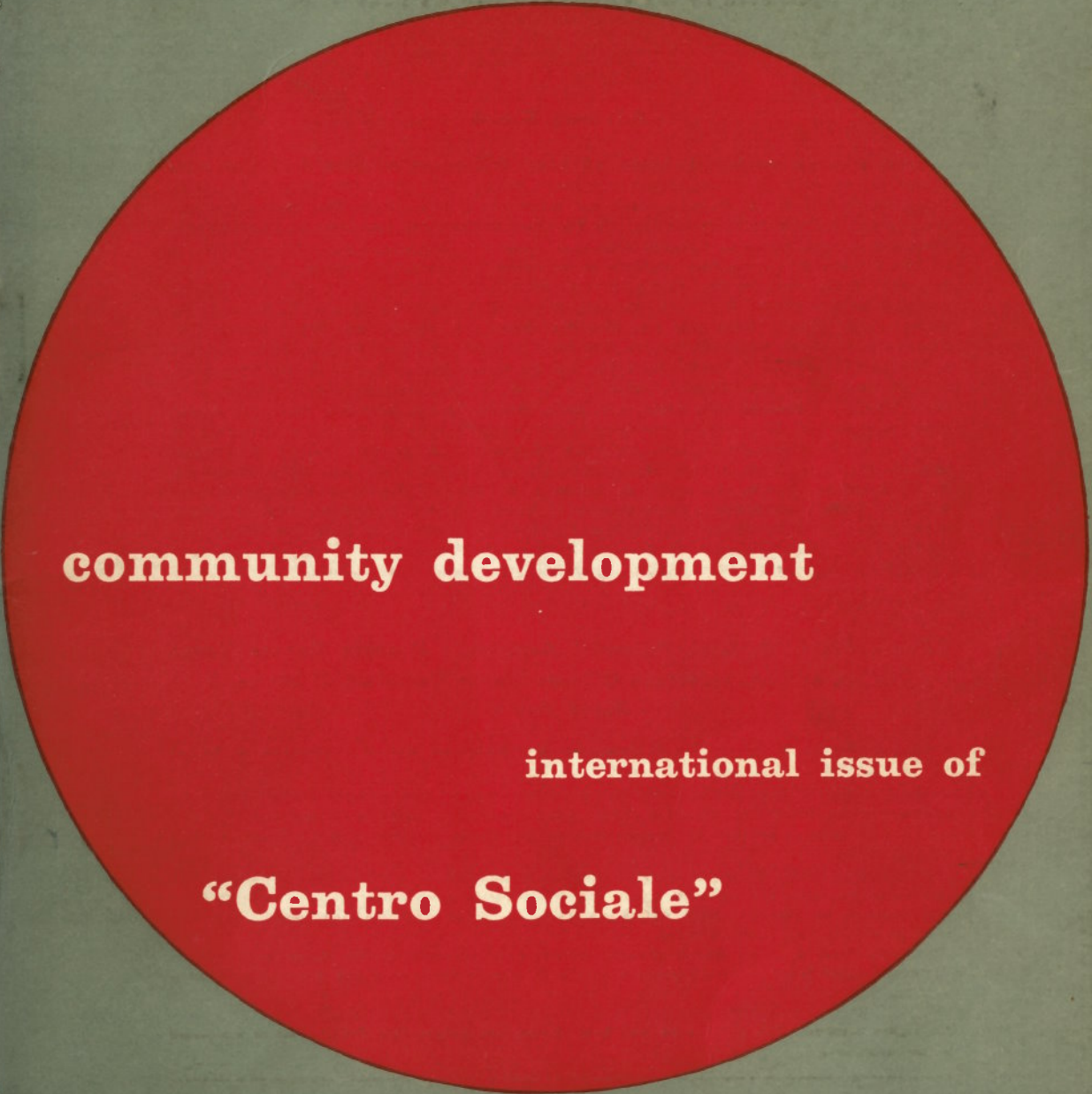


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Observations on Some Characteristics of Italian Emigration in the Last Fifteen Years

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For some years the trends and characteristics of Italian migratory phenomena have shown a number of new features, and have revealed a series of problems making it necessary to re-examine and reconsider the general meaning and implications of emigration in a new context.

These new elements concern both the situation and the prospects of migrants in the immigration areas, and particularly the implications, for the areas of emigration, of the size and characteristics of such massive movements of population.

Recently the first of these problems has been — much more than in the past — the object of a series of investigations and denunciations, which have revealed the objective difficulties the migrants meet with in adjusting to conditions in the immigration areas, as well as the economic, institutional and political obstacles they have to face in order to overcome the discrimination operating against them.¹

A lack of occupational stability is the additional factor to be quoted, besides the lack of improvement in the social situation of Italian migrants particularly in European countries. If we consider that for the purpose of maintaining in Italy a social and economic stability a migratory flow towards foreign countries is absolutely necessary, we can understand better the concern that has been shown at official levels. Last summer the report of the Italian Minister for Labour, Donat Cattin, on "Employment policies in the EEC" has been very widely commented;² it contains a denunciation, couched in strong terms, of the inadequacy of the protection measures for Italian workers in the EEC countries, as well as of the systematic evasion of existing laws.

From the analysis of the more accurate surveys on this question, it is perfectly clear that the main characteristic of present Italian migration abroad consists in an *increasing precariousness*: this concerns both the lack of a permanent adjustment of the migrants within the countries of immigration, and an effective occupational instability.

This situation has serious consequences for the areas of departure of migrants: *the main one being that a high percentage of migrant workers must be still considered* — precisely because of their occupational instability abroad — *as part of the national labour market*. At a demographic level, this fact entails a deterioration of the population structure in the regions of emigration (as an effect of the failure to migrate as family groups). At an economic level we find incomes becoming increas-

ingly unstable and precarious; at a social level we are faced with an increase of workers with an unstable occupation and a further fragmentation of the working class, and at a psychological level an increasing feeling of frustration on the part of the population of the areas of emigration.

In this article we will refer essentially to the European migration of the last fifteen years. The key element of this migratory flow, is the fact that it consists essentially of a labour force, particularly for the migration channel from the South. According to the Ministry of Labour report, already quoted, *9 out of 10 coming from the South are manual workers*, and the great majority of them are between 14 and 29 years of age.³

At present the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has assessed the size of Italian migrant groups residing in Europe (and which are only in part constituted by migrants in the last fifteen years) as 2,340,384 units. Of these, 1,449,650 reside in the EEC countries and 554,166 in Switzerland; to these last ab. 200,000 workers must be added, who do not appear in the Ministry's assessment because they do not reside permanently abroad, being seasonal workers, or workers across the frontiers.⁴ If we consider the migratory flow of the last ten years, Switzerland is the country where the greatest part of our migrants tend to go; while if we consider only the EEC countries, Western Germany is the most important of the receiving countries.

As it is well known, this European channel is only one of the possible ones open to migrants coming from Southern Italy, which is the main source of the migratory flow: there is also an internal channel, from Southern to Northern Italy, which is equally important, though with different characteristics and implications.

The Historical Framework of Italian Migration

In order to clarify and understand better the present trends and prospects of these migratory phenomena, we must consider briefly the development taking place at present, particularly in the regions of highest exodus.

As it is well known, Italy is one of those countries where, since it became a national state, economic development has followed a dualistic pattern, based on the concentration of the greatest part of industrial investment in the North, and on a prevalently agricultural structure in the South. The economic weakness inherent to this choice for the Southern regions, together with the constant demographic increase, determined towards the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one, a huge migratory wave directed almost exclusively towards non European continents. This wave reached its highest peak just before the First World War: in the single year 1913 there were 8,712,598 Italian emigrants, and of these 556,000 migrated to America.

The heavy losses in population of those years did nothing to change substantially the situation in the interested regions: first of all because at a national level there was no change in the investment policies; secondly, because the emigrants' remittances,

even if quite considerable, could not modify the general economic context in a stagnant situation. The remittances in fact were invested either in agriculture or in buying houses, and practically never were they used to create or finance industrial initiatives. The only effect of the accumulation of migrants' savings was an improvement in the individual social conditions of the people concerned: at best, the most fortunate would find themselves with a private income, that is in a position which was integrated in and not contradictory with the original context.

After the First World War, owing to factors both international (block of immigration in the USA) and national (discouragement of emigration abroad and limitations imposed by law on internal migrations), the migratory phenomena obviously underwent a sharp flexion.

With the establishment in 1948 of the Italian Republic, there was a change in the policies of the ruling classes concerning emigration, which was again encouraged by the governments of the time as a basic instrument for reducing unemployment and for importing valuable foreign currencies.⁵

From the last few years of the 40's to more than half the 50's, we witness in fact, concomitantly with the high levels of unemployment in Italy, a strong resumption of trans-oceanic emigration, not only towards the usual destinations: United States, the Argentine and Brazil, but also and above all to new countries, like Venezuela, Canada and Australia.⁶

One characteristic of this new wave of emigration is that it appears to be largely assisted and organized by the State. Nevertheless, for the majority of the people concerned, it has been a failure and a personal tragedy. For this reason, as soon as the situation of the European work market improved and new channels for migration opened up, the old destination began to be abandoned. The migratory balance, which in the '45-'56 period had remained above 100.000 units a year, fell sharply and reached 29.000 units in 1961.

Starting from 1956-57, a trend which was to prevail throughout the following ten years became increasingly clear and reached high figures. At least as a mass phenomenon, implicating the whole country, it appears as something new in respect of past experiences: emigration towards other countries of Western Europe, from the poorest up to the most developed areas of Italy itself.

The large proportions and the duration of this phenomenon, which up to date (notwithstanding some changes in its trends, sharper in the very last years) influences the current image of Italian emigration, induce us to look closer at its main traits and its developments.

Italian Emigration to Countries of Western Europe

While the departure for overseas countries was undertaken for good, or at least for very long periods, this new wave immediately showed itself as *temporary and provisional*.

The periods spent abroad today are rarely longer than one consecutive year, and they are interrupted by periods spent at home, sometimes long ones, during which advantage is taken of opportunities for work in the migrants' birthplace.

That such a solution should subjectively be considered temporary is proved by the fact that the emigrant's family does not follow him abroad and that very frequent contacts between them are kept up. In contrast with what often used to happen in the period of "departure for America", cases of broken family relations are fairly rare; indeed the aim of bringing all the family together appears to prevail. This widespread attitude becomes possible because the distance between the migrants' birthplace and the country where he works is now much smaller, as compared with the former overseas migration, and homecomings for brief periods have become a habit. These factors also explain the extremely high turnover of migrants during the periods of most intensive emigration (1960-62) when 2-300,000 persons left the country, and at least half as many came back.

Another proof of the close ties continuing between migrants and their families is the remarkable and increasing amount of their remittances; in some municipalities they have become a fundamental source of income. According to the Italian Exchange Bureau, in the period between 1957 and 1965, remittances have risen from 187.312 to 673.632 dollars.⁷

Lack of organization and "spontaneity" are, since the beginning, other typical characters of the new wave. Accordingly, in the 60's, these are the aspects of emigration receiving the greatest attention, in discussions and debates. The fundamental theme which has been stressed, chiefly in progressive circles, is the lack of structures for assisting emigration.⁸

Only an insignificant number of emigrants have preferred to use the existing organizations, and those who have done so have generally been disappointed, because these have generally entailed obligations and conditions as to the choice of work and to the bargaining for salaries.

In a very great majority of cases workmen have preferred to rely on informal help and on their own forces⁹.

Such being the character of emigration in the 60's, it is easy to see why it should be so hard to assess its quantitative aspects; hence all the statistics concerned must be taken with a certain margin of doubt. Nevertheless, in order to clarify our preceding remarks and those that will follow, we give some figures. Even if they do not give an exact idea of the phenomenon's proportions, they are undoubtedly very useful, at least to define its trends.

As can be observed in the tables 1 and 2 emigration to European countries, already important in 1958 because the wave towards France was still notably strong, reached its peak in 1961 (with 329.596 departures and a balance of 147.101 units).

The flow remained constant up to 1966, although the yearly migratory balance — as far as official figures can be trusted — began to decrease beginning from 1962, and reached particularly low levels in the following years. A peculiarity of this trend —

Table 1. Total Emigration

	Switzerland	Germany	Europe	Overseas Countries	Total
1958	111 334	11 698	236 707	97 454	334 167
1959	63 770	32 350	169 280	75 647	244 921
1960	128 257	100 544	307 876	74 032	381 908
1961	142 114	114 012	329 597	57 526	387 123
1962	143 054	117 427	315 795	49 816	365 611
1963	122 018	81 261	235 134	42 477	277 611
1964	111 863	75 210	216 498	41 984	258 482
1965	103 159	90 853	232 421	50 222	272 643
1966	104 899	78 343	219 353	77 141	296 494
1967	69 407	47 178	166 698	62 567	229 265
1968	81 206	51 152	158 462	57 251	215 713
1969	69 655	70 000	139 140	43 059	182 199

Table 2. Yearly Migratory Balance (Returns - Departures)

	Switzerland	Germany	Europe	Overseas Countries	Total
1958	— 7 025	— 2 531	— 67 360	— 53 712	— 121 072
1959	— 17 120	— 7 950	— 45 795	— 51 801	— 97 596
1960	— 66 432	— 38 050	— 141 462	— 48 211	— 189 673
1961	— 45 414	— 65 996	— 147 101	— 29 826	— 176 927
1962	— 37 032	— 47 827	— 105 220	— 31 303	— 136 523
1963	— 15 701	— 7 995	— 28 449	— 28 012	— 56 461
1964	— 17 918	— 16 311	— 42 288	— 26 026	— 68 314
1965	— 11 537	— 21 368	— 44 482	— 41 785	— 86 267
1966	— 10 779	+ 542	— 18 434	— 71 572	— 90 008
1967	— 9 025	+ 9 698	— 4 360	— 55 576	— 59 936
1968	— 7 980	— 7 750	— 16 014	— 49 672	— 65 686
1969	— 2 424	— 7 101	— 8 498	— 20 403	— 28 901

Source: ISTAT, *Annuario Statistico Italiano*, Years: 1959, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69 and 1970.

to which particular attention must be paid — is that it is due only in part to the national economic situation. In fact, particularly in the Southern areas, the situation of the labour market and the living conditions are so unfavourable that their impact acts in a permanent and unvarying manner. On the contrary this migratory flow is influenced much more decisively by the political and economical conditions of the receiving countries. The latter remarks are better understood if we consider the relation between migratory movements within Italy and those directed towards foreign countries (Table 3).

In the periods of the country's greatest economical crisis — i.e. when the industrial sector was unable to absorb labour forces coming from agriculture and from the South — the migratory balances within Italy suddenly decrease. But at the same time, we do not have an increase of the migratory flow towards foreign countries, indeed it remains very moderate. Moreover, when the situation of the work

Table 3. Balance of Migratory Currents Within the Country and Abroad, Originating in Southern Italy (1958-1969)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Within Italy</i>	<i>Abroad</i>	<i>Total</i>
1958	85 175	82 884	168 059
1959	79 829	79 829	182 332
1960	135 018	147 045	282 063
1961	240 723	142 841	383 564
1962	226 904	117 247	344 151
1963	204 589	53 890	258 479
1964	120 381	51 850	172 231
1965	52 777	63 976	116 753
1966	70 764	68 702	139 466
1967	122 465	50 909	173 374
1968	148 283	59 992	208 275
1969	150 604	60 000	210 604

Source: MINISTERO DEL LAVORO, La politica dell'impiego della CEE.

market appears difficult in the countries of immigration (as in Germany in 1966-67) we observe a sudden decrease of emigration abroad.

All this is possibly due to the temporary character that this migratory flow has, from the point of view of the persons concerned. An exact documentation of this is lacking, but we may easily presume that only a rather modest percentage of the workers present in Switzerland and in Germany ten years ago are still there. Even if the number of Italian workers now present in these countries is greater than in the past, a very high percentage is made up of new arrivals, who have partly replaced the old immigrants.

The advantages of this form of temporary immigration for the countries receiving it, is that it enables them to regulate easily the work market; for instance, at the moment when they are restructuring the productive system, if it proves necessary to reduce employment, either temporarily or permanently, it will be easy, through simple administrative measures, to send back a certain proportion of immigrants, as they cannot practically claim any rights.

Thus a result will be obtained, which is apparently contradictory but in fact extremely profitable on a political and social level: a reduction in the number of jobs which does not produce unemployment within the receiving countries, and hence will not arouse any reaction from the local workers. The latter, actually, may believe up to a point that things have improved. On the other hand, this particular manner of regulating the labour market has increased the immigrants' frustration, making them more sharply conscious that their experience has been precarious.

To conclude: the fundamental characters of this migratory experience, which explain its crisis and the present trends of the migratory flow towards Europe, are the following:

1. — Its massive character, whose proportions are almost comparable at least for some Southern areas, with the period around 1900.

2. — Its "temporary" character, or rather the absolute reluctance of the great majority of the people concerned, to consider it a permanent solution.

3. — The preservation of close ties with the family and the area of origin.

4. — The poor social mobility, at an individual level, derived from the migratory experience, even when it produces an appreciable improvement of life conditions and consumption for the emigrants' families.

5. — The dependance of the migratory flow from the economic and political situation of the receiving countries.

6. — The demographic composition of the migrating population, characterized by an absolute prevalence of the working class forces, whose prospects of reunion with their families are precisely connected with the decision to return to their country of origin.

Crisis of the Emigration Towards Europe and Prospects of Migration Movements

These aspects, especially the last two, explain the substantially negative balance of Italian emigration towards other European countries. After a dozen years of emigratory experience (with at least two years spent at home, in various periods) the Italian emigrant, who had departed in the early 60's, finds himself back at the point he had started from. In the meantime the general situation, as far as work opportunities are concerned has deteriorated, both at home and abroad.

In Italy as we shall see in greater detail, the economic situation has developed in such a way, that neither has there been an increase in productive activities capable of creating new jobs, nor have the emigrants' remittances been capable of stimulating appreciable productive activities.

In the foreign countries, on the other hand, the economic and social policies of the various governments in respect of immigration have had a double effect: the workers' conditions have become more precarious and a growing competitiveness has been required from them.

In Switzerland, while it is true that the racist adventure of Schwarzenbach¹⁰ has been defeated by Swiss voters, the massive support it obtained has clearly shown what is the prevailing attitude towards "fremdarbeiter", most of whom are Italian.

The same contradiction can be observed in the Swiss government's migratory policy: on the one hand the total dependance of the national economy upon foreign labour does not allow an anti-immigration policy, on the other hand the political risks connected with the presence of a growing and over-exploited foreign working-class imposes restrictive measures. Up to now the outcome of this contradiction has been a compromise solution represented by the decision by the Swiss government to "stop, starting from March 20, 1970, the entrance of foreign manpower in Switzerland, with the exception of a yearly quota of 40.000 units that should

compensate for the returns that are expected to increase.¹⁰ At the same time, the recent occurrence of open and violent xenophobia has been widely publicized by the Italian press, making this channel much less attractive than in the past. As a result of these factors of restrictive measures and lesser attraction, one can argue that the migratory flux towards this country will by no means be comparable with that of the sixties, and it is not difficult to foresee for the next years that the migratory balance will be negative or at least null.

In Germany the problem is set in a rather different form. From a legal and political point of view the immigrants' situation is, in theory, very much better than in Switzerland. Provisions concerning the free circulation of man-power within the EEC, should favour, at least at the employment level, Italian workers, who should be given preference. But in reality the proportion of Italian workers on the total of immigrants tends to decrease in Germany; their number is actually lower than the number of Yugoslav workers (415.461 against 536.704).

Furthermore the precariousness of the migratory experience to Germany has been felt in a particularly painful manner; as we have mentioned, during the years of economic crisis (1966-67) Italian workers had to return from Germany and for them it has been extremely difficult to find work in Italy.

The renewal of the migratory flow towards overseas countries has to be understood in this light. The migratory balance with these countries, which was very low in the first half of the sixties, has become much higher in the years 1966-68, and more than double *than the migratory balance with the other European countries in the same period.*

Moreover, these departures can be considered as permanent: this is shown by the limited number of returns and by the fact that the departure itself does concern not only the workers but also their families. If the migratory balance is very high, the total number of departures is still relatively small. The present stage in effect can be defined as characterized by an increasing lack of confidence in the traditional European channel and at the same time by a certain perplexity towards a new overseas adventure which is felt as final.

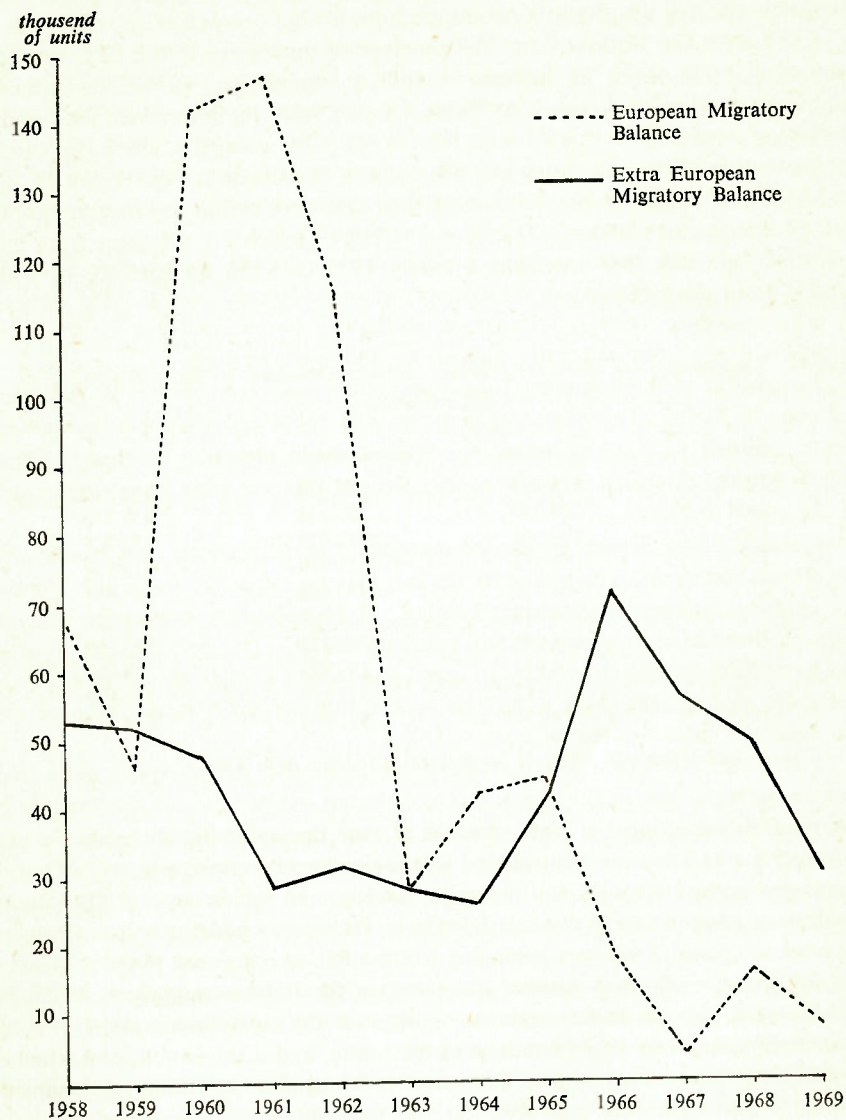
To sum up, one might say that the potential Italian emigrant has understood that he *must go*, but in the absence of convincing experiences, he does not know yet where he can go, or, at least, where it is more profitable for him to go.

A decision to leave for Australia or Canada cannot be taken with the same ease as that of leaving for another European country. In the latter case the migrant could very easily find relatives or friends in the place of immigration; he might come back several times in a year for any family necessity; he could get before leaving, through informal channels, all information concerning working and living conditions, finally, in case of failure of the migratory experience, he would not need more than 30 or 40 dollars to go back.

Obviously the renewal of this flow should not be over estimated; it must also be kept in mind that these countries too may limit immigration in the future. Any-

how, the point we want to stress from the statistics is that this channel tends to become active again when emigration to European countries becomes increasingly doubtful. As graph 1 shows, the trends of European and extra-European balances are almost reversed.

GRAPH 1. - Trends in the Migratory Balances (European and Extra-European)



Future prospects are then aleatory, both for the European channel and for the extra-European one.

As regards Europe, Switzerland having decided to limit immigration, our prospects are confined to the countries of the EEC. In fact, in most European countries, Italy excepted, an increasing shortage of workers is observed. In the future it is foreseen that — for Germany only —¹² the development of economy will bring about the opening up of over one million jobs, a high percentage of which will be covered by foreign workers. But the shortage of manpower in the EEC does not necessarily bring about an increase in Italian immigration; indeed the opposite might almost seem to be true. As Table 4 shows, with the increase in the number of foreign workers who have found jobs in the EEC countries, there has been a corresponding decrease (relative and absolute) of the Italian quota. While in 1960 the number of Italian workers obtaining their first work permit was over 52% of the total of immigrated workers (171.257 on 332.210, of which 126.428 came from third countries), in 1969 they represented barely 17% (145.256 on 858.676, of which 691.905 from third countries).

Table 4. Employment of Foreign Workers Having Obtained a First Work Permit in EEC Countries

<i>Years</i>	<i>Italians</i>	<i>Third Countries Citizens</i>	<i>Total</i>
1960	171 257	126 428	332 210
1961	205 530	207 328	434 985
1962	199 005	292 051	512 851
1963	158 378	333 919	514 732
1964	163 556	447 666	635 551
1965	234 614	452 232	711 270
1966	188 446	382 124	593 167
1967	74 643	189 823	284 984
1968	141 572	357 568	519 864
1969	145 256	691 905	858 676

Source: MINISTERO DEL LAVORO, La politica di impiego nella CEE.

A paradoxical element of this situation is that the occupational precariousness of Italian workers increases in relation to the greater guarantees which they enjoy. This is proved by the ministerial report we have quoted, which states: "The discrimination existing in fact in the salaries, the social security benefits and the housing measures in favour of workers belonging to the EEC, as compared to those of extra EEC workers, results in a distinct disadvantage for Italian emigration, which, as we have seen, represents the main component of the total immigration". This contradiction may very easily continue in the future, and it is a moot point whether the Italian government will have the power to bring EEC and other governments to modify their migratory policy.¹⁴

Internal Migrations

The picture of the trends and perspectives of Italian migration is incomplete without a mention of the internal migratory channel, which shows some different characteristics.

The basic differences have to be seen on one hand in the permanent character of the transfer (with the consequent prospect of being joined by the family in the place of immigration), and on the other hand in the *higher competitiveness* of the labour force that turns to the internal migratory channel.

This last aspect has become more evident after the period of a heavier crisis of the national economy (1963-65) since a process of restructuring of northern industry, characterized by a higher technological level, has taken place and the demand for manpower has become still more selective. The younger and most skilled labour force migration towards northern regions created serious difficulties for less competitive local workers, in a labour market that is chronically deteriorating from the workers' point of view.

Selectivity in the internal migratory channel has undoubtedly increased more than in the European one. If we want nevertheless to make a comparison at the origin, one can say that whoever was not competitive enough at a national level, could still turn to the European migratory channel: even an illiterate farm worker aged over forty could find an unskilled job in the building industry or in the railroad yards.

This lower competitiveness implied, of course, higher human costs. The workers could not look forward to settling permanently abroad, and to being joined eventually by their families, changing their whole status; on the contrary, the prospect is that of a life in the most squalid barracks (not infrequently owned by the employers), in order to accumulate enough savings for a more decent life once back home.

The opportunity of accumulating savings is on the other hand much lower for internal migrants, both because of lower salaries and because the life they have to lead is much less segregated. In this case, and particularly for married people, it becomes much more important to find a decent home where to live and spend their leisure time. But this expectation is frequently frustrated owing to the extreme deficiency of the reception structures and services.

Selectivity and the inadequacy of the reception structures also explain the specific character of this migratory flow, which though characterized by permanent departures, consists predominantly of labour manpower.

According to studies carried out in the areas of immigration, the labour force represents more than 50% of total immigration, while, according to national data, the labour force is less than 1/3 of the total population.

Moreover, because of increased selectivity, this labour force is now mainly made up by younger workers, not infrequently young unmarried workers, who will tend to weaken their contacts with the family, when it remains at home. For the regions of emigration the effect is that of an increasing relative weight of less valid labour forces and of non-active population, with all the social consequences it implies.

The Social Situation in the Areas of Emigration

The social implications of such a massive movement of population for internal and external destinations have of course been noticeable. But in order to interpret the direction of social changes and the reasons why, notwithstanding such massive migratory phenomena, radical modifications did not occur in the social structure and in the class relations, we must consider the evolution of the economic structure and of the labour market also in the regions of emigration (particularly the South). Here, notwithstanding the steady increase of public and private investments no improvement has taken place in the labour market and the pressure to emigrate still continues to operate.

The processes of capitalistic development consistently influence both agriculture and industry. In the first sector, the crisis of peasant farming pushes into the labour market at an increasing speed those who will not find employment in the highly mechanized capitalistic farms. The secondary sector is characterized by processes of concentration and increasing use of labour saving technology. Consequently, the total number of industrial workers who have been expelled from the productive process owing to the crisis of small and traditional industries is higher than that employed in the newly created industrial plants.¹⁷ It is easy to understand how in such a situation, Italian migration abroad — regardless of the migrants' subjective expectations — does not foresee for the largest majority of migrants the possibility of returning and utilizing the skills acquired abroad. National data on the subject show this situation very clearly (see Table 5): more than 80% of returned migrants who, before leaving, had an occupation in agriculture are pushed back into this sector, while almost 60% of those who had no occupation at all, have not been able to find any job on their return. No greater are the chances of occupation connected with the investments of migrants' savings and remittances. Rossi-Doria's statement of 1965 that "the hard earned savings of the migratory period today are spent in unnecessary investments (cars, electrical household appliances) or in traditional investment (houses and land), useless for the future of these workers", is still pertinent.¹⁸

Table 5. Percentage of Returnees by Sector of Economic Activity Before Departure and After Return

Before Departure		After Return					
		Employed			With no Occupation		
		Agr.	Ind.	Other	Total		Total
Employed	73.4	34.8	48.5	9.1	92.4	7.6	100
Agric.	30.2	80.3	13.0	2.5	93.8	4.2	100
Industr.	37.1	3.2	83.7	3.6	90.5	9.5	100
Other	6.1	1.8	11.3	74.1	87.2	12.8	100
With no occupation	26.6	7.0	26.6	8.1	41.7	58.3	100
Total	100	27.4	42.7	8.8	78.9	21	100

Source: ISTAT (As quoted by C. BLUMER, *L'emigrazione Italiana in Europa*).

The limited chances of occupation in the newly created local industries, and the "temporary" and irregular character of Italian migration to European countries also explain partly why in the peasant sector of Southern agriculture, emigration has not resulted in the final giving up of agricultural activity by whole families, but only in the departure of younger and more active members. As it can be observed in Table 6, the percentage of families that have given up farming activities is much lower than that of persons who have left this sector. The migrants are in fact very reluctant to get rid of their own land, which in the past has meant to them a minimum guarantee of survival while the migratory experience has not proved a convincing alternative to it. This appears to be true even in areas of more intensive emigration, which in the last ten years have undergone a real process of depopulation. But at this point it is necessary to introduce a further specification, by distinguishing more clearly the main areas in which the South can be divided, in order to understand the different social implications of emigration.

Although the Italian South can be considered historically a unitary reality, it can be differentiated in two types of areas: a very large one, covering more than 80% of the total surface, and a smaller one differing from the former in respect of agronomic and socio-economic characteristics, and with different prospects of development. The distinction between these two main types, particularly as regards their role in the process of economic development, was made by Rossi-Doria limitedly to the agricultural sector. In terms that proved very apt in the following years, he named the first area, the poorer one, "the bone", and the second one, the richer and the more capable of development, "the lean meat".

Since industrial investments have been concentrated in the second type of area, the distinction today can be applied not just to agriculture, but to the whole of Southern economy.

Due to the dualistic model that has characterized Italian economic development, and to the close interdependence of those two realities, it has been possible to think for a long time of *one* South. But the most recent trends in economic development, implying a revision of the criteria for intervention have gradually brought out the internal differences in the social and economic structure of the Italian South. Emigration itself represents an indicator of these differences. If one considers emigration from the point of view of the emigrant's origin one can distinguish *two main areas*:

- (a) the first includes places that have undergone the most intensive process of depopulation and that will be further depopulated in the future. For the poorest of these areas it seems much more fitting to speak of *capability* to migrate than of *propension* to migrate, as many sociologists do. Particularly in the most internal and mountainous districts the only restraints on migration are due to strictly individual factors. The "push" that operates here is so strong that generally *whoever can migrate does so*. A further migratory chan-

nel, internal to the South, originates in these areas, and is directed towards the plains and the urban centres. In geographical terms, according to the previously mentioned distinction, these areas correspond to the "bone" of the South.

- (b) the area where migration very often represents a second choice, for those who have not been able "to make it" at home. It is here that the most intensive processes of restructuring occur. In these areas the efforts of the workers expelled by the agricultural sector are directed towards obtaining a job in the newly created industries, or in the traditional ones (building and food processing). It is interesting to note that here part-time farming is very widespread. But this fact does not mean that we are in front of a transitory stage from agricultural to industrial work: it means rather a more or less institutionalized situation, expressing the need of a non-agricultural (often irregular or seasonal) activity, in order to integrate the insufficient income from farming, and expressing at the same time the precariousness of non-agricultural occupations.

Emigration indicates here the inadequacy of present economic development to satisfy the workers' expectation of a permanent employment at home, due to the fact that development only operates here on the basis of obtaining a maximum profit.

The general picture of employment is made even more serious by a structural crisis investing small industries and farming alike. In both cases the effect of this crisis is an increase in open and latent unemployment. This phenomenon, although present in all sectors, shows itself most clearly in agriculture, precisely because of the specific characteristics of the exodus from this sector. In fact, the mere persistence of very small peasant holdings allows, in a crisis situation, for family labour to be re-absorbed. But the productivity, and therefore the salaries of this labour cannot but be extremely low.

The social consequences of this type of economic choice have proved rather heavy. Starting from 1968, these areas have witnessed violent social conflicts, with aspects of a revolt, and with great mass participation.

Table 6. *Exodus of Agricultural Families and Family Members*

Regions	1961		1966		Variations %	
	Whole families	Family members	Whole families	Family members	Whole families	Family members
North	872	3 099	790	2 471	— 10.5	— 20.2
Central Regions	261	923	243	750	— 7.1	— 18.7
Continental South	493	1 761	445	1 366	— 9.6	— 22.4
Islands	185	621	153	462	— 17.4	— 26.6
ITALIA	1 811	6 404	1 621	5 049	— 10.5	— 21.2

Source: C. AIELLO «Esodo agricolo e ristrutturazione fondiaria», *Rivista di Economia Agraria*, 1970.

Conclusions

What we have said raises serious questions concerning the future of Italian migration. It is clear that the equation economic development = end of emigration, on which the official propaganda was based, has lost credibility, particularly among the populations concerned. This official view tended to represent emigration as a necessary but fruitful hardship, and above all a sacrifice limited or limitable in time.

As we have shown, emigration towards other European countries has been basically conditioned in its size, its form and its developments by the political and economic events of the countries of immigration, while at the same time the "push" from the areas of departure can be safely considered as constant. A modification, though, has occurred in what determines the expulsion effect. Not only a stagnating situation but also the dynamic of social and economic factors of the context of origin lead to this effect. These endogenous factors coupled with the increasing precariousness of the situation of Italian workers already migrated to Europe, have determined the resumption of the oversea channel. But this is not a phenomenon that can be evaluated, at least for the time being, in simple quantitative terms.

For example, the deterioration of that expectation of 'transitoriousness' of the migratory experience, which has been a dominating characteristic of European migration, is connected to it. But this deterioration does not take place at the same speed in the people's consciousness and in the economic reality. So it has been possible in the last few years that the failure of investments (particularly in small farms) realized thanks to the savings of hard and long years of migration in Germany or Switzerland, has stimulated — after a few years of frustrating negative experience — the definitive departure of whole families to Australia or Canada.

The perception of the transitory character of the migratory experience towards European countries was undoubtedly accurate for a great part of the emigrants. Unfortunately — as we have tried to show — the experience was found to be transitory for reasons opposite to the ones the migrants had in mind. In effect, while they thought that *it would not be necessary to leave any more* because they would be able to make use at home of the savings accumulated and of the skills acquired during their time abroad, in reality, for the older ones and the less skilled ones it becomes increasingly difficult to go on with the migratory experience. Even if it is smaller in size, migration continues to be a mass phenomenon, but it involves successive age groups, whose role becomes simply a substitute one.

Observed in this new light, that is not only as an effect of a chronic situation of underdevelopment, but also, at least partially, as an effect of a particular type of development, recent Italian emigration ceases being a phenomenon that can be separately analyzed. Much more than in the past, it becomes part of a very complex picture so that an understanding of its characteristics, trends and

prospects cannot be separated from the analysis of other phenomena, both socio-economical (increasing latent or open unemployment, diffusion of part-time farming, structural changes in agriculture and industry) and political in nature (diffusion and intensification of social conflicts), which are to be observed in the Italian South today.

On the other hand it is essential, in constructing a general picture, to evaluate the quantitative measures, and above all the present trends and future prospects of this particular phenomenon.

The data which have emerged from our analysis are an attempt, to give an idea of the present difficult situation of European emigration and of the seriousness, at all levels, of the consequences of this crisis, for the areas emigrants come from.

In the social processes which will take place in these areas, particularly in the South, emigration tends to play less and less its historical role as a "safety valve", while the failure of expectations placed in emigration will have increasingly serious consequences, especially for the people personally concerned.

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Notes

¹ Among the most recent publications on the subject we quote: G. BLUMER, *L'emigrazione italiana in Europa*, (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1970); P. CINNANI, *Emigrazione e imperialismo* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1968); FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA LAVORATORI EMIGRATI E FAMIGLIE, *Libro Bianco sull'Emigrazione* (Roma, 1971); AA.VV. *L'immigrazione in Svizzera* (Milano: Sapere Edizioni, 1971); C. CALVARUSO, *Sottoproletariato in Svizzera; 152.000 lavoratori stagionali, perché?* (Milano: Coines, 1971).

² MINISTERO DEL LAVORO E DELLA PREVIDENZA SOCIALE, «La politica dell'impiego nella CEE», memorandum presented to the Council of Social Affairs Ministers of EEC by the Italian Minister for Labour and Social Security, On. Carlo Donat Cattin, on June 24, 1971. Quoted in *Mondo Economico*, XXVI, n. 39, 1971.

³ *Ibidem*, p. XI.

⁴ These data are taken from MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *Problemi del lavoro italiano all'estero*, Report for 1970.

⁵ Concerning the emigration policies of Italian governments after the war, see A. FONTANI, *Gli emigranti* (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1962).

⁶ S. CAFIERO, *Le migrazioni meridionali*, (Roma: SVIMEZ, 1964).

⁷ See A. FONTANI, «Dimensioni e aspetti del fenomeno migratorio dal 1946 al 1965», *Critica Marxista*, 1966. The author states and proves that the data quoted tend to underestimate the real amount of migrants' remittances.

As to the importance of remittances in the local economy of the emigration areas, useful considerations will be found in the book by CAFIERO quoted above. On the basis of a survey in 20 municipalities in Southern Italy, the author calculates that the average amount of each emigrant's remittances at the time of the study, was of ab. 800 dollars per year. He also calculated that this amount was practically the double of the average income of a farm worker in the same area. See CAFIERO, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁸ The judgement expressed by ROSSI-DORIA on the character of the rural exodus is quite significant: "When the story of these last years shall be written, a very hard judgement will be given concerning the lack of public action in this sector. In times of so called social security we have allowed this huge transfer of men from place of origin to new places of work, from traditional agricultural activities to new extra-agricultural activities, from homeland to foreign countries to take place with no defence nor organized assistance". And these words could be extended to the whole of the migratory phenomenon. Cfr. M. ROSSI-DORIA «Esodo rurale e ricostruzione dell'agricoltura meridionale», *Mondo Economico*, XX, 35, 1965. By the same author on emigration problems, see also «Una politica per l'emigrazione meridionale», *Nord e Sud*, a. XIII, n. 78, 1966.

⁹ A fact that shows the lack of trust of migrants in the organizations for emigration control is for instance that emigrants preferred to go abroad on a tourist passport, in order to by pass the governmental controls. An inquiry carried out in a town of Calabria by one of the authors of the present article showed that in contrast with the several hundred migrants who left the country with a tourist passport, only a few went abroad with a migrant passport and fixed residence there. At the peak of the migratory flow towards European countries (between 1961 and 1963) less than 50 persons officially migrated from that town. But in the same period 50 tourist passports were issued to farm workers and unskilled workers, 40 to skilled workers, 15 to small farmers, 5 to truck drivers 40 to working class housewives. The inquiry led to the conclusion that *almost all* the passports were in fact issued to migrants. See E. PUGLIESE, *Le trasformazioni socio-economiche di un paese di Calabria: Castrovillari* Unpublished degree thesis, Istituto di Economia Agraria, Portici, 1965.

¹⁰ In June 1970 a referendum took place in Switzerland in order to vote the constitutional law "against the foreignization of the people and of the fatherland", tending to reduce the number of foreigners to 10% of the total population.

¹¹ See G. BLUMER, *op. cit.* p. 67.

¹² MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *La situazione del lavoro italiano all'estero cit.*

¹³ MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI, *La politica dell'impiego nella CEE, op. cit.*, p. XV.

¹⁴ For instance, even if we note the firm stand taken by the Italian Ministry for Labour toward the employment policies in the EEC, the Donat Cattin report can only be considered as a denunciation. It is not in fact an *official* document of policy, but a proposal directed to *one of the decisional bodies* of the Community, by the representative of *one of the countries* members of the Community.

Even without discussing the value of the proposals of the Minister, and accepting them as such, in order to evaluate how realistic they are it is necessary to consider and analyze the mechanisms of the decisional process according to which political decisions are in fact taken in the Community.

¹⁵ M. PACI, « Migrazioni interne e mercato capitalistico del lavoro », *Problemi del Socialismo*, n. 48, 1970.

¹⁶ For an analysis of the difficulties and conflicts which grow out of these problems, see G. FOI, *L'immigrazione meridionale a Torino* (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1964).

¹⁷ M. PACI, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Cfr. G. MOTTURA, « Verso una riduzione dell'intervento », *Economia Pubblica*, I, 1, 1971. It would be enough to think that in Campania (one of the Southern regions that has benefited in large measure from the industrial investments in the South) according to official data industrial employment has decreased of 20.000 units.

¹⁹ Cfr. M. ROSSI-DORIA, « Esodo rurale... », *op. cit.*, p. 30.