



# Gendered Politics of Migration Management: The Italian National Identity in the Structuring of 'others'

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## Introduction

Access to a nation, and thus its people and identity, is controlled by policies surrounding migration and citizenship. Over the last twenty years Italy has experienced a notable increase in their immigrant populations. From 2002 to 2010 the percentage of foreign residents legally registered as living in Italy rose from 2.7 percent of the population to 7.5, around 4 570 000.<sup>1</sup> With their position on the southern border of Europe, Italy has also been at the centre of the developments along the central Mediterranean migration route to Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Italy's overall population has been on a downward trend for a few years now,<sup>3</sup> with immigrants established in Italy deciding to return to their homelands, and Italians themselves increasingly moving abroad exacerbating the effects of a falling birth-rate.<sup>4</sup> Yet in spite of this, migration policy has been focused on enhancing border protection, hindering access to legal entry and accelerating case review and return processes for asylum seekers. The mission of the Italian government has become so dramatically separated from the actual needs of the Italian state that it is even being opposed by mayors of Italian towns.<sup>5</sup> So what is driving the developments in Italian migration policy?

Migration policy allows governments to control the two sides of migration, managing the standards for reception and inclusion, while also protecting public order and security. As recent research has pointed out, insecurities sensed by states resulting from changing

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<sup>1</sup> Scotto, A. (2017). From emigration to asylum destination, Italy navigates shifting migration tides. *The Online Journal of the Migration Policy Institute*, Migration Policy Institute, Accessed on 27.04.2019, Accessed at [<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/emigration-asylum-destination-italy-navigates-shifting-migration-tides>] Accessed on 27.04.2019

<sup>2</sup> Frontex (2019) Infographic- Migration flows: Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean routes. European Council of the European Union, Accessed on 27.04.2019, Accessed at [[www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/eastern-and-central-mediterranean-routes-09-2017/](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/eastern-and-central-mediterranean-routes-09-2017/)]

<sup>3</sup> World Population Review (2019) Italy Population 2019, Accessed on 27.04.2019, Accessed at [<http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/italy-population/>]

<sup>4</sup> Rada, C. (2016) Population Ageing and its Global Challenges in *Global Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: Challenges, opportunities and implications*. Ed. McDaniel, S.A. and Zimmer, Z., Routledge, Oxton, UK.

<sup>5</sup> Pettrachin, A. (2019) Why are Sicilian mayors leading the opposition to Salvini's asylum policies in Italy?, *Debate Migration Migration Policy Centre Blog*. Accessed on 25.04.2019, [Accessed at <https://blogs.eui.eu/migrationpolicycentre/sicilian-mayors-leading-opposition-salvinis-asylum-policies-italy/>]

migration patterns are gendered in terms of “masculinist anxieties”.<sup>6</sup> These fears are based on the perceived threats posed by migrants and transferred into state policies for migration management.

In this way, masculinist, paternalistic, conceptions of protection can be observed in political statements about migration management, such as the Minniti decree of 2017. In 1997, the Turco-Napolitano Law dramatically expanded on the rights of migrants within Italy, giving undocumented migrants access to public school systems, and legal immigrants rights equal to Italian citizens. However, based on the views expressed twenty years later, in the Minniti decree, it seems that these priorities have changed from improving integration and the rights of immigrants, to one that is more concerned with an ability to detain and remove anyone deemed unfit. The ability both to protect citizens while safeguarding the security of the state is pivotal to the production of masculinist identity, ‘as impenetrable yet protective’.<sup>7</sup>

To be able to fully understand the motivations behind changes to migration policies, this paper posits a theoretical framework for exploring the dynamics of gendered insecurities of states through viewing changes in policies as juxtaposed to external factors. This framework allows for the clear identification of trends in how the discourse produced in policy shapes internal structures in Italy. Exploring these influences allows us to better conceptualize the impact of migration management policies, as they influence newcomers, local communities, and state actors of the host society. In such environments, where the fear and alienation of ‘the other’ prevails, a sense of tension can grow within a community.

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<sup>6</sup> Nayak, M. (2015). ‘Who is worth of protection? Gender-based asylum and U.S. immigration policies’. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>7</sup> Idib



Photo:Roberto Bonvallet

This paper will focus on key Italian migration policies and decrees from the 1990s and 2010s. Through the analysis of Italian migration policies and legislation one can gain insight into the priorities and perspectives of Italian policy makers. This article uses the policy encoding methods created by the DEMIG Policy database<sup>8</sup> to organize our policy analysis. The research then proposes a framework for future oriented analysis of the impacts of developments in the management of the Italian border, conditions for granting asylum and the pathways to legal migration. The methodology used incorporates a gender lens to analyze how state practices securitize and categorize migrants, how state insecurity is gendered and how this contributes to the development of security-oriented migration policies.

### **The Logic of Hegemonic Masculinity in Forming the Italian Identity**

The concept of hegemonic masculinity provides a framework for understanding how government leaders in Italy expand their arbitrary power and restrict their migration policies to strengthen their position as the protectors of the nation. This idea of hegemony, which is implicit in Gramsci's concept<sup>9</sup>, refers to dynamics that a specific social structure alleges, and confirms its dominant position inside a social hierarchy.

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<sup>8</sup> de Haas, Natter and Vezzoli (2014). Compiling and coding migration policies: Insights from the DEMIG POLICY database. *IMI Working Paper 87*, Oxford: International Migration Institute, University of Oxford.

<sup>9</sup> Gramsci, A., Hoare, Q., & Nowell-Smith, G. (2008). *Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. New York: International.

This hegemony is enacted through culture, institutions and discourses in an inter-relation between dominance and consent.<sup>10</sup> The conceptual meaning of hegemonic masculinities expresses the culturally glorified manifestation of manhood that is socially exclusive and concerned with ‘bread-winning’. As put forward by Donaldson, “it is anxiety-provoking, internally and hierarchically differentiated, brutal and violent. It is pseudo-natural, tough, contradictory, crisis-prone, rich and socially sustained”.<sup>11</sup>

This type of masculinity depends on its constitutive relation to the presumption of evil/subordinate others. In the Italian case, these have commonly been represented by the majority of migrants, and most especially refugees and asylum seekers. One point of evidence that will be further explored is the current practice of refusing port access to ships, many of which are coming from conflict ridden Libya. As Inga Schwarz argues, along the EU internal border and Italy in particular, border crossing are becoming “increasingly racialized spaces, constructed not only by border guards profiling according to race, but also by European citizens who witness these racialised control practices”.<sup>12</sup>

From this perspective, it can be assumed that a number of social institutions in Italy are being driven, by their own differing reasons, to intensify the problems associated with migration. For politicians, migration offers a platform where messages are transmitted relatively easily to the public. The result is a convergence of interests that sets in place a “complex systemic machine”<sup>13</sup> which often present a strong criminalising discourse around the figure of the migrant or foreigners. This discourse surrounding an external threat also enables the creation of a meaningful state identity and justifies its attempts to control internal borders.

In the case of states constructing and maintaining fear, hegemonic masculinity is at play. It “arises when agents of hegemonic masculinity feel threatened or undermined, thereby

<sup>10</sup> Connel, R.W. (2005). ‘Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept’. *Gender and Society* 19 (6): 829-859.

<sup>11</sup> Donaldson, M.(1993). What is hegemonic masculinity? *Theory and Society*. 22:643-57

<sup>12</sup> Schwarz, I. (2016). Racializing freedom of movement in Europe: Experiences of racial profiling at European borders and beyond. Available at: <https://movements-journal.org/issues/03.rassismus/16.schwarz--racializing.freedom.of.movements.in.europe.html>

<sup>13</sup> Melossi, D. (2003b). In a peaceful life: Migration and the crime of modernity in Europe/Italy’, *Punishment & Society* 5(4): 371–97

needing to inflate, exaggerate, or otherwise distort their traditional masculinity”.<sup>14</sup> In this case, the masculine fragility is evident when “hordes” of migrants are “penetrating” and overrunning borders. In particular, states are insecure about migrants because they are viewed as a threat to order, security and identity. As Hansen and Papademetriou contend, the very presence of migrants crossing borders and entering the country is an evidence of state weakness and a threat to its constructed identity as the “Protector”.<sup>15</sup> This is manifested through the creation of stricter migration entry procedures and jurisdiction, as it will be highlighted below in the next section.

### Definition of Policies and how they Shape the Italian Immigration System

Before tracing these policy developments, one must be familiar with the fundamental laws, legal decrees and presidential decrees that shape the Italian immigration system. It is worth noting that the majority of policies that the researchers reviewed were amendments made to a few fundamental texts. One of the most significant documents in the Italian migration policy is the “Consolidation Act on Immigration” or Legislative Decree 286/1998. This document is the foundational text for the modern state of Italian migration. Three of the most prodigious modifications issued in the last twenty years are: Law 189/2002, “Changes in Regulations on the Matter of Immigration and Asylum”, Law 94/2009, the “Security Package”, and Decree-Law 132/2018 on “Immigration and Security”.<sup>16</sup>

Amendments made by Matteo Salvini, Deputy Prime Minister of Italy and Minister of the Interior as of 2018, to Law 91/1992, governing access to Italian citizenship, and amendments made to the Consolidation Act on Immigration (Legislative Decree no. 286/1998) in 2004 and 2009, can all be seen as efforts to enhance limitations on immigrants’ access to Italy. While demographic researchers have identified legal migration

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<sup>14</sup> Agathangelou, Anna M. and L. H. M. Ling (2004). Power, Borders, Security, Wealth: Lessons of Violence and Desire from September 11. *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 3: 517-538

<sup>15</sup> Hasen, R. and Papademetriou, D. G. (2013). *Managing Borders in an Increasingly Borderless World*. Washington, DC

<sup>16</sup> Law 132, 1st December 2018, *in Gazzetta Ufficiale Vol 156 (281)*. Access on 27.04.2019, Accessed at [<https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/gu/2018/12/03/281/sg/pdf>]

into a country as a viable option for combating aging populations, the way in which the arriving populations are being framed in the policy implies a much different understanding.

The very presence of migrants, or the way in which they are viewed systematically at or inside borders is represented as an evidence of state weakness. As Huymans (2006) argues, migration is central to the identity-making of states. In modern practice, Italy has been profiling large groups of people, most often coming from the global south, as security threats, particularly as it is increasingly framed not as an economic or humanitarian issue but as a “security” matter.

### **Restricting Borders: Security First and Foremost**

Through a series of legal decrees and new laws, Italy has been steadily externalizing its borders. The Boss-Fini Law, No. 189/2002, imposed for the first time a condition for the refusal of entry at the border. Before 2002, border management had been governed by Law 40/1998, or the Turco-Napolitano Law, which reconfirmed the protection of fundamental human rights to those present on their borders with the exception of individuals who constitute a threat to public order. The Boss-Fini law stiffened penalties for any individuals who are found to have entered Italy illegally, allowing for the detention of said individual for up to 60 days, twice the previous maximum detention period, and imposed a barrier to legal re-entry by banning any unauthorized non-EU foreigners from Italy for 10 years. Following border closures in neighbouring countries and the signing of the EU-Turkey deal, however, Italy has steadily worked to harden its coastal borders. Much of this has been done through bilateral agreements with sending countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Libya.



Photo: Kitra Cahana

In 2013, as Italy first witnessed the dramatic number of lives being lost by those trying to cross the Mediterranean sea, the maritime rescue initiative called *Mare Nostrum*, or “Our Sea”. At this point in time there was a strong and broadly shared sentiment shown by the Italian people to prevent this loss of life. This program brought together both humanitarian and military objectives in one shared operation. For *Mare Nostrum* the objective was clear, to safeguard life and to apprehend and prosecute smugglers and traffickers.

This system was replaced one year later with the Operation Triton. This operation expanded upon the *Mare Nostrum* operative guidelines to allow officers to collect information about criminal activities and interrupt illegal activities, such as the smuggling of illegal drugs and weapons, illegal fishing and maritime pollution.<sup>17</sup> The most recent project, Operation Themis, has continued to mix humanitarian and military objectives, attempting to control

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<sup>17</sup> Frontex, European Border and Coastal Guard Agency (2016). Joint Operation Triton (Italy). Available at: <https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/focus/joint-operation-triton-italy--ekKaes>

the border, conduct registration and identification, detect fraudulent documents, collect intelligence about criminal networks as well as conducting search and rescue.<sup>18</sup>

In June 2018, the Aquarius participated in rescue operations carried out by NGOs and the Italian navy and rescued 629 migrants from the Mediterranean sea. The operations were coordinated by the Italian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC). On its way to Italy, Italian authorities ordered the Aquarius to stop and informed the ship that it would be refused access to the country's ports and that any disembarkation of the rescued migrants on Italian territory was prohibited.

This action portended the latest development in Italy's policy, Law 132/2018, placing into law the Salvini Decree, legal decree 113/2018. This law granted Italy's border officers with more power, reorganising the roles of armed forces in their border management duties, and further detailed procedures for persons attempting to evade border controls, or persons convicted of criminal offences.<sup>19</sup> Research into the full history of Italy migration policy developments, conducted by De Haas and colleagues in 2014,<sup>20</sup> found that restrictive policy changes have historically focused on border control, although also noted that there has been a recent focus on exit measures, which will be discussed in the following section.

### **The Ultimatum: Expediting Asylum Review, Appeal and Return processes**

On the matter of asylum, Italy has taken a long road transitioning from what was traditionally an emigration country to one that had experienced significant increases in the number of people seeking humanitarian protection within their borders. Law 39/1990 is a major milestone in the broadening of Italy's policy, as it was within this law that they abolished the pre-existing geographic restraints to their ratification of the Geneva

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<sup>18</sup> Frontex, European Border and Coastal Guard Agency (2016). Main Operations. Available at: <https://frontex.europa.eu/along-eu-borders/main-operations/operation-themis-italy/>

<sup>19</sup> Gombeer, K., & Fink, M. (2018). The Aquarius incident: navigating the turbulent waters of international law. Available at: <https://www.ejiltalk.org/the-aquarius-incident-navigating-the-turbulent-waters-of-international-law/>

<sup>20</sup> De Haas, H. Natter, K. and Vezzoli, S. (2014). Growing restrictiveness or changing selection? The nature and evolution of migration policies. *International Migration Institute*, Working Paper 96.

convention in 1951. Before this, Italy only offered refugee status to European citizens seeking asylum.

Eight years later, after a drawn out parliamentary debate process the Turco-Napolitano Law, Law 286/1998, was passed. This law represented Italy's first attempt to separate humanitarian issues from immigration policy, while at the same time clarifying their mechanisms for fighting 'illegal immigration'. Part of this mechanism is the system of assisted voluntary return (AVR), initially presented in Law 286/1998, but again detailed in the Bossi-Fini law, 189/2002. With Law 189/2002, the Italian state made AVR accessible to victims of trafficking, as originally stated, as well as to individuals who have renounced applying for asylum or whose applications have been denied.

A further exception, detailed in the 2002 law allows individuals who are elderly, single mothers, unaccompanied minors or living with mental or physical illness to stay even if their application has been denied. Nearly a full ten years later, Conversion Law 129/2011 put forth more restrictive specifications on the conditions and criteria for return of third country nationals, but while exemptions for children, single mothers and those who are elderly or unwell were maintained, it also described that any individual being sought under a warrant for any kind of criminal behaviour cannot "benefit" from the AVR. Through an analytical perspective, it can be observed that the particular way in which this policy is framed towards women helps to form and perpetuate certain stereotypes. It has the effect of strengthening and even promoting the image of migrant women as vulnerable subjects in need for protection. Furthermore, this vulnerability framing and the protection of (some) "innocent people" can be a site for the Italian state to assert its hegemonic masculinity.

More particularly, regulation of migration entry procedures has observed a crescendo of repressive and restrictive measures, with a stronger focus on public security and less attention to migrants living conditions. In parallel with the adoption of restrictive entry procedures policies and expulsion measures,<sup>21</sup> Law no. 94/2009 lengthened the period of legal residence needed to apply for Italian citizenship, in the case of marriage with an Italian citizen, from six months to two years.<sup>22</sup>



Photo: AFP

These policies are clearly gendered, since it creates different types of insecurity and violence for men and women, depending on their varying social and economic positions and the relations of power between them.<sup>23</sup> In addition, decrees 24/2007 and 249/2007 both introduced further specifications to the process of expulsion. Decree 24/2007 clearly placed

<sup>21</sup> In particular, Law no. 40/1998 introduced the detention of migrants awaiting expulsion in centres for temporary permanence and assistance (Centri di permanenza temporanea e di assistenza – CPTA), later renamed in 2008 centres for the identification and expulsion of migrants (Centri di identificazione e di espulsione – CIE).

<sup>22</sup> The law had also established, for foreign nationals intending to marry in Italy, the obligation of presenting to the civil registrar, in addition to the approval issued by the competent authority in their own country, ‘a document attesting to the regularity of their stay’ (article 1, paragraph 15). However, the Constitutional Court, with judgment no. 245/2011, declared the provision unconstitutional.

<sup>23</sup> Marchand, M. 2008. ‘The Violence of Development and the Migration/Insecurities Nexus: Labour Migration in a North American Context’, *Third World Quarterly* 29 (7): 1375–1388.

responsibility on transit companies to return any irregular migrants who arrive via that mode of transit, while decree 249/2007 offered urgent measures for expulsion for reasons of terrorism and public safety.<sup>24</sup> Later decree, such as 251/2007 and 28/2008 were concretely established as the minimum criteria for both the identification/qualification of third country nationals and stateless persons in need of protection, as well as the specifics of that protection in the case of the former, and establishing minimum criteria, procedures and protections for refugees for the later. This later decree finally addressed a number of oversights that were still existent within the established documents, likely as a result of developments to these policies have come sporadically and in response to other developments in and around Italy.

Other deterrence practices such as increasing fines for illegal migration, with legal decree 94/2009, or extending the maximum length of detention in identification centres and extending incarceration period for individuals who cannot produce adequate identification of themselves.

By 2012, the increasing severity of these policies and practices had caught the attention of the European Court on Human Rights (ECHR) in the case of *Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy*. The court issued a landmark judgement for the defense of refugees basic human rights.<sup>25</sup>

In 2014, the legislative body turned its attention to the plight of trafficked individuals in Legislative Decree 24/2014, which updated the Italian Penal Code to account for all methods of trafficking and established clear definitions for 'vulnerable persons' and thus making existing protections available to a broader range of people. For those not found to be trafficked, but having entered the country illegally themselves, Legislative Decree 67/2014 abolished the crime of "illegal entry" transforming it into an administrative

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<sup>24</sup> Callia, R., Guiliani, M., Luatti, L., Pittau, F. and Ricci, A. (2012) Organization of asylum and migration policies in Italy. *European Migration Network*.

<sup>25</sup> European Database of Asylum Law (2012). ECtHR - *Hirsi Jamaa and Others v Italy* [GC], Application No. 27765/09. Accessed at <https://www.asylumlawdatabase.eu/en/content/ecthr-hirsi-jamaa-and-others-v-italy-gc-application-no-2776509>

violation. This meant that those found in violation could be given a non-imprisonment sentence, which was defined in the decree to be a fine of €5,000-€10,000.<sup>26</sup>

Between 2014 and 2015, the legislative body worked to establish distinct criteria for the minimum standards of reception for asylum seekers, as well as granting and revoking refugee status. These efforts strove to expand on Italy's institutional capacity to address the increase in asylum applications by doubling the number of Territorial Commissions with Law 146/2014, and creating a pathway for up to 30 additional sub-Commissions to be created across the country with Presidential Decree 21/2015.<sup>27</sup>

Legislative Decree 142/2015 was also designed to further streamline Italian asylum procedures. This decree created two distinct phases of reception, managed by distinct authorities. It also specified that some nationalities may be exempted from the interview process due to pre-established grounds for subsidiary protection. Many aspects of this decree were found to be more restrictive though, aimed at expediting the evaluative processes and clarifying conditions of the withdrawal of protective statuses and removal from the state. The requirement of a residential address to be presented to the police upon request for international protection creates yet another barrier although accommodation centres as well as CPR centres are accepted. The recurring reliance of CPRs and other accommodation centres for individuals who are still being processed places individuals even further under the control of the Italian state, who appear to not leaving much up to chance.

Legislative Decree 132/2018, as we have already highlighted, is a very significant document. Not only did it readdress issues of border management and security, as described above, but it also addressed the current asylum system in Italy. Generally, this document showed a prioritization towards security through restricting the mobility of asylum seekers, limiting access to reception centres and removed the ability to suspend AVR in the appeal process.

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<sup>26</sup> Figueroa, D. (2014) Italy: Abolition of Crime of "Illegal Immigration" and the Mare Nostrum Policy. *Global Legal Monitor*.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*.

## The Profiling Game: Access to Legal Migration

While the above two areas of exploration are very closely linked to the issues of “irregular” migration and humanitarian migration practices, the way in which a country either opens or closes itself to legal points of ingress into the state can allow for a broader view of how migrants are being viewed by policy makers. The First Law on Immigration, Act 943/1986, instituted the practice of issuing work permits to foreigners residing in Italy and marks the first policy response to growing immigration trends. This law regulated employment and treatment of non-European immigrant workers and illegal immigration.<sup>28</sup> In the Italian Nationality Act of 1992 (Law 91/1992), Italy made dramatic changes that restricted access to Italian citizenship for foreigners to predominantly on the basis of *jus sanguinis*.

A remarkable instrument established within the Bossi-Fini Law in 2002 is the Flow Decree. The law established a process where each year President from the Council of Ministers establishes the quota for work permit entry for third-country nationals, and also issues the criteria for qualifications. This tied the permanent settlement of immigrants to the demands of the labour market. While this law took a hard stance on any individual found to be within Italy and undocumented, it also provided for a regularisation of domestic helpers, such as migrant caretakers for children and the elderly, and was later extended to any ‘wage-earners’ whose employers were willing offer an official contract.<sup>29</sup>

Legislative Decree 160/2008 restricted the criteria for family unification. Reunification was limited to only immediate family members within specific age ranges, or states of dependence. The degree also stipulated a lofty income requirement and proof of health insurance or registration with the National Health Services. The following year the Security Package, Law 94/2009, dramatically extended the period that spouses of Italian citizens have to wait before they can apply for citizenship themselves and imposed evaluations of the sanitation and condition of housing of immigrants applying for family reunification. It also introduced a language test as a criteria for long-term residence permits and increased

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<sup>28</sup> Cagiano de Azevedo, R. and Musumeci, L. (1989). The new immigration in Italy. *Italian Politics*, Vol 3, pg. 66-78.

<sup>29</sup> DEMIG dataset

the fee for a citizenship application from €80 to €200. At the same time this law also eased conditions for foreigners who graduate from Italian universities, giving them one year of residency after graduation for the purpose of job seeking, and created the possibility for employers to eschew some of the barriers when hiring high-skilled foreign workers. In parallel with the adoption of restrictive entry procedures policies and expulsion measures,<sup>30</sup> Law no. 94/2009 lengthened the period of legal residence needed to apply for Italian citizenship, in the case of marriage with an Italian citizen, from six months to two years<sup>31</sup>.

The next innovation created by the Italian government was introduced in Presidential Decree 179/2011 and took the form of an Integration Agreement. Upon receipt of a residence permit of more than one year, all recipients are obliged to sign an agreement with the Italian state to pursue activities that will further their integration. This is then measured in a point system, where points are awarded for actions such as attending language classes and participating in civic activities and removed for administrative, financial or criminal violations. It is expected that the resident will have 30 points by the end of their first two years. If a resident's score ever falls below zero however, that can be used as grounds for immediate expulsion.

In 2013, in response to public pressure the year before, Decree number 69/2013 eased the way for second general children born into Italy to access Italian nationality. It created an allowance for children who may be lacking proper documentation to not have their application hindered by this.

In 2017 more was done to ease the entry of high-skilled labourers into the labour market. The Memorandum of Understanding shared between the *Confindustria*, the Employers

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<sup>30</sup> In particular, Law no. 40/1998 introduced the detention of migrants awaiting expulsion in centres for temporary permanence and assistance (Centri di permanenza temporanea e di assistenza – CPTA), later renamed in 2008 centres for the identification and expulsion of migrants (Centri di identificazione e di espulsione – CIE). See Bascherini, 2012: 2.

<sup>31</sup> Rahim, Z. (2019) Matteo Salvini urges Europeans to vote for nationalist parties to prevent 'caliphate' on continent. The Guardian, accessed at [<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/matteo-salvini-eu-elections-viktor-orban-budapest-hungary-islam-a8897401.html>]

national association and the National Chamber of Commerce to facilitate work permits for high-skilled third country nationals along with investors and start-up ventures.<sup>32</sup>

Overall, the discursive framing of migrants as bearers of social threat comes from specific categories of rhetoric. As observed, in recent years many countries around Europe have seen politicians, public officials and influential voices in the media increasingly promoting and perpetuating the problematic characterizations of migrants. State representatives have been able to successfully mobilize fear in order to justify the establishment of enhanced security and surveillance measures. By professing that it is their role as the protectors of the nation against external threats, state representatives are able to continue to grow their power and dominance. In this way the Italian state is playing the *Leviathan*'s role, whose actions aimed to foster and maintain security of its citizens; the patriarchal father protecting his family from the outside dangers.

When examining both external security and internal reception policies, one may observe not only the particular way that the priorities underlying migration regulation have shifted, but also the ways that developments within the current political dynamics have reaffirmed the paternalistic and patriarchal identity of the Italian State, through which a gendered discourse is legitimized.

### The Rational through Future Oriented / Ex-ante Analysis

As can be observed in the above sections, Italy's migration policies have been steadily changing and redefining who is allowed to cross the border, how they are initially received, and have empowered the Italian state with a high level of control over entrance criteria, the number of permits given out each year, and who will be allowed to stay and possibly access Italian citizenship. Based on current policies, and the above application of a gender perspective analysis related to the characteristics of the Italian state, this section will

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<sup>32</sup> European Migration Network (2018). Annual report on migration and asylum 2017. [online]. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00\\_annual\\_report\\_on\\_migration\\_2017\\_highres\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00_annual_report_on_migration_2017_highres_en.pdf)

explore the implications of this rational through future oriented analysis<sup>33</sup> of the relevant policy areas.

The proposed model of analysis will mainly focus on the national level, as this is what is most influenced by the concept of one singular Italian national identity, although it is important to note that influences from distinct regions come with their own historic connotations and relationships to the larger Italian state.

The objective of this analysis is not to pinpoint specific predictions, but to better conceptualize the current policy landscape within which decisions are being made as well as aiding in identifying state priorities. This concept will be explored through three different contexts, as have already been identified in the review of policy developments. Those contexts are border management, asylum policy, and legal access to Italy. It is of interest to note however, that there have been clashes between local mayors and the national government over differing interests and interpretations of needs.

Our approach to future oriented analysis will focus on the definition and abstractions phases of analysis to assess the rationale behind certain policy conditions and abstracting it to theorize how this current conception would fit in an increasingly complex system of global migration. This system of analysis has been applied to observe the ways in which decisions relating to the maintenance, expansion of institutionalisation of different systems are made.

Within the definition phase, the context, levels of analysis, categories and policy metrics are defined. As it has already been stated, the majority of this analysis will be focused on national policy, without going into the different implementations found in different regions and municipalities. The categories of policy have also already been defined as border management, conditions and contexts of asylum and pathways to legal migration. The context for analysis accounts for policies working to manage both legal and 'illegal' migration. This distinction will become increasingly challenging in the future as patterns of

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<sup>33</sup> Mostafavi, A., Abraham, D., and DeLaurentis, D. (2014). Ex-ante policy analysis in civil infrastructure systems. *Journal of Computing in Civil Engineering*, Vol 28(5).

mixed migration continue to develop and evolve. Many of the amendments or introduction of new laws or mechanisms have been constructed in a reactive way, basing new policies in response to existing or already emergent patterns of migration. However, what was most often observed in recent policy developments was a focus of Italian policies on preventing the influx of migrants. Going forward though, the World Health Organization anticipates that, as a result of climate change's effects on subsistence economies, these pathways will be increasingly used.<sup>34</sup> This means that old paradigms for migration decision making will not adequately address climate change migrants. They are not being overtly persecuted, and therefore do not fit into the traditional 'protectionist' perspective present in much of Italy's migration policies and makes it more difficult to identify who is to blame for displacing these peoples.

For this analysis the policy metrics were drawn from the criteria used in the Demig policy database, identifying the policy area, magnitude of change, target group and 'change in restrictiveness'.

### Connecting Behaviours to Policy Outcomes: the Abstraction Phase

The abstraction phase allows for a deeper analysis of the complex adaptive behaviours displayed by agents and how these agents affect policy outcomes. Another aspect of this analytical phase is the creation of a conceptual model that maps out different elements of the models and their interdependencies, thus allowing for a broader view of some of the numerous influences on agents.<sup>35</sup>

**Agents** - There are a diverse set of authoritative bodies and actors involved in migration management, such as: the individual members within the government, including the Minister of the interior, Prime minister, President of the council of ministers, and many more; the individuals who create the language and rules for migration; and those who are left to enact policy,

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<sup>34</sup> World Health Organization (2018). Climate and health country profile: Italy. Accessed at [<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/260380/WHO-FWC-PHE-EPE-15.52-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>]

<sup>35</sup> Mostafavi, A. (2014) Ex-ante Policy Analysis in Civil Infrastructure Systems. Journal of Computing Civil Engineering

including border officials, civil society organizations, civic institutions and community leaders. This research is focused on national policies, thus the macro level, however for more comprehensive use of the ex ante analysis model, mapping out interactions between the different levels could reveal further insights.

**Complex Adaptive Behaviours** - Complex adaptive behaviours allow the researcher to attempt to outline an agent's thoughts, beliefs or knowledge as displayed through their actions and publicly available information such as speeches and policy texts. In this work we have contextualized this through the gendered analytic lens and narrative frames that are commonly used when addressing migrants. The thoughts, beliefs or knowledge of an agent speaks to decision makers objectives, priorities, values and rules for incorporating uncertainty. When viewed at the macro level, the Italian nation state appears to centre its decision-making around a more insular conception of the 'protection' of Italy and its citizens.

**Interactions between agents** - This predisposition to a parochial securitized attitude has led policy-makers to give preference to policies that will only attract high skilled labourers, despite the literature that suggests that 'low-skilled' migrant workers can help boost economies by doing the jobs that the locals do not want to do.<sup>36</sup> This is also indicative of the anxieties held by policy makers over the loss of high-skilled Italians to opportunities in other countries that have stronger economies.

Another aspect of the defense of 'Italy' can be viewed at the micro level, in the form of integration of newcomers into communities, the proliferation of business development, and how the inclusion of new culture and their practices affect, or threaten, the preservation of 'the Italian identity'. These concerns, which have not been consistently shown by local community leaders and civil society organizations,

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<sup>36</sup> Dadush, U. (2014) [The Effect of Low-Skilled Labor Migration on the Host Economy](#). KNOMAD Working Paper.

can still be conveyed to the meso and macro levels and affect the behaviour of policy makers. Within the Demig database much of the formatting/coding of the levels at least were already assigned and their methodology for encoding these levels were followed throughout the study.

Through this research we view that much of the driving decision-making process is highly motivated by the paternalistic nature of the Italian state. As illustrated, the Italian State aims to “solve” the gendered insecurities it is exposed by reaffirming their ability to protect Italian citizens and restricting migrants from entering its borders.



Photo: REUTERS/Alessandro Bianchi

## Conclusion

In sum, migrants in Italy are framed as dangerous criminal individuals who threaten the paternalistic and protective role of the good masculine Italian State. Put differently, protection of innocent people (Italian nationals), who are constructed as vulnerable, from the foreign Other, is a site for the Italian state to assert its hegemonic masculinity. Hence, the ability both to protect citizens and to secure the state is pivotal to the production of this masculinist identity, “as impenetrable yet protective”.<sup>37</sup>

By looking at the gendered figurations of security reveals how integral security practices towards migrants are to gender relations and how central gender relations are to these security practices. It reveals the multiple conjectures of power in the formulation of security policies - on how the Italian State maintains its fatherly role as protectors, and finally how intersectional and racialized figurations of migrants are used to legitimize policies.

As Darcy Leigh and Cynthia Weber contend, sexed, gendered and racialized framing of security are “always intersectionally produced and disputed, and these formulations can be central to contemporary formulations of power” (2018).<sup>38</sup> In the Italian case, especially in the social media, but often in the national press, male refugees are frequently portrayed as ‘terrorists’ and lazy aliens, who forge asylum claims and come to create “an Islamic caliphate in Europe”.<sup>39</sup> In security politics throughout Europe, and especially in Italy, such portrayals have been indirectly used as justifications to curb migration and increase security measures at the borders. This in turn also adds to the Italian masculine conception of security, rendering the gendered body of the Other as a site of insecurity.

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<sup>37</sup> Nayak, M. (2015). ‘Who is worth of protection? Gender-based asylum and U.S. immigration policies’. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>38</sup> Leigh, Darcy and Weber, Cynthia (2018) *Gendered and sexualized figurations of security*. In: Gentry, Caron E, Shepherd, Laura J and Sjoberg, Laura J (eds.) *The handbook of gender and security*, 1st ed. Routledge, Oxon, pp. 83-93. ISBN 9781138696211

<sup>39</sup> Rahim, Z. (2019). ‘Matteo Salvini urges Europeans to vote for nationalist parties to prevent ‘caliphate’ on continent’, *Independent*, 3 May, [online]. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/matteo-salvini-eu-elections-viktor-orban-budapest-hungary-islam-a8897401.html>

Finally, the initial exploration of the applications of ex ante, or future oriented research, has shown to be a beneficial tool for mapping out the various agents and influence affecting migration policy developments. In our view, a project with a larger scope could apply this format to create some basic modeling to predict police responses to anticipated external influences, such as climate migration.

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