

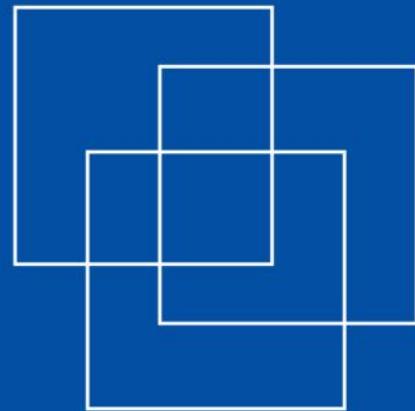


India-EU Common Agenda on  
Migration and Mobility



HANDBOOK FOR THE  
INTEGRATION OF

# Indians in Italy



Local Partner



Implementing Partner



International  
Labour  
Organization

Implementing Partner



HANDBOOK FOR THE  
INTEGRATION OF

# Indians in Italy

**India-EU Cooperation and Dialogue  
on Migration and Mobility**

Implemented by:  
International Labour Organization (ILO)  
International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

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# Introduction

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The *Handbook for integration of Indians in Italy* is a guide for migrants from India, mainly those working in the agro-industrial sector, who are the majority of the 151,791 Indian migrant workers regularly residing in Italy as of December 2017. It may also be useful to students and other Indians living and working in Italy.

The handbook provides basic information required to successfully integrate in Italy. It includes step-by-step directions on the documentation needed to stay in the country and preliminary orientation on how to access basic services, emphasizing health, education, employment, housing, family needs and transportation. It also attempts to address more complex questions like pensions and irregularity.

The handbook is published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) under the EU-India Cooperation and Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Project (CDMM). The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) is a co-delegate partner in the project. India Centre for Migration (ICM) is the local partner from the Government of India side. The ILO and ICMPD are funded by the European Union. The ILO is thankful for the effort and contribution by Manfred Bergmann. The ILO is also grateful to the Embassy of Italy in India and Consular General of India in Milan for their inputs and support.

This handbook is also available in Punjabi and Hindi.

## 1. Basic documents (documenti di base)

In Italy, it is mandatory to carry your basic documents all the time:

- a. **Permesso di Soggiorno** (Permit to Stay), or alternatively the **Permesso di Soggiorno UE per Soggiornanti di Lungo Periodo (ex Carta di Soggiorno)** (the European Union's Long-term Permit to Stay);
- b. **Carta di Identità** (Identity Card);
- c. **Tessera Sanitaria e Codice Fiscale** (Health Insurance Card with your Social Security Number, also called Fiscal Code).



Keep copies of these documents in a safe place at home.

Remember that nobody can keep your documents without your permission. These are your personal documents, so they must stay in your pocket, not in the pocket of your employer or anybody else.

In case your employer is forcibly keeping your documents, seek the help of lawyers. You can easily find lawyers for free with the help of **local orientation services**. Refer to chapter 9 of this booklet for more information.

### 1.1 If you are coming to work in Italy

If you have just arrived regularly in Italy, you should have the following:

1. Valid **entry visa (visto di ingresso)** annexed to your **passport (passaporto)**.
2. **Chiamata nominativa (autohirization to work) from your employer.**  
This means you already have received, in your home country, a promise of an employment in Italy because you are arriving according to the yearly planning of migrant workers' quotas (**decreto flussi**).
3. You need to **apply for a Permit to Stay** for work **within eight business days of your arrival**.

Seasonal workers who have come to Italy and then returned to India when their visa expired, can come back as seasonal workers and will be given priority for a seasonal work visa over other Indians, who have never entered Italy.



You can also enter Italy for self-employment. You must prove that you have adequate financial means and that the law does not reserve the activity for Italian or European Union citizens.

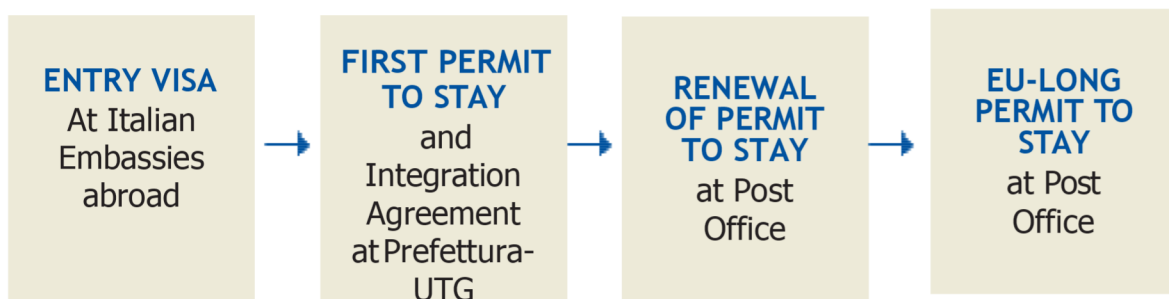
## 1.2 If you are coming to study in Italy

To get a study visa you should have the following:

1. Proof of course/ degree or research activity to be carried out
2. Euro 5750/year (2018) as personal economic guarantees for sustenance (bank guarantees are not accepted)
3. Insurance coverage for medical care and hospitalization
4. Accommodation – hotel or assured hospitality of Italian citizen or regular resident
5. You need to apply for a permit to stay within 8 working days of your arrival

If you are coming to Italy as a family member please refer section 1.10

**You must have a valid Permit to Stay** if you want to work in Italy; your entry visa is not enough.



Your employer will take you to the closest **Prefettura UTG** (Prefecture). Here, you apply for a **Permesso di Soggiorno** (Permit to Stay) at the **Sportello Unico per l'Immigrazione** (Unified Desk for Immigration). The rest of the procedure will be done online at the local post offices.

### 1.3 Integration Agreement (Accordo Di Integrazione)

At the Prefettura UTG, you will also be asked to **sign an Accordo Di Integrazione** (Integration Agreement), at the time of first entry in Italy.

To **keep your Permesso di Soggiorno**, you **must** earn at least 30 credits within two years. Credits are necessary to certify that you satisfy some requirements for obtaining a new permit to stay, for family reunification, for asking for Italian citizenship and other entitlements.

By signing an **Accordo Di Integrazione**, you receive 16 initial credits and you may obtain credits by attending free language and cultural courses, public schools and through other systems. For instance, simply choosing a general practitioner (GP) gives you four credits.

The validity period of the Permesso di Soggiorno may not, in any case, exceed:

1. Three months, for business and tourism.
2. One year, for a course of study or job training. Student permits for courses of more than one year may be renewed annually.
3. Two years, for independent work, subordinate permanent work, or for family reunification.



Photo: Permesso di Soggiorno –  
Permit to Stay

### 1.4 Renewal of Residence Permit (Permesso di Soggiorno)

Foreign nationals must apply for renewal of their Permesso di Soggiorno at the police department of their province (Questura) of residence, within the following deadlines:

- a. Ninety days before expiry for two-year residency permits for work and family reasons.
- b. Sixty days before expiry for one-year work permits.
- c. Thirty days before expiry for all other categories of residency permit.

If your document has expired for more than sixty days, and you have not applied for renewal, you are considered to be in Italy illegally. In this situation, it is necessary to visit the questura office with the help of a lawyer experienced in migration laws to document the reasons of the failure of the renewal of the Permesso di Soggiorno, and to ask if it is possible to renew it anyway.

### 1.5 Renewing the Residence Permit at the post office (Permesso di Soggiorno)

The **kit** for renewal of the Permesso di Soggiorno is available at the post offices. It costs €30, plus €16 of stamps (marca da bollo), plus €3460 for printing expenses. You can complete the process yourself by sending the papers via the post office, but it is better to be assisted by a local orientation service for the applications for renewal of the Permit to Stay.



During your first visit to the questura, you must bring **four passport-sized photographs** with a white background, one of which will be attached to your Permesso. This procedure will be done online.

Following the online procedure, you will receive a registered letter from the Immigration Office of the **questura**, summoning you to be fingerprinted, and to receive your **Permesso**.

Your permit cannot be renewed or extended if you have interrupted your stay in Italy for a continuous period longer than six months or for a period equal to more than half the period of validity of your stay permit. It is also rejected for failing the requirements including non-signing of the employment contract, lack of subsistence means or suitable accommodation, reporting of inadmissibility by a country for the Schengen area, etc.

If you have entered Italy for seasonal work and had already been authorized to

work the previous year for the same employer, you can apply for work again, the permission is considered valid, Employers have permission to hire seasonal workers up to three years if the workers can demonstrate that they have come to Italy for seasonal work for two years consecutively. For this purpose, foreign citizens are given a long-term visa (up to three years). At the end of the working period, workers must return to their own country and the visa for the following year will be issued if it can be demonstrated that the workers possess a three year working permission and a draft of the contract. *One of the main advantages of the long-term visa is to allow seasonal workers to enter Italy in the subsequent year, irrespective of the publication of the seasonal work Flows Decree.* The application for the years following the first one can be made by a different employer than the one who obtained the three year permission for seasonal work.

Seasonal workers who has worked on a regular basis for at least 3 months and are offered a temporary or permanent contract can convert the residence permit into a permanent work permit, within the limits of quotas system.

### **1.6 A permit to stay (Permesso di Soggiorno) gives you the right to:**

- Enrol in the Job Centres and establish your own professional curriculum there;
- enrol in the National Health Care System or SSN;
- legally register yourself at INPS (the National Institute for Social Welfare);
- legally register yourself at INAIL (the National Institute for the Injuries at the Workplace);
- **to be enrolled in the Registry at the Municipality where you reside;**
- **apply for your children (those who are minors) to attend public schools;**
- **join and/or promote an association;**
- join a trade union.



**Instead of the expiry date** that you find on a normal Permesso di Soggiorno, you'll find the word **“illimitato”**, which means **“unlimited”** on the Permesso di Soggiorno UE di Lungo Periodo.

### **1.8 If you don't have a valid Permesso di Soggiorno**

In this case you are considered as an irregular migrant (**migrante irregolare**). It may be because you didn't renew your Permit to Stay on time, or because you never had one because you entered Italy without a visa. Renewal of your Permesso di Soggiorno is dependent on having regular work. Please check section 4.1 for more information.

Italian laws don't allow the **regularization** of an undocumented / irregular migrant. Therefore if you enter or remain in Italy without a stay permit or with an expired permit to stay, you are in violation of the law and subject to a fine of five to ten thousand euros. The only



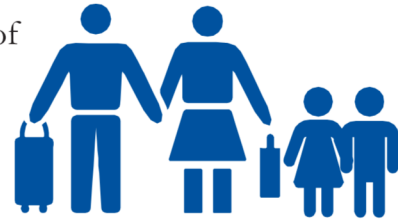
solution in this case seems to be repatriation – that is, you will be sent back to your home country.

If you are denied a residence permit, you will receive a decree of expulsion to leave Italy in 7-30 days or be detained at the Identification and Expulsion Centre (CIE). While you are at the CIE, the Italian authorities will seek confirmation of your nationality with the Embassy of India. If the Embassy of India confirms your Indian nationality, the Italian government will send you back to India, maybe even forcibly, by putting you on a plane. However, within 60 days from the date of the decree, you can file and appeal to the Regional Administrative Tribunal (Tribunale Amministrativo Regionali –TAR) if denial is related to employment reasons and to the regular court (Tribunale Ordinario) if it is related to family reasons.

***If your identity is not confirmed within the maximum period of detention (currently 90 days), you will be given the decreto di espulsione and asked to leave. Failure to do so can lead to imprisonment.***

## 1.9 Assisted Voluntary Return to Your Country of Origin Rimpatrio Assistito nel tuo Paese di Origine

In case you are no longer in a position to have your Permesso di Soggiorno renewed, you can ask local orientation services for access to a voluntary programme of **Rimpatrio Assistito** (Assisted Return). Under the assisted voluntary return programmes, professionals will give you advice, and make arrangements for your travel home, and a sum of money will be given to you at the time of departure.



For more information on voluntary return programmes you can look for the Italian office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at [www.italy.iom.int](http://www.italy.iom.int), or call 06 44 16 091/222.

## 1.10 If you want to bring your family members

If you have a valid Permesso di Soggiorno allowing you to work and stay in Italy for more than a year and you have a place to host your family and a minimum income according to the standards set forth by the law for family reunion, you can apply for a **Permesso di Soggiorno per Ricongiungimento Familiare** (Permit to Stay for Family Reunification).

This permit allows you to bring to Italy your spouse, underage children and elderly parents who have no family support in India.

The application for reunification (Ricongiungimento) should be submitted online at the **Sportello Unico per l'Immigrazione at Prefettura UTG**, but it is quite complicated and you should seek help at the local orientation services.

Family visas can be denied for various reasons – if parents have other children living in India; income generated in India; financial dependency on the inviting person not fully proved or is they represents a real threat for the public order or security of Italy, or other Schengen countries.

## 1.11 If you want to convert your purpose of stay in your Permesso di Soggiorno

You can use the Permesso di Soggiorno for other activities as long as the permit is valid. At the time of renewal you can change the reason.

### 1.11.1 Converting from student to employment

This is possible before your permit expires and within annual quotas of the government. You must present all documents providing the existence of the employment relationship. Those who achieve graduation, doctoral or masters degree in Italy upon the expiration of residence permit for study may be included in the registry of persons seeking employment for a period not exceeding twelve months

### 1.11.2 Converting from seasonal work to fixed-term or open-ended employment

Foreign workers authorised to enter Italy for seasonal work purposes may convert the seasonal work residence permit into another one for employed work – either fixed-term or open ended work -in the framework of the quotas available.

Foreign workers shall send to the Immigration One Stop Shop the application for the conversion of the seasonal work residence permit into employed work residence permit exclusively through the website <https://nullaostalavoro.interno.it>. In case of availability of quotas, foreigners are summoned to the One Stop Shop to sign the residence contract and the form applying for the employed work residence permit.

## 1.12 If you lose your job



In case you have a Permesso di Soggiorno and you lose your job, you are still a regular immigrant until the expiry date of your Permesso di Soggiorno.

If you lose your job due to dismissal or redundancy you should enrol in the jobseeker's registry at the Job Centre (centro per l'impiego) within 40 days from the termination of your contract. You can enrol in the employment register even when the permit to stay has expired for the reason of "pending employment". Enrolment in the registry extends to the job search period and you may be



entitled to receive the unemployment benefit in the form of income support until you find another job or for the period of validity of your stay permit. This does not apply to seasonal workers.

The application for stay permit for pending employment must be filed through the kit available at all post offices that offer the service “Sportello Amico” (friendly desk), trade union services (Patronati) and authorized municipalities.

If you need any kind of assistance in relation to visa and permits consult one of the **local orientation services** for foreigners listed in chapter 9, bringing them all your documentation. They have experienced lawyers and social workers who can help and will keep your information confidential.

### **1.13 Identity Card, Certificate of Residence and other documents from the City Council's Offices**

To request a **Certificato di Residenza** (Certificate of Residence), a **Stato di Famiglia** (Certificate of Family Status) or a **Carta di Identità** (Identity Card), you should go to the **Ufficio Anagrafe Civile Comunale (General Registry Office at the City Council)**. You can also visit the website of the city council and request your certificate online.

Your **Carta di Identità** will be given to you after the local **Polizia Municipale, Vigili Urbani** (Municipal Police) visit your address in Italy and verify that you are living at the address you have declared.

#### **1.13.1 Identity Card (Carta di Identità)**

The Carta di Identità is a personal identification document for nationals and foreigners in Italy.



Photo: Identity Card (Carta di Identità)

Any person over 15 years of age holding a valid residence permit and living in Italy is eligible for this card. Your Carta di Identità is not enough to prove that you live in Italy legally; that is why you will also need to carry your Permesso di Soggiorno at all times. The police might ask you to show them the documents on the road at any time.

Your Italian Carta di Identità is not valid for travelling in other European countries. You need your passport and your Permesso di Soggiorno to go abroad and return safely.

In case you have an Indian passport, it can be renewed six months before expiry at either the Embassy in Rome or the Consul General in Milan by applying online.



### 1.13.2 Personal certificates

Personal documents, e.g. residence certificate, date of birth certificate, etc., are issued by the **Ufficio Anagrafe** of your **Comune** (Municipality) and are available at local offices and online.



**Autocertificazione** (self-certifications) replace regular public certificates in your relations with public authorities. A self-certification is a statement whereby you indicate your identity or you state that you meet certain requirements.

A self-certificate is used to state your date and place of birth, residence, nationality, family status and the birth of your children. You cannot provide self-certification for renewal of residence permit, judicial register, pending charges, registration at employment centre or of school /training enrolment. You have to take full responsibility for self-

certificates and ensure that everything you say is true.

It is important to pay attention when writing a self-certification (public authorities may double-check your statements); anyone making false statements is punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to three years.

### 1.14 Fiscal Code (Codice Fiscale)

You need to have a **Codice Fiscale** (Fiscal Code) Card to **register** with the Italian National Health System (**Servizio Sanitario Nazionale, or SSN**) and for social security benefits.



The local office of the **Agenzia delle Entrate** (Italian Revenue Agency) will issue your **Codice Fiscale** during the online procedure for your first Permit to Stay at the Prefettura UTG.

If your family members are staying with you in Italy, you can apply for their Codice Fiscale directly at the local Agenzia delle Entrate office by showing an identification document (for adults, their passport or residence permit, and for babies, a birth certificate or a parent's self-declaration).

### 1. 15 The Equivalent Economic Status Indicator (ISEE)

The Equivalent Economic Status Indicator (**Indicatore della Situazione Economica Equivalente, or ISEE**) is a document that details your income level.

This is required for several purposes, including being able to get a discount at your children's school canteen, or for a public transportation pass, or for calculating public selection processes and queues.

You may request the Attestazione ISEE (ISEE certificate) at any of the **CAFs** (see chapter 9), which are tax advice centres providing free tax assistance in your area.

## 2. Social security

**You may be entitled to:**

**Social Security benefits:** Old-age pensions, retirement pensions and unemployment benefits

**Welfare benefits:** Civil invalidity pensions, disability pensions and maternity allowances

To know your entitlement, visit any local National Social Security Institute (**Istituto Nazionale Previdenza Sociale, or INPS**).

At the **INPS**, you can ask for a document called **Estratto Conto Contributivo Previdenziale (ECCP)** and check whether your employer(s) have paid your taxes, for how many hours, for doing what and for how long.

In case you find any problems mistakes, you can take your ECCP to the **sindacati** (trade unions) and ask them to help you get your basic rights as a worker. They will help you even if you are not a member. You should consider becoming a member of a trade union as they protect workers' rights.

### 2.1 Social Services (Servizi Sociali)

You can visit the Servizi Sociali for advice and support in relation to your, your family and your relatives' needs. You'll find the Servizi Sociali locally, at your **Uffici del Comune (City Council's Offices)**. Here, you can find help related to housing, education and integration.

### 2.2 Other social bonuses and allowances

#### 2.2.1 Baby bonus for long-term residents

For foreigners holding a **Permesso di Soggiorno UE di Lungo Periodo**, the Italian government pays out a baby bonus for each child born or adopted. This is revised periodically and is based on your income.

For more information go to the **INPS** offices, visit the website [www.inps.it](http://www.inps.it) or contact one of the Centres for Tax Assistance or **Patronati, or pension assistance office** (see chapter 9).

### 2.2.2 Family allowance (Assegno al Nucleo Familiare, or ANF)

The following categories of people are entitled to **ANF**: (a) employees, (b) agricultural labourers, (c) domestic workers, workers registered with the **Gestione Separata** (separate fund for social security contributions for independent workers), and (d) beneficiaries of pensions.

**Long-term foreign residents who work in Italy are also entitled to a family allowance** including their family members who live abroad (therefore, residence in Italy is not a requirement to be entitled to a family allowance). For the years 2016 - 17, the average monthly ANF granted to a household (couple and three dependent children under 18, with an ISEE of €8,555.99) was €141.30.

For families with at least three underage children, there is an allowance, granted by the Municipality. Long-term resident third-country nationals with at least three minors and with limited assets and income as certified by ISEE (see chapter 9) are also eligible for this allowance.

### 2.2.3 Survivors' or indirect pension (Pensione di reversibilità)

A survivors' or indirect pension is a payment from the Italian National Social Security Institute (INPS) to the spouse of the person who expires while in a job.

The survivors' pension or the indirect pension is also payable to surviving family members. The payable amount is calculated based on the pension to which the deceased would have been entitled, or based on the pension provided to the deceased.

### 2.2.4 Social Card (Carta Acquisti)

The **Carta Acquisti** is a normal debit card – however, expenses are not charged to the cardholder, but to the State, Regions and Municipalities. The Carta Acquisti was introduced in 2008 to help poorest people to buy food, medicines and basic survival expenses, such as paying their utility bills. This social card is granted to the elderly aged 65 or more and to eligible children under three (in this case, the holder of the card is one of the parents). The sum available is €40 per month.

For more information on your position in regard of the Carta Acquisti visit a CAF, a Patronato, or an INPS offices, or call the Poste Italiane toll-free number **800 666 888** or the **INPS** toll-free number 803-164.

### 3. Housing

If you rent a house (**casa**), flat (**appartamento**), room (**camera**) or single bed in a shared room (**posto letto**), in exchange for a monthly sum, you must sign a **Contratto di Affitto** (Contract of Lodgement) with the landlord.

This **Contratto di Affitto must be registered** by the landlord at the inherent Ufficio Registro; you and your landlord should share the cost of registration equally (fifty percent each).

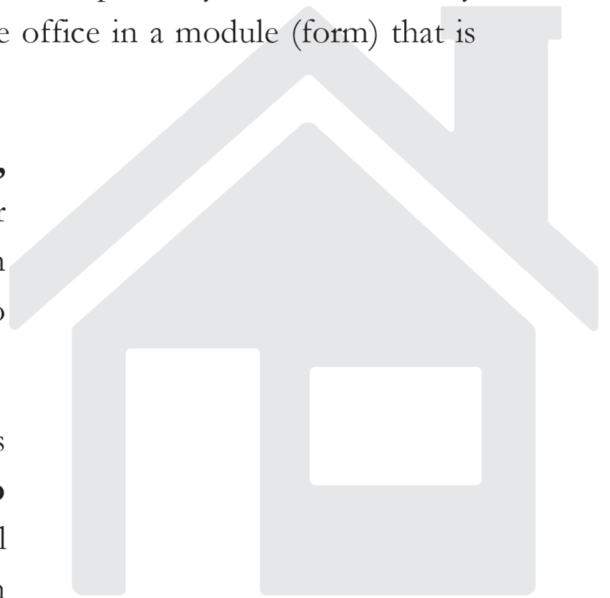
Before moving in, you have to give three months' rent to the landlord – two months' rent in advance as a grant or deposit (**caparra, deposito**), plus the first month's rent. But sometimes landlords agree to take only one month's rent as the deposit. **Ask for receipts for all the payments you make**, including the deposit, and keep them safely.

Make sure to take photographs of any problems in the rooms.

The landlord will need your photograph and photocopies of your Permit to Stay for registering your presence to the local police office in a module (form) that is called **Cessione di Fabbricato**.

**If you don't want to rent a place to stay, public housing (casa popolare)** is another option. The procedure to get public housing in Italy is long but it is accessible to foreigners who are long-term residents.

If you want to be included in casa popolare, it is necessary to start the procedure of the **Bando di Assegnazione Case Popolari** (Public Call for Public Housing) in your **Municipality** with the help of the Office of **Servizi Sociali**.



To be eligible for **public housing projects**, you need:

1. Legal residence or working activity in the place where you are asking for housing.
2. To not own any housing, building, etc.
3. Yearly income (**reddito annuo**) should be under the legal parameters of the **ISEE** (this will be certified at any local Centre for Fiscal Assistance (**Centri Assistenza Fiscale, or CAF**)).

There are also **centri di accoglienza** (emergency shelters), which are temporary living quarters, like a hostel. These shelters are often dedicated to singles or families, migrant workers, refugees, the homeless, seasonal workers or other vulnerable groups. The management of the shelter will decide how long you can stay there; usually, it is not more than six months, but it depends on the city council and the type of the shelter.

## 4. Employment



To find a job you must register with a **Centro per l'Impiego, or CPI** (State Job Centre). It is free of charge and operates at a local level. To register, you need to show an identity document, your **Permesso di Soggiorno** and your **Codice Fiscale**. You must be at least sixteen years old.

At the **CPI** you will be asked about your profile – how many years of education you completed in Italy or in India, what kind of work you have done and can do, your computer literacy level, which languages you know, etc. This information will be recorded on your personal card, which will be used later to apply for vacant jobs. Women must also be encouraged to complete this profile; there may be several job opportunities for them, including part-time jobs.

Some employment agencies are only open to specific categories of people – for example, employment agencies reserved for undergraduate students and/or graduates, or the **Servizio Inserimento Lavorativo Disabili (SILD)**, which is reserved for the disabled and for other vulnerable individuals (**categorie protette**) like single mothers and orphans.

Local authorities provide different job orientation services, called **Centri di Orientamento al Lavoro (COL)**, **Informagiovani** and other services for employment. **Private recruitment agencies and job centres** in Italy can also be approached for different jobs.

Remember that 75% of Italian people find a job with the help of their families and friends. Don't rely only on job offices, actively look for a job yourself too.

Once employed, you are entitled to a written work contract with the details:

- your personal data;
- the place where you work/ employers details;
- the date of beginning of the employment relationship;
- the length of the employment relationship/contract;
- the length of the trial period, if any;
- the placement, level and qualifications attributed to the worker;
- the wage;
- the duration of paid holidays;



- the working hours;
- the notice time in case of termination.

During the selection phase, the employer is not entitled to ask you any questions on political or religious opinions, on your eventual pregnancy or if you are HIV positive, civil status or family status.

Remember that in Italy there is a minimum wage, corresponding to contracts. You are entitled to be paid at least this minimum amount under the law, and to have a contract of work (**contratto di lavoro**). The normal working hours in Italy are 40 hours per week. You are entitled to overtime for work beyond these hours.

International students can work for a maximum of 20 hours per week.

#### 4.1 Working without a contract

If you work without an employment contract, you are doing what is called **irregular work or black work (lavoro irregolare, o lavoro in nero)**. You will be paid cash, with no receipt, and your employer will not pay taxes and insurance for you. As far as the authorities are concerned, you are unemployed and you will have problems renewing your Permesso di Soggiorno. Such work deprives you of your rights and must be reported, but you must act with the help of trade unions, who can provide you with a lawyer.

For all matters related to your employment and stay permit (Permesso di Soggiorno), you should ask your friends where to find the local offices of the sindacati or specialised labour law firms, take an appointment and go there with all your documents. They will help you to understand your situation and let you know what your options are. They have experienced lawyers and social workers who may be able to help you with your paperwork and explain to your rights and processes for justice.

Ask the sindacati about the legality of your work, the number of hours you work, what work you are doing, for what salary, how long you have been working, and what your evidence and witnesses are. If there are other workers mistreated like you in the same place and if it is possible to contact them, you can decide with the trade unions if you should fight together against your employer.

The sindacati can start a labour dispute (**vertenza lavorativa**) that can lead to the full reimbursement of your unpaid wages, or in case the employer refuses to a mutual agreement, the sindacati can take the employer to court, where a judge will

decide to apply strong penalties against your employer, who must pay not only you, but also the state because of tax crimes.

Every year, many irregular migrants in Italy are entitled to get a Permit to Stay for collaborating with the authorities in the fight against exploitation, violence and slavery. Helped by the sindacati and the police, workers can take their exploiter to court, and are protected by the state.

In **2017**, a **new law** (on labour exploitation (**caporalato**) of migrant workers especially in agriculture and seasonal jobs, permits the regularization of many irregular migrant workers while taking illegal recruiters (**caporali**) to court.

## 5. Health services

It is mandatory for every resident of Italy to register with the **Servizio Sanitario Nazionale, or SSN** (National Health System).

Any health services provided to a foreign national who is registered with the SSN are also guaranteed to their family members regularly residing in Italy, with the exception of parents over sixty-five years of age. For parents over sixty-five years of age, the sponsor applying for family reunification must proceed to **voluntary registration with the SSN**, or a more expensive private health insurance covering all risks on the Italian territory.

Registration for the service is done at the offices of the **Azienda Sanitaria Locale, or ASL** (Local Sanitary Unit), of the area where you are staying.

By registering with the SSN, a foreign citizen who lives in Italy and has a valid residence permit is entitled to **equal treatment as Italian nationals** with regards of health care.

### 5.1 Health Card (Tessera Sanitaria)

The **Tessera Sanitaria** is a health insurance card that is necessary to access health services. It is valid all over Italy. It also allows access to health services in the rest of European Union as well. It has the same duration as your Permesso di Soggiorno.

To **renew** your health insurance card, you should contact your ASL, submitting the new Permesso di Soggiorno or the documentation proving that you have applied for the renewal of your Permesso di Soggiorno.



Photo: The Health Card (Tessera sanitaria)

## 5.2 Straniero Temporaneamente Presente (STP) code

An STP code is assigned to foreign nationals who are temporarily, **legally or illegally present in Italy** who are not registered with the SSN or if they expressly request this code. An STP code is valid for six months and is renewable.



An STP code is issued by any ASL, IRCCS (Scientific Institute for Admission and Treatment) or University Hospital, regardless of where the applicant is living.

The holder of an STP code is guaranteed urgent or essential outpatient and hospital care at accredited facilities, in cases of both disease and accident.

You do not need to show an identity document to obtain an STP code. The data recorded for STP are confidential and will never be used for retracing the holder of an STP code unless there is a written request issued by a public prosecutor for criminal reasons.

## 5.3 Local Sanitary Unit (Azienda Sanitaria Locale or ASL)

**You should refer to your ASL for:**

1. Choosing your family doctor (**medico di famiglia**) and your paediatrician (**pediatra**).
2. Obtaining medical certificates (**certificati medici**), and prescriptions (**ricette**), or requests (**richieste**) for tests (**analisi**), medical examinations (**esami medici**) and specialist visits (**visite specialistiche**).
3. Requesting home visit if you are not able to go to the doctor (**visita domiciliare**).
4. Receiving mandatory vaccinations (**vaccinazione obbligatoria**).

Other services like family planning centres (consultorio familiare), maternity care (cure per la maternità), children's vaccinations (vaccinazioni per i bambini), voluntary termination of pregnancy (interruzione volontaria della gravidanza) and pharmaceutical assistance (assistenza farmaceutica) are also accessible with the SSN card.

You can contact the ASL, who will direct you to these services.

#### 5.4 Emergency Medical Services and First Aid (Guardia Medica and Pronto Soccorso)

The **Guardia Medica** is an out of hours emergency medical service available at your home. You can request this service in case of serious emergencies, when your general practitioner or paediatrician cannot be contacted, during the night or on non-working days.

But in case of accidents and other emergencies, the telephone number for an **ambulance** that will take you to the **Pronto Soccorso (First Aid)** unit of the closest hospital is **118**.



#### 5.5 Assistance for violence against women

Violence against women is considered a serious crime in Italy. It includes domestic violence including family abuse and mistreatment, injury, sexual violence and sexual harassment, stalking, mobbing, trafficking etc.

Indian women who have come to Italy to be with their partners and find themselves to be subject to violence, can seek assistance. Free legal and psychological advice is available locally for the victims. Shelters are also provided (depending on resources available). An anti-violence free of charge helpline (1522) is available 24/7. The victim will need to file a complaint to the police (**Carabinieri**) within six months of the time the most recent offensive behaviour took place.

Indian women who are victims of domestic violence, can, like other foreigners, have the permit to stay for foreign victims of family violence.

If you are an Indian women abandoned by her husband, you have the right to financial and legal assistance from the Government of India. Please contact the Indian Embassy for further details.

## **5.6 If you are married (new Indian law for Non-resident Indians)**

As per Indian law, it is compulsory to register your marriage within thirty days of marriage in India or abroad; the Embassy can impound or revoke your passport if you do not register your marriage.

If there is a case filed by your spouse, summons/warrants will be issued online, through the specially designated website of the Ministry of External Affairs and your properties may be attached to the case, if you do not appear before the Court in India.

## 6. Education, training and language courses in Italy

As part of the Accordo Di Integrazione, a migrant must learn Italian.

Attending courses of Italian language, culture and civilization gives you credits that are **recognized under the Integration Agreement** and exempt you from future verification tests.

At the **Centri Territoriali Permanenti per l'Educazione degli Adulti (CTPs)** you can also find the details and addresses of not-for-profit organizations that offer free courses of Italian language in your area. These classes are held in various locations and have flexible hours.

You can also gain further education by joining evening courses (**corsi serali**) offered by the Ministry of Education. Free courses leading to high-school diplomas or certifications of vocational training, or language and cultural courses for adults are offered by the government.

### These courses include:

1. Preparation and exam for a lower secondary school diploma (**licenza media inferiore**).
2. Italian laws and civic orientation.
3. Italian language and culture classes.
4. Exams for Italian as a foreign language.
5. Language certification exams.
6. Vocational training activities.
7. High school diplomas.

### 6.1 The Italian School System (Sistema Scolastico Italiano)

If you are a child or have children you must join the Italian school system.

The Italian school system starts from early childhood with nursery (**asilo nido**), which is non-compulsory schools for children **up to three** years of age. Children **over three** can be enrolled in a different **nursery (asilo) until they are six years old**. For more information on the timing, the services and the costs of nurseries,

talk to the Public Relations Office of your Municipality, and they will help you to access to the nursery and to **calculate the costs** that correspond to your **ISEE**.

**It is compulsory for children from the age of six to 16 to be enrolled in school:**

1. Five years of **primary school (scuole elementari)**.
2. Three years of **lower secondary school (scuola secondaria inferiore, or scuola media) which** ends with a state exam (**licenza media inferiore**).
3. **When children turn 14**, they go to secondary high school (**scuola media superiore**), technical institutes (**istituti tecnici**), or institutes for vocational training (**istituti di formazione professionale**).
4. When students get their high school diplomas (**diplomi di maturità**), they are **18-19** years old and they can access university (**università**).

## **6.2 Recognition of academic/professional qualification**

If you have a foreign degree and would like to study in Italy, you need to send a request to the University or Institute of University Education that interests you. The University/ Institute's makes an autonomous decision on whether or not to recognize your foreign academic and their equivalency vis-à-vis an Italian degree title, within 90 days.

If you have a professional qualification, you need to submit the application to the competent authority/ relevant Ministry. Within 4 months, a decree is issued, recognising your professional title. This is mandatory for several workers including doctors, lawyers, accountants, engineer etc. if they wish to practice in Italy.



## 7. Getting around Italy – driving and transportation

### 7.1 Driving

If you have a driving licence obtained in a country not belonging to the European Union, you can only drive in Italy if you have an **international driving permit** (issued in the same country that issued your driving licence) and your **driving licence is accompanied by an official translation in Italian.**

One year after having acquired Italian residence, you will no longer be allowed to drive with a non-EU driving licence on Italian territory; you will have to **convert** it into an Italian driving licence.

You will receive information on how to do this at the driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (**Motorizzazione Civile**) where you can ask for the conversion of your driving license (**conversione della patente di guida**). Converting your driving licence costs less than obtaining a new one in Italy.

To get a **patente di guida Italiana** (Italian driving licence) you must apply at the local offices of the Motorizzazione Civile (take your Permesso di Soggiorno with you) for the selection examinations (**esami della patente**). You have to take a driving test that consists of a theoretical test and a practical one.



Photo 7: Patente di Guida Italiana (Italian Driving License)

Alternatively, you can pay more and go to a private driving school (**scuola guida**); they take care of certifications and paperwork, including classes and practical guides.

Driving without a licence in Italy, or with a licence that is not valid, is punishable with very serious penalties (from €5,000 to €30,000)

## 7.2 Bicycles (Biciclette)

Be very careful when you ride a bicycle in Italy. Always wear your lights and ride carefully on roads dedicated for bicycles.

## 7.3 Public transportation (trasporti pubblici)

Italy is well connected by public transport.

For long-distance travel by **train (treno)**, you can get information about schedules, fares, etc., from the website of the Trenitalia Railway Service ([www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com)) and Italo ([www.italotreno.it](http://www.italotreno.it)). You can also book tickets on the same website.

For long-distance travel by **bus (autobus)** you can choose among Go Euro ([www.goeuro.it](http://www.goeuro.it)), Euro lines ([www.eurolines.it](http://www.eurolines.it)), Flixbus ([www.flixbus.it](http://www.flixbus.it)), Ibus ([www.ibus.it](http://www.ibus.it)) and many smaller companies. Bus tickets cost around half of a basic train ticket.

For local travel, you can use the metro, local trains and buses. You can get tickets for these at any station, at the machines, at Tabacchi shops, in many bars and online.

**Daily, weekly or monthly passes** can cost much less than buying single tickets if you travel regularly. Go to Local Transportation Offices and they will ask you a copy of your **ISEE** to check if you are eligible for a discount on the price of the transportation pass.

**Taxis** in Italy can be quite expensive

You may want to check fares and compare all options before traveling.

## 8. Sending money home

If you have to send money from Italy to your home country, or from your home country to Italy, you can go to any Italian post office (**Poste Italiane**) and ask for the form “Richiesta di trasferimento Internazionale di Denaro” (international money transfer).

At Poste Italiane, you can open your **conto corrente postale (postal account)** or a **postepay (prepaid card)** with the facility to make payments online worldwide using an Iban number.

If you have to send small amounts of money from Italy to India, you can go to any post office and **pay offline** asking to send money by **International Post Transfer (Vaglia Internazionale)** payable in India from seven to ten days.

**The basic commission for the Vaglia Internazionale is:** €6 if you send up to €100; €12 if you send from €100.01 to €400; €15 if you send more than €400. There are additional fees regarding the currency exchange rates (minimum 2%). By paying extra charges, you can make a transfer faster.

It is also possible **send money home online and offline**, in collaboration with Poste Italiane using an affiliated international company called **MoneyGram** that is **much faster but costs double what the Vaglia Internazionale does. More information about this process is available on [www.poste.it](http://www.poste.it).**

There are **private companies** like **Western Union Money Transfer**, and **Transfer Wise** that you can find everywhere in Italy, and are based in Tabacchi shops. Sometimes they run special offers.

You can also send money back home by using a bank account. This may be a more expensive option because of the commission, the time taken and the exchange rates but may be suitable under some circumstances.

## 9. Local orientation services

The basic procedures for obtaining a Permesso di Soggiorno and other essential documents from public offices in Italy can be very complex for a foreigner who has arrived in the country for the first time.

There are many associations, legal orientation services and service providers that can help you: associations (associazioni) or welfare organizations associated with sindacati, (trade unions), Patronati, Centres for Fiscal Assistance (CAFs), temples (tempio) and churches (chiese).

**Try to find one or more of them in your area with the help of your friends.**

You can find lawyers, social workers, volunteers and interpreters who will help you fill your forms in correct Italian; this gives you a better chance to achieve what you are looking for.

Local **associations and NGOs** run free language courses, legal orientation desks for Italians and foreigners and social support for people in need.

A **sindacato (sindacati)** is an association that aims to defend the rights and promote the interests of workers, it can be useful in case of problems with your employer. Examples are included in table 1 below.

Local **patronati** are able to help you through Italian documents; they are everywhere in Italy, almost free of charge and can help you interact with the country's systems and processes.

If you face discrimination on the grounds of race, skin colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, religion or belief you are entitled to justice on an equal basis with Italian citizens and can approach courts, local orientation services and sindacati for support.

A **Centre for Fiscal Assistance (CAF)** is an office that can help you with many different services: tax declarations, IMU and TASI modules, resources, refund claims, supplementary declarations, tax information, ISEE declaration, request for rent contributions, help desk for seasonal workers, care and domestic workers, unemployment benefits and many other procedures like regularization.

You can find direct assistance in many gurudwaras, churches and in many **religious associations** like Caritas, Sant'Egidio and Acli.

If you aren't able to find these local orientation services on your own or with the help of your friends, you can find details on all local services for migrants and

refugees online at the national database [www.portaleimmigrazione.it](http://www.portaleimmigrazione.it), where you can select your province and town to find the timetables, telephone numbers and addresses of the service providers closest to you, and get an appointment for a free consultancy (**consulenza gratuita**).

Below, you'll find some **useful contacts** of Italian networks and institutions. You can write down your local contacts in the empty spaces in the last column of the table. **Ask your friends or search the web and add your local contacts in the table below.**

**Table 1: Useful contacts**

Name of organization	Services available	Contact details	Local address
Ministero Affari Esteri (MAE)	Visa, Italian Embassies Roma	0636912284 0636918899	
Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali – General Directorate for immigration	Integration Housing, employment, language , healthcare etc	<a href="http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en">www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/en</a> <a href="http://integrazionemigrant.gov.it">integrazionemigrant.gov.it</a>	
Azienda Sanitaria Locale (ASL)	Health services, Tessera Sanitaria, SSN, TEAM, Consultorio	<a href="http://www.salute.gov.it">www.salute.gov.it</a>	
Prefettura UTG	First Permessi di Soggiorno	<a href="http://www.prefettura.it">www.prefettura.it</a>	
Commissariato Polizia	Cessione di Fabbricato	<a href="http://www.interno.gov.it">www.interno.gov.it</a>	
Questura	Renewal of Permesso di Soggiorno	<a href="http://www.interno.gov.it">www.interno.gov.it</a>	
Poste Italiane	Kit documenti	<a href="http://www.poste.it">www.poste.it</a>	
Comune, City Council	Carta Identità, residenza, Servizi Sociali	<a href="http://www.comuniverso.it/link/siti/index.cfm">http://www.comuniverso.it/link/siti/index.cfm</a>	
Agenzia delle Entrate	Codice Fiscale	<a href="http://www.agenziaentrate.gov.it">www.agenziaentrate.gov.it</a>	
Gurudwara	Local orientation and assistance	<a href="http://www.sikhisewasociety.org/templi-sikh-in-italia.html">www.sikhisewasociety.org/templi-sikh-in-italia.html</a>	
Indian Consulate in Milan	Assistance with Indian passports and OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) cards, consular services including funds for migrants in distress	Emergency number: +39 3881647527 <a href="http://www.cgimilan.in">www.cgimilan.in</a>	Milano

Name of organization	Services available	Contact details	Local address
Indian Embassy in Rome	Assistance with Indian passports and OCI cards, consular services including funds for migrants in distress	<a href="http://www.indianembassyrome.in">www.indianembassyrome.in</a>	Rome
Indian national voters' services portal	Online application for overseas voters	<a href="http://www.nvsp.in">www.nvsp.in</a>	
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Voluntary repatriation programmes	<a href="http://www.italy.iom.int">www.italy.iom.int</a>	Roma
Istituto Nazionale Previdenza Sociale (INPS)	Pension, taxes	<a href="http://www.inps.it">www.inps.it</a>	
Centro Assistenza Fiscale (CAF)	Fiscal assistance, ISEE, unemployment benefits	<a href="http://www.mycaf.it">www.mycaf.it</a>	
Churches	Direct assistance		
Associations for migrants and refugees	Language courses, legal orientation	<a href="http://www.meltingpot.org">www.meltingpot.org</a> <a href="http://www.arci.it">www.arci.it</a>	
Patronati	Legal and social orientation	Database, check your Province <a href="http://www.portaleimmigrazione.it">www.portaleimmigrazione.it</a>	
Sindacato CGIL	Trade union, deals with labour disputes	<a href="http://www.cgil.it/sedi/">www.cgil.it/sedi/</a> and <a href="http://www.cafcgil.it/pagine/mappa">www.cafcgil.it/pagine/mappa</a> (all workers) <a href="http://www.flai.it">www.flai.it</a> (agro industry workers)	
Sindacato CISL	Trade union, deals with labour disputes	<a href="http://www.cisl.it">www.cisl.it</a> and <a href="http://www.cafcisl.it">www.cafcisl.it</a> (all workers) <a href="http://www.faicisl.it">www.faicisl.it</a> (agro industry workers)	
Sindacato UIL	Trade union, deals with labour disputes	<a href="http://www.uil.it/DoveSiamo.asp">www.uil.it/DoveSiamo.asp</a> <a href="http://www.extranet.cafuil.it/sedi.asp">www.extranet.cafuil.it/sedi.asp</a> (all workers) <a href="http://www.uila.eu">www.uila.eu</a> (agro industry workers)	
Ministero dell'Istruzione dell'Università della Ricerca	Schools, education	<a href="http://www.miur.it">www.miur.it</a>	
Centri Territoriali Permanenti (CPTs)	Evening courses for adults	<a href="http://www.miur.it">www.miur.it</a>	

Name of organization	Services available	Contact details	Local address
Camera di Commercio	Orientation for independent workers	800 800 077 <a href="http://www.camcom.gov.it">www.camcom.gov.it</a>	
Other associations/private entities (this information is not validated, please verify from other sources)			
India Italia Facilities Association	Legal assistance	0372458420 Cremona Galleria del Corso 3	
Nari Onlus	Diaspora group providing advice	+0327 406 7593	

**Table 2: Useful phone numbers**

Name of organization	Services available	Contact details
Ambulanza	Ambulance, first aid	118
Forze dell'Ordine	Polizia	112
	Carabinieri	133
Vigili del Fuoco	Fire brigade	155
National Anti-Discrimination Office (UNAR)	Assistance for victims of racial discrimination	<a href="http://www.unar.it">www.unar.it</a> 800 901010 office hours
Numero Verde Anti-tratta	Fighting sexual exploitation	800 290 290 <a href="http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it">www.pariopportunita.gov.it</a> <a href="http://www.osservatoriointerventitratta.it">www.osservatoriointerventitratta.it</a>
Telefono Rosa Available in Italian, English, French, Spanish and Arabic	Fighting violence against women	1522 <a href="http://www.telefonorosa.it">http://www.telefonorosa.it</a>

The *Handbook for the integration of Indians in Italy* is a guide for Indian migrants to understand the local systems and how to access the services offered by many local actors, institutions and service providers in Italy.

The handbook is built on the personal experiences of migrants themselves. The aim is to simplify the long list of procedures that migrants approach in their daily life, giving them an opportunity to learn and adapt to the host society and achieve their highest potential.

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