



TRADITIONS, ETHICS AND ETHIQUETTES

A BOOK ABOUT EUROPEAN CULTURES, VALUES AND CUSTOMS

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Chapter 1. Basic human rights and freedom issues

In this chapter, we are going to talk about the history of human rights and the philosophers and declarations that contributed to the creation of a list of rights that today we consider basic and essential for humans. Human Rights is really a modern concept, which received nourishment from the thoughts of many relevant philosophers, politicians, and famous thinkers since ancient times, we cannot conceive the rights we have today without thinking about all the events that have happened until our very day. This chapter gives us some time and scope to reflect about our history and our past in order to keep building our future.

Tien-an-men Square in China, the so-called Gate of Heavenly Peace is the third biggest square in the world. Its size is 0,44 km² and it exactly corresponds with the smallest state of the world – the Vatican. The square witnessed some key events of the most populous country in the world. *“As a student of grammar school I clearly remember an event when students from Beijing started gathering there*



Tien-an-Men Square – historic image from 1989 – an unarmed man stands in front of a line-up of tanks.

peacefully to express their attitudes towards corruption, bureaucracy in state administration, limited human rights, imprisonment and persecution of citizens of the People's Republic of China, etc. In the beginning, hundreds of students were requiring a dialogue with the government. As soon as citizens joined the students and a number of protesters grew sharply to thousands, communist party declared martial law on May 20. The Chinese Army was called to arms and dispersed protesters with tanks and shooting during the night of June 3, 1989. We do not know the number of victims but according to Chinese Red Cross from 2000 to 3000 people died there during the massacre.”

A photography by reporter Ladislav Bielik which captured a man tearing his shirt in front of a Soviet tank in August 1968 in Bratislava in front of Comenius University went around the world making headlines. In it the world could see a clear similarity to The Gate of Heavenly Peace Square. China, which “was very popular” in the Western democratic world and it was considered to be a symbol of communism but also of socialist countries and it was relatively independent in the Soviet

Union, although it lost its reputation for some time. However, this period in the Soviet Union, after Michail Gorbachev coming to power in 1985, there was a revivalist process of “glasnost” and “perestroika” (transparency and restructuring in Russian) which included that civil rights and liberties were formally guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution and got into common life of citizens. This democratisation process naturally and gradually affected other countries in middle and eastern Europe, which according to “the standards” of western countries did not respect human rights of their citizens as required by the “developed” Western world. The collapse of socialistic countries began in 1989 - 1990 and symbolised a landmark in history of the 20th century.

“What are human rights?” A slogan that was often heard as a demonstrators cried out to the police in riots during the revolutionary years of 1989/90. Even today, in different parts of the world, we can see crowds of people asking government to respect one thing: “*Human rights!*”

Human rights substantially concern every single person, they have essential importance for their existence and quality of life. A primary task of a state is to secure basic human rights for



Protesters demanding human rights

citizens at least within its international obligations and implement them with internal tools. Constitutional formulation of basic human rights and liberties sets the conditions which have to be respected by people, state and society. In general, human rights represent a specific space, choices and an implementation of fundamental attributes which shape the human personality. These are rights which

take precedence over society, they are inalienable and therefore, they are a criterion of constitutionality. Ordinarily, they are classified as *civil rights*. These rights mean: freedom of thinking, conscience, speech, religion, association, assembly, marching, organising protests, etc. People referring to such terms and international conventions in the former USSR and its satellites were cruelly persecuted. Although constitutions of the USSR and the CSSR pretended that basic human rights were being guaranteed, they resolutely claimed that a citizen may use them only in case they do not harm the interests of society, state and other individuals. The concept of human rights included in documents has *primacy over liberty* – on the basis of restrictions a state is bound by, a

citizen may not be arbitrarily arrested e.g. for smuggled literature of a brand prohibited by state authorities.

Basic rights are those which emerge from your status in society, not the ones that could be granted to you by another individual. Differentiation of basic human and civil rights comes from the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and it is based on differentiation of two types of rights: rights which arises from a person's status in society and rights that a person gains from a state as a citizen. Basic rights and liberties are limited by liberties of other people for the common welfare of society. These rights primarily protect a human being, their personality from arbitrariness and abuse of power. Besides their protective function, civil and political rights enable individuals to influence behaviour and activities. Basically, human rights determine individual freedom of a citizen which may be influenced by a state only on the basis of law and its limits. The essence of philosophy of human rights is represented by a matter of a relation between an individual and power.

1.1. Natural Law.

Natural law is an ensemble of authorisations typical of human beings, they are eternal, unchangeable and universal rights belonging to a person. These rights do not come from power. When natural rights became the content of binding documents we talk about human rights. It is a selection of natural rights included in international conventions. As soon as a state accepts a specific catalogue of human rights in its constitution and law, human rights become civil rights and basic liberties. Although there are the traditional *Ten Commandments* which represent all religions and create some kind of universal ethos, a concept of human rights itself is an issue of modern history when people have experienced unconditionality of their personality, dignity and freedom. These are rights that belong to human beings. The term came into focus especially in the 20th century. In the past these rights were considered “natural rights” or “rights of a person”. *Natural law* (subjective law) belongs to all human beings as laws ruled by nature exist independently from effective law and order. Natural law has attributes like intellect and rationality. Despite this fact there are two questions:

1. Which rights are natural?
2. What is required to accept or believe in their existence?
3. What is required to be supported by people?

A concept of legal realists is accepted. They claim that natural rights might be developed only there where legal procedures correspond with spirit and principles of natural justice. It means there was human law and order of state power which respected law control. The matter of natural rights is more complexly analysed by modern philosophy of rationalism, especially by John Locke. His concept is accepted as traditional. This philosopher offered a concept of protection of life, health, freedom and property. He suggested *considering these rights inalienable*, especially the right to life. Otherwise, somebody (whoever) might claim that in some states based on a social contract all people would renounce this right. Therefore, they would justify their mass slaughter. In such cases doctrine of natural rights would not function as required and courts would plead any laws. Roger Scruton assumes that there are two groups of sceptics, those who refuse doctrine of natural rights itself and those who suppose that existence of natural rights cannot be objectively rationalized but it is natural for human beings to believe in their effect.

John Locke, unlike T. Hobbes, claimed that a person changes from a natural (pre-political) status to human society covered by the state, they renounce a part of their freedom – give some of their rights to the government to keep social order (peace). They do not renounce to all the rights to be able to appeal in case the government tends to repress people. Actually, Hobbes sacrifices freedom to absolute power. According to Locke, God's natural law (*lex naturalis*) determines that nobody should hurt someone else's life, damage their health, freedom or property. This law gives everybody natural rights (*ius naturale*): right to live, freedom and property and at the same time demand everybody to respect the life, freedom and property of others. It was “executive natural law” which was a source of conflicts in its natural status. This is the reason why people struggled for peace, they established this law and they created political society. Locke emphasizes the importance of retaining natural rights to life, freedom and property. On the other hand, the establishment of political society was better for protection of these rights. They are inalienable and nobody has a moral right to put their life or freedom to someone else's full disposal. However, people might lose these rights in case they violate the rights of someone else. Natural rights led to three serious consequences in Locke's theory.

1. Since natural law leads to natural rights for everybody, nobody is obliged to be submitted to political authorities.

2. Keeping and protecting natural rights is a primary function of the government.

3. Natural rights determine the limits of governmental power. It means governments which violate rights of their citizens lose people's obedience and they might be legitimately overthrown. In the following three centuries these political consequences were transferred to so called declarations of human rights. For instance, in 1776, the American Declaration of Independence came into existence and it claimed that "all people were created to be equal, the Creator gifted them with particular inalienable rights like right to life, freedom and looking for happiness". In 1779, the French Declaration of the Rights of a Man and a Citizen stated "natural and inalienable" rights. Doctrines of human rights from the 20th century are lineal descendants of liberal theory of natural rights. Many of them use terms like "natural right" and "human right" without drawing any distinction. And so, declarations of the 18th and 19th centuries affect declarations of the 20th century. The most significant one was *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations* from 1948 and various contracts and conventions that followed, *the European Convention on Human Rights* from 1950 which together with *the European Social Charter* created *the European Charter of Human Rights* was approved by The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. There are many other documents and institutions which reference is necessary like the *Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe* in 1975 in Helsinki which issued the so called *Final Act*. Signatories of these documents made a commitment to fulfil their content. Although recoverability of these documents is low, still there is specific moral awareness and an international public opinion that discredit states violating human rights. It is also important to mention various courts in our geopolitical conditions: the European Court of Human Rights in Strasburg, the International Court of Justice in Hague, the European Commission on Human Rights and dozens of international documents, charters and institutions. In general, it is possible to say that after the WWII governments and citizens became aware of atrocities committed and realised that it is necessary to build awareness and real protection of human rights. This way, in accordance with Article 55 of the Charter of the United Nation, "worldwide comprehension and acceptation of human rights and basic liberties for everybody will be developing". Article 56 says that member states of the UN "commit to take common and individual measures to cooperate with the UN to achieve establishment of Article 55."

1.2. A catalogue and generations of human rights, a historical overview.

Which rights are the most generally claimed to be human rights? On the basis of mentioned declarations, we can (in accordance with Blackwell's encyclopaedia) talk about six categories:

1. *Right to life.* It can be comprehended as the right not to be killed, physically attacked, protected from killing in an attack and the right to have basic conditions to live and minimum health care.

2. *Freedom.* It is defined in general meaning. Sometimes it is comprehended as the right to particular liberties, especially freedom of thinking, speech, religion, assembly and movement.

3. *Right to property.* It had an important place in early law formulation and remained in most formulations of the 20th century although nowadays it is comprehended as a right with particular limits, especially in case property might make commonwealth impossible.

4. *Right to citizen's individual status,* e.g. democratic and national rights.

5. *Right of government of laws,* e.g. right not to be arrested arbitrarily and right to a regular trial.

6. *Right to particular social, economic and cultural properties* (right to education, social security, leisure time, living standard, health care, etc.).

A catalogue of basic human rights and liberties is divided into several groups called generations of human rights:

The 1st generation of human rights came into existence together with bourgeoisie and their fight against feudalism. They were meant to be a direct message to the state, they represent an effort of an individual who has broken free from domination of the state. These rights include: right to life, personal freedom, inalienability of dwelling, freedom of movement and thinking, protection of human dignity and credit, freedom of religion. Political rights: freedom of speech, right to information, right to petition, suffrage, assembly and association.

The 2nd generation of human rights is represented by economical, social and cultural rights. Economical rights include especially freedom of property, occupation and entrepreneurship. Social rights include right to work, work pay, strike, social security, health safety, family safety and support, mother and child safety and right to pension and unemployment security. Cultural rights include the right to education, participation in the cultural life of society and freedom of scientific research.

The 3rd generation of human rights follows the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981). It includes the right to peace, environmental conservation, natural resources, right of nations to self-determination, protection of national minorities, etc.

Human rights and liberties have their own long history. They are ancient as the creation of ideas about respecting human rights. This period of time is connected with Aristotle's comprehension of natural law, Plato's basis of a social contract and ideas of freedom. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle as well as Roman philosophy of constitutional law focused on the idea of a good government. Mainly sophists and Stoics accepted human rights of a person related to birth within their cosmopolitan attitudes.

According to Christian rules, the natural legal status of people is related to an idea of "children of one God". Natural human rights are considered a specific divine law. A significant example of a supporter of these ideas was Thomas Aquinas, one of the most important representatives of ancient scholasticism. He regarded eternal law, whose partial manifestation is natural law, as the basic element of law.

The English Magna Carta Libertatum played a specific role in 1215 because it protected ordinary law against abuse and damage by royal justice. Other similar documents are the Danish Magna Carta from 1282, the Belgian Magna Carta from 1188 and the Tyrolean Magna Carta from 1342. They acknowledge old rights, privileges, liberties and traditions related to taxes, declaring war, filling important state positions, untouchability of a person and protection against arbitrary arrest. They may be understood as "contracts dealing with a system of governance". These documents did not protect any individual rights. However, they supported ideas of limited state power by means of objective law.

In the 16th and 17th century, the theory of social contract had anti-absolutist and anti-religion character. It disproved the thesis that the state and effective laws come from God, they are eternal and invariable. It also states that power of a ruler results from a contract that undertakes them to take care of citizens' welfare.

John Locke presented an idea that life, freedom and property are natural rights of a person who is born as an equal and independent individual and no social contract is able to proclaim them ineffective [VBT2]. Since the theories of J. Locke there was a requirement to define state power and freedom and liberties of an individual. J. Locke, in the interest of people and their rights, required demarcation of the rights of legislative and executive power. These ideas were later developed by

Ch. Montesquieu in his theory of division of power which was considerably applied in the USA in a form of presidential government completed by a system of brakes and counterweights.

In the 18th century, these ideas were expressed in documents of constitutional character, especially in the USA and France. The first document of this kind was accepted in the American state of Virginia in 1776 and its ideas were also mentioned in the Declaration of Independence from July 4, 1776. In Europe, the Declaration of Rights of the Man and of the Citizen was accepted in 1789. Then a similar document got to the Constitution of Belgium from 1831, the Constitution of Austria from 1867 and to other constitutions. These documents define a particular minimum sphere of individual freedom which the state cannot touch. It means they reflect an individualistic attitude to rights and liberties of an individual. Mentioned ideas of rights and liberties have their basis in ideas of natural law and its individualistic concept. They may derive from a principle of inalienability and inviolability of basic rights and liberties.

The Marxist-Leninist teaching, the basis of all constitutions of former socialist states after the Second World War, had a qualitatively different attitude to comprehension of an individual's status in the state and society. This teaching has specific attributes like consistent reflection of the class which is the basis of the state to an institute of rights and liberties, principle of collectivism, social equality, a leading role of the Marxist-Leninist Party, principle of socialist property of means of production as the basis of an institute of rights, liberties and citizens' duties...

A significant development of human rights protection arose after the Second World War as a reaction to serious violation of human rights by Hitler's Nazism and Japanese imperialistic regime. Even during the war public opinion required organization and guarantee of respecting human rights on the international level. This already occurs in the Atlantic Charter from 1941, the Declaration of the United Nations from 1942 and the Potsdam Declaration from 1945. At that time a strong belief was formed: the respect of human rights is related to maintenance and guarantee of international peace. It was proved that states which do not respect human rights in their own country are aggressive in general. Basic human rights were internationally approached in a new way in the Charter of the United Nations in 1945. The Charter required states to respect human rights and cooperate on their protection.

The General Assembly of the United Nations passed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10th December 1948. This document includes 30 articles which define the most important human rights and liberties. These are right to life, freedom and personal security, prohibition of

slavery and serfdom, right to equality in front of the law and the same legal protection, guaranty to be protected from an arbitrary arrest, detention or deportation, equal rights for women, protection of the family, right to property, freedom of thinking, conscience, religion, speech, assembly and association, universal suffrage, right to social security and others. However, the declaration was only a reference character^[VBT3]. It was a subject of approval depending on internationally binding treaties such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Optional protocol.

1.3. Universal Declaration Human Rights – human rights as they are contemplated today.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11.

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13.

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14.

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15.

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16.

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17.

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20.

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21.

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23.

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25.

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26.

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional

education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27.

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29.

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

In conclusion, freedom for all is necessary and ensuring human rights in every country has to be the objective on top of our agendas. We, as developed countries, need to support developing countries trying to ensure these rights in order to be a developed, inclusive and democratic world. In the next chapter we are also going to talk about rights, specifically on women's rights focusing on gender equality, women's status, women's fight for equality etc.

Chapter 2. Women marching equal

WOMEN'S RIGHTS – HUMAN RIGHTS



In this chapter we are going to talk about women's rights, how they have fought in order to have basic rights and how they are still fighting to have them. Women make up more than two-thirds of the world's 750 million adults without basic literacy skills; women represent less than 30% of the world's researchers; and women journalists are more exposed to assault, threat or physical, verbal or digital attack than their male counterparts.

UNESCO believes that all forms of discrimination based on gender are violations of human rights, as well as a significant barrier to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The message is clear: women and men must enjoy equal opportunities, choices, capabilities, power and knowledge as equal citizens. Equipping girls and boys, women and men with the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills to tackle gender disparities is a precondition to building a sustainable future for all.

2.1. Women's status throughout centuries.

Since antiquity, for centuries, women in patriarchal societies have been suppressed - personally and intellectually - because of religion. Women didn't have the right to participate in public life, politics, trade... They had no access to education, no right to inheritance and had very few "civil" rights. The Jewish religion required women to enter a separate entrance into the "temple of God". Christianity forbade women to speak in the churches and declared them the personification of the evil itself. Islam, in turn, made women prisoners and property, possessions of men.

Women in Ancient Greece were completely dependent on their fathers, spouses, brothers and even sons. They did not have the right to own land or other property, not to talk about taking part in

the government. The fathers chose husbands for their daughters, dowry dignitaries and they usually married at age 15 with much older men than them. At home the woman played an important role: she cared for the household, she was the one who managed the finances, practiced weaving. However, her social life was too limited - she could only visit her friends and invite them to visit.

In Ancient Rome the situation of women was not better than that in Greece. *Pater familias* was the main actor, the father. Everyone respected his opinion, and the girls were married even at the age of 12, with the father giving the dowry to the groom. This patriarchal order made the family hoping to have a healthy boy in every pregnancy. Sometimes the new-born girls were even allowed to die!

In Burkina Faso, women work as slaves, but they have barely any voice in society. They have no right to education, ownership of land and means of production because it is a privilege reserved for men. In Gujarat, India, women have hardly any chance of buying a piece of land, a small business or a vehicle. In a jeans factory in China, hundreds of women work almost without money, while their production is expensive to sell in the consumer countries in the west.

Women did not have access to higher education as well as to all "public affairs" and were intellectually suppressed. The culture-intrusive *misogyn* was so intense that masculine class firmly refused to pay attention to "women's intellectual creativity". Lise Meitner scientist, Marie Curie's contemporary, had a fundamental role in the discovery of nuclear decay; but instead, her colleague Otto Han received a Nobel Prize for the discovery, simply because he was a man.



In the period of the two world wars the "new woman," combining eroticism (in the service of a man) with maternal instinct (in the service of the people), was seen as alien to any social issues and political positions. In addition to the mockery and negative attitude of men, the whole society defended the woman's natural functions as a "mother and housewife," and nothing else outside of these spheres.

In the 1930s, the ideas of birth as a vocation and sacred duty of the woman were passed through a fascist model. A pro-active nation-building policy is being promoted. Women had to give birth to babies and raise them, and men should be selflessly responding to the battlefields.

Today, in "secular societies", women still cannot hold senior positions in churches, synagogues and mosques. There are still a number of professions and companies where men and women do not receive the same salaries for the same position at the labour market. In popular culture, women's stereotypes are still being actively promoted by marketing and show-business. Sex stereotypes still determine the attitudes and lives of many people.



Nowadays, women still suffer acts of the male dominant role:

1. Argentina finally accepted an initiative to legalize abortion after many days of fighting. Uruguay, Cuba and Argentina are currently the only countries in Latin America where abortions are legalized.
2. Former US President Donald Trump proposed in May the government to stop providing funds for contraception and abortion. The so-called Mexico City policy has put at risk more than eight billion dollars of annual aid, including HIV-infected clinics in Ethiopia, as well as programs to reduce pregnancy among teenagers in distant Uganda, warned activists .
3. Kenyan MPs blocked in November the adoption of a rule according to which every third place in the parliament is reserved for a woman.
4. In December, during the sixth anniversary of the fatal group rape in Delhi, which caused indignation around the world, a security guard who had raped a three-year-old girl who offered him with treats was arrested.

5. The 19-year-old married Nura Hussein was sentenced to death in May after killing her husband, trying to rape her. Hussein's sentence was lifted after the indignation of the world, but she was sentenced to five years in prison.

2.2. The fight against discrimination of women and feminist movements.



Female movements in Europe and the United States began to gain strength at the end of the 19th Century. Women raised their voice to have access to all levels of education and professions and participation in politics. The meaning of feminism does not explicitly focus on the sexual release of women but on the struggle for civil, professional and political equality.

The movement proclaimed equal rights for men and women, the right to vote, to acquire property, to have equal parental rights. The women organized demonstrations and marches, strikes to show their disagreement with the unequal conditions in which they live, convinced the general public to support them in their noble fight.

The women's electoral rights movement, called suffragism, achieved success - the women in New Zealand were eligible to vote in 1893. The French and Italians were given such right by law in 1945 and respectively 1946.

The first historical female leader is often [cited](#) as the “first feminist” or “mother of feminism,” Mary Wollstonecraft. Her most famous work, “[A Vindication for the Rights of Women](#),” is one of the pillars of feminism and the women’s equality movement. Her moto was: “*When confronted with the double standards and limited options, you must forge your own path*”

[Elizabeth Blackwell](#) achieved the distinction of becoming the first female to earn a medical degree in the United States. She decided to pursue a medical degree and had to improvise a pathway

to earning her degree. For much of her career she experienced difficulty finding work on account of her gender, but she eventually opened her own practice in New York City

[International Women's Day](#) is celebrated annually on 8 March. International Women's Day first emerged from the activists of labour movements at the turn of the twentieth century in North America and across Europe. It is a day, observed by many countries around the world, on which women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political.



March 8 was officially accepted by the United Nations in 1977 as International Women's Day. And although this day was initially taken up by the Socialists, today the holiday has lost its political color and is perceived as a day in which we can express our love and gratitude to women.

On this day many women's rights defenders around the world wear purple strips. The purple color was adopted in 1908 as a symbol of justice and dignity, and today is the time to think about what it would be if we did not have the right to vote, go to school, or live by our own will.

2.3 Violence Against Women.

Each year in November and December in Europe and many other countries and regions, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence Campaign is held. The main aims of the campaign are to combat gender-based violence against women and “symbolically link violence against women and human rights”. In this way the founders and organisers of the campaign underline the fact that violence is not a gender-neutral phenomenon. In the majority of cases, especially regarding domestic violence, victims and perpetrators represent specified genders, usually women and men respectively.

The following are the most drastic forms of violence against women:

- Intimate partner violence is sexual violence, harassment and any behaviour by a current or former partner or spouse that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm. This is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by women globally.

- Human trafficking is the acquisition and exploitation of people, through means, such as force, fraud, coercion, or deception. This heinous crime ensnares millions of women and girls worldwide, many of whom are sexually exploited.
- Female Genital Mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Beyond extreme physical and psychological pain, the practice carries many health risks, including death.
- Child marriage usually means an end to girl's education, vocation and her right to make life choices. Research confirms that girls who marry in childhood are at greater risk for intimate partner violence than girls of the same age who marry later.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, one of the most influential European sociologists, masculinity is a specific type of social game in which violence plays an important role. In other words, (traditional/dominant) masculinity is a socially constructed phenomenon based on several foundations, among which physical power, aggression and violent behaviours are the most prominent ones. For Bourdieu, violence is one of the various “masculine games of competition” that men learn to play as part of their socialisation process.

The UN system continues to give particular attention to the issue of violence against women. The 1993 General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women contained *“a clear and comprehensive definition of violence against women [and] a clear statement of the rights to be applied to ensure the elimination of violence against women in all its forms”*. It represented *“a commitment by States in respect of their responsibilities, and a commitment by the international community at large to the elimination of violence against women”*.

Violence against women is a pandemic affecting all countries, even those that have made laudable progress in other areas. Worldwide, 35 per cent of women have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence

In September 2017, the European Union and the United Nations joined forces to launch the [Spotlight Initiative](#), a global, multi-year initiative that focuses on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

2.4. Gender equality.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), in December 2006, the European Parliament and the Council established a European Institute for Gender Equality, based in Vilnius,

Lithuania, with the overall objective of contributing to and boosting the promotion of gender equality, including gender mainstreaming in all EU and national policies. (<http://eige.europa.eu/content/rdc>).

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and, therefore, also half of its potential.

Gender equality, besides being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve peaceful societies, with full human potential and sustainable development. Moreover, it has been shown that empowering women spurs productivity and economic growth.

Unfortunately, there is still a long way to go to achieve full equality of rights and opportunities between men and women, warns UN Women. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to end the multiple forms of gender violence and secure equal access to quality education and health, economic resources and participation in political life for both women and girls and men and boys.

It is also essential to achieve equal opportunities in access to employment and to positions of leadership and decision-making at all levels.

The United Nations is now focusing its global development work on the recently-developed 17 [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). Women have a [critical role to play](#) in all of the SDGs, with many targets specifically recognizing women's equality and empowerment as both the objective, and as part of the solution.

[Goal 5](#), to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" is known as the stand-alone gender goal, because it is dedicated to achieving these ends. Deep legal and legislative changes are needed to ensure women's rights around the world. While a record of 143 countries guaranteed equality between men and women in their Constitutions by 2014, another 52 had not taken this step.

Stark gender disparities remain in economic and political realms. While there has been some progress over the decades, on average women in the labour market still earn 24 per cent less than men globally.



2.5. Bright future for women.

The landmark Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1948, reaffirms that “*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights*” and that “*everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, ... birth or other status.*”



The principle that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work has been enshrined in the European Treaties since 1957 (today: Article 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)). Article 153 TFEU allows the EU to act in the wider area of equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation, and within this framework Article 157 TFEU authorises positive action to empower women. In addition, Article 19 TFEU enables the adoption of legislation to combat all forms of discrimination, including on the basis of sex. Legislation against trafficking in human beings, in particular women and children, has been adopted on the basis of Articles 79 and 83 TFEU, and the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme finances, among others, measures contributing to the eradication of violence against women, based on Article 168 TFEU.

As the international feminist movement began to gain momentum during the 1970s, the General Assembly declared 1975 as the International Women’s Year and organized the first World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City. At the urging of the Conference, it subsequently declared the years 1976-1985 as the [UN Decade for Women](#), and established a Voluntary Fund for Decade.

The [Commission on the Status of Women](#) (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The CSW is instrumental in promoting women’s rights, documenting the reality of women’s lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

We, in the 21st century, tend to view women in the workplace and women’s leadership as unique to the modern era. This is largely because of the influx of female workers during and after

WWII, and the increase of women graduating college and entering professional careers since the [mid-20stCentury](#).

Our history is filled with innovative woman leaders who rocked their respective epoch. They serve as shining examples of how we can move the women's leadership movement forward today. These are only some of the recent examples of achievements in the fight for equal rights for women and men:

1. In the referendum in Ireland in May voters strongly supported the mitigation of abortion legislation. Nearly half of the 56 million abortions made each year are not carried out under the safety rules, leading to the deaths of at least 22,800 women, according to a global study by the *Gütmacher Institute* in March.
2. Saudi Arabia allowed women to drive for the first time in their history in June. But dozens of activists who insisted on the right to drive and to end the custody of men over women were arrested shortly after the ban was lifted.
3. Ethiopia chose its first president, Sahle-Workie Zeved, in October, and Measa Ashefafi became the first female president of the Supreme Court a month later. Ethiopia became the third African state, after Rwanda and the Seychelles, whose government has an equal number of men and women.
4. In January, Iceland became the first country to forbid by law to pay to men more than women, with fines being set for any company or government institution with more than 25 employees who does not have a government certificate proving equal pay .
5. The "Me too" movement (#MeToo), which was provoked by the Hollywood Sexual Injury Disclosure, has this year's popularity of jobs around the world and has led to the start of investigations and the removal of hundreds of influential men from power positions. However, in some parts of Africa, Latin America and Asia, its campaign was harder to grow.

In December 2015, the Commission published the [Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019](#)^[5] as a follow-up and prolongation of the Commission Strategy for equality between men and women (2010-2015)^[6].

The Strategic engagement focuses on the following five priority areas:

- [Increasing female labour market participation and equal economic independence](#);

- [Reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women;](#)
- [Promoting equality between women and men in decision-making;](#)
- [Combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims;](#)
- [Promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world.](#)

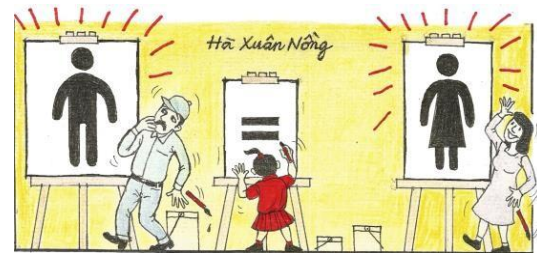
In conclusion, women have fought over the centuries in order to have the same rights as men, their contribution to the world is undeniable and they have the right to be treated in the same way as men. Despite their battle, there are many causes which are not done nowadays and they need to be fixed in order to ensure equality all over the world.



Chapter 3. Tourism and etiquettes of travelling: unwritten rules of behavior

3.1. Etiquette.

Perceived as a combination of rules of good conduct, the word "etiquette" dates back to the time of King Louis IV. Inscriptions were placed in the parks of Versay with the following text: "It is forbidden to walk on the grass", which no one observed. The chief gardener of the palace managed to persuade the king to issue a decree in which to remind that the "etiquettes", ie. prohibitions and rules must be followed. The ability to live in a group dates back to the time when people began to unite in communities. There were also different forms of communication and behavior for different social formations. Over time, many of these forms have changed or disappeared, but some have remained unchanged for centuries. Probably the Cro- Magnon man did not consider himself rude when he dragged his wife by the hair. It is known, however, that in the Middle Ages troubadours introduced sophistication, elegance and tenderness in love and delicacy in communication between people. In the court of King Louis IV, sophistication reached the point that the door was not knocked on, but scratched with the nail of the little finger, which the courtiers specifically began to leave long. Nowadays the long nail on the little finger is not a sign of decency and good taste.



The etiquette changes over time and reflects the best practices that are observed by people in a certain era. It has existed since ancient times, but in history of the civilized world the period between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe is considered as the most saturated in terms of books with rules of good behavior. These are not just tips on how to avoid awkward situations, but in-depth guidelines for moral conduct written by educators of the ages. In 1530, Erasmus of Rotterdam, philosopher, humanist, theologian and philologist, one of the the leaders of modernity, wrote the book "De civilitate morum puerilium ("On the courtesy of the child's manners"), which gives us an idea of the customs of that era. The etiquette described in the manual look amazing and even shocking to a contemporary reader. Erasmus advises: "Do not touch yourself under the clothes", "Do not touch the hand with which you hold the meat", "Don't spit on the table", "Don't blow your nose in the tablecloth, in the sleeve or in your hat", "Do not put back on the plate something that was already in your mouth", etc.

Good relationships are established on showing attention to others and knowledge of a code of conduct called a protocol. In order to exist, any organization or society needs to observe rules for good manners and civilized dialogue. This applies also for relations between business partners, youth organizations and formal and informal groups. Communication is needed between official state representatives to carry out an agreement or participate in formal meetings following a diplomatic protocol.

In the process of civilization the requirements for behavior of individuals from decentralized societies in the Middle century, each with its own ruler and hierarchical system, change significantly with the creation of the modern state. As more and more people have to comply with the behavior of others, the system of behavior needed to be regulated much more strictly and in detail, so that each human action can perform social functions. In the Middle centuries emotions have been expressed openly and violently - joy, grief, anger, fear, even the pleasure of torture and killing of enemies. Gradually, new requirements were developed: to cultivate restraint, to abandon primary instinctive nature and treat carefully the others. These requirements for refining behavior, self-control and a sense of the other's feelings had to be acquired and that is why we call them "second nature".

Today, people who masters good manners and rules of good manners possess the ability to live in harmony. They are polite not only to certain people, but to all with whom they communicate. The French "savoir vivre" means natural behavior combined with respect for others, respect for another's freedom and upholding one's own freedom. This skill should be a denial of selfishness, a rejection of haughtiness. Freed from the ridiculous unnaturalness and artificiality of past epochs, the modern ability to communicate naturally and sincerely with the people around us is like the second nature of the social personality. And yet, in some exceptional circumstances, we sometimes wonder what is next and more polite. The rules collected here offer answers to these questions.

The idea of good behavior is a modern concept developed in Europe within its modern history. Etiquette, good manners¹, change over time or are different in different cultures, but the principles are basically the same - attention and respect for the other, thought for the other. Etiquette, this code of conduct that facilitates our daily communication, is part of the protocol language with which we participate in communication. The protocol and the etiquette are a matter of taste and measure - they are not a set of formal prescriptions, but an obligation to make sense and assess our

¹ *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*, StevenPinker, Penguin Books; Reprint edition (September 25, 2012)

overall presence. Words, gestures, clothing, nutrition must correspond to the idea of good behavior in society.

Modern man has a hectic daily life in today's world. We quite often miss important and mandatory for etiquette rules of conduct and communication. This sometimes proves to be an obstacle for the realization of our intentions, because it is still customary for people to be polite to each other in a civilized society.

Characteristic of the fast pace of life are the shorter forms of verbal expression, which for people accustomed to a slower pace of existence, turns out to be a manifestation of rudeness and lack of manners.

It is necessary to master the culture of communication for achieving civilized communication between different people. The good manners and the polite behavior will make for friendly interaction between people. This set of generally accepted social norms and rules are called etiquette.

Good manners are a manifestation of a value system based on consideration for others, willingness to help, balanced emotions and accurate language expression.

They are one of the most important things in creating first impressions for a person.

Observance of certain etiquette in everyday communication and on special occasions was in the "old days" a mandatory behavior rather than a matter of personal choice, and today it is an expression of culture and good manners.

It is difficult to follow someone else's advice on etiquette in everyday life if there are no permanently acquired habits of behavior and communication in society and family. Their acquisition usually takes place in childhood and in the family environment, supported by regulated manners at school and later - in the field of professional realization. In this way, through personal example and perseverance shown by older to younger individuals, it is possible to create continuity in the assimilation of etiquette rules.

3.2. A few short and easy-to-follow etiquette rules for behavior and communication in a busy everyday life.

- Show goodwill and respect through your facial expressions and smile. This will make it harder for you to have unpleasant experiences, unless you encounter misunderstanding from the other side. In this case, you have no choice but to keep your goodwill to yourself.
- Always greet politely, even if you are uncomfortable, following the greeting label, saying "Good morning!", "Good day!", "Good evening!", "Hello!"

You express a friendly disposition by which you wish good to someone. If you are not greeted with an appropriate greeting, do not insist - you have obviously become "unsightly", "inconspicuous", "insufficiently remarkable" for the person or simply have not recognized you as acquaintances.

- Show polite interest, but not curiosity, when you meet someone or meet them after a long absence - if they want, they will share more about themselves. But if they start asking you about details of your personal or professional life, be restrained and make it clear that you do not discuss such topics with the person in question.
- The handshake is an accepted expression of joy of a meeting or a new acquaintance, of readiness for cooperation and of a wish for a "good way" in saying goodbye. It is more often used in meetings between men and less often between women, although in the emancipated modernity it happens more and more often. In case they give you a hand and you want to avoid shaking hands without looking rude, you can apologize that your hands are not clean.
- Allow your interlocutor to express his or her opinion freely on an issue without interrupting it, unless you are worried that you do not have enough time. In this case, you could look at your watch as a sign to the other party that the conversation is coming to an end for you. If the other party is not kind enough, you could apologize for the interruption at the end of the next sentence and verbally announce that the meeting is over for you.
- The dating label requires you to introduce your friends and acquaintances to the person (s) they do not know when you are on a date. Say their names clearly, looking at their faces, and try to find a common topic of conversation so that each of them can join the conversation.

3.3. He and she.

- The gentleman walks on the lady's left side on official occasions, in other cases the lady has the right to choose or the gentleman walks on the side, which hides a risk or danger.
- If one of the man's hands is occupied with luggage, the lady walks on the side of his free hand. The man is obliged to take the lady's luggage while walking down the street.
- If they go upstairs, the gentleman goes one step behind the lady, and when he goes down the stairs he goes in front of her.
- The lady enters the vehicle first, and the man gets out first and gives her a hand (if they know each other). A well-mannered man is usually expected to offer his help to a woman with heavy luggage or a child on boarding or disembarking, but without being intrusive and untactful. The man sits in a vacant place only if there is no standing woman nearby, but he is obliged to give his place to his acquaintance, to a pregnant or elderly woman.
- In front of an open door, the man steps aside and gives way to the lady to go first, but if the door is massive and heavy, the man goes forward. The lady passes through the revolving door first, but if the door is motionless, the man moves it carefully, passing forward, and allows the lady to pass after him.
- When getting out of an elevator, the man gives the lady a way to get out first.
- In case the man is the initiator of a visit to a restaurant, he takes over the payment of the bill. If this is the lady's proposal, the costs are expected to be borne by her, although nowadays both parties often prefer to share the costs of the account. Then it is good to have a preliminary agreement on who will cover the expenses.
- When two men and a woman are walking down the street, she should be between them.

3.4. Interaction with other people.

- If several people are approaching the entrance of a room at the same time, the collision is inadmissible and the elderly, women and children have priority.
- It would be rude to close the door behind you in front of someone walking right behind you.
- The first to get off the elevator is the one closest to the door. And those who block its exit must get out of it to give way to those who want to come out.
- Staring at someone is considered a gross manifestation of bad manners.
- If someone politely gives you a way, nod and say "thanks".

- If you are moving up stairs and a person with luggage is coming towards you, you should wait on the platform until he passes.

The requirements of etiquette are numerous and can hardly be exhausted, but if you treat others the way you want them to treat you, then you have realized that good manners are based on caring for the weaker and respect for oneself and the others.



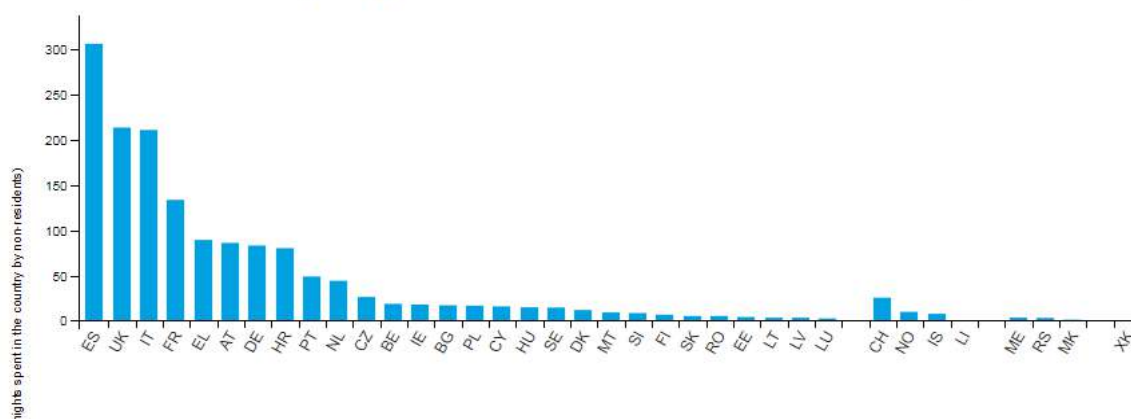
3.5. Tourism and traveling as resources for economic benefits but also for European social cohesion.

Tourism plays an important role in the EU because of its economic and employment potential, as well as its social and environmental implications. [Tourism statistics](#) are not only used to monitor the EU's tourism policies but also its regional and [sustainable development](#) policies.

In 2015, one in ten enterprises in the European non-financial business economy belonged to the [tourism industries](#). These 2.4 million enterprises employed an estimated 12.7 million persons. Enterprises in industries with tourism related activities accounted for 9.2 % of the persons employed in the whole non-financial business economy and 21.5 % of persons employed in the services sector. The tourism industries' shares in total turnover and value added at factor cost were relatively lower, with the tourism industries accounting for 3.8 % of the turnover and 5.7 % of the value added of the non-financial business economy².

² EUROSTAT Statistics explained (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Tourism_statistics)

Tourism destinations – nights spent at tourist accommodation establishments, 2017



The European Union total is 1 497.8 million = 1.4978 billion.

United Kingdom, Ireland, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo (*): estimated using monthly data.

(*): This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

eurostat

If we examine the nights spent at tourist accommodation in partner countries in 2017 as quantitative indicator related to the economic impact of Tourism, we can observe how it can be considered a precious source for the third Sector in each country:

- **Bulgaria 17.1** (million nights spent in the country by non-residents)
- **Italy 210.7** (million nights spent in the country by non-residents)
- **Slovakia 5.3** (million nights spent in the country by non-residents)
- **Spain 305.9** (million nights spent in the country by non-residents)
- **Norway 9.9** (million nights spent in the country by non-residents)

(The indicator includes both European and Extra-European guests).

Some countries, such as Spain and Italy, have a long lasting tradition of tourist welcoming, highlighted by the numbers of visitors, but also in the other countries the number of guests is relevant and points at interesting perspectives of advancement and growth for the whole sector.

Anyway, these data detected by EUROSTAT contributes to underline how Tourism gives a significant contribute to single national economy and it also represents a key factor for local development as well as a very important means for promoting and enhancing the knowledge of these countries not only among people coming from all over the world, but also among European citizens themselves.

Therefore, according with what said above, we can say that, for the whole European Union, Tourism is a very precious source even because it sustains the free circulation of citizens among all

the member countries and it also promotes in a pleasant way the mutual knowledge of several places, different local cultural heritages and social habits as well as their understanding and respect.

One of the greatest benefits of travel is the opportunity to experience different cultures and lifestyle, making us aware about how they all belong to the same European root, how we are "United in Diversity".

And it is precisely this diversity that should push all of us as travelers to take care of observing travel etiquettes to respect customs, traditions and people when we are abroad. When we travel we should keep always in mind that we are "guests in someone else's home", so we have to behave accordingly.

As more and more people today begin to travel, it is vital making sure tourism doesn't disrupt destinations and the life of the locals, especially in view of increasing measures for **overtourism**, anti-tourism protests and a growing anti-tourist sentiment across Europe.

To emphasize the relevance of this peculiar need also the European Union and the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC³) works together in efforts to raise awareness about good manners among travelers to make them more responsible in their traveler behavior.

3.6. How to be a Better and Responsible Tourist.

Tourism can be of great social, cultural and economic value to everybody involved—the visitor and the visited. It all depends on the type of traveler we are, so is up to us to be socially responsible and culturally open-minded.

³ WTCC - The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) is the body which represents the Travel & Tourism private sector globally. Its Members include over 170 CEOs, Chairs and Presidents of the world's leading Travel & Tourism companies from all geographies covering all industries. WTTC works to raise awareness of Travel & Tourism as one of the world's largest economic sectors, supporting one in 10 jobs (319 million) worldwide and generating 10.4% (US\$8.8 trillion) of world GDP in 2018. WTTC conducts research on the Economic Impact of Travel & Tourism in 185 countries for nearly 30 years. WTCC makes also publications in the field of interest with European Commission, such as:

"EU_Tourism_Trends_LowResolution_emails" Publication prepared in the framework of the cooperation between UNWTO and the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) of the European Commission with the funding from the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020). The European Commission and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) have a long standing history of cooperation in the field of tourism. This relationship was enhanced with the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between both organizations in May 2012 and with the April 2016 agreement between UNWTO and the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) of the European Commission for the development of the Enhancing the Understanding of European Tourism project.

Exploring a new destination and immersing ourselves in the culture of its citizens is an immensely rewarding experience. But it can be even more rewarding if we, as travelers, take care to observe the customs and travel etiquette of the places we visit. So, while traveling, it is really important to be mindful and remember that the locals are essentially hosting us in their home country.

To be a better and responsible tourist, indeed, it is highly suggested learning as much as we can about the place we're travelling to. To make ourselves aware, for example, we can read up on the customs, history and culture of the destination. The more is known about a country, its citizens and traditions, the smaller will be the possibilities that cultural or social bounds will be overtaken, providing unpleasant situations or cultural misunderstandings.

A tourist who respects a travel etiquette always remembers that he is a "visitor" and locals are his hosts, so he should try to don't disturb their normal routines (e.g. he doesn't expect them to make space for him on the train/tram/bus) since they are in their day to day and probably they might be on their way to work or school. The most important thing is always be courteous in our interactions with locals, and it will return us the rewards. Most people are eager to help and engage with a friendly person, no matter where they're from.

Moreover, it can be a good idea to read up a bit about basic language uses. Greeting a person in their native tongue is one of the most powerful introductions you can ever have. Even if you can only say 'hello', 'goodbye', 'thank you' and 'please' in the language of the country you're visiting, you already have an advantage. Nelson Mandela famously said, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart." This adage rings true throughout the world.

When we speak about travel etiquettes, we can't not mention opinions and discussion points, so a polite traveler should keep controversial opinions to himself. A careful traveler should be mindful about the fact that the locals might be sensitive about specific topics, especially about politics and religion. Many countries throughout Europe can have complicated politics and/or difficult histories then, if we have a controversial opinion about something regarding their affairs, it is better rather to keep it to ourselves.

There are also some other simple but not less important ethical rules and good manners that should be observed by a tourist who decided to adopt a proper travel etiquette: they may be assumed, but sometimes, unfortunately, they are not.

Since today we're all accustomed to always be with our mobile devices, making photos and videos of our good and enjoyable experiences to be sent to friends or shared with the followers on social media as well, a responsible tourist should be mindful when do that.

Taking a selfie in a foreign destination or making videos in a pleasing situation is very tempting.

After all, everyone want a visual keepsake of the time spent abroad in wonderful places. Like travel etiquette, it is important also to have a "*selfie etiquette*". First, we should be careful about who/what could be included in the background. Then, a selfie stick is not welcome everywhere, for example in museums, in places of worship or memorial sites they are highly discouraged. So, we should be careful where we use it, and always keep the people around us in mind when you're trying to find the perfect angle.

Last but not the list, a polite tourist dresses appropriately. When we travel it is allowed to wear whatever makes us feel comfortable, however, be cognisant of the fact that certain modes of dress are frowned upon in certain places. For instance, is not recommended to go into places of worship with bare shoulders and flip flops. An appropriate travel etiquette provides to keep it stylish, and when in doubt, cover up to the knees and elbows to be on the safe side.

Finally, since trying local cuisine is a big part of exploring a new culture and sharing traditions and social habits, a curious and interested tourist should not deprive himself of tasting local food and know foreign gastronomic traditions. The food will be both interesting and different and we might not like the taste, but always remember that it's the traditional food of the country we're visiting.

GOOD TOURISTS VS BAD TOURISTS

11 golden tips to observe a responsible Travel Etiquette

- 1. Consider to discover and visit alternative options** such as secondary or tertiary cities to improve the travel experience and promote lesser-known destinations (e.g. in Italy, you can choose to visit smaller cities such Verona or Chioggia other than Venice).
- 2. Try to escape the so-called "honeypot sites"**, the locations attracting massive number of tourists. These places are at high risk of *overtourism* and they could endanger the travel experience in addition to put cities and local habitants under strain.
- 3. While you research where to stay, eat, and sightsee at your destination, include research on customs and cultural sensitivities.** A good practice for good travelers and responsible tourists is to do some research on the customs and traditions before visiting any given place. By educating ourselves on the social reality of a country, we can provide insight to mind and empathy to heart.
- 4. Learn a few words in the language of your destination.** Even if your pronunciation is not perfect, words like "Good morning" or "Please" are appreciated: trying to speak some basic words in local language - even if just "Hello" or "Thank you" — it's a sign of consideration. Then, smile and use those interactions to learn some new vocabulary!
- 5. A good traveler should keep in mind that he is the one abroad and probably having the time of his life, but locals are going about their daily routine, same day, VERY different perspectives.**
- 6. Choose to stay in locally-owned accommodation and guesthouses instead international hotel franchise.** The profits are more likely to go back into the local economy rather than into giant multinationals.
- 7. Buy locally-made products and try to avoid cheap mass-produced souvenirs.** Be a conscious consumer and buy locally made products to support local communities. Go eat at local restaurants, taste new flavors and enjoy the country's cuisine and the local gastronomic traditions.
- 8. A good tourist practices good photo etiquette:** he doesn't snap rolls of photos from speeding tour buses, doesn't use flash photography and video in restricted places such as museums, shrines, churches, temples or theatres. He pays attention in photographing some private corporate or government location may violate the law as well as shooting people without asking their permission could disturb them, so a good tourist try to don't do that.
- 9. Silence cell phones when you are in restricted places** such as museums, shrines, churches, temples or theatres. Let's leave the phone behind in the backpack and explore, get lost and experience the destination!
- 10. Be a considerate smoker and choose a smoking location that doesn't impact others** (it is a good etiquette at home and abroad).
- 11. Reduce plastic waste** and always pick up after, paying attention to our planet and ecology.

But above all, to be a good traveler be respectful and don't forget to be culturally alert!

Chapter 4. Religious tolerance and Ecumenism

In this chapter we will address the issues of tolerance and ecumenism from a religious perspective, based on the fact that the majority of countries in Europe are Christian or their societies have Christian beliefs, values and traditions at their core, even if nowadays less and less people consider themselves practicing Christians or religious. Even when all states in Europe today are secular states that function independently of religious beliefs or that, at least, officially do not contemplate or promote religious codes of conduct, there are certain customs, values and traditions that remain and stem from Christian values and attitudes and are part of society. We will look at tolerance from a religious perspective to better understand how the issue of ecumenism within Christianity can and should help Christian Europeans be more tolerant not only among the different Christian denominations that are present in Europe, but also towards other religions that now coexist in Europe.

4.1. What is Ecumenism?

Ecumenism (also spelled œcumenism) from the Greek word “oikoumene” is known as the movement in which Christians strive together for closer relations, cooperate and promote unity among all Christian churches. This union involves a range of initiatives from local churches of different denominations running a soup kitchen for the poor to holding an ecumenical Stations of the Cross service every Friday in Lent in a different local church of another denomination (e.g. Catholic, Lutheran, Moravian, Anglican, Reformed and Methodist). The main objective of ecumenism is the recognition of sacramental validity, Eucharistic participation, and the achievement of full communion between the different Christian confessions. Baptism according to the Trinitarian formula is considered the foundation of Christian ecumenism. To strive for the unity of the Church, ecumenists use verses 17:20-23 of the Apostle John as biblical support, in which Christ pleads with Christians “that they may all be one” so that mankind may follow the message of the Gospel. In addition, Jesus Christ pointed out that the bonds of Christians with one another are far more important and valuable than those we may have with our blood relatives.

Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Protestantism are the 3 main religions found on the European continent, being Catholicism the predominant one. Within Protestantism are the religious currents of Lutheranism and Anglicanism.

- Catholicism: According to the Catholic Church, full unity with the separated affiliates must be eminent, and in turn, what is considered to be a false union must be declined, as it would be disloyal to the teaching of Holy Scripture and its tradition. The European countries where Catholicism is most widely practised are Germany, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, the Vatican City, Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, San Marino, Switzerland.
- Orthodoxy: It is the opinion held to be correct and true; as opposed to heterodoxy, held to be false. This belief is mainly present in European countries such as Belarus, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Montenegro, Macedonia, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine. There are two distinct bodies of Orthodox churches: Eastern Orthodoxy and Oriental Orthodoxy.
- Protestantism: There is no concrete and adequate definition of Protestantism as there is a great diversity within this religious current. However, it could be defined as non-Roman Western Christianity. Two of its most important denominations are Lutheranism and Anglicanism. Protestants are involved in a wide variety of ecumenical groups, although they do not always work for the purpose of unity, which has made it difficult for all Protestant denominations to fully unite. Although, as mentioned above, the Catholic religion is followed in Germany, there is also a large part of the population that is Protestant.
- Lutheranism: The largest and leading non-Catholic denomination in the West. The German, Scandinavian and American churches of this stream differ from each other in their polity, but almost all are related through national and international committees, the most comprehensive being the Lutheran World Federation. Doctrinally, it decrees its distinctive position in the Book of Concord, which has been developed by a tradition of theological scholarship. Martin Luther was conservative in this Roman Catholic liturgical reform and the Lutheran Church, which despite altering some of its liturgical forms, remains traditional. A large number of Lutheran churches around the world have cooperated with ecumenism and are members of the World Council of Churches, although Lutheranism has not gone beyond its confessional boundaries in order to create full communion with other bodies. Today, this religious current is followed in European countries such as Denmark, Iceland, Latvia, Norway and Sweden.

- Anglicanism: The members of the Anglican Communion have followed the Ecumenical Movement through their involvement in organizations in the USA.

The first two millennia of the Christian Church can be seen as a period in which the recovery of the unity of the Church was pushed forward. The second century saw the beginning of a long period in which relations between Christians broke down because of the presentation of a serious doctrinal error of the Gnostics, which led to the breakdown of communion. On the date of Easter there arose Quartodecimanism, a dispute that pitted the Christians of Rome against the Christians of Asia Minor. In turn, Montanism, a radical doctrine, completely divided the Church. In 250, the Novatians broke communion with those Christians who offered sacrifices to pagan gods during the persecutions of Emperor Decius. In the early 4th century, the Donatists, belonging to the Church of the Martyrs, refused to share communion with those who had rejected their faith during the persecutions of Diocletian and Galerius. They were a powerful force until the 5th century and survived into the 7th century despite ecclesiastical and state opposition. This disagreement manifested the regional, national, cultural and economic differences between poor rural North African Christians and sophisticated city Romans. Over the years, leaders and churches attempted to mend these divisions and externalise the visible unity of Christ's church. However, in the fifth century there was a momentous breakdown of this unity because of political, philosophical, linguistic and cultural differences. In addition, tensions grew as the church began to determine the relationship between God the Father and God the Son, and later, the relationship between divine and human elements in the nature and person of Jesus Christ.

The ecumenical councils at Nicaea (325 AD), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) concretised the agreement to be taught and believed, coupling this faith in the Nicene Creed and the Chalcedonian Definition, which assumed that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, true man and God, one person. Certain groups departed doctrinally from the agreement developed at the councils mentioned above. Nestorianism (heresy at Ephesus) taught that in Christ there are two incarnate persons and two natures merged as one. Monophysitism (heresy at Chalcedon) taught that there is only one divine nature. Some churches refused to accept the doctrinal and disciplinary decisions of Ephesus and Chalcedon, so they formed their own communities mainly outside what was considered mainstream Christianity in Europe and the Middle East. Nestorianism became the Assyrian Church of the East. These churches along with the Monophysites became isolated from the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant churches despite some attempts

at reconciliation. Eventually, they became large missionary churches that spread throughout Africa and Asia.

A general overview, based on some René Berthier's assessments, allows the following points to be made concerning the state of Ecumenism today. The question of baptism was resolved: all Christians, whether Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican or Protestant, recognise the value of baptism administered by churches other than their own, so that if a Christian wishes to change his or her doctrine, he or she does not have to be rebaptised. With regard to the verification of marriages between partners of different Christian faiths, a Catholic who wishes to marry a non-Catholic must fulfil certain requirements that do not affect his or her understanding of the sacrament. On moral issues, such as divorce or abortion, the disagreements are not so extreme as to prevent agreement. However, on issues of a more modern formulation, such as social justice, international life and civic freedoms, the views are similar to the extent that the different Churches have come to speak together.

4.2. What is Tolerance?

Tolerance, from the Latin *tolerans*, can be defined as the acceptance, permission and acquiescence towards actions, ideas, objects, opinions, practices, beliefs or persons with racial or ethnic origins that differ from our own. This concept emerged in the 16th century during the wars of religion in France between Protestants and Catholics. At first it signalled forgiveness of others' views of faith that the Church did not regard as indispensable and was thus interpreted in a derogatory way. However, John Locke and Pierre Bayle gave the term a positive meaning, as did the Enlightenment, where it became one of the essential values for the acceptance of other beliefs. The basis of tolerance is respect, it is established as a fundamental value so that people can live together harmoniously and peacefully, accepting the differences of each human being in any field.

As mentioned above, to tolerate is to accept, understand and cope with the differences that human beings may have. For example, a group of people may agree in the political sphere and belong to the same party, but at the same time that same group may disagree in the religious sphere, and for that reason they should not argue or break off relations. When we talk about tolerant societies, countries or states, we mean that people are respected in all areas. Spain, in terms of religion, is a secular country, but it respects people who practise other religions such as Islam or Buddhism, or no religion at all.

According to “This is the real Spain” blog that made a comparative data from the Pew Research Center and the Real Instituto Elcano, in terms of tolerance in Europe, the 10 most religiously tolerant countries in Europe are the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, France, Finland and Ireland. Spain is the 6th most tolerant country in Europe, as Spanish society has a great aptitude for integrating the different. In fact, it is one of the most immigrant-receiving countries in the world, whose citizens have been integrated into the education and health system as well as into the labour market. Spain's hospitable attitude, its low rate of xenophobia and its acceptance of coexistence with people of different races, religions, customs and languages, means that immigrants from both rich and poor countries decide to make the journey to this country in search of a good quality of life. Furthermore, this comparative data shows that Spain is one of the least xenophobic countries in Europe and the one that least sees immigration as a problem.

4.3. Tolerance and Ecumenism.

According to an article written by Jeff Geerling titled “Tolerance - A Misunderstood Aspect of Ecumenism”, diversity is praised and tolerance is popular, and being intolerant is tantamount to committing a serious crime against one’s freedom in our culture, therefore, one should adapt to the beliefs of others even if they conflict with Catholic morality, lest one be labelled a close-minded person. The idea of healthy tolerance held by the vast majority of Catholics is wrong, since the concept does not mean acceptance or that one person should not correct another person's wrongdoing. In accordance with Geerling, ecumenism and tolerance require that the human beings for whom God has respect are also respected by us, while at the same time we fulfil the love of neighbour as written in the Bible. Jesus loved others with a pure and divine love, which is why he embraced harsh repressions and sorrows. Furthermore, he expected everyone to follow his path to the Kingdom of God, which demanded a correction in the way we love others. To love as he did, it is our duty to care for ourselves as well as for our neighbour. Following in Christ's footsteps and giving love to others sometimes needs reproof and amendment, so Catholics must hold fast to their faith and share it with others, which amounts to living a Christ-like life, being faithful to God's Word and having true love for others.

4.4. Tolerance and Ecumenism in Europe.

Ecumenism in Europe is going through a remarkably difficult and critical time, which is largely due to issues external to the Church, but which have led to tensions and conflicts between and within the Church. One of these conflicts could be the great tension in Ukraine between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, which has caused a rift within Orthodoxy. Another issue, which is perhaps the biggest and most divisive, is the whole issue of gender theory and the LGBTBI+ community, as the churches have very different positions on this issue, which are sometimes opposed and irreconcilable. Also, another issue that causes tensions is the presence of many free churches, linked in some way to Pentecostalism, which, although they consider themselves heirs of the Protestant Reformation, are very critical of the traditional churches and are not ecumenical. Such free churches are currently on the rise.

Tolerance in Europe is increasing due to the cultural diversity that we citizens live with on a daily basis. The fact that European themselves migrate from one country to another within Europe increases this diversity and therefore, as a general rule, there is greater acceptance of other Christian customs, beliefs but also, although to a lesser extent and with more challenges still to overcome of other races, ethnicities and religions that come from outside of Europe. There are even Europeans who belonged to one religion in their country of origin, who have converted to the predominant religion of the European country they migrated to. However, as with any other issue, there is still discrimination, although to a lesser extent than in the past, against people on the basis of their religion, language, country of origin, race, ethnicity and sexuality in all European countries. This is a challenge that all Europeans should work together to overcome.

Chapter 5 - Attitudes of majorities to minorities (Spain and Italy)

5.1. Spain.

5.1.1. A brief history of immigration in Spain.

Mass immigration in Spain is a relatively new phenomenon that timidly started with the arrival of the new millennium, at the dawn of the 21st century, and gradually increased until it had reached its peak by the end of the decade when foreign residents represented 12.22 per cent of the Spanish population [The Evolution of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance in Spain, Survey Report 2016]. After that, immigration figures have steadied and slightly decreased with a downward trend. According to figures published by the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (INE) and the National Statistics Office Municipal Register of Inhabitants, **the immigrant population in Spain represented 9.8 per cent of the national population in 2017, 0.1 per cent down from the previous year.** Even when, in recent times, there has been a surge of extreme right radicalism and the spreading of an anti-immigration feeling in Europe, with a strong presence of right-wing parties gaining momentum in some European countries (like Italy, Poland, Hungary and France where nationalist parties have gained a sizeable number of seats in the European Parliament), in Spain the level of intolerance against immigrants remains low and immigration is nowhere near the top concerns of the Spanish population. Despite attempts from resurgent far-right forces like that of VOX (a populist right-wing party founded in 2013 which recently rose in popularity in the south of Spain) to portray immigration as one of Spain's biggest problems and economic burdens, the real figures reveal a decline in immigrant arrivals in the last decade and Spaniards rate Unemployment, the Economy, Healthcare, the Pensions System and Education as far bigger concerns, in that order. [The Evolution of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance in Spain, Survey Report 2016].

5.1.2. Spain as a migrant nation.



1. Statue in the seaport of Veracruz, Mexico dedicated to the thousands of Spanish immigrants who arrived between 1936 and 1939 [image by Alejandro Linares García]

Historically speaking, **before 1998 Spain was a country of emigrants with virtually non-existent foreign immigration** and waves of mass exodus of Spanish people in the face of unfavourable economic climates marked historical events, especially between 1936 and 1939, as a consequence of the Spanish civil war and its aftermath with the eventual loss of freedoms and persecution of left-wing fighters and thinkers, once General Franco assumed power after his triumphant military coup and 36-year dictatorship rule, which ended upon his death in 1975. **Between the late 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s and early 70s Spanish migration constituted a long-lasting historical phenomenon with a great impact at both national and historical level.** The so-called Spanish migration of the Modern Age saw several waves of Spanish migrants looking for a better future make their way to (mostly) Latin American lands that were former colonies of the Spanish Empire. Main countries of migration included

Argentina, Venezuela and Cuba (the top three receiving countries in terms of numbers of Spanish immigrants over the decades)

Mexico, Uruguay, Chile and, to a lesser extent, Brazil and the

U.S. But Spaniards did not just flock to the Americas in search of good fortune, they also looked to neighbouring countries in Europe when it was finally on its way to recovery after the end of the Second World War. **Over one million of Spaniards emigrated to continental Europe over the last half of the 20th century**, which represented 70 per cent of the migration total in the 1959-1973 period. The main destinations were France, Germany, Switzerland and Belgium, in that order, and the migration figures from Spain to neighbouring European nations only started dwindling in 1973, coinciding with the first oil crisis. It was after 1973 that Spanish migration came to a halt and many of the expatriates started making the return home (especially from the Spanish migrants that went to Europe). Despite there being a large number of returners, there are many significant Spanish colonies in several European and American countries. The figures of Spaniards emigrants during the late 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s have never been close to being reached again, even when the global economic crisis of 2008-2009 saw unemployment rates skyrocket to unprecedented levels (22.77% in 2012 according

to figures from EPA – Labour Force Survey - compared to an European average of 10.8 per cent during the same period [Eurostat]) and forced many youngsters to seek a brighter future elsewhere.



2. Monument to the Migrant's Mother in Gijón, Spain [Photo by Indiacatalina]

As can be seen, Spain has a long history as a migrant nation (if we go back in time even further, the waves of mass Spanish exodus go back to pre-medieval times) **and it is precisely because of its long (and still relatively recent) history as a migrant nation that Spanish people may be more tolerant and accepting of foreign migrants than their European counterparts**, given that they themselves were migrants for several generations, it is easier for them to put themselves in the shoes of immigrants and feel more compassionate towards their predicament.

5.1.3. Immigration in Spain today.

As explained earlier, immigration in Spain is a recent phenomenon where prior to 1998 the country had always been known as a migrant nation and even after the figures of Spanish emigrants came to a halt in the 70s, the two decades that followed received virtually no foreign immigrants. At the close of 1998 immigrants in Spain accounted for only 1.6 per cent of the population, the years that followed would see that figure double and triple, gradually growing to reach a peak of 12.2% in 2010 and 2011, before starting to decline and fall to a low of 9.8% in 2017 after which figures started to pick up again, with United Nations stating **that as of the end of 2017 there were over 5,947,106 foreign-born people in Spain, accounting for 12.75% of the population.**

With the arrival of a new century and the dawn of a new millennium that saw a booming economy, low unemployment rates that kept getting lower (they reached a peak low of 8.26% in 2006 as published by the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística*) many immigrants saw in Spain the opportunity of a promising future, especially those with cultural and linguistic ties to Spain (Latin America) and North African countries, that due to its proximity to the south of Spain attempted to cross the pond.

5.1.4. Attitudes of Spanish citizens towards immigrants and ethnic minorities.

Unlike in the rest of Europe, a moderate (and growing) **majority of immigrants in Spain nowadays come from Latin American countries** (who share the same language, religious beliefs and some elements of Hispanic culture), especially from Ecuador (as of 2016 they made up for the largest population of Latin American immigrants in Spain, accounting for 7.09 per cent of the population according to UN figures) and more recently from Venezuela (the arrival of migrants from Venezuela to Spain jumped up by 44 per cent in 2018 due to the economic and political Venezuelan crisis under the rule of President Maduro) but also from neighbouring European countries (mainly Romania, Italy and formerly the UK, with the latter having drastically decreased over the last two years and the number of UK expats in Spain having dwindled to an all-time low due to Brexit). There is also **an important majority of immigrants from Morocco** (11.91% of the population), and more recently other minorities coming from other African countries. Similarly, the **migration of people from Sub-Saharan Africa has increased** and has been deemed controversial as they enter Spain crossing the fenced borders in Melilla and Ceuta (the two Spanish autonomous cities in Africa that border Morocco). With authorities unable to control the massive influx towards the end of the 2000 decade, in 2013 they added razors to the top of the border fences to try and contain them, a reverted measure brought back after six years of suspension. The decision to bring back “*concertina*” fencing was met with mixed opinions and regarded by some as non-humanitarian and in violation of human rights. The new left-wing government presided by Pedro Sanchez promised to remove the razor wires, but as of today the “*concertina*” wires remain in place.

In the midst of the migratory surge in Spain between 2000 and 2007, the downfall of the global economy in 2008 played an important role in altering the way Spanish people viewed immigrants, threatening the (until then) rather peaceful coexistence between Spaniards and foreigners. During the worst times of the crisis that saw many people lose their homes (seized by the banks because of unpaid mortgage arrears) **a sizeable portion of the Spanish population thought**

immigrants unfairly competed against Spanish people for jobs at a time when unemployment in the country was over 20% and growing. To make matter worse, even when the global financial crisis was declared officially over by the end of 2014, the markets in Spain remained on their sluggish and slow way to recovery, with salaries still lagging behind pre-crisis figures and a recovering unemployment rate that still remains high at an estimated 13.21% as of June 2019 [figures published by the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security – *Ministerio de Trabajo, Migraciones y Seguridad Social*], the second highest unemployment rate in Europe, only behind Greece’s 18% during the same period. Even when the Spanish Social Security system received a record-number of affiliations in June 2019, many jobs continue to be precarious, the system is plagued with temporary contracts and low-quality jobs which means instability in the job market continues to drive tensions in the population. The trend for temporary contracts and the continued fall of permanent ones perseveres since 2009. The fact **that immigrants often accept lower-paid jobs and worse working conditions** (verging on the illegal, often accepting exploitative terms without contract), makes Spanish people feel pushed to the edge with little options to access a quality job market. The biggest wedge standing between Spanish people and immigrants continues to be employment and the economy. **Most Spaniards see immigration as problematic because if there are not enough jobs for the native population how can the welfare system sustain more unemployed people with additional needs** (like housing, food and clothing). Part of the Spanish population also feels that immigrants get better and quicker access to health and preferential housing, a critical issue (and major bone of contention between the population and the government) when the inflation of rent in cities and the ever-stricter financial checks to secure housing (together with the rise of AirBnB-style tourist accommodation – another very problematic phenomenon) are driving citizens out of cities. **Rather than racism or cultural differences being at the root of Spain’s problem with immigration, the nature of Spanish people’s discordant note with immigration is of a mainly economic nature**, with the only exception of the growing concern about the arrival of unaccompanied minors (called MENAS in Spain for its abbreviation in Spanish “*Menores No Acompañados*”) but more on that later.

5.1.5. The “manteros” of Sub-Saharan origin.

A good number of the illegal immigrants who make it to Spain from Africa’s Sub-Saharan regions turn to the streets to earn a living and become street vendors. You can find them Spain’s most populous and centric cities, they operate in groups and sell their goods on the floor (on top of blankets, or “*mantas*” as they’re called in Spanish, hence the name “*manteros*”). Spanish people are

mostly indifferent to this group of illegal immigrants who try to make a living on the streets by selling fake imitation brand products and pirate DVDs and CDs. They have a “live and let live” attitude towards them, sometimes feeling sorry for them but not really engaging with them in the majority of cases. In March 2018, the police persecution of one of these illegal immigrants, a 35-year-old man of Senegal origin, ended in a cardiac arrest that ended the young man’s life. It all happened in Madrid’s neighbourhood of *Lavapiés* and the incident caused major uproar in, with outpourings of solidarity, anti-racist parades and accusations to the police for their unfair treatment and often extreme measures against a mostly peaceful (although illegal) group of immigrants.

5.1.6. The controversial use of concertina wire on the border fence.

There is one controversial anti-immigration measure in Spain that caused an uproar in recent times and had the current government (presided by Pedro Sanchez) pledged to eliminate. The razor-topped fencing on the border that stands between Spain and Morocco in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla have been met with national and international repulse, given that they are widely regarded as a cruel, inhumane and ultimately unnecessary measure that achieves little beyond physically hurting and maiming people.



3. The adapted shoes of an immigrant to climb concertina fencing. Photo by Raymond Gelow

The problem with *concertina* fencing is not only that it is regarded as a cruel method to curtail migration, responsible for serious cuts and injuries to immigrants, they have also proved to be largely ineffective as they have not stopped immigrants from crossing the border, bloody feet, hands, arms and all, with some cuts being really gruesome to watch. Some ingenious migrants have

even fashioned a special “razor-resistant” shoe by attaching nails and hooks (see image to the left, where the sole of the shoe reads “We all have a right to live in the world”).

The current left-wing government ruling Spain, the PSOE party said that “frontiers can be protected without hurting humans” pledging to substitute *concertinas* with “more secure methods”. Even when the Ministry of Interior (“*Ministerio del Interior*”) announced the elimination of *concertinas* by the end of February or beginning of March, as of June 2019 they were still in place with no further government announcements as to when their removal will finally happen. With political upheaval and general elections having taken place recent months (plus an atmosphere that makes it likely that there could be another election in a few months’ time) it looks like this promise could be delayed further.

5.1.7. Unaccompanied minors (MENAS) – a growing concern.

The term MENAS in Spain is used to refer to unaccompanied immigrant minors. UNICEF says they lack protection, but Spanish neighbourhoods feel unsafe when groups of unaccompanied minors (aged between 13 and 18) take the streets and turn into young delinquents, vandalising shops, stealing, pickpocketing or generally being conflictive, disrespectful and difficult to deal with. Not only that, there have been cases of gang rape perpetrated by MENAS and a general feeling of repulse towards them is gaining momentum in the Spanish society. They are of mostly Moroccan and African origin and while part of the Spanish population feels varying degrees of compassion towards them, another large part fears them. The major problem here is exclusion and the government not doing enough to integrate immigrant unaccompanied youths in Spain and not dedicating enough resources to their guardianship, schooling or training.

5.1.8. The Latin American conundrum.

How are Latin American immigrants viewed by Spanish people? The answer to that question varies greatly, because although there are many links between Spain and its former Hispanic colonies beyond sharing a common tongue and mostly Catholic beliefs, said ties are not as strong with some nationalities as they are with others. Argentinians, Venezuelans and Cubans, for example, enjoy greater acceptance in Spain for a variety of reasons, one of the main ones being the fact that when Spain was a major migrant nation, these were the Latin American countries that the vast majority of Spanish migrants flocked to, creating stronger cultural links that have lasted through the decades and remain strong. In the case of Cuba, the mutual congeniality is also because the tropical island was the

last major Spanish stronghold in the Americas (they were the last country to gain independence from Spain). Also, Cuba's contagious Caribbean culture is more appealing to Spanish people, who find Cubans in general more open and friendly than more closed-up groups of indigenous Amerindian origin (as is the case with Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, etc).

The disproportionately large numbers of Ecuadorians in Spain have been met with a certain degree of concern and rebuff. Concern because at times some Spanish people have felt they have taken over entire neighbourhoods and erased Spanish traditions and customs from them, failing to fully integrate as they would have hoped or contributing to the loss of identity in some areas. On the other hand, while some Colombians, for example (one of the fastest growing immigrant groups in Spain) have a good to moderate level of acceptance, there are networks of criminal Latin bands (including other Latin American nationalities, not just Colombians) who have not helped change the image that Spanish people have of Latin American immigrants, South Americans in particular, who are sometimes referred to as "*sudacas*" (meaning from South America) in a rather disrespectful and contemptuous tone.

5.1.9. The European context – A welcoming neighbourly approach?

When it comes to how Spanish people respond to immigration from their European counterparts the outlook is generally more favourable than when compared to other migrating nations, with geographical and historical ties as well as a common culture generating generally positive or mostly positive views with a tacit acceptance. A European spirit and sense of belonging to a region as well as to an economic area make for an eagerness to get along or at the very least tolerance and indifference.

5.1.10. The Eurobarometer.

Out of all the countries analysed by The Evolution of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance, Survey Report 2016, Spain and Ireland had a higher percentage of respondents with positive attitudes towards European immigration, with a higher degree of acceptance in 2016 (69%) when compared to the previous year (59%). In the case of Ireland, 71% of survey respondents gave a positive in November 2015, jumping up to a whopping 81% in 2016 (possibly due to Brexit fears and the anti-Brexit feeling in Ireland). By contrast, France, Italy and the UK had a more unfavourable view of European immigration despite their more favourable economic contexts.

Similarly, both Ireland and Spain, followed by Portugal had the most favourable view on immigration from other countries outside the EU than their other European counterparts (see table below).

Table 5. QB4.2 What type of feeling does immigration of people from outside the EU evoke? (total positive responses, as a percentage of total respondents)

	May-15	May-16	Nov-15	Nov-16
UK	39	41	39	49
PT	40	45	42	48
IT	19	27	26	24
FR	29	34	30	35
ES	45	50	53	52
EL	19	24	24	27
IE	47	53	49	57
DE	38	35	35	40
EU-28	34	34	34	37

Source: Eurobarometer, May and November 2015 and 2016.

5.1.11. What do immigrants say? Do they feel included in Spain?

Although opinions differ between some nationalities and others, an article published in Spanish newspaper, El País, revealed that **nearly 80% of immigrants' children feel at home in Spain**. The findings came from a study by the Ortega-Marañón Foundation and the University of Princeton and revealed that **second generation immigrants feel more identified with Spain than descendants from Spanish-born citizens**. According to the study, 79.1 per cent of expatriates' children born in Spain or who arrived to Spain in early childhood feel Spanish. Paradoxically and by comparison, only 71.5 per cent of Spanish children (born to Spanish parents) say they feel the same way. The study, the first of its kind in Europe, has been carried out for ten years with the participation of 7,000 second-generation immigrants residing in Madrid and Barcelona, among which there were people from 67 different nationalities. Participants in the investigation were first interviewed in childhood, then in teenagerhood and again shortly after reaching adulthood.

The reasons for such high rates of integration and inclusion, according to the report, are the egalitarian education and healthcare system, on one hand, and the welcoming attitude of the Spanish population on the other. Only 1.67 per cent of Spanish people born to immigrant parents feels frequently discriminated in Spain while 92.95 per cent says they are never or rarely marginalised because of their origin. Conversely, according to the study's authors a certain degree of discrimination can be observed in the fact that only 18.2 per cent of second-generation Spaniards

with foreign parents have access to jobs as administrators, managers or qualified professional in comparison to 27.3 per cent Spanish workers born to Spanish-born parents. The clue is more on the fact that 47 per cent second-generation immigrants get jobs through family and friends in comparison to 46.3 per cent of workers born to Spanish natives who find jobs on the internet or by sending their CV to companies.



4. A group of immigrants learns to dance flamenco in the Integration Party of Seville. Photo by Alejandro Ruesga. Source: El País

In terms of education, according to Alejandro Portes, sociologist at the University of Princeton, the findings were surprising in the “similarity of autochthonous groups and participants with immigrant parents”, who, in his words, “seem to belong to a same common universe of youngsters”. According to the study both groups share professional and educational ambitions as well as similar milestones in both areas. Around 13% of both participating groups, had completed a university degree.

When it comes to religious grounds, the study found that those born to immigrant parents tend to maintain their parents’ religious beliefs more than those of autochthonous origin, something that happens more often among the Muslim population, according to Portes. And it is precisely this group (Muslims) who report more cases of discrimination as nearly 15 per cent of participants said they felt discriminated in Spain, with special hostility from the police. Even when complaints about police harassment are few and far between (and mostly happened in Barcelona according to the report), the study authors say this has a direct impact on their self-identification as Spanish nationals.

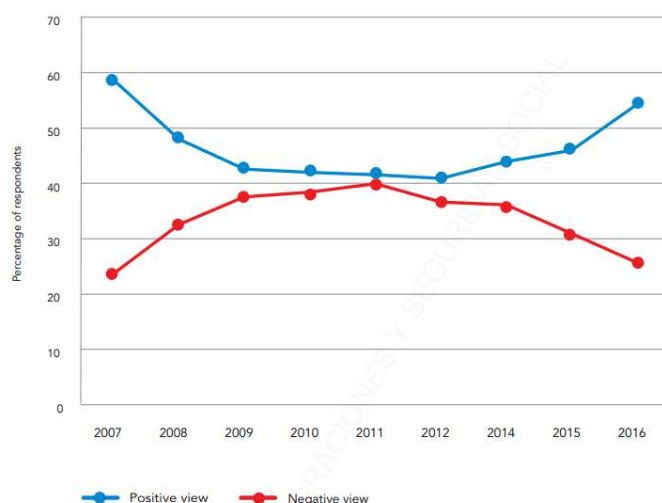
“National self-identification is a very strong indicator even when it looks like a changing variable, on occasions it can have dramatic consequences, as seeing oneself as second-category citizens or limited to living in ghettos sometimes leads to behaviour that can have tragic consequences”

As to first-generation immigrants, the results could probably be very different and would heavily depend on the immigrant’s ethnicity, particular background, nationality, beliefs, traditions, customs and level of acceptance in the Spanish community of settlement, as well as their own attitude towards integration in daily life.

5.1.12. Conclusions – Is Spain a tolerant society?

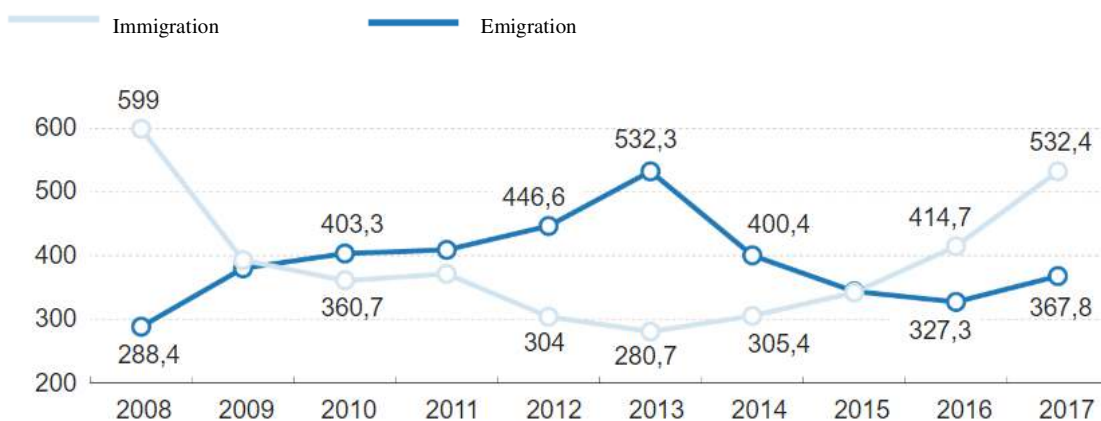
The dawn of the global economic crisis towards the end of 2008 made for a harsher climate with rising levels of intolerance against migrants at a critical time when thousands of jobs were lost in Spain and as such, many regarded immigrants an unnecessary burden to a failing economy on a seemingly never-ending downward spiral. The Spanish saw in foreign arrivals, an unfair competition to access the labour market and good health coverage. This did not mean however that the Spanish people entirely lost sensitivity to immigrants’ plight or that Spanish solidarity disappeared overnight. On the surface, the levels of empathy towards immigrants temporarily waned in order to protect what they deemed were their rights above those of foreigners but the effects were not long-lasting. As can be seen in the chart below, Spanish people’s attitude towards immigration in general turned unfavourable during the worst of the crisis year but the trend has been reversing over the last three to four years and empathy towards immigrants seems to be growing again.

Chart 4. Spaniards’ view of immigration (positive or negative) (Q.23)



5. Source: Centre for Sociological Research: Attitudes Towards Immigration, 2007-2016

Proof of this is the general outrage among the Spanish population with the case of the stranded Aquarius boat, unsuccessfully calling at Mediterranean ports for days with several African immigrants onboard (including very small children). The humanitarian rescue vessel was repeatedly denied entry into various European ports and while tensions arose in Europe to decide who would take responsibility, the passengers were tossed around like a Ping-Pong ball for days with their supplies running critically low and some in a critical condition after being at sea for weeks. Spanish authorities, at the time under a new left-wing government (after six years of right-wing party rule) swiftly acted to welcome the passengers of the Aquarius into Spanish soil and grant them asylum, a move that seemed to be widely supported by the Spanish population, even in the face of the surge of some populist, ultra-conservative, hatred-spouting, anti-immigration political parties like VOX, whose fearmongering tactics did manage to persuade a small part of the population but never gained as many followers as it had hoped (or as it had been predicted by the Spanish media and pre-election polls).

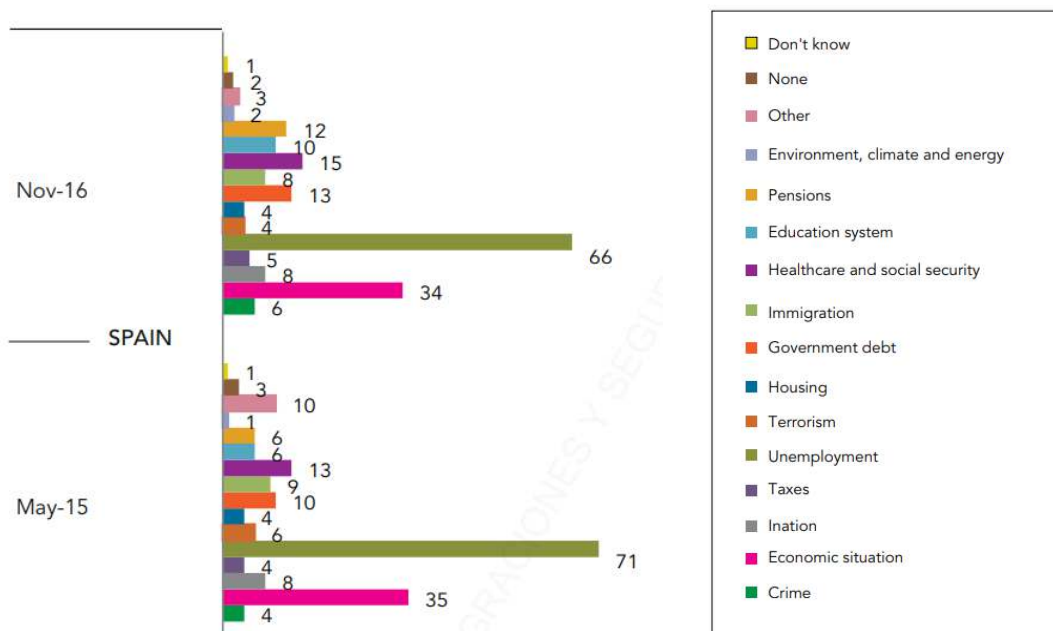


6. Record of Arrivals to Spain since 2008 [Source: El Mundo]

Fast-forwarding to 2019 and looking at the unprecedented rise of VOX (an extreme right wing, anti-immigration party founded in 2013) and how they had triumphantly entered the Andalusian regional government after the municipal elections of December 2008, some Spanish voters were astounded. The left-wing party, PSOE, had lost power after ruling in the autonomous community for nearly 40 years with VOX gaining their first seats in the local government and for the first time having real representation and real influence. Their votes were enough to allow for a three-party joint government between the conservatives from the Partido Popular (PP) and Ciudadanos (centre-right). The initial shock showed uneasiness and puzzlement, but it later proved to be more a case of the left-wing voters being disillusioned with the former party (after nearly half a century or uninterrupted rule in Andalusia) and a desperate want for change rather than a drastic shift to the

extreme right. So, the results must be taken with a pinch of salt, especially in the context that after VOX's entry into the national parliament, there is a fear among the wider Spanish population that the extreme-right sentiment is on the rise. As many as **80% of Spanish citizens are worried about the increase in racism and xenophobia**, according to an article published on La Marea in June 2018, citing the results of a survey by Oxfam Intermón. The survey was carried out before the Aquarius boat rescue case and shows that "Spanish citizens are solidary, legitimising a more proactive political approach from governments" in the words of Eva Garzon, head of Oxfam Intermón's Global Displacement unit.

Spanish people have some pressing concerns and national issues, but as of 2017 immigration was not in the top three; it's not even in the top five. As illustrated in the table below, Employment, the Economic Situation, Healthcare, and more increasingly, in recent years Pensions and the Education System are Spanish people's biggest worries, in that order. Particularly, there has been a growing concern over pensions, with the senior population being regarded as the "saviours" during the worst of the financial crisis (helping out their families with the income from their pensions) and contributing to the economy at an extremely frail time. But unless proven wrong by more recent data, Spanish people are not losing sleep about immigration.



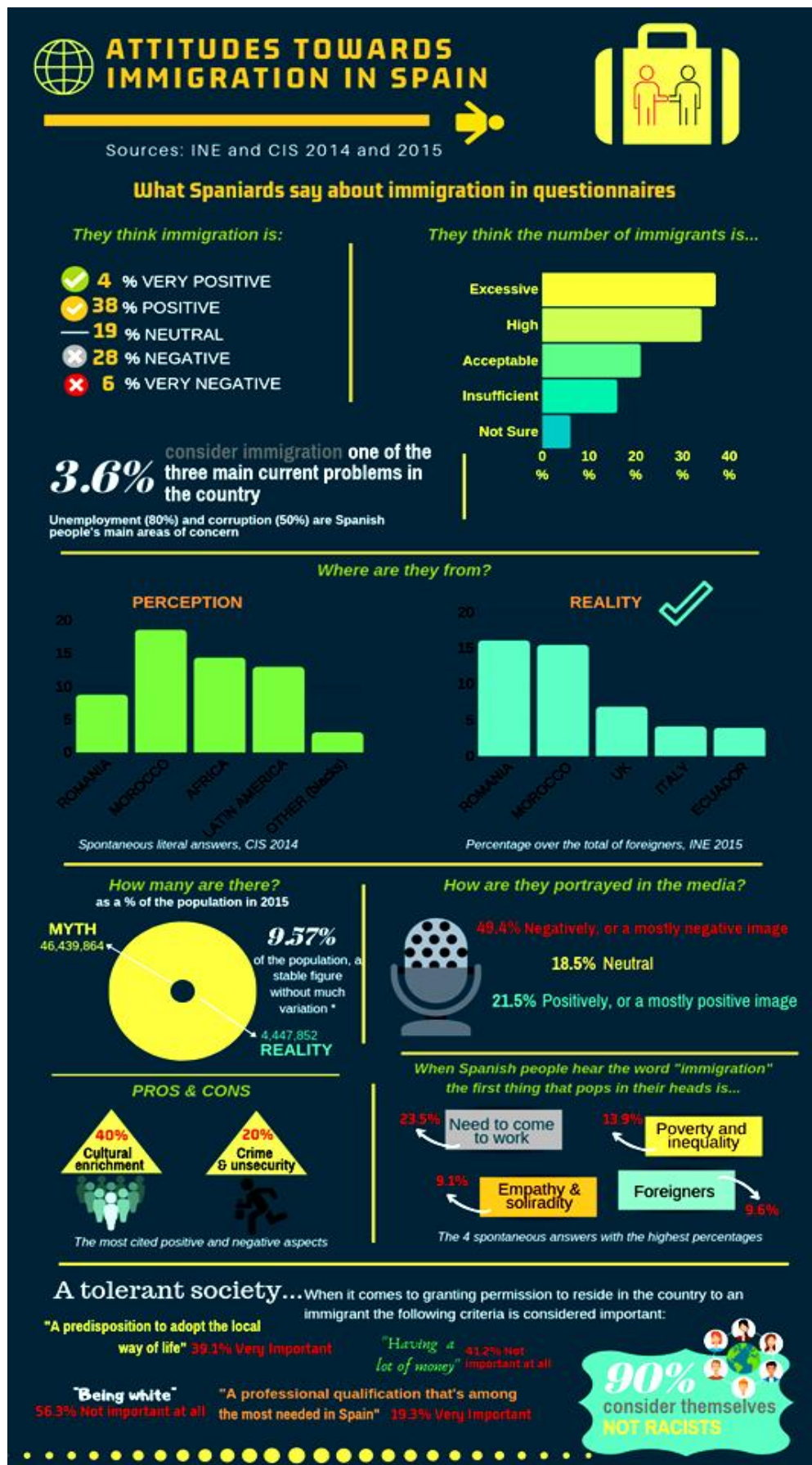
7. What Spanish people ranked as the two most important issues facing their countries [Source: Evolution of Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance in Spain, Survey Report 2016]

On another, not least important note, the aging of the Spanish population and the low birth rates (the third lowest in all of Europe) mean that there were 25 per cent less young people aged

between 25 and 35 years old in the last decade, which, in turn, means that **Spain will need foreigners to fulfil future job roles, something that's already begun to happen**. The Spanish population continued to grow in 2017 and 2018 but in great measure due to immigration, especially from Venezuela (with a 15 per cent increase as of 1st January 2018) and Colombia. Last year's **28 per cent increase in immigration significantly contributed to the national population growth** and the bottom line is that in order to support the aging population Spain needs immigration, especially because immigrant families or immigrant women tend to have higher fertility rates and give birth to more children.

- *A compassionate nation - the Aquarius case that put it all in perspective*

What is a certainty, especially after the last general election results of May 2019, is that most of Spain is leaning left again (despite a small rise in extreme right wing radicalism) and with that there is more room for compassion and solidarity, for tolerance and acceptance. The media is also making efforts to portray the reality that Spanish immigration figures are nowhere near as high or disproportionately unsustainable as some right-wing parties like VOX claim and that, in fact, they are growing moderately year on year (with exception of political and sociological phenomenon like Venezuela's mass exodus). If the economy allows and immigrant figures don't affect other areas, Spain's attitudes towards immigrants can continue to be a mostly positive, or at least an indifferent and accepting one.



8. Infographic by Susana Corona Cruz, adapted from the original in Spanish published in [Observatorio Proxi](#).

5.2. Italy.

5.2.1. A brief history of immigration in Italy.

We start this brief historical excursus from the analysis of the Sociologist Enrico Pugliese⁴, a prominent scholar of immigration to Italy, who has been tracking and mapping the immigration routes to our country followed by those seek safety and employment for a better and more safe future.

In an interview released in 2016 to the organization “Open Migration” he analyzed the *Open Migration Dashboard*⁵ that follows the trends and changes in the migratory flows.

Prof. Pugliese has shown how immigration to Italy has changed over the last half-century: from the early arrivals in the nineteen-sixties to the refugees in Lampedusa in recent years. According to his reflection concerning the possibility to immigrate in Italy today, he says that is fundamental to make a preliminary distinction. Those migrating to Italy from new EU member states can travel in and out without problems. This has an effect on the measured inflow of immigrants. For instance, a Romanian can come and go, he can go back to his country because he has something to do there and then return to Italy. On the contrary, those arriving from non-EU states have a much harder time. Stricter are the regulations, more stabilized the migration becomes. This also affects the data that are available to us. Currently, in Italy there is a situation where it is quite difficult to get registered after arrival.

Concerning the history of immigration in Italy, Prof. Pugliese explains how the national makeup of immigrants has been changed.

The history of migrations to Italy began more than forty years ago. First, the Tunisians came to Puglia, followed by women from Catholic countries of Africa and South America, working as

⁴ Prof. ENRICO PUGLIESE - Professor Emeritus of Sociology of Work, University of Rome-Sapienza. Collaborator Irpps-Cnr, Rome. His long research activity has mainly focused on the Labor Market dynamics and the condition of the weaker job-seekers segments. He paid also particular attention to the socio-economic issues linked to agricultural work, unemployment and migration flows. He also worked on the study of welfare systems, with particular attention to the Italian case, and to the analysis of social policies.

⁵<https://openmigration.org/dashboard/> OPEN MIGRATION.ORG - *Understanding through data, Advocating for dignity*. Open Migration is a project, a path but also a goal. It is an open, horizontal information project on migration issues. It is not information for specialists only. It does not want to be rhetorical information and It must not be information based on prejudices or stereotypes, otherwise it would not have the strength to undermine the prevailing and dangerous prejudices and stereotypes that are used by the media and by certain political forces when the issue of immigration is addressed. Open Migration is therefore a project that uses skills, data and knowledge to contribute to forming opinions and consciences about migration.

waitresses. Then there is the unique case of the Yugoslavians who helped with the reconstruction work in Friuli after the earthquake, in 1976. Overall, immigrants were well distributed even in Southern Italy, especially those employed in housework. Then, in the early nineteen-eighties, as the Italians became richer, it was the time that saw the rise of professions like domestic helpers and street vendors – the so-called “vu’ cumpra”. Throughout the eighties, women came from South America, the Philippines and generally from Catholic countries and the Horn of Africa, while street vendors came from Senegal and Morocco. Tunisians found a home in Sicily, as fishermen, farm hands and construction workers. Since 1992, we have had reliable data on the number of immigrants in Italy. Before that, we only had numbers from the police, and they tended to overestimate the presence of Europeans. Everything changed with the fall of the Berlin Wall, obviously. The landscape changed in the early nineties. The first Albanians arrive, and then the first immigrants from the Eastern Bloc, few and far between.

In particular, with the Albanians arrival, Italians realized for the first time in their history that they have been changed from a Nation of emigrants to a nation which became immigrants' destination. It was a social and cultural shock for a country that wasn't prepared to welcome and support a so wide number of arriving people. The episode of the “Vlora” ship is still remembered as the most significant of the immigration flow occurred in Italy from 1990 to 1992 and it remains today the largest landing of migrants ever arrived in Italy with a single ship. The ship docked at the Bari harbour on **8 August 1991**, bringing around 20,000 Albanians. The management of such a conspicuous and unexpected flow of migrants, moreover in the middle of August, caught the Italian institutions unprepared, who found themselves lacking in structures and procedures adequate to an emergency of this magnitude.

Then, from the late nineties onwards, the immigration became more Christianized and de-Islamized. We saw the first arrivals from Romania, reaching their peak in the early 2000s, when the country joined the European Union.

5.2.2. Italy as a migrant nation – Italian migrants in the past.

If we look at Italian migrants in the past, we can see that they represented one of the most relevant phenomena in our history, especially during the 19th and 20th century. It is possible to divide the main Italian emigration periods in two steps:

- **the first period** called “BIG EXODUS” situated between the end of 19th century (about 1870) and beginning of 20th century (1915), in which people moved especially to North and South America;
- **the second period** called “EUROPEAN EMIGRATION” that started around 1950, after the II World War.

1. The Big Exodus.

It is not to forget that the most important migratory stream of modern history was made by Italians. The emigration phenomenon characterized Italian life from the Country's unification to the Seventy years of the former century. During the XIX century, about 27 million Italians went abroad and about 25 million changed their residence inside the Country, from South to North. The consistence of migration is known by official data, starting from 1970; in 1901 the General Committee of emigration was created.

Emigration had different phases and it changed the demographic, economic and social structure of Italy: it was addressed mostly to America (USA, Brazil and Argentina, where manpower was necessary) and, when they emigrated within European countries, to France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. In the USA emigration was mainly for long periods, while in Latin America it was both stable and transitory.

The main causes of the large scale of emigration were poverty and the desire to change life.

Between 1876 and 1900 the exodus mainly interested the northern regions with three regions that provided the 47% of the entire migratory contingent: Veneto (17.9%), Friuli Venezia Giulia (16.1%) and Piemonte (12.5%). The emigration of Northern Italy, more highly qualified than the Southern regions and, in general temporary, it was mostly absorbed by European countries. In the following two decades the migration record came to the Southern regions. With almost three million people emigrated only from Calabria, Campania and Sicily, and almost nine million from all over Italy. The emigrants from Southern Italy, mainly employed in agriculture and laborers, forced on expatriation from the poverty of their countries. They were ready to accept any kind of job and a stable emigration oversee.

Between 1880 and 1915 four million of Italians arrived in the USA; a lot of them (50/60%) came back to Italy between 1900 and 1914. The main causes of emigration consisted in: the Southern

population was severely damaged by the I World War and also millions of victims were affected by natural catastrophes (1908 earthquake), they were depredated by soldiers and exhausted by the feudal system. Therefore, most of them were forced to emigrate. Another reason for the exodus was the agrarian crisis started about in 1880, the worsen of taxation after the unification of Italy, the decline of old artisan jobs and of domestic factories and the crisis of mountain farms and rural production.

Since 1880 the USA were open to immigration, in order to start their capitalistic development; ships carried goods to Europe and sailed back with emigrants. Ship transport to America was cheaper than trains to Northern Europe, and so many people chose to cross the ocean. The journey to America was hard and difficult, due to medical and bureaucrat controls.

Then, starting from the second part of 19th century in the South America, especially in Argentina, the new government was very committed in agricultural colonization. The new policy attracted a lot of European emigrants. Since 1865 emigrants were encouraged to leave for Argentina by the system of payment in advance of the journey expense and of everything people needed to settle. An Immigration Committee was founded to increase the agricultural production, which was insufficient for the national requirements. Since 1870 in Buenos Aires young couples of farmers were given agricultural fields free, under condition that they planted them and built a house. At the end of the century more than 25% of the landowners were foreign people and among them more than a half came from Southern Italy.



Figure 1 - Italian Emigrants to USA 19° Century

Emigration in Italian Folk Songs - The Songs of Italian Emigrants

30 giorni di nave a vapore⁶

(canto tradizionale dei migranti italiani)

*30 giorni di nave a vapour
che nell'America noi siamo arrivati
e nell' America che siamo arrivati
non abbiám trovato né paglia e né fieno
abbiam dormito sul piano terreno
e come bestie abbiám riposà.
abbiam dormito sul piano terreno
e come bestie abbiám riposà.*

*America allegra e bella
Tutti la chiamano l'America sorella
Tutti la chiamano l'America sorella
La la la la lallalal lallalalallalala*

*Ci andaremo coi carri dei zingari
Ci andaremo coi carri dei zingari
Ci andaremo coi carri dei zingari
In America voglio andar*

*America allegra e bella
Tutti la chiamano l'America sorella
Tutti la chiamano l'America sorella
La la la la lallalal lallalalallalala*

*E l'America l'è longa e l'è larga
L'è circondata di monti e di piani
Ma con l'industria dei nostri italiani
Abbiam fondato paesi e città
Ma con l'industria dei nostri italiani
Abbiam fondato paesi e città*

*America allegra e bella
Tutti la chiamano l'America sorella
Tutti la chiamano l'America sorella
La la la la lallalal lallalalallalala*

30 days of steamboat

(Traditional Folk Song of Italian Emigrants)

*30 days of steamboat
That we have arrived in America
And in America we have arrived
We have found neither straw nor hay
We have slept on the ground floor
And as beasts we have rested
We have slept on the ground floor
And as beasts we have to rest.*

*Cheerful and beautiful America
Everyone calls her America sister
Everyone calls her America sister
La la la la lallalal lallalalallalala*

*We will go there with the gypsy carts
We will go there with the gypsy carts
We will go there with the gypsy carts
I want to go to America*

*Cheerful and beautiful America
Everyone calls her America sister
Everyone calls her America sister
La la la la lallalal lallalalallalala*

*And America is long and wide
It is surrounded by mountains and plains
But with the industry of our Italians
We founded countries and cities
But with the industry of our Italians
We founded countries and cities*

*Cheerful and beautiful America
Everyone calls her America sister
Everyone calls her America sister
La la la la lallalal lallalalallalala*



⁶ Popular folk song called "stornello" on Italian emigration collected in the Casentino area (Tuscany) by Caterina Bueno in 1965. The informant was Principio Micheli who had known them for many years with the name "Stornelli della leggera". The researcher has interpreted these *stornelli* in the show "Ci ragiono e canto" directed by Dario Fo (1966) <http://www.orda.it/rizzoli/stella/canti/canti-emigrazione.spm>

2. European Emigration



Figure 2 - Italian Emigrants to Germany during the 60s

European emigration, that developed in the second part of 20th century concerned the movement to European states like France (from 1850) Switzerland, Belgium (from 1940) and Germany. Many people considered it, when they had to leave their homes, a temporary emigration (some months). During this time they find out a work to earn money and then to have a better life

coming back in Italy. But this thing didn't take place and lots of emigrants stayed in France, Switzerland, Belgium and Germany. Another important phenomenon, that there was in Europe like in other states and continents towards Italians moved, was the association of emigrants.

5.2.3. Immigration in Italy today.

Analyzing the most recent Immigration data, we can see that as of 1 January 2017, there were 5,047,028 foreign national residents in Italy. This amounted to 8.2% of the country's population and represented an increase of 92,352 over the previous year. These data include children born in Italy to foreign nationals (who were 75,067 in 2014; 14.9% of total births in Italy), but exclude foreign nationals who have subsequently acquired Italian nationality; this applied to 129,887 people in 2014. Around 6,200,000 people residing in Italy have an immigration background (around the 10% of the total Italian population).

The data also exclude illegal immigrants whose numbers are difficult to determine.

Concerning the distribution of foreign born population, we can see that it is largely uneven in Italy: 59.5% of immigrants live in the northern part of the country (the most economically developed area), 25.4% in the central one, while only 15.1% live in the southern regions.

Since the expansion of the European Union, the most recent wave of migration has been from surrounding European states, particularly Eastern Europe, and increasingly Asia, replacing North Africa as the major immigration area. About a million Romanians, around 10% of them being Roma, are officially registered as living in Italy. As of 2013, the foreigner born population origin was

subdivided as follows: Europe (50.8%), Africa (22.1%), Asia (18.8%), America (8.3%), and Oceania (0.1%).

5.2.4. The Mediterranean Sea crossing in the 2000s.

The Mediterranean Sea crossing to Southern Europe has historically been the most used route for undocumented migrants and, according to its peculiar geographical position and close proximity to the North Africa coast, Italy represents one of the most achieved destinations, together with Greece and Spain.

This route has become gradually more prominent as people flows through other routes to the EU gradually faded and political turmoil in Libya⁷ caused a general weakening of borders and coastal control, opening opportunities to people illegal organizations.



Figure 3 - "The Gate of Europe", Italian Monument in Lampedusa

The principal destination for sea crossings boats and rafts are the most southern Italian territories, such as the *Pelagie Islands*. These islands are 113 km from Tunisia, 167 from Libya and 207 from Sicily. The close distance between these islands - in particular with *Lampedusa island* - and the African mainland has caused people smuggling and fostered illegal organizations to employ boats and rafts

otherwise hardly seaworthy, generally vastly filled above their capacity. Official reports list boats filled up to two or three times nominal capacity, including the use of rubber dinghies. This has led to several accidents at sea, as in 2007, the 2009, the 2011, the 2013, 2015. These accidents have become harder to document between 2014 and 2017, as people smuggling organizations changed their tactics: instead of aiming for a full crossing of the sea towards Lampedusa, their boats aimed just to exit Libyan territorial waters, fostering rescue operations from passing mercantile vessels,

⁷ Since 2011 till today in Lybia came a succession of several internal conflicts. The first civil war took place between February and October 2011 to knock over *Mu'ammarr Gaddafi* for a political renewing change, following the "Arab Spring" movement. Then, an armed conflict started in 2014 between two coalitions and two rival governments: on the one hand the internationally recognized Haftar government based in the eastern city of Tobruk; on the other hand the government based in the capital Tripoli and supported by the New General National Congress and the Libyan Alba coalition.

seek and rescue organizations, Italian and Maltese coastguards and militaries. The rescue operations have been (and they still today, they are) able to help and save many migrants. These first aid actions are carried out according to the *United Nations Convention of the Sea (UNCLOS)*, subscribed also by Italy, which provides that people rescued at sea have to be transported to the closest safe harbor: since Libya continues to be in political turmoil this means they should be transported to Italy.

Once in Italy, the *EU Dublin Regulation*⁸ requires migrants to apply for legal residence, protection or asylum permits in the first EU country they arrive, effectively barring them from legally crossing internal EU borders until their case has been processed and positively concluded. Since the most part of migrant people landing in Italy want to achieve other destinations in Central and Northern European States, there is a tendency to avoid filing permits applications in Italy and rather try a northwards land journey.

As a reaction to the gradual increase in migration flows through the Mediterranean Sea, Italian governments stepped up cooperation with Tunisian and Libyan authorities to halt activities of people unlawful organization on land, as well as to allow boats rescued from the Italian Military in international waters to be towed back to the port where they left from. This policy, enacted in 2004 and 2005, sparked controversies related in particular to the compatibility with Italian and EU laws, as numerous reports documented acts of violence from Libyan authorities on migrant people. The policy was openly criticized by the EU Parliament.

Starting from 2011 in Tunisia and Libya, within the *Arab Spring* civil rebellion movement, the government control over borders and coasts has been disrupted and it lead to a further increase of migrant flows in the Mediterranean Sea. By May 2011, more than 35,000 immigrants had arrived on the island of Lampedusa from Tunisia and Libya. By the end of August, 48,000 had arrived. As migration and asylum policies are exclusive responsibilities of each member State, the increased migration pressure at the EU Southern border sparked tensions between EU States on how to differentiate between people migrating due to economic reasons, which in principle are regarded as unlawful immigrants and thus are forced to leave or deported, and people fleeing violence or persecution for religious, sexual orientation, political reasons, who can be granted asylum rights.

⁸ **Regulation No. 604/2013- The Dublin Regulation** is a European Union (EU) law that determines which EU Member State is responsible for the examination of an application for asylum, submitted by persons seeking international protection under the Geneva Convention and the EU Qualification Directive, within the European Union.

After 2015, the use of inappropriate vessels to bring people across the sea by illegal organizations lead to a significant increase of sea accidents and disasters involving loss of lives. To tackle this difficult situation several European NGOs have started seek and rescue operations in close coordination with Italian Navy and coast guard units. These operations often happen close to Libyan waters at the same time in order not to unlawfully enter Libyan jurisdictions and yet ensure migrants' safety. As provided by the *UNCLOS*, the



Figure 4 - "The Lampedusa Raft", the work of the eco-sculptor Jason DeCaires Taylor created in the Lanzarote sea (Canarie - ES) at a depth of 14 meters is dedicated to the massacre of migrants.

rescued people are brought to the closer safe harbor, which is in most cases on Italian shore. This effectively means NGOs vessels are covering most of the distance between Libyan and Italian coast.

The several landings combined with the economic crisis effects not yet completely upturned and with the still quite widespread unemployment rate, **in 2018** led Italian public opinion to wide its interest towards center-right or more populist political parties, with a more conservative and nationalist attitude. This general orientation has been reflected itself also in the political election of March 2018, with a considerable consensus to "Lega" party which has a more protectionist vision respect to the issues linked to immigration.

5.2.5. Attitudes of Italian citizens towards immigrants and ethnic minorities.

Immigration and all the issues linked to migrants arriving (or passing by) are one of the most relevant topics currently treated by the public discussion in Italy. For this reason, they also constituted a central theme during the last election campaign (March 2018), remaining an important matter even in the following months. Nevertheless, the data available by the public opinion are often fragmented and sometimes they have been presented in a "partisan way", risking to be adapted to the different political interests. This can often contribute in projecting a distorted image of reality, especially of the migratory phenomenon in Italy, where perceptions count more than concrete data.

The ways that the media are used to treat these specific contents, indeed, can influence the public opinion, also affecting the main - and general - attitudes shown by Italian citizens towards immigrants and minorities.

But, how much does this possible distortion can affect the Italian attitude towards Migrants? And how these attitudes are positioned if we compared with what happens in other European Union countries?

We would like to answer to these questions, starting from the report made in August 2018 by the Researching Institute “Carlo Cattaneo”⁹ of Bologna. The Cattaneo Institute has analyzed the EUROBAROMETER¹⁰ data concerning the estimated presence of immigrants perceived by citizens in each of the EU Member States. In particular, this was the question submitted to the respondents: "As far as you know, what is the percentage of immigrants compared to the total population in Italy?" It should be noted that, in this survey, "immigrants" means only those born outside the borders of the European Union and currently residing legally in our country.

What emerges from the *Istituto Cattaneo* research is that there is a general attitude shared all across Europe where around a third of respondents (31.5%) do not know how to answer about the percentage of immigrants living in their countries. In some cases (e.g. Bulgaria, Portugal, Malta and Spain) the percentage of those who do not know how to answer is over the 50%, while in Italy is below the European average. The Italians who cannot answer are "only" 27% of the sample. These data firstly show a high level of uncertainty among European citizens regarding the extent of migration in Europe.

⁹ FONDAZIONE DI RICERCA - ISTITUTO CARLO CATTANEO, <https://www.cattaneo.org/>

The Carlo Cattaneo Institute of Studies and Research was established in January 1965 from the legacy of the "Carlo Cattaneo" Association of Culture and Politics - established in 1956 by the same group of intellectuals who had founded the magazine "il Mulino" and then, in 1954, the publishing company with the same name. On May 15, 1986, by decree of the President of the Republic, the Institute was recognized as a Foundation and established as a moral body.

¹⁰ EUROBAROMETER – **Statistic on European public opinion**. The Standard Eurobarometer was established in 1974. Each survey consists of approximately 1000 face-to-face interviews per country. Reports are published twice yearly. Reproduction is authorised, except for commercial purposes, provided the source is acknowledged. <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm>

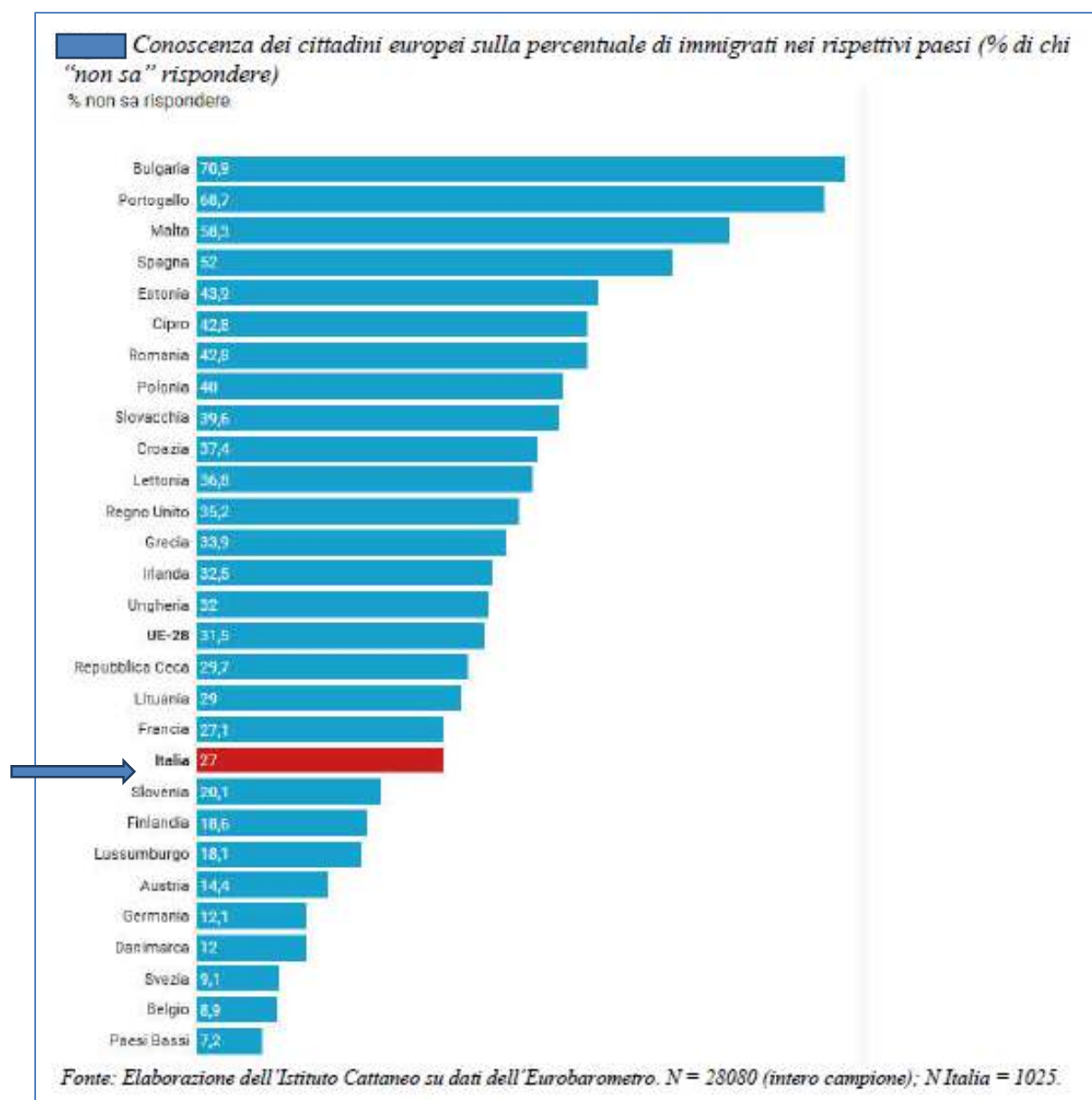


Figure 5 - Knowledge of European citizens about migrants' percentage in their countries (% of who cannot answer).
Source: Cattaneo Institute, Elaboration on Eurobarometer data N. 28080 (total sample group) N. Italy 1025

If we observe the estimated percentage of migrants compared with the actual data provided by the EUROSTAT¹¹ (2017), the uncertainty and imprecision in the immigrants presence assessment are furtherly confirmed. As shown by the **Figure n. 6**, European citizens clearly overestimate the percentage of migrants in their own countries. Compared to the actual percentage of 7.2% of non-EU immigrants in European states, the rate estimated by the respondents has a greater value since it is the 16.7%. In particular, if we look to Italy, we can detect a very significant data: the Italian respondents are those who show a greater detachment (in percentage points) between the percentage

¹¹ **EUROSTAT** - Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union situated in Luxembourg. Its mission is to provide high quality statistics for Europe. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/overview>

of non-EU immigrants actually present in Italy (7%) and the estimated/or perceived ones, equal to 25%.

The Italians' mistake of perception is the highest error among all European Union countries (+17.4 percentage points). This estimate would remain equally high even if we consider the percentage of all immigrants present in Italy - which, according to UN data, currently correspond to 10% of the population (increased by more than 6 percentage points compared to 2007).

In the *Figure 6* the **actual % of migrants per each country is represented by the blue line** and the **perceived % by the red one**. The Figure makes a confrontation between the real data provided by EUROSTAT and the perceived ones provided by EUROBAROMETER (differences in percentage report).

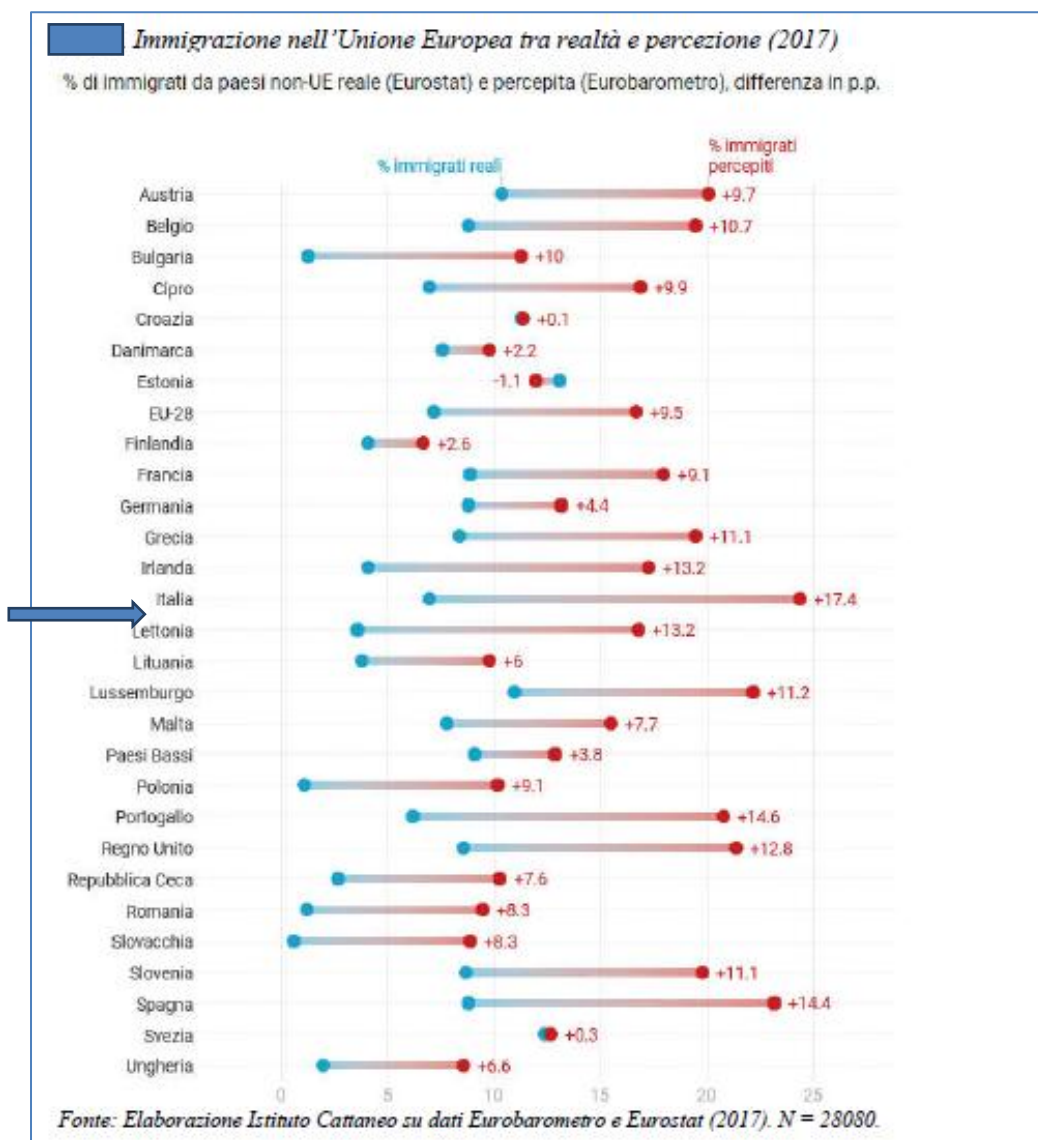


Figure 6 - Immigration in EU between reality and perception (2017). Source: Cattaneo Institute, Elaboration on Eurobarometer and EUROSTAT data 2017, N = 28080

5.2.6. Italians between prejudices and misinformation.

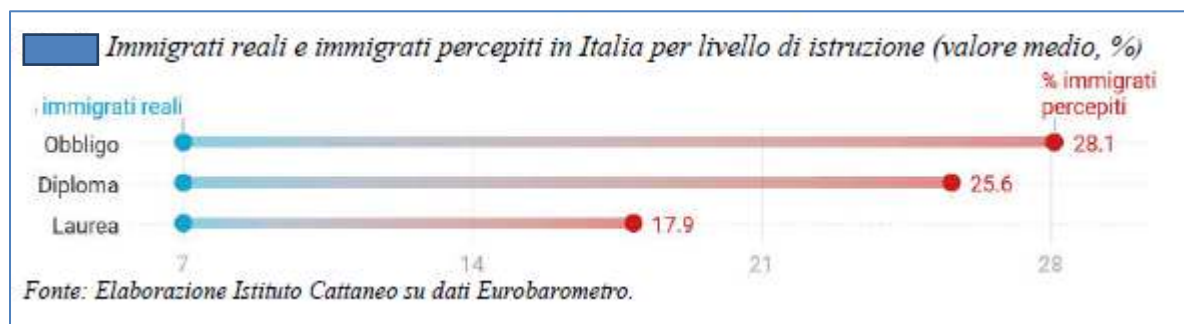


Figure 7 – Real (in blue) and perceived (in red) percentage of immigrants in Italy (average value,%) shown by educational level Source: Elaboration of Cattaneo Institute on Eurobarometer data.

The **Figure n. 7** shows the average value of the estimate of immigrants in Italy according to the educational qualifications of the interviewees. As we can see, those who stopped their educational path to compulsory education think that immigration in Italy exceeds 28%, while among graduates the estimate is reduced by more than 10 percentage points, reaching 17, 9%. Education and, through it, the predisposition to greater socio-political information make people able to limit the perceptive error on the immigration issue. Another factor that can explain the different levels in perceiving the migration phenomenon in Italy concerns the professional sphere of citizens. In particular, the manual low-qualified or low-paid workers tend to consider their employment most at risk and, therefore, they tend also to perceive the presence or arrival of foreigners as a threat. On the other side, workers with highly qualified tasks do not see their job potentially attacked by migrants and it contributes to limit their perceptive error.

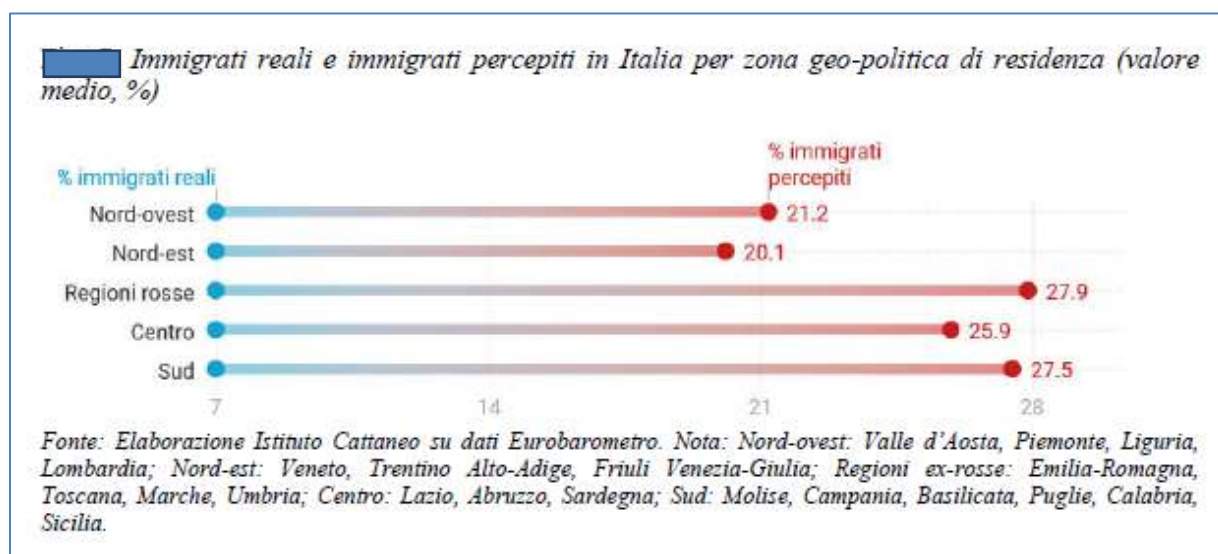


Figure 8 – Real (in blue) and perceived (in red) percentage of immigrants in Italy per geo-politic area (average value,%). Source: Elaboration of Cattaneo Institute on Eurobarometer data. Note: North-West = Valle d'Aosta, Piemonte, Liguria, Lombardia; North-East = Veneto, Trentino, Alto Adige, Friuli Venezia-Giulia; Ex red Regions: Emilia Romagna, Toscana, Marche, Umbria; Center = Lazio, Abruzzo, Sardegna; South = Molise, Campania, Basilicata, Puglia, Calabria, Sicilia

The fact shown by **Figure n. 8** is particularly significant because it completely contrasts with the reality of the immigrants' spread in the Italian regions/ areas. **Table n. 1** compares the estimate on the immigrants' presence according to the interviewed by the Eurobarometer with the data provided by ISTAT¹² in Italy in 2017. As can be seen, the distance between the real data and that estimated is greater where the immigrants' presence is lower (in the south, less than 5% of the population). On the contrary, the gap between reality and perception is more limited in the northern regions, where the percentage of immigrants - corresponding to around 10% of the population - tends to be higher.

Tab. 1 Real (ISTAT data) and perceived (EUROBAROMETER data) percentage of immigrants in Italy in 2017 per geo-politic areas (average values)

AREAS	PERCEIVED PRESENCE (%)	% OF ACTUAL IMMIGRANTS IN 2017	DIFFERENCE IN % RATES
NORTH-WEST	21,2	10,7	+ 10,5
NORTH -EAST	20,1	9,0	+ 11,5
RED REGIONS	27,9	11,1	+ 16,8
CENTER	25,9	9,4	+ 16,5
SOUTH	27,5	4,3	+ 23,2

How the perception of the Immigration phenomenon impacts on the real attitudes of Italian citizens?

As observed so far, it is possible to ask if the perception mistakes in considering the migration phenomenon in Italy can produce relevant consequences on the attitudes of Italians towards immigrants and their impact on society.

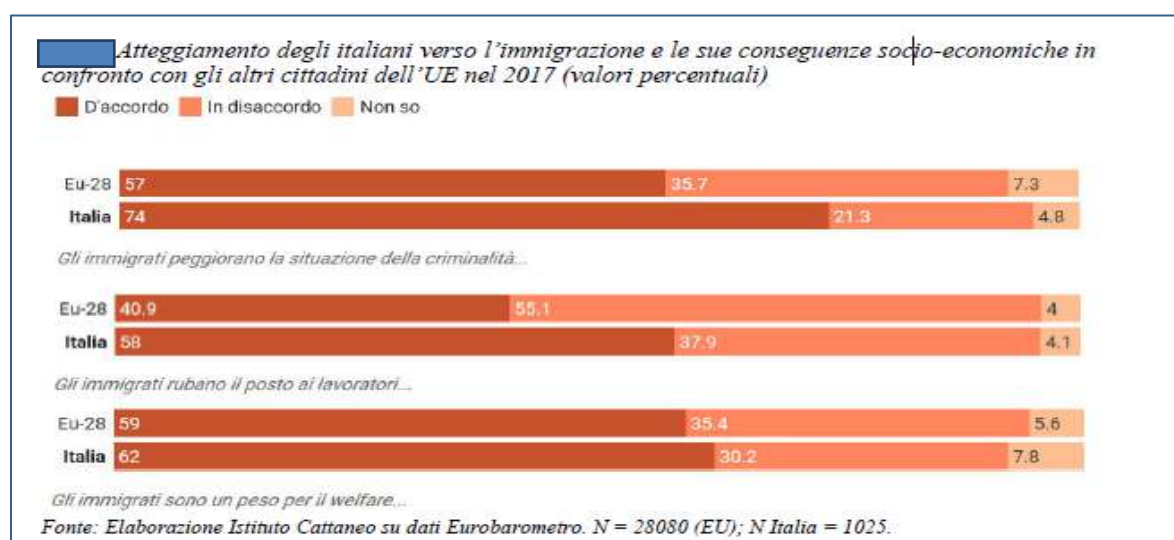





Figure 9 – Italians general attitude towards immigration and its socio-economic consequences compared with the other EU citizens in 2017 .
Source: Elaboration of Cattaneo Institute on Eurobarometer data N. 28080 (EU); N. Italy = 1025.

¹² ISTAT – Italian Public Institute of Statistic, Public Italian Research Institute of Statistic. <https://www.istat.it/>

The comparison is made by submitting three different issues about the impact of immigration phenomenon to whom the respondents shall show their positive or negative attitude:

-  *I agree,*
-  *I don't agree,*
-  *I don't Know.*

The issues submitted were:

- 1) the relationship between immigrants and criminality;
- 2) the hypothesis that immigrants reduce the employment opportunities of Italians;
- 3) the weight or contribution of immigrants to the sustainability of national welfare.

If we consider all the compared attitudes, many substantial differences emerge between those shown by Italians and those of Europeans on the question of immigration and their socio-economic consequences. At least, these differences seem also to be produced by a mistaken perception of the migratory phenomenon: those who magnify its scope are also led to exaggerate its consequences. However, it would be wrong to think that the theme of immigration is just a question of mal-perception: because its effects on citizens' attitudes are concrete and real. And it is above all with those that politics has to deal with.

5.2.7. Is Italy a tolerant society?

The issues linked to Migrants, Immigration and to the general attitudes shown by Italian people to these phenomena represent a central topic both for the current political agenda and for the general public opinion. As we said above - taking into account the data detected by *Istituto Cattaneo* (2018) - in Italy we can observe a significant crack between the actual reality linked to Immigration/presence of minorities in our country and their widespread perception among Italians.

So, is it possible to affirm that *Italy is a tolerant society*? We can try to give an answer to this question reporting the data included in the 2018 research “A fragmented Italy: attitudes towards national identity, immigration and refugees in Italy” by Tim Dixon, Stephen Hawkins, Laurence Heijbroek, Míriam Juan-Torres, François-Xavier Demoures¹³.

¹³ “*Un'Italia frammentata: atteggiamenti verso identità nazionale, immigrazione e rifugiati in Italia*” Tim Dixon, Stephen Hawkins, Laurence Heijbroek, Míriam Juan-Torres, François-Xavier Demoures; More in Common (IPSOS, SCI- Social Change Initiative); Agosto 2018. Free dowlodable in pdf at: www.moreincommon.com, ISBN 978-1-9997788-5-9 . Work distributed by Licenza Creative Commons Attribuzione 4.0 Internazionale. (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). To have a license copy visit: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

The research tries to focus the Italians' opinion concerning their own country, how they consider its relevance in Europe and in the World and what is their relationship with foreign citizens (residing in Italy without citizenship). It is time for barriers in Italy, the 89% of population see and describe a divided Nation. The political elections held in 2018 produced a new government coalition between "Movimento 5 Stelle" and "Lega", both parties with populist components, elected also thanks to an anti-system sentiment and with the promise "the Italians first".

According to the analysis results, Italians are quite frustrated by the ruling class and fear that new generations could have less opportunities or lack of opportunities, if compared with the previous ones. Sometimes they are disappointed by a European Union that has not been able to support them, and they are particularly irritated towards the other countries that have not helped Italy to manage the maritime borders. In Italy, the debate that preceded the March 2018 elections gave a central role to the issue of immigration and the Italians cite immigration as one of the most urgent problems, also thanks to the contribution of the wide media coverage reserved for landings in the Mediterranean during 2017, which contributed to increase perceived insecurity.

Here below some of the most representative items of the research, with their related general data detected, which can describe the current most diffused Italian attitudes towards globalization, cultural and national identity and migrants.

In Italy there is widespread dissatisfaction with the *status quo*, a deep lack of confidence in the elites and the overwhelming vision that the country has not gained from globalization.

It is difficult to find a part of Italian population convinced that globalization was good: only 18% believe it has had a positive impact on the national economy. The disaffection towards the political situation is evident from the very high percentage, the 73%, of those who believe that traditional parties and politicians do not care about common people.

Traditional cultural identity is important for Italians, most of whom fear its disappearance.

Half of the Italian population reports having felt sometimes foreign in its own country and a larger slice (59%) believes that national identity is disappearing (only 22% disagree).

Italian public opinion is worried about the migration phenomenon: most of the population thinks that it has negative impact on the country, especially if compared with the restricted job prospects for Italians.

Only 16% consider the impact of immigration on Italy (especially among the most openminded part of the population) positive, while 57% consider it globally negative. The concern for negative economic repercussions is partly linked to the general belief that immigrants, compared to Italians, are often willing to work more for a lower salary.

However, how it is underlined by the research, despite the widespread idea that immigration has a bad impact in the country, the majority of Italians feel feelings of solidarity and empathy for foreigners: Italian public opinion is often more multi-faceted than imagined.

Despite concerns over the management and impact of the migration phenomenon, most Italians do not adopt an extremist position towards migrants.

A lot of Italians are welcoming towards foreigners, including immigrants and refugees:

- the vast majority (72%) support the principle of political asylum and the right of these people to find refuge in other nations, including their own (only 9% are against).
- on a personal level, Italians are more sympathetic to refugees (41%) than those who are distant (29%), with 27% neutral. The feelings towards migrants in general are slightly warmer (32% are supportive, 33% are distant).
- Italians reject extremism: most (61%) say they are worried about the growing climate of racism and discrimination, and only 17% deny being alarmed.
- there is more support for human rights than for nationalist groups: a small 11% report a deep connection with political movements in defense of the nation, while 37% firmly choose those in favor of human rights.

For Italians religious identity is important and for almost half of the whole population the Catholic heritage influences the conviction of having responsibilities towards others, including migrants and refugees.

The 42% of Italians confirm that, as a Catholic country, Italy must take care of the needs of those arriving in Europe as migrants (while 28% are against and 27% are neutral); in all probability, this

attitude has its roots also in the history of the many Italians who emigrated to work on the other side of the world.

5.3. Norway.

5.3.1. Some history of immigration to Norway.

Historical immigration to Norway, started in the Viking age. The practice of Royal intermarriage was common in European aristocracies and elsewhere. Norwegian kings used to seek their wives from other Royal houses, in order to foster ties with foreign countries. See the Kings of Norway family tree.

Other historical fields linked to migrations were trade and academia, bringing workforce and innovation respectively. The Hanseatic League introduced large scale trade in Bergen and Northern Norway. Mining in Kongsberg, Røros and other places was made possible by immigrants from nearby countries. During the 19th century the evolution of dairies and the industrial exploitation of waterfalls depended on immigrants. Before the University was established in Christiania in 1811, almost all civil servants from up to circa 1500, were migrants.



From the middle of the 20th century, the history of migration to Norway is characterized by four main phases. The first wave of immigrants came during the 1960s, as a result of demand of labor within the secondary labor market. This group was mainly dominated by men from Pakistan and Turkey, who came to work in the oil sector. The shock of the 1973 Oil Crisis resulted in an immigration stop to Norway, which ended this first wave. The next wave came the late 1970s, and consisted mostly of family members from former immigrants. The third wave of the mid 1980s, was a increasing flow of asylum seekers mainly from Iran, Chile, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and the former Yugoslavia. From the beginning of the 21st century until today, Norwegian immigration has been characterized by a more liberal approach to labor immigration, as well as stricter policies towards asylum seekers.

5.3.2. Intercultural competences.

The 1997 Norwegian national curriculum pointed out the need for foreign language learners to develop ‘the ability to communicate across cultural divides’. When it comes to the teaching of English in Norway, the 1997 national curriculum introduced the view that successful use of language “is not a matter of language skills alone, but of the ability to communicate across cultural divides”.

In Europe, the model of intercultural competence developed by Michael Byram, professor of education at Durham University in England, has been most influential. Byram claims that intercultural competence consists of five main elements:

- Attitudes
- Knowledge
- Skills of interpreting and relating
- Skills of discovery and interaction
- Critical cultural awareness

Most theorists who have entered the discussion of what intercultural competence comprises agree with Byram that the concept has to do with attitudes, skills and knowledge. Attitudes are most often described in terms of curiosity and openness towards other cultures. Other key words are ‘cultural sensitivity’, ‘tolerance of ambiguity’, ‘respect for otherness’ and ‘empathy’. This also involves a willing-ness to question assumptions and previous ‘knowledge’ about other cultures as well as our own.

5.3.3. Respect of cultural diversity.

The word ‘diversity’ pops up continually in public and social debates when issues such as immigration and immigrants are discussed. Diversity is also an appropriate word to describe all the reasons why people cross the Norwegian border: love, family, work, conflict, war, poverty, adoption, education - to name but a few. In a globalised world, the opportunity and need to move to a new country are both becoming more and more prevalent.



5.3.4. Language barriers.

English is widely spoken in Norway, and virtually every Norwegian can speak fluent or understand a minimum of the English language. Tourist information is usually printed in several languages. Information in museums, restaurants, hotels and public transport is often printed in English and other major languages such as German and French. Many Norwegians also speak or understand a second foreign language, often German, French or Spanish. In the main cities (Oslo in particular) there are several ethnic minorities with Spanish, Arab, Tamil or Urdu as the first language. There is also a large number of recent immigrants from Sweden, Poland and other Baltic-area countries. In the Eastern corner of Finnmark county, Russian is also common.

Norwegian is closely related to Danish and Swedish, written Norwegian is virtually identical to Danish, whereas Swedes and Norwegians understand each other very easily. Norwegian is also related to Icelandic, German, Dutch and English. Some knowledge of a Scandinavian language is useful, knowledge of German or Dutch is helpful in understanding written Norwegian.

5.3.5. Attitudes.

- 9 out of 10 think that immigrants should have the same job opportunities as Norwegians, and 7 out of 10 believe that immigrants make a valuable contribution to Norwegian working life
- Two out of 3 think that immigrants enrich the cultural life in Norway.
- Nine out of 10 do not mind having contact with immigrants as neighbours or as home helps, but 1 out of 3 would feel uncomfortable having an immigrant married into the family.
- One out of 3 also suspect that immigrants abuse the social welfare system and believe that immigrants represent a source of insecurity in society.
- More than 4 out of 10 think that immigrants should endeavour to become as similar to Norwegians as possible.
- One out of 10 want a liberalisation of the current asylum policy, whereas 4 out of 10 think that the refugees' access to obtaining a residence permit should be made more difficult.
- The changing attitudes towards immigrants and immigration over time are probably affected by fluctuations in business cycles, the number of refugees seeking residence permits in the

country, to what extent the official refugee policy appears humane and just in the eyes of the public, and the image created by the refugees themselves as a result of their own conduct (especially with regard to crime).

- The attitudes of the population vary according to demographic and social factors such as education, age, urbanisation, geographic area, degree of contact with immigrants, political opinions, and to some extent also by sex.
- Highly educated persons, aged less than 67 years, residing in Akershus/Oslo and who have contact with immigrants are generally among the most positive towards immigration and immigrants.
- Compared to attitudes in other European countries, Norwegian attitudes tend to be in the middle or at the liberal or tolerant end of the scale on most immigrant issues.

In a poignant speech at the Royal House in Oslo Sept. 2 2016, the country's King Harald V reminded Norwegians that theirs historically a land of integration and one that has long tolerated different religions and sexual orientations.

“Norwegians are also immigrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Poland, Sweden, Somalia and Syria”, he said. “It is not always easy to say where we come from, to which nationality we belong. Home is where the heart is. That cannot always be placed within country borders”

“Norwegians are young and old, tall and short, able-bodied and wheelchair users”, the king said, “Norwegians are girls who love girls, boys who love boys, and boys and girls who love each other. Norwegians believe in God, Allah, everything and nothing.”

“In other words: you are Norway. We are Norway,” the king said. “My biggest hope for Norway is that we will manage to take care of each other, that we can build this country further on trust, solidarity, and generosity,” he said.

“That we can know that we – despite our differences – are one people.”



King Harald V

Chapter 6. Environmental preservation

LIFE IN HARMONY WITH NATURE BY CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

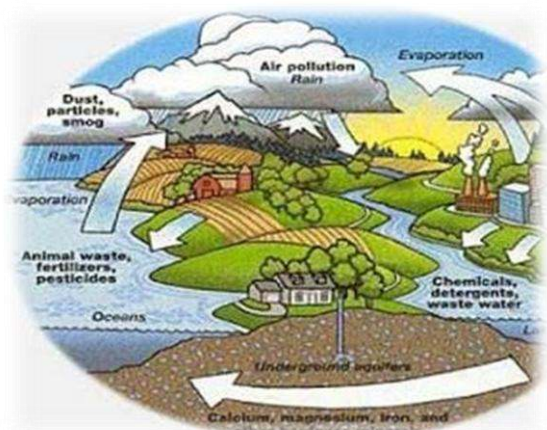


6.1. Ecological disasters and environmental issues.

We live in a wonderful world full of natural resources. Our planet – the Earth, can provide for us everything that we need for sustainable development and healthy life – pure air, pure water, pure soil.

But what is the reality? What has happened to the human race to become so cruel in the endeavors of destroying the nature, in polluting the air, the soil and the water? Flora and fauna species are vanishing. Climate change threatens the existence of life on earth. Today, we consume 50% of the natural resources that nature provides us with. In the last 40 years, biological diversity has decreased by 30%. The reason for these reductions is the result of the unconscious use of green nature for the sake of humanity's own interests.

The ecosystem balance of nature is destroyed, causing climate change. As a result of various human activities such as gasoline, diesel, unconscious use of fuels, industrial activities, and destruction of forest areas into concrete structures, the gas balance in the atmosphere deteriorates and leads to climate change. Climate change disrupts the balance of living species with the effect of human activities.



On the other hand unrecycled waste is one of the key problems of our environment. Plastic and other kind of waste pollutes the soil, the water and the air which also contributes to climate

change. European Commission has announced that 70% of waste which is found in oceans and beaches consists of one-time plastic products. What is more, in October 2018 EC for the first time announced that plastic has already entered human's nutrition chain.

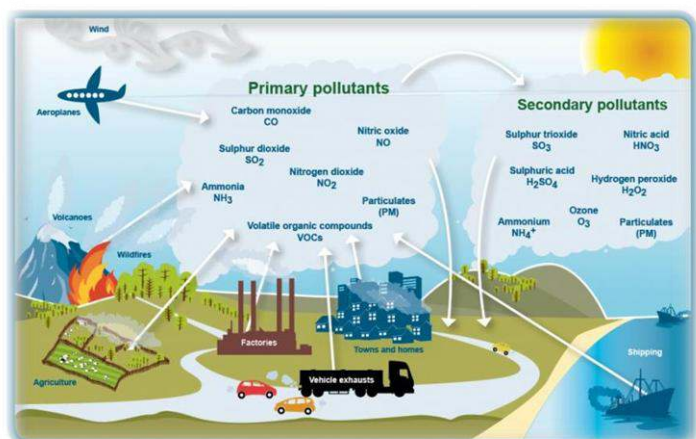


The threat of "ecological crisis" today is alarmingly real, as mankind uses more natural resources than the planet can reproduce. The world faces one of its most serious challenges: to develop sustainably in a way that meets the needs of the present generation without depriving future generations of the opportunities to consume nature's products.

According to William Sweet, oceanographer, flood frequency trends are increasing due to sea level rise, and we have seen up to 1000% increase since the 1960's. She states "While we cannot stop sea level rise right now – we are committed to a certain amount of rise simply because of the emissions already in the atmosphere – we can slow down the rate of rising in future years by reducing emissions of global warming gases now."

In the past year we witnessed heat waves in India and Pakistan and Europe, record-breaking typhoons in Asia and Mexico, droughts and fires in Africa, Australia, and the American west, and floods in Europe.

According to provisional data published by the European Environment Agency (EEA), the average carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from new passenger cars registered in the European Union (EU) in 2018 increased for the second consecutive year, reaching 120.4 grams of CO₂ per kilometre. For the first time, the average CO₂ emissions from new vans also increased.



the activities of Al Gore, an environmentalist and the co-recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. He has been involved with the environmental activist movement for a number of decades, and has had full participation since he left the vice-presidency in 2001.

The European Environment Agency provides sound, independent information on the environment for those involved in developing, adopting, implementing and evaluating environmental policy, and also the general public. In close collaboration with the European Environmental Information and Observation Network (Eionet) and its 33 member countries, the EEA gathers data and produces assessments on a wide range of topics related to the environment

We will focus on the principles of environmental policy and the measures undertaken for the protection of the environment and preservation of fauna and flora.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 expressed an awareness of the growing dangers around the world caused by increasingly acute environmental problems.

The "Earth Summit" in Rio formulates several fundamental and long-term solutions that engage the international community with the following key principles of environmental policy:

- The principle of preventive measures based on the best available scientific and technological achievements in order to reduce risks to humans and the environment.
- The Polluter Pays Principle, which means that the costs of preventing and removing environmental pollution are borne by those responsible for causing them at all levels.
- The principle that environmental protection is a common task for governments, citizens and industry through cooperation between them.
- The principle of integration, which means that environmental protection is a matter that should not be discussed on its own and that environmental considerations must always be taken into account in shaping and implementing policies in many other areas, such as transport, energy, industry, agriculture and others.

6.3. Global Strategies for Environment protection and preservation – UN Decade on Biodiversity - 2011-2020.

6.3.1. Convention on biodiversity.



The tenth meeting of the Conference of the World leaders, held from 18 to 29 October 2010, in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, adopted a revised and updated Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, for the 2011-2020 period.

This Plan provides an overarching framework on biodiversity, not only for the biodiversity-related conventions, but for the entire United Nations system and all other partners engaged in biodiversity management and policy development.

Aichi Strategic Objectives and Aichi Biodiversity Goals Strategic Plan for Biodiversity - 2011-2020

The mission of the Strategic Plan is "to take effective and urgent measures to halt the loss of biodiversity in order to ensure the sustainability of ecosystems that will continue to provide vital services by 2020, thus ensuring the diversity of the life of the planet and contributing to the well-being of mankind and the eradication of poverty. To this end, reduce biodiversity pressure, restore ecosystems, make sustainable use of biological resources and share the benefits of using genetic resources in a fair and equitable manner; to provide sufficient financial resources, to improve capacity, to take into account biodiversity issues and values, to effectively implement appropriate policies, and to make decision-making based on sound research and a preventive approach. "

The concept of a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity is for a world in which "To live in harmony with nature," in which "By 2050, to value the importance of biodiversity, to preserve, restore and use

rationally, sustaining ecosystem services, health plan, and providing vital benefits for all. "

The strategic plan includes the achievement of 20 leading targets by 2020. - "Aichi Biodiversity Goals" grouped into five strategic objectives. The goals and objectives envisage both the pursuit of global achievement and a flexible framework for defining national or geographic goals.

Countries are invited to develop their own objectives within this framework, taking into account national needs and priorities, while at the same time taking the lead and national contribution to the achievement of global goals.

Strategic Goal A: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by integrating biodiversity into the work of government and society. By 2020, the following actions should be implemented:

- Integrating biodiversity values into national and local development planning and poverty reduction strategies and processes and engaging in national accountability.
- Keep people informed about the values of biodiversity and the steps that can be taken to conserve and sustain it.
- Subsidies harmful to biodiversity have been eliminated in order to minimize or avoid their negative impact and to create positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Governments, businesses and all stakeholders have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption.

Strategic Goal B: Reduce direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use.

- Reduce the magnitude of the loss of natural habitats, including forests, by at least half and, where possible, be reduced to zero, and the destruction and fragmentation significantly reduced.
- fish stocks, invertebrates and aquatic plants to manage and collect sustainable, legitimate and ecosystem-based approaches, such as avoiding overfishing, introducing plans and measures for the recovery of stalking species, fishing for a significant unfavorable impact on endangered species and vulnerable ecosystems, and the impact of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems within safe environmental boundaries.
- Farmland, aquaculture and forests should be managed sustainably while ensuring the

conservation of biodiversity.

- Pollution, including the need for unnecessary nutrients, to be managed sustainably, ensuring the loss of biodiversity.
- Identify and prioritize invasive alien species and ways of penetration, prioritized species to be controlled or destroyed by taking road management or destruction measures to manage their penetration pathways to preventing their intrusion and detection.
- Minimize multilateral anthropogenic impacts on coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems affected by climate change

Strategic Goal C: To improve the state of biodiversity by protecting ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.

- To conserve at least 17% of land and inland waterways and 10% of coastal and marine areas, especially those of biodiversity and ecosystem services, through efficient and fair management, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and the adoption of other effective environmental protection measures on a regional basis, to be integrated into wider landscapes and marine areas.
- To prevent the disappearance of known endangered species, and to improve and maintain the state of their conservation, especially those before extinction.
- To preserve the genetic diversity of cultivated plants, farm and domestic animals and their wild relatives by implementing strategies to minimize genetic erosion.

Strategic goal D: Increase biodiversity and ecosystem services for all.

- Restoring and safeguarding ecosystems that provide vital services, including water-related services that contribute to health, food and well-being, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, the poor and vulnerable sections of the population.
- Enhancement of ecosystem sustainability and biodiversity contribution to carbon stockpiling, conservation and recovery, including the recovery of at least 15% of degraded ecosystems, thus contributing to mitigating the harmful effects of climate change, adaptation and combating desertification.
- Enforce the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of using them, in accordance with national laws.

Strategic goal E: Improving implementation through public planning, knowledge management and capacity building.

- Each country to develop, adopt as a policy instrument and launch an effective, public and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan.
- The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of native and local communities on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as well as the common use of biological resources should be recognized, transposed into national legislation and relevant international commitments and fully integrate and reflect in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective involvement of native and local communities.
- Improve, broadly communicate and transfer and apply knowledge, science and technology to biodiversity, its values, its functioning, its state and trends, and the consequences of its loss
- Significantly increase the mobilization of financial resources from all sources for the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan in line with the agreed and agreed process in the Resource Mobilization Strategy.



6.3.2. Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020.

Without plants, there is no life. The functioning of the planet, and our survival, depends upon plants. The Strategy seeks to halt the continuing loss of plant diversity.

Our vision is of a positive, sustainable future where human activities support the diversity of plant life (including the endurance of plant genetic diversity, survival of plant species and communities and their associated habitats and ecological associations), and where in turn the diversity of plants support and improve our livelihoods and well-being.

➤ **Mission**

The Global Plant Conservation Strategy is a prerequisite for working together at all levels - locally, nationally, regionally and globally - for knowledge, conservation and sustainable implementation of the tremendous wealth of world plant diversity while at the same time encouraging awareness and building up the necessary capacity for its implementation.

➤ Goals of the Global Strategy

The Global Plant Conservation Strategy addresses the challenges posed by threats to plant diversity. The ultimate goal of the Strategy is to achieve the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity: Conservation, Sustainable Use and Biodiversity and the equitable distribution of the benefits of genetic resources, in particular for plant diversity.

2.1. At least 15% of each ecological region or type of vegetation shall be preserved by effective management and / or recovery

2.3. At least 75% of the areas most important to the diversity of the flora of each ecological region are protected by effective management aimed at plant protection and their genetic diversity

2.4. At least 75% of the production area in each sector is managed sustainably in line with the conservation of plant diversity

2.5. At least 75% of known endangered plant species are preserved in situ

2.6. At least 75% of endangered plant species are in ex situ collections, preferable in the countries of origin, and at least 20% of them are available for recovery programs

2.7. 70% of the genetic diversity of crop plants, including their wild relatives and other plant species that are valuable from a socio-economic point of view, is protected by the associated root and local knowledge being recorded, maintained and maintained.

2.8. Effective management plans have been prepared to prevent new biological invasions and to manage important plant diversity sites that are threatened by invasions.

Strategic Goal 3: Sustainable and Fair Use of Plant Diversity

3.1. There are no wild species of plants endangered by international trade

3.2. All products based on wild plant species are harvested from sources that are steadily managed

3.3. Traditional and local knowledge, innovations and practices related to plant resources are properly preserved or developed to support their traditional use, sustainable livelihoods, local

food security and healthcare.

Strategic Goal 4: Raising awareness and awareness of plant diversity, promoting its role in providing sustainable livelihood and its importance for life on Earth

4.1. The importance of plant diversity and the need to preserve it is included in the Communication, Education and Awareness Raising Programs

Strategic Goal 5: Capacity building and public engagement needed to implement the Strategy

5.1. The number of people trained to work with appropriate resources is sufficient and in line with national needs to achieve the objectives of this Strategy

5.2. Institutions, networks and partnerships for plant protection are established or strengthened at national, regional and international level to achieve the objectives of this Strategy.



6.3.3. European policies in the field of sustainable use of natural resources.

6.3.3.1. *Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.*

Europe faces a moment of transformation. Because of economic crisis there have been lost years for economic and social progress. Meanwhile, the world is moving fast and long-term - globalization, pressure on resources, aging population and global warming are serious problems. The EU must take its future into its own hands. Europe can succeed if it acts collectively, as a union. It needs a strategy to help get out stronger than before the crisis and its economy must become smart, sustainable and inclusive, an economy that provides a high level of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The Europe 2020 Strategy sets out a vision for social market economy in Europe in the 21st century.

The Europe 2020 strategy proposes three priorities:

- Smart growth: Developing a knowledge-based economy and innovation.
- Sustainable growth: promoting a greener and more competitive economy.
- Inclusive growth: promoting a high-employment economy that provides social and territorial cohesion.

Sustainable growth means building sustainable competitive, resource-efficient economy, using EU leadership in the developing of new processes and technologies, including green technologies, speeding up the deployment of smart networks via ICT, use of EU networks and strengthening of competitive businesses, as well as helping users in evaluation of resource efficiency. This approach will help the EU prosper in the low-carbon economy using limited resources while at the same time will be able to prevent the deterioration of the environment, the loss of biodiversity and unsustainable use of resources. This too will help economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The EU was the first engine of the "green" solutions, but we could lose our position by key competitors, especially from China and North America. The EU should keep its leading position in the market for environmentally friendly technologies to ensure resource efficiency in the whole economy.

Achieving the EU's climate goals means reducing emissions significantly faster over the next decade than in the last decade, and full using the potential of new technologies. Improving the resource efficiency will significantly help to reduce emissions, save resources and stimulate economic growth. All sectors of the economy are taken into account, not just intensive emission.



Sustainability must be achieved by prevention of climate-related risks and strengthening EU capacity for disaster prevention and response.

Achieving energy goals can lead to a reduction of € 60 billion in oil and gas imports by 2020. This is essential for the EU's energy security. Further progress in the integration of the European energy market can add an additional 0.6% to 0.8% of GDP. Implementation of the EU target for 20% of energy from renewable energy sources has the potential to create more than 600,000 jobs in the EU. Added to the goals for 20% for energy efficiency, that's a lot more than 1 million new jobs.

Actions within this priority will require implementation of EU commitments to reduce emissions in a way that will maximize benefits and minimize costs, including through the implementation of innovative technology solutions. Furthermore, the EU should aim to become more resource-efficient that will reduce its dependence on foreign sources, raw materials and commodities.

6.3.3.2. EU Sustainable Development Strategy.



The overall objective of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy is to identify and develop actions that will enable the EU to achieve permanent long - term improvement of quality of life through creating sustainable communities that can manage and use resources efficiently, develop the potential for social innovation of the economy and, ultimately, to ensure prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion. The strategy sets out general objectives and concrete actions for seven key priority challenges for the period up to 2010, many of which are primarily environmentally friendly (including a change to the climate and clean energy, sustainable transport, sustainable consumption and production or conservation and management of natural resources).

To improve synergies and reduce compromises, a more integrated approach was proposed for developing policies based on better regulation and on the guiding principles for Sustainable Development (adopted by the European Council in June 2005). The external dimension of sustainable development (eg global resource use, international issues development) is involved in the development of the EU's internal policy and by integrating sustainable development considerations into the EU's external policies.

In 2016, the EU is building on its strategy by joining the Sustainable Development Program 2030.

The scale, ambition and approach of the program are unprecedented. One of the key features is that goals for sustainable development are global in their nature and universally applicable, taking into account national realities, capacity and levels of development and specific challenges. All countries have shared responsibility for achieving strategic goals such as all have a significant role at local, national and global levels.

In addition, the 2030 Sustainable Development Program includes the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and environmental. Sustainable Program development 2030 needs to be implemented as a whole, on an integrated basis, not in a fragmented way. The 2030 program is based on the concept of a global partnership, backed up by a comprehensive partnership approach to the mobilization of all means of implementation. In addition, to ensure progress and long-term accountability, the 2030 program includes a strong tracking mechanism - a review that will allow all partners to evaluate the impact of its actions. At world level, this is monitored by the High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development.

6.3.3.3. Seventh Environment Action Program.

The Seventh Environmental Action Program guides European environmental policy by 2020. In order to give a more long-term perspective, it sets a vision beyond that, defining where the Union wants to be by 2050: "We live well within the ecological boundaries of the planet in 2050. Our prosperity and healthy environment stem from an innovative circular economy where nothing is lost and where natural resources are managed steadily and biodiversity is protected, valued and restored in a way that ensures the sustainability of our society. Our low carbon growth has long been separate from the use of resources that guarantees safe and sustainable global society."

The program defines three main objectives:

- preserving and improving the natural capital of the Union
- making the Union a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy
- protecting Union citizens from environmental pressures and health and well-being risks





The four so-called "tools" will help Europe achieve these goals:

- Better implementation of legislation
 - Better information by improving the knowledge data base
 - More and wiser investment for policy and in the area of environment and climate
 - Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies
- Two additional horizontal priority objectives end the program:
- To make the Union cities more sustainable
 - To help the Union more effectively address the international challenges associated with the environment and the climate.

The program came into force in January 2014. It is now up to the EU institutions and the Member States to ensure that it is implemented and that the priority targets set will be met by 2020.

6.3.3.4. Clean Air Policies Package.

On December 18, 2013, the European Commission adopted a package for clean air policies. This package is based on a comprehensive overview of the EU's air policy and includes a clean air program for Europe and a proposal for directives on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants (NEC Directive) and on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from medium-range combustion plants (MCP Directive). The accepted package contains a number of components. They include:

New Clean Air Program for Europe with measures to ensure the achievement of the existing short-term targets and new air quality objectives for the period up to 2030. The package also includes measures to help reduce air pollution, air quality in cities, support for research and innovation and the promotion of international cooperation.

By 2030, and compared to the usual, the Clean Air Policies package will lead to:

- avoiding 58,000 premature deaths,
- rescuing 123,000 km² of ecosystems from nitrogen pollution (more than half of Romanian territory);
- rescuing 56 000 km² of Natura 2000 (more than the entire territory of Croatia) protected areas from nitrogen pollution,
- rescuing 19,000 km² of acidification forests.



Only the health benefits will save 40-140 billion euros of external costs to society and will provide direct benefits of about EUR 3 billion due to higher labor productivity, lower healthcare costs, higher yields and less damage to buildings. The package will also add the equivalent of about 100,000 additional jobs due to increased productivity and competitiveness due to fewer lost working days. It is estimated that it has a positive net impact on economic growth.

6.3.3.5. EU action plan for circular economy.

The European Commission has adopted an ambitious circular economy package that includes measures that will help stimulate Europe's transition to a circular economy, increase global competitiveness, promote sustainable economic growth and create new jobs.

The Circular Economy Package consists of an EU action plan for the circular economy which sets out a concrete and ambitious action program with measures covering the entire cycle: from generation and consumption to waste management and the secondary raw materials market, as well as the revised legislative proposal on waste. The actions proposed will contribute to "closing the cycle" of the product life cycle through greater recycling and re-use and will bring benefits for both the environment and the economy.

Revised waste legislation proposals set clear goals for waste reduction and set up an ambitious and reliable long-term waste management and recycling pathway.

The main elements of the revised waste proposal include:

- A general EU target for recycling 65% of household waste by 2030;
- EU general objective of recycling 75% of packaging waste by 2030;
- Mandatory landfill target to reduce landfill to a maximum of 10% of household waste by 2030;
- Prohibition of landfill of separately collected waste; Promoting economic instruments to prevent landfill;
- Simplified and improved definitions and harmonized methods for calculating recycling rates throughout the EU;
- Specific measures to encourage the re-use and stimulation of industrial symbiosis - turning the by-product of one industry into the raw material of another industry;

- Economic incentives for manufacturers to place organic products on the market and support recovery and recycling schemes (eg packaging, batteries, electrical and electronic equipment, vehicles).

6.3.3.6. EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.

The EU biodiversity strategy aims to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystems in the EU and help halting the loss of biodiversity by 2020. It reflects the commitments made by the EU in 2010 under the International Convention on Biological Diversity.

This should lead to the conservation of species and their habitats, to help us fight climate change and adapt to its effects, and to contribute to the objectives of the EU Resource Efficiency Initiative.

Unlike the previous approach, which was too broad and not sufficiently effective, the new strategy is more closely targeted at 5 priority objectives (and related measures):

- Increasing efforts to conserve species and habitats.
- Maintaining and restoring ecosystems.
- Including biodiversity targets in the most relevant EU policy areas: agriculture, forestry and fisheries.
- Fighting invasive alien species.
- Increasing the EU contribution to avoiding biodiversity loss worldwide.



6.3.4. EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) - about our food, villages, environment.

The policy objective is to define the conditions that enable farmers to fulfill their many functions in society, the first of which is food production.

In order to ensure that farmers can work efficiently and that these upstream and downstream sectors remain modern and productive, they need direct access to up-to-date information on agricultural, agricultural and market development issues. The CAP therefore improves access to high-speed technologies in rural areas and thus contributes to one of the Commission's ten priorities, namely the related digital single market.

It is expected that in 2014-2020 the policy will ensure the improvement of the Internet services and infrastructure of 18 million inhabitants of rural areas - a figure corresponding to 6.4% of the population in rural areas of the EU.

Farmers provide stable and secure food supplies to over 500 million citizens; so the common agricultural policy supports them in the following ways:

- Income support: Direct payments provide support for farm incomes and compensate farmers for the provision of public goods that are not usually paid by the market, such as rural care;
- Market measures: The European Commission can take measures to tackle difficult market situations such as sudden drop in demand due to health risk or price decrease as a result of temporary oversupply on the market;
- Rural development measures: National (sometimes regional) development programs address the specific needs and challenges facing these areas. While EU Member States draw up their programs from the same list of measures, they have a choice to focus their efforts on the most pressing problems in their territories in economic, natural and structural terms. An integral part of rural development programs is also the Leader approach, which encourages local people to solve local issues. Market and income support measures are fully funded by the EU budget and rural development measures are jointly funded by the EU and the Member States on the basis of a multiannual financial program.

6.3.4.1. Energy Strategy 2020.

By 2020, the EU aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%, increase the share of renewable energy to at least 20% of consumption and achieve energy savings of 20% or more. All EU countries must also achieve a share of 10% of renewable energy in their transport.



By achieving these objectives, the EU can help combat climate change and air pollution, reduce its dependence on foreign fossil fuels and keep energy available to consumers and businesses.

To achieve the goals, the Energy 2020 Strategy sets five priorities:

- 1) Achieving greater energy efficiency in Europe by accelerating investment in efficient buildings, products and transport. This includes measures such as energy labeling schemes,

renovation of public buildings and eco-design requirements for energy-using products

- 2) Building a pan-European energy market by building the necessary power lines, pipelines, liquefied natural gas terminals and other infrastructure. Financial schemes can be provided to projects that have difficulties in obtaining public funding. By 2015, no EU country should be isolated from the internal market
- 3) Protecting consumers' rights and achieving high safety standards in the energy sector. This includes allowing users to easily switch energy suppliers and monitor energy use
- 4) Implementing the Strategic Energy Technology Plan - the EU strategy to accelerate the development and deployment of low carbon technologies such as solar energy, smart grids and carbon capture and storage
- 5) Making good relations with external suppliers of energy and energy transit countries in the EU.

6.3.4.2. Strategic Energy Technology Plan.

The European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET Plan) aims to accelerate the development and deployment of low carbon technologies. The goal is to improve new technologies and reduce costs by coordinating national research efforts and supporting project finance.

The SET-Plan promotes research and innovation efforts across Europe by supporting the most powerful technologies in the EU's transformation into a low-carbon energy system. It encourages cooperation between EU countries, companies, research institutions and the EU itself.

The SET Plan consists of the SET-Plan Coordination Group, the European Technology and Innovation Platforms, the European Energy Research Alliance and the SET (SETS) Information System.

Research, innovation and competitiveness are one of the five dimensions of the Commission's Energy Strategy. The Integrated Strategic Energy Technology Plan is part of a new European approach to energy research and innovation aimed at accelerating the transformation of the EU energy system and putting new promising zero energy technologies on the market. The plan thus defined includes:

- Ten research and innovation actions based on an assessment of the needs of the energy



system and their importance for the transformation of the energy system and their potential for creating growth and jobs in the EU

- Attention to the whole chain of innovation, from research to market penetration, dealing both with funding and with the regulatory framework
- Adaptation of the governance structures under the SET-Plan plan to ensure more effective interaction with EU countries and stakeholders
- Proposal to measure progress through Common Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as levels of investment in research and innovation or cost savings.

6.3.4.3. Action Plan for eco-innovation.

In response to the economic and financial crisis, the Europe 2020 strategy strengthens the EU's ability to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Several flagship initiatives addressing the main challenges are contributing to the achievement of its objectives. The Innovation Union flagship initiative will ensure that innovative ideas turn into products and services, lead to economic growth and job creation and respond to major challenges for European society. As a step in this direction, the flagship initiative is committed to developing an eco-innovation action plan as a continuation of the Innovation Union and focusing on the specific barriers, challenges and opportunities for achieving environmental objectives through innovation.

The eco-innovation action plan is complementary to other Europe 2020 flagship initiatives. A key building block for the transition to a green economy is the flagship initiative "Resource efficient Europe" and its roadmap for creating and enhancing demand for eco-innovation and related investments. In its Communication "An Integrated Industrial Policy for the Globalization Era", is seen as an instrument for identifying and implementing measures to implement key environmental technologies, improving coordination and cooperation between the EU and Member States, and raising awareness of the potential of new technologies.

The focus is on promoting innovation that leads to or aims at a more environmentally friendly approach and overcoming the gap between innovation and the market. The action plan includes targeted activities both in supply and demand, research and industry, and in political and financial instruments. Support for implementation will be the partnership approach between stakeholders, the public and private sectors and the European Commission.

The Commission will provide the main incentives for eco-innovation to enter the market through:





- use of environmental policy and legislation as an incentive to promote eco-innovation;
- support for demonstration projects and partnerships for the penetration of promising, intelligent and ambitious operating technologies on the market that have not yet been widely deployed;
- developing new standards to promote eco-innovation;
- attracting funding and ancillary services to support SMEs;
- promoting international cooperation;
- support for the development of new skills and job creation and related training programs to meet the needs of the labor market;
- promoting eco-innovation through the European Innovation Partnerships provided for in the Innovation Union.





Chapter 7. Bioethics issues

7.1. Introduction.

Bioethics is a new scientific discipline. At the same time, it might be a controversial topic and cause many discussions of philosophical and medicinal character. Bioethics is a specific extension of general ethics. Erich Fromm, one of representatives of bioethics who described it in his philosophical work was my inspiration to include a brief characteristic of bioethics to this publication.

The subject and contents of bioethics are food for thought and undoubtedly lead to many questions, discussions and polemics.

Bioethics deals with issues such as conception, abortion or euthanasia. It is really worth discussing and determining bounds of humanity. Medicine is developing very fast and establishes more and more complicated issues including humanity, altruisms of doctors' behaviour in relation to patients or scientists to some genetic experiments. Gene conversions in human embryos and consequences of science are debatable.

Applied ethics represents application of ethical requirements to various areas of social practice in order to direct human behaviour for protection and support of good life. Social work is a discipline which secures professional social care for people, using special working methods. Our objective is to emphasize relevant normative foundations of social work and bioethics as one of disciplines of applied ethics and point out their interconnection using selected (fundamental) ethical principles like respect for human rights, dignity and justice.

7.2. Bioethics as applied ethics and its subdisciplines.

It is common knowledge that bioethics as one of disciplines of applied ethics has come into existence in the USA. The experts got acquainted with bioethics from work of Potter who had used the term as the first one. He emphasized that bioethics needs to become “a new discipline” and interconnect biological knowledge and human values. He saw “a bridge” in bioethics that might connect those two areas to enable humans to use scientific and technical knowledge reasonably and support survival of mankind and life improvement of future generations.

“Potter's” bioethics, in its original concept of global bioethics, includes the whole biosphere, humans and their interactions in near and long-term perspective. His bioethics represents (bio)ethics of the environment and this way it has a “larger” framework than traditional medical ethics (medicinal, nursing and health).



Parallelly with this original tendency of bioethics, it is necessary to point out what enabled some authors (Reich et al.) to talk about its dual origin. It was because at the same time bioethics obtained a strong impulse in works of Hellegers, a founder of the Kennedy Institute of Ethics, who used this term in a narrower sense, as application of ethics in a medicine and biomedical research. Such understanding has brought opinions that bioethics is ethics of medical practice and theory. We share an opinion that contemporary bioethics is not only an ordinary follow-up of medical ethics of previous period of time. It is a wider discipline with a specific subject and working methods.

Bioethics is not only a reflexion of problems dealing with life of a human itself from the point of ethics as a philosophical ethics, but it is also applied ethics justly considered one of the most mature and solidly formed applied ethics which includes a wider range of problems and combines more disciplines. Relevance of bioethics and applied ethics is pointed out by more native and foreign applied ethicists like R. Gillon, P. Fobel /et al./, who claim that bioethics is applied ethics because it covers studies of ethical problems arising from practice of biological disciplines, e.g. medicine including veterinary medicine, nursing care, caretaking, biological sciences, since medical and nursing ethics are a dominant part of bioethics.

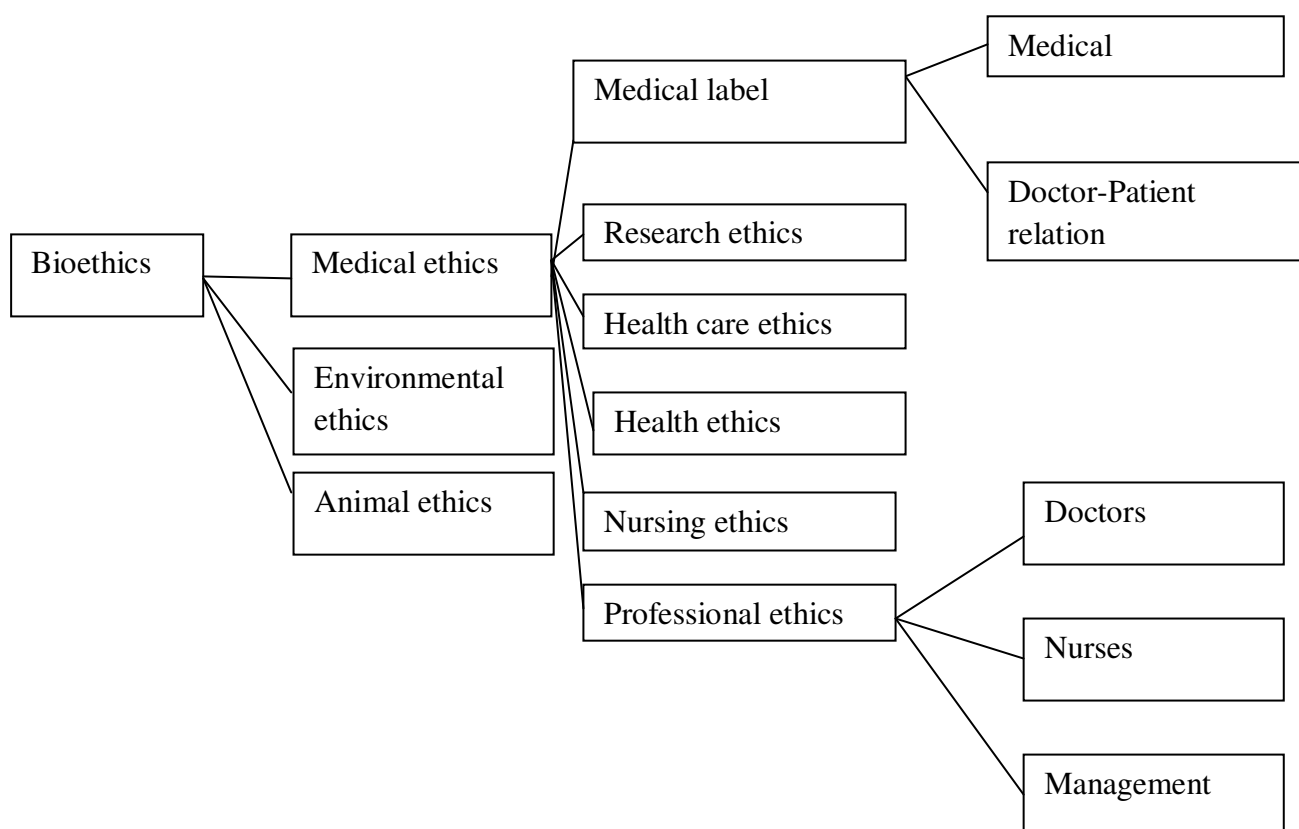


Figure 1. Bioethics (own suggestion)



The above-mentioned diagram indicates that bioethics combines several disciplines, accepts plurality of opinions and attitudes (this suggests that everybody has the right of an own opinion and obligation to accept and respect opinions of the others) and represents a specific ethical-application discourse with a considerable ethical element. Nowadays, bioethics has a broader spectrum, an extensive range and context. According to Fobel it is mostly influenced by:

- Research ethics in disciplines related to life
- Environmental ethics which emphasizes current issues such as pollution, relations among people and other living beings
- Ethical problems related to sexuality, reproduction, genetics and population
- Socio-political problems such as health, unemployment, poverty, discrimination, war, torture, etc. (Fobel, 2007, p. 21- 22).

Basically, bioethics represents application of ethical requirements to medicine, nursing and other areas of practical actions of a human in order to direct human behaviour for protection and support of good life.

7.3. Value and normative content of bioethics – history and the present.

Bioethics as ethics of life (one of sciences about life) formulates ethical principles and norms and tries to rationalize them. However, it is not simple due to pluralism of opinions, ethical theories and existing criteria, which are often contradictory.

More than 25 centuries European culture was forming and changing various moral-ethical principles, rules and recommendations accompanying existence of medicine. Is it possible to select any from such a diverse spectrum which have importance for contemporary bioethics? If we classify medical ethical experience as (bio)medical ethics, we may conclude that it is represented in three forms or models at present: Hippocrates' model, Paracelsus' model and the deontological model. These are a part of bioethics and together they create its value-normative content. Moreover, bioethics itself as normative ethics complements a spectrum of principles and norms. And so historical specifics and logical basis of each model including contemporary specifics create value-normative content of bioethics.



7.3.1. Moral principles and norms expressed in the well-known Hippocratic oath.

Historically first medical (medicinal) ethics was represented by moral principles and norms expressed in the well-known Hippocratic oath. Hippocrates (460-380 BC) as a founder of medicine is being identified with the origin of professional medical ethics. A practical relation of a doctor and a person, either ill or healthy, oriented on care and support was the main feature of professional medical ethics from the very beginning. What is later an ideal norm of a relation between people in Christian ethics such as “love your neighbour as yourself” and “love your enemies”, professional medical ethics considers a real criterium of profession choice and determination of medical art.

Norms and principles of doctor’s behaviour formulated by Hippocrates are not only reflection of specific relations in a specific historical era. They are full of contents, conditioned objectives and tasks in a context of a medical profession, independently of place, time or their implementation. At present they are still up-to-date and do not lose their importance even though a style of their formulation or writing have changed in ethical documents, ethical code of medics, nurses or social workers.

A large amount of norms and principles characteristic of this model are dominated by the principle of non-maleficence. In a culture-historical context of Hippocrates’s ethics, the principle of non-maleficence expresses a civil credo of a medical profession, an initial professional guarantee. They may be understood as a condition and a foundation of its acknowledgement by the society and every individual person who puts their life and health to doctor’s hands.

7.3.2. Comprehension of a mutual relation between a doctor and a patient.

The second historical form of medical ethics is comprehension of a mutual relation between a doctor and a patient which was formed in the Middle Ages. Its most significant representative was Paracelsus (1493-1541). He was considered to be a discoverer of chemical medicaments and empirical treatment.

Paracelsus’ model is a form of medical ethics where an ethical relation with a patient is understood as an important strategy of doctor’s therapeutic action. Contrary to Hippocrates’s model oriented to winning social trust of an individual, Paracelsus’ model is focused on emotional and psychical features of an individual, their mental and spiritual contacts with a doctor and involvement of these contacts in a medical procedure.



This model was fully developing paternalism as a type of a relation between a doctor and a patient. Medical culture uses a Latin term pater-father which was also used by Christianity to describe a priest and God too. The meaning of “father” in paternalism lies in expression of a relation between a doctor and a patient which does not cover only blood-related and family relations but also positive psycho-emotional bond and socio-moral responsibility and “healing effect” of doctor’s contact with a patient. As already mentioned, “healing effect” and “divinity” result from good proceedings of a doctor and their effort and willingness to bring “welfare” and “the good” to an ill person.

The essential ethical principle formed in this model is the principle of beneficence (“do good, welfare, mercy”). The medical profession is organized implementation of the good.

7.3.3. A requirement of moral irreproachability of a doctor.

A requirement of moral irreproachability of a doctor is very important in medical ethics. It is expressed by its deontological model which includes rules and duties of medical practice. Their violation may cause specific disciplinary and legal consequences for doctors.

“To carry out one’s duties” principle means to fulfil specific requirements and vice versa not to carry out one’s duties means to contradict requirements determined by medical society, the whole society, doctor’s own will and reason.

As soon as rules are clear and exactly formulated for each medical specialty, a principle of carrying out duties does not tolerate any excuses and apologies when duties are violated or neglected. Therefore, the idea of obligation is determining and adequate for doctor’s action.

7.3.4. Nowadays.

Nowadays, we do not talk only about help to an ill person in a context of contemporary medical care. Thanks to use of new technologies, existence of plural value systems or criteria of orientation, we are able to direct, maintain and “improve” life of people but it often leads to problematic “physical” and moral consequences for mankind as the whole (human cloning, influence of GMO on life and health of the human population, etc.). Moral conflicts and problems appear. We often talk about a conflict of rights (the right of a foetus for life versus the right of a woman for abortion, the right for dignified death versus the right for euthanasia or the right of a doctor to fulfil their professional duty “not to harm” and “not to kill”).



Therefore, one of the most important bioethical principles is the principle of respect to rights and dignity of a human. The principle influences a solution of the “main issue” of medical ethics, a relation between a doctor and a patient. Paternalism exclusively based on the authority of a doctor is replaced by involvement of a patient in a process of a medical decision. New forms of mutual relations between a doctor and a patient arise. At the same time each of them represents a specific form of protection of human rights and dignity.

A conflict of rights, principles and values is reality of contemporary plural society. Bioethics as applied ethics, however, represents an adequate type of application of ethics which tries to apply its ethical element in ethical programmes and ethical assessments. To be more specific, there are ethics committees as a part of ethical programmes to solve problems in the area of biomedicine. The ethics committees represent a form of institutionalization of (bio)ethics, they may be characterized as bioethical social associations involving ethics committees for hospitals, research institutions and specialized bioethics associations. Their role is (should be) to solve problems that require recommendations for specific questionable situations in medical-biological activities related to their theoretical or practical part.

At the end of this part we would like to emphasize that historical and logical analysis of development of medical (medicinal) ethics and principles leads to a conclusion that they are still up-to-date, a part of bioethics and practically a part of all important bioethical documents (the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine, the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights).

If we speculate about further development of contemporary bioethics, we have to note that there have been formed a few basic models of “strategies of implementation of ethics which were transformed to methods” (Fobel, 2007, p. 40). It means ethics of principles whose model is considered one of the first attempts to create foundations of particular generally valid ethical principles accepted by representatives of various cultural and moral traditions. In famous work of T. L. Beauchamp and J. F. Childress, fundamental principles of biomedical ethics are determined as follows: autonomy, justice, beneficence and non-maleficence. The principles of non-maleficence and beneficence are the oldest. The principle of non-maleficence is embodied in the Hippocrates’ oath and it can be considered some kind of an initial requirement of all moral relations among people.

The principle of beneficence is (let’s say) a follow-up of the previous principle and presupposes actions of the maximum good for an individual person and it often corresponds with terms such as charity, mercy, philanthropy, etc.



The principle of autonomy together with the principle of justice became the preferred ones at time when bioethics was formed. This and application of “ancient” ethical principles became the basis of quality of relations among medical staff and patients due to emphasis on respect for an autonomous personality of a patient and their dignity which is considered the foundation and the objective of human rights. Human rights are a tool of human dignity guarantee.

The principle of justice, contrary to the above-mentioned ethical principles, focuses on a solution of those moral problems whose participants are not only individuals but also social groups. It is comprehended as an ethical “criterion” for an adequate division of services, medicaments, technologies, etc.

These are the primary principles, immediately apparent (*prima facie*), accepted by various cultures and religious traditions and they should serve as regulations able to solve all ethically conflict situations. However, it is necessary to say that in some specific cases these principles are contradictory and not able to solve moral problems and ethical dilemmas. Nevertheless, this model and its importance of application of ethics for bioethics (applied ethics) is significant and related to the fact that it was the first integrative foundation systematically developed for bioethics.

Another model is represented by ethics of care whose basic moral credo is healing and care for the ill although it is lacking unanimous formulation of care, especially in connection with justice, or equality of those who need care. Ethics of care tries to perceive specific situations and cases from different points of view and puts emphasis on care for good life of specific people.

A causal model of application of ethics in bioethics is original and basic. It compares and determines specific problematic situations on the basis of analogy and other similar cases and tries to solve them.

There are other models such as utilitarian, deontological (Kantian ethics, contractualism, communitarianism, liberal pluralism, religious ethics...).

All of them offer a solution of moral problems through applications of their own principles and determined criteria.

In bioethics, as a discipline of applied ethics, attention is paid mainly to a model of good life more than a model of quality life. “We appeal to a requirement of good life more likely than its quality or distinctions.” (Fobel, 2007, p.38).





However, it is possible to list other models which have a significant role in a process of philosophical and ethical reasoning and application approaches to bioethics. These include ethics of virtue with emphasis on ethics of good life, narrative ethics, feminist ethics interconnected with ethics of care and gender issues and discourse ethics as a theory of communication and action.

7.4. Conclusions.

Social work is closely connected with (bio)ethics (applied ethics). A social worker is supposed to do their work, considering “a subject” of their work, in accordance with ethical principles. And so, their professional action presupposes capability of ethical reflexion, moral behaviour and decisions.

Social work arises from rules studied by ethics and at the same time it is oriented to a solution of practical tasks connected with social conflicts people are involved in. Therefore, fundamental ethical principles, famous thanks to philosophical, general ethics and applied ethics (bioethics), have an important role. It is obvious that social work, considering its contents and subject, carries on their further development and rationalization.

We were focusing on those fundamental ethical principles which are, in our opinion, relevant to bioethics as well as to social work. We are talking about respect to human dignity leading to human rights (ethics of human rights) and consequently to autonomy and justice which are its normative expression.

Human dignity undoubtedly belongs to every individual, it is naturally related to humans and legitimate thanks to an ability of a human to have a personality. It is inviolable and so any violation of human rights is unacceptable. In a certain way it is reversion to Kant’s statement which says that a human is the aim themselves and it should never be used as a tool. According to Kant, human dignity is expressed by moral autonomy of a person and is one of the main ethical norms, in social work either.

Autonomy expresses a way of life of a human who is responsible for their own actions, as well as for an autonomous way of life of other people. It emphasizes respect of a person as a human being in all dimensions – physical, mental, spiritual and social.

Human rights are basically interpreted as rights belonging to every person and we could not live without them as human beings. They are based on dignity and humane values of a human. They are universal and cannot be denied since they are the same for everybody.





Human dignity is interconnected with rights but also with duties of all participants of social work and society. We talk about social justice that might be interpreted through the social and ethical principle of justice. The principle of justice may be comprehended as a moral attitude, social and unbiased order, a criterion of external relations of people, social structures or a virtue more than necessary for social work practice.

The principle of justice requires to make no distinctions between people and secure optimum care for everybody who needs it, without any discrimination.





Chapter 8. Culture and traditions

8.1. Bulgaria.

8.1.1. Introduction.

A Country for All Ages¹⁴, Bulgaria has a rich and century-old cultural history. With the adoption of Christianity in the 9th century, Bulgarian culture became an integral part of the European culture, but nevertheless its authenticity is preserved till nowadays¹⁵.

There are many traditions and celebrations that originated from pagan times or have Christian roots, and have been strictly followed for centuries. Bulgarians are proud of their traditions, culture and heritage. This is reflected in everything from food and songs to dances and jewelry.

Winston Churchill once remarked that the “Balkans produce more history than they can consume.” Bulgaria, which hugs the peninsula’s eastern edge along the Black Sea, may have a right to say its history is among the oldest and most complex. Human existence here can be traced back to at least the Old Stone Age. A large number of golden artefacts have been found, in the Panagyurishte, Valchitran, Rogozen, and elsewhere. Entire city complexes have been discovered where excavations are still going on.

Bulgaria is one of the biggest producers of rose oil in the world. The Rose is the Symbol of Bulgaria. The Bulgarian roses are inheritors of the so called Damascena rose and were brought to our lands during the 17th century. The Rose valley of Bulgaria includes fields with area is about 3,300 square kilometers along the Stara Planina mountain.

During antiquity, the region now known as Bulgaria was controlled by Thracians, Greeks, and Romans. Over time, the area was overtaken by the Avars, the Byzantine Empire, and the Ottomans. Each stage was met with local resistance. As Ottoman control weakened across the Balkans, Bulgaria again blossomed under its own control. A new constitution was drawn in 1989, and in 2007, Bulgaria joined the European Union.

The traditions, festivals, customs, and rituals preserved by Bulgarians through the ages are evidence of the country’s profound spirituality and its dynamic lifestyle and culture.

¹⁴ <https://routes4u.culture-routes.net/country/bulgaria/>

¹⁵ <https://visitmybulgaria.com/bulgarian-traditions/>





Traditions and old customs as well as involvement in community cultural life and public celebrations are organized by Community Culture Centres, called Chitalishte. Those non-governmental institutions were set up after the liberation from the Ottoman Empire when Bulgarians were eager to preserve their language, traditions and customs. There isn't a town, a village in Bulgaria without such an institution. The founders erected buildings between 1880 and 1890, were responsible for selecting teachers and setting up of amateur choirs, national folklore dancing and singing groups. There were numerous amateur theatres where intergenerational relationships were established, poets clubs and reading workshops that made for the supply with books and setting up of libraries.

The Chitalishte institutions were the centres for enlightenment, the membership was voluntary and the residents of the village impatiently expected the community shows dedicated to National holidays: Christmas, the week of the Book, the Day of the Bulgaria alphabet and culture. Nearly all community centres have internet facilities and are still the place that attracts young and old for activities, dedicated on preserving Bulgarian traditions and customs.

8.1.2. Geography.

Bulgaria is a country situated in Southeast Europe and occupies the eastern quarter of the Balkan Peninsula. The country is bordered by Romania, Turkey, Greece, the Republic of North Macedonia, and Serbia. The Danube River flows along its northern border. To the east, the Black Sea provides a completely different dimension to tourism with its famous resort cities of Varna and Burgas.

Bulgaria's long Black Sea coastline is the country's summertime playground, attracting tourists from across Europe and beyond. The big, purpose-built resorts have become serious rivals to those of Spain and Greece. Golden Sands is one of the oldest and largest Black Sea resorts situated at a distance of 17 km north from Varna city.

There are multiple mountain ranges in the country—including the Balkan Mountains, which give the peninsula its name—and the highest peak in the Balkans: the 2,925-metre Musala Peak. The mountains are not only incredibly majestic but are also characterised by great versatility. The majority of them boast excellent [ski resorts](#) where one can engage in all sorts of winter sports and activities including skiing, snowboarding, trekking, climbing, etc. The ski slopes are as varied as they can get and the aerial lifts are modern and well-maintained.





Bulgaria has a temperate-continental climate with moderate features which is characteristic for Central Europe, with hot summers, long, cold winters and very distinct seasons. Daytime temperatures vary from 0-5°C in the winter and 25-30°C in summer months.

Bulgaria is a Parliamentary Republic. The official language is Bulgarian and the religion of most Bulgarians is Eastern Orthodox Christianity. The national state emblem of the Republic of Bulgaria is an upright golden lion on a dark red, shield-shaped background. The national emblem is depicted on its state seal. The flag consists of three colors: white, green and red, laid horizontally from top to bottom. Bulgaria's capital is Sofia.

All citizens are equal before the law. No limitations on rights or privileges are allowed based on of race, citizenship, ethnicity, sex, national origin, religion, education, beliefs, political affiliations, personal or social position, or property status. The state authority is divided into legislative, executive and legal branches. The political life of Bulgaria is based on the principle of political pluralism.

The basis of the Bulgarian economy is free economic initiative. The state creates conditions for the free development of science, education, and the arts and provides support for them. The state also makes provisions to preserve the country's historical and cultural heritage.

8.1.3. Religion.

Religion in [Bulgaria](#) has been dominated by [Christianity](#) since its [adoption](#) as the [state religion](#) in 865. The dominant form of the religion is [Eastern Orthodox Christianity](#) within the fold of the [Bulgarian Orthodox Church](#). During the [Ottoman](#) rule of the [Balkans](#), [Sunni Islam](#) spread in the

territories of Bulgaria, and it remains a significant minority today. The [Catholic Church](#) has roots in the country since the [Middle Ages](#), and [Protestantism](#) arrived in the 19th century¹⁶.

In the latest years, there has been a decline of both the historic religions of Bulgaria—Orthodox Christianity and Islam—, which shrank respectively from 86% in 1992 to 84% in 2001 to 61% in 2011 and from 13% in 1992 to 12% in 2001 to 8% in 2011. In the 2011 census, the question about the religious affiliation became optional, and thus 21.8% of the total population didn't answer.

Religion	1992 ^[6]		2001 ^[7]		2011 ^{[1][8]}	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Christianity	7,350,016	86.6	6,638,870	83.73	4,487,554	60.9
– Bulgarian Orthodox Church	7,274,479	85.71	6,552,751	82.64	4,374,135	59.4
– Protestantism	22,067	0.26	42,308	0.53	64,476	0.9
– Catholic Church	53,470	0.63	43,811	0.55	48,945	0.7
Islam	1,111,838	13.1	966,978	12.2	577,139	7.9
Other	11,882	0.14	14,937	0.19	11,444	0.1
No religion	-	-	308,116	3.88	682,162	9.3
No answer	-	-	-	-	1,606,269	21.8
Total population	8,487,317	100.0	7,928,901	100.0	7,364,570	100.0

The [Constitution of Bulgaria](#) designates Orthodox Christianity as the "traditional" religion of the country, but guarantees the free exercise of any religion¹⁷

Public schools offer an optional religious education course that covers Christianity and Islam. The course examines the historical, philosophical, and cultural aspects of religion and introduces students to the moral values of different religious groups. All officially registered religious groups can request that their religious beliefs be included in the course's curriculum.

¹⁶ [Население по местоживеење, възраст и вероизповедание](#)". National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria. Archived from [the original](#) on 3 March 2018.

¹⁷ ["The Bulgarian Constitution"](#). Bulgarian Parliament.

The government does not permit religious headdresses on official photos for national identity documents.

Bulgaria has not experienced any significant ethnic or religious confrontation. The religious communities in the country coexist peacefully. In fact, the capital [Sofia](#) is known for its so-called Square of Religious Tolerance; the [St Nedelya Church](#), [St Joseph Cathedral](#), [Banya Bashi Mosque](#) and [Sofia Synagogue](#) are located within metres of each other in the very centre of the city. A lesser known fact is that a Protestant church is located near them. [Protestantism](#) is rising especially amongst younger people in Bulgaria. Two of the famous Protestant churches in Sofia are [Awakening Church](#) and [Zoe Sofia](#).



Relations between religious groups generally remained civil and tolerant; however, discrimination, harassment, and public intolerance of some religious groups remained an intermittent problem. There were continuing reports of societal discrimination against "non-traditional" religious groups as well as negative media stories about such groups. Jehovah's Witnesses continued to report numerous media stories with negative, derogatory, and sometimes slanderous information about their activities and beliefs. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints voiced concerns over the media's reluctance to cover their charity work and positive contributions to the society. Although less common than in previous years, some Protestant groups continued to report hostility and verbal attacks from the local population in heavily Muslim areas.



Some "non-traditional" groups continued to face discrimination and prejudice from local authorities in certain localities, despite obtaining a national registration with the Sofia City Court. Jehovah's Witnesses voiced concerns over an increasing number of instances in which police officers or municipal guards stopped and fined

missionaries for engaging persons in religious conversations.

Over the centuries Bulgaria has proven to be a state where Bulgarians of different religious backgrounds live together and respect neighbours' religious celebrations and customs. There are towns and villages with Muslim and Christian population who have established friendly relationship.

8.1.4. Culture: historical roots.

Bulgaria is the oldest country in Europe that hasn't changed its name since it was first established in 681 AD. [Sofia](#), the capital of Bulgaria, was founded 7000 years ago. This makes it the second oldest city in Europe.

Bulgaria comes third in the list of countries with most valuable [archaeological sites](#) discovered on their territories, preceded only by Greece and Italy. There is solid historical evidence that wine has been produced on the territory of what is now modern-day Bulgaria ever since the Stone Age. Today the country has earned the reputation of a world-class wine producer.

The culture of Bulgaria is based on an interesting blend of Thracian, Slavic and Bulgarian traditions, along with the influence of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Many ancient customs remain, such as Thracian fire dancing, which is recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage. Bulgaria also has a strong folkloric tradition that pervades many aspects of art, literature, music, celebrations and daily life¹⁸.

Lifestyles and cultures in what is now Bulgaria have developed over thousands of years. The country is located at the crossroad between Europe and Asia, and the lands of Bulgaria have been populated since antiquity. The Slavs and proto-Bulgarians were greatly influenced by the cultures of the Thracians, Illyrians and Greeks, and all peoples who resided on these lands – Thracians, Romans, Slavs, and Bulgarians – have contributed to the world's cultural heritage.

It is no accident that the earliest European civilization grew up here.

Some of the most famous treasures in the world were discovered at the Varna Necropolis, including the world's oldest golden ornaments;

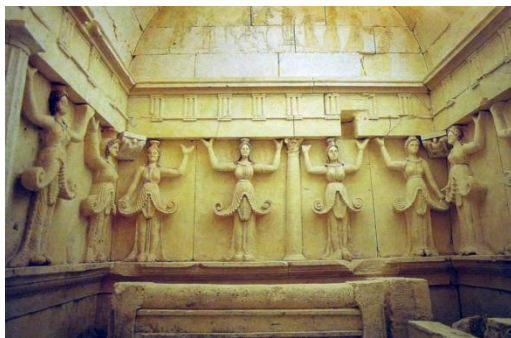


¹⁸ <https://www.iexplore.com/articles/travel-guides/europe/bulgaria/history-and-culture>

The Varna Necropolis is a burial site in the western industrial zone of Varna, a town on the Black Sea coast, internationally considered one of the key archaeological sites in world prehistory. The oldest [gold](#) treasure in the world, dating from 4,600 BC to 4,200 BC, was discovered at the site¹⁹.

There are Thracian tombs and sanctuaries in Kazanlak, Sveshtari, Starosel, Aleksandrovo, Perperikon, and Tatul.

An original Thracian tomb from 4th – 3rd century BC is one of the most significant monuments of the Thracian culture in Bulgaria, included in the list of the global cultural inheritance of UNESCO in 1979. The monument owes its global fame to the remarkable wall-paintings in the corridor and the dome premise – one of the best preserved products of the antique painting from the early Hellenistic age.²⁰



[*Kazanlak Tomb, 8, Tyulbenska Str. Kazanlak, Bulgaria*](#)²¹

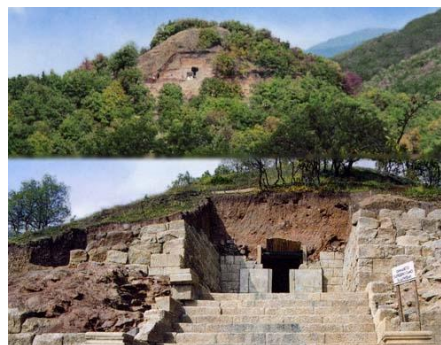
The remains of the Thracian, Hellenistic and Roman culture are many and varied. In the dozens of Thracians tombs that have been discovered, there are unique remains attesting to the high material and spiritual culture of antiquity. The Thracian Temple Complex in the village of Starosel which was in [Antiquity](#) an important and wealthy Thracian city in the 5th century BC. The largest underground temple in the Balkans is found under the Chetinyova Mogila (tumulus), along with a mausoleum. The temple as well as nearby Thracian king's residence under Mount Kozi Gramadi were likely built during the reign of Amatokos II (359-351 BC). Other sites include the Horizont

¹⁹ <https://bibliophilia.eu/varna-necropolis-the-dawn-of-european-civilization>

²⁰ https://bulgariatravel.org/en/object/14/kazanlyshka_grobnica#map=6/42.750/25.380

²¹ <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/bulgaria/articles/the-most-impressive-thracian-tombs-in-bulgaria/>

tumulus, where the only known Thracian temple featuring a colonnade (a Doric one) is located, as well as 9 other tumuli in the surrounding area²².



8.1.5. Bulgarian folklore music and dances.

What is traditionally referred to “Bulgarian folk music” has its roots in ancient customs and traditions that reflect the five-century-long Ottoman rule that never succeeded in crushing the lively spirit of the Bulgarians. Traditional Bulgarian music is exceptionally diverse and distinctive and is known for its unusual ‘asymmetric’ rhythms, where rhythm is not split in even beats but in longer and shorter ones. It can be described as a fusion of melodious ballads, sung with powerful voices and the traditional instruments – the blows of the goatskin bagpipe intertwined with the mystical sounds of the end-blown flute and complemented by the sound of the large drum.

Another intriguing fact about the traditional Bulgarian song is that it always tells a story. Created in small [villages](#) tucked away in the valleys of our beautiful [mountains](#), women would often gather and sing together, telling tales of love, family, work, daily chores or anything else that would trigger their inspiration. Traditionally, these songs served as news – from village to village and valley-to-valley – women used to create these magical sounds and share their story. This tradition was passed from mother to daughter over many generations²³.

Today the voice of a woman called Valya Balkanska, singing the song “Izlel e Delio Haidutin” is one of the twenty-seven musical performances that were once sent to space in 1977 on board of the US Voyager. The [UNESCO-honoured](#) “citizen of the world”, Balkanska is one of Bulgaria’s greatest treasures not only renowned for her incredible voice, vocal capacity and range but also for her phenomenal ability to recreate the mystical atmosphere of the traditional [Rhodope Mountain](#) singing.

²² [http://www.incomingbulgaria.com/i.php/places_of_interest/Thracian Tombs/Tom of Starosel/index.html](http://www.incomingbulgaria.com/i.php/places_of_interest/Thracian_Tombs/Tom_of_Starosel/index.html)

²³ <https://www.myguidebulgaria.com/travel-articles>

If you see Bulgarians dancing in the street holding hands and forming big circles or rows, you have most probably come across a *horo*, the national dance of the country. This centuries-old tradition has been preserved in Bulgaria and a few other Balkan states, and it still brings people together for moments of unity and spontaneous joy.²⁴

Dancing *horo* involves learning a sequence of steps and combining them with movements of the hands while folk music is playing. Sometimes dancers hold each other by their waists or perform a “dancing dialogue” standing opposite each other. Fifty years ago or so, dancing *horo* was a way of courting. Looking each other in the eyes during a dancing party in the main square of the village often meant that the two people liked each other and were going to get married. At a time when no radio and television existed, *horo* dancing was the main form of entertainment.



Bulgarian Public holidays

8.1.6. National Day Of Bulgaria – 3th of March.

On this day, remembered in history as Bulgaria Liberation Day, the people of Bulgaria pause for a tribute. Since 1888, March 3 has become Bulgaria’s Day of Liberation from Ottoman yoke and it was declared a National Holiday in 1978. The date March 3 was included in the list of Bulgaria’s official holidays, according to a parliamentary decree in 1990.

This celebration marks the death of the winter and the birth of the spring, via appreciating winemakers and vine growers. It is traditionally the Winemaker’s Day in Bulgaria – the first pruning of the vines. St. Trifon the Pruner is the winemakers’ saint. The original tradition says that the more wine that flows on this day, the more generous the next harvest will be.



Martyr Trifon Zarezan (Pruner) Winemaker’s

²⁴ <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/bulgaria/articles/horo-the> Day – 14th February.

According to Bulgarian scientists, Saint Trifon acquired his wine-centered role through a transformation of the pagan pre-Christian wine gods such as Dionysius, who were widely worshiped by the ancient [Thracians](#)²⁵.

Every year, from the beginning of February, a hot public dispute opposes Saint Trifon's day to Saint Valentine's day. Arguments are in favour of making Bulgarians stick to their roots and traditional holidays, on one hand, or justifying the freedom of people to celebrate whichever occasion they want, on the other hand. Recently, February 14 has been turned into a combined holiday when Bulgarians celebrate their love for their better half, or their love for wine.



8.1.7. St. George's day – 6th May.

May 6th is declared the Day of the Bulgarian army as well as the Day of the shepherds. At the same time it is the name day of the people who have the name George or derivative names for men and women.

Saint George the Victorious was canonized by the Church because of what he has done. He is usually painted on an icon as riding a white horse, holding a lance in his hand, stabbed in the throat of a beast – the dragon. According to the legend, a dragon used to attack the shepherds and their sheep and each time the dragon used to steal a sheep or a lamb, Saint George defended the herd.



²⁵ <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/bulgaria/articles/trifon-zarezan-bulgarias-second-valentines-day/>

8.1.8. The Day of the Bulgarian education and culture and Slavonic literature.

May 24 is the Bulgarian education and culture, and Slavonic literature day. It is also known as the day of St. Cyril and Methodius, in honor of the brothers who created the Cyrillic alphabet. It is a public holiday in Bulgaria, celebrated with an abundance of cultural events.



8.1.9. Family celebrations.

Just like the majority of Europe, Bulgaria celebrates Christmas and Easter as two of its primary holidays, and many of the associated customs like the Christmas tree and Easter eggs are also present.

➤ Christmas Eve – 25 of December.

Bulgaria's Orthodox Church is celebrated on December 25th, following the Gregorian calendar. The event is very important for a family gathering: cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents come to the house of the oldest members of the family. Christmas tree and presents are among the attributes of the celebration. The typical meal consists of an odd number of dishes which follows the forty-day Advent fast. This vegetarian meal includes grains, vegetables, fruits, and nuts. Walnuts are a necessary component to the Bulgarian Christmas meal. Each member of the family cracks one in order to determine their fate for the next year.

If the walnut is a good one, it is said that the year will be successful. Bad luck is predicted for the person who cracks a bad walnut.

The hosts leave the Christmas Eve dinner table as it is after everyone finishes eating and the table is not cleared until the next morning to provide sustenance for the ghosts of ancestors who might come back to visit before Christmas morning.

The legend tells us that Virgin Mary bore Christ on Christmas Eve but only announced his birth the day after, on Christmas Day. Bulgarian legend also has it that Mary was in labor from December 20 until Christ's birth.

Christmas Eve might be all vegetarian, but on Christmas Day, it's time for feasting on an enormous dinner that includes a main dish of some type of meat (often pork).

Koledari, or Christmas carolers, go from house to house throughout Bulgarian villages on Christmas, starting at midnight on Christmas Eve. These groups of carolers are typically made up of young men dressed in traditional costumes, which vary from region to region. The koledari make special preparations for these holiday performances. As with other Bulgarian traditions, this one has a motivation behind it: This custom is said to protect against evil spirits. The Christmas carolers are often rewarded with food in return for their singing as they go from house to house through the night.

➤ Easter.

[Easter](#) is a family holiday in Bulgaria. Every family should dye and decorate boiled eggs in bright colors and bake special cookies and cake. Religious Bulgarians go to a special mass on Easter at midnight where it is officially announced "Christ is resurrected". These are the words that are used for greeting instead of "hello" when people meet on the street for the next few days. Lamb is served on Easter day when the 40 day Great Fast finishes.

According to the Bible, Jesus was captured on Thursday during prayer and this is traditionally the day to color the eggs. Before coloring the eggs you need to hard boil them first. Then take the egg paint and dissolve it in as much water as the packaging says before putting the eggs inside. Some Bulgarians add a tablespoon of vinegar, so the shell absorbs the color better.

The first egg you take out of the paint should be the red one. Before it dries up you make small cross signs with it, first on the forehead, and then on the cheeks of the children in the family, and then on each family member. The first egg should be kept next to the icon of St. Mary in the house until next year. When the following Easter comes you break last year's egg to see it's color: if it's white, your family will be blessed with a beautiful year ahead. If the inside of the egg has darkened, you should be more cautious.





➤ Traditional name days celebrations.

In addition to birthdays all Bulgarians have a name day too. A name day celebration is as close to the heart of the Bulgarians as it is their birthday. The name day is a day of the year in the [Bulgarian Orthodox calendar](#) to celebrate the name and life of a certain Saint and everyone named after that saint. That's only part of the story though, because Bulgaria is rich in traditions and being one of them, Bulgarian name days are as complex and unique as the rest of the many other [Bulgarian folklore customs](#). Although not all names derive from the Orthodox Christian list of saints, if the name sounds similar to a saint's name, the person will most probably celebrate that name day.

As the tradition goes, everyone is invited to name day celebrations, so it's not necessary for the celebrant to personally invite anyone. However, this approach is not as common as it once was when people would open their homes, and the whole village would come [drink to their health](#). The name day is considered the second most important celebration in one's life, after their birthday, so you don't have to bring really big or expensive presents. Something small or even a pot of flowers and a bottle of good wine is usually enough.

➤ Yordanov den - Saint Jordan's day – January 6th.

It is believed that on the 6th of January Jesus Christ was being baptized by John the Baptist. The baptizing took place in the river of Jordan with God as a witness as he came down to Earth to pronounce him as his son. This day is being honored as the Epiphany. The night between the 5th and 6th of January is believed that the skies would open and everyone who saw this will get all the things that he/she wished from God. Many people in the past used to stay up all night watching and waiting for heaven to open.

This is one of the most ancient holidays of Bulgaria and it has been celebrated for centuries. The priest throws a cross into a lake or a river and the men jump in and try to be the first to find it. Whoever catches the cross will be very lucky and healthy for the rest of the year. It is believed that if the cross freezes in the water it will be a fertile year for the agriculture with lots of harvesting. After this ritual is done the people go home to feast.

There is another version of celebration where all the men from the village dance a folklore dance in the cold river water to the beating of traditional instruments. Since it is the beginning of January, the water is very cold and often icy. During the ice dancing some drink alcohol to stay warm in the cold water.



➤ Tsvetnitsa.

Another Orthodox moveable feast celebrated Sunday one week before Easter. This is the day when religious Bulgarians go to church and bring home a twig of willow – a symbol of the palm leaves used by the people in [Jerusalem](#) to greet Jesus one week before he died. Bulgarians decorate their homes with flowers and all people whose are named after flowers (Rose, Lily, etc) celebrate a name day.

[Palm Day, or Tsvetnitsa](#) in Bulgarian, which literally means “Flower Day”, is when everyone whose name means flower has their name day. It’s basically obligatory to bring a flower to someone celebrating their name day on Flower Day.

➤ Todorov den.

St Theodore’s Day is celebrated on the first Saturday of the Easter Great Fast in Bulgaria (usually in March). All people named Theodore (or a derivative) have their name day and throw parties for their families and friends. Also known as “Horse Easter”, horse races are organized all over the country. The horses are decorated with flowers or beads. It is also known as "Horses' Easter" because of the horse races commonly held on that day.

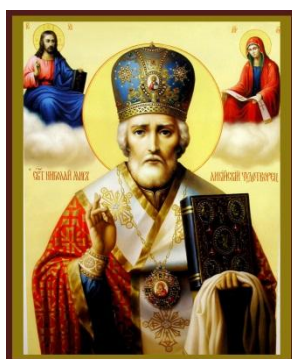
St. Todor occupies a part of folk customs and is important for all spring rituals for the changing of winter to spring and the related fertility. On this day, according to folk St. Todor crawls on his horse Spring field to check you grow crops, then thrust his spear into the ground, tying him for the horse takes off nine housing and goes to God to pray for summer. So people associated Theodore mostly hoping for fertility.



➤ Nikul den.

Nikulden—St. Nicholas Day—December 6th, is a great winter festival. Bulgarians celebrate St. Nicholas as the protector of sailors and fishermen. Stories are told of St. Nikolay, the commander of the sea, calming wind and storms and walking over the sea to rescue ships in danger. Like Greek sailors, Bulgarians keep icons of St. Nicholas on shipboard, seeking protection from storms. Sailors' wives put icons of Nicholas into the sea, praying to St. Nicolay to bring their husbands safely back to shore.

Carp is the special food for the day, as legend tells how, when a ship was sinking because of a hole in the hull, St. Nicholas stuffed a live carp in the hole, saving the ship. The special fish dish, *ribnik*, is carp or trout wrapped in dough or stuffed with rice, walnuts, raisins, and herbs. Ribnik is baked in the oven along with two special loaves of bread. Other meatless dishes are also served. The food is blessed at church or at home before being served. Carp is regarded as Nicholas' servant.



8.1.10. Spring festivals²⁶.

There's a Bulgarian saying "One bird is not enough for spring to come" and that is why [Bulgarians](#) have many spring festivals and traditions, symbolically marking the transition between winter and summer. Many of them are a mixture of Christian and pagan ritual, and like [Easter](#) their dates are different every year.

➤ Kukery

The word 'kuker' comes from Latin ('cuculla,' meaning a 'hood') and it denotes a folkloric ritual monster, a man dressed in an elaborate suit of fur and ribbons, feathers and beads. These kukeri wear carved wooden masks with the faces of beasts and birds; hanging heavy copper or bronze bells

²⁶ <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/bulgaria/articles/6-spring-festivals-to-look-forward-to-in-bulgaria/>

around their waists as they dance and jump in arcane rituals intended to dispel the evil spirits which might otherwise bring *loshotiya*, or *ill fortune*, to a community.

In the earliest surviving accounts of the ritual – and in those towns and villages with the most loyally observed traditions – the kukeri will often start their work as early as dawn. They dance through village streets delivering health, happiness and a bountiful harvest year; they visit houses too, letting themselves into family homes in order to perform blessings older than any book can remember.

In some traditions, these home invasions took place in the morning; in other communities they were performed after dark, as the story goes, so that “the sun would not catch them on the road.” I’ve spoken to Bulgarians who clearly remember such episodes from their childhood – some of them describing a visit from the kukeri as a singularly terrifying experience. But then, that’s the point. Evil spirits take a lot to scare, and these performers often spend all year crafting intricate, disturbing and grotesque costumes for the festival.

The kuker dance is an ancient Bulgarian ritual performed usually by men, dressed up in animal skins, fur, horns, with heavy bells around their waists, wearing masks of fearful creatures. Kukeri fight evil, dance and perform short stories in order to chase the evil spirits away. Kukeri festivals are held on various dates around the country, mainly between January 1 and the beginning of the Easter Great Fast (mid-March). The performers go to every house in town, scaring the wicked ghosts off and bringing good luck and happiness to the families.



Surva - International [Festival of Masquerade Games](#) is an annual event held at the end of January and the beginning of February in the town of Pernik, located some 30 km away from [Sofia](#), the capital of [Bulgaria](#). It was first organised nearly 50 years ago and has now become one of the most iconic folklore festivals that take place on the territory of the country.

Every year more and more masquerade groups and spectators from all over the world come to Pernik to contribute to and witness the magic of this unique festival, whose main goal is to celebrate tradition and cultural diversity. The most fascinating detail about the way the kuker ritual goes at

Surva International Festival is that the spectators are more than welcome to grab a bell and a mask and join the dancing party. Well, it may not be quite like the carnival in Rio but the fun is still guaranteed.

➤ Baba Marta – 1st of March.

On March 1st Bulgarians tie red and white threads called martenitsa around each other's wrists or pin them on their coats. The day itself is called [Baba Marta](#) (literally Grandma March) named after the folk character related to a grumpy old lady whose mood swings very rapidly and who is said to be responsible for the ever changing weather in March.



This is one of the most highly valued customs in Bulgaria for celebrating the beginning of spring, originated from an old pagan tradition that remains almost unchanged today. The ritual is said to bring people health and good fortune for the coming year. Family members, relatives, friends, and colleagues give each other white and red tassels, martenitsa, with wishes of health, luck and happiness. Martenitsas are only taken off when seeing a stork or a blossoming tree, which symbolize the heralds of warmer seasons. Martenitsas are still often hung on fruit trees and livestock in rural areas.

➤ International Women's Day – March 8th.

On March 8th all mothers are honoured. Children made decorations and post cards and greet their mothers. Every man buys flowers and arranges festivities for his mother, grandmothers, aunts and his wife. There are lots of poems dedicated to the mother and students usually learn them by heart and greet their mothers with poems and songs.



8.1.11. Annual cultural events.

➤ Festival of roses.



Every year, during the first weekend of June, local community organizes the annual **Festival of Roses**, held for first time in 1903 and dedicated to the beauty and charity. The rose cultivation and rose industry have been kept by generations of enterprising people from the valley. Today the Rose Festival is an international event, visited and enjoyed by thousands of tourists and guests of Kazanlak. Now a days the Rose Festival in the unique Valley of the Roses has come to be a symbolic reflection of the lifestyle, the spirit and the cultural patterns, typical for Kazanlak region.

The festival program includes the traditional rose-picking ritual and rose - distillation that gives you a true feeling of authenticity and the coronation of Queen Rose. The festival ends with a street procession in which the main role is allotted for the participants of the International Folklore Festival. There are other interesting events, taking place during the festival weekend - choir a cappella and folklore concerts, art shows, exhibitions, wine-tasting, shows.

➤ Apollonia Festival.

Apollonia Festival of Arts is one of the hottest and most awaited annual cultural events organised on the territory of the country. It takes place every year in the period between the last week of August and the first week of September and attracts musicians, artists, performers, sculptors, writers, directors and audiences from all around the globe.

Its immense popularity is pretty much down to the fact that the festival has always been able to demonstrate its impressive versatility and create a magic atmosphere that everyone can enjoy to the fullest. A simple glimpse at Apollonia's programme is enough to prove that point. It is as varied and exciting as it can get. The list comprises an endless number of events ranging from classical, traditional and jazz concerts, literary readings, theatrical and dance performances to fine art

exhibitions and film showings, all of which share one common goal – to promote culture and celebrate its great values.

➤ National Fair of Bulgarian Folklore Art.

The National Fair of Bulgarian Folklore Art has been holding in the town of Koprivshtitza since 1965. Every fifth year in summer the region becomes a center of folklore celebrations. Ensembles from all ethnographic areas in Bulgaria take part in the Koprivshtitza festival. Concerts are played in the open near Koprivshtitza performing the unique Bulgarian singing and dancing on 8 stages. Only the best performers from every region participate in the fair. An interesting part of the celebrations is the review of authentic Bulgarian national costumes and exhibition of Old Bulgarian crafts. In the evening in the center of Koprivshtitza foreign folklore ensembles perform traditional Bulgarian folklore. The Folklore Festival in Koprivshtitza is among the most impressive, exciting and important events in Bulgarian cultural life. It gathers at one place the best of Bulgarian folklore and contributes for its preserving and popularizing all over the world.

8.1.12. Unique traditions.

➤ Fire dancers performing sacred barefoot dance on fire.

In a few isolated villages near the Turkish border, a mystical ritual has survived till the present day. On the night of Saints Constantine and Helen's Day, villagers gather on the square to dance – barefoot – on burning embers. It is reported that the dancers descend into a state of trance induced by a sacred drum, explaining the complete lack of pain felt by the participants.

The tradition of barefoot dancing or Anastenaria combines Eastern Orthodox principles with more ancient pagan rituals. Curiously, it is practiced by both ethnic Bulgarians and the former Greek population of some of the villages in the mountain of Strandzha in Southwest Bulgaria.



➤ The Wonder of Paneurhythmy²⁷.

Master Peter Deunov was not only one of the most distinguished spiritual leaders ever to have lived in Bulgaria, but was also among those who played an instrumental role in the saving of the lives of no less than 50,000 Bulgarian Jews during WWII. His generosity and the unlimited love he felt for everyone helped him develop a doctrine based on the principles of compassion, virtue and truth. Deunov claimed that the only way to reach God was by recognising His supreme cosmic rhythm and for that purpose he invented the paneurhythmy – the art of praising nature and becoming one with the universe.



Today thousands of people follow the steps of Master Deunov and practice this ritual. Every summer the members of the White Brotherhood – that's how his movement is commonly referred to as nowadays – climb the sheer slopes of [Rila Mountain](#), set up camps in the area around the gorgeous [Seven Rila Lakes](#) and celebrate the cleansing light of the rising sun and the infinite wisdom it brings. We have seen the whole thing with our own eyes so we know exactly what you can expect: a once-in-a-lifetime experience that you will certainly never forget.

It all begins in mid-August on the picturesque plateau with the kidney-shaped Babreka Lake in Rila. If you happen to be in the region around this time of the year, you'd most probably be hiking along one of the many lovely trails there and enjoying the breathtaking scenery.

That's when you will come across a huge camp comprising hundreds of remarkably well-organised tents. Please, don't be weirded out by this unusual sight – all of Deunov's followers are extremely friendly and hospitable and they will never do anything to bother you. Instead, they will greet you politely and if it is lunchtime. They will most probably also invite you to join them to the improvised field kitchen they have set up, where they will share their delicious organic food with you.

²⁷ <https://www.myguidebulgaria.com/travel-articles>



The feeling of amity that reigns in this place gets even more palpable when you take a closer look around. It is full of tourists just like you who have pleasant, quiet conversations with the people in the tents. No one is arguing or trying to impose their beliefs on others. This tranquil atmosphere will most likely lure you in to spending the night there. And that's good because the next morning you will become part of the wonder of paneurhythmy.

- May your success flow like water: spilling water in front of the door

There exist many ways to wish someone luck around the world, but what is done in Bulgaria has to rank among the most curious. When one leaves home for a key event in their life like the first day of school, a decisive exam or an important competition, **it is a custom to spill a copper vessel of water in front of the doorstep**, so that literally “it [your success] may go on water for you”. And when a bride leaves home before the wedding, she kicks a copper vessel full of water too!

Typically, this tradition is followed up by giving the person a cranesbill plant, a Bulgarian symbol of health and prosperity. Indeed, there seems to be an entire ceremony for ensuring success!

8.1.13. Peculiarities and features in a nutshell.

- Bulgarians express approval by shaking their heads rather than nodding. Weird, huh.
- The famous **Bulgarian rose** oil is used for making some of the world's most popular and expensive perfumes. One gram rose oil is produced out of 1000 rose blossoms.
- [Sofia](#), the capital of Bulgaria, is the only big city in Europe that lies just 15 minutes away from an imposing mountain – [Vitosha](#).
- The Bulgarian folk song *Izlel e Delio Haydutin* has been flying around open space together with Bach's and Mozart's greatest works since 1977 when the Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 probes left the Earth.
- Bulgarian yogurt is the best in the world, no doubt about it. This is thanks to the unique *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* bacteria used for its production that can only be found on the territory of the country.
- Nearly one third of Bulgaria is covered in forests in over 40 [mountains](#), great for skiing and mountaineering.





- Bulgaria is the country with the highest number of natural [mineral springs](#) in Continental Europe – over 600.
- The different ethnic and [religious groups](#) in Bulgaria live in peaceful coexistence.
- The Bulgarian army has never lost a single flag in battle.
- The famous Facebook creator **Mark Zuckerberg** has a Bulgarian origin and he is named after his Bulgarian grandfather – Marko who emigrated from Bulgaria in 1940.
- The first computer in the world was created by a Bulgarian. In the period 1937 – 1942 **John Atanasoff**, a scientist of Bulgarian descent, together with Clifford Berry, an American inventor working for the University of Iowa, designed and developed the first electronic digital computing device.
- The first digital wristwatch was also invented by a Bulgarian. His name is Peter Petroff.
- The renowned opera singers Boris Christoff and Nikolai Gyaurov are Bulgarians.
- The Cyrillic alphabet was invented in the 9th century AD by none other than the two most famous Bulgarian monks ever to have lived – Cyril and Methodius.
- Assen Jordanoff, a renowned aircraft engineer and one of the inventors of the airbag, was also of Bulgarian descent.
- The Bulgarian national football team finished fourth in the 1994 World Cup. Their best footballer, Hristo Stoichkov, finished the tournament as a top scorer, netting six goals in seven games.





8.2. Italy.

8.2.1. Facts and Statistics.

- **Location:** It is one of the Mediterranean countries placed in the South of Europe and sharing borders with French, Switzerland, Austria, Germany and Slovenia. Italy is a peninsula surrounded by the Ligurian, Tyrrhenian, Ionian and Adriatic seas, stretching into the Mediterranean Sea. It has numerous islands (the largest are Sicily and Sardinia) and two enclosures of the Republic (the states of Vatican City and San Marino).

- **Capital:** Rome.

- **Climate:** temperate; generally warm summers; cold, cloudy, humid winters.

- **Population:** 60,359,546 (Demo ISTAT at 04/10/2018).

- **Religions:** 74.4% Catholic Church, 22.6% Irreligious, 3.0% others.

- **Government:** Unitary Parliamentary Republic.

8.2.2. Language in Italy.

- **Official language:** Italian.

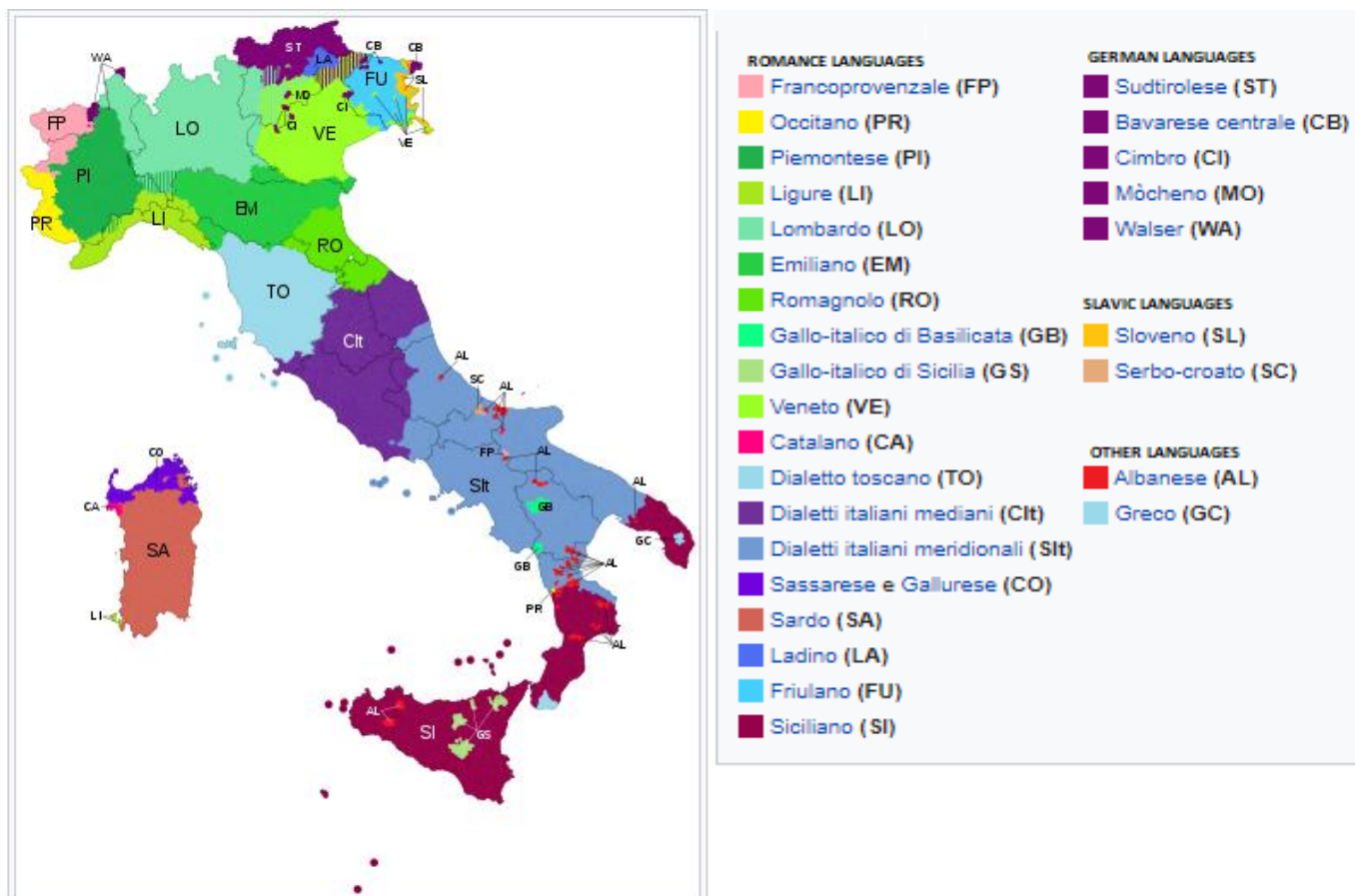
In the Italian Regions are also locally present many different linguistic minorities, that are officially recognized and protected by the "*Constitution of the Italian Republic*" (**Article 6** - "*The Republic protects linguistic minorities with specific rules*"). The Constitution, indeed, affirms the principle of protection of minority languages present on the national territory.

Special forms of protection are provided for by the Special Statutes of the *Trentino-Alto Adige* Regions as regards the German and Ladin languages (including Cimbrian and Mochene minorities), the *Valle d'Aosta* as regards the French language and *Sicily* for the Albanian language.

The Italy languages represent a rich and varied linguistic heritage in Europe. Excluding the current foreign languages due to modern migratory flows, all the Italian spoken languages are exclusively Indo-European and belong largely to the Romance languages family. Anyway, among the spoken languages, we can find also Albanian, Germanic, Greek and Slavic varieties²⁸.

²⁸ https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingue_dell'Italia





8.2.3. Italian People and Society²⁹.

➤ The People.

For historical and geographical reasons the Roman civilization legacy has permeated the history of Italians even more than other European peoples. Italians also got the influence of some other advanced local cultures such as the Etruscan, Hellenic and those of Italioti and Sicelioti (Hellenics of *Magna Grecia*). These cultures later merged into the Latin one, but they have contributed in various ways to the enrichment of the artistic, architectural, religious, legal, institutional and in some cases even scientific heritage of Rome and ancient Italy. After the Italy Kingdom foundation (1861) as a modern nation-state, the word "Italians" has also passed to designate all Italian citizens and naturalized foreigners who are believed to have adopted the general lifestyle, as well as language, culture and the values of the local population.

With 60 359 546 inhabitants (provisional data as of 31 December 2018), Italy is the fourth country in the European Union by population (after Germany, France and the United Kingdom). At

²⁹ <https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italia#Societ%C3%A0> <https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italiani>

the end of the nineteenth century, Italy was a country of mass emigration, a phenomenon that occurred first in the northern regions and then in the southern regions. The main regions are the Americas (United States, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay) and central-northern Europe (especially Germany). In the twentieth century, emigration also became internal, attracted by the industrial development of some northern areas of the country. As far as the phenomenon of immigration is concerned, the number of immigrants or foreign residents regularly in Italy has considerably increased since the 1990s. According to ISTAT data, on 1 January 2019 it had 5 255 503 units, 8.7%³⁰ of the resident population: the most numerous communities were the Romanian, Albanian and Moroccan ones.

➤ The Family.

The Italian family continues to be a very important social value and a firm and safe point on which they always count, despite having significantly transformed over the past 30 years³¹ The average number of family members is about three people and, concerning children, four out of ten families do not have it and 26% have only one. It is a different family than 30 years ago that follows the evolution of society. As Istat confirms: singles have increased significantly (8.4 million, + 110%), marriages have fallen by -40.5% (191 thousand) in favor of cohabitation and divorces have increased significantly (+ 230%). **Despite this transformation, it emerges that today's Italian family still defines itself as traditional (37%), a safe haven (31%), modern and open (26%).** Compared to the family of origin, even if people no longer live with them, the bond remains very much alive with a mutual exchange of attention and care on both sides. In particular, 25% of the elderly give concrete help to the new family, while 45% receive assistance from their younger relatives.

As for the working sphere, women are slowly gaining ground over their spouses in the roles of entrepreneurs and managers, but the road to equality is still long. Despite this, only 34% of women are housewives.

³⁰ <http://dati.istat.it/>, Foreign population residing on 1 January 2019 by age and gender Italy, on dati.istat.it. URL consulted on 24-12-2019.

³¹ Data from: research "Modern family: from 1989 to today how the family has changed in 30 years" commissioned by BNP Paribas Cardif on the occasion of its 30 years of activity in Italy and conducted by the Eumetra MR research institute. http://www.ansa.it/canale_lifestyle/notizie/societa_diritti/2019/11/09/modern-family-la-famiglia-italiana-di-oggi-tra-tradizione-e-nuove-aperture_cb52b26d-4c6f-47b7-97dc-749f31a17351.html



8.2.4. Etiquette and Customs in Italy.

➤ Meeting and Greeting.

Upon meeting and leave-taking, both friends and strangers wish each other good day or good evening (*buongiorno*, *buonasera*). “*Ciao*” isn’t used between strangers. Italians who are friends greet each other with a kiss, usually first on the left cheek, then on the right. When you meet a new person, shake hands.

➤ *If you are invited to an Italian's house:*

- Gift Giving Etiquette.

When invited for a family lunch or dinner small presents can be given in an informal way as typically such an invitation would indicate a high level of familiarity. Pastries, chocolates or flowers are appropriate on such occasions. Never give an even number of flowers (especially roses) and avoid chrysanthemums as they are used for funerals.

- Dining Etiquette.

Italians can choose if have a dinner in a restaurant or at home. Starting from the Friday night and during the week end, Italians often choose to eat in a restaurant: it is a sort of celebration of the free time. On the other side, the dinner at home today has usually replaced lunch as main meal of the day. 20-30 years ago, indeed, dinner pattern followed that of the classic Italian lunch, with more or less the same courses but with lighter dishes and food. Today, the introduction of short lunch breaks in the working days has often changed the eating habits of a slice of Italians, especially in the great urban areas. For that reason, many Italians consume the classic complete lunch mainly on holidays or weekends, while on other days it generally uses a single course or a single dish, if not only a stuffed sandwich with a drink near the workplace (despite this, the typical full and multi-course lunch continues to persist among most of the Italian population).

During Italian dinner you may be offered several different white or red wines; and in this case, the finer red or white is usually served first, so that you may appreciate it best. A sweeter wine may be served with dessert. The most common toast is “*salute!*” (to your health!), or, more informally, “*cin-cin*”. Remember to not begin eating until the host says “*Buon appetito!*”. Allow the more senior members of your party to enter rooms ahead of you. At the table, be sure to look for place cards or wait until the host indicates your seat.





Take care of *dining etiquette for eating pasta*: it is very important for Italian people! If you are served pasta, do not use a spoon to assist yourself while eating it!! Use a fork and the sides of the bowl or plate against which to twirl the pasta onto the fork.

8.2.4.1. *Business Etiquette and Protocol.*

Courtesy is a quality that is very much appreciated in Italy, so, if you have Italian business partners, ensure your conduct is always polished. There are specific etiquettes and protocols for individual social and business situations, especially concerning meeting and greetings.

Moreover, Italians tend to “multitask”, since they like to do many things at once, shifting their priorities as new demands arise but being unruffled by interruptions. As a consequence, you might experience differing reaction times from your Italian contact as he/she is probably following several other projects at once.

- Meeting and Greeting.

During business meetings it is common to shake hands with everyone present upon introduction and to bid farewell. Women should always extend their hand first to men. Once you have developed a friendly relationship with a person you may greet each other with a kiss on both cheeks and/or an embrace. The term “kissing” means simply pressing the sides of the face together.

- Communication Style.

While being introduced in a business meeting, respond with “it is a pleasure”, which translated into Italian is “*piacere*”. Also, a common greeting for “good morning” (“*buongiorno*”) or “good evening” (“*buonasera*”) is used when you enter the office. Before leaving you can use the term “*arrivederci*” (“see you”) or “*a presto*” (“see you soon”).

- Business Meetings.

Showing up on time for business appointments is the norm and expected in Italy. There are more business lunches than business dinners, and even business lunches aren’t common, as Italians view mealtimes as periods of pleasure and relaxation.

Anyway, with the aim of socializing and establishing friendly relationships, it is very common for business meetings to lead to an invitation to dine out in a fine restaurant. Here it is recommended to keep the business discussions limited. The dining etiquette for talking business, indeed, depends upon how well developed your relationship is with your Italian colleagues, it is





generally not the time to make important business decisions. Anyway, take your cue from your Italian associates.

Usually the lunch in a business sense is very brief and informal, consisting of simple course or single dishes in a restaurant. Traditionally lunch begins around 1.00- 1.30 PM. Dinner time is usually around 7.30-8.00 PM, however, in some southern regions it is delayed, starting at 9 PM.

8.2.5. Italian cuisine.

Italian cuisine has roots dating back to the 4th century BC, it was influenced by the cuisine of ancient Greece, ancient Rome, Byzantine, Jewish and Arab. The precious raw material to prepare one of the most important and typical drink of Italian cuisine came from Arabia: coffee. Coffee, especially *espresso coffee* and *Neapolitan coffee*³², is recognized all over the world as symbol of Italian cuisine tradition and it started to be regularly consumed just from XVII century³³.

But it was the discovery of the New World that brought many important changes and the introduction of new ingredients such as potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and corn, now fundamental in Italian cuisine³⁴. Italian cuisine is known above all for its vast regional diversity, its abundance in taste and seasonings and as a classic example of a Mediterranean diet, recognized as an intangible heritage of humanity by UNESCO in 2010.

Italy is characterized by a very various and rich different local and traditional cuisines: each Italian region has its own traditional dishes and ingredients. Many Italian dishes that once were known only in the regions of origin, today they have spread over the country over time. For some specific local cuisine products such as cheese, wine, sausages, there is specific legal protection, the *Denomination of controlled origin (DOC)*, especially for the autochthonous varieties. Additionally, to the DOC legal protection, the most important Italian cuisine products are protected and preserved by several specific official nomenclatures: Italian products with PDO - *Protected Designation of Origin*; Italian PGI products - *Protected geographical indication*; Italian TSG products - *Traditional specialty guaranteed*.

Italian food is considered by some to be the finest in the world. As one moves from north to south through Italy, the food shifts from rice-based dishes (*risotto*) to wheat-based dishes (*pasta*, *pizza* and *gnocchi*), from carefully prepared complex dishes to more simple and hearty fare (stews,

³² Coffee done by moka pot.

³³ The first cafes were opened in Venice in 1645, with blends from Arabia, Ethiopia and Yemen.

³⁴ These specific ingredients have been introduced in large quantities only in the eighteenth century, so becoming Italian cuisine typical ingredients.



soups, etc.). Seafood and fish are abundant throughout the country due to its enormous coastline, and the vegetables and the fruits are extraordinary. Some say that the finest food in Italy can be found in the Bologna region, the home of *ragout*, *tortellini* and *prosciutto*. Bolognese food is rich, heavy, and complex. Florentine and Tuscan dishes rely on boar, meats, beans, lots of olive oil, herbs, and garlic. Genoa is the home of *gnocchi* and *pesto* and wonderful fresh fish stews. The Lombard region is famous for its *osso buco*, lamb dishes, and Rome for the fabulous varieties of pastas, meats, and vegetables. In the Veneto area to the east you can find wonderful *polenta* (a dish of boiled cornmeal that was historically made from other grains), fried fish from the Adriatic, and lots of fresh vegetables prepared in countless ways. Finally, into the south and beyond to Sicily, you find the home of the *pizza*, fresh farm vegetables, figs, olive oil, and herbs.

8.2.5.1. Italian cuisine main meals.

➤ Breakfast.



Breakfast is usually sweet with hot or cold milk or fruit juice accompanied by baked goods such as biscuits, bread with jam or hazelnut cream or the classic croissant. The coffee predominates with the variants of *cappuccino*, *caffellatte*, or the famous *espresso*. On some special occasions, such as Sundays or holidays, pastry products or other regional specialties may also be present. However, there are many Italians who only drink coffee in the morning, without taking food.

➤ Lunch.

Traditionally, lunch is the most important meal of the day and is, if complete, made up of three or four courses:

1. *appetizer* (“*antipasto*”), cold or hot, generally composed of croutons, salami, cheeses and vegetables;
2. *first course* (“*primo*”), usually a pasta or rice dish or a soup;
3. *second dish* (“*secondo*”), generally based on meat or fish or cheese or salami, accompanied by a side dish, often composed of vegetables;
4. *dessert* and / or fruit to finish.

After dessert, coffee: it is very frequent and traditional in Italy that a meal is closed by a cup of espresso coffee, followed by the so-called *ammazzacaffè*, consisting of a little glass of local liqueur, bitter or sweet. Today, the majority of the Italian population consumes the classic full lunch mainly on holidays or weekends, while on other days it generally uses a single course or a single dish near the workplace.

➤ Dinner.

The dinner pattern follows that of the classic Italian lunch, with more or less the same courses but with lighter dishes and food. Dinner is the most frequently consumed meal at the restaurant with friends and relatives, and it can have multiple dishes.

➤ Break.

This short break time is called *“merenda”*, it is placed between lunch and dinner around 4 PM and it consists in a snack to appease the mid-day appetite. It is usually a light meal, made only with fruit or bread and jam if not some typical dessert and, in summer, possibly ice cream. It is particularly used in childhood.



www.settemuse.it

Giuseppe Arcimboldo: Estate (1573)



8.2.6. Italian art and culture.

8.2.6.1. Ancient art tradition and cultural development.

Italian peninsula artistic tradition is much older than Italy itself, which born as a united country less than 160 years ago. The various people lived in the peninsula during several millennia produced precious objects already in the Neolithic era and the strong artistic tradition as well as many important artistic treasures were the result of the influence of numerous Mediterranean cultures, especially the ones of Greeks and Etruscans. Today is especially the culture and lifestyle of Italians, alongside many artistic treasures and historical heritage, that fascinate all those visit Italy. The Mediterranean atmosphere, the excellent cuisine and a calm and welcoming lifestyle make this country so enchanting.

8.2.6.2. Art in Italy: from Etruscans to the present.

Art and politics have always been closely connected to each other. So also in the history of Italian art we can say that almost all roads led to Rome. After the Etruscans, Europe was dominated by Roman Empire that for centuries was the center of the arts and culture. But even after the fall of the Roman Empire, Rome and the Vatican remained however in the center of the European artistic framework and established new norms, firstly with the Italian Renaissance. Meanwhile, numerous Italian city-states were developed independently by each other creating their own political and cultural centers. Today's Rome can no longer even be imagined without the baroque works of Gianlorenzo Bernini and Francesco Borromini - they in particular created the appearance of the Italian capital and their grandiose works are admired by many travelers that visit Italy.

8.2.6.3. Lifestyle and joy of living - Italian mentality and culture.

The Italian lifestyle and the typical joy for life in the Mediterranean area are the main reason why so many people appreciate the Italian mentality and culture. But how are really Italians? There are so many stereotypes and prejudices about Italians: some define them as snooty machos, others see them as very expressive and eloquent or elegant and focused on outward appearance. Although maybe many of these stereotypes contain a bit of truth, Italians are much more less uniform than one might think. Glorious history of Ancient Romans was followed by a long period of formation of many city-states and foreign domains. This is the reason why it is no wonder that local patriotism is still very strong in many regions and that many Italians try to distinguish themselves from others.





But despite this, Italian national pride is always dominant over a foreigner, which is a positive and particular aspect of Italy.

8.2.6.4. Italian Art - Artistic heritage to date.

Artistic tradition is deeply embedded in Italy. Inhabitants of Italy produced decorative objects already in the Neolithic era. Italian art was increasingly developed during the birth of the Roman Empire. Many influences from various regions of Europe and famous Italian artists enriched the peninsula and left to Italy so many artistic treasures of very relevant importance. While many Italian regions developed independently from each other after the fall of Roman Empire, Italian Renaissance led to a further growing of Italian art. Michelangelo, Raffaello and Leonardo da Vinci marked the Renaissance as Bernini and Borromini did it with Italian Baroque.

8.2.6.5. Roman Art in Italy.

Roman art has been characterized by a very deep relationship between politics and art. Differently than Greek art, Roman art placed attention especially to secular values, as center of main values. Ornaments, interior rooms and frescoes were more important than the exterior facades. Apart from these characteristics, Roman art brought three great innovations to Italian art: art of portraiture, landscape and historical painting. All these three conquests of Italian artistic history were ably exploited by Caesars to reflect glory and splendor of their empire. Through recognition and propagation of the Christian religion there was a clear change: art was put at the service of the church, which influenced in a relevant way Italian and European art over the following centuries.

8.2.6.6. Italian Renaissance - Harmony and Perfection.

After the fall of Roman Empire, the tradition of Roman art continued to live, not only in Byzantine Empire. The Italian city-states developed in independent centers both in the field of art and in the politics sphere and managed perfectly to tie the glorious past to their present. Romanesque and Gothic art were more inspired by nature until the Renaissance and its revaluation of antiquity triumphing in Italy. Starting from Florence as a place of birth, Renaissance spread as a new artistic style throughout Italy and was strongly supported especially by church and by rich cities.

Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1520), Michelangelo (1475-1564), Raphael (1483-1520) and Tiziano (1488 / 90-1576) became the symbol of Italian Renaissance and left us many fantastic works that make heart beat faster to all Italian's art lovers. The passage to the Baroque was then





characterized by two artists who realized equal important works: Annibale Carracci (1560-1609) and Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1573-1610), whose works can be admired in Rome and Naples.

8.2.6.7. Rome and the Baroque heritage of Italy.

Due to the expansion of Protestantism, the Catholic church began to use art with the intention to strengthen faith in God. So, for this reason Baroque can also be considered as a means of propagation by which the Church tried to emphasize its importance. Talking about Italian Baroque, is not possible to omit Rome and the heritage left by two important artists: Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) and Francesco Borromini (1599-1667). Rome owes its current outward appearance to these two artists. Without the magnificent architectural works of Borromini and the wonderful sculptures of Bernini, Rome would certainly not emanate the today charm.

8.2.6.8. Italian Modern Art.

Italian sculptors, painters, architects and artists dominated the artistic framework throughout Europe for 400 years and they always started new eras thanks to their artistic innovations. This domination had a sudden end with the birth of nationalism and the union of Italy. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century some Italian artists were able to further capture the attention of the art world with their works belonging to Futurism and Metaphysical Painting. However, era during which the most important Italian artists putted all their work at the service of Church, is definitively concluded, but their heritage makes Italian art a central element for every trip to Italy.

8.2.7. Italian culture, main local traditions and folklore.

Italy always distinguishes itself thanks to a secular and very varied culture, which is characterized not only by several important characters, stories and events but also by a great number of interesting local traditions.

From North to South, every single region, city or small village as well as each territory - no less than each district - can boast an incredible heritage of customs and traditions. Italian *folklore* is one of the richest in the world, and it gives to our country an even more extraordinary charm. Among the most original and picturesque Italian aspects, those related to the innumerable local traditions certainly stand out. Every single city, from the largest to the smallest, has got an age-old folkloric baggage in its culture with purely religious celebrations and popular festivals and each of



them is often linked to original, unique - and sometimes bizarre - events (or characters) able to touch anyone's imagination.

It is not unusual in Italy to bump into a popular local festival or in a patron saint's festival and, especially in the summertime or during the main religious festivities, is very easy to find traditional events to be attended.

From the Neapolitan culture to the Alpine one, passing through the magic of the Southern lands, the Italian regions are full of popular customs and traditions composed both from great and famous events known all over the world (such as the *Venice Carnival*) and small customs, surviving in the gestures and words of our fathers and grandparents.

Especially the latter ones can be considered true life testimonies, bringing traditions, cultural roots and social customs from the past to our days through generations.

One of the most famous of these popular traditions, recognized all over the country, is the “*Acqua di San Giovanni*” (*Saint John water*), to be prepared in the 23th of June night, as the 24th is the day devoted to Saint John the Baptiste. Saint John's Eve, indeed, starts at sunset on 23 June and is the eve of celebration before the Feast Day.



Figure 3 - Mixture of herbs for St. John water

As the most of the celebrations and popular festivals arrived till to our days, it has pagan origins.

At the beginning the festival celebrated the Sun, which warded off the darkness and introduced the harvest season. The Feast of Saint John closely coincides also with the June solstice, also referred to as *Midsummer* in the Northern Hemisphere, and it has a similar meaning for the locals.

Such as all the various customs connected to the Baptist, the celebration *aims to protect and wish all the best to the Nature and people* (good and copious crop and prosperity for farmers).

As referred by the ancient beliefs - but also as told by *William Shakespeare* in a "Midsummer night's dream" - during this special night the Faith is combined with magical legends,

the impossible becomes possible and wonders happen. So, during this night a special mixture of herbs, plants and flowers should be picked: they are called the "**St. John's Wort**".

The wort is put in a bowl with water and left to the night light between 23 and 24 June. This way the water should receive beneficial magic powers with which to wash at sunrise. A traditional popular Italian adage says: "*La guazza (rugiada) di Santo Gioanno fa guarì da ognimalanno*" (the Saint John's dew heals from every illness).

But how to prepare the mix of wild herbs useful for Saint John's water? The wort should be composed by: Rose petals, mint, cloves, buttercups, chamomile matricaria, artemisa, arnica, verbena, poppies, cornflowers, garlic (against witches and spells), fennel (against the deceptions) and hear hear Fern leaves (plant with powerful qualities). Although there is no fixed rule for this mix of herbs, the presence of the Hypericum is absolutely inevitable. The hypericum (*Hypericum Perforatum*) is also called "*Erba di San Giovanni*" (S. John Herbs).



8.2.7.1. Folklore of Italy: a special history.

In the Italy of "Cento Campanili" (Hundred Tower Bells), characterized by a remarkable cultural fragmentation and by an infinite variety of uses, customs and traditions, linked and connected with the different regional realities, folklore must necessarily be seen and considered in a limited territorial context because, recalling and interpreting archaic traditions coming from the people, concerning popular uses and customs, often linked to legends or typical dances, and handed down orally, they refer to a specific geographical area and a specific population.

Since 1878, the term folklore has been accepted by the international scientific community to indicate the contemporary forms of social aggregation focused on the evocation of ancient popular practices or all those cultural expressions commonly referred to popular traditions, from songs to superstitions, to cuisine, that already two centuries in advance *Giambattista Vico*³⁵ defined as "fragments of antiquity".

³⁵ **Giambattista Vico** (23 June 1668 – 23 January 1744) was an Italian political philosopher and rhetorician, historian and jurist, of the Age of Enlightenment.



But the term had been already coined, in 1846, by the anthropologist *William John Thomas*³⁶ who, in an article published on the London newspaper “The Athenaeum” expressed the necessity to find a word that could unify and understand all studies on English popular traditions.

In Italy a real start of the study on popular traditions and about folklore occurred during the Napoleonic era, by a survey started between 1809 and 1811 on dialects and customs of peoples of Italy's Kingdom aimed at identifying and eradicating prejudices and superstitions still existing in the “Bel Paese” countryside. Proceedings of the inquiry are preserved at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan. But as in Italy it was, and perhaps it is still so, accentuated the cultural fragmentation and the variety of local customs and traditions, it was highlighted by several surveys carried out in the various regions just to highlight the different aspects of the traditions and popular practices.

From 1835 to 1856 don Francesco Lunelli investigated the traditions of Trentino and Alto Adige³⁷, not considered by the Napoleonic investigation as territories not aggregated to the Italy's Kingdom at this time, focusing the survey mainly on proverbs concerning women. But the first important and complete work was the treatise published in Forlì in 1818 by Romagnolo *Michele Placucci*³⁸ on “Uses and prejudices of the peasants of Romagna”. Among other things, there is stated that the peasants of Romagna used to eat fava beans on 2nd November, day of deads, because it was commonly believed that these plant had the power to strengthen memory, so that no one would forget their deads. Another archaic tradition reported by Placucci is the making the filling of

³⁶To fully understand **FOLKLORE**, it is helpful to clarify its component parts: the terms **folk** and **lore**. It is well-documented that the term was coined in 1846 by the Englishman *William Thomas*. He developed it to replace the contemporary terminology of “popular antiquities” or “popular literature”. The second half of the compound word, **lore**, proves easier to define as its meaning has stayed relatively stable over the last two centuries. Coming from Old English *lār* ‘instruction,’ and with German and Dutch cognates, it is the knowledge and traditions of a particular group, frequently passed along by word of mouth. The concept of **folk** proves somewhat more elusive. When Thoms first created this term, folk applied only to rural, frequently poor and illiterate peasants. A more modern definition of folk is a social group which includes two or more persons with common traits, who express their shared identity through distinctive traditions. “Folk is a flexible concept which can refer to a nation as in Italian folklore or to a single family.” This expanded social definition of folk supports a broader view of the material, i.e. the lore, considered to be folklore artifacts. These now include all “things people make with words (verbal lore), things they make with their hands (material lore), and things they make with their actions (customary lore)”. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folklore>

³⁷ “*Tradizioni popolari e dialetti nel Trentino*”, Inchiesta post-napoleonica di Francesco Lunelli (1835-1856). “Popular traditions and dialects of Trentino”, post Napoleonic inquiry of Francesco Lunelli (1835-1856).

³⁸In May 1811, Prof. Giovanni Scopoli, the Public Education General Director of Italy Kingdom started to collect all the available information concerning customs, traditions, beliefs and widespread superstitions in the campaigns of the several departments of the Kingdom. The topics treated regarded: birth, weddings, funerals, and the main annual festivities such as Christmas, New Year, Carnival, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, etc. Furthermore, the inquiry focused the most used agricultural seasonal practices, popular dances, and songs as well as on the local dialects of inhabitants. This important and vast Napoleonic investigation is at the base of the famous work “Uses and prejudices of the Romagna region”, published by Michele Placucci in Forlì in 1818. **Michele Placucci** (Forlì, 24 August 1782 - Forlì, 2 April 1840) was an Italian historian and writer. He was the author of a collection on the popular traditions of Romagna. The work, released in 1818, is considered the first study on folklore in Italy. https://www.dialettoromagnolo.it/uploads/5/2/4/2/52420601/pb-207-file-placucci_edizione_pitre-1885.pdf





"cappelletti" without meat. Placucci's work was the first in a long series of other treatises dedicated to the different Italy's regions.

But the intellectual who started a systematic and scientific study on Italian Folklore, was Mr. *Giuseppe Pitre*³⁹ from Palermo who published the "Library of Sicilian popular traditions" and realised in 1894 an unbeatable publishing work, wealth of information: the "Bibliography of Italian popular traditions" and the "Archive Magazine for the Study of Popular Traditions", published without interruption from 1882 to 1909. And it was exactly Mr. Pitre himself the first scholar who obtained, in in Palermo in 1911 a university chair for the study of popular traditions, under the name of Demopsicology. During fascism era this type of study was initially used to reinforce the romantic and medievalizing myth of the People linked to their land and tradition, then to create "the people" at the national level, trying to unify the local traditions, through the action of "After Work Institute". After the Second World War, a great impact had the publication of the "Notes on folklore", contained in the "Quaderni del carcere" by Antonio Gramsci.

Particularly appreciated are the Italian folkloristic researches conducted by Ernesto De Martino on themes linked to regional realities ("Morte e Pianto Rituale - Death and Ritual Crying", "Sud e Magia - Magic: A Theory from the South", "The Land of Remorse - La Terra del Rimorso"), which had as object survey on social classes considered out of history, the peasants of Southern Italy, with the declared aim to use popular traditions as a founding element of a future class consciousness. Popular traditions, ritual representations, dialects and forgotten languages, which Ernesto De Martino called "Mondo Magico - Magic World", which tell about sacred and profane world and remember rituals, festivals, music and songs, the mysteries of life and nature, wars, loves, legends, birth and death, represent a legacy of ours to be preserved and not to be forget, that finally it will be protected in Italy as a humanity heritage, thanks to the ratification of two Unesco conventions, one on Cultural Diversity and the other on Intangible Heritage. Within the world's assets to be protected there are included some expressions of high Italian folklore such as Sardinian "Canto a Tenores" Sicilian "Puppet Theater", "Palio of Siena", "Ceri di Gubbio Festival". Some other examples of popular tradition are already included in a UNESCO world list that every year identifies pieces of collective memory to be preserved and to be saved from oblivion. Among these, in addition to the famous "Canto a Tenores", the most archaic musical expression of Sardinia, where four singers placed in a circle perform real musical acrobatics through the simple use of voice, there is the "Teatro dei Pupi

³⁹ **Giuseppe Pitre** (22 December 1841 – 10 April 1916) was an Italian folklorist, medical doctor, professor, and senator for Sicily. As a folklorist he is credited with extending the realm of folklore to include all the manifestations of popular life.



Siciliani", with those unique and colorful puppets that still today remember us Orlando Furioso and the Gerusalemme Liberata. However, although Italy is one of the richest countries in the world concerning traditions, is almost one of the last in acting for the protection of these "Intangible Goods". In fact, since many years Korea has a catalog of "living heritage", which classifies a famous shaman as a "cultural asset". Anyway, the UNESCO classification should have a very positive repercussion for restoring Italian folklore in its real nature of "living archeology", not only tourism and not just a postcard. However, it must not be forgot that in Italy there are many areas where the "intangible heritage" is much more protected than the material one. Such as, for example, some Southern processions, such as the Flagellants of Guardia Sanframondi or the pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Madonna dell'Arco in Santanastasia, the representations of Easter in Campania or the Festivity of Santa Rosalia in Catania, where all resident families, even more so if emigrated, give their immaterial and economic contribution to keep alive this tradition. (Rosanna Fudoli)

Until 2016, the most important part of the Italian popular traditions and cultural folkloristic costumes have been preserved by the "*Museo delle Arti e Tradizioni Popolari*", the only state Museum in Italy with specific competences in the "demo-etno-anthropological" areas, storing over than one hundred thousand documents of popular traditions from all the Italian regions, that have been collected and acquired from 1906 till today, starting from the collection made by Lamberto Loria for the 1911 International Exhibition.

Then, thanks to a complex plan of reforms and reorganization developed by MiBAC- Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, from September 2016 the *Museum of Civilizations*⁴⁰ has been created in Rome, including in one body the major national museums related to the demo-etno-anthropological areas. The collections preserved by the new Museum of Civilization are composed by these following former museums:

- "Luigi Pigorini" prehistoric ethnographic Museum
- "Lamberto Loria" Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions
- "Giuseppe Tucci" Museum of Oriental Art
- "Alessandra Vaccaro" Museum of the High Middle Ages
- Italo-African colonial Museum of Rome.

⁴⁰ ITALIAN MUSEO DELLE CIVILTÀ <http://www.museocivilta.beniculturali.it/>

8.2.8. Main Italian popular traditions.

According to what we said before is it not possible to give an exhaustive overview of all the Italian popular traditions. So, we decided to present only some of the most representatives, dividing them for geographical areas.

We are going to observe the main traditions and cultural events of North, Centre and South of Italy.

8.2.8.1. Northern Italy.

➤ *Il carnevale di venezia* (The Venice Carnival – Veneto)⁴¹



Figure 4 - Venice Carnival

The Carnival of Venice is an annual festival held in Venice, Italy. It ends with the Christian celebration of Lent - forty days before Easter – on Shrove Tuesday (*Martedì Grasso* or *Mardi Gras*), the day before *Ash Wednesday*. The festival is world-famous for its elaborate masks. It's said that the Carnival of Venice was started from a victory of the Venice Republic against the Patriarch of Aquileia, *Ulrico di Treven* in the year 1162. In the honor of this victory, the people started to dance and gather in **San Marco Square**. Apparently, this festival started on that period and became official in the Renaissance. In the seventeenth century, the baroque carnival was a way to save the prestigious image of Venice in the world.

⁴¹CARNIVAL OF VENICE https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnival_of_Venice

It was very famous during the eighteenth century. It encouraged license and pleasure, but it was also used to protect Venetians from present and future anguish. However, under the rule of the *Holy Roman Emperor* and later *Emperor of Austria*, Francis II, the festival was outlawed entirely in 1797 and the use of masks became strictly forbidden. It reappeared gradually in the nineteenth century, but only for short periods and above all for private feasts, where it became an occasion for artistic creations.

After a long absence, the Carnival returned in 1979. The Italian government decided to bring back the history and culture of Venice, and sought to use the traditional Carnival as the centerpiece of its efforts. The redevelopment of the masks began as the pursuit of some Venetian college students for the tourist trade. Since then, approximately 3 million visitors come to Venice every year for the Carnival. One of the most important events is the contest for “*la maschera più bella*” (“the most beautiful mask”) which is judged by a panel of international costume and fashion designers.

- Carnival masks.

Masks have always been an important feature of the Venetian carnival. Traditionally people were allowed to wear them between the festival of Santo Stefano (St. Stephen's Day, December 26) and the end of the carnival season at midnight of Shrove Tuesday. As masks were also allowed on Ascension and from October 5 to Christmas, people could spend a large portion of the year in disguise. Mask makers (*mascherari*) enjoyed a special position in society, with their own laws and their own guild.

Covering the face in public was a uniquely Venetian response to one of the most rigid class hierarchies in European history. During Carnival, the sumptuary laws were suspended, and people could dress as they liked, instead of according to the rules that were set down in law for their profession and social class.

- Most Popular Masks.



1. BAUTA Mask.

The *BAUTA* (sometimes referred as *Baùtta*) is a mask, originally simple stark white, which is designed to comfortably cover the entire face; this traditional grotesque piece of art was characterized by the inclusion of an over-prominent nose, a thick supraorbital ridge, a projecting "chin line",

and no mouth. The mask's beak-like chin is designed to enable the wearer to talk, eat, and drink without having to remove it; thereby, preserving the wearer's anonymity. The bauta was often accompanied by a red or black cape and a tricorne. In the 18th century, together with a black cape called a "tabarro", the bauta had become a standardized society mask and disguise regulated by the Venetian government. It was obligatory to wear it at certain political decision-making events when all citizens were required to act anonymously as peers.

2. MEDICO DELLA PESTE Mask (Doctor of the Plague mask).

The *Medico della peste*, with its long beak, is one of the most bizarre and recognizable of the Venetian masks, though it did not start out as carnival mask at all but as a method of preventing the spread of disease. The striking design originates from 17th-century French physician Charles de Lorme who adopted the mask together with other sanitary precautions while treating plague victims. The mask is often white, consisting of a hollow beak and round eyeholes covered with crystal discs, creating a bespectacled effect. Its use as a carnival mask is entirely a modern convention, and today these masks are often much more decorative. Although the mask and costume is worn almost exclusively by males, the enhancement in decoration also suggests that women are now more likely to wear the mask and costume than in previous years at the Carnival.



➤ *La battaglia delle arance di ivrea (Ivrea Battle Of The Oranges - Piemonte)*⁴²



Figure 5 - e Battle of Oranges

The Battle of the Oranges is a festival in the city of Ivrea, including the traditional throwing of oranges between organized groups (it is the largest food fight in Italy). The celebration involves some thousands of townspeople, divided into nine combat teams (different *Arancieri* teams), who throw oranges at each other, during the traditional carnival days: Sunday, Monday

⁴²IVREA BATTLE OF ORANGES https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Oranges

and Tuesday. The carnival takes place in February (occasionally in March) and it ends on the night of Shrove Tuesday with a solemn funeral. Traditionally, at the end of the silent march that closes the carnival the "General" says goodbye to everyone with the classical phrase in Piedmontese dialect "*arvedse a giobia a 'n bot*", translated as "we'll see each other on Thursday at one", referring to the Thursday the carnival will start the next year. A popular local account narrates that *the battle* commemorates the city's defiance against the tyrant. The tyrant could have been either a member of the Ranieri family or a conflation of the 12th-century Ranieri di Biandrate and the 13th-century Marquis William VII of Montferrat. This tyrant attempted to rape a young commoner (often specified as a miller's daughter on the evening of her wedding, supposedly exercising the *droit du seigneur* (law of the Lord)). The tyrant's plan backfired when the young woman instead decapitated him, after which the populace stormed and burned the palace. Each year, a young girl is chosen to play the part of *Violetta*, the defiant young woman.

Every year the citizens remember their liberation with the Battle of the Oranges, where teams of *ARANCERI* (orange handlers) on foot throw oranges (representing old weapons and stones) against other *ARANCERI* riding in carts (representing the tyrant's ranks). During the 19th-century French occupation of Italy, the Carnival of Ivrea was modified to add representatives of the French army. Another adaptation of the story has the oranges used to symbolize the removed testicles of the tyrant.



Figure 6 - Arancieri at work

➤ *Regata delle antiche repubbliche marinare (The Regatta Of The Historical Marine Republics⁴³ - Genoa, Liguria)*



The Regatta of the Historical Maritime Republics (or *Palio of the Historical Maritime Republics*) is a sporting event of historical re-enactment, established in 1955 with the aim of recalling the rivalry of the most famous Italian

⁴³THE REGATTA OF THE HISTORICAL MARINE

REPUBLICS https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regatta_of_the_Historical_Marine_Republics

maritime republics: Amalfi, Pisa, Genoa and Venice. During this event, four rowing crews representing each of the republics compete against each other. The regatta, held under the high patronage of the President of the Italian Republic, takes place every year on a day between the end of May and the beginning of July, and is hosted in rotation between these cities. The challenge is preceded by a historical procession where some figures play the role of ancient characters representing each Marine Republic, parade through the streets of the hosting city. The idea of an event reminiscent of the four seafaring powers of the Middle Ages was born in the late forties of the twentieth century by the Pisan knight Mirro Chiaverini. The proposal was first viewed by Carlo Vallini, president of the Provincial Tourist Board of Pisa, who, after having accepted it, turned it in turn to the municipalities of the other three cities to participate. The initiative was welcomed in a positive way especially by the lawyer Francesco Amodio, then mayor of Amalfi, who requested (and obtained) a meeting of representatives of the four cities involved to examine the proposal together. The meeting took place at the Pisa palace on April 9, 1949, but the agreement was not simple: during the discussion, Mr. Manzini, director of the Venice municipal office, showed his opinion against the participation of the tender rowing of the lagoon city, while being in favor of the parade in the historical parade. The lawyer Amodio tried, in his speech in defense of the regatta, to change his mind, underlining the importance not only historical but also tourism of the event. Given the strong agreement by Amalfi, Pisa and Genoa, the representatives of Venice took note of it and also joined the initiative. Since then, the *Regatta* is a very important annual event for sportsmen and fans of history and popular traditions.

8.2.8.2. *Centre of Italy.*

➤ *Il palio di Siena (Horse race in Siena – Tuscany)*



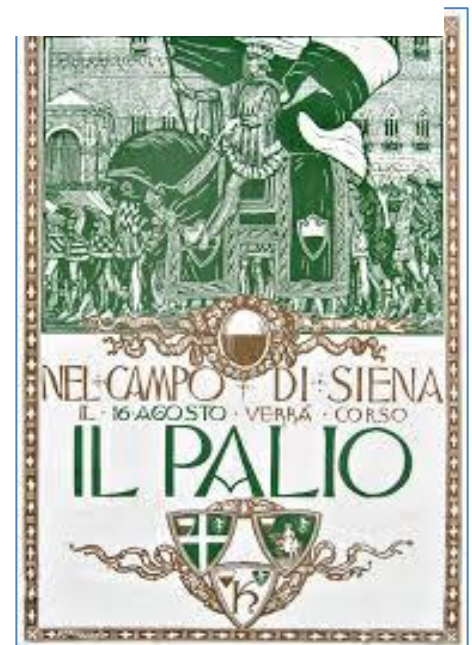
Figure 7 - Palio of Siena

The *Palio di Siena* (locally simply known as "Il Palio") is a horse race that is held twice each year: on **2 July** and **16 August**, in Siena, Tuscany. It consists in ten

horses and riders, bareback and dressed in the appropriate colours, representing ten of the seventeen Siena's *contrade*. Siena City, indeed, is divided into 17 contrade (districts, or city wards), called as follows:



1. *Aquila (Eagle);*
2. *Bruco (Caterpillar);*
3. *Chiocciola (Snail);*
4. *Civetta (Owl);*
5. *Drago (Dragon);*
6. *Giraffa (Giraffe);*
7. *Istrice (Porcupine);*
8. *Leocorno (Leocorn);*
9. *Lupa (Wolf);*
10. *Nicchio (Seashell);*
11. *Oca (Goose);*
12. *Onda (Wave);*
13. *Pantera (Panther);*
14. *Selva Forest);*
15. *Tartuca (Turtle);*
16. *Torre (Tower);*
17. *Valdimontone (Ram).*



The Palio held on 2 July is named Palio di Provenzano, in honour of the Madonna of Provenzano, a Marian devotion particular to Siena. The Palio held on 16 August is named Palio dell'Assunta, in honour of the Assumption of Mary.

A pageant, the Corteo Storico, precedes the race, which attracts visitors and spectators from around the world. The race itself, in which the jockeys ride bareback, circles the **Piazza del Campo**, on which a thick layer of earth has been laid. The race is run for three laps of the piazza and usually lasts no more than 90 seconds. It is common for a few of the jockeys to be thrown off their horses while making the treacherous turns in the piazza, and indeed, it is not unusual to see riderless horses finishing the race.



The earliest known antecedents of the horse race are medieval. For example, the public races organized by the contrade were popular from the 14th century on: they have been called *palii alla lunga* (long races), they were run across the whole city. Then, when the Grand Duke of Tuscany outlawed bullfighting in 1590, the contrade took to organizing races in the Piazza del Campo. The first such races were on buffalo-back and called *bufalate*; *asinate*, races on donkey-back, later took their place, while horse racing continued elsewhere. The first modern Palio (called *palio alla tonda* - all around to Piazza del Campo - to distinguish it from the earlier *palii alla lunga*) took place in 1633.

➤ ***Infiorata di Genzano (Flower Festival of Genzano - Lazio)***⁴⁴



Figure 8 - Infiorata di Genzano (Rome)

The Flower Festival is an event that takes place in the Genzano section of Rome, characterized by the carpet of flowers set up in the path of the religious procession on the Feast of *Corpus Domini*⁴⁵.

The festival dates back to the 18th century, when a floral carpet was set up along the *Via Sforza* (now *Via Bruno Buozzi*) in Genzano. Previously, in Genzano, and probably in other locations of the Castelli Romani, the custom of preparing flower carpets for the feast of *Corpus Christi* had existed for some time. The tradition was born in Rome in the first half of the seventeenth century and had been adopted in the localities of the Alban Hills probably due to the close ties of this territory with *Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, the main architect of

Baroque celebrations. It is believed, indeed, that the tradition of creating paintings by means of flowers was born in the Vatican basilica by Benedetto Drei, head of the Florerian Vatican, and of his son Pietro, who had used "leafless flowers, minced to emulate mosaics" June 29, 1625, feast of Saints Peter and Paul, the patrons of Rome.

⁴⁴ **INFIORATA DI GENZANO** https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infiorata_di_Genzano

⁴⁵ **The Feast of Corpus Christi** also known in Liturgical Latin as *Dies Sanctissimi Corporis et Sanguinis Domini Iesu Christi* (Latin for "Day of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ the Lord", also known as Solemnity of the Corpus Christi) is a Christian liturgical solemnity celebrating the Real Presence of the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the elements of the Eucharist.



A few years later, in 1633, another floral painting was made by Stefano Speranza, a close associate of Bernini. Oreste Raggi says that, it was Bernini himself who succeeded Benedetto Drei when he died, and "Rome popularized this art".

In Rome the custom of flower displays disappeared at the end of the XVII century. In Genzano, on the other hand, it continued into the eighteenth century, according to an anonymous manuscript 1824 which is preserved in the Central National Library of Rome and printed only recently, that says in Genzano some families used to display flowers in front of their home on the occasion of the three different processions that took place on the anniversary of Corpus Domini, one on Thursday, the other two on the following Sunday.

In the nineteenth century the Genzano Flower Festival took place annually, except for some periods of interruption: the first interruption was from 1845 to 1863; the second interruption, also lasting nineteen years, from 1875 to 1894. It was restored in 1894 by the "Company of Saint Luigi" Catholic circle. In the early twentieth century, the installation of the floral display was not very constant. The tradition of the floral display resumed on the occasion of the interdiocesan Eucharistic Congress of 1922, where it was held in Genzano, and since then it has been held annually, except for interruptions in the years 1932, 1934, 1935 and during the five years of World War II.

Since 1875 the Flower Festival has taken place in Via Italo Belardi, formerly Via Livia, the street that connects the main square of the town (Piazza IV Novembre) to the Church of Saint Maria of Cima. The street is completely covered by a floral carpet covering an area of 1890 m², generally composed of thirteen sections, in addition to the decoration of the staircase leading to the Church of Saint Maria of Cima which is located at the top of the hill. Each framework is generally 7m x 114. The subjects are generally reproductions of known artworks or geometric motifs and are religious or civil in nature, which are chosen by a special Commission that presides over the display. To compose the thirteen paintings of the Flower Festival of Genzano it takes about 500 quintals of flower petals or vegetable essences. The sides are protected by columns made with mortelle and are always connected by festoons of mortella.



➤ ***Calcio storico Fiorentino - Historic Florentine Football (Tuscany)***



Figure 9 - St. Croce Square with historical football opening

Calcio fiorentino (also known as calcio storico "historic football") is an early form of football and rugby that originated in 16th-century Italy. Once widely played, the sport is thought to have started in the Piazza Santa Croce in Florence. There it became known as the giuoco del calcio fiorentino ("Florentine kick game") or simply calcio; which is now also the name for association football in the Italian language. The game may have started as a revival of the Roman sport of harpastum (Harpastum, also known

as harpastum, was a form of ball game played in the Roman Empire. The Romans also referred to it as the small ball game. The ball used was small (not as large as a follis, paganica, or football-sized ball) and hard, probably about the size and solidity of a softball. The word harpastum is the latinisation of the Greek ἄρπαστόν (harpaston),[1] the neuter of ἄρπαστός (harpastos), "carried away", from the verb ἄρπάζω (harpazo), "to seize, to snatch").

➤ ***Renaissance era***

Calcio was reserved for rich aristocrats who played every night between Epiphany and Lent. Even popes, such as Clement VII, Leo XI and Urban VIII, played the sport in Vatican City. The games could get violent as teams vied to score goals. A variation of Calcio Fiorentino was most likely played in the 15th century as well, as a match was organized on the Arno river in 1490, notable as a day so cold the waters were completely frozen. On another famous occasion, the city of Florence held a match on February 17, 1530, in defiance of the imperial troops sent by Charles V, as the city was under siege. In 1574 Henry III of France attended a game of "bridge fighting" – put on in his honor during a visit to Venice. The king is recorded as saying: "Too small to be a real war and too cruel to be a game".

Despite the numerous claims of a direct origin of football from ancient Roman play practices, the first sources that speak of it are only late medieval, at the end of the fifteenth century. In all of Dante's work, which for the infinite variety of subjects treated constitutes a true encyclopedia of the uses of his time, it is not mentioned.

However, for sure in the second half of the fifteenth century football was so widespread among Florentine youths, that they frequently practiced it in every street or town square. However time passage, especially for public order problems, Florentine administrations went towards a greater organization and football began to be practiced especially in the most important squares of Florence. The players (football players) who took the field were mostly nobles (including future popes) between the ages of 18 and 45 and wore the sumptuous liveries of their time, which then gave the name to this sport.

The great popularity of this game lasted throughout the seventeenth century, but in the following century began a slow decline that brought it shortly thereafter to the disappearance, at least as an organized event.

And it is true that for almost two hundred years there are no news about organized matches, but it is also true that this sport remained alive in the collective memory of Florentines. In fact, although far from the great squares and medieval splendors, it was continued to be practiced in the districts and neighborhoods, giving a strong contribution to forge what would become "the modern spirit of ancient football", according to the popular motto.

The game that started in the twentieth century the revival of the Florentine historical football was played in May 1930 when, in occasion of the 400th anniversary of the Siege of Florence, by initiative of the fascist hierarch Alessandro Pavolini, it was organised the first tournament between the different city districts; since this event the Florentine Football has been reaffirmed itself becoming along these years the most important re-enacting event in Florence.

Since 1930, except for the war period, the challenges between the players of the four historic districts of Florence took place punctually among the centuries-old city walls:



- *Bianchi* di Santo Spirito,
- *Azzurri* di Santa Croce,
- *Rossi* di Santa Maria Novella,
- *Verdi* di San Giovanni.

8.2.8.3. Southern Italy.

➤ *Opera dei pupi* (The Puppets Theatre- Sicily⁴⁶)



Figure 10 - Sicilian Pupi (Sicilian traditional puppets)

Inscribed in 2008 (3.COM) on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (originally proclaimed in 2001), the Puppet Theatre - known as the *Opera dei Pupi* - emerged in Sicily at the beginning of the nineteenth century and enjoyed great success among the island's working classes. The puppeteers told stories

based on medieval chivalric literature and other sources, such as Italian poems of the

Renaissance, the lives of saints and tales of notorious bandits. The dialogues in these performances were largely improvised by the puppeteers. The two main Sicilian puppet schools in Palermo and Catania were distinguished principally by the size and shape of the puppets, the operating techniques and the variety of colourful stage backdrops.

These theatres were often family-run businesses; the carving, painting and construction of the puppets, renowned for their intense expressions, were carried out by craftspeople employing traditional methods. The puppeteers constantly endeavoured to outdo each other with their shows, and they exerted great influence over their audience. In the past, these performances took place over several evenings and provided opportunities for social gatherings.

The economic and social upheavals caused by the extraordinary economic boom of the 1950s had a considerable effect on the tradition, threatening its very foundations. At that time, similar forms of theatre in other parts of Italy disappeared, some of them to re-emerge some twenty years later. The Opera dei Pupi is the only example of an uninterrupted tradition of this kind of theatre. Owing to current economic difficulties puppeteers can no longer make a living from their art, prompting them to turn to more lucrative professions. Tourism has contributed to reducing the quality of performances, which were previously aimed at a local audience only.

⁴⁶ OPERA DEI PUPPI <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/opera-dei-pupi-sicilian-puppet-theatre-00011>

➤ **Pizzica and tarantism⁴⁷**

Pizzica (also called pizzica pizzica) is a folk dance from Salento - the far Southern East peninsula of Italy (the tip of the heel!), currently widespread and popular also in two other sub-regions of Apulia and Basilicata: Bassa Murgia and Matera County (both belonged to Terra d'Otranto influencing area). Present throughout these territories until the first decades of the twentieth century, it was called with different names coming from the various dialects of these sub-regions and it has been often confused with tarantellas.

- **Pizzica and history.**

The first written source, known today, dates back to April 20th, 1797 and refers to the dance evening that the nobility of these regions offered to King Ferdinand IV Bourbon during his diplomatic visit to the city. Texts of "pizzica pizzica" speaks about a "nobbilitata tarantella". Since nineteenth century pizzica has been linked musical therapeutic practices of tarantism, but it have been verified that starting from the 14th century onwards musicians and tarantulatos used local dances of the period, which alternated to cure and cure themselves from the poison of tarantulas and scorpions. Then, these dances have been adapted to the times, over the centuries. Some of these dances (moorish, shoulder, chain, pastoral, etc.) had a wide circulation beyond the Apulian and Lucan area, in fact they can be found in other European regions. Therefore, pizzica pizzica was essentially a playful dance used during celebration moments and social conviviality, but it was practiced also during therapeutic rituals to heal from the (real or presumed) bite of tarantula.



Figure 11 - Pizzica traditional dance

⁴⁷ <https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pizzica>

- **Tarantism and pizzica renaissance.**



Pizzica music was played not only during individual and family groups celebration moments or during local communities festivities, but was also the main music accompaniment to the ethnocoreutic rite of tarantism. Therefore, it was performed by orchestras composed of various instruments - among which the

tambourine and the violin emerged for their rhythmic and melodic characteristics - with the aim of "exorcising" the tarantate women and healing them by the frantic dance that this obsessive music unleashed through their evil.

Pizzica music played for days or even weeks for healing the tarantate women, had often its own features, very different than that "pizzica of love" played for the courting dance. The "pizzica tarantata" - became famous thanks to the recordings of the master violinist Luigi Stifani - or as some called it, the "pizzica tarantata", was in fact performed with a rhythm generally more fast and ossessive than the classical one played for the courting dance, and often the most popular shades were those in minor tune, able to "scazzicare" (i.e. to stimulate) the tarantata woman much more easily, thanks to the repetitive and melancholy features given by the minor tones.

Today tarantism has completely disappeared as traditional therapeutic tradition. However, everywhere in Salento there are phenomena of "Pizzica Renaissance" in small villages and there are everywhere "Taranta Festivals", concerts, especially during the summertime, when are mostly celebrated Saints Patrons or Folk Festivals. Great attention is paid currently to this phenomena, and there are a lot of studies both in historiography and anthropology in this field. There is a large bibliography on the subject, often of good quality. Probably the most popular event about Pizzica is the so called "Notte della Taranta - Night of Tarantula" Festival, started in 1998, which since more than 20 years it appoints annually a new musical director and involves many national and international singers, who are immerged for a summer in this special ancien sound (Some examples: Stewart Copeland, Goran Bregovic, Joe Zawinul, Phil Manzanera, Luigi Einaudi, Francesco De Gregori, Lucio Dalla, Gianna Nannini, Carmen Consoli, Piero Pelù, Elisa, others...).

Night of Tarantula is focused on Pizzica music and dance and takes place in various municipalities in the province of Lecce and the Grecia Salentina, especially in Melpignano

samlitown. It gives great importance to the folk music tradition of Taranta and Pizzica, and it is a great resource for tourism in Apulia.

The Festival tours around Salento, normally culminating in the grand final concert in Melpignano in August, which lasts until late at night. Over these 20 years it has been attended by an average of 150,000 spectators.

➤ *Presepe Napoletano - Neapolitan crib*

The Neapolitan Nativity is a representation of the birth of Jesus traditionally set in eighteenth-century Naples.

The Neapolitan Nativity art unchanged for centuries, becoming part of the most consolidated and followed Christmas traditions of the city. In fact, the famous "Via dei Presepi" (Via San Gregorio Armeno) is famous in Naples and offers a showcase of all the local craftsmanship regarding the nativity. In addition, there are numerous museums in the city and in the metropolitan area (such as the San Martino Museum or the Reggia di Caserta Palace) where historical pieces or entire scenes set during the birth of Jesus are exhibited

- **Origins.**

The first mention of a crib in Naples appears in a notarial deed, dated 1021, which mentions the church of Santa Maria "ad praesepe" (Luigi Correra, The Nativity in Naples, fasc. IV, page 325, University of Palermo). In a text of 1324 reference is made to a "chapel of the Nativity of the House of Alagni" in Amalfi (Stefano de Caro et al., Intangible heritage of humanity. The cultural district of the manger in Naples, Guide publisher). In 1340 Queen Sancia d'Aragona (wife of Roberto D'Angiò) gave the Poor Clares a nativity scene for their new church, of which today remains the statue of Madonna in the national museum of San Martin.

The first real sculptors of figures can be found in the fifteenth century. Among these there are Giovanni e Pietro Alemanno brothers, who in 1470 created wooden sculptures for the representation of the Nativity. In 1507 the Lombard Pietro Belverte carved in Naples 28 statues for the friars of the church of San Domenico Maggiore. For the first time the crib was set in a cave of real stones, perhaps coming from Palestine, and enriched with a tavern.

In eighteenth century the Neapolitan Nativity experienced its golden season, leaving the churches where it was considered the object of religious devotion to access in the homes of local



aristocracy. Nobles and wealthy bourgeoisie competed to set up ever more sophisticated scenographic plants. Giuseppe Sanmartino, perhaps the greatest Neapolitan sculptor of the eighteenth century, was very able to mold terracotta figures and started a real school of artists of the crib.

- **Each character meet a symbol: *all months of the year are represented.***

The market: In the 18th century Neapolitan Nativity and the various work activities represent - as in a snapshot - the main businesses that take place throughout the year. Therefore it is possible to interpret arts and crafts as personifications of the months following this scheme:

- January: butcher
- February: cheese seller
- March: chicken seller
- April: egg seller
- May: a woman selling cherries
- June: baker
- July: tomato seller
- August: watermelon seller
- September: farmer or sower
- October: winemaker
- November: chestnut seller
- December: fishmonger

- **Crib today.**

The true aim and cultural legacy of the Neapolitan crib can be found in the realism of its representations. It is no longer just a religious symbol, but a descriptive, identifying and unifying tool of the belonging community, in its detailed composition. It could perhaps be said that the Neapolitan crib was and remains a vehicle for identifying the "Neapolitan gens" and the forerunner of that realism that characterized Neapolitan theatrical performances and film productions.

Today some shepherds makers for the crib also produce shepherds that reflect the personalities of our times. Along via San Gregorio Armeno there are permanent exhibitions and artisan shops that allow you to buy, in addition to the classic statuettes, shepherds depicting modern characters such as Totò, Pulcinella or political figures.



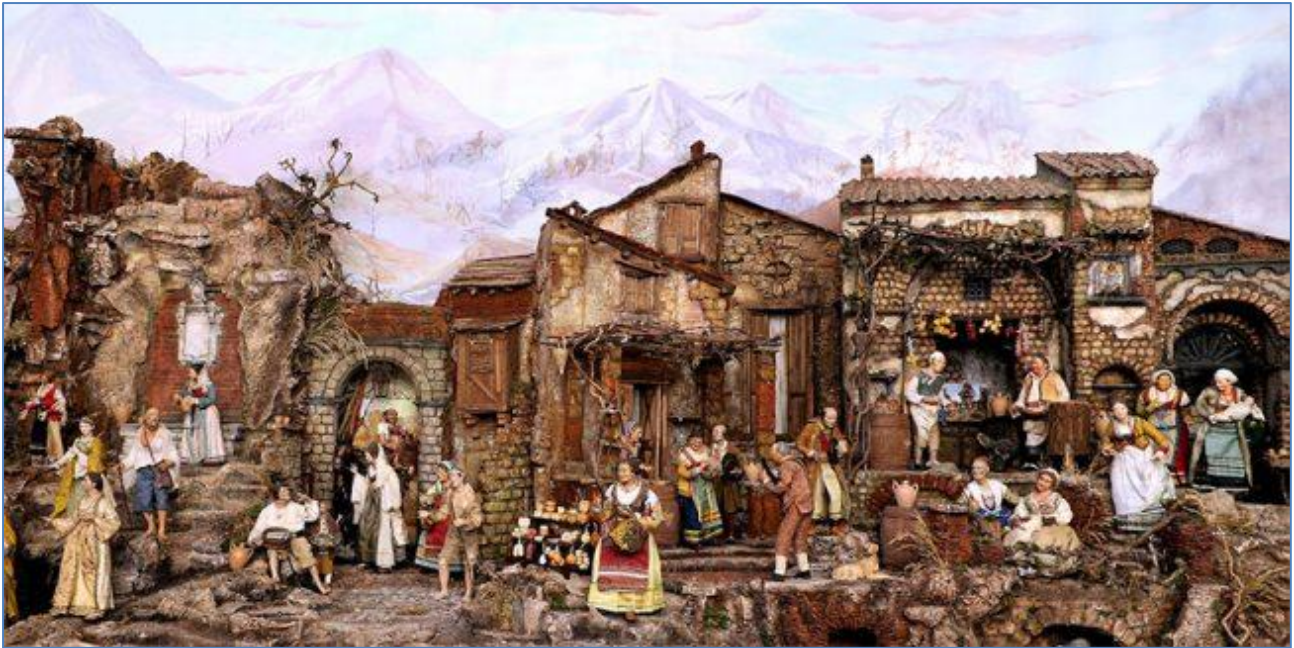


Figure 12 - Neapolitan Crib



8.3. Spain.

8.3.1. Introduction.

Spanish culture is very rich and incredibly varied, especially given that each region in Spain has its own culture, a strong sense of identity and a set of festivities, traditions and unique celebrations that go a long way back in time. Some regions in Spain also have its own language or dialect, adding to the complexity and multi-dimensional aspect of Spain's intricate cultural fabric. With so many different traditions peacefully coexisting and a variety of landscapes and climates (from the dry and sultry south to the balmy Mediterranean coast, the Castilian centre with its continental weather, the green (and often rainy) north with its Celtic roots and varying cultures, outsiders can't really say they've gotten to know the real Spain unless they've experienced north and south, east and west, as there are vast differences in culture, way of living, behaviour, traditions, language and outlook on life. Spanish culture is kaleidoscopic and mind-boggling at times but nevertheless captivating in more ways than we can count.

8.3.2. Religion.

One thing that all of the Spanish population has overwhelmingly in common is religion, with a vast majority of Catholic Christians (practising and non-practising) and a majority of national and regional holidays, festivities and traditions being of a religious nature, even if some have deviated somewhat from their original spiritual meaning and have adopted a more joyous (rather than solemn) tone (as is the case in other parts of the world with the likes of Christmas and Easter). Despite religion having historically had enormous importance and influence, strong cultural impact and political weight in Spain, in more recent decades a degree of secularisation has meant that even those who baptise their children and encourage them to make the First Holy Communion do so more for tradition than for spiritual reasons or religious conviction. The First Communion in Spain is associated with parties, lavish ceremonies and expensive gifts (in some ways far bigger than birthday parties) and this is why even non-believers would still adhere to this religious rite of passage to avoid their kids being left out the big celebrations and gift-receiving. With religious celebrations becoming more commercial, more and more people are becoming more sceptical and cynical about upholding certain religious traditions and practices.

According to data from the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (Centre for Sociological Investigation) as of April 2019, **69% of the Spanish population described themselves as Catholics**, and around 25% as atheists or non-believers while 4.2 per cent said they had other beliefs.



Regardless of the obvious majority of Catholic Christians in Spanish society, it must be noted that most of those who define themselves as Catholics (62.1%) also admit that they “rarely ever” attend religious services not related to social events (like weddings, communions or funerals) and only 11.7 % says they go to church regularly throughout the year. Of these only 13.9 per cent says they attend religious services every Sunday and a scarce 2.7% says they go to church several times per week.

“It’s not that [Spanish] people don’t believe in God, they just take religion differently”

Minerva Donald, sociologist and professor at Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

A process of secularisation that begun with the end of the Francisco Franco dictatorship towards the end of the 70s has seen a gradual decrease in the number of Catholic worship and religious practice in Spain as well as a step decline in attendance to religious rites (Catholic weddings, baptisms and communions) and a waning percentage of the Spanish population that considers itself Catholic. By the end of the new millennium the number of strictly civil weddings had surpassed that of Catholic ceremonies for the first time in Spanish history, being the first decade in Spanish history that this happened. Meanwhile between the years 2000 and 2009 Catholic weddings fell by a little over 50% while civil marriages increased by a whopping 80%. Studies conducted by the Spanish Centre of Sociological Investigation (CIS) also show generational differences in the Spanish attitude towards religion, according to an opinion barometer from March 2019 [[3242/0-0Macrobarómetro de Marzo 2019. Preelectoral Elecciones Generales 2019](#)], 46% of Spaniards aged between 18 and 24 define themselves as Catholic (of these only 7.3% are practising Catholics compared to 38.8 % non-practising Catholics) while, on the other tip of the scale, the Spanish population aged between 55 and 64 has a 74.5 percentage of Catholic believers (20.7% of which describe themselves as practising Catholics while 53.8% identify themselves non-practising Catholics). The generational difference is significant and progressive among the different age groups.

Regardless of the higher degree of scepticism and growing number of atheists and agnostics in the Spanish society, religion still plays an important role in Spain and Spaniards’ way of life and traditions.

“Spanish people’s identification with Catholicism is turning into something more cultural than religious [...]”

Gerardo Meilo, sociologist and professor at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.

The majority of public holidays are of religious origin and a fine example of this are the nationwide celebrations of Semana Santa (Holy Week or Easter) which are huge and see hundreds of religious processions taking over the country (the biggest are in Andalusia, more specifically in Seville). Likewise, **Christmas in Spain has strong religious connotations**, even when in recent times it has taken a more commercial and international tone (the introduction of Santa Claus, for example, has only happened in recent years and to a lesser extent than the bigger tradition of the Three Wise Kings). In Spain the gift-givers are the biblical Three Wise Kings who brought their gifts to Jesus, and in the same way, are the ones who bring Christmas presents to Spanish children. Their popularity hasn’t waned and **one of the biggest annual celebrations in the entire nation are the Three Wise Kings parades**, taking over the streets in every town and city every 5th January and 6th January where ornate floats make their way through avenues and lanes with the Three Wise Men (and their helpers) throw sweets and toys to children.

As to other religions, important minorities in Spain include Muslims (4.3% as of 2016, according to the *Estudio Demográfico de la Población Musulmana* by the UCIDE – “Unión de Comunidades Islámicas de España”), protestants from the Federation of Evangelists Religious Entities, Buddhists, Christian Orthodox and Bah. It must be noted that non-Christians are mainly expatriates or immigrants and their descendants. Otherwise, non-Christian Spaniards are self-described as atheists, agnostics or non-practising Christians.

8.3.3. Culture and regional differences.

If you ask a foreigner about Spanish culture, they would probably mention flamenco dresses, dancing and music or bullfighting. If you ask them to describe it in three words, they would probably throw in “paella” or “chorizo” too but this generalisation doesn’t sit well with all Spaniards. Especially when flamenco is a tradition of the south only and many northerners dislike bullfighting and push for its total ban in the country (they regard it a cruel violation of animal rights). Catalonia has been a pioneer in banning bullfighting altogether (the motion was approved in 2010), as have Canarias and the Balearic Islands.



Culturally speaking Spain is a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted society where culture and traditions depend on geographical location. There are a few common denominators (especially where religious activities and festivities are concerned) but each region or city brings its own flavour and twist to it, as well as its own set of independent traditions and celebrations.

For example, Valencians revel in the annual celebration of their *Falles* (Festival of Fire) and *La Tomatina* (Tomato Fight Festival, basically a huge tomato fight), Catalonia has its quirky *caganers* and *cagatiós* (both Christmas traditions) as well as the massive celebration of San Juan and Sant Jordi. Pamplona has their world-famous San Fermín bull runs, Zaragoza has their annual *Fiestas del Pilar*, Haro (in La Rioja) has its *Batallas de Vino* (Wine Battles) and Sevilla has its popular *Feria de Abril* (full of flamenco music, flamenco dancing and flamenco dresses). When it comes to bullfighting, the “corridos de toro” (bullfights) are celebrated nationwide (with the exception of the autonomous communities we’ve mentioned earlier) but are far more popular in some areas than others; while in some places they are banned entirely and in others, a vast majority of the population pushes for its ban (only to be stopped by typically right-wing, conservative regional governments who view bullfighting as an untouchable icon of Spanish culture, regardless of whether the local population enjoys bullfighting or not). In Galicia, for example, surveys conducted in recent times prove that the majority of the population would be in favour of banning bullfights with a steep decline in popularity, as there are only four bullfights per year with very low attendance rates that keep falling every year.

Not all Spanish people identify with the typical clichés and labels, so unravelling Spanish culture is much more complex than it seems at first glance. Some Spaniards might even be offended at being identified with the typical labels of bullfighter or flamenco-dancer as they might (rightly) tell you that those traditions are not part of their local culture and as such they don’t feel any real connection to it.

As can be seen, Spanish culture is much more complex than it seems, and regional variations make the typical perceptions of Spanish people often a misconception or an overgeneralised view of what Spain is and what Spanish people are like. Now, we’ll take a look at the different cultures present in Spain by going over some of the country’s autonomous communities, some of which have a very strong sense of self-value and are very protective of their identity, customs and traditions.



8.3.3.1. Spain, a multilingual society.

To refer to Spanish as a language is actually kind of a misnomer, given that Spain doesn't have a single, all-encompassing language but rather a set of different tongues and idioms, among which "Spanish" is actually referred to as Castilian [Castellano] from Castille (Castilla) which is the Spanish region where the language originated from. Spain's marked differences in regional languages, dialects and accents are a result of the fact that Spain is made up of communities that were formerly independent kingdoms and many of these had their own language which are as old as Castilian (or even older).

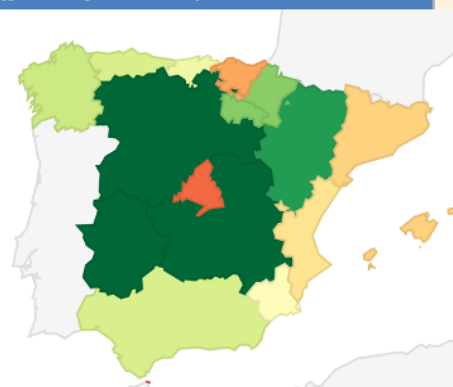
Even when Spanish is the only official language in Spain, used by a majority as the mother tongue, other co-official languages have just as much importance and are spoken by a significant number of the Spanish population in some regions. In autonomous communities like Catalonia or Galicia, Catalan and Galician are the main working tongues, although people from the other bilingual communities all have a high degree of bilingualism.

Spain's main co-official languages are Catalan and Aranese (Catalonia), Valencian (a dialect of Catalan spoken in the Comunitat Valenciana), Galician (Galicia) and Euskera (Basque Country). Beyond that, other non-official tongues spoken in Spain include Aragonese, Asturian, Leonese and other dialects. Regardless of location, all Spaniards can fluently speak Spanish.

8.3.3.2. Spain regional cultures.

Spain is geographically and politically divided into 19 autonomous communities (technically-speaking, 17 autonomous communities and 2 offshore autonomous cities – Ceuta and Melilla). Each autonomous community has an independent government and the freedom to set their own laws regarding education, tourism, sports, agriculture and other aspects of self-governance. Some autonomous communities have more powers and higher degrees of independence than others (notably the ones with their own language), and these are also the ones with a greater sense of self-identity (as is the case with the Basque Country, Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Balearic Islands,

Densidad de población (pers. por km2) 2018



9. Population Density in Spain in 2018 as published on datosmacro.com

Navarra and Galicia). Some have wanted even more self-governing powers and less political intervention from Madrid (Spain's capital). In a not-so-distant past the Spanish separatist group from the Basque Country, ETA, terrorised the nation with a series of attacks and the strategically planned murders of politicians and members of Spain's armed forces with explosions that also killed civilians (estimated death toll is at around 829 assassinated people in the span of 36 years). ETA announced the ceasing of their armed activities in 2011 but the independence spirit remains strong among part of the Euskadi population. Similarly, (with the exception of the use of violence), nationalism has been growing in Catalonia in recent years with a very much-publicised and well-known standoff between Spain's central government and the local elected government in Catalonia, presided by a nationalist group that (illegally) proclaimed independence after holding a referendum, deemed illegal by Spanish authorities. All of this resulted in the fleeing of Catalonia's president, Carles Puigdemont, to escape prison and others in his political party did the same. Those that remained and were held partly responsible for the rebellion have recently stood trial and await a verdict from the Supreme Court of Spain. Tension remains in this part of Spain with Catalonia being divided into nationalists who want independence and those who consider themselves both Catalan and Spanish and want to continue being part of Spain. According to polls conducted between 22nd and 25th October 2018 and cited by *El Periódico*, 42% of Catalonia's population wants independence as opposed to an alleged 52% as per another poll's estimation (by SocioMétrica for *El Español*, conducted between 22nd August and 30th August 2018). In the end it depends on who you believe, although it looks like the independence movement has somewhat stalled in recent months and seems to be losing rather than gaining votes.

Regional differences like the one stated above can be observed throughout all of Spain, even if not in such an acute or extreme way. Spanish culture is rich and varied and now we'll proceed to explain the ways that different parts of Spain are indeed, different and unique.

➤ ***Northern Spain – the cool northerners.***

The north of Spain is different from the rest of the country in various ways, especially because a few of the biggest autonomous communities there have a very strong sense of identity that set them apart from the rest. In a way, you could say there's really no homogeneity in the north of Spain, yet; despite some cultures being very different, there is one thing that binds them together; their strong love for their homeland (regionally-speaking, not at a national level), values, traditions and, in the case of three of them - Galicia, Basque Country and Catalonia - their own languages. **The north is the only part of Spain (with the exception of Valencia) that is multilingual and where**

various autonomous communities have an official language other than Spanish; therefore there are many individual cultures that in no way relate to each other or the rest of Spain.



Picture of Galician coast – unknown author, protected by [CC BY-SA](#) licence

The northern weather and proximity to northern Europe also means that the character of its inhabitants is somewhat colder and more reserved than Spaniards who live in the south. They can appear to be closed off to the rest of Spain or more distant in general. In a way, the cold climate and humid weather (there's a lot of rain in the Spanish north, especially in the north-west)

can give the impression that northerners are more miserable, serious and aloof. But the rain is also responsible for some of the **most stunning greenery in all of Spain** (especially in Galicia, where magical forests and Celtic legends have given way to myths about fairies, elves and witches) giving way to **fertile lands, scenic coastal landscapes, an important fishing industry (especially in Galicia) and natural beauty all around**. In terms of cutting-edge style and contemporary gastronomy, the “cool” northerners are definitely regarded as **some of the coolest in Spain given the number of Michelin-star restaurants in the region** (especially in the Basque Country and Catalonia, with over 100 Michelin-starred restaurants between the two). On the other hand, autonomous communities like Galicia and Asturias are famous for their delicious culinary traditions.

Also, while northerners might not be perceived as outgoing and sociable as Spanish people in the south, that's not to say they're inhospitable. Indeed, they take pride in showing off their culture, traditions, landmarks and local gastronomy to visitors and will happily engage in conversation, even if not as spontaneously (or as loudly) as southerners.

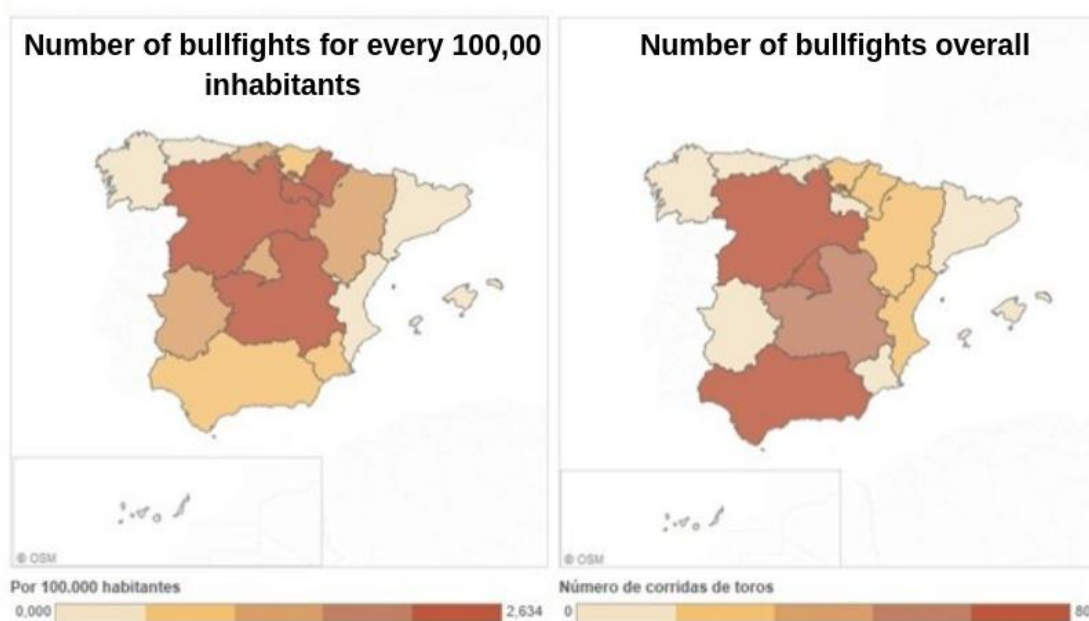
➤ ***Middle Spain – the moderate Castilian character of the centre.***

When it comes to central Spain, perhaps it could be said to be the most homogeneous part of the country overall in terms of culture, attitude, values and even accent. **Central Spain is united not just by similar ideologies, ways of living and geographical situation but also by a common climate**, very different from the Atlantic coastal areas in the northwest and southwest and the coastal

areas in Mediterranean east and the southeastern part of the country. Unlike other Spanish regions that have coastal borders, central Spain has a continental climate with very hot summers (upwards of 35 degrees Celsius) and very cold winters. Their **mild temperament and politically-correct attitude** certainly aren't a reflection the extremes changes in temperature that they experience throughout the year, which they often jokingly describe as “9 months of winter and 3 months of hell”.

But what do we mean when we talk about central Spain or middle Spain? Specifically, we're referring to the autonomous communities of **Castilla y León, Madrid, Castilla y La Mancha and Extremadura**. Even when each of these four autonomous communities has their own identity, traditions and cultural peculiarities, the fact that most of this region more or less belonged to the old Kingdom of Castile at one point in time, gives them **a common ground that binds them together in a way that no other autonomous communities in Spain can equate**.

Many also refer to central Spain as the real Spain or the region that holds the truer picture of Spain that most people have in their minds (well...minus the beaches, the paellas and with very little flamenco dancing unless you attend a proper theatre performance or a touristy “tablao”!) and this is because, like we said earlier they seem to have a similar vibe, same accent and even same way of speaking. Culturally-speaking they also share some common values and traditions, one example is **bullfighting, which is more popular in these autonomous communities than in most of Spain**, with attendance to “*corridas de toros*” (bullfights) being the highest here (see diagram above), followed by Andalucía where the majority of bullfighting schools are located.



10. Autonomous communities where bullfighting is most popular (2016) - diagram from Europa Press

Contrary to what many think Madrid isn't just a city, it's an autonomous community itself (one of smallest but most populated in comparison to similarly-sized ones), whose capital is also called Madrid and is also the country's capital and seat of the central government. Madrid (along with Barcelona) is **the most international and cosmopolitan city in Spain and the third-largest city in the European Union** (surpassed only by Berlin and London). Besides being Spain's economic, political and cultural centre, Madrid is also where the Spanish monarch (Felipe VI) resides.

Middle Spain occupies the largest territory in Spain in terms of land expansion (just Castilla La Mancha and Castilla y León put together make up for 34.3% of the country's total land mass) something that adds to the feeling of the "real Spain". It is also here that the love for their homeland (Spain as a greater nation, as opposed to the autonomous community itself) and Spanish pride is at its strongest.

➤ ***Southern Spain – the sultry south.***

When talking about the south of Spain, everyone takes to mean Andalusia, and rightly so, as it covers the Spanish south entirely (unless you consider – some do - the autonomous community Murcia to be part of the south due to its geographical proximity) and as such **is the biggest autonomous community in Spain**, both in terms of geographical land extension (17% of total land)



and population (8 409 738 inhabitants), surpassing the number of inhabitants in all other Spanish autonomous communities. And **Andalusia is not just big on size, it's big on character and huge on personality.** If there's one nationality that stands out in Spain, that's the Andalusian – they have unequivocal *joie de vivre*, are famous for their *salero* (an Andalusian term to describe

a lively, enthusiastic and artistic attitude to life), their flair or *arte* and are among the most optimistic, spontaneous and humorous. Traditionally famous for their love of dancing, singing and generally having a good time, conversely Andalusians have a reputation for also being lazy (partying more than they work) and not as productive as they could be - **out of all of Spain they take the siesta time the most seriously** with many stores closing down for up to 5 hours in the summer months – between 2 p.m. up to 7 p.m). They attribute this to the high summer temperatures which are indeed

scorching (August and July often see temperature hovering above the 40°C mark in city centres like Seville), but to be fair Madrid experiences a similar hot and arid summer and stores close only for two hours during lunchtime ...after all, **the sacred siesta break is common across all of Spain**, and the working day is usually split into two, with typical working hours being 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4 or 5 p.m. to 7 or 8 p.m. countrywide.

Andalusia is one of the most homogeneous regions in all of Spain in terms of culture, customs and traditions which they keep very much alive (they love flamenco –the dressing up part, the music and 74the parties surrounding flamenco traditions), and it's not by coincidence that **this region celebrates the most *romerías* in all of Spain**. The “romerías” are Catholic pilgrimages with large-scale travel journeys (like the pilgrimage to the Virgin of Rocío in Huelva, the biggest and most famous off all in Spain) or short-distance routes through the streets of small towns, where townspeople traverse the city on ornate floats and on foot to follow the procession of their patron saint or virgin to their church. These festivities can last several days and bring about a solemn tone during the day with chants and songs dedicated to the saint or virgin being worshipsed and joyous party and singing at night with “flamenquito” bands and other types of popular music. Wine and food also flow freely and are part of the celebrations.

Perhaps the most “different” and **ground-breaking city in Andalusia is Granada which breaks away from Andalusian traditions and customs in some ways and has a more modern, alternative vibe with distinct Moorish influence and hippie flavour**. It's also home to one of the world's most spectacular Moorish fortress and palaces (*La Alhambra*), a UNESCO World Heritage Site and splendid, unusual example of Muslim art in Europe, with unique features, layout and style.



Andalusians are often described as hot-blooded, passionate and even happy-go-lucky. It's not that they don't complain or don't take things seriously, it's more that, when putting things into perspective; a party, a family gathering or a reunion of some sort is the solution to most problems or at least go a long way towards alleviating them. It's popular knowledge that some Andalusians spend the year austere, living with the basics and saving

up to then spend it all during one of the region's big festivities (especially for the massive yearly pilgrimage to El Rocío, which, despite having a religious tone has become all about richly decorated *carretas* (traditional carts pulled by mules and oxen - see image above on the left), flamenco dresses, flamenco dancing and singing with day-to-night parties. **Andalusians' peculiar accent plus some autochthonous words used nowhere else in Spain also distinguish from the rest.** Identifying where a Spanish speaker is from might not be as easy with those from other autonomous communities, but when it comes to Andalusians, you can tell straight away. Bullfighting is also big in this part of Spain, even when in recent years it has gained some detractors, it still is fiercely defended by a significant part of the Andalusian population and is where most *toreros* come from (and where most are trained).

8.3.4. Popular costumes and traditions.

Spain's most internationally-known traditions are bullfighting and flamenco-dancing, but, like we said earlier, they're not common to all of Spain and don't enjoy the same popularity in all of the Spanish territory. While flamenco-dancing continues to be a traditional dance featuring in parties and informal gatherings in the south, you will struggle to find it in other parts of Spain (with the exception of city centres where they cater for tourists and some bars offer a "typical" flamenco dance show (or tablao), that more often than not does not define the local culture of that Spanish city you're in, unless, of course, it's in the south). Likewise, bullfighting is not synonymous with all of Spain, and while virtually every big city will have a bullfighting ring (cultural landmarks in their own right) many of these fail to fill up during bullfighting season while others spend the majority of the year completely empty. The popularity of some nationwide festivities and traditions in Spain will depend upon location.

8.3.4.1. Nationwide festivities in Spain.

Even when Spain is rich with festivities and celebrations from many different towns, cities and autonomous communities, there are some that are synonymous with every region in the country bringing nationwide joy in different forms. Here we illustrate some of the most popular festivities common to all of Spain.

➤ *Carnival.*

This nationwide celebration takes place every February and sees people of all ages dress up to go to private and public parties, gather around, dance, eat, drink and generally just have fun. They

celebrate it in schools, nurseries and even in some workplaces. Not all cities and towns in Spain celebrate carnival in the same way or throw special parties but there are quite a few that do with traditions that go back in time for centuries. The carnival tradition in Spain has (like the majority of festivities in Spain) some links to the Catholic religion, with the biggest days like Fat Thursday (*Jueves Lardero*) and Ash Wednesday (*Miércoles de Cenizas*) being celebrated around 46 days before Easter.



Cadiz Carnival Contest

Carnivals in Spain are an age-old tradition that date all the way back to the Middle Ages, having gained an enriched character during the Renaissance period and being celebrated across the entire nation, with some variations from place to place. Each town or city in Spain celebrates carnival in their own way. They kick off on Fat Thursday, somewhere between 29 January and 4th March, so, generally-speaking, February is Carnival Month in Spain. The three biggest, most famous carnivals in Spain take place in Cadiz (Andalucía), Tenerife in the Canary Islands (which is the most similar to Caribbean and Brazilian-style carnivals) and Aguila in Murcia. All three carnivals have been declared a Fiesta of International Tourism Interest and see people from all over Spain (and beyond) coming to partake in the carnival festivities.

➤ Bullfights.

One of the most iconic symbols of Spain is that of the bull and the bullfighter, or “torero” (the general term in Spanish to refer to a bullfighter, as opposed to “matador” which is the highest rank, a term used for a torero who has passed their “alternative” test). Bullfights in Spain draw very

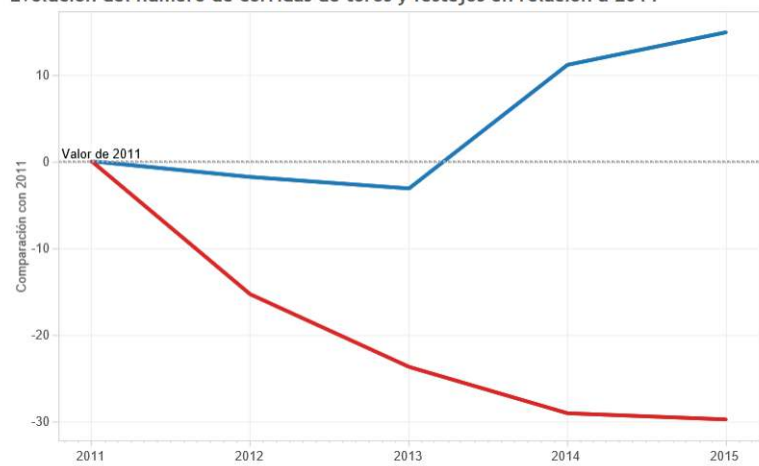


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opposed crowds and it’s a bit like Marmite, you love it or hate it. Some traditionalists fiercely defend it as a cultural aspect and a matter of Spanish identity. A momentum has been building for some time to ban bullfights altogether and political parties have debated about it to a certain extent (the right-wing parties staunchly protect the tradition while those on left call for its abolition and take side with animal protection agencies and groups). The issue of banning “Tauromaquia” has been on the agenda for quite some time now and calls for its ban have been successful in autonomous communities like Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, perhaps the two places most isolated from the rest of Spain, one because of physical distance the other because of different ideologies. But many people in Spain argue that bullfighting will never become history because the “sport” is protected as a cultural tradition and certain political parties would never dare touch it.

Still, animal rights debates aside, bullfighting is commonplace in many places of Spain and the tradition continues very much alive, especially in Madrid and the South even if some say it’s just a matter of time before “culture” is no longer confused with “torture” and the practice is abolished. In the meantime, activists will continue to protest at the entrance of bullrings while attending crowds and general public interest continues to wane.

Evolución del número de corridas de toros y festejos en relación a 2011



The only bull-related fights that seem to gain more popularity over time are the “encierros” (bull runs) in the north (see graph below, where the line in blue shows the increasing popularity of bull-related festivities like bull runs as opposed to bullfights, where the red line indicates its falling out of favour with an increasing number of the Spanish population), most specifically in the Basque Country and Navarra, with the most popular festivity of all being San Fermin in Pamplona, also known as San Fermín, which we take a look at more closely further on.

Going back to bullfighting the autonomous communities with most bullfights per year and higher attendance rates are Andalusia, Madrid and Castilla y León, in that order (see figure above).

➤ **Romerías.**

These peculiar festivities in Spain are all centred around worshipping Catholic virgins or

saints. Each town and city and Spain has its own *romerías* celebrating the town or city’s patron virgin or patron saint, with the biggest and most traditional taking place in smaller towns. Well, that’s with the exception of the *Romería de la Virgen del Rocío*, which sees a massive pilgrimage from worshippers coming from different parts of the south of Spain to the town of El Rocío in Huelva,



home to the Virgin of Rocío. The Rocío festivities might be the biggest and most memorable in Spain for a number of reasons (not just the sheer number of worshippers but other peculiarities too that you can read about further down in the section about Spain’s regional festivities) but there are many others worth witnessing, like Galicia’s. And sometimes in the smaller towns you’ll find *romerías* worth seeing because, especially because of the small size of the place, the entire town gets out on the streets, dresses up, dons their best, sharpest flamenco dresses of the season (as is the case with the *Romerías de la Virgen de la Santa Cruz* in Punta Umbría, Huelva, in the image above).

What does a *romería* consist of? The name “*romería*” comes from “*romero*” which refers to the pilgrims that centuries ago went to Rome, but which also translates as rosemary, and in some towns these herbs are used to decorate the streets for its sweet-smelling properties. *Romerías* take place all throughout the year to mark the of a patron saint or virgin (each saint or virgin has its

special celebration and ceremonies). There are many famous *romerías* all across Spain depending on the region, with the *romería* of *Virgen del Monte* being the biggest in Castilla La Mancha and *Fiestas de San Juan del Norte* being among the biggest in the north of Spain. But undoubtedly, the biggest and perhaps most famous of all is the *romería* of the *Virgen del Rocío* in Huelva, which we'll take a closer look at further on.

➤ ***Semana Santa (Easter).***

As we explained earlier, Spain might be a secular nation strictly speaking but Catholicism still plays an important role in society, especially when it comes to national holidays (the majority of public bank holidays in Spain are of religious origin) and festivities. The biggest of all (after Christmas) is, as can be expected of a Christian country, Easter or Holy Week (the literal translation for *Semana Santa*) which is at its biggest and most spectacular in Seville, with a seemingly never-ending series of daily processions that go on for days (weather-permitting).



Palm Sunday procession in Spain with palm leaf bearers [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

In Spain Easter is not so much about the eggs, bunnies and chicks but more about religious processions, attending special masses and eating traditional food like *torrijas* and *tortillitas de bacalao* in the south, *sancocho* in Canarias and *buñuelos* countrywide. At schools (even public ones) kids are told about the meaning of Easter and in some cases will be even given a dried palm leaf to take home as a blessing. Palm Sunday in Spain marks the beginning of the country's religious Easter festivities commemorating the triumphal entrance of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem, a few days prior to

his crucifixion and death. At the time of his arrival townspeople in Jerusalem greeted Jesus with palms and as such the tradition is continued in Spain to mark this special day with the procession of palms and the Palm Sunday mass (pictured above).

Some parts of Spain celebrate *Semana Santa* slightly different, as is the case with Catalonia, which despite maintaining some religious traditions like processions on Easter Sunday (in Barcelona, the most famous one is *La Burreta*), they have their own ones like making “monas de Pascuas” which are delicious chocolate cakes with Easter themes and also themes from cartoons and Disney films.

➤ ***Cabalgata de los Reyes Magos.***

For many Spaniards regarded as the most magical time of year (and that includes adults too, as many get to relive their childhoods year after year) the arrival of the Three Wise Men (or Three Magi) every 5th January brings enormous joy to every region, city and town, and most importantly, toys and lots, and lots of sweets. *Las Cabalgatas de los Reyes Mayos* (Wise Kings’ Cavalcade), also known as the Epiphany Procession, is a very colourful parade where ornate floats with a wide variety of themes (and background music, from live bands to recordings) take to the streets to gift children and throw them all manner of sweets and toys of every size (from teddy bears and soft toys to balls and small plastic toys). The most awaited (and biggest floats) are those carrying the Three Wise Men but many years floats have included football club teams, where players are the ones to throw sweets to children (Real Madrid and FC Barcelona have both done this).



Every city and town in Spain has its own cavalcade, no matter how small the population or the geographical confines of a town, they all budget for this occasion. One of the biggest traditions in Spain, it follows the Biblical legend of the Three Magi of the Orient who brought gifts to Jesus Christ after his birth. It’s a joyous occasion that unites believers and non-believers in the magic of Christmas.

8.3.4.2. Regional festivities in Spain.

Now we'll take a look at some of the most famous regional festivities in Spain. The list only includes the biggest, most famous ones but given that Spaniards love a good party and any excuse to celebrate, virtually every town in Spain has its own peculiar celebration, whether that might be a *romería*, a street party, a fair or a public gathering of some sort.

➤ *San Fermín in Pamplona (Navarra)*

Perhaps the most internationally famous bull-related festivity in Spain (other than bullfights) are the bull runs of Pamplona and they're gaining momentum. After having been forever immortalised in Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) which has also been made into a film, thousands of tourists from all around the globe (and all over Spain) travel here in July to partake in this rather peculiar festivity. Celebrated in honour of San Fermín, Navarra's patron saint, this week-long festival goes back to the middle ages and its climax comes with the running of the bulls where hundreds of people brave it out to run in front of bulls that are let out onto the streets. The bull run stretch is down a narrow 825-metre street and is as dangerous as it sounds. Almost every year there are casualties that go from mild to very serious (some people have even been killed – 15 deaths have been recorded between 1925 and 2019) but the tradition remains as strong as ever and there are always people willing to brave the bulls and even tease them.



It all starts on 6th July at noon with the “chupinazo” a rocket launch that kicks off a party that goes on ‘till midnight. Even when the San Fermín are mostly known for its bull runs, (there are several every day throughout the event's seven-day duration) the festivity is also known for its heavy

drinking and partying (and associated unruly behaviour) and also includes many other traditions like the parade of Gigantes and Cabezudos (Giants and Big-Heads) with the figures being over 150 years old and representing four pairs of kings and queens from different races and geographical locations



Gigantes y Cabezudos in Pamplona's San Fermes

(America, Europe, Asia and Africa). Over 1,000, 000 million flock to Pamplona in July every year to participate in the San Fermes. The tradition white T-shirt and trousers with a red scarf.

➤ ***Semana Santa in Seville (Andalusia).***



Known as Holy Week, Easter is serious business in Seville. Even when it's widely celebrated in all of Spain, the biggest processions and the highest amount of them (they go on from morning until pass midnight, well into the early hours) are in Seville, the city known for its splendourous Semana Santa celebrations with a solemn deeply religious tone and impressive processions that take the breath of many

away. Sevillians prepare for these religious festivities ahead of time, with many of the best seats (on the streets and on balconies) being reserved ahead of time (some are booked in for months and even years while others belong to families for generations. Getting a good seat is almost impossible for an outsider unless they are prepared to pay big. Most tourists who come to witness the event stand on

the street among the crowds (they keep moving with the processions so you're never standing in the same place for too long).

Los pasos de Semana Santa (the processions are called “pasos” – steps – because of the march that the carriers of the floats do, in time with the music) are something to behold, and the men underneath the float, who carry them on their shoulders (they take it in turns as these floats are very, very heavy) take enormous pride in doing so and there are even waiting lists to be a float bearer!



➤ *El Rocío in Huelva (Andalusia).*

From one religious event to another, El Rocío is a small town (well, technically-speaking it's not big enough to be a town and it's actually a village) in Huelva that would go completely unnoticed (in fact it remains deadly quiet and almost ghostlike for most of the year) were it not for its annual festivities surrounding the pilgrimage that thousands of worshippers make to see its patron virgin being taken on procession on Monday of Pentecost.



This *romería* is peculiar for a number of reasons. Firstly, the road that the faithful make to reach it is one of the most beautiful in the country as it borders the natural reserve of Doñana, a protected UNESCO World Heritage Site that includes a Ramsar Wetland. Secondly, the fact that so many people make the pilgrimage on foot and onboard caravans (well, actually “*carretas*” traditionally pulled by oxen but also by tractors) makes it one of the longest pilgrimage routes in the country. The caravan-like *carretas* that worshippers use are ornately decorated and all along the journey those who embark on the pilgrimage sing, make stops to eat, dance and drink and continue partying non-stop until the following day where they all head to see the virgin in huge crowds with people struggling to get to the front of the massive queues to have the honour of being one of the bearers that carry her in procession. Quite the spectacle!

➤ ***Las Fallas (Les Falles) in Valencia.***

This amazing festival is special and unique (not just to Valencia but the entire world) because not only does it extend over several days, and not only does it feature bonfires, fireworks and ornate parades, but it does all of it in rather spectacular fashion. It all starts on the last Sunday in February with the “Crida”, the street cry that kickstarts days and nights of spectacular revelry. Each neighbourhood has a “commissió fallera” with specialist carpenters who spend months building the *fallas* (wooden monuments) and the *ninots* (wooden doll-like figures). In total around 800 *ninots* are made each year and they’re exhibited in the “museo fallero” before being paraded down the streets.

One of the most special part of this festivity are the parades of the “fallas” (or “falls” in Valencian) which are huge wooden monuments representing a variety of themes, the majority are from medieval times, featuring fantastical creature like fairies and elves but a minority in more recent times also represent satirical takes on recent historical events, featuring local and international celebrities, cartoon characters, politicians, figures from classic tales and more. All the *fallas* and *ninots* are burnt later in a bonfire night, all but the one, the “*ninot indultat*” which, by popular vote, is declared the winner and spared from the flames.



The fallas are gigantic, to put into perspective, the majority are taller than buildings and breathtakingly exquisitely designed. The falleres are women representing the various neighbourhood commissions and you'll easily spot them as they're dressed in beautiful, ornate traditional costumes with traditional hair updos and sashes.



➤ ***Feria de Abril in Seville (Andalusia).***

Celebrated sometime between April and early May, this spring fair is one of the most famous in all of Andalusia, and quite certainly, Seville's biggest, non-religious festivity. It consists of a week of flamenco dressing and dancing, merry eating and drinking in traditional "casetas" set up on the extensive fair grounds, which are the same year after year.



Beyond the "casetas", the majority of which are private (mostly owned by families who pay yearly subscriptions to maintain them), the Seville fair grounds also include a theme park esplanade with hundreds of rides (locally called "cacharritos") on the infamous "Calle del Infierno" for kids (and adults) of all ages. The dresscode is flamenco dresses for

women and "traje de corto" for men, although many men nowadays just dress smart in shirts and trousers.

➤ ***La Tomatina in Valencia.***

One of the most ridiculously fun festivals in Spain this is one of the world's biggest, most epic food fights and it takes over an entire city. La Tomatina, which could loosely translate as “the tomativity” is a splashy fiesta celebrated on the last Wednesday in August in the Valencian town of Buñol. The festival basically consists of throwing tomatoes at each other non-stop for 24 hours. The streets soon turn red and many of those who take part bring goggles to help with the vision, it gets really messy and people are showered in tomato juice from head to toe!



➤ ***Sant Jordi in Catalonia.***

This festivity has a more calm and subdued nature. Forget about fireworks, bonfires, non-stop drinking and dancing or food fights. The tradition on the day of Sant Jordi (St George) in Catalonia is for men to give red roses to women and women to gift books to men, although nowadays it's traditional for women to receive both. The streets fill with roses and book stands and couples exchange gifts while kids relive the legend of the dragon slayed by St Jordi thus saving a princess and giving her a rose.

➤ ***San Juan (or Sant Joan) in Barcelona.***

As if you could still doubt Spaniards' love of firecrackers and pyrotechnics, here comes another confirmation. The “Fiestas de San Juan” celebrate the start of summer with epic fireworks that take place on the night of 23rd with the parties going into the early morning of 24th in June, to coincide with the longest day in the year (summer solstice). Beyond the fireworks there are bonfires at the beach and places fill up quick so getting there before sunset is crucial if you want a good spot to see the firework displays and the bonfires.



➤ ***San Isidro in Madrid.***

The Spanish capital's biggest annual festivity is in honour of its patron saint, San Isidro who is attributed over one hundred miracles and whose festivity coincides with the start of spring. Taking place in mid-May (with varying dates). With a religious undertone, beyond the chulapos and chulapas drinking “water from the saint”, there are traditions like having *rosquillas* (sugar-coated donuts) and lemonades as snacks, the parades of the “gigantes y cabezudos” (beig-headed giants) and music concerts under the stars every night.

➤ ***Batalla del Vino in La Rioja.***

The autonomous region of La Rioja is already famous around the world for its red wine, so it might come as little surprise that the biggest wine-drenched festival on the planet takes place here. Every year the town of Haro celebrates the “Batatalla del Vino” (Wine Battle) where participants are

squirted, splashed, and basically drenched with red wine over the course of an entire week. You can pour it, drink it, spray it, or do all three for added fun!



➤ ***Aste Nagusia in Bilbao.***

The biggest celebration of Basque culture takes place over nine days in August's second half. The festivities begin with a rocket launch known as "txupinazo" and continue with Basque music and dancing highlighting every Basque tradition old and new. From wood chopping and stone carrying competitions to special activities for children, the streets are lined with stalls selling a variety of traditional Basque treats and drinks, from *pintxos* to *txakoli*, so it's an enjoyable and delectable festival in multiple ways.

➤ ***Castellers in Catalonia.***

The spellbinding, sky-scratching human towers known as "castellers" are an art and a skill autochthonous to Catalonia. One of the region's oldest and most famous traditions, and one of the most gasp-inducing feats to watch, groups of expert climbers, called "colles" in Catalan assemble on top of each other to make remarkable human towers of impressive height. These human castle-like constructions (hence its name, which translates as castle-makers) can be witnessed on several occasions throughout the year and several locations across all of Catalonia. Tourists can even train to be part of a human tower or check the [calendar of performances](#) to catch one.

8.4. Slovakia.

8.4.1. Facts and Statistics.

- **Location:** Central Europe, south of Poland and sharing borders with Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine.
- **Capital:** Bratislava.
- **Climate:** temperate; generally warm summers; cold, cloudy, humid winters.
- **Population:** 5.4 million (2019 est.).
- **Ethnic Make-up:** Slovak 85.8%, Hungarian 9.7%, Roma 1.7%, Ruthenian/Ukrainian 1%, other and unspecified 1.8%.
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 68.9%, Protestant 10.8%, Greek Catholic 4.1%, other or unspecified 3.2%, none 13%.
- **Government:** parliamentary democracy.





8.4.2. Language in Slovakia.

The Slovak language, sometimes referred to as "Slovakian", is an Indo-European language belonging to the West Slavic languages (together with Czech, Polish, Kashubian and Sorbian). Slovak is mutually intelligible with Czech.

Slovak, as a written language, did not exist until the end of the 18th Century, when Anton Bernolak, a Roman Catholic priest set about to create a Slovak literary language. He based his creation on the Western Slovakian dialect and produced a phonetic spelling (one that is written as it is pronounced).

Bernolak published his new language in his "Grammatica Slavica" in 1790. The language was further developed in 1843, when an agreement on the codification of Slovak as a written language was made. This was led by Ludovit Stur, who now chose the Central dialect as the basis, believing it to be the purest form.

8.4.3. Slovak People, Society and Culture.

8.4.3.1. *The People.*

The people of Slovakia descend from the Slavic people who settled around the Danube river basin in the 6th and 7th centuries. Traditionally, Slovaks were what could be termed the “peasant class.” Their links to the earth and land still remain to this day. Under communism some industrialization was undertaken and today Slovak society includes both elements of folk traditions and modern society.

The political transformations of 1989 brought new freedoms that have considerably widened the societal outlook of the populace, yet many of the cultural movements are still in their infancy and consequently a large part of the elderly population is still rural and dependant on agriculture.

On January 1, 1993 Slovakia became an independent nation-state recognized by the United Nations and its member states. Although some aspects of the society already had a unique national character, namely the language, many of the customs, laws and conventions were still deeply influenced by past rulers: Czechs, Hungarians and the Austrian Habsburgs.





8.4.3.2. *The Family.*

The family is the centre of the social structure. The family and close friends, form the basis of financial and emotional support. Obligation to the family is a person's number one priority.

Explore this little-discovered destination in the heart of Europe. Avoid the crowds of tourists and feel like a real traveller, with everything nearby – Slovakia is Central Europe in pocket edition. You will discover hundreds of interesting and unexpected secrets in almost every village, town, and valley. Unique castles, caves, hot springs, folk architecture, the European Dead Sea, a famous Celtic town, European wilderness, and much more. These are some of Slovakia's unique tourist destinations, which are hard to find elsewhere in the world. Do not be afraid to get off the beaten tourist track, and besides the country's wonderful nature, many unique surprises are waiting for you.

8.4.3.3. *History.*

➤ ***First settlements 5000 years BC.***

In the territory of Slovakia many have been settled from the oldest times. Several cultures inhabited its territory until they were dominated by the expanding **Celts** in the 4th century BC followed by the **German-Roman rivalry** at the turn of the Eras.

In time of Migration of Nations, the first **Slavs** arrived here. The **Samo's Domain** existing in the mid-7th century with the territory of Slovakia as its central part was followed by establishment of the Nitra Principality at the beginning of the 9th century and finally the **Great Moravian Empire** was established in 833 AD – the first common state of the Slovak and Czechs ancestors.

After the fall of Great Moravia, the Old Hungarian tribes invaded the territory of Slovakia, and the territory of Slovakia with its inhabitants became part of the **Kingdom of Hungary** for many thousand years.

The Hungarian state was consolidated after centuries of internal struggle between the nobility and the ruler and economic growth occurred also in the territory of today's Slovakia, which was also the result of the thriving mining towns or the trade centres. In what is now the city of Bratislava, the first university of Slovakia, Academia Istropolitana was established in 1467. The royal house, which ruled the country after the invasion the Turks undertook in Europe, was the **Habsburgs** which withheld the throne until 1918.



From the perspective of the Slovak nation, the crucial period in their history was the 19th century when the Slovaks formulated their own political programme for the first time. The promising development of the national movement though, was mutilated by the Austrian-Hungarian Compromise signed in 1867 and the following period of Magyarisation which lasted full 50 years. Only the First World War activated the anti-Austrian-Hungarian resistance, which culminated in 1918 by the declaration on the joining of the Slovak nation with the Czech nation into a whole – the **Czecho-Slovak Republic**.

The independent **Slovak State** was established in Slovakia in 1939 as an outcome of international events, however, the end of the Second World War brought about restoration of **Czecho-Slovakia**. The communist party gradually seized power in the country and the communist dictatorship was overthrown only through the Velvet Revolution in 1989. The democratic process exposed several problems, which resulted in the break-up of the common state of the Czechs and Slovaks and the establishment of the independent **Slovak Republic** (1 January 1993).

Slovakia is a **member of the European Union** since May 2004. In December 2007, it became part of the Schengen Area and since 1/1/2009, upon the adoption of the single European currency Euro, Slovakia also became one of the countries of the European Monetary Union.

➤ *Review of important historical events and dates.*

approx. 5 000 BC - The first farmers arrived at the territory of Slovakia and built their settlements.

5th century - The first Slavs crossed the mountain passes of the Carpathians and appeared in the territory of today's Slovakia.

623-658 - The Frankish merchant Samo assumed leadership of the Slave tribe union. He founded and headed Samo's Dominion – the first state of the Western Slavs.

833 - The Moravian Prince Mojmir I expelled Prince Pribina of Nitra and founded the Great Moravian Empire by joining the Moravian Principality and the Nitra Principality.

1000 - Hungarian state ruled by King Stephen I was founded. The territory of what is today Slovakia was included.

1238 - Trnava and Krupina acquired the privileges of a free royal borough as the first towns in Slovakia.

1428-1443 - The Hussites invaded the Kingdom of Hungary.



- 1467-1490** - The first university in the territory of Slovakia Academia Istropolitana was established in Pressburg (today Bratislava).
- 1536** - The Parliament of the Kingdom of Hungary promoted Pressburg (now Bratislava) to Capital of the Kingdom.
- 1604-1711** - The Kingdom of Hungary was swept by a series of six anti-Habsburg rebellions of the Hungarian nobility.
- 1787** - Anton Bernolák codified the first literary form of the Slovak language. However, it did not catch on.
- 1843** - The second codification of the Slovak literary language authored by Ľudovít Štúr was more successful and it became the basis of the current Slovak literary language.
- 1863** - Matica slovenská, the first national institution involved in promotion of education and culture of Slovaks was founded in Martin.
- 1918** - Slovakia became part of the newly established Czecho-Slovak Republic declared on 28 October in Prague. Bratislava became the Capital of Slovakia.
- 1939** - The independent Slovak State was declared on 14 March 1939 in Bratislava. Priest Jozef Tiso became the President of this new state practically established by the Nazi Germany.
- 1944** - Slovak National Uprising broke out in central Slovakia (29. 8.).
- 1944-1945** - The Red Army entered Slovakia through the Dukla pass on 6 October 1944 and started to liberate Slovakia from the Nazi occupation.
- 1948** - After the communist coup in February 1948 Slovakia also fell under the control of the communists and the Soviet Union.
- 1989** - In November the Velvet Revolution brought about essential political changes, deprived the communists of power and opened the way to democracy and pluralism.
- 1993** - Slovakia became the independent and sovereign state on 1 January and entered the UNO on 19 January.
- 2004** - On 1 May Slovakia became a member of the European Union.



2007 - In December, Slovakia became a part of the Schengen Area – the system of free movement of persons within 25 European countries.

2009 - On 1 January, the Slovak Republic adopted the single European currency Euro and thus became one of the countries of the European Monetary Union.

You will find (only) in Slovakia unique castles, caves, hot springs, folk architecture, the European Dead Sea, a famous Celtic town, European wildlife and much more. What are some of the unique Slovak tourist spots that you would hardly be able to find elsewhere?

8.4.4. Tourism on Slovakia (UNESCO).

Three localities from Slovakia were inscribed to the UNESCO World Heritage List already in 1993: Castle of Spiš and its environs, Banská Štiavnica and Vlkolínec. In 2000, the historic town Bardejov was added, in 2008 wooden churches of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area and in 2009 town Levoča.

The [Castle of Spiš](#) is the largest medieval castle compound in central Europe along with the little town of Spišské Podhradie (with typical Renaissance and Baroque burgher houses), the Church town of Spišská Kapitula (including several sacral monuments and above all the impressing two tower cathedral of St Martin) and the Gothic church of the Holy Spirit in Žehra from the 14th century and frescoes in its interior from the 14th and 15th centuries. Well conserved monuments along with the charming natural setting of the travertine territory of the National Nature Reserve Dreveník forms a unique whole.



Spiš Castle

In June 2009, the historic town of [Levoča](#) was included in this group of Spiš monuments. [Banská Štiavnica](#) is a town monument reserve which demonstrates the mining tradition in Slovakia, [Vlkolínec](#) represents a reserve of traditional folk architecture and [Bardejov](#) is considered to be the most Gothic town in Slovakia.

[Wooden churches](#) of the Slovak part of Carpathian Mountain Area possess an extraordinary worldwide value, too. The churches include: Roman Catholic churches in Hervartov and Tvrdošín, Evangelical articular churches in Kežmarok, Leštiny and Hronsek, and churches of Eastern rite in Bodružal, Ladomirová and Ruská Bystrá.

8.4.4.1. UNESCO Natural Heritage.

Heritage of Slovakia is represented in the UNESCO World Heritage List by [caves and abysses of Slovenský kras](#) karst and by Dobšinská ľadová jaskyňa cave. In 2007 the Carpathian primeval beech forests of the Bukovské vrchy and Vihorlatské vrchy Mts. which are in the east of Slovakia, were added to this list.

Slovenský kras is situated in the south of Slovakia on the frontier with Hungary is the largest karstic area in the middle Europe. It consists of 1110 caves and abysses. In 1995 the bilateral Slovak-Hungarian project with the title Caves of the Slovak and Aggtelek Karst (Ochtinská aragonitová jaskyňa, Gombasecká jaskyňa, Jaskyňa Domica, Krásnohorská jaskyňa, Jasovská jaskyňa, ...) was successful in its endeavour to be included among the most precious world natural phenomena. In 2000 this inscription also included the ice cave of Dobšinská ľadová jaskyňa, one of the largest of its kind in Europe.

[The primeval beech forests of the Carpathians](#) in the Ukraine and in Slovakia were added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in June 2007. Thanks to this fact, the Carpathian primeval beech forests of Stužica, Rožok and Havešová in the Bukovské vrchy Mts. and Vihorlatský prales primeval forest in the Vihorlatské vrchy Mts. in CHKO Vihorlat are of world importance. The first three of them are situated in the area of the Poloniny National Park.

8.4.4.2. UNESCO Intangible Heritage.

Fujara is the most typical Slovak musical instrument. It was included by UNESCO in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The list was founded in 2001. Fujara is an overtone fipple flute that can be up to 1.8 m long. It is usually made from elder tree and has a characteristic meditation tone.

It is known nowhere else in the world but Slovakia. This country is considered to be the place of origin of this instrument, especially the region of Poľana and North Gemer. It used to be the typical instrument of shepherds. Fujaras were decorated by ornaments or figural decorations.

The longest instrument is the Fujara Trombita, up to 6 m long that was used for signalling and for communication among shepherds on their pastures because of its magnificent and strong tone. It is made from pine wood.

Second on the UNESCO intangible heritage list is the **Music of Terchová** – the “heavenly” archaic folk music characteristic of Terchová and neighbouring villages, typified by multi-voice singing. The Music of Terchova is closely connected with dancing, hence its temperamental music style. We do not know the exact origins of this folklore, because naturally it has passed from one generation to the next only in spoken form. It was included in the UNESCO list in 2013.

8.4.4.3. Properties designed to be inscribed on the UNESCO list.

- Limes Romanus - The Roman antique monuments on the Middle Danube
- Gemer and Abov churches with the medieval wall paintings
- Komárno - The Fortress against Turks
- The Memorial of Chatam Sófer
- Tokaj Wine Region
- The concept of the lenticular historical town core of Košice City
- Natural Reserves of Tatras Mountain (assumed common proposal with Poland)
- Karst Valleys of Slovakia (based on the selection of various types of karst valleys, enlargement and finalisation of the nomination project Yardangs of Slovak Paradise, submitted on 26.6.1997)
- Natural and Cultural Landscape of Danube Region (assumed common proposal with Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary)
- Fungal Flora of Bukovské Hills
- Geyser in Herľany



- Monuments of Great Moravia - a joint Czech-Slovak nomination (the church of st. Margita of Antiochia in Kopčany and Ducové, part Kostolec)

8.4.4.4. Slovakia is a castle superpower.

The smaller the country, the greater the number of its castles. It is doubtful you would find another country that has as many [castles](#) as Slovakia. The first written mention of Slovakia's oldest castle [Devín](#) dates back to the year 868. [Spiš Castle](#) is a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the ten largest castles in the world. And the whole world knows the terrifying story of the bloody countess Elizabeth Bathory from [Čachtice Castle](#). Altogether, Slovakia has as many as 220 castles and castle ruins! Not enough? Then add its 425 chateaus to the mix.

8.4.4.5. The first folk architecture reservation in the world.

Travel back in time and see what life in the Slovak countryside looked like in past centuries. The picturesque wooden village of [Čičmany](#) at the foothills of the Strážov Hills is actually the first-ever folk architecture reservation in the world! How did Čičmany come into existence? How did our ancestors live? How did they dress? How did they build painted wooden houses that look like fairy tale gingerbread houses? This place has many interesting stories from the distant past to tell. After all, the first mention of the village dates back to the year 1272.

➤ *Ochtinská Aragonite Cave – one of only four of its kind in the world.*

There are only four accessible aragonite caves on the planet. Slovakia is one of two European countries to have this unique natural phenomenon – ours is the [Ochtinská Aragonite Cave](#). It differs from other caves in that there are no classic stalagmites and stalactites, but strange-looking milky white twigs and bushes made from aragonite. A simply unique “freak of nature” that you can only find here, in the Czech Republic, Mexico and Argentina!

➤ *The biggest cave dripstone.*

Yes, Slovakia is a cave superpower too. So far, 7,000 caves have been discovered in the country, and [Krásnohorská Cave](#) has the highest sinter column (34 metres) in the world. For a long time, it was considered the biggest dripstone in the world, registered in the Guinness Book of Records!





➤ ***Fairy tale-like oak grove.***

Few people know about it, but the oak grove near Dobrá Niva in Zvolen is unrivalled and attracts the interest of scientists from around the world. On an area equal to 120 football fields grow 600 giant, more than 400-year-old oaks. Their bizarre shapes are like something out of a fairy tale!

➤ ***World rock rarity.***

Can you believe that some people in Slovakia still live in stone “caves?” Apache Indians once visited this place and said it was more unique than their own cliff dwellings, because in our caves people live all year round, while theirs are inhabited only in summer! In [Brhlovce](#), these unique houses are carved into the rock. It is said that the first such dwellings were made in the 16th century in response to the imminent danger presented during the Turkish wars. People did not have enough money to build new houses, so they carved them into the surrounding rocks. They are truly unique buildings. After all, it took up to eight years to carve a house into the stone wall. Two of these houses are still inhabited today! Originally, there were 14 rock houses. Now, only eight remain.

➤ ***The centre of Europe.***

If you hear somebody say that Slovakia is the heart and centre of Europe, it is not a joke. In a beautiful spot at [Kremnické Bane](#) in Central Slovakia, next to the ancient Church of St. John the Baptist, you can find a stone marking the geographical centre of Europe.

➤ ***The only horologe in the world with accurate solar time.***

The only Slovak horologe in Stará Bystrica, in the Kysuce Region, is also the only horologe in the world to display an accurate measure of so-called solar time! Since it is extremely complicated to build a horologe and explain how it works, suffice it to say that the one in Stará Bystrica is the only one in the world to show the exact solar time, because it is especially configured for the place in which it stands.

➤ ***Herľany Geyser – a world rarity.***

The [geyser in the spa village Herľany](#) has been jetting forth from under the Earth’s surface for over 140 years. Although at present the spring reaches a height of “only” 20 meters at regular intervals every 32 to 36 hours, in 1874 the water erupted continuously for 10 days at a height of 112 meters! What makes it different from other geysers? While the vast majority of geysers around the world gush hot water, Herľany Geyser is renowned for its low temperatures of 14-18°C. From 1957-



2006, it even was the only cold geyser in all of Europe. Today, similar geysers can be found only in Iceland.

➤ *The highest altar in the world.*

It measures 18.6 metres, and its creator, Master Pavol of Levoča, needed 10 years to carve it from linden wood. Made in the 16th century, it still is the highest wooden Gothic altar in the world. You can find it in [the St Jacob church in Levoča](#).



St Jacob church in Levoča



Levoča

➤ ***Forever mysterious – the stone balls of Megoňky.***

In the Klokočovské skálie nature reserve in the Kysuce Region, there are [huge stone balls](#) that are comparable to similar world-famous findings in Mexico and Costa Rica. It is in fact the largest known stone ball site in Europe, and it hides a big secret that is millions of years old. The largest one has a diameter of about 2.15m, and it has been named Mary. So far, no one has been able to explain their origin. Would you dare to try?

➤ ***Kremnica Mint – a seven-hundred-year-old enterprise.***

The Kremnica Mint has been making coins since 1328 and is the oldest continuously-operating enterprise in the world. It also manufactures Slovak euro coins and is renowned in the fields of numismatics and the history of art and technology. The [Kremnica Mint](#) achieved its highest levels of production during the reign of Maria Theresa.

➤ ***Dead Sea in the heart of Europe – the magic waters of Podhájska.***

Did you know that the water from the [hot springs in Podhájska](#) has even more beneficial effects than the world famous Dead Sea water, which people have been writing odes about for

centuries? The water of Podhájska is unique throughout all of Europe, and its composition is truly a world rarity!

➤ ***Tatra chamois.***

There are only a thousand of them left. A completely unique species of chamois evolved for thousands of years after the Ice Ages in a totally isolated environment, and it differs from the related chamois species of the Alps and the Apennines. This endemic species can't be found anywhere else on the planet but in the [High Tatras](#)!



➤ ***More expensive than gold – the oldest and largest opal mines in the world.***

Few people know that in the Slanské Hills, there are deposits of precious opal. This is an extraordinary phenomenon of a global perspective, as nowhere in the world was opal mined in such a large scale. The biggest known piece of precious opal also comes from [Slovak opal mines](#). It was found 236 years ago and weighed 607 grams. Because of its unique colour, it was named Harlequin. It is stored in a museum in Vienna, and its price is estimated at five hundred thousand US dollars. Opal gems from Slovakia also adorned the family of Napoleon, with the famous Trojan Fire opal being worn by Empress Josephine. The scale of opal mining from 150 years ago is comparable to only one place in the world today – Australia.

➤ ***Bethlehem in Rajecká Lesná.***

Master carver Jozef Pekara needed more than 15 years to finish the [Bethlehem in Rajecká Lesná](#). It is a true rarity, since it is the largest wooden moving Bethlehem set in Europe. Pekara's Bethlehem includes about 300 figures, half of which are movable. The piece is 8.5m long, 2.5m wide and 3m high. The beautiful exhibition not only depicts the birth of Christ, but also the history of the Slovak nation. For a long time, it was considered the largest Bethlehem in the world.

➤ ***Banská Štiavnica – a world rarity.***

A beautiful town in absolute harmony with the surrounding nature. There are historical landmarks, the Calvary, dozens of picturesque settings, and the [tajchy](#), artificial water reservoirs built to provide energy for the mines. [Banská Štiavnica](#) was one of the most important cities of medieval Hungary and is truly unique from a cultural, historical and architectural point of view.

➤ ***More than 1,600 mineral springs.***

No other country has, compared to its size, as many [mineral springs](#) as Slovakia. There are 1,657 officially-registered springs, but there probably are many more yet to be discovered. The mineral water of [Smrdáky](#) is unique for its hydrogen sulphide content. The largest number of springs in Slovakia can be found in [Bešeňová](#), with 33 springs that reach temperatures of up to 61 °C.

➤ ***Wolf Mountains – a wilderness and lost paradise.***

It is said that the European wilderness ceased to exist centuries ago. But you can still find it in Slovakia! Do you ever wonder what the wilderness looked like when man did not rule over nature? In the Poloniny National Park on the border with Poland and Ukraine, there is an untouched wild forest called the [Wolf Mountains](#) with trees over a thousand-years-old. This wild European nature can be just as amazing as the African Serengeti. In a single area, where there are no people far and wide, this beautiful wilderness is home to many endangered animal species, such as the lynx, wolf, bear, beaver, wild horse and the huge prehistoric European [bison](#).

➤ ***Carnuntum – the mythical town of the Celtic Kingdom.***

The “City on the Rock,” i.e. Carnuntum, which archaeologists had searched for for several decades across Europe – that mythical town of the Celtic kingdom of Noricum, built by the Romans in 100 BC when Paris and London were still only swamps – has been recently discovered by



archaeologists at the Bratislava Castle. The historic buildings are even 200 years older than Rome's Colosseum!

8.4.5. Slovakia: Exceptional folklore and folk tradition.

Since time immemorial, people in Slovakia lived in harmony with nature, and with respect and humility for their predecessors, customs and traditions, from which the way of life, folk culture and folklore evolved.

Many unique traditional customs have been preserved, whether as folk architecture, song or dance, distinct customs, or traditional arts and crafts.

Examples of the skills and artistic feel of the Slovak nation can best be experienced at folk architecture conservation reserves, open-air expositions, folklore and other festivals, and in smaller villages in regions such as Kysuce, Orava, Liptov, Horehronie, Spiš and Šariš.

The milk is drunk fresh or sour and all milk products such as whey, cottage cheese, bryndza (salted sheep curd) and sheep cheese are very popular. Smoked or fresh sheep cheese products are sold in different forms and shapes and Slovaks love them.

The most typical albeit not preferred by all, is the Slovak national meal „bryndzové halušky“ with fried bacon. Bryndzové halušky means for the Slovaks the same as sushi for the Japanese or pizza for the Italians.

Slovak folklore regularly taps into its abundant traditions to represent its culture. In broad terms, Slovak folk refers to the life cycle of the country's peasants, shepherds and craftsmen. Main motifs are daily toil, nature, and holiday markings.

From music and dance ensembles, to handicrafts, open-air markets and festivals, folk traditions continue to receive a warm reception in the country. Arts and crafts can count on government support, as well as promotion of its representative products and workmanship abroad. Slovak crafts and practices include lace embroidery, beekeeping, sheep rearing, pottery, and woodcarving.

Segments of Slovakia's folklore are typically passed down from generation to generation, with each region maintaining its own flavor in the way of typical costumes, customs, dialects, and overall style.



8.4.5.1. Slovak Folk Music.

Folk music has strong regional roots, which makes for distinct sounds among groups. While the music you'll find in one region would mostly rely on string instruments, another would consist of primarily brass bands. On the other hand, the fujara, which is also known as shepherd's pipe, is originally from the Detva region but has been adopted by musicians from all over Slovakia.



Lucnica and **Sluk** are two professional ensembles that regularly feature in prominent folk festivals in Slovakia and abroad. There are also many amateur ensembles, such as Detva, Polana, and Sarisan, which make the rounds throughout the country's many festivals. To hear one of Slovakia's more established quintessential folk singers, look up Darina Lasciakova; many of her songs are available online.

8.4.5.2. Slovak Folk Tales.

Although Slovakia's literary language only arose after the 18th century, the country's folk stories can count on a long oral tradition. To gain a feel for some of Slovakia's beloved folk tales, turn to folk tale collections, some of which have been translated into English and are available online, as well as attractive print editions. [One such collection is found here](#) (amazon). Read about the most interesting [folktales and legends of Slovakia](#).



8.4.5.3. *Burning of Morena (two weeks before Easter).*

One of the most ancient customs preserved until these days is **held late in the winter** and it expresses the peoples desire to do away with the cold weather and to call the warm rays of the sun.

This custom has its roots in the pre-Christian era when people believed that the nature is controlled by supernatural forces whose activities could be influenced. The changing of the seasons was also associated with these forces.

Morena symbolised the winter and so when people wanted the spring to come, they had to kill her, drown her in a stream or burn her. She was presented as an effigy made of straw clothed in womens dress. Young girls carried her singing towards a stream. When they arrived at the bank, Morena was undressed, set on fire and thrown into the waters of the defrosting stream.

The most frequent date of burning of Morena is the so called Dead Sunday (two weeks before Easter). In some regions young men burnt, instead of Morena, a straw effigy of the **Old Man**.

8.4.5.4. *Carnival (January, February, sometimes March).*

The Carnival is the merriest time of the year. Its origins go back to the pre-Christian era and it belongs among the customs connected with the break of the winter and the spring.

The Carnival, starting at Epiphany and ending on Ash Wednesday, **comes before the Lent**. In the past as well as nowadays, it is the time of merriness and feasts. It culminates in the **carnival mask ball** symbolising the world “upside down” during which the social barriers were neglected.

The most ancient masks are those representing various animals, the most frequent being the mask of the bull (bull-human), the goat, the bear and the horse.

The carnival time reaches its top in the last week before the Lent when masked groups go singing round the village and they make various tricks. The symbol of the end of the Carnival is the ceremony called **pochovávanie basy** (burying of the bass) on Mardi Gras, during which a real funeral is parodied.

8.4.5.5. *Christmas (24th - 26th December).*

The time between **Christmas** and **New Year** is one of the richest and the most interesting as far as customs are concerned. Many of them go back to the pre-Christian era and are connected





with celebrations of the winter solstice. The tradition of Christmas, in an altered form, has been preserved as [Christmas markets](#) or performing of the Christmas customs in [open-air museums](#).

Christmas Eve (24th December) is connected with various activities, making special dishes, customs and superstitions. Especially pastry has a very important role. The oldest kind of pastry is a pancake made from dough without yeast from which **Christmas wafers** have developed.

The dinner on Christmas Eve in Christian families begins with a common prayer and continues with eating wafers and honey or small buns called “opekance”. It finishes with eating special dishes. A frequent dish is fish, legumes (especially peas and lentils), dried fruit and mainly soup, most often sauerkraut soup called “**kapustnica**”.

There are various kinds of cakes, most typical being “kračun” and “štedrák” and pastry which is made not only for the family but also for the carol singers, shepherds or even livestock.

Among the most beautiful and artistically best elaborated folk customs associated with Christmas Eve are **nativity plays**.

The tradition of **the light of peace from Bethlehem** which has been spread by Slovak **scouts** since 1990, is a great event and a part of **Christmas** for many people. By means of this mission, they bring to families a bit of Bethlehem, human unity and friendship.

8.4.5.6. Easter whipping or bathing (March or April).

This custom, spread all over the territory of Slovakia, is known in villages as well as in towns and is performed on the last day of Easter - **Easter Monday**.

Easter Monday is associated with the custom of bathing or sprinkling with water and whipping girls and women. The **traditional reward** for whipping or bathing is a decorated egg called **kraslica** - a symbol of new life.

The oldest way of decorating eggs was dyeing in various herbal dips, later various other techniques developed, like batik, which is putting wax on the egg with a needle and then dyeing it while the waxed places stay uncoloured.

In some regions of Slovakia **the Tuesday** after Easter Monday was the day when girls and women could pay back the whipping and bathing, which appeared very amusing.





8.4.5.7. *Midsummer Night's Bonfires (23rd – 24th June night).*

In summer many customs concentrated on protection against evil forces that might have harmed vegetation and livestock. The culmination point of this magic time was the **Midsummer Night** (23rd - 24th June night) which involved customs whose origins go back to the pre-Christian era. Some forms of this custom, especially **making bonfires above villages**, have been preserved till nowadays.

The Midsummer Day is the longest day of the year. Fire, especially bonfire, belonged among the basic elements of the solstice customs and the adults as well as the young went singing and dancing around it.

On this day, people picked medicinal herbs and they looked for treasures with the help of the so called **fern flower** which was to blossom during the Midsummer Night.

Most attention was paid to **fire**. One of the traditions was making huge bonfires on a place clearly seen from the village, launching fire wheels, tossing burning torches, singing, dancing and jumping over the bonfire.

8.4.5.8. *St. Nicholas' Day (6th December).*

St. Nicholas' Day is popular especially with children who are given presents of sweets and various small toys. According to this tradition they clean their shoes, put them on the window sill in the evening and the next morning they find a lovely surprise in them.

The customs associated to St. Nicholas' Day (**6th [December](#)**) gradually developed into the form known nowadays.

One of the customs of an ancient origin was marching of the three men in masks. The first of them represented a goat led by the second man wrapped in straw. The third man had an effigy of a woman dressed in trousers with boots hanging from them tied on his back. When the man turned round the effigy was kicking the passers-by with its boots.

Another custom became frequent later. **St. Nicholas with an angel and a devil** went round the houses giving out presents or the “devils reward”.



8.4.6. Handicrafts preserved to the present day.

There are many skilled people living in Slovakia – and always were. Their handicrafts have been preserved to the present day and several of them are globally unique. Wear Liptov lace, have your pots repaired by a tinker, discover skills of Slovak bee-keepers or wood-carvers.

8.4.6.1. *Bee-keeping and honey-picking.*

Honey was the favourite sweetener of the Slavs and mead was mentioned in the first written documents about the Slavs.

Honey-picking or picking honey from wild bees on the territory of Slovakia is historically proved from 5th century by many surnames and preserved names of places.

Bee-keeping developed from honey-picking. It meant replacing tree trunks with colonies of bees closer to people's dwellings where they were enclosed with fences or sheltered.

From the half of 19th century frame beehives started to be used from which honeycombs were taken out while the bees stayed alive. Various kinds of beehives were built. Some of them were decorated, others had a shape of a figure. Such kinds of beehives can be seen in the **museum of bee-keeping** in **Kráľová pri Senci**.

Traditional **Slovak mead** can be tasted or bought at every historical fair. This “wine of wines” is appreciated not only for its sweet flavour, but also for its favourable effects on the human organism.

8.4.6.2. *Pottery.*

Ceramics making from baked clay belong to the oldest occupations in Slovakia and for archaeologists the fragments of ceramics are a lead to dating particular cultures.

The oldest written document about pottery dates from the year 1416 and is from **Pozdišovce**. The first **pottery guild** on the territory of Slovakia came into



Medieval cun (G. Hurai)

existence in **Bardejov** in 1475. The development of pottery was connected with practical needs of the countryside households for various kinds of dishes.

Potters worked especially in winter and sold their goods at markets and fairs. The production of **faience dishes** started to develop with the arrival of the Habans in western Slovakia. This tradition was followed by ceramics making in western Slovakia, the best-known being the **faience of Holič**.

Gradually, centres of ceramics making developed from folk pottery centres like **Modra** (Majolica), Pozdišovce, Dechtice, Sekule and Dobrá Voda. Many of them carry on with the tradition even today. In Modra tourists can visit a factory producing Majolica and they can try and make their own pieces.

8.4.6.3. Wine-growing.

Slovak wines already used to be popular in the past on several emperors' or kings' tables. If you are interested, what made Their Lordships to love them, the best way how to find it out is to start tasting on your own...

The first vineyards on the territory of Slovakia were founded by the Romans and the unique archaeological findings of the wine-grower's knives date from 7th century. The first written documents about wine-growing date from 11th – 13th centuries. The wine-growing tradition is proved by the motifs on village seals and town coats of arms.

Vine growing or viticulture is considered the oldest branch of farming oriented to growing of vine and processing of grapes.

Areas of Slovakia where vine is grown, following the European regionalization, are classified into **zone B**. In total there exist six viticultural regions in Slovakia with forty areas. These areas stretch on the total surface of more than **20,000 hectares** of vineyards.

Almost four fifths of vineyards are located in the region of the western Slovakia, about 13 % exist in the central Slovakian region and some 7 % is in the eastern part of the Republic. Viticultural areas are further broken down into viticultural communes.

In the 13th century the most important wine-growing region was the region of the **Malé Karpaty** mountain range. German colonists also contributed greatly to creating the particular character of the wine-growing culture of this region.

Various customs are connected to the wine-growing tradition; e.g. decorating the statue of St. Urban, the patron saint of wine-growers, with vine twigs, customs connected to vintages, pouring wine onto the ground for the souls of those dead before the toast, etc.

Gradually wine-growing became more important and wine became an important commercial and export article. It is said that **račianska frankovka** (Frankovka of Rača) was drunk and appreciated at the court of Maria Theresa.

Among the best quality products of wine-growing and wine-making in the Kingdom of Hungary was the **Tokay wine** from the southern slopes of the **Zemplínske vrchy** mountain range.

8.4.6.4. *Lace-making.*

The lace became the typical adornment of clothes, accessories, handkerchiefs and other decoration objects on the territory of Slovakia where it was given its characteristic features.

Bobbin-lace-making for sale spread on the Slovak territory in the second half of the 16th century. It was brought there by the Croatian colonists and also by the Czech and German miners.

From 17th century lace-making developed especially in the mining regions as an important supplementary occupation. Among the most important centres of this craft are the environs of **Banská Bystrica**, **Banská Štiavnica**, **Kremnica** and **Prešov**.

At the end of the 19th century lace-making became the source of income in rural areas, too. In this period the Hungarian state founded lace-making workshops and schools in the original centres (Staré Hory, Kremnické Bane, Hodruša, Špania Dolina and others).

Today one can find lace-making in **Špania Dolina** where laces can even be bought.

8.4.6.5. *Tinkering.*

Tinkering was a specific Slovak craft and Slovak tinkers, who made their living by mending the kitchen ware, tinkering, making and selling products from tinplate and wires, travelled all over Europe and Russia.

The origins of this occupation, which involved a lot of travelling, date from 18th and 19th centuries. Tinkers came from the poorest regions of isolated settlements. The cradle of tinkering was the environs of **Trenčín** and the region of **Kysuce**.



Tinkers sometimes left for two or three years. The apprentices were called džarek. Some tinkers became rich entrepreneurs.

Tinkers created **their own folklore** which included, apart from songs, an interesting dance called drotáriček, known especially in the Kysuce region.

It is possible to see beautiful samples of work of old masters and also of current craftsmen and modern designers using tinker technology in the **exposure of tinker** in Považské Muzeum in **Žilina-Budatín**.

8.4.6.6. *Wood Carving.*

The wood carving craft, which involves decorating wooden objects by carving, engraving, sawing, sharpening, beating, burning and other techniques as well as making various objects of art from wood, became **one of the most exquisite crafts** in Slovakia.

In the past, wood carving was in many cases only **secondary to other crafts** (manufacturing of agricultural tools, woodturning, wooden-spoon making, carpentry, wheels and trolleys manufacturing) as well as the complement of work of shepherds, millers, miners, beekeepers, gingerbread makers, farmers and wood-cutters, who drew their inspiration from their surroundings and religious traditions.

It was used to decorate houses, especially gates of wealthy homesteads (environs of Zvolen and Levice), gables and columns of porches as well as furniture, tomb crosses (Detva, Gemer and Novohrad) and sometimes agricultural tools.

Shepherds decorated their sticks and tools and carved special jugs called **črpák**, miners made various wooden figures, millers decorated their mill equipment and bee-keepers were known for their **figure-shaped** beehives. Each of them gave this craft their specific features. **Wooden spoon making** was another specific craft spread throughout Slovakia mainly in the environs of Stará Turá in western Slovakia. The products of wooden spoon makers were sold at markets and fairs, the most important being the Radvanský jarmok fair in Banská Bystrica.

Slovak folk wood-carving underwent a specific development in the era of socialism. The cease of sacral production and the requirement of "traditional manufacturing" put a halt on a natural development of this craft. As a result, wood-carvers who grew up in new cultural and social conditions, were thematically inspired by the works of their fathers and grandfathers, failing to provide their own artistic contribution.





Following 1989 a technological advance in the manufacturing can be observed (machine equipment), which is aided by accessible literary sources and an ever more frequent use of the Internet. This was reflected in developments in various areas, and the image of a wood-carver cutting a piece of wood with his knife next to an oven is a thing of the past.

New craft – **carving of Christmas cribs** – has found its way in Slovakia. It is no longer associated with a particular location, as is the case with, for instance, the manufacturing of shepherds' kitchenware or sticks. Small-scale **home galleries of wood-carvers** are being founded and are involved in the creation of a variety of offers of Slovakia's regions, with craftsmen setting up associations and presenting themselves.

The beautiful and various products of wood-carving can be seen at folk and historical markets and are counted among popular Slovak souvenirs.

8.4.6.7. A Spa Culture.

Slovakia has a large number of natural curative springs as well as extensive deposits of high-quality healing peat and mud. Throughout the ages people have taken advantage of these resources to cure a variety of diseases and ailments. The country has more than 1,160 registered mineral and thermal springs. Even Marcus Aurelius' Roman legions tried out the thermal water, and several of the better-known spas are visited every year by people from many countries.

8.4.6.8. A Private People.

Slovaks value their privacy. It takes a while for them to open up to and trust new people. As a result they can seem overly formal and reserved. They are not exuberant and are not given to emotional displays. Once you develop a personal relationship Slovaks will start to open up. Although always polite, they seldom move to a first-name basis with people outside their extended family or very close friends.

8.4.7. Etiquette and Customs in Slovakia.

8.4.7.1. Meeting and Greeting.

- Greetings are warm but not effusive.
- The most common greeting will be a handshake, direct eye contact and the relevant greeting for the time of day: The formal greeting is "dobry den". "Dobre rano" is used early in the





morning and "dobre popoludie" is only seldomly used – It is better to use "dobry den". After 18.00 you use "dobry vecer" and finally "dobru noc" means good night. The informal greeting "ahoj" (hi) is often used among friends.

- People are generally introduced by the honorific titles "Pan" (Mr.) or "Pani" (Mrs.) and their surname.
- Close friends may refer to each other using the honorific title and first names.
- Always wait to be invited before using someone's first name.

8.4.7.2. Gift Giving Etiquette.

- If you are invited to a Slovak's home, take wine, flowers or good quality chocolates for the hostess.
- If giving flowers, do so in odd numbers, except for 13, which is considered unlucky.
- Do not give chrysanthemums or calla lilies and do not wrap flowers in purple ribbon, as these are traditions reserved for funerals.
- Gifts are usually opened when received.

8.4.7.3. Dining Etiquette.

Slovaks generally entertain in pubs or taverns (called "pivnice"), wine bars (called "vinárne"), restaurants and sometimes in their homes. The home is considered private and only family and close friends are generally invited to visit.

➤ *If you are invited to a Slovak's house:*

- Remove your shoes at the door.
- Arrive on time - punctuality is appreciated.
- Dress well, i.e. like you are going to work, as this shows respect for your hosts.
- Try not to discuss business in social situations unless your host brings up the topic.
- Reciprocating any hospitality you receive goes towards strengthening a relationship.
- Table manners are rather formal in Slovakia.





- Table manners are Continental, i.e. hold the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right while eating.
- Wait for the host to say "do brou chut" before you begin eating.
- The napkin remains folded next to the plate. It is not unfolded and put on your lap.
- To refuse the first offer of a second helping is polite; wait until the hostess insists before accepting more.
- The most common toast is "na zdravie" (to your health).
- It is imperative that you look the person who is being toasted in the eye.
- When at home, it is polite to eat all what you have on your plate, especially when the food is hand made.

8.4.7.4. Business Etiquette and Protocol.

➤ ***Meeting and Greeting.***

- Slovak businesspeople initially take a formal and distant approach to people in business. Be prepared for a seemingly cold reception at first.
- This approach is however changing and a younger generation becomes more involved in business. They are more willing to dispense of protocol and a slightly less level of formality will be used.
- It is best to let your colleagues determine the level of formality used.
- Handshakes should be firm and confident.
- Include the appropriate greeting for the time of day (see above).
- Wait for a woman to extend her hand.
- Academic and professional titles are commonly used in business situations; if the person does not have such a title, the honorific titles "Pan" or "Pani" and the surname are used.
- First names are rarely used until a personal relationship has developed, and even then they are seldom used in business.





- Wait to be invited before moving to first names.
- Business cards are exchanged without any formal ritual.
- It is a nice touch to have one side of your card translated into Slovak.
- Include any advanced university degrees on your business card.
- If your company has been in business for more than 20 years, include its founding date on your card as well.
- In meetings or presentations do not raise politics first and avoid Slovak-Hungarian topics unless you know your hosts opinion on this matter.

➤ ***Communication Style.***

While direct communication is valued in Slovakia, there is also an emphasis placed on finessing what is being said so that information is delivered in a sensitive way. It is often that the level of the relationship will determine how direct someone is. For newly established and more formal relationships, a great deal of emphasis will be placed on diplomacy. But once a relationship has passed through the initial phases, people feel more comfortable speaking frankly with each other.

Since tradition is valued, it is often helpful to give a bit of historical background or context before starting a meeting or new program. Slovaks do not need a tremendous amount of background information to feel comfortable proceeding with a transaction, although they do require some information and may ask questions until they feel comfortable and are able to proceed satisfactorily. Body language, body posture and tonal delivery are important enhancements to the verbal message, adding emphasis or additional meaning to the words.

➤ ***Business Meetings.***

Organisational cultures differ widely in Slovakia, but generally meetings are conducted by the most senior person present who sets the agenda, the content, and the pace. The purpose is usually to communicate information and decisions that have already been made rather than to brainstorm or discuss. Employees may be called on to corroborate or clarify facts and statistics, but will not usually be asked to collaborate.

Meeting schedules are not very rigid in Slovakia. There may be an agenda, but it serves as a guideline for the discussion and acts as a springboard to other related business ideas. As relationships





are highly important in this culture, there may be some time in the meeting devoted to non-business discussions. Time is not considered more important than completing a meeting satisfactorily, so meetings will go on until they come to a natural ending.



8.5. Norway.

8.5.1. Introduction.

Norway is a stunningly beautiful and culturally rich part of Scandinavia. Although it shares some Viking history and cultural traditions with its Nordic neighbors, it is also unique in many ways. After having been traded between and waged war upon by Sweden and Denmark many times, in the 19th and 20th centuries Norway was very eager to rediscover and develop its own national culture and identity. This has caused the



Viking boat

country to have great national pride and fierce individuality. Much of the culture of Norway can be traced back to the Vikings, a group of Scandinavian seafaring pirates, traders, and pioneers that settled in Northern Europe in the 8th century. Norway's constitution was signed in 1814, and this led to a period of nation-building. During this time, collectors of folk culture were inspired to look to the past and to the rural areas to find significant traditions, art, and music. Norway is now governed by a constitutional monarchy and King Harald V is the current reigning monarch. This monarchy has very limited power, and in addition there is a three-branch socially democratic government, so the king remains mostly a respected figurehead symbolizing Norway as an autonomous entity independent of its previous rule by Sweden and Denmark. The country is also divided into regions, counties, and municipalities and the people are fiercely proud, loyal, and protective of the qualities and traditions that make their locality special. Norway's rich history in the arts and culture includes famous names such as composer Edvard Grieg, playwright Henrik Ibsen, and painter Edvard Munch.

8.5.2. Landscape, Nature and Culture.

The naturally beautiful but rugged landscapes which characterize Norway have had much to do with the local culture as they impact how people live, work, and draw creative inspiration. Norwegians have always identified with rural culture, and have tried to preserve elements of this in their national identity. In fact, an average of 14 people per square kilometer makes Norway one of the most scarcely populated countries in the world. The country's coastline stretches more than 100,000 kilometers and the region boasts around 240,000 islands. Thanks to the public rights law

named *allemannsret* (all man's rights), residents are free to roam through all uncultivated land. This makes for incredible outdoor activities and ventures into landscapes seemingly untouched by modern life. The cold and dark winters can be very harsh, and many try to make their inside spaces more warm and inviting in order to combat this. Candles are used often for light and warmth, and winter celebrations are especially cozy. On the other



Norwegian Landscape

hand, the never-ending summer days make it possible for people to stay outside late into the night. Although the landscape and weather can be harsh, there is a strong tradition amongst Norwegians of spending much time outside enjoying nature. The mountains, valleys, fjords, and coastlines make for no shortage of nature to explore.

8.5.3. Farming and Fishing, Food.

The most common occupations for food production in the past of Norway were farming and fishing. Many people still own farms passed down through their families over generations, and continue to grow food and animals. This tradition of farming and fishing has decided the traditional foods of Norway, making meat, fish, and dairy products central to the cuisine. Some dishes even include meat such as sheep, moose, or reindeer. There are also many fish dishes which involve preservation of the fish through marinating or drying. Norway also has its own unique type of cheese: *brunost*, or brown cheese. This tan or brown colored cheese is a byproduct made from the whey of goat's milk through a process which



Norwegian Waffles

caramelizes the sugars. It is often eaten on waffles or *knekkebrød*, which are also common Norwegian foods. *Knekkebrød*, or crisp bread, is basically a large dry cracker made of rye or wheat (sometimes supplemented with seeds and other grains) used as a vessel for cheese or other *pålegg* (spreads or toppings). At a meal, the table is often loaded with many different *pålegg* like butter, jam, liver pate, cold-cuts, and more so there are different spreads to put on your bread or *knekkebrød*,

or even waffles. Norwegian waffles are unique in that they are always made in an waffle iron which creates heart-shaped pieces! Another uniquely Norwegian food is *lefse*, a potato-based pancake. This can be thin or thick depending on the type, and sometimes will be eaten with butter, sugar, and cinnamon as a sweet food or used as a wrap for sausage or pretty much any filling. Plant foods which commonly grow in Norway include root vegetables, such as potatoes, and all types of berries!

8.5.4. Outdoor Activities.

Norway is a country which takes pride in its nature, and all the activities that go with it. Cold and unpredictable weather does not deter those who wish to go out, as is proven by a quintessential There is a Norwegian saying which translates as “there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing”. Walking and hiking are very typical outdoor activities, and it is common for many to leave immediately as



Norwegian people with skiis

work ends on Friday to “gå på tur” (go hiking). Winter sports are also very popular, as there is often much snow and ice during Norway’s winter season. Norwegians are known for their love of skiing, and it is often said that they are “born on skis”. Cross-country skiing can even be used as an everyday form of transportation, with some even skiing to work or school and other meetings. Other winter sports include biathlon, snowboarding, curling, skating, hockey, sledding, and various types of skiing. Some Norwegians also enjoy swimming in the very cold water of the fjords, mountain streams, lakes, or ocean at any time of the year.

8.5.5. Religion.

Although there was a Norse religion in the ancient past, Christianity was brought to Norway as early as the time of the Vikings, who brought it home from their travels. King Olav Haraldsson in the 1000s was credited with making a more dramatic shift towards Christianity for the country as a whole, and he was eventually canonized as the patron saint of Norway. In the 1500s, the royals converted to Protestantism and by the mid 1600’s this was the official religion of the Church of



Olav Haraldsson

Norway. The country is no longer officially religious, however about 70% of Norwegians still consider themselves members of the Church of Norway, even if they do not actively practice religion. The country is quite secular, but the church is used by most in order to uphold certain traditions, such as confirmation. Confirmation can be held as either a Christian or secular event, and is a coming-of-age ceremony which usually takes place in a church when the participant is 15 years old. Although Christianity is the most widespread, Islam and non-religious beliefs are the two religions which form the next largest percentages when it comes to religion in Norway.

8.5.6. Folklore.

There is a rich folklore tradition in Norway, and most people have at least superficial knowledge of Norse mythology and stories of many other supernatural creatures. In addition, there is a famous volume of Norwegian folk tales and legends written by the famous collectors Asbjørsen and Moe which is well-known by most. Amongst all the creatures in Norwegian folklore, trolls may be the most prolific in these stories. There are also many mentions of giants, witches, dragons, elves, and unicorns as well as some lesser-known outside of Norway including *nisse*, *hulder*, *nøkken*, and *fossegrimen* amongst many others. Here is a brief description of some of these



Troll

creatures: The *nisse* is a sort of household elf or goblin. *Nøkken* is an eerie male creature dwelling in water such as rivers and lakes and is a manifestation of the dangers of water. The *hulder* is portrayed as a seductive woman in the forest who lures men in with her beauty and lovely singing, but can be identified by her cow's tail. *Fossegrimen* is a fiddle-playing creature which lives in the waterfalls and will teach his skills in return for an offering. In conclusion, this rich folklore tradition incorporates itself into modern life in Norway through storytelling, art, design, and music. Many seemingly magical landscapes in Norway are even named after creatures in folklore.

8.5.7. Folk Music and Dance.

Folk music in Norway generally refers to traditional music from rural communities that has survived the passing of time, often passed down by ear rather than by written notes. There are many instruments which are used for this music, some uniquely Norwegian. This includes very old



Arve Tellefsen Sculpture

instruments such as the goat horn, willow flute, birch bark trumpet, *langeleik* (drone zither), and metal jew's harp as well as somewhat newer instruments like the fiddle, accordion, and Norway's 'national instrument', the hardanger fiddle. The hardanger fiddle has been used as the symbol of folk music and as a point of national pride for Norway because of its purely Norwegian origins and its striking appearance, sound, and importance in the development of traditional music and dance. This fiddle dates back to the mid 1600s and is characterized by its extra sympathetic resonant strings, flattened bridge, decorative inlay and painting, and carved dragon head scroll. This fiddle, as

well as the unadorned type, are both used to play the old type of traditional dance music (*bygdedans*) which is regionally specific and includes tunes in two beats for walking-speed partner dance or solo dance, and tunes in three beats for running-speed partner dances. The other type of folk dance (*gammeldans*) is slightly newer and consisted of tune types which were popular for partner dancing in Europe at the time such as waltz, polka, *reinlender*, and *masurka*. There are many local groups for folk music and folk dance, as well as festivals throughout the year. In addition, the big annual country-wide music and dance competitions (*landskappleik* and *landsfestivalen*) provide not just a place for musicians and dancers to compete but also to meet others in the folk community and share tunes with each other.

8.5.8. Folk Art.

Wood carving, textile work, metal work, and painting are some of the most common forms of traditional arts in Norway. Knitting is such a popular activity among the general public it seems to be one of the national pastimes, and there are countless sweaters, mittens, and hats made with traditional patterns. Much of the folk art that is done today in textiles and metal is connected to making the *bunad*, or Norwegian traditional costume. Many Norwegians own a *bunad* to wear for special occasions and for Norway's national day. These garments vary in pattern and design between regions, and require many hours of complicated hand work in sewing and embroidering. The costume also



Girls wearing the *bunad*

includes silver jewelry used as clasps, cufflinks, pins, and buckles. The traditional metalwork features a technique called *filigran*, which uses very small threads of fine silver to create intricate designs. Wood carving in Norway is also very special as you can see this work often on the outsides of wood buildings, and on decorative objects and kitchen supplies such as spoons, bowls, cutting boards, and drinking vessels. There is also a specific type of painting known as rosemaling or rose painting, that is special in Scandinavia, developed in the baroque period and inspired by folk art. This is a stylized type of painting using “c” and “s” strokes with scrolls and flowing lines, floral designs, and vibrant colors and is done on wooden surfaces like walls, furniture, and other wooden objects.

8.5.9. Architecture and Society.

A description of important structures in Norway in terms of architecture, culture, and society cannot be complete without a mention of stave churches. These churches are medieval Christian churches built from wood, during the 1100s-1300s using posts (staves). Not many survive as wood is not the most permanent building material and old churches were often torn down to make way for a new church. However, those that are left feature striking appearance in their structure and design as well as wood carvings and paintings which give a glimpse into Norway’s past. Although these churches were built throughout Northern Europe, almost all that survive are located in Norway, so they are an important part of Norway’s cultural history and locals and tourists alike enjoy visiting them. In terms of society and cultural tradition in a town or city, there is always at least one building which can be used as the general meeting place for group gatherings. This can be a place where organizers, planners, and governors of the area can meet and make decisions, or as a venue for cultural events as well as a studio for lessons in cultural tradition such as music and dance. Another important structure in terms of Norwegian culture and society is the cabin, or *hytte*. Cabin culture is strong in Norway, as many have a family-owned cabin in a rural area which they can escape to and



Veste church

relax in whenever they have free time. As most people enjoy a break from city life, cabins are often located in picturesque nature and can range from extremely rustic with no water or electricity to very modern and fancy.

8.5.10. Sami.

The Sami people are an indigenous people residing traditionally mostly in the northern part of Norway, although now their largest percentage resides in Oslo, the southernly capital. There are many different groups of Sami people, and some of these tribes were originally nomadic. The Sami are most known for reindeer herding, but many were also fishermen, farmers, and



Sami family

gatherers amongst other things. Traditionally they lived across northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, and there are several languages used by the different groups of Sami people. They have a distinct cultural identity, with their own traditional garb as well as art, music, and other customs. Some of the most celebrated types of music which come from the Sami are *Yoik* (singing) and drumming on a traditional reindeer-hide drum. These groups of indigenous people have faced many challenges and much oppression as many attempts have been made in the past to erase their culture and displace them or forcibly assimilate them. The Sami people are the biggest Norwegian ethnic minority but other ethnic minorities include the *Kvener* and the Roma people.

8.5.11. Language.



Child learning languages

Strangely enough, there are two different written versions of the Norwegian language. Bokmal, the older version, is very similar to Danish as it was created at the time when Norway was under the rule of Denmark. In the 1800s, Nynorsk, or New Norwegian, was created to be a written language which more accurately reflected the way in which the language was spoken by people in many parts of the country (mainly dialects of western

Norway). Today, Bokmal is used predominantly in Oslo and other large cities while Nynorsk is used mainly in the western part of Norway and some rural areas, and most children must learn both written languages in school. In addition, dialects are a very strong part of Norwegian culture as they represent the place where one comes from. Dialects use some different words or variations on words from standard Norwegian, as well as different accents, intonation, and speed/rhythm of speaking. Dialects are a source of pride for many, and therefore are protected and used as a way of identifying where others come from. Although this keeps local culture and tradition alive, it can sometimes make it difficult for people to understand each other! Norwegian and Sami are the two official languages of Norway, and most people also learn and speak English very well.

8.5.12. Holidays.

Holidays in Norway are full of festive tradition. In the winter, Norwegians celebrate Santa Lucia day in December as well as Christmas. For Santa Lucia day, young girls dress in white gowns holding candles and singing a song as they walk along giving out saffron buns called *lussekatter*. Christmas is celebrated on the 24th rather than the 25th in Norway, and gifts are opened in the evening rather than the morning. The Christmas meal always includes meat such as *pinnekjøtt* (lamb) and *ribbe* (pork). Another tradition is to leave a bowl of porridge out for the *nisse* (elf-like creature) to enjoy, and it is often a *nisse* who comes to deliver the gifts rather than Santa Claus. It is also customary to have porridge with an almond hidden in the pot; the one who finds it in their bowl might get a marzipan sweet as a prize.



Oslo, Norway – 17th May 2012

Another important holiday is the 17th of May, which is Norway's national day: the day that Norway signed its own constitution, declaring itself an independent kingdom. On this holiday usual customs include street parades, dressing up in Norwegian traditional costume, hanging and waving Norwegian flags, a speech from the king, and a special meal.

Another Norwegian holiday is St. Hans, on June 23rd; this technically is the birthday of St. John but is often celebrated more as a summer solstice celebration with a giant bonfire sometimes



burning a witch-doll at the top. A few religious holidays worth mentioning are *fastelavn*, Pentecost and ascension day. In addition, *Olsok* is a holiday to celebrate the holy king Olav of Norway who died in the 1000's.

One more cultural phenomenon to introduce is known as "*Russ*": students in their final semester of high school spend a month celebrating while dressed in overalls of different colors signifying what they studied. Customs include continuous partying, engaging in dares to win small charms to string from hats, and forming crews complete with their own group name, party bus, and theme song. Lastly, it is quite common for people to take a vacation away from work and from Norway in the summer, and it is very popular to visit the warmer countries of southern Europe which are often referred to as "*syden*".





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