



THE BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY IN ITALY

Annual Report on the Presence of Migrants
Executive Summary



20
20

For nearly a decade, the *Direzione Generale dell'immigrazione e delle politiche di integrazione* (Generale Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies) 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) (tenth edition), the *Rapporti nazionali sulla presenza in Italia delle principali Comunità straniere* (National reports on the main foreign communities in Italy) (ninth 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) (fifth 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, 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 dimensions are considered, alongside presence of minors and their education, occupational integration and welfare policies. Each report starts with comparison among the various communities. The data used for the analysis relate to periods prior to the spread of the SARS-COV-2 virus. Therefore, this edition of the reports does not provide for an overview of the effects of the pandemic crisis on the social and labour integration of migrants.

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.

The full series of *Rapporti Comunità* (community reports), editions 2012 - 2020, can be accessed – in Italian and in the main foreign languages – in the section “*Studi e statistiche*” (Studies and Statistics) on the institutional website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – www.lavoro.gov.it and on the institutional portal www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it. This addresses also provide 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 projects, *Assistenza tecnica per il Supporto alla governance integrata delle politiche migratorie tra lavoro e integrazione sociale* (PR.Au.D. - *Protezione, Autonomia, Dignità dal lavoro*) and *Supporto nelle politiche per l'immigrazione e di cooperazione bilaterale con i Paesi di origine*, ANPAL Servizi has drawn up and translated the 2020 edition of its *Rapporti nazionali sulle principali Comunità straniere* (National reports on the main foreign communities) – analytic reports provided in summary form.

Executive Summary



148,389
Legally residing Bangladeshi citizens
ranking seventh for number of presences

4.1% of non-EU citizens as a whole



29.8%
women

70.2%
men



33,287
Minors under the age of 18
965 unaccompanied minors (+258.7%)


28% Lazio
16.2% Lombardia
13.5% Veneto

42.5% short-term permits

57.5% Long-term residents


- Work
- Family
- Other reasons

61.4% employment rate
83.5% male 10.7% female

28.9% employed  in the **Commerce**

38.2% workers engaged in **sales**

Ranking fourth for number of sole proprietorships (8%)



30,682 sole proprietors (-1.9%)
7.3% Bangladeshi female sole proprietors (+6.5%)

64.4% sole proprietorships in the **Commerce and Transport** sector

Demographic characteristics

As on **1 January 2020**, **148,389** Bangladeshi citizens were legally residing in Italy, i.e., 4.1% of non-EU citizens as a whole.

On analysis of the main demographic characteristics of Bangladeshi citizens legally residing in Italy as on 1 January 2020, we note the following:

- a marked **gender imbalance**, the male and female components standing at 70.2% and 29.8%, respectively, this latter quotient lower than that for non-EU citizens as a whole (49%) by approx. 19%;
- the mean age for this community is lower than that observed in non-EU citizens as a whole. (28.9 years vs 34.2 years). A significant quotient of minors. 45.4% are under the age of 30 (vs 39.7% of non-EU citizens as a whole), a percentage which rises to 58.6% when considering only women (vs 36.8% of women from Third Countries as a whole).

On the other hand, the presence of minors is mainly balanced vs the average of non-EU citizens. Minors represent the prevailing age group in this community: 22.4% vs 22% of the non-EU population as a whole. A gender analysis shows that the incidence of minors on the total of Bangladeshi women stands at 35.8%, while for men the value drops to 16.8%.

As for geographical distribution, the community examined here favours Northern Italy, which hosts 5 Bangladeshi citizens out of 10. However, this value is significantly lower than that recorded for the non-EU population as a whole (47% vs 61.5%). Indeed, two of the top three regions for numbers of Bangladeshis are Northern Italian: Lombardia ranks second for number of Bangladeshi citizens (the region hosts 1/6 of residents and ¼ of non-EU residents as a whole); Veneto (ranking third for number of Bangladeshi citizens) presents with an incidence of 13.5% (the incidence for non-EU citizens as a whole falls to 10.2%). The presence in the regions of Central Italy is significant, where 36.8% of the community resides (vs 24% of citizens from third countries as a whole). The Lazio region ranks first as it hosts most Bangladeshi citizens residing in Italy and presents with 28% of this community, especially in the Metropolitan area of Rome (26.8%), where Bangladeshi citizens represent the second community in terms of number of presences. Noteworthy is the concentration in the metropolitan city of Roma Capitale, hosting the largest community of Bangladeshis in Italy. The levels for Southern Italy are also significant, standing at 16.2% (a value higher than non-EU citizens as a whole). In particular, the Campania region hosts 6% of the Bangladeshi community while Sicily hosts 5.8%.

Analysis of **residence permits** as on 1 January 2020 indicates that the process of stabilisation is still at an early stage: the quotient of **long-term permit holders** (holders of residence permits not subject to renewal) among Bangladeshi citizens stands at **57.5%** (vs 63.1% for non-EU citizens as a whole). Moreover, although short-term permits are mainly issued for family reasons, they reach a significantly lower incidence compared to the non-EU population as a whole (43% vs 46.7%). On the other hand, job represents the second reason for staying and concern 32.8% of migrants belonging to this community. The quotient of residence permits linked to the possession or request for a form of protection is significant and stands at 23.1% compared to approx. 16% recorded for non-EU citizens as a whole; however, this value is more than 3% lower compared to the previous year.

Current trends

For the first time, after years of stability in the presences, we note a significant reduction in the number of legally residing members compared to the previous year: -2.7%. The presence of non-EU citizens in Italy decreased by 101,580 units between 1 January 2019 and 1 January 2020. The reduction concerns all the main foreign communities with the exception of Indian and Bangladeshi which record increases of 1.7% and 1.8%, respectively. The most significant reductions concern the Nigerian community (-8.2%), which from ranking eleventh now ranks fourteenth, the Ecuadorian community (-6.2%) and the Chinese community (-5.3%).

Two main opposite factors affect the trends of presences: on the one hand, the new permits issued attesting to an inflow impacting the stock of legally residing members, and, on the other, the granting of citizenship (which latter practice entail a replacement effect in the statistics as those who become Italian citizens are removed from the stock of foreign citizens).

Turning to admissions, 2019 marks a negative record with approx. 177 thousand new residence permits, 26% less vs 2018; this is the most significant reduction recorded since 2012 and the first six months of 2020 seem to consolidate the negative trend, with a further decrease of 57.7% vs the same period of 2019¹. The reduction concerns all reasons for admissions, and it is particularly relevant for permits ascribable to the request or possession of a form of protection: -57.5%. This is a value ascribable to the sharp reduction of the so-called "unexpected flows", with a sharp decline in the number of migrants landed on the Italian coasts: 11,471 in 2019, i.e., 51% less than 2018 and 90.4% less than 2017².

The growth trend in the quotient of new permits issued for family reunification consolidates, thus reaching 56.9% of admissions in 2019 (vs approx. 51% in 2018), while the percentage relating to the request or possession of a form of protection decreases: 15.6% of new permits³ vs 28.8% in 2018. The percentage relating to study reasons (11.5% vs 9.1% in 2018) and work reasons (6.4% vs 6% in 2018) is slightly on the rise. On the other hand, the failure to plan entry flows for job purposes, with the exception of seasonal work, has now led to a sharp decrease in new permits issued for this reason.

As noted above, the Bangladeshi and the Indian communities are the only one recording an increase vs 1 January 2019: the number of legally resident members of the community has increased by 1.8% as a result of new admissions. The community ranks fifth in terms of the number of new residence permits issued in 2019: 9,934, i.e., 5.6% of the total. In the overwhelming majority of cases (approx. 72%) the new residence permits for Bangladeshi citizens were issued for family reasons, while about 1/4 are connected to the request or possession of a form of protection. This value is significantly higher than the value recorded for non-EU citizens as a whole (15.6%).

Minors and educational paths

As on 1 January 2020, the **minors of Bangladeshi origin totalled 33,287** (4.2% of non-EU minors as a whole). Furthermore, many of these minors were born in Italy, with a significant increase in births for this community: +18.2%, from 2,324 in 2017 to 2,748 in 2018. Between 2010 and 2018, more than 513,000 Bangladeshi children with non-EU citizenship were born in Italy, more than 21,000 (approx. 45) of which with Bangladeshi citizenship.

In this community, there are many **Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (UFMs)**. Indeed, Bangladesh ranks as second country of origin. As on 31 August 2020, there were **965** minors of Bangladeshi origin hosted in ad hoc facilities (17% of the unaccompanied foreign minors receiving care in Italy). Compared with the previous year, the incidence has increased by 258.7%.

Admission of minors of Bangladeshi origin into the Italian schooling circuit is rather low. Bangladesh ranks twelfth as country of origin of non-EU students. 20,647 students enrolled for academic year 2019/2020 (3% of the non-EU student population as a whole). However, compared with the previous year, community students increased significantly more than the overall non-community school population (+16.4% vs +2.6%). Students mainly enrolled in secondary schools: +21.1% in junior secondary schools and +19.1% in senior secondary schools. The incidence of students from this community vs non-EU students as a whole is higher in preschool institutions (3.9% of the enrolled are Bangladeshi citizens) and is lower in senior secondary schools (falling to 1.7%). There is also a limited presence of students in universities, where the 419 Bangladeshi students represent only 0.6% of the non-EU academic population.

¹ Istat, *Cittadini non comunitari in Italia*, Statistica Report (Non-EU citizens in Italy, Statistics Report), October 2020.

² http://www.libertacivilimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/allegati/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_31-12-2019.pdf

³ In all likelihood, the reduction in the number of permits linked to the possession of a form of protection is affected by the entry into force of the decree-law no. 113/2018 from 5 October 2018, converted with amendments by Law no. 132/2018, which abolished the residence permit for humanitarian reasons, replacing it, only under certain specific conditions, with some residence permits for "special circumstances".

Young people aged between 15 and 29 belonging to this community who are out of the education and training circuits and who are also unemployed (**NEETs**) make up a quotient that is decidedly higher than the mean for non-EU youngsters. The NEET rate among young Bangladeshi citizens is 40.4% vs a mean of 33.1%. Females are those mainly excluded from job and training. Their NEET rate is 75.8% (vs 43.5% recorded for non-EU citizens as a whole) while for male the value stands at 13%.

Work and employment

The Bangladeshi community is active in key sectors of Italy's economic life, such as commerce and catering and industry. However, the distribution of workers of Bangladeshi origin among the various sectors of the economy differs significantly from that noted for non-EU citizens as a whole. We note a marked involvement of this community in the *Commerce and catering* sector, which, as a sector is indeed the prevailing source of employment: more than 1/2 of the Bangladeshi working population (58%), vs 24% of non-EU citizens as a whole. The quotient of Bangladeshi workers employed in industry is also most significant, standing at 26% of this community's workers (vs 27% of non-EU citizens as a whole). The data available on the labour market reveal that the employment conditions of the Bangladeshi community in Italy is better than those of non-EU citizens as a whole: we note a **higher employment rate** (61.4% vs 60.1%) and lower unemployment levels (8.9% vs 13.8%); the inactivity rate is the only indicator which stands at a slightly higher level (32.6% vs 30.2%). The latter indicator shows the poor involvement of women in the labour market. Within the community there are considerable differences between employment levels for men and women, and hence large gaps in relation to inactivity rates. The employment rate, which for men in the community stands at 83.5%, drops to 10.7% for women, while the unemployment rate stands at 7.1% for men and 32.6% for women. However, the most worrisome indicator is probably inactivity: 84.1% for women vs 10.1% for men. This community ranks second among the main non-EU communities, after the Pakistani community, for the highest rate of female inactivity.

Bangladeshi workers are not among the main beneficiaries of the **wage subsidies** granted by INPS (the National Social Security Institute) in the event of interruptions or reduction of production. In 2019, only 1.4% of the beneficiaries of CIGO (ordinary redundancy fund) or CIGS (extraordinary redundancy fund) arrangements, with non-European citizenship were Bangladeshi (700). The quotient is slightly higher for Bangladeshi citizens as beneficiaries of unemployment benefits, vs the total for non-EU beneficiaries: 3.5% (16,586). The Bangladeshi citizens mainly benefit from NASPI (*Nuova Prestazione di Assicurazione Sociale per l'impiego*, a social employment insurance scheme) (more than 90%); 8.8% are granted agricultural unemployment benefits, while the remaining portion are granted mobility allowance.

During 2019, 79,316 new employment relationships were activated for citizens of Bangladeshi origin (5% of new employment relationships of non-EU citizens). While confirming that women from this community are drawn to the labour market way less than men, the data provided by the *Comunicazioni Obbligatorie* (mandatory notices) reveal that only 3% of Bangladeshi citizens recruited are women (vs 31.3% for non-EU citizens as a whole). Most of the new subordinate and para-subordinate jobs that began during 2019 for Bangladeshi workers were in the Services sector (a level approaching 68.4%). Gender analysis indicates that for women this level rises to 85.8%

For the Bangladeshi community, we note the prevalence of workers engaged in sales and personal services (38% of Bangladeshi workers). We then note *unskilled workers* (involving 33% of Bangladeshi workers vs 36% of non-EU citizens as a whole). The quotient of skilled manual workers, on the other hand, stands at a slightly lower level than the workers from third countries as a whole (26% vs 28%), while the incidence for managers and professionals in the intellectual and technical fields stands at 3%.

Involvement of this community in the **world of entrepreneurship** appears to be most significant. Indeed, with its 30,682 sole proprietorships, this community ranks fourth in terms of number of sole proprietorships (8% of non-EU sole proprietorships as a whole, i.e., 1.9% less than the previous year). The *Commerce and transport* sector is once again the sector where most investment by Bangladeshi entrepreneurs takes place. 64.4% of sole proprietorships under Bangladeshi ownership operate in this sector. These companies represent approx. 12% of non-EU companies within this ambit.

Socio-economic conditions

Employment in the commercial and industrial sectors exposes the workers belonging to this community to negative repercussions in terms of incomes. The data indicate that Bangladeshi workers earn **monthly salaries** that are on average lower than those of non-EU workers as a whole: employed Bangladeshis earn 1,024 vs 1,191 euros for non-EU workers as a whole (i.e., 170 euros lower mean monthly remuneration). In the case of agricultural labourers, the gap stands at 80 euros. A more significant gap may be noted within the ambit of domestic work. Here, Bangladeshi workers earn 153 euros less than the average for non-EU workers as a whole. Female Bangladeshi workers also lose out when it comes to pay conditions: the gender pay gap within this community is fairly large; on average, the monthly salary of male employees exceeds that of female employees by more than 400 euros. The gap is reversed for other typologies of work (for home help, the gap favouring women stands at a mean of 100 euros and in agriculture 17 euros).

Among employed Bangladeshi citizens in Italy, a medium-low level of education prevails. Approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ of the workers belonging to this community received, at best, a junior secondary school leaving certificate (73.6%: more than 14% higher than for the non-EU population as a whole) 16.2% hold a senior secondary school leaving certificate, while 10.5% hold a higher education certificate (vs. 11.4% of non-EU citizens as a whole).

The quotient of INPS benefits (solely assistance for the vulnerable, old-age and civilian invalidity) made over to Bangladeshi citizens is rather small: 1,348 (1.4% of such benefits for non-EU migrants). 54% of the instances regard constant attendance or similar supplements, 41.5% regard disability pensions, and approx. 4% regard social benefits.

As for parental leave, in 2019 the beneficiaries totalled 299,028 (-10.3% vs 2018), 7.2% of which of non-EU origin (21,564). 444 Bangladeshi citizens benefited from this measure in 2019 (approx. 2% of non-EU citizens). This community also experienced a 3.9% decrease vs the year before.

A greater number of people benefit from family allowances: in 2019 there were 2,446,795 beneficiaries, a (-13.8% vs the year before). 12.5% of the beneficiaries are non-EU citizens (305,000), - 13.5% vs 2018. Within this community, we note 11,039 beneficiaries of family allowances in 2019 (3.6% of non-EU citizens as a whole). Also, for the Bangladeshi community their number decreased vs 2018 (-14.2%).

As to transfers made by the Bangladeshis in Italy to their country of origin, Bangladesh ranks first as nation of destination of **remittances** sent from Italy in 2019 (more than 813 million euros), accounting for 1/6 of the total remittances to Third Countries (+15.2% vs 2018).

