

Italian views on migrants distorted by fake news





We will talk of fake news about migrants in Italy.

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Why the Italians have a distorted perception of migration?



A study by Italian sociologist Massimo Introvigne has brought to light the extent to which Italians have a distorted perception of migration. The expert says that this trend is fostered by fake news and the 'demonization' of little-known religious groups.





Italians mistakenly think that there are double the number of migrants than are actually present in the country and that most are Muslim, according to a study presented at the Italian Chamber of Deputies by Italian sociologist Massimo Introvigne. "The study tests the notion of 'perceived migration'," he said, adding, "Just as there is a real temperature and a perceived one, there is real migration and one that we build in the social imagination."

**Fake news as driving force
behind distorted perceptions**



This distorted perception of the migration phenomenon has "significant social and political consequences," and is fostered by "a massive phenomenon of fake news that provides wrong information on migrants," the sociologist said.





The study shows that this fake news "demonizes other categories and creates dangerous, intolerant perceptions. Among the groups negatively affected by these distorted perceptions are the so-called "sects," which refer to around one hundred new religious movements. Of these, only around ten have been accused of committing crimes. Everything is thrown together and laws are called for which would affect all of them, Introvigne elaborated.

This mechanism does not only hit new religious movements, he noted. "In certain countries, this affects religions that are considered 'foreign;' which are imagined as plotting against the nation," he added. The Italian sociologist cited Russia as an example of this. The country is planning to ban Christian group Jehovah's Witnesses soon. Similar plans are underway in Ukraine, which, according to Ukrainian lawyer Olga Panchenko, labels minority groups as "sects" even if they are not religious.





**Thank you
for the attention!**

The Italian team