

# MIGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Monitoring Report of the Italian Civil Society on the Sustainable Development Goals related to Migration and for the Global Compact on Migration**

April 2021



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## **Monitoring Report of the Italian Civil Society on the Sustainable Development Goals related to Migration and for the Global Compact on Migration**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this monitoring report on migration and sustainable development is to contribute to the revision of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, to the elaboration of a new Policy Coherence Plan, and in general to better migration policies according to the vision of sustainable development, its principle of leaving no one behind, and the respect of human rights regardless of gender, age and origin, to be considered as a set of indivisible rights.

The monitoring of the situation in Italy has been carried out having as reference the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), their targets and indicators, as well as the Global Compact on Migration, although Italy does not participate in it.

Monitoring is necessary because migration policy is separated from sustainable development. Migration policy has always been overwhelmed by emergency. While sustainable development is sustainable if migration policy is coherent with its principles and vision.

On the other hand, the debate on sustainable development has always left the consideration of the role of migrants on the sidelines. The past National Strategy for Sustainable Development appears to be deficient and limited, migration is only made explicit with reference to the external dimension, mostly focused on development cooperation and not on migration policy. While the internal dimension is poorly developed.

It is clear to all that it is essential to go beyond the securitarian and utilitarian narrative, to set migration policy in a structural perspective of sustainable development. Overcoming ideological taboos and discrimination fomented by a poisoned political debate.

This is necessary because when analysing migration issues, the general weakness of social and economic inclusion emerges, which also includes Italian men and women citizens, and which highlights the general issue of social justice. The absence of a structural migration policy is linked to the general process of Italian decline, to the emigration of young Italians and young women, to the absence of a future vision of the labour market, to the lack of opportunities for social mobility, to the growth of inequality and to the increase in poverty.

The monitoring conducted in the chapters of the report, which compare the SDGs and the Global Compact with the conditions and policies of reception and integration, highlights how migrants are subordinate in Italian society and economy (chapter 2 and 3). The recent immigration decree has restored constitutional guarantees and seems to relaunch the integrated reception system, which will be such only if greater investment is guaranteed for its diffusion and for the services necessary for integration. However, the conditions of integration remain critical both for recently arrived immigrants and for immigrants who have been living in Italy for a long time.

The poor migrant population constitutes more than a quarter of the poor population in Italy.



The conditions of labour market segmentation, ethnic specialization, irregularity and exploitation depend on (non) sustainable development model, unfair economic structures (as in the case of the food system with quasi-slavery in the fields), and policies that push for exclusion rather than facilitating integration. Economic conditions interact with problems of social inclusion, education and access to health care. In this regard, the Covid-19 pandemic has made the inequalities of which migrants are also victims even more evident.

The weakness of the labour market for better inclusion is also found in the measures aimed at encouraging the immigration of talent and entrepreneurs from abroad. Italy's low attractiveness emerges, a sign of our country's decline. Italy is one of the last countries to benefit from Blue Cards. At the level of political participation, all the measures for the involvement of migrants through the forms of deputy councillors and councils prove to be very insufficient. The main path is the recognition of citizenship, in particular the new generations, and the right to vote at the administrative level (as requested in the proposed law of popular initiative of *Ero straniero*).

In this context, women (chapter 5) are the population group most discriminated against. Migrant women are, in fact, doubly discriminated against, relegated to personal service jobs and in commerce, with salaries lower than those of men, and many live confined to their families, suffering from weak social inclusion. Girls and women are at risk of becoming victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and gender-based violence; they have difficulties in accessing educational and health services, particularly sexual and reproductive health services. Small entrepreneurship represents a possible way out of isolation, but mostly within the sphere of work traditionally linked to the care sector and permitted to them by the community to which they belong.

What emerges from all of this is the absence of a positive vision of the role of migration for sustainable development, despite the fact that, from an utilitarian viewpoint, their importance for the gross domestic product, tax payments and contributions to the pension system is stressed. There is a lack of programming of the labour market, and of orderly and safe channels for migration. The flow decrees are established annually and focus primarily on seasonal work, while the main channel of immigration is that for family reunification (chapter 4).

We have become accustomed to deaths at sea in the Sicilian channel (target 10.7.3 of the SDG calls for an accounting of deaths, but the Strategy and ISTAT reports do not offer any indications or information, chapter 1). The operations of rejections at the borders have been denounced (as in the recent case of the border with Slovenia and then in Croatia, keeping asylum seekers in inhuman camps in Bosnia), while the agreement with Libya finances the rejection of migrants in detention centres (chapter 6).

In a work on indicators related to the target 10.7.2, the United Nations have already highlighted the inadequacy of Italian migration policy with particular reference to measures to facilitate a safe, orderly, regulated and responsible migration and mobility of persons. On the other hand, the Italian policy, like the European one, even with the proposal of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, is centred on the control of external borders, returns, outsourcing of controls and containment of migration flows (chapter 6). Yet, development cooperation presents a successful experience in the recognition of the role of diasporas, which could be enhanced for an active participation of migrants in internal policies as well.



Monitoring clearly shows the need to review the National Strategy starting from the coherence of internal and external policies that link migration to sustainable development. Coherence and integrated vision because the weakness of migrants' integration is due to the interconnection of issues that cannot be treated separately. The effectiveness of policies depends on an integrated approach. Problems of social inclusion, health and education, for example, are closely linked to precariousness in employment, housing and suburbs. Improving the conditions of working men and women can enhance their health and opportunities for the education and social mobility of their sons and daughters. And vice versa.

In each chapter, a series of specific recommendations is indicated, but it is essential to consider them together, from an integrated and coherent perspective. In this regard, we recall, among the various recommendations:

- Sign the Global Compact on Migration and have a plan for policy coherence based on respect for human rights.
- Invest in an integrated reception system and integration from a universalist perspective;
- Program safe and orderly channels for migration, from those for work reasons to those for asylum seekers, in a vision of recovery and sustainable recovery based on human rights, youth and women.
- Proceed expeditiously in the discussion of the proposed law of popular initiative of the campaign "I am a foreigner", and the proposal for the citizenship of new generations;
- Rediscuss the Agreement with Libya and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum to overcome the short-term approach based on the control and externalization of borders
- Invest in international cooperation for sustainable development to enhance migration and diasporas. In particular, it is a matter of achieving an investment equal to 0,7% of gross national income as set out in Sustainable Development Goal 17.2.

All this within a framework of policy coherence. The current path of defining a plan on policy coherence, with the assistance of the OECD, represents a unique opportunity to integrate migration policy into the framework of sustainable development. This report aims to nurture this perspective. In this regard, the UN system requires governments to report on the implementation of target 17.14.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which calls for the implementation of a coherence plan. A composite indicator has been defined, which we report on the next page. We therefore ask that the Cabina di regia Benessere Italia or the Inter-ministerial Committee for Sustainable Development adopt the plan on policy coherence, and monitor the implementation of the relative indicator, with reference to the implementation of human rights and specifically in the governance of migration.

The vision of migration policy must change profoundly and be anchored to that of sustainable development. Migration policy must be considered together with policies of social inclusion, the labour market, foreign policy and cooperation, in order to halt the Italian decline, and to work under the banner of the European Union in the world, consistent bearer of the values of equality and freedom.

**INDICATORS ON POLICY COHERENCE<sup>1</sup>****1. Institutionalized political commitment****Political commitment expressed/endorsed by the highest level**

Additional specific commitments (1 point each, maximum of 5 points):

- Set timelines for the achievement of policy coherence objectives;
- A dedicated budget;
- Defined roles and responsibilities;
- Regular reporting mechanism;
- Explicit consideration of international commitments;
- Other nationally relevant commitment.

**2. Long-term considerations****Long-term objectives going beyond the current electoral cycle included in national strategies**

Additional specific mechanisms (1 point each, maximum of 5 points):

- A commissioner, council or ombudsperson for future generations;
- Other mechanisms of scrutiny or oversight on possible future effects;
- Mechanisms for regular appraisal of policies;
- Impact assessment mechanisms; and
- Other nationally relevant factors.

**3. Inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination****National mechanism for regular coordination**

Additional elements (scored as follows):

- A mandate to make decisions regarding trade-offs (2 points);
- Coordination body is convened by a centralized government body (1 point);
- Coordination at both political level and technical level (1 point);
- Mandate for aligning internal and external policies (1 point).

**4. Participatory processes****Relevant stakeholders are consulted at the early stages of development of laws, policies, plans, etc.**

Additional elements (scored as follows):

- Consultations take place in a comprehensive manner at various stages of the policy cycle (1 point);
- Institutions disclose the rationale for not including inputs from consultations (2 points);
- An accountability mechanism that allows public intervention (2 points).

**5. Integration of the three dimensions of Sustainable Development, assessment of policy effects and linkages****A mechanism for assessing and addressing issues in terms of the contribution of a policy (new or existing) to broader sustainable development, including transboundary elements.**

Additional mechanisms (1 point each, maximum of 5 points):

- The application of the above mechanisms at all levels of government;
- An indicator framework for tracking policy effectiveness towards sustainable development;
- Cost-benefit analysis of policy impacts across all sectors;
- The identification of measures to mitigate potentially negative effects and to optimize synergies as part of policy and planning;
- The consideration of international spill-overs, such as cross-border and international impacts; and
- Other nationally relevant mechanisms.

**6. Consultation and coordination across government levels****Any of following mechanisms (5 points each, 10 points total – two mechanisms is enough for 10 points):**

- Mechanisms to systematically collect the inputs of sub-national government entities;
- Arrangements for regular formal exchange between central government and subnational levels;
- Mechanisms to ensure enhance substantive coherence (templates & checklists);
- Planning cycle timeframes that facilitate alignment.

**7. Monitoring and reporting for policy coherence****Monitoring and evaluation framework for policy coherence for sustainable development.**

Aspects of policy coherence for sustainable development are integrated into reporting processes.  
Data and information management system for sustainable development data.

**8. Financial resources and tools****Any of following (5 points each, 10 points total):**

- Check-lists to ensure that plans and budgets reflect policy coherence for sustainable development;
- Integrated financial information systems.
- Mechanisms to ensure that cooperation funds are aligned with

<sup>1</sup> UNEP (2019), SDG Indicator 17.14.1. Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development. Concept note for the development of a global methodology. Ultimo aggiornamento in: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Migration without sustainable development

Migration policy is not part of sustainable development policy in Italy. Migration has never entered the Italian political and public debate on sustainable development, except in a marginal way. That is the reason why the title migration without sustainable development has been used. “Migration without development as a logical consequence of the accentuated tendencies to confine migrants in the most disadvantaged and vulnerable segments of the population from the socio-economic point of view, of the condition of suspension and legal precariousness experienced by many of them, and of the widespread popular and institutional ostracism on the side of social integration” (Ceschi, 2019).<sup>1</sup>

The migration issue has always been addressed as an emergency, the landings and invasions, the “illegality” of migrants and the danger to the security of Italian citizens. It has been and still is instrumentalized by political parties and the media, especially during electoral periods. An instrumentalization that is something deeper when it implies and spreads a nationalistic sovereigntist vision, a rabble-rousing that feeds xenophobic and racist feelings. A vision that is radically distant from the principles of sustainable development, the founding values of the European Union and the Italian Constitution.

This negative narrative is countered by a rationalization based on facts that show how Italy “needs” migrants because of its declining population, their contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) and the pension system. Migration is useful for Italian development. However, this counter-narrative is instrumental, it does not ask the question in terms of principles, human rights, and does not produce empathy in a world that is in any case affected by post-truth, fake news, and communication bubbles that divide public opinions.

The theme is almost always presented as “us and them”, in divisive terms because there are cultural and religious diversities that are actually, at times, difficult to compose. Even in this report there is a risk of writing about migrants as if they were a social group distinct from society in general. A category that wants to be integrated into “our” socio-economic system, and that can be usefully functional to our system, but that is essentially detached from it.

This is contrary to the sustainable development principle of “leaving no one behind” and to human rights. Principles and rights that clearly present the political issue of equitable and sustainable development beyond differences of gender, age, ethnicity, national separations and migration. The opposition between “us and them” does not take into account the fact that we all participate in the same global socio-economic system that has long penetrated national borders, transforming our daily lives, both real and virtual.

However, this cosmopolitan vision is not enough to empty the security narrative, especially where there are actually tensions and conflicts at local level between migrants and native peoples, the so-called wars between the poor for access to housing, to a job however precarious, to a healthy environment.

<sup>1</sup>Sebastiano Ceschi “Migrazione e sviluppo tra politiche regressive e processi di esclusione”, in Mezzetti P. e S. Ceschi (2019), Ripartire dall’Africa. Esperienze e iniziative di migrazione eco-sviluppo, Donzelli editore.



And it is precisely here that the theme of sustainable development must be strongly posed, above all in terms of social justice in an unequal socio-economic system that must be profoundly changed. A system that, as we will see with the monitoring, reproduces a subordinate integration of migrants as well as of marginal social groups, relegated to an “industrial reserve army”, to a social class functional to unequal economies as in the master gang system in agriculture, in the precariousness of personal services and petty trade, in the most degraded occupations in industry. Social mobility is scarce and it is insufficient because market structures produce concentration of power and growing inequalities.

The migration issue must therefore be reinterpreted through the lens of the debate on social justice in sustainable development. The benefits of migration (another term that implies an instrumental vision), but above all the human rights of marginalized and discriminated social groups, are enhanced only if power structures are made more just, with policies that transfer power, resources and capacities to them, making them masters of their life.

### Some initial background data

Factual data<sup>2</sup> tells us that migration in Italy is equal to 8.8% (5,306,500 people) of the native population, compensates (but less and less<sup>3</sup>) for the demographic decline<sup>4</sup>, half of them are women, around 20% are minors, and 50% come from European countries (in particular Romania, Albania and Ukraine) (see Table 1). The presence from non-EU countries has decreased in recent years (3,615,000 presences at the end of 2019), because the irregularity estimated at around 600,000 people has grown. An irregularity that depends on arrivals that have escaped controls, but above all on the precariousness of work and the effect of the recently reformed Security Decrees (which had cancelled visas for humanitarian reasons) (the Decrees are commented in chapter 2). In 2020, regularization, decided to address the problems caused by Covid-19, brought out 220,500 people in the personal services and agriculture sectors.

Migrants entering Italy in recent years do so mainly for reasons of family reunification: among the 177,000 new residence permits issued in 2019, only 6.4% were for work, compared to as many as 56.9% for family reunification. This is due to the absence of entry planning for work purposes.

Landings have been greatly reduced following Italy’s agreement with Libya to control (and reject in detention centres) migrants: from a peak of 181,436 people in 2016 to 10,707 people in 2019, and 32,542 as of November 26, 2020<sup>5</sup>. This decrease, together with rejections at the border with Slovenia<sup>6</sup>, raises the question of the principle of non-compliance with the right to protection of migrants, and the need to establish regular humanitarian channels with the European Union. Reception has consequently decreased by around 84,000 people in mid-2020.

<sup>2</sup> The data and information commented on here are taken from IDOS and Confronti (2020), Dossier statistico immigrazione 2020; and from Caritas and Migrantes (2020), XXIX Rapporto immigrazione 2020. Conoscere e comprendere. Tau Publishing.

<sup>3</sup> The fertility rate of immigrant women decreases over time, assimilating to that of native women. Births to foreign parents have decreased in recent years (see Table 1), but still accounted for 15% of the total number of newborns.

<sup>4</sup> 1.2 million fewer Italians in the last 5 years.

<sup>5</sup> Data from the statistical dashboard of the Ministry of the Interior

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.vita.it/it/article/2021/02/06/le-pratiche-di-respingimento-dellitalia-alla-frontiera-con-la-slovenia/158253/>



**Table 1 -** The main data on foreign presence, absolute values and percentages (2008-2019)

	2008	2017	2018	2019
Total resident population	59.000.586	60.483.973	60.359.546	60.244.639
Of which foreign population	3.402.435	5.144.440	5.255.503	5.306.548
Foreigners on the total (%)	6,5	8,5	8,7	8,8
Foreigners born during the year	72.472	67.933	65.444	62.944
Enrolled in school	628.937	841.719	857.729*	n.d.
Acquisition of Italian citizenship	53.696	146.605	112.523	127.001
<b>First five communities</b>				
Romania	796.477	1.190.091	1.206.938	1.207.919
Albania	441.396	440.465	441.027	440.854
Morocco	403.592	416.531	422.980	432.458
China	170.265	290.681	299.823	305.089
Ukraine	153.998	237.047	239.424	240.428

\*Il 65% born in Italy

Source: Centro Studi and Ricerche IDOS. Elaborations on ISTAT, Ministry of the Interior and Miur data.

In 2019 foreign workers were 2,505,000 (1,411,000 men and 1,094,000 women), accounting for 10.7% of total employment, while 402,000 were unemployed. Most are employed in industry (28%) and in particular in construction (9.4%), in services (65.3%: particularly in personal services, 54.9%), and in agriculture (6.6%; and they account for 18% of total employment in the sector). Migrants have mainly short-term and low-skill jobs (despite the fact that many of them have a higher education qualification). As a result, “the average annual salary in 2019 of non-EU workers is 35% lower than that of the workers as a whole (14,287 euros compared to 21,927 euros)” (Caritas, 2020).

Despite their low value added, migrants contribute as much as 10% to the GDP. “Foreign taxpayers declared 27.4 billion in income, paying 13.9 billion in contributions and 3.5 billion in IRPEF (personal income tax). VAT paid by foreign nationals is estimated at 2.5 billion.” (Caritas, 2020). While the estimated cost of reception in 2017 was 4.4 billion euros.

Finally, the rate of acquisition of Italian citizenship has grown over time but slowing down in recent crisis years, standing at 24 per thousand of foreign residents, particularly 127,000 people in 2019, and more than 1 million since 2012.

### Migration in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development and its indicators

The Italian Government is actively participating in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>7</sup>. It was among the first to present **the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (SNSS)**, the Voluntary National Review<sup>8</sup>, at the United Nations High Level Policy Forum in 2017<sup>9</sup>. A review of the Strategy is scheduled for 2021.

<sup>7</sup> The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are a collection of 17 global goals set by the UN General Assembly in 2015 for the year 2030. They address the global challenges we face included those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace and justice. See <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.minambiente.it/pagina/la-strategia-nazionale-lo-sviluppo-sostenibile>

<sup>9</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/italy>



On the other hand, the Italian parliament and government have not signed the Global Compact on Migration (GCM), which represents a very important agreement to link the 2030 Agenda to the governance of migration in a multilateral system. However, there remains the commitment to achieve goal 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda in cooperating with partner countries to “make migration and mobility of people more disciplined, secure, regular and responsible, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”, as well as to meet the goals related to social and economic inclusion and international partnership, which also refer to refugees and migrants, explicitly or implicitly<sup>10</sup>.

The SNSS makes explicit the measures related to the relationship between SDGs and migration especially in the part related to partnership, where it identifies the area of intervention “Migration and Development” and the following objectives:

- foster the role of migrants as “actors of development”
- promote the professional and business skills of migrants in close connection with their countries of origin
- promote models of collaboration between Europe and Africa for the prevention and management of migrant flows through the strengthening of institutional capacities, creation of employment and economic opportunities, support for micro-entrepreneurship and infrastructural investments, especially in African countries.

As can be seen, this area of intervention concerns the external dimension of the Strategy, without entering into the question of regular migration routes, and little is written about the internal dimension in terms of reception and integration of migrants at social and economic level, protection of refugees and the most vulnerable groups, political participation and so on. Insufficiencies that need to be filled and to which this report intends to contribute.

In turn, **the ISTAT report** on sustainable development indicators does not offer a breakdown of data for the migrant item, except for a few measures. Relative to Objective 10.7 above, ISTAT uses five indicators that photograph some data on permits issued for non-EU citizens, share of long-term permits, new permits issued, acquisitions of citizenship, share of permits for political asylum and humanitarian reasons, recording some small variations from 2017 to 2018 such as the decrease in permits for asylum reasons, the growth of those for short-term work, an increasing share of women, and the stability of presences.

ISTAT recalls some contextual events that can have important repercussions on the indicators of the objectives, for example, with reference to the Covid-19 pandemic: “The most recent national scenario, –dominated by the health emergency due to the pandemic, with the lock down for the containment of Covid-19, is causing a generalized economic shock without historical precedent and is likely to have a negative impact on the labour market, household consumption and international migration” (ISTAT, 2020, p 175).

Another indicator is with respect to target 17.3.2 on migrants’ remittances to their countries of origin, which in 2019 saw a 2% reduction to around €6 billion (ISTAT, 2020, p. 265). While no indicator is used with respect to goal 10.c on “reducing, by 2030, to less than 3 percent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminating remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 percent.”

<sup>10</sup> For an analysis of the relationships linking the 2030 Agenda to migration issues see: <https://migrationdataportal.org/sdgs?no-de=0>

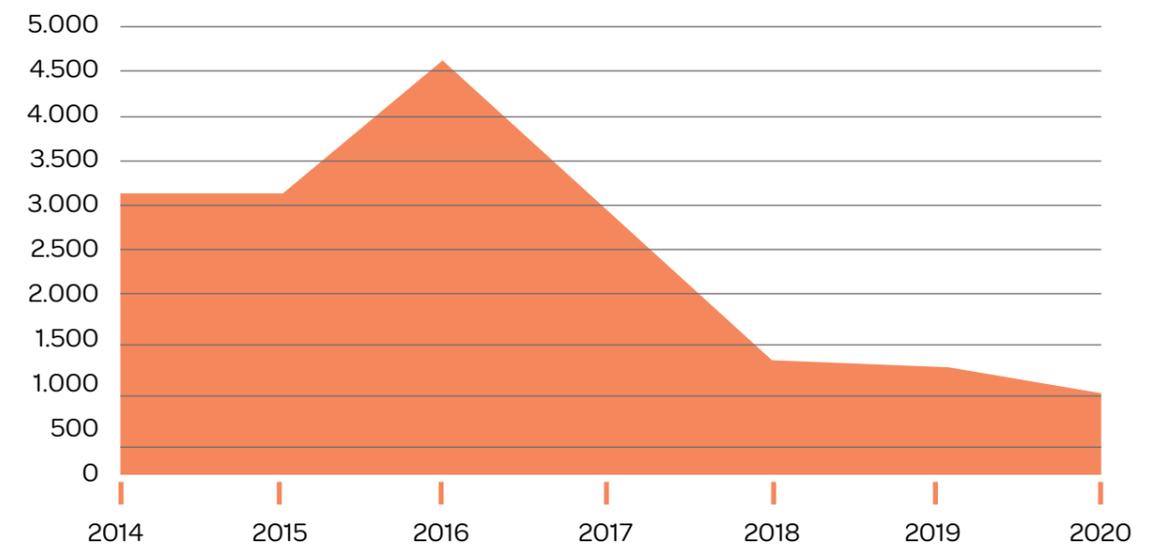
<sup>11</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/benessere-e-sostenibilit%C3%A0/obiettivi-di-sviluppo-sostenibile/gli-indicatori-istat>

<sup>12</sup> ISTAT, Rapporto SDGs 2020, pp.174, 179-182.



But most of all, a relevant indicator is missing that would be very important to use in the Italian case, looking at the Central Mediterranean migration route, related to target 10.7.3 on **the number of migrants who died while trying to cross sea, land or air borders**. In this regard, reference can be made to the data collected by IOM with the project “missingmigrants”<sup>13</sup>, according to which the migrants who died in the crossing of the Central Mediterranean were 17,301 from 2014 to 2020, a number obviously and tragically lower than the real figure that no one knows.

**Graphic 1.** - Migrants who died in the Central Mediterranean from 2014 to 2020.



Source: IOM, <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>

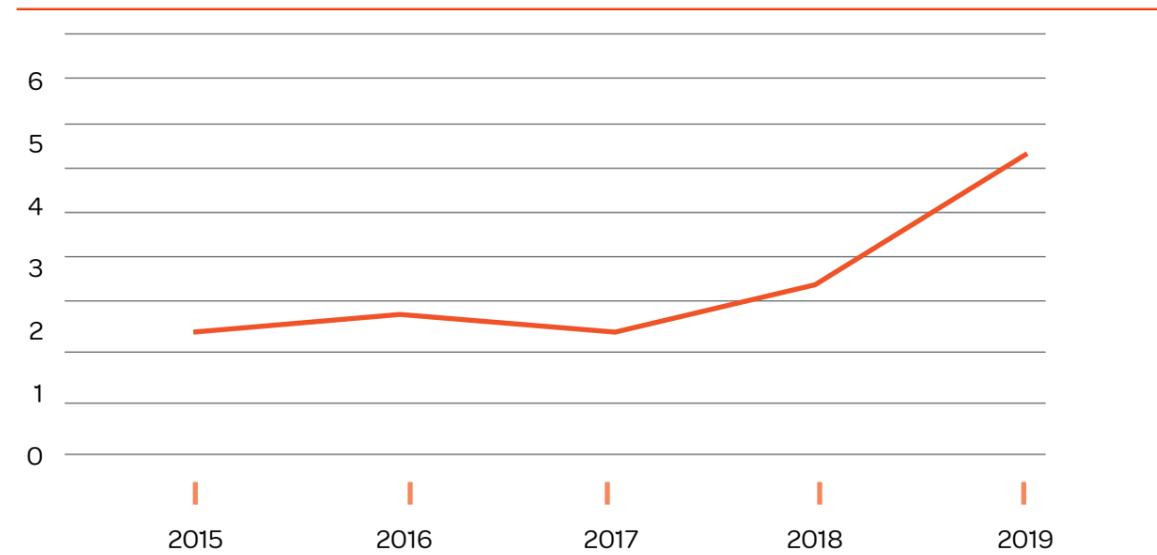
While in absolute numbers deaths have decreased since 2016 (graphic 1), they have instead increased in relative terms, in the ratio of deaths to attempted crossings, since 2017, increasing from 2% to 5% (graphic 2). As if to say that the agreement with Libya (signed in January 2017) has reduced the number but increased the risk of the migration route.

These tragic data are essential to situate the migration issue within the framework of sustainable development.

<sup>13</sup> <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean>



**Graphic 2.** - Mortality rate in crossings from 2015 to 2019



Source: IOM, <https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mortality-rates.pdf>

This report seeks to provide information to fill these informational gaps, as well as advance some policy evaluations. In this regard, it should be noted that UNDESA and IOM, at the request of the Inter-agency and the Expert Group on the UN SDGs indicators, has already carried out a first monitoring exercise that we report in the box below and that indicates how the Italian government needs to substantially improve the governance of migration.

**BOX 1 - A first assessment of indicator 10.7.2 on the number of countries with migration policies to facilitate a safe, orderly, regulated and responsible migration and mobility of persons. Italy sufficient but needs improvement<sup>14</sup>**

UNDESA with IOM has developed a set of indicators to measure objective 10.7 that includes six policy dimensions divided into 3 principles: 1. adherence to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights; 2. evidence-based policy formulation and whole-of-government approach; 3. involvement and commitment of partners to address migration issues; and in three objectives: 1. advancing the well-being of migrants in society; 2. effectively addressing the mobility of people in crisis situations; and 3. ensuring that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner. For each dimension, a "proxy" measure was identified that consists of a question answered with reference to 5 sub-categories that capture key aspects of policies. The composite indicator is an unweighted average of all 30 subcategories.

The analysis was applied to 111 countries including Italy, collecting responses from governments. In the case of our country, the assessment recorded: partial satisfaction with the policy dimensions of migrants' rights, the "whole of government" and evidence-based approach, cooperation and partnership, and the socio-economic well-being of migrants; while further improvement is required on mobility in crises and safe and orderly migration. In these last two dimensions the responses of the Italian government have been negative: the government stated that it does not have an emergency plan for displaced populations in terms of responding to basic needs such as food, education, health and access to drinking water; that it does not have specific measures to provide assistance to citizens residing abroad in countries in crisis or post-crisis situations; that it does not have a national strategy for disaster risk reduction with specific measures to respond to the impacts of displacement; that it does not have provision for the granting of temporary residence permits and temporary protection in the case of internationally forcibly displaced persons and for those who are unable to return. In general and synthetic terms, indicator 10.7.2 shows partial fulfilment of objective 10.7, in short, a satisfactory situation, but with ample room for improvement, especially in relation to safe and orderly mobility.

In addition to the goals, targets and indicators related to the 2030 Agenda, the implementation of the GCM can also be monitored (although Italy is not among the signatory countries). The GCM lists 23 goals with approximately 120 actions to be undertaken, but does not specify targets and indicators. Its monitoring is therefore less defined and binding. There is no monitoring of the GCM at the international level so far, and therefore this report (with those conducted in other countries thanks to the Faces of Migration project), represents a first attempt in this sense.

Currently underway is the review of the SNSS for 2021 that sees the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Forum for Sustainable Development facilitated by the Ministry of Environment (Ministry of Ecological Transition now). GCAP Italy with FOCSIV are contributing to the review and, thanks also to this report, present a series of recommendations to integrate a governance of migration based on the respect for human rights in the SNSS. Among these is the need to participate in the GCM, and to resolve ambiguities and contradictions in the framework of the plan on policy coherence being drafted by the Italian government with the technical assistance of the OECD.

<sup>14</sup> Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2019, SDG INDICATOR 10.7.2 Number of countries with migration policies to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, Policy Brief 1, October 2019.

## 2. SOCIAL INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS

In 2014, OECD's report outlined that Italy should implement its migrants' inclusion/integration system in order to improve their social and economic conditions in the country<sup>1</sup>. 6 years after the publication of the report, things have not changed yet.

The social inclusion of migrants within the social fabric of the host society is part of the goals of the **Agenda 2030**, especially to fight against social marginalization, to reduce the rate of migrants' poverty and to improve their access to national public services (welfare system, housing). Agenda 2030 contains specific goals in order to face these critical issues such as goal 1 (contrasting poverty and social exclusion by eliminating geographic differences within a given country), goals 3-4 (promoting quality health care to everyone and education) and goal 11 (sustainable cities and social protection). Although there is no evidence of references to migrants in these SDGs, links to migration, even if implicit, can be found within the categories of vulnerable persons in a given society.



Ph. Global Goals for Sustainable Development



The goals are reinforced by the **Global Compact on Migration** notably in the objectives 15 (provide access to basic services for migrants), 16 (Empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion), 17 (eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote evidence based public discourse to shape perception on migrants). They are strongly related to the importance of social integration and engagement of migrants within the host society. The Compact stresses the empowering of the migrants to become active members of society, and it indicates concrete actions to achieve the reduction of disparities and avoid discrimination behaviors. Main actions are focused on developing long-term policies for the social and economic integration of migrants, promoting mutual respect, traditions and customs of all the members of the community, working toward an inclusive labour market and promoting multi-cultural activities like sports, music and arts.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.oecd.org/migration/italy-needs-to-improve-immigrant-integration-in-society-and-work.htm>.

<sup>2</sup>Mattia, Giampaolo; Aurora, Ianni, Il Global Compact sulle Migrazioni: un'opportunità mondiale per una governance comune delle migrazioni, Background document n°5, Aprile 2020, p. 4.



In Italy, social inclusion is a broader issue: employment problems are surely a dominant effect of social exclusion of migrants (as well as for locals), the difficulty to access the national health care system, the education system, decent housing, as well as the general welfare system, are all potential factors of discrimination and exclusion. A great number of migrants, despite formally being employed in the labour market, lack access to many basic services. This is due to the discrimination of the labour market itself and, in many cases, to the poor local contexts which deprive migrants of access to those services. In addition, the inclusion is linked to the legal status of migrants within the host countries.

The problematic access to legal documents makes it hard to benefit from the welfare system.

**The National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD)** stresses the importance of social inclusion “in the framework of this strategy Italy should identify the national objectives in order to curb with poverty, particularly, economic, educative, and cultural poverty and the material, food and housing deprivation with a particular attention to those families and persons with grave social exclusion”<sup>3</sup>. Even though no reference is made to migrants, the document links the above-mentioned goals to migration especially in relation to the eradication of violence within the society: “the migratory flows are determining new social instances and they are directly linked to the necessity to monitor violence episodes against migrant communities on one side, and to the need to implement new integration policies in order to ensure social rights to migrants and asylum seekers”<sup>4</sup>.

The Italian NSSD sets a series of objectives to reach by 2030 on:

- Increment, at the national level, suitable social protection systems and security measures for all the individuals in the society, lower classes included, and reach a relevant coverage of the poor and vulnerable persons within 2030.
- by 2030, reinforce and promote social inclusion at all level regardless of age, gender, disability, race, ethnic group, origin, economic status or other.
- build an inclusive education system.
- Guarantee within 2030 to all students the right skills in terms of promotion of sustainable development throughout a sustainable life style, human rights education, gender equality and the spreading of a non-violent and peaceful culture which tend to educate to global citizenship, cultural diversity and the contribution that culture can offer to the SDGs.
- Improve access to health services and contribute to the extension of universal health coverage
- Limit risk factors and the impact of health emergencies: improve early warning and prevention mechanisms.
- Carry on a forceful action to relaunch public health functions and to support health reforms.
- Within 2030, empower an inclusive and sustainable urbanization and reinforce the capability to manage an inclusive and participative human settlement.
- Increment the number of cities or human settlements which adopt and put into practice integrated and inclusive policies.
- Guarantee, by 2030, the access to suitable, secure housing, basic services to everyone and a general requalification of poor areas.

<sup>3</sup> Strategia Nazionale per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile, Ministero dell’ambiente, e della tutela del territorio e del mare, 2017, pp. 24, see: [https://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio\\_immagini/Galletti/Comunicati/snsvs\\_ottobre2017.pdf](https://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio_immagini/Galletti/Comunicati/snsvs_ottobre2017.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Ivi, p. 76.



**ISTAT report on SDGs** outlines the importance of the migrants’ social inclusion which is particularly related to SDG 10 (reducing inequality)<sup>5</sup>. According to the report, extreme poverty in Italy accounts for 20% of the population and for 30% of the migrant population. They are one of the most vulnerable categories: the number of migrants in extreme poverty is about 1,500,000<sup>6</sup>. Despite the report’s focus on inequality, the document seems to lack sufficient analysis on migrants’ access to the health care system and integration within educational institutions.

Worsening a fragmented governance framework is the lack of data and monitoring, also coordinated at the European level, that can guide the analysis and policies for the inclusion and integration of minors with migrant backgrounds. In order to cope with this lack of information, this chapter aims to analyze indicators and data on social inclusion of migrants. In doing so, it will permit us to observe how migrants are included in our society and what Italy should do in order to have more inclusive policies to reach SDGs.

### Reception and integration of international protection holders

According to the Statistic Report on Migration (IDOS 2020), migrants’ integration within the social fabric of the host country is a double side (between migrants and host society) and difficult process, and it will be hardly reached if no active policies are put in place to promote a real social inclusion<sup>7</sup>, and if social attitudes and behaviors remain intolerant.

Particularly, after the migratory flows in 2015-16 and the mounting rhetoric of far rights and anti-migrant movements, racist and **discriminatory episodes** have increased, especially when it comes to migrant’s access to public benefits. According to ‘Words Are Stones’ report<sup>8</sup>, discriminatory episodes increased from 555 in 2015 to 1048 in 2017. The main topics of the hate speech in Italy were insecurity, criminalization of migration, fear of ethnic substitution, cultural and religious incompatibility with the host society. The main targets of this behavior were immigrants/refugees, Muslims, Roma, Jews and black people<sup>9</sup>.

The Ministry of the Interior, Department of Civil Freedoms and Migration, drawn the **National Plan for the Integration of International Protection Holders** (October 2017)<sup>10</sup>. The plan can be divided into two parts: duties for migrants and hosting communities. Among migrants’ duties are: learning the Italian language; sharing the constitutional fundamental values; compliance with the law; being part of economic, social and cultural life. As for the duties of the State: guaranteeing equality and dignity; freedom of worship; access to education and training; facilitating the social inclusion and respect of non-negotiable social values.

<sup>5</sup> Here ISTAT report: [https://www.istat.it/it/files//2020/05/SDGs\\_2020.pdf](https://www.istat.it/it/files//2020/05/SDGs_2020.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.istat.it/storage/rapporti-tematici/sdgs/2020/goal1.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> IDOS, 2020, p. 179.

<sup>8</sup> Words are stones, Analisi dell’hate speech pubblico nel discorso pubblico in sei paesi europei, International Report, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Ivi, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> An Italian version of the document here: [https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/slides\\_primo\\_piano\\_nazionale\\_integrazione.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/slides_primo_piano_nazionale_integrazione.pdf)



### BOX 1. The scaling down of the reception system

By Fabrizio Coresi and Cristiano Maugeri, Action Aid, member GCAP Italy

The report “The system at a crossroads - Centres of Italy 2020” reveals the dismantling of the migrants’ widespread reception system in Extraordinary Reception Centres (CAS in Italian), from the North to the South of the country. The analysis only confirms the trends that had already emerged in the previous study “The security of exclusion - Centres of Italy 2019”: deserted calls for tenders for widespread reception and the incentives, offered by the tender specifications, to large centres and large managerial groups.

The trends detected in 2019 and then confirmed in 2020, are attributable to the Security Decree signed the first Conte Government with Minister of the Interior Salvini, which has aggravated the structural criticalities of the reception system and caused, with the abolition of humanitarian protection and the exclusion of asylum seekers from SIPROIMI<sup>11</sup>, a further contraction of rights. The Security Decree has also favored large centres’ managers to the detriment of small social entities with consolidated expertise.

From the analysis of the amounts tendered by the prefectures for the various types of CAS (classified as: housing units, up to 50 places and up to 300 places), it can be seen that in the centre-north there has been an attempt to maintain a model of widespread reception. The administrative and managerial problems caused by the Security Decree and the tender specifications have led, at the national level, 34 prefectures to launch further calls for accommodation in the last two years (about one third of the total, but there could be many more prefectures facing problems that have decided not to launch other tenders to find places). In the south of Italy, on the other hand, there is still a tendency to favor large collective centres.

At a time of health emergency, however, the critical nature of large facilities emerged forcefully. Despite the propaganda about migrants carrying the virus being completely unfounded, in border regions such as Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Sicily, extensive use was made of governmental centres to concentrate incoming migrants, without managing to redistribute them throughout the country within a reasonable timeframe. This also amplified the risk of contagion. A situation that has produced social tensions at the local level, overflowing centres and practices that violate the rights of the people hosted.

In Sicily before the Security Decree - as shown also in “Calls, managers and costs of reception of asylum seekers and refugees - Centres of Italy 2018”. - the system was already characterized by the model of large collective centres. Mostly located in isolated areas, since the end of 2018 without integration services, CASs have been reduced to simple dormitories, thus exposing even more migrant people to the risk of becoming labour force for caporalato.

In Friuli-Venezia Giulia, where a model of widespread reception had been affirmed, the third sector opposed the new specifications and deserted the prefectures’ notices, which for 59.27% offered places in housing units trying to preserve a system of widespread micro-reception. The situation in Trieste is emblematic, where the prefecture assigned 10 places out of the 1,000 available.

<sup>11</sup> SIPROIMI (system for holders of international protection and unaccompanied foreign minors) was the new name that the Security Decree gave to the previous reception system SPRAR (protection system for asylum seekers and refugees).



On October 5, 2020, the government passed the Immigration Decree: an undeniable step forward, although it still presents some critical points. Among the improvements, the effort to redirect the reception system towards the model of public ownership in widespread micro-housing should be counted. However, only by profoundly changing the specifications - which define costs and services to be provided - will we be able to speak of real reform. However, once the new directives are in place, it will be necessary to set up mechanisms to monitor the system. The usability of data, which we have been claiming for a long time with Openpolis, and the respect of the obligation to publish the annual report on the reception system (required by law in June of each year, a deadline never respected), are key aspects to design functional policies and effective reforms, as well as to allow Parliament and civil society to exercise their proper role.

Despite the “good intentions” of the plan, the Security Decrees and Law 132/2018 “Immigration, Security and International Protection” have worsened the reception system (see Box 1)<sup>12</sup>. The Italian system, prior to this law, established a multilevel governance of reception: a first phase of reception in government facilities, affected by the hotspot approach<sup>13</sup>, in which the person carried out the operations necessary to define his legal position as an asylum seeker<sup>14</sup>. If the places in these centres were not available, temporary structures, the Extraordinary Reception Centers (CAS), could be set up for the time strictly necessary to transfer them to ordinary centers. In these centers the migrant had to wait for the evaluation of the asylum request by the Territorial Commission<sup>15</sup>.

The function of second reception was ensured within the system of widespread and integrated micro-accommodation, publicly owned by the municipalities, called SPRAR (protection system for asylum seekers and refugees). The asylum seeker could access it immediately after formalizing his request for protection. Also in this case, in the absence of available places in the ordinary SPRAR structures, the activation of temporary centers CAS was foreseen, with the consequent de facto creation of two parallel reception systems: one identified by law as ordinary, with high standards but residual, and one temporary and emergency, without standards, less transparent, but in fact the main one since it hosted (and hosts) most of the applicants and holders of protection on a national scale.

With the Security Decrees, a set of unprecedented and discriminatory regulations reconfigured the Italian asylum system and lowered standards of protection, violating the right to asylum of people on the move (see Box 2). In particular, the abolition of Humanitarian Protection - the form of protection most often granted for reasons related to political conditions in the country of origin - meant that 61,600 asylum seekers were denied any kind of protection between October 2018 and October 2020 alone<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> IDOS, 2020, p.182.

<sup>13</sup> For a brief explanation of hotspots see: Hotspot immigrazione: cosa sono i centri di prima accoglienza (theitaliantimes.it)

<sup>14</sup> The identification, if not yet completed, the verbalization of the application, the initiation of the procedure for the examination of the same and the assessment of health conditions, also aimed at identifying any situations of vulnerability to be treated with specific and targeted measures.

<sup>15</sup> The Territorial Commissions for the Recognition of International Protection are the administrative bodies responsible for evaluating asylum applications in the first instance; they are under the Ministry of the Interior. For further information see: <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/italy/asylum-procedure/general/number-staff-and-nature-first-instance-authority>.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Attualita/Notizie/Pagine/Diritto-Asilo,-il-Report-2020-della-Fondazione-Migrantes-.aspx>



Compared to the previous law, the Security Decrees configured the CASs not as temporary facilities but as an obligatory passage for asylum seekers who were therefore excluded from the publicly-owned system in charge of municipalities that became, with the same measure, the SIPROIMI (system for holders of international protection and unaccompanied foreign minors) to replace SPRAR. This measure, in combination with the new outline of specifications for the management of governmental and extraordinary centers, had the demerit of economizing by eliminating the services for integration (provided in the previous outline of specifications) and forcing migrants inside the reception structure (in some cases, for more than a year) without any possibility of attending any activity that would have allowed them a concrete start to autonomy in Italy<sup>17</sup>.

After the fall of the government, in August 2019, and many pressures from civil society organizations<sup>18</sup>, on 5th October 2020 the new Italian government enacted a new migration decree which, despite the fact that it still presents important criticalities, in part restores the old structure of reception, reintroducing the possibility for asylum seekers to access the public system in charge of municipalities, now called SAI (Reception and Integration System), as well as minimum services also provided within the CAS (Italian courses, vocational training and cultural mediation).

## BOX 2. Territorial Commissions and the right to asylum

Rossella Fadda, Young activist of FOCSIV<sup>19</sup>

Three issues emerged as central to the right to asylum: credibility, the culture of suspicion, and the circulation of stories. Simply put, for many asylum seekers narrating asylum stories becomes a performative act to convince authorities that they are trustworthy, credible and deserving protection. Insecurity, distrust and uncertainty are feelings often linked to the circulation of stories among asylum seekers that contribute to build a negative imaginary of the Territorial Commission (TC). Being fueled by fear, these stories depict a context where asylum seekers must be very careful with the personal information they tell to authorities due to the harsh scrutiny of law enforcement bodies.

As a form of 'informal knowledge' on asylum procedures produced by and shared among claimants, these stories are often counterproductive on claims' assessment. Being aware of the well-rooted 'culture of disbelief and suspicion' among institutions, some individuals believe that 'borrowing' asylum narratives that are considered more 'powerful' than others, which were already granted legal status, will increase their chances for a positive outcome. In fact, the result is often opposite because such deceptive strategy leads to the creation of 'standard claims' which reinforce a negative decision-making environment. Although some purposely lie at the TC's interview, in many instances this must be seen as a copying strategy for being recognized as a refugee in spite of officials' cultural discriminatory biases.

Information shared among applicants' communities on first-instance refugee status determination (RSD) interview may be misleading or incorrect, thereby shedding light on the importance of providing legal support consistently.

<sup>17</sup> For an analysis of the security and reception decrees in Italy: <https://www.openpolis.it/esercizi/la-stretta-del-decreto-sicurezza-al-sistema-di-accoglienza/>; here an English language version: <https://www.smartdualcitizenship.com/blog/what-does-the-decreto-sicurezza-say-exactly/>

<sup>18</sup> Here an open letter from the Campaign 'Io Accolgo' for the abrogation of the law: [https://ioaccolgo.it/appello\\_governo.pdf](https://ioaccolgo.it/appello_governo.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> This article is based on MA research project (November 2018-March 2019) and MA Dissertation "Narrating Experiences of (In)Security at Asylum-seeking Procedures. An ethnographic qualitative case study on claiming asylum in Italy". As an intern at Oxfam Italia Intercultura NGO, Rossella Fadda carried out fieldwork at the CAS (Center for extraordinary receptions) in Siena where she conducted narrative interviews with asylum seekers, mostly of Nigerian origins, and informal conversations with NGO's legal advisors, caseworkers and project managers.



In particular, the interview preparation by legal advisors is an important practice in facilitating access to RSD procedures because it actually provides appropriate guidelines for claimants to navigate such a context. This practice represents an empowering and useful process for applicants. These confidential preparations provide an opportunity for asylum seekers to go through the hardships they have experienced in a safe space with people they trust, which eases their fear of making 'mistakes' during the interview. As one participant explained during an interview: "I just have to think, to gather myself... to know what I am going to say, I should not go and make mistakes, some things...for me it was [...] not easy the first time to tell someone my story...". Legal advisors are key in equipping asylum seekers with appropriate information and suggesting strategies to cope with the distrust, cultural assumptions, and subjective perceptions of authorities. However, as an additional effect of the 'Security decrees', services and personnel working hours have been drastically reduced in reception centers, so receiving appropriate legal support was no longer an option for many asylum seekers.

The politicization of migration has not to do merely with political agendas and rhetoric at the macro-level, but it has a great impact on people on the move at the micro-level. The so-called 'Security decrees' have impacted the everyday life and social inclusion of women and men seeking asylum in Italy with short-term consequences.

Yet, as of 18 December 2020 a new "Immigration Decree" (law 130/2020) was approved. The new law reforms the 'Security decrees' and it broadens the access to the recognition of international/national protection and to reception centres for people claiming asylum in Italy. Although it surely signals a turn from the previous political orientation on asylum, search and rescue (SAR) operations, the reception system, residence permits and citizenship, there are concerns that actual changes might be limited. Nevertheless, an important move towards a fairer normative framework on (im)migration and the re-establishment of the asylum right has been done.



## Education

As outlined in the introduction, **SDG 4 (high quality of education)** is one of the core goal of 2030 Agenda. The above-mentioned National Plan for the Integration of International Protection Holders<sup>20</sup> indicates the education access for all the migrants to the reception centers: making the attendance to the Italian language courses mandatory within the reception structures, and promoting the participation to professional courses in order to implement useful skills for labor integration.

According to the figures reported in IDOS<sup>21</sup>, in 2018, 22,347 migrants within SPRAR/SIPROIMI attended language courses; among them 15.3% took part in pre-literacy courses, 39% beginner level, 26.4% intermediate level and 12.3% an advanced course. Among minors in reception centres, about 2,458 were attending the class according to their age, and this means that the integration and the language learning are facilitated, becoming a bridge between host community and their families<sup>22</sup>. Box 3 illustrates inclusion issues of non-accompanied minors who are one of the most vulnerable subjects

### BOX 3. State of the art on the inclusion of unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy a Save the Children, member of GCAP Italy

As of December 31, 2020, the total number of unaccompanied foreign minors (MSNA) arriving by sea<sup>23</sup> in Italy amounted to 4,623<sup>24</sup>, more than double the number recorded in 2019 (1,680), representing 13.5% of the total arrivals by sea in 2020. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, as of November 30, 2020 (latest data available), there were 6,601<sup>25</sup> unaccompanied minors present in reception facilities, of which 6,362 were male (96.4%) and 239 were female (3.6%), a decrease compared to 2018 when there were 10,787. Among the minors in the facilities, 88.1% are between 16 and 17 years old, a percentage that increases with age (they were 83.7% in 2017). The main nationalities are Bangladesh (21.5%, up from previous years), Albania (15.6%), Tunisia (12.3%), Egypt (10%) and Pakistan (8.6%), while the near disappearance of minors arriving from sub-Saharan Africa is confirmed, testifying to the blockage of landings from Libya. To these numbers should be added those of minors who have left the reception facilities and are therefore untraceable: 2,081 at the end of November 2020 and 5,383 in 2019.

Law No. 47 of April 7, 2017, "Provisions on measures for the protection of unaccompanied foreign minors"<sup>26</sup>, promoted in a first formulation<sup>27</sup> by several organizations<sup>28</sup> committed to the defense of the rights of minors, is the last stage of a long process of regulatory changes aimed at addressing the shortcomings of the system of protection of unaccompanied minors, as well as the first attempt in Europe to create an organic system of protection of those who, as minors, migrate without adult reference figures<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> National plan, op. cit. pp. 8-9.

<sup>21</sup> IDOS, op. cit. p. 183.

<sup>22</sup> IDOS, op. cit. p. 183.

<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that, to date, no official surveys are available that provide data relating to crossings by land.

<sup>24</sup> Ministry of the Interior, Daily Statistical Dashboard, available at [http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto\\_statistico\\_giornaliero\\_31-12-2020.pdf](http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_31-12-2020.pdf), data as of December 28, 2020.

<sup>25</sup> General Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies. Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Monthly report of unaccompanied foreign minors (MSNA) in Italy. Last monthly report available: November 2020.

<sup>26</sup> Law No. 47 of April 7, 2017, Provisions on measures for the protection and reception of unaccompanied foreign minors accompanied, available at the link <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/04/21/17G00062/sg>

<sup>27</sup> Bill C 1658. Amendments to the Consolidated Text of Legislative Decree No 286 of 25 July 1998, and other provisions concerning provisions concerning measures for the protection of unaccompanied foreign minors, available at [https://www.camera.it/\\_dati/leg17/lavori/stampati/pdf/17PDL0014820.pdf](https://www.camera.it/_dati/leg17/lavori/stampati/pdf/17PDL0014820.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Save the Children, Action Aid, Ai.Bi., Amnesty International, ASGI, Caritas Italiana, Centro Astalli, C.I.R., CNCA, Emergency, OIM, Terre des Hommes, UNHCR and UNICEF.

<sup>29</sup> Europartners, 2019, Minori Stranieri Non Accompagnati. Analisi del fenomeno in Italia e sentiment dei social media, p. 2, disponibile al link <http://www.europartnersnetwork.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/WP-MSNA.pdf>



In the last two years, however, the so-called Security Decrees have undermined the principle of the best interests of the child, as well as the absolute prohibition of refoulement of unaccompanied foreign minors, as codified by Law 47/2017<sup>30</sup>.

At the end of 2020, the approval of the Immigration Decree brought about a series of profound revisions to the Security Decrees that made it possible to address the difficulties in inclusion pathways arising from the lack of civil registration, and the impact of restrictive rules on the situation of newborns. The new norms include important improvements for reception: the "System for Reception and Integration" (SAI) is renamed and strengthened, allowing again to receive asylum seekers, including families with children, otherwise destined to spend the first months of their stay in Italy in CAS and other large centers, with the impossibility of adequately taking care of the needs of minors. The decree provides for the reception of newborns in the system, in administrative continuation ordered by the Juvenile Court pursuant to Article 13 of Law 47/2017 (continuity of care until the age of 21) - a possibility, this one, so far uncertain due to an unclear practice. It is also worth noting the reintroduction of the silence-assent in case of silence from the Public Administration on the opinion on the integration for the purposes of the conversion of the permit for minor age into a permit for work, study or waiting for employment, provided for by Law 47/2017, the priority of the examination of international protection presented by vulnerable persons and in particular of unaccompanied minors, and the exemption of the latter from the accelerated procedures for the evaluation of the application. There has also been an expansion of the definition of "special protection", now linked to the prohibition of expulsion and refoulement in case of risks of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment, and recognizable when the removal would violate the right to respect private and family life, taking into account the presence of family ties in Italy. This provision can have important positive consequences on families and newborns who have applied for asylum but do not fall under the hypothesis of international protection. The issuance of the permit for medical treatment is no longer foreseen for "particularly serious health conditions" but for "serious psycho-physical conditions or conditions resulting from serious diseases", a formulation that more clearly includes the psychological condition - an important new element, among others, for newborn applicants for protection who report trauma due to what they suffered during the journey without having the prerequisites for international or special protection, who have suffered the effects of the cancellation of the humanitarian permit. It is also provided that this permit can be converted into a work permit. Finally, it is recognized the possibility for parents who have received a residence permit for "child care" pursuant to art. 31 TU to obtain a work permit when the conditions are met.

Some important issues remain, such as<sup>31</sup>: the greater enhancement of the possibilities opened by L.47/17 with respect to the different legal statuses that affect the vulnerabilities of MSNAs; obtaining citizenship for the social and civil participation of minors with migration background; the widespread presence of socio-legal guidance services to support minors; the need to improve access to education, health and decent housing systems.

Finally, among MSNs newly arrived in Italy there are increasing cases of psychological fragility, vulnerability and even mental illness, often related to pre- and/or migration experiences. Aspects related to socio-psychological and emotional wellbeing should be given greater attention, starting with schools, where such services are scarcely present. Student well-being could also be enhanced starting with the establishment of an integrative and inclusive climate in classrooms, as well as combatting episodes of discrimination, bullying, and marginalization that can emerge in educational and extracurricular environments.

<sup>30</sup> Save the Children, Superando le Barriere, 2020, <https://www.savethechildren.it/cosa-facciamo/pubblicazioni/superando-le-barriere>

<sup>31</sup> Save the Children, Integration Mapping of refugee and Migrant children in School and Other Experiential Environments in Europe, 2020, <https://www.savethechildren.it/cosa-facciamo/pubblicazioni/immerse-ricerca-indicatori-inclusione>

Within **the school system**, students with migratory background are about 857,729 accounting for one tenth of the whole student population in Italy<sup>32</sup>. By dividing them by nationality, we can see four main countries represented: Romania (18.4%), Albania (13.5%), Morocco (12.2%) and China (6.4%), other countries as Egypt, Philippines, Moldavia and India account for about 3% of the whole migrant students' population. As for the geographical presence, more than a half of them are in northern Italy, about 20% in the central regions, 8% in the south and about 3% in the Islands (Sicily and Sardinia)<sup>33</sup>. The highest rate of students with migratory background, according to figures reported in IDOS<sup>34</sup>, is in the primary school with 36.5%, while in the middle and secondary schools they are about 21% and 23% respectively. Many of them are second generations of migrants (they are about 65% of all migrant students and are well integrated within the class).

Critical points in terms of inclusion remain. According to Open Polis<sup>35</sup>, more than a half of students with migratory background in the secondary school have one-year delay in comparison to Italian students, with a high rate of school drop-out (in Italy the rate is 37.6%). This is due to the wrong choice at the moment of the shift from middle-school and secondary one, especially due to either the lack of a good orientation by the schools, or the incapability of the parents -very often due to the lack of relationship between school institutions and migrant families- to support their son/daughter in the choice, and this could be a direct effect of migrants' exclusion from the social fabric as well as of their low economic conditions<sup>37</sup>.

In addition, it is worth noting that students with migratory background tends to prefer professional institutes or technical ones rather than address high schools which lead to a university education once completed the secondary school. According to the figures of the Education Ministry, students with migratory background that choose professional or technician institutes are about 67%, while only 33% choose classical or scientific schools in order to continue their path at Italian universities<sup>38</sup>. These figures may demonstrate that migrant students are compelled to join the labor market as soon as possible, and thus have fewer opportunities to improve their social mobility.

Indeed, the canalization<sup>39</sup> of the students with migratory background is one of the main discriminations. Many middle schools, at the transitional moment from middle to secondary school, suggest to migrant students to choose a 'low level school' in order to avoid learning problems which may occur if they go to a Lyceum or other high schools. Such process -that is not automatic- created in some cases ghettoization in schools with a high number of migrant students, which represents another face of discrimination.

With respect to access to education, the legal status of minors and their age upon arrival in Italy influence their access to school and their results: for example, the vast majority of MSNAs attend provincial adult education centers, rather than ordinary schools. The schooling of students with migrant backgrounds should instead be supported by combating stereotypes and discrimination that drive the phenomena of orientation and ghettoization and by facilitating integration paths, starting with greater support for learning the Italian language and the presence of tutors and cultural mediators in public schools.

<sup>32</sup> IDOS, op. cit., pp 219-20

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Son or daughter of migrant parents or mixed couples.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.openpolis.it/i-minori-stranieri-nelle-scuole-italiane-tra-disuguaglianze-e-diritto-allinclusione/>

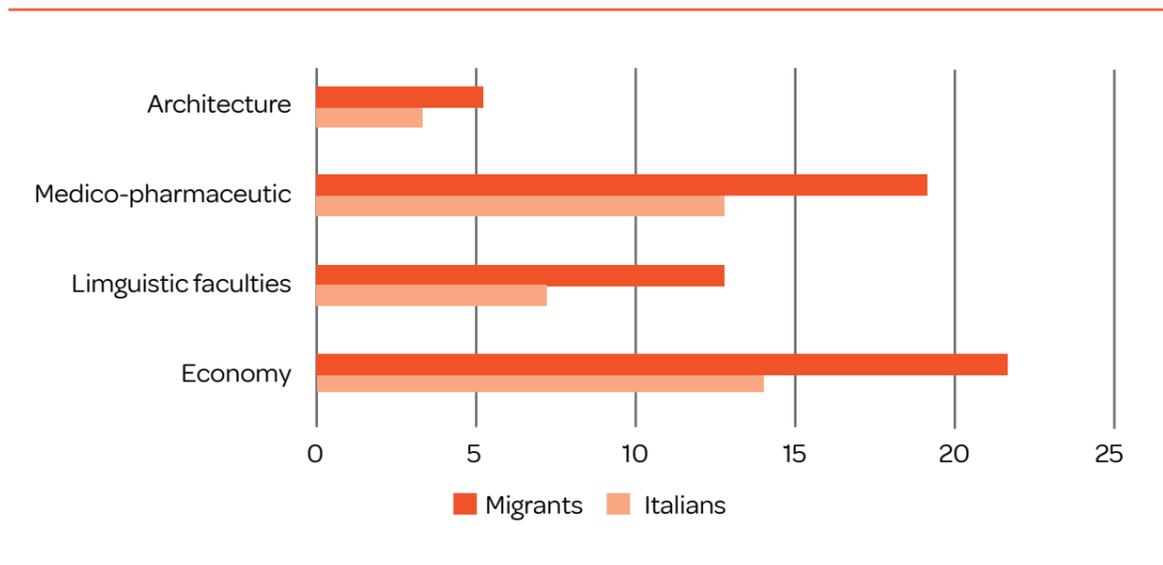
<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> [https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/2447435/Notiziario+Alunni+con+Cittadinanza+non+italiana+A.S.+2018\\_2019.pdf/ad84f9fc-efe5-46bd-2aa4-091b81727197?version=1.0&t=1593701066178](https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/2447435/Notiziario+Alunni+con+Cittadinanza+non+italiana+A.S.+2018_2019.pdf/ad84f9fc-efe5-46bd-2aa4-091b81727197?version=1.0&t=1593701066178)

<sup>39</sup> According to the literature the canalization in the school is the process that tend to include students with a migratory background within established school -very often the so considered low level schools as professional or technic institute. For a first approach on the issue: [https://www.collettiva.it/rassegna/2017/02/24/news/figli\\_di\\_immigrati\\_se\\_il\\_sistema\\_non\\_sa\\_trattare\\_le\\_diversita\\_-475546/](https://www.collettiva.it/rassegna/2017/02/24/news/figli_di_immigrati_se_il_sistema_non_sa_trattare_le_diversita_-475546/)

As for **universities**, according to IDOS report, between 2003-04 and 2019-20 the number of students with a migratory background in the Italian universities increased from 2.7% to 5.4%<sup>40</sup>. Within this figure, in 2020, migrant students are about 16,000 and among them 57% are girls. Graph 1 shows how enrollment growth is greater for young people with immigrant backgrounds than for Italians, and the main fields of study are economics (+21.7%, +14% Italians), language faculties (+10.7%, +7.2% Italians), medical-pharmaceuticals (+12.8%, +10.2% Italians) and architecture (+5.3%, +3.3% Italians). As for nationalities, more than 50% are European students (25.5% communitarian and 24.8% extra EU), while, among non-Europeans, 21.7% are from Asia, 17.1% from Africa and 10.7 Americans. Even in this case, migrant students tend to choose professional faculties and this may be explained on one side by the strong willingness to join the labor market and, on the other, to have a high skill profession as a sort of social revenge, towards the host country, and an 'example' for the household in the country of origin<sup>41</sup>.

**Graphic 1** - Increase of students with migratory background compared to Italian students in the universities (%)



Source: IDOS, 2020.

<sup>40</sup> IDOS, op.cit, pp.224-6.

<sup>48</sup> [https://www.ismu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Guida\\_Scuola-e-famiglie-immigrate\\_.pdf](https://www.ismu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Guida_Scuola-e-famiglie-immigrate_.pdf)



### Housing

As for **housing**, the 2030 Agenda and notably objective 11, as well as the above-mentioned NSSD, put at the top priorities the right to a house. According to data and remaining focused, for now, on the reception system in Italy, in 2018 about 4,500 migrants were hosted in houses within the SPRAR/SIPROIMI system. However, very often the lack of a job and the precarious economic conditions of migrants aliment the diffidence among home owners. In this context, civil society organizations took on initiatives in order to curb the housing issue, for example: Refugees Welcome Italy supports the inclusion of refugees in Italian families, while the project Carry On<sup>42</sup> (a partnership among 7 CSOs in Rome) offers first hospitality for those migrants who remained out from the reception system.

Generally, the lack of regular and stable job prevents migrants to get a house and forces them to live in very precarious conditions. The house market in Italy may be divided temporally into 3 phases: 2004-07, 2007-14 and 2014-19<sup>43</sup>. In the first phase, the pre-crisis period, migrants were facilitated to obtain credit from the banks and had a more stable job (though the labor market was restricted within given sectors), and the house market increased between 12% and 17% (on the total of bought houses in Italy). The second period is that of the declining of the house market due to the economic crisis and the increasing rate of unemployment. From this period on (third phase) the house market increased again, especially among those who had been living in Italy for at least 10 years, with a total expense of 20,5 billion euros and 232,000 houses bought by migrants. The nationalities involved in this last phase are for more than a half migrants from Eastern Europe, followed by Asians (India and Pakistan) and then Chinese (more than 70% of these individuals live in the north of Italy). However, as IDOS reported, Covid-19 crisis is negatively influencing the housing market for migrants, and this will affect also their social inclusion.

Indeed, a great number of migrants who bought a house in these last years were completing their path to the full integration within the host society. IDOS reports that the majority of them abandoned, often, poor neighborhoods for better suburbs in the cities, were more Italians used to live.

Policies of the Italian central government and particularly the regional legislations present some obstacles to migrants in terms of access to council houses. Most regions enacted a law according to which a certification must be shown, confirming that the applicant does not own any house in Italy nor in any other part of the world. As underlined in ASGI<sup>44</sup>, this request is discriminatory, because for Italians an autocertification is sufficient, while migrants should present an official statement from their government of origin that only some countries in the world are able to issue<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> Here the project: <https://www.asinitas.org/carry-on-e-crossing/>.

<sup>43</sup> IDOS, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>44</sup> Association for Juridical Studies on Migration.

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.asgi.it/banca-dati/messaggio-dellinps-dell3-dicembre-2019-n-4516/>

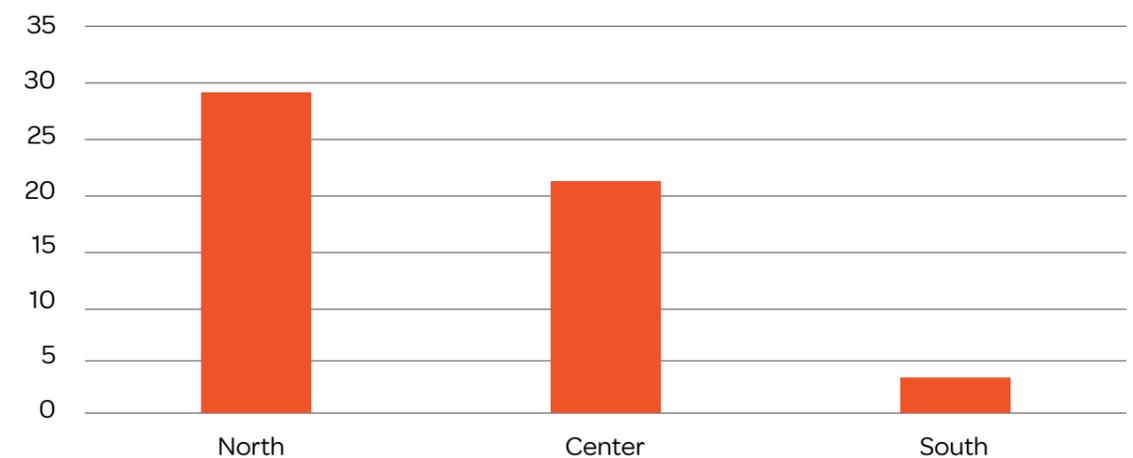


### Poverty and inequalities

As we will see also in chapter 3, migrants represent the weak part of the society in terms of **social and economic conditions**. In this respect, SDG 1 (eradicating poverty) and SDG 10 (eliminate inequalities) are the main reference in order to have a clear path to walk through. Objectives 1.3 and 1b aim to build efficient social protection tools in order to protect poor and vulnerable people, and to create development strategies to enable rapid investments in actions against poverty. Furthermore, objective 10, and more in particular objectives 10.1 and 10.3, aim respectively to reach within 2030 the income growth of 40% of the population in extreme poverty to a higher income on the national average, and to ensure equal opportunities and reducing inequalities by eliminating all discriminatory policies and laws<sup>46</sup>. Looking at the figures published by ISTAT<sup>48</sup>, in 2019 migrants account for 26.9% (1,400,000) of the poor in Italy, particularly families of migrants with a minor which represent about 31.2% against 6.3% of Italian families. These figures, as ISMU<sup>49</sup> outlined, do not take into consideration all those migrants who are in Italy irregularly and, as we will see in chapter 3, they are often employed without any contract in various sectors of the labor market, such as agriculture.

As displayed in the NSSD, poverty reduction is one of the first priorities of the Italian government. In 2018 the Italian government introduced the Inclusion Income (Reddito di inclusione, REI) in order to face extreme poverty in the country. This is a two-element measure: one consists in providing a monthly amount of money and a second one provides a set of professional training in order to join the labor market. However, in the first period, after the law entered into force, the law itself excluded all those migrants who had temporally working permits including only those who had a long-term permit. After the mobilization of civil society organization, Bergamo Court decided that the measure had to be extended to all migrants regardless their legal status. According to the figures, migrants are only a little part of the beneficiaries of this measure and account for 11% of the total (29% in the north of Italy, 21% in the centre, 3% in the south).

**Graphic 2.** - Migrants beneficiaries of inclusion income (%)



Source: IDOS, 2020.

<sup>46</sup> <https://unric.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/11/Agenda-2030-Onu-italia.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> [https://www.redattosociale.it/article/notiziario/migranti\\_il\\_coronavirus\\_ha\\_reso\\_ancora\\_piu\\_povere\\_le\\_famiglie\\_straniere](https://www.redattosociale.it/article/notiziario/migranti_il_coronavirus_ha_reso_ancora_piu_povere_le_famiglie_straniere).

<sup>49</sup> Initiative and Studies on multi-Ethnicity Foundation: <https://www.ismu.org/ismu-e/>.



These figures, even though migrants account for low numbers, are a direct effect of the distribution of migrants within the labor market (see chapter 3). Indeed, migrants in Italy tend to have better job conditions in northern regions, where they often work in industries where controls are more frequent, and so they can 'enjoy' regular contracts with only few cases of 'black work'. On the contrary, in southern regions, where the main job opportunities are within the agricultural sector, irregular jobs and the lack of contracts are more usual. This has an effect on the access to social benefits from the State or the public institutions and prevent migrants, especially in the last period of the pandemic, from having government subsidies.

Furthermore, in 2019, the Italian government launched a new measure to contrast poverty in the country: **The Citizenship Income** (Reddito di Cittadinanza, RdC). The RdC substituted the above-mentioned REI and it was structured in line with the old measure but with a higher income for families that cannot, in any case, exceed 9,360 euros per year (780 euros per month) except in the case of a family composition with several minors and persons with disabilities. However, given the hostility of the government towards migration, the new law, as the previous in the first stance, excluded a prominent part of migrants. The RdC can be requested only by those migrants who had long-term permit (at least 10 years in Italy). This is confirmed by INPS<sup>50</sup> in its report<sup>51</sup>, according to which only 6% of migrants (migrants account for more than 27% of extreme poverty in Italy) had access to this measure.

The same **discriminatory mechanism** is re-produced within the social protection system wherein many migrants are excluded due to their legal status and to the length of the permit. According to the figures reported in IDOS<sup>52</sup>, migrants who had access to ordinary unemployed subsidies were 12.5% of the total, of those most of them are men (96%) and are from Albania (34.1%), Morocco (14.6%) and Egypt (4.8%). As for the extraordinary unemployed subsidies, only 2.2% have been given to non-communitarian migrants with Moroccans at the top of 'chart'. As for **pensions**, migrants account for only 0.4% of the total retirees with a majority among women (65%). Given the 'young presence' of migrants in Italy, pensions are still low but we are witnessing an increasing trend of 12% in 2019. Furthermore, the pension pay slip for migrants is about, on average, half of that received by Italians (15,000 euros per year against 7,000 euros for migrants).

#### BOX 4. From reception to integration

Rita Urbano coordinator of CasaScalabrini634, ASCS program

One of the critical aspects of the reception system and the integration process is the difficulty in achieving effective autonomy at the end of the reception process in the ministerial centres. This autonomy concerns four different aspects: working autonomy; economic autonomy; housing autonomy; relational autonomy.

Very often, at the time of leaving the ministerial centre, CAS or SPRAR (now SAI), the work path is just beginning: most of the time, due to the pre-set timeframe, migrants have only had the opportunity to undertake a first path to work with training courses and internships of a few months; this does not allow them to have enough stability to make long-term plans.

<sup>50</sup> Italian National Institute for Prevention.

<sup>51</sup> [https://www.inps.it/docallegatiNP/Mig/Dati\\_analisi\\_bilanci/Osservatori\\_statistici/Osservatorio\\_REI/Report\\_trimestrale\\_Rel-RdC\\_Aprile-Dicembre\\_2019.pdf](https://www.inps.it/docallegatiNP/Mig/Dati_analisi_bilanci/Osservatori_statistici/Osservatorio_REI/Report_trimestrale_Rel-RdC_Aprile-Dicembre_2019.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> IDOS, op. cit., p. 277.



Economic autonomy is also closely linked to this first aspect: the short period of employment prevents beneficiaries, and even more so family units, from setting aside savings and therefore having certain economic resources to rely on.

In most cases, the precarious work and economic situation makes it difficult to continue one's life outside the shelter circuit. Leaving a structure means suddenly passing from a system in which the indispensable is guaranteed to one in which it is necessary to manage one's own budget. This aspect is particularly complex not only because the beneficiary must pay rent, deposits and food on a reduced budget, but also because he or she is forced to deal with the management of his or her own resources to which he or she is not accustomed.

Sometimes the projects support the exit from the centre with an economic aid that should allow the beneficiary to start his/her life independently; however, this is not enough in cases where there is no continuous and stable employment that allows the beneficiary to meet monthly expenses. The precariousness of the first two forms of autonomy makes it very difficult to achieve housing autonomy in the long term.

To aggravate situations that are already complex in themselves, migrants are also very lonely. It is therefore crucial to work on relational autonomy, which is as important as the previous two, and to build a network of friendly support that allows people not to find themselves alone in times of difficulty but to be able to count on the closeness of trusted people.

Casa Scalabrini 634 has thought of offering beneficiaries a period useful for the achievement and strengthening of these four autonomies. Those who are accepted have an individualized and specific plan that allows them to work on those autonomies that are less structured at the moment of entry. Creating a personalized plan, both in terms of objectives and timing, already within the ministerial reception could be the best strategy to obtain more lasting results that ensure the beneficiaries real autonomy and integration within society.

#### Health

As 2018 ISTAT report outlined<sup>53</sup>, economic and social conditions have a prominent impact on the **health and mental condition** of a person. Social exclusion and scarce social participation are often linked to precarious health conditions and also to depression. With decent economic conditions, as well as good quality of education and access to housing services, health access represents one of the most important aspects of migrant social inclusion. In this case, SDG 3 and, particularly SDG 3.8, aims to ensure universal access to health services including financial risk protection, access to high quality and efficient basic sanitarian services<sup>54</sup> Italian Constitution, art. 32 considers health safeguard as a fundamental right in terms of collective interest and guarantee health services to all the persons on the Italian soil<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> ISTAT, Vita e percorsi di integrazione degli immigrati in Italia, rapporto 2018, see: <https://www.istat.it/it/files//2019/05/Vita-e-percorsi.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> Agenda 2030, op. cit.

<sup>55</sup> here the article of the Italian Constitution. [https://www.senato.it/1025?sezione=121&articolo\\_numero\\_articolo=32#:~:text=La%20Repubblica%20tutela%20la%20salute,non%20per%20disposizione%20di%20legge.](https://www.senato.it/1025?sezione=121&articolo_numero_articolo=32#:~:text=La%20Repubblica%20tutela%20la%20salute,non%20per%20disposizione%20di%20legge.)



Thus, it means that all individuals settled in Italy have the right to access freely the public health in order to receive the necessary treatment. In addition, law 40/1988<sup>56</sup> establishes for all migrants, with a regular permit, to sign up on the National Health Service. As for irregular migrants, they have the right to receive treatments only in critical and emergency cases (those that would put their lives in danger) or continuative treatments or mental cure programs.

According to 2018 ISTAT data,<sup>57</sup> 84% of migrants interviewed claimed that they used to go to hospitals and emergency rooms and not having any medical visits for more than a month. The report affirmed that, if on one side this may suggest good health conditions, actually it is a proof that **most migrants do not have a proper treatment for diseases** and the high access to emergency services is a direct effect of the deterioration of the health conditions. Among migrants who have access directly to the emergency services are those from North Africa and Moldavia (10% on average, 8% of the total of migrant population in Italy)<sup>58</sup>.

Even though Italian laws guarantee equal health treatment for all citizens, within migrant community **the longer the permanence in Italys, the more their health situation gets worse**. This can be explained by some relevant factors such as poor life style and socio-demographic characteristics. Indeed, the lack of a job may interfere with the life style; a person without a job may be affected by alcoholism and heavy smoking or tendency to suffer from obesity (this is strictly related to couples with no children or persons living alone)<sup>59</sup>.

As for socio-demographic factors, **education is one of the most important factors in the access to the public health system**, especially related to linguistic difficulties which a migrant has to deal with. For Open Migration<sup>60</sup>, even if the law guarantees a cultural mediator and an interpreter for migrants in hospitals or, more in general, in public care structures, these professionals are far from being in office due to the lack of qualified professional trainings.

Even though the law guarantees to **irregular migrant's access to health treatment**, due to their poor living conditions and exclusion from society, they are treated by civil society organizations which operate in those informal sites wherein migrants use to live. In big cities these sites are often close to train stations (see the Baobab Experience in Rome Tiburtina railway Station<sup>61</sup> and Platform 95 in Roma Termini railway station<sup>62</sup>), while other informal situations are given by precarious living conditions due to irregular jobs especially in agriculture. This is the cases of Latina Province (50 kilometers from Rome) where thousands of Sikh people are settled in occupied houses without any services or in the more serious case of Borgo Mezzanone in Foggia (Apulia Region, southern Italy) wherein migrants live in shanty towns. The poor working conditions deteriorated the health of migrants living in these places, in addition the use of chemical products increased respiratory diseases, and the high labor exploitation, which obliged migrants to work 13 hours per day, caused physical and mental problems. Their irregular status and the lack of any form of contact with the host community excluded de facto these persons from the social fabric and also denied them access to basic services.

<sup>56</sup> The law took the name of its proposers. At the time Livia Turco was the Minister of Social Affairs and Giorgio Napolitano was the Minister of Interior.

<sup>57</sup> ISTAT, 2020, op. cit. p. 263.

<sup>58</sup> In addition, there is a tight connection between health condition and migratory story. According to the ISTAT report migrants coming from Asia are generally in relatively good conditions, while those coming from Sub-Saharan and North Africa suffer from chronic diseases and other pathologies.

<sup>59</sup> IVI, p.272.

<sup>60</sup> Eleonora, Camilli, Se il diritto alle cure per i migranti è un percorso a ostacoli, 22 febbraio 2017, Open Migration, see: <https://openmigration.org/analisi/se-il-diritto-alle-cure-per-i-migranti-e-un-percorso-a-ostacoli/>.

<sup>61</sup> Here the description of the initiative, <https://baobabexperience.org/chisiamo/>.

<sup>62</sup> Here the description of the initiative: <https://www.binario95.it/chi-siamo/>.



Finally, in the last years a belief was spread in Italy spread indicating migrants as exporters of diseases, particularly after the outbreak of **Covid-19**. According to ISPOS report<sup>63</sup> about 40% of the interviewees strongly believe that migrants are one of the main causes of Corona Virus infection in the country. In the same report, however, many people in Italy recognized that migrants are among the most vulnerable people (60% of the interviewees) in terms of access to health services and they are the most likely persons to risk their life due to lack of treatments.

### Recommendations

Social inclusion of migrants is a complicated process, which demands a huge effort from national and European institutions. However, despite the national laws and policies, Italy is far from being a country that is sufficiently working to alleviate critical issues related to the social inclusion of migrants. First of all, Italy should recognize the close relationship between sustainable development and migration, and how better living conditions of migrants can contribute to improving the overall well-being of the country. Considering migrants within a broader process of sustainable development means creating a society that takes into account all aspects of social life, eliminating those forms of discrimination that Italy is witnessing. It also means recognizing the interconnections that exist between the different dimensions of social and economic inclusion, for which it is necessary to act simultaneously and coherently with various converging measures from education to health, housing and poverty.

In this context, Italy should:

- Invest in the reception system that would provide tools for a first integration and this means a full reintegration of basic services (linguistic and cultural mediation, psychological services, Italian language courses and professional trainings)
- Put into practice the principle of inclusive schools. The presence of cultural and linguistic mediators remained on the paper. Very often schools enjoy the autonomy from the central institutions and this brings many headmasters to decide whether or not provide the school with cultural and linguistic mediators. What Italy should do is to make the presence of these professionals mandatory in order to have an homogeneous system in terms of social inclusion of students with a migratory background.
- Amend regional legislation that limits access to housing.
- Implement the presence of cultural mediators within healthcare structures and provide every hospital, emergency room in the public services with multi-lingual information.
- Monitor the health conditions of migrants who had a traumatic experience during their journey to reach the Italian shores. This requires a deeper analysis during the reception period and should be followed up also after the reception. This must include mental screening, the presence of dedicated services within the public health services.
- Improve and enlarge the right of access to the public health system to all the citizens and non-citizens, in order to build a fair and equal health structure, investing in territorial structures and promoting better lifestyles. In order to be effective, these initiatives must go hand in hand with measures against precarious employment and for better living conditions in the suburbs.
- Remove all the restrictions (particularly those limits related to the period of permanence in Italy) from all the laws as Income of citizenship.

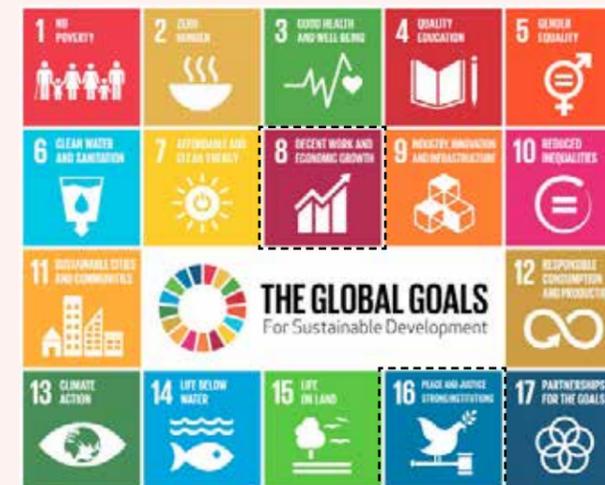
<sup>63</sup> IPSOS report 2020 on covid-19 and migration in Italy: [https://www.weworld.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ipsos-per-We-World-La-percezione-dei-migranti-nellItalia-del-Coronavirus\\_def.pdf](https://www.weworld.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ipsos-per-We-World-La-percezione-dei-migranti-nellItalia-del-Coronavirus_def.pdf)



### 3. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS

The economic and political inclusion of migrants in the hosting society is one of the key points of **Agenda 2030**, and one of the central topics in the public and political debate in Italy. Inclusion is part of a broader framework which includes migrants' involvement in the labour market as well as in political and civic participation. Goal 8 of Agenda 2030 deals with employment and economic growth in order to curb inequalities within the society, to ensure equal rights and a sustainable employment for everyone, to guarantee dignity to each individual in the society. Within this framework it is prominent to underline point 8.8 which aims to protect the right to a fair and rightful job which, in turn, guarantee basic rights to everyone, including migrants<sup>1</sup>.

Goal 16 is also related to the topic we will address in this chapter, and is strictly linked to social peace among all communities within a given society (in our case Italy) for a sustainable development. What is worth noting within this goal is 16.9 which aims to ensure, within 2030, a legal status and juridical identity to all. Finally, 16.7, which aims to enlarge the civic participation to all the components of the society.



Ph. Global Goals for Sustainable Development

This ambition is driven by a deeper framework given by **the Global Compact on Migration** which, especially in objectives 15-16-17, is strongly related to the importance of social integration and engagement of migrants within the host society. It stresses the empowering of migrants to become active members of society. In addition, objective 18 of the Global Compact emphasizes the importance of school titles' recognition. Many migrants are often employed in low skilled jobs despite their graduation or diploma which can permit them to join in a more qualified job and to be more involved within the social fabric. As we will see, the social exclusion is due to the social conditions created by the migrants' employment within a given sector (i.e. agriculture), wherein low wages and precarious housing conditions let them excluded from the host society.

<sup>1</sup>To go in depth: <https://unric.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/11/Agenda-2030-Onu-italia.pdf>



As for **NSSD** (National Strategy for Sustainable Development), migrants within the Strategy are considered as one of the main actors to reach SDGs. In particular, one point of the document is strictly linked to their social inclusion and the need to build a system which promotes professional skills of migrants and their cooperation with the country of origin. In order to make it possible, the Italian government should take on a strategy which aims to include migrants within the social fabric and their active participation in the daily life activities<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, **ISTAT** monitoring report on SDGs in Italy, outlined that migrants are often employed in low skilled and precarious jobs more than Italians, and they account for 30% among NEET (people that do not work and do not participate at professional trainings)<sup>3</sup>. In addition, as outlined in the report, migrants are among those workers who have more injuries while working. According to figures, every 10,000 workers, 11.4 have died or resulted grave injured during the working hours. Finally, considering the great impact of migrants on the Italian economy, ISTAT report indicates among the priorities to reach within the 2030, the decrease of costs of remittances (see chapter 6).

### Migrants in the labor market: between disparities and exploitation

The presence of migrants within the labor market in Italy is in line with the European situation and is strictly linked to the demographic trend. In Italy, as well as in Europe, if the growth of local population, in terms of numbers, is stable, that of migrants, particularly in the last period, is growing. In this context, as outlined in Leone Moressa Report<sup>4</sup>, comparing the trend from 2009, migrants of working age increased by 42% while Italians decreased by 4.2%.

Today in Italy, migrants employed in **the labour market** are about 2,505,000 (1,411,000 men and 1,094,000 women) and account for 10.7% of the total employment. The employment rate in the last six years has grown a little after the financial and economic crises<sup>5</sup>, that of migrants increasing of 2%, while that of Italians settles at 0.5%. On the other hand, unemployment rates among Italians decreased by -7.5%, while that of migrants increased by 0.6%.

The unemployed migrants in Italy are about 402,000 (190,000 men and 212,000 women) and account for 13.7% of the total of migrants able to work in Italy (15-64 years old). This difference, between Italians and migrants, is also driven by geographic factors, indeed if in northern Italy the rate of unemployment among migrants decreases, in the central and southern regions of the country it remains high. Differences between Italians and migrants are important in the **sectors of employment**, where we can observe two phenomena: the segmentation of the labour market and a gradual substitution of the autochthons in the low skilled jobs. By observing the figures in some Italian labour sectors, we can see that migrants cover manual and low skilled jobs. Among women, for example, 4 out of 10 are employed in care services or domestic tasks while 42% of men are employed within the building industry. Migrants account for 63% of workers employed in low skilled sectors, while Italians represent 26.9%<sup>6</sup>.

This trend does not change within the ranks of graduated migrants who continue to be employed in low skilled positions (28.8%), while Italians account for 2.8%. Geographically, in northern Italy migrants are 28%, within low skilled jobs, while in the central and southern regions they account for 48%. In this geographic context we can see also how natives are mainly employed in better positions with only 6.7% and 11.8% in low skilled professions.

<sup>2</sup> National Strategy for the Sustainable Development, see: [https://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio\\_immagini/Galletti/Comunicati/snsvs\\_ottobre2017.pdf](https://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio_immagini/Galletti/Comunicati/snsvs_ottobre2017.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> ISTAT monitoring report on SDGs in Italy, see: <https://www.istat.it/storage/rapporti-tematici/sdgs/2020/goal8.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Leone Moressa, 2020, pp. 30. Leone Moressa is a foundation born in Mestre and focuses its research and study on statistic data on migrant economy with the aim to provide useful tools to find out patterns to the social and economic inclusion and integration of migrants.

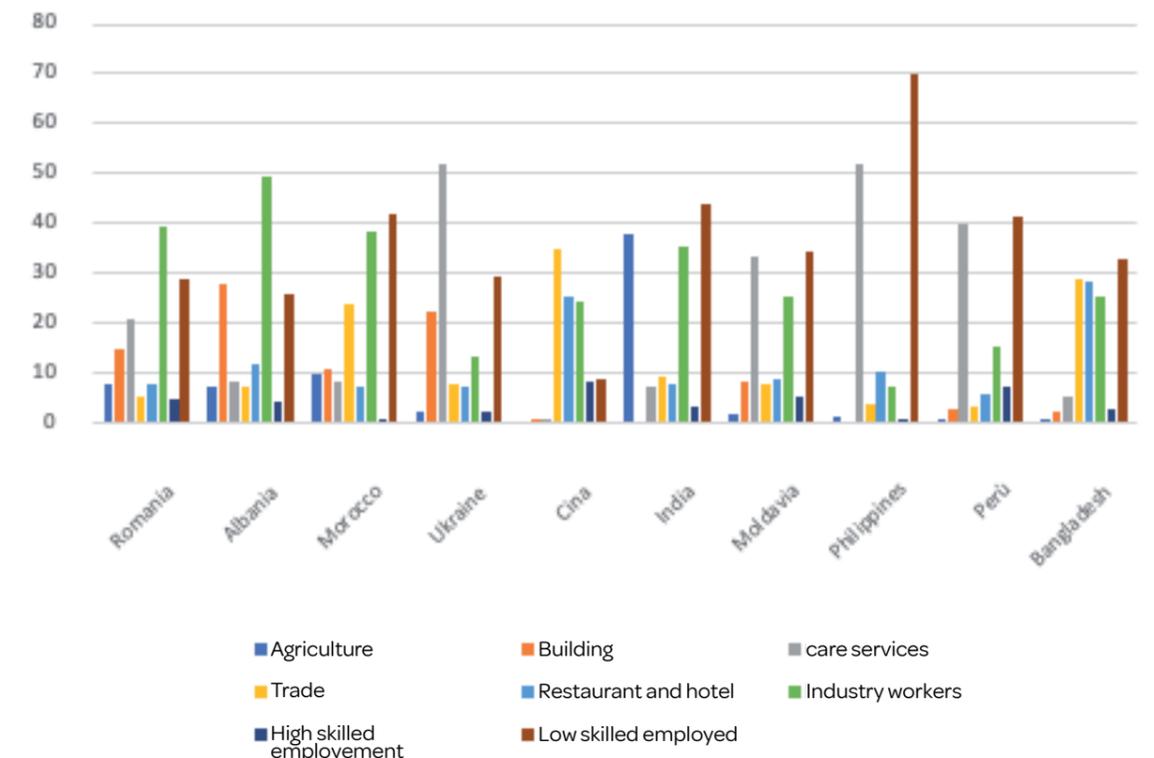
<sup>5</sup> IDOS, 2020, p. 262.

<sup>6</sup> IDOS, 2020, p. 263.



The totality of the employed migrants is working mainly as: peddlers, porters, peasants, low skilled workers in food services and accommodation, care givers, butlers, manual labourers, bricklayers. In the same time, women are in worse conditions. According to IDOS, women cover, for more than a half, only three economic sectors working as care givers, butlers and cleaners. Furthermore, there is an **ethnic specialization** of the labour market. For example, the Indian community is mainly employed within the agricultural and farm sectors, while the Chinese are, for the majority, within trade activities, food and drink sector. As for family care, Philippines with Peruvian women account for 67% of the total<sup>7</sup>.

**Graphic 1** - Migrants in the labour sectors (%)



Source: IDOS, 2020.

If in some sectors of the labour market migrants have substituted native workers, at the same time the presence of migrants within low-skilled tasks produced a gradual increasing of **exploitation of labour** force. This is the case of some economic sectors such as agriculture, farming and care givers, wherein there are not regular contracts and control by the State and institutions are absent. As the Leone Moressa report outlines, the wealth produced in Italy involves also the underground or black economy, that means irregular activities within the labour market. This kind of economy produces about 12% of the Italian GDP, which means 211 billion euros, and it represents a structural characteristic of the southern Europe labour market<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Ivi, p. 263.

<sup>8</sup> Leone Moressa, 2020, p. 91.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



One of the main sectors affected by underground and irregular economic production is with no doubts the agriculture. It's worth noting that more than 450,000 migrants are employed within the agricultural sector, and many of them are exploited or are living in very precarious conditions (poor housing conditions, lack of transportation or low salaries -about 32 euros per day-. In addition, according to Placido Rizzotto report<sup>10</sup> irregular workers within the agricultural sector in 2018, accounted for 39% of the total employed (see Box 1).

### BOX 1. The Mastergang System or 'Caporalato' in agriculture <sup>11</sup>

The term "Caporalato" (i.e., master gang system) is referred to the illicit system of brokering and exploiting labour by illegal intermediaries (named "corporals") who recruit the labour force. A crucial feature of the master gang system is the monopoly of the transportation system, which forces workers to pay money to a private informal system of transportation to commute to and from the workplace. The system is mainly widespread when the worker's accommodation (sometimes remote slums) is far from the workplace.

In Italy, workers' exploitation by corporals is reported in various sectors (transportation, construction, logistics, delivery and care services), but is significantly spread in the agricultural sector, characterized by a prevalence of short term and seasonal employment relations. Among the risk factors related to labour exploitation in the agricultural sector the main ones are: a) the massive use of labour force for short periods and in isolated locations, which often lead to the creation of informal settlements; b) the inadequate conditions of both transportation and accommodation services; c) the precarious or irregular legal status of several migrant workers. More specifically, the master gang system has some unwritten rules which help better understand the scale of this phenomenon. The share of income deducted by corporals from the workers' salaries is around 50% of the remuneration set by National and Provincial sectorial contracts. The daily salary earned by these workers is around 25-30 euros for 10 to 14 working hours. Corporals, in addition, impose daily taxes to "their" workers for transportation and meals.

In order to contrast the system of Caporalato, Italy approved the Law 199/2016 which provides for some important measures to face the spread of the phenomenon: a) financial penalties for the employer in case he hires labour force in exploitative conditions, also through intermediaries, taking advantage of their state of need; b) confiscation of properties for companies which are involved in such criminal activity, c) arrest in flagrante delicto. In addition, Law 199/2016 introduces the monitoring of the agricultural labour market trends, the promotion of active policies for contrasting the so called "black labour", the setting up of efficient forms of transportation, among others. However, although Law 199/2016 was considered

<sup>10</sup> Rapporto Placido Rizzotto 2020. Placido Rizzotto report is a qualitative and quantitative report published annually by CGIL (Italian Labor General Confederation) which analyzes the exploitation within the agricultural sector.

<sup>11</sup> See the case study produced by FOCSIV the the Faces of Migration project in <https://www.focsiv.it/lo-sfruttamento-dei-migranti-nel-caporalato/>

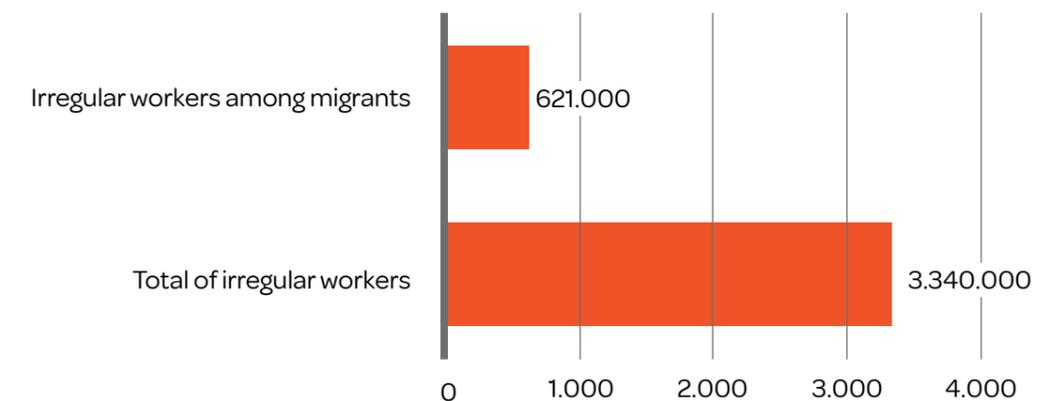


a step forward against the phenomenon, the gang master system is far from being eradicated. In fact, the food supply chain is still managed, and in many cases spread throughout the country, by criminal organizations and illegal systems: the "agro-mafia". Furthermore, the food market structure monopolized by few large distribution enterprises continue to squeeze small farmers who are compelled to reduce labour salaries, thus feeding the master gang system

This scenario, of course, influences also the life quality of migrants and their economic conditions in the host society. According to the figures reported in IDOS<sup>12</sup>, the average **of wages** of migrants are lower than those of Italians and it differs also in relation with the geographic aspect. In general, the annual income of migrants is, on average, 14,340 €, on the other side, Italians' annual income is about 22,460<sup>13</sup>. The monthly wage of a migrant is on average 24% lower than that of Italians (1,077 € per month against 1,408€)<sup>14</sup>. In this context, youths (25-34 years old) seem to suffer much more from these inequalities. As data show, the difference between young migrants and Italians is about 144€ (25-34 years old) and more than 500€ if we include those between 35-44 years old.

**Covid-19 crisis**, as ISMU outlined<sup>15</sup>, increased, inter alia, the disparities within the society especially between the vulnerable categories such as migrants, refugees, unemployed and, more in general, those who cannot afford basic goods and services. This is, undoubtedly, influenced mainly by the economic, formal or informal, sector wherein the migrant is employed. According to the above-mentioned estimations, irregular migrants are about 621,000 (18.6%) out of 3,303,900 of the total employed in the shadow economy (migrants and Italians)<sup>16</sup>.

Graphic 2. - Number of irregular workers in Italy



Source: IDOS, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> IDOS, op. cit., p. 263.

<sup>13</sup> Data elaborated on the bases of Ministry of Finance data, Leone Moressa, 2020, p. 130.

<sup>14</sup> IDOS, 2020, p. 264.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ismu.org/cosa-dicono-i-dati-sulla-poverta-e-future-criticita-legate-al-covid19-comunicato-stampa-16-6-2020/>

<sup>16</sup> These figures are an elaboration of ISTAT data, in IDOS, 2020, pp.300. however, as it has been outlined by the report, these figures are estimates and are not definitive data.



Despite the segmentation of job positions, migrants in Italy are also little **entrepreneurs** especially in the last ten years. According to Leone Moressa<sup>17</sup>, the entrepreneurship of migrants has increased by 32% (approximately 722,712 new businesses), while the new businesses of Italians have decreased by 6.9% with a further drop in the last year (0.6%). Growth did not stop in 2020 either, despite COVID-19, reaching 739,568 businesses. Among the main nationalities involved in this process, China is at the top with about 75,542 enterprises followed by Romania, Morocco and, recently, other countries such as Pakistan India and Bangladesh. As for the sectors, these activities are focused on trade (13.2%), services (12%, mainly restaurants and accommodation) and building (15.4%).

Migrant entrepreneur profile seems to follow a common path before setting up his/her own activity. Many employed workers become entrepreneur in the same sector he/she used to work and, in many cases, his/her business takes on activities with the previous enterprises wherein the migrant worked. As Leone Moressa outlined, very often the birth of migrants' enterprises is strictly linked to the lack of job opportunities and represents a sort of opportunity to deal with the economic crisis and also a step towards stabilization in the host country.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the subordination of migrants in the labor market also depends on insufficient labor planning and policy, as shown in the box below.

### BOX 2. Immigration in Italy: history of a "chronic emergency"

Enrico Di Pasquale and Chiara Tronchin, Leone Moressa Foundation

Italy is today the European country that issues fewer residence permits for work reasons<sup>18</sup>: just 11 thousand in 2019, or 0.18 entries per 1,000 inhabitants (of which a large part are seasonal). If in the last 10 years there has been a real "closure" by Italy towards non-EU foreign workers, we cannot say that before there was a real "planning", since the flows were mainly determined by the so-called "sanatoria", or regularizations "a posteriori". For this reason, we can define the Italian history of immigration as "suffered and not planned"<sup>19</sup>.

The watershed year was 2011 when, at the same time as the economic crisis, the annual quotas established by the flow decrees were almost reduced to zero, resulting in the fact that almost all arrivals from Africa and Asia were channeled into the process of requesting international protection and, therefore, into the reception system, with all of the associated problems (length of stay, lack of adequate integration programs, lack of responsibility on the part of beneficiaries, emergency management - and not always transparent - of resources).

The principle that led to the current closure derives from the commonplace, as widespread as it is mistaken, that there is competition between Italian and foreign employment<sup>20</sup>. This idea is wrong for several reasons. First, in a growing economy, creating new jobs generates more jobs. In addition, although the two groups are numerically similar, they are not easily replaceable<sup>21</sup>: first of all, the foreign

<sup>17</sup> Leone Moressa, 2020, p. 97.

<sup>18</sup> Ma perché l'Italia non vuole i migranti economici? LaVoce.info, 30.08.2019

<sup>19</sup> Immigrazione: il rischio vero è l'ideologia LaVoce.info, 05.02.2019

<sup>20</sup> Migranti economici cercasi LaVoce.info, 13.07.2018

<sup>21</sup> Rapporto 2019 sull'economia dell'immigrazione, Fondazione Leone Moressa



employed work mainly in low-skilled jobs, while most of the Italian unemployed have at least a diploma and aspire to qualified professions. In addition, foreign workers are in the majority in the North, while the Italian unemployed in the South. Finally, in a country that is rapidly aging, reintegrating the unemployed (some of whom are of advanced age) may not be enough to sustain the pension system. As of today, according to estimates by the Leone Moressa Foundation, the 2.5 million employed (10.7% of the total) contribute to generating 9.5% of the national GDP, or 146.7 billion in added value<sup>22</sup>.

Ultimately, the history of immigration in Italy appears fragmentary and characterized by a poor systemic vision. The reopening of legal channels of entry would bring an essential contribution to the productive system and to the public coffers, in the form of tax revenues and social security contributions, in a context of birth rate at historic lows and an aging population. The legal channel would also have another, not negligible, effect: it would offer an alternative (much safer and more controllable) to the Mediterranean crossings. If it is true that among asylum seekers there is a large percentage of "economic migrants", the opening of legal channels for work could be a solution. Ultimately, it would be necessary to move from emergency management (which has characterized the last decade) to a targeted and long-range planning, with flows linked to market needs and with an effective system of selection of arrivals.

### The political and social participation of migrants

Participation in political and socio-cultural spheres are important parts of a complete inclusion. Participation in voting, in fact, allows individuals to invest and expand their endowment of social capital, thus nourishing trust in the rules that govern coexistence and favoring the creation of social and fiduciary networks that are fundamental to keeping a community firmly united. Participation and inclusion, therefore, seem to travel hand in hand, managing to demonstrate, at the same time, a double and mutual recognition: that of a segment of the population, the foreign one, which recognizes and acknowledges itself in the institutions of the State in which it has decided to invest its future, and that of a State which recognizes in these subjects, the full ownership of rights.

According to the Italian political system and with reference to 1992 Strasbourg Convention on migrant public participation at local and national life, migrants can be involved within the political arena in different ways at the local level throughout: migrants' councils and migrants' representatives (institutional figures in city councils representing foreign communities present in the territory). Italy will ratify the Convention only in May 1994, reserving however the right to accept what is outlined in "Chapter C", which would provide for the extension of the active and passive right to vote at local level to non-EU foreigners who have legally and habitually resided in the state, in the five years preceding the elections. Once again, therefore, Italy renews its faithful adherence to what is established by the Constitutional Charter in its 48th article, continuing to consider the ownership of political rights as an inseparable element from the possession of citizenship. Data on this topic is lacking in Italy, however, as shown in IDOS report<sup>23</sup>, out of 725 city councils in Italy (with more than 15,000 inhabitants) only 157 (22%) have established forms of political participation of migrants. Among them, 46 have appointed a migrant representative, 99 have a migrants' council and 12 have both of them. However, the analysis of the report proved that among those 725 cities only 32 are effectively operating in the territory (see Box 3 on the case of the Umbria region).

<sup>22</sup> Rapporto 2019 sull'economia dell'immigrazione, Fondazione Leone Moressa

<sup>23</sup> Bertazzo T. (2020), «Si fa presto a dire partecipazione. Consiglieri stranieri aggiunti e consulte degli stranieri, punto d'arrivo o inizio da cui partire?» in Dossier statistico immigrazione, IDOS, p.190



If on the political activism migrants are still low represented, in terms of **labour organization participation** they are more active. According to the figures on IDOS report, migrants' workers registered in a labour organization are about 1 million in the confederal trade unions (CGIL, CISL and UIL) and account for 9.3% of the total. CGIL seems to be the organization that gathers a great deal of foreign workers (10.4%), followed by CISL (9%) and UIL (8.3%). However, in the labour sectors where exploitation is stronger, migrants took on manager positions within these organization especially within autonomous trade unions (Cobas and USB) in such sectors as agriculture and logistic warehouses.

Furthermore, in the last years in Italy a great number of **migrants' associations** have been established. The Ministry of Labour and Economic Activities, with the support of IDOS, promoted the mapping of the associations of migrants in Italy. According to data on the portal, the associations are about 1,413<sup>24</sup>. Many of them are related to national communities of migrants and among their activities there are cultural promotion, religious associations, mutual support, services providers (relations with consulates or embassies) and, in some ways, they also promote international cooperation with the countries of origin.

### BOX 3. The failure of institutions of political participation of migrants in the Umbrian case

By Alessia Colonnelli, young activist FOCSIV

An eloquent case of the dubious functioning of the bodies of participation of immigrant communities provided for by Italian legislation is the Umbrian one. At present, Umbria does not have a council at regional level, and the future intentions of the authorities are unclear<sup>25</sup>. At the provincial level there is no institute, while the analysis carried out by reviewing the Statutes of the current 92 Umbrian municipalities, shows that only the Municipality of Umbertide establishes the Municipal Council of Foreigners Residents, only that of Corciano establishes the figure of the Deputy Councillor, while the Municipality of Gubbio has both institutions (the Deputy Foreign Councillor and the Municipal Council for Immigration). There is also the particular case of Perugia, in which a "Municipal Council for the representation of foreign citizens and stateless persons" is provided for by regulation but not by Statute, and the figure of the Councillor, provided instead by the Statute, has recently been repealed. None of the mentioned institutions is, to date, active, as confirmed by local authorities.

Ismael Moktar, former Secretary General of the Municipal Council for Immigration of Perugia, active from 2009 to 2014, confirms the low political influence of these institutes, their only formal nature, the meagreness of the funds made available and their poor management, as well as the rigidity of the institutions and the difficulty of interacting with administration officials to carry out concrete activities. Immigrants find themselves exercising a public function for free, without real support and listening from the institutions, both at political and administrative level. Participation is therefore emptied of meaning, causing frustration and disillusionment. Similar remarks are also valid for the institution of the Deputy Foreign Councillor.

<sup>24</sup> Data are related to 2018 that is the last monitoring report on the migrants' associations, see: <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Aretematiche/Paesicomunitari-e-associazionimigranti/Pagine/mappatura-associazioni.aspx>

<sup>25</sup> When the regional authorities were asked whether or not an Immigration Council would be set up in the coming months, no definite information was obtained, which suggests that the formation of such a body is not the priority of the new administration.



To be criticized is also the very appendix of the deputy, which emphasizes the foreignness of the figure, its being - precisely - foreign. An addition that demarcates what is ours and what is theirs. The perceived injustice has led the same Council of Foreigners of Perugia, active between 2009 and 2014, to propose and obtain the abrogation of the figure of the Deputy Councillor from the Statute of the capital: the latest confirmation of the failure of the institution.

From the Umbrian experience emerges the obsolete character, little incisive and marginal institutions of political participation of migrants. It would be appropriate to update the legislation, adopting the Strasbourg Convention in its entirety, providing for the extension of active and passive voting rights, at local level, to foreigners who have been resident in the State for at least five years.

On the other hand, it should be noted how the integration of some migrant communities and the acquisition of Italian citizenship can lead to better political participation. This is the case, for example, of the Ivorian community in Umbria represented by the cultural association ASSIDU, which actively participates in the political life of Perugia, also acting as spokesman for those who do not have the same rights. At the last municipal elections (2019), for example, two Ivorians, Italian citizens, competed for the position of Councillor: Nancy Carene Tra, graduate and ASSIDU Secretary, who presented herself with a center-left list, and Omer Cyr Zakou, candidate instead with a center-right list.

It is necessary, therefore, that the citizenship regime becomes the subject of a serious political reflection and a reform process that considers as a priority the issue of second generations, whose condition represents one of the most serious denials of rights of our time.

Finally, the issue of the second generations or new generations<sup>26</sup> of migrants, and their citizenship, has become central in the political debate. In 2018 minors with migratory background were about 1,316,000 with a majority of second or new generations (991,000, about 75%) strictly speaking, thus son/daughter of migrants. Among these figures, 90% of under 5s were born in Italy, while 37.5% aged 14-17 were born in Italy. As outlined in the IDOS report<sup>27</sup>, Italian institutions demonstrated their opposition to a law for facilitating the citizenship to second/new generations preferring to focus on the past, for example giving the Slovenian and Austrian Italians citizenship and denying it to migrants. This is due to the penetration of the idea of citizenship as an issue of ancestry, blood and belonging to an Italian identity<sup>28</sup>.

In order to break with this approach, recently, the debate has aroused on the *Ius Culturae* and *Ius soli* approach to citizenship. The first is related to minors who, once arrived in Italy and completed a full cycle in Italian schools (i.e., middle school) or completed a professional training, can apply for citizenship<sup>29</sup>. The second is strictly linked to those who were born in Italy and one of the parents has been in Italy for, at least, one year. Despite many initiatives, promoted by associations of second/new generations, no draft law (a merge of the two approach) has been passed yet in the Italian parliament and the issue is still pending, triggering controversies and criticism between those who see migrants as an opportunity and those who reject in toto the 'naturalization' of these 'Italians without citizenships'<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> According to the definition a second or new generation is a person with a migratory background (son of migrants, son of mixed couples, someone who migrated with the family or someone born in Italy, for example, and his/her parents are from a third country or, finally, who migrated alone and, according to the European legislation, is an unaccompanied minor). <https://www.meltingpot.org/Le-seconde-generazioni-di-immigrati-ed-il-concetto-di.html#.X-r439hKhPY>; for a less detailed definition see: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/glossary\\_search/person-migratory-background\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary_search/person-migratory-background_en).

<sup>27</sup> IDOS, 2020, p. 214.

<sup>28</sup> Ivi, p. 215.

<sup>29</sup> In Italian, <https://tg24.sky.it/politica/2019/10/03/ius-soli-ius-culturae-legge-proposte>. In English <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/new-proposals-try-to-overcome-impasse-on-reforming-citizenship-law-in-italy>.

<sup>30</sup> In order to better understand the debate, see: <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/20200/over-one-million-italians-are-without-citizenship-idos>.



### Recommendations

Covid-19 has brought to surface all the contradictions within the Italian society especially concerning economic inclusion. The reduction of regular jobs and labour exploitation within some economic sectors require strong actions and moves from Italian institutions. In this context, Italian institutions should:

- Face the issue of the irregular/black jobs in agriculture not only in terms of repression of the phenomenon, but also tackling the problem of the legal status of migrants exploited in agriculture. The irregular status of migrants makes them vulnerable and blackmailable by entrepreneurs. Covid-19 crisis has shown how migrants are indispensable for the agricultural sector; given the situation, a real regularization -without any limit- should be implemented, in order to prevent them to be blackmailed.
- Improve the recruitment system within the labour market. Migrants are often discriminated but at the same time, very often, they have to struggle with the Italian institutions which do not recognize their studies in the country of origin. Italy should implement scholarships, school exchanges and bilateral agreements on education titles recognition in order to let this gap fillable. While the promotion of inclusive, non-segmented education (see Chapter 2) could foster better social mobility and integration into the world of work.
- Improve the citizenship system and give, on the scheme of the *Ius Soli* and *Ius Culturae*, automatic Italian citizenship to all those born in Italy and all those who completed an entire cycle of school (elementary, middle or secondary alike).
- Increase the participation of migrants in public life, by promoting migrants' associations, political participation at the territorial level, and recognizing migrants the right to vote at the city council for all those who have lived in a given city for 5 years.



## 4. REGULAR PATHWAYS FOR MIGRANTS BETWEEN ITALY AND THIRD COUNTRIES

The **2030 Agenda** is “the first international development framework to include and recognize migration as a dimension of development”<sup>1</sup>. Target 10.7 under the goal “Reduce inequality in and among countries”, directly refers to migration when calling to “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”.



Ph. Global Goals for Sustainable Development

Objective 5 of the **Global Compact on Migration** calls for enhancing both availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration “in a manner that facilitates labour mobility and decent work reflecting demographic and labour market realities, optimizes education opportunities, upholds the right to family life, and responds to the needs of migrants in a situation of vulnerability, with a view to expanding and diversifying availability of pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration”<sup>2</sup>. Among the main actions to realize these commitments, the Global Compact lists: to revise existing options and pathways for regular migration, with a view to optimize skills matching in labour markets; to develop flexible, rights-based and gender-responsive labour mobility schemes for migrants, including temporary, seasonal, circular, and fast-track programmes in areas of labour shortages, by providing flexible, convertible and non-discriminatory visa and permit options, such as for permanent and temporary work, multiple-entry study, business, visit, investment and entrepreneurship; to facilitate access to procedures for family reunification for migrants at all skills levels; to expand available options for academic mobility<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>M. Foresti et al. Migration and development How human mobility can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, ODI, 2018. <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/12421.pdf>

See also the background papers of the Faces of Migration Project: 1) Climate Change and Migration, 2) Social Inclusion of migrants in the EU, 3) Gender and Migration, 4) Migration in third countries: the Jordanian case, 5) The Global Compact on Migration: a worldwide opportunity for a common governance of migrations; 6) Migration and Development; 7) Conflict and Migration: The case of Libya 8) Covid19 and Migration. For download [https://www.focsiv.it/tag/FoM\\_paper/](https://www.focsiv.it/tag/FoM_paper/)

<sup>2</sup>Objective 5 of the Global Compact on Migration. See <https://migrationdataportal.org/global-compact-for-migration#5>

<sup>3</sup>See [https://refugeemigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180713\\_agreed\\_outcome\\_global\\_compact\\_for\\_migration.pdf](https://refugeemigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180713_agreed_outcome_global_compact_for_migration.pdf)



The **Italian National Strategy for Sustainable Development** refers to the link between migration and development in the area of partnership, with a call to promote professional skills of migrants in relation to the country of origin, strengthen collaboration between Africa and Europe to better manage migration, and enhance the role of migrants as actors in development (see chapter 1 introduction). No direct reference is made to the enhancement of the regular channels of migration.

Considering that Italy is not among the signatory countries of the Global Compact on Migration it needs to be underlined that the attraction of seasonal workers, students and researchers, investors, are addressed by some national legislative provisions. By providing an overview of the legislative framework and related data on regular migration channels, we can try to measure the advancement of SDGs target 10.7 and of GCM objective 5 implementation in Italy.

### Labour migration pathways

Italy manages **labour migration** of TCNs (Third Country Nationals-extra EU) to Italy with the Quota System, introduced by 286/1998 law<sup>4</sup> (i.e. Comprehensive Act on Immigration). The number of workers that every year can enter Italy for working (or convert their permit to that of employment) is regulated and established by the Annual Flows Decree as a result of the annual consultation between the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the administrations responsible for immigration (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies)<sup>5</sup>.

Before starting the analysis of the main channels of regular entry to Italy, it is important to mention that, since 2007, the programming of the entry flows of non-EU workers is carried out only as a transitional programming<sup>6</sup>. This raises numerous concerns on the management of the entry flows in Italy, which are currently developed to meet short-term needs rather than being part of a long-term and more structured and sustainable strategy (see Box 2 in chapter 3). In 2020 some steps forward have been taken on the issue of migration as the regularization provision and the reform of the Security Decrees adopted between 2018 and 2019. Many civil society organisations, however, ask for the revision of the current rules on immigration (see Box 1), which are still linked to a system, introduced by law n.189/2002, that restricted regular channels for entering Italy (eliminating the sponsorship system) and was basically aimed at returning migrants to their homeland.

<sup>4</sup> See <https://immigrazione.it/docs/2020/emn-rapporto-asilo-e-migrazione-italia.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.governo.it/it/dipartimenti/dica-att-decretoflussi/9206>

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. <http://www.governo.it/it/dipartimenti/dica-att-decretoflussi/9206>



### BOX 1. Ero straniero: law proposal<sup>7</sup>

Ero straniero – L'umanità che fa bene Campaign has been launched in April 2017 by many CSOs<sup>8</sup>, aimed at promoting a pragmatic approach as well as finding long-term solutions to the issue of migration in Italy. As a result of this effort, the campaign led to the development of a popular law proposal entitled "New standards for promoting regular stay, social and working inclusion of non-EU foreign citizens", presented to the Italian Chamber of Deputies in October 2017.

The proposal asks for: introducing the temporary residence permit for the purpose of seeking employment; reintroducing the sponsorship system; regularize foreign citizens (at individual base) who are irregularly staying in the country when it can be demonstrated that they are involved in an employment activity (which can be converted into a regular activity or denounced in the event of exploitation), when they can prove family ties or they lack concrete links with the country of origin; improving the access to employment of asylum seekers to enhance their inclusion in the Italian territory; guaranteeing the reintegration and enjoyment of the social and security rights acquired (regardless of the reciprocity agreements between Italy and the country of origin) to migrant workers who decide to repatriate; guaranteeing equal treatment in social and security benefits for all foreigners who hold a permit of at least one year term; guaranteeing the real access and right to health to foreign citizens; guaranteeing active and passive electoral rights for local elections to foreigners holding residence permits for long-term stay; abolishing the offence of illegal immigration.

After more than three years, the law proposal is before the Commission of Constitutional Affairs<sup>9</sup>.

As of the last annual Flows Decree adopted<sup>10</sup>, 30,850 TCNs are admitted in Italy for seasonal and non-seasonal work. Within this quota, 12,850 are admitted in Italy for non seasonal work and for self-employment and 18,000 are the quotas reserved for seasonal workers. As for the latter, seasonal workers from countries with which bilateral agreements with Italy are in place<sup>11</sup>, are admitted in Italy in the sectors of tourism and agriculture<sup>12</sup>.

It is worth mentioning that the latest decree introduces a disposition addressed to seasonal workers in agriculture aimed at contrasting the system of illicit brokering widespread in this sector and usually targeting migrants<sup>13</sup>: professional Organizations of Employers are entitled to submit, on behalf of the employers, applications of "nulla-osta" for a number of 6,000 seasonal workers out of the 18,000 admitted. For seasonal workers already admitted to work in Italy at least once in the previous five years there is also the chance of a facilitated re-entry.

<sup>7</sup> For the information in detail see official website of the Ero Straniero Campaign <https://erostraniero.radicali.it/la-proposta/>  
<sup>8</sup> Radicali Italiani, Fondazione Casa della carità "Angelo Abriani", ACLI, ARCI, ASGI, Centro Astalli, CNCA, A Buon Diritto, CILD, together with Oxfam, ActionAid, Legambiente, Scalabriniani, AOI, Federazione Chiese Evangeliche Italiane (Fcei), Comunità di Sant'Egidio, Fondazione Migrantes, Caritas italiana, CGIL, Altromercato, Emergency and many other civil society organisations.

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.repubblica.it/solidarieta/immigrazione/2020/12/29/news/bossi-fini-280293322/>

<sup>10</sup> See [https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-10/circ.\\_cong.\\_dec.\\_flussi\\_2020\\_def.firmata.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-10/circ._cong._dec._flussi_2020_def.firmata.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> As of 2020 the countries are Albania, Algeria, Bangladesh, BosniaHerzegovina, Corea (Repubblica di Corea), Costa d'Avorio, Egitto, El Salvador, Etiopia, Filippine, Gambia, Ghana, Giappone, India, Kosovo, Mali, Marocco, Mauritius, Moldova, Montenegro, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Repubblica di Macedonia del Nord, Senegal, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia, Ucraina. See [https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-10/circ.\\_cong.\\_dec.\\_flussi\\_2020\\_def.firmata.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-10/circ._cong._dec._flussi_2020_def.firmata.pdf)

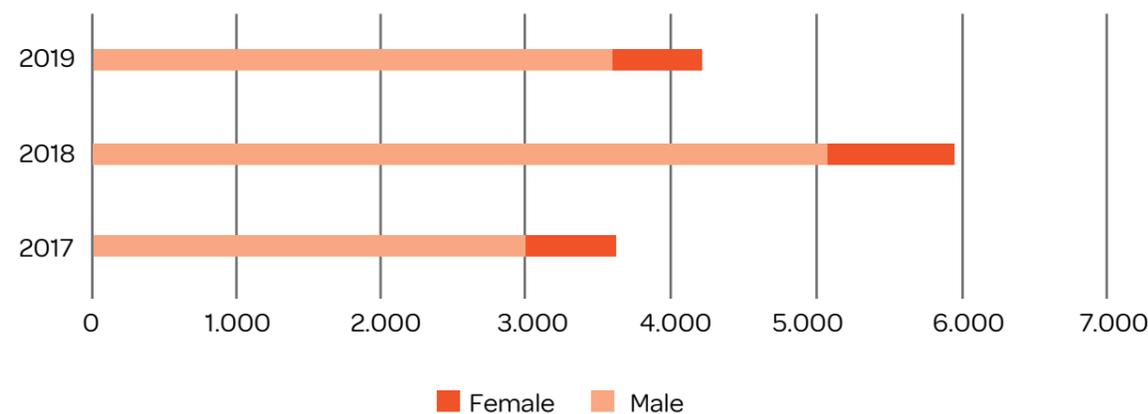
<sup>12</sup> These two categories of seasonal workers were established by Legislative Decree 203/2016 (that implements Directive 2014/36/EU on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for reasons of employment as seasonal workers)

<sup>13</sup> To go into depth see A. Ianni M. Giampaolo, The Mastergang system in Italy, Faces of Migration, Focsiv, November 2020. <https://www.focsiv.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CSR-n.-1-ENG-11.12.2020.pdf>



If they respected the conditions indicated in the residence permit and returned to their country of origin when it expired, they gain priority for entering Italy over those who have never legally entered the country for working.

**Graphic 1** - Authorisation issued (Italy) for the purpose of seasonal work per year and gender<sup>14</sup>



Source: Figures developed on Eurostat data [migr\_ressw2]

### Migratory pathways for talents and start-ups innovative entrepreneurs

To attract investments, innovation and raise Italian economic competitiveness at the global level, in 2013<sup>15</sup>, after the approval of the Italian Start up Act, the Annual Flows Decree introduced a new category to enter Italy for the reason of self-employment concerning “foreign citizens who intend to set up “innovative start-up” companies<sup>16</sup>. In 2014 the Italian Ministry of economic development (MISE) with the cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies launched the ‘**Italian start up visa**’ (italiastartupvisa.mise.gov.it), a particular scheme for migrant entrepreneurship to simplify the procedure for issuing self-employment visas to non-EU citizens wishing to set up (individually or in team) an innovative start-up (i.e. newly-established companies with a strong nexus to technological innovation<sup>17</sup>) in Italy<sup>18</sup>. The process to obtain the visa is fast-track (it never takes more than 30 days) centralised (the applicant can communicate with the Italian public offices through a single contact point); digital (the procedure takes place entirely online); bilingual (applications can be submitted both in Italian and in English); free-of-charge (no fees for the application)<sup>19</sup> to encourage and facilitate applications of entrepreneurial talents from abroad to establish innovative businesses in Italy.

<sup>14</sup> Data extracted on 28/12/2020.

<sup>15</sup> See [https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/linee\\_guida\\_italia\\_startup\\_visa\\_28\\_marzo\\_0.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/linee_guida_italia_startup_visa_28_marzo_0.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> According to Law 221/2012.

<sup>17</sup> For the definition of Innovative Start ups in detail according to Italian legislation see The Italian Startup Act Italy’s policy framework to support innovative startups, Executive Summary, Ministry of Economic Development July 2019. <https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/THE-ITALIAN-STARTUP-ACT-agg20.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> See <https://www.mise.gov.it/index.php/it/per-i-media/notizie/2040730-startup-visa-online-il-nuovo-rapporto>

<sup>19</sup> See Italia Start up visa and Hub: Summary of main findings, 4th quarterly report 2019, Italian Ministry of Economic Development Directorate General for Industrial Policy, Innovation and SMEs, 31 December 2019. [https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/ISVH-4th-quarterly-report-2019-29\\_01\\_2020.pdf](https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/ISVH-4th-quarterly-report-2019-29_01_2020.pdf)



According to the Ministry of Economic Development website<sup>20</sup>, the number of applications registered as of 31 December 2019 was 481 from 49 countries with an approval rate of 51,9%. Russia leads the ranking of the most represented countries, in terms of applications approved (73 out of 107 received), followed by China (44 out of the 99 received), United States (28 out of the 44 received), Ukraine (21 out of the 26 received). About the academic background of the start up visa holders, 92.1% are university graduates<sup>21</sup>.

Italy adopted in 2012 the Blue Card Directive (2009/50/EC) which governs the conditions for entry and residence of highly qualified third-country workers in the EU. Highly qualified workers are among the categories of those who can entry in Italy outside the quotas<sup>22</sup> annually set by the Flows Decree. EU Blue Card permit is valid for two years in the event of an indefinite employment contract, or, in other cases, its validity is equal to the duration of the employment relationship<sup>23</sup>. Considering the total numbers of Blue Cards granted in 2019 within the EU, Italy issued a very low number of permits compared to Germany, Poland and France, ranking just six out of the total of EU member states.

**Table 1** - EU Blue Cards granted in 2019

Country	EU Blue Cards concesse
Germany	28.858
Poland	2.104
France	2.039
Luxembourg	677
Czechia	570
Italy	418
Austria	336
Bulgaria	268
Lithuania	223
Latvia	217
All other EU countries	1.096

Source: Figures developed on eurostat data [migr\_resbc1]<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.mise.gov.it/index.php/it/per-i-media/notizie/2040730-startup-visa-online-il-nuovo-rapporto>

<sup>21</sup> See [https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/ISVH-4th-quarterly-report-2019-29\\_01\\_2020.pdf](https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/ISVH-4th-quarterly-report-2019-29_01_2020.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> See <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en/legal-framework/domestic-law/Pages/Blue-Card.aspx>

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en/legal-framework/domestic-law/Pages/Blue-Card.aspx>

<sup>24</sup> Data extracted on January 23, 2021.



### Migrant students and researchers pathways

The entry and stay of TCN students and researchers in Italy are also among the channels of regular migration<sup>25</sup>. Procedures for entry, residence and registration of students requesting a visa for higher education courses in Italy are set annually by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, in agreement with the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI)<sup>26</sup>. To improve internationalization of the higher education System and to foster international cooperation in cultural, scientific and technological fields, the Italian government offers also scholarships to foreign students and Italian students residing abroad (IRE)<sup>27</sup>.

Moreover, through the Executive Protocols of bilateral cooperation between MAECI and third countries Italy provides the realization of joint research programs to promote scientific cooperation and researchers' mobility<sup>28</sup>. Good practices for the attraction of international students to Italy are represented by the MARCO POLO and TURANDOT programs, used to promote the Italian university system in China and to facilitate the inclusion of Chinese students in Italian higher education institutions<sup>29</sup>.

In addition, MAECI, the agency for the promotion abroad and internationalisation of the Italian business (ICE) and Uni-Italia, in collaboration with Union Camere and Confindustria, launch annually the program Invest Your talent in Italy which offers international students the opportunity 'to develop their skills and specialize through a range of Master of Science and postgraduate programs in Engineering, Advanced Technologies, Architecture, Design, Economics, and Management, with the support of a scholarship and other benefits'<sup>30</sup>. As for student retention, with legislative Decree n.71/2018 adopting EU Directive 2016/801<sup>31</sup>, Italy allows international students who have obtained a university degree in the country, to get, upon expiry of their permit to study, a residence permit (valid for at least 9 months to a maximum of 12) to seek employment or start a business "consistent with the training course completed"<sup>32</sup>.

Despite this favourable framework, Italy is less attractive compared to other EU countries regarding tertiary education. According to Eurostat data, in 2018, mobile students from abroad who undertook tertiary-level studies in the EU represented 8% of all enrolled tertiary students. Among the EU Member States, Luxembourg had the highest share of mobile tertiary students from abroad (48%), followed by Cyprus (24%), Austria (18%), Czechia (14%) and the Netherlands (12%)<sup>33</sup>. In Italy the incidence of international students on the total is 5.6%, still below the European average<sup>34</sup>. This questions the effectiveness of the measures in place for attracting international students in Italy and raises concerns on employment opportunities after the completion of their studies. According to ISAT, in 2019, the employment rate of foreign citizens with medium-high qualifications was significantly lower than

<sup>25</sup> For the elaboration of the paragraphs regarding the main provisions to attract international students to Italy, we referred, in addition to institutional websites, to some of the information contained in "Gli studenti Internazionali in Italia e in UE", Studio del Punto di contatto italiano-European Migration Network, 2019. See <http://www.emnitalyncp.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/EMN-Students.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Last version for 2020-2021 available here [https://www.studiare-in-italia.it/studentistranieri/moduli/2020/Circolare\\_2020\\_2021\\_EN.pdf](https://www.studiare-in-italia.it/studentistranieri/moduli/2020/Circolare_2020_2021_EN.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> For the 2020-2021 application see <https://studyinitaly.esteri.it/en/call-for-procedure>

<sup>28</sup> For a complete and adjourned list of the Executive Protocols see [https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/politica\\_estera/cooperscientificatecologica/programmiesecutivi/accordi\\_programmi\\_culturali\\_tecnologici.html](https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/politica_estera/cooperscientificatecologica/programmiesecutivi/accordi_programmi_culturali_tecnologici.html)

<sup>29</sup> For more information see <https://www.unistrapg.it/it/rel/articoli/che-cosa-sono-i-programmi-marco-polo-e-turandot>

<sup>30</sup> See [https://international.polito.it/finacial\\_aid/politecnico\\_international\\_scholarships/invest\\_your\\_talent\\_in\\_italy](https://international.polito.it/finacial_aid/politecnico_international_scholarships/invest_your_talent_in_italy)

<sup>31</sup> The Directive relates to the conditions of entry and stay of third country nationals for the purpose of research, study, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing in the EU.

<sup>32</sup> For more information see [http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/normativa/procedureitalia/Pagine/PERMESSO-DI-SOG-GIORNO-PER-RICERCA-LAVORO-O-IMPREDITORIALITA-DEGLI-STUDENTI-\(art-39bis-1\).aspx](http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/normativa/procedureitalia/Pagine/PERMESSO-DI-SOG-GIORNO-PER-RICERCA-LAVORO-O-IMPREDITORIALITA-DEGLI-STUDENTI-(art-39bis-1).aspx)

<sup>33</sup> See <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20200828-1?inheritRedirect=true&redirect=eurostat/home?>

<sup>34</sup> For more information see <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Attualita/Notizie/Pagine/Universit%C3%A0,-studenti-internazionali-in-crescita-ma-ancora-sotto-la-media-Ue.aspx>

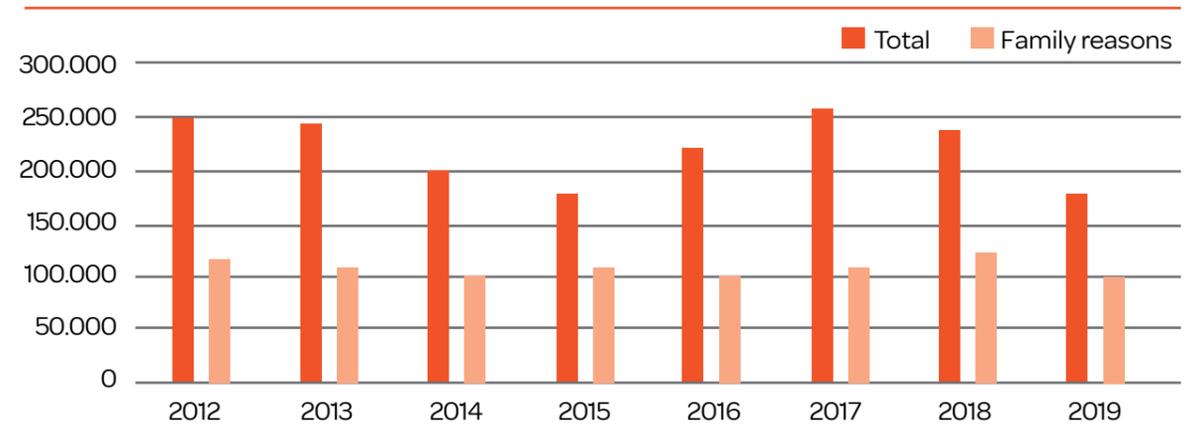


the European average<sup>35</sup>. In addition, considering that the majority of migrants in Italy are employed in low skilled job positions, the situation does not vary for foreign graduates employees. According to IDOS, 28,8% of foreign employees with a university degree, have low skilled jobs in Italy<sup>36</sup>. The low value given to migrants, the weak attractiveness of both our education system and labour market are all aspects of a more general and structural problem: the economic and social decline of Italy over the last twenty years, linked to the absence of a vision and strategy oriented to sustainable development. A decline that is also measurable by the numbers of the Italian emigration abroad. From 2006 to 2019, as an example, Italian mobility increased by 70.2% and AIRE<sup>37</sup> members raised from 3.1 million to almost 5.3 million<sup>38</sup>.

### Family reunification pathways

Family reunification is also among the main regular channels to enter in Italy. A foreigner wishing to apply for family reunification must hold a valid residence card or residence permit valid for at least one year, or for which renewal has been requested within the prescribed terms, issued for subordinate work or self-employment reasons, or for asylum, study, religious or family reasons<sup>39</sup>. The person who requests family reunification need to meet some criteria such as: proving adequate housing (with the hygienic and sanitary requirements, set by Italian Law<sup>40</sup>) and minimum annual income "deriving from legal sources not lower than the annual amount of the social allowance increased by half of the amount of the social allowance for each family member involved in reunification"<sup>41</sup>. The residence permit for family reasons allows access to welfare services, enrolment in study courses or professional training and the performance of subordinate work or self-employment<sup>42</sup>. According to Eurostat data<sup>43</sup>, first residence permits to get to Italy for family reasons are a considerable number out of the total of the permits issued between 2012 and 2019.

**Graphic 2** - First permits issued in Italy (out of total) for family reasons



Source: Figures developed on Eurostat [migr\_resfas]

<sup>35</sup> See <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2020/07/Livelli-di-istruzione-e-ritorni-occupazionali.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> IDOS, 2020, p. 263

<sup>37</sup> AIRE is the Public Register of Italian Residents Abroad.

<sup>38</sup> See [https://www.migrantes.it/wp-content/uploads/sites/50/2019/10/Sintesi\\_RIM2019.pdf](https://www.migrantes.it/wp-content/uploads/sites/50/2019/10/Sintesi_RIM2019.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> See <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en/legal-framework/domestic-law/Pages/Family-Reunification1130-4728.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> 14 metres for 1 inhabitant; 2,7 minimum height and other requirements as aeration etc. For the requirements in detail determining adequate housing in Italy see <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en/legal-framework/domestic-law/Pages/Family-Reunification1130-4728.aspx>

<sup>41</sup> See <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en/legal-framework/domestic-law/Pages/Family-Reunification1130-4728.aspx>.

According to EMN 2019 Annual Report on Asylum and Migration to Italy, the minimum annual income for 2019 was 5.954 euros. See <https://immigrazione.it/docs/2020/emn-rapporto-asilo-e-migrazione-italia.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> See <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en/legal-framework/domestic-law/Pages/Family-Reunification1130-4728.aspx>

<sup>43</sup> Eurostat [migr\_resfas]. Data extracted on January, 6, 2021.



Family reunification has become the main regular flow to enter in Italy, ranking before that for working reasons (see chapter 1 introduction). This factor confirms that the lack of a more structural and organic programming which overcome the temporary solution approach to “economic migration”, needs to find solutions.

Regular and well managed migration pathways are necessary to enhance economy and to help matching labour market needs, especially in countries like Italy, in which “brain drain” and ageing population are widespread challenges. National schemes are in place in Italy to simplify access to some categories of workers, investors and for students.

These processes have been facilitated also over the years by the transposition into the Italian legislation of some EU Directives related to labour migration as well as to student and researcher mobility. However, the fact that among the main channels for entering Italy that of family reunification is almost the preferred way to get to the country, raises concerns on the easy availability of getting a permit for working to Italy. In addition, the low percentage of students coming to Italy for tertiary education can also be seen as a consequence of the lack of possibilities of employment offered in the country to university graduates after the completion of their studies. Opportunities for joining Italy for talents and investors as well as for some category of workers are then available, but a strategy should be implemented to link attractiveness to a real sustainable development in Italy.

### Pathways to protection

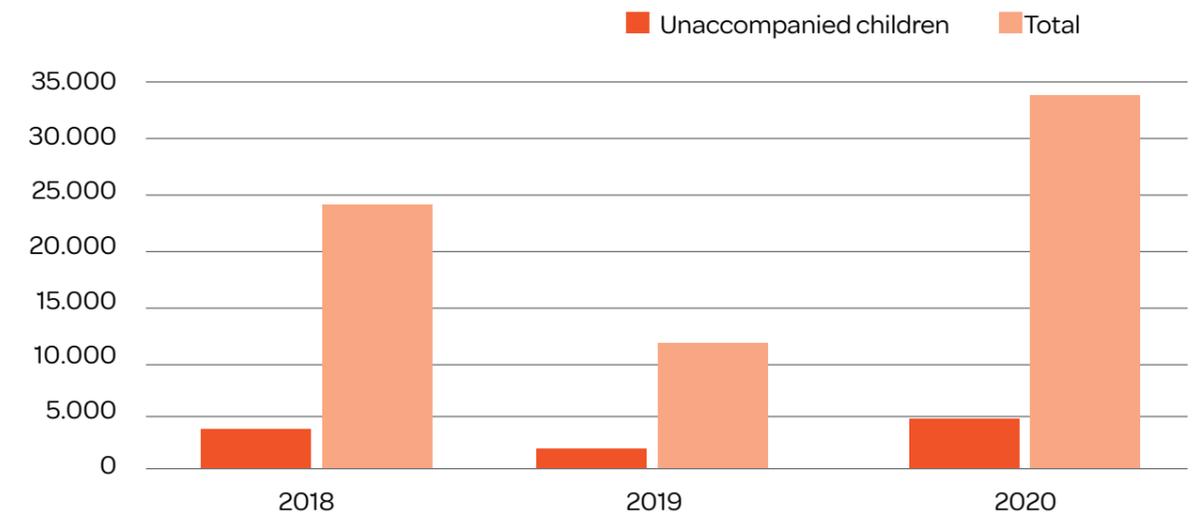
When vulnerable people come to Italy looking for international protection, regular migratory channels to reach the country in safe conditions are limited and restricted to a small number of people. As outlined in this report, in the recent past, Italy adopted an approach on migration that was based on readmission agreements and externalization of borders, usually aimed at reducing irregular migration (see chapter 6) and at addressing the roots of migration, rather than strengthening safe channels for entering the country. According to data published by the Ministry of Interior<sup>44</sup>, the total number of arrivals by sea decreased in 2019 comparing with the previous year and raised again in 2020. Almost the same trend is registered for unaccompanied minors. Asylum seekers decreased of 18% in 2019 (43,783), compared to 2018 (53,596). 11% of those examined were granted the refugee status, 7% subsidiary protection and 1% special protection<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> For data and statistics on the arrivals to Italy see <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/stampa-e-comunicazione/dati-e-statistiche/sbarchi-e-accoglienza-dei-migranti-tutti-i-dati>

<sup>45</sup> See IDOS, 2020, p. 148.



**Graphic 3** - Arrivals by sea in Italy per year (2018-2020) and composition.



Source: Figures developed on data published by the Ministry of Interior website<sup>46</sup>

This approach raised strong criticism especially from the civil society organisations, which denounced the lack of protection granted to migrants when sent back to countries which are not considered safe ports. The renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between Libya and Italy in February 2020 is the most famous in this sense. According to IDOS report, during 2019<sup>47</sup> at least 8,406 people have been tracked down by the Libyan coastguard and returned to Libya.

In 2020, the problem of border rejections along the Balkan route, from Bosnia to Croatia to Italy, also emerged. A practice that turned out to be illegitimate and shows how the Italian government, along with other European governments, put border protection before people (Box 2).

<sup>46</sup> See [http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto\\_statistico\\_giornaliero\\_31-12-2020\\_1.pdf](http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_31-12-2020_1.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> See IDOS, 2020, p. 149.



## BOX 2. Rejections at the Italian border with Slovenia

“According to official data released in September 2020, over the course of the year Italy quadrupled readmissions from Italy to Slovenia, based on the 1996 bilateral agreement, reaching 962 from January to the end of September 2020, compared to 250 in the same period of the previous year. The trend appears to be confirmed by data recently released by civil society networks and organizations, which report 1,240 rejections between January 1 and November 15, 2020.”<sup>48</sup>

“The rejections desired by the Italian Ministry of Interior and practiced with increasing intensity since spring 2020 at the border with Slovenia are “illegitimate,” violate constitutional obligations and international law, and have knowingly exposed migrants in transit along the “Balkan route,” including asylum seekers, to “inhuman and degrading treatment” as well as “real torture inflicted by Croatian police.”

To crystallize it, demolishing the government practice of “informal readmissions” to the eastern border, is the Ordinary Court of Rome (Section of Human Rights and Immigration) with an order dated January 18, 2021 and arrived following an appeal filed by lawyers Caterina Bove and Anna Brambilla (Trieste and Milan Bar, Asgi partners) in the interest of an asylum seeker from Pakistan rejected by Italy in the summer of 2020 once arrived in Trieste and found himself in Sarajevo to live with hardship.”<sup>49</sup>

Cooperation with third countries, however, is not only linked to bad examples.

Although secure access routes to get to Italy are still limited, successful actions have been implemented. Since December 2017, as an example, **8 humanitarian evacuation** operations have been organised for the transfer of 808 asylum seekers from Libya and 105 from Niger to Italy. Humanitarian evacuations are carried out in collaboration with UNHCR and are aimed to rapidly transferring people in emergency situations. Potential beneficiaries are reported to the Government by UNHCR, travel expenses are normally covered by the state and beneficiaries follow the normal process of the asylum seekers<sup>50</sup>. As to **resettlement programs**, since 2015, 2,510 refugees from Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Sudan and Turkey have been resettled in Italy (an additional commitment for 700 people is forecasted for 2020/2021)<sup>51</sup>. The selection of beneficiaries is carried out by the Ministry of Interior in collaboration with UNHCR, the journey and reception are covered by the State (with a European co-funding of 10,000 for each refugee resettled).

In addition, among the best practices coming from Italy, the project of the **Humanitarian Corridors**<sup>52</sup> is worth mentioning. Realized by the Community of Sant’Egidio with the Italian Confederation of Evangelical Churches, Tavola Valdese, and CEI-Caritas, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Ministry of the Interior, the program aims at granting people in vulnerable conditions regular entry into the Italian territory through the issuing of a visa, thus contrasting deaths in the Mediterranean as well as the risk of human trafficking and smuggling.

<sup>48</sup> Le pratiche di respingimento dell’Italia alla frontiera con la Slovenia violano la Legge Zampa (06/02/2021) - Vita.it

<sup>49</sup> I respingimenti italiani in Slovenia sono illegittimi. Condannato il ministero dell’Interno (altreconomia.it)

<sup>50</sup> See [https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-06/intervento\\_capo\\_dipartimento\\_di\\_bari.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-06/intervento_capo_dipartimento_di_bari.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> For more information see [https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-06/intervento\\_capo\\_dipartimento\\_di\\_bari.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2020-06/intervento_capo_dipartimento_di_bari.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> For more information about the project see <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/34176/langID/it/Dossier-sui-corridoi-umanitari-in-Europa.html>



Religious communities are in charge of receiving the beneficiaries once they arrive in Italy, assuring them an accommodation and economic aid over the time needed to file an application for international protection<sup>53</sup>. According to Sant’Egidio estimates, as of 13 December 2019, 1,805 people coming from Lebanon, 601 from Ethiopia, 22 from Turkey and Jordan, 54 from Lesbos have entered Italy through the system of the Humanitarian corridors<sup>54</sup>.

International student mobility programs targeting refugees and asylum seekers are also starting to be developed. As an example, 10 Italian universities with the support of UNHCR, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Caritas Italiana, Diaconia Valdese, and other partners developed a project called **University Corridor for Refugees**<sup>55</sup> (UNICORE). The project was launched in 2019 with the aim at selecting 20 refugees residing in Ethiopia to continue their higher education in Italy, giving them the chance of getting to Italy through regular and safe channels.

Family reunification is also another way to get to Italy for family members of refugees living in Italy. It is not necessary to hold appropriate housing requirements and income in this case<sup>56</sup>.

Resettlement programs, humanitarian corridors as well as university corridors represent best practices in terms of enhancing regular and safe entry to Italy. However, these measures are still available for a limited number of people.

Considering the high number of deaths in the Mediterranean and the risk of exploitation and trafficking (see chapter 1 and 6) that people coming irregularly to the EU face during their journeys, it is important to focus on the enhancement of the safe migratory channels. After the positive changes related to the Security Decrees reform, strengthening the already existent resettlement programs can be a good step forward in this sense as requested by UN agencies and the EU.

## Recommendations

As to the importance that the enhancement of the regular migratory channels to Italy have at both economic and security levels, we recommend Italy to sign the Global Compact on Migration and to adopt a comprehensive and long-term strategy on migration, overcoming the temporary and piecemeal approach to the issue of regular channels to enter the country.

The revision of the overall migration policy linked to economic migrants, particularly through the adoption of the law proposal ERO Straniero, thus reintroducing the sponsorship system and introducing the temporary permit for employment, are fundamental steps for turning the concept of migration as an “emergency issue” into that of migration for sustainable development.

On the other hand, greater use of visas for innovative foreign entrepreneurs as well as the Blue Card for skilled migrants seems to depend fundamentally on Italy’s economic and social recovery, and therefore on the adoption of a comprehensive plan for sustainable development.

<sup>53</sup> See [https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/politica\\_estera/temi\\_globali/diritti\\_umani/i-corridoi-umanitari.html](https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/politica_estera/temi_globali/diritti_umani/i-corridoi-umanitari.html)

<sup>54</sup> See <http://www.santegidio.org/downloads/Dossier-Corridoi-Umanitari-20191213-cifre.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> To know more about the project see <https://www.unhcr.org/it/cosa-facciamo/partner/progetti/unicore/>

<sup>56</sup> See <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en/legal-framework/domestic-law/Pages/Family-Reunification1130-4728.aspx>



Further promoting the internationalisation of the Italian university system (together with developing well managed policies oriented at increasing job opportunities for the young generations), fostering academic exchange programs and the attraction of foreign entrepreneurs, can help the mobility of talents as well as skill-exchange, thus improving cooperation with third countries and strengthening the link between migration and sustainable development.

This needs to be reconsidered also in the framework of the EU negotiation on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, which has to overcome the approach of “securing borders” in favour of a better addressed strategy on the enhancement of regular channels for migrants, asylum seekers as well as economic migrants.

To these recommendations we link the recent proposals of CINI, contained in the box below.

### **BOX 3. Recommendations for safe and regular migratory channels**

CINI<sup>57</sup>

Human beings have been migrating since the dawn of time for a multitude of reasons, including the search for comprehensive protection, as well as the improvement of their life and work opportunities. While the 2030 Agenda affirms the importance of migration for inclusive growth and sustainable development, the debate on the nexus between migration and development has tended, in recent years, to focus on a vision of development policies as “disincentives” to migration.

Safe and regular migration can offer opportunities in terms of the development of partner countries, as reaffirmed by the 2016 New York Declaration on Migrants and Refugees, having a higher potential for poverty reduction than irregular migration because it is less costly, risky, and detrimental to the rights of those involved. From a development perspective, safe and regular migration support programs must therefore be thought of as a complementary tool to other development programs, and as a fundamental poverty reduction tool: they have the potential for far greater impact than traditional development programs.

The channels of regular entry to Italy that exist today are extremely limited, while the options for regular migration are many and in the Italian case potentially expandable, in a development perspective, even within the current regulatory framework, such as pilot programs of labour mobility, private sponsorships for extended family reunification, community sponsorships, humanitarian corridors.

With a view to the protection of people’s rights and lives, to the development of the countries of origin, but also to the convenience for some productive sectors and to the stability of the Italian asylum system, it is essential that the restrictive approach to regular migration is broadened and evolves not within a dichotomy between openness and closure to new entries, but rather towards the definition



of a range of regular options corresponding to the different profiles of migrants and opportunities for their integration in Italy so as to make the migration path safe, productive and protected in terms of rights, with positive effects in terms of development for Italy and the country of origin.

The Italian system of international cooperation - first and foremost the public sector - can play a central role in the promotion and expansion of regular migration options. In particular, the investments needed can be an opportunity to redefine in a new and different way the Italian Official Development Assistance funds currently allocated to the theme of “migration & development”, which need an alternative strategic review with respect to the “root causes of migration” approach, as well as to that based on a securitarian vision of African border control.

<sup>57</sup> CINI is the Italian Coordination of International NGOs: <https://www.cininet.org/>



## 5. GENDER PERSPECTIVE

In Objective 5, **2030 Agenda** calls for ensuring gender equality by eliminating all forms of discrimination against women, including trafficking and other forms of exploitation (target 5.2); recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work (target 5.4); undertaking reforms to grant women equal rights to economic resources (5.A); adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels (5.C), among others<sup>1</sup>. As women represent a large portion of migrants, both targets 5 and 10.7 (see chapters 2 and 3) are strictly interconnected.



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In addition, women empowerment is linked to Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” and, particularly, to its Target 8.8 “Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers and particularly female migrants”. As female migrants are usually at serious risk of sexual exploitation and abuses, target 5.2 of the Agenda is also connected to Goal 16 “promote peaceful and inclusive societies” and, specifically, to its targets 16.1 “significantly reduce all forms of violence everywhere”, 16.2 “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children” and 16.3 “promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice for all”<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>For all the targets of in detail see <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

<sup>2</sup>See Gender and Migration, M. Giampaolo, A. Ianni, Faces of Migration, Background document n.3, February 2020. <https://gcap.global/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Gender-and-Migration-Focsiv-11.03.2020.pdf>



**The Global Compact on Migration (GCM)**, has been agreed on a series of principles including that of being gender-responsive. The GCM ensures that the human rights of women, men, girls and boys are respected at all stages of migration, their specific needs are properly understood and addressed and they are empowered as agents of change. It mainstreams a gender perspective, promotes gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, recognizing their independence, agency and leadership<sup>3</sup>. In particular Objective 10 calls for the prevention of and eradication of trafficking in persons in the context of international migration; Objective 16 calls for empowering migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion and, in particular, migrant women; Objective 7 calls for addressing and reducing vulnerabilities in migration through the development of gender-responsive migration policies addressing the particular needs and vulnerabilities of migrant women, girls and boys (which may include assistance, health care, psychological and other counselling services, as well as access to justice and effective remedies, especially in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation).

Gender equality is a cross-cutting issue within the **Italian National Strategy for Sustainable Development**. In the area of Peace, the strategy puts gender equality as a specific objective of the broader strategy for eliminating all forms of discrimination. Among the other priorities of the section, the NSSD calls for promoting inclusive and nonviolent societies by preventing violence against women and children, and by guaranteeing inclusion of migrants and asylum seekers (with reference to targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5c), and for ensuring legality and justice by intensifying the fight against criminality (recalling target 5.2 of the 2030 agenda), among others.

According to **ISTAT report** on the Sustainable Development Indicators, there are 16 statistical measures for Goal 5 (gender equality) referring to 7 Indicators UN-IAEG-SDGs. The table of indicators does not provide disaggregated data for migrant and/or foreign women. However, within the brief analysis of each indicator, foreign women are mentioned (ex. percentage of women that contact anti-violence centres or the ratio between women workers with children and without children) recognizing them among the most vulnerable groups<sup>4</sup>.

### Social and Economic Inclusion of Women Migrants

Foreign population in Italy counts 5.039.637 people according to the latest ISTAT data<sup>5</sup>, among them, 2.607.959 are women. The top ten female foreign residents in Italy come from Romania, Albania, Morocco, Ukraine, China, Philippines, Moldova, India, Poland and Peru<sup>6</sup>. In 2020, the majority of extra EU female citizens hold a long stay residence permit (1,152,646) and 620,850 hold short term permits. The number of female asylum seekers in Italy, according to data released by the Ministry of Interior, remained almost unchanged both for 2018 and 2019 (respectively 11,745 and 11,698), while the number of male migrants in 2019 decreased by 23% compared to the previous year.

<sup>3</sup> See [https://refugeemigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180713\\_agreed\\_outcome\\_global\\_compact\\_for\\_migration.pdf](https://refugeemigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180713_agreed_outcome_global_compact_for_migration.pdf)

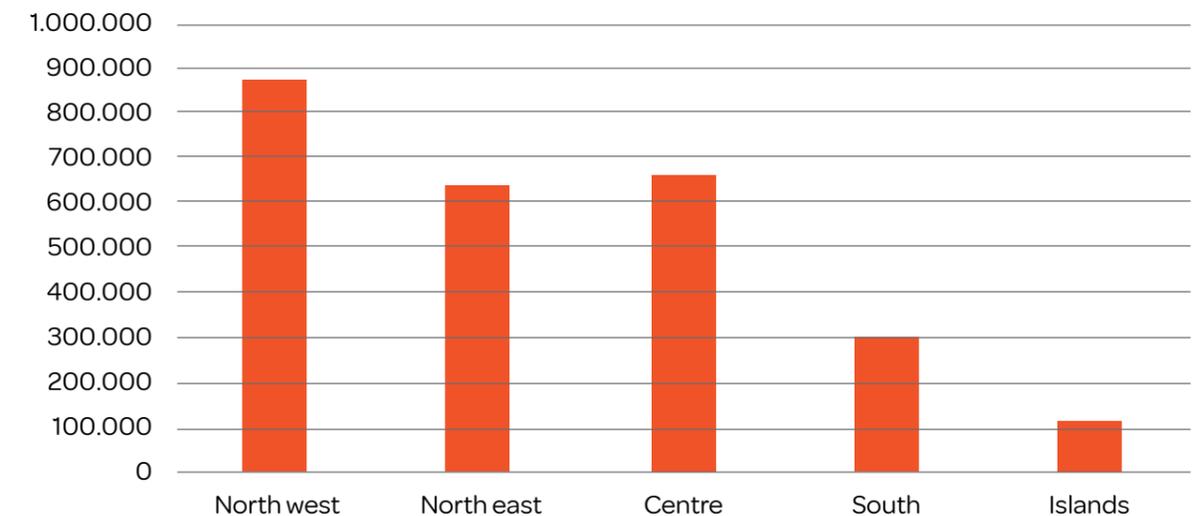
<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.istat.it/storage/rapporti-tematici/sdgs/2020/goal5.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> See [http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS\\_POPSTRRES1](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_POPSTRRES1)

<sup>6</sup> ISTAT, data extracted on January 11, 2021. [http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS\\_POPSTRRES1](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_POPSTRRES1)



**Graphic 1** - Geographical distribution of foreign population (female) in Italy in 2020



Source: Figure developed on ISTAT data<sup>7</sup>

According to IDOS report<sup>8</sup>, there are 1,094,039 **foreign employed women** (over the age of 15). The Italian region with the highest rate of foreign female workers is Lombardy (21.2%). Unemployed female foreign nationals represent 52.8% out of the total of foreigners unemployed. As to their nationalities, the unemployment rate of Egyptian women is 54.3%, that of Ghanaian women is 52.7%, 39.5% for Tunisians, 36.4% for Moroccans, 32.6% Bangladeshis and 32.5% for Indians. The majority of female foreign workers belongs to the 35-44 age group (30.1%), followed by the age group 45-54 years (27.7%) and that between 25-34 (20.4%).

The gender distribution varies according to the economic activity. The female component is prevalent in collective and personal services<sup>9</sup> which usually represent the first work experience of many female migrants in Italy (see also the chapter on economic inclusion). In 2019, 4 out of 10 (40.6%) women migrants were employed in domestic or family care service<sup>10</sup>. As for their nationalities, in 2019 the involvement of women migrants in the household services increased for Filipino women (67.8%) and Peruvians (61.3%). Despite a slight decrease, the presence of Ukrainians remains high (over 60%) as well as that of Moldovans (half)<sup>11</sup>. Again, IDOS report<sup>12</sup>, estimates that there are currently more than one and a half million (among regular and irregular) **domestic workers** in Italy. Domestic work almost exclusively employs women (more than 88%) and foreign population for the largest proportion (more than 70%).

As a proof of the high percentage of irregularly employed in the sector of domestic care services, which usually employs migrant women, we can look at the number of applications, for the regularization procedure launched by the Italian Government in 2020, per sector.

<sup>7</sup> Data extracted on January 11, 2021.

<sup>8</sup> See IDOS 2020, pp.117-118.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See IDOS 2020, p.263

<sup>11</sup> Ibid p.267

<sup>12</sup> See IDOS 2020, p.296



On May 19, 2020, the Parliament approved Decree no. 34 which enables, in art. 103, Italian employers or nationals of an EU Member State, or foreign employers in possession of the residence permit, to sign a subordinate employment contract with foreign citizens who are already living in the country, or to declare the existence of an irregular employment relationship still ongoing with Italian citizens or foreign nationals, and to regularize it. The process of regularisation has been addressed to the sectors of agriculture, domestic and care services. According to data released by the Ministry of Interior<sup>13</sup>, as of August 2020, applications for domestic work and assistance prevailed, accounting for 85% (176,848) out of the total number of applications submitted (207,542). As of Ero Straniero first evaluation of the provision, considering the restrictions of this extraordinary procedure, the number of applications received are tangible testimony to the desire of tens of thousands of irregular workers to regularise their position<sup>14</sup>.

Domestic care sector is not the only one in which irregular working relations, that also targets women, are reported. According to the Agromafia report 2020, in **agriculture**, where the exploitation of labour (particularly of migrants) is one of the main strategies for reducing production costs, the asymmetry of gender power relations produces specific forms of exploitation<sup>15</sup>. Exploitation which is usually linked to a system of illicit brokering. In order to contrast the phenomenon of undeclared work and exploitation in agriculture, Italy approved Law 199/2016 which provides for some important measures to face the spread of the phenomenon (see chapter 3 on economic Integration).

As for **remuneration** as employees, foreign women are disadvantaged compared to men. According to IDOS report, on average, they receive an income 23.8% lower than men and this gap is more evident for Senegalese workers (-49.5%) and Moroccans (-42.3%). The difference is minimum for the Chinese (-8.7%) and Peruvians (-13.5%)<sup>16</sup>. In addition, immigrant women labourers during the first wave of the Covid-19, received a salary 20-30% lower than their male colleagues<sup>17</sup>. This data does not surprise, considering that in general terms, the monthly wages of women in Italy are lower than those of their male counterparts. According to Eige (European Institute for gender equality), in a 0-100 points scale Italy has 63.5<sup>18</sup> points and ranks 14th in the EU on the Gender Equality Index (the value include work, money, knowledge, time, power, health). Among the negative indicators it is highlighted that women's average monthly earnings amount to almost a fifth less than men's.

In addition, as reported by Sapiens<sup>19</sup>, the **risk of poverty** that women already run much more than men, increases in conditions of greater vulnerability. That is the case of migrant women, women with disabilities, women with a low level of education, women over 65 years or single mothers<sup>20</sup>. Women migrants are particularly exposed to the risk of poverty due to structural and systematic inequalities, poor education, and little access to basic services. Among foreign women in **NEET**<sup>21</sup> condition, according to ISTAT data for 2019, there are 40,6% of young women aged between 15-29 years old who neither work nor study (compared to 22,3% of Italian girls), and the percentage is higher in the south of Italy. Exclusion from employment and trainings goes along with the patriarchal model of gender roles, which often relegates foreign women to domestic care<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> See <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/notizie/emersione-dei-rapporti-lavoro-presentate-piu-207mila-domande>

<sup>14</sup> See [https://erostraniero.radicali.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Ero-straniero\\_27-ottobre-2020.pdf](https://erostraniero.radicali.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Ero-straniero_27-ottobre-2020.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> See OSSERVATORIO PLACIDO RIZZOTTO FLAI-CGIL, Agromafie e caporalato Quinto Rapporto, p. 83.

<sup>16</sup> For more information see IDOS 2020, p. 272

<sup>17</sup> See Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2020, IDOS, p.290.

<sup>18</sup> The reported rank is related to 2020. See <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2020/country/IT>

<sup>19</sup> Sapiens is a social magazine by LUZ, a content marketing agency <https://luz.it/en/what-we-do/>.

<sup>20</sup> See [https://luz.it/spns\\_article/in-italia/](https://luz.it/spns_article/in-italia/)

<sup>21</sup> Neither in Employment or in Education or Training.

<sup>22</sup> See IDOS 2020, p.118



interesting data comes from **entrepreneurship**. According to Unioncamere report<sup>23</sup>, in 2019, foreign women run companies amount to almost 149,000, 11.1% of the total number of women-led enterprises, while among men, foreign companies account for 9.8%. Entrepreneurial activities led by immigrant women have increased by more than 23% since 2014. Foreign female entrepreneurs have grown more both compared to that of Italian female entrepreneurs (+2.9% compared to 2014) and compared to foreign entrepreneurs (+15.8%). About sectors of employment, 71% of foreign female entrepreneurship in Italy operates in the tertiary sector, where trade remains by far the sector with the largest presence of foreign female enterprises (32.3%), followed by accommodation and catering services (13.3%). As to the geographical distribution, Lombardy, Lazio and Tuscany are the regions with the highest number of companies led by female foreign nationals in Italy. According to Unioncamere report, the greater diffusion of foreign female companies compared to that of men seems to show that being entrepreneurs is an important factor of socio-economic inclusion, compensating the limits of a demand for low-skilled and more physical jobs often reserved to male migrants<sup>24</sup>.

Regarding the access to **health**, according to IDOS report, despite the fact that legislation, both at national and regional level, establishes access to health care with equal rights for Italian and foreign citizens, some serious challenges emerge, often due to bureaucratic delays, long waiting times, linguistic problems, added to episodes of institutional racism that increase mistrust in approaching these services<sup>25</sup>. These challenges particularly affect women asylum seekers and women holders of international protection hosted in the Italian reception systems. In this case, the lack of a proper training of the operators and staff working in the centres on the main challenges that women migrants (trafficking, exploitation, sexual gender-based violence) suffer during their journeys, makes it difficult to refer them to specialized services.

In addition, there are economic and social factors which influence the health conditions of migrant women (see also chapter 2 and 3) like unemployment, social exclusion and the living conditions which often relegate migrant community to ghetto neighbourhoods. Some interesting data on women's migrant community in Italy and on the link between social exclusion and health conditions is that "the sense of loneliness increases the risk of smoking by 33% among women and 17% among men; difficulties in communication with the doctor, on the other hand, are associated with greater risk of obesity"<sup>26</sup>. In particular, the tendency to alcohol and cigarette abuse is especially reported among women coming from Eastern Europe, and obesity is mostly spread among North African women (due to religious culture that, very often, prevent them from alcoholism and smoking)<sup>27</sup>.

### Women migrants and trafficking of human beings

Between 2017-2018 a total of 74,514 victims of trafficking were detected in 110 countries and women and girls represent 72% of all trafficking victims globally<sup>28</sup>. The phenomenon of trafficking of human beings is globally widespread. Italy, as many external EU border member States, represents a way of transit and/or destination of criminal organizations routes involved in trafficking of human beings. Data from the Ministry of Interior collected by the European Commission<sup>29</sup> show 1988 victims registered in Italy in the period 2017-2018, of which as many as 1743 were female, 4104 traffickers suspected and arrested, which is the highest number among European countries, of which 82% were for sexual exploitation, and 2235 were of Italian nationality.

<sup>23</sup> See Union Camere, Rapporto Imprenditoria femminile 2020

<sup>24</sup> See Union Camere, p. 55

<sup>25</sup> IDOS 2020, p.119

<sup>26</sup> ISTAT, Vita e percorsi di integrazione degli immigrati in Italia, 2018, p. 267

<sup>27</sup> See ISTAT, Vita e percorsi di integrazione degli immigrati in Italia, 2018, pg. 262 <https://www.istat.it/it/files//2019/05/Vita-e-percorsi.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> See Addressing Emerging Human Trafficking Trends and Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic, OSCE and UN WOMEN <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/b/467700.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> European Commission, Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the European Union, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, 2020.



In Italy, Legislative Decree n. 24/2014 (which transposes EU Directive 36 of 2011, on preventing and combating trafficking of human beings and protecting its victims), identifies the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers as the body responsible for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the results of policies for preventing and combating trafficking of human beings and for the social protection of its victims<sup>30</sup>.

The main recent response of the Italian legislative system for protecting victims of trafficking is the **National Plan against trafficking and severe exploitation of human beings**. The first edition of the plan was launched in 2016 for the two-year period 2016-2018. The plan was developed around 5 priorities, namely: identify, protect and assist victims of trafficking; prevent trafficking of human beings; strengthen prosecution against traffickers; improve coordination between key stakeholders and policy coherence; to raise awareness on all forms of trafficking of human beings and to provide an effective response<sup>31</sup>. The Plan provided for the establishment of a centralised database which is of crucial importance for identifying the victims. According to data provided by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities website, in 2018<sup>32</sup> 91.83% of the people in charge of the system and identified as victims of trafficking were women. Same trend has been confirmed for the first semester of 2019 when the majority of the victims identified were women (83.94 %)<sup>33</sup>. Both in 2018 and mid-2019, the highest number of victims of trafficking were Nigerians. According to the Ministry of Equal opportunities website, an updated version of the Plan is about to be finalized<sup>34</sup>.

The identification and social inclusion of victims of trafficking are issues addressed by the Italian governmental action. To give some examples, the Ministry of the Interior supported within the framework of the AMIF funds 2014-2020<sup>35</sup>, the ADITUS project carried out in collaboration with the IOM between 2017-2019. The project focused on 4 areas of intervention including: legal counselling activity at landing points to all migrants promoting the early identification and protection of victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors; trainings sessions (about family reunification, protection of minors potentially victims of trafficking and/or labour exploitation, psychosocial support mechanisms) to the staff working in the first reception centres for unaccompanied minors; trainings on counter exploitation schemes to Prefectures, Police Offices, Social Services, Local Health Authorities; reception standards monitoring<sup>36</sup>.

In addition, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers – Department for Equal Opportunities concluded on 19 October 2018 a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of the Interior to implement interventions in Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicily regions aimed at overcoming the conditions of disadvantage and exploitation of women and children victims of trafficking, through social integration paths, and provision of information on psychological support, medical services etc. The Project “NON si Tratta: Actions for the inclusion of the victims of trafficking” aims to carry out actions for identifying victims of trafficking (migrants, asylum seekers and unaccompanied foreign minors) and of strengthening their socio-occupational integration<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> See <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/contrasto-della-tratta-di-esseri-umani/>

<sup>31</sup> See <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/materiale/piano-dazione-contro-la-tratta-e-il-grave-sfruttamento/>

<sup>32</sup> See <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Servizio-Informatizzato-per-la-Raccolta-di-Informazioni-sulla-Tratta-Dati-2018.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> See <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Servizio-Informatizzato-per-la-Raccolta-di-informazioni-sulla-tratta-Dati-1%C2%BD-semester-2019.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> See <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/news/tratta-esseri-umani-bonetti-riunisce-la-cabina-di-regia/>

<sup>35</sup> See Rapporto Annuale 2019 Migrazione e Asilo in Italia, EMN, p.30. <https://immigrazione.it/docs/2020/emn-rapporto-asilo-e-migrazione-italia.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> See <https://italy.iom.int/en/activities/assistance-vulnerable-groups-and-minors-/ADITUS>

<sup>37</sup> See <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/materiale/cabina-di-regia/>



Best practices against human trafficking and exploitation also come from civil society organisations. One of the latest examples in this sense is represented by the MEDiterranean reception systems' coordinated RESponse for people in migration victims of SGBV (see Box 1).

### BOX 1. MEDiterranean reception systems' coordinated RESponse for refugees and asylum seekers survivors of sexual and gender-based violence

AIDOS, GCAP ITALY member

The “MEDiterranean reception systems' coordinated RESponse for people in migration victims of SGBV” project (MED RES) was implemented in three European Union (EU) countries, Italy, Malta and Spain in 2018-2020 with the aim of contributing to the inclusion of female/male people in migration, particularly refugees and asylum seekers survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in integrated and coordinated reception and support services/systems<sup>38</sup>. In fact, most women and children arriving by sea have survived SGBV, including sexual assault and rape, even while traveling. The IOM estimates that about 80% of Nigerian women who arrived in Italy by sea in 2016 are potential victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in Italy or in other states of the European Union. There is also an increasing number of men and boys who have survived sexual and gender-based violence, although most cases are not reported.<sup>39</sup> The project built the capacities of relevant operators/professionals to give appropriate services to PIMs survivors of SGBV with a coordinated, intercultural, multidisciplinary and gender approach. During the project implementation, “Training of Trainers” and Roll Out training as webinars on SGBV were delivered, and operating tools, as leaflets addressed to PIMs, were produced<sup>40</sup>.

The trainings revealed the need to analyse three specific forms of SGBV in greater detail: rape, Female Genital Mutilation and human trafficking for sexual exploitation as all three phenomena have a high incidence in migrant populations arriving in the three countries.

The exchange of experiences<sup>41</sup> among operators, professionals and experts of the three countries and the final webinar<sup>42</sup> gave the opportunities to discuss case studies, identify critical areas, exchange best practices and draft bottom-up recommendations to be addressed to various institutions.

Among the most relevant recommendations to Italy were: Strengthen the efforts to enhance the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in all member states; Address and implement the GREVIO<sup>43</sup> recommendation to the Italian Government; Implement existing anti-trafficking laws with uniformity and more broadly ensure harmonisation among regions in terms of provision of adequate services; Ensure appropriate human and financial long term resources and increase accountability in order to ensure provision of high quality services and facilitate both the disclosure of SGBV as the empowerment of SGBV survivors; Adopt a survivor centered approach that empowers survivors to be agents of change and promoters of their own social and economic inclusion; Reinforce ties with feminist organisations offering transversal, intercultural and gender friendly services as premises. Provide regular multidisciplinary training of personnel, including public and private staff, with a gender, intercultural and integrated approach so as to strengthen local referral systems and the quality of care. Institutionalise the involvement of trained cultural/linguistic mediators with standardized certifications and deontological codes.

<sup>38</sup> The MED-RES project was implemented by AIDOS (the Italian Association of Women for Development) in cooperation with the Women's Rights Foundation (WRF, Malta) and Federación de Planificación Familiar Estatal (FPFE, Spain). The project is co-funded by the European Commission with funds from the Directorate General Justice and Consumer (DG Justice), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNFPA EECARO, by UNHCR and UNHCR Italia, by the Maltese Ministry for Education and Labour, and the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

<sup>39</sup> Strategy on SGBV, UNHCR Italy, 2017- 2019

<sup>40</sup> The operating tools (1 toolkits on SGBV for trainers, 1 guide on the EU directives relevant to the topic and adapted to the Spanish, Italian and Maltese context as 1 factsheet for operators in the three languages) as the leaflets (in 9 PIMs languages) developed in the framework of the project may be found on the websites of the three partners AIDOS, FPFE and WRF

<sup>41</sup> Initially scheduled to be held in Malta during March 2020, it was, however, cancelled owing to the COVID-19 Pandemic and rescheduled to be held online.

<sup>42</sup> The webinar can be seen on the AIDOS youtube channel and the program is available on the AIDOS website

<sup>43</sup> GREVIO is the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) by the parties.



### Recommendations

Once arrived to their destination countries, women migrants are usually in condition of extreme vulnerability. During their journeys in many cases women on the move experience violence and/or become or risk to be victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Recognising that women migrants require specific support helps better understand and address their vulnerabilities. Organizing trainings to both private and public service staff who manage the reception system in identifying victims of trafficking and SGBV, and addressing them to appropriate facilities can help in responding to diversified women needs, strengthen local referral systems and improving their access to care services and life dignity.

In order to facilitate socio-economic inclusion, there is a need to develop specific and active policies (training on Italian language, civic education, job and access to health services orientation), particularly targeting women migrants for both preventing their social exclusion and improving their access to the labour market.

Regarding irregular migrants (both women and men), more broadly, even if the process of regularisation represented a step forward in order to legalize the stay of many workers in Italy, it cannot be considered as a permanent solution. As outlined by many civil society organisations, irregular migration cannot be solved by periodic regularisation provisions. There is a need to revise the overall migration policy by increasing and improving regular channels for migration (see chapter 4).

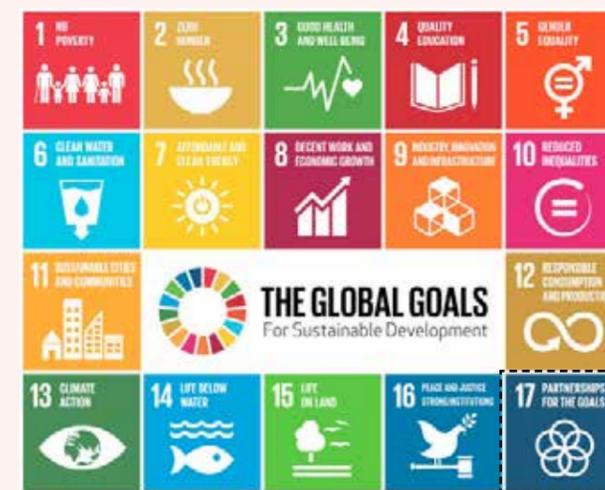
Finally, it is necessary to mention LGBTQI persons who, by virtue of their sexual orientation and gender identity, file applications for refugee status. The persecution of people because of their sexual orientation is not a recent phenomenon. It is only in recent years, however, that an increasing number of asylum applications are being filed by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (“LGBT”) people. This calls for greater awareness of the specific experiences of LGBT asylum seekers among decision-makers and a more in-depth analysis of the legal issues involved.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain/opendocpdf.pdf?reldoc=y&docid=5513c5c24>



## 6. INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AND DIASPORAS IN SDG17

Goal 17 of the **2030 Agenda** on international partnership calls for action on finance, technology, trade, and systemic issues such as development coherence, and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Specifically, Target 17.17 calls for “Encouraging and promoting effective partnerships in the public sector, between the public and private sectors, and in civil society by building on the partnerships’ experience and capacity to find resources.” Although not all actors are made explicit, diasporas can well be considered one of the stakeholders to be involved in international partnerships for sustainable development policies<sup>1</sup>.



Ph. Global Goals for Sustainable Development

In turn, Goal 19 of the **Global Compact on Migration** indicates the “creations of conditions for migrants and diasporas to contribute fully to sustainable development in all countries.” States must commit to empowering diasporas and enhancing the benefits of migration. Among the actions envisaged are the integration of migration into development planning, the creation of bodies to involve diasporas, tools to facilitate their investment and commitments to cooperation.

The **Italian Strategy for Sustainable Development** indicates the theme of migration and development among the priorities of the Partnership for Development. In fact, the Strategy refers to the programming of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and for International Cooperation (MFAIC) and the Law 125/2014 on development cooperation policy that show among the priorities: the encouragement of migrants as actors of development, their entrepreneurial and professional skills, and models of cooperation to prevent and manage migrant flows.

<sup>1</sup>The indicator proposed by the United Nations is very specific and focused (“17.17.1 Amount in United States dollars committed to public-private partnerships for infrastructure”; source: Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) considering, instead, the very broad spectrum of actions that partnerships put in place.



In the **ISTAT 2020 report** on sustainable development with reference to objective 17, there are two indicators related to migrants and concerning remittances to foreign countries. There are no indicators on partnership and in particular on the priorities of the Strategy indicated above. For this reason, this report is important. In fact, in these pages, we will give an account of what Italian institutions are doing regarding migration in international partnerships for sustainable development.

### Partnerships and development cooperation

First, it must be underlined that, although the international community has proceeded to evolve the partnership for the governance of migration, arriving at the definition of the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, the Italian government and parliament have not signed the former. The Italian political debate focused on the issue of territorial sovereignty that the global compact would have called into question. Whereas the global compact does not undermine this principle. Ideological issues blocked the debate. In this way, Italy is not participating in a multilateral instrument of international cooperation and partnership for the governance of migration, while acting bilaterally and within the European Union (where most member states have signed the Global Compact).

In this sense, the recent start of negotiations on the New Pact for Migration and Asylum of the European Union is relevant. The European Commission's proposal envisages partnership with third countries to govern migratory flows, continuing what has been achieved in recent years. Reference is therefore made above all to those agreements with third countries (from Turkey to Libya, to the Sahelian countries) that aim to stop migration in transit countries and return irregular migrants to their countries of origin, supporting the capacity of local governments to provide protection to refugees and displaced persons, to hit trafficking and smuggling of human beings, and to address the root causes of migration, from lack of work to environmental and climate problems. Very little is considered in terms of the benefits of migration for sustainable development, legal migration routes and the active role of diasporas<sup>2</sup>.

Conversely, Italian development cooperation policy has a positive view on the role of migration for sustainable development (despite some ambiguities), and has corresponded well to Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda and Goal 19 of the Global Compact, especially with regard to the participation of diasporas.

Law 125/2014 on development cooperation provides for and has implemented the participation of a representative of diasporas in the National Council for Development Cooperation. The Council created a working group on migration and development in which several representatives of diasporas currently sit thanks to a project that promoted their involvement. In fact, the National Summit of Diasporas project<sup>3</sup> has supported several information, training and networking activities that have led to the creation of territorial networks of migrants' associations. These networks will constitute the National Forum of Diasporas that will be their voice to participate in the Partnership for Sustainable Development. Meanwhile, migrant associations are already partners in development cooperation projects with Italian NGOs in different countries and for different issues, from agricultural development to renewable energy, to support communities of origin in the fields of education and health<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> For a critical analysis of the New Pact see the background document FOCSIV Faces of Migration n.9 in Background-Documents-n.-9-ITA-28.01.2021-1.pdf (focsiv.it)

<sup>3</sup> See <https://summitdiaspore.org/>, and the video *Le diaspore e le nuove generazioni per la ripresa e lo sviluppo sostenibile* – FOCSIV

<sup>4</sup> See the *Manuale delle diaspore nella cooperazione allo sviluppo italiana* (Handbook of diasporas in Italian development cooperation) (<https://www.cespi.it/it/ricerche/manuale-delle-diaspore-nella-cooperazione-allo-sviluppo-italiana/>) and the document *Le associazioni della diaspora e la cooperazione allo sviluppo: tra crescita delle professionalità e pratiche di cittadinanza* (<https://www.cespi.it/it/ricerche/le-associazioni-della-diaspora-la-cooperazione-allo-sviluppo-tra-crescita-delle->), which illustrate some of these projects.



In addition to the direct involvement of diasporas, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)<sup>5</sup> is engaged in several projects for humanitarian assistance and refugee protection, for safe migration of domestic working women, for information on responsible migration, on finance and remittances with the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti<sup>6</sup>. In some cases, however, there is a certain ambiguity: while, on the one hand, the benefits of migration for development are supported, on the other hand, the concept that cooperation is needed to reduce irregular migratory flows is espoused, corresponding to a securitarian political idea (without foreseeing actions for safe and orderly channels). The title of the SINCE project, for example, is explicit in this sense (Stemming Irregular Migration in Northern and Central Ethiopia)<sup>7</sup>. a project managed by AICS and financed by the European Trust Fund for Emergency in Africa (EUTF)<sup>8</sup>, which promotes the creation of local employment to stem irregular migration. An objective that is, however, difficult to assess considering that the people employed are not necessarily really intent on emigrating, and that the wages they earn could, on the other hand, be used to support the expenses of brothers or sisters who are about to emigrate.

Projects on migration are also financed (for a value of around 250 million euros) with the Africa Fund managed by the General Directorate for Migration Policies of MFAIC, part of which went to support the EUTF, making Italy the second largest contributor among member states. This is to underline the importance that the Italian government assigns to cooperation in governing migratory flows and to the role that the EU should play. Particularly controversial, however, is the project to support the Libyan coast guard, implemented by the Italian Ministry of the Interior with financing from the Africa Fund and EUTF<sup>9</sup>, for the delivery of patrol boats<sup>10</sup>, monitoring equipment and training courses.

In 2020, AICS began drafting new operational guidelines on migration and development that saw the consultation of ministries, civil society and also diasporas and new generations. These guidelines should strengthen the participation of diasporas, dampen the aforementioned ambiguities, and increase policy coherence. In 2021, the process of elaborating strategic guidelines on migration and development should begin, as envisaged in the new three-year cooperation programming, which should frame the operational ones, currently in draft form.

An important share of official development assistance (ODA), 397,37 million euros in 2019, is represented by the Ministry of the Interior's expenditure for the reception of refugees (as recognised by DAC/OECD accounting rules<sup>11</sup>). However, NGOs are asking that this overestimated share be transferred to the real purpose of cooperation, which is the fight against poverty and inequality<sup>12</sup>. This is all the more so in view of the fact that Italian ODA has been reduced in recent years.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.aics.gov.it/home-ita/settori/sviluppo-economico-sostegno-alle-pmi/migrazioni-e-sviluppo/>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.cdp.it/sitointernet/page/it/cdp\\_al\\_via\\_progetto\\_risparmio\\_senza\\_frontiere\\_un\\_ponte\\_verso\\_il\\_risparmio\\_e\\_lo\\_sviluppo\\_nel\\_mediterraneo?contentId=CSA21180](https://www.cdp.it/sitointernet/page/it/cdp_al_via_progetto_risparmio_senza_frontiere_un_ponte_verso_il_risparmio_e_lo_sviluppo_nel_mediterraneo?contentId=CSA21180)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.aics.gov.it/oltremare/articoli/prosperita/since-la-cooperazione-delegata-in-etiopia-con-litalia/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/horn-africa/ethiopia/stemming-irregular-migration-northern-central-ethiopia\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/horn-africa/ethiopia/stemming-irregular-migration-northern-central-ethiopia_en)

<sup>9</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/north-africa/libya/support-integrated-border-and-migration-management-libya-second-phase\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/north-africa/libya/support-integrated-border-and-migration-management-libya-second-phase_en)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.asgi.it/notizie/fondo-africa-sotto-esame-al-consiglio-di-stato/>

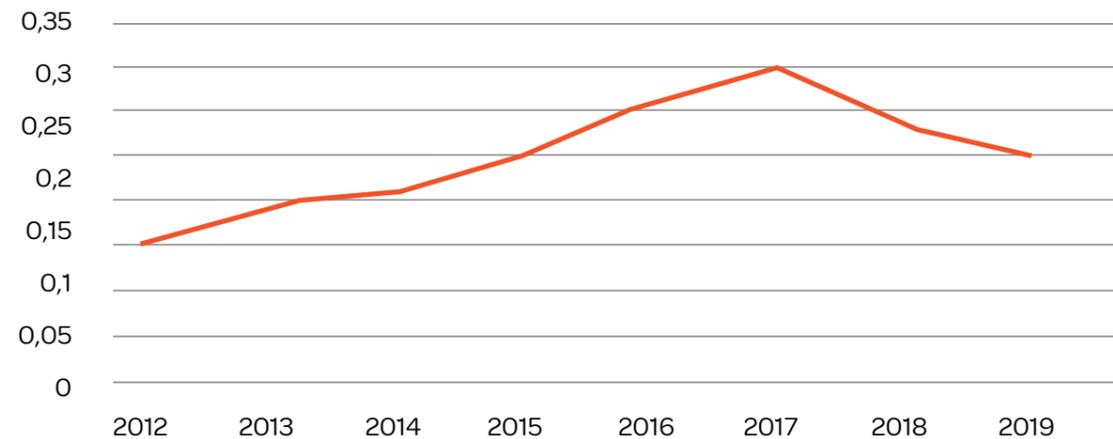
<sup>11</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/development/conflict-fragility-resilience/refugees-migration-working-group.htm>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.vita.it/article/2020/10/23/litalia-riduce-i-fondi-per-laiuto-allo-sviluppo-ma-i-dati-non-sono-tut/157107/>



On the other hand, the reduction in ODA<sup>13</sup>, down to 0.22% of GNI, equal to 3,9 billion euros, is overcome by the volume of remittances, over 6 billion euros, which are well in excess of aid (see box 1).

**Graphic 1.** - OECD confirms the reduction of Italian aid. The ratio of official development aid to Italian gross national income between 2012 and 2019.



SOURCE: OECD (last updated: Tuesday, December 29, 2020)

### BOX 1. The Italian government's commitment on remittances

Daniele Frigeri, CeSPI Director

Remittances represent more than 60% of income for millions of families<sup>14</sup> and contribute to the welfare of about 272 million migrants<sup>15</sup>. In 2009, G8 leaders signed an agreement to reduce the cost of remittances to 5%, an objective incorporated into the 2030 Agenda, bringing it to 3% with the elimination of corridors above 5% by 2030. The Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion, set up within the G20, has the task of monitoring and stimulating governments to achieve the objective.

Since 2009, Italy has taken on a series of governmental initiatives in this direction. The Italian Working Group of Remittances has been set up at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the participation of operators in the sector, institutions and civil society. The website for comparing and surveying the costs of remittances from Italy, [www.mandasoldiacasa.it](http://www.mandasoldiacasa.it) (managed by CeSPI), has been launched and actions have been launched at the regulatory level, especially in terms of derisking and customer due diligence. In particular, in 2019 Banca d'Italia introduced a series of provisions including methods for verifying customer identity through video-identification systems, and the transposition of the new Payment Services Directive introduced greater transparency and facilitated cross-border transfers.

Following the COVID emergency, Italy participated, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and CeSPI, in the Remittance Country Task Force, created under the auspices of the UN Secretary General to develop worldwide recommendations to support remittances.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.openpolis.it/litalia-e-i-fondi-destinati-allaiuto-pubblico-allo-sviluppo/>; e <https://www.openpolis.it/locse-conferma-che-i-fondi-per-la-cooperazione-sono-meno-del-previsto/>

<sup>14</sup> International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), *Sending Money Home*, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> IOM, *World Migration Report 2020*.



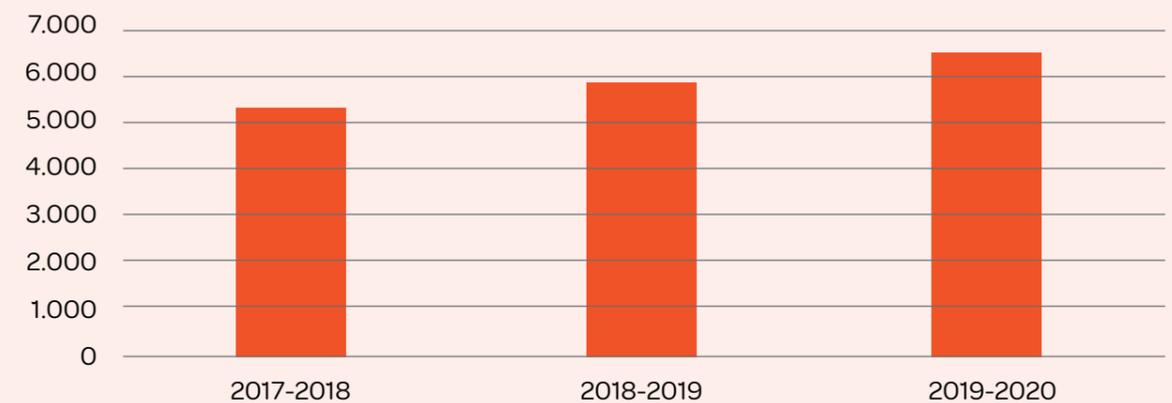
Legislation linked to the health emergency immediately classified payment services as essential services, ensuring full functionality of the majority of Money Transfer agencies operating in the country, as well as banks and BancoPosta.

From a regulatory point of view, the introduction of a tax on remittances is worthy of note. The first version, in the form of a stamp duty, was introduced in 2011 and then repealed in 2012. The method of collection has not made it possible to measure its impact in terms of public finances, but in terms of flows the reduction in remittances was greater than 20% in the period August 2011 and April 2012. The new tax, introduced by the government with the 2018 Tax Decree, provided for a 1.5% levy on remittance flows sent via Money Transfer. The Competition Authority, in February 2019, declared the rule harmful to competition, effectively freezing its application, and the Budget Law 2020 repealed the tax.

The pandemic crisis has had a significant impact on remittance flows, affecting both receiving and sending countries. An overall reduction of 7% in 2020 and 14% in 2021 is expected (World Bank). Italy represents one of the exceptions on the international scene. Bank of Italy data show continuously increasing flows from our country. In 2019, €6.012 billion was sent from Italy, a growth of almost 4% compared to 2018 and 18% from 2017 (€5.081 billion).

The analysis of the data on a quarterly basis presents some limitations related to the time horizon, but comparing the volumes referred to the first quarter of 2020 with those of the same period of 2019 shows a 3% contraction, confirming an immediate impact following the first month of lock-down, cushioned by the first two months of the year. Reconstructing the flows of the last 12 months over a time horizon of three years, with reference to the period October 2019 – September 2020 (last data available), the data show how the pandemic did not appear to have had a consistent impact; in fact, overall flows increased by 15% compared to the same prior period (October 2018-September 2019), recovering the reduction of the first quarter.

**Graphic 2.** - Remittance volumes in millions of euros (period July 1 - June 30)



Source: Bank of Italy

<sup>16</sup> D. Frigeri, *Rimesse e Resilienza*, 2020, [rimesse\\_e\\_resilienza\\_def.pdf](https://www.cespi.it/risorse/rimesse_e_resilienza_def.pdf) (cespi.it)



In terms of costs, World Bank data on remittances from Italy, show a significant drop from 2009, when they were at 7.2%, but do not show significant deviations over the last three years. In 2017 (Q1) the average cost of sending 200USD from our country was 5.92%, while in Q4 2020 it reached 4.7%.

A significant contraction that brings Italy below the target set in 2009. The average cost from Italy remains lower than that of the Europe-Central Asia area (equal to 6.42%) and the G8 area (6.01%).

### Policy coherence

An important problem is that of policy coherence, and in particular between development cooperation policy and migration policy. If, on the one hand, cooperation policy is positive in its recognition of the role of diaspora, despite some ambiguities, on the other hand, various migration policy measures are contradictory, providing a contradictory overall picture.

In the recent past, the Italian government, in particular through the Ministry of Interior, has adopted measures that have damaged the human rights of migrants with the closure of ports, the criminalization of NGOs engaged in rescuing migrants, the reduction of reception services, and the outsourcing of border control through the granting of means and training to a Libyan coast guard that brings migrants back to detention centers. There is also an increased role of the Ministry of Defense<sup>17</sup> in the militarization of relations with third countries as in the case of Niger where a mission has been sent to strengthen the capacity of local security forces in dealing with instabilities in the region, including the fight against migrant trafficking.

The Italian partnership with third countries has developed mainly to reduce irregular migration. The memorandum in this sense most famous and contested for the lack of respect for human rights<sup>18</sup> is that of February 2017 with the Libyan government of the National Agreement, under review<sup>19</sup>, to which was added the military one with Niger in September 2017, while recently has been strengthened the one with Tunisia for the readmission of irregular migrants following the growth of flows recorded in 2020 for the local economic and social crisis.

A recent survey by ActioAid<sup>20</sup>, The Big Wall, has shown how this approach of control and externalization of the containment of migration flows, has committed significant resources, estimated 1 billion 337 million euros, diverting them from the few resources of development cooperation.

### BOX 2. The financial support of the Italian Government to the Agreement with Libya

Paolo Pezzati, OXFAM Italy, GCAP ITALY member

European aid for the development of African countries is increasingly being spent to close borders, stifle migration and encourage the repatriation of migrants to Africa. In the case of Libya, in particular, these resources have also been used to equip, train and equip the Coast Guard which has proven to be an accomplice of human traffickers along the central Mediterranean route and has operated at sea to bring back, in four years, around 51,000 - 11,000 in 2020 alone - innocent men, women and children to the "Libyan lagers" where they are exposed on a daily basis to unspeakable torture and abuse.

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.difesa.it/OperazioniMilitari/op\\_intern\\_corso/Niger\\_missione\\_bilaterale\\_supporto/notizie\\_teatro/Pagine/Missione\\_in\\_Niger\\_la\\_MISIN\\_raggiunge\\_1000\\_giorni\\_di\\_mandato.aspx](https://www.difesa.it/OperazioniMilitari/op_intern_corso/Niger_missione_bilaterale_supporto/notizie_teatro/Pagine/Missione_in_Niger_la_MISIN_raggiunge_1000_giorni_di_mandato.aspx)

<sup>18</sup> <https://espresso.repubblica.it/attualita/2020/07/06/news/memorandum-italia-libia-l-accordo-della-vergogna-che-continua-a-condannare-a-morte-1.350743>, e si vedano le critiche all' accordo anche nel capitolo sulle migrazioni del rapporto GCAP Italia del 2018: <http://www.gcapitalia.it/rapporto-gcap-italia-2018/>

<sup>19</sup> In addition, a new military cooperation agreement was reached in December 2020: <https://sicurezzainternazionale.luiss.it/2020/12/04/libia-firmato-un-accordo-litalia-materia-difesa/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.actionaid.it/blog/the-big-wall>



The cost incurred by Italy in support of the Italy-Libya Agreement, signed in 2017, amounts to 213 million euros with regard to missions in the country, if we add to these also the naval ones we arrive at a total of 785 million euros, as shown in the table below.

**Table 1** - Funding for missions in Libya and in the Sicily channel (mil. euro)

Missions	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
4 missions in Libya					
UNSMIL	0,5	0,4	0,1	0,1	1,1
Bilateral mission support Libya	43,6	49,1	49,0	47,9	189,6
Libyan Coast Guard support	3,6	1,6	6,9	10,0	22,1
EUBAM	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	1,1
Total 4 missions in Libya	<b>47,9</b>	<b>51,4</b>	<b>56,3</b>	<b>58,3</b>	<b>213,9</b>
MARE SICURO	83,9	84,7	85,2	79,0	332,8
EUNAVFORMED/IRINI*	43,1	42,5	41,3	24,9	151,8
SEAGUARDIAN	17,5	17,7	6,3	15,0	56,5
Funds for UN agencies through the Africa Fund **	30,0				30,0
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>785,0</b>

Unfortunately, over the last 4 years, people have continued to die at sea. Despite pressure from Italian civil society and some vague promises by the Italian government to modify certain aspects relating to respect for human rights, the agreement has not been modified and the sore points are all still on the table. At the moment there are more than 2 thousand migrants stranded in official Libyan detention centers and an unspecified number in unofficial ones, controlled by the various armed gangs and factions fighting, with more than 400 thousand internally displaced due to the civil war.

Furthermore, the Ministry of the Interior continues to support programs for assisted voluntary repatriation with the International Organization for Migration<sup>21</sup>, and has opened calls for funding for development cooperation actions in third countries with NGOs<sup>22</sup>.

In turn, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies establishes bilateral agreements with third countries<sup>23</sup> to cooperate in the management of labor migration and family reunification. The agreements provide for the implementation of projects<sup>24</sup> for the circulation of skills, for pre-departure training, and for the development of the social economy in the countries of origin. Some of these projects have been carried out with the active participation of the diasporas, as in the case of Filipino associations for support of family reunification, and in the case of Moldova for productive returns and support of social enterprise<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/rimpatrio-volontario-assistito>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/amministrazione-trasparente/bandi-gara-e-contratti/pubblicazione-graduatorie-inerenti-l-avviso-minintrelint-2019-presentazione-progetti-cooperazione-ed-assistenza-paesi-terzi-materia-immigrazione-ed-asilo-cig-z672c9935d>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/Cooperazione-internazionale/Pagine/Accordi-migrazione-lavoro.aspx>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/Cooperazione-internazionale/Pagine/Iniziative-progettuali.aspx>

<sup>25</sup> For a description of the commitment of the Ministry of Labor with the diasporas, see the document "The Italian system with the diasporas and new generations for development cooperation" at <https://www.aics.gov.it/2019/54959/>.



### Recommendations

As it emerges from this monitoring, there is no plan for policy coherence and there are ambiguities and contradictions to be solved. In this sense the technical assistance that OECD<sup>26</sup> is carrying out with the Ministry of Environment and more generally the Italian government is very important to define a general coherence plan, in which the relationship between development cooperation and migration policy could find a better adjustment. In this sense, GCAP Italy and FOCSIV are involved in the Forum for Sustainable Development and have contributed to the revision of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development by bringing these analyses to the attention of the various stakeholders, with some of the recommendations that follow.

As underlined, priority should be given to the definition and implementation of a policy coherence plan based on the respect of the human rights of migrants, which heals the existing ambiguities and contradictions between development cooperation policy and government policies of the flows in charge of the different ministries.

The plan should be based on the principles of Agenda 2030 and its sustainable development goals, with a far-sighted vision on the balance to be found between humanitarian responses to crises that cause forced migration, opening of borders to safe, regular and orderly migration for different reasons (chapter 4), virtuous paths of reception and integration into the social and economic fabric (chapter 2 and 3), circulation of skills and enhancement of remittances for countries of origin, to be included in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Coherence should also include and coordinate the agreements that the various ministries make with third countries, giving prevalence to agreements for development cooperation and for the management of migration for work and social reasons, as opposed to security and military ones. To this end, it is necessary that the Italian government and parliament take over the GCM ensuring participation in the multilateral system of migration regulation. In the same way, it is essential that the government invests in development cooperation, reaching 0.7% of gross national income as established by objective 17.2 of sustainable development.

Finally, the Italian contribution to the negotiation of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum of the European Union is essential, where it appears necessary to review the basic approach fixed on border control and its outsourcing to third countries.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/gov/pcsd/public-governance-sdgs/policy-coherence-for-sustainable-development-mainstreaming-the-sdgs-in-italian-decision-making.htm>





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