



THE EGYPTIAN 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 for consolidated and practical collaboration 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 the Data Science Applications Operating Unit – 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 Egyptian community in Italy

Relations between Italy and Egypt have ancient roots, not least because of their geographical proximity and shared Mediterranean culture. Egyptian nationals started emigrating to Italy back in 1970s, when many qualified middle-class citizens, mostly young men, were attracted by the economic and cultural prospects on offer. At the beginning of the 1980s, the community consisted of just under 4,000 members although it increased rapidly during the 1990s following the initial regularisations. At the threshold of the 21st century, the Egyptian community in Italy already numbered more than 25,000, characterised from the outset by a high concentration in Lombardy, the first settlement region.

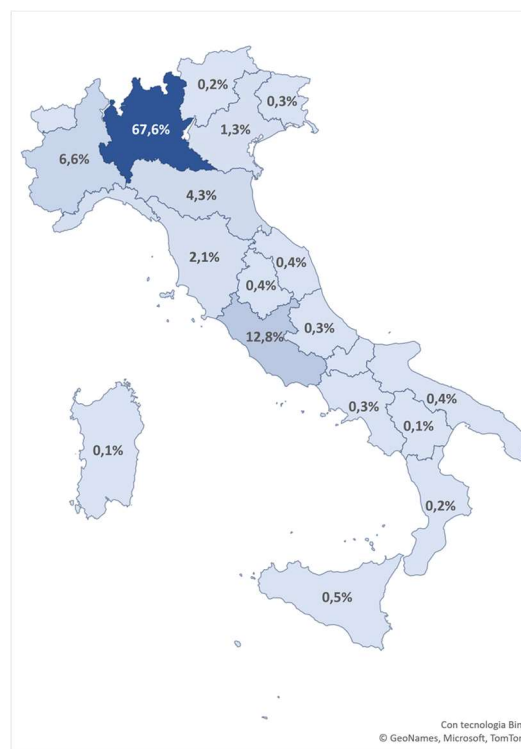
The Egyptian community ranks seventh among the main non-EU communities in terms of the number of legal residents. The number of Egyptians legally residing¹ in Italy was **151,411** as of 1 January 2022, up by more than 9% compared to the previous year, versus +5.6% for all non-EU citizens. Although the increase in immigrants is widespread, the community under consideration is the one that shows the greatest growth in percentage terms, with the incidence in relation to the non-EU population overall rising from 4.1% to 4.3%.

The community is concentrated in the north of the country (approximately 82% of Egyptian immigrants live in northern Italy), with high numbers in particular in Lombardy - the first region for Egyptian immigration - which hosts 67.6% of the community's members, compared to 26% of non-EU nationals overall. The second region for Egyptian settlement is Lazio, home to 12.8% of settlers, while Piedmont is in third place (6.6% of Egyptian nationals).

On the demographic level, the Egyptian community displays a very marked gender imbalance: females are only one in three residents (33.3%) with an age group breakdown that differs markedly from that of the Italian population. In particular, there is a higher incidence of younger age groups; this is an extremely youthful community, second only to the Nigerian community in terms of low average age: 29.1 years.

The significant presence of minors is higher than average for non-EU nationals, representing the predominant age group in the North African community with an incidence of 32.8%, the highest among the main non-EU citizenships, this fact is to be interpreted in relation to the high birth rate among the Egyptian population in Italy² (**18‰**). In relation to young people, a distinctive element of the community under consideration is the high presence of unaccompanied minors³: Egypt, with 4,899 minors (24.4% of the total) was the **second country of origin of unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy** as

Distribution of the Egyptian population legally residing in Italy. Data as at 1 January 2022



Source: Anpal Servizi SpINT Area analysis of ISTAT data

¹ Statistics on regularly residing non-EU citizens include all foreigners from non-EU countries in possession of a valid residence document (residence permit or long-term EU residence permit). Not all legally resident foreign nationals are including in the total count of residents in Italy: the statistical source employed therefore also includes foreign nationals who for whatever reason have yet to be awarded official residence in Italy.

² The birth rate is the ratio between the number of births in a community or population during a period of time and the average population in same period per thousand.

³ The expression unaccompanied foreign minor (UFM), refers to a "minor without Italian citizenship or citizenship of any other EU member state, who is in the country for any reason, or who is otherwise subject to Italian jurisdiction, without the assistance and representation of his/her parents or other legally responsible adults according to the laws in force in the Italian legal system" (See art. 2, L. 47/2017).

of 31 December 2022⁴. The number of Egyptian UFM's has soared compared to the previous year, increasing by 120.6%. These UFM's are almost exclusively boys, who are 99% of the total.

In 2021, after the sudden 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) that allowed regularisation of non-EU citizens already in the country: new residence permits issued to Egyptian citizens in 2021 totalled **11,550**, more than double the number issued in the previous year. Two out of three Egyptian citizens entered the country in 2021 for family reasons (65%), double the number of permits issued for family reasons in the previous year. The marked increase in new work-related permits is striking: +702.1%; in 2020, only 145 Egyptian citizens came to Italy for work purposes, while in 2021, there were 1,163.

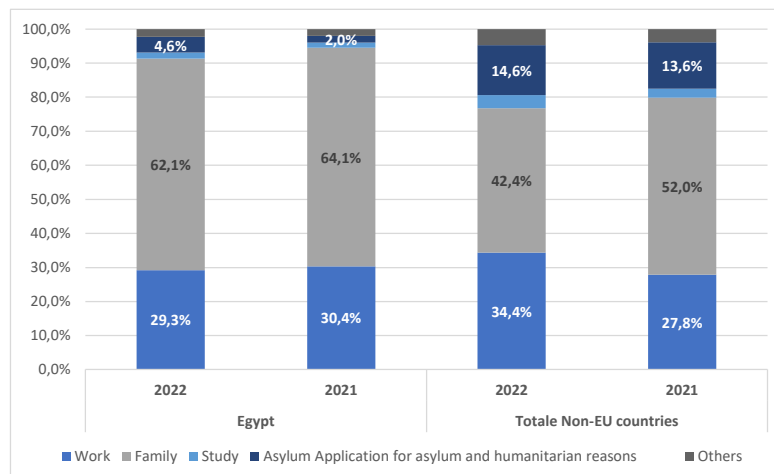
Analysis of the type of residence permits ⁵shows the high level stabilisation achieved by the community: **the share of long-term residents⁶ on 1 January 2022 was 65.3%**, only slightly lower than that found among non-EU citizens overall (65.8%).

As further confirmation of the progressive consolidation of Egyptian immigration into Italy, family reasons are the main motivation for residing in Italy (62.1%), with an incidence about 20 percentage points higher than that recorded for non-EU citizens overall (for whom family reasons nonetheless remain prevalent).

The **prevailing** - though not exclusive - **profile** of Egyptian job-holders is **male working in sales or personal services, in the hospitality sector**.

In the first half of 2022, the Egyptian community performed worse than the non-EU population overall, with a lower employment rate (49.5% compared to 58.4%) and a higher inactivity rate (43.2% compared to 32.8%), mainly due to the very low inclusion of Egyptian women in the labour market. Within the community, there is a very wide **gap** between the **employment** rate of **men** (82.6%) and that of **women** (4.7%), which seems impervious to improvement trends: between the first half of 2021 and the first half of 2022, the employment rate for women fell by 4.3%, while inactivity, already very high, increased by 3.2 percentage points; also the unemployment rate rose sharply (+18.2%). Among the main non-EU immigrant populations, the Egyptian community is first in terms of the highest female unemployment rate, third in terms of female inactivity rate, and last in terms of the employment rate.

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



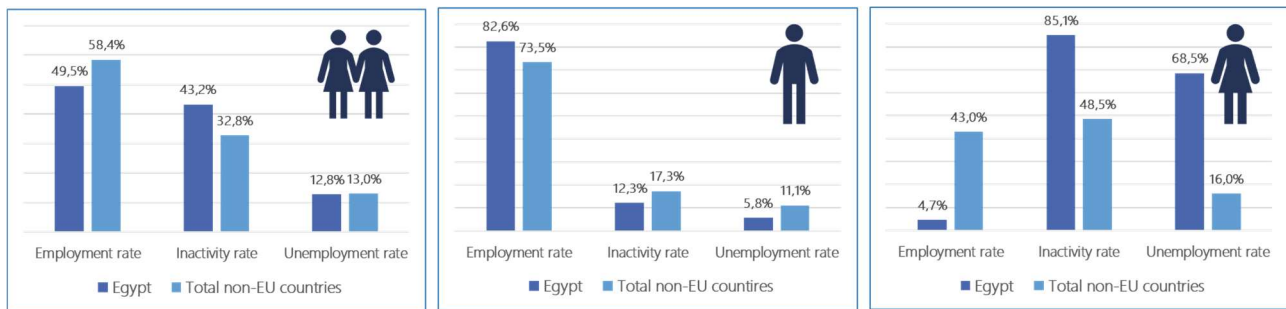
Source: SpINT Area analysis of Anpal Servizi on ISTAT-Ministry of the Interior data

⁴ Updated data on the presence of unaccompanied foreign minors are always available on the dedicated page of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs website <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/minori-stranieri/Pagine/Dati-minori-stranieri-non-accompagnati.aspx>

⁵ The report shows the stock figure for the total number of third-country nationals authorised to reside in Italy in the reference year.

⁶ The EU long-term residence permit may be issued to a foreign national who has held a valid residence permit for at least five years, provided the person can prove that they have a minimum income of no less than the social allowance calculated annually.

Main labour market indicators by gender and nationality (v.%). H1 2022



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

The gender distribution of the workforce confirms the worrying trend of the community's female members on the Italian labour market: although women account for about one third of Egyptians legally residing in Italy⁷, the proportion of women in work is far lower at just 4%.

With regard to the distribution of Egyptian-born employees among **economic activity sectors**, the hospitality sector is prevalent, accounting for 29% of the community's workforce. There are also high numbers in the area of *commerce* and *construction*, with incidences of 14.5% and 13.5% respectively. In terms of **occupational types**, *clerical, sales and personal service* workers predominate in the community under review, with 38% of job-holders falling into these categories. This is followed by *skilled manual work*, with an incidence of 26.6%, while *unskilled manual work*, prevalent for non-EU nationals overall, concerns 26.3% of workers in the Egyptian community. The share of workers with a managerial or professional role in the intellectual and technical field is higher than for the non-EU population overall: 9.1% versus 6.2%.

The Egyptian community ranks sixth in terms of the number of **sole proprietorships**⁸ while it is seventh place in terms of the number of Egyptian nationals in Italy versus non-EU nationalities. There were 19,562 Egyptian-born sole proprietors as at 31 December 2021, or 5% of non-EU entrepreneurs in Italy, the number was 3.5% lower than in 2020 and the downward trend proceeded in 2022⁹. With reference to the sectors of economic activity, the prevailing sectors for the community are as follows: about 40% of Egyptian sole proprietors operate in the construction sector, which is amply the leading sector of activity (Egyptian sole proprietorships represent 9.6% of non-EU run firms in the sector), the second sector is *Commerce and Transport*, (19.8% compared to 41.2% of all businesses run by non-EU nationals). The incidence of the community in the hospitality sector is impressive: 15.3% of Egyptian sole proprietorships operate in this sector, accounting for 12.4% of all non-EU-owned enterprises in the field.

⁷Women account for 39.6% of the community.

⁸The analysis focuses on sole proprietorships, as this is the only form of business that allows for identification of the individual non-EU nationality of the proprietor.

⁹ As of 31 December 2022 in fact, Egyptian-owned sole proprietorships registered in Italy totalled 18,769, 793 fewer than those recorded as at 31 December 2021 (-4%). For further updates, refer to the 'Interactive Dashboard on Migrant Enterprises', a knowledge tool created by Infocamere in the framework of the Futuræ Project, born from collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and Unioncamere and financed by Fondo Nazionale Politiche Migratorie (national migration policies fund). The interactive dashboard on migrant enterprises can be consulted here: <https://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Altre-info/id/78/Imprese-dei-migranti-la-dashboard-interattiva>.

