Migrants are essential and badly distributed in Europe according to the Report on Mediterranean Economies 2016, by the Institute of Studies on Mediterranean Society (ISSM-CNR), recently presented in Naples.

The book, published by Mulino, provides information, data and interpretation on the demographics and economy of the Mediterranean countries, widely covering the political scenario in this area: from the changed commitment of the United States, to the conflict between Sunnis and Shiites resulting in the Arab revolts, to the struggle for leadership in place between Iran and Saudi Arabia.
The Report also shows that the total number of migrants in the European Union is approximately 65 million, equal to 13% of the resident population. This presence partially compensates for the strong demographic fall which has been ongoing in our continent over the last few decades. “The demographic weight of the European Union as compared to the rest of the world has gone from 14.5% in 1952 to 7% in 2010. As compared to 2010, Eurostat expects that in 2050 the EU population, without migration, will lose additional 58 million residents, consequently to workforce aging and reduced innovation and competitiveness capability”, explained Eugenia Ferragina, researcher from ISSM-CNR who has edited the book.

In the Report, special attention is drawn to the distribution of migratory flows in our continent. As shown in the chapter by Alessandro Romagnoli, Professor of political economy of the University of Bologna, more than 35 million migrants are resident in the countries bordering Mare Nostrum (the Mediterranean Sea), a third of whom come from extra-EU Mediterranean countries, while more than 27 million live in the central and Northern EU countries, with less than 15% of them coming from the Mediterranean countries. Therefore, the number of Mediterranean migrants living in the EU Southern countries is more than double as compared to the other Member States.

The number of migrants who have left their countries of origin in 2015 to go abroad, with sadly fatal outcomes, is tragically high: according to the international organization for migrations in the Mediterranean, last year at least 3,771 people died, while 1,080,000 people have arrived. More than 5 million citizens left Syria, ravaged by the war and Isis pressure, 1.6 million of which addressed to Turkey: a land where a lot of migrants transit, with 2.9 million foreigners hosted as opposed to 3.1 million emigrants, half of whom directed to Germany.

Besides the distribution of migratory flows, the Report also analyses the economic indicators related to the Mediterranean countries and the employment level of their citizens. From this point of view, the effects of the 2008 economic crisis put a heavy weight on the unemployment levels of immigrants living in Southern Europe. “It is crucial to ensure the countries bordering the South and East coasts of the Mediterranean Sea a full inclusion in the globalization processes not in a subordinate way, only limited to low value-added productions. Data related to manufacturing import and export show that almost all the MENA countries exports are mainly made of consumption goods and a very low percentage of instrumental goods”, concluded Ferragina.

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