

The project undertaken was born out of the AHRC funded workshop series. 'Mobility and Identity Formation: An interdisciplinary approach to the Italian case.' The workshop series arose from research within the department of Italian at Warwick University established in 2001. It consisted of four half-day workshops and a closing two-day colloquium, held between November 2006, and June 2007. The focus of the programme was to bring together scholars and address the 'Italian case' of migration. The project website was created in association with the AHRC funded workshop, and financed by a Warwick undergraduate research scholarship. It aimed to provide an informative resource for academic and non-academic researchers interested in migration studies and the Italian context.

MIGRATION RESOURCES

Project: To design a web-based resource bank in order to draw together ongoing research in the area of Italian Migration Studies. To be developed in parallel with the AHRC funded workshop series 'Mobility and Identity Formation : An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Italian Case.'

Italian Department:

An online open access resource bank for Italian migration studies.

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INTRODUCTION:

Italy has traditionally been a country of emigration. For centuries Italians have moved abroad in search of wealth and riches and to escape the poverty of their homeland. Emigration began in the 1870's during which the majority of emigrants held seasonal positions in European countries such as Germany, Switzerland and France. By the end of the 19th century, however, the conditions of emigration had changed. Temporary seasonal workers established more permanent roots in their country of immigration. It was from this point onwards that mass emigration to the United States and Latin America began.

However, in the last thirty years migratory tendencies have changed dramatically. This transformation began in 1973 in which the number of Italians returning to Italy exceeded the number of those leaving their homeland. At the same time the levels of foreign nationals in Italy began to increase. There are many elements which contributed to these migratory changes, for example, the rapid growth of the Italian economy, the existence of a large Italian black market, the increase in the forces of globalisation and the crack down on immigration in Northern Europe.

Today the number of legal foreign immigrants in Italy is estimated by ISTAT at 2.938.922 . The majority come from Eastern European countries such as Romania and Albania and Northern African countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, and Nigeria.

Then...



Now...



The aim of the project was to collect and organise information on the subject of migration by creating a web-resource within the Italian Department. The project aimed to cater for the needs of a wide-ranging target audience; from the general public to students, and professionals.

PROJECT OVERVIEW:



First we delegated jobs and began collating data.



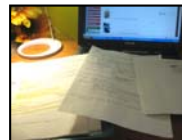
Then we began organising the layout of the website



Then we began organising the layout of the website



Next we began inputting data into the website

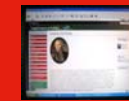
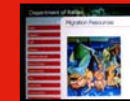


We added links and other useful and relevant websites.



Finally just a few finishing touches were left, managing logos and page layout.

CONCLUSION:



Overall both the planning and implementation of the project were both very successful despite the geographical constraints. The initial data collation and allocation of tasks was organised in person, however, online communication and the online status of the website meant that the work was easily accessible for all those involved in the project and keeping in contact to provide help, comments or queries was facilitated by the internet.

The problems encountered on the site were addressed individually and resolved through group discussion. These problems included, the formatting and layout of the site, for example the constraints and restrictions of computer formatting and random anomalies of layout and presentation, through discussion with peers and contact with IT services these problems were resolved and the site was presented to a high standard. It was equally paramount to address the legal issues of plagiarism rights. It was necessary to obtain consent for the usage of images and information protected by copyright laws, permission was obtained directly from their sources who were contacted by letter and to whom we are most grateful.

There is much potential for the expansion and improvement of the site which given more time or funding could include some of the following options. The site could be adapted as a bilingual resource offering users the opportunity to use the resource in both English and Italian. This would therefore make the site more accessible to non-English speaking Italians interested in the project. The addition of a forum page would also be a useful as it would allow users a resource for questions, advice and comments which they may want to discuss with other users.

The project enabled the students to develop a wide range of both research skills and transferable skills, as well as a deeper knowledge of contemporary Italian culture. Research skills included gathering information and the ability to handle large amounts of data from a wide range of sources. Transferable skills ranged from IT skills and the use of web publishing programmes such as Microsoft SiteBuilder to time management and oral presentation skills. There was also the possibility to practise foreign language skills when collating the data and a vast array of organisation, communication and design skills were also involved. It was necessary to be able to work both independently and as part of a team during the project. A certain level of commitment was required to see this project through and at times perseverance and problem-solving skills were also necessary to keep the project coordinated and moving forward when those involved were scattered across Europe during the summer holidays. The satisfaction however at seeing a project of this nature through from start to finish has been immense.

