Edited by Vincenzo Cesareo

The Twenty-eighth Italian Report on Migrations 2022

FONDAZIONE ISMU
INIZIATIVE E STUDI SULLA MULTIETNICITÀ

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Our annual Report contains the results of the studies carried out by the research staff and collaborators of ISMU Foundation – Initiatives and Studies on Multi-ethnicity (FONDAZIONE INIZIATIVE E STUDI SULLA MULTIETNICITÀ ENTE DEL TERZO SETTORE - FONDAZIONE ISMU ETS).

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This Report was written under the direct supervision of Secretary-General Vincenzo Cesareo, as Editor-in-Chief, with the assistance of Editorial Board members Ennio Codini, Livia Elisa Ortensi, Nicola Pasini, Mariagrazia Santagati, Giovanni Giulio Valtolina, Laura Zanfrini, and with the editorial coordination of Elena Bosetti and Francesca Locatelli.

Fondazione ISMU ETS (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 organizations and institutions, in both the private and the public sectors. It is inserted in academic networks, it cooperates with welfare and healthcare agencies, and it exchanges with libraries and documentation centers in Italy and beyond. ISMU organizes 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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1.
2022: The year of the terrible aggression against Ukraine

Vincenzo Cesareo

The Twenty-eighth edition of the ISMU Migration Report inevitably opens with an analysis of the tragic events related to the conflict in Ukraine. In line with its core mission as an annual migration review, it examines the conflict from the perspective of human mobility. This chapter offers a systematic monitoring of the largest and most dramatic displacement of people in Europe since WWII by looking at the various forms of mobility and displacement of people caused by the conflict in 2022. It looks at the outflows from Ukraine as well as inflows, analyzing the European regions where the reception of Ukrainians was particularly relevant.

1. Population displacement in the history of Russian and Ukrainian territories

Over the past year different forms of (voluntary and forced) mobility have greatly affected Eastern European countries due to war provoked by Russia through the invasion of Ukraine. To better understand the current state of play in this

region it is useful to look back at the (often forced) displacement of population in the past between Russia and Ukraine and, more generally, between Russia and its neighbors. Forced large-scale mobility, indeed, is certainly not a new phenomenon in the Slavic region and occurred on several occasions, particularly following wars and the conquest of new territories.

In the 11th century, the Kingdom of Kiev or Rus' became one of the greatest powers in Eastern Europe, spanning from the Gulf of Finland in the North to the Carpathians and the Black Sea in the South. This gave rise to significant, large-scale and forced population movements (Flatland, 2019: 433). The Russian empire reached its greatest extent under the leadership of Catherine II (1729-1796) who made extensive use of forced displacements of populations, particularly of ethnic and religious groups. For instance, she ordered that nearly half a million Jews, who lived in Russia but had not converted to Christianity, be confined to the territories corresponding to present-day Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania (Ibid.: 470). By overtaking Crimea from the Ottoman Empire (1783), she enabled Russia to get full control of the Black Sea. She then defeated Sweden (1794) and incorporated the Baltic countries, the whole of Belarus and the western part of Ukraine (1795). As a result of this considerable expansion, many people were moved from one territory to another and the entire Russian population increased by 5.5 million (Ragni, 2022: 55-65). In 1864, after a long war, Tsar Alexander II defeated the Caucasian peoples by forcing them into exile in the Ottoman Empire and punished the Circassians by exiling them too within the same Empire: "several hundred thousand Circassians were crammed on overloaded ships and sent across the Black Sea, while two hundred thousand were forced to emigrate. Ten thousand died" (Ibid.: 356-357).

During the Stalin era, in the 1930s, more than five million Soviet citizens, mostly children and elderly, were deported to Siberia. An emblematic case is Crimea, that after becoming part of Ukraine at the end of the nineteenth century, was invaded by the Russian Army in 1944. After Russian annexation, the "process of Russification" immediately began with the deportation of nearly 200,000 Crimeans largely to Uzbekistan. Out of these, an estimated 45,000 died in exile over just one and a half year.[1] Alongside this expulsion of "undesirable" people or people deemed dangerous, an influx of Russian speakers into the region was meant to accelerate the process of Russification politically, economically and culturally. While the Tatar survivors were allowed to return to their homeland only by Gorbachev in 1989, by then the heavy Russification of Crimea had been consolidated.

In the Soviet era, over 40,000 Latvians were deported to Siberia in a single day (25 March 1949). The same happened to 30,000 Lithuanians and 20,000 Estonians. Deportations were seen as a key part of the so-called forced "col-

[1] Cf. brief on the Crimean Tartars by the research network "Violence de masse et Résistance" of the Université Sciences Po Paris (available at: https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/suerguen-crimean-tatars-deportation-and-exile.html, accessed November 22, 2022) or the overview by the United Nations (available at: https://www.ohchr.org/en/2016/05/press-briefing-notes-crimean-tatars and https://www.refworld.org/docid/469f38ec14.html, accessed November 22, 2022).

lectivization" of agriculture in the Baltic region that involved the expulsion of natives and the repopulation of lands through the transfer of Russian citizens (Ragni, 2022: 527).

After the dissolution of the USSR, in 1999 Moscow invaded Chechnya causing 100,000 civilian casualties and thousands of refugees. In 2008, Russian President Putin invaded Georgia – an act that killed 800 people in just five days and forced 200,000 people to flee. The invasion also has an important meaning as it was the first time the "new czar" intervened militarily in a former Soviet republic (Ibid.: 348).

More recently, Russian annexed Crimea in 2014 in violation of international law and vis-à-vis a powerless country, Ukraine, leveraging the "russification" that had already taken place in many territories during the Soviet era. The example of Crimea is one of the most relevant in terms of the nexus between (mostly forced) migration and the "process of Russification" that marked the three phases of Russian history (Tsarist, Soviet, Putin). This process is implemented by Russia in the countries it occupies and consists of managing the resident population by selecting and expelling ethnic groups and people presumed to create problems for the Kremlin. From a political point of view, bogus referendums are held to gather consensus and allow for the establishment of puppet governments that are completely subjected to Moscow, including in terms of economic management. Culturally, Russian language and culture are imposed and the study of clearly Russian-centric history is promoted. Combined, these interventions allow for an actual pervasive socialization aimed at imposing the integration of peoples from the conquered countries into the Russian universe.

As of 2014, after the forced annexation of Crimea, a co-called "low-intensity" conflict has begun in the Donbass, a region in Eastern Ukraine bordering Russia. While Donbass hosts a pro-Russian population, Ukrainians try to defend these territories. As a result of clashes, between 2014 and 2018 600,000 Ukrainians sought political asylum outside Ukraine, particularly in the Russian Federation, while in 2018 the government in Kiev reported more than 1.5 million internally displaced persons fleeing that region as a result of the violence by the Russian army and Russian-speaking separatists (Ibid: 116).

This general and inexhaustive overview of the cases of (mostly forced) relocations of people highlights how "Russification" has a long tradition in the history of Russia and helps to explain the choices of Putin who, with his brutal aggression in Ukraine, forced millions of people to move both within and outside this tormented country. Through a series of concrete examples the next paragraphs show how mobility in the context of the war has evolved and diversified.

2. Population displacement caused by the Russian aggression

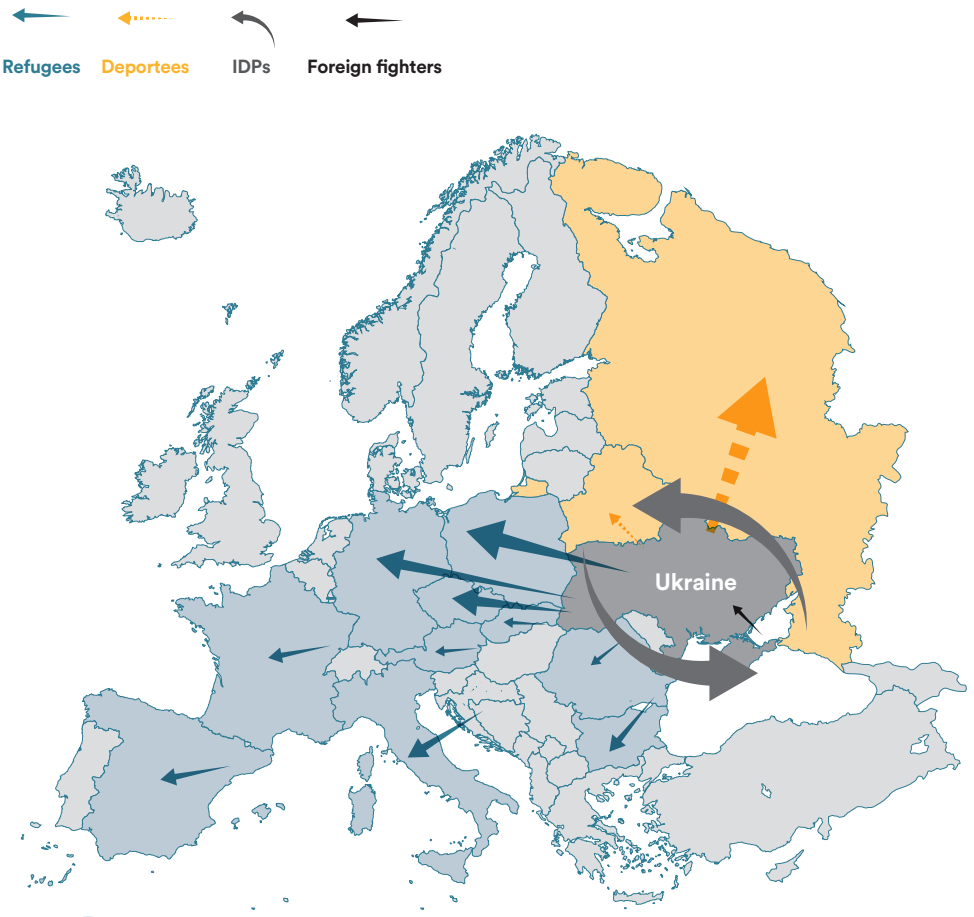
According to United Nations data (2022), the population of Ukraine is 43.2 million.[2] It is very difficult to get a sense of the diversity of linguistic and ethnic minorities that make up the country as the latest relevant data dates back from the 2001 census, conducted using a methodology and categories from the Soviet period that did not accurately distinguish between ethnic identification, native language and the predominant spoken language of respondents (Constantin, 2022). Thus, there is a discrepancy between ethnicity and language spoken declared in the census. Indeed, for many minority members – and especially those living in the multi-ethnic regions of the Donbass – Russian was a lingua franca rather than an indicator of ethnic affiliation (Ibid.). Keeping these limitations in mind, the census highlighted that 77.8% of the Ukrainian population identified as ethnically Ukrainian and 17.3% as Russian. Among those who defined themselves as ethnically Ukrainian, 85.2% reported Ukrainian as their mother tongue compared to 14.8% who indicated Russian. Ethnic and linguistic minorities included Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Jews, Roma, Greeks, Germans and Poles.

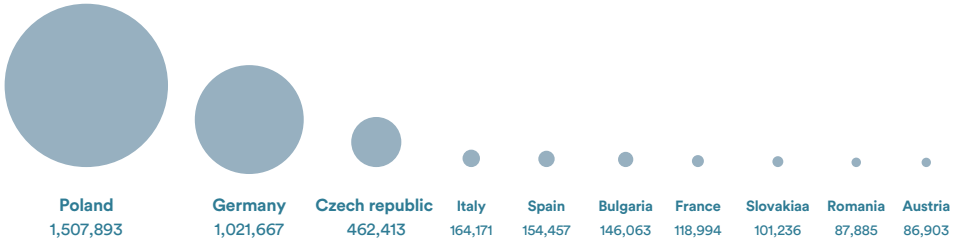
There is reason to believe that the complex composition of the Ukrainian population will undergo changes as a result of the upheaval triggered by a war that has caused the largest forced displacement in Europe since WWII. People fleeing the conflict either sought shelter in other regions of Ukraine, thus becoming internally displaced persons, or left the country heading mainly west to EU countries as well as, to a lesser extent, to Belarus and Russia – the latter flow most likely consists of Russian-speaking and Russophile Ukrainians. However, Ukraine has been not only the center of outgoing mobility but also the destination of incoming movements consisting of both Ukrainians who gradually returned to areas taken over by the Ukrainian army and the so-called foreign fighters (i.e., people who have joined either the Ukrainian or the Russian army).

The next paragraphs retrace the movements from, to and within Ukraine during the war until November 2022, starting from the map below distinguishing and quantifying the several types of mobility that have concerned Ukraine, with the objective to help understand their complex dynamics.

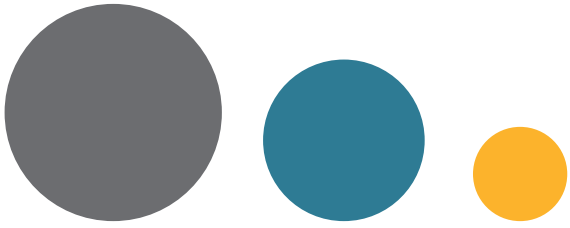
[2] Cf. United Nations Population Fund, *World Population Dashboard – Ukraine*, available at: https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population/UA (accessed November 22, 2022).

Main forms of mobility in and out of Ukraine





Poland	Germany	Czech republic	Italy	Spain	Bulgaria	France	Slovakiaa	Romania	Austria
1,507,893	1,021,667	462,413	164,171	154,457	146,063	118,994	101,236	87,885	86,903



IDPs	Europe (including non-EU countries)	Russia
6,540,000	4,800,000	2,850,000

2.1 Forced migration of refugees and internally displaced persons

(a) Refugees

According to the UNHCR,[3] as of 18 November 2022 the number of people who fled the conflict and moved to other countries reached 7 841,000. By triggering the Temporary Protection Directive on 4 March 2022, only a few days after the Russian attack, the EU launched a mechanism that allowed Ukrainians to move without a visa within the EU for a period of one year and choose the country in which to settle and apply for asylum. While migrants holding the temporary protection status are legally different from beneficiaries of international protection in general, in practice they are people who have forcibly left Ukraine and have to be considered forced migrants, similarly to refugees.

However, it should be note that most of Ukrainian refugees entered and settled in neighboring countries temporarily as their intention is to return home as soon as possible. The main European countries where Ukrainians found refuge are Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Romania. Poland, in particular, hosted more than 1.5 million people as of November 2022 down from 2 million in mid-March 2022[4] and 3.5 million in May 2022.[5] This decrease is indeed mainly due to many people returning to Ukraine (see paragraph 2.2).

More generally, all EU Member states opened their doors to Ukrainians, as shown in Table 1 on the top ten EU countries of destination. In total, more than 4.8 million Ukrainians have entered Europe (i.e., considering non-EU countries as well).[6] Besides Poland, many Ukrainians moved to Germany (1 million people) and Italy, a country that hosts one of the largest Ukrainian diaspora communities in the world.

[3] Cf. the brief *Ukraine Situation Flash Update #35*, by UNHCR updated November 18, 2022 (available at: https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/96923, accessed November 22, 2022).

[4] Cf. *Poland welcomes more than two million refugees from Ukraine*, March 18, 2022, available at: https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2022/3/6234811a4/poland-welcomes-million-refugees-ukraine.html (accessed November 22, 2022).

[5] Cf. *UNHCR expands operations in Poland to reach refugees from Ukraine amid rising vulnerabilities*, May 27, 2022, available at: https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2022/5/62908c384/unhcr-expands-operations-poland-reach-refugees-ukraine-amid-rising-vulnerabilities.html (accessed November 22, 2022).

[6] Data published on the UNHCR portal, available at: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine (accessed November 22, 2022). Among the non-EU countries, the United Kingdom hosted 146,200 refugees as of November 22, 2022 and Turkey hosted approximately 145,000 refugees as of May 19, 2022.

Table 1. Main countries hosting Ukrainian refugees in the EU

Country	Ukrainian refugees under temporary protection or other international protection schemes
Poland	1,507,893
Germany	1,021,667
Czech Republic	462,413
Italy	164,171
Spain	154,457
Bulgaria	146,063
France	118,994
Slovakia	101,236
Romania	87,885
Austria	86,903

Source: UNHCR data (as of 22 November 2022) elaborated by ISMU

People leaving Ukraine are overwhelmingly women, minors, elderly and sick people due to the ban to leave the country for men aged 18 to 60. In addition to the large number of Ukrainians who have fled to EU countries, there are an estimated 16,000 Ukrainians in Belarus and a way bigger number of Ukrainians in the Russian Federation (2.8 million people according to UNCHR data).[7] Forced displacement of people from Ukraine to Russia takes place as actual deportations, as discussed in more detail in paragraph 2.4. UNHCR is also trying to provide assistance to these people through Russian authorities despite the difficulties in operating in the country.[8].

b) Internally displaced persons

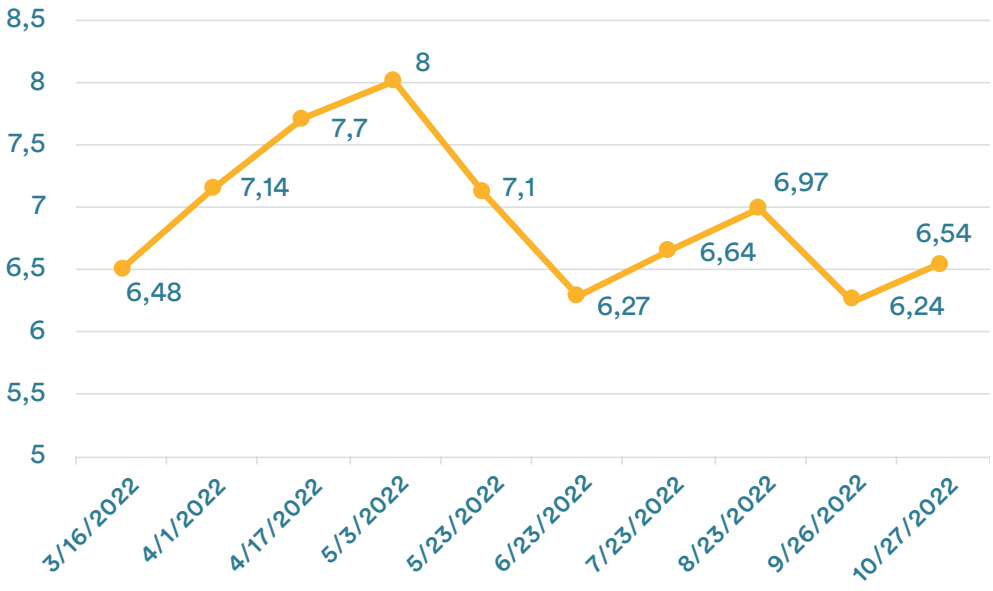
The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), i.e., people who move within the borders of their own country and away from places where the war is most intense or territories are occupied, is also high. At the end of October 2022, IOM recorded as many as 6.5 million IDPs. However, the estimate of IDPs is subject to change over time as many have tried to return home not only in the territories occupied by the Russians in early 2022 and then gradually taken over by the Ukrainian army but also in the territories of the Donbass that Russians still control. As documented, the number of these returnees was quite substantial at some stages, despite people being aware of the risks of living under Russian

[7] Data published on the UNHCR portal, available at: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine (accessed November 22, 2022). Data on Ukrainians moving to Russia are updated to October 3, 2022.
[8] Cf. the brief *Ukraine Situation Flash Update #35* by UNHCR updated on November 18, 2022 (available at: https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/96923 - accessed November 22, 2022).

control.[9] Reasons behind this difficult choice include 1) insufficient economic support provided by the Kiev government to those living outside the Donbass as IDPs (around 65€/month for each adult and 98€/month for each child); 2) availability of housing that was not completely destroyed and small vegetable gardens covering basic livelihood; 3) need to return to sick and elderly relatives.[10]

In each case, as Figure 1 shows, the number of IDPs remained between 6 and 7 million, reaching 8 million at the beginning of May 2022, two months after the beginning of the war.

Figure 1. Trends in IDPs (millions)



Source: Estimates and visualisation by ISMU based on iom data

2.2 Returns to Ukraine

Since the first moments of the war, Ukrainians who fled to neighboring countries have shown a strong desire to return as soon as possible to their home-

[9] Cf. Brera P. "Ecco perché tanti profughi ucraini rientrano nelle zone controllate dai russi: "Vivere da sfollati costa troppo"", *La Repubblica*, July 1, 2022, available at: https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2022/07/01/news/profughi_ucraini_rientrano_nelle_zone_controllate_dai_russi-356254035/ (accessed November 22, 2022).
[10] Ibid.

land, or at least to the regions that were no longer under Russian control or where violence was deescalating. A good example of this is the number of people returning to Kiev – up to 50,000 people over a few days in April 2022, when the situation in the capital appeared less risky –.[11]

In other areas, however, it was not possible to return for a long time. In Bucha, a city heavily attacked on 27 February 2022, most of inhabitants managed to escape while some remained trapped seeking shelter in cellars until 31 March, when the Russian military withdrew. As Bucha Mayor Anatolii Fedoruk recalled, the town was home to more than 35,000 inhabitants before the war. At the beginning of the Russian invasion only 10% had remained, while in July 13,000 people lived in the city[12] due to returnees. As in other cities with a similar fate, returns allowed to uncover and document the atrocities perpetrated by invaders, including the number of people killed and buried in mass graves and the tortures inflicted even on children, all things that can be unequivocally qualified as true war crimes.

2.3 Inflows of foreign fighters

In addition to the mobility described above, some people entered Ukraine also from different parts of the world. To a small extent, these are workers from NGOs supporting the local population. A much larger flow is represented foreign fighters who joined both the Russian and Ukrainian army. Before the war, the presence of some 17,000 foreign fighters and militias of different origin on both sides was also well documented in the Donbass during the years of the latent conflict that affected the region (Mehra, Torley, 2022).

On the Russian side, the mercenaries belonging to the Wagner Group, a private militia closely dependent on Moscow, were deployed in several African and Middle Eastern conflicts where Russia is active. The Wagner militia in Ukraine includes men from the 14 recruitment centers the group has opened in Syria, Libya and Central Africa. Additional support to Russians is ensured by Chechen militias, composed also of Islamic fundamentalists, that have stood out for some of the bloodiest actions and crimes in the conflict. The Kremlin also resorts to militias openly inspired by the Third Reich and white supremacy, such as the Russian Imperial Movement and the Sparta Battalion (Lombardi, 2022: 25).

A similar cluster of different groups can also be found among Kiev's allies, starting with the Azov Battalion, a militia originally and still Nazi-inspired that has been active in the Donbass for years. The Government in Kiev has also explicitly resorted to volunteers from abroad, establishing a Foreign Legion that, as of July 2022, reportedly consisted of some 20,000 fighters from 52 coun-

[11] Cf. Euronews "Kiev, il ritorno degli ucraini nella capitale: "la città sta tornando a vivere"", April 23, 2022, available at: https://it.euronews.com/2022/04/23/kiev-il-ritorno-degli-ucraini-nella-capitale-la-citta-sta-tornando-a-vivere (accessed November 22, 2022).

[12] Cf. Fasano G., "A Bucha, quattro mesi dopo, dove ottocento cadaveri aspettano ancora un nome", *Corriere della Sera*, July 25, 2022, available at: https://www.corriere.it/esteri/22_luglio_25/a-bucha-quattro-mesi-dopo-dove-ottocento-cadaveri-aspettano-ancora-nome-fc05f5d2-0c49-11ed-b3b8-bcecca2571b4.shtml (accessed November 22, 2022).

tries, recruited by the Ukrainian embassies present in various parts of the world (Mehra, Torley, 2022). This "legion" includes the Belarusian Gorez regiment, that opposes its country's dictatorship allied with Russia, the Mansur and Dudaev battalions, a group of Chechens hostile to their own regime, and the Freedom of Russia group, composed of Russians who contest Putin. Alongside these more structured entities, there is a range of informal groups aligned with the Ukrainians. These are politically very heterogeneous units (nationalists, radicals, libertarians, socialists) that, in addition to foreign fighters from America, Asia and Europe, include Ukrainian citizens too. Such a diverse group of people with different motivations, skills and forms of organization makes both the outcome of their engagement and their adherence to a desirable cease-fire very uncertain (Lombardi, 2022).

2.4 (Forced) mobility to and (voluntary) mobility from Russia

A particularly tragic form of human mobility is the migration of people forced to leave Ukraine to Russia. Many Ukrainian deportees were forced to move to Russia and could not be tracked as their documents and means of communication were confiscated. Moscow presented this mass deportation to Russian people as a "humanitarian operation". These deportations, comparable to the ones of Tatars in 1944, may be aimed both at having hostages to blackmail the Ukrainian government and at addressing the severe demographic crisis in the Russian Federation.

As early as the end of April 2022, according to Kiev, deportees to Russia were at least half a million, while Moscow reported 915,000 Ukrainians, including 170,000 minors, who had "voluntarily" decided to move to the Russian Federation. In September 2022, at the UN Security Council meeting Ukraine denounced the deportation of 2.5 million people to Russia.[13] In Mariupol, for instance, the mayor said that at least 49,000 citizens and about 5,000 children had been deported.[14] This is the forced relocation of "thousands of families from the occupied Ukrainian territories to the most remote and depressed corners of Russia, [with authorities labelling] as "welcoming" what in fact is a forced migration plan sending evacuees as far north as the Arctic Circle and distributing them along the eleven time zones of the Federation – 8,000 kilometers from home for the most unfortunate ones".[15] According to Alexei Danilov, Secretary of the Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, many of these deportees would be then forced to work in Western Siberia or to join the Russian army.[16]

[13] Cf. Brera P., "In Russia 2,5 milioni di ucraini": Kiev denuncia le deportazioni", *La Repubblica*, September 9, 2022, availabe at: https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2022/09/09/news/deportazione_ucraini_in_russia_onu-364834814/ (accessed November 22, 2022).
[14] Cf. Fasano G., "Ucraina, l'incubo dei deportati in Russia: «Sono prigionieri di fatto»", *Corriere della Sera*, April 22, 2022, available at: https://www.corriere.it/esteri/22_aprile_22/ucraina-l-incubo-deportati-russia-sono-prigionieri-fatto-c202146e-c1c7-11ec-b24b-141a4aa112a9.shtml (accessed November 22, 2022).
[15] Ibid.
[16] Cf. Castelletti R., "Rubli, passaporti e telefoni. Così Kirienko, il "viceré del Donbass", annette i territori occupati", *La Repubblica*, June 11, 2022, available at: https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2022/06/10/news/sergej_kirienko_e_il_vicere_del_donbass-353353405/ (accessed November 22, 2022).

The group of 200,000 deported minors includes at least 1,700 unaccompanied children whose parents died or went missing.[17] There is reason to believe that the Russian government is taking steps to have many of them adopted by Russian families by simplifying the relative procedures as much as possible. Moscow hypocritically refers to this initiative as a humanitarian initiative while Kiev considers it a real children abduction that would be part of a broader specific strategy to tackle the severe demographic decline in Russia.[18] In late May 2022 official Russian sources reported there were 230,000 children transferred to Russia and that they would undergo "rehabilitation." This is likely to consist of an intense "process of Russification", as dramatically confirmed by a measure that Putin adopted on 30 May where he formalized that Ukrainian orphans and minors, violently removed from their parents, were undergoing an intense "education" on Russian culture.

The general picture on the mobility of Ukrainians also includes those who voluntarily sought refuge in the Russian Federation, either because they were pressured to or because they were both Russophones and Russophiles. From the stories collected mainly by humanitarian organization, some Ukrainians relocate to Russia as a last resort to escape war and death.

Parallel to this (mostly forced) mobility to the Russian Federation there is also a flow of people leaving – or escaping from – the country, including oligarchs who have fallen out of favor with Putin or opposed his war, skilled people moving as part of the "brain drain" (researchers, scientists, technicians) and individuals belonging to the middle class who, out of fear or dissent from Putin's political line, decided to leave a country where they saw no future.[19] Another important outflow, however, is that of millionaires who, according to a survey, have fled Russia. By the end of 2022, 15% of high-income citizens were expected to move to countries where citizenship acquisition was easy.[20]

Further departures from Russia were recorded following Putin's speech to the nation on 21 September 2022, when he announced the so-called "partial mobilization" of 300,000 reservists. The measures put in place caused panic among the population, with more than 70,000 people leaving the country by car or even bike and scooters in just three days, as shown by the long queues at

[17] Cf. Fubini F., "I bambini ucraini «rubati» che ora la Russia vuole adottare", *Corriere della Sera*, May 22, 2022, available at: https://www.corriere.it/politica/22_maggio_24/bambini-ucraini-rubati-russia-e2890152-dad1-11ec-85d9-79001994e61c.shtml (accessed November 22, 2022).

[18] The demographic decline is clearly demonstrated by the figures discussed by Shcherbakova, 2022.

[19] Cf. Imarisio M., "L'isolamento tecnologico di Mosca: si ritirano anche i big cinesi Lenovo e Xiaomi", *Corriere della Sera*, May 7, 2022, available at: https://www.corriere.it/economia/finanza/22_maggio_07/isolamento-tecnologico-mosca-si-ritirano-anche-big-cinesi-lenovo-xiaomi-57b1aac8-ce44-11ec-b3ba-cf41db28034c.shtml (accessed November 22, 2022).

[20] Cf. Franceschini E., "Russia, la grande fuga dei milionari: in 15mila andranno via entro fine anno", *La Repubblica*, June 15, 2022, available at: https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2022/06/14/news/russia_fuga_milionari_15mila_via_entro_fine_anno-353844587/ (accessed November 22, 2022)

the borders with Georgia, Kazakhstan and Mongolia.[21] Flights from Moscow to the capitals of Georgia, Turkey, Serbia and Armenia – all destinations Russians could access without a visa – were sold out within hours. The same happened with flights to other destinations outside Europe, e.g., Dubai. Putin's speech also prompted many Russian citizens to head for the border with Finland, where kilometer-long queues formed just like after the announcement of the invasion.

3. Reception of Ukrainians in Europe and Italy

In the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, public opinion in European countries showed solidarity with Ukraine and support Ukrainians forced to leave. As the data above shows (see 2.1), European countries opened their borders, letting in millions of people seeking protection from the conflict in a very short time. In recent years asylum seekers living in similar humanitarian crises have not been granted an equally easy access into the EU but, rather, their mobility has been hindered. For example, Hungary physically prevented access and transit among Syrian asylum seekers reaching the EU and fleeing atrocities committed in their own country by the Syrian regime, ISIS and external actors, particularly Russia. Another example is the construction of walls on the Eastern European borders, a plan presented by the countries of the Visegrád group, namely Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia, as early as 2021.

In the case of Ukrainian asylum seekers, however, the attitude and response of EU counties have been radically opposite. Most strikingly it was the Eastern European countries, historically most hostile to immigration, that took in some 2 million people as a whole, showing great empathy for Ukrainian asylum seekers and deploying a broad solidarity mechanism with the involvement of civil society. Even political leaders of overtly anti-immigration parties reiterated the "duty to welcome" Ukrainians.[22] This open-minded attitude was finally enshrined in the rapid approval of the Temporary Protection Directive by the Council of the EU, a development that is absolutely unprecedented considering the always difficult and often inconclusive mediations between Member states on EU migration policy. This highlights a different treatment of Ukrainians compared to asylum seekers from other regions that can be understood through the sociological cat-

[21] Cf. Castelletti R., ""Passo in monopattino?" La fuga dei giovani russi, mai così tanti ai confini", *La Repubblica*, September 23, 2022, available at: https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2022/09/23/news/fuga_russia_mobilitazione_parziale-366971302/ (accessed November 22, 2022); Imarisio M., "Russia, mobilitati anche gli over 50: panico e code ai confini del Paese", *Corriere della Sera*, September 23, 2022, available at: https://www.corriere.it/esteri/22_settembre_23/russia-mobilitati-over-50-0c28abda-3ab7-11ed-b03d-1f9e636121b9.shtml (accessed November 22, 2022)

[22] Cf. "Salvini: "Accogliamo gli ucraini in fuga, sono profughi veri". Letta: "Serve un aiuto più concreto per difendersi"", *La Repubblica*, February 25, 2022, available at: https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2022/02/25/news/salvini_letta_ucraina-339233962/ (accessed November 22, 2022); Bourgeois, M.P., "Ukraine: Marine Le Pen juge "naturel" d'accueillir des réfugiés européens et non des Afghans" , available at: https://www.bfmtv.com/politique/ukraine-marine-le-pen-juge-naturel-d-accueillir-des-refugies-europeens-et-non-des-afghans_AV-202203010696.html (accessed November 22, 2022).

egory of "difference/different" In other words, one of the primary reasons that Europeans were more willing to accept Ukrainians fleeing war is the perceived greater cultural closeness, according to which Ukrainians would not be "different" from us. Indeed, Ukrainians share many aspects of the Western Culture in Europe, Christianity, a common history and the self-identification with the EU, to which the Ukrainians want to be part. However, while it is normal to feel closer to people with whom one shares cultural and identity traits or a common fear, e.g., fear of the Russian enemy, the perceived greater closeness should not overshadow the moral imperative to welcome people fleeing war and persecution regardless of their race or religion, nor should it be used to build social stratifications and hierarchies where some are "luckier" than others. On the contrary, asylum seekers from other regions, who are not white and are often Muslim, received a radically different treatment because they are associated to an image of foreignness, dirtiness, dangerousness or, more generally, otherness. An example of this attitude is the willingness of Visegrád countries to accept only Christian Syrian refugees during the so-called refugee crisis in 2015. Moreover, it has been documented how people from African or Middle Eastern countries living in Ukraine were the target of discrimination and racist when crossing the Ukrainian borders to flee war.[23]

Considering the admirable solidarity shown by Ukraine's neighboring countries, there is hope that the same empathy towards the suffering endured by Ukrainians fleeing the war may lead to more awareness of the suffering also experienced by Syrians, Afghans or Eritreans who have been seeking asylum from wars and dictatorships. In this regard, it is worth remembering how "difference" is a socially and historically constructed concept. Today's Others are the Blacks or Muslims but in the not-so distant past they were the Italians in Belgium or Germany and the Irish in the US, even though their skin color was white and their religion was Christian. This should always make us reflect on how relative the perceived differences are and should make us reject any justification of the need to welcome people in "ethnic" or "culturalist" terms.

However, to understand the objectively exceptional nature of the treatment reserved for Ukrainians one cannot ignore that their country is engaged in a war to both defend itself and safeguard other European countries threatened by Russian expansionism. Putin's aggression against a sovereign, independent and democratic country – that violated borders defined at international level – is of extreme gravity. What is happening at the heart of Europe is reminiscent of other events, such as Hitler's military invasion, that should not be forgotten and should be enough to stop Putin from seizing other people's territories and impose his own repressive regime on them, which would repress individual and collective freedom. The heroic resistance of the Ukrainians is therefore fundamental to defend both their and our freedom – something that we often take for granted despite its irreplaceable value to be safeguarded and consolidated (Cesareo, 2023).

[23] Cf. Press releases by European Network Against Racism (ENAR) available at: https://www.enar-eu.org/black-human-rights-activist-describes-experience-escaping-ukraine/; https://www.enar-eu.org/europe-cannot-abandon-racialised-people-stuck-at-borders-of-ukrainian-conflict/ (accessed November 22, 2022)

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2.
Statistical aspects

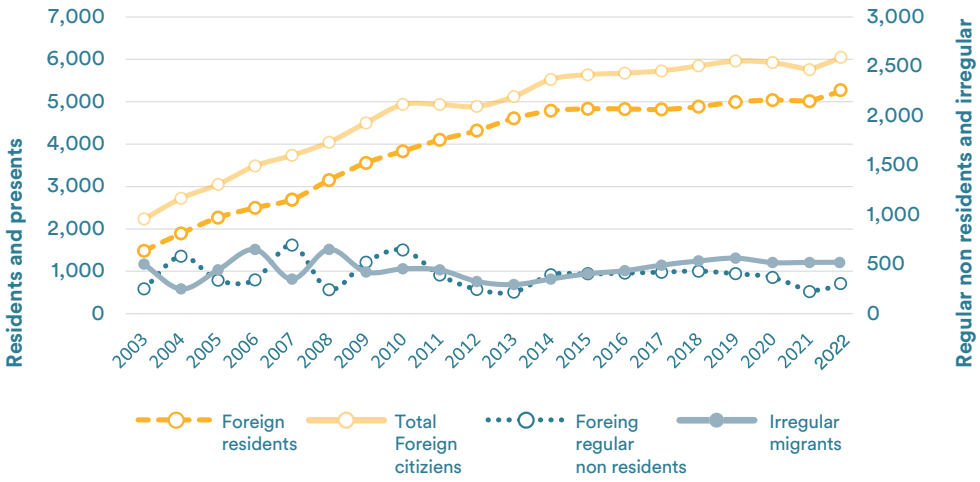
Gian Carlo Blangiardo and Livia Elisa Ortensi

1. Over 6 million foreign citizens

The year 2021, as the second year influenced by the pandemic, shows a moderate increase in the growth of the foreign population in Italy, ending the stagnation highlighted in our last report (Fondazione ISMU, 2022). The stock data on January 1st 2022, points out the passing of the threshold of 6 million persons, raising the ratio between the number of foreign citizens living in our country and the usually resident population in Italy[1] from 9.9% recorded in 2021 up to 10.1% in 2022 (both on January 1st).

[1] We refer to the "Usually resident population", that amounts to 59 million 607 thousand in Italy on 1st January 2022, compared to 59 million and 862 thousand in 2021 (Eurostat, 2022).

Figure 1. Foreign population in Italy on January 2003-2022 by resident status (values in thousands)



Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of the Interior data

A moderate growth in the foreign resident population (up to 2 thousand persons) and a moderate drop in the irregular foreign population are noted. The latter result is primarily due to the first effects of the "2020 amnesty".[2] The so-called "non-resident regular foreign population" (i.e., migrants with a regular resident permit not yet registered in the civil register *Anagrafe*) has also shown a significant increase. Its increase has been fundamental to raising the stock data of the foreign population as the result of a renewed growth in the annual flux of first resident permits issued. This boost seems, therefore, to be driven by the extra-EU component.

Table 1. Foreign population in Italy on January 1st 2019-2022 by resident status (thousand)

Type	1.1.2019	1.1.2020	1.1.2021	1.1.2022
Resident population	4,996	5,040	5,172	5,194
Regular non-resident population	404	366	224	303
Irregular population	562	517	519	506
Total foreign population	**5,962**	**5,923**	**5,915**	**6,003**

Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of the Interior data

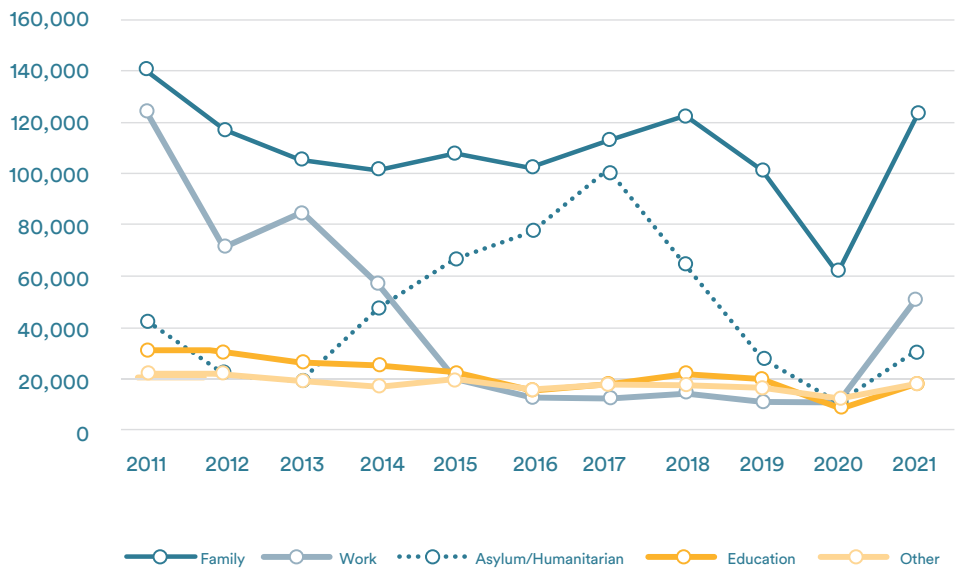
[2] Article 103 of the Law Decree no. 34 of May 19, 2020.

Official Statistics show that 242 thousand first resident permits were issued in 2021, more than twice the number recorded during the previous year (up to 127%) when the Covid-19 effect had significantly reduced mobility.

Data as of 2021 are close to those of 2018, being also comprehensive of increased permits issued for asylum reasons (31 thousand). That dynamics followed the up-going trend of the total number of permits issued and led to an absolute number of cases exceeding the pre-pandemic levels, even if, in relative terms, the number of resident permits issued for asylum reasons and other protective reasons has been lower than in 2019 falling to 12.8% from 15.6% of the total number of the first permits issued.

A growth in the issue of first permits for employment-related reasons is noted, mainly caused by the regularisation of irregular migrants already present in Italy (2020 amnesty). The first permits issued for employment-related reasons represent 21% of the total number, reaching 51,000 units, close to the figure observed in 2014. Concerning resident permits issued for other reasons, in 2021, the education-related permits (about 18,000) still do not reach the pre-Covid-19 levels. First permits issued for family-related reasons followed the same trend as those for education-related reasons, accounting for the highest value, reaching the levels observed 10 years ago of 122,000 units.

Figure 2. Number of first resident permits by reason. Years 2011-2021



Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of the Interior data

2. Third-country nationals: dynamics and structure

The number of regular non-EU Citizens in Italy on January 1st 2022, was equal to 3 million and 562 thousand persons, in a proportion of 6 out of 10 foreign citizens in Italy. Compared to the previous year, we observed an increase of non-EU Citizens of 188 thousand persons (up to 5.6%). The growth regards almost all nationalities, with some peaks for people from Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The long-term resident permits represent two-thirds of the total amount of valid permits of stay (65.8%), a proportion that reaches three-thirds among migrants from Europe, with a peak for Moldavians and Ukrainians.

From a structural point of view, there is an overall gender balance. Male individuals make up 51% of the total, even if their proportion varies greatly across citizenships. The age distribution of third-country nationals in Italy is younger than the Italian one. The median age is 36.3 years old, but it varies according to the nationalities from a minimum of 30.7 years old for Asian citizens to a maximum of 43.2 for North-American citizens, through 33.8 for African citizens, 38.9 for European citizens and 39.3 for Latin-American citizens.

The data by nationality of origin on January 1st 2022, shows the prominence of citizens from Morocco (408 thousand), followed by those originating from Albania (397 thousand), China (291 thousand), Ukraine[3] (230 thousand) and India (162 thousand). Three countries with little more than 150 thousand persons (Philippines, Sri Lanka, Senegal and Tunisia) follow. These 13 countries together account for 70% of the regular stayers from outside the EU.

3. The transition to Italian citizenship

According to the statistics by Eurostat (2022), back in 2011, Italy was the fourth country in the EU according to the number of citizenship acquisitions by third-country nationals, with about 50 thousand concessions (9.7% of the total). It was largely surpassed by Spain (113 thousand acquisitions), France (103 thousand) and Germany (90 thousand).
Ten years later - being the year 2021 the last available year - Italy is the second most important country in terms of citizenship acquisitions to former non-EU citizens with 119 thousand cases (19% of the total), with only 2 thousand concessions less than those recorded for Spain.

If we add the citizenship acquisitions of EU citizens, the overall number of concessions in 2021 reaches 121,457 (above 10 thousand less than the previous year), 90% of which were previously non-EU citizens. 41% of the latter were granted by residence, 11.9% by marriage, while the remaining percentage (47.1%) stated as "other reasons" refers to those acquiring citizenship by family

[3] The value doesn't comprehends the Ukraine conflict-driven migration flows, being referred to 1st January 2022.

ties under Article 5 of the current law.[4] Women represent 49.6% of those who gained Italian citizenship in 2021, and more than 81% acquired it by marriage.

Table 2. Citizenship acquisitions by former Non-EU citizens in 2021 and 2020 by acquisition reason. First ten countries (absolute values)

	Acquisition reason			
	Residence	**Marriage**	**Other**	**Total**
		Year 2021		
Albania	11,494	2,246	8,753	22,493
Moldova	2,269	441	923	3,633
Bangladesh	2,057	233	2,826	5,116
India	2,052	515	1,922	4,489
Pakistan	1,553	254	2,603	4,410
Egypt	1,142	282	2,107	3,531
Morocco	6,327	2,298	7,963	16,588
Argentina	119	170	3,380	3,669
Brazil	423	815	4,222	5,460
Ecuador	1,873	334	1,155	3,362
Other countries	15,574	5,490	15,779	36,843
Total	**44,883**	**13,078**	**51,633**	**109,594**
		Year 2020		
Albania	17,006	2,127	8,974	28,107
Moldova	3,113	398	829	4,340
Bangladesh	2,955	219	2,487	5,661
India	2,895	588	2,119	5,602
Pakistan	2,740	221	2,668	5,629
Egypt	897	247	1,647	2,791
Morocco	7,811	2,761	7,452	18,024
Argentina	61	104	1,552	1,717
Brazil	284	619	6,246	7,149
Ecuador	1,567	238	774	2,579
Other countries	18,114	5,247	13,553	36,914
Total	**57,443**	**12,769**	**48,301**	**118,513**

Source: ISMU analysis on ISTAT data

[4] We remind that under article 5 of Law no. 91/1992 "When living with their parents, the underage children of individuals who acquired or renewed the Italian citizenship shall acquire the Italian citizenship as well".

The non-EU naturalised citizens were mainly Albanians (22 thousand), Moroccans (17 thousand) and Brazilians (5 thousand). Great relevance has the acquisition of Italian citizenship by descent from Italian ancestors between Brazilians. Those three countries comprise more than 44% of the acquisitions registered in 2021. About 7 acquisitions out of 10 were registered in Northern Italy, 2 in Centre Italy and 1 in the South, where the acquisitions by descent were more significant than anywhere else.

Overall, on January 1st 2021, there were 1 million and 471 thousand naturalised migrants in Italy, 83.3% originating from non-EU countries. It is a group of people characterised by a slight female predominance (56.3%), with a significant proportion of migrants of Albanian (18.4%) and Moroccan origin (15.5%) combined with a plurality of other nationalities in a less minor quota. In general, for every 100 regular Albanian residents, there are 52 Italian citizens of Albanian origin. The ratio is similar for Moroccan citizens (44 out of 100), while it drops to about 32 for the entire population of former non-EU citizens.

From a geographical point of view, "the new citizens" are concentrated in six regions: Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia Romagna, Piedmont, Lazio and Tuscany, covering three-thirds of the total.

4. An update on Ukrainian arrivals, sea arrivals and asylum requests trends

Migrations are the most dynamic component of inflows and outflows in and from countries. The least predictable flow is related to conflict-driven flows or arising from instability. The most up-to-date and relevant example is the flow of persons that left Ukraine because of the conflict with Russia, which began on February 24th 2022. About 173 thousand Ukrainian nationals are benefiting from temporary protection permits in Italy as of March 17th 2023 (Protezione Civile, 2023). The applications peaked between February and March 2022, while only over one quarter (26.7%) was received after June. The actual flow is far lower than those initially hypothesised of around 800 thousand persons, equal to 3.3 entries for every Ukrainian citizen residing in Italy on January 1st 2021 (less than 236 thousand residents; ISTAT, 2022).

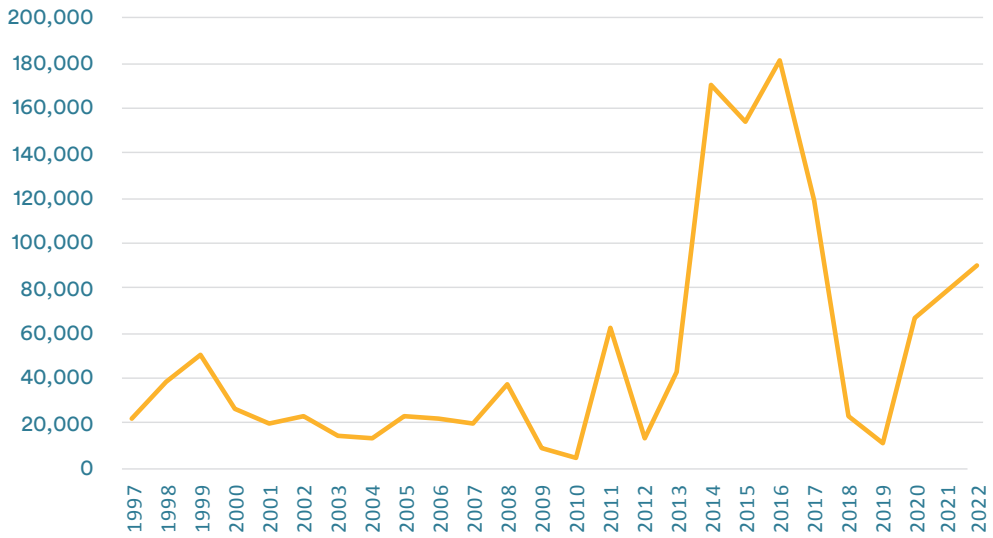
The current figure is much lower, with an attractiveness rate for Italy equal to 0.7 entries for each resident, the lowest rate behind Hungary and Greece. The Ukrainian population in Italy is characterised by the highest level of feminisation in Europe, second only to Greece in the EU territory, and by a strong presence of women over sixty years old primarily working as caregivers. The high share of Ukrainians working as caregivers cohabiting with their employers or living in shared flats makes this community particularly weak in their lodging capability for their relatives. This aspect helps us understand why the number of persons that reached Italy has been lesser than expected, despite a very large Ukrainian community in Italy. The applications have been equally distributed across the Italian territory: 28.2% in the North-West, 25.9% in the North-East,

20.7% in the Centre and 25.2% in the South. Such distribution matches the geographic presence of the Ukrainian individuals already residing, supporting the theory that refugees reached friends and relatives in Italy. If compared to other migration flows, due to international protection reasons - mainly characterised by a substantial male presence - the Ukrainian flow in 2022 is composed chiefly of women (85% of the adult population) and minors (38% of the total) (Protezione Civile, 2023).

The Ukrainian arrivals, benefiting from the Decision of the European Commission on March 4th 2022, to activate the Temporary Protection Directive 2022/382 to give the right to protection under article 5 of the Directive 2001/55/EC, took place in concurrence with the continuously growing number of sea and land entries in our country.

The sea arrivals on the Italian coasts in 2021 were 67,477 (Ministero dell'Interno, 2022a), about the double of registered arrivals in 2020 and almost 6 times those recorded in 2019. The 2022 figures show a further growth up to 105 thousand (Ministry of the Interior, 2022)

Figure 3. Italy sea arrivals by year. Years 1997-2022



Source: ISMU analysis on ISTAT data

Despite the strong growth observed in 2022, those figures are 32% lower than the average number of sea arrivals registered between 2014 and 2017, the years of the more recent peak in sea arrivals inflows to Italy. However, they are also 67% higher compared to 2011, when the North Africa emergency occurred. Libya is the most recurrent departure place on the way to the Italian coasts: in the year 2022, 51% of departures originated from Libya, in comparison with 31%

from Tunisia, 15% from Turkey and a residual 5% from Cyprus, Greece, Algeria, Lebanon and Syria (UNHCR, 2022a). In the last two years, the arrivals from Türkiye have also grown as a reaction against Greece's higher and higher restrictive approach towards migration inflows. In 2021 the arrival rate from this country had reached the 9% of the total. Greece's systematic and large-scale pushbacks have been indeed frequently reported. (ECRE, 2021; UNHCR, 2022a; Forin and Frouws, 2022). That policy caused a drop in migration flows along the Eastern Mediterranean route, with a partial re-routing towards Italy. Afghans (45.3%), Iranians (18.2%) as well as Egyptians (13.9%) arrive by sea from Türkiye. They usually land in Calabria (Forin and Frouws, 2022). Egyptians (36.3%), Bangladeshis (28.1%), and Syrians (12.2%) mainly depart from Libya, while 56.9% of the arrivals from Tunisia are composed of Tunisians, followed by Ivorians (17.5%) and Guineans (13.6%) (UNHCR, 2022a)

The sea arrivals, while increasing in size, have also changed their citizenship composition compared to the 2014-2017 crisis year. In those years, most migrants originated from sub-Saharan Africa, except for a peak of Syrians in 2014. Since 2018 arrivals of Tunisian and Egyptian citizens sharply increased together with those from some Asian countries such as Bangladesh. In Tunisia, the resuming of the migration flows is the result of worsening social and economic conditions such as unemployment, underemployment and very little confidence in the country's future, aggravated by the pandemic and the Ukrainian crisis' consequences on prices. The Covid-19 pandemic has worsened existing difficulties, with key sectors such as tourism facing troubles. (Herbert, 2022). Departures from Egypt have similar reasons. The number of sea arrivals from the country is 13 times higher than the total for 2020, the first year when Egypt ranked amongst the top ten countries of origin for arrival by sea. Italy is the primary country of emigration in Europe for Egyptians, whose main destinations are, however, outside the EU, such as Saudi Arabia, Emirates and Kuwait (EUAA, 2022). The migration flows are motivated by "the worst crisis in the past century" as was recently defined by the Egyptian Prime Minister. In the country, the violation of the right to freedom of expression is also a critical point (Ibid.)

Table 3. First 5 declared nationalities upon sea arrival and percentage in the total number of sea arrival citizens. Years 2014-2022[5]

2014	Syria	Eritrea	Mali	Nigeria	Gambia
	24.9	20.2	5.8	5.3	5.1
2015	Eritrea	Nigeria	Somalia	Sudan	Gambia
	25.5	14.5	8.1	5.8	5.5
2016	Nigeria	Eritrea	Guinea	Ivory Coast	Gambia
	20.7	11.4	7.4	6.8	6.6
2017	Nigeria	Guinea	Ivory Coast	Bangladesh	Mali
	15.2	8.1	8	7.5	6
2018	Tunisia	Eritrea	Iraq	Sudan	Pakistan
	22.2	14.2	7.5	6.9	6.8
2019	Tunisia	Pakistan	Ivory Coast	Algeria	Iraq
	23.1	10.3	9.9	8.8	8.5
2020	Tunisia	Bangladesh	Ivory Coast	Algeria	Egypt
	37.7	12.1	5.7	4.3	3.7
2021	Tunisia	Egypt	Bangladesh	Iran	Ivory Coast
	23.4	12.5	11.7	5.8	5.7
2022	Egypt	Tunisia	Bangladesh	Syria	Afghanistan
	19.9	19.3	14.0	7.2	6.8

Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of the Interior data

We observe a slight fall in the number of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa migrants compared to the previous years. Such a decrease was first interpreted as a temporary regionalisation of the migration movement (Villa, 2021) caused by mobility restrictions during the first phase of the Covid-19 emergency (Schofberger, Rango, 2020). Later, that decline proved persistent, suggesting other factors' concurrence. According to a recent analysis, some communities seem more affected by the Libyan Coast Guard interceptions (Malians, for example; Forin, Frouws, 2022). However, according to the authors, this evidence is insufficient to explain the significant and persistent fall in arrivals from Sub-Saharan Africa to Italy. Another partial explanation can be found in the EU and Niger's efforts to stop migration into Libya. The increasing number of conflicts in Mali and Burkina Faso may also have concurred to a fall in migration movements that are becoming more and more dangerous. At the same time, flows from Western Africa to Europe, Morocco and Senegal have been growing since 2020 along the Atlantic route, especially to the Canary Islands.

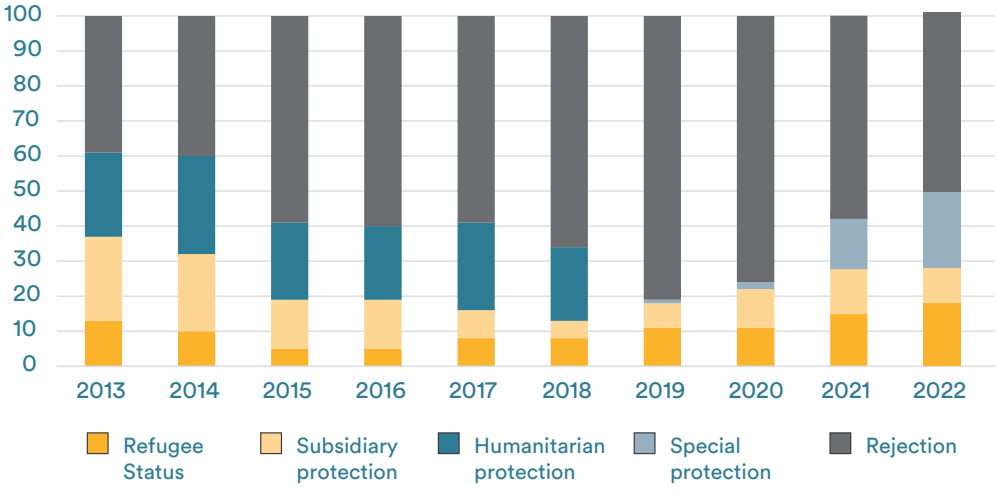
[5] This value has already been reached in the past years (see this Report previous edition), albeit being edited and shrunk by the Census Bureau's calculation of the resident population.

While sea arrivals are on the rise, the number of land border crossings, especially from Slovenia, is also increasing: recent data shows about 13,500 arrivals in 2022, mostly from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, India and Nepal (UNHCR, 2022b). There is a likely growing trend, despite the difficulties in collecting data on this entry channel. The overall figure reported by UNHCR was 5,247 in 2020 and 4,133 in 2019 (UNHCR 2021a, 2021b).

The availability of real-time data on sea arrivals only draws attention to this entry route, leaving in the background - even in public debate - the asylum application dynamics that partly depend on them. Not every sea arrival results in an asylum claim, some of which originate in different entry channels such as land arrivals, humanitarian corridors, re-entries under the Dublin Regulation, or airport entries. The growth of arrivals by land and sea has indeed resulted in an increase in asylum applications in 2021. Those were 53,609, with a rise of 98.8% compared to 2020, when Italy received 26,963 applications (Ministero dell'Interno, 2022b).

The year 2022 shows a steady downward trend in the total rejection rate of asylum applications (51.6%), compared to 2019-2020 when three-quarters of the applications were rejected. The rise in the issue of the so-called "special permits" that account for 20.5% of the decisions influences such a trend. Also, the recognition of the refugee status and subsidiary protection, amounting to one-third of the results, is higher compared to 2019 (Figure 4). The growing number of granted asylum applications resulted from amendments in Italian laws and the change in the composition of the asylum-seekers, especially those arriving from Afghanistan, after the Kabul evacuation in the 2021 summer.

Figure 4. Decisions on asylum request. Years 2013-2022, percentages



Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of the Interior and Eurostat data

5. Conclusions

The foreign population in Italy reached the symbolic threshold of 6 million persons at the beginning of the year 2022 and accounts for 10% of the usually resident population. That population is increasingly becoming more stable, a process substantiated by a high proportion of long-term residents among third-country nationals (i.e. the unlimited right of residence) and the high number of citizenship acquisitions. As anticipated in the previous edition of this report, the irregular population size estimated on January 1st 2002 drops due to the increased number of regularisations issued under the 2020 Amnesty - Sanatoria in Italian - in 2021. A substantial increase in humanitarian migration flow in 2021 and 2022 is observed: sea and land arrivals peaked with the addition of the inflow caused by the Ukraine war. The rate of the granted refugee status or subsidiary protection has indeed grown.

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3.
The legal framework

Ennio Codini

1. Introduction

Between January 2022 and March 2023 no radical innovations were introduced into the legal framework. However, there were two main developments. In 2022 a particular reception model dedicated to Ukrainian refugees was implemented and in March 2023 the Government passed a decree law on "Urgent provisions on the legal entry of foreign workers and on prevention and tackling of irregular migration" (Decree 20 of March 2023).

These events may appear of little interest. There is hope that the Ukrainian conflict will not get more dramatic, that there will be no additional flows of asylum seekers coming from this country to Italy and that the war will end as soon as possible, allowing those who fled their homes as a result of foreign aggression to return. On the other hand, the fact that the Decree of March 2023 was also seen as an emergency-driven, exceptional measure might cement the idea that this kind of initiatives have no relevance for long-term policymaking. But they do. The measures concerning Ukrainian refugees gave rise to a reception model that is certainly peculiar but could also become an important reference

for designing an overall reform that addresses *all* groups of asylum seekers. It should also be noted that, as proven by the decree law of March 2023, asylum policy is increasingly approached through emergency decrees that are used as "tools for minor reforms" introducing important innovations.
This chapter breaks down these two and other developments that are relevant from a regulatory point of view.

2. The reception model for Ukrainian refugees…

Faced with the inflow of people from Ukraine fleeing the war, multiple measures were taken to set up a reception model.

A special permit for temporary protection was created through the Ministerial Decree of 28 March 2022 and based on the European Council Implementing Decision of 4 March 2022. This sui generis way of regulating the presence of a specific group of people fleeing war was influenced by the special traits of the Ukrainian crisis in the European context and is therefore not likely to become the blueprint for regulating the stay of asylum seekers in the future. This greatly reduces its relevance also considering that this approach drew much criticism for creating an unjust system of privileges over other refugees.

However, in response to the flow of Ukrainians, institutions set up a more comprehensive, particular response – analyzed in by the ISMU Foundation in a previous paper (Morlotti, 2022) – that included specific solutions on reception in terms of material reception and integration measures financed with public funds. The following paragraphs explore how these solutions might become a reference for a needed general reform of the Italian asylum system.

One key choice was to avoid focusing exclusively on the SAI (Reception and Integration System) to meet the emerging needs but, rather, on a wider range of measures. This does not mean the SAI was not significantly strengthened – 8,000 places were added through the Decree 16 of 28 February 2022. Beyond this increase, however, the Decree 21 of 21 March 2022 created a much wider range of reception options for Ukrainian refugees.

This system was designed strongly following the principle of horizontal subsidiarity in its broadest sense. The core of this principle is that in the first instance the input of public authorities is limited to supporting individuals or families that autonomously try to cover their own needs. For Ukrainian refugees, this meant receiving a public contribution of 300€ per month and 150€ for every minor child (the so-called "subsistence contribution", Art. 2 of the Civil Protection Ordinance 881 of 29 March 2022). Until that time Italy – unlike other countries – had never opened access to this kind of help for people granted entry and residence based on international protection law.

Those who did not use this form of support could rely upon either families willing to host in partnership with nonprofit organizations or reception facilities that organizations independently set up with public funding outside the scope of the SAI – as part of the so-called "widespread reception" (Art. 1 of the Civil

Protection Ordinance). The pattern emerging from the reception of Ukrainians is that policymakers tried to enhance, first and foremost, the ability of people to provide for themselves, and that the whole society, families and private actors were part of an additional option. As a result, the contribution of the SAI, i.e., a public service, was found to be subsidiary.

3. … and its possible relevance for an overall reform of the reception system

The reception model adopted for Ukrainian refugees can become an important starting point to reflect on an overall reform of the reception system for asylum seekers.

The SAI has important advantages compared to other reception alternatives (e.g., CASs, Extraordinary Reception Centers) and is seen as a good example of a public service including private actors as an essential resource. However, due to its institutional configuration, so far the system has not managed to enhance the ability of individuals to self-determine and struggled to fully exploit all the resources that families and the private sector could potentially contribute to the reception of asylum seekers. On the other hand, there is potential value in the idea of giving room to and supporting individual responsibility while leaving the outsourcing of responsibility to others (e.g., institutions) as a backup solution. In addition, in a context where resources are often lacking in practice, it can be strategic to support private actors (including individual people) who are willing to help others and address their needs. This means, however, that private actors should not be expected to conform to pre-set cross-cutting standards that are characteristic of a public service such as the SAI but, rather, that their originality and ability to develop different, new solutions should be fostered. A profound mentality shift in this sense becomes key considering that in the coming years societies will be asked to host and support the integration of *many* and *different* people seeking asylum – a challenge that, as experience shows, cannot be met by only focusing on the SAI.

Indeed, past criticism of grants for asylum seekers has primarily built on the argument that such form of contribution could induce people to apply for international protection despite not meeting the requirements as they would be drawn by the possibility of accessing subsidies pending the asylum decision. In the case of the Ukrainian crisis, some could also argue that the Ukrainians who entered Italy as result of the war automatically fell into the category of those eligible for international protection and, therefore, that the option of individual grants cannot be applied to other migrant groups. However, this reasoning would go too far. In recent years there have been very significant flows similar to those from Ukraine – e.g., Syrians asylum seekers – so it is hard to see why Italy should not replicate what it did for Ukrainians in 2022 with people coming

from countries marked by general violence or repression – something we will unfortunately still witness in the future.

More generally, using the model created for Ukrainians to redesign the overall reception system could also be criticized based on the argument that the reception of Ukrainians followed a logic of *temporary* protection, unlike what is usually done for other asylum seekers. However, it should be noted that the publicly funded reception of asylum seekers has always been temporary in principle and that, even in a model like the one envisaged for Ukrainians, effective integration interventions in the medium and long term are recommended.

4. The attempt to reform the citizenship legislative framework based on the ius scholae…

In 2022 policymakers tried to pass a reform of citizenship law. The Constitutional Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies tabled a legislative proposal that built on the idea that schooling and the acquisition of citizenship could be intertwined and that, unsurprisingly, was referred to as *ius scholae*. The aim was to innovate provisions of citizenship law that concerned immigrants' children by supplementing the existing legal provisions with a new one strengthening the role of education. The current ways of citizenship acquisition available to immigrants' children are essentially three:

1. for people born in Italy: immediate acquisition if parents cannot transmit their citizenship based on the regulations of their countries;
2. for people born in Italy and people who moved to Italy through family reunion: indirect acquisition from the (Italian) citizenship of parents acquired before the child was 18;
3. for people born in Italy: autonomous acquisition upon request once the applicant turns 18.

The legislative proposal developed in the Committee added a new option that people under the age of 18 could access based on the following requirements: being born in Italy, or having begun to live in Italy before the age of 12; having uninterrupted formal residence in the country; and having attended one of the institutions belonging to the National Education System (primary school, high school) for at least five years.

The proposal was dropped as it was not approved by the Parliament before its dissolution a few months later. It nevertheless remains an important legal document with key implications.

5. … and the possible relevance of the ius scholae for future reforms

Despite the fierce opposition by many center-right politicians that now sit in government, the ius scholae legislative proposal brought to the fore an idea that the same center-right actors might actually appreciate.

Because the proposal was addressed to those who would sooner or later get Italian citizenship if they wanted to, the debate was not on *whether* to grant citizenship but, rather, *how* to do so. As such, the idea of linking the acquisition of citizenship to school attendance might seem a good idea for several parties across the political spectrum considering that, today, the so-called second generations can become Italian citizens anyways with or without actual civic integration pathways. On the other hand, the ius scholae would enhance the role of education by turning schools into places where, through experiences and teachings, people internalize the values that are characteristic of citizens. These values are also what constitutes the civilization and civil coexistence that center-right parties have often emphasized as part of the national identity.

Despite the advantages of the ius scholae, any possible step forward in this sense should not lead to the mere reiteration of the 2022 legislative proposal but, rather, should engage actors in a reflection along the lines presented in a recent policy paper of the ISMU Foundation (Codini, 2022a).

6. The decision of the Constitutional Court on citizenship subsidies…

In its Decision 19 of 2022, the Constitutional Court ruled in favor of the provision that third country nationals could access basic income (Reddito di cittadinanza) only if they held a long-term residence permit. The Court reached its decision taking stock of the previous case law, according to which requirements for access to social benefits must be consistent with the condition of need identified on a case-by-case basis by policymakers and with the nature of the measure envisaged – or else they would be considered unreasonable and, hence, illegitimate.

Prior to that, the Court had followed the same reasoning and ruled against the requirement of a long-term permit to access a wide range of social benefits, mostly economic. Indeed, this requirement was found to be unrelated to the condition of need underlying the measure and had no connection with the nature of the measure.

As for basic income, instead, even though this measure also involved an economic contribution, the Court found the exclusion of immigrants without a long-term permit to be reasonable. This is because, while it did not see any link between such a permit and the condition of need to which the measure referred, it did see a link between holding a long-term permit and the nature of the citizenship subsidy, its rationale, and the way in which the rationale is pursued. In particular, the Court saw the configuration of the measure as a tool for people's

integration or reintegration into the labor market under a medium-term logic. On this basis, it concluded that it is reasonable and therefore legitimate to deny this benefit to third country nationals without a long-term permit because the latter guarantees stability of residence unlike ordinary permits that are temporary and, if they can be renewed, are subject to specific conditions leading to relative uncertainty.

7. … and its relevance

The Court ruling highlighted tensions in what appeared to be a jurisprudence that is almost taken for granted for its stability. These tensions are related to a key aspect, i.e., whether and to what extent the principle of equality should be limited in terms of access to social benefits among immigrants.

As mentioned above, the Court considered basic income as a tool for people's integration or reintegration into the labor market under a medium-term logic. However, it is also a measure aimed at lifting people out of absolute poverty and the same is true for the measure recently passed that should replace the previous subsidy as of 2023. It should be noted that the two goals (inclusion into the labor market and tackling of poverty) do not necessarily overlap, as beneficiaries of basic income may successfully (re)enter the labor market and still become unemployed – and, hence, at risk of poverty – later on. As a result, if the Court wanted to stress that the measure is also meant to lift people out of absolute poverty it would not make it conditional on having a long-term residence permit.

The Court ruling also highlighted another critical point. The long-term permit is indeed an element of stability of residence but is also an indicator of a certain level of economic success among migrants, who can meet the income and housing requirements. A key question is then how reasonable it is to make support for people in extremely difficult economic conditions conditional on… prior economic success.

The Court's jurisprudence on the principle of equality in regulating immigrants' access to social benefits has shown critical issues that require further reflection and the recent analysis by ISMU Foundation can be of great help in this (Codini, 2022b). Such reflection can be particularly relevant in a context where the tensions arising between immigration and the undeniable scarcity of resources for public welfare to respond to emerging needs may lead national governments, as well as regional and local ones, to consider discriminating immigrants, including those who are legally resident, in specific services.

8. The Decree of March 2023…

The Decree 20 of 10 March 2023 was adopted in the wake of the tragedy of Cutro, where nearly two hundred migrants drowned near the Italian shores. It follows a twofold logic, entailing measures to both tackle irregular immigration and to support legal migration.

The decree establishes a simplified mechanism to set quotas for the legal entry of foreign workers until 2025 and has provisions aimed at simplifying the process for authorizing the entry of such workers. The duration of residence permits following the first renewal has been changed to three years. Considering that early permits are mostly biannual, with only one renewal people can meet the five-year time required to obtain a long-term permit.

Parallel to that, the decree tightens penalties for human traffickers in order to tackle irregular immigration. Furthermore, a change in the so-called special international protection, i.e., protection granted to asylum seekers who do not qualify for the refugee status or subsidiary protection but should not be returned, is seen by policymakers as a tool to tackle irregular immigration. This form of protection has been part of the Italian legal system since 1998. After a sharp reduction in application in 2018 due to the so-called Salvini Decree, in 2020 it was reviewed and given a broader scope through the Decree 13. The Decree 20 of 2023 is restrictive in this sense as it ended the possibility of granting special protection to protect private and family life.

Legal migration and irregular migration are two intertwined aspects in the text as the decree allocates quotas to workers from countries that promote media campaigns on the risks of irregular migration to Italy.

9. … and its limitations

Some provisions of the decree may prove useful (e.g., the legal duration of permits) while others pose problems of legitimacy (e.g., the abolition of special protection in connection with the right to respect for private and family life, protected by the ECHR under Article 8 and under principles of Italian law).

Several provisions are likely to be ineffective. The idea of supporting media campaigns is both nonviable in several relevant contexts (e.g., Libya) and builds on the assumption that potential migrants live in a condition of ignorance on the risks while, in fact, they are often aware of them.

The simplified rules on flows programming and authorization of entry are supposed to foster legal migration. However, the provision that entry should be requested by employers still remains, even though the matching between labor supply and demand in Italy has historically and notoriously always taken place *within* the country. As a result, we can expect the continuation of the consolidated practice where formal legal entry procedures are in reality a way of regularizing immigrants who are already present in Italy and who, following

the publication of the periodic decree with migration quotas and the employer's request, return to their countries of origin to complete the paperwork. This way quotas would not result in new entries but, rather, in yet another amnesty program for irregular migrants.

As for restrictions on human trafficking, in order to be truly effective, measures should theoretically target every single organization that contributes to human mobility – or, at least, those involved in departures in the Mediterranean – and the conditions are clearly not there for this to be implemented.

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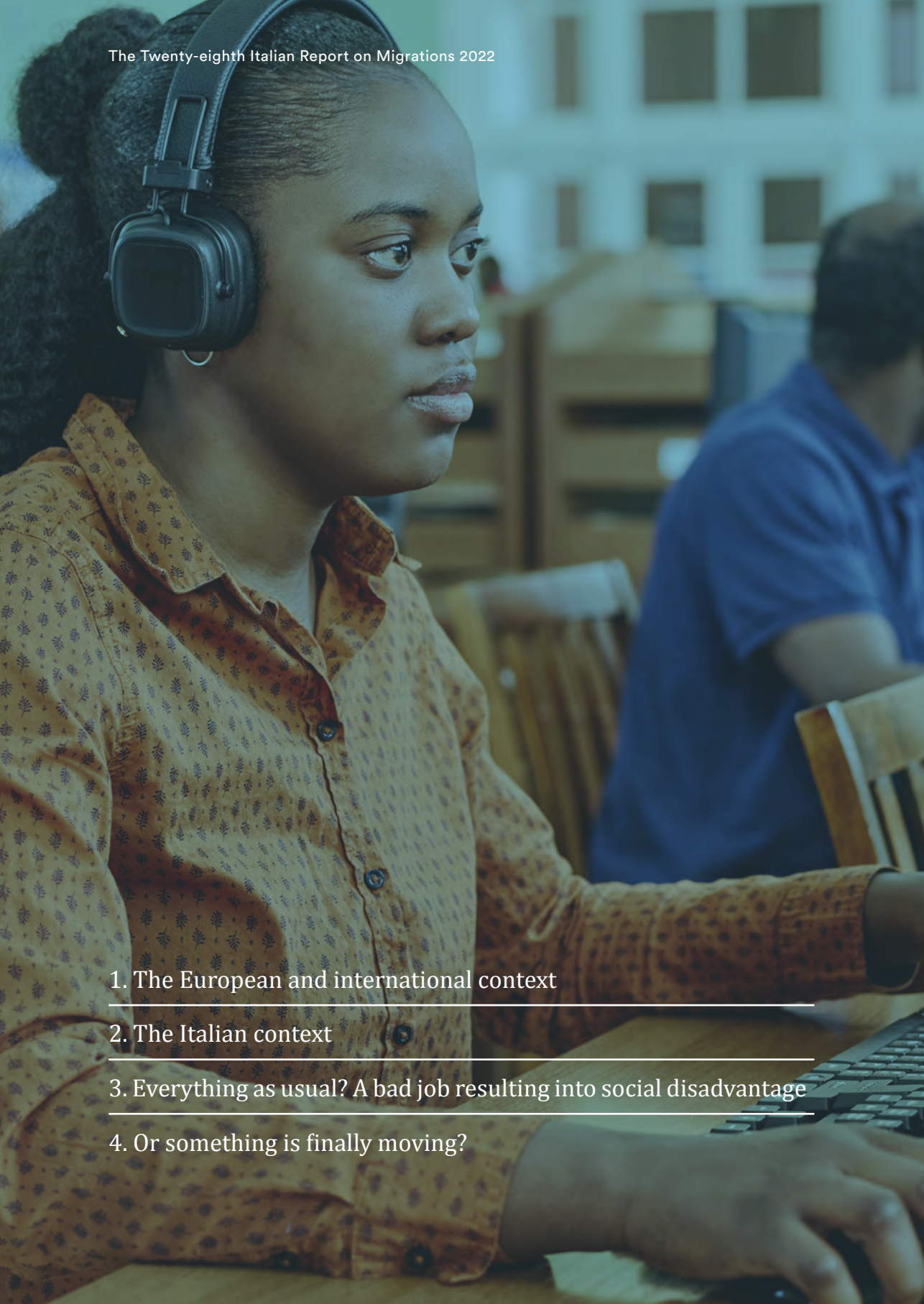

4.
Work*

Laura Zanfrini

In a quite complex and difficult situation like the one we have been experiencing in recent months, the labour market has been sending conflicting signals: frequent transfers among areas of inactivity, employment, and unemployment; corporate crises in addition to widespread difficulties to recruit new personnel; incentives for upgrading competitive strategies encouraged by digitization and ecological transition, along with the dissemination of "poor" and under-paid employment. These signals make it even more urgent to relaunch labour market governance in all its forms after the pandemic – which has overwhelmingly affected the worlds of production and reproduction –, the energy crisis triggered by speculative dynamics and further increased by the conflict in Ukraine, the climate vagaries – a warning about the consequences of global warming – have clearly manifested the need for a "paradigm shift". It is in this context that the most recent trends in the immigrant labour market at national and international level have to be assessed, as well as, the further consolidation of structural disadvantage affecting foreign workers and their families, the perspectives on the management of economic migrations and paths of occupational inclusion of immigrants.

* This is a shorter version of the original chapter published in the Italian version of the Report.

1. The European and international context

The massive exodus of Ukrainian refugees and the subsequent mobilisation for their reception have certainly contributed to diverting attention from the flows of economic migrants, which were rapidly reactivated as early as 2021, after the abrupt interruption caused by the global health crisis (OECD, 2022), and continued throughout 2022 (based on available data) despite the sudden increase in energy costs and its repercussions on the economy. In OECD countries as a whole, entries for work-related reasons between 2020 and 2021 increased by 45%, nearing – but not yet reaching – pre-Covid levels.[1]

Somehow, this reactivation seems to be heralding a new phase in migration history, marked by a growing concern for the demographic backdrops of economically advanced countries – especially in the "old" continent – and by a greater awareness of the importance of immigrant labour in key sectors of economy and society. As a matter of fact, these concern and awareness have led many experts and scholars to underscore the need to resort to immigration not only to make up for personnel recruitment struggles affecting various occupational sectors, but also to ensure the turnover of the working-age population, especially because of the ongoing mass exit from the labour force of the *baby boomer* generation.

Significantly, after being particularly affected by the impact of the pandemic, migrants have rapidly reached pre-Covid employment levels, even surpassing them in some countries. At the same time, migrant workers have once again carried out a cushioning function for the effects of the crisis. In countries yearly monitored by OECD, in 2020 the employment level of immigrants decreased more sharply than the one of their native-born counterparts, but improved more rapidly as the economy recovered in 2021. Going from 67.9% in 2020 to 69.4% in 2021, the employment rate of immigrants in all OECD countries was only 0.5% lower than the pre-pandemic situation. Similarly, the unemployment rate decreased by 1.2% (from 10.3% to 9.1%) to settle at 0.7 points higher than the pre-crisis level.

Despite its reactivity to the new economic situation, if one refers to the main labour market indicators, immigrants are considered a disadvantaged group almost anywhere, but especially in European countries. Both employment and unemployment rates of immigrants continue to present a negative gap when compared to natives, even though it significantly narrowed between 2020 and 2021, when the employment rate of immigrants in OECD countries was on average 1% lower than natives', while the unemployment rate was 3 points higher. However, in the EU27 countries, the native employment was a good 4.5% higher than immigrants', and the unemployment rate was almost 7 points lower.

Furthermore, the gap between non-European immigrants and those coming

[1] It needs to be emphasised that data, regarding the "official" entries in the labour market, also include the regularisations of immigrants already resident – and Italy has given its contribution thanks to the provision adopted in 2020 – and changes of residence permits issued for other work-related purposes.

from EU countries is very significant; in fact, in 2021, 72% of EU27 immigrants were employed compared to 51.5% of immigrants coming from North Africa and 56% from the Middle East, thus confirming the salience of variables like national origin and physiognomic traits even in current civilised and progressive European societies.

Moreover, the penalty factor connected to the migratory background adds to the traditional lines of segmentation of the labour markets, fostering the well-known phenomena of intersectional discrimination. Taking only into consideration the influence of gender, non-European women in EU countries present a "positive" gap in their unemployment rate of about 8% if compared to European women, and about 5% if compared to non-European men (and that becomes 11.5 if compared to European men). Therefore, on the basis of what emerged from a recent in-depth study carried out in the context of the European Migration Network (EMN, 2021), it does not come as a surprise the fact that inclusion in the labour market represents one of the main challenges reported by member states while pursuing the integration of immigrant women, as the 2021-2027 European Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion also advocates.[2]

An additional disturbing element concerns the polarisation between highly skilled migrants – who have almost entirely regained their pre-crisis employment rates in OECD countries – and those with a low and medium level of education, whose condition is even worse if compared to 2019. Despite their striking rise to the rank of "key workers" in the darkest months of the pandemic, poorly educated migrants are confirmed to be a very weak component of the workforce and particularly exposed to the risk of unstable and undeclared employment. This factor must be carefully taken into account, especially when we are called to reflect on the future governance of economic migration in Italy and in Europe.

2. The Italian context

As we highlighted in the previous edition of the ISMU Report (Zanfrini, 2022a), because of the large flow of foreign labour forces into the area of inactivity, the pandemic has marked a setback in the process of reinforcing the multi-ethnic profile of the Italian labour market, recording for the first time, between 2019 and 2020, a reduction of the number of both active and employed immigrants. Conversely, 2021 was expected to show a recovery in this process; in fact, within the framework of a moderate improvement in labor market indicators, the number of employed persons (+2.3%) as well as of active non-Italian nationals (+3.4%) increased. This change was also recorded by National Institute of Statistic (ISTAT) while applying to 2020 data the new survey methodology of-

[2] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. *Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027*, COM/2020/758 final https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0758&from=it.

ficially adopted since January 1st, 2021, pursuant to the 2019/1700 Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council[3] which uses a new definition of employed person and a new questionnaire. Between 2020 and 2021, among foreigners, the number of people in search of a job grew more than others, reflecting an opposite shift of direction in comparison to the most acute phases of the health emergency (when it mostly increased, as mentioned earlier, the phenomenon of inactivity). Even if these patterns were also observed among Italians, their consequences were much more significant for foreigners and determined an escalation of unemployed workers, reflected especially in the ongoing increase of their unemployment rate.

Focusing on 2021 data, it should be mentioned that the adoption of the new survey methodology, probably together with an update intervention, has resulted in a reduction of the volume of the working-age population (especially for foreigners) and of the labour force (which includes the sum of employed people and job seekers). As data reported in Table 1 attest, the incidence of foreigners on the total number of employed persons exceeds by one percentage point their incidence on the total labour force group, but it is even more evident among the unemployed, thus underscoring their higher vulnerability.

Table 1. Population (15-64 years old), by labour status and citizenship. Year 2021. Thousands

	EU Foreigners	Non-EU Foreigners	Total Foreigners	Italians	Total (Foreigners + Italians)	Foreign incidence on total %
Population 15-64 years old	1,147,7	2,672,6	3,820,3	33,704,9	37,525,8	10.2
Persons in the labour force (active persons)	807,7	1,775,5	2,583,2	21,614,2	24,197,5	10.7
Employed persons	697,3	1,510,8	2,208,1	19,641,0	21,849,2	11.2
Unemployed persons	110,4	264,7	375,1	1,973,2	2,348,3	16.0
Persons outside the labour force (inactive persons)	339,9	897,1	1,237,1	12,090,8	13,328,3	9.3

Source: ISMU elaboration of Eurostat data https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/lfsa_pganws/default/table?lang=en (accessed November 7, 2022)

[3] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_Labour_Force_Survey_-_new_methodology_from_2021_onwards&oldid=544814.

Let us now consider the activity, employment, and unemployment rates. Eurostat data (Table 2, first columns on the left) uses a different survey methodology, respectively, in the years 2019-2020 and 2021. Therefore, in order to make possible the temporal comparison – in addition to the comparison between Italians and foreigners – the recalculations provided by ISTAT (relating to the years 2019-2020 and applying the new methodology[4]) were included in the columns with a darker background. Right away the foreigners' activity rate stands out, which was definitely growing faster than Italians', thanks mostly to the greater recovery determined by the female component. However, the activity rate of immigrant women, although slightly lower than the one of Italian women, was still more than 4% lower than its pre-Covid level, and needs to be constantly monitored. This is the result of very diversified behaviours (the difference between immigrants coming from an EU country – 62.9% – and non-Europeans – 51.1% – stands out by almost 12 percentage points), providing an extraordinarily heterogeneous picture: from 11.7 of Pakistani women to 80% of Filipinas (Direzione Generale dell'Immigrazione e delle Politiche di Integrazione, 2022).

Therefore, the modest increase in the employment rate should be mainly attributed to the female component, either among Italians and among foreigners (and especially the latter). It is also interesting noting that male and female immigrants coming from EU countries perform better both than non-EU foreigners and Italians, with an employment rate equal to 72.8% for men and 52.7% for women, and this last figure is 7 percentage points higher than the percentage referred to non-European women.

The unemployment rate is the most significant indicator of the condition of disadvantage both for EU and non-EU immigrants (even though European men experienced a decrease between 2020 and 2021). Focusing on last year's data, the female immigrant component witnessed a strongly negative gap with respect to Italian women (a good 5.4 percentage points difference) as well as foreign men (with a differential equal to 5.6 percentage points). Instead, the non-European women's gap widened once again in comparison with both non-European male workers (reaching 6 percentage points) and Italian women (reaching even 8.9 percentage points). If the low activity rate of non-European women is taken into account, there is enough to conclude that the issue of intersectional discrimination, in all its forms and driving factors, represents – in Italy even more than in other countries – one of the most evident rebuttals of the alleged universalism that should regulate the functioning of economy and society.

[4] The minor changes found in 2021 data were likely made by an "adjusting" action done by Eurostat (for example, the estimate of missing values).

Table 2. Activity, employment, and unemployment rates, by sex and citizenship, 15-64 years old. 2019-2021 (and recalculation for 2019 and 2020, using the new methodology)

	2019		2020		2021		2019		2020		2021	
	Data compilation using the pursuant methodology for each year (Eurostat)						Recalculation made with the new methodology in effect since (ISTAT)					
	Foreign.	Ital.	Foreign.	Ital.	Foreign.	Ital.	Foreign.	Ital.	Foreign.	Ital.	Foreign.	Ital.
Activity rate												
Men	84.0	74.0	81.1	72.7	81.6	72.8	84.0	74.0	80.7	72.1	81.6	72.8
Women	59.3	56.1	52.8	54.9	55.1	55.4	59.4	56.2	52.3	54.4	55.1	55.4
Total	**70.9**	**65.1**	**66.0**	**63.9**	**67.6**	**64.1**	**70.9**	**65.1**	**65.6**	**63.3**	**67.6**	**64.1**
Employment rate												
Men	74.0	67.3	71.8	66.7	71.7	66.6	74.1	67.3	71.3	66.1	71.7	66.6
Women	49.5	50.2	44.6	49.6	45.4	49.9	49.6	50.2	44.0	49.0	45.4	49.9
Total	**61.0**	**59.0**	**57.3**	**58.1**	**57.8**	**58.2**	**61.1**	**58.8**	**56.8**	**57.5**	**57.8**	**58.3**
Unemployment rate												
Men	11.4	8.7	11.0	8.0	11.8	8.2	11.8	9.0	11.7	8.4	12.1	8.5
Women	16.4	10.3	15.4	9.5	17.4	9.7	16.5	10.6	15.8	9.9	17.7	10.0
Total	**13.6**	**9.4**	**12.9**	**8.6**	**14.2**	**8.8**	**13.9**	**9.7**	**13.4**	**9.1**	**14.5**	**9.1**

Source: ISMU elaboration of Eurostat data https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/lfsa_argan/default/table?lang=en (accessed November 7, 2022) Source for columns with a dark background, ISMU analyses of ISTAT data: www.istat.it > Lavoro e Retribuzioni

Finally, moving on to consider trends in labour demand, data provided by the Excelsior Information System (Unioncamere, ANPAL, 2021) relating to the year 2021 (latest available) attests a large recovery of planned entries of immigrant workers, which, after the shortfall in 2020, reached levels well above those obtained in 2019 (+7%, compared to the overall +0.5) and represent 14.5% of the total number of expected hirings. The immigrant recruitment mostly occurred in Northern Italian regions (where the need for personnel not covered by Italian workers was the greatest) and its growth mainly involved construction, transport and logistics sectors, the trade sector – where demand was driven by the increase in home deliveries –, health and care services, and food industry.

In absolute terms, it is the area of business services where migrant labour was mostly needed, with 216,000 planned entries (17.8% of total entries), included mainly transport, logistics and warehousing services, as well as operational business support, followed by tourism and catering businesses, as well as the personal services sector (which includes the health, social assistance, and the private health service sectors).[5]

[5] This survey does not include needs expressed by families (for domestic or assistance work) and farm-workers.

3. Everything as usual? A bad job resulting into social disadvantage

After the "lesson" learned from the pandemic, with its call to bridge the gap between the key role of jobs performed by immigrants and their social and monetary recognition, it seems that the immigrant labour market is now finding a new balance in continuity with the past. As a matter of fact, there are signs – confirmed by the first data relating to 2022 – of an ongoing absorption of the occupational impacts that the health crisis had on categories like foreigners, who have been greatly affected by it. This noticeable absorption has taken place in the job offer supply – promoting a large transfer of inactive people into the workforce – and in the recovery of recruitment (especially fixed-term contracts, which had sharply decreased in 2020) and recruitment forecasts. At the same time, optimism is somehow underplayed when traditional lines of penalisation are still pursued (especially the one locking up non-European women in a condition of clear disadvantage with respect to the risk of occupational exclusion) or when an unexpected aggravation of unemployment affects immigrants. Furthermore, it could be noted that, despite the shock of the pandemic and the constant appeals to enhance a "paradigm shift" – the prevailing employment models remain the same, meaning that immigrants are mostly concentrated in the lower-skilled and lower-paid segments of the labor market.
Recalling only some specific data, from a sectoral point of view, it is always the sector of "Other collective and personal services" that registers the highest incidence of foreign workers (34.3%), followed by Agriculture (18%), Construction (15.5%) and "Hotels and restaurants" (15.3%).

As far as prevailing professional profiles, and by taking into consideration employment contracts activated in 2021 (2,123,782 involved a foreign worker, equal to 19% of total hires), the most common profession for European and non-EU foreigners is that of farm labourer (376,282 hires of non-EU workers out of a total of 555,082 hires), followed by personal assistance workers (193,783), domestic workers and service providers (132,039), and waiters and similar professions (105,934). So, nothing new under the sun!

As is known, standard full-time and permanent employment has progressively decreased in the Italian labour market, while hybrid types of work have spread (ISTAT, 2022) involving many foreign workers, often represented by people holding fixed-term contracts, as well as intermittent apprentices and unintentional part-timers. Being concentrated in sectors and roles that are not very profitable from a revenue perspective, immigrants suffer more than others the consequences of jobs combining short/intermittent duration with low pay, thus having less opportunities to enhance their financial stability. This circumstance also increases the economic vulnerability of their families, already heavily penalised by their weak patrimonial condition in comparison with the majority of Italian families (especially in the case of many foreign families mostly dependent on the underground economy).

In addition, the main challenges affecting the relationship between immigration and labour market – high unemployment rates, low female activity rates,

widespread under-employment and low wages – are also underscoring the further expansion of the phenomenon of poverty, considered even more alarming because of strong inflationary pressures (whose consequences are especially felt by low-paid workers employed in sectors such as cleaning, private security and social welfare services: ISTAT, 2022). In 2021, absolute poverty affected as much as 30.6% of foreign families, almost 4 percentage points more than the already alarming figure recorded in 2020, and 5 times more than the percentage (5.7%) of families of only Italians in absolute poverty. Furthermore, the presence of minor children dramatically increased the risk of poverty. For Italians, 13% of families with three or more children are poor, but for foreigners this issue affects as much as 52.1% of families.

Relative poverty, instead, involves 9.2% of Italian-only families, but reaches as much as 32.2% of foreign-only families, and even 30.5% of "mixed" ones. This data clearly manifests its consequences both at the level of social cohesion, as well as on the process of accumulation of human capital. In fact, it is sadly known how family's vulnerability largely influences children's school careers, especially in a social context where poverty takes on the feature of a "hereditary" phenomenon. This data also emphasises how the issue of immigration – that is, the issue of migrants' labour – should deal with all the great issues concerning the present and future of labour policies and income support: from minimum wage to basic income (which today only a small portion of poor foreign families benefit from, because of the accessibility criteria heavily penalising them), from interventions to support families and birth-rate to the hypothesis of subsidiarization of the cost of low-skilled labour.[6]

In this regard, it should be noted that the relationship with the working condition manifests a poverty of foreigners strongly connected not only to unemployment, but also to "poor" work, a phenomenon that keeps growing more and more. When it involves an unemployed person, poverty affects 43.5% of foreign families, compared to 17.2% of only-Italians families. If the reference person is employed, only 4.2% of Italian-only households fall below the poverty line, against 24.7% of households with foreigners, and this becomes 31.1% in families of only foreigners where the reference person is classified as a manual worker or assimilated.

In summary, the work of immigrants, even when it is bad and underpaid, "pays" from the perspective of newly arrived migrants, focused on maximising their earnings (especially if they have to fulfil heavy obligations, like repaying a debt with the extended family contracted in order to be able to migrate), capable of strictly containing their own living expenses, endowed with high flexibility and able to do multiple jobs, even occasional ones,[7] compressing the resting

[6] A documented proposal is included in the *Libro Verde sul governo delle migrazioni economiche* published by the Economy and Labor Sector of the ISMU Foundation (Settore Economia e lavoro Fondazione ISMU, 2021), and also taken up again in the *Libro Bianco* (Zanfrini, 2023) issued at the beginning of 2023.

[7] It is the case of many asylum seekers hosted in reception centres, who save their modest "*argent de poche*" along with other small remunerations for odd and usually irregular jobs, in order to send something to their left-behind family.

times and juggling between a main job and supplementary ones.[8] Nevertheless, this type of work ends up being inadequate to support their settlement process, to cover for all the needs of a household, to allow a "normal" family life. The high incidence of poor immigrant families, even when there is at least one bread-winner in the household, is the sign of a job unable to foster integration, promoting instead social unrest and consolidating a condition of structural disadvantage usually handed down to the next generations; as a consequence, migrants' offspring result to be the privileged victims of the phenomena of educational poverty and often protagonists of acts of vandalism and urban crime that strongly impact public opinion. Tips of an ever-wider iceberg, many immigrant workers and their immigrant families show in a paradigmatic way the costs, intended in a broader sense, of "bad work" and its incompatibility with a prospect of economic and social sustainability (Zanfrini, 2021). It seems that the time has really come for a change of pace!

4. Or something is finally moving?

After launching a plan to regularise the undocumented migrants' status in the midst of the pandemic but yet not concluded, in the last days of 2021 the issuance of a flow decree much more "generous" than the previous ones seemed to enact the expectations of a rapid employment growth and a turnaround in the management of labour migrations. The 69,700 authorised entries were, in fact, more than doubled if compared to recent years and especially included 27,000 quotas reserved to non-seasonal workers in sectors (transport, construction, tourism-hotel) afflicted by great difficulties in recruiting personnel. More than for their effective impact (in fact, quotas must be divided among the more than 30 countries which have signed an immigration agreement and are partly absorbed by the conversions of permits already issued for other reasons), the decree was welcomed as a sign of discontinuity in reference to the past (since non-seasonal migrant entries were almost zeroed in previous years).

Once again, however, the provision followed the logic of "transitional planning" and had no mid-term planning document which the consolidated text on immigration entrusted to, among other things, the task of identifying the general criteria to determine the immigrant flows. The last document known to us refers to the three-year period 2007-2009, which was continuously "under construction". Since then, none of the following governments ever tried to get involved with the politically challenging task of handling economic migrations, which has been thus turned into a tool (actually, a very ineffective one) for combating irregular immigration. Not even the so-called "Simplifications Decree" (no. 73/2022, converted with amendments into law no. 122 on August 4, 2022),

[8] It is, for instance, the case of many immigrant women hired as domestic workers/family carers or caregivers in nursing homes that, during the time/days of rest, work on an hourly rate (usually undeclared) for one or more employers, cleaning for example houses or office places.

approved purposely to speed up the procedures for issuing authorizations and entry visas relating to the 2021 flow decree (and to the subsequently approved 2022 decree-flows) escaped this emergency and transitional logic. Nor did this occur with the measures adopted to enhance the occupational inclusion of Ukrainian refugees (particularly those envisaged by the Directive for temporary protection), by providing simplified tools and procedures to assess professional titles (for instance the health ones), but also highlighting their limits. Therefore, the long-standing issue of redesigning the legal framework that regulates economic migration remains open.

The drawbacks of the procedures currently in effect (starting from their rigidity, which is quite distant from an increasingly flexible labour market); those deriving from choices – or non-choices – in their application; finally, those relating to the context in which migratory patterns operate (from the spreading of irregular work to the deficits in the institutional intermediation between labour supply and demand) have contributed to the failure of the flow planning system, making Italy an "exemplary" model of misalignment between the level of policies and the one concerning the concrete migratory and inclusion processes. While the most important international agencies never cease to remind how migrations, if properly managed, can represent a resource for all the actors involved, this misalignment stands out as a common trait even in countries considered benchmarks in this matter. The need to implement innovative policies, sustainable in the long run, able to also meet the substantial demand for low-skilled labour safeguarding workers' rights, is therefore self-explanatory.

It is also evident, in light of what we have discussed so far, that many of the critical issues concerning the immigrant labour market can only and partially be addressed by what we call migration policies, meaning tools like planning decrees. They advocate for the involvement of policies for the governance of the labour market, the redesign of social protection systems, as well as – without exhausting the list – training policies (whose lack of vision certainly has contributed to the current grave shortage of health professionals). At the same time, the analysis of the processes of migrants' working inclusion proves to be quite beneficial in providing measures which, on different levels – from the legislative/procedural to the informational one, up to the multiple initiatives involving the actors of civil society –, can contribute to jointly achieving multiple objectives: from a better matching between job demand/supply to an overall increase in the levels of workers' protection, up to the sustainability of the economic and social systems in a broad sense (Zanfrini, 2021).

Furthermore, the dramatic demographic scenarios – made even more "tangible" by the latest negative record in the number of births recorded in both 2021 and 2022 – and difficulties in recruiting personnel reported by the entire productive sectors (only minimally attributable to basic income) have made the problem of the structural under-supply of available workforce tangible and, in some ways, the risk that Italy will remain on the margins of global competition for attracting not only "talents", but also immigrants with different levels of qualification. It is precisely the awareness of this problem that has in fact led several countries to expand temporary migration schemes, sign bilateral agreements

for the recruitment of manpower, and offer the possibility of permanent residence to temporary migrants (OECD, 2022). Data regarding the recruitment of immigrants planned by Italian companies (Unioncamere, ANPAL, 2021) stress that in about 4 out of 10 cases companies find it difficult to identify candidates, often available in low numbers or lacking the proper skills. While reiterating the priority that should be given to strategies aimed at activating the unfathomable potential of unused labour force (unemployed and inactive, including the many already sojourning migrants in these conditions), it is therefore necessary to promote new entry channels for the so-called economic migrants.

The ISMU Foundation's initiative to provide a *White Paper on the governance of economic migrations* (Zanfrini, 2023) has been developed in the light of this list of priorities. The volume was realised thanks to a vast process of consultation with the ecomomy's and society's stakeholders and was released and discussed in January 2023. It includes an extensive list of suggestions relating both to the desirable changes to the regulatory framework and to procedural and organisational aspects, addressed primarily to policymakers and then to all the actors involved in the management of migratory processes and employment inclusion of immigrant workers. By this initiative we would like to contribute to promoting migration management oriented towards criteria of coherence with the needs of the economic and social system, protection of the rights of migrants and of all the other workers, medium-long term sustainability of migration and integration processes, attention to the development needs of the sending countries, strengthening of the capacity to attract immigration with a higher added value.

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5.
Education

Mariagrazia Santagati

1. Multicultural education and Italian society during emergency times

Three years after the unprecedented scenario caused by the global spread of the Coronavirus, health systems, national economies, and human mobility within and across state borders have been put to the test, and the effects of the pandemic have not yet been fully processed at the collective level, especially when considering the harshest and most painful experiences (Martone, 2022): the casualties, lockdowns, the increase in vulnerabilities, the increasingly manifest crisis of public systems, and the sharpening of socio-economic inequalities.

The last few years have represented a unique period also with respect to education, characterized by a health-related emergency that, although temporary in nature, has been particularly long-standing. This emergency spanned three school years and has affected the delivery of education and learning, with the adoption, first, of Distance Learning (DAD, or *Didattica a distanza* in Italy) and, later, of Integrated Digital Learning (DDI or *Didattica digitale integrata*), offered during the different phases of the emergency and based on the use of ICT and e-learning environments. On the other hand, the pandemic has impacted on school organization with a push towards the acceleration in the digitalization of teaching and learning, extreme individualization, and independence within the teaching process, while simultaneously enabling a greater fluidity in staff board meetings as a result of the use of digital media (Argentin et al., 2022).
Furthermore, the longstanding nature of the state of emergency altered pupils'

enjoyment of education and training. In many cases this certainly generated a stronger partnership between schools, students, and families, but also a progressive estrangement from school establishments of certain categories of students, such as those with cultural, socio-economic, and linguistic disadvantages (Cordini, De Angelis, 2021), those with special educational needs and disabilities (Colombo, Santagati, 2022), or those who were already at risk of school dropout (Bonini, 2022).

In the 2020/2021 s.y. the Italian situation was still uncertain, and, on the basis of national pandemic trends, a diversified closure of schools was decided at the regional and local levels, based on the levels of contagion in various areas and at different school levels. This led to an alternation of in-person and distance learning, for both individual students and single classes, both in compulsory schooling and elsewhere. The situation has gradually improved only in the current school year 2022/23, which has represented, from various points of view, a sort of "return to normality": school starting without the mandatory use of masks in classrooms, with parent-teacher meetings being held in person and on school grounds, and less strict safety protocols overall.

However, over and beyond the pandemic and the relative safety measures adopted to contrast it, research and analysis have shown time and again how the COVID-19 emergency has unveiled some critical aspects of the Italian school system and magnified pre-existing problems: namely, the increasing difficulties and rise in inequalities among the most disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs, as well as the slowdown in learning and a "learning loss" for the entire school population.

More specifically, as pointed out in the ISMU National Report 3/2021, *Pupils with Migrant Backgrounds in Italy. Competent Generations* (Santagati, Colussi, 2021), the pandemic represented a new test for multicultural schools, to check for stumbling blocks and retrocessions in the educational trajectories of pupils with non-Italian citizenship, but also to take a closer look at the steps taken by students, families, and educational institutions that, in several cases, have been able to demonstrate their resilience even during times of crisis.

In light of the pandemic, but also of the more recent emergency situation represented by incoming refugees from the Ukraine, the national document *Intercultural Orientations* (Ministry of Education, 2022a) has strived to illustrate a set of ideas and proposals for the renewal of educational guidelines for pupils with a migratory background in the context of an increasing cultural pluralism, given the need for supportive actions to: fully implement the socio-educational rights of disadvantaged students, raise the inclusiveness of schools, and foster the investment in civic education and democratic participation for new generations. The reference to these elements, which characterize the contemporary social context, outlines the framework proposed to read and interpret the data on multicultural schools presented in the following paragraphs: the continuous succession of crises that alter the normal unfolding of teaching and learning processes (Grek, Landri, 2021), when analyzed in greater depth, invites us to be more aware of the socio-educational model that guides the development of new generations and its capacity to translate into concrete and collective, relationally meaningful experiences.

2. A downward trend: students with a migratory background in 2020/21

The latest data from the Ministry of Education (2022b) indicate a change in direction, long heralded by the slowdown in the rise of numbers of NIC students that has been taking place for the past decade. For the first time in approximately 40 years – i.e., since a reliable record of such presences has been registered – in 2020/21 there has been a decrease in the number of students with a migrant background. The new total is approximately 865,000 or 11,413 less compared to the previous school year. Given the steady numerical decline in the Italian school population, however, the proportion of students with migratory background remains consistent at 10.3% of the total number of pupils enrolled in Italian schools, from preprimary to secondary schools (Table 1), compared to 2019/20.

Table 1. NIC students in the Italian school system. 2010/11-2020/21

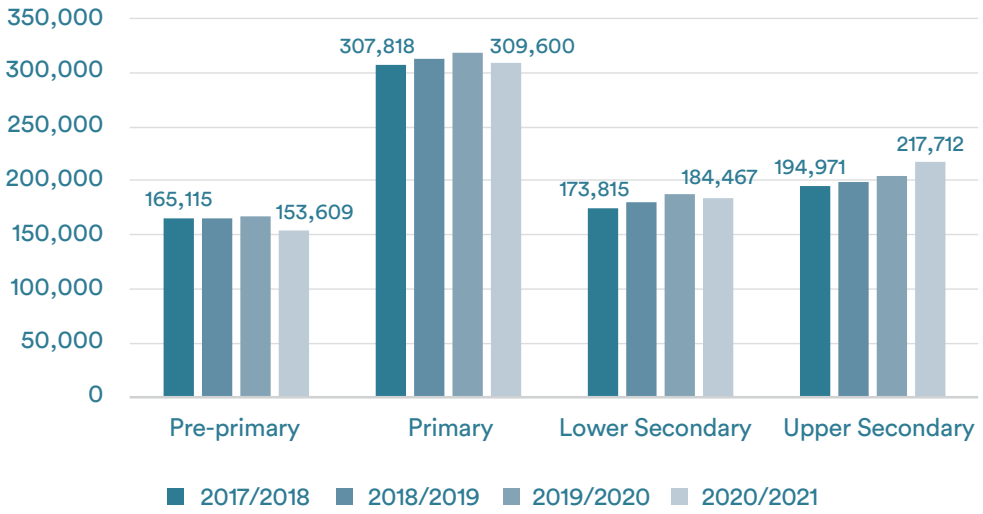
School year	Total	Per 100 students	Increase in a.v.
2010/11	711,046	7.9	-
2011/12	755,939	8.4	+44,893
2012/13	786,630	8.9	+30,691
2013/14	803,053	9.0	+16,423
2014/15	814,208	9.2	+11,155
2015/16	814,851	9.2	+643
2016/17	826,091	9.4	+11,240
2017/18	841,719	9.7	+15,628
2018/19	857,729	10.0	+16,010
2019/20	876,801	10.3	+19,072
2020/21	865,388	10.3	-11,413

Source: Ministry of Education

As already highlighted in previous ISMU Reports, since 2013/14 the phenomenon has been characterized by a "stagnation phase", with a limited growth of about 10,000 new admissions per year, except the "zero growth" of 2015/16. Net of the gradual reduction of incoming migratory flows, if we observe the enrollment trend across different school levels what emerges is a significant decline in presences in the preprimary school sector in the last three years – coupled with the fact that rate of non-Italian 3-to-5 year olds enrolled in preschool is at a historic low (74.7 versus 93.7 of Italians), probably as a result also of the pandemic (Ministry of Education, 2022a: 13). The reduction in the number of

pupils with a migrant background is also relevant in the first school cycle, which receives pupils in an age cohort where the acquisition of Italian citizenship continues to increase. On the contrary, it is noteworthy that enrollment in secondary schools continues to increase and the schooling rate in the 14-16 age group also holds up when comparing natives and non-natives (91.8% among students with NIC versus 94.1% among Italians).

Figure 1. Students with NIC per school level. S.Y. 2017/18-2020/21. A.v.



Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of Education data

Looking at the distribution of pupils with NIC at different school levels, in 2020/21, 57.1% of non-Italian pupils in the school system attended the first cycle – a percentage that has remained stable over the last decade. On the other hand, children with a migratory background enrolled in pre-primary school have decreased by -2.6% points over the last decade, while the share of those attending secondary school has grown (+3.6 percentage points).

Table 2. NIC students by school level. S.y. 2010/11 and 2020/21. A.v. and %

S.y.	V.a.				%			
	Pre-primary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Pre-primary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
2010/11	144,628	254,653	157,559	153,423	20.4	35.9	22.2	21.6
2020/21	153,609	309,600	184,467	217,712	17.8	35.8	21.3	25.2

Source: Ministry of Education

With respect to their migratory background, students originate from nearly 200 different countries: about 45% are of European origin, more than ¼ are of African origin, while those of Asian origin are around 20%, and about 8% come from Latin America. Romania, Albania, and Morocco represent the largest minority groups in education, exceeding 100 thousand students enrolled (154,000 are of Romanian origin, nearly 117,000 are Albanians and 109,000 are Moroccans). In 2020/21 the number of pupils of Romanian origin continues to decrease compared to previous years (there were 156,718 in 2019/20, with a decrease of 2,462 pupils compared to the previous year). The presence of students of Chinese origin, moreover, has decreased by more than 5,000 units, given that there were 55,993 in 2019/20. They belong to the 10 largest minority groups in Italian schools and represent 67.8% of all NIC students. After China, in the ranking of the largest community groups we have Egypt, India, Moldova, the Philippines, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Students of Ukrainian origin rank 13th, with 20,175 presences, and have been the object of particular attention in recent months, given the significant flow of refugees caused by the outbreak of the conflict between Russia and the Ukraine.[1]

In terms of how students with a migratory background are dislocated in the various Italian *regions*, the situation remains rather stable: the data from 2020/1 confirms that the majority of NICs are concentrated in the Northern regions, followed by those in the Centre and, subsequently, those of the South. Lombardy hosts 220,771 students with a migrant background, followed by a certain distance by Emilia-Romagna (104,799 NICs), Veneto (94,699), Lazio (80,051) and Piedmont (78,256). In Emilia-Romagna, on the other hand, students with non-Italian citizenship represent, in relation to the total regional school population, 17.1%, the highest national value, followed by Lombardy with 16 NICs for every 100 students enrolled in school.

In terms of provinces (Table 3), in 2020/21 the ranking of areas by number of non-Italian students broadly corresponds to that of previous years, with the province of Milan in first place (but with a steadily declining number of NICs), followed by the provinces of Rome, Turin and Brescia. Among the top 10 provinces, 8 are in the North and 2 (Rome and Florence) in Central Italy.

[1] According to the survey on Ukrainian students in Italy, released by the Ministry of Education in May 2022, there were 22,788 Ukrainians enrolled in Italian schools as of 24th February 2022: of these, 5,060 in preprimary school, 10,399 in primary, 5,226 in lower secondary and 2,103 in upper secondary. Also, 1,495 students were counted as enrolled in CPIAs. Overall, 4,223 schools took in Ukrainian pupils, particularly in the regions of Lombardy (4,836), Emilia Romagna (2,774) and Campania (2,412).

Table 3. First ten provinces and cities by number of students with a migratory background in Italy. S.y. 2020/21. A.v.

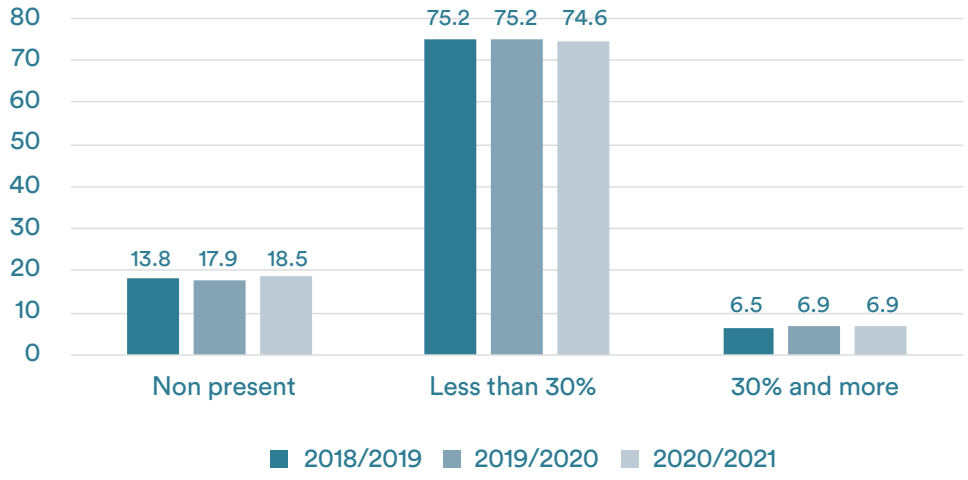
Province	V.a.	City	V.a.
Milan	79,039	Rome	43,272
Rome	63,782	Milan	39,874
Turin	39,465	Turin	24,734
Brescia	32,747	Genova	10,639
Bergamo	25,709	Bologna	10,254
Bologna	22,204	Florence	9,779
Florence	21,921	Prato	9,470
Verona	21,078	Brescia	8,754
Modena	19,075	Verona	7,986
Padova	18,075	Venice	6,928

Source Ministry of Education

When the percentage incidence of foreign pupils is considered, the ranking varies further and other provincial areas come to the fore (e.g., Prato with 28% non-Italian pupils, Piacenza, Parma, Cremona, Mantua, Asti, Lodi, Brescia, Milan, Modena). Brescia and Milan are the provinces that appear on both lists (highest in terms of both a.v. and percentage incidence of migrants), with 18.2 non-Italians per 100 students. Among the *cities* with the highest number of pupils of immigrant origin, Genoa, Prato, and Venice, that are not on the list of top provinces, also appear in the top ten.

Figure 2 presents a picture of the percentage incidence of students with a migratory background in Italian schools. In 2020/21 most Italian schools (74.6%), have "less than 30%" of NICs, whereas 18.5% of schools are not impacted by the migratory phenomenon and 6.9% continue to host "30% or more" pupils with a migratory background.

Figure 2. Italian schools by % incidence of NIC students on the total number of students. S.y. 2018/19-2020/21. %



Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of Education data

Official Ministry of Education reports continue to monitor the incidence of those born in Italy within the broader group of pupils with a migratory background. Among pupils of Chinese origin, for example, nearly 86% were born in Italy, among those of Moroccan and Albanian origin the percentages are around 75%, and even among Filipinos and Romanians, the percentages of those born in Italy exceed 70%. Over half of students of Indian, Moldavian, Egyptian and Bengali origin, moreover, are natives (Ministry of Education, 2022b: 29).

Although, compared to the previous school year, non-Italian students born in Italy have increased slightly (+3,226), since the first survey conducted during the 2007/08 school year, the group has almost trebled, reaching 571,000 units in 2020/21 or 66.7% of all NICs (Table 4). Among preschoolers, approximately 83 out of every 100 pupils with a migrant background are born in Italy, a number that falls to 74.5 among primary school pupils. This group has significantly increased, in terms of percentage incidence, also among lower secondary (65%) and uppers secondary school students (65% and 45.6%, respectively). Compared to the past school year, however, in absolute values, the group has decreased considerably in pre-primary (-9,217) and primary school (-6,329), whereas there has been an increase in secondary schools (+18,772); indeed, the latter is the only component that has increased quantitatively in the Italian school system.

Table 4. NIC students born in Italy by school level. S.y. 2007/08 and 2020/21. A.v. and %

	A.v.		Born in Italy per 100 NICs	
	2007/08	**2020/21**	**2007/08**	**2020/21**
Pre-primary	79,113	127,000	71.2	82.7
Primary	89,421	230,806	41.1	74.5
Lower Secondary	22,474	119,932	17.8	65
Upper Secondary	8,111	99,333	6.8	45.6
Total	**199,119**	**577,071**	**34.7**	**66.7**

Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of Education data

Table 5. NIC students newly arrived in Italy by school level. S.y. 2007/08 and 2020/21. A.v. and %

	A.v.		Newly-arrived per 100 NICs	
	2007/08	**2020/21**	**2007/08**	**2020/21**
Primary	23,650	4,121	10.9	1.3
Lower Secondary	12,064	5,617	9.5	3
Upper Secondary	10,440	6,272	8.8	2.9
Total	**46,154**	**16,010**	**10.0**	**1.9**

Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of Education data

In terms of pupils who arrived in the Italian school system for the first time, between 2007/08 and 2020/21 the size of this group has fluctuated. Since 2007 there has been a reduction of over 30,000 units, and currently they represent 1.9% of all non-Italian students (Table 5). During the 2020/21 school year presences dropped to 16,000, with a significant fall in secondary schools (-5,986 new arrivals in one year) where they represent about 3% of all NICs.

3. Educational trajectories, academic performance, and secondary school choices among NIC students

The present section hopes to illustrate some of the distinctive features of non-Italian students present in Italy, by presenting and commenting on some data that highlight both some critical aspects and positive academic achievements in their educational trajectories. School delay, notably one of the most problematic aspects of non-Italian students, affected 7.5% of all Italian students and almost 27% of all non-Italian students during the 2020/21 school year (Table 6). Overall, over the past decade, the share of students with a migrant background lagging behind has decreased by more than 20 percentage points; among Italians, the lag has also decreased, albeit to a lesser extent. The gap between Italians and non-Italians has narrowed from almost 30 percentage points in 2009/10 to 20 points in 2020/21. The delay is still very high for non-Italians, especially in upper secondary schools where most students of immigrant origin are one or more years behind (53.2%). Also, in lower secondary school and primary school, the lag is high when compared with natives (almost 27% and about 10%, respectively).

Table 6. Italian and NIC students, delay (per 100 students) by school level. % 2009/10 and 2020/21 S.y.

	2009/10			2020/21		
	Italians (a)	NICs (b)	b-a	Italians (a)	NICs (b)	b-a
Primary	1.9	19.3	17.4	1.5	10.3	8.8
Lower Secondary	8.1	49.2	41.1	3.5	26.8	23.3
Upper Secondary	25.1	71.3	46.2	16	53.2	37.2
Total	**12.1**	**41.5**	**29.4**	**7.5**	**26.9**	**19.4**

Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of Education data

Another phenomenon that continues to be of concern when it comes to students with a migratory background is early school dropout. The group of Early Leavers from Education and Training (ELETs), i.e., young people with only a lower secondary school leaving certificate and a low human capital, has decreased in size both among Italians and non-Italians over the past decade. In 2021, foreign-born ELETs still account for 31.8% of all foreign-born 18-24 year-olds, three times the percentage among natives, where the number has dropped to 10.7%. As for NEETs WW young people who are not in education, training, or work – the trend has been stable for the past decade, with the share of foreign-born NEETs standing at 36.2% of the total number of foreign-born 15–29 year-olds in Italy.

Table 7. ELET (18-24 year-olds) e NEET (15-29 year-olds) by birthplace. 2010 and 2021. %

	ELET			NEET		
	Italians (a)	NICs (b)	b-a	Italians (a)	NICs (b)	b-a
2010	16.3	40.7	24.4	20.6	32.7	12.1
2021	10.7	31.8	21.1	21.7	36.2	14.5

Source: ISMU analysis on Eurostat data

Let us consider these last two indicators. Over time (Table 7) there has not been a significant reduction in the gap between natives and those born abroad, neither in terms school dropout or early exit from education and training (only a 3 point decrease between 2010 and 2021), nor – more importantly – in terms of the risk of becoming a member of the NEET group (the disadvantage gap for foreigners has risen by +2.5 percentage points).

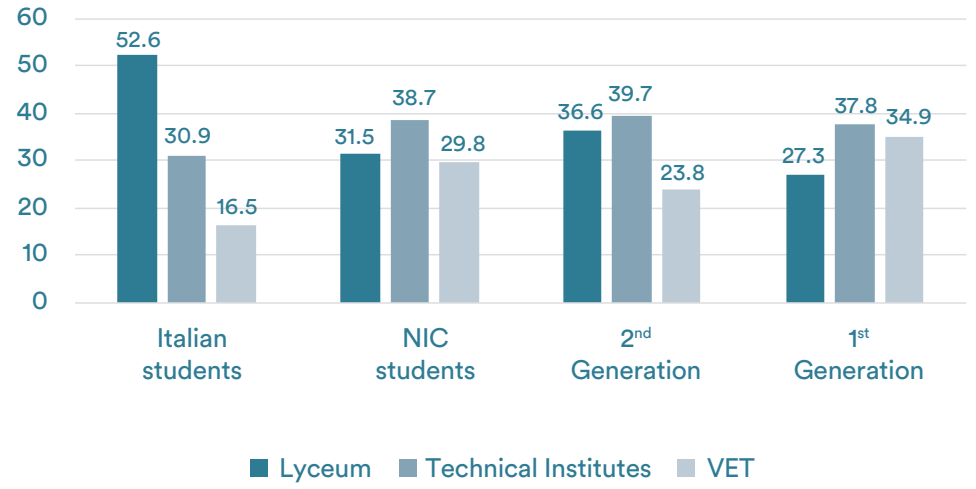
If we turn to school choices in the transition to upper secondary school, the trend for students with a migrant background is increasingly like that of natives, although some distances remain. Over the past decade (Tab. 8), the proportion of NICs has remained stable within technical institutes, whereas it has decreased in VET and risen in equal measure in lyceums. Indeed, in 2020/21, lyceum students with a migrant background accounted for 31.5% (almost 69,000) of all non-Italian enrollees in the second cycle of education and outnumbered foreign students enrolled in VET by almost 10,000 (approx. 59,000).

Table 8. NIC students in different upper secondary schools. 2009/10 and 2020/21 s.y. %

	2009/10	2020/21
Lyceum	21.6	31.5
Technical Institute	37.8	38.7
VET	40.6	29.8

Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of Education data

Figure 3. Italian and NIC students, born abroad (first generation) or in Italy (second generation) in different upper secondary schools. S.y. 2020/21. %



Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of Education data

If we compare secondary school choices across the different groups (Figure 3), we can see how the share of second generation NICs in lyceums is highest (36.6%), followed closely by first generation NICs (27.3%). On the other hand, among the latter, born abroad, we find the highest percentage of those enrolled in VET (34.9%) where, moreover, 13 out of every 100 students have a migratory background, whereas in lyceums the proportion is only 5 out of 100.

A final note on the data from the INVALSI Report 2022, where the weighth of migratory background on school performance has been isolated, thus enabling us to estimate its effect while controlling for other differences in the sample. Within this analytical comparison, we chose to focus on the data relative to the end of the second cycle, that is, to the final grade of upper secondary school (5th year). As shown in Table 9, in Italian, 1st generation migrant students achieve, on average, a lower outcome compared to a typical student, with a lag of just over 9 points, whereas 2nd generation NICs are just under 9 points lower. Therefore, there is no evidence of a generational difference between 1st and 2nd generation migrant students at the end of upper secondary schooling.

Table 9. The weighth of a migratory background on results in Italian, Mathematics and English (reading e listening) in the final grade of upper secondary school. IN-VALSI Tests 2022

	1st generation	2nd generation
Italian	-9.2	-8.6
Mathematics	-2.3	-4.7
English Reading	+7.7	+2.7
English Listening	+10	+5.6

Source: INVALSI data, 2022

If we look at performances in Mathematics, first generations achieve, on average, lower results compared to the typical student with a difference of just over -2 points, while second generations have a lower outcome by almost 5 points: again, there is no significant reduction in the learning disadvantage in Mathematics among 2nd generations compared to foreign-born NICs.

Finally, if we take into consideration outcomes in English, what we see is the opposite trend compared to results in Italian and Mathematics, and having a migratory background appears to have a positive influence on INVALSI performance results. First-generation students achieve a higher outcome compared to the typical student, both in reading (about +8 points) and listening (+10 points). The results of 2nd generation NICs are also better than those of the typical student (albeit at lower levels compared to foreign-born NICs), with scores almost 3 points higher in the reading test and 6 points higher in the listening test. It is therefore possible to state that, at the end of the second cycle of education, the disadvantage in Italian and Mathematics is at similar levels for first and second generation NICs, almost as if the schooling completed entirely in Italy makes no difference to those born in Italy giving them no significant advantage over those born abroad. For the latter, on the other hand, having an immigrant origin appears to impact positively on their performance in English.

4. Future challenges for the educational integration of immigrant children. Final remarks from an ISMU study

The data presented so far outline the current picture regarding the attendance and trajectories of pupils with a migratory background during pandemic times. Where are we then in our path towards ensuring full educational inclusion of this group? In these final remarks, we draw upon a qualitative study conducted by the ISMU Foundation to identify and highlight some of the most significant challenges schools are currently facing, thanks to the collection of valuable con-

tributions from experts in the fields of education, public institutions and the Third Sector in Italy.[2]

The first challenge identified, and one that should not be taken for granted, is the importance of a renewed commitment to ensure that "all children be able to actually go to school", in educational settings that have demonstrated renewed abilities and flexibilities to cope with the emergency, but that need to re-focus attention on multicultural classrooms and on the most disadvantaged members of the student population, integrating acquired digital teaching and learning devices with active methodologies that foster the co-construction of knowledge and the participation of all students.

The challenge is precisely that of creating an educational environment that finally overcomes frontal teaching. A challenge that summarizes the whole experience of the pandemic... inclusion does not come about merely by participating in projects, inclusion emerges when schools adopt an active form of education, where knowledge is co-constructed, where you respond to the needs of every one, but with a group that is actively participating in this construction (14, Center, school).

Secondly, in the face of a school that currently presents itself as "mute" - that is, a school in which teachers and students do not frequently appear on the public scene to report the fears, problems, and hopes that make up the daily atmosphere of classrooms - the challenge is to once again give schools a voice in order to understand, from the perspective of the protagonists, what is taking place, whether the losses and delays in the cognitive, relational and emotional development of the new generation are still being processed, and, if so, what kind of school experience can still motivate students to get up every morning to go to school.

Right now, I don't know to what extent teachers have re-opened communication with students... I don't know because right now the school has no voice. It doesn't have a voice in the sense that, at most, the school head speaks, complaining they have too many responsibilities, too many organizational difficulties... schools, right now, are mute: the researchers, the school heads, the universities speak, but not students and teachers... we should try to understand what happened (8, Center, school).

Moreover, inclusion remains a goal to be pursued within Italian schools, but it is still a challenge that schools need to rise to: making schools more inclusive today implies continuing to invest in teachers' professional development and inter-cultural training (Colussi, 2021), trying to go beyond the bureaucratization of procedures that could generate closure and exclusion, rather than fostering

[2] Fondazione ISMU's survey "The Impact of the Pandemic on Pupils with Migrant Backgrounds" (by ISMU's Education Sector, coordinated by Mariagrazia Santagati and Alessandra Barzaghi), carried out between 2021 and 2022, had an exploratory purpose and was based on 24 semi-structured interviews, based on 8 main questions aimed at exploring experts' opinions on: the impact of the prolonged pandemic on immigrant pupils and families and teachers in multicultural schools; the consequences on academic and social learning; how schools and extra-curricular organizations responded to the problems that emerged during the pandemic. Key informants from Northern (13), Central (5) and Southern Italy (6) were recruited, equally divided between those belonging to schools and extra-scholastic dimensions (representatives of the Third Sector, public administration, private foundations, etc.).

equal educational opportunities, openness, and intercultural exchange. The fact that we have to continue learning and training, all of us, is inherent in our work: teachers, managers, support staff ... this makes schools even more inclusive, the fact that all staff members have to keep learning and training... we have to think less bureaucratically, we must reduce bureaucracy because bureaucracy reduces inclusion, it helps schools but some bureaucratic practices are a source of distraction and exclusion rather than inclusion (15, North, school).

Finally, the gradual shift from "closed schools" during periods of lockdown to "schools re-opening" refers not only to the fact that students and teachers have returned to classrooms, without masks and with desks no longer distanced apart, but also and above all it refers to the central role played by educational institutions at the center of a dense network of links with families, territories, public administration, and the Third Sector. Work still needs to be done to strengthen the specific educational alliances that have worked to respond to the damage suffered by multicultural schooling during the past few years of the health emergency, experimenting and practicing partnerships that support inclusion as an "adventure" and "openness" to the other, as stated by one of our interviewees; another bearer of social and cultural diversity that has not disappeared in homes and behind digital screens, but returns to coexist in proximity inside and outside school spaces.

There was an increase in awareness of what inclusivity could mean... I hope we don't forget... we need to keep the important and positive aspects of these bad memories alive and use them as resources to open up schools to be more inclusive to immigrant students and families... we need to find different inclusive ways for all of our students to enjoy this beautiful world that schools are (15, Center, School).

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6.
The immigration issue in the Italian general elections

Nicola Pasini and Marta Regalia

1. Introduction

After the Draghi government fell on July 20, 2022, early elections for the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic were held on September 25, 2022. In reality, the elections were moved up by only a few months, as the parliamentary term that had begun in 2018 was slated to end in the spring of 2023.

In this chapter, we will analyze the political platforms of the major parties and coalitions that ran for election, seeking to shed light on certain features of the immigration issue that have long been constants for the Italian party system, as well as several peculiarities that were typical of this round of voting. As we will see in the first section, the issue figures in all of the platforms, though the interpretations and proposals naturally differ from party to party and even within coalitions and electoral alliances. However, in the September 25, 2022 elections, all of the parties assigned less weighth specifically to the immigration issue than in past electoral seasons, choosing to package it in their voter messaging together with other questions that were regarded as more urgent for Italy's present and future.

In the second section, we use diachronic Eurobarometer data from 2018 to 2022 to try to understand how Italians perceive the issue by comparison with other Member States, and how important they regard it to themselves as individuals and to the community. We found significant differences between the two spheres, and whether the issue is seen as important or unimportant does not seem to reflect a consistent pattern of thought. Hence the awareness – at least on the authors' part – of the effort that citizen-voters and the system of parties and institutions must still make to understand the socio-political phenomenon of immigration, which is as complex in terms of public policy as it is divisive for contemporary societies.

2. 2022 General elections: what do the platforms say?

A snap vote for the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic was held on September 25, 2022, around seven months before regular elections were due. Results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. 2022 General election results, Chamber of Deputies*

Party or Coalition	Percentage vote	Single-member districts	Multi-member districts
Fratelli d'Italia	26.00	121	69
Lega	8.77		23
Forza Italia	8.11		22
Partito democratico	19.07		57
Alleanza Verdi e Sinistra	3.63	12	11
+Europa	2.83		0
Movimento 5 stelle	15.43	10	41
Azione - Italia Viva - Calenda	7.79	0	21
De Luca	0.76	1	0
SVP	0.42	2	1

** Excluding Valle d'Aosta.*
Source: ISMU calculations from Ministry of the Interior data

Table 2. 2022 General election results, Senate of the Republic*

Party or Coalition	Percentage vote	Single-member districts	Multi-member districts
Fratelli d'Italia	44.02	56	34
Lega	8.85		13
Forza Italia	8.27		9
Partito democratico	18.97		31
Alleanza Verdi e Sinistra	3.53	5	3
+Europa	2.93		0
Movimento 5 stelle	15.55	5	23
Azione - Italia Viva - Calenda	7.73	0	9
De Luca	0.99	1	0

** Excluding Valle d'Aosta and Trentino Alto-Adige.*
Source: ISMU calculations from Ministry of the Interior data

In this section, we will look at the major parties' platforms in order to understand if and to what extent they consider the immigration issue, how they frame it, and what they propose to do.

For each party, Table 3 summarizes whether the platform refers to migrants or foreigners and, if it does, in what chapter or section. As required by law, all the major parties presented a platform, and all the platforms contained specific references to the immigration issue.

Table 3. The major parties' platforms, 2022

Party or Coalition	References to the immigration issue	Chapter
Fratelli d'Italia Lega Forza Italia	Yes	Security and fighting illegal immigration
Movimento 5 stelle	Yes	For multilateralism and a people's Europe
Partito democratico + Europa	Yes	Rights and citizenship Rights and citizenship
Azione - Italia Viva - Calenda	Yes	Immigration
Unione popolare	Yes	Nurturing rights and freedoms
Europa Verde – Verdi e Sinistra Italiana	Yes	Migration

Source: ISMU summary of data from party and candidate websites

As we can see from the table, the joint platform of the center-right parties **Fratelli d'Italia, Forza Italia and Lega** addresses the immigration issue in chapter 6, "Security and fighting illegal immigration." The issue is thus cast in a securitarian light. Though the platform professes to want to "pursue social and occupational inclusion of legal immigrants," the issue is chiefly framed as a matter of "curbing illegal immigration and ensuring the orderly management of legal immigration flows", proposing "agreements with other states for the detention of foreign prisoners in the country", "Defending national and European borders as called for by the EU's New Pact on Migration and Asylum, with controls over border crossings and arrivals by sea to put a stop to human trafficking together with the North African authorities", "creation of 'hot spots' run by the European Union outside of Europe to process asylum applications", and combatting "all forms of antisemitism and Islamic extremism." Lastly, the center-right parties propose to "Guarantee that municipalities have the resources needed to cover the costs of dealing with unaccompanied minors" (Fratelli d'Italia, Forza Italia and Lega, 2022).

Movimento 5 stelle touches tangentially on the issue in the chapter "For multilateralism and a people's Europe." The movement proposes "the adoption of a Community-wide mechanism for determining how immigration flows and pre-entry screening will be managed, as well as subsequent reception and distribution among EU Member States." The platform also calls for "fighting human trafficking and reinforcing policies for inclusion and social and cultural integration (Movimento 5 stelle, 2022: 13).

The **Partito democratico** introduces the immigration issue in the chapter entitled "Rights and citizenship" with a statement of principle: "We reject the idea that obtaining citizenship must necessarily be a mirage for people who are already Italian to all intents and purposes", announcing "the firm intention of […] approving a new law on citizenship for boys and girls who study in Italy, putting an end to a long and painful history of outmoded discriminatory practices" (Partito democratico, 2022: 7). "We will introduce Ius Scholae to move beyond the unjustifiable discrimination we still see today in Italy's classrooms. […] Because even now, the children of foreign parents come up against unjustified barriers to becoming citizens, even when they were born in Italy, grew up in Italy, and were educated in Italy. The time has come to put forward a law that is not just a question of civility: above all, it's common sense. A child of foreign parents who completes a cycle of schooling in Italy should become an Italian citizen" (Partito democratico, 2022: 22). "As regards migrants' rights and migration policies, we want to set up a Coordinating Agency for migration policies which will take primary responsibility for everything to do with monitoring and managing immigration flows, compliance with reception criteria and the effectiveness of polices for integration in society and the workplace by engaging with institutions, trade associations and volunteer groups. We want to repeal the Bossi-Fini Act and pass a new immigration law that permits legal entry for work purposes, with input from Italian employers and the third sector. What is

needed is a new approach to reception based on small centers located around the country and integrated with their surrounding area, with particular attention to gradually replacing the current Reception and Integration System. In addition, we must support scaling up the Humanitarian Corridors (promoted by the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, the Tavola Valdese and Caritas) organized in emergency situations. We are, have been and always will be against refoulement policies, against seeming to 'slam the door shut' on migrants, against all the cries to 'stop the small boats': it is a sacrosanct principle that whoever is in danger at sea must be rescued and brought to safety" (Partito democratico, 2022: 22).

For **+Europa**, the immigration issue features in the chapter, "Rights and citizenship." The party presents four proposals: first, "a systematic reform of citizenship law that follows through on the 'Ius Scholae' bill to guarantee that minors who are attending school in Italy are granted Italian citizenship"; second, "The introduction of legal channels of access for citizens of non-European Union countries, reintroduction of the sponsor system and legalization of foreign workers who are already in Italy, starting from the citizens' initiative 'I Was A Foreigner [And You Took Me In]', for which a petition with over 90,000 signatories was filed with parliament in 2017"; third, "Enter into agreements and international protocols with governments, universities and training centers to certify migrants' skills in their countries of origin in accordance with European standards and the qualifications required by Italian employers to meet the needs of the national labor market"; fourth, "that Italy cooperate more extensively and energetically with the Mediterranean countries and propose more incisive aid and development policies to achieve shared, sustainable growth. Concrete action must be taken to honor the international commitment to allocate 0.70% of GNI by 2030 to partnerships for development and for eradicating poverty" (+Europa, 2022: 6).

Azione – Italia Viva – Calenda devotes considerable space to immigration in the platform's chapter of the same name. The bloc frames the issue as part of the larger problem of the demographic crisis that threatens to engulf the county-system, with negative repercussions on the size of the active workforce and the pension system. "For this reason, and to field effective policies to boost the birth rate, support the family and help first-time job seekers, immigration flows must handled rigorously with pragmatic, workable policies. This can be accomplished by tackling four sets of problems: entries, integration policies, asylum polices and system governance" (Azione, Italia Viva, Calenda, 2022: 45). Recognizing that "illegal immigration is harmful for migrants and host countries alike", the bloc proposes to "return to planned and regulated forms of immigration" through "cooperative agreements with countries of origin and transit (at both the European level - the Migration Compact - and nationally) that call for policies for trade, defense, institution building, dedicated lines of funding, customs union expansion and a planning framework for legal immigration based on the labor market's needs" in order to "arrive at binding cooperation in re-

patriations (including voluntary and incentivized repatriations) in exchange for a crackdown on illegal departures" (Ibid.). In addition, the platform intends to "reassert the distinction between humanitarian refuges (who enjoy specific forms of international protection) and economic migrants (who could enter the legal job market directly only with an ad hoc residence permit)" with the "reintroduction of sponsorship arrangements to put prospective employers and migrant workers into contact before the latter leave their home countries, which is especially difficult in the case of low-skill jobs" (Ibid.). This proposal could "drastically reduce the number of people who remain in the country illegally after being refused a humanitarian visa. Paradoxically, in fact, despite the need for workers, the proportion of visas issued for work purposes today is laughably small" (Ibid.). Moreover, Azione and Italia Viva propose to pursue policies for the integration of migrants, refugees and their families through "mandatory intensive Italian language and culture courses" and regularizing the status of "illegal immigrants already living in Italy who have a job" (Ibid.). The platform argues that it is not in Italy's "interests to maintain levels of irregular immigration that end by contaminating society, encouraging the spread of undeclared work, tax evasion, unfair competition and what can only be regarded as hives of the criminal economy" (Ibid.). The bloc also proposes to give "Ius Scholae citizenship rights to those who have attended school in Italy for at least five years." Likewise, it proposes to "grant citizenship to all foreign students who have concluded a full university program in Italy" (Ibid.). As regards asylum policies, Azione and Italia Viva state their intention to "offer people seeking protection who arrive in Europe and Italy access to a fast and fair asylum procedure." They would "go beyond the Dublin Treaty by creating a Common European Asylum System that, after a short period in which applications are registered at the border of first entry, distributes asylum seekers among the EU Member States, taking personal circumstances into account" (Ibid.). The bloc is against "early checks on the asylum procedure at the external borders," as it calls for "safer, legal routes to access via expanded humanitarian corridors" and for everyone to be guaranteed "rescue at sea, coordinated and financed at the European level" (Ibid.: 45-46). Lastly, Azione and Italia Viva propose to "set up a Ministry for Immigration", noting that "immigration is a complex phenomenon, currently handled with mutually contradictory policies by multiple ministries (Interior, Labor, Education, Health, etc.)", making it necessary to "move past the current situation where functions are split piecemeal among many different offices, leading to pointless complexity that makes it difficult for immigrants and citizens to get their bearings, and to match supply and demand for labor" (Ibid.: 46).

Unione popolare lists its priorities for immigration policies in the chapter "Nurturing rights and freedoms": "Abolish the policies that criminalize immigrants, and fight the gangmaster system and exploitation. Saving human lives and respecting the dignity of every human being is a moral duty, even more than it is a legal obligation. Approve birthright citizenship for the children of immigrants. Repeal the Bossi-Fini Act that makes an employment contract a prerequisite for legally residing in Italy and, consequently, decriminalize unau-

thorized entry or residence. Establish channels for permanently regularizing the status of people who have settled in our country but are unable to obtain a residence permit. Amend Law 91/1992 on citizenship to provide for the acquisition of this right after five years of residence in Italy, without income requirements, and ratify Chapter C of the Strasbourg Convention to guarantee the right to vote and run for office, at least in local elections. Open legal pathways to entry in order to seek employment and true humanitarian corridors for persons fleeing war, dictatorships, environmental disasters and economic crises. Cancel the Memorandum of Understanding with Libya whereby funding is provided for military and paramilitary forces who can use any means possible to stop people outside European territory seeking an escape route from war zones and crisis-stricken areas. More generally, we must withdraw from bilateral agreements with countries that do not concretely respect the Geneva Convention. Eliminate all indictability or legal jeopardy for NGOs providing aid at sea to deliver refugees to a safe Italian port, and establish a standing naval force for rescue operations in the Central Mediterranean. Set up a reception system run by local administrations rather than the Ministry of the Interior as at present, where arrivals can be hosted in local communities instead of ghettoizing centers. Close the Permanent Repatriation Centers (former CIEs) and abolish all forms of administrative detention" (Unione popolare, 2022: 13).

According to **Europa Verde – Verdi e Sinistra Italiana** "Today there is no immigration emergency and, *pace* the boorish right-wing populism that fuels fear and racism, we are not dealing here with an invasion of any kind, but with immigration flows that are a fundamental resource, demographically, economically and socially. The politics of fear and inhumanity, of refusal, exploitation and marginalization must be rejected and reversed. We must work for a politics of hospitableness and integration, guaranteeing full equality of rights for everyone, men and women alike. Because rights are not a zero-sum game; they are not to be taken from some that they may be given to others. Rights serve only if they universally acknowledged and respected. We must look at the underlying causes of immigration, which are often the direct upshot of inequalities, of wars, but also of environmental devastation and the policies that over the years have impoverished the peoples of the Global South and bereft them of resources. We must create channels for safe, legal immigration, repealing laws like the Bossi-Fini Act that push immigrants into illegality. Clear, open and transparent pathways are essential in preventing insecurity and unlawfulness. Within the EU, we will work towards a coherent reform of the right to asylum, but Italy, too, needs to apply this right fully and effectively, starting from the principle of non-refoulement which forbids any form of expulsion that puts people's basic rights at risk – as is so dramatically the case of the shameful agreements with Libya, which must not be allowed to continue. Also needed is an extension of the right to asylum that includes protections for climate and environmental refugees. We stand firmly opposed to criminalizing aid and solidarity in any way. We will work to ensure that those who are engaged in rescue and reception operations (whether in Italy or along immigration routes) are supported and free to act.

We believe, moreover, that a public (Italian and European) sea-rescue mission should be reinstated. We thus propose to:

- Review the Italy-Libya agreements and defund the coast guard.
- Promote a European immigration plan that goes beyond the Dublin system, together with uniform parameters for the reception system with a quota-based relocation mechanism.
- Abolish the Permanent Repatriation Centers.
- Facilitate the procedure for recognizing the right to asylum, increase the number of caseworkers at police immigration offices and ensure uniform, monitored administrative practices.
- Facilitate the issuance of residence permits.
- Register immigrants at employment centers using an STP temporary identification code, thus making it easier for them to receive a residence permit and regularize their employment status.
- Reform the law relating to the registration of foreign residents to make it easier for them to be entered in the registry of the resident population and maintain their registration (residence permit not linked to registration).
- Establish regional and municipal professional boards for the occupations in the sector: interpreters, cultural/intercultural mediators and immigration case workers.
- Establish local advisory councils of non-EU citizens, stateless persons and elected adjunct city councilors.
- Assist transnational families, and children left behind in particular; lower the minimum income requirements for family reunification" (Europa Verde – Verdi e Sinistra Italiana, 2022: 21-22).

In summary, then:

1. All parties address the immigration issue, some in greater detail than others.
2. Movimento 5 stelle deals only marginally with the issue.
3. The center-left and the left frame the immigration issue as a question of immigrants' citizenship rights.
4. As in the past, the center-right takes a securitarian view of the issue.

3. What the public thinks: an individual problem or everybody's problem?

Weighing up the impact of the September 25, 2022 election is undeniably difficult. And it is even more difficult to interpret the results in terms of the importance the electorate assigned to the immigration issue. How much influence did worries about immigration flows from the South and East have on the vote? It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty without well-designed statistical surveys. Nevertheless, in this section we will hazard an educated guess based on ecological data.[1]

The best source of information about public opinion in the Member States is undoubtedly the **Eurobarometer**. Since 1974, the survey has polled around 1,000 citizens in each EU country through face-to-face interviews conducted twice a year. Here we will consider the last version available before the elections, viz., EB97, published in 2022 with interviews dating to the summer of that year.

In Table 4, we see the importance that Europeans assigned to the immigration issue as a national concern in 2022 (column 2), at the end of 2018[2] (column 3), and the difference between the two survey waves (column 4). The table also shows the importance they assigned to it as a personal concern in 2022 (column 5), at the end of 2018 (column 6) and the difference in this perception between the two waves (column 7). Clearly, over this four-year period the questions associated with immigration have in general lost political salience both as a national and as a personal concern. In all Member States, with the notable exception of Cyprus and, to a far lesser extent, Portugal, Europeans mentioned immigration as one of the two most important issues facing their country less frequently in 2022 than in 2018. Italy is one of the countries where the drop in mentions was sharpest: from 32% of respondents in 2018 to 5% in 2022.

The situation is somewhat different for immigration's salience as a personal concern. In 16 countries including Italy, the number of respondents who included it as one of the two most important issues facing them personally dropped, while in 6 countries there was no change over the period. Concern at the personal level increased in only 5 countries, again doing so notably in Cyprus. In this case, Italy shows the largest difference with respect to 2018: in that year, 13% of respondents said that immigration was a major issue affecting them personally, as against 4% in 2022.

Lastly, we should not underestimate the fact that Europeans see immigration more as a problem affecting their country as a whole than as a concern impacting them personally.

[1] By ecological data, we mean aggregate population-level data collected over a geographical area that enable us to characterize the contexts where social interaction takes place.
[2] EB90, published in December 2018 with interviews conducted in November 2018.

Table 4. Importance of the immigration issue, 2022 and 2018. % and Δ 2022-2018

Country	Immigration is one of the two most important issues facing my country at the moment			Immigration is one of two most important issues I, personally, am facing at the moment		
	2022	2018	Δ 2022-2018	2022	Δ 2018	Δ 2022-2018
Austria	14	26	-12	4	10	-6
Belgium	12	29	-17	6	11	-5
Bulgaria	4	7	-3	1	2	-1
Cyprus	40	12	28	13	6	7
Croatia	3	11	-8	2	2	0
Denmark	7	30	-23	3	6	-3
Estonia	10	12	-2	4	2	2
Finland	5	15	-10	2	3	-1
France	9	15	-6	3	3	0
Germany	8	36	-28	2	8	-6
Greece	9	22	-13	1	4	-3
Ireland	3	5	-2	2	3	-1
Italy	**5**	**32**	**-27**	**4**	**13**	**-9**
Latvia	4	7	-3	1	1	0
Lithuania	6	11	-5	1	2	-1
Luxembourg	4	14	-10	4	4	0
Malta	12	50	-38	8	15	-7
The Netherlands	11	27	-16	3	4	-1
Poland	8	9	-1	4	3	1
Portugal	4	3	1	1	1	0
Czechia	14	16	-2	5	5	0
Romania	4	5	-1	5	3	2
Slovakia	3	9	-6	1	2	-1
Slovenia	5	24	-19	2	3	-1
Spain	5	19	-14	2	4	-2
Sweden	18	20	-2	11	8	3
Hungary	9	21	-12	3	6	-3

Source: Standard Eurobarometer 90 and 97, 2018 and 2022

4. Concluding remarks: seesawing attitudes towards immigration

In the 2022 general elections, Italy's political parties put less emphasis on the immigration issue than in the 2018 general elections and earlier local, regional and European Parliament campaigns. Against the backdrop of Western democracies' uncertain political climate, the aftermath of the pandemic and urgent economic issues – the new challenges facing the global economy, the disconnect between its real and financial sectors, and the looming specter of high inflation coupled with sluggish growth – have shifted the attention of the major institutional, party and media actors, and even of public opinion, away from immigration. In addition, while it is true that the war between Russia and Ukraine has sparked keen interest and an outpouring of effort on behalf of the Ukrainian refugees fleeing to the European Union (including Italy), it is likewise true that since February 24, 2022 we have seen a two-pronged attitude to immigration: on the one hand, there is authentic solidarity with the Ukrainian people under attack by Russia, while on the other, the intense focus at all levels on the war in the heart of Europe has to some extent distracted from the immigration issue in the broader sense, from the flows and arrivals from other parts of the world, from how migrants are treated upon arriving in Italy, and from the process of integrating a varied population that has been present throughout our country for nearly forty years.

Nevertheless, and for the reasons we discussed above, though the immigration issue was far from central in the 2022 general election campaign, it still managed to keep a place on the political agenda and in the public debate. Possibly, the post-Covid problems arising chiefly in connection with the economy and the Russia-Ukraine war (with its geopolitical fallout and economic repercussions, especially on energy supplies) have contributed to changing how political figures and the public interpret immigration and the importance they assign to it.

In any case, as we have often had occasion to say, the issue is very much a slippery slope. Beyond the circumstances of the last electoral campaign, immigration will always play a central part in the relationships between political supply and demand and in the answers that – in Italian society – the institutions offer in the short- and medium-long term. The demonstration of this, though beyond our scope here, is the fact that the immigration issue was (back) in the spotlight again in Italy and Europe only one month after the elections and a few weeks after the Meloni government was sworn in on October 22, 2022 and began work with the XIX legislature.

The events of Autumn 2022 – the migrants surging towards Europe, the NGOs in the Mediterranean helping them land on Italy's coasts, the diplomatic crisis between the EU Member States, starting with the clash between the institutional and political leaders of Italy and France - are the tangible proof that immigration is a fundamental theme in the description and redefinition of the conflicts of the contemporary world. For Italy and the European Union, much is at stake: not only our borders, geographical and otherwise, but also our societies' shared

values and political culture, the identity of political parties grappling with the new challenges that immigration brings. For Italy, these challenges are not limited to the question of sovereignism versus Europeanism, but extend to the role of xenophobia and its offshoots, the radicalization of poverty and injustice on a global scale. Hence the reordering of political space along coordinates that are no longer limited to Left and Right. We can thus say that in the first nine months of 2022, the immigration issue went out, politically speaking, by the window, but was soon back with a vengeance through the front door.

Political platforms

All political platforms are available: https://dait.interno.gov.it/elezioni/trasparenza/elezioni-politiche-2022, Contrassegni (accessed September 20, 2022).

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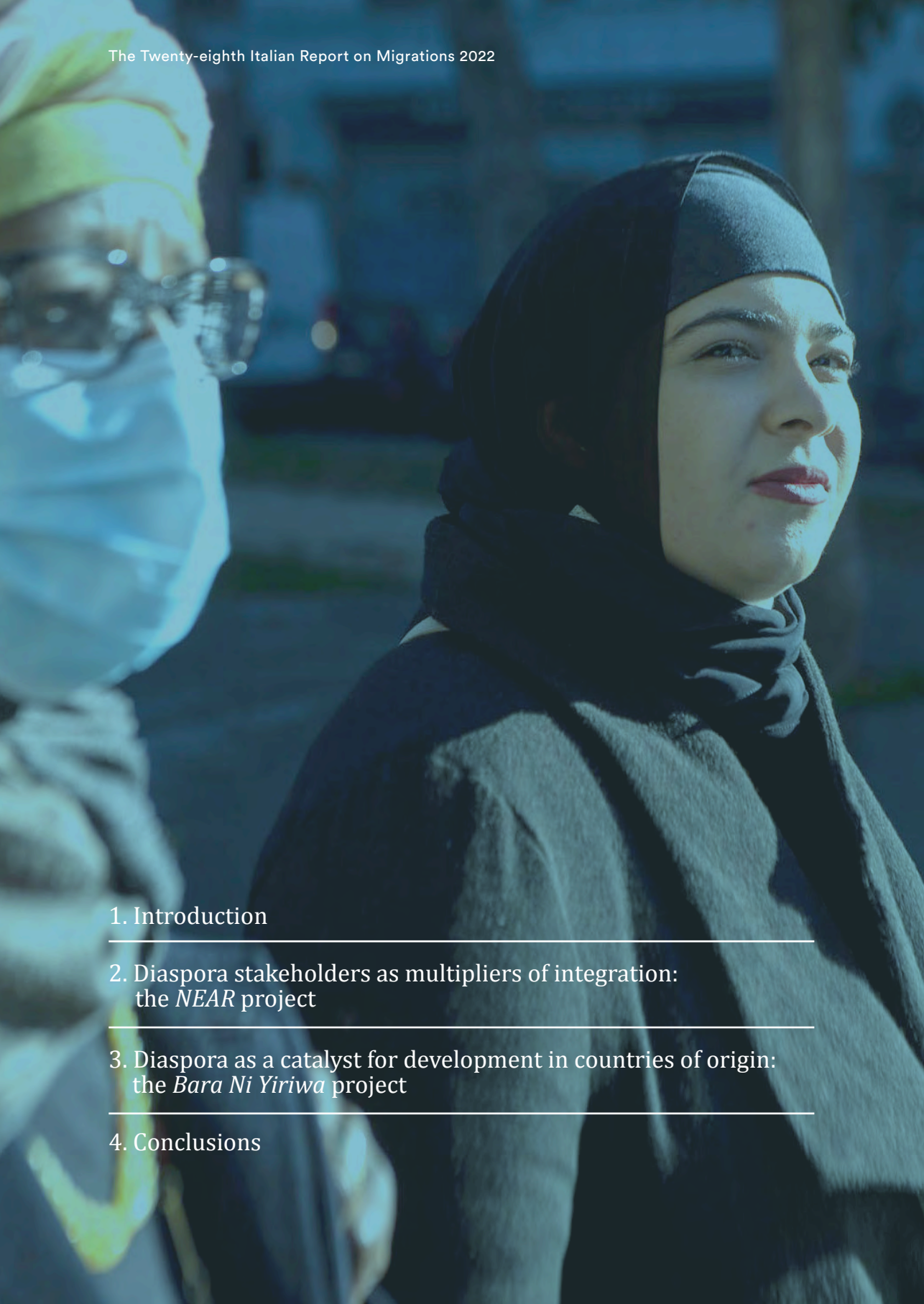

7.
A multidimensional stakeholder: the role of diaspora between local integration and development cooperation

Marta Lovison, Luca Merotta and Susanna Owusu Twumwah

1. Introduction

In recent decades, diaspora has increasingly been seen as a fundamental actor in Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and development cooperation. In particular, its members are not only key to building integration and inclusion pathways but also act as natural bridges between countries of destination and countries of origin.

In Italy the role of diaspora is also recognized in the context of integration, although there is still no regulatory framework and/or clear operational scheme. As a result, diaspora is not always involved in national and local policymaking and in managing political and social processes, with major implications for newly arrived migrants.

Over the years, the ISMU Foundation has involved diaspora groups and migrant youth in integration through projects such as NEAR, InsideAut, or Cooperation between Italy and El Salvador, all focusing on migration and so-

cio-economic inclusion.[1] These projects demonstrate how diaspora can play an empowering role in the integration of newly arrived migrants by leveraging skills that are anchored in a consolidated and protracted migration experience. Diaspora comes with forms of cultural capital, including knowledge of countries of origin, that are both sectoral (i.e., focused on people's area of specialization) and transversal and can improve the living conditions of their communities. Furthermore, diaspora members can use their social capital to bring newcomers closer to the vibrant and resourceful territorial networks based on migrants' needs.

In order to put this potential to good use, it is necessary to establish a relationship of trust with diaspora groups, for instance through a set of common values and objectives among the different integration stakeholders. This can help identify needs and innovative solutions where actors can act in a complementary way.

In the context of development cooperation, the operational framework is clearer. The idea that the role of diaspora in Italy is extremely important has begun to spread in a more concrete and cross-cutting way, especially since 2014 thanks to the Law n. 125 (General law on international development cooperation). This does not mean that the diaspora was not previously included in Italian cooperation projects. On the contrary, in a simple yet symbolically very important way, the law contributes to giving diaspora a formal role and consolidating the idea that diaspora stakeholders are new actors of development cooperation on the same footing as other civil society organizations. The Italian development cooperation has complied with the law, namely by involving diaspora stakeholders throughout the design of policies, programs and projects.

The economic data indicates that the migration-development nexus is particularly strong and represents in and of itself a global development tool. However, recent studies showed that the positive impact of diaspora goes far beyond economic remittances (Merotta, 2022) and is also ensured by other types of contributions, such as social remittances. The role of economic remittances surely becomes visible and measurable when looking at official money transfer channels and it is undoubtedly easier to assess the positive or negative effects on diaspora households in countries of origin and local communities where part of the remittances is invested. On the other hand, a more difficult task is to evaluate social remittances, i.e., to understand the impact of soft skills and professional, social and interpersonal skills acquired by diasporas in a circular process like migration. Recognizing and valuing this type of contribution can create development opportunities for countries of destination and origin through development cooperation.

Finally, it is important to underline that diaspora stakeholders cannot be analyzed as a homogeneous group and that their involvement may not occur through formal organizations. It is also important that informal actors are valued and possibly recognized also within diaspora communities.

[1] https://www.ismu.org/progetto-inside-aut-reti-e-sentieri-verso-lintegrazione/; https://www.ismu.org/progetto-cooperazione-tra-italia-ed-el-salvador-in-tema-di-migrazione-e-inclusione-socio-economica/. See also Caselli (2021).

The practical experience developed within the NEAR and Bara Ni Yiriwa projects demonstrates how over the years the ISMU Foundation has sustained its interest in actively involving diaspora stakeholders in the internal and external dimension of migration under a logic of circularity. The results presented in this chapter aim to enrich the academic and societal debate by providing a number of concrete examples of the importance to involve diaspora stakeholders in development cooperation and migrant integration.

1.1 Diaspora stakeholders: sons and daughters of a circular journey called "migration"

A superficial approach to migration could lead to analyzing mobility and diaspora in separate way. However, countries that fail to see migration as a circular phenomenon risk not understanding the full potential of mobility and the key role of diaspora.

The international community, driven by global processes like the Global Compact, has recently begun to adopt a common approach to migration in all its dimensions, in order to optimize its overall benefits by critically evaluating risks and challenges. Adopting a circular approach means being interested in, studying and promoting policies, actions and projects that consider the conditions of individuals in countries of origin, transit, destination and, once more, origin with a view to return. Under this circularity, diaspora are particularly relevant as transnational entities that can act as bridges between two or more worlds.

Who are these transnational subjects though? The term "diaspora", from the ancient Greek "dispersion" of a people, has long referred to populations forced, for various reasons, to leave their country of origin. Examples of diaspora groups include the Jewish one in the ancient world and, more recently, the Armenian and the African one (the latter linked to the trafficking of enslaved people from Africa).

In the modern era the term simply refers to groups of people living in a country other than their country of origin who have the same migration background. As the term is often linked to violent historical events, it is not always accepted by various communities. More recently (Safran, 1991, 2007; Cohen, 2008) various groups have been defined as "diaspora" based on factors such as a migratory experience in a specific peripheral region, a collective myth of the ancestral homeland, a feeling of alienation in the host society, an emotional closeness to the homeland as a common home and the desire to return to the country of origin under better conditions. Diaspora groups also maintain a constant tie with the homeland, become independent centers of cultural creation by regularly handing down ethno-symbols, customs and narratives of the country of origin and, finally, maintain cultural, religious, economic and political relations with the homeland that are significantly reflected in institutions.

1.2 Diaspora and development cooperation in Italy

Diaspora stakeholders are also called upon contributing to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an innovative way as part of Italy's development cooperation, especially in light of the Global Compact on Migration. Goal 19 of the Compact, indeed, aims to "create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries" (United Nations, 2018). The involvement of diaspora stakeholders in Italy has been concretely supported through the creation of the National Diaspora Summit,[2] an initiative that since 2017 has been informing and training diaspora organizations to boast their participation in the Italian development cooperation through official venues. The Summit also kickstarted discussions on how organizations could be supported in meeting the requirements to join the list of eligible entities of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). As a matter of fact, the first diaspora organization was added to this list in 2020.[3]

The Summit relies on a team with many diaspora members and has organized conferences, workshops and trainings by also involving actors from the private sector willing to invest in social and environmentally sustainable businesses. To date, the Summit has led all the major development cooperation actors in Italy to include diaspora stakeholders in their partnerships throughout programming. Two of the most important results have been the mapping of diaspora organizations active in development cooperation[4] and the launch of a handbook on diaspora in Italian development cooperation.[5] Among the several objectives currently pursued, the Summit aims to change the perception of migration in the Italian social narrative by also supporting diaspora stakeholders in their political, economic and social participation across the country. As part of the next phase, a National Diaspora Forum will be set up to strengthen the presence of diaspora stakeholders in institutional processes.

The following paragraphs explore the role of diaspora stakeholders in integration (in countries of destination) and in development cooperation (in countries of origin) starting from the concrete experience of two projects where ISMU is involved: NEAR (NEwly ARrived in a common home) and Bara Ni Yiriwa (Work and Development in Mali). ISMU has indeed always positioned itself as a research-action entity that conducts studies and fosters reflection on the different aspects of migrations starting from field experiences and analysis of empirical data acquired through interventions.

[2] https://summitdiaspore.org/.
[3] *Elenco OSC: iscritta la prima associazione delle Diaspore*, available at: https://www.aics.govit/2021/62483/ (29/09/2022).
[4] https://summitdiaspore.org/database/.
[5] Summit Nazionale delle Diaspore (2020).

2. Diaspora stakeholders as multipliers of integration: the *NEAR* project[6]

NEAR (NEwly Arrived in a common home)[7] is a EU-funded project aiming to promote the social orientation of newly arrived migrants during their settlement in the host countries. Financed under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), NEAR activates a process of mutual trust, knowledge and intercultural transfer between migrants and local communities, building a sense of belonging to "a new common home".

The project is strongly focused on the local context and offers a unique approach to integration in four target areas (Lisbon, Nicosia, Perugia, Milan), addressing different groups of migrant beneficiaries and combining multiple types of activities: capacity building and empowerment of diaspora stakeholders, support to access to services and labor market integration for asylum seekers and refugees, support to the inclusion of newly arrived children, and enhancement of school orientation and opportunities for newly arrived university students.

NEAR is coordinated by the ISMU Foundation (Italy) and implemented in collaboration with Tamat NGO (Italy), CARDET NGO (Cyprus), AIDGLOBAL (Portugal) and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart of Milan (Italy).

Capacity building, empowerment and networking among diaspora stakeholders (also referred to as "Community Agents - CAs") are central in the NEAR approach. In particular, the project creates or expands the cultural (knowledge) and social capital (contacts) to allow CAs to operate easily and effectively in the integration of newcomers.

After two years of implementation, ISMU Foundation has modeled the work done with diasporas to share experiences, tools, knowledge and practices with organizations, professionals and other interested groups and to empower diaspora stakeholders as actors of local integration. The main results that constitute the "NEAR approach" are reported below.

2.1 Selection of target territories and actors considering diaspora stakeholders

When working on integration pathways, it is necessary to support the enhancement of social capital by activating networks based on relationships. The core idea is that the relational-social aspect allows to keep together several factors that are fundamental to achieve autonomy and personal satisfaction. To this end, working with proximity networks is key as it allows to start a dialogue between people who live/work in the same area, identify concrete needs, foster

[6] This paragraph builds on the evidence gathered by Giorgia Papavero, Alessandra Barzaghi, Giulia Landi and Luca Merotta (ISMU Foundation).

[7] https://www.ismu.org/progetto-near-newly-arrived-in-a-common-home/.

activation and commitment, and build solid relationships that last over time.

From this point of view, to initiate the involvement of the CAs, ISMU identified an area in Milan with a significantly high number of migrants where, as a result, there was a greater need to welcome newcomers and where the orientation to services provided by CAs could be more helpful.

Project partners collected data on different institutions and private social actors operating at local level that could be useful for the implementation of the entire project and, more generally, for the reception of newcomers. This preliminary mapping led to choosing the 2nd Municipality (Municipio) as the district of intervention, namely the area around the Central Railway Station. This area is also very meaningful for migrants arriving to the city as it is a concrete and symbolic place of transit and movement with a very rich offer in terms of reception services.

Building from the contacts provided by local public authorities, partners identified the CAs for being either active members of organized, formalized groups and organizations or individuals who, due to personal characteristics, interests and professional background, were points of reference for migrants in the area. It was decided to involve both men and women as the gender is a very important variable in the reception, support and orientation to local services.

2.2 Engagement and co-design of capacity building trainings

After identifying people with key roles in their communities, partners organized explorative meetings either with individual stakeholders or with the entire team in the case of organizations. Meetings were both virtual and physical.
In the context of Milan, ISMU created a final group of 15 CAs that was involved in a co-design workshop on a Saturday morning, a particularly practical time for that responded to the personal and work needs of participants. The chosen venue, located near the Central Station and easily accessible by public transport, allowed ISMU to immediately connect with the area in view of the project activities.

The co-design workshop was fundamental for the implementation of NEAR according to its strongly participatory logic. Indeed, the CAs had the opportunity to better understand the project objectives while highlighting the knowledge gaps related to their community in terms of actors, procedures and opportunities for local integration. They could also influence the training methods so that these could best respond to the needs and habits of their communities, thus giving greater sustainability to the knowledge transfer.

2.3 Training Implementation

The themes that came out of the co-design workshop were organized into thematic clusters, giving priority to the most urgent topics due to the limited time available. In choosing the trainers, ISMU decided to hire people who worked in

the public or non-profit sector. Indeed, the aim was to provide CAs not only with updates on the functioning of integration services but also with the possibility of receiving feedback and answers to concrete and real problems that trainers dealt with in their daily work.

The choice of the venue of the training session was made with this in mind by organizing the meetings directly at the offices of local services in order to promote mutual and direct knowledge of the operators-trainers and their actual organizations. All meetings included informal moments, e.g., coffee breaks or lunch breaks, where participants and trainers could interact and get to know each other better. These expedients made it possible to develop shared capital not only with the operators but also among the CAs.

There were three thematic clusters:

- MODULE 1 – Legislation. Visas, family reunification, request for international protection, conversion of residence permits (study/work; asylum/subsidiary/special-long-term), citizenship, residence, reception system.
- MODULE 2 – Services. Basic support services, work (orientation - traineeship, job grants, civic service), housing, education and training (enrollment, documents needed, educational system, extracurricular activities, identity and multilingualism) and health (diseases, pregnancy, prevention, nutrition, disability).
- MODULE 3 – Co-creation of a local map. This module, set up by the communication agency partner of the project, included a guided tour of the neighborhood with stops in the most significant places with the aid of a contact person from the main neighborhood organization with year-long experience in the area and commitment to its enhancement and redevelopment. This has allowed the CAs to go back to areas they already knew while also discovering new places, their trivia and history, and better connecting them with the identity of the territory. The later activities were organized at the headquarters of the ISMU Foundation and focused on systematizing the information and suggestions collected during the guided tour and the most exciting experiences shared by the CAs in relation to their experience as migrants in a new city.

2.4 Ongoing engagement of diaspora stakeholders

The CAs immediately showed great interest in the proposed training, attended all meetings and shared reflections with the whole group. They were always allowed to express themselves spontaneously in order to share testimonies, talk about activities and initiatives addressing their fellow nationals, and give suggestions on the training and on other project activities. Some of them were directly involved in other project workshops (e.g., with asylum seekers, refugees and children), thus remaining anchored to the project as a whole. Their role was fundamental to identify beneficiaries of these workshops, expand the outreach

of the project and propose initiatives and activities in collaboration with their organization.

2.5 Co-creation of the communication campaign and the tools for effective inclusion of newcomers

The involvement of the CAs has been essential not only to include and support migrants who turn to their community of origin upon their arrival in Italy, but also to build tools for communication with and for new arrived migrants.

The CAs shared their emotions related to the experience as (former) migrants in the city with great enthusiasm. They also immediately showed curiosity, desire to participate and ability to work in team while providing valuable ideas for communication actions targeting newly arrived migrants in Milan.

The key aspect of this approach to communication was that it allowed CAs to act as true protagonists, making sure that their experience was passed on to other people. The CAs indeed described places that were dear and meaningful to them in terms of their personal integration journey in the city. The most interesting aspect was learning about their emotions connected to specific places in the city that often echoed memories of the country of origin.

Communication based on emotions and on the creation of products (videos, photos, interactive maps) starting from feelings and memories allowed to overcome the linguistic barrier that tends to be predominantly present when arriving in a new country and city. The direct participation of CAs in communication through their own experience allowed them to provide messages that could be immediately understood regardless of people's mother tongue or second language.

3. Diaspora as a catalyst for development in countries of origin: the *Bara Ni Yiriwa* project

The project "Bara Ni Yiriwa - Work and development in Mali",[8] to which the ISMU Foundation contributes as part of a broad partnership led by the NGO Tamat, aims to support the socio-economic development and the creation of job opportunities for Malian citizens in the Cercle of Kati. In particular, it focuses on women and young people as well as refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, migrants, and stateless residents.

The project is structured around two specific objectives: 1) increase employment and self-employment opportunities by strengthening people's professional skills in the agricultural and handicraft sectors and in the development of micro-enterprises; 2) stimulate local economic development through the participation of the Malian diaspora in Italy. To make the direct participation of the

[8] https://www.ismu.org/progetto-bara-ni-yiriwa-lavoro-e-sviluppo-in-mali/.

Malian diaspora in the development of Mali effective, the partnership includes the Haut Conseil des Maliens d'Italie (High Council of Malians in Italy).[9] The collaboration between the Haut Conseil and the ISMU Foundation was essential to conduct the preliminary research and design the training and investment support program to involve the Malian diaspora in their country of origin.

The research aimed to reconstruct the stories and experiences of the Malian diaspora in Italy knowing that its contribution to development cannot concern only remittances, investments or other types of economic capital but also the transfer of cultural capital (sectoral/cross-cutting knowledge and skills) and social capital (contacts).[10]

To explore these aspects and the potential role of diaspora in development, 40 semi-structured interviews and 10 focus groups were conducted and investigated people's migration path, the relationship with the country of origin and the active economic (remittances and investments), cultural and social exchanges.

3.1 The role of remittances in mobility

The research conducted by ISMU confirms that the relation with the country of origin is the main driver of remittances. All the people interviewed maintained transnational ties with Mali and this applied both to first-generation migrants and their descendants. Relations with the country of origin and fellow nationals is extremely articulated and looks not only to family members who remained in Mali but also to those who migrated to other countries (within and beyond the EU) or people met in transit countries. In this complex system of relationships, the main objective of migration is to send money and help families in Mali. Remittances are also concrete evidence of the strong and vital relationships that bind migrants to their country and extended families despite the distance.[11]

It is precisely around remittances and the concrete possibility of improving one's life and the life of family members that mobility plans very often revolve. This intertwines with a desire to return and undertake circular migration that stems not only from emotional ties but also the concrete possibility of creating job and/or investment opportunities in the country of origin.

The difference between sending money as remittances and actually investing capital in the country of origin is very blurry. The people interviewed sent mon-

[9] Mali is a country with a strong migratory tradition, which is why the diaspora decided to set up a common body called the High Council of Malians Abroad (Haut Conseil des Maliens de l'Extérieur - HCME) to represent Malians abroad. The HCME is a non-profit, apolitical, secular, inclusive platform organization consisting of an Executive Office (in Mali) and the offices of the Councils of Malians Abroad (ECM) in the countries of migration established following the Conférence nationale of 1991 and recognized as an organization of public utility by the Council of Ministers of Mali in 2009.

[10] The research was coordinated by Marta Lovison and members of the Haut Conseil des Maliens d'Italie (in particular President Mahamoud Idrissa Boune) and was conducted by Luca Merotta and Lidia Calderoli with the support of Ginevra Restelli, Dunia Lisa Sek and Noemi Guccione.

[11] According to data from the Bank of Italy, remittances from the Malian diaspora in Italy have grown from 9.29 million euros in 2013 to 87.58 million euros in 2021.

ey to Mali to ensure the subsistence of their families and address needs that local welfare services did not meet (healthcare, education, housing, basic needs). In addition, in some cases, remittances allowed to buy machinery or livestock as a sort of small/medium-scale investment to make family members more independent or lay the foundations for future return. Remittances and small investments therefore contribute to improving the life conditions of friends and family members who remained in Mali. However, this approach might lead to controversial results. Because remittances very often focus on the well-being of families, they contribute only in part to the country's development and risk exacerbating inequality and spurring competition and conflict (Clemens, McKenzie, 2014). They can also give rise to a distorted perception of migration and a stereotyped image of migrants, who are seen as wealthy regardless of their actual life conditions in the country of residence.

3.2 From remittances to investments: critical aspects, challenges and scenarios

While remittances are a widespread practice, real investments are very rare among the people interviewed. This can be certainly due to economic reasons (i.e., scarcity of capital to invest), but other aspects come out the interviews. There is some resistance to investment as a tool solely aimed at individual profit and profits are, rather, given back to the community (e.g., donated to charities). There is indeed greater propensity to team up with other fellow national, perhaps from the same village, to support interventions on collective well-being that lead to greater impact than individual actions would.

There is also the theme of trust, as the way authority and responsibility are organized within families makes it difficult to fully and concretely manage from afar the investments in terms of resources sent to the country of origin. In order to really invest in Mali, it is necessary to find local partners who can be trusted completely. However, according to the interviews, migrants would prefer to conduct the investment personally, monitoring it directly to reduce the risks.

The capital that diaspora stakeholders can make available to their countries of origin is not only economic but also cultural and social. From this point of view, one of the most interesting aspects is the possibility of applying the skills developed through migration and the new, different experiences it entails. On the one hand there are the technical skills developed by training and working in the country of destination despite the mismatch between the work performed in Italy and the investment interests in Mali – which is why the interviewees reported a strong need for professional training in the areas of interest for the investment. On the other hand, there are soft skills that can be made available in a cross-cutting way not only among family members but also the whole community.

The data collected confirms that the relation between diaspora stakeholders and the development of countries of origin is much more articulated and complex than it is suggested by the so-called triple win model, according to which

migration and development are an absolutely positive and winning combination from every point of view.[12]

4. Conclusions

This chapter took stock of the direct experience and empirical data acquired through relevant field projects implemented, highlighting how the effective involvement of diaspora stakeholders both in integration (in destination countries) and development (in countries of origin) contributes not only to implementing more effective policies and practices but also to promoting new models of inclusion and co-development that can start addressing and undoing inequalities.

Diaspora actors are not just mere objects of studies, practices and policies on the migration-development nexus but should be considered as active stakeholders with interests, suggestions and solutions. This is precisely why the ISMU Foundation has adopted a theoretical and practical approach for the involvement of the diaspora stakeholders through which it contributes to a still scarce literature on the Italian context while supporting a mentality shifts that can fully recognize intercultural society as an opportunity.

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[12] For more information on this see, for instance, De Haas (2010; 2019), Zanfrini (2018; 2019), Buscema, Corrado, D'Agostino (2009).

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8.
Ukrainian families and minors fleeing from war

Giovanni Giulio Valtolina and Nicoletta Pavesi

Data provided by UNHCR[1] indicates that as of September 13, 2022 7,278,696 Ukrainian refugees had reached various European countries, and more than 4 million of them had already received a Temporary Permit or another form of protection. A significant portion of them moved to countries close to Ukraine: more than 1.3 million were registered in Poland, while more than 90,000 settled in Slovakia and Moldova. Nonetheless, the Ukrainian diaspora has affected all of the European nations: more than 1 million refugees were recorded in Germany, and at least 665,800 of them asked for temporary protection; the Czech Republic received 431,462 refugees, and almost all of them held a temporary protection permit. In Italy, by September 13, 2022 UNHCR registered 159,968 refugees, and 153,664 of them obtained temporary protection status.

In this essay, after providing some data regarding Ukrainian families and minors who fled their country after the Russian invasion and moved to Italy, we will focus on the extraordinary effort made to improve reception programs, on the peculiar condition of minors who reached our country accompanied by adults who were not their parents, and finally on the experience of placing these fleeing families into Italian households.

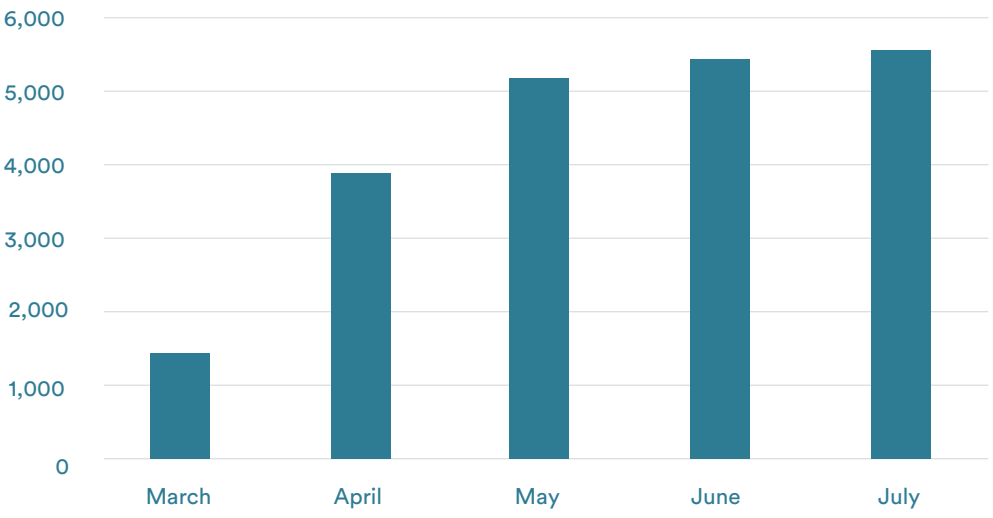
[1] UNHCR, *Operational Data Portal. Ukraine Refugee Situation*, available at: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine.

1. Dimensions of phenomenon

At the beginning of September, in Italy there were 159,968 refugees coming from Ukraine (UNHCR data). Almost all of them had a temporary protection permit (155,032 people).[2] 72% of them were female and 39% (59,908) were minors. Approximately 40,000 adults also had children with them. Regarding minors, there were 26,215 teenagers between the age of 10 and 17 years old; 19,654 between 5 and 9; 9,664 between 2 and 4; and 4,375 between 0 and 1. Their gender difference was just about the same: 29,715 female and 30,193 male.

Overall, they arrived in our country accompanied by an adult, even though some of them were orphans: family members, acquaintances, or educators working in the Ukrainian institutes where these children previously lived. However, if the person accompanying them was neither a parent or an adult legally responsible for them, according to the Italian legal system they needed to be considered unaccompanied foreign minors, and because of that – as the latest data reports – since July there were already 5,577 of them. If before the conflict the number of unaccompanied minors originally from Ukraine was practically nonexistent (only 4 children registered by June 2021), their presence instead increased after the Russian invasion, as Figure 1 shows.

Figure 1. Presence of Ukrainian unaccompanied minors. July 1st, 2022



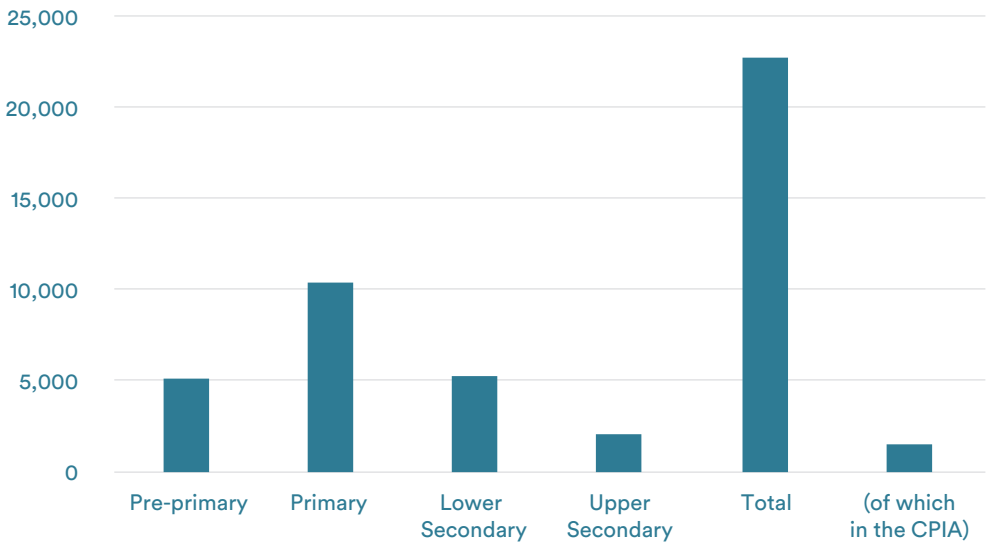
Source: General Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies - Second Division

[2] Dipartimento della Protezione Civile, *Emergenza Ucraina. Dashboard richieste di protezione temporanea*, available at: https://mappe.protezionecivile.gov.it/it/mappe-e-dashboards-emergenze/mappe-e-dashboards-ucraina/richieste-di-protezione-temporanea.

At the end of June, there were 2,814 girls representing 52% of the total number of Ukrainian unaccompanied minors. More than 90% of them were unaccompanied foreign girls. About 1/3 of Ukrainian unaccompanied minors resided in Lombardy, and 13% in Emilia-Romagna. Smaller groups were instead located in Veneto (9%), Latium (8%), Piedmont, Tuscany, and Sicily (6%).

According to the Ministry of Education, on May 9, 2022, the Ukrainian students welcomed into public and private schools since February 24 were distributed according to the percentages provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Ukrainian students welcomed into Italian schools



Source: Ministry of Education (Ministero dell'Istruzione, 2022)

21% of the students attended Lombard schools, 12% were in Emilia Romagna, and 11% in Campania.

2. Enhancing the reception program

Because of the arrival of so many Ukrainian refugees, the whole system of reception and integration managed by local institutions and emergency welcoming centres administered by Prefectures were widened. Access to these locations was also offered to Ukrainian refugees who had not made a formal request for international protection. Furthermore, Decree Law No. 21/2022 allowed additional forms of widespread reception involving the Third Sector and access to financial subsidies for those people who had already secured an accommoda-

tion for themselves. All these extraordinary measures were provided for by the Ocdpc no. 881 (March 29, 2022).

The Civil Protection Department published operational guidelines to provide reception and assistance to Ukrainian refugees, outlining the national and regional models of coordination, as well as the definition of reception activities and facilities. In addition, the online platform *"#OffroAiuto"* (I Give Help) was set up, allowing citizens, companies and agencies belonging to the Third or Private Social Sectors to provide goods, services, and accommodation on behalf of Ukrainian migrants once they arrived in Italy.

Furthermore, the Civil Protection Department issued a notice related to the acquisition of expressions of interest to carry out widespread reception activities within the national territory to support people arriving from Ukraine and fleeing the war. The Assessment Commission responsible for the evaluation of the expressions of interest received 48 applications from agencies of the Third Sector. Only one of them was excluded because the necessary documentation was not submitted. As far as the remaining 47 applications, 29 were accepted thus adding 17,012 places available for hospitality in apartments, families and other institutions, while the other 18 were turned down. Initially, only 9 agencies signed the agreement, providing in all 5,219 lodging places. The remaining 11,793 were still virtually available. Later, the Commission saw 5 more organisations backing out, bringing the final count to 24 agencies still involved in the program.

The Decree published by the President of the Council of Ministers (March 28, 2022) regulated the temporary protection program offered in Italy to people fleeing Ukraine because of the Russian invasion. Meanwhile, the Police headquarters issued for them a one-year residence permit that could be extended for another year, allowing them – among other things – to enroll into the National Healthcare System and have access to work, study, and other services of assistance and reception.

According to this Decree, people requesting a residence permit for temporary protection and finding an independent accommodation with relatives, friends or hosting families could also apply for financial subsidies for themselves, their children, and minors whom they were legal guardians of, by using an online platform set up by the Civil Protection Office. On the institutional website a specific manual available in 3 languages (Ukrainian, Italian, and English) was also uploaded.

3. Unaccompanied minors coming from Ukraine

All minors arriving from Ukraine in the European Union (EU) should be able to have access to their rights immediately and without discrimination, receiving also the necessary psychological support and healthcare assistance, as well as access to education. This is what the European Commission hopes for regarding the emergency crisis due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

As of June 30, 2022, the total number of unaccompanied foreign minors arrived in Italy from Ukraine was 5,392. According to Law 47/17, reiterated again in the Minors Plan devised to welcome Ukrainian refugees, it is considered an unaccompanied minor every child coming from Ukraine and living in Italy with no parents, even though he/she might be under the direct care of a trusted adult of the family, like an aunt or a grandmother, as well as a director or an educator belonging to the Ukrainian institution where the child was living before. To every minor, then, the Juvenile Court must assign a guardian taken from the list of volunteer tutors or appoint an institutional one. In this regard, the President of the AIMMF (the Italian Association of Judges for Minors and Families) stated that the appointment of an Italian guardian should not prevent the children's connection to their emotional references or travel companions. The assignment of an Italian guardian is determined by the immediate need to offer a concrete support to them during a difficult time. Providing an Italian guardian with legal expertise, knowledge of the local language and civic institutions, represents an actual improvement from before and a real help for minors and their Ukrainian chaperones, supporting them while dealing with a really complicated governamental Italian system.

4. Unaccompanied minors from Ukraine: the case studies of Catania and Bolzano

On May 11, 2022, 63 minor orphans from Ukraine arrived in Sicily. Their age was between 4 and 16 years old, and they came from orphanages located in Mariupol and Kramatorsk. The Community "Papa Giovanni XXXIII" coordinated this humanitarian mission. These children were also accompanied by 21 people that included some educators and their own children. Minors were hosted in the local Diocese of Trapani, as well as at a facility run by the Community "Papa Giovanni XXXIII" in Modica, and 2 more centres belonging to the Foundation "*Ebbène*" located in Catania. At that time, all these places were trying to be part of the circuit of widespread reception, meaning their inclusion into the 15,000 accommodation places made available by the Third Sector via direct procurement.

However, the Department of Civil Protection decided to dismiss the agreements related to widespread reception programs planned in Sicily, Calabria, and Basilicata; meanwhile, other reception programs involving organisations located in different Italian regions were accepted.

The emerging issue – completely new for the Italian context – was that these minors, whom the Italian institutions considered as unaccompanied foreign minors, had to be relocated into other facilities accredited by the Sicilian region, without acknowledging the presence of their Ukrainian educators, their emotional bond with these adults (being orphans), relationships established among them over time, and their well-being determined by the creation of a comfortable habitat in Italy. Fortunately, thanks to the involvement of people in charge of the hosting facilities, in June the Social Services Office of the Municipality of

Catania, executing a mandate issued by the Juvenile Court, transferred the first group of 12 minors along with 2 of their educators into another location with adequate quality standards.

Considering all minors in Italy without a parent as unaccompanied foreign minors and therefore individuals to be placed into a community, however, could have different interpretations, as the case of the Bolzano Juvenile Court manifested. In fact, the provision issued on April 6, 2022, rejected the requests for ratification of the reception measures and of the appointment of a guardian for a group of minors who had arrived in Italy accompanied by the person responsible for the "family-type" orphanage that hosted them in Ukraine. The supervisor had presented the measures adopted by the Ukrainian authorities entrusting these minors to the family-type orphanage and the letters from the Ukrainian Consulate in Milan and the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice, which confirmed that she was their guardian and care provider.

Despite the documentation provided and the evident emotional bond existing between Mrs. A. and the minors, the Juvenile Public Prosecutor ordered then to divide the group and to consider the minors as unaccompanied. Therefore, the Bolzano social services identified suitable centres for their relocation, thus separating them from their "foster parent". These decisions sparked the involvement of both the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice and the Ukrainian Consulate in Milan. They sent to the Bolzano Public Prosecutor's Office specific information attesting the existence in Ukraine of the lawfulness of the "family type" orphanage and the validity of the Ukrainian measures applied, which should have been directly recognized and enforced pursuant to the 1996 Hague Convention. Against the appeal presented by the Public Prosecutor's Office at the Juvenile Court, an intervention was carried out aimed at preventing the separation of minors from the foster parent and enforcing the Ukrainian measures. The Court, then, accepted the requests presented by Mrs. A. and assigned the custody of the minors to the Social Services of the Municipality, discharging them from the community, entrusting them to Mrs. A., and supporting her in the minors' temporary integration process and school education while in Italy.
The decision of the Bolzano Juvenile Court, therefore, clarifies how the absence of a parent does not necessarily mean the need to find a host community, when instead there is the possibility of a family placement, where the concept of family member is understood in a broader sense including people living together and with no direct family-ties. It also specifies that Ukrainian minors accompanied not by a parent but by another "family member" – understood in a broader sense – cannot be automatically classified as "unaccompanied foreign minors." This aspect surely invites us to reassess data provided by the Civil Protection Department, recording for instance in the month of August the arrival of more than 47,000 Ukrainian minors, and 4,660 were unaccompanied minors registered in the Labor Ministry database. Over 3,000 of them were then entrusted to families, and more than 840 were assigned to institutions.

5. The dispositions of the Deputy Commissioner

The Deputy Commissioner, Francesca Ferrandino, responsible for the coordination of measures and procedures aimed at assisting unaccompanied minors coming from Ukraine, in accordance with her duties proceeded to put together a "Plan for unaccompanied foreign minors," that was adopted on March 25, 2022. This document described the activities carried out by institutional organizations involved in different ways in the reception assistance program for unaccompanied foreign minors within the national territory. In particular, the Plan offered guidelines to identify and monitor unaccompanied foreign minors residing in Italy, to evaluate the reception system, the hosting facilities, and the different forms of temporary foster care.

The Plan was subsequently updated with a specific addition – shared with other administrations and protection associations directly involved with unaccompanied Ukrainian minors – outlining procedures to be followed to improve channels of communication and reception when transfers of unaccompanied foreign minors were going to take place from Ukraine into our country. Specifically, the Addition highlighted the need that, since the initial contacts between Ukrainian institutions and associations promoting these transfers, the Department of Civil Protection, the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration, and the Department of Public Security had to be informed, and that – at least ten days before the actual transfer – the organization involved needed to provide the competent authorities, even at local level, with all the necessary information, including the presence of any further reasons for vulnerability and special needs, the presence of chaperones, any guardianship and legal representation adopted by Ukrainian authorities, in addition to the reception measures in place. Finally, once the communication from the promoting association with the requested information was received, the local competent Prefecture based on the place of reception set up along with the Deputy Commissioner a coordinating panel with all the institutions involved, to also arrange specific actions to meet the newcomers' educational and health needs.

6. Hosting small families in local households

In Italy the reception of refugees in families has had a recent history, although prior experiences of family solidarity dating back to the Balkan war had already occurred, when civil society got involved spontaneously to welcome refugees coming from the former Yugoslavia. As Bona (2016) points out, the public system was not prepared to welcome the approximately 80,000 refugees who arrived in our country between 1992 and 1995. For this reason, associations, networks, groups of citizens and families started giving generic hospitality to people and families fleeing the war. This experience was quite instrumental when in 2002 the refugee reception system began to take shape, and through

various transformations this has now become the SAI. "It is precisely from that period of activism – however naive and improvised – that the impulse came about to establish a first embryonic reception system and develop a legal framework for the right to asylum" (Marchetti, 2018: 188). Nevertheless, a few years went by before other similar experiences happened. In 2008, the "*Rifugio Diffuso*" project was set up in Turin, involving along with the municipal administration also associations, voluntary organizations, families, and individual citizens. Even though various experiences of welcoming refugees into families have taken place, no cumulative data is currently available in order to provide a clear picture of this phenomenon. However, it is evident that these experiences are quantitatively marginal.

Conversely, the Ukrainian crisis has indeed sparked an impressive mobilization of civil society and families who opened their homes to individuals or groups, in many cases involving people who had never offered hospitality before or had been exposed to the issue of social inclusion of forced migrants. From this perspective, the "proximity and involvement" effect that occurred when the aforementioned war in Bosnia seems to have been reproduced, a "war at home" (Rastello, 1998) that triggered almost immediately feelings of closeness within circuits – such as parishes and third sector associations – which already had experiences of solidarity, as well as with "new families", not yet accustomed to experiences of active citizenship. "I saw the images on television, and I said to myself: how can I stay here and watch? These people are running away. We have room at home, and it came naturally to offer hospitality (…). No, I have never dealt with refugees, it is not a topic that matters to me."

One of the families interviewed also pointed out how different it was the response to the request for hospitality made by Afghan women fleeing their country in August 2021, which had not drawn any attention because these women were always accompanied by a male relative and were also perceived as distant because of their religion, culture, and language. Instead, in the case of Ukrainian groups, they were mostly made up of mothers or grandmothers with children and were perceived much "closer" in terms of religion and culture. For this reason, in good faith many more families thought it was easier to open the doors of their households, especially during the first wave of arrivals.

For many, the informal dimension has been the hallmark of this experience. Requests for hospitality have often used the network of acquaintances, especially Ukrainian communities already present in our territory acting on their behalf as informal mediators, or even have been a direct resource for the reception. In other cases, instead, the reception went through the channels of the public administration. "We have given our availability to the Municipality. For a while nothing happened... Then the police came to inspect the place and within a week M. and her daughter arrived."

As Campomori (2022) states, the dimension of informality is a clear sign that people usually know how "to get by", precisely thanks to the informal support provided; but it also represents an obstacle to an adequate circulation of information, which instead happens more promptly and correctly within the formal reception system.

Another typical feature of Ukrainian refugees is the temporary nature of their intention to stay as guests. "Most Ukrainian refugees do not consider themselves refugees and have no intention of applying for international protection; rather they perceive themselves as people temporarily forced to live outside their country, but ready to go back to Ukraine as soon as they can" (Ibid.: 329). This attitude has had inevitable repercussions on the family reception program. If the "classic" idea was for the host family to share its resources and social relationships to promote integration, becoming a sort of bridge between reception structures and independence, in the case of Ukrainians this goal often was not pursued. "Now I have been hosting O. and his son since March. We still struggle to communicate. They do not speak English and are not learning Italian. We suggested V. (the son) to attend Italian classes, instead he stays all the time in his room. At least O. sometimes comes shopping with me... he does not want to go out. O. tells me that he talks to his friends online… here in town there are no Ukrainian boys of his age." Adolescent boys and girls in fact represent, both in the words of their families and those who were interviewed, a vulnerability within a vulnerability. These risks have connected them to the traumas they had already suffered and to the experience of critical events in their lives (adolescence, trauma of war and flight, immersion in a context in which they have communication difficulties, comparison with Italian teenagers, etc). The lack of a formal support network for families (ranging from the linguistic/cultural mediator to the psychologist) has made living together in some cases challenging. "At the beginning the impact was difficult. I confess that I thought everything was going to be easier… I am a generous person and a host, but you come to my house and need to try to interact with me. Well, that is not exactly how it went. We are different, and these differences take a toll on coexistence... We were not prepared, and that's about it. In retrospect I can say that we embarked on this experience completely unaware of the situation... It is not like hosting the kids who arrive here with my children's cultural exchange program... Would I do it again? I do not know… maybe if we had some help. Instead, they left us alone." One of those people who were interviewed highlighted the fact that a significant portion of host families had false expectations regarding hospitality. Some of them thought that they were finally going to be grandparents, some others to have company, and some to receive support in their daily life. Checking out host families ahead of time would eventually have prevented some misunderstandings, which also caused abrupt interruptions of reception programs and the relocation of the group into the CAS facility.

Families were aware that they were providing only a temporary shelter. In some cases the short time needed to host them pushed families to volunteer, acknowledging also the fact that the burden of the reception program fell entirely on families. This might have partially selected the host families.

Then the problem of the "aftermath" remains. In some families the hospitality program went well and beyond the 3 to 6 months agreed upon at the beginning, while other groups faced serious difficulties to continue providing hospitality. Therefore, some refugees are already making their way home, while others intend to stay even longer.

7. Final considerations

The great attention drawn by the Ukrainian crisis in our country has resulted in a "grass-roots" movement of solidarity bringing civil society to play a leading role in welcoming fleeing families. The system has certainly moved fast, both at European and national level. In Italy, in particular, the crisis "has somehow triggered a process of innovation of the system, which hopefully could become a new model of reception on behalf of all migrants fleeing conflicts such as the one that broke out in Ukraine" (Campomori, 2022: 331). As a matter of fact, the specific literature on this topic argues that two different paths have been created within the system, and one of them is considered a "privileged" one, as is the case of Ukrainian refugees. This model could be then applied to the entire reception system, making it more flexible regarding the territory in which refugees can settle, by taking into account any existing family or friend networks that should be valued and included in planning their reception, investing more on that widespread system which has proven to be so effective in the case of Ukrainian refugees.

In reference to the reception program with local families, the difficulties encountered can be an opportunity to highlight some issues that need to be accounted for while handling similar projects. First, the economic factor. The lack of specific support to families greatly affects the number of households able to open their doors. Most likely, financial support would increase the number of potential welcoming families. Another aspect concerns the sense of abandonment felt by these families. It is helpful, instead, for them (in case of need) to have access to linguistic mediation services, support on bureaucratic obligations, and assistance when faced with vulnerabilities shown by their guests. As a matter of fact, the pioneering reception experiences and those run by Sprar/Sai facilities have underscored the need for accompaniment, even though it is aimed at lower numbers of people, setting up a tutoring program that perhaps is not suitable to larger groups of people. Between an ongoing accompaniment (perhaps not always necessary) and total abandonment, one can perhaps think of an "on call" support system, which allows host families to have a point of reference in case of need, without however feeling "under surveillance".

Another aspect spells out the need to provide clear and specific information to families volunteering for reception programs, thus preventing false expectations and problems and/or failures during the process. The creation of only one register of host families could also enhance the matching process when the time comes.

The mediation provided by third sector organizations and ethnic networks has even proved to be very effective while welcoming Ukrainian women and minors. This is an element that must be kept in mind when aiming to promote and strengthen reception programs with local families.

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The 28th edition of ISMU Migration Report inevitably addresses the tragic events connected to the war in Ukraine, analysing the conflict from the perspective of human mobility. The volume traces the inflows and outflows from Ukraine to Europe and Italy, analysing the reasons why the reception granted to Ukrainians differs from the reception conditions that have been granted to asylum seekers of other nationalities over the past decade.
While paying particular attention to the conflict in Ukraine, the Report also turns the spotlight on some countries that tend to be forgotten, such as Afghanistan, Syria and Countries of the African continent.
Alongside the analysis of statistical data (ISMU estimates that the number of foreigners living steadily in Italy slightly exceeded 6 million individuals, as of 1 January 2022), the Report covers the traditional areas of interest of health, work, education and the juridical framework. Moreover, the Report is enriched by several in-depth studies including analyses of how recent Italian political elections treated the "Migration issue" and of the role played by diaspora communities between local integration and international cooperation.

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