



THE ALBANIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Annual report on the presence of migrants

Executive summary



20
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 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 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 Albanian community in Italy

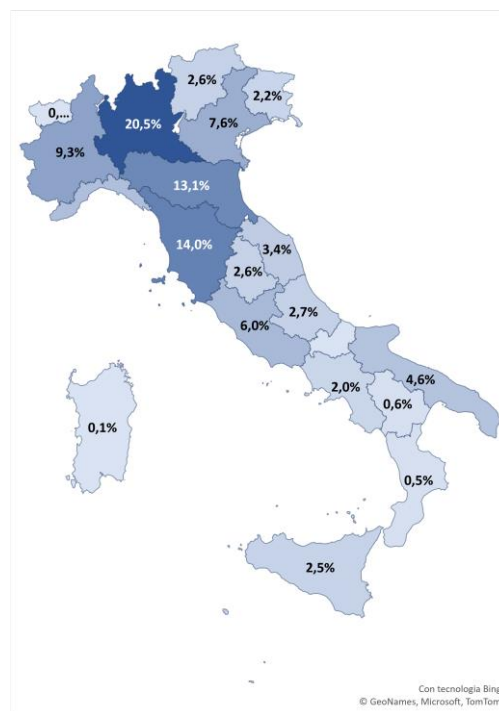
For years, the Albanian community in Italy has ranked second among the main non-EU communities in terms of the number of legal residents¹. As at 1 January 2023, the total number of Albanian citizens with residence permits was 389,646, accounting for 10.5% of the non-EU population in Italy. Compared to the previous year, however, the community dropped by 1.8%, as against a 4.7% increase in non-EU nationals as a whole.

60.6% of Albanian citizens in Italy are located in the north of the country. In particular, the first region of Albanian settlement is Lombardy, which hosts a little over one fifth of the community, compared to more than one quarter of the non-EU population as a whole. In northern Italy, this is followed by Emilia-Romagna (the third region of Albanian settlement), where 13.1% of the Albanians in Italy are located. The Albanian population in Italy is characterised by a high concentration in Tuscany (the second region of Albanian settlement), which hosts 14% of the community (vs. 8.3% of the non-EU population as a whole). About 13% of the community is settled in the south of the country. In this area, the community is particularly settled in Apulia (accounting for 4.6% of Albanians vs. 2.6% of third-country nationals as a whole). This figure is linked to the history of Albanian migration to Italy, and in particular to the first migratory flows in the early 1990s, when the Apulian ports constituted the community's first landing points.

From a demographic point of view, the community is characterised by an almost perfect gender balance (women represent 49.4% and men the remaining 50.6%) and by a high presence of young people: 39.8% of the Albanians in Italy are under 30 (vs. 37.1% of the non-EU population as a whole). There is also a high presence of minors, who, with an incidence of 23.5%, represent the prevailing age group in the community under review (for the non-EU population as a whole, the share drops to 20.6%). This can be linked to the high presence of family units, a sign of the high level of stabilisation reached by the community on Italian soil. The share of over-60s is also significant: 14.2% vs. 10.8% for the third-country population as a whole. This figure further confirms the community's stabilisation, as these are most likely individuals who came to Italy in the past or have been reunited with family members.

The number of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (UFM)² in the community is declining. As at 31 December 2023, the Albanian community - with 936 minors - was the seventh largest country of origin for UFM, down 30.5% over the previous year.

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



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

¹ 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.

² 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).

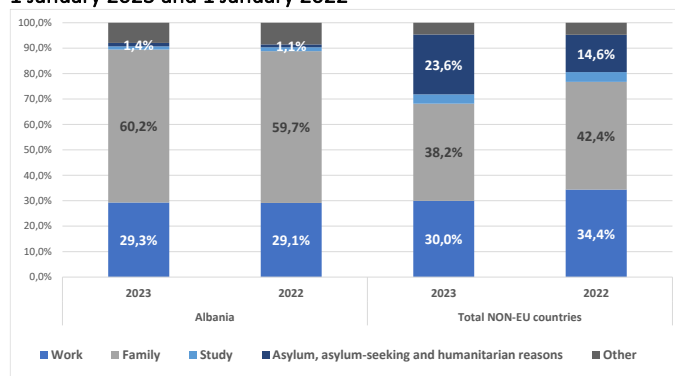
The high proportion of long-term residents (63.6% vs. 60.1% for the non-EU population as a whole) confirms the advanced degree of stabilisation achieved by the community, as does the marked incidence of family reasons for residence permits subject to renewal (60.2% vs. 38.2% for the non-EU population as a whole).

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 is the highest number of entries of non-EU citizens in a year in the past 10 years. This increase can be linked both to the war in Ukraine, which led to the entry of about 148,000 citizens from the Eastern European country, and to the regularisation of citizens already present in the territory based on Italian Leg. Decree 34 of 2020³, whose applications were largely examined in 2022. With regard to the Albanian community, the number of entries in 2022 was 34,594, up 17.2% over the previous year. The predominant reason for entry into Italy for Albanian nationals was family reunification, which - in 2022 - accounted for more than three fifths of all new permits (60.9%). The Albanian community ranks third among the main non-EU communities in terms of the share of entries related to family reasons. Moreover, compared to 2021, entries for family reasons have increased sharply: (+20.8%). Compared to the previous year, all reasons for entry increased, with the sole exception of study purposes. Worthy of note is the increased percentage of new permits linked to a form of protection: +85.3%; however, the figure in absolute terms (606 entries in the year) is small and accounts for 1.8% of entries of Albanian citizens.

An analysis of short-term residence permits shows that family reasons also constitute the main reason for the community residing in Italy (60.2%), further confirming its stabilisation in Italy. The second reason for seeking residence was work, with a slightly lower incidence than that found in the non-EU population as a whole (29.3% vs. 30%).

Further underlining the community's marked level of stabilisation, Albanians once again rank first in terms of the number of **acquisitions of Italian citizenship** during 2022: out of a total of 194,071 acquisitions for third-country nationals, 38,129 concern Albanian citizens, i.e. about one fifth of the total.

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



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

The community has a strong positioning in the Italian manual labour market. The **prevalent** - though not exclusive - **profile** among Albanian employed people is that of specialised manual worker (accounting for 49.4% of Albanian employees) in the Construction industry (in which 29.1% of Albanian workers are employed). More than two-fifths (42.8%) of non-EU employees in the *Construction* industry are Albanian. The next largest sectors are *Industry in the strict sense*, with an incidence of 16.6%, closely followed by *Transport and business services*, whose significant incidence is higher than that recorded for non-EU nationals as a whole (16.4% vs. 13.8%).

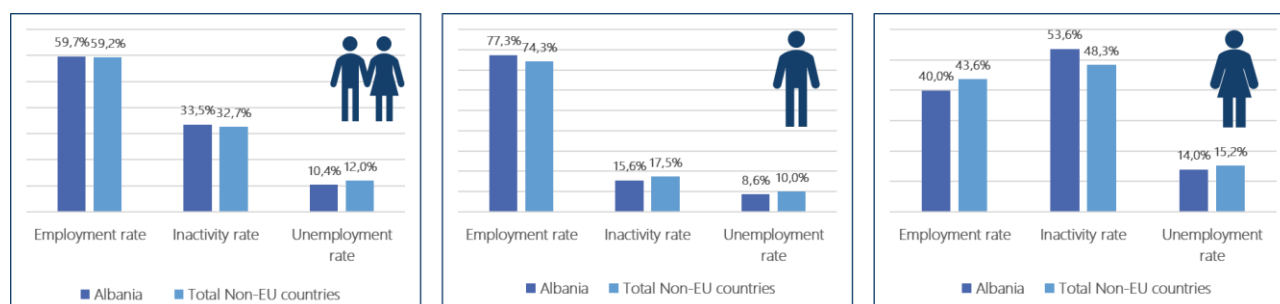
The Albanian community in Italy registers slightly better employment performance than the non-EU population as a whole: the **employment** rate in 2022 was 59.7% (vs. 59.2% for non-EU nationals), the **unemployment** rate was 10.4% (vs. 12%), while the share of **inactive** people aged 15-64 - the only indicator that registered worse results than the non-EU population - was 33.5% (vs. 32.7%).

Within the community, there is still a large **gap** between the **employment rate of men** (77.3%) and **women** (40%). However, the upward trend registered in 2021 and 2022 has helped to reduce this disparity; the indicator relating to the male element of the population increased by 4.2 percentage points over the previous year, while that for the female element increased by almost 6%. Moreover, women registered a much more

³ 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.

significant change on the unemployment front, with the share of jobseekers dropping by 10.5% (vs. a 3.3% drop recorded for men).

Population (15 years and over) and main labour market indicators by gender and citizenship (v.%) Year 2022



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

With regard to self-employment, the Albanian presence is very significant: the 37,000 plus artisans belonging to the community – a figure that has risen by 3.5% over 2021 – represent 26.3% of the non-EU artisans in Italy. Significant male dominance persists also in this area, with men accounting for 90.5% of the total.

For years, the Albanian community has **ranked third in terms of the number of sole proprietors**⁴. As at 31 December 2022, the number of sole proprietors of Albanian origin was 38,007, accounting for 9.7% of the non-EU entrepreneurs in Italy. This figure increased by 4.7% over the previous year. The Albanian community's channelling towards the Construction sector is confirmed in the entrepreneurial sphere. Approximately 67% of Albanian sole proprietorships operate in this sector, accounting for 28.3% of all non-EU sole proprietorships in this area.

Data regarding the use of certain welfare measures, and in particular wage supplements⁵, shows significant signs of integration of the Albanian community into the Italian socio-economic fabric: 26.7% of non-EU wage supplement recipients are Albanian, a percentage that rises to 27.8% in the case of the Ordinary redundancy fund (CIGO). The incidence of Albanians among non-EU recipients of old-age pensions is rather low (5.9%); conversely, the community is particularly represented among the recipients of welfare pensions, with almost one fourth of non-EU recipients being Albanian. The percentage reaches 18.9% for *Constant attendance supplements and the like*, 16.4% for *Disability allowance* and 33.2% for *Social security retirement benefits and allowances*.

The high incidence of Albanian citizens among the beneficiaries of family assistance measures also highlights the community's good level of integration into the Italian economic and social fabric, most likely as a result of the high presence of family units. As regards *maternity allowance*⁶, almost a quarter of the non-EU recipients are of Albanian nationality. Finally, in the Albanian community, 9,216 families receive a basic income (Reddito di cittadinanza) or basic pension (Pensione di cittadinanza), accounting for 5.2% of non-EU recipients.

⁴ The following analysis focuses on sole proprietorships, this being the only form of business that allows for identification of the individual non-EU nationality of the owner.

⁵ These include the Extraordinary redundancy fund (or CIGS, which registers very low absolute values as it was not used as a support tool for companies and workers during the pandemic), the Redundancy fund in derogation (or CIGD, a measure adopted during the pandemic to support workers employed by companies not covered by other income support measures), and the Ordinary redundancy fund (CIGO).

⁶ Otherwise known as "compulsory abstention allowance", this is a form of income support in lieu of salary and is paid to female workers for maternity leave and childbirth for a total of 5 months.

