



demotrends

quadrimestrale sulla realtà demografica italiana

Direttore Responsabile: Giuseppe Gesano

Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Roma n.332/98 del 7.7.98

N. 2/2003

Italy in Europe: An Old, Declining Population?

For some time now, Italy and much of Europe have been witnessing the growth of their population come to a halt. A “zero-growth” population, which maintains a constant size and age structure, could be viewed favourably by those in charge of governing it and providing for its needs, because the type and dimension of the various services required would not be forced to undergo continuous changes over time, following the fluctuations in the population size and its age structure.

For many European countries, in the coming years there will be losses of varying intensity in their population. This is the first time in history that this loss is taking place due to a population’s voluntary behaviour, and not because of some external event, such as war, famine, or epidemics. Italy is one of these countries; indeed, now it is in the forefront. In some ways, it is also a limit case: its population had already exhibited a near constancy in the 1980s, and the subsequent, but limited expansions of the 1990s were due mainly to the regularization and new inflows of immigrants from abroad. Whatever considerable changes might occur in the immigration policies, whatever might be the reproductive behaviour reasonably hypothesizable for the near future we are faced with just a few more years of weak growth, followed by the start of a process of rapid size reduction.

A population decline might not be considered as a misfortune, especially if it were to affect the territory in a widespread manner, allowing us to live in a “roomier” manner. This is the idea expressed by several environmentalists, and which we would all be led to share every time we have to deal with excessive crowding. It is, however, doubtful that our life can improve in this way, since the population decline might not reduce the concentration everywhere – in particular



in the cities or sites of tourist attraction – or even guarantee a more mindful and less “wasteful” use of space; lastly, the environment itself, which in our countries has become almost totally anthropic, would pose remarkable problems – and indeed it already poses them at the occurrence of every emergency situation – in an uncontrolled process of return to the natural state.

The real problem is not that there will be fewer people, but that we will be a structurally different, mainly older, population. Indeed, a population that slows down its growth already ages just because of this fact alone. It is even worse if it regresses. The new generations are, in fact, increasingly smaller than those that preceded them and, with time, the larger groups move up toward the top of the “age pyramid”. As a result, everything must change and, if the processes take

place rapidly, as they did during the last quarter of a century in Italy, the changes occur at breakneck speed, even in a way that is contradictory for the governing bodies and politicians. In fact, the generational “peak” presses on the training system, then on the labour market and – lastly – on the pension, health, and welfare systems. As unsatisfied as it may be in its requirements, it leaves behind – for the following generations – structures that the policy-makers will have tried to adapt to the temporally increased demand.

What are the results, problems, and solutions of these current trends and of the future consequences? Everyone, of course, highlights and proposes according to his/her own ideological outlook and political usefulness. However, there are questions on which there should be only agreement, because they originate and develop in a situation of necessity dictated by past events or, in any case, which are hardly controllable through the governing of public matters.

The population decline has been widely envisaged in our past behaviours, and to slow down its endogenous component (the reduced fertility) significantly, there should be returns to the past in women’s family and social roles. These latter would be totally unacceptable considering the progress achieved up to now, and incompatible with the stage of development reached by Italy compared to Europe and the rest of the world.

Considering the inevitable reduction of the population, there are two potential paths, which are not at all opposite to each other. The first consists of managing the consequences, keeping well in mind the differential factors of the decline, from both the territorial standpoint for the potential environmental damages, and from that of the population structure, for their impact with the services, the commodities market and, most of all, with the production and labour-market requirements. The second path consists of fighting the decline, in particular the selected decline in the population of working age, through immigration from abroad. Within this context, on the one hand it is necessary to consider the quantitative and qualitative shortcomings which are already appearing,

continues on page 8

Prospects and Problems for the Italian Population

A genuine laboratory: this is how the Italian population is being increasingly defined. With its interplay of dynamics and structure, it has become the world’s oldest population, with a high proportion of people aged 65 and over (21.4%) and the lowest percentage of young people under the age of 15 (13.5%).

This structure is the outcome of a very low fertility rate, which for about the past 20 years has been under the replacement rate, and which in 2002 reached a value of 1.26 children per woman, while a few years before it had fallen to 1.19 (period data; for the more recent generations, the estimated fertility rate is 1.4). At the same time, life expectancy has risen surprisingly over the past 50 years, at an average of 3-4 months for every calendar year, reaching the age of 76.7 in 2001 for men and 82.8 for women. The average residual life at 65 was 16.7 and 20.8 years respectively.

The persisting very low fertility rate - the prime factor in current Italian population trends - has created a significant demographic momentum, so that even with a desirable and consistent, but currently unlikely, recovery of fertility, in the coming years there will inevitably be a serious and growing gap between births and deaths. Around the middle of this century, Italy could reach a ratio of 3-4 deaths for every birth.

This heavy demographic “momentum” is associated with the very high Italian public debt, which is 106% of the GDP. Two structural factors that seem to strengthen each other, could even compromise the survival capacity of the Italian system. The latest Istat (National Institute of Statistics) projections, though taking into account the considerable foreign immigration, show that between 2001 and 2051 there could be an increase of 5 million in the population aged 80 and over, and a decrease of 11 million in the population under 80.

The causes of the excessively low fertility rate have yet to be fully clarified. What is surprising is the difference between the 1.9-1.7 children per woman in France, the UK or the United States and the rate of 1.2 in Italy (and Spain). The most recent surveys have shown the importance of: a) the economic factor, and in particular of the cost of raising children with the almost total lack of family allowances (and despite the significant, but recent, tax-relief measures); b) structural factors, such as the insufficient number of places in crèches and kindergartens, which moreover are very costly; c) the scarce use of part-time and the actual difficulty, above all for women, of reconciling employment, procreation and child-rearing, especially as a consequence of the growing, necessary and positive insertion of women in the labour market (also the result of their better education); d) the lack of full sharing by men of the tasks of family care; e) a widespread counter-culture that considers children to be the specifically private “good” of women and of couples, and not also as a fundamental resource for the entire community. This may also be due to a stereotype, lasting up to recently, of Italy as a country with a high fertility rate. These reasons have also mainly contributed to the structural factors of low fertility, the high average age

at marriage and at the birth of the first child.

The problems of the increasing, severe population ageing in Italy lie in its speed and in the consequent need of society and the economy to promptly adjust its structure in a dynamic way. The challenges facing Italy due to population factors are important and numerous. We should wonder whether the country will be able to: a) foster a recovery of fertility to bring it up to levels like the French or British ones; b) manage the necessary and heavy foreign immigration from the political, social and demographic and not just economic point of view (on 1 January 2002, there were 1,450,000 immigrants to which we should add approximately 700,000 applications under the amnesty measure); c) safeguard - given this massive ageing - the welfare system, starting from pensions, which risks a sudden collapse, also due to the sharp decline and ageing of the labour force; d) remain - in the light of what has been said in point c) - competitive on the international arena with countries that have a slower and less intensive global ageing of the society and the labour force.

A number of population researchers have focused their attention on these aspects for many years. Finally, also the economists have begun to notice how devastating the population factor could prove to be in the coming decades. At this point, we can hope that the resistance to change by lobbies and interest groups will weaken, so that there will be a prompt and appropriate implementation at the social and economic level of all those reforms (many of which have yet to be designed) required by population dynamics that are absolutely new in human history.

Antonio Golini
IRPPS’ Scientific Advisory Board

IN THIS ISSUE

AGEING AND THE ITALIAN
PENSION SYSTEM

M. Paci

ITALIAN MORTALITY: HOW MUCH
ROOM FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS?

G. Caselli

ATTITUDES ON CHILDBEARING
IN ITALY

A. Menniti

The Challenge of Ageing

The elderly, a burden or a resource for society

Whatever indicator on population ageing one considers, whether static or dynamic, current or prospective, Italy shows values of high concern. Over the past 25-30 years, the natural population dynamics have overturned the by-now remote image of a country of large families, full of children and young people. Today, families that include at least one elderly person, i.e. an individual of at least 65 years of age, number around 35% and have an average of 2.05 members. Between 65 and 74 years of age, 11% of the men and 28% of the women live alone, but the percentage increases by 17% and 48%, respectively, for those over 74 years of age (*Istat*, The Family Structures).

Nonetheless, the condition of the elderly in Italy today is not – generally speaking – a particularly needy one, from either the economic or the support standpoint.

According to the Bank of Italy's Household Budget Survey in 2000, the average annual income in the households headed by a person aged over 65 years (27.4% of the surveyed households) was 18,738 euros (0.77 compared to the average of all households), but the elderly were able to enjoy, on average, 152,708 euros of net wealth (most of which consisted of real assets, with 3/4 of the elderly households owning the house in which they live); this average was 0.93 compared to the general average. The equivalent and per-capita income are even closer to the all-household mean, so that the "poverty index" (share of elderly people below the poverty line, i.e. 1/2 of the median value) is lower in Italy for the elderly than for younger age groups. About 60% of the income earned by the elderly householders comes from "transfers" (pensions and other public or private provisions) and 30% from their properties.

These relative economic and financial resources of the

elderly population end up benefiting, in part, the following generations, through redistribution within the *families*, a redistribution that is not always adequately recorded by surveys, which mainly focus on *household* income and consumption, instead.

Also from the standpoint of loneliness and – on the other hand – of the support on which the elderly can rely, more than half the over-64-year-old parents live less than 1 km from their closest son/daughter, and quite a few even live in the same apartment building, as can be evidenced from the *Istat* Survey on Family Networks. Cohabitation in the same home remains, however, limited (only around 12% of the parents aged over 74 years), while only 1% of the sons/daughters state that they have entrusted their parents to welfare or health-care structures. In exchange for this close network that surrounds elderly people – at least those who can count on sons/daughters – the grandparents, and especially the grandmothers, are involved in taking care of their grandchildren, in particular of the youngest and in cases of need (work, occasional commitments, but also use of leisure time) expressed by the parents.

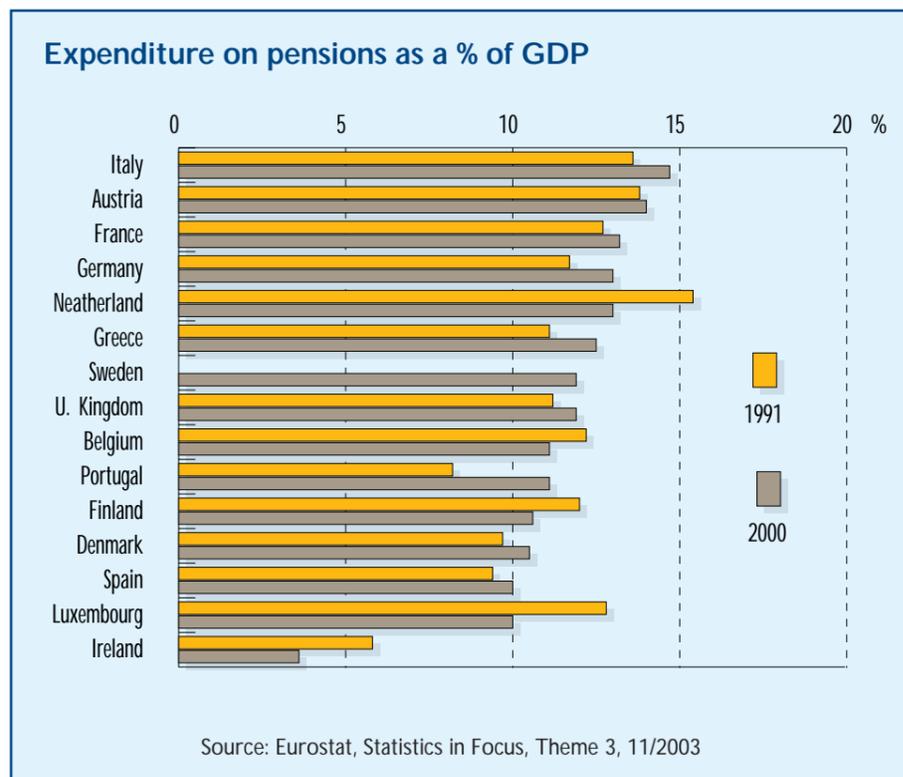
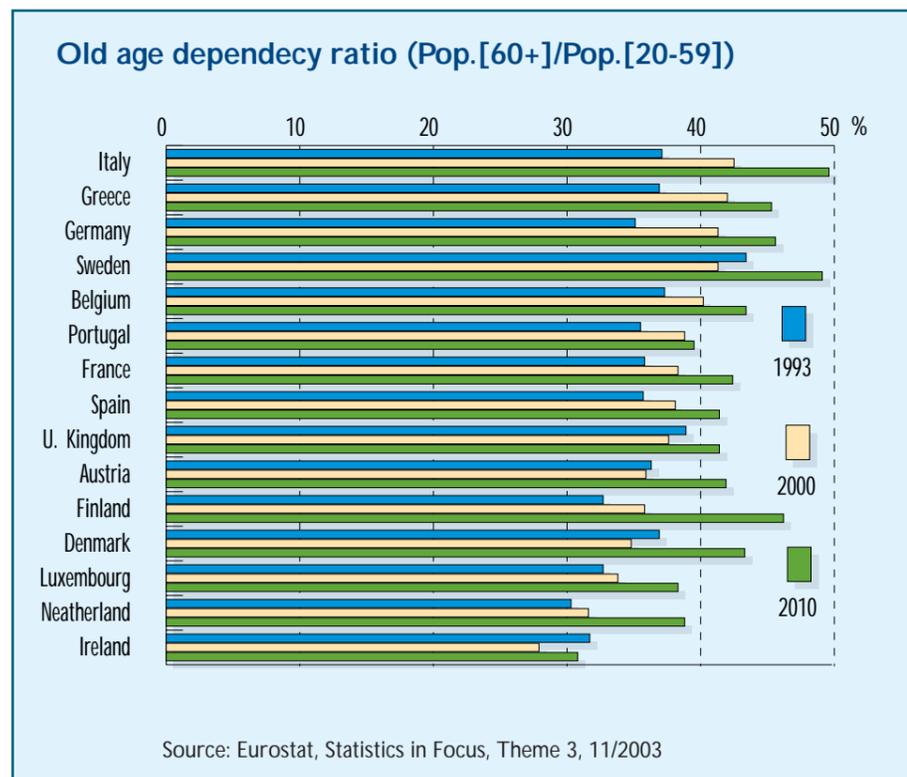
Lastly, work activity is certainly very limited among the Italian elderly: according to the *Istat* Labour Force Survey, 2002 average, 31% of men aged 60-64 years, 11% of 65-69-year-olds, and 5% of the 70-74-year-olds are still active, while for women the percentage decreased from 9% to less than 2%. Nevertheless, the younger generations of elderly people especially, and those residing in the Centre-North, appear to be fairly well engaged in volunteer activities (*Istat*, The Volunteer Organisations in Italy).

Briefly, the phenomenon of the population ageing has

increasingly numerous facets, some of which are really problematic, and others which are of potential aid to the society in which the elderly live. It is, however, necessary to deal with the problem of ageing with an innovative spirit. We must, therefore, abandon the stereotypes that continue to label as old and of no use to society those who retire and are aged over 65 or even 60 years. This is necessary not only because of the long life expectancy of these people, but also because of their good state of mental and physical health, the appreciable level of well-being they generally enjoy, and the great potential they maintain in terms of usefulness for society. Even from the economic standpoint, if we abandon this narrow-minded production-focused approach, their contribution often becomes essential in terms of unpaid activities but which solve problems within the family and social networks.

If it changes its attitudes and behaviours with respect to the mature and elderly population, a society that ages from the demographic standpoint may paradoxically find, precisely in ageing, a factor of renewal of the structures and its functional procedures, as well as a multiplier of activities and employment specifically focusing on these age groups. However, all of this makes necessary for a great flexibility and – I would say – even an inventiveness, which set aside certain stereotyped images and instead know how to understand and make productive the factors available in the new generations of elderly people. Indeed, because of social-security balance requirements, it will be necessary to extend the working life further; but this is only part of the solution, because not all wealth and its exchanges take place through and are controlled by the market.

Giuseppe Gesano



Ageing and the Italian Pension System

In several European countries, including Italy, there is a growing concern regarding the medium- and long-term financial sustainability of public pension systems. One of the main factors underlying this concern, as we know, is the longer life expectancy, which also involves a longer period of the enjoyment of retirement, both for men and even more so for women. For example, it has been calculated that between 1951 and 2000, every year of life for women in Italy has been of 16 months, 12 of which are "lived" immediately and 4 "put aside" with longer life expectancy.

Several proposals for reforming the retirement systems presented by governments in various countries have, however, encountered considerable resistance and social conflicts (as has occurred in France and Germany in recent months).

In Italy, the situation has been less serious since the measures adopted in the 1990s, and in particular after the approval of Law 335 of 1995 (the so-called "Dini Reform Law"). This law has radically changed the mechanism for calculating pensions: the amount depends more strictly on the contribution actually paid, and also on the average life expectancy at the time of retirement. This law will nevertheless be applied rather gradually, involving significant effects

on the reduction of the pension expenditure only after around 2030. It is also interesting to recall that under this law, workers can choose the retirement age between 57 and 65 (with economic incentives to working life up to 65).

Although the Italian situation is less serious, one should stress that the high proportion of pension expenditure on total social-security costs in Italy has led to a serious limitation on the funds available for other major social sectors, like welfare or training. Furthermore, as a result of the highly gradual application of the "Dini Reform", the average real age of retirement is likely to remain at the current low levels (about age 57) or to increase very slowly for many years to come.

This is why the current government has decided to intervene again on pensions; on the one hand, accelerating the application of the "Dini Reform" and, on the other, introducing an improved system of incentives for the postponement of the decision to retire from work.

In this regard, we can say that while the acceleration of the "Dini Reform" will undoubtedly result in the reduction of the pension expenditure, the effects regarding incentives to the postponement of the retirement age are less certain.

The decision to retire from work is, in fact, linked to a

series of factors occurring at the level of the single worker (for example, the physical and mental health status, the educational level, the degree of vocational obsolescence of the job qualification, etc.) which can prevent the continuation of work even with heavy economic incentives. In the case of dependent workers, the opinion of employers as to the productivity of workers and the usefulness of retaining them in the enterprise must obviously be taken into account.

More economic incentives not accompanied by other policies (vocational training, promotion of occupational health, introduction of technologies and work methods that are more "friendly" towards older workers and a customised planning of corporate careers) are highly likely to fail. Not surprisingly, in countries with a law suddenly changing the retirement age, there has been an increase in invalidity pensions and a rise in unemployment among older workers.

The objective of "active ageing" of the population thus requires a range of medium-term integrated policies, before the reduction of pension expenditure can be achieved and have consistent effects.

Massimo Paci
IRPPS' Scientific Advisory Board

Migration Trends in Italy

Two basic aspects in a complex reality

Since 1993 a positive net international migration has prevented a decline of population in Italy due to the prevalence of the death rate over the birth rate. For some years, by size of the foreign population, Italy has already become the fourth country in the European Union, after the traditional immigration-receiving countries like Germany, France and the United Kingdom. There were nearly 1.5 million foreigners legally present at the beginning of 2002, to which those legalised in the recent amnesty measure, attracting 700,000 applications, will be added in the coming months. On the other hand, there are from 2.9 to 4 million Italians who, according to the two available sources, live in another country.

These data effectively summarise two basic aspects of the complex reality of the Italian migration system. In recent years, Italy has become more attractive to foreigners; according to the data of population registers, between 1996 and 2000 arrivals exceeded departures by 141,000 people per year, while in the same period a much lower amount of loss of Ital-

ian nationals was recorded (-12,800 people per year). The present situation of international migration in Italy is thus represented on the one hand by the stabilisation and growth of a consistent level of foreign immigration from Third World countries and Eastern Europe and on the other, by a migration loss of Italian nationals, due to the relationships with the large and generally well-integrated Italian communities abroad and the new flows related to exchanges with countries having a similar level of economic development.

The migration balance for the period 1991-2001, calculated with census data and figures on the natural change in the population, totals 393,000 people, i.e. approximately 40,000 people per year. This data is closer than it appears to the population-register figures for the period 1996-2000. We must, in fact, consider that in the first half of the 1990s, the balance was lower than in the second half, that the population-register data tend to overestimate it and that the calculation for the intercensal period includes all the errors of the statistical sources used.

However, the truly interesting aspect is that the various areas of the country contribute to this figure in wholly different ways. The South lost 574,000 people, Central Italy gained 190,000, the North-West gained 314,000 and the North-East 463,000. These figures contain a third major dimension of Italian migration, linked to the persistent losses of the South in interregional exchanges. In the exchanges with foreign countries during these years, the South gained population, although much less than the rest of the country. The overall migration loss must therefore be attributed wholly to the effects of internal migration, which were so significant for this part of the country in the 1990s to induce a decline in the resident population, despite a positive natural balance of 552,000 people. With regard to the destination of migration (inter-divisions and international), the North-East seems to have definitely replaced the North-West as the main area of attraction for the long-distance mobility.

Corrado Bonifazi

Net migration in Italian divisions according to census data and natural change, 1991-2001 (Absolute values in thousands)

	Natural change	Intercensal change	Difference = net migration
North West	-326.8	-12.3	314.5
North East	-206.1	256.5	462.6
Central Italy	-194.6	-4.7	189.9
South	551.9	-21.7	-573.7
Italy	-175.6	217.7	393.3

Source: IRPPS elaborations on ISTAT data.

Top five Italian communities in other European countries (1999) and top five foreign communities in Italy (2002) (Absolute values in thousands)

Italian communities abroad		Foreign communities in Italy	
Receiving country	Size	Country of citizenship	Size
Germany	615.9	Morocco	167.9
Switzerland	327.7	Albania	159.3
France	201.7	Romania	83.0
Belgium	200.3	Philippines	67.7
United Kingdom ^(a)	95.0	China	62.1

^(a) 2000.

Source: OECD and ISTAT data.

Internal Migration and the Italian Settlement System

The Italian settlement system is dominated by major agglomerations such as Roma (3,215,000), Milano (2,805,000), Napoli (2,409,000), Torino (1,462,000). At the same time it is renowned for its medium sized cities with the amenities of the "Italian way of life". Needless to say that the lifestyle of most Italians is rather urban than rural.

The comparison between the 1991 and 2001 population census figures (see map based on the local labour market areas in p. 8) indicates a continuing trend towards suburbia at the meso scale, and towards the North on a macro scale. Several trends of interregional migration do persist in Italy: (1) within the agglomerations the centres continue to loose population with regard to their periphery; (2) rural, low density and mountainous areas, which are characterised by a low accessibility through public and

private transportation, continue to loose population; (3) South-North migration flows continue to play an important role, even if their origins and destinations vary over the decades. In the 1990s we observe a South to North flow of 114,000 persons per year and a North to South flow of 61,000, leading to an average net migration of



53,000. The South to North flows have increased in the last years and reached 137,000 in 1999. In the last years the destinations shifted somewhat from the traditional industrial areas, like Turin and Genova, to the areas dominated by the tertiary sector and the areas characterised by small and medium-sized enterprises of the "Third Italy", in north-eastern Italy.

As other European countries, Italy is facing serious environmental problems linked to the geographic distribution of the population and its consumption patterns. Through the human consumption of resources like water and energy, the settlement system and its changes have direct and indirect effects on the environment. Italy has one of the highest water per capita consumption and most of its energy still comes from non renewable resources. Its agglomerations suffer from congestion due to the reduced role of the public sector in transporting persons and goods.

Frank Heins

Immigrant Incorporation in the Italian Society

In early 2002, the foreigners present in Italy with a regular residence permit numbered slightly fewer than 1,450,000 (with 85% of the cases coming from Third World countries and Eastern Europe). This number does not include minors, that numbered around 250 thousands according to an estimate of Istat (National Institute of Statistics). Therefore, a reliable estimate of the total legal foreign population in Italy amounts to 1,700,000, almost 3% of the total resident population in Italy. Moreover, a new amnesty law is being enacted which, in a short time, will presumably lead to the regularisation of around another half a million people. Therefore, the legal component of the foreigners is expected to increase considerably.

In less than 10 years, legal immigrants have more than doubled, and their demographic and social characteristics have substantially changed. Even if we limit our attention to the population structure alone there are evident signs of a stabilisation of the phenomenon: with the passing of time, the imbalance in the composition by sex within the different nationalities has been reduced; the proportion of married couples has increased; there is a greater presence of families, while minors have increased their absolute and relative importance, as evidenced by the enrolment of foreign pupils and students in Italian schools. This trend is obviously connected, in the first place, with the increase of the family reunions, but also with the growth in marriages between foreigners - as well as in mixed marriages, which continue to be increasingly frequent - and with the considerable rise in the number of births from both foreign parents.

The special regularisation measures (amnesty laws) - four already enacted in the past, and one currently being implemented - have solved the problems linked to the great difficulties of a regular entry and have compensated for the difficulties in programming the official inflow of immigrants. In fact, in Italy - with the exception of the family reunions and a few other cases - entries are almost always unauthorised and later corrected by the regularisation measures envisaged by the amnesty laws. Thus these laws, ensuring a greater matching between the supply and demand of foreign labour, have been a necessary, albeit not sufficient, step for immigrants, enabling them to undertake the difficult pathway of integration into the various spheres of the host society.

It should be kept in mind that there are at least three immigrant population segments,

which correspond to the different needs and levels of social participation and integration: naturalised citizens, legal foreigners, and unauthorised foreigners. It would surely be of great interest to be able to consider all three segments, or at least arrive at an evaluation of their importance, since each of them has a different impact on the host society and is the target for specific social policies. The statistical data obtained - and available - refer, however, mainly to the central segment of the legal foreign population. But for this group, also, there are currently not enough reliable data that allow for a continuous monitoring (at least on an annual basis) of several essential aspects, such as job insertion and housing conditions.

As for the migration policies, two points should be stressed. In the first place, the Italian legislation - which fundamentally extends to foreigners the welfare benefits of the Italian population - limits the enjoyment of these benefits to regular and authorised immigrants alone. In the second place, as is the case in many other countries, a series of implementation deficits occur in the actual management of the social policies for immigrants. In other words, the legislative measures for integration, which do exist, risk being nullified by an inadequate application of the provisions. In recent years, these problems have worsened due to the fact that the new immigration law, which amends in a restrictive way the fundamental law in effect (Consolidation Act on Immigration Laws), risks of inducing a significant increase in the number of unauthorised immigrants, both making difficult the granting of residence permits and requiring increasingly extensive documentation for renewal which is difficult to produce.

The Italian immigration is thus going through a contradictory phase because, on the one hand, there is an evident process of stabilisation and maturation, as expressed by the indicators mentioned previously; on the other, however, forms of discrimination persist both in the norms and, especially, in the practices, which make the integration process more difficult.

Lastly, it should be stressed that, in spite of a significant improvement of the recording criteria and availability of data, immigration still remains a phenomenon that is measured poorly and monitored less.

Enrico Pugliese and Salvatore Strozza

DEMOTRENDS IN I

	Around 2000						Around 1990			
	Italy					EU-15	Year	Italy	EU-15	
	North	Centre	South	Total	Year					
POPULATION										
Population (000's)	25,573	10,907	20,516	56,996	21/10/01	377,988	1/1/01	56,694	363,763	
Population 0-14 (% of total population)	12.6	13.0	17.3	14.4	1/1/01	16.8	1/1/00	16.8	18.3	
Population 15-64 (% of total population)	67.9	67.2	66.9	67.4	1/1/01	66.9	1/1/00	68.5	67.2	
Population 65+ (% of total population)	19.5	19.8	15.8	18.2	1/1/01	16.3	1/1/00	14.7	14.5	
Population 80+ (% of total population)	4.6	4.6	3.3	4.1	1/1/01	3.7	1/1/00	3.1	3.4	
Population density (population per sqkm)	213	187	167	189	21/10/01	117	1/1/01	188	112	
Birth rate (per 1,000 inhabitants)	8.9	8.8	10.1	9.3	2002	10.6	2002	10.0	12.0	
Death rate (per 1,000 inhabitants)	10.5	10.4	8.7	9.8	2002	9.7	2002	9.6	10.2	
Total population change (per 1,000 inhabitants)	3.1	3.6	-2.0	1.4	2002	3.6	2002	0.9	4.4	
Rate of natural increase (per 1,000 inhabitants)	-1.5	-1.6	1.3	-0.5	2002	0.8	2002	0.5	1.8	
FERTILITY										
Total fertility rate (children per woman)	1.21	1.19	1.34	1.26	2002	1.47	2001	1.33	1.57	
Mean age of mothers at childbirth (years)	30.6	30.6	29.2	30.3	1996/1999	29.3	1999	28.9	28.2	
Live births outside marriage (in % of total live births)	9.0	8.3	6.4	9.6	1996/2000	28.4	2000	6.5	19.6	
Live births with foreign citizenship (in % of total live births)	7.5	6.4	1.3	4.8	1996/2000	...	...	...	...
FAMILY FORMATION AND DISSOLUTION										
Nuptiality rate (per 1,000 inhabitants)	4.2	4.6	5.2	4.6	2002	5.1	2000	5.6	6.0	
First marriage rate of men (per 1,000)	506	526	668	547	1998	530	1995	690	620	
First marriage rate of women (per 1,000)	568	570	687	602	1998	570	1995	690	650	
Men's mean age at first marriage (years)	30.9	31.1	29.7	30.4	1998	30.3	1999	28.6	27.7	
Women's mean age at first marriage (years)	28.3	28.5	26.6	27.6	1998	28.1	1999	25.6	25.3	
Divorces (per 100 marriages)	17.2	14.6	5.5	13.4	1998/2000	36.6	2000	8.7	27.8	
FAMILY STRUCTURE										
Average number of persons per household	2.5	2.6	2.9	2.6	2000	2.4	2000	2.8	...	
Population living in one-person households (% of total population)	24.9	24.3	20.3	23.3	2000	...	...	20.2	...
One-person households (% of total households)	10.0	9.4	6.9	8.8	2000	12.0	2000	8.0	10.0	
Large households (5 and more members, % of total households)	4.4	6.4	12.4	7.4	2000	...	...	10.0	...
Couple-without-children households (% of total households)	22.6	22.5	16.9	20.7	2000	...	...	18.9	...
Couple-with-children households (% of total households)	40.9	41.8	52.0	44.7	2000	...	...	50.8	...
One-parent households (% of total households)	8.8	8.3	8.2	8.5	2000	...	...	7.8	...
Elderly households* (% of total households)	13.9	14.9	12.9	13.8	2000	15.0	2000	...	...
EDUCATION										
15-24-year-olds in education or training (% of 15-24-year-olds)	52.3	58.0	55.1	54.5	2000	64.0	2001	47.6	52.8 ³	
25-64-year-olds with upper secondary education (% of 25-64 year-olds)	35.1	36.6	30.6	33.9	2002	50.8	2001	25.7	26.4 ³	
25-64-year-olds with an university degree (% of 25-64-year-olds)	10.3	11.6	9.2	10.2	2002	25.7	2001	7.3	11.9 ³	
LABOUR FORCE										
Male labour-force participation rate (% of 15-64-year-old men) ¹	76.4	74.4	71.7	74.3	2002	72.9	2001	75.4	78.4 ³	
Female labour-force participation rate (% of 15-64-year-old women) ¹	55.9	51.1	37.0	48.2	2002	55.5	2001	42.4	52.6 ³	
Male unemployment rate (% economically active men)	2.7	4.7	14.1	7.0	2002	6.8	2001	6.5	6.7 ³	
Female unemployment rate (% economically active women)	5.8	9.4	26.4	12.2	2002	8.6	2001	15.9	11.1 ³	
Youth unemployment rate (% economically active population aged 15-24 years) ²	11.1	22.0	49.4	27.2	2002	14.0	2001	29.0	16.4 ³	
Long term unemployment (12 months or more, % of total unemployed)	36.3	56.6	67.2	59.1	2002	44.0	2001	70.8	51.3 ³	
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION										
Residents with foreigner citizenship (000's)	821	418	226	1,465	2001	18,889	2000	356	14,900	
Residents with foreigner citizenship (% of total population)	3.2	3.7	1.1	2.5	2001	5.0	2000	0.6	4.1	
Population with citizenship of another EU-15 Member State (% of total population)	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.3	2001	1.5	2000	0.1	1.5	
Asylum applications (000's)	...	...	...	19	1999	353	1999	4	397
MORTALITY										
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	3.9	4.6	6.1	4.3	1999/2001	4.6	2001	8.2	7.6	
Male life expectancy at birth (years)	76.8	77.3	76.6	76.8	2001	75.3	2000	73.6	72.8	
Female life expectancy at birth (years)	83.1	83.2	82.3	82.9	2001	81.4	2000	80.1	79.4	
Male life expectancy at 65 years (years)	16.1	16.4	16.2	16.2	1999	15.6	1997	15.1	14.6	
Female life expectancy at 65 years (years)	20.5	20.4	19.6	20.2	1999	19.4	1997	18.8	18.4	
POPULATION AGEING IN 2025 AND 2050										
Population 65+ in 2025 (% of total population)	26.9	26.1	23.0	25.4		22.6				
Population 80+ in 2025 (% of total population)	9.4	8.6	6.7	8.3		6.3				
Population 65+ in 2050 (% of total population)	35.9	34.3	32.4	34.4		28.3				
Population 80+ in 2050 (% of total population)	15.7	14.0	12.5	14.2		10.9				

Estimated values in italics

... Not available

Definition of major geographic areas in Italy: North: Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta, Lombardia, Trentino-Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Emilia Romagna; Centre: Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio; South: Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna.

The EU has today 15 Member States (EU-15) (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom)

Statistical sources: Istat, Eurostat and UN

* % private households of 1 or 2 members of which at least one aged 65+

¹ 1990 data refer to 14-64-year-olds

² 1990 data refer to 14-24-year-olds

³ EU-12

TALY AND EUROPE

edited by Massimiliano Crisci and Frank Heins

Statistical information in general, and regarding demographic and socio-economic aspects in particular, is of primordial importance in formulating, conducting and evaluating policies regarding economic and social aspects.

Notwithstanding the cultural and socio-economic differences we observe between the countries of the European Union comprising 15 countries, and in the future 25, 27 or even more countries, certain demographic processes seem to converge. Even if certain national and regional differences continue to persist, lifestyles are becoming more uniform in a unified Europe. European demography is reflecting these changing lifestyles and common traits of change and common challenges can be observed in European demography.

In most EU countries a lower intensity and/or a delay of important demographic events like union formation, fertility and mortality is taking hold. We observe lower and later fertility with a total fertility rate of 1.5 children, as well as decreasing mortality levels and, consequently, a higher life expectancy (75.3 years for men and 81.4 years for women). Concurrently, the tendency towards more time spent in education and towards a shorter working life seems to come to a standstill, in the case of men. Whereas labour-force participation of women continues to

increase. In most European countries efforts are under way to extend the age at retirement to limit deficits in the social security accounts.

Evidently, this delay of demographic events will and cannot continue indefinitely. But before these trends slow down their effects will be undelatable from the European society, especially if these processes are read through the perspective of the life cycle of generations, instead of a cross-sectional approach.

The demographic challenges facing Italy and the EU are similar: low or very low fertility and an ageing population. Both processes are linked and trigger consequences for the societies and economies of the EU in its entirety, as well as at a national, regional and local level. Our societies are starting to acknowledge these challenges, but they are far from formulating sustainable solutions.

The population of the EU, even with the accessions planned for 2004 and 2006 (with more than 480 millions inhabitants) will lose importance, compared to the world population. In 2010 Europe of the 27 countries will represent 7.1% of the world population and in 2050 this value will decline to 5.1%. Is it likely that an economic decline follows these demographic changes?

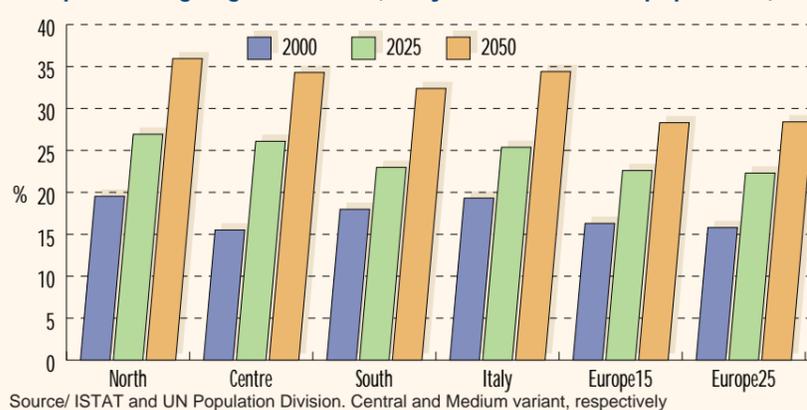
The forthcoming European Union with 25 member states

	Value	Date
Population (in thousands)	453,005	1/1/2003
Population 0-14 (in % of total population)	17.2	1/1/2000
Population 15-64 (in % of total population)	67.1	1/1/2000
Population 65+ (in % of total population)	15.7	1/1/2000
Birth rate (per 1,000 inh.)	10.3	2002
Death rate (per 1,000 inh.)	9.8	2002
Total population change (per 1,000 inh.)	2.7	2002

Note: The EU is preparing for the accession of eastern and southern European countries. In 2004 Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia will join (EU25).

Source: Eurostat

Population ageing 2000-2050 (65+ years in % of total population)



Source/ ISTAT and UN Population Division. Central and Medium variant, respectively

Italian Mortality: How Much Room for Further Improvements?

In the past thirty years, the progresses attained in the economic-social and medical-health fields have enabled the Italian population to gain many years in terms of life expectancy. According to the ISTAT's latest life tables, Italian women can now count on a life expectancy at birth of over 82 years, and men can expect 76, while thirty years ago they could count on 74 and 68 years, respectively. There has thus been a gain of 8 years of life for both sexes. What we are now experiencing is a true revolution, made possible by the great survival gains of the elderly population. In less than thirty years' time, women of over 60 years of age have gained a mean length of 5 years of life (rising from 19.6 to 24.6 years), and men have gained 4 years (from 16.1 to 20.1 years). During the same period, those over 80 years of age have gained, respectively, 2.5

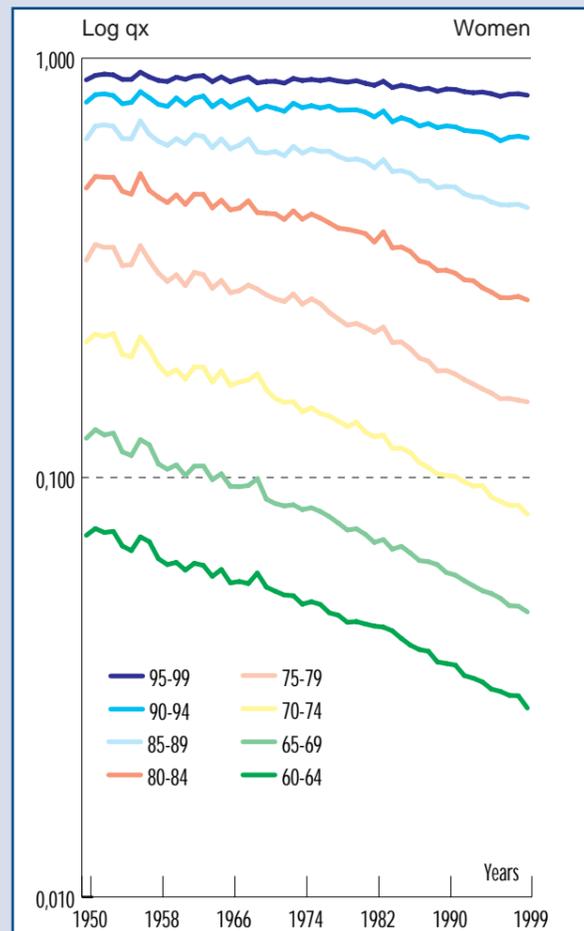
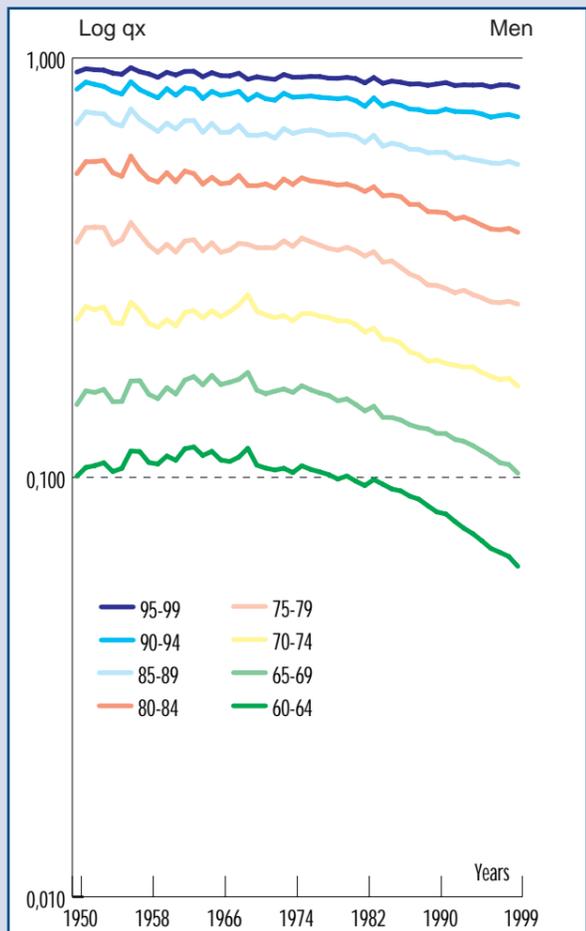
(from 6.5 to 9.0 years) and 1.5 years (from 5.8 to 7.3 years). According to the latest life tables, at the age of 80, 70% of the women and 47% of the men of the cohort are still alive. This means that, on the average, more than half the population of the life table dies after reaching 80 years of age. For women, in particular, 30% of the deaths take place after the age of 90. The proportion of survivors between 90 and 100 years of age increases as time goes by, while the presence of people over 100 years of age is becoming more and more important as well. Italy is one of the most favoured countries in the world in this regard, although to reach the survival levels of the Japanese women, our 60-year-old women still have to gain two years of life, on average, while the Italian elderly men – in particular those living in the Marches region – are among the most privileged in the world.

of the decisive factors in the decline of mortality, which could start another, just as positive, phase. The dynamics that are taking hold make it appear that this new phase could have, as its own driving force, the individual factor with the change of lifestyles. The future could thus be increasingly rosy for tomorrow's elderly people, who belong to the generations who have been able to enjoy the positive aspects of prosperity: greater culture and a more marked attitude toward prevention, adequate nutrition, better quality in individual and working life, but also a wider availability of goods, services, and resources useful for maintaining good physical and mental health.

Graziella Caselli
University of Roma La Sapienza

The number of years of life gained during old age is the almost exclusive contribution of the decline in mortality which has been taking place for this portion of the population since the late 1970s (see Figures, in which the 1950-1999 trends of age-specific probability of death are shown). It is a decline that is partly due to the great successes obtained in the therapeutic field, which for some specific diseases – hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, and diabetes – have contributed to prevent the relevant risk from turning into an increase of mortality. In part, the decline is also connected with the likewise important contribution provided by an increased individual sensitivity to prevention (which, enabling early diagnosis, has made it possible to enhance the effectiveness of the new therapies) and respect for health (which, through the adoption of more healthful lifestyles, has helped remove some risk factors).

Obviously, it is not simple to establish whether the different individual attitude is the result of health-education policies, moreover experimented only marginally in our country, or rather of the changed social, economic, and cultural structure of the population. At the present time, this latter hypothesis seems the most probable, considering that the second half of the 20th century saw a considerable rise in the education levels and – more recently – an economic transformation that has brought larger portions of the population to enjoy standards of living that were previously reserved for a privileged elite. Whatever the genesis of the changed attitude, in any case it is certain that in these years – and even more so in the future – further progresses in the fight against disease and death depend precisely on the greater attention devoted by individuals to their health, starting in their youthful years. We may be facing a further modifi-



Main Current Patterns in the Family

The Italian family has changed over time, but is still linked to tradition

Looking at macro changes

Today, there are over 21 million households in Italy. The number has increased steadily over the past 50 years while the average family size has been falling increasingly to reach the current average of 2.7 members. These trends in household dynamics in our country are a highly sensitive indicator of the changes that have occurred in the broader field of dynamics in the Italian population and even more in general of the wider changes in our society. The family, the changes occurring in its structure, the quality and rate of family changes all depend directly on new economic factors, changes in legislation, progress in the medical field or developments in the education and training sector. The family and its changes are therefore a good means of interpreting social changes.

First of all, the process of change in the Italian family still shows features of continuity with tradition and at the same time of diversity within a framework characterised by a limited spread of new patterns of family behaviour. In Italy, the average Italian family is represented by the married couple with children, though there have been major internal changes. On the one hand, the families with alternative forms to marriage, defined by standard categories like cohabitation, premarital cohabitation, living alone in the young age group are not yet very widespread, and on the other hand Italian couples continue to get married and, once married, have at least one child in the vast majority of cases.

From a strictly demographic point of view, the development trends in our population tend towards numerical reduction, characterised by a rapid ageing process. The percentage of older people and the elderly aged over 65 is, in fact, increasing, and has risen in just over 20 years from 11.3% of the population to 17.4% in 1998. Furthermore, there has been a parallel reduction in the percentage of population aged under 14, falling from 24.4% in 1971 to 14.6% in 1998, so that today there are 127 older people for every 100 youth aged under 15. This population-ageing process is mainly due to the significant fall in Italian fertility rate, accelerated by an equally significant fall in nuptiality, and by the parallel increase in life expectancy, in particular in the older age groups.

Equally important effects on the Italian family structure and dynamics and on family life have occurred due to changes in mentality and values, social pressure towards new divisions of tasks and definition of family roles, the major changes occurring above all for women as regards roles in the family and family behaviour patterns that change the way in which the various family mem-



bers pursue common strategies to increase or conserve economic resources, power or prestige.

Changes from inside

Women, who are better educated, arrive in increasing numbers on the labour market; double-earner families are increasing due to economic necessity as well as women's desire to work; there is now a significant number of children with working mothers. All this change in the labour market produces a variety of types from the family point of view: families with the woman housewife, dual-job families, families where the woman is unemployed, families where the man is unemployed, all families which represent different and often new aspects with respect to a traditional-type asymmetrical married family.

The relationships between generations have also changed from a quality point of view and people keep up the role of "children" increasingly longer at home with their parents. The phenomenon of "mother's boys" does not seem to be a contingent factor, but rather a structural element in Italian society, likely to persist and spread because it is basically related to the value system and social models of the country. The consequences will be significant not only for young people involved but also for the entire Italian social and economic structure

Changes in family policies

Considering these changes, public policies have been developed and modified with excessive slowness. While there is a significant generosity in the transfer of central government funds to older people, there are serious drawbacks in the support and encouragement of younger families for whom it is often difficult to reconcile employment and child-rearing. These difficulties are all the more serious in those families where one or both partners work on a precarious basis or in any case without social-security protection. Furthermore, there is more poverty in families with dependent children, compared to those of older people: the poverty rate is, in fact, very high in families with two or more minor children and in lone parent families.

The family network well-functioning may therefore become essential. The family with its division of tasks and responsibilities according to gender and the generations may be considered as an explicit partner of Italian-style welfare and to a certain extent allows for lower public expenditure for family policy.

Rossella Palomba



Is an Upswing for Italy Fertility in Sight?

For a number of years, the annual number of births in Italy has been just slightly over half million, and it is constantly lower than the number of deaths. Italy has thus become a case study as a country with decidedly negative natural dynamics and a "suffering" demographic structure. The proportion of births among the foreign population grew during the 1990s, gradually becoming more important, also by virtue of the presence of more consolidated and more sizable communities. Nevertheless, from the demographic standpoint this contribution is still slight (in the year 2000, the newborns of foreign parents counted for less than 5% of the total) and insufficient for reversing the consolidated trend.

For over 25 years, the actual behaviours having children, estimated by the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) underwent a continuous, sizable decrease that persisted up to the early 1990s. The slight increase in the last five to six years has been greeted with great interest by insiders, who see it as the first blurred sign of an interruption of the decreasing trend. But is it sufficient to speak of a new phase of Italian fertility?

It is, perhaps, early for optimism. The most recent estimate of the TFR, equal to 1.26 children per woman in 2002, still describes an Italy at the world's lowest rates, on a level considered unanimously as too low to allow for a balanced demographic trend. Moreover, the increase recorded up to now, which has entailed variations between 1.20 and 1.26 children per woman, has not been sufficient to induce sensible practical effects, in particular on total births. In fact, this aggregate tends to remain

constant, when it does not actually decrease, because of the simultaneous decline in the female population at reproductive age.

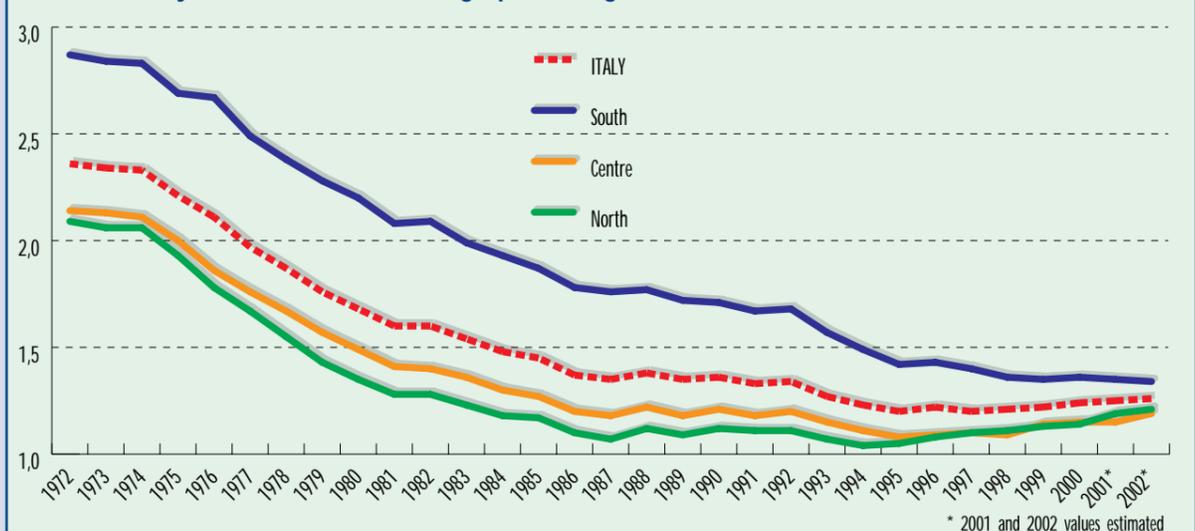
Nevertheless, several positive aspects may be observed, analysing the territory in detail. The geography of fertility in Italy shows two different areas: the southern regions, traditionally more reproductive, and the central-northern area, where the fertility rate is considerably lower. The interesting novelty of the most recent trend is that the slight increase of the TFR recorded nationally is the average of two opposite trends. In the areas of very low fertility (including several Italian regions that recorded in the 1990s an average number of children per women lower than 1), the increase of the fertility rate is consider-

able, sufficient also to make the number of births indicator. On the other hand, in the southern regions, the indicator is still in the declining phase.

Fundamentally, in Italy we are seeing a trend toward a standardisation of the reproductive behaviour in the country's various areas. Until active family-support policies are implemented, the wager on the future fertility will only lie in defining the point of balance that will be reached at the national level by two opposite trajectories: on the one side, the slight upswing in the low-fertility area and, on the other, the slow decrease in the more reproductive areas.

Maria Pia Sorvillo
ISTAT

Total Fertility Rate in the Italian Geographical Regions: 1972-2002



and will be highlighted even more in the near future in certain segments of our labour market; on the other, it is necessary to take into account the need – not only humanitarian, but also indispensable for the orderly management of the society and for a balanced development of the whole population – for immigration to consist of both workers and their families, which is by now a standard in the migration policy prevailing at the European level.

There are some doubts as to the possibilities and limits of a recovery of fertility in Italy. There will be increases – and somewhere these have already occurred – of a few points partly due to the late recovery of births not occurred previously by the large generations born between 1965 and 1975, partly due to the slowing down of the delay or even to the earlier start of procreation of the new generations, and lastly due to the contribution of the fertility of the immigrants.

Can more be done? Our surveys on the attitudes with respect to the population policies do not seem to show that economic and even tax incentives can do much to induce Italian couples to have more children. The objective obstacles are the usual ones: a home, a job, and the insufficiency or poor efficiency of certain services. These should be remedied as much as possible, without, however, expecting amazing effects on the number of children per family. These children are few – but, generally speaking, not none – because the investment in care, time, and money made by the family for each is quite high. The other problem is that too often most of the responsibility for that time and care falls on the mother alone, who must, with great difficulty, reconcile these commitments with those deriving from her job: it is an issue of equality within the families, but also a problem of co-ordination of childcare and school services and their hours with the needs of the working lives of both parents.

Giuseppe Gesano

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

On April 3, 2003 the IRPPS Board appointed **Sveva Avveduto** as head of the new section “Human Resources and Knowledge Society”.

On May 21, 2003 **Rossella Palomba**, from IRPPS, presented the report “**Reconciling work and family in Europe**” at the Social Cohesion Committee of the Council of Europe. She gave also an audition at the Italian Economics and Labour Council (CNEL) on the same subject.

On June 10, 2003, at IRPPS, the **European Research Project “Overcoming the Barriers and Seizing the Opportunities for Active Ageing Policies in Europe”** was presented by Paolo Calza Bini, Scientific reference person of the Italian team in the Project.

Fabio Palazzo and **Pietro Folino-Gallo**, from IRPPS, gave two lessons during the Corso Nazionale di formazione in Medicina Sociale delle Cefalee (National Training Course on Social Medicine for Migraines), 28 March / 27 June 2003, CNR. The lessons dealt with “Health Economics” and “Pharmaceutical costs of the migraine”, respectively.

The EAPS (European Association for Population Studies) will hold the **European Population Conference – EPC’2003 in Warsaw, Poland, on 26-30 August 2003**.

The IRPPS researchers will contribute the following papers and posters:

Frank Heins: *An exploratory study of internal migration by educational attainment: differences in intensity and timing and its regional impact.* (Theme E: Regional population dynamics and internal migration - Session E1: Individual and household migration within social and economic systems);

Giuseppe Gesano: *Use and misuse of applied demography in local governance: some Italian experiences* (Theme K: Applied demography - Session K1: Applied demography);

Maria Girolama Caruso, Giuseppe Gesano, Frank Heins, Dante Sabatino: *Educational attainment and some aspects of Italian demography.* (Theme P: Population and education - Session P1: Population and education);

Giuseppe Gesano: *Shrinking population and expanding ‘footprint’ in developed societies: evidences from Italian trends.* (PO7: Population and environment).

DEMOTRENDS

Editorial Board

Giuseppe Gesano, *chairman*
Corrado Bonifazi, Adele Menniti, Maura Misiti,
Rossella Palomba, Enrico Pugliese
Executive secretary: Alessandra Bailletti

IRPPS Via Nizza, 128 - 00198 Roma
tel.: 0649932805; fax: 0685834506;
e-mail: segr.irpps@irpps.cnr.it

Designer: Fabio M. Canale; Print: Graffiti / F. M. Canale;
Chiuso in tipografia il 18.07.2003

The most recent issues of Demotrends are available on the IRPPS website: www.irpps.cnr.it

IRPPS participation in international research programs

Programs just closed

European Commission NIEPS

Network for Integrated European Population Studies

Giuseppe Gesano

European Commission MINERVA

Women’s Scientific Careers. From a Member State, a prototype for Europe

Rossella Palomba

Programs in progress

European Commission EUROMEDSTAT

Monitoring Expenditure and Utilisation of Pharmaceutical Products in the EU – A public approach
Pietro Folino-Gallo

European Commission DIALOG

Population Policy Acceptance Study –The Viewpoint of Citizens and Policy Actors Regarding the Management of Population Related Change
Rossella Palomba

European Commission ENMOB

European Network on Human Mobility. The Role of Human Mobility in the creation and diffusion of Knowledge on a National and International Scale
Sveva Avveduto

European Commission

The Brain Drain: Emigration Flows for Qualified Scientists
Sveva Avveduto

European Commission ACTIVEAGE

Active Ageing in Europe
Paolo Calza Bini

European Commission PEN-REF

Public Participation and the Pension Policy Process: the Citizen and Pension Reform
Paolo Calza Bini

European Commission

Private Pensions
Paolo Calza Bini

National Cancer Institute (USA)

Enhancing Complete Prevalence Estimates
Anna Gigli

Proposals in progress

European Commission EUROMEDSTAT 2

Monitoring Expenditure and Utilisation of Pharmaceutical Products in the EU – A public approach. Second step
Pietro Folino-Gallo

European Commission DILEMMA

The Work-life Balance of Male and Female Leaders
Rossella Palomba

European Commission PRIME

Policies for Research and Innovation in the Move towards the European Research Area
Sveva Avveduto

...AND WHAT’S MORE

Bank of Italy, Italian Household Budget in 2000, Methodological Notes and Statistical Information, Supplements to the Statistical Bulletin, Year XII, No. 6, 18 January 2002.

Linda Laura Sabbadini, “Reti di parentela e reti di solidarietà in Italia”, “Tra le generazioni. I molteplici fili della solidarietà familiare” Conference, Pistoia, 15-16 March 2001.

Istat, Le strutture familiari, Indagine Multiscopo sulle famiglie. Famiglia, soggetti sociali e condizione dell’infanzia, Year 1998. Rome: Istat, 2000.

Istat, Le Organizzazioni di Volontariato in Italia, Year 1999. Note Rapide, 28 April 2000.

Bonifazi C., Heins F., 2003, Testing the differential urbanisation model for Italy, Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie, 1, 23-37

Bonifazi C., Heins F., 2000, Long-term trends of internal migration in Italy, International Journal of Population Geography, 2, 111-131

UN Population Division, 2003, World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision Data Online <http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm>. Istat population estimates and population projection <http://demo.istat.it/previsioni/index.html>.

