**Theme 3**

**Discrimination**

A food journalist and chef who provided recipes for the Italian version of Ready Steady Cook has quit the show, claiming the public broadcaster, Rai, had told him to drop foreign recipes.

Vittorio Castellani, also known as Chef Kumalé, says Rai told him in a telephone call last week that his role had been temporarily put on hold because producers of the programme, hosted by Elena Isoardi, the girlfriend of Italy’s far-right deputy prime minister, Matteo Salvini, wanted to give more space to “multi-regional” Italian rather than “multicultural” food.

“They told me my episode was being suspended, to be reinstated later, because viewers don’t like foreign food recipes,” Castellani said.

**Immigration**

At the same time every afternoon, while seated on the same bench, my father-in-law, Rosario Buttaci, silently watches John Babalola Wale and his family climb the steep walkway in the village of Sutera that leads from Piazza Europa to the old Arab quarter of Rabato.

In Rosario’s day, the “foreigner” who came to this picturesque Sicilian village was likely to be from Palermo, 100km away, or nearby Agrigento. But Wale, 35, is from Ekiti state in Nigeria, and he reached Sutera four months ago after a trek covering 6,000km. He lives with his wife and a son, like dozens of other African people seeking asylum who have come from another continent with their families to live here.

The number of immigrants in Italy is increasing annually. The vast majority come from eastern Europe, especially from countries such as Albania and Romania. One of the reasons why they emigrate is to find work and a better life than they would have had in their own country. Many have settled in the north where industries are happy to employ them because of the shortage of local labour. Unfortunately they are often exploited as they are prepared to earn less and work longer hours.

Today, unrest across the Middle East and Africa has caused thousands to seek asylum in Italy, but this pursuit has become deadly. Many attempt the journey across the Mediterranean Sea in small boats that often capsize.

However, discrimination against immigrants is not necessarily a problem emerging from working members of the older generation. “Unlike what you might think though, young Italians are the ones having trouble accepting immigrants and praising diversity,” said Centamore.

**IMMIGRATION**

1. Last month figures showed the number of gun crimes in London had nearly doubled in the past six months.
2. Hundreds of African immigrants landed on the Italian island of Lampedusa.
3. Demographically, Italy is one of the most rapidly changing countries in Europe.
4. According to the Italian charity group Caritas the percentage of noncitizen residents in the country was greater than Britain’s.
5. Those who have been in this country for 12 years.
6. By the end of the weekend, at least 70 people – most of them migrant workers – had been injured.
7. They are given to stay in Italy for humanitarian reasons.

**Racism and immigration**

“As Italy's foreign-born population has grown, so too has resistance to these new Italians and the idea of Italy as a culturally diverse nation. Many Italians are fearful of immigrants,” said Lum. “Only a portion of these refugees actually remain in Italy, with many preferring to apply for refugee status in other European countries. The recent violent protests on the outskirts of Rome against a refugee shelter for minors shows that a significant number of Italians link immigration to crime, insecurity and incivility.”

**NORD-SOUTH DIVIDE**

Although Italy is a single nation state and a national community, any examination of its internal social characteristics reveals that, beyond the the definition of nationhood, there are many Italies, with some internal differences sufficiently large to generate pressures for political fragmentation. An important driver of these internal differences is contrasts in economic performance.

Now, many say, the divide between north and south -- the curse of Italian unity since the nation was formed in 1870 -- has never been greater. And that split augurs ill for Italy as a whole as it tries to put its financial house in order, seeking to be among the first countries to adopt a common European currency in 1999.

''The problem of the Mezzogiorno is not just an Italian problem but a European problem,'' Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, wrote in a preface to a recent book on Europe's unemployment crisis.

The economic gap between the rich industrialized north and the poor, more agrarian south has widened in recent years. Unemployment in the south as a whole has gone from 18.7 percent in 1993 to 21.4 percent in July 1996, while joblessness in northern Italy at midyear was only about 6.2 percent.