

## The exodus from Molise between 1952 and 1980. New destinations and socio-economic impact

by Cristiano Pesaresi

### I. Overview

The intense migratory trend that started in Molise beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century accentuated the marginality of the region and produced a series of negative chain reactions,<sup>1</sup> notably because it slowed down economic growth and upset the socio-demographic balance by depleting the younger generations and highly increasing the relative numbers of the elderly, especially in mountain areas.<sup>2</sup> There were also serious repercussions on housing, which were already pointed out about forty years ago: “And even if some new buildings, built with remittances from abroad, have appeared at the fringes of the town, adding an often ill-matching patch of color to the landscape, this hardly makes up for the growing number of houses that are abandoned and in a complete state of ruin.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Paolo Migliorini, *Problemi di equilibrio del sistema insediativo molisano*, «Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana», suppl. al vol. XI, 1982, pp. 227-232; Franco Salvatori, Paolo Migliorini, *L'economia molisana tra assistenzialismo e sviluppo*, in Ugo Leone (ed.), *La rivalorizzazione territoriale in Italia. Indagine geo-economica sullo sviluppo periferico*, AGeI, Franco Angeli, Milano 1986, pp. 67-82; Paolo Migliorini, Franco Salvatori, *Il Molise. Analisi zonale dei processi di trasformazione demografica in una regione depressa*, in Carlo Cencini, Giuseppe Dematteis, Bruno Menegatti (eds), *Le aree emergenti: verso una nuova geografia degli spazi periferici. L'Italia emergente. Indagine geo-demografica sullo sviluppo periferico*, AGeI, Franco Angeli, Milano, 1990, pp. 465-477.

<sup>2</sup> Gino De Vecchis, Cristiano Pesaresi, *Invecchiamento e femminilizzazione della montagna italiana. Alcuni casi esemplificativi*, in Silvino Salgaro (ed.), *Scritti in onore di Roberto Bernardi*, Pàtron, Bologna 2006, pp. 137-146; Antonio Ciaschi, Cristiano Pesaresi, *La ricchezza del Molise. Potenzialità e prospettive di una montagna da scoprire*, Collana Quaderni della Montagna, Istituto Nazionale della Montagna, Roma, Bononia University Press, Bologna 2007, p.p. 105-137; Cristiano Pesaresi, *La marginalità della montagna molisana: aspetti demografici, sociali ed economici*, Atti del 48° Convegno Nazionale AIIG (Campobasso, 2-5 settembre 2005), Art Decò - Digital Printing, Campobasso 2006, pp. 115-125.

<sup>3</sup> Mario Fondi, *Abruzzo e Molise*, UTET, Torino 1970, p. 203.

As to the emotional and perceptual aspects of this situation, at the end of the Sixties Ricciarda Simoncelli quoted a touching statement collected during interviews with emigrants by the Italian national television. This statement expressed the feelings of those who were forced to abandon their loved ones and land for an indefinite number of years: it is like “moving away from family and friends while still alive, as if one was already dead.”<sup>4</sup>

As recent studies have shown, this phenomenon was so vast that Molise holds a depressing first place, far ahead of all other Italian regions, in membership of the AIRE – Anagrafe Italiani Residenti all’Estero, the register of Italians residing abroad.<sup>5</sup>

After the great exodus—which ended with the first world war—had taken a heavy toll, and after its cultural and historical heritage, housing, communication routes and hydroelectric plants had been severely damaged by the second world war, between 1951 and 1971 the region was impacted by a new intense process of abandonment. According to Istat data cited in the *Sommario storico di statistiche sulla popolazione* (1951-87), the migratory balance in the inter-census intervals, 1951-61 and 1961-71, was dramatically negative: respectively, -84,359 and -61,946 units.<sup>6</sup> These data, which together total more than 146,000 units, acquire even more significance in the light of the fact that the number of residents in 1951 was less than 407,000. And still more if we look at the age distribution (Figure 1): the percentage of the population aged 65 or more went from 8.2% in 1951 to 13% in 1971 (and to 15.6% in 1981, and 21.2% in 2001).

Thus, “while so many Molisan farmers contributed to the Italian economic boom and to the more general extraordinary worldwide growth of those years with their labor and ingenuity, far from their land of origin, Molise displayed all the typical signs of stagnation of the economy, production, and social innovation.”<sup>7</sup>

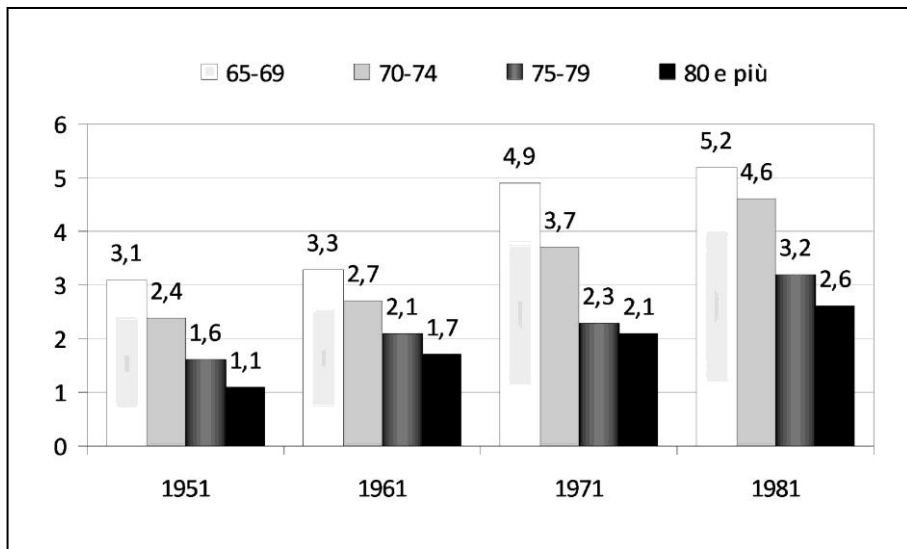
<sup>4</sup> Ricciarda Simoncelli, *Il Molise. Le condizioni geografiche di una economia regionale*, Istituto di Geografia Economica della Facoltà di Economia dell’Università di Roma, Roma 1969, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Riccardo Morri, Cristiano Pesaresi, *The European Dimension of Regional Emigration: The Case of Molise, Italy*, in Riccardo Morri, Cristiano Pesaresi (eds), *Migration and citizenship: the role of the metropolis in the European Union process of enlargement*, Collana Ricerche e Studi, Società Geografica Italiana, Roma 2009, pp. 84-85.

<sup>6</sup> With the caveat that the data for 1952-81 “are those ‘reconstructed’ by the Istat on the basis of the results of subsequent population censuses”: Istat, *Sommario storico di statistiche sulla popolazione*, Roma 1990, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Gino Massullo, *Dalla periferia alla periferia. L’economia nel Novecento*, in Id. (ed.), *Storia del Molise in età contemporanea*, Donzelli Editore, Roma 2006, p. 489.

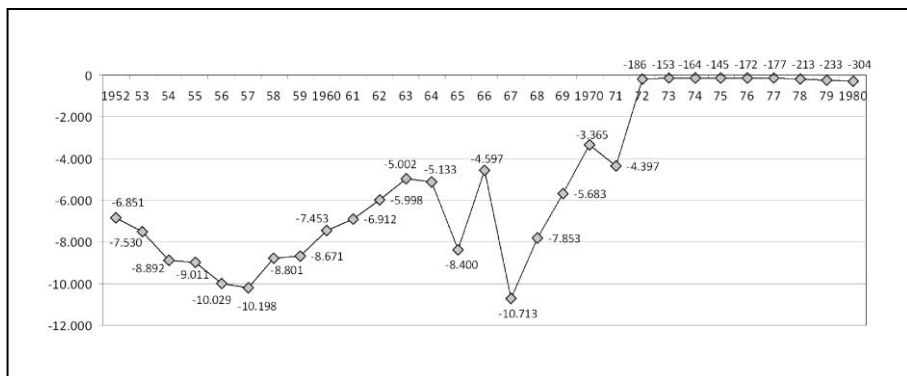
Figure 1 – Percentage of the population aged 65 and more, by age group, residing in Molise at the censuses of 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981.



Source: Elaboration on Istat data, 1990, p. 92.

The migratory balance, estimated annually for the 1952-1980 period (Figure 2), displays significant negative values—by several thousands—for the whole 1952-1971 interval. 1967 was the year with the greatest loss, both in absolute and in percentage terms (-31.6%). From 1972 onward, instead, the values were still negative, but much lower, only a few hundreds. They remained fairly stable, with a slight increase in the last year considered.

Figure 2 – Migratory balance recorded in Molise between 1952 and 1980.



Source: Elaboration on Istat data, 1990, p. 257.

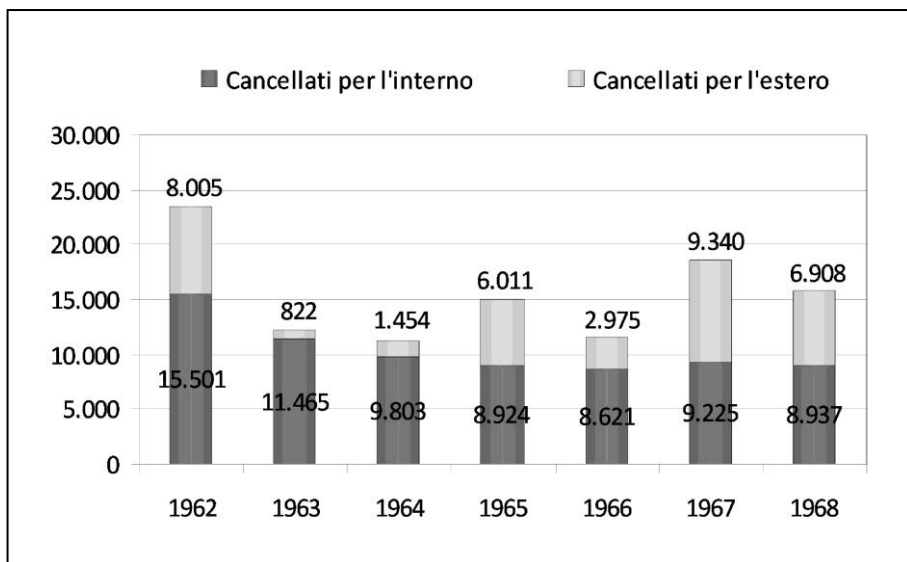
Notably, from 1952 to 1955 the migratory balance kept getting worse, until the two alarming peaks of 1956 (-10,029 units) and 1957 (-10,198). These negative values then decreased until 1963, then picked up again, with two new peaks, one in 1965 (-8,400 units) and an even higher one in 1967 (-10,713), separated by a year of anomalous recovery. After this there were signs of improvement, with the exception of 1971. Beginning in 1972 the negative values became much lower. Those were the years when Italy was turning from an emigration into an immigration country.

If we focus on the 1962-68 interval—which was characterized by strong fluctuations and included the year with the highest loss—we will notice a remarkable difference in inner versus foreign migration. The data, which are drawn from the *Annuari di statistiche demografiche* (Repubblica Italiana – Istituto Centrale di Statistica), show first of all a strong domestic orientation. Of the 107,991 Molisans who left the region in those years, more than two thirds (72,476) were headed for other locations in Italy. Each year, however, had its own peculiarities (Figure 3).

- in 1962 there were 23,506 residence office deregistrations, 15,501 of emigrants headed for domestic destinations, 8,005 of emigrants headed abroad (34.1% of the total);
- in 1963 there were 12,287 deregistrations, 11,465 of emigrants headed for domestic destinations, and just 822 of emigrants headed abroad (6.7%);
- in 1964 there were 11,257 deregistrations, 9,803 of emigrants headed for domestic destinations and 1,454 of emigrants headed abroad (12.9%);
- in 1965 there were 14,935 deregistrations, 8,924 of emigrants headed for domestic destinations, 6,011 of emigrants headed abroad (40.2%);
- in 1966 there were 11,596 deregistrations, 8,261 of emigrants headed for domestic destinations, and 2,975 of emigrants headed abroad (25.7%);
- in 1967 there were 18,565 deregistrations, equally distributed between 9,225 headed for destinations in Italy and 9,340 for destinations abroad (50.3%);
- in 1968 there were 14,935 deregistrations, 8,294 of emigrants headed for domestic destinations and 6,908 of emigrants headed abroad (43.6%).

The percentages of residence office deregistrations for emigration abroad thus oscillated significantly from year to year. The lowest point, far below the average of the time, was reached in 1963, the highest, slightly more than half of the total, in 1967, when it contributed decisively to the maximum negative peak in the migratory balance.

Figure 3 – Residence office deregistrations of emigrants headed for domestic destinations and abroad in Molise between 1962 and 1968.



Source: Elaboration on data of Repubblica Italiana – Istituto Centrale di Statistica, various years.

## 2. The principal destinations in the 1962-68 interval and socioeconomic conditions in Molise

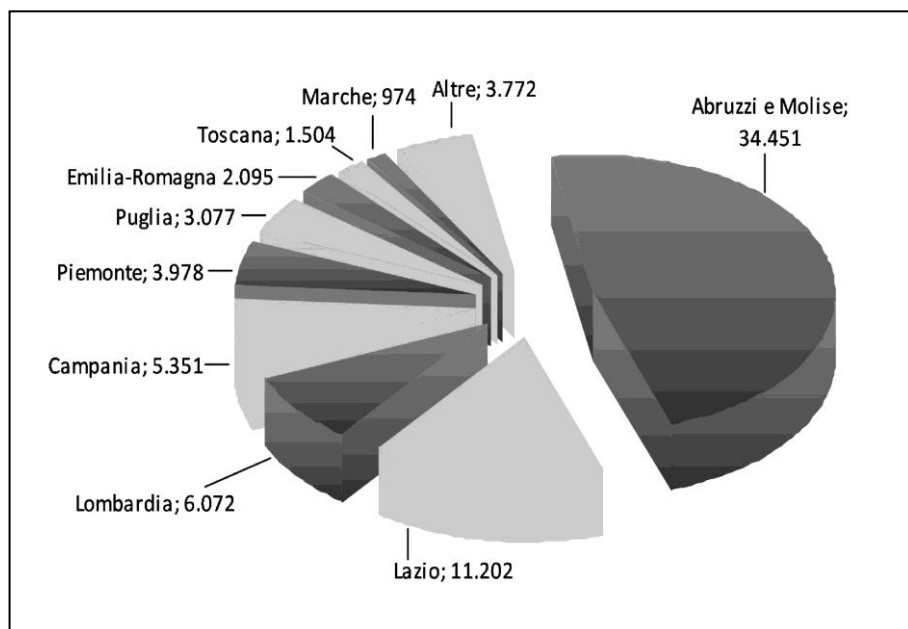
To provide detailed breakdowns revealing the main destinations of Molisan emigration in Italy and abroad, I have processed and analyzed data relative to the 1962-68 period with the highest degree of disaggregation provided in official statistics.

As regards emigration within Italy (Figure 4), of the 72,476 residence office deregistrations, 34,451 (equal to 47.5%) moved within the region, prevalently to the regional capital of Campobasso or the coastal area, and to Abruzzo, which formed a single administrative region with Molise (Abruzzi and Molise)<sup>8</sup> until Molise became its own region in 1963.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Abruzzo accounts, on average, for 15-20% of the total.

<sup>9</sup> As to the province of Isernia, it was established in 1970.

Figure 4 – Distribution of residence office deregistrations of emigrants headed to other locations in Italy in the 1962-68 period.



Source: Elaboration on data of Repubblica Italiana – Istituto Centrale di Statistica, various years.

Among the other regions, Lazio was an especially important destination, drawing 11,202 Molisans (15.5% of deregistrations), especially because of Rome's role as a "magnet."

Much further behind we find Lombardy—which attracted 6,072 Molisans (8.4%), drawn by the business and employment opportunities offered by Milan and the towns in its hinterland—and Campania, whose nearness mainly accounted for its attractiveness; the latter region drew 5,351 Molisans (7.4%).

Other prominent destinations included Piemonte (3,978; 5.5%) and Puglia (3,077; 4.2%), for similar reasons as the above regions, and, in lesser measure, Emilia-Romagna (2,095; 2.9%), Tuscany (1,504; 2.1%) and Marche (974; 1.3%).

However, while during the years under examination (Table 1) Latium steadily held first place, from year to year Lombardy and Campania and, less frequently, Piemonte and Puglia vied, respectively, for second and third, and for fourth and fifth place.

Table 1 – Deregistrations of movers to domestic destinations in Molise from 1962 to 1968.

| REGION                | 1962         | 1963         | 1964         | 1965         | 1966         | 1967         | 1968         | TOTAL 1962-68 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Piemonte              | 722          | 779          | 647          | 334          | 385          | 614          | 497          | 3.978         |
| Valle d'Aosta         | 4            | 6            | 2            | 1            | 4            | 6            | 11           | 34            |
| Liguria               | 237          | 111          | 112          | 66           | 108          | 65           | 73           | 772           |
| Lombardy              | 1,292        | 1,165        | 927          | 649          | 588          | 657          | 794          | 3.617         |
| Veneto                | 64           | 40           | 29           | 38           | 14           | 12           | 34           | 231           |
| Trentino-Alto Adige   | 113          | 73           | 107          | 106          | 99           | 65           | 88           | 651           |
| Friuli-Venezia Giulia | 35           | 53           | 41           | 34           | 52           | 50           | 31           | 296           |
| Emilia-Romagna        | 392          | 322          | 349          | 200          | 223          | 289          | 320          | 2.095         |
| Marche                | 228          | 125          | 163          | 99           | 92           | 141          | 126          | 974           |
| Tuscany               | 314          | 274          | 148          | 205          | 151          | 180          | 232          | 1.504         |
| Umbria                | 71           | 34           | 25           | 31           | 18           | 30           | 38           | 247           |
| Lazio                 | 1,898        | 2,416        | 1,739        | 1,344        | 1,229        | 1,315        | 1,261        | 11            |
| Campania              | 896          | 852          | 719          | 701          | 707          | 719          | 757          | 5.351         |
| Abruzzo and Molise    | 8,360        | 4,617        | 4,134        | 4,489        | 4,352        | 4,463        | 4,036        | 34            |
| Puglia                | 644          | 426          | 423          | 401          | 385          | 385          | 413          | 3.077         |
| Basilicata            | 38           | 28           | 35           | 39           | 51           | 40           | 53           | 284           |
| Calabria              | 76           | 46           | 84           | 57           | 59           | 71           | 53           | 446           |
| Sicily                | 78           | 68           | 98           | 88           | 89           | 97           | 67           | 585           |
| Sardinia              | 39           | 30           | 21           | 42           | 15           | 26           | 53           | 226           |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>3.963</b> | <b>3.275</b> | <b>3.936</b> | <b>3.097</b> | <b>3.046</b> | <b>3.453</b> | <b>3.645</b> | <b>24.415</b> |

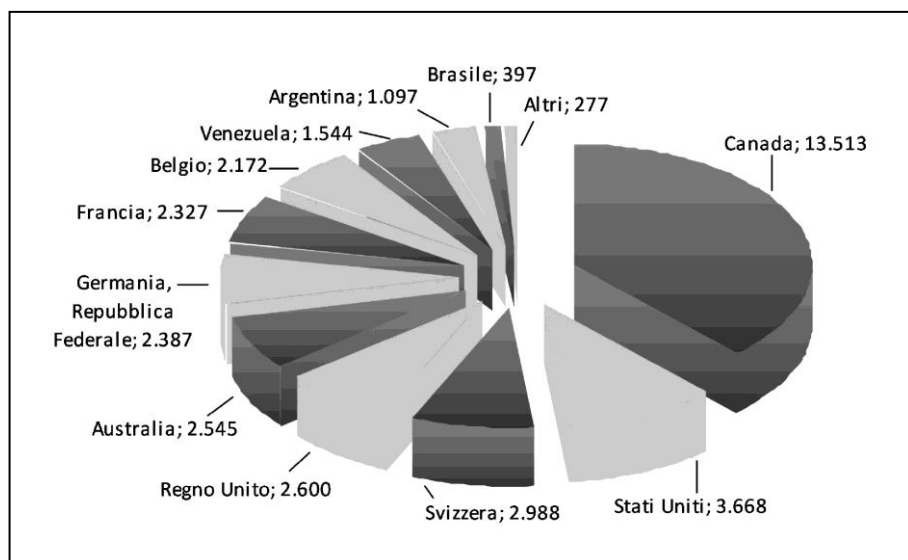
Source: Repubblica Italiana – Istituto Centrale di Statistica, various years.

As regards foreign-bound emigration (Figure 5), the country that attracted most Molisan immigration—13,513, or 38%, out of 35,515—was Canada:

Canada was for the Molisans, during the twenty-five years that followed the second world war, what the United States had been during the “Great Emigration.” From the Fifties onward, it incarnated the myth of “Mereca bbona,” which had such a lure not only on smallholders and craftsmen—who

tumultuously and irreversibly abandoned the rural towns of the region—but also on many who, having already experienced migration to other European countries or Latin America, now headed for this North American destination.<sup>10</sup>

Figure 5 – Distribution of deregistrations of Molisan emigrants headed abroad in the 1962-68 period.



Source: Repubblica Italiana – Istituto Centrale di Statistica, various years.

3,668 Molisans (10.3%) went to the United States, which remained the next favorite destination in spite of its introduction of restrictive policies and a number of other measures aimed at increasing controls and barriers. Past memories of the United States as “a torrential exit route from social deprivation” and “a special case in the historiography of Italian migrations”<sup>11</sup>—due to the magnitude and speed of the process—were thus still alive in the collective imaginary of emigrants and continued to fuel significant flows.

At the third place was a European country, Switzerland, where 2,988 Molisans (8.4%) are reported. These emigrants opted for a closer destination to avoid almost total eradication. Further factors in this decision were the high wages offered and the demand for labor in several sectors, mostly in the construction industry, that were less risky than others.

<sup>10</sup> Norberto Lombardi, *Il Molise fuori dal Molise*, in G. Massullo (ed.), *Storia del Molise*, cit., p. 615.

<sup>11</sup> Ivi, pp. 553-554.



Similar numbers are recorded for the United Kingdom (2,600, or 7.3%), where many Molisans found employment in factories or construction or reconstruction companies, and Australia (2,545, or 7.2%), which had planned a massive inflow of immigrants to accelerate its urban and economic takeoff and since 1952 had entered into a bilateral treaty with Italy to try to increase the number of entries.

In the following positions we find three more European countries: the Federal Republic of Germany (2,387 immigrants, or 6.7%), which seemed to offer interesting income opportunities, France (2,327 or 6.6%)—a preferred destination ever since the time of the great exodus, and Belgium (2,172 or 6.1%). France and Belgium offered a great number of jobs, although often hazardous ones such as in mines.

Finally, there are the cases of Venezuela (1,544 or 4.3%)—which for several years in the second postwar period witnessed significant inflows of immigrants in connection with demand in the sector of extraction, principally of petrol—and Argentina (1,097 or 3.1%), a well-established destination where—partly thanks to the bilateral agreement of 1947—significant migratory chains were once again set into motion. In the latter country, there are still many associations of Molisans holding on to their identity and the traditions of their homeland. In both Venezuela and Argentina, as in Brazil, the numbers of Molisan immigrants later declined following the crisis of these countries' political, economic and financial systems, which failed to meet expectations.

The trends in the 1962-68 period were the following (Table 2):

- Canada uninterruptedly and firmly retained its first place;
- the United States always placed between second and fourth;
- Switzerland was neglected by immigrants for the first four years of the period under scrutiny, to leap forward to the second place for the remaining three years;
- trends were oscillating in the United Kingdom and Australia;
- the importance of the Federal Republic of Germany increased in the last three years of the period;
- France, the second foreign destination in 1964, on several years held the sixth place;
- after holding the second place in 1962, Belgium became less attractive to immigrants;
- Venezuela and Argentina never went above fifth place, and Brazil often held the last place among these principal destinations.

Table 2 – Deregistrations of emigrants headed abroad from Molise between 1962 and 1968.

| Country                          | 1962         | 1963       | 1964         | 1965         | 1966         | 1967         | 1968         | TOTAL 1962-68 |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Netherlands                      | 3            | 0          | 2            | 3            | 10           | 10           | 11           | 39            |
| Germania, Repubblica Federale    | 91           | 7          | 18           | 193          | 279          | 911          | 888          | 2.387         |
| Belgium                          | 857          | 36         | 96           | 305          | 80           | 415          | 383          | 2.172         |
| Luxemburg                        | 0            | 0          | 0            | 6            | 5            | 9            | 6            | 26            |
| France                           | 577          | 30         | 338          | 355          | 154          | 565          | 308          | 2.327         |
| United Kingdom                   | 809          | 14         | 136          | 419          | 246          | 399          | 577          | 2.600         |
| Switzerland                      | 129          | 10         | 25           | 183          | 375          | 1,276        | 990          | 1.713         |
| Austria                          | 0            | 0          | 0            | 1            | 0            | 7            | 0            | 8             |
| Greece                           | 1            | 0          | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 1             |
| Other European countries         | 1            | 0          | 0            | 2            | 1            | 8            | 2            | 14            |
| <i>European countries, total</i> | <i>2.468</i> | <i>97</i>  | <i>615</i>   | <i>1.467</i> | <i>1.150</i> | <i>2.325</i> | <i>3.165</i> | <i>11.287</i> |
| <i>African countries, total</i>  | <i>18</i>    | <i>3</i>   | <i>0</i>     | <i>11</i>    | <i>7</i>     | <i>26</i>    | <i>9</i>     | <i>74</i>     |
| Canada                           | 2,843        | 452        | 572          | 2,434        | 1,180        | 3,705        | 2,327        | 1.036         |
| United States                    | 806          | 110        | 115          | 762          | 352          | 943          | 580          | 3.668         |
| Venezuela                        | 441          | 29         | 25           | 402          | 124          | 282          | 241          | 1.544         |
| Brazil                           | 282          | 8          | 2            | 58           | 6            | 18           | 23           | 397           |
| Argentina                        | 656          | 13         | 16           | 116          | 32           | 114          | 150          | 1.097         |
| Other American countries         | 60           | 4          | 0            | 8            | 5            | 17           | 1            | 95            |
| <i>American countries, total</i> | <i>2.248</i> | <i>616</i> | <i>730</i>   | <i>1.348</i> | <i>520</i>   | <i>1.378</i> | <i>997</i>   | <i>7.837</i>  |
| <i>Asiatic countries, total</i>  | <i>0</i>     | <i>0</i>   | <i>0</i>     | <i>0</i>     | <i>0</i>     | <i>0</i>     | <i>0</i>     | <i>0</i>      |
| Australia                        | 431          | 106        | 107          | 752          | 118          | 619          | 412          | 2.545         |
| Other countries in Oceania       | 0            | 0          | 2            | 1            | 1            | 16           | 0            | 20            |
| <i>Oceania, total</i>            | <i>431</i>   | <i>106</i> | <i>109</i>   | <i>753</i>   | <i>119</i>   | <i>635</i>   | <i>412</i>   | <i>2.565</i>  |
| <b>All countries, total</b>      | <b>5.165</b> | <b>822</b> | <b>1.454</b> | <b>3.579</b> | <b>1.796</b> | <b>4.364</b> | <b>4.583</b> | <b>21.763</b> |

Source: Elaboration on data of Repubblica Italiana – Istituto Centrale di Statistica, various years.

Thus, at the end of the Sixties, the demographic structure of Molise was still being undermined by considerable migratory outflows—although temporary emigration was on the increase, partly thanks to the institution of the ECM in 1957). The socio-economic conditions of the region were therefore substandard, in both the primary and the secondary sector.

In agriculture, the “degree of mechanization as related to cultivable surface remained much lower not just than the national average, but also than that of the continental South,” and the sector’s traditional, deleterious structural characteristics still endured:

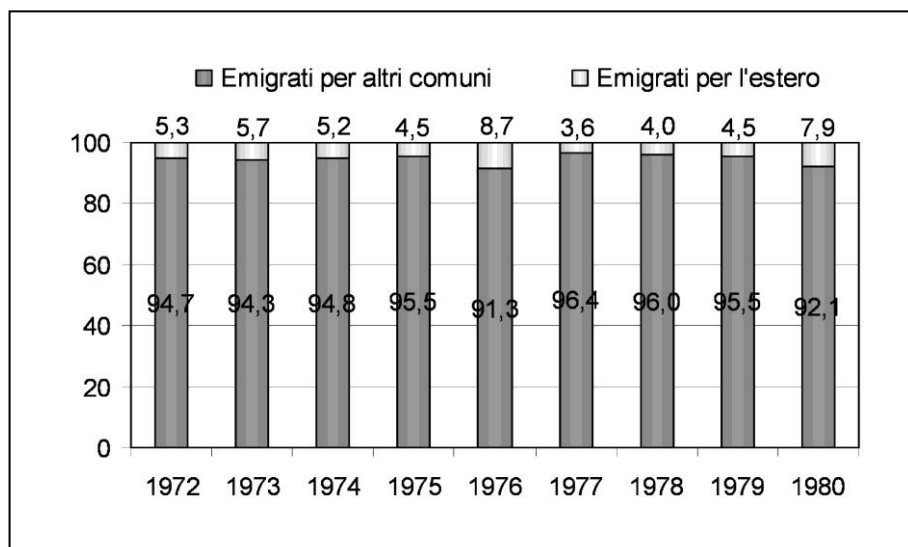
Property fragmentation, scarce technical knowledge, an absence of agroalimentary food processing supply chains, a spatial dichotomy in the development of the region [...] now made even more serious by the concentration of what little innovation had been introduced in small and limited areas of the hills of the littoral. In the secondary sector, the industrial product remained small in absolute terms, and its moderate increase [...] occurred without bringing any significant positive structural changes and in the absolute absence of involvement of companies from outside the region. All these are evident signs of the virtual inexistence of a regional industrial structure and of a broad widening of the gap between local and national development.<sup>12</sup>

### *3. The trends of the 1972-80 period and the socioeconomic conditions of Molise*

From 1972 onward, Molise entered a new phase in its demographic history. The migratory balance began to stabilize at negative values by a few hundreds, or less than 1%. Furthermore, according to civil registry statistics provided by Istat, between 1972 and 1980 the percentage of deregistrations of emigrants headed for other towns in Italy out of total deregistrations (Figure 6) ranged from 91.3% in 1976 and 96.4% in 1977. Thus, during these years emigration became an almost exclusively national phenomenon, potentially accentuating the temporary character that emigration had taken on during the Sixties (although even domestic migrations very often became permanent).

<sup>12</sup> G. Massullo, *Dalla periferia alla periferia. L'economia nel Novecento*, cit., pp. 491-492; 494-495.

Figure 6 – Percentages of emigrants headed for other towns in Italy and abroad in Molise between 1972 and 1980.



Source: ISTAT data.

As far as its economic effects are concerned, this reduction of the negative migratory balance went hand in hand with tangible signs of improvement in development processes, guided by some industries capable of guaranteeing certain standards of production and favored by a growth, however limited, in the size of farming businesses in specific areas. These improvements, however, were only embryonic. A new general planning would have been called for to favor a real step forward towards a more modern, competitive and collaborative production system. Instead, many of the typical problems of these realities endured, slowing down processes that would have allowed a reduction of the productive gap with the strong areas of the country, and could have laid a solid foundation for the discouraging of emigration.<sup>13</sup>

First of all, the agricultural sector still had an excessive role within the economy of the region, and its organization was not such as to ensure suitable levels of productivity and yields. Moreover, the inappropriate use of heavy equipment that was unsuited to the local geomorphological conditions caused a widespread propensity to landslides. Monocultures, prevalently of cereals, created disquieting hazard conditions as a consequence of overuse of land and possibly years of scarce harvests.

<sup>13</sup> Ivi, pp. 498-592.

Furthermore, the average size of industries remained too small and, in general, there was a lack of coordinated and systematically programmed initiatives capable of making the system more dynamic and propulsive.

As to the tertiary sector, it had not witnessed the hoped for significant progress. Most of those employed in this sector continued to find work in public administrations and base services, whereas there was a serious lack of high-level services and services for the industry, which would have been essential to boost synergic processes and find new approaches.

Having experienced for a long time a thinning out of the ranks of the younger age groups, and having become used to see emigration, in a way, as a painful solution to domestic problems, in the Seventies Molise continued to struggle with hard to overcome structural-organizational economic problems.

Even today many Molisan towns are lagging far behind in their economic development,<sup>14</sup> partly due to the massive migratory outflows that followed one another in the course of time. Thus, in Molise emigration was so large compared to population that it had pernicious effects, not only in sentimental and emotional terms for those who were directly involved, but also in socio-demographic and economic terms for the whole region. And even though today the migratory balance is usually always negative (for example from 2002 to 2010, with the sole exception of 2005),<sup>15</sup> we cannot abandon another kind of emigration to its own devices. The fact that it is more silent and less abundant does not make it any less important or alarming. I am speaking of the emigration of the hundreds of young high school and university graduates [...] who leave Molise every year. It has been rightly observed that this is a whole other kind of emigration, a different story. But its impact on the society of the region is no less decisive and momentous.<sup>16</sup>

Molisan society has already more than paid its dues. It must find within itself the means and ways to revitalize its productive fabric.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Rosa Maria Fanelli, *La "similarità" territoriale dei comuni molisani*, «Geografia», 2006, 1-2, pp. 13-22; A. Ciaschi, C. Pesaresi, *La ricchezza del Molise. Potenzialità e prospettive di una montagna da scoprire*, cit., pp. 153-155.

<sup>15</sup> On this subject, see Istat, *Bilancio Demografico e popolazione residente per sesso al 31 dicembre*, <http://demo.istat.it>.

<sup>16</sup> N. Lombardi, *Il Molise fuori dal Molise*, cit., p. 640.

<sup>17</sup> On some possibilities for development, see, besides the cited essay by Ciaschi, C. Pesaresi, *La ricchezza del Molise. Potenzialità e prospettive di una montagna da scoprire*, Cristiano Pesaresi, *Il Molise: una regione in crisi demografica. Alcune proposte di sviluppo turistico*, in Gino De Vecchis, *Un futuro possibile per la montagna italiana*, Kappa, Roma 2004, pp. 157-191; Maria Prezioso, *Molise. Viaggio in un ambiente dimenticato*, Gangemi, Roma 1995; Emilia Sarno, *L'associazionismo molisano e la valorizzazione dell'identità regionale*, in Atti 48° Convegno Nazionale AIIG (Campobasso, 2-5 settembre 2005), Art Decò - Digital Printing, Campobasso 2006, pp. 81-93.