MINISTERO del LAVORO
e delle POLITICHE SOCIALI

THE SRI LANKAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Annual Report on the Presence of Migrants

Executive Summary

2019

For nearly a decade, the *Direzione Generale dell'immigrazione e delle politiche di integrazione* (general immigration and integration policies directorate) has aimed to provide a detailed and balanced account of the complex phenomenon of the presence of foreigners in Italy and to do so by setting forth the various distinct aspects of the question while analysing the characteristics noted and also anticipating today's trends. The directorate does so by means of its *Rapporto nazionale sui migranti nel Mercato del lavoro italiano* (national reports on migrants in the Italian labour market) (ninth edition), the *Rapporti nazionali sulla presenza in Italia delle principali Comunità straniere* (national reports on the main foreign communities in Italy) (eighth edition) and the *Rapporti sulla presenza dei migranti non comunitari nelle 14 città metropolitane italiane* (reports on the presence of non-EU migrants in the 14 metropolitan cities of Italy) (fourth edition).

The series of national reports on the presence of the main foreign communities aims to investigate and study in depth the presence on Italian soil of the more numerically significant non-EU nationals: Moroccans, Albanians, the Chinese, Ukrainians, Indians, Filipinos, Bangladeshis, Egyptians, Pakistanis, Moldovans, Nigerians, the Senegalese, Sri Lankans, Tunisians, Peruvians and Ecuadorians.

For each grouping, the main features from the socio-demographic and employment angles are considered, alongside presence of minors and their education, occupational integration, welfare policies and processes of integration. Each report starts with comparison among the various communities.

Again, this year we duly acknowledge the contributions of institutions and bodies that have provided information in their possession. These entities include the Italian National Institute of Statistics; the general statistical and actuarial coordination body of INPS (National Social Security Institute); the Ministry of Education, University and Research; the Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture; the international political studies organisation, CeSPI; the trade unions CGIL, CISL, UIL and UGL; and the Divisione Studi e Ricerca (study and research division) of ANPAL Servizi. We are also most grateful to dottor Daniele Frigeri, the Director of the *Osservatorio Nazionale sull'Inclusione Finanziaria dei Migranti* (national observatory on financial inclusion of migrants) who drew up the focus reports on remittances and access to credit.

The full series of *Rapporti Comunità* (community reports), editions 2012 - 2019, can be accessed – in Italian and in the main foreign languages – in the areas *Paesi di origine e comunità* (countries of origin and communities) and *Rapporti di ricerca sull'immigrazione* (immigration research reports) on the institutional portal, www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it. This portal also provides access to a statistical annex providing information that supplements the reports or that, within a comparative framework among the main national communities considered, enables in-depth study of the data analysed.

Within the ambit of the project, *Supporto nelle politiche per l'immigrazione e di cooperazione bilaterale con i Paesi di origin*e (support for immigration and bilateral cooperation with countries of origin) ANPAL Servizi has drawn up and translated the 2019 edition of its *Rapporti nazionali sulle principali Comunità straniere* (national reports on the main foreign communities) – analytic reports provided in summary form.

Version of 30/06/2020

Executive Summary

105.990

legally residing Sri Lankan citizens

ranking thirteenth for numbers of presences

46,9% **women**

53,1% **men**

44% above the age of 40

25.507

minors below the age of 18

11.930 sri lankan students (**+10,5%**)

332 enrolled for degree courses

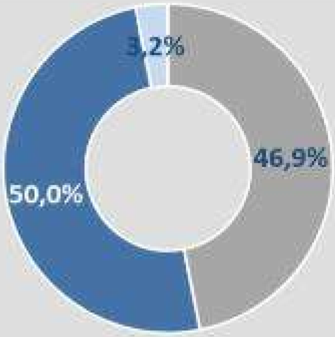
present in:

31,4% Lombardia

13,5% Campania

12,4% Piemonte

65,1% long-term residents

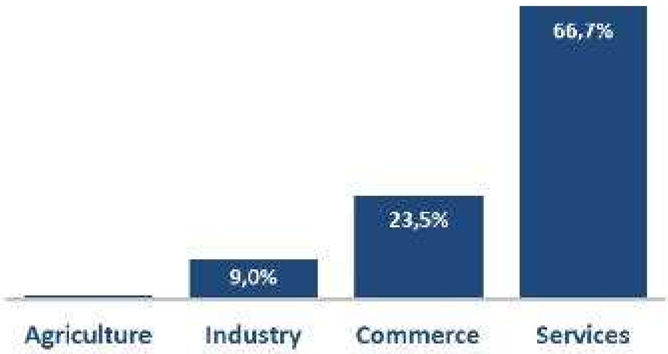


34,9% short-term permits

Work

Family

Other reasons



69,9% employment rate

83,8 % male 53,7% female

36,3% female inactivity rate

-15,7% vs 2017

56% employed in **personal services**

ranking seventh for volume of remittances

6,2% of the total

306 million euros (+10,4%)

Demographic characteristics

As the community ranking thirteenth in terms of numbers of residents, **105,990 Sri Lankan citizens** are holders of a residence permit valid as on **1 January 2019**, accounting for 2.9% of the non-EU citizens in Italy.

On analysis of the main demographic characteristics of the Sri Lankan citizens legally residing in Italy as on 1 January 2019, we note:

- **a slight gender imbalance**: men make up 53.1% of this community and women 46.9%, which latter value is slightly lower than the mean for legally residing non-EU citizens as a whole, with women standing at 48.3%;
- **a mean age in line with that of non-EU citizens as a whole**, although the value is slightly higher vs the previous year: the Sri Lankans in Italy are aged on average 35 (one year more than non-EU citizens as a whole: 34). During the previous year, the mean age was 34.

As to geographic distribution, we must firstly note that more than 1 out of 4 among Sri Lankan citizens reside in Southern Italy (26.4%), vs approx. 15% for non-EU citizens as a whole. While the regions ranking first and third for presences are **Lombardia** (31.4%) and **Veneto** (12.4%), **Campania** ranks second (13.5%, as opposed to the 4.8% incidence for non-EU citizens as a whole). We should also note that more than ½ of this community (53.6%) reside in Northern Italy (vs 61.1% of non-EU citizens as a whole). Also significant is the presence of this community in the Lazio region (11.7%) and in Sicily (11.1%, as opposed to the low quotient of 3.2% of non-EU citizens as a whole).

Analysis of **residence permits** indicates this community's marked progress in the direction of stabilisation. The quotient of Sri Lankan **long-term residents** (holders of residence permits not subject to renewal) stands at **65.1%** (almost 3% higher than the quotient of non-EU citizens as a whole). Regarding short-term permits, those issued for **family reunification reasons** prevail, i.e. **approx.** ½ of permits subject to renewal among migrant members of this community (50%, vs 43.7% of non-EU citizens as a whole). Work permits account for approx. 47% of the total (vs the 31% mean for non-EU citizens as a whole).

Current trends

Compared to 1 January 2018, the number of non-EU citizens in Italy is basically stable (+2,472 units). This apparent stability is in any case the result of the algebraic sum of opposing variations in the diverse communities. Indeed, the geography of origins of migrants sees significant changes taking place. For the first time, changes are noted also in the top 5 in the ranking for numbers present. The key increases are noted in the communities from the Indian subcontinent: namely, the Pakistani community (+4.9%), the Bangladeshi community (+4.5%) and the Indian community (+3.5%). The rise of the Nigerian community is also significant (+2.7%), ranking eleventh in terms of numbers of presences, having risen from fourteenth the year before.

The most significant downturns regard the Tunisian, Moroccan and Moldovan communities (-4.6%, -2% and -1.8%, respectively).

Two factors are of greater significance with respect to trends displayed by numbers present. These factors consist in, on the one hand, the new permits issued attesting to an inflow impacting the stock of legally residing foreigners, and, on the other, in the granting of citizenship (which latter practice of course removes those who become Italian citizens from the stock of foreign citizens).

Minors and educational paths

On analysis of the Sri Lankans residing in Italy, the incidence of **minors** is found to be higher than the mean: **25,507** Sri Lankan citizens, making up **24.1%** of the total, vs 21.8% noted for non-EU citizens as a whole.

11,930 students of Sri Lankan origin enrolled for academic year 2018/2019 (1.8% of the non-EU schooling population as a whole). The students from this community increased in number by 10.5% vs the previous year, with a higher growth rate than that noted for non-EU students as a whole (+2.6%). The number of enrolling nationals increased above all in primary schools (+11.4%) and junior secondary schools (+11.3%). The incidence of students belonging to this community vs non-EU students as a whole is highest in preschool institutions, in which 2.1% of the enrolling infants are Sri Lankan, falling to 1.6**%** in junior secondary schools. Sri Lankan nationals enrolling to attend university courses in Italy in academic year 2018/19 totalled 332 (a mere 0.5**%** of non-EU university students).

This community presents with a number of young people not engaged in education, employment or training that is slightly below the mean value for non-EU communities: out of 100 young **Sri Lankan nationals** aged between 15 and 29, approx. **33.8%** are **NEET**s (Not engaged in Education, Employment or Training), vs the mean value of 34.6%. The data on the **female component** of this community is not at all encouraging, on comparison with the mean value for non-EU women, with a NEET rate of **51.8%** (vs 45.5%).

Work and employment

The data on distribution of Sri Lankan employees in the various sectors of economic activity point to marked engagement in ***Public, Social and Personal Services*** in this community (approx. **56%**). This sector is prevalent also for non-EU workers as a whole (however, the incidence stands at approx. 31%). Following on is the sector of *Commerce and catering*, employing 24% of Sri Lankan workers, this quotient also noted for non-EU workers as a whole. Ranking third for numbers of Sri Lankan employed is the sector of *Transport and business services*, again the incidence differing little from that of non-EU workers as a whole (11% vs 12%).

The incidence for the industrial sector among Sri Lankan employees is decidedly below the mean value (9% vs the much higher incidence of 26% for non-EU workers as a whole). It is to be noted that engagement of this community in the primary sector is practically negligible (the employed Sri Lankans in the sector of *Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing* account for a mere 1% of the total.

On analysis of the available labour market data, the **conditions relating to employment** in Italy for the Sri Lankan community are **more encouraging** than for the non-EU population as a whole. The employment rate is higher, accompanied by lower levels of inactivity and unemployment. **70%** of the Sri Lankan population in the 15-64 age bracket in Italy are **employed** (a level almost 10% higher than that noted for the non-EU population as a whole). The trend in regard to employment points to a significant **upswing** vs the previous year (+5.9% vs the lower value of +0.9% for non-EU citizens as a whole).

In regard to the **unemployment rate**, this community presents with a **12.3%** quotient of jobseekers in the workforce. This value is significantly lower than that noted for non-EU citizens as a whole (14.3%). The trend is negative: on comparison with the year before, the unemployment rate for Sri Lankans in Italy is **rising slightly (+0.6%)**, vs a downturn noted in the non-EU population as a whole (-0.6 %). The **inactivity** rate of Sri Lankan citizens stands at **20.5%** (approx. 9% lower than the value for non-EU citizens as a whole).

The female component of the Sri Lankan community, above all, was a factor that was decisive in the emergence of the positive trends as per the main labour market indicators. Until 2017, few women from this community were drawn to the labour market, but as from 2018 we saw an apparent U-turn. **The female employment rate rose by 16% (rising from 36.9% in 2017 to approx. 53%)**, and thus to more than 5% higher than for non-EU women as a whole (46.9%). The data on inactivity and unemployment rates attest to this positive trend. Female inactivity fell by 15.7% (from 52.1% in 2017 to 36.3%, vs 43.1 for non-EU women as a whole). The unemployment rate fell by 5% − a quotient that, while closely resembling that for non-EU women as a whole, outstrips this latter group (17.9% vs 17.1%).

Only 72 members of this community are in receipt of CIGS (extraordinary redundancy fund) payments (men in 93.1% of the cases). 2.1% of non-EU recipients of redundancy payments are Sri Lankan nationals. 9,385 receive practically only NASPI (*Nuova Prestazione di assicurazione sociale per l'impiego*, a social employment insurance scheme) payments (9,314). Men prevail among Sri Lankans in receipt of unemployment benefits. Only for the ASPI scheme do women prevail among beneficiaries (53.3%). In the case of this community, mean female presences outstrip males as recipients of NASPI. More than 1/3 of Sri Lankan beneficiaries are female.

35,738 Sri Lankan citizens were **hired** in 2018 (approx. **2.4%** of new employment relationships with non-EU citizens). A notable characteristic of this community is the high incidence of open-ended contracts (a gap of more than 15% vs the rate of activations of non-EU workers as a whole: 41% vs 24.6%). Contracts of this kind for Sri Lankan workers account for more than 4% of those for non-EU workers as a whole. Even so, more than ½ of the activations (52.4%) regard fixed term contracts, this incidence being lower than that noted for non-EU citizens as a whole (66.8%).

Apprenticeship contracts account for 1.3%, and collaboration contracts account for a mere 0.3% (and yet presenting with a growth rate of approx. 43% since 2017). Lastly, activations of other typologies of contracts account for approx. 5%, with a 2.4% incidence with respect to contracts for non-EU workers as a whole. The subordinate and para-subordinate jobs that began during 2018 for Senegalese Sri Lankans (a quotient approaching **93%**) were almost all in the ***Services*** sector, which is the prime sector also for non-EU workers as a whole, in the latter case with a decidedly lower incidence than for the community examined here (58.1%).

Gender analysis reveals a gap of almost 44% between the incidence of Services among activations for Sri Lankan men vs such activations for non-EU workers as a whole (91% vs 47.1%); the incidence for the women of this community reached almost 98% (more than 15% more than for non-EU female workers as a whole, which latter rate is in any case very high: 82.2%).

In regard to typologies of work, **62%** of Sri Lankan workers are ***unskilled manual workers***, a value almost doubling that for non-EU works as a whole. 24% are workers in the sector of *office workers, sales staff or personal services*: these typologies of work both present with incidences that are lower than those noted among workers from non-EU countries as a whole (30%). The level is also lower – less than ½ – for the Sri Lankans employed engaging in skilled manual work (11% vs 28% of workers from non-EU countries as a whole). A quotient of 3% of employed Sri Lankans are managers or professionals in intellectual and technical fields. The incidence among non-EU workers doubles that value (6%).

Economic conditions

According to data provided by INPS (the National Social Security Institute) on **remuneration** of workers, the mean earnings of Sri Lankan workers as a whole are **in line with those of non-EU workers as a whole** (a 6 euro gap among employees and a 3 euro gap among home helpers). However, on gender analysis, the situation changes: women employees belonging to this community earn more than 200 euros less than their female non-EU colleagues, The gap narrows among home helpers (35 euros), Men from this community earn more than non-EU workers as a whole in the home help sector, but they earn slightly less as employees.

Among the Sri Lankan citizens employed in Italy, a **medium-low level of education** prevails. **72%** of the workers belonging to this community obtained at best a **junior secondary school leaving certificate**. This level is more than 10% higher than that for non-EU nationals as a whole. Approx. 25% obtained a senior secondary school leaving certificate (a mere 2.8% are also holders of a higher education certificate).

The quotient of **IVS (disability, old-age and survivors') pensions** that are made over to non-EU citizens has always been rather small. In 2018, this quotient stood at 0.4% of the total (out of almost 14 million pensions, 56,071 regard non-EU citizens). Non-EU citizens receive old-age pensions (in 42% of such cases), followed by survivors' pensions (36.3%); 21.6% are in receipt of IVS pensions, provided for migrants with non-EU citizenship during 2018, and linked to disability. In the Sri Lankan community, among the various social security measures there is in any case a prevalence of old-age pensions with a higher incidence than the mean (47.4%), followed by survivors' pensions (26.8%). Disability pensions account for approx. 26%.

Overall, with its 1,135 IVS pensions, the Sri Lankan community accounts for 2% of the total for non-EU citizens who are in receipt of such benefits, peaking (2.4%) for disability pensions. Between 2017 and 2018, the **numbers of IVS pensions rose** slightly less markedly than was noted among non-EU citizens as a whole: **+12%** vs +13%. The Sri Lankans in receipt of old-age pensions rose in number by approx. 18% (as noted also in the non-EU population as a whole).

1,540 social assistance pensions were provided to members of the Sri Lankan community in 2018 (approx. 1.6% of those provided to migrants of non-EU origin). In 40.6% of the cases, the benefits took the form of social benefits; approx. 31%, disability pensions; and constant attendance supplements, almost 28%. Also among Sri Lankan citizens, the number of those in receipt of social assistance pensions is rising (+9.8% vs the previous year): +10.8% for pensions and social benefits.

During the same period the recipients of maternity benefits numbered 573 (2% of non-EU beneficiaries). Among Sri Lankans, the number of recipients of maternity benefits fell (-2.7% vs 2017).

Lastly, in this community the recipients of family allowances numbered 10,706 in 2018 (3% of non-EU beneficiaries). The number of these recipients rose significantly (+3.3% vs 2017).

As to transfers made by the Sri Lankans in Italy to their country of origin, Sri Lanka ranks **seventh as nation of destination of remittances** sent from Italy in 2018 (approx. 306 million euros), accounting for 6.2% of the total outgoing remittances (+25.4 million vs 2017).

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