

THE TUNISIAN COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Annual Report on the Presence of Migrants
Executive Summary



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 origine (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.

Executive Summary



103.249
legally residing Tunisian citizens
ranking fourteenth for numbers of presences

103.478 “nuovi italiani” (new Italians) in 2018 (2.4%)



38%
women

62%
men



28.923

minors below the age of 18
251 unaccompanied minors

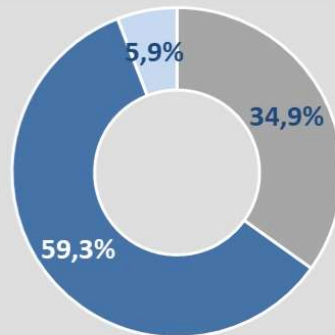


19.752 tunisian students (+2,5%)

1.071 enrolled for degree courses

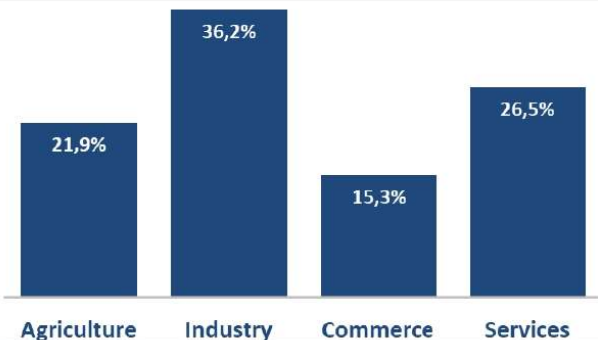
21% Emilia-Romagna
19% Lombardia
17,7% Sicilia

73,8%
long-term residents



26,2% short-term permits

- Work
- Family
- Other reasons



51,3% employment rate

73,2% male 12,5% female

21,9% employed in the agricultural sector



49% skilled manual workers

ranking eighth for number of sole proprietorships (3,9%)



14.668 sole proprietors

8,6% female sole proprietors

52% enterprises in the **Construction** sector

Demographic characteristics

103,249 Tunisian citizens are holders of a residence permit valid as on **1 January 2019**, accounting for 2.8% of the non-EU citizens in Italy.

The Tunisian community has fallen in the ranking to the fourteenth position for number of legally residing members. It is one of the most stable foreign communities, this also being due to its long track record of migration to Italy.

Various indicators underscore the degree of stability of presence of Tunisians, such as the following:

- a high **quotient of minors** (indicating the presence of families). Minors, numbering more than 28,000 units, account for more than ¼ of the legally residing Tunisian citizens. Furthermore, this community is on average younger than non-EU citizens as a whole; approx. 40% of citizens of Tunisian origin are aged below 30;
- there is a clear prevalence in this community of holders of long-term residence permits: **73.8%** as on 1 January 2019, vs 62.3% of non-EU citizens as a whole;
- incidence of family reasons for issuance of term permits, regarding approx. 60% of permits subject to renewal for this community (59.3% vs 43.7% of non-EU citizens as a whole), with work permits accounting for barely more than 1/3 of the total (34.9%).

As to geographic distribution, this community favours Northern Italy, where approx. 6 out of 10 Tunisian citizens reside. Accordingly, two of the regions with most Tunisians are northern: Emilia-Romagna presents an incidence of 21% of Tunisians (vs 11.3% of non-EU citizens as a whole). Lombardia presents with 19.1% (6.8% lower than the rate for non-EU citizens as a whole, or 25.9%). There is a marked presence also in the Region of Sicily, where 17.7% of Tunisian citizens received or renewed their residence permits, which rate is more than 14% higher than that for migrants of non-EU origin 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 of presences. 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 Moldavan communities (-4.6%, -2% and -1.8%, respectively).

Two factors are of greater significance with respect to trends displayed by numbers of presences. 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).

Turning to admissions, in 2018, 242,009 new residence permits were issued (approx. 21,000 less than during 2017). Despite the downturn, the growth trend remains, as noted over the last few years, regarding family reunification (+8.2% vs 2017), which is the reason for issuance of most of the new residence permits (50.7%). There is a downturn in the number of applications for, or entitlements to, a form of protection (-35.9% vs 2017). Only 6% of the new residence permits were issued on the basis of work-related considerations.

Of the 103,478 citizenships granted to non-EU citizens in 2018, 2,484 went to citizens of Tunisian origin (2.4% of the total). The main reason for granting Italian citizenship to Tunisian nationals was naturalization (50.5%).

Minors and educational paths

As noted above, one of the indicators of geographic stabilization of a community is the high presence of families and minors within it. As on 1 January 2019, there were **28,923 Tunisian minors**, i.e. 3.6% of the total for non-EU minors. Many are also Tunisian children born in Italy: 1,603 in 2017 (3% of non-EU children born in 2017). In all, between 2010 and 2017, more than 15,000 Tunisian children were born in Italy.

A decidedly significant issue in regard to this community concerns the presence of **unaccompanied foreign minors (UFMs)**, since Tunisia ranks tenth as country of origin. As on 31 August 2019, **251** minors of Tunisian origin were accommodated in *ad hoc* facilities. There was a significant fall in numbers vs the previous year (-39.4%).

Admission of Tunisian minors into the Italian schooling circuit is high. Indeed, 19,752 students of Tunisian origin enrolled for academic year 2018/2019 (2.9% of the non-EU school population as a whole). Compared to the previous year, the students of this community increased in number by 2.5%. This growth rate was very slightly lower than that displayed by non-EU students as a whole (+2.6%). The number of enrolled students rose especially in secondary schools: +4.1% and +4.2% in junior and senior secondary schools, respectively. The incidence of students from this community vs non-EU students as a whole is higher in junior secondary schools and preschool institutions, where 3% of the enrolled are Tunisian nationals. However, at senior secondary schools, the quotient drops to 2.8%. There are also 1,071 Tunisian university students (1.5% of the enrolled non-EU academic population).

In this community, the quotient of **NEETs** (i.e. persons aged between 15 and 29 not in employment, education or training) is significantly higher than the non-EU mean. The young NEETs of Tunisian citizenship total more than 5,000, accounting for almost $\frac{1}{2}$ of Tunisian young people in this age bracket (46.5%). The lack of engagement in employment, education or training is more marked in the female component of this community; $\frac{3}{4}$ of the girls/young women aged between 15 and 29 are NEETs, vs $\frac{1}{4}$ of the male youths/young men.

Work and employment

Thanks also to its migratory seniority, the Tunisian community's workers joined important sectors of the Italian economy, such as industry. In particular, 16.2% of Tunisians worked in the construction sector (vs 8.1% of non-EU citizens). Jobs in *industry, in the strict sense*, absorb 20% of the Tunisian workforce. The quotient of Tunisian workers in the primary sector is significantly higher than the mean for non-EU workers. *Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing* as a sector employs 22% of this community's workers (vs 6% of the non-EU community as a whole).

According to the main labour market indicators, this community presents with lower quotients of the employed and more marked inactivity and unemployment. The **employment rate** stands at **51.3%** (vs 60.1% for non-EU citizens as a whole). The **inactivity rate** is (6%) higher than the mean value, standing at 35.9% of Tunisians. The **unemployment rate** stands at 19.9% (vs 14.3% for the non-EU population as a whole). This community displays a very wide gap between the male and female employment rates (73.2% and 12.5%, respectively). Indeed, the low incidence of employed females is a driver behind the lower index value as a whole vs the non-EU mean.

Tunisian workers make up a major quotient of those in receipt of **wage subsidies** made over by INPS (the National Social Security Institute) in the event of interruptions or reduction of production. In 2018, approx., 4% of the beneficiaries of CIGO (ordinary redundancy fund) or CIGS (extraordinary redundancy fund) arrangements, with non-European citizenship, were Tunisian (1,950). The quotient is also high for Tunisian citizen recipients of unemployment benefits, vs the total for non-EU beneficiaries: 4.1% (18,422). The Tunisian citizens mainly benefit from Naspi (*Nuova Prestazione di assicurazione sociale per l'impiego*, a social employment insurance scheme) (53.5%) and agricultural unemployment benefits (45.9%), while the remaining portion are in receipt of various other forms of compensation.

During 2018, **47,246 new employment relationships** were activated for citizens of Tunisian origin (approx. 7% more than the previous year). Indicating that women from this community are drawn to the labour market to a decidedly lesser extent than men, the data provided by the *Comunicazioni Obbligatorie* (mandatory notices) reveal that only 13.3% of Tunisian citizens recruited are women (vs 46% for non-EU citizens as a whole). Most of the new subordinate and para-subordinate jobs that began during 2018 for Tunisian workers were in the *agriculture* sector (51%). Gender analysis indicates that more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the work contracts activated with men regard this sector while, for women, the levels approach 70%

For the Tunisian community, we note the absolute prevalence of *unskilled workers engaging in farming, gardening activities etc.* (1/2 of the Tunisian workers) Numerically speaking, we then note the incidence among Tunisians of *managers and other catering workers* (7.7%).

Lastly, involvement of the community in question in **the world of entrepreneurship** is most significant. Indeed, with its 14,668 sole proprietors, this community ranks eighth in terms of number of companies. The construction sector is the sector within which most investment takes place, for Tunisian entrepreneurs. Indeed, 52% of sole proprietors under Tunisian ownership operate in this sector, these undertakings representing approx. 10% of non-EU companies within this ambit.

Economic conditions

On analysis of remuneration of non-EU employees, it is noted that Tunisian workers' **monthly remuneration** is higher on average than that of non-EU workers as a whole: 1,200 euros vs 1,166 euros (i.e. a 34-euro higher salary). Turning to agricultural labourers, the difference is negative, with a 79-euro gap. The gap for home helpers is likewise negative for Tunisian workers, who on average earn 67 euros less than non-EU workers as a whole. We note, in any case, that Tunisian women are at a disadvantage in regard to earnings. Indeed, the gender pay gap is fairly wide among employees, with mean monthly salaries for males more than 512 euros higher than for females. The gap narrows for agricultural work (77 euros). In the ambit of home help, instead, females receive more pay (34 euros) than Tunisian males.

Among employed Tunisian citizens in Italy, a medium-low level of education prevails. 75.5% of Tunisian workers hold at best a junior secondary school leaving certificate vs 61% the non-EU population as a whole.

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% of IVS pensions are linked to disability. In the Tunisian community, disability pensions prevail, with an instance of 52.8%, followed by survivors' pensions (30.2%). 17% are old-age pensions. Overall, with its 1,733 IVS pensions, the Tunisian community accounts for 3.1% of the total for non-EU citizens who are in receipt of such benefits. Between 2017 and 2018, the numbers of IVS pensions for Tunisian migrants rose, but slightly less markedly than among non-EU citizens as a whole: +9% vs +13%. The Tunisians in receipt of old-age pensions rose in number by 16% (vs 18% for the non-EU population as a whole).

The level of **social assistance measures** provided by INPS to Tunisian citizens (solely welfare services for the most vulnerable, due to age conditions reached or civil disability) stands at 2,809 beneficiaries (3% of recipients of non-EU origin). 40.2% consist in constant attendance supplements; 39.4% are civil disability pensions; and 1/5 are social benefits.

With reference to **monetary transfers** to families (maternity benefits, parental leave and family allowances provided by INPS), in 2018 a total of 321,157 women received maternity benefits, 8.8% of whom were non-EU citizens (28,414) (7.6% less than the year before). During the same period, the beneficiaries of maternity allowances with Tunisian citizenship totalled 372, or 1.3% of non-EU female beneficiaries. The number of Tunisian beneficiaries fell by 6.5% vs 2017. As to parental leave, in 2018 there were a total of 344,529 such beneficiaries, denoting a 6.2% increase vs 2017, 6.8% of whom were of non-EU origin (23,445). A total of 896 Tunisian nationals benefited from this measure in 2018 (3.8% of non-EU beneficiaries). The benefit that is most frequently received consists in family allowances. During 2018, as many as 2,836,868 beneficiaries were in receipt of family allowances (a value that was basically stable vs the year before). 12.4% of the beneficiaries were non-EU citizens (approx. 353,000) denoting a 3.7% increase on 2017. 12,836 members of this community were in receipt of family allowances in 2018 (3.6% of non-EU citizens as a whole; +3.8% on 2017).

As to transfers made by the Tunisians in Italy to their country of origin, Tunisia ranks **twentieth** as nation of **destination of remittances** sent from Italy in 2018 (approx. 55 million euros), accounting for 1% of the total outgoing remittances (+8 million vs 2017).

