



THE SENEGALESE 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 Senegalese community in Italy

As of 1 January 2023, there were **101,616** Senegalese legally residing¹ in Italy, accounting for 2.7% of all third-country nationals. This figure places the community in **twelfth** position among the main non-EU citizens in numerical terms. In line with the general trend of non-EU settlements (+4.7%), the Senegalese community recorded an - albeit lower - increase (1.4%) over the previous year².

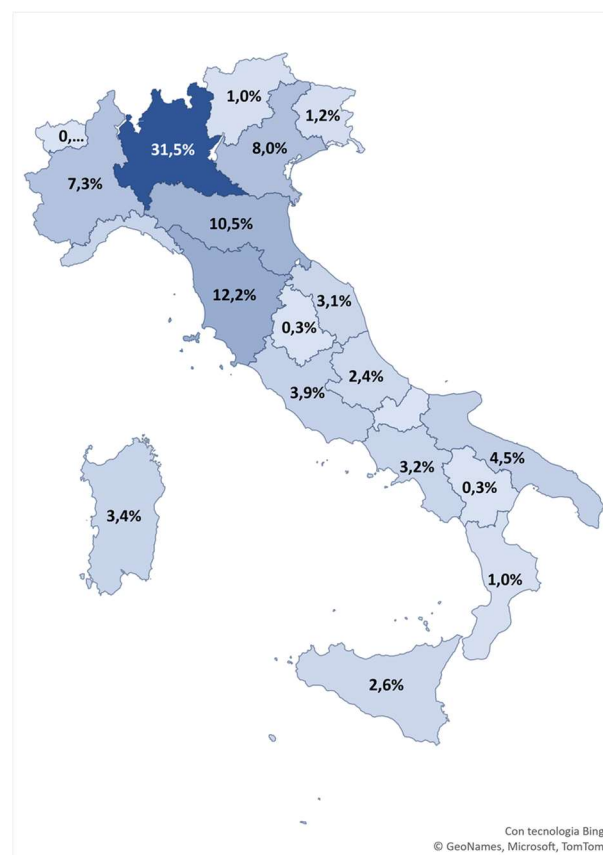
63% of Senegalese citizens in Italy are located in the north of the country, particularly in Lombardy (the first region of Senegalese settlement), which hosts 31.5% of Senegalese citizens, compared to more than a quarter of non-EU citizens as a whole. Lombardy is followed by Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, with 12.2% and 10.5%, respectively of the total number of Senegalese citizens in Italy. The presence in southern Italy is significant; here, 17.6% of Senegalese citizens have applied for or renewed their residence permit, with a higher concentration in Apulia (4.5%), Sardinia (3.4%) and Campania (3.2%).

A demographic analysis of the Senegalese population reveals a **marked gender imbalance**, with women accounting for only 27.5% and men for the remaining 72.5%. The Senegalese community is the third non-European community, after the Ukrainian and Pakistani communities, with the highest degree of gender inequality.

The average age of the Senegalese community in Italy is identical to that of the entire non-EU population in the country, standing at 35.8 years. However, the percentage of individuals under the age of 30 is slightly higher among the Senegalese than among non-EU citizens (38.2% vs. 37.1%), while among the Italian population it is 26.7%. Although the presence of minors is lower than for non-EU citizens as a whole, these still constitute the predominant age group within the Senegalese community, representing 18.6% of the total. Furthermore, the proportion of adults of working age is significant: 35.5% of the Senegalese community is aged between 40 and 59, compared to 31.7% for non-EU nationals as a whole. Both sets of data show a prevalence of male immigration and a low presence of family units due to strong ties with families in the country of origin and a typically African migration pattern focused on circular mobility.

What characterises the community is the prevalence of **single-person family units**, which have higher incidence than in the non-EU population as a whole (28.8% vs. 16.2%). However, the share of large households with 5-7 members (26% vs. 22.7%) or more than 8 people (roughly 5% vs. 1%) is also higher. Conversely, the share of

Distribution of the Senegalese 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.

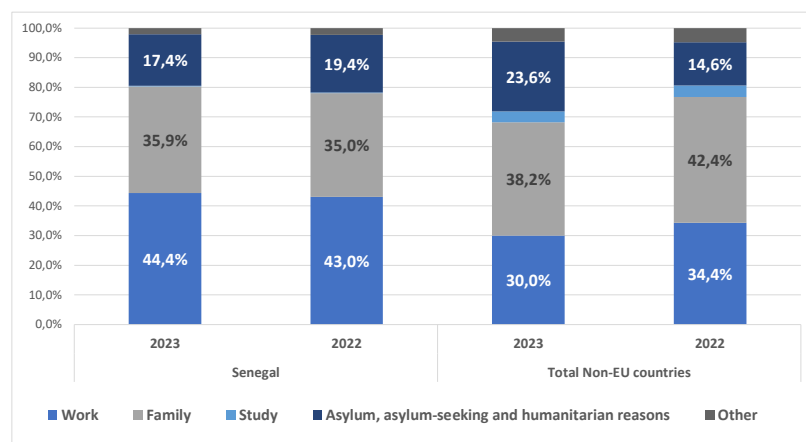
² This figure is most likely linked to acquisitions of Italian citizenship, which - as is well known - leads to a reduction in the statistics, since those who become Italian are no longer counted as foreigners.

couples (12.6%) is in line with those recorded for the non-EU population as a whole, while that for medium-sized families of 3-4 members is lower (37.7%)³.

In 2022, **6,946 Senegalese citizens entered Italy**, up 21.3% over the previous year⁴. Family reunification was the prevalent reason for entry (48.2%), although down by 4.6% compared to the previous year. The second reason for seeking residence was work, with 37.1% of new residence permits being issued for this reason (up 85% over 2021). The number of entries linked to asylum or a form of protection was also significant (10.7%, up 38.3% over 2021).

The analysis of the types of residence permit shows a high level of stabilisation: **the share of long-term residents⁵ within the community on 1 January 2023 is 63.3%, more than 3 percentage point higher than that recorded for non-EU nationals as a whole**. This figure places the Senegalese community in tenth position among the main non-EU citizens in terms of the number of long-term residents.

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

Among the reasons for permit renewals, work-related reasons prevail, with an incidence of 54.2%. This percentage is more than 14 percentage points higher than that recorded for non-EU citizens as a whole, for whom work-related reasons represent the second reason for seeking residence, preceded only by family reasons. For the community under review, the second reason - family reasons - has an incidence of about 36%, about 2 percentage points lower than that recorded for non-EU citizens as a whole. The third reason for seeking residence is to apply for asylum or to receive some

form of protection, with a slightly lower incidence than for the non-EU population as a whole (17.4% vs. 23.6%). An analysis of demographic data and residence permits reveals a good level of stabilisation, as evidenced by the high number of long-term residence permits. On the other hand, this stability has not always allowed the reunification of family units, therefore ties with the country of origin and the family members who have remained there remain close.

The **predominant** - though not exclusive - **profile** among Senegalese employed people is that of **male worker employed in specialised manual labour and Industry**.

The Senegalese population in Italy is well integrated in the labour market, performing better in employment terms than third-country nationals as a whole. The employment rate is 62.8% (vs. 59.2% for the non-EU population as a whole), the unemployment rate is 17.9% (vs. 12%), while the share of inactive people aged 15-64 is 23.5% (vs. 32.7%).

The gender distribution of people employed confirms a low presence of Senegalese females on the Italian labour market. Indeed, the share of women among the employed people of the same nationality is 13.9% (vs.

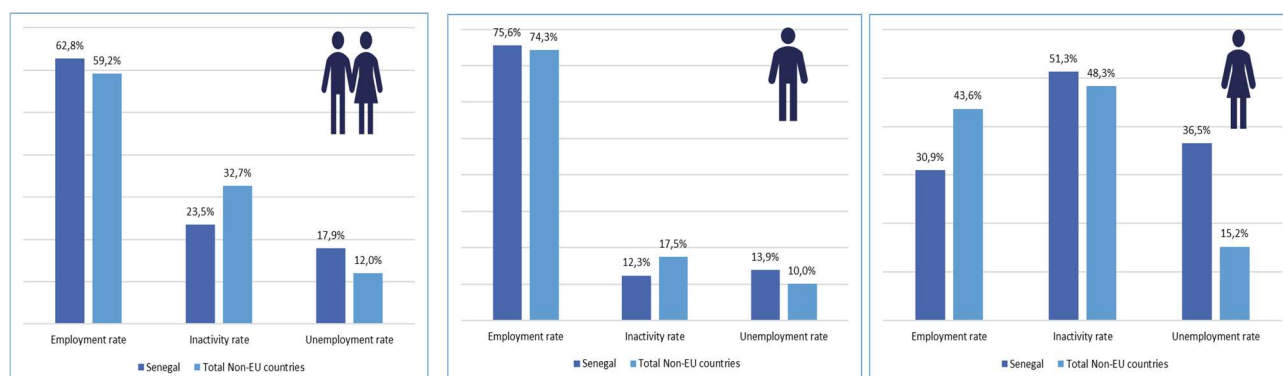
³ Source: RCFL ISTAT - Year 2022.

⁴ The increase recorded for the non-EU population as a whole was 85.9%, a figure that 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 special protection permits), and to the 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.

a much higher 37% among non-EU nationals). The community shows a lower employment rate for women than non-EU women as a whole (30.9% vs. 43.6% overall), although up by 2.8%.

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

The distribution of employed people of Senegalese origin across different **economic sectors** is mainly concentrated in *Industry*: more than 44% of the community's employees work in this sector, compared to 19.9% of non-EU citizens as a whole; this represents 7% of non-EU workers in the Italian industrial sector. About 14% of Senegalese employees are employed in the *Trade* sector and 13% in *Transport and business services*. In fourth place is the hospitality and catering sector, with an incidence of 11.4%.

As at 31 December 2022, the number of **sole proprietors** of Senegalese origin was **16,938**, or 4.3% of the non-EU entrepreneurs in Italy. Compared to the previous year, the number of Senegalese sole proprietorships dropped by 7.1%, while the number of non-EU entrepreneurs as a whole only fell slightly (-0.8%). In the Senegalese community, the majority of sole proprietors are men, accounting for about 89% of the total. There is a strong sectoral specialisation of Senegalese-led companies in the *Trade and transport* sector, where 83.8% of Senegalese sole proprietorships operate. This level of specialisation is a characteristic feature of this community, whose sole proprietorships account for 9.1% of all non-EU sole proprietorships in the sector.

The data on certain welfare measures and, in particular, on wage supplements show that the Senegalese community is rather integrated in the Italian socio-economic fabric. 4.7% of non-EU wage supplement recipients are Senegalese, a percentage that rises to 4.9% in the case of the *Extraordinary redundancy fund (CIGS)*. The community also makes particular use of unemployment benefits, especially considering that 4.4% of the recipients of the NASPI monthly unemployment benefit are Senegalese citizens. In line with the age composition of the community, where younger age groups prevail, the proportion of Senegalese citizens among non-EU recipients of *old-age pensions* is rather small (1.6%). The percentage of those receiving welfare pensions is also low (2.2%) but reaches 2.6% for *Constant attendance supplements* and the like, and 2.4% in the case of *Disability allowances*. The low incidence of *maternity allowance*⁶ (2%) should be interpreted taking into consideration the low participation of Senegalese women in the Italian labour market. On the other hand, there are almost 1,700 Senegalese recipients of parental leave, 6.2% of all non-EU recipients of this measure designed to support families. Finally, in the Senegalese community, 10,105 families receive a basic income (Reddito di cittadinanza) or basic pension (Pensione di cittadinanza), accounting for 5.7% 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.

