

# **The Demographic Malaise in the South of Italy: a Short Analysis of the Last Census**

*Il malessere demografico nel meridione d'Italia: un quadro sintetico all'ultimo censimento*

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## **1. Introduction**

The aim of this paper is to present a socio-demographic analysis of 2557 municipalities in the south of Italy about the demographic malaise as a consequence of the change in population structure. The multivariate analysis allows to build some typologies of southern municipalities as regards some indicators constructed using the last census information.

## **2. The characteristics of demographic malaise in the South of Italy**

The principal component analysis shows the existence of three factors which explain the 64% of the total variability. The first factor is defined as “age structure and dynamic population”, the second one is “work and instruction” and the third dimension is defined “mobility and occupation”. According to this application, the cluster analysis carries out nine typologies of municipalities. Cluster 1 “the oldest municipalities with a strong malaise”: with a natural growth rate<sup>1</sup> (NGR) over the level of -10‰ and an elevated ageing level. However, the migration movement is higher than the Southern average and the unemployment rate is lower than the general one (the 12% against the 20%). They are working municipalities mainly located in Abruzzo and Molise. Cluster 2 “rural municipalities, ageing with an intense malaise”: the class is made up of 374 municipalities characterised by an intense malaise (NGR between -5 and -10‰), with around the 35% of over sixty years old and a percentage of people, over the 24%, employed in agriculture. Cluster 3 “unemployed municipalities with a high emigration”: it deals with 453 municipalities mainly located in Calabria, Sicily and Sardinia with a moderate malaise (NGR between -2 and -5‰), a high rate of unemployment and a negative migratory growth rate (-6.8% against -3.2%). Cluster 4 “moderate malaise municipalities”: is composed by 389 municipalities mainly located in Abruzzo and Campania. The main feature is a negative natural and migratory growth rate, but a high proportion of women employed. Cluster 5 “municipalities with zero population growth”: with 521 young municipalities, educated but with unemployment problems. It includes the most important Sicilian municipalities and the town of Naples. Cluster 6

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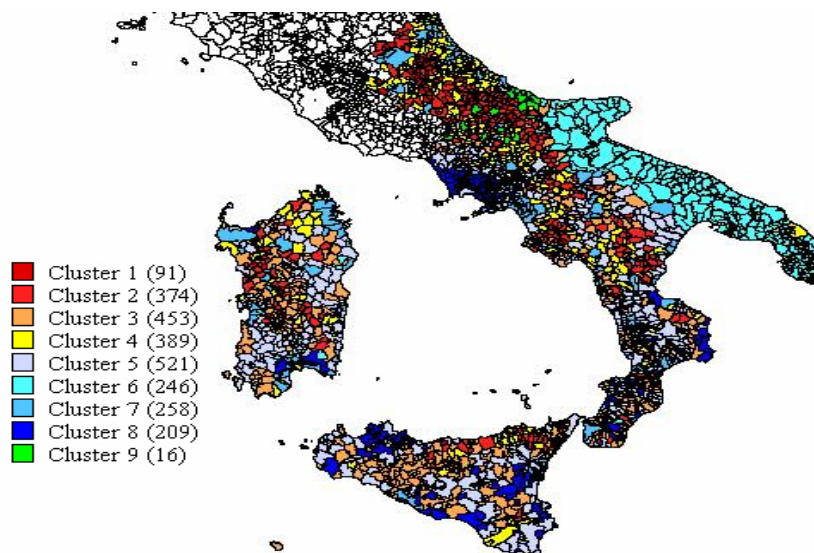
<sup>1</sup> For an empirical classification of natural growth rate according to Golini *et al.* (2000).

“young municipalities with a moderate vitality”: consists of 246 municipalities located in Puglia, with a moderate vitality (NGR between +2 and +5%). Cluster 7 “young and attractive working conditions municipalities”: the group includes 258 municipalities with a moderate vitality, spread across the area (including L'Aquila, Catanzaro, Reggio Calabria, Vibo Valentia, Caserta, Benevento, Avellino, Salerno, Potenza, Matera, Sassari, Nuoro, Oristano). Cluster 8 “municipalities of educated but unemployed males”: 209 municipalities mainly located in Campania and Sicily with an intense vitality (NGR over 5%). The structural age is very young and there is also a high percentage of educated but unemployed males. Cluster 9 “educated and working women”: it includes 16 municipalities in Molise (including Isernia and Campobasso), whose economic structure is characterized by working women, educated and employed in the primary and secondary sectors.

### 3. Conclusions

The south of Italy presents a heterogeneous situation. The analysis of the data emphasises that the municipalities with strong malaise are located in Abruzzo and Molise, although it deals with working attraction municipalities since the economic structure is mainly industrialised. The most damaged cluster belong to many Calabrian and Sardinian municipalities, because they have passed the threshold of intense malaise and the average rate of emigration and unemployment is higher than the average of the southern values. On the contrary, the most vital area is mainly composed by the municipalities of Puglia and Campania (Figure 1).

**Figure 1:** *The demographic malaise in the south of Italy*



### References

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