



THE ECUADORIAN 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 Ecuadorian community in Italy

As of 1 January 2023, there were **62,459** Ecuadorians legally residing¹ in Italy, accounting for 1.7% of all third-country nationals. This figure places the community in **sixteenth** position among the main non-EU citizens in numerical terms. Contrary to the general trend of non-EU settlements (+4.7%), the Ecuadorian community recorded a 5% decrease compared to the previous year².

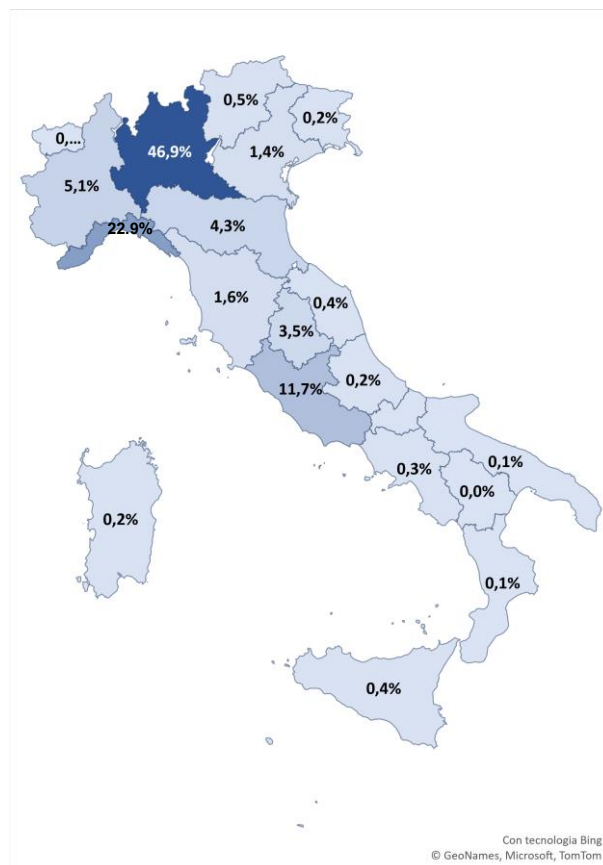
The Ecuadorian population is concentrated in the north of the country, where 81.4% of the community is located. In particular, the first region of Ecuadorian settlement is Lombardy, which hosts almost half of the community (approx. 47%, compared to 25.9% of the non-EU population as a whole), while in second place we find Liguria, historically one of the main centres of Ecuadorian settlement, with 23% of the community. The third region of settlement of the Ecuadorians is Lazio, which hosts 11.7% of the community: overall, 17.2% of the community is located in a central region of Italy, while its presence in the south is decidedly lower, with only 1.4% of Ecuadorians in Italy residing here legally.

The Ecuadorian population in Italy - historically characterised by a preponderant female quota - has progressively seen the weighting of the two sexes become more balanced: however, at 56.7%, women still represent the majority, with men accounting for the remaining 43.3%.

The Ecuadorian community has an unbalanced age distribution towards the older age groups than the non-EU community as a whole. In particular, the proportion of over-50s is higher than that of non-EU nationals as a whole: 27.6% vs. 23.5%, more than one in four Ecuadorians in Italy. There is a lower than average presence of minors (19.8%), who in any case represent the predominant age group in the Ecuadorian community (for non-EU nationals as a whole, the share rises to 20.6%). In line with non-EU nationals as a whole, the prevailing family type is three- to four-person households, accounting for about 59.3% (vs. 47.5%). Higher than the incidence recorded for the non-EU population as a whole is the share of households consisting of 2 people: 14% for the Ecuadorian community, compared to 12.6% for non-EU nationals. Lower than the non-EU average, instead, is the incidence of all other family types.³

In 2022, **1,823 Ecuadorian citizens entered Italy**, up 19% over the previous year⁴. Family reunification was the main reason for entry (75% of the entries of Ecuadorians), up around 18.5% compared to the previous year.

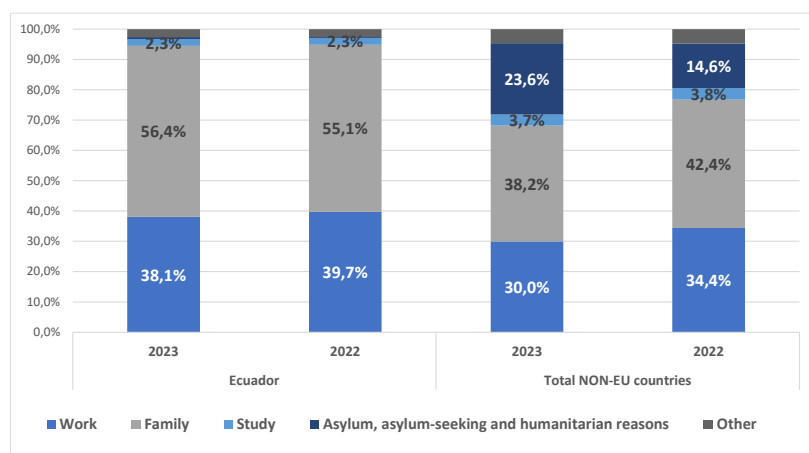
Distribution of the Ecuadorian population legally residing in Italy. Data as at 1 January 2023



The Ecuadorian community ranks first among the main non-EU communities in terms of the share of entries related to family reasons. The community's second reason for entering Italy was work (10.4%, up from the previous year: +59.7%).

The analysis of the types of residence permit held by Moroccan nationals shows a high level of stabilisation: **the share of long-term residents⁵ within the community on 1 January 2023 is 77.7%**, over 17 percentage points higher than that recorded for non-EU nationals as a whole. Indeed, the community ranks second for the highest share of long-term residents, despite a year-on-year decrease of 1.7%. This is mainly due to an increase in new residence permits, which increases the incidence of permits subject to renewal.

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

As regards short-term residence permits, family reasons are the main motivation for Ecuadorians residing in Italy (56.4%), its incidence being more than 18 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 was work, with a higher incidence than that found in the non-EU population as a whole (38.1% vs. 30%).

The prevailing employment profile in the Ecuadorian community is that of male and female workers predominantly employed in unskilled manual labour in Public, social and

personal services.

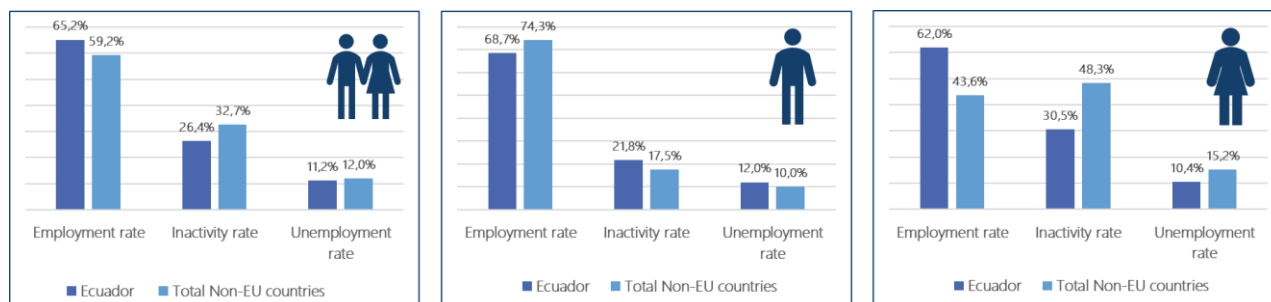
The Ecuadorian community in Italy is well integrated in the labour market, registering better employment performance than the third-country population as a whole: in 2022, the employment rate was 65.2% (vs. 59.2% for non-EU nationals), the unemployment rate was 11.2% (vs. 12%), while the share of inactive people aged 15-64 was 26.4% (vs. 32.7%). In line with the non-EU population as a whole, the community under review also recorded an increase in employment - albeit less significant - and a decrease in unemployment and inactivity: compared to 2021, the employment rate rose by +0.9% (vs. +2.7% for non-EU nationals), inactivity remained essentially stable (-0.2%, compared to -0.9% for non-EU nationals), while the share of jobseekers fell by 0.5% (vs. -2.7% for non-EU nationals).

The community's positive performance can be linked to the high level of participation in the Italian labour market of Ecuadorian women, who have a much higher employment rate than non-EU women as a whole (62% vs. 43.6%), as well as lower levels of inactivity and unemployment.

regularisation of citizens already present in the territory based on Italian Leg. Decree 34 of 2020, whose applications were largely examined in 2022.

⁵ 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.

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 the distribution of employed persons of Ecuadorian origin across different economic sectors, there is a marked concentration in *Other public, social and personal services*: almost a third (31.6%) of those employed in the community work in this sector, compared to 23.3% of non-EU nationals as a whole. The second main sector of employment is *Transport and other business services*, with an incidence of around 20% (13.8% for non-EU workers as a whole), immediately followed by *Industry in the strict sense* (14.7% vs. 20%). Some 13% of Ecuadorians are employed in Construction (9% for non-EU nationals), 8.7% in *PA, education and healthcare*, 6.6% in hospitality and catering, around 4% in *Trade* and a residual 1.1% in the primary sector. Compared to 2021, there is a growth in the Construction sector (+6.7%); on the other hand, employment in *Other public, social and personal services* declined by about 8%, while changes in the other sectors are smaller.

The Ecuadorian community ranks 15th in terms of number of non-EU sole proprietorships, after the Peruvian community and ahead of the Filipino community. As at 31 December 2022, the number of sole proprietors of Ecuadorian origin was 3,591, or just under 1% of the non-EU entrepreneurs in Italy. Compared to the previous year, the number of Ecuadorian sole proprietors grew slightly by +2.9%, in contrast with the slight drop recorded for non-EU nationals as a whole (-0.8%). As far as sectors are concerned, a channelling of community enterprises towards the Construction industry emerges, a sector in which 41.4% of Ecuadorian sole traders operate.

Data regarding the use of certain welfare measures, and in particular wage supplements, shows reasonable integration of the Ecuadorian community into the Italian socio-economic fabric: around 1.5% of non-EU wage supplement recipients are Ecuadorian, a percentage that rises to 1.8% in the case of the Extraordinary redundancy fund (CIGS). These figures are essentially in line with the community's demographic weighting.

Regarding the use of family assistance measures, the data shows an ongoing stabilisation for the Ecuadorian community. In the specific case of *maternity allowance*⁶, almost 3% of the non-EU recipients are Ecuadorians: despite a lower birth rate than the non-EU average, this figure is mainly explained by the high participation of the community's female component in the Italian labour market. Higher than the demographic weighting of the community is the share of recipients of parental leave (2.9%). Within the community, there were 6,306 recipients of family allowances in 2022, accounting for 2.3% of the total number of non-EU nationals.

Finally, in the Ecuadorian community, 3,342 families receive a basic income (Reddito di cittadinanza) or basic pension (Pensione di cittadinanza), accounting for 2% of non-EU recipients.

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.

