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The impact of COVID-19 in international migrations in Italy and the United States of America

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Table of contents

Index	1
Part I: Introduction	2
Research question and method	3
Chapter one: What is the relationship between COVID-19 and international migrations?	
1.1: International migration as part of globalization: an overview.	5
1.2: International migration: what has changed from “normal life”.	11
1.3: History of quarantine and its impact on international migration in the past and the present.	21
Part II: Comparison between Italy and the United States of America	27
Chapter two: How does Italy react to the pandemic and what are the migration consequences?	
2.1: General overview of the situation in Europe.	28
2.2: Internal migration and Italian outflow during the pandemic in Italy.	34
2.3: Immigration during the pandemic in Italy.	50
Chapter three: How does the United States react to the pandemic and what are migration consequences?	
3.1: General overview of United States during the pandemic	60
3.2: Internal migration and emigration in the U.S. during the pandemic	71
3.3: Immigration in the U.S. during the pandemic	83
Part III: Conclusions	93
Chapter four: Conclusions	
4.1: A brief comparison of both countries, the future of smart working and impact on migration trends	94
4.2: Globalization versus glocalization: a new step towards sustainability?	101
4.3 The centrality of the State intervention in the COVID-19 era and its role in the	105
Bibliography and sitography	111
Abstract	128

Part I: Introduction

Research method

“The impact of COVID-19 in international migrations in Italy and the United States of America” is a research that has the purpose to deeply investigate inflows and outflows data before and during the pandemic, analysing its impact and then rethinking the relative effects on the future immigrational and emigrational patterns. The development of tools such as smart working and its new shapes, like ‘Work-From-Home’ (WFH), ‘Work-From-Anywhere’ (WFA), ‘workation’, ‘near working’ and ‘south working’, has created innovations in the world of workers. It has boosted the spread of ‘smart workers’ and it has allowed the rise of new figures in the working environment, like ‘digital nomads’. All these features can have huge effects in the future.

At the same time, the pandemic has diffused fears among citizens towards foreigners, because of the risk of contagion. Many governments across the world have enacted some laws in which they prevented the entry of foreigners if they do not respect some criteria, such as a negative COVID-19 test and, eventually, a compulsory quarantine period. The bans introduced by the countries have discouraged people to travel and to plan possible relocation to other States. In some circumstances, many foreigners who were used to live in the host country were repatriated since they have lost their works (that is a fundamental criterion in order to obtain a visa).

The decrees promulgated by governments had an effect also in the local population, forcing individuals to ‘stay at home’ (that became a slogan around the world) and, in some extreme cases, stopping every kind of unnecessary mobility in the territory through strong decisions and legislations (such as in Italy and China) but, at the same time, the pandemic had the great opportunity to shed a light on the illegal migration and the essentiality of seasonal workers in some fields (for instances, the agricultural and household ones).

The pros and cons which the pandemic has led in the migration field will be analysed in this research. The focus will be on the Western world, exploring the policies and the trends in two specific countries: Italy and the United States of America, as the title of this thesis suggests. The motives below the choice of these two States are the following: firstly, because they are two of the countries hardest hit by the virus; secondly, since both have interesting inbound and outbound to analyse; finally, because Italy and the U.S. have a considerable specific weight in the Western world, albeit for different reasons. While Italy has significant soft power for its historical emigrations (capable of trading not only goods but also traditions), the United States of America have an attractiveness out of the ordinary for its image built up over decades as a ‘superpower’.

Concerning the choice of the topic, however, it fell on this argument for some reasons. First of all, COVID-19 had a historical, social, economic and emotional impact on everyone. For different reasons and in various ways, the pandemic has affected the quality of the life of people. Someone has experienced

emotional losses attributable to the virus; somebody has economically suffered the closures imposed by the States; others have faced mental diseases due to the lockdowns and the social distancing measures. And considering its historical and dramatic impact in which most people in the West rediscovered the vulnerability of mankind even in an area so long taken for granted but so essential as health, the author has chosen to talk about COVID-19 changing the perspective. The outbreak could be seen as a great opportunity to revise the mindset of individuals, trying to live more sustainably. But it would be important to keep this experience in mind as a warning for the future. Another reason why the author has chosen this subject relies on her personal experience as a migrant during the pandemic and the difficulties which have dealt with in that period. Even though xenophobic episodes were also present in the pre-COVID period, the virus has enhanced the frequency of these attacks, as the research will show. Moreover, the measures introduced by the States to counter the diffusion of the disease, such as lockdowns, closures and social distancing, have shown the limits of the countries in the treatment of foreigners, often classifying them as second-class people and in some cases depriving them of essential needs and rights. The positive side of international migration regards the opportunity for workers to carry out their duties from home and/or anywhere, even getting closer to families in some cases.

The author will use a deductive hypothetical method relating to the analyses of the chosen case studies, while an inductive hypothetical method concerning the introduction and the conclusions. Moreover, the thesis will be supported by some economic theories (for instance OLI paradigm) and helped by the collection of data, graphs from the most relevant economic databases (for example Statista, OECD, ISTAT, etcetera), drawing attention to the tendencies in both countries. The approach would like to go over the simple comparison between the two States, but it would like to shed a light on the future implications of the innovations prompted by the pandemic and the tendencies which could arise when the pandemic will be definitely over.

First Chapter: What is the relationship between COVID-19 and international migrations?

1.1: International migration as part of globalization: a general overview.

COVID-19 hit us where we thought we were stronger and in what we took most for granted: health. It does not matter if someone tried to draw attention to the eventual global risk and the possible downsides. For instance, in 2015 Bill Gates dealt with the issue, warning the audience about how much pandemics would be a concrete threat for our world (Gates, 2015)¹. But his claims fell on deaf ears. The pandemic is changing our lives in every aspect: from the sanitary danger to the freedom of movement. Particularly, lockdowns are affecting individual's freedoms, as well as many parts of the economy, especially trade in its broader sense. Not only goods and services but also human capital cannot circulate at the same frequency as before the pandemic.

Globalization deserves a special mention since its cruciality in the actual economic system which is particularly affected by the virus. But it is a phenomenon with many nuances and its definition differs from the perspective. From an economic point of view, globalization is “the spread of products, technology, information, and jobs across national borders and cultures” (Fernando and Barnier, 2020)². In economic terms, it describes an interdependence of nations around the globe fostered through free trade” (Fernando and Barnier, 2020)³; other scholars, such as Melina Kolb, define it as “the word used to describe the growing interdependence of the world's economies, cultures, and populations, brought about by cross-border trade in goods and services, technology, and flows of investment, people, and information⁴” (Kolb, 2018). The assistant vice-president for digital communications of the Peterson Institute for International Economics added: “Countries have built economic partnerships to facilitate these movements over many centuries (Kolb, 2018)⁵”. And to underline the fundamental role of countries in erecting this global economic network, the definition given by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is more suitable for this research: “Economic "globalization" is a historical process, the result of human innovation and technological progress. It refers to the increasing integration of economies around the world, particularly through the movement of goods, services, and capital across borders (IMF, 2021)⁶”.

Notwithstanding this historical process did not start in the last few decades, it has been ongoing for centuries. Some scholars admit that globalization was born in the same period of capitalism, suggesting a

¹ Gates, Bill. “The next Outbreak? We’re Not Ready.” *Ted.com*, TED Talks, 2014, www.ted.com/talks/bill_gates_the_next_outbreak_we_re_not_ready?language=en. Accessed 29 Mar. 2021.

² Fernando, Jason and Barnier, Brian. “Globalization.” *Investopedia*, 2021, www.investopedia.com/terms/g/globalization.asp. Accessed 22 Apr. 2021.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ Kolb, Melina. “What Is Globalization?” *PIIE*, 29 Oct. 2018, www.piie.com/microsites/globalization/what-is-globalization#group-Credits-and-Sources-RjKrFhm3hT. Accessed 22 Apr. 2021.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ IMF, “Issues Brief - Globalization: A Brief Overview.” *Imf.org*, 2021, www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2008/053008.htm#:~:text=Economic%20globalization%20is%20a%20historical,service%20and%20capital%20across%20borders.. Accessed 22 Apr. 2021.

correlation between the two phenomena. According to sociologist and LUISS Guido Carli University professor Luciano Luigi Pellicani, capitalism is the result of a series of coincidences that have occurred, such as secularisation, decentralised power and the emergence of open societies which have favoured trade (Pellicani, 2013)⁷. Particularly, the latter characteristic was essential for the development of globalization because it allowed trading and the interrelation among different countries and populations. In the book “La genesi del capitalismo e le origini della modernità” (“The genesis of capitalism and the origins of modernity”), the author placed the rise of capitalism when the medieval Communes were born. They escaped from the control of the feuds, creating independent enclaves outside of the control of the lords where they could move freely. In this way, trade became the most important activity to survive and essential to create prosperity. And from this event, the figure of merchant emerged⁸, who were central also for globalization since they were in charge for trading and, for this reason, they are used to cross borders and sell across countries. Even though this figure was already present since Ancient Greece (as the Swiss-French activist Benjamin Constant remembered to us with his works)⁹, the consecration of the merchant role occurred only in this period. They were the first step towards the further integration of national economies into a global economic system and thanks to them it was possible to exchange goods and services among countries.

From an economic perspective, Bocconi University professor Andrea Colli, author of the book “Dynamics of International Business: Comparative perspectives of firms, markets and entrepreneurship”, analyses the evolution of the merchant role, which took to the rise and development of firms. From the beginning of the colonial era, some enterprises were prompted to discover new routes and to trade new goods (such as spices), creating an opportunity to expand their businesses. The inevitable implication was that companies started to cross national borders to do business abroad. It entailed the progressive birth of multinationals enterprises (MNEs) which became central in the process of globalization. The most outstanding feature of MNEs which differ them to another kind of activities is their ability to trade on an international scale. And without faster communication routes and the development of new kind of inventions (such as steamships), the multinationals could not globally trade, and globalization would not possible (Colli, 2015)¹⁰.

On this subject, it is interesting to note that all these features came from European countries. The sociologist Pellicani dealt with this question in his abovementioned book, citing some examples of societies that satisfied and respected all the conditions for the rise of capitalism but where it did not occur. For instances, China and Arab territories experienced these conditions before European countries. However, governments’ fear and concerns to lose control of the situation pushed them to close the borders and to

⁷ Pellicani, Luciano Luigi. “La genesi del capitalismo e le origini della modernità”, *Rubbettino*, 2013.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Pellicani, Luciano Luigi. “Dalla società chiusa alla società aperta”, *Rubbettino*, 2002.

¹⁰ Colli, Andrea. “Dynamics of International Business: Comparative perspectives of firms, markets and entrepreneurship”. *Routledge*, 2015.

centralize the power again after its previous liberalization¹¹. So, we can admit that globalization and capitalism have a strong bond or even they go hand in hand.

Despite its long history, globalization became a popular concept during the 1980s. In his book “Teoria e critica della globalizzazione finanziaria: dinamiche del potere finanziario e crisi sistemiche” (“Theory and critics of financial globalization: dynamics of financial power and systemic crises”), LUISS Guido Carli professor Giuseppe Di Gaspare explained why it happened. Globalization and the consequent liberalization of movements were central in the stabilisation of the dollar standard system, with the aim to maintain U.S. economic supremacy around the world. Afterwards, they helped to build up a new economic system, no longer anchored in the real economy (made of concrete goods) as in the past with Bretton Woods (which was based on the gold standard) but based on financial services and creating new challenges. This was possible thanks to the liberalization of capital movements allowed by new technologies (which in turn they permitted to have more information quickly), leading to a new stage of capitalism and globalization (Di Gaspare, 2011)¹².

Thus, globalization lived in different stages since it is a historical process¹³. Over time its composition has changed. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), nowadays globalization is composed by¹⁴:

- Trade: according to professor Adam Hayes, trade is: “Trade is a basic economic concept involving the buying and selling of goods and services, with compensation paid by a buyer to a seller, or the exchange of goods or services between parties. Trade can take place within an economy between producers and consumers (Hayes and Kelly, 2021)¹⁵”. Specifically for international trade, he added: “International trade allows countries to expand markets for both goods and services that otherwise may not have been available to it (Hayes and Kelly, 2021)¹⁶”. But according to Encyclopaedia Britannica: “International trade, economic transactions that are made between countries. Among the items commonly traded are consumer goods, capital goods and raw materials and food. Other transactions involve services (Balassa, 2020)¹⁷”.

¹¹ Pellicani, Luciano Luigi. “La genesi del capitalismo e le origini della modernità”, *Rubbettino*, 2013.

¹² Di Gaspare, Giuseppe. “Teoria e critica della globalizzazione finanziaria: dinamiche del potere finanziario e crisi sistemiche”. *CEDAM*, 2011.

¹³ IMF, “Issues Brief - Globalization: A Brief Overview.” *Imf.org*, 2021, www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2008/053008.htm. Accessed 31 Mar. 2021.

¹⁴ IMF, “Globalization: Threat or Opportunity? An IMF Issues Brief.” *Imf.org*, 2011, www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2000/041200to.htm#II. Accessed 31 Mar. 2021.

¹⁵ Hayes, Adam and Kelly, Robert. C., “What Is Trade?” *Investopedia*, 2021, www.investopedia.com/terms/t/trade.asp. Accessed 21 Apr. 2021.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ Balassa, Bela. “International Trade | Definition, History, Benefits, Theory, & Types | Britannica.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2021, www.britannica.com/topic/international-trade. Accessed 21 Apr. 2021.

- Capital movements: James Chen and Gordon Scott described the different kinds of capital flows, which change depending on the point of view of the entities and their goals: “Capital flows refer to the movement of money for the purpose of investment, trade, or business operations. Inside of a firm, these include the flow of funds in the form of investment capital, capital spending on operations, and research and development (R&D). On a larger scale, a government directs capital flows from tax receipts into programs and operations and through trade with other nations and currencies. Individual investors direct savings and investment capital into securities, such as stocks, bonds, and mutual funds (Chen and Gordon, 2021)¹⁸”. In a narrower sense, the freedom of capital flows, their movements and their liberalization allow and lead to the consequent liberalization of the economy and the financial sector and services, generating new incomes and gains.
- Movement of people: freedom of movements and migrations are other important assets of globalization. The economist Richard B. Freeman defines with the following words: “People flows refers to the movement of people across international borders in the form of immigration, international student flows, business travel, and tourism (Freeman, 2006)¹⁹”. In addition, he pointed out: “[...] the movement of people from low income to high income countries is fundamental in global economic development, with consequences for factor endowments, trade patterns, and transfer of technology. In part because people flows are smaller than trade and capital flows, the dispersion of pay for similarly skilled workers around the world exceeds the dispersion of the prices of goods and cost of capital (Freeman, 2006)²⁰”. Moreover, according to the World Economic Forum, it is one of the four pillars of the single markets (one of the most outstanding examples is the European Union), along with the movement of capital, services and goods²¹. What is essential in people’s freedom of movement is the contribution which every individual can make when he or she crosses the borders: they can spend money and contribute to the national consumption; they can bring their goods and exchange them with locals (making business); they can share their knowledge, traditions, cultures and experiences with host countries and learn something new from the latter one, giving the rise to the ‘spread of knowledge’.
- Spread of knowledge: it is strictly linked to freedom of movements and technologies. Stanford University professors Walter W. Powell and Kaisa Snellman explained in their article “The Knowledge Economy” its meaning: “We define the knowledge economy as production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technological and

¹⁸ Chen, James and Scott, Gordon. “Capital Flows.” *Investopedia*, 2021, www.investopedia.com/terms/c/capital-flows.asp. Accessed 21 Apr. 2021.

¹⁹ Freeman, Richard. *NBER WORKING PAPER SERIES PEOPLE FLOWS in GLOBALIZATION.*, 2006, https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w12315/w12315.pdf. Accessed 22 Apr. 2021.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ Hutt, Rosamond. “What Is the Free Movement of People, and Why Does It Matter?” *World Economic Forum*, Sept. 2016, www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/09/free-movement-of-people-explainer/. Accessed 22 Apr. 2021.

This system has many benefits for MNEs. John Harry Dunning explained clearly how this scheme advantages businesses through his Eclectic Paradigm (OLI). There are three main elements at the ground of Dunning's theory:

- Ownership advantages: the author defined them as “The (net) competitive advantages which firms of one nationality possess over those of another nationality in supplying any particular market or set of markets. These advantages may arise either from the firm's privileged ownership of, or access to, a set of income-generating assets, or from their ability to co-ordinate these assets with other assets across national boundaries in a way that benefits them relative to their competitors, or potential competitors” (Dunning, 2001)²⁵.
- Locational advantages: Dunning explained them with the following words: “The extent to which firms choose to locate these value-adding activities outside their national boundaries” (Dunning, 2001)²⁶.
- Internalisation advantages: they are “The extent to which firms perceive it to be in their best interests to internalise the markets for the generation and/or the use of these assets; and by so doing add value to them” (Dunning, 2001)²⁷.

The good functioning of this cycle was disrupted by the pandemic. Looking at some data, according to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in 2020 the global value of the merchandise was predicted to fall by 5.6% compared with 2019, whilst the decline of services trade was expected to decrease by 15,4% compared to the previous year²⁸. Concerning the 2020 migration trend, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (ECOSOC) made a report in which it claims: “Highlights indicate that the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may have reduced the number of international migrants by around 2 million globally by mid-2020, corresponding to a decrease of around 27 per cent in the growth expected from July 2019 to June 2020²⁹”. Pandemic slowed also the spread of

²⁵ Dunning, John H. “The Eclectic (OLI) Paradigm of International Production: Past, Present and Future.” *International Journal of the Economics of Business*, vol. 8, no. 2, July 2001, pp. 173–190, [²⁶ *Ibidem*.](https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/60556719/2001_Dunning_The_Eclectic_OLI_Paradigm_of_International_Production_Past__Present_and_Future20190911-53522-oc1tie.pdf?1568191180=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DThe_Eclectic_OLI_Paradigm_of_International_Production_Past__Present_and_Future20190911-53522-oc1tie.pdf?1568191180=&Expires=1616759320&Signature=XXUvRP8yZu3SrwAby~joRYzR4mXlej4RnqJvK8Z6In1GISqKmov~pewRF6mkcVO3GcD8MyMc4JIUHloGEenMxPG--RJHA6Ez6PsJnL3AwheSBbVRKbe~l2zMDcpfUEzsyiVLq51dyhUWibxOgRwjI41DS0MPe75K-XgARXAzHOzPT3k8kNpJroJyMilCSDuJKqBXQbMBLKUkCI07~23isChf3kBPMYetfjPJAveEsEYWPe8scGKN-GqPu7Q3Z15xVW24e5KdcDpjsELOvaNOYklr3G5Amru1vkqybqzKe-PuBInA9xPRaDQEyyQxNW89~64wE2J4i9iie6xZfhZ2Jg__&Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA, 10.1080/13571510110051441. Accessed 26 Mar. 2021.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ UNCTAD, “COVID-19 Drives Large International Trade Declines in 2020 | UNCTAD.” *unctad.org*, 2020, unctad.org/news/covid-19-drives-large-international-trade-declines-2020. Accessed 31 Mar. 2021.

²⁹ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). *International Migration 2020 Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/452)*.

knowledge, as a consequence for example of the 2020 stock market crash which led to their global closures. Also, the slowdown or even stopping of the spread of knowledge is attributable to the decreasing of the circulation of people. The research will deal with this topic in the following paragraph.

1.2: International migration: what has changed from the “normal” life.

In the previous paragraph, we have defined what is people flow. But it is important to keep in mind some basic terms of migration. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), migration is “The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State (IOM, 2015)”³⁰. Migration is considered as a flow, as explained by IOM with the following words: “The number of international migrants arriving in a country (immigrants) or the number of international migrants departing from a country (emigrants) over the course of a specific period (IOM, 2015)³¹”. Moreover, it could be split into two other phenomena: the emigrations and the immigrations. While emigration is “From the perspective of the country of departure, the act of moving from one’s country of nationality or usual residence to another country, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence” (IOM, 2015)³², the immigration is “From the perspective of the country of arrival, the act of moving into a country other than one’s country of nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence (IOM, 2015)³³”. Obviously, migration is based on migrants, but a universal definition of the term has not yet been accepted³⁴. In general, IOM has described them as “a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons (IOM, 2015)³⁵”. The lack of a universally accepted definition makes the migrant count difficult. And to complicate the situation even further are the different reasons that prompt migrants to migrate to another country, such as climate, labour, and so on. For research purposes, it will take into account everyone who changes his or her location from his or her place of birth, including the internal migration, which is “The movement of people within a State involving the establishment of a new temporary or permanent residence (IOM, 2015)³⁶”. Also, the research will consider both temporary and permanent movements. Other important definitions are “country of origin” and “country of destination”: the previous one is defined like “In the migration context, a country of nationality or of former habitual residence of a person or group of persons who have migrated abroad, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly (IOM, 2015)³⁷”,

³⁰ International Organization for Migration (IOM). “Key Migration Terms.” *International Organization for Migration*, 14 Jan. 2015, www.iom.int/key-migration-terms. Accessed 9 June 2021.

³¹ *Ibidem*.

³² *Ibidem*.

³³ *Ibidem*.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

while the latter one is “In the migration context, a country that is the destination for a person or a group of persons, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly (IOM, 2015)³⁸”.

In the previous paragraph, the research did not talk about how much migration is important to globalization, particularly before the pandemic. The freedom of people movements guarantees also spread of knowledge, goods, services and capital movements (through trade, business and tourism). So, the human capital and its freedom to cross borders and to move freely around the globe is at the ground of globalization and then capitalism. Without this freedom, the system could collapse.

In this way, making a comparison between 2019 and 2020 data on migration trends would be useful. According to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a special agency of United Nations, in 2019 “the total number of passengers carried on scheduled services rose to 4.5 billion in 2019, which is 3.6 per cent higher than the previous year, while the number of departures reached 38.3 million in 2019, a 1.7 per cent increase (ICAO, 2020)³⁹”. Moreover, in 2019 international tourist arrivals worldwide reached around 1.46 billion (Statista, 2020)⁴⁰. The abovementioned numbers were the highest in history.

However, these figures could not be reconfirmed in 2020 because of the pandemic. According to the researcher Phillip Connor, more than nine in ten people worldwide live in countries with travel restrictions amid COVID-19 (Connor, 2020)⁴¹. The following map shows how many countries and governments imposed partial or total border closures.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ ICAO. “The World of Air Transport in 2019.” *Icao.int*, 2019, www.icao.int/annual-report-2019/Pages/the-world-of-air-transport-in-2019.aspx. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.

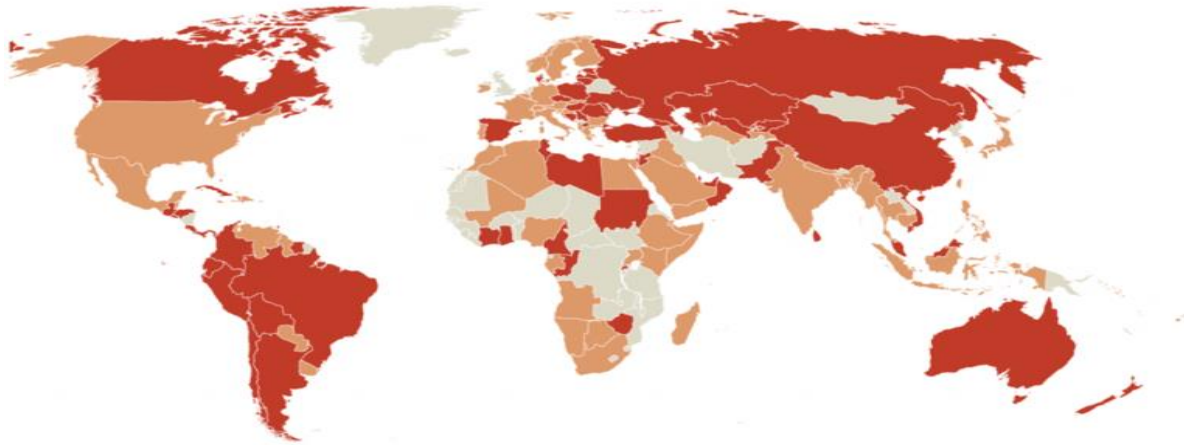
⁴⁰ Statista. “International Tourist Arrivals Worldwide 2019 | Statista.” *Statista*, Statista, 2019, www.statista.com/statistics/262750/number-of-international-tourist-arrivals-worldwide/#:~:text=1950%20to%202019,-,The%20number%20of%20international%20tourist%20arrivals,approximately%201.46%20billion%20in%202019.&text=As%20international%20travel%20has%20become,tourist%20arrivals%20has%20greatly%20increased.. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.

⁴¹ Connor, Phillip. “More than Nine-In-Ten People Worldwide Live in Countries with Travel Restrictions amid COVID-19.” *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, Apr. 2020, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/04/01/more-than-nine-in-ten-people-worldwide-live-in-countries-with-travel-restrictions-amid-covid-19/. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.

Most countries in the world have imposed partial or complete border closures to foreign nationals due to coronavirus outbreak

Countries with borders closed to the movement of noncitizens and nonresidents as of March 31, 2020

■ Complete closure ■ Partial closure



Note: Partial closure is a border closed to people arriving from other countries who are neither citizens nor residents of the destination country, including tourists and other noncitizen visitors. Partial closure also includes country situations where not all types of borders are closed (land, sea, air). Complete closure refers to a ban on anyone arriving who is not a citizen or resident of the destination country, with some possible exceptions such as scientists, diplomats, airline crews and humanitarian personnel.
Sources: The New York Times and Al Jazeera (border closures), accessed March 31, 2020.

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42

Travel restrictions had an impact on everyone, but particularly for certain categories of workers and people. For instance, many of the exchange programmes for students were blocked in the fall semester, due to the uncertainty of the situation. Another affected category from the pandemic is certainly the migrant workers. On the one hand, some of them were repatriated during the pandemic; on the other hand, others were stranded in the host countries, raising the risk of human rights violations against them. Indeed, episodes of xenophobia and racism against migrant workers are increasing from the beginning of the pandemic. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), COVID-19 and its consequences impacted around 164 million migrant workers out of 272 million international migrants globally⁴³. All these elements help us to understand how much the impact of the pandemic is huge on migrations and its main actors.

As shown in the previous paragraph, also multinationals are involved in the migration process, due to their peculiarity to cross borders to seek new revenues abroad. Understandably, the measures introduced by most of the governments worldwide had a heavy impact also in the earnings and budgets of MNEs. So, companies want the pandemic to end as soon as possible in such a way as to start again the production cycle and to recover the pre-pandemic productivity level and the gains lost during it. Regarding the former one, the issue is quite debated. In the beginning, most of the governments around the world imposed hard

⁴² Pew Research Center. "Most Countries in the World Have Imposed Partial or Complete Border Closures to Foreign Nationals due to Coronavirus Outbreak." *Pew Research Center*, 2020, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/04/01/more-than-nine-in-ten-people-worldwide-live-in-countries-with-travel-restrictions-amid-covid-19/ft_2020-04-01_borderclosures/. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.

⁴³ Hennebry, J. and H. KC. Quarantined! Xenophobia and migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. International Organization for Migration (IOM). Geneva, 2020. <https://publications.iom.int/es/system/files/pdf/quarantined.pdf>. Accessed 19 April, 2021.

lockdowns and forced MNEs to shut down industries and fabrics to limit and stop the diffusion of the virus, slowing the sector of manufacturing and production. On the other hand, multinationals could take advantage of smart working for those workers who can carry out their duties from home and partially recover the productivity level. Forbes deeply explored this aspect of the pandemic: despite the losses (according to the Australian National University, acronym of ANU, the total estimate is around 47 billion dollars for the economy as a whole during the period between March and October 2020) and smart working (which created a lot of concerns because someone claims that remote work inevitably leads to a decline of productivity), the productivity remained stable during that time (Gaskell, 2020)⁴⁴.

At the same time, smart working are producing new tendencies which involve also international migration. COVID-19 is forcing countries to make faster progress on innovation, rebuilding more and new internet and smart infrastructures in such a way as to facilitate the rise of this mode of work, which was already used in the pre-pandemic era but it became popular to avoid non-essential contacts and to interconnect people from home and around the world. This innovative wave regards the way of communications such as the use of information and communication technology (ICT), big data, new 5G networks and other technologies which support the development (Nishi and Nakamura, 2020)⁴⁵. These elements are empowered by the countries to ensure work and study continuity and with the aim to implement new policies in favour of the digitalisation process and to create “smart cities” (Nishi and Nakamura, 2020)⁴⁶. This shift in the work environment has led to a new kind of workers, called “digital nomads”.

According to Adam Hayes, digital nomads are considered as a new category of workers who need technology to perform their job duties with a nomadic lifestyle because location-independent⁴⁷ (Hayes and Scott, 2021). The term was coined in 1997 from the book “The Digital Nomad” written by Tsugio Makimoto and David Manners (Hayes and Gordon, 2021)⁴⁸, but workers can become easier a digital nomad from the beginning of the pandemic. Some countries are adapting their political system to this innovation. For instance, Mauritius has introduced the new “Mauritius Premium Visa” to welcome long-stay visitors and to attract new travellers and investments in this time of economic crisis for a tourist place⁴⁹. The efforts of Mauritius in building seven smart cities across the territory in such a way to make even more agile smart working is about 3.5

⁴⁴ Gaskell, Adi. “Productivity in Times of Covid.” *Forbes*, 7 Dec. 2020,

www.forbes.com/sites/adigaskell/2020/12/08/productivityin-times-of-covid/?sh=5f9566e91fa1. Accessed 27 Mar. 2021

⁴⁵ Nishi, Hiroaki, and Nakamura, Yuichi. “IoT-Based Monitoring for Smart Community.” *Urban Systems Design*, 2020, pp. 335–344, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780128160558000105, 10.1016/b978-0-12-816055-8.00010-5. Accessed 20 Apr. 2021.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷ Hayes, Adam and Scott, Gordon. “Digital Nomad.” *Investopedia*, 2021, www.investopedia.com/terms/d/digital-nomad.asp. Accessed 20 Apr. 2021.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ “MAURITIUS PREMIUM VISA | EDB MAURITIUS.” *EDB MAURITIUS*, 2021, www.edbmauritius.org/premium-visa#:~:text=A%20premium%20visa%20is%20required,granted%20on%20arrival%20to%20Mauritius.&text=The%20e%2Dvisa%20application%20may,as%20from%2016%20November%202020. Accessed 21 Apr. 2021.

billion dollars⁵⁰. In Europe, another nation that is working in the same direction as Mauritius is Croatia. In fact, the Croatian government has introduced its long-stay visa from 1st January 2021, covering also foreign remote workers⁵¹. But workers who want to implement this plan must meet some requirements for both nations. For example, the Croatian government define a “digital nomad” as “a third-country national who is employed or performs work through communication technology for a company or his own company that is not registered in the Republic of Croatia and does not perform work or provide services to employers in the Republic of Croatia (Croatian government, 2021)⁵²”. Through this definition, Croatia puts in place certain limits and candidates must have these requirements. In addition, the government explains other immigration procedures: “Temporary stay is granted for up to a year (possibly even less) and it cannot be extended. A new application for regulating a stay of digital nomads can be submitted 6 months after the expiry of the previously granted temporary stay of digital nomads. Close family members of a digital nomad who has been granted a temporary stay in the Republic of Croatia may join him in the Republic of Croatia (see temporary stay for the purpose of family reunification) (Croatian government, 2021)⁵³”. The Republic of Mauritius settles stricter limitations that must be overcome by those who want to obtain this particular visa. Indeed, according to the Economic Development Board of Mauritius: “To qualify for the Premium Visa, interested visitors should produce proof of their long stay plans and sufficient travel and health insurance for the initial period of stay while meeting the following criteria:

- the applicants should not enter the Mauritius Labour market;
- the main place of business and source of income and profits should be outside Mauritius;
- documentary evidence to support application such as purpose of visit, accommodation etc.; and
- other basic immigration requirements (Economic Development Board Mauritius)⁵⁴”.

So, it is not easy to acquire this kind of status and visas. But remote workers can have the access to other forms of smart working which are emerging at this time. For instance, the south working is a new trend that is reshaping international and internal migrations flows. South working is a growing phenomenon that is particularly widespread in southern Italy. According to the definition given by the Italian associations “Global Shapers Community - Palermo” and “Fondazione con il Sud”, the south working is a “remote working from a Southern region or from an inner area which is different than the employer's location⁵⁵”. The phenomenon involves all the people who decide to settle in the Southern regions of the country. Particularly,

⁵⁰ “The Making of Smart Mauritius - African Business.” *African Business*, 12 Mar. 2018, african.business/2018/03/economy/the-making-of-smart-mauritius/. Accessed 21 Apr. 2021.

⁵¹ “Croatia Opens Its Doors to Digital Nomads with a Special Visa.” *Euronews*, Euronews.com, 28 Jan. 2021, www.euronews.com/travel/2021/01/28/meet-croatia-s-first-official-digital-nomad-as-country-opens-its-doors-with-special-visa. Accessed 21 Apr. 2021.

⁵² “Temporary Stay of Digital Nomads.” *Mup.gov.hr*, 2014, mup.gov.hr/aliens-281621/stay-and-work/temporary-stay-of-digital-nomads/286833. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.

⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴ “MAURITIUS PREMIUM VISA | EDB MAURITIUS.” *EDB MAURITIUS*, 2021, www.edbmauritius.org/premium-visa#:~:text=A%20premium%20visa%20is%20required,granted%20on%20arrival%20to%20Mauritius.&text=The%20e%2Dvisa%20application%20may,as%20from%2016%20November%202020.. Accessed 23 Apr. 2021.

⁵⁵ “ADESIONI | South Working.” *South Working*, 2021, en.southworking.org/raccolta-adesioni. Accessed 24 Apr. 2021.

young graduates and southerners who migrated or are used to work abroad or in the North of the country⁵⁶. The article “South Working: Working for Companies in the North from Italy’s ‘Mezzogiorno’”, published by the blog “Morning Future” and powered by Adecco Group, collected considerations and thoughts of these youngsters who come back to their hometowns, generally located in the Southern part of Italy, from the beginning of the pandemic. According to these interviews, the respondents are appreciating this new way of working, since they can better enjoy their lives away from the hectic pace and the big cities⁵⁷. But the uncertainty of the future makes unhappy the respondents because they are aware that this situation is temporary. One of them, whose name is Lorenza, said: “I don’t know if I could live far away from Milan. I miss office life and village life has its limits. That’s why I love Milan: it offers opportunities that are unimaginable elsewhere. It would be great to live in the south, but what you find in Milan you can’t find anywhere else⁵⁸”. Another one, Maurizio, have a different opinion: “The future is still uncertain, but seeing as I’ve already done it in the past, if possible, I would like to continue working remotely from Polignano. I really hope so (Morning Future, 2020)⁵⁹”. Of course, south working could be the key to bridge the gap between Northern and Southern Italy.

Smart working has not just changed the lives of those who live in another city from their town of residence. The slogan ‘work-from-home’ (WFH) prompted people to ‘work-from-anywhere’ (WFA), creating a new category of workers. Recalling the phenomenon of south working, WFA prompts people to move and live where they feel more comfortable. In this sense, it is possible to understand why small cities are becoming a big draw for remote workers. According to the National Public Radio (NPR) journalist Jon Marcus: “Since COVID-19 has allowed people to work hundreds or thousands of miles from their company’s office, this trend appears to be speeding up dramatically. More young, well-paid and well-educated people are relocating permanently from big metro areas such as Seattle, San Francisco, Boston and New York to small cities such as Burlington, which has a population just under 43,000 (Marcus, 2020)⁶⁰”. In the same article, the author said there are more cities involved around Canada and the United States of America⁶¹. Also, he offered a graph of how much this new trend is affecting U.S. cities and which are the most affected.

⁵⁶ Redazione. “South Working: Working for Companies in the North from Italy’s ‘Mezzogiorno.’” *Morningfuture.com*, The Adecco Group, 3 Aug. 2020, www.morningfuture.com/en/article/2020/08/03/work-covid-southworking/990/. Accessed 24 Apr. 2021.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

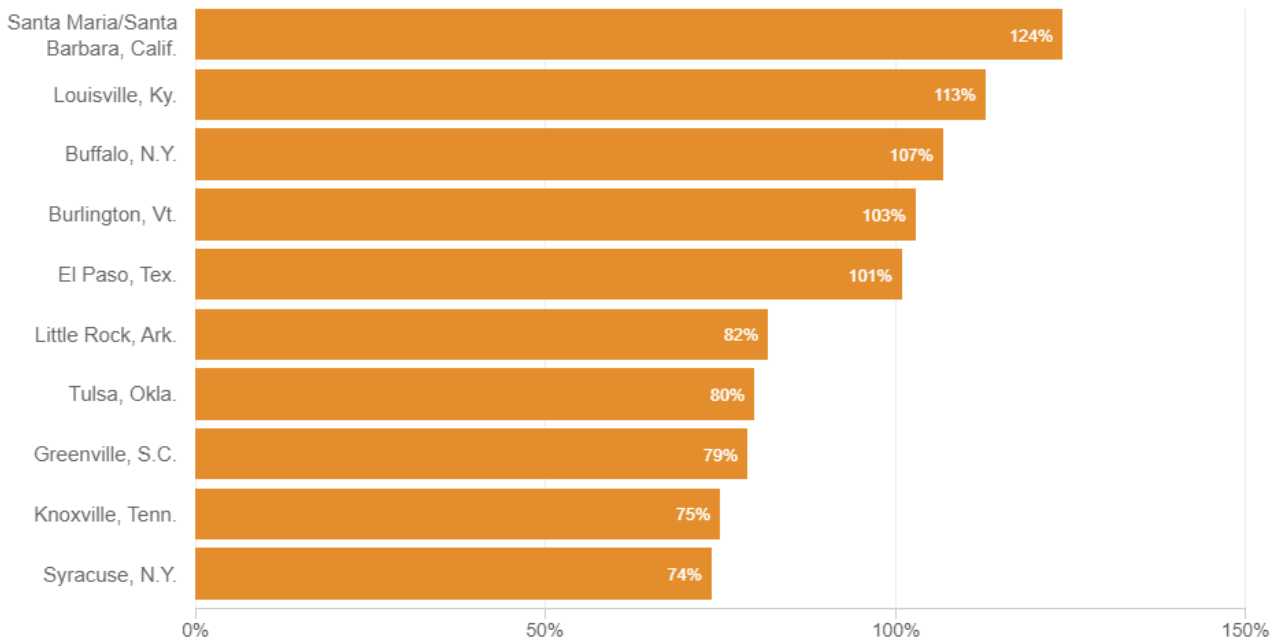
⁵⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁰ Marcus, Jon. “Small Cities Are a Big Draw for Remote Workers during the Pandemic.” *NPR.org*, 16 Nov. 2020, www.npr.org/2020/11/16/931400786/small-cities-are-a-big-draw-for-remote-workers-during-the-pandemic?t=1619274478544. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

Pandemic Boosts Migration to These Cities

Migration to smaller cities from major metro areas rose this spring compared with last spring. Here are the top 10 destination cities by percentage increase.



Source: Redfin national real estate brokerage

Credit: Jess Eng/NPR

62

However, WFH is not so easy at this time. If on the one hand the internet traffic surges during the pandemic (Bond, 2020)⁶³, on the other hand, its increase is creating quite a few problems for remote workers and smart working. In fact, smart workers are facing slow broadband, connectivity and security problems. According to a survey made by “Computerworld”: “Unreliable home broadband connectivity is the primary technical challenge businesses are having to deal with as remote working continues during the COVID-19 pandemic (Finnegan, 2020)⁶⁴”. This kind of problems can be solved thanks to huge investments in innovation and infrastructures but not all countries have the resources to invest in them and this entails a growing gap between the countries.

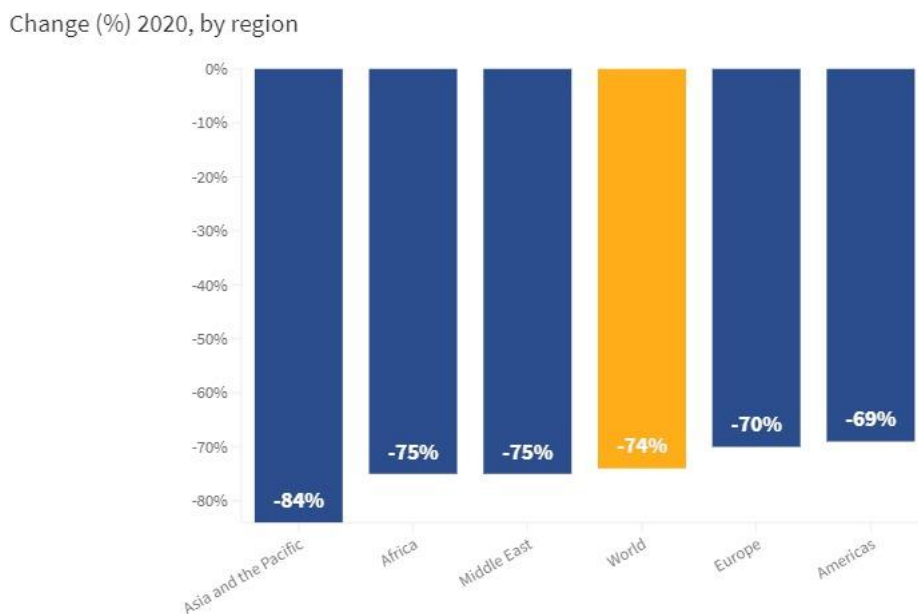
If during the pandemic ‘long-stay tourism’ is speeding up, the same cannot be said for ‘normal tourism’ which is one of the hardest-hit sectors. It does not include only hotels, apartments and B&B but also the travel industry, especially for low-cost airlines. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2020 was the worst year ever for tourism. International arrivals globally diminished by 74% and

⁶² *Ibidem*.

⁶³ Bond, Shannon. “Internet Traffic Surges as Companies and Schools Send People Home.” *NPR.org*, 17 Mar. 2020, www.npr.org/2020/03/17/817154787/internet-traffic-surges-as-companies-and-schools-send-people-home. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

⁶⁴ Finnegan, Matthew. “Working from Home? Slow Broadband, Remote Security Remain Top Issues.” *Computerworld*, 5 Oct. 2020, www.computerworld.com/article/3584454/working-from-home-slow-broadband-remote-security-remain-top-issues.html. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

they were 1 billion fewer in destinations worldwide compared to 2019⁶⁵. As a consequence, the estimated loss was around USD 1.3 trillion in export revenue, putting between 100 and 120 million tourism jobs at risk⁶⁶. But COVID-19 did not affect tourism in the countries at the same level.



Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ©
Data as collected by UNWTO. January 2021. Published: 28/01/2021

67

As we can see from the previous graph, the hardest hit continent was Asia and Pacific in 2020, followed by Africa and the Middle East. Notwithstanding the heavy effects of the pandemic on the other two continents, European and American tourism sectors have suffered a little bit less than the formers in 2020. Particularly for the European Union’s Member States, the Schengen agreement allowed European people to freely move around the continent during the summer, in an attempt to mitigate the losses of the year. Moreover, 2020 pushed people to rediscover neighbouring territories, revitalising local tourism (also known as proximity tourism)⁶⁸. This creates some inequalities among countries, favouring those which are not geographically isolated (like European countries) but sinking the economies of other island nations (such as Taiwan and Japan).

Surely, we can address the responsibility of the abovementioned losses to lockdowns, travel bans and other kind of measures which are influencing freedom of movement in some ways⁶⁹. From this pandemic,

⁶⁵ UNWTO. “2020: Worst Year in Tourism History with 1 Billion Fewer International Arrivals.” *Unwto.org*, 2020, www.unwto.org/news/2020-worst-year-in-tourism-history-with-1-billion-fewer-international-arrivals. Accessed 28 Mar. 2021.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁸ Ferraretto, Valeria. “Proximity Tourism: An Opportunity for Italian Rural Areas?” *Italics Magazine*, 11 June 2020, italicsmag.com/2020/06/11/proximity-tourism-an-opportunity-for-italian-rural-areas/#:~:text=“Proximity%20tourism”%20is%20the%20kind,our%20holidays%20or%20weekends%20off.. Accessed 28 Mar. 2021.

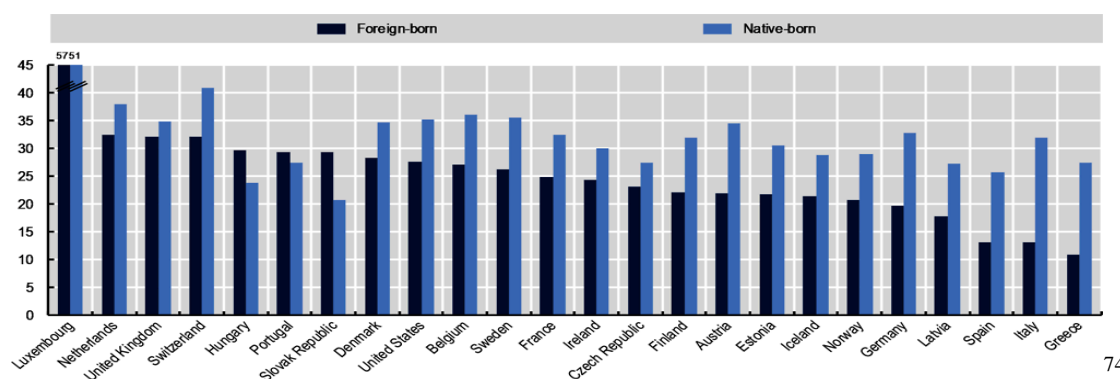
⁶⁹ UNWTO. “2020: Worst Year in Tourism History with 1 Billion Fewer International Arrivals.” *Unwto.org*, 2020, www.unwto.org/news/2020-worst-year-in-tourism-history-with-1-billion-fewer-international-arrivals. Accessed 28 Mar. 2021.

we are learning how much freedom of movement is central to our lives (D’Eramo, 2021)⁷⁰. Unquestionably, it is essential for the good working of actual capitalism.

In summary, the international migration phenomenon has been strongly impacted by the pandemic. And international migrants face more challenges than native locals. According to the report made by the Organization for the Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), some of them has difficulties acceding to the healthcare system and receiving medical care in countries such as United Kingdom, United States and New Zealand⁷¹.

Moreover, the living conditions of migrants are lower than the living standards of native-born. In the abovementioned reports, OECD stated: “Around 30% of immigrants live in relative poverty in the OECD, compared with 20% of the native-born. They are also more likely to live in sub-standard accommodations (23% against 19%) and twice as likely in overcrowded dwellings (17% against 8%). Poor housing conditions increase the likeliness of infection, especially given that immigrants are more likely to live in extended cohabiting families. Alongside poor housing conditions, immigrants are also more likely to live in higher density buildings and neighbourhoods, which makes the respect of social distancing more difficult. This is particularly the case for certain groups who live together in collective housing, such as asylum seekers⁷²”. This exposes them to a greater risk to be diagnosed positive to COVID-19.

Another reason which explains why immigrants seem likely to be more exposed to contract the virus relies on the higher use of public transportation (Bruno and Simon, 2020)⁷³. Alongside, immigrants are employed in essential works that cannot be undertaken from home and for this reason, most of them cannot do telework, as the figure below shows us.



74

⁷⁰ D’Eramo, Marco. “Il Covid Impone Di Ripensare Il Turismo.” *Internazionale*, Internazionale, 25 Mar. 2021, www.internazionale.it/opinione/marco-d-eramo/2021/03/25/covid-industria-turismo-crisi?fbclid=IwAR1AQBkCr5F6NC-gBedRSnegDkcYc1kqcg4iQxVsunQPVCEB1n4LnoGcsmg. Accessed 28 Mar. 2021.

⁷¹ OECD. “What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigrants and their children?”. *Oecd-Ilibrary.org*, 2021, read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=137_137245-8saheqv0k3&title=What-is-the-impact-of-the-COVID-19-pandemic-on-immigrants-and-their-children%3F. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

⁷² *Ibidem*.

⁷³ Brun, S. and P. Simon (2020), “Inégalités ethno-raciales et coronavirus”, De Facto 19.

⁷⁴ OECD. “What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigrants and their children?”. *Oecd-Ilibrary.org*, 2021, read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=137_137245-8saheqv0k3&title=What-is-the-impact-of-the-COVID-19-pandemic-on-immigrants-and-their-children%3F. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

If we analyse the data of the picture, it is evident that a large concentration of immigrants who work for domestic services is situated in the Southern countries of Europe, creating an unbalance of telework opportunities between international migrants and native-born people⁷⁵. Other countries which are not represented in this chart, but which have the same problem are Israel and Canada⁷⁶. In addition, many migrants face unsafe working conditions and the environment concerning COVID-19 transmission⁷⁷.

In certain cases, the bureaucratic status of immigrants must be considered as an obstacle the access to medical services. For instance, those who have an irregular situation may be less inclined to be tested or go to hospitals⁷⁸.

As complicated as immigrant mortality rate from COVID-19 complications is to calculate, 2020 OECD report took Sweden, France and the Netherlands as examples to measure the incidence of death rates among immigrants and compares it with the native peers: “In France, between March and April 2020, excess mortality – the difference in mortality compared with the same period in 2019 – among the foreign-born was twice that of native-born (Papon and Robert-Bobée, 2020[15]). The immigrant groups which were hit the worst by the excess mortality were from North Africa (+54% deaths compared to the same period in 2019), sub-Saharan Africa (+114%) and Asia (+91%), compared with 22% excess mortality for the native-born. Higher excess mortality for immigrants was even observed among the youngest cohorts. Immigrants’ excess mortality remained twice to four times as much as that for the native-born, even after taking into account that foreign-born are more likely to live in densely populated areas that were more affected by the pandemic. In Sweden, the share of foreign-born among deaths, which varied between 12 and 14% over the 2015-19 periods, reached 16% in March-April 2020. The number of deaths among persons aged 40 years and more who were born in countries from which many refugees have migrated to Sweden in the last decades (Syria, Iraq and Somalia) was 220% higher in March-May 2020 compared to the average in 2016-19. In contrast, the respective increase during these three months was only 18% for those born in Sweden, the EU or North America, despite an older age composition (Hansson et al., 2020). In the Netherlands, death statistics by parental place of birth for March and April 2020 show that deaths were 47% higher than usual for immigrants from lower-income countries and their immediate children, 49% higher for immigrants from high-income countries and their descendants, and 38% higher for native-born with Dutch parents (Kunst et al., 2020[17]) (OECD, 2020)⁷⁹”.

Another kind of risks which the migrants are running in these hard times are listed in the figures below made by Lorenzo Guadagno for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) report.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁸ *Ibidem.*

⁷⁹ *Ibidem.*

Table 2: Overview of migrants' vulnerability to COVID-19

Recurring conditions of vulnerability	Increased likelihood of:
Limited awareness of recommended prevention measures, including due to linguistic barriers Inability to respect social distancing in crowded, multigenerational homes Reliance on public transportation Continued exposure in close contact professions Limited access to key hygiene items Limited personal protective equipment in the workplace	Contracting COVID-19
Lack of entitlement to health care and deprioritization in service provision Lack of access to facilities in underserved locations Limited awareness of options or right to receive health care Language barriers hindering communication with providers Unwillingness to come forward for assistance due to fear of arrest and/or stigmatization	Not accessing appropriate care
Pre-existing pulmonary/respiratory issues due to travel and living conditions Physical weathering Inability to access timely assistance	Showing severe symptoms
Restrained living and outside space during lockdowns Isolation and inability to communicate Obstacles to proper burial of deceased ones Anxiety linked with being stranded, potentially arrested or victim of xenophobic acts	Suffering psychosocial impacts
Discontinued provision of basic assistance and integration services Loss of precarious, unprotected job No inclusion in COVID-19 income support schemes, housing provision programmes or rental subsidies/exemptions Inability to maintain regular migration status	Livelihood and income insecurity

Source: Author's own elaboration.

80

As far as social distancing and quarantine are affecting everyone and they are considered as a “sacrifice” of our liberties in exchange for our lives, immigrants seem to be likely more hit by them. But during history and before the 20th century, quarantine was quite common, and its history should be integrated into this research.

1.3: History of quarantine and its impact on international migration in the past and the present

Quarantine has a long story. This practice started to be used in 1377 in Dubrovnik, Croatia (but at that time under the control of the Republic of Venice) in order to fight the plague. Moreover, in 1423 the first ‘lazaretto’ was opened on the small island of Santa Maria di Nazareth (located in the Republic of Venice as well). And for its location, the Republic was the first one to perfect maritime cordons system, flagging the suspected ships. These systems were used also against cholera and influenzas. But with the discovery of the pathogenic agents of these diseases between the 19th and 20th centuries, new regulations were applied and in 1911 the eleventh edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica announced the end of the “old sanitary preventive system of detention of ships and men” (Tognotti, 2013)⁸¹.

⁸⁰ Guadagno, Lorenzo. Migrants and the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Initial Analysis. *publications.iom.int*, 2020.

⁸¹ Tognotti, Eugenia. “Lessons from the History of Quarantine, from Plague to Influenza A.” *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, vol. 19, no. 2, Feb. 2013, pp. 254–259, wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/19/2/12-0312_article, 10.3201/eid1902.120312. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

Despite the delays caused by local epidemics, the globalization process was not arrested. Perhaps, the phenomenon enjoyed the end of the use of quarantines, speeding up the exchanges. However, the global character of this process exposes countries to face the risk of a pandemic. And so, it was with the ‘mother of all pandemics’: 1918 Influenza (also known as “Spanish flu”) (Taubenberger and Morens, 2006)⁸².

The growth of interactions and exchanges between countries over the years has led to greater freedom of movements, supported by new technologies and, later, by the approval of new positive rights for the population made by the Western States, intending to build up democracies and protecting individuals’ freedoms.

It is not by chance that the “first” age of globalization is placed between 1870 and 1914. Nineteenth-century was the Second Industrial Revolution, which was full of great inventions: the telegraph, morse code, dynamite, aspirin, telephone, steam turbines, skyscrapers, roll film for cameras were a few examples. All of these allowed to speed up the spread of knowledge and the freedom of movements. In the meantime, big business and modern multinationals arose, thanks to the process of internationalisation. The export of new technologies worldwide became attractive for businesses, expanding their routes, and gaining more. This led to an intensification of exchanges around the world (Colli, 2015)⁸³. Their increase was supported also by the countries, which provided new free-trade policies and creating new free-taxes zones or lowering tariffs in return for investments in the homeland of the multinational. Obviously, the most advantaged were colonial empires: Great Britain (but only after the 1840s) and France (Nye, 1991)⁸⁴.

The first wave of globalization was stopped by the Great War, which pushed back countries to rethink protectionist economic policies. But despite this step back made by countries, multinationals could not come back. Especially for those multinationals which were settled in neutral countries, they continued to cross borders and to trade with every part involved in the war. An example could be the Swiss company “Nestlé” in the Great War (Colli, 2015)⁸⁵.

This continuous flow at the borders generated 1918 influenza and causing thousands of deaths since the precarious hygienic conditions. A fortiori, it was not possible to establish where the Spanish flu was originated. According to Taubenberger and Morens: “Before and after 1918, most influenza pandemics developed in Asia and spread from there to the rest of the world. Confounding definite assignment of a geographic point of origin, the 1918 pandemic spread more or less simultaneously in 3 distinct waves during

⁸² Taubenberger, Jeffery K, and David M Morens. “1918 Influenza: The Mother of All Pandemics - Volume 12, Number 1— January 2006 - Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal - CDC.” *Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal*, 2011, wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/12/1/05-0979_article, 10.3201/eid1201.050979. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

⁸³ Colli, Andrea. “Dynamics of International Business: Comparative perspectives of firms, markets and entrepreneurship”. *Routledge*, 2015.

⁸⁴ Nye, John Vincent. “The Myth of Free-Trade Britain and Fortress France: Tariffs and Trade in the Nineteenth Century.” *The Journal of Economic History*, vol. 51, no. 1, 1991, pp. 23–46. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2123049. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

⁸⁵ Colli, Andrea. “Dynamics of International Business: Comparative perspectives of firms, markets and entrepreneurship”. *Routledge*, 2015.

an ≈12-month period in 1918–1919, in Europe, Asia, and North America (the first wave was best described in the United States in March 1918) (Taubenberger and Morens, 2006)⁸⁶”.

Remarkably are the contagions of this disease which were reported in European military camps (Taubenberger and Morens, 2006)⁸⁷. So, we can deduce that the global dimension of the First World War may help the running of the virus. The first evidence in support of this idea is the simultaneous character of this pandemic, which affected Europe, Asia and North America at the same time. All of these continents had some countries which participated in the Great War. Finally, the movements of troops in different countries, the scarce hygienic conditions, the lack of space and distances may have had a key role in spreading more quickly the virus.

Recalling this event is the only way to show how international migration could play a role in the diffusion of a virus and how much this threat was ignored by governments and authorities across the world. Even if the hygienic and health conditions are improved worldwide, many of the governments of developed countries have sinned of pride and at the beginning of the outbreak, they denied the severity of the situation. They were unable to see and consider the rise of some risk factors, particularly the overpopulation in the metropolises and pollution.

The world population growth had a key role in the pandemic. It is not an accident if the epicentre of the pandemic was Wuhan, China in all probability. The city is not famous as other important cities in China, such as Beijing or Shanghai, but it must be considered as a metropolis like others. Its size is quite similar to London (United Kingdom) and this resemblance must be applied also to their global connections⁸⁸. But if London has an approximate population of 9 million⁸⁹, according to the figure of the local government the population is around 11 million⁹⁰. The relationship between overcrowding and epidemics was shown for the first time by Alfred Russel Wallace in 1898. In his book “Vaccination a Delusion: its Penal Enforcement a Crime”, he claimed: “In 1845 began the great development of our railway system and with it the rapid growth of London, from a population of two million in 1844 to one of four millions in 1884. This rapid growth of population was at first accompanied with overcrowding, and as no adequate measures of sanitation were then provided the conditions were prepared for that, increase of zymotic disease which constitutes so remarkable a feature of the London death-rates between 1848 and 1866 (Wallace, 1898)⁹¹”.

⁸⁶ Taubenberger, Jeffery K, and David M Morens. “1918 Influenza: The Mother of All Pandemics - Volume 12, Number 1— January 2006 - Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal - CDC.” *Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal*, 2011,

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁸ BBC News. “Wuhan: The London-Sized City Where the Virus Began.” *BBC News*, BBC News, 23 Jan. 2020, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-51202254. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

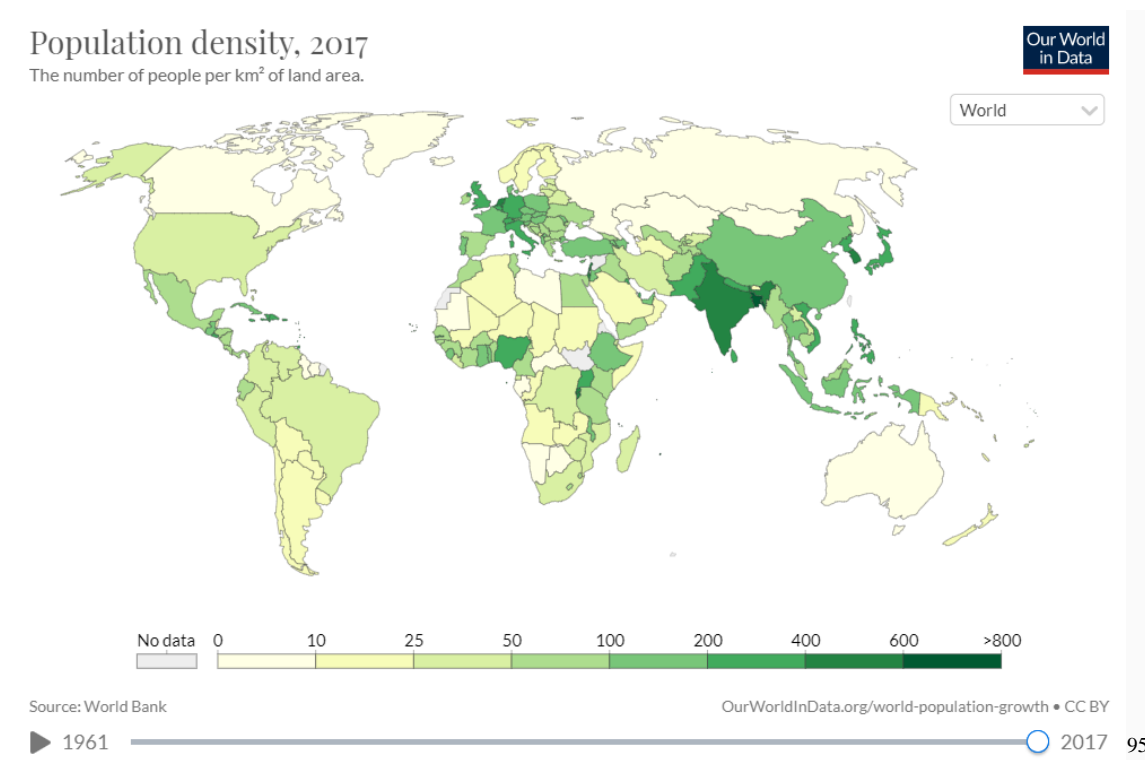
⁸⁹ “Greater London - Place Explorer - Data Commons.” *Datacommons.org*, 2021, datacommons.org/place/nuts/UKI?utm_medium=explore&mprop=count&popt=Person&hl=en. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

⁹⁰ BBC News. “Wuhan: The London-Sized City Where the Virus Began.” *BBC News*, BBC News, 23 Jan. 2020, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-51202254. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

⁹¹ Wallace, Alfred Russel. “Vaccination a delusion its penal enforcement a crime:: proved by the official evidence in the reports of the Royal Commission”. *Swan Sonnenschein & Co., LIMD, Paternoster Square*. London, 1898.

As abovementioned before, Wuhan was the core of an intricate global network. For instances, in 2016 20 million passengers were welcomed in Wuhan international airport, which offered direct flights from the most important city in the world (such as Paris, London, Dubai and so on)⁹². It entailed also a high pollution degree. And according to a study conducted by PEW Charitable Trust, the transportation emissions may be a vehicle used by the virus to spread faster and its pollution could lead to a growth of COVID-19 mortality⁹³.

Following the previous example, the most densely populated, globalized and polluted cities are the ones most at risk of having more cases and of COVID-19 the highest rate of deaths for the complications of this disease. Moreover, they could expose others to new epidemics and they can easily spread the new virus around the world. For instances, according to the researcher Hannah Ritchie: “Bangladesh is the most densely-populated with 1,252 people per square kilometer; this is almost three times as dense as its neighbour, India. It’s followed by Lebanon (595), South Korea (528), the Netherlands (508) and Rwanda (495 per km²) completing the top five (Ritchie, 2019)⁹⁴”.



In conclusion, all these elements helped COVID-19 to run across the world. Probably, international migration played and plays a key role in the spreading of pandemics. And in a globalized world, the risk of ever more frequent outbreaks is possible. Considering the world demography and its features (such as the

⁹² BBC News. “Wuhan: The London-Sized City Where the Virus Began.” *BBC News*, BBC News, 23 Jan. 2020, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-51202254. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

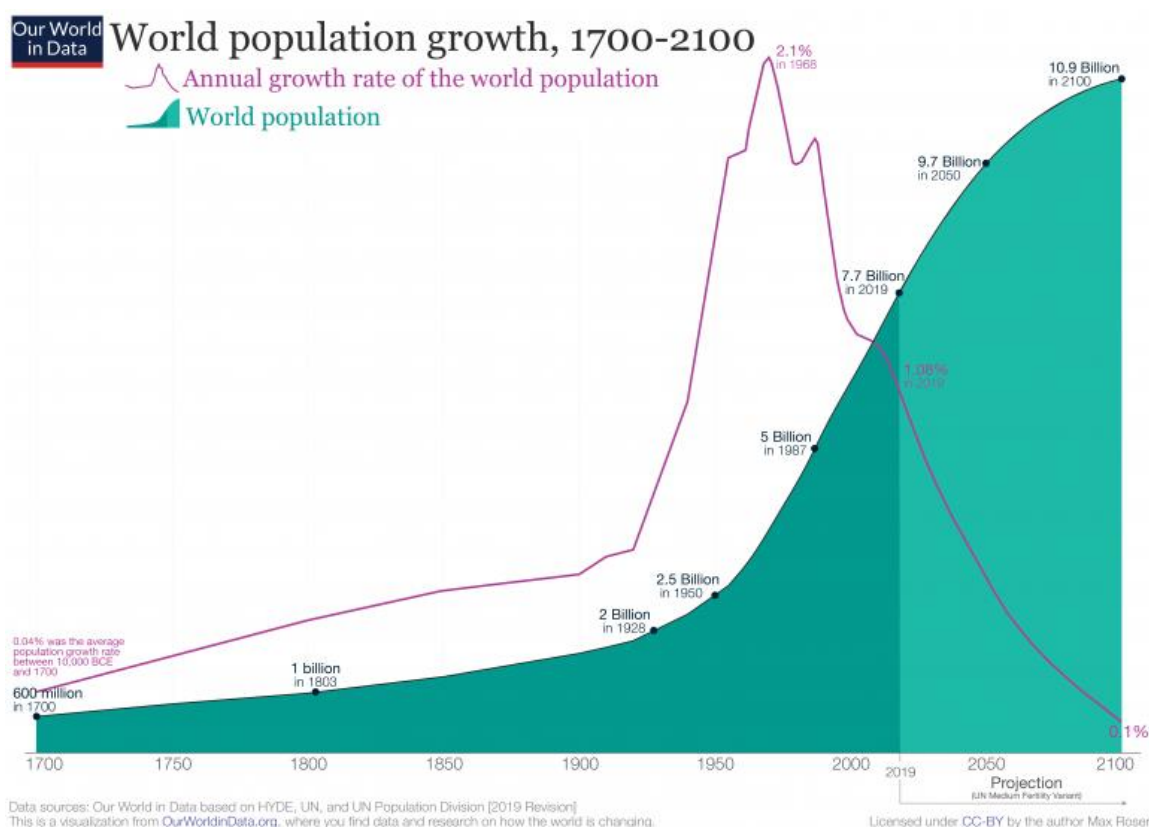
⁹³ Brown, Alex. “Emissions Exposure May Increase COVID-19 Mortality.” *Pewtrusts.org*, 19 Oct. 2020, www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2020/10/19/emissions-exposure-may-increase-covid-19-mortality. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

⁹⁴ Ritchie, Hannah. “Which Countries Are Most Densely Populated?” *Our World in Data*, 2019, ourworldindata.org/most-densely-populated-countries. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*.

new-births pace and trend, life expectancy and so on), we can acknowledge that the world's population is increasing as never before. According to the United Nations: “The world's population is expected to increase by two billion people, from 7.7 billion at present to 9.7 billion in 2050, before reaching a peak of nearly 11 billion by the end of the century as fertility rates continue to decline. During this period, the global population is projected to become more and more urban, while children below age 5 will be outnumbered by persons aged 65 or above (UN, 2020)⁹⁶”. Regarding international migrations, the UN said: “Meanwhile, people are on the move. While the percentage of international migrants has remained around 3 per cent of the global population over the past two decades, their number has increased by more than half since 2000. At the same time, the number of people forced to flee their homes has risen sharply due to protracted conflicts and could increase further due to climate change and environmental degradation. The vast majority of refugee and migrant flow are to countries in the global South (UN, 2020)⁹⁷”.

In the following graph, it is possible to see how much world population grew quickly from 1700 until our current days and a projection of the future demographic trend until 2100.



98

The speed of global population growth is expected to slow after 2100 but this may not be enough to stop international migration, since once the world became globalised, it could not go back. Governments must learn the lesson from COVID-19 to avoid again pandemics and its consequence. It is essential to

⁹⁶ United Nations. “Shifting Demographics | United Nations.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 2020, www.un.org/en/un75/shifting-demographics. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁸ Roser, Max, et al. “World Population Growth.” *Our World in Data*, 2013, ourworldindata.org/world-population-growth. Accessed 29 Apr. 2021.

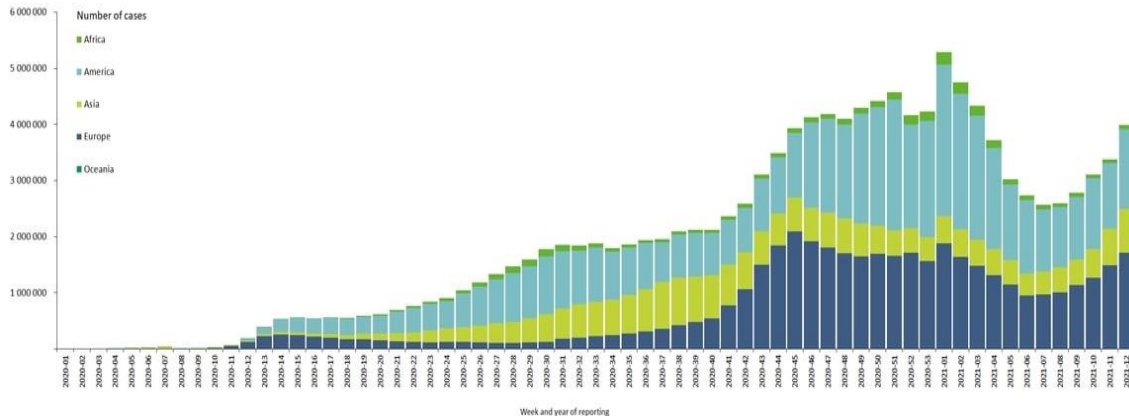
preserve our economic system from other eventual pandemics and viruses which could disrupt again the economic cycle. Now, we are experiencing all its costs: not only the losses of human capitals (such as deaths) but also in economic terms. The risk is the following: international migration could hurt itself and could damage the whole economic system of which it is the ground. Now we are going to analyse the effects of pandemics on international migrations specifically in two countries: Italy and the United States of America.

Part II: Comparison between Italy and the United States of America

Second chapter: How does Italy react to the pandemic and what are the migration consequences?

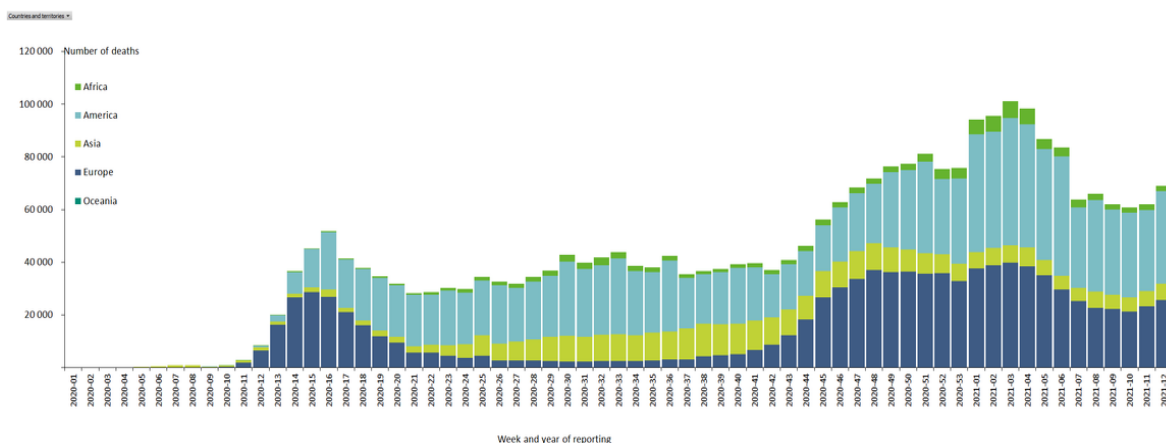
2.1: General overview of the situation in Europe

Europe is the most affected continent by the 2020 pandemic in the world after the Americas. According to the European Union agency “European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control” (ECDC), 127,628,928 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the world until 1st April 2021. Contagions are above 43 million in Europe and the hardest-hit countries in the region are France, Russia, United Kingdom, Italy and Spain⁹⁹.



100

It is important to take into account one of the consequences of the virus: the death rate. Even here, Europe has one of the highest rates in the world. Indeed, Europe has almost reached one million COVID-19 victims. The Americas alone exceeded the million. Clearly, the more infections States have, the higher the mortality rate they have. Hence, it is not by accident if United Kingdom, Italy, Russia and France are the countries with the COVID-19 highest death rate in Europe¹⁰¹.



102

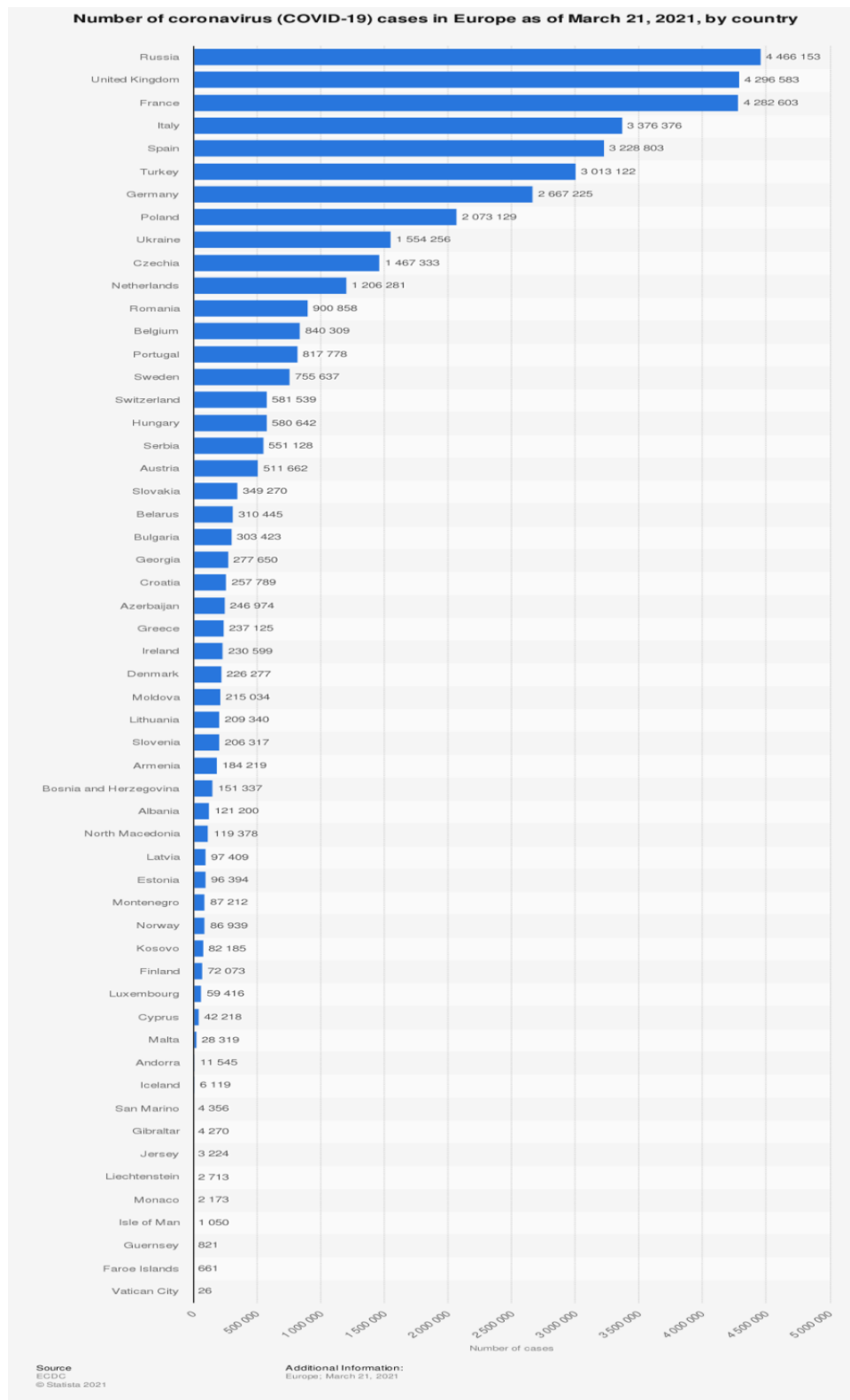
⁹⁹ “COVID-19 Situation Update Worldwide, as of Week 12, Updated 1 April 2021.” *European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control*, Apr. 2021, www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/geographical-distribution-2019-ncov-cases. Accessed 3 Apr. 2021.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰² *Ibidem*.

In its counting, Statista analysed the contagions per each country in Europe¹⁰³. Comparing countries' size and population, it is clear the hardest-hit countries by pandemic are those which have a huge population density, crowded and big cities and full of global interconnections.



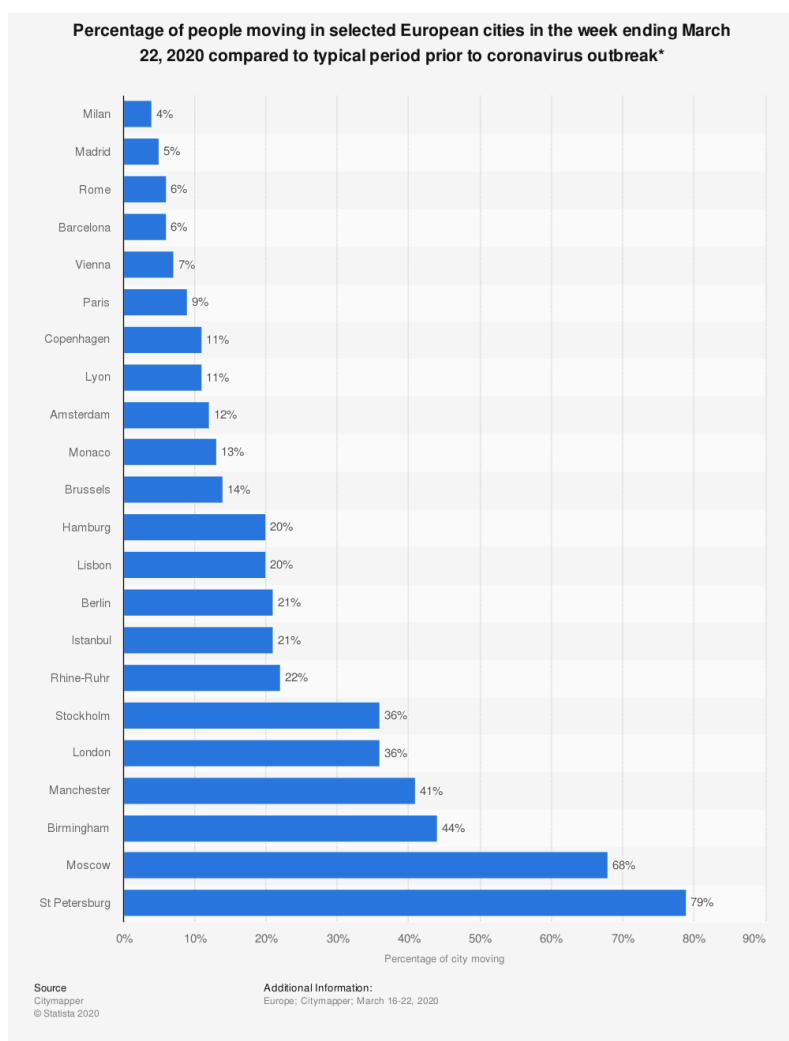
104

¹⁰³ "Europe: COVID-19 Cases, by Country | Statista." *Statista*, Statista, 2021, www.statista.com/statistics/1104837/coronavirus-cases-europe-by-country/. Accessed 3 Apr. 2021.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem*.

For instance, in their paper “COVID-19: Spatial Dynamics and Diffusion Factors across Russian Regions”, professors Zemtsov and Baburin addressed the responsibility of the COVID-19 spreading in Russia to the “growing population density (urbanization) and mobility” (Zemtsov and Baburin, 2020)¹⁰⁵. Unsurprisingly, the Russian cities most affected by the disease are Moscow¹⁰⁶ (Brown, 2020) and Saint Petersburg¹⁰⁷ (and the latter one has a stronger link with European countries than the former one).

In order to prevent the diffusion of the virus, every country approved and settled a various range of restrictions. In some countries, the measures were more severe than in others, but generally, the aim of them was to avoid non-essential contacts and the respect of the social distancing. In the following graph, Statista shows the percentage of movements into the most important European cities during 2020 lockdowns.



108

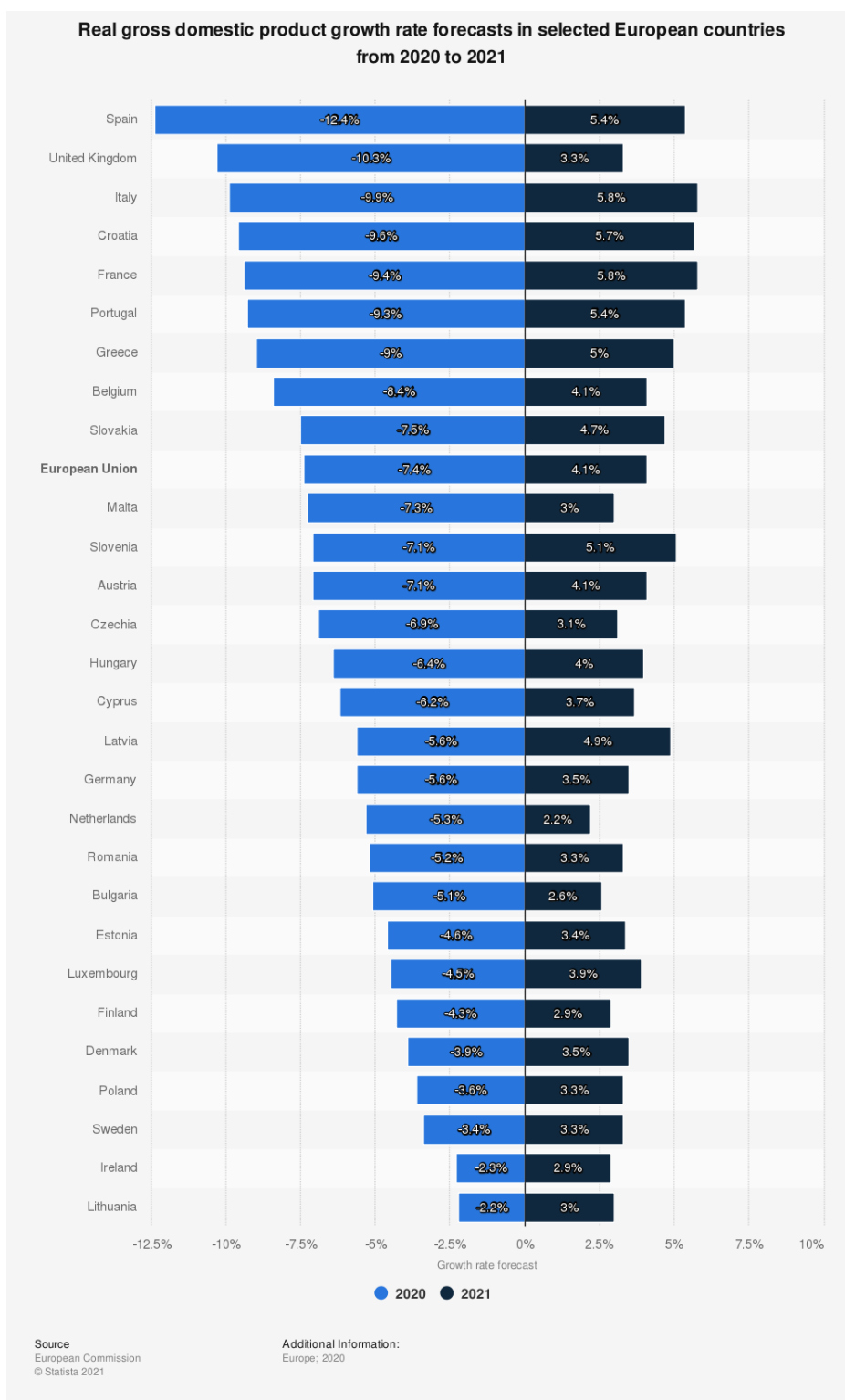
¹⁰⁵ Zemtsov, S.P., Baburin, V.L. “COVID-19: Spatial Dynamics and Diffusion Factors across Russian Regions”. *Reg. Res. Russ.* 10, 273–290 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1134/S2079970520030156>

¹⁰⁶ Brown, Chris. “Inside a Pop-up COVID Hospital in Moscow, Russia’s Worst-Hit City in Coronavirus Crisis.” *CBC*, 20 Nov. 2020, www.cbc.ca/news/world/russia-covid-19-pandemic-vaccine-hospitals-1.5806172. Accessed 4 Apr. 2021.

¹⁰⁷ Seddon, Max. “Coronavirus: Russia’s Regions Hardest Hit by Second Wave.” *The Irish Times*, The Irish Times, 10 Dec. 2020, www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/coronavirus-russia-s-regions-hardest-hit-by-second-wave-1.4433291. Accessed 4 Apr. 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Citymapper. “Percentage of People Moving in Selected European Cities in The Week Ending March 22, 2020 Compared to Typical Period Prior to Coronavirus Outbreak*.” *Statista*, Statista Inc., 23 Mar 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1106086/european-city-movements-during-coronavirus-outbreak>. Accessed 4 Apr. 2021.

The measures have an impact also to the economy, generating the worst economic crisis since Great Depression, in 1929, as said by the IMF's managing director Kristalina Georgieva¹⁰⁹. Below it is possible to see a graph about the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of some European countries in 2020 and 2021.



110

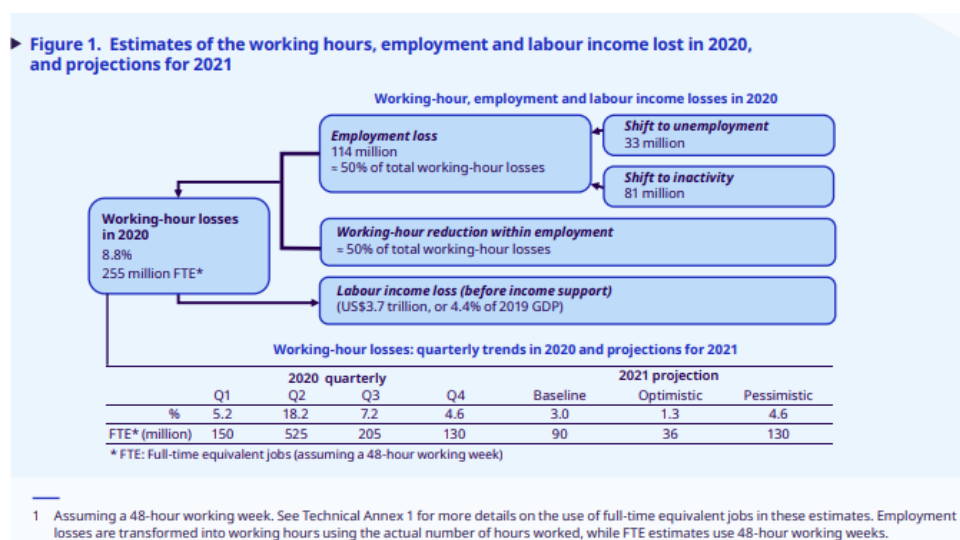
¹⁰⁹ BBC News. "Coronavirus: Worst Economic Crisis since 1930s Depression, IMF Says." *BBC News*, BBC News, 9 Apr. 2020, www.bbc.com/news/business-52236936. Accessed 5 Apr. 2021.

¹¹⁰ "Coronavirus: Economic Impact in Europe 2020 | Statista." *Statista*, Statista, 2020, www.statista.com/statistics/1102546/coronavirus-european-gdp-

As we can see, the hardest affected are the same which have the highest rate of infections: Spain, the United Kingdom and Italy. Additionally, the Russian economy saw contractions in 2020: 8% in the second quarter, while 3.4% in the third one and this negative trend is expected to persist for the fourth quarter of 2020 as well (World Bank, 2020)¹¹¹. The comparison between all the European GDP growth rates and the 2020 global average (which had an expected contraction of 5.2%) is remarkable¹¹²: most of them are above the global GDP growth rate. And most of them are considered as one of the most developed countries and economies.

So, the generalised lockdowns sponsored by governments affected countries' GDPs. It would be interesting to translate these data into the real economy, considering the unemployment rates and consumption trend.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) made a report on COVID-19 impact on a global scale, in which it gave some data about the crisis: "In total, there were unprecedented global employment losses in 2020 of 114 million jobs relative to 2019. In relative terms, employment losses were higher for women (5.0 per cent) than for men, and for young workers (8.7 per cent) than for older workers. [...] Employment losses in 2020 translated mainly into rising inactivity rather than unemployment. Accounting for 71 per cent of global employment losses, inactivity increased by 81 million,² which resulted in a reduction of the global labour force participation rate by 2.2 percentage points in 2020 to 58.7 per cent. Global unemployment increased by 33 million in 2020, with the unemployment rate rising by 1.1 percentage points to 6.5 per cent (ILO, 2021)¹¹³". The following graph shows in detail the whole losses in 2020.



114

growth/#:~:text=Spain%20and%20the%20United%20Kingdom,and%20suffer%20the%20least%20damage.. Accessed 5 Apr. 2021.

¹¹¹ "Russia Economic Report." *World Bank*, 2020, www.worldbank.org/en/country/russia/publication/rer. Accessed 5 Apr. 2021.

¹¹² *Ibidem*.

¹¹³ "ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the World of Work. Seventh Edition Updated Estimates and Analysis." *Ilo.org*, International Labour Organization, 21 Jan. 2021,

www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_767028.pdf. Accessed 5 Apr. 2021.

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

Regarding international migrations, according to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) report: “[...] the pandemic may have slowed the growth in the stock of international migrants by around two million by mid-2020, 27 per cent less than the growth expected since mid-2019¹¹⁵”. As a consequence, also the volume of remittances is reduced. According to the abovementioned report: “Diasporas contribute to the development of their countries of origin through the promotion of foreign investment, trade, access to technology and financial inclusion. However, according to projections by the World Bank, the COVID-19 pandemic may reduce the volume of remittances sent to low-and middle-income countries from USD 548 billion in 2019 to USD 470 billion in 2021, a decline of USD 78 billion or 14 per cent. The loss has affected the livelihoods of millions of migrants and their families, stalling progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. National strategies and international cooperation will be needed to mitigate the effects of this loss (UNDESA, 2020)¹¹⁶”.

About Europe, the report stated: “Among the major regions of the world, the largest number of international migrants in 2020 resided in Europe, with a total of 87 million. Northern America hosted the second largest number of migrants, with almost 59 million. Northern Africa and Western Asia followed with a total of nearly 50 million (UNDESA, 2020)¹¹⁷”. However, the European situation is peculiar thanks to Schengen Area. Indeed, the report claimed: “In 2020, nearly half of all international migrants resided in the region from which they originated, with Europe accounting for the largest share of intra-regional migration: 70 per cent of migrants born in Europe reside in another European country. The share of intra-regional migration among migrants originating in sub-Saharan Africa was 63 per cent. At the other end of the spectrum, Central and South Asia had the largest share of its diaspora residing outside the region, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern America. Nearly two thirds of all international migrants live in high-income countries, in contrast with just 31 per cent in middle-income countries and around 4 per cent in low-income countries. On the other hand, low- and middle-income countries hosted 80 per cent of the world’s refugees in 2020. Refugees comprise around three per cent of all international migrants in high-income countries, compared to 25 per cent in middle-income countries and 50 per cent in low-income countries (UNDESA, 2020)¹¹⁸”.

According to this perspective, during the pandemic ‘international migrants’ are depicted with the following features:

- European: because of the travel restrictions, in the Schengen Area Europeans can easily cross the borders within Europe, more than international migrants. The same reasoning is applicable to other regions of the world, such as sub-Saharan Africa, but most of the movements are concentrated in Europe. Generally, the pandemic has brought an increase in intra-regional migration.

¹¹⁵ United Nations. “Growth of International Migration Slowed by 27%, or 2 Million Migrants, due to COVID-19, Says UN | United Nations.” *United Nations*, United Nations, 2019, www.un.org/en/desa/growth-international-migration-slowed-27-or-2-million-migrants-due-covid-19-says-un. Accessed 1 May 2021.

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

- Middle-high income: since the pandemic, the costs of travelling are increasing and, for this reason, it is considered as a “luxury”. Despite the cost of airline tickets are down (but this only applies to low-cost airlines), a “migrant” must cover the cost of the tests and he or she is forced to stay in quarantine for several days (it depends on the policies applied by the States and they change according to many factors, such as multilateral agreements and current infections trend abroad). Therefore, they have to extend the time of stay and this means having to pay more to stay longer (considering the quarantine time). It is affordable only for those who have the resources. For this reason, we can deduce that most of the migrants have a middle-high income during the pandemic.

Following this description, it is interesting to note that during the pandemic the ‘migratory wave’ is formed by those who can Work-From-Anywhere (WFA), which is different from the ‘hybrid workplace’ policy. In the latter one, the employees should work within the same metro-area of the physical workplace, favouring ‘near working’, and the businesses could provide other non-company spaces¹¹⁹, favouring coworking, which refers to the “methodology whereby people and/or groups of people work alongside one another, but not for the same organization or on the same project (Chartetton, 2018)¹²⁰”. The previous one allows the workers to carry on their duties wherever they prefer without any limits¹²¹. That prompted people with high income to search for a new lifestyle and new place to live and the Southern part of Europe became a good destination for this kind of workers. And one of this destination is obviously Italy.

2.2: Internal migration and Italian outflow during the pandemic in Italy

Italy is one of the worst affected countries by the pandemic and as a consequence, it has had to resort to very drastic methods to contain the virus. It was the first country to introduce severe measures against COVID-19 in Europe in 2020. On March 10th, 2020, the Italian Prime Minister of that time, Giuseppe Conte, decided to extend the measures introduced just a few days earlier in the Northern part of the country (Horowitz, 2020)¹²². The situation was well-explained by the commentary published on “The Lancet” and made by Alessandro Siani, Ernesto Burgio, Prisco Piscitelli, Renato Lauro and Annamaria Colao: “[...] nobody is allowed to exit from home other than for compelling job or health reasons; museums, cinemas, theatres, sport facilities, and even churches have been closed; restaurants and bars must stop at 6 PM their activity (Miani et al, 2020)¹²³”. Other measures were added in the following days and these strong restrictions

¹¹⁹ LiquidSpace. “Hybrid Workplace vs. WFA – What’s the Difference?” *LiquidSpace.com*, 2020, blog.liquidSpace.com/hybrid-workplace-vs-wfa-whats-the-difference. Accessed 3 May 2021.

¹²⁰ Chatterton, Ryan. “How Do We Define Coworking?” *Coworking Insights*, Coworking Insights, 26 July 2018, coworkinginsights.com/how-do-we-define-coworking/. Accessed 3 May 2021.

¹²¹ LiquidSpace. “Hybrid Workplace vs. WFA – What’s the Difference?” *LiquidSpace.com*, 2020, blog.liquidSpace.com/hybrid-workplace-vs-wfa-whats-the-difference. Accessed 3 May 2021.

¹²² Horowitz, Jason. “Italy Announces Restrictions over Entire Country in Attempt to Halt Coronavirus (Published 2020).” *The New York Times*, 2021, www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/world/europe/italy-lockdown-coronavirus.html. Accessed 4 May 2021.

¹²³ Miani, Alessandro, et al. “The Italian War-like Measures to Fight Coronavirus Spreading: Re-Open Closed Hospitals Now.” *EClinicalMedicine*, vol. 21, Apr. 2020, p. 100320, [www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370\(20\)30064-X/fulltext#%20,10.1016/j.eclinm.2020.100320](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370(20)30064-X/fulltext#%20,10.1016/j.eclinm.2020.100320). Accessed 4 May 2021.

lasted until May 4th, 2020. On this day a gradual reopening of activities started, as the IMF remembers in its article “Policy Response to COVID-19”: “The first nation-wide lockdown expired on May 4, 2020. Since then, manufacturing and construction reopened under new safety rules (e.g., staggered shifts, spaced workstation, temperature checks, masks). The government moved forward some of the reopening plans. In addition to retail shops, restaurants, cafes and hairdressers reopened on May 18 (the initial reopening plan was June 1). Sports facilities reopened on May 25, followed by cinemas and theatres on June 15 (IMF, 2020)¹²⁴”. But with the increase of contagions in early August: “[...] the government reintroduced some containment measures, including closing night clubs, capacity limits at cultural sites. Mask wearing in public places (both in and outdoors) is required through end January 2021. Fines were raised for those who do not follow anti-contagion and quarantine rules. Rapid Covid tests are required for travellers coming back from a number of countries in Europe, and have been authorized for use in schools to identify and quarantine infected individuals, thereby avoiding the need to close entire schools (IMF, 2020)¹²⁵”. Despite the introduction of the curfew, for the second and the third waves of the pandemic the Italian government issued a new lockdown system: no more a total lockdown of the entire country, but a zone-based system which distinguished three different areas of risks: the yellow (low-level of risk), orange (medium-level of risk) and red zones (high level of risk). The colour of the region depended on the diffusion of the virus on the territory, and the higher was the risk of contagion, the more stringent the containment measures were. In the last wave a white zone was introduced, in which only the respect of the social distancing and the wearing masks were compulsory¹²⁶. This colour-based system is still available¹²⁷, while the state of emergency has been extended until July 31st, 2021¹²⁸. The regions should implement the guidelines given by the central government, following the principle of subsidiarity established by article 117 of the Italian Constitution¹²⁹.

This entailed many restrictions on the movements: in the first wave, nobody can go outside without a valid justification, which must be declared by self-certification. As time goes by, the restrictions were eased, except for red zones. These hard-measures were introduced by the latter Prime Minister for the following reason: “[...] the emergency does not come from the lethality of the virus, but from the

¹²⁴ IMF. “Policy Responses to COVID19.” IMF, 2021, www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19. Accessed 4 May 2021.

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁶ “Coronavirus, Le Misure Adottate Dal Governo.” [Www.governo.it](http://www.governo.it), 18 Mar. 2020, www.governo.it/it/coronavirus-misure-del-governo. Accessed 4 May 2021.

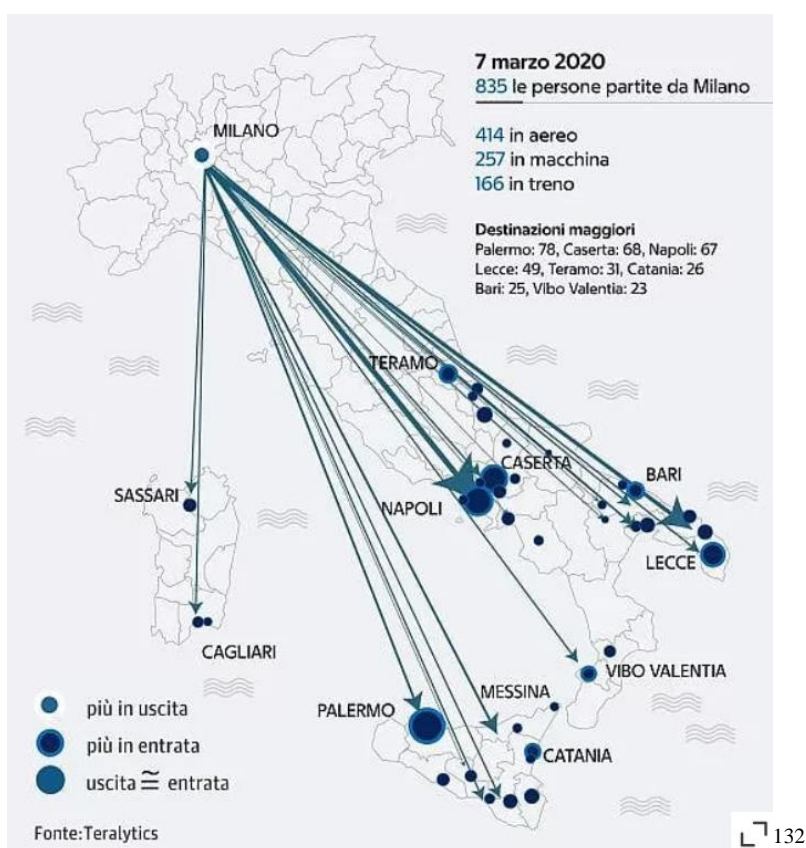
¹²⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁸ “Gazzetta Ufficiale.” *Gazzettaufficiale.it*, 2021, www.gazzettaufficiale.it/atto/serie_generale/caricaDettaglioAtto/originario?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2021-04-30&atto.codiceRedazionale=21A02610&elenco30giorni=false. Accessed 4 May 2021.

¹²⁹ “Italy's Constitution of 1947 (With Amendments through 2012).” Edited by Constitute Project, *Constituteproject.org*, Constitute Project, www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Italy_2012.pdf?lang=en#:~:text=Citizens have the right to,of security or public safety.

impossibility of the Italian healthcare system to cope with the impact of a rapid epidemic spreading of the Covid-19 (Miani et al., 2020)¹³⁰”.

Obviously, social distancing and lockdowns had huge effects also in internal migrations. As explained in the article published by “The Lancet”: “In Italy, after the shutdown of the educational system (schools and Universities will remain closed at least for one month) and the collapse of the touristic sector (90% of travels and reservations cancelled), the Government officially locked down residents of all the region of Milan (Lombardia) and other 11 provinces. To avoid the imprisonment, hundreds of thousands of people left those areas with any possible mean on the night of March 7th, just before the law was signed by Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, thus turning his purpose of slowing down the epidemics exactly into the opposite. The Governors of Southern regions adopted limitations for this huge mass of potentially infected incoming people, with the risk of disseminating suspicion in the population (“hunting the greaser”) (Miani et al, 2020)¹³¹”. Despite the attempt of the regional Governors of the Southern regions to stop the “diaspora” from North to South and consequently the diffusion of the virus in other regions of Belpaese on March 7th, their efforts were in vain. In the following chart, it is possible to see how many people left Milan to go to the South only on March 7th.



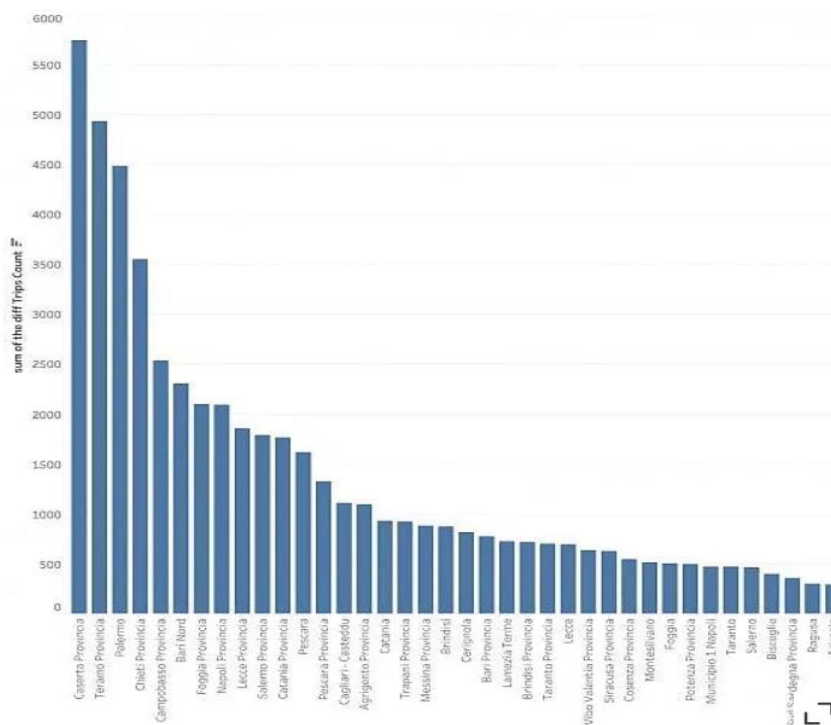
¹³⁰ Miani, Alessandro, et al. “The Italian War-like Measures to Fight Coronavirus Spreading: Re-Open Closed Hospitals Now.” *EClinicalMedicine*, vol. 21, Apr. 2020, p. 100320, [www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370\(20\)30064-X/fulltext#%20, 10.1016/j.eclinm.2020.100320](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/eclinm/article/PIIS2589-5370(20)30064-X/fulltext#%20, 10.1016/j.eclinm.2020.100320). Accessed 4 May 2021.

¹³¹ *Ibidem*.

¹³² D’Alessandro, Jaime. “Coronavirus, l’illusione Della Grande Fuga Da Milano. Ecco I Veri Numeri Degli Spostamenti Verso Sud.” *La Repubblica*, la Repubblica, 23 Apr. 2020,

However, the map does not count all people who left the city before that date. In fact, according to the journalist Jaime D’Alessandro, the exodus to Southern Italy started on February 20th, but reaching its highest peak on the 23rd of the same month: in that day, 9,149 left Milan, with an increase of 4,000 units than the average (D’Alessandro, 2020)¹³³. The migration to the South was stopped by the total lockdown settled on March 10th (D’Alessandro, 2020)¹³⁴. Another data which is important to take into account is mobility. Thanks to the interactive map offered by Teralytics, a Swiss telephone company which analysed the mobility trend among Italian regions at that time, it is possible to see where the movements became more or less intense, using a range of colours: from the blue (areas where there were little moving) to the red (where the movements were increasing) (Belpoliti, 2020)¹³⁵. Clearly, in the period between February 20th and March 10th, the mobility grew up in the Southern regions, according to the aforementioned infographic¹³⁶.

It is interesting to note where the flow of people who came from Milan was direct. According to the next graph, the final destinations of these migrants were located in the South and the most popular were Caserta, in Campania, followed by Taranto, Puglia and Palermo, Sicily.



137

www.repubblica.it/tecnologia/2020/04/23/news/coronavirus_1_illusione_della_grande_fuga_da_milano_e_i_veri_numeri_degli_spostamenti_verso_sud-254722355/. Accessed 5 May 2021.

¹³³ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁴ *Ibidem*.

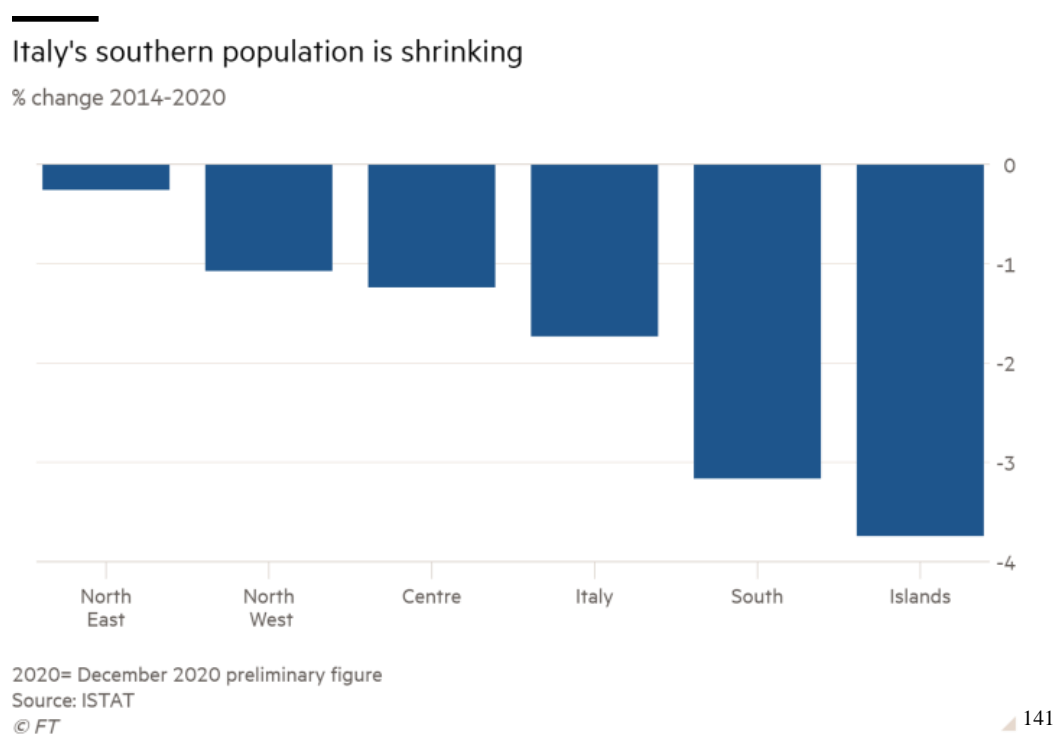
¹³⁵ Belpoliti, Marco. “La Mappa Della Nostra Era Glaciale: Così Il Coronavirus Ha Congelato L’Italia.” *Repubblica.it*, 23 Feb. 2020, lab.gedidigital.it/repubblica/2020/cronaca/coronavirus-mappa-italia-impatto-sulla-mobilita/. Accessed 5 May 2021.

¹³⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁷ D’Alessandro, Jaime. “Coronavirus, l’Illusione Della Grande Fuga Da Milano. Ecco I Veri Numeri Degli Spostamenti Verso Sud.” *La Repubblica*, la Repubblica, 23 Apr. 2020, www.repubblica.it/tecnologia/2020/04/23/news/coronavirus_1_illusione_della_grande_fuga_da_milano_e_i_veri_numeri_degli_spostamenti_verso_sud-254722355/. Accessed 5 May 2021.

During the spring 2020 and after the decision made on March 10th the movements within the country and from/to abroad were blocked. According to IMF reconstruction: “Regional governments are allowed the discretion to adjust the dates in both direction. People can now travel within their own region, and mobility restrictions across regions has been lifted on June 3, when international borders also reopen without restriction to and from other EU countries (IMF, 2020)¹³⁸”. With the second and the third wave, the movements between regions were limited as well. This situation remained unchanged until April 26, 2021 (Merati, 2021)¹³⁹.

Some preliminary data seem to acknowledge this new reversed mobility trend. In an article in the newspaper “Financial Times”, two Italian journalists, Davide Ghiglione and Valentina Romei compared the data on mobility before and after COVID-19: “It is estimated that more than 1 million people moved from the Mezzogiorno - a term for the southern states and islands of Italy - to the north in the past decade. [...] As a result, the population in southern Italy shrank by more than 3 per cent between 2014 and 2020, while it remained stable in the richer north-east (Ghiglione et al, 2021)¹⁴⁰”.



But the authors added: “The pandemic has put a brake on this decades-old trend: between March and December 2020, when most of the Covid-19 restrictions were in place, the net south-north migration nearly

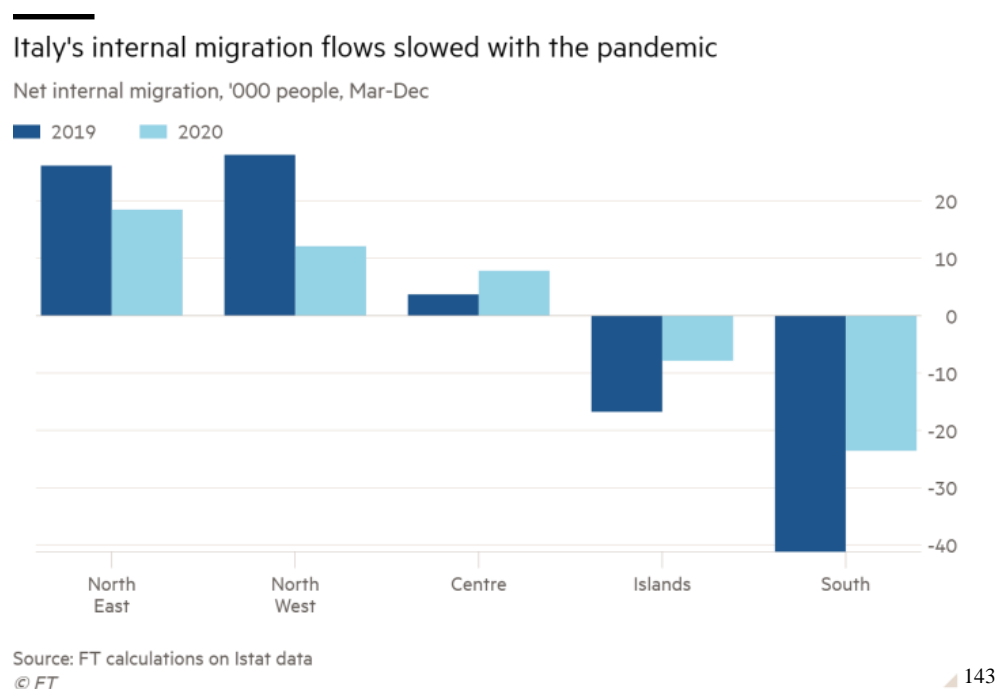
¹³⁸ IMF. “Policy Responses to COVID19.” IMF, 2021, www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19. Accessed 4 May 2021.

¹³⁹ Alessia Merati. “Decreto Riapertura: Cosa Cambia Dal 26 Aprile per Green Pass, Spostamenti Tra Regioni E Coprifuoco.” *Dove Viaggi*, Dove Viaggi, 22 Apr. 2021, viaggi.corriere.it/eventi/cards/decreto-riapertura-26-aprile-pass-spostamenti-regioni-certificati-verdi/. Accessed 5 May 2021.

¹⁴⁰ Ghiglione, Davide and Romei, Valentina. “Italian Returnees Seize on Pandemic to Stop Mezzogiorno Brain Drain.” @*FinancialTimes*, Financial Times, 6 Apr. 2021, www.ft.com/content/2c8f6ff9-ee12-4f0c-a7b2-fe2ac4469c11. Accessed 8 May 2021.

¹⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

halved compared with the same period in the previous year (Ghiglione et al, 2021)¹⁴²”. The graph below compared the internal migration flows in Italy in 2019 and 2020, making the role of the pandemic evident in stopping the losses in the Southern regions caused by the brain drain phenomenon, which prompted many high-skilled workers, millennials and students to move to the wealthy North-Eastern part of the country.



Milan is suffering this new tendency and it is a clear example of how smart working could change the movements within the territory and become a threat for big cities. The mayor of the city, Giuseppe Sala, raised the alarm on July 2020: “Milan is at a standstill because someone else is not working in his presence. I understand that there is a need for smart working, but let us not consider it normal, because if we were to consider it normal, we would have to rethink the city entirely (Sala, 2020)¹⁴⁴”. Undeniably, the closure of workplaces, offices, schools and the compulsory recourse to remote work represent big issues for those cities which have invested a lot of money in their infrastructures. For instances, the Municipality of Milan has lost around 310 million euros due to the collapse of bus and metro tickets sales, which are managed by ATM company¹⁴⁵. Other important cities of Italy are affected by this phenomenon as well (for example Rome), but they are not hit at the same level as Milan.

Otherwise, this could become a big opportunity for the Southern regions of Italy. According to the declaration made by Mara Carfagna, Italy’s minister for the South and territorial Cohesion: “The EU recovery funds and a governmental plan to boost southern Italy’s economy offer a unique opportunity to correct the

¹⁴² *Ibidem*.

¹⁴³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁴ Il Giorno. “Sala: ‘Parte Della Città è Ferma per Chi Lavora Da Casa’ - Il Giorno.” *Il Giorno*, 2020, www.ilgiorno.it/milano/cronaca/sala-1.5320572. Accessed 5 May 2021.

¹⁴⁵ D.D. “Meno Biglietti Atm Venduti: Il Comune Di Milano Perde 310 Milioni Di Euro.” *MilanoToday*, MilanoToday, 25 Nov. 2020, www.milanotoday.it/attualita/coronavirus/comune-perde-310-milioni-atm.html. Accessed 5 May 2021.

country's north-south divide (Carfagna, 2021)¹⁴⁶". Digital infrastructures are the most urgent divide between Northern and Southern Italy which must be filled as soon as possible to make the latter more competitive than before. LUISS Guido Carli professor Luca Giustiniano cautioned that public infrastructures need to be improved in the South to reverse brain drain: "To really embrace working in the south, work has to be rethought in depth, with careful planning with business (Giustiniano, 2021)¹⁴⁷". For this reason, 48 per cent of ultra-broadband investments are destined to South Italy as part of the recovery plan¹⁴⁸. Again, Mara Carfagna underlined the importance of this new balance: "It could become a more solid and widespread opportunity if companies confirm their propensity for smart working and if the south manages to quickly narrow the gap in digital infrastructure that weighs on many local realities (Carfagna, 2021)¹⁴⁹". Smart working can repopulate the southern regions after decades of depopulation, redefining migration paths with an eye to sustainability. From this perspective the idea of 'south working' was born, an all-Italian phenomenon which has the aim to develop smart working for businesses which are located in the Northern part of the country allowing the employees to work from their region of residence and remotely from the company is situated (Pisanu, 2020)¹⁵⁰. The following graph summarizes the result of a questionnaire done to companies about their opinion on south working:

- 40,4% of the respondents believe that south-working grants greater flexibility in managing working hours;
- 38,4% of them think that this will succeed in reducing the fixed costs of physical locations, such as utilities, cleaning, connectivity etc;
- 28,7% of participants answer which would give more motivation to workers;
- 26,8% of those involved notice a higher level of employee productivity;
- 22,2% strongly believe that with south working is possible a reduction of ancillary labour costs;
- 19,3% of interviewed people say that there is room to reduce the charges for capital properties for the businesses;
- A small percentage of the respondents (around 8%) do not know or do not believe in benefits created by south-working;
- 3% of them give other explanation in favour of the new trend.

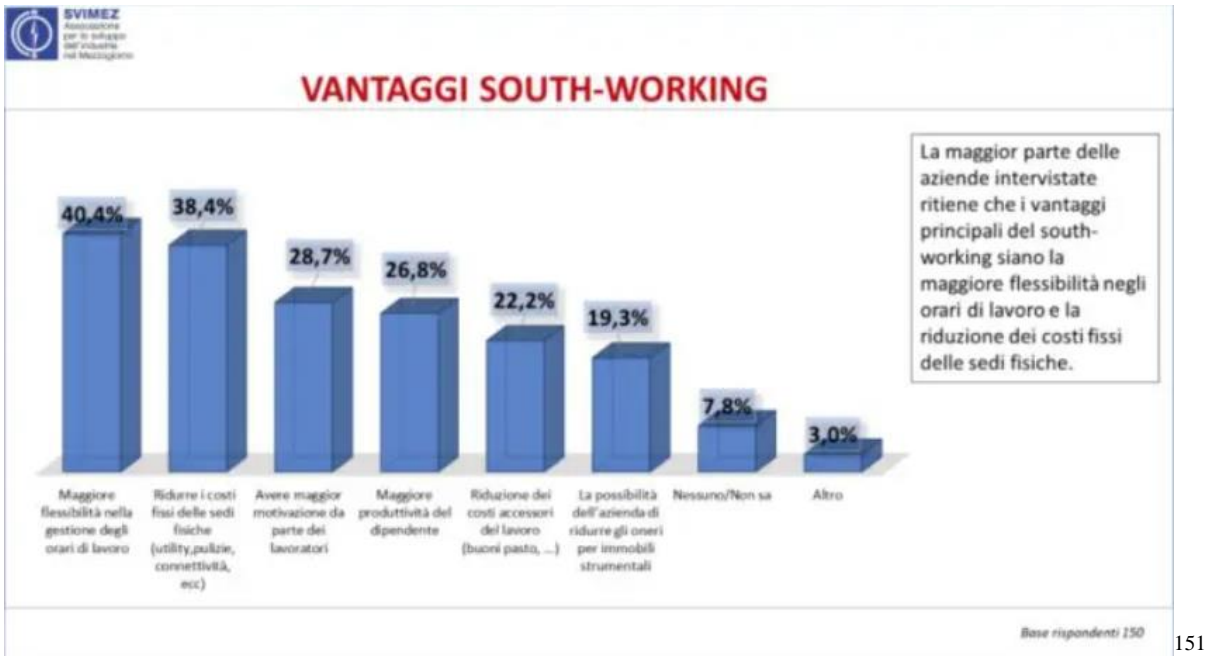
¹⁴⁶ Ghiglione, Davide and Romei, Valentina. "Italian Returnees Seize on Pandemic to Stop Mezzogiorno Brain Drain." @ *FinancialTimes*, Financial Times, 6 Apr. 2021, www.ft.com/content/2c8f6ff9-ee12-4f0c-a7b2-fe2ac4469c11. Accessed 8 May 2021.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵⁰ Pisanu, Nicoletta. "South Working, Come Lavorare a Milano Ma Dal Sud: Ecco Perché è Occasione Di Rilancio." *Agenda Digitale*, Agenda Digitale, 9 Dec. 2020, www.agendadigitale.eu/cittadinanza-digitale/south-working-come-lavorare-a-milano-ma-dal-sud-ecco-perche-e-occasione-di-rilancio/. Accessed 5 May 2021.



151

Looking at the workers' side, according to the survey elaborated by Svimez and "Fondazione con il Sud", 85,3% of people would live in the South if they could, keeping their jobs in smart working¹⁵². Moreover, from the aforementioned questionnaire, the workers can enjoy some advantages:

- Lower cost of living compared to large urban centres in the Center or North;
- More affordable housing solutions;
- Working near the place which is settled the family¹⁵³.

However, side effects of south working and its detractors are around the corner. The drawbacks are the same as those in smart working, which were listed by notorious work social media LinkedIn. The author of the article, Simone Sperindé analysed the pros and cons of smart working from three viewpoints: from the individual side, from the organization one, and finally from the social perspective¹⁵⁴. It is possible to find out a summary of this analysis in the following table.

¹⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵² *Ibidem*.

¹⁵³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵⁴ Sperindé, Simone. "Smart working: advantages and drawbacks." *Linkedin.com*, 2021, www.linkedin.com/pulse/smart-working-advantages-drawbacks-simone-sperind%C3%A9/?articleId=6663798850349748224. Accessed 5 May 2021.

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
FOR INDIVIDUALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher perceived autonomy • lower work-family conflict • increased job satisfaction • lower stress levels • better morale • schedule flexibility • fewer distractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • professional isolation • lower access to employee development activities • lower job performance • lack of confidence • reduced visibility • lack of career advancement • higher work-family conflict • potential distractions • shirking perception
FOR ORGANIZATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased flexibility of office locations • reduce costs • increased flexibility in recruiting and managing workforce • decreasing turnover intention • decreasing absenteeism • improving employees' engagement • improving employees' productivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficulties in creating organizational camaraderie • lack of employees' organizational commitment • reduced workplace socialization • slower knowledge transfer • lack of tacit learning • resentment by employees not allowed to access smart working programs • necessity of additional specific skills and efforts • shirking perception reduces overall performance
FOR THE SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher environmental sustainability • rural communities can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ limit the decrease in population ◦ increase the perceived quality of life of the locals ◦ advance their economic activity ◦ increase their budget • close the digital gap between rural and urban areas • increase the retirement age • improve the working conditions of people with disabilities or health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher need to illuminate and heat smart workers' houses • smart working might induce workers to live further away from the office, increasing their commuting distance on office days • higher need for office equipment and material at smart workers' homes • increased amount of waste from increased demand for equipment

155

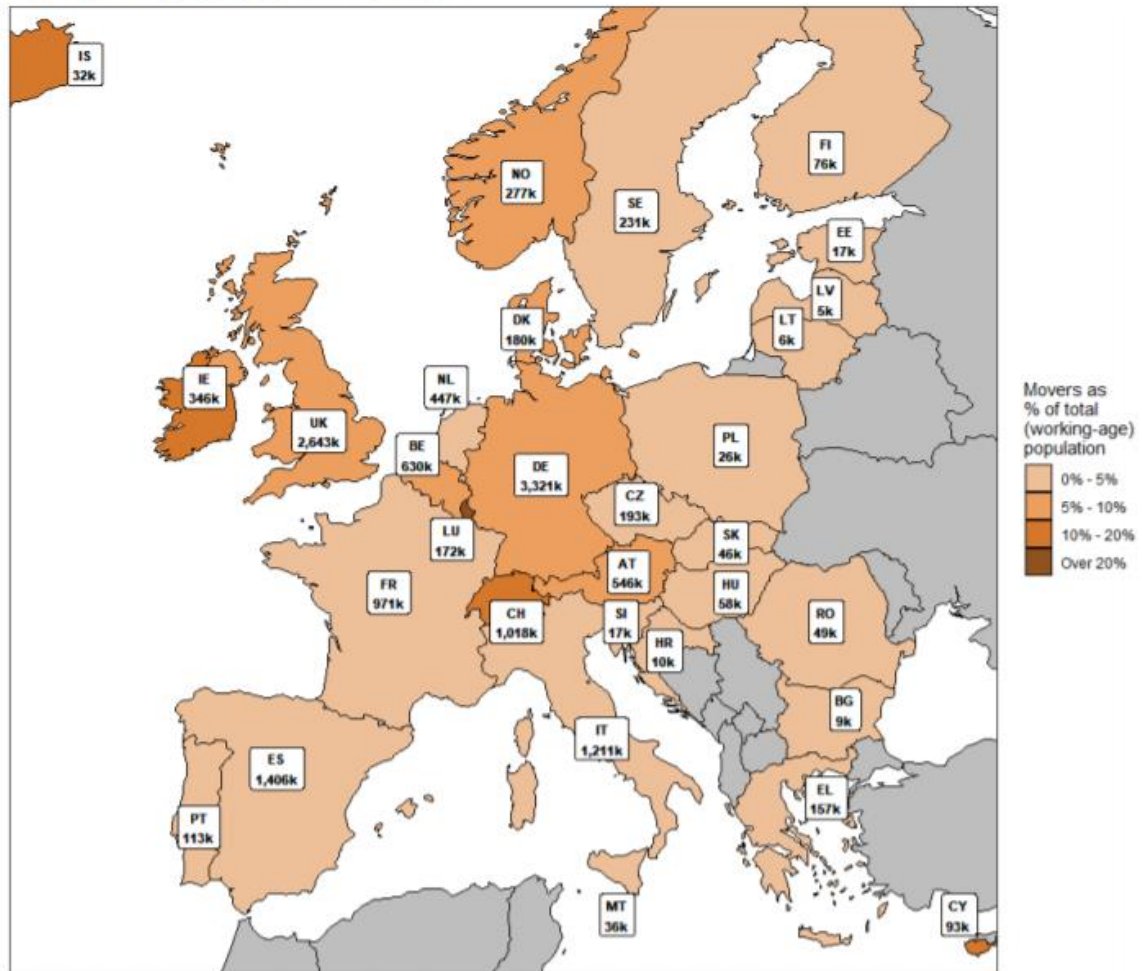
This great innovation involves not only internal migrants but also Italians expatriated abroad. Italian ex-pats are moving back to Italy. This tendency has begun before the beginning of the pandemic, but with its outbreak, the trend started to become very consistent. The phenomenon of 'brain drain' and 'migration' was quite widespread in Italy before the pandemic. European Commission analysed this phenomenon in its "Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020". The data revealed the following shreds of evidence: "In 2019, 34% of EU movers had a tertiary level of education, considered 'high-skilled'. The most important EU destination countries of high-skilled movers are Germany, Spain, France, Belgium and Austria. Prior to its exit from the EU, the UK was the destination with the most high-skilled movers. Major sending countries are Poland, Romania and Italy but also Bulgaria and Portugal (Siöland et al, 2021)¹⁵⁶".

The subsequent map illustrates the inflows in the territory of 28 European Union Members and the European Freedom Trade Agreement (EFTA) countries in 2019 (before the pandemic).

¹⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵⁶ Linus, Siöland, et al. "Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020." *Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (European Commission)*, 19 Feb. 2021, doi:10.2767/075264. Accessed 7 May 2021.

Figure 1: EU-28 movers in EU-28 and EFTA countries in absolute numbers (1 000s) and as percentage of the total working-age population, 2019⁵⁰



THE COUNTRY LABELS DISPLAY THE COUNTRY AND THE ABSOLUTE STOCKS IN 2019 (EXPRESSED IN THOUSANDS). COUNTRIES ARE COLOURED ACCORDING TO HOW LARGE THE STOCKS ARE IN RELATION TO THE TOTAL WORKING-AGE POPULATION IN THE COUNTRY.

SOURCE: EUROSTAT DATA ON POPULATION BY CITIZENSHIP AND AGE GROUP [MIGR_POP1CTZ] (EXTRACTED MAY 2020), MILIEU CALCULATIONS.

157

The report explains the picture and its data: “Luxembourg, Ireland, Iceland and Cyprus have the highest proportion of movers in relation to their own population, in part due to a relatively small national population. Five countries have over a million movers resident: Germany (3.3 million), the UK (2.6 million), Spain (1.4 million) and Italy (1.2 million). France has just under a million at 970 000. Together, these five countries made up 73.4% of EU-28 movers, or 9.5 million people. For the EU27, the equivalent figure is 6.9 million, or 67% of EU-27 movers. The next tier of destination countries – Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands – have around half a million EU-28 residents (Siöland et al, 2021)¹⁵⁸”.

Otherwise, the following chart shows the variation of nationals’ outflows in main sending countries in the period 2017-2018.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibidem.*

Table 4: Countries with outflows of nationals of more than 50 000 in 2018 (changes compared to 2017)⁷⁵

Country of residence	Outflow of nationals (main sending countries)
RO	163 421 (-5.5%)
DE	160 754 (-1.4%)
UK	109 513 (-1.7%)
PL	106 114 (-16.5%)
IT	88 917 (+2.9%)
ES	56 586 (-8.2%)

PROVISIONAL DATA: PL, UK. ESTIMATED NUMBERS: DE, PL, RO.

FIGURES FOR RO AND UK USE AGE DEFINITION 'AGE COMPLETED IN YEARS'.

SOURCE: EUROSTAT DATA ON EMIGRATION BY AGE GROUP, SEX AND CITIZENSHIP [MIGR_EMI1CTZ] (EXTRACTED MAY 2020), MILIEU CALCULATIONS.

159

According to the aforementioned report: “The countries with the highest outflows in 2018 were Romania (163 000), Germany (161 000), the UK (110 000), Poland (106 000) and Italy (89 000). Of these, Romania and Poland’s outflow rates decreased most compared to 2017 (-6% and -17%, respectively). The other countries had relatively steady rates compared to the previous year, with changes between -2% (Germany and the UK) and 3% (Italy) (Siöland et al, 2021)¹⁶⁰”.

Before the pandemic, these two data also entailed the number of returnees (or return movers), who are defined as “those moving (back) to their country of nationality after a stay abroad” (Siöland et al, 2021)¹⁶¹. They constitute an important part of intra-EU mobility flows, around 738,000 in 2018¹⁶². It is possible to compare the Italian inflow and outflow ratio with other EU-28 countries in the following figure.

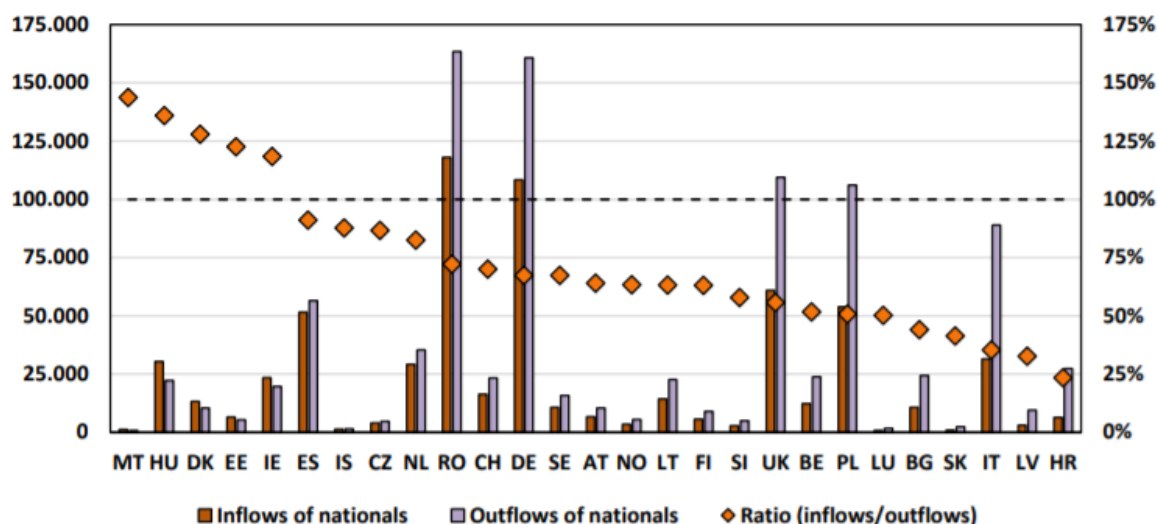
¹⁵⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁶⁰ *Ibidem.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁶² *Ibidem.*

Figure 26: Absolute inflows and outflows of nationals in EU-28 countries, and the ratio of inflows-to-outflows, 2018



THE LEFT AXIS DISPLAYS THE ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF INFLOWS AND OUTFLOWS. THE RIGHT AXIS DISPLAYS THE RATIO OF INFLOWS TO OUTFLOWS. THIS RATIO ILLUSTRATES (1) WHETHER MORE NATIONALS RETURNED TO THE COUNTRY THAN LEFT IT IN 2018, AND (2) THE MAGNITUDE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INFLOWS AND OUTFLOWS. AT 100%, AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF NATIONALS ARE LEAVING AS ARE RETURNING; BELOW 100%, MORE ARE LEAVING; AND ABOVE 100%, MORE ARE RETURNING. THE DASHED LINE INDICATES THE 100% LEVEL.

HIGHLIGHTED COLUMNS INDICATE AGGREGATES.

INFLOWS: PROVISIONAL DATA FOR BG, PL, SK, UK. ESTIMATED NUMBERS FOR DE, PL, RO. BREAK IN TIME SERIES FOR DE.

OUTFLOWS: CY, EL, FR, PT ARE NOT DISPLAYED BECAUSE FIGURES ARE NOT AVAILABLE. PROVISIONAL DATA FOR BG, FR, PL, UK. ESTIMATED NUMBERS FOR DE, PL, RO.

SOURCE: EUROSTAT DATA ON EMIGRATION BY AGE GROUP AND CITIZENSHIP [MIGR_EMI1CTZ] (EXTRACTED MAY 2020) AND DATA ON IMMIGRATION BY AGE GROUP, SEX AND CITIZENSHIP [MIGR_IMM1CTZ] (EXTRACTED MAY 2020), MILIEU CALCULATIONS.

163

According to the evidence shown by the previous graph, Italy had a ratio between inflows and outflows above 25%, where the second ones outweighed the first ones. The outflows were slightly under 100,000 units, while the inflows were above 25,000 people.

All these data are helpful to understand how much the situation has suddenly changed in only one year. The abovementioned article of “Financial Time” describes the situation before the pandemic in the following terms: “Foreign emigration is another drain: In the 10 years to 2019, about 900,000 Italians moved abroad, according to government data. That year, more than one-third of new expatriates originated from the southern regions (Ghiglione et al, 2021)¹⁶⁴”. The outbreak in 2020 led to an important cut of the number of people who left the country, as outlined by the two authors in their article:” Over the same period, the number of southern Italians leaving the country fell by more than a third (Ghiglione et al, 2021)¹⁶⁵”. In addition, according to 'Sole 24 Ore' estimates, 80,000 Italians returned home between 10 March and 8 May 2020¹⁶⁶.

¹⁶³ *Ibidem*.

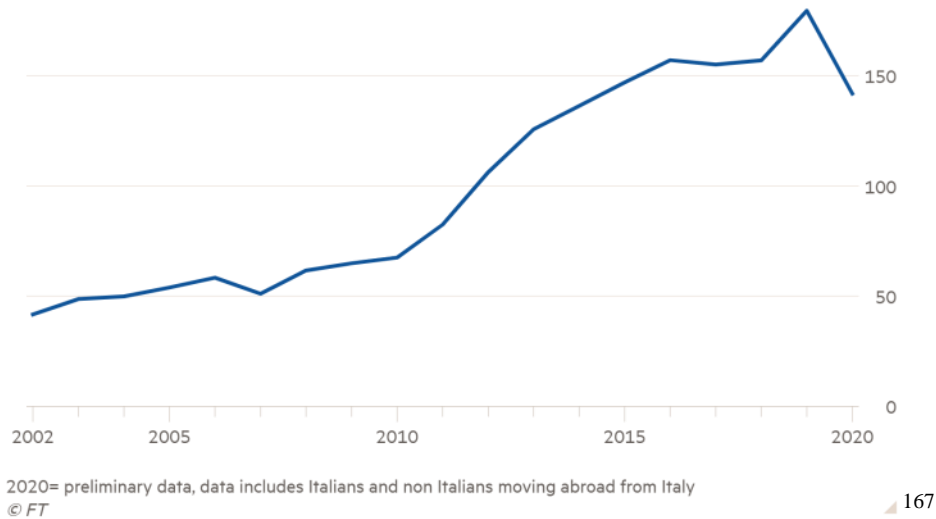
¹⁶⁴ Ghiglione, Davide and Romei, Valentina. “Italian Returnees Seize on Pandemic to Stop Mezzogiorno Brain Drain.” @*FinancialTimes*, Financial Times, 6 Apr. 2021, www.ft.com/content/2c8f6ff9-ee12-4f0c-a7b2-fe2ac4469c11. Accessed 8 May 2021.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶⁶ Pelosi, Gerardo. “Quasi 80mila Gli Italiani Rentrati in Patria 4mila Ancora All'estero.” *Il Sole 24 ORE*, Il Sole 24 ORE, 10 May 2020, www.ilsole24ore.com/art/quasi-80mila-italiani-rentati-patria-4mila-ancora-all-estero-ADCTrXP. Accessed 6 June 2021.

Italy's foreign emigration has slowed

'000 people moving abroad



167

Many of them are millennials and, more precisely students. As long as academic lectures will be available online, students will not need to return in in-person and live in the same geographical area where the university is located. In this sense, it is possible to understand why the trend is decreasing from the pandemic and how it could affect Italian emigration. This kind of argument could be applied also to the exchange program, for instances Erasmus + Program. For instance, according to the aforementioned article of the 'Sole 24 Ore', 14,000 Italian students who studied in Spain came back to Italy without concluding their exchange programme¹⁶⁸.

There is another reason why Italian ex-pats are coming back and it is not related to the pandemic. The Vice-president of the British Chamber of Commerce for Italy Daniel Shillito wrote an article which was released in the mid of January: "Aside from the pandemic, the UK's exit from the EU has left more than just a bad taste in the mouth. Arguably, considering the anguish reported with respect to British settlement status, and residency rights for Europeans in the UK being uncertain for so long, many Europeans have reported feeling less than 'at home' (Shillito, 2021)¹⁶⁹".

Actually, United Kingdom is no longer member of the European Union. Between 2016 and 2020, the State was in a transitional phase in which it was with one foot inside and another one outside the European Union. In the meanwhile, the country was trying its best efforts to reach an agreement with EU institutions for its exit and its process, known as "Brexit", was completed only on January 1st, 2021, with a last-minute

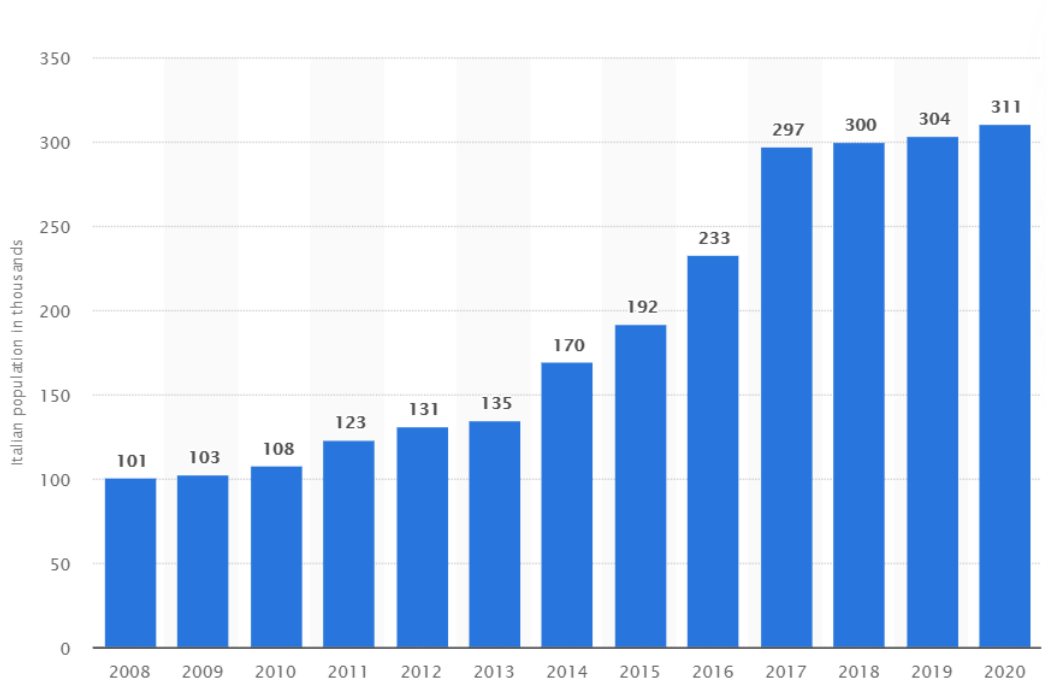
¹⁶⁷ Ghiglione, Davide and Romei, Valentina. "Italian Returnees Seize on Pandemic to Stop Mezzogiorno Brain Drain." @ *FinancialTimes*, Financial Times, 6 Apr. 2021, www.ft.com/content/2c8f6ff9-ee12-4f0c-a7b2-fe2ac4469c11. Accessed 8 May 2021.

¹⁶⁸ Pelosi, Gerardo. "Quasi 80mila Gli Italiani Rentrati in Patria 4mila Ancora All'estero." *Il Sole 24 ORE*, Il Sole 24 ORE, 10 May 2020, www.ilsole24ore.com/art/quasi-80mila-italiani-rentati-patria-4mila-ancora-all-estero-ADCTrXP. Accessed 6 June 2021.

¹⁶⁹ Shillito, Daniel. "A Guide to Relocating to Italy." *Experts for Expats*, 2021, www.expertsforexpats.com/expat-news-and-opinion/latest-expert-opinion/a-guide-to-relocating-to-italy/. Accessed 8 May 2021.

deal¹⁷⁰. For this reason, the European Union Members are 27 and no longer 28. As Daniel Shillito explained before, it is another reason why many Italians are coming back to their hometowns.

In the UK, the Italian population is one of the largest communities which reside in the country. According to the data given by Statista, from January 2008 to June 2020 Italian community grew by 210 thousand units but considering the period from 2017 and 2020 its growth slowed as the following graph shows.

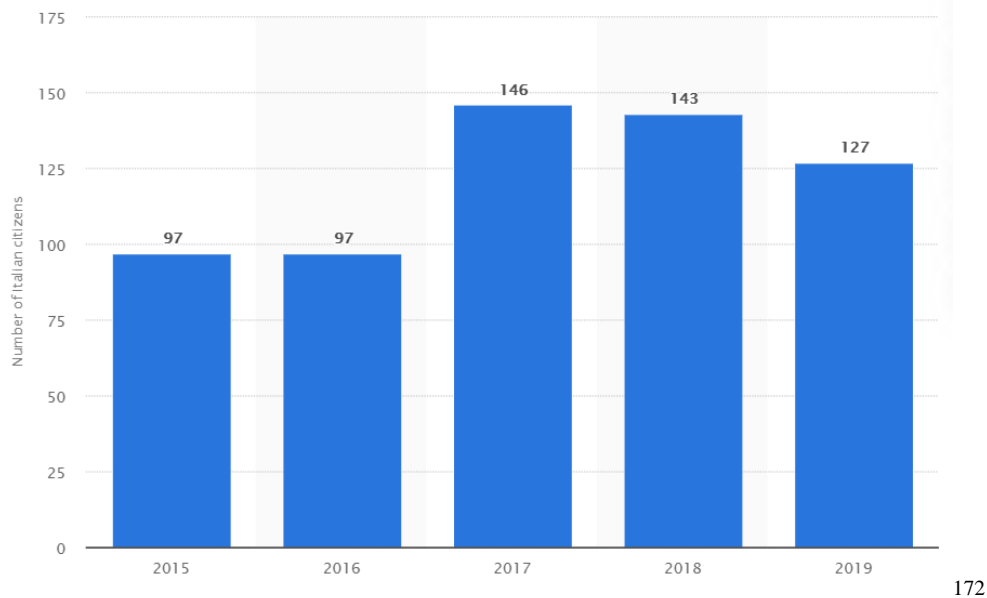


171

Undeniably, London is the favourite destination for Italians to move to in the UK. And it is a good index to show how much Brexit has redefined the Italian emigrational pattern. According to the data given by Statista, the Italian community in London reached its maximum peak in 2017, but in 2018 it decreased slightly while in 2019 this tendency has accelerated, losing almost 20 thousand Italians in two years.

¹⁷⁰ BBC News. "Brexit: What You Need to Know about the UK Leaving the EU." *BBC News*, BBC News, 30 Dec. 2020, www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-32810887. Accessed 8 May 2021.

¹⁷¹ Clark, D. "Italian Population of the UK 2020 | Statista." *Statista*, Statista, 2020, www.statista.com/statistics/1061631/italian-population-in-united-kingdom/. Accessed 9 May 2021.



We have no certainties where this outflow is directed: someone could move back to Italy as returnees; others could settle in other countries. In fact, some countries are advantaged by Brexit because they can attract those Europeans who want to stay in Europe. For instances, the Netherlands might have more appeal among European students, since the ranking of its university and its international environment. Another example is surely Germany, which could be even more attractive for high-skilled migrant workers than nowadays.

Brexit has not had an effect only in stopping emigrational patterns, but also in redistributing high-skilled workers and students in Europe (and in Italy as well) and this phenomenon is enhanced by the pandemic. The newspaper “The Guardian” in an article written by the King’s College professor Jonathan Portes alerted of the consequences of both phenomena combined: “The latest Office for National Statistics figures suggest that a million people have left the country (at the end of 2020 Britain had almost a million fewer non-UK-born residents than a year earlier). This would represent by far the largest annual fall in the resident population since the second world war, with London especially hard hit (Portes, 2021)¹⁷³”. In the same article, the author tried to imagine the future immigration trend of the country, also analysing the role of Brexit: “While the economy overall will probably rebound, as relatively well-off households spend the money they’ve saved in lockdown, jobs – especially in consumer-facing service sectors in cities, like coffee shops and restaurants – may not, as many former commuters decide to continue to work at home some or most of the time. Restrictions on international travel make migration more difficult and will hit businesses – hotels, arts and culture – that rely on tourism. International students, spooked by the less-than-optimal

¹⁷² Varrella, Simona. “Italy: Population of London 2019 | Statista.” *Statista*, Statista, 2019, www.statista.com/statistics/603114/number-of-registered-italians-in-london-uk-by-gender/. Accessed 9 May 2021.

¹⁷³ Portes, Jonathan. “A Million People Have Left Britain. What Does This Mean for the Country?” *The Guardian*, The Guardian, 8 Mar. 2021, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/mar/08/million-people-left-britain-pandemic-exodus-brexit. Accessed 9 May 2021.

experience of the last year, may stay away entirely or opt for cheaper online-only courses. And looming over all of this is Brexit. Brexit was not the main driver of emigration over the last year, which was very much concentrated in the first few months of the pandemic and appears to have affected non-EU migrants as well as Europeans. But it could certainly help persuade people not to return. While many of those who left will have acquired settled status, entitling them to come back, others will have only “pre-settled status” or nothing at all, and the Home Office has been at best ambiguous on their rights. And, of course, the new post-Brexit system will make it much more difficult for new EU migrants to come here (Portes, 2021)¹⁷⁴”.

Alongside this immigrants’ outflow, there are “apparent” nationals’ ones. The journalist Adrian Zorzut shed a light on the EU citizenship seekers in the UK, who could approach other European countries in such a way to continue using the single-market amongst EU-27 and avoiding taxes and customs costs. According to the aforementioned article, the author claimed: “The number of wealthy Britons seeking EU citizenship has shot up substantially since the beginning of this year, immigration agencies say. Investment immigration firm Astons has seen a 50% and 30% year-on-year increase in interest from clients seeking Cypriot or Greek citizenship respectively this quarter, *Reuters* reports. Henley & Partners also reported a rise in requests for advice on citizenship in Malta, Portugal, Austria and several Caribbean islands, which enjoy special access to the EU market (Zorzut, 2020)¹⁷⁵”.

This may be a new push factor for high skilled immigration in Italy from the UK. For instance, in 2017, British actor Colin Firth obtained Italian citizenship. He asked for it because of the period of uncertainty generated by Brexit and, in this way, he acquires new citizenship, securing a new way to obtain the EU passport¹⁷⁶. The pandemic could facilitate this process, but not only in the UK but also other wealthy Northern European countries. Thanks to the greater implementation of smart working, many Europeans establish themselves in warm and sunny countries to keep them in contact with nature and to better appreciate life. This new lifestyle is called ‘workation’, which comes from the merger between ‘work’ and ‘vacation’ and means ‘working while on vacation’ (Metcalf, 2019)¹⁷⁷. Obviously, Italy is one of the suggested destinations for ‘workation’¹⁷⁸, but there are important drawbacks which will be analysed in the following paragraph.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷⁵ Zorzut, Adrian. “Figures for British Elite Seeking EU Passports Jumps by 50% in 2020.” *The New European*, 24 Sept. 2020, www.theneweuropean.co.uk/brexit-news/europe-news/brits-seeking-eu-citizenship-skyrockets-says-reuters-94204. Accessed 9 May 2021.

¹⁷⁶ BBC News. “Actor Colin Firth Gets Dual British-Italian Citizenship.” *BBC News*, BBC News, 23 Sept. 2017, www.bbc.com/news/uk-41374020. Accessed 9 May 2021.

¹⁷⁷ Metcalf, Michael. “What Is a ‘Workation’?” *Timetastic - a Blog about Taking and Managing Time off Work.*, Timetastic - A blog about taking and managing time off work., 13 Mar. 2019, timetastic.co.uk/blog/what-is-a-workation/. Accessed 9 May 2021.

¹⁷⁸ “What’s a Workation? Work and Travel as a Freelancer in Italy.” *N26.com*, 19 Mar. 2021, n26.com/en-it/blog/workation-advantages-of-freelancing-in-italy. Accessed 9 May 2021.

With these concluding remarks, we can deepen the immigrational inflows in Italy during the pandemic.

2.3: Immigration during the pandemic in Italy

Italy is amidst a weird but peculiar situation. As we see previously, Italy seems to be only a sending country. It is not completely true. According to the “Annual Report on EU-Intra Labour Mobility 2020”, Italy is in the top five destination countries for immigrants. The UK, Germany, Spain, France and Italy can attract 74 per cent of EU movers (Siöland, 2021)¹⁷⁹. Particularly, in 2019 Italy was declared as the nation which has the third-largest migrant population in Europe, preceded only by Germany and UK¹⁸⁰. An article made by “Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata” (National Associated Press Agency, also known with the Italian acronym ANSA) claimed: “The 28th edition of the Caritas-Migrantes "Immigration Report," released on Friday in Rome, revealed that Italy has the third-highest number of foreign residents in the European Union. Around 5.3 million foreign citizens legally reside in the country. That's nearly nine percent of the overall resident population (ANSA, 2019)¹⁸¹”.

Italy reached a total of 5,035,643 migrants out of around 60 million people on January 1st, 2021, according to the Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (ISTAT), which is the Italian institute in charge of analysing statistical data¹⁸². The following graph shows the nationalities which are present in Italian territory.

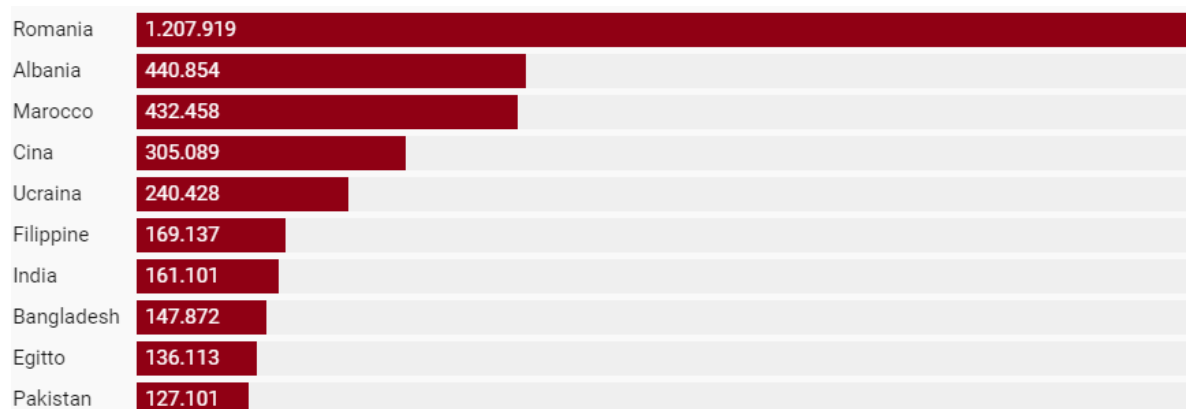


Grafico: Antonio Massariolo • Fonte: Dossier statistico immigrazione • Scaricare i dati • Creato con Datawrapper

According to the previous data, the largest community of immigrants in Italy is the Romanian one, which is followed by Albanian and Moroccan ethnic groups. The outcome of this survey is similar to the

¹⁷⁹ Linus, Siöland, et al. “Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020.” *Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (European Commission)*, 19 Feb. 2021, doi:10.2767/075264. Accessed 7 May 2021.

¹⁸⁰ ANSA. “Italy Has Third-Largest Migrant Population in Europe: Report.” *InfoMigrants*, Infomigrants, 30 Sept. 2019, www.infomigrants.net/en/post/19852/italy-has-third-largest-migrant-population-in-europe-report. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁸¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸² ISTAT. “Statistiche Istat.” *Istat.it*, 2011, stra-dati.istat.it/. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁸³ Massariolo, Antonio. “Dossier Statistico Immigrazione: In Italia Gli Stranieri Sono l’8,8% Della Popolazione | Il Bo Live UniPD.” *Il Bo Live UniPD*, 5 Nov. 2020, ilbolive.unipd.it/it/news/dossier-statistico-immigrazione-italia-stranieri. Accessed 10 May 2021.

2019 result, which saw these communities as the predominant¹⁸⁴. However, comparing the total amount of international migrants (including the communitarian citizens) in 2019 and 2020, the trend of international migration is decreasing in Italy and a key role in this outflow is played by the pandemic. In support of this thesis, it is important to have a look at the effect of the outbreak of COVID-19 on the Romanian population. The Senior Policy Analyst Monica Andriescu wrote an article for the Migration Policy Institute in which stated: “As of late March, more than 200,000 Romanian workers — currently the largest group of EU-27 free movers — had returned to Romania from EU countries most hit by the pandemic, for reasons that may include precarious employment conditions, loss of income, as well as limited health insurance and social security coverage (Andriescu, 2020)¹⁸⁵”. This phenomenon occurred all around Europe, but it is sufficient to understand why there is this immigration loss. Including those who came spontaneously back in their countries for the same reasons cited before for Italian ex-pats (for instance, they could carry on their duties from remote, becoming smart workers), it is understandable why the trend is decreasing.

Special mention must be done to EU citizens in Italy. According to the “Istituto Superiore di Sanità” (Superior Institute of Health, known with the acronym ISS), which is the research, control and prevention pole of public health in Italy¹⁸⁶, 2,6 million migrants out of a total of 5,3 million came from other EU-countries in 2019 in Italy (ISS, 2019)¹⁸⁷. This means that almost one in two migrants is an EU citizen in Italy. Schengen Area allows European citizens to move freely into the countries which join its agreement. But it includes only 26 members, as explained by the website “Schengen Visa Info”: “The 26 Schengen countries are Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland¹⁸⁸”. Many countries which join the European Union are not part of the Schengen Area, as reported by the previous source: “There are five more EU members, that have not joined the Schengen zone: Ireland – which still maintains opt-outs and Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Cyprus – that are seeking to join soon¹⁸⁹”. For this reason, Romanians are not considered in the general account of European migrants, but as international ones.

Schengen Agreement gives many facilities or simplified procedures regarding freedom of movements: it permits Europeans to stay in another European country that differs from the home country for

¹⁸⁴ ANSA. “Italy Has Third-Largest Migrant Population in Europe: Report.” *InfoMigrants*, Infomigrants, 30 Sept. 2019, www.infomigrants.net/en/post/19852/italy-has-third-largest-migrant-population-in-europe-report. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁸⁵ Andriescu, Monica. “Under Lockdown amid COVID-19 Pandemic, Europe Feels the Pinch from Slowed Intra-EU Labor Mobility.” *Migrationpolicy.org*, May 2020, www.migrationpolicy.org/article/covid19-europe-feels-pinch-slowed-intra-eu-labor-mobility. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁸⁶ Istituto Superiore di Sanità, “Missione - ISS.” *Www.iss.it*, 2020, www.iss.it/missione2. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁸⁷ Marchetti, Giulia and Declich, Silvia. “Migranti E Salute I Numeri in Italia.” *Epicentro.iss.it*, 2021, www.epicentro.iss.it/migranti/numeri-italia. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁸⁸ “Schengen Area - Visa Information for Schengen Countries.” *SchengenVisaInfo.com*, 5 Apr. 2021, www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-visa-countries-list/. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibidem*.

less than three months, without filling in the “declaration of presence” (which is optional)¹⁹⁰. Whenever the period exceeds three months, then they must register in the public records office of the municipality of residence¹⁹¹. This complicates the compute of European foreigners in Italian territory. Below it is possible to find the latest statistics about European migrants in Italy (on December 31st, 2019, before the pandemic).

EUROPA	Area	Maschi	Femmine	Totale	%
Romania	Unione Europea	489436	656282	1145718	22,73%
Albania	Europa centro orientale	215485	206106	421591	8,37%
Ucraina	Europa centro orientale	51713	176847	228560	4,54%
Moldavia	Europa centro orientale	40175	78341	118516	2,35%
Polonia	Unione Europea	22606	64137	86743	1,72%
Bulgaria	Unione Europea	21007	35638	56645	1,12%
Macedonia del Nord	Europa centro orientale	28808	27008	55816	1,11%
Kosovo	Europa centro orientale	21092	17553	38645	0,77%
Federazione Russa	Europa centro orientale	7168	30256	37424	0,74%
Germania	Unione Europea	13277	22039	35316	0,70%
Repubblica di Serbia	Europa centro orientale	16300	17022	33322	0,66%
Francia	Unione Europea	11656	18065	29721	0,59%
Regno Unito	Unione Europea	13708	15946	29654	0,59%
Spagna	Unione Europea	8673	17281	25954	0,51%
Bosnia-Erzegovina	Europa centro orientale	11687	10224	21911	0,43%
Turchia	Europa centro orientale	10847	8321	19168	0,38%
Croazia	Unione Europea	8096	8189	16285	0,32%
Bielorussia	Europa centro orientale	1756	7052	8808	0,17%
Paesi Bassi	Unione Europea	3676	4607	8283	0,16%
Slovacchia	Unione Europea	2050	5926	7976	0,16%
Ungheria	Unione Europea	2183	5744	7927	0,16%
Svizzera	Altri paesi europei	3160	4543	7703	0,15%
Grecia	Unione Europea	3882	3745	7627	0,15%
Portogallo	Unione Europea	2858	3618	6476	0,13%
Austria	Unione Europea	1845	4233	6078	0,12%
Belgio	Unione Europea	2485	3339	5824	0,12%
Repubblica Ceca	Unione Europea	917	4475	5392	0,11%
Lituania	Unione Europea	1063	4186	5249	0,10%
Svezia	Unione Europea	1034	2125	3159	0,06%
Irlanda	Unione Europea	1434	1642	3076	0,06%

¹⁹⁰ Ministero dell’Interno. “Residence in Another Member State - Moving Temporarily or Permanently to Another Member State | Single Digital Gateway - Ministero Dell’Interno.” *Interno.gov.it*, Dec. 2020, sdg.interno.gov.it/en/residence-another-member-state-moving-temporarily-or-permanently-another-member-state. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁹¹ *Ibidem*.

Lettonia	Unione Europea	550	2336	2886	0,06%
Slovenia	Unione Europea	1096	1295	2391	0,05%
Danimarca	Unione Europea	809	1209	2018	0,04%
Montenegro	Europa centro orientale	908	1034	1942	0,04%
Finlandia	Unione Europea	394	1270	1664	0,03%
Estonia	Unione Europea	203	1042	1245	0,02%
San Marino	Altri paesi europei	671	461	1132	0,02%
Norvegia	Altri paesi europei	434	634	1068	0,02%
Malta	Unione Europea	247	465	712	0,01%
Lussemburgo	Unione Europea	112	143	255	0,01%
Cipro	Unione Europea	94	153	247	0,00%
Islanda	Altri paesi europei	45	96	141	0,00%
Principato di Monaco	Altri paesi europei	9	15	24	0,00%
Liechtenstein	Altri paesi europei	7	12	19	0,00%
Andorra	Altri paesi europei	5	7	12	0,00%
Città del Vaticano	Altri paesi europei	4	3	7	0,00%
Totale Europa	Totale Europa	1025665	1474665	2500330	49,61%

192

These numbers involved those who reside in the country. But after COVID-19 and the growth of smart working use, it is and will be easily possible for Europeans to work in different places around Europe without declaring their presence to host countries. It is the principle on which the aforementioned ‘workation’ is based. And some wealthy Europeans from North Europe has done it during the pandemic (despite the restrictions) and they would do it in the future, strengthening the ‘long-stay’ trend.

Certainly, long stays replaced tourism as we were used to understanding it. The tourism sector is one of the most affected by the pandemic in Italy. ISTAT issued a press release in December 2020, in which claimed: “First nine months of 2020: presences halved in accommodation establishments. In the summer period July-September 2020, the presences of customers in the receptive establishments are overall 63.9% of those of the previous year. The decline is mainly due to the presences of foreign customers, they are only 39.7% compared to the same quarter of 2019; for Italian customers they are 86.2%. In the first three quarters of 2020, there is a drastic decrease in trips made for business purposes by residents of our country (-59%) and, to a lesser but still large extent, those for vacations (-23%) (ISTAT, 2020)¹⁹³”.

Even though the long stays of wealthy Europeans can help the Italian population, feeding and increasing the general consumption of goods, there are other downsides just around the corner. First of all, the closures of the non-essential shop as cafés, restaurants, museums, cinemas and so on due to the pandemic (or more precisely to social distancing measures) prevent the possibility to redistribute new incomes which come from wealthy European long-stayers. Secondly, wealthy Europeans (who usually come from Northern

¹⁹² “Cittadini Stranieri in Italia - 2019.” *Tuttitalia.it*, 2019, www.tuttitalia.it/statistiche/cittadini-stranieri-2019/. Accessed 10 May 2021.

¹⁹³ ISTAT. “Movimento Turistico in Italia.” *Istat.it*, 28 Dec. 2020, www.istat.it/it/archivio/252091. Accessed 10 May 2021.

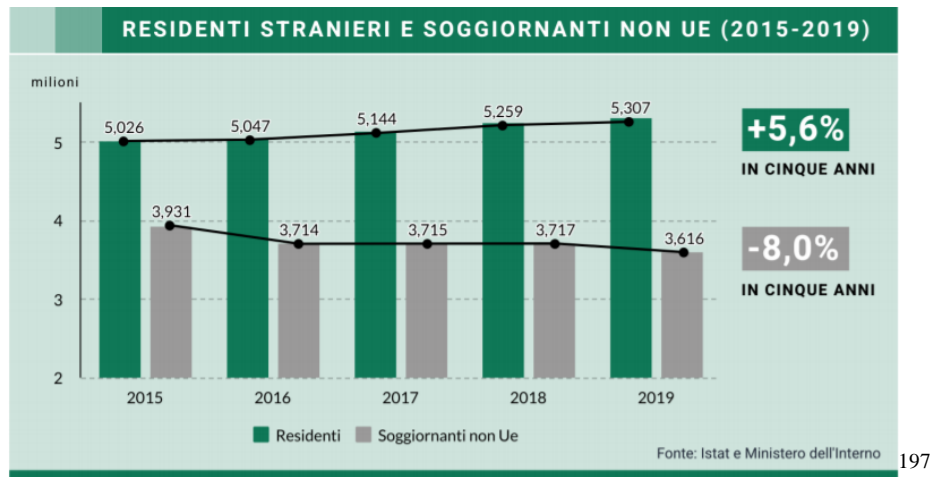
Europe in search of a better climate and a closer approach to nature) are not so many and they are not in the position to raise an entire economy like the Italian one alone. Last but not least, their knowledge cannot enrich the country or take some innovations, because they work for other businesses located in other countries thanks to smart working. So, until the pandemic, their impact should be marginal, but in the future, this new tendency could be helpful for the Italian economy if it would be better implemented by the government.

Another matter regards international migration. Italy has suffered a drastic drop in international migration in 2020 and there are other data which can demonstrate this theory. Comparing 2019 and 2020 immigration statistics in Italy and, according to ISTAT in the first semester of 2020 about 43,000 residence permits were granted for non-communitarian citizens, less than half the number issued at the same time in 2019 (ISTAT, 2020)¹⁹⁴. But the pandemic has enhanced a trend that was already started in 2019. In the “Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2020” (Immigration Statistic Dossier 2020) made by “Centro studi e ricerche IDOS” (which is an Italian research centre) in partnership with “Centro Studi Confronti” (another research centre), the researchers stated: “For the first time, after several years, the number of non-EU foreigners regularly residing in Italy: from 3,717,000 in the previous year to about 3,615,000 (a share substantially similar to that of 2011), for a decrease of 101,600 units (-2.7%) (IDOS et al, 2020)¹⁹⁵”. At the same time, while the number of non-EU citizens regularly residing in Italy decreased, the amount of irregular non-communitarian immigrants increased, as explained by the abovementioned report: “The strong decrease in 2019 is counterbalanced, rather, by a corresponding increase in the number of non-EU nationals who have slipped into irregularity: already estimated at 562,000 at the end of 2018, when the first “Decreto Sicurezza” (Security Decree) came into force, it was calculated that, as a result of this effect of the latter, would have grown by 120-140,000 in the following two years, reaching over 610,000 at the end of 2019 and almost 700,000 at the end of 2020, if in the meantime the regularization of last summer had not intervened, which collected a total of about 220,500 applications (IDOS et al, 2020)¹⁹⁶”. The following graph summarizes the trend described above.

¹⁹⁴ ISTAT, “Cittadini Non Comunitari in Italia.” *Istat.it*, 18 Feb. 2021, www.istat.it/it/archivio/249445. Accessed 4 May 2021.

¹⁹⁵ “Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2020.” *Dossierimmigrazione.it*, Dossier Immigrazione, www.dossierimmigrazione.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CS-irregolari-DOSS-2020-anticipazione-DEF-DEF-3.pdf. Accessed 11 May 2021.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibidem*.



The reason below to these aforementioned phenomena should be addressed to the “Decreto Sicurezza” (Security Decree), and its impact on international migration was depicted by the dossier with the following terms: “The abolition of permits for humanitarian reasons, established by the 2018 "security" decree, combined with both the policy of "closed ports" and rejections and the persistent lack, since 2011, of a programming of stable entries of foreign workers from abroad, has contributed on the one hand to the emptying of reception centers (whose guests fell from 183,800 in 2017 to 84,400 at the end of June 2020, for a net outflow of almost 100,000 migrants in just two and a half years) and on the other hand to a drastic drop in the recognition rate of the applications for protection submitted in Italy (from 32.2% in 2018 to just 19.7% in 2019, half the half of the European average) (IDOS et al, 2020)¹⁹⁸”.

The report well explained the consequences of this kind of policy: “It is well known how the state of irregularity exposes immigrants not only to be exploited as undeclared workers, and therefore deprived of rights, but also to be recruited by criminal organizations, who prefer to seek in the underground labour necessary for their illegal activities (IDOS et al, 2020)¹⁹⁹”.

In fact, during the pandemic, many European countries (and Italy as well) suffered a lot from the lack of foreign labour in the agricultural sector. In the first wave of the pandemic, irregular immigrants could not go to work in the camps, or they would have risked severe consequences. Breaching the laws enacted to counter COVID-19, illegal immigrants would be exposed to the risk of expulsions. Moreover, being unregistered migrants and forced to accept a black labour contract, the working conditions could expose the migrants to non-compliance with social distancing measures, hygiene regulations and the danger of contracting the virus. All these nuances could put in danger the protection of their human rights and their right to work.

Italy needs a lot of seasonal workers for the agricultural sector every year and the pandemic help the government to understand how much migrant workers are important in Italian economy. In fact, it is not by

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibidem.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibidem.*

chance if “migrant workers are now recognised as ‘essential’ workers, keeping their adoptive countries fed during the global economic shutdown” as released by Migration Data Portal²⁰⁰. Monica Andriescu dealt with this topic in her article for Migration Policy: “The temporary border closures and travel bans within the European Union have demonstrated immediate near-term effects. One of them is the inability to get the seasonal foreign workers necessary in agriculture, with fears in France, Germany, Italy, and elsewhere in recent weeks that crops will go unharvested (Andriescu, 2020)²⁰¹”. She added: “Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom (which exited the European Union on January 31 but remains bound by EU rules and rights including free movement during a transition period lasting through December 31) each need between 300,000 to 400,000 seasonal workers. Other Member States have also signalled challenges in gaining access to sufficient workers to harvest crops (Andriescu, 2020)²⁰²”.

For this reason, the Italian government ran for cover during the pandemic: it made a decree-law with an amnesty for the regularization of illegal migrants who works in the agricultural sector²⁰³ and which has been extended until July 31st 2021²⁰⁴. This entails a decrease of irregular migrants in the territory in 2020. In his article published by the Italian newspaper “Il Sole 24 Ore”, the journalist Andrea Carli cited the twenty-sixth edition of the Migration Report made by “Fondazione ISMU” (ISMU Foundation): “[...] “the migratory phenomenon in our country shows signs of a phase of relative stagnation. This trend is likely to be accentuated by the economic crisis that the post-pandemic will bring with it, slowing down arrivals and encouraging the mobility of foreigners and naturalized to other countries. In perspective - the document also states - a reduction in the number of immigrants is also expected with regard to the irregular component, which will be affected both by the effects of the amnesty during this year, and by the possible reduction of the driving force of a labor market that will almost certainly struggle to recover the positions, already not brilliant, of the pre-Covid era” (Carli, 2021)²⁰⁵”. The following chart compares the number of illegal migrants during the period 1991-2020.

²⁰⁰ Migration Data Portal. “5 Key Global Trends on COVID-19 and Migration.” *Migration Data Portal*, 2021, migrationdataportal.org/blog/5-key-global-trends-covid-19-and-migration. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²⁰¹ Andriescu, Monica. “Under Lockdown amid COVID-19 Pandemic, Europe Feels the Pinch from Slowed Intra-EU Labor Mobility.” *Migrationpolicy.org*, May 2020, www.migrationpolicy.org/article/covid19-europe-feels-pinch-slowed-intra-eu-labor-mobility. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²⁰² *Ibidem*.

²⁰³ Portale Immigrazione. “Sanatoria Stranieri 2020, La Regolarizzazione Nella Gazzetta Ufficiale.” *Portale Immigrazione*, 19 May 2020, portaleimmigrazione.eu/sanatoria-stranieri-2020-la-regolarizzazione-nella-gazzetta-ufficiale/. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²⁰⁴ Gli Stranieri. “Decreto Flussi 2021 Da Emanare Quanto Prima.” *Gli Stranieri*, May 2021, www.glistranieri.it/decreto-flussi-2021-da-emanare-quanto-prima/. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²⁰⁵ Carli, Andrea. “Migranti, Nel 2020 Del Coronavirus Gli Sbarchi Sono Tornati Ad Aumentare.” *Il Sole 24 ORE*, Il Sole 24 ORE, 23 Feb. 2021, www.ilsole24ore.com/art/migranti-2020-coronavirus-sbarchi-tornano-ad-aumentare-ADlyZSLB. Accessed 11 May 2021.

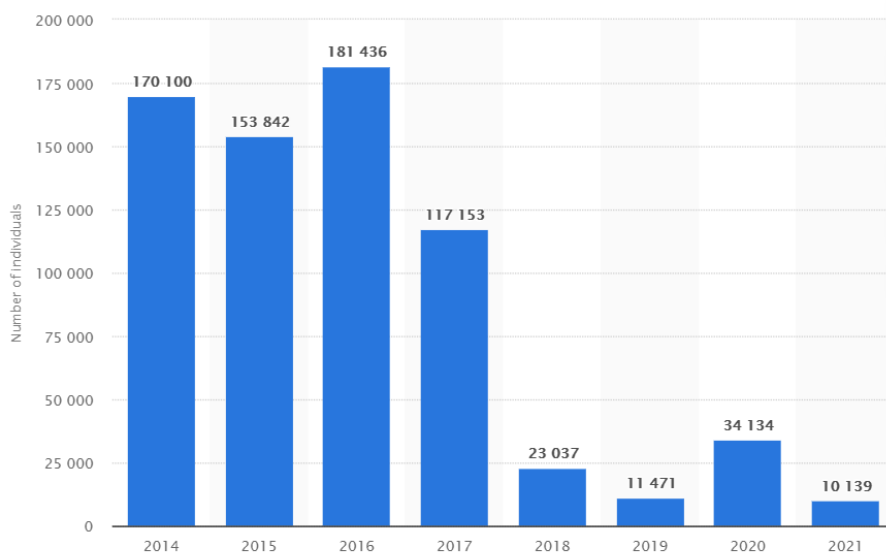
LA STIMA DELLE PRESENZE IRREGOLARI

(Fonte:XXVI Rapporto Ismu)



206

While irregular presences declined in 2020, migrant sea arrivals increased significantly in the past year (up 149%) (ANSA, 2020)²⁰⁷. Illegal migration by sea has always been a sensitive issue for Italy because of its location on the Mediterranean Sea and the inability of the State to deal with the question of landings alone. According to the latest statistics furnished by Statista, in 2020 34,134 migrants arrived by sea. Comparing this figure to that of 2019, its growth of over 20 thousand units is glaringly evident. In the chart below it is possible to see the trend from 2014 through 2021.



208

²⁰⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁰⁷ ANSA. "Migrant Sea Arrivals in Italy up 149%." *InfoMigrants*, Infomigrants, 18 Aug. 2020, www.infomigrants.net/en/post/26686/migrant-sea-arrivals-in-italy-up-149. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²⁰⁸ Varrella, Simona. "Italy: Immigrants' Arrivals in Italy 2014-2021 | Statista." *Statista*, Statista, 2014, www.statista.com/statistics/623514/migrant-arrivals-to-italy/. Accessed 11 May 2021.

According to ANSA: “The majority of migrants departed from Tunisia (8,984) and Libya (8,746). The largest national groups were citizens of Tunisia (34.3%) and Bangladesh (11.9%) (ANSA, 2021)²⁰⁹”. The route from Tunisia to Italy is considered safer than the Libyan one and therefore it was used more by migrants in the last years (Senatore, 2020)²¹⁰.

Once again, the reason for this increase relies on the movement restrictions. The Deputy Director and Senior Fellow, Project on Prosperity and Development of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Erol Yayboke explained what is happening in Italy: “Already at risk of COVID-19, the forcibly displaced — refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons — and other forced migrants are also faced with diminished institutional capacity offering them support. In Italy, this means that recently arriving asylum seekers face mandatory two-week quarantines and vastly fewer or no integration services even after the 14 days due to mandatory country-wide restrictions on workers going to work. If forced migrants — such as those coming to Italy via Libya — are seen as bringing COVID-19 with them, public opinion from Sicily to Sweden will undoubtedly harden in ways that will not soon go away (Yayboke, 2020)²¹¹”. In addition, he underlined that it is a global phenomenon: “Global migration goes increasingly into the shadows. There is growing evidence that limits on safe, orderly, and regular migration push vulnerable people — as many as 100 million globally — into shadowy irregular pathways. As I wrote recently, “[irregular] migration exists because there are not enough opportunities for safety and prosperity at home and too few regular means through which to remedy that lack of opportunities.” COVID-19 means that there are fewer regular means for migration than there were a couple of months ago. When combined, the economic, inequality, political, and displacement-related implications discussed above will only increase desperation at a time when fewer migration pathways exist. In such a scenario, those feeling compelled to move will do so increasingly using smugglers, traffickers, and other illicit groups. Migration will be increasing in and among developing countries with weaker health systems and rule of law. Irregular migrants will travel in close quarters with other people. They will cross international boundaries without documentation or health checks. In the age of COVID-19, they will also put themselves, their fellow travellers, and anyone in their extended path at grave risk (Yayboke, 2020)²¹²”.

In conclusion, COVID-19 has changed the migration inflows and outflows in Italy during the pandemic. This has a lot of pros and cons. On the one hand, the pandemic has increased globalization and has created new opportunities, making workplaces more “liquid” (no matter where people are, it is enough to carry out their duties). On the other hand, it enhanced the inequalities among foreigners and Italians in

²⁰⁹ ANSA. “Migrant Sea Arrivals in Italy up 149%.” *InfoMigrants*, Infomigrants, 18 Aug. 2020, www.infomigrants.net/en/post/26686/migrant-sea-arrivals-in-italy-up-149. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²¹⁰ Senatore, Bianca. “Nuove Rotte | Gli Sbarchi Dei Migranti Sono Ripresi, Ma Adesso Partono Anche Dalla Tunisia - Linkiesta.it.” *Linkiesta.it*, Linkiesta, 27 May 2020, www.linkiesta.it/2020/05/immigrazione-nuovi-migranti-sbarchi-tunisia-sardegna-libia/. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²¹¹ Yayboke, Erol. “Five Ways COVID-19 Is Changing Global Migration.” *Csis.org*, 2020, www.csis.org/analysis/five-ways-covid-19-changing-global-migration. Accessed 11 May 2021.

²¹² *Ibidem*.

Italy, but it is a global tendency, according to Erol Yayboke²¹³. Probably, the effects and the tendencies generated by the virus will last in the life “after COVID-19”, especially after the consecration of remote work. Other trends should be changed to reach a new sustainable way. But it will be dealt with in the following chapter more specifically when the research will focus its attention on the analysis of the migration tendencies in the United States.

²¹³ *Ibidem.*

Third chapter: How does the United States react to the pandemic and what are the migration consequences?

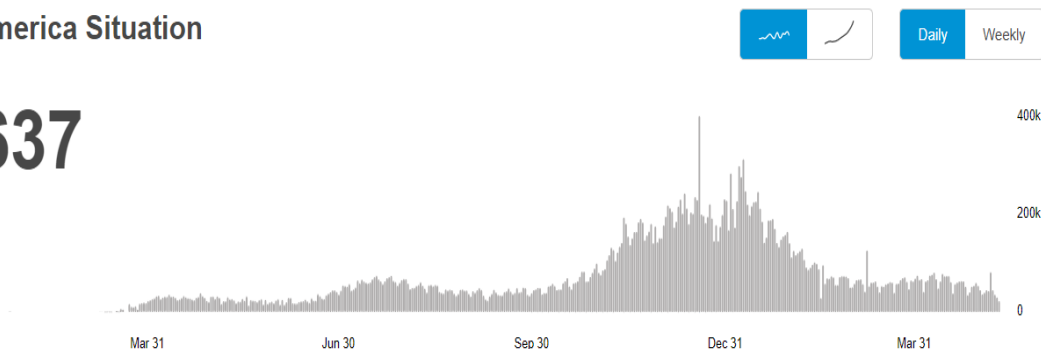
3.1: General overview of United States during the pandemic

The United States is another country that is particularly affected by COVID-19. According to the data furnished by the World Health Organization (WHO), an agency of the United Nations, until May 12th the United States has a total of 32,424,637 contagions and 576,814 lost their lives struggling with this disease²¹⁴. In the following charts, it would be possible to see the trend of the pandemic.

United States of America Situation

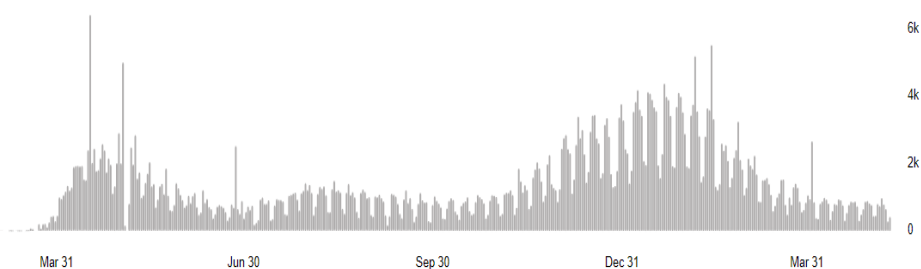
32,424,637

confirmed cases



576,814

deaths



Source: World Health Organization

Despite the huge number of infections and deaths, these are not uniformly distributed in the territory. In fact, there are some federal States which are more affected than others. The article made by Mitch Smith, Amy Harmon, Lucy Tompkins and Thomas Fuller and published in New York Times last November analysed what cities have been more impacted by the pandemic. The analysis has concluded the following results:

- 1) Minot, North Dakota, is “the metro-area with the most recent cases per capita” (at that time) (Smith et al, 2020)²¹⁷.

²¹⁴ “United States of America: WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard with Vaccination Data.” *Who.int*, 2020, covid19.who.int/region/amro/country/us. Accessed 13 May 2021.

²¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

²¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

²¹⁷ Smith, Mitch; Harmon, Amy; Tompkins, Lucy and Fuller, Thomas. “What Places Are Hardest Hit by the Coronavirus? It Depends on the Measure.” *The New York Times*, 2021, www.nytimes.com/2020/11/12/us/coronavirus-crisis-united-

- 2) Sioux City, Iowa, is “the metro area that may have faced the most prolonged suffering” (Smith et al, 2020)²¹⁸.
- 3) New York City, New York, is “the big city with the highest death toll” (Smith et al, 2020)²¹⁹.
- 4) Los Angeles County, California, is “the county with the most known cases since the start of the pandemic” (Smith et al, 2020)²²⁰.
- 5) The biggest known cluster was in a prison in California as well, called “Avenal State Prison” (Smith et al, 2020)²²¹.

The authors of the aforementioned article supported the thesis which these scores depended on the social distancing measures implemented by each federal States²²². In fact, Sara H. Gordon, Nicole Huberfeld and David K. Jones outlined US decision-making structure during the pandemic in their academic paper “What Federalism Means for the US Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019”: “The rapid spread of novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) across the United States has been met with a decentralized and piecemeal response led primarily by governors, mayors, and local health departments. This disjointed response is no accident. Federalism, or the division of power between a national government and states, is a fundamental feature of US public health authority. In this pandemic, US public health federalism assures that the coronavirus response depends on zip code. A global pandemic has no respect for geographic boundaries, laying bare the weaknesses of federalism in the face of a crisis (Gordon et al, 2020)²²³”. Regarding the central government actions, the authors claimed: “While the Trump administration’s coronavirus response has aggravated the pandemic with uneven assistance to states, funding and supply delays, inconsistent messaging, and insufficient testing, the federal government is limited in its ability to mandate a centralized course of action. This is by design; the COVID-19 response is divided among more than 2000 state, local, and tribal public health departments. The Department of Health and Human Services, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have limited authority to direct local officials to take united action. When asked about eastern and western states’ coordinated response to the pandemic, President Trump asserted that the authority of the president is “total...[States] can’t do anything without the approval of the president of the United States.” This is not accurate. The power of quarantine rests primarily with state and local authorities, with substantial variation among jurisdictions (Gordon et al, 2020)²²⁴”. The lack of uniformity of laws to counter the spread of the virus in the United States

states.html?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20201112&instance_id=24035&nl=the-morning@i_id=120250509&segment_id=44293&te=1&user_id=d5e3d153cc6119ca701090fc12b435a3. Accessed 13 May 2021.

²¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

²¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²²¹ *Ibidem*.

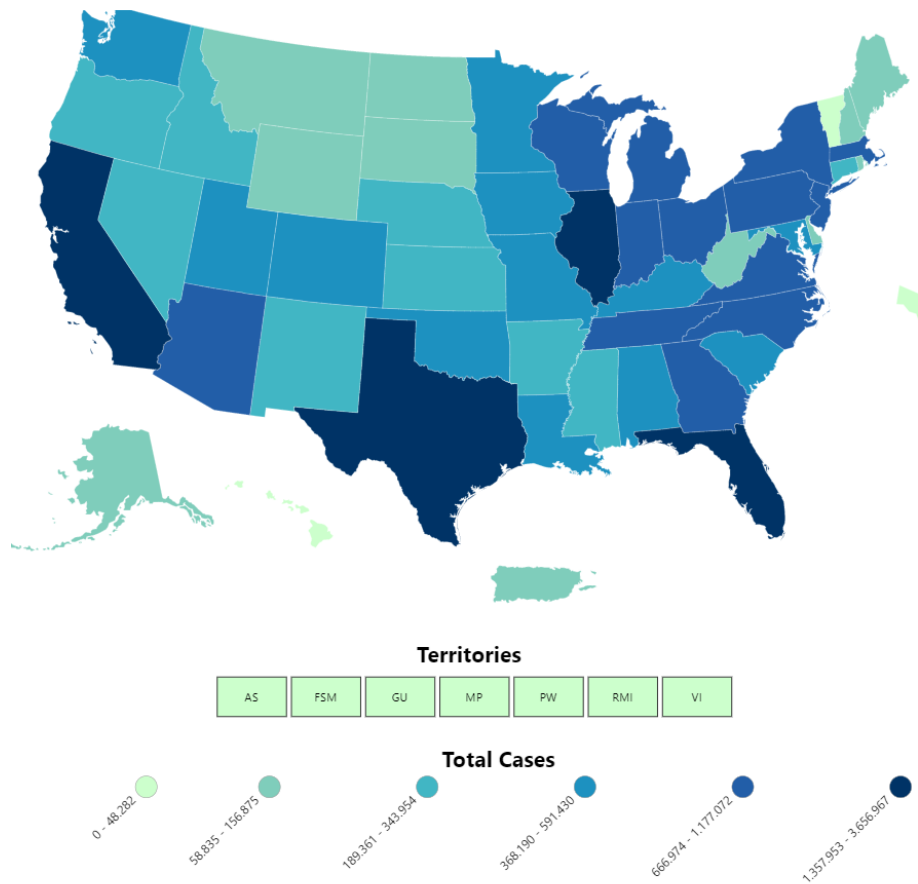
²²² *Ibidem*.

²²³ Gordon, Sarah H., et al. “What Federalism Means for the US Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019.” *JAMA Health Forum*, vol. 1, no. 5, 8 May 2020, p. e200510, jamanetwork.com/journals/jama-health-forum/fullarticle/2766033, 10.1001/jamahealthforum.2020.0510. Accessed 13 May 2021.

²²⁴ *Ibidem*.

has thwarted the efforts of some federal states that had implemented more stringent policies than others, as explained by the same authors: “Once the federal government declares a national emergency, state disaster declarations trigger specific, short-term powers, such as stay-at-home orders, and enable the drawdown of federal funding. Resulting state variations have implications reaching beyond infection rates. Lax stay-at-home orders in one area may foil much stricter measures in a neighboring region. For example, Salt Lake City, Utah, mayor Erin Mendenhall issued a stay-at-home order weeks before Utah governor Gary Herbert issued a milder statewide decree, delaying prevention efforts in the state’s most populous city. These differences are even starker in states where residents cross borders for health care, such as New Hampshire and Massachusetts (Gordon et al, 2020)²²⁵”. This explains the reason why COVID-19 affects differently the federated States. The charts below indicate the total number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the US reported to the Center for Disease, Control and Prevention (CDC) by States.

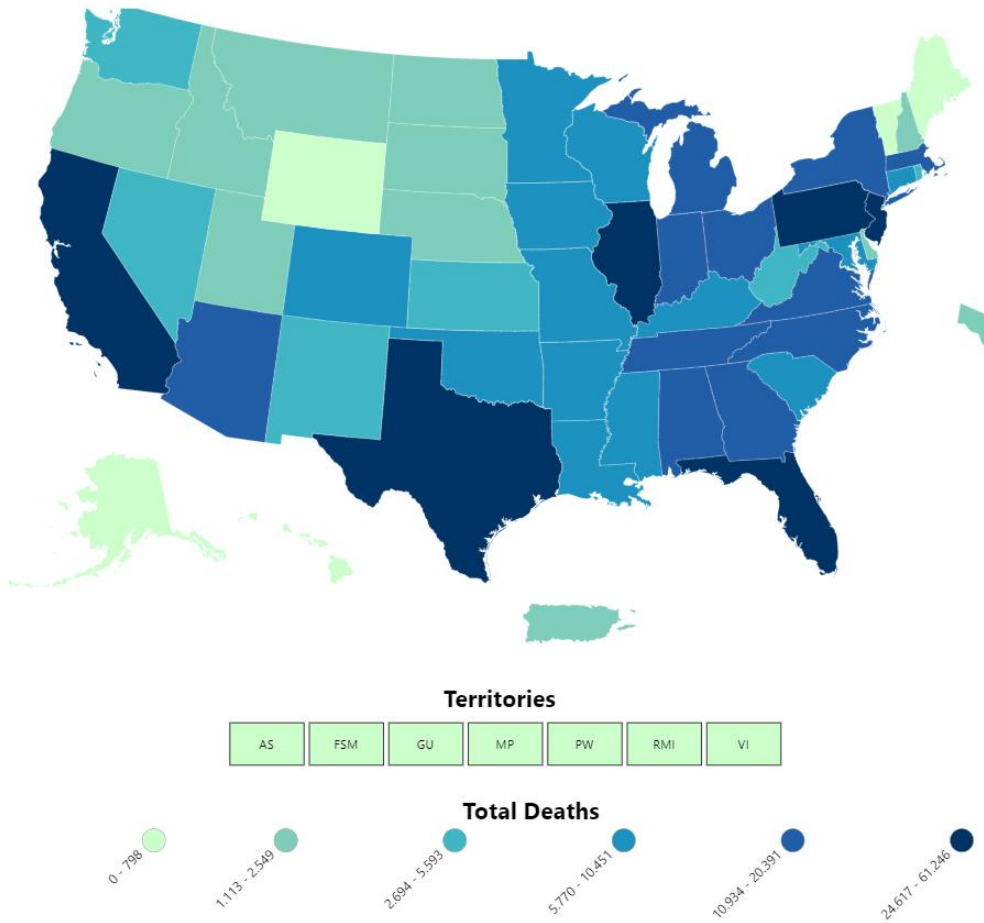
Total Number of COVID-19 Cases in the US Reported to the CDC, by State/Territory



²²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²²⁶ CDC. “COVID Data Tracker.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 28 Mar. 2020, covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesinlast7days. Accessed 13 May 2021.

Total Number of COVID-19 Deaths in the US Reported to the CDC, by State/Territory

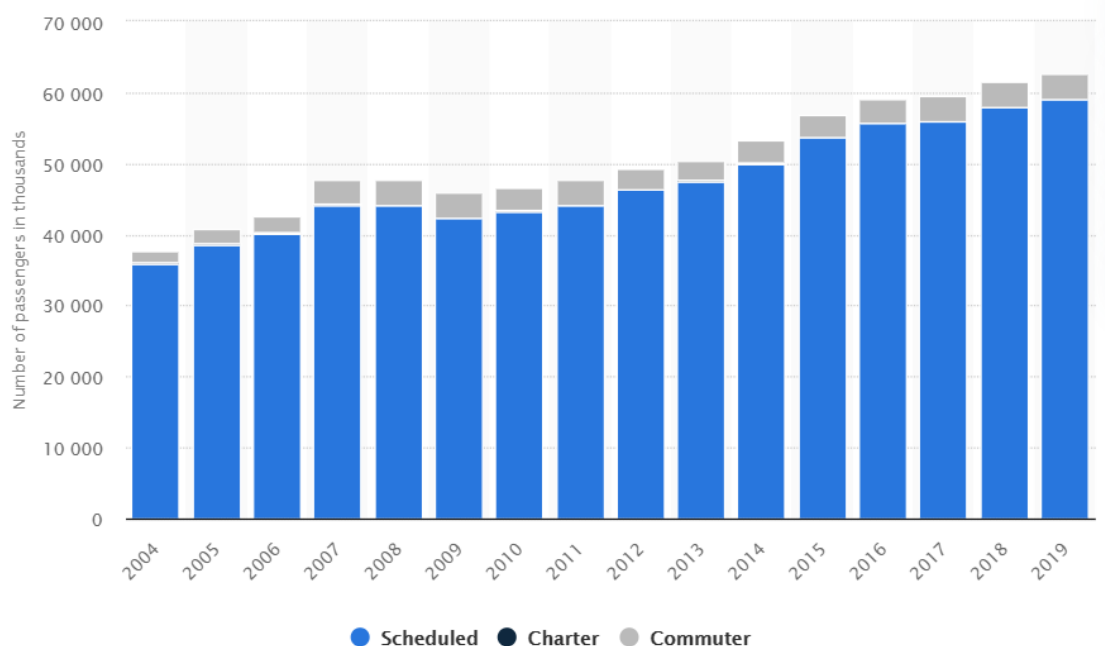


227

Another reason why the U.S. has been hit so hard is its role in the globalized world. It is not accidental that the State of New York became the first “hotspot” of the country since it is considered as the point of reference in the travelling between Europe and the United States. The mayor of New York City, Bill De Blasio, declared on March 22nd: “We are now in New York City the epicenter of this crisis in the United States of America, [...] I am not happy to tell you that. You’re not happy to hear it (De Blasio, 2020)²²⁸”. Its strategic position contributed to the spread of the virus in all the country. Its main airport, called “New York John F. Kennedy airport” (JFK airport) is one of the busiest in the world. In the following graph, it is possible to note the growth of the number of passenger traffic in this airport from 2004 to 2019 (before COVID-19).

²²⁷ CDC. “COVID Data Tracker.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 28 Mar. 2020, covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_totaldeaths. Accessed 13 May 2021.

²²⁸ Armstrong, Drew, et al. “Why New York Suffered When Other Cities Were Spared by Covid-19.” *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 28 May 2020, www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-05-28/why-was-new-york-hit-so-badly-with-covid-19. Accessed 15 May 2021.



Despite the previous president of the U.S., Donald Trump suspended flights from China, he did not do the same with Europe²³⁰. For this reason, when the first case appeared in Washington State (and then in all the United States) on January 21st, 2020²³¹, on January 31st, Trump stopped flights from China²³². In the article written by Drew Armstrong, Henry Goldman and Keshia Clukey and published by Bloomberg, the contributors claimed: “In the week ended March 13, 274,000 people arrived at New York-area airports from Europe, and another 174,000 came from the U.K. and Ireland, according to U. S. Customs and Border Protection’s New York field office (Armstrong et al, 2020)²³³”. Also, they reported the point of view of the New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who veiled criticism of the work of the federal government: ““We closed the front door with the China ban, which was right,” New York Governor Andrew Cuomo said on April 24. “But we left the back door open.” (Armstrong et al, 2020)²³⁴”. The ‘back door open’ mentioned by Governor Cuomo referred to Europe. Notwithstanding, Joe Penney’s article published on “The Intercept” analysed the origin of the outbreaks in each federated States. According to the following table, most of the

²²⁹ Mazareanu, E. “New York JFK Airport: Passenger Traffic 2019 | Statista.” *Statista*, Statista, 2019, www.statista.com/statistics/962767/passenger-traffic-new-york-john-f-kennedy-type/. Accessed 13 May 2021.

²³⁰ Armstrong, Drew, et al. “Why New York Suffered When Other Cities Were Spared by Covid-19.” *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 28 May 2020, www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-05-28/why-was-new-york-hit-so-badly-with-covid-19. Accessed 13 May 2021.

²³¹ AJMC Staff. “A Timeline of COVID-19 Developments in 2020.” *AJMC*, 2020, www.ajmc.com/view/a-timeline-of-covid19-developments-in-2020. Accessed 15 May 2021.

²³² Geoff Whitmore. “When Did President Trump Ban Travel from China? And Can You Travel to China Now?” *Forbes*, 15 Dec. 2020, www.forbes.com/sites/geoffwhitmore/2020/10/19/when-did-president-trump-ban-travel-from-china-and-can-you-travel-to-china-now/?sh=4dc446677484. Accessed 15 May 2021.

²³³ Armstrong, Drew, et al. “Why New York Suffered When Other Cities Were Spared by Covid-19.” *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 28 May 2020, www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-05-28/why-was-new-york-hit-so-badly-with-covid-19. Accessed 13 May 2021.

²³⁴ *Ibidem*.

contagions were imported from Italy (10 States) as explained in the following abstract: “For instance, Missouri’s first case was a young woman who studied abroad in Italy, while a high school trip to Milan was behind Rhode Island’s index case. Travelers from Italy brought it to Florida, Georgia, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Hampshire, and South Carolina. Italian tourists brought Covid-19 to Puerto Rico, and a Navy reservist stationed in Italy brought it to Maine (Penney, 2020)²³⁵”.

Total	
China	5
Cruise ships	6
Italy	10
Other Europe	3
Total Europe	13

236

Moreover, the journalist added the dynamic of the spreading: “From February 1st to when flight restrictions went into effect on the Schengen zone (the 26 European states without internal border checks) and Britain and Ireland, on March 14 and March 17 respectively, more than 10,000 direct flights from Europe had arrived in 12 major American airports, according to data from tracking agency FlightAware. Though this number includes some cargo flights, their proportion to passenger flights is very low. Occupancy data from Air France/KLM shows that those flights might have carried an estimated 1,000,000 people into the country. In the six weeks prior to the European travel bans, the U.S. was exposed to a massive amount of travellers from a highly infected region. During that time, there were almost no checks in international airports for passengers coming from Europe, as American authorities focused their screening efforts on China travellers. The China travel restrictions were mostly cosmetic anyway — the Chinese government banned flights from the Hubei region on January 23 and was sharply reducing its cases through harsh lockdowns and quarantines (Penney, 2020)²³⁷”.

So, international migration (including tourists, migrant workers, irregular migrants and so on) and globalization, in general, had a key role in the diffusion of the virus in the whole country. However, another great change represented 2020 for America, because of the general election, held on November 3rd, 2020²³⁸. American elections saw Trump’s defeat and the victory of Biden. It is possible to see below the map with the 2020 electoral outcome and how the States were divided between the two political alignments.

²³⁵ Penney, Joe. “U.S. Got More Confirmed ‘Index Cases’ of Coronavirus from Europe than from China.” *The Intercept*, 12 Apr. 2020, theintercept.com/2020/04/12/u-s-got-more-confirmed-index-cases-of-coronavirus-from-europe-than-from-china/. Accessed 15 May 2021.

²³⁶ *Ibidem*.

²³⁷ *Ibidem*.

²³⁸ “Presidential Election Process | USA.gov.” *Usa.gov*, 2020, www.usa.gov/election. Accessed 15 May 2021.



306 BIDEN ✓

270 to Win

TRUMP 232

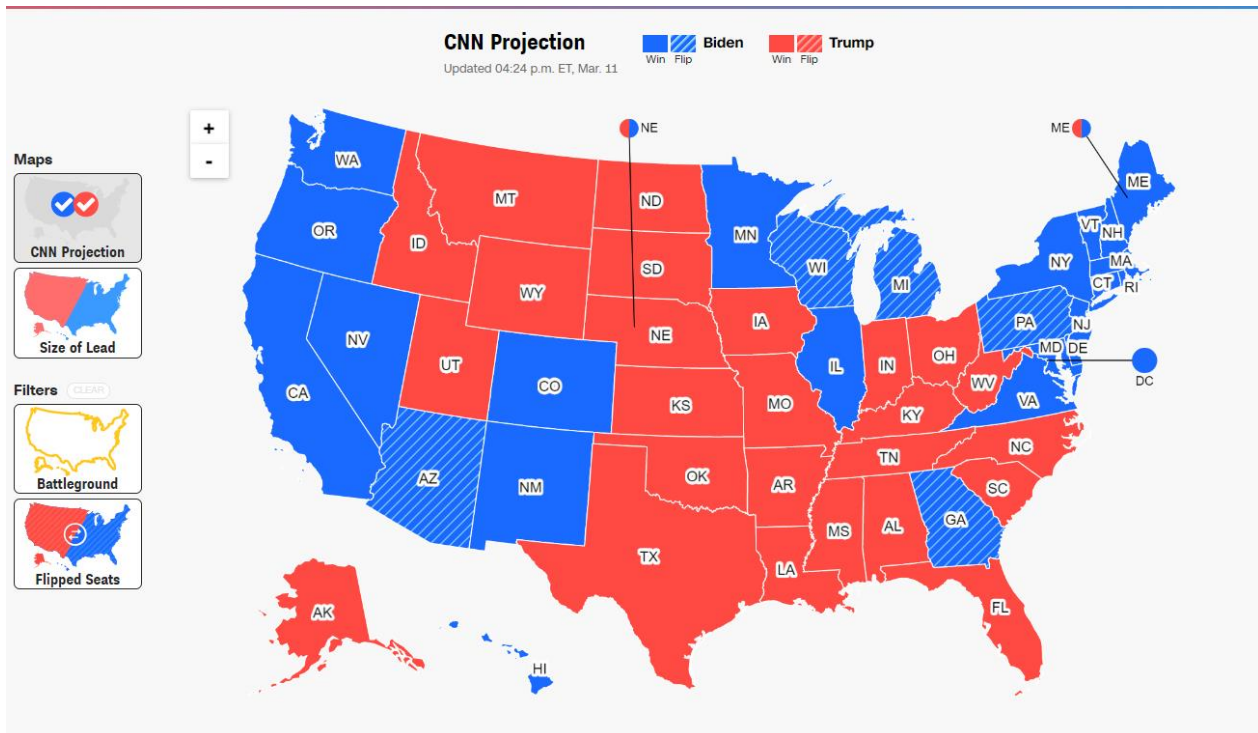


51.3% 81,283,786

What is this?

74,222,552 46.8%

239



240

This generated a wave of protests at Capitol Hill on January 6th, 2021. Thousands of Trump supporters forcibly entered the building to show their opposition to the installation of the new government (Peñaloza, 2021)²⁴¹. The presidential election brought about a change of pace not only in the management of the pandemic but also in migration patterns. Regarding the first matter, a good comparison was made by Austin Landis, who wrote the article “Pandemic Presidencies: How Donald Trump and Joe Biden Navigated a Year of COVID-19”, in which he supported the thesis that the changes made by Biden are significant in four main fields: communication and transparency, masks issue, a collaboration between federal government and States, and vaccination²⁴². He reported the affirmations of Doctor Amesh Adalja: ““The biggest difference is the tone,” said Doctor Amesh Adalja, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security and an infectious disease physician. “Having the appropriate tone and honesty and transparency is

²³⁹ “Presidential Election Results and Electoral Map 2020.” *Cnn.com*, 2020, edition.cnn.com/election/2020/results/president. Accessed 15 May 2021.

²⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

²⁴¹ Peñaloza, Marisa. “Trump Supporters Storm U.S. Capitol, Clash with Police.” *NPR.org*, 6 Jan. 2021, www.npr.org/sections/congress-electoral-college-tally-live-updates/2021/01/06/953616207/diehard-trump-supporters-gather-in-the-nations-capital-to-protest-election-resul. Accessed 15 May 2021.

²⁴² Landis, Austin. “Pandemic Presidencies: How Donald Trump and Joe Biden Navigated a Year of COVID-19.” *Spectrumlocalnews.com*, Spectrum News Central NY, 9 Mar. 2021, spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/buffalo/news/2021/03/09/pandemic-presidencies-how-donald-trump-and-joe-biden-navigated-a-year-of-covid. Accessed 15 May 2021.

really, really helpful, because it does trickle all the way down from the top.” (Landis, 2021)²⁴³”. Trump’s communication failed to be clear during his presidency, saying things that are often at odds with each other. For instance, Landis stated: “President Trump also admitted relatively early on, on March 16, 2020, that the virus was “bad” because it was so contagious, but a few weeks later – and frequently throughout the pandemic – he changed his tune, saying he’d like to have Americans working again by early April (Landis, 2021)²⁴⁴”. While for the same author “The Biden administration has signalled a stark shift in its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, particularly when it comes to areas like transparency and boosting vaccine supply (Landis, 2021)²⁴⁵”.

Another difference between the two administrations relies on the usage of the masks and their bindingness. The journalist compared both leaders and outlined the following pieces of evidence: “Despite increasing evidence that masks slowed the virus’s spread, President Trump often flouted the practice, once explaining that he didn’t want to wear one on camera. Biden, on the other hand, has challenged all Americans to wear face coverings for his first 100 days in an effort to save more lives. He’s required masks on all federal property, including the White House, and has made good on that requirement by wearing one himself at nearly all times, except when distanced and speaking in an official capacity (Landis, 2021)²⁴⁶”.

Moreover, a great change of pace occurred in the coordination between the federal government and States. This difference is greatly summarized in the following tense: “Under President Trump, state and local officials were largely in charge of their own COVID-19 response – from the vaccine rollout to mask-wearing to school reopenings – while the Biden administration has aimed toward greater collaboration (Landis, 2021)²⁴⁷”.

Finally, from Biden’s settlement, the vaccination process was boosted, reaching the target of 2 million inoculated doses per day, while Trump reached less than 900,000 shots per day at the end of its administration²⁴⁸. At the same time, from the approval of the first vaccine (which was the Pfizer-BioNTech CoVID-19 Vaccine and happened on December 11th, 2020²⁴⁹) made by the “Food and Drugs Administration” (FDA), which is “responsible for protecting the public health by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, and medical devices; and by ensuring the safety of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation”²⁵⁰, Trump had little time to implement a

²⁴³ *Ibidem*.

²⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

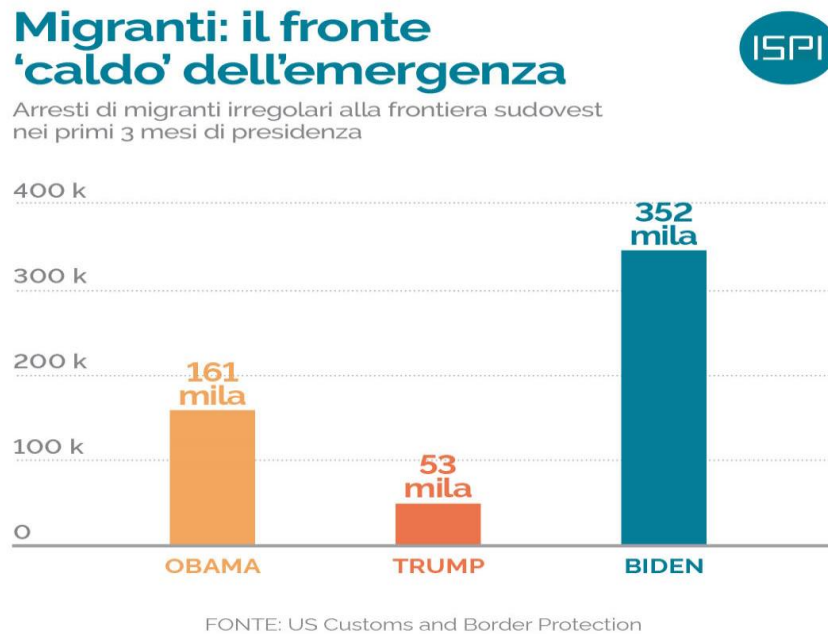
²⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁴⁹ Office of the Commissioner. “Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine.” *U.S. Food and Drug Administration*, 2021, www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine. Accessed 16 May 2021.

²⁵⁰ Office of the Commissioner. “What We Do.” *U.S. Food and Drug Administration*, 2018, www.fda.gov/about-fda/what-we-do. Accessed 16 May 2021.

strategy to speed up the vaccination campaign. That little, however, was enough to get to nearly a million doses as mentioned above.

Concerning migration patterns, also there the situation changed significantly. In fact, looking at the chart below it is notably the increment of the irregular migrants who accessed the country through the South-western border from the moment when Biden took office.



251

On the subject of migration, the policies implemented by Trump and Biden could not be more divergent from each other. The previous President carried out a very aggressive policy in order to reduce the number of immigrants in the country and it is testified by the article of Stuart Anderson published on Forbes: “By 2021, Donald Trump will have reduced legal immigration by 49% since becoming president – without any change in U.S. immigration law, according to a National Foundation for American Policy analysis. An April presidential proclamation blocked the entry of legal immigrants to the United States in almost all categories. Reducing legal immigration most harms refugees, employers and Americans who want to live with their spouses, parents or children, but it also affects the country’s future labor force and economic growth: “Average annual labor force growth, a key component of the nation’s economic growth, will be approximately 59% lower as a result of the administration’s immigration policies, if the policies continue,” according to the National Foundation for American Policy (Anderson, 2021)²⁵²”. The following graph

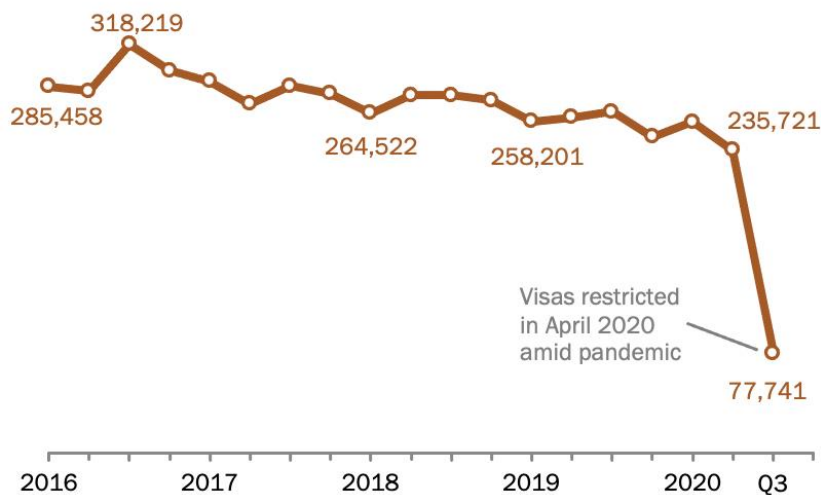
²⁵¹ Redazione ISPI. “Migranti, Il Fronte Caldo Dell'emergenza Negli USA.” *ISPI*, 30 Apr. 2021, www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/migranti-il-fronte-caldo-dellemergenza-negli-usa-30283. Accessed 16 May 2021.

²⁵² Anderson, Stuart. “A Review of Trump Immigration Policy.” *Forbes*, 26 Aug. 2020, www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2020/08/26/fact-check-and-review-of-trump-immigration-policy/?sh=539c267156c0. Accessed 16 May 2021.

described the curve trend of the number of people who received a U.S. green card during Trump’s administration.

The number of people who received a U.S. green card declined sharply in fiscal 2020 amid the pandemic

New U.S. lawful permanent residents *per quarter*, fiscal 2016-2020



Note: Quarterly data for fiscal year 2020 is through the third quarter, April to June 2020.
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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253

By contrast, Biden is trying to reverse this tendency. The nonpartisan fact tank Pew Research Center and the researchers Jens Manuel Krogstad and Ana Gonzalez-Barrera stated in an article: “The Biden administration is acting on a number of fronts to reverse Trump-era restrictions on immigration to the United States. The steps include plans to boost refugee admissions, preserving deportation relief for unauthorized immigrants who came to the U.S. as children and not enforcing the “public charge” rule that denies green cards to immigrants who might use public benefits like Medicaid (Krogstad and Gonzalez-Barrera, 2021)²⁵⁴”.

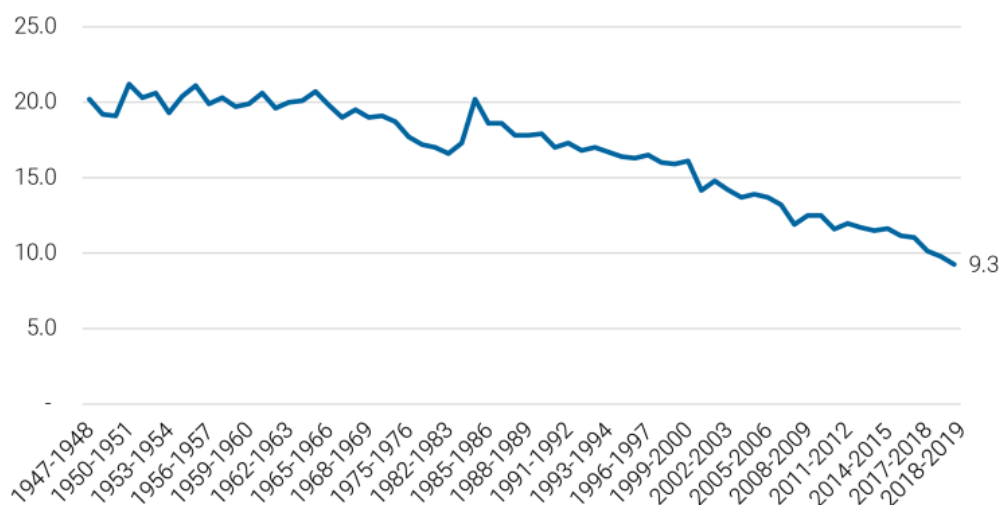
Notwithstanding Trump’s immigrational policies and the pandemic, which helped in the decline of immigration in the U.S., migration trend was decreasing also before the pandemic, according to William H. Frey, Senior Fellow of Brookings Institution (which is a non-profit public policy organization based in Washington D.C.). From his perspective, the author explained: “In the year before COVID-19 swept the country, a smaller share of Americans changed residence than in any year since 1947, when the Census Bureau first started collecting annual migration statistics. This migration decline occurred during an upswing in the economy, when young adult millennials were beginning to get back on their feet after the Great Recession of 2007 to 2009. While no comparable migration statistics are available for the 10 months since

²⁵³ Jens Manuel Krogstad, and Ana Gonzalez-Barrera. “Key Facts about U.S. Immigration Policies and Biden’s Proposed Changes.” *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 22 Mar. 2021, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/03/22/key-facts-about-u-s-immigration-policies-and-bidens-proposed-changes/. Accessed 16 May 2021.

²⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

the pandemic occurred, there now appears to be a new mix of migration patterns across different parts of the country, as evidenced by real estate, moving, and survey data suggesting selective migration upticks and downticks due to both safety and economic concerns. Still, newly released pre-pandemic census statistics show a continuation of the decades-long migration decline, bringing the percentage of Americans who changed residence to a post-World War II low of 9.3%. This one-year rate — between March 2019 and March 2020 — occurred on the heels of a year when the nation’s total population growth fell to a 100-year low, with a continued downturn in the nation’s foreign-born population gains. Thus, even before the pandemic, the nation was in the throes of stagnating demographic dynamics (Frey, 2020)²⁵⁵”. It is possible to see the trend in the graph below.

Figure 1. US annual migration rates, 1947-2020



Source: William H. Frey analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Surveys.

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256

The author explained the reason which is the basis of this decrease: “U.S. migration trends show a fairly consistent decline since the late 1940s to 1960s, when approximately one-fifth of Americans changed residence annually. This was a period of economic growth and robust housing consumption, with a younger population than today. Afterwards began a gradual but sustained downturn in migration due to a variety of demographic and economic forces, including the rise of dual-earner households (making them less footloose), an aging population, and more homogenous labor markets emerging across the country (Frey, 2020)²⁵⁷”. Moreover, the economic performances were not so brilliant at the end of the 2000s, because of the economic crisis in 2009. Then, the slow recovery from the economic crisis and the policies introduced by Trump has led to this drastic drop of the last years, as a “coup de grace”.

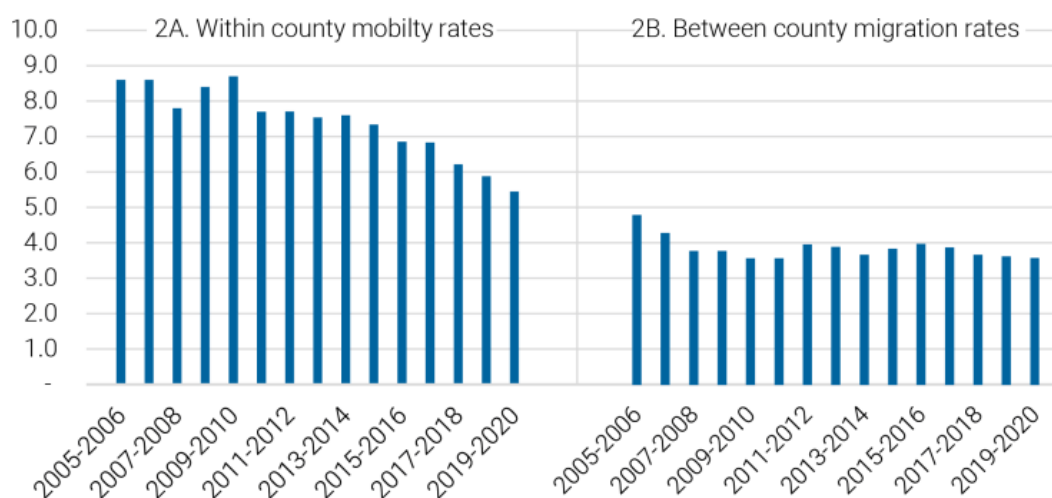
²⁵⁵ Frey, William H. “Just before COVID-19, American Migration Hit a 73-Year Low.” *Brookings*, Brookings, 15 Dec. 2020, www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/12/15/just-before-covid-19-american-migration-hit-a-73-year-low/. Accessed 17 May 2021.

²⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

Similarly, the same decline is visible for the mobility within the country, as outlined by Frey: “It is important to note that while both local moves (those within counties) and longer-distance moves (those across counties) have declined since the immediate post-war decades, their downturn has become more sustained since the recession and post-recession period. [...] local mobility hovered in the 8% to 9% range between 2005 and 2010. Since then, local mobility has plummeted to 5.4%. Because local moves comprise three-fifths of all moves, their consistent downward trend drove the overall pattern. Since 2007 (the first year of the Great Recession), cross-county movement has hovered between 3.5% to 3.7%. [...] Prior to this, cross-county mobility levels were 4% or higher— including rates in the 5% to 6% range in the 1990s (Frey, 2020)²⁵⁸”. The following graphs describe the two tendencies cited above by the author.

Figure 2. US migration by type, 2005-2020



Source: William H. Frey analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Surveys.

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259

But while the international migration in the U.S. is falling also during the pandemic, internal one has seen a rise. Some federated States have benefited from this reshaping of internal migration, while others have suffered an outflow of people. In the following paragraph, the research will deepen this argument.

3.2: Internal migration and emigration in the U.S. during the pandemic

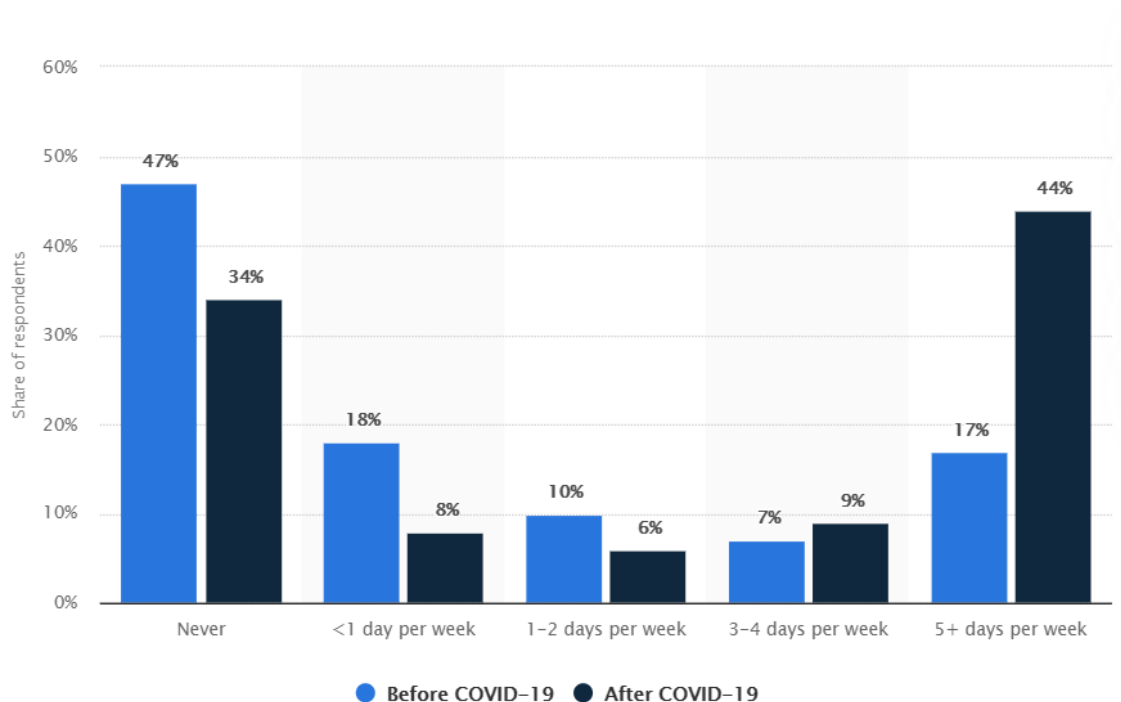
As well as in Italy, United States has seen substantial growth in the use of smart working from the beginning of the pandemic. The difference between the two countries relied on how often it was used before COVID-19. In Italy only 4,8% of the workers could work in smart working before the outbreak, shooting up to almost 40% during that period according to “Assolombarda”²⁶⁰, an association located in Northern Italy, which is part of Confindustria, which is the “main association representing manufacturing and service

²⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁵⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁶⁰ Area Centro Studi. “Lo Smart-Working in Numeri 2021.” *Assolombarda*, Apr. 2021, pp. 10–14., www.assolombarda.it/centro-studi/smart-working-2021.

companies in Italy”²⁶¹. Meanwhile in the U.S. 52% of people had already experienced remote working before the pandemic²⁶². Below it is possible to look at the graph which compares the recourse to smart working before and during the virus and how the situation is changed for this.



263

Now the number of people who have the possibility to work remotely rose to 67%, with a growth of 15% of workers who are encouraged to carry on their duty from home. This could encourage people to move within the country, making internal travels and settling in places different than they were used to live. At the same time, it seems that the majority of Americans are more willing to change the county rather than the federated States, according to the researcher Laura Short²⁶⁴. But there is a fundamental division among scholars: those who support the idea of an increase of movements during the pandemic and others who do not agree with this point of view.

During the pandemic, the internal migration was concentrated in the Southern and Western part of the country according to the reporter Elliott Davis²⁶⁵. It was also underlined by the abovementioned research written by Laura Short, who stated: “In general, the states in the Northeast and Midwest are seeing a net negative internal migration rate. More people are leaving these states than are entering these states (Short,

²⁶¹ “About Us.” *Confindustria.it*, 2021, www.confindustria.it/en. Accessed 18 May 2021.

²⁶² Miltz, Kimberly. “Remote Work Frequency Before/after COVID-19 2020 | Statista.” *Statista*, Statista, 2020, www.statista.com/statistics/1122987/change-in-remote-work-trends-after-covid-in-usa/. Accessed 18 May 2021.

²⁶³ *Ibidem*.

²⁶⁴ Short, Laura. “How Internal Migration Is Shaping the U.S. Population - Population Education.” *Population Education*, 4 Oct. 2019, populationeducation.org/how-internal-migration-is-shaping-the-us-population/. Accessed 18 May 2021.

²⁶⁵ Davis, Elliott. “Study: Americans Moved West, South in 2020.” *US News & World Report*, U.S. News & World Report, 2020, www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/2021-01-04/americans-moved-west-and-south-in-2020-amid-coronavirus-pandemic-study-finds. Accessed 18 May 2021.

2019)²⁶⁶”. There are different reasons which could explain this phenomenon and some of them are listed in: “Sun belt states in the southern U.S., in general, are seeing a net influx from internal migration. Some of the country’s largest cities are also seeing a net negative internal migration rate. Places like New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago would be shrinking, except for the influx of migrants from other countries. Larger cities that are seeing urban growth tend to be located in southern states, like Phoenix, Las Vegas, and Jacksonville. More people are moving out of cities and into suburbs, smaller towns, and rural areas than are moving into urban areas (Short, 2019)²⁶⁷”. So, it seems that climate and the size of the cities have an incidence on the choice to change their residence.

Particularly, as we said before in the case of Milan, the same arguments may be applied also to the big metropolises in the United States. This issue was faced by the staff writer of the Atlantic, whose name is Derek Thompson. In this article, he analysed four reasons why the U.S. “Superstar cities are in trouble” (Thompson, 2021)²⁶⁸:

- The rise of “supercommuter”: according to the author, the growth in smart working use could push people to go to live in the outskirts of these big cities in order to cut the spending on house rentals. He claimed: “Today, the term *supercommuting* is often used to describe the punishment inflicted on lower-income workers who have to live far from their job because of the scarcity of affordable housing. But the remote-work revolution could spawn the rise of something a little different: the affluent supercommuter who chooses to move to a big exurban house with the expectation that she’ll make fewer, longer commutes to the office (Thompson, 2021)²⁶⁹”.
- The decline of the coastal superstar cities: the author has raised the alarm in his article for many “superstar cities” located on the coasts, particularly New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Thompson declared: “According to U-Haul’s annual review, California lost more people to out-migration than any other state in 2020, and the five largest states in the Northeast—New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Maryland—joined California in the top 10 losers. Rents have fallen fastest in “pricey coastal cities,” including San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, Boston, and New York City, according to Apartment List. Zillow data also show that home values in New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., are growing below the national average. These migration trends could spell long-term trouble for cities such as San Francisco and New York, where municipal services rely on property taxes, sales taxes, and urban-transit revenue (Thompson, 2021)²⁷⁰”. He also concluded by saying: “[...] If people leave New York—and newcomers don’t

²⁶⁶ Short, Laura. “How Internal Migration Is Shaping the U.S. Population - Population Education.” *Population Education*, 4 Oct. 2019, [populationeducation.org/how-internal-migration-is-shaping-the-us-population/](https://www.populationeducation.org/how-internal-migration-is-shaping-the-us-population/). Accessed 18 May 2021.

²⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁶⁸ Thompson, Derek. “The Atlantic.” *The Atlantic*, theatlantic, Feb. 2021, www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/02/remote-work-revolution/617842/. Accessed 19 May 2021.

²⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁷⁰ *Ibidem*.

immediately take their place—that will reduce the city’s subway and bus revenue, which will lead to service cuts; that will make New York a harder place to live, so more people will leave the city; transit revenue will be reduced further, and on we go. More optimistically, the federal government could bail out cities, speeding up what I’ve called the urban forest-fire effect. In that scenario, the pandemic pushes thousands of people out of expensive coastal cities, reducing the cities’ rent and housing costs, but those lower costs attract a new generation of immigrants and middle-class families to move back into the city, which leads to regrowth. Note, however, that both the optimistic and pessimistic cases involve a difficult period of transition (Thompson, 2020)²⁷¹”.

- The rise of the rest: the phenomenon of depopulation in the coastal superstar cities could prompt a new repopulation in other zones of the country which can be more economically affordable than the other ones but before the pandemic, they had a lot of problem in the mobility sector. For this reason, this new situation might be the best opportunity to solve this problem, as Thompson said: “Coastal cities’ depopulation will not be a perfect substitute for more housing construction in those cities, but it might be better than the before world. Remote work is not a perfect substitute for higher welfare spending, either, but thousands of high-income workers moving to lower-income metros in the Midwest and the South could stimulate local job creation and raise local incomes. And remote work is not a perfect solution to regional inequality, but it will almost certainly expand the roster of hyper-productive cities in ways that could help wages grow nationwide, according to Moretti’s analysis (Thompson, 2021)²⁷²”.
- The next Silicon Valley is nowhere: the author has well-explained this concept with the following words: “If Moretti is right, the coastal diaspora is akin to a national seed-planting experiment that has the potential to grow new industrial clusters. Today, the innovation economy is unevenly distributed. Three states—New York, Massachusetts, and California—account for three-quarters of all venture-capital investment in the United States. But one of the companies on the move could take off after relocating to Miami or Austin and trigger the complex domino effect that creates a new hub: a Quantum Valley in Austin, or Wall Street South in Miami. The other, weirder possibility is that the remote-work revolution will eliminate the concept of a metro hub entirely, as companies embrace the reality of a permanently distributed workforce. What if the next Silicon Valley is nowhere—or, just as precisely, everywhere? (Thompson, 2021)²⁷³”.

But the fleeing from superstar cities in favour of small cities is not coming out with the pandemic, but its beginning dates back to 2019, as we can see from Short’s paper. It was also reiterated in the article done by Davis, in which he claimed:” Idaho and New Jersey ended up on opposite ends of the moving spectrum for the second consecutive year, according to United Van Lines’ annual study of migration patterns

²⁷¹ *Ibidem.*

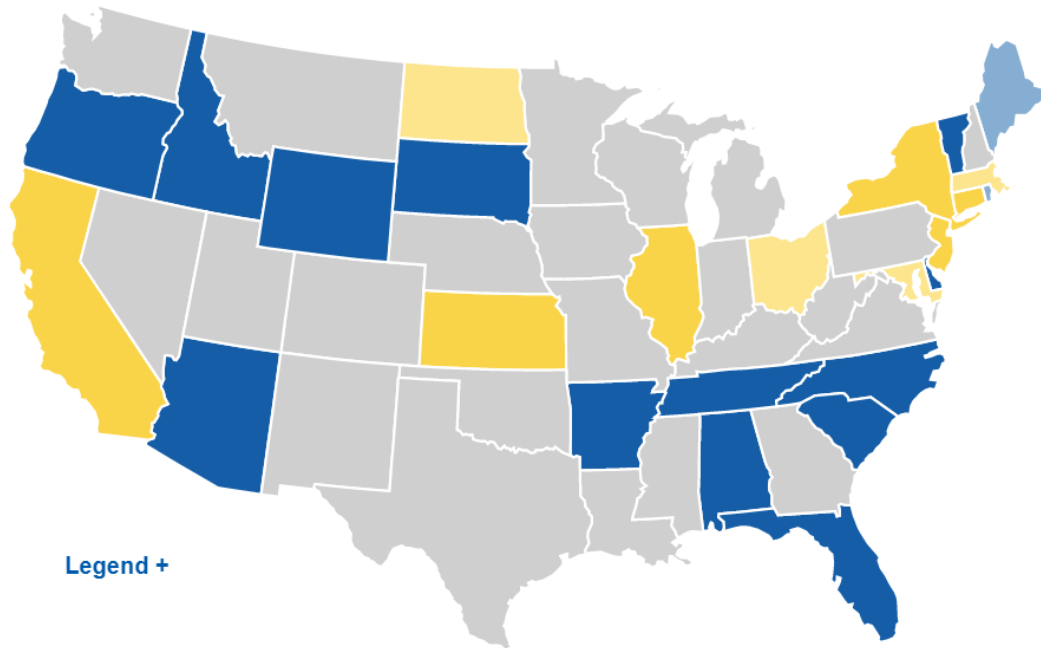
²⁷² *Ibidem.*

²⁷³ *Ibidem.*

(Davis, 2021)²⁷⁴”. Moreover, he deeply analysed the internal movements into the country, ranking them based on their outbound and inbound. He cited the studies made by the American moving and relocation company “United Van Lines”, which reached the following conclusions: “United Van Lines today released the company’s 44th Annual National Migration Study, revealing in 2020, Americans continued to move westbound and southbound – and the COVID-19 pandemic factored into and accelerated many of those decisions to move. According to the study, which tracks the company’s exclusive data for customers’ 2020 state-to-state migration patterns, Idaho was the state with the highest percentage of inbound migration (70%) among states experiencing more than 250 moves* with United Van Lines for the second consecutive year. Topping the list of outbound locations was New Jersey (70% outbound), which has held the spot for the past three years. Among the top inbound states were South Carolina (64%), Oregon (63%), South Dakota (62%) and Arizona (62%), while New York (67%), Illinois (67%), Connecticut (63%) and California (59%) were among the states experiencing the largest exoduses. United Van Lines also conducts a survey examining the reasons behind Americans’ migration patterns as a companion to the study’s findings. This year’s survey results indicated 40% of Americans who moved did so for a new job or job transfer (down from prior years), and more than one in four (27%) moved to be closer to family (which is significantly up over prior years). Data from March to October 2020 also revealed the COVID-19 pandemic influenced Americans’ decisions to move. For customers who cited COVID-19 as an influence on their move in 2020, the top reasons associated with COVID-19 were concerns for personal and family health and wellbeing (60%); desires to be closer to family (59%); 57% moved due to changes in employment status or work arrangement (including the ability to work remotely); and 53% desired a lifestyle change or improvement of quality of life. [...] For retirement, Montana and Delaware experienced more inbound moves than any other state at 41%, followed by Florida (39%) and South Carolina (38.5%). Minnesota led the list of states people moved to for family (41%), and Wyoming was the top state for a lifestyle change with an inbound percentage upwards of 29. More people migrated to Nebraska (72%) for a new job or job transfer than any other state, and more people moved to Idaho (11%) due to the cost of living than any other state. Throughout the pandemic in 2020, major metropolitan areas and hotspots, such as New York City (72%), Newark (72%) and Chicago (69%), experienced greater outbound migration, while lower-density cities like Wilmington, North Carolina (79%) and Boise, Idaho (75%) saw high levels of inbound moves (United van Lines, 2021)²⁷⁵”. In the following graph, it would be possible to compare each U.S. federated States and those which have large inbound are coloured in blue, then, those which have a large outbound are coloured in yellow and finally those who are coloured in white are the balanced States (States which have a net between migration outbounds and inbounds).

²⁷⁴ Davis, Elliott. “Study: Americans Moved West, South in 2020.” *US News & World Report*, U.S. News & World Report, 2020, www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/2021-01-04/americans-moved-west-and-south-in-2020-amid-coronavirus-pandemic-study-finds. Accessed 18 May 2021.

²⁷⁵ United van Lines. “2020 National Movers Study | United van Lines.” *United van Lines*, 7 Jan. 2021, www.unitedvanlines.com/newsroom/movers-study-2020. Accessed 19 May 2021.



Legend +

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Data courtesy of United Van Lines Movers Study © 2021
Demographic data only available for 2013 through present.



276

From this analysis, “United van Lines” listed two different classifications. The first one concerns the following topic: “The top inbound states (with 250 moves or more) of 2020 were:

- 1) Idaho.
- 2) South Carolina.
- 3) Oregon.
- 4) South Dakota.
- 5) Arizona.
- 6) North Carolina.
- 7) Tennessee.
- 8) Alabama.
- 9) Florida.
- 10) Arkansas.

New to the 2020 top inbound list are Tennessee at No. 7 and Alabama at No. 8, both with inbound percentages of 60, and Arkansas at No. 10 with 59% inbound (United van Lines, 2021)²⁷⁷”.

The other classification regards its opposite: “The top outbound states for 2020 were:

- 1) New Jersey.
- 2) New York.

²⁷⁶ *Ibidem.*

²⁷⁷ *Ibidem.*

- 3) Illinois.
- 4) Connecticut.
- 5) California.
- 6) Kansas.
- 7) North Dakota.
- 8) Massachusetts.
- 9) Ohio.
- 10) Maryland (United van Lines, 2021)²⁷⁸”.

The last point dealt with the balanced States: “Several states saw nearly the same number of residents moving inbound as outbound. New Hampshire and Montana are among these “balanced states.” (United van Lines, 2021)²⁷⁹”.

The research made by United van Lines is central also for the argumentations made by the counterpart which is composed by the scholars who do not believe that pandemic has changed migration patterns. The data journalist Marie Patino wrote an article titled “What we actually know about how Americans are moving during COVID” argued in this matter: “So far, there is little support for the dramatic claims that people are fleeing cities writ large. In fact, available data indicates that overall, fewer people moved at all since the beginning of stay-at-home orders and through June — even with interest in moving on the rise again (Patino, 2020)²⁸⁰”.

The first explanation against this theory mentioned by the author involves the uncertainty of how long the stay will be: “Among those who have moved, it’s unclear how many of those moves will be only temporary (Patino, 2020)²⁸¹”.

Another reason why Marie Patino does not support this theory relied on mobility data. She claimed: “If there is a perception that the pandemic has ushered in a mass migration, it is not supported by the data. According to figures from two national moving companies, Americans moved less during the pandemic than they normally would have, not more. These drops were not spread evenly across all states: Data from moving company platform Hire A Helper found that moves decreased the least in states with no stay-at-home orders, like Nebraska (where they even increased a little, by 1.8%). But overall, almost every state saw drops, ranging from 1.3% in Arizona to 66.1% in New Hampshire (Patino, 2020)²⁸²”. Regarding the data furnished by United van Lines, she said: “United Van Lines, which focuses on long-distance hauls, also reports fewer

²⁷⁸ *Ibidem.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibidem.*

²⁸⁰ Patino, Marie. “What We Actually Know about How Americans Are Moving during Covid.” *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 16 Sept. 2020, www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-09-16/the-truth-about-american-migration-during-covid. Accessed 19 May 2021.

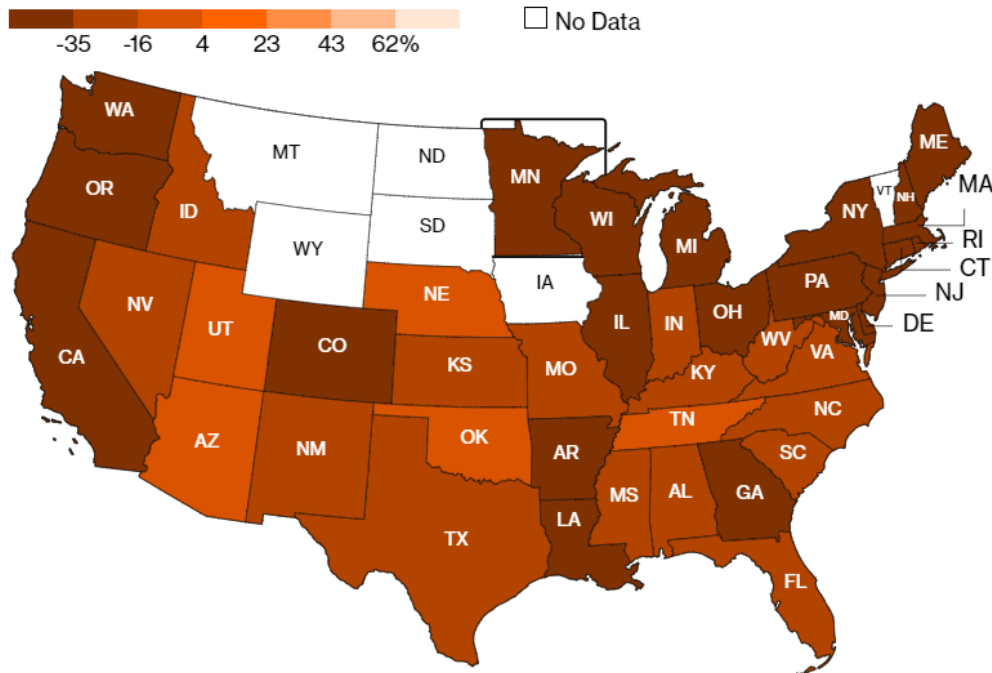
²⁸¹ *Ibidem.*

²⁸² *Ibidem.*

moves during the pandemic. But both companies are seeing interest starting to rebound with gusto during the summer months. In June, United Van Lines said interest in moving was 14% higher compared to same month last year, after several months of being down (Patino, 2020)²⁸³. It is possible to see the data on the mobility of each federated States during the pandemic below.

Change In Moves

Percentage drop in moves between March 11 and June 30 compared to last year



Source: Hire A Helper
 Note: States with no data have less than 100 moves recorded for 2020

284

Even though there was this increment in the internal moving during summer 2020, this was added to the holiday’s season, as explained in the aforementioned article: ““It’s not unusual for [the summer] to be peak moving season,” said Igor Popov, the chief economist at Apartment List, which also saw record drops in apartment searches before they picked back up this summer. “I think it was just a little bit more intense this summer, because of the nature of the pandemic, and the nature of shelter-in-place preceding high moving months.” (Patino, 2020)²⁸⁵”.

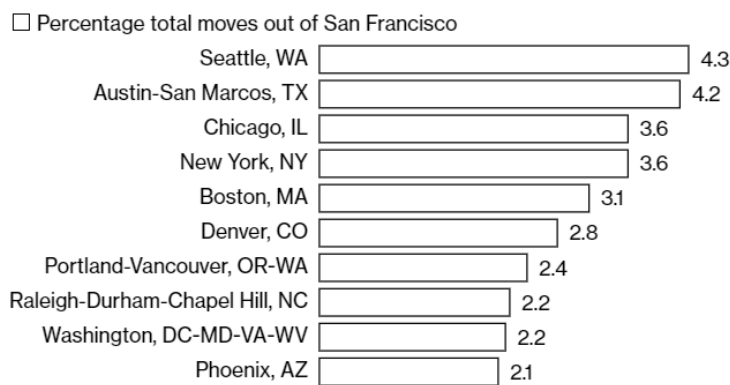
Finally, the journalist explained the reasons which pushed people to move during the pandemic and which were not correlated to it: “Several surveys have found that the great majority of people who did move during the first months of the pandemic did so for reasons unrelated to the coronavirus. In one such survey of 1,300 individuals conducted by Hire A Helper, just 15% said they had relocated because of Covid-19. Out

²⁸³ *Ibidem.*
²⁸⁴ *Ibidem.*
²⁸⁵ *Ibidem.*

of these pandemic-induced migrations, 37% of respondents said they moved because they could not afford current housing due to a Covid-related income loss. Thirty-three percent of the respondents said that they moved to shelter in place with friends or family, and 24% that they didn't feel safe where they were. A Pew Research Center survey in June looked more closely at Americans who said they did make pandemic-induced moves. It found that overall, young people between the ages of 18 and 29 were moving because of Covid-19 in higher numbers, whether permanently or temporarily (college closing for in-person education might be to blame, at least partially.) Only 3% of the respondents said they had moved because of Covid-19, and 6% said someone else had moved in with them because of it (Patino, 2020)²⁸⁶.

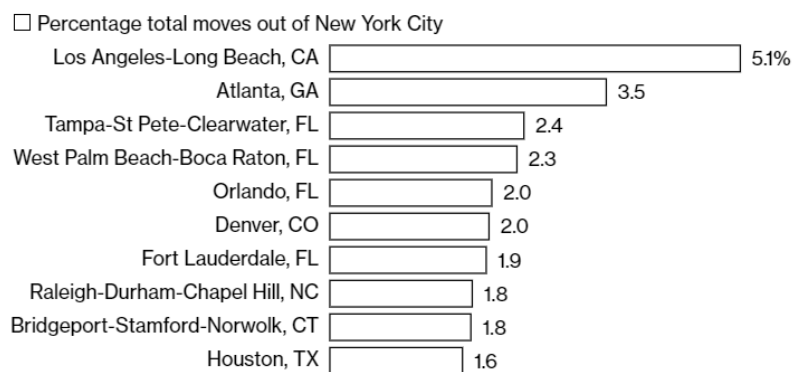
Also, she looked at the examples furnished by San Francisco and New York. Inhabitants of these two cities are fleeing to other major cities, such as Los Angeles and Seattle²⁸⁷. We can see in the following graphs where New Yorkers and San Franciscans choose to flee during the pandemic.

Moving Out of San Francisco



288

Moving Out of New York City



289

The author concluded that mass migration has not happened yet and outlined that this migration started even before the pandemic, recalling the words used by Susan Watcher, professor at the Wharton

²⁸⁶ *Ibidem.*

²⁸⁷ *Ibidem.*

²⁸⁸ *Ibidem.*

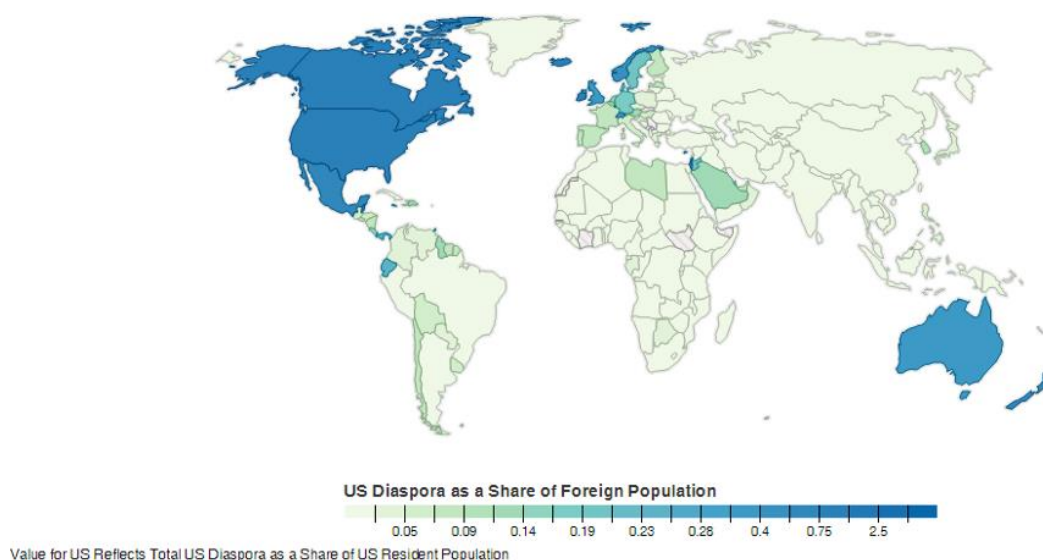
²⁸⁹ *Ibidem.*

School of the University of Pennsylvania: ““That’s what was happening even before Covid,” she said, referring to population growth rates in the suburbs and exurbs that have been speeding up over the last several years (Patino, 2020)²⁹⁰”.

Some remarks should be done about U.S. emigrational flow, which has acquired strength in the last few years. Observers continue to depict the United States solely as a ‘destination country’²⁹¹, but surprisingly, at the same time, the tendency to leave the country is increasing. This tendency was highlighted in 2015 with the article made by the economist Lyman Stone, but it was unknown the impact of this phenomenon and how many people were involved in it²⁹². He analysed the ‘American diaspora’, looking at some criteria: one of them is where the American emigrates move. The answer is quite easy: in the Anglophone world²⁹³. It is possible to see below how much is strong the incident of American ex-pats in whole the world.

American Diaspora is Highly Concentrated in Anglophone World, Neighbors

US Diaspora as Share of Local Population



Source: UN Population Division, World Bank Global Migration Matrix, Authors Calculations [Get the data](#)

294

He added: “In terms of raw numbers, about 1/4 of the American diaspora, or 670,000 emigrants, lives in Mexico. [...] The next biggest destinations are Canada (308,000), the United Kingdom (212,000), Puerto Rico (200,000), Germany (144,000), Australia (89,000), Japan (56,000), Israel (55,000), South Korea (53,000), and France (49,000) (Stone, 2015)²⁹⁵”. This result is not surprising. Many Americans decide to leave the U.S and moving to other nations in which English is the mother tongue. The reason could be various: some

²⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

²⁹¹ Migration Policy Institute. “Top 25 Destinations of International Migrants.” *Migrationpolicy.org*, 20 Aug. 2013, www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/top-25-destinations-international-migrants. Accessed 20 May 2021.

²⁹² Stone, Lyman. “Why Americans Are Going Abroad - in a State of Migration - Medium.” Medium, In a State of Migration, 20 Apr. 2015, medium.com/migration-issues/why-are-americans-leaving-75fe530ce49d. Accessed 20 May 2021.

²⁹³ *Ibidem*.

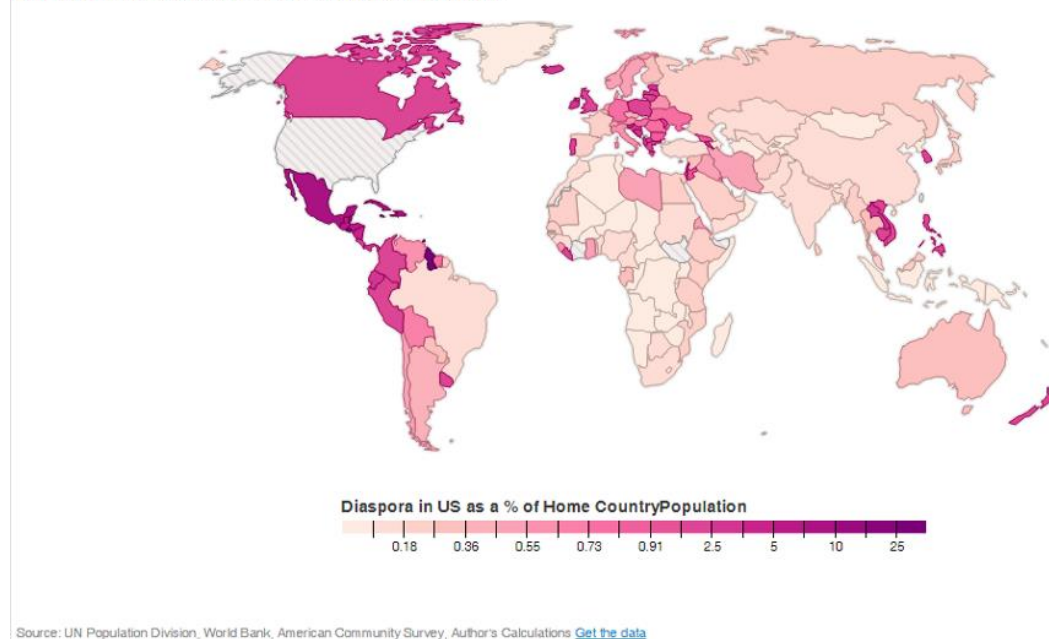
²⁹⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁹⁵ *Ibidem*.

for work reason, others want just to go back to their origins. In order to better explain the concept, the map below shows the origins of U.S. ex-pats.

Diaspora in the US Represents Large Share of Many Countries' Populations

Foreign Diaspora in the United States as a Share of Foreign Country Population



296

Thus, comparing the two figures, it is possible to note that the destination countries of American ex-pats correspond to the origins of a large share of the foreign country population. Therefore, we can assume that many U.S. emigrations are due to a return to their origins.

Other reasons for Americans to go abroad are resumed in the following scheme, which was present in the book “American Abroad: A Comparative Study of Emigrants from the United States”.

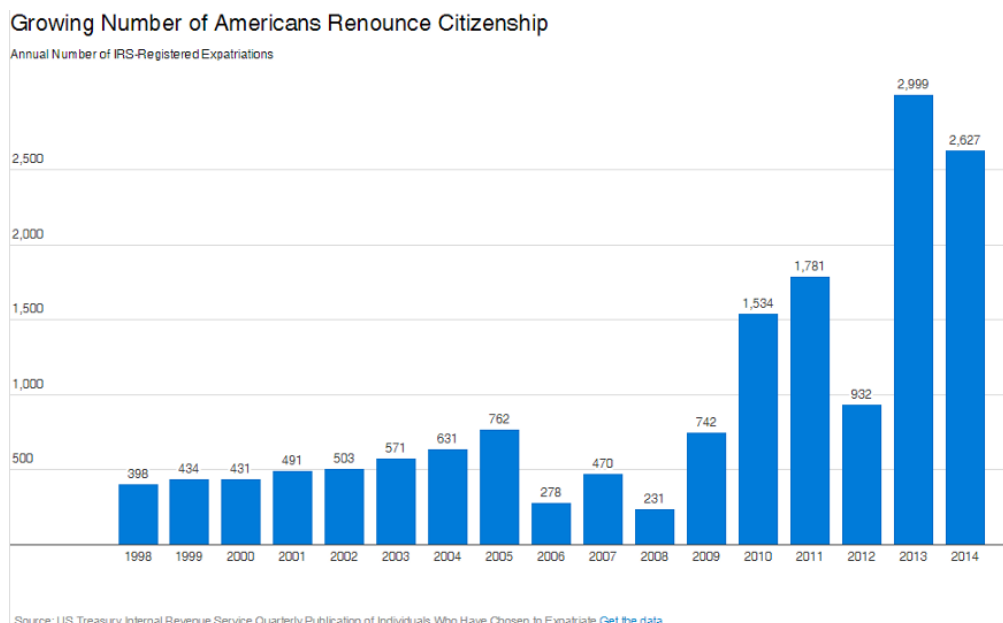
Goals of Migration		
Locus of Concern	Expressive	Instrumental
Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals seeking greater political and/or religious expression • Rootless wanderers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Brain drain” workers • Foreign students • Migrant laborers
		A B
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouses and children seeking family unity • Disciples of charismatic leaders • Adherents of religious and political groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Corps volunteer • Missionaries
		C D

297

²⁹⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁹⁷ Dashefsky, Arnold, and Karen A. Woodrow-Lafield. “American Emigration: Past and Present.” *Americans Abroad*, 2020, pp. 75–93, link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-94-024-1795-1_3, 10.1007/978-94-024-1795-1_3. Accessed 20 May 2021.

“American diaspora” theory is also supported by other data, like the number of procedures for the citizenship renouncement. According to the data furnished by the 2015 report, the number of U.S. patriots who started this practice was increasing. Below it is possible to see this growth over the years.



298

In 2020, a new report about the topic was made, probably prompted by the pandemic waves and the growth of smart working and all related technologies (such as wireless, computers, smartphones, Zoom and the other platforms). This report, which was made by Kenneth Best, editor for the University of Connecticut (UConn) Magazine, counts “approximately eight million Americans who have left the country to live in other nations” (Best, 2020)²⁹⁹. Moreover, he cited the Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Arnold Dashefsky, who wrote the second edition of *Americans Abroad: A Comparative Study of Emigrants from the United States*: “Dashefsky says the original 1992 study of American emigration found that more people left the country than arrived from overseas during the Great Depression in the early part of the 20th century. He adds that he “wouldn’t be surprised” if this happens during the COVID-19 pandemic, but that there is not yet any statistical evidence this is happening (Best, 2020)³⁰⁰”. In addition, there was no evidence of emigrants who came back to the U.S. after the outbreak in March 2020, when the travel ban was set up.

In conclusion, we do not know exactly if the pandemic has an impact on domestic and foreign emigrations and to what extent it has exerted its influence. However, the possibilities created or enhanced by COVID-19 to work in a different location from the workplace or own homeland seem to have an impact during the lockdowns but also, they could have an impact in future scenarios. It could mean a new

²⁹⁸ Stone, Lyman. “Why Americans Are Going Abroad - in a State of Migration - Medium.” Medium, In a State of Migration, 20 Apr. 2015, medium.com/migration-issues/why-are-americans-leaving-75fe530ce49d. Accessed 20 May 2021.

²⁹⁹ Best, Kenneth. “Americans Abroad: Escaping or Enhancing Life? - UConn Today.” *UConn Today*, 7 Aug. 2020, today.uconn.edu/2020/08/americans-abroad-escaping-enhancing-life/#. Accessed 20 May 2021.

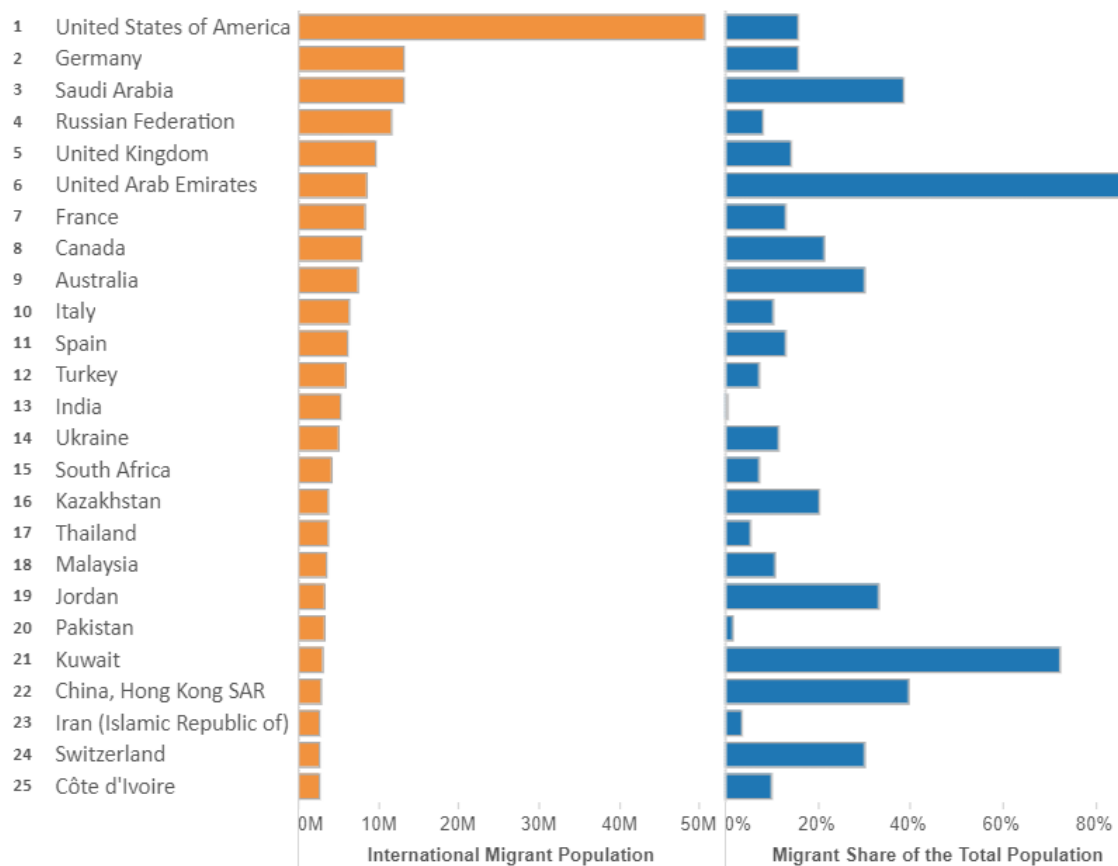
³⁰⁰ *Ibidem*.

interconnected and globalized world but expressed in a virtual way. And the same reasoning may be applied for immigrational flows in the U.S.

3.3: Immigration in the U.S. during the pandemic

The United States was always portrayed for its opportunities so much so that they adopted the slogan "American Dream". It is not by chance that the U.S. was confirmed as the top destination country across the world, according to 2019 data detected by Migration Policy Institute³⁰¹. It is possible to see below the ranking of the top-25 destination countries in 2019.

International Migrant Population and Migrant Share of Total Population
Top 25 Countries of Destination, 2019



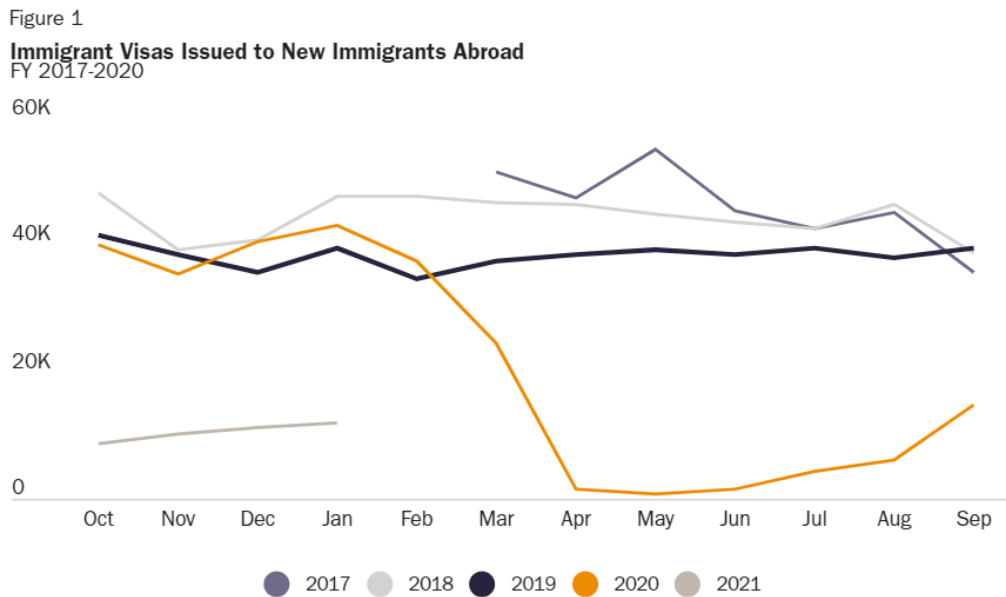
302

Nevertheless, U.S. was affected by the consequences of the pandemic as well and for this reason, the country has been touched by social distancing restrictions introduced by the federated and central governments, leading to a contraction of immigration. Even if there are not already available data that explain exactly how many immigrants the U.S. has lost with the pandemic, there are other ones which can show its

³⁰¹ Migration Policy Institute. "Top 25 Destinations of International Migrants." *Migrationpolicy.org*, 20 Aug. 2013, www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/top-25-destinations-international-migrants. Accessed 20 May 2021.

³⁰² *Ibidem*.

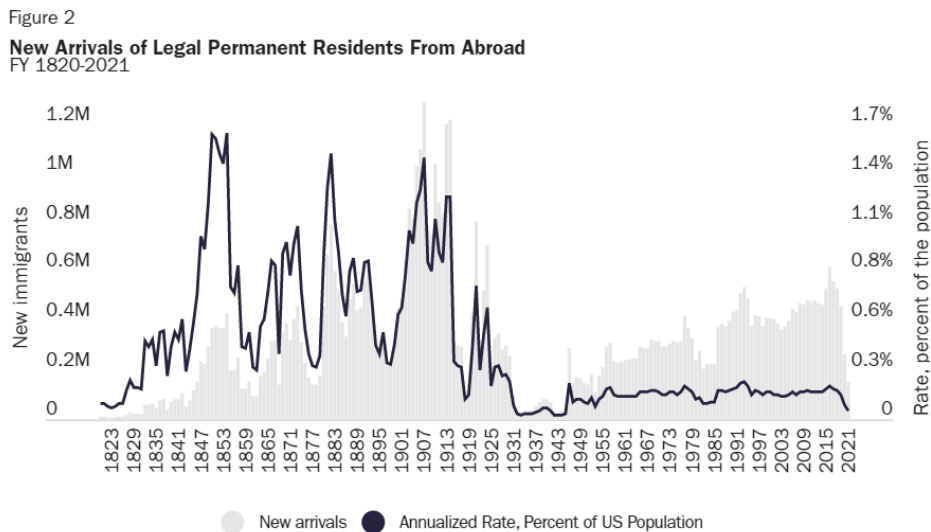
decrease. Comparing the number of visas issued in 2019 with those issued in 2020, it is possible to see a huge reduction, which reached 84% less than in the previous year³⁰³.



Source: State Department, "Immigrant Visa Statistics"

304

Moreover, another marker to take into account regards new arrivals. In the first semester of 2020, the arrivals have decreased by almost 43%, while in the second one they have shrunk by as much as 87% compared to the previous year. In the first two quarters of 2020, the arrivals were almost 264,000, while in the second two quarters they were slightly above 29,000 units. In the following graph, there is the possibility to make a comparison among the data available from 1823 to 2021³⁰⁵



306

³⁰³ Bier, David J. "No Year Has Seen Legal Immigration Cut like the 2nd Half of FY 2020." *Cato Institute*, 13 Oct. 2020, www.cato.org/blog/no-year-has-seen-legal-immigration-cut-2nd-half-fy-2020#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20witnessed%20a,percent%20of%20the%20U.S.%20population.. Accessed 22 May 2021.

³⁰⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁰⁶ *Ibidem*.

As explained in the special report titled “The Impact of COVID-19 on Non-citizen and across the U.S. Immigration System”, published by “American Immigration Council”: “The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly impacted the ability of foreign nationals to travel to the United States in any status. Beginning in February 2020, the Trump administration has imposed five separate travel restrictions on individuals who had been present in certain countries where COVID-19 epidemics were occurring. As the pandemic spread, on March 20, 2020 the Department of State suspended “routine visa services” at all embassies and consulates worldwide, including cancelling all “immigrant and non-immigrant visa appointments.” This suspension encompasses applicants for both employment-based and family-based immigrant visas, including the relatives of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents (LPRs), as well as applicants for non-immigrant visas for visitors, students, and skilled workers. However, the State Department has continued to process all H-2 visa cases, which includes temporary agricultural workers, and allows for emergency visa appointments. The worldwide suspension remained until mid-July, after which some consulates began to slowly reopen (Loweree et al, 2020)³⁰⁷”. As we said before, what made matters worse was the proclamation of a new act made by the Trump administration restricting legal immigration into the country and renewed in June until December 2020³⁰⁸. Also, as agreed by the parties involved, United States, Canada and Mexico suspended non-essential travels through ports of entry at each border³⁰⁹. This entailed an increase in the number of deportations, as shown in the report: “Through the end of August, over 147,000 people have been “expelled” at the southern border (Loweree et al, 2020)³¹⁰”.

Regarding visas and other procedures for immigration status, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) suspended all in-person services at its offices in the first three months of the pandemic according to the abovementioned report. The authors Jorge Loweree, Aaron Reichlin-Melnick and Walter Ewing deepened the question: “USCIS suspended all in-person services at its offices for the first three months of the pandemic, before beginning a slow reopening process in certain locations. As a result, interviews for all immigration benefit applications and asylum applications were postponed and will be rescheduled when normal operations resume. USCIS also temporarily suspended all biometrics appointments, meaning that new fingerprints could not be taken. In addition, the agency temporarily suspended naturalization oath ceremonies through June, resisting video oath ceremonies and instead

³⁰⁷ Jorge, Loweree, et al. “The Impact of COVID-19 on Noncitizens and Across the U.S. Immigration System.” *American Immigration Council*, 28 Apr. 2021, [³⁰⁸ *Ibidem*.](http://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/impact-covid-19-us-immigration-system?__cf_chl_jschl_tk__=387a80901a1a1c92c71fb04137e10f0f5092b0e6-1621530970-0-ARNdJw9m88cNmY8GGsugQ-PvndjbaDQ8mtfc_v1IiEj0MDYAH3OhyDOXVkoXZ5vOpUWdPEVdkgydEEX0e3LqkP5U0ONrmMURO_nbH9LY7UOCJIAOMBjC140HKwOOAynVY21J2nnO65r8TDbrbRwKb_n7hixZqYO-_f0uBwPMRXXtK0S1PI3q6NEZ-k0ag00QCHMbAt60rqFgQ-jII1YCwQzFwgCslg4ZyEqSqHODA9IRh9ZLDMNimniZ0QqRrC0A2uq4WJL6ogSRuLfYALb8Ylf5nCdKdJHMGt5-MTV37eRgzkhneRxxtZsdiA_U_UY9vKaRk7VEGNqNY2ln9ltNRerF1tVp_uVWJjvgFXomGWhDukG1JSlcdc_oNfetxkcCZh z5NsKzYM6BWvkLPZ2xhK-vgB10xZ1mYon43Nsg1Kz20mzZQN29uaZL8qwwAV447mM84DOvd5ZDdgpH0MeklTAd-da2yEkoSgyVBspq394Kc9xWYiCwAjKICKD2kQXEBs0vhSpvGujJGJoOwKhGUI0.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

³⁰⁹ *Ibidem*.

³¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

instituting socially distant in-person oath ceremonies and drive-through oath ceremonies. This delayed the ability of tens of thousands of immigrants to become U.S. citizens. The agency has also made a number of technical changes to the H-2A and H-2B processes that make it easier for noncitizens who are working to keep the nation's food supply stable to remain in the United States for the duration of the national emergency. However, the agency has resisted calls to grant automatic status extensions or otherwise make changes which would prevent foreign nationals from inadvertently losing status during the national emergency declared by the president on March 13, 2020. In addition, the agency announced that due to reduced fees resulting in part from the pandemic, it would run out of money to meet its expenses and that it would have to furlough 13,400 employees. While the agency ultimately cancelled its planned furloughs, it nevertheless announced that it anticipated that operational reductions would significantly impact its day-to-day operations (Lowerer et al, 2020)³¹¹”.

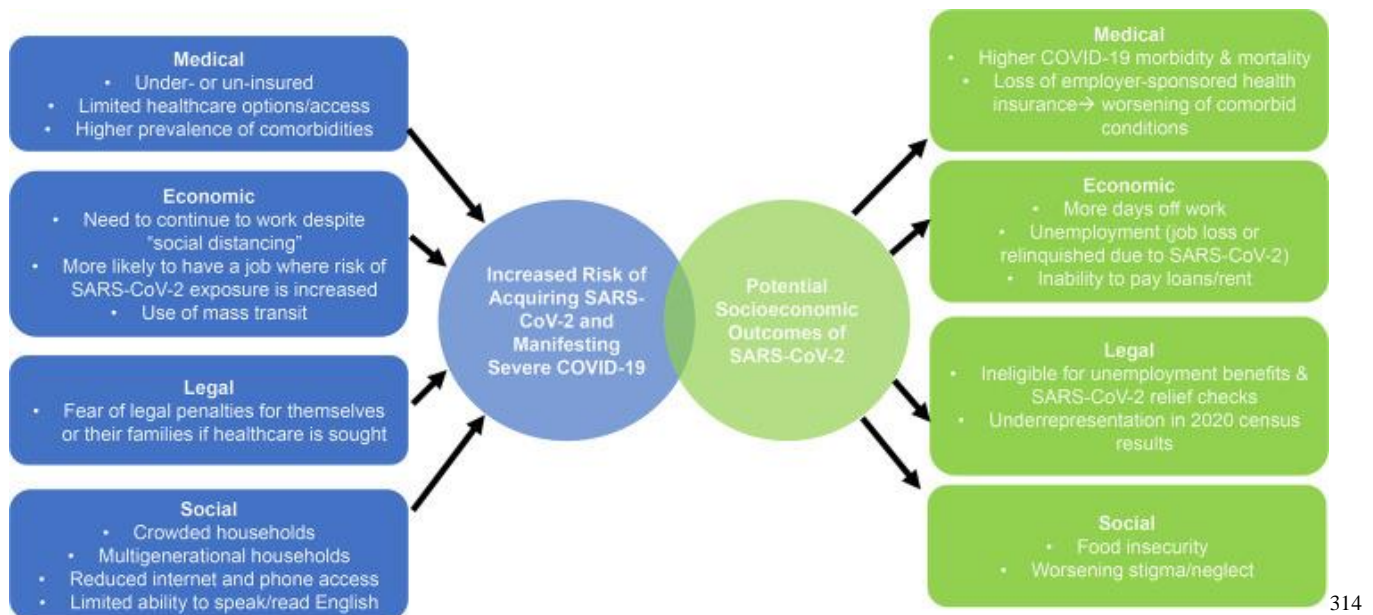
Another issue concerns immigration enforcement and detention during the pandemic in the United States. The contributors stated: “Unlike people living outside of detention centers, those in detention centers cannot socially distance from others, as they are locked inside facilities with hundreds of other people. People in detention have limited access to soap and often must pay for hand sanitizer. Face masks are difficult to obtain or simply not distributed at all. The risk of the virus spreading to additional ICE detention centers is exacerbated by the agency's practice of routinely transferring people from one detention center to another, often multiple times. At least eight people have died after contracting COVID-19 while detained and over 6,000 people have tested positive in ICE detention since the pandemic began (Lowerer et al, 2020)³¹²”. While the situation in the immigration court system was the following:” It was not until March 16 that the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) postponed large “master calendar hearings” nationwide. Despite suspending all non-detained immigration court hearings through June, EOIR has not suspended all other hearings. Hearings continue for all immigrants held in detention, as well as for unaccompanied children held in shelters by the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement. In June, EOIR began reopening some courts across the country for individual hearings but has not explained its methodology for picking which courts should be reopened. Several courts that reopened have been forced to close unexpectedly for days at a time when a COVID-19 exposure occurs. While most courts remained shuttered through August, by the end of September the majority of courts had reopened for at least some hearings (Lowerer et al, 2020)³¹³”.

If these are the problems that the immigrants who wanted to settle down in the U.S. should face, other ones should be faced for those who are already established in the country. Beyond the issues regarding the visas and their hypothetical renewals, which the research dealt with above, there are other medical, economic, legal and social issues, as the graph below has listed.

³¹¹ *Ibidem.*

³¹² *Ibidem.*

³¹³ *Ibidem.*



314

The report made by Eva Clark, Karla Fredricks, Laila Woc-Colburn, Maria Elena Bottazzi and Jill Weatherhead which deeply investigated the matter. They claimed that the immigrants seem to be more exposed to contract COVID-19 or to be subjected to its consequences than the local peers for many reasons. The first one is the medical motive, as explained by the authors: “The lack of readily accessible, affordable healthcare is particularly consequential during the COVID-19 pandemic. First, early diagnosis and monitoring of persons with COVID-19 is critical both to optimize the individual patient’s outcome and to prevent further community transmission. Many vulnerable immigrants are under - or uninsured and thus depend upon Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), safety-net public health systems, or free clinics. [...] Second, lack of access to preventive medicine leads to increased risk of underlying health conditions such as obesity, hypertension, and diabetes — comorbidities that have been linked to more severe COVID-19 manifestations. [...] Third, depending on their mode of entry into the US, many immigrants may be at risk for excessive stress related to poverty, trauma, and poor social support, which leads to mental health conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety. These psychological stressors may be worsened during a pandemic, certainly for those with limited healthcare resources, high risk of job loss, or high risk of SARS-CoV-2 exposure (Clark et al, 2020)³¹⁵”.

Another aspect that should be considered in migrants is the economic factor. In this regard, the authors claimed: “Regarding risk of SARS-CoV-2 exposure, many immigrants are at increased risk both because their economic situation requires continuation of work despite “social distancing” and “stay-at-home” recommendations and because the types of jobs most commonly worked by immigrants often require face-

³¹⁴ Clark, Eva, et al. “Disproportionate Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Immigrant Communities in the United States.” *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, vol. 14, no. 7, 13 July 2020, p. e0008484, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7357736/, 10.1371/journal.pntd.0008484. Accessed 21 May 2021.

³¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

to-face interactions. [...] In addition, immigrants who continue working are more likely to use public mass transit to get to their jobs, which further increases their risk of SARS-CoV-2 exposure (Clark et al, 2020)³¹⁶”.

Also, the housing factor represents a big challenge to deal with, especially for immigrants, and also in this topic, the report has expressed its concerns: “In the home, immigrants are more likely to live in large, multigenerational family groups or with multiple roommates. [...] Logically, if one person living in a crowded home is infected with SARS-CoV-2, their cohabitants, including elderly and immunosuppressed ones, will likely be exposed as well. Finally, recent immigrants and their families are less likely to have cell phones or internet access and to speak and read English; [...] Consequently, immigrant communities with limited English skills may be less likely to receive and understand public health messages, warnings, and updates (Clark et al, 2020)³¹⁷”.

It is important to have a look at the structure of the U.S. healthcare system. In general, treatments and cares are provided by insurance companies and more often health insurance is included among the benefits that employers offer to their employees. Those who cannot afford insurances have the right to access the two public healthcare programs: ‘Medicare’ and ‘Medicaid’. But to get access to these programs people should satisfy some eligibility criteria. While ‘Medicare’ is destined only for people with disabilities and/or over 65 years old without pension coverage (which is known as ‘Social Security’)³¹⁸, ‘Medicaid’ includes needy people. The eligibility criteria are well-explained by the government website: “To participate in Medicaid, federal law requires states to cover certain groups of individuals. Low-income families, qualified pregnant women and children, and individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are examples of mandatory eligibility groups. States have additional options for coverage and may choose to cover other groups, such as individuals receiving home and community-based services and children in foster care who are not otherwise eligible (Medicaid.gov, 2019)³¹⁹”. A key role in Medicaid was played by the “Affordable Care Act” (ACA), which was enacted in 2010 under Obama’s administration. It allows the expansion of its coverage to all low-income Americans under 65 years old³²⁰.

During the pandemic, due to the social distancing restrictions, many workers have lost their jobs, including immigrants. And despite the efforts of the government and the health insurance companies to consider out-of-pocket costs COVID-19 tests and treatments³²¹, the number of those who are not covered by

³¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

³¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

³¹⁸ “Get Started with Medicare | Medicare.” *Medicare.gov*, 2021, www.medicare.gov/sign-up-change-plans/get-started-with-medicare. Accessed 22 May 2021.

³¹⁹ “Eligibility | Medicaid.” *Medicaid.gov*, 2019, www.medicicaid.gov/medicaid/eligibility/index.html. Accessed 22 May 2021.

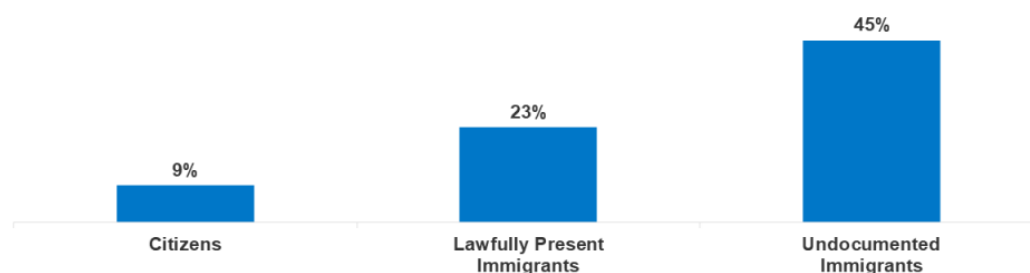
³²⁰ *Ibidem*.

³²¹ Gavin, Kara. “COVID-19 Care Is (Mostly) Free to Patients. Should Other Vital Care Be Too?” *University of Michigan*, 2020, labblog.uofmhealth.org/industry-dx/covid-19-care-mostly-free-to-patients-should-other-vital-care-be-too. Accessed 22 May 2021.

health insurances has increased³²². Immigrants are particularly affected by this issue for the following reason: “Lawfully present immigrants may qualify for Medicaid and CHIP, but are subject to certain eligibility restrictions. In general, lawfully present immigrants must have a “qualified” immigration status to be eligible for Medicaid or CHIP, and many, including most LPRs or “green card” holders, must wait five years after obtaining qualified status before they may enrol. Some immigrants with qualified status, such as refugees and asylees, do not have to wait five years before enrolling. Some immigrants, such as those with temporary protected status, are lawfully present but do not have a qualified status and are not eligible to enrol in Medicaid or CHIP regardless of their length of time in the country. For children and pregnant women, states can eliminate the five-year wait and extend coverage to lawfully present immigrants without a qualified status. Over half of states have taken up this option for children and nearly half have elected the option for pregnant women (Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2018)³²³”. Below it is possible to see 2018 data on people who were not covered by health insurance and its immigration legal status in the United States.

Figure 3

Uninsured Rates among Nonelderly Population by Immigration Status, 2018



Note: All non-citizen percentages shown are significantly different from citizens at the $p < 0.05$ level. Includes nonelderly individuals ages 0-64.
Source: KFF analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (ACS), 1-Year Estimates.



324

It is one of the potential socio-economic outcomes of COVID-19 enumerated by the aforementioned report published on the “National Center for Biotechnology Information”. In the subject, authors claimed: “One of the ways US immigrants play a significant role in the US economy is by paying federal, state, and local taxes. [...] Families with mixed immigration status who file jointly, such as undocumented adults with children or spouses who are US citizens, are also excluded because all individuals included in a tax return

³²² Clark, Eva, et al. “Disproportionate Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Immigrant Communities in the United States.” *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, vol. 14, no. 7, 13 July 2020, p. e0008484, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7357736/, 10.1371/journal.pntd.0008484. Accessed 21 May 2021.

³²³ Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF). “Health Coverage of Immigrants.” *KFF*, 18 Mar. 2020, www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/fact-sheet/health-coverage-of-immigrants/#:~:text=In%20general%2C%20lawfully%20present%20immigrants,status%20before%20they%20may%20enroll.. Accessed 22 May 2021.

³²⁴ *Ibidem*.

must have valid Social Security numbers to be eligible. As such, despite paying into the US economy and experiencing equal, if not more severe, consequences from the COVID-19 pandemic, many immigrants will not receive any COVID-19–related economic relief from the US government (Clark et al, 2020)³²⁵”.

Another economic matter for immigrants regards the unemployment rate. As the research explained before, many immigrants have lost their jobs during the pandemic waves as a result of the lockdowns. In order to avoid uncontrolled growth of unemployed, the government enacted two different acts: the “Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act” (2020) and the “Coronavirus Response and Consolidated Appropriations Act” (2021) which provide financial support for “American workers, families, businesses and industries”³²⁶. But these acts are pointless for immigrants if they have not citizenship, as explained in the report: “Thus, there is much concern that the COVID-19 pandemic will result in particularly high rates of unemployment and financial strain within immigrant communities. Between February 2020 and April 2020, the unemployment rate for immigrant women increased from 4.3% to 18% and for immigrant men from 3% to 15.3%, while for US-born women, it changed from 3.3% to 15.3%, and for US-born men, it increased from 4.3% to 12.8%. Because undocumented immigrants are ineligible for national unemployment benefits in addition to CARES Act benefits, job loss or reduced work hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to significantly decreased financial reserve in immigrant households. For the 57% of immigrants who have private insurance, loss of a job could also mean loss of health insurance for the employee and their family, leading to further difficulty accessing healthcare. Those who are able to retain their jobs, as discussed above, may work in sectors not amenable to working from home or that do not permit sick leave. Higher numbers of uninsured immigrants combined with those working in high SARS-CoV-2 exposure risk jobs will undoubtedly result in increased COVID-19–related morbidity and mortality in immigrant communities. Additionally, in the context of extended school closing as a result of COVID-19, many parents have limited childcare options, putting additional financial, health, and social pressure on families (Clark et al, 2020)³²⁷”.

Food insecurity has grown up during the pandemic worldwide, and neither a wealthy country such as the United States was able to avoid this risk. Also in this matter, the report was clear: “As the COVID-19 pandemic causes instability in global supply chains, concern for worsening food insecurity is growing in many disadvantaged communities. Immigrants are at particularly high risk, especially those who have resided in the US for less than 5 years. This may be because immigrant families newly arrived in the US have more

³²⁵ Clark, Eva, et al. “Disproportionate Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Immigrant Communities in the United States.” *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, vol. 14, no. 7, 13 July 2020, p. e0008484, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7357736/, 10.1371/journal.pntd.0008484. Accessed 21 May 2021.

³²⁶ U.S. Department of Treasury. “About the CARES Act and the Consolidated Appropriations Act | U.S. Department of the Treasury.” *Treasury.gov*, 18 May 2021, home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/about-the-cares-act. Accessed 22 May 2021.

³²⁷ Clark, Eva, et al. “Disproportionate Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Immigrant Communities in the United States.” *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, vol. 14, no. 7, 13 July 2020, p. e0008484, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7357736/, 10.1371/journal.pntd.0008484. Accessed 21 May 2021.

significant language barriers and less exposure to a stable education system and jobs than those who have lived in the US for longer periods of time. However, even immigrant families who have lived in the US for more than 10 years are at higher risk of food insecurity than US-born households. [...] Additionally, the federal government stipulates that adults (with some exceptions) with legal permanent resident status (i.e., green card holders) must wait 5 years before they can apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Furthermore, despite being eligible for SNAP, low-income US citizen children with immigrant parents have decreased utilization of this benefit in recent years. Although children with green cards are not subject to the 5-year waiting period and may qualify for SNAP along with low-income US citizen children, studies have shown that eligible children of ineligible parents are less likely to participate in assistance programs. This has become increasingly apparent in recent years because of concern over the “Public Charge” rule (implemented on February 24, 2020), which limits the ability of immigrants to adjust to legal permanent resident status if they have used certain public benefits. The fear of deportation and chilling effect of this rule have led many immigrant families to forgo participation in all federal assistance programs, including nutrition assistance, even if they are eligible and not subject to a public charge determination. The factors driving this downward trend will likely also prevent many eligible immigrant families from applying for Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), a provision of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act allowing states to provide money to families whose children were receiving free or reduced cost meals through their schools. This would have a far-reaching impact because, unlike SNAP, Pandemic EBT is available to children regardless of immigration status. Expansion of “food deserts” as a result of limited transportation options and restaurant restrictions, reduced grocery store supply, and diminished resources in food banks may further limit food availability in at-risk immigrant communities (Clark et al, 2020)³²⁸”.

About the ‘Public Charge’, the authors of the report pointed out: “Finally, due to the implementation of recent immigration policies such as the “Public Charge” rule, the utilization of available health resources among immigrants and their families has effectively decreased as a result of widespread fear of immigration enforcement and/or concern that using these services would impair their success of future naturalization. In addition, mounting health, psychosocial, and financial concerns—together with fears of legal exposure—may inhibit immigrant participation in the ongoing 2020 census data collection. In the long term, inadequate enumeration of the US immigrant populations will manifest as decreased funding for sorely needed health, education, and socioeconomic programs in many disadvantaged communities (Clark et al, 2020)³²⁹”.

In conclusion, the pandemic has widened the gap between locals and immigrants into the United States. Not only from an economic point of view but also from a social one: in this sense, it is possible to

³²⁸ *Ibidem.*

³²⁹ *Ibidem.*

explain the growth of the racial divide³³⁰ and, sometimes, it could lead to xenophobia and physical aggression³³¹, as it was with George Floyd³³² and COVID-19 hate crimes against Asian people³³³. Movements like ‘Black Lives Matter’ could be helpful to build up a new kind of society, more careful to redistribute the same social and economic opportunities to everyone.

³³⁰ Lavietes, Matthew. “‘A Pandemic in a Pandemic’: Coronavirus Deepens Racial Gaps in America.” *U.S.*, 20 Aug. 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-race-money-insight/a-pandemic-in-a-pandemic-coronavirus-deepens-racial-gaps-in-america-idUSKBN25G1EW. Accessed 22 May 2021.

³³¹ Hennebry, J. and H. KC. Quarantined! Xenophobia and migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. International Organization for Migration (IOM). Geneva, 2020. <https://publications.iom.int/es/system/files/pdf/quarantined.pdf>. Accessed 19 April, 2021.

³³² The New York Times. “How George Floyd Died, and What Happened Next.” The New York Times, 2021, www.nytimes.com/article/george-floyd.html. Accessed 22 May 2021.

³³³ BBC News. “Covid ‘Hate Crimes’ against Asian Americans on Rise.” *BBC News*, BBC News, 21 May 2021, www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-56218684. Accessed 22 May 2021.

Part III: Conclusions

Conclusions: what is the next?

4.1: A brief comparison of both countries, the future of smart working and impact on migration trends

Before analysing the future implications of the pandemic and the innovations that it prompted, the research will want to briefly resume the similarities and differences between Italy and the United States of America. There are similar aspects in immigration and emigration between Italy and the United States during the pandemic. For instance, new arrivals are decreased in both countries during the pandemic (leaving out the case of illegal immigration which increased during Biden's administration and in Italy, but not under Trump's administration). The reason for this decline is addressable to travel bans from foreign countries, to which both countries resorted, marking another parallel between Italy and the United States. Moreover, internal migrations from big cities to the peripheries and small towns have increased as never before. As it was possible to see from the history of other epidemics, such as the "Black Death" and as it was narrated by Giovanni Boccaccio in his masterpiece "The Decameron", many people are used to escape from the cities during the pandemic because they perceive the countryside safer³³⁴. In this pandemic, this would be possible for another similarity between both countries: the implementation of the use of the smart working and its promotions made by governments, institutions and companies, despite there were different nuances of this tool that prevailed on others. For instance, in Italy, the south working is more widespread, though, in the United States, Work-From-Home (WFH) and Work-From-Anywhere (WFA) seemed to be privileged as kinds of remote work. Otherwise, in both countries, worries are arising for the destiny of metropolises and their declines due to the abovementioned internal migrations. Finally, another similar trend that both countries have in common during the pandemic, unfortunately, was the presence of xenophobic episodes, despite it affected Italy and the U.S. in a different manner.

On this point relies the first huge difference between both countries: in the U.S. the incidence of racial crimes are greater than in Italy, due to higher multicultural decree in the society and because of the U.S. liberalisation of arms and thus the propensity for their use rather than in Italy. Another difference relied on emigration patterns: while in Italy there was an increase of 'returnees', so more nationals came back home, this would not happen in the U.S. The latter has not the same long and historical tradition in emigration as Italy, while it is considered as a country of immigration for its attractiveness. In general, American citizens may not have reason to go away and come back for a pandemic (except for American tourists who come back from high risks areas, as it was in January and February 2020, before the outbreak in the U.S.³³⁵). As we said before, the illegal immigration trend decreased under Trump's administration (unlikely in Italy and Biden's administration). There is also a difference between the Italian and the U.S. healthcare systems since

³³⁴ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Decameron | Work by Boccaccio | Britannica." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2021, www.britannica.com/topic/Decameron. Accessed 7 June 2021.

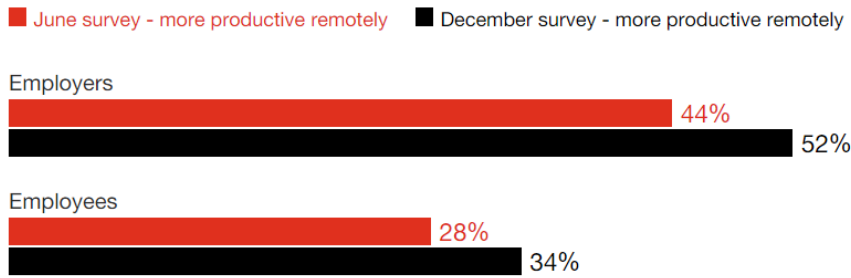
³³⁵ Thomas, Pierre, et al. "Disaster in Motion: 3.4 Million Travelers Poured into US as Coronavirus Pandemic Erupted." *ABC News*, ABC News, 2 Apr. 2020, abcnews.go.com/Politics/disaster-motion-34-million-travelers-poured-us-coronavirus/story?id=69933625. Accessed 7 June 2021.

the previous one is open to anyone and do not ask for money back for their performances because of the State economic intervention in the Italian healthcare system. It is mainly based on taxes their payments and it is not the same in the U.S., which manage their system through insurance companies and the two programs that the research has analysed in the previous chapter: ‘Medicaid’ and ‘Medicare’, which do not include everyone and entails greater costs. Finally, the last difference concern the approach of Italian and the U.S. governments in managing the pandemic: while in Italy, the government has centralized its power, giving the guidelines that the regions must follow and making the measures against the pandemic unitary, in the U.S. the decentralized approach was applied, especially under Trump’s administration, nullifying the efforts of some federated States to contain the virus. This was mitigated only when Joe Biden became the new president of the United States.

Notwithstanding the difficulties and the losses which this period has bequeathed to us, COVID-19 has prompted a new order, developing and improving technologies that have become dominating and essential during the pandemic. As in the past (such as after the Second World War), in the aftermath of the pandemic, a new wave of innovation will be necessary for the economic restart of the countries.

What was so essential to keep on working during the lockdowns established by governments in most countries around the world was absolutely smart working. The duties of some workers were carried out prevalently in a virtual way during the pandemic, as the research showed in the previous chapters. So, the greatest “innovation” of COVID-19 is the centrality of smart working. Undeniably, the pandemic has accelerated a process that had seen set in motion since before its beginning, but many were critical about the total use of smart working in a working environment. The most important concern raised up by critics was productivity. But the social-distancing measures which were set up in order to counteract the spreading of the disease among the most vulnerable groups of the society have forced people to stay at home, allowing them to review the way of working and consenting also to disprove previous ideas about smart working regarding the productivity. Here below it is possible to see a graph made by the multinational professional services network “PricewaterhouseCoopers” (PwC) which show how much productivity improved over a prolonged work-from-home period.

Productivity improved over prolonged work-from-home period



Q: Which of the following best describes your productivity working remotely compared to before COVID-19?
 Q: How has average employee productivity changed (compared to pre-COVID-19)? (Responding 'more productive' and 'much more productive')
 Source: PwC US Remote Work Survey
 June 25, 2020, Base: 118 US executives, 1,200 US office workers
 January 12, 2021, Base: 132 US executives, 1,200 US office workers

336

For this reason, we can deduce that the remote work can last for a long time, revolutionizing many works. According to a survey conducted by the smart working seems to be here to stay also after the pandemic. In fact, they admitted: “Remote work productivity is not just a fleeting crisis phenomenon. Findings from this second survey should help dispel concerns among the skeptics that work-from-home (WFH) is less effective. Instead, this data should draw attention to specific actions companies can take to help their workforce perform effectively in any environment. A majority of employees surveyed say their companies have been successful in finding ways to make WFH more productive. Allowing the flexibility needed to manage family matters is rated highest: 79% of employees say it’s been a success. Companies that may have been slow to adopt technologies that support remote work — or to create clear rules and a secure structure around WFH — are playing catch-up. Optimizing the hybrid workplace requires accelerating investments to support virtual collaboration and creativity, as well as for scheduling and safety. Over 60% of executives expect to raise spending on virtual collaboration tools and manager training. Half plan to invest more in areas that support hybrid working models, including hoteling apps (50%) and communal space in the office (48%) (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2021)³³⁷”. But the revolution introduced by the pandemic might be less ‘ground-breaking’ as people have experienced it so far. In the abovementioned survey, there is another graph which illustrates the percentage of executives who think company culture will survive a purely remote working set up.

³³⁶ PricewaterhouseCoopers. “US Remote Work Survey: PwC.” PwC, 2021, www.pwc.com/us/en/library/covid-19/us-remote-work-survey.html. Accessed 26 May 2021.

³³⁷ *Ibidem*.

Few executives think company culture will survive a purely remote working set up

■ To keep a strong culture, employees should be in the office...

About 1-3 days per month

6%

One day per week

5%

Two days per week

15%

Three days per week

29%

Four days per week

18%

Five days per week

21%

Employees don't need to be in the office to maintain company culture

5%

338

There are different hidden explanations. Firstly, because it does not involve every category of workers. As we seen in the previous chapters, both in Italy and in the United States, seasonal and domestic workers are not included since they can carry out their activities only in person. Same for essential activities, such as healthcare professionals, and commercial services workers, like restaurants, cafés, pubs, tobacco shops, supermarkets and so on. According to the estimates collected by “McKinsey and Company”, which is an American management consulting business, more than a half of workers has few or no opportunities to work remotely, while only 20% of the total workforce can work from home over three times a week with the tasks which the worker has³³⁹. Secondly, because many workers who had access to remote work during the pandemic may no longer be entitled to this right that arose from the emergency. For instance, educational workers could be one of these categories, considering the importance of in-person classes (which has sought to be preserved from the closures during the second wave of the pandemic by countries like France³⁴⁰ and the Netherlands³⁴¹). The suggestion could be the use of blended education for higher education (from high school to universities) in those countries which have few facilities and a high number of requests to enrol in

³³⁸ *Ibidem*.

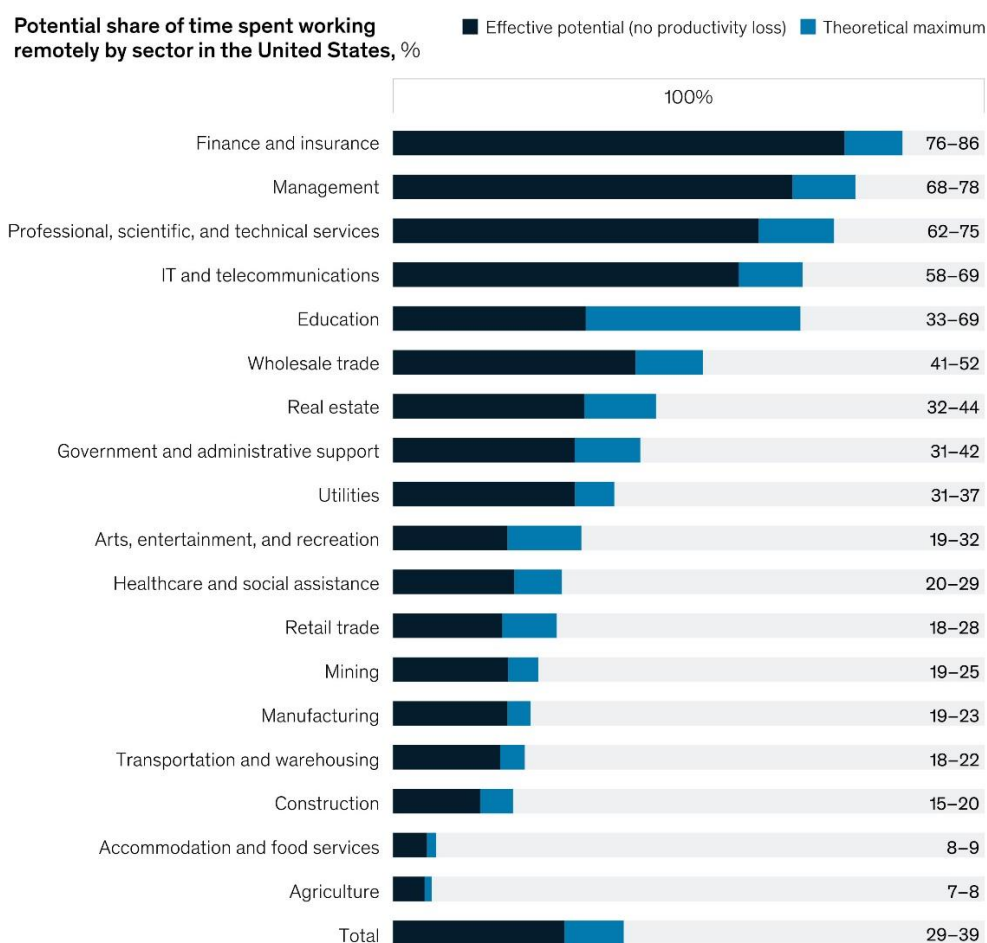
³³⁹ Lund, Susan, et al. “What’s next for Remote Work: An Analysis of 2,000 Tasks, 800 Jobs, and Nine Countries.” *McKinsey & Company*, McKinsey & Company, 23 Nov. 2020, www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/whats-next-for-remote-work-an-analysis-of-2000-tasks-800-jobs-and-nine-countries#. Accessed 26 May 2021.

³⁴⁰ McAuley, James. “Students in France Return to Schools, Even as Covid-19 Cases Soar.” *Washington Post*, The Washington Post, Sept. 2020, www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/covid-schools-reopen-france/2020/08/31/21afbd94-e93e-11ea-bf44-0d31c85838a5_story.html. Accessed 26 May 2021.

³⁴¹ De Boer, Harry. “COVID-19 in Dutch Higher Education.” *Studies in Higher Education*, 2021, www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03075079.2020.1859684. Accessed 27 May 2021.

them (such as in Italy). Moreover, this may be helpful to enlarge the course of studies offered by schools and universities. They could introduce programs offered entirely online at a reduced cost, to be more affordable and continue to give an in-person education for those who want to experience teaching in the presence and all related consequences (such as the scholastic and academic social life, participation in extra-curricular activities and so on). As a middle ground, there could be mixed education with reduced costs without sacrificing the extras mentioned above. But in order to understand what categories will be more impacted by the changes prompted by the pandemic, “McKinsey & Company” realized a graph, shedding a light on the percentage of workers in each sector which will be able to benefit from smart working. And according to their estimates and predictions, people who will benefit from smart working even after the pandemic range between 29 and 39 per cent of the total workforce³⁴².

The finance, management, professional services, and information sectors have the highest potential for remote work.



Note: The theoretical maximum includes all activities not requiring physical presence on-site; the effective potential includes only those activities that can be done remotely without losing effectiveness. Model based on more than 2,000 activities across more than 800 occupations.
Source: McKinsey Global Institute analysis

McKinsey
& Company

343

³⁴² Lund, Susan, et al. “What’s next for Remote Work: An Analysis of 2,000 Tasks, 800 Jobs, and Nine Countries.” *McKinsey & Company*, McKinsey & Company, 23 Nov. 2020, www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/whats-next-for-remote-work-an-analysis-of-2000-tasks-800-jobs-and-nine-countries#. Accessed 26 May 2021.

³⁴³ *Ibidem*.

The impact of smart working will be substantially reduced in the aftermath of the pandemic. Notwithstanding, it could be enough in such a way to reshape migrational and emigrational patterns worldwide, as seen in previous chapters.

When the social distancing measures will be over, migrant workers will be able to travel again, but with a new and different awareness. Now, they know they can carry out their duties wherever they want, without any kind of limits. For this reason, they can ask to work permanently with the status of smart workers and work from home, maybe moving even closer to the family. However, the abovementioned doubts of employers could deny this opportunity, promoting a blended approach: the ‘near working’.

Near working is defined by the article made by Federico Del Prete and published in “Business Insider” newspaper with the following words: “Near-working is the idea of a working space and time in between the home and the company headquarters, thus remaining hooked to family needs without suffering too much stress, while being able to work safely and efficiently (Del Prete, 2021)³⁴⁴”. Italian cities as Milan are opting for this choice³⁴⁵, giving the opportunity to reconvert the unused spaces at corporate headquarters in coworking areas and avoiding the dispersion of human capital away from the metropolis, as supported by the author of the article³⁴⁶. From the employees’ point of view, it would allow the worker to have his or her own space outside the home to work without any familiar distraction around. Moreover, this would avoid three problems generated by smart working in workers. The first concerns the legal issue of the salaries. Workers’ wages depend on the costs of life in the place where the workers used to live. In a liquid situation such as the “working from anywhere” (WFA), also the salaries of every worker should be adequate of their living costs, causing controversial issues from legal and economic perspectives, that are not created by near working. Another problem is related to the ‘right to disconnect’ that every worker must enjoy in order to balance work and private life. The first two countries which introduced this right in their legislations were France and Spain before the pandemic in 2019³⁴⁷, but it is gradually spreading within and outside Europe³⁴⁸

³⁴⁴ Del Prete, Federico. “L’evoluzione Dello Smart è Il near Working, Il Lavoro Di Prossimità. Cosa Succede a Milano, Tra Città 15’ E Logica Concentrazionaria | Business Insider Italia.” *Business Insider Italia*, 5 Apr. 2021, it.businessinsider.com/evoluzione-dello-smart-e-il-near-working-il-lavoro-di-prossimita-cosa-succede-a-milano-tra-citta-15-e-logica-concentrazionaria/. Accessed 27 May 2021.

³⁴⁵ Di Stefano, Alessandro. “Milano Punta al near Working: La PA Si Sposta Nei Coworking #Startupitalia #Milano #Nearworking.” *Startupitalia.eu*, 4 Feb. 2019, startupitalia.eu/878-20210104-milano-punta-al-near-working-la-pa-si-sposta-nei-coworking. Accessed 27 May 2021.

³⁴⁶ Del Prete, Federico. “L’evoluzione Dello Smart è Il near Working, Il Lavoro Di Prossimità. Cosa Succede a Milano, Tra Città 15’ E Logica Concentrazionaria | Business Insider Italia.” *Business Insider Italia*, 5 Apr. 2021, it.businessinsider.com/evoluzione-dello-smart-e-il-near-working-il-lavoro-di-prossimita-cosa-succede-a-milano-tra-citta-15-e-logica-concentrazionaria/. Accessed 27 May 2021.

³⁴⁷ Wisenberg Brin, Dinah. “France and Spain: Right to Disconnect Spreads.” *SHRM*, SHRM, 20 May 2019, www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/legal-and-compliance/employment-law/pages/global-france-spain-right-to-disconnect.aspx. Accessed 27 May 2021.

³⁴⁸ Way, Katie. “‘Right to Disconnect’ Legislation Is Spreading.” *Vice.com*, 2019, www.vice.com/en/article/evjk4w/right-to-disconnect-legislation-labor-movement. Accessed 27 May 2021.

to the point of being asked as an EU-wide fundamental right by the Members of the European Parliament³⁴⁹. In the case of near working, it will be a time which you should leave the coworker position, as the same when people go to work in the office. Consequently, if this division between the different parts of the worker's life is not respected, it can lead to damage to the worker's own mental health. The "burnout syndrome" are increasing in this time of the pandemic, maybe helped by the restrictions introduced by the governments. What is certain is the role of smart working in the increase of burnout cases, as the Business Insider declared in its article: "Burnout and fatigue are familiar themes of pandemic life. Meetings are booming, workdays are lengthening. And at the same time, per recent LinkedIn survey data, 74% of employees are taking "shelter" in their current job as a way of mitigating risk during tumultuous times. While what it means to work from home isn't going to be the same in post-pandemic life, these remote and hybrid — where you come into the office some of the time — work styles are likely to. But conflict is rising around the best way to do it without sacrificing quality, company success, or personal wellbeing (Business Insider, 2021)³⁵⁰".

By the way, alongside the ups, there are many downs just around the corner. One of the disadvantages of near working is the probable new outflow from little towns to move again in big cities at the end of the pandemic. This could nullify all the 'rediscoveries' made during the pandemic, such as the importance of contact with nature. But there is a change of gear from the past, particularly before COVID-19: a rethinking in the structures of the cities, which should also be comprehensive of the peripheries and the countryside, like a giant metropolitan area. Prompting innovations, refining existing technologies and infrastructures (such as high-speed trains), and developing smart cities for each region or state in the whole country could be a good solution in such a way to maintain a balance for a new 'normality': the era of the 'supercommuter', as mentioned in the article made by Derek Thompson³⁵¹. After the pandemic, people should be able to carry out their duties from another smart city different from the workplace, equipped with coworking stations which are nearest to the place which they are used to live or where the family live. In this way, moving could become a personal choice and not forced by external factors (such as work or study reasons) and changing also the lifestyle: no more an extremist globalized way of life but a new approach founded on 'glocalization'.

In conclusion, in a future scenario, we will see a decrease of pure smart working, but a prevalence of blended in-person work and a remote one. As a consequence, movements around the world will increase again but in a new and more sustainable way before the past. If the city could offer whatever people need to

³⁴⁹ De Boer, Ingelise. EU-wide. "'Right to Disconnect' Should Be an EU-Wide Fundamental Right, MEPs Say | News | European Parliament." *Europa.eu*, 2021, www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210114IPR95618/right-to-disconnect-should-be-an-eu-wide-fundamental-right-meps-say. Accessed 27 May 2021.

³⁵⁰ Business Insider. "4 Things You Need to Know about the Future of Hybrid and Remote Work." *Business Insider*, Business Insider, 14 Apr. 2021, www.businessinsider.com/what-to-know-about-the-future-of-hybrid-remote-work-2021-4?IR=T. Accessed 27 May 2021.

³⁵¹ Thompson, Derek. "The Atlantic." *The Atlantic*, theatlantic, Feb. 2021, www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/02/remote-work-revolution/617842/. Accessed 19 May 2021.

perform at their best and workers' families live nearby, there is no occasion to move, if not for personal choice or the pleasure of travel.

4.2: Globalization versus glocalization: a new step towards sustainability?

In the previous paragraph, the research hinted at the phenomenon of “glocalization”. The professor of Political Science and Political Theory of the University of Lucerne, Joachim Blatter, defines the concept in the following terms in *Encyclopædia Britannica*: “Glocalization, the simultaneous occurrence of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies in contemporary social, political, and economic systems. The term, a linguistic hybrid of globalization and localization, was popularized by the sociologist Roland Robertson and coined, according to him, by Japanese economists to explain Japanese global marketing strategies. The notion of glocalization represents a challenge to simplistic conceptions of globalization processes as linear expansions of territorial scales. Glocalization indicates that the growing importance of continental and global levels is occurring together with the increasing salience of local and regional levels (Blatter, 2013)³⁵²”.

The rise of a “glocal” approach dates back before the pandemic, but during the pandemic, it has acquired strength and its consecration may come after the end of the COVID era. The pandemic has seen the entire limits of globalization. For instance, in the COVID-19 era, the working world has suffered a huge stop, due to the restrictions but the one most affected sector not by chance was the migrant labour, which is a creation of the globalized economy. The Senior Fellow of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Erol Yayboke pointed out the criticism of globalization and its limits during the pandemic: “Migrant labor — the engine of a globalized economy — stops moving. While exemptions might be made for key professions (e.g., scientists, doctors, journalists, government leaders), those who travel to work and travel for work may not be able to do so for the foreseeable future. This will have family, economic, and potentially food security implications. Migrant workers currently overseas may not be able to get home, and families already dealing with complicated immigration and visa regimes may experience prolonged separation for an entirely new reason. It is conceivable that, in response to current and future quarantines or “stay at home” orders, businesses will also accelerate development of automation capabilities, thereby removing some jobs often filled by migrants more quickly (Yayboke, 2020)³⁵³”.

The globalized world prompted people to move across nations and continents and one of the sectors which was mostly affected by the pandemic and it will probably never be the same in the aftermath is business travel. COVID-19 has led to a replacement of business travel with virtual meetings via Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, Cisco Webex and so on. The same arguments could be applied also to conferences and

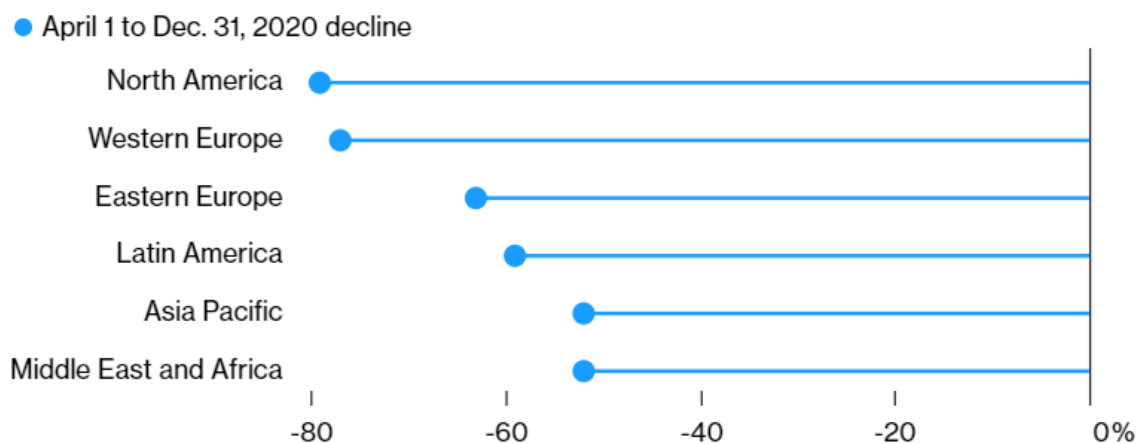
³⁵² Blatter, Joachim. “Glocalization | Britannica.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2021, www.britannica.com/topic/glocalization. Accessed 28 May 2021.

³⁵³ Yayboke, Erol. “Five Ways COVID-19 Is Changing Global Migration.” *Csis.org*, 2020, www.csis.org/analysis/five-ways-covid-19-changing-global-migration. Accessed 28 May 2021.

refresher courses. So, workers and students can meet each other in virtual space without facing additional costs and long distances. For this reason, this sector is likely to disappear. The article “Business trips struggle to recover in the age of Zoom Video Meetings” made by Alexandre Tanzi and published on Bloomberg have detected this tendency and the author commented that in this way: “Corporate chiefs have noted the effectiveness of video-conferencing tools - and the money they saved. Many have also pledged to reduce carbon emissions. The upshot may be bad news for anyone looking forward to resuming a road-warrior lifestyle. The Global Business Travel Association estimates that worldwide spending on commercial travel won’t recover to its pre-pandemic peak of \$1.4 trillion until 2025. In the U.S., the latest Census Bureau survey of small businesses found that only 27% of companies expect to spend money on travel in the next six months. “The outcomes of meetings held on Zoom vs those held in person are not that much different, but the costs are night-and-day different,” Richard Curtin, director of the University of Michigan Survey of Consumers, said in an interview. “It will be hard to justify the costs that were once supported.” (Tanzi, 2021)³⁵⁴”. Below it is possible to see a graph that summarizes the data offered by the author.

Business Travel Falters

The pandemic has been devastating for business travel. Before 2020, business travel had grown for 10 consecutive years, with an average growth rate of 5.1% per year



Source: Global Business Travel Association

355

This will be another effect of ‘glocalization’: the place where everyone can meet will be virtual. It would be helpful also for environmental reasons. The discovery of the relationship between pollution and COVID-19, particularly increasing by 9% the mortality rates (Petroni et al, 2020)³⁵⁶, and the fear that another pandemic could disrupt even in the future, pressed Western governments in tackling the environmental

³⁵⁴ Tanzi, Alexandre. “Business Trips Struggle to Recover in the Age of Zoom Video Meetings.” *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 2 Mar. 2021, www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-03-02/not-so-frequent-flyers-business-travel-misses-out-on-recovery. Accessed 28 May 2021.

³⁵⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁵⁶ Petroni, Michael, et al. “Hazardous Air Pollutant Exposure as a Contributing Factor to COVID-19 Mortality in the United States.” *Environmental Research Letters*, vol. 15, no. 9, 11 Sept. 2020, p. 0940a9, iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abaf86. Accessed 28 May 2021.

problems by introducing new “green” policies. For instance, according to the EU recovery deal approved last year, European Union will invest 30% of the agreed total, amounting to “a 1.074 trillion euros EU budget for 2021-27, plus a 750 billion euros recovery fund” (Abnett, 2020)³⁵⁷, on climate spending share³⁵⁸.

So, in order to continue pursuing the ‘green path’, it is important to rethink life with a view to sustainability, especially on the environment. Governments should incentive labour policies which will favour locals or the remote working from other countries and nationalities, finding the balance between “global” and “local” aspects (on the one hand, remaining virtually open to comparison with other cultures; on the other hand, privileging what the local labour market has to offer). In addition, now people are aware that we are not untouchable, and the risk of new pandemics is concrete and real. In order to avoid and prevent this catastrophic scenario, governments and individuals should rethink the structures of the cities.

In his book “Vaccination a Delusion: its Penal Enforcement a Crime” (1898), Russel Wallace was not only the first one who found a correlation between overcrowding and viral diseases, but also the role of pollution in the spreading of viruses. Taking as an example smallpox, he claimed: “But on the sanitation theory the explanation is simple. Mercantile seaports have grown up along the banks of harbours or tidal rivers whose waters and shores have been polluted by sewage for centuries. They are always densely crowded owing to the value of situations as near as possible to the shipping. Hence, there is always a large population living under the worst sanitary conditions, with bad drainage, bad ventilation, abundance of filth and decaying organic matter, and all the conditions favourable to the spread of zymotic diseases and their exceptional fatality. Such populations have maintained to our day the insanitary conditions of the last century, and thus present us with a similarly great small-pox mortality (Wallace, 1898)³⁵⁹”. He was also the first one who suggested improving hygienic and sanitary conditions and to change the organisation of the urban areas to avoid the spreading of new viral diseases³⁶⁰. And despite the former have been improved over time, the latter has seen a worsening with the rise of buildings and giant structures which welcome too many people (like skyscrapers), facilitating the diffusion of illnesses. Moreover, the ‘bad’ habit of using private vehicles (such as cars) instead of public transportations (such as trains, trams, buses and undergrounds or metros) entailed an increase in pollution in the air. The acknowledgement of the correlation between COVID-19 and pollution³⁶¹ (combined with little opportunity to enjoy the outdoors in leisure time due to restrictions) awakened the consciences of individuals, trying to use more sustainable and alternative methods such as bicycles. Adrienne Bernhard, author of the article “The great bicycle boom of 2020” and published on “BBC”

³⁵⁷ Abnett, Kate. “Factbox: How ‘Green’ Is the EU’s Recovery Deal?” *U.S.*, 21 July 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-summit-climate-change-factbox/factbox-how-green-is-the-eus-recovery-deal-idUSKCN24M19V. Accessed 28 May 2021.

³⁵⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁵⁹ Wallace, Alfred Russel. “Vaccination a delusion its penal enforcement a crime:: proved by the official evidence in the reports of the Royal Commission”. *Swan Sonnenschein & Co., LIMD, Paternoster Square*. London, 1898.

³⁶⁰ *Ibidem*.

³⁶¹ Brown, Alex. “Emissions Exposure May Increase COVID-19 Mortality.” *Pewtrusts.org*, 19 Oct. 2020, www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2020/10/19/emissions-exposure-may-increase-covid-19-mortality. Accessed 1 Apr. 2021.

said: “Covid-19 brought about a dramatic increase in bicycle sales in response to the pandemic. Heightened anxiety over public transportation and a surge in exercise has meant that more and more are choosing to use one of the most basic forms of mobility, leading to a so-called “bike boom”. Cycling has long been one of the fastest, most flexible and reliable methods of transport. Even before the pandemic, millions relied on bicycles to do their jobs or get to work. But when stay-at-home orders temporarily curtailed daily life across the globe, the role of bicycles transformed. One in 10 American adults reported having ridden a bike for the first time in a year (or longer) since the onset of Covid-19, according to research by People for Bikes, an industry coalition based in Colorado, US. And in March 2020, ridership on trails in the US peaked at a threefold increase compared with the same period in 2019, according to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a non-profit promoting the development of disused rail lines into trails for walking and cycling in the US. (Bernhard, 2020)³⁶²”.

The new central role of bicycles was recognized also by some governments around the world, as explained by Bernhard: “Indeed, some nations rewarded the purchase of new bikes or bike maintenance expenditures in a bid to encourage ridership during the pandemic. Italy, for example, allocated €210m (£190m/\$250m) toward a cash-back programme through which Italian residents who purchased a vehicle without an engine were eligible for a €500 (£450/\$590) stipend, while France has established a similar programme. With lockdown measures and social distancing firmly in place, bike retailers suddenly became an “essential service” and were given exemptions from shutting down by governments, putting them on a par with grocery stores. But bicycle manufacturers depend upon a multifaceted, geographically dynamic chain of production, with parts arriving from across the globe – a chain upended by the pandemic (Bernhard, 2020)³⁶³”.

The author concluded its article wondering if this new renaissance of bicycles can last also in the aftermath of COVID-19. This ‘good habit’ can continue only if we can rethink the cities, creating new cycle paths, enlarging streets, creating neighbourhood which has all the essential services that a person need: schools, coworking stations or working offices, high-speed railways or more metro and bus stations and cycle paths. In this way, long distances travels will be avoided, and pollution decreased. While the spreading of viruses could be slowed only with the renaissance of small cities, possibly building housings with few floors, in order to avoid gathering too many people. In this way, we continue with this new possible ‘green’ scenario.

In conclusion, the urgency of a new “glocal” world was pointed out by the scholar Ethan Goffman in its paper “In the wake of COVID-19, is glocalization our sustainability future?”, in which he said: “A society capable of surviving, and even thriving, in coming decades and into the 22nd century, will need to adapt a

³⁶² Bernhard, Adrienne. “The Great Bicycle Boom of 2020.” @BBC_Future, 2020, www.bbc.com/future/bespoke/made-on-earth/the-great-bicycle-boom-of-2020.html#:~:text=Covid%2D19%20brought%20about%20a,%2Dcalled%20%E2%80%9Cbike%20boom%E2%80%9D.. Accessed 28 May 2021.

³⁶³ *Ibidem*.

version of glocalization in which people live much more locally while encompassing a far broader vision of the planetary common good than we have seen thus far (Goffman, 2020)³⁶⁴”. People may have to give up and sacrifice something in their lifestyle, leaving them with shortcomings. But they are shortcomings that are worth it for a more sustainable life for everyone, paying more attention to individual and, thus, general well-being. Nonetheless, this requires state intervention.

4.3 The centrality of the State intervention during COVID-19 and its role in the future

Alongside globalization, another big loser from the pandemic is capitalism in its narrow sense of liberalization. As the research has shown, the liberalization of movements has hardly affected by the restrictions, so much so that some legal scholars have questioned whether lockdowns have constitutional validity and whether they infringe civil rights³⁶⁵.

As we see in the previous chapters, many workers were not able to carry out their duties because of restrictions and, for this reason, they have risked their jobs. Many governments have worked to avoid this scenario, giving aids to families and workers most touched by lockdowns. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) summarized all the economic policies introduced by States. For reasons of convenience, the research will take as examples only the fiscal measures introduced by the analysed countries: Italy and United States.

Regarding the situation in Italy and concerning its fiscal policies launched during the pandemic, IMF said: “On March 17 (2020), the government adopted a €25 billion (1.6 percent of GDP) “Cura Italia” emergency package. It includes:

- (i) funds to strengthen the Italian health care system and civil protection (€3.2 billion);
- (ii) measures to preserve jobs and support income of laid-off workers and self-employed (€10.3 billion);
- (iii) other measures to support businesses, including tax deferrals and postponement of utility bill payments in most affected municipalities (€6.4 billion); as well as
- (iv) measures to support credit supply (€5.1 billion)

On April 6 (2020), the Liquidity Decree allowed for additional state guarantees of up to €400 billion (25 percent of GDP). The guarantee envelope from this and earlier schemes is aimed to unlock more than €750 billion (close to 50 percent of GDP) of liquidity for businesses and households. On May 15 (2020), the

³⁶⁴ Goffman, Ethan. “In the Wake of COVID-19, Is Glocalization Our Sustainability Future?” *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 2020, www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15487733.2020.1765678. Accessed 28 May 2021.

³⁶⁵ Falcioni, Davide. “Le Restrizioni Anti-Covid Sono Illegittime: Cosa Dice La Sentenza Di Un Tribunale Del Belgio.” *Fanpage*, Fanpage, Apr. 2021, www.fanpage.it/esteri/le-restrizioni-anti-covid-sono-illegittime-cosa-dice-la-sentenza-di-un-tribunale-del-belgio/. Accessed 29 May 2021.

government adopted a further €55 billion (3.5 percent of GDP) “Relaunch” package of fiscal measures. It provides, among other things, further income support for families (€14.5 billion), funds for the healthcare system (€3.3 billion), and other measures to support businesses, including grants for SMEs and tax deferrals (€16 billion). Following the Parliament’s approval for a further €25 billion (1.6 percent of GDP) deficit deviation, on August 8 (,2020), the government adopted a new third support package. Labor and social measures (€12 billion) include, among other things, additional income support for families and some workers, an extension of the short-time work program, and a suspension of social security contribution for new hires. Other key measures are extensions of the moratorium on SMEs’ debt repayment and the time to pay back tax obligations. On October 27 (2020), the government adopted a €5.4 billion (0.3 percent of GDP) package that seeks to provide quick relief to the sectors affected by the latest round of COVID containment actions. Measures include grants to 460 thousand SMEs and the self-employed, and further income support for families. The government has also extended social contribution exemptions for affected businesses. On March 19 and April 15 (2021), the government approved further support packages for about €72bn aiming at extending supports for business and workers affected by the pandemic as well as kickstarting the economy. Key measures include compensating businesses and the self-employed (proportional to 2020 turnover loss), and extending the firing ban and the short-time work schemes (IMF, 2020)³⁶⁶”.

About U.S. fiscal policies during the pandemic, IMF said: “On March 11, 2021, the House approved the American Rescue Plan, which provides another round of coronavirus relief with an estimated cost of \$1,844bn (about 8.8 percent of 2020 GDP). The plan focuses on investing in the public health response and providing time-bound assistance to families, communities and businesses. It extends the unemployment benefits programs (including supplemental unemployment benefits), sends direct stimulus payments of \$1,400 to eligible individuals, provides direct aid to state and local government, adds resources to the vaccination program and increases funding for school reopening. On December 28 President Trump signed a US \$ 868bn (about 4.1 percent of GDP) coronavirus relief and government funding bill as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. The Act includes enhanced unemployment benefits of US \$ 300 weekly federal enhancement in benefits through March 14, direct stimulus payments of \$600 to individuals, another round of PPP loans, resources for vaccines, testing and tracing, and funding for K-12 education. On August 8, President Trump issued executive orders mostly to address the expiration of certain Coronavirus reliefs provided by previous legislations. These included:

- i) using \$44 billion from the Disaster Relief Fund to provide extra unemployment benefits ;
- ii) continuing student loan payment relief ;

³⁶⁶ IMF. “Policy Responses to COVID19.” IMF, 2021, www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19. Accessed 4 May 2021.

- iii) deferring collections of employee social security payroll taxes ;
- iv) identifying options to help renters and homeowners avoid evictions and foreclosures.

US \$ 483 billion Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act. The legislation includes:

- (i) US \$ 321 billion for additional forgivable Small Business Administration loans and guarantees to help small businesses that retain workers;
- (ii) US \$ 62 billion for the Small Business Administration to provide grants and loans to assist small businesses;
- (iii) US \$ 75 billion for hospitals;
- (iv) US \$ 25 billion for expanding virus testing.

An estimated US \$ 2.3 trillion (around 11% of GDP) Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economy Security Act (“CARES Act”). The Act includes:

- (i) US \$ 293 billion to provide one-time tax rebates to individuals;
- (ii) US \$ 268 billion to expand unemployment benefits;
- (iii) US \$ 25 billion to provide a food safety net for the most vulnerable;
- (iv) US \$ 510 billion to prevent corporate bankruptcy by providing loans, guarantees, and backstopping Federal Reserve 13(3) program;
- (v) US \$ 349 billion in forgivable Small Business Administration loans and guarantees to help small businesses that retain workers; (vi) US \$ 100 billion for hospitals,
- (vi) US \$ 150 billion in transfers to state and local governments and
- (vii) US \$ 49.9 billion for international assistance (including SDR28 billion for the IMF’s New Arrangement to Borrow).

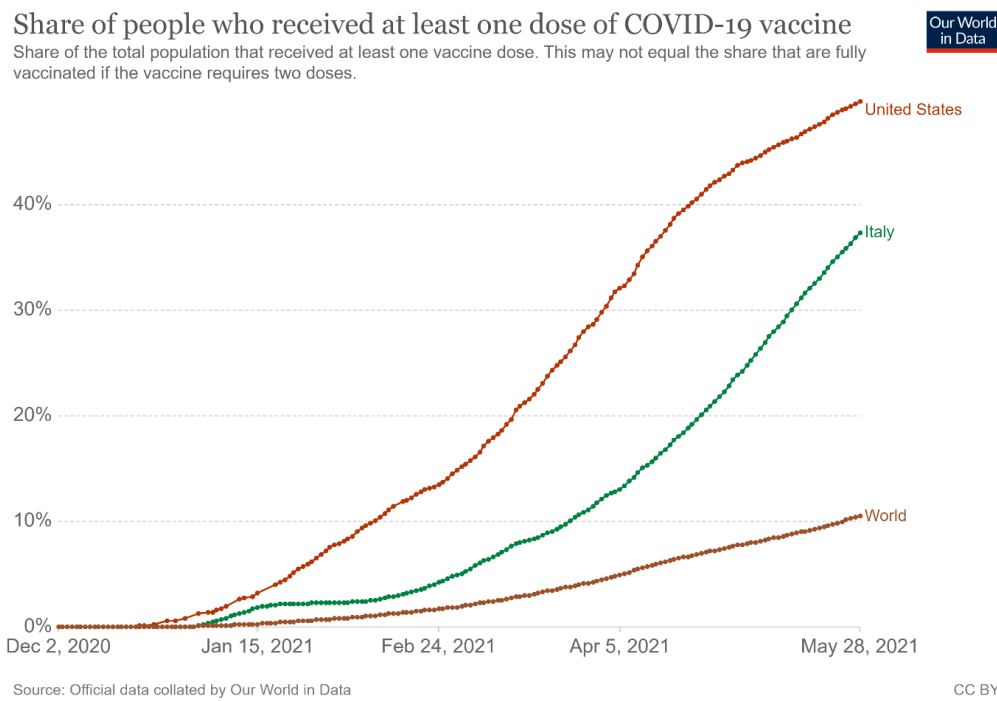
US \$ 8.3 billion Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act and US \$ 192 billion. They together provide around 1% of GDP for:

- (i) Virus testing; transfers to states for Medicaid funding; development of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; support for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention responses.

- (ii) 2 weeks paid sick leave; up to 3 months emergency leave for those infected (at 2/3 pay); food assistance; transfers to states to fund expanded unemployment insurance.
- (iii) Expansion of Small Business Administration loan subsidies. And (iv) US \$ 1.25 billion in international assistance. In addition, federal student loan obligations have been suspended for 60 days (IMF, 2020)³⁶⁷.

Unquestionably, the measures introduced by both countries have prevented the increase of the unemployment rates and have given reliefs to suffering workers and sectors. The role of the state was essential in overcoming the pandemic emergency and it should continue to maintain this role also in the post-pandemic scenario.

During this period of living with the virus, the state also played an essential role in managing the emergency itself. It does not concern only the hospital pressure issue, but also the vaccination campaign. While the United States has vaccinated half of the total population³⁶⁸, the Italian government boosted its vaccination campaign in April and now it would appear that vaccinations are proceeding apace³⁶⁹. Below it is possible to find a graph on the vaccination trend in Italy and United States, comparing them to the world's one.



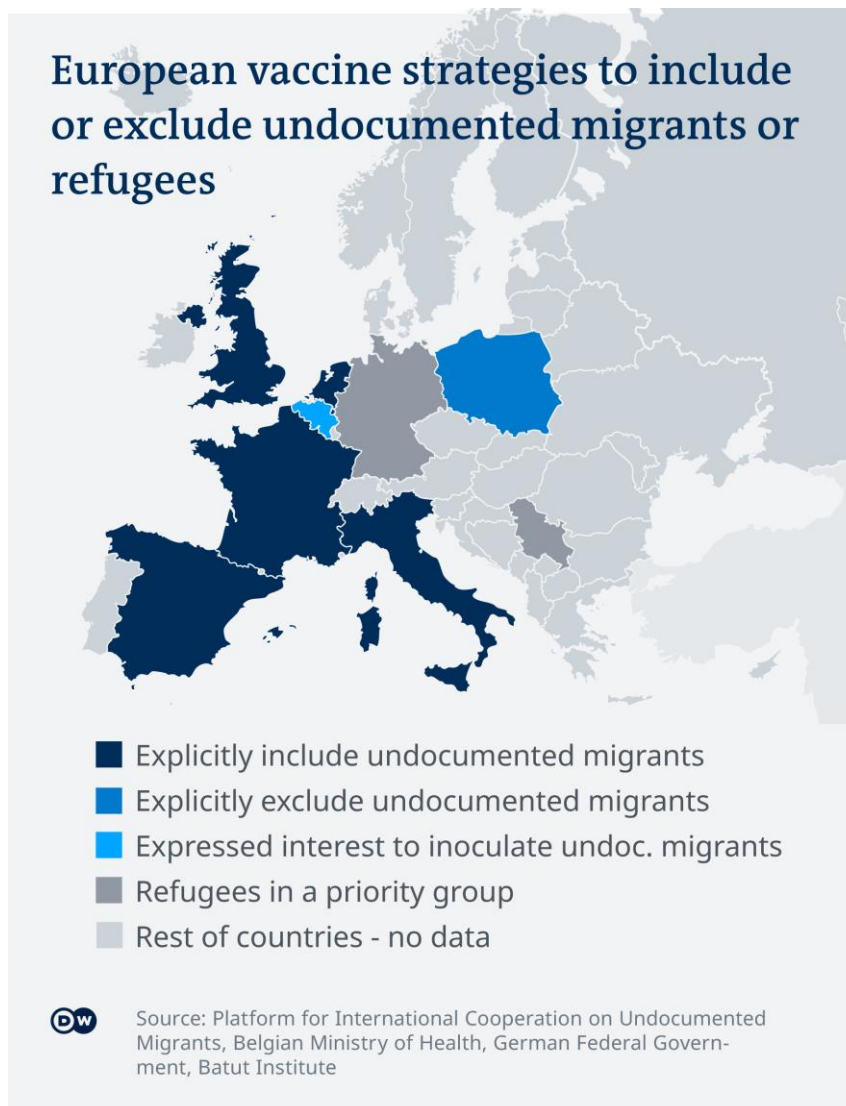
³⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁶⁸ Holder, Josh. "Tracking Coronavirus Vaccinations around the World." *The New York Times*, 2021, www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-vaccinations-tracker.html. Accessed 29 May 2021.

³⁶⁹ Reuters. "New Protocols, Vaccine Supplies to Boost Italy's Vaccination Campaign -Minister to Paper." *Reuters*, 12 Apr. 2021, www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/new-protocols-vaccine-supplies-boost-italys-vaccination-campaign-minister-paper-2021-04-12/. Accessed 29 May 2021.

³⁷⁰ Ritchie, Hannah et al. "Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations - Statistics and Research." *Our World in Data*, 2021, ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations. Accessed 29 May 2021.

Both governments have ensured vaccination without additional costs for everyone, including migrants^{[371][372]}. They were aware that the virus could indiscriminately attack everyone, and this could lead to the creation of new clusters if they had not also vaccinated immigrants. But other countries, particularly European ones, have not given indications or they are ignoring the problem. For instance, the Netherlands has largely excluded migrant workers from their vaccination plan, despite they have a huge share of immigrants in its society, which is grounded on multiculturalism³⁷³. Below it is possible to see which countries have included immigrants in their vaccination plan and those which not in Europe.



374

³⁷¹ Bray, Ilona. "Are Undocumented Immigrants Eligible to Receive a COVID-19 Vaccine?" *Www.nolo.com*, Nolo, 24 Mar. 2021, www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/are-undocumented-immigrants-eligible-to-receive-a-covid-19-vaccine.html. Accessed 29 May 2021.

³⁷² Deutsche Welle (www.dw.com). "Refugees and Undocumented Migrants Must Be Vaccinated, NGOs Warn | DW | 24.02.2021." *DW.COM*, 2021, www.dw.com/en/refugees-and-undocumented-migrants-must-be-vaccinated-ngos-warn/a-56664623. Accessed 29 May 2021.

³⁷³ NL Times. "Migrant Workers in Netherlands Largely Excluded from Covid-19 Vaccination Program." *NL Times*, 3 May 2021, nltimes.nl/2021/05/03/migrant-workers-netherlands-largely-excluded-covid-19-vaccination-program. Accessed 29 May 2021.

³⁷⁴ Deutsche Welle (www.dw.com). "Refugees and Undocumented Migrants Must Be Vaccinated, NGOs Warn | DW | 24.02.2021." *DW.COM*, 2021, www.dw.com/en/refugees-and-undocumented-migrants-must-be-vaccinated-ngos-warn/a-56664623. Accessed 29 May 2021.

So, also, in this case, the role of the State is essential in managing the health emergency, but the economic recovery will be hard without State intervention. As when the Second World War ended, the State is needed to be able to rebuild the economy and to aspire to a relaunch.

As in the time of the economic boom in the '60s, the State should drive innovations in order to have new lease of life to restart. The economist Mariana Francesca Mazzucato has talked about the role of the State in innovation in her pamphlet "Do something different. The role of the entrepreneurial State in fostering innovation". Talking about the green revolution, she wrote: "After looking at the role of the state in making the most courageous investments behind the internet and IT revolution two chapters look at the next big thing: 'green' technology. Unsurprisingly we find that across the globe the countries leading in the green revolution (solar and wind energy are the paradigmatic examples explored) are those where the state is playing an active role beyond that which is typically attributed to market failure theory. And the public sector organizations involved, such as development banks in Brazil and China, are not just providing countercyclical lending (as Keynes would have asked for), but even 'directing' that lending towards the most innovative parts of the 'green' economy (Mazzucato, 2013)³⁷⁵".

For a long time, many governments have left the economy to the liberal and the 'invisible hand' of Adam Smith³⁷⁶ without taking responsibility for making policies. Others have centralised power to such an extent that they have crushed entrepreneurial activities. But at this moment, we need a State helped by the businesses to drive towards a 'green revolution' which the research mentioned before. But at the same time, governments should have a look at their national debts and to future generations. 'Sustainability' should be the keyword not only for ecological but also for economic aspects. And even if governments need to increase their debts to have new investments and to face the new challenges, these new investments should be addressed to future generations to recover part of the debt produced. The governments should address investments in education, research and digital transition, as budgeted by the EU recovery plan³⁷⁷.

In summary, migration will be present also in the post-pandemic era, but probably the phenomenon will be less widespread than in the past because there is a more effective and sustainable way to meet cultures: virtually. And virtual interconnections will overcome real interactions, cutting costs and time, but losing human contact, a problem that affected particularly young people, who should be the future of a country. The various nations could have the occasion to demonstrate the same attention that they gave to elders to the pandemic to young people, providing them with a brighter future than they have seen so far and especially during this pandemic.

³⁷⁵ Mazzucato, Mariana. "Do something different. The role of an entrepreneurial state in fostering innovation." In *Twenty Years of Ideas*, edited by Ralph Scott and David Goodhart (London: Demos, 2013), 141-150.

³⁷⁶ Majaski, Christina. "Dispelling Mysteries about the Invisible Hand." *Investopedia*, 2021, www.investopedia.com/terms/i/invisiblehand.asp. Accessed 7 June 2021.

³⁷⁷ "Recovery Plan for Europe." *European Commission*, 2021, ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/recovery-plan-europe_en. Accessed 29 May 2021.

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Abstract

COVID-19 has had an effect on all our lives in every way, disrupting our lifestyles. Particularly, the virus has affected the mobility within and outside the territory that people used to live. The enforcement of some social distancing measures, such as the bindingness of wearing masks, respect of the hygienic standards and norms, closures and lockdowns prevent the possibility to carry on the “normal life”. What used to be obvious before the pandemic, such as work in person or physically go to school or university, it has no longer possible as long as this danger continues to circulate. And according to some studies cited and deepened during the research, the movements of people can enhance the spreading of mortal viruses.

Globalization has needed international movements from its beginning. The figures of merchants and multinational enterprises (MNEs) have contributed to the rise of a new globalized world, generating a turning point from the medieval and feudal world to the modern world. The latter one has left in legacy the globalised world which people are used to knowing before the pandemic.

Over time, the MNEs became essential for the good working of the current capitalistic system for its capacity to interconnect countries, cultures and, essentially, people, going beyond barriers and borders. For this reason, globalization is considered at the basis of the current economic cycle. The more goods, people and services are spreading and moving across the world, the more globalized the world becomes. This phenomenon is composed of four elements: trade, capital movements, movements of people and spread of knowledge. And the pandemic has disrupted the economy due to the measures implemented by governments to avoid non-essential contacts, throwing some countries (with a more fragile economic structure) into a new deep economic crisis.

The research wants to show the economic dependency of nations on globalization and the people’s freedom of movement. But not only the countries are dependent on these dynamics, but also the companies, which need the free movement of people in order to increase their revenues and to generate business. The scheme activated by the MNEs follows the Eclectic Paradigm which was explained by John Harry Dunning and which was also known as “OLI Paradigm” for the three main elements that compound the theory: the Ownership advantages, Locational advantages and Internalisation advantages.

As the research said before, the pandemic has upset the world that we lived in and, in addition, the economic cycle. The correlation between the speed at which the virus spreads and the movement of people (and, consequently, their interaction) was demonstrated also before COVID-19 by different scholars, such as professors Tognotti and Taubenberger. But the risk of large-scale spread of the disease had been underestimated by the governments and the World Health Organization (WHO). And for this reason, when the virus was already widespread in the countries, the national governments had no choice but to implement the most restrictive measures they could: quarantines for those who were infected, total lockdowns for the rest of the population, avoiding non-essential contacts and so on. The enforcement of these measures, which

were considered 'outdated' before the pandemic, was necessary to contain and counteract infection and mortality rates.

One of the categories that suffered the most from the pandemic and these measures were the international migrants. Some of them cannot come back to their home countries, remaining imprisoned in limbo and far away from their families. Others were brutally repatriated to their home towns since they did no longer satisfied the criteria to stay in the host countries. These criteria usually rely on work or marriage. This entailed a global increase in irregular migration. In some of these cases, many of them have no health insurance since they cannot afford it, exposing them to an increased risk of contracting the virus. And in this uncertain and mistrusted atmosphere, xenophobic episodes have increased during the pandemic, since the foreigners were seen as 'the ones who could transmit COVID'. The attacks against Asians and black people in America are some examples of xenophobia triggered by the fear of this unknown disease.

At the same time, many migrants could come back and carry out their working tasks in the comfort and affection of the home. This was possible thanks to the implementation of policies that had been little used before the pandemic: smart working. Remote work allows people to work from anywhere, literally in any location in the world. And this led to new shapes of 'smart working', such as the 'near working' (which is the form of working near the workplace but from home) and its contrast of 'Work-From-Anywhere' (people who can work from everywhere), the 'south working' (an Italian reinterpretation of remote working, which entails working from Southern Italy despite the location of the businesses is located in Northern countries or North Italy), and the new term of 'workation' (working in a place which is usually considered for holidays and the word comes from the merger between 'working' and 'vacation'). This change can advantage some nations with beautiful landscapes and that encourage the contact with nature and which are used to be populated in holidays. Two examples of countries that are exploiting the spread of remote work are Mauritius (which has introduced a one-year premium visa for those who work in smart working and want to carry out their duties from the islands) and Croatia (which has introduced a specific visa for smart workers as well). This would not possible without the new central figure of the world of work that arose from the pandemic: the 'digital nomads'. They are an evolution of smart workers because they need only a computer to do their jobs and they can live anywhere without presence work. In order to analyse better the migration trends during the pandemic, the research will focus on two case studies: Italy and the United States of America.

In both case studies, the research draws attention to three categories of migrants: emigrants, immigrants and internal migrants. In this way, it would be possible to analyse the degree of mobility inside and outside the countries during the COVID-19 era.

In order to analyse the Italian situation, the research compares Italy with other European countries. This comparison revealed that Italy has implemented stronger measures than its European peers (alongside

Spain) especially during the first wave and regarding the mobility sector. In Italy, nobody could go outside without a self-declaration in which people could state that the reason they went out was justified by necessity. If the declarations were false, Italians could face legal sanctions. So, the control and the respects of the anti-COVID norms was centralized during the first wave. The huge difference between the first wave and the followings (second and third ones) was that in the first all entire Italy was considered as a 'red zone' (where the state of alert was maximum), while in the subsequent ones Italy was divided among regions and the colour of them depended on its critical status. The colours were: yellow (low risk), orange (medium) and red (maximum risk). In the third wave, the white zone was introduced, which corresponded to very low risk. Basing on these colours, the measures could be mitigated or enforced in the region.

Despite the implementation of these hard measures, Italy was one of the most affected countries in Europe and the world. The reason why the Italian infection and mortality rates were so high is still unknown. But the impact of the virus in Northern regions were higher than the Southern ones and many scholars addressed the responsibility to the pollution, whose presence is greater in northern Italy due to the concentration of industrial factories in the area. Lombardy region is the most affected in Italy.

The travel ban introduced by the Italian government has changed the Italian emigrational patterns during the pandemic. Italy has historically had a large flow of emigration, giving it a respectable soft power abroad. But before the state of alert became maximum and during the emergency (some of them were done as repatriations organized by the host country), many Italians who usually live abroad has come back to their hometowns, particularly students, smart workers and those workers who lost their jobs because of the restrictions. The same phenomenon is detectable in the internal migration: before that Lombardy region became a 'red zone', many people had left the cities of Lombardy to take refuge in their hometowns in southern Italy. The reasons below this choice of the compatriots to return to Italy should be addressed on the proximity to the family. Southern regions are the ones that are gaining the most from these 'return flows'. And many students and workers would like to continue to work from the South, generating a new kind of smart working: the south working. This could be helpful to revitalise small cities, peripheries and the Southern part of the country, while it could bring the 'supercities' (such as Milan) into disrepute. Other consequences of the travel bans scattered around the world are the increase of 'proximity tourism' and 'long stays' trends. Concerning the first, it regards travelling within the country, in order to rediscover home country and helping it financially. While the second sees an increase in days spent on holiday in one place. This attitude is triggered by the quarantines which prompt people to stay longer time in a place.

Another important key factor that prompted Italian people to return to their homeland is Brexit. Italians are one of the largest communities which reside in the United Kingdom. But alongside the pandemic, Brexit and the issue which concerns visas has prompted Italians to come back. Since the UK is no longer part of the EU, this has led to an increase in repatriations and made it more difficult to obtain visas even for EU citizens such as Italians. At the same time, many British citizens have managed to obtain dual citizenship

with one of the European member states, including actor Colin Firth who has taken Italian citizenship. In this way, they can maintain their status as European citizens and thus continue to benefit from the European single market and all the advantages of the EU. This is especially advantageous for companies operating between the City and the EU. And it can entail also an increase in British people's requests to become citizens of other countries in Europe, including Italy and creating more opportunities for these countries.

Concerning immigrational patterns in Italy, the travel bans have blocked new arrivals and renewals of visas for migrants, getting many of them in shadow and increasing, therefore, the repatriations. It is not by chance if the landings of illegal immigrants from the sea increased exponentially compared to previous years. At the same time, there is this decrease of regular immigrants, but this trend started before the pandemic. The reason why this decline relies on the "Decreto Sicurezza", which is a decree introduced by the former Minister of the Interior, Matteo Salvini, who is the leader of one of the Italian nationalist party, called "Lega". This law made the process of obtaining a visa, residence permit or Italian citizenship even more complicated for international migrants. However, the pandemic helped to shed a light on how much migrant workers are essential in our economic system. Particularly, the seasonal workers in the agricultural sector are central and in Italy the risk that the entire harvest would be wasted because of the restrictions was high. Fortunately, the Italian government has worked for an amnesty for the regularisation of migrant workers in such a way as to avoid possible wastes. In this way, they could come out from under the shadow of illegal migration. The largest community of immigrants in Italy is Romanians who were the hardest hit by the repatriations, despite they are European citizens. Nevertheless, they are not already included in the Schengen Area and for this reason, they are accounted as international migrants. Regarding other European citizens, it is difficult to take into account how many of them established themselves in Italy during the pandemic, since they are not forced to register their presence in the City Hall of the city which were established for a period less long than three months. Beyond that, then, they should signal their presence to the local authorities. But it is easy to imagine that Southern countries in Europe have seen a rise of Northern European citizens who can work remotely and want to live more in contact with nature or in a place with better weather and climate. But despite it could help Southern countries to speed up their recovery, however, first of all, they are only a few who can afford this lifestyle; then, the closures of cinemas, museums, bars and restaurants cannot allow spending money and, therefore, stimulating the economic recovery of local entrepreneurs and countries; finally, by contrast, it seems they may hardly push innovation in the host country, which could be more helpful for the latter than distribute some incomes in such a way as to go out from the economic crisis.

In conclusion, the immigrational and emigrational patterns (both inside and outside the country) have changed during the pandemic in Italy. This entails pros and cons: on the one hand, the pandemic has entailed the rise of a 'liquid workplace', because some workers could carry out their duties from home and this home could be located anywhere; on the other hand, the virus enhanced disequalities between locals and foreigners and these tendencies were present in the United States as well.

The United States of America were hardly affected by the virus, more than Italy since its size and population. Cities as New York faced total lockdowns for a long time. But differently from the Italian case, the measures were not introduced by the central government, but the implementation of social distancing restrictions relied on the federated States and their governors. Therefore, the U.S. preferred a decentralized approach rather than the Italian centralised approach (and after it followed the principle of subsidiarity established by article 117 of the Italian Constitution). The disadvantage of this situation could be the difficulties to slow the infection and mortality rate and tracking people with COVID-19. If a State decided to implement closures while the closest ones opted for more relaxed measures, the lockdowns were ineffective, even if the mobility on territory was reduced during the pandemic. But there were too many internal migrations in the U.S. as in Italy in this period. Too many people have crossed the borders among federated States. And also in this country, this phenomenon (which started before the pandemic but enhanced and speeded up this process) has advantaged small towns (first and foremost Santa Maria and Santa Barbara), revitalising them, but create a huge problem for that metropolis such as New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, etcetera. From the pandemic, the U.S. big cities have discovered their dependence on migrants: without new arrivals and while those who lived in the country were shifting in the suburbs, the metropolis started to be empty creating a huge economic loss for them. Moreover, it prompted innovation in the lifestyle of people: the rise of the ‘super-commuter’, who is a person who uses to live in peripheries and take the high-speed trains to work or even the workers can carry out their duties in remote work many times a week. As in Italy, a key role in this change of pace was played by smart working, which helped people to settle down wherever they want and work from anywhere. Even though remote work was implemented before the pandemic, more than half of Americans have used it to carry out their working tasks during the pandemic.

It would be a good reason for people to leave out the country and work from anywhere. In fact, despite the U.S. are always depicted as ‘the top destination country’, nobody could think that there are so many Americans who live outside their country or maybe some of them want to live abroad. But surprisingly, the movement of people who are leaving the country is increasing. This growth started before the pandemic but the research find pieces of evidence that this trend has continued to grow during its waves. Although the most interesting aspect regards that all of them who are leaving have different origins from Americans and they usually go back to the countries of their parents or ancestors.

Probably Trump’s anti-immigrational policies had played a role in pushing people of different origins to leave the country. And this rule had some consequences also during the pandemic: he reached an agreement in order to stop immigration with its neighbouring countries (such as Canada and Mexico) and he introduced a travel ban. As a consequence, he stopped every kind of immigration, both irregular and regular migrants, impeding the possibility to obtain visas, residence permits or citizenships. This entails greater risks for the U.S. immigrants, which depended on health, social and economic factors. It seemed that immigrants who live in the United States were more likely exposed to contracting the virus rather than local peers because

they were used to live in crowded places without the respect of social distancing measures (and they could not afford better accommodations). Particularly, it also depended on their immigration status: irregular or regular. And this legal status depended on the work, and many of them have lost their jobs during the pandemic and, as a consequence, any kind of benefits stipulated by working contracts, including health insurances. And if they have lost their job during the pandemic they have not only lost their wages and health insurance, but also the possibility to live legally in the U.S.: one of the criteria to have a visa or a resident permit relies on the work and/or marriage. So also the mortality rate is higher among migrants rather than locals. And it is different between the U.S. and Italy: Italian hospitals helped everyone without any kind of discrimination and did not ask back for their performances since the economic efforts made by the Italian government. It appeared that this system fitted better than the American system to contain COVID-19. And for this reason, American insurance companies and the U.S. government reached an agreement in which distributed for free COVID-19 tests and its care, helped also with the national healthcare programs of 'Medicaid' and 'Medicare'.

But another important game-changer was the United States 2020 elections. This marked an important turning point, because this event saw Biden's victory, leading to the anger of Trump and his supporters. On January 6th, 2021 there was the explosion of the tensions: many protesters and Trumpist voters, dissatisfied with the result, entered by force into Capitol Hill, in Washington D.C., seeming like a coup d'état. Nonetheless, once its mandate was over, Trump had to step aside in Biden's favour. And this entailed a change of gear in immigration policies in the U.S. Particularly, it has seen a rise of new irregular arrivals but at the same time, he would like to boost the implementation of a new plan for immigrants, especially to welcome refugees. Another change regards the anti-COVID policies, which became more centralized than in Trump's administration, speeding up the vaccinations.

In the concluding remarks on the American case study and their particular issues that arose during the pandemic, a special mention should be done for the growth of xenophobic attacks, such as the case of George Floyd, with the creation of the movement 'Black Lives Matter' and the hate crimes against Asian people who live in America. The pandemic has enhanced differences from economic and social viewpoints, but also racial ones. And this relationship between the pandemic and xenophobia was outlined by many scholars.

In conclusion, there are many similarities in immigration and emigration between Italy and the United States: fewer new arrivals in 2020 (excepted for the illegal immigration which increase during Biden's administration and in Italy) due to travel bans (which were implemented in both countries), the implementation of the use of the smart working (in every single facet), the revitalisation of small towns and otherwise the fear of metropolises' decline due to the internal migrations and the presence of xenophobic episodes in both countries are some of the main trends which both countries had in common during the pandemic. However, there are differences between them: for instances, the illegal immigration trend that

decreased under Trump's administration (unlikely in Italy), the aforementioned differences between the Italian and the U.S. healthcare systems, the greater incidence of racial crimes in the U.S. rather than in Italy, the centralized power in the managing the pandemic in Italy rather than the U.S. decentralized approach with Trump.

From the pandemic, we should learn the lesson and trying to avoid these human losses and extreme measures, that are detrimental to both the economy and mental health. In order to prevent a new pandemic, it is necessary to rethink the way of life, living in a more sustainable way. For this reason, smart working will be essentials in the near future, albeit reasonably the most popular of the smart working modes will be near working when the restrictions will be totally abandoned by countries to restart (at least a minimum) the work in presence. Work-From-Anywhere, smart-working and, generally, the smart working would be dangerous because of the different living costs and, consequently, the problem of the salaries which should be adequate to them. Another problem is the 'right to disconnect', which is one of the legislations that urges to be implemented by all governments across the world. And linked to this point, there is the third problem: the burn-out syndrome is increasing due to the excess of smart working and as well other mental diseases like COVID-19 fatigue, which became widespread due to the restriction that prompt to avoid non-essential contact and to stop social life.

Nonetheless, if we could find a balance between smart working and work in presence, as the near working is, many of these situations could be improved. And despite it could entail a new inflow in the metropolis, at the same time people would not again renounce the contact with nature. And if alongside smart working will be implemented new infrastructures which will lead to new high-speed railways or buses, maybe it would be possible to realize the project of a city for 'super-commuters'. Smart working should be essential because it can avoid non-essential travels (such as a business meeting or conference in a different part of the world), making that available also virtually. This could entail also a rethinking of the urban spaces. Encouraging work from home will entail less use of cars and public transportations, with the effect to reduce pollution. At the same time, if the workers need a quiet space to carry out their duties, they can resort to coworking stations, which are buildings (which could be reused from the offices that the companies do not want to maintain because they are too expensive and need to cut costs) where people can use to work. In this way, it would be possible to avoid the problem of social alienation and giving a calm space that is midway between home and work. And living in a place where everything is at hand despite the long distances from the centre of the city to the suburbs, making that more livable and it prompts people to live sustainably. In this way, it is possible to see the consecration of the "glocalization" instead of "globalization". Living in a 'glocal' way more than in a global way allows having everything at the disposal of the citizen, without going abroad. An example from the pandemic could be the increase in requests for bicycles. In this way, people do not produce pollution and can exercise in the open air. But in order to do this change, it urges State intervention.

To change this mindset and to carry out this 'green revolution' will be necessary the economic efforts of the State, particularly in innovation. And also in the pandemic, States have played a key role in distributing economic aids and subsidies to the most vulnerable population and avoiding the increase of unemployment and poverty rates. Another field in which there was State intervention is vaccination and in general the management of the pandemic. Without the State intervention, it was not possible to speed up vaccination campaigns and have the vaccine for free and it could entail also a risk for migrants because many of them could not have the vaccine if it would be dependent only on private companies, creating disequities (and some countries has this issue to deal with since their private healthcare) and continue to struggle with new infections. Therefore, the pandemic helped the State to regain control of its intervention in the economic field, which was taken from them in the name of liberalizations. And for this reason, to keep the aforementioned green revolution on, European Union members have decided to invest in it through the EU recovery deal. But the European Member States should take into account their national debts, so their investments should be targeted to something or someone that could create a profit. In few words: they should invest in younger people. For this reason, the four main fields which EU should address most of the EU recovery funds should be climate, education, research and digital transition. In this way, they could think about the future of the country, giving also them a chance to create their future with their own hands.