
There are 5.5 million Italians in the world, up 76.6% in 15 years. 131 thousand relocated abroad in 2019, not only "brain drain"

The number of Italians living abroad rose by 76.6% in fifteen years, totalling 5.5 million people. An exodus - which, however, also includes new births and citizenship status- comparable to post-war years. Thus, we too are migrants: in 2009 alone, 131,000 Italians left Italy. And it's not only a matter of brain drain, as the current narrative goes. Indeed, the educational level of expatriates has risen since 2006 (+193.3% university graduates), but the greatest increase was recorded among high school graduates (+292.5%), willing to accept any kind of job. Surprisingly, while the migration trend of people relocating in the Americas and Europe continued, besides the traditional countries offering employment (Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland, France) Italians are now choosing other destinations for a better life: Malta, Portugal, Ireland, Norway, Finland. This movement depopulated small towns and deserted territories, not only with departures from the South to the North, but also within the northern regions. It is a snapshot of Italian migration trends outlined in the *Rapporto Italiani nel mondo 2020* (2020 Italians in the World Report) released today by the Migrants Foundation. This special edition comes 15 years after the first publication. Today's official online presentation will see the presence of Prime Minister **Giuseppe Conte** and Cardinal **Gualtiero Bassetti**, President of the Italian Bishops' Conference, Archbishop of Perugia-Città della Pieve.



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[In 2006 there were 3,106,251 Italians listed in the Registry of Italians Resident Abroad \(AIRE\), amounting to almost 5.5 million in 2020. Women represented 48% of the total number registered in 2006, they were 46.2% in 2020. Compared to 2006, this community is younger thanks to new generations born abroad \(+150.1%\) and to the new mobility consisting both of families with minors \(+84.3% of the age group 0-18 years\) and of young people and young adults to be inserted in the job market \(78.4% increase compared to 2006 in the 19-40 years age group\).](#)



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. As many as 131 thousand citizens have officially left Italy from throughout the Country in 2019 headed towards 186 destinations worldwide. Contrary to popular belief, it's not only a matter of brain drain. Most migrants hold a high-school diploma and are seeking a "generic" job abroad. Overall, a total of 257,812 people registered with the AIRE in 2019 (50% of whom were expatriates, 35.5% new births, 3.6% new citizenship status). Based on the analysis of the Report, in 2006 68.4% of registered residents abroad had only a middle or elementary school diploma or no qualification, while 31.6% had a secondary or higher education degree (diploma, university degree or PhD). The trend changed in the period between 2006 and 2018: in fact, in 2018, 29.4% had a university degree or doctorate and 29.5% had a high school diploma, while 41.5% had a lower or no qualification. However, with respect to 2006, the percentage of tertiary-educated emigrants (university or post-doctoral degree) increased by 193.3%, while those with a high-school diploma increased by an additional 100 percentage points (+292.5%). "This reveals - reads the Report - a mistaken narrative of recent mobility described as being almost exclusively composed of highly qualified people working in prestigious and highly specialized employment sectors, whereas the number of high school graduates seeking generic jobs abroad is steadily increasing."



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In the last 15 years (2006-2020) the Americas and Europe were the main destinations of Italians living abroad. Also in less traditional destinations.

In fact, the "new frontiers" of migration are Malta (+632.8%), Portugal (+399.4%), Ireland (+332.1%), Norway (+277.9%) and Finland (+206.2%).

Italians' presence in the American continent, especially the Latin American region, has grown thanks to new citizenship status (+123.4% since 2006), mainly in Brazil (+221.3%), Chile (+123.1%), Argentina (+114.9%) and, only in part owing to the recent crisis, Venezuela (+47.4%). More than 70% (+793,876) of all registrations in the America continent since 2006 occurred in Argentina (+464,670) and Brazil (+329,206). **Three million Italians in Europe.** By contrast, over the last fifteen years, Europe has grown mostly thanks to increased mobility (+1,119,432 people, totalling, at the beginning of 2020, close to 3 million residents). Overall immigration numbers point to traditional mobility countries such as Germany (more than 252 thousand new citizenship applications, +47.2%), the United Kingdom (almost 215 thousand), Switzerland (more than 174 thousand, +38%), France (almost 109 thousand, +33.4%) and Belgium (about 59 thousand, +27.3%). Increases in the UK, and especially in Spain, were much higher, +147.9% and +242.1% respectively. Italians also relocated to Eastern countries, especially the United Arab Emirates and China.

