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MIGRATION MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

Master thesis

UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN BRATISLAVA
FACULTY OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

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Supervisor: Mgr. Michaela Čiefová, PhD.

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Bc. Stela Marcineková

Affirmation

I hereby declare that I have written my master thesis entitled 'Migration Management in Southern Europe', in Slovak 'Manažment migrácie v Južnej Európe' myself, based on the literature and material that I list in the bibliographic references.

Date:

.....
signature

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Abstrakt

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Predmetom diplomovej práce je manažment migrácie v Južnej Európe, konkrétne v Taliansku a Španielsku, a jeho prepojenie s rastúcou popularitou politických strán krajnej pravice. Migrácia je globálny fenomén, ktorý nie je možné spomaliť, ani zastaviť, a je to hlavne Južná Európa, ktorá čelí mnohým výzvam v spojení so zvýšeným počtom migrantov prichádzajúcich do Európy najmä zo Severnej Afriky. Spolu s rastúcim počtom migrantov rastie aj vplyv krajne pravicových strán - niektorí tvrdia, že vzostup týchto politických strán predstavuje hrozbu pre demokratické hodnoty a ľudské práva, zatiaľ čo iní ho považujú za legitímnu reakciu na výzvy meniaceho sa sveta. Celkovo je tento fenomén kontroverznou témou, ktorá vyvoláva dôležité otázky o budúcnosti európskej politiky a spoločnosti. Diplomová práca je rozdelená o trochu samostatných kapitol. Prvá kapitola definuje pôvod a históriu migrácie, opisuje prečo ľudia migrujú a venuje sa najdôležitejším migračným tokom. Následne práca opisuje manažment migrácie, momentálnu situáciu a krajne pravicové strany v Taliansku a Španielsku. Druhá kapitola prezentuje primárny cieľ výskumu, rovnako ako aj sekundárne ciele, hypotézu, a uvádza použité metódy a metodológiu. Tretia kapitola analyzuje do akej miery ovplyvňuje migračná politika jednotlivých krajín vzostup popularity krajne pravicových strán a politické preferencie voličov. V práci sú využité kvalitatívne a kvantitatívne výskumné metódy, vrátane analýzy, syntézy, indukcie a dedukcie.

Kľúčové slová: migrácia, migračná politika, manažment migrácie, Európska únia, krajne pravicová strana, Taliansko, Španielsko

Abstract

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The subject of the thesis is the management of migration in Southern Europe, specifically in Italy and Spain, and its connection with the growing popularity of political parties of the far right. Migration is a global phenomenon that cannot be slowed down or stopped, and it is mainly Southern Europe that faces many challenges in connection with the increased number of migrants coming to Europe, especially from North Africa. Along with the increasing number of migrants, the influence of far-right parties is also growing - some argue that the rise of these political parties represents a threat to democratic values and human rights, while others see it as a legitimate response to the challenges of a changing world. Overall, this phenomenon is a controversial topic that raises important questions about the future of European politics and society. The thesis is divided into three separate chapters. The first chapter defines the origins and history of migration, describes why people migrate and addresses the most important migration flows. Subsequently, the thesis describes the management of migration, the current situation and the far-right parties in Italy and Spain. The second chapter presents the primary aim, secondary aims of the research together with hypothesis, and outlines the methods and methodology used. The third chapter analyses the extent to which the migration policies of each country influence the rise in popularity of far-right parties and the political preferences of voters. The thesis employs qualitative and quantitative research methods, including key informant interviews, and the other methods such as analysis, synthesis, induction, and deduction.

Key words: migration, migration policy, migration management, European Union, far-right party, Italy, Spain

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Introduction

Migration management in Southern Europe has been a contentious issue for many years. The region has been a major point of entry for migrants and refugees from Africa and the Middle East for a long time and has struggled to find an effective way to handle the influx of people. In this thesis, I will examine the challenges and strategies associated with migration management in Southern Europe, with a focus on the countries of Italy and Spain. These two countries are the subject of the thesis as they are of particular interest in terms of social and political events and leading countries in the number of incoming migrants. Greece is also one of the countries with the largest number of refugees and migrants - due to limited space and the fact that Greece has been the subject of much work, especially during the refugee crisis, I decided not to include this country in my research.

One of the biggest challenges Southern Europe has to face is the sheer scale of migration. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of people trying to enter the region by sea. In 2015, over 1 million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe by sea, with many of them landing in Southern European countries like Italy and Greece. This has put a significant strain on the resources of these countries, as they struggle to provide basic services and support for the new arrivals. Another major challenge is the lack of coordination and cooperation among Southern European countries. Despite being part of the European Union, these countries have often acted independently in their efforts to manage migration. This has led to a patchwork of policies and practices, with some countries taking a more welcoming approach, while others have adopted more restrictive measures. This lack of coordination has made it difficult for the EU to develop a comprehensive and effective approach to migration management in the region.

One strategy that has been adopted by some Southern European countries is the use of naval patrols and other measures to prevent migrants and refugees from crossing the Mediterranean Sea. In recent years, Italy, Greece, and Spain have all increased their naval patrols in the Mediterranean, in an effort to intercept boats carrying migrants and refugees. While these measures have been successful in reducing the number of people arriving in the region, they have also been criticized for being inhumane and for not addressing the root causes of migration. Another strategy that has been adopted is the use of "hotspot" facilities, where migrants and refugees are processed and registered upon their arrival. These facilities are intended to provide a more orderly and efficient way of dealing with new arrivals, but

they have also been criticized for being overcrowded and inhumane. A more comprehensive approach to migration management in Southern Europe would involve a combination of measures, such as providing aid and support to the countries of origin, addressing the root causes of migration, and strengthening the capacity of Southern European countries to manage migration. Overall, migration management in Southern Europe is a complex and challenging issue that requires a multifaceted approach. While some progress has been made in recent years, there is still much work to be done to find a sustainable and humane solution to the problem.

Chapter 1 of the thesis provides an extensive overview of migration as a global phenomenon, its historical context, the reasons that drive people to migrate, and the primary migratory routes. It further examines migration management in two selected European Union countries, namely Italy and Spain, offering a dynamic account of irregular migration and the implementation of declared policies. Additionally, this chapter analyses popular far-right parties within these countries, exploring their ideologies, rhetoric, and influence on migration-related debates.

Chapter 2 focuses on the aim, methods, and methodology employed in the thesis. It outlines the research objectives, presents the research design and data collection methods, and establishes the hypotheses that will guide the empirical part of the thesis.

The empirical part of this master's thesis aims to explore the potential connection between migration management policies in countries of Southern Europe and the rise of far-right parties. This research seeks to investigate whether these two phenomena influence each other and, if so, to what extent. Understanding the interplay between migration management and the rise of far-right parties is crucial for comprehending the complex dynamics shaping the political landscape and social fabric of these countries. By examining the empirical evidence, this study aims to shed light on the relationship between migration management policies and the emergence or growth of far-right parties, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the broader implications for societies in Southern Europe. To achieve this goal, a mixed-methods approach will be employed, combining quantitative analysis of relevant data on migration flows, policy frameworks, and electoral results, with qualitative analysis including interviews and survey among Italian and Spanish nationals, or people currently living in these two countries.

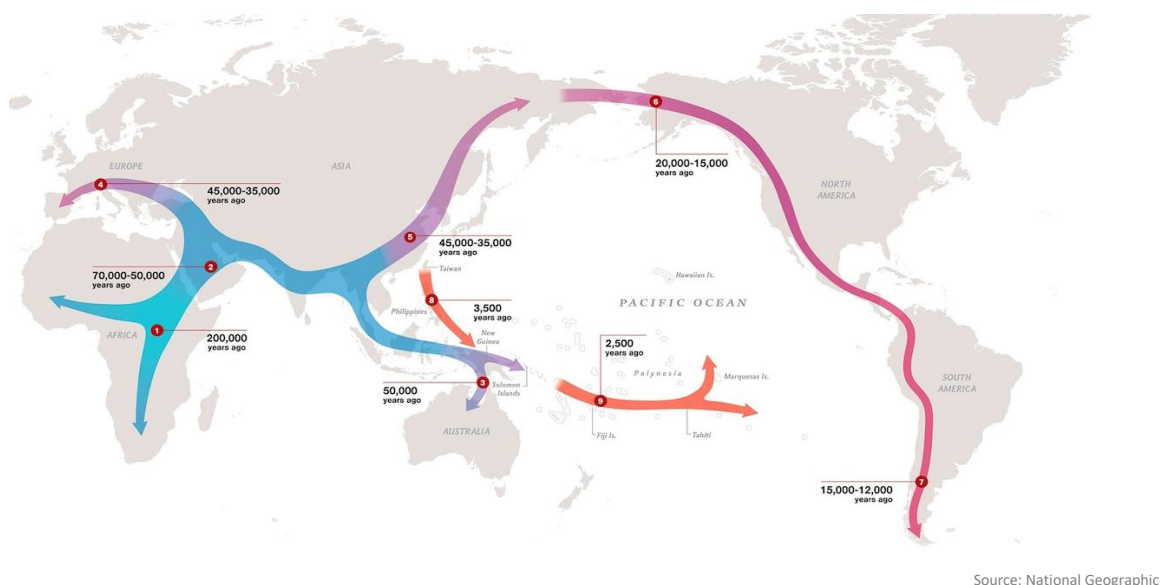
1 Migration as a Global Phenomenon

1.1 Origin and History of Migration

The phenomenon of migration is not new - society has been dealing with it since ancient times. A myriad of institutions, organisations and individuals have been studying its causes, impacts and changes. The aim of this chapter is to describe the origin and history of migration, to clarify and explain its basic concepts, to describe the main migration routes, especially towards Southern Europe, and to introduce the most common misconceptions regarding migration presented to society.

Migration can be simply defined as “movement from one country, place or locality to another.” Ever since the earliest human started to spread, humans have been on the move – according to the World Migration Report 2022 issued by International Migration Organization (IOM), in 2020, 3.6 percent of the world’s population, which makes 281 million people, lived outside of their country of origin. Although the earliest stages of human migrations are the subject of intense debate, most hypotheses agree that they took place within and out of the African continent. The earliest fossils of recognizable Homo sapiens were found in Ethiopia and are approximately 200.000 years old. The “out of Africa” theory presuppose that around 60.000 years ago, Homo sapiens spread across Eurasia, where they eventually replaced other human ancestors like Neanderthals, and it is challenged by evidence of migrations from Africa to Eurasia 120.000 years ago (Blakemore, 2019).

Figure 1: The earliest migrations across the globe



The cause of the migration of ancient people can only be disputed, but it was most likely due to food deficiency, climate change and other environmental factors. Already in historical times it is possible to find signs that migration is a very complex topic, and that African migration was already divided into two sub-fields – people moving freely and people moving because they were forced. This shows that the main reasons for migration have hardly changed over the millennia of humanity's existence, despite enormous progress in all spheres of life - just as in 2023 there is voluntary migration, e.g., for work or education, and involuntary migration, e.g., as a result of climate change, war or political regimes.

1.2 Why People Migrate

In order to better understand why people have not stopped migrating to this day, it is necessary to define the main migration flows around the world and in Europe, and to identify the main causes causing people to move from country to country or even from continent to continent. People fleeing or leaving their home countries are more than just the number - unfortunately, that is how numerous percentages of the population see them. The vast majority of the population still live in the countries in which they were born, which means that only one person in thirty is a migrant, but at the same time the number of migrants has increased by a staggering 128 million in the last 50 years (IOM, 2022).

The main topic discussed in this thesis is the migration management in Southern Europe – so why do people migrate to Europe and within the Europe? There are many reasons for this, but the three most important push (reasons people leave a country) and pull (reasons people move to a particular country) factors are socio-political, demographic and economic, and environmental. Unfortunately, persecution because of one's ethnicity, religion, race, politics and culture push people to leave their countries. Once they do not feel safe and staying would represent a significant risk for them, for example because of war conflicts or human rights violations, they are fleeing their homelands. Migrants like these are usually considered as humanitarian refugees, which can affect the whole process of admission, treatment and integration. An important decision is made already before the departure, since the countries have different attitudes against humanitarian refugees. However, these individuals are likely to move to the nearest safe country that accepts asylum seekers. An example of humanitarian refugees fleeing to Europe are people from war-torn Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, who were also granted protection status in the EU in 2019.

Demographic and economic migration is connected to labour standards, unemployment and the overall health of a country's economy. Pull factors include higher wages, better employment opportunities, a higher standard of living, better education and well-managed social welfare. Roughly two thirds of international migrants come with a goal to be employed and almost 70% come to high-income, developed countries. When a country's economy begins to decline and the conditions that directly affect the population's quality of life begin to change, migration is a direct consequence. Here, it is possible to refer to the dual labour market theory, where a secondary sector is characterized by short-term employment, little or no prospect of internal promotion, and the determination of wages primarily by market forces. In terms of occupations, it consists primarily of lower or unskilled occupations, whether they are blue-collar (manual labour), white-collar (e.g., file clerks) or service-industry (e.g., waiters). These jobs are linked by the fact that they are characterized by low skill levels, low income, ease of entry, transience of employment, and little return to education or experience. The informal economy consists of workers who are often "paid under the table." This market tends to attract the poor and a disproportionate number of minority members. Dual labour market focuses on immigration as a natural consequence of economic globalization and market penetration across national borders. Overall, the focus is not on individual migration decisions, but on what draws them to migrate as a collective group. It is argued that international migration emanates from the labour demands of modern civilization (Freiburghaus, Schmid, 1975).

As stated before, the environment and change of climate have always been a driver of migration, as people flee natural disasters, such as floods or earthquakes, that rendered several areas uninhabitable - the soil is no longer able to grow crops, people do not have the feeling of safety in their own houses, everyday life became a huge risk. Climate change is expected to exacerbate extreme weather events, meaning more people could be on the move and environmental factors could become the main reason for migration and this century is more often referred to as 'the century of climate migration'. Already today it is possible to observe the first climate refugees, e.g., from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia or Sudan (European Parliament, 2020).

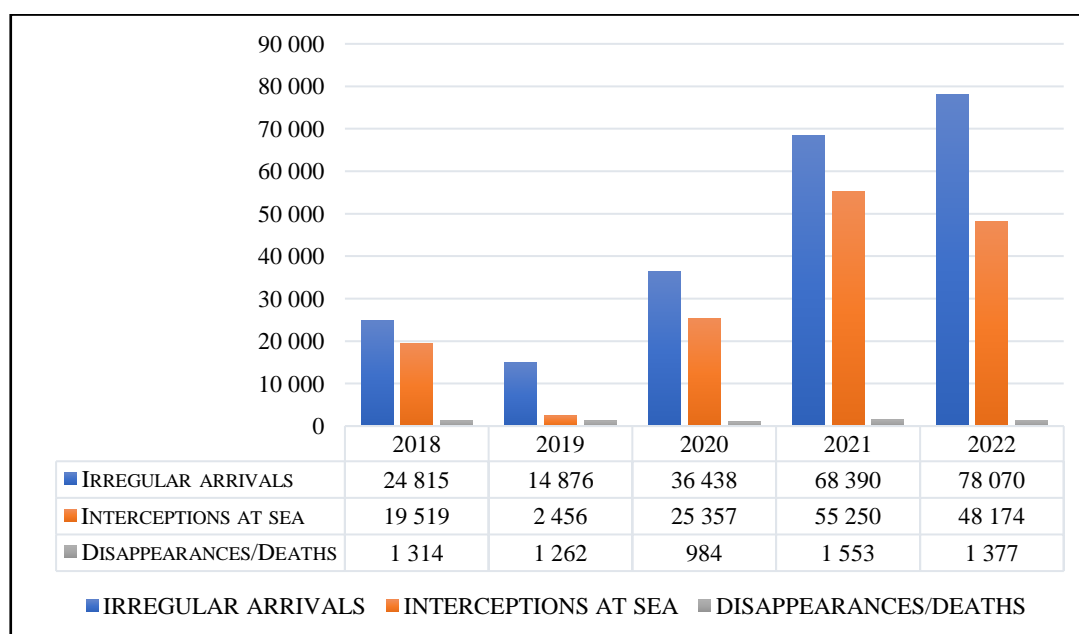
1.3 Migratory Routes

The main migration flows to Europe include *Western African Route*, *Western Mediterranean Route*, *Central Mediterranean Route*, *Western Balkan Route*, *Eastern*

Mediterranean Route and *Eastern Borders Route* (FRONTEX, 2022). For the purposes of this thesis, the Central and Western Mediterranean route leading to Italy and Spain and the Western African Route leading to the Canary Islands are further described and analysed.

The Central Mediterranean route is located in the Mediterranean Sea between North Africa and Italy, and it is considered to be the most active and dangerous paths to Europe by sea – in 2021, 68.390 migrants were detected on this route, which represents an 90% increase from 2020 (36.438 migrants) and accounts for 23% of all reported illegal border-crossings at the external border. The most common departure point was Libya, followed by Tunisia, Turkey, Egypt and Bangladesh (FRONTEX, 2022). These movements include people fleeing persecution, conflict and violence as well as those looking for better economic and social opportunities, including means to support family members at home. Many are not headed to Libya or Europe when they initially leave their country of origin, while others are ultimately trafficked to Europe (UNHR, 2018). In the graph below it is possible to see the development of border crossing attempts – the final figure consists of the number of irregular arrivals, interceptions at sea and disappearances or deaths of refugees between 2018 and 2022.

Graph 1: Attempted crossings through Central Mediterranean route (2018 – 2022)



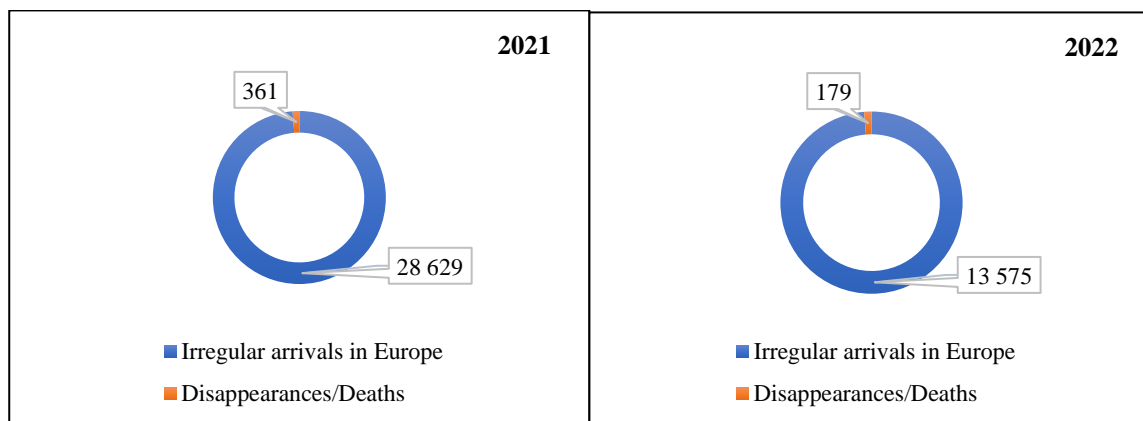
Source: IOM, 2022

The graph shows that the peak of migration through the Central Mediterranean route was in 2022, with a total of 124.621 refugee attempts to reach Europe. 1% of these people disappeared or died during their arrival - the most common causes were drowning, deaths

linked to hazardous transport, violence and lack of adequate shelter, food and water (IOM, 2022).

The Western Mediterranean route is stretching between Spain, Morocco and Algeria, and it has also been the main route used by drug smugglers. In comparison with 2020, the number of arrivals to Europe increased in 2021 just slightly as 28.990 cases were reported. This route had the decreasing tendency in previous years, which can be a result of the COVID-19 measures and restrictions. The majority of detected migrants were of Algerian nationality, followed by Moroccans (the distance between Spain and Morocco is just 14.4 km at its closest point) – same as in 2019 and 2020. Irregular migration to Spain has been a common occurrence since Spain introduced visa requirements for many North African countries in 1991 as part of the Schengen process.

Graph 2: Attempted crossings through Western Mediterranean route: 2021 and 2022



Source: IOM, 2022

The Western African route connects Senegal, The Gambia, Mauritania and Morocco (including the Western Sahara region) with the Canary Islands in Spain. This route did not belong to the frequently used migration flows before 2018 since it is considered as the longer and more dangerous path to Europe than the Western Mediterranean route. However, it reached its peak in 2020 with 23.029 detected irregular migrants coming to European territory. The sudden increase may be related to the COVID-19 regulations, which have made it more difficult for smugglers to use the aforementioned Central Mediterranean route, which is considered an easier alternative. The 2021 number of detections is only slightly lower, namely 22.504 people crossing the external border and the main nationality continued to be Moroccan, followed by various Western African nations (FRONTEX, 2022).

1.4 Migration Governance and Management

Migration is no longer just something unusual - in fact, it is part of everyday life and can affect it in a wide range of ways, both positively and negatively. This phenomenon cannot be something uncontrollable; on the contrary, there must be regional, national, international and subnational rules and agreements on the basis of which individual countries and states act. This chapter describes these agreements, treaties, conventions and rules and their subsequent implementation in the framework of migration management in the European Union.

It is vital to understand the difference between migration governance and migration management. These terms are defined by the IOM as follows:

“Migration governance is the combined frameworks of legal norms, laws and regulations, policies and traditions as well as organizational structures (subnational, national, regional and international) and the relevant processes that shape and regulate States’ approaches with regard to migration in all its forms, addressing rights and responsibilities and promoting international cooperation.”

and

“Migration management is the management and implementation of the whole set of activities primarily by States within national systems or through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, concerning all aspects of migration and the mainstreaming of migration considerations into public policies. The term refers to planned approaches to the implementation and operationalization of policy, legislative and administrative frameworks, developed by the institutions in charge of migration.”

The European Commission (EC), as the executive of the EU, supports EU countries in developing and implementing migration management and asylum systems which is done by providing operational response in EU countries, especially in Italy, Malta, Cyprus, Spain and Greece. The Commission helps national authorities through teams on the ground, as well as in coordination with EU Agencies, international organisations and other relevant actors in managing the arrivals of migrants, setting up adequate migrant reception facilities, implementing relocation decisions and other transfer mechanisms at EU level, ensuring efficient asylum and return procedures, improving border management, protecting unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups, and promoting integration policies for legally residing third-country nationals (EU, Migration and Home Affairs).

Besides, the Commission is developing a common migration and asylum policy to handle the refugee crisis – policies implemented should help Europe to reap the benefits and opportunities resulting from migration, e.g., better integration of non-EU nationals into EU societies together with guaranteeing their free movement within the Schengen area, and try to cope with the challenges of increased cross-border mobility which also involve restraining irregular migration and securing the EU's external borders, as well as better organization of legal migration, saving lives at sea and protecting those in need of shelter.

For the system to work as it should, the rules must be uniform and European countries must commit to these rules, agreements and frameworks. One of these frameworks of agreed rules is Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which establish common procedures for international protection and a uniform status for those who are granted refugee status or subsidiary protection based on the full and inclusive application of the Geneva Refugee Convention and Protocol and which aims to ensure fair and human treatment of applicants for international protection. To ensure that all EU countries fully implement the CEAS is one of the main objectives of EC. It is, of course, in the interest of the EU to reduce the motivation for irregular migration, fight smuggling, increase the effectiveness of return policies, safeguard the functioning of the internal border-free Schengen zone and closely cooperate with non-EU countries to smooth repatriation of irregular migrants.

Protection of the EU's external borders is better thanks to a more prominent role of the European Border Agency Frontex. It promotes, coordinates and develops European border management in line with the EU fundamental rights charter and the concept of Integrated Border Management, which covers national and international coordination among all relevant authorities and agencies involved in border security to establish effective, efficient and coordinated border management at the external EU borders, in order to reach the objective of open, but well controlled and secure borders. Frontex is primarily concerned with the data analysis related to the situation at and beyond EU's borders – based on these data it is identifying migratory patterns and trends, as well as the criminal activity, and then provides further evaluation of ability and readiness of each Member State to face migratory pressure on its external borders. The agency coordinates and organizes joint operations and is responsible also for rapid border interventions to assist Member States, including humanitarian emergencies and rescue at sea. In addition, Frontex may carry out operations on the territory on non-EU countries neighbouring at least one Member State, in case of migratory pressure at a non-EU country's border. Frontex focuses on preventing smuggling,

human trafficking and terrorism as well as many other cross-border crimes. It shares any relevant information gathered during its operations with relevant national authorities and Europol (Frontex, 2022).

Europol's mission is to support its Member States in preventing and combating all forms of serious international organised crime, cybercrime and terrorism. Regarding Europol's role in international migration, its main task is to deal with human people smuggling and illegal immigration, which can present a significant threat to the internal security of the EU and to the safety of its people. The facilitation of illegal migration is one of the EU's priorities in the fight against serious and organized crime as part of EMPACT 2022 - 2025 (European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats). It is believed that there is a complex and multinational migrant-smuggling network, which rapidly spread after 2014, when Europe was experiencing the biggest migration crisis in history. According to Europol's data, more than 90% of the migrants travelling to the EU use facilitation services and criminal networks around the world are increasing their involvement in migrant smuggling, with an estimated turnover of between 3 to 6 billion euro (2015). The turnover is likely to double or triple in these times when the EU is once again facing a migration crisis, which could have the knock-on effect of increasing labour exploitation, where migrants could be forced to work to pay off their large debts to smugglers (Europol, 2022).

1.4.1 Migration Management in Selected Countries of the EU – Italy

Italy is supported by the European Commission throughout the entire migration management process, which starts by managing arrivals and continues with guiding migrants through relevant procedure and integrating them into society or organising transfers to another EU country or, if needed, returning them to the country of origin. All mentioned is provided through EU funding and expertise, including the deployment of staff members permanently based in Rome, alongside the permanent presence of EU agencies, such as Frontex (European Border and Coast Guard Agency), European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and Europol.

The EC staff members in Italy cooperate with the Italian authorities, EU agencies and other relevant stakeholders to ensure effective migration management. This cooperation also includes follow-up measures after the disembarkation or arrival of migrants, including search and rescue operations. They also coordinate the voluntary relocation of asylum

seekers from Italy to other EU and Schengen associated countries. They closely cooperate with Europol staff deployed in Italy, which supports Italian law enforcement authorities on investigations, with intelligence gathering focusing on counter-smuggling and counterterrorism (EU, Migration and Home Affairs).

Frontex supports Italy mainly with border control, border surveillance, search and rescue activities in the Central Mediterranean through Joint Operation Themis, which began in February 2018, as the replacement of the operation Triton launched in 2014. This operation reflects the changing patterns of migration, as well as cross-border crime and its operational area spans the Central Mediterranean Sea (routes from Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Turkey and Albania). The staff deployed by Frontex also supports the Italian authorities in the registration and screening of migrants and asylum seekers, with search and rescue as the main component of Operation Themis (Frontex, 2022).

Another one of the agencies mentioned before is European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), which provides support to Italy's asylum and reception system. The main purpose is to improve the ability of asylum seekers and refugees to meet their objectives and to perform better (also known as capacity building), which can result in their better integration into society and labour market. EUAA is also supporting asylum registrations and is trying to improve asylum procedures and reception standards, together with improving voluntary relocation process (EU, Migration and Home Affairs). According to Activity Report for Italy (2021) issued by the EUAA, 67.040 sea arrivals in 61 locations across Italy have been recorded, which represents 97% increase compared to 2020 – 53.140 asylum registrations were recorded, which also represents a 96% increase to 2020. The EUAA agreed a 3-year Operational Plan (2022-2024) with Italian authorities, in accordance with the operational situation and needs assessment carried out with the main Italian stakeholders (EUAA, 2023).

1.4.2 Migration Policy Before 2023

Italy became a “new” immigration country in the 1970s and 1980s, after being an emigration country for decades. Despite high levels of irregular migration in the past, it is now an experienced immigration country with an increasing number of immigrants with permanent residency rights. The rate of migration to Italy has started to increase the most since 2000 - while the foreign population represented 2% of the total population in that year, it increased to 7.5% in 2013. The research made by Instat (2021) shows, that foreign

residents represented around 8.4 percent of the total population and according to Eurostat, in January 2020, 10.3% of Italy's population was foreign-born. The largest share of Italy's immigrant population is from Europe (50.2%), followed by Africa (21.8%) and Asia (20.6%). Italy's first decades as an immigrant country were characterized by weak border controls and increasing structural demand for foreign labour. Inadequate immigration laws combined with rising immigration numbers and an expanding shadow economy led to an increase in irregular migration.

To address the problem of irregular migration, various Italian governments implemented 5 regularization programs between 1986 and 2002, which contributed to the regularization of about 1.4 million migrants. The regularizations included an improvement in border control or an improvement of recruitment procedures for foreign workers. However, a polarized political debate, unevenly developed administrative structures, and weak implementation capacity limited the effectiveness of recruitment tools. This, in turn, contributed to an increase in the number of irregular migrants working in the informal economy. With a goal to reduce the number of incoming migrants, the reception system for asylum seekers has made remarkable progress with the establishment of the National Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) in 2002 - renamed in 2020 to Reception and Integration System (SAI). Funded by the Ministry of Interior Measures through the National Fund for Policy and Asylum Services, Project SAI provides hospitality and protection to asylum seekers, beneficiaries of international protection, and other vulnerable persons. Project SAI provides hospitality services, integration and protection to beneficiaries. Hospitality services consist of delivery of grocery shopping vouchers, the assistance of a language mediator, facilitating access to social-sanitary and educational services, e.g., Italian language courses for adults or school care for minors. The integration services concern orientation to work, participation in training courses and professional retraining, and assistance in finding jobs and housing (Finotelli, 2022).

Italy is one of the main entry points in Europe for immigrants crossing the Mediterranean. Together with Spain, Greece, Bulgaria and Cyprus, Italy is one of the first Member States reached by immigrants. The island Lampedusa, for example, is a major European port of entry for immigrants arriving from North Africa. This Sicilian island is geographically closer to the North African continent than to Italy. However, in the last two years, Italy has played a controversial role in rescuing migrants from the sea. As a result of anti-migration policies, a previous government declared that Italian ports were closed to

ships carrying rescued migrants. This controversial Immigration and Security Decree was proposed by the former Interior Minister Matteo Salvini - prior to the Decree, humanitarian protection permits were granted in cases where individuals were eligible for neither refugee status nor subsidiary protection but could not be removed from the country because of objective and serious personal situations. Arguing that this system for humanitarian protection was abused, Mr. Salvini abolished the humanitarian protection permit. This resulted in NGOs' vessels having to wait a long time before being allowed to disembark in a safe port. In the last months of 2019, the average wait time for rescue ships was 5.9 days, and in some cases much longer (Testore, 2021).

Later, in October 2020, the Italian cabinet approved a new decree on migration and security, which modified the provision introduced by the so-called 'Salvini Security Decrees'. Immigration Decree no. 130/2020 introduced a new special protection permit, added the possibility for asylum seekers to register with the city registry and reduced processing times for citizenship applications for naturalization and marriage from 48 months to 36 months. One of the most discussed aspects of the Salvini Decree concerned the downsizing of the SPRAR/SIPROIMI reception system (a system of reception and integration programs managed by municipalities and NGOs), and the exclusion from this system of asylum seekers. Following the Salvini Decree, asylum seekers were allowed to be hosted only in large first-arrival reception centres (CARA, CDA) and in temporary reception centres (CAS), managed by the Ministry of the Interior and its local branches. However, these facilities meet only basic standards for reception conditions. Under the new reform, the former SPRAR/SIPROIMI system changed its name into SAI and was reorganised into two levels: the first dedicated to international protection seekers, and the second for those who are already international protection beneficiaries, with added services aimed at integration. The Interior Minister of the II Conte government, Ms. Luciana Lamorgese, also widened the conditions under which migrants can apply for humanitarian protection, introducing a new special protection permit. This new permit lasts 2 years and is eligible for conversion to a work permit, as was the abolished humanitarian protection permit and grants this possibility to those within the other categories of permits, such as elective residence, acquisition of citizenship or stateless person status, sporting activity, artistic work, religious reasons, or assistance to minors. In order to avoid a massive increase in illegality, Italian legislation has improved the possibilities for temporary residence permits. In particular, the time a migrant can stay in Italy to find new employment after losing his or her job has been

extended to 12 months. Migrants with a residence permit for humanitarian reasons have also been given the option of obtaining a residence permit for employment purposes once they have found a job (Testore, 2021).

1.4.3 Current Situation

The migration issue suddenly returned to the centre of public debate with post-fascist Giorgia Meloni. It is not a priority for Italians, as the polls show - the war in Ukraine and its consequences, general inflation and higher gas and electricity prices seem much more important to them. However, the fight against migrants and private sea rescuers is one of the most important topics for the far right, and if necessary, it is also used as a distraction from other issues and shortcomings (Finotelli, 2022). Italy's far-right-wing government is aimed at stopping the migratory flow, and it took some measures that cause international rejection because they affect the actions of rescue boats at the Mediterranean Sea. A new decree-law issued on December 28, 2022 by the Italian Council of Ministers sets limits to sea rescue by humanitarian organizations. According to the piece of legislation, vessels could sail and participate in rescuing only under the control of territorial authorities and will be authorized to conduct only one operation – migrants must be also asked if they intend to seek international protection and in such a case, the country after which the boat has been flagged and the boat owner deal with the request. The main promoter of the measures, Italian interior minister Matteo Piantedosi stated, that the government's purpose is to face illegal migratory flow and defend Italian borders since the current situation is not sustainable for the country. On a contrary, several humanitarian organizations do not agree and they issued a joint statement arguing that these provisions will reduce sea rescue capabilities and turn the central Mediterranean Sea into even more dangerous place than it currently is (Garcia, 2023).

The Prime Ministerial Decree of December 29, 2022, the Immigration Flow Decree (Decreto Flussi), establishes each year the entry quotas for non-EU citizens who may enter Italy for employment, self-employment or seasonal work – it sets a maximum quota of entries, equal to 82.705 units, from which 44.000 are reserved for seasonal workers, and the quotas fixed for non-seasonal and self-employment reasons are 38.705 units, the vast majority of which (30.105 units) are reserved for entries for non-seasonal employment in the trucking, construction and tourism sectors, mechanics, and telecommunication for citizens coming from Albania, Algeria, Bangladesh, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Korea (Republic of Korea), Ivory Coast, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Philippines, Gambia, Ghana, Japan,

Guatemala, India, Kosovo, Mali, Morocco, Mauritius, Moldova, Montenegro, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Republic of North Macedonia, Senegal, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia and Ukraine. The Immigration Quota Decree also establishes which and how many conversions of residence permits to other types of permits can be requested by foreign nationals already legally residing in Italy. An important novelty concerns the need for the employer (before sending the request for work authorization) to verify with the competent Employment Centre that there are no other workers already on the national territory available to fill the job for which they intend to hire the worker who is abroad. The verification must be carried out by sending a personnel request to the Employment Centre through a special form available at integrazioneimmigranti.gov.it. Importantly, verification of unavailability of workers in the country is not required for seasonal workers and workers trained abroad. Another important novelty introduced this year by the Flows Decree (although already partly tested in the 2021 Flows Decree), is that 30 days after the submission of applications, without any obstructive reasons having emerged, the clearance is automatically issued and sent electronically to the Italian Diplomatic Representations of the countries of origin, which must then issue the entry visa within 20 days of the relevant application. 2.000 residence permits are reserved to students already legally residing in Italy, who intend to convert their Italian student permit into a work permit (Gazzetta, 2023).

1.5 Migration Management in Selected Countries of the EU – Spain

Like Italy, Spain was originally a country of emigration. The situation also began to change in the 1970s, when the country began to change into an immigration country, which included the return of the former Spanish emigrants, plus an increase in the number of new immigrants who wanted to settle in the country. In 1980, there were around 180,000 foreigners in Spain, 65 percent of whom came from Europe and 25 percent from the Americas. The most important pull-factor was the economic boom in the late 1990s - people from lower-income countries were attracted by the diversity of job opportunities, particularly in sectors such as construction, agriculture and hospitality (Fernández, 2022).

The table below shows, that in 2021 there were about 5.4 million foreign nationals living in Spain, which is 11.4 % of the country's population. The main areas of origin were the EU-27 (29.2 %), Africa (22.1 %) and South America (20.9 %). The most numerous nationalities were Moroccans (around 870.000 people), Romanians (around 640.000 people) and Colombians (around 290.000 people).

Table 1: Population registered in Spain, 2006 - 2021

YEAR	NATIONALITY			
	SPANISH	FOREIGNERS	TOTAL	% FOREIGNERS
2006	40.564.798	4.144.166	44.708.964	9.27%
2007	40.681.183	4.519.554	45.200.737	10.00%
2008	40.889.060	5.268.762	46.157.822	11.41%
2009	41.097.136	5.648.671	46.745.807	12.08%
2010	41.273.297	5.747.734	47.021.031	12.22%
2011	41.439.006	5.751.487	47.190.493	12.19%
2012	41.529.063	5.736.258	47.265.321	12.14%
2013	41.583.545	5.546.238	47.129.783	11.77%
2014	41.747.854	5.023.487	46.771.341	10.74%
2015	41.894.738	4.729.644	46.624.382	10.14%
2016	41.938.427	4.618.581	46.557.008	9.92%
2017	41.999.325	4.572.807	46.572.132	9.82%
2018	41.988.289	4.734.691	46.722.980	10.13%
2019	41.989.330	5.036.878	47.026.208	10.71%
2020	42.016.642	5.434.153	47.450.795	11.45%
2021	41.936.827	5.407.822	47.344.649	11.4 %

Source: National Statistics Institute, 2021

The table also shows that the percentage of foreigners in Spain increased before the beginning of economic crisis and then stayed relatively stable. This percentage also includes foreigners who were already in the country before and did not decide to leave. At the same time, it can be observed that between 2007 and 2012 the number of foreigners was at an all-time high and started to slowly decrease in 2013 and 2014. The increase between 2006 and 2010 was probably due to the economic crisis - at the beginning of the crisis in 2008, there were many new jobs in Spain, half of which were occupied by immigrants, which is why they came to the country in their millions (Worden, 2010).

Many immigrants have acquired the Spanish nationality. On 1 January 2021, there were almost 7.3 million people of foreign origin (so-called foreign born) residing in Spain according to data provided by National Statistics Institute (2021). Of these, 2.4 million (33 %), were Spanish citizens. Spanish nationality can be comparatively easily obtained by

immigrants from Latin America who can apply for naturalization after 2 years of residence in Spain, whereas for most immigrants' naturalization is possible after 10 years of continued legal residence in Spain. In fact, around 60 % of those who have obtained Spanish nationality since 2009 originated from Latin America (National Statistics Institute, 2021).

1.5.1 The Main Actors in Spanish Migration Management

According to Spanish Constitution, Article 149.1.2, the competences regarding immigration and asylum belong to the state administration, while autonomous communities in Spain (Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Balearic Islands, Basque Country, Canary Islands, Cantabria, Castile and León, Castilla-La Mancha, Catalonia, Madrid, Extremadura, Galicia, La Rioja, Navarre, Murcia, Valencia) have social, educational, health, employment, cultural and sport competences, among others. The current institutional framework for immigrant integration was set by Law 2/2009, which introduced multi-level governance based on cooperation among central administration institutions, local governments and civil society (European Commission, 2023).

On the national level, the institution responsible for the governance of immigrant integration is the General Secretary of Immigration and Emigration at the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migrations. Its General Directorate of Integration and Humanitarian Attention is in charge of the functional coordination of relevant actors, while the Sub-Directorate for Integration and Institutional Relations develops and manages procedures for the reception and integration of migrants. The general secretary closely works with the *Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración*, which conducts research on migration-related topics. All the different phases of integration are managed according to a model of multi-level governance that includes the public administration, regional governments (autonomous communities), local entities (town and city councils) and civil society (trade unions, employers' organisations, NGOs and migrant associations). In addition, each autonomous community has its own integration plan regulating integration policies (European Commission, 2023).

1.5.2 Immigrating to Spain

In order to arrive to Spain legally, an immigrant needs to follow all the requirements set out by Spanish Immigration Law. The main law, which regulates the immigration of non-EU citizens in Spain, is the Immigration Act 2009. According to the legal provisions of the

Kingdom of Spain, there are several distinct options for legal immigration to this country, each of which has its own advantages and requirements. There are no specific rules for people arriving from other country in Schengen zone – nationals of EU Member States can enter and stay in the country without restrictions, regardless of the purpose (permanent employment, education, seasonal work, etc.). Countries of the Schengen Agreement have abolished passport and immigration control at their common borders and for travel between their member states. Spain also recognize Schengen visas issued by other Schengen states. Citizens of non-EU countries wishing to stay in Spain for more than three months must apply for a Residency Permit/Card (*Tarjeta de Residencia*) within 30 days of arriving in the country. The application must be made at the Foreigner's Office (*Oficina de Extranjeros*) or local national police station in the province of intended residence.

If staying in Spain for a period under 90 days (short time), third country nationals must apply for visas in order to make their visit legal. According to immigration policy legislation of Spain, there are several types of visas, which must be acquired depending on case and circumstances, specifically:

Airport transit visa (*visado de transito aeroportuario*), which allows third country nationals into the international transit zone in a Spanish airport, with the only requirement of airplane ticket;

Short-stay Schengen visa (*visado de corta duracion*), which allows third country nationals to stay in Spain (excluding work) for up to 90 days in a 180-day period, and they are required to have the travel health insurance, documents on sufficient funds and proof of accommodation (this applies also in case they have a Schengen visa issued by another country within the Schengen area);

Long stay national visa (*visado nacional*), for third country nationals who intend to live, work, study or carry out research in Spain for longer than 3 months, with the requirement of travel health insurance, documents on sufficient funds, police clearance certificate, documents proving the purpose of stay and proof of accommodation.

In case of a legal relocation for a longer period of time, arrivals must apply for a residence permit, which allows a person from outside Spain to reside in the country. It is usually either limited in validity length (temporary residence permit) or provides an

unlimited right to reside (permanent residence permit). However, there are various types of residence permits, such as

Wealth visa, which is suitable for applicants, who can show enough subsistence fund to reside in Spain without working (fixed balance required);

Golden visa, also known as Property visa, grants residence permit rights upon purchase of real estate property in Spain with the cost of at least 500.000 EUR (apartment, house, commercial premises, land or a combination of few);

Investor visa, also known as an Investment visa, grants residence permit rights to a foreign national, who can present available funds in a certain amount together with a business plan and may start a business in Spain (owners of already existing businesses may also apply under certain conditions);

Highly skilled worker's visa, which is suitable for foreigners having a local Spanish employer company, who is willing to employ him in Spain (professional skills of an applicant are evaluated and his potential salary is taken into consideration);

Student visa, which grants residence permit for people who want to study in Spain longer than 90 days in order to graduate a course of studies.

All applicants must submit visa personally with all supporting documents at the Spanish Embassy in their country of residence. After acquiring a visa, the applicant is obliged to enter Spain within the time period defined by their issued visa (usually 90 days period) and within 30 days from the day of arrival is obliged to submit documents for the residence permit to the corresponding immigration authority. In addition, Spanish residence permit requires an annual extension – as long as the grounds for residence acquisition are maintained, residence permit can be extended an unlimited number of times (Spanish Immigration Services, 2023).

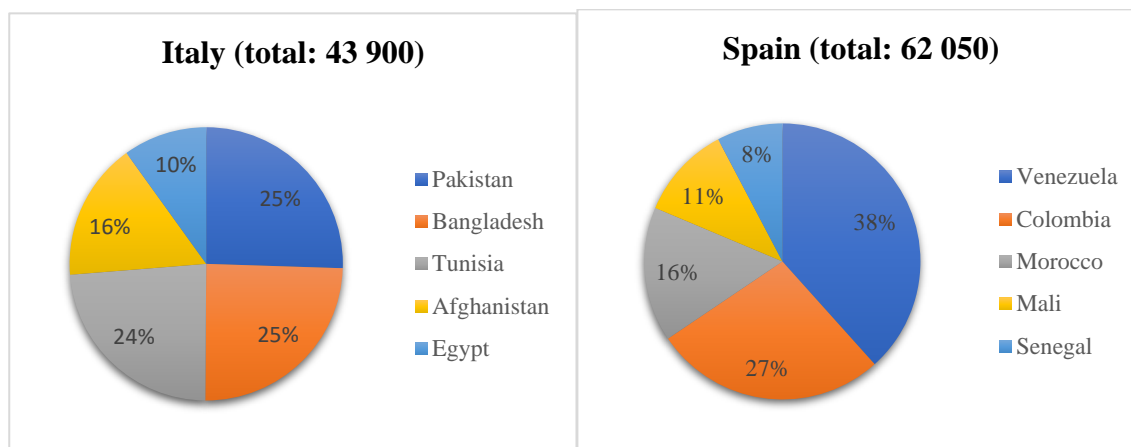
1.6 A Dynamic and Multifaceted Account of Irregular Migration

The period after World War II, also known as a period of economic growth, is very important for the basic understanding of migration in Europe. War-affected countries were experiencing labour shortages and international migrants were a temporary solution for an unemployment in the most fundamental sectors, such as car or metalworking industry - seen

as potential saviours of post-World War II Europe, they were accepted by general public. The “problem” started as soon as they started to occupy more prestigious positions in highly segmented labour markets. As Ambrosini stated: *"This situation makes it easier to depict migrants as unnecessary and even harmful to the employment of native workers."* (Ambrosini, 2018). The depiction of immigrants as no longer needed labour force was however the socio-political perception and not a true and fair view, since the persistent high demand for their services was still present. Only the economic downturn in the 1970s exposed the downside to immigration. Many people were left unemployed, yet the foreign workers did not leave the European countries. To prevent all the foreign workers from establishing permanent residence, Western European governments established legislation from 1973-1977 that put a stop on immigration. Inevitably, legal residents found loopholes in the immigration halts, many quickly sponsored their friends and family members to get granted access to the Western European countries with the fear that the European borders might soon close forever. Eventually Europe began to loosen the restrictions on family reunification, which hiked up the number of immigrants in Europe even more. Research over years support this fact and show that 2 main reasons behind migration are, and always have been, work and family.

Graph 3 shows the statistics of first-time asylum seekers, along with their nationalities. Asylum seekers in Italy come mainly from Pakistan and Bangladesh, with an almost equal proportion of Tunisians. As for Spain, applicants are over-represented from South American countries, namely Venezuela and Colombia. It can also be observed that there are more asylum applicants in Spain than in Italy, which may be due to the fact that the inhabitants of South American countries want to live in Spain, probably because of the similarity of their mother tongue.

Graph 3: First-time asylum applicants (non-EU), 2021



Source: Eurostat, 2021

The political reaction and attitude against migrants are creating public tension – the problem is the social acceptance of migrants by majority. Governments across the world, and especially in Europe, are opening markets to global trade together with their economies globalizing the markets and erasing the international boundaries. At the same time, the issue of securing the borders and protecting the very own national identity is a hot topic.

According to Yamamoto: *“Migration policies can be viewed as a combination of symbolic politics designed to please anti-immigrant sentiments and instrumental politics to supply cheap migrant labour.”* This may cause that most of the time, implemented policies differ from declared policies. It is often represented by the selective treatment of irregular migrants, also visible in the easier transitions to more stable positions or legal statuses experienced by certain irregular migrants, especially those who encounter some form of tolerance in the receiving societies (Ambrosini, 2018).

It might seem that the selection process begins only after the arrival of migrants in one of the countries of the European Union - this is how it is often presented by politicians. On the contrary, the selection begins before their departure. Although the EU follows the rules of equality and upholds values according to which everyone should be given the same opportunity to live with dignity and freedom regardless of origin and personal background, in reality it implicitly favours the entrance of people from certain countries while restricting the admission of citizens from other countries (Ambrosini, 2018). This feature can be equally observed in the opinion of the population. The European Union conducted the ‘Special Eurobarometer 519 - Integration of Immigrants in the European Union’ survey in 2021, where citizens of each member country were asked set of questions regarding immigrants in their country as a whole and city where they live. The survey shows that the majority of the

population (70-80%) is willing to tolerate migrants and play part in their integration, but only under certain conditions - migrants should speak at least one of the official languages, contribute to the country's welfare system by paying taxes, accept the values and the norms of the society, etc. This issue is further analysed in Chapter 3.

Either way, the image of 'Fortress Europe' needs to be reconsidered - Europe's visa policy clearly shows that controls on migrants coming from the Global South are stricter in comparison with more indulgent controls on migrants from European periphery. In this case, it is possible to define a phenomenon of 'external tolerance' and 'internal tolerance'. The two are at the same time linked, because the external tolerance is complemented by implicit practices of internal tolerance. Particularly in Southern Europe, it is possible to observe how internal tolerance is related to the ability of migrants to find employment in the countries they arrive in - they seem to be the chosen ones who deserve to stay in a given country because they have found a job. In other words, their new employers, not the state, take responsibility for them and thus they are not perceived as a burden on society. This fact can be discussed further - inequality occurs not only between employed and unemployed migrants, but also between genders. It can almost certainly be argued that the thousands of women who come to Italy and Southern Europe to deliver crucial care to families by looking after children or the elderly, or by doing housekeeping work, do not arouse the same tensions in society as the men who come to the same countries. In this case, immigrant women have to cope with legal obstacles set up by individual governments, rather than resistance and unrest in the social mood of the population. It may seem that employers are not interested in irregular migrants, but the opposite is true. Employers benefit from irregular migrants as they represent cheap labour coming from a country of lower standards and thus willing to work in conditions and for wages significantly lower than the native population. Moreover, employers put themselves in the role of so-called 'gatekeepers', which means that they have the power to decide whether an immigrant without a residence permit deserves to work and stay in the host country and thus try to qualify for legal status (Ambrosini, 2018).

Irregular migrants do not interact only with their employers and governments themselves – lot of other actors are involved. Countries whose migration policies are not very favourable force irregular migrants to try to override the system. In that case, it is inevitable for them to avoid any kind of identification and to try to make a life for themselves in the new country without being registered and intercepted by the government. Most often, they do so by asking for help from their fellow patriots who have been in the country for some time (e.g., the Roma community in the UK) and are looking for employment on the black and grey market

(trading of goods takes place outside the realm of the manufacturer's official trading channels).

Irregular employment is a multifaced phenomenon and irregular employment that involves foreign workers is a target of significant national and international political debate leading to certain policy actions in the field of immigration and labour market regulations across the whole European Union. The combination irregular migration and irregular employment often results in pressure on politicians, who then seek to change and tighten state's control over migration flows, labour market regulation, unfair competition with native workers, and lost revenues for the state. On the other hand, these restrictive policies tend to create illegal residence status and the proportion of irregular work decreases. However, the presence of irregular work may be widely accepted and not perceived by society as illegal. This usually applies for low pay and low prestige and low skill jobs – in general the professions, in which the native citizens do not show high interest, because they are considered inferior. According to Triandafyllidou, there is a clear link between the restrictive labour migration and asylum-seeking policies in Europe and the presence of migrants with an insecure, temporary, or irregular status. Therefore, asylum seekers who are rejected on first instance or those waiting for their application to be processed and women and minors who do not receive protection and support and for that reason are vulnerable, represent the group of people that is likely to accept irregular work out of necessity as they have no other option to provide for themselves and their families.

Migrating to the EU and other western countries has become increasingly difficult. International migration flow towards Europe have transformed and migrants nowadays have mixed motivations – they do not seek only better employment and brighter future for their families and themselves, they are also escaping war conflicts, violence, inequality, discrimination, etc. In many cases, it is possible to observe an increased presence of minors, especially adolescents, but also children who are travelling alone and whose parents have sent them through Eastern, Central or Mediterranean routes to Europe hoping that they either enter the country without being intercepted by authorities, or if being intercepted, local organisations established by government will be obliged to take care of them and provide them with basic necessities. There have also been cases where one member of the family has already managed to enter the country (legally or illegally) and the other members of the family have gradually followed them (Triandafyllidou, Bartolini, 2020).

1.6.1 Declared Policies and Their Implementation

As explained above, irregular migration is a multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon attracting media and political attention since the early 2000s and has been at the forefront of the political debate in most of the EU's member states since the outbreak of migration crisis in 2015. According to IOM 2017a from UNDESA 2017, migrants represent 3.3% of the world's population, from which 15% to 20% are migrants with irregular status (these are estimates and vary between continents and countries). While discussing this phenomenon, European policy makers must deal with different paths towards irregularity in the first place (legal entry and irregular stay, entry with fake documents, entry and abuse of the terms of stay, etc.). The fact also remains that not every irregular migrant in the country is trying to abuse the social welfare system, as many politicians present it to public, but on the contrary, many of them have jobs, housing, family and community they belong to, and thus contribute to their immediate or wider social environment (e.g., taxes, rent, education fees). EU Returns Directive (2018) unequivocally states that people in an irregular situation cannot reside in the European Union and they must either be returned to their country of origin/last country of transit or must regularise their status. Return is often too complicated to be realised, usually because an expelled person may have developed ties with the country of residence that cannot be severed so easily, which makes the whole situation far more complex in reality than it may seem on the paper. Such ties may include children visiting school and whose lives would be disrupted, employers who value a hard-working and reliable employee, neighbours and friends who do not care about the legal status of such a person. These contradictory situations are then being left to the city or regional level to be solved by local authorities (Triandafyllidou, Bartolini, 2020).

A comprehensive study concluded by de Haas et al. in 2016 pointed out that policy changes over past 20 years have diversified immigration policies, making them more selective and differentiated towards specific groups. Policies targeted specifically towards family migrants (migrating due to new or established family ties – family reunification, family formation, accompanying family members of workers, international adoption), irregular migrants and on border controls have been tightened, and international migrants seeking better employment and life opportunities face increasingly higher walls, especially if they want to come to high-income countries in Europe. The paradox is that ageing populations in Europe and blooming younger populations in other countries outside EU, coupled with a growing demand for cheap labour, is creating a showcase push/pull

mechanism that contradicts established border and national controls, visa policies, and other restrictions and internal measures. This demonstrates that restrictive policies do not decrease the number of irregular migrants by cutting them off from both jobs and welfare so that they leave or are discouraged from coming but, on the contrary, they produce and encourage irregular residence and irregular work as they limit legal channels for labour migration, raise the requirements for family reunification or family formation, and make regularisation of status difficult or almost impossible to reach (Genova, 2004; Vickstrom, 2014).

Patterns of irregularity are diverse, and they are not entirely of the migrant's making because they may also result from red tape or labour market dynamics that privilege irregular stay and work. Researches came up with a new term 'befallen irregularity' to specify the cases in which migrants in southern Europe fell to irregular status especially because of red tape around stay or work requirements which are impossible to fulfil. According to Kubal (2013), this term is also used to highlight the fact that migrants may combine periods of regular stay and work with periods of irregular stay and work, and that is precisely why they live in conditions of so-called partial regular status (foreigners may possess the right to stay, although not to work, or they can fail to fulfil settled requirements in order to obtain a durable regular status). Moreover, irregular migrant workers provide cheap and plentiful workforce, which make irregularity functional to labour market conditions in sectors such as construction, domestic work, agriculture, etc. Potential employers often do not require a valid work permit even if they are aware of the associated risks precisely because irregular workers in such 'semi-legal' situation are willing to work in poor conditions for low wages just to avoid having to leave the country, family and community. As since it is the state that sets the condition for obtaining permanent residence permits or work permits, by creating conditions of regular stay and work that are impossible to meet, it indirectly supports the interest of immoral employers and creates ethnic segmentation and hierarchies in the labour market that are functional to the national economy (Cheliotis, 2017). Studies concluded by Chauvin and Garcés- Mascareñas (2014) have shown that irregular migrants often possess formal papers that testify to their presence in a given country, such as social security numbers, work contracts, certificates of enrolment for their children in school, or identity cards issued by municipalities while not having a regular stay permit. Such documents are important to illustrate the dynamism and complexity of the irregular migration phenomenon as well as the fragmentation of its governance – a typical example comes from Spain where

municipalities require all migrants to enrol with the local registry even if they do not have regular permits of residence, which are issued by the national administration.

Europe has experienced two large indirect regularisation waves through successive EU enlargements to the east in 2004 (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania), and 2013 (Croatia). This naturally affected Southern Europe, and specifically Italy and Spain, while citizens of ‘new’ member states who were irregularly residing and working in the ‘old’ member states became EU citizens and thus shifted to a regular stay with full socio-economic and labour rights. In addition, over the past two decades, a number of countries have repeatedly resorted to regularisation programs as a response to the presence of irregular migrants within their territories and Southern European countries have regularized the largest number of migrants with amnesty programs, together with Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. While 3.5 million migrants received a regular residence permit within the EU through these regularizations, in more recent years no measure of similar kind has been implemented by EU Member States, and the EU Return Directive explicitly restrains them from such measure if not in exceptional circumstances (Kraler, 2009).

1.7 Far-Right Parties in Europe

In recent years, the rise of far-right parties in Europe has become a significant political phenomenon. These parties, which are characterized by their nationalist, anti-immigrant, and anti-establishment views, have gained increasing popularity and influence in several European countries. Far-right parties could not be precisely defined, but it is possible to describe them as political groups that promote conservative and nationalistic ideologies, which are often associated with anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiment, as well as opposition to multiculturalism and globalization. The importance of far-right parties in Europe lies in their ability to challenge the traditional political landscape and gain a foothold in mainstream politics. These parties have been successful in mobilizing voters who feel disillusioned with the established political parties and who are concerned about issues such as immigration, national identity, and the perceived threat to traditional values and culture.

According to PopuList, a research collaboration supported by the Guardian, far-right parties in Europe have tripled their vote share over the last three decades, from about 5% in

the early 1990s to more than 15% today. Political scientists have demonstrated that the most important reason why people tend to vote for far-right parties is their attitude towards immigration – in other words, they support these parties because they agree with the opinion that immigrants represent some kind of danger, and they form an economic and cultural threat to their national identity. Far-right parties have learned how to better mobilise voters. Before the turn of the millennium, voters' attitude towards them was more negative – they associated them with fascism and violence – this changed lately because many far-right parties have succeeded in moderating their images. Several leaders, such as Marine Le Pen, have cut themselves off from extremists and focused on improving the party's reputation. As for the programmes themselves, they have remained almost unchanged, and the parties still tend towards radical solutions and changes. Mainstream parties have also played an important role in this process of reputational softening. They have legitimised the ideas of far-right parties by incorporating moderated versions of them into their own political agendas. Many academic studies have shown that when it comes to their positions on immigration and integration, mainstream parties have moved towards the far right (Abou-Chadi, 2014).

There are many active nationalist or far-right parties in national governments of EU Member States. The list below mentions the most influential and active political parties, that could be defined as nationalist, far-right, or populist:

1. Law and Justice (PiS) - Poland;
2. Hungarian Civic Alliance (Fidesz) - Hungary;
3. Vox - Spain;
4. National Rally (RN) - France;
5. Finns Party (PS) - Finland;
6. Danish People's Party (DPP) - Denmark;
7. Estonian Conservative People's Party (EKRE) - Estonia;
8. Brothers of Italy (FdI) - Italy;
9. Flemish Interest (VB) - Belgium;
10. The Freedom Party (FPÖ) – Austria

For the purposes of this thesis, Italian Brothers of Italy and Spanish Vox parties are the most relevant and are further analysed in the thesis in the context of migration management in Italy and Spain.

1.7.1 Brothers of Italy (Fratelli d'Italia -FdI)

The Brothers of Italy was formed in 2012, but traces its origins right back to the end of World War II. In 1946, a group of Mussolini's allies founded the neofascist Italian Social Movement (Movimento Sociale Italiano, or MSI). Later in 1995, MSI merged with more mainstream right-wing elements to become the National Alliance (Alleanza Nazionale, or AN), which publicly distanced itself from fascism. AN was absorbed into Berlusconi's centre-right People of Freedom party in 2009, but in 2012 a breakaway group formed mainly of former AN leaders, including current FdI leader Giorgia Meloni, left to found Brothers of Italy. The origin, and the fact that FdI stand for far-right ideologies while rejecting the label of fascism, means the party is often described as 'post-fascist'.

The most important figure is the leader Giorgia Meloni, who promotes a public image of herself as a "woman, mother, Christian" whose mission is to defend "God, country and family". The ideology of the party itself is anti-immigrant, anti-gay marriage, and pro the traditional family unit, with many pro-natalist policies aimed at combatting Italy's declining birth-rate – they include increased child benefits, free childcare provision, reducing VAT rates of nappies, baby bottles and formula, or motivating employers to hire mothers. Regarding immigration, Meloni was openly calling for a naval blockade to put an end to illegal departures to Italy, as well as stating that the party wants to create offshore hotspots to process asylum applications outside the EU (Allaby, 2022).

The Brothers of Italy has seen a meteoric rise in popularity over the last four years, going from just 4% of the vote in the 2018 elections to securing 26% in the September 2022 elections (see Graph 5). Giorgia Meloni was named Italy's first female PM in October. Even in March 2023, Brothers of Italy is still the largest party in the country in terms of support.

1.7.2 The Vox Party

The Vox Party was founded in Spain in December 2013 and its first chairman was Aleix Vidal-Quadras. After he left the party in 2015, two of its founders, Santiago Abascal and Iván Espinosa de los Monteros, were elected as president and general secretary. VOX is a far-right political party with two central issues: Spanish nationalism and traditional Catholic values concerning marriage, family, and abortion. Its political platform supports a united national centred on the monarchy, the Spanish language, national symbols such as the flag, anthem, and the cross, and the protection of what it describes as the "natural family",

which means a heteronormative, married couple with children. This nationalist political party advocates discriminatory policies against Spanish Muslims and Muslim immigrants and it is building a political narrative that Spain must be ‘reconquered’ from Muslims again. The Vox Party was founded at the peak of Spain’s economic crisis and political instability, with high rates of unemployment (27%) and youth unemployment (57%), as well as the Catalan independence movement.

VOX supports and promotes the anti-Muslim trope of a civilizational clash between the religion of Islam and “Western” (Spanish) culture. VOX and its members have often wielded this trope in nationalistic rhetoric during elections - the motto of VOX’s national campaign for the 2019 general elections was “La Reconquista”, a reference to the historical myth constructed in the nineteenth century of a “struggle of national liberation against invading Muslims, culminating in a final Christian victory in 1492,” the expulsion of Muslims from Spain after eight centuries of settlement in the Iberian Peninsula, and the expulsion of Jews.

The next chapter describes the aim of this thesis, together with methods and methodology used in the theoretical part as well as in the research that continues in the Chapter 3.

2 Aim, methods and methodology

The underlying argument of current thesis, as many sources suggest, is that migration management can be considered as the main reason for the growing popularity of far-right parties. This thesis further analyses their interconnection and influence on the electorate. Related hypotheses are that *the increase in the popularity of far-right parties is a direct consequence of how the country governs the migration policy* and that *the phenomenon of migration in Southern Europe is perceived to be negative*. The primary objective of the thesis is *to determine whether these two separate issues are interconnected and whether they influence each other, and if so, to what extent*. In order to investigate this relationship and achieve the primary aim, the thesis follows several secondary objectives:

- to focus on providing a historical and contextual understanding of migration, starting with its origin and history;
- to examine the factors that drive people to migrate;
- to lay the foundation for exploring the complexities of migration and its implications;
- to define the main migratory routes, as it sheds light on the patterns and dynamics of migration flows – understanding the specific routes contributes to a deeper understanding of migration management and the challenges faced by countries in handling these movements;
- to identify the approaches taken in managing migration and the subsequent impacts on society and politics;
- to highlight the complexities and implications of irregular migration for both migrants and receiving countries;
- to examine the far-right parties in Europe, specifically The Brother of Italy (FdI) and The Vox Party – understanding of their ideology and influence is essential in comprehending their perspectives on migration and their impact on public discourse;
- to examine perceptions towards migration;
- to provide a personal subjective perspective on the individual process of applying for a residence permit, such as mandatory documentation, waiting periods, etc.

These secondary objectives outlined in the thesis contribute to a comprehensive analysis of migration management, far-right parties, and their interconnections. By addressing these objectives, the research aims to provide a solid foundation for the empirical investigation and shed light on the complex relationship between migration management and the rise of far-right parties in Europe.

This thesis employs a range of methods to address its research objectives. Firstly, analysis is conducted to examine and interpret data, literature, and information related to migration management and the rise of far-right parties. Comparison is utilized to identify similarities and differences between different countries, policies, and political contexts. Deductive reasoning is applied to test existing theories and frameworks, while inductive reasoning is used to derive new insights and patterns from the data. Desk research plays a crucial role, involving an extensive review of literature, reports, and official documents. Furthermore, both quantitative and qualitative research methods are utilized. Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data, such as survey responses or statistical data, to identify trends and patterns. The survey was aimed on the inter-connection between the current approach to migration management and the rise of far-right parties – whether the current approach contributed to their popularity or not, whether the rise of far-right parties is a response to immigration and if there are other factors involved. The last important question was about overall opinion whether the management of migration and rise of far-right parties as two individual issues should be addressed separately or if they are inherently connected. People asked were also able to express their personal negative experiences or impacts regarding increased influence and popularity of far-right parties in their countries. The questionnaire involves demographic questions regarding the age, gender, and nationality of those who have taken part in it. This research was conducted during April 2023 and involved a total of 41 respondents. The questionnaire was made in English language and was distributed using social networking sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, etc. The target group was people of Italian or Spanish nationality, as well as people of other nationalities currently living in Italy or Spain.

Qualitative research, on the other hand, involves in-depth interviews, or textual analysis to gain a deeper understanding of individuals' perspectives and experiences. For the purposes of the thesis, 4 interviews were conducted between March 2023 and May 2023.³ interviews were conducted in English, as the participants were international students

currently living in Italy and Spain who had applied for some type of residence permit in the past. These informants provided their personal experience and subjective perspective on the matter of migration, as all of them emigrated from their home countries. The fourth interview was conducted in Slovak language, the informant was a university professor and a political scientist, who further explained the interconnectedness of migration and politics, as well as the communication strategies of political parties. The aim of these interviews was to provide a personal or professional experience, from the perspective of an immigrant or a scholar, in relation to migration and the processes of applying for visas and residence permits.

The methodology used in this thesis incorporates a diverse range of sources to ensure a comprehensive and rigorous analysis. Eurostat reports, IOM reports, OECD data, and Statista statistics serve as valuable sources of quantitative information, providing data on migration trends, policy frameworks, and socio-economic indicators. The use of official EU webpages and reports adds credibility and up-to-date information to the research. To gain insights into public opinion and political discourse, POLITICO opinion polls are utilized, offering valuable perspectives on migration-related issues and the rise of far-right parties. These polls provide a snapshot of public sentiment and can help identify trends and attitudes towards migration management and political ideologies.

The inclusion of relevant books in the field enhances the theoretical framework of the thesis. Works such as Maurizio Ambrosini's *Irregular Immigration in Southern Europe*, *Oxford Handbook of Migration Crises*, Anna Triandafyllidou's *Immigrants and National Identity in Europe* or Claudia Finotelli's *Migration Control Logics and Strategies in Europe* provide in-depth analysis, theoretical perspectives, and case studies that enrich the research. As far as domestic authors are concerned, an interesting perspective is provided by the book *Radikálny populizmus v ére pandémie COVID-19 a vojny na Ukrajine* by Radoslav Štefančík, which analyses populism as a communication strategy.

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Desk research

3.1.1 Far-Right Parties in Europe

The growing influence of far-right parties has also sparked debates about the impact of their ideologies on European societies, particularly with regard to issues of diversity and social cohesion. Some argue that the rise of far-right parties represents a threat to democratic values and human rights, while others see it as a legitimate response to the challenges of a changing world. Overall, the phenomenon of far-right parties in Europe is a complex and controversial topic that raises important questions about the future of European politics and society. Migration management is often mentioned as one of the key factors that have contributed to the rise of far-right parties in Europe. In recent years, Europe has experienced a significant influx of migrants and refugees, primarily from war-torn countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The management of this migration has been a major challenge for European governments, and the issue has become highly politicized, with far-right parties using it as a rallying point for their anti-immigrant agendas, since they often promote strict immigration policies, including the closure of borders and the deportation of illegal immigrants. They argue that the influx of migrants and refugees is a threat to national security, cultural identity, and economic stability. They also claim that mainstream political parties have failed to address the concerns of citizens about immigration and have left them feeling powerless and disenfranchised. The rise of far-right parties has naturally put pressure on these mainstream political parties to respond that is why some of them have responded by adopting more restrictive immigration policies, which has further polarized the debate and created a feedback loop that reinforces the far-right's position. In summary, while there are multiple factors that have contributed to the rise of far-right parties in Europe, which are later explained in detail, the management of migration can be perceived as a significant issue and a major driver of the far-right's popularity.

Whether, as mentioned above, migration management has an impact on the popularity of right-wing parties can be examined through several indicators. As a first indicator, I choose the evolution of the number of migrants in some countries with active nationalist parties over the years 2007 (before the 2015 European migration crisis) to 2020 (the last year of officially collected IOM data). In this research I have chosen to observe the following countries: Austria, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy and Spain.

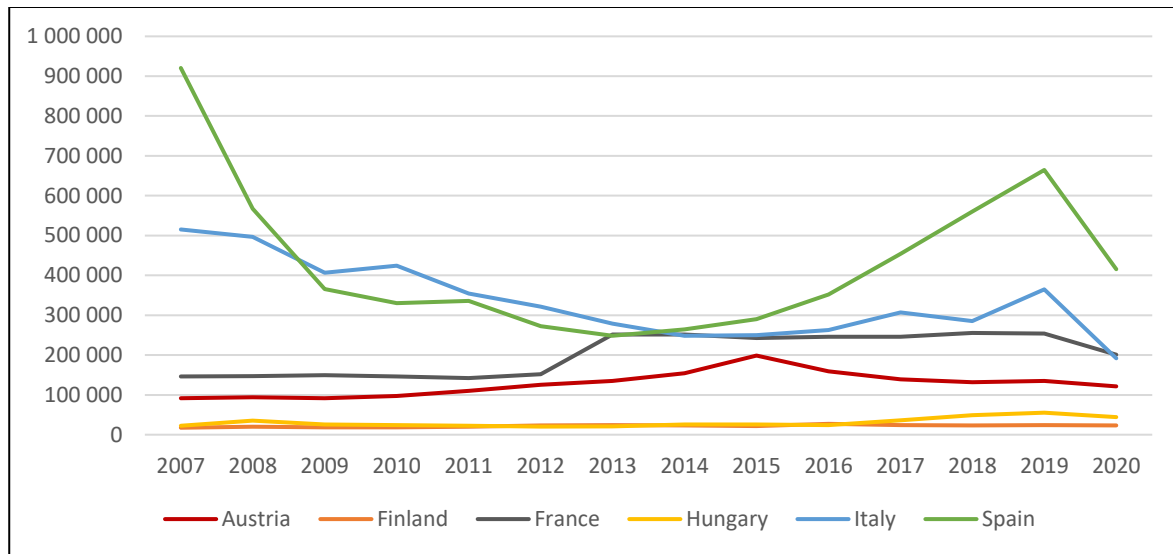
The choice of Italy and Spain is clear as these two countries are the main focus of the thesis. For comparison, I have chosen other countries in which it is possible to observe a rise in the popularity of right-wing parties. Austria and Hungary are countries that border Slovakia and we have a general overview of these countries in terms of standard of living, social or political situation. Hungary is even our partner in the V4, and so it is interesting to see what impact the arrival of migrants in the country has on the political scene, as this topic has been one of the most debated in recent years. In my opinion, Finland is interesting precisely because it is considered to be one of the top countries in terms of the standard of living of its citizens, as well as the level of education, and these factors can influence what voters vote for their representatives in parliament. And lastly France, which is a very important Member State of the European Union and which has long been known to receive large numbers of migrants. The elections in 2022, in which Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen, the representative of The National Rally, which is one of the very strong right-wing nationalist parties, stood against each other also resonated strongly in French and European society, which is why I have chosen this country for comparison.

The curves in the chart below show a varied evolution over the years - Spain and Italy's curves are noticeably more volatile compared to those of France and Austria and may appear to be the exact opposite of the very stable curves of Hungary and Finland. Austria, Finland and Hungary can be considered as countries with stable migration rates, which are neither decreasing nor increasing significantly - in the period 2007-2020 the total number of migrants arriving in Finland and Hungary was below 40k, in the case of Austria it was below 150k, with the exception of the years 2014-2016, within which year 2015 can be considered as the peak of the inflow of migrants to the country. In the case of France, there was a big jump between 2012 and 2013, during which the rate of migration to the country increased by 65.77% (from 151,599 to 251,299), and this trend continued steadily until 2020, when a slight decline reappeared.

The chart shows the constantly changing migration rates in Italy and Spain - perhaps the most striking feature is the rapid increase in 2019, or more precisely the rapid decrease in 2020, most likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions. The number of migrants in the Italian territory had a downward trend in the past, which slowly started to change in 2015 when the European migration crisis broke out, and since then the curve has been rising until the aforementioned 2019. As for Spain, the sharp decline between

2007 and 2009 was also followed by a downward migration rate, which, as in the case of Italy, started to rise in 2015 and stopped in 2019. Although the situation has changed almost identically in both countries, the differences in the figures are significant - in 2007 alone, which represents the beginning of the graph, the number of people of different origins was 78.67% higher than in Italy. Similarly, in the 2019 statistics, the number of arrivals in Spain was 151% higher than in Italy.

Graph 4: Migration Rate in Selected Countries (2007-2022)



Source: OECD (2023)

Another indicator is the employment rate and participation rate of migrants in the country to which they have immigrated. This figure can also be used to observe whether the popularity of right-wing parties is rising and whether voters' preferences are changing. Since most people from the non-EU countries migrate to the economically developed countries of the EU in search of work and a better life, this figure plays an important role both, as an indicator of the degree of migrant's integration into the work and social system of their new country of origin, and also reflects the perception and mood of the population based on their political preferences - if more and more voters are inclined to vote for radical or nationalist parties, the state is probably making a mistake somewhere in this process of integration.

Table 2: Employment rate of foreign-born nationals (2014-2021)

	AUSTRIA	FINLAND	FRANCE	HUNGARY	ITALY	SPAIN
2014	64,9	60,7	56,4	70,4	58,4	52,3
2015	64,7	59,3	55,5	71,1	58,6	55,2
2016	64,6	59	55,3	73,8	59,2	57,6
2017	65,6	60,3	56,6	73,7	60	59,6
2018	68	62,2	58,5	71,7	60,9	61,6
2019	68,9	64,2	58,9	77,4	61,4	62,7
2020	66,1	63,7	59,8	76,6	57,8	57,4
2021	67,6	66,2	61,1	80,3	59,3	60,4

Source: OECD.stat (2023)

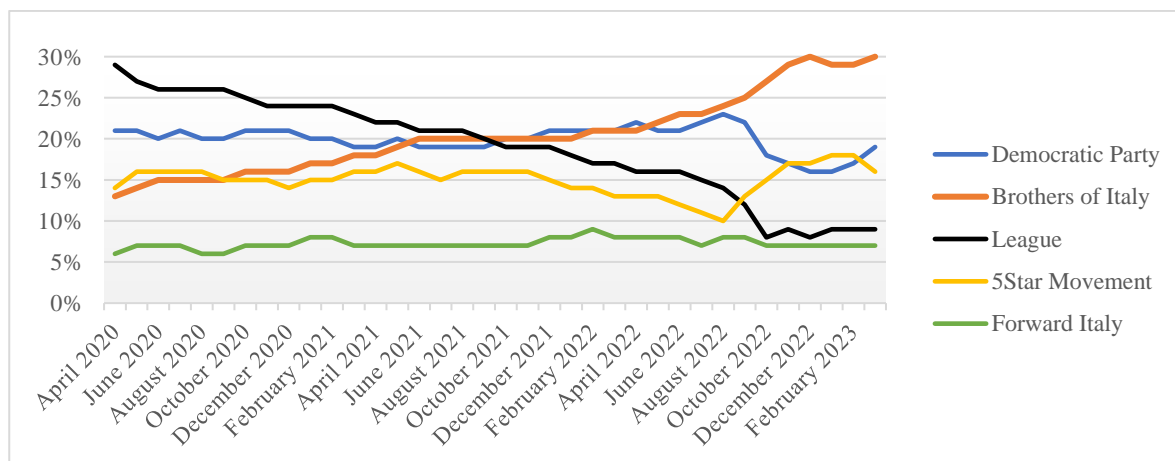
Based on the OECD data used in the table above, it is possible to observe that the employment rate of foreign-born people during the period 2014-2021, and thus also during and after the migration crisis in 2015, remained relatively stable and even had an upward trend. The employment rate declined slightly in Italy and Spain in 2020 and 2021 compared to previous years. The most significant decline occurred in 2020, when the employment rate fell by around 4%, but this was most likely linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which the native population also struggled to keep their employment. As mentioned earlier, the employment rate of foreigners is an important factor influencing how migrants are perceived in the country. Thus, based on this table, it can be assumed that the mood of the population and the implementation of new migration policies should not change sharply in relation to migrant employment.

It is precisely in relation to this factor that many political actors across the European Union are waging their campaign against the admission of new migrants from third-world countries. The most common argument is that migrants come for a vision of a better life but are unwilling to seek employment and are merely taking advantage of the EU's well-established social welfare system. The data collected contradicts these claims as it shows that their employment rate is high and stable. The next chapter examines how the popularity of right-wing parties' changes during different electoral periods and what factors are responsible for each change, or whether the migration policies of selected Southern European countries in particular have influenced voters' preferences.

3.1.2 Rise and Popularity of Italian Far-Right

As mentioned in chapter 1.6.1, it was the ruling party of Brothers of Italy (FdI) that came to the forefront of Italian politics almost out of the blue. Giorgia Meloni's party had the support of only 1.96% of the population in 2013, which is negligible compared to the results of the early elections in 2022, which they won with 26% support. This chapter analyses which events have most influenced the rise of the party, and whether it is events related to the arrival of migrants in the country and Italy's changing migration and asylum policies. In the next election in 2018, the party's preferences increased slightly, but only to 4.35%. From 2013 to 2018, the Democratic Party (PD) led the country - this includes the migration crisis that began in 2015 and the period of transformations that followed. Between the last Italian elections and March 2020, the FdI's preferences rose to 13% and since then its popularity has grown until the early national elections in 2022. In this case, it can be assumed that voters' opinion was also changing because of the situation linked to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020, which, especially in Italy, caused a huge economic downturn. As far as migration is concerned, it is also possible to observe a decline in the arrival of people from third countries (see Graph 4), where the number of new migrants has almost halved.

Graph 5: Italian National Parliament Voting Intention



Source: Politico (2023)

Based on Graph 5, it is evident that 4 out of the 5 most popular Italian parties declined in popularity among the electorate after the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. On the contrary, the only party whose preferences have risen is the FdI - it might seem that the pandemic and migration are 2 different issues and therefore unrelated topics, but the truth is that the leader, Giorgia Meloni, together with the leader of the League, Matteo Salvini, have attributed the spread of the COVID-19 virus to illegal migration to Italy and have strongly criticised the

ruling government for applying the so-called double standard in favour of immigrants. Yet the two parties have had a different fate - the FdI has grown continuously and continues to grow to this day, while the League has fallen from 30% to an unstable 8%, as today's opinion polls show.

Most noticeable is the difference in the percentages of the Democratic Party, which was in power until the general elections in 2022, and the Brothers of Italy, which has captured a very large part of the Italian population with its political programme and is currently leading the country. The party has been very consistent over the years on the issues of illegal migration, increasing controls at Italy's borders and at sea, and the radicalisation of the asylum system. There is also speculation that the fact that the party was not part of Conte's government has added to its popularity, as voters have begun to shift towards more radical beliefs after years of persistent problems. A wave of asylum seekers in 2014-2016 turned migration into a burning political issue - at its peak in 2016, more than 181.000 migrants reached Italy by sea. In 2019, Salvini limited charity boats' access to Italy and containment measures led to a sharp fall, when only 11.471 people arrived. As mentioned before, period between 2019 and 2021 was relatively calm in regard to migration, followed again by increased migration rate in 2022 with 72.430 people arriving mostly from North Africa to Italy (see Graph 6).

Graph 6: Arrivals to Italy by sea (2014-2022)



Source: Statista (2022)

Important fact to mention is that people's attitude towards immigration have not changed rapidly over the years. On average, people have become neither more positive nor more negative about the influx of immigrants. This brings up an interesting question: how is it possible that the electoral successes of far-right parties have increased so much, if at the

same time the main determinant of far-right support, anti-immigration sentiment, has remained relatively stable?

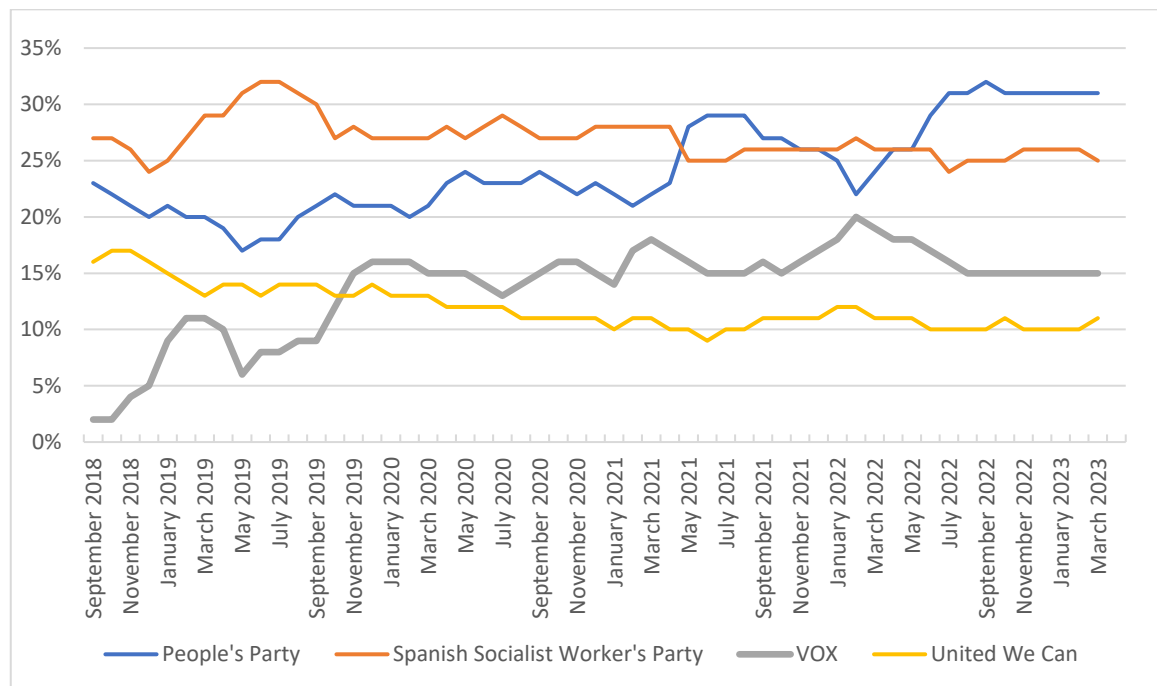
3.1.3 Rise and Popularity of Spanish Far-Right

At a time when many far-right parties were already popular in Europe, Spain was still an exception. The change came only in the 2019 general election, when VOX won almost 10% of the vote and 24 seats in the Spanish parliament. I briefly discussed the background of this party in subchapter 1.6.2.

However, the situation in Spain is different from that in Italy. This Spanish far-right party is part of the parliament, but it is not the leading party in power, as is the Brothers of Italy – still this does not change the fact that they are spreading their openly misogynistic, xenophobic and Islamophobic policies among the population. To understand whether Vox poses a threat or has the potential to have an impact on Madrid's policies, it is essential to trace the party's development. Vox was formed about five years ago with the agenda of defending Spain against what the party called its 'enemies': feminists, LGBT community, liberal elites and Muslims among others.

The Graph 7 shows the Spanish national parliament voting intentions on example of 4 most important and influential Spanish political parties: Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE), People's Party (PP), the VOX Party and United We Can party. The graph also shows how VOX's preferences have evolved over time and in which years more significant changes can be observed. As can be observed, VOX's preferences started to rise in 2019, in response to the situation in 2018, when Spain became the main port of entry for migrants and refugees trying to make it to Europe from Northern Africa. The party reached the 11% vote threshold in early 2019, which eventually resulted in 10% support in the general elections as mentioned above. The party's popularity began to rise even further towards the end of 2019, when it surpassed the 15% mark, and this trend continued throughout 2020 and 2021, and thus during the COVID-19 crisis, during which the influx of migrants dropped considerably (see Graph 8).

Graph 7: Spanish National Parliament Voting Intention



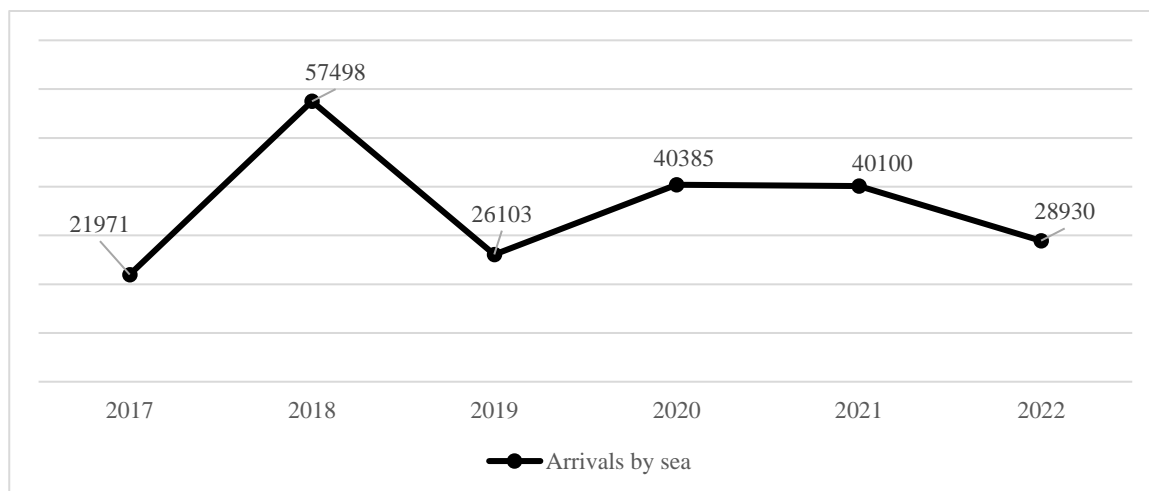
Source: POLITICO (2023)

Another sharp increase can be observed around March 2022, when another interesting phenomenon can also be observed - VOX has risen, while the PP has fallen in the same period, and voters have dispersed to other parties within the country, and understandably some of them have switched to VOX. This conservative and Christian-democratic political party went through a crisis within its internal structures, which culminated just at the beginning of 2022, when the party's former president, Pablo Casado Blanco, was forced to resign. His victory in the July 2018 PP leadership election was considered a party swing towards the right. The graph indicates a continual decline in support for the PP in the lead-up to the April 2019 general election. Ultimately, the party achieved the worst result in its history, winning just 16.7% of the national vote, a decline of almost 16% from the 2016 election, and losing over half its seats. The party has been critical of the Spanish government's handling of migration issues and has called for stricter immigration policies and that is why it is possible to think that the disruptions in the party drove away the PP voters who were inclined to more right-wing views and they started to support VOX, whose popularity was growing. After Alberto Núñez Feijóo took over as party president, the party's preferences have started to rise again and, according to the latest polls, it is even leading in Spain with a very strong 31% ahead of the upcoming elections in December this year (2023). It is also possible to observe a decline in the preferences of the VOX party in the same period as the preferences of the PP were rising and therefore it can be assumed that the electoral

bases of these 2 parties are the same and the voters are "wandering" between the parties. The preferences of the other 2 parties in the graph (PSOE and United) have been relatively stable over the period of their mandates and have not changed sharply in the past. Currently, as of the 2019 elections, the leading party in Spain is the PSOE, which is a social democratic party and is also the longest-serving party in the Spanish Parliament.

Social events in Spain have changed over the years and the issue of migration has once again become a hot topic of political debate. Migration as a natural phenomenon cannot be stopped or slowed down - the only solution to the situation seems to be better integration and an improved social system. Here, however, we are faced with a problem, since the role of populist parties, whether on the right or the left of the political spectrum, is not to solve the problem, but simply to point to the party's elected enemies. This issue is addressed more in the qualitative research section in Chapter 3.3.

Graph 8: Arrivals to Spain by sea (2017-2022)



Source: Statista (2023)

In this graph, it is possible to observe how the numbers of migrants arriving by sea have changed between 2017 and 2022. As expressed before, the first big surge in the popularity of the VOX party came in 2019, after Spain became the 'hottest port of entry' for migrants coming mainly from North Africa. This graph confirms this theory, as the number of migrants arriving by sea in 2018 (57.498) was more than half that of 2017 (21.971). Later, we can again observe a decrease in the number of immigrants arriving by sea in 2019 of more than 50% - this decline was probably due to the changes made by the Spanish government already during 2018. The Ministry of Home Affairs has implemented several measures to combat the arrival of immigrants on Spanish coasts since June 2018, both to

control illegal immigration and to provide assistance to immigrants. Another important measure was the strengthening of bilateral relations with Morocco since Morocco is a preferred partner of Spain and is engaged in effective efforts to control illegal immigration towards Spain from its territory. The Government of Spain has also advocated and promoted a common and coordinated EU immigration policy that is based on solidarity and cooperation between the countries of origin, transit, and destination for immigrants.

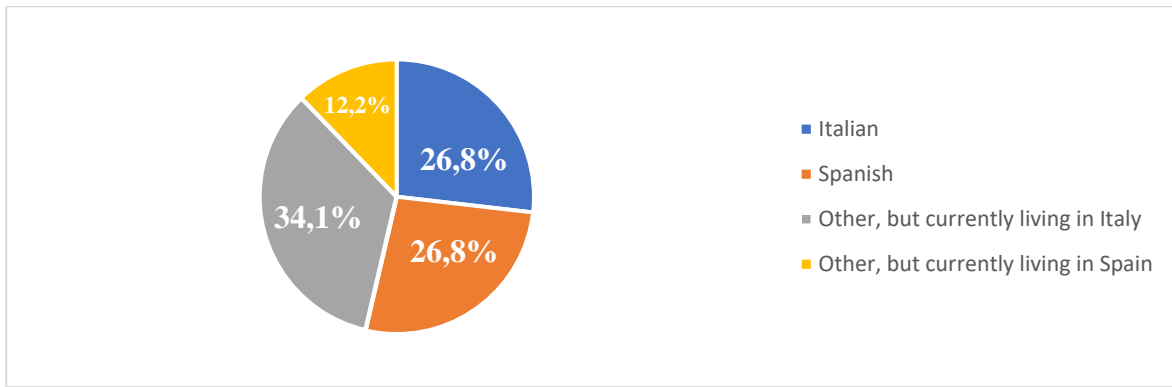
3.2 Quantitative research

The quantitative research of this thesis was directed on Italian and Spanish nationals, or people currently living in Italy and Spain. The aim was to discover the opinion of the respondents on migration in their country by using detailed questions, based on which they were able to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the level of migration, what they consider to be the biggest benefits and on the other hand the biggest downsides of increasing migration to their countries, and they could also express their own suggestions, which would improve the management of migration. Respondents were asked about their preference regarding the type of migrants (EU-nationals, third country nationals, etc.), or factors that should be taken into consideration when determining how many migrants should be admitted each year (demographic, socio-cultural, etc.). The next part of the questionnaire was aimed on the inter-connection between the current approach to migration management and the rise of far-right parties – whether the current approach contributed to their popularity or not, whether the rise of far-right parties is a response to immigration and if there are other factors involved. The last important question was about overall opinion whether the management of migration and rise of far-right parties as two individual issues should be addressed separately or if they are inherently connected. People asked were also able to express their personal negative experiences or impacts regarding increased influence and popularity of far-right parties in their countries. The questionnaire involves demographic questions regarding the age, gender, and nationality of those who have taken part in it. The results of this research are presented below.

As stated before, this research was aimed on people of Italian or Spanish nationality, or people currently living in Italy or Spain. The proportion of participants in this research according to their nationality is shown in Graph 9 – the largest proportion (34,1%) is made up of people who are of a different nationality but live in Italy for a long-term period, followed by people of Italian nationality with 26,8%. As for people of Spanish nationality,

their share in this survey is 26,8%, and the least respondents (12,2%) were people of other nationality currently living in Spain. The questionnaire contains the answers of 41 respondents, 11 of whom were of Italian nationality, 14 of other nationality but living in Italy, 11 of Spanish nationality and 5 of other nationality but living in Spain.

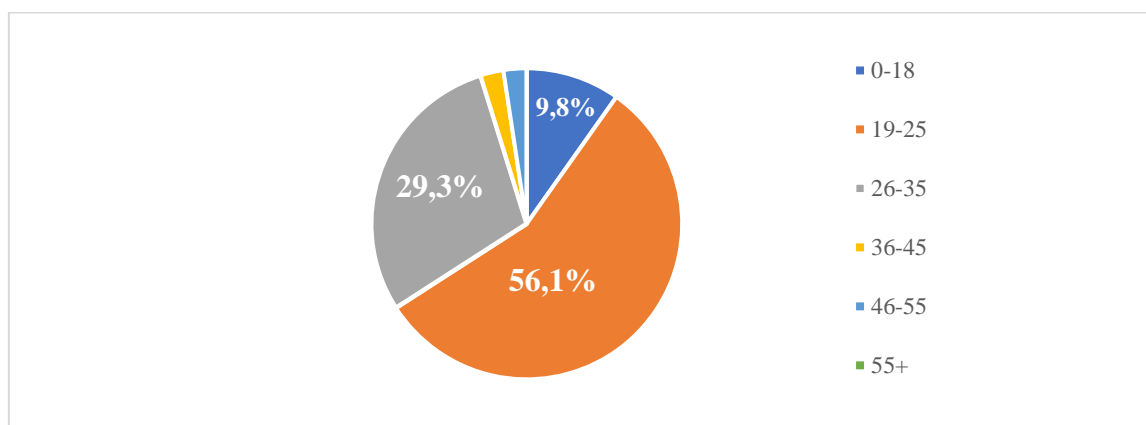
Graph 9: Nationality of participants



Source: Author's own elaboration

Regarding the age of the participants in this survey, more than half of the respondents, namely 56.1%, belonged to the age group between 19 and 25 years, followed by participants between 26 and 35 years (29.3%). However, there were also responses from people of younger and older ages, namely 9.8% of the participants were under 18 - although they are not yet eligible to vote, I consider the opinion of this generation to be just as important. As for the 36-45 and 46-55 age categories, 2.4% of both participated. Unfortunately, there were no responses received from the 55+ age group. (see Graph 10). The survey was published on social platforms making it possible for all ages to participate.

Graph 10: Age of participants

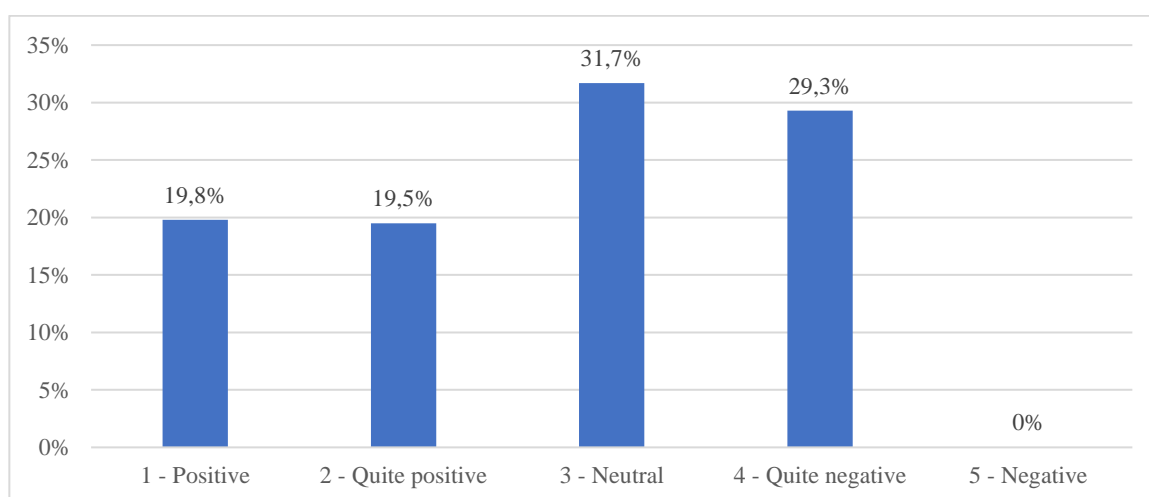


Source: Author's own elaboration

Regarding the gender of the people participating in this survey, the proportion of women and men was 60% (female) to 40% (male). I perceive these results as positive, because it is important that the young generation of people, who are most affected by this, as well as women, who can be seen more and more in the role of leaders, express their opinion on the current situation in society and in politics.

Further, I would like to move on to an evaluation of the specific issues that were the subject of the survey. Several graphs can be observed on the following pages - these graphs evaluate the data collected from both countries together. The reason for this is that the purpose of the research was not to compare the two countries in terms of their attitudes towards migration, but to find out what the prevailing mood and opinion is in this region of Southern Europe in general.

Question 1: What is your overall opinion on migration to your country?



Source: Author's own elaboration

The results suggest that opinion on migration is not unanimous. Respondents were given the opportunity to choose on a scale of 1 to 5 what they were most inclined towards - 1 on this axis represented that they perceived migration to their country exclusively positively and 5 on the other hand represented that they perceived migration exclusively negatively.

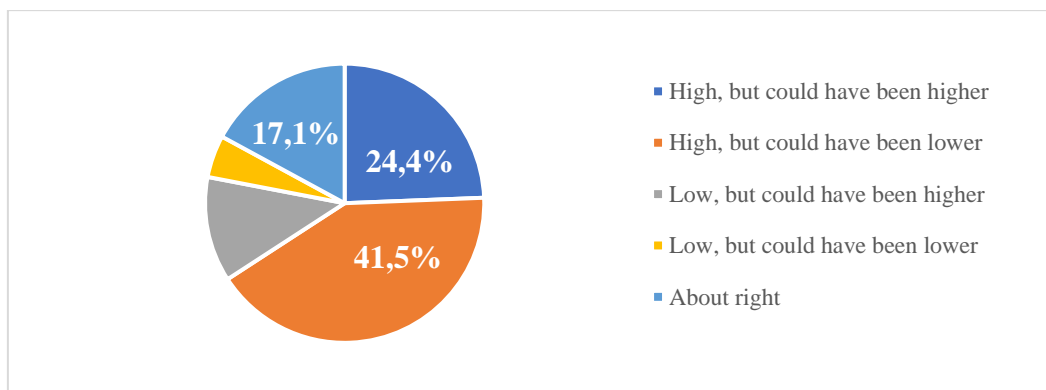
A surprising result is the fact that none of the respondents stated that they perceive migration exclusively negatively. However, 29.3% of the participants expressed that they perceive it more negatively than positively - this means that in their perception migration is more of a negative phenomenon, but it is not excluded that it does not have positive aspects as well. Most of the participants (31.7%) stated that their opinion is neutral, and thus at a

value of 3 - this result implies that they either perceive the phenomenon of migration as a matter in which opinions can fluctuate, or they do not perceive it with a particular negative or positive emotion and thus do not consider this topic important enough to be at the centre of social debates. 19.5% of the respondents perceive migration rather positively and 19.5% exclusively positively and thus think that it does not bring with it any negative aspects. The survey also revealed that migration is viewed more negatively in Italy than in Spain, and it is women (58%) who have a more negative opinion of it than their male counterparts.

In conclusion, the graph suggests a mixed view of migration to the country, with a significant proportion of respondents holding a neutral or negative opinion. The reasons for this may vary, ranging from concerns about the impact of immigration on job opportunities and the economy to cultural and social issues. However, it is also possible that some of the respondents may have held a positive view of migration but were hesitant to rate it as a 1 or 2, perhaps due to social desirability bias.

The research on migration appears to have further analysed multiple issues related to migration through a variety of questions. Migration is a complex phenomenon that involves not only the movement of people but also its impact on the countries of origin and destination, the social and economic factors that drive migration, and the policies that regulate it. As such, it is important to approach the topic from a multi-dimensional perspective that considers the diverse experiences and perspectives of all involved. By exploring various aspects of migration, the research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities.

Question 2: Do you believe that the current level of migration to your country is too high, too low, or about right?



Source: Author's own elaboration

The graph depicts the results of a survey question that asks respondents about their perception of the current level of migration to their country. The question offers five options: too high, high but could have been higher, low but could have been higher, too low and about right. According to the graph, the largest percentage of respondents, 41.5%, believe that migration levels are high, but they could have been lower. This suggests that there is a significant proportion of the population who feels that the current level of migration is problematic, but they do not necessarily want to see a complete halt to migration. This sentiment is also echoed by the 24.4% of respondents who believe that migration levels are too high, but it could have been higher. These individuals may be more supportive of increased migration in specific circumstances, such as for skilled labour or refugees, but they still feel that there are limits to what their country can accommodate. On the other hand, the 17.8% of respondents who believe that migration levels are about right seem to be content with the current situation. This group may feel that the benefits of migration, such as cultural diversity or economic growth, outweigh any potential drawbacks. However, it is worth noting that a significant proportion of respondents, 12.2%, believe that migration levels are too low or too low but could have been lower. This suggests that there is a portion of the population that feels their country should be doing more to attract migrants.

Overall, this graph demonstrates that there are diverse opinions on the current level of migration in the surveyed countries. It highlights the complexities involved in managing migration policy and underscores the need for policymakers to balance competing interests and priorities.

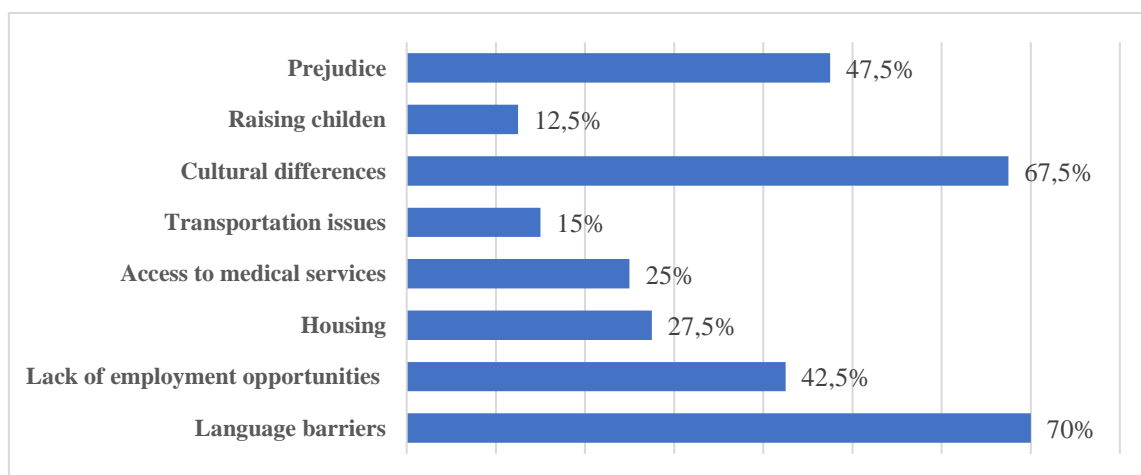
Question 3: In your opinion, what are the benefits of migration to your country?

This research question asks respondents to identify the benefits of migration to their country. The responses presented in this question are varied and highlight the multifaceted nature of migration and its effects on the host country. Respondents were asked to state at least 2 benefits.

Some of the most identified benefits of migration in the responses include economic development, innovation, and cultural diversity. Respondents highlight the potential for migrants to fill jobs that domestic workers may not be willing to do, bring new skills and ideas to the workforce, and increase the overall competitiveness of the domestic labour market. Many also acknowledge the role of migrants in supporting the economy through their contributions to tax revenues and the labour force. The responses indicate that many

people recognize the value of a diverse and dynamic workforce and the potential for migrants to contribute to the economy. However, it is also clear that there are concerns about the impacts of migration, including competition for jobs and resources, strains on social services, and cultural clashes. Cultural exchange and diversity are also commonly cited benefits of migration. Respondents emphasize the potential for migrants to enrich the host country's cultural landscape, expose citizens to new perspectives, and increase awareness and understanding of other cultures. It is also noteworthy that some respondents highlight the potential for migration to address demographic challenges, such as an aging population or declining birth rates, by increasing the size and diversity of the workforce. Overall, this research question provides important insights into the complex and multifaceted nature of migration and its effects on the host country. It highlights the need for policymakers to consider the full range of potential benefits and challenges associated with migration and to develop policies that balance the competing priorities and interests of different stakeholders. In conclusion, this research question provides valuable information about the perceptions of the benefits of migration in the surveyed countries. It highlights the need for policymakers to carefully consider the potential impacts of migration and to design policies that can maximize the benefits while minimizing the challenges.

Question 4: In your opinion, what are the challenges or drawbacks for people migrating to your country?



Source: Author's own elaboration

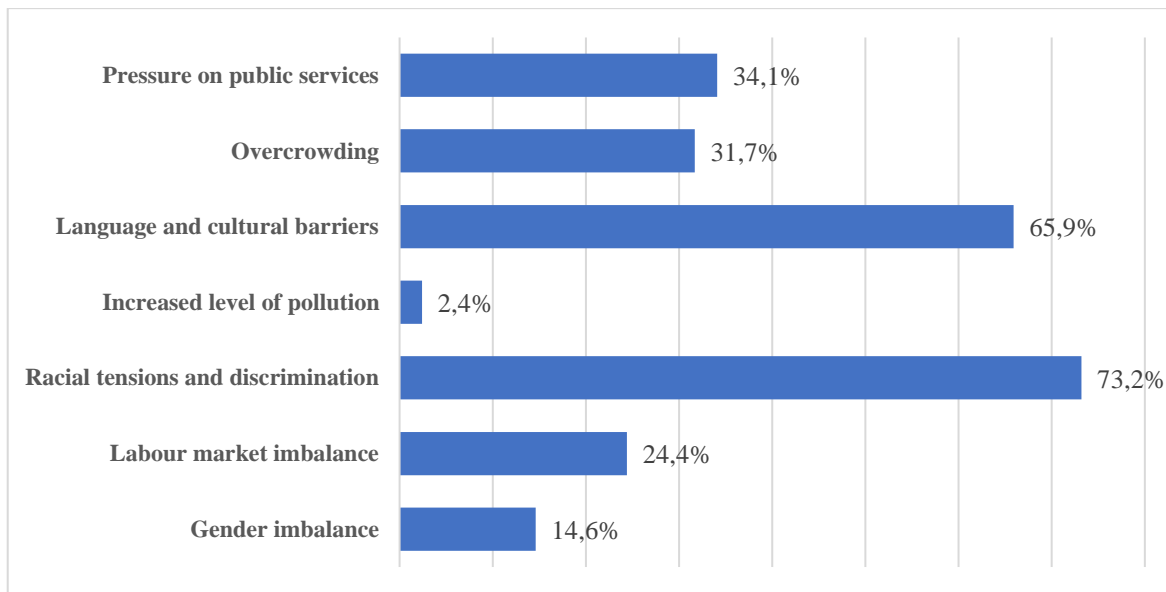
The responses in the survey suggest that there are several challenges that immigrants potentially face when they arrive. It is important to note that the respondents were able to choose multiple options, and the results indicate that a combination of factors can impact the experience of immigrants.

According to the survey, the most common challenge faced by immigrants is language barriers, with 70% of respondents selecting this issue. This indicates that a significant proportion of immigrants would struggle to communicate effectively in the local language, which can have a substantial impact on their ability to integrate and access essential services. Cultural differences were also a significant challenge, with 67.5% of respondents citing this as a concern. Adapting to a new culture can be challenging, and this can lead to social isolation and difficulty in forming connections with the local community. Prejudice is also seen as a significant challenge (47.5%) - immigrants may experience discrimination or prejudice in areas such as employment, housing, and healthcare, which can limit their opportunities and affect their wellbeing. Lack of employment opportunities is another significant challenge, ss marked by 42.5% of respondents. Finding employment is crucial for immigrants, as it can provide financial stability and a sense of belonging in the new country. Housing is also noted as a concern for 27.5% of respondents, pointing out that finding affordable and suitable housing can be a significant challenge for immigrants. Access to medical services was a concern for 25% of respondents, highlighting the importance of ensuring that immigrants have access to quality healthcare services in their new country. Transportation issues (15%) and raising children (12.5%) were less commonly mentioned, however this also suggests that interviewees perceive these two things as a potential challenge when migrants arrive.

The results of the survey show that there are several challenges and drawbacks faced by immigrants when they migrate to Italy or Spain. Addressing these challenges will require including measures to address language barriers, cultural education and awareness, anti-discrimination measures, and efforts to improve access to employment, housing, healthcare, and education.

Question 5: In your opinion, what are the negative effects of migration in your country?

The following graph shows the results of a survey that asked respondents about their opinions on the negative effects of migration in their country. The answers were multiple-choice, and the options included pressure on public services (such as schools, housing, and healthcare), overcrowding, language and cultural barriers, increased level of pollution, racial tensions and discrimination, labour market imbalance, and gender imbalance (usually more men migrate).



Source: Author's own elaboration

The top-rated negative effect of migration, according to 73.2% of respondents, was creating racial tensions and discrimination. This result highlights the issue of xenophobia, racism, and prejudice towards migrants in some communities. Such social issues can have a detrimental effect on the overall harmony and integration of diverse cultures and ethnicities. The second-highest rated negative effect of migration, at 65.9%, was forming language and cultural barriers. This emphasizes the challenge of integrating different cultures and languages into society - when there is a large influx of people from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, it can become difficult for the host country to provide adequate support for the integration of these individuals, including education, training, and language services. Another significant concern for respondents was pressure on public services, which received 34.1% of the votes. This can refer to issues such as increased demand for healthcare, education, and other public services that can struggle to keep up with the influx of people. Overcrowding was also a concern, with 31.7% of respondents stating it as a negative effect of migration. This can refer to increased pressure on housing, transport, and infrastructure because of increased population. Labour market imbalance was another issue that received a significant number of responses (24.4%). This may be seen as a negative effect because of the displacement of native workers by migrant labour or the exploitation of migrants in low-paid jobs, leading to income inequality and job insecurity. Gender imbalance was mentioned at 14.6%, indicating that it is not a significant concern for respondents. Only 2.4% of respondents identified an increased level of pollution as a negative effect of migration. This suggests that some people believe that the increase in population resulting from migration can lead to more waste, traffic, and energy use, which can contribute to environmental

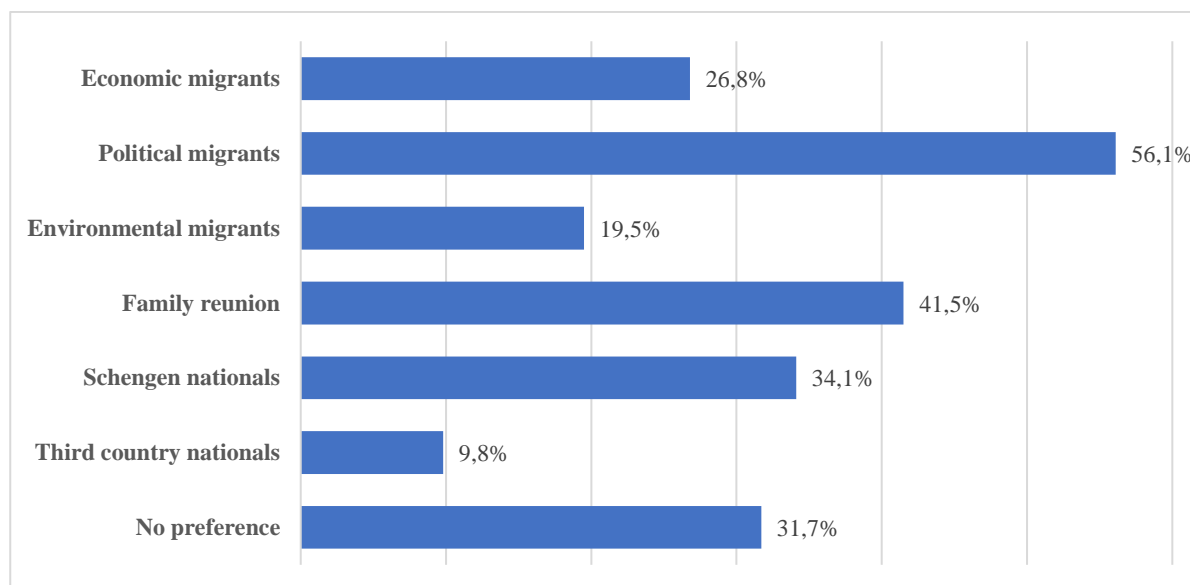
degradation and air pollution. While this effect was not as frequently cited as others, it emphasizes the importance of considering the environmental impacts of migration, especially in densely populated urban areas. Policies that prioritize sustainable development and reduce the carbon footprint of the population can help mitigate this concern.

The graph highlights the complex nature of the effects of migration and the different concerns that arise as a result. Leaders of each country should consider the multiple dimensions of the issue when developing policies to address these concerns while also recognizing the valuable contributions that migrants make to society.

Question 6: What do you think could be done differently to improve the management of migration to your country?

The answers collected in response to the question of how the management of migration to the country could be improved reveal a diverse range of opinions and suggestions. Many of the answers centre around the theme of better integration, with several respondents calling for smoother bureaucracy, promoting labour integration, and providing opportunities for immigrants to blend into the community more easily, such as through free language courses. There is also a call for improving cultural literacy, education, and medical assistance for immigrants, and more support and funds from the government for inclusion of migrants. Other suggestions include regulating migration flow, considering the education level of immigrants, being stricter with language and profession requirements, and providing more procedures and regulations. Respondents also highlighted the need for more preparation beforehand, more security presence at critical migration points, and more houses and financial help. Some respondents suggested that the Italian political landscape needs to change, and that the government needs to improve its management of migration at the basic level. Others emphasized the importance of inclusion and equality and reducing prejudice and fear towards immigrants. Overall, the answers suggest a need for a more proactive and organized approach to managing migration that takes into account the needs of both immigrants and the wider community.

Question 7: In your opinion, which types of migrants should be prioritized when it comes to admission to your country?



Source: Author's own elaboration

The graph shows the responses to the question of which types of migrants should be prioritized when it comes to admission to Italy and Spain. The respondents were given the option to choose multiple answers as their preference.

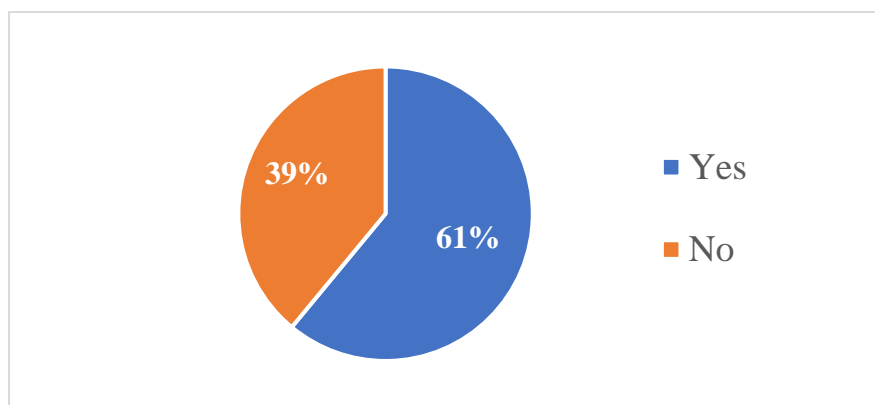
According to the results, political migrants were the most prioritized group, with 56.1% of respondents choosing them as one of their preferences. This could be due to the current political situations in various countries, especially in Ukraine and the global refugee crisis, which has led to an increase in the number of people seeking asylum. Respondents may believe that it is their moral obligation to help those who are in danger due to political instability or persecution. Family reunion was the second most prioritized group, as 41.5% of respondents stated. This could be due to the importance placed on family values in Italy and Spain, where family plays a central role in social life. Respondents may think that it is important to reunite families who have been separated due to migration. Schengen nationals and economic migrants were also prioritized, with 34.1% and 26.8% of respondents choosing these types, probably because of the economic benefits that migrants can bring to the country, as well as the ease of travel and mobility that Schengen nationals enjoy. Environmental migrants were the second least prioritized group (19.5%), which may be despite the growing recognition of the impact of environmental factors such as climate change on forced migration. Respondents may not see environmental migration as a pressing issue, or they may not be fully aware of the impact of environmental factors on migration.

Another reason why respondents do not consider this group of migrants as one that should be prioritised may be that countries such as Italy and Spain, as well as the countries around them, are not currently areas that are affected by the climate crisis to the extent that the population is experiencing an increased growth in environmental migrants, nor are populations from these countries being forced to leave due to climate change. Based on the survey results where only 9.8% of respondents chose third country nationals as a group of migrants that should be prioritized when it comes to admission to Italy and Spain, it appears that people in these countries do not view non-Schengen nationals as a priority for admission. There could be several reasons for this:

One possible reason is that there may be a perception that non-Schengen nationals may pose more of a security risk compared to other groups of migrants. This could be due to concerns about terrorism, organized crime, or other forms of illegal activity. As a result, there may be a preference for admitting migrants from countries that are perceived as being more stable and secure. Another possible reason could be economic in nature. Non-Schengen nationals may be seen as a burden on the economy, particularly if they require government support to establish themselves in the country. This could include access to healthcare, education, and other social services. As a result, there may be a preference for admitting migrants who are more likely to be self-sufficient and contribute to the economy. It's also possible that some respondents simply have a negative attitude towards non-Schengen nationals due to cultural or ethnic biases. This could manifest in a preference for admitting migrants from countries that are perceived as being culturally or ethnically similar to Italy and Spain.

Overall, the results suggest that respondents prioritized groups based on moral obligations, family values, and economic benefits. The preferences may also reflect the political and social contexts of Italy and Spain, where the current political situation, family values, and economic considerations play a significant role in shaping public opinion on migration. It is very important to note that these survey results reflect the opinions of a sample of respondents and may not be representative of the broader population. It is also important to acknowledge that immigration policies are complex and must balance a range of factors, including security, economics, and humanitarian concerns.

Question 8: Do you think that your country should admit more migrants from outside of the European Union?

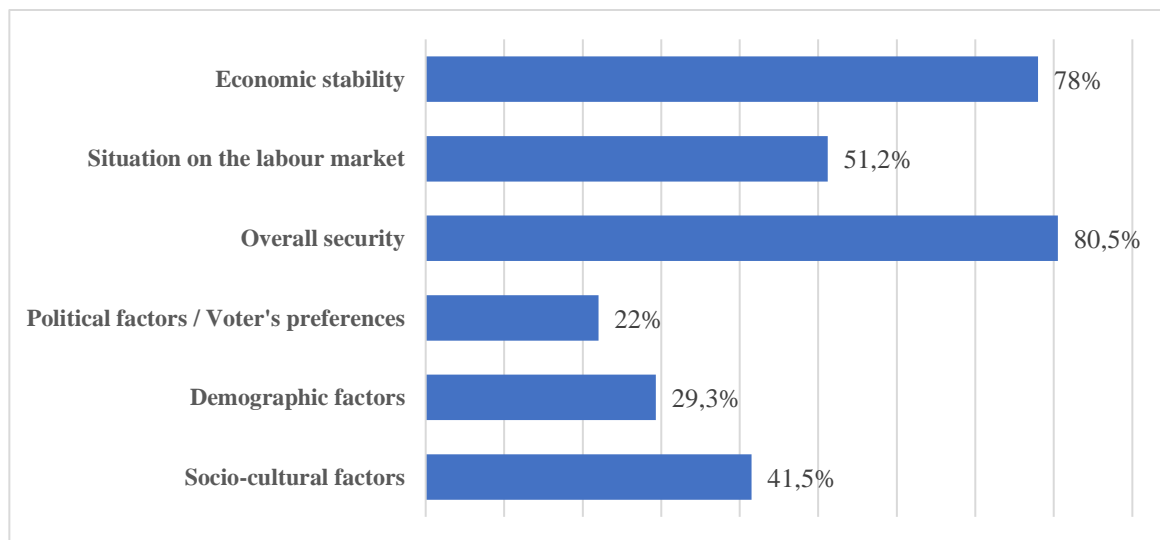


Source: Author's own elaboration

The graph on whether countries should admit more migrants from outside the European Union shows that 61% of respondents believe that their country should indeed admit more migrants, while the remaining 39% disagree. This suggests a willingness on the part of the majority of respondents to accept more migrants from outside the EU. However, when comparing this graph with the previous one, which asked respondents to prioritize different groups of migrants for admission, it is interesting to note that non-Schengen nationals were the least prioritized group. This indicates that while respondents may be willing to admit more migrants from outside the EU in general, they may still have specific preferences and priorities regarding the types of migrants they believe should be prioritized for admission. The different opinions on admitting more migrants from outside of the European Union could be due to various factors such as personal beliefs, economic factors, political considerations, and cultural attitudes. Firstly, personal beliefs could influence one's opinion on this matter. Some individuals may have a strong sense of compassion and empathy towards migrants, which could lead them to support admitting more migrants into their country. On the other hand, some individuals may hold a more nationalistic or conservative view, which could make them less open to the idea of admitting more migrants. Secondly, economic factors could also play a role in shaping people's opinions on this matter. Some people may see migrants as a potential economic benefit to the country, as they can fill gaps in the labour market, start businesses, and contribute to the economy. Others may view migrants as a financial burden and worry about the cost of supporting them. Thirdly, political considerations could influence people's opinions. Depending on the political climate and policies of the country, individuals may have different views on the issue of

admitting migrants. For example, a government that is committed to a more open immigration policy may influence citizens to be more accepting of admitting more migrants, while a government with stricter immigration policies may influence citizens to be less accepting. Lastly, cultural attitudes towards migrants could play a role in shaping people's opinions. Some individuals may view migrants as a threat to their cultural identity and values, while others may see migrants as a valuable addition to their culture and society. It is important to note that these factors are complex and interrelated, and there is no precise explanation for the differences in opinion between the two graphs.

Question 9: Which factors do you think should be taken into consideration when determining how many migrants should be admitted to your country each year?



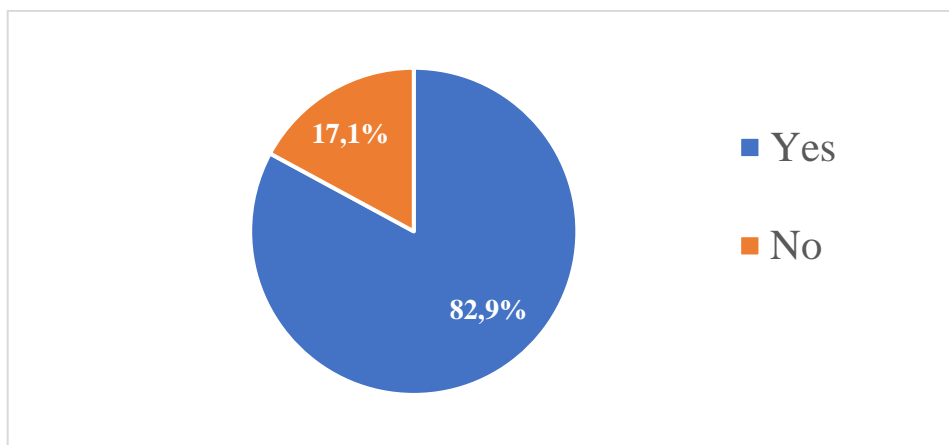
Source: Author's own elaboration

The graph shows the results of a survey question that asks respondents to indicate which factors they believe should be taken into account when determining how many migrants should be admitted to their country each year. The responses were multiple-choice, and respondents could select more than one factor. The data presented in the graph is divided into six categories, including economic stability, situation on the labour market, overall security, political factors such as voter's preferences, demographic factors, and socio-cultural factors. The percentages next to each category represent the proportion of respondents who selected that factor.

The graph displays that economic stability and overall security were the most popular factors among respondents, with 78% and 80.5% respectively indicating that these factors should be considered when determining how many migrants should be admitted to their

country each year. The next most commonly chosen factor was socio-cultural, which was selected by 41.5% of respondents. Situation on the labour market was chosen by 51.2%, demographic factors by 29.3%, and political factors such as voter's preferences by 22%. The graph provides valuable information about public opinion on immigration policy. It suggests that economic stability and overall security are the most significant factors that people consider when thinking about the number of migrants to be admitted to their country each year. The relatively low proportion of respondents selecting political factors may indicate a preference for policy decisions based on objective factors rather than political considerations. In conclusion, the graph highlights the complexity of the issue of immigration policy and the importance of considering multiple factors when making decisions. It is clear that public opinion on this issue is nuanced and multifaceted, and governments should take this into account when formulating policy.

Question 10: Do you believe that the current approach to migration management in your country contributed to the rise of far-right parties?



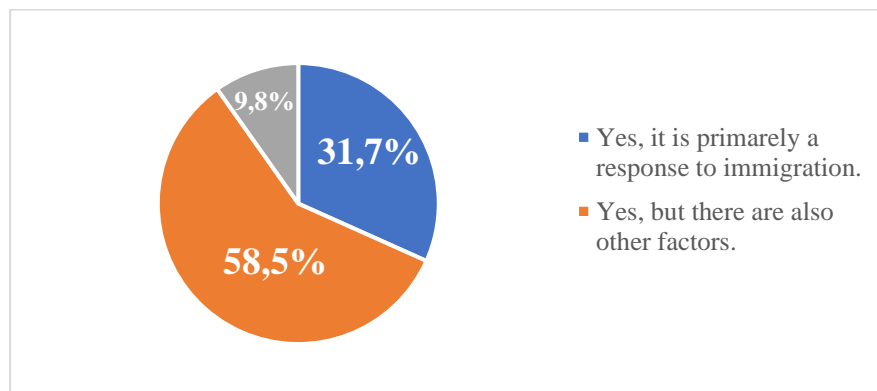
Source: Author's own elaboration

The graph presents the results of a question that asks respondents whether they believe the current approach to migration management in their country has contributed to the rise of far-right parties. The two options provided were "yes" and "no," and the percentages next to each option represent the proportion of respondents who selected that answer.

The data presented in the graph shows that the overwhelming majority of respondents, 82.9%, believe that the current approach to migration management in their country has contributed to the rise of far-right parties. Only 17.1% of respondents indicated that they do not believe the current approach has had this effect. The results suggest that

many people believe that the way in which migration is managed in their country is a contributing factor to the rise of far-right parties. The reasons behind this belief may be varied and complex, but it could be argued that concerns about the impact of immigration on social and economic factors, such as unemployment and crime rates, are often exploited by far-right parties to gain support. Additionally, the perception that the government is not adequately addressing these concerns may contribute to the rise of far-right movements. The high percentage of respondents who believe that the current approach to migration management has in fact contributed to the rise of far-right parties highlights the need for political leaders to take public opinion into account when formulating immigration policy. The results suggest that there is a significant level of concern among the public about the impact of immigration on their country and that policymakers must address these concerns in a way that does not fuel these parties. They also must take steps to address public concerns about immigration in a way that does not exacerbate the problem. Failure to do so could lead to further political polarization and the growth of far-right movements, which could have significant negative consequences for social and political stability.

Question 11: Do you think that the rise of far-right parties in your country is primarily a response to immigration, or are there other factors involved as well?



Source: Author's own elaboration

The graph represents the responses of a survey question that asks whether the rise of far-right parties in the respondent's country is primarily a response to immigration or whether other factors are involved as well. The responses were provided in three categories: "Yes, it is primarily a response to immigration," "Yes, but there are also other factors involved," and "No, it is not a response to immigration."

The results of the survey question suggest that a majority of respondents (58.5%) believe that the rise of far-right parties in their country is a response to factors beyond

immigration, but that immigration also plays a role. A significant minority of respondents, 31.7%, indicated that they believe the rise of far-right parties is primarily a response to immigration, while a smaller proportion of respondents, 9.8%, do not believe that immigration is a factor at all. The survey results suggest that while immigration is considered a factor in the rise of far-right parties, there are other underlying factors at play as well. The nature of these other factors is specified in the following survey question below.

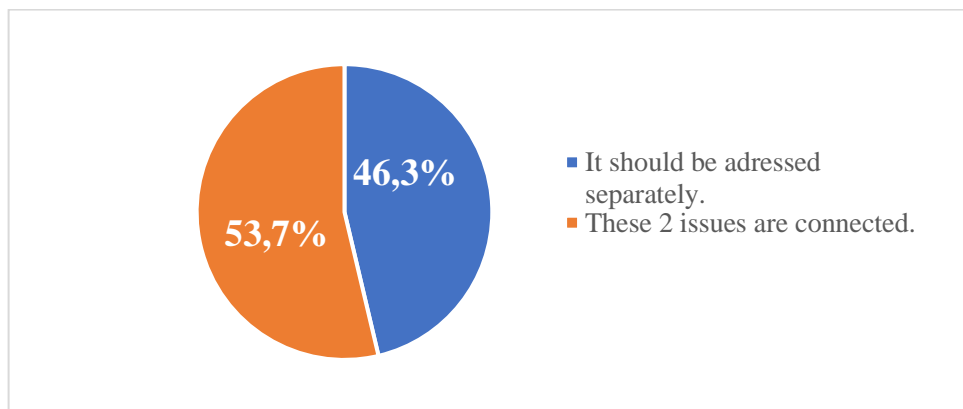
These results highlight the complexity of the issue of far-right parties and the role that immigration plays in their rise. While immigration may be a significant concern for some individuals, other factors are also involved. It is essential to understand the underlying reasons for the rise of far-right parties and to address these issues in a constructive and inclusive manner. In conclusion, the graph suggests that the rise of far-right parties is a complex issue that cannot be attributed solely to immigration. While immigration is considered a factor by a significant proportion of respondents, a majority believe that other factors are also involved.

Question 12: If you think there are other factors involved, please state at least 1 of them.

The follow-up question to the previous one asked respondents to name at least one other factor, in addition to immigration, that they believe has contributed to the rise of far-right parties in their country. The answers provided were varied and covered a range of issues such as economic, political, and social factors. Some of the respondents pointed to specific events in their country's history as a contributing factor to the rise of far-right parties, such as the use of past civil war to separate the Spanish society as a whole. Other responses mentioned issues related to social movements and values such as liberal ideas, LGBT, and religion. Dissatisfaction with previous governments, fear of the unknown, and general economic crises were also mentioned as factors. The responses suggest that there are many factors at play in the rise of far-right parties, and that these factors may vary from country to country. Economic instability, political tensions, and social changes all appear to be important drivers. Additionally, there may be issues related to education and populism that contribute to their increasing popularity. The responses highlight the complexity of the issue of far-right parties and the need to understand the underlying reasons for their rise. Politicians and society must consider the range of factors that contribute to the rise of these parties in order to address the issue effectively and work towards a more inclusive and

equitable society. The last two questions of the questionnaire ask for the respondents' opinion on the management of migration and the rise in popularity of far-right parties, namely whether these two issues should be addressed separately or whether they are linked, and also allow space for the respondents to express whether they have had any negative experience in the past that could have been caused by the policies of far-right parties.

Question 13: Do you think that the management of migration is an issue that should be addressed separately from the rise of far-right parties, or are the two issues inherently connected?



Source: Author's own elaboration

The graph shows the results of respondents' opinion whether they believe the management of migration is a separate issue from the rise of far-right parties or if the two issues are inherently connected. The results show that slightly more than half of the respondents (53.7%) believe the two issues are connected, while 46.3% think they should be addressed separately. The responses indicate that there is a perception among a significant portion of the population that the management of migration and the rise of far-right parties are related issues. The connection between the two issues may be driven by an idea that migration management policies are leading to feelings of anxiety and frustration among certain sections of the population, which in turn contribute to the rise of far-right parties. However, the significant number of respondents who believe that the two issues should be addressed separately indicates that there are also those who believe that the management of migration is an issue that should be dealt with on its own terms. This view may reflect a belief that the rise of far-right parties is a separate issue that can be addressed independently of the management of migration.

In conclusion, the survey results suggest that there is no clear consensus among the population about whether the management of migration and the rise of far-right parties are inherently connected. While a majority of respondents believe that there is a connection between the two issues, there are also many who believe that they should be addressed separately. This indicates that there may be different perspectives on how to address the issue of migration management and the rise of far-right parties, and that policy solutions must take into account these diverse perspectives.

Question 14: Have you or anyone you know experienced any negative impacts as a result of the rise of far-right parties in your country?

The follow-up question asking about personal experiences or knowledge of negative impacts as a result of the rise of far-right parties in one's country provides a more detailed and personal perspective to the issue. The responses given by the participants show the various negative impacts that the rise of far-right parties can have on individuals and communities. Some respondents reported discrimination, violence, and fear of a reduction of civil rights for minorities, particularly the LGBT+ community. Others mentioned corruption, misuse of power, and radicalism in thinking among some people. One respondent shared a specific personal experience of their Turkish partner being denied a visa on Christmas, despite providing evidence of their relationship and financial stability, due to the probability of not leaving the country. The respondent attributed the denial to the rise of far-right parties in their country.

Overall, these responses demonstrate that the rise of such parties can have a significant impact on individuals and communities, particularly those who are part of minority groups or have close connections with them. It highlights the need for continued efforts to address and combat far-right ideologies and their negative consequences.

After conducting a comprehensive questionnaire on migration, we have gained valuable insights into the general attitudes, opinions, and concerns of the respondents regarding migration in their countries. The results of the survey were diverse, reflecting the complexity of the issue of migration. Most of the respondents consider migration to be neutral or negative phenomenon. Regarding the current level of migration, respondents' opinions varied, with some believing it was too high, too low, or just right - the majority of people asked shared the opinion, that the current migration is high, and it could have been lower. This statement supports the result of the very first question, where respondents

expressed their neutral, or rather negative opinion regarding migration in general. However, they also acknowledged the benefits of migration to their country, such as cultural enrichment or economic growth. The challenges or drawbacks for people migrating to their country were also recognized, including language barriers, cultural differences, prejudice, and lack of employment opportunities. Participants were also able to express their views on the negative impacts of migration on their country - as in the previous answer, they most frequently chose racial tensions and discrimination, the creation of language and cultural barriers, and increased pressure on public services such as schools or hospitals. The diverse range of opinions and suggestions from respondents regarding the management of migration to the country centre around better integration, cultural literacy, education, and medical assistance for immigrants, as well as more government support and regulation. Other suggestions include improving security, financial help, and reducing prejudice and fear towards immigrants. Overall, there is a need for a more proactive and organized approach to managing migration that considers the needs of both immigrants and the wider community. Respondents would prioritise political migrants and family members of migrants already living in their country when accepting a group of migrants into their country. In particular, they would have a very negative perception of the arrival of migrants from outside the Schengen area, which they expressed by giving this group the lowest priority for admission. This result directly contradicts the result of the next question, in which it was expressed that national governments should accept more migrants from outside the European Union. At the same time, it is almost impossible to determine why there is such a split in opinion. The majority of respondents believe that overall security and economic stability should be taken into consideration when determining how many migrants should be admitted to the country each year. On the contrary, political factors, such as voters' preferences, should not be considered to the same extent as the labour market situation or socio-cultural factors, according to the participants. When asked whether the current approach to migration management is contributing to the rise in popularity of far-right parties, an overwhelming majority answered yes. On the follow-up question of whether this surge in popularity is a direct response to immigration or whether other factors are also involved, opinion was not homogenous. However, most people thought that the rise of far-right parties is a response to immigration, but there are other factors present that increase this popularity. Respondents suggested various other factors that they believe are involved in the rise of far-right parties in their countries, including racism, lower levels of education, religion, general crises, unemployment, fear of the unknown, etc. Other factors include the benefit of wrong

decisions of the current government, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, a pro-east mindset, dissatisfaction with previous leftist and centrist governments, populism, sectarianism, and liberal ideas such as LGBT rights. Some respondents also pointed to the general economic world crisis and the tense political situation in the world as contributing factors. On the question of whether migration management and the rise of far-right parties should be addressed separately as two separate issues, or whether the two are intertwined, respondents were divided into two almost identically represented groups. At the end, it was possible to express a personal negative experience caused by the policies of the far-right parties, to which the participants responded by mentioning things such as discrimination, more radicalism in thinking, fear of a reduction of civil rights for minorities, violence, and misuse of power. One respondent shared a personal experience of their partner's visa being denied on Christmas due to the probability of not leaving the country, which they believe was due to the right party's influence.

3.3 Qualitative research

This master's thesis includes a qualitative research study that aims to explore and understand a specific topic of interest in depth. Qualitative research helps us gain detailed insights into complex social phenomena by focusing on people's experiences and perspectives. This chapter introduces the qualitative research conducted for this thesis, providing an overview of the research design, methods, and participants involved. The main goal of this qualitative research was to dive deep into the complexities of migration, political parties and procedures related to obtaining visa and residence permits. Through in-depth interviews, the research aimed to capture participants' experiences, thoughts, and interpretations related to the topic. Instead of relying solely on numbers and statistics, qualitative research allows us to understand the human side of the phenomenon and the factors that shape it.

The key informants were carefully chosen based on their relevance to the topic and their ability to offer valuable insights. They come from different backgrounds and have different experiences, which allows us to gain a broader understanding of the topic. Respondent A is a university professor and political scientist with a special interest in migration. Respondent B is a man of Turkish nationality currently living in Italy, Respondent C is a woman of Turkish nationality also living in Italy, and Respondent D is a female of Moroccan nationality living in Spain.

To ensure the research is reliable, it followed a rigorous qualitative research methodology. This involved designing interview questions, conducting face-to-face or virtual interviews, transcribing, and analysing the data, and identifying important themes and patterns. Well-established methods like thematic analysis or content analysis to make sense of the data were also used.

The following set of questions was prepared in preparation for the interview with Respondent A:

- a) In your opinion, is there a connection between the management of migration and the rise in popularity of far-right parties in your country?
- b) Do you believe that the current approach to migration management in your country has contributed to the rise of far-right parties?
- c) Do you think that the rise of far-right parties is primarily a response to immigration, or are there other factors involved as well?
- d) In your opinion, what role do economic factors play in the rise of far-right parties, and how do these factors relate to migration management?
- e) How do you believe that your country should address the concerns and grievances that are driving the popularity of far-right parties?
- f) Do you think that the management of migration is an issue that should be addressed separately from the rise of far-right parties, or are the two issues inherently connected?
- g) Do you believe that there is a way to address the concerns of far-right parties without compromising the rights and well-being of immigrants in your country?

Some of these questions have been answered fully, some only partially. The interview was in the form of a discussion and for this reason other topics were also discussed and on the contrary, some were only mentioned in a marginal way. During the conversation, we mainly dealt with the issue of migration and its connection to political parties (the topic of this discussion was mainly populist political parties, especially those on the right side of the political spectrum). We discussed that the impact of migration on the behaviour of populist parties in Europe should be discussed by focusing on migration itself rather than migration policy, as people generally have limited knowledge of the specific content of migration policy. While individuals can readily observe the presence of migrants in their country and identify certain cultural patterns of behaviour, migration policy primarily manages and regulates migration processes, with indirect effects on the policies of European

populist parties. The behaviour is shaped by their own perspectives on migration and the policies related to it. Migration policy encompasses immigration, asylum, and integration policies, each of which can have a liberal or restrictive approach. Populists often advocate for stricter policies in response to perceived negative consequences of migration, such as crimes committed by individual migrants that receive media attention, rather than being directly influenced by government laws and regulations. The thinking of populists is based on a division between "us" and "them," with the enemies being defined both vertically (the political elite) and horizontally (those who differ from "us" in terms of traits such as culture, religion, or skin colour). Populists criticize the government's migration policy, which they believe favours migrants over the interests of the people. Populists use fear as a communication tool, exploiting concerns about migrants and crimes committed by some of them. Countries directly affected by migration, like Italy and Spain, see reinforced populist narratives due to the socioeconomic challenges faced by migrants in those regions. If populist parties focused more on proposing specific solutions within the framework of integration instead of simply rejecting migrants and fuelling fear, it could potentially change public opinion and address the challenges associated with migration. However, Respondent A suggests that these parties deliberately perpetuate the issue to gain voters, as their existence relies on the persistence of the conflict rather than its resolution. Respondent A highlighted that the focus should shift from trying to stop migration to promoting integration of migrants. Italy and Spain, being countries with long-standing migration challenges, have learned the importance of integrating migrants who contribute to their economies by taking up jobs that the local population may not be willing to do. Exclusion leads to radicalization, and a reciprocal integration policy is crucial to ensure that migrants are accepted as valuable members of society, especially for second-generation migrants who may experience an identity crisis due to cultural differences. The language barrier is perceived as a significant obstacle to the arrival of migrants, according to the findings of a questionnaire. Respondent A adds that economic and demographic factors are also crucial considerations. Migrants can benefit the country economically by filling job positions that locals may not prefer, and they can also address demographic challenges by bringing in young individuals who can contribute to the social system and support other groups, such as pensioners. Respondent A also mentioned that populists tend to spread the notion that migrants are expensive, but the cost to the state is only up until the point of integration. Migrants can be beneficial as they can contribute to the system by working and paying taxes. Moreover, migrants who are ready

to work and contribute are sometimes rejected by the state while people who have received support from the state from birth tend to leave, which is a loss for the state.

Respondents B, C and D received the following questions:

- a) What type of visa or residence permit are you applying for, and what is the purpose of your stay in Italy or Spain?
- b) What documentation do you need to provide in order to apply for the visa or residence permit, and how can you obtain these documents?
- c) How long does the application process typically take, and what are the steps involved?
- d) Are there any specific requirements or restrictions that you need to be aware of when applying for a visa or residence permit in Italy or Spain?
- e) How are visa and residence permit applications processed, and what criteria are used to evaluate them?
- f) What are the consequences of overstaying your visa or residence permit in Italy or Spain, and what steps can you take to avoid these consequences?
- g) What are the potential consequences of providing false information or documentation during the visa or residence permit application process?
- h) What types of support services are available to you as an immigrant or visa applicant in Italy or Spain?
- i) How can you access information and resources to help you navigate the immigration process in Italy or Spain?
- j) What are some of the cultural and social norms in Italy or Spain that you should be aware of as an immigrant or visa applicant?
- k) Do you think that current policies are in favour of people migrating to Italy or Spain, or do you think the opposite?
- l) Did you notice any change from the previous government – maybe the process of obtaining permit became more difficult?
- m) Do you feel culturally accepted in the country where you currently live?
- n) Feel free to express any further opinion on the topic.

Based on the interviews with Respondent B and Respondent C, it can be concluded that both individuals have applied for student visas and residence permits in Italy to pursue master's programs. The visa application process for both took approximately 2 weeks, while the residence permit process typically took 6-8 months. In order to apply for the visas and residence permits, both respondents had to provide similar documents, including acceptance

letters from their respective Italian universities, proof of personal income and bank status, graduation certificates, and motivational letters. Additionally, they needed to provide information about their parents' employment and financial documents. The initial visa application documents were collected while both respondents were still residing in their home countries (Turkey) and they had to be officially translated into Italian. After arriving in Italy, both respondents applied for residence permit cards, submitted the same set of documents to the Immigration office, and completed application forms for one-year residence permits. The process involved providing fingerprints, and after a waiting period of approximately 45 days, both respondents received their one-year residence permit cards. They acknowledged the need to repeat this process annually. Specific requirements included applying for a residence permit within 10 days of arrival in Italy, and during the period between application and receiving the official residence permit, there were restrictions on traveling to other European Union countries. Both respondents indicated that the evaluation of visa and residence permit applications likely relies on the documents provided and the necessity of having valid reasons for obtaining the permits. They acknowledged that providing false information or documentation could result in consequences such as denial of the visa or residence permit, entry denial, or immediate departure. Respondent C mentioned specific support services available to immigrants or visa applicants in Italy provided by the university office. They both relied on online research and assistance from fellow students. They accessed information from official websites and received help from individuals who had already gone through the application process, including Turkish nationals like themselves.

Overall, both respondents felt culturally accepted in Italy, especially when making efforts to speak Italian and learn Italian culture. They did not experience culture shock or encounter significant problems. While they acknowledged that the lengthy application process could be challenging, they understood the importance of the strict procedures in maintaining border security and protecting the well-being of citizens.

The interview with Respondent D sheds light on the process of applying for a student visa and residence permit in Spain. The respondent applied for a student visa type D and residency to pursue their master's studies at a university in Spain. They had to provide documents such as criminal records, proof of enrolment in a university with a minimum of 20 hours per week, bank statements showing a minimum balance of €10,000, and a valid passport. The application process typically took around 2 weeks, although the specific steps

involved were not mentioned. There are no specific requirements or restrictions mentioned apart from the obligatory documentation. However, the respondent pointed out that their student visa can only be renewed if they continue studying at the same university, implying that changing universities would require going through the application process again. The consequences of overstaying a visa or residence permit in Spain can result in fines and, in serious cases or prolonged overstays, an order to leave the country. To avoid these consequences, it is essential to renew the visa on time. The Respondent D relied on their family's assistance and knowledge of the process, but they were unsure about specific support services available to immigrants or visa applicants in Spain. They suggested seeking information online or reaching out to university offices for guidance. Regarding the current policies, the respondent mentioned that they are generally favourable for those coming to work or study, but they expressed the need for better integration of refugees, emphasizing that their inclusion would benefit both the individuals and the system. In terms of cultural acceptance, the respondent mostly feels accepted in Spain, although they acknowledged occasional instances of people looking at them with possible disapproval. However, they have found new friends, particularly at the university, and have grown fond of Spain, not wanting to imagine leaving the country.

In summary, this qualitative research is an important part of this master's thesis, offering a deeper understanding of the research topic and adding to the existing knowledge. In the interview with Respondent A, several key points regarding migration and its implications were discussed. It was acknowledged that migration cannot be stopped and should instead be focused on integration. Respondent A emphasized the economic benefits of migrants, as they can fill job positions that locals may not prefer. The importance of addressing language barriers and considering economic and demographic factors in integration policies was highlighted. Respondent A also criticized populist parties for spreading misinformation about the cost of migrants to the state and creating fear. The potential loss for the state in rejecting migrants who are ready to contribute was emphasized. Overall, Respondent A stressed the need for inclusive policies and specific solutions for successful integration rather than simply rejecting migrants. The interviews with Respondent B, Respondent C, and Respondent D offer a collective understanding of the visa and residence permit application processes in Italy and Spain. In both countries, the application processes for student visas and residence permits involve providing various documents, such as acceptance letters, financial statements, and criminal records. The timeframes for

processing these applications differ, with visas typically taking a few weeks and residence permits ranging from months to a year. While specific requirements and restrictions vary, compliance with renewal timelines and avoiding overstays is crucial. Immigrants often rely on online resources, university offices, and the support of their families to navigate the immigration processes. Overall, the respondents felt accepted in their respective countries, emphasizing the importance of adhering to the procedures to maintain legal status and contribute positively to the host countries.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this master thesis has explored the complex and multifaceted issue of migration management in Southern Europe, with a specific focus on Italy and Spain. The theoretical part of the study provided a comprehensive overview of migration as a global phenomenon, tracing its origins and historical context, as well as examining the underlying motivations that drive people to migrate. Additionally, the migratory routes and the existing migration management systems in Italy and Spain were thoroughly analysed, shedding light on the current situation regarding migration in these two countries. Furthermore, the thesis delved into the examination of migration policies and their implications in Italy and Spain, considering the challenges and opportunities they present in managing the influx of migrants. Moreover, the rise and popularity of far-right parties in both countries were explored, emphasizing the potential impact of these political movements on migration management strategies.

The empirical part of the research employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the phenomenon further. Desk research was conducted to gain insights into the factors contributing to the rise of far-right parties in Italy and Spain, enabling a comprehensive understanding of their ideologies and the implications for migration management. Additionally, a quantitative research method was employed through a questionnaire distributed among the Italian and Spanish populations, as well as individuals currently residing in these countries. This allowed for the collection of valuable data and statistical analysis, enabling a deeper understanding of public opinions and attitudes towards migration and related policies.

To complement the quantitative research, qualitative key informant interviews were conducted. In conclusion, the key informant interviews conducted for the master thesis on migration management in Southern Europe provided valuable insights and perspectives from experts in the field. These interviews allowed for a deeper understanding of the complexities and challenges faced by countries in Southern Europe in managing migration flows. The first-hand experiences and expert opinions shared during the interviews enriched the research and contributed to a comprehensive analysis of the topic.

In conclusion, the hypothesis that *the increase in the popularity of far-right parties is a direct consequence of how the country governs the migration policy* was not confirmed.

While migration policy does contribute to the rise in popularity, it is just one of several factors involved. Migration, as a multifaceted issue, is influenced by a range of socio-economic, cultural, and political factors. Several other factors may contribute to the rise in the popularity of far-right parties, including economic concerns, cultural anxieties, perceptions of national identity and security, disillusionment with mainstream politics, and the role of media in shaping public opinion. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the rise of far-right parties requires a nuanced analysis that considers the interplay of these various factors. This statement is supported by the findings of the quantitative research conducted. Respondents expressed their belief that the approach to migration management contributed to the rise of far-right parties. However, they also acknowledged the existence of other factors that play a role in this phenomenon, indicating an indirect relationship. Furthermore, the insights provided by the key informant during the interviews emphasized the importance of discussing migration in a broader context rather than focusing solely on migration policies. These findings collectively reinforce the understanding that while migration policy does have an impact on the popularity of far-right parties, it is just one piece of the complex puzzle.

The hypothesis that *the phenomenon of migration in Southern Europe is perceived to be negative* was confirmed by the research findings. The qualitative research revealed that respondents expressed a predominantly negative perception of migration. They highlighted concerns such as language and cultural barriers, racial tension, and prioritization of migrants from within the Schengen area. Additionally, the respondents emphasized the importance of overall security as the primary factor in determining the admission of more migrants to their countries. These findings indicate a prevailing negative perception of migration in Southern Europe, shedding light on the complexities and challenges associated with managing migration in the region.

The primary aim of this master thesis was to examine the potential interdependence between migration management and the growing prevalence of far-right parties in Southern Europe, and to ascertain the extent to which they mutually influence one another. The findings of this study demonstrate that while a relationship exists between these phenomena, it is complex and multifaceted. Migration policy does indeed contribute to the rise of far-right parties; however, it represents only one among numerous factors at play. The negative perceptions of migration held by Southern European populations also play a pivotal role in

driving the increased popularity of far-right parties. These findings underlined the intricacy of migration management in the region and highlight the need for a comprehensive approach that considers the complex interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and political factors. Ultimately, the master thesis contributed valuable insights into the challenges and complexities surrounding migration governance in Southern Europe.

The secondary objectives of this master thesis were successfully fulfilled by providing a historical and contextual understanding of migration, exploring the driving factors behind migration, and establishing a foundation for comprehending the complexities and implications of migration. The thesis also defined the main migratory routes, examined approaches to migration management and their societal and political impacts, and highlighted the complexities and implications of irregular migration. Furthermore, the research delved into far-right parties in Europe, specifically The Brother of Italy (FdI) and The Vox Party, to understand their ideologies and influence on migration discourse. Additionally, the research examined perceptions towards migration and provided a personal subjective perspective on the individual process of applying for a residence permit.

Overall, this master thesis has contributed to the existing knowledge on migration management in Southern Europe, specifically focusing on Italy and Spain. By combining theoretical analysis with empirical research, it has shed light on the complex dynamics and challenges involved in managing migration flows. The findings highlight the importance of comprehensive and balanced migration policies, taking into account both the humanitarian aspects and the socio-political realities. This study serves as a foundation for future research and policy development, encouraging a more informed and inclusive approach towards migration management in Southern Europe and beyond.

Resumé

Fenomén migrácie nie je nový – existuje už od staroveku. Jeho príčinami, dôsledkami a zmenami sa zaoberá nespočetné množstvo inštitúcií, organizácií a jednotlivcov. Migráciu možno definovať ako proces, keď jednotlivci alebo celé skupiny ľudí opúšťajú miesto, kde sa narodili a hľadajú iné, lepšie miesto pre svoj život. Hoci sú najstaršie fázy ľudských migrácií predmetom intenzívnych diskusií, väčšina hypotéz sa zhoduje v tom, že prebiehali v rámci afrického kontinentu a mimo neho. Najstaršie rozpoznateľné fosílie *Homo sapiens* sa našli v Etiópii a sú staré približne 200 000 rokov. Teória "z Afriky" predpokladá, že približne pred 60 000 rokmi sa *Homo sapiens* rozšíril po Eurázii, kde nakoniec nahradil iných ľudských predkov, napríklad neandertálcov, a spochybňujú ju dôkazy o migrácii z Afriky do Eurázie pred 120 000 rokmi. O príčine migrácie starovekých ľudí sa dá len polemizovať, ale s najväčšou pravdepodobnosťou ju spôsobil nedostatok potravín, klimatické zmeny a iné environmentálne faktory. Už v historických dobách je možné nájsť náznaky toho, že migrácia je veľmi komplexná téma a že africká migrácia sa už vtedy delila na dve podoblasti - ľudia, ktorí sa pohybovali slobodne, a ľudia, ktorí sa pohybovali, pretože boli nútení. Z toho vyplýva, že hlavné dôvody migrácie sa za tisícročia existencie ľudstva takmer nezmenili, a to napriek obrovskému pokroku vo všetkých oblastiach života - rovnako ako v roku 2023 existuje dobrovoľná migrácia, napr. za prácou alebo vzdelaním, a nedobrovoľná migrácia, napr. v dôsledku klimatických zmien, vojny alebo politických režimov. Aby sme lepšie pochopili, prečo ľudia dodnes neprestali migrovať, je potrebné definovať hlavné migračné toky vo svete a v Európe a určiť hlavné príčiny, ktoré spôsobujú sťahovanie ľudí z krajiny do krajiny alebo dokonca z kontinentu na kontinent. Ľudia, ktorí utekajú alebo odchádzajú zo svojich domovských krajín, sú viac ako len číslo - žiaľ, takto ich vnímajú početné percentá obyvateľstva. Drvivá väčšina obyvateľstva stále žije v krajinách, v ktorých sa narodila, čo znamená, že len každý tridsiaty človek je migrant, ale zároveň sa počet migrantov za posledných 50 rokov zvýšil o neuveriteľných 128 miliónov. Hlavnou témou tejto práce je riadenie migrácie v južnej Európe - prečo ľudia migrujú do Európy a v rámci Európy? Dôvodov je mnoho, ale tri najdôležitejšie push faktory (dôvody, prečo ľudia opúšťajú krajinu) a pull faktory (dôvody, prečo sa ľudia sťahujú do určitej krajiny) sú sociálno-politické, demografické a ekonomické, a environmentálne. Žiaľ, prenasledovanie kvôli etnickej príslušnosti, náboženstvu, rase, politike a kultúre tlačí ľudí k tomu, aby opúšťali svoje krajiny. Akonáhle sa necítia bezpečne a zotrvanie by pre nich predstavovalo značné riziko, napríklad z dôvodu vojnových konfliktov alebo porušovania

ľudských práv, opúšťajú svoju domovinu. Takíto migranti sa zvyčajne považujú za humanitárnych utečencov, čo môže ovplyvniť celý proces prijímania, zaobchádzania a integrácie. Dôležité rozhodnutie je nutné urobiť už pred odchodom, pretože krajiny majú k humanitárnym utečencom rôzne postoje. Tieto osoby sa však pravdepodobne presunú do najbližšej bezpečnej krajiny, ktorá prijíma žiadateľov o azyl. Príkladom humanitárnych utečencov, ktorí utekajú do Európy, sú ľudia z vojnou zmietanej Sýrie, Afganistanu a Iraku, ktorým bol v roku 2019 udelený aj štatút ochrany v EÚ.

Demografická a ekonomická migrácia súvisí s pracovnou úrovňou, nezamestnanosťou a celkovým stavom hospodárstva krajiny. Medzi príťažlivé faktory patria vyššie mzdy, lepšie pracovné príležitosti, vyššia životná úroveň, lepšie vzdelanie a dobre riadená sociálna starostlivosť. Približne dve tretiny medzinárodných migrantov prichádzajú s cieľom zamestnať sa a takmer 70 % prichádza do rozvinutých krajín s vysokou životnou úrovňou. Keď ekonomika krajiny začne upadať a podmienky, ktoré priamo ovplyvňujú kvalitu života obyvateľstva, sa začnú meniť, migrácia je priamym dôsledkom. Tu je možné odvolať sa na teóriu duálneho trhu práce, kde je sekundárny sektor charakterizovaný krátkodobým zamestnaním, malou alebo žiadnou perspektívou kariérneho postupu a určovaním miezd predovšetkým trhovými silami. Z hľadiska povolání ho tvoria predovšetkým nižšie alebo nekvalifikované povolania, či už ide o manuálnu prácu, administratívnych pracovníkov alebo v pracovníkov v oblasti služieb (napr. čašníci). Tieto zamestnania spája skutočnosť, že sa vyznačujú nízkou úrovňou kvalifikácie, nízkym príjmom, prechodnosťou zamestnania a malou návratnosťou vzdelania alebo skúseností. Neformálnu ekonomiku tvoria pracovníci, ktorí sú často platení "na čierno". Tento trh má tendenciu priťahovať chudobných a neúmerne veľký počet príslušníkov menšín. Duálny trh práce sa zameriava na prisťahovalectvo ako prirodzený dôsledok hospodárskej globalizácie a prenikania trhu cez hranice štátov. Celkovo sa nesústreďuje na rozhodnutia jednotlivcov o migrácii, ale na to, čo ich priťahuje k migrácii ako kolektívnu skupinu. Tvrdí sa, že medzinárodná migrácia vychádza z požiadaviek modernej civilizácie na pracovnú silu.

Ako už bolo uvedené, životné prostredie a zmena klímy boli vždy hnacím motorom migrácie, keďže ľudia utekali pred prírodnými katastrofami, ako sú povodne alebo zemetrasenia, ktoré spôsobili, že sa viaceré oblasti stali neobývatelnými. Očakáva sa, že klimatické zmeny spôsobia extrémne výkyvy počasia, čo znamená, že by v pohybe mohlo byť viac ľudí a environmentálne faktory by sa mohli stať hlavným dôvodom migrácie - toto storočie sa často označuje ako "storočie klimatickej migrácie".

Migrácia už nie je len niečo nezvyčajné - v skutočnosti je súčasťou každodenného života a môže ho ovplyvniť mnohými pozitívnymi aj negatívnymi spôsobmi. Tento jav nemôže byť niečím nekontrolovateľným, naopak, musia existovať regionálne, národné, medzinárodné a nadnárodné pravidlá a dohody, na základe ktorých jednotlivé krajiny a štáty konajú. Riadenie migrácie v južnej Európe je už mnoho rokov spornou otázkou. Tento región je už dlho hlavným vstupným bodom pre migrantov a utečencov z Afriky a Blízkeho východu a snaží sa nájsť účinný spôsob, ako zvládnuť tento prílev. Táto práca skúma výzvy a stratégie spojené s riadením migrácie v južnej Európe so zameraním na Taliansko a Španielsko. Tieto dve krajiny sú predmetom práce, pretože sú zaujímavé z hľadiska spoločenského a politického diania a sú vedúcimi krajinami v počte prichádzajúcich migrantov.

Jednou z najväčších výziev, ktorým musí južná Európa čeliť, je samotný rozsah migrácie. V posledných rokoch došlo k výraznému nárastu počtu ľudí, ktorí sa snažia dostať do regiónu cez more. V roku 2015 prišlo takto do Európy viac ako 1 milión migrantov a utečencov, pričom mnohí z nich sa vylodili v juhoeurópskych krajinách, ako sú práve Taliansko, Španielsko, či Grécko. To značne zaťažilo zdroje týchto krajín, ktoré sa snažia poskytovať základné služby a podporu prichádzajúcim migrantom. Ďalšou veľkou výzvou je nedostatočná koordinácia a spolupráca medzi krajinami južnej Európy. Napriek tomu, že sú tieto krajiny súčasťou Európskej únie, v úsilí o riadenie migrácie často konali nezávisle. To viedlo k rôznorodosti politík a postupov, pričom niektoré krajiny zaujali ústretovejší prístup, zatiaľ čo iné prijali reštriktívnejšie opatrenia. Tento nedostatok koordinácie sťažil EÚ vytvorenie komplexného a účinného prístupu k riadeniu migrácie v regióne.

Jednou zo stratégií, ktorú prijali niektoré juhoeurópske krajiny, je využívanie námorných hliadok a iných opatrení na zabránenie migrantom a utečencom v prechode cez Stredozemné more. V posledných rokoch Taliansko a Španielsko posilnili svoje námorné hliadky v Stredozemnom mori v snahe zachytiť lode s migrantmi a utečencami. Hoci tieto opatrenia úspešne znížili počet ľudí prichádzajúcich do regiónu, boli tiež kritizované za to, že sú nehumánne a neriešia základné príčiny migrácie. Ďalšou stratégiou, ktorá bola prijatá, je využívanie "hotspotov", kde sa migranti a utečenci po príchode registrujú. Cieľom týchto zariadení je zabezpečiť usporiadanejší a efektívnejší spôsob riešenia problémov, ale boli tiež kritizované za ich preplnenosť a nehumánnosť. Komplexnejší prístup k riadeniu migrácie v južnej Európe by zahŕňal kombináciu opatrení, ako je poskytovanie pomoci a podpory

krajinám pôvodu, riešenie základných príčin migrácie a posilnenie kapacity juhoeurópskych krajín na riadenie migrácie.

V prvej kapitole práce je uvedený rozsiahly prehľad migrácie ako globálneho fenoménu, jej historického kontextu, dôvodov, ktoré vedú ľudí k migrácii, a hlavných migračných trás. Ďalej skúma riadenie migrácie v dvoch vybraných krajinách Európskej únie, konkrétne v Taliansku a Španielsku, pričom ponúka dynamický opis nelegálnej migrácie a realizácie deklarovaných politík. Okrem toho táto kapitola analyzuje populárne krajne pravicové strany v týchto krajinách, skúma ich ideológiu, rétoriku a vplyv na diskusie týkajúce sa migrácie.

Kapitola 2 sa zameriava na cieľ, metódy a metodológiu použitú v práci. Načrtáva ciele výskumu, predstavuje výskumný plán a metódy zberu údajov a stanovuje hypotézy, ktorými sa bude riadiť empirická časť práce.

Základným argumentom tejto práce bolo, ako naznačujú mnohé zdroje, že riadenie migrácie možno považovať za hlavný dôvod rastúcej popularity krajne pravicových strán. Táto práca analyzuje ich vzájomné prepojenie a vplyv na voličov. Primárnym cieľom tejto práce bolo zistiť, či sú tieto dve samostatné roviny prepojené a či sa navzájom ovplyvňujú, a ak áno, do akej miery. Za účelom skúmania tohto vzťahu a dosiahnutia primárneho cieľa práca sleduje niekoľko sekundárnych cieľov:

- zameriava sa na historické a kontextuálne pochopenie migrácie, počnúc jej pôvodom a históriou;
- skúma faktory, ktoré vedú ľudí k migrácii;
- kladie základy pre skúmanie zložitosti migrácie a jej dôsledkov;
- definuje hlavné migračné trasy, pretože to vrhá svetlo na modely a dynamiku migračných tokov - pochopenie konkrétnych trás prispieva k hlbšiemu pochopeniu riadenia migrácie a výziev, ktorým čelia krajiny pri zvládaní týchto pohybov;
- identifikuje prístupy uplatňované pri riadení migrácie a následné vplyvy na spoločnosť a politiku;
- poukazuje na zložitosť a dôsledky nelegálnej migrácie pre migrantov aj prijímajúce krajiny;

- analyzuje krajne pravicové strany v Európe, konkrétne stranu Fratelli d'Italia (FdI) a stranu Vox - pochopenie ich ideológie a vplyvu je nevyhnutné na pochopenie ich pohľadu na migráciu a ich vplyvu na verejný diskurz;
- skúma vnímanie migrácie;
- poskytuje osobný subjektívny pohľad na individuálny proces podávania žiadostí o povolenie na pobyt, ako sú povinné dokumenty, čakacie lehoty atď.

Tieto sekundárne ciele načrtnuté v práci prispievajú ku komplexnej analýze riadenia migrácie, krajne pravicových strán a ich vzájomných vzťahov. Riešením týchto cieľov mal výskum poskytnúť pevný základ pre empirické skúmanie a objasniť komplexný vzťah medzi riadením migrácie a vzostupom krajne pravicových strán v Európe.

Cieľom empirickej časti tejto magisterskej práce bolo preskúmať potenciálnu súvislosť medzi politikami riadenia migrácie v krajinách južnej Európy a vzostupom krajne pravicových strán. Cieľom tohto výskumu bolo zistiť, či sa tieto dva javy navzájom ovplyvňujú, a ak áno, do akej miery. Pochopenie vzájomného vzťahu medzi riadením migrácie a vzostupom krajne pravicových strán je kľúčové pre pochopenie komplexnej dynamiky, ktorá formuje politiku a sociálnu štruktúru týchto krajín. Cieľom tejto štúdie bolo prostredníctvom skúmania empirických dôkazov objasniť vzťah medzi politikami riadenia migrácie a vznikom alebo rastom krajne pravicových strán, čo v konečnom dôsledku prispeje k hlbšiemu pochopeniu širších dôsledkov pre spoločnosti v južnej Európe. Na dosiahnutie tohto cieľa bol použitý prístup založený na zmiešaných metódach, ktorý kombinoval kvantitatívnu analýzu relevantných údajov o migračných tokoch, politických rámcoch a volebných výsledkoch s kvalitatívnou analýzou vrátane rozhovorov a prieskumu medzi talianskymi a španielskymi štátnymi príslušníkmi alebo ľuďmi, ktorí v súčasnosti žijú v týchto dvoch krajinách.

Záverom možno konštatovať, že riadenie migrácie v južnej Európe je zložitá a náročná otázka, ktorá si vyžaduje mnohostranný prístup. Hoci sa v posledných rokoch dosiahol určitý pokrok, stále je potrebné vykonať veľa práce na nájdenie udržateľného a humaného riešenia tohto problému. Hypotéza, podľa ktorej je nárast popularity krajne pravicových strán priamym dôsledkom spôsobu riadenia migračnej politiky krajiny, sa nepotvrdila. Migračná politika síce prispieva k nárastu popularity, ale je len jedným z viacerých faktorov, ktoré sa na tom podieľajú. Migráciu ako komplexnú problematiku ovplyvňuje celý rad sociálno-ekonomických, kultúrnych a politických faktorov. Komplexné

pochopenie nárastu krajne pravicových strán si preto vyžaduje diferencovanú analýzu, ktorá zohľadňuje vzájomné pôsobenie týchto rôznych faktorov. Toto tvrdenie potvrdzujú aj zistenia z uskutočneného kvantitatívneho výskumu. Respondenti vyjadrili presvedčenie, že k vzostupu krajne pravicových strán prispel prístup k riadeniu migrácie. Priznali však aj existenciu ďalších faktorov, ktoré zohrávajú úlohu v tomto jave, čo naznačuje nepriamy vzťah. Okrem toho postrehy, ktoré poskytli kľúčoví informátori počas rozhovorov, zdôraznili dôležitosť diskusie o migrácii v širšom kontexte. Tieto zistenia spoločne posilňujú tvrdenie, že hoci má migračná politika vplyv na popularitu krajne pravicových strán, je to len jedna časť zložitej skladačky.

Hypotéza, že fenomén migrácie v južnej Európe je vnímaný negatívne, sa na základe výsledkov výskumu potvrdila. Kvalitatívny výskum ukázal, že respondenti vyjadrili prevažne negatívne vnímanie migrácie. Zdôrazňovali obavy, ako sú jazykové a kultúrne bariéry, rasové napätie a uprednostňovanie migrantov zo schengenského priestoru. Okrem toho respondenti zdôrazňovali význam celkovej bezpečnosti ako hlavného faktora, ktorý by mal rozhodovať pri prijatí väčšieho počtu migrantov do ich krajín. Tieto zistenia poukazujú na prevládajúce negatívne vnímanie migrácie v južnej Európe a objasňujú zložitosť a výzvy spojené s riadením migrácie v tomto regióne.

Hlavným cieľom tejto diplomovej práce bolo preskúmať potenciálnu vzájomnú prepojenosť medzi riadením migrácie a rastúcou popularitou krajne pravicových strán v južnej Európe a zistiť, do akej miery sa navzájom ovplyvňujú. Zistenia tejto štúdie ukazujú, že hoci medzi týmito javmi existuje vzťah, je zložitý a mnohostranný. Migračná politika skutočne prispieva k vzostupu krajne pravicových strán, predstavuje však len jeden z mnohých faktorov. Negatívne vnímanie migrácie obyvateľmi južnej Európy tiež zohráva kľúčovú úlohu pri zvyšovaní popularity krajne pravicových strán. V konečnom dôsledku magisterská práca prispela k cenným poznatkom o výzvach a zložitostiach spojených s riadením migrácie v južnej Európe.

Sekundárne ciele tejto magisterskej práce boli úspešne splnené poskytnutím historického chápania migrácie, skúmaním hnacích faktorov migrácie a vytvorením základu pre pochopenie zložitosti a dôsledkov migrácie. Práca tiež definovala hlavné migračné trasy, skúmala prístupy k riadeniu migrácie a ich spoločenské a politické dôsledky a poukázala na zložitosť a dôsledky nelegálnej migrácie. Okrem toho sa výskum zaoberal krajne pravicovými stranami v Európe, konkrétne stranou Fratelli d'Italia (FdiI) a stranou Vox, s

cieľom pochopiť ich ideológie a vplyv na migračný diskurz. Okrem toho výskum skúmal vnímanie migrácie a poskytol osobný subjektívny pohľad na individuálny proces žiadosti o povolenie na pobyt.

Celkovo táto magisterská práca prispela k existujúcim poznatkom o riadení migrácie v južnej Európe, konkrétne so zameraním na Taliansko a Španielsko. Kombináciou teoretickej analýzy s empirickým výskumom objasnila zložitú dynamiku a výzvy spojené s riadením migračných tokov. Zistenia zdôrazňujú význam komplexných a vyvážených migračných politík, ktoré zohľadňujú humanitárne aspekty aj sociálno-politickú realitu. Táto štúdia slúži ako základ pre budúci výskum a rozvoj politiky, pričom podporuje informovanejší a inkluzívnejší prístup k riadeniu migrácie v južnej Európe a mimo nej.

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Annexes

Transcripts of the interviews with the key informants

Interview with the Respondent A

Stela Marcineková: How do you think migration, or the migration policy of countries, is affecting political parties in Europe?

Respondent A: If we are talking about migration, or the impact of migration on the behaviour of populist parties in Europe, then we should not talk about migration policy, because people rarely know what is actually part of migration policy, what is its content, but they certainly know that there are some migrants in their country, because they are, for example, visually distinguishable, or because they exhibit some other cultural patterns of behaviour, which may not entirely correspond to the idea of an ordinary person in a country. So, first of all, we need to talk about migration as such, because migration policy only manages and regulates migration processes, but I would not say that this policy has a direct influence on the policies of European populist parties.

Stela Marcineková: I understand. I am asking because I also have a question in my questionnaire about whether people think that the rise of far-right parties and migration policy are two areas that are connected, or whether they are two different issues that should be addressed separately. Now, you have just said to me that it is more about migration as such. I agree with that, but at the same time, migration influences how these parties express their views on the matter, for example, what they would like to change after the next elections, and that is what voters are responding to.

Respondent A: Yes, certainly yes, but if we are talking about a migration policy, that is a particular output of the government, but what

the political parties are presenting is not a migration policy, it is just their views on migration policy and migration. Some authors divide migration policy into 3 spheres, and these are: immigration policy, asylum policy and integration policy. And yes, if the state's approach to immigration policy is too liberal, that is, if, for example, the labour market or access to real estate is open to migrants, then this can influence the behaviour of populists, and populists then claim that they want to make this policy restrictive, that is, that we want to do everything we can to stop these migration processes, which I think is not possible, or at least to limit them at the very least. The question is to what extent does an ordinary person have an idea of how migration policy really works and what it really looks like. And if we are talking about asylum policy, that can also influence populist behaviour, because it can also be liberal or restrictive. In Slovakia, for example, we have a completely restrictive asylum policy, because it grants a maximum of 10 permits a year. At the same time, however, the interest of asylum seekers in Slovakia is also minimal, which is why the numbers are so low. So immigration and asylum policies influence populist behaviour, and even integration policies, and this can be seen in countries that have been focused on multiculturalism and have been too open to different cultures, even encouraging them to retain their original cultural patterns of behaviour. So, it is not only migration policy but migration as such that influences the behaviour of such parties. Populists are more influenced when a Muslim migrant commits a crime that is published in the media than by the fact that the government has formulated something into a law.

Stela Marcineková:

Everywhere, and therefore in Italy and Spain too, it is true that who shouts the loudest has the most influence. The current Prime Minister of Italy, Giorgia Meloni, also claims that they are not a far-right party, and certainly not a neo-fascist party, yet what they want to promote claims the opposite. So, I am trying to figure out what is behind this. Whether it is just the fact that people are more likely to go along with a simpler view or a idea that does not require too much thinking, such as the fact that they want to ban the arrival of more migrants from outside the EU because they already have too many of them there anyway.

Respondent A:

What is behind this is not just migrants. First of all, we need to understand the thinking of the populists - this thinking is based

on the dichotomy of US and THEM. WE in the sense of friend and THEY in the sense of enemy. The question is who the enemies are. They can be defined either in a horizontal form or in a vertical form. The typical populist is always critical of the political elite that governs. Even Meloni started out in opposition and criticised everything the government did - that is the vertical dimension, WE the people versus THEM, those who are up there, who, among other things, are making migration policy. And it is precisely that migration policy that is not in line with what we the people want. And then there is the horizontal dimension, where we are WE versus the others (THEM) - those others who differ from us in some way based on some traits (skin colour, religion, etc.) and these others disrupt the homogeneity of that WE. This can include, for example, the LGBTI+ community and also migrants, who are for populists an "excellent" category of enemy. Most of the time it is a person who is often from a different culture, behaves differently, has a different religion, a different skin colour, and his behaviour does not correspond with the behaviour of people who belong to the WE category. And when you realise this, the migrant is the other, and the populist is by definition the one who seeks the other (the enemy). And since migration has been quite publicised in recent years to the point where fears have been created about it, fears that migrants will harm us, that they will disrupt our patterns of behaviour, etc. So, to understand what's behind this, you must realise that populists think dichotomously in terms of US versus THEM - and therefore criticise everything that is not US. And when you link it all together, THEY - the ruling elite, create a migration policy that favours the other (migrants). The main communication tool of populists is to create fear and concern, because when a person is afraid it motivates him to act. In Italy and Spain, this is reinforced by the fact that these countries are directly confronted by migrants, mainly from Africa, and these migrants do not have it easy there, because many times they are below the poverty line and are dependent on the help of others. And when you are poor and you do not get that help, many times these people start committing crimes, which, again, is exploited by populist or far-right parties, and voters then tend to vote for them because they criticise this and proclaim that changes are needed that the current elite is not making.

Stela Marcineková:

In my opinion, if these parties would put more energy into coming up with some specific solutions, for example, in the framework of integration, instead of just rejecting migrants out

loud and creating the fear associated with their arrival, maybe something could change, and it would probably change the general opinion of the population as well. Migration cannot be stopped anymore. And I seriously think that this is something that even the populists are aware of. So why don't they take some steps to change it for the better?

Respondent A:

Because that would solve the problem and they don't want to solve the problem because it would disappear. They want to feed the problem because they want to gain voters. Political parties were never there to solve problems, but rather to make a big fuss. As long as that particular conflict exists, so will their political party.

Stela Marcineková:

In doing so, they feed what they fight against the most. This is completely a paradox.

Respondent A:

You said it well that migration cannot be stopped. We do not need to talk about how to stop it, but about how to integrate these people. Since Italy and Spain have been confronted with migration for years, they know better how to deal with it. Migrants arrive there who are advantageous to them because they do jobs that their population is no longer willing to do (cleaners, waiters, dishwashers, etc.). And that's why, on the one hand, the population sees them positively and generally has no problem with them as long as they are beneficial to them and to the system. Integration is key - if you exclude someone, they become radicalised. The other interesting thing about migrants is that they may be going through an identity crisis by virtue of exclusion. This mostly affects second-generation migrants who were born in a different country than their parents but were often brought up in the native environment of the country from which their parents emigrated. These people may feel that they belong to the country of their birth, but they may, for example, be different in appearance and thus not be seen as equals by the native population. But the native population must understand and accept that these people were born in the same country as them, they work there, they pay taxes, they can vote, they are part of society - so the integration policy must be reciprocal, and they cannot be excluded.

Stela Marcineková: As for my experience in Italy, I know people who are accepted by the society, even working, and studying, but because of the bureaucracy, they have been waiting for more than a year for permits.

Respondent A: Now imagine their situation - how are they supposed to integrate into society if the state rejects them in this way and creates obstacles for them. If a migrant has a negative experience of the system of the country, he or she has come to in the first place, his or her idea of that country's society is also negative, and he or she may automatically feel excluded. This can then, after all, demotivate him or her to integrate into that society and bring some benefits with their arrival. A good example of integration is Germany, where they understood that the alpha omega is to teach immigrants the language and started to offer them free language courses. This, too, is one of the paths that other countries can follow.

Stela Marcineková: That's a very good point, I also ask in my questionnaire what people perceive as the biggest drawbacks or obstacles when it comes to the arrival of migrants, and almost all of them choose the language barrier. Another factor that is important is the economic situation of the country, and the political parties should also be aware of this, that the state can benefit from migrants, as you said, for example, by doing professions that may be inferior to the locals.

Respondent A: Not just economic factors, but also demographic factors. The populations of countries are ageing, and managed migration is the solution. Countries can choose to recruit doctors or IT specialists, young people who are fit and who are expected to contribute to the social system. And then this social system can be generous to pensioners and other groups. Therefore, economic and demographic factors are directly linked.

Stela Marcineková: Exactly.

Respondent A: The populists are spreading the general opinion that migrants are expensive and that the money that the state would invest in them can be invested, for example, in education. It is important to realise here that the migrant only costs the state money up

to the point at which the state integrates him or her. In the end, the migrant costs less money than a person who decides to leave his/her native country at the age of 25, after being supported by the state from the moment of birth (parental allowance, maternity leave, free schools, etc.). This is a loss for the state. And then there is the migrant, in whom the system of the country where he comes has invested nothing in his whole life, he is ready to get a job and contribute to the system, and the state decides to create barriers for him/her and rejects him/her.

Stela Marcineková: I agree. The state should create suitable conditions for both groups.

Respondent A: Yes, but people will always leave. The difference is that a wise state will realise that those people who leave must be replaced by someone else. The state, led by populist parties, will say that we don't want anyone else here because they are stealing our jobs.

Stela Marcineková: This is exactly what they claim - they steal jobs from the native population, cost the state a lot of money, don't know the language, have a different culture and religion, and then instil this into the subconscious of the nation.

Respondent A: That is why we need to talk more about it in general.

Stela Marcineková: Thank you very much for your time and information provided.

Interview with the Respondent B

Stela Marcineková: What type of visa or residence permit are you applying for, and what is the purpose of your stay in Italy?

- Respondent B:* I have applied for student visa and for student residence permit in Italy.
- Stela Marcineková:* What documentation do you need to provide in order to apply for the visa or residence permit, and how can you obtain these documents?
- Respondent B:* First, for coming to Italy, I had to show documents proving that I got my acceptance from the university Master program in Italy. I also had to prove my personal income and bank status, together with documents about my parents – information about their job and financial documents such as bank status. Documents about my graduation from Bachelor program and high school were also needed. I had to write a motivational letter and explain why I want to come to Italy, where will I live, how long do I want to stay and what is my purpose for the application. I collected these documents while I still lived in Turkey, and I had to officially translate them to Italian language. That was for my first visa application that allowed me to arrive to Italy. After I arrived in Italy, I applied for residence permit card for 1 year and I sent the same documents to the Immigration office, together with filled application form for the residence permit with duration of 1 year. 6 months later I went to the Immigration office, and they collected my fingerprints. 45 days later I got my residence permit card for 1 year and I have to follow this process every year again.
- Stela Marcineková:* How long does the application process typically take?
- Respondent B:* Visa process took just 2 weeks. Stay permit processes are taking 6-8 months.
- Stela Marcineková:* Are there any specific requirements or restrictions that you need to be aware of when applying for a visa or residence permit in Italy?
- Respondent B:* When I came to Italy, I had to apply for residence permit in 10 days. I was able to get all of the documents needed in the offices of Italian Post so I could have sent my application. I

received a document saying that I am in the process of getting residence permit in Italy. With this document, I was allowed to only stay in Italy and no other countries of the EU, until I got my official residence permit papers. After getting it, there are no restrictions.

Stela Marcineková: How are visa and residence permit applications processed, and what criteria are used to evaluate them?

Respondent B: I do not know, but I think they evaluate you based on the documents provided. You must have a valid reason to get a residence permit.

Stela Marcineková: What are the potential consequences of providing false information or documentation during the visa or residence permit application process?

Respondent B: I am not sure, but I would probably not have a chance to get different type of visa or residence permit, I would not be able to enter the country, or I would have to leave immediately.

Stela Marcineková: What types of support services are available to you as an immigrant or visa applicant in Italy?

Respondent B: I think there is no service like that. I did not get any support, I did the online research and applied.

Stela Marcineková: How can you access information and resources to help you navigate the immigration process in Italy?

Respondent B: As I said, I did the online research and I read information available on official websites. I received a lot of information and help in student WhatsApp groups from people who already went through this process, especially Turkish nationals like me.

- Stela Marcineková:* What are some of the cultural and social norms in Italy that you should be aware of as an immigrant or visa applicant?
- Respondent B:* I think there are no special norms to be aware of. You just need to follow the application process and provide correct documents on time.
- Stela Marcineková:* Do you think that current policies are in favour of people migrating to Italy, or do you think the opposite?
- Respondent B:* I believe that these processes are necessary, because the government needs to protect the borders and fight with problems regarding illegal immigrants, so I did not feel that those rules are against me. Only problem is that the processes are taking so much time, especially when your initial permit expires and you have to wait, for example, for the fingerprint appointment at the police station. While waiting I was not allowed to travel to different countries and that felt bad.
- Stela Marcineková:* Did you notice any change from the previous government – maybe the process of obtaining permit became more difficult?
- Respondent B:* I am not aware of the past procedures. I am still new in this country.
- Stela Marcineková:* Do you feel culturally accepted in the country where you currently live?
- Respondent B:* Yes, especially when I try to speak Italian, people are very helpful and nice. I did not have any culture shock or serious problems.
- Stela Marcineková:* Feel free to express any further opinion on the topic.
- Respondent B:* For summary I can say that if the application process took less time, I would not have any problem. On the other hand, I

understand that if the immigrant application process was not that strict, safety problems could arise, and it can affect lives of other citizens. That is why I believe that collecting documents, proving that I can live in Italy and that I do not have any criminal record is really important.

Stela Marcineková: Thank you very much for your time.

Interview with the Respondent C

Stela Marcineková: What type of visa or residence permit are you applying for, and what is the purpose of your stay in Italy?

Respondent C: I have a student residence permit and visa.

Stela Marcineková: What documentation do you need to provide in order to apply for the visa or residence permit?

Respondent C: For the visa application, I needed to show the acceptance letter that I got from the university. I also needed to show the bachelor's degree graduation certificate and high school graduation certificate. I had to show where I will stay after I arrive to Italy, either a hotel reservation or house contract. Additionally, I needed to show my personal income, bank status and passport. At the same time, I had to add the documents proving my family's financial situation. I had to explain the purpose of my stay in a motivational letter. For the residence permit, my student document, credit card information, house contract, health insurance, and passport were needed. I gave all the documents with the application form to the Italian post office, and I paid the application fee. I went to immigration office to give my fingerprints 2 weeks after I sent my application. 2 months later I got my residence permit from the police station.

Stela Marcineková: How long does the application process typically take, and what are the steps involved?

- Respondent C:* I got my visa in one week and permit in 2 months. However, the renewal process of permit takes 6-8 months in general.
- Stela Marcineková:* Are there any specific requirements or restrictions that you need to be aware of when applying for a visa or residence permit in Spain?
- Respondent C:* I had to apply for the residence permit in 10 days after my arrival to Italy. Besides, Until I got my permit card, I was not able to travel out of the country. When I started the renewal process of my permit, the post office sent me a “ricevuta” document, which allowed me to go to my home country and back to Italy. However, it is not possible to travel elsewhere with this document.
- Stela Marcineková:* What types of support services are available to you as an immigrant or visa applicant in Spain?
- Respondent C:* The only service I know is that there was a person at the university, who was helping students with collecting the documents needed and filling the application form.
- Stela Marcineková:* How can you access information and resources to help you navigate the immigration process in Spain?
- Respondent C:* I checked the official websites, and I got all the information online.
- Stela Marcineková:* Do you think that current policies are in favour of people migrating to Spain, or do you think the opposite?
- Respondent C:* I think there is no problem with the application process. It is a normal process to protect the country and I understand that the office wants to know the person that is arriving to the country. The only problem was the time when I needed to wait for the application result. Waiting 6 to 8 months for having a permit and not be able to go to other countries are the negative sides. They may be improved with a better organisation.

Stela Marcineková: Do you feel culturally accepted in the country where you currently live?

Respondent C: Yes, I feel 100% accepted.

Stela Marcineková: Feel free to express any further opinion on the topic.

Respondent C: In general, everything is fine about the application process and collecting documents as I am aware of the negative effects of not asking to provide the detailed documents from a potential immigrant. The only problem is the waiting time. If the application process would be completed in a short time, then there will not be any problem. Besides, I feel that Italian people are not against the immigrants, especially if I try to learn their culture and language.

Interview with the Respondent D

Stela Marcineková: What type of visa or residence permit are you applying for, and what is the purpose of your stay in Spain?

Respondent D: I applied for student visa type D and residency. I am doing my Master studies at the university in Spain. I could have also applied for the family regrouping visa, since my relatives live in Spain, but they are not the direct family, so in this way it was more convenient.

Stela Marcineková: What documentation do you need to provide in order to apply for the visa or residence permit?

Respondent D: First, I applied for the permit in my country, in the Spanish embassy in order to be able to travel to Spain. You can also do it during the first 2 months after entering the country, but this way was easier for me. I had to provide my criminal records, a proof that I am enrolled to the university – a course must take

at least 20 hour per week – and I also had to show them the bank statement. It is obligatory to have a minimum of 10.000€ in your account, and the bank statements of the parents are sometimes needed too. Valid passport is, of course, a must.

Stela Marcineková: How long does the application process typically take, and what are the steps involved?

Respondent D: In my case it was around 2 weeks. I do not know about the procedure, but they are probably proving if all the documents provided are correct.

Stela Marcineková: Are there any specific requirements or restrictions that you need to be aware of when applying for a visa or residence permit in Spain?

Respondent D: Only the specific requirements regarding the documents that I was already talking about. Plus, in my case, my student visa can be renewed only if I keep studying at the same university. So, if I decided to change the university, I guess I would have to apply and go through the whole process again.

Stela Marcineková: What are the consequences of overstaying your visa or residence permit in Spain, and what steps can you take to avoid these consequences?

Respondent D: There is definitely some kind of fine and if it is serious and you overstayed for a very long time, they might order you to leave the country. In order to avoid such situation, everyone has to be punctual with renewing visa.

Stela Marcineková: What types of support services are available to you as an immigrant or visa applicant in Spain?

Respondent D: I actually do not know. My biggest help was my family that knew exactly what I have to do and when.

- Stela Marcinekova:* How can you access information and resources to help you navigate the immigration process in Spain?
- Respondent D:* As I said, if you have someone who is already living in Spain, it is the best for you. Besides that, you can find everything online, or you can ask your university office for help.
- Stela Marcinekova:* Do you think that current policies are in favour of people migrating to Spain, or do you think the opposite?
- Respondent D:* I would say it depends. Policies are in favour of those that come to work or study. I think that better integration of refugees is needed, they need help, and they cannot be ignored. If they were integrated, they can also contribute to the system. It is very complicated topic.
- Stela Marcinekova:* Do you feel culturally accepted in the country where you currently live?
- Respondent D:* Most of the time yes, sometimes I see people looking at me and they are probably thinking that I should not be here, but I do not take it personally. In the beginning I felt a bit lost because everything was new. But I got used to it and I found new friends, especially at the university. And now it is the opposite – I cannot imagine leaving Spain.
- Stela Marcinekova:* Thank you very much for your time and honesty. It was nice talking to you.