

THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Migrant population annual report
Executive summary



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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”.

and in the area surrounding the Circeo National Park, where it has provided a response to the demand for agricultural labour over the years.

The Indian community displays a level of gender imbalance: men account for about 59%, while women make up the remaining 41%. The migratory flows from India have mainly involved young men, in whom the families in the country of origin have invested – economically and emotionally; over the years, also thanks to family reunifications, the presence of women has however increased, signalling a progressive stabilisation in the territory.

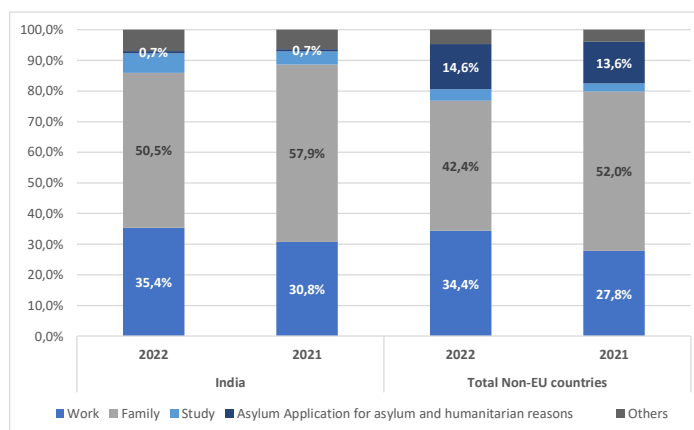
On a demographic level, the Indian community in Italy is characterised by the high presence of young adults: around 39% are between 30 and 44 years of age (compared to 31% among non-EU citizens overall). The presence of minors is higher than the average for non-EU nationals, with this group representing the predominant age group in the community under review: 22%. This can be linked to the increasing number of family units and a **high birth rate**⁴: **15.4%**⁵.

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), which allowed for the regularisation of non-EU citizens already present in the territory: the new residence permits issued to Indian citizens in 2021 totalled 12,680 (5.2% of the total), a number that almost doubled compared to the previous year. The majority of arrivals are for family reasons (46.9%), with a rise of around 74% compared to the previous year. The share of new permits for work-related reasons is significant, and higher than the non-EU population overall: 37.7% compared to 21.1%. In particular, the marked increase in new residence permits issued for this reason stands out in comparison with the previous year: +212.3%.

Analysis of residence permits confirms that the stabilisation process of the Indian community in Italy is not yet fully mature: **the share of long-term residents⁶ in Italy on 1 January 2021 was 61.7%**, a lower percentage than that recorded for the non-EU community overall (65.8%).

With regard to the reasons for issuing short-term permits, note that the majority of community-related permits are linked to family reasons, with a higher incidence than that recorded for non-EU citizens overall (50.5% against 42.4%). Work is the second most important reason for residence, accounting for more than a third of short-term residence permits, a slightly higher share than that recorded for non-EU nationals overall (34.4%). Also the incidence of study-related permits is higher: 6.4% compared to 3.8%. In fact, Indian attendance at **universities** is also very high: in the 2021/22 academic year there were 5,260 students from the community enrolled in Italian universities, **representing 6% of the total non-EU academic community**, a figure that places the community in third place among the leading non-EU communities in terms of the number of university students.

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

⁴ 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.

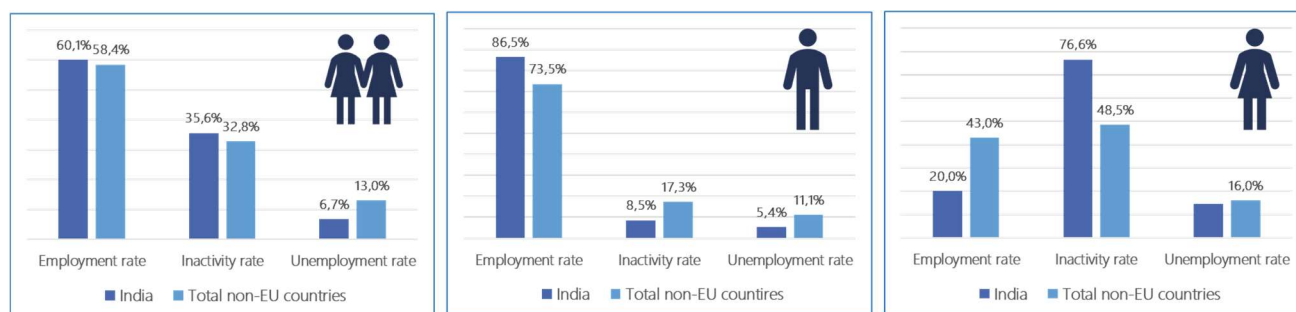
⁵ For the non-EU population overall, the rate drops to 12.3 per thousand, while it falls to 6.4 for the Italian population.

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.

The **predominant** – though not exclusive – **profile** among Indian job holders is that of **unskilled male manual workers**, mainly in the **agricultural sector**. Although the community does not have a high **level of education** (the share of workers with at most a secondary school diploma is around 71% compared to 56.7% for the total number of non-EU nationals), the Indian community has managed to carve out a specific role in the labour market by meeting the demand for labour in agriculture, which the indigenous workforce struggles to fill.

The Indian community displays ⁷better performance than the non-EU community as a whole, with a higher employment rate (60.1% compared to 58.4%) and a lower unemployment rate (6.7% compared to 13%), but also with a higher proportion of inactive persons (35.6% compared to 32.8%); the latter is due to the very low inclusion of the community's female component in the labour market. In fact, Indian women have a low employment rate of 20%, with a significant **gap** with respect to the **male employment** rate (86.5%), which is the highest among the main non-EU communities. The most decisive figure is that relating to the inactivity rate, which is far higher for Indian community women than for non-community nationals as a whole, 76.6% compared to 48.5%, and contributes to the high overall value of the indicator.

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



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

Gender distribution of job-holders confirms the low level of participation of Indian women in the Italian labour market: with a female incidence among legal residents of 41.2%, the female share of employed Indian nationals is around 13%.

With reference to the breakdown by sectors of activity, there is an outstanding concentration in the agricultural sector, which is prevalent in the community, employing around 35% of the Indian workforce in Italy. The specialisation in this area is such that about one in three non-EU employees in the primary sector is of Indian nationality. The share of workers in *industry in the strict sense* is also very significant: 32.6% of the Indian workforce.

Manual labour, skilled and unskilled, is the area of employment of more than 80% of the Indian workforce. In particular, there is a slight prevalence of *unskilled manual labour* (43.6%), while *skilled manual workers* account for 39.4%. Considerably lower than the non-EU as a whole is the share of *Clerical, sales and personal service workers* (12.1% compared to 30.4%), while the share of *Executives and professionals in the intellectual and technical field* is 4.9%.

The community's specialisation in the agricultural sector is also evident due to data on the start of employment contracts: about half of Indian immigrant hires during 2021 concern *unskilled personnel in agriculture and groundcare*.

⁷ Source: RCFL-ISTAT – H1 2022.

