

NATIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC BALANCE | YEAR 2018

Resident population still decreasing

In 2018 population decline continued to be a key point for the fourth consecutive year: -400 thousand residents since 2015, an amount greater than the inhabitants of the seventh most populous municipality in Italy.

The same year was also characterized by **a minimum level of births, fewer deaths and fewer registrations from abroad compared with the previous year.**

The number of foreign citizens leaving our country slightly decreased (-0.8%), while the emigration of Italian citizens increased (+ 1.9%).

-0.2%

The resident population decreased by 124,427 units in 2018

60,359,546 people were resident in Italy, among which 8.7% of foreigners (at January 1st 2019)

-4.0%

The decrease in births in 2018 was over 18 thousand compared with 2017

439,747 children were registered in the birth register: new historical minimum

-3.2%

enrollments from abroad, mainly due to less foreign immigrants

Registrations from abroad were 332,324, over 11,000 less than in 2017.

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Demographic decline slowed by the growth of foreign citizens

Since 2015, the resident population has been decreasing, setting up a phase of demographic decline for the first time in the last 90 years. At 31 December 2018 the population amounted to 60,359,546 residents, over 124 thousand less than the previous year (-0.2%) and over 400 thousand less than four years earlier.

The decline is entirely due to the Italian population, which decrease, with respect to the previous year, to 55 million 104 thousand units at December 31, 2018, 235 thousand less than the previous year (-0.4%). The comparison with the same date in 2014, show a loss of Italian citizens (resident in Italy) equal to the disappearance of a city as large as Palermo (-677 thousand). It should also be considered that over the past four years, over 638 thousands new citizens have acquired citizenship. Without this contribution, the decline of Italians would have been around 1 million and 300 thousand units.

In the last four-years period, the simultaneous increase of over 241 thousand units of foreign citizens made it possible to contain the overall loss of residents. At December 31, 2018, there were 5,255,503 foreign citizens registered in the registry; compared to 2017 they increased by 111 thousand (+ 2.2%), reaching 8.7% of the total resident population.

In the North-West one third of foreign residents

In 2018 the geographical distribution of the resident population was stable with respect to the previous years. The most populated areas of the country were the North-west (26.7% of the total population) and the South (23.1%), followed by the North-east (19.3%), the Center (19.9%) and the Islands (11.0%). The population increased only in the North-east (+0.10% compared with 2017). The greatest decreases, above the national average variation (-0.21%), were observed in the Islands (-0.53%) and in the South (-0.46%).

The foreign population resided predominantly in the North and in the Center (incidence of over 10% of the total residents). In the South the foreign presence remained more contained although growing: 4.6 foreign residents per hundred inhabitants in the South and 3.9 in the Islands.

The North-west had the primacy, in absolute terms, of foreign residents (1,764,305; 33.6% of foreigners). About one foreign citizen out of four resided in the regions of the North-East (23.9%), as well as in the regions of the Center (25.4%). The presence of foreign citizens in the South (12.2%) and in the Islands (4.9%) was more contained.

RESIDENT POPULATION BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS.

On 31 December 2017, absolute and percentage values

MAIN INDICATORS	North-west	North-east	Centre	South	Islands	Italy
Resident population						
Total (absolute values)	16,093,286	11,652,827	12,016,009	13,957,942	6,639,482	60,359,546
Of which foreigners (absolute values)	1,764,305	1,256,541	1,335,268	643,467	255,922	5,255,503
Of which foreigners (%)	11.0	10.8	11.1	4.6	3.9	8.7
Change (on 2017)						
Total (absolute values)	-2,020	11,975	-34,045	-64,654	-35,683	-124,427
Total (%)	-0.0	0.1	-0.3	-0.5	-0.5	-0.2
Of which foreigners (absolute values)	37,127	31,075	15,576	18,601	8,684	111,063
Of which foreigners (%)	2.1	2.5	1.2	3.0	3.5	2.2

More deaths than births except for Bolzano

In 2018 the difference between births and deaths (natural balance) was negative (-193 thousand units), except for the autonomous province of Bolzano.

At a national level, the natural growth rate (-3.2 per thousand) ranged from +1.7 per thousand in Bolzano to -8.5 per thousand in Liguria. Pronounced natural decrements (greater than 5 per thousand) were observed in Toscana, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Piemonte and Molise.

The birth deficit compared to deaths was exclusively due to Italians (-251 thousand units). In fact, the natural balance of foreign population was largely positive (+57.554), thanks to a higher birth rate and a very low mortality rate, due to the young age of the population. The natural growth rate of foreigners was equal to 11.1 per thousand. The highest value was recorded in Emilia-Romagna (13.8 per thousand), the lowest in Sardegna (5.9 per thousand).

Negative record for births: the lowest level since the Constitution of the Italian State

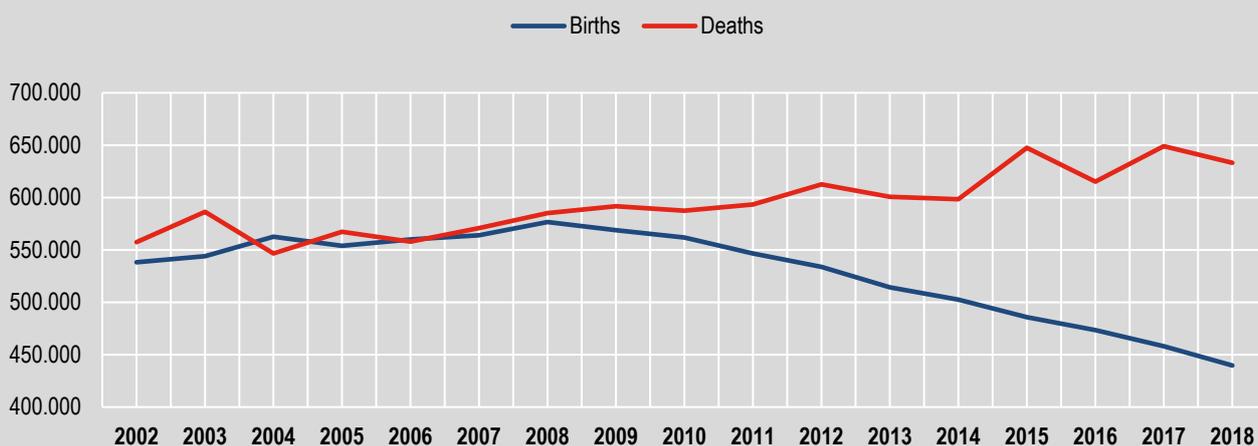
Since 2008 births continued to decline. Moreover, in 2015 the number of births decreased below half a million and in 2018 only 439,747 children were registered in the birth register, the historical minimum since the Constitution of the Italian State (-4.0% compared with 2017). The decrease was recorded in all the geographic areas but more pronounced in the Center (-5.1%).

The decrease was mainly due to a progressive reduction of potential mothers, both because of the exit of the baby boom generation and the entry of less numerous contingents, due to the prolonged decrease in births observed since the mid-1970s.

The increase in births recorded until 2008 was mainly due to foreign women, but in the last few years the number of foreigners born in Italy gradually started to decrease (65,444 in 2018; 14.9% of the total births). The decline was determined, among others, by decreasing female flows entering our country, foreign population ageing, the acquisition of Italian citizenship by many foreign womenⁱⁱ.

FIGURE 1. NATURAL MOVEMENT OF THE POPULATION. BIRTHS AND DEATHS

Years 2002-2018, absolute values



The births of foreign children were concentrated in the North-west (21.0%) and in the North-east (20.7%), where the foreign presence was more widespread and rooted: the highest percentage of foreign births was observed in Emilia-Romagna (24.3%), the lowest in Sardegna (4.5%).

The birth rate of the resident population was equal to 7.3 per thousand. Positive record for the autonomous province of Bolzano (10.0 per thousand) and negative record for Sardegna (5.7 per thousand) and Liguria (5.6 per thousand).

Decreasing Deaths

Deaths (633 thousand units) remained in line with the increasing trend recorded since 2012, but lowered in comparison to 2017 (-15 thousand), and expected due to an aging population. The fluctuations that occur from year to year are often linked to circumstances. The climatic conditions (particularly adverse or favorable) and the greater or lesser virulence of seasonal flu epidemics, for example, could influence the trend of the phenomenon as occurred in 2015 and 2017, years of a visible increase in deaths. The future evolution or not of deaths is tied with the ability of the Italian social-health system to protect the most fragile individuals from conjunctural and environmental risk conditions, with preventive and targeted care actions.

The decrease in the number of deaths was recorded in almost all the geographic areas, with a more consistent decrease in the Center (-4.3%) and in the South (-4.4%). In the North-West there was a slight increase in deaths (+0.4%).

The mortality rate was 10.5 per thousand and ranged from a minimum of 8.3 per thousand in the autonomous province of Bolzano to a maximum of 14.3 in Liguria, where linked to the age structure of the population.

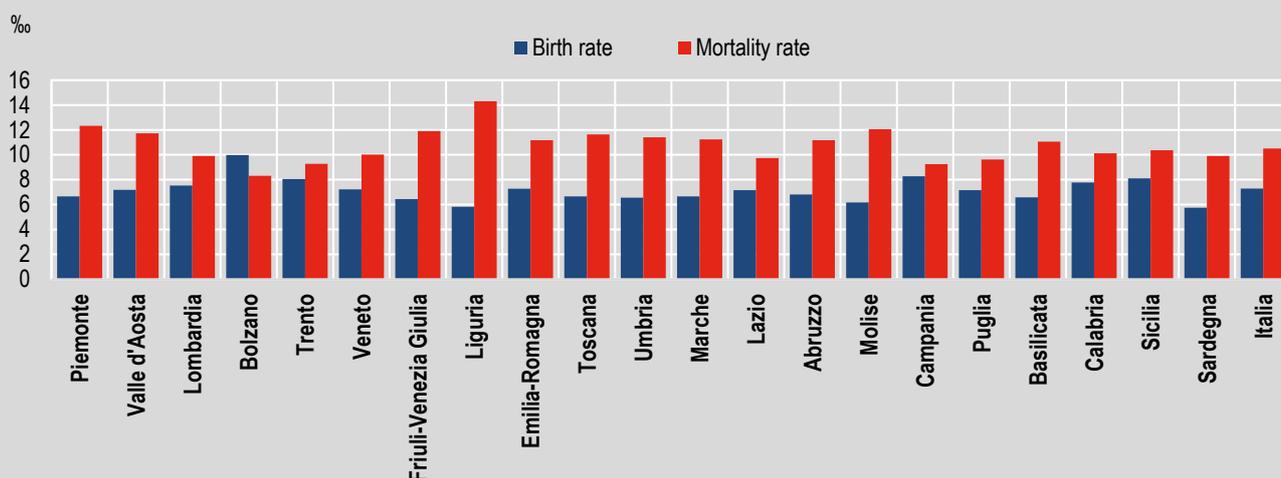
Still less registrations in the Registry Office from abroad

Registrations in the Registry Office from abroad fell from almost 500 thousand in 2008 to 332 thousand in 2018, while cancellations from the Registry Office for foreign countries increased consistently, from 80 thousand to 157 thousand in the decade. The migratory balance with foreign countries was therefore reduced to 175 thousand units in 2018.

In 2018, registrations from abroad decreased by 3.2% if compared with 2017. They were mainly foreign citizens (85.9%) even if Italians coming back home were increasing (+10.5%). It was mainly men who chose to move to Italy (55.7%), contrary to what happened throughout the previous decade, when women prevailed in the flow of entries from abroad.

FIGURE 2. BIRTH AND MORTALITY RATES BY REGIONS

Year 2018, rates per 1,000 residents



The number of people who left our country in 2018 is almost 157 thousand, with an increase of 2 thousand compared to 2017.

The number of foreign citizens leaving our country slightly decreases (-0.8%) while the emigration of Italian citizens (+ 1.9%) increases. Among these the number of Italians born abroad is considerable. In 2017 there were about 33,000 Italian emigrants abroad of foreign origin (28.6% of expatriates, + 18% compared to 2016)ⁱⁱⁱ. These are mainly foreign people who emigrate to a third country or return to their country of origin after spending a period in Italy and having acquired Italian citizenship. To these are also included the children, born in Italy, of the new Italian citizens who emigrate with the family nucleus.

The migratory balances for foreign countries show a negative balance for Italians (-70 thousand) and positive for foreigners (+245 thousand).

Stable the internal mobility

In 2018, internal changes of residence involved more than 1 million and 350 thousand people, and took place mainly from the South to the North and Center.

The internal migration rate ranged from -5.2 per thousand in Calabria and 3.5 per thousand in the autonomous province of Bolzano. All the regions of the South and the Islands showed negative values, as well as Marche and Umbria.

Foreigners residing in Italy have a greater propensity to mobility than Italians, but follow a similar direction. Although they represented 8.7% of the population, they generated 18.1% of internal movements.

Declining new Italian citizens

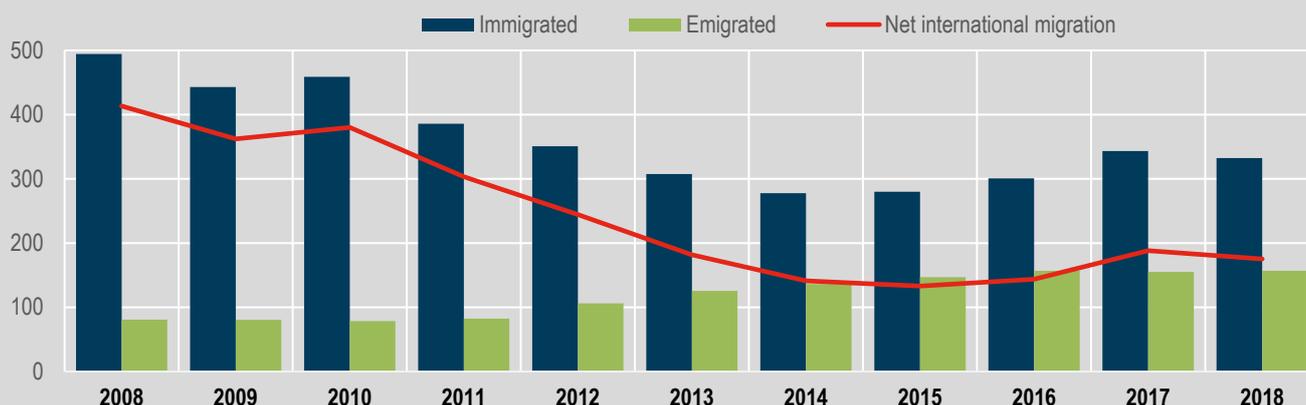
In 2018, foreign citizens who acquired the Italian citizenship were less than 113 thousand (22 for every thousand foreigners; -23% compared with 2017).

On January 1st 2018, people who acquired the Italian citizenship amounted to more than 1 million 340 thousand people acquired citizenships^{iv} (56.3% were women).

In 2018, 6.5 million people resident in Italy were foreign citizens or had a foreign origin.

FIGURE 3. IMMIGRATED AND EMIGRATED FROM/TO ABROAD AND NET INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Years 2008-2018, values in thousands (a)



(a) Source: National demographic balance

Italy, a multi-ethnic country

Italy confirmed to be a multiethnic framework, with the presence of 196 different citizenships and almost 50 different nationalities with at least 10 thousand residents.

As in 2017, the first five citizenships were Romanian (1 million 207 thousand), Albanian (441 thousand), Moroccan (423 thousand), Chinese (300 thousand) and Ukrainian (239 thousand), which alone represented almost 50% of the total number of foreign residents.

Population in institutional households continued to increase

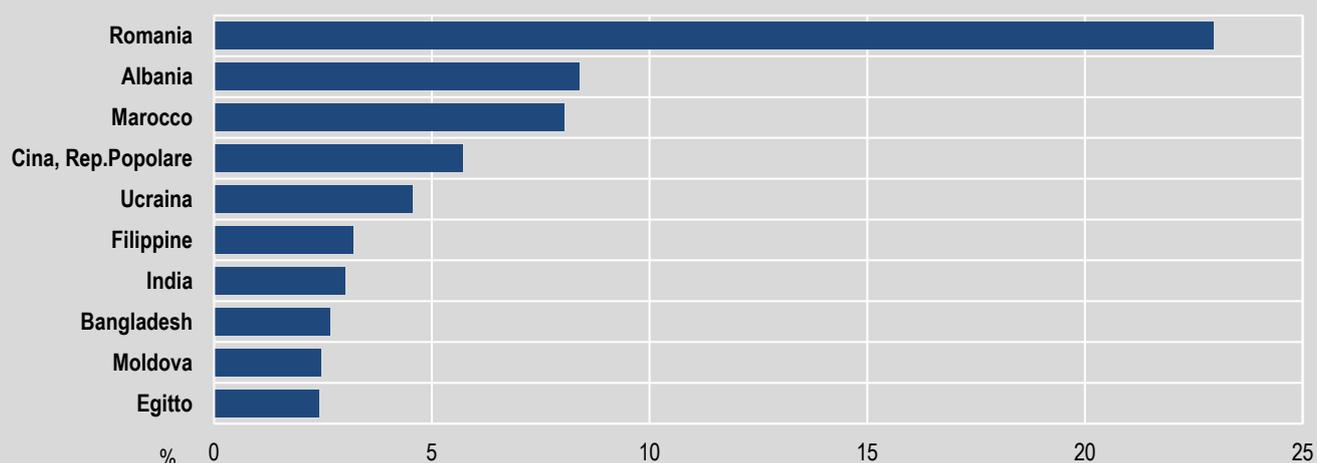
In 2018 the population in institutional households continued to increase (+404 thousand; +6.1% compared with 2017).

Foreigners residing in institutional households (over 157 thousand) grew by over 20 thousand compared with the previous year (+17.7%). Half of the foreigners in institutional households lived in the North-West and in the Center (+10 thousand units). However, the incidence of those living in institutional households was higher in the Islands (6.2%) and in the Southern regions (4.9%) compared to the Northern regions (2.7%).

Although the landings' contraction along the central Mediterranean route since July 2017, Southern Italy confirmed to be a frontier and transit land. Despite the arrivals of migrants, the migratory rate remained negative both for the South (-0.7 per thousand) and for the Islands (-1.2 per thousand).

FIGURE 4. FOREIGN RESIDENT POPULATION BY MAIN CITIZENSHIP

Year 2018, absolute value



Glossary

Acquisition of Italian citizenship: this is regulated by Law 91/1992 and subsequent amendments and/or integration. Within the demographic balance of the resident foreign population, the acquisitions of Italian citizenship constitute a negative item (they are included in the cancellations). In the national demographic balance, however, they do not alter the amount of the total population.

Cancellations: these are divided into a) Cancellations for another municipality: number of persons cancelled for transfer of residence to another Italian municipality; b) Cancellations for foreign countries: number of persons cancelled for transfer of residence abroad; c) Cancellations for other reasons: these are not actual transfers of residence, but cancellations due to registry correction practices. These include persons cancelled for unavailability, i.e., they are not resident following personal data checks; foreigners for expiration of their residence permit, according to current personal data regulations; persons registered as having their usual residence, but who did not wish or were unable (due to lack of requirements) to register in the personal data register of residents of the municipality in which they were registered.

Citizenship: the status of belonging to a State which is required and certified and which entails both certain rights and responsibilities.

Enrolments: these are divided into a) Enrolments from another municipality: number of persons registered by transfer of residence from another Italian municipality; b) Enrolments from abroad: number of persons registered by transfer of residence from abroad; c) Enrolments for other reasons: they are not registrations due to an actual transfer of residence, but registrations due to operations of registry correction. These include registrations of persons who have been wrongly deleted due to unavailability and subsequently reappeared; registrations of persons who have not been registered, and therefore have not been included in the calculation of the legal population, but who are actually resident.

Foreign resident citizen (in Italy): a person of foreign citizenship or a stateless person recorded in the population register of an Italian municipality.

Migration movement and other reasons: number of registrations and cancellations of the resident population registered during the year.

Natural movement: number of live births of parents residing in Italy, regardless of the place where the birth occurred (in Italy or abroad) and the number of deaths related to the resident population, also regardless of the place where the event occurred (both in Italy and abroad). Therefore, those born in Italy from non-resident parents and those who die non-resident are excluded. Both live births and deaths are counted at the time of transcription of the birth or death certificate in the registry.

Average number of children per woman (or total fertility rate): average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime if she were to experience the exact current age-specific fertility rates through her lifetime, and she were to survive from birth through the end of her reproductive life. It is obtained by summing the single-year age-specific rates at a given time.

Resident population: people with place of usual residence in the municipality, even if they are absent on the date in question because they are temporarily in another Italian municipality or abroad. Every person, of Italian and foreign citizenship, with usual residence in Italy must register, by law, in the registry office of the municipality in which he has established his usual residence. Each Population Census determines the legal population. To this population is added the population movement of the following periods, calculated with reference to the end of each calendar year, and the population residing in each municipality on 31 December of each year is calculated.

Population register: the registration system for the resident population. The register is constantly updated via registrations of births for parents resident in the municipality, deceased residents, and changes of residence between Italian municipalities or with abroad.

Growth rate: the ratio of the total population change for the year to the average population, times 1,000.

Naturalisation rate: the ratio of the number of people who have acquired Italian citizenship during a year to the number of foreign citizens residents at the beginning of the year, times 1,000.

Birth rate: the ratio of the number of live births during the year to the average population, times 1,000.

Mortality rate: the ratio of the number of deaths during the year to the average population, times 1,000.

Natural change: the difference between the number of live births and the number of deaths among Italian residents.

Natural increase rate: the ratio of the natural change for the year to the average population, times 1,000.

Net migration: the surplus or deficit of registrations due to immigration from abroad and deregistrations due to emigration abroad.

Estimated net migration: net migration plus people registered in the municipal registers for reappearing after having been deleted for being untraceable at the residence address, minus people cancelled for being untraceable at the residence address and foreigners deleted for expiry of the permit of stay.

Net migration rate: the ratio of net migration to the average population, times 1,000.

Estimated international net migration rate: the ratio of the Estimated net migration and the average population, times 1,000.

Net internal migration (by region): the difference between registrations due to immigrations from another region and cancellations due to emigrations to another region.

Net internal migration rate: the ratio between net internal migration for the year and the average population, times 1,000.

Balance for other reasons: the difference between registrations and cancellations for other reasons than natural and migratory.

Methodological note

Introduction and regulatory framework

The national demographic balance data for the 2018 are disclosed as provisional. The final data will be released upon completion of the statistical realignment operations with the results of the permanent census of the population and housing started in October 2018.

The two yearly surveys on the movement and calculation of the resident and foreign resident population collect the data relating to the demographic flows recorded in the registers of all Italian municipalities. These are data collections based on administrative data. The distribution of the foreign population by citizenship and gender is detected based on calculations made by the municipal offices on the members registered in the registry office.

The data collected update the calculation of the official resident population in the municipalities as of December 31 of each year.

The calculation, which determines the official resident population as of December 31 of each year, in each Italian municipality, has as its starting point the legal population defined through the 15th General Population Census carried out on October 9th 2011 (published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale n. 209 of December 18, 2012). Subsequently, the census results were compared with the registry data and produced variations in the population calculation. This is the so-called post-census registry review, which is mandatory pursuant to the registry regulation (DPR 223/1989). For further information, see "The post-census review of the registry offices: 2012-2014" at the link <http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/190510>.

The calculation is carried out, year by year, on the basis of data relating to natural movement (registrations by birth and cancellations by death), migratory data (registrations and cancellations due to transfer of residence) and for other reasons (post-census adjustments, cancellations due to unavailability), cancellations due to expiry of the residence permit, registrations for reappearance, etc.) occurring in the municipalities from October 9th 2011 to December 31st 2011 and subsequently from January 1st to December 31st of each year.

The statistical surveys relating to the natural and migratory movement of the resident population are based on article 48 of the Registry Data (DPR 223/1989).

Since 2011, EU legislation (European regulations on the production of public statistics) has been in force, regulating statistical production in the demographic field, both as regards statistics on migration (EC Regulation 862/2007, as implemented by EC Regulations No. 216 and 351 of 2010), both more generally demographic and population statistics (EC Regulation 1260/2013, as implemented by EC Regulation No. 205 of 2014). These regulations regulate the statistical production in the demographic and health field, regulating both the contents and the timing of the national statistical production, establishing methods of execution to which each country is obliged to comply, under penalty of the foreseen community sanctions.

Reference population, survey and analysis unit

The object of the survey consists of all the registration and cancellation data relating to individuals registered in the municipal registry records.

According to the registry law (Law 1228/1954) all the population having usual residence in Italy must be registered in the registry office (right / duty). Only foreigners who have a valid residence permit can be registered. Therefore, the flows counted by this survey refer to all residents, based on the municipality of residence.

The survey and analysis units are the 7,954 municipalities at 31 December 2018. The data relating to the municipalities of Corigliano Calabro and Rossano in the province of Cosenza, which in the month of March 2018

merged into the municipality of Corigliano-Rossano, were added to the data of the new municipality constituted. Therefore the initial and final population of the municipality of Corigliano-Rossano takes this merger into account. In the same way, the other municipalities that were formed by merging existing municipalities in the first few months of 2018 were counted statistically as existing from 1 January 2018.

The reference date on the basis of which the flows are counted is that of definition of the registration and / or cancellation in the registry office and not of the event. For example, a child born on December 30, 2018 and registered in the registry office on January 2, 2019 will be counted in the demographic balance sheet of 2019 and not in that of 2018.

The events related to the natural movement are detected by distinguishing according to the place of event (same municipality, other municipality, foreign), but counted in the municipality in which the new born is registered and from which the deceased is canceled.

Data collection and processing: process, tools and techniques

The data are detected by distinguishing the population by gender and country of citizenship (total population / foreign population).

The data is transmitted by the Municipalities using an electronic questionnaire available online on the ISTAT website. Each municipality accesses it using its own user account and password. The acquisition system has been re-engineered for this survey since 2017. Although there are two statistical surveys, one relating to population movement and the other to the movement of the foreign population only, the acquisition model is unique, starting from 2012, so as to decrease the statistical error, making it very clear that as the foreign population is one of which of the total population, as well as the demographic flows related to it.

The analyzes relating to the natural and migratory movement of the resident population make use, both for the purposes of validation and for interpretation purposes, of the individual data on registrations by birth, cancellations due to death, registrations and registry deletions for transfer of residence. The data of the surveys on the movement and calculation of the resident population (total and foreign) define the reference totals for the individual surveys on births, deaths, transfers of residence.

The validation of the annual data is also based on the comparison with the monthly movement survey and population calculation data, published monthly at the municipal level on the website ISTAT.

Furthermore, comparisons are made in historical series to highlight and correct any errors made by the municipalities in the processing of the data sent.

The balance sheet data, for the part relating to the foreign population, also contain the numbers relating to the acquisition of Italian citizenship, recorded on the basis of the date of registration in the registry office. The phenomenon was the subject of an in-depth study, through elaborations and estimates based on the Municipal Master Data Lists (LAC) compared to two subsequent dates: 1 January 2018 and 1 January 2019. In this way news was acquired about the foreign citizenship of origin and the age of those who have acquired Italian citizenship.

Also for the validation of the distribution of the foreign population by country of citizenship, we made use of elaborations carried out on the Municipal Registry Lists (LAC). The personal data relating to the distribution by foreign citizenship of the residents in each municipality, where they do not coincide with the calculated population, are re-proportioned to it.

Timeliness

The survey data, which have as a whole reference period for 2018, are released six months after the end of the reference period.

The monthly data, published in the form of provisional data, during the year, with a timeliness variable from 4 to 6 months, become definitive at the time of the publication of this report. The sum of the various data flow items from the 12 months corresponds exactly to the annual total.

Territorial detail

The data on the demographic balance of the total and foreign population and of the foreign population by citizenship are widespread at the municipal level.

Data dissemination

This press release and the press releases relating to the previous demographic reports are available at the link: <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/bilancio+demografico>

On the website <http://demo.istat.it>, under the heading "Demographic balance" and "Foreign citizens - Demographic balance" and at the address <http://dati.istat.it/>, under "population" and "foreigners and immigrants" are available data on the demographic balance for each Italian municipality and the distribution of the foreign population by citizenship.

Eurostat collects the data, products and Community Regulations of the "Population" sector at the address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/population-demography-migration-projections/statistics-illustrated>

ⁱ See methodological note

ⁱⁱ See Statistiche Report, Natalità e fecondità della popolazione residente. Anno 2017, pag. 6

ⁱⁱⁱ See Statistiche Report, Mobilità interna e migrazioni internazionali della popolazione residente. Anno 2017, pag. 13.

^{iv} See Rapporto annuale Istat, anno 2019, pag. 129.