PRAGUE PROCESS
ПРАЖСКИЙ ПРОЦЕСС



Italy

General Information

Population

58 915 656 (World Bank 2025)

58 971 230 (STAT IT 2024)

Immigration

6 553 671 (UN Immigration Stock 2024)

434 579 (STAT IT 2024)

Emigration

2 941 444 (UN Emigration Stock 2024)

190 967 (STAT IT 2024)

Working-age population

37 261 028 (World Bank 2025)

37 341 839 (STAT IT 2025)

Unemployment rate

6.1 % (World Bank 2025)

5.9 % (STAT IT 2025)

GDP

2 551 556 954 100.4 current prices USD (World Bank 2025)

2 192 181 600 000 current prices EUR (STAT IT 2024)

Refugees, Asylum seekers, IDPs

Refugees

192 914 (UNHCR 2025)

Asylum Seekers

234 144 (UNHCR 2025)

218 175 (EUROSTAT 2025)

IDPs

0 (UNHCR 2025)

9 400 (IDMC 2024)

Citizenship

By Birth

No (GLOBALCIT 2024)

By Descent

Yes (GLOBALCIT 2024)

Years of Residency

10 years of residence required (GLOBALCIT 2024)

Territory

301 340 km^2 (CIA World Factbook)

Data from international sources is updated automatically as it becomes available.

Migration Authorities

Responsible Body

Ministry of Interior

Line Ministries

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Labour and Social Policies

Agencies

Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration

The Central Directorate for Immigration and Asylum Policies

The Register of Italians Residing Abroad (A.I.R.E.)

Directorate-General for Immigration and integration policies

National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI)

Key Policy Documents

Protocol between the Government of the Italian Republic and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania for the strengthening of cooperation in the field of migration

Law 74/2025, Conversion into law, with amendments, of the Decree-Law of 28 March 2025, no. 36, containing urgent provisions on citizenship

Law 187/2024, Conversion into law, with amendments, of the Decree-Law of 11 October 2024, no. 145, containing urgent provisions on entry into Italy of foreign workers, protection and assistance to victims of caporalato, management of migration flows and protection as well as the related judicial proceedings

Decree 2024, Updated list of safe countries of origin Article 2-bis of Legislative Decree No. 25 of 28 January 2008.

Decree Law 20/2023, Urgent provisions on legal entry flows of foreign workers and the prevention and fight against irregular immigration

Decree Law 1/2023, Urgent provisions for the management of migration flows

Decree Law 77/2020, Urgent measures on health, labour and economic support, and social policies related to the epidemiological emergency from COVID-19

Decree Law 130/2020, Urgent provisions on immigration, international and complementary protection

Decree Law 113/2018, Urgent provisions on international protection, immigration and public security

Decree Law 46/2017, provisions for the acceleration of international protection proceedings, as well as for the fight against illegal immigration

Decree Law 142/2015, implementing the EU Directive 2013/33 and 2013/32

Decree Law 24/2014, transposition of EU Directive 2011/36

Decree Law 25/2008, transposition of EU Directive 2005/8

Decree Law 251/2007, transposition of EU Directive 2004/83

Decree Law 140/2005, transposition of EU Directive 2003/9

Decree 189/2002, Amendment to immigration and asylum law

Decree Law 286/1998, Consolidated text of provisions concerning immigration regulations and norms on the status of foreigners

Relevant Publications

Exploring the Potential of Digitalisation in Migration Management in the Prague Process Region

Digitalisation and labour migration: the use of modern technology, challenges and opportunities

How will migration to Europe look in the Future?

The Impact of COVID-19 on Ukrainian Labour Migrants in Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Italy

Intra-corporate Transferees (ICTs): The benefits for the EU and the opportunity cost

ENIGMMA 2 Case Study: Georgian Diaspora in Greece, Italy and Spain

Pathways and Policy Evolution: Comparing national laws and policies addressing irregular migrants (2024)

Diaspora Legislation and Engagement Policies in Lebanon, India, Ireland and Italy (2021)

Italy is a long-standing country of emigration, while immigration has become a demographically significant phenomenon only in the early years of the 21st century. The country's resident population, nearing 59 million in 2025, is ageing, experiencing low fertility, and steadily declining, notwithstanding the growing share of foreign residents.

In 2024, approximately 191,000 people left Italy, of these only 18% were foreigners. Over the past 15 years, the stock of Italians living abroad has increased by over 97,5%, to more than 6.1 million in 2024, representing 10.3% of Italy's total resident population. Most of them live in Europe, especially in Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom; or America, with Brazil, the United States, and Argentina as key destinations. The majority are young people between 18 and 34 years old and highly educated.

As of January 2025, the total foreign resident population in Italy was 5.4 million – with a nearly equal share of men and women – marking a 3,2% increase from the previous year and a 8.5% increase compared to 2019. The largest community comes from Romania, representing 20% of foreign residents. Among the non-EU nationals who make up 73% of foreign residents, the most populous groups come from Albania, Morocco, China, Ukraine and Bangladesh. The majority of immigrants live in the country's north-west regions, particularly Lombardy (23%), followed by Lazio (12%) and Emilia Romagna (11%).

In 2023, 389,542 non-EU nationals received their first permits in Italy, 15.3% more than in 2022. Of these, about 35% were granted for family reasons, primarily to nationals of Albania and Morocco, 7% for educational reasons, mainly to nationals of Iran and China, 10% for employment reasons, with India and Morocco as top countries of origins; and the remaining 48% for 'other' reasons. By the end of 2023, the number of non-EU holders of valid residence permits in Italy exceeded 3.7 million, predominantly issued for family and employment purposes (45.8% and 42.5%, respectively).

In the context of Italy's ageing population and demographic decline, labour migration plays an increasingly vital role in sustaining the workforce and supporting key economic sectors. According to EURES, in 2023, some 15% of the workforce in Italy consisted of foreigners, with 4.2% from EU Member States and 10.9 % from non-EU countries. They also face higher unemployment rates, especially among youth and women. To manage labour migration, the Italian government annually establishes entry quotas for non-EU foreign through an ad-hoc Flows Decree. The decree sets specific quotas for seasonal, self-employed and non-seasonal employed workers. Quotas are also set for converting existing residence permits, from study to work and from seasonal work to non-seasonal employment. In 2024, Italy's Flows Decree raised the entry cap to 151,000 (61,250 non-seasonal, 89,050 seasonal, 700 self-employed), up from 136,000 in 2023; the 2025 quota will rise to 165,000, and a draft 2026-28 decree envisions 497,550 work visas overall. Despite these measures, Italy continued to report considerable labour shortages in 2025.

Located at the heart of the Mediterranean Sea and bordering the Balkans region, Italy serves as a major entry point to Europe. Thousands of asylum seekers and migrants from Africa and Asia reach its shores each year, often by sea or through rescue operations in the Sicily Channel. In 2024, 66,617 persons had disembarked in Italy, down from over 150,000 arrivals in 2023 and over 100,000 in 2022. Most arrivals come from Bangladesh, Eritrea, Pakistan and Egypt, with children accounting for 18.6% of them. In 2024, 108,925 non-EU nationals were found to be illegally present in Italy, a decrease compared to 2022 and 2023, possibly linked to tighter border controls. That year, 27,970 individuals were ordered to leave, and 4,480 were returned to their country of origin. Many irregular migrants are transiting onward to France, Switzerland and Germany.

As of June 2024, Italy hosted 312,849 refugees and 207,278 asylum seekers. Most of them come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria. In the course of 2024, 158,605 people applied for asylum in Italy and 78,565 first-instance decisions were issued. While the number of negative decisions doubled compared to 2023, the share of those granted protection rose, exceeding 28,000 people in 2024, up from 22,000 in 2023. This included 11,500 people granted special protection for humanitarian reasons, a slight increase from the previous year. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Italy activated temporary protection under the EU framework. As of mid-April 2025, 166,380 displaced people from Ukraine were present in Italy – 3.9% of the EU total.

Since 2019, over 8,200 refugees have been relocated to Italy and France from Jordan, Lebanon, Niger, and Ethiopia via the Humanitarian Corridors programme. In 2025, 700 Afghan nationals are expected to arrive under the same scheme. In December 2023, Italy launched a humanitarian corridor from Libya to transfer, in partnership with UNHCR, 1,500 highly vulnerable individuals over three years via a community sponsorship scheme. However, only 216 people reached Italy over this route in 2024.

Italy has adopted most major international conventions, including the UN Human Rights treaties, ILO Conventions and the Global Compact on Refugees. It has concluded various cooperation agreements with ministries, community and religious organizations, universities in non-EU countries, and partners such as UNHCR. It established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, and the Tavola Valdese to facilitate humanitarian corridors for refugees.

Most recently, Italy has been working on the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum and pushed for an EU-level list of safe countries of origin. Domestically, the government has introduced reforms aimed at both facilitating regular migration and deterring irregular arrivals. These include extending the required legal residence period for spouse/parent family reunification to two uninterrupted years (with stricter housing standards), and establishing a special renewable residence permit for victims of labour exploitation who cooperate with the judiciary. A December 2024 law tightened access to reception centres for asylum seekers who file their claims more than 90 days after arrival, while prioritising those rescued at sea over land or air arrivals. Seeking additional deterrence measures, Italy signed a five-year agreement with Albania in late 2023 to build Italian-run processing centres in Shengjin and Gjader, with the capacity to handle up to 36,000 migrants annually. Transfers of rejected asylum seekers under this scheme have already began, in parallel with broader EU discussions on establishing return hubs in third countries. In May 2025, Italy enacted a more restrictive citizenship law. Eligibility by descent is now limited to individuals with a parent or grandparent born in Italy, ending access for those with more distant ancestors. The law also introduces a requirement for a "genuine link" to Italy, such as two years of residency either after acquiring citizenship and prior to the applicant's birth or adoption.

Italy is the party to the Prague Process, Budapest Process, as well as Rabat and Khartoum Processes.

latest update: 26 August 2025