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## IMMIGRATION IN ITALY: AN OVERVIEW

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### INTRODUCTION

International migration in this period of fast globalization and the widening usage of temporary jobs have become increasingly like a multifaceted path, where geography and the search for a better life entangle, while at the same time the possibility of coming back to the point of origin of the journey or to be continuously on the move is never completely ruled out. In such a context migration is part of a transnational context where the individual may gain by the gradual access to the rights of citizenship in the host country, but overall benefits are envisaged for both the country of origin and that of destination of migrants. The key word used by policy-makers in the debate on international migration is in fact co-development, which is used to indicate a parallel and synergic development between the country of origin and of destination, where the migrant represents the driving factor.<sup>1</sup>

When analysing migration in the Mediterranean context it is important, however, to stress that there has been a significant shift of vision in the last 20 years. In the 1950s and 1960s migration was still seen as an important factor of economic complementarities and virtuous interdependence between western Europe and African Mediterranean countries. Nowadays, particularly as result of the increase of irregular and illegal flows, migration is more and more a cause of serious concern in the receiving countries and often causes friction among the same Mediterranean countries of both the northern and the southern shores.

To try to find a solution, in recent years a wide range of initiatives of dialogue and cooperation between countries of migration and countries of immigration have been taking place. This has resulted in a plethora of networks which stress the importance of strengthening, together with bilateral cooperation, which is monopolized by the European Union (EU) initiative, the multilateral and regional dimension of cooperation in the area of migration. In fact, economic and demographic imbalances between the country of origin and of destination of migrants, although they do not justify by themselves migration, do still account for a great deal for it. As noted in the Final Report of the United Nations Global Commission on International Migration, 2005, the driving forces behind migration can still be represented by the '3Ds': imbalances in development, demography and democracy.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pastore, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Caritas/Migrantes, 2006.

Italy in this setting, being on the one hand one of the most looked-for destinations of migrants and on the other hand being a member of the EU, appears to be an ideal case study to try to understand the complexity of the migration phenomenon and the mechanisms which regulate the Euro-Mediterranean relationship.

In this article, after a brief description of the international migration context, we analyse the status of foreign populations resident in Italy, their distribution in the territory and the impact on the Italian labour sector, linking all that with the Euro-Mediterranean migration context.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

### *Population, migration and development*

World population reached almost 6.5 billion in 2005. Of these 85.1 per cent lived in less developed countries (LDCs) (Table 1). Asia remained the most populated with 60.4 per cent of the world population, followed by Africa (14.1 per cent), America (13.8 per cent), Europe (11.3 per cent) and Oceania (0.5).

In 1960 world migrants comprised 76 million people. By 2000 they had more than doubled, reaching the figure of 175 million. In 2005 this figure had reached almost 200 million (190,626 million), with an increase of 8 per cent (16 million) in only five years.

Europe had the highest presence of immigrants in 2005, with 33.7 per cent, followed by Asia (27.9 per cent), Americas (26.8 per cent) and Africa (9 per cent). Last in this list was Oceania with only 2.6 per cent of worldwide immigrants, although due to its small population it registered the highest increase of immigrants compared with the local population (15.2 per cent).

However, there was a decrease in the number of refugees and asylum-seekers,<sup>3</sup> particularly in Africa, where probably due to the repatriation programmes, the figure fell from 5.4 million to 3 million in the period 1990–2005. Europe still received almost 2 million refugees and asylum-seekers (21.5 per cent of the total number in 2005), although the highest presence of this category of migrants is in the LDCs (21.8 per cent) rather than in developed countries, because of a high number of local conflicts. Overall the percentage of refugees and asylum-seekers over the total of immigrants is just 4.8 per cent. However, there was a wide discrepancy between the developed and less developed economies. In fact while the EU and North America were well below that percentage with 4.3 per cent and 1.6 per cent respectively, in Central-East Africa, one out of three immigrants was either a refugee or an asylum-seeker, and this proportion rose to one out of four in Central-West Africa, and to one out of five in North Africa.

The reasons for such imbalances can be identified, among other things, in the forced displacement caused by armed conflicts, of which almost 85 per cent have erupted mainly in African and Asian countries. At the same time environmental

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<sup>3</sup> Migrants and asylum-seekers are still considered as migrants.

TABLE 1:  
*World population: immigrants and asylum-seekers, 2005*

|                                    | Population<br>(000) | %     | Immigrants<br>(000) | %     | Refugees<br>and<br>asylum-<br>seekers | %     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| European Union                     | 459,385             | 7.1   | 39,788              | 20.9  | 16,905                                | 18.4  |
| Other European<br>countries        | 268,839             | 4.2   | 24,442              | 12.8  | 1,890                                 | 3.1   |
| Europe total                       | 728,224             | 11.3  | 64,230              | 33.7  | 18,795                                | 21.5  |
| Central-East Africa                | 287,707             | 4.5   | 4,517               | 2.4   | 14,694                                | 16.0  |
| Central-South Africa               | 163,697             | 2.5   | 3,171               | 1.7   | 8,434                                 | 9.2   |
| Northern Africa                    | 190,895             | 3.0   | 1,838               | 1.0   | 3,505                                 | 3.9   |
| West Africa                        | 263,636             | 4.1   | 7,542               | 4.0   | 3,464                                 | 3.8   |
| Africa total                       | 905,936             | 14.1  | 17,068              | 9.0   | 30,199                                | 32.9  |
| East Asia                          | 2,080,196           | 32.2  | 12,160              | 6.4   | 5,038                                 | 5.5   |
| Central-Southern Asia              | 1,541,381           | 23.8  | 15,817              | 8.3   | 14,448                                | 15.8  |
| West Asia                          | 283,003             | 4.4   | 25,198              | 13.2  | 13,764                                | 15.0  |
| Asia total                         | 3,904,580           | 60.4  | 53,175              | 27.9  | 33,251                                | 36.3  |
| North America                      | 330,608             | 5.1   | 44,493              | 23.3  | 7,168                                 | 7.8   |
| Central and Southern<br>America    | 561,346             | 8.7   | 6,628               | 3.5   | 486                                   | 0.5   |
| Americas total                     | 891,954             | 13.8  | 51,121              | 26.8  | 7,654                                 | 8.3   |
| Oceania                            | 33,056              | 0.5   | 5,032               | 2.6   | 825                                   | 0.9   |
| World                              | 6,464,750           | 100.0 | 190,626             | 100.0 | 91,679                                | 100.0 |
| Developed countries<br>(DCs)       | 961,619             | 14.9  | 95,972              | 50.3  | 25,898                                | 28.2  |
| Less developed countries<br>(LDCs) | 5,503,130           | 85.1  | 94,654              | 49.7  | 6,578                                 | 21.8  |

Source: Caritas/Migrantes, 2006.

disasters, often originated by human mismanagement of natural resources (famine, drought, desertification) are taking their toll in generating forced displacements.

The unequal distribution of world income is still, of course, at the root of world migration. Although in 2005 apparently a balance between the overall income of LDCs and that of DCs was reached (47.5 per cent and 52.5 per cent respectively), when comparing the estimate of the GDP aggregate by continents with the estimate of the world population, it is clear that half of the wealth is in the hands of the 14.9 per cent of the world population in DCs. Such an imbalance is more striking when considering the distribution of GDP per head. Here while it falls from \$9,250 to \$5,200 in LDCs, it rises to \$32,600 for DCs.

Migration could contribute to partially improving such figures. In fact, according to World Bank studies, a growth of at least 3 per cent of world migrants would generate an increase in the GDP of the LDCs of at least 1.8 per cent, much higher than the impact caused by the elimination of remaining trade barriers with

the DCs.<sup>4</sup> The positive impact of migration on the economies of LDCs can in fact be seen in the flux of foreign direct investments originated by the migrants abroad as well as in the flux of remittances. Both could generate, if properly used, a multiplier effect, in terms of increasing purchasing power, which would stimulate the internal growth of the LDC economies. In 2005, in fact, remittances alone reached the figure of \$232 billion, three times higher than in 1990, in the same year, while the effect of world remittances on the GDP is equal to 0.4 per cent; in the case of northern and western Africa they account for 1 per cent and 1.3 per cent respectively. If we look at remittances at the country level, their impact on GDP represents 12.4 per cent in the case of Lebanon, 8.2 per cent for Jordan and 3.5 per cent for Morocco, just to mention a few revealing countries in the area. It is also important to stress that official statistics only consider the official remittance fluxes, those that pass through the financial institutions, either banks or money service providers. They do not consider at all remittances that pass through the informal channel, particularly those produced by illegal immigrants who represent between 30 million and 40 million out of the 191 million world migrants. In Europe they represent between 7 million and 8 million. To this figure one has to add between 10 million and 14 million illegal immigrants originating from the countries that belonged to the former eastern bloc and residing in Russia. Irregular migrants do hence represent an international problem which originates at least in the European and in particular in the Italian cases, caused by the geographical proximity with the country of origin of the migrants, but also by the lack of a homogeneous immigration law, which has been characterized by non-appropriate entry quotas, the absence of a clear path to encourage the wide use of illegal immigrants as a means to avoid taxes and labour laws. In order to curb this phenomenon, between 1990 and 2005 many southern European countries (and Italy among them), undertook campaigns to legalize illegal immigrants. In Italy alone 5.3 million illegal immigrants were regularized in this period.

#### *Legal and political aspects in the international migration setting*

In the last decades, the impact of globalization on the world economies has determined profound changes in the way in which international migration has been addressed. In particular, the impact that migration can have in transforming economic, demographic, social and political patterns has persuaded the majority of states to redefine both internal and international migration policies on the basis of the possible advantages or disadvantages that migration may produce in the country of origin, of transit and of destination. In this regard the analysis made by the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, International Migration,<sup>5</sup> considering the changes in the world migration policies, is interesting. The study highlights that in 2005:

1. An increasing number of states recognized the benefits of international migration and put in place specific policies aimed to manage them on the basis

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<sup>4</sup> World Bank, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> UN, 2006.

of national needs. This is confirmed by the fact that while in 1996 two-fifths of the world's countries wished to block or to reduce the fluxes of international migrants, in 2005 only one-fifth still would like such a reduction. Such a pattern is much more evident in the cases of LDCs, where the percentage of those countries which had adopted strict restrictive migration policies to curb migrants moved from 60 per cent in 1996 to 12 per cent in 2005.

2. In the receiving countries, migration policies emphasized the need to be more selective by encouraging the entrance either of highly skilled immigrants or of those who could be used in those sectors where there was a scarcity of local skilled or unskilled labour.
3. 75 countries worldwide (37 DCs and 38 LDCs) introduced policies which emphasized and encouraged migrant integration in the host country, an increase of 30 per cent over 1996.
4. On the side of the countries of origin, the loss of a high number of skilled workers prompted many governments to develop policies to encourage their return home: 76 countries worldwide, of which 58 were LDCs.

The global migration policy developed by the European Commission focuses instead on three main pillars. The first looks at the prevention and control mechanisms, based on admission and readmission policies. These are aimed at curbing in the short and medium terms the influx of immigrants. The second pillar focuses on policies aimed at encouraging the integration of migrants in the host member countries, in order to reduce the social friction with the nationals and particularly those on the internal labour market. The third pillar tries to address the cause of migration at the origin. The rationale of such intervention is that prevention is better than cure. In other words, it acknowledges that in order to reduce the migration fluxes it is necessary to work hand in hand with the governments of the country of origin and cooperate with them to reduce the internal imbalances. Coupled with that, support for the democratization processes and coordination among the countries in the area of joint migration policies are equally emphasized. In this regard, the Commission presented a Plan of Action containing indications on how to harmonize the procedures of entrance of non-European immigrants into the European labour market. On 1 September 2005 the Commission presented the Common Agenda for the integration of non-European citizens living and working in the member countries, with the intention of assisting the individual member states to find common procedures to regulate a subject, which although of national relevance, represents the key to promoting and strengthening social and economic cohesion in Europe.<sup>6</sup> Since migration is a facet of globalization it demands a European rather than a national response. While the vast majority of member states are in fact interested in attracting highly skilled workers, national immigration policies lack a cross-border dimension and once in a member state, highly qualified workers have great difficulty in moving to other member states for work purposes. This also hinders a more efficient use of this labour force for the benefit of growth and jobs in Europe. There is also a

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<sup>6</sup> Caruso, 2007: 45–65.

rights gap between legal immigrants and EU citizens. This is incompatible with the concept of equal treatment and it hampers integration and social cohesion. Therefore, the Commission adopted two major proposals in October 2007. The first was about the EU Blue Card, which aims to harmonize the admission procedures for highly qualified workers. The second provided for a general framework to be applied in all cases: a single application procedure for a single work and residence permit as well as a common set of rights for third-country nationals who reside and work legally in Europe. Then, in its work programme for 2008 which focuses on the globalization agenda, regarding immigration the Commission will propose further steps towards a common migration policy, combining well-managed labour migration and effective action against illegal migration and human trafficking. Regarding the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), it will continue to support political, economic and social reforms in partner countries, providing a tailor-made response to needs of ENP countries within a common policy framework. Building on the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, the ENP is also expected to develop longstanding regional dialogue and cooperation with all the countries of the Mediterranean region.<sup>7</sup>

This is even more needed, considering that in the last decade non-European Mediterranean countries (EMCs), particularly those in the east and north, have grown to be one of the major transit areas for immigrants originating from sub-Saharan countries. This has hence transformed the non-EMCs from countries of emigration into countries of both immigration and emigration. At the same time, while they have not yet developed comprehensive immigration policies, the failure to absorb the influx of immigrants into already stagnant labour markets generates further social and economical instability. All this justifies the view that European countries have to put in place additional cooperation interventions in order to make it easier for the non-EMCs to develop policies able to tackle the internal and international problems that this type of migration generates.

#### *The Italian legislation*

In the European context, until the 1970s Italy remained a country of emigration, with a limited influx of immigrants, either in transit to North America (mainly refugees from the Eastern bloc) or to work as home carers. This means that the environment was still a close cultural one where immigration was seen primarily as temporary. As a result there was no specific law to regulate immigration and the justice system referred to international law and to the norms of the 1931 local judiciary criminal law coupled with ministerial decrees to fill the gaps. During the 1980s the economic boom of the late 1960s and 1970s fully materialized and Italy turned into a country of net immigration. The need for a cheap workforce to sustain the economic growth, the need to replace local workers in low-skilled sectors and the need to provide direct private assistance to an increasing aged population can be seen as the causes of the increase in the immigration fluxes of this period. The first law to regulate immigration in Italy was enacted in 1986,

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<sup>7</sup> ENPI, 2007.

decree 943, which contains rules for the employment of non-European immigrants as well as rules to fight illegal immigrants. In fact it is worthwhile noticing that in this same period European external policies moved towards a more controlled regulation of migrants.<sup>8</sup>

During the 1990s as a result of the many international crises (the Gulf war, the collapse of the Soviet Union and of the Albanian regime, the war in Yugoslavia, just to mention a few) the arrivals of immigrants in Italy, particularly of illegal ones, skyrocketed, determining a status of crisis in the country, which was not prepared either from a social or from a legal point of view. Italian legislators therefore intervened to amend and upgrade the old legislation on migration, enacting a more comprehensive act for the rights and dues of non-EU citizens, be they immigrants, refugees or stateless (decree 39/1990). What was still missing was the acknowledgement that migration was a structural phenomenon which had to be addressed with a medium- and long-term vision. Consequently, from the mid-1990s, after much parliamentary debate and the introduction of new restrictive norms, particularly with regard to expulsions and family reunions, in 1998 a new inclusive and organic law (decree 40/1998), was approved.

The new law tried on the one hand to curb and fight illegal immigration by introducing a triennial plan with entry quotas for immigrants, linked to the needs of the labour market, and on the other hand to support and develop a clear pattern for the integration of legal immigrants. However, the openness of the legislation did not find the same receptiveness in the public, which was divided almost in half between those who were open to the presence of immigrants and who recognized the positive impact on the social and economic structure of the country, and those who instead saw in them a peril against which they had to defend themselves. This scenario led to the immigration law 189/2002, which introduced the offence of illegal immigration, while increasing the responsibilities of the employer, making him legally responsible for the registration of the immigrant employment contract, for the provision of accommodation for the employee and the coverage of the repatriation costs. At the same time the possibility of entry into the country was linked to the existence of a pre-existent working contract; only temporary working entries were given, obliging the immigrant to repatriate at the end of the contract or in case of dismissal. The innovative figure of the sponsor was abolished, transforming in this way the Italian embassies and consulates into virtual employment agencies.<sup>9</sup> Coupled with that, new restrictions on family reunion were introduced.

On the whole, the Italian approach to immigration is influenced by the complexity of the phenomenon and a swing between the openness set by the Community laws which urge to put in place comprehensive social and cultural integration programmes for the immigrants, and the need to have an unskilled and semi-skilled labour force willing to accept sub-standard working conditions.<sup>10</sup> This

<sup>8</sup> Caruso and Sciaudone, 2006: 41–61.

<sup>9</sup> The sponsor system gave the possibility to Italian citizens to vouch for the entry of foreign citizens: see Decree 40/1998.

<sup>10</sup> Calavita, 2005.



has generated a wide public debate which, since 2005, has induced the government to engage in consultation with regions, local administrations and social stakeholders, as well as associations of migrants and sectoral non-governmental organizations, to revisit and transform the existing law 189/2002.

#### FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN ITALY

In order to consider the status of foreign residents in Italy, it is necessary to observe that for a statistical analysis we have to consider two categories of foreigners: first, those registered in the registry office, strictly speaking who are the residents, and are registered annually by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat); and second, those with a residence permit (who sojourn in the country).<sup>11</sup> Although both figures refer to those regularly present in the country, they do not correspond. In fact those defined as residents are a section of the total of foreigners with residence permits. Not all of them in fact do register; furthermore, the registration process is a long process which causes a time lag with the time when the annual resident census takes place. On the other hand, only under-age children with no parents obtain residence permits, since those with parents are registered on the residence permit of the parents. For this reason to have a clear figure of the foreign citizens living in Italy it would be necessary to develop a complex estimate based on partial statistical data. For this reason in our analysis we have decided to use mainly the data elaborated by Istat, complementing them when necessary with the estimates produced by Caritas.

On the basis of the latest figures provided by Istat,<sup>12</sup> it is possible to observe that in the period 2002–6 the number of foreigners residing in Italy more than doubled (Table 2), reaching almost 3 million.

The increase registered in the year 2006 is slightly lower than that registered in the previous years (period 2002–4), since those years reveal the effects of the immigration laws 189/2002 and 202/2002, which have permitted the registration of large numbers of immigrants who managed to be registered in the public registries. The increase in the foreign resident population in 2006 is also caused by the high birth rate. In fact the children of foreign parents both residing in the country have increased in number to 57,765 units, an increase of 11.1 per cent compared with the previous year; they represent 10.3 per cent of those born in the country. Considering the negative birth rate of the Italian population, which saw in 2006 a decline of the population by 52,200 units, the presence of foreign residents contributes 70.7 per cent to the overall increase of residents in the country, increasing from 58,751,711 units to 59,131,287 units. The weight of the foreign population on the total population increased to 5 per cent at the end of 2006, while those foreign residents of the second generation, born in the country, represent 13.5 per cent of the total foreign population. It is also important to underline that the number of foreign citizens who acquire Italian citizenship is at a constant

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<sup>11</sup> The Catholic organization Caritas uses these figures.

<sup>12</sup> Istat, 2007.

TABLE 2:  
*Foreign residents (population and minors), 2005 and 2006*

|   | 2005      | 2006      |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Foreign residents 1 January               | 2,402,157 | 2,670,514 |
| Births                                    | 51,971    | 57,765    |
| Deaths                                    | 3,133     | 3,447     |
| Natural balance                           | 48,838    | 54,318    |
| Attainment Italian citizenship            | 28,659    | 35,266    |
| Foreign residents 31 December             | 2,670,514 | 2,938,922 |
| End year % change                         | 11.2      | 10.1      |
| Impact foreign pop. on total pop. (%)     | 4.5       | 5.0       |
| Minors                                    | 585,496   | 665,625   |
| Impact minors on foreign pop. (%)         | 21.9      | 22.6      |
| Foreign born in Italy (2nd generation)    |           | 398,205   |
| Impact 2nd generation on foreign pop. (%) |           | 13.5      |

Source: Istat, 2007.

increase at 23 per cent (35,266 units) compared with the 2005 figure. Marriage is still the prevalent method to obtain Italian citizenship; overall they are celebrated between foreign female citizens and Italian males. Citizenship by naturalization is still very low considering that the requirement is ten years of permanent residence in the country. Based on Istat data on 1 January 2007, the foreign residents in Italy were 2,938,922, with an increase of 268,408 units (10.1 per cent) on the 2006 data. This places Italy together with Spain and just behind Germany as the major countries of destination of immigrants in Europe; worldwide the annual increase that both Italy and Spain experienced is far bigger than the United States, which with a population five times higher only experienced an influx of 1 million immigrants (Table 3).

With regard to the country of origin of the immigrants residing in the country, it is interesting to notice that while at the beginning immigrants were coming mainly from the North African countries, and there was a prevalence of immigrants from central and eastern Europe, overall the origin of the immigrants tends to be more and more diversified, transforming the country into a true melting pot where all nationalities are represented. In 2007 the foreign residents originating from east and central Europe showed the highest percentage increase at 48.8 per cent when compared with 2004.<sup>13</sup> Among them a sharp increase can be observed for the Ukrainians who in three years passed from 58,000 units to 120,000, the Romanians from 178,000 to 342,000, the Albanians from 270,000 to 376,000 and the Polish from 40,000 to 72,000. The Chinese are the fastest growing

<sup>13</sup> Compared with the previous year the increase was smaller due to the fact that Romania (+92.5 per cent) and Bulgaria (+73.8 per cent) left this group, having fully entered the EU. If we had included them the increase would have been higher, at 60.1 per cent.

TABLE 3:

Foreign resident population: gender and area of origin and nationality, from 1 January 2004 to 1 January 2007

|                              | 1 January<br>2004<br>Total | 1 January 2007 |           |           | Var. %<br>Total |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
|                              |                            | M              | F         | Total     |                 |
| Europe                       | 913,620                    | 629,282        | 765,224   | 1,394,506 | 52.6            |
| Europe 15                    | 133,545                    | 57,648         | 91,263    | 148,911   | 11.5            |
| Europe 27                    | 379,277                    | 254,824        | 351,364   | 606,188   | 59.8            |
| Central East Europe          | 521,493                    | 368,856        | 406,953   | 775,809   | 48.8            |
| Other European<br>countries  | 12,850                     | 5,602          | 6,907     | 12,509    | -2.7            |
| Africa                       | 549,801                    | 461,200        | 288,697   | 749,897   | 36.4            |
| North Africa                 | 380,280                    | 328,538        | 193,995   | 522,533   | 37.4            |
| of which: Morocco            | 253,362                    | 205,852        | 137,376   | 343,228   | 35.5            |
| Tunisia                      | 68,630                     | 58,294         | 30,638    | 88,932    | 29.6            |
| Egypt                        | 40,583                     | 46,791         | 18,876    | 65,667    | 61.8            |
| Other African countries      | 169,521                    | 132,662        | 94,702    | 227,364   | 34.1            |
| Asia                         | 335,004                    | 279,494        | 232,886   | 512,380   | 52.9            |
| East Asia                    | 174,464                    | 124,462        | 140,426   | 264,888   | 51.8            |
| Other Asian countries        | 160,540                    | 155,032        | 92,460    | 247,492   | 54.2            |
| Americas                     | 188,455                    | 101,735        | 177,225   | 278,960   | 48.0            |
| North America                | 16,458                     | 7,831          | 9,470     | 17,301    | 5.1             |
| Central and South<br>America | 171,997                    | 93,904         | 167,755   | 261,659   | 52.1            |
| Oceania                      | 2,562                      | 1,008          | 1,528     | 2,536     | -1.0            |
| Stateless                    | 717                        | 354            | 289       | 643       | -10.3           |
| Total                        | 1,990,159                  | 1,473,073      | 1,465,849 | 2,938,922 | 47.7            |

Source: Istat, 2007.

group of immigrants from East Asia, increasing from 87,000 to 145,000 units. More moderate, but still relevant, is the increase of immigrants from Africa at 36 per cent, among them the Moroccans who reached 343,000 units on 1 January 2007. This is also due to the fact that they are among the oldest immigrant communities in the country and have hence benefited from various laws to become official residents. Central and Southern Americans represent the new immigrants with a sharp increase of 52 per cent compared with the 2004 data, among them Ecuadorians who increased from 34,000 units to 69,000.

A very modest increase, if not a slight reduction, can be noted for those citizens coming from DCs, and a slight increase is registered for North American citizens. A decrease of 2.7 per cent can be observed for those European citizens not part of the EU and for those originating from Oceania, at 1 per cent. But citizens from European member countries increased to 59 per cent, although while the increase

of members of the EU 15<sup>14</sup> is 11.5 per cent, those of citizens of the new member countries is 86.1 per cent. In fact, considering the entry into the EU on 1 January 2007 of Romania and Bulgaria, it is possible to say that with more than 1 million residents, the citizens from east and central Europe represent almost 39 per cent of the total foreign residents in the country, while the Africans represent 26 per cent (750,000) and the Asians 17 per cent (512,000) (Table 3).

The 2007 data indicate that the gender component is quite balanced, even if one should notice that due to family reunions it is likely that female residents may easily outnumber the male foreign residents. However, when looking at the single group of foreign residents it is interesting to notice that there are strong gender differences. Female foreigners are higher among east and central European and Latin American residents (Ukraine and Poland have a ratio of 22 and 39 males for 100 females respectively, while Ecuador and Peru have a ratio of 64 males for 100 females) than among African and Asian communities, where the ratio is 160 and 120 males for 100 females respectively (Table 3).

Overall immigrants are young but due to family reunions in the last decade a sharp increase of under-age and over-60s foreign residents has been observed.<sup>15</sup> A more comprehensive picture can be revealed if we consider together with the data of the residents those with only the right of sojourn (2,414,972). It is possible to observe that more than 50 per cent of them are resident in the country for more than five years, with 26.2 per cent (633,000) for more than ten years. Tunisian, Senegalese and Filipinos are more than half of them, while Moroccans, Sri Lankans and Serbian-Montenegrins are the majority of those who have been in the country for more than five years.

With regard to the distribution of immigrants in the regions, the majority of immigrants do reside in the northern and central regions: 36.3 per cent in the northwest, 27.3 per cent in the northeast and 24.8 per cent in the centre. The remaining 11.6 per cent live in the southern regions. Lombardia, with 24.8 per cent, is among the northern regions with the highest number of immigrants; 10.8 per cent of all foreign residents reside in the capital, Milano. In the central and northern regions the foreign population is evenly distributed in respect to the overall population, representing on average 7 per cent of the total residents. This percentage is lower in the central regions and falls to 1.6 per cent in the southern regions and the islands (Tables 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d). Lombardia with 7.6 per cent, Emilia-Romagna with 7.5 per cent, Veneto with 7.3 per cent in the north and Umbria with 7.3 per cent in the centre are the regions with the highest prevalence of foreign populations. Among the southern regions only Umbria with 3.7 per cent has a significant presence of foreigners.

In Table 5 the ten major foreign nationalities presented in the country are detailed; they represent almost 59 per cent of the foreign residents.<sup>16</sup> Albanians,

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<sup>14</sup> The countries that are here indicated as EU 15 are: Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Greece, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, the UK and Ireland.

<sup>15</sup> Caritas/Migrants, 2007.

<sup>16</sup> For a full picture of the different nationalities resident in Italy see Table 4.

TABLE 4A:  
Foreign residents by region and provinces, northwest, 1 January 2007

| Regions and provinces | Number  | TRP <sup>a</sup><br>% | FB/TRP <sup>b</sup><br>% | Female<br>% | Minors<br>% | 1st<br>nationality | Total foreign<br>% |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| PIEMONTE              | 252,302 | 5.8                   | 14.1                     | 50.4        | 23.5        | Romania            | 23.6               |
| Torino                | 129,533 | 5.8                   | 13.5                     | 50.9        | 22.1        | Romania            | 34.1               |
| Vercelli              | 9,431   | 5.3                   | 14.1                     | 49.7        | 25.0        | Morocco            | 30.2               |
| Biella                | 8,321   | 4.5                   | 10.7                     | 53.6        | 24.9        | Morocco            | 37.1               |
| Verbanò-C.-O.         | 6,420   | 4.0                   | 8.3                      | 55.4        | 18.2        | Morocco            | 16.1               |
| Novara                | 21,485  | 6.0                   | 13.2                     | 49.0        | 23.3        | Albania            | 20.3               |
| Cuneo                 | 35,547  | 6.2                   | 15.9                     | 48.7        | 26.5        | Albania            | 24.5               |
| Asti                  | 14,872  | 6.9                   | 19.9                     | 48.2        | 24.9        | Albania            | 25.5               |
| Alessandria           | 26,693  | 6.2                   | 16.8                     | 50.8        | 25.3        | Albania            | 31.0               |
| VALLE D'AOSTA         | 5,534   | 4.4                   | 9.8                      | 52.2        | 21.8        | Morocco            | 31.0               |
| Aosta                 | 80,735  | 5.0                   | 10.5                     | 52.2        | 20.8        | Morocco            | 31.0               |
| LIGURIA               | 13,198  | 6.1                   | 10.3                     | 51.1        | 20.8        | Ecuador            | 20.2               |
| Imperia               | 13,850  | 4.9                   | 10.3                     | 51.1        | 18.7        | Albania            | 18.7               |
| Savona                | 44,322  | 5.0                   | 11.2                     | 50.3        | 22.3        | Albania            | 33.0               |
| Genova                | 9,365   | 4.3                   | 10.8                     | 53.5        | 20.8        | Ecuador            | 32.3               |
| La Spezia             | 728,647 | 7.6                   | 8.6                      | 47.5        | 21.3        | Albania            | 19.6               |
| LOMBARDIA             | 50,376  | 5.9                   | 16.9                     | 47.5        | 24.0        | Morocco            | 11.5               |
| Varese                | 32,381  | 5.7                   | 13.5                     | 49.7        | 24.9        | Albania            | 17.8               |
| Como                  | 18,142  | 5.5                   | 12.3                     | 49.2        | 23.3        | Morocco            | 12.8               |
| Lecco                 | 5,269   | 2.9                   | 14.3                     | 46.8        | 26.2        | Morocco            | 15.8               |
| Sondrio               | 317,536 | 8.2                   | 7.0                      | 52.0        | 22.5        | Morocco            | 25.2               |
| Afflato               | 78,165  | 7.5                   | 15.7                     | 49.1        | 21.8        | Egypt              | 10.5               |
| Bergamo               | 120,845 | 10.1                  | 16.9                     | 44.0        | 25.9        | Morocco            | 20.6               |
| Brescia               | 30,187  | 5.8                   | 24.3                     | 44.2        | 26.6        | Morocco            | 13.8               |
| Pavia                 | 15,711  | 7.3                   | 15.0                     | 49.4        | 24.1        | Albania            | 17.9               |
| Lodi                  | 24,868  | 7.1                   | 20.5                     | 47.5        | 25.9        | Romania            | 16.4               |
| Cremona               | 35,167  | 8.8                   | 19.0                     | 47.0        | 28.2        | India              | 18.0               |
| Mantova               |         |                       | 23.5                     | 46.4        | 26.2        | Morocco            | 17.6               |

<sup>a</sup>TRP = Total resident population. <sup>b</sup>FB = Foreign born. <sup>c</sup>TB = Total born.

Source: Istat, 2007.

TABLE 4B:  
Foreign residents by regions and provinces, northwest, 1 January 2007

| Regions and provinces | Number        | TRP<br>%   | FB/TB<br>%  | Female<br>% | Minors<br>% | 1st<br>nationality  | Total foreign<br>% |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| TRENTINO-A.A.         | 61,674        | 6.2        | 11.4        | 49.7        | 23.4        | Albania             | 15.2               |
| Bolzano               | 28,394        | 5.8        | 9.6         | 49.5        | 21.7        | Albania             | 14.2               |
| Trento                | 33,280        | 6.6        | 13.3        | 49.8        | 24.9        | Albania             | 16.0               |
| VENETO                | 350,215       | 7.3        | 17.3        | 47.4        | 24.8        | Romania             | 13.8               |
| Verona                | 72,459        | 8.2        | 18.4        | 47.5        | 23.9        | Morocco             | 17.6               |
| Vicenza               | 75,630        | 9.0        | 20.7        | 46.0        | 26.5        | Serbia-Montenegro   | 16.0               |
| Belluno               | 9,939         | 4.7        | 11.1        | 52.9        | 23.3        | Morocco             | 17.0               |
| Treviso               | 77,947        | 9.1        | 20.9        | 45.7        | 26.7        | Morocco             | 13.9               |
| Venezia               | 44,996        | 5.4        | 11.9        | 49.9        | 22.0        | Albania             | 12.1               |
| Padova                | 58,498        | 6.5        | 15.3        | 48.3        | 23.3        | Romania             | 24.5               |
| Rovigo                | 10,746        | 4.4        | 14.3        | 49.7        | 25.4        | Morocco             | 22.1               |
| FRIULI-V. G.          | 72,462        | 6.0        | 12.1        | 48.7        | 21.2        | Albania             | 15.0               |
| Pordenone             | 24,895        | 8.2        | 14.6        | 48.9        | 23.1        | Albania             | 22.1               |
| Udine                 | 26,680        | 5.0        | 11.3        | 50.3        | 21.7        | Albania             | 15.9               |
| Gorizia               | 7,451         | 5.3        | 12.0        | 42.0        | 20.1        | Macedonia, ex. Yug. | 15.7               |
| Trieste               | 13,436        | 5.7        | 9.7         | 48.7        | 17.1        | Serbia-Montenegro   | 37.7               |
| EMILIA-ROMAGNA        | 317,888       | 7.5        | 17.4        | 48.6        | 23.9        | Morocco             | 16.9               |
| Piacenza              | 24,357        | 8.8        | 23.1        | 48.3        | 25.6        | Albania             | 20.5               |
| Parma                 | 33,950        | 8.1        | 19.1        | 48.7        | 22.0        | Albania             | 13.7               |
| Reggio Emilia         | 46,722        | 9.3        | 20.2        | 47.2        | 26.2        | Morocco             | 17.8               |
| Modena                | 59,944        | 8.9        | 20.5        | 47.0        | 26.5        | Morocco             | 23.4               |
| <b>Bologna</b>        | <b>65,785</b> | <b>6.9</b> | <b>15.1</b> | <b>50.1</b> | <b>22.3</b> | <b>Morocco</b>      | <b>18.7</b>        |
| Ferrara               | 15,516        | 4.4        | 12.5        | 52.5        | 22.7        | Morocco             | 19.2               |
| Ravenna               | 26,099        | 7.0        | 16.1        | 47.4        | 22.1        | Albania             | 19.5               |
| Forlì-Cesena          | 25,757        | 6.8        | 16.6        | 47.4        | 24.0        | Albania             | 19.2               |
| Rimini                | 19,758        | 6.7        | 12.0        | 51.2        | 20.6        | Albania             | 27.3               |

TABLE 4C:  
Foreign residents by regions and provinces, centre, 1 January 2007

| Regions and provinces | Number  | TRP<br>% | EB/IB<br>% | Female<br>% | Minors<br>% | 1st<br>nationality | Total foreign<br>% |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| TOSCANA               | 234,398 | 6.4      | 13.6       | 50.2        | 21.7        | Albania            | 22.0               |
| Massa-Carrara         | 7,961   | 4.0      | 7.6        | 49.0        | 19.0        | Albania            | 20.7               |
| Lucca                 | 16,830  | 4.4      | 9.2        | 51.2        | 21.4        | Albania            | 19.9               |
| Pistoia               | 17,575  | 6.2      | 14.5       | 52.9        | 22.9        | Albania            | 44.4               |
| Firenze               | 75,621  | 7.8      | 16.0       | 50.5        | 21.9        | Albania            | 19.2               |
| Prato                 | 26,120  | 10.7     | 27.3       | 46.5        | 26.1        | China              | 41.9               |
| Livorno               | 13,990  | 4.2      | 6.2        | 53.6        | 17.5        | Albania            | 17.5               |
| Pisa                  | 22,015  | 5.5      | 10.0       | 47.7        | 20.6        | Albania            | 27.3               |
| Arezzo                | 24,048  | 7.1      | 15.0       | 50.4        | 22.7        | Romania            | 26.5               |
| Siena                 | 18,530  | 7.0      | 13.2       | 50.2        | 21.4        | Albania            | 23.7               |
| Grosseto              | 11,708  | 5.3      | 9.2        | 53.2        | 16.3        | Romania            | 13.7               |
| MARCHE                | 99,285  | 6.5      | 14.3       | 49.8        | 24.2        | Albania            | 18.3               |
| Pesaro e Urbino       | 24,148  | 6.5      | 13.6       | 49.4        | 23.6        | Albania            | 20.8               |
| Ancona                | 29,509  | 6.3      | 14.6       | 50.1        | 24.5        | Albania            | 16.4               |
| Macerata              | 25,004  | 7.9      | 17.0       | 48.5        | 25.0        | Macedonia, ex Yug. | 15.9               |
| Ascoli Piceno         | 20,624  | 5.4      | 12.5       | 51.4        | 23.6        | Albania            | 22.7               |
| UMBRIA                | 63,861  | 7.3      | 15.3       | 52.2        | 23.0        | Albania            | 20.9               |
| Perugia               | 50,824  | 7.9      | 16.2       | 51.6        | 23.4        | Albania            | 21.1               |
| Terni                 | 13,037  | 5.7      | 12.2       | 54.5        | 21.2        | Romania            | 20.5               |
| LAZIO                 | 330,146 | 6.0      | 10.5       | 53.0        | 19.6        | Romania            | 23.0               |
| Viterbo               | 15,433  | 5.1      | 9.9        | 53.0        | 20.3        | Romania            | 28.7               |
| Rieti                 | 6,531   | 4.2      | 6.8        | 54.6        | 18.4        | Romania            | 23.4               |
| Roma                  | 278,540 | 6.9      | 11.0       | 54.3        | 19.4        | Romania            | 22.3               |
| Latina                | 16,977  | 3.2      | 5.3        | 51.4        | 20.4        | Romania            | 31.2               |
| Frosinone             | 12,665  | 2.6      | 5.1        | 53.0        | 22.9        | Albania            | 27.1               |
| ABRUZZO               | 48,018  | 3.7      | 7.3        | 52.9        | 21.4        | Albania            | 22.6               |
| L'Aquila              | 14,099  | 4.6      | 9.1        | 50.0        | 20.4        | Macedonia, ex Yug. | 17.2               |
| Teramo                | 14,775  | 4.9      | 11.3       | 52.5        | 24.5        | Albania            | 27.7               |
| Pescara               | 8,501   | 2.7      | 4.4        | 56.3        | 18.7        | Albania            | 17.5               |
| Chieti                | 10,643  | 2.7      | 5.2        | 54.6        | 20.4        | Albania            | 34.5               |

Source: ISTAT, 2007.

TABLE 4D:  
*Foreign residents by regions and provinces, south and islands, 1 January 2007*

| Regions and provinces | Value  | TRP<br>% | FB/TB<br>% | Female<br>% | Minors<br>% | Ist<br>nationality | Total foreign<br>% |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| MOLISE                | 4,834  | 1.5      | 2.3        | 56.7        | 18.7        | Albania            | 16.4               |
| Isernia               | 1,476  | 1.7      | 2.3        | 56.0        | 18.2        | Morocco            | 19.5               |
| <i>Campobasso</i>     | 3,358  | 1.5      | 2.3        | 57.0        | 18.9        | Albania            | 19.7               |
| CAMPANIA              | 98,052 | 1.7      | 1.8        | 58.1        | 15.6        | Ukraine            | 27.4               |
| Caserta               | 20,425 | 2.3      | 2.4        | 53.0        | 15.1        | Ukraine            | 27.2               |
| Benevento             | 3,066  | 1.1      | 1.3        | 61.8        | 15.3        | Ukraine            | 27.6               |
| Napoli                | 47,577 | 1.5      | 1.7        | 60.7        | 16.2        | Ukraine            | 27.1               |
| Avellino              | 7,129  | 1.6      | 2.4        | 59.4        | 18.1        | Ukraine            | 24.8               |
| Salerno               | 19,855 | 1.8      | 1.8        | 56.2        | 13.8        | Ukraine            | 29.2               |
| PUGLIA                | 51,242 | 1.3      | 2.0        | 49.0        | 21.9        | Albania            | 37.4               |
| Foggia                | 9,860  | 1.4      | 2.4        | 49.9        | 20.3        | Albania            | 24.6               |
| Bari                  | 23,041 | 1.4      | 2.4        | 46.9        | 23.4        | Albania            | 45.8               |
| Taranto               | 4,244  | 0.7      | 1.1        | 50.7        | 21.7        | Albania            | 35.9               |
| Brindisi              | 4,180  | 1.0      | 1.2        | 51.0        | 20.3        | Albania            | 48.4               |
| Lecce                 | 9,917  | 1.2      | 2.0        | 51.3        | 21.0        | Albania            | 26.4               |
| BASILICATA            | 6,726  | 1.1      | 1.6        | 53.3        | 18.3        | Albania            | 21.7               |
| Potenza               | 3,253  | 0.8      | 1.2        | 59.7        | 15.6        | Morocco            | 16.0               |
| Matera                | 3,473  | 1.7      | 2.3        | 47.3        | 20.8        | Albania            | 30.6               |
| CALABRIA              | 35,216 | 1.8      | 2.4        | 54.6        | 18.2        | Morocco            | 25.2               |
| Cosenza               | 9,251  | 1.3      | 2.1        | 58.5        | 18.0        | Morocco            | 18.5               |
| Crotone               | 3,110  | 1.8      | 1.9        | 54.4        | 18.9        | Morocco            | 19.0               |
| Catanzaro             | 6,805  | 1.9      | 2.4        | 52.4        | 19.2        | Morocco            | 39.5               |
| Vibo Valentia         | 2,994  | 1.8      | 2.4        | 56.4        | 18.5        | Morocco            | 26.3               |
| Reggio Calabria       | 13,056 | 2.3      | 2.9        | 52.5        | 17.4        | Morocco            | 23.8               |



|                   |        |     |     |      |      |           |      |
|-------------------|--------|-----|-----|------|------|-----------|------|
| SICILIA           | 78,242 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 49.4 | 22.4 | Tunisia   | 18.8 |
| Trapani           | 6,667  | 1.5 | 2.3 | 47.2 | 29.7 | Tunisia   | 58.1 |
| Palermo           | 18,717 | 1.5 | 2.5 | 50.4 | 25.4 | Sri Lanka | 14.5 |
| Messina           | 13,363 | 2.0 | 3.7 | 54.1 | 20.2 | Sri Lanka | 18.0 |
| Agrigento         | 5,007  | 1.1 | 1.6 | 51.5 | 17.8 | Morocco   | 22.9 |
| Caltanissetta     | 2,497  | 0.9 | 1.4 | 51.8 | 21.2 | Morocco   | 35.5 |
| Enna              | 1,222  | 0.7 | 1.3 | 61.5 | 16.6 | Romania   | 22.7 |
| Catania           | 13,108 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 54.4 | 22.0 | Mauritius | 18.8 |
| Ragusa            | 12,156 | 3.9 | 7.3 | 35.3 | 22.5 | Tunisia   | 48.7 |
| Siracusa          | 5,505  | 1.4 | 1.7 | 50.3 | 15.8 | Morocco   | 14.6 |
| SARDEGNA          | 19,445 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 51.9 | 17.5 | Morocco   | 16.6 |
| Olbia-Tempio      | 4,254  | 2.9 | 4.5 | 53.1 | 15.9 | Morocco   | 18.3 |
| Sassari           | 3,463  | 1.0 | 1.5 | 56.5 | 18.3 | Morocco   | 17.2 |
| Nuoro             | 1,397  | 0.9 | 0.9 | 45.3 | 17.9 | Morocco   | 32.1 |
| Oristano          | 1,270  | 0.8 | 1.6 | 59.5 | 22.5 | Morocco   | 17.3 |
| Ogliastra         | 491    | 0.8 | 1.1 | 55.0 | 14.1 | Morocco   | 26.9 |
| Medio Campidano   | 472    | 0.5 | 0.4 | 51.9 | 18.0 | Morocco   | 16.7 |
| Cagliari          | 7,323  | 1.3 | 1.8 | 48.2 | 16.8 | Senegal   | 12.0 |
| Carbonia-Iglesias | 775    | 0.6 | 1.2 | 55.6 | 23.1 | Morocco   | 19.9 |

Source: Istat, 2007.

Moroccans and Romanians are the three major foreign nationalities; although they are equally spread in almost all regions of the country, they do seem to have a preference for specific regions. Albanians seem to choose Lombardia, Toscana, Emilia-Romagna and Piemonte, where 20.3 per cent, 13.7 per cent, 11.8 per cent and 9.6 per cent respectively of the 376,000 Albanians officially registered in Italy reside. Moroccans prefer Lombardia, Emilia-Romagna, Piemonte and Veneto, where 24.4 per cent, 15.6 per cent, 14.6 per cent and 13.6 per cent respectively of the 343,000 Moroccans registered reside. Romanians prefer to live in Lazio (22.2 per cent), Piemonte (17.4 per cent), Lombardia (16.5 per cent) and Veneto (14.1 per cent).

TABLE 5:  
*Foreign residents by nationality*

|                          | Male    | Female  | Total   |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Albania                  | 209,209 | 166,738 | 375,947 |
| Morocco                  | 205,852 | 137,376 | 343,228 |
| Romania                  | 162,154 | 180,046 | 342,200 |
| China                    | 76,739  | 68,146  | 144,885 |
| Ukraine                  | 23,058  | 97,012  | 120,070 |
| Philippines              | 41,591  | 59,746  | 101,337 |
| Tunisia                  | 58,294  | 30,638  | 88,932  |
| Macedonia, ex. Yug. Rep. | 42,943  | 31,219  | 74,162  |
| Poland                   | 20,516  | 51,941  | 72,457  |
| India                    | 42,275  | 27,229  | 69,504  |

Source: Istat, 2007.

Looking at the same phenomenon from another angle, that of the principal foreign nationalities living in each Italian region, we can observe that Albanians represent almost 22.6 per cent of the total foreign residents in Abruzzo (11,000) and 22 per cent of those living in Toscana (51,000). Moroccans comprise 25.2 per cent (9,000) of the foreign residents living in Calabria and 16.9 per cent (54,000) of those living in Emilia-Romagna. Romanian nationals comprise 23.6 per cent (59,000) of the foreigners living in Piemonte and 23 per cent (76,000) of those living in Lazio.

There are also nationalities that have taken strong roots only in specific regions, such as Ecuadorians, who represent 25.2 per cent (more than 16,000) of the total of foreign residents in Liguria, or the 15,000 Tunisians living in Sicily, representing 19 per cent of foreign residents in the region. Ukrainians are 27.4 per cent and 13.2 per cent of foreign nationals in Campania and Calabria respectively, and significant contributions are those of the Serbian-Montenegrins in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (almost 8,000), Chinese and Senegalese in Toscana (25,000) and Sardinia (almost 2,000), and Sri Lankans in Sicily (more than 7,000).

The overall internal mobility of the foreign citizens is characterized by the movement from major cities to those with smaller populations. However, when considering the specific nationalities, it is still true that their representation is

particularly intense in a few large towns, while others are more evenly distributed in the territory. Filipinos, Peruvians and Ecuadorians, who work prevalently in the sector of home care, live mainly in the regional capitals, at 81.2 per cent, 65.1 per cent and 59.4 per cent respectively. Indians, Moroccans, Albanians and Tunisians, although numerically relevant even in the major cities, do not prefer to live in the regional capitals: 82 per cent of Indians 78 per cent of Moroccans, 73 per cent of Albanians and 72 per cent of the Tunisians live in non-capital cities.

Reading resident permits allows us to understand the major reasons for entry into the country. Coming to work is the major reason: 1,463,058 working permits were issued in January 2007 (Table 6), mainly to men (78 per cent). In recent years the number of permits issued for family reunions has also increased (to 763,744). Women are still the majority of those holding this type of permit (48 per cent), but also the number of men is steadily increasing, being summoned by women who came to the country to work in previous years. Overall work and family reunion permits represent almost 90 per cent of the total resident permits issued by the Italian authorities.

As for the figures for the working force represented by foreign nationals in the country, Istat indicates that in 2006 it was 1,475,000 people, of which 1,348,000 were employed and 127,000 unemployed (8.6 per cent). Almost two-thirds of them live in the northern regions, one-quarter in the central regions and almost one-tenth in the southern regions. As regards the sector of employment, 40 per cent of foreign residents work in the manufacturing sector and 55 per cent in the service sectors; their presence in the agricultural sector is negligible. They work during unsocial hours: 19 per cent in the evening between 8 pm and 11 pm; 12 per cent during the night from 11 pm onwards and 15 per cent on Sunday. Of these, 85 per cent work as employees and their employment rate is 12 percentage points higher than that of the Italian population.

Considering all the workers born outside Italy, regardless of whether they have a foreign nationality or not (i.e. some of them can be Italian and EU member citizens), the Inail<sup>17</sup> data for 2006 indicate that they comprise 2,194,27; 84.6 per cent of them were not born in an EU member country. They represent 12.5 per cent of the total employed (16.2 per cent in the northern and eastern regions, 6.9 per cent in the southern regions and 5.1 per cent in the islands). Lombardia, Emilia-Romagna and Veneto are the three regions with the highest number of employees born outside the country, at 21.4 per cent, 10.7 per cent and 10.3 per cent respectively. The data registered with Inail also give a better picture of the type of working pattern that this type of workers undertake. They seem to have a higher turnover than Italian workers, since on average they sign two employment contracts a year.<sup>18</sup> The construction sector has the highest percentage of foreign workers, but one-fifth of them are underpaid, used as unskilled workers or are not fully registered. An important sign to assess the level of radicalization of foreign workers in the country is both the number of those who join the trade unions and

<sup>17</sup> Italian Workers Compensation Authority.

<sup>18</sup> Inail data.

TABLE 6:  
*Residents' permits (reasons and gender), 1 January 2005–January 2007*

| Years  | Work      |      | Remission |      | Study  | Elected residence | Religious | Asylum-seekers | Other  | Total     |
|--------|-----------|------|-----------|------|--------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|--------|-----------|
|        | Number    | %    | Value     | %    |        |                   |           |                |        |           |
| Total  |           |      |           |      |        |                   |           |                |        |           |
| 2005   | 1,412,694 | 62.9 | 624,404   | 27.8 | 40,355 | 61,876            | 53,249    | 17,833         | 35,137 | 2,245,548 |
| 2006   | 1,419,285 | 62.1 | 682,365   | 29.8 | 48,718 | 41,573            | 34,251    | 14,932         | 44,900 | 2,286,024 |
| 2007   | 1,463,058 | 60.6 | 763,744   | 31.6 | 51,625 | 44,847            | 32,081    | 16,079         | 43,538 | 2,414,972 |
| Male   |           |      |           |      |        |                   |           |                |        |           |
| 2005   | 899,328   | 78.8 | 140,913   | 12.3 | 17,977 | 28,010            | 25,280    | 13,887         | 16,336 | 1,141,731 |
| 2006   | 903,516   | 78.9 | 156,031   | 13.6 | 21,760 | 17,004            | 13,874    | 11,617         | 21,082 | 1,144,884 |
| 2007   | 932,596   | 77.8 | 174,839   | 14.6 | 23,517 | 18,471            | 12,746    | 12,538         | 23,745 | 1,198,452 |
| Female |           |      |           |      |        |                   |           |                |        |           |
| 2005   | 513,366   | 46.5 | 483,491   | 43.8 | 22,378 | 33,866            | 27,969    | 3,946          | 18,801 | 1,103,817 |
| 2006   | 515,769   | 45.2 | 526,334   | 46.1 | 26,958 | 24,569            | 20,377    | 3,315          | 23,818 | 1,141,140 |
| 2007   | 530,462   | 43.6 | 588,905   | 48.4 | 28,108 | 26,376            | 19,335    | 3,541          | 19,793 | 1,216,520 |

Source: Istat, 2007.

the number of those who start their own business. In 2006 there were 680,000 foreign workers who joined a union (one-fifth of the total foreign workers regularly living in the country), while 141,393 foreign residents started their own business, an increase of 8 per cent. Of these, 70 per cent of them operate in the construction and trade sectors and often are employees who have acquired enough experience to start their own business. Although foreign workers earn on average only €10,042<sup>19</sup> per year, they manage to send a high proportion of it as remittances to their home countries.

## CONCLUSION

During the last two decades immigration in Europe has structurally changed. Events such as the fall of the Berlin wall and its trickle-down effects ended with the EU's enlargement to the ten transitional countries, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania. These events have been coupled with the intensification of the impact of unequal world income distribution and the impact of globalization. Geo-proximity with the non-European Mediterranean countries has caused a great influx from the Maghreb and the Adriatic countries, while the continued economical and political crises experienced by sub-Saharan countries have resulted in new migration routes from these areas to Europe.

In this context the presence of foreign citizens in Italy can be structurally associated with the Mediterranean model of immigration,<sup>20</sup> which has the following characteristics.

- Italy, like other southern European countries, has moved from being a country from which to emigrate immediately after the second world war, to being a country to which to immigrate during the 1980s.<sup>21</sup>
- The demand for foreign workers, apart from the manufacturing sector which is still the leading sector (relevant particularly in the northern and central regions), originated in the agricultural sector, mainly for its seasonal component, and increasingly in the service sectors, particularly those related to home care.
- The weight that the informal economy has on the economic growth of the country acts as a strong pull factor for immigration.
- Consequently many new immigration routes have developed in contrast to the more stringent immigration rules.
- Despite that, illegal immigrants represent a high percentage of the foreign workers.
- Immigrant countries of origin are disparate, and there is no one specific group.
- There is a substantial gender balance among immigrants, with a female prevalence in specific foreign nationalities.
- Overall immigrants prefer to live in urban areas, but they have high mobility.

<sup>19</sup> Inps (State body for coordinating national insurance funds), 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Censis, 2000.

<sup>21</sup> European Observatory on Homelessness, 2001.

Some characteristics make international migration to Italy different from the immigration experienced by European countries. Germany, the UK, France and to some extent Spain, due to their colonial past, experienced the influx of immigrants much earlier than Italy. This has given them the possibility to both develop better and more comprehensive immigration policies and to have a less severe social problem of integration, thanks to the fact that many immigrants spoke the language of the destination country. This, on the one hand, means that immigrants' nationalities in Italy are more diversified; on the other hand, paradoxically this means that a stronger link is created between the immigrant and the country of destination (Italy). The fact that the Italian language is not spoken outside the country, neither in the country of origin of the immigrants nor in other European countries, has produced a direct and strong connection between the first-generation immigrants, particularly those legally registered, and the country. At the same time second-generation immigrants feel much more radicalized in the country and feel Italian, compared with second-generation immigrants in other European countries.

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