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Transnational practices: Functions and Impact of Egyptian Diaspora associations in Milan, Italy

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I declare that the research presented in this thesis is original and has not been submitted overall or in part to be awarded a degree in any other Italian or foreign educational institution. I affirm that all sources used in the writing of this thesis have been exactly cited in the text and identified in the "Bibliographical References" Furthermore, I confirm that any explicit quotations or references to other works are appropriately credited to their sources.

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Acknowledgments

Abstract

Migrant self-organization is an intersectional phenomenon that extends beyond formal structures, yet it remains insufficiently studied in the Italian context. This thesis focuses on exploring the dynamics of migrant connectedness and political engagement among diaspora Egyptians in Italy. While existing research mostly examines the formal and structured aspects of immigrant organizing, there is a gap in understanding informal forms of self-organization within immigrant communities. Starting from this premise, this thesis delves into the self-organization of Egyptian immigrants residing in Italy, especially in Milan, and examines their informal social networks and more formal organizational mobilization efforts. The study aims to reveal the interaction between these two areas of work and to identify the transnational linkages and dynamics shaped by the social and political context in Egypt. Furthermore, the research addresses the influence of contextual factors within the host country, including the social, political, and economic landscape at the national and local levels.

Our research reveals the essential functions applied by the Egyptian expatriate groups in Milan including offering legal assistance and social services, cultural promotion events, and economic empowerment initiatives, notwithstanding barriers such as limited resources and legal restrictions. they act as important mediators between immigrants and between immigrants and both Italian and Egyptian national institutions, representing the interests of the Egyptian immigrant community and facilitating community initiatives.

Sommario

L'auto-organizzazione dei migranti è un fenomeno intersettoriale che va oltre le strutture formali, tuttavia rimane insufficientemente studiato nel contesto italiano. Questa tesi si concentra sull'esplorazione della dinamica della connessione dei migranti e dell'impegno politico tra gli egiziani di diaspora in Italia. Mentre la ricerca esistente esamina principalmente gli aspetti formali e strutturati dell'organizzazione degli immigrati, vi è una lacuna nella comprensione delle forme informali di auto-organizzazione all'interno delle comunità immigrate. Partendo da questa premessa, questa tesi approfondisce l'auto-organizzazione degli immigrati egiziani residenti in Italia, specialmente a Milano, e esamina le loro reti sociali informali e gli sforzi di mobilitazione organizzativa più formali. Lo studio mira a rivelare l'interazione tra queste due aree di lavoro e a identificare i legami e le dinamiche transnazionali modellate dal contesto sociale e politico in Egitto. Inoltre, la ricerca affronta l'influenza di fattori contestuali all'interno del paese ospitante, compreso il paesaggio sociale, politico ed economico a livello nazionale e locale.

La nostra ricerca rivela le funzioni essenziali applicate dai gruppi di espatriati egiziani a Milano, tra cui la fornitura di assistenza legale e servizi sociali, eventi di promozione culturale e iniziative di empowerment economico, nonostante barriere quali risorse limitate e restrizioni legali. agiscono come importanti mediatori tra gli immigrati e tra i migranti e le istituzioni nazionali sia italiane che egiziane, rappresentando gli interessi della comunità degli emigranti egiziani e facilitando le iniziative comunitarie.

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THE INTRODUCTION

Recent shifts in the immigration studies, particularly in Europe, scholars have become more and more interested in the political and social participation of immigrants in recent decades. Numerous publications have tackled this subject since the late 1980s, attempting to investigate the various facets of migrants' engagement with the political and social landscape of their new communities (Zapata-Barrero, 2013; Waldinger, 2010; Martinello, 2005; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003). Migrant studies have been thrust to the forefront of academic research due to changes and the evolving dynamics of migration and globalization. This has led researchers to examine the roles that migrants participate as actors in creating social structures and political settings (Boccagni and Bracciale, 2019; Faist, 2000; Boccagni, 2012).

In the Italian studies on immigrant associationism and involvement, three main pathways of inquiry may be identified. Firstly, a few studies have examined how immigrants become involved with local affairs through official channels, such as joining foreign advisory groups or advocating for local government (Giannetti, 1993; Attanasio & Facchini, 2004; Caritas Italiana, 2005). Secondly, studies on foreigners' associationism and self-organization focused on the dynamics and evolution of organizations led by immigrants (Campani, 1994; Danese, 1998; Berti, 2000; Caponio, 2005; Caselli, 2006; Palidda & Consoli, 2006; Camozzi, 2008). Finally, some studies focused on many different types of participation in associations, social movements, trade unions, and institutions (Kosic & Triandafyllidou, 2005; Pizzolati, 2005; Semprebon, 2012; Oliveri, 2012; Lotto, 2015).

Nonetheless, a notable gap in the existing database of research is the lack of inquiry into immigrant self-organization that is not explicitly focused on engaging with the host community. Some scholars refer to this type of mobilization as "infra-political, social" insisting on the necessity of how immigrants work toward changing political agendas (Bousetta, 2000). The transnational connections that immigrants maintain with their home country, as well as how they interact with the patterns of associations in their adopted country, can be better understood by diving deeper into the infra-political and social component of immigrant self-organization (Danese, 1998).

Nonetheless, we observed that there are other forms of participation in which migrants participate in informal networks and popular initiatives, through which they exercise their influence and effect change (Boukani, 2011). The literature that is currently available, however, focuses primarily on the participation of migrants within official institutions, agencies, and entities as well as organized groups.To fully understand diaspora migrants' political and social choices and organizational practices, it will be essential to investigate these alternative forms of participation, especially in situations where more traditional possibilities of participation may be unavailable or insufficient (Bocconi, 2016; Alba and Foner, 2019).

Moreover comprehending immigrants' social and infra-political activity sheds light on their complex connection with both their host and home nations. Researchers may identify the intricate networks of transnational connection and identity negotiation that shape immigrant communities by studying how immigrants' experiences in political and social participation in their home country influence their organizational practices in the host country (Zapata-Barrero, 2013; Waldinger, 2010; Martinello, 2013; Ostergaard-Nielsen, 2003). The approach helps our understanding regarding immigrant integration and concerns of belonging in diverse societies by giving fresh

insights into how individual-created agencies interact with structural constraints and at the same time political and social considerations.

To address this identified gap in the literature, this dissertation examines the roles, functions, and contributions of Egyptian immigrant groups in the Italian context and in Milan[1], which is home to Europe's biggest Egyptian population[2]. The purpose of this study is to shed light on immigrant self-organization beyond the typical focus on assimilation, highlighting the value of understanding these associations' activities and challenges. By diving into such topics, this study hopes to gain practical knowledge of their vital roles in encouraging social integration and supporting intercultural collaboration.

The main question of the thesis is the following: What are the primary tasks, roles, and objectives of Egyptian migrant associations in Italy? To answer this question, this thesis examines the basic tasks and objectives of Egyptian immigrant associations in Italy, providing us with a comprehensive understanding of their organizational structures and priorities To do this, the research asks four more certain subquestions, namely:

1. How do these associations contribute to the social, cultural, and economic integration of the Egyptian community within Italy? To fill the literature gap we mentioned above, this subquestion explores the impact of Egyptian expatriate associations on societal integration processes, trying to understand their efforts to promote social cohesion as well as preserve cultural heritage, in addition to their roles in promoting economic empowerment. By conducting this analysis, we aim to evaluate its effectiveness in facilitating the integration of Egyptian immigrants into Italian society.

2: How do Egyptian expatriate associations engage with the local Italian community to promote cross-cultural understanding and cooperation and meet the needs of both communities? This subquestion explores the strategies used by Egyptian immigrant associations to bridge cultural gaps and strengthen partnerships with the local Italian community. By delving deeper into...studying their awareness initiatives and collaborative endeavors, by answering this question, we seek to evaluate their role in promoting intercultural dialogue and addressing common challenges, and by extension, addressing the gap in the literature related to the self-organization of outward-oriented immigrants.

3. What are the main challenges that diaspora organizations face in mobilizing their communities and implementing their activities, and how do they overcome these obstacles? 3. By answering this subquestion, we analyze the obstacles facing Egyptian expatriate organizations in mobilizing community members and implementing their programs. By examining their diverse responses to these challenges, we aim to identify effective strategies to overcome barriers to organizational effectiveness, thus contributing to an effective understanding of diaspora dynamics.

4: To what extent do Egyptian diaspora associations participate in policy advocacy, especially regarding issues affecting the Egyptian community in Italy, and how do they cooperate with Italian entities to address common goals and challenges? This subquestion attempts to explore the advocacy efforts of Egyptian diaspora associations and their efforts to collaborate with Italian institutions to address community concerns and influence political decisions. By assessing their engagement with local stakeholders, we seek to assess their role in shaping policies affecting the

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[1] Milan is Italy's second-largest metropolis when measured in terms of population after Rome also the capital of the Lombardy region. The number of inhabitants of Milan in 2023 was 3,155,000, rising 0.19% from 2022. Milan's metro area population during 2022 was 3,149,000, an increase of 0.16% from 2021. Increase in 2020. https://www.istat.it/en/archivio/resident+population

[2] The largest Egyptian population in the European Union is found in Italy, followed by those in Germany and France (approximately 35,000 Egyptian residents live in Germany and over 21,000 in France, according to Eurostat data).

Egyptian community in Milan, Italy, thus contributing to the literature on migrant political participation.

The stated research question and subquestions provide a strong framework for studying the activities, challenges, and contributions of Egyptian migrant associations in Milan, Italy. To comprehensively address these questions, the thesis adopts a qualitative approach, combining interviews and participant observation. This interdisciplinary approach aims to provide comprehensive insights into the under-researched phenomenon of migrant self-organization and political participation.

The analyses are structured around some hypotheses that are formulated in this study building on the extensive literature on immigrant associationism, community integration, and political participation. Drawing from a diverse range of scholarly works, these hypotheses provide a theoretical framework for structuring the research, guiding data collection, and interpreting the findings.

We begin with the argument that immigrant groups have an outstanding role in improving community integration and intercultural understanding within host communities, drawing on the substantial research of Portes and Rumbaugh (2001) and Bocconi (2016). Drawing on existing literature, we hypothesize that Egyptian migrant associations function as the main means of fostering social cohesiveness, offering social support systems, and encouraging a feeling of inclusion within the Egyptian migrant community residing in Milan.

Additionally predicated research by Pizzolatti (2005) and Kosic and Triandafylidou (2005) shows a favorable correlation between immigrant associations' efficacy in serving the varied demands of the immigrant population and their degree of community participation. We contend that Egyptian immigrant associations seek to strengthen immigrant voices in the public arena, empower marginalized groups, and increase community engagement through the planning of advocacy campaigns, awareness campaigns, and community events

Furthermore, we utilize numerous perspectives reported in research by Martinello (2005) and Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) concerning the dynamic involvement of diaspora associations in national and international policy advocacy campaigns. Diaspora associations work to address the urgent issues faced by migrant communities and advance their social and political interests by advocating for policy reforms, legislative changes, and institutional initiatives through the use of their social networks, institutional connections, and collective advocacy strategies.

We also assume that Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan contribute to preserving and promoting their cultures and heritage in the host communities, which enhances the sense of identity and belonging among community members, based on the studies he conducted (Hirschman, 2004). Associations do this by organizing cultural events, language courses, and heritage celebrations (Al-Ali and Koser, 2002).

We also studied the challenges hypothesis. Based on the studies of Kaponyo and Burkert (2019) and Giugini and Passi (2017), the challenges hypothesis emphasizes the study of the various obstacles and multiple constraints that diaspora associations face in mobilizing their communities and implementing their activities. These challenges may include organizational complexities, financial constraints, legal barriers, institutional resistance, and leadership turnover, all of which can prevent the effective and sustainable work of immigrant associations from achieving their missions and goals. Through this study, we discuss the various tasks and challenges faced by Egyptian expatriate associations in Milan, and we seek to shed light on the multiple roles they play

in supporting immigrants and the obstacles that prevent them from being effective in serving the immigrant community.

In the results section we present a detailed analysis drawn from interviews with leaders of Egyptian diaspora associations in Milan, highlighting their multifaceted roles and activities and the challenges they face in facilitating the integration of the Egyptian diaspora into Italian society in Milan. Our analysis is consistent with the objectives of the study, including revealing the functions, roles, and objectives of these associations, exploring their contributions to social, cultural, and economic integration, and investigating their engagement with the local Italian community. Moreover, our analysis identifies challenges in mobilizing communities, engaging in policy advocacy, and collaborative efforts with Italian entities. Through this analysis, our analysis reflects an attempt to establish an accurate understanding of Egyptian immigrant associations in Italy, to highlight the key role they play in promoting community integration and addressing societal challenges. Starting with an overview of association size and governance structures, it is evident that associations typically have low to moderate membership, with 75% having fewer than five core members. Members are selected based on moral integrity, competence, and willingness to commit to the group, which often requires regular attendance and legal status in Italy. Regarding age, 37.5% of the associations were founded by individuals under 40 years of age, while 62.5% are over 50 years of age, and 87.5% have resided in Italy for more than 20 years. The generational representation shows that 75% of founders are first-generation immigrants.

In terms of activities and meeting places, associations often meet in places of worship, members' residences, or public places. Financially, 87.5% rely on member contributions and deal primarily with Egyptian business owners in Milan for support. Only 5% receive funds from international entities, and 75% of them cooperate closely with local authorities and sometimes facilitate activities.

Egyptian diaspora groups in Milan serve people in a wide range of approaches, including providing legal services, social services, community betterment, cultural preservation, and earning a living, as well as mediating community representation. These associations offer urgent legal support to migrants through several methods, including government-funded lawyers for individuals with low incomes and informal community-based reconciliation strategies, that handle issues such as work disputes and marital problems. They also organize lots of activities aimed at increasing community unity and well-being, including language courses, celebrations of cultures, and family-friendly events, that contribute to breaking down social isolation and developing genuine connections within the community. Furthermore, these associations actively advance Egyptian culture and heritage while enabling economic engagement among community members through events, exhibitions, and commercial initiatives, thereby strengthening cultural ties and contributing to the economic empowerment of Egyptian migrants in Milan. Despite challenges such as limited resources and legal restrictions, associations take a key function as mediators between migrants and institutions, working with diplomatic authorities, Italian public authorities, and other stakeholders to represent the interests of the Egyptian immigrant community and facilitate initiatives such as conscription settlement.

Most of these results fit in with expectations based on the literature. The giving of legal assistance and community-oriented activities is consistent with previous studies showing the supportive value of diaspora associations. However, one surprising discovery was the Egyptian community's massive reliance on mediation services, which often circumvented government security standards.

Most associations found it impressive that these mediation efforts have been embraced and effective, indicating an original element of social unity and resolution of conflicts within the community.

In terms of differences over associations, while all of them play key roles, the most important areas and techniques change. Some may prioritize legal help, whilst others may focus on cultural preservation or economic empowerment. These distinctions reflect the various demands and goals of the Egyptian migrant population. Furthermore, the evolution of these perspectives across time reflects a dynamic reaction to society's changing conditions and problems, demonstrating the adaptability of diaspora groups in Milan. The unexpected contribution of mediation services points out the local population's resilience and ability for informal dispute resolution, demonstrating a more sophisticated knowledge of diaspora social processes. The result stresses the urgency of community-specific assessments to address issues and strengthen integration with migrants.

Yet, Egyptian diaspora associations in Milan experience quite a few obstacles in their efforts to organize and conduct activities. Financial restrictions are a key barrier to sustainability, as organizations rely significantly on self-funding and have few external connections. The challenging bureaucratic setting and major legal systems in Milan make it tough to negotiate the legal frameworks and bureaucratic procedures, limiting the timely execution of development interventions and advocacy actions. Long leadership stagnation in associations influences organizational growth and outreach, although some leaders have held posts for over three decades, creating challenges to innovation and inclusive decision-making.

Hierarchical ineffectiveness and bureaucratic slowness restrict flexibility and responsiveness to community needs, bringing out the importance of facilitating decision-making processes as well as encouraging participatory governance approaches. Furthermore, gender and age differences in leadership composition hinder diversity and inclusion within organizations, emphasizing the need for activities targeted at increasing women and youth representation and engagement. Awareness and implementation of capacity-building activities are inadequate among Milan's association leaders, focusing on the worth of making investments in leadership development programs and capacity-building initiatives to empower base leaders and strengthen organizational resilience. Challenges remain in successfully representing workers' interests and interacting with the community, underlining the significance of building strong systems for community engagement, input, and representation to align association operations with democratic values and community demands.

Reflecting on these issues, certain aspects of them in line with literature-based hypotheses. Financial restrictions and regulatory difficulties continue to be challenges for diaspora groups globally, reflecting greater institutional obstacles to effective community mobilization. However, the continued existence of leadership stagnation and hierarchical inefficiencies inside groups might create new issues that have not been thoroughly examined in the existing literature. Such issues show the importance of targeted efforts that promote organizational renewal, inclusive governance structures, and leadership development to confront rising barriers and improve the efficacy of Milan's diaspora groups.

However, Egyptian diaspora groups in Milan experience a variety of hurdles in their efforts to mobilize and conduct activities. Financial restrictions are a key barrier to sustainability, as groups rely significantly on self-funding[3] and have few external funds. The complicated bureaucratic

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[3] Our research reveals that 87.5% of Egyptian groups depend on self-funded resources from members and the community.

environment and major legal systems in Milan make it difficult to navigate legal frameworks and bureaucratic procedures, stifling the timely implementation of development interventions and advocacy initiatives. Persistent leadership stagnation inside associations has impacted organizational renewal and community participation, despite some leaders holding places for more than thirty years, providing hurdles to innovation and inclusive decision-making. Hierarchical inefficiencies and bureaucratic slowness limit flexibility and responsiveness to community demands, highlighting the importance of simplifying decision-making processes and supporting participatory governance approaches. Furthermore, gender and age differences in leadership composition hinder diversity and inclusion within organizations, emphasizing the need for activities targeted at increasing women and youth representation and engagement.

The awareness of capacity-building activities is insufficient among Milan's association leaders, which indicates the need to invest in leadership development programs and capacity-building programs to empower community leaders and strengthen organizational resilience. Challenges remain in successfully representing workers' interests and interacting with the community, underlining the significance of building strong systems that outreach to the community, input, and representation to align association operations with democratic values and community demands.

Now, after this general review of the study that we have presented, we will move on to delve into the structure of the thesis, guiding the reader through the upcoming discussions.

The first chapter of this work examines the theoretical foundations of diaspora associations and the concept of diaspora, built on a large body of literature. In this chapter, we look at the various definitions of diaspora, its broad notions, the difficulties in defining it, and the complex role of identity in establishing diaspora dynamics. We analyze perspectives on diaspora connections, follow their changing definitions, highlight their significance in modern society, and demonstrate the historical and cultural influences that have influenced their evolution throughout time. Furthermore, the chapter dives into diaspora associations' multiple activities, which include legal advocacy, policy participation, cultural preservation, and economic engagement.

During the second chapter we provide a comprehensive overview of contemporary migration trends in Italy, contextualizing the role of diaspora associations within this framework. It explores the historical context of migrant associations in Italy, highlighting their development and the challenges and opportunities they face. Particular emphasis is placed on the context of migrant associations in Milan, a center for cultural diversity and diaspora engagement. This chapter draws on historical overviews, demographic data, and maps to provide a nuanced understanding of the landscape of migrant associations in Italy.

The third part will concentrate on Egyptian expatriates living in Italy. The historical background, current migratory trends, and the community's socioeconomic patterns are all thoroughly covered in this chapter. The study offers an extensive overview of Egyptian immigrants' presence in Italy by looking at demographic trends, regional distributions, gender composition, and social and economic circumstances. The chapter also examines the dynamics of Egyptian expatriates' cultural and societal integration, stressing both their contributions to Italian culture and the difficulties they encounter along the way. In addition, we look at the mapping of Egyptian diaspora associations in Milan and evaluate the Egyptian diaspora's political participation in Italy, emphasizing their involvement in both national and local matters.

In Chapter Four, we provide an explanation of the methodology used in the research, detailing the demographics of the population, the criteria for selecting cases, and the process of selecting

interviewees. Data analysis techniques are illustrated, with a particular focus on mapping Egyptian diaspora associations in Milan. Furthermore, the chapter presents findings from the research, including insights into the functions, roles, goals and activities of Egyptian diaspora associations, as well as the challenges and opportunities they face in mobilizing and implementing them.

In the last chapter of our study. We summarize the findings, discuss the implications, and make recommendations. The chapter critically examines the primary responsibilities, functions, goals, and undertakings of Egyptian diaspora associations. It also looks at the barriers that prevent these groups from organizing and carrying out their programs. In addition to suggestions for resolving these issues, a comparative study of Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan offers more information. As the chapter comes to a close, a summary of the major discoveries and their significance for comprehending diaspora participation and mapping associations is provided, opening the door for more research projects in this field. It also gives a picture of politicians, decision-makers, and important stakeholders.

CHAPTER1 Examining Diaspora and Diaspora Associations through the literature review.

In this chapter, we start with a comprehensive examination of the term "Diaspora ", and the concept of diaspora associations[4]. The main objective is to remove ambiguity and address overlaps between conceptions. The focus then shifts to a detailed examination of the activities and functions apply by diaspora associations. We examine the multifaceted roles they play, the goals they strive to achieve, and the adaptive resilience they exhibit in navigating complex socio-cultural landscapes. To serve the research objectives which focus mainly on the Italian context, so we spotlight diaspora associations in Italy, offering a comprehensive overview.

This serves as a prelude to the subsequent chapters, which will meticulously delve into the specific context of the Egyptian diaspora in Milan, Italy. By laying this foundation, we aim to provide a contextualized understanding that enriches the subsequent discussions and analyses.

1.1 The Definition of Diaspora and Diaspora Associations

Diaspora, in its broadest meaning, refers to the dispersal or extension of a population from its original homeland to different places around the world. It includes the migration of individuals away from their place of ancestry or national origin, which is frequently driven by factors like social pressures, political upheaval, economic opportunity, or conflicts. The phrase refers to a variety of groups living outside of their home countries but having common cultural, ethnic, or national links.

1.1.1. Broad Notions of Diaspora:

Diaspora, as explained by Stuart Hall (1990)[5], refers to the expansion of identities and belongings, deeply connected to social and cultural changes tied to historical events such as colonialism, migration, and cultural dispersion. Hall's viewpoint goes beyond a simple physical diasporic, search for the complex complicated of cultural shifts and transformations across time. this idea is repeated by William Safran (1991)[6], who highlights the mixed sides of diaspora, introducing elements such as geographical separation, the preservation of collective memory, and a continual connection to the homeland. and having a complicated connection with the current society of settlement.

Adding to these thoughts, Avtar Brah (1996) illustrates the interconnected nature of diaspora in discussions about nationhood and ethnicity. Brah's contribution broadens the understanding of diaspora as an active process in which communities are engaged in cultural preservation, including languages, traditions, rituals, and art. This is in step with Hall and Safran's focus on cultural

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[4] We use many terminologies when talking about diaspora associations in the context of this study. We refer to these relationships as "diaspora associations," "immigrant associations," as well as "expatriate associations." Clarity is therefore required. Also sometimes I used the term "group" instead of association".

[5] Hall, S. (1990). Cultural Identity and Diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), Identity: Community, Culture, Difference (pp. 222-237). London: Lawrence & Wishart.

[6] Safran, William, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and return", Diasporas, vol. 1, n° 1, 1991.

changes that preserve the ability of diasporic communities to successfully form their identities despite dispersion. Appadurai's (1996) approach contributes to the discussion by introducing the escapes paradigm, which recognizes varied cross-border flows that go beyond human migrations. Ethnoscape, technoscape, finanscape, mediascape, and ideoscape all give a unique perspective for understanding diaspora in a larger global context.

1.1.2. Challenges in Defining Diaspora:

Stuart Hall (1990) defines diaspora as the complex dispersal of identities and belongings resulting from historical events such as colonization, migration, and diffusion of culture. Hall's perspective views diaspora as a maze of cultural variations and transformation throughout the fabric of time, rather than simply the dispersion of physical entities. This perspective reflects William Safran's (1991) observation regarding the intricacy of diaspora. Safran presents elements including a strong connection to the ancestral country, the adoption of collective memory, and geographical separation.

Robin Cohen (1997), represents a key contribution to the in-progress discourse on diaspora within the broader academic debate. Cohen's accurate development of a comprehensive typology initiates a key framework for understanding diasporas. by dividing diasporas into victim, labor, imperial, and trade categories, he provides scholars with a consistent tool to analyze and comprehend the complicated nature of these distributed communities. In the other hand in his important academic work by Paul Gilroy (1993)[7], enhances the discussion on the challenges of defining diaspora with a post-colonial perspective. Gilroy's focus on the black atlantic as a cultural space disrupts conventional notions, assuring the dispersion and interconnectedness of African cultures across geographical and conceptual borders. by introducing the idea of a dynamic and hybrid diasporic identity, Gilroy complicates the challenges in defining diaspora, resisting singular categorizations, and summiting the fluid nature of these cultural narratives.

Furthermore, (Appadurai, 1996)[8] spotlight on the cultural components of globalization brought an interesting and harmonizing voice to the broader academic debate regarding the various and complicated nature of diasporas in a growingly and superconnected world. His writings, (Appadurai, 1996) transcended the spatial explanation and study of the diaspora facts and raised awareness of the unique significance that cross-border flows—which include the international movement of people, ideas, and goods—play in forming identities. By merging non-traditional features of academic discourse, this new approach integrates another dimension of the issues confronting the definition of the term. Plus, Appadurai's priority for "landscapes," which includes ethnic landscape, artistic landscape, financial landscape, mediascape, and ideology, provides a conceptual toolset for comprehending many aspects of diasporic identity foundation. The Complex Role of Identity:

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[7] Gilroy, Paul, 1956-. (1993). The black Atlantic : modernity and double consciousness. Cambridge, Mass. :Harvard University Press,

[8] Appadurai, Arjun, 1949- author. (1996). Modernity at large : cultural dimensions of globalization. Minneapolis, MN :University of Minnesota Press,

The term "diaspora" evolves throughout time in academic discourse and literature, as scholars such as Eric Brubaker (2005) have noted. Brubaker's analytical investigation of the term's evolution, charting its extension and alterations, prompted him to voice concerns about the possible repercussions of its proliferation. He emphasized the importance of accuracy in classifying specific groups as diaspora and establishing qualities that constitute a group's experience as diaspora in academic language terms.

Building on the topic, Feist (2010) provides useful insights into the ongoing changes in the usage of the term. He emphasizes the importance of being accurate when designating certain groups as diaspora, taking into account unique features that contribute to the diasporic experience. Feist delves more into the present alterations in the meaning and connotation of the term, examining the conceptual extensions it has come to embrace. This investigation confirms that the emergence and spread of diaspora terminology represents not only a movement in meaning but also a substantial evolution within the academic and philosophical framework.

In its full form, Clifford's (1994) addition to the concept of diaspora goes beyond just acknowledging collective movements across national lines. Instead, he complicates it by incorporating political fights to identify communities based on their experiences in the face of historical displacement. Clifford contends that diaspora is more than just physical displacement; it is intricately linked to the political dynamics of peoples across historical time. His perspective confirms that the term encompasses not only the physical migration of communities, but also their active participation in political battles as they seek to confirm their unique identities in the face of historical challenges.

In the current debates about diaspora, William Safran's (1991) contributions are especially interesting for pinpointing certain qualities that determine what we might call diaspora. His emphasis on geographical separation, the preservation of communal memory about the homeland, a strong belief in the true homeland, and a dedication to protecting or restoring the original homeland is critical. Safran's academic framework provides a complete understanding of the complex interplay between geographical, cultural, and social components that establish diaspora identity.

In harmony, Brah's (1996) theories widen the academic conversation by highlighting the interconnection of the diaspora issue and identifying it within the larger discourse on country, nationalism, ethnicity, and cultural belonging. Brah's research indicates this concept of a feeling of self and community, broadening our knowledge of diaspora by guaranteeing that these groups actively participate in maintaining many different characteristics such as language, customs, rituals, and art. This distinct viewpoint sees diaspora not just as a response to historical displacement, but also as a continuous process of identity development and cultural continuity in distant countries.

1.1.3. Evolution of Terminology:

Eric Brubaker (2005) is a key voice in this discussion, having critically examined the spread and change of the term "diaspora." As previously stated, Brubaker's primary worries are the possible weakening of the word as a result of its significant extension to embrace wide intellectual, cultural,

and political dimensions. This makes it difficult to precisely identify groups with distinguishing traits, such as the diaspora. While Faist (2010) welcomed this wider usage of the word, he saw it as a signal of the multifaceted nature of communication, applications, and conceptual extensions, and that it is more than just a language shift, but rather indicates significant changes in the conceptual and specialized sector.

This evolution is more than just a semantic concern; it reflects the larger intellectual, cultural, and political currents that shape conversations about migration, identity, and belonging. As the word continues to be redefined and expanded, researchers like Brubaker (2005) warn against losing sight of its basic meaning and analytical value.

2.1 Perspectives on Diaspora Associations

1.2.1. Evolving Definitions:

The evolving definitions of diaspora, particularly in the context of organizations, have witnessed transformative insights from scholars such as James Clifford and Michel Rees. Rees affirms the lasting sense of empathy and solidarity within diaspora communities, particularly focuses on their connection across borders. This perspective focuses attention on the role of diaspora associations as agents fostering a collective identity that cuts across geographical boundaries and the countries of settlement. such solidarity, deeply rooted in diasporic experiences, becomes a unifying force that strengthens the construction of diaspora communities. this aligns with the broader narrative on transnationalism, weighing the connected and shared identity that keep on among diasporic individuals despite physical dispersion.

On the other hand, James Clifford's "Diasporas" (1994) transforms our understanding of diaspora, his work challenges the notion that diaspora associations simply reflect or respond to dispersed experiences. and explain associations' functions, especially in political struggles and identity formation. Clifford denies the idea of them as passive connectors preserving ties. Instead, he sees them as motivated agents in defining and redefining diasporic identity, actively contributing to the community's narrative. they are not responders but key players shaping diasporic identity through their initiatives and engagement.

1.2.2. Importance in Contemporary Society:

The evolving role of immigrant associations as essential mediators between host communities and immigrants is a focal point in present discussions "(Schrover and Vermeulen, 2005). recognized for fostering communication and cooperation, these associations play a key role in establishing a sustainable balance between diverse societies (Vertovec, 2001). Vertovec's observation prompts a conclusive examination of the multifaceted roles played by diaspora associations, insisting to scholars to delve deeper into their constructions and societal contributions.

to boot, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) summit the transformative potential of diaspora associations in cultural integration, declaring, "diaspora associations do as intermediaries, fostering positive interaction and cultural exchange, between host communities and immigrants." This view assures the functions these associations carry out in promoting cohesion and bridging cultural gaps in diverse societies.

The function of diaspora associations is to adeptly drove and react to the effective and changing facets present in the societies with which they interact, which was demonstrated by Faist (2010). Their adaptability is obvious in their capacity to adjust strategies, goals, and approaches in response to shifting societal conditions. Additionally, their responsiveness is pointed up in their quick and efficient dealing with prominent challenges and issues. also, Faist affirms the effective and flexible character of diaspora associations, indicating that they are not rigid entities but rather have the agility to sail through transformations in societal contexts. .

1.2.3. Historical and Cultural Factors Shaping Diaspora Associations:

Gamlin (2008) believes that the modification of diaspora connections has an unbreakable connection to historical events, communal memory, and cultural elements of diaspora identity. This link points out the complexities of diaspora affiliations in the larger context of diaspora groups. Historical and cultural variables influence the purpose and growth of diaspora groups (Cohen, 1997).

On the other hand, when we discuss diaspora associations, we are referring to organized structures purposefully established and maintained by diaspora communities to disseminate, preserve, and celebrate their social and cultural identity. within the organized framework of these associations, the diaspora strives for integration, continuity, and active contribution, seeking legitimate channels for its endeavors. these organizations manifest in various forms – cultural organizations, political advocacy groups, humanitarian initiatives, and educational institutions, each tailored to the specific needs, aspirations, and goals of the diaspora community it represents. as pointing out by Brinkerhoff (2008), at their core, diaspora associations contribute as positive conduits of identity, platforms for cultural expression, and mechanisms for advocacy. These structures, grounded in a shared origin and identity, transcend geographical boundaries, functioning as symbolic channels for the realization of the diaspora's collective aspirations and objectives.

3.1 The multifaceted role of expatriate associations:

1.3.1. Legal Advocacy and Policy Engagement:

Diaspora associations have emerged as major advocates of legal rights and policy reforms for migrants; scholarly research, such as Smith's comprehensive study (2019), gives insight into the nature of these associations' legal lobbying. This research looks at the associations' support as a clear example of a diaspora association that has changed immigration laws, highlighting the influence these groups may have on the legislative setting.

Jones et al.'s comprehensive research in 2020 instills confidence in the essential role that diaspora associations play in safeguarding the rights of migrants. Expanding on this foundation, Ragazzi's seminal work, "Diaspora: A Resource for Political Advocacy" (2011), delves into the intricacies of the legal landscape. This work not only navigates through the challenges but also illuminates the inherent opportunities, providing valuable insights into the strategic approaches adopted by diaspora associations in advocating for political causes.

For instance, The Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform (ILIR) put forward a compelling case study, that exhibits the powerful influence diaspora associations can utilize on legal frameworks. Founded in 2006, the ILIR has been at the forefront of advocating for reform in immigration

policies, particularly those affecting the Irish community in the United States. By leveraging grassroots organizing, engaging with policymakers, and utilizing both traditional and digital media, the ILIR successfully lobbied for the inclusion of the Irish E3 Visa in the U.S. Immigration Act of 2018. The ILIR's accomplishments provide a touchable example of how diaspora-led legal advocacy can conclusion in legislative changes that deal with certain needs and concerns of displaced populations.

In using technology and social media for legal advocacy. Gershon (2019) explores how diaspora associations influence technology and social media for legal advocacy. This adaptation to emerging trends mirrors the active nature of their involvement and the use of advanced tools to speak up their voices.

1.3.2. Social Services and Community Building:

Diaspora associations offer a focal function in providing a range of social services and fostering community structure in the integration process of migrants. Notably, the study conducted by Doe (2018) examines the functions of these organizations and focuses attention on their weight in compromise support, language education, and cultural integration programs.

For instance, The Filipino Migrant Workers Group (FMWG) contributes to demonstrating to what extent the diaspora associations affect social services and community establishment. A inclusive study by Santos (2019) highlights FMWG's emphasis on language classes to enhance migrants' communication skills and cultural orientation programs providing practical insights into host country customs. These initiatives contribute not only to migrants' adaptation but also enrich the cultural fabric of local communities. FMWG's support groups, addressing psychological challenges, have shown a statistically significant improvement in participants' mental well-being according to a quantitative analysis by Hernandez et al. (2020). Garcia's ethnographic research (2017) showcases FMWG's cultural activities preserving Filipino heritage and fostering intercultural understanding.

Diaspora associations go beyond providing practical assistance; they actively empower migrants by creating supportive environments, as demonstrated in Garcia's research (2017). Through networking events and a collaborative approach, these associations work to diminish the isolation commonly felt by migrants, fostering a sense of belonging and connection. The initiatives undertaken by diaspora associations not only enhance the well-being of migrants but also contribute to the cultural richness of host communities. Further literature, such as Brown & Johnson's study in 2021, underscores the enduring impact of diaspora associations in reshaping the intricate landscape of social services, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive society for migrants.

1.3.3. Cultural Preservation and Economic Engagement:

The Complications of preserving the cultural and economic engagement within diaspora associations are obvious in the activities of several groups, such as the Salvadoran community researched by Orozco (2006). Orozco's considerable study discloses that 90% of Salvadorans spend over $130 monthly on products from their homeland, displaying a strong economic trade that not only encourages cultural bonds but also propels the economy of both the diaspora and host

communities. Moreover, the "nostalgic trade," as coined by Orozco, affirms how expatriates actively play a part in the consumption of goods from their country of origin, contributing to transnational economic movements. The World Bank's report on "Diasporas: New Partners in Global Development Policy" (2006) features the wide economic contributions of diaspora communities, extending from trade to investments. Beyond the economic field, Heri Otomo's exploration of diaspora, and cultural heritage shows how these associations serve as cultural bridges, allowing diaspora members to exceed the spatial separations through the cultural narratives.

1.3.4. Political Advocacy and Community Representation:

Political advocacy and community representation contribute as cornerstone roles for diaspora associations, playing a central part in shaping relations and policies. as cleared by Cheldin (1985) and Ragazzi (2011), lobbying emerges as a key practice employed by diaspora associations in engaging with political institutions, both in host countries and the homeland. The Irish Lobby in the United States contributes as an absolute example, showcasing how diaspora associations can display influence over policies related to their community's interests. this commitment enables these associations to formulate policies aligned with their communities' expectations, influencing governmental decision-making on matters ranging from human rights and migration policies to trade agreements and conflict resolution.

The evolving nature of diaspora associations, transforming into players in international politics, is assert by their collaboration in networks, demonstrating their expertise to impact politics, diplomatic relations, and political discourse. The shift towards comprehending diaspora in intricate contexts, as showed by Kapur (2010), positions these associations as key stakeholders. They advocate for the effective representation of migrant communities and contribute to global policy pathways.

1.3.5. Humanitarian Efforts and Long-Term Development:

Diaspora associations demonstrate Constant commitment to providing support and resources during crises through humanitarian efforts and long-term development initiatives. studies conducted by Horst et al. (2016), DEMAC (2018), Shabaka (2019), and the Center for Humanitarian Leadership (2019) shed light on the evolving role of diaspora associations as significant humanitarian actors. Their contributions cover a wide range, extensive relief aid, medical assistance, educational support, and community development projects, as detailed in works by Zollberg and Pindanya (2005) and Ong (1999). Expatriate groups, exemplified by the Indian Diaspora Network for Development (IDND), not only respond to severe crises but also actively contribute to long-term development initiatives. Instances in Southeast Asia, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrate intense collaboration between expatriates and noncommercial associations, spotlighting their dedication to promoting development and easing poverty (PTI, 2021).

Researchers like Ahmed and Asquith (2020) examined the substantial role played by diaspora groups and individuals in addressing a wide range of humanitarian challenges, covering conflicts to natural disasters. policy frameworks in different countries, exemplified by Mexico's "three-for-

one" program, further validate the intentional impact of organized diaspora engagement in accessing institutional support and initiating social impact projects for sustainable development (SEDESOL, 2014).

In the context of Southeast Asia, the noteworthy contributions from wealthy expatriates during the COVID-19 pandemic highlight the active role of diaspora associations in responding to severe crises. Notably, groups like the Indian Diaspora Network for Development (IDND) demonstrate strong collaboration with noncommercial organizations to support India's pandemic response in 2021 (PTI, 2021). The dedication of expatriates in Southeast Asia, both in terms of financial contributions and expertise, spotlights the diaspora's commitment to actively participating in humanitarian efforts. this effectiveness is evident in reliable sources, including media reports, recommendations, and academic studies that specifically focus on the initiatives led by diaspora associations during the pandemic.

1.3.6. Preserving Identity and Community Cohesion:

Preserving identity and community cohesion is a key dimension of the mixed function assured by diaspora associations. The Filipino Migrant Workers Group (FMWG) represents this by promptly promoting a core connection to the homeland across cultural events, language lessons, and heritage conservation projects (Smith, 2019). Studies conducted by Kim (2015) and Cohen (2008) weigh the wide importance of such attempts and focus attention on the function of diaspora associations in giving an address to the challenges of double responsiveness and identity crises within migrant communities. These associations act as attractive centers that bring together community members, providing a stage for interaction, and collaboration. By actively working to produce a sense of community solidarity, diaspora associations effectively address the inherent challenges of absorption, and isolation faced by diaspora communities (Suckfield, 2006; Waldinger, 2011). The touchable result of these efforts is the growing of a great sense of belonging, guaranteeing that diaspora members feel included in a supportive community, thereby enhancing overall community cohesion (Taylor, 2009).

An exemplifying instance of a group in Europe actively contributing to preserving identity and consolidating community cohesion is the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB). helping as an entity for British Muslims to come together, share their cultural heritage, and sustain a strong sense of identity, MAB contributes through cultural events, educational programs initiatives, Studies on Muslim diaspora communities, such as those by Cesari (2014) and Vertovec (2002), light the critical role played by Islamic associations in sustaining cultural identity and fostering community cohesion in European contexts. The efforts of MAB align with broader research highlighting the positive impact of diaspora associations in addressing challenges related to assimilation and cultural preservation (Suckfield, 2006; Waldinger, 2011).

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4.1 factors that can influence the mobilization or activities of diaspora organizations:

1.4.1. Political dynamics:

Political theater stands out as a significant dimension, acting as a driving force that profoundly influences the mobilization and organizational effectiveness of diaspora organizations. Scholars and researchers thoroughly investigate the intricate pathways through which political factors either bolster the effectiveness of these organizations or impose constraints on their collective actions and movements.

Whether unfolding in host countries or the original diaspora communities, major political events often ignite heightened activity within diaspora associations, particularly amid widespread political turmoil and conflicts. This surge is fueled by efforts of solidarity and cooperation among the diaspora, playing a pivotal role as highlighted by Cohen (1997). Political crises emerge as catalysts that propel diaspora engagement, with communities coming together to exert pressure, advocate for change, and champion human rights and social justice, as outlined by Cohen (1997) and Safran (1991).

Diaspora organizations emerge as potent political actors, actively engaged in policy advocacy, lobbying, and participation in various political institutions. They assume key stakeholder roles in policy dialogue, influencing the formulation, implementation, and evaluation stages (King, 1991; Adamson, 2009). These organizations make substantial contributions as major actors in policy reform, designing comprehensive policies that respond to diaspora communities' actual needs and challenges (King, 1991; Adamson, 2009).

over and above that, the political dimension encompasses the representation of diaspora communities within host and home countries. Through official channels and government agencies, diaspora associations are highlighted as legitimate political representatives and defenders of the interests and concerns of diaspora voters (De Saussure, 2011; Boubock, 2007). Engaging in the work of diaspora organizations becomes a legitimate channel for community members to be heard and participate. Their effect increases to the political procedure in both the home and the country of habitation, Increasing the sense of effectiveness and participation (De Saussure, 2011; Bobock, 2007).

Legal and political substructure function a conclusive role in shaping the political setting for diaspora organizations. Praising legal environments simplifies soft organizational functioning and encourages involvement in political activities wanting constraints (Simmel, 1908). Conversely, legal frameworks can pose restrictions and challenges for diaspora organizations to operate and exert influence (Simmel, 1908; Mitchell, 1997). inclusive policies that adopt the contributions of diaspora communities consolidate their politically effective participation, and qualify meaningful involvement in political processes in both host and origin communities (Mitchell, 1997).

Within the political dimension of diaspora and expatriate communities, globalization and transnationalism emerge as exceptional additions. Global interconnectedness, driven by globalization, makes diaspora organizations integral players in global political discourses and contributors to transnational networks (Bauman, 1999). Abundant literature delves into studies on how diaspora organizations navigate these global dynamics, underscoring their pivotal role as major actors in international affairs (Bauman, 1999; Vertovec, 1999).

1.4.2. Cultural ties:

When examining the emergence and mobilization of activities within diaspora organizations, a crucial factor to consider is the role of cultural ties. Beyond their function in fostering a sense of identity and heritage, these ties play a significant role in building a sense of belonging among diaspora communities. Researchers have sought to delve into the ways cultural ties influence diaspora communities, particularly in terms of participation levels and the degree of cohesion in both host and origin countries.

Preserving cultural heritage and reinforcing cultural identity stand out as two pivotal dimensions of cultural ties. Diaspora organizations assume a vital role in safeguarding, celebrating, and enriching the cultural tapestry of the community, acting as custodians of traditions and customs (Brah, 1996). Thus, cultural preservation becomes a fundamental aspect of diaspora identity, serving as a robust foundation for organizational initiatives and enhancing their capacity to mobilize and exert influence around shared values, history, and heritage (Safran, 1991).

The connection between the diaspora and cultural ties transcends mere preservation; it involves actively shaping new cultural expressions that mirror the evolving nature of diaspora identities amidst changing environments (Appadurai, 1996). Brah's (1996) concept of cultural competition further emphasizes the pivotal role of diaspora communities in not only redefining but also challenging traditional narratives.

Examining the impact of cultural ties on diaspora mobilization extends into the realm of festivals and cultural events organized by these associations. These occasions serve as critical platforms to not only exhibit cultural richness but also foster intercultural understanding, gaining recognition from the host community (Appadurai, 1996). Essentially, cultural ties emerge as a dynamic force influencing the various facets of diaspora identity and steering efforts in mobilization

Religious and spiritual ties represent another important aspect of cultural connections within diaspora communities. Diaspora organizations often serve as centers for religious practices (Safran, 1991). These activities also contribute to the integration of diaspora communities into shared spiritual values that contribute to their overall cohesion (Safran, 1991; Appadurai, 1996). Language is also considered a very important and fundamental factor in cultural ties, as it is a strong symbol of identity, commonality and communication. Diaspora organizations are actively involved in language preservation and promotion efforts, ensuring that indigenous languages are passed on to successive generations and are also evident in education initiatives, school building activities and curriculum design (Brah, 1996; Safran, 1991).

1.4.3. Economic factors:

The economic facet of diaspora organizations is a intricate interplay of factors that significantly influence their mobilization and activities. Scholars have devoted considerable efforts to unravel the multifaceted nature of economic relations, shedding light on how diaspora communities navigate and contribute to the economic landscapes of both host countries and their homelands.

Central to diaspora economic participation are remittances, which serve as a lifeline for communities in the homeland, impacting livelihoods, poverty alleviation, and enhancing education and healthcare quality (Orozco, 2003; Gamlen, 2006). Remittances not only directly influence the well-being of recipients but also drive diaspora organizations' activities, especially in facilitating secure and efficient methods of transfer, shaping their pivotal roles in the process (Cohen, 2008; De Saussure, 2011).

Diaspora organizations play a crucial role in boosting their countries of origin economically through various investment projects. Cohen (2008) and De Saussure (2011) highlight the diversity of these investments, ranging from small-scale businesses to substantial contributions in areas like infrastructure, education, and healthcare. Brinkerhoff (2008) and Smith (2019) emphasize how such initiatives strengthen global economic ties, offering valuable trade and investment opportunities, as discussed by Faist (2010). These projects showcase the steadfast commitment of diaspora organizations to promoting economic development and sustainable growth in their home countries.

The entrepreneurial spirit within diaspora communities is a key economic driver, and diaspora organizations actively foster entrepreneurial endeavors. Scholars like Adamson (2009) and Safran (1991) explore the economic impact of diaspora entrepreneurship, highlighting the crucial role of these organizations in providing essential support, mentorship, and networking opportunities. Through their active involvement, these diaspora organizations significantly contribute to establishing and sustaining businesses owned by the diaspora. As highlighted by Adamson (2009) and Safran (1991), this involvement not only shapes the economic landscape but also enhances the effectiveness of diaspora communities in their economic pursuits.

1.4.4. Crisis situations in the country:

Homeland crises act as motivating factors for diaspora organizations, accelerating them into action to address the complex challenges faced by their communities. Scholars have go through extensive studies to comprehend how diaspora groups navigate and respond to crises, unraveling the Complex interactions of their mobilization efforts and community support during turbulent times. A key aspect of diaspora responses to homeland crises involves humanitarian aid and relief efforts. Scholars such as Horst et al. (2016) and DEMAC (2018) point out on the evolving role of diaspora organizations as humanitarian actors and agents, contributing to relief aid, medical assistance, educational support, and community development projects. The multifaceted nature of their contributions includes various dimensions, featuring the diaspora's commitment to providing support and resources during crises (Horst et al., 2016; DEMAC, 2018).

Financial remittances arise as a meaningful pathway for diaspora support during crises. Studies conducted by Brown and Kim (2015) stress the central function of remittances in providing

economic sustenance to families and communities affected by crises. the timely and targeted financial support from diaspora members becomes a lifeline for homeland populations, contributing to their resilience and recovery (Brown & Kim, 2015).

Diaspora organizations often engage in advocacy and awareness campaigns to collect international support and attention toward homeland crises. research by Cheldin (1985) and Ragazzi (2011) highlights the political advocacy role played by diaspora associations, influencing policies related to their community's interests and contributing to global humanitarian efforts. The transformative nature of diaspora organizations into dynamic players in international politics is stressed by their involvement in transnational networks, featuring their ability to influence politics, diplomatic relations, and political discourse (Cheldin, 1985; Ragazzi, 2011).

In addition to immediate crisis response, diaspora organizations contribute to long-term development initiatives in their homeland. Studies by Shabaka (2019) and the Center for Humanitarian Leadership (2019) stress the complex nature of diaspora engagement, including relief aid, medical assistance, educational support, and sustainable community development projects. The commitment of diaspora groups and individuals in addressing diverse humanitarian challenges reflects their dedication to making enduring contributions to their homeland's development (Shabaka, 2019; Center for Humanitarian Leadership, 2019).

In times of crises, media and communication channels assume primary importance for diaspora organizations. They serve as essential tools for disseminating information, mobilizing resources, and fostering connections within communities. Gershon's exploration of digital platforms and social media in 2019 highlights the innovative channels available to diaspora associations for augmenting their voices, coordinating efforts, and delivering real-time updates to both their members and the wider public (Gershon, 2019).

1.4.5. Integration policies in host countries:

Integration policies dominate a major influence on the mobilization and objectives of diaspora organizations, lead to the patterns of participation within the diaspora community. researchers examine these policies' role in either fostering or disturb the diaspora's integration into the social, economic, and political structure of the host country. integration, by nature, is a conflicting process, introducing a challenge in harmonizing similarities and differences between integrated and host communities. Dealing with this challenge covers navigating a mass of differences influenced by ideologies, cultural, social, and historical factors, and surely the context of the host country.

The legal framework controlling diaspora projects in host countries grows as a key aspect shaping the mobilization and activities of organizations (Joppke, 2007; Freeman, 2015). The legal dimensions of diaspora participation assured the need for clear and obvious legal frameworks in host countries to admit diaspora associations, allowing them to operate freely, accomplish their roles, and contribute to the host society.

Besides, studies by Kymlicka (2010) and Anthias (2001) look over integration policies related to multiculturalism and their impact on cultural diversity and inclusion. These policies become needed tools for diaspora organizations, benefiting from efforts that acknowledge and celebrate

cultural differences, creating spaces for cultural expressions and activities, and increasing the sense of belonging for both the diaspora communties and host communities. Integration policies in education also leave a great impact on diaspora organizations. Research by Heath and Berenbaum (2007) and Stevens (2011) goes through the function of education policies in speed up the integration of diaspora youth. Inclusive education policies lead diaspora organizations to deal with the educational needs of their community members, guarantee a overall integration process (Heath and Berenbaum, 2007; Stevens, 2011).

as a result, integration policies in the labor market stand as a focal factor shaping the activities of diaspora organizations, as insist on by Penninx (2016) and Phalet et al. (2016). realizing the impact of policies on equal opportunities in the internal labor market is key. Partnerships between diaspora organizations and integration policies related to the labor market become instrumental in supporting employment, skills development activities, and facilitating career advancement, aligning with the host country's labor market structures. As diaspora communities peruse to integrate, host country policies play a appoint role in creating an inclusive and supportive environment that promotes collaboration and shared welfare.

1.4.6. Effective leadership:

Leadership is a key of diaspora mobilization, is more than a basic organizational role, it's the driving force that shapes community engagement and participation. In the complex context of diaspora communities, productive leaders act as cultural interpreters, bridging gaps and lead generous experiences to the table (Alderfer, 2011; Avolio et al., 2009). The GLOBE project discloses patterns of leadership traits across 60+ countries, weight the cultural differences implicit in leadership within diverse diaspora communities (House et al., 2004).

Leadership, at its root, involves forming a strategic vision. Transformational leaders, as defined by Bass and Riggio (2006), go beyond administrative obligations, they motivate stunning results and stimulate active community participation (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Their impact extends to efficient organizational management and ensuring financial sustainability and focus on the effective project's coordination (Bryant & Dunford, 2008; Rigg & Balasubramanian, 2009).

Perception theory focuses on the complexity of how leaders are perceived. Conclusion-based perceptions focus on performance outcomes, while acknowledgment-based perceptions draw on pre-existing cultural knowledge (Lord & Maher, 1991; Yan & Hunt, 2005). This cultural intelligence is main for leaders set in multiple diaspora contexts (Earley & Ang, 2003). Active, leaders, through advocacy and cultural adaptability, contribute to the development of social capital and shape strong community networks (Putnam, 1993).

Leadership becomes a key in diaspora mobilization, orientation leading community collectives, and actively forming policies that impact expatriates in both host and home countries (Stone, 2011; Yukl, 2010). In essence, it's the human touch of leadership that pushes the diaspora community forward, fostering not only organizational success but also a collective sense of identity and purpos.

With the foundation laid by our examination of the definition of diaspora and diaspora associations, as well as the multifaceted role of diaspora associations and the factors influencing

their mobilization, we now focus on a comprehensive exploration of contemporary migration trends in Italy. In the next chapter, we begin on a detailed journey through the complex landscape of Italian immigration, with a particular focus on the city of Milan. By examining, evolving migration patterns and the symbiotic relationship between migrants and diaspora associations, we aim to provide a nuanced understanding of the interaction that shapes Italy's multicultural reality. Through the analysis and scholarly insights, we seek to unravel the complexities of migration dynamics and provide valuable insights into the role of diaspora associations in promoting community integration and community resilience.

CHAPTER2 Contemporary Migration Trends in Italy and the context of Diaspora associations: A Comprehensive Overview

through this chapter, we review the contemporary immigration scene in Italy, highlighting the historical development, and the role played by diaspora associations. Since the beginning of migration flows in the mid-1970s and contributing to strengthening the contemporary social and cultural fabric of Milan, we delve into the complex interaction between migrants and their communities. Through empirical analysis and scholarly insights, we aim to shed light on the micro-dynamics of migration in Italy, especially in Milan, and the transformative impact of diaspora associations on societal integration and community cohesion. This chapter sets the stage for subsequent chapters for a deeper exploration of migration corridors and social and political dynamics, providing a comprehensive understanding of migration trends in Italy within the framework of the engagement of diaspora associations.

1.2 The Contemporary immigration to Italy:

Italy has seen waves of immigration in recent years, indicating a dynamic blending of cultures. Italy has developed into a hub for individuals from all over the world since it is a meeting place in Europe. The current immigration landscape is formed by the integration of local context, regional considerations, and global economic trends. opportunity beckon migrants, who move in response to political upheaval, humanitarian emergencies, and economic opportunity. Not only has this immigration improved Italy's cultural framework, but it has also brought opportunities and difficulties to the country. Italy leads the complicated aspects of migration in the twenty-first century, develops inclusive policies, and addresses the complexity of modern immigration.

The complex and diverse environment of migration in Italy presents a multifaceted story that showcases dynamic changes, obstacles, and perseverance. The Ministry of Interior Italy's most recent public and open source figures show that, as of January 1, 2022, the number of non-European citizens had increased by 5.6% to over 186,000.

Figure 1: Monthly and Yearly Sea Arrivals to the Italian South Coast 2023"
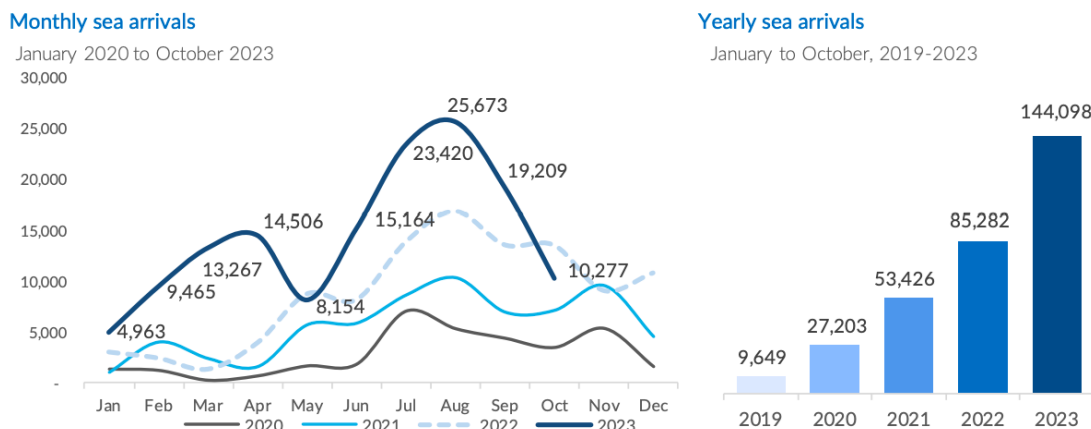
Diverse cultures have come together to form Italy, as seen by the country's recent immigration statistics. Europe makes up 28%, Africa makes up 30%, and Asia makes up 31%. Important source nations including Morocco, Albania, China, and the Ukraine make substantial contributions and together account for 37.2% of all non-EU citizens.

Not all parts of the nation are seeing the same rate of gain; for example, Bari saw a notable 12.3% spike, while Florence saw a massive 11.7% surge. Family reunification, job opportunities, and humanitarian concerns are the driving forces behind this flow.

The Twenty-eighth Italian Report on Migrations 2022

Figure 1. Foreign population in Italy on January 2003-2022 by resident status (values in thousands)
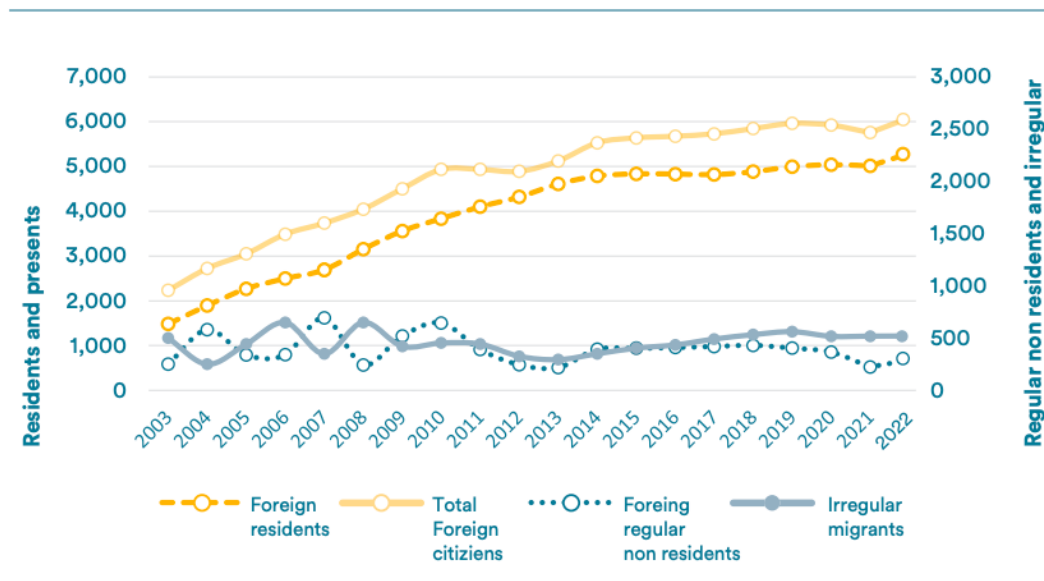
Source: ISMU analysis on Ministry of the Interior data

Figure 2Figure 2: Foreign Population in Italy from January 2003 to 2022, by Resident Status"[9]

As of October 2023, the UNHCR's "ITALY Sea Arrivals Dashboard" was compiling statistics that showed 144,098 refugees and migrants had entered Italy by maritime routes in the first ten months of the year. This amount is a noteworthy 69% rise over the same period last year when there were

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[9] Although the high rise is observed in 2022, the estimated numbers are 32% lower than the average number of maritime arrivals recorded between 2014 and 2017, the most current peak in sea arrivals inflows to Italy. However, they are 67% greater than in 2011, when the North Africa disaster occurred. Libya is the most common departure point on the journey to the Italian coasts: in the year 2022, 51% of departures originated from Libya, compared to 31% The source is "Twenty-eighth Italian Report on Migrations 2022" https://shorturl.at/wzP47

85,282 arrivals. Significantly, compared to September, there was a 46% decline in arrivals in the month of October.

The majority of arrivals (77%) landed in Sicily during October, totaling 7,931 persons. Calabria (1,224), Campania (327), Apulia (248), Tuscany (247), Sardinia (129), Liguria (63), Lazio (61), and Emilia-Romagna (47) were among the other regions that saw immigrants.

The influx continued in the first two months of 2023, with a staggering 164% increase compared to the same period in the previous year, totaling 14,433 arrivals. Of particular concern is the rising number of unaccompanied children, which reached 19,422 by February 2023, marking an increase of 8,221 individuals compared to the corresponding period in 2022.

The Balkan route emerged as a pivotal channel, doubling arrivals in 2021, with around 9,400 individuals arriving from Slovenia. The Ukraine crisis introduced a new dimension, putting Italy as a main destination for refugees escaping Russia's invasion. By December 2022, Italy hosted approximately 173,589 Ukrainian refugees, primarily comprising women (53%) and children (28%).

Most common nationalities of arrivals - January 2022 to October 2023

	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23
Guinea	110	40	97	146	232	148	341	316	333	1,159	763	1,230	652	1,724	1,545	1,896	329	1,726	4,762	3,382	1,692	26
Tunisia	382	308	224	345	1,038	1,736	4,276	4,489	1,858	2,233	554	1,022	347	850	825	1,178	348	1,062	2,858	5,352	2,520	1,359
Côte d'Ivoire	173	100	163	140	315	250	535	312	405	1,204	1,197	1,646	861	1,528	2,717	2,127	217	1,146	3,717	2,723	761	21
Egypt	584	799	238	734	1,190	1,426	3,542	3,493	3,926	2,353	1,737	1,279	359	316	1,691	2,109	1,757	1,137	592	637	382	1,331
Bangladesh	904	337	35	765	1,642	1,448	1,910	2,160	1,828	1,594	1,405	1,200	232	1,110	813	1,180	1,514	1,502	631	707	542	1,921

Figure 3 Most Common Nationalities of Arrivals to the Italian Coast – January 2022 to October 20233"

With 14,433 arrivals in the first two months of 2023—a startling 164% rise over the same period the year before—the surge persisted. The growing number of unaccompanied minors, which increased by 8,221 people from the same period in 2022 to 19,422 by February 2023, is a cause for particular concern.

In terms of demographics, males make up 51% of the population and women 49% of non-European legal residents. This represents a balanced gender representation. As they make up 7.5% of Italy's employment, non-European citizens are heavily involved in the labor market. In 2022, there were 23,099,389 working adults in the EU, of which 1,656,517 were non-EU citizens, or 7.2% of the overall workforce. In comparison to the local population, inequities persisted even if the employment rate showed a good 2.7% gain.

The non-EU population is showing signs of stability, as evidenced by the increase in the percentage of people having long-term residency permits, which rose to 63.1% in 2020 from 62.3% in 2019. The populations of Moldavian, Ecuadorian, Ukrainian, Tunisian, Moroccan, and Albanian communities show a notably larger percentage of long-term inhabitants than other communities.

Non-EU workers make up 7.5% of the workforce, a substantial contribution. Their employment rate was 60.1% in 2019, which was higher than the 58.8% rate for the Italian population. Notable differences are found in the employment rates of women in different localities. With 80.4%, the Filipino communities are in the lead, followed by the Chinese (69.8%), Peruvian (66.3%), Ukrainian (66.5%), and Moldovan (63.2%) communities. In comparison, the employment rates of women are lower in the communities of Pakistan (7.3%), Egypt (7.5%), and Bangladesh (10.7%). The non-EU population is actively involved in the entrepreneurial environment, with 486,145 firms, or 8% of the total, in the nation. The communities that stand out are Moroccan (16.7%), Chinese (13.9%), Albanian (8.7%), and Bangladeshi (8%). Notably, among Ukrainian (54.5%), Filipino (49.3%), Chinese (46.7%), and Nigerian (39.6%) citizens, there is a notable representation of female entrepreneurs.

Remittances from Italy to non-EU nations topped 5 billion euros in 2019, an increase of 5.7% over the previous year. Nearly half of these remittances—45.4%—are absorbed by the Asian continent, with Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Pakistan appearing as the main recipient nations, together making up about one-third of the overall remittances.

Italy must modify its policy to effectively manage a varied range of immigrants entering by land and water. For the purpose of creating comprehensive and successful policies that address the challenges of migration, ongoing observation and proactive measures are thought to be essential.

This table shows a slight decline in the irregular foreign population and a moderate increase in the number of foreign residents (up to 2,000 persons). The first consequences of the "2020 amnesty" are mostly to blame for the latter outcome.[10] There has also been a noticeable rise in the so-called "non-resident regular foreign population," which refers to immigrants who have regular residence permits but have not yet registered in the civil register Anagrafe. As a result of a continued increase in the annual flux of first-resident permits issued, its expansion has been crucial to growing the stock statistics of the foreign population. Thus, it appears that the extra-EU component is what is causing this rise.[11]

As to the XXXII Rapporto Immigrazione 2023, Caritas Italiana e Fondazione Migrantes – Sintesi, a noteworthy pattern has been seen in the religious affiliation and forced migration of Christians from the Middle East. On January 1, 2023, Christians as a group solidified their status as the largest group of foreign residents in Italy, making up 53.5% of the total, up from an estimated 53.0% the year before. The Orthodox component alone accounts for 29.9% of Italy's migratory phenomenon at the beginning of 2023, up from 28.9% in early 2022, and is primarily responsible for this growth. On the other hand, from 17.2% on January 1, 2022, to 16.8% at the start of 2023, the Catholic component decreased. Muslims saw a rise among other religious groups, rising from 29.5% to 29.8% at the beginning of 2023. Based on a distribution of estimated religious affiliations between minors of any age and adults of the same nationality, the absolute numbers as of January 1, 2023,

[10] Article 103 of the Law Decree no. 34 of May 19, 2020
[11] The Twenty-eighth Italian Report on Migrations 2022 report: https://shorturl.at/wzP47

show that there are over 1.5 million foreign Orthodox Christians in Italy, almost the same number of Muslims, and about 844 thousand Catholics in third place. The number of people who belong to other religions is lower: 156 thousand Buddhists, 136 thousand Evangelicals, 126 thousand Christians who are categorized as "others" (not Orthodox, Catholic, Evangelical, or Coptic), 104 thousand Hindus, 85 thousand Sikhs, 81 thousand Copts, and 20,000 people who practice other religions, in addition to 478 thousand atheists or agnostics, who are actually the fourth largest group based on this classification.

2.2 The Context of Migrant Associations in Italy

Recent decades have seen a significant change in Italy's demographic environment, primarily due to a shift in migratory patterns. Due to factors including long-term security and employment prospects, the peninsula has grown in importance as a relocation destination for non-European nationals (Tignor, 2015).

Immigrant associations were formed as a result of the need for social support networks that emerged as these immigrant groups joined together. These groups were essential in helping recently arrived immigrants with their immediate needs (Carchedi, 2000). Their scope grew over time to encompass more general concerns like political representation, cultural preservation, and social integration.

Migrant groups engage in lobbying activities and address issues including discrimination and access to essential services, acting as advocates for migrant rights and political representation (Ireland, 1994). Additionally, via various initiatives like job training and microenterprise, they empower immigrants socially and economically, making a significant contribution to community development (Koopmans and Statham, 2000).

Despite these efforts, immigrant associations still have to deal with issues including bureaucratic roadblocks and a lack of funds (Soysal, 1994). Furthermore, conflicts within immigrant communities may present additional challenges (Massey et al., 1998).

More than 1,413 associations that represent diaspora communities call Italy home, and they are acknowledged as important players in development cooperation (Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, 2022; Law 125/2014). Numerous parties are involved in these associations' activities, including local government agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) (Ambrosini, 2001).

The identification of MAECI by Law 125/2014, among other laws, has made it easier for diaspora associations to participate in development projects.[12] nd AICS as the main organizations offering assistance. Furthermore, diaspora organizations can contribute to policy development and network expansion through the National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS), which acts as a consultative platform (Vicentini & Fava, 2001).

Although their actions might be in line with foreign policy goals, which could affect the project's orientation, this cooperative framework also applies to other nations' diplomatic representation in Italy (Castles, 2010). Notwithstanding the obstacles, diaspora associations are cooperating on a local and global level, expanding their missions and capabilities via a range of initiatives (Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, 2022). Additionally, regional and international organizations are

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[12] Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale

crucial in assisting diaspora associations to participate in development projects (Ambrosini, 2001). These organizations empower and integrate diaspora populations by offering training, capacity building, and technical help through strategic projects in Italian cities and areas with high immigrant density (Tignor, 2015; Castles, 2010).
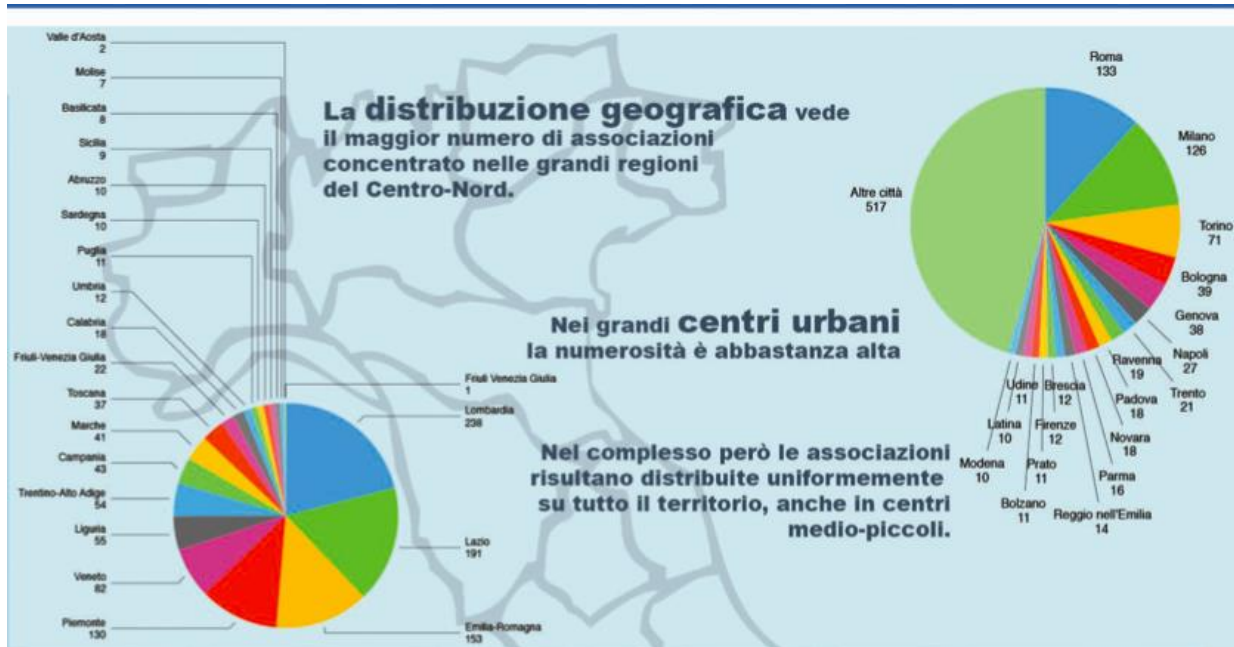
Figure 4: show the distribution of the migrants associations in Italian cities and rejoins , published by Italian Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs 2022

Local governments are assisting efforts to promote social cohesion and inclusion by decentralizing cooperation operations to the local level and enabling diaspora associations to participate in initiatives (Ambrosini, 2001; Vicentini & Fava, 2001).

Furthermore, even with the complications brought about by the legal registration of diaspora groups, the active involvement of NGOs with a specific focus improves development cooperation efforts (Carchedi, 2000; Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 2022).

2.2.1. Overview of Migrants' Associations in Italy

Italy started to become a destination for immigration in the mid-1970s, driven by changes in geopolitics and global economic conditions that had previously made it a source of emigration. In the past, Italy had been a significant source of emigrants, mostly to Western Europe, especially from its southern areas. But the global recession of the late 1960s and the 1973 oil crisis changed the patterns of migration in Europe, bringing in a large number of people from South America, North Africa, and Italy's former colonies (King et al., 2000).
Italy enacted several immigration laws and regulations in reaction to this flood, albeit many of them had flaws and were inconsistent. Among these were attempts to control the changing

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immigrant population in the nation and the use of amnesties to control migratory patterns (Perocco, 2003; Pittau, 2005; Zincone, 2001).

As Italy's immigration scene changed, associations for migrants also emerged, reflecting their attempts to adjust to their new social, economic, and political circumstances. Due to government policies intended to control and regulate immigration, academics have distinguished four distinct periods in the integration of migrant associations (Carchedi, 2000).

The first stage, marked by avant-garde organizations connected to student societies and political parties, was centered on resisting dictatorships in the countries of origin of migrants. These associations were not very well-known across the country, but they were very active in big towns like Rome, Milan, and Turin.

The second phase, characterized by publicity and social recognition, began in the late 1980s despite deteriorating living conditions for immigrants and insufficient immigration regulations. Increased association creation and mobilization occurred during this time, leading to the adoption of Law 943 of 1986, the first organic law governing immigration.

The third phase, which was marked by social engagement and active participation, was followed by a spike in immigration to Italy, which led migrants to look for better living and working conditions. During this time, immigrant groups expanded the range of services they offered, including recreational and cultural initiatives to conserve immigrant cultural heritage as well as practical help like legal counsel and employment assistance.

As a result of their legal recognition and increased cooperation, these associations signaled the start of a self-organization process backed by changing laws and regulations.

But as immigration laws tightened and sentiments toward migrants grew more hostile, migrant groups saw organizational retreat and disintegration in the ensuing phase. Disillusioned with their limited ability to influence local decision-making processes, migrants withdrew defensively from community organizations, with groups concentrating on less contentious concerns like cultural promotion and recreational activities.

First, the associations' organizational withdrawal and then a new phase of development in the mid-1990s have been the defining characteristics of the current phase (Carchedi 2000). Large-scale coordination initiatives and group struggles for immigrant rights gave way to a more localized phenomenon that was divided based on ethnicity and/or religion and gave up on purely political goals in favor of charitable, cultural, and recreational pursuits. There are several reasons for this development. In general, harsher political actions to restrict immigration flows were paired with a growing hostility toward migrants. In this stage, immigrants who were members of associations realized they had no control over decisions made by local municipal bodies. A "defensive withdrawal in community organization" resulted from this (Frisullo 2002:41).

This duration in time appears to be constant in the current conditions. Migrant groups become more disconnected at both the local and national levels (Kosic and Triandafyllidou 2005). Nowadays, associations prioritize nurturing the culture of origin, forming social groups around sports and leisure activities, and addressing less difficult issues. The struggles of the previous phase, which were caused by migrants' incapacity to express themselves directly politically, have been replaced by only symbolic modes of expression.

2.2.2. Historical Overview of Migrants' Associations in Milan

Milan, which is located in the center of Lombardy, the most populous and economically active region of Italy, has a distinct political and cultural environment that has been influenced by its post-Fordist economy and dominance in the service industry. The city is a major center for volunteer work, and its social fabric is closely entwined with trade unions that fight for workers' rights and Catholic organizations that offer social help (Caponio, 2005).

Similar to the rest of Italy, Milan has seen a surge in migrants since the late 1970s. At first, Milan was home to a variety of groups, including political dissidents from South America, the Middle East, and Africa, as well as domestic workers from the Philippines, Somalia, and Eritrea. Later, however, the city saw an increase in the number of Chinese migrants and men from North Africa working in a variety of economic capacities (Carchedi, 2000).

Early on, migrants in Milan started banding together through unofficial networks and political movements focused on their home countries. To promote the political representation and engagement of migrants, a grassroots movement that began in the 1980s resulted in the creation of community associations and the Coordinamento Migranti (Caponio, 2005). Nevertheless, these groups' limited representativeness and lack of ties to the larger immigrant community caused their impact to decline.

The center-left government's adoption of a multicultural integration initiative in the late 1980s caused a significant change in the environment, and the Foreigners' Centre was established in 1989 as a result. With a forum to organize and interact with the municipality, this project marked a turning point for migrant associations (Caponio, 2005). But in 1993, the development of the Northern League party—which was marked by xenophobic language and a move away from collaboration with immigrant associations—caused another shift in the political landscape (Caponio, 2005).

This led to the dissolution of numerous migrant associations, which made room for Catholic pro-immigrant societies and cooperatives to assume a prominent position in the provision of social services (Caponio, 2005). As a result of this change, immigrant associations were sidelined and had less influence over municipal governments and immigration laws.

As of right now, the Milanese migrant associations are dominated by "community leisure associations," which are mostly concerned with domestic activities for particular national groups (Caponio, 2005; Caselli, 2006). Nonetheless, an increasing number of proactive, secular organizations are pushing for integration and immigrant rights in collaboration with both public and private institutions (Caponio, 2005).

Despite such attempts, problems with migrant integration and representation persist because the current right-wing majority in Milan favors interaction with Catholic associations over immigrant-led groups on immigration-related fears (Caponio, 2005).

2.2.3. Mapping Immigrant Associations in Milan:

The Italian Ministry of Interior conducted a thorough scan in May 2021, which revealed a precise mapping of immigrant associations throughout Italy. This mapping sheds light on the many roles and structures that these associations play in the country. These associations engage in a wide range of activities, including intellectual interaction, training sessions, legal services, education in the Italian language, aid with immigration, support with official documentation related to the

Italian bureaucracy, native language instruction, job assistance, health care assistance, and educational services.

After the association members were examined, it was discovered that less than 50 organizations claimed having fewer than 10 members, while over 250 groups declared permanent members ranging from 11 to 50. Furthermore, less than 50 organizations reported memberships of 100 to 10,000 people, illustrating the diverse sizes of these important groups.

When asked about their sources of funding, most organizations (51%) said they were self-funding, and 8% said they received income from public or private initiatives approved by the EU or the Italian government. Remarkably, 36 percent obtain funds on their own via public or private initiatives unaffiliated with the European Union or the Italian government, demonstrating a varied financial environment.

These organizations are widely dispersed geographically, with most of them centered in large areas and central-northern Italy. Rome has the most organizations (133), followed by Bologna (39), Milan (126), and Turin (71). Outside of these areas, there are about 600 organizations spread over other Italian cities.

In partnership with the Italian Ministry of Interior, this comprehensive research offers an overview of 1,135 organizations and their interactions with a variety of nationalities. Of them, 193 serve three or more nations, whereas 434 serve different ethnicities. Particular nationalities highlight the inclusive nature of these groups; examples include 71 organizations for Senegal, 51 for Morocco, 44 for Albania, 26 for China, 23 for Ecuador, and others.[14]

Figure 5Migrants' Associations Based on Nationality in Milan: Data Gathered by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies 2023

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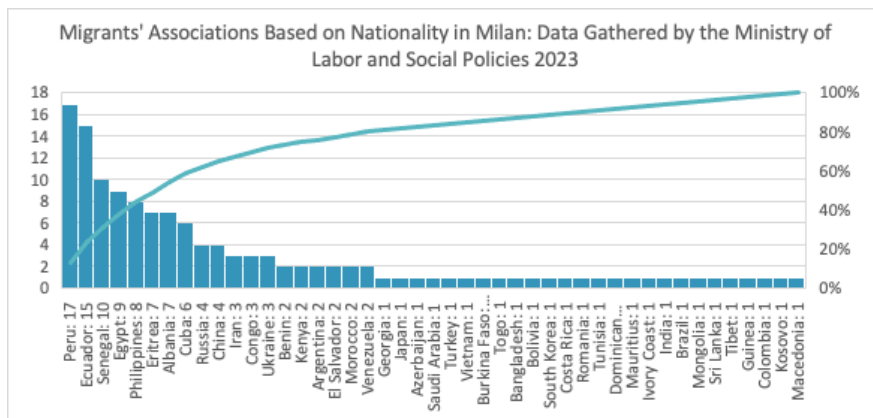
[14] For further information and details, individuals can visit: Integrazionemigranti.gov.it: https://shorturl.at/jkqOQ

According to nationality, the table presents a thorough summary of Milan's immigrant associations gathered as part of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies Project 2023. It provides information about the wide range of associations that represent different nationalities and their initiatives to encourage and promote integration within the immigrant community.This link is a useful tool for learning about Milan's multicultural environment and the efforts made by immigrant associations to foster mutual assistance and social cohesion.

To sum up, this chapter has given readers a basic grasp of the diaspora concept and the important role that diaspora associations play in preserving ties and promoting a feeling of community among dispersed communities. The backdrop of diaspora groups in Italy will be further examined in the upcoming chapter, which will concentrate on the patterns of Egyptian migration to the nation. Investigating the patterns of Egyptian migration to Italy will open the door to a deeper analysis of the networks that Egyptian migrants establish. The chapters that follow will provide a thorough examination of these associations, highlighting their goals, pursuits, difficulties, and contributions to the social, cultural, and political milieu of both the diaspora community and as well as the host nation. By taking a step-by-step approach, we hope to unveil the complex web of diaspora connections, especially those headed by Egyptians in Italy, and offer a more nuanced perspective on their place in the larger scheme of migration and community development.

Andamento della popolazione con cittadinanza straniera - 2023
CITTÀ METROPOLITANA DI MILANO - Dati ISTAT 1° gennaio 2023 - Elaborazione TUTTITALIA.IT
(*) post-censimento

Figure 6: " Foreign Population Resident in the Metropolitan City of Milan on 1 January 2023"

number of foreign nationals living in Milan's metropolitan area as of January 1, 2023. The results of the permanent population census are factored into the data. Foreign citizens are those who regularly reside in Italy but are not citizens of Italy..[15]

2.2.4. Challenges and opportunities faced by Migrant Associations in Italy:

Growth in Italian development cooperation in recent times, especially since Law 125/2014 was passed, [16] represent a substantial change in the nation's strategy for development projects (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). Important institutional organizations have been established as a result of this legislative reform, including the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation

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[15] https://shorturl.at/aglyN
[16] The law no. 125 of 11 August 2014, https://shorturl.at/HO367

(AICS).[17] and the Consiglio Italiano per la Cooperazione, [18] intended to provide a framework for development cooperation that is more inclusive and cooperative (Mariniello & Pasquino, 2021). Additionally, the reform encourages private and for-profit groups to engage in development cooperation by formally recognizing diaspora organizations as stakeholders (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). This recognition entitles them to direct public support. For immigrant associations in Italy, this policy change brings opportunities as well as obstacles.

Since 2016, AICS and DG Cooperazione have been working together to integrate migrant organizations into the agenda of Civil Society Organizations (OSC), which are overseen by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, despite the technical challenges that have arisen at various levels (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016).

The "Summit of the Diasporas," [19] backed by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, provides a major forum for talking about how migrants fit into development initiatives and emphasizes the value of civil society organizations taking an active role (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019).

Nonetheless, obstacles persist, namely with the delineation of the participation of profit-making entities in development cooperation and the establishment of an equitable structure for cooperation (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). Furthermore, Zincone et al. (2020) point out that there is a deficiency in the literature concerning the union, civil, and developmental initiatives carried out by immigrants in Italy, highlighting the need for more inclusive assessments and qualitative evaluations of the objectives and activities of migrant groups.

The significance of qualitative analysis in comprehending the contributions of immigrant organizations to Italian society is highlighted by a noteworthy study carried out by the Aliens Coordination Service in the province of Bolzano (Zincone et al., 2020). This study sheds light on the difficulties encountered by immigrant associations and offers insightful advice that can guide community projects and policy decisions (Zincone et al., 2020).

Additionally, research by Mariniello and Pasquino (2021) emphasizes how migrant associations are changing Italy's social and political landscapes. They contend that despite several obstacles like financial limitations and institutional barriers, these associations play a critical role in fostering social cohesion and supporting migrant rights.

Finally, migrant associations support inclusive development projects and foster social cohesion in Italy. They are an important source of development cooperation (Mariniello & Pasquino, 2021). But along with these advantages come a number of difficulties that decision-makers in government, academia, and the society need to address. The need for more accurate analyses of immigrant associations and their contributions to Italian society represents a fundamental problem. The body of existing literature frequently concentrates on quantitative metrics, like membership counts or funding allotments, but it lacks qualitative analyses of the objectives, programs carried out, efficacy, internal dynamics, and the kind and duration of the associations' services to the immigrant community (Zincone et al., 2020). Policymakers could find it challenging to create initiatives and policies that effectively address the varied needs and objectives of immigrant populations if they don't have a deeper grasp of these factors.

Furthermore, Zincone et al. (2020) note that there is a deficiency in the literature concerning the union, civic, and development initiatives carried out by migrants in Italy. This disparity

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[17] https://www.aics.gov.it/?lang=en
[18] National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS), https://shorturl.at/auQ19
[19] MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN ITALY, Caritas Italiana, May 2019: https://shorturl.at/ghoW0å

emphasizes how critical it is to carry out thorough study that looks at the various functions that immigrant groups play in advocating for social inclusion, protecting immigrant rights, and supporting regional development projects (Mariniello & Pasquino, 2021).

Through thorough investigation and analysis, this gap in the literature will be filled, giving communities and policymakers a greater knowledge of the potential and difficulties encountered by immigrant associations. This knowledge can help design more focused policies and initiatives that strengthen social cohesion, empower immigrant groups, and enable their active engagement in society at large (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014).

Additionally, policymakers may guarantee that programs and policies address the needs and objectives of immigrant populations by including immigrant associations as significant partners in the policy-making process (Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019). More effective and long-lasting development results can result from this cooperative strategy, which can improve mutual respect, trust, and cooperation between migrant associations and government organizations.

In summary, legislators, scholars, and community stakeholders must work together to address the issues that migrant associations in Italy face. Italy can fully utilize the potential of diverse immigrant communities to accomplish shared objectives and advance inclusive development by carrying out more accurate analyses, completing gaps in the literature, and involving immigrant associations as partners in the policy-making process (Mariniello and Pasquino, 2021; Zincone et al., 2022).

CHAPTER3 The Egyptian immigration patterns and their Diaspora Association in Italy

Through this chapter, we attempt to explore Egyptian immigration patterns and the context of the formation of diaspora associations within Italy. Starting with an in-depth analysis of Egypt's statistics, history, and contemporary migration context, we navigate through the historical roots and development of the Egyptian community in Italy. Delving into the demographic, social, and economic profile also sheds light on the dynamics of cultural and societal integration while addressing prevailing challenges and opportunities. Furthermore, we examine the impact of the Egyptian diaspora on both the host country and the home country, unveiling insights into diaspora engagement and mapping of engagement. Finally, we will address the political participation of the Egyptian diaspora in Italy, setting the stage for future discussions. we conclude this chapter with a general review of previous studies and literature to explore expectations and hypotheses before delving into the research methodology in the next chapter.

1.3 Egypt; Statistics, History, and Context of Contemporary Migration

Egypt[20] is one of the oldest countries and civilizations in the world. Throughout its history, because of its unique position between East and West, it has been recognized as an immigration center and destination for settlement. [21] (Robert L. Tignor, 2010)

As for the Egyptians, their civilization was on the banks of the Nile, and they were famous for their deep connection to their homeland. They rarely move beyond its borders until the middle of the twentieth century. "Until the mid-1950s, foreigners came to Egypt, but Egyptians rarely immigrated abroad" (Zahri, 2003).

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[20] else since mid-April 2023, Egypt has received over its southern borders 255,565 people coming from Sudan to the country, with a total percentage of 95 percent of Sudanese, 2 percent of returnees, and 3 percent of other cases. Egypt is now home to roughly 6 million refugees with asylum seekers from more than 65 countries, and due to the instability facing the region, this number is expected to continue to rise, making the burden on Egypt more demanding in title of security and the economy. In the latest data issued by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics in January 2023, the population of Egypt reached 104,395,000 people. Egypt is estimateed the most populous in North Africa and the Arab world, and the fifteenth largest in the world in label of population.

[21] For more further information: Whidden, J. (2010). Expatriates in Cosmopolitan Egypt: 1864–1956. In D. S. G. Thomas (Ed.), Egypt: A Short History (pp. 45–73). Oxford University Press.

POPULATION OF EGYPT (2024 AND HISTORICAL)
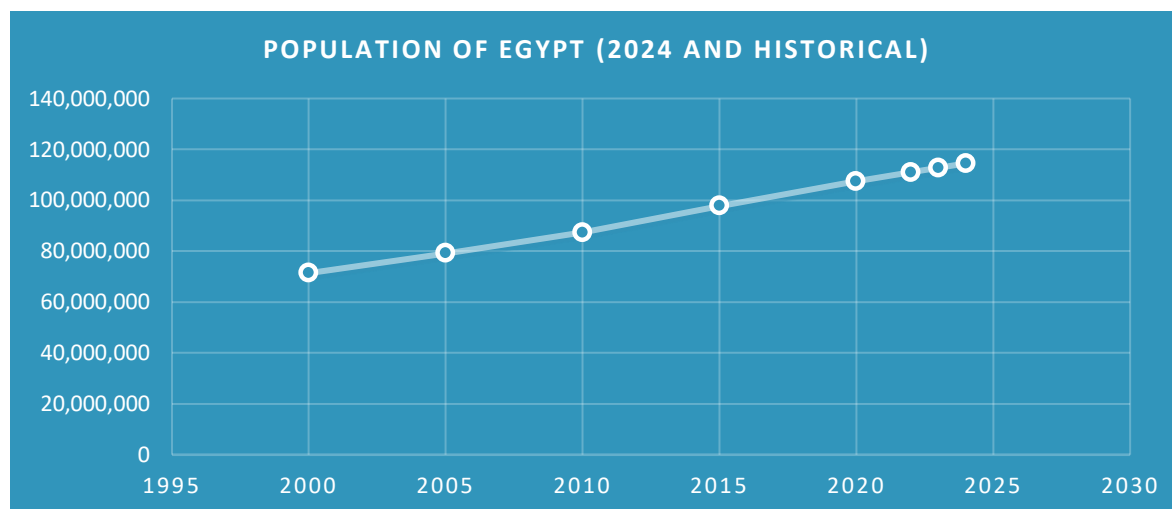
Figure 7: the Population of Egypt (2024 and historical)[22]

Historical evidence indicates that immigration to Egypt dates back to the era of Muhammad Ali Pasha "1805-1848" [23] (Fahmy 1997) when he sent the initial Egyptian delegation consisting of 44 members, including military officers, engineers, doctors, and soldiers. students. To study in France in 1820. The main goal was to study French military tactics, technology, and various sciences, to modernize the Egyptian army and governance in line with European standards. see (Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid Marsut 1984), Successive generations of his successors continued to send these missions. The returning students became Egypt's national elite (Khaled Fahmy 1997) and played leading roles in shaping the country's path in subsequent decades. [24]

In 1952, the Free Officers [25] movement act against what they called the corruption of the king and the government. They abolished the monarchy and declared the republic, and Gamal Abdel

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[22] https://www.capmas.gov.eg/Pages/populationClock.aspx

[23] Muhammad Ali's rule, known as the Pasha in Egypt, lasted from 1805 until 1848. During this time, Egypt, despite being technically part of the Ottoman Empire, claimed its independence. Sultan Abd al-Majid, King of Egypt, handed Muhammad Ali's sons the succession of Egypt's reign in 1841, so bolstering his position. The Pasha demolished Mamluk's rule and established a devoted elite composed of his family members, associates from his hometown of Kavala, and bureaucrats. Motivated to keep his position, the Pasha instituted dramatic reforms, altered Egypt's relationship with the Ottoman Empire, and maintained strong trade ties with Europe. His era transformed Egypt's social, political, and economic environment. His policies fundamentally altered Egypt's social, cultural, and geopolitical scene. The Pasha established the first effective naval and military force, extending Cairo's dominance beyond its usual bounds. His domains encompassed Sudan, Crete, Morea, Hijaz, Yemen, Syria, and portions of Anatolia.
Fahmy, K. (2008). The era of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, 1805–1848. In M. W. Daly (Ed.), Egypt: A Short History (pp. 6). Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://doi.org/(link)

[24] Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, a key member in the first mission to France, contributed to improving education after coming back engaged as school director and first language interpreter. Ali Mubarak contributed significantly to history and rose to a position of prominence in education. Muhammad Abduh became Egypt's Mufti and advocated for major judicial changes. Mustafa Kamel Pasha and Saad Pasha Zaghloul emerged as significant national figures. In 1907, Kamal helped create Egypt's first university as well as its first political party. Saad Zaghloul led the 1919 revolt against the English rule of Egypt and helped to design the country's first constitution in 1923. (Khaled Fahmy,1997).

[25] Cook, S. A. (2011). The Rise of the Officers. In The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square (pp. 39–63). Oxford University Press.

Nasser[26] established a socialist system of government (P.J. Vatikiotis, 1978). The new regime had no intention of encouraging immigration outside Egypt, so it issued a new law [27] restricting immigration. The restrictions included revoking Egyptian citizenship from those who were outside the country for more than six months without a clear excuse. Immigration restrictions included banning travel and adopting compulsory employment for some specific professions for graduates in high-demand fields such as medicine and engineering, and setting restrictions that required obtaining permission from the government for other professions. In the early 1960s, Egypt participated in some wars and supported African and Arab free movements by making the government make military service compulsory and became a prerequisite for leaving the country. Educational activities were excluded, especially the teacher's missions to the Arab countries in line with Egypt's Arabnalism ideology of supporting Arab countries and enhancing political and cultural influence. (Beinin, 2001)

During Sadat's rule (1967-1970), [28] and especially Post-October 1973 War against Israel, the official attitude towards immigration witnessed a major shift. The permanent constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt was approved in 1971[29]. It stipulated the right to leave the country without restrictions or conditions. The government adopted a more open approach to immigration. In subsequent years, the government established institutions to manage migration flows and maintain contacts with Egyptians abroad.

We can think of this stage as the Egyptian state's attempt to Build the diaspora. Remittances peaked as a proportion of GDP during the first Gulf War, with inflows accounting for almost 15%. On average, from 1985 to 2009, the ratio of remittances to GDP was about 5.9%. On the other hand, the average remittances per capita peaked in 2008, (at about $105). The average annual remittances per capita during 1985-2009 has been around $61.4.(World Bank Migration and Remittances Data)

However, following the defeat of 1967 and the Camp David Accords in 1978, Egypt saw a decline in regional influence (Vatikiotis 1978),[30] whereas the Gulf states, which benefited from the huge profits they made after the 1973 oil crisis and began implementing large-scale development programs, became a magnet for migrant workers (Joel Beinin, 2001). According to (International

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[26] Gamal Abdel Nasser (January 15, 1918, Alexandria - September 28, 1970, Cairo) was a military figure. He served as Egypt's Prime Minister from 1954 to 1956 and President from 1956 to 1970. He was globally known as a controversial Arab and African leader. He was President of the United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria from 1958 to 1961, and fought Israel in three wars (1948, 1956, 1967).

[27] Dessouki, A. E. H. (1982). The shift in Egypt's migration policy: 1952–1978. International Migration Review, 16(1), 53–68.

[28] Muhammad Anwar Sadat (December 25, 1918 - October 6, 1981) was an Egyptian politician and military leader who was a key member of the Free Officers Organization. He served as the Arab Republic of Egypt's third president from October 15, 1970 to October 6, 1981. He received the Nobel Peace Prize following the 1978 peace treaty with Israel.

[29] When President Anwar Sadat took office in 1971, he moved toward the adoption of a new constitution that would allow for more freedoms and a return to parliamentary life. The Permanent Constitution of Egypt went into effect on September 11, 1971, following approval in a referendum. It included 211 articles, as shown below. after having been approved in a referendum on September 11, 1971. it comprised 211 articles as follows.

[30] The peace agreement between Egypt and Israel at "Camp David" in 1977 affected Egypt's regional standing, as Egypt's membership in the League of Arab States and the African Union was suspended, and its relations with its Arab neighbors became strained, who regarded the unilateral peace agreement as a betrayal of Arab and African solidarity.

Bank Statistics on Migration and Remittances, 1976), Egypt has emerged as a key global supplier of labor exports, with an estimated 1.4 million Egyptian emigrants in 1976.

During President Hosni Mubarak's administration[31] (1981-2011), Egypt continued to control immigration in the same way as it had under Sadat. The Mubarak dictatorship saw immigration as a vital component of the Egyptian economy, particularly for securing hard money, and as a result, the state media supported the search for work abroad (Weaver, 1989).

However, as a result of major regional changes, particularly after 1983 during the Mubarak era, Egyptians returned in greater numbers due to unstable conditions in the main migration destinations for Egyptians, such as Iraq, and the subsequent decline in demand for construction workers in Gulf countries. The Gulf War of 1990 had a significant impact on Egyptian workers since Iraq, Kuwait, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were popular vacation destinations for Egyptians. The Gulf War prompted the majority of Egyptians in Iraq and Kuwait to return to Egypt (UNHCR reports on forced migration during the conflict). In the late 1990s, records show a substantial reduction in migration to Saudi Arabia and Libya. due to the global economic slowdown that followed the 1997 East Asian financial crisis. (International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook, May/ May 1998).

SOURCE: WWW.CEICDATA.COM | Central Bank of Egypt
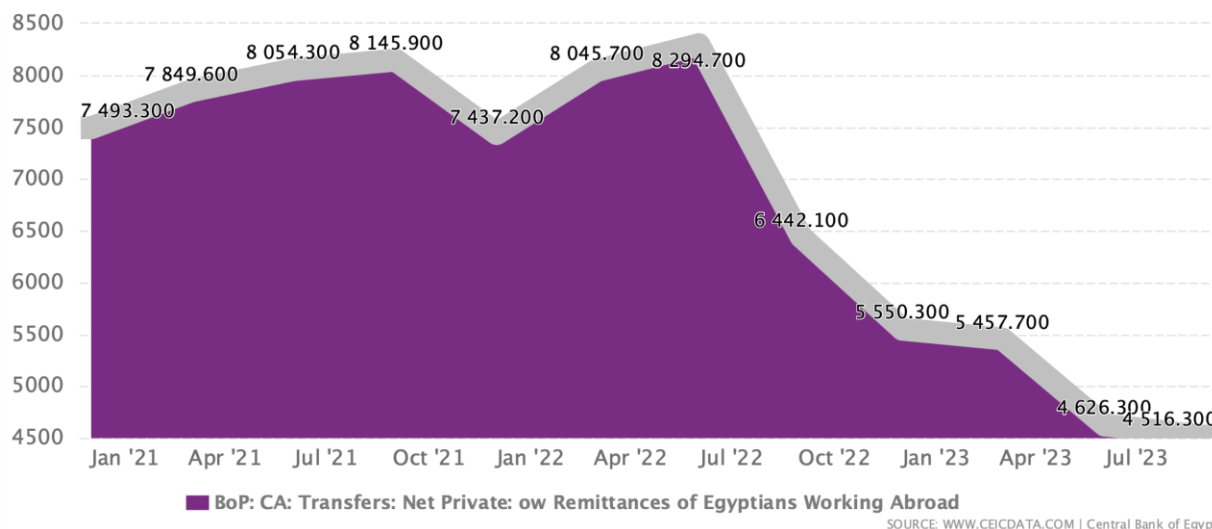
Figure 8: Remittances of Egyptians Working Abroad (2021-2023))

Looking at the worldwide diaspora, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) projected 3,610,461 Egyptian migrants in 2020. Specific nations include Saudi Arabia (962,432, 27% of total Egyptian migrants), the United Arab Emirates (899,612, 25%), and Kuwait (421,025, 12%). In Europe, Italy led the exodus with 128,857 Egyptians, accounting for 4% of all Egyptian migrants. Overall, 8% of all Egyptian migrants lived in EU+ countries, including notable diaspora groups in France (35,390), Greece (28,834), Germany (25,905), the Netherlands (15,893), and Austria (14,779).

Country	Number of Egyptian Migrants	Percentage of Total Egyptian Migrants
Saudi Arabia	962,432	27%

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[31] Egypt's history under Hosni Mubarak covers 29 years, beginning with President Anwar Sadat's killing in 1981 and ending with Mubarak's removal in January 2011, as part of the larger Arab Spring movement.

Country	Number of Egyptian Migrants	Percentage of Total Egyptian Migrants
United Arab Emirates	899,612	25%
Kuwait	421,025	12%
Italy	151,857	5%
France	35,390	-
Greece	28,834	-
Germany	25,905	-
Netherlands	15,893	-
Austria	14,779	-

Figure 9: Number of Egyptian Migrants Worldwide (2022)[32]

2.3 Historical Roots and Evolution of the Egyptian Diaspora in Italy

The mid-twentieth century was the beginning of the migration of Egyptians to Italy. Egyptians sought to exploit the availability of job opportunities and the open welcoming policy, especially in many sectors such as construction, agriculture, and domestic work. The first stage of Egyptian labor migration in that period was essentially the establishment of the Egyptian community in Italy (Amsari,2003).

Over time, especially in the late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, the motives of Egyptians for immigrating to Italy changed. Labor migration continued, but it was also followed by other motives such as family reunification from the families of the workers who initially arrived in Italy, studying abroad, and asylum requests, especially from Christians. Copts, all of this contributed to the diversity of the Egyptian diaspora scene in Italy. These changes shaped and diversified the motives and goals of the Egyptian community in Italy (Ohaegbulam, 2007) The reasons that prompted Egyptians to emigrate were also the widening of economic and social disparities, the state of political chaos at times, and stagnation at other times. These factors pushed Egyptians to discover opportunities outside the homeland, and because of extended historical relations and geographical proximity, Italy was an attractive destination for achieving economic and social advancement (Gomaa, 2012).

These motives, desires and goals on the part of Egyptians converged with an open immigration policy adopted by Italy in the same period, as it followed flexible immigration systems and witnessed an intense demand for labor, as well as Italy's location and consideration as the gateway to Europe and of course to more opportunities, in addition to the presence of a well-established Egyptian community and social networks. In Italy, it made it easier for newcomers to integrate. This has contributed to the growth of the diaspora community (Moroni, 2001).

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[32] https://egypt.iom.int/news/iom-egypt-estimates-current-number-international-migrants-living-egypt-9-million-people-originating-133-countries

The Number of Egyptians in The EU

France
10%

Germany
17%

Italy
73%

■ Italy ■ Germany ■ France

Figure 10: The Number of Egyptians in The EU"
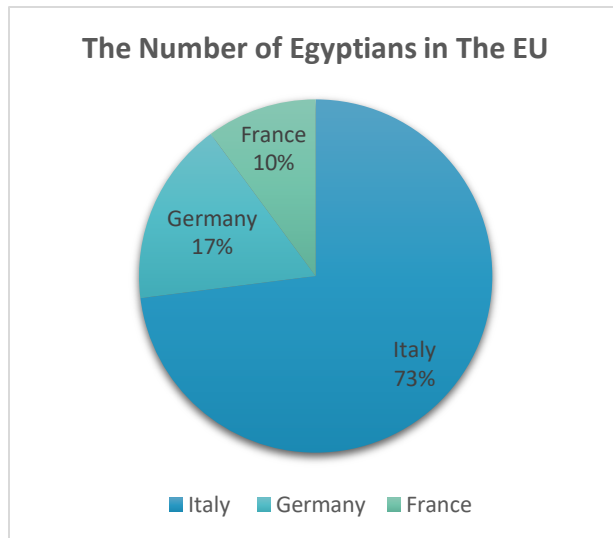
With a considerable growth, notably in the previous two years during Egypt's economic crisis, inflation, structural changes, and the floating dollar exchange rate affecting millions of Egyptians (World Bank 2022). The Italian Ministry of the Interior reports that 3,935 Egyptians landed in Italy between January 1 and June 13, 2022, accounting for 18% of overall arrivals and ranking second only to Bangladeshis. According to data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of Egyptian arrivals has been climbing since August. Before November 2021, the numbers continuously increased, ains strong in 2022, with 1,188 people arriving in May (UNHCR 2022). Between December 2021 and January 2022, 117,156 Egyptian migrants arrived in Libya, accounting for 18% of the total migrant population (IOM 2022).

If we shift our emphasis to the Mediterranean, Frontex has reported the discovery of 3,292 Egyptian citizens along the Central Mediterranean route between January and May 2022. Egyptians lead the way as the most commonly discovered nationality, accounting for 20% of all finds, according to the Frontex 2022 report. Moving on to Turkey, the Coast Guard intercepted 340 Egyptians on the move between March and June 2022. According to Turkish Coast Guard figures for 2022, this accounts for around 3% of all interceptions.

The research of Egyptian migration patterns, sea arrivals in Italy, and asylum applications to EU+ shows an increase, with a peak of 1,893 in November 2021. Between December 2021 and January 2022, 117,156 Egyptians left Libya, accounting for 18% of the total. Regionally, 52% resided in the east, 43% in the west, and 5% in the south. Libyan authorities repatriated 5,693 Egyptians in 2019 and 2020, with an additional 135 in March 2022.

In March 2022, over 1,400 Egyptians requested refuge in EU+ nations, the highest monthly figure since 2014. The first quarter of 2022 had a 33% rise over the previous year. Italy led in 2021, with 61% of all applications. Based on 2022 statistics, the Italian Ministry of Immigration made 1,375 judgments for Egyptians, with 24% approval in the first quarter.

3.3 Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile

The movement of Egyptian nationals to Italy began in the 1970s, when many eligible young middle-class persons, predominantly men, relocated to Italy, drawn by the country's economic and cultural opportunities. (Stucchiero, 2004) The community had slightly under 4,000 Egyptians in the start of the 1980s, but it saw tremendous expansion after the first generation in the 1990s. On the threshold of the twenty-first century, The Egyptian population in Italy already numbered over 25,000 persons, with a significant concentration in Lombardy, the first area of settlement. With the implementation of the flow decrees beginning in 2000 (L. 40/1998, the so-called "Turkish-Napolitano Law") [34] The Busi-Fini Law went into effect in 2002, and owing to the various bilateral

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[33] https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Estimated-number-of-Egyptian-migrants-in-Europe-by-country-of-destination_tbl1_23535378

[34]Law of March 6, 1998, n. 40 (also known as the Turco-Napolitano Law, named after the two ministers in the Italian government, Livia Turco and Giorgio Napolitano), which is a law regulating the issue of immigration to Italy..

agreements signed between both countries, the Egyptian presence witnessed a boom. Others reached approximately 59,000 thousand units according to population census data for the year 2005.

3.3.1. Demographic Composition:

3.3.2. Population Size:

Italy has a rich Egyptian diaspora; the Egyptian community represents the sixth largest among non-EU nationals. According to official data from the Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (ISTAT)[35], there are 151,411 Egyptians legally living in Italy as of January 1, 2022, growing more than 9% from the previous year, compared to the +5.6% indicated for all non-EU citizens. Although the increase in presence is rather widespread, Egyptian individuals have had the biggest percentage rise.

Figure 11: DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS | YEAR 2022 , Istat,

3.3.3. [36]Regional distribution:

According to Eurostat figures [37], the greatest Egyptian population in the European Union is in Italy, followed by Germany and France. A large number of Egyptians residing in Europe are currently living in Italy. They are currently documenting an extended period of immigration, and the Egyptian community is distinguished by a strong presence in the north of the country (approximately 82% of the group lives in northern Italy), as well as an intense concentration in Lombardy, the first area of Egyptian presence, which receives 67.6% of its population as members of the community. in comparison to 26% of citizens who live outside the region.. The second-largest region of Egyptian presence is Lazio, with 12.8% of community members, second only to the Filipino community (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy 2020). Thirdly, the community has a relatively low presence in the south, with just 2% of Egyptian nationals living there regularly, compared to 14.6% of the population from other Italian areas. The Egyptian society's heavy concentration in the northern regions suggests that the nation, especially in the Lombardy zone, is going through a stabilization process

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[35] https://www.istat.it/storage/rapporto-annuale/2023/Rapporto-Annuale-2023.pdf

[36] https://shorturl.at/esyE1

[37] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/digpub/regions/#median-age

because of the employment and income opportunities in these areas, where labor demand has always been steady.

Figure 13: illustrates the distribution of foreign residents in Lombardy, Italy

"Foreign Residents in Lombardy by Nationality (January 1st, 2022)"

This graphic [38] above depicts the distribution of foreign residents in Lombardy Italy, as of January 1, 2022. Lombardy has a diverse foreign population of 1,155,393, making up about 11.6% of the region's total population. The graph displays the major countries represented among foreign residents, with Romania accounting for the largest group at 14.8% of the total foreign residents. Following Romania, Egypt holds 8.2% of the foreign population, then comes Morocco with 7.9%. Furthermore, considerable populations are depicted from Albania, China, Lebanon, Pakistan, Peru, India, and Ukraine, with the other ethnicities represented under "Others".

3.3.4. Gender composition:

The most recent data obtained by Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS 2022 [39] implies. The gender distribution of Egyptian immigrants in Italy shows a serious gender gap, only one in three members of the community is a woman (34%), The society has the third biggest gender imbalance at 33.5%. (Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, 2020). The gender balance of the population and their distribution by age groups are crucial indicators of societal integration in the region because they reflect the presence of family reunions and births in general, which only occur when there is a suitable level of social and economic development.

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[38] DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS | YEAR 2022 , Istat, https://shorturl.at/esyE1
[39] Immigration Statistical Dossier 2022, https://shorturl.at/wyABV

ITALIA. Primi 10 Paesi per numero di residenti stranieri: distribuzione per genere (2021)
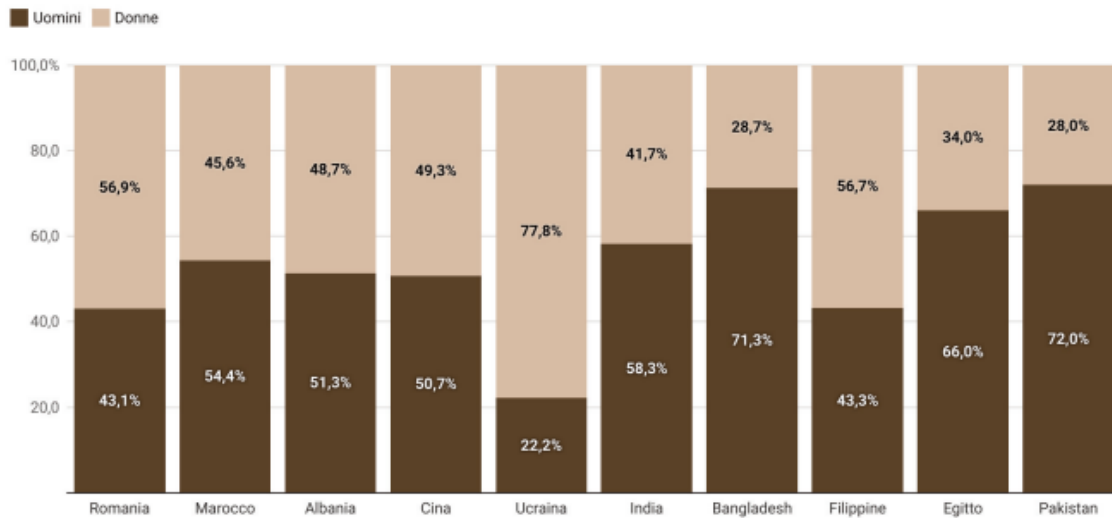
Fonte: Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS. Elaborazioni su dati Istat

Figure 14: Percentage of men and women among immigrant communities in Italy

3.3.4.1. The age group:

In contrast to the Italian population, the Egyptian community's age pyramid in Italy reveals a different distribution by age class. Given the demographic crisis that Italy is currently experiencing, there is a higher incidence of younger age groups in particular. The contribution of the migrant population helps to balance the increasingly unbalanced relationship between the young and the old (in favor of the latter), which has clear economic and social implications. The incidence of minors in the North African community is 32.8%, which is higher compared to the average for non-EU citizens. This percentage is probably caused by the high birth rate of Egyptians in Italy. However, the presence of minors is undoubtedly high and higher than average for non-EU citizens. Given that 45% of Egyptians are under the age of 17, the prevalence of minors among men is even more notable. Approximately 50,000 minors from Egypt make up 6.7% of all non-EU minors in Italy as of January 1, 2022. Compared to the non-EU average of roughly 10% in the non-EU population as a whole, the share of people over 60 is much smaller at 3.6%. The statistics that were just seen demonstrate how young this group is—its average age of 29.1 years is slightly younger than that of Nigeria. The notable prevalence of unaccompanied adolescents is another characteristic that sets the community in issue apart. 2. As of December 31, 2022, Egypt is the second country of origin for unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy, accounting for 4,899 of the total, or 24.4% of the total. 3. There has been a sharp increase in Egyptian UASCs..[40]

3.3.5. Socioeconomic Status

3.3.5.1. Occupational Diversity within the Egyptian Diaspora:

In many cases, work constitutes the main driver of the migratory project, as demonstrated by the strong presence of foreign workers in the Italian labor market. Furthermore, work plays a fundamental role in the integration process as it is a guarantee of a dignified life, it is a crucial

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[40] All data are taken from the Italian Ministry of Labor's report on the Egyptian community in Italy 2022.

factor for the construction of identity and emancipation, it represents an opportunity to build and cultivate social relationships, and, in some cases, represents the privileged resource to be able to legally reside in our country. The prevalent - although not exclusive - profile among employed Egyptians is that of the male subject, an employee, sales or personal services worker, in the hospitality sector.

The Egyptian diaspora in Italy engages in a diverse range of occupations. Approximately 45% are employed in the service sector, 25% in construction, 15% in healthcare, 10% in education, and 5% in the arts (Moroni, A., 2009). This diversity reflects the diaspora's adaptation and diversification over time.

3.3.5.2. Employment Statistics:

In the first half of 2022, the Egyptian community performed worse than the overall non-EU population, with a lower employment rate and a higher inactivity rate. The share of employed people in the Egyptian population aged 15-64 years present in Italy is, in fact, equal to 49.5% (compared to 58.4% relating to the total non-EU population), with a positive trend compared to the first six months of 2021 (Data from the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) for the first half of 2022): +3.9%. In line with the overall non-EU population, the community in question also shows an increase in employment compared to a contraction in the unemployment area, the rate of which decreases for the Egyptian population by 8.4%, reaching 12.8%. The inactivity rate of the community in question is instead equal to 43.2%, or approximately 10 percentage points higher than that of the population coming from third countries as a whole. In this case, an increase of 1.1% was recorded for the community in question, compared to the decrease of 2.1% relating to the total of non-EU citizens.[41]

Figure 15: illustrates the distribution of Egyptian workers across various employment sectors in Italy
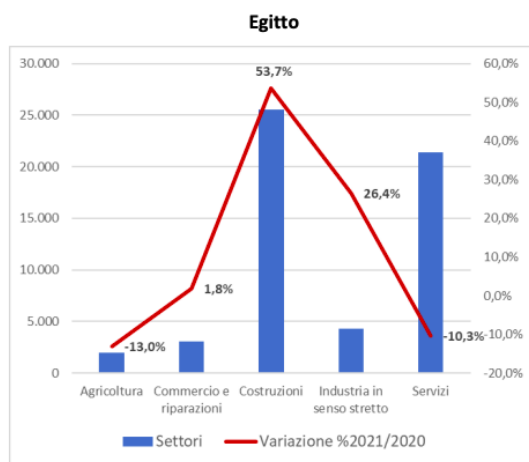
This chart [42] illustrates the distribution of Egyptian workers across various employment sectors, based on the latest statistics released by the Italian government. According to the data, 53% of Egyptian workers are employed in the construction sector, showcasing a predominant presence in this industry. Less than 10% are engaged in heavy industries, indicating a lower representation in this sector. Approximately 40% of Egyptian workers are involved in service provision, including restaurants and cleaning companies, highlighting a significant presence in service-oriented roles. Additionally, less than 13% are employed in the agricultural sector and food industries, reflecting a relatively smaller proportion compared to other sectors.

Source: Elaborated by the SpINT area of Anpal Servizi using data from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies - Information System

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[41] The Italian Ministry of the Interior 2022.

[42] Figure 9: illustrates the distribution of Egyptian workers across various employment sectors in Italy 2022.

3.3.5.3. Entrepreneurship among the Egyptian Diaspora:

The Egyptian community is sixth in terms of the number of owners of individual businesses (Ministry of Labor and Social Policies data as of 31 December 2021), compared to the seventh position held in terms of the number of presences in Italy among citizens of non-EU countries. There are 19,562 owners of individual businesses born in Egypt as of 31 December 2021, or 5% of non-EU entrepreneurs in Italy, a number down by 3.5% compared to 2020; this negative trend continues in 2022 (Ministry of Labor and Social Policies data for the year 2022). Even in the entrepreneurial field, the contribution of the female component of the community is rather limited: among Egyptian individual entrepreneurs, men cover 93.2%, while women, 1,336, make up the remaining 6.8%. However, the analysis of the last two years highlights how female businesses have recorded.

3.3.5.4. Gender Dynamics and Employment Patterns:

. It is worth noting that gender and care connections within homes have received considerable attention, particularly since the pandemic's onset. Egyptian women have a poor employment rate, with around 80% of Egyptian women in Italy unemployed (CARITAS E MIGRANTES 2020:59). This gender discrepancy in employment underlines the need for more research on the variables influencing labor force participation among Egyptian women in Italy, as well as the difficulties they may encounter while juggling job and caregiving duties.

Tabella 3 -Popolazione (15 anni e oltre) e principali indicatori del mercato del lavoro per genere e cittadinanza (v.%). I semestre 2022

	Tasso di occupazione (15-64 anni)		Tasso di inattività (15-64 anni)		Tasso di disoccupazione (15 anni e oltre)	
	v.%	Var. % I semestre 2022/ I semestre 2021	v.%	Var. % I semestre 2022/ I semestre 2021	v. %	Var. % I semestre 2022/ I semestre 2021
Totale						
Egitto	49,5%	3,9%	43,2%	1,1%	12,8%	-8,4%
Totale Paesi non comunitari	58,4%	4,0%	32,8%	-2,1%	13,0%	-3,4%
Uomini						
Egitto	82,6%	13,0%	12,3%	-3,7%	5,8%	-11,3%
Totale Paesi non comunitari	73,5%	4,2%	17,3%	-2,0%	11,1%	-2,9%
Donne						
Egitto	4,7%	-4,3%	85,1%	3,2%	68,5%	18,2%
Totale Paesi non comunitari	43,0%	3,6%	48,5%	-1,9%	16,0%	-4,0%

Fonte: Elaborazione Area SpINT di Anpal Servizi su microdati RCFL – ISTAT

Figure 16: Distribution of Egyptian men and women among the labor force within Italy[43]

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[43] Regional Report on Jobs and Growth in North Africa 2020 ‹Published in September 2021
https://shorturl.at/xyAEW

3.3.5.5. Educational Achievements:

Educational attainment within the Egyptian diaspora varies significantly. According to research by Shukur (2012), 25% of individuals have limited formal education, while 50% hold secondary education qualifications. Interestingly, 25% of the diaspora are actively pursuing higher education and advanced degrees. Moreover, it's observed that the second generation benefits notably from the Italian education system, often achieving higher educational levels compared to their predecessors.

3.3.5.6. Income Levels:

Income levels within the Egyptian diaspora exhibit a wide range, contributing to a diverse socioeconomic landscape. As highlighted by Fargues and Fraboni (2014), approximately 30% of individuals have modest incomes, typically below €20,000 annually. Furthermore, around 50% of the diaspora fall within the middle-income range, earning between €20,000 to €40,000 per year. Notably, 20% of individuals boast higher incomes, surpassing €40,000 annually. This distribution underscores the varying economic circumstances and financial trajectories within the Egyptian diaspora community.[44]

4.3 Cultural and Community Integration

3.4.1. Demographic Landscape and Integration Dynamics:

The integration of the Egyptian diaspora into Italian society unfolds through various interconnected factors such as inclusion in the labor market, access to welfare, media portrayals of migration, and the implementation of social inclusion policies (Rother & Boccagni, 2014). These elements collectively shape and accelerate the stabilization process for the diaspora within the host country. Notably, according to recent demographic studies conducted by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), the Egyptian community represents one of the largest migrant groups in Italy, with significant concentrations in urban centers like Milan, Rome, and Naples (ISTAT, 2021). This demographic prominence underscores the importance of understanding the multifaceted integration dynamics experienced by the Egyptian diaspora.

3.4.2. Relational Dimension as the Litmus Test:

The relational dimension serves as a critical aspect of integration, often indicating the depth of connection within the foreign community (Rother, S., & Boccagni, P., 2014). Mixed marriages, in particular, provide tangible proof of the potential for a multicultural and open society, with only 0.8% of mixed marriages in Italy involving Egyptian and Italian citizens in 2020. The decline in these unions from previous years, attributed partially to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social gatherings, highlights the need for ongoing research into the relational dynamics shaping integration outcomes (ISTAT, 2020).

3.4.3. Migration Patterns and Integration Trends:

An analysis of marriage patterns reveals intriguing insights into the Egyptian community's involvement in mixed marriages. In 2020, there were 108 mixed marriages involving Egyptian and Italian citizens, representing a decline of 48.3% from 2019, attributed to the reduction in weddings due to the COVID emergency. Further research into the factors influencing marriage choices among diaspora members, including socio-economic factors and cultural preferences, could provide valuable insights into integration trends (ISTAT, 2020).

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[44] All data are taken from the Italian Ministry of Labor's report on the Egyptian community in Italy 2022.

3.4.4. Citizenship Acquisitions as Social Barometers:

Citizenship acquisitions serve as key indicators of social integration, with positive trends observed within communities like the Egyptian diaspora. In 2021, citizenship acquisitions by Egyptian citizens increased by 26.5%, reflecting approximately 3.2% of the total concessions to citizens from Third Countries. This trend underscores the evolving sense of belonging and attachment to the host country among diaspora members and merits further investigation into the socio-economic factors driving citizenship acquisition decisions (ISTAT, 2021).

3.4.5. Educational Involvement and Family Dynamics:

The educational landscape highlights the growing presence of Egyptian students in Italian schools, with 34,176 Egyptian students enrolled in the 2021/2022 school year, constituting approximately 5% of the non-EU school population. This growth outpaces the increase recorded for the total number of non-EU students. However, gender disparities persist within the Egyptian student population, with girls comprising 44.7% of students, indicating potential barriers to educational access and attainment for female diaspora members (ISTAT, 2022).

3.4.6. Gender Disparities in Education:

Gender dynamics within the Egyptian student population show distinctive patterns, with girls comprising 44.7% of Egyptian students. However, there's a reduction in female students from primary to upper secondary schools, indicating a need for further exploration of gender disparities in education. Understanding the underlying factors contributing to these disparities, including socio-cultural norms and access to educational resources, is essential for promoting gender equity within the diaspora community (ISTAT, 2022).[45]

3.4.7. Growing Presence in Higher Education:

The Egyptian community's expanding presence in university education is evident, with a 12% growth in students pursuing two- or three-year degree courses compared to the previous academic year, representing 2.7% of non-EU university students. This trend reflects the increasing aspirations for higher education among diaspora members and underscores the importance of targeted support initiatives to facilitate their academic success and integration into professional fields (ISTAT, 2022).

3.4.8. Youth Vulnerability and NEET Rates:

Addressing youth vulnerability is one of the major challenges, especially since the NEET (not in education, employment or training) rate among Egyptians aged 18 to 24 is 46.3%. This rate exceeds the overall NEET rate observed among both immigrant and Italian populations. These statistics confirm the urgent need for interventions directed at this group to effectively combat unemployment and underemployment among young people. Vocational training initiatives and employment services tailored to diaspora youth are essential to mitigate their vulnerability and enhance their socio-economic integration (ISTAT, 2021).

3.4.9. Associations as Social Integrators:

Active participation in associations has an important role in achieving social and political integration of the host country. Organizations play an active role in combating discrimination, advocating for the promotion of culture, facilitating cultural mediation, and promoting integration efforts. By acting as community mobilizers and advocates for collective interests, associations contribute significantly to enhancing social cohesion and empowering diaspora members (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 2021).

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[45] https://www.istat.it/it/files//2023/04/indicatori-2022-english.pdf

3.4.10. Labor Market Dynamics and Vulnerability:

The reality of the labor market shows the increasing vulnerability of foreign workers, especially those from non-EU backgrounds, who often find themselves working in low-skilled and consequently low-paid occupations in various sectors such as domestic work, construction, hospitality and agriculture. This reality highlights the urgent need to address labor market weaknesses to achieve fair and equitable integration outcomes. Policy interventions that seek to improve the quality of jobs, provide skills development opportunities, and promote fair labor practices are essential in order to protect the rights and well-being of expatriate workers (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 2020).

5.3 The distribution and impact of Coptic Orthodox Churches:

The name "Copt" is derived from Arabic phrases such as qutb, quft, and qift, with Greek and Latin elements, and refers to Egypt's indigenous population during Arab domination in Mediterranean African areas. Initially non-confessional, it refers to Egypt's indigenous people under Arab sovereignty. The Coptic population, which was formerly broad from the Nile to the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, declined during the seventh-century Muslim takeover but maintained an important part of Egypt's character.

Historically considerable migratory patterns from Egypt to Italy, driven by violence against the Coptic minority and desires for a better life, have resulted in an estimated 80,000 Copts living in Italy, primarily in the Milan area. Copts make up about one-third of the estimated 151,411 Egyptian migrants in Italy, although accurate enumeration is difficult owing to optional religious identification registration in Italian censuses (Bottoni, 2019). Despite these limitations, the Coptic community not only serves its parishioners but also positively contributes to local communities by strategically placing Coptic churches around Italy to encourage integration.

Copts have been present in Italy since the 1970s, when pastoral operations were first initiated. The Coptic diaspora has solidly established itself, demonstrating upward mobility while maintaining its historical identity, notably in the Milan area. The Coptic Church in Italy actively engages in discussion, promotes education, and advocates for citizenship regardless of religious identity. The Episcopal seat in Milan, led by leaders like as Anba Kirolos and Anba Antonius, acts as a hub for religious and community-building initiatives.

The geographical spread of Coptic Orthodox churches in Italy reflects the long-standing ties between Italy and the Coptic people. Major churches such as the Church of St. Mark, St. Mary, and St. Anthony in Milan, St. George and St. Mark in Rome, St. Mary in Turin, and St. Mina Coptic Orthodox Church in Florence serve as important centers for the Coptic diaspora. Other congregations exist in Piedmont, Tuscany, Umbria, and Veneto, adding to the Coptic community's vast presence throughout the country. The Coptic Church exerts influence through active participation in interfaith dialogue, educational initiatives, and equality advocacy, which is supported by the Italian Catholic Church (Dossier, 2015; LaStampa, 2019; Ayad, 2016; International Conference of Coptic Studies, 2016; Istat, 2018; Coca, 2018; Bottoni, 2019).

Coptic Orthodox churches in Italy serve as essential centers, providing a variety of services and instilling a strong feeling of community among Copts in the diaspora. These churches function as spiritual hubs, hosting religious festivals such as Holy Mass, preserving religious traditions, and providing worship space. They also actively promote Christian education initiatives for immigrant children by translating important materials into Italian. Advocating for bigger changes, such as involving pre-Islamic history in school curricula, demonstrates the Coptic Church's commitment to education. Churches contribute to wider discourses about equality and inclusion by emphasizing

the necessity of citizenship, regardless of religious membership. Their activities extend to community development, which includes projects to revive abandoned sites and improve communities. Coptic dioceses, particularly those in Milan and Rome, play an important role in organizing efforts to improve the well-being of Italy's Coptic community. These insights are derived from a variety of sources, including a file highlighting Coptic Catholic cooperation, the International Conference of Coptic Studies providing historical context, and the Institute providing demographic insights (Dossier, 2015; LaStampa, 2019; Ayad, 2016; International Conference of Coptic Studies, 2016; Estate, 2018; Coca, 2018; Bottoni, 2019).

6.3 Challenges and Opportunities

7.3 Impact on Host Country and Homeland

Egyptian expatriates influence Italy in a multiple and overlapping manner, as this influence extends to include the host country and the homeland, and is considered an exciting and contributor to cultural diversity, achieving economic development, and improving international relations. The study conducted by the IDOS Studies and Research Center within the IN.CO.NT.RO initiative[46], funded by the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals, showed that 70% of expatriates actively participate in cultural events, which certainly enriches and increases the diversity and inclusiveness of the Italian reality. In addition, the same study said that 60% of these expatriates actively participate in the Italian workforce, playing a crucial role in achieving individual prosperity and the country's overall economic well-being (Morrone, 2009).

According to Fargues and Fraboni (2014), around 30% of expatriates actively participate in transnational activities, such as trade, cultural exchanges, and diplomatic endeavors. It is worth emphasizing that remittances play a significant role, with an annual contribution anticipated to be over US$3 billion by 2021, which has a direct impact on the economic well-being of Egyptian recipients. Egypt is the top remittance-receiving country in the Middle East and North Africa, with remittances expected to exceed US$32 billion in 2021. Remittance flows increased, with Egyptians overseas sending US$3.3 billion in March 2022 alone, a new high. A rise of 13% from March 2021.

Moreover, about 40% of expatriates actively participate in cultural exchanges with Egypt, which contributes significantly to preserving and promoting Egyptian culture, and strengthening cultural ties (Fargues & Fraboni, 2014). Diplomatic initiatives involve approximately 30% of the diaspora, influencing advocacy efforts and policies shaping bilateral relations between Italy and Egypt, focusing on economic partnerships, cultural cooperation, and political dialogues (Fargues & Fraboni, 2014).

According to Bank of Italy data, total remittances leaving Italy in 2022 were 8.212 billion euros, up 6% from 2021. This steady growth, which has occurred since 2016, demonstrates the endurance of remittances to family members even during times of crisis. Remittances to Egypt account for little more than 1% of the overall amount of remittances sent from Italy to the rest of the globe, and 5% of those directed to the whole African continent. Between 2021 and 2022, the average amount of a single transfer increased by 11%, reaching over €450 per transaction, much above the national average of €290. This considerable increase in remittance flow represents a large infusion of capital into Egypt, which is attributed in part to the country's economic woes. According to World Bank data, remittances from Egyptian expatriates would account for 7% of the country's GDP in 2022.

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[46] https://www.insuranceitaly.it/association-immigrants-italy/?lang=zh-hans

Table 2: Shares of the ten largest recipients of Italy's outgoing remittances

(Four-quarter averages; percentage shares)

Country	2022-Q3	2023-Q3
Bangladesh	14.2	14.2
Pakistan	8.7	8.3
Philippines	7.4	7.6
Morocco	7.0	6.8
Romania	6.3	5.6
Senegal	5.7	4.4
India	4.9	5.4
Georgia	4.7	5.4
Peru	3.5	3.9
Sri Lanka	2.5	3.8
Rest of the World	35.0	34.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Foreign workers' remittances xlsx 3.7 MB
08 January 2024

Figure 17: the top ten countries that made cash transfers to their countries, Banca d'Italia 2022-2023.

Sending money back to Egypt dropped to 4516.30 USD. Million in the third quarterly of 2023, from 4626.30 USD [47] Millions in the second quarter of 2023, totaling 4036.23 USD million from 2001 to 2023. According to the Central Bank of Egypt, these data show both highs and lows, with a high of 8294.70 USD Million in the subsequent quarters of 2022 and a low of 655.20 USD Million in the third quarter of 2001. The table illustrates the distribution of inbound remittances from Italy's highest ten beneficiaries in both the third quarters of 2022 and 2023. In the third quarter of 2023, remittances sent abroad from Italy showed a modest dip of 0.7% compared to The year 2022 will have a big impact on Sub-Saharan African countries, the European Union, and Asia. Remittances to North Africa and the Near East, on the other hand, were fairly steady, while those to other parts of the world increased. Notably, according to figures from the four quarters ending in September 2023, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Philippines were the top three receiving countries, accounting for 14.2%, 8.3%, and 7.6% of total outflows, respectively.[48]

8.3 The Egyptian Diaspora engagement and association's mapping, and the Political Engagement of the Egyptian Diaspora in Italy:

3.8.1. The Egyptian Diaspora engagement and association's mapping:

As of January 1, 2020, 5.3 million foreign immigrants lived in Italy, representing around 8.8% of the nation's population. Over the last 15 years, 1.3 million foreigners gained Italian citizenship, increasing the overall total of individuals with an "immigrant background" to 7.3 million, or 12% of the resident population.

Over antiquity, associations founded by Italians and, later, by immigrants themselves played a huge part in facilitating immigrants' lives and supporting the ingestion into Italian society. Geographically, the distribution of these associations reflects the degree of foreign community expansion on Italian territory, with most of them located in central and northern regions of Italy, mostly in main urban regions. While expatriate participation in Italian collaboration is based on Law No. 125 of 2014, This impacted the circumstances for national development collaboration. Responding to national advancement, the law established the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) to oversee cooperation and development initiatives, with a focus on collaboration between the public and commercial sectors. The foundation of the National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS) has resulted in a more formal approach to diaspora engagement, with a crucial platform for consultation and interaction among a wide variety of stakeholders. the "Portale Integrazione Migranti" initiative, which started in 2014 and verifies its

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[47] https://tradingeconomics.com/egypt/remittances
[48] The source: band di Italia 2024 https://shorturl.at/tSTY7

databases annually, found that there are 1,413 groups in different rejoins in Italy, that provide its services to immigrants.

These organizations offer a range of services, such as cultural immersion, legal assistance, and workforce access. As immigrants become involved in Italian social life, they overcome barriers that include language difficulties, cultural differences, and organizational defects, revealing the capacity for change of these connections.

Despite the size of the Egyptian community in Italy, particularly in the northern regions, and its demographic potential, there has been a notable lack of accurate information on the activities and contributions of Egyptian diaspora societies over the years. Limited documentation makes it impossible to provide an accurate picture of its impact on community development and integration, as well as to provide essential insights into how it performs in the Italian development cooperation environment or improves collaborations. Researchers who want to explore deeper the dynamics of foreign and Egyptian groups in Italy require in-depth research that reveals all aspects of the community's experiences, struggles, and accomplishments. . Realizing the importance of stressing the Egyptian diaspora's particular contributions allows for a more detailed examination of their role in affecting the broader cultural, social, and political climate in Italy.

3.8.2. Political Engagement of the Egyptian Diaspora in Italy:

3.8.2.1. In the local Italian context:

According to current research, immigrants, particularly the Egyptian population in Italy, face numerous barriers that prevent them from participating in politics and other social and cultural activities. Language barriers are frequently identified as a major barrier to accessing important information and communicating effectively in political settings (Lobo 2017). Furthermore, unfamiliarity with the complexity of the Italian political system, such as democratic procedures and party structures, may hinder immigrant participation (Giogni, 2004). Discrimination and the perception of exclusion may also discourage immigrants from being involved in politics (Entzinger, 2003). Baldassare and Merla (2014) emphasize the need to understand migrants' diverse backgrounds and experiences since these influence their political engagementThese barriers demonstrate the worth of establishing targeted approaches and comprehensive policies that support the active participation of the Egyptian diaspora and other migrant communities in Italian politics.

Kostadinova (2018) discovered that individuals from outside the European Union who have legitimately resided in Italy for at least five years are of voting age, pay taxes, and are allowed to vote in municipal elections. However, these rights are only applicable to local elections and not to national elections. According to the study's findings, a variety of factors influence immigrants' political activity, including their ethnic communities and their degree of integration into the community they live in.

Seta and Kaponyo (2019) look at migrants' political engagement, emphasizing the need to strike the right balance between local integration and global belonging. The study recognizes the difficulties of migrants' political engagement and looks at many forms of active and passive participation, such as voting in local elections. This body of work emphasizes the complex interaction of variables that influence migrants' political activity in Italy and calls for nuanced policies that take into account the different barriers faced by varied communities, mainly the Egyptian diaspora.

3.8.2.2. In Egyptian politics:

Research on Egyptians' political activism in the diaspora, particularly following the 2011 revolution, is complex and dimensional, featuring a focus on local Egyptian politics and the establishment of political organizations overseas to support these activities. Theoretical frameworks, especially diaspora partisanship (Vertovec, 1999; Glick Schiller et al., 1995) and transnational social spaces (Faist, 2008), give context for understanding how migrants engage politically from a distance. These frameworks highlight the connection between home and host nations, putting light on the difficulties of diaspora civic engagement.

In addition, studies on online political mobilization (Howard and Hussain, 2013) and the repercussions of major political events (Gamlen et al., 2013) add to the topic. Digital platforms and social media have transformed political action, allowing expatriate populations to organize and mobilize across boundaries in new ways. Seminal events such as the 2011 revolution initiated political awareness and mobilization among Egyptians across home and abroad.

Furthermore, the idea of "political remittances" (Lahav, 2008) sheds light on how migrants influence political processes in their home countries through financial assistance, lobbying, and advocacy from abroad. This concept shows the value of diaspora participation in impacting political procedures, such as electoral results and policy choices.

Also, it is impossible to neglect the influence of transnational activism (Smith et al., 1997) and identity politics (Brubaker, 2001) on diaspora political engagement. Identity conceptions such as ethnicity, religion, and national allegiance impact migrants' views on their place in political processes and their involvement in homeland politics.

The Egyptian diaspora has different obstacles when seeking to have a say in domestic Egyptian politics. One key impediment is the geographical and physical separation from the country, which may reduce a sense of connection and significance to local political concerns (Vertovec, 1999). On top of that, diaspora members frequently encounter legal and procedural barriers that prevent them from participating in Egyptian elections or political activities remotely. Complex citizenship rules, residence restrictions, and voting procedures might limit or increase diaspora participation logistically problematic (Gamlen et al., 2013). Also, political persecution and authoritarianism in Egypt may cause fear or concern among diaspora members, prohibiting them from openly voicing political dissent or participating in oppositional activities (Glick Schiller et al., 1995). Further, socioeconomic challenges such as unstable employment, economic constraints, and time restrictions may limit diaspora people's ability to allocate time and resources to political participation (Faist, 2008). These issues illustrate the power of tailored initiatives and support structures to promote expatriate political engagement and overcome obstacles to participation.

CHAPTER4 THE FINDINGS

Introduction:

This chapter is the outcome of a significant study into the complicated dynamics of Egyptian expatriate groups in Italy, with a special and exclusive focus on Milan ,Lombardy

In revealing these overlapping aspects of the reality of Egyptian associations, we were guided by a set of outlined research questions, each of which sheds light on a specific aspect of Egyptian society's roles, functions, interactions, challenges, contributions, and impact in Milan.

Several questions have been put forward such as, "What are the basic tasks, roles, and objectives that guide the activities of Egyptian expatriate associations in Italy?", and "How do these associations contribute to the social, cultural, and economic integration of the Egyptian community within Italy?", "How do Egyptian expatriate associations deal with Italian society? and how can local Italians foster intercultural understanding and collaboration while fulfilling the needs of both communities?, "What are the main barriers faced to organizing the community and implementing their activities, and how do they overcome these obstacles?" ."To what extent do Egyptian diaspora associations participate in policy advocacy , Especially with regard to issues affecting the Egyptian community in Italy, and how do you cooperate with Italian entities to address common goals and challenges?

Our main seeks to align perfectly with these research questions, which act as guiding lights, driving our research efforts toward thorough knowledge and analysis.

We also researched to explore the context of history that assisted in the formation and expansion of Egyptian diaspora associations in Milan, Italy. Conduct an in-depth look at the desired outcomes and objectives that influence the actions of these groups. In addition, research the techniques relied on by Egyptian expatriate groups for community involvement. We attempted to identify and assess the problems and possibilities that these organizations confront in reaching their objectives. We likewise worked hard to investigate the role of Egyptian immigrant groups in policy advocacy and their collaborative efforts with Italian institutions. In addition, we will look at how these links shape Egyptian identity in the context of the diaspora.

In the later sections of this chapter, we will delve into the findings from our rigorous research methodology, and provide insights drawn from interviews with representatives of eight Egyptian diaspora associations operating in Milan. Through an iterative process of data collection and analysis, we seek to highlight the multifaceted nature of diaspora associations and their impact on the Milanese landscape.

1.4 Methodology:

Our aim in this study is to carefully examine the formation of Egyptian immigrant associations in Italy, their functions, and the factors influencing them, in addition to the services they provide to Egyptian society. In the context of our research, we view well-organized research design as an important factor in guiding the methodology, sampling, and analysis processes (Chapin, 1991; Hochman, 2005; Roy, 2021). The use of qualitative case study methodology allows us to conduct an in-depth exploration of the activities and roles of these associations in Italy, along with the challenges they face (Creswell, 2013). Our use of structured interviews as our primary data collection method, in addition to reviewing published research, association publications, and

online platforms, facilitates comprehensive and extended insights (Creswell, 2013; Luce, Elixhauser, & Collier, 1990; Ahmad, Marwat, & Khan, 2014).

Our research design not only determines the type of data collected, but also guides collection methods, analysis procedures, and interpretation of results (Luce et al., 1990; Ahmad et al., 2014). By adopting a qualitative case study approach, we aim to achieve a comprehensive understanding of Egyptian migrant associations in Milan, Italy, and to contribute to deepening the theoretical understanding of social structures within diaspora communities in Milan (Creswell, 2013). This approach allows for the integration of diverse data collection methods and facilitates the exploration of regularities of social phenomena (Creswell, 2013).

We used the snowball technique as a data collection technique. Personal interviews were used to collect qualitative data from members of Egyptian expatriate associations in Milan. This method was chosen for its ability to promote dialogue that leads to achieving our research goals and answering the research questions. and expanding the sample size through referrals (Creswell, 2013). Initial contacts were made through personal networks and referrals, followed by interviews conducted via various communication platforms. Ethical considerations were paramount, with informed consent obtained from all participants, emphasizing their right to withdraw without consequences and ensuring confidentiality throughout the process.

Throughout our research, we took great effort to acknowledge and respect the perspectives and experiences of participants. This includes fostering an environment in which participants felt free to share their thoughts openly and honestly. Furthermore, strong procedures were used to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all research participants. This includes collecting prior informed consent and advising participants that they might withdraw from the research at any time with no penalty. In addition, any identifiable information from the data will be carefully removed throughout the analysis process to ensure that participants' anonymity is protected at all times. By following these ethical principles, we want to keep our participants' confidence.

4.1.1. Population:

In this study, the population under investigation comprises Egyptian migrant associations located in Milan, Italy, which cater to the Egyptian community in the city. Specifically, I focused on eight associations situated in Milan and providing services to the local Egyptian community. Interviews were conducted with leaders or prominent figures within these associations, the majority of whom were over the age of 50, consisting of three women and five men. Each association typically has an organizational and administrative structure comprising fewer than 10 members. These associations operate across nine neighborhoods in Milan, employing a traditional administrative structure headed by one person and 3 to 6 assistants, with active membership ranging from 5 to 10 individuals.

The services provided by these associations vary, encompassing a wide range of community-oriented initiatives. Attendance at collective activities organized by these associations fluctuates between 10 and 400 participants, depending on the nature and objectives of the events, and the target groups. Notably, as part of the Italian initiative to register immigrant associations, 1,498 associations were identified, with 11 declaring themselves as service providers specifically to the Egyptian immigrant community in Italy. Associations operating outside Milan were excluded from this study.

To identify key associations, efforts were made to establish communication with prominent figures within the Egyptian immigrant community. This involved some weeks of investigation to gather information on the most active associations and updates to the list through further communication

with these figures. Contact was initiated via email or messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, introducing the researcher, nationality, field of study, and research objectives, and inviting participation. eight out of eleven associations responded affirmatively, while contact was lost with three others despite initial expressions of interest.

The justification for selecting these associations over others was based on several factors. Priority was given to associations operating in Milan, with further consideration given to their range of functions, gender representation among leaders, and longevity in operation, whether newly established or longstanding. However, it is important to acknowledge some limitations of this approach. For instance, language barriers and limited access to certain associations may have impacted the selection process. Additionally, reliance on self-identification as service providers to the Egyptian community may have led to some associations being overlooked or misclassified. Furthermore, the response rate of associations may have been influenced by various factors such as time constraints or competing priorities within the organizations.

4.1.2. Case selection:

In this study, we meticulously analyzed data collected from eight Egyptian migrant associations operating in Italy, employing a combination of qualitative research methods to ensure comprehensive insights into their roles, functions, and challenges. The selection of these associations was guided by a rigorous sampling strategy anchored within a framework that prioritizes accuracy and representativeness.

Our approach to sampling design was informed by Olea's (1984) methodology, which advocates for the use of universal kriging to optimize sampling design and estimate spatial functions with minimal requirements. By leveraging global indices of sampling efficiency, we determined parameters such as sample density and spatial pattern to ensure that the selected associations were adequately represented within the study's framework.

Complementary to Olea's optimization framework, Parel (1973) underscored the fundamental role of sampling in accurately representing a population, emphasizing its pertinence in sample surveys. This highlighted the necessity of a meticulous sampling strategy tailored to the unique characteristics of Egyptian migrant associations in Italy, ensuring the broad applicability and insightfulness of the study findings.

In aligning our methodology with Ardilly's (2005) comprehensive overview of sampling methods, including simple random sampling, stratification, and multi-stage sampling, we gained a nuanced understanding of the myriad techniques available. Furthermore, Ardilly's discussion on variance estimation and non-response treatment provided valuable insights into mitigating potential biases and ensuring the robustness of our sampling approach.

Drawing parallels with Kellerhals and Bray's (1971) procedural framework for sampling bed material in gravel-bed rivers, we emphasized the importance of systematic sampling techniques in delineating spatial phenomena. While their focus differed from our study's context, the principles of systematic sampling and conversion methods for different sampling procedures were pertinent to our endeavor.

Finally, Mabert and Whybark's (1977) exploration of sampling procedures for large combinatorial problems offered valuable insights into the comparative efficacy of various sampling methodologies. Their analysis provided a heuristic framework for evaluating the quality and computational efficiency of different sampling strategies, guiding our selection process towards the most appropriate strategy for achieving our research objectives.

4.1.3. Interviewees

By putting together these insights, we have formulated a sampling framework designed to give comprehensive perspectives on the roles and functions of Egyptian immigrant associations in Italy. By including theories from influencing works, our approach is to carefully select a sample of Egyptian migrant associations in Milan, integrating ideas drawn from different sources discussed throughout our discourse. Our sample consisted of associations selected based on criteria such as historical importance, geographic distribution, organizational structures, and participation in community activities. relying on well-established methodologies in social research, we consider the essentials of spatial sampling improvement outlined by Olea (1984) and the insights of Burrell (1973) concerning the importance of sampling in accurately representing a population. In addition, we combined Ardilly's (2005) insight into sampling methods and procedural frameworks discussed by Kellerhals and Bray (1971) to ensure the robustness of our sampling strategy. By evaluating the relative efficacy of dissimilar sampling methodologies, guided by the fundamental theoretical empirical applicability as discussed by Mapert and Weybark (1977), our perspective aimed to capture the diversity and representation of Egyptian migrant associations in Milan.

In our exploration of the interview section of our study, we relied on qualitative interviews to examine the experiences and perspectives of participants within Egyptian immigrant associations in Italy. As Dixon (2015) makes a point qualitative interviews are key for understanding the lived truth of participants, a view repeated by Seidman (1991).

In our study, interviews served as a foundation for understanding the organizational complexities within Egyptian immigrant associations. Through developing the open dialogue in open and evolving discussions, we aimed to expose the narratives that shape these interactions. through engaging in qualitative interviews, we look to acquire insights into the experiences and perspectives of leaders within Egyptian immigrant communities in Milan.

In our methodological approach, we come to representatives of different Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan to discuss their activities, goals, objectives, and challenges.

For example, in the case of the Egyptian Forum in Milan, a personal interview with the Vice President was arranged via Zoom. Although our initial plan was a face-to-face interview, logistical restrictions required a shift to telephone interviews. However, the insights gathered during the interview were necessary in highlighting the forum's role and functions within the Egyptian migrant community in Milan.

Likewise, our interaction with the "Studenti Arab ed Egiziani in Italia" group took a distinguishing form. Instead of conducting a usual interview with one of the administrators, I shared my personal experiences as an active member of the group. Through direct participation in group activities and interactions with fellow members, valuable insights were gained into the support networks and resources available to Egyptian students in Italy. This immersive approach provided an understanding of the group's influence in facilitating integration.

Despite the logistical challenges in planning face-to-face interviews with the founders of Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS, the association's dedication to recording its work through professional videos and online posts has proven effective. Through careful review of available materials and consultation with community leaders familiar with the association, the essence of Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS's contributions to the Egyptian migrant community in Milan was identified.

The various methods I used during the study provided multiple insights into the roles, functions, and challenges faced by Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan. Through a combination of interviews, personal experiences, and analysis, we aimed to provide a comprehensive

understanding of the contributions and dynamics of these associations within the diaspora community.

This table outlines each association and the method through which you collected data or examined existing resources for each one.

Association	Method of Data Collection
Lotus Association (LOTUS Associazione Italo Egiziana)	Interview
Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS	Online Resources
Studenti Arabi ed Egiziani in Italia (Facebook Group)	Personal Experience; Online Resources
Alliance Group for Egypt (Gruppo Alleanza per l'Egitto)	Interview
Egyptian Workers Union in Italy	Interview
Coptic Orthodox Church in Italy	Interview; Online Resources
Egyptian Expatriate Services in Italy (Facebook Group)	Interview
Forum Egiziano in Italia	Interview

Figure 18: showing the breakdown of the methods used in collecting data from different samples

2.4 Data Analysis:

This section delves into a comprehensive analysis drawn from interviews with members of 8 Egyptian immigrant associations under examination in this study. Through careful examination, the analysis sheds light on the roles, activities, and challenges faced by these associations as they attempt to facilitate the integration of Egyptian diaspora migrants into Italian society.
the whole data collected during the interviews underwent thorough analysis, aligning with the set objectives and research questions outlined in the study. These include:
- Examining the main functions, roles, and objectives of Egyptian Diaspora associations within Italy.
- Finding the contributions and activities undertaken by these associations to foster the social, cultural, and economic integration of the Egyptian community within Italian society.
- Investigating the extent of engagement of Egyptian immigrant associations with the local Italian community to encourage cross-cultural understanding, and collaboration, and address the needs of both communities.
- Spotting the main challenges the diaspora associations face in mobilizing their communities and executing their activities, along with the strategies employed to overcome these obstacles.
- Examining the involvement of these associations in policy advocacy, particularly in matters affecting the Egyptian community in Italy, and assessing their collaborative efforts with Italian entities to address shared objectives and challenges.

Through this comprehensive analysis, a nuanced understanding of the dynamics surrounding the activities and endeavors of Egyptian migrant associations in Italy is provided, offering valuable insights into their pivotal role in fostering community integration and addressing pertinent societal challenges.
Determining the magnitude of Egyptian groups and their administrative structure is crucial in order to begin my investigation. Although they can vary, the structure and size are typically small to medium in size: Less than five important members made up 75% of the organizations surveyed; fewer than three members made up 12.5% of the associations; and more than ten members made

up 12.5%. Members are usually selected on the basis of their leadership skills, competency, morality, network, and willingness to dedicate themselves to the group. Regular attendance at the organization's events for a predetermined amount of time is also taken into account. in addition to the potential for devoting time to the group's requirements. In certain religious groups, having suitable prior understanding of religious topics may be necessary in addition to intense religiosity.
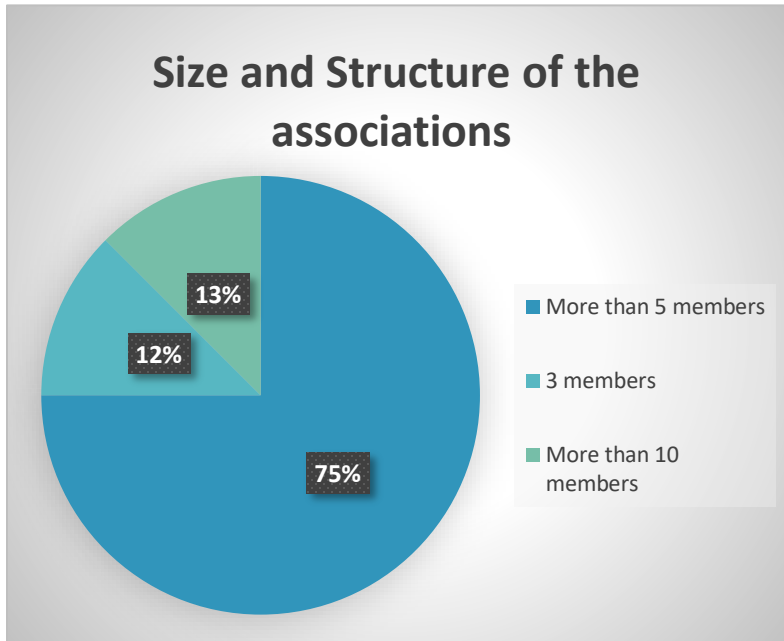
Even though it isn't a requirement for membership, having Egyptian nationality is typically necessary to become a key member. Most of the time, an Italian regular legal status is necessary. Age limitations may occasionally apply, such as the need that the administrator be older than eighteen. The most widely used method by Egyptian groups to choose their membership is voluntary system, often based on trust, prior knowledge, and direct selection

In terms of age, we discovered that 37.5% of the associations had founders who were under 40 years

Figure 19:"The age of the members at the administrative level of the associations"

ms of services rendered, twenty-five ldren to the elderly, and twenty-five

percent primarily targeted young people between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five. 87.5% of association founders have lived in Italy for more than 20 years, making up the vast majority when it comes to duration of residency. Furthermore, while the precise ratio was not given, on average, five out of every seven founders in each association were Italian nationals

Figure 20: the Size and Structure of the Egyptian associations in Milan.

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or had open residency. intergenerational representation, 75% of association founders belong to the first immigrant generation.

"The locations utilized by the associations for managing and implementing their activities."

- Places associated with worship
- Places own by the association
- Meeting at a member's residence
- Public places such as parks, train stations, etc.

Figure 21: "The locations utilized by the associations for managing and implementing their activities."

The locations of regular activities for the Egyptian associations that were surveyed were as follows: 37.5% used places of worship like mosques and churches; 25% met at a member's home; 25% used locations organized by associations or other friends; and 12.5% used public spaces like parks, train stations, or similar locations; hotels, restaurants, or similar establishments.

"The degree of contribution to financing activities and sources of funding."

Members' contributions   International entities outside Italy
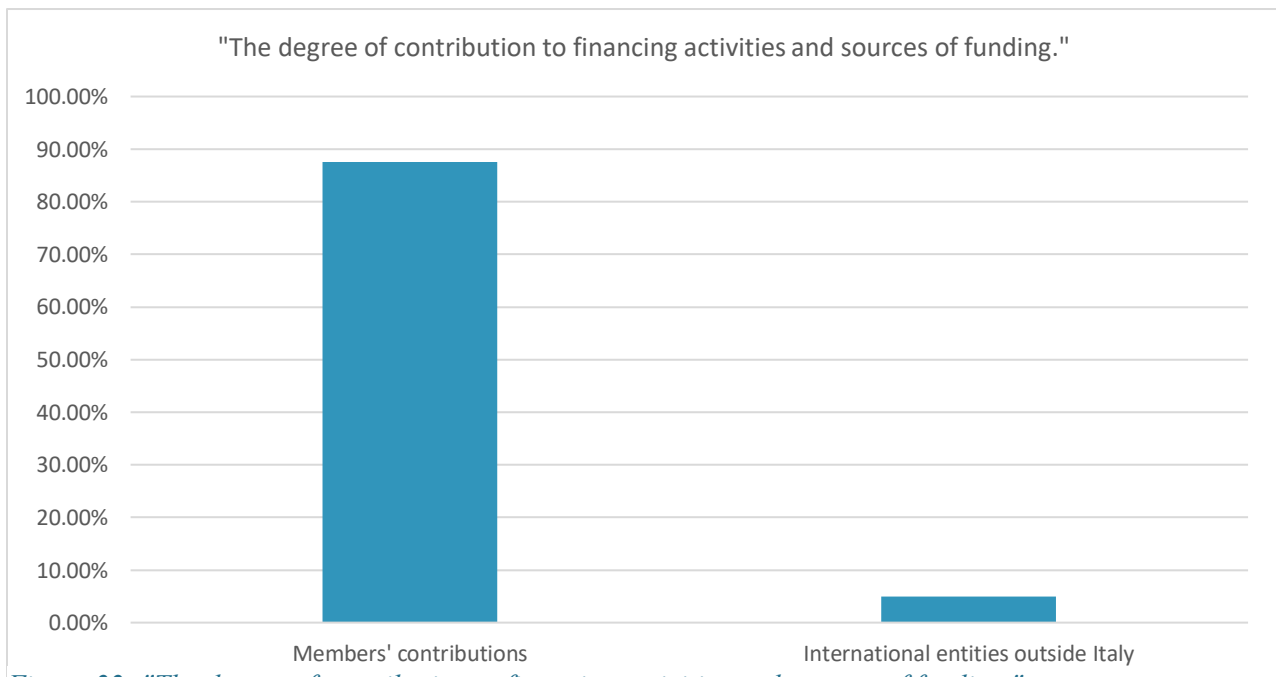
Figure 22: "The degree of contribution to financing activities and sources of funding."

In order to carry out their programs and make use of their local network of contacts in Milan, 87.5% of the groups needed money primarily from their members' contributions. We mostly interact with Egyptian business owners in Milan's private sector, such as store owners, pizzeria owners, and real estate investors, as stated in the comments made by this group. Our communication with them is . regular, and they often provide Egyptian migrant communities with the in-kind resources required to conduct operations, but it is still limited and insufficient. In-kind contributions consist of tangible goods and other resources in addition to cash assistance.

Furthermore, just 5% of the associations surveyed said they get funding from organizations outside of Italy. Additionally, seventy-five percent of the groups work closely with Milan's local government, and these Italian government organizations occasionally lend them resources, like spaces for events.

Furthermore, just 5% of the associations surveyed said they get funding from organizations outside of Italy. Additionally, 75% of the associations work closely with Milan's municipal government and occasionally provide them with resources like spaces for events.

Figure 23: Demographic and Operational Characteristics of Diaspora Associations: A Summary of Findings

Categories	Subcategories	Percentage
Size and Structure	More than 5 members	75%
	3 members	12.5%
	More than 10 members	12.5%
Age Distribution	Less than 40 years old	37.5%
	Over 50 years old	62.5%
Services Provided	Targeted at 18-35 age group	25%
	Cater to all age groups	75%
Length of Residence in Italy	More than 20 years	87.5%
	Italian citizenship/residency	(Approx. 5 out of 7 founders in each association)
Location of Regular Activities	Places associated with worship	37.5%
	Meeting at a member's residence	25%
	Places organized by associations or friends	25%
	Public places such as parks, train stations, etc.	12.5%
Sources of Funding	Members' contributions	87.5%
	International entities outside Italy	5%
Collaboration with local authorities	Collaboration with local authorities	75%

By analyzing data collected from interviews with members of Egyptian immigrant associations, data visualization software such as Microsoft Excel and Python scripting were utilized to present the study findings in a clear, concise, and visually appealing manner, enhancing the overall impact and accessibility of the research findings.

4.2.1. Mapping of the Egyptian diaspora associations in Milano:

4.2.1.1. The Lotus Association (LOTUS Associazione Italo Egiziana):[49]

[50]It is an Egyptian association registered with the Italian Ministry of Social Affairs in Milan. In Italy, it operates under civil society regulations. Named after the famous Egyptian flower, the association provides its services primarily to the Egyptian community. Its administrative body,

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[49] I got all of these pictures for the association's activates from their Facebook 'page. https://www.facebook.com/lotusassociazione/

[50] According to the leader of the organization, this photo was taken during the clothing and handicrafts exhibition organized by the association in Milan, October 2022.

headed by a woman, consists of 5 members, 3 of whom hold Egyptian and Italian citizenship and two hold permanent residency. It was officially established in 2017, but its founders were active in public service in Milan before formalizing their collective efforts.

According to the interview I conducted with the association's director, the LOTUS Associazione Italo Egiziana Association dedicates its tasks and activities to serving the needs of the Egyptian community in Milano, Italy, while giving priority to enhancing cultural heritage, social cohesion, and economic empowerment of Egyptian families and women. It is also at the heart of the association's mission to preserve and promote Egyptian heritage and culture in the Egyptian-Italian context in Milan. By adopting a variety of cultural, educational and community initiatives, the association seeks to celebrate Egypt's rich cultural heritage while promoting exchange and understanding between the Egyptian and Italian cultures. According to the association's director, *"One of the active members carries out periodic activities such as Italian language lessons for 51Egyptians and Arabic language lessons for Italians as platforms for intercultural dialogue, mutual enrichment, and bridging linguistic and cultural gaps."*

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[51] According to the leader of the organization, this photo was taken during the clothing and handicrafts exhibition organized by the association in Milan, October 2022.

The association focuses on family development and support, with a special focus on empowering Egyptian mothers and families. The association's leader says, *"Recognizing the pivotal role of mothers in raising strong and resilient families and preparing a generation capable of integrating into Italian culture,"* the association offers a variety of programs and services specifically designed to meet their needs. These include workshops on motherhood skills, and the association believes that *"the family is the nucleus of society"* and that strengthening it will ultimately lead to the cohesion of Egyptian society.

[52]Furthermore, the association actively participates in community-building activities aimed at promoting social cohesion and integration. Through initiatives such as celebrating the ideal mother in the Egyptian community in Milan, cultural festivals of a national character, social gatherings during Ramadan iftars, and Islamic and Christian religious holidays where they exchange visits with the Egyptian Church in Milan, the association's leader says, *"These opportunities provide community members to meet and establish contacts." Purposeful and celebrating Egyptian traditions and shared national and religious values."*

The association's director also adds that the association is committed to enhancing the economic empowerment of Egyptian society by supporting access to economic opportunities. The association holds monthly exhibitions of Egyptian products and handicrafts that are produced by hand by women from Egyptian society.

[52] A group Ramadan iftar in Milan organized by the association

The association also works primarily as a partner of the Alliance for Egypt entity in implementing the football sports tournament that is implemented during the month of Ramadan with the participation of more than twenty teams from the youth of the Egyptian community in Milan. This tournament is constantly attended by the Egyptian Consul.

Speaking about participating in advocacy efforts to support the Egyptian society, the association's leader indicated that "*we are organizing protests to put pressure on employers who are stubborn in paying workers' financial dues or problems related to employment contracts. If the employers and workers are Egyptian, we invite both to the association or go to them to resolve matters through amicable means and mediation*".

[53]Regarding the challenges facing the Egyptian community in Milan, the association's director said that "the type of immigrants who have come in recent years, who are characterized by religious conservatism, a rural background, and poor education and culture, have harmed the reputation of the Egyptian community as a result of the fact that they live inside *"ghettos"* as she described them, and she followed *"even warn their children against befriending the Italians"*. You also believe that the large number of unaccompanied children in Milan is threatening a major catastrophe and that the efforts of Egyptian civil society, the Italian government, and the business

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[53] The association organized Eid al-Fitr prayers 2023 in one of the open stadiums designated by the Municipality of Milan for prayer.

sector must be combined to implement projects specifically designed to rehabilitate them, given that this matter has become a reality that must be dealt with.

4.2.1.2. The Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS:

Aims as stated on its Facebook page, *"to promote goodness and human values among Arab youth in Europe, to contribute positively to the communities in which they live, and to spread goodness to all."*

In 2020, during the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis in Italy, when the country was struggling with the state of emergency [54] and its multiple and heavy effects on society, considering that Italy was one of the countries most affected by the epidemic, a group of young Egyptians appeared under the slogan "Giovani Per Il Bene". They have shown remarkable initiative [55] and dedication to charitable endeavors aimed at alleviating the economic hardships faced by Milanese residents of various nationalities.

As a result, the following details their story: Not long after the epidemic, some young people who lived close to the first lockdown area in Sirisena, where the first SARS-CoV-2 virus group was isolated, set up a Facebook page where they posted videos in Arabic outlining protocols. security.

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[54] https://www.facebook.com/GiovaniXilBene/
[55] https://www.milanotoday.it/video/coronavirus-spesa-giovani-islamici.html

Egyptian immigrants learned about their efforts and were eager to help, donating food, medicine, and face masks that were given to needy families and individuals who were alone at home.

Gradually, they started getting donations from foreigners, Italian nationals, and immigrants from the Arab world. They used WhatsApp to compile a list of recipients and started assisting people as far south as Sicily. The "Giovanni per il Bene" campaign became a real project that garnered media attention. In Milan and Lombardy, Egyptian women actively participated alongside males, buying products from local markets and keeping them in warehouses donated by Egyptian groups. Carefully planned shopping, cooking, office work, and logistical planning were done in order to prepare parcels and dinners. Everyday tasks like scheduling delivery and placing phone calls demand focus and commitment. Individuals' participation levels differed, but their group's dedication to community service brought them together.

The five young founders of the youth charity leveraged their newfound notoriety, trust, and knowledge in both the Italian government and the Egyptian migrant population to grow their contacts and relationships within the Milan community after the COVID-19 problem was resolved. They have structured their grassroots movement into a viable business action, keeping their identity as "Giovanni Per Il Bene," thanks to their persistent commitment to their cause.

Increased donations caused the association's operations to grow significantly, and a notable headquarters was established as a result. Numerous fundamental amenities are available at this location, such as a mosque that serves both sexes, which promotes inclusivity and religious activity in the neighborhood. Furthermore, a reconciliation hall has been assigned to the building as a crucial substitute location for settling disputes, encouraging unity, and resolving problems within the community.

Moreover, the association's programmers have integrated and outfitted a classroom that can hold up to 30 pupils, realizing the value of education and self-determination. The goal of this project is to offer educational possibilities with the ultimate goal of opening an independent school. The program aimed to enhance the quality of education for Egyptian adolescents and youth by organizing events that emphasized religious education, spiritual growth, and the development of personal and leadership abilities.

Furthermore, the original Giovani Per Il members have continued to be actively committed as volunteers and have been unwavering in their commitment to community service. They committed themselves to providing weekly basic supplies to Milan's homeless population living on the streets. Using the automobiles of other volunteers, they drove to stores owned by Arabs and Egyptians in Milan to pick up food, bottled water, and warm drinks.

In addition, the organization facilitates Islamic burial customs and offers bereaved families fundamental support and direction during their grieving process, understanding the value of maintaining cultural and religious traditions. This kind deed and this special position reaffirmed the organization's dedication to upholding Islamic religious and cultural values while offering essential social services.

Consequently, despite the Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS's commendable efforts and accomplishments, the organization faces a variety of difficulties in carrying out its goals. One of the main challenges is navigating the nuances of intercultural and interreligious interactions within Milan's heterogeneous culture. Effective communication and deft diplomacy are necessary to strike a balance between the cultural sensitivities, religious views, and distinctions of different elements of society while fostering tolerance and understanding.

Furthermore, even though the group has had tremendous success in raising money and obtaining donations, it still faces operational and logistical difficulties, particularly in the areas of resource

management and sustainability. One constant worry is finding continuing financing and resources to sustain the association's projects and activities. Furthermore, solid organizational infrastructure and strong leadership are necessary to provide the efficient coordination and management of volunteer efforts and activities that are directly related to community participation.

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[56] The events, events and celebrations organized by the association witness a large presence by the Egyptian and Arab community in Milan. This photo is of Eid al-Adha prayer in Milan 2023.

4.2.1.3. The Studenti Arabi ed egiziani in Italia group on Facebook:[57]

Since 2017, the only source of funding for this digital gateway for Arab and Egyptian students studying in Italy has been from volunteers. It provides a wealth of information and support regarding studying in Italy and submitting applications for regional scholarships. This group, which has more than 40,000 members, is essential for assisting Arab and Egyptian students in settling into Italian society and advancing their academic careers.

[58]The group essentially serves as a one-stop resource, providing direction and counsel on a range of topics related to studying in Italy. universities, the Egyptian educational system, academic standards, and the procedures for finishing formal documents. services for documentation and translation. help in filling out grant applications and figuring out due dates. locating a place to stay With the help of information on academic programs, entrance requirements, language needs, and visa policies, members can confidently and easily negotiate the complexities of the Italian educational system.

Additionally, the club provides a forum for students to exchange advice, thoughts, and experiences with one another. Members can benefit from the combined knowledge and experiences of their

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[57] https://www.facebook.com/groups/egyptianstudents/
[58] Some Arab students organized themselves through the group in order to gather in universities to organize protests to denounce the war on Gaza.

peers to improve their academic journey and quality of life in Italy, whether it's advice on how to find affordable housing, suggestions for respectable universities and colleges, or tactics for adjusting to Italian academic culture.

Apart from its media roles, the club facilitates communication and collaboration amongst students from Egypt and the Arab world. Members can establish friendships, study groups, and professional networks that transcend the virtual world by connecting with other students pursuing similar degrees or living in nearby locations. The students' experience is undoubtedly enhanced by this sense of belonging and solidarity, which also helps to create a welcoming and inclusive learning environment.

4.2.1.4. The Alliance Group for Egypt (Gruppo Alleanza per l'Egitto) :[59]

According to the date of publishing the activities on the official page of the association on Facebook, as well as the confirmation of the group leader during the personal interview. It began its activities in 2014. It includes members and leaders of three previous community groups, most of whom worked in public work in Milan before 2011. those associations are the Egypt 2000 Association, the For Egypt Group, and the Watan Group. The alliance arose because of the

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[59] https://m.facebook.com/gruppoalleanzaperlegitto/

The alliance mainly specializes in organizing sporting activities and events for the Egyptian community in Milan. These pictures are an excerpt from the events of the football competitions it organized during the past years.

interchange of visions between the members of the three groups and *"the feeling We are stronger together,"* said the group leader. As well as in response to the transformations in the Egyptian internal political scene after the 2013 revolution in Egypt, and to unify and harmonize the goals of the Egyptian community in Milan.

According to the group leader, and by reviewing the group's posts on Facebook, for seven consecutive years, the group has focused on organizing various sporting events, including the annual football competition during the month of Ramadan, and the competition provides an opportunity for Egyptian youth to participate in healthy competition and build social bonds.

The leader of the association also confirmed that the Alliance played various roles. During the COVID-19 crisis, the Alliance mobilized its resources to support the Egyptian community in Milan. Through the "Charity Caravans" initiative, the group collected and distributed essential food supplies to vulnerable families affected by the pandemic. The coalition also organized virtual events and online forums to provide support and information to community members, address concerns, and promote mental health during periods of isolation.

Although the event during the personal interview with the group leader did not mention this activity, by examining the group's activities on Facebook, I found that during the year 2015, the association was active in advocacy efforts against terrorist threats in the Middle East and extremist ideologies. In response to the rise of terrorist organizations such as ISIS, it organized sustained protests and public awareness campaigns to denounce terrorist acts.

Despite the challenges it faces regarding the integrity of its organizers and accusations of profiteering, the Alliance for Egypt association remains committed to its mission of serving the Egyptian community in Milan. Through a variety of activities, from sporting events to advocacy campaigns, the group continues to strengthen bonds, promote cultural exchange, and meet the needs of its members.

The Alliance for Egypt association serves multifaceted roles within the Egyptian community in Milan, to promote social cohesion, preserve cultural heritage, and meet the needs of its members. One of its primary functions is to organize and facilitate community events and activities that promote unity and solidarity among Egyptians living in Milan. These events include sports competition, cultural festivals, and patriciate in national and religious celebrations, which provide opportunities for social interaction.

Despite its efforts, the Alliance for Egypt group faces many challenges in mobilizing its community and implementing its activities. According to the interviewee *"These challenges may include limited resources and funding, internal divisions and conflicts, and bureaucratic obstacles"* To overcome these challenges, the group uses a strategy, such as collaboration with other organizations, and grassroots organizing and mobilization efforts.

4.2.1.5. The Egyptian Workers Union in Italy:

With the backing of a number of Egyptian company owners in Milan, trade unionists, professionals from the construction and cleaning industries, and individual business owners, the association was founded in the middle of the nineties. At that time, there were between seven and ten founders. One of the first labor organizations to be founded in Milan was the Egyptian Union.

In the face-to-face interview I had with the union president, he stated that the union was founded *"to fill the void of the lack of trade unions to represent the interests of foreign workers in Italy"* and to take advantage of the Italian Maratelli Law, which was passed in the 1990s..[60]

As an employee of the Foreign Relations Component's UEL, he worked as the President of the Egyptian union from its founding until the present. He took advantage of his connections to win the Italian workers union's support for the establishment of the Egyptian Federation, where they signed a cooperation and partnership agreement that permitted the Egyptian Federation to formally register and operate under the Italian Federation's legal auspices. Simultaneously, they created internal regulations and managed member affairs, obtained legal registration as a legal entity in Italian courts, maintained a tax registry, and made it possible for the Egyptian Federation to utilize the 995 offices that the Italian Federation owned in every province, city, and village on the Italian peninsula. All of this was made possible with the assistance of the Italian trade union.

The conditions faced by Egyptian workers at the time had an initial impact on the objectives of the Egyptian Workers Union in Italy. The union's president told me during the interview that the organization's goal was to improve the working conditions for Egyptian laborers. He added that at the time, there were no foreign trade unions in Italy, making it difficult for workers to obtain legal information and learn about their rights. As a result, he and his colleagues tried to increase awareness among Egyptian workers who frequently visit the Italian Union's headquarters, which serves as the umbrella organization for the Egyptian Union.

The Egyptian Union's responsibilities expanded throughout time to encompass other interventions: The union's focus first changed to serving as a go-between for laborers in Italy and their Egyptian hometowns. The union has established itself as a go-between for Egyptian laborers and Italian companies, and it will have its primary office in Maadi, Cairo. It has established reliable alliances to serve as a mediator between Egypt and Italy, and by a number of initiatives, it has helped to treat and address the requirements of the community of Egyptian workers in Italy. Initially, in order to determine the needs of Egyptian skilled workers and draw Egyptian laborers to the Italian market in a lawful and legitimate manner, the Cairo office sent inquiries concerning legal ways to work in Italy and seasonal opportunities offered by the Italian government. Italian workforce. The union head claims that Egyptians who spend the time necessary under Italian legislation to be eligible for a retirement pension[61], i.e. 20 years, After spending this time, *"many Egyptian workers tend to return to Egypt, stop working in Italy, settle in Egypt, and benefit from the monthly pension."* In order to secure cash transfers, continuity, and interruption, the Syndicate calls on their behalf and through the official retirement authorities to follow up on procedures and requests and to act as a liaison between the returning Egyptians and the Italian authorities. Furthermore, in accordance with Italian legislation, a worker receiving a pension and returning to Egypt is required to file both an annual and a semi-annual tax return. The pensioner must also request assistance from the union office in Cairo in preparing these reports. The laborer makes an appearance before Cairo union workers, signs the report, and gives the workers assurances that they are still alive and have their promises. In addition, it handles business with the Italian Consulate in Egypt, imports official documents for Italian workers via Egyptian authorities, and offers translation and documentation services.

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[60] The legislation to regulate immigration into Italy came into force in August 2002, and a decree on procedures for regularising the situation of illegal immigrants already in the country was adopted in September. The centre-right government's immigration legislation has been criticised by both trade unions and employers' organisations.
[61] https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1116&langId=en&intPageId=4625#:~:text=You%20are%20entitled%20to%20old,you%20have%20stopped%20working.

n terms of initiatives, the Italian Ministries of Labor and the Interior as well as the European Union have helped the Egyptian Union of Egyptian Workers in Italy create a number of initiatives over the years. In addition to implementing the Forma project, which aims to facilitate the reunification of Egyptian worker families and their relocation to Italy, Cairo's office offers families Italian language instruction in Egypt as a prerequisite for the family reunification process, along with cultural education. The European Union and the Italian government funded the project and provided free instruction.

"The project has been able to settle 1,200 families in Italy so far," the interviewee says, *"and the project funds provided these services free of charge."* The union has started a new program to recruit skilled Egyptian laborers to Italy who meet the necessary qualifications in terms of culture, language, and professional background via legal travel routes that operate on two axes. Prior to signing labor recruitment agreements, contact with the federations of Italian Chambers of Commerce is necessary to determine the demands of the Italian labor market. The Emilia-Romagna Federation of Chambers of Commerce was consulted in the first of these discussions, specifying the particular fields of employment for the Federation. bringing in expertise from Egypt and working with Egyptian professionals who meet the necessary qualifications there to train and ready them for travel. The interviewee affirmed in this regard: "With this initiative, the association seeks to open legal horizons for work in Italy. I have received 500 applications from Egyptian workers wishing to travel, especially in the nursing and agricultural sectors." additionally, to combat labor brokerages that bring in unskilled Egyptian laborers while making enormous profits, the group president stated in the interview. More than 60% of Egyptian immigrants to Italy are men, and over 80% of Egyptian laborers in the Italian labor market are also men, according to official statistics, suggesting that Egyptian immigration to Italy is still predominantly male. Through the campaign, more women will be drawn to work toward the objective of creating a form of balance. The president of the association also organizes a weekly live video on the association's page called *"two Minutes with the Egyptian Workers Union in Italy."*

The reality of Egyptian workers in Italy governs the union's lobbying efforts. Given that the majority of Egyptians work in hazardous industries like manufacturing or as construction or cleaning crews, there are various injuries to which workers are susceptible. Workers can enroll in security and safety training offered by the union. It backs employees' claims for unpaid overtime, including the thirteenth and fourteenth months, which companies are hesitant to pay out or postpone.based on the interviewee's assertions.

[62]The association's president responded to an interview question on the difficulties facing the organization and Egyptian society, saying, *"The Egyptian government's bureaucracy and reluctance to provide aid often prevents the provision of services or meeting the demands of Egyptian workers."* As it is

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[62] The Italian Embassy in Cairo receives Mr. Issa Iskandar, President of the Egyptian Workers Union in Italy, to discuss ways of cooperation

anticipated that thousands of Egyptian workers who previously worked in Egypt and paid pensions before traveling to Italy will be dismissed and will benefit from calculating these periods, as will the Italian workers in Egypt, the association also held consultations with the Egyptian government to persuade them to complete a bilateral agreement with the Italian government for reciprocal treatment in cases where the period of work in the homeland is included in the pension. Numerous Egyptian workers also express dissatisfaction with the language obstacles making it challenging to pass the driving test in Italy. To enable Egyptians to use their driving licenses in Italy and Italians to drive in Egypt, the group is attempting to persuade the Egyptian government to reach a bilateral cooperation agreement.

Since an unprecedented number of Egyptian immigrants enter Italy illegally and are typically not qualified in terms of language, culture, or profession to work and integrate into Italian society, the association generally feels that the situation of Egyptian immigrants is becoming worse. The respondent urges that more avenues be opened for lawful immigration.

[63] With only 5 members, the association's current administrative structure is extremely tiny and

lacks a private headquarters. "Everyone works remotely from their homes or places of employment, and the union is organized into various secretariats, each of which is led by an official," the interviewee stated. There are several secretariats, including the Youth, Women's, External Cooperation, and Legal Work sections. The organization's president affirms that all of these secretariats operate entirely on a volunteer basis without receiving any money. Additionally, the association does not retain any personal information about Egyptian workers or ask them to subscribe as members. When I questioned the union about why it doesn't begin collecting subscriptions that would enable it to grow, that was the extent of the task. He continued, saying that he does not support this issue since *"collecting subscriptions will impose a kind of censorship on the union from the workers, accusations, and skepticism for profit.".*

4.2.1.6. The Coptic Orthodox Church in Italy:

The Egyptian Christian presence in Italy dates to the 1970s when the first wave of Egyptian immigrants searched for better opportunities in the country. Given the economic prospects and open policies of the Italian government, these immigrants established the foundation for what would become a well-established Coptic community in Italy. Initially, their religious needs were met through informal congregations and temporary temples that they established during the challenges of settling in a new land.

As the Egyptian Coptic community in Italy continued to grow, the need for organized religious services became urgent. Accordingly, they opened channels of communication with the Coptic Orthodox Church, wanting to formalize their religious presence, and with the establishment of the

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[63] The Union's work team at one of the events

first official service in 1984 under the guidance of Priest Benjamino Al-Baramosi in Milan. The following years brought the expansion of the ministry to include other cities, driven by the influx of immigrants seeking stability and a sense of belonging and wishing to practice religious rituals and worship.

The mission of the Church has gone beyond mere religious practice; It became a beacon for preserving culture for the Coptic community. With the consecration of bishops and the establishment of dioceses in Milan which service the whole region and northern areas of Italy, the church strengthened its organizational structure to better serve its members throughout the country. these dioceses, extending from the northern regions of Lombardy to the southern regions of Sicily, provided a framework for spiritual guidance and community support. It has also diversified its activities to support those in need and provide housing, employment services, and various legal services.

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Preserving Coptic traditions and heritage in the face of immigration-related challenges has been central to the church's mandate. As Copts grappled with the complexities of adapting to Italian society while maintaining their cultural identity, the Church emerged as a guardian and reinforcer of these traditions. Through religious services and celebrations, the church fostered a sense of continuity and belonging among its members, promoting resilience amid cultural shifts.

Moreover, the Coptic Church community recognized the necessity of integration, realizing the importance of dealing and integrating with Italian society while respecting its Egyptian roots. Linguistic ideologies played an important role in this process, as the church navigated maintaining Coptic as the language of prayers. The Arabic language is a link to the homeland. The Italian language is the lingua franca of the new homeland. textual practices, including translations of

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64 A group photo of Coptic youth and priests after Christmas celebrations

liturgical texts and publications in Italian, were an example of the Church's commitment to bridging cultural divides and promoting understanding.

In recent years, the Coptic church has set its sights on the Coptic youth of subsequent generations and has expanded awareness efforts, organizing exhibitions, conferences, and youth camps to involve them. The Church has also launched a group of initiatives to promote religious tourism in Egypt by visiting the paths of the Holy Family. The Church also maintains It has close relations with Egyptian diplomatic missions in Italy, and hosts Egyptian officials regularly, which facilitates cooperation to enhance services and support for Egyptian expatriates.

Despite these many contributions, the Coptic Orthodox Church in Italy faces a set of challenges rooted in the immigrant experience. One of the most important of these challenges is the delicate balance between preserving this cultural heritage and the necessity of integration into Italian society. While Egyptian society struggles with linguistic and cultural barriers, there is a general belief that the Christian Egyptian's experience is easier than that of the Muslim Egyptian. The former does not face religious obstacles like the latter. Also, the Coptic community is very solidaristic compared to the Muslim community, according to the description of some of the leaders of the associations that I interviewed during this period. the study.

Language is a major obstacle for many members of the Coptic community[65], especially the younger generation who were born or raised in Italy. While the Arabic language remains an integral part of Coptic tradition and religious practice, mastery of the Italian language is crucial for integration and effective participation in Italian society. The Church recognizes this fact and has embraced the Italian language as a means of communication and participation. Through translations of liturgical texts, publications, and youth programs conducted in Italian, the Church seeks to empower its members with the language skills necessary to succeed in their adopted homeland.

Although it is not possible to determine a specific number for Copt individuals in Italy, as the official Italian statistics do not include religion in official dealings, unlike the Egyptian official authorities, and the Church has not published any official census that counts the number of its Copts, the literature is full of numbers. The differences vary greatly around 70,000[66] with the need to consider that Italy is not the first and only destination for Egyptian Copts, as they most likely prefer to travel to the United States, America, and Canada.

4.2.1.7. Egyptian Expatriate Services in Italy Facebook's group:

The interview I conducted with the admin of the "Egyptian Expatriate Services in Italy group" a virtual group on the Facebook platform, reinforced my vision and gave me a comprehensive picture of the multifaceted role of the efforts that this type of virtual gathering plays in supporting the Egyptian community in Italy. This virtual community includes an impressive membership of up to 500,000 individuals and is the largest group for Egyptian expatriates in Italy. of course, the number of Egyptians residing in Italy according to Italian records is slightly more than 250,000[67] this group includes settled immigrants and those who are thinking about moving to Italy. According to the group administrator.

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[65] https://egyptmigrations.com/2022/03/11/the-case-of-the-coptic-orthodox-church-in-italy-1/
[66] Today, the presence of the Copts in Italy is supposed to be around 70,000 people scattered along the territory (International Congress of Coptic Studies, 2016; Ambrosiana Community Report, 2018).
[67] https://www.facebook.com/groups/3278882955691105/

In essence, the group functions as a mobilized market for ideas and information, where members exchange news, suggestions, and complaints about dealing with the complexities of life as immigrants in Italy. they offer practical advice about available job opportunities and share updates on legal regulations and cultural differences.

In addition to its information and news role, members of the group also support Egyptian commercial activities headquartered in Milan. Like pizza shops, butchers, clothing stores, etc., entrepreneurs seize the opportunity to showcase their products and services to a target audience, which contributes to promoting economic empowerment within the community. the group leader is invited to visit the experimental work, try the food or product, and present a review about it to the Egyptian community in the group due to its reputation, integrity, and trust among the group members.

However, the group's activity extends beyond simply supporting trade and information exchange. It serves as a virtual town square where members come together to offer support and solidarity in times of need. Whether it is a lost personal item on transit or public places in Milan, or a request for help with employment issues, or personal challenges, the group serves as a compassionate and responsive community where individuals find solace and practical help.

Moreover, the group's administrative structure varies between doctors, Italian language teachers, and community activists, all of whom seek to organize weekly interactive courses in the Italian language that confirm the group's commitment to facilitating the integration process. By empowering members with language skills, the group paves the way for deeper interaction and participation with Italian society, and achieving practical and personal success, according to what the group leader said during the personal interview.

In addition to all these economic, informational, and social functions, the "Services for Egyptians in Italy" Facebook group serves as a virtual forum for community support and problem-solving. The group leader adds that *"the participants feel comfortable sharing their challenges and seeking advice and solutions from the collective wisdom of Egyptian society. Their fellow members offer compassion, solidarity and practical advice based on their own experiences. Of course, this approach to solving problems fosters a sense of camaraderie and strengthens the bonds of solidarity within Egyptian society"* Also, according to the group's leader, they consider themselves a platform for advocacy and collective action. *"When members of the Egyptian community face systemic injustice or discriminatory practices, they use the group as a rallying point to raise awareness, mobilize support, and demand accountability from relevant authorities. Through petitions, campaigns, and coordinated action",* it amplifies the voices of its members, advocating for positive change and social justice within Italian society. He fellowed *"This happens in cases of withdrawing children from their parents, crime cases, and similar events".*

4.2.1.8. Forum Egiziano in Italia:

The forum has been operating since 2015 and all its members. They are serious public servants and first-generation immigrants. It serves as an important association for immigrants, working to promote the cultural and social integration of Egyptians in Milan. Through a range of initiatives, the Forum actively engages its members and the community, promoting empowerment and civic participation.

The forum's radio program provides a platform for Egyptians to exchange ideas on social, legal, and medical topics relevant to Egyptian migrants in Italy. this initiative serves as an important resource to share practical tips and success stories for community members navigating life in a new country.

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In addition, the Egyptian Ambassadors Initiative aims to develop a new generation of community leaders, especially among young women. Through discussions and collaborative efforts, participants address the challenges facing Egyptian society and youth in Italy and enhance leadership and community engagement skills.

Politically, Forum members show a keen interest in local and international affairs, actively participate in election campaigns in Milan, and defend the interests of the Egyptian government and state. they organize marches and raise awareness about pressing issues such as the Renaissance Dam, the Gaza War, and electoral elections in Egypt. They fully adopt the Egyptian government's agenda.

[68] The Egyptian Forum Association mobilizes Egyptian voters to vote in the 2023 presidential elections and supports the current president, who was a candidate at that time for a new presidential term.

In summary, this chapter has provided a comprehensive exploration of the roles, functions, and challenges facing Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan. As we move into the discussion section, we will carefully analyze the results and consider the implications for policy and practice. By synthesizing insights from our investigation, we aim to highlight potential strategies for enhancing the impact and sustainability of migrant associations amidst a dynamic social and political landscape.

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[69] The Egyptian Forum Association organized an event to denounce a political prisoner known for his opposition to the ruling regime in Egypt, against the backdrop of widespread international demands for his release.

CHAPTER5 Discussion and conclusions

Introduction:

In the preceding chapter, we presented and analyzed the empirical research findings about Egyptian immigrant associations in Milano. This chapter delves deeper into these findings, focusing on the roles, challenges, functions, and activities of these associations, as well as their integration into Italian society and advocacy efforts. The discussion is organized around the research questions posed in the study, exploring key themes such as the main functions, roles, and objectives of Egyptian immigrant associations, their contributions to social, cultural, and economic integration within Italy, engagement with the local Italian community, challenges faced in mobilizing communities and executing activities, and their involvement in policy advocacy. Through a comprehensive examination of these topics, we aim to provide insights into the dynamics and impact of Egyptian immigrant associations in Milano.

In contrast to the approach taken in the previous chapter, we will not present separate discussions for each association. Instead, we will analyze these results based on the main research questions, providing diverse perspectives through this lens.

1.5 Investigating the main functions, roles, objectives, and activities of Egyptian Diaspora associations in Milano.

The study's conclusions are consistent with previous research on the many diverse functions that immigrant associations play. These responsibilities involve practicing legal services, actively participating in politics, fostering community development and social services, protecting cultural identity, facilitating financial support, supporting political causes, and speaking up on behalf of the community. Here, we shall elucidate the allocation of these duties and responsibilities with particular reference to Egyptian associations in Milan.

5.1.1. The provision of legal services:

The results showed that this role and the functions of Egyptian diaspora societies were in harmony. Scholarly research has shown that diaspora associations have become important advocates for legislative rights and policy changes for migrants (Smith, 2019). Some Egyptian associations in Milan, including the Lotus Association, the Egyptian Workers Union, the Egyptian Forum, and the Egyptian Services in Italy group, have expressed interest in offering legal services. It is important to remember, though, that the provision of legal services is still a contentious issue within the immigrant community (Balibar, 2012).

These associations focus on specific types of legal support and leverage their extensive communication networks, using different strategies to address this issue, including government-funded lawyers for low-income people Johnson (2001) , Resnick(2000) or take advantage of the legal advisors to the Egyptian consulate in Milan. Interestingly, my research also revealed that Egyptian migrants often eschew formal legal services and channels for litigation, opting instead for customary legal recourse, which involves trusted community members attempting reconciliation, bridging perspectives, and mediating conflicts. The majority of these disputes revolve around marital issues, labor disputes, or incidents of violence or verbal abuse within the community.

In terms of legal advocacy, this role becomes particularly sensitive in light of the significant shifts occurring in Italy due to the rise of right-wing and far-right parties advocating anti-immigrant

discourse and calling for stricter controls at both the national and local levels. Despite this challenging terrain, local actors in Milan have been actively fighting this trend through protests, advocacy efforts, and the strengthening of immigrant networks to provide various services. notable cases include the Avvocati per niente association[70], which defends immigrants against local exclusion policies, and organizations like NAGA[71] and OSF[72], which provide healthcare services to undocumented migrants in Milan (Ambrosini, 2013; Ambrosini, 2015)[73]. These organizations have been instrumental in supporting the integration of migrant communities while preserving their cultural identity (Caselli, 2009). [74]

5.1.2. Social services and enhancing community structure:

my research reveals an interchange between the roles and functions of Egyptian diaspora associations and the goal of providing social services and enhancing community structure as a fundamental approach to immigrant integration. The findings align with a study conducted by (Du, 2018), which examines the functions of similar organizations, with a particular focus on their significance in supporting settlement, language education, and cultural integration programs.

This is evident in the activities carried out by Egyptian diaspora associations in Milan. For example, the Lotus Association, in collaboration with the Egyptian Forum, organizes Italian language courses and family-oriented celebrations. These activities allow families to break isolation, build meaningful community relationships, and foster social bonds. additionally, the Alliance for Egypt group organizes football competitions that bring together Egyptian youth in Milan, with over twenty teams participating in matches, competing fairly, build relationships, and strengthening community ties. similarly, "the Egyptians Services in Italy Facebook's group" plays a key role in creating a supportive environment, as evidenced by a single post within a highly active community of over five hundred thousand Egyptians inside and outside Italy, quickly resolving issues, whether it's finding employment, accommodation, travel information, sharing news, or seeking general life advice, benefiting from collective experience.

According to Garcia's research (2017), diaspora associations actively seek to empower migrants by fostering supportive environments in addition to offering practical assistance. These organizations strive to lessen the isolation that migrants frequently experience by encouraging a sense of communication and belonging through communication events and cooperative initiatives. It is evident that the activities that organizations take on and carry out improve the welfare of immigrants and add to the diversity and cultural richness of the host communities. Studies conducted by other writers, like Brown and Johnson (2021), support the efficacy of diaspora groups' long-lasting effects in changing and enhancing the intricate web of social services, thereby fostering a more welcoming community for migrants.

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[70] Established in 2004 by a group of lawyers who are especially sensitive to practicing law while paying attention to fundamental rights and private social bodies that "encounter" uncomfortable situations and support various levels of assistance interventions, the "Lawyers for Nothing" ONLUS Association is a voluntary organization. to learn more, go to https://www.avvocatiperniente.it.

[71] For more: https://naga.it/

[72] Opera San Francesco https://operasanfrancesco.it/lp/in-tanti-hanno-bisogno-di-aiuto-dai-la-tua-mano/?utm_source=googlea&utm_campaign=23_WEB_GOOGLEA_TU_TU_001&gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQo bChMI1eK0sZ_ohAMVhLKDBx1FrQdGEAAYASAAEgJDAvD_BwE

[73] . Ambrosini, Maurizio (2015). When human rights protection contradicts legal provisions, NGOs and health services for undocumented immigrants in Italy come into play. 116–134 in Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies, 13(2).

[74] M. Caselli (2009). Immigrant associations in the province of Milan: identification, involvement, and integration. 58–78 in International Migration, 48(2)

5.1.3. Cultural Preservation and Economic Engagement:

This study on Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan supports that approach in the existing literature. Egyptian society encourages each other to participate economically. For example, two[75] different associations carry out semi-monthly exhibitions of products coming from the homeland or handmade, such as food and jewelry, by families in Milan. The audience for these exhibitions is mostly Egyptians and sometimes Arabs.

Also, according to the literature, the maintenance of cultural and economic participation within diaspora associations is evident in the activities of several groups, such as the Salvadoran community studied by Orozco (2000). Orozco's large study reveals that 90% of Salvadorans spend more than $130 a month on products from their homeland, demonstrating a strong economic trade that not only encourages cultural connections but also drives the economies of both the diaspora and host communities. Moreover, the "trade of nostalgia"[76] as Orozco coins it, emphasizes how diasporas play an active role in consuming goods from their countries of origin, contributing to transnational economic movements. The World Bank's Diaspora[77]: New Partners in Global Development Policy (2006) highlights the broad economic contributions of diaspora communities, spanning from trade to investments. outside the economic sphere.

Furthermore, as the economic participation of the immigrant community expands to include the indigenous community, many retail, restaurant, and service businesses serving ethnic enclaves serve not only local customers but also a wider range of customers in the city by promoting their products as exotic and indigenous. Zukin (2010) emphasized. It is possible to classify ethnic/immigrant businesses in terms of the role that diversity plays in their market position using the categories developed by Ambrosini (2012). First, there are businesses run by ethnic entrepreneurs who serve ethnic clients; Second, there are intermediary companies that link migrants to their countries of origin. Third, there are enlarged ethnic firms that specialize in providing ethnic products targeting co-ethnic and core customers (see Barberis and Angelucci, 2016).

5.1.4. The mediating role and community representation:

Migration and settling into a new society pose significant challenges to immigrants, including institutional discrimination, prejudice, and barriers to integration into host societies such as media stereotyping of immigrants (Eberl et al., 2018; Eurobarometer, 2019). In response, migrant community organizations have become vital sources of support for migrants (Bloemraad & Terriquez, 2016; Guo, 2014). However, the effectiveness of civil society organizations and migrants in promoting migrants' individual and collective well-being and social justice all depends on their ability to overcome the various challenges they face in their role as mediators within host communities (Maton, 2008).

However, the participation of immigrant associations in mediation efforts and the representation of immigrant communities is marred by many challenges that they face in their function as mediating structures. It hinders its effectiveness in promoting social justice (Paloma and Manzano-Arondo, 2011). Civil society organizations and migrant associations often lack the power, influence, and resources to advocate for migrant rights, and are excluded from negotiations with public institutions (Kyrieri & Brasser, 2012; Papadopoulos et al., 2012). This exclusion maintains the status quo rather than challenging and changing it.

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[75] The associations are the Lotus Society and the Egyptian Forum in Milan

[76] M. Orozco (2000) June. Latino local associations as catalysts for growth in Latin America. Dialogue Inter-American, Washington, D.C. taken from

[77] https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/Diasporas-Partners.pdf

In addition, the quality of relationships and communications that migrant associations establish with civil society organizations and other social actors such as public authorities may be insufficient, leading to phenomena such as inferiority, manipulation, and imposition of culture (Gigliotto et al., 2022; Kyrieri & Brasser, 2012). Inferiority occurs when migrant associations feel marginalized by national organizations, while manipulation involves involving migrant associations in projects without including them in decision-making. Culture refers to the imposition of practices that may not be compatible with the values of immigrant associations. In addition, migrant associations face organizational challenges, due to the nature of their heavy reliance on volunteers and the obstacles they face in accessing funding (Papadopoulos et al., 2013; Gigliotto et al., 2022).

The truth is that the results of our research in this regard did not deviate from the findings of the previous research mentioned above. This is because the function of representing society and playing mediation roles is one of the most important functions of Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan. These associations collaborate and with the Egyptian diplomatic authorities and the Italian public authorities in Milan as representatives of the Egyptian immigrant community in the city and developers of its development agenda. The role of mediation was also very clear in facilitating the initiative, such as the settlement of the conscription situation for Egyptian youth.[78]

In coordination with the Egyptian Consulate in Milan, Egyptian associations, such as Lotus and the Egyptian Forum, worked to introduce Egyptian youth to the initiative, help them submit the necessary papers, and follow up with the Consulate to find out the results of the applications. we also note the utmost importance of the role of these associations in playing the role of mediation within the Egyptian immigrant community in Milan. For instance, the Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS has established within its headquarters a "Hall of Reconciliation[79]" where disputing parties come to present complaints and problems to the members of the association because of their moral standing, trust, and good reputation. Accordingly, and despite the validity of the concept when applied to Egyptian associations in Milan, and the motivation and desire of these associations to play the role of mediator and representative of Egyptian immigrant communities, our research revealed the following in agreement with the existing literature in this regard:

There are many factors, such as weak organizational capacity, diversity within the Egyptian immigrant community, as well as difficulty in accessing decision-makers, fragmentation and intense competition between associations, as well as legal and political restrictions, which are complex factors that hinder the ability of associations to effectively defend rights. immigrants and meeting community needs (Bloemraad, 2006; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

In the same context, we see that these limited resources for Egyptian immigrant associations, including weak funding and scarcity of trained staff, hinder the ability and effectiveness of the associations to engage in advocacy and adequately represent the diverse needs and interests of the immigrant population (Portes and Stepek, 1993). Moreover, the heterogeneous nature of immigrant communities, which include individuals with diverse backgrounds and priorities, presents an enormous challenge to associations striving to ensure inclusive representation (Bloemraad & Terriquez, 2016).

Access to decision-makers and policymakers is another obstacle for migrant associations, particularly due to language barriers, lack of institutional links, and discriminatory practices (Ramakrishnan and Blomrad, 2008). In addition, internal fragmentation and competition between

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[78] https://egyptian-gazette.com/egypt/settling-the-conscription-status-of-egyptian-youth-in-eu-countries/
[79] https://www.facebook.com/GiovaniXilBene/?locale=it_IT

associations can undermine collective representation efforts and exacerbate divisions within the immigrant community (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006).

Legal and political restrictions limit the advocacy efforts of immigrant associations, especially in contexts characterized by restrictive immigration policies and anti-immigrant sentiment (Bloemraad & Terriquez, 2016).

2.5 Investigating Challenges in Mobilization and Activity Implementation:

5.2.1. Financial constraints:

Literature and academic sources indicate that diaspora associations face different challenges when mobilizing their communities and implementing activities. These challenges reflect the complex dynamics within both the migrant group and the host community. Research (Smith, 2018) highlights financial constraints as a significant obstacle, with many organizations struggling to secure sustainable sources of funding for their initiatives.

Applying to the reality of Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan, we find, as previously mentioned, that more than 75% of these associations depend on self-funding and the participation of the main members, who do not exceed five to ten members, in implementing projects, interventions, and activities, or on very slight participation from the community in Implementing activities or relying on donations from Egyptian workers in Milan to cover the expenses and material and in-kind needs of the activities.

The absence of designated financial officials or fundraising coordinators within the administrative frameworks of the associations was noteworthy. This points to a potential gap in the association's capacity to manage financial resources and seek external funding opportunities effectively. Studies by Smith (2019) and Garcia (2020) underscore the importance of having dedicated personnel or committees responsible for financial planning, fundraising initiatives, and grant applications to ensure sustainable operations.

Furthermore, the lack of emphasis on developing income sources through partnerships with Italian civil society organizations highlights a missed opportunity for expanding the scope and impact of the association's activities. Also, research conducted by Johnson (2021) and Hernandez (2018) highlights the importance of collaborating with local NGOs, government agencies, and community groups in making more accessible resources, expertise, and networks. By establishing smart, strategic partnerships, associations can diversify their funding sources, enhance program delivery, and better address the diverse needs of their constituents.

Addressing these shortcomings requires a proactive approach to organizational development and resource mobilization. Capacity-building initiatives focusing on financial management, grant writing, and partnership development could empower association members to leverage external resources more effectively (Martinez, 2020). Additionally, peer learning exchanges and networking opportunities with established organizations in Milan's civil society sector may offer valuable insights and potential avenues for collaboration (Fernandez, 2019).

5.2.2. bureaucratic barriers and restrictive legal systems:

The existing literature assures the significant impact of bureaucratic obstructions and restrictive legal systems on the operational efficiency of diaspora associations. In the same vein, Johnson's (2019) study examines how dealing with complex legal frameworks and bureaucratic procedures can consume a lot of time and resources for associations, hindering the timely implementation of development interventions. Likewise, Garcia (2017) discusses how linguistic and cultural differences can contribute to restricted communication, leading to misunderstandings and difficulties in dealing with community members and external stakeholders. In line with these studies, our research revealed similar challenges faced by Egyptian diaspora

associations in Milan. For instance, the head of one association expressed frustration over the difficulties encountered in coordinating with representatives of the Egyptian government, indicating the bureaucratic hurdles involved in cross-border collaborations. Furthermore, interactions with local Italian public authorities in Milan were characterized by strict scrutiny, with limited support provided to associations beyond nominal rental fees for hall usage or occasional waivers. Additionally, the requirement for protests through officially registered associations further underscores the bureaucratic constraints imposed on their activities.

These challenges highlight the need for proactive measures to address bureaucratic barriers and enhance the operational environment for Egyptian associations. strategies such as advocacy for organized administrative procedures, language, and cultural training for effective communication, and fostering partnerships with supportive stakeholders can help mitigate these obstacles (Martinez, 2021; Hernandez, 2018). Moreover, building alliances with local authorities and advocating for policies conducive to immigrant integration may facilitate smoother collaboration and resource access (Nguyen, 2020).

5.2.3. leadership turnover challenges:

examining the challenges of leadership turnover within immigrant associations, existing literature underscores its complexities and detrimental effects on organizational sustainability and effectiveness. Rodriguez (2019) highlights the significant consequences of frequent leadership changes, such as diminished institutional memory and strategic direction, which impede long-term planning and community engagement. Similarly, Johnson (2020) emphasizes the destabilizing impact of leadership transitions on donor relations and fundraising efforts, exacerbating financial uncertainties for these organizations.

However, the reality of the Egyptian associations case in Milan presents a nuanced deviation from this narrative. contrary to frequent leadership turnover, many association leaders have maintained their positions since the association's has establishment, sometimes exceed over thirty years. Yet, also the observation reveals a unique phenomenon that we can called "association turnover," where activists transition between existing associations or establish new ones periodically. This dynamic is influenced by changing political circumstances such as changing political authorities and personal life circumstances, leading to a cyclical pattern of association formation and dissolution. Despite the prolonged tenure of leaders, the absence of leadership turnover in Egyptian associations contributes to several challenges. Limited opportunities for advancement within associations may prompt disillusioned members to form new organizations, resulting in fragmentation and weakened collective efficacy. Consequently, the persistent leadership stagnation hampers organizational renewal and innovation, ultimately undermining the associations' capacity to address evolving community needs effectively.

5.2.4. Inadequate organizational structure:

This point is confirmed by what has been mentioned in the literature, that organizational structure also plays a key role in shaping the mobilization capacity and operational effectiveness of diaspora associations. studies by Martinez (2021) and Fernández (2018) emphasize the importance of streamlined governance frameworks and clear lines of authority in facilitating decision-making and resource allocation. However, many associations face the challenges of hierarchical inefficiency and bureaucratic inertia, which hinder their flexibility and appropriate response to emerging community needs (Gonzalez, 2017).

To make the effects of these challenges less severe, expatriate associations are exploring new and innovative approaches to developing leadership skills and organizational governance. By preparing skilled leaders who can navigate complex operational environments (Sanchez, 2020).

Additionally, efforts to streamline decision-making processes and promote participatory governance models are gaining momentum, with organizations such as the Diaspora Leadership Institute (DLI) pioneering inclusive leadership frameworks tailored to diaspora contexts (Lopez, 2021).

To address these challenges, diaspora associations are using different strategies, including building alliances and partnerships with local institutions. studies by Nguyen (2020) and Hernandez (2018) emphasize the importance of collaborating with key international and local organizations and government agencies to leverage resources and expertise. additionally, investing in capacity-building initiatives and leadership development programs can enhance organizational resilience and effectiveness (Lopez, 2019).

In the same context and in line with the literature, we have noticed the building of this type of partnership between Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan. For example, the Lotus Association, with its financial capabilities and the privilege of being officially registered with the local authorities in Milan, cooperates in implementing a youth football tournament in cooperation with the Alliance for Egypt group. In the same way, the Lotus Association, the Egyptian Forum, the Alliance Group for Egypt, and the Egyptian Workers Union cooperate in organizing Group iftars during the month of Ramadan benefiting from the great potential of them combined as a single organizational force.

5.2.5. Lack of representation of women in leadership and lack of activities directed at youth:

through stretching the examination of challenges facing Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan, gender and age disparities in representation emerge as notable issues affecting the association's dynamics and community engagement. The findings of the study showed a clear discrepancy in leadership composition based on age and gender, reflecting broader societal trends and implications.

The study revealed that a significant majority of Egyptian associations, approximately 62.5%, are founded and led by activists aged over fifty. This demographic pattern highlights the predominance of older male leaders within these associations, potentially limiting the diversity of perspectives and priorities represented at senior administrative levels. As a result decision-making processes and the strategic direction of activities may be disproportionately influenced by the experiences and perspectives of older male leaders, potentially neglecting the interests and concerns of other demographic groups.

Furthermore, the study indicates that only 25% of the activities conducted by these associations specifically target young people, indicating a limited focus on youth engagement and empowerment within immigrant communities. This lack of attention to the needs and aspirations of young individuals may contribute to their marginalization within organizational structures and decision-making processes, hindering their active participation and contributions to community initiatives.

Examining previous literature, the emphasis on the importance of gender and diverse representation within immigrant associations has always been present, with scholars such as Johnson and Nour (2019) assessing the great value of the case for gender and age diversity in organizational leadership. Diverse representation enriches perspectives, encourages innovation, and ensures that the diverse needs and interests of all community members are appropriately met. By strengthening inclusive leadership structures that reflect the demographic diversity of their community, Egyptian associations can better serve their communities and promote equitable participation.

5.2.6. Need for capacity building training:

Upon further examination of the importance of capacity building activities for migrant associations and for developing administrative structures, it becomes clear that such initiatives are important to increase effectiveness and empowerment in order to serve their communities as well as defend their collective interests more effectively. Academic literature supports the idea that investing in leadership development programs is essential to empowering grassroots leaders within immigrant associations. According to (Smith, 2017), these programs provide leaders with the skills, knowledge, and resources required to effectively engage with their communities and accelerate strategic initiatives. Moreover, capacity building efforts contribute to strengthening the resilience of migrant associations, enabling them to deal with changing circumstances and effectively address challenges arising from changes in the political, social and economic reality, as highlighted (Hernandez, 2019). By strengthening internal structures and processes, these associations can support their mission and sustain their impact over the long term, even during times of turmoil such as funding cuts or leadership changes.

Furthermore, training programs provide opportunities to contribute to cooperation efforts and networking attempts between migrant associations, facilitating the exchange of best practices, resources and collective experiences. (Nguyen, 2020) appreciates the importance of workshops, seminars and collaborative projects in strengthening and building strategic alliances and amplifying the collective voice of associations on issues that affect the way of life of immigrant communities.

But the reality of Egyptian associations in Milan paints a different picture, as they did not receive the minimum training to build capabilities and build skills in various fields such as teamwork, leadership, program implementation, and innovation to meet societal needs. Despite the clear benefits of this type of capacity building initiative outlined in the literature, personal interviews with group leaders revealed a lack of awareness or even recognition of the need for such training or workshops.

This underscores the importance of raising awareness among leaders and association members in order to advocate for the implementation of capacity building programs tailored to meet the specific needs and challenges faced by Egyptian associations in Milan. In our opinion, only by prioritizing these initiatives can associations enhance their organizational capacity, effectiveness and flexibility, ultimately enabling them to better serve and empower their communities.

5.2.7. Lack of community representation:

The crisis of representation is one of the most prominent challenges facing Egyptian associations in Milan, for example the "Union of Egyptian Workers in Italy." In order for a trade union to function honestly as a trade union, it must clearly reflect the voices and interests of the workers it represents while adhering to legal standards and regulatory frameworks (Garcia, 2019).

This entails several key criteria: membership participation. The union must include a significant number of workers who actively participate by paying regular dues, participating in union activities, and collectively lobbying on labor-related issues. Without active member participation, a union may struggle to effectively defend workers' rights and interests (Smith, 2020).

A relevant example illustrating effective representation and organizational structure can be found in the Philippine Federation of Labor in Italy. According to studies and data, the Federation of Filipino Workers in Italy has a large membership base, with thousands of Filipino workers actively participating in union activities and contributing to achieving the goals of the organization (Garcia, 2019). For example, a study by Garcia (2019) reported that the Federation of Filipino Labor in

Italy represents more than 10,000 Filipino workers in various industries, including domestic work, health care, and construction.

Furthermore, the union has implemented rotational leadership practices, allowing different individuals to assume leadership roles within the organization over time. This approach ensures leadership accountability, promotes inclusivity, and promotes popular participation among members (Martinez, 2020).

One of the outstanding challenges facing Egyptian associations in Milan, and particularly the Egyptian Workers Union in Italy, is the crisis of representation. in our opinion a labor union to truly function as a labor union, it must accurately reflect the voices and interests of the workers it represents while adhering to legal standards and organizational norms (Garcia, 2019). This entails several key criteria: membership participation. The union must include a significant number of workers who actively participate by paying regular dues, participating in union activities, and collectively lobbying on labor-related issues. Without active member participation, a union may struggle to effectively defend workers' rights and interests (Smith, 2020).

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In contrast to the trends we have observed in the academic literature, regarding leadership turnover and organizational dynamics within immigrant associations, the presidency of the Egyptian Workers Union in Italy has remained unchanged since its establishment 30 years ago. This prolonged term raises questions about the extent to which the management process is democratic and to what extent we can talk about the union's leadership actually representing Egyptian workers, as well as the potential for stagnation in the decision-making process and strategic direction.

Furthermore, our study revealed a notable absence of essential components such as a database of workers, membership or affiliation systems, and mechanisms for worker engagement and representation within the union. Despite possessing considerable skills and knowledge among its core members, the union's failure to establish these fundamental structures undermines its ability to effectively advocate for workers' rights and address their concerns. Moreover, the reliance on employment even if it was voluntary or unpaid within the Italian Federation of Workers as a primary avenue for advancing the union's objectives raises concerns about conflicts of interest and the independence of its actions and decisions.

In light of these findings, there is a clear critical for bold and structural reforms within the Egyptian associations, in general, to align its operations with best practices and principles of democratic governance and representation. Drawing on insights from studies on organizational restructuring and leadership development within migrant associations, there is a pressing need to implement reforms that promote transparency, accountability, and inclusivity within the association's administrative structures. Additionally, efforts should be directed toward establishing robust mechanisms for community participation, feedback, and representation, such as creating

databases, membership systems, and channels for regular communication and engagement with the community.

3.5 Comparative Analysis of Egyptian Immigrant Associations in Milan

To be able to comprehend in depth the context of Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan and the factors shaping their decisions and activities, a comparative study is needed. This section discusses the variation that have been noted between these correlations to help explain the true causes and consequences. We believe that when we utilize this comparative lens to examine the distinctive characteristics, varied leadership styles, resource allocation, and various strategies used by these associations for assisting community engagement, we can acquire important insights into the complicated nature of organizing immigrants to offer services. This comparative analysis will clarify the mechanisms influencing differences among Egyptian migrant associations in Milan and deepen our understanding of the dynamic interplay between internal dynamics and external settings.

5.3.1.1. Roles and functions

The previous analysis demonstrates that there are significant differences in the roles and obligations of Egyptian migrant associations in Milan. These variances are mostly caused by the diverse needs, abilities, and goals of the migrant community. This section dives deeper into these differences to provide readers a comprehensive understanding of the realities of the associations that serve immigrants from Egypt in the city.

5.3.1.2. Social support and cultural preservation

One of the main goals of certain Egyptian immigrant associations is to provide social support and cultural preservation initiatives. These societies frequently plan social events, religious ceremonies, and cultural exhibitions to promote a sense of community among its members. The associations help newcomers by giving them advice on how to get around the area's systems, get services, and adjust to life in Italy. To encourage cultural identification and integration, organizations like the Lotus Society, The Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS, and Group of Alliance for Egypt provide language courses, cultural seminars, and neighborhood festivities.

5.3.1.3. Advocacy and policy reform

An additional category of association concentrates on policy change and activism to tackle the structural and systemic issues that the community of immigrants from Egypt faces. To promote the rights and interests of migrants, these organizations collaborate with civil society organizations, policy makers, and local authorities. They might advocate for modifications to immigration laws, fight prejudice and bigotry, and push for easier access to necessities like healthcare and education. Prominent examples of associations involved in advocacy work are the Egyptian Forum Association and the Egyptian Labor Union, which encourage members to take part in demonstrations and policy talks in an effort to effect genuine change.

5.3.1.4. Providing services and community development

As service providers, certain associations provide a variety of programs and services to cater to the various requirements of the Egyptian immigrant population. These services could include job support, educational opportunities, and legal aid. Organizations like the Giovani Per Il Bene Fondazione ETS, the Egyptians Abroad Services Facebook Group, and the Coptic Church in Milan actively support community development projects, fight for social justice, and offer basic services to needy communities. To increase their influence and reach, they work with regional associations, global partners, and governmental institutions.

5.3.1.5. Engaging and empowering youth

Certain associations place a high priority on youth empowerment and involvement as a fundamental component of their work. These organizations give youth access to their services and activities, as well as leadership development programs and mentorship opportunities, to help young people get involved in the community. It is affiliated with the Egypt Alliance. Egyptian Forum in Milan, students from Egypt and the Arab world. in addition to the Coptic Church. Milan is home to several notable associations that assist youth initiatives, offer forums for expression, and encourage civic engagement among young Egyptians.

5.3.2. Factors affecting variation.

The roles and functions of Egyptian migrant associations in Milan vary greatly and are influenced by a myriad of internal and external factors. This section attempts to explore these factors that shape the diverse landscape of associations serving immigrants in the city.

5.3.2.1. Organizational leadership

The reality of Egyptian associations in Milan is demonstrated by this investigation. It illustrates the significance of leadership style in these groups and the part it plays in establishing the associations' goals and ideals as well as the tasks and responsibilities of immigrant associations. Enthusiastic advocates and social justice advocates might focus their associations' efforts on policy reform initiatives. On the other hand, leaders that take a community-focused approach might give social assistance and cultural preservation programs top priority. The direction and focus of associations can also be impacted by leadership turnover, and naturally, new leaders can bring fresh viewpoints and priorities to the group.

5.3.2.2. Availability of resources

Egyptian organizations' ability to perform a variety of duties and responsibilities is significantly impacted by the wealth of financial resources, human capital, and formal or informal institutional support. An extensive range of services and programs, such as legal aid, educational campaigns, and community gatherings, may be able to be carried out by well-funded associations with years of experience. As a result, the range of their operations may be restricted. In contrast, associations that are smaller in size, have fewer resources, and lack experience may find it difficult to offer these kinds of services.

5.3.2.3. Community needs and priorities

The needs and priorities that migrant associations identify with the communities they serve frequently influence the roles and responsibilities that these organizations play. Associations that cater to a variety of demographic groups may use various strategies to solve the issues that each segment faces. While associations serving teenagers may stress youth empowerment and leadership development activities, associations supporting elderly immigrants may concentrate on social support and health care services. For organizations to continue being relevant and successful in their endeavors, they must have a thorough understanding of the changing requirements and preferences of the community.

5.3.2.4. External context

The broad framework and environment in which these relationships function are influenced by external variables. The settings and bodies that provide money, legislation, and regulation have an impact on the duties and operations of migrant associations. The operating environment of associations can be impacted by changes in governmental regulations, funding priorities, and legislative frameworks, which may limit their capacity to carry out specific projects and activities.

To effectively serve their communities, associations may need to modify their tasks and responsibilities in reaction to changes in the outside world, get past current bureaucratic obstacles, and adhere to legal obligations.

5.3.2.5. Historical and cultural context

The responsibilities and activities of migrant associations can also be influenced by the historical and cultural milieu in which they operate. Associations might base their outreach initiatives and program designs on prevalent cultural customs, values, and practices. Furthermore, the collective identity of the diaspora community is shaped by past and collective experiences with migration, settlement, and integration. These experiences also influence the goals of migrant communities, which in turn affects the kinds of services and support that these groups need from associations.

5.3.2.6. Monuments and visions

Broad and distinct insights into the dynamic nature of community organization and service delivery can be gained from a thorough knowledge of these variables that affect variation in the roles and activities of immigrant associations. We contend that in order to effectively support and work with immigrant-serving organizations to address the varied needs of immigrant populations, policymakers, funders, and community stakeholders must acknowledge the interaction between internal and external influences that determine association operations.

4.5 Recommendations:

Based on the results of the study, a variety of recommendations can be suggested to improve the efficacy and contribution of the Egyptian migrant associations in Milan based on the study's findings:

• As we have explained, more efforts should be taken to effectively involve youth in organizational activities and decision-making processes, as we have shown, as there is an apparent lack of young representation in Egyptian immigrant associations both in administrative structures and in planned events. Youth-focused programs, mentorship opportunities, and leadership development activities catered to their needs and interests can help make this achievable.

• It is recommended that Egyptian immigrant associations seek a wider range of funding alternatives, beyond self-financing and membership contributions. To keep up their work and grow their impact, this may involve applying some grant funding applications to grant institutions, corporate sponsors, or philanthropic organizations.

• In light of the information we offered regarding the low percentages of female engagement with the associations' most senior levels of the administrative and organizational structures. We believe that organizations representing Egyptian immigrants ought to prioritize advancing equal representation of women in leadership roles and organizational structures. Programs that allow women to step up and take on leadership roles and take part in the association's decision-making processes, such as discrimination laws, mentoring programs, and women's leadership programs, can be extremely helpful.

• According to our examinations, these types of administrative procedures are missing from all Egyptian immigrant groups. We assume that should be carried out by Milan's Egyptian immigrant associations. To determine the impact and effectiveness of their programs and initiatives, associations skip using monitoring and assessment procedures in how they function. likewise regularly monitoring what happens and extracting insightful feedback from community service recipients, these actions eventually assist strategic decision-making and guarantee accountability and transparency.

• Egyptian associations, recognizing the worth of digital communication channels, should prioritize funding programs for volunteers and community members to adopt technology along with proficiency in digital training. This means setting well-defined goals for imparting knowledge on digital platforms, allowing access to technology resources, and transforming online engagement plans to reach a larger audience. by developing digital information platforms, pamphlets, and publications that make a variety of services easier to access and maintain.

• We further believe that in discipline to impact modifications to policy and move ahead in social justice locally, nationally, and globally, Egyptian groups ought to become more involved in advocacy work more effectively. This might mean connecting out to legislators, getting involved in Italian politics, launching public campaigns, partnering with other civil society groups to build up vulnerable populations, fighting systemic injustices, and strengthen migrant rights.

• In our estimation, Egyptian associations ought to place a higher priority on community empowerment and participation by offering people in the community greater possibilities to be engaged in the design, execution, and evaluation of projects and activities. produced the benefits of collective work and granted individuals the capacity to lead the forward motion of their community, which ultimately enhances the immigrant community's feeling of inclusivity and strengthens its social capital.

• Egyptian associations must collaborate longer and more effectively with all the necessary stakeholders, covering the government, businesses, universities, and civil society organizations. Associations can strengthen their capacity to handle challenging social issues and produce results for long-term growth by forming cooperative partnerships and utilizing group knowledge and assets. as an alternative to the inadequate structure, shoddy management, and lack of funding currently in place.• Egyptian associations must expand the scope of their activities beyond traditional events and rituals to meet a wide range of community needs and interests. This may include implementing programs focusing on education, employment, health and social integration to meet the diverse needs of members of their community.

5.5 Conclusion:

This study of Egyptian associations in Milan utilized an integrated analytical framework to explore their core tasks, roles, and objectives, and to investigate their effect on social and cultural integration within the Italian community. While investigating their contacts with the local population, we wanted to uncover ways to cultivate cross-cultural understanding and collaboration while meeting the needs of both communities. Using transnational social spaces (Faist, 2008), I aim to clarify the link among social capital, network analysis, and civic community concepts (Fennema and Tillie, 1999; Jacobs and Tillie, 2004).

As we conclude our discussion, it is fair to focus on a few major issues from our investigation of the present condition of Egyptian expatriate associations in Milan, Italy. Essential indicators derived from an analysis of the main challenges dealt with in this thesis provide a useful addition to these findings.

By researching the functions and strategies for engagement provided by these groups, we acquired major conclusions on the obstacles of diaspora mobilizing and community empowerment. The investigation we conducted was guided by major research questions. We seek to understand the main responsibilities, functions, and objectives of Egyptian expatriate associations in Italy. urthermore, our research looks at the barriers that diaspora organizations face while establishing communities and pursuing their objectives. We saw a wide range of challenges that required careful consideration and planned response, ranging from poor interaction with local institutions to organizational inefficiencies and leadership churn. We also examined how Egyptian diaspora associations fight for policies, particularly those affecting the Egyptian population in Italy, and how successfully they collaborate with Italian organizations to solve common issues and concerns.

Our research found that Egyptian expatriate groups serve a crucial purpose in maintaining culture, securing a feeling of community, and fighting for the rights of the people they represent.

The study uncovers noticeable gaps in Egyptian immigrants' familiarity with Italian civil and labor laws, hindering their ability to obtain official recognition for their entities and capitalize on opportunities for representation and influence. Gender inclusivity and youth engagement emerged as prominent themes in our study models, underscoring the importance of fostering diverse and representative leadership within migrant associations. By promoting broader participation and empowerment across society, these organizations can better address the needs and aspirations of their constituents, ensuring their voices are heard and their concerns addressed.

Subsequent investigations of the evolving duties and challenges encountered by diaspora associations within the framework of worldwide migration dynamics are vital. By following current trends and encouraging collaboration across diaspora communities internationally, we may use collective wisdom and experience to confront shared issues and embrace opportunities for communal advancement and empowerment. Diaspora associations can employ internet platforms, international conferences, and exchange programs to build strong, durable networks beyond national boundaries. Both social justice and immigrant empowerment may benefit from this.

Furthermore, we observed another significant limitation that severely constrains Egyptian expatriate organizations in Milan, their lack of visibility within Italian society. Their efforts to enhance visibility, if any, are predominantly directed toward the Egyptian community in Italy and occasionally the home country. This limitation stems largely from a lack of familiarity with the

Italian institutional context, resulting in only sporadic initiatives meant to introduce Egyptian expatriate associations to Italian society.

Also, we understand a further noteworthy restriction that severely limits the activities of Egyptian immigrant associations in Milan: their relative invisibility in Italian culture. What little publicity they can get is mostly focused on the Italian Egyptian community and sometimes even their native Egypt. The limitation is mainly the result of a lack of comprehension of the legal framework in Italy, which leaves Egyptian expatriate associations with just a few isolated attempts at integrating into Italian society.

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