



THE ECUADORIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Migrant population annual report
Executive summary



20

22

Curated by the General Directorate for Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the Annual Reports on the main foreign communities in Italy investigate and analyse the presence in Italy of the largest populations of non-EU migrants: Moroccan, Albanian, Chinese, Ukrainian, Indian, Filipino, Bangladeshi, Egyptian, Pakistani, Moldovan, Sri Lankan, Senegalese, Tunisian, Nigerian, Peruvian and Ecuadorian.

A key factor also in the 2022 edition is the contribution of the Institutions and Bodies that provided the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies with the necessary information, subsequently processed by the ANPAL Servizi Integration Services Area. Sincere thanks are due to ISTAT – National Institute of Statistics, INPS – General Statistical Actuarial Coordination, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of University and Research, the Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture; CeSPI, the CGIL, CISL, UIL, UGL trade union confederations and U.O. Data Science Applications – ANPAL Servizi Studies and Research Division. The financial inclusion section was curated by Daniele Frigeri, Director of the National Observatory on Financial Inclusion of Migrants.

The unabridged volumes of the 2012 – 2022 editions of the Reports on the Main Foreign Communities in Italy are available, in Italian and in the main foreign languages, in the “Documents and Research – Reports by the Immigration and Integration Policies DG” area of the portal www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it and in the 'Studies and Statistics' area of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies website – www.lavoro.gov.it. A statistical annex is also available at the same addresses, containing additional information with respect to the reports, or with insights on the existing analysis, with a comparison between the main nationalities.

The 2022 edition of the National Reports on the Main Foreign Communities, the translation of the overviews into the main vehicular languages and the Monitoring Report were produced by the “Services for Integration Policies” Area of ANPAL Servizi, in the framework of the project “START-Support to Integrated Multiannual Programming on Employment, Integration and Inclusion”.

The Ecuadorian community in Italy

In order to understand Ecuadorian migration to our country and its dynamics, we need to look at the migratory flows to Italy in an international framework. In this context, historically there have been three different waves of Ecuadorian emigration: the first occurred in the 1950s, the second at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s and, finally, a third wave occurred at the end of the 1990s, at the height of Ecuador's banking industry crisis. Italy is particularly affected by this latest phase, triggered by an economic crisis that has impoverished many families and persuaded many Ecuadorians to take advantage of the migratory networks created in previous years, with a stream of individuals, mainly women, leaving the country bound for Italy, in particular. In fact, the first migratory waves were mainly directed towards North America: at the end of the 1990s, 63% of Ecuadorians leaving the country headed for the US, although Europe has become the preferred destination since the 2000s, with Spain figuring as the main emigration country (60%), followed by Italy (10%); the remaining 30% of Ecuadorian emigrants settled in the United States. Like other communities with significant channelling towards the service sector, here again it was women who paved the way for the creation of a stable community in Italy: it was thanks to the instrument of family reunification that these women were able to reconstitute the family units they had been forced to leave.

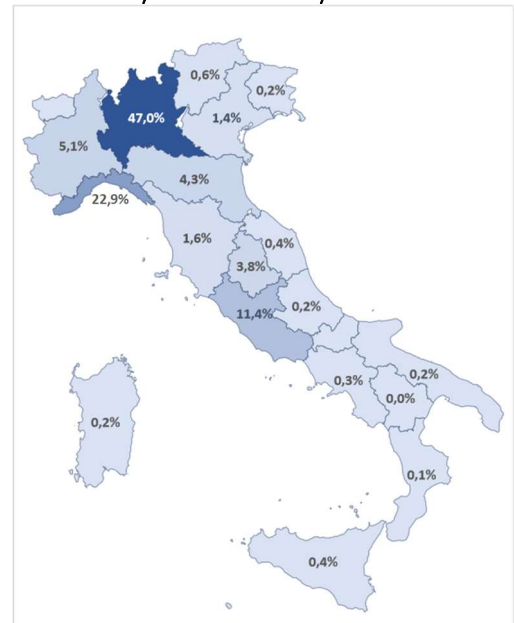
There were 65,747 **Ecuadorians legally residing** in Italy as of 1 January 2022, a number that means the community is in sixteenth place among the main non-EU citizens. Ecuadorians are 1.8% of the total non-EU population, down 1.1% from 2020.

In terms of **geographical distribution**, 81.4% of Ecuadorian citizens in Italy reside in the north of the country, particularly in Lombardy, which is the region with the highest number of Ecuadorian immigrants hosting just under half of them (47%, versus 26.1% of the non-EU population as a whole); the second region for settlement is Liguria, where a well-established community resides, accounting for about 23% of Ecuadorian nationals in Italy. Lazio is in third place with 11.4% of all Ecuadorian immigrants in Italy. Despite the moderate numbers in Lazio, around 17% of the legally immigrated Ecuadorian population is located in central Italy, compared to around 24% for the non-EU population as a whole. In the light of far higher than average numbers in the north of the country, and smaller numbers in the centre, only 1.3% of the community are legally resident in the south, while the percentage rises to 14.6% for non-EU citizens overall.

The age pyramid of the Ecuadorian community in Italy has a more balanced distribution and a generally younger average age than that of the Italian population. The Ecuadorian population in Italy has a bias towards young people in line with the non-EU average: 38.2% of the community is under 30, a slightly higher share than the 37.3% of the non-EU population overall.

The presence of minors is slightly lower than average for the non-EU population, representing 20.5% of the community compared to around 21% for the non-EU population. However, the community has a low **average age** (36, like the non-EU average), with this value to be considered together with a slight **gender imbalance** in favour of women (who represent 56.7% of the community).

Distribution of the Ecuadorian population legally settled in Italy. Data at 1 January 2022



Source: Anpal Servizi SpINT Area analysis of ISTAT data

Analysis of the type of **residence permits** confirms a solid level of stabilisation: the share of long-term residents in the community on 1 January 2022 was 79.4%, 13 percentage points higher than that recorded for non-EU nationals as a whole. In contrast to the non-EU population overall, for which the presence of long-term residents increased by 7.8% compared to 2020, there was a very slight decrease in numbers among the Ecuadorian community (-0.3%).

Family reasons prevail among **short-term residence permits**, covering more than half of permits held by Ecuadorians, with an incidence almost 13 percentage points higher than that recorded for non-EU nationals as overall. Conversely, Ecuadorian citizens accounted for about 40% of short-term permits, compared to 34.4% for the non-EU population overall.

In 2021, after the abrupt drop recorded in 2020 due to the movement restrictions introduced globally to counter the spread of the SARS-COV 2 virus, there was a general increase in the issue of **new permits**, also due to the illegal labour emergence provision (legislative decree 34 of 2020), which allowed regularisation of non-EU citizens already residing in Italy. In 75% of the more than 1,500 Ecuadorians who entered Italy in 2021 did so for family reasons, an increase of about 100% compared to the previous year: around 63% of the 1,151 Ecuadorians who entered Italy in 2021 for family reasons were minors.

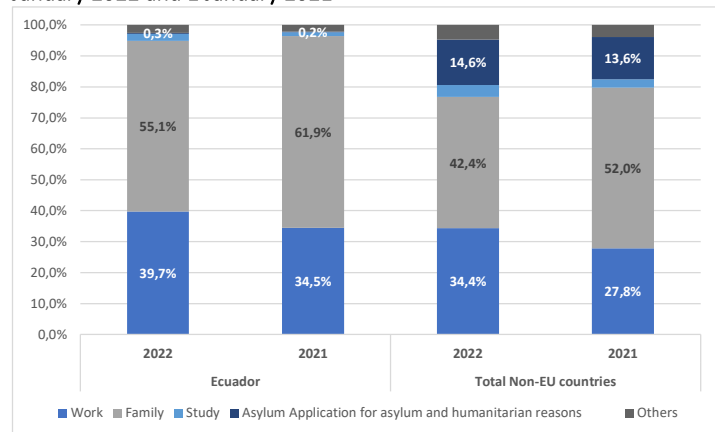
The **prevailing profile** in the Ecuadorian community is that of workers with a high level of education, employed mainly as **unskilled manual labourers in public, social, and personal services**.

The **labour market data**¹ show that the community is channelled into the *Personal and Social Public Services* sector, which is prevalent, with a total of about 39% of the community's employed, driven by the strong representation of women in the sector (about 64%). Next in terms of the incidence sectors is *transport and other business services*, in which 23.3% of the community is employed; in this case, men hold the majority of jobs, so much so that the sector ranks first in terms of employment of the male component of the community (39.3%).

An analysis of the main labour market indicators reveals that the **employment performance** of the Ecuadorian community is on average better than that of the non-EU population as a whole: in the first half of 2022, 59.4% of the Ecuadorian population in Italy aged 15-64 was employed, a higher percentage than that of the non-EU population as a whole (58.4%); the inactivity rate is 29.3% (around 33% for non-EU citizens), while unemployment is 15.5% (for non-EU citizens it is lower, 13%). This situation is mainly due to the employment status of Ecuadorian men who - unlike the community's women - perform worse than non-EU men overall, with a lower employment rate (63.7% versus 73.5%), higher inactivity rate (around 23% versus 17.3% on average), and a higher unemployment rate (around 17% versus 11.1%).

The community has an average **level of education** that is higher than that of non-EU nationals as a whole: although the share of Ecuadorian graduates is 4.2% (compared to 10.5% for non-EU nationals overall), graduates account for 59.3% (32.8% the incidence observed for non-EU nationals overall).

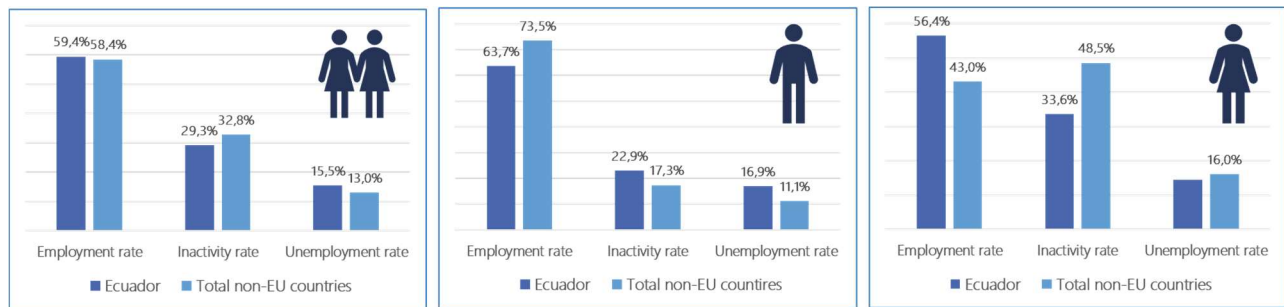
Short-term residence permits by type and citizenship (v%). Data as at 1 January 2022 and 1 January 2021



Source: SpINT Area analysis of Anpal Servizi on ISTAT-Ministry of the Interior data

¹ Labour market data were provided by ISTAT RCFL at H1 2022.

Main job market indicators by gender and citizenship (v.%). H1 2022



Source: SpINT Area analysis of Anpal Servizi on RCFL - ISTAT microdata

With regard to **occupational types**, unskilled manual work prevails in the Ecuadorian community with 41.3%: the diachronic analysis however shows that *clerical, sales and personal service workers* were predominant in the previous six months (currently the second occupational type, with 32.2%). The figure seems to reveal a shift towards lower-skilled work on the part of Ecuadorian workers, probably due to the economic changes caused by the pandemic. *Specialised manual labour* accounts for 23.4% of Ecuadorians employed, while the remaining 3.1% are classified as *executives and professionals in intellectual and technical fields*.

The Ecuadorian community is one of the least active in the realm of sole proprietorships: sixteenth place in terms of the number of citizens in Italy and fifteenth place for the number of **sole proprietors**. There were 3,489 Ecuadorian sole proprietors in Italy as of 31 December 2021, or just under 1% of non-EU sole proprietors in Italy, the number reflecting a downward trend compared to 2020 (-1.1%)

Data on the use of **welfare measures**² show how the community is well integrated into the Italian socio-economic fabric: almost 10,000 Ecuadorians benefit from social employment insurance (NASPI) (2.7% of the total), while 2.2% of non-EU wage supplement recipients belong to the community, this figure rising to 3% in the case of the ordinary Solidarity Fund allowance. On the other hand, as already seen for the non-EU population overall, the community is scarcely involved in the receipt of IVS and welfare pensions: only 0.9% of non-EU recipients of the IVS are Ecuadorians, rising to 1.7% for welfare pension recipients.

There is high level usage of family support measures, a fact that points to the presence of family units: in relation to parental leave and maternity allowance, about 3% of non-EU recipients of both measures are Ecuadorians, although this percentage rises to 4.3% in the case of Covid-related parental leave.

In the Ecuadorian community, there are 3,889 families benefiting from Basic income (Reddito di cittadinanza) or a Basic pension (Pensione di cittadinanza), 1.7% of all non-EU recipients.

² Source: National Social Security Institute (INPS) - General Statistical Actuarial Coordination as at 2021.

