



European Network Against Racism

**ENAR SHADOW REPORT  
2002**

***ITALY***

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Edited by Camilla Bencini and Anna Meli.  
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## 1. National context

It is still said about Italy that it is a country of recent immigration, although the migration phenomenon is nearly thirty years old. Relatively recent is the collective growing consciousness, both in terms of public opinion and the institutions, of the stability of the phenomenon and the consequent need for policies for social inclusion and the defence and extension of rights of migrants, refugees and ethnic minorities. The first law with the aim of regulating the phenomenon dates back to 1986<sup>1</sup>, while nearly twenty years later, and after slow and gradual achievements regarding the rights of citizenship for migrants, today we witness a clear withdrawal in this respect, with the passing of the Bossi-Fini Law<sup>2</sup>. This law is the result of a constant underestimation of the phenomenon, which is reputed (or desired to be) fleeting and transitory, and of xenophobic impulses which are collected and fed at a political level by some of the political parties in the governing coalition and particularly by the Lega Nord, which was the first supporter of the current law.

Clearly contrasting with this alarming legislative context is the analysis of the data on the presence of migrants and the flows of people entering Italy. With a regular presence of about 1,600,000 foreign nationals, 2.8% of the population, Italy is confirmed as a country with a very low level of migrants (one foreigner for every 38 native residents)<sup>3</sup>.

The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the evolution which has taken place over the last 10 years also highlights the presence of migrants, due to work and the possibility for effective integration in the labour market, as well as the substantial increase in immigrant populations as a consequence of family reunion and a large number of minors. These are all factors which together underline the trend towards a stable settlement.

Further confirmation of this trend towards stability is provided by the figures on length of residence for migrant populations, which has gradually increased in the last 10 years. Today it is calculated that 54.2% of migrants usually resident in Italy have been living in the country for longer than five years<sup>4</sup>. Paradoxically, in spite of this data, in Italy the right to vote, even in local elections, is denied to non-EU nationals and Roma.

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<sup>1</sup> Act no. 943 of 30/12/1986 – “Legislation on the issue of placing and treatment of non-EU immigrant workers and against clandestine immigration”.

<sup>2</sup> Act of 30 July 2002 n.189 “Amendment to the legislation pertaining to immigration and asylum” known as the Bossi-Fini Law.

<sup>3</sup> Caritas-Migrantes “Immigration- Statistical dossier- XII report on Immigration in Italy” – Nuova Anterem - October 2002.

Finally, the data on the steady rise in births to migrant couples<sup>5</sup>, like the data on the schooling of pupils without Italian citizenship<sup>6</sup>, demonstrates once again a constantly increase in the number of migrants, but with a trend towards permanent settling and now stable migrating routes.

In view of these data, the contrast with a legislation and policies aimed at making living in Italy unstable for migrants<sup>7</sup> appears to be even more contradictory. Such measures, besides rendering migrants more exposed to incidents of discrimination and racism, increase their sense of insecurity and deny the social aspirations of the younger generations.

The progressive dramatising of the migration phenomenon, the concepts of “invasion” as a source of insecurity for native Italians, of “clandestinity” as being synonymous with criminality, emphasised and fed (consciously and unconsciously) by the majority of the Italian media, have become major themes in every election campaign, used extensively by the right wing parties and, occasionally, contested by the moderate left wing parties.

Parallel to the scarce and depressing legislative and institutional context, mainly at a national level, the NGOs and antiracist associations have worked at a local and national level with numerous projects and initiatives, which are also cited in the text, with the aim of documenting, denouncing discrimination and promoting positive actions for the recognition of rights and equal opportunities for people of migrant origin in Italy.

Among the Italian associations committed to the fight against racism, associations formed predominantly by immigrants are continuing to grow in number and in terms of accountability. Together with those which belong to ENAR Italia, these organisations have collaborated in organising events of great importance, such as the national demonstration against the Bossi-Fini Law, organised in Rome in January 2002, and the European Social Forum in Florence (November 2002), where there were several debates on the human rights of ethnic minorities in Italy.

## **2. Methodology and the lack of specialised bodies**

The information and data which relate to cases of discrimination and racism are still collected in Italy almost exclusively by the associations and universities and research institutes which study migration.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> It is estimated that the birth rate among foreigners in Italy is greater than 2% - source: Giancarlo Blangiardo – ISMU – Seventh Report on migration 2001- Milan , Franco Angeli, 2002

<sup>6</sup> In six years the number of students without Italian citizenship has nearly tripled (+192%) according to the Ministry of Education “Students without Italian citizenship. State and non-state schools” June 2001.

<sup>7</sup> In the current law (named Bossi-Fini after its promoters).

This report is therefore based essentially on research made in the academic field into the different aspects and areas of discrimination on the basis of race, and on a number of press articles, local reports and dossiers which are produced by associations and NGOs committed to the migration issue.

We have tried to organise and arrange the data systematically to give a picture which is as representative as possible of Italian reality, although there is still a lack of relevant data about many areas of southern Italy. In these cases we have tried to make up for this lack of information by carrying out our own local research.

As for the examination of the press articles, we have tried on the one hand to extrapolate a detailed survey of the most relevant incidents of discrimination and racism and, on the other hand, to analyse, through a collection of articles on this subject spanning a number of years, the role of the media as put forward in Chapter 11.

Finally, concerning the collection of data, it is important to point out that up to now it has been very difficult to provide a reliable picture of discriminatory and racist acts and practice in Italy because of the lack of surveys of the phenomenon which are systematic and follow a uniform criteria throughout the country<sup>8</sup>.

The ECRI (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance), also in its last report<sup>9</sup>, recommends that Italy should establish specialised bodies at national level or should at least urge the regions to create the Discrimination Observatories, for which provision was made in the 40/98 law and which have not been abrogated by the latest legislation, but which have not yet been created in any region<sup>10</sup>.

The inclusion in the above-mentioned Law 40 of 1998 of Articles 43 and 44 on discrimination<sup>11</sup>, was saluted by all those who are engaged in promoting the rights of migrants and by people of ethnic minority origin as an important and positive step forward. However, any real achievement through these articles of the rights of citizenship risk being frustrated by the lack of the bodies which should monitor the implementation of such legislation.

### **3. Description of victim groups**

In Italy people still talk about discrimination on the basis of race (although they are aware of the groundless basis of the concept of race from a scientific point of view) because the notion of

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<sup>8</sup> Zincone G., (editor) *Second report on the integration of immigrants in Italy*, Commission for the Policy of Integration of Immigrants, Milan, Il Mulino, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> ECRI, *Second Report on Italy*, Strasbourg, April 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Only the autonomous Province of Bolzano, comparable to a region from the administrative point of view, is creating a discrimination observatory.

<sup>11</sup> Article which has not been abrogated and is still in force with the new law no. 286/02.

“race”(and/or the ideology underlying it) exists as a social concept and continues to be present in language and in everyday life<sup>12</sup>.

The ideology, explicit or implicit, conscious or unconscious, whereby certain minority groups and the people who belong to them differ from a certain “us”, which is also socially represented but cannot be statistically quantified, produces *discriminatory discourse, acts and practices*. These do not necessarily lead to racism, but contribute to its development at the point when, “Due to the xenophobia found throughout society and in the institutions, they accumulate and generalise until they become the ‘normal’ mode of relating to migrants and minority groups. They foster negative images of the “other”, which in turn produces or reinforces racism”.<sup>13</sup>

The individuals and groups who are most exposed to discrimination and the violence of racism seem to be: foreign nationals who come from third countries; Roma and Sinti; non-EU immigrants who are or are supposed to be Muslims; and Jews. The areas where discrimination and racist violence take place are varied: in work, housing, state schools, social services and public offices and services, on the street and in the virtual space represented by the internet.

The perpetrators of these acts are also varied but include public officials and representatives of the police. The phenomena defined as “institutional discrimination” and “institutional racism” are in fact particularly relevant.

The discriminatory acts found cannot be considered as isolated cases, but rather are an integral aspect of Italian reality and it is not by chance that many cases can be traced back to the category of institutional racism. Discriminatory and violent acts of a racial nature are also the result of a climate of increasing intolerance towards migrants and Roma, which is fomented and used both by the mass media and by political forces, “Who make them the scapegoats of a series of social problems – degradation of the poorer districts, small-scale criminality, unsafe urban conditions etc. – which are in fact attributable to causes which are external to migration”<sup>14</sup>.

#### **4. Areas in which racism is visible or hidden**

The general picture of the acts of discrimination and racism which occur in different areas provides disturbing data describing a difficult situation which gets worse every year. The research led by Manconi and Sorice, which dates back to the first nine months of 2000, describes an alarming scene

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<sup>12</sup> Gallissot, R., Kilani, M., Rivera, A., “The ethnic swindle in fourteen key words”, Bari, Dedalo, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Anna Maria Rivera “Race, ethnic group, culture” in P.Tabet, S.Di Bella “I’m not a racist, but...- tools to unlearn racism” Anicia, Rome, 1998.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

both in quantitative terms (one act of violence every 25 hours) and in “qualitative” terms (violence of a clearly xenophobic nature in 34.7% of cases)<sup>15</sup>.

As we have mentioned in the section on the description of victim groups, it is important to remember that cases of racism and discrimination take place in all spheres of life, although they have different characteristics. In the following section we will look at the features of these phenomena in the different fields, from the employment sector, to enrolment in schools, healthcare, housing and relations with institutions.

We will try and show the ways in which these episodes take place, describing their characteristics and the effects they can have on the lives of migrants, preventing them from enjoying equal opportunities and inclusion in Italy.

#### **4.1- Racism in the employment sector**

The general difficulty in obtaining data about cases of discrimination at a national level also applies to discrimination in employment, where the numerous reports gathered informally by trade unions cannot always be proved, also because trade union representatives are not admitted into companies with fewer than 15 employees<sup>16</sup>.

In this field acts of racism and/or discrimination include giving migrants the most menial and hard jobs, without considering their vocational training or qualifications, paying them less for the same jobs and refusing to employ migrants because of their different ethnic origins<sup>17</sup>.

The new legislation on residence introduced by the law no.189/02, known as the Bossi-Fini Law, substitutes the residence permit for employment reasons with a residence contract. This contract has the same duration as the employment contract and thus binds foreign workers even more tightly to their employers. This condition is a prime motive for migrants being blackmailed, it makes them particularly exposed to the risk of illegal behaviour at work and often prevents them from being able to react. In addition, the provisions Bossi-Fini Law in relation to the requirement for the employer to provide lodging for non-EU employees, by focusing on the social integration of the migrant worker actually increases the chance of blackmail and dependence on the employer.

The need for work, for reasons of survival in an environment where there are often no family connections to provide support or to assist in obtaining legal residence in Italy, may lead to people accepting substandard conditions of work and of payment.

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<sup>15</sup> Michele Sorice (editor), *One a day. Violent acts against foreigners in Italy*, Faculty of Communication Studies - Rome University “La Sapienza”, 2000.

<sup>16</sup> *EUMC Annual Report 2001- ITALY*, Vienna 2002.

<sup>17</sup> CESTIM-MLAL Verona, “*Free Schengen phone number... a phone call against discrimination*” project, 2000. The final report of the “Free Schengen number” project talks about discrimination in the first cases and of racism in the case

For these reasons the irregular working conditions, common in Italy for many native and migrant workers, may have different repercussions depending on whether the people in question are Italian or non-EU workers; the latter in fact need a regular job to be able to keep their residence and renew their permits.

Together with these forms of discrimination, which are often denounced by the different trade-union associations, the difficulty migrants find in getting their rights respected (for example in complaining against their employer represents another example of discrimination, for the objective risks migrants have of losing their jobs or coming up against the police administration (as the actual legislation is demonstrating). In this sense, as the trade-union associations have underlined, at present the migrant citizens represent the category which is most at risk of discrimination and in the weakest position regarding contracts with employers<sup>18</sup>.

The other very serious discriminatory act (or racist act as the Cestim defines it) most common in this field is the refusal to employ immigrants simply because of their provenance or, even worse, because of the colour of their skin. Episodes of this type have been registered by the Schengen free phone line<sup>19</sup> and have come out in the newspapers (where they have occasionally been denounced) but complete justice regarding this phenomenon has never been achieved. On this matter the television programme *Le iene* “The Hyenas”), transmitted on one of the main private Italian channels<sup>20</sup>, has been quite interesting: at the end of 2002 it broadcast a report where two young men, one Italian and the other a foreigner of African origin but with Italian citizenship, applied for a job and in which the reactions of the employers were filmed, with hidden cameras. In most of the cases (9 out of 11) they denied the availability of the job in front of the black man, while they confirmed it to the white man and fixed a trial period for him.

Even less under control, also because there are no instruments to observe and control, seem to be the cases in which migrant workers are submitted to real slavery conditions, which imply, for example, the confiscation of passports, working for nothing to repay the debt incurred to come to Italy, being forced to engage in prostitution, being confined to the house as domestic servants..

The fear of losing employment, in this last case, leads people to be silent about their working conditions, timetables and salary, but it is possible to see this data in all the information points set up for the migrant citizens throughout Italy and managed by associations.

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of refusal to employ people because they are foreign, while it talks about xenophobia when there is a refusal on the part of the individual who is a native of the country to share spaces, like canteens and toilets.

<sup>18</sup> IRES-CGIL National (editor), *The report on immigration: scenes, labour market and contracts*, 2002. Even though there is no doubt that in the last few years there has been significant quantitative and qualitative progress in trade-union creation of jobs for foreign workers, which underlines both the constant inclusion in the fabric of production and services, and the tendency towards consolidation of an increasing number of these inclusions in relatively stable work places.

<sup>19</sup> CESTIM-MLAL Verona, “Free Schengen phone number” project.

#### 4.2- Access to services

We have put on the same level, in this section, some forms of discrimination that are manifested when it is difficult, if not impossible, for migrant citizens to get access to basic services which are part of the welfare state as native citizens do. We are talking about access to housing, health services, public assistance for schoolchildren, access to the administrative services in the towns of residence, but also access to insurance and banking services, in other words to all those services that make a full and positive integration in a community possible for the immigrant and his or her family.

Unfortunately, access to these rights is neither taken for granted nor is it immediate in many cases. It is the public institutions themselves that should be the first to guarantee the correct “supply” of these rights, but they have often been the promoters of a different application of the law depending on the origin of the user (Italian or of an ethnic minority). In this sense the episode, dating back to 2000, of the Piancogno Town Council in the Province of Brescia, who refused to give a residence certificate to a Tunisian citizen who had all the qualifications the law required<sup>21</sup>, is significant. The Town Council maintained that it awards the residence permit only with proof of the existence of a loaning contract and of a work connection, applying to the Tunisian citizen, by doing so, a much harder legislation than for the Italian citizens, and most of all this was illegitimate and with a clear discriminatory intent. Even worse was the ordinance by the mayor of Alessandria, adopted at the beginning of 1999, that established that in order to receive services from the Town Council, such as residence permits, non-EU citizens had to, besides showing a valid residence permit, also demonstrate that they were regularly employed and show a certificate of healthy and robust constitution(!). The ordinance was later invalidated by the Prefect of the Province<sup>22</sup>.

Equally serious and discriminatory, even if in an indirect way, was the case of the allocation of social housing in the Municipality of Pordenone, that took place between 1999 and 2000<sup>23</sup>. In this case none of the 107 non-EU citizens (out of 712) who applied were included in the graded list, because none of them had presented the documentation relative to eventual wages abroad and to property owned in other countries, which had to be translated and authenticated by the consular and

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<sup>20</sup> *Italia 1* which belongs to Mediaset.

<sup>21</sup> CESTIM-MLAL Verona, “*Free Schengen phone number... a phone call against discrimination*” project, page 15. The intervention of the Observatory of Racism managed by Cestim and by Mlal permits the issue of the document, but not before the intervention of the Prefect.

<sup>22</sup> In the same year, he proposed changes in access to registry services also to the mayor of Lecco. See the ASGI review *Right Immigration and Citizenship*, n.1/1999 and n.4/2000.

<sup>23</sup> Giovanna Zincone (edited by), *Second report on the integration of migrants in Italy*, Commission for the Integration Policies of Immigrants, Il Mulino, Milano 2001, pages 419-424.

diplomatic representatives in Italy. As a matter of fact, the obligation to provide this detailed documentation, which was impossible to produce, due both to a lack of time and to the different administrative structure in the countries of origin of the applicants, made it practically impossible to apply for the housing allocation, in spite of a formal policy of “equal opportunities” for natives and migrants. The fact that it was not possible for the non-EU citizens who applied to produce this documentation, and their consequent exclusion from the graded list, represents an act of indirect and illegitimate discrimination, formally forbidden by the Consolidation Act on Immigration currently in force. The same can be said about the more recent allocation of housing conducted by the Town Council of Milan: in this case the attribution of five points to applicants with Italian citizenship resulted in an action on behalf of the foreign applicants and to the Council of Milan being convicted for violation of the anti-discrimination principle<sup>24</sup>.

### **4.3- Language barriers**

For many users who do not speak Italian the linguistic and/or communicative difficulties represent major barriers to access to all kinds of services, public (educational, social, in health care, police stations and tribunals) or private (insurance, banks, trade unions). Providing a service in only one language in a multilingual society (even with reference to the dialects of the official language) is, in effect, discriminatory because it makes it impossible to have full access for all to that service.

An example is the exercise of the right of defence and of the capability of sustaining an accusation in a courtroom or in jail, where it is still frequent that there will be no interpreter available for prisoners or defendants who do not speak Italian<sup>25</sup>.

Even more important is the presence of translators and interpreters in relation to the health service, where it is fundamental and often urgent to communicate correctly. In spite of a greater attention to these issues by local hospitals and health service providers, this need is not always recognised, especially from an economic and professional point of view.

More often people try to resolve particularly urgent situations by contacting relatives and friends, or by asking for assistance from associations or from people from the same country, who, apart from anything else, are not paid.

Unfortunately, the formally recognised access to a certain service may disappear precisely because people do not understand their own rights. In other words, in some cases the provision of a specific service must come after the recognition of another right: making oneself understood and

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<sup>24</sup> ASGI (editor), *Right Immigration and Citizenship*, n.2/2002, page 119.

<sup>25</sup> On this matter see also A. Caputo “The right to linguistic assistance of the foreign defendant”, in ASGI (editor), *Right, immigration and citizenship*, n.4/2002.

comprehending the basic elements of the response. The denial of this right is effectively the denial of the appropriate provision of the service concerned.

Let us think more about the consequences that a correct and complete transmission of information may have in the field of employment security: in building sites, where Italian legislation makes it compulsory for the employers to make sure that individual security systems are used (fundamental precautions like helmets, special shoes to prevent accidents, etc.), there are no translations of these norms, even where there are more foreign workers than Italians.

It is not a coincidence, then, that the number of accidents at work, including fatal accidents, involves an increasing number of foreign citizens.

#### **4.4- Access to the housing market**

In access, or better, in the failure of access to housing, discrimination takes place in two main fields: the refusal by some estate agents and individual house owners to let houses to migrant citizens from certain geographical areas, and the presence of “another” price market for migrants, where expenses are much higher and the living conditions clearly inferior<sup>26</sup>.

The refusal by individuals or estate agents to let houses to non-EU citizens is still very common throughout Italy. In spite of several cases that, by applying the legislation against discrimination introduced by Act n.40/98, have led to the conviction of several estate agents (the main one was the case at the Tribunal of Milan, which in 2000 convicted an estate agent for having told a client of African origin that they could not let a house to her because she was not from the EU), it is now still possible to find accommodation adverts in magazines that specify “No non-EU citizens”<sup>27</sup>. It is more common for these stipulations to be made informally and orally, which makes demonstrating that the discrimination has taken place more difficult.

Particularly interesting was the case where the Tribunal of Bologna convicted an estate agent who offered their services on the internet: not only in the research layout did the website present the category “Non-EU citizen”, together with the categories “single women/men”, “childless”, etc., but once the research was started in those categories there were no houses available<sup>28</sup>.

These discriminations and the enormous difficulties found in access to housing, have as a consequence, for migrant citizens, accommodation in buildings with poor hygiene and security, or

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<sup>26</sup> For the accommodation we refer to: Urgency net against racism- Turin, *Annual report 2000*; ARES (editor), *The colour of the houses. First report on living conditions of migrants in Italy*, 2000; CESTIM-MLAL Verona, “Free Schengen phone number... a phone call against discrimination” project.

<sup>27</sup> See for example *La Pulce*, Tuscan periodical for accommodation adverts, n.5/2003, 14/1/2003.

<sup>28</sup> ASGI (editor), *Right, Immigration and Citizenship*, n.1/2001.

living with many other people in the same apartment. This has repercussions not only on living conditions, but also, for example, on the possibility of getting residence, or, even worse, of family reunion. The requirement in cases of family reunion, that is the fitness of the house on the basis of parameters which are decided by regional legislation, is one of the most clear cases of discrimination operated by the Law, because it obliges the non-EU citizens to demonstrate that they live in a house with living conditions which are much higher than the average as found among the native population.

## **5. Institutional racism**

In this section we have included a series of observations relative to the behaviour and attitudes of a discriminatory or racist type which come directly from the public authorities and from the single Italian institutions, both where these assumptions of discriminatory nature are already contained in the legislation, and where they are carried out by representatives of the institutions while practising their public functions.

As we have already mentioned, the specific legislation against discrimination for racial, ethnic, national or religious reasons are included in Articles 43 and 44 of the Consolidation Act on Immigration n.286/98. Unfortunately, this important legislation has not yet been applied permanently but only in rare cases, and most of all it has not been applied in all its parts<sup>29</sup>.

Also concerning the law on the acquisition of citizenship (n.91/92), Italy seems to make things difficult for those foreigners who want to request it, making it impossible for migrants to enjoy those social and civil rights which are recognised to citizens.

Even more serious are the difficulties in obtaining the “leave to stay” (carta di soggiorno), which was introduced in 1998 by Law n.40 and applied in the following years. The difficulties are both for technical-bureaucratic reasons (the non-existence of the rules for the enforcement of the law and of circulars for the purpose, non-existence of a residence permit model and because of resistance by the police to release a document that frees non-EU citizens from continuous checks<sup>30</sup>). The difficulty in having access to the “leave to stay” (carta di soggiorno) represents discrimination from the moment in which preventing the access to the permit means preventing the use of all the rights that are related to it, from disability pensions to family allowance, from maternity benefits to insurance indemnity.

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<sup>29</sup> In this also the cited report by ECRI invites the Italian State to a quick implication of the legislation article, with the aim of monitoring constantly and in detail the cases of discrimination and racism.

<sup>30</sup> See the research promoted by the Commission for the Integration policy of immigrants, carried out in year 2000 by the Association of Juridical Studies on Immigration- Asgi, *From the residence permit to the document- The problematic points of the course of immigration*, 2001.

Even concerning other fundamental rights of the individual, like the right to have a family or to reunite with relatives who were left in the country of origin, the legislation and its application do not always guarantee their full application. First of all the requirements for obtaining family reunion with partner or children, particularly the requirement regarding the fitness of the house to be lived in, make the whole bureaucratic process to obtain a permit from the police very difficult. Once the permit is obtained the next obstacle is the Italian Embassy or Consulate in the country of origin which has to issue the entrance visa. This creates a series of illegitimate obstacles which can mean waiting for the visa for a year and a half. In this way the right to family reunion is violated and, in the case of a minor, the superior right of children to be reunited with their parents, which is confirmed in numerous conventions, is similarly violated. This right is reconfirmed in a significant ordinance, from the Grosseto Town Council, in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is invited to issue immediately the entrance visa for family reunion to a Moroccan citizen who had been given a permit by the Police of Grosseto on 20/03/2002<sup>31</sup>.

Finally, it is good to remember that the Italian State, with the Law n.39 – 1/3/2002 (the so-called Community Law 2001) has required the Government to implement the EU Directive 2000/43 on equal treatment between persons irrespective of race and ethnic origin. Article 29 of the EU law, which provides that the Government decree should be passed by April 2003, gives a first example of a reductive interpretation of the EU directive.

As for discriminatory acts carried out by representatives of the institutions during the exercise of their public functions, we have already given some examples in section 4.2.

Unfortunately the list is long and it is important to remember this, because discrimination carried out by a public official precisely during the exercise of their functions seems to be particularly serious and contributes consistently in creating that common notion of racism that is so prevalent in all the spheres of our society<sup>32</sup>. Apart from the norms, which were introduced by some mayors, relating to different access to registry services for migrant citizens, it is useful to remember the ordinance made by the mayor of Rovato (BS): with this ordinance, issued on 21 November 2000, the mayor set the objective of creating “a protection and security area of 15 meters around Christian holy and religious sites to protect Christian values from the constant contamination of other religions” and “for the protection of morals, justified in the name of public interest.” Some months later the Prefect of Brescia decreed its radical invalidity because it was “tarnished with serious illegitimacy”<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> The Ordinance can be read in the December section 2002 on Sergio Briguglio’s website, currently hosted on the website of Foreigners in Italy ([www.stranieriinitalia.it/briguglio](http://www.stranieriinitalia.it/briguglio))

<sup>32</sup> See the cited article by A. Caputo, in ASGI.

<sup>33</sup> ASGI, *Right, Immigration and Citizenship*, n.2/2001.

## 6. Racial violence

In Italy every 25 hours a foreign person suffers an act of violence. This is the beginning of the above-mentioned report on xenophobic violence edited by Michele Sorice<sup>34</sup> and it shows a worrying situation about a considerable increase<sup>35</sup> in crimes against migrant groups living in Italy. Xenophobia is the alarming motive of these crimes (34.7%) and, apart from this, women are the main victims.

We would like to remember some striking events which have happened in the last few years.

In March 2000, in Gallarate, Ion Cazacu, a forty-year-old Romanian workman, died as a consequence of the aggression of his employer, owner of a small building factory. The employer sprinkled inflammable material on Cazacu and thereby set fire to him, so that Cazacu was scalded to death. Cazacu was protesting against the terrible exploitative working situation of himself and the other twenty workers and he asked for their regularisation and lower rates for the rented lodging.

In June 2000, in Milan, an Italian lawyer fired two shots and killed a young Ecuadorian man, Luiz Guzman. This murder was caused by a fight between, on one hand, the lawyer and his father, and, on the other, Guzman and a group of young people, maybe drunk, because they were damaging the cars parked in front of the two Italians' apartment. After that the young Ecuadorian fell down in a pool of blood, the lawyer and his father ran away quickly: Guzman died after two surgical operations and four months of agony. But the Court of First Instance's sentence was more disconcerting because the lawyer was condemned to 14 years and 4 months imprisonment with the condition and the judge's opinion was that "*he was executioner for trifling reasons*". One day later, the lawyer gave himself up and he asserted his unintentional action. He was immediately released and arrested only after the investigating commission brought to light the details of the murder: the lawyer and his father (both of them with a gun) chased the young Ecuadorian man by car for a distance of about one kilometre. Despite these details, the Court recognised the "*provocation*" as an extenuating circumstance and the murder as a reaction, certainly excessive, to an unjust act committed by the immigrant. Also in the Court of Appeal the plaintiff asked a fair compensation for the victims' relatives, because of their difficult living conditions, but the only result was that the lawyer was sentenced to house arrest and, subsequently, the Court allowed him also to go out to work during the day<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Sorice M. "*Uno al giorno...*", mentioned above.

<sup>35</sup> Even though the percentage of foreign people in Italy is just higher than 2%, the number of foreign victims of murder between 1995 and the 2000 exceeded 10% of the total of the victims and amounted to 19% in 1999.

<sup>36</sup> "*Corriere della Sera*", Milano, 7 May 2002.

## 7. The situation of minors

The situation of minors in Italy is characterised by two different and contrasting aspects: on one hand an advanced and egalitarian legislation warrants “*the superior interest of the child*” and admission to compulsory schooling for non-Italian minors, on the other hand there are a lot of discrimination cases, completely unknown to the public, except for the most extraordinary ones<sup>37</sup>.

Italian legislation regarding education allows a minor to be enrolled in school immediately they come to Italy, even if they do not receive permission to stay, but this has not been sufficient to prevent discriminatory acts in schools.

The migrant minors are often behind the Italian students, not only because of language problems or because they have arrived after the beginning of the school year, but also because the teachers are often unprepared to understand their previous skills and studies from their country of origin<sup>38</sup>.

In spite of this legislation, some non-Italian children are still not able to enrol in school or they have to attend schools a long way from their homes. The causes are different, but the main one is the choice of the educational representatives not to put too many foreign children together in the same school to avoid a double and contrasting situation: on one hand the creation of “ghetto” classes, composed of a large number of migrant minors, on the other hand, the refusal by Italian parents to enrol their children in a classroom with many foreign children.

Sometimes a lot of foreign children have to miss a school year because no school will take them, other times they have to go to study in a different town or go back to their country of origin. Many studies show that the Italian legislation on compulsory schooling is not respected or guaranteed<sup>39</sup>.

A particular situation concerns Roma minors: it is very difficult to ensure regular and successful schooling of Roma children because of their difficult living conditions in camps and because they often have to leave and change these camps. Not only are the camps where they are forced to live usually sited a long way from the schools but they also have to move frequently, mainly because of forced evictions ordered by the local institutions. Moreover, the Roma children also have to struggle against prejudices and stereotypes transmitted and pronounced both by Italian teachers and parents, as well as by school-fellows. Also Italian children say words like “*gypsy*”, in an insulting sense<sup>40</sup>. The difficulties of integration and the problems with their indigenous school-fellows usually lead to Roma children abandoning school.

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<sup>37</sup> Save the Children Italy, “*I diritti dell’infanzia: invisibili o dimenticati? La discriminazione razziale dei minori in Italia*”, synthesis, 11/2000.

<sup>38</sup> For more details about this argument, see the above-mentioned report by Save the Children and Fondazione Andolfi, Integration politics Commission, CNEL, “*La qualità della vita delle famiglie immigrate in Italia*”, working paper n° 16, Roma, 2001; MIUR, “*La trasformazione della scuola nella società multiculturale*”, School Agency, EIS Management, Roma, 2001.

<sup>39</sup> For more on this, see the research at *Centro di alfabetizzazione Gandhi, quartiere 5*, Florence.

The dramatic situation of foreign children is represented by the example of Anthony, adopted by a family in Florence, with his sister, some years ago. These two children, with Italian citizenship but of Indian origin, spoke Italian very well and regularly attended school, but they were often discriminated against by the other students because of their “*different look*”. In the last year of secondary school, Anthony could no longer endure this situation and so he committed suicide. This case gave rise to a heated debate in Italy, but the mass media continued to define these adopted children as “*foreigners*”, despite their Italian citizenship, fostering the common opinion that the origin is more important than the country and the family in which someone grows up.

The Italian educational legislation mentioned above impacts negatively on continuing studies and on employment possibilities for young people of migrant origin. For example, this legislation does not allow the residence permit for studying to be converted into one for employment. The employment possibilities are further reduced by widespread prejudice and discrimination on the part of potential employers as well as by additional disadvantaging circumstances, and so migrant minors often stop studying after completing compulsory schooling<sup>41</sup>. The situation of a Moroccan boy is an example of what has been mentioned above: he arrived in Italy when he was 9 years old, at the beginning he had just a residence permit for his family, then he changed this for a study permit; but when he finished high school he had to leave Italy because the legislation did not allow the residence permit for studying to be converted into one for employment.

***After nine years they sent me away...***  
***By Mohamed Habboubi***

*I was born on 1 January 1981 in Casablanca, of Moroccan nationality and I live in Bassano del Grappa in the province of Vicenza. I entered Italy for the first time on 28 July 1992 with a visa to join my family. Until February 1999, I have always had a residence permit on the grounds of “family reunion”. When I came of age and had to renew my permit, my residence permit was changed by the Police Station of Vicenza from “family reunion” to one of “study” (as at that time I was studying and not working) according to the following regulations: legislative decree 286/98 art. 32, para. 1.*

*I finished my studies last year, at the I.T.I.S. “E. Fermi” of Bassano del Grappa, with a mark of 85/100 and I immediately began to work. Unfortunately, according to art. 14 para. 5 of the application regulations, to get a work permit, I had to put myself on the entrance quotas established every year. However, when I got my diploma on 4 July 2000, the quota had already been reached, and therefore at the time of renewal of my residence permit, 29 December 2000, my residence permit was suspended, as it was not included in the entrance quotas, while I waited for the answer to the question I had*

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<sup>40</sup> ERRC (European Roma Rights Center), “*Il Paese dei campi. La segregazione razziale dei Rom in Italy*”, *International Reports serie*, n°9, October 2000.

<sup>41</sup> MIUR mentioned above and *Dossier Caritas on immigration*, 2002.

*sent to the Head of the Immigration Office, Dott. Eduardo Cozzo, at the Ministry of the Interior, asking for the possibility of having a work permit even though I had not been included in the entrance quotas. Unfortunately, the answer is negative and I am obliged to leave Italy after nine years of residence, after having perfectly integrated, after having studied Italian, obliging me to abandon my family, to go to a country which I no longer belong to. Many foreigners, among them my family, despair about the destinies of their children who are in exactly the same situation, and the only way of avoiding these regulations, to safeguard the family unity is that of making children leave school and start working early in life.*

Source: Letters to “L’Unità”, Sunday 10 June 2001

The great number of foreign minors in Italian prisons is another and revealing issue about racial discrimination. Even though the complaints against Italian minors are more than the complaints against foreign minors, a very significant part of the prison population of Italy is made up of foreigners. This is a demonstration that immigrant minors (and also adult immigrants) very rarely have access to measures other than detention and they do not have the same possibilities to defend themselves as Italian people<sup>42</sup>.

## **8. The Roma case**

As mentioned above in reference to Roma minors, the Roma/Sinti community is particularly vulnerable to problems of racism, discrimination and intolerance in Italy. About one third of the total Roma/Gypsy population of Italy – including both Italian citizens (predominantly Sinti) and non-Italian citizens – currently live in authorised or unauthorised camps separated from mainstream Italian society. This situation of practical segregation of Roma/Gypsies in Italy appears to reflect a general approach of the Italian authorities, mass media and public opinion which tend to consider Roma/Gypsies as nomads and wanting to live in camps. The living conditions in camps inhabited by Roma/Gypsy families are extremely harsh, due to lack of basic infrastructure and facilities, including access to energy, heating and lighting, sanitation as well as washing facilities and refuse disposal, site drainage and emergency services<sup>43</sup>. This practical separation of the Roma/Gypsy communities is reflected in all fields of life, including education, health and employment.

It is particularly significant that in the ECRI (European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance) Second Report on Italy, Section II is entitled “*Issues of particular concern: situation of the Roma/Gypsy communities*”<sup>44</sup>. ECRI expresses deep concern at this situation and believes that, in

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<sup>42</sup> Save the Children, “*Il diritto dell’infanzia...*”, mentioned above.

<sup>43</sup> ERRC (European Roma Rights Center), “*Il paese dei campi. La segregazione razziale dei Rom in Italia*”, *International Reports serie*, n°9, October 2000. This is the most detailed report about the situation of Roma communities in Italy, with a lot of data, issues and examples about the dramatic discrimination and racism against this community.

<sup>44</sup> ECRI, *Second Report on Italy, 2001*.

the medium and long-term, the Italian authorities should implement measures to overcome the practical segregation of Roma/Gypsy communities. In fact, the representation of Roma/Gypsies as nomads also appears to be closely related to the general perception of the members of the Roma/Gypsy communities of Italy as “*foreigners*”, even though only a part of the Roma/Gypsy communities still living in camps is non-Italian. ECRI underlines that there have been numerous reports of evictions of Roma/Gypsy families from nomad camps, usually carried out late at night or early in the morning, during which law enforcement officials have acted in a violent and abusive way. Alleged misconduct includes abusive use of firearms, ill-treatment, humiliating treatment against pregnant women and minors, arbitrary destruction of property and confiscation or destruction of papers. Furthermore, Roma/Gypsies are widely reported to be subject to disproportionately frequent checks. In cases where Roma/Gypsies communities have been victims of racial attacks, there are reports that the response by law enforcement officials has sometimes been inadequate. ECRI expresses deep concern at these reports and in accordance with its general policy recommendation n°3 on “*Combating racism and intolerance against Roma/Gypsies*”, ECRI therefore encourages the Italian authorities to develop institutional arrangements to promote an active role and participation of Roma/Gypsy communities in the decision-making processes, through national, regional and local mechanisms, with priority placed on the idea of partnership on an equal footing.

## **9. Anti-Semitism**

According to statistical information issued by the Ministry of the Interior<sup>45</sup>, anti-Semitic crimes have risen by 10% over 2001 compared to 2002, but racist crimes have fallen 12% in the same period. In a research study recently conducted by Renato Mannheimer about prejudices of Italians<sup>46</sup>, a third of the persons interviewed, politically aligning themselves with either right-wing or left-wing parties, judge the Jews to be “*different*”, but for different reasons. The persons voting for right-wing parties have “*traditional*” prejudices, such as stinginess and deicide, while the persons voting for left-wing parties accuse the Jews of “*factionous backing of Israeli policy*”.

The Middle East crisis has increased anti-Semitism in Italy, more than in other European countries, especially in spring 2002. In March and April there were many reports of spoken threats, anonymous letters, threatening calls, graffiti, especially relating to events in Palestine (Bethlehem

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<sup>45</sup> Ministry of the Interior (2002), Direzione Centrale della Polizia di prevenzione: EU-European monitoring centre on racism, xenophobia and antisemitism – report n° 224/B1/16285.

<sup>46</sup> Renato Mannheimer, “*Immigrati ed Ebrei: due fonti di pregiudizio per gli Italiani*”, 2003, [www.sondaggiipoliticoelettorali.it](http://www.sondaggiipoliticoelettorali.it). oppure [www.politicaltrendonline.it](http://www.politicaltrendonline.it).

occupied by Jews, the issue of the Church of the Nativity, the attack on the refugee camp of Jenin). Some famous Jewish reporters have received threatening and outrageous letters and e-mails. Anti-Semitic banners and slogans have also been displayed during sports events and it seems that the dissemination of anti-Semitic and negationist<sup>47</sup> books and publications is increasing; there are also souvenirs, such as bottles of wine with images of Hitler and Mussolini on the labels. But the internet is the main channel of communication for anti-Semitic propaganda and for the dissemination of this material.

## 10. Islamophobia

Since 11 September 2001, Islamophobia has also increased considerably because of articles and public speeches by politicians and religious representatives fostering the equation “*Muslim = terrorist*”.

The position of the Lega Nord party, actually in the government coalition, is emblematic: in 2001 a representative, Mario Borghezio, organised a protest demonstration in front of the Islamic Cultural Institute in Milan, displaying a banner with the words “*Terrorists and clandestines out of Milan*”<sup>48</sup>. Unfortunately, in Italy there are also many cases of attack against young Muslims or people who are believed to be Muslim, perpetrated by young men of the same age, when they come out of school. The insults which accompany the attacks often refer to Bin Laden or to the Taliban: “*You are like Osama; look at him, you are like him: go back to your own country, terrorist Muslim of s...*”, with these words two school fellows beat up a Moroccan boy in front of a school in Vigevano. The arrest of four Moroccan men in the San Petronio church in Bologna is also significant. Some of their remarks in the church had been deemed suspicious, but three days later it was found that the words had been translated wrongly and that the Moroccan men were just visiting the church. All the individuals were released, but the newspapers did not pay the same attention to their release as to their imprisonment<sup>49</sup>.

After 11 September 2001 many important politicians, intellectuals and Catholic representatives talked in an exaggerated way of the “*Muslim danger*”. For example, Giacomo Biffi, cardinal of Bologna, believed that the Islamic immigrants were a danger to the Catholic religion. Giovanni Sartori, a famous political scientist and counsellor of the Ulivo party’s coalition, said referring to Biffi’s speech that “*He agreed with his intelligent faith*”<sup>50</sup>, commending “*his ethics of responsibility*”.

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<sup>47</sup> ECRI, European Commission against racism and intolerance, Second Report on Italy, 2001.

<sup>48</sup> [www.lastampa.it](http://www.lastampa.it), 21 October 2001.

<sup>49</sup> “*Terrorists in Bologna, criminal Islamic attempt failed, they wanted to blow up the church*”, etc.

<sup>50</sup> L’Espresso, 28 September 2000.

Islamophobia is now increasing after the beginning of the war in Iraq, especially because of the media point of view of the war. As happened after 11 September 2001, many Italians have racist ideas that “*we*” (Western countries) fight properly, but “*they*” (Iraqi and more in general Arab and Muslim countries) react contemptibly and unpredictably, inhumanely, because they are radically *different (wild, terrorist, etc.)*<sup>51</sup>.

It is too soon to consider the consequences of this kind of information on the citizens of Arab origin and Islamic religion living in Italy, but the “*aftermath of 11 September*” proves that unfortunately we will soon experience the consequences.

## **11. Public speeches and the role of the media**

### **11.1- Public speeches**

Recently another worrying situation spread in Italy: racist public speeches concerning migrants are often delivered by government politicians, mayors and other elected representatives, such as exponents of the Lega Nord party. Racist and xenophobic propaganda is disseminated through the use of written material such as posters and leaflets, but is also significantly present in their public speeches. In most cases non-European Union migrants (Albanian, Moroccan or Gypsy) are identified and qualified as the main threat to social security and community identity. The racist and xenophobic propaganda of these political parties exerts a great influence on the whole political arena. Some representatives of the Lega Nord (such as the mayor of Treviso, Gentilizi, or the European Parliament deputy Borghezio), during the regional electoral campaign in 2000, in particular Umberto Bossi, distributed leaflets with the slogan “*If you don’t want Gypsies, Moroccan or other criminals in your houses and in your country, vote for Lega Nord*”. In October 2002, Borghezio was arrested and condemned to five months imprisonment for setting fire to an immigrants’ dormitory, during a “punitive expedition”. In Lodi, in 2000, some representatives of Lega Nord, Forza Italia and Forza Nuova (neo-Nazi party) organised a political demonstration against the building of a mosque, sprinkling with pig urine the place where the mosque was to be built.

ECRI stresses that political parties should in the future resist the temptation to approach the subject of immigration in a way which may result in racist, xenophobic or discriminatory attitudes by society at large vis-à-vis certain minority groups. Political parties should, rather, emphasise the positive contribution made by different minority groups to Italian society, economy and culture.

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<sup>51</sup> Il Manifesto, 31 March 2003.

ECRI believes “that all political parties should also take a firm public stand against any forms of racism, discrimination and xenophobia as part of a more general commitment to respecting and guaranteeing human rights<sup>52</sup>”.

### 11.2- The portrayal of ethnic minorities

The Italian mass media have played a major role in dramatising the migration phenomenon, but they have also been encouraged by racist speeches and the attitudes of certain Italian politicians. Recent studies on the portrayal of immigrant<sup>53</sup> in the mass media (in particular television and the press) show that since the 1990s the main national press has, consciously or not<sup>54</sup>, come to connect immigration with danger and crime. The researchers use the expression “*stratification of stereotypes*”<sup>55</sup> when the migrants’ criminality is considered as expected and when “from the simple conflict between different people living in the same city, it is easy to arrive at the myth of an invasion by foreigners which has to be stopped at any cost<sup>56</sup>”.

The portrayal of migrants in the mass media is more distorted and unfair than before and reporting about the situation of minorities seems to be limited to news about crimes<sup>57</sup>. When speaking about non-EU citizens, TV programmes tend to reduce their identity by just quoting their country of origin and their residence status in Italy<sup>58</sup>. This portrayal of minorities is a social representation built progressively by media discourse and closely linked to the political and social opinion on immigration.

This negative interaction between the media and political speeches is evident in numerous articles which appeared after 11 September 2001, reporting on Muslim living in Italy. The event at the Mosque in Naples is a clear example: the administration of Campania province, in 2000, made available a sum of €1,826,000 for the building of the Mosque in Ponticelli, but in November 2001 this decision caused a heated debate between political and religious representatives<sup>59</sup>. In an interview, the Imam of Naples said “...*the story of the Mosque building began in 1989. Nowadays the building site is the only sure thing because we don’t know anything about the funds of the*

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<sup>52</sup> ECRI, “*Second Report on Italy*”, mentioned above.

<sup>53</sup> Jessica Ter Wal, “*Racism and cultural diversity in the mass media - an overview of research and examples of good practice in EU Member States, 1995-2000*”, EUMC, Vienna, February 2002; M. Maneri, “*Lo straniero consensuale. La devianza degli immigrati come circolarità di pratiche e discorsi*” in A. Del Lago (a cura di) “*Lo straniero e il nemico. Materiali per l’etnografia contemporanea*”. Genova, Costa & Nolan, 1998.

<sup>54</sup> Many journalists assert that they write “*what the people think*” but it is often a way to justify certain behaviours as reflecting some beliefs and thought patterns common to society at large.

<sup>55</sup> M. Maneri, “*Elementi di analisi del discorso dei media*”, in P. Tabet, S. Di Bella, “*Io non sono razzista ma...strumenti per disimparare il razzismo*”, Anicia, 1998.

<sup>56</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>57</sup> Censis, “*L’immagine degli immigrati nei media: confinati dentro al ghetto della cronaca*”, Roma, October 2002.

Web: [www.immagineimmigratitalia.it](http://www.immagineimmigratitalia.it)

<sup>58</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>59</sup> *La Repubblica*,

administration. *We will form a committee to collect these funds*<sup>60</sup>". Despite this declaration, the event continued to be mentioned in numerous articles and interviews by representatives of different political parties and on 12 December 2001, the Chamber of Deputies approved the item on the agenda proposed by Lega Nord against the decision of the President of Campania to finance with a sum of €2,600,000 (other newspapers stated the sum of €1,826,000 the Mosque building in Naples. The approved document binds the Government "to use the funds for the Mosque building to finish the lodgings". During the decision-making process the deputy of Lega Nord, Dario Galli, wished the Mayor of Naples "to be able to dress herself as she preferred for a long time without having to wear the burqa. But it could be an advantage for this specific case"<sup>61</sup>. The administration of Naples is led by representatives of the Centre-Left parties, and in fact the Mayor is Rosa Russo Jervolino, Minister of the Interior in the last legislature<sup>62</sup>.

The most famous example of violent racist propaganda in the media is the article "*Rage and Pride*", written by Oriana Fallaci and published by the newspaper with the highest circulation in Italy, *Corriere della Sera*, a few days after the attack against the Twin Towers. In this article the writer gives her opinion using violent expressions against Muslims and Arabs and extending her insults to other migrant citizens living in Italy. Oriana Fallaci invokes "*Holy War*" against the Muslims and a total fight against immigration and immigrants living in Western countries, in particular in the USA and in Italy.

Here is an extract from "*Rage and Pride*" (English translation by Letizia Grasso):

*"...What sense is it to respect someone who does not respect us? What sense does it make to defend their culture or presumed culture when they scorn ours? I want to defend ours, and I inform you that I like Dante Alighieri more than Omar Khayam."*

*"..... But America's vulnerability is born from its strength, its riches, its might, its modernity. It is also born from its multi-ethnic essence, its freedom, its respect for the citizens and for its guests. Example, approximately 24 million Americans are Arab Muslims. When a Mustafa or a Muhammed comes, let's say, from Afghanistan to visit his uncle, no one prohibits him to take courses in a school to learn to pilot a 757. No one stops him from taking university courses to study chemistry and biology (I hope this will stop). No one".*

*"...I would see the image, for me symbolic (therefore infuriating), of the big tent with which one summer ago the Somali Muslims disfigured, smeared with shit and profaned for three months piazza Del Duomo in Florence. My city"<sup>63</sup>.*

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<sup>60</sup> *La Repubblica*, Edizione Napoli, 2 December 2001, pagg. I, III. [www.repubblica.napoli.it](http://www.repubblica.napoli.it)

<sup>61</sup> *La Padania*, 13 December 2001, pag. 5; *Corriere della Sera*, 13 December 2001, pag. 9.

<sup>62</sup> Articles and analyses about the effects of 11 September 2001 on minority communities in Italy have been summarised by the Focal Point of EUMC for the report "Anti-Islamic reactions within the European Union after the recent acts of terror against the USA", [www.eumc.org](http://www.eumc.org). In Italy this study was carried out by Cospe (Co-operation for the Development of Emerging Countries), [www.cospe.it](http://www.cospe.it), with the contribution of Cestim, Verona, [www.cestim.org](http://www.cestim.org)

<sup>63</sup> This specific situation refers to the protests by some anti-racism associations and other Somali associations in Tuscany, calling for a renewal of the residence permit for humanitarian causes.

*"(...)...on all the other acts of desecration and destruction with which for many years they have been humiliating and wounding what had been the capital of art, beauty and culture. I am not discouraged at all.*

*The other arrogant guests of the city: the Albanians, Sudanese, Bengalis, Tunisians, Algerians, Pakistani, Nigerians who with much fervour contribute to the commerce of drugs and prostitution, which apparently is not prohibited by the Koran. Instead of sons of Allah, in Italy they call them "foreign workers".*

The article of Oriana Fallaci became a successful book, published by Rizzoli. The book also has an introduction reporting the speech by the Premier Berlusconi about the superiority of Western culture, given during a European meeting in Berlin. Oriana Fallaci criticises the Premier because he retracted in order to make happy the "luxury cicadas". *"He suffered without a word the hypocritical rebukes of his European colleagues and the slaps of Blair. Using one word, he was afraid. And it is not a good thing"*.

Also some left-wing intellectuals agree with the statement of the Premier, for example, Sabino Acquaviva, sociologist and writer, declared: *"The truth escaped him. But it didn't happen because he is ingenuous, but because behind the statesman, behind the politician, there is the man...Soon afterwards the polemics, the international protests, the usual " I didn't say it" arrived...A polemic taken for granted and very tedious"* (Oggi, n° 41, 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2001, pag. 27).

The main Italian media made room for the opposite polemics the following weeks, but no control body, and above all the *Authority Garante per le Telecomunicazioni* or the *Order of journalists* did nothing against the newspaper and its manager or against Fallaci.

Nowadays, in Italy, a code of conduct on representation of ethnic minorities' communities does not exist<sup>64</sup>. It is important to remember that the Italian public broadcasting system (RAI) does not have a specific paragraph on the portrayal of ethnic minorities in its service agreement with the Ministry of Telecommunications, but this matter is included in the general one on TV social programming<sup>65</sup>.

In Italy migrants' opinions are not considered, neither when the facts are strictly connected to them, nor even when they are victims of the crimes reported in the news<sup>66</sup>. In a research study carried out recently in Italy<sup>67</sup> the multicultural offerings in the mass media sector are consigned just to local TV and above all local radio, where numerous multilingual and multicultural information initiatives are becoming important means of expression.

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<sup>64</sup> Cospe, *"Libertà di stampa e discriminazione razziale-Rassegna sulla normativa in materia e analisi del ruolo dei codici di condotta in Italia"* - January 2002.

<sup>65</sup> In the last service agreement of RAI the art. 7 is entitled *"Social programming and programming dedicated to people with disabilities"*. This document is on the internet [www.segretariatosociale.rai.it](http://www.segretariatosociale.rai.it)

<sup>66</sup> Censis, mentioned above.

<sup>67</sup> Cospe, *"L'offerta multiculturale nella stampa, tv e radio in Italia"*, - quaderni di ricerca del Cospe – April 2002.

The study confirms a constant trend, if not a growth of this media reality promoted by immigrant citizens or specifically designed for this audience, a clear expression of needs for information and self-representation of immigrant citizens present in Italy.

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