

The foreign population resident in Italy

On 1 January 2010

There were 4,235,059 foreign citizens residing in Italy on 1 January 2010, equal to 7.0% of the total residents, while on 1 January 2009 they represented 6.5%. During 2009 the number of foreigners increased by 343,764 units (+8.8%), an increase that is still very high even though lower than that of two years previously (494 thousand in 2007 and 459 thousand in 2008, respectively +16.8% and +13.4%), mainly because of lower entries from Romania.

There are 932,675 minors, 22.0% of the total of resident foreigners; around 573 thousand were born in Italy, while the remainder entered our country because of family reunification. The minors born in Italy represent the “second generation”, foreigners because children of foreign parents, but not immigrants.

Around half of the foreign residents (2 million 86 thousand individuals, equal to 49.3% of the total) comes from Eastern European countries: in particular, around a quarter comes from new EU countries (1 million 71 thousand, excluding Cyprus and Malta, among which 888 thousand from Romania alone); another quarter (1 million 15 thousand) is represented by citizens from Eastern European countries that are not part of the EU.

Citizens from Eastern European countries (+181 thousand during 2009, +9.5%) contribute by around a half even to the increase in resident foreigners: those from new EU countries have grown in total by around 105 thousand units (+10.9%), while those from Eastern European countries that do not belong to the EU have increased by 76 thousand units (+8.1%). Citizens from Asian countries have grown in total by 71 thousand units, an increase of 11.6%.

People from Eastern Europe and the Indian subcontinent caused the figures to rise most rapidly during the last year: some of the main countries are, in order, +18.1% Moldova, +17.1% Pakistan, +15.3% India and +13.1% Ukraine.

The increase of 13.0% in citizens from Peru, caused probably by the current regularisation of domestic work (which also explains the notable increase in citizens from Moldova) should be highlighted.

More than 60% of foreign citizens resident in Italy live in the North, 25.3% in Central Italy and the remaining 13.1% in the South, even if in 2009 the foreign population grew more intensely in the South than in the Centre-North. This was caused above all by Romanian and Bulgarian citizens, who recorded double increases (around 20%) in the South in comparison with those in the Centre-North (10%), but also Moroccan and Sri Lankan citizens, the increase of which is 3 to 5 percentage points higher in the South than in the Centre-North.

Table 1- Foreign population resident in Italy and demographic balance – Years 2003-2009

Years	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
FOREIGNERS RESIDENT ON 1 JANUARY	1,549,373	1,990,159	2,402,157	2,670,514	2,938,922	3,432,651	3,891,295
Births	33,691	48,925	51,971	57,765	64,049	72,472	77,109
Deaths	2,559	2,931	3,133	3,447	3,670	4,278	4,768
- Natural balance	31,132	45,994	48,838	54,318	60,379	68,194	72,341
Registered from abroad	424,856	394,756	282,780	254,588	515,201	496,549	406,725
Cancelled for abroad	12,886	14,019	15,951	16,974	20,316	27,023	32,270
- Migration balance with abroad	411,970	380,737	266,829	237,614	494,885	469,526	374,455
- Other places balance (a)	14,889	4,407	- 18,651	11,742	-16,050	-25,380	-43,663
- Acquisition of Italian citizenship	17,205	19,140	28,659	35,266	45,485	53,696	59,369
TOTAL BALANCE	440,786	411,998	268,357	268,408	493,729	458,644	343,764
RESIDENT FOREIGNERS ON 31 DECEMBER	1,990,159	2,402,157	2,670,514	2,938,922	3,432,651	3,891,295	4,235,059
<i>Variation between start and end of year (%)</i>	28.4	20.7	11.2	10.1	16.8	13.4	8.8
<i>Incidence of foreign population at end of year (%)</i>	3.4	4.1	4.5	5.0	5.8	6.5	7.0
MINORS (b)	412,432	501,792	585,496	665,625	760,733	857,591	932,675
<i>Minors (%)</i>	20.7	20.9	21.9	22.6	22.3	22.2	22.0
FOREIGNERS BORN IN ITALY (c)	-	-	-	398,205	457,345	518,700	572,720
<i>Second generation (%)</i>	-	-	-	13.5	13.3	13.3	13.5

(a) Includes the internal migration balance, the census verification balance, the registering balance and that of cancellations for other reasons, cancellations for untraceableness (see Glossary).

(b) The data of the year 2009 are temporary.

(c) Given that the phenomenon of immigration is relatively recent in our Country, it is a good approximation that almost all the foreigners born in Italy (second generation) are minors.

For more detailed information please refer to the Italian version

Contact person:

Statistics on demographic structure and dynamics

ISTAT – Italian National Institute of Statistics

Viale Liegi 13 – 00198 Rome, Italy

Mauro Albani

tel. 06 4673.7215

Domenico Gabrielli

tel. 06 4673.7334