



THE ALBANIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Annual Report on the Presence of Migrants
Executive Summary



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For nearly a decade, the *Direzione Generale dell'immigrazione e delle politiche di integrazione* (General Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies) has aimed to provide a detailed and balanced account of the complex phenomenon of the presence of foreigners in Italy and to do so by setting forth the various distinct aspects of the question while analysing the characteristics noted and also anticipating today's trends. The Directorate does so by means of its *Rapporto nazionale sui migranti nel Mercato del lavoro italiano* (National reports on migrants in the Italian labour market) (tenth edition), the *Rapporti nazionali sulla presenza in Italia delle principali Comunità straniere* (National reports on the main foreign communities in Italy) (ninth edition) and the *Rapporti sulla presenza dei migranti non comunitari nelle 14 città metropolitane italiane* (Reports on the presence of non-EU migrants in the 14 metropolitan cities of Italy) (fifth edition).

The series of national reports on the presence of the main foreign communities aims to investigate and study in depth the presence on Italian soil of the more numerically significant non-EU nationals: Moroccans, Albanians, Chinese, Ukrainians, Indians, Filipinos, Bangladeshis, Egyptians, Pakistanis, Moldovans, Nigerians, the Senegalese, Sri Lankans, Tunisians, Peruvians and Ecuadorians.

For each grouping, the main features from the socio-demographic and employment dimensions are considered, alongside presence of minors and their education, occupational integration and welfare policies. Each report starts with comparison among the various communities. The data used for the analysis relate to periods prior to the spread of the SARS-COV-2 virus. Therefore, this edition of the reports does not provide for an overview of the effects of the pandemic crisis on the social and labour integration of migrants.

Again, this year we duly acknowledge the contributions of institutions and bodies that have provided information in their possession. These entities include the Italian National Institute of Statistics; the General statistical and actuarial coordination body of INPS (National Social Security Institute); the Ministry of Education, University and Research; the Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture; the CeSPI (Centre for Politics and International Studies); the trade unions CGIL, CISL, UIL and UGL; and the *Divisione Studi e Ricerca* (Study and Research Division) of ANPAL Servizi.

The full series of *Rapporti Comunità* (Community reports), editions 2012 - 2020, can be accessed – in Italian and in the main foreign languages – in the section “Studi e statistiche” (Studies and Statistics) on the institutional website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – www.lavoro.gov.it and on the institutional portal www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it. These addresses also provide access to a statistical annex providing information that supplements the reports or that, within a comparative framework among the main national communities considered, enables in-depth study of the data analysed.

Within the ambit of the projects, *Assistenza tecnica per il Supporto alla governance integrata delle politiche migratorie tra lavoro e integrazione sociale* (PR.Au.D. - Protezione, Autonomia, Dignità dal lavoro) and *Supporto nelle politiche per l'immigrazione e di cooperazione bilaterale con i Paesi di origine*, ANPAL Servizi has drawn up and translated the 2020 edition of its *Rapporti nazionali sulle principali Comunità straniere* (National reports on the main foreign communities) – analytic reports provided in summary form.

Executive Summary



416,703
Legally residing Albanian citizens
Ranking 2nd for number of presences

113,979 “new Italians” in 2019 (22.8% are Albanians)



49% women

51% men

105,079
Minors under the age of 18
1,267 unaccompanied minors

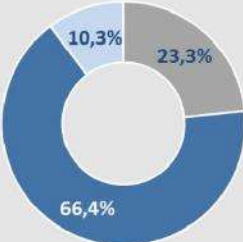


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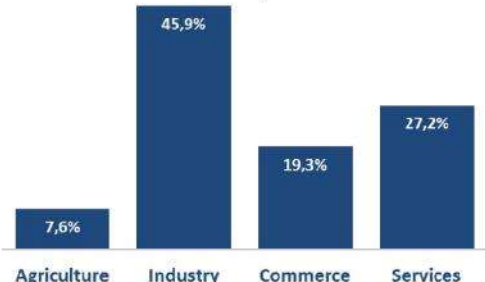
- 20.5%** Lombardia
- 14.4%** Toscana
- 13%** Emilia-Romagna

68.8%
 Long-term residents


31.2% Short-term permits



- Work
- Family
- Other reasons



56.2% employment rate
72.4% male 38.6% female

28.2% 
 Construction employed workers

50% skilled manual workers



3rd position in sole proprietorship ranking (8.7%)

33,294 sole proprietors (+2.8%)
12.1% Albanian female sole proprietors (+7.7%)

68% sole proprietorship in the **Construction** sector

Demographic characteristics

416,703 Albanian citizens are holders of a residence permit valid as on **1 January 2020**, accounting for 11.5% of the non-EU citizens in Italy.

The Albanian community, which has for some years now ranked second for number of legally residing members, is one of the most stable foreign communities, this also being due to its long track record of migration to Italy. Albanians were among the first migrants to attract the attention of observers of migration flows, in the early 1990s in the wake of the socio-political changes in Albania when outflows started to become significantly large.

Various indicators underscore the degree of stability of presence of Albanians. Socio-demographically speaking, some aspects point to stable settling on the part of this community:

- a basic **gender balance** (women make up 49.1% of this community and men 50.9%); -
- a high **quotient of minors** (indicating the presence of families). The number of minors stands at more than 105,000. Furthermore, this community presents a lower mean age than that of non-EU citizens as a whole. Almost ½ of the citizens of Albanian origin are younger than 30 (43.2% of the total).

As to geographic distribution, this community favours Northern Italy, where more than 6 out of 10 Albanian citizens reside. Accordingly, two of the regions with most Albanians are northern: **Lombardia** is the major Region of settlement for this community, with 1/5 of the total number of Albanian citizens. Emilia-Romagna (ranking third for number of Albanian citizens) presents an incidence of 13%. In any case, there is a marked presence in the **Toscana** region, which is the second region in terms of number of Albanians present (59,900, or 14.4% of the total, and more than 6% higher than the level for migrants of non-EU origin as a whole). 12.8% of this community have settled in Southern Italy (a value slightly lower than that for non-EU citizens legally residing in Italy). Notably, the **Puglia** region hosts 5% of this community.

Analysis of residence permits indicates this community's marked progress in the direction of stabilisation. The quotient of long-term residents (holders of residence permits not subject to renewal) stands at 68.8%, as on 1 January 2019 (vs 63.2% of non-EU citizens as a whole). Regarding short-term permits, those issued for **family reunification** reasons prevail, i.e., 2/3 of permits subject to renewal among migrant members of this community (66.4%, vs 46.7% of non-EU citizens). Work permits, on the other hand, account for less than ¼ of the total.

Current trends

For the first time, after years of stable number of presences, a sharp decrease (-2.7%) can be noted in the number of legal residents compared to the previous year. Indeed, the presence of non-EU citizens in Italy decreased by 101,580 units between 1 January 2019 and 1 January 2020. Such decrease concerns all the main foreign communities except for Indian and Bangladeshi communities, which increased by 1.7% and 1.8% respectively. The most significant reductions can be noted in the Nigerian community (-8.2%), which went from ranking eleventh to ranking fourteenth, the Ecuadorian community (-6.2%) and the Chinese community (-5.3%).

Two main opposite factors affect the trends of presences: on the one hand, the new permits issued attesting to an inflow impacting the stock of legally residing members, and, on the other, the granting of citizenship (which latter practice entail a replacement effect in the statistics as those who become Italian citizens are removed from the stock of foreign citizens).

Turning to admissions, 2019 marks a negative record with approx. 177 thousand new residence permits, 26% less vs 2018; this is the most significant reduction recorded since 2012 and the first six months of 2020 seem to consolidate the negative trend, with a further decrease of 57.7% vs the same period of 2019¹.

¹ Istat, *Cittadini non comunitari in Italia*, Statistica Report (Non-EU citizens in Italy, Statistics Report), October 2020.

The reduction concerns all reasons for admissions, and it is particularly relevant for permits ascribable to the request or possession of a form of protection: -57.5%. This is a value ascribable to the sharp reduction of the so-called "unexpected flows", with a sharp decline in the number of migrants landed on the Italian coasts: 11,471 in 2019, i.e., 51% less than 2018 and 90.4% less than 2017².

The growth trend in the quotient of new permits issued for family reunification consolidates, thus reaching 56.9% of admissions in 2019 (vs approx. 51% in 2018), while the percentage relating to the request or possession of a form of protection decreases 15.6% of new permits³ vs 28.8% in 2018. The percentage relating to study reasons (11.5% vs 9.1% in 2018) and work reasons (6.4% vs 6% in 2018) is slightly on the rise. On the other hand, the failure to plan entry flows for job purposes, with the exception of seasonal work, has now led to a sharp decrease in new permits issued for this reason.

With its 21,437 new residence permits – the large majority of which linked to family reunification (63.2%) – the Albanian community ranks first for numbers of admissions. We note, however, a sharp downturn in the number of Albanians present vs the previous year (-2.7%), due also to acquisition of citizenship (which entails a replacement effect in statistics). As a matter of fact, the Albanian community ranks first for citizenships granted: of the 113,979 citizenships granted to non-EU citizens in 2019, 26,033 went to citizens of Albanian origin (a quotient corresponding to 1/5 of the total), also to be ascribed to the stability of this community in Italy. Naturalization is the main reason for granting Italian citizenship to Albanian nationals (54%).

The degree of settlement or entrenchment of the Albanian community in Italy is also evident in the numbers of marriages with Italian citizens. In 2018⁴, 1,507 mixed marriages took place, i.e., 82.3% of the 1,831 marriages where at least one spouse was of Albanian nationality: 892 involve an Italian husband and an Albanian wife, 615 an Albanian husband and an Italian wife.

Minors and educational paths

As noted above, one of the indicators of geographic stabilization of a community is the high presence of families and minors within it. As on 1 January 2020, there were **105,079 Albanian minors**, i.e., 13.2% of the total for non-EU minors. Many are also Albanian children born in Italy: 7,039 in 2018 (14.8% of non-EU children born in 2018). In all, between 2010 and 2018, nearly 77,000 Albanian children were born in Italy.

A highly significant issue about this community concerns the presence of **unaccompanied foreign minors (UFMs)**, since Albania ranks first as country of origin. As on **31 August 2020**, 1,267 minors of Albanian origin were accommodated in ad hoc facilities (more than 1/5 of the number of UFMs accommodated in Italy). There has been a sharp decrease in numbers since 2019 (-16.6%).

Admission of Albanian minors into the Italian schooling circuit remains high. Albania ranks first as country of origin of non-EU students. Indeed, 118,167 students of Albanian origin enrolled for academic year 2019/2020 (17.2% of the non-EU school population as a whole). Compared to the previous year, the students of this community increased by 1.8%. The growth rate was slightly lower than that displayed by non-EU students as a whole (+2.6%). The number of enrolled students increased especially in secondary schools: +4.1% and +3.7% in junior and senior secondary schools, respectively. The incidence of students from this community vs non-EU students as a whole is higher in senior secondary schools, where 17.8% of the enrolled non-EU students are Albanian citizens. At primary schools, the quotient drops to 16.9%. There are also many university students (with its 9,120 students, i.e., 12.1% of non-EU students, Albania ranks first as country of origin of the non-EU academic population).

Among the main non-EU communities, this community ranks first also as regards the number (absolute values) of **NEETs** (i.e., persons aged between 15 and 29 not in employment, education or training). Young NEETs of Albanian citizenship amount to approx. 41,000 (i.e., more than 1/3 of Albanians youngsters in this age bracket, a percentage which reaches 47.8% for females and 21.6% for males).

² http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_31-12-2019.pdf

³ In all likelihood, the reduction in the number of permits linked to the possession of a form of protection is affected by the entry into force of the decree-law no. 113/2018 from 5 October 2018, converted with amendments by Law no. 132/2018, which abolished the residence permit for humanitarian reasons, replacing it, only under certain specific conditions, with some residence permits for "special circumstances".

⁴ Latest reference year.

Work and employment

Thanks also to its migratory seniority, the Albanian community's workers joined important sectors of the Italian economy, such as industry. In particular, as a factor, the marked influence of networks of personal relations led to a significant degree of specialization, channelling Albanian workers towards the *construction sector*, in which the quotient employed stands at 28.2% (vs 8% of non-EU citizens). Jobs in *industry*, in the strict sense, employ 17.7% of the Albanian workforce. These sectors were particularly vulnerable during the most acute phase of the economic hardship, with repercussions on the employment levels of workers from this community. Analysis has revealed that work and employment conditions for the Albanian community in Italy are less encouraging than for the non-EU population as a whole. According to the key labour market indicators, this community presents with a lower quotient of persons employed and higher levels of inactivity and unemployment. **The employment rate** stands at **56.2%** vs 60.1% among non-EU citizens as a whole; the inactivity rate is approx. 4% higher than the mean value, equal to, among Albanian citizens, 33.9%; and the unemployment rate stands at 15.2% (vs 13.8% for the non-EU population as a whole). Within this community, significant differences can be noted between the male and female employment rates (72.4% and 38.6%, respectively). The low incidence of employed persons from the female population contributes to an overall rate that is below the mean for non-EU citizens.

Unsurprisingly, Albanian workers are among the main beneficiaries of the **wage subsidies** granted by INPS (the National Social Security Institute) in the event of interruptions or reduction of production. In 2019, more than 1/3 of the beneficiaries of CIGO (ordinary redundancy fund) or CIGS (extraordinary redundancy fund) arrangements, with non-European citizenship, were Albanian (18,307). This incidence is significant in view of the fact that approx. 12% of the non-EU workforce belongs to this community. The quotient is also high for Albanian citizens granted unemployment benefits, vs the total for non-EU beneficiaries: 14.4% (67,618). The Albanian citizens mainly benefit from NASPI (*Nuova Prestazione di assicurazione sociale per l'impiego*, a social employment insurance scheme) (approx. 50,000); 17,581 are granted agricultural unemployment benefits.

During 2019, **177,047 new employment relationships** were activated for citizens of Albanian origin (approx. 1.7% more than the previous year). While confirming that women from this community are drawn to the labour market way less than men, the data provided by the *Comunicazioni Obbligatorie* (mandatory notices) reveals that 39.1% of Albanian citizens recruited are women (vs 31.3% for non-EU citizens as a whole). Most of the new subordinate and para-subordinate jobs that began during 2019 for Albanian workers were in the Services sector (a level approaching 47.6%). However, gender analysis indicates that only 1/3 of work contracts activated with men regard Services while for women levels exceed 70%

For the Albanian community, we note the prevalence of *skilled manual workers* (1/2 of the Albanian workers vs 28% for non-EU citizens as a whole). Numerically speaking, we then note *unskilled workers* (26%). This latter value is lower than for non-EU citizens as a whole (36%). 1/5 of employed Albanians are engaged in *sales and personal services*, while the incidence for *managers and professionals in the intellectual and technical fields* stands at 4%.

Involvement of the community in question in the world of entrepreneurship appears to be most significant. Indeed, with its **33,294 sole proprietorships**, this community ranks third in terms of number of companies. The construction sector is the sector within which most investment takes place, for Albanian sole proprietors. Indeed, 68.4% of sole proprietorships under Albanian ownership operate in this sector, representing 28% of non-EU companies within this ambit.

Socio-economic conditions

Although employment in the industrial sector and acquisition of skills exposed the workers belonging to this community to the negative repercussions of the economic crisis, they also brought benefits in terms of incomes. The data indicate that Albanian workers earn **monthly salaries** that are on average higher than those of non-EU workers as a whole (1,341 vs 1,191 euros: 150 euros higher mean monthly remuneration). In the case of agricultural labourers, the gap (again, a positive value) stands at 93 euros. Conversely, a further gap may be noted within the ambit of domestic work. Here, Albanian workers earn on average 124 euros less than non-EU workers as a whole.

In any case, female Albanian workers lost out when it came to pay conditions: the gender pay gap, within this community is fairly large; on average, the monthly salary of male employees exceeds that of female employees by

more than 580 euros. The gap is less marked for other typologies of work (for agricultural work the gap stands at 237 euros, while among home-helpers it stands at 69 euros).

Among employed Albanian citizens in Italy, a medium-low level of education prevails. In line with the findings for non-EU citizens as a whole, 62.2% of the workers belonging to this community received, at best, a junior secondary school leaving certificate. Educationally, within this community, women are more highly qualified than men, with 10% of female employees as holders of a higher education certificate vs 4% among the men. In any case, the value is lower than that for non-EU women as a whole (16.3%).

The quotient of IVS (disability, old age and survivors') pensions granted to non-EU citizens has always been rather small. In 2019, this quotient stood at 0.5% of the total (out of almost 14 million pensions, 65,926 regard non-EU citizens). Non-EU citizens receive old-age pensions (in 43% of such cases), followed by survivors' pensions (37.4%); 19.8% are granted disability pensions. In the Albanian community, survivors' pensions prevail, with an incidence of 41.4%, followed by disability pensions (33.9%). 24.7% are old-age pensions. Overall, with its 5,461 IVS pensions, the Albanian community accounts for 8.3% of the total for non-EU citizens who are granted such benefits. Between 2018 and 2019, the number of IVS pensions granted to migrants from Albania experienced a lower increase than was noted for non-EU citizens as a whole: +13.4% vs +12.3%. In this community, the number of old-age pensioners increased by 21.8% (vs 17.1% for non-EU citizens as a whole).

The level of **social assistance measures** provided by INPS to Albanian citizens (solely welfare services for the most vulnerable, due to age conditions reached or civilian invalidity) is high: 24,715 (approx. ¼ of migrant beneficiaries of non-EU origin). Social benefits account for 53.8% of such cases. Slightly more than 1/5 are attendance allowances. The remaining 1/4 consist of constant attendance supplements.

With reference to **monetary transfers to families** (maternity benefits, parental leave and family allowances provided by INPS), in 2019 a total of 304,465 women received maternity benefits, 9.1% of whom were non-EU citizens (27,714) (3.1% less than the year before). During the same period, the beneficiaries of maternity allowances with Albanian citizenship totalled 5,797, i.e., more than 1/5 of non-EU female beneficiaries. Among the Albanians, the beneficiaries of maternity allowances increased by 3.2% vs 2018. As to parental leave, in 2019 there were 299,028 such beneficiaries, denoting a 10.3% decrease vs 2018, 7.2% of whom were of non-EU origin (21,564). 3,111 Albanian citizens benefited from this measure (14.4% of non-EU beneficiaries). A greater number of people benefit from family allowances: during 2019, as many as 2,446,795 beneficiaries were granted family allowances (a value decreasing by 13.5% vs the previous year). 12.5% of the beneficiaries were non-EU citizens (approx. 305,000) denoting a 13.5% decrease vs 2018. 57,964 members of this community were granted family allowances in 2019 (19% of non-EU citizens as a whole; -13.2% vs 2018 considering the Albanian community).

Concerning to transfers made by the Albanians in Italy to their country of origin, Albania ranks twelfth as nation of destination of **remittances** sent from Italy in 2019 (approx. 137 million euros), accounting for 2.7% of the total outgoing remittances (+0.2 million vs 2018).

