The Immigration Crisis in Italy: A Convergence of Crises and What it Means for Globalization

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The Immigration Crisis in Italy
A Convergence of Crises and What it Means for Globalization

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Abstract

This paper is an analysis of what is deemed the “immigration crisis” in Europe as it affects the country of Italy. Originally, I had theorized that the effects of the immigration crisis on Italy were due solely to the failings of the Schengen Agreement. However, upon further research, I concluded the problems of the Schengen are only one part of a larger picture that finds its beginnings in the economic problems of Italy. The worldwide economic crisis of 2008 and the actions of the European Central Bank in the wake of the crisis created a separation in the European Union between larger central countries such as Germany and France, and smaller border countries such as Italy and Greece. The feelings of abandonment and alienization that were sparked in Italy during this time began the country’s disillusionment with the European Union, and these feelings were only exacerbated when the waves of immigrants began to pour in in 2015, and Schengen area countries began to close their internal borders and trap the immigrants and asylum-seekers in Italy, thus worsening the economic, social, and political problems that the country was already facing. In addition, my research prompted me to draw the conclusion that the underlying problem is the failure of the globalization that is seen in the European Union. Therefore, this paper theorizes that the current immigration crisis is not a crisis in and of itself, but provided the stimuli needed to create a crisis from the pre-existing problems in Italy and in the European Union.
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Introduction

In 2014, hundreds of thousands of immigrants and asylum-seekers began to enter into Greece and Italy via the Mediterranean Sea. The majority of these people were African nationals and were attempting to enter Europe through illegal means including smuggling. In the early months, these countries were able to control the immigrants and asylum-seekers. However, the waves soon turned into a flood, and Italy and Greece began to become overwhelmed. In 2015, this situation was named the “immigration crisis.”

The immigration crisis poses many problems for the countries at its forefront. Italy is one of the countries most affected by this situation, as its southernmost border and islands are only a short distance from northern African countries such as Libya and Tunisia, the origin points of many illegal immigrants and asylum-seekers attempting to find new lives in Europe. It seems as if Italy has been hit extraordinarily hard by the immigration crisis, but, when looking more closely at the situation, it is evident that the problems that Italy is facing now are pre-existing problems that have been exacerbated by the increase in immigration, causing a crisis situation.

Italy’s immigration policies, most importantly the Schengen Agreement, have come into question in the new social and political climate created by the rise in immigration. This policy, which ensures that all people can move freely within the external borders of the Schengen area, has become problematic as member countries have begun to close their borders. The willingness of countries to close their borders, thus trapping immigrants and asylum-seekers in Italy, stems from long-standing tensions between the larger internal European Union countries such as Germany and France and the smaller outer countries such as Italy and Greece. These tensions within the European Union are not a new development and have stemmed from the actions of the European Union and the European Central Bank during the worldwide economic crisis of 2008.
Italy’s economy took a hit during the crisis, and its weakened state has been extremely susceptible to the damaging effects of the rise in immigration in the recent years. The weak economy has thus led to a disillusionment within Italy with the European Union, and the rise of many radical political parties calling for an end to immigration and a separation from the EU and its policies. This is a web of interconnected pre-existing problems in Italy. The rise in immigration was the spark that was needed for these problems to grow and come together to create a state of crisis in Italy. Therefore, the immigration crisis is not truly a crisis in and of itself, but is instead a combination of many crises that have existed in Italy for decades, including the country’s poor economy and the economic crisis of 2008, the flaws in European Union immigration policy, the unstable government, and a history of anti-immigrant sentiment.
Methodology

In this literature review, resources used included scholarly journals, newspaper articles, books, and government websites. Primary sources used included the websites of the European Parliament, the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Organization for Migration, ISTAT, and the Istituti Affari Internazionali, among others, from which scholarly articles and data were retrieved. The section titled “What Does This Reveal About Globalization?” is based primarily on Dani Rodrik’s 2011 book, *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy*. This paper is based fully on print and online sources due to logistical problems regarding the topic and the area studied. Due to lack of connections and resources, it was impossible to gain first-hand access to the area of focus, acquire data, and conduct interviews.

The conclusions of this paper were arrived at after extensive research. During the research process, it was discovered that the initial hypothesis was extremely limited, and thus was changed to allow for a more comprehensive view on the issue. Through researching the problems addressed individually, a second hypothesis—that the underlying problem is the globalization of the European Union—was developed. In the literature review, the hypotheses were explored and allowed for the conclusion to be reached.
Background

a. Recent World Migration Trends

Understanding world migration trends in recent years is necessary to understanding the scale of the immigration crisis in the European Union, which provides a backdrop for the situation in Italy. The year 2015 was a turning point for world migration, beginning what is referred to as the immigration crisis, because over one million immigrants arrived in Europe by sea (McAuliffe and Ruhs, 2018). According to the International Organization for Migration’s 2018 Global Migration Trends Factsheet—in which the most recent data is from 2015 to 2017—the number of international migrants globally in 2015 was the highest ever recorded at 244 million, having risen from 222 million in 2010 and up 41 percent since 2000. In 2015, migration flows south to south across developing countries showed more growth—at 90.2 million international migrants—than south to north migration flows from developing countries to developed countries—at 85.3 million migrants. Though the number of immigrants in developed countries is rising, developing countries continue to host the most immigrants (McAuliffe and Ruhs, 2018).

The United States remained the most popular destination for international migrants, with Germany rising to second place and Russia coming in third. In 2015, Germany saw approximately 12 million foreign-born individuals residing in the country. Italy ranks at the eleventh most popular destination for migrants globally, falling at the fifth most popular destination in Europe. However, the majority of all refugees continues to be hosted by developing countries. The Gulf Cooperation Council nations—primarily the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Kuwait—continue to have the highest percentages of immigrants in their country populations (Global migration trends factsheet, 2015). Understanding the rising levels of
immigrants in Europe, particularly Germany, provides a necessary background for understanding the crisis.

A rise in forced migration is one reason for the overall rise in migration in 2015. Forced migrants refer to those displaced by “persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations” (Global migration trends factsheet, p.8, 2015). As reported by the International Organization for Migration’s 2015 Global Migration Trends Factsheet, forced migration increased by 5.8 million people from 2014 to 2015, totaling 65.3 million of the total 244 million migrants worldwide in 2015. In 2015, the total of 65.3 million forced migrants included 21.3 million refugees, 40.8 million internally displaced people, and 3.2 million asylum seekers. Due in large part to the Syrian conflict, the number of refugees has increased by 55% since 2011. In 2015, the Syrian Arab Republic produced the most refugees, at 4.9 million, followed by Afghanistan and Somalia. Turkey and Pakistan are the main host countries for all refugees, hosting 2.5 million and 1.6 million refugees respectively in 2015 (Global migration trends factsheet, 2015). Forced migration plays a large role in the European immigration crisis because it accounts for the majority of the immigrants who have arrived in Europe in the recent years and explains their illegal and often dangerous attempts to reach Europe. These dangerous journeys have resulted in 7,927 migrants dying or going missing in 2016, up from 6,281 migrants in 2015. More than 60 percent of these deaths and missing migrants are attributed to the Mediterranean Sea (McAuliffe and Ruhs, 2018).
**b. The European Immigration Crisis**

In 2015, Germany became the “largest single recipient of first-time asylum claims globally, with 441,899 new requests” (Global migration trends factsheet, 2015). Germany was followed by the United States, Sweden, and the Russian Federation in number of new asylum requests. In 2015, the European Union received approximately 1.3 million asylum claims, doubling the number of claims received in 2014. Following Germany, the countries that received the most claims were Hungary, Sweden, Austria, Italy, and France (Global migration trends factsheet, 2015). This high number of asylum claims is extremely difficult for European countries to handle, and asylum-seekers often move from country to country before their claims can be processed, which is a problem that will be discussed in the following literature review.

According to Cummings, Pacitto, and Foresti (2015), “during 2014 and 2015, there has been an exponential increase in the number of irregular migrants entering Europe.” “Irregular migrants” refers to those people residing in a country who do not have that country’s legal permission to be living there, while “irregular migration” refers to the “cross-border flow” of people who enter a country without that country’s permission to do so (Cummings, Pacitto, and Foresti, p. 9, 2015).

In order for many immigrants to reach Europe, irregular migration routes formed between 2010 and 2015. Three main pathways have been identified: the Western Balkans Route, the Eastern Mediterranean Route, and the Central Mediterranean Route. The Western Balkans route accounts for both the flow of migrants from the Western Balkans countries and for the flow of Asian migrants moving from Bulgaria, Turkey, or Greece to Hungary. The Eastern Mediterranean Route accounts for the flow of migrants passing through Turkey en route to the European Union, using Greece, southern Bulgaria, or Cyprus. The Central Mediterranean Route
accounts for the flow of migrants from North Africa to Italy and Malta using the Mediterranean Sea. This was the primary route for irregular migration to the EU in 2011, 2013, and 2014, and remains heavily-used today (Cummings, Pacitto, and Foresti, p. 10,18, 2015).
c. Italy at the Forefront

Italy—often thought of in relation to its cuisine, rolling hills lined with vineyards, ocean vistas, and historic ruins—is a country on the front lines of one of Europe’s most pressing problems: the immigration crisis. The country’s location at the southern border of Europe on the Mediterranean Sea puts Italy in extremely close proximity to the northern coast of Africa, resulting in its position at the forefront of the immigration crisis and causing it to feel the brunt of the waves of African and Middle Eastern immigrants who have been pouring in from the sea since 2014. With a population of 62,137,802 people in July of 2017 and a population density of about 205 people per square kilometer, Italy is more crowded than most European countries, causing it to feel the pressing weight of the hundreds of thousands of immigrants entering the country each year (Italy: population density from 2007 to 2017, 2018, and The World Factbook: Italy, 2018).

In 2015, the official beginning of what is deemed ‘the immigration crisis’, “a total of 153,842 people arrived by sea to Italy, a decrease from 170,000 in 2014, yet still a large increase compared to the 42,925 arrivals recorded by national authorities in 2013” (Global Migration Trends Factsheet, 2017). Most immigrants who travel by sea to Italy are African citizens, most prominently Eritrean and Nigerian in 2015, and smaller percentage of the total immigrants came from the Syrian Arab Republic (Global Migration Trends Factsheet, 2017). In 2018, the largest percentages of immigrants who arrived by sea in Italy hailed from Tunisia and Eritrea.
Approximately 80 to 90 percent of the migrants traveling to Italy depart by way of Libya and use the Central Mediterranean Route of irregular migration, in which migrants and asylum seekers depart from North Africa, cross the Mediterranean Sea by boat—often with the help of illegal smuggling systems—and arrive in Italy, Malta, or nearby islands such as the Italian islands of Lampedusa and Linosa, located halfway between Malta and the coast of Tunisia (Cummings, Pacitto, and Foresti, 2015). In 2016, Italy saw 180,000 migrant arrivals, which dropped to 119,000 in 2017 (Migration to Europe in charts, 2018). On January first, 2018, Italy had the third highest number of non-EU nationals living in its country at 5.1 million, preceded only by Germany and the United Kingdom (Migration and migrant population statistics, 2019).

Faced with the challenge of controlling borders with the sea, Italy is presented with challenges that are different and more difficult to control than those of land borders. Northern African countries such as Libya lack the control over its borders to regulate the illegal smugglers who set sail for Italy every day, and the newly-formed European Border and Coast Guard Agency does not yet have the manpower and necessary skills to overcome every vessel attempting to access Italy through the Central Mediterranean Route. The stricter enforcing of controls over other irregular migration routes of access to Europe—such as the route through Turkey—has put further strain on the situation, forcing desperate migrants and asylum-seekers to use the Central Mediterranean Route, thus overwhelming Italy (Hermanin, 2017).

As Italy struggles to deal with the crisis to the best of its abilities, tensions have arisen between Italy and the European Union, and “government and public opinion alike feel that Italy has done its part in dealing with the persistent crisis, while the EU has shown a deplorable lack of solidarity” (Hermanin, 2017). In June of 2018, Italy’s interior minister Matteo Salvini declared, upon visiting the town of Pozzallo in Sicily—a “migration hotspot”—that “Italy and
Sicily cannot be Europe’s refugee camp” (Carrier, 2018). In light of the immigration crisis and the growing tensions between Italy and the European Union, analyzing the problems faced by Italy prior to the rise in immigration may illuminate the reasons for the country’s current crisis situation.
Literature Review

a. The First Crisis- The Economic Crisis of 2008 and the ECB’s Response

The immigration crisis in Europe, and, specifically, in Italy, is not a crisis in and of itself. The increase in immigration in 2014 resulted in full-blown crisis as a result of the coinciding of multiple pre-existing crises and their effects on Italy. One pre-existing problem is the Italian recession in 2008 and the weak economy even prior to the recession. The already weak Italian economy was extremely susceptible to the worldwide economic crisis in 2008. In the wake of the crisis, the European Central Bank proved that its interests were skewed in the direction of richer countries such as Germany and France, and the European Union failed to bail out Italy and help the country get back on its feet. These problems created a climate in which the effects of the immigration crisis could grow and worsen, and they provide a background for Italy’s continuously growing dissatisfaction with the European Union.

Even before the crash, Italy had a weaker economy than most Eurozone countries. Over the decade before the 2008 crisis, Italy’s annual growth was “almost one percentage point lower than the average” of its peer countries (Morsy and Sgherri, 2010). This low growth rate was due largely in part to a poor total factor productivity which decreased sharply from 1995 to 2005, primarily in the manufacturing and non-tradable sectors of Italy’s economy (Morsy and Sgherri, 2010). Prodi’s leftist governmental employment policies were focused on expansion of temporary positions, which resulted in low wages and few rights for workers. This reduced “long-term family investment in houses, and savings, and discouraged marriage and child-bearing” (Di Quirico, 2010). The poor economy also pushed the government to cut the budgets for education and some welfare and health care service. The decrease in services for the Italian people increased animosity toward the government— which collapsed in 2008 allowing
Berlusconi to regain power— and also increased the inequalities between the northern and southern regions of the country. The economic crisis further weakened southern Italy and Sicily, making it especially susceptible to the problems brought about later by the immigration crisis and poorly equipped to deal with the crisis effectively (Di Quirico, 2010).

The economic and social problems in Italy were made worse with the economic crisis. When the global recession began in 2008, Italy was not immediately affected. The crash initially affected big banks, of which Italy does not have many, and the state was able to solve the early problems faced by the banks. Italy officially joined the international crisis when banks began to reduce the credit of its clients in an attempt to recover liquidity. The larger problem came from the links of certain small and medium-sized Italian banks with Central and Eastern European countries which lost share value and risked complete collapse. This resulted in the banks “reducing credit to clients and consumers and raising the amount of collateral required for new loans,” which then reduced investments in machinery and houses, caused the unemployment rate to grow, caused the GDP to decrease, and increased budget deficits and public debt (Di Quirico, 2010).

In an attempt to get the crisis under control, the European Central Bank— in its Troika partnership with the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund— implemented an austerity policy in an attempt to cut government spending, conserve resources, and get the debt under control. However, the countries that underwent this austerity policy— which has since been discredited— have ended up with increased debt and shrunken GDPs. The Troika believed that this policy would expand the economy, but it had the opposite effect and increased the debt/GDP ratios instead. According to Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Laureate and former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors under President Bill Clinton, it is the “design of the
eurozone itself” that is to blame for the fact that, a decade later, some European countries have yet to recover from the economic crisis (Stiglitz, 2016). First off, the membership in the EU itself poses problems when a country needs to improve its economy. These countries do not have control of their own currency as members of the euro, and therefore do not have to freedom to lower interest rates, spend more, or have a devaluation. They cannot take matters into their own hands and must follow the ECB policies. So, in structuring the economic system of the European Union, the EU and the ECB chose to (1) focus on inflation, and (2) take away the fiscal tool, the interest rate tool, and the exchange rate tool from member countries (Stiglitz, 2019). As a result of implementing economic policies that could not sustain individual countries in times of recession, countries like Italy remain in crisis a decade after the worldwide economic crisis.

The Italian economy took a large hit from the crisis, which resulted in the disillusionment with the Italian government and the European Union. In general, Italian companies suffered worsened revenues, especially in “more export-oriented branches of manufacturing industries” (Coletto, 2010). The Italian production system is comprised primarily of small companies, which make up 95% of all enterprises in the country and provide 50% of jobs to the country’s workers. Due to the procedures enacted by the ECB in response to the recession, small business in Italy found themselves with “lower access to credit” and “fewer resources available to undertake reorganization,” as well as less demand from large enterprises to which they were suppliers (Coletto, 2010). This resulted in an increase in unemployment in Italy, with 380,000 people losing their jobs. Unemployment was higher in southern Italy, and the unemployment rate continued to grow in the years after the recession began, rising from 6.7% in 2008 to 7.8% in 2009 to 8.5% in 2010 (Coletto, 2010). The people most affected by unemployment during the
recession—and still today—were temporary workers and young people, many of whom are students who are unable to find work after graduating from universities.

The economic instability in Italy led to a rise in opposition to Berlusconi’s government and accusations of corruption and insufficiency. It led to increased criminal activity throughout the country, much of which is blamed on immigrants. Though the current immigration crisis did not officially begin until 2015, both legal and illegal immigrants have always been present in Italy. The recession led to an increase in anti-immigrant sentiment among native Italian people, which has continued to increase in the recent years (Di Quirico, 2010). The combination of high unemployment rates, animosity toward Italy’s government, and anti-immigrant sentiment provide a hostile environment for immigrants. Native Italian people do not want them there and want to limit competition for the few jobs that are available.
b. The Second Crisis- European Union Immigration Policy

The second pre-existing crisis in Italy was the downfall of the immigration policies of the EU, specifically the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. The problems caused by the economic crisis of 2008 and the resulting actions of the European Central Bank and the European Union created a background of animosity between Italy and the European Union that paved the way for the problems that have stemmed from EU immigration and asylum policies.

The Schengen Agreement, enacted in 1985, is a European Union policy that allows every European Union citizen to travel, work, and live in any Schengen area country. It also guarantees free movement between Schengen area countries to EU citizens as well as tourists and other non-EU citizens—including the immigrants and refugees entering Europe illegally. In addition, the Schengen deems the countries with external borders responsible for patrolling those borders (The Schengen acquis, 1985). Today, the Schengen area includes most EU countries—with the exception of Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland, Romania, and the United Kingdom—as well as the non-EU countries of Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein. Any person or vehicle may cross the internal borders between the member countries without being subject to border checks (Schengen Area, 2018). This free and easy movement between member states has had meaningful impacts on tourism, trade, and immigration, which will be discussed further in the following sections.
With respect to the immigration crisis and the influx of migrants and refugees arriving in the European Union, the Schengen Agreement has become controversial, as it was not formulated with a foreign immigration crisis in mind. The original Schengen Agreement, implemented in European Union law in 1985, states that, although the internal borders of the Schengen Area are open to all without restrictions, the external borders of the area may “only be crossed at border crossing points and during the fixed opening hours” (The Schengen acquis, 1985, Article 3.1). These designated border crossing points include airports, ocean ports, and other border checkpoints in which all people who wish to enter that country— and thus the Schengen Area as a whole— must have their credentials verified and be given permission to enter. The following article of the Schengen Agreement states that the member states with external borders “undertake to introduce penalties for the unauthorized crossing of external borders,” meaning that these countries are responsible for monitoring all irregular border crossings into their country and thus controlling both the authorized and unauthorized external border crossing areas (The Schengen acquis, 1985, Article 3.2). For many countries with external borders, this is a massive area that must always be regulated and monitored. This is especially relevant to the current immigration crisis, because many unauthorized border crossings occur or are attempted daily along the external borders of Schengen area countries, most prominently Italy and Greece.

At the beginning of this immigration crisis, the problem of patrolling the external borders was the most pressing issue, with the member states leaving the countries with these borders to fend for themselves. Today, immigrants continue to enter the southernmost countries via the Mediterranean Sea, but the European Union has made great progress in aiding these countries. In 2016, a European Parliament regulation regarding the Schengen Borders Code states in Article
6 that “Border control is in the interest not only of the Member State at whose external borders it is carried out but of all Member States which have abolished internal border control” (Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament, 2016, Article 6). This is a step in the right direction for the Schengen Agreement, which originally stated that member states with external borders were solely responsible for their own borders. Another positive yet insufficient step forward for the European Union in response to the immigration crisis and acknowledgment that the Schengen area must work together to patrol the external borders is the formation of the European Border and Coastal Guard Agency, or the EBCG. This agency was launched in October of 2016, and is a reform of the Frontex agency, the former EU border protection agency. While Frontex provided only monetary aid and direction to the border patrol forces of Schengen member states, the EBCG also deploys border guards to border areas that are in need of reinforcement. However, it is a new program and is in the development process, meaning it has not yet made any great contributions to solving the immigration crisis. The Agency provides physical aid to the existing border controls as well as providing its own equipment, and also gives direction to the existing border controls of the member states (Securing Europe’s External Borders, 2017). The EBCG works with the member states in order to better enforce the external borders but does not have unlimited power as to not interfere with “state-centered matters such as sovereignty, fundamental rights or trade” (Rojo, 2017). The European Border and Coastal Guard Agency has the potential to be very beneficial to the European Union as it continues to develop and improve. These new developments take into account the severity of the immigration crisis and the necessity for all member states to work together to protect the European Union and control the crisis.
As the European Union began to increase focus on external border protection of the Schengen area and work together to enforce these borders, the main problem shifted to the internal borders. When the internal borders of the Schengen area are open, immigrants and refugees often move from their country of first arrival to other countries before their asylum claims and other documentation can be processed, which increases the difficulty of recording and monitoring who has arrived in the EU. According to another aspect of European Union immigration policy called the Dublin Regulation, countries that receive asylum applications have the right to send those filing the applications back to their country of first arrival in the European Union. The countries of first arrival for these asylum-seekers are primarily countries with southern external borders such as Italy and Greece (Explaining the rules for migrants: borders and asylum, 2015). In 2015, the beginning of the immigration crisis, Germany became the “largest single recipient of first-time asylum claims globally, with 441,899 new requests” (Global migration trends factsheet, 2015). Following Germany, the countries that received the most claims were Hungary, Sweden, Austria, Italy, and France (Global migration trends factsheet, 2015). The high number of asylum claims being received during this immigration crisis is extremely difficult for European countries to handle, and asylum-seekers often move from country to country before their claims can be processed, using the open internal borders implemented by the Schengen Agreement. As countries with better economies and more job opportunities—primarily Germany and France—fall under the burden of hundreds of thousands of asylum applications filed by immigrants and refugees who illegally entered the Schengen area through the external borders, these countries become increasingly willing to send the asylum-seekers back to the already struggling Schengen area external border countries.
Taking this a step further, many countries have begun to block immigrants and refugees from entering their countries altogether. Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Sweden, Denmark, and Belgium reintroduced internal border controls after September of 2015 because they believed the large number of migrants attempting to move into their countries posed threats to public policy or security and because they believed the external border management of Italy and Greece was extremely deficient (Guild et al., 2016). Though the Schengen Agreement allows for the temporary reintroduction of internal border checks where deficiencies are detected at the external borders and when member states believe that they are threatened, the act of reintroducing internal border checks further alienates the struggling countries, trapping the crowds that arrive on the coasts daily inside the countries that lack resources to process and accommodate them (Schengen acquis, 1985, Article 2). An incident of a temporary closing of internal borders came even before the current immigration crisis began and is referred to is the Franco-Italian Affair of 2011, in which France temporarily imposed border checks at border with Italy in order to block a train carrying Tunisian immigrants from entering the country (Guild et al., 2016). Following this incident, the European Parliament gathered in 2012 in order to propose regulations on the reintroduction of internal border checks in the Schengen area. In the many amendments proposed in this meeting, the Parliament argued that “migration and the crossing of external borders by a large number of third-country nationals should not, per se, be considered to
be a threat to public policy or to internal security,” the free movement of persons should not be hindered, internal borders should not be closed for political reasons, internal borders checks should not be imposed for more than thirty days, and other measures should be taken, if possible, to resolve any problems before resorting to the closing of internal borders (On the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 562/2006, 2012). Despite the concerns expressed in this 2012 Parliament hearing—which led to a 2013 reform of the Schengen Agreement in which the proposals listed above were enacted—the countries previously listed chose to reintroduce internal border checks at the height of the immigration crisis. This has worsened the problems faced by countries such as Italy and Greece, which battle overcrowding and the inability to accommodate the immigrants and refugees seeking new lives in Europe.

In the 2018 “annual report on the functioning of the Schengen area” by the European Parliament, Parliament “condemns the continued reintroduction of internal border checks as this undermines the basic principles of the Schengen area,” and “takes the view that many of the prolongations are not in line with the existing rules as to their extensions, necessity or proportionality and are therefore unlawful.” (European Parliament resolution of 30 May 2018 on the annual report on the functioning of the Schengen area, 2018). The report proceeds to highlight that member states have been “artificially changing the legal basis for reintroduction to extend it beyond the maximum possible period,” and that there are other tools at the disposal of these countries, including “targeted police controls” that should be utilized before border controls, and that the continuation of internal border controls “would impose major economic costs on the EU as a whole” (European Parliament resolution of 30 May 2018 on the annual report on the functioning of the Schengen area, 2018). It is clear that the reintroduction of
internal border controls is detrimental to the Schengen area and is increasing the pressure already felt by the countries at the frontlines of the immigration crisis. However, the Schengen Agreement still holds that it is legal, and member states are reluctant to remove the border checks.

Despite what seems to be a progressive movement toward trust and teamwork between Schengen member states by way of the formation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, some countries continue to call for closed internal borders, pushing for the reintroduction of internal border checks in order to protect themselves and push back against the immigrants and asylum seekers from entering their countries. These downfalls of European Union immigration policy, specifically the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation, prove to be a reason for the crisis created by the rise in immigration to Europe in the recent years. The lack of willingness for EU member countries to work to ease the burden on Italy and other countries of first arrival has alienated Italy from the European Union and created a climate of selfishness and self-serving interests. However, this climate found its beginnings some years prior to 2015.
c. The Third Crisis- Italy’s Unstable Government and Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

With the recent formation and growth of political parties preaching anti-immigration to riots in the streets of Italian cities, it is clear that the whole country is feeling the dividing effects of the crisis and calling for change. Italy has a history of government instability, with one of its most infamous leaders being the fascist Mussolini. Berlusconi, in addition, who served as Italy’s Prime Minister in four different governments, was extremely controversial and the subject of numerous scandals during his time in power. The pre-existing problems with the Italian economy and European Union immigration policies that have been exacerbated by the increase in immigration have sparked a third problem that has led to the immigration “crisis”: new radical and anti-immigrant political parties.

In 2013, the radical populist Five Star party participated in its first national election, where it received only 25 percent of the total votes. In the election that took place in March 2018, it received the most votes at 33 percent. The party, led by Luigi Di Maio, has quickly gained the favor of the Italian public who believes that Berlusconi’s government has not done enough in recent years to help Italy recover from the economic crash, lower the unemployment rate, and improve the lives the Italian people (Loucaides, 2018). The Five Star party aims to implement a basic equal income for all people and an end to poverty and is often referred to by the media as “anti-establishment, anti-EU and anti-immigration,” though it does not explicitly refer to itself in this way (Loucaides, 2018). Five Star is especially popular in the southern regions of Italy, which is the most poverty-stricken and the most affected by the immigration crisis. The southern Italian and Sicilian people who are struggling with poverty and the overflow of immigrants are more likely to support a radical party who pledges to make the changes the people want.
The publicized basis of Five Star’s platform is greater equality and quality of life for all Italian people, though it does have radical undertones. Even more radical than Five Star is the far-right Lega Nord party, often referred to as “Lega”, which is creating a sharp divide between Italians. Lega, led by Matteo Salvini, is part of a right-wing alliance with the former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, and his Forza Italia party. The Lega’s platform is autonomy for the regions of northern Italy, based in the resentment of some northern Italians toward southern Italians, Rome, and the European Union. The party has preached “Euroscepticism” in the recent years, openly criticizing the euro (Schumacher, 2018). Lega is also known for its extreme anti-immigrant sentiment and staunch opposition to immigration, even going as far to suggest that Milan designate certain train cars for use by Milanese people only (Schumacher, 2018). One of Lega’s anti-immigrant claims is that immigrants and refugees are given special benefits in Italy and are thus exploiting the native Italian people (Dixon et al, 2018). This is a sensitive topic for the Italian people, who struggle to find jobs, housing, and welfare benefits. The idea that immigrants and refugees are further depriving them of these necessities makes them further inclined toward anti-immigrant sentiment themselves.

The rise to power and popularity by Salvini’s Lega and Di Maio’s Five Star reveal that many Italian people are staunchly opposed to immigration and want to return Italy to the state of autonomy that it had before it joined the European Union. In recent news, Italy has also been openly criticizing what they believe to be the European Union’s failure to assist in the control of the immigration crisis. Italy is feeling increasingly abandoned by the European Union, even going as far as to threaten to veto a budget proposed by the EU to assist with control of the migration crisis. The proposed plan would set forth a budget for the next seven years, but Di Maio and Salvini will refuse to accept it if the European Union will not take on more migrants
and relieve the burden on Italy. Salvini has even threatened to stop Italy’s funding to the European Union annual budget, which is required for member states, and has called the EU “filth” (Gotev, 2018). Salvini and Di Maio are often referred to as “Italy’s strongmen,” and have even more influence over the Italian people and the government than Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte himself (Gotev, 2018). With their parties continuing to grow in popularity and their anti-immigration and anti-EU sentiments becoming more widespread, the future of Italy as a part of the European Union is becoming increasingly questioned.

The suffering economy and radical political parties combined with the increasing tensions of the continuing immigration crisis are causing the Italian people to view their own country in a negative light. A 2018 poll from the More in Common initiative revealed many of the feelings of Italian people toward the current state of the country and the problems it is facing. According to this poll, 53 percent of Italian people stated that they believe “that ‘weak’ is an accurate description of Italy, followed by ‘angry’ and ‘divided’” (Dixon et al, 2018). Only five percent of Italian people would describe Italy using only positive terms. In addition to viewing the state of Italy in a primarily negative light, the majority of Italian people also view globalization negatively and believe it to the reason for many problems that Italy faces today, with 55 percent of Italian people believing that “globalization has had negative economic consequences” (Dixon et al, 2018). In addition, the majority of Italians believe that Italy must protect itself more from the rest of the world, especially its culture and heritage. This is in line with the beliefs of the radical political parties rapidly gaining power in Italy who want to keep the immigrants and refugees out and return Italy to its Italian nationality and do more to benefit ethnically Italian people. Most Italian people across the country believe that the European Union needs to do more to assist Italy in its management of the immigration crisis, though the southern
regions of the country are more uncertain if remaining in the European Union is the right choice. However, 52 percent of the country expressed support for Italy’s continuing membership in the European Union. The country’s “tension between frustration and disenchantment with the EU and a simultaneous desire to remain a part of the union” has created a state of confusion and uncertainty in Italy (Dixon et al, 2018). The Italian people are unsure of what they want, although they seem to agree that some changes need to be made if the country’s economic problems and immigration crisis problems are to be solved. This climate of uncertainty has made the influence of Lega and Five Star incredibly strong, as the Italian people look for answers.

The More in Common poll also conducted studies on how Italian people understand their Italian identity and the extent to which the feel their identity is threatened by immigrants. Many Italian people see migrants as outsiders who threaten the identity of native Italian people and even cause some native Italians to leave the country. The Italian people also believe that the immigration crisis would not have such a drastic impact on Italy if the country had been stronger to begin with. The poor economy, unemployment, lack of basic services, poverty, and divide between the societies and economies of the north and south have left the Italian people feeling the effects of the crisis even more (Dixon et al, 2018).

Problems originating even before the immigration crisis have given rise to strong anti-immigration sentiments felt by the Italian people and preached by the radical political parties Lega Nord and Five Star, and the increase in immigration has allowed these radical parties and xenophobic attitudes to flourish in Italy. It has also opened a new door in the minds of the Italian people, which is the possibility of succession from the European Union. Though the majority of the Italian people do not support Italy leaving the European Union, the increasing pressure of the
parties on the EU to do more to help Italy is creating a climate of uncertainty in the country. As the immigration crisis continues, tensions increase.
d. Repercussions of the Pre-Existing Crises

The 2008 economic crisis and the policies of the ECB, the problems created by the Schengen agreement, and the government and social structure of Italy provided a perfect climate for the increase in immigration in 2014 to spark a crisis situation. This poses the problem: what should Italy do now? Despite the problems faced in the aftermath of the recession, Italy’s economy has been given opportunities for growth by the open borders of the Schengen area. The removal of these benefits would negatively impact the economy of Italy, thus increasing the effects of the immigration crisis even further.

The open borders provided for by the Schengen Agreement allow for the movement of not only people, but of goods and workers. Every year, the internal borders of the European Union are crossed approximately 1.3 billion times by people (Putting up barriers; Schengen’s economic impact, 2016). Because there are not permanent border controls in place at the border of Italy, there is no conclusive data on the percentage of Italian laborers who cross the internal borders of Italy each day to work in other Schengen area countries. However, the expansion of the labor market that is provided by the open borders is important to the citizens of Italy. With a high unemployment rate of 10.7% in August of 2018, Italy struggles to provide jobs to all of its citizens (Labour market: second quarter of 2018, 2018). The open borders of the Schengen alleviate some of the stress on Italy by allowing the citizens to easily cross borders to work in other countries. Reintroduction of border controls would not only diminish the jobs available to Italians— primarily those who live in Northern Italy in close proximity to Italy’s internal border— but would also make it much more difficult for those who already hold jobs in other countries to travel to and from work each day (Putting up barriers; Schengen’s economic impact, 2016).
With the reintroduction of border checks comes long lines of cars waiting at border checkpoints for their passengers’ passports to be checked. Though this is mostly a nuisance, border checks can bring about more serious problems. In addition to the border crossings of people, the internal borders of the Schengen area are crossed each year by about 57 million times by trucks carrying €2.8 trillion of goods. Borderless trade in the EU allows goods to be transported easily and quickly between Schengen area countries and saves time and money, and forcing trucks to stop at internal border checks and wait in long lines to be searched would cause an extreme loss of both. The more internal borders a trade route includes, the more money will be saved, for example, “a truck from Italy to Germany crosses two internal borders so that Schengen is equivalent to a trade cost saving of about 1.4%,” but border checks could put an end to these savings (Felbermayr et al, 2016).

The end of the open borders of the Schengen would bring about more serious problems as well, such as interrupting the single market of the European Union, which could result in a 3% tax on trade between countries in the Schengen area and a reduction in output of 0.8% (amounting to €110 billion) over the next ten years, raising prices of goods and services for European Union citizens (Putting up barriers; Schengen’s economic impact, 2016). Italy is the seventh largest export economy in the world and the third largest in Europe, and a hinderance to the country’s ability to efficiently export goods could cause problems. Among Italy’s top export destinations are Germany and France, to which products can easily be exported by land by crossing the internal borders of the Schengen area (Italy country profile, 2018). The industries that would be most affected by the long-term reintroduction of border controls would be those of perishable foodstuffs, produce, and animal products. The long waits at borders will put perishable goods in danger of spoiling, and companies may need to spend extra money to rent
storage areas or upgrade their transportation (Putting up barriers; Schengen’s economic impact, 2016). About 5.6% of Italy’s exported goods are foodstuffs, and the exports amounted to 25.3 billion USD in 2016 (Italy country profile, 2018). A blow to the efficiency of this export business within the European Union could result in a substantial loss for Italy.

Since temporary border checks were reinstated beginning in 2015, some loss has been seen in the GDP of Schengen area countries, and even greater decline is predicted. Since 2015, a decline of 0.13% of GDP has been seen in Italy, and a decline of 0.35% of GDP is predicted if border controls are reintroduced at all internal borders (Felbermayr et al, 2016). According to the VOX Centre for Economic Policy Research, “peripheral and/or small countries are much more strongly affected than central and/or large ones,” meaning that a permanent reintroduction of border controls at all Schengen internal borders could put Italy at a higher risk than other countries for economic loss (Felbermayr et al, 2016). Because some negative results of temporary border checks have already been detected, the continuation and expansion of these border checks is predicted to be detrimental and hinder the trade and labor industries in Italy and other Schengen member countries.

Though it would seemingly be detrimental for Italy to withdraw from the Schengen Agreement or from the European Union, it is clear that the European Union and its policies have had negative effects on Italy in the recent years.
What Does This Reveal About Globalization?

The previous discussion of the problems that have befallen Italy begs the question: What can we make of this? What is the underlying problem? Many of the issues Italy has faced have been directly related to Italy’s membership in the European Union, which is a sort of miniature globalization. So, this situation reveals that globalization—which refers to the interdependence of national economies and the cross-border trade of goods and services—is not always beneficial to the countries involved. In some cases, one solution will not work to solve the problems of all countries in a globalized society.

In his 2011 book, The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy, economist Dani Rodrik hypothesizes that globalization proposes a trilemma. That is, in the world economy, democracy, national determination, and economic globalization cannot coexist (Rodrik, 2011). The first option, democracy, is the form of politics in which elected representatives represent the entirety of its population. The second option, national determination, is the ability for nations to be distinct from other nations and exercise self-determination. The third option, economic globalization, is the interdependence of national economies and movement of goods and services across borders. According to Rodrik, a country can choose two of these options, but it cannot have all three. For example, if globalization is chosen as one aspect that must exist, either democracy or national determination must be abandoned. Rodrik argues that all three factors cannot exist in harmony because globalization ignores the inherent differences between nations. It is impossible for every single nation to have its needs and interests met by a set of global rules and practices. Therefore, something must be sacrificed (Rodrik, 2011).
According to Rodrik, democracy and national determination are the most important choices, and these should be chosen above globalization (Roderick, 2011). He gives a reason for this, stating, “Democracies have the right to protect their social arrangements, and when this right clashes with the requirements of the global economy, it is the latter that should give way” (Rodrick, 2011). This does not call for an end to globalization, but instead for a better globalization that does not impair or block the abilities of national governments to make their own decisions for the well-being of their own societies. Rodrik describes this new and improved globalization as “a thin layer of international rules” that does not suffocate national governments and allows them to maintain the economic benefits of globalization while also preserving their national interests (Rodrik, 2011).

In the case of Italy, the globalized migration and economic policies of the European Union during the economic crisis of 2008 and the current immigration crisis blocked Italy’s ability to exercise national determination. In 2008, the European Union and the European Central Bank blocked the ability of Italy to choose its own course of action to repair its economy. Ultimately, the choices of the European Central Bank to utilize an austerity policy failed to solve Italy’s economic problems, and the economy of Italy remains weak and unstable to this day. This complete control by the European Central Bank did not leave Italy with any ability to determine what its course of action would be. It is impossible to tell if Italy would be better or worse off if it had been able to make its own decisions during the crisis, but it should have had the ability to protect its own country and economy.

Today, the European Union’s Schengen Agreement provides another example of Rodrik’s trilemma at work. This policy encompasses the majority of European Union member countries but does not always allow each country to function in the same way. When immigrants
began to pour in to Italy through its external borders, other member countries began to close their borders and leave Italy to fend for itself. Though this policy allowed these countries to act in their best interest, it ultimately led to the abandonment of Italy. This is an interesting situation, because the Schengen Agreement allows countries to have national determination in some situations, but often at the expense of another nation with which they should be working in partnership. In this case, Italy could not take any emergency measures to change the Schengen Agreement to help its situation. It struggled to patrol its external borders with limited help from the European Union amidst the border-closings by other countries. This situation and that of the economic crisis of 2008 show that because Italy has a democratic government and is a member state of the European Union, Italy has chosen democracy and a globalized economy, leaving out national determination. Great Britain, when it found itself encountering its own problems with the European Union, voted to abandon globalization and choose democracy and national determination. Though Italy’s membership in the Schengen Agreement and the European Union has been detrimental to the country in recent years, it benefits Italy’s economy. A Brexit-like exit would leave the already-struggling country in a worsened state. This is a situation in which Rodrik’s call for a thin layer of globalization would benefit Italy, allowing it to reap the benefits of a globalized economy while giving it the ability to defend and protect itself in crisis situations.

Despite these examples of Rodrik’s trilemma, economist Thomas Palley argues that this trilemma is a fallacy, and in reality, there is only a dilemma between “more globalization and reduced national policy space” (Palley, 2017). Palley agrees with Rodrik in the sense that globalization poses threats to a nation’s ability to make its own policies and to policy space, but disagrees that democracy is affected by globalization. Globalization affects what democracy can accomplish, but it does not affect the democracy itself. In addition, there are different types of
globalization that can affect policy space differently, either shrinking it or expanding it (Palley, 2017). Palley’s theory, however, is insufficient to Rodrik’s theory because globalization destroys the ability for the citizens of countries to vote on certain policies. In Italy in 2008, the Italian people did not vote that the European Central Bank should enact an austerity policy on the country.

Globalization can also create a negative environment if all countries are not treated as equals. The European Union, marketed by its central government as a true “union” of member countries, does not always act in a unified manor. In the aftermath of the global economic crisis of 2008, some northern European countries such as Germany took to blaming the victims of the crisis such as Italy and Greece, who had “suffered as a result of flawed policies and the flawed structure of the eurozone” (Stiglitz, 2016). Instead of doing more or attempting different policies to assist the victim countries, some European Union countries simply turned against them, blaming them for the problems of the EU. In reality, these victim countries, unable to enact their own policies or control their currency could not have done anything to help themselves. Stiglitz argues that the problems of the Eurozone are deeply embedded in the zone’s structural features. By taking away individual countries abilities to control their own economies, these countries become sitting ducks, waiting for the EU and the ECB to make a move.

European Union member countries are negatively affected by the Eurozone’s form of globalization. Italy is a prime example of a country that the centralized government and bank of the European Union failed in its time economic crisis and continues to fail today. Globalization, though seemingly beneficial, can be the seed from which crisis grows. Rodrik’s trilemma describes how crisis situations like this one arise, and his call for a new globalization that is less restrictive on national self-determination may be the solution to future similar problems.
Conclusion

In conclusion, what is deemed the “immigration crisis” in Italy is not a crisis in and of itself. The situation that Italy now faces is the result of numerous pre-existing problems that have converged with each other and with the recent rise in immigration to create a new crisis situation. The web of pre-existing problems— the economic crisis of 2008, the faults of the Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulations, and the rise of radical political parties— is connected by anti-immigration sentiments and feelings of disillusionment for and abandonment by the European Union arising from the failing of the globalized Eurozone to support its member country. The economic and social problems that have been present in Italy for decades— such as unemployment and anti-immigrant sentiment— were worsened by the pre-existing problems in the country and are further worsened by the increase in immigration.

With the radical political parties going as far as to threaten secession from the European Union, Italy could be facing even greater problems if the country does not begin to receive the help and support it so desperately needs. It is time for the European Union powers to take responsibility for some of the problems that Italy faces today, reevaluate the globalized constructs of the Eurozone, and attempt to gain control of the immigration situation for the good of the entire Union.
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Image 3 (pg. 21)