, based on what has been said, seems to be a priority and also generates fewer reservations in public opinion.

Ending with the subject of citizenship, we feel there is no need to add more here regarding what the pages of the report and other studies by this Foundation have proposed in terms of content. Moreover, the problem is above all one of political will. On this subject, we can merely observe that, as already noted, reform would be important for the substantial integration of foreigners, but at the same time, we must not fall into the trap of linking this issue to tension over the arrivals of new migrants. The latter clearly follow dynamics that are entirely independent from the unique contents of the law regarding the way citizenship is acquired, so that there must be no fears about slowing down necessary reforms in this area.

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4

The Labour Market

by Laura Zanfrini

According to a recent statement by Confindustria (2016), immigrants represent an opportunity for the Italian economy. Their contribution to Italian GDP is estimated at 8.7%, they were responsible for its compound growth by almost 4 points during the pre-crisis years of expansion while, during the crisis period, they helped to limit its decrease by 3 points. Through their work as domestic helpers and care-givers they have made it easier for Italian workers to obtain a good work-life balance. However, and especially with regard to less skilled workers – particularly male workers who tend to apply for the same job opportunities – the immigration phenomenon can be both complementary and competitive. This is especially true in a highly regulated market which, at the same time, is very tolerant of less rigid contractual arrangements which result in a significant reduction of labour costs. Moreover, the spread of irregular employment gives rise to other negative phenomena which tend to thrive within the context of immigrant labour, both regular and irregular.

Within this framework, the latest available data show certain positive signals that seem to point towards the end of the current crisis. However, this process is still fraught with problems. Employment growth and the enhancement of human capital remain two priority issues, even more so now than before the crisis. And this because, in the current context of demographic decline – which can only in part be offset by immigration –, it is necessary to increase both the quantity and the productivity of labour which have been stagnant for 25 years. Furthermore, the consolidation of economic recovery – which is currently below the European average – must necessarily coincide with an increase in employed workers and an improvement of wage levels. This leads to the issues of both generational equity – symbolized by the under-employment of young people and a percentage of NEETs which is the highest in Europe –, and of ethnic equity, symbolized by a discriminatory integration model.

4.1 The immigrant labour market: recent trends

The number of employed immigrants rose in 2015 as regards both EU (+4.6%) and non-EU (+2%) immigrants and reached 2,359,065 workers (1,578,648 non-EU and 780,417 EU). Moreover, contrary to previous years, domestic employment also increased (+0.8%, i.e. 120,892 employed workers).

On the contrary, situations of employment malaise appear to be decreasing, as is demonstrated by the reduced number of workers benefitting from wage subsidies and mobility allowances and, particularly, by the decrease in the number of unemployed, thus finally breaking the rising trend of recent years. In this case, as well, the positive trend regards both immigrant workers (-9,579) and indigenous workers (-193,175), although the decrease is smaller for EU citizens. However, there are still 456,115 unemployed foreigners, representing almost 18% of total unemployment, whose distribution across the territory weighs more heavily upon the regions with the largest numbers of foreign residents (thus, while unemployment in the South is almost totally indigenous, in the North, one third of the unemployed are foreign).

In examining these data, account must be taken of the constant increase – in absolute numbers – of the immigrant population present in the territory, as well as of its active component, which is already high owing to the age factor (only 3% is over 65 years of age compared to 23.4% for Italians).

While the general situation seems to be improving significantly – although it is still too early to predict the end of the employment crisis that greatly marked the last decade –, the most important issue, particularly in the medium/long-term period, is the rise of the inactive part of the population which, in the case of foreigners above 15 years of age has reached the number of 1,270,242. This phenomenon is in part the natural consequence of the immigrants' settlement process, which reduces the weight of the active population. Moreover, it can also be ascribed to the many differences that exist among national groups in terms of activity and employment rates. One important effect is without doubt that of reducing the general advantages of immigration for the Italian economy and, in particular, its contribution to the readjustment of dependency ratios. However, the implications are also different and regard, based on the experience of other countries, the entire issue of integration.

All these processes are summarized by the evolution of the activity, employment and unemployment rates presented in Table 1.

The employment rate is increasing in all its components (with a higher increase regarding Italians and EU citizens compared to non-EU workers), even though the budget for the last 11 years (2005 was the first year in which data were available) was much more negative for foreigners than for Italians, as a result of the sharp decline in male employment which significantly reduced the initial advantage.

The unemployment rate, on the contrary, is falling for all its components. However, despite the decrease of unemployment among foreigners, it should be noted that the gap between Italian and foreign workers is increasing, a

circumstance which tends to reinforce the presence of a structural disadvantage. This phenomenon has always existed in the case of women. For men, on the contrary, the gap was lower than one percentage point at the beginning of the period in question and up to the onset of the crisis. What is more, this gap was entirely due to the bad performance of the non-EU component, in other words the people for whom unemployment can have the most dire consequences.

Finally, the employment rate is mainly stable except for the decrease that has been registered in the case of female immigrants. On the whole, the employment rates of foreigners continue to be significantly higher than those for Italians. This, however, is not due to their higher propensity to enter the job market – which in actual fact is lower than the average of developed countries – but to the very low level of the total employment rate.

Table 1 – Activity rate, employment rate and unemployment rate, by gender and worker nationality (Foreigners and Italians); Years 2005-2015

	2005		2008		2011		2014		2015	
	For.	Ita.	For.	Ita.	For.	Ita.	For.	Ita.	For.	Ita.
<i>Activity Rate</i>										
Men	87.5	74.0	87.1	73.6	84.0	72.1	81.3	72.8	81.7	73.3
Women	58.0	50.0	59.9	51.0	59.1	50.7	61.1	53.6	60.4	53.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>72.9</i>	<i>61.9</i>	<i>73.3</i>	<i>62.3</i>	<i>70.9</i>	<i>61.4</i>	<i>70.4</i>	<i>63.2</i>	<i>70.3</i>	<i>63.3</i>
<i>Employment rate</i>										
Men	81.5	69.4	81.9	69.5	75.4	66.7	68.1	64.3	69.4	65.1
Women	49.1	45.1	52.8	46.8	50.5	46.1	50.2	46.4	49.7	46.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>65.5</i>	<i>57.2</i>	<i>67.1</i>	<i>58.1</i>	<i>62.3</i>	<i>56.4</i>	<i>58.5</i>	<i>55.4</i>	<i>58.9</i>	<i>56.0</i>
<i>Unemployment rate</i>										
Men	6.8	6.2	6.0	5.6	10.3	7.4	16.1	11.4	15.1	10.9
Women	15.4	9.8	11.9	8.3	14.6	9.1	17.7	13.3	17.5	12.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>10.2</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>8.5</i>	<i>6.7</i>	<i>12.2</i>	<i>8.1</i>	<i>16.9</i>	<i>12.2</i>	<i>16.2</i>	<i>11.4</i>

Source: Rilevazione continua sulle forze lavoro, various years

As mentioned earlier, the overall data result from the different employment outcomes registered among the immigrant population.

Last year (Zanfrini, 2016a) we were able to thoroughly examine the role of age, with particular emphasis on the performance of young foreigners who appeared to have the advantage over their Italian counterparts – based solely on their participation rate – but who, in reality, were much more exposed to the risks of marginalization and underemployment.

This year, we intend to concentrate on gender, which is probably the most useful aspect when trying to interpret job market participation rates. According to the latest available data, while the employment rate of women from the EU (57.8%) is much higher than that of Italian women, non-EU women have now “attained” the unenviable position occupied by Italian women (despite some progress over the years, Italy’s position is still one of the worst among European

countries). The geographical differences in the distribution of job opportunities (explaining the overall data which, however, result from the very different situations existing in the North and South of Italy) and the difficult task of combining work – or, rather, the type of work usually offered to immigrant women – with family requirements are key aspects for understanding this phenomenon. However, it is only by breaking down data by nationality that we can understand the impact of the various migration models and family structures. Within the same non-EU population, female employment rates range from 93.6% for Filipino women (despite the large presence of women with children) to 10% for Egyptian women. Among the most active on the job market, next to the Filipinos, we find women from Ukraine and Moldova (87.5%), Peru (74.4%), Ecuador (73.9%) and China (64.9%). On the contrary, the highest and most disquieting unemployment rates regard women from Egypt (90%) Bangladesh (82.6%) and India (80%), but also women from Ghana, Morocco and Tunisia whose unemployment rates are above 60%. The picture becomes worse if we take into account the fact that unemployment – “real” or “formal”, considering women who claim to be unemployed for various reasons without actually seeking a job – mostly affects women belonging to communities with the lowest activity rates: Pakistani women, for instance, have an unemployment rate of 67.3%, and Egyptian women 62.1%. At the same time, less than 4 out of 100 Egyptian women and less than 3 out of 100 Pakistani women are employed. To understand all the critical aspects of this phenomenon it is important to consider that the effects of the exclusion of such a large group from the job market go beyond economic aspects, family welfare and the general sustainability of immigration. Indeed, female unemployment also affects the younger generations of these immigrant communities, i.e. those who are meant to play a crucial part in the integration and socialization process of children born in Italy. The exclusion from the formal labour market and from the opportunity to socialize within the work environment could hamper their emancipation and also accentuate the feeling of social marginalization as well as the perception of the social distance that separates them from mainstream society. In this regard, let’s not forget that in the recent European experience, it was exactly this issue that stimulated the debate on integration and the controversial measures for promoting – or rather imposing – integration within the framework of the so-called “integrationist turn” (for more details see Zanfrini, 2016b).

Lastly, by analysing family composition, the report by the Directorate General for Immigration (2016) sheds light on very serious cases of labour marginalization linked to immigration which can lead to situations of extreme poverty, mostly affecting immigrant rather than Italian families. The percentage of foreign families (EU: 15.5%; non-EU: 14.1%) with no income-provider (worker or pensioner) is twice that of Italian families (7.6%) in the same situation. Beyond the immediate implications – i.e. the need for local welfare systems to address these situations of poverty in a context that is already under pressure because of the refugee crisis –, it is important to also consider the long-term effects and, in particular, the danger that a large section of the new

generations born to immigrant parents will be faced with a structural disadvantage. Furthermore, even today, immigrants are twice as much at risk of becoming poor compared to Italians (Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, 2016).

As far as employed workers are concerned, data confirm that in 2015, within the category of paid employees – representing 87.5% of foreign workers – , 8 foreigners out of 10 were unskilled workers (compared to 3 out of 10 for Italians) and less than 1 out of 10 were employees (whereas this is the preferred position for Italians: 35.5%). Very small numbers of foreigners, 0.6% and 0.3% respectively, held managerial and executive positions. Even among self-employed workers, a category often thought to be able to achieve the professional mobility denied to employees, foreign workers face structural disadvantages. This is due not only to the fact that the percentage of foreign self-employed workers (11.1%) is half of that of Italian workers (24.2%), but mostly because the most prestigious and lucrative job profiles – such as entrepreneur or any of the liberal professions – held by foreigners correspond, respectively, to 1/5 and 1/6 of such jobs held by Italians.

The space at our disposal does not allow us to delve more deeply into gender differences. It is sufficient to note that the gender variable in some ways strengthens the variable linked to migrant background, by directing immigrants towards job profiles with ethnic connotations but also linked predominantly to gender (such as, for instance, domestic help and construction worker). On the other hand, considering the total number of foreign employees, businessmen and liberal professions (as well as among blue-collar workers) the percentage of women is much higher compared to the equivalent Italian sub-group. A possible explanation (which however needs to be confirmed) could be that as women are not usually the main breadwinners of their families, they can afford to experiment with different job profiles that go beyond ethnic niches.

A similar observation can be made with regard to young people, i.e. foreigners up to 34 years of age. Although few of them gain access to the more prestigious profiles – as a result of the well-known condition of structural disadvantage that affects first, and to a certain extent, second generation immigrants –, their “weight” within these professions is significantly higher than that of Italians. Thus, for instance, only 3.3% of Italian managers, 7.7% of entrepreneurs and 17.7% of liberal professions are under 35 years of age, while among immigrants these percentages are 18.8%, 58.3% and 23.2%, confirming that they pass on to more adult and responsible roles earlier, something which is also demonstrated by other indicators (such as the average age at which they get married or have their first child).

Finally, women and young people appear, at first glance, disadvantaged compared to both the indigenous population and, in some aspects, to adult immigrant men. However, within the “élite” which is taking shape in the various immigrant communities, they could play a key role in renewing the integration model.

4.2 The demand for immigrant labour

It is probably superfluous to mention that immigrant labour has very specific characteristics regarding both the sectors of employment and, particularly, job qualifications. It is also well-known that these characteristics affect the employability of foreigners. This is demonstrated by the employment trend recorded in the past 12 months during which the employment rate of foreign workers was much higher than that of Italian workers, particularly in sectors in which certain job profiles are highly ethnicized.

Table 2 – Variation of the number of employed workers per economic activity sector (foreigners and Italians) (Absolute Values and %). Years 2015-2014

	A.V.			Var. % 2015-14		
	Foreigners	Italians	Total	Foreigners	Italians	Total
Agriculture	132,754	710,086	842,840	15.2	2.0	3.8
Industry	435,741	4,071,595	4,507,335	2.9	-0.4	0.0
Building	237,116	1,231,179	1,468,295	-4.1	-0.5	-1.1
Trade	200,072	2,994,137	3,194,209	1.6	-1.2	-1.0
Other service activities	1,353,382	11,098,691	12,452,074	3.2	1.5	1.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>2,359,065</i>	<i>20,105,688</i>	<i>22,464,753</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>0.8</i>

Source: Direzione Generale dell'Immigrazione e delle Politiche d'Integrazione, 2016: 29

The case of agricultural labour (Table 2) constitutes one of the most prominent examples: according to the data provided by the Information system for compulsory communication, 35.7% of new jobs in 2015 were held by foreigners¹.

As regards the employed workers' characteristics, we can confirm that, also this year, foreigners are generally less educated than their Italian counterparts. The over-qualification of immigrants compared to the jobs they hold is a very widespread phenomenon, thus becoming one of the most serious forms of discrimination against them. However, the aspect we now want to highlight is the fact that Italy appears to be very attractive to less skilled immigrants while it is much less attractive to well-educated immigrants, and this to a greater degree compared with other developed countries. In other words, although some people continue to claim otherwise, immigration not only fails to reduce this enduring disadvantage, but threatens to increase it. This finding is consistent with the structure of the demand for immigrant labour and is confirmed by data regarding employed foreigners. First of all, the number of foreigners who, at best, hold an elementary school degree is much higher – 8.6% of employed foreigners compared to 3.1% of Italians –, while the percentage of immigrants

¹ Over 225,000 of new fixed-term jobs for agricultural workers (sometimes regarding the same person holding a succession of jobs).

with a university degree is lower by 10 points (12.3% vs 22.1%). Moreover, if we look at the composition according to age, both categories are destined to grow as less educated Italians will progressively be pensioned off and better educated generations will take their place. As long as there is no radical change in labour demand, it is fairly safe to predict that the Italian labour market will be segmented further on the basis of immigration-linked parameters. On the other hand, according to job recruiting forecasts for 2015 as estimated by Sistema informativo Uniocamere-Excelsior, almost 7 programmed immigrant recruitments out of 10 regard workers with a medium-low level of education (a number that has increased compared to the previous year), while in 45% of the cases companies require only the compulsory education level (almost 20 percentage points higher compared with the recruiting of Italians).

At the risk of over-simplifying a complicated framework which has also shown signs of progress, we can observe that the demand for immigrant labour is linked to two, strongly overlapping, factors. The first is the readiness to accept prevalently manual work with a low social value, both because of their intrinsic characteristics and because of the way the work is executed (as in the typical case of work for families). The breakdown of foreign worker recruitments on the basis of professional qualifications in 2015 provides further proof. Indeed, at the top we find agricultural workers (over half a million recruitments, almost all of them fixed-term), followed by care-givers (over 161,000 recruitments, domestic helpers (over 138,000), waiters and related professions (over 128,000). Next we have porters, construction workers, restaurant staff and cleaning personnel. In the list of the top 20 job qualifications, that correspond to almost 80% of new recruitments, there are practically no skilled professions. The second factor is that immigrant labour (particularly if non-EU) costs little and, in any case, much less than the already cheap labour of Italian workers (Table 3).

Table 3 - Percentage of employed workers broken down by salary and position; Foreigners and Italians. Year 2015

	<i>Up to 800</i>	<i>From 801 to 1,200</i>	<i>1,201 to 1,600</i>	<i>1,601 to 2,000</i>	<i>Over 2,000</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>EU foreigners</i>	35.1	38.0	20.6	3.6	2.7	100.0
Employees	16.8	39.0	26.8	9.5	8.0	100.0
Workers	38.3	38.6	20.0	2.5	0.6	100.0
<i>Non-EU</i>	39.0	40.3	17.4	2.4	0.9	100.0
Employees	29.4	37.7	25.4	5.4	2.1	100.0
Workers	40.1	40.7	16.7	2.1	0.4	100.0
<i>Italian</i>	14.1	27.1	35.9	14.1	8.8	100.0
Employees	10.5	24.5	41.4	17.4	6.3	100.0
Workers	21.1	35.4	33.5	8.2	1.8	100.0

Source: Direzione Generale dell'Immigrazione e delle Politiche d'Integrazione, 2016: 37

It is a fact that the general features of immigrant labour in Italy are closely linked to the way supply meets demand on the job market. Indeed, in the majority of

cases (6 out of 10), jobs are found through friends, relatives or acquaintances, by contacting the potential employer directly (often at the suggestion of friends, relatives or acquaintances). It is obvious that this method does not take account of education degrees (for those who possess them), nor does it favour employment mobility, but, on the contrary, it reinforces employer prejudice. This is confirmed by the data contained in 2015 employment reports which present a sectoral distribution which is strongly linked to citizenship. For example, while the agricultural sector absorbs on average 14.6% of jobs held by non-EU citizens, this rate climbs to 56.5% for Indians and to 52.3% for Tunisians. The industrial sector absorbs only 6.6% of new jobs but 44.5% of those held by Chinese workers; the services sector absorbs most of new jobs created for national groups but manage to monopolize new jobs for some countries like the Philippines (93.1%), Peru (91.6%), Sri Lanka (90.9%), Ukraine (81.5%), Moldova (76.4%).

However, this aspect would have certainly been less important if it hadn't been consistent with the structure of the labour demand addressed to immigrants, which is perpetuated thanks to, on one hand, the propensity of families to use such recruitment methods and, on the other, to companies' recruitment plans. According to recent estimates (referring to 2015) and disseminated through the Unioncamere-Excelsior system, estimated new recruitments of immigrant workers range from a minimum of over 61,000 to a maximum of 88,740, corresponding to 12% of the entire labour demand by companies, i.e. slightly more than the 10% corresponding to non-seasonal jobs. As usual, the tertiary sector has the largest part as it absorbs a little less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of immigrant recruitments, and over 86% of non-seasonal recruitments. However, the industry sector is showing a higher increase than the services sector and even the construction sector is showing an upward trend compared to the very negative trend registered during the previous three years. The mechanical engineering sector and the fashion industry are responsible for a large part of new recruitments. However, following a general trend that goes beyond Italy, it is the catering sector, and particularly the part that regards less skilled workers, that shows the greatest propensity to resort to immigrant labour, particularly if one takes into account seasonal jobs: over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the top ten seasonal jobs are linked to the catering sector. Finally, the recruitment of immigrants in the agricultural sector corresponds to almost $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total planned jobs, estimated at a maximum of 3,300 units, and regarding almost 87% of small enterprises.

As regards the characteristics of these new recruitments of foreigners, they seem to confirm the general approach towards this type of labour and its role within the competitive strategies of Italian companies. According to available data, the demand for immigrant labour focuses mainly on unskilled or, in any case, blue-collar jobs. Indeed, the number of immigrants recruited for medium/high-level jobs has decreased further compared to 2014. This inevitably results in a highly discriminatory distribution compared to Italian workers (Table 4).

Table 4 – Percentage of planned non-seasonal recruitments of immigrant and Italian workers in 2015, by large professional categories

	<i>Immigrants</i>	<i>Italians</i>
Unskilled jobs	27,1	10.5
Plant and machine operators	16,1	11.5
Specialized workers	19.3	15.7
Jobs in trade and services	26.1	26.7
Employees	3.5	12.1
Technicians	5.1	15.3
Managers, liberal professions and scientists	2.8	8.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Sistema Informativo Unioncamere – Excelsior, 2015

Almost half of new foreigner recruitments are concentrated in just 10, highly ethnicized, professions: some job profiles in the service, shop and market sales group (personal care workers, waiters and related workers, salespersons, skilled workers in the health and social sectors, cooks in hotels and restaurants), cleaning personnel, porters and related workers, unskilled workers in restaurant services, construction workers, and truck and heavy-vehicle operators... With the sole exception of people working in health services – a sector for which demand is showing a great increase because of the ageing population –, this distribution perfectly coincides with that of employed immigrants. This reinforces the perception that immigrants are destined to enter the same job sectors where their presence is already strong. As regards agriculture, the planned recruitments of immigrants mainly regard tasks such as the harvesting of agricultural products by hand, fruit growing, cattle farming and working in plant nurseries. The job profile that has the biggest share is that of livestock farmer and this, once again, confirms the high level of ethnicization of professions such as, for example that of “bergamino” (milker).

The sharp increase in immigrant recruitments registered in 2015 is certainly worthy of attention. However, both the total number of recruitments and – particularly – the share compared to total recruitments, demonstrate that the onset of the crisis in 2008 marked the end of a truly exceptional period during which the role of immigrant labour with regard to planned new jobs had been completely overestimated compared to its weight in the labour market, to the extent that it was taken for granted that using workers from abroad was the only way to meet the demands of companies and thus fulfil the structural needs of the productive system. Today, on the contrary, the number of foreigners hired is approximately the same as that of employed immigrants. This does not alter the fact that immigration is still important for the functioning of the Italian economy. In fact, it was Italy’s entrepreneurial sector that called for measures to be taken so that the arrival of refugees does not undermine the efforts to limit the presence of foreign workers in the Italian economy (cf. Confindustria Centro Studi, 2016).

4.3 Management of inclusion processes

Italy still constitutes one of the main destinations of migration flows, and not only those linked to the current refugee crisis, despite views to the contrary based on the comparison with the years in which immigration was growing at an impressive rate and planned recruitments of foreigners nearly reached one third of total recruitment by companies. Unfortunately, the latest available data regard 2014, when 248,323 non-EU citizens arrived, of whom 23% (57,040) were seeking employment. This number is largely due to the conversion of other types of residence permits into residence permits for work reasons, a trend that placed Italy, together with Spain and the UK, among the first three European countries importing labour. On the other hand, it is well-known that the EU-workers component, although formally not bound by the legislative framework that regulates the admission and participation of foreigners in the labour market, turns to a large extent towards what can be sociologically defined as the “immigrant labour market”, and even favours some of its more regressive aspects (Zanfrini, 2016b). Indeed, the latest data confirm that there is no programming, official or otherwise, for a large part of the immigrants that access the job market – and never has been. This is the case not only in Italy or in Europe’s Mediterranean countries but also in countries with apparently more rigid systems, like the UK and Germany, to the extent that it has become the rule in Europe. Consequently, although single countries have, over the years, developed specific systems for the admission of third country citizens – all of them based, with several variations, on the principle that every new admission must correspond to a specific job (Chaloff, 2014) –, in reality most of the so-called economic migrants are admitted without already having found a job (OECD, EU, 2016). Thus, next to the recurring proposal to allow the admission of job seekers (Pascouau, 2016), the integration of immigrants in the labour market is a challenge that must still be faced by both the Italian and the European society.

In this respect, the big influx of immigrants and refugees that was registered in recent months without any kind of planning, will provide a good opportunity for testing the ability to manage the job integration process, as well as the degree of preparedness not only of government bodies but also of businesses sector. According to all the experts, participation in the labour market is the best way to facilitate integration into the host society, turning the long-term impact of refugee flows into an advantage (OECD, 2016a). However, labour market integration is hampered by a series of factors: poor language skills, lack of qualifications suitable for the labour market, length of recognition procedures, but also difficulties linked to housing and health problems (which can hinder not only the access to the labour market, but also the learning of the language and the entire relationship with public institutions). Past experience shows that it can take up to 5-6 years to achieve labour market integration for at least half of the refugees, even in countries where employment services are more efficient (Policy Department – Economic and Scientific Policy, 2016). All this leads us to

suppose that, once the examination of the applications for protection has been completed, we should notice a rise in unemployment in the countries mostly affected by the recent migration flows, including – obviously – Italy. However, this should not discourage support initiatives: although it is commonly believed that refugees represent a cost for host societies, by channeling resources into programmes to promote employability – literacy, competence assessment, professional training, but also improvement of physical and mental health conditions – it is possible to turn this cost into an investment.

Finally, despite being obscured by events linked to the recent onslaught of refugees, discussions on the management of economic migration were resumed last year, thanks – particularly – to the public consultation launched by the European institutions on the amendment of the Blue Card Directive (which converged into the amendment proposal presented by the Commission on June 7th, 2016), in other words by the Directive symbolizing the failure of Europe’s aspiration to attract selected immigrants. By launching, in 2014, “an effective policy for migration and mobility” [COM(2014) 154 final], the management of migration flows became part of the “Europe 2020” strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, with the aim to develop ways of attracting new talents and competing on a global level, recognizing education diplomas and professional skills of immigrants already present in Europe. The Italian case, as described above, is emblematic of the distance that separates reality from this kind of aspiration. For example, although Italy has fixed a very low income threshold for obtaining the “Blue Card” (the gross annual salary must be at least 24,789 euro), this is very high when compared to the income distribution of non-EU immigrants. Even among the university educated élite, over 1/3 earns less than 800 euro per month while a meagre 4% earns more than 2,000 euro.

It is evidently not enough to offer a preferential channel for the legal immigration of “desirable” workers, if they are not able to meet the requirements of potential employers who are more interested in exploiting their great adaptability, a “quality” which has been the cornerstone of their employability in Italy (and in most European countries). It is with this in mind that we must examine the proposals aimed at strengthening Europe’s ability to attract immigrants, as presented in a recent joint study by the OECD and the European Union (2016) which is summarized in Box 1.

Although it is not possible to analyze the document in depth, two aspects deserve a mention. Both imply a broader communitarization of the issue, but in a more innovative manner compared to the past.

The first aspect is the chance to promote the EU “brand”, by presenting to potential candidates the single market as a whole, and not as the sum of individual countries, a fact that increases its competitive advantage. The second aspect is that of facilitating internal mobility also for third-country workers through a series of reforms regarding, in particular, the transfer of rights – including years of residence – acquired in another EU Member State.

Box 1 – Summary of the main recommendations**A. Increase the added value of EU initiatives**

- Improve the framework for recognition of qualifications for third-country nationals and related support procedures
- Develop EU-wide job-matching databases compatible with labour migration channels and schemes
- Increase opportunities for intra-EU mobility for lowering barriers, including for seasonal workers, students who have graduated, and other legally present third-country nationals

B. Improve “brand EU” and promote EU migration measures

- Strengthen the EU Immigration Portal and promote the comparative advantages of EU migration policy
- Develop the labour migration component in mobility partnerships with third countries
- Develop a gateway platform for initial contact and, in particular, for harmonised EU residence permits

C. Strengthen the harmonisation of EU policies

- Build more flexibility into the EU law-making system by creating mechanisms allowing adjustments to legislative details outside of Directives (implementing measures)
- Spell out the characteristics of labour market test procedures clearly and state the terms of third country nationals’ equal access to employment
- Standardise application forms for labour migrants
- Improve the portability of residence periods in mobility, allow applications for permits in one Member State to be filed from another Member State and facilitate international students’ bridge to work permits across the European Union

D. Revise the EU Blue Card to make it more effective and attractive

- Set separate, lower income thresholds for younger workers and new EU graduates, and waive labour market tests for labour migrants changing status
- Reduce the required contract duration, waiting period before mobility, and duration to eligibility for permanent residence
- Develop a “Blue-Card-Ready” pool of candidates whose qualifications have been recognised or who may benefit from facilitated mobility

E. Fill the gaps in EU policy initiatives

- Allow refugees to access more favourable EU labour migration schemes
- Develop and EU-wide youth mobility or Working Holiday scheme
- Extend minimum standard to additional migrant group, including investor

Source: OECD, EU, 2016: 22-23

On the other hand, because of its size – and the mobility restrictions to which it is subject – the immigrant population becomes an obstacle to the creation of a single European labour market, able to use human resources in the best possible way and, thus, become more competitive. Given this situation, it is easy to note a discrepancy between the progressive communitarization of the issue, strongly supported by the proposals in question – and even considered crucial to the

achievement of its stated goals – and the approach adopted by Europe in the last decades, focusing mainly on containing and controlling migration flows. Once again, the best example is provided by the handling of the refugee crisis which, by leading to the reappearance of internal borders, puts into question the very idea of a single European space.

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by Mariagrazia Santagati

5.1 Students with non-Italian citizenship

The most recent data available on the Italian educational system have been extensively detailed in the latest Report promoted by MIUR (Ministry of Education) and ISMU Foundation, entitled *Foreign students in Italian educational system. The multicultural school in local contexts. National Report. S.y. 2014/15 (Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana. La scuola multiculturale nei contesti locali*, edited by Santagati, Ongini, 2016). This chapter will present an overview of the main Italian data on this issue: in particular, I will focus on the territorial differences of the phenomenon of students with non-Italian citizenship, highlighting the characteristics of multicultural schools in Italian regions, provinces, and in the main municipalities.

As for the s.y. 2014/15, it is confirmed that there was an increase in the enrollment of foreign students in the educational system (Colussi, Ongini, 2016)¹. Over the past decade, the total foreign school population more than doubled, from 370,803 in s.y. 2004/05 (4.2% of the total school population) to 814,187 of s.y. 2014/15 (9.2%).

However, the annual increase, in A.V., gradually reduced: over the period analysed (Table1), the highest growth in the numbers of students with an immigrant background took place in 2007/08 if compared with the previous school year (+72,000 presences), while the smallest increase was recorded in the last school year here considered (+11,000 foreign students in 2014/2015).

¹ Terms such “foreign students”, “students with non-Italian citizenship”, “non-Italian students”, and “students with an immigrant background” are used as an equivalent in this chapter, referring to students who have foreign-born parents.

Table 1 – Students with non-Italian citizenship in the Italian Educational System. S.y. 2004/05-2014/15. A.V. and %

<i>School year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Per 100 students</i>	<i>Increase in A.V.</i>
2004/05	370,803	4.2	-
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	+16,214
2014/15	814,187	9.2	+11,343

Source: ISMU analysis on MIUR data

Table 2 – Students with non-Italian citizenship by school level. S.y. 2004/05 and 2014/15. V.A. and %

<i>S.y.</i>	<i>V.A.</i>				<i>%</i>			
	<i>Pre-primary</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Lower Sec.</i>	<i>Upper Sec.</i>	<i>Pre-primary</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Lower Sec.</i>	<i>Upper Sec.</i>
2004/05	74,348	147,633	84,989	63,833	20	39.8	22.9	17.3
2014/15	167,980	291,782	167,068	187,357	20.6	35.8	20.5	23.1

Source: ISMU analysis on MIUR data

As for the distribution across school levels, primary school still receives the greatest number of non-Italian students (cf. Table 2), followed by upper secondary school level, then by pre-schools and, finally, by lower secondary schools. Over the past decade, the enrollment of the total foreign student population decreased from 39.8% in 2004/5 to 35.8% in 2014/15, while an opposite trend was recorded in upper secondary schools (the number of students increased in the same period from 17.3% to 23.1%). It should be noted that, during the last school year, the only school level with an increase in the enrollments of foreign students was upper secondary school (+2.8%).

If we analyse the data in terms of the student's country of origin, we can see that in s.y. 2014/15 Romanians are still the most numerous (157,153), followed by Albanians (108,331) and Moroccans (101,584). Regarding gender, females are less numerous than males, making up 48% of the total (386,836): the only exception is recorded in upper secondary schools, where females are the prevalent component.

It is also important to underline that, starting from s.y. 2013/14, children born in Italy represent the majority of the students with an immigrant background. In 2014/15 they reached 55.3% (445,534 students in absolute values) of the non-Italian students (Table 3). Between 2007/8 – the first year when the data for this group was collected – and 2014/15 there was an

exponential growth in native-born students in secondary schools, where these presences have tripled.

Table 3 – Native-born students without Italian citizenship. S.y. 2007/08 and 2014/15. A.V. and %

	A.V. (2007/08)	A.V. (2014/15)	Born in Italy each 100 foreign students (2007/08)	Born in Italy each 100 foreign students (2014/15)
Pre-primary school	79,113	140,684	71.2	84.8
Primary	89,421	197,557	41.1	68.4
Lower secondary school	22,474	72,505	17.8	43.8
Upper secondary school	8,111	34,788	6.8	18.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>199,119</i>	<i>445,534</i>	<i>34.7</i>	<i>55.3</i>

Source: ISMU analysis on MIUR data

In terms of territorial distribution, Lombardy is the first region where the highest number of foreign students live, in fact they are over 200,000 (201,633); it is followed by Emilia Romagna and Veneto (over 90,000 foreign students), Lazio and Piedmont (over 70,000). Lombardy is also the region with the highest number of native-born students with an immigrant background (122,153). The focus on territories shows that the largest number of foreign students born in Italy live in the Northwest: in this area, in s.y. 2014/15 there were 179,422 students born in Italy with an immigrant background, followed by 129,981 in the Northeast, 100,839 in the Centre, 23,877 in the South and 11,415 in the Islands.

On the other hand, if we consider newly arrived pupils (in the previous school year), between 2007/08 and 2014/15, they dropped from 40,154 to 33,054. There was a new surge in the last year (+10,218 from 2012/13 to 2014/15), however, which can be partly explained by the significant rise in family reunions and an increase in the arrival of unaccompanied minors (10,536 in 2014). As for newcomer pupils, the geography of distribution is similar to the one of the students born in Italy considering the absolute values, but it changes if we take into account the percentages of the total of students with an immigrant background attending Italian schools: the higher percentages of newcomers are in the Islands (11.5%) and in the South (9.2%).

5.2 Focus on territories: presence and performance of students with an immigrant background

If we analyse the data in terms of foreign students' presence in the different Italian provinces² (Table 4), in s.y. 2014/15 the province of Milan ranked

² In Italy, a Province is an administrative division of intermediate level between a Municipality (comune) and a Region (regione).

number one for non-Italian students (80,000 foreign students), followed by the province of Rome (over 61,000), by Turin (almost 38,000) and by Brescia (over 32,000). Among the first 10 provinces, there is a prevalence of territories of the North, 5 regional capitals (Milan, Rome, Turin, Florence, Bologna); the same goes for provincial capitals (Brescia, Bergamo, Treviso, Verona, Vicenza). If we consider the percentage of foreign students with respect to the total school population, Prato (21.6 non-Italians each 100 students) and Piacenza (20.9) are at the top of the list (see Santagati, 2016a).

In the ranking considering the number of foreign students by municipalities, in which the phenomenon is analysed (Table 4), Rome exceeds Milan in about 3,500 units, reaching almost 40,000 presences. Milan, on the contrary, is characterized by a higher percentage of foreign students (19 foreign students each 100 students, this figure against 10 foreign students each 100 in Rome);

Table 4 – Characteristics of non-Italian students in the main Italian provinces and municipalities. S.y. 2014/15

	<i>Provinces</i>		<i>Municipalities</i>					
	<i>Foreign students A.V.</i>	<i>Foreign students each 100 students</i>	<i>Foreign students A.V.</i>	<i>Foreign students each 100 students</i>	<i>Born in Italy each 100 foreign students</i>	<i>% Non-Italian students in lyceum/ tot foreign students</i>	<i>% non-Italian students in vocational institutes/tot foreign students</i>	<i>% schools with 50% and over of non-Italians</i>
Milan	80,333	14.4	36,379	19.1	59.5	18.2	36.9	6.8
Rome	61,172	10.0	39,922	10.1	51.2	36.3	24.9	1.1
Turin	37,920	12.2	23,774	18.7	56.8	26.7	37.6	6.3
Brescia	32,678	17.5	7,873	18.6	51.5	18.3	43.5	1.5
Florence	20,561	14.9	9,170	15.9	53.5	22.7	49.1	2.2
Bologna	20,010	15.1	9,331	17.9	55.7	21.6	38.9	4.9
Verona	19,091	14.1	6,747	13.6	57.7	24.3	30.3	6.1

Source: ISMU analysis on MIUR data

Milan is at the first place also for the number of students with non-Italian citizenship born in Italy (over 21,000, 59.5% of all the foreign students): at the same time Verona, Turin e Bologna, too, show a percentage share of native-born students with an immigrant background higher than the national average (55.3%).

If we examine the differences among local contexts, another important focus concerns schools with high rates of foreign students. This presence is generated by complex mechanisms that intertwine the mobility of families and children, the residential concentration in specific areas/ territories and the risks of school segregation (Colombo, Santagati, 2014; Santagati, Ongini, 2016). In s.y. 2014/15,

there were 2,855 schools with over 30% of students with non-Italian citizenship (5.1% of the total of Italian schools) and 569 (1%) schools “with a majority of foreign students”. Lombardy is the region with the higher number of schools with 50% or more foreign students (167); within Lombardy, Milan is both the province (76 schools) and the municipality (55) that sees, in absolute values, the higher number of those institutes.

It should also be noted that, in the ranking of the main municipalities (for number of non-Italian students), Brescia is the town featured by the highest percentage of schools with 50% or more immigrant students (15%). On lower levels, but still well above the national average, Milan, Turin and Verona are characterized by a percentage higher than 6% of schools with a majority of foreign students.

Regarding the trajectories of foreign students in Italian local contexts (Table 4), we deem important to say that their distribution in different tracking of upper secondary schools changes significantly. Rome is the municipality that welcomes the highest percentage of foreign students in lyceums³ (+ than 10 points over the national 24.5% average of foreign students enrolled in lyceums), while Florence and Brescia stand out for the high percentages of foreign students in vocational schools (a percentage between 40 and 50%, very far from the 36.9% Italian average: cf. Bertozzi, 2016; Santagati, 2016b).

Table 5 – Mean score in Italian and Mathematics. INVALSI data, upper secondary school (2nd year), by citizenship and province. S.y. 2014/15

Upper secondary school	Italian			Mathematics		
	Italian students	First generation (born abroad)	Second generation (Native born)	Italians	First generation students	Second Generation students
Milan	61	42	51	38	30	37
Rome	53	42	46	40	29	33
Turin	55	42	48	46	37	41
Brescia	61	43	51	51	36	42
Florence	50	33	43	42	29	37
Bologna	61	43	50	52	38	43
Verona	61	47	52	50	38	42
Italy	56	42	48	47	36	41

Source: ISMU analysis on INVALSI data

Even the most recent INVALSI data⁴ based on standardized test results on Italian and Mathematics performances (2014/15), examined by Barabanti (2016) for

³ Lyceum in Italy includes classical, scientific, teaching and art high schools.

⁴ INVALSI is the National Institution for the Evaluation of the Educational System, a research institute with the status of legal entity governed by public law. INVALSI provides periodic and systematic evaluations on students' knowledge and skills, by elaborating standardized

the last MIUR/ISMU report, pointed out some national trends and some local differences in the results of upper secondary schools tests (Table 5):

- the first generation of immigrant students show greater difficulties than the second generation of native-born students and, above all, than Italians;
- the difficulties with the Italian language appear to be the main problem because of the wider gap in tests' results between first generation of foreign students and Italian ones;
- the difference between second generation students and Italians is smaller, especially in Maths, where the gap is reduced or it almost disappeared.

In some provinces, the school performances of Italian students in upper secondary schools are lower when compared to the national reference value: this is the case of the provinces of Rome, Turin and Florence for both tests and the province of Milan, only for Maths. Florence, in both tests, Milan and Rome, only for Maths, are the three provinces in which we see the lowest outcomes, not only for the foreign students, but also for the Italian ones. The overall analysis of INVALSI data shows that the different territories have significant differences with outstanding and disadvantaged areas for Italian and non-Italian students. In the light of the specificities of these local contexts, it is necessary to promote inclusive and positive educational environments for the learning of all students (Barabanti, 2016: 131).

In conclusion, according to the recent *Handbook for National Unions of Students on Students with a Migrant or Ethnic Minority Background* (2016), when promoting policies aimed at combating inequalities, it is important to formulate proposals showing how improvements can be achieved. Therefore, it is necessary to gather data on the experience of students of foreign origin by taking into account the obstacles and the barriers they have to face in their paths, along with the help that they need. This indication legitimates the analysis of data trend, to which ISMU contributes with the National Report on Foreign students in Italy, which constitutes a solid basis from which developing actions aimed at broadening the chances of success of foreign students.

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6

The Health of Migrants

by Nicola Pasini and Veronica Merotta

This chapter reviews the recent policy developments in the protection of migrants' health at national and EU level and the recent legal developments on migrants' right to health and its application. It looks at factors affecting migrants' health by using 2014 data on hospitalisation of migrants and provides specific thematic data, for instance, on abortions and infectious diseases. The review draws on a number of EU directives and from empirical evidence on diseases and health conditions collected in a medical centre in Lampedusa. The chapter ends with some recommendations from researchers and advocacy third sector organisations.

6.1 The closing of European welfare systems

National welfare systems are required to meet an increasing demand for assistance from all individuals present on their territory and that includes not only Italian citizens but also EU citizens and third country nationals.

Paradoxically, the demand for welfare services is not in line with the principle of closure that underpins national welfare systems and is a requirement for applying the solidarity and redistribution mechanisms.

While the European integration model is based on the concept of openness and takes the form of blurring of national borders and free movement of persons, goods, capital and services (Ferrera, 2016), national welfare systems seek to maintain clear borders that separate insiders from outsiders.

Although the divergence between EU integration and the welfare systems of member states has multiple reasons, four groups of sub-divergences can be identified: the tension between the economic and social dimension of the EU, where the market logics has been imposed; the opposition between northern member states (central, creditors) and southern member states (peripheral, debtors); the opposition between eastern member states (with weak welfare systems) and

western member states (with strong welfare systems); the tension between the EU level (supranational) and the member states (national) level of governance and sovereignty (Ferrera, 2016).

Until recent years these four sub-divergences had reached a balance. The recent increase in the number of migrants entering EU Member states has raised the issue of closed and open welfare systems again, as it was reported in the UK, Austria, Denmark and the Netherlands. More specifically, two opposed approaches are competing here. On the one hand is the idea that economic and financial aspects should be prioritised, often at the detriment of fundamental rights and the free movement of third-country nationals. On the other hand is the idea that the EU should also be considered a social union of multiple welfare systems catering for all EU citizens.

6.2 Developments at National Level (Italy)

6.2.1 Right to health care for migrants: the legal framework and its application

Over the past few years, political and social debate in Italy has focused on the possibility of including migrants in the welfare systems despite their not being taxpayers (Pasini, Merotta, 2015). Denying the right to health to immigrants goes against the Italian constitution, which considers it as a universal right to be guaranteed to all individuals present on the national territory and not just to Italian citizens (art. 32).

All third-country nationals with a legal residence permit, including beneficiaries of international protection, are entitled to equal treatment with Italian nationals in terms of rights (e.g. access to free healthcare for deprived persons) and duties (e.g. fees for healthcare services). Like all Italian citizens, they have access to the services provided by the national health service (Servizio Sanitario Nazionale, SSN) regardless of their economic conditions. Asylum seekers with a legal residence permit have the right to be affiliated to the SSN and are exempted from any fee for six months after the asylum application and beyond as long as they are found to be economically disadvantaged. Italian law is quite inclusive with regard to people without a legal residence permit, and gives them access to basic healthcare (hospitalisation or ambulatory care) without any risk of being reported to the authorities.

The application of the legal framework appears to be quite heterogeneous, in particular at a territorial level. More specifically, the gap in the provision and access to healthcare services by immigrants (legal and irregular) among local and regional authorities hampers the potential effectiveness of the inclusive and universalistic legal framework at national level (Idos, 2015). These disparities include the level of awareness of rights, the linguistic and cultural barriers, psychological fragility due to traumas, and the legal hurdles for irregular migrants. The

different interpretation of national laws by regional governments is responsible, to a large extent, for the misalignment of practices. .

6.2.2 The health of refugees and asylum seekers: a policy perspective

Although the European Parliament and the European Commission have recently stressed the importance of providing healthcare to vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers, the application of this principle has ultimately been given to member states and in particular to the member states alongside the EU external border.

The European regional office of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has engaged more directly by creating a specific task force on refugees' health, namely in the peripheral member states.

Italy's reception and human rights system is complex and diverse, as it involves both public authorities (regional and local authorities) and private bodies from the social sector. It is also organised in different facilities that can work as alternatives or as complementary in catering for asylum seekers throughout the application process.

The Italian law entitles asylum seekers to the same rights and duties as Italian citizens and an additional exemption from healthcare fees for the first six months after the application has been lodged.

Migrants whose eligibility for international protection has not yet been assessed are provided with a general medical check upon arriving at the reception centres. The public or private authorities managing initial reception centres (Centri di Accoglienza Straordinaria, CAS) must guarantee the presence of health operators and provide generic and specific social and psychological services. The same obligations apply to secondary reception and integration, the Protection System for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Sistema di Protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati, SPRAR).

Despite the legal protection of fundamental rights such as the right to health, major gaps exist among the different reception and integration systems, in particular between the initial reception facilities (CAS) and the secondary reception and integration facilities (SPRAR).

6.3 The health of migrants

Although migrants do not necessarily have poorer health conditions than Italian nationals, their specific situation entails different health profiles due to different risk factors. In terms of diseases of affluence (i.e. selected diseases that are commonly thought to be a result of increasing wealth in a society, such as obesity), migrants show lower levels of mortality than the overall Italian population. On the contrary, they show higher levels of mortality and morbidity for trans-

missible diseases, injuries, violence, while migrant women are more exposed to social exclusion in terms of sexual and reproductive health (Osservasalute, 2016).

Length of residence and membership to mixed families play a key role in improving health conditions. Migrants who have resided in Italy for a long time and migrants with an Italian partner show higher levels of health (INMP-ISTAT, 2016).

6.3.1 Hospitalisation

The data analysis of hospitalisations confirms the trend that access to hospital services is lower among migrants than Italian citizens and essentially limited to physiological factors (e.g. reproduction) and accidents (e.g. traumas and injuries). In 2014, 607,027 foreign-born nationals were hospitalised, in particular 477,510 under ordinary hospitalisation and 129,517 under day hospital procedure (Ministry of Health, 2015).

Abortions. In 2013, Istat recorded 100,342 cases of voluntary interruption of pregnancy at national level, 33.5% of which involved foreign-born women. Compared to 2012 data, this shows a slight decrease.

Infectious diseases: Data on infectious diseases does not raise public health concerns and, on the contrary, shows the healthcare system has weathered the recent and consistent flux of migrant and that no infectious disease has been found among those migrants.

Viral hepatitis: Between 2004 and 2013, 10,591 cases of acute viral hepatitis were reported to the SEIEVA (Italy's national integrated surveillance system for acute viral hepatitis). 15% (1,589 cases) involved non-Italian nationals and most of them were affected people from heavy migration pressure countries (97%).

6.3.2 The health of refugees and asylum seekers

The WHO has recently highlighted that several initial reception centres in peripheral EU Member states have not implemented sufficient health measures, in particular with regard to safe drinking water (World Health Organization, 2016). It also indicated that the chances that infectious and bacterial gastrointestinal diseases are transmitted through food is particularly high, due to the travel conditions and the overcrowding of some centres. Incidence of psychological traumas and heart diseases (e.g. diabetes or hypertension) are particularly high among refugees and migrants and is exacerbated by the interruption of medical treatments. The occurrence of diseases associated with the poor health conditions during the journey (e.g. respiratory infections, diarrhoea, lice) is also high. Finally, asylum seekers face the risk, albeit marginal, of contracting TBC, HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis and forms of measles and rubella (ibid.)

As for Italy, data collected in Lampedusa and Sicily highlights health issues related to travel conditions such as dehydration, hyperthermia, trauma, or bone

fractures (Abramo, Mancinelli, Buonomo, Palombi, 2016). The most frequently diagnosed and treated diseases at the Lampedusa reception centre include respiratory diseases, gastroenteritis and urogenital infections. The most frequently prescribed medicines are topical ones (e.g. antiparasitic treatments and antibiotics), analgesics, antifungals and antivirals (INMP, 2016).

The WHO data highlights the link between forced migrants and traumatic events, including torture and violence, which are often experienced before and during the journey and which, if not addressed properly, can cause profound damages leading to anxiety, insomnia and depression. These issues are nevertheless not easy to identify, as migrants often do not express their needs on their very first contact with the healthcare professionals. They therefore remain latent and can be traced only through a careful analysis of migrants' personal stories and an understanding of their symptoms (Aragona, 2016).

Difficulties in addressing asylum seekers' psychological conditions are further complicated by three factors. Firstly, they might not be fully aware of psychotherapy and its benefits. Secondly, cultural barriers and taboos might hamper the sharing of personal and traumatic events including sexual violence. Thirdly, they might have undergone a process of normalisation of violent and traumatic events. An anthropological study conducted in the Lampedusa reception centre showed that a high number of asylum seekers were victims of violence before (40%) and during the journey (80%), in particular while being in Libya. The majority of respondents declared considering these events as an unavoidable part of the migration experience (Segneri, Castaldo, Fortino, Costanzo, 2016).

6.4 Recommendations

The protection of migrants' health and their access to healthcare services is a topic that has been extensively debated at political level and in public opinion with the contribution of third sector organisations and national and international institutions. Below is a list of the main recommendations stakeholders have addressed to national and EU institutions in terms of governance in order to improve the protection of migrants' health.

A complete European integration

Without a truly integrated European Union welfare that mediates between the interests of the EU (economic and financial stability) and the interests of EU citizens (the social dimension of the EU), inequalities among citizens of different member states and between EU citizens and third-country national will increase. This could lead to further tensions and conflicts that could jeopardise the survival and the cohesion of the EU ("Brexit" is a clear example of this).

A clear political line

Under the current European Commission lead by Jean-Claude Juncker, the priorities of the EU are being redefined, and increasing attention is being paid to the

principles of equity, inclusion and social justice. If the European Commission truly believes this supranational approach will have a positive impact on the endurance of the EU, it should translate these principles into political guidelines in order to provide Member states with a clear operational input (Ferrera, 2016).

More social equity

An inclusive society based on social cohesion could reduce the risks of raising xenophobia. The WHO is in favour of more equity, human dignity and respect of fundamental rights, including the right to health. Among other things, it also recommended lifting legal barriers in order to enable full access to healthcare (WHO, 2016).

A multi-level governance

The predominantly top-down EU decision-making should take more account of the inputs from Member states' sub-national authorities, as these latter have direct access to stakeholders and their problems (Gilardoni, D'Odorico, Carrillo, 2015).

Need for far-reaching policies, not emergency policies

It is not enough to acknowledge and protect fundamental rights at a legal level. Protection of fundamental rights must be mainstreamed at an operational level, for instance by providing training aimed at field workers. It is essential to move away from an emergency-orientated approach to migration and integration policies that not only has not solved issues, but it has also created and exacerbated social tensions.

Reception policies that are territorially targets

The fragmentation of measures among different regions in Italy have proved to increase, rather than reduce, the health gap between migrants and the rest of the Italian population. In order to truly address these inequalities, the national Government should commit to creating a coherent reception system across the country. This system should be monitored regularly through appointed mechanisms in order to verify the implementation of the state-regions agreement. More specifically, periodic reviews of government reception centres should be conducted in order to verify that basic services are provided.

Greater responsibility of the central actors

The self-organisation of services by the third sector to compensate for the low involvement of public authorities is not always a good choice, especially in the long term. The interruption of public funding as part of public tendering can lead to a discontinuity of services, with the great risk that vulnerable migrants feel abandoned due to the inefficiency of Italian bureaucracy and grow more resentful towards the country. Social partner from the private sector should demand that the NHS fulfil its role in the policy governance and act with greater responsibility in identifying, knowing and addressing existing issues.

In conclusion, the advocacy of stakeholders has resulted in a number of key messages on the operational and technical aspects of the current approach to the health of migrants, namely migrants in transit. At its annual congress (2016) the Italian Society of Migration Medicine (Società Italiana di Medicina delle Migrazioni, SIMM) recommended:

- guaranteeing that they are properly taken in charge by building a network of public institutions and private actors, involving communities on the ground, and strengthening cooperation between the social and the health dimension;
- focusing on data collection upon their arrival, keeping in mind that this risks creating and nurturing stigmas between economic migrants and asylum seekers. The collection of data can indeed have an impact on the legal status, the integration programme and the future of migrants;
- providing training aimed at professionals in order to equip them with proper competences and tools for an early identification of migrants' manifest and latent discomfort;
- operationalising the programmes identified in the stakeholder meetings as soon as possible.

6.5 Conclusions

Some EU Member states are increasingly adopting a restrictive approach to national welfare, since closure is required to apply the principles of solidarity and redistribution. In addition to the clear definition of national borders, this approach inevitably views EU migrants and third-country nationals as a threat to sustainability.

The Italian constitution enshrines the right to health in an inclusive way by placing legal migrants and asylum seekers on the same footing as Italian citizens in terms of access to healthcare services. As for irregular migrants, some forms of protection exist beyond emergency care.

The Italian legislation is based, however, on a strong delegation of competence in the field of social and health policies to regions. The way regions respond to migrants' needs, including asylum seekers, is quite inconsistent. In particular, the Italian reception system for asylum seekers is complex and provides services that are not equal in terms of territories and programmes.

Migrants do not necessarily have poorer health conditions than Italian nationals. Their morbidity risks are different and can become similar to those of Italian nationals if migrants have resided in Italy for a long time and are in mixed couples and families. The incidence of psychological traumas, often due to torture and violence before and during the journey, has been recorded among asylum seekers in reception centres. These traumas often go undetected, leading to cases of depression, insomnia and anxiety.

In 2014 nearly 607,000 foreign-born nationals were hospitalised at their own expense (477,000 under ordinary hospitalisation).

Health issues related to travel conditions are predominant among forced migrants in Italian initial reception centres. There is a strong correlation between forced migrants and traumatic events, i.e. events that forced migrants have experienced before or during the journey and that can lead to severe mental and physical disorders.

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Unaccompanied Minors in Italy

by Giovanni Giulio Valtolina

7.1 Introduction

The most recent data regarding unaccompanied immigrant minors (UAMs) in Europe shows that this phenomenon has become, in recent years, a steady component of migration flows to Europe, and is made up mostly of minors escaping from warzones. They come to Europe for different reasons, very often pushed by their own families and frequently in order to reach relatives already settled in EU countries and begin a better life. Because they travel without a family protection network, however UAMs are more fragile and at greater risk of exploitation and smuggling. For this reason, several UE laws focus on them.

Despite the increasing social impact of the UAMs in many UE Member States, public opinion doesn't seem to have a specific attitude towards unaccompanied minors, identifying them prevalently as "children alone". Hence, their social representation does not specifically influence social behaviour and the negotiation of social identities.

Generally speaking, one (or more) of these four key reasons push these minors to leave their home country: economic motivations; reunification with a family member; education; joining a Diaspora community. Given the diversity of these factors, the universe of the UAMs is made up of different subgroups. A first difference is between asylum seeking and non-asylum seeking minors. In the subgroup of non-asylum seeking minors, however, we can still identify several different groups, such as victims of trafficking or undocumented minors. These are minors without a valid residence permit, who live outside any system of state support (including the asylum system). Usually unaccompanied minors are undocumented even before they come in contact with state services, and may have entered Europe irregularly and independently. In other cases, they may become undocumented if they lose contact with social services. Undocumented children are a multifaceted group, who often change status during the course of their childhood.

Public opinion, identifying UAMs as an homogeneous group of children, misses the heterogeneity of this group and the many issues raised by UAMs. The phenomenon of UAMs is a multifaceted issue, which cannot be addressed using a single approach. Typically represented as small children without any family link in the host country, UAMs are, on the contrary, a mixed group with specific features and different needs, which must be acknowledged and dealt with.

As one of the most vulnerable categories in the complex scenario of contemporary human mobility at the global level, UAMs pose a challenge to EU countries and their ability to really guarantee the fundamental rights of the child and support the weakest members of society.

7.2 Current data

The number of UAMs disembarked in Italy is dramatically increased in the last years: 25.846 UAMs cross the sea to come to Italy in 2016, more than double of 2015: the 14,2% of all the disembarkations. In the 2015 were the 8% and in 2014 they were the 7,7%. On the contrary, the minors who came to Italy along with their parents are decreased: 13 thousand in 2014, 2.400 in 2016.

In the 2016, the monthly data about UAMs shows a regular increase with the highest number of UAMs disembarkations on October: 3.771 minors.

Table 1 – Disembarkation in Italy, 2014-2016

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total disembarkation</i>	<i>UAMS</i>	<i>% UAMS</i>
2014	170.100	13.026	7,7
2015	153.842	12.360	8,0
2016	181.436	25.846	14,2
	<i>Monthly data 2016</i>		
January	5.273	645	12,2
February	3.828	691	18,1
March	9.676	1.344	13,9
April	9.149	1.861	20,3
May	19.925	2.468	12,4
June	22.371	3.515	15,7
July	23.552	3.181	13,5
August	21.294	3.158	14,8
September	16.975	2.138	12,6
October	27.384	3.771	13,8
November	13.581	1.887	13,9
December	8.428	1.187	14,1

Source: ISMU on UNHCR data

In 2016, the UAMs were the 92% of all the disembarked minors. They were the 49% in 2014 and the 75% in 2015.

Considering the nationalities of the UAMs disembarked in Italy in 2016, almost 3 out of 4, come from Africa (74,3%): 15,4% from Eritrea, 12,9% from Gambia, 12,1% from Nigeria.

Table 2 – Nationalities of UAMs disembarked on 2016 (January-November)

	<i>UAMS</i>	<i>% Value</i>
Nigeria	2.932	12,1
Eritrea	3.714	15,4
Guinea	2.225	9,2
Ivory Coast	1.613	6,7
Gambia	3.119	12,9
Sudan	431	1,8
Senegal	1.072	4,4
Mali	1.302	5,4
Somalia	1.535	6,4
Others	6.229	25,7
<i>Total</i>	<i>24.172</i>	<i>100,0</i>

Source: ISMU on UNHCR data

According to the data of the Ministry of Labour and Welfare, even the UAMs hosted in Italian reception centres increased since 2014: 10.536 in 2014, 11.921 in 2015, 17.245 in 2016. The 93% of the UAMs hosted in Italy are male, and more than a half are 17 years old.

But Italy is not the final destination, for many of these UAMs: very often they want to leave Italy to go to Northern Europe, where family members or friends live. In 2016, over 6.500 UAMs escape from the reception centres. UAMs asking for international protection in Italy are few: only 4.168 out of 17.245 UAMs, even though they increased significantly in the last 3 years: 2.505 in 2014; 3.959 in 2015.

7.3 Critical issues

Ismu drawn a project in order to highlight critical issues in dealing with UAMs in EU Member States. Information and data was gathered through a review of the existing literature on the topic and through in-depth interviews to international stakeholders, providing a critical and prospective view.

With reference to the desk analysis, the main sources at national and international levels were considered¹. This has allowed to highlight best

¹ The full list of documents is available at www.ismu.org/en/minors-and-family/.

practices, discrepancies between contexts, shortcomings and funding or intervention needs. The interview phase, on the other hand, was carried out in 2015 and 17 international experts were interviewed². Two set of questions were prepared: the first regarding UAMs seeking asylum, and the second focussing on UAMs who were not seeking asylum. Both sets focused on the reception and inclusion of UAMs, with the aim to highlight:

- the main issues faced by a specific country and/or by the European Union;
- the legal and social shortcomings;
- the role of civil society in supporting initiatives for receiving and integrating UAMs;
- the practices carried out at the local level and the main strategies implemented;
- the main intervention and funding needs.

These are the most important issues which emerged from ISMU study:

- regarding the identification of border crossing UAMs, a key point is age assessment; since many UAMs cross borders without any identification documents or with documents that need to be checked for authenticity, the practices for age assessment are different across EU States, in terms of motives, methods and timing;
- creating collaborations among the different stakeholders involved in the reception and inclusion of UAMs;
- ensuring UAMs have access to education, through professional training and skills development; it is fundamental in order to support them in finding employment and becoming independent;
- having skilled, trained and dedicated staff, able to deal with UAMs appropriately (especially cultural mediators);
- endorsing the active involvement of UAMs in their route to integration, through specific measures aimed at fostering their empowerment;
- ensuring all UAMs benefit from the same level of protection; currently, there is a clear gap between asylum seeking and non-asylum seeking minors, e.g., in terms of how fast a representative/guardian is appointed;
- tackling the situation of UAMs who go missing or run away from reception facilities;
- accomplishing the obligations related to upholding the right to family unity, in particular family tracing, as indicated in EU documents;
- finding resources to obviate the budget cuts and the lack of financial support in most countries, which affect the development of actions for the

² Italy: 4; Belgium: 3; Netherlands: 2; France: 1; Greece: 1; Spain: 1; Germany: 1; International Organization for Migration (IOM): 1; European Commission: 1; European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE): 1; Save the Children: 1.

integration of UAMs and hinder efforts aimed at the finding durable solutions;

- identifying the adequacy of reception facilities for UAMs; currently, in some Member States, UAMs seeking asylum and those not seeking asylum are all hosted in similar facilities, whereas in other EU Member States they are allocated to different facilities. The types of facilities offered are also quite different: some countries have facilities specifically for children, others have a dedicated area within mainstream facilities, others still have opted for foster families;
- identifying “durable solutions” for UAMs, as stated in the *Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors 2010-2014*; the creation of a National Action Plan, encompassing “durable solutions” for UAMs, is essential, especially given the fact that one is not currently in place in any EU Member States;
- highlighting the role of civil society in hosting and integrating UAMs;
- accompanying the change in status, once UAMs turn 18 years of age.

It has to be said that this last issue is widely acknowledged as one of the most important, because of the high number of UAMs currently living in the EU States close the age of 18. For this reason, we are going to present the different practices adopted in different Member States, in order to shed light on the variety of arrangements currently practiced with regards UAMs’ change of status. Given the different practices implemented across the EU, coordinated strategies and actions at the EU level are urgently needed.

7.4 Concluding remarks

A first important issue which has emerged from our study is that measures aimed at improving cooperative relationships among actors at all levels of governance would be more than welcome. The crucial point is that the more collaboration increases, the greater the benefit for UAMs, because this ensures that the “best interest of the child” is put first.

The literature review and the information gathered through the interviews conducted enable to make the following recommendations:

- it is important to improve data collection methods, with full respect of data protection standards; data concerning UAMs’ reception and inclusion should be collected at individual level in order to properly assess how processes occur and thus, potentially, to improve shortcomings;
- UAMs must always be treated, at all levels of governance, as holders of individual rights, right from the beginning and in consideration of their particular condition: they are minors and they are migrants; currently, they are minors who face the same situations of other migrants but without any support;

- ensuring that UAMs' rights are explicit in legislation and accessible in practice; this includes pursuing proactive measures to eliminate practical barriers, such as warranting equal access to all levels of education, health service, and shelter, regardless of residence status;
- operationalizing existing legal safeguards and procedural guarantees, such as the best interest of the child principle; advocacy activities could be used in order to reach this goal;
- evaluating enforcement rules and practices – arrest, detention and deportation – in order to assess the impact on child rights and rapidly redress individual rights violations. In some Member States if the law states that a minor has to be expelled, it rarely occurs; creating a situation whereby they stay in detention centres or live undocumented on the road, with no rights;
- implement measures and setting rules, taking into account the currently different social and legal contexts.

In conclusion, the study highlights that more efforts, in terms of activities and funds, should be made in order to improve the strategies of reception and inclusion of UAMs in Europe. It is mandatory for EU Member States to provide the tools to face this situation beyond the emergency.

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Schengen at a Crossroads: European or National Borders?

by Roberto Cortinovis

8.1 Introduction: the migration crisis in Europe in 2015-2016

The significant growth in the number of migrants and asylum seekers who have crossed the borders of the European Union (EU) over the course of the last two years has put at risk the functioning of the Schengen area – that is, the area without internal border controls – which constitutes one of the main achievements of the European integration process. Specifically, the decision by a group of Member States to reintroduce controls at their internal borders, whilst formally permissible within the existing legal framework, raised important questions about the willingness of Member States’ governments to maintain the integrity of the Schengen area, where issues that are considered relevant from the point of view of the national interest come into play.

There is no doubt that the migration flows that have been experienced in Europe since 2014 have been largely greater than in the past and are in part the result of exceptional events in the countries from which the majority of these migrants originate. Ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as in numerous sub-Saharan African countries (often coupled with long-standing social and economic instability), have maintained a strong migration pressure towards Europe in recent years. Over the course of 2015, more than one million people had entered the EU “illegally”, according to the European Agency Frontex, quadrupling the figure of 216,000 arrivals recorded in 2014 (Frontex, 2016). Provisional data relating to 2016 (collected in mid-September) shows that over 290,000 people had already entered the EU (UNHCR, 2016a).

The growth of migration flows in the Mediterranean has gone hand in hand with the increase in the number of applications for asylum lodged in the EU: in

2015, more than 1.2 million people had made an application for asylum in the EU, around double the figure of 2014. One particularly important aspect in terms of political implications is the distribution of asylum applications between Member States. The data provided by Eurostat for the first quarter of 2016 shows that, out of 287,000 applications submitted in the EU, Germany accepted 61% of the total, followed by Italy (8%), France (6%), Austria (5%) and the United Kingdom (4%). These five Member States accounted for 83% of the total number of applications submitted during the period in question in the EU (Eurostat, 2016a).

The migratory situation of early 2016 is particularly relevant for the purposes of the analysis carried out in this contribution, as it coincided with the most heated phase of the debate on the functioning of the Schengen area. The tensions that hit the Schengen area in the first half of the year were the direct result of the dramatic increase of migration flows from all along the Balkan route that begun in the autumn of 2015, when hundreds of thousands of migrants who had landed on the Greek Islands from the nearby Turkish coasts started to march through Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary (and, following the construction of a wall along the Serbo-Hungarian border, Croatia and Slovenia) in order to reach the Northern European countries, primarily Germany and Sweden.

Flows along the Balkan route were dramatically reduced during 2016: whereas in the final months of 2015, the countries situated along this route – Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary and Croatia – were crossed by thousands of migrants daily, data shows that these numbers dropped sharply in the middle months of 2016 (UNHCR, 2016b). There is no doubt that the closure of the Balkan route has responded to a precise political priority put forward by the states most affected by the secondary movements of asylum seekers into their countries. This choice, however, has not been without consequences: the political events that characterised the management of the Balkan route, as described in the following sections, can be equated to a true political earthquake that hit the Schengen system, calling into question the principle of free movement of people in which it is rooted.

8.2 Schengen under pressure: the reintroduction of internal border controls

Several Member States reintroduced controls at their internal borders from September 2015 onwards. As mentioned above, the trigger for this decision can be found in the “opening” of the Balkan route, which resulted in a veritable exodus of migrants and refugees marching through European countries. The creation of the Balkan route was facilitated by the so-called wave through policy which was initially adopted by transit states – Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary – with the aim of facilitating the movement of refugees towards Northern European countries. Such an approach had been partly justified by the

reception policy adopted by Germany in August 2015: the decision made by Chancellor Merkel, when faced with the possibility that a series of unilateral closures of borders along the Balkan route could result in a large-scale repatriation of migrants in search of protection, had been to temporarily suspend the normal operation of the Dublin System, allowing refugees to obtain protection in Germany rather than, as established by EU law, in the country of first entry, which was, in most cases, Greece (The Economist, 12 September 2015).

In response to the threat of a possible collapse of the German reception system – that was considered unable to absorb such a high number of refugees in such a short period – as well as to an increasingly strong domestic opposition, it was, however, Merkel herself who decided, the following month, to reintroduce internal controls along the Austrian border, justifying this choice with the need to ensure an orderly flow of asylum seekers on German territory. Germany's decision triggered a "chain reaction", resulting in similar decisions by the Austrian and Slovenian governments. In the months that followed, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Belgium also announced the reintroduction of internal border controls (Guild et al., 2016, pp. 14-15).

The reintroduction of internal border controls was carried out in line with the legal framework provided for by the Schengen Borders Code, which contains specific rules governing the ways in which such a reintroduction can be made (Council/Parliament, 2016). Specifically, the countries named above firstly invoked the emergency procedure provided for in Article 28 of the Schengen Code, which allows the immediate reintroduction of controls for a maximum period of two months in the case of unforeseen circumstances which pose a serious threat to public policy and internal security. Later, having exhausted the maximum limit allowed by article 28, some of the Member States concerned resorted to Art. 27, which includes the procedure governing the reintroduction of internal controls in the case of foreseeable events: in that circumstance, internal border controls can be reintroduced for up to 30 days, renewable for up to six months.

So what were the reasons given by the Member States in order to justify the reintroduction of internal controls? When browsing through the communications sent to the Commission by the Member States, you can see how they relate mainly to exceptional migratory pressures within their own territories. The Slovenian authorities, for example, refer to "uncontrollable migration flows" by framing the issue in terms of "illegal migration", whereas the German authorities refer to them in a more neutral manner as "uncontrolled and unmanageable inflows of nationals of non-member countries". There are also specific allegations against so-called "border states", namely Italy and Greece, who are accused of not being able to ensure proper management of their external borders. The Austrian authorities, for example, point the finger at Greece: "Due to the recognised, persistent and serious deficiencies in Greece's management of its external borders, Austria will continue to conduct internal border checks for a further two months" (Guild et al., 2016, p. 48).

The serious deficiencies in controlling its external borders that Greece is accused of are also the reason given by some Member States to justify the need to retain internal border controls for longer than the total period of eight months provided for by the combined provisions of articles 27 and 28 of the Schengen Border Code. At the end of that period, i.e. from mid-2016 onward, these Member States would have found it impossible to continue the checks without invoking article 29 of the Schengen Borders Code. This article states that, if the overall functioning of the Schengen Area is put at risk by serious and persistent deficiencies related to external border control (and provided that this constitutes a serious threat to public policy or internal security for Member States), internal border controls can be reinstated for a maximum period of six months which may be extended up to three times, i.e. for a maximum period of two years. This procedure can be activated only as a last resort and when the measures put in place by said Regulation in order to remedy these serious shortcomings have not had the desired effect: in this case, the Commission may submit a proposal to the EU Council of Ministers for the latter to recommend to one or more Member States to reinstate controls at its internal borders.

In February 2016, the Commission had published a report that presented the results of an assessment of the Greek border control system conducted in November 2015 (Commission, 2016a). According to the Report in question, the assessment noted serious deficiencies in Greece's management of its external border controls, particularly due to the lack of proper identification and registration of irregular migrants who arrived on the Greek Islands, primarily caused by a lack of the staff and equipment necessary to check migrants' identity documents. The Commission concluded that these serious deficiencies "constitute a serious threat to public order and internal security and jeopardise the overall operation of the area without internal borders". Despite the progress made by Greece during subsequent evaluations, on 4th May 2016 the European Commission made a proposal to the Council of Ministers to recommend the reintroduction of internal border controls on the basis of Art. 29 (Commission, 2016b). This recommendation, formally adopted by the Council on 12th May 2016, allowed five Schengen Member States – Austria, Denmark, Germany, Sweden and Norway – to keep the controls in place for a further six months (Council of Ministers, 2016).

Although also in this case the procedure laid down in the Schengen Border Code was formally respected, the timing and the manner in which it was adopted clearly reflect the political character of this decision. Indeed, it can be considered as the direct result of strong pressure exerted by the Member States concerned in order to maintain controls at their borders, despite the flow of people along the Balkan route already being substantially reduced in May 2016.

The exceptional measures taken to allow the reintroduction of checks at internal borders go to the very core of the response adopted by the EU Member States (and therefore also the European institutions) to cope with the migration crisis. As mentioned in the first section, the extraordinary influx of migrants arrived Europe during 2015 – especially those moving towards Greece – was

largely made up of refugees coming from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, as evidenced by the high rate of approval of applications from those nationalities. The management of those flows could therefore be framed in terms of a humanitarian issue, in line with the approach initially adopted by Germany. The fact that the prevailing political line subsequently turned decisively towards the reintroduction of border controls (both internal and external) and the fight against illegal migration (and not on the reception of refugees) is the proof of a deterioration of the political climate in many Member States.

With a lack of appropriate mechanisms for sharing responsibility at the EU level, as also demonstrated by the poor implementation of the exceptional relocation plan adopted in September 2015, the only possible result was the prevalence of unilateral strategies to contain flows. The reintroduction of controls has been accompanied by numerous statements regarding a possible “end” or “dissolution” of the Schengen Agreement, hand in hand with assessments about the costs (not just economic, but also political) that such decision could incur¹. Tensions around Schengen have also widened the fault line that divides “continental” and “border” Member States. Over the past year, it was mainly Greece that was in the dock: the accusations against Greece are similar to those made against Italy in the past – that is, the failure to ensure the registration of asylum seekers on its territory and to proceed swiftly with the repatriation of those not deemed in need of protection.

As will be discussed in the next section, the subsequent EU response was focused on recognising Greece as the “weak link” in the Schengen system and was geared towards pursuing two objectives: first, to ensure a more efficient management of migration flows, with a primary focus aimed specifically at Greek borders; second, to achieve cooperation with major countries of origin and transit, primarily Turkey.

8.3 The European Union’s strategy to “save” Schengen

The report presented by the Commission in March 2016 titled *Back to Schengen – A Roadmap* includes the strategy developed by the EU to “save” Schengen, namely to restore normal operation of the area without internal border controls (Commission, 2016c).

The focus of the Commission was obviously directed at Greece, the starting point of the Balkan route. The Commission stressed above all the need for a joint effort by the Member States, the European agencies (Frontex and EASO), and the Commission itself in order to provide immediate support to Athens. The primary objective of the EU’s action was to ensure the registration of all migrants and asylum seekers arriving in Greece. This condition was considered essential to

¹ In terms of economic costs, according to the European Commission, the full reestablishment of border controls within the Schengen Area would generate immediate direct costs for the EU economy in a range between €5 and €18 billion annually (Commission, 2016c, p. 3).

put an end to secondary movements along the Balkan route and ensure the proper operation of the Dublin Regulation. Financial support to Greece was also increased to this end: the European Commission made over 345 million euros in emergency assistance available from the beginning of 2015 up to July 2016 in order to improve reception conditions, ensure that asylum procedures were in line with EU standards and integrate asylum seekers locally².

In addition to the financial and operational support given to Greece, the EU's strategy to ensure efficient management of its external borders also entailed the establishment of a European Border and Coast Guard Agency. The new European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex's successor) was granted the role of *primus inter pares* within a network made up of the border authorities of the Member States, which will continue to be responsible for the management of their respective external borders. In line with this approach, the new agency has been attributed the role of establishing an operational and technical strategy for the integrated management of the EU's external borders that national authorities are expected to follow (Rijpma, 2016).

Despite the rapid negotiation of the Regulation regarding the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, it would be impossible to expect the new agency to perform all the tasks and functions assigned to it in the short term. It appears clear, then, that the EU's priority of containing flows could only be achievable in the short-term through increased cooperation with Turkey, not only a transit country for a large share of migrants heading towards Europe, but also the main country hosting refugees at the global level, with almost three million Syrian refugees in its territory.

The cooperation between the EU and Turkey was first expressed in the Joint Plan of Action signed on 29th November 2015, through which the parties intended to increase support to the Syrian population residing in Turkey and the communities hosting them, as well as to increase cooperation in fighting illegal immigration (Commission, 2015a). The implementation of this plan of action revolved around the creation of a facility (i.e. a financial instrument) to the value of three billion euros that the EU and its Member States undertook to make available to support the efforts of the Turkish government. The initiatives implemented through the available funds aimed to address not only the immediate needs of refugees in Turkey, but also their longer-term needs, such as access to the education system, the health care system and the labour market (Commission, 2015b).

Negotiations between the EU and Turkey reached a higher stage in early 2016 as they came to involve issues that were not strictly concerned with the management of the migratory crisis. The results of the renewed commitment at cooperation found practical implementation in the EU-Turkey Statement of 18th March 2016 (European Council, 2016). The Statement is meant to represent a

² These emergency funds came in addition to the 509 million euros already allocated to Greece for the 2014-2020 period through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) (Commission, 2016d).

watershed in the management of the crisis, putting a definitive end to “illegal migration from Turkey to the EU”. To achieve this objective, the agreement establishes two priorities: i) the repatriation to Turkey of all new illegal migrants who arrived in Greece from 20th March 2016, including asylum seekers whose application is considered unfounded or inadmissible; ii) the implementation of a “one to one” resettlement mechanism, whereby for every Syrian repatriated to Turkey from the Greek Islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey in another EU member state. In exchange for commitments in the field of readmission and increased control of the Turkish coast, Ankara has placed on the negotiating table the acceleration of the roadmap regarding the liberalisation of visas for Turkish citizens and a revival of Turkey's accession process to the EU. The agreement also includes the provision of additional financial resources to support Turkey: the Statement specifies that whereas the three billion made available under the facility for refugees had been completely used, the EU would mobilise an additional 3 billion euros by the end of 2018.

The EU-Turkey Statement was preceded by a climate of strong tension that highlighted the divisions among Member States regarding the strategy to adopt in dealing with Ankara and, more generally, for addressing the migrant crisis (Emmanouilidis, 2016). The agreement with Turkey was strongly supported by Germany, as it was considered a central component of a pan-European strategy to deal with the crisis. In this way, Chancellor Merkel intended to counter the “closed-door” attitude of some European Heads of State, such as the Hungarian Prime Minister Orban and the Austrian Chancellor Faymann and, more generally, the spread of the “walls and barbed wire” policy as a legitimate method of responding to migration flows along the Balkan route. According to the German government's strategy, then, the agreement with Turkey was a fundamental prerequisite for “saving” Schengen, which was supposed to be accompanied by a wider reform of the European asylum system and the governance of the Union's external borders (Spiegel International, 11th March 2016).

There is no doubt, however, that even the path of cooperation with Turkey poses many questions from a political, legal and ethical point of view, exposing the EU to accusations of inconsistency. Many non-governmental organisations for the protection of refugees have criticised the assumption on which the repatriation of asylum seekers under the agreement is based, namely that Turkey can be considered a “safe” country for refugees, recalling how Turkey maintains a geographical limitation from the application of the Geneva Convention, precluding the attribution of full refugee status to non-Europeans. The European institutions answered by arguing that, despite the geographical limitation, refugees residing in Turkey would receive “equivalent” protection to that laid down in the Convention, due to recent legislation adopted by the Turkish government. Proponents of the agreement also stressed that all applications for asylum made in Greece would be evaluated on “an individual basis” by the Greek authorities, as well as guaranteeing the right of appeal in case of refusal of the request, in accordance with the provisions contained in EU legislation on asylum procedures (Emmanouilidis, 2016, pp. 4-5).

On the Turkish front, in addition to operational difficulties, there are political issues that threaten to undermine the foundations on which the agreement was struck: in particular, following the attempted coup of 15th July 2015 and the subsequent repression implemented by the Turkish government against the alleged perpetrators, which, according to many observers, has further reduced the protection of democratic guarantees in the country, dissenting voices have multiplied and the warnings regarding whether to continue on the path plotted by the agreement, from the liberalisation of visas for Turkish citizens to the revival of Turkey's accession process to the EU (Financial Times, 1st August 2016).

Ultimately, although it has undoubtedly contributed to significantly reducing migration flows along the Balkan route, avoiding the prospect of an implosion of the Schengen area and reviving the chance of a pan-European response to the crisis, the EU-Turkey agreement seems to stand on a weak foundation. In light of this, it is obvious that the EU needs a long-term strategy to sustainably manage asylum and migration flows and lay the groundwork for an effective response to future shocks. A central component of this strategy passes for a structural reform of the Common European asylum system: in 2016, several legislative proposals were introduced to that aim, including a further harmonisation of legislation on asylum criteria and procedures and a revision of the Dublin system (Commission, 2016e). The outcome of this reform process will deserve special attention in the future since from the content and form it will take would depend the possibility for the EU to remedy the vulnerabilities shown in the management of flows in the last years.

8.4 Conclusions: European or national borders?

The dynamics of Member States' internal politics and negative public attitudes to immigration, whether economic or motivated by humanitarian reasons, are variables that are key to understanding the trajectory taken by EU policy in response to the crisis, from the re-introduction of internal borders to the main foreign policy lines, such as the agreement with Turkey but also through increased cooperation with African countries following to the Valletta Summit in November 2015. The management of migration also vividly exposes tensions between the national and European levels of government, resulting in a sort of "existential" crisis which raises pressing questions about the future of the EU.

Indeed, a common thread connects the issues that have surrounded the Schengen system to the "centrifugal forces" that pervade many European countries, where Eurosceptic political forces appear to be very much on the rise. The outcome in favour of Brexit in the June 2016 referendum held in the UK is certainly the most striking case of this rejection of the European integration process. Although this event is at least partly rooted in the British people's traditional distrust of the EU, it should be borne in mind that Eurosceptic political forces have gained support in many European countries: just think of

the advance of the Front National in France or the exploits of the far-right Candidate Norbert Hofer in the Austrian presidential elections. Even in Germany, the traditional homeland of Europeanism, the Eurosceptic and anti-immigration party Alternative für Deutschland (The Alternative for Germany) saw considerable success in the regional elections held in 2016. In all the cases mentioned above, anti-Europeanism is closely tied to restrictive positions regarding immigration (Mudde, 2013).

The advance of the Eurosceptic forces described above has caused negative repercussions on the framework of European cooperation; specifically, it has led to a vicious circle whereby mainstream parties (who are charged with representing the Member States in the various European institutions) are forced to “chase” the positions of the Eurosceptic parties (Balfour et al., 2016). This often translates in the instrumental use of the EU as a scapegoat for Member States’ internal problems, a strategy traditionally used by European rulers but one that at this stage risks being particularly detrimental to the future of the European project. Getting out of this spiral is not easy: without a comprehensive vision on the future of the European project, Member States’ “sovereignty reflex” risks taking over, further paralysing the EU’s decision-making process. The management of migration flows is therefore a test of the strength of the EU as a whole and as such should be recognised and addressed: although in recent years European leaders have been engaged in handling the emergency, the situation requires now to work on common solutions to ensure fair and sustainable policies in the long run, from the field of asylum, to the management of external borders, up to the policies of legal entry into the EU.

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9

Stories of Jihadism. The Radicalisation Process and its Plausibility*

by Giulia Mezzetti and Fabio Introini

9.1 An ecological prospective to understand contemporary jihadism

Between the massacre in Paris of the Charlie Hebdo editorial staff and the summer of 2016, there has been a genuine escalation of terrorist attacks of various types attributable to the complex and heterogeneous world of the jihadist universe. These tragic events are characterised by their distinctive geography and by the origins of the people who took part in them. Indeed, they were perpetrated in most cases in European cities and countries, carried out by people who in turn can be defined as “sociologically European”. This expression, used by Lorenzo Vidino (2014), refers to those who, despite being of non-European ethnic origin, were born, grew up and were educated within the Old Continent and yet they decided to strike in their own home countries in the name of jihad. As well as these episodes, there is a remarkable number of young European men and women – both of immigrant as well as indigenous descent – who have joined the so-called “Islamic State”, and gone to the territories it occupies in Syria and Iraq. These two phenomena not only spread panic and a sense of uncertainty throughout Europe, but they also raise the question, with increasing astonishment and incredulity: how can someone do something like this? What causes someone to decide to join the jihadist mission and to carry out, in its name, these crimes and attacks, especially over the last two years? The

* The present chapter is the joint work of both authors. However, Section 9.1 was written by Fabio Introini, while Sections 9.2 and 9.3 were written by Giulia Mezzetti.

feeling people get from these events concerns the (apparently) clear implausibility of the “ideas” in whose name these massacres are carried out.

Yet the “plausibility” of the jihadist mission is the focus of the analysis presented in this contribution, in which we will analyse some jihadi “stories” in the light of a precise theoretical frame and of a perspective that we define as ecological. According to this approach, which was inspired by Bateson (1977) and based on Latour’s Actor-Network Theory (1998; 2005) as well as on the theories of complexity (Morin, 2001), the ideas, or world visions, such as the “radical” ones considered here, do not exist in an autonomous and self-referencing sphere, like fixed and permanent elements, predetermined for ever more. Their “story”, like their ability to put their beliefs into practice for their actions, is connected to relating to people, organisations, players and symbolic and material resources to which they manage to bind themselves and which in turn they help to spread. During this process, these same ideas, following unavoidable adjustments and “translations” which modify and sometimes also betray their meanings, undergo a strengthening process by “thickening”, becoming so dense that they “become a reality”. A world in which these same ideas raise their plausibility gradient as the world or environment in which they circulate gains territory, gradually becoming more solid, more “normal” and more “real”. Thus events or phenomena are not (a priori) plausible, but *become so*, or, in other words, “facts”, objects, whole “worlds” progressively turn into reality (Latour, 1998). Regarding the topic under analysis here, therefore, we intend to discuss radicalisation as a process that is not plausible from the outset, but becomes so, the more “radical” visions of the world take shape and become real, acquiring “sense” and “plausibility” in the eyes of a growing number of people.

In this sense, therefore, it is possible to study the process of radicalisation with an ecological interpretation. Indeed it is within this theoretical framework that the problem of the apparent absurdity and implausibility of jihadist terrorists turning to violence can perhaps find some criteria of intelligibility, which also include some of the elements underlined by other approaches that tend to concentrate mainly on the subjective trajectories of those who become radicalised. Such a theoretical framework allows us to highlight the complex and multidimensional genesis of radicalisation phenomena, as well as the non-linear process of its dynamics. Indeed, from a broadest ecological perspective, the trajectories of radicalisation are certainly the outcome of a series of events, circumstances and inclinations which are very contingent and idiosyncratic and which lead certain individuals to be increasingly part of an “ecosystem” and to feel all of its strength and solidity. But at the same time, the reality gradient of the “radical” ecosystem becomes central, because the ecosystem’s ability to make ideas, values and behaviours plausible, however extreme and radical they are, depends on such reality gradient. This gradient rises, just as it can fall, with the thickening and broadening of the network of alliances through which a growing number of actors, places, situations and resources (both material and symbolic) become enrolled within it. The broader, denser and more heterogenic

the number of alliances, the more the ecosystem is able to “shore itself up” and “naturalise itself”. Finally, it is worth noting that among these connected elements, there are in turn also “new entrants”, i.e. new jihadist recruits, whose importance is twofold: on the one hand, they provide new human resources for the jihad’s practical objectives; on the other hand, by broadening the ecosystem’s network they also contribute to its “becoming real”. The “cultivation” of the ecosystem also explains why I.S.I.S. is interested in putting its brand on every event that resembles a jihadist attack.

It is the very number and heterogeneity of the “sociologically European” converts of the new jihad (whose only common trait appears to be their young or very young age) that make it necessary to update the approach to studying the transformed phenomenon of jihadism. In other terms, it appears crucial to adopt a perspective that adequately explains, in terms of plausibility, the reasons why people who are very different from each other can, on the one hand, expose themselves to and allow themselves to be caught up in propaganda messages, and on the other hand, to actively follow jihadist causes, “self-selecting themselves” from the bottom. The questions we should now ask ourselves to further understand radicalisation processes are: how “real” is the jihadist universe? Which actors, factors and relationships establish and “create” this ecosystem? To what extent and within which limits do these ideas appear plausible?

9.2 Some “stories” of jihadism

In trying to answer these questions, it is possible to discover some elements by analysing the “stories” of jihadists. The aim of studying the lives of these people is not to identify the intelligibility criteria of a “deterministic” or “structural” type – such as unsuccessful socio-economic integration, which is often proved wrong by the available information (see below), or the psychological fragility of “radicalised” individuals. By adopting an ecological perspective, progress is made by going against any explanation based on rigid determinisms. By contrast, the analysis of “radicalisation stories” using the approach we have adopted here, allows us to identify those factors, which, in the eyes of the individuals involved, have made the practice of jihadism rational and plausible. Just as there are non-typical profiles of “potential jihadists” – the relevant literature is unanimous in this – there also do not seem to be any typical routes to jihadism, or at least it appears very difficult to create any “models” of violent radicalisation. Although many points or accounts do indeed recur and are common to the various “stories”, there does not seem to be a linearity, a progression or a gradualness, which might lead to unambiguous “models”. However, it is possible to identify a set of elements that may or may not work together, which connect to or activate each other accumulating in various patterns in the individuals’ journeys, creating a horizon of sense and increasing that gradient of reality needed to undertake a “jihadist” course of action. As we shall see, these elements intersect three main

dimensions which contribute to making the “jihadist venture” possible – the network of connections and relationships (online and offline) in which wanna-be jihadists are intertwined, the environment or context of origin and, lastly, the encounter with Salafist-jihadist milieus.

We present below a brief selection of some “stories” about jihadism regarding young people who committed attacks in Europe or who joined jihadist organisations operating in Syria and Iraq. This contribution is based on secondary sources considered to be the most reliable among French literature and para-literature: given the difficulty of interviewing the protagonists of jihadist “careers” directly, we use reconstructions containing references attributable to a traceable empirical base. These reconstructions have so far been produced by scholars and reporters who could have direct access to the field of enquiry. The decision to choose the case of France was driven by the fact that France represents an emblematic case since it is the country that has suffered the greatest number of jihadist terrorist attacks since 2012 and that has seen the highest number by far of young people going to Syria as foreign fighters. For this reason, it is the country which has been de facto providing the largest amount of empirical data concerning “new generation” jihadism.

The first “stories” we analyse are those of Mohamed Merah¹, the Kouachi brothers², Amedy Coulibaly and Mehdi Nemmouche³. The lives of these four people share the following characteristics: a migrant background; coming from areas of marginalisation – the banlieue; problem families, in some cases supported by social services; extremely poor educational achievement; a history of violence and delinquency including theft and drug dealing; a history of prison sentences, in some cases repeated and lengthy; contact with “inspirers”, attributable to the “new generation” of jihadists (Andre, Harris-Hogan, 2013; Kepel, 2015). All of these elements, when taken together, have produced the outline of the plausibility of the jihadist option. In the case of Merah, although his family background was very difficult (he was taken into care several times by social services and by institutions for the protection of minors), a crucial element in understanding his journey is represented by the family context itself within which the young man was able to “absorb” decidedly radical ideas and behaviours. Indeed, one of his sisters and one of his brothers grew up regularly frequenting a Salafist milieu with strong jihadist tendencies that was set up in the 1970s in a rural village in the Toulouse countryside. Furthermore, it has been documented that the family environment harboured true hatred for France as a colonial power (Kepel, 2015). It has been ascertained that his close relations and

¹ Mohamed Merah is the “killer on the scooter” who, in March 2012, between Toulouse and Montauban, killed three soldiers and carried out a massacre in a Jewish school.

² The brothers Said and Chérif Kouachi and Amedy Coulibaly committed, respectively, the massacre on 7 January 2015 at the offices of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and the killing of several hostages in a kosher supermarket on 9 January 2015.

³ Mehdi Nemmouche committed the attack at the Jewish museum in Brussels on 24 March 2014, which caused the death of four people.

their neighbours considerably influenced the young man, beginning from his most recent stay in prison where, through repeated visits from his brother, he was initiated into religious practice and where he had the opportunity to hold conversations with Sabri Essid, a well known jihadist who belonged to the same extended family as Merah's relations (Kepel, 2015). The young man, therefore, socialised with, or at least came into contact with, a milieu from which several French jihadist figures emerged (Ibid.). In this way, the context of the primary networks of relations and acquaintances gradually provided the "sense coordinates" within which the young man then carried out the act of killing. Merah's journey allows us to better understand the role of religion: until his "conversion" in prison, the young man had never been particularly interested in religion, yet he appeared to be zealous following his religious initialisation which occurred there. Nevertheless, it should be noted that from the very beginning the young man approached the radical Salafist-jihadist version of the religion, that is, the one practised by his close relations. Thus, Merah's radicalisation occurred over quite a long period of time, but that process occurred from the beginning in a context of "extremism", without any intermediate phases or any relationship with any religious practices he had followed previously; indeed, according to Merah's sister, before his conversion to jihadism, the young man had never been interested in religion as a boy (Andre, Harris-Hogan, 2013).

Like Merah, the Kouachi brothers and Coulibaly were inspired by people who can be traced back to the "first generation" of Salafist-jihadists: in the case of the brothers, this was Farid Benyettou, a charismatic preacher from the radical Buttes-Chaumont mosque in Paris, who invited the young men to join to the jihad in Iraq during the time of the American invasion (something which Chérif ventured to do) and Djamel Beghal, an Al Qaeda militant and a central figure for all three, whom Chérif Kouachi and Amedy Coulibaly met in prison. While for the two brothers the first crucial step was the radical mosque, for Coulibaly prison was the place where he "converted" to jihadism after meeting Beghal. We would like to underline how, also in this case, the religious option can be classified as radical and extremist. The two brothers frequented a radical mosque where armed jihad was encouraged; Coulibaly came from a family where the practice of religion was somewhat bland (Kepel, 2015) and his jihadist turning point came once he got into direct contact with extremist individuals.

Nemmouche also served various prison sentences, the last one of which lasted for five years. It was during this long prison sentence, when he met other prisoners who were already militant jihadists, that the young man "converted" to jihadism although he had never previously shown any signs of interest in religion. An important detail concerns his "harki" origins, i.e. being descended from Algerians labelled "anti-nationalists" during the Algerian War (1954-1962). Many of these people took up residence in France and in certain areas in particular (such as Roubaix, like in the case of Nemmouche) at the end of the Algerian conflict; for the rest of the Algerian community, however, harkis have always been considered "traitors", accused of "collaborating" with the French colonial power and treated with hostility. In more recent times, adopting

intransigent Salafism has, for some young harkis, become a way of regaining legitimacy in the eyes of the rest of the community of immigrant origin (Kepel, 2015). In Roubaix, the harkis' descendants are over-represented within members of the Salafist community. We have found no trace of sincere or zealous religious practices in Nemmouche's case before his conversion to jihadism during his last prison sentence; nevertheless, the "burden" of his harki ancestry and the consolidation of Salafism in his personal "ecosystem", or background (starting from its material features) represent elements which contribute to making the choice of jihadism more "plausible" and "natural" for an individual like Nemmouche. This is because adopting jihadist Salafism may have been some perverse way of throwing off the stigma attached to being harki as well as the stigma of not knowing who his father was, something which is deeply felt through the code of honour in segregated neighbourhoods such as those where Nemmouche grew up (Kepel, 2015). This by no means implies any inevitability in moving towards Salafist religious practices in the local community; nevertheless, these elements, in an ecological perspective such as the one adopted here, become susceptible to increasing the plausibility of certain behaviours.

In all four cases examined, the personal or at least the "material" networks of the protagonists appear to be fundamental in "making possible" the violent radical option; they all came into contact with the jihadist ideology through preachers they met personally in prison or in a mosque. Moreover, as we have seen, in every case the context of both their family and social origins seems to play a crucial role as do any possible "grievances" (Pantucci, 2015) or recriminations arising from it. The poor milieu from which they came formed a kind of "base" on which the influence of relationships with first generation jihadists was grafted. Troubled pasts linked to inexistent or problem families, as well as the difficult conditions of life in the banlieue, the experience of prison and finally a broader context of true discrimination and hostility towards the Muslim community in France and Europe may all contribute to explaining the use of violence in deviant and criminal behaviour as well as its subsequent channelling into the jihadist cause, despite the fact that this "channelling" may not have occurred with the individuals' full awareness (Kepel, 2015; Andre, Harris-Hogan, 2013). By "sacralising" their conflict with society in retrospect, they end up adopting a zealous, ultra-intransigent and orthodox religious practice, but this religiosity proves to be the effect and not the cause of their adhesion to jihadism, which prescribes a practice with very similar characteristics as Salafist orthopraxy. In other words, in these cases, becoming jihadists does not seem to be the outcome or the result of pre-existing consolidated religiousness, which cannot be found in the individuals discussed in this study.

Furthermore, the stories of these people help us to understand how "radicalisation" does not occur out of the blue but is the result of a gradual, though not necessarily linear or consequential culmination of elements which make the option of jihadist violence reasonable in the eyes of those who commit it. One only has to consider Merah and Nemmouche: before adopting jihadism,

they were both “exposed” for some time to environments (those of the family or of the neighbourhood) which were already known for their radical ideas; more generally, in the case of all four of them, the background of deprivation from which they came facilitated the development of “oppositional identities” (Mezzetti, 2016), antagonist to the prevailing French society which is perceived as hostile to immigrants and Muslims.

In the stories of the protagonists we have analysed so far, recruitment took place in “traditional places” such as radical mosques and prisons, where contact with the clandestine jihadist network could be made. However, starting from about 2011-2012, the Internet opened up channels for propaganda, indoctrination and the grooming of new recruits. As we can see from studying the stories of the newest jihadist converts, places of worship and prisons have now become relatively marginal for recruitment purposes. Indeed, many of those who have been joining the jihad in the most recent years have never even set foot in a mosque (Thomson, 2014; Bouzar et al., 2014), whereas others have only occasionally frequented places of worship only to then avoid them, because what was preached there did not fit in with jihadist “teachings” (Thomson, 2014). Therefore, as all the testimonies of the “new jihadists” claim, the Internet is the means and the instrument which has allowed a firm adhesion to jihadism to take place. According to the stories of these young men, the Internet opened the door of jihadism to them in the simplest way; alongside more or less “specialised” websites and online discussion forums, it is YouTube and Facebook which enabled not just the circulation and the consequent use of propaganda material but more importantly the contacts, dialogues and discussions between all the individuals interested in those pages and that content. Forming relationships with other “like-minded” people helps to collectively build up the “jihadist world” and make it increasingly “real”, thus heightening the plausibility of the actions carried out in its name.

We will see how this occurs in the following three cases. Yassine⁴, born in France to parents who originated from Morocco, had an excellent job as a prosthodontist at a dental surgery in Paris. He came from a working class neighbourhood on the outskirts of the city, had a united and loving family and had no delinquent past. Indeed he was able to study and moved successfully up the social scale. As he himself relates: “I had everything that the son of immigrants can ever hope to have” (Thomson, 2014: 24). He says that he did not cultivate any true “hatred for France”; nevertheless, the young man reported meeting various obstacles, which prevented people like him from feeling a fully-fledged French citizen. This sparked a certain introspection in him: “We were born between two cultures: in France they call us the children of immigrants, in Morocco they call us children born abroad. We are an uprooted generation,

⁴ The stories of Yassine, Souleymane and Abu Rayan come from the work of David Thomson, a reporter and Middle East specialist, who was able to contact various people who had gone to Syria between 2013 and 2014. The names of the people interviewed have been changed by the interviewer in order to protect their anonymity. The translations of all the first hand accounts were done by the writers of this contribution.

without any reference points. In France, at the beginning, we really wanted to integrate (...) but despite this, the fact that we are Arabs and that we come from the banlieue creates barriers (...). Without these barriers, we would have stayed non-believers (...) but today Islam gives us our identity (...). It is Islam that has given us back our dignity because France has humiliated us" (Ibid). As one can deduce, this is a case of ex post rationalisation of the process that led him to embrace jihadism; in any case, it is significant that these words are spoken by a young man who, in theory, would appear to be perfectly "well integrated". In the case of Yassine, it does not seem pertinent, therefore, to offer explanations of his adhesion to jihadism that are focused on a socio-economic variable or on a stereotype of a young man "from the banlieue". On the contrary, as he himself explains, jihadism and the religious practices it prescribes seem to take on great significance in terms of identity. His journey to radicalisation, like those seen in the cases mentioned above, does not include created and cultivated religious practices: indeed, this was virtually "inexistent" prior to his adhesion to jihadism (Ibid.). In his case "something clicked" when in 2011 he received a telephone call from Afghanistan in which he was told about how two friends of his suffered "martyrs' deaths" which caused him to "feel jealous" (Thomson, 2014: 17). The fact that within his circle of friends and acquaintances there were two people who went "to the jihad" helps to explain the plausibility, within the young man's conscience, of his later choice to join jihadism. Having almost never frequented a mosque, because "there they present an à la carte Islam, where they don't tell you about jihad and war, [because] these people [the mosque leaders] want to remain in France and want France to like them", his radicalisation basically took place over the Internet, and caused a rift in his family who did not understand him. When asked about his main reason for going to Syria to carry out the jihad, the young man reported the sense of guilt he felt, a recurring element in the accounts of these individuals and a constant refrain in the jihadist propaganda: "I had everything, materially, but in my heart I didn't feel at ease because I was aware of my brothers who were killed because of the fact that they were Muslim. And you're all cosy under your blankets, you've had a hot shower and you say to yourself 'I'm a Muslim, I've said my prayers five times'. No, this is not Islam. Islam means supporting Islam, fighting for Islam, helping the oppressed" (Thomson, 2014: 217). It seems significant that, nevertheless, within his peer group, there were other people who were already oriented towards jihadism; this helps us to understand how the young man's journey took place "within extremism", embracing, as he did, the jihadist cause right from the beginning.

This is an aspect that he shares with another young man, Souleymane, who had a troubled childhood as he had lived several times with foster families and whose past was full of episodes of delinquency carried out together with his two brothers. He spoke of how he felt unhappy, aimless, of how he asked himself questions about life and how something clicked when, after a fight in which he almost died, he "declared his faith" on the stretcher of the hospital where he had been admitted. After this episode, the young man continued his life as before, drinking and smoking, until one day he decided to go to the mosque where he

met “a brother who became my best friend and who taught me everything” (Ibid.: 55). Following this episode, he avoided going to mosques because what was preached there did not correspond to the “message of mujaheddin” (Ibid.). At the same time, it was thanks to the Internet that “I directly approached the ideals of Al Qaeda” (Ibid.: 56 – authors’ emphasis). Also in this case, the young man’s radicalisation occurs within violent extremism, facilitated by a lack of knowledge of the religion, and without really going through any stage of religious awareness (Ibid.). His decision to go to Syria with his wife, a French convert, occurred when the plausibility and the “gradient of reality” of the jihadist world reached a peak, that is when both of them watched a video of a “sister” who had gone to Syria alone: “I said to myself ‘that’s not right, if she could do it, then I’ve got no excuse’” (Ibid.: 51). The wife spoke of how, when she saw the footage, “I felt like it was aimed at me. It was incredible, it was like Hollywood, a film. She went alone, by plane, and she got married there. It seems so easy when it’s about one of us”. Souleymane continues: “When you see this sister of ours, it’s different from seeing the Pashtun [the Taliban] in the caves! It has an impact on you. You feel close to it all, it makes you feel as though you’re inside something real, concrete. You say to yourself ‘a brother of mine is down there, someone who grew up like me, who experienced the same things as I did. We were born in France, we have the same culture. This is someone who listened to rap music like I did’. So I say to myself, ‘If young men like me go to Syria, then I’ve got no excuse’ (...). There are even boys as young as 15 down there! When you see these things, you say to yourself ‘I can’t stay here’” (Ibid.). Moreover, for this couple, as for many other individuals who have gone to Syria, the places where the so-called Islamic state has set itself up represent the place where they can live their Islamic lives “correctly” and “peacefully”, far away from a country like France where “we can’t go on living like this, in the midst of polytheists, it’s not healthy for our beliefs. We feel humiliated every day by the blasphemy”.

The story of Abu Rayan throws light on how the choice of jihadism “becomes plausible” when it derives from a primary interest of a mainly political nature. This Belgian, who is now in his forties, became fascinated from a very early age and as a “rebellious and introverted adolescent” with the figure of Malcolm X. He was a fan of militant American rap music and proved sensitive to the history of colonialism and slavery in the United States. Almost by mimicry he decided to convert to Islam, just like Malcom X, but today he believes that at the time he was “a very negligent worshiper” and that “it was the Islamic, ideological [political] aspect that had become very important for me” (Ibid.: 119). The young man, who worked in an American company as a computer technician – therefore this is also a case about a middle class individual – felt a “pull” in the direction of zealous jihadist militancy on 11th September 2001 when, as he began to become interested in the Islamic and jihadist discourse, he realised that “neutrality was no longer possible, because it will be sanctioned for lack of courage” (Ibid.). Thus he began to “develop an Islamic counter-culture” (Ibid.) and was able to gain access to “the real Islam”, thanks to the Internet and to the first online jihadists at a time when the Internet and similar instruments were still a long way from

becoming a mass phenomenon. To further confirm his belief that at the roots of the jihadist cause there are fundamentally political motivations, Abu Rayan expresses himself in the following terms regarding young men who join the cause today: “for them, it’s a bit like it’s their Che Guevara, like it once was for those people who hung a poster of Che Guevara, Bob Marley or A for Anarchy on their walls. That’s what it’s like for Muslims” (Ibid.: 124).

More generally, the empirical evidence shows how the jihad manages to attract young and very young people, often adolescents, of both sexes, in many cases natives’ descendants, who therefore do not have any immigrant or Muslim background. Also in these cases, contact with the “jihadist proposal” happens over the Internet (Bouzar et al., 2014; Bouzar, 2016). One aspect which almost all of these young people share concerns their primary interest not so much for seeking spirituality, but for “conspiracy theories” (Bouzar et al., 2014): it is looking on the Internet for information about such “theories” that subsequently facilitates coming across jihadist propaganda videos, which, not by chance, present the world according to a strictly Manichean vision, as though it is held together by a huge conspiracy against the oppressed – the Muslims – who need to be defended and avenged. Thanks to social media, and to Facebook in particular, these individuals discover that they “are not alone” and that there are many other people interested in these topics and in the jihadist cause in particular: the “gradient of reality” of this vision of the world, therefore, grows thanks to discussions and contact with others. All this helps to convince them of how “right” they are in choosing jihad, making it ever more plausible. It is because of this interaction that the “jihadist discourse” manages to “personalise the offer”, accommodating the different predispositions, interests and needs expressed by these young men and women. For example, the emarginated young man is shown the “revenge” aspect, while the one who harbours feelings of selflessness and compassion is shown the “humanitarian cause” aspect as strong motivations for joining the jihad. The study of these cases requires further analysis in order to fully understand the individual agency of these people when they come into contact with these forms of propaganda and to understand in more detail what happens within the young person before he or she becomes “radicalised”. A significant element to take into consideration naturally regards the age of the individuals analysed in these studies: in the vast majority of cases they are adolescents, that is people whose identity is still being formed. On the one hand, these people are more fragile than others; on the other hand, because of their age and the fact that they are “digital natives”, they have greater familiarity and a higher level of inclusion in this communicative universe, which is fundamental for making the world in which jihad appears plausible become reality.

9.3 Some concluding remarks

We have seen how the interpretation of “becoming plausible” can contribute to a better understanding of the “success” of jihadism, which thanks to, for example, the role played by the Internet, can reach and attract a much more diverse and numerous group of people than before. In this regard, we feel able, in these concluding considerations, to refer to the debate, which is currently developing around these topics on the part of the leading figures in this area of study. Indeed we feel that the interpretation of the “regimes of plausibility” set out here allows us to reconcile the various positions which have been emerging recently and which have become polarised over the points of view of three among the most prominent scholars in this field: Gilles Kepel, François Burgat and Olivier Roy.

According to Kepel (2015), the rise of the “new jihadism” in Europe should be understood against the broader background of the “identity fractures” which are taking place in a country like France and which concern the Muslim population (who have by now become European citizens) as much as the main population. The increasingly bitter opposition between the two and their fraught relationships are paving the way for reciprocal rejection. Thus, to understand the phenomenon of jihadist radicalisation in many young people, he argues, one cannot disregard a preliminary analysis of these fractures. This is particularly true of the diffusion of Salafism (especially in the more impoverished neighbourhoods), an ultra-Orthodox and intransigent religious movement which explicitly conveys and incarnates a profound “break” with mainstream society, advocating a categorical refusal of “unholy”, “impure” and “depraved” Western values and codes of behaviour – terms borrowed from theological language to depict such a rejection (Adraoui, 2013). Although Salafism is practiced by an extremely small fraction of the European Muslim population, this movement has been slowly on the rise in Europe and it has gained more and more visibility. However, European Salafists overwhelmingly belong to the “quietist” stream of this movement. Quietist Salafism preaches not to become interested or involved in politics, as this is not “righteous” in their worldview. For this very reason, quietist Salafists despise Jihadists (Thomson, 2014). Nevertheless, Jihadism and Salafism share a common orthopraxy (even though this is questioned – see Roy, 2016). Therefore, Kepel argues that the analysis of jihadism should be centred on the drivers of the success of Salafism, studying how Salafism is engaging in a strife to impose its hegemony over the Muslim community, suggesting a continuity between Salafism and Jihadism (Kepel, 2015; Kepel & Rougier, 2016).

François Burgat (2015) provides a political interpretation of contemporary jihadist radicalisation processes, claiming that a great deal of the explanation of these dynamics has to do with the treatment of Islamic minorities in Europe, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, on the relationships of power which exist between the Western world and Muslim countries, pointing in particular to the troubled heritage of the colonial past, on the enduring conflict between Israel and Palestine and on the general feeling of domination, humiliation and, consequently, rage, which Muslims – globally, and in particular in Western

societies - would suffer in his view. While he acknowledges that there is not a direct, immediate connection between North African and Middle Eastern conflicts and the radicalisation dynamics that take place in Western countries, this scholar claims that, at the same time, it is not possible to analyse these two phenomena separately⁵. In particular, he refers to Western powers' domination and exploitation of Muslim countries and to the repeated conflicts caused by Western countries' interference in and support of dictatorships both in North Africa and in the Middle East. In his view, the way the West has shaped its relationships with the Muslim world and its former colonies, on the one hand, and the discrimination endured by Muslims in the countries they migrated to, on the other, have led to nothing but the depiction of Islam as "the public enemy". According to him, this has inevitably affected Muslims' self-perception across the world, and it would hold especially true for Muslims in countries that are bound by an unresolved colonial past, such as France and Maghrebian countries (Algeria in primis). Kepel also underlines this point (2015): the "humiliation" felt by many second-generation immigrants with a Maghrebian background resonates with or reminds them of the legacy of the colonial oppression. In summary, Burgat recalls what he defines as the West's "responsibilities", claiming that they should be duly included in the overall analysis of the phenomenon.

Moreover, with the aim of challenging a widely held culturalist approach to the matter – according to which only Muslims and their religiosity are to be blamed for the diffusion of jihadism – Roy (2015; 2016) contends that the study of radicalisation processes should primarily begin with close scrutiny of the lives of the single individuals who have become jihadists. As we have seen thus far, according to available data, their stories show no particular interest in religion or no particularly assiduous religiosity before they turned jihadism: the zealous and intransigent religious conduct they adopted appears to be the effect of their adherence to jihadism. Their approach to Islam occurred by making direct contact with jihadism, and thus took an "extremist" direction from the beginning. In other words, it is hardly the case that a pious religious person, even someone who is a quietist Salafist in his practice and beliefs, can become a violent extremist and embrace armed jihadism. According to Roy, although the diffusion of Salafism and of Jihadism share some social mechanisms, the first should not be considered the precursor of the latter, the reason being that wanna-be jihadists are driven to jihadism not by their religiousness, but by their pre-existent "need for violence" – which they have often already practised or undergone within gangs. In his view, we are not so much confronted with a "radicalisation of Islam", but with an "Islamisation of radicalism" (2015): incarnating what he calls a "generational and nihilistic revolt" (2015; 2016), these young people choose jihadism because it is the only and most successful violent ideology available "on

⁵ See also the debate between François Burgat and Olivier Roy, that took place on 13 May 2016 at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, <http://savoirs.ens.fr/expose.php?id=2602> (last accessed on 2 February 2017).

the market” (Ibid.) to vent their prior need of violence. Indeed, this clearly emerged from the analysis of some jihadists’ stories which we discussed in the previous section. As demonstrated by other studies, it is these people’s very ignorance of religion that facilitates espousing the tenets of jihadism; by contrast, a firm and consolidated religious identity actually seems to shield people from violent radicalisation⁶.

At first glance, these three positions may seem irreconcilable; nevertheless, in the light of the approach and of the ecological perspective adopted here, we deem that there are grounds for considering that they explain three sides of the same phenomenon and that therefore they can prove to be complementary. Choosing jihadism as it is the only “ideology available on the market” begins to make sense and gains plausibility because this decision positions itself within a context which is increasingly characterised by deep and broad forms of rifts and of identity differences, such as those embodied in the *modus vivendi* of the Salafist community. Salafism represents a deep rupture with mainstream society and offers a powerful identitarian counter-narrative that appropriates religious language and terminology to refer to its refusal of Western societies. Therefore, while it is true that quietist Salafism does not act as the precursor of jihadism, and that those who become jihadists are not interested in Salafists’ pious and fervent practice of religion (as proven by the poor religiousness of the individuals who turn to jihadism, indeed they abhor quietists), it also seems fitting to state that, from an ecological perspective, the mere presence of Salafist habits and practices in the surrounding “environment” also increases the gradient of reality of the jihadist worldview. Without suggesting that there is any direct continuity between quietist Salafism and jihadism, it may be said that, for a young person who already has a “need to be radical” and seeks a channel for venting this need, joining jihadism can seem more plausible and “natural” than joining other expressions of political violence, precisely because the choice of embracing jihadism occurs in a context characterised by the spread of identity fractures similar to jihadism, such as those embodied by Salafism. In summary, nowadays, the most “plausible” terms for expressing one’s need for revolt and violence are borrowed from what is currently the most successful form of antagonism “offered by the market”, that is, the uncompromising and ultra-conservative religious identity of the Salafists. Even though Salafists do not represent a “reservoir” of a possible jihadist armada, as quietist Salafists will hardly become fighters or terrorists, the mere presence and success of Salafism in the banlieues provides an inescapable element for the comprehension of the spread of jihadism, as Salafism to some extent provides the co-ordinates of meaning for the plausibility of the choice of jihadism. In other words, we deem that, from an ecological perspective, such an unprecedented spread of jihadism

⁶ According to a study conducted by the British secret services on the profiles of terrorists published on The Guardian, empirical evidence suggests that a stable religious identity represents a barrier against 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 accessed on 19 July 2015).

would hardly be imaginable without a contextual diffusion of Salafism within Muslim communities across Europe⁷. At the same time, it has been demonstrated that, in all of these processes, a prominent role is played by the feeling of domination and humiliation felt by many marginalised young Muslims, who cannot perceive themselves as fully-fledged citizens in Western societies (Burgat, 2015; Kepel 2015). For many, assuming the traits of “oppositional identities” – such as the ones represented by Salafism and jihadism – is the answer to the stigmatisation they experience and represents a way to reverse the dynamics of real and symbolic exclusion used by the main population (Adraoui, 2013; Mezzetti, 2016) – as we have seen above, in the words of Yassine for instance. In a country like France, political grievances linked to a burdensome unresolved colonial legacy do play a prominent role in the creation of such oppositional identities (Kepel, 2015; Burgat, 2015).

Therefore, it can be said that each of the three positions outlined above explains a part of the “truth” of the multifaceted jihadist phenomenon. Thanks to an ecological approach, they appear all equally relevant for the comprehension of contemporary radicalisation processes in the West. Although these interpretations cannot account for the entire complexity of jihadist violent extremism and much remains to be investigated about it, they nonetheless help to capture the increase in “plausibility” of the jihadist endeavour’s appeal.

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⁷ It is important to bear in mind, however, that Salafists in Europe represent an absolute minority of overall European Muslims.

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The Twenty-second Italian Report on Migrations 2016



In the *Twenty-second Report on migrations*, ISMU Foundation highlights how the migratory phenomena and the complex challenges connected with them are becoming a test, not only for European policies on immigration and asylum, but also for the existence of the European Union itself.

The book pays special attention to the analysis of **foreign population in Italy, which reached – as of 1 January 2016 – 5.9 million admissions**. Besides the usual areas of interest (demography, legislation, work, school, and health), the XXII Report explores other important topics such as unaccompanied minors and the phenomenon of Islamic radicalism.

