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Migrations, populism and the crisis of globalization: an introduction

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Over the last two decades, and especially in recent years, migration has become a central and highly conflictual issue in political and economic debates (Chouliaraki et al., 2017; Georgiou and Zaborowski, 2017). The most critical aspects, not only because of the many border deaths that it implies but also because of the documented strongly upward biased perception of the share of immigrants by the population of developed countries (OECD, 2013), refer to migrations from African and Asian countries towards Europe and from Latin and Central American countries towards the United States, but also to intra-European migrations, from Eastern to Western Europe, and to other intra-continental movements. It should be observed, however, that the highest share of world migrants originates from high-income countries (64%), while only 4% originates from low-income countries and that, just to provide some other not so well-known figures, while in 2017 about 9 million migrants in Europe originated from Africa, 19 million African migrants moved within Africa itself and 15 million Europeans moved to North America (8 million) and Asia (7 million) (United Nations, 2017).

Some countries have been successful so far in controlling human mobility through the application of restrictive and selective migration policies that, however (as in the case of Japan or Australia, for example), have been effective mainly because of the natural barriers provided by their geographic location. In other circumstances, such as the Euro-Mediterranean and the US-Mexico border zones, more restrictive policies enforced through the externalization and the militarization of controls did not prevent people from migrating: they rather produced more irregular and dangerous journeys, related to more deaths and to extensive violations of human rights (Cuttitta and Last, 2020).

In current debates, an overwhelming stress has been put on the "negative effects" attributed to "uncontrolled" migrations, mainly seen as a problem of

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security and a menace to welfare in destination countries. These alarming discourses, which tend to criminalize migrants as such, are often included among the main causes of the Brexit (see for example Dustmann et al., 2005; Della Posta and Rehman, 2017; 2020) and, in general, as a key feature of "Trumpism", populism (Rodrik, 2018), new racism and nationalism. In turn, these narratives can be seen as part of a broader process of a more general "crisis of globalization". As a matter of fact, many authors are explicitly referring to the current socio-economic phase - started well before the COVID-19 pandemic - as a phase of "deglobalization" (see, for example, Crouch, 2018, and Della Posta, 2018; 2020a; 2020b).

Nevertheless, the picture seems to be changing again as populism appears to be in retreat, at least in the US. The new President, Joe Biden, is committed to build a "fair and humane immigration system" upholding laws humanely and preserving "the dignity of immigrant families, refugees, and asylum-seekers". He recognizes that irregular migration from the Northern Triangle countries of Central America cannot be effectively addressed if solutions only focus on border enforcement. The better answer lies, from his perspective, in addressing the "root causes" that push people to flee their homes in the first place: endemic violence and insecurity, lack of economic opportunity, and corrupt governance.

On the one hand, it is too soon to evaluate the effects of this political turn, not only in America but also in Europe. On the other hand, in order to assess ongoing and future changes in migration governance, it is crucial to properly understand the populist momentum and its deep causes. To this aim, we might preliminarily conceptualize the link between populism and immigration as the result of a more general political strategy: diverting fear and unease, generated by unfair globalization processes and rising socio-economic inequalities, against ethnic minorities, people on the move and other "dangerous subjects", represented as a menace to the wellbeing, the security, and the way of life of Western countries (Oliveri 2017; 2020).

Having this background in mind, the present issue aims to entangle the complex links between migrations, populism and the crisis of globalization. The papers collected here provide a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach, which is crucial in dealing with such multi-faceted phenomena, involving many different dimensions, and encompassing many different spatial scales, from the local to the global.

First of all, migrations raise legal and ethical issues that can be synthesized in the paradox that while capital is allowed to flow freely across the world, labor -

the other most relevant factor of production - is not (this point was raised already by Della Posta, 2009). Such questions emerge also in the distinction that is often made between economic migrants and refugees, as if people who live in a situation of absolute poverty and deprivation should not be given the possibility to look for a decent existence for their families and for themselves. Those aspects are accompanied by harsh dilemmas relative to the 'best' immigration policies to be adopted by the destination countries, to the sacredness of life to be defended at all costs in the case of an emergency, and to the relation between humanitarian interventions and migrations trends. Focusing on the Mediterranean area, although available data show that there is no evident relationship between the presence of NGOs at sea and the number of migrants leaving Libyan shores (Cusumano and Villa, 2019), it is worth to reflect on the involuntary ambivalent signals that humanitarian intervention could provide to actual and potential migrants.

Secondly, migrations raise social issues, including those relative to the effects that immigration and the resulting ethnic diversity (together with the cultural and religious ones) may have on the social capital of destination countries. Putnam (2007), Rhys (2008), Belton et al. (2014), among others, argue that ethnic diversity resulting from the inflow of migrants within a country would put the social cohesion of the destination communities at risk, reducing their social attitude and their levels of trust and altruism. Such an inflow would also threaten the maintenance of their traditions and specific identity, in their multiple meanings, and would generate a feeling of uneasiness, insecurity and fear that is often resented by some sectors of the resident population with the arrival of new immigrants.

On the one hand, however, the conclusions reached by Putnam (2007) have been completely reversed by Abascal and Baldassarri (2015). Using the same dataset used by Putnam, they show that it is the income of migrants, rather than the color of their skin, that determines the hostility of the localpopulation. Letki (2008) and Gesthuizen et al. (2009) reach a similar conclusion, respectively analyzing the effects of the racial context on various dimensions of social capital in British neighborhoods, and considering economic inequality and historical background, rather than ethnic diversity. On the other hand, migration experiences are highly influenced by the socio-economic and political environments that they find in destination countries. In this respect, the capability approach has been used by the related literature to link the migration experience to social and political issues (Risse, 2009; Bonfanti, 2014; Preibisch et al., 2014). Further investigations are needed on these issues, especially on the hidden implications of so-called "civic integration policies" in terms of

discrimination, subordinate inclusion and assimilation (Carbone, Gargiulo and Russo Spena, 2018).

Thirdly, migrations raise linguistic, cultural and religious issues, due to the fact that different languages, habits, traditions and religions have to live side by side. As a matter of fact, new labor forces entering a country imply the entrance of new and diverse people. This can be summarized by the well-known phrase of the Swiss-German writer Max Frisch, originally referring to the Turkish immigration in Germany in the years following World War II: "We asked for workers, but human beings came". In this regard, hosting countries can be seen as systems with their own characteristics and traditional rules (von Bertalanffy, 1968) where new people enter, interact and introduce their specific cultural capital. We are now growingly living in a super-diverse society, built on a "dynamic interplay of variables" related to "multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants" (Vertovec, 2007). If this leads the system into a new and more complex equilibrium, or into a disequilibrium, much depends on the implemented policies and the political capacity of recognizing the value of diversity and integrating it into the overall cultural capital.

Fourthly, migrations raise political issues resulting once more from the consequences of human mobility on the perceptions and feelings of the people living in destination countries, and represented by the spreading of new forms of populism, nationalism, and racism. Such phenomena may well have to do with the fear that immigration, especially when represented as an "invasion" or even as an "ethnic substitution" strategy, may increase crime and even terrorism. Although the positive empirical correlation between immigration and crime is highly controversial, there exists some evidence on an opposite causal relation: it has been estimated that immigrant legalization programs exert a positive effect on crime reduction (Pinotti, 2017), highlighting the criminogenic effects of restrictive immigration policies. In any case, questions of this kind should be always addressed in an informed, scientific and non-emotional way, an approach which is increasingly rare today.

Finally, economic issues must be taken into account, because of the positive and negative effects that migrations may have. As a matter of fact, potentially negative effects may affect countries of origin in terms of arm brain and brain drain that could undermine their future development opportunities (Beine et al., 2001; Garcia Pires, 2015). Potential harmful effects may occur also in destination countries, in terms of competition with local unskilled workers, threat to the economic and social standards resulting from decades of negotiations

between unions and employers, and conflict in the access to shrinking social rights.

At the same time, however, there are undeniable positive economic aspects of immigration for both countries of origin and destination (Borjas, 1995). Origin countries receive from migrants significant amounts of remittances, that can be fruitfully channeled to support economic activities, development and growth (Rodrik, 1999, 2002, 2018b). Moreover, the incentive of acquiring better possibilities of migrating can encourage people to invest more in education and, in the long run, this can result into brain gain (for a review of the relevant literature, see Mayr and Peri, 2008). In parallel, destination countries are allowed to satisfy the manpower needs of many agricultural and manufacturing sectors together with the many other needs resulting from their falling demographic trends. It is a fact that most migrants fill in some occupational gaps in destination countries, accepting to do jobs that native residents have often abandoned, such as for example elderly care takers or manual workers in relatively dangerous, stressful or 'hard' sectors. Migration can thus remedy the lack of both skilled and unskilled workers in specific segments of domestic labor markets (see Fasani et al., 2020) and compensate, at least in the short-medium run, for demographic imbalances. As for possible negative effects, research shows a small impact of overall immigration on the employment and unemployment rates of native workers and suggests that immigration has small impacts also on average wages, although these impacts are not evenly distributed: low-waged workers are more likely to lose, while medium and high-paid workers are more likely to gain (Dustmann et al., 2013).

Last but not least, accurate data analyses and reflections are needed in the domain of reception of asylum seekers in Europe. Experts identify structural weaknesses and shortcomings in the design of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). A study by the EPRS estimates high costs due to the lack of an efficient and fair European system (the so-called 'costs of non-Europe') in terms of tragic lives losses, of lacking human rights protection and of socio-economic costs. The reasons are constant presence of mechanisms that keep migration irregular, lack of accountability in external action, inefficiencies and discriminations in asylum procedures, poor living conditions, and reduced employment possibilities leading to lower creation of tax revenue (Van Ballegooij and Navarra, 2018).

Considering the points made above, the CISP (Centro Interdisciplinare "Scienze per la Pace") at the University of Pisa, the academic journal Scienza e Pace/Science and Peace, the AISSEC (Associazione Italiana per lo Studio dei

Sistemi Economici Comparati) and the GLO (Global Labor Organization) has invited scholars and experts (economists, historians, lawyers, philosophers, political scientists, sociologists and social science scholars in general) to present their works and findings in a workshop entitled "Migrations, populism and the crisis of globalization". Unfortunately, the workshop did not take place because of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the accepted works have been collected in the present issue.

A short presentation of the contributions contained in this issue is provided below.

In her paper Matilde Rosina addresses the role played by information on potential decisions of irregular migration to Europe. According to the author, given the increased global outreach of information and communication technologies on one side, and the European efforts in deterring illegal migration on the other side, one may expect a reasonable amount of accurate information to be detained by potential migrants and influencing their behavior. However, the research, based on primary sources related to Italy and France and secondary sources in the available literature, shows that this expectation is seriously challenged by available evidence. It emerges that migrants' degree of information may be very limited, imperfect or even irrelevant in relation to the "decision" to migrate. This leads to new reflections on the drivers of migration decisions, on the real impact of deterring migration policies, and on the uneven diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICT) in developing countries.

Giuseppina Talamo stresses in her research the strict correlation between migrations, vulnerability, and health issues, starting from the intuitive observation that the more people are sensitive (and the less they are reactive), for example, to climate and environmental changes, the more migrations are likely to happen. In turn, the degree of vulnerability is increased by poverty and health risk, the clearest example of which is represented, of course, by the Covid-19 pandemic. She urges scholars and policymakers to take the complex implications between migration, vulnerability and global health into account, considering in particular the effects that climatic-environmental issues may have on them.

In reference to her extensive field experience, D'Agnolo Vallan analyses migration as a system and focuses on the interdependence of institutional politics, individual choices, knowledge, information and perceptions. More specifically, the systemic approach consists in the application of the systems

theory which allows, among other things, to analyze migration and hosting countries as systems made of institutions, inhabitants, formal rules and social behaviors. This approach helps to detect coexistence and interaction of different dimensions of migration phenomena, and support the development of integrated and context-specific immigration, socio-economic and cultural policies. Moreover, by employing the main principles of the systems theory (such as non-additivity, equifinality, interdependence and systemic equilibrium) to migration, the author shows and discusses how the use of the systemic approach can contribute to understand some of the main migration-related issues and to develop, manage and implement efficient migration policies and actions.

Anna Malandrino explores the importance of multicultural and multilingual education in contemporary diverse societies, arguing that this crucial dimension has been largely neglected by scholars on public policy and by decision-makers themselves. Her work presents different perspectives by which multilingual education should be approached. Firstly, she provides an overview of the economic, social and legal angles involved in the discourse; subsequently she proposes an investigation of the implications for the administration and public policy, with a particular focus on teachers.

Gabriele Restelli addresses the policies recently introduced by most European countries to respond to the growing concerns raised by migration among natives. As for the effectiveness of such restrictive policies, however, he observes that the existing literature usually ignores the effects of such measures on irregular migrations. Taking that into account and considering an innovative way to estimate irregular flows through the Central Mediterranean Route between 2003 and 2016, allows him to conclude that such stricter rules are only partially effective, since their main result is to increase the number of asylum seekers, while leaving unaffected the volume of irregular migrants.

Tom Montel explores the possible tensions between Europeanisation of borders, migration policies and national sovereignty, by analyzing tactics of bordering promoted by national-populists in the wake of the 2015 "migration crisis" with the Dublin Regulation, the EU legal framework governing the allocation of asylum seekers across member States. He concludes that the Common European Asylum System might be, in some respect, highly needed for enacting national sovereignty in the Schengen context. Whereas EU asylum policies are often attacked by populists in public debates in the name of "re-nationalising" the management of asylum flows against an ineffective and/or unfair EU governance, they might have paradoxically relied on the wide usage of dataveillance instruments offered by the EU itself. In fact, not only the

biometric database related to Dublin Regulation (the EURODAC) enables national authorities to diminish the number of applicants for whom they are deemed responsible: it may also be used in a variety of ways for setting administrative traps against other categories of third country nationals. Through these lenses, the author highlights some telling ambivalences of Eurosceptic parties in their relation to the Common European Asylum System.

Paolo Ramazzotti discusses the economic determinants of "new racism" affecting migrants and their descendants in contemporary Italy. He contends that contemporary racism is a complex phenomenon that emerged over the last twenty-thirty years in the frame of the degrading quality of life and working conditions determined by neoliberalism. From this perspective, racism results from in-group/out-group dynamics: native people are encouraged to seek scapegoats that may account for declining economic and social conditions, growing inequalities and lacking opportunities of social mobility. Contrary to other economic theories, this paper tries to explain the strong and peculiar resurgence of ethno-nationally motivated discrimination in the last decades, rather than assuming a simple continuity with previous forms of racism. The author reconstructs Italian shift to neoliberalism in the 1990s by describing both the change in the balance of power between business and unions, in connection with economic and labor market policies that reinforced this change. Such institutional change affected people's relational identities and reduced spaces for social conflicts and participation, while increasing the scope for categorical identities: all these processes, in connection with xenophobic public discourses, have been crucial in the diffusion of racist feelings and attitudes across the country.

Enzo Rossi and Luca Vitali observe that European countries, over the last twenty years, aimed at harmonizing the legal system and setting common standards on asylum, while pursuing at the same time self-centered "beggar-thy-neighbor" policies. More specifically, according to their research covering the 2006-2018 period, general migration policies affect first entry flows into the EU, while integration policies and welfare measures adopted by the different EU countries determine their "secondary movements" within the EU.

By analyzing migration from the perspective of the capability approach, Matteo Belletti, Mario Biggeri and Federico Ciani analyze the evolution of the multidimensional well-being and capabilities of migrants during their migration experience and, in this regard, assess the role played by the reception system in Italy. In particular, through the adoption of innovative participatory methods, the authors investigate three case studies observed between 2015 and 2019.

The first case study is based on a participatory research made in two Extraordinary Reception Centres (CAS) in Tuscany; the second case study involves asylum seekers and holders of international protection hosted in five CAS and one facility of the System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) in Piedmont; the third case study focuses on holders of international protection hosted a SPRAR facility in Tuscany. The analysis represents an outstanding example of how a participatory capability-based methodology can be effectively used to examine the evolution of migrants' well-being during the migration experience, and to support the development of fairer reception policies.

Michela Franceschelli and Giovanni Angioni examine the political situation in Southern Italy, arguing that migration plays a relevant role in fostering the appeal of populist platforms, but in relation to socio-economic inequalities and the history of local areas. On the one hand, the surge of populism across Western countries is strongly related to migratory issues, which have been highly politicized, with migrants accused of causing the loss of jobs and the poor performance of welfare and health services. On the other hand, the importance of the local dimension in alimenting racism and xenophobia has been often underestimated. By taking Southern Italy as a case study, the authors claim that while migration is a key factor in explaining tendency towards populism, a more complex picture must be taken into consideration. Perceptions and experiences of inequality, a sense of dissatisfaction and resentment, and a general feeling of distance between the "central Italian State" and "the South" make natives understand their everyday life in a peculiar way: they don't trust "traditional" parties and political movements any more, while feeling attracted by populism and expressing their unease in new xenophobic terms.

Valeria Nanni and Mario Biggeri contributed to the issue with the research on the socio-economic effects of the 2018 Immigration and Security Decree-Law in Tuscany. They consider the heavy criticism expressed by civil society organizations on the Decree-Law, as a legislation aimed at lowering protection standards for asylum seekers, while violating human rights and intensifying social tensions on migration. The authors develop a conceptual framework in order to analyze the Decree-Law's effects on the local level, more specifically on the reception and integration of asylum seekers and refugees. They apply the framework to the Tuscany Region, chosen as a case study for its well-known welfare model and dense social capital network. The authors also use the results of this assessment in order to formulate proposals for action at local and regional levels, aimed at policy-makers and non-governmental organizations.

In conclusion, we hope that the papers collected in this special issue will inspire further thoughts and research on contemporary migration and its wide-ranging implications, within the frame of the multiple - environmental, social, sanitarian - crises we are living through. We are fully aware that there are still many questions that still need to be answered: how can populism, nationalism, racism, and classism, often linked to migrations, be faced? Are there viable alternatives to the current migration governance based on border controls and selections? What would a global society based on the free movement of people look like? How are these alternatives linked with a structural change in the socio-economic model, inspired by environmental, social, intergenerational justice? What kind of collective actors, institutions, organizations would be interested in these kinds of changes, and able to implement them? To acknowledge migrations as a mirror reflecting ourselves and our society will help us to find the way out of the labyrinth.

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