

Migrimage presents: Massive Open Online Courses.

Capsule number 1: **INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT, HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**
MAIN ROUTES TO ITALY, MIGRATION HISTORY, POPULATION

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In the global framework of international migration, Europe is the main entry channel into the West for many migrants. The history of migration in this continent has a more than secular trend.

In the last thirty years, political, economic, social and cultural events changed the international relations, triggering previously unthinkable migratory dynamics.

Three events were decisive: the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989; the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the disintegration of Yugoslavia between 1990 and 1992.

The Maastricht Treaty, the Agreement and the Convention of Schengen introduced the principle of free movement between the EU countries. This led to the hope of a cosmopolitan citizenship without internal borders. But at the same time it generated the strengthening of borders, also to stem the new flows of migrants, no longer just economic ones.

This policy was established in 2004 with the creation of the Frontex agency in order to identify common criteria for controlling the EU borders. And its effects have mostly hit non-EU migrants.

There are three main migratory routes to Italy:

- From Libya, departing from the coastal areas of Tripoli, Sabratha, Zawija and Zuwara;
- From Tunisia, departing from the coastal areas of Mahdia, Sfax and Zarsis;
- From Turkey, by sailing ships or makeshift fishing boats.

According to the Italian Ministry of the Interior, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM), as of 30 November 2021, 62,941 migrants landed in Italy (34,000 had been in 2020; 11,500 in 2019, but over 100,000 per year between 2015 and 2017). Among these, 74% are men; 19% are minors and 7% are women.

Arrivals from the sub-Saharan area and the Horn of Africa are in sharp decline. Nowadays, the main nationalities are: Tunisia 24%; Egypt 13%; Bangladesh 12%; Iran 6%; Ivory Coast 6%; Iraq 4%; Guinea 4%; Syria 3%; Eritrea 3%; Morocco 3%; other nations 22%.

But there are also many migrants who have been intercepted at sea and brought back by the Libyan coast guard: in 2021 alone there were 28,600.

Unfortunately, the number of dead and missing cannot be that precise. Official news states that from 2014 to 2019 around 22,000 people died in the Mediterranean Sea. But in 2/3 of the cases the body was never found either in water or on the coasts. From January to November 2021, over 1,315 people died at sea or "missing" in the central Mediterranean attempting to reach Europe.

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