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Migrations in Brescia 2017-2018. The portrait of a multiethnic society



**CIRMiB – Research Centre on
Migration in Brescia**

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<https://centridiricerca.unicatt.it/cirmib-home?rdeLocaleAttr=en>

CIRMiB: A research unit across academic and local community

- Managed by two local universities (State University and Catholic University in Brescia) **1998-2010** and funded by a local institution made of public-private joined organisations
- **2013** CIRMiB became one of the hundred Catholic University Research Centres, based on Department of Sociology and Faculty of Education, since then self-sustained with external funds (projects application)
- Managerial Board of 7 academics; Scientific Board of 12 extra-academic experts and representatives; a dozen of junior local researchers
- To date, it gets funds from: Ministry of Home Affairs-local detachment, Council of Brescia, Ong VIS – International Volunteers for Development (Salesians of Don Bosco), ONGs...

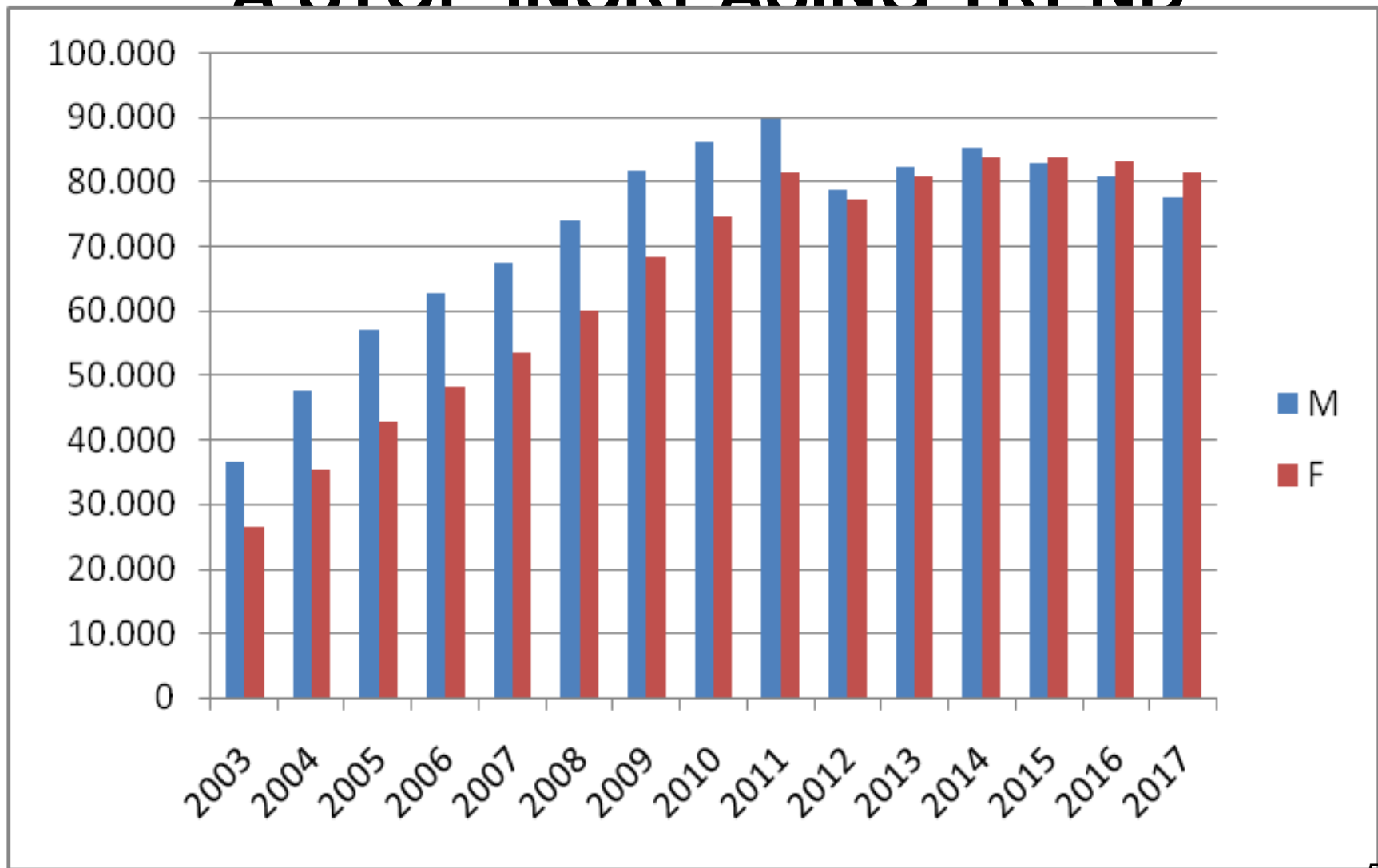
Immigrant population in Brescia

- The stock of residents with non-Italian citizenship living in Brescia in 2018 is 156,000, thus representing **12,4% of the total population**
- Comparing the year 2017 with 2018 we can notice that there is a **1.6 percentage points of decrease**
- According to data, **Brescia is still one of the most multiethnic city in Lombardia**, but the huge **growth of migrant population**, which has increased in the past decades, **since 2011, has turned into a decrease**

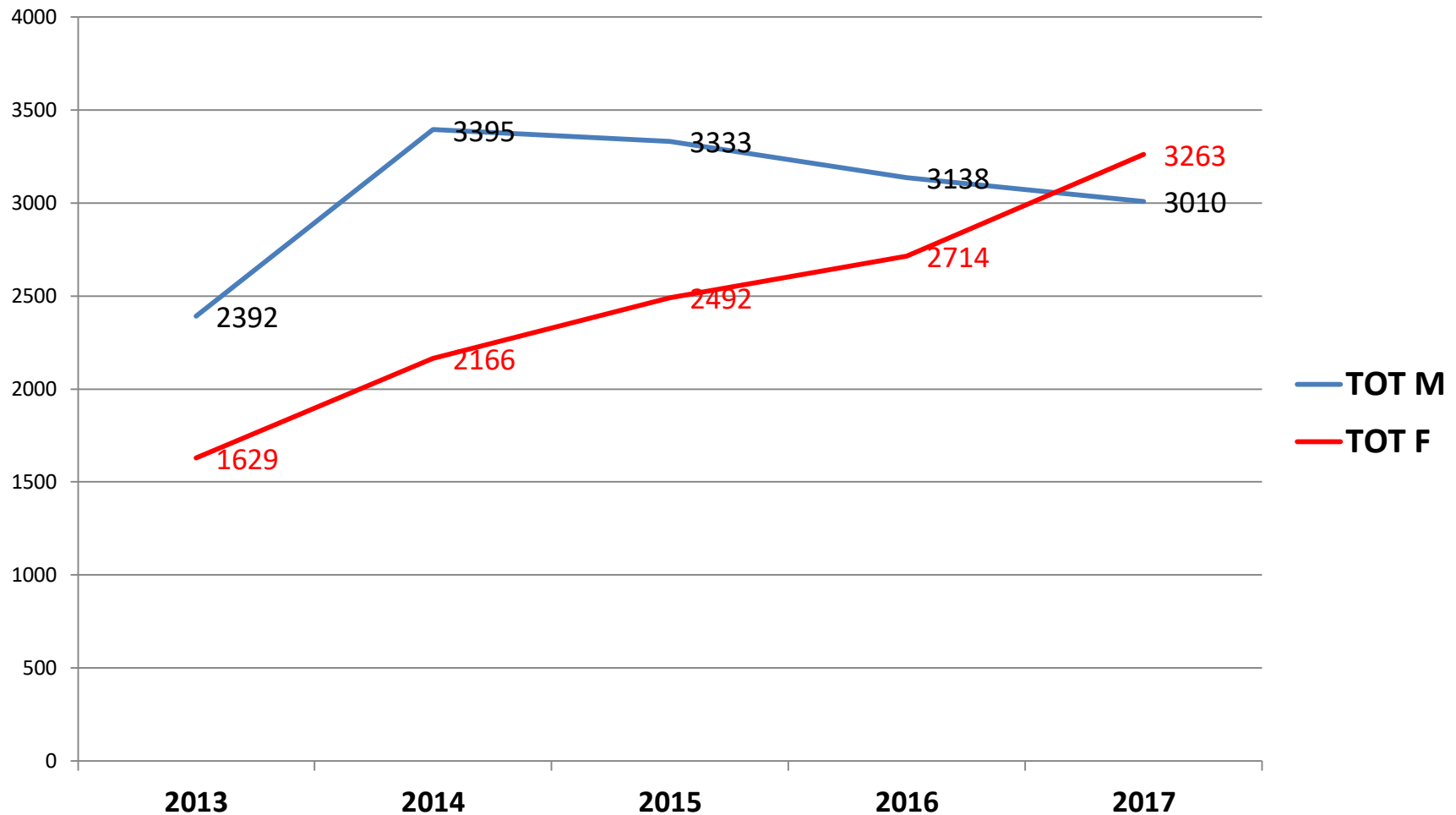
The decline of migrant flow: *why?*

- Due to:
- 1 – the country wide economical crisis (which discourages new arrivals and is also cause and reason for returning home or moving to other countries)
- 2 - the acquisition of citizenship (over than 6000 new Italians in 2017)

IMMIGRANT INFLUXES : A STOP-INCREASING TREND



INCREASING STOCK OF HOLDERS OF THE ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP (AFTER 2013)



Immigrant population in Brescia

Even if there was a decrease of migrant inflow we can notice that:

- 1) Over the years a remarkable numbers of migrants acquired the possibility to uproot their lives and settle in a new environment
- 2) Brescia has shown a significant capability of integration
- 3) Brescia shows also that «*demography still matters*»: migrants replace a declining population in termes of birth rate and work force

Immigrant population in Brescia

- The immigrant population living in Brescia displays huge diversity with regards to the country of origin
- The most represented nationalities are:
 - **Romanian** (16% of the total foreign population)
 - **Albanian** (12%)
 - **Moroccan** (9%)

Immigrant population in Brescia

- The nationalities that in 2017 showed a feeble growth are:

Romanian (+ 2,7%)

Chinese (+ 0,1%)

Egyptian (+ 2,7%)

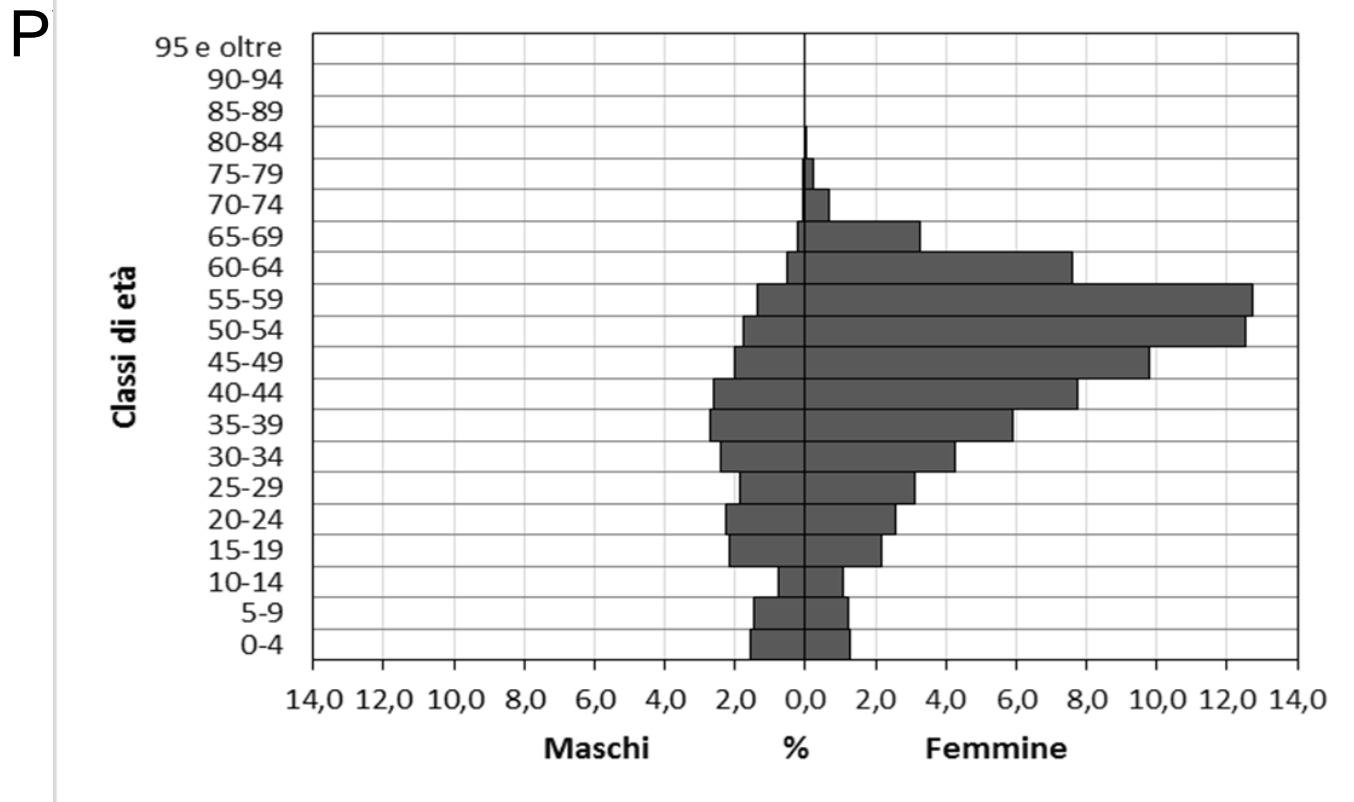
- All other nationalities had a high return/moving away rate

Immigrant population in Brescia

- Immigrants living in Brescia are generally younger than natives
- They show a higher birth rate compared to Italians
- There is not a considerable difference between male and female migrant population, but this difference becomes remarkable inside certain groups : i.e. **Ukrainian** (more women), **Senegalese** (more men)

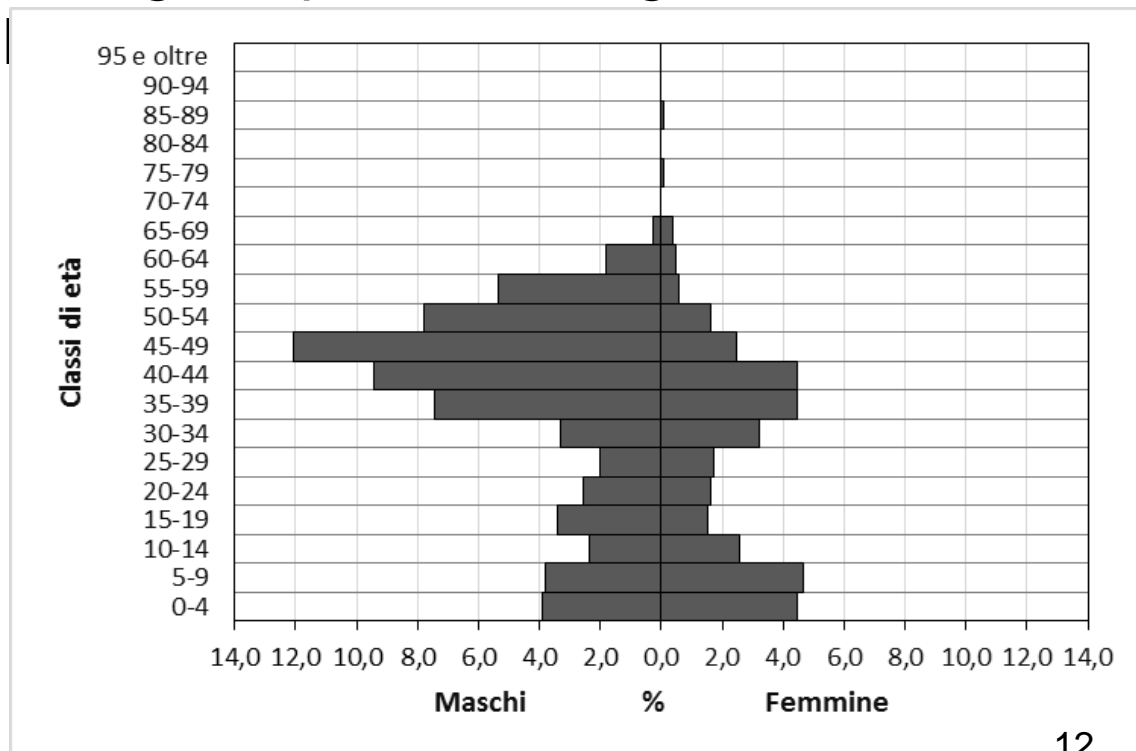
Migration as a life project

- 1) **individual intensive-saving project:** short staying, saving up enough money to start an activity in the country of origin, or to buy a house, (UKRAINIAN



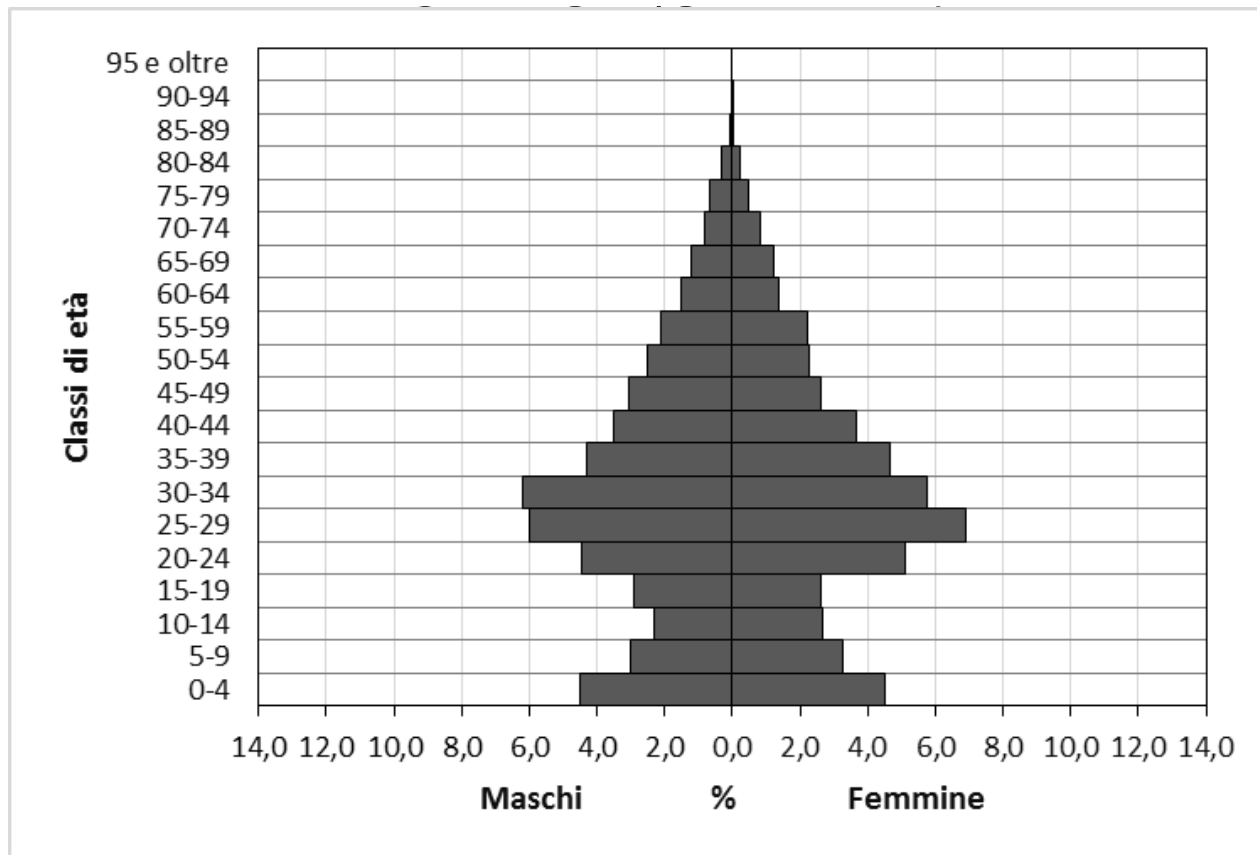
Migration as a life project

- 2) **family remittance project:** returning to the country of origin at the end of a few years migration after saving up enough money to afford to parents better conditions of life, education for children, etc., preferring not to move the family during the period of migration (SENEGALESE |



Migration as a life project

- 3) **family migration project:** involving all family in migration and to re-start a new life in the receiving country across every life events (ALBANIAN



Migrant peoples' religions

- Changes in religious demography are often consequences of human mass migrations
- Migration make it possible to have more contacts with different religions, cultures and traditions
- Brescia can be defined a “multireligious city”
- Most represented religions among foreigners in 2017 are: **Christian** (46%), **Islam** (35%), **Buddhism** (9%) and **Hinduism** (6%)

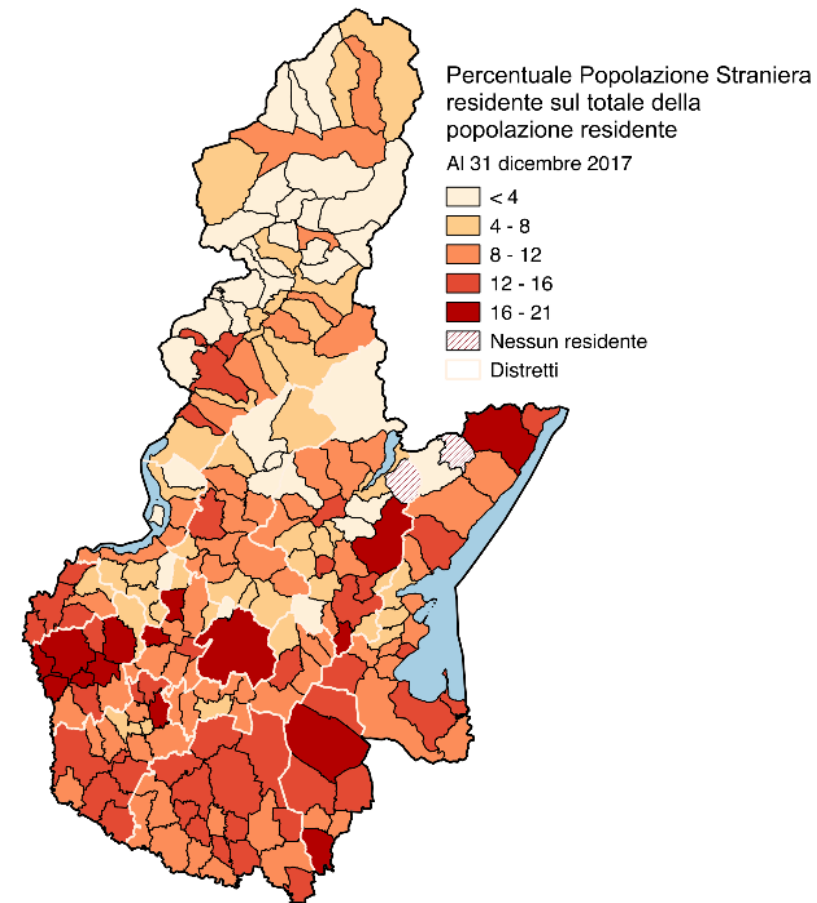
Migrant workers

FACING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

- Foreign workers score higher rates of **employment, unemployment** and «**activity**» (searching for job) of the native counterparts
- In 2017 unemployment rate among migrants has decreased (year 2016: 8,2% vs. year 2017: 6,2%)
- In 2017 there was a foreign entrepreneurship growth (1,8%)
- **REMITTANCES** : still **increase**, over than 159 millions of euro in 2017

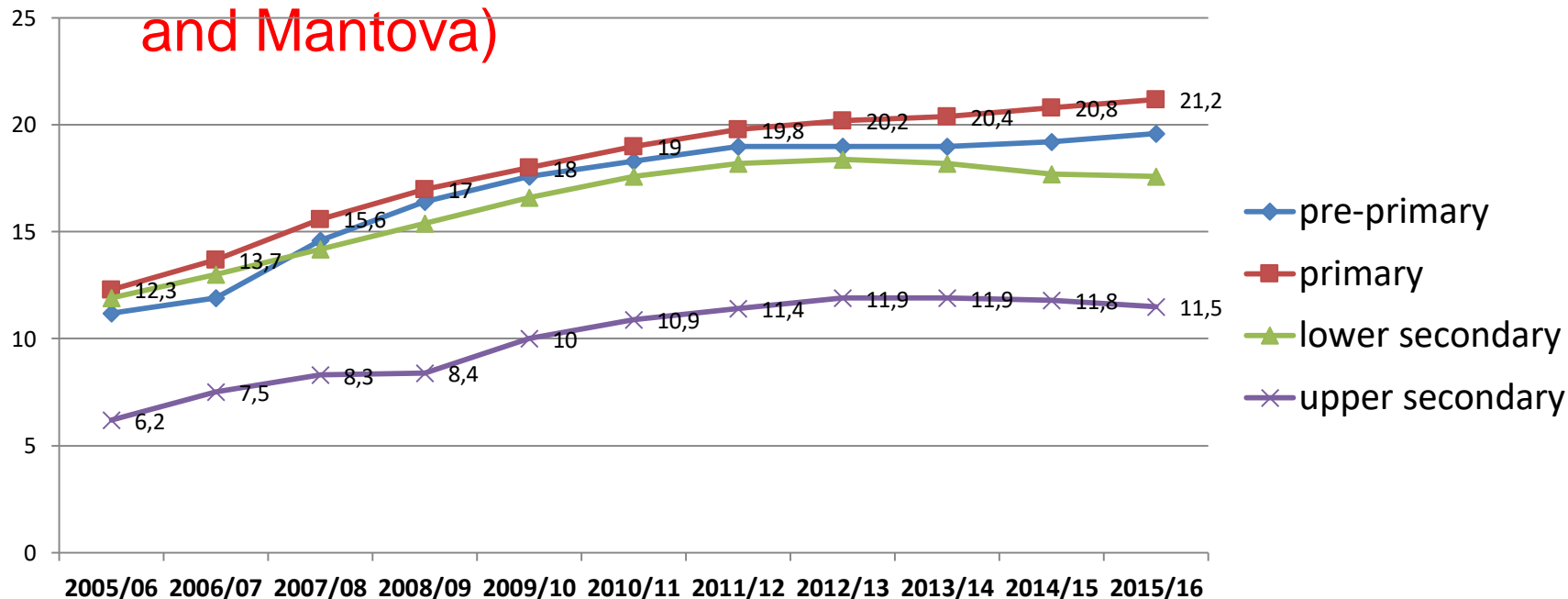
Housing

- In Lombardia, in 2017, the house ownership rate among migrants is 24,8%;
- In Brescia, the foreign-born population has lower house ownership rate compared with the natives;
- In Brescia, 63% migrants live in rented houses
- In Brescia there are some areas marked by a heavy concentration of migrant population



Schooling migrant pupils

- EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT – constant progression of the incidence rates
- S.y.2016/17 : **17.7% means of Non-Italian Pupils** out of the total population attend schools in the county of Brescia (the fourth area in Italy after Prato, Piacenza and Mantova)



School achievement of migrant pupils

- The CIRMiB promotes **research projects on multicultural schools, migrants' pupils integration**, in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the phenomena and valorize multicultural education
- In 2017 it carried out a social research on **successful foreign students in Brescia** (Su.Per); the aim of the project is to analyse the reasons/causes of foreign students' success, to collect the biographies of the students (which will be soon published) and to valorize them.
- Results: the analysis of biographies points out some topics related to success/difficulties: self determination, family involvement, economic status, relationships with peers and teachers, ethnic/gender problems and language problems**

School achievement of migrant pupils

The educational gap

- Immigrants' disadvantage for the first generation is particularly remarkable
- The educational gap between the second generation and the natives is not particularly pronounced
- Foreign pupils coming from European countries achieve better outcomes compared with their non-European counterpart

School achievement of migrant pupils

Some considerations :

- Second generations have a better acquisition of the schooling language
- because they have spent more time in the destination country, they have also interiorised specific norms and skills of the receiving country

School achievement of migrant pupils

When talking about success/failure at school of migrant pupils other factors should be taken into account:

1. Poverty
2. Family involvement
3. Relationships with peers and teachers

School achievement of migrant pupils

1. Common problems with poorer migrant students

- High tardy rate, not completed homework and high absenteeism (maybe the student is required to work to support the family; maybe the student is required to babysit younger brothers/sisters while parents are at work)
- Poor parents may actually discourage participation in school or school career
- Low motivation to learn – always thinking about economic problems/something else

1. Common problems with migrant poorer students

- Difficult relations with peers/teachers – because think they are not smart enough
- Lack of adequate home environment;
- High family's mobility due to economic factors (negative effects of educational discontinuity are even more daunting when viewed over time: students who have moved several times have lower outcomes than “more stable” counterparts)

2. Family involvement

Research demonstrates that parents / family involvement significantly contributes to improve student outcomes, in several ways:

- More positive attitudes towards school;
- Higher attendance rate, and more homework completed consistently;
- Higher enrollment rates in post-secondary education and higher graduation rates

3. Family involvement

- While parent/family involvement improves student outcomes, variations in culture, ethnicity, and/ or socioeconomic background affect how families are involved.
- for example, family involvement can differ in relation to gender differences: how parents provide son's education or daughter's education (in some ethnic groups girls have limited control over their schooling and future: domestic responsibilities, early marriages, etc. can cause girls' school dropout)

2. Family involvement

- Even if many migrant parents appreciate education for their children, they may not always know how to support their children:
 - for example, they cannot able to help them with homework or to communicate with their teachers because of their lack of school language
 - sometimes they limit their participation to school initiatives addressed to parents: meetings with teachers or parental extra-school encounters, due to lack of time or the need to have a childminder service

3. Relationship with peers and teachers

- Migrant students are frequently faced with adjustments to school setting, especially if they move from a city to others.
- They find it difficult making new friends and fitting in socially
- The identification with the school, including sense of belonging, are related to their school achievement (to be successful/failing)
- Teachers' and peers' psychological/operative support can play an important role in migrant pupils integration

Some conclusions

- Italy's population is growing mostly through migration. With a rapidly ageing population and low birth rate, increase through migration can't be avoided
- Migrants are more than simply workers in the host country: they interact with local population and contribute in many ways to the shape of future society
- It is naïve to think that migrants can assimilate into a country without generating some changes

Some conclusions

- The idea of change may inculcate fear of the Other, if people think that they would lose something (i.e. their original identity or tradition)
- Being influenced by other cultures or foreign belief systems, at times, create a protectionist tendency among people, especially when local policy and mass media manipulate our ideas about diversity and “multi” (anti-immigrant sentiment)
- The idea of diversity can be interpreted as an obstacle (negative way) or enrichment (positive way)

Some conclusions

- It's important to develop an idea of **sustainable diversity** that can invest in “multi” as a form of economical, social and cultural enrichment
- Cultural exchange programs (such as Erasmus, etc.) across different countries help in bringing about several subtle changes in one's perspective towards other cultures
- *Thanks for giving me the opportunity to be involved in your Erasmus generation!*