

**LA POPULATION DES BALKANS  
À L'AUBE DU XXI<sup>ÈME</sup> SIÈCLE**

**THE POPULATION OF THE BALKANS  
AT THE DAWN OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

Skopje  
2017

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Cinquième Conférence Internationale de  
Démographie des Balkans  
Ohrid, République de Macédoine  
21-24 octobre 2015

Organisée par :

DemoBalk

Institut économique – Skopje  
Université Saints-Cyrille-et-Méthode de Skopje

**Cinquième Conférence Internationale de Démographie des Balkans**  
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**Éditeur :**

Institut économique - Skopje, Université Saints-Cyrille-et-Méthode de Skopje  
Prolet 1, 1000 Skopje, République de Macédoine

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**Conception de couverture :**

Maja Daskalovska

**Imprimé par :**

MAR-SAZ DOOEL SKOPJE

UDC - CIP Fiche de catalogue de la Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire  
St. Clément d'Ohrid. Skopje

**Tirage :** 200

**ISBN 978-608-4519-1; -7**

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Institute of Economics – Skopje, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje  
Prolet 1, 1000 Skopje, Republic of Macedonia

**For the publisher:**

Tatjana Petkovska Mirchevska

**Editors:**

Verica Janeska

Aleksandra Lozanoska

**English and French editing by:**

BERLITZ Language Center Skopje

**Cover design by:**

Maja Daskalovska

**Printed by:**

MAR-SAZ DOOEL SKOPJE

**UDC-CIP** Catalogue record from National and university Library  
"St. Clement of Ohrid" - Skopje

**Circulation:** 200

**ISBN 978-608-4519-1; -7**

## RECENT IMMIGRATION FROM SERBIA TO ITALY: THE BEGINNING OF A NEW TRADITION?

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### Abstract

Since the mid-1960s, Serbian citizens residing abroad were typically guest workers in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Italy joined this group almost unexpectedly, becoming the fourth most popular migrant destination for Serbian citizens. It is usually a very good idea to compare sources from both sides – immigrant and emigrant – in order to get as reliable picture as possible on the size and, most important, the structure of citizens residing outside the country. By interpreting the results from methodologically different sources of migration data (Serbian and Italian census, Italian population register and immigration flow statistics), we want to provide a deeper insight into the phenomenon of Serbian immigrants in Italy trying to realize if (and how much) this new group of immigrants differs from the traditional ones originating from Serbia and also how specific it is comparing to other new immigrant groups in Italy.

It seems reasonable to expect that Italy will remain a very important destination in the next decades. Serbian nationals immigrating to Italy generally lag behind their compatriots leaving for other new destinations (USA, Canada, United Kingdom) in terms of education level, being closer to those residing in traditional countries of Serbian immigrants (Austria, Germany, France). The increasing percentage of female immigrants from Serbia to Italy points to one of the most important Italian pull factors – the population ageing, and the need for domestic female workers while the economic crisis reduces the demand for jobs in several sectors where males are mainly employed (e.g. construction sector) and increases the labour market competition with native workers. Considering the geographical proximity (the majority of Serbian citizens are concentrated in the Northeast of Italy), Italy and Serbia will probably strengthen their connection and will experience the increase of new typologies of migration, such as circular migration.

**Keywords:** immigration, Italy, Serbia, census, population register

## Introduction

During and after the wars in the Western Balkans in the 1990s, a large-scale emigration from Serbia took place (Nikitović, Lukić, 2010). However, despite the political stabilization of the region in the 2000s, the emigration process continued (indeed at lower rates) due to the failure of economic recovery. Consequently, net migration balance of the country varied roughly between  $-10,000$  and  $-15,000$  persons per year during the last decade (ISS, 2013), which supported unfavourable demographic processes – reducing and ageing of the population – induced by long-lasting below-replacement fertility. Emigrants from Serbia are typically younger than the population in the country. Those working in traditional European destinations mostly have low education, while brain drain is considered to be an important part of the emigration flows to overseas countries, which has been renewed since the 1990s (Grupa 484, 2010).

However, Serbia has never had a complex migration policy as an independent country (since 2006) or as a part of former Yugoslavia (ISS, 2013). Furthermore, the role of migration issue as an important driver of population change is not recognized in political, economic, academic nor general public discourse (Rašević et al., 2014). On the other side, population and labour force decline and ageing are considered a quite certain future for Serbia on a long term even by the most optimistic scenarios (Nikitović, 2013; UN, 2015). In that sense, a turn towards positive net migration is not expected to be a plausible scenario at least in the next 20 years. Indeed, a short lasting high volume emigration could be a more realistic future in case of the expected EU accession, as happened to some new member states (Kupiszewski et al., 2012).

Traditional immigration countries for Serbian nationals, such as Germany and Austria, will probably remain the most popular ones in the forthcoming years due to the well-developed migrant networks from the earlier decades. Yet, in the recent period, the number of Serbian citizens residing abroad started to disperse to several new destinations. In comparison with other popular immigration countries, Italy turned up as almost the only one to show an increase in the number of persons arriving from Serbia between 2002 and 2011 according to the Serbian census. Given the expected prevalence of outflows in the future migration pattern of Serbian citizens, it seems relevant to examine if the flow to Italy can become important in terms of size and structure on longer term. By interpreting the results from methodologically different sources of migration data, we want to provide a deeper insight into the phenomenon of Serbian immigrants in Italy trying to realize if (and how much) this new group of immigrants differs from the traditional ones originating from Serbia and also how specific it is comparing to other new immigrant groups in Italy. Consequently, a specific highlight was put on education structure of immigrants.

The absence of population register and statistics on emigration flows points to the population census as the only Serbian source of data on emigrants, i.e. on Serbian citizens residing abroad. The estimation that almost half the number of emigrants from Serbia is not encompassed by the census (ISS, 2013: 16) proved to be realistic in the case of Serbian citizens residing in Italy (23,340 as to the Serbian census vs. 43,608 Italian census). For that reason, using “mirror statistics” from the main destination countries, in spite of its limitations arising from issues on definitions and concepts of migrants and migration, could significantly improve quality of the census data on emigrants particularly in terms of their size and the main demographic labels. The aim of this paper implies using data sources from both sides (emigrant and immigrant) in order to get a more realistic and more comprehensive picture on the Serbian nationals residing in Italy. However, as regarding flow statistics, the main drawback of using Italian sources on recent immigration from Serbia refers to the limited span of time series. The records on Serbian citizenship cannot be traced back further than 2006, when Serbia was recognized as independent state, following the dissolution of the state union with Montenegro (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).<sup>1</sup> Yet, in order to perceive longer time series, which would cover the period of intense inflow of foreigners to Italy, we also considered the data referring to the period of the union as they can help in understanding general immigration trends of Serbian nationals.

## **Immigrant stock from Serbia - Serbian population census**

### **Geographic distribution and length of stay**

Since the mid-1960s, i.e. the period of opening the borders of the former Yugoslavia, four European countries (Germany, Austria, France and Switzerland) have emerged as the most popular destinations for Serbian citizens working/residing abroad (82.5% of all immigrants from Serbia according to the 1971 census).<sup>2</sup> Over time, the range of destinations spread at the expense of the share of Germany and France, thus the five most important according to the Census 2011 were as follows: Austria (22.5% of all emigrants from Serbia), Germany (17.9%), Switzerland (13.1%), Italy (7.4%) and France (6.5%). The share of immigrants from Serbia in Italy shows the highest increase (by 51%) compared to the 2002 Census. It should be noted that the number of persons abroad in 2011 dropped by a quarter compared to 2002, which was partly caused by a somewhat lower coverage in the last census due to the changes in the methodology of collecting data on citizens abroad (ISS, 2013: 41). In 2011, the only

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<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, since 2009 Italian statistics recognizes three different citizenships (Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo) for the population originating from the territory of the former FR Yugoslavia.

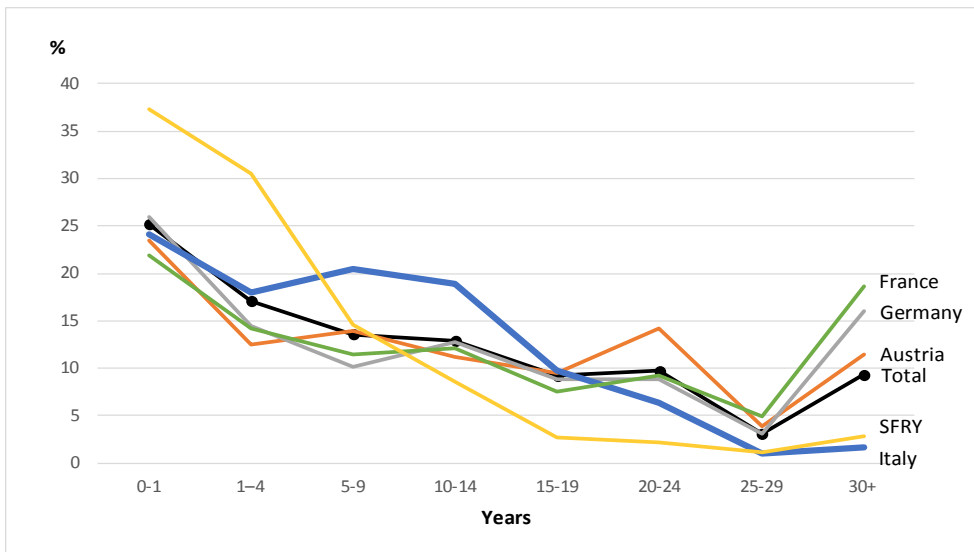
<sup>2</sup> The definition of migrants is in accordance with UNECE recommendations for the 2010 censuses of population.



two destinations in which we found an increase in the absolute number of immigrants from Serbia were Italy and Russia.

Compared to the traditional destination countries, the average length of stay of Serbian citizens in Italy (8.0 years) is shorter by 35-43% (from 12.4 in Austria to 14.0 in France), which puts Italy in the new popular destinations (4.9 in Russia, 7.3 in Hungary, 9.0 in G. Britain). With the exception of those who reside in Italy for less than one year (24.1%), the biggest part of them has been absent from Serbia for 5-9 (20.5%) or 10-14 years (18.9%) (fig. 1).

**Figure 1.** Distribution (%) of emigrants from Serbia according to the length of stay – selected destination countries



Source: our elaboration on Serbian 2011 census data (Stanković, 2014)

### Citizenship, regional and ethnic affiliation

Of all the countries of destination, Italy is ranked highest when it comes to the percentage of citizens of Serbia who have only the citizenship of Serbia (83.1%), which indicates that it is a new emigration. On the other hand, in most of the "old" destinations (and revived overseas destinations) the percentage of people who have only Serbian citizenship is below 50% or up to 60%, referring to the process of assimilation (Stanković, 2014). This indicator can be seen as an indirect evidence of the length of stay, while the differences between countries of destination also reflect differences in their immigration policies. With the exception of the Yugoslav successor states, the second generation of immigrants remains to work and reside in

the host country of their parents. Italy is at the top of the list (94.4%), after Sweden (95.3%) and Austria (95.0%).

In comparison to all the major immigrant destinations for Serbian citizens, the most prominent regional disproportion concerns the migrants who moved to Italy because 62.3% of them come from one region – Southern and Eastern (SE) Serbia. Interestingly, it is the region with the longest tradition in terms of low-skilled labor emigration, which started since the mid-1960s (Penev, Predojević-Despić, 2012). It is the same for emigrants who moved to Austria (58.8% come from SE Serbia, which is 37.4% of all emigrants from this region). Other traditional destinations (Germany, France, Switzerland, Sweden etc.) usually attract emigrants from the central and western part of Serbia, while the regional disproportion is not as pronounced. By far the largest part of those who have emigrated to the United States, Canada and G. Britain (practically one of two emigrants) originates from the region of Belgrade. This is expected because these are the countries that mainly attract highly educated people from Serbia and the region of the capital has the highest percentage of university graduates.

Ethnic groups in Serbia are not all affected in the same way by emigration. Below the average level for the country (4.4% of the total population are emigrants) are Serbs (3.2%), Hungarians (3.0%), Croats (2.9%), Montenegrins (2.0%), etc., while above the average are Vlachs (17.9%), Bosniaks (13.5%), Romanians (9.2%), Muslims (9.0%), Albanians (7.4%) and Roma (6.4%). Demographically younger ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Muslims, Albanians and Roma) joined the emigration process later in comparison to the older ones (Vlachs and Romanians) whose emigration rates were high from the very beginning of the modern intensive emigration that began in the mid-1960s.

Serbs make up 61.9% of the total number of Serbian citizens who reside abroad. States in which the share of Serbs in the total number of Serbian nationals is significantly above this average are as follows: Greece (82.1%), Russia (81.0%), UK (78.8%), USA (77.4%), Canada (76.9%), Australia (73.7%), Italy (71.7%) and Switzerland (71.7%). Besides Switzerland, other listed destinations have become popular in the last two decades. Among other ethnic groups with Serbian citizenship in Italy most common are Vlachs (3.2%) and Roma (2.6%). However, there are a large proportion of persons who have not declared their ethnicity or who have expressed regional affiliation (5.2%), and persons of unknown ethnic characteristics (12.8%). Italy is the fourth destination for Serbs by popularity (8.6%, which is above the share of Italy as a destination for Serbian citizens - 7.4%), while Austria is by far the most popular (21.8%), ahead of Switzerland (15.0%) and Germany (14.3%). Apart from Serbs, Gorani (12.2%), Vlachs (11.8%) and Slovaks (11.1%) are represented in a higher percentage than that for all emigrants with Serbian citizenship in Italy (7.4%).

## Education structure

The largest part of the emigrants with Serbian citizenship has secondary level of education (38.8%), but between the census of 2002 and 2011 there was a significant increase of persons with higher education (from 7.3 to 12.0%). However, even 12.0% of emigrants have unknown educational level, indicating that a good part of that percentage probably refers to highly educated taking into account the meteoric rise of their share and simultaneous fall of the share of persons with elementary level of education in the last ten years.

In terms of brain drain, as the most attractive destinations for Serbian nationals with higher education are the US (15.8% of all highly educated emigrants with Serbian citizenship), Germany (10.4%) and Canada (11.7%), while in Italy there are only 3.9% of them. The smallest share of the highly educated emigrants from Serbia, with the exception of the countries in the region of former Yugoslavia, refers to Greece (1.3%), the Netherlands (2.4%), Australia (2.5%), Russia (2.6%) and Sweden (2.7%). However, if we consider only the most educated segment of immigrants (masters and PhDs) in addition to the US and Germany, stands out only G. Britain. These three countries attract more than half of all PhDs who emigrated from Serbia (31.7%, 10.6% and 9.9%, respectively).

The share of people with tertiary education in the total number of Serbian citizens in Italy (5.2%) is almost half the size of the corresponding share in the total number of emigrants from Serbia (10.8%). In this regard, Italy is most similar to the traditional destinations of emigrants from Serbia: Sweden, France, Germany, Switzerland and Austria. On the other hand, countries with by far the best education structure of emigrants from Serbia are United Kingdom, USA and Canada (table 1).

In relation to the structure of highly educated emigrants with Serbian citizenship, those who moved to Italy have a slightly lower educational level, given a lower proportion of masters (8.4% vs. 11.0%) and PhDs (3.8% vs. 6.9%). By far the best structure of highly educated emigrants from Serbia relates to the US (15.2% masters and 13.8% PhDs), the UK (16.2% and 13.2%) and the Netherlands (12.6% and 11.7%). On the other hand, the lowest proportion of masters and doctors in the population of highly educated emigrants with Serbian citizenship refers to Russia (6.3% and 0.9%), Hungary (4.5% and 5.0%) and Greece (7.6% and 2.7%).

By far the largest proportion of students from Serbia is located in the US (15.8%). When we exclude the high participation of students in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Hungary for ethnic and indigenous reasons (Stanković, 2014), Italy (5.9%) is the most popular destination for students from Serbia right after Germany (8.3%) and Austria (8.1%). However, in case of doctoral studies by popularity dominate the US (20.9%) and Germany (13.2%). In Italy, the largest proportion of students from Serbia were involved in the studies of second degree (50.1%), which is the highest compared to all

the major destinations of students from Serbia, while the percentage of those in doctoral studies (13.8%) was higher only in comparison to the Yugoslav successor states, Russia (13.3%), Austria (9.8%) and Hungary (4.9%).

**Table 1.** Emigrants from Serbia with high education – total number and share

Country of residence	Total number of emigrants	Emigrants with high education	
		Total	Share (%)
Total	313,411	31,580	10.08
Great Britain	3,516	1,632	46.42
USA	13,504	4,976	36.85
Canada	6,226	2,246	36.07
Hungary	5,375	1,378	25.64
Australia	3,760	784	20.85
Greece	2,048	408	19.92
Netherlands	4,189	772	18.43
Russia	5,983	807	13.49
Sweden	10,925	847	7.75
France	20,231	1,387	6.86
Germany	55,999	3,268	5.84
Italy	23,340	1,215	5.21
Switzerland	41,008	1,640	4.00
Austria	70,488	1,353	1.92

*Source:* our elaboration on Serbian 2001 census data

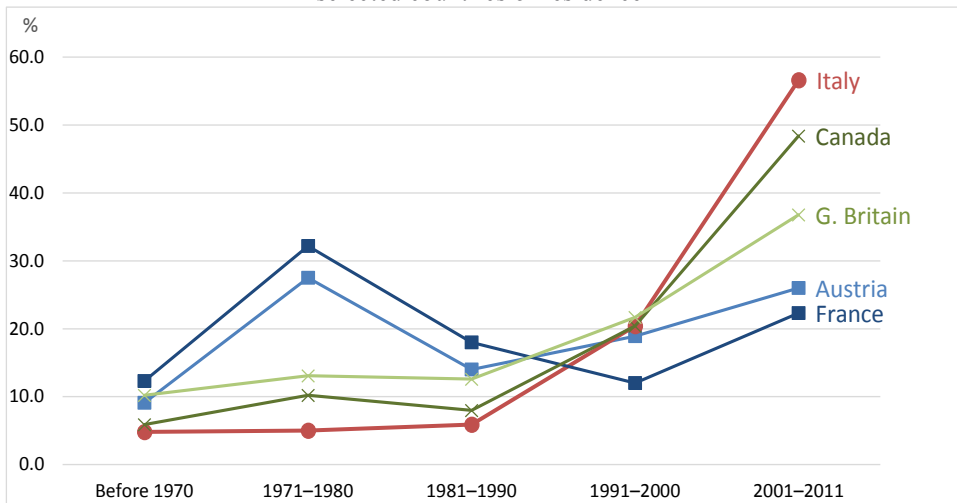
*Note:* Yugoslav successor states and countries with small number of Serbian citizens are not included in the table.

## Returnees

The immigration to Serbia in the recent years mainly consists of Serbian nationals who, once their working careers abroad ended, returned either to enjoy their pension, in case of the first large emigration waves of the late 1960s and early 1970s, or to find a new job in Serbia. These flows originate in the old destination countries such as Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France. The 2011 census registered only 9,243 returnees from Italy or 3.9% of the total number of returnees to Serbia. This share is significantly lower than the share of Serbian citizens in Italy in the total number of emigrants from Serbia, implying that Italy is one of the new destinations of Serbian citizens.

The share of returnees to Serbia across countries of destination in the last decade (2001-2011) is higher than the average for all periods in case of all major destinations except for Austria, Germany and France, while the share of Italy almost doubled (7.5%), which is the highest recorded jump. There may be several reasons for that. One of the most important is that Italy is a new important destination of Serbian citizens with the fastest increase of their share compared to the other popular destinations of emigrants from Serbia, so it is logical that only the last period could register a higher proportion of returnees. This is confirmed by the fact that, in relation to the total number of registered returnees from Italy, a significant proportion refers only to the decade 1991-2000 (20.4%), while culmination occurred between 2001 and 2011 (56.6%) (fig. 2). It is opposed to the peaks of returnees from traditional destinations that took place three decades ago ("oil shock" in 1973), and from 2001 to 2011 (the first major wave of retired returnees). Another important reason is certainly the global economic crisis, which has particularly affected the south of Europe. It probably contributed to the fact that a number of those who planned a long-term stay in Italy was forced to come back much earlier.

**Figure 2.** Distribution of returnees according to the period of return (%), selected countries of residence



Source: our elaboration on Serbian 2011 census data (Stanković, 2014)

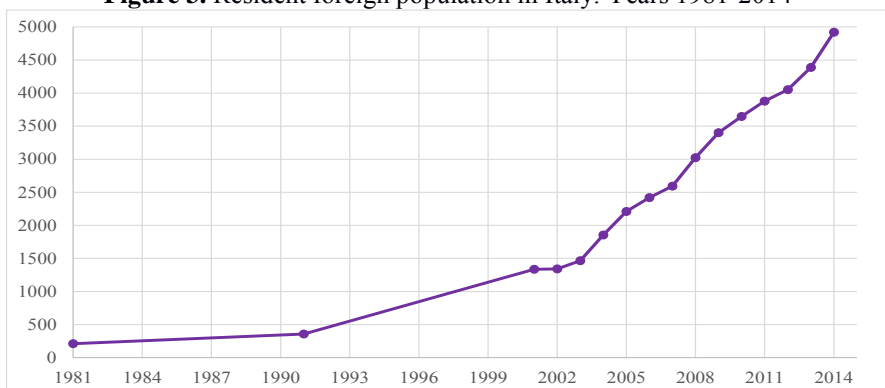
Note: The difference up to 100% refers to unknown period of return.

### Serbian citizens residing in Italy – Italian migration sources

In the case of Italy, after a period of more than a century that pulled out more than 26 million people from the country, a new migration era started as of the 1980s, turning the country into a typical immigrant destination, which resulted in 2.17 million of legal immigrants already between 1993 and 2003 (Bonifazi, 2013). Thus, immigration in

Italy became an important and structured phenomenon as of the 1990's, which increased speedily during the 2000's (fig. 3).

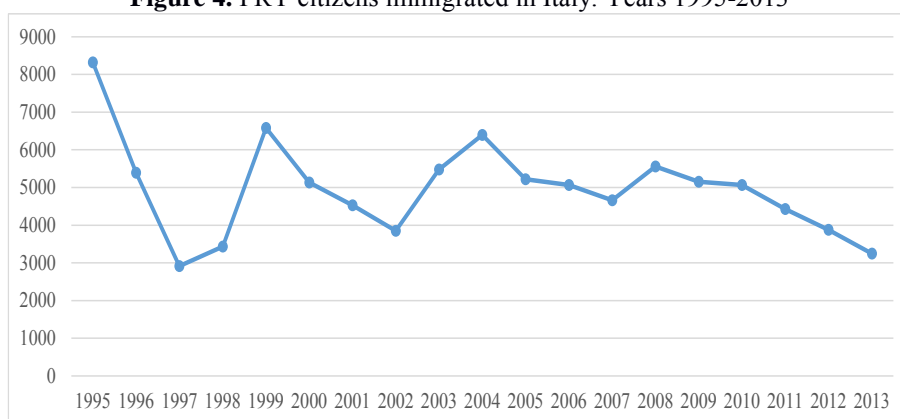
**Figure 3.** Resident foreign population in Italy. Years 1981-2014



Source: our elaboration on Istat data

In the 1990s the majority of the immigration flows from abroad concerned Albanian and Moroccan citizens (Bonifazi, 2007). In the following years, due to the Western Balkan conflicts (the 1991-1995 wars), the immigration from ex-Yugoslavian countries became more relevant (fig. 4) (Bonifazi, Mamolo, 2004). In fact, in the Italian 2001 census the citizens of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)<sup>3</sup> were, in terms of resident population size, the fifth foreign citizenship after Morocco, Albania, Romania and Philippines. Almost 50 thousand out of 1,335 thousand of foreigners in Italy (tab. 2) were FRY citizens.

**Figure 4.** FRY citizens immigrated in Italy. Years 1995-2013



Source: our elaboration on Istat data

<sup>3</sup> It was the federal union of Serbia (including Kosovo) and Montenegro.

**Table 2.** Foreign resident population by citizenship in 2001 and 2011 (Census)

2001		2011	
Citizenship	a.v.	Citizenship	a.v.
Morocco	180,103	Romania	823,100
Albania	173,064	Albania	451,437
Romania	74,885	Morocco	407,097
Philippines	53,994	China	194,510
Rep. Federale di Jugoslavia	49,324	Ucraina	178,534
Tunisia	47,656	Moldova	130,619
China	46,887	Philippines	129,015
Germany	35,091	India	116,797
Senegal	31,174	Perù	93,905
Perù	29,452	Poland	84,619
Francia	29,313	Tunisia	82,066
Ex Rep. Jugoslava di Macedonia	28,073	Ecuador	80,645
Egitto	27,331	Bangladesh	80,639
		Serbia (21°)	43,608
		Kosovo (22°)	41,575
		Montenegro (75°)	2,485
		<i>Total FRY</i>	<i>87,668</i>
Others	528,542	Other	1,086,976
Total	1,334,889	Total	4,027,627

*Source:* our elaboration on Italian Census data

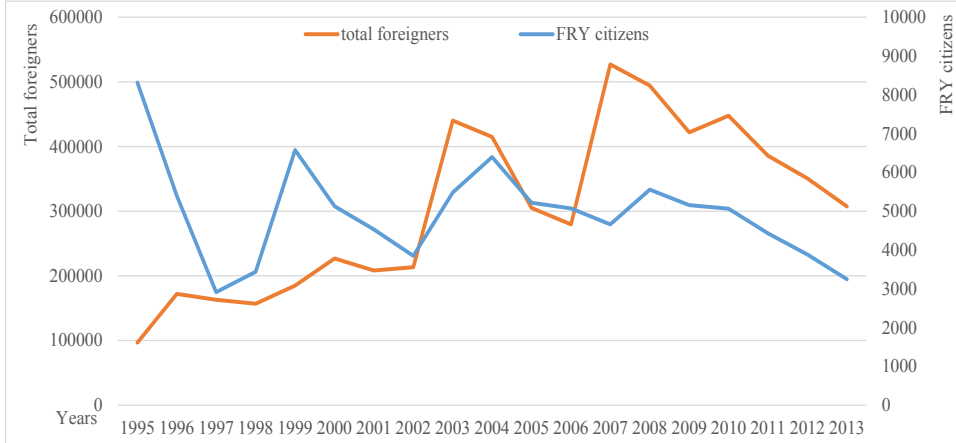
According to the last census (2011), this number increased to 87,668, but now the ex-FRY citizens represent the tenth foreign citizenship. The presence of citizens from the ex-Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (nowadays Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo<sup>4</sup>) became less important in comparison with other foreign citizenships and the percentage of FRY foreigners among the total number of foreigners decreased from 3.7% in 2001 to 2.2% in 2011.

The number of arrivals from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was still relevant at the end of 1990s (following the 1999 NATO bombing of the FRY) and in the mid-2000s. Observing the figure 5, the interesting thing if we compare these arrivals of FRY citizens with the arrivals of all foreigners is that in the first period (1995-1999) the FRY trend seems to follow different patterns of immigration and the push factors seem to be more important. Of course, this result was expected taking into consideration the conflicts and the instability of the political situation in the region. On the other hand, if we consider the following period (2000-2013), the trend of the

<sup>4</sup> It is disputed territory (dominantly populated by ethnic Albanians) under administration of EULEX because Kosovo, being southern Serbian province, unilaterally proclaimed independence from Serbia in February 2008.

arrivals of ex-FRY citizens seems to be more “in line” with the total arrivals of foreigners and the pull factors seem to be prevalent.

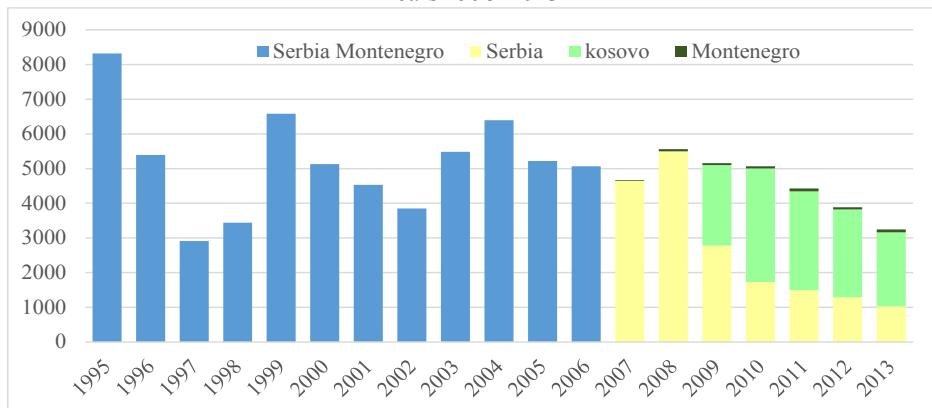
**Figure 5.** Arrivals in Italy of FRY citizens and total foreign citizens. Years 1995-2013



Source: our elaboration on Istat data

Following the dates of forming new states on the territory of former FRY, Istat is able to distinguish among three different citizenships of immigrants (fig. 6). Considering the immigration flows by single citizenships, we can note that Kosovo in comparison with Serbia and Montenegro during the last years became the most important citizenship in terms.

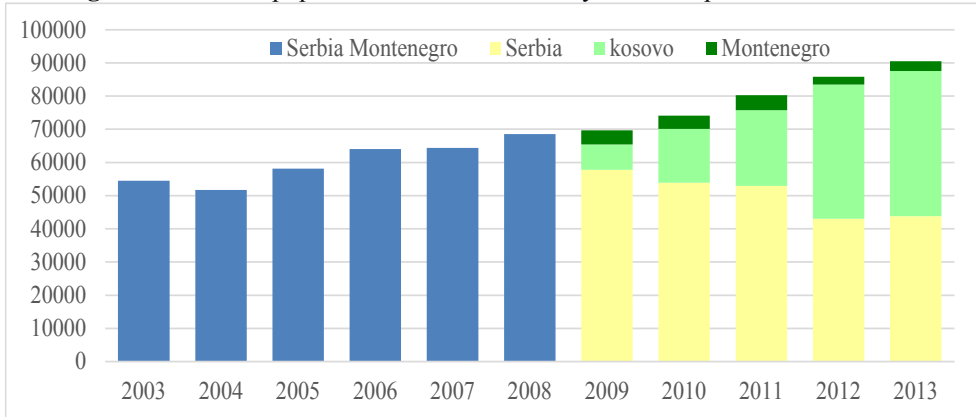
**Figure 6.** Registration in the Italian population register of FRY citizens by citizenship. Years 1995-2013



Source: our elaboration on Istat data

Nevertheless, if we consider the stock data, the number of Serbian citizens is still the highest in spite of a decrease of its share (fig. 7).



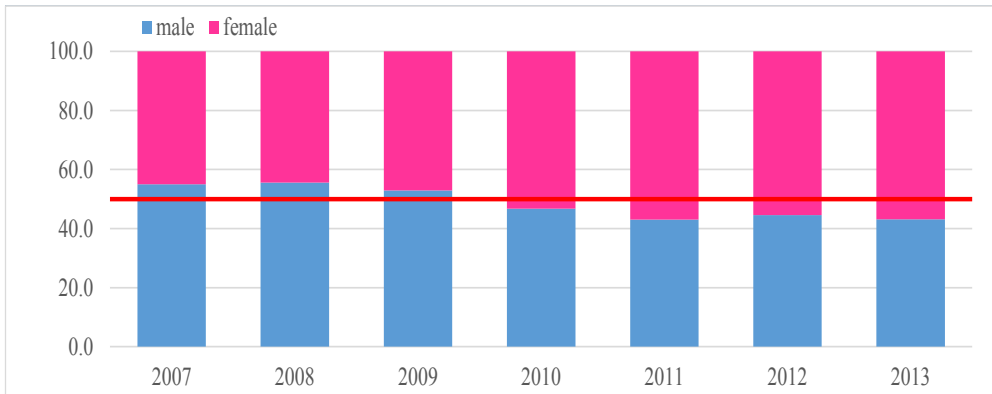
**Figure 7.** Resident population of FRY citizens by citizenship. Years 2003-2013

Source: our elaboration on Istat data

Unfortunately, it is not possible to consider only Serbian citizens residing in Italy in the period prior to 2009 due to the territorial changes that affected the statistics according to citizenship. Yet, if we take into account the rising trend of this population between 2002 and 2011 as to the last two Serbian censuses, we can assume that its recent decline recorded in Italian population register (2009-2013) could be of short-term nature, similarly to the trend of total arrivals of foreigners (fig. 5), possibly as the effect of the economic crisis. On the other side, the rise of immigrants from Kosovo particularly in the first couple of years after the province has declared independence from Serbia in 2008 could be also the result of a lag caused by the replacement of Serbian passports with documents issued by new authorities in Kosovo (Kupiszewski et al., 2012: 103). Thus, a certain number of immigrants from Kosovo had to use passports indicating a Serbian citizenship, which surely affected accuracy of the data according to citizenship in the period just after 2008.

If we consider only Serbian immigration flows, the proportion of female immigrants increased from 45% in 2007 to 57% in 2013. This dynamic has also had a strong impact on the proportion of the Serbian female resident population that increased from 44.7% at 1.1.2007 to 50.1% at 1.1.2013.

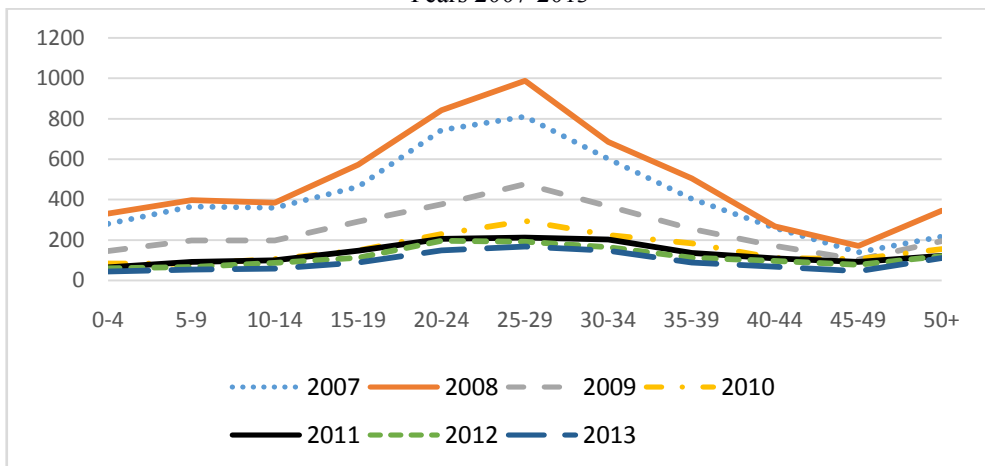
**Figure 8.** Registration in the Italian population register of Serbian citizens by sex. Years 2007-2013



Source: our elaboration on Istat data

The age distribution highlights that the majority of the Serbian immigrants arrive in Italy between 25 and 29 years old except for 2011 and 2012 (fig. 9). The peak is more evident in the first years of arrivals (2007-2009). During the last years, the age distribution is less concentrated on the younger classes of age. The sex ratio and the age distribution in 2013 are a clear sign of an increasing stabilization of the resident Serbian population in Italy which is not a young male phenomenon anymore, but involves both sex and different class of ages.

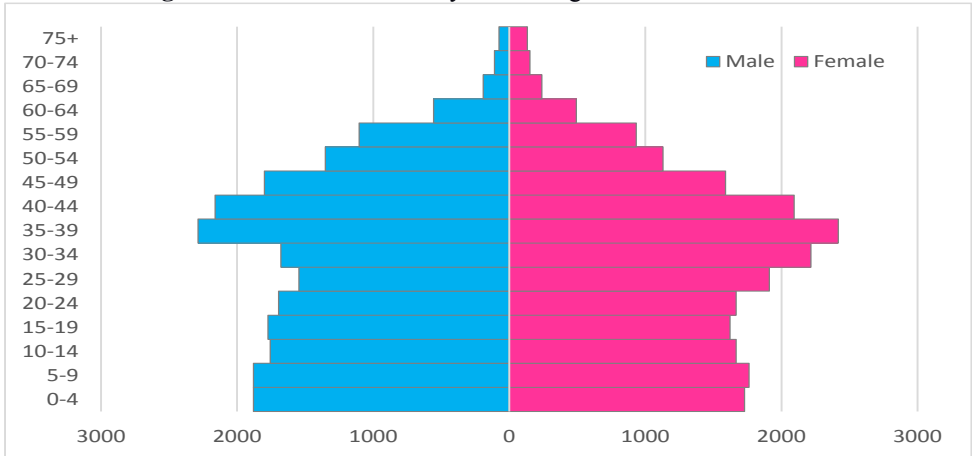
**Figure 9.** Registration in the Italian population register of Serbian citizens by class of age. Years 2007-2013



Source: our elaboration on Istat data

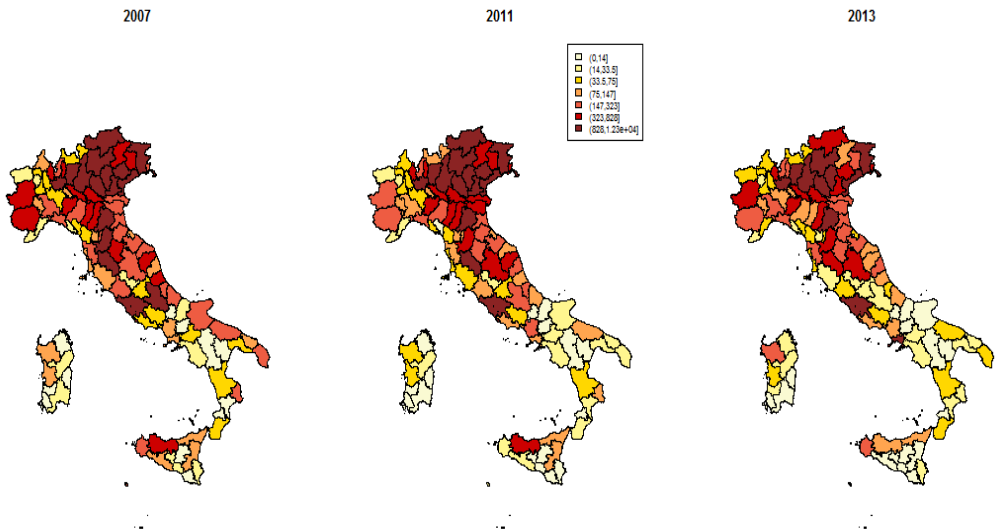
In particular, according to the census data, Serbian resident population shows a young population with a large number of people in the first classes of age (0-4 and 5-9 years).

**Figure 10.** Serbian citizens by class of age and sex. 2011 Census



Source: our elaboration on Istat data

**Figure 11.** Resident population of Serbian citizens by province in Italy. Years 2007, 2011, 2013



As regarding the regional distribution, Serbian citizens prefer to settle in the Nord-East of the country, which implies that geographic proximity is the main factor of location.

## Conclusion

Italy has become an immigration country since the 1980s. The conflicts in the region of former Yugoslavia during the 1990s contributed to massive immigration flows towards Italy during the following years. It turns out that the new migrant destination has been established since then, particularly in the case of Serbian citizens. Yet, Serbian nationals immigrating to Italy generally lag behind their compatriots leaving for other new destinations (USA, Canada, United Kingdom) in terms of education level, being closer to those residing in traditional countries of Serbian immigrants (Austria, Germany, France). Given the observed trends as well as the needs of Italian labor market, it seems that Italy will continue to compete with traditional destinations rather than with new ones in terms of education attainment of Serbian immigrants.

According to the recent foresight exercise by Serbian experts on migration issues, the no return migration outflows from Serbia to overseas destinations (USA, Australia) that renewed during the 1990s are considered as a general pattern of emigration from the country. Thus, emigrants from Serbia will strive to permanently settle down even in close European destinations, such as Italy, unlike the case of typical working emigration (guest workers) to Germany between 1960s and 1980s (Rašević et al., 2014). The Serbian census data indicates that such a perspective seems possible, but there is still not enough evidence to support it.

If we consider the Serbian migration to Italy from the viewpoint of Italian statistics, the composition of this migration flow changed over time. The migration flows are concentrated in the younger classes of age (25-29 and 20-24) and the percentage of males is decreasing. Indeed, one of the peculiarities of the recent flows to Italy is the increasing percentage of females due to a strong demand for caregivers. The increasing percentage of females from Serbia to Italy generated a more balanced gender composition of the Serbian resident population in Italy. This happens because one of the most important Italian pull factor is the ageing process of the population and the need of domestic female workers while the economic crisis reduces the demand for jobs in several sectors where male are mainly employed (e.g. construction sector) and increases the labor market competition with native workers.

The recent political and economic crisis forced many Serbian citizens to leave the country. This tendency will undoubtedly continue in the forthcoming period as it is induced by deep-rooted drivers that change slowly. From a demographic point of view, the size of the outflows could be, indeed, significantly depleted due to intensified population ageing and lack of labor force in Serbia. On the other hand, also considering the geographical proximity (the majority of Serbian citizens are concentrated in the Northeast of Italy), Italy and Serbia will probably strengthen their connection and will experience the increase of new kinds of migration, such as circular migration. In that sense, monitoring and managing migration processes between the

two countries remains a specific challenge in terms of both data quality and policy implications.

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