



## **TRANSATLANTIC FORUM ON INCLUSIVE EARLY YEARS**

INVESTING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN FROM MIGRANT AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

### **Series**

### **Investing in childhood for growing life**

# **Identity, multilingualism and multiculturalism**

**Essay TFIEY n. 5**



**fondazione  
cariplo**



**Fondazione**  
Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo



**Project team:**

Cinzia Canali, Roberto Maurizio, Antonella Ricci, Marzia Sica, Tiziano Vecchiato

**Authors:**

Cinzia Canali, Devis Geron, Elena Innocenti, Tiziano Vecchiato

© Compagnia di San Paolo e Fondazione Emanuela Zancan onlus

In Italy the project is promoted and supported by:

Compagnia di San Paolo

Fondazione Cariplo

Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo

Fondazione CON IL SUD

With the scientific support of Fondazione Emanuela Zancan onlus

978-88-88843-87-2

**Fondazione Emanuela Zancan onlus**

Via Vescovado, 66

35141 Padova

tel. 049663800

fax 049663013

email: fz@fondazionezancan.it

www.fondazionezancan.it

[www.tfieyitalia.org](http://www.tfieyitalia.org)

May 2015

---

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	p.	5
<b>1. Identity e cultures</b>	»	7
1.1. Imperfect identities		
1.2. Differentiation		
1.3. Redefining the issue		
1.4. What children can teach us		
1.5. Migrations of individuals and peoples		
1.6. I know you but I do not recognise you		
1.7. Well-being		
<b>2. The multicultural context</b>	»	13
2.1. Children born in other countries and residents in Italy		
2.2. Italy and Europe		
2.3. “Foreigner” pupils		
2.4. Unaccompanied foreigner children		
2.5. Different roots ...		
2.6. ... and different cultures		
2.7. Critical issues and challenges		
<b>References</b>	»	35
<b>The Tfiey Library</b>	»	39



---

# Introduction

Identity, multilingualism, multiculturalism are ways, sometimes contradictory, to share the problems of a changing world. If these problems are not addressed they will face you, in ways that can be cruel and unnatural. The idea of identity leads us to thinking of copies of an “original” that is duplicated in each resident. Multilingualism calls us elsewhere, to a multiculturalism that is well beyond the scope of those who hold themselves as an archive, with a huge past but little future.

Going back in the past, we lose tracks of those who consider themselves the repository of identity, language and culture of their territory. They claim their own place in a territory that won't be theirs any longer in the future. They are not satisfied with their possessions so they claim the privilege of being the legitimate inhabitants, with an “ownership” logic, that tenaciously survives in the twentieth century after vassals became citizens and citizens created new coexistence, in territories to live in and share. How to explain this to children?

Children do not compete for the land, but for simpler things to play with. It is impossible to explain to the young that identity is not a biological, ethnic, cultural mark separating residents from non-residents. It is difficult to explain that the spoken language is not just for those who know how to use it, since it represents a way to communicate, learn, invent. It is hard to explain to children that culture is not what we know, but mainly what we are.

For children it is not difficult to understand, without stopping before the colour of those who also have name, capacity, feelings and much more to share, inside the game of human fraternity, growing together. It thus becomes easier to express themselves in many ways. These can be spoken languages, signs, sounds, colours. Art can handle these different languages better than any other human expression. Therefore there is no distance between art and culture if it is a message of humanity.

The transition from multilingualism to multiculturalism is courageous, because speaking many languages does not mean thinking in many ways, in many cultures. Cultures are creative environments that express the meaning of life, our beliefs, our hopes for the future society.

---

Children and adolescents “exist as they grow”, they become adults but they are not adults yet. This tension between present and future is important, present and future can coexist, so that parents’ expectations do not prevail. It can become limit and denial for a new life, when it becomes pressure on identity. The traps of identity may become constraint, especially today when “living among diversities” has become the norm rather than an exception.

We considered these concerns and potentials, to learn how to recognize and deepen them, turning them into something new. It is a necessary effort for considering a humanity that grows and needs to live in a full balance between “well-being” and “well-becoming”.

For this reason we tried to define the problem and give it a “size”, with some self-criticism necessary to avoid the risk of a repetitive knowledge. We also tried to understand if institutions, particularly at the regional level, have asked themselves such questions and what answers they have provided for the benefit of residents and non-residents.

In the recent decades, research has dealt with the issues of citizenship and conflicts that focus on human and social differences. Early childhood services encompass all of this, to the point that we do not need to describe, quantify and explain what we already see on the faces and cultures that coexist in spaces that embrace new humanity. Listening and observing are therefore the necessary first steps for learning to walk and discover something that - for now - is hidden by prejudices and fears.

---

# 1. Identity and cultures

## 1.1. Imperfect identities

“Imperfect identities” is the title of a volume of Palmonari et al. (1979), referring to identities that are incomplete and open to exploration, as it happens during adolescence. The book questions the link between identity and prolonged schooling.

The text highlights instead the need to “understand the psychological meaning of adolescence in building the identity of young workers” since it has never been analysed. If this holds for young apprentices, why should not it apply to youth who live, study and start working under unprecedented conditions experienced in a new territory.

They are “apprentices of new identities”, having *behind* them other cultures and *next* to them parents concerned with preserving their roots. It is cultural resilience that does not favour expectations for the future of their children and sometimes hinders them while they are searching within a hostile social environment. This harms the opportunity of planning for self-fulfilment, at the professional and personal level. It is hampered hope that emerges in forms of amplified “social categorisation”. Bruner et al. (1957) adopted the concept of categorisation, to support (internal) homogenisation and (external) differentiation.

## 1.2. Differentiation

Doise (1976) discusses “categorical differentiation” and its consequences in terms of behaviour, evaluation and social representation. They are just as many “ways of identity and identification”. They do not occur only as “personal” tracks but also as “group” belonging. The group works indeed also as a “social womb”, the development of identity and its belonging. Both are a nourishing environment, capable of nourishment and anchorage necessary for identification processes. They are imperfect identities because they are life on the move. Groups coexist with other groups and amid them. For this reason inter-group comparison helps position oneself, find the necessary protection against anxiety about identity imperfection. In other words, positive aspects of

---

identity and social action gain meaning with respect to and in comparison with other groups.

These are processes resuming after adulthood, when one needs to “readjust” identity having gone through a long way, many experiences and images of themselves. Working functions cease and personal factors start again, those less connected with configurations of the “social and productive role”. It represents an effort favouring the “existential role”, that based on relations, social capability, relational and emotional value accumulated over the years.

Identity has to do with life cycle, although this is actually an irrational way of talking rationally about “who we are”. Western culture has associated identity with the principle of non-contradiction. Between “true” and “false” any other third possibility is ruled out. It means that no intermediate possibilities are there between the “self” and the “other”. For this reason identity means identification, attribution of properties, objectivisation. The other coming from afar is thus even more “other” and diverse. I can objectivise them (i.e. make a stereotype out of them) to keep them at a distance. But they are still “a person”, living a generated life, itself required to generate and multiply, to be incompatible with the identification that separates, that creates “identity feelings” which do not acknowledge each other.

### 1.3. Redefining the issue

These considerations bring us closer to the issue and how to define it. Multidimensionality is not possibility of replacing need with one’s own identity and its equivalents, as if it were a passport issued by different countries. It is something deeper, inherent in vital processes. The name accompanying a child remains equal over time, whereas that child becomes adolescent, adult, old, turning from son to father without losing the meaning of their roots, which remain roots of childhood, brotherhood, family.

Failing to acknowledge such differences may lead to accept the idea of multidimensionality of identity and multiplicity of self-perception. Together they allow every person to experience themselves as equal and different over time.

In front of this lies its opposite, the diversity of the other “without roots” because “different from me and us”. It is a distorting perception that makes unnatural one of the most natural human experiences, the meeting of “me” and “you” that cannot become “us”. It can stop on the threshold of “us” constrained by many “I’s” who own their land, their fatherland which does not become “motherland”, mother and land for everyone. The sets of “us” therefore experience contradictions due to not recognising and accepting each other, not exploring the multiplicative potential that only differences make possible.



---

Every child experiences this for a few years, whereas their life is marked by many changes. These are normal when growing up, whereas standing still is the greatest risk if it turns into inability to express one's own capabilities. This is the worst thing that could happen to a child, when parental action to grow life are unmet. Adolescents know it well as they excessively suffer from imperfect identities, which confirm and deny themselves and the others so as to become what they wish. In this way identity is also acknowledgment, desire and discovery.

#### **1.4. What children can teach us**

We are told that nowadays it is difficult to manage multiple identifications. They are discouraged and reduced to racial belonging. It is the traditional belonging, rooted in the land of origin. It is preserved against new ways of being society, prevents better understanding of what has always occurred around the borders.

Huge powers tensely gather at the borders: those of humanity living around them. In this way they learn how to manage ideological, racial, ethnic constraints ... i.e. everything to be kept at arm's length and stigmatised. Distances are reduced and this, among other factors, can spark: hatred, violence, unjustified strengthening of accessory identities, those of contrasting "us" willing to deny and to kill, thinking that "the other" can be eliminated.

Identity relies on geographical and cultural attributes "where you are from" and "who you are". But we can not confine ourselves to these questions, since attention can be focused on other things children can teach us, because what is unknown and what is new occur during the first years of life. We need the ability to recognise them and the words to express them, before all this becomes identity, recognition, belonging, culture.

We need criteria to observe in advance what will then become standard, way of being. Identities struggle to become diamonds, accepting multiple facets. These are necessary conditions to multiply beams of light. It is light of a self becoming multifarious "I, you, we" within the social space. So why constrain it, as borders are merely belonging and reference groups, but in lands unwilling to accept it.

#### **1.5. Migrations of individuals and peoples**

Over the last decades migrations of individuals have turned into migrations of peoples, while everyone was not ready to understand and act consistently. It is easy to stop single individuals until they become peoples on the move, vital magma advancing. These are movements of peoples that currently lead thousands of people to concentrate in the lands and seas they pass through. Such concentration of suffering is frightening. It

---

pushes people towards other lands, other societies, thus questioning their stability and continuity. This threat sparks fear, thereby fuelling the refusal of welcoming migrants. All of this happens while many children are going to experience a new birth. After the biological birth, it is now an existential one, necessary for a new social existence. Children welcomed for legal and humanitarian reasons are allowed to familiarise themselves with other children, another tongue, other food, other ways of playing, new developmental tasks, ... but not forever. Others are born in the new land, that however does not welcome them. It is mother and stepmother, providing them with residence but not citizenship. For them it is not a matter of learning new things, rather it is a matter of growing up while learning in new living spaces.

What does multiculturalism mean to them? Developing capabilities of growing, reading and simultaneously understanding several codes, forms of understanding, ways of thinking and communicating.

Those who manage the simultaneous translation of different grammatical and syntactical rules experience the potential of “parallel minds”. They simultaneously manage possible worlds. It also occurs when simultaneously managing multifactorial problems where variables are consistently related to each other. Separating them would imply compromising the possibility of managing and solve them.

The aptitude of every child for these opportunities does not imply that they arise spontaneously. They can be learned and genetics has helped us balance determinism and the available degrees of freedom and generativity, in the biological and social environment, with very diverse outcomes. Also for this reason multi-knowledge is not multi-culture, which we directly experience when knowing other cultures help us understand and talk to different people, but does not necessarily help us modify our culture. We therefore need a “multicultural culture”, to be entrusted to children and those who natively learn to experience and express it and to express themselves with their peers, even if this effort may separate them from their parents. For poor children this opportunity is however limited, sometimes out of their reach. The lack of this opportunity exposes them, much more than their peers, to the risk of inequality, not the kind of inequality which can be overcome by means of more economic resources, but rather a deeper form of inequality reducing their hopes for the future.

### **1.6. I know you but I do not recognise you**

In his essay *“Italiani col trattino: figli dell'immigrazione in cerca di identità”* – Italians with the hyphen: children of immigration in search of identity” – Ambrosini (2007) describes the above mentioned issues as “institutionalised inequality”, which however “is increasingly difficult to maintain towards the new generations born or raised in our so-

---

cieties, not having another country to go back to and having developed experiences, social relations and cultural attitudes within the contexts where they have grown up". Negative and violent reactions against a gradual integration of non-residents has highlighted in many European countries the development of "self-perpetuating social exclusion: on the one hand, by channelling second generations into paths of study and work "for migrants", thus discriminating when hiring and creating "glass ceilings" in careers; on the other hand, by causing distrust of the school system and the fairness of the hosting society, [...], forms of self- ghettoization: what Portes and Rumbaut (2001) describe as downward assimilation". As if colour, language, food ... could represent stable and permanent markers of a transportable but unchangeable "diversity". The alternative can be envisaged in the search of new identities, where multilingualism and multiculturalism can boost new ways of relating to others.

Nowadays culture can become resonance equal to itself, localism, racial hatred, refusal of those who are different. Its opposite is discovery, becoming people capable of common feelings, of a community that is "motherland and fatherland", of a common descent. Finding new ways of being society also means accepting the risk of meeting different people.

### 1.7. Well-being

Through the concept of "well-being" Ben-Arieh and Goerge (2006) open research to "becoming". Esping-Andersen (1990) did not imagine that he would rethink and reconfigure his own conceptual simplifications that separated and hierarchised the ways of taking care of the fundamental human needs (in other words, welfare systems). The Mediterranean area is a collection of peoples, cultures, meetings facilitated by water. It has historically favoured life and civilisation, since it delicately nourishes, protects, welcomes, supports. Its difficulties are storms and cold weather, which have prevented many children from passing through it together with their parents.

It has been and still is a space where to negotiate, trade, exchange goods and ideas, so that they could thrive. Cultures that have developed were standardised only when they became able to separate themselves from diversity in a degenerative way, namely with no capability of paving the way for new life. Also for this reason a "sociality with few children" has prevailed, at risk of extinction.

The sea from which we need to restart is represented by those cultures which are less capable of preserving themselves, but able to meet and value each other, so as to reproduce themselves with no need to be violent and aggressive. This is possible for childhood since it is, by nature, far from the violence of which adults are capable.

The risks of meeting are necessary and vivifying nourishment for children. But for poor and deprived children, the effort of growing occurs in narrow living spaces, with few

---

opportunities, scarce nourishment, few relations, in unwelcoming social spaces. But material poverty is not yet unavoidable lack of opportunities to grow well, when parental love and care transform the few available things, relying on services that too often do not allow for the contribution of parents. It also holds for early childhood services, which should abandon those practices that make them single-culture forms of care.

Building identities among different children is increasingly necessary, because it favours dialogue among different images of themselves. These are not reproductions of their parents, as the reference context becomes richer in colours, languages, flavours, games and possible worlds. Parents need to learn how hard it is to raise children in a different land from the one where they were born. It is not the land of their ancestors and their children do not feel they are linked to it.

The social development of our country has been marked by a particular phenomenon, typical of developed countries: the possibility of being different from one's parents, of moving up the social ladder, of having a different job from that of one's fathers and mothers. The crisis and economic recession have dangerously reduced this possibility, with negative consequences affecting the opportunity of making one's dreams come true. For migrant children all of this holds to an even greater extent, if those hosting them are afraid of them and of meeting other cultures, that only in this manner can find their way and grow new life.

---

## 2. The multicultural context

The chapter presents some of the most significant data on the multicultural context that characterizes Italy and other developed countries. Without claiming to outline a comprehensive picture of this issue, we report relevant data on the presence of children with immigrant background in Italy and Europe, with particular attention - where data are available - to children in their early childhood (up to 6 years old).

### 2.1. Children with foreign background resident in Italy

Estimating the number of “foreign” minors in Italy poses some difficulties related to the heterogeneity of a population that is classifiable into (at least) three main categories: foreign children regularly and permanently living in our country (i.e. present on municipal population registers); children regularly present (with a residence permit, but not registered on the municipal registers); and children without a residence permit and not registered on the municipal register<sup>1</sup>.

A first source of data useful to outline the presence of foreign children - although incomplete because lacking the component of “irregular” children - is provided by the national statistics on the foreign resident population.

In Italy the percentage of foreign residents among the total residents (January 1, 2014) was 8.1%. This is an average value, which varies significantly along (at least) two dimensions: geographical area and age. Territorially, the incidence of foreign population is significantly higher in the Centre-Northern regions. From an age perspective, the percentage of “foreigners” is higher than the average among the younger population. In particular, considering the minors (0-17 y.o.) the nationwide incidence is 10.7%, a percentage that increases to 13.9% among children aged 0-5 years and further increases (to 14.8 %) among children younger than 3 y.o. (tab. 2.1).

---

<sup>1</sup> See Save the Children (2011).

Among children younger than 6, the incidence of residents with foreign citizenship is highest (more than 1 out of 5 children) in Emilia-Romagna (22.3%), Lombardy (20.8%) and Veneto (20.2 %). Over the decade from 1 January 2004 to 1 January 2014 (tab. 2.2), the share of foreign residents has been increasing everywhere, almost 5 percentage points on average at the national level. Among children younger than 6, the incidence has increased by 8.3 percentage points (8.6 among children aged 0-2 y.o.), with peaks in Emilia-Romagna (+11.8 points), Liguria (+11.3), Lombardy (+11.1), Veneto (+11) and Piedmont (+10.6).

Tab. 2.1. Percentage of foreign residents (a) among total residents, by age group and by region, January 1, 2014

	0-2 y.o.	3-5 y.o.	0-5 y.o.	0-17 y.o.	Total
Piemonte	19,2	17,4	18,3	14,1	9,6
Valle d'Aosta	13,4	13,1	13,3	9,2	7,3
Liguria	18,3	15,4	16,8	13,2	8,7
Lombardia	21,9	19,8	20,8	16,6	11,3
<i>North-west</i>	20,8	18,8	19,8	15,6	10,6
Trentino-Alto Adige	15,4	13,9	14,6	11,0	9,2
Veneto	21,0	19,3	20,2	15,1	10,4
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	16,8	16,0	16,4	12,7	8,8
Emilia-Romagna	23,7	21,1	22,3	17,4	12,0
<i>North-east</i>	21,1	19,1	20,1	15,3	10,8
Marche	17,3	15,9	16,6	13,0	9,4
Toscana	19,0	16,7	17,8	14,4	10,3
Umbria	19,0	17,4	18,2	15,5	11,1
Lazio	16,3	12,8	14,5	11,7	10,5
<i>Centre</i>	17,4	14,7	16,0	12,9	10,4
Campania	4,3	3,6	4,0	2,9	3,5
Abruzzo	11,0	9,7	10,4	8,3	6,3
Molise	5,6	5,0	5,3	4,1	3,3
Puglia	4,2	3,5	3,8	3,0	2,7
Basilicata	4,7	4,4	4,6	3,4	2,9
Calabria	6,5	5,4	5,9	4,8	4,4
Sicilia	4,9	4,3	4,6	3,7	3,2
Sardegna	3,7	3,2	3,5	2,9	2,5
<i>South and Islands</i>	5,0	4,3	4,7	3,6	3,4
<i>Italy</i>	14,8	13,1	13,9	10,7	8,1

(a) Istat defines foreign population as the population without Italian citizenship.

Source: computations on Istat data, <http://demo.istat.it/>

Tab. 2.2. Variation in the percentage of foreign residents (a) on total residents, by age group and by region, between 1 January 2004 and 1 January 2014

	0-2 y.o.	3-5 y.o.	0-5 y.o.	0-17 y.o.	Total
Piemonte	+10,8	+10,4	+10,6	+8,3	+5,5
Valle d'Aosta	+7,5	+7,9	+7,7	+5,1	+4,3
Liguria	+12,1	+10,6	+11,3	+8,6	+5,3
Lombardia	+11,4	+11,0	+11,1	+9,3	+6,1
<i>North-west</i>	+11,3	+10,8	+11,0	+9,0	+5,9
Trentino-Alto Adige	+8,3	+8,2	+8,2	+6,0	+4,8
Veneto	+10,6	+11,2	+11,0	+8,0	+5,2
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	+9,5	+9,9	+9,7	+6,9	+4,5
Emilia-Romagna	+12,3	+11,5	+11,8	+9,2	+6,8
<i>North-east</i>	+11,0	+10,9	+11,0	+8,2	+5,8
Marche	+7,8	+8,1	+7,9	+6,4	+4,7
Toscana	+10,1	+9,3	+9,7	+7,8	+5,7
Umbria	+9,6	+9,0	+9,3	+8,4	+6,0
Lazio	+10,5	+8,4	+9,4	+7,6	+6,6
<i>Centre</i>	+9,9	+8,7	+9,2	+7,5	+6,1
Campania	+3,2	+2,7	+3,0	+2,2	+2,4
Abruzzo	+7,2	+6,3	+6,8	+5,3	+3,8
Molise	+4,3	+3,9	+4,1	+3,1	+2,3
Puglia	+2,8	+2,2	+2,4	+1,9	+1,6
Basilicata	+3,9	+3,6	+3,8	+2,6	+2,0
Calabria	+5,1	+4,2	+4,6	+3,7	+3,0
Sicilia	+3,1	+2,7	+2,9	+2,4	+1,9
Sardegna	+2,6	+2,2	+2,5	+2,1	+1,6
<i>South and Islands</i>	+3,5	+3,0	+3,3	+2,5	+2,2
<i>Italy</i>	+8,6	+8,1	+8,3	+6,5	+4,7

(a) L'Istat definisce la popolazione straniera come la popolazione residente con cittadinanza non italiana.

(a) Istat defines foreign population as the population without Italian citizenship.

Source: computations on Istat data, <http://demo.istat.it/>

On 1 January 2015, foreigners living in Italy are estimated to total 5,073,000 (8.3% of the total resident population), with an increase of about 151,000 units compared to 1 January 2014 (Istat, 2015). As shown, for example, by Caritas and Fondazione Migrantes (Idos, 2012), it is a trend that is expected to grow further in the coming years. Based on the Istat trends, it is possible to calculate that between 2011 and 2065 the incidence of the foreign population will increase by about 20 percentage points among younger age groups, compared with an increase of about 15 percentage of the total population (Tab. 2.3).

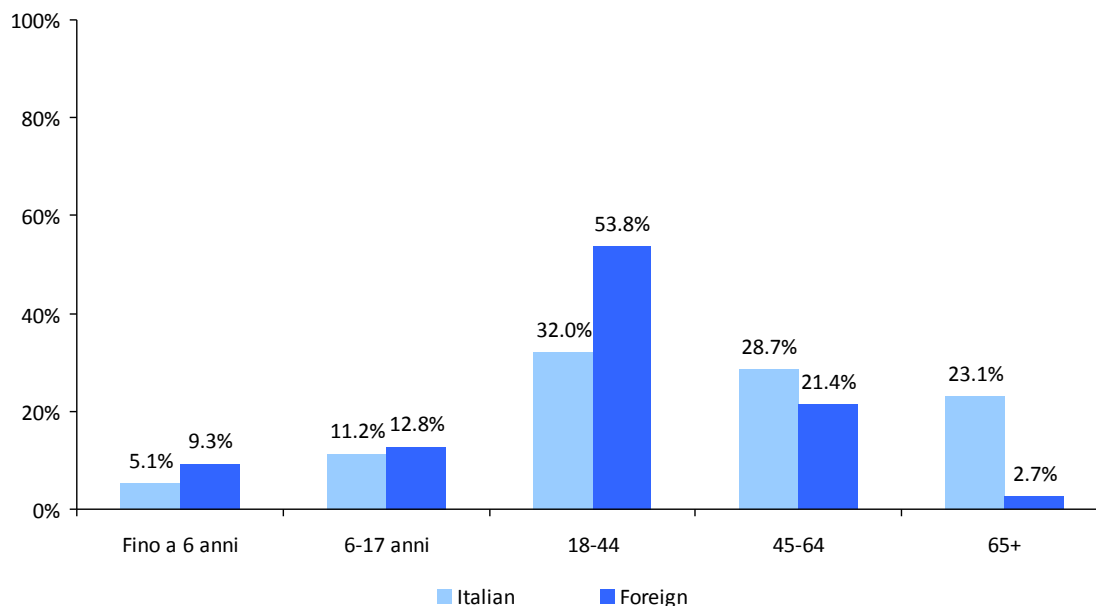
Tab. 2.3. Percentage of foreign residents by age, 1 January 2011 and 1 January 2065

	1 January 2011	1 January 2065	Variation 2011-2065 (percentage points)
0-2 y.o.	13,5	32,8	+19,3
3-5 y.o.	11,6	31,5	+19,9
0-5 y.o.	12,5	32,1	+19,6
0-17 y.o.	9,7	29,9	+20,2
Total	7,5	23,0	+15,4

Source: computations on Istat data, <http://demo.istat.it/>

In the last decade, despite a reduction in residents with Italian citizenship, immigration has led to a slight increase in the overall population. The contribution of immigrants can preserve a relative "rejuvenation" of the total population (average age of 44.4 years at January 1, 2015), due to the different demographic structure of residents with foreign citizenship and the higher fertility rate of foreign women (1.97 children per foreign woman, compared to an average fertility of 1.31 among Italian women). At the beginning of 2014, the foreign population was concentrated in the central age group (18-44 years) and the 0-17 age group, while the opposite was true of the higher age groups (Fig. 2.1).

Fig. 2.1. Percentage distribution of resident foreigners ("Foreign") and non foreigners ("Italian") by age group, Italy, 1 January 2014



Source: computations on Istat data, <http://demo.istat.it/>

In the last five years, however, the net migration from foreign countries (i.e. the difference between the number of newly registered people moving their residence from abroad and the number of de-registered people moving their residence abroad) has



been constantly decreasing, reaching an estimated value of 142,000 units in 2014, compared to data that were well above during the pre-crisis year 2007 (493,000) and in 2008 (454,000).

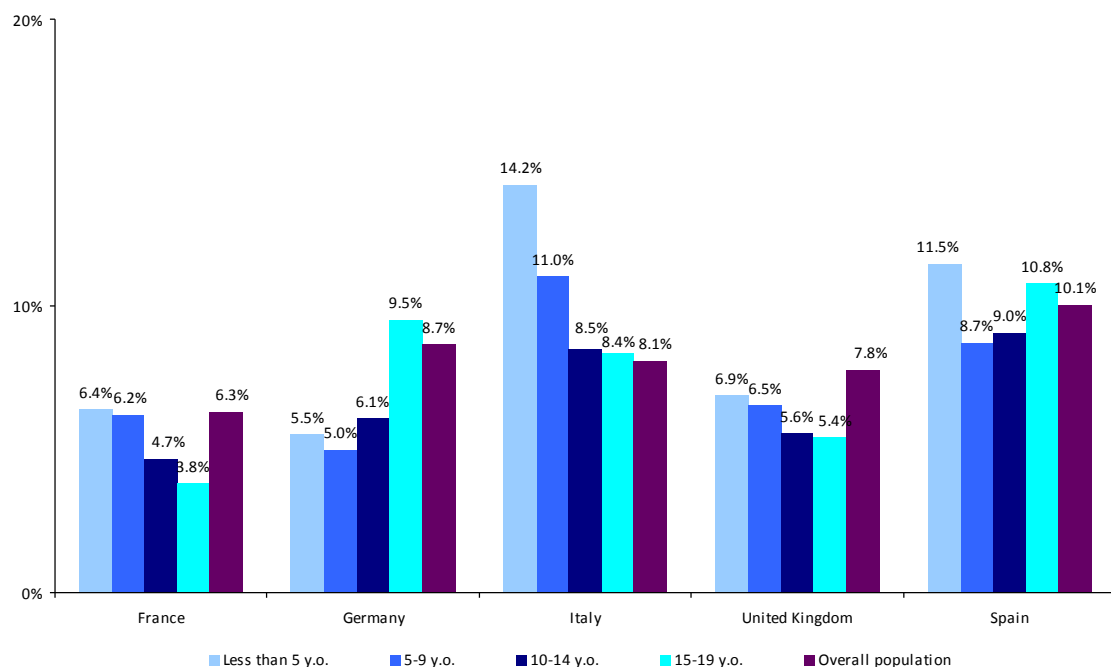
## 2.2. Italy and Europe

In comparison with Europe, Italy is characterized by a percentage of foreign residents higher than the EU average. On 1 January 2013, the percentage of residents with foreign citizenship was 7.4%, compared with 4.1% on average in the EU-27 countries. Two years before (January 1, 2011) the percentage in Italy was 6.5% while the EU average was approximately the same (just over 4%).

The percentage of population with foreign citizenship residing in Italy on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 (8.1%) is in line with the rates of other European countries (Fig. 2.2). However, considering the younger age groups, Italy is characterized by higher percentages than the other major European countries, particularly in the age groups 0-4 y.o. (14.2% of foreign resident children) and 5-9 y.o. (11%) .

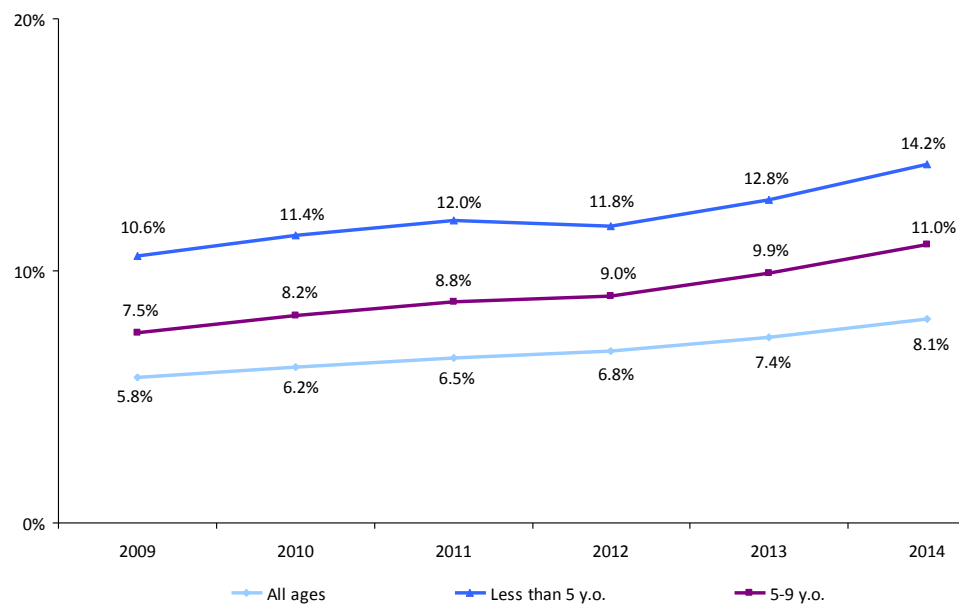
In the recent years the incidence on the child population has been significantly increasing in Italy, including in the last five-year period during which the percentage of "foreign" children in the age groups 0-4 and 5-9 y.o. has increased by 3.6 and 3.5 percentage points, respectively, against an increase of 2.3 percentage in the total population (fig. 2.3).

Fig. 2.2. Percentage of residents with foreign citizenship, by age, January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014



Source: computations on Eurostat data, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

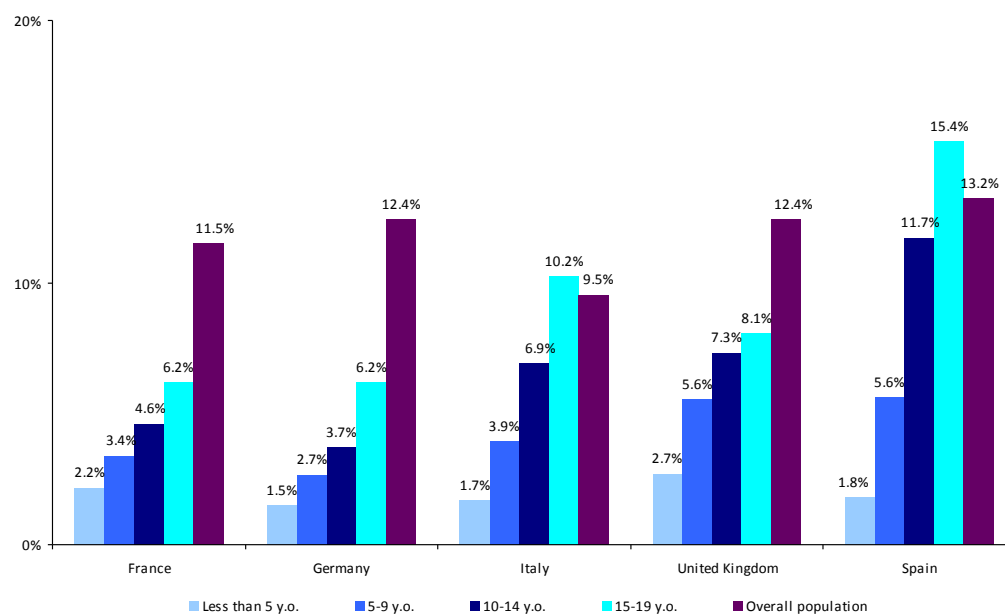
Fig. 2.3. Percentage of residents with foreign citizenship in Italy, by age group, January 1<sup>st</sup> from 2009 to 2014



Source: computations on Eurostat data, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Also considering the percentage of residents that are born abroad, the Italian percentage (9.5% on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013) is higher than the EU average (6.7% on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013). The percentage of residents in Italy that are born abroad among children and adolescents is basically in line or lower than the corresponding percentages in the other main European countries (Fig. 2.4).

Fig. 2.4. Percentage of residents that are born abroad, by age, January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013



Source: computations on Eurostat data, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

## 2.3. “Foreign” pupils

A useful source of information for understanding the multicultural evolution of the Italian society in its younger age groups is represented by the data on foreign students enrolled in Italian schools (from kindergarten to secondary level, state and non-state schools). Altogether, their number increased from 196,414 in the school year 2001/2002 to 802,844 in the year 2013/2014, thus by 4 times over this period. In percentage terms, this meant an increase in the incidence of pupils with non-Italian citizenship from 2.2% to 9% of the total school population (Ministry of Education and ISMU Foundation, 2015). In the shorter period between the school year 2009/2010 and 2013/2014 (tab. 2.4), the total school population decreased by almost 37,000 units (-0.4%), as a result of a reduction of more than 166,000 students with Italian citizenship (-2%) and a simultaneous increase of more than 129,000 students without Italian citizenship (+ 19.2%). This means that, in the absence of “foreign” pupils, the decrease in the total school population would have been much higher than the one recorded (nearly 5 times higher).

Tab. 2.4. School population by citizenship and school

School year		Pre-school	Primary	Secondary – I degree	Secondary – II degree	Total
<b>A.s. 2009/2010</b>						
Foreign pupils	Number	135.632	244.457	150.279	143.224	673.592
	Percentage	8,1%	8,7%	8,5%	5,3%	7,5%
Italian pupils	Number	1.540.806	2.577.689	1.627.555	2.537.443	8.283.493
	Percentage	91,9%	91,3%	91,5%	94,7%	92,5%
Total	Number	1.676.438	2.822.146	1.777.834	2.680.667	8.957.085
	Percentage	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
<b>A.s. 2013/2014</b>						
Foreign pupils	Number	167.591	283.233	169.780	182.181	802.785
	Percentage	10,1%	10,0%	9,6%	6,8%	9,0%
Italian pupils	Number	1.496.313	2.543.876	1.591.362	2.485.886	8.117.329
	Percentage	89,9%	90,0%	90,4%	93,2%	91,0%
Total	Number	1.663.904	2.827.109	1.761.142	2.668.067	8.920.114
	Percentage	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
<b>Variazione a.s. 2013/2014 su a.s. 2009/2010</b>						
Foreign pupils	Number	+31.959	+38.776	+19.501	+38.957	+129.193
	Percentage points	+23,6	+15,9	+13,0	+27,2	+19,2
Italian pupils	Number	-44.493	-33.813	-36.193	-51.557	-166.164
	Percentage points	-2,9	-1,3	-2,2	-2,0	-2,0
Total	Number	-12.534	+4.963	-16.692	-12.600	-36.971
	Percentage points	-0,7	+0,2	-0,9	-0,5	-0,4

Source: Miur and Fondazione Ismu (2015) data and computations on Miur e Fondazione Ismu (2015) data.

In recent years, due to the lower attractiveness of Italy (also due to the economic crisis) and to a trend of stabilization of migration flows into the country, there was a decline in the growth of the students enrolled in the national school system. Between the school year 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, the increase was 2.1%, while a decade ago, between the school year 2002/2003 and 2003/2004, the increase was 28.1% (Ministry of Education and ISMU Foundation, 2015). The same trend was seen in all grade levels: in kindergarten the increase was 1.9% (compared to 23.8% ten years ago) and in primary schools 2.6% (against +22.7%), in the secondary level (I degree) there was a decrease of 0.6% (against +27.8%), in the secondary level (II degree) an increase of 4% (against +50.1% ten years ago).

Considering each region, the increase of pupils with non Italian citizenship is higher in the Centre and North of Italy, where it is generally higher the presence of foreign residents (Tab. 2.5 and Tab. 2.6).

Tab. 2.5. Number of pupils with non-Italian citizenship by region and school, school year 2013/2014

	Pre-school	Primary	Secondary – I degree	Secondary – II degree	Total
Piemonte	16.989	26.496	15.365	16.426	75.276
Valle d'Aosta	410	557	318	306	1.591
Liguria	4.427	7.240	4.915	6.429	23.011
Lombardia	42.990	72.898	41.842	39.472	197.202
Trentino-Alto Adige (a)	4.483	6.193	3.483	3.231	17.390
Veneto	20.507	34.717	19.255	18.445	92.924
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	4.356	6.622	3.755	4.288	19.021
Emilia-Romagna	18.932	32.751	18.857	22.894	93.434
Marche	5.593	8.767	5.435	6.750	26.545
Toscana	13.070	21.599	13.982	15.704	64.355
Umbria	3.645	5.781	3.637	4.278	17.341
Lazio	14.648	26.492	16.527	19.404	77.071
Campania	3.711	7.491	4.714	5.868	21.784
Abruzzo	2.860	4.393	2.930	3.062	13.245
Molise	258	458	385	385	1.486
Puglia	2.953	5.804	3.702	4.087	16.546
Basilicata	488	818	517	645	2.468
Calabria	2.181	4.038	2.949	3.754	12.922
Sicilia	4.257	8.420	6.009	5.446	24.132
Sardegna	833	1.698	1.203	1.307	5.041
<i>Italy (a)</i>	<i>167.591</i>	<i>283.233</i>	<i>169.780</i>	<i>182.181</i>	<i>802.785</i>

(a) Data of Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014) slightly differ from regional data of Miur e Fondazione Ismu (2015), due to a difference of 59 foreign pupils in the schools of Trentino-Alto Adige.

Source: Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014)

Tab. 2.6. Percentage of pupils with non-Italian citizenship by region and school, school year 2013/2014

	Pre-school	Primary	Secondary – I degree	Secondary – II degree	Total
Piemonte	14,9	13,8	13,0	9,8	12,7
Valle d'Aosta	11,4	9,3	8,6	5,8	8,6
Liguria	12,2	11,8	12,5	10,7	11,7
Lombardia	15,6	15,6	14,8	10,3	14,0
Trentino-Alto Adige	13,7	11,3	10,1	7,5	10,6
Veneto	15,0	14,9	13,5	9,0	13,0
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	14,0	12,8	11,7	9,1	11,7
Emilia-Romagna	16,4	16,5	15,9	12,9	15,3
Marche	13,3	12,9	12,9	9,6	11,9
Toscana	13,8	13,4	14,2	10,3	12,7
Umbria	15,3	14,8	15,5	11,6	14,0
Lazio	9,6	9,9	10,2	7,8	9,3
Campania	2,0	2,4	2,3	1,8	2,1
Abruzzo	8,0	7,7	8,2	5,2	7,1
Molise	3,5	3,6	4,6	2,6	3,4
Puglia	2,5	2,9	2,8	1,9	2,5
Basilicata	3,4	3,2	3,0	2,1	2,8
Calabria	3,7	4,3	4,9	3,7	4,1
Sicilia	2,9	3,3	3,7	2,2	3,0
Sardegna	2,0	2,5	2,7	1,8	2,2
<i>Italy</i>	10,1	10,0	9,6	6,8	9,0

Source: Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014)

The region with the highest number of pupils with non-Italian citizenship is Lombardy (almost 200,000), followed by Emilia-Romagna and Veneto (over 90,000 each). Considering the absolute figures with respect to the total student population, it emerges that the highest percentage of students with non-Italian citizenship is in Emilia Romagna (15.3%), followed by Lombardy and Umbria (14%).

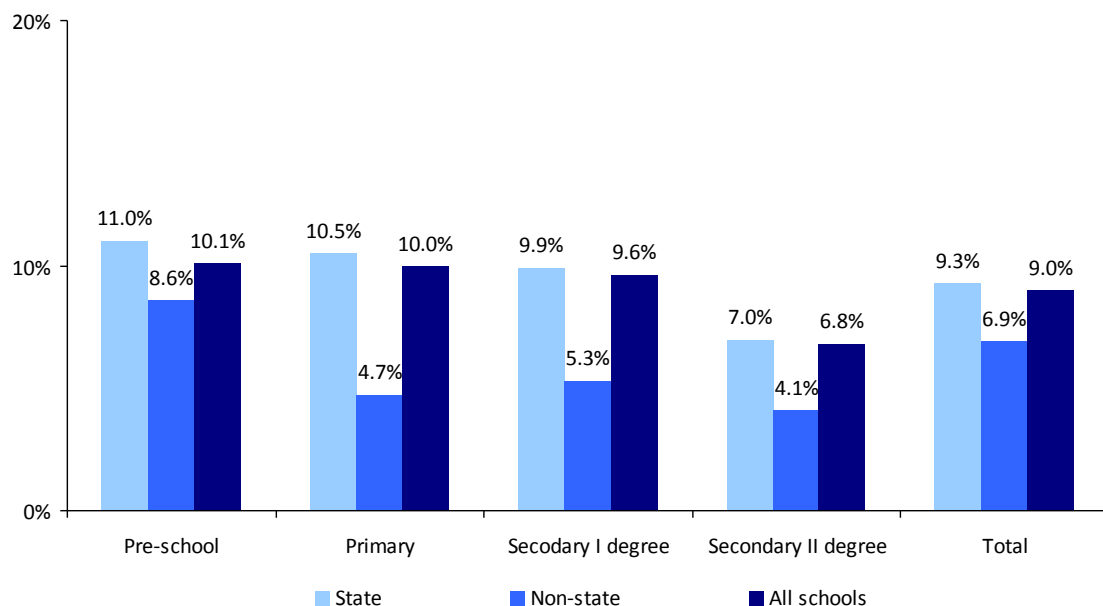
A difference between "foreign" and "Italian" pupils is the school they attended. On the one hand, with regard to the school orientation: in particular, in secondary schools (II degree) Italian pupils choose more often high schools with a curriculum of classical, scientific or language studies (in 35.2% of cases, school year 2013/2014) than "foreign" pupils; and foreigners born in Italy more often (20.5%) than those who were born abroad (14.3%). Conversely, vocational schools are chosen by less than one in five Italians (19.2%), but by 29.2% of foreigners born in Italy and 39.5% of foreigners born abroad.

On the other hand, foreign families more often choose for their children state schools over private schools - in 90% of the cases, against 86.7% among Italian students. Differences in this sense are observed at all levels of education (early childhood, primary,

secondary I and II degree). The presence and incidence of foreign students in private schools has however increased in recent years, due to both an increase in their number and a reduction in the number of Italian pupils (Ministry of Education and ISMU Foundation, 2015). The maximum rate is recorded in non-state kindergarten, with an enrolment of 39.7% of Italian children but also one out of three (33.6%) children with foreign citizenship.

In general, among all types of school the highest percentage of "foreign" pupils was recorded in kindergartens - state and non-state (10.1%), that is among children aged 3-5. The high density of children with foreign citizenship is particularly evident in the non-state kindergartens, where the percentage of attending "foreign" children (8.6%) is much higher than that of foreign children in non-state schools of upper levels (fig. 2.5).

Fig. 2.5. Percentage of pupils with non-Italian citizenship by school and management, school year 2013/2014



Source: Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014)

Some dynamics can be observed, regarding all "foreign" pupils - that is, with non-Italian citizenship. These can be divided into two main categories: "foreigners" who were born abroad and "foreigners" who were born in Italy. Until 2013 foreigners born in Italy represented a minority - albeit considerable - of the total (47.2% in school year 2012/2013), whereas for the first time in school year 2013/2014 those born in Italy became the majority of students with foreign citizenship (51.7%). Typically they are children of immigrants, but born in Italy, so with profiles and needs (especially educational needs) that are potentially different from those of children with foreign citizenship arrived in Italy after their birth. In recent years there has been a stable and significant in-

crease in the percentage of "born in Italy" children on the total of foreign students. The incidence is particularly high in kindergarten, where it reached 84% in 2013/2014 (tab. 2.7).

Tab. 2.7. Foreign pupils born in Italy for every 100 pupils with non-italian citizenship, by school, school years 2007/2008 – 2013/2014

School year	Pre-school	Primary	Secondary – I degree	Secondary – II degree	Total
2007/2008	71,2	41,1	17,8	6,8	34,7
2008/2009	73,3	45,0	18,8	7,5	37,0
2009/2010	74,8	48,6	20,5	8,7	39,1
2010/2011	78,3	52,9	23,9	9,0	42,2
2011/2012	80,4	54,1	27,9	10,2	44,2
2012/2013	79,9	59,4	31,8	12,2	47,2
2013/2014	84,0	64,4	37,9	15,3	51,7

Source: Miur and Fondazione Ismu (2015)

On a regional basis, the distribution remains higher in central and northern regions. The Veneto Region is the one with the highest incidence of foreign children born in Italy among all foreign students (59.5%), followed by Lombardy (57.9%) and Piedmont (55.5%), while at the bottom of the "ranking" there is Calabria with 20.7% (Tab. 2.8 and tab. 2.9).

Tab. 2.8. Number of pupils with non-Italian citizenship *born in Italy*, by region and school, school year 2013/2014

	Pre-school	Primary	Secondary – I degree	Secondary – II degree	Total
Piemonte	14.646	18.529	6.143	2.456	41.774
Valle d'Aosta	351	370	103	36	860
Liguria	3.666	4.475	1.666	647	10.454
Lombardia	37.244	50.972	18.376	7.502	114.094
Trentino-Alto Adige (a)	3.522	2.238	771	316	6.847
Veneto	18.203	25.684	8.300	3.118	55.305
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	3.677	4.393	1.336	572	9.978
Emilia-Romagna	16.069	22.818	8.043	3.981	50.911
Marche	4.941	6.067	2.259	961	14.228
Toscana	11.201	14.136	5.712	2.559	33.608
Umbria	3.244	4.112	1.490	668	9.514
Lazio	12.217	15.764	5.473	2.290	35.744
Campania	2.287	2.508	740	503	6.038
Abruzzo	2.206	2.320	788	315	5.629
Molise	152	151	49	15	367
Puglia	2.130	2.595	920	447	6.092
Basilicata	283	230	81	44	638

	Pre-school	Primary	Secondary – I degree	Secondary – II degree	Total
Calabria	1.224	968	289	189	2.670
Sicilia	2.896	3.293	1.542	1.042	8.773
Sardegna	580	692	257	129	1.658
<i>Italy (a)</i>	<i>140.739</i>	<i>182.315</i>	<i>64.338</i>	<i>27.790</i>	<i>415.182</i>

(a) Data of Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014) slightly differ from regional data of Miur e Fondazione Ismu (2015), due to a difference of 59 foreign pupils in the schools of Trentino-Alto Adige.

Source: Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014)

Tab. 2.9. Percentage of pupils with non-Italian citizenship *born in Italy*, by region and school, school year 2013/2014

	Pre-school	Primary	Secondary – I degree	Secondary – II degree	Total
Piemonte	86,2	69,9	40,0	15,0	55,5
Valle d'Aosta	85,6	66,4	32,4	11,8	54,1
Liguria	82,8	61,8	33,9	10,1	45,4
Lombardia	86,6	69,9	43,9	19,0	57,9
Trentino-Alto Adige	78,6	36,1	22,1	9,8	39,4
Veneto	88,8	74,0	43,1	16,9	59,5
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	84,4	66,3	35,6	13,3	52,5
Emilia-Romagna	84,9	69,7	42,7	17,4	54,5
Marche	88,3	69,2	41,6	14,2	53,6
Toscana	85,7	65,4	40,9	16,3	52,2
Umbria	89,0	71,1	41,0	15,6	54,9
Lazio	83,4	59,5	33,1	11,8	46,4
Campania	61,6	33,5	15,7	8,6	27,7
Abruzzo	77,1	52,8	26,9	10,3	42,5
Molise	58,9	33,0	12,7	3,9	24,7
Puglia	72,1	44,7	24,9	10,9	36,8
Basilicata	58,0	28,1	15,7	6,8	25,9
Calabria	56,1	24,0	9,8	5,0	20,7
Sicilia	68,0	39,1	25,7	19,1	36,4
Sardegna	69,6	40,8	21,4	9,9	32,9
<i>Italia</i>	<i>84,0</i>	<i>64,4</i>	<i>37,9</i>	<i>15,3</i>	<i>51,7</i>

Source: Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014)

The increasing trend in the percentage of foreign students born in Italy is accompanied by a parallel trend, in recent years, related to the reduction in the number of newly entered in the national school system. This trend has, however, suffered a slight reversal between the school year 2012/2013 and the school year 2013/2014. This trend can also be connected to the increase of unaccompanied foreign children in 2014, although there are no exact data on their school integration (Ministry of Education and ISMU Foundation, 2015).



## 2.4. Unaccompanied foreign children

Estimates of the number of unaccompanied children (MSNA) provide information on foreign children and young people, not covered in the statistics on children who are lawfully and permanently resident in Italy. At the end of 2014, the number of unaccompanied foreign children amounted to 10,536 reported as "present"; considering also the 3,707 reported as "untraceable", the total would be 14,243 MSNA. Two years earlier, at the end of 2012, there were 5,821 present and 1,754 untraceable amounting to a total of 7,575 children and young people; at the end of 2013 the number was 6,319 present and 2,142 untraceable, amounting to a total of 8,461 (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2012, 2013 and 2014). It can be noted, therefore, an increasing trend in the last three years. The 10,500 MSNA and more that were present at the end of 2014 were in large part male (94.5%). The age group most represented was 15 - 17 y.o. (tab. 2.10).

Tab. 2.10. Distribution by age group of unaccompanied foreign minors on December 31st 2014

Age group	Present	Percentage of present minors	Untraceable
0-6	27	0,3	0
7-14	952	9,0	401
15	1.321	12,5	602
16	3.020	28,7	1.149
17	5.216	49,5	1.555
<i>Total</i>	<i>10.536</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>3.707</i>

Source: Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2014)

The region with the largest number of MSNA was Sicily (43.9% of those present) followed by other regions with much smaller percentages (the second being Puglia with 10.4% of unaccompanied children who are present).

Rather heterogeneous is the list of countries of origin of MSNA reported at the end of 2014 (tab. 2.11), although some areas of origin prevail: the main countries of origin of present unaccompanied children were Egypt (23.3%), Eritrea (12.4%), Gambia (10.5%), Somalia (10.4%), Albania (9.9%).

Tab. 2.11. Unaccompanied forcing minors by citizenship, on December 31st 2014, first 20 countries

	Present	Percentage of present minors	Untraceable
Egypt	2.455	23,3	914
Eritrea	1.303	12,4	1.020
Gambia	1.104	10,5	45
Somalia	1.097	10,4	690
Albania	1.043	9,9	44
Bangladesh	611	5,8	19
Mali	474	4,5	58
Senegal	412	3,9	29
Afghanistan	391	3,7	460
Nigeria	356	3,4	28
Morocco	231	2,2	54
Ghana	172	1,6	11
Tunisia	123	1,2	47
Kosovo	114	1,1	9
Syria	77	0,7	81
Ivory Coast	72	0,7	4
Guinea	70	0,7	7
Pakistan	67	0,6	7
Algeria	38	0,4	18
Guinea Bissau	25	0,2	2
<b>Total first 20 countries</b>	<b>10.235</b>	<b>97,2</b>	<b>3.547</b>

Source: Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2014)

## 2.5. Different roots...

As the "small" group of unaccompanied children, also "foreign" people in Italy come from a variety of different countries and geographical areas, therefore they do not constitute a (culturally) monolithic block. On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2010, the relative majority (more than one fifth) of foreigners residing in Italy came from Romania (21%), followed by Albania and Morocco - 10% of the total (tab. 2.12) .

Tab. 2.12. Foreigners residing in Italy on January 1st 2010 by country of origin (first 20 countries), number and percentage over the total number of foreigners

	Number	Percentage of the total
Romania	887.763	21,0
Albania	466.684	11,0
Morocco	431.529	10,2
China	188.352	4,4
Ukraine	174.129	4,1
Philippines	123.584	2,9

	Number	Percentage of the total
India	105.863	2,5
Poland	105.608	2,5
Moldavia	105.600	2,5
Tunisia	103.678	2,4
Macedonia	92.847	2,2
Peru	87.747	2,1
Ecuador	85.940	2,0
Egypt	82.064	1,9
Sri Lanka	75.343	1,8
Bangladesh	73.965	1,7
Senegal	72.618	1,7
Pakistan	64.859	1,5
Serbia	53.875	1,3
Nigeria	48.674	1,1
<i>Total first 20 countries</i>	<i>3.430.722</i>	<i>81,1</i>

Source: Istat - Noi Italia (2011), <http://noi-italia2011.istat.it>

The diversity of backgrounds of all foreign residents in Italy is also reflected in the variety of countries of origin of foreign students without Italian citizenship. In accordance with tab. 2.12, the foreign countries most represented in the Italian school system (rather constant in recent years) are Romania, Albania, Morocco, China, the Philippines, Moldova, India, Ukraine and Peru (tab. 2.13).

Tab. 2.13. Pupils with non-Italian citizenship by country of origin (first 20 countries), school year 2013/2014

	Number	Percentage of the total
Romania	154.605	19,3
Albania	107.862	13,4
Morocco	101.167	12,6
China	39.204	4,9
Philippines	24.838	3,1
Moldavia	24.589	3,1
India	24.017	3,0
Ukraine	19.167	2,4
Peru	18.610	2,3
Tunisia	18.363	2,3
Ecuador	18.251	2,3
Pakistan	18.128	2,3
Macedonia	16.764	2,1
Egypt	15.239	1,9
Bangladesh	13.163	1,6
Senegal	12.441	1,6
Nigeria	12.351	1,5

	Number	Percentage of the total
Poland	10.625	1,3
Ghana	10.452	1,3
Kosovo	9.185	1,1
<i>Total first 20 countries</i>	669.021	83,4

Fonte: Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014) e elaborazione su dati Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014)

The majority of students without Italian citizenship live in the North of Italy, regardless of their country of origin: 51.4% of pupils of Romanian origin up to 78.2% of pupils of Moldovan origin are in Northern Italy (Ministry of Education 2014).

Despite the general prevalence of Romania, Albania, Morocco, representing all together 45% at the national level, disaggregating by region it is possible to notice a certain heterogeneity of the areas of origin of foreign students (tab. 2.14). The Romanian roots represent the relative majority in 11 out of 20 regions, but this is not the case of Liguria (where, relatively, the Albania roots prevail) or Lombardy (where, relatively, the Moroccan roots prevail). There are also interregional differences in the migration flows, for example, the weight of the Chinese community in Tuscany (11.2% of foreign students come from China).

Tab. 2.14. Percentage of pupils with non-Italian citizenship by country of origin, by region, school year 2013/2014

	Romania	Albania	Morocco	China	Philippines	Moldavia	India	Ukraine	Peru	Tunisia	Other countries	Total	Total (absolute value)
Piemonte	29,8	13,9	20,4	3,6	1,4	2,8	0,9	1,1	3,3	1,5	21,5	100	75.276
Valle d'Aosta	19,8	14,8	35,1	2,8	0,1	3,5	1,1	0,8	1,4	5,8	14,8	100	1.591
Liguria	9,7	22,3	11,1	2,6	0,9	1,6	0,7	1,5	3,8	1,7	44,1	100	23.011
Lombardia	11,8	11,4	13,1	4,4	4,9	2	5,1	2,1	4,2	2,1	38,9	100	197.202
Trentino-Alto Adige (a)	10,1	17,2	12,7	2,2	0,4	3,9	2	1,9	1,7	3,9	44	100	17.390
Veneto	17,7	10,3	13,8	6,4	1,4	7,1	3,5	1,3	0,3	1,3	37	100	92.924
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	16,8	15,2	5,6	3	0,7	2,3	2,4	2,1	0,2	1,2	50,5	100	19.021
Emilia-Romagna	10,7	14,7	17,7	5,1	2,8	5,5	3,9	2,5	0,7	4,4	31,9	100	93.434
Marche	11,4	18,1	12,9	6,3	1	3,2	3,4	2,1	2,2	4,5	35	100	26.545
Toscana	16,8	24,5	10	11,2	3,4	1,5	1,7	1,4	3,2	1,3	25,2	100	64.355
Umbria	20,8	22,4	14,1	1,8	1,9	2,8	1,7	2,6	2,2	1,6	28,1	100	17.341
Lazio	39,4	5,7	2,7	2,9	6,7	3,2	2,4	2,5	3,2	1,1	30,4	100	77.071
Campania	23,4	5	7,8	4,3	1,4	0,9	1,8	15,9	0,5	1,3	37,8	100	21.784
Abruzzo	25,5	21,9	9,4	5,1	0,6	1	0,6	2,9	0,5	1	31,6	100	13.245
Molise	35,5	9,5	16,2	1,7	-	1,3	3	3	0,2	1,5	28,1	100	1.486
Puglia	24,3	28,1	7,5	4	1,4	0,4	1,6	2,2	0,2	2	28,3	100	16.546
Basilicata	43	14,7	12,1	2,9	0,3	0,7	3,1	3,4	0,2	2,3	17,3	100	2.468
Calabria	34,8	4,2	16,5	2,3	2,5	0,7	2,6	5,6	0,1	0,5	30	100	12.922
Sicilia	31,3	6,8	9,1	3,6	3,2	0,1	0,6	1,8	0,1	9,3	34,1	100	24.132

	Romania	Albania	Morocco	China	Philippines	Moldavia	India	Ukraine	Peru	Tunisia	Other countries	Total	Total (absolute value)
Sardegna	23,2	2,1	16,2	9	5,7	0,7	1	3,7	0,5	1,8	36,2	100	5.041
Italy (a)	19,3	13,4	12,6	4,9	3,1	3,1	3	2,4	2,3	2,3	33,7	100	802.785

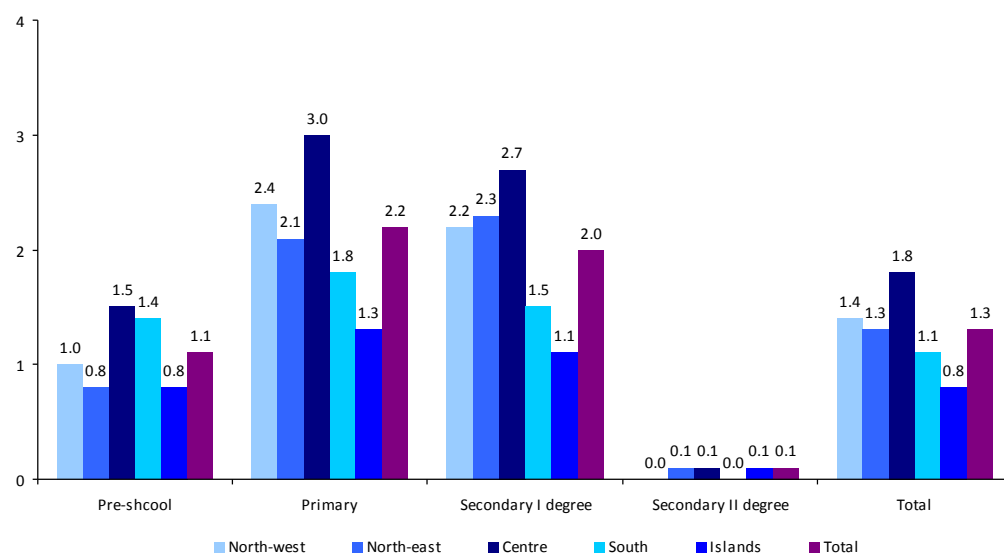
(a) Data of Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014) slightly differ from regional data of Miur e Fondazione Ismu (2015), due to a difference of 59 foreign pupils in the schools of Trentino-Alto Adige.

Source: Miur – Ufficio di Statistica (2014)

It can also be highlighted the number of Roma pupils. In the school year 2013/2014 there were 11,657 Roma students enrolled in Italian schools (Ministry of Education and ISMU Foundation, 2015). It is significantly lower (9.2%) than five years before (12,838 in school year 2008/2009). At local level, the presence (in absolute values) is greater in Lazio (2,175), followed by Lombardy (1,751), Piedmont (1,217) and Calabria (1,177). Among the different grade levels (Fig. 2.6), the incidence of Roma pupils is highest in primary schools (2.2 per thousand students), lowest in secondary level schools (0.1 per thousand).

More and more, finally, are the children that are born in Italy to at least one foreign parent. In 2012, children born to two foreign parents were almost 80,000 (79,894), accounting for 15% of total born residents (Istat, 2013). Considering children born from mixed marriages, children born in 2012 with at least one foreign parent amounted to approximately 20% of the total births in Italy. The more numerous foreign mothers have a Romanian nationality (19,415 born in 2012), followed by Moroccan mothers with 12,829 births, Albanian mothers with 9,843 births and Chinese mothers with 5,593 births (Caritas and Fondazione Migrantes, 2013).

Fig. 2.6. Roma pupils for every 1.000 pupils, by school level and area, school year 2013/14



Source: Miur e Fondazione Ismu (2015)

## 2.6. ... and different cultures

The variety of backgrounds – of immigrant children and / or parents - also affects the different socio-cultural background of children. An important aspect is represented by the specific culture of origin of the family, of which language is one of the main aspects. If "foreigners", because of their different origins, do not represent a single culturally homogeneous group, there are many idioms that children “absorb” - to a greater or lesser extent - inside their family. Among all foreign children with 6 years or more, the most widespread native language<sup>2</sup> is Romanian, followed by Arabic and Albanian (tab. 2.15).

Tab. 2.15. People (a) by foreign language spoken as a native language (absolute and percentage), Italy, 2011-2012

	Absolute values	Percentage values
Romanian	798.364	21,9
Arab	476.721	13,1
Albanian	380.361	10,5
Spanish	255.459	7,0
Italian	162.148	4,5
Chinese	159.597	4,4
Russian	126.849	3,5
Ukrainian	119.883	3,3
French	116.287	3,2
Serbia/Croatian/Bosnian/Montenegrin	93.289	2,6
Other languages	950.269	26,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.639.227</b>	<b>100,0</b>

(a) Foreign citizens 6 years or older - Source: Istat (2014)

Among the foreign citizens, Italian is the mainly spoken language inside the family for only 38.5%. A breakdown by household type shows that this percentage is slightly lower in households with at least one child (37.3%). In particular, this figure falls further, to 30.9%, in households in which there are exclusively 0-5 y.o. children (tab. 2.16).

Tab. 2.16. People (a) by mainly spoken language inside the family, Italy, 2011-2012

	Italian (%)	Other language (%)	Total (absolute value)
<b>By age group</b>			
6-17 years	47,3	52,7	546.590
18 years or older	36,8	63,2	2.876.870
<b>By family type</b>			
At least one member with Italian citizenship	77,6	22,4	726.381
Only foreign members	27,9	72,1	2.697.079

<sup>2</sup> Mother tongue is the language spoken before accessing school.

	Italian (%)	Other language (%)	Total (absolute value)
Families with at least one minor member	37,3	62,7	2.148.960
<i>of whom: with only minors aged 0- 5</i>	30,9	69,1	552.651
<i>with at least one member aged 6-17</i>	39,5	60,5	1.596.309
Families with all members aged 18 or over	40,5	59,5	1.274.500
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,5</b>	<b>61,5</b>	<b>3.423.460</b>

(a) Foreign citizens aged 6 or over

Source: Istat (2014)

Therefore, the role of educational institutions of all levels may be important to allow adequate learning of the Italian language for 0-5 children living in these families. In the younger age learning a new language is easier. If the majority (60.8%) of all foreign citizens have "at least some" difficulties speaking the Italian language, this percentage drops at younger ages<sup>3</sup>: 69.9 % of foreign citizens 36+ y.o. , 66% of 26-35 y.o and 48.5% of 16-25 y.o have "at least some" difficulties with the national language. This is true for less than a third (31.2%) of children and young people aged 6-15 (Istat, 2014).

Beside the linguistic variety, another important aspect related to immigration is represented by religious diversity. According to recent estimates, the "foreigners" are in order: Muslims (33.1%), Orthodox (29.6%), Catholics (18.5%), Eastern religious traditions (6.4 %), evangelical and other Christians (5.0%) and other minor groups including Jews, etc. (Idos, 2014). The majority (approximately 53%) thus belong to different Christian groups, while a third are Muslim. According to the Caritas and Fondazione Migrantes Report (2013) religious worship places are represented by 850 african neo-Pentecostal churches, 750 Catholic communities, 655 places for Islamic worship, 355 Orthodox churches, 126 Buddhist sites, 37 Sikhs, Hindus 2.

Religion can be an important factor of cultural belonging. The Convention for the Rights of the Child (CRC), in addition to recognizing the overall importance of the participation of children and young people in decisions and actions (art. 12), particularly emphasizes the need to ensure for children and adolescents belonging to ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities the right to learn and practice their culture, language, religion (art. 30). This did not always happen. For example, a recent research on unaccompanied children - in Italy and in other EU countries - based on the voices of 336 children aged 14+ (as well as 302 professionals) and mainly coming from Afghanistan, Somalia, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea and Iraq, shows that these children suffer sometimes from lower access to education and training, and their reli-

<sup>3</sup> The degree of difficulty is connected to a composite indicator that takes into account the difficulties of foreigners with the Italian language in four different areas: understanding, speaking, reading and writing.

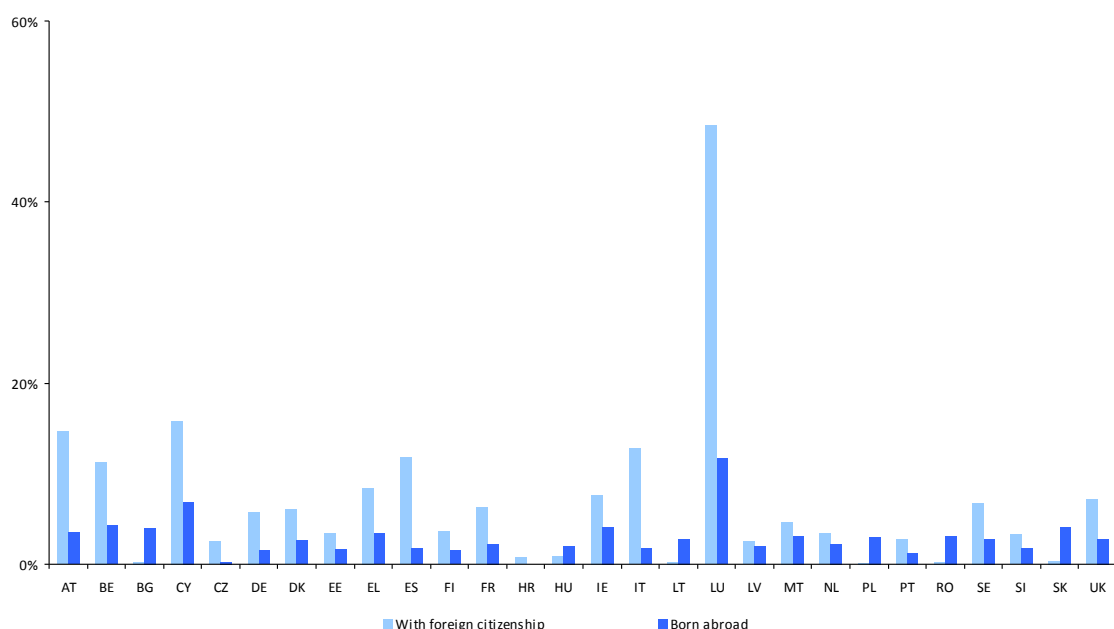
gious needs are not always met or satisfied, up to the phenomena of discrimination and maltreatment (Fra 2010, cited in Save the Children, 2011).

## 2.7. Critical issues and challenges

In terms of policy, the cultural backgrounds of children is one of the challenges at European level, also considering the possible need for support - especially language support - in favour of migrant children or children from ethnic minorities. The European Commission points out that in most EU countries with a significant presence of children with foreign citizenship and/or born abroad, there is still a rare involvement of immigrant professionals or professionals belonging to ethnic minorities in supporting children with language difficulties (European Commission, 2014), even though there are national recommendations on the introduction of language programs.

The Commission also highlights that, among all goals and outcomes recommended in guidance documents at central level in European countries, the early learning of a foreign language or a second language is the least frequently cited. Moreover, this kind of services (for example teaching of a foreign language) may incur additional fees for families, including those services provided by the public sector. Therefore these remain critical issues in this area, despite the European institutions recognizing the central importance of quality services for early childhood in pursuing a “smart and sustainable” strategy growth in the medium and long term.

Fig. 2.7. Percentage of children 0-5 y.o. with foreign citizenship and percentage of children 0-5 y.o. born abroad, 1 January 2013, European countries



Source: European Commission (2014)



---

An estimate (at least proxy) of children potentially in need of specific programs of support for cultural and linguistic differences, can be derived from the rates in various countries of children in the age group 0-5 years that a) have foreign citizenship, or b) are foreign-born (fig. 2.7). The joint reading of these two dimensions provides a quantitative picture of European children with potential immigrant background (European Commission, 2014).

Different European countries have very different characteristics with regard to the incidence of children with "potentially foreign origin" (in the words of the Commission). In particular, Italy, in early 2013, ranked in a "low" position regarding the percentage of children 0-5 years old who were born abroad, but it was the fourth country with the highest percentage of children 0-5 years with foreign citizenship. The data presented are quantitative proxy variables of the phenomenon of multiculturalism and multilingualism in Italy and in Europe. But these numbers indicate the need for institutional mechanisms to promote access to quality early childhood services also (and especially) for children of immigrant families, because of the recognized impact they can have on the future of children.



---

# References

- Alba R., Nee V. (1997), *Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration*, in "International Migration Review", vol. XXXI, n.4 (Winter), pp.826-874.
- Ambrosini M. (2007), *Italiani col trattino: figli dell'immigrazione in cerca di identità*, relazione al convegno su *Seconde generazioni in Italia. Presente futuro dei processi di integrazione dei figli degli immigrati*, Osservatorio sulle differenze del Comune di Bologna.
- Ben Arie A. (2008), Indicators and Indices of Children's Well-being: towards a more policy-oriented perspective, in "European Journal of Education", Volume 43, Issue 1, pages 37–50, March.
- Ben-Arie A., Goerge R (2006), *Measuring and Monitoring Children's Well-Being: The policy process*, in Ben-Arie A., Goerge R.(Ed.), *Indicators of children's well being: understanding their role, usage and policy influence*, Springer: Dordrecht, Netherlands.
- Bruner J.S., Perlmutter H.V, (1957), *Compatriot and Foreigner: A Study of Impression Formation in Three Countries*, in Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 55, pp- 253-260.
- Caritas e Fondazione Migrantes (2012), *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2013. 22° Rapporto*, Roma.
- Caritas e Fondazione Migrantes (2013), *XXIII Rapporto Immigrazione 2013. Tra crisi e diritti umani*, Roma.
- Caritas e Fondazione Migrantes (2013), *XXIII Rapporto Immigrazione 2013. Tra crisi e diritti umani*, Roma.
- Centro Studi e Ricerche Idos (2014), *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2014 – Rapporto Unar*, Centro Studi e Ricerche Idos, Roma.
- Commissione Europea/EACEA/Eurydice/Eurostat (2014), *Key Data on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe. 2014 Edition*, Eurydice and Eurostat Report, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union.

- 
- Commissione Europea/EACEA/Eurydice/Eurostat (2014), *Key Data on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe. 2014 Edition*, Eurydice and Eurostat Report, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union.
- Doise W. (1976), *L'articulation psychosociologique et les relations entre groupes*, Bruxelles, Edition de Boek, trad. it. Psicologia sociale e relazioni tra gruppi, Bologna, il Mulino 1977.
- Erikson E.H. (1968), *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, New York, Norton and Company, trad. it. *Gioventù e crisi di identità*, Roma, Armando, 1974.
- Esping-Andersen G. (1990), *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Fondazione Emanuela Zancan (2014), *Welfare generativo. Responsabilizzare, rendere, rigenerare. La lotta alla povertà. Rapporto 2014*, Bologna, Il Mulino.
- Fondazione Ismu e Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca (2015), *Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana. Tra difficoltà e successi. Rapporto nazionale A.s. 2013/2014*, Quaderni Ismu, 1.
- Fra – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (a cura di) (2010), *Separated, asylum-seeking children in European Union Member States. Summary Report*, aprile 2010.
- Goffman E. (1959), *The Presentation of Self in Everyday life*, Garden City, N.Y, Doubleday, trad. it. *La vita quotidiana come rappresentazione*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1969.
- Idos (a cura di) (2012), *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2012. 22° Rapporto*, Roma
- Idos (a cura di) (2014), *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2014 – Rapporto Unar*, Roma.
- Istat (2013), *La popolazione straniera residente in Italia – bilancio demografico. Anno 2012*, [www.istat.it](http://www.istat.it).
- Istat (2014), *Diversità linguistiche tra i cittadini stranieri. Anno 2011-2012*, [www.istat.it](http://www.istat.it)
- Istat (2015), *Indicatori demografici. Stime per l'anno 2014*, [www.istat.it](http://www.istat.it).
- Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2012), *Report nazionale Minori Stranieri non accompagnati. Aggiornato al 31 dicembre 2012*, [www.lavoro.gov.it](http://www.lavoro.gov.it).
- Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2013), *Report nazionale Minori Stranieri non accompagnati. Aggiornato al 31 dicembre 2013*, [www.lavoro.gov.it](http://www.lavoro.gov.it).
- Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2014), *Report nazionale Minori Stranieri non accompagnati. Aggiornato al 31 dicembre 2014*, [www.lavoro.gov.it](http://www.lavoro.gov.it).
- Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2015), *Report nazionale Minori Stranieri non accompagnati. Dati al 30 aprile 2015*, [www.lavoro.gov.it](http://www.lavoro.gov.it).
- Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca – Ufficio di Statistica (2014), *Gli alunni stranieri nel sistema scolastico italiano. A.s. 2013/2014*, [www.istruzione.it](http://www.istruzione.it).
- Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca e Fondazione Ismu (2015), *Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana. Tra difficoltà e successi. Rapporto nazionale A.s. 2013/2014*, Quaderni Ismu, 1.

- 
- Moscovici S. (1976), *Social Influence and Social Change*, London Academic Press.
- Palmonari A., Carugati F., Ricci Bitti P., Sarchielli G., (1979), *Identità imperfette*, Il Mulino, Bologna.
- Portes A., Rumbaut R.G. (2001), *Legacies. The story of the immigrant second generation*, Berkeley-New York. University of California Press- Russel Sage Foundation.
- Save the Children (2011), *I minori stranieri in Italia. L'esperienza e le raccomandazioni di Save the Children. 2° Rapporto annuale*, [www.savethechildren.it](http://www.savethechildren.it).



---

# The Tfiety Library

## Collana “Investire nell’infanzia è coltivare la vita”

*Quaderno TFIEY 1: Bambini poveri: chi sono, cosa chiedono, cosa ricevono (2013)*

*Quaderno TFIEY 2: Servizi per l’infanzia: risorse e professionalità (2013)*

*Quaderno TFIEY 3: Orientarsi nei servizi per l’infanzia (2014)*

*Quaderno TFIEY 4: La valutazione nei servizi per l’infanzia (2014)*

*Quaderno TFIEY 5: Sistemi integrati: nuove frontiere per i servizi all’infanzia (2015)*

*Quaderno TFIEY 6: Identità, multilinguismo e multiculturalità (2015)*

## Collana “Investing in childhood for growing life”

*Essay TFIEY 1: Children in poverty: needs and services (2013)*

*Essay TFIEY 2: Services for children: economic and professional re-sources (2013)*

*Essay TFIEY 3: Evaluation of early childhood services (2014)*

*Essay TFIEY 4: Integrated systems: new perspectives for children and families (2015)*

*Essay TFIEY 5: Identity, multilingualism and multiculturalism (2015)*

## Collana “TFIEY Selected Papers”

*Selected Papers 1/2013: Quality Early Childhood Services for All: Addressing Disparities in Access for Children from Migrant and Low-Income Families*

## Collana “Idee condivise”

*Idee condivise 1: L’accesso ai servizi per l’infanzia (2013)*

*Idee condivise 2: Servizi per l’infanzia: risorse professionali ed economiche (2013)*

*Idee condivise 3: I genitori negli spazi di vita dell’infanzia (2014)*

*Idee condivise 4: Valutare l’impatto dell’incontro tra bisogni, risposte e risorse per l’infanzia (2014)*

*Idee condivise 5: Sistemi integrati: nuove frontiere per i servizi all’infanzia (2015)*

*Idee condivise 6: Multilinguismo e sviluppo delle identità culturali nella prima infanzia (2015)*

## Percorsi di approfondimento locale

2013: Piemonte - Contributi preliminari

2013: Piemonte - Repertorio delle esperienze

2015: Veneto - Verso nuovi servizi (studio di fattibilità)

**I materiali della biblioteca TFIEY sono scaricabili dai siti istituzionali e dal sito:**

[www.tfietyitalia.org](http://www.tfietyitalia.org)

### Per informazioni

Marzia Sica, Compagnia di San Paolo, [Marzia.Sica@compagniadisanpaolo.it](mailto:Marzia.Sica@compagniadisanpaolo.it)

Cinzia Canali, Fondazione Zancan, [cinziacanali@fondazionezancan.it](mailto:cinziacanali@fondazionezancan.it)

