



# THE EGYPTIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Annual report on the presence of migrants  
*Executive summary*



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23

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, Ukrainian, Chinese, Indian, Bangladeshi, Egyptian, Filipino, Pakistani, Moldovan, Sri Lankan, Senegalese, Nigerian, Tunisian, Peruvian and Ecuadorian.

A key factor also in the 2023 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 Integration Services Area of Sviluppo Lavoro Italia. 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 the Data Science Applications B.U. - Studies and Research Division of Sviluppo Lavoro Italia. 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 – 2023 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 website [www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it](http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it) and in the "Studies and Statistics" area of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies website - [www.lavoro.gov.it](http://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 and a comparison between the main nationalities.

The 2023 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 Sviluppo Lavoro Italia, in the framework of the project "START-Support to Integrated Multiannual Programming on Employment, Integration and Inclusion".

## The Egyptian community in Italy

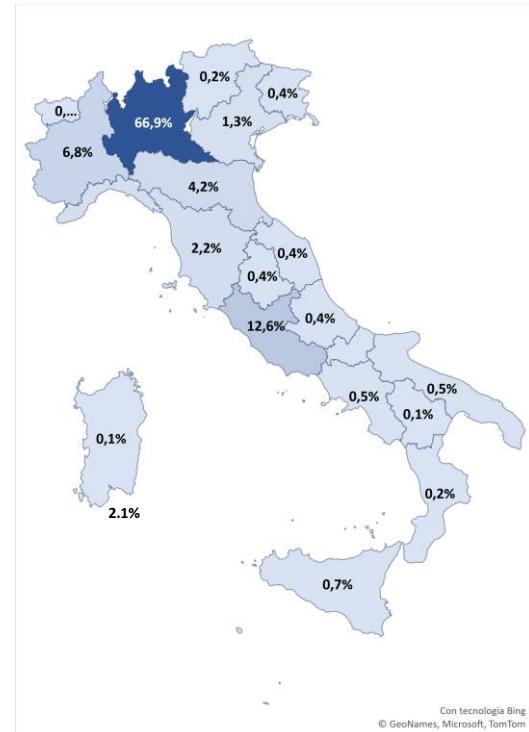
As at 1 January 2023, there were **155,892** Egyptians legally residing<sup>1</sup> in Italy, up 3% over the previous year (compared to the +4.7% recorded by the non-EU population as a whole). This figure places the community in seventh position among the main non-EU citizens in numerical terms.

The territorial distribution of the Egyptian community shows a **clear concentration in the north of the country** (about 82% of the community resides in northern Italy), particularly in Lombardy - the first region of Egyptian settlement - which hosts a resounding 66.9% of the community, compared to about 26% of non-EU citizens as a whole. Far behind comes Lazio, where 12.6% of the community resides, while the third region of Egyptian settlement is Piedmont, with 6.8% of Egyptian citizens legally residing in Italy. The community is characterised by a very scarce presence in the south: only 2.5% of legally resident Egyptian citizens are in this area of the country, compared to 15.3% of the non-EU population as a whole.

On a demographic level, the Egyptian community shows a marked gender imbalance, with a 32.7% share of women and a high share of minors well above the non-EU average: 31.9%, the highest among the main non-EU nationalities. This can be linked to the high **birth rate<sup>2</sup>** registered by the community (18%, which is significantly higher than the 11.9% registered for the non-EU population as a whole) and to the significant presence of large households. In particular, the prevailing family type is that of 5 to 7 people, which accounts for almost twice the proportion of non-EU nationals as a whole (41.7% vs. 22.7%), followed by 3 to 4 person households (33.7%). The share of households with more than 8 people is also higher than for the non-EU population as a whole (4.7% compared to 1%).

On the subject of minors, a distinctive element of the community under review is the incisive presence of unaccompanied minors<sup>3</sup>: indeed, as at 31 December 2023, the Egypt community, with its 4,677 minors - down 4.5% over the previous year and equal to 20.1% of the total - ranks **first for unaccompanied foreign minors in Italy.<sup>4</sup>**

**Distribution of the Egyptian population legally residing in Italy. Data as at 1 January 2023**



Source: Processing by SpINT, Sviluppo Lavoro Italia, based on ISTAT data

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

<sup>2</sup> Birth rate is the ratio between the number of births in a community or population during a period of time and the size of the average population in the same period per thousand.

<sup>3</sup> The expression 'unaccompanied foreign minor' (UFM) refers to "a minor who is not a citizen of Italy or of another EU Member State, who is, for whatever reason, in the national territory, or otherwise subject to Italian jurisdiction, without the legal assistance and representation of his parents or of other adults legally responsible for him, pursuant to current Italian law" (see art. 2 of Italian Law no. 47/2017).

<sup>4</sup> Up-to-date information on the presence of unaccompanied foreign minors is always available on the dedicated page of the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies: <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/immigrazione/focus-on/minori-stranieri/Pagine/Dati-minori-stranieri-non-accompagnati.aspx>.

The year 2022 marked a positive record for the total number of new residence permits issued: 449,118, up 85.9% over the previous year. This increase can be linked both to the war in Ukraine, which led to the entry of about 148,000 citizens fleeing the Eastern European country (mainly with temporary protection permits), and to the regularisation of citizens already present in the territory based on Italian Leg. Decree 34 of 2020<sup>5</sup>, whose applications were largely examined in 2022. As far as the Egyptian community is concerned, 16,976 new residence permits were issued, up significantly over the previous year: (+47%). The Egyptian community ranks sixth in terms of the number of new residence permits issued in 2022, accounting for 3.8% of the total. The predominant reason for entry into Italy for Egyptian nationals is family reunification, which - in 2022 - accounted for more than two fifths of all new permits (40.4%). The increase in new permits linked to a form of protection was significant (+186%), and - accounting for 29.4% of the total - represented the second main reason for the entry into Italy of Egyptian citizens.

The share of **long-term residents** is similar to that of non-EU nationals as a whole<sup>6</sup> (60.7% vs. 60.1%). Compared to the previous year, however, the share of long-term residents decreased by 4.7%, mainly due to the large number of new residence permits issued, which increased the incidence of permits subject to renewal.

Family reasons are the main motivation for Egyptians residing in Italy (59.9%), its incidence being more than 21 percentage points higher than that recorded for non-EU citizens as a whole (for whom family reasons are nevertheless the main motivation). The second reason for seeking residence is work (26% vs. 30% for non-EU nationals as a whole).

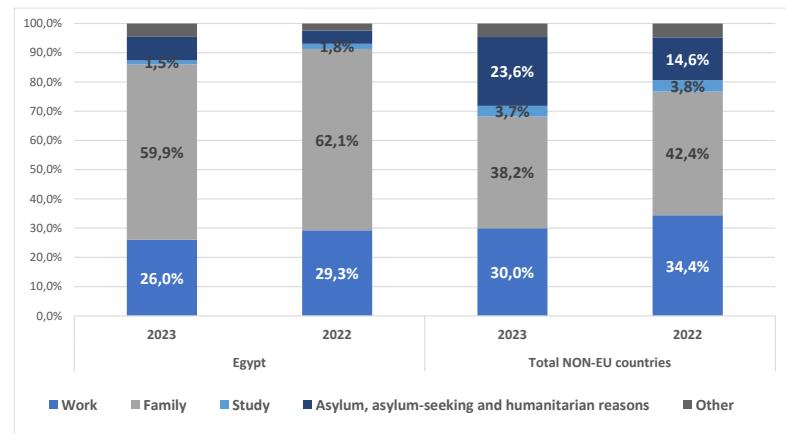
The **prevailing** - though not exclusive - **occupational profile** among Egyptian workers is that of male **clerk or salesperson** employed in the **hospitality industry**.

The Egyptian community in Italy registers worse employment performance than the non-EU population as a whole, with a lower **employment** rate (52.4% vs. 59.2%) and a higher inactivity rate (40.8% vs. 32.7%). The only indicator that fares slightly better is **unemployment**, which stands at 11.4% (vs. 12% for non-EU nationals as a whole). The poor integration of the community's female component in the labour market is a decisive factor: the share of inactive Egyptian women is significantly higher than that of non-EU women as a whole (83.9% vs. 48.3%). Furthermore, there is a distinctly large gap between the employment rate of Egyptian women and men: 6.9% vs. 82.4%. Compared to the main non-EU communities, the Egyptian community ranks simultaneously second in terms of the highest male employment rate and first in terms of the lowest female employment rate.

The gender distribution of the employed confirms the worrying situation of the community's female component on the Italian labour market: although women account for about one third of Egyptians legally residing in Italy, the female share among the employed is much lower and close to 5%.

**Population (15 years and over) and main labour market indicators by gender and citizenship (v.%) First half of 2022**

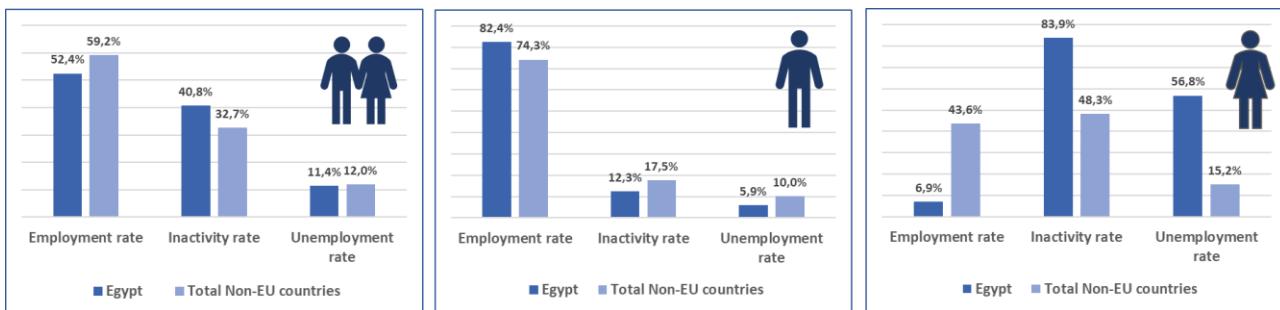
**Short-term residence permits by type and citizenship (v%) Data as at 1 January 2022 and 1 January 2023**



Source: Processing by SpINT, Sviluppo Lavoro Italia, based on ISTAT-Ministry of the Interior data

<sup>5</sup> Art.103 of Italian Leg. Decree no. 34 of 19 May 2020 introduced an illegal labour emergence provision in the following sectors: agriculture, livestock and animal husbandry, fishing and aquaculture and related activities, personal care, domestic work to support family needs.

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



Source: Processing by SpINT, Sviluppo Lavoro Italia, based on RCFL - ISTAT microdata

With regard to the distribution of employed persons of Egyptian origin across different **economic sectors**, a prevalence is registered in the hospitality sector, which employs around 30% of the community's employees. *Transport and business services* and *Industry in the strict sense* also register a high presence of Egyptians, with incidences of 19.5% and 15.8% respectively (vs. 13.8% and 19.9% for non-EU workers as a whole). In terms of **occupational categories**, *Clerical, sales and personal service roles* prevail in the community under review, with 42% of the employed falling into this category. This is followed by *skilled manual work*, with an incidence of 27.2%, while *unskilled manual work*, the main category for the non-EU population as a whole, concerns 25.2% of Egyptian workers. The proportion of Egyptian executives and professionals in the intellectual and technical fields is lower than for the non-EU population as a whole: 5.4% vs. 6.7%.

With regard to **self-employment**, the Egyptian presence is very significant: the 12,000 plus artisans belonging to the community – a figure that has remained essentially stable over 2021 – represent 8.7% of the non-EU artisans in Italy. Male dominance persists also in this area, with men accounting for 94.1% of the total.

The Egyptian community ranks sixth in terms of the number of sole proprietors in Italy, while it occupies seventh position among the main non-EU citizens in numerical terms. As at 31 December 2022, there were 19,873 Egyptian sole proprietors in Italy, corresponding to 5.1% of the total number of non-EU entrepreneurs in Italy. This number represents a slight increase over 2021, with a positive change of +1.6%<sup>7</sup>. With reference to economic sectors, more than 40% of Egyptian-owned sole proprietorships operate in the Construction sector, which is clearly the community's prevalent industry in this regard (Egyptian sole proprietors account for 9.2% of non-EU entrepreneurs operating in the sector), while the second sector is *Trade and Transport* (20.1% vs. 41.6% for the non-EU population as a whole, for whom it is the prevalent sector). The community's weighting in the hospitality sector is significant: 14.7% of Egyptian sole proprietorships operate in this sector, representing 12% of all non-EU sole proprietorships in this field.

<sup>7</sup> For further updates, please refer to the 'Interactive Dashboard on Migrant Enterprises', an informative tool created by Infocamere within the framework of the Futurae Project, springing from the collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and Unioncamere, and financed by the National Fund for Migration Policies. The Interactive Dashboard on Migrant Enterprises can be found at: <https://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Altre-info/id/78/Imprese-dei-migranti-la-dashboard-interattiva>.



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