

# DIASPORA MAPPING

PROFILE OF THE GAMBIA,  
GUINEA AND GUINEA-BISSAU  
DIASPORAS IN ITALY



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March 2019





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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AICS	Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development
A.Y.	Academic Year
B.A.	Bachelor of Art
B.Sc.	Bachelor of Science
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
FMS	Flow Monitoring Survey
M.A.	Master of Art
M.Sc.	Master of Science
MAEGE	Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et des Guinéens de l'Étranger
MIUR	Italian Ministry of Research and Education
Mol	Italian Ministry of Interior
YDLA	project “Bridging together youth, diaspora and local authorities for an integrated approach to promote employment and address irregular migration in The Gambia, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau”
SIPROIMI (formerly SPRAR)	Protection System for holders of international protection and for unaccompanied foreign minors



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# INTRODUCTION

The mapping of the Gambian, Guinean and Guinea-Bissau diasporas in Italy was commissioned by IOM within the framework of the project “Bridging together youth, diaspora and local authorities for an integrated approach to promote employment and address irregular migration in The Gambia, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau” (YDLA) funded by the Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development (AICS) and managed by IOM in collaboration with the governments of the three African countries involved.

The overall goal of the project is promoting safe migration and creating alternatives to irregular youth migration by fostering youth agency and employment in the communities of origin in The Gambia, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, as well as effectively managing the labour supply and demand by promoting youth job centres. It consists of three essential components, intended to:

- a. provide national and local authorities with knowledge and tools on how best to account for migration into local development plans;
- b. empower youth in the communities of origin, to achieve their livelihood expectations and aspirations while promoting their access to viable jobs, locally and abroad;
- c. facilitate engagement by the diaspora, to contribute to youth empowerment and promote local alternatives to irregular migration in their countries of origin through skill transfer programmes.

To achieve the target listed at point c above, IOM recruited a consultant to conduct a Diaspora mapping of the nationals from The Gambia, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau living in Italy. As specified in the Terms of Reference, the study aimed at identifying existing skills, expertise and interests among diaspora members of the three target nationalities and at evaluating the extent to which they are engaged (or wish to be engaged) in supporting their communities of origin. The research also aimed to help shed light on what diaspora-led initiatives need to be supported and boosted by government authorities to contribute to the development of local activities in the respective countries of origin.

In particular, the study aimed at delivering the following results:

- Drafting a profile of the three targeted diasporas in Italy;
- Identifying any existing network and evaluating the organizational level of existing structures (e.g. associations, networks, community groups);
- Identifying private and public initiatives by the diaspora in Italy and the various sectors of intervention;
- Identifying any existing diaspora-led development projects in the country of origin;
- Identifying forms of partnership/cooperation between diaspora associations/networks and other actors engaged in development activities (e.g. NGOs, local authorities, companies, etc.);
- Providing diaspora members and associations with suggestions and recommendations on capacity-building activities and on how to use their expertise and investments for development projects in country of origin.

The report is organized into two main sections. In the first one, the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the three diasporas is outlined. Through the collection and processing of statistical data, the current presence and the historical evolution of the migratory flows, as well as the more recent dynamics related to the arrivals by sea is described, with insights on the regions of origins, reasons for leaving the homeland and number of asylum applications. The socioeconomic profile is then analysed, with insights on the educational background and job placement in Italy, remittances flow and, only for those arrived by sea in 2016–2018, educational and professional background.

In the second section, the results of the focus group discussions organized with associations and diplomatic delegations of each diaspora are reported and analysed. This section provides insights on the organization and structure of each diaspora and about the issues reported by participants at the meeting and related to co-development projects, already implemented or planned for the future. It is followed by the report conclusions, which consist of final remarks and recommendations to foster the inclusion of diaspora and migration into the design and implementation of local development strategies.

## METHODOLOGY

The terms “diaspora” and “mapping” both require a conceptual definition, which is also the underlying basis of the methodological approach adopted in this study.

### Diaspora and sampling procedure

The concept of diaspora relates to a body of literature on the politics of migration and integration, identity and cultural formation, international politics and cooperation too rich to address here in any depth. In general, the term “diasporas” conveys the idea of transnational populations living in a place other than their country of origin, while still maintaining relations, at least emotional, with their homelands, being both “here” and “there” irrespective of the place of birth. Defining diasporas indeed raises tangible issues related to the social and everyday experience of people, such as the definition of place of birth and citizenship, as well as subtle questions on identity and belonging. According to IOM’s glossary on migration, diasporas are defined as: “Migrants or descendants of migrants whose identity and sense of belonging, either real or symbolic, have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country”. The word diaspora is indeed used as an umbrella term encompassing multiple realities, that differ from country to country, and it includes subjects and organizations with different backgrounds: people settled in a host country on a permanent basis, labour migrants based abroad for a period of time, dual nationals, ethnic diasporas, nationals of the host country or second/third-generation groups. Ultimately, it is important to stress that self-identification is key when it comes to labelling individuals as diaspora members.

For the purpose of this study, diaspora is defined as “consisting of people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union”.<sup>1</sup> In particular, this study concerns people who have a Gambian, Guinean or Bissau-Guinean citizenship and who are regularly residing in Italy. While the majority of the sample consists of first generation migrants, statistical data may also include people who have been born or brought up in Italy but that still do not have the Italian citizenship, mainly pursuant to the principle of “*ius sanguinis*” (right of blood), according to which a child born from an Italian father or mother is Italian.<sup>2</sup> Also, the sample considered in the section on development needs and collected through a qualitative methodology (see below) included both first generation migrants and their descendants.

<sup>1</sup> African Union, <https://au.int/en/diaspora-division> [accessed on 06 June 2019].

<sup>2</sup> Foreign citizens can indeed obtain it if they meet certain requirements and have been residing in Italy for several years; citizens of the three countries considered herein can choose to maintain dual citizenship. For an insight on the citizenship law in Italy see: [www.esteri.it/mae/en/servizi/stranieri/cittadinanza\\_0.html](http://www.esteri.it/mae/en/servizi/stranieri/cittadinanza_0.html) [accessed in March 2019]

## Mapping methodology

Generally, a diaspora mapping is a cross sectional study identifying the characteristics of a given diaspora through the use of secondary data (such as census data or administrative source data). It may also include surveys and qualitative methodologies, allowing to obtain a large-scale view of a given population in a specific context.

This diaspora mapping followed a two-step research process. The first one focused on secondary data collection and analysis, while the second one concerned primary data collection from associations and diaspora organizations.

The secondary data analysis allowed to outline the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the three target diasporas. The analysed data included official statistics issued by Istat and Eurostat, information issued by government bodies like the Italian Ministry of Interior (nationalities declared upon landing, asylum statistics), the Italian Ministry of Research and Education (Primary/Secondary School and University students), Anpal<sup>3</sup> (job market inclusion) and the Bank of Italy (remittances), as well as information from authoritative research institutions like the Italian ISMU Foundation and the European University Institute. The analysis of secondary data allowed to uncover a substantial lack of statistical or published data on the research topics, because of the relatively low number of people of the three diasporas residing in Italy (compared with other foreign communities). Thus, unpublished and missing data were requested for this specific research from competent public institutions and research offices, allowing to enrich this study with unedited statistical information. Specifically, the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce provided data on individual entrepreneurship. The Central Statistical Office of the Ministry of Interior supplied unpublished data on the residence permits issued and renewed in 2017. Finally, IOM Italy provided data extracted from the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) project conducted in Italy between 2016 and 2018, with a specific focus on the respondents' profile with regards to their education, place of origin and reasons for leaving the country.

The primary data collection phase of the research involved qualitative interviews with diaspora associations to get an understanding of their *modus operandi*, their development needs and their willingness to engage in activities in their countries of origin. The database of the associations of foreign nationals of the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies<sup>4</sup> was first consulted to get a general overview of diaspora associations in Italy. After that, interviews and conversations with associative leaders and diplomats were conducted in order to obtain up-to-date information on the diaspora associations' activities and to ask whether they were willing to take part in a focus group organized with other diaspora associations, aimed at discussing issues related to the situation of each diaspora in Italy and their development needs. Given the historical, socioeconomic and demographic differences among the three countries and their diasporas, the sampling method and the focus group led to different results and insights on diaspora organizations, that will be separately addressed and discussed for each diaspora in the related section.

This research project was conducted in Italy between September 2018 and February 2019. The results obtained from the analysis of the available secondary data and from the analysis of the data collected in this time frame provided a first general overview of the three diasporas in Italy. This mapping allows to compare the different situations of the three nationalities, highlighting interesting differences and similarities, useful to adapt and tailor the capacity-building and development activities that will follow. Nevertheless, this study only concerns registered and formally organized associations and gives us a mere glimpse of the several informal associations, groups and activities, for which there was not space in this report but that may be explored in future research.

<sup>3</sup> Agenzia Nazionale Politiche attive del Lavoro (National Agency for active labour market policies).

<sup>4</sup> [www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Areetematiche/PaesiComunitari-e-associazioniMigranti/Pagine/mappatura-associazioni.aspx](http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Areetematiche/PaesiComunitari-e-associazioniMigranti/Pagine/mappatura-associazioni.aspx) [accessed on 06 June 2019]

# PROFILES OF DIASPORAS





## 1

## THE GAMBIA

## 1.1 MIGRATION TRENDS: ARRIVALS AND CURRENT PRESENCE IN ITALY

## 1.1.1 Arrivals by sea

The Gambian population in Italy has significantly increased over the last few years, mostly as a result of arrivals by sea through the Central Mediterranean Route. Data provided by the Ministry of the Interior (table 1) shows that the number of Gambians departing from Libya and who disembarked in Italy after crossing the Mediterranean Sea increased between 2012 and 2013, when 2,619 individuals landed in Sicily, which made Gambians the sixth most represented nationality arriving to Italy by number of registered persons at disembarkation points. The number of Gambian nationals remained high in both 2014 and 2015 (8,707 and 8,454 respectively), reaching a peak of 11,929 individuals registered at landing points in 2016. Arrivals by sea, however, significantly decreased in 2017 and 2018, a change in line with a general drop in arrivals by sea of third-country nationals to Italy.

**Table 1. Arrivals by sea of Gambian nationals, absolute values, share of the total (%) and relative position, 2012–2018**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Gambia (absolute value)	348	2,619	8,707	8,454	11,929	5,808	264
Gambia (% of the total)	2.6	6.1	5.1	5.5	6.6	4.9	1.1
Position	9th	6th	5th	5th	5th	11th	18th

Source: Italian Ministry of the Interior (2018).<sup>5</sup>

## 1.1.2 Current presence in Italy

According to available official statistics (Eurostat), Gambian nationals living in Italy as of 1 January 2018 were 19,567, corresponding to 0.4 per cent of the total foreign population regularly residing in Italy (slightly above 5 million individuals).

## 1.1.2.1 Regional distribution

Regarding the regional distribution (table 2), the first three regions for the presence of Gambian nationals at the beginning of 2018 were Sicily (16%, for a total of 3,126 people), Lombardy (12.2%) and Campania (9.4 %), followed by Lazio (9.2%), Piedmont (6.9%), Tuscany (6.6%), Emilia-Romagna (6.5%) and Apulia (6.3%), evenly spread between Northern and Southern Italy. Compared with the previous year, there is a significant increase in all regions – except for Valle d'Aosta – with peaks of 89.9 per cent in Molise, 86.3 per cent in Abruzzo and 83.9 per cent in Sardinia. In these regions, however, presence of Gambian nationals is not high in absolute terms. The increase is around 60 per cent in regions such as Tuscany, Emilia Romagna, Calabria, Veneto and Marche. This positive trend has been observed since 2012 (table 3). In 2012, the Gambian community in Italy consisted of less than one thousand people (940); in 2013 it grew by about 300 units, reaching the number of 1,244 people, and by about as many in 2014, when it reached the number of 1,630 people. Between 2015 and 2018, the number of Gambian nationals regularly residing in Italy increased at a faster pace: 3,306 Gambian residents registered in 2015, 8,015 in 2016, 13,768 in 2017, up to 19,567 in 2018.

<sup>5</sup> <http://ucs.interno.gov.it/ucs> [accessed in March 2019].

**Table 2. Gambian nationals by region of residence, gender and total as of 1 January 2018**

Region	Residents from The Gambia				% of foreign population in 2018	% variation over the previous year (2017)
	Male	Female	Total	%		
Sicily	3,076	50	3,126	16.00%	1.62%	+18.60%
Lombardy	2,177	201	2,378	12.20%	0.21%	+36.50%
Campania	1,821	21	1,842	9.40%	0.71%	+48.80%
Lazio	1,762	47	1,809	9.20%	0.27%	+32.90%
Piedmont	1,295	50	1,345	6.90%	0.32%	+24.90%
Tuscany	1,283	18	1,301	6.60%	0.32%	+62.60%
Emilia-Romagna	1,256	14	1,270	6.50%	0.24%	+64.70%
Apulia	1,220	13	1,233	6.30%	0.92%	+54.70%
Calabria	1,120	28	1,148	5.90%	1.06%	+61.50%
Sardinia	695	11	706	3.60%	1.30%	+83.90%
Veneto	663	41	704	3.60%	0.14%	+61.10%
Liguria	563	15	578	3.00%	0.41%	+46.00%
Marche	429	18	447	2.30%	0.33%	+62.00%
Basilicata	373	6	379	1.90%	1.68%	+33.90%
Umbria	357	13	370	1.90%	0.39%	+31.20%
Abruzzo	309	4	313	1.60%	0.36%	+86.30%
Trentino-Alto A.	306	4	310	1.60%	0.33%	+42.90%
Molise	244	1	245	1.30%	1.76%	+89.90%
Friuli Venezia G.	36		36	0.20%	0.03%	+12.50%
Valle d'Aosta	27		27	0.10%	0.33%	-15.60%
<b>Total Italy</b>	<b>19,012</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>19,567</b>		<b>0.40%</b>	<b>+42.10%</b>

Source: Istat, 2018.<sup>6</sup>

The most stable presence over time is the one in Lombardy, where in 2012 Gambian nationals were 541, increasing regularly up to 2,378 residents as of January 2018. On the contrary, all other regions have registered a spike in the presence of Gambian nationals, especially from 2016 onwards. In all other regions, in fact, Gambian nationals were less than one hundred in 2012, while five or six years later their number exceeded one thousand. In 2012, for example, only 18 Gambians were residing in Sicily; in 2015 residents were 1,013 and in 2018 they were 3,126. Tuscany, Calabria, Campania, Piedmont, Apulia, Emilia – Romagna and Lazio have a similar trend, from a few units in 2012 to over one thousand residents in 2018.

<sup>6</sup> <http://demo.istat.it/str2017/index.html> [accessed in March 2019].

**Table 3. Trends of Gambian nationals regularly residing in Italy, by region (2012–2018)**

Region	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Abruzzo	3	3	2	14	55	168	313
Basilicata		5	3	37	157	283	379
Calabria	2	7	22	112	422	711	1,148
Campania	17	44	56	101	727	1,238	1,842
Emilia-Romagna	11	14	28	71	408	771	1,270
Friuli Venezia Giulia	2	4	3	4	15	32	36
Lazio	92	134	279	451	845	1,361	1,809
Liguria	10	16	16	32	161	396	578
Lombardy	541	624	695	781	1,079	1,742	2,378
Marche	6	10	13	35	137	276	447
Molise		5	8	23	137	129	245
Piedmont	77	90	120	144	489	1,077	1,345
Apulia	15	42	50	168	475	797	1,233
Sardinia	7	9	5	36	205	384	706
Sicily	18	56	127	1,013	2,023	2,635	3,126
Tuscany	15	19	33	82	221	800	1,301
Trentino-Alto Adige	11	26	27	35	117	217	310
Umbria	1	3	7	22	138	282	370
Valle d'Aosta			1	1	1	32	27
Total	941	1,244	1,630	3,306	8,015	13,768	19,567

Source: Istat, 2018.

### 1.1.2.2 Gambian nationals in Italy by age

The Gambian population residing in Italy is particularly young. In 2018, the youth aged 15–19 years amounted to 24.3 per cent of the total Gambian population, whereas the vast majority of Gambians is aged 20–34 years (65.3%). Gambians in Italy are predominantly male (97% of the total population in 2018) and young, 90.6 per cent of males are aged 15–34 years. The female Gambian population only amounted to 555 individuals in 2018, and is younger than the male counterpart: 22 per cent of female Gambians are aged less than 15 years, 13 per cent are aged 15–19 years, 45 per cent are aged 20–34 years, and only 20 per cent are over age 34.

## 1.2 OFFICIAL STATISTICS: ASYLUM APPLICATIONS AND TYPE OF PERMITS

### 1.2.1 Asylum applications

The growth in the asylum applications submitted in Italy by Gambian nationals is related to the gradual increase in the arrival of people by sea in recent years (see table 1). Gambian nationals have been among the top ten nationalities for asylum applications since 2006. Between 2012 and 2016, in particular, most of the Gambian nationals who arrived by sea on Italian coasts applied for asylum: in 2013, 1,700 asylum applications were submitted, while from 2014 to 2017 the applications were between seven and eight thousand each year (table 4).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> It must be noted that due to the challenges in dealing with increasing arrivals by sea and increasing numbers of migrants who expressed the willingness to apply for asylum, there is a lag between the number of arrivals at any given period (year, month) and the number of asylum applications submitted during the same period (year/month).

**Table 4. First-time asylum application by Gambian nationals in Italy, 2012–2018**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	320	1,700	8,490	7,975	8,845	8,705	1,630
Of which, female	5	10	35	85	175	170	20
Of which, under age 18	50	115	990	1,185	1,705	2,055	635

Source: Eurostat (2019).<sup>8</sup>

Compared with other nationalities, Gambians were the third group by number of asylum applications submitted in 2014 (after Nigeria and Mali), 2015 and 2016 (after Nigeria and Pakistan). Reflecting changes in main nationalities at arrival, The Gambia was the fourth country of origin in 2017 and the ninth in 2018. Overall, 37,715 Gambian nationals applied for asylum in Italy between 2012 and 2018 (Eurostat, 2019).

## 1.2.2 First-instance asylum decisions

Regarding the results of asylum applications of Gambian nationals, the percentage of refugee status or subsidiary protection status remains very low (table 5), varying between 1 per cent and 4 per cent between 2012 and 2018 (Eurostat, 2019). A far greater percentage of Gambians obtained humanitarian protection (69% in 2012, 51% in 2013 and decreasing in subsequent years), while over the years the number of rejected applications has grown, with an average of 60 per cent of denials. In absolute terms, these percentages correspond in 2014 to the denial of 2,043 asylum applications, in 2015 of 5,307 applications, in 2016 of 5,572 applications and in 2017 of 3,723 applications. As these are first-instance decisions by the Territorial Asylum Commissions, a large part of the rejected asylum seekers have appealed against this administrative decision, accessing the justice system. Rejected asylum seekers who appeal the decision have the right to remain in reception centres until the final decision is taken.

**Table 5. First instance decisions on applications for Gambians in Italy, absolute %, 2012–2018**

Decision/time	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	355	625	3,400	8,725	8,680	6,430	6,970
Total positive decisions	290	345	1,285	2,995	2,815	2,605	2,320
Geneva Convention status	15	20	120	245	225	135	135
Humanitarian status	260	315	1,065	2,550	2,350	2,420	2,160
Rejected	70	280	2,115	5,730	5,865	3,825	4,655
Subsidiary protection status	15	10	100	195	240	50	20

Source: Eurostat (2019).<sup>9</sup>

## 1.2.3 Type of residence permits

Data from Eurostat provide insights on the evolution of the type of permits granted to Gambian nationals in Italy over the years. From 2012 to 2017 the number of all valid permits (table 6), as well as the number of first-time permits (table 7), has significantly increased (data for 2018 is not available yet at the time of writing).

**Table 6. Residence permits granted to Gambian nationals in Italy, by reason and year, 2012–2017**

Reasons	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	1,433	1,824	2,858	4,712	15,857	10,697
Family reasons	414	575	596	622	563	610
Education reasons	11	8	8	11	12	23
Remunerated activities reasons	540	434	424	429	413	474
Refugee status	108	114	231	443	739	961
Subsidiary protection	94	109	196	361	720	1,081
Other	266	584	1,403	2,846	13,410	7,548

Source: Eurostat, last update 11-02-2019.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/data/database> [accessed in March 2019].

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/data/database> [accessed in March 2019] [migr\_resvalid]. Please note that the category “Other” includes other types of protection permits (including humanitarian protection, permit for minor age, social protection permits for victims of trafficking) as well as other residual types (including sport reasons, religious reasons).

**Table 7. First-time residence permits granted to Gambian nationals, by reason and year, 2012–2017.**

Reasons	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	229	366	751	774	7,087	3,289
Family reasons	55	46	31	62	66	87
Education reasons	3	10	14	11	5	15
Remunerated activities reasons	62	31	20	7	3	6
Other	109	279	686	694	7,013	3,181

Source: Eurostat, last update 09-01-2019.<sup>11</sup>

Although data from Eurostat do not provide a full disaggregation of all types of permits available and all existing individual statutes, the two tables show how family, work and study permits are a residual part of all those granted to Gambian nationals in recent years. Indeed, in 2017 most Gambian nationals held a refugee permit (9% of the total), a subsidiary protection permit (10% of the total) and above all a permit granted for “other” reasons (70% of the total), a broad category which includes, among others, humanitarian protection permits and permits for minor age.

Disaggregated data are similar for the previous years. Also noteworthy is the sharp increase in the number of total permits granted between 2015 and 2016, which might hint at some underreporting of existing permits and newly issued permits in 2015.

### 1.2.3.1 Residence permits issued and renewed in 2017

National administrative data provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior (Mol) for 2017<sup>12</sup> can help to better understand the variety of international and national protection permits and related statuses that are granted to Gambian nationals in Italy.<sup>13</sup> Data from the Mol for 2017, illustrated in figures 1, 2 and 3, indicate the number and reasons of the residence permits granted to the newly arrived Gambians in 2017 and of the permits renewed by Gambians already settled in Italy in 2017. In 2017, the Italian State granted 5,345 new first residence permits and renewed 13,504 permits, with a marked prevalence of permits granted and renewed to men compared with women and to the group aged 18–30 years.

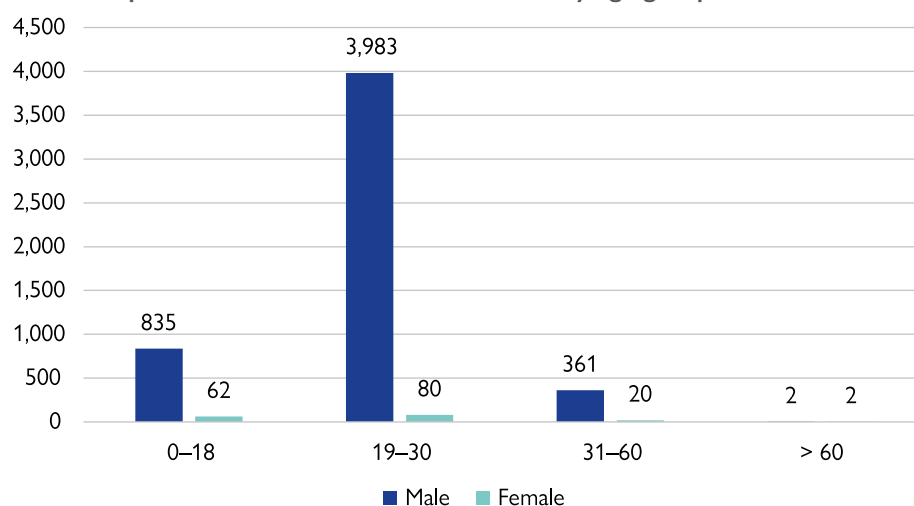
#### Age

Over 74 per cent (74.5%) of the new permits issued in 2017 (3,983 permits) were granted to men aged 18–30 years (figure 1) and 1.4 per cent (80) to women aged 18–30 years, thus confirming that the recent demographic growth in the Gambian diaspora in Italy is due to migratory flows mainly consisting of young men. The number of male children is also significant and accounts for 15.6 per cent (835 permits) of the total number of new permits released, while permits released to female children only correspond to 1.1 per cent of the total number. Regarding the other age groups, 6.7 per cent of the new permits were granted to men and 0.3 per cent to women aged 30–60 years, and only 4 permits were granted to people aged over 60 years. Data concerning the permits renewed in 2017 to people already residing in Italy confirm the same demographic trends (figure 2) characterized by the marked predominance of the male groups aged 18–30 years. Almost 82 per cent (81.9%) of the total number of permits renewed (13,504) were granted to men aged 18–30 years, while 1.1 per cent were granted to the same female age group. As for the other age groups, 2 per cent (278) of the permits were renewed to underage men and 0.2 per cent (31) to underage women. The permits renewed to men aged 30–60 years correspond to 14 per cent of the total number (total 1,897 permits).

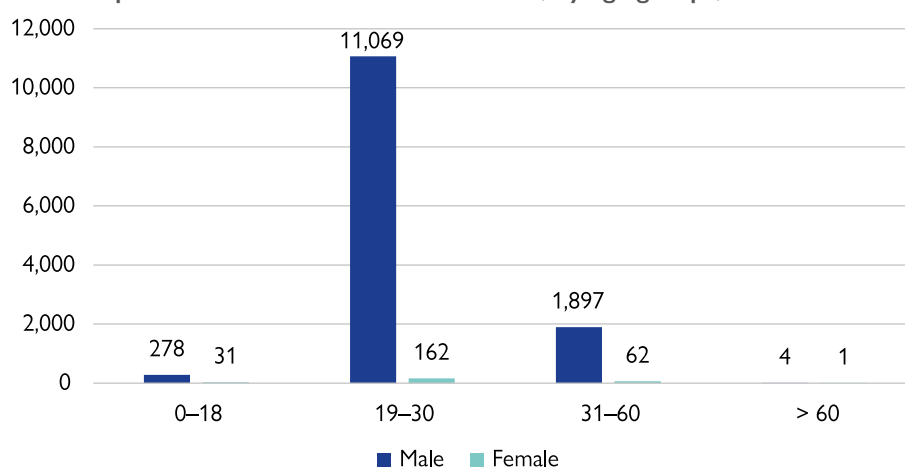
<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Disaggregated data for other years were not available. Final data on 2018 were not yet available when we contacted the Italian Ministry of Interior.

<sup>13</sup> Administrative data do not coincide with publicly available data provided by national and European statistical offices, as definitions and time frames might differ slightly.

**Figure 1. First-time permits issued to Gambian nationals by age groups, absolute values, 2017**

Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

**Figure 2. Renewed permits issued to Gambian nationals, by age groups, absolute values, 2017**

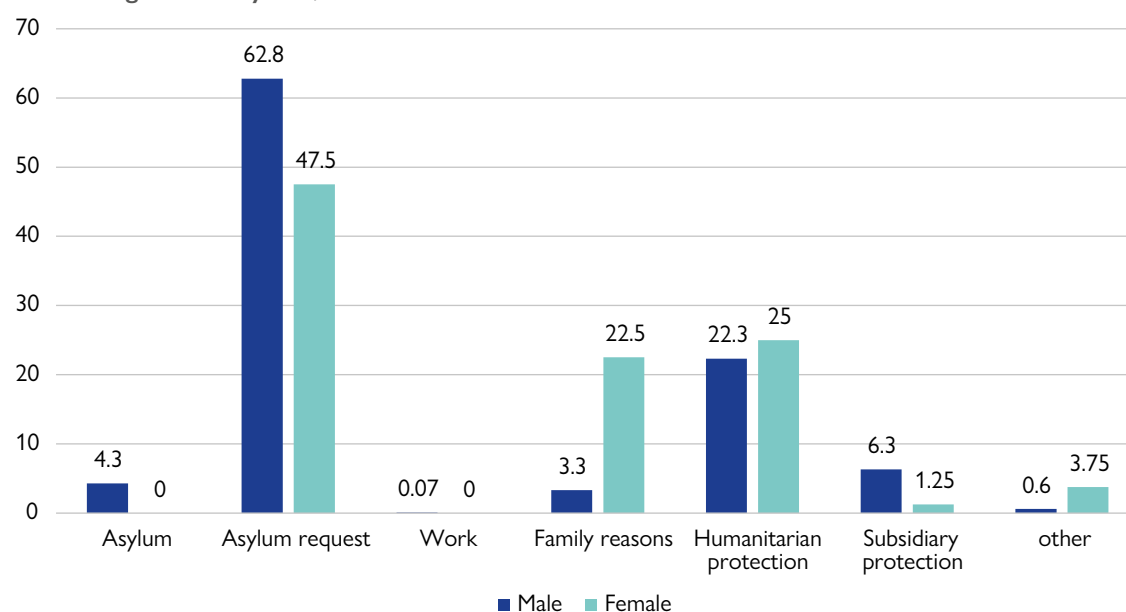
Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

### Type of Permits

Figure 3 illustrates the type of the permits issued for the first time to Gambians aged 18–30 years in 2017. It shows that, among the total permits issued to men aged 18–30 years (3,983), there is a marked prevalence of permits granted for asylum application (62.8%, total 2,505 permits), followed by permits granted for humanitarian protection (22.3%, 892 permits) and for other international protection reasons (6.3% for subsidiary protection and 4.3% for asylum). Only 3 permits were issued for wage labour.

Among women, although the absolute number of permits issued (80) is clearly much lower compared with the ones issued to the male group, the percentage ratio of permit types is similar: most permits, 47.5 per cent (total 38) are issued for asylum application, 25 per cent is granted for humanitarian protection and only 1.25 per cent is issued for subsidiary protection. No Gambian woman was granted a permit for asylum in 2017, nor for wage labour, while the portion granted for family reasons – mainly issued for family reunification – is higher compared with the one of the male group (22.5% of women and 3.3% of men).

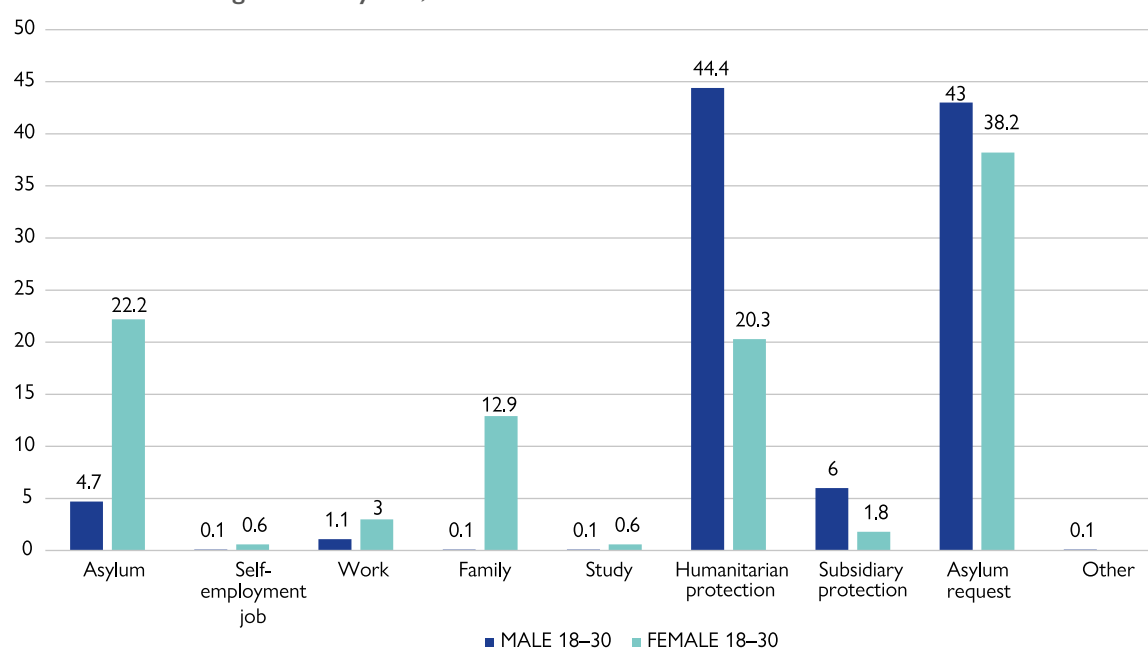
**Figure 3. Type of first-time permits issued in 2017 to Gambians residing in Italy, male and female aged 18–30 years, % values**



Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

In the same year, the prevailing reasons for permit renewal (figure 4) for men aged 18–30 years are still humanitarian protection (44.4% – total 4,922 permits) and asylum application (43% – total 4,767 permits) while the proportion of permits renewed for other types of protection remains lower: 6 per cent for subsidiary protection and 4.7 per cent for asylum. Only 1.1 per cent of this male age group had their permit renewed for wage labour, a percentage corresponding to 142 permits renewed. Compared with the data on first-time permits issued in the same year, this absolute figure shows that the number of employed men is slowly but steadily increasing. With regards to the female age group, most of them, 38.2 per cent (total 62 permits), renewed a permit for asylum request, 20.3 per cent (33 permits) renewed the permit for humanitarian reasons and only 1.8 per cent for subsidiary protection. Compared with the male group, the percentage of women who renewed their permits for asylum (22.2% – 7 permits) and for family reasons (12.9% – 27 permits) is higher.

**Figure 4. Reasons of permits renewed in 2017, Gambian nationals residing in Italy, males and females aged 18–30 years, % values**



Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

## 1.3 A PROFILE OF THE GAMBIAN DIASPORA IN ITALY FROM IOM SURVEY DATA

This section relies on primary survey data collected by IOM Italy through its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) project, as part of IOM's research on populations on the move through the Mediterranean and Western Balkan routes to Europe. FMS were conducted with migrants aged 14 years and above who arrived by sea in 2016, 2017 and 2018, in arrival locations in Southern Italy and in transit locations in Lazio, Lombardy and Liguria, to obtain information on profiles, transit routes and vulnerabilities. The total sample was designed to provide information on the nationality, sex and age structure of migrants arriving in Italy through the Central Mediterranean route.<sup>14</sup>

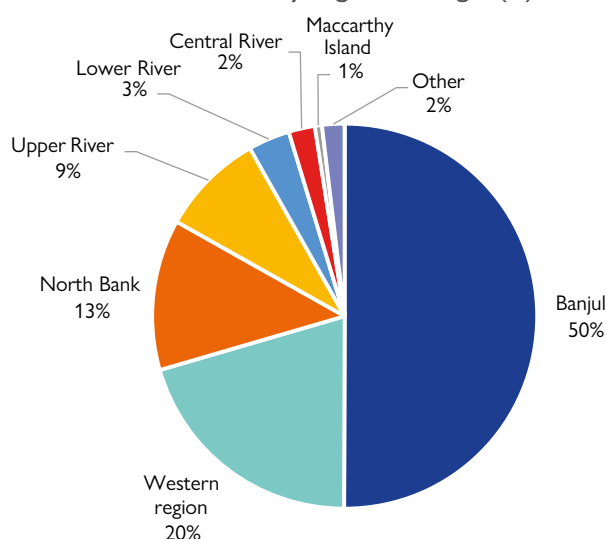
The subsample used for this analysis consists of 1,015 migrants from Gambia (594 in 2016, 359 in 2017 and 62 in 2018).<sup>15</sup> Most interviewees from The Gambia were males (99%) and 39 per cent of them were aged 14–18 years. The great majority reported being single (92%), with the remainder being married (7%) or divorced/widowed (1%). Only about 8 per cent reported having children, almost all of whom were left behind at the place of origin.

### 1.3.1 Socioeconomic background before departure

#### Regions of origin and route

Migrants from Gambia interviewed by IOM between 2016 and 2018 reported Banjul, the capital, as their place of origin in 50 per cent of the cases, followed by those coming from the Western and North-Bank regions (20% and 13% respectively). The remainder reported coming from Upper, Lower and Central River and others (figure 5).

**Figure 5. Gambian respondents in 2016–2018, by region of origin (%)**



Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Most of those who took part in the survey reported having travelled alone (79%), while the remainder travelled with a group of non-family members (15%) or with at least one family member (6%).

<sup>14</sup> Only migrants aged 14 years and above who arrived in Italy no more than one year before the interview were approached. Surveys are fully anonymous and voluntary, and respondents are approached according to a targeted procedure by IOM field staff, with those who give their consent to be interviewed proceeding with the remainder of the questions. The sample is therefore not random and, as with all surveys of this kind, this can lead to selection bias. Those more willing to respond to this survey are often young adult males, which are therefore slightly overrepresented in comparison to women. The fieldwork conditions have changed throughout the survey period, to account for changes in incoming flows to Italy and to give a good representation of both arrival and transit points in the country. For more information, see the IOM Mediterranean Geoportal with DTM reports on surveys conducted in Italy.

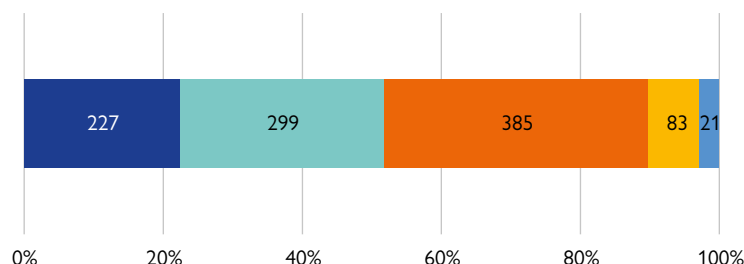
<sup>15</sup> The sample of respondents from Guinea and Guinea-Bissau is presented in the next 2 chapters. For more on DTM project activities in the Mediterranean region, recent reports and the latest data on arrivals by sea and by land to Europe, please see the DTM Europe Geoportal: <http://migration.iom.int/europe/> [accessed on 06 June 2019]



## Educational and professional background

Gambian respondents reported having received lower secondary education in 38 per cent of the cases, while 29 per cent reported having completed primary education, 8 per cent higher secondary education and 2 per cent tertiary education. The remaining 22 per cent of Gambian respondents reported not having completed any type of formal education.

**Figure 6. Education level, Gambian respondents in 2016–2018, absolute and share values (%).**



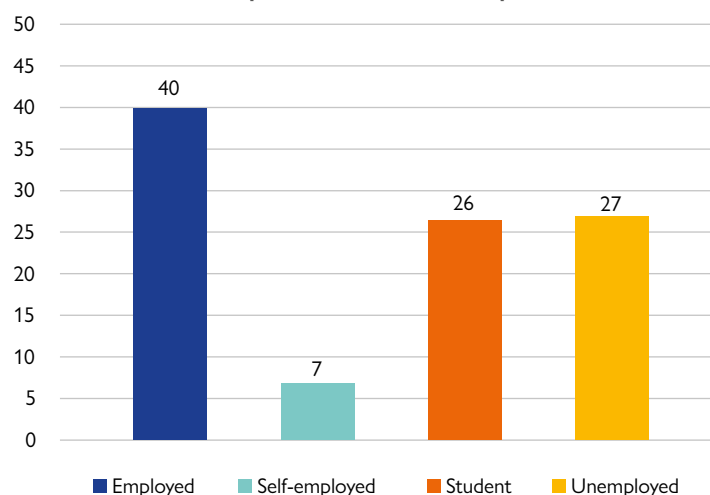
Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Gambians who were aged 14–17 years – almost 40% of the interviewed sample – were asked about the last time they went to school: almost one third (31%) reported having left school between 1 and 2 years prior to the interview, 27 per cent having left school more than 3 years before, and 15 per cent having lastly attended school less than 1 year before the interviews. Moreover, 27 per cent of them reported never having attended school.

## Employment status before departure

Regarding the employment status before departure (figure 7), the majority of Gambian interviewees declared they have been employed (40%), while others reported having been students (27%) or having been self-employed (7%). The remaining 27 per cent reported having been unemployed at the time they left their country.

**Figure 7. Employment status before departure, Gambian respondents in 2016–2018 (%).**

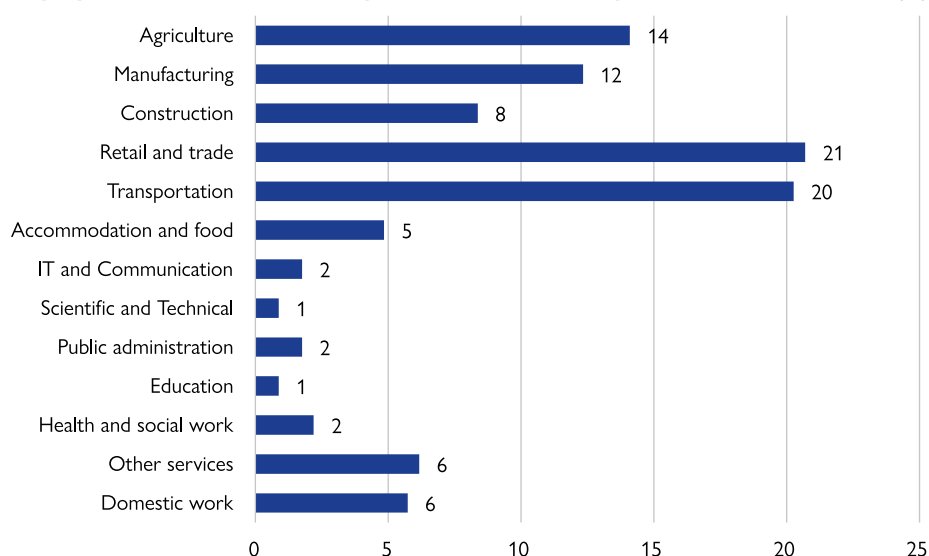


Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Among those who reported having been employed or self-employed, the most common employment sector was manufacturing (22%), followed by agriculture (17%), construction (16%) and retail and trade services (16%).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> This question was not included in 2016's DTM's questionnaire.

**Figure 8. Employment sectors before departure, Gambian respondents in 2017–2018 (%)**

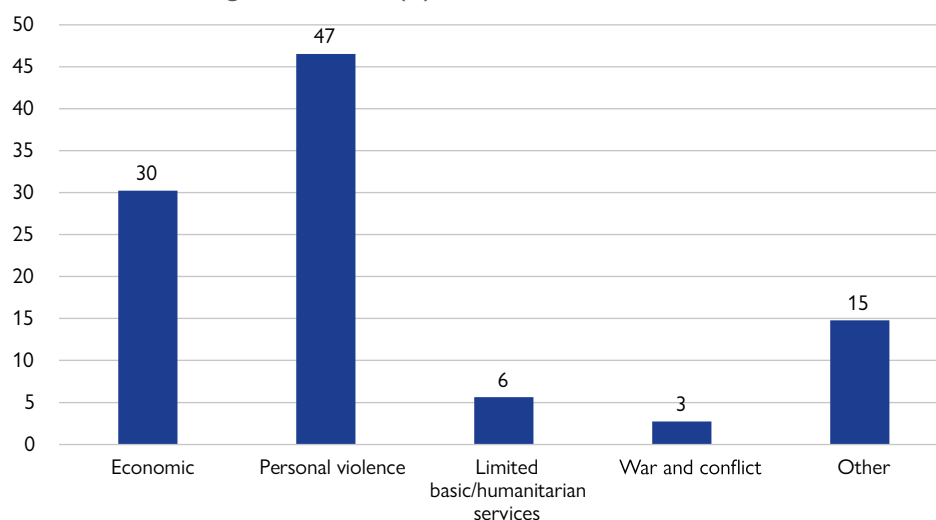


Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2017–2018.

### 1.3.2 Reasons for leaving The Gambia

Migrants and refugees from Gambia met by IOM in Italy were also asked about their motivations to leave their country of origin. As the questionnaire was slightly revised for this question, results are not strictly comparable across the 3 years. Figure 9 summarizes the answers for migrants interviewed in 2017 and 2018: war and conflict is reported by a minority of respondents, while most reported having left The Gambia because of personal violence (some reported threats received by members of the family for heritage reasons and fights for land control in rural areas) and because of economic reasons. Other reasons, which include education reasons, health reasons, natural disasters and family reunification, were reported by about 15 per cent of the respondents in both years.

**Figure 9. Reasons for leaving The Gambia (%), 2017–2018**



Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2017–2018.

One third of Gambian respondents reported having departed from a country other than The Gambia, after having spent there more than one year. Migrants were also asked why they left the country of departure, every time they reported having spent more than one year in a country other than their own before resuming the journey. Since in 80 per cent of the cases this country was Libya, almost three quarters of them reported having left the country of departure because of personal violence and reasons related to insecurity, as the main reason to resume their journey.<sup>17</sup>

### 1.3.3 Intended destinations

Finally, IOM survey data can also shed some light on the intentions of Gambians travelling along the Central Mediterranean route with regards to their final destination. Many of the respondents reported having left at a very young age and having embarked on very long journeys; it is understandable that their aims and intentions may have changed and adapted to the situation they met at different stages of the journey.

While half of the respondents (51%) reported having had Italy as a destination in mind at the time of departure, a large percentage of them just referred to “Europe” as a destination or had no specific destination in mind, while some had planned to reach Libya in the first place (17.9 and 10% respectively). Then, in the light of their situation once they arrived in Italy and with more information about Italian and European rules, 89 per cent of them reported wanting to remain in Italy and only smaller percentages reported wanting to reach other European countries (Germany, Spain, United Kingdom above all).

<sup>17</sup> Please see DTM reports on migrants’ vulnerability to human trafficking and exploitation during the journey along the Central Mediterranean route: <https://publications.iom.int/books/migrant-vulnerability-human-trafficking-and-exploitation-evidence-central-and-eastern> [accessed on 06 June 2019].

## Box 1: Type of residence permits

**Residence Permit for asylum application:** Residence permit for six months, renewable until the “Territorial Commissions for the Recognition of International Protection” – which are competent to examine the asylum application – issue the first instance decision. Asylum seekers are allowed to work 60 days after formalizing the asylum application. It does not allow family reunification, nor does it allow travelling or working in Europe.

**Residence Permit for subsidiary protection:** Residence permit for five years, renewable. It allows the holder to study and work (as employed/self-employed worker and in the public sector), and grants access to the public health service. It can be converted into a work permit or into an EU permit for long-term residence, which allows the holder to live and work in another European country. It allows family reunification with facilitated criteria compared with residence permits for work reasons. In some cases, the Italian State provides a travel document. Alternatively, the candidate must apply for a passport through the embassy. It allows the holder to stay in another European country for up to 3 months, but not to work there.

**Residence Permit for asylum:** Residence permit for 5 years, renewable. It allows the holder to study and work (as employed/self-employed worker and in the public sector), and grants access to the public health service. It allows family reunification without any economic requirement and, after 5 years (instead of 10), it grants the right to apply for Italian citizenship. **The Italian State must provide a travel document, equivalent to a passport.** It allows the permit holder to stay in another European country for up to 3 months, but not to work there. It can be converted into an EU permit for long term residence, which allows living and working in another European country.

Also see: [www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/italy/content-international-protection/status-and-residence/residence-permit](http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/italy/content-international-protection/status-and-residence/residence-permit)

**Permit for humanitarian protection:** Humanitarian protection is a residual form of protection available to those not eligible for refugee status, who are not entitled to subsidiary protection but cannot be removed from national territory because of objective and serious personal situations. The permit validity ranges from 6 months to two years. It allows the permit holder to stay in another European country for up to 3 months, but not to work there. It can be converted into a residence permit for work. This type of permit has been abolished by Leg. Decree 113/2018, converted into law 132/2018. After a transitional period for asylum seekers in the pipeline, this type of protection permit is no longer available for migrants who submit their asylum applications after 5 October 2018.

**Permit for family reasons:** It can be granted to: a) relatives who arrived in Italy through family reunification or as accompanying family members, b) a foreigner who marries an Italian citizen or a foreigner regularly residing in Italy, c) the parent of an Italian minor. The applicant’s permit has the same duration as that of their relative’s, and both permits can be renewed at the same time. It allows the holder to work and it can be converted into a work permit.

**Work permit:** Available when the applicant has a regular job in Italy; its validity is two years with a permanent job, one year with a temporary job. It may also be granted in case of seasonal work, self-employment or temporary unemployment. It grants access to the public health service, and allows the holder to travel to and from Europe, in addition to granting the right to family reunification if certain economic requirements are met.

## Box 2: Unaccompanied children in reception centres

The number of unaccompanied children residing in Italy increased considerably from 2013 to 2017. While in 2013 the number of registered unaccompanied children was 6,319, at the end of 2017 their presence had tripled, reaching the number of 18,303 minors registered. At the end of 2018, children coming from The Gambia accounted for 8 per cent of the total number, while children from Guinea accounted for 7 per cent of the total. For Guinea-Bissau, data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies confirm indeed that the presence of unaccompanied children from this country is fairly small and constant over the considered period, with only 37 children registered and present in reception centres as of the end of 2018.

**Table 8. Number of unaccompanied children registered and present in Italy, 2013–2018**

End-of-year figure	Present and registered
2013	6,319
2014	10,536
2015	11,921
2016	17,373
2017	18,303
2018	10,787

Source: Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

**Table 9. Unaccompanied children in reception centres, as of 31/12/2018, top 12 citizenships and Guinea-Bissau, absolute and % values**

Citizenship	Total	%	Of which, female
Albania	1,550	14	82
Egypt	930	9	0
Gambia, the	892	8	11
Côte d'Ivoire	769	7	70
Guinea	802	7	10
Eritrea	770	7	151
Pakistan	552	5	0
Nigeria	563	5	237
Mali	596	6	13
Senegal	505	5	0
Tunisia	398	4	5
Kosovo <sup>18</sup>	315	3	0
Guinea-Bissau	37	0	0
Others	2,108	20	208
Total	10,787	100	787

As a constant feature for the three national groups of interest and for the period considered, female children are a very small minority of all children registered as present in the Italian reception system. Less than 2 per cent of all children from The Gambia and Guinea are female, and no female child from Guinea-Bissau is reported as of the end of 2018.

<sup>18</sup> References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Finally, the number of children who voluntarily leave the reception system and are still under age 18 at each given moment (the “untraceable”) can provide significant information: out of the 5,229 children who were registered but no more in reception centres as of the end of 2018, about 8 per cent are of Guinean nationality and 2 per cent are of Gambian nationality. As several reports of IOM and other agencies have stated, some of these children might have tried to reach other European countries by crossing Italian borders mainly in the areas of Ventimiglia and Bardonecchia (with France) and of Como (with Switzerland) (see IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF/Research, Intersos).

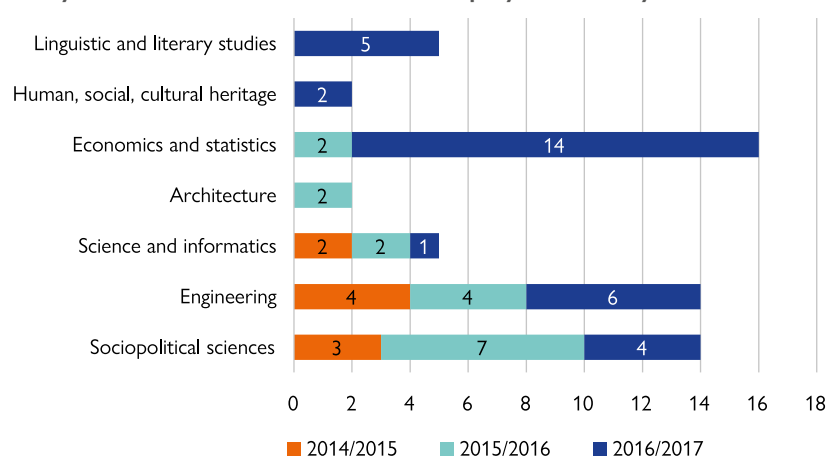
## 1.4 GAMBIAN NATIONALS IN ITALY: AN OVERVIEW OF THEIR EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC STATUS

### 1.4.1 Education

With respect to educational pathways in Italy, the data provided by the MIUR (Ministry of Education, University and Research) illustrate the presence of students enrolled in primary and secondary school since 2015, broken down by nationality. In school year 2015/2016, 425 students of Gambian origin (0.025% of all students with non-Italian citizenship) attended primary and secondary schools. In the following year, the number of students slightly increased, to 627 pupils (0.076%). Data on the geographical distribution of students (region and municipality), as well as the presence by type and order of school are not available for Gambian children as they only refer to the top ten nationalities.

With regard to university education, MIUR data are available from 2016 onward and indicate a very low number of graduates of Gambian citizenship (2 graduates in 2017, 0 in 2016 and no data are available for the previous year). The number of Gambian nationals enrolled in university courses has been gradually increasing from 2014 to 2017 (9 students in A.Y. 2014/2015, 17 students in A.Y. 2015/2016, up to 32 students in A.Y. 2016/2017); most of these students are enrolled in a BA/B.Sc. course, with a slight growth in MA Students over the course of the year (from zero MA students in 2014/2015 to 5 MA students in 2016/2017) and a low but constant presence of students attending postgraduate courses. Most of these students are enrolled at universities located in Northern Italy (mainly in Lombardy, Piedmont, Veneto, Emilia Romagna and Trentino Alto Adige).

**Figure 10. University students with Gambian citizenship by academic year and course area**



Source: Data from the Ministry of Research and Education on academic years 2014–2017, processed by IOM.

**Table 10. Postgraduate students with Gambian citizenship, 2014–2016, absolute values**

Academic year	Course	Gender	Students
2014/2015	PhD	M	1
2014/2015	1°Level Master	F	2
2014/2015	1°Level Master	M	2
2014/2015	2°Level Master	M	2
2014/2015	Specialization School	M	1
2015/2016	1° Level Master	M	2

Source: Data from the Ministry of Research and Education on academic years 2016-2017, processed by IOM.

Information about the presence of Gambian nationals in the Italian public education system buttresses the recent settlement of the Gambian diaspora in Italy and the lack of second generation Gambians in primary and secondary schools.<sup>19</sup> However, since the recent migratory flow from The Gambia is mainly composed of young people (also see the unaccompanied minors section), it may be interesting to continue monitoring how these minors and youth will be included in the Italian educational system.

### 1.4.2 Employment and entrepreneurial activities

The data on residence permits listed in previous sections (par.1.2.3) show that a very low share of Gambian nationals entered in Italy with a work permit. For the Gambians who renewed their permits in 2017 – and therefore had already settled in Italy for a few years (figure 4) – the share of people in possession of a permit for wage labour or self-employment is slightly higher.

Moreover, data on self-employment activities (table 11) indicate that 165 Gambian nationals are self-employed<sup>20</sup> in Italy (0.037% of the total of enterprises owned by foreign nationals); they mainly operate in the following sectors<sup>21</sup> wholesale and retail trade (78.7%), construction (7.8%) and rental and travel services (7.8%). As for regional distribution (figure 12), most self-employed Gambians are based in Campania, Lombardy, Apulia, Lazio, Sicily, Piedmont, evenly spread across the country.

**Table 11. Individual enterprises by owner citizenship (absolute values and %)**

Position	Citizenship	Tot. Individual enterprises	% Total enterprises owned by foreigners
1	Morocco	65,172	14.588%
2	China	50,797	11.370%
3	Romania	47,869	10.715%
4	Albania	31,359	7.019%
5	Bangladesh	29,724	6.653%
...	...		
68	Guinea	298	0.067%
87	The Gambia	165	0.037%
152	Guinea-Bissau	12	0.0027%
Total Guinea + The Gambia + Guinea-Bissau		483	
Total Foreigner Individual Enterprises		446,754	100.000%
Total Individual Enterprises in Italy		2,622,335	
Total non-classified		3,858	
Total		3,072,947	

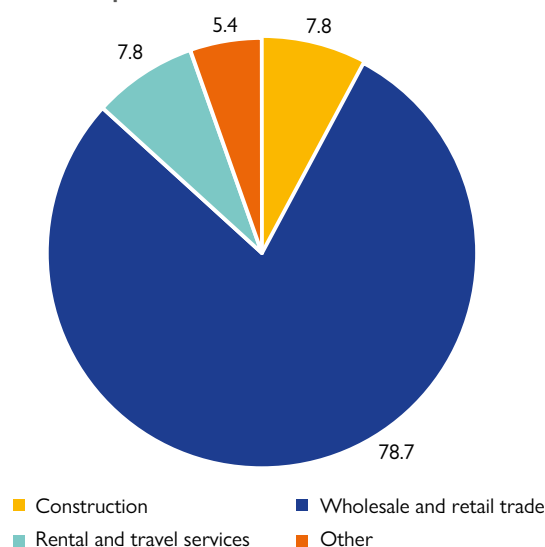
Source: Data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

<sup>19</sup> Compare, for example, with the number of Cameroon students, a nationality which is very close to Gambians in terms of number of residents in Italy: the number of minors in the school system (2,183) is much higher than the number of Gambian students.

<sup>20</sup> Individual entrepreneurship, or self-employment, is a type of enterprise that is owned and run by one person in which there is no legal distinction between the owner and the business entity.

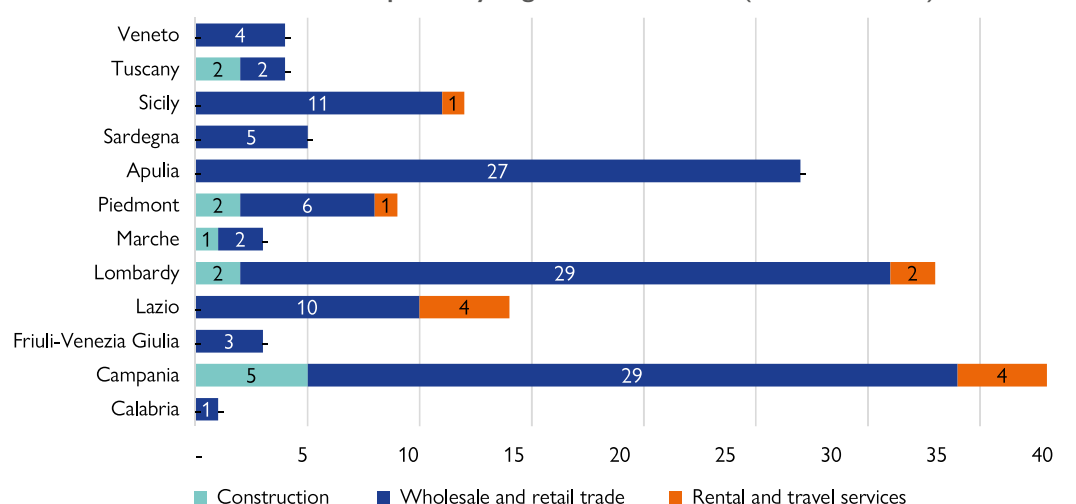
<sup>21</sup> Based on ATECO2007 classification, [www.codiceateco.it/](http://www.codiceateco.it/) [accessed on 06 June 2019].

**Figure 11. Sector of Individual Enterprises, Gambian citizens, % values**



Source: Data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

**Figure 12. Sector of Individual Enterprises by regional distribution (absolute values)**



Source: Data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

### 1.4.3 Remittances

For remittances, which are often portrayed as a tool for financing development, IOM follows a rights-based approach, and is concerned with how remittances are earned (e.g. fair work, ethical recruitment), sent (e.g. transparency in service provision) and used (e.g. as complementary income for recipients, rather than as a major tool for financing development).

Along these lines, first of all it should be noted that these transactions differ greatly in terms of type, logic and means, which makes it difficult to accurately estimate remittance inflows and outflows from any given country (Alvarez et al., 2015). Available and official data on remittances from Italy (by foreign and Italian residents) are, by definition, underestimated.<sup>22</sup> Despite data-related deficiencies, the volume of officially recorded remittances from Italy is estimated to exceed 5 billion euros both in 2016 and in 2017 (Bank of Italy, 2019). Of these, almost 11 million euros were sent to The Gambia in 2017, with Apulia, Lombardy and Emilia Romagna being the first 3 regions by amount of remittances generated.

<sup>22</sup> Estimates by the Bank of Italy are based on the current balance of payment accounts. Since 2005, the Bank has adopted a system for acquiring detailed data directly from money transfers operators. See [www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/tematiche/rapporti-estero/rimesse-immigrati/](http://www.bancaditalia.it/statistiche/tematiche/rapporti-estero/rimesse-immigrati/) for more information [accessed on 06 June 2019].



**Table 12. Remittances from Italy to The Gambia, by region, 2012–2017.**

The Gambia	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Abruzzo	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.06	0.16	0.20
Basilicata	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.09	0.10	0.16
Calabria	0.05	0.07	0.20	0.37	0.31	0.58
Campania	0.13	0.22	0.49	0.40	0.32	0.54
Emilia Romagna	0.08	0.06	0.17	0.39	0.56	1.02
Friuli Venezia Giulia	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.08
Lazio	0.10	0.11	0.18	0.20	0.20	0.39
Liguria	0.04	0.04	0.10	0.15	0.31	0.62
Lombardy	0.47	0.48	0.53	0.64	0.81	1.09
Marche	0.04	0.03	0.09	0.12	0.15	0.17
Molise	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.08
Piedmont	0.16	0.16	0.28	0.35	0.44	0.63
Apulia	0.17	0.22	0.47	0.40	0.77	1.40
Sardinia	0.01	0.02	0.08	0.12	0.25	0.49
Sicily	0.06	0.19	0.90	0.98	0.91	1.23
Tuscany	0.05	0.07	0.09	0.25	0.39	0.66
Trentino alto adige	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.24	0.61
Umbria	0.00	0.01	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.12
Valle d'aosta	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.02
Veneto	0.19	0.26	0.29	0.37	0.57	0.83
Total (million euro)	1.64	2.03	4.03	5.14	6.62	10.90

Source: Bank of Italy.



# 2

## GUINEA

### 2.1 MIGRATION TRENDS: ARRIVALS AND CURRENT PRESENCE IN ITALY

#### 2.1.1 Arrivals by sea

Data on the arrivals by sea of people of Guinean nationality show a significant increase from 2015 onwards (although the growth is relatively low compared with the arrivals of Gambians). Starting from 2015, the Guinean nationality is indeed among the top ten nationalities declared on disembarkation. In 2015, with 8,937 people who disembarked, Guinea ranks 4th after Eritrea, Nigeria and Mali. The number of Guineans who arrived through the central Mediterranean Route also remains significant in the following years. In 2016 they ranked third after Nigeria and Eritrea, with a total of 13,345 arrivals. In 2017 – the year in which border closure policies began to come into effect – the flow from Guinea also decreased and the number of people who disembarked dropped to 9,693. Despite this decline in absolute value, Guinean nationals continue to represent a significant percentage of the total arrivals by sea. Indeed, in 2017 Guineans rose to second place among the declared nationalities, after Nigeria, and in 2018 the Guinean nationality remains among the top ten declared (in tenth place), although the number of people who landed (809) is drastically lower compared with the previous year.

#### 2.1.2 Current presence in Italy

According to Istat, as of 1 January 2018 Guinean nationals in Italy were 11,240 and they accounted for 0.2 per cent of the total of immigrants in Italy (5,144,440). Compared with the previous year, the numerical presence in Italy has more than doubled (+ 63%). As table 13 illustrates, Guinean migrants are mostly men (compared with the Gambian diaspora, however, the gender difference is lower and more similar to the proportion existing in the community of Nationals of Guinea-Bissau), with a total of 9,698. Gender proportion is almost constant in all regions.

#### Regional Distribution

As for regional distribution, Lombardy (1,826 people), Emilia-Romagna (1,423 people) and Lazio (1,347 people) are the regions with the largest Guinean population – over one thousand people. Overall, the majority of Guinean population in Italy is registered in these northern and central regions. Other regions follow, such as Campania (990 people, 8.8%), Piedmont (966 people, 8.6%), Veneto (742 people, 6.6%) and Sicily (706 people, 6.3%). Between 5 per cent and 3 per cent of population is settled in Tuscany, Apulia, Calabria and Sardinia; around 2 per cent resides in Marche and Liguria.

Compared with 2017, a significant increase in the presence of Guineans was registered in all regions; its extent ranged from percentages below 50 per cent in Friuli (+25%), Veneto (+27.9%), Emilia Romagna (+30.8%), Lazio (+36.3%) and Marche (+44.5%), to percentages that even greatly exceed this threshold: Basilicata (+59%), Sicily (+59.4%), Lombardy (+62.6%), Trentino Alto-Adige (+ 70.6%), Valle d'Aosta (+73.7%), Calabria (+76.9%) Campania (+98.4%), Piedmont (+80.6%), Apulia (+94.9%). In some regions, the presence of Guineans more than doubled: Tuscany (+118.5%), Umbria (+114.3%), Molise (+123.4%), Abruzzo (+172.5%), Sardinia (+181.3%).

Historically, the Guinean presence in Italy (table 14) has been constantly increasing since 2012, with a significant growth spike in both 2017 and 2018. Between 2012 and 2016, the number of nationals grew by 1,700 units (from 3,297 in 2012 to 4,927 in 2016) and between 2016 and 2018 the number of presences in Italy practically tripled. In 2017, indeed, the number of Guinean nationals increased by approximately two thousand units (up to 6,896 people) before reaching the current value of 11,240 people.

**Table 13. Distribution of Guinean nationals in Italy, by region (men, women %), 2018**

Region	GUINEANS					
	Men	Women	Total	% of total Guineans	% of Regional foreign population	% variation previous year
1. Lombardy	1,502	324	1,826	16.20%	0.16%	+62.60%
2. Emilia-Romagna	1,085	338	1,423	12.70%	0.27%	+30.80%
3. Lazio	1,119	228	1,347	12.00%	0.20%	+36.30%
4. Campania	912	78	990	8.80%	0.38%	+98.40%
5. Piedmont	869	97	966	8.60%	0.23%	+80.60%
6. Veneto	548	194	742	6.60%	0.15%	+27.90%
7. Sicily	682	24	706	6.30%	0.37%	+59.40%
8. Tuscany	612	48	660	5.90%	0.16%	+118.50%
9. Apulia	500	30	530	4.70%	0.39%	+94.90%
10. Calabria	362	13	375	3.30%	0.35%	+76.90%
11. Sardinia	350	10	360	3.20%	0.66%	+181.30%
12. Marche	226	76	302	2.70%	0.22%	+44.50%
13. Liguria	256	25	281	2.50%	0.20%	+96.50%
14. Trentino-Alto A.	129	21	150	1.30%	0.16%	+70.50%
15. Molise	140	3	143	1.30%	1.03%	+123.40%
16. Abruzzo	133	6	139	1.20%	0.16%	+172.50%
17. Umbria	121	14	135	1.20%	0.14%	+114.30%
18. Basilicata	95	2	97	0.90%	0.43%	+59.00%
19. Friuli Venezia G.	28	7	35	0.30%	0.03%	+25.00%
20. Valle d'Aosta	29	4	33	0.30%	0.41%	+73.70%
Total	9,698	1,542	11,240		0.20%	+63.00%

Source: Istat, 2018.<sup>23</sup>

The diaspora is historically rooted in central-northern regions, Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, Lazio and Veneto. Regions in which the presence of people from Guinea appears to be more recent are Basilicata, Calabria, Molise, Sardinia and Valle d'Aosta. Six years ago, indeed, the Guinean nationals in these areas were less than 10, while in 2018 in almost all these areas (except in Valle d'Aosta) they could be measured in hundreds, reaching 360 people in Sardinia and 375 people in Calabria.

**Table 14. Historical evolution of the presence of Guinean nationals regularly resident in Italy, 2012–2018, sorted by region (as of 1 January of each year)**

Region	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Abruzzo	139	51	29	23	17	14	12
Basilicata	97	61	25	4	2	1	1
Calabria	375	212	109	63	53	20	3
Campania	990	499	315	224	215	145	102
Emilia-Romagna	1.423	1.088	921	856	832	859	763
Friuli Venezia Giulia	35	28	27	37	42	50	45
Lazio	1.347	988	829	865	893	658	518
Liguria	281	143	57	24	21	24	20
Lombardy	1.826	1.123	883	862	878	798	711
Marche	302	209	160	192	186	191	183
Molise	143	64	18	5	5	5	
Piedmont	966	535	288	219	193	158	131
Apulia	530	272	146	126	121	83	51
Sardinia	360	128	47	15	10	7	
Sicily	706	443	274	179	110	86	31
Tuscany	660	302	137	109	90	91	62
Trentino-Alto Adige	150	88	72	65	66	62	48
Umbria	135	63	30	23	18	17	17
Valle d'Aosta	33	19	7	3	1	1	1
Veneto	742	580	553	596	618	626	598
Total	11,240	6,896	4,927	4,490	4,371	3,896	3,297

Source: Istat, 2018. Processing of data from Istat as of 1 January of each year.

### Guinean nationals in Italy by age

The Guinean population residing in Italy is young: in 2018, the youth aged 15–19 years amounts to 22 per cent of the total Guinean population, whereas the vast majority of Guineans is aged 20–34 years (55%) (Eurostat, 2018). Only 10 per cent of the individuals are aged 35–44 years, but this percentage is larger than in the case of the Gambian diaspora and similar to the one of the Guinea-Bissau community.

Moreover, residents from Guinea in Italy are predominantly male, with only 14 per cent of the total registered residents being females in 2018. In addition, while among males under age 15 children are about 5 per cent of the total, females under age 15 are more than a quarter of all Guinean females (26%) (Eurostat, 2018).

## 2.2 OFFICIAL STATISTICS: ASYLUM APPLICATIONS AND TYPE OF PERMITS

### 2.2.1 Asylum applications

A large part of the migrants who arrived by sea and were motivated by difficult living conditions (such as war, persecution, lack of humanitarian services) sought asylum in Italy. As in the case of Gambians, most of the nationals from Guinea who have arrived by sea in Italy over the past years have submitted an asylum application. Table 15 shows the number of first-time asylum applications since 2012, with an increase since 2014 and a peak in 2016–2017, when between 6 and 7 thousand Guineans applied for protection in Italy. Over the same period, the number of children under age 18 is also particularly significant, while female asylum seekers are a small minority of the total.

**Table 15. First-time asylum applications of Guinean nationals in Italy, 2012–2018**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	180	155	935	1,675	6,040	7,795	1,410
Of which, female	10	10	5	30	115	190	45
Of which, under age 18	55	20	40	165	520	1,050	375

Source: Eurostat, last update 09-01-2019.<sup>24</sup>

### 2.2.2 First-instance asylum decisions

While the number of asylum applications increased, the number of international protection denials by the “Territorial Commissions for the Recognition of International Protection”<sup>25</sup> also raised (table 16). From 2015, the share of applications rejected by the Territorial Commission increased. Between 2016 and 2018, rejections reached between 67 and 72 per cent of all first-instance decisions. At the same time, the share of humanitarian protection applications that were approved decreased from about 40–48 per cent in 2013–2015 to 25 per cent of the total decisions in 2018. The share of applicants who have been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection over the past years is instead relatively stable, although low. As mentioned above for the case of the Gambian diaspora, rejected asylum seekers might appeal against the first-instance decision and are allowed to stay in reception centres until the final decision. Data on final decisions by the judiciary system are nevertheless not available. At the same time, it is uncertain whether migrants who in the past years were granted humanitarian protection, which was abrogated on October 2018, shall be allowed to renew their permit.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 16. First-time asylum decisions in favour of nationals from Guinea in Italy, 2012–2018**

Decision/time	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total	465	200	435	1,170	2,555	3,610	4,800
Total positive decisions	405	125	250	600	740	1,200	1,330
Geneva Convention status	10	10	15	35	40	55	130
Humanitarian status	370	95	185	495	655	1,115	1,185
Rejected	60	75	180	570	1,815	2,405	3,475
Subsidiary protection status	25	20	55	70	45	30	15

Source: Eurostat, last update 09-01-2019.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/data/database> [accessed in March 2019].

<sup>25</sup> See paragraph 1.1.2 for a more detailed description of the regulations on asylum applications in Italy.

<sup>26</sup> Also see paragraph 1.1.2.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

## 2.2.3 Type of residence permits

Data from Eurostat provide insights on the evolution of the type of permits granted to Guinean nationals in Italy over the years. From 2012 to 2017 the number of all valid permits (table 17) as well as the number of first-time permits (table 18) has significantly increased (data for 2018 is not available yet at the time of writing). Permits for family reasons represented about one half of all permits in 2013, 2014 and 2015; a relative decrease occurred in 2016 and 2017, when a bigger share of all permits were for “other reasons” (including humanitarian protection and permit for minor age).

**Table 17. All valid residence permits of Guinean nationals in Italy by reason, 2012–2017**

Reasons	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	4,527	4,677	4,886	5,109	8,841	6,749
Family reasons	1,612	2,309	2,442	2,492	2,180	2,306
Education reasons	12	12	16	21	13	12
Remunerated activities reasons	1,835	1,323	1,308	1,238	1,115	1,093
Refugee status	274	250	231	236	277	334
Subsidiary protection	285	299	303	307	353	420
Other	509	484	586	815	4,903	2,584

Source: Eurostat, last update 09-01-2019.

**Table 18. First residence permits issued in the year to Guinean nationals, by reason, 2012–2017**

Reasons	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	341	273	251	343	3,943	1,861
Family reasons	132	134	144	194	226	288
Education reasons	5	2	4	14	2	1
Remunerated activities reasons	71	38	26	8	3	2
Other	133	99	77	127	3,712	1,570

Source: Eurostat, last update 09-01-2019.<sup>28</sup>

### A focus on residence permits issued and renewed in 2017

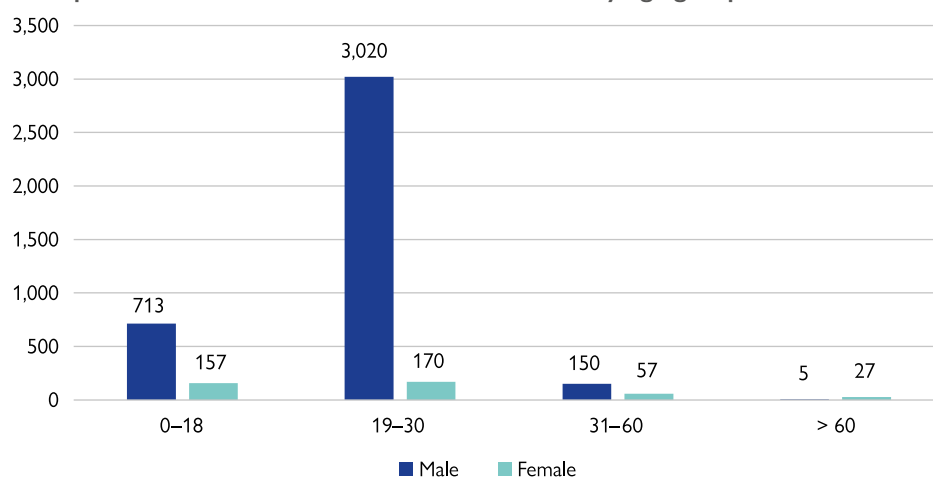
Figures 13 and 14 show the number of the residence permits<sup>29</sup> issued and renewed to Guineans settled in Italy in 2017, and are based on data provided by Ministry of Interior. In 2017, 4,299 new first-time residence permits were granted, and 5,452 new permits were renewed, with a clear prevalence of permits granted and renewed to men compared with females, and to the 18–30 age group.

Regarding the age groups of the Guineans who received their first residence permit in Italy in 2017, figure 13 shows that the highest percentage of permits, 70.2 per cent (total 3,020), was granted to males aged 18–30 years, followed by male minors, who received 16.5 per cent of the new residence permits (total 713). In both these age groups, the female component represents a minority reaching 3.9 per cent among people aged 18–30 years and 3.6 per cent among minors. As for the older groups, only 207 people aged 30–60 years and 32 people older than 60 received their first residence permit in 2017. The total number of first-time permits granted to women in 2017 is 411, representing 9.5 per cent of the total of new permits granted in 2017.

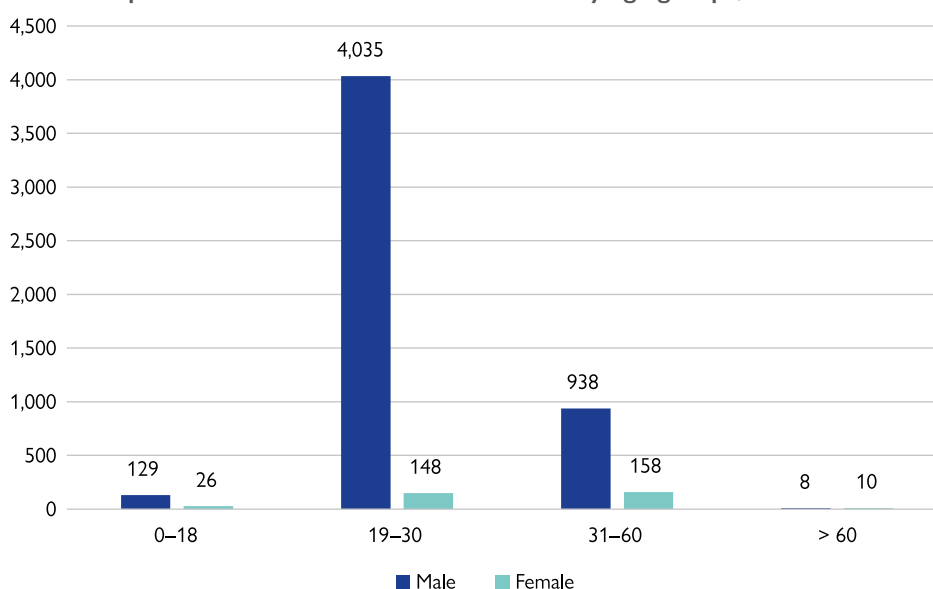
Figure 14 shows the number of people who renewed their permits in 2017: the largest group is still that of males aged 18–30 years (73.4%), followed by males aged 30–60 years (17%) and then by minors (2.3%). The male component still appears to be the prevailing one: in 2017 only 342 permits were renewed to women (6.2%).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> For an overview of the types of permits see Box 1.

**Figure 13. First permits issued in 2017 to Guinean nationals by age groups, absolute values**

Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

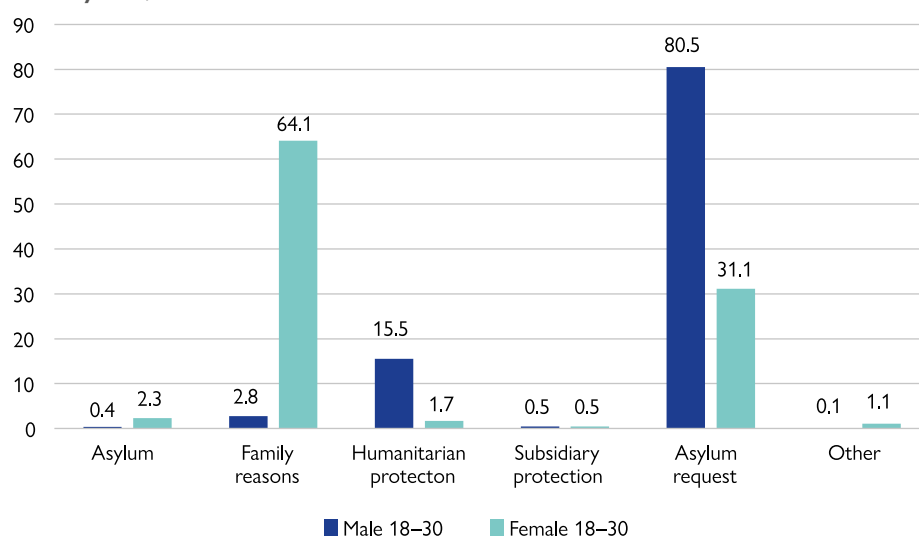
**Figure 14. Renewed permits in 2017 for Guinean nationals by age groups, absolute values**

Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

Figure 15 illustrates the type of permits issued for the first time to Guineans aged 18–30 years in 2017. It shows that, among the total permits issued to men aged 18–30 years (3,020) there is a clear prevalence of permits issued for asylum application (80.5%, total 2,434 permits), followed by the permits issued for humanitarian protection (15.5%, 470 permits) and for family reasons (2.8%, total 85). A relatively small number of permits was granted for other kinds of international protection (0.5 for subsidiary protection and 0.4 for asylum) and only 1 permit was issued for wage labour. Among women aged 18–30 years, the absolute number of permits issued (170) is clearly much lower than that of the permits issued to the same age male group, and most of these permits were granted for family reasons (64.1%, total 109 permits), followed by permits granted for asylum application, 31.1 per cent, (total 53). The portion of the permits issued for international protection (2.3% asylum total 4, 0.5% subsidiary 1 total) is much lower, while none of the women received her first permit for wage labour.



**Figure 15. Reasons of first permits issued in 2017, Guineans resident in Italy, male and female aged 18–30 years, % values**

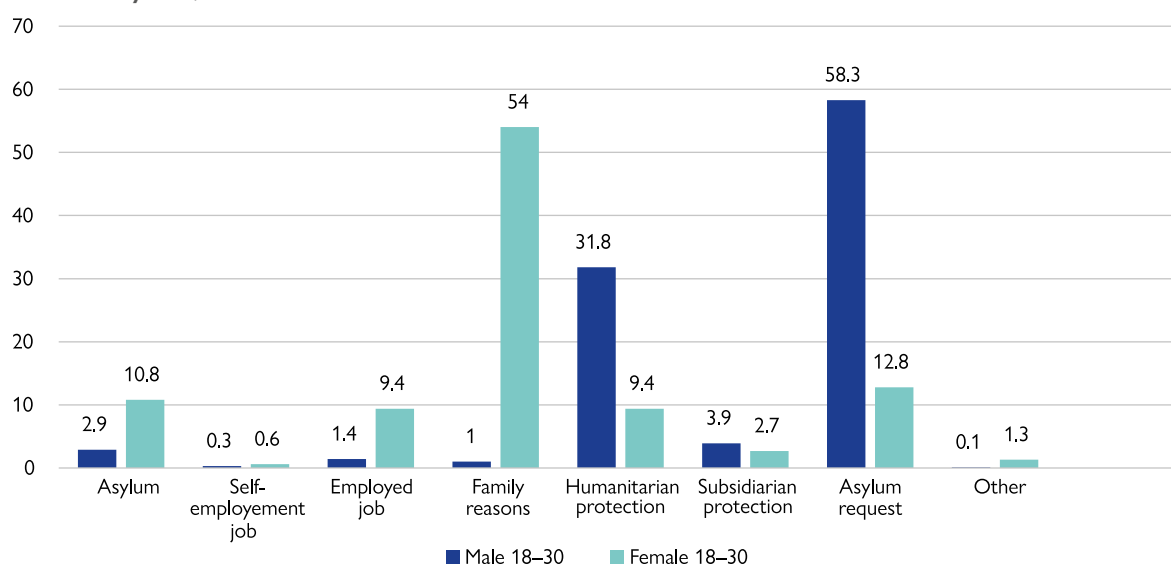


Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

In the same year, the prevailing reasons for the renewal of the permits (figure 16) for men aged 18–30 years are still asylum application (58.3% – total 2,353 permits) and humanitarian protection (31.8% – total 1,284 permits), while the proportion of permits renewed for other kinds of protection remains lower: 3.9 per cent for subsidiary protection and 2.9 per cent for asylum. 1.4 per cent of this male age group renewed a permit for wage labour (59 permits) and 0.3 per cent (15 total) for self-employment. Compared with the data on the first-time permits issued in the same year, this absolute figure shows that among Guineans who recently arrived in Italy the number of employees is slowly but steadily increasing.

As for the female age group, the largest part of them, 54 per cent (total 80 permits), renewed a permit for family reasons, thus confirming a significant presence of family units in Italy. As for international protection, 12.8 per cent of the women (total 19) renewed a permit for asylum application, 10.8 per cent of them renewed a permit for asylum (3 permits), 9.4 per cent for humanitarian reasons (total 14) and 2.7 per cent for subsidiary protection (4). Regarding the permits for employment, 9.4 per cent of the women renewed the permit for wage labour (total 14) and 0.6 per cent for self-employment (total 1).

**Figure 16. Reasons of permits renewed in 2017, Guinean nationals, male and female aged 18–30 years, % values**



Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

## 2.3 A PROFILE OF THE GUINEAN DIASPORA FROM IOM SURVEY DATA

As in the case of Gambians, IOM's DTM survey data allow to obtain some insights on the background, the reasons for moving and the intentions of Guinean migrants and refugees in Italy.

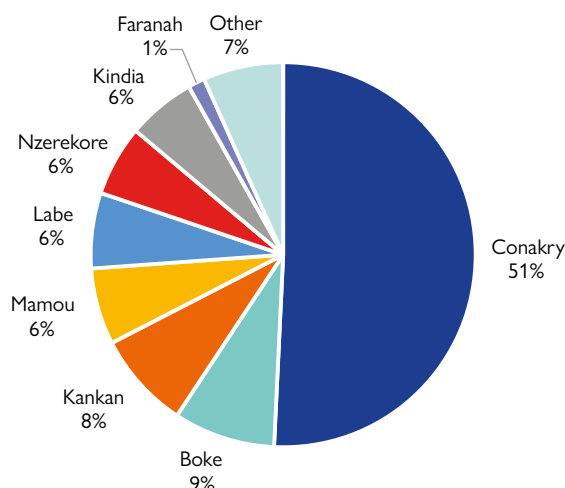
The subsample used for this analysis consists of 995 migrants from Guinea (546 in 2016, 385 in 2017 and 64 in 2018). Most respondents were males (96%) and 34% of them were aged 14–18 years. The great majority reported being single (90%), with the rest being married (9%) or divorced/widowed (1%). About 11 per cent reported having at least one child.

### 2.3.1 Socioeconomic background before departure

#### Regions of origin and route

Guinean nationals interviewed by IOM between 2016 and 2018 reported the region of Conakry and in particular Conakry city as their place of origin in 51 per cent of the cases. A number of other provinces were also mentioned, including Boke, Kankan, Mamou, Labe and Nzerekore (figure 17).

**Figure 17. Guinean respondents in 2016–2018, by region of origin (%)**



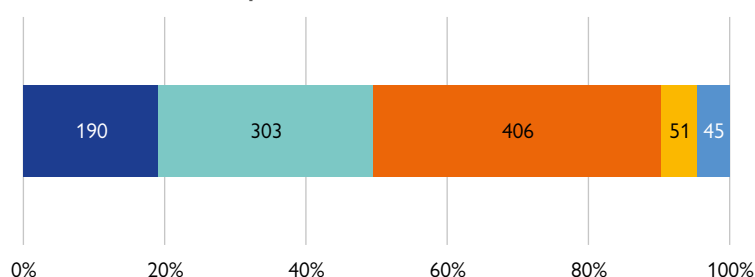
Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Most of those participating in the survey reported having travelled alone (81%), while the remainder travelled with a group of non-family members (14%) or with at least one family member (5%).

#### Educational and professional background

Guinean interviewees reported having received lower secondary education in 41 per cent of the cases, while 30 per cent reported having completed primary education, 5 per cent higher secondary education and 5 per cent tertiary education. The remaining 19 per cent of the respondents reported having failed to complete any type of formal education.

**Figure 18. Education level, Guinean respondents in 2016–2018, absolute and share values (%)**



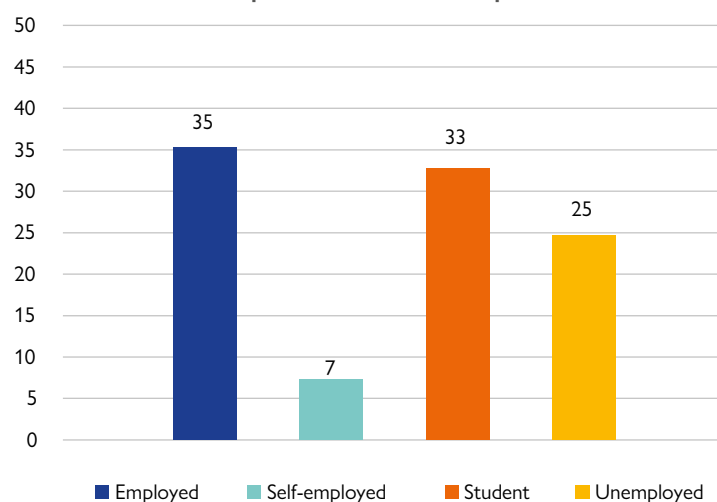
Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

About 34 per cent of interviewed children reported having left school more than 2 years prior to the survey, while 27 per cent having left school between 1 and 2 years before, and 16 per cent having lastly attended school less than 1 year before the interviews. Moreover, 23 per cent of the children in the sample reported having never attended school.

### Employment status before departure

Regarding the employment status before departure (figure 19), most Guineans declared having been employed or self-employed (35 and 7% respectively), while others reported having been studying (33%). One quarter (25%) of them reported having been unemployed at the time they left their country.

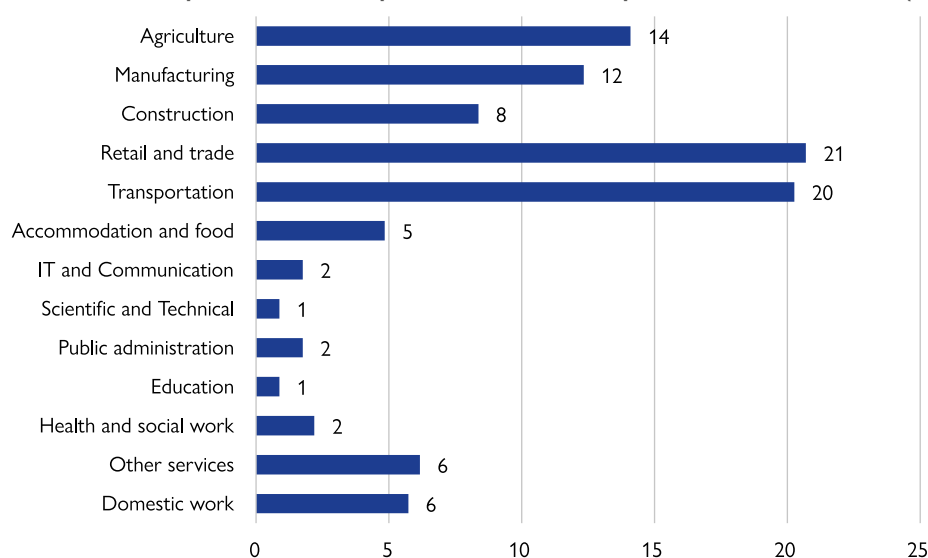
**Figure 19. Employment status before departure, Guinean respondents in 2016–2018 (%)**



Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Among those who reported having been employed or self-employed, the most common sector of activity was retail and trade (21%), followed by transportation (20%), agriculture (14%) and manufacturing (12%).

**Figure 20. Sectors of occupation before departure, Guinean respondents in 2017–2018 (%)**

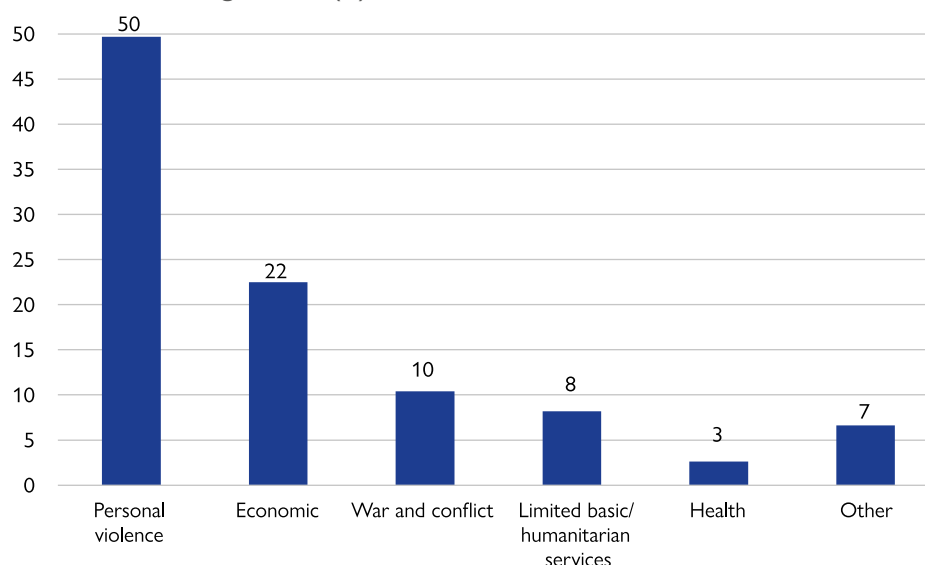


Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2017–2018.

## Reasons for leaving Guinea

Figure 21 summarizes the answers by migrants interviewed in 2017 and 2018 as to why they originally left Guinea. Half of them reported personal violence as the main reason, followed by economic reasons, reasons related to the presence of conflict, and others related to the lack of access to basic and humanitarian services.

**Figure 21. Reasons for leaving Guinea (%), 2017–2018**



Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2017–2018.

One third of respondents from Guinea reported having departed from a country other than the Guinea, after spending there more than one year; the reasons of the decision to resume the journey after spending more than one year in another country might be different from the initial reasons.

Most of them reported Libya and Algeria as countries where they had spent long periods of residence before deciding to move again towards Europe and reported personal violence and safety reasons as main reason to move (62%), while others reported economic reasons (20%).

## Intended destinations

Guineans met by IOM also reported the destination they had in mind when they left their place of origin. Less than half of them reported Italy as the initial intended destination (42%), while 19 per cent reported Europe as a generic destination and 9 per cent did not have any specific idea in mind. Moreover, others mentioned France (7%), Algeria (7%) and Libya (6%).

Then, after the arrival to Italy, intentions regarding the final destination change quite significantly: 69 per cent of them reported being willing to remain in Italy, while others still reported having Europe in mind (11%), or more specifically France (8%), Germany (4%) or others.

As only 6 per cent reported having first-line relatives at their intended destination, and an additional 2 per cent having no first-line relatives there, it seems most interviewees did not have a family network already established at their destination.

## 2.4 GUINEAN NATIONALS IN ITALY: AN OVERVIEW OF THEIR EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC STATUS

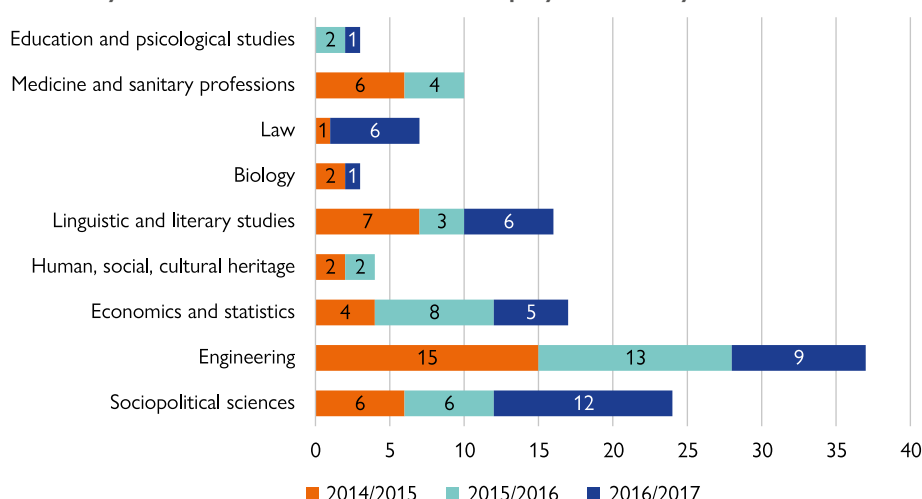
### 2.4.1 Education

Regarding the professional and educational pathways followed by Guinean nationals in Italy, data from the Ministry of Education, University and Research provide information about the presence of students with Guinean citizenship in primary and secondary school. Both in school years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, the presence of students of this nationality does not reach a thousand units. Namely, in year 2015/16 students with Guinean nationality were 791, corresponding to 0.097 per cent of the total of students with foreign citizenship. During the following school year, there was a slight growth and the number of students reached 903 units, corresponding to 0.109 per cent of the total of foreign students. Although the presence of this nationality is very low in terms of percentage, in absolute values the number of primary and secondary school students is the highest among the three nationalities analysed herein. It should also be noted that for this nationality the public report provided by Ministry of Education includes neither more specific data, regarding for instance the geographical distribution or the type of school attended, nor any data referring to the previous years.

With regards to university education, the open data provided by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, available from 2016 onward, indicate that the number of graduates is relatively low but still higher than the numbers of graduates with Gambian citizenship: 4 Guineans got their degree in 2016 and 2 students in 2017.

The number of Guinean nationals enrolled in university courses has remained almost stable from 2014 to 2017 (43 students in A.Y. 2014/2015, 38 students in 2015/2016, and 40 students in 2016/2017). The largest part of these students is enrolled to a B.A./B.Sc. course, with a slight growth of M.A. Students over the course of the year (3 M.A. students in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, 8 M.A. students in 2016/2017). The regional distribution of the students (data only available for A.Y. 2015/2016 and 2016/2017) shows that most of them attend a course at a University located in Northern (mainly Veneto, Lombardy and Emilia Romagna) or Central Italy (Lazio and Tuscany). The highest number of students attends a course in engineering or in sociopolitical sciences, followed by students in economics, statistics, linguistic and literary fields. Over the course of the years, a significant number of students has also been specializing in health care-related professions or in law, while the number of those who chose humanities remains low.

**Figure 22. University students with Guinean citizenship by academic year and course area**



Source: Data from the Ministry of Research and Education, 2016–2017, processed by IOM.

With regards to the postgraduate courses, the available data show that 12 students, mainly male, were attending a postgraduate course in Academic Year 2014/2015: among them, 1 is a PhD candidate, while others are attending a first or a second level Master (table 19)

**Table 19. Postgraduate students with Guinean citizenship, 2014–2016, absolute values**

Academic Year	Course	Gender	Number
2014/2015	PhD	M	1
2014/2015	1° level Master	F	1
2014/2015	2° level Master	F	2
2014/2015	2° level Master	M	8
Total			12

Source: Data from the Ministry of Research and Education, 2016–2017, processed by IOM.

## 2.4.2 Employment and entrepreneurial activities

Regarding the employment status and entrepreneurial activities of Guinean nationals in Italy, data provided on residence permits issued and renewed in 2017 (par.2.1.1) show that a very low share of Guinean nationals entered Italy in 2017 with a permit for employment reasons. Similarly, few people renewed a permit for wage labour or self-employment. Since data regarding the reasons of residence permits was not provided for previous years, we cannot illustrate the percentage trend for the employment permits granted in previous years. Nevertheless, data on self-employment (table 20) show that the number of Guinean nationals who are self-employed and own an enterprise is the highest among the three diasporas analysed herein.

**Table 20. Individual enterprises by owner citizenship (absolute values and %)**

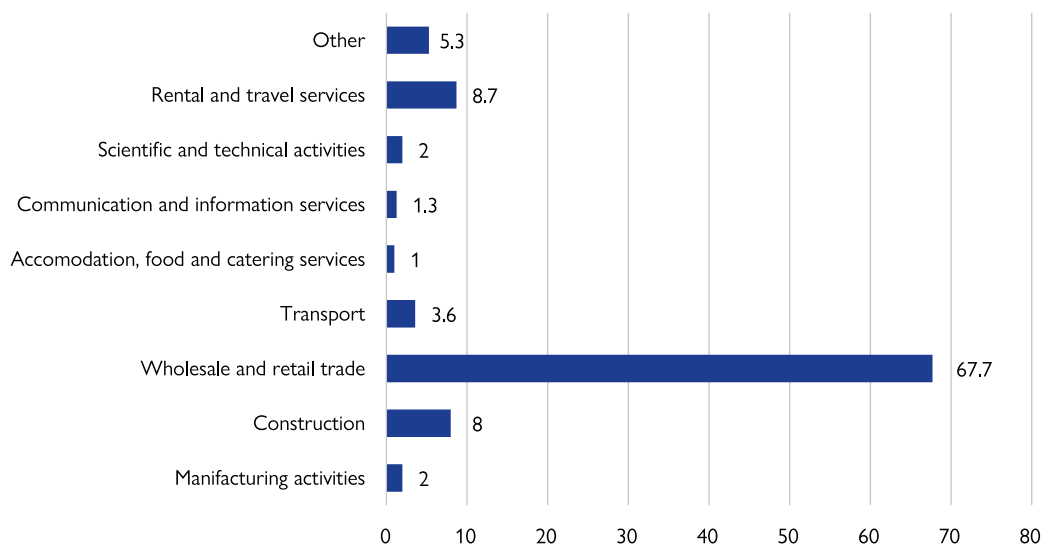
Position	Citizenship	Tot. Individual enterprises	% of Total enterprises owned by foreigners
1	Morocco	65,172	14.588%
2	China	50,797	11.370%
3	Romania	47,869	10.715%
4	Albania	31,359	7.019%
5	Bangladesh	29,724	6.653%
...	...		
68	Guinea	298	0.067%
87	Gambia	165	0.037%
152	Guinea-Bissau	12	0.0027%
Total Guinea + The Gambia + Guinea-Bissau		483	
Total Foreigner Individual Enterprises		446,754	100.000%
Total Individual Enterprises in Italy		2,622,335	
Total non-classified		3,858	
Total		3,072,947	

Source: data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

The main sector of investment for Guinean entrepreneurs in Italy is wholesale and retail trade, as for the Gambian and the Guinea-Bissau diaspora. The share of other sectors, such as for instance rental and travel services, construction

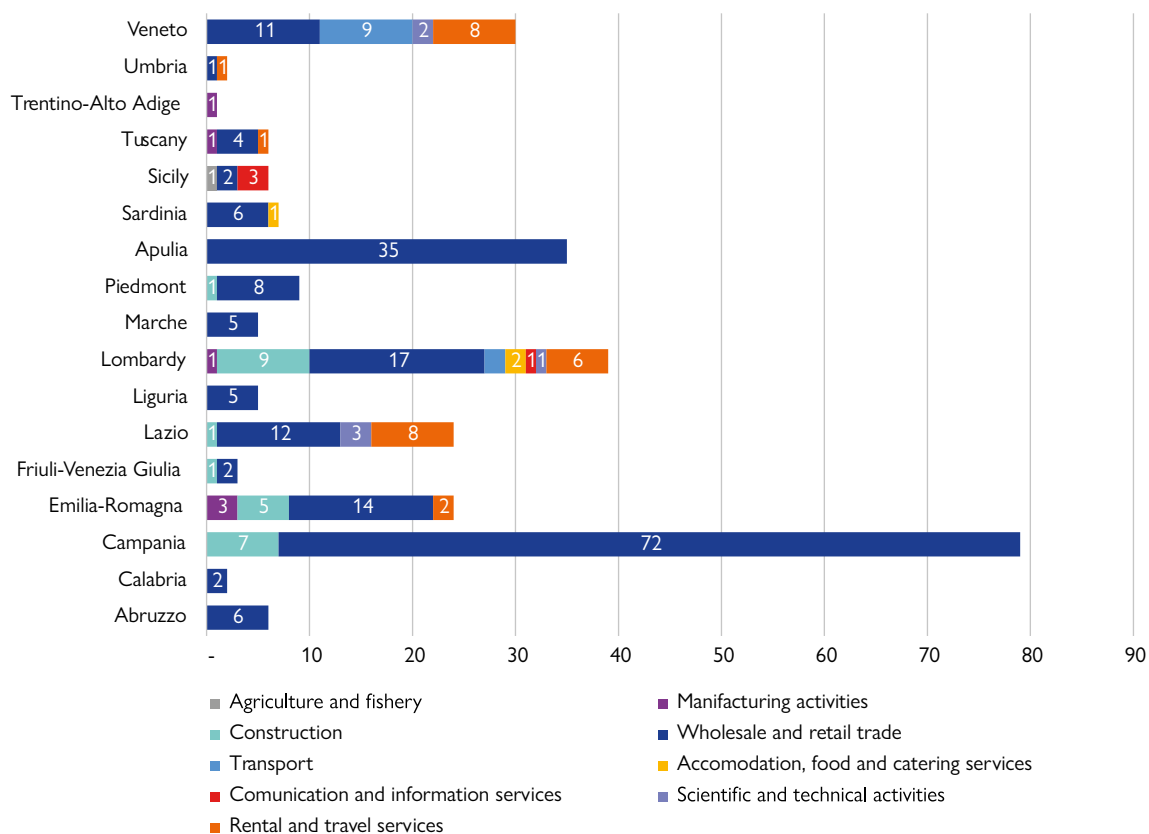
and transport is much lower. The enterprises are spread between Southern (Campania and Apulia), Central (Lazio) and Northern Italy (Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia Romagna) (figures 23 and 24). While in Campania and Apulia – which are among the regions that host the greatest number of companies owned by Guinean nationals – the large majority of business are established in the trade sector, in other regions sector diversification is greater. In Lombardy, Veneto and Lazio, for instance, besides the trade sector, a significant number of entrepreneurs also invested in construction and travel services and, to a lesser extent, in communication services, accommodation and catering services.

**Figure 23. Sector of Individual Enterprises, Guinean nationals, % values**



Source: Data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

**Figure 24. Sector of Individual Enterprises by regional distribution (absolute values)**



## 2.4.3 Remittances

As in the case of remittances to The Gambia, the Bank of Italy provides the best available estimates about the monetary flows from Italy to Guinea over the past years. Overall, almost 9 million euros were sent to Guinea from Italy in 2017, a significant increase from the 1.5 million euros sent in 2012. Registered remittances to Guinea mainly originate from Lombardy, Emilia Romagna, Piedmont, followed by Apulia, Sicily and Campania.

**Table 21. Remittances sent from Italy to Guinea, 2012–2017 (million euros)**

Guinea	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Abruzzi	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.15
Basilicata	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.08
Calabria	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.11	0.37
Campania	0.05	0.06	0.12	0.11	0.26	0.63
Emilia Romagna	0.20	0.26	0.40	0.37	0.60	1.05
Friuli Venezia Giulia	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.13
Lazio	0.24	0.24	0.29	0.34	0.49	0.78
Liguria	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.11	0.28
Lombardy	0.32	0.48	0.54	0.53	0.77	1.38
Marche	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.09	0.14
Molise	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.07
Piedmont	0.12	0.15	0.21	0.22	0.42	0.81
Apulia	0.07	0.09	0.11	0.16	0.26	0.67
Sardinia	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.07	0.18
Sicily	0.09	0.09	0.17	0.21	0.34	0.61
Tuscany	0.07	0.08	0.11	0.12	0.25	0.59
Trentino Alto Adige	0.02	0.06	0.07	0.05	0.08	0.15
Umbria	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.13
Valle d'aosta	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.03
Veneto	0.09	0.12	0.17	0.18	0.33	0.60
Total (million euros)	1.47	1.84	2.48	2.62	4.42	8.86

Source: Bank of Italy.



## 3

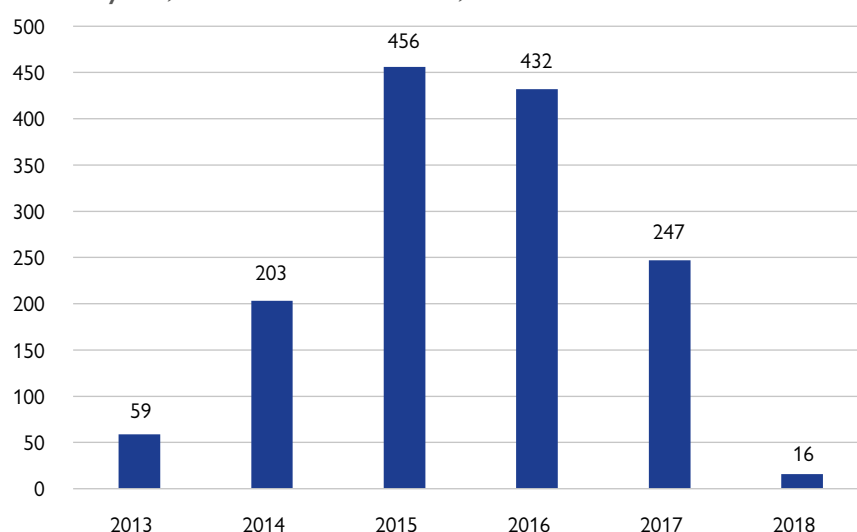
## GUINEA-BISSAU

## 3.1 MIGRATION TRENDS: ARRIVALS AND CURRENT PRESENCE IN ITALY

## 3.1.1 Arrivals by sea

Compared with the other two diasporas examined in this report, the number of Guinea-Bissau nationals who arrived by sea in recent years is rather low, but still significant if we consider it in proportion to the total number of Guinea-Bissau nationals residing in Italy (1,995 as of January 2018). The number of arrivals by sea gradually increased from 2013 to 2016: 59 people landed in 2013, 203 in 2014 and the number doubled in 2015 and 2016 (456 and 432 arrivals respectively). In line with the general trend, in 2017 and in 2018 the number of people who disembarked significantly decreased, halving in 2017 and dropping to a few units in 2018 (figure 25).

**Figure 25. Arrivals by sea, Guinea-Bissau nationals, 2013–2018**



Source: IOM Italy from Italian Ministry of Interior.<sup>30</sup>

Demographically, this flow mainly consists of adult men who, over the period 2013–2017, represent on average 84 per cent of Guinea-Bissau nationals who disembarked. The percentage of females and accompanied children remains very low, between zero and 5 per cent, while unaccompanied children account on average for 13.4 per cent of the total people who disembarked (see Box 2).

## 3.1.2 Current presence in Italy

Nationals of Guinea-Bissau residing in Italy at the beginning of 2018 are 1,995 and they represent 0.04 per cent of the total foreign population in Italy. Even in this case, the male presence is clearly prevalent: the number of women is as low as 197 units, compared with 1,798 men in total.

<sup>30</sup> Information is based on the nationality declared by migrants as reported by the Italian Ministry of Interior.

### 3.1.2.1 Regional distribution

With regards to the regional distribution (table 22), the regions with the most significant presence of Guinea-Bissau nationals, above 200 units, are two northern regions, Lombardy (295) and Veneto (252), which therefore account for 27.4 per cent of the Guinea-Bissau population. They are followed by the regions hosting more than one hundred people: Lazio (188), Apulia (160), Emilia Romagna (152), Sicily (150), Tuscany (142), Piedmont (127) and Campania. Less than one hundred people reside in the other regions, spread between both Southern (Calabria, Sardinia, Liguria) and Central-Northern Italy (Trentino-Alto Adige, Marche, Abruzzo, Molise, Umbria, Basilicata, Friuli Venezia Giulia and Valle d'Aosta).

In 2018, the number of Guinea-Bissau nationals increased by 46 per cent compared with the previous year, with a positive variation in all the Italian regions but Friuli Venezia Giulia and Valle d'Aosta. Presence of Guinea-Bissau nationals increased by over 100 per cent in Sardinia, Umbria and Abruzzo, by over 50 per cent in Lombardy, Apulia, Emilia Romagna, Piedmont, Campania, Liguria, Marche and Basilicata, while in the remaining regions the growth remained below this threshold.

**Table 22. Regional distribution of Guinea-Bissau nationals in Italy (men, women, %)**

Region	Guinea-Bissau nationals				% of Regional foreign population	% var. compared with the previous year
	Men	Women	Total	as a % of total Bissau Guinean population		
1. Lombardy	250	45	295	14.80%	0.03%	52.80%
2. Veneto	159	93	252	12.60%	0.05%	24.10%
3. Lazio	171	17	188	9.40%	0.03%	29.70%
4. Apulia	157	3	160	8.00%	0.12%	77.80%
5. Emilia-Romagna	143	9	152	7.60%	0.03%	65.20%
6. Sicily	140	10	150	7.50%	0.08%	15.40%
7. Tuscany	140	2	142	7.10%	0.03%	39.20%
8. Piedmont	127		127	6.40%	0.03%	64.90%
9. Campania	113	3	116	5.80%	0.04%	87.10%
10. Calabria	80		80	4.00%	0.07%	29.00%
11. Sardinia	68		68	3.40%	0.13%	112.50%
12. Liguria	58		58	2.90%	0.04%	87.10%
13. Trentino-Alto A.	45	13	58	2.90%	0.06%	23.40%
14. Marche	37		37	1.90%	0.03%	76.20%
15. Abruzzo	32		32	1.60%	0.04%	100.00%
16. Molise	24		24	1.20%	0.17%	41.20%
17. Umbria	24		24	1.20%	0.03%	118.20%
18. Basilicata	22		22	1.10%	0.10%	57.10%
19. Friuli Venezia G.	3	2	5	0.30%	0.00%	-16.70%
20. Valle d'Aosta	5		5	0.30%	0.06%	-44.40%
Total	1,798	197	1,995		0.00%	46.70%

Source: Istat data as of 01/01/2018.

As for the historical evolution (table 23), a slight but constant increase has been registered since 2012. From 2012 to 2015 the number of resident Guinea-Bissau nationals grew by about 100 units per year, while since 2015 the growth has become more significant: from 719 people in 2015 to 945 in 2016, with an increase by 400 units in 2017 and by about 600 units in 2018. Veneto and Lombardy are also the regions where the largest share of the Guinea-Bissau population is historically rooted: more than one hundred Guinea-Bissau nationals had already settled in these areas in 2012. In that year, less than 25 Guinea-Bissau nationals had settled in all the other regions combined. In 2015, Lazio reached 100 units; in the following year even Sicily exceeded the one-hundred threshold, while Tuscany also exceeded the number of 100 residents in 2017. Reasons for the concentration of the diaspora in northern regions may be the significant presence of industries and therefore the greater availability of job opportunities. Also, the largest number of women – usually an index of family reunification and thus of stable residence in the territory – is settled in the northern regions.

**Table 23. Historical evolution of the presence of Guinea-Bissau nationals, regularly resident in Italy, 2012–2018, presence by region (as of 1 January of each year)**

Region	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Abruzzo	1	2	1	4	6	16	32
Basilicata	2	9	7	8	9	14	22
Calabria	1	7	18	24	43	62	80
Campania	1	6	18	21	46	62	116
Emilia-Romagna	10	13	21	18	54	92	152
Friuli Venezia G.		2	6	4	6	6	5
Lazio	17	38	68	100	114	145	188
Liguria	2	6	5	9	17	31	58
Lombardy	139	154	154	154	166	193	295
Marche	5	3	5	4	10	21	37
Molise				1	7	17	24
Piedmont	9	5	9	19	44	77	127
Apulia	5	34	31	38	45	90	160
Sardinia	2	3	4	3	18	32	68
Sicily	5	33	37	83	105	130	150
Tuscany	11	10	13	14	30	102	142
Trentino-Alto A.	25	28	29	31	39	47	58
Umbria	1	1	2	3	4	11	24
Valle d'Aosta	4	6	6	6	6	9	5
Veneto	166	163	191	175	176	203	252
Total	406	523	625	719	945	1,360	1,995

Source: Istat data as of 01/01/2018.

### Guinea-Bissau nationals in Italy by age

As for the other two communities, even the Guinea-Bissau population residing in Italy is very young. In 2018, the youth aged 15–19 years amounted to 16 per cent of the total of nationals from Guinea-Bissau, whereas the vast majority of Guinea-Bissau is aged 20–34 years (63%) and only 11 per cent are aged 35–44 years (Eurostat).

The female population is 10 per cent of the total and mainly consists of adults aged 20–34 years (27%) and 35–44 years (24%), while children are mainly under age 14 (23.4%). The largest part of the male population, instead, consists of adults aged 20–34 years (67.2%), while 17 per cent are young, aged 15–19 years.

## 3.2 OFFICIAL STATISTICS: ASYLUM APPLICATIONS AND TYPE OF PERMITS

### 3.2.1 Asylum applications

From 2012 onwards there has been an increase in asylum applications by Guinea-Bissau nationals, which passed from 50 in 2012 to almost a thousand in 2017. The peak is consistent with the trend in arrivals, as 2016 was the year with the highest number of disembarkations of Guinea-Bissau nationals in Italy.

**Table 24. First-time asylum applications by nationals from Guinea-Bissau in Italy, 2012–2018**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Guinea-Bissau	50	115	410	655	725	915	190
Of which, female	0	0	5	0	0	10	0
Of which, under age 18	10	10	25	40	75	110	40

Source: Eurostat.

### 3.2.2 First-instance asylum decisions

The share of positive decisions over the total of first-instance decisions regarding the asylum applications submitted by Guinea-Bissau nationals dropped from 93 per cent in 2012 to 26 per cent in 2018. Similarly to trends observed among Gambians and Guineans, the humanitarian protection status was granted to most of those who has their application accepted over the past years, although at a decreasing rate. The number of first-instance decisions granting refugee status or subsidiary protection is really small, representing around 1 per cent of all decisions each year.

**Table 25. First-instance decisions by type, Guinea-Bissau nationals in Italy, 2012–2018**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total decisions	140	60	190	500	705	565	610
Total positive decisions (%)	93	67	47	31	29	33	26
Geneva Convention status (%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Humanitarian status (%)	82	67	42	27	26	32	25
Rejected (%)	7	33	55	69	71	66	73
Subsidiary protection status (%)	7	0	3	3	2	1	0

### 3.2.3 Type of residence permits

From 2012 to 2017 the number of all valid permits (table 26) granted to Guinea-Bissau nationals increased from 534 to 1,112. Residence permits for family reasons and for work reasons show an overall constant trend, while the number of those granted for refugee status, subsidiary protection and other reasons (including humanitarian protection) significantly increased, especially since 2015.

**Table 26. All valid residence permits in Italy of Guinea-Bissau nationals by reason, 2012–2017**

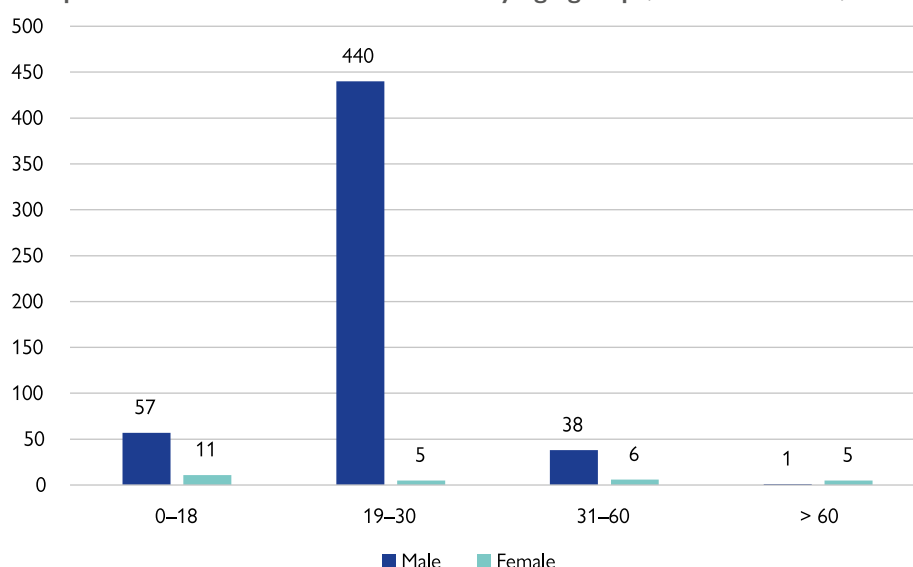
Reasons	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	534	593	692	769	1,633	1,112
Family reasons	118	209	218	232	206	219
Education reasons	9	9	5	8	5	4
Remunerated activities reasons	223	180	184	170	155	156
Refugee status	3	4	4	3	8	10
Subsidiary protection	27	32	49	66	80	109
Other	154	159	232	290	1,179	614

Source: Eurostat.

### Focus on residence permits issued and renewed in 2017

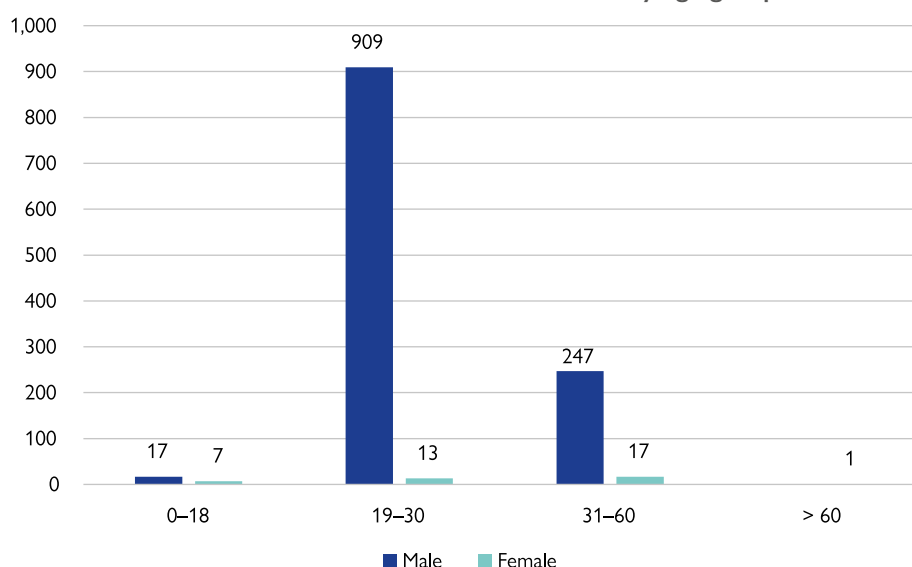
Figure 26, 27 and 28 illustrate the number and type of residence permits<sup>31</sup> issued and renewed to Guinea-Bissau nationals settled in Italy in 2017, and are based on data provided by Ministry of Interior. In 2017, the Italian State granted 563 new first-time residence permits, and renewed 1,218 permits. Even in this case, data for year 2017 show a clear prevalence of permits granted and renewed to men compared with females, and to the 18–30 age group.

Regarding the age group of the people who obtained their first permit in 2017, data provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior show that in 2017 the largest part of permits (77.9%, total 440) was issued to males aged 18–30 years, followed by minors (10.4%, total 59) and then by males aged 30–60 years (6%). For the same age groups, women represent a minority: only 4 permits were granted to women aged 18–30 years and 11 permits to women aged 0–18 years. As for the permits renewed in 2017, 909 permits were issued to males aged 18–30 years, representing 74.9 per cent of the total permits renewed, and 247 (20.2%) were renewed to males aged 30–60 years. Even in the case of renewals, the female group represents a small percentage: only 13 women (1.06%) aged 18–30 years and 17 women aged 30–60 years (1.3%) renewed their permits in 2017.

**Figure 26. First permits for Guinea-Bissau nationals by age groups, absolute values, 2017**

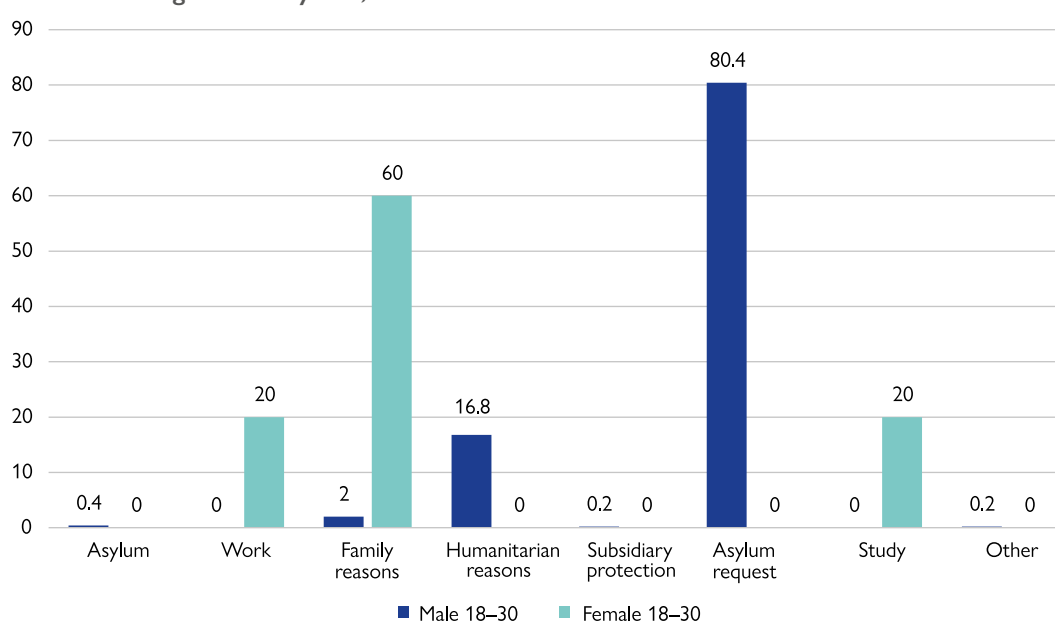
Source: Data from Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

<sup>31</sup> For an overview on the types of permits, see box 1.

**Figure 27. Permits renewed in 2017 for Guinea-Bissau nationals by age groups, absolute values**

Source: Data from Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

Figure 28 illustrates the reasons of the permits issued for the first time to Guinea-Bissau men and women aged 18–30 years in 2017. It shows that, among the total permits issued to men (440) there is a clear prevalence of permits issued for asylum request (80.4%, total 353 permits), followed by the permits issued for humanitarian protection (16.8%, 74 permits) and for family reasons (2%, total 9 permits). Less significant are the percentages of permits granted for other kinds of international protection (0.4% for asylum and 0.2 per cent for subsidiary protection), and no permits were issued for wage labour. As for the female group, the absolute number of permits that were issued (5) is clearly much lower compared with the ones issued to the male group. The permit reason chart shows that the largest part of permits (60%, 3 permits) was issued for family reasons, and the remainder for wage labour (1 permit) and for study (1 permit).

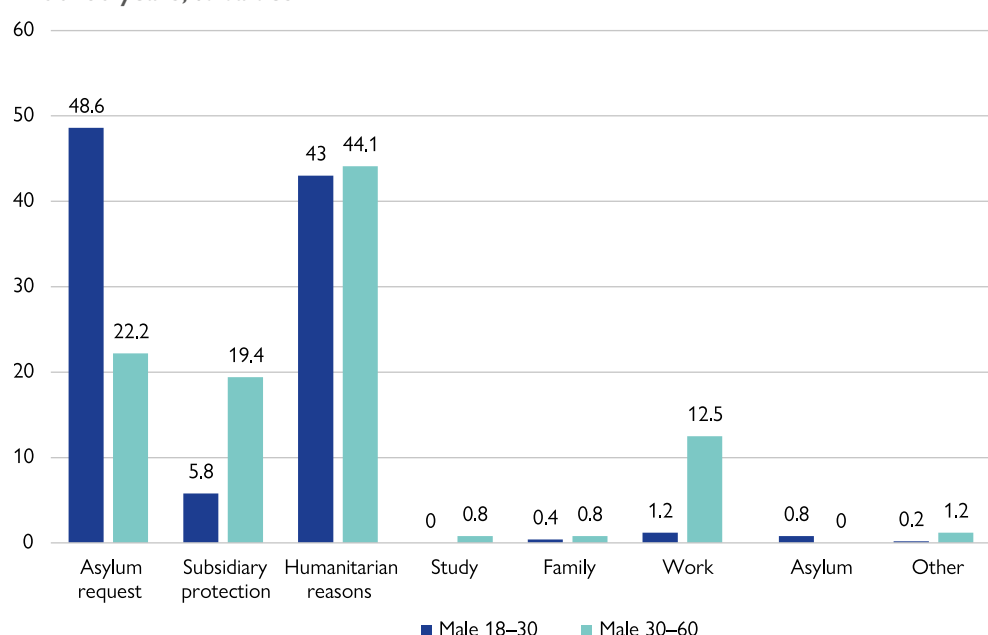
**Figure 28. Reasons of permits issued in 2017 to Guinea-Bissau nationals residing in Italy, male and female aged 18–30 years, % values**

Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

Figure 29 illustrates the reasons of the renewal of residence permits for two male age groups (migrants aged 18–30 and 30–60 years), since together they represent 94.9 per cent of the permits renewed in 2017. The largest part of the youngest male group (18–30) renewed the permits for asylum request (48.6%), followed by the ones who renewed a permit for humanitarian reasons (43%). Lower is the portion of people who renewed the permit for subsidiary protection (5.8%). Only 0.8 per cent renewed a permit for asylum and 1.1 per cent for wage labour. As for the older male group, the majority of them (44.1%) renewed a permit for humanitarian reasons, but the number of asylum request permits is lower than for the other age group (22.2%). The percentage of men who renewed a permit for subsidiary reasons (19.4%) and for wage labour (11.3%), instead, is significantly larger.

As for women, 13 permits were renewed to women aged 18–30 years; the majority of them renewed the permit for family reasons (5) and for wage labour (4). Only 2 renewed the permit for humanitarian reasons and 1 for asylum request. Among women aged 30–60 years, the largest part (11) of them renewed a permit for wage labour, and the remainder for family reasons.

**Figure 29. Reasons of permits renewed in 2017 to Guinea-Bissau nationals, males aged 18–30 and 30–60 years, % values**



Source: Data from the Ministry of Interior, Department of Public Security as of 31/12/2017, processed by IOM.

### 3.3 A PROFILE OF THE GUINEA-BISSAU DIASPORA FROM IOM SURVEY DATA

Arrivals of migrants and refugees from Guinea-Bissau to Italy by sea have been less than those of Gambians and Guineans in the past years. Hence, IOM's DTM surveys of national groups arriving through the Central Mediterranean route are based on a smaller subsample of individuals compared with the other two groups.

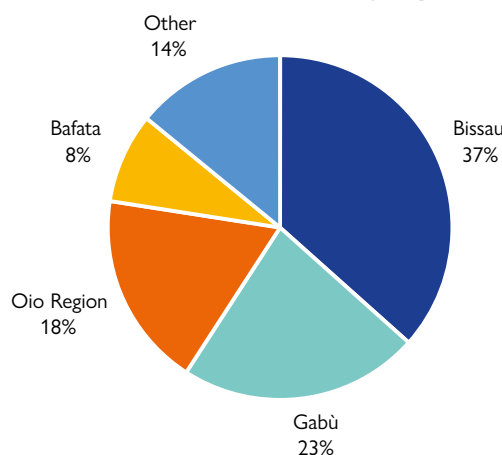
The subsample of respondents from Guinea-Bissau, therefore, consists of 71 interviewees (34 in 2016, 29 in 2017 and 8 in 2018). This section presents the profile of respondents from Guinea-Bissau as it emerged from the DTM interviews. All respondents were males, and 14 per cent of them were aged 14–17 years at the time of the interview. About 16 per cent of them reported having been married and having at least one child.

### 3.3.1 Socioeconomic background before departure

#### Regions of origin and route

Bissau is the reported region (and city) of origin for about 37 per cent of all respondents, followed by Gabù (the eastern-most region, bordering with Senegal and Guinea, 23%), Farim (the capital city of Oio region, situated in the North of the country and bordering with Senegal 18%) and the central-northern Bafata region (8%).

**Figure 30. Respondents from Guinea-Bissau in 2016–2018, by region of origin (%)**



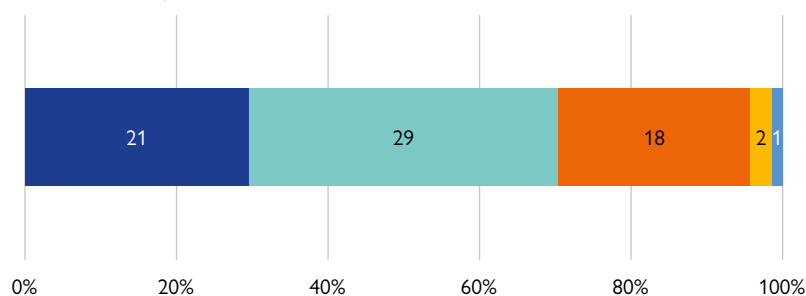
Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Most respondents reported having travelled alone (83%), while the remainder travelled with a group of non-family members (8.5%) or with at least one family member (8.5%).

#### Educational and professional background

Respondents from Guinea-Bissau reported having received a primary education in 41 per cent of the cases, while 25 per cent reported having completed lower secondary education and only 4 per cent either higher secondary education or tertiary education. The remaining 30 per cent of the respondents reported having completed no type of formal education.

**Figure 31. Education level, respondents from Guinea-Bissau in 2016–2018, absolute and share values (%)**



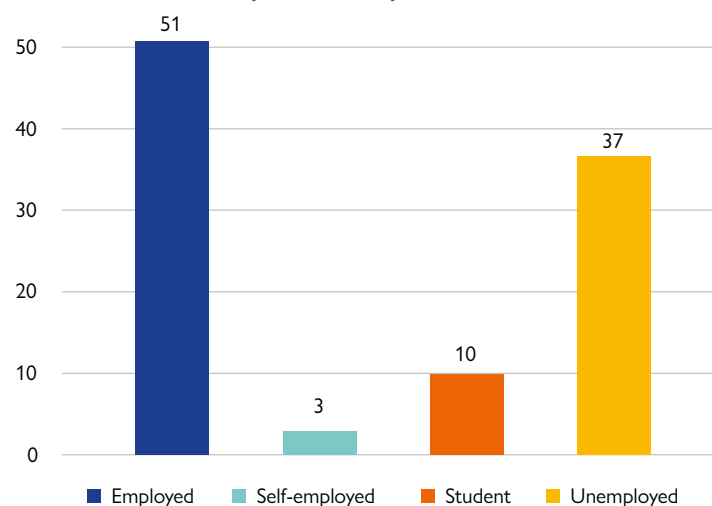
Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.



## Employment status before departure

Regarding the employment status before departure (figure 32), most Guineans declared having been employed or self-employed (51 and 3% respectively), while others reported having been studying (10%). More than one third (37%) of them reported having been unemployed at the time they left their country.

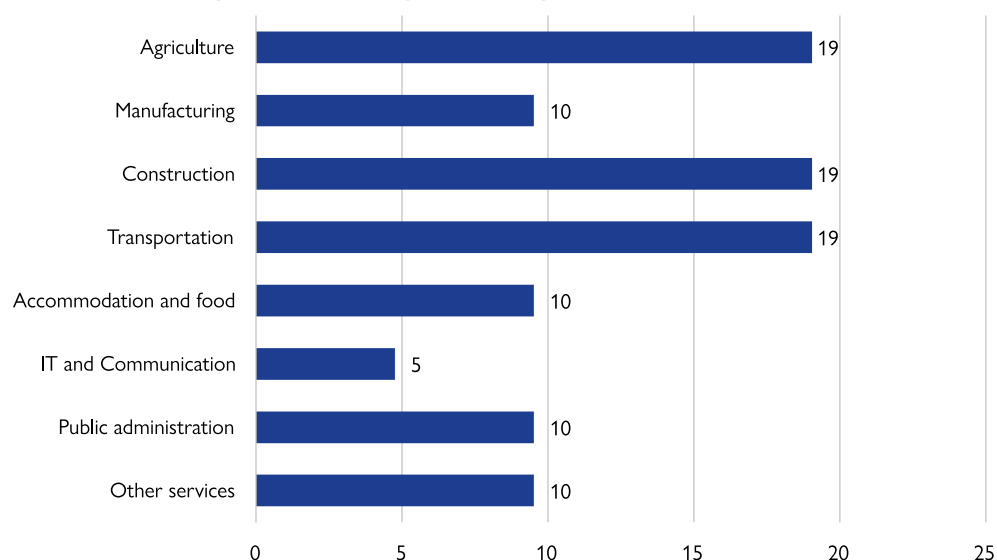
**Figure 32. Employment status before departure, respondents from Guinea-Bissau in 2016–2018 (%)**



Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Among those who reported having been employed or self-employed, the most common sectors of activity were agriculture, construction and transportation.

**Figure 33. Sectors of occupation before departure, respondents from Guinea-Bissau in 2017–2018 (%)**

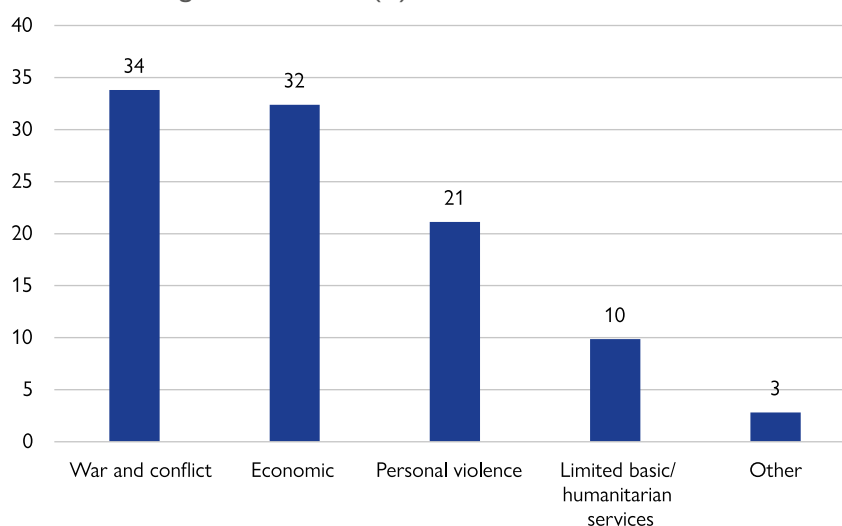


Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2017–2018.

## Reasons for leaving Guinea-Bissau

As regards the reasons for leaving Guinea-Bissau, about one third (34%) reported the presence of war or conflict and another third (32%) reported having left because of economic reasons.<sup>32</sup> Personal violence and the poor or no access to basic and humanitarian services were reported as reasons for leaving in 21 and 10 per cent of the cases respectively.

**Figure 34. Reasons for leaving Guinea-Bissau (%), 2016–2018**



Source: IOM's DTM project in Italy 2016–2018.

Half of all respondents reported having departed from a country other than Guinea-Bissau, after having spent there at least one year. In almost all cases, this country was Libya. For these migrants and refugees, the reason for moving again after a long stop (at least one year) in Libya was in almost all cases the level of personal insecurity they felt, reported as personal violence and as presence of conflict in the country.

## Intended destinations

Almost half of respondents from Guinea-Bissau reported Italy as the initial intended destination (49%) at the time they started the journey, while 14 per cent reported Germany and about 10 per cent reported Europe as a generic destination. The rest mentioned in almost equal proportions Algeria, Spain, Libya, Portugal (about 4% each).

Upon arrival in Italy, 68 per cent declared being willing to stay in the country, while some others still mentioned Germany (8%), Europe in general (8%), Portugal (5%) or other countries as their intended final destination.

## 3.4 GUINEA-BISSAU NATIONALS IN ITALY: AN OVERVIEW OF THEIR EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC STATUS

### 3.4.1. Education

Regarding the professional and education pathways followed by the migrants in Italy, data from the Ministry of Education, University and Research provide information about the presence of students with Guinea-Bissau citizenship in primary and secondary school. Since 2015, the presence of students has remained close to one thousand units every year: namely 131 students in 2015/16 (corresponding to 0.016% of the total number of students with foreign citizenship) and 127 in 2016/17 (0.015% of the total number of foreign students). Even for this nationality, more specific data regarding the geographical distribution, the type of school attended and the previous years are not available in the public report provided by Ministry of Education.

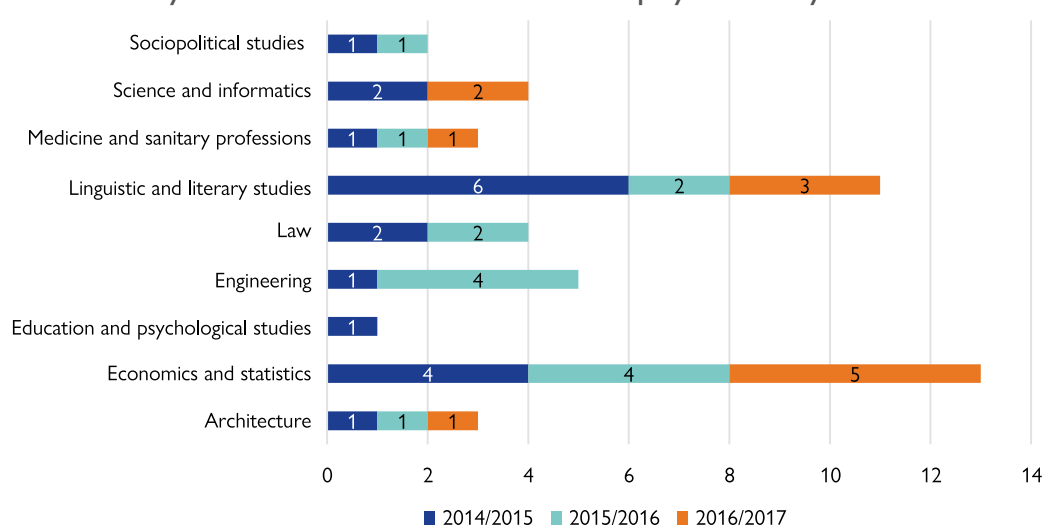
<sup>32</sup> Reasons reported by respondents to DTM surveys in Italy might include a mix of conditions related to the country of origin and of experiences made while in transit, as most of the respondents reported quite long journeys and often a stop in Libya of more than one year.

With regards to university education, open data provided by the Ministry of Education, University and Research, available from 2016 onward, indicate that the number of graduates is relatively low but still the highest among the three diasporas analysed in this document: three Guinea-Bissau students got their degree in 2016 and four in 2017 (2 men and 2 women).

The number of Guinea-Bissau nationals enrolled in university courses has remained almost stable from 2014 to 2017 (19 students in academic year 2014/2015, 15 students in 2015/2016 and 12 students in 2016/2017). The largest part of these students is enrolled in a B.A./B.Sc. course at universities mainly located in Veneto, Lombardy, Trentino Alto Adige and Emilia Romagna.

The regional distribution of the students (data available only for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 Academic Year) shows that the largest part of them attends a course at a University located in Northern Italy (mainly Veneto, Lombardy and Emilia Romagna; only one student is attending a course in Sicily). The highest number of students attends a course in economics and statistics and in linguistic and literary studies; science, IT science and engineering are also among the most favourite fields of study chosen by students.

**Figure 35. University students with Guinea-Bissau citizenship by academic year and course area**



Source: Data from the Ministry of Research and Education, 2016–2017, processed by IOM.

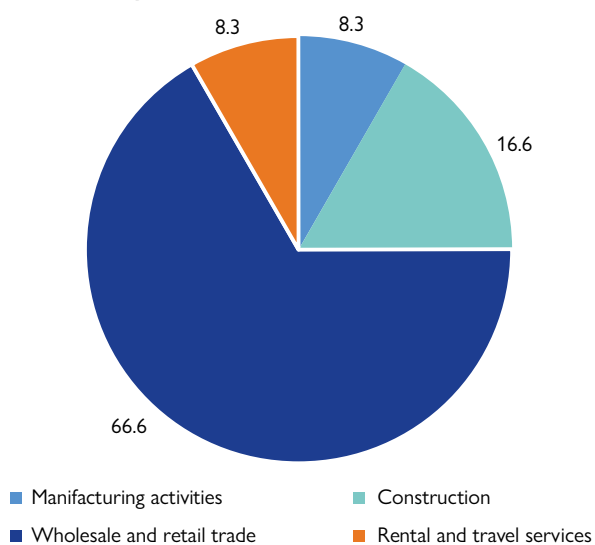
### 3.4.2 Employment and entrepreneurial activities

Similar to the Gambian and Guinean diaspora, data on residence permits granted or renewed in 2017 indicate that a low share of newly arrived people from Guinea-Bissau entered Italy with a residence permit for wage labour or self-employment. Data for previous years are not available, which makes it impossible to observe the trend evolution. Indeed, recent statistical data do not show what emerged during the interviews and the meeting with the associations, namely, that many among those who arrived in previous decades found an employment in Italy thanks to their education pathways in Italy or in the homeland. Very few Guinea-Bissau nationals own an individual enterprise in Italy (table 27); they mainly invested in wholesale and retail trade, construction, manufacturing and travel services. Enterprises are located in both southern and central-northern regions.

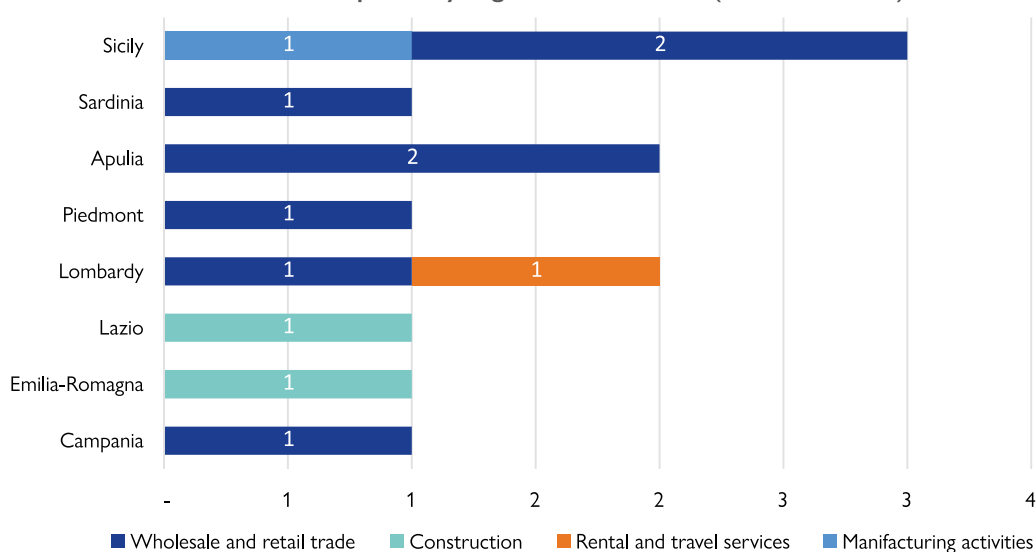
**Table 27. Individual enterprises by owner citizenship (absolute values and %)**

Position	Citizenship	Tot. Individual enterprises	% Total enterprises owned by foreigners
1	Morocco	65,172	14.588%
2	China	50,797	11.370%
3	Romania	47,869	10.715%
4	Albania	31,359	7.019%
5	Bangladesh	29,724	6.653%
...	...		
68	Guinea	298	0.067%
87	The Gambia	165	0.037%
152	Guinea-Bissau	12	0.0027%
Total Guinea + The Gambia + Guinea-Bissau		483	
Total foreigner-owned Individual Enterprises		446,754	100.000%
Total Individual Enterprises in Italy		2,622,335	
Total non-classified		3,858	
Total		3,072,947	

Source: Data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

**Figure 36. Sector of Individual Enterprises, Guinea-Bissau nationals, % values**

Source: Data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

**Figure 37. Sector of Individual Enterprises by regional distribution (absolute values)**

Source: Data from Infocamere as of 30/09/2018, processed by the Statistical Office of the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce.

### 3.4.3 Remittances

As in the case of Gambian and Guinea diasporas, the Bank of Italy provides the most accurate estimate of monetary outflows from Italy to Guinea-Bissau which are registered by formal money transfer institutions all across Italy. According to these data, remittances to Guinea-Bissau were quite constant between 2012 and 2014, and started increasing on 2015, reaching over 2.5 million euros in 2018. Lombardy, Veneto and Apulia are the three regions where most of the transactions were recorded in 2018.

**Table 28. Remittances sent from Italy to Guinea-Bissau, 2012–2017 (million euros)**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Abruzzo	0.03	0.07	0.02	0.05	0.09	0.05
Basilicata	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02
Calabria	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.05	0.07
Campania	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.15
Emilia Romagna	0.05	0.09	0.07	0.06	0.09	0.16
Friuli Venezia Giulia	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.03
Lazio	0.08	0.07	0.11	0.11	0.13	0.17
Liguria	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.07
Lombardy	0.23	0.24	0.22	0.29	0.38	0.48
Marche	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02
Molise	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Piedmont	0.21	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.09	0.16
Apulia	0.06	0.12	0.13	0.16	0.24	0.39
Sardinia	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.04
Sicily	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.13	0.20
Tuscany	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.08	0.11
Trentino Alto Adige	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.10
Umbria	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02
Valle d'aosta	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Veneto	0.20	0.20	0.24	0.20	0.32	0.40
Total (million euro)	1.06	1.07	1.07	1.23	1.85	2.66

Source: Bank of Italy.

# ORGANIZATION OF DIASPORAS AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS



## 4

## THE GAMBIA

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus group was organized in Padova, on 2 December 2018. The participant associations were identified through a combination of digital ethnography and snowball sampling methodology, since no Gambian associations were registered in the database of associations of foreign nationals<sup>33</sup> managed by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

Through regional databases, such as the ones of Volunteer Services Centres, we identified and contacted a registered association (Gambia Youth Association Padua) in Padua (Veneto). Digital ethnography allowed us to identify another active youth group based in Emilia Romagna,<sup>34</sup> but contact attempts were not successful by the time of the planned meeting. An interview with the leader of the association based in Padua was conducted before the meeting, with the aim of outlining his association network. The only reported contact was with a group in Verona, “Senegambia”, that was soon invited to the meeting. None of them reported having any contact with other Gambian associations across Italy, including the one in Emilia Romagna. Therefore, the meeting was organized with the two contacted associations and this focus group opened up the opportunity to gain further insights on the diaspora network in Italy. In February 2019, in addition, we organized a meeting with the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of The Gambia, based in Milan, aimed at sharing some of the findings of the research and at gaining more insights on diaspora organizations in Italy.

The focus group was organized as follows.

- As an introduction, IOM staff presented the YDLA project and the capacity-building activities promoted by Migration and Development Unit of IOM Italy; participants were invited to introduce themselves and their associations.
- The collective discussion followed, coordinated by the researcher and organized into two main thematic groups:
  - the relation with other diaspora organizations in Italy and elsewhere (that is, existing network with other diaspora members or associations and with the Honorary Consulate in Milan);
  - the engagement of the associations in development projects already implemented or planned for the future (that is, project ideas, transitional network, difficulties, strategies).

## 4.2 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GAMBIAN DIASPORA

The profile outlined through statistical data, picturing a recently rooted diaspora mainly consisting of young males, is also reflected in its current associative dynamics, which were discussed in greater depth during the focus group with the associations and in further interviews.

The lack of networking activities and structures among associations across Italy was indeed confirmed, as well as the absence of any contact with the Honorary Consulate in Milan. While indeed singularly people had contacts with the Consulate for bureaucratic issues, they never contacted the Consulate to improve the associations' activities. From its perspective, the Honorary Consulate reported some difficulties in mapping the new associative dynamics and in contacting the recently constituted associations. This is due to the perception of the consulate as an institution that is risky to contact in case of asylum application in Italy, but also to the speed with which new informal groups

<sup>33</sup> [www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Aretematiche/PaesiComunitari-e-associazioniMigranti/Pagine/mappatura-associazioni.aspx](http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Aretematiche/PaesiComunitari-e-associazioniMigranti/Pagine/mappatura-associazioni.aspx) [accessed on 06 June 2019].

<sup>34</sup> [www.facebook.com/groups/220480121784462/?fref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/groups/220480121784462/?fref=nf) [accessed on 06 June 2019].

and associations have been created in recent years. In addition, the Consul reported difficulties creating bridges and collaboration between fellow nationals with very different background and migratory pathways, such as university students, long-time residents and asylum seekers or refugees.

Another important aspect is the high degree of informality that currently characterizes the diaspora organizations. During the meeting and in further interviews with diaspora members, the existence of several informal groups across Italy was reported. These groups are created with the main objective to offer mutual aid and to foster integration in the local social context. Some of the promoters of these groups – all young males, who recently arrived in Italy – reported difficulties in tackling with the bureaucratic process required to formally register the associations, but also in engaging long-time Gambian residents. One long-time resident, based in Verona, reported that he was initially sceptical about the several associative experiences that young Gambians are promoting in Italy, but later realized that these associations could represent an opportunity for all diaspora members. Until now, many Gambians relied on associations promoted by longer-time settled communities in Italy, such as the Senegalese one.

A consequence of this high degree of informality, of the fragmentation of diaspora networks and of the recentness of associative experiences is the lack of coordinated development activities. At this stage, association activities are mainly aimed at providing support to migrants in Italy, and the development projects are not yet implemented, but mainly planned for the near future.

### 4.3 PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

	Association	Gender	City of origin	Time in Italy and city of residence	Education and profession
1.	Gambia Youth Association (president)	Male	Serekunda	In Italy for 5 years, Padua	Graduated in Business management in Gambia; he owned a clothes shop and then he worked as a marketing assistant in several enterprises. Currently employed in a multinational enterprise for furniture and home accessories. Intercultural mediator for cooperatives and public services.
2.	Gambia Youth Association	Male	Bakau	In Italy for 5 years, Padua	In Gambia he worked as a taxi driver and photographer. In Italy he worked as a farmer, currently unemployed.
3.	Gambia Youth Association (secretary)	Male	Basse	In Italy for 5 years, Padua	He currently works as a warehouse worker.
4.	Gambia youth association	Male	Serekunda	In Italy for 2 years, Padua	In Gambia, after High School, he attended The Gambia University and he studied to become a Laboratory Assistant. He worked as a laboratory assistant in a hospital. Currently, he works as an intercultural mediator and as an emergency helper or rescuer with Green Cross.
5.	Gambia youth association	Male	Basse	In Italy for 5 years, Padua	He worked as a tailor in Gambia and as a warehouse worker in Italy. Currently unemployed.
6.	Gambia Youth Association	Male	Jarra Kanikunda	In Italy for 3 years, Padua	In Gambia he completed high school and later worked as a welder. In Italy he worked as a warehouse worker and currently as an upholsterer.



7.	Gambia Youth Association	Male	Basse	In Italy for 2 years, Padua	In Gambia, he obtained the Training Teachers Certificate and worked as a teacher. In Italy he worked as a dishwasher and canteen attendant. He is currently unemployed.
8.	Gambia Youth Association	Male	Born in Thies (Senegal) grown up in Bakaou New Town (The Gambia)	In Italy for 4 years, Padua	In Gambia he attended secondary school and worked as a mechanic. He currently works as a mechanic.
9.	Senegambia (president)	Male	Chia	In Italy for 4 years, Verona	In Gambia he attended secondary school and worked as a tradesman. In Italy he attended the lower secondary school and he is currently employed in a food company.
10.	Senegambia	Male	Talliding	In Italy for 3 years, Verona	In Gambia he attended secondary school and worked as a tailor. He is currently employed in a tailoring company.
11.	Gambia Youth Association	Male	Serekunda	In Italy for 4 years, Padua	In Gambia he attended secondary school and worked as a tradesman. He currently works as a domestic worker.
12.	Senegambia (vice-president)	Male	Old Jensang	In Italy for 4 years, Verona	He worked as a painter in Gambia. He is currently employed in a packaging factory and also works as an intercultural mediator.

## 4.4 ASSOCIATIONS' PROFILE

### 4.4.1 Senegambia Association, Verona

The association was founded in December 2018 by Gambian youths living in Verona and often meeting during football competitions. Sharing the desire to support fellow nationals living in difficult social, psychological, housing and economic situations, they founded the association with the goal of creating a mutual support network. They benefited from the support of the Verona-based Italian association "Gigi Piccolo",<sup>35</sup> aimed at promoting intercultural relations and active citizenship. The name "Senegambia" implies the desire to also include young Senegalese in Italy.

This association mainly consists of youths who recently arrived in Italy, but it is slowly trying to invite some older Gambians to take part in the association's activities.

#### Organization and activities:

Members: 53; they all are very young and have lived in Italy for only a few years (no more than 7 years). Members include five Senegalese nationals. The rest are Gambian. Only two members are women. They meet the first Saturday of each month, every member pays 5 euros every month that are deposited into the joint account of the association. These resources are used to organize cultural activities or religious celebrations, and the remainder constitutes a fund that will be used in case of need by members (that is, housing problem, temporary unemployment, health problem, body repatriation).

The association still has a football team, which has participated in an intercultural and anti-racial national competition, called "Balun Mundial".<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> [www.gigipiccoli.it/](http://www.gigipiccoli.it/) [accessed in March 2019].

<sup>36</sup> [www.balonmundial.it/](http://www.balonmundial.it/) [accessed in March 2019].

#### 4.4.2 Gambia Youth Association A.P.S<sup>37</sup>

The association was founded in February 2018, with the goal of providing social, economic and psychological support to fellow nationals who have recently arrived in Italy and of implementing development projects in the country/villages of origin. The founding members met during football competitions and shared the need to create a sustained network to respond to the many calls for help they have received by compatriots. They are supported by the Italian association “Razzismo stop”<sup>38</sup> – an anti-racist group based in Padua for many years which is sensitive to intercultural issues. Support includes free access to the Razzismo stop office.

##### Goals:

- Providing economic support and help with the bureaucracy related to the residence permits issued to Gambians recently arrived in Italy;
- Providing social and psychological support through leisure activities (football matches, religious events and celebrations, such as *tabaski*) to Gambians who recently arrived in Italy;
- Implementing awareness-raising initiatives to promote Gambian culture and traditions in the Italian context.

Members: 70 active in the WhatsApp group; 35 of them are also active and participate in events and meetings. They meet on the last Sunday of each month. All members are male Gambian nationals. During the meetings, Mandinka is the used common language.

##### Fundraising strategy:

- Fundraising events – such as the first self-financing dinner organized on 25/02/2018 – with the additional aim of presenting the activities of the association to the public;
- Every month each member pays 2 euros that are collected in a joint account. Since the founding of the association, around 2,000 euros have been collected.

Being a member of one of these Italian-based associations does not exclude the possibility of playing an active role in other transnational associations as well. Some participants continue to actively operate in associations in their home countries, of which they were members before departing. For instance, one is still an active member of the “Manduar Youth Association”, based in Mandus Village. Many of the members of this association live outside The Gambia, in different European countries (Germany, Italy, Finland and Spain), and in the United States of America. They organize a meeting via WhatsApp every month and they consider themselves as part of the “Mandus diaspora”. The Manduar Youth Association still maintains a joint account which is funded by monthly collections and is used for development projects in Mandus Village.

#### 4.4.3 Network and activities in Italy

Participants report that they do not have many connections with Gambian migrants or associative leaders who have lived in Italy for more than 10 years. They only know there are some recent informal groups, established in cities such as Bari, Turin and Milan, which aim at collecting money for mutual support, primarily for body repatriation. Thus, the main reference network of both associations consists of Italian associations or other migrants' associations (such as Senegalese or Somali ones, which are among the longest-time settled communities in Italy).

Neither association has ever contacted the Gambian consulate in Italy and they have never met the Consul in Italy. Some of the participants were not aware of the consular office in Milan, but only of the Embassy in Spain. They do not know if there are any national meetings of Gambians in Italy, for instance on the occasion of the National Independence Day (18 February).

As associations, they have never contacted the Consulate, but they think that, in case of need, the Consulate would be willing to help them implement activities in Italy and in their country of origin. Moreover, they don't think that their legal condition as beneficiaries of humanitarian and international protection would be an obstacle to relations with the Consulate.

<sup>37</sup> [www.facebook.com/groups/203849536831745](https://www.facebook.com/groups/203849536831745) [accessed in March 2019].

<sup>38</sup> Stop racism <https://razzismostop.wordpress.com/> [accessed in March 2019].

Both associations have common ideas about the activities that can be implemented in the Italian context in Italy with the associations' funds. "Gambia youth association" has a more defined list of activities which include:

- Economic support for the reintegration process (that is, training or entrepreneurial activities) of members who are deported or who voluntarily decide to return to their country of origin;
- Economic support for body repatriation;
- Renting an apartment in Italy for members who in temporary need for accommodation (the main difficulty is finding someone who will act as guarantor).

#### 4.4.4 Network and development activities in the country of origin

Both associations did not have any contacts with the institutions in the country of origin, and neither is yet registered in The Gambia. Participants believe that the political situation in The Gambia is stable and that democratic achievements have been consolidated; nevertheless they do not know anything about the diaspora policies of the new Government. They claim that the Consulate in Italy could play an important role in informing the diaspora about any new rules and policies. For instance, many of them were unsure whether there is any new agreement between the Italian and Gambian Governments for forced repatriation of irregular migrants in Italy.

Since they believe that the socioeconomic condition of the majority of people in The Gambia remains very poor and precarious, they are convinced that the diaspora can play an important role in development and in contrasting irregular migration. For this reason, these associations are planning to implement some development activities in the field of agriculture and education in the next five or seven years. These are considered strategic sectors to create new job opportunities. Therefore, they represent a possible alternative to migration for young people who are pressured by their families to relocate to Europe to secure new economic income for the household. During the focus group, we asked the associations to explain in greater detail what kind of projects they are planning to implement in the above-mentioned fields.

##### **Agriculture**

A development project in agriculture is considered a good investment because many members of the association have had experience in this field before their departure and some of them have also acquired new skills in Italy. Moreover, women in The Gambia can be easily involved in this sector, which can have a key role in the household economy.

They plan to use the economic resources of the association to buy a piece of land to cultivate agricultural products that can also be exported to Italy. Identifying the land to buy is not expected to be difficult, since the members of both associations are still in contact with village chiefs that often reserve some pieces of land for development projects. Presumably, these chiefs would easily approve the land purchase. Moreover, one member of the association said that two Italian friends asked him to help them buy some pieces of land in The Gambia: while doing this, he realized that the Gambian law makes the purchase of land by foreigners very difficult, while it facilitates the acquisition by Gambian nationals.

The problems could be:

- finding appropriate agricultural vehicles and irrigation systems;
- installing solar panels, in case of necessity;
- choosing the agricultural product and implementing a trading and import/exporting strategy. As for the choice of product, some suggest it could be possible to involve local farmers with extensive experience in the cultivation of manioc, mango and oranges.

## Education

Investments in training activities is considered a key strategy to combat youth unemployment and irregular migration as an economic strategy. In particular, the goal of the associations is:

- Providing economic support to school education for orphaned children or people living in extreme poverty;
- Creating a skills centre for youth, in which different professional training programmes could be organized.

Training ideas include: how to build and manage a chicken farm, a bakery course, tailoring and batik courses, how to start a business enterprise, welding courses with particular attention to safety strategies (for instance how to use protective shoes and goggles, the use of which in The Gambia is not as common as in Italy).

The bakery course is considered particularly useful for unemployed youth because there are currently no bakery courses in The Gambia. The only way to learn how to bake is working as a trainee in a bakery, with no guarantee of employment. In The Gambia, two kinds of bread constitute the everyday food: “senfour”, an industrially made baguette, and “tapa-lapa”, a handmade bread, made mainly by Fula foreigners from Guinea.

### Which acquired skills would you like to transfer?

When asked to think about the skills acquired in Italy that could be transferred to the homeland or about the field in which they think they could invest, participants reported the following ideas. None of them has started any project, since they have recently arrived in Italy and some of them claimed they still have to train in Italy before thinking about the possibility of transferring their skills.

Among those who have some ideas, one participant thinks about the possibility of exporting tools and machinery, such as: second-hand ambulances (A., Red Cross volunteer), second-hand sewing machines and industrial spare fabrics, car components and spare parts. Another idea is to open a mechanical workshop to teach youth how to work with used machinery for wire bonding (which is not used in The Gambia).

During the focus group, participants also listed some skills they acquired in Italy that they would like to transfer to the homeland, leaving room for future entrepreneurial activities: how to use industrial-size butchery equipment, how to cultivate products that could be appreciated by European tourists (e.g. zucchini, strawberries, etc.), how to be a tourist guide, how to innovate business management and marketing.

## 4.5 FINAL REMARKS

The associations that took part in the focus group report that IOM could play an important role in reinforcing the skills of the associations, such as writing project proposals and fundraising strategies. Moreover, those who are leading informal groups, and thus are in the initial stage of the creation of new associations, mentioned the need for support in dealing with bureaucracy, in engaging new members and in creating new partnerships at both local and transnational level. From their point of view, diplomatic institutions may also support the strengthening of a structured association network in Italy and accompany development projects in the country of origin, also providing the diaspora with information about the diaspora policies of the Gambian Government. From his perspective, the Honorary Consul reported the importance of supporting micro-development projects in the fields of agriculture, education and health care, and of creating opportunities for the diaspora organizations across Italy to meet at national level.

# 5

## GUINEA

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus group with the associations of the Guinean diaspora took place in Florence, on 2 February 2019, and was organized in tight cooperation with the president of the “Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger”. This collaboration allowed the participation of a high number of Guinean associations across Italy: the majority of them were part of this council, but associations that were not part of the council board and individual subjects and entrepreneurs also participated in the event. At the meeting, delegates from the Guinean Embassy in Italy, Monsieur Camara Mohamed Nassir, ambassador counsellor, and Madame Fatoumata Bereté, Attachée Financière et Consulaire also participated. Delegates from the Embassy opened the meeting, expressing their appreciation and gratitude to all the participants attending the meeting. On behalf of the Ambassador of the Guinean Republic in Italy, Mohamed Chérif Diallo, they also renewed the full support of the Guinean Embassy in Italy to all of the diaspora activities aimed at improving development projects in Guinea and at strengthening a coordination network among diaspora associations in Italy.

After the preliminary remarks by the delegates of the diplomatic institution, IOM staff presented the YDLA project and the capacity-building activities promoted by the Migration and Development Unit of IOM Italy.

Given the high number of associations represented, the focus group was organized into two sessions (morning and afternoon) and the discussion was organized into two thematic sections:

- a. presentation of the association (history, member, main goals) (morning);
- b. presentation of an important project implemented in Italy and in Guinea (afternoon).

### 5.2 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GUINEAN DIASPORA

The Guinean Embassy is based in Rome and its diplomatic jurisdiction includes the following countries: Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Albania.

The main diaspora organizations are represented in the “Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger”, founded in Italy on 25 November 2017,<sup>39</sup> with the active support of the Guinean Embassy within the framework of the diaspora policies promoted by the Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et des Guinéens de l'Étranger (MAEGE). This council had been established in all the other countries of the Guinean diaspora with the aim of reinforcing transnational cooperation among Guinean authorities and diaspora organizations. The Italian council is composed of the representatives of the main diaspora associations based in Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Albania. The president of the “Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger” stressed the importance of the institutional support to the local and transnational activities of the associations, as well as to the deployment of the networking strategies promoted by this recently established council.

The participants mainly came from Northern and Central Italy and the description of their experiences shed light on the historically rooted and socially variegated diaspora activities across Italy. The existence of several informal groups and organizations was also reported during the meeting, thus outlining a rich variety of informal organizations

<sup>39</sup> And in several other countries in the same year. Delegates from the council of the global Guinean diaspora participated in the first forum of the Guinean diaspora in Conakry <https://developmentfund.iom.int/fr/projet-d%E2%80%99appui-au-gouvernement-de-guin%C3%A9e-afin-de-mobiliser-sa-diaspora> [accessed on 06 June 2019]. [www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/idm/workshops/IDM-2013-Diaspora-Ministerial-Conference/Diaspora-Ministerial-Conference-Statement-Rougui-Barry-Kaba.pdf](http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/idm/workshops/IDM-2013-Diaspora-Ministerial-Conference/Diaspora-Ministerial-Conference-Statement-Rougui-Barry-Kaba.pdf) [accessed on 06 June 2019].

and economic strategies that could be explored in further research. During the morning and afternoon focus group sessions, the associations briefly presented their history and experiences at the local and transnational level. Some issues emerged as topics of common interest: the perception of increasing racism in Italy, irregular migration to Europe and the necessity to support newly arrived Guinean nationals, development needs of Guinea such as education and training, youth unemployment, local social and sanitary services. Other topics were reported as very urgent issues for the whole diaspora in Italy: the great cost of body repatriation and the impossibility for the Guinean Embassy to issue passports to nationals living in Italy.

The focus group also shed light on the activities carried out to support newly arrived Guinean nationals. The associations reported they were actively supporting and providing assistance to the large number of Guinean nationals who arrived by sea, even in partnership with local institutions and reception centres. As it emerged during the meeting, traditional leadership, intercultural mediation and peer-counselling are already part of the activities voluntarily carried out by the diaspora organizations and have a relevant impact at the local level.

### 5.3 PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

	Association and Role	Gender	Time in Italy and city of residence
1.	• Association Fedde Bantal Fouta Djallo Italie	Male	In Italy for 10 years, Treviso (Veneto)
2.	• Union des Immigrés de Guinée • First Secretary in charge of Resource Mobilization in the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger.	Male	In Italy for 20 years, Rome (Lazio)
3.	• Union des Immigrés de Guinée • Secretary in charge of Social affairs in the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger	Female	In Italy for 20 years, Rome (Lazio)
4.	• Union des Immigrés de Guinée (president) • Second Secretary in charge of Resource Mobilization in the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger.	Male	In Italy for 19 years, Brescia (Lombardy)
5.	• Fondazione Guineana Italia (founding member) • First Administrative Secretary of the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger.	Male	In Italy for 14 years, Ravenna (Emilia Romagna)
6.	• Association des Jeunes Ressortissants de KOUROU • First Secretary, in charge of external relations, of the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger	Male	In Italy for 13 years, Modena (Emilia Romagna)
7.	• Nakiri association (president) • First Secretary in charge of Communication of the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger	Female	In Italy for 13 years, Turin (Piedmont)
8.	• Nakiri association (founding member) • President of the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger.	Male	In Italy for 10 years, Turin (Piedmont)
9.	• AFEGUI (founding member)	Female	In Italy for 30 years, Milan (Lombardy)
10.	• AFEGUI	Female	In Italy for 9 years, Milan (Lombardy)
11.	• Association Guinéenne en Lombardie NIMBA	Male	In Italy for 11 years, Lombardy
12.	• Vicenza association	Female	In Italy for 11 years, Vicenza
13.	• Vicenza association	Male	In Italy for 2 years, Vicenza
14.	• Association Ressortissants et Amis de la Guinée (president) • Second Secretary in charge of Social Affairs and Solidarity in the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger.	Male	In Italy for 22 years. He lived in several southern and central Italian regions; since 2000 he has been living in Macerata (Marche)
15.	• Association Ressortissants et Amis de la Guinée	Male	In Italy for 18 years, Marche.

## 5.4 ASSOCIATIONS' PROFILE

### 5.4.1 Association Fedde Bhantal Fouta Djallo Italie (Treviso, Veneto)

The association Fedde Bhantal Fouta Djallo was founded in 2012 in Treviso and is part of a federation of ten associations and several informal groups based in other Italian regions. The main goal of the association is providing social and economic support to fellow nationals living in Italy, including body repatriation. Their financial resources are exclusively based on the members' annual fee. At the local level, in Treviso, they organize cultural and recreational events for the community. For example, every Sunday the association organizes cultural activities for families, during which children can learn about the Guinean culture and traditions.

As for development projects in the homeland, every year the association reserves a part of the members' fees to finance projects in Guinea in different fields. For example, the organization supported the construction of a 5-classroom school and still continues to pay the teachers' salary. The association also financed the construction of a new bridge, which was a replacement for an older bridge that fell during the rainy season. The new bridge was inaugurated a few weeks ago. They would like to be more involved in development projects designed to offer alternatives to irregular migration from Guinea to Europe for the youth in the community. Specifically, they would like to take part in some projects that could reduce youth unemployment in Guinea, creating new training and entrepreneurial opportunities for young people. They never succeeded in obtaining any co-financing for their development projects.

### 5.4.2 Union des Immigrés de Guinée (U.I.G) Roma

The association was founded 10 years ago in Rome and it is officially registered with the Guinean Embassy. It has 130 members, each paying a monthly fee of 5 euros. They meet every month at the home of one of the members. Previously, they met at an office that was made available by the city Government, but the new city Government did not renew the concession. The association funds are intended to support the social and economic needs of the members. One of the main financial problems that members faced during their stay in Italy is the cost of the repatriation of mortal remains. The priority of the association is the social and economic support of fellow nationals in Italy. Members support women who have recently given birth and unemployed fellow nationals. Requests for assistance by newly arrived Guineans has significantly increased in recent years. The association is also available to support members that would like to go back to the homeland but do not have the necessary economic resources. Such a support has never been available in the past.

The association is currently not engaged in development projects in Guinea. In the future, they would like to contribute to the development of projects aimed at improving local services, including the construction of drinking-water wells or a medical centre in some of the regions of Guinea.

### 5.4.3 Union des Immigrés de Guinée, Rezzato, Brescia (Lombardy Region)

The association was founded in 2001. Initially, members were approximately 100. Now, there are 200. Not all the members are economically active: among them, about 50 members regularly pay the monthly fee of 5 euros. The association organizes recreational and cultural activities and provides educational/health-care support, even in cooperation with other local associations. If one of the fellow nationals dies, members are asked to pay 100 euros in order to cover the expenses for the repatriation of the mortal remains.

For five years, the association has also carried out several activities in the homeland. Every year, part of the association funds (about 2,000/3,000 euros) are used to implement development projects in the fields of education and health care. For example, they supported the construction of wells for drinking water and the transport of used ambulances from Italy to Guinea.

#### 5.4.4 Fondazione Guineana Italia (F.G.I.), Ravenna (Emilia Romagna)

The association was founded in November 2017. Initially, members were 15. Now, they have increased to 74. All are from the area of Ravenna, Rimini and Cesena. Among them, only those who are employed pay a monthly fee of 10 euros. The main goal of the association is promoting volunteerism, cooperation and development through intercultural projects. In particular, they promote national and local events to raise awareness about human rights, support the integration of migrants and the social inclusion of vulnerable individuals, strengthen the diaspora network in Italy and develop international cooperation activities.

In partnership with a professional institute based in Ravenna, the association helps newly arrived young Guineans, with or without regular residence permits, to enrol in a professional training course – e.g. carpentry, welding and mechanics courses.

As for activities in Guinea, the association would like to start a development project in the health care field, for the construction of a new hospital. The association already started collecting used health-care equipment in cooperation with several hospitals in Emilia Romagna, while the Rimini hospital allows them to organize a training session with health-care professionals in Guinea every year. The association already has a piece of land available for this project, located 70 km from Conakry.

#### 5.4.5 Association des Jeunes Ressortissants de KOUROU (A.R.K.M.), Modena, Emilia Romagna

The association was founded in 2008 in Modena and currently has 100 members: most of them are resident in Modena and surroundings, but some also live in other European countries.

In Italy, the association organizes courses to support illiterate women and financially supports the educational career of pupils and young students. The organization also supported return projects for two members, financially helping them with travel costs and professional reintegration in the homeland. Every year, in April, the association tries to release a fund set aside to support young students in Guinea who have to take a final examination.

#### 5.4.6 Nakiri association, Turin (Piedmont)

The association was founded in 2012. It has seven active members and each of them pays a monthly fee of 30 euros. The founder explained that when he arrived in Turin, he found support in a Malian association, because only a few Guineans were living in that city and they were not organized in an association. He soon realized the necessity of creating a context fostering the development of a network among countrymen and the organization of cultural activities.

The aim of the association is promoting a new narrative about Guinean culture (and more generally – about Africa), thus deconstructing negative stereotypes that are widely spread in collective perceptions. Indeed, the association mainly operates in the field of cultural initiatives and started its activities with a literary project promoting Guinean writers in Italy, in cooperation with the Torino International Book Fair. As a result of this successful collaboration, Guinea was invited as guest country of honour at the 27th edition of the Torino Book Fair.

The association mainly operates on a transnational level. In partnership with some secondary institutes, the Piedmont Region, the Municipality of Turin and the “Compagnia San Paolo” Foundation, the association organized a cultural exchange for secondary school students: 40 Italian students travelled to Guinea within the framework of this cultural programme and 15 among them are planning to return with a new cultural project.

A new decentralized cooperation project – between the Municipalities of Moncalieri and Conakry – was recently funded and will implement new cultural and professional training projects between Italy and Guinea.



### 5.4.7 AFEGUI, Milano

The AFEGUI association was founded in 2009 and has delegates in several Italian regions. There are about 50 active members and they pay an annual fee of 60 euros. Members are exclusively women, mostly Guineans but also from other countries. It is registered with the Municipality of Milan – which sponsors many activities – and has established strong links with other associations (such as the Sunugal association) and foundations (like CESPI).

The main goal of the association is the empowerment of Guinean women: in Italy, the association supports women in finding jobs and helps them gain autonomy in their daily activities – for instance, bureaucratic and health-care needs or relation with social workers. The association also organizes an annual conference on women issues and regularly promotes campaigns against gender violence and traditional practices such as female circumcision.

Since 2009, the association has implemented three main projects:

- In partnership with the SUNUGAL association, within the framework of the project “Pane e Migranti”, it supported the education career of youth living in rural contexts in order to reduce internal migration from rural areas to cities. More specifically, the first outcome of the project was the implementation of a bakery course, during which the youth could learn how to use modern bakery machinery as well as to recognize the several kinds of flours used in Guinea. The second outcome was the construction of a building where the bakery courses could be held, but the Ebola crisis forced the association to stop all activities. The association would also like to achieve this second outcome in the coming years.
- In partnership with an association of Guinean women based in Canada, AFEGUI financially supported the education of 20 girls living in Conakry. The association organized several funding events and used the association's common funds.
- In partnership with an association of Guinean women living in Paris, AFEGUI supported education and medical treatments for several albino girls living in Conakry.

### 5.4.8 Association Guinéenne en Lombardie NIMBA (A.G.L.N.)

The Nimba association is based in Milan. It has about 40 members, who pay an annual fee of 60 euros. The NIMBA association operates both in Italy – supporting newly arrived and long-time residents – and in Guinea – reserving part of the association fund to support a school for deaf-mutes. The representative of this association stressed three topics:

- the difficulties in having a university degree recognized in Italy (he never succeeded in getting the recognition of his degree in engineering);
- while doing volunteer work as a cultural mediator, he met several Guinean youths who irregularly lived in Italy or had arrived by sea as asylum seekers. He claims he is very worried because of the increasing numbers of youth emigrating from Guinea. He stresses the necessity of informing Guinean youth about the risk of irregular migration and of finding innovative strategies and policies to improve the employment and the social and economic condition of the people living in Guinea;
- the coexistence of several ethnic associations: for instance, he is also a member of the “Manding association”, based near Bergamo and composed of about 30 members.

### 5.4.9 Association Ressortissants et Amis de la Guinée, Macerata (Marche)

The organization started as an informal group, created to support fellow nationals with the repatriation of mortal remains, and it was formally registered as an association in 2004. It currently has 26 members residing in the Marche region. They all pay a monthly fee, except for one member, who is exempted because he is a student. The association is historically rooted in the local context and over the years has established successful relationships with local and national institutions. Thanks to its network, it successfully assisted newly arrived Guineans – mostly asylum seekers – in finding jobs and documents for living in Italy.

The main goal of the activities carried out in Italy is supporting fellow nationals in the education of their children born in Italy (they organize an after-school programme and language courses for newly arrived Guinean nationals). As for the activities in the countries of origin, they would like to implement some innovative projects that could

bring drinkable water to schools located in rural areas in Guinea. They never succeeded in finding co-financing for their project.

During the meeting, representatives drew attention to the passport-related issues faced by Guinean nationals living in Italy: the Guinean Embassy is only allowed to renew existing passports, not to issue first-time passports. This is an urgent issue for many Guinean nationals residing in Italy. They also highlighted the considerable degradation of life conditions for Guineans, and more generally for Africans, living in the Marche region after the murder of a girl in January 2018, for which an African citizen has been accused. This murder was followed by a racially based attack carried out by a right-wing extremist.

#### 5.4.10 Informal groups, individual initiatives and entrepreneurial projects

As explained above, not all of the associations and participants were part of the board of the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger, but some of them were informal groups in the process of establishing new associations, individual entrepreneurs and professionals.

##### **Informal group of Vicenza**

A. and M. are planning to establish a new association of Guineans in Vicenza, where many fellow young nationals are living as asylum seekers or are trying to make a life for themselves after being granted humanitarian or international protection. So far, they have established an informal group with 30 fellow nationals and aim at formally founding the association in the next months. The association may support the integration process of newly arrived youth in Italy and promote intercultural projects, even in cooperation with “second-generation” youth living in Vicenza. The association may also collaborate with local institutions to open an information office for migrants, in order to provide information about documents, asylum applications and local services for families, asylum seekers and unemployed people. In the homeland, the association may implement a project in the field of agriculture, working mainly with small villages in the tomato processing sector.

A. stresses the importance of promoting intercultural practices between Italians and foreigners, but also of reinforcing inter-ethnic dialogue both in Guinea and within its diaspora.

##### **Individual initiative: L.C. from Milan**

He has lived in Italy for 2 years. He holds a PhD at the “L’Orientale” University of Naples. He is currently associate professor at IULM University in Milan, where he teaches “Geography of local development”. He is part of a research project on migratory perception among youth in Guinea. The preliminary results of this research draw attention to the historical continuity of mobility cultures among several communities in Guinea (for instance among Peul and Malinkè), as well as to the impact of the socially constructed “idea of Europe” currently spread among several sub-Saharan African societies. It becomes necessary to analyse the contemporary culture of migration spread among youth, even from an historical perspective, in order to deconstruct the stereotyped “perception of the elsewhere”, as well as to understand the social and cultural factors that push youth to migrate.

He is also working on establishing a new master’s degree programme in “Migratory cooperation and local development”, through a collaboration between the IULM University of Milan and the University of Conakry and Kankan. The Italian Embassy in Guinea, as well as IOM Guinea, have already been informed of this project and showed interest in supporting it. The Master programme shall be free of charge and students will have the opportunity, at the end of the course, to get financial support for the development of a project designed during the course. All the students’ projects must be consistent with the Local Development Plan outlined by the Guinea Government. He also suggests that Diaspora associations should implement their development projects in accordance with the National Local Development Plan and projects should be designed and carried out in tight cooperation with local communities.

### Individual initiative: A.B. from Milano

He has been living in Italy since 2007, at first in Apulia and since 2014 in Milan. He specializes in welding techniques and he also attended several courses to become a qualified trainer. With a group of fellow nationals, he is initiating a new project in Guinea, aimed at organizing welder training courses for unemployed youth in Guinea. Currently, they are an informal group and they are assessing the opportunity of becoming an association.

In Italy, he is taking part in meetings aimed at helping newly arrived Guinean nationals living in difficult social and economic conditions (for example, homeless, living in reception centres without residence permits or waiting for their asylum applications to be examined). During such meetings, long-time resident Guineans listen to the needs and problems expressed by recently arrived Guineans and try to provide advice about the local integration services and facilities (language courses, job-searching strategies, accommodation, etc.). The importance of deconstructing the stereotypical perception of Europe as a land of wealth and success is also an important issue considered during the meetings. Participants are made aware of the importance of not strengthening this perception, providing a realistic picture of their living conditions in Europe to those remaining in the homeland.

### Entrepreneurial projects

During the focus group discussion, several participants reported being interested in the business field. These are the planned entrepreneurial projects:

- One participant would like to create a website to promote tourism from Italy to Guinea.
- One participant graduated in IT science. Leveraging his technical expertise, he would like to implement an innovative digital platform to facilitate remittances in Guinea.
- One participant with a professional background in hydro-engineering would like to invest in Guinea with an innovative hydro-engineering project, to be implemented in cooperation with his current employer.
- One skilled factory worker operating in the field of electronics and automation is planning on establishing a company for the provision of automation services in Guinea. He is already in contact with some entrepreneurs in the mining sector in Guinea and he took part in the Economic Forum “Guinée en Europe”,<sup>40</sup> held in Brussels in June 2018.
- One participant is planning on launching a new fashion brand in Guinea.

## 5.5 FINAL REMARKS

The associations greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet and discuss their local and transnational activities, as well as the development needs of the diaspora and their homeland. They expect IOM and the Guinean Government to support the activities of the Conseil des Guinéens de l'Étranger and the need of creating the opportunity to coordinate more national meetings. They also stressed the importance of addressing the passport-related issues faced by those who live in Italy.

During the focus group, associations reported a lack of skills related to project management and fundraising strategies. While they demonstrated strong expertise in self-organized fundraising activities (through association fees, fundraising events, etc.), they stressed their difficulties in identifying and participating in calls for proposals.

<sup>40</sup> <https://forumguinee-europe.com/> [accessed on 06 June 2019].



## 6

## GUINEA-BISSAU

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The meeting with the associations took place in Brescia on 8 December 2018. The meeting was organized in collaboration with the Honorary Consul of Guinea-Bissau in Italy, based in Milan. The association's network was mapped starting from the information provided by the Honorary Consul, who provided contact data of Guinea-Bissau nationals who have lived in Italy for many years and have demonstrated active participation in associations. This allowed us to identify two main associations promoted by Guinea-Bissau nationals in Italy. The leaders of the associations were also asked to suggest other Guinea-Bissau nationals playing an active role in associations or engaged in development projects. They mentioned that some informal groups were active in Emilia Romagna, that a new group was being established in Treviso (Veneto) and that the group based in Trentino Alto Adige was no longer active.

The focus group was organized as follows.

- As an introduction, IOM staff presented the YDLA project and the capacity-building activities promoted by Migration and Development Unit of IOM Italy;
- Participants were invited to introduce themselves and their associations.

The collective discussion followed, coordinated by the researcher and organized into two main thematic groups:

- Diaspora organizations in Italy (common activities organized on a national level, mapping of other associations or professionals actively operating across Italy, entrepreneurial experiences, collaboration with local institutions and organization, youth activism, role of the Consulate, problems and difficulties).
- Engagement of associations in development projects (projects or entrepreneurial activities already implemented, projects planned for the future, transitional networks and relation with government institutions, sectors of intervention, existing project difficulties and related strategies).

## 6.2 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIASPORA FROM GUINEA-BISSAU

The first Guinea-Bissau nationals arrived in Italy in 1977 with scholarships provided by the PIME<sup>41</sup> missionary order, actively operating in Guinea-Bissau and based in Verona, a city in Veneto. Father Ermanno Battisti was a very active missionary who helped many young Guinea-Bissau nationals to develop a university career in Italy. He also helped the youth by promoting the creation of a skill and training centre and a well-known paediatric clinic "S. José em Bôr". In the following years, many other young nationals of Guinea-Bissau arrived in Verona to complete their education career, mainly in Universities. Students were supported by religious organizations and almost none of them received the scholarship granted by the Guinea-Bissau Minister of Education. Some of the professionals trained in Italy returned to the country of origin, but most of them found a job and remained in Italy, converting their residence permits from study to employment. Thus, the oldest community of the diaspora is based in Verona, where they reported being appreciated by local institutions because of their high-level education and their positive integration in the local social, religious and work context. The first migration flow, and thus the relationship between diaspora and the homeland – particularly between the cities of Bissau and Verona – was mainly supported and promoted by

<sup>41</sup> Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere [Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions] [www.pime.org/index.php/pt/](http://www.pime.org/index.php/pt/) [accessed on 06 June 2019].

religious transnational networks.

Simultaneously, starting from the 90s, Italy also became a destination country for an “economic” migration flow. People indeed arrived in Italy to look for jobs and thus settled in the northern industrialized regions. Until today, the biggest diaspora communities settled in Veneto and Lombardy, where the oldest associations were also established. A sizable group of long-time residents is reported to live in Campania, but they do not seem to be organized into an association, while a new association is going to be established in Treviso (Veneto).

During the meeting, the Honorary Consul in Italy stated that the diaspora “feels left alone” by local, transnational and international institutions. Until today, for example, members of the diaspora have never been contacted by international organizations, such as IOM. In addition, they also feel that their potential and expertise are not fully recognized, neither by Italian nor by Bissau Guinean institutions. Therefore, they hope the dialogue which started within the framework of the YDLA project will help them to voice the needs and aspirations of the Guinea-Bissau diaspora in Italy.

## 6.3 PARTICIPANTS’ PROFILE

	Association	Gender	Time in Italy and city of residence	Education and profession
1.	ASCOUAGUI (founding member, communication expert)	Male	In Italy since 2003, Verona.	Journalist
2.	ASCOUAGUI	Male	In Italy since 2008, Verona.	He arrived in Italy with a student visa, graduated in IT Science from the University of Verona. He works as software engineer.
3.	ASCOUAGUI (founding member)	Male	In Italy since 1999, Verona.	He attended secondary School in Portugal with the support of the Italian Cultural Institute of Lisbon, then graduated in Economics from the University of Verona. He has worked at an insurance company and is currently employed in a food-processing company based in Verona.
4.	ASCOUAGUI (Vice-president)	Female	In Italy since 1996, Verona.	She attended nursing school in Latina and she works as a nurse.
5.	ASCOUAGUI (president)	Male	In Italy since 1988, Verona.	He studied in Verona as an accountant and commercial expert. He currently works in a typography.
6.	ASCOUAGUI	Male	In Italy since 1989, Verona. He has dual Italian and Guinea-Bissau citizenship.	He graduated in Italy as an agricultural and industrial technician (secondary school), employed at an agrifood multinational company in Verona. President of the Guinea-Bissau football team in Italy, coach and observer graduated from the Chievo-Verona Academy.
7.	A.E.O.G.B.	Male	In Italy since 1988, Lecco.	He graduated as an electrical engineering technician from a secondary school in Verona. He has worked for 20 years in a company specializing in the manufacturing of heaters based in Lecco.

8.	A.E.O.G.B.	Male	In Italy since 2003, Lecco. He has dual Italian and Guinea-Bissau citizenship. 31 years old.	He arrived with family reunification, graduated in Italy in accounting (secondary school), then found an employment in a mechanical engineering company (manufacturing prints for fine-blanking) and simultaneously specialized in mechatronics in Monza.
9.	A.E.O.G.B.	Female	In Italy since 1999, Bergamo. 26 years old.	She graduated in Economics from the University of Bergamo, then specialized in Human Resources Management and is currently employed in a Chartered Accounting Firm.
10.	A.E.O.G.B. (in charge of the youth section)	Female	Born in Senegal. In Italy since 1991, Lecco. She applied for Italian citizenship.	She attended a Technical College secondary school and she was employed in a logistics company. After that, she decided to specialize in tailoring. She attended a Fashion Institute in Milan.
11.	A.E.O.G.B. (president)	Male	In Italy since 1993, Lecco.	He arrived in Italy with a scholarship in 1993, graduated as a mechanical engineering technician from a secondary school in Merate (Lecco). After that, he started working in a factory manufacturing breaker box parts, where he is still employed.
12.	A.E.O.G.B (vice-president)	Male	In Italy since 2001.	He graduated in Religious Sciences from the Urbaniana University in Rome. After that, he lived for one year in Belgium and then returned to Busto Arsizio, where he currently works as a health-care worker.
13.	Italian entrepreneur	Male	Milan	Director of a consultancy company for airlines, member of the administrative board of Aslam, a professional school manufacturing specialized mechanical parts for aircraft maintenance.

## 6.4 ASSOCIATIONS' PROFILE

### 6.4.1 ASCOAGUI (Associação da Comunidade e Amigos da Guiné-Bissau em Italia/ Association of the Guinea-Bissau Community in Italy and friends), (Verona)<sup>42</sup>

The first Guinea-Bissau association founded in Verona is AIGBI (Associazione Immigrati Guinea-Bissau in Italia – Association of Immigrants from Guinea-Bissau in Italy) formally registered in 1992 and already existing for a few years as an informal group of Guinea-Bissau students based in Verona. In 2006, the AIGBI founding members (5 people with the following professional background: 1 nurse, 2 Law students, 1 Business and Economics student, 1 Pharmacy student) established a new association, ASCOAGUI (Associação da Comunidade e Amigos da Guiné-Bissau em Italia – Association of the Community and Friends of Guinea-Bissau in Italy). As its name suggests, ASCOAGUI aims to create a network within the diaspora, but also to include – people of different nationalities who want to collaborate for the development of Guinea-Bissau. Initially, the idea was to create a network among students and highly skilled professionals in order to foster skills transfer to the homeland. In the following years, the number of Guinea-Bissau who arrived to study in Italy decreased and the majority of migrants were lower-skilled. Thus, the association decided to also include economic migrants and second-generation youth, as the former president explained in an interview. The name of the association made no reference to the migration process or to the professional background of the members. Both associations continue to formally exist, but since 2006 ASCOAGUI has been the most active one.

<sup>42</sup> See: [www.facebook.com/Ascoagui/](https://www.facebook.com/Ascoagui/) and [www.ascoagui.com/](http://www.ascoagui.com/) [accessed in June 2019].

In recent years, many Guinea-Bissau nationals left Italy and moved to other European countries or to the homeland, including the first president of the association. After the departure of many first-generation migrants, the association had some difficulties in implementing its activities. The new president recently resigned, and a new directive board is going to be elected in the next months. The association is also formally registered in Guinea-Bissau in order to facilitate transnational and cooperation activities.

### Goals and activities

ASCOUAGUI was founded with the aim of creating a strong network between newly arrived and long-time residents, and between the diaspora and the homeland. One of the inspiring principles of the association is the desire not to dissipate the acquired expertise of the diaspora, but to induce long-time and highly skilled migrants to make their skills available to the diasporic community and to the homeland. ("We asked for experience and skills, not money!" Claimed the former president during an interview). The association has never received public funds. All activities have been funded with the membership fee (10 euros per year for each member, 75 euros per year for members of the board).

#### 6.4.2 A.E.O.G.B. (Associazione emigranti di origine della Guinea-Bissau residenti in Italia – Association of the emigrants of Guinea-Bissau origin residing in Italy) (Lecco)

The association was formally founded in 2011 by Guinea-Bissau nationals, who perceived the need to create a network to financially support fellow nationals. In particular, starting from 2008, several Guinea-Bissau families in Italy needed financial support for the repatriation of mortal remains. These events motivated some migrants to establish an informal group to collect money and then to establish the association.

Initially, members were 81, then several people moved to other countries. The number has now dropped to 49 active members. Among them, there are both male and female long-time residents in Italy and a very active section of second-generation youth, born or grown up in Italy. In 2018, with the support of several private sponsorships, a group of young members organized the first edition of "Miss Guinea-Bissau Europe-Italy"<sup>43</sup> on the occasion of the National Independence Day, 24 September. This was a highly successful event – already organized in other European countries and never in Italy – and several Guinea-Bissau living in other European countries took part in this beauty pageant.

Another goal of the organization is supporting the integration of newly arrived countrymen and to raise awareness about the Guinea-Bissau culture and other intercultural issues in Italy.

### Funding strategy and organization

Each member pays a monthly fee of 5 euros and the money is deposited into a joint account that can be used by members in case of need. Every year each member must therefore pay 60 euros. They can manage deposits with some flexibility, but it is important that they pay the overall amount by the end of the year. There are two meetings per month: a restricted meeting of the board on one Saturday, and another meeting, which is open to all members, on another Saturday.

#### 6.4.3 Local and transnational networks of associations

The nearest Embassy in Europe is in France or in Portugal; in Italy there is an honorary consulate based in Milan. The consul appears to be very close to the community, often actively representing their needs on a diplomatic level and participating in events organized by and for the community. Interviewees reported that the designation of the honorary consul was strongly desired by the associations that, for several years, had to invite diplomatic delegations from the Embassy in France or Portugal to facilitate the processing of documents for the diaspora community in Italy. Nevertheless, the lack of diplomatic services still persists. Passport renewal is complicated and often impossible to do in Italy, although the Honorary Consul is officially delegated to do this. Thus, most of the people need to go to the Embassy in other European countries.



Moreover, participants deplore the inability to vote for the coming elections in Guinea-Bissau: the census of foreign nationals has not been implemented in Italy, unlike in other European countries. They wonder whether the failure to implement the census is due to the decision of the associations not to represent or explicitly support any political candidates.

More generally, both the Honorary Consul and the associations feel invisible to both the Italian and the Guinea-Bissau institutions. In addition to the above-mentioned lack of diplomatic services, a university student reported another example of what they define “invisibility” – the absence of Guinea-Bissau among the nationalities that could apply for a university scholarship.

They think that the original cause of this condition is the fact that the first students arrived in Italy with the aid of ecclesiastic and not national institutions: thus, their pathways in Italy have not been traced on a ministerial level. The diaspora regarded itself as partly responsible for this lack of visibility. They think they are not organized well enough and some of the interviewees believe it is necessary to create a federative structure among associations and informal groups in Italy.

They argue that it should be important to raise awareness of the fact that there are several highly skilled Guinea-Bissau nationals in Italy and that they still contribute to the development of the homeland with remittances and other forms of development projects. They think that an International Organization, such as IOM, could help in raising awareness of their situation and potential on a transnational level.

#### 6.4.4 Activities of the associations in Italy

Over the course of several years, both associations completed several initiatives in Italy, namely:

##### **ASCOAGUI, VERONA**

- Provision of support to students with bureaucracy-related and other necessities during their University career – for example, the association created a joint account to provide students with financial support to buy books.
- Provision of support to fellow nationals with bureaucracy-related issues and maintaining a relationship with the Embassy to obtain or renew passports – for example, they invited a delegation from the Embassy in Portugal to Italy several times and supported their travel with association funds.
- Awareness-raising activities about Guinea-Bissau history and other social issues.
- Organization a big event on 8 March of each year to celebrate the role of women in the contemporary sociohistorical context.
- Organization of an event on 24 September of each year to commemorate the National Independence Day.

##### **A.E.O.G.B., LECCO**

- Organization of cultural events to raise awareness about Guinea-Bissau history and traditions and to promote intercultural socialization (that is cultural, culinary and sport events, religious celebration –Christmas, Independence day, International Women’s Day, Miss Guinea-Bissau).
- Provision of financial support to members and newly arrived fellow nationals: examples include assistance for repatriation of mortal remains for current members and support for Italian language courses for newly arrived members of the community.

#### 6.4.5 Activities in the country of origin

##### **ASCOAGUI, VERONA**

These are some of the main activities conducted in Guinea-Bissau, mainly in the education and health care fields:

- In collaboration with some doctors who graduated in Italy and work in Guinea-Bissau, the association organized the collection and delivery of a large amount of medicines to Guinea-Bissau (valued at 11.000 euros);
- They financially contributed to the construction of a hospital in Bissau, in collaboration with the “Raul Follerau association”;

- They are still planning to support the construction of a school, in collaboration with the Verona-based association “Rete Guinea-Bissau”.<sup>44</sup>

### A.E.O.G.B., LECCO

The association has not yet implemented any project in the homeland because they used their financial resources to support the diaspora community in Italy. However, in 2016 they started the formal registration process in Guinea-Bissau, which was completed at the end of 2018; they plan to implement some projects in the field of education in the future. Namely, they plan to support the construction of a school. In collaboration with some local organization, they would like to engage builders and send not only money, but also construction materials.

### Other mentioned development projects

Participants in the focus group stressed that, in addition to the association activities, members of the diaspora in Italy contributed in several ways to development projects in the homeland. Firstly, the diaspora had an important role in the foundation and management of the paediatric clinic “S. José em Bôr”.<sup>45</sup> For example, some doctors who graduated in Italy worked as volunteers in this clinic, others are employed by the clinic. These associations also organized several fundraising and medicine collection initiatives to support the clinic. Similarly, the diaspora in Italy also supported the establishment of the “Madrugada Clinic” in Bissau, of the “Cumura Hospital” and of the “Hospital Nacional Simão Mendes” in Bissau with fundraising activities and medicine shipments. As an example of fundraising activity, a choir, which is no longer active, was established and raised around 7,000 euros.

## 6.4.6 Entrepreneurial projects and ideas

With regards to entrepreneurial activities, participants reported that several fellow nationals returned to Guinea-Bissau to establish some entrepreneurial projects: for example, a bakery in Bissau, mainly working with catholic missions, a wood shop and a construction enterprise.

Both first- and the second-generation participants claimed they do not rule out the possibility of future investments in entrepreneurial activities, therefore transferring skills acquired in Italy to Guinea-Bissau. One young participant expressed the desire to invest, for instance, in the fields of tailoring and tourism, another one in a mechanical company, consistently with their professional experiences in Italy. Some of the oldest members of the diaspora think of entrepreneurship as a return strategy but, based on some previous negative experiences, they worry about the economic sustainability of their return projects. One of them explained that he succeeded in convincing the multinational enterprise where he currently works to evaluate an investment in Guinea-Bissau. The managing board of the company seemed interested in his proposal, but the bank – which had to fund the project – did not consider an investment in Guinea-Bissau safe enough, because of the socioeconomic instability and the lack of infrastructure. In addition, they reported that some entrepreneurs, once they returned to Guinea-Bissau after spending several years in Italy, created an association to support their projects, but they are currently facing many problems.

## 6.5 FINAL REMARKS

During the focus group, participants reported the existence of other development projects, mainly in the health care field, and the existence of professionals (such as journalists and doctors) who were not mentioned before the meetings were organized. Thus, further research could be done to gain more insight into the different activities carried out by this diaspora, locally and transnationally.

The associations and the Honorary Consulate expect IOM to give voice to diaspora needs and to facilitate the dialogue with the embassies and the Government in the country of origin.

They also expected the possibility to receive support and consultancy for further development projects that the associations would like to implement, as well as transnational entrepreneurial projects that both first and second generations would like to implement in the country of origin. They also expect IOM to be a reference point for those who would like to return to the homeland, helping their economic reintegration.

<sup>44</sup> [www.retegb.org/](http://www.retegb.org/) [accessed in March 2019].

<sup>45</sup> [www.pime.org/index.php/fr/component/tags/tag/381-clinica-bor](http://www.pime.org/index.php/fr/component/tags/tag/381-clinica-bor) [accessed in March 2019].

## 7

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the focus group, associations reported a lack of skills related to project management and fundraising strategies and expressed an interest in building activities.

This study highlights significant differences, but also important thematic similarities, among the three diasporas and their social and cultural experience in the Italian and transnational context. Originating from countries with different colonial and postcolonial histories, economic and political profiles, the constitution of the three diasporas in Italy happened in different phases, following different social pathways.

The methodology used for outlining the demographic and the socioeconomic profile of each diaspora – based on official statistical data – only considers people residing in Italy and who hold regular residence permits. That said, the demographic characteristics of the three diasporas show that they are relatively small compared with other foreign communities in Italy. With reference to the number of people regularly residing in Italy, the Gambian nationals represent 0.4 per cent of the total foreign nationals in Italy, Guinean nationals represent 0.2 per cent and the Guinea-Bissau nationals represent 0.04 per cent. This percentage does not affect their impact on a local and transnational level. But they do have different impacts. Guinea and Guinea-Bissau diasporas demonstrated a strong associative drive, while The Gambia diaspora is less structured from the associative point of view but has a high potential, given the young age of its members and the recent numerical growth.

Concerning the demographic profile of the three diasporas, the Gambian is indeed the largest one, followed by the Guinea and Guinea-Bissau ones. The numerical growth of the Gambian community increased considerably from 2015 and 2017, with a huge number of people who arrived by sea and sought asylum in Italy, as also reflected by the types of permits granted or renewed in 2017, with a prevalence of permits for asylum application and humanitarian protection. Also, in the case of Guinea, a high number of arrivals by sea has been recently registered but, differently from The Gambia, the number of people already residing in Italy in 2012 is higher, thus testifying to a more historical rooting in the Italian context, particularly in central and northern Italian regions (although all regions registered a positive variation in 2017). Both The Gambia and Guinea also registered a high number of unaccompanied minors. The number of arrivals by sea and unaccompanied minors is less significant in the case of Guinea-Bissau. This is the smallest community among the three, but it is historically based in Northern Italy, particularly in Veneto and Lombardy, and also registered a considerable number of Guinea-Bissau descendants active in the association network.

Statistical data also show a clear prevalence of the male component, particularly for Gambians, and a gradually growing trend towards integration at all levels of the Italian education system. Data on education and professional background are only available for those who recently arrived by sea and show a small amount of higher-level degrees among Guinea and Guinea-Bissau nationals. As for the education pathway in Italy, both in primary and secondary school, the percentage of Guinean students is the highest among the three diasporas, while at University level the highest number of students are from Guinea-Bissau – albeit with a small difference, in absolute value, among the three.

Concerning the professional background of those who arrived by sea, the highest number of those who were employed before leaving the country is among Guinea-Bissau nationals, while most Gambians and Guinean nationals were students prior to their departure. As for employment in Italy, in 2017 a small number of people of the three nationalities entered Italy with a work permit, but further research should be conducted, and more statistical data should be collected to gain a deeper insight into the number and characteristics of employed activities. Data on self-employment show that the Guinea diaspora has the highest number of individual enterprises.

Concerning the associative profile of the three diasporas, there are significant differences among them in terms of association network, relations with diplomatic institutions and development activities. In the case of Guinea, a very articulated associative network is registered across Italy and the main associations have gathered into a national committee, promoted by the Guinean Embassy in Italy within the framework of the diaspora policies carried out by the “Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et des Guinéens de l’Étranger (MAEGE). In the case of the Guinea-Bissau diaspora, the number of official associations is lower, and they are mainly based in Veneto and Lombardy. While the number of organizations is low, they represent an important reference point for locals, members of the diaspora and institutions, because of their historical roots both in Italy and in Guinea-Bissau. There is an active presence of second-generation youth, which shall be regarded as a very important point in terms of innovation, intergenerational alliance and social and cultural bridging. As for relations with diplomatic institutions, members of the community report that the Honorary Consulate is sensitive to their needs and that communication and cooperation with the embassies in Europe could be strengthened. Despite the statistically low number of females in all three of these diasporas, during the meetings with the associations, women turned out to be very active and acknowledged the sociopolitical and economic needs of the diaspora and of the homeland. In the case of Guinea, women are reported to play a significant and active role on an institutional level, in the national committee, and also as members of the board of several associations. A women-only association also actively operates in the field of gender rights and equality both in Italy and in Guinea. Even in the case of Guinea-Bissau, women were active and present. Many are founding members of associations. Also, many second-generation women appeared to play a significant and active role.

The associations of all three diasporas reported actively supporting fellow nationals in the migratory context and promoting development projects in the country of origin. There is a huge difference between the associations, both for Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, in terms of project planning and proposal writing skills, as well as in terms of funding strategies. Only a few associations reported having experience in project management and in project proposal writing, while the majority of them showed great capability to collect funds through formal (annual fees) or informal economic strategies. They all expressed the desire to strengthen their skills in project management and project proposal writing, while also confirming the need for tighter cooperation with diplomatic institutions and government organizations.

The case of The Gambia presents some differences compared with the other two diasporas in terms of the association network. Given the recent demographic growth of this community in Italy, the associative network is less structured and historically rooted than for the other two diasporas, but many associations are emerging across Italy. Although many of them are still informal groups, they are evolving into actual associations. These are going to be reference points not only for newly arrived Gambian nationals, but also for long-time residents in Italy who have so far leaned on associations established by larger nationalities, like the Senegalese one. These new associations are mainly promoted by youth, who seem to have the potential to become new diaspora leaders and they should be sustained and empowered through specific and innovative capacity-building activities. The relationship with the Honorary Consulate, who is insensitive to the needs of the community, should be strengthened. Many newly arrived youths perceived contact with the consulate as risky because of their weak legal condition in Italy. Thus, they do not always perceive relations with the Consulate as an opportunity to be supported in the integration pathways in Italy. Moreover, the presence of women in the association network is weak and more research is needed to assess their presence in informal groups.

### Recommendations for the Governments of Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia:

- **Invest in further research:** lack of literature and statistical data calls for governments to invest in commissioning further research on specific topics of interest (such as economic and entrepreneurial projects, formal and informal associative activities).
- **Leverage skills and knowledge:** the skills and knowledge of diaspora members should be upheld to support their actions on a local and transnational level. Governments should liaise with Italian institutions to facilitate access to professional training, higher education opportunities, student exchange programmes, as well as to ensure the recognition of degrees and school certificates.
- **Cooperate on a local level:** local authorities should seek to establish partnerships with their Italian counterparts.

Local authorities in both countries of origin and destination should cooperate to understand how to best integrate the contribution and initiatives of diaspora members into existing local development plans and priorities.

- **Strengthen the dialogue between diaspora members, embassies and consulates in Italy:** governments should encourage further cooperation between their institutions in Italy (consulates and embassies) and their respective diaspora members. Engagement strategies should be tailored and specific to the needs of each diaspora. Governments may seek to collaborate with IOM in this effort (see recommendations for IOM below).

#### Recommendations for IOM:

- **Support embassies and consulates:** IOM may provide technical support to these institutions to facilitate the engagement with their respective diasporas:
  - Support embassies and consulates in developing data collection systems to collect data on their nationals living in Italy;
  - Promote the organization of events such as fora, conferences and workshops to drive both institutions (from the three target countries) and diaspora members to promote dialogue and exchanges;
  - Assist embassies and consulates in monitoring and supporting existing diaspora initiatives and networks, such as the “*Conseil des Guinéens de l’Étranger*”.
- **Support diaspora members and associations:**
  - For Guinea and Guinea-Bissau: empower the existing network of associations through capacity-building initiatives, such as the A.MI.CO. training, particularly in project development and management. Such initiatives would provide diaspora associations with the tools and knowledge required to initiate co-development projects in their country of origin.
  - For The Gambia: given the young age of Gambian nationals and the low level of formalization of their associative network in Italy, IOM may develop a tailored fellowship programme to support emerging young Gambian leaders. The programme should empower young leaders with leadership and management skills to become impactful changemakers in their communities.

#### Recommendations for Italian authorities:

- **Cooperate with diaspora associations for reception and orientation initiatives:** this report has shown how some diaspora associations (particularly from The Gambia and Guinea) work to address the needs of newly arrived nationals (asylum seekers, youth and unaccompanied minors). Italian authorities (particularly at the local level) should be encouraged to liaise and cooperate strategically with these associations for reception and orientation initiatives aimed at newly arrived nationals.
- **Cooperate with diaspora associations to foster the social integration of migrants in Italy,** promoting social and cultural activities with the involvement of local communities, cooperatives and associations.



## 8

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# 9

## ANNEXES

### PROGRAMME OF THE FOCUS GROUP

(CONDUCTED IN ITALIAN)

#### INCONTRO CON XXX

#### OBIETTIVI INCONTRO:

- a. discussione su tematiche utili alla mappatura (organizzazione diaspora, network esistenti tra associazioni e istituzioni, a livello locale e transnazionale, progetti di co-sviluppo attivi o in progettazione, modalità di trasferimento denaro nel contesto di origine)
- b. individuare possibili obiettivi per futuri training

#### PROGRAMMA DELLA GIORNATA:

**14:30 – 15:15** Presentazione OIM Italia e progetti M&D  
Presentazione OIM Gambia e progetti/attività  
Presentazione progetto YDLA

**15:00 – 15:30** Presentazione guidata delle associazioni presenti e dei singoli partecipanti  
Presentazione individuale: nome e città di provenienza  
Presentazione associazioni: da quanti membri è composta, da quanto tempo esiste e con quali obiettivi è nata

**15:30 – 17:00** Focus group

1° parte: domande relative all'organizzazione della diaspora in Italia:

- Esistono organizzazioni di riferimento per la comunità gambiana in Italia? Chi sono?
- Pensate sia una comunità molto organizzata rispetto ad altre comunità diasporiche?
- Esistono dei "leader", persone a cui la comunità si rivolge per consigli, suggerimenti, raccomandazioni? Chi sono?

2° parte: domande relative a diaspora engagement e relazione con ambasciata in Italia

- Con chi collaborate di più o con chi pensate di collaborare in futuro? (sia in contesto locale che internazionale e nel contesto di origine)
- A quante informazioni avete accesso provenienti dal vostro consolato/ambasciata? E quale tipo di servizio in materia di diaspora engagement vorreste avere da parte del vostro consolato/ambasciata?

Domanda individuale: Quali competenze, capacità, conoscenze acquisite in Italia o nel contesto di origine vorresti portare nel tuo paese di origine?

3° parte: idee progettuali nel contesto di origine

- Come vi organizzate per portare avanti iniziative nei vostri paesi di origine?
- Quali idee o progetti avete in corso nel paese d'origine?
- Il trasferimento di conoscenze/competenze può avvenire come "mentoring" o come ritorno a servizio di un'istituzione nel paese di origine per un breve periodo?
- Quali ostacoli avete riscontrato o pensate di riscontrare in futuro? E quali eventuali soluzioni?
- Su cosa pensate sia utile avere dei corsi di formazione?

**17:00 – 17:15** Q&A e aspettative sul progetto YDLA

**17:15** Buffet di chiusura



