

GUIDE TO SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN THE COMMUNITY



EURO-OPP - OPPORTUNITIES FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE EUROPE

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1. INTRODUCTION

This **Guide to Social Integration in the Community** is born as a key tool within the EURO-OPP - Opportunities for a more inclusive Europe project, funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. Its main objective is to provide adults of foreign origin living in Spain, Italy and Lithuania with a practical and accessible resource to facilitate their integration process in the local society and community. The guide addresses in a structured way the fundamental aspects for effective integration: from knowledge of legal rights and obligations, to access to education, health, housing or employment. It also includes relevant cultural information, resources for learning the local language, entrepreneurial opportunities and a description of the support networks available in each country.



The aim is not only to provide useful information, but also to promote personal empowerment, active participation and social cohesion.

This tool is mainly addressed to adult learners of foreign origin, regardless of their administrative status, and is adapted

to the different socio-cultural realities of the partner countries. It will also be useful for trainers and technicians working in the field of inclusion, adult education and community development. The development of this guide has been possible thanks to the active collaboration between the three partner organisations of the EURO-OPP project:

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- Fundación Sieneva (Spain), the project coordinator, with extensive experience in adult education, entrepreneurship and inclusion programmes aimed at vulnerable groups in rural and urban contexts.
 - Muoversi Assieme NGO (M.A.NGO) (Italy), a recently created organisation working in Sardinia promoting inclusion, citizen participation and the valorisation of cultural and social heritage, with particular attention to the fight against discrimination and the promotion of gender equality.
 - UNFUZZ (Lithuania) is a Kaunas-based NGO dedicated to non-formal education, community empowerment, and the development of innovative pedagogical tools for educators and professionals. The organisation focuses particularly on supporting the inclusion of adults aged 50+ and seniors, including individuals from migrant communities, fostering their active participation and social integration through tailored educational approaches.

By combining these three perspectives - training, inclusion and community action - this guide represents a comprehensive, multilingual resource, designed to be accessible, understandable and useful in all three participating countries. It will be available at in digital format and will be disseminated through the websites and networks of each organisation, ensuring its free access and practical application in diverse contexts.

2. INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL INCLUSION.

**DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF SOCIAL INCLUSION.
BENEFITS OF INTEGRATION FOR INDIVIDUALS AND THE
COMMUNITY. IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY.**

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Social integration is the process by which people, regardless of their origin, social, cultural or economic status, are actively incorporated into the life of a community, sharing rights, duties and opportunities on equal terms. Integration not only implies the physical presence of diverse people in the same environment, but also their effective and respected participation in the different spheres of society: education, employment, politics, culture and community.

This process seeks to remove barriers to exclusion and promote environments where all people can develop fully, contribute to the community and feel part of it.

SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND MIGRATION

Social integration and migration are closely related, as migration processes involve the arrival of people in new communities where they must adapt, participate and be accepted.

When people migrate, they leave behind their social, cultural and family environment and have to deal with new cultural codes, social norms and often linguistic and administrative barriers. This can make integration difficult if there are no adequate reception policies and attitudes in the receiving society.

The social integration of migrants is fundamental to their well-being and to the balance of the community.

BENEFITS OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

Individual benefits of social integration:

- **Sense of belonging:** Integration allows the individual to feel part of a group or community, which promotes self-esteem and reduces isolation or loneliness.
- **Access to rights and services:** An integrated person can exercise their rights and have equal access to essential services such as: Education, Health, Housing, Work, etc.
- **Personal and professional development:** Inclusion in social and economic life enables individuals to develop themselves, improve their education, access job opportunities and contribute their talents.
- **Emotional stability and mental health:** Being integrated into a supportive social network reduces stress, anxiety and emotional disorders associated with exclusion or marginalisation.
- **Active participation:** Integration gives the individual a voice, enabling them to participate in democratic life, express their ideas and take part in decision-making processes.
- **Security and equality:** An integrated person lives in greater security, as they are not exposed to situations of discrimination, abuse or violence resulting from exclusion.
- **Promoting diversity and intercultural dialogue:** Social inclusion fosters respect for diversity and intercultural dialogue, which can enrich people's lives and promote social cohesion.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Social inclusion generates multiple benefits at the collective level, contributing to building fairer, more cohesive and sustainable communities.

- **Social cohesion and stability:** An integrated community is stronger and more resilient. Integration strengthens ties between people of different backgrounds, ages and conditions. This reduces tensions, fosters solidarity and builds a more cohesive society.
- **Reducing inequalities:** Social integration helps to reduce social and economic gaps, providing equal opportunities in access to basic services such as health, education or housing.
- **Conflict reduction:** In integrated communities, there is less exclusion and marginalisation, which reduces social conflicts, violence and discrimination. Coexistence improves when everyone feels part of the group.
- **Harnessing talent and diversity:** When all citizens are integrated, their skills and experiences are better harnessed, enriching community life and fostering cultural, educational and economic innovation.
- **Improved economic development:** Integration allows more people to access employment, create businesses or participate in the local economy, which stimulates growth and improves the overall quality of life.
- **Cultural diversity:** Integration promotes the exchange of different customs, ideas and perspectives, enriching cultural life and fostering open-mindedness and tolerance.
- **Active citizen participation:** A community where everyone feels part of it tends to have higher levels of participation in associations, volunteering and democratic processes.

- **Strengthening social values:** Integration promotes values such as solidarity, empathy, respect for diversity and social justice, which are fundamental for a healthy and balanced coexistence.
- **Adaptability and sustainability:** Integrated communities are better prepared to face social, demographic or economic challenges, thanks to a more cohesive and participatory social base.
- **Emotional well-being:** Feeling accepted and part of a community has a positive impact on people's mental and emotional health, resulting in a healthier community.

IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Cultural diversity is an essential value in contemporary societies. It refers to the coexistence and recognition of different cultures, languages, traditions, beliefs and ways of life within the same community or country. Its importance is manifested in many areas:

- **Social enrichment:** Each culture brings its own knowledge, customs, artistic expressions and ways of seeing the world. This broadens the collective vision, encourages mutual respect and fosters social creativity.
- **Promoting respect and tolerance:** Living with people from different cultural backgrounds helps to combat prejudices and stereotypes, promoting a more inclusive, fair and peaceful society.
- **Innovation and development:** Diversity of ideas, experiences and cultural approaches stimulates innovation in education, science, economics and technology. Culturally diverse teams tend to be more creative and efficient.
- **Strengthening identity:** Recognising diversity also strengthens individual and collective identities by allowing each person to express themselves freely and to value their origin without having to renounce it.

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- **Comprehensive education:** The presence of different cultures in the educational environment enriches learning, fosters empathy in students and prepares them to live together in a globalised world.
 - **Peace-building:** Well-managed cultural diversity contributes to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the construction of more democratic and equitable societies.

In short, cultural diversity is not only a reality, but a richness that must be protected and promoted as a basis for harmonious, creative and supportive coexistence.

Social integration presents both opportunities and challenges. The EURO-OPP project plays a crucial role in addressing these issues by strengthening education, employability and intercultural dialogue. Structured policies, active community participation and tailor-made educational resources will be essential to achieve a more cohesive and inclusive society.

3. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

INFORMATION ON THE LEGAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF FOREIGN RESIDENTS. ACCESS TO HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES. RESIDENCE AND WORK REGULATIONS.

INFORMATION ON LEGAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF FOREIGN RESIDENTS

The legal rights and obligations of foreign residents in the EU vary according to their immigration status and nationality:

Citizens of the European Union:

The Maastricht Treaty introduced the concept of citizenship of the European Union, i.e. all nationals of a Member State are automatically citizens of the Union. EU citizens have the right to move and reside freely in any EU country. No visa or residence permit is required.



Among other rights, they have the right to:

- Freedom of movement and residence: They can travel and live in any EU country without a visa, work or residence permit.

- Voting rights: They can vote and stand in municipal and European Parliament elections in the country where they reside.
- Protection against discrimination: They cannot be discriminated against on the basis of their nationality.
- Access to education and health care: They can access education and health care in the country of residence on equal terms with local citizens.
- Right to work: They can work in any EU country without work restrictions.

Third-country nationals:

Foreigners (non-EU citizens) who are legally resident in the EU have the right to work, study and join family members, among other rights, as long as they have obtained a residence permit or visa. Among other rights to

- residence: They can obtain residence permits if they meet the requirements set by each EU country.
- Right to work: They can work if they meet the employment requirements and if their country of origin has agreements with the EU on labour immigration.
- Right to family reunification: They can apply for the residence of their family members if they meet the requirements established by each EU country.
- Other rights: They may have access to education, health and other social services, although conditions may vary from country to country.

Comparative overview: key rights of migrants in Europe

Aspect	Community Migrants (EU/EEA)	Non-EU migrants
Freedom of movement	Freedom of movement and residence.	Entry and residence permit, subject to conditions.
Access to the labour market	Equal treatment with nationals.	Work or residence permit required. Restrictions on sectors.
Access to social services	Equal treatment: education, health, benefits.	Limited according to permit and legal status. Some services restricted.
Political rights	Vote and be elected in local and European elections.	No political rights except naturalisation.
Social and labour protection	Equal treatment with nationals.	Limited, depending on residence permit.
Asylum and shelter	Not applicable.	Right to seek asylum and international protection.
Nationality and citizenship	Possible after prolonged residence.	Longer and more restrictive process.
Family reunification	More flexible, within the European framework.	Allowed with stricter requirements.
Expulsion and repatriation	Protection from expulsion except in serious cases.	Vulnerability to expulsion for irregularities or offences.

OBLIGATIONS of foreign residents (EU and/or third country nationals):

- **Respect for local laws:** They must comply with the laws and regulations of the country where they reside.

- Documentation in order: They must keep their supporting documentation, residency papers and any other legal documents in order.
- Tax compliance: They must pay the taxes due in the country where they reside.
- Co-ordination with the authorities: They should cooperate with the authorities and provide information as requested.
- Respecting the conditions of entry and stay: They must comply with the conditions of entry and stay in the country, especially if they have a visa.

For more specific information on the legal rights and obligations of foreign residents in an EU country, it is advisable to consult the immigration authorities of that country.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF FOREIGNERS IN ITALY

European immigrants:

In Italy, EU citizens have a number of rights and obligations just like Italian citizens. They can settle in Italy, work, study and live freely, and are entitled to equal treatment before the law. The main obligations include respecting Italian laws, paying taxes and registering their residence. Directive 2004/38/EC regulates the right of entry, movement and residence of EU and EEA citizens and their family members.



Non-European immigrants:

In Italy, non-European (non-EU) immigrants have a number of rights that depend on their legal status, the type of permit they hold, and on international agreements or specific rules.

The most relevant rules are:

- Legislative Decree 286/1998 (Testo Unico sull'Immigrazione): Regulates the entry, residence, expulsion and rights of non-EU foreigners.
- Law 94/2009: Modifies requirements for residence permits, family reunification, and security measures applicable to non-EU nationals.
- Flussi Decree: Establishes annual entry quotas for non-EU workers, depending on the labour market

Rights of non-EU migrants and EU migrants

Comparison of Rights

Aspect	European Citizens (EU/EEA)	Foreigners non-EU nationals
Entrance and stay	Free movement, without visa	Visa and permit requirements
Residence permit	Registration for stays > 3 months	Compulsory permit
Work	Free access	Permit according to Flussi Decree
Health	Full access to SSN	Limited access to SSN, guaranteed emergencies
Education	Free and full access	Guaranteed access, including irregular access
Social services	Full access	Limited by legal status
Political participation	Local and European vote	No political rights
Family reunification	Free for immediate family members	Strict requirements

Access to nationality	After 4 years	After 10 years (5 for refugees)
Expulsion	Only for serious reasons	Possible on irregularity or public order grounds

Comparison of obligations for European and non-EU migrants in Italy

Aspect	European Citizens (EU/EEA)	Foreigners non-EU nationals
Law enforcement	Respect laws and the Constitution	Respect laws and the Constitution
Register	Mandatory for residence longer than 3 months	Mandatory with legal residence
Residence and work permits	Registration only for stays > 3 months	Compulsory permit
Declaration of changes	Notifying changes of residence	Notifying changes of residence
Political participation	Local/European elections only	No political rights
Tax obligations	Tax payment and compliance	Tax payment and compliance
Social security	Social security contributions	Social security contributions
Health insurance	Mandatory for long-term residence	Mandatory with valid permit
Family reunification	Notifying and regularising family members	Income and accommodation requirements

RIGHT OF ACCESS TO THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM IN ITALY

In Italy, the right of access to the health, education and social welfare system is guaranteed for all citizens and legal residents. The health system is universal and free, with co-payments for some services. Education is compulsory and free up to the age of 16, and social assistance provides support to those in need.

ACCESS TO THE HEALTH SYSTEM IN ITALY

The Italian National Health System is public and accessible to all Italian citizens, European citizens and categories of foreign citizens residing in Italy. This system is based on three guiding principles "universality, equality and solidarity".

European Citizens:

EU citizens in possession of a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) can use it in Italy to obtain all necessary medical treatment.

These services are provided under the same conditions as for Italian citizens, paying the corresponding contribution to the system ("ticket") and benefiting from free services when available.

Non-European citizens:

Health care in Italy concerns persons with a regular residence permit and dependent family members living with them. Without a regular residence permit, you have the right to health care in outpatient clinics and hospitals provided by public emergency structures. However, you do not have access to the care provided by the general practitioner and paediatrician of your choice.

Foreign nationals may register with the SSN if they:

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- They have a residence permit and are working, are registered as unemployed at the employment offices or are pending regularisation;
 - They are regular residents;
 - They have applied for the renewal of their residence permit (employed or self-employed work, family reasons, asylum, adoption, custody, citizenship, religious reasons, study);
 - Dependants of the foreign nationals described above.

Foreign students

As a European foreign student in Italy, you are eligible to be covered by the European Health Insurance Card, but you should be aware that it does not cover certain treatments or services such as dental treatment, travel protection, search and rescue, repatriation; so it is advisable to take out private travel insurance abroad in addition.

If you are a non-European international student, you must take out private insurance when applying for your visa and once in Italy you can also choose to register with the SSN, provided you meet the requirements and pay the required annual registration fee, depending on your circumstances.

It is also important to check with the university or school for specific information on the requirements and health care available to international students.

How to access the health care system in Italy:

To register for the SSN, you must apply at the local health office, identified according to your registered address of residence, or at the municipality of domicile indicated in the application for a residence permit.

As for the documents to be provided for registration, they include:

- Valid identification document;

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- Tax identification number ("Codice Fiscale") issued by the local tax office or by the competent immigration office;
 - Residence permit or application receipt for the issuance or renewal of the residence permit (and relevant documents, such as entry visa and/or the contract of stay signed with the local immigration office);
 - Documents proving family status, for the purpose of registering dependants.

After registering with the SSN, you will receive an electronic Health Card that will allow access to care provided by the National Health Service. The card is regional. Health services and their access modalities may vary from one region to another. The Health Insurance Card is free of charge and its duration is equivalent to that of a residence permit. When is the Health Insurance Card valid? The Health Insurance Card is used to go to the doctor or paediatrician, to pick up a drug at the pharmacy, to book a test at an analytical laboratory, to visit specialists at the hospital or at the Local Health Agency (ASL) and, in general, when you need to certify your "codice fiscale".

ACCESS TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ITALY

European citizens:

Students from the European Union (EU) or EFTA countries can enter Italy with a valid passport or EU ID card and can stay in Italy without a visa for the duration of their studies. However, upon arrival, EU students must register at their local Questura station (police station) if their study programme lasts more than 3 months, in order to obtain a residence permit. However, upon arrival, EU students must register at the municipal registry office to obtain a certificate of residence, if their study programme lasts more than 3 months, in order to obtain a residence permit.

International students who are EU citizens are entitled to work in Italy alongside their studies, but must not exceed 20 hours of work per week during regular study periods. However, they may spend more hours during holiday periods.

Non-European citizens resident in Italy:

If you are a European citizen resident in Italy, the Italian education system offers foreign residents access to education, with compulsory education up to the age of 16.

Education is free and divided into several levels, from primary school (scuola elementare) to upper secondary school (scuola superiore).

Moreover, as an EU citizen, you can access university education in Italy with equal opportunities as an Italian student, as long as you have been able to validate your studies to Italian ones.

Non-European citizen not resident in Italy:

If you are a student from outside the EU and want to travel to Italy to study, you must obtain a student visa before entering the country. There are two types of student visas in Italy, depending on the duration of the study programme:

- Visa type C: Short-stay visa - not exceeding 90 days.
- Type D visa: Long-stay visa valid for more than 90 days

You will have to present all the required documents well in advance and follow the steps for obtaining a visa (acceptance by an Italian institution, no criminal record, passport, financial resources, etc...).

The visa allows only entry, while the residence permit allows to legally stay in Italy more than 90 days.

If you are entering Italy on a type D visa, you must also report your arrival at the Questura station within 8 days of your arrival in Italy. You will be sent a residence permit card to prove your legal residence status within the country.

Students from outside the EU can work only about 20 hours a week during their studies without further permission, provided they have a regular contract with an employer in Italy.

Recognition of diplomas in Italy:

Diplomas obtained abroad have no legal value in Italy until they are recognised by the Italian authorities.

Each State has autonomy over the education system. Thus, they apply their own rules regarding the recognition of diplomas (equipollenza) and the recognition of professional qualifications (riconoscimento del titolo professionale).

In order to study or take vocational courses in Italy, it is necessary to apply for recognition and equivalence of qualifications obtained abroad. The Information Centre on Mobility and Academic Equivalences (**CIMEA-Centro Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equipollenze Accademiche**) provides information and services in this area.

Please note that, in general, the recognition or equivalence of educational qualifications, depending on the purpose (for study or professional use), is the responsibility of different Italian authorities:

- Provincial school offices (in Italian only) regarding the equivalence of pre-university level diplomas;
- Universities with regard to the equivalence of foreign academic qualifications;
- The Ministry of Education, University and Research for the academic equivalence of foreign doctorates;

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- Relevant ministries per subject for the recognition of qualifications for regulated professions (e.g. doctor, lawyer, etc.).

ACCESS TO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE IN ITALY

For European citizens:

In Italy, European residents are entitled to various social services, including health care, social benefits and housing assistance.

The Italian social security system provides benefits such as free public health care for basic medicine, hospitalisation and emergencies, with co-payments for tests and medicines.

In addition, there is financial assistance such as the social allowance for people with low income and financial difficulties, as well as housing support through Caritas, which provides food and shelter for the homeless.

- **Social Subsidy (Assegno Sociale):** An economic subsidy intended for Italian and foreign citizens with economic difficulties and low income, according to the INPS.
- **Caritas aid:** Caritas provides fortnightly food aid, lunches and dinners, and accommodation to homeless people on low incomes.
- **Housing Assistance:** Housing assistance programmes are available, especially for people on low incomes or in vulnerable situations.

Other Services:

- **Emergency Services:** 112 is the European emergency number that can be used to request help in an emergency.
- **Consular Social Assistance:** Consulates in your country can provide help if you are experiencing a momentary difficulty.

- **Assistance to Foreigners:** Social services are available for foreigners, including support for job search, social integration and legal assistance.
- **Online advice:** VivirEnEuropa.eu offers online advice on various topics such as INAIL management, NASPI application, recognition of diplomas and driving licence conversion.

For non-European citizens:

In Italy, non-European migrants have access to a wide range of health and social services, both through the government and non-governmental organisations. These services include medical assistance, legal support, guidance for accessing the labour market, accommodation and psychological support.

Key social services:

- **Health services:** Non-European migrants can access health services through the Italian National Health System, which provides free or low-cost health care. This requires registration and a residence permit or a temporary entry permit.
- **Legal aid:** There is a network of organisations that offer legal support to migrants, including advice on migration rights, international protection and access to justice. These organisations are often funded by government or international organisations.
- **Job counselling:** Job counselling services are offered to migrants, which may include vocational training, support in finding work and advice on Italian labour laws.
- **Accommodation:** In emergency situations, migrants can access reception centres that offer temporary accommodation and basic assistance.
- **Psychological support:** Psychological support services are offered to migrants, especially those who have experienced trauma or difficult situations during their journey.

RESIDENCE AND WORK REGULATIONS IN ITALY

European citizens:

The European Union's principle of free movement grants EU nationals the right to live and work in Italy without a visa or work permit. All you need is a valid passport or national identity card. You will need to register with the local authorities, obtain a Certificate of Residence (Certificato di Residenza) at the local Anagrafe office or at the Comune (Comune).

To access health care you must register with the Italian National Health Service (Servizio Sanitario Nazionale - SSN) and to fulfil your tax obligations you will need to obtain a Tax Identification Number (Codice Fiscale) from the local Tax Office (Agenzia delle Entrate).

Non-European citizens:

For non-EU citizens, Italy's entry for employment purposes is regulated by Legislative Decree No 286/1998 and Presidential Decree No 394/1999, which establish that non-EU workers may enter Italy only within the annual quotas provided for by the so-called *Decreti Flussi* (Flow Decrees), except in special cases outside the quotas.

You need an employer in Italy willing to promote your visa application so that you can apply for it. There are different types of visas depending on the type of employment and its duration:

- **Seasonal work visa:** For seasonal work in sectors such as agriculture and tourism. 44,000 visas are allocated for this category, mainly for nationals of countries with cooperation agreements with Italy.
- **Non-seasonal work visa:** For non-seasonal work in sectors such as construction, tourism, telecommunications and mechanics. 30,105 visas are allocated for this category.

- **Self-employed visa:** For entrepreneurs, self-employed, start-ups, professionals and artists. 500 visas are allocated for this category.
- **Long-stay or national (D visa):** This is a general work visa that allows workers to enter Italy. It is also the one you should apply for if you want to study for more than 3 months in Italy. If you wish to work during your studies, you must apply for a work permit.

Applying for a residence permit: Within eight days of your arrival, apply for a "Permesso di Soggiorno" (residence permit). Go to the local police station (Questura) in your area with all the necessary documents, including a valid passport, visa, work contract or proof of studies, proof of accommodation, health insurance and financial means.

For more information on migration and regulations for EU, non-EU and refugee migrants, please follow the links below:

<https://www.interno.gov.it/it/temi/immigrazione-e-asilo>

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF FOREIGNERS IN LITHUANIA

In Lithuania, the rights and obligations of migrants are regulated (as in Spain and Italy) by a set of legal rules that establish important differences between European (EU/EEA) citizens and non-EU (non-European) citizens.

- For European citizens and their family members, Directive 2004/38/EC guarantees the right to free movement, residence and work, as well as full access to healthcare, education and participation in municipal and European elections
- For non-EU nationals, the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens of the Republic of Lithuania (*liet. Lietuvos Respublikos įstatymas dėl užsieniečių teisinės padėties*) sets specific requirements for obtaining residence and work permits, entry quotas, family reunification and access to social and health services. Political participation is

restricted, and obtaining citizenship requires long periods of legal residence and additional requirements.

- The rules on asylum and international protection are based on the Geneva Convention, EU asylum acquis and Lithuanian national procedures, which are applicable to those seeking refuge and subsidiary protection are granted specific rights and obligations during their stay in Lithuania.



The main differences lie in the ease of entry and residence for EU citizens, while non-EU nationals face additional requirements, entry quotas, and restrictions on political rights. Both groups must fulfil fiscal and social obligations, and can access basic services and justice, albeit under different conditions.

Comparison of rights in Lithuania for European and non-European citizens:

Aspect	European Citizens (EU/EEA)	Foreigners non-EU nationals
Entrance and stay	Free movement, without visa – Can stay up to 3 months without registration; after that, must apply for a certificate of residence	Visa and permit requirements

Residence permit	Certificate of residence (for stays > 3 months), valid up to 5 years	Required; can be temporary or permanent (after 5 years)
Work	Full access to the labour market without permit, under Directive 2004/38/EC	Work permit/residence/work approval required, depending on status; must comply with quotas and sectors regulations
Health	Access to national healthcare via EHIC or national insurance	Access if insured (employed, permanent resident, family member of professional); emergency care always available; as of July 2024, non-EU spouses included in national insurance
Education	Free access to national education system under equal conditions	Access guaranteed according to permit and status; schooling available, even for permit irregular migrants in some cases
Social services	Full social welfare access after 3 months of legal residence/permanent residence	Limited; access depends on legal status and residence conditions; emergency and basic services provided
Political participation	Can vote & stand in local and European Parliament elections; cannot vote in	No political rights

	national (Seimas, presidential)	
Family reunification	Family members receive a residence card freely under Directive 2004/38/EC	Specific requirements
Access to nationality	After 7 years (reduction due to marriage or offspring) does not allow dual citizenship	Stricter requirements after 10 years
Expulsion	Only for serious reasons	Possible for irregularity

Comparison of obligations between Europeans and non-EU citizens:

Aspect	European Citizens (EU/EEA)	Foreigners non-EU nationals
Law enforcement	Respect Lithuanian laws and Constitution	Respect Lithuanian laws and Constitution
Register	Mandatory > 3 months	Mandatory with legal residence
Residence and work permit	Registration only	Compulsory permit

Declaration of changes	Notifying changes of residence	Report changes
Political participation	Local/European elections	No political rights
Tax obligations	Payment of taxes	Payment of taxes
Social security	Compulsory contribution	Compulsory contribution
Health insurance	Mandatory for long-term residence	Mandatory with valid permit
Family reunification	Notifying and regularising family members	Income and accommodation requirements

ACCESS TO THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN LITHUANIA

Lithuania has a universal health care system, financed mainly by taxes and compulsory social security contributions.

While many services are free to insured residents, such as primary care and hospital treatments, some require co-payments. In addition, certain medications and elective surgeries may have out-of-pocket costs.

Uninsured persons, including some foreigners without valid residence status, are entitled to emergency medical care only, while full access to the system requires valid health insurance coverage.

Access to the health system as a European migrant:

Access to the health care system in Lithuania for European migrants (EU/EEA/Switzerland citizens) depends on the reason for their stay and their status (temporary or registered resident).

Short stays (up to 90 days)

If you are an EU citizen and you are in Lithuania as a **tourist or temporary visitor**:

- You can receive **necessary or urgent medical care** with the **European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)**. You do not need to register with the Lithuanian health system.
- The EHIC covers public services **on the same basis** as for Lithuanians, but **does not cover private treatment and repatriation**.

Long stay or residence (more than 90 days)

If you plan to live, work or study in Lithuania for more than 3 months: You must **register as a resident** (EU citizen) and in some cases meet specific conditions to have full access to the health care system.

Common documents required

- European Health Insurance Card (for short visits).
- EU citizen's residence certificate (if you live in the EU for more than 90 days).
- Lithuanian personal number (compulsory for access to state services).
- Proof of employment, education or insurance.

As a **European Student** you can use the European Health Insurance Card to be covered in Spain, however, the EHIC would not cover you in case of repatriation due to accident or death or if you need private health services, such as a dentist or ophthalmologist. To be

covered 100%, you will need to take out private medical insurance, which will offer other cover such as liability or luggage insurance.

Access to the health system as a non-European migrant:

Access to the health care system in Lithuania for non-European migrants (from outside the EU/EEA/Switzerland) depends on the type of residence permit, activity in the country and employment or educational status.

1. Migrants with temporary residence permit for work: If you are legally employed in Lithuania, your employer is obliged to pay for your health insurance (PSDF: National Health Insurance Fund) and affiliate your children or dependents.

2. Migrants with a temporary residence permit for study purposes: You must take out private insurance or voluntarily pay into the public system.

3. Non-active migrants (for family reunification or other reasons): You must prove that you have valid health insurance (private or paid to the public system) when applying for a residence permit.

4. Asylum seekers and refugees: You have the right to: Basic medical care, emergency medical care, initial medical examinations and essential medicines. If you receive refugee or subsidiary protection status, you get access to the system like any legal resident.

Common documentation required for access to the public health system

- Valid residence permit.
- Employment contract or academic registration (as the case may be).
- Lithuanian personal number (mandatory for official registrations).
- Proof of insurance affiliation (public or private).

ACCESS TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN LITHUANIA

Primary and secondary education in Lithuania is free of charge regardless of nationality. They have the right to join a class corresponding to their age group and educational level, and can receive free Lithuanian language classes to facilitate their integration.

For European migrants:

In higher education as a European, they have the right to study in Lithuania on equal terms with Lithuanian citizens. This includes access to bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes, as well as exchange programmes such as Erasmus+. In addition, you can benefit from scholarships and financial aid available to EU students for higher education.

Remember that, to study in Lithuania for more than 90 days, although you do not need a visa, you are required to have a residence permit in the country and to have health insurance (public through the TSE or private).

For non-European migrants:

As we have seen, primary and secondary education (from 6 to 16 years old) is free and compulsory in Lithuania. As a migrant you can access it with the same rights as any Lithuanian. In addition, there are integration programmes (language classes, etc... to facilitate integration).

Higher education (universities and technical studies)

If you wish to pursue higher education studies in Lithuania, such as bachelor's, master's or doctoral programmes, you must meet the following requirements:

1. **Admission to a recognised educational institution:** You must be accepted to an accredited university or higher education institution in Lithuania.
2. **National visa type D:** This visa allows you to enter and stay in Lithuania for up to one year for study purposes. You must apply for it at the Lithuanian embassy or consulate in your home country.

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3. **Temporary residence permit:** If your studies last more than one year, you must apply for a temporary residence permit through the Lithuanian Migration Information System (MIGRIS). This permit can be renewed according to the duration of your studies.

The required documents include:

- Valid passport
- Letter of admission from the educational institution
- Proof of sufficient financial resources.
- Valid health insurance
- Proof of accommodation in Lithuania

It is important to start these procedures well in advance, as the process of obtaining a visa and residence permit can take several weeks.

Recognition or recognition of diplomas in Lithuania

Emigrant citizens travelling to Lithuania for work or study purposes must undergo a procedure of recognition of their foreign qualifications. Qualification recognition procedures are governed by international and national legal regulations.

In the recognition of a qualification acquired in a foreign state, two types of recognition can be distinguished: academic recognition and professional recognition.

Academic recognition is an assessment of a qualification in an academic aspect, i.e. it establishes whether the qualification conforms to the requirements set for the relevant qualification in Lithuania.

Professional recognition is an assessment of a qualification in a professional aspect, i.e. it establishes whether the qualification conforms to the requirements set for the relevant professional activities in Lithuania.

In Lithuania, several institutions are involved in the academic recognition of qualifications. The choice of an institution depends on the level of studies acquired and the career objective.

ACCESS TO SOCIAL SERVICES IN LITHUANIA

Social services for migrants include among others:

They include:

- Financial assistance for people on low incomes.
- Family allowances (for children or dependency).
- Rental or social housing assistance.
- Access to childcare, community centres, social programmes.
- Services for the elderly, disabled or victims of violence.
- Integration programmes for migrants (language, employment, etc.).

Access for Europeans

Access to social services in Lithuania for European migrants (EU/EEA/Switzerland citizens) is guaranteed by Lithuanian legislation and EU rules, but it is not automatic: it depends on your residence status, employment situation and length of stay in the country.

You have access to social services if:

1. You work legally in Lithuania (employed or self-employed).
2. You are registered as an EU resident (more than 90 days in the country).
3. You pay taxes and contribute to the Lithuanian social security system.
4. You have permanent residence (after 5 years of continuous legal residence).

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5. You are an immediate family member of an EU citizen who fulfils the above conditions (children, partner, dependants).

Limited access if:

- You are looking for a job and you are not working yet.
- You are a student with no economic activity.
- You are economically inactive (e.g. retired), but you have health insurance and means of living.

In these cases, you might get some basic services, but not full financial benefits.

You do not have access if:

- You are not registered as a resident.
- You cannot demonstrate financial means or health coverage.
- You are in an irregular situation (more than 90 days without registration or means).

Documents needed to access social services

- EU citizen's residence certificate.
- Lithuanian personal number (similar to identity card).
- Employment contract or proof of economic activity.
- Declaration of income (for social benefits).
- Health insurance (public or valid private).
- Family documents if you are applying for child or dependent support.

Social services for non-European migrants

Access to **social services in Lithuania for non-European migrants** is **limited** and **depends on their migration, employment and legal residence status**. Non-European migrants **do not have automatic access** to state benefits.

Migrants with permanent or long-term residence (after 5 years of continuous legal residence):

They have **the same** access as **Lithuanian citizens**, including: child benefits, financial assistance in case of poverty, access to social housing and services for people with disabilities among others.

Migrants with temporary residence (work, study, regrouping):

- They do **NOT** have **general access** to state financial benefits.
- They may receive some **limited** services: attention in cases of social emergency, integration programmes (language courses, job orientation, domestic violence, etc...).

Refugees and asylum seekers:

- During the application process:
 - They receive **basic accommodation, food, medical and psychological assistance**.
 - Access to **education for children**.
 - Integration programmes.
- Whether they are granted asylum or subsidiary protection:
 - They have **full access to social services** as legal residents.
 - They can receive financial aid, social housing, language courses, etc.

Migrants in an irregular situation (without a valid residence permit), with a choir visa or international students without insurance or residence cannot receive public benefits, except in case of emergency or NGO intervention.

RESIDENCE AND WORK REGULATIONS IN LITHUANIA

For European migrants

As a citizen of the European Union (EU), you have the right to reside and work in Lithuania without a visa or work permit, under the freedom of movement and residence established by EU law.

If your stay will exceed three months, you must register as a resident with the local immigration office within one month of your arrival. To do this you will need:

- Valid identity card or passport
- Proof of employment, education or sufficient financial means.
- Valid medical insurance.
- Proof of accommodation in Lithuania.

This registration will allow you to obtain a certificate of residence that certifies your right to reside in the country.

For non-European migrants

Yes, as a non-EU (non-EU) citizen, you can legally reside and work in Lithuania, subject to the following regulations:

Types of permits to reside and work in Lithuania

I. National Visa type D: The student visa in Lithuania: allows international students to enter and stay in Lithuania to study, and also allows them to work part-time during their

studies. The duration of this visa is usually for a period of time similar to the duration of their studies.

The key features are:

- **Permission to work:** Non-EU students on this visa can work part-time while studying. Undergraduate students can work up to 20 hours per week, while Master's and PhD students can work full-time (up to 40 hours per week).
- **Residence permit:** After completing their studies, non-EU students can apply for a residence permit for job search and employment, or for self-employment, valid for 12 months.
- **Documents required for visa application:** Completed and signed visa application form, recent passport-size photos, valid passport, letter of admission from the university, proof of sufficient financial resources (150 EUR per month, e.g. bank statements), details of accommodation and address arrangements, flight itinerary including return flight and student health insurance.

2. Temporary Residence Permit (TRP)

If you plan to reside and work in Lithuania for more than one year, you will need to apply for a TRP, which is usually issued for a period of 1 to 2 years and is renewable. This permit authorises you to reside and work in the country for the duration of its validity.

3. EU Blue Card

Designed for highly qualified professionals, the Blue Card allows to reside and work in Lithuania under simplified conditions. It requires a job offer with a minimum duration of one year and a salary that exceeds 50% of the national average gross salary.

Requirements for non-European migrants to work in Lithuania

- **Job offer:** You must have a valid job offer from a Lithuanian employer.

- **Work permit:** The employer must apply for a work permit (PRT) on your behalf with the Lithuanian Employment Service. This permit is generally valid for one year.
- **Visa or residence permit:** Once you have obtained a work permit, you will need to apply for a national visa type D or a PRT, depending on the length of your stay.
- **Additional documentation:** Valid passport, proof of professional qualifications, health insurance and proof of sufficient financial means are required.

Process to be able to work:

1. **Job offer:** Get a job offer from an employer in Lithuania.
2. **Work permit:** The employer applies to the Employment Service for a work permit.
3. **Visa or TRP application:** With the approved work permit, apply for the national type D visa or TRP at the Lithuanian embassy or consulate in your country of residence.
4. **Registration in Lithuania:** Upon arrival, register your residence and start your employment in accordance with the current regulations.

If you want more details you can visit:

www.migracija.lt or more information on visas: <https://www.globalization-partners.com>

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF FOREIGNERS IN SPAIN

European citizens

European citizens in Spain have rights such as freedom of movement, residence and work, as well as political participation in municipal and European elections. They also have obligations, such as respecting the law, paying taxes and cooperating with the authorities.



For **citizens of the European Union (EU)**, the **European Economic Area (EEA)** and **Switzerland**, there are specific and distinct regulations establishing their rights of entry, residence and movement:

Regulations applicable to EU citizens (EU/EEA/Switzerland)

- Directive 2004/38/EC, known as the Free Movement Directive, regulates the rights of EU citizens and their family members to enter, reside and move freely within the Member States.
- In Spain, this directive has been transposed into national law by Royal Decree 240/2007, which regulates the entry, free movement, residence and family reunification of EU and EEA citizens.
- EU citizens do not need a residence permit in the strict sense, but are registered as EU residents if they stay for more than 3 months.

Non-European citizens

Organic Law 4/2000 (LOEX) is mainly aimed at regulating the rights, duties and administrative status of **non-EU foreigners**, i.e. **third-country nationals** (non-EU nationals).

Rights of immigrants from outside the EU (LOEX) and EU immigrants (Royal Decree 240/2007).

Aspect	Foreigners from outside the EU (LOEX)	Community Citizens (Royal Decree 240/2007)
Applicable regulations	Organic Law 4/2000 and corresponding regulations	Directive 2004/38/EC + Royal Decree 240/2007
Residence permit	Visa application and authorisation required	Registration as an EU resident (green NIE)
Access to work	Work permit required	Free access to the labour market
Family reunification	More restrictive, with requirements	More flexible, under the principle of free movement
Expulsion	Possible due to irregular stay or other reasons	Only for serious and justified reasons

OBLIGATIONS

Obligations of EU Citizens and Non-EU Foreigners in Spain

Aspect	Community Citizens (EU/EEA)	Non-EU Foreigners (LOEX)
Law enforcement	Respect laws and the Spanish Constitution.	Respect laws and the Spanish Constitution.

Registration / Enrolment	Compulsory for residence of more than 3 months.	Mandatory with legal residence.
Residence and work permits	No registration is required.	Compulsory for residence and work.
Declaration of changes	Notify changes of residence.	Notify changes of residence.
Political participation	Limited right to local and European elections.	No political rights.
Tax obligations	Tax payment and tax compliance.	Tax payment and tax compliance.
Other obligations	Contribute to social security, health insurance.	Contribute to social security, health insurance.

RIGHT OF ACCESS TO THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM IN SPAIN

In Spain, immigrants have the right to access health, education and social welfare services, although legal status may influence the extent of these rights. In general, legally resident immigrants enjoy the same rights as Spanish citizens in terms of health, education and social services.

ACCESS TO THE HEALTH SYSTEM IN SPAIN

The Spanish public health system is universal and generally available to all residents, regardless of their nationality.

European citizens

European citizens are entitled to healthcare in Spain, especially if they are insured in their country of origin and have the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The EHIC allows access to public health services in Spain, under the same conditions as Spanish citizens. If they do not have the EHIC, they can apply for it in their country of origin.

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is a personal, non-transferable and free document that entitles you to receive health services during a temporary stay in any country of the European Union, the European Economic Area (Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland) and Switzerland.

As a **European Student** you can use the European Health Insurance Card to be covered in Spain, however, the EHIC would not cover you in case of repatriation due to accident or death or if you need private health services, such as a dentist or ophthalmologist. To be covered 100%, you will need to take out private medical insurance, which will offer other cover such as liability or luggage insurance.

Non-European citizens

- **Legal residence:**

Immigrants with legal residence are entitled to free medical care, just like Spanish citizens.

- **Without legal residence:**

Although migrants without legal residence may have limited access to health care, care is guaranteed in cases of emergency, pregnancy, serious illness, or for those who have been registered for at least six months.

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- If you are arriving as a **student** from a country outside the European Union and this country does not have a health agreement with Spain, you must take out a private medical insurance policy to cover medical, hospital or repatriation expenses for medical reasons during your stay, at the time of applying for the visa.

How to access the health system in Spain:

To obtain a health card in Spain, it is essential to follow a structured process:

- **Empadronamiento:** Empadronamiento is a registration that certifies your residence in a specific locality.
- **Documentation:** You need to present documents proving your legal status in the country. This may include your residence permit, student visa, passport and other relevant documents.
- **Application at the Health Centre:** Once you have all the documentation, you must go to the health centre that corresponds to your address. There, you must fill in the corresponding form and, after review and approval, you will be issued with a health card.

ACCESS TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SPAIN

Compulsory education:

In Spain, access to education for foreigners, especially for children and young people (up to



the age of 18), is guaranteed by law and is universal. All children and young people, regardless of their migration status, have the right to access free and compulsory basic education.

Post-compulsory education:

All foreign minors and resident foreigners over 18 years of age have the right to access post-compulsory educational stages, to obtain the corresponding qualifications and to scholarships and grants under the same conditions as Spaniards.

Therefore, if you are a migrant or refugee and wish to continue your post-compulsory education outside your country of origin, you can access any level of the Spanish education system, as long as you meet the academic requirements for access:

Depending on your personal circumstances or your country of origin, you will have to carry out a series of procedures to be able to study in Spain.

EU migrant

If you are a European citizen, you can study in Spain without having to apply for any authorisation and without any time limit. However, depending on the educational centre and on the type of studies you want to do, you will need to meet a series of requirements, for example, accredit previous studies, prove your knowledge of the language (Spanish or a co-official language in those communities that have it) or take certain admission tests. You

should also bear in mind that if you are going to study for more than 3 months you must obtain a foreigner's identity card (TIE).

Migrant from outside the EU

To study in Spain from a non-EU country, you must take into account the type of visa you have applied for to enter the country. You must also comply with the requirements for the type of studies you wish to undertake (recognition of qualifications, language skills, etc.). The general requirements are:

- Letter of admission from an educational establishment in Spain.
- Compulsory health insurance (minimum €30,000, no co-payments or deductibles).
- Proof of accommodation (contract, property, residence or invitation).
- Registration in the corresponding Town Hall.
- Valid passport.
- NIE and TIE (foreigner's identity number and card).
- Proof of funds (minimum €600/month, grant or loan).
- Certificates of good health and criminal record.

You will need to apply for a student visa at your country's embassy if your stay is longer than 3 months. You can apply for three types of visa: Schengen Visa (short stay), Study Visa (more than 6 months, allows you to work up to 30 hours/week) or Non-profit Residence (more complex, but also valid for study).

In order to apply for a study visa (more than 6 months), a medical and criminal record certificate and the school's letter of admission must be submitted.

Migrant without documentation: In case you do not have the necessary documentation to reside in the country, you will not be able to access post-compulsory studies unless you are a minor.

Refugee or asylum seeker

If you are residing in Spain as a refugee, you can access any type of post-compulsory education without any problem, as long as you fulfil the corresponding requirements, such as homologating your previous qualifications or passing one or more entrance exams (EBAU).

Homologation of studies

If you have previous studies from a different education system than the Spanish one, you may need to have your degree recognised to gain access to a higher level of education. There is no automatic recognition of qualifications in the EU - each country has its own procedure. This procedure is often complex and time-consuming, so you should plan ahead. Recognition of studies in Spain requires legalising and translating the documents, submitting the application to the relevant ministry and following the processing and resolution process.

Where to apply:

- **University degrees:** Through the electronic headquarters of the Ministry of Universities.
- **Non-university degrees:** At the General Registry of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, at the Information and Registry Offices of the Government Delegations/Subdelegations, or at the General Registries of the diplomatic representations of Spain abroad.

ACCESS TO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE IN SPAIN

For European citizens:

In Spain, European citizens can access social services similar to those offered to Spanish citizens. These services include primary care, health, social assistance, and access to economic and employment support programmes, among others.

Primary Care Social Services and Social Assistance:

- **Primary Social Services Centres:** Primary social care is the first level of care in social services and is offered in the municipalities. To find the nearest centre, you can contact your local council.
- **Dependency Care Services:** Care for elderly or disabled people who require care is the responsibility of the Autonomous Communities. These services may include support at home, day centres, residences, among others.
- **Child and Family Care:** Child protection services, family support programmes and intervention services for the prevention and solution of family problems are offered.
- **Support in Critical Situations:** Social services also cater for people in crisis situations such as gender-based violence, homelessness, addictions or loss of income.
- **Public Health System:** European citizens can access medical care in the public health system, as long as they meet the requirements of legal residence in Spain. The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is a document that facilitates access to healthcare in other EU countries.
- **Economic and Employment Support Programmes:** such as unemployment benefits, social assistance (scholarships, housing support programmes).
- **European Social Fund Plus (ESF+):** ESF+ is an EU programme that funds projects promoting employment, education, training and social inclusion in all Member States, including Spain.

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- **EURES:** The European Employment Services network helps European citizens find jobs in other EU countries.

For non-European citizens:

Non-EU students in Spain can have access to social services under the same conditions as Spaniards as long as they meet the requirements of legal residence and registration in a Spanish municipality. Access to social services and social security also depends on the type of activity (studies, paid internships, etc.) and the legal status of the student.

In addition, in Spain, various social services for migrants are offered, including a wide range of benefits and organisations that help migrants in various situations, from their arrival in Spain to their integration into society.

- **Humanitarian Care:**
 - **Shelter Service:** Accommodation and food, basic toiletries and personal hygiene, clothing, footwear and a first aid kit, basic health care, orientation and social, civic, health and legal support.
 - **Humanitarian Attention Programme:** Managed by the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration, to meet the basic needs of migrants in an irregular situation.
- **Medical care:** Access to public health care, the same as for Spanish citizens.
- **Support for Social Integration:**
 - **International Protection Reception System:** Accompaniment in the acquisition of autonomy and social integration.

- **Social and Labour Integration Programmes:** Offered by organisations such as CEAR, which include support in accessing the labour market and training programmes.
- **Legal support:** Legal advice on migration issues, asylum, etc., provided by organisations such as CEAR and ACCEM.
- **Other Services:**
 - **Economic Aid:** To cover basic needs or to return to their country of origin, managed by the Ministry of Inclusion.
 - **Education Services:** Access to public education, like health care, the same as for Spanish citizens.
 - **Specialised Services:** Care centres for seasonal workers, aimed at people who travel to work in the olive harvest, for example.

RESIDENCE AND WORK REGULATIONS IN SPAIN

Residence and work for European citizens:

EU citizens have the right to reside and work in Spain. Registration in the Central Register of Foreigners is only required after three months of stay (NIE). This registration is done at the Oficina de Extranjeros and a registration certificate is obtained. After this registration, a certificate of registration is issued to certify legal residence. Remember that you will also have to register with the social security and health service.

Residence and Work for non-European citizens:

In order to be able to reside and work in Spain legally, citizens of other (non-EU) countries usually need a residence and work permit.

There are different types of authorisations, depending on the type of work, duration and particular circumstances. The requirements for obtaining a residence and work permit may vary, but generally include:

- Be over 16 years of age.
- Hold a valid visa for entry into Spain.
- Proof of the existence of an employment contract or the capacity to exercise a self-employed activity.
- Proof of compliance with the specific requirements of the work activity to be carried out.
- No criminal record.

Types of authorisation:

- Autorización de residencia temporal y trabajo por cuenta ajena: Allows you to work for a company.
- Authorisation for temporary residence and self-employment: Allows self-employment, as a freelancer or entrepreneur.
- Authorisation for temporary residence and work for seasonal activities: Allows you to work in sectors with temporary demand, such as agriculture or the hotel and catering industry.
- Residence permits for studies: It facilitates the reconciliation between learning and work, allowing you to work up to 30 hours per week during your studies.
- Residence permits for family reunification: Allows family members of Spanish citizens or foreigners resident in Spain to obtain a residence permit.

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- Residence permits for social, socio-occupational or second-chance roots:
Allows the regularisation of the situation of foreigners who are already in Spain and meet certain requirements.

All regulations for EU, non-EU and refugee migrants can be visited at the following link:
https://www.boe.es/biblioteca_juridica/codigos/codigo.php?id=70&modo=2¬a=0&tab=2

4. LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITIONS.

INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITIONS. LOCAL FESTIVALS AND CELEBRATIONS. ETIQUETTE AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE COMMUNITY.

In a context of increasing international student mobility, cultural adaptation has become a key process for foreign students. This adaptation involves both a psychological component - such as emotional well-being - and a socio-cultural one, related to the acquisition of skills and norms necessary to function in the new society. However, this process is often accompanied by acculturation stress, stemming from the clash between different cultural values, customs and expectations.

The successful integration of foreign students depends on multiple factors: intrinsic motivation, language proficiency, support networks, personal characteristics of the student and, especially, the cultural openness of the host country. Despite progress, there is still a need to develop programmes that facilitate this process and enhance the academic and personal experience of those studying abroad.

In this sense, local culture and traditions play a fundamental role in integration. Knowing, respecting and participating in them - whether through language, customs or cultural events - not only facilitates adaptation, but also strengthens the migrant's sense of belonging. Each country has a unique cultural richness, reflecting its history, values and ways of life. By getting closer to these traditions, students not only better understand their environment, but also connect with the people and communities around them.

LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITIONS IN ITALY

Introduction to local culture and traditions

Italy is a country with a great geographical and cultural diversity that varies from region to region (Tuscany, Sicily, Lombardy, Veneto, etc...). You can find everything from majestic mountains such as the Alps and Apennines to fertile plains, golden coastlines and historic cities full of art and architecture.

Italian culture is the result of thousands of years of history and the different civilisations that have left their mark on the territory: Etruscans, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Lombards and Normans, among others. This is reflected in a vast cultural legacy that encompasses architecture, art, music, literature and traditions. Each Italian region preserves its own identity, traditions and, in many cases, its own dialects, such as Neapolitan, Sicilian or Veneto. On the other hand, the Catholic religion has had a profound influence on Italian culture, with numerous religious festivals, celebrations and deeply rooted customs. The Mediterranean climate, with mild winters and warm summers, has influenced the Italian way of life, which is often characterised by a relaxed pace, with social gatherings and family togetherness a priority. Meal times are marked by tradition: lunch is a central moment, around 12:30-14:00, and dinner is usually served from 19:30-21:00.

Italians are known for their friendliness and approachability, showing an ease of conversation. Social life is vibrant, with frequent gatherings in piazzas, cafés, markets and trattorias, underlining the importance of personal relationships in Italian culture. Gastronomy and the sharing of food are an essential part of everyday life. It is common to enjoy long, lively meals, where everything from an aperitif to a final espresso is shared.

Both the family and the community are fundamental pillars of Italian society, providing support, identity and a strong network of affection.

Local festivals and celebrations

Italy is world famous for its love of celebrations, reflecting the joyful and lively character of its people. Each region and locality have its own festivals (e.g. Carnival in Venice, Palio di Siena, Festa di San Gennaro in Naples), with deep roots and a particular style reflecting the local identity.

Throughout the year there are countless celebrations, starting with Christmas and the magical Befana (the night of 5-6 January, when the good witch brings sweets to children). In February, Carnivals fill the streets with masks, parades and colours, especially in Venice and



Carnival of Venice

Viareggio. Easter is a very important religious holiday in Italy (especially in Sicily, Puglia and Rome). The Feast of the Republic on 2 June with official events and military parades. In summer, patronal feasts and sagras (local gastronomic festivals) are common, such as the Festa del

Redentore in Venice or the Festa

della Madonna Bruna in Matera. Other emblematic celebrations include the Palio in Siena and Ferragosto, and the numerous grape harvests and gastronomic festivals that spread throughout the peninsula.

In short, Italy is a country where tradition and culture are intrinsically linked, creating a unique and enriching atmosphere. Celebrations, family customs, art, music, gastronomy and social life are key aspects that define the Italian identity.

Etiquette and social behaviour in the community

In Italy, etiquette and social behaviour combine tradition, courtesy and hospitality. Although customs vary from region to region, there are general rules:

- **Common greeting and introduction:** It is common to greet with a handshake or by kissing the person on the cheek (sometimes kissing twice, starting with the left). The "tu" is used in informal situations and "Lei" (you) in formal settings or with older people.
- **Punctuality:** Punctuality is valued and it is advisable to report any delays.
- **Communication:** Speech is expressive and close, accompanying words with characteristic hand gestures. Conversation is important and people are expected to express themselves with passion.
- **Personal space:** In Italy, less physical distance is tolerated during informal conversations. Flirting is a natural part of Italian culture.
- **Dining etiquette:** Dining is a central event. Care at the table is valued, from the correct use of cutlery to the choice of wine. It is common to share dishes with family or friends, and lively conversation during meals is appreciated.
- **Dress Etiquette:** A great deal of importance is placed on personal care and fashion. Dress is usually elegant and appropriate to the occasion, with a preference for quality and style.
- **Respect for religious and local customs:** In religious festivities (processions, masses, patron saints), respect and discreet participation are expected. It is recommended to avoid behaviour that could be interpreted as disrespectful to faith or local traditions.
- **Respect for regional diversity:** Italy is a country with a strong regional identity. It is advisable to show interest and respect for local differences. In Italy, regional pride

coexists with a sense of national unity, and respect for this plurality is a sign of courtesy and openness.

North Sardinia: Tempio Pausania

History, Heritage and Culture of Northern Sardinia: The northern part of Sardinia is a region rich in traditions, history and culture, with roots in a millenary past in which the influences of the Nuragic, Phoenicians, Romans and other peoples who have crossed the island over the centuries are interwoven. This territory, overlooking the Sardinian Sea, stands out not only for its breathtaking natural beauty, but also for the vitality of its traditions and customs. The archaeological heritage, with the famous nuraghi and the Domus de Janas, reveals the ancient roots of the Sardinian civilisation, captivating every visitor with its mysterious beauty. Traditional music, including "canto a tenore" and polyphonic singing, fills the squares and festivals, while craft traditions, such as pottery and textile work, remain an important economic and cultural resource.

The towns and villages of northern Sardinia, such as Olbia, Tempio and Sassari, are vibrant centres where local culture is expressed through language, music, crafts and gastronomy.

Culture and customs of Tempio Pausania: located in the heart of northern Sardinia, Tempio Pausania is a town rich in traditions and culture that reflect the island's deep historical roots. Known for its impressive granite architecture, the town combines natural beauty with a strong sense of local identity.

The culture of Tempio Pausania is deeply tied to its pastoral and agricultural heritage, with a focus on handicrafts, especially the production of granite work and woven items such as baskets and carpets.

When visiting Tempio Pausania, you can expect a combination of warmth and reserve in local social behaviour. Sardinians are generally friendly, but tend to be more reserved at first, offering polite greetings such as "Ciao" or "Buongiorno". People value respect and personal space, and interactions tend to be polite but not overly familiar right away.

Dress etiquette: In terms of dress, it is important to dress neatly, especially on formal occasions such as weddings or religious ceremonies. Sardinians take pride in their appearance, so dressing appropriately is a sign of respect for local customs. On less formal occasions, people dress casually but with a certain style, making sure they look presentable.

Respect for local cultural traditions and customs is essential. Sardinia is deeply rooted in its history, and participating in festivals or religious events requires sensitivity to local practices. Family plays a central role in Sardinian life, and gatherings are often intimate, so if you're invited to a family home, it's considered a special honour. Small villages like Tempio Pausania have strong community ties, where many people know each other well and interactions can feel personal and communal.

Finally, the **natural environment** is something the locals value deeply. It is important to respect the beauty of the landscape and follow ecological practices to preserve the environment.

Local festivals and events: The city also holds a variety of events or festivals throughout the year, creating a lively atmosphere for residents and visitors alike.

Some of the main ones are:

- The "Festival of Music and Romantic Night", which takes place on the first day of summer.
- On the first weekend of September, Tempio celebrates St. Isidro Labrador, a symbolic figure of agricultural roots and an emblem of community spirit and humble devotion.
- Every year, at the end of August, a day is celebrated in honour of the patron saints of the town of Tempio: St. Paul the Hermit and the Blessed Virgin of Buoncammino.

The Tempio Carnival is one of the biggest events in Sardinia, combining religiosity and folklore, celebrating the local identity with joy and community spirit. The carnival stands out

for its typical masks and costumes, among the most representative characters are the "Mammutones" and the "Issohadores"

LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITIONS IN LITHUANIA

Introduction to local culture and traditions

Lithuania is a country located in northern Europe, bathed by the Baltic Sea, with a diverse landscape combining vast forests, crystal-clear lakes and rolling hills. Despite being a relatively small territory, Lithuania has a rich and complex history that has left a deep imprint on its culture and traditions.

Lithuanian culture has been forged through the interplay of Baltic, Slavic, Germanic and Scandinavian influences, in addition to its deep pre-Christian pagan heritage. This heritage is evident in its traditional architecture, handicrafts (particularly textiles and woodcarving), folk music and festivals that mix pagan and Christian elements.

Lithuania was one of the last European countries to adopt Christianity (in the late 14th century), and the influence of this conversion is still evident in the coexistence of religious festivals with ancient celebrations linked to nature and the cycles of the year.

The Lithuanian climate, characterised by long, cold winters and mild, pleasant summers, has influenced the lifestyle of its inhabitants, encouraging hospitality and community life. The seasons set the pace for cultural activities, with traditions especially lively during spring and summer.

Lithuanians are known for their reserved friendliness: although they may initially appear aloof, their manner is cordial and respectful. Personal relationships, especially with friends and family, are deeply valued, and the community plays an important role as a place of mutual support.

Lithuanian cuisine reflects the influences of its climate and history, with dishes consisting of potatoes, cereals and dairy products, such as the famous *cepelinai* (stuffed potato dumplings), *kugelis* (potato cake) or cold soups such as beetroot *šaltibarščiai*. Sharing homemade food and drink, especially during festivities and family gatherings, is an essential custom.

Local festivals and celebrations

Lithuania is known for its rich festivities, which combine pagan and Christian heritages with local events full of music, dance, food and rituals.

The year begins with Christian celebrations such as Christmas (25 December), which in Lithuania is characterised by the traditional Christmas Eve dinner (*Kūčios*), consisting of 12



Margučiai

vegetarian dishes symbolising the months of the year and a connection to the earth. At Easter (*Velykos*), in addition to religious services, Easter eggs (*margučiai*) are decorated with intricate designs.

The summer solstice, known as *Joninė*, is an ancient pagan celebration held on 23 June. On the

shortest night of the year, people light bonfires, sing songs and jump over the fire, and search for magical "fern flowers".

The autumn is marked by All Souls' Day (1 November), when families visit cemeteries to light candles and remember their loved ones.

February is marked by *Užgavėnės*, a vibrant carnival full of traditional masks, song and dance, celebrating the arrival of spring. Pancakes and other traditional dishes are prepared, while the evils of winter are chased away.

Throughout the year, each Lithuanian region also preserves local celebrations with folklore roots, such as craft fairs (*Kaziuko mugė* in Vilnius) and traditional music and dance festivals.

Etiquette and social behaviour in the community

In Lithuania, the rules of etiquette and social behaviour are governed by a balance of tradition, respect and discretion. Although Lithuanians tend to be reserved, they show warmth and hospitality once trust is established.

- **Common greeting and introduction:** A firm handshake and direct eye contact symbolise sincerity and trust. It is also recommended to say 'Labas' (Hello). In informal meetings between close friends, brief hugs can be given.
- **Punctuality:** Punctuality is highly valued in Lithuania, being late is not only seen as tardiness but also as a lack of respect for the other person's time.
- **Communication:** Lithuanians usually speak in a calm and unobtrusive tone. Although they may seem introverted at first, they open up over time. Clarity and frankness are valued, avoiding interruptions.
- **Personal space:** Lithuanians tend to keep a safe distance; it is common to keep personal emotions hidden for privacy.
- **Etiquette at meals:** It is customary to wait for the host's invitation to begin eating. Table manners are formal, and all food served is expected to be eaten. Toasts are important, especially with vodka or beer, and are usually accompanied by good wishes.
- **Dress:** Appearance is taken care of, especially at formal events. On a day-to-day basis, clothing is usually functional and adapted to the climate.
- **Respect for religious and local customs:** Respectful behaviour is expected at religious events and at cemeteries. During traditional festivals, interest in local customs is appreciated.

- **Respect for diversity:** Although Lithuania is ethnically fairly homogeneous, courtesy and respect for cultural and linguistic differences are valued, especially with the Polish, Russian and Belarusian minorities.

Kaunas - Lithuania

Kaunas, located in south-central Lithuania, is the country's second largest city and a major historical, cultural and academic centre. On the banks of the Nemunas and Neris rivers, Kaunas has witnessed the political and social changes that have marked Lithuania's history, from medieval times to contemporary independence. Its atmosphere combines a rich heritage with a vibrant modern life.

- **Heritage and History:** Kaunas is noted for its well-preserved old town, with a mix of architectural styles including Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Art Nouveau. The Town Hall Square, is the heart of the city, surrounded by old houses and dominated by the Town Hall, known as the 'White Swan' for its elegant tower. Kaunas was the temporary capital of Lithuania between the two world wars, which left an Art Nouveau imprint visible in its European heritage-listed buildings.

The 14th-century Kaunas Castle is a symbol of resistance against attacks by the Teutonic Knights. The city is also home to historic churches such as St Peter and St Paul's and the Cathedral of St Michael the Archangel. In addition, Kaunas was an important centre of the Jewish community before World War II, with a history marked by the Holocaust that is remembered in the Nine Forts Museum.

- **Festivals and Celebrations:** Kaunas celebrates numerous festivals that reflect both Lithuanian traditions and modern history. Among the most notable are:

- The **Kaunas Jazz Festival**, one of the most important musical events in the country, brings together national and international artists.

- **Museum Night** in May, which opens the doors of museums and galleries to the public with night-time activities.
- **Lithuanian Independence Day** (16 February) and the **Restoration of Independence Day** (11 March), with parades and civic events.
- The **St. Casimir's Fair (Kaziuko mugė)**, which fills the town with handicrafts, traditional food and folklore activities.
- The **Joninės** (summer solstice) festivities are also celebrated in Kaunas, with bonfires, music and traditional rituals.

- **Art, Music and Social Life:** Kaunas was named **European Capital of 2022**, boosting its cultural profile with new exhibitions, events and creative projects. The city has a vibrant artistic life. Music, both classical and contemporary, plays a central role, with festivals and concerts throughout the year.

- **Local Customs:** The cafés, bars and terraces in the centre are regular meeting places to enjoy Lithuanian hospitality. Gatherings in the squares and the relaxed atmosphere of the city encourage social interaction. Lithuanians tend to value deep, lasting relationships over superficial exchanges, so while initial interactions may appear reserved, social bonds often strengthen over time through shared experiences such as meals, forest walks, or sauna visits. Home gatherings remain central, and being invited to someone's home is a strong sign of trust and connection. Guests are typically welcomed with food, drink, and great attention to hospitality—echoing the cultural emphasis on generosity and respect.

LOCAL CULTURE AND TRADITIONS IN SPAIN

Introduction to local culture and traditions

Spain is a country with a great geographical and cultural diversity that varies from region to region (Andalusia, Catalonia, Galicia, Basque Country, etc...). You can find everything from golden beaches to majestic mountains, from fertile plains to arid lands.

In Spain, you can find a rich and varied mix of cultures, a product of its long history and the different civilisations that have inhabited it. Spanish culture is a fusion of Celtic, Iberian, Roman, Visigothic, Arab and Jewish influences. This has left a rich cultural legacy in architecture, art, literature and traditions; where each Spanish region maintains its own culture or customs (dances, food, and even official languages such as Catalan or Basque).

On the other hand, the Catholic religion has had a great influence on Spanish culture, with religious festivities and traditions deeply rooted in the country.

Spain's climate, especially its long daylight hours, has influenced Spanish culture and schedules, creating a more relaxed lifestyle with longer breaks. Working hours tend to be later than in other European countries and lunchtime is an important time in Spanish culture, with a longer break, where people eat at 2-3pm and can enjoy the well-known "siesta".

Spaniards are open and friendly and easy to talk to. Social life is dynamic, with frequent meetings in squares, markets, bars, etc... demonstrating the importance of personal relationships to Spanish culture.

Gastronomy and sharing food (tapas, paellas, etc.) are part of everyday life. Often going out for tapas or sharing meals becomes a very popular social activity, where small dishes and drinks are enjoyed in the company of family or friends.

Both the family and the community are fundamental pillars for the development of individuals and society in Spain. The family provides the first social environment and affection, while the community offers a space for interaction, support and development.

Local festivals and celebrations

Spain is well known for its joyful character and love of fiesta. As mentioned above, each town has its own customs and local celebrations (e.g. San Isidro in Madrid, La Mercè in Barcelona), which are deeply rooted and unique to each locality, reflecting the identity and traditions of each community.

You won't get bored in Spain because there are so many popular festivals spread throughout the year that there is always an interesting date on the calendar. It all starts with the Christmas celebrations and the parades of the Three Wise Men who bring gifts to the children (on the night of January 5th). Normally in February come the colourful Carnivals (the most famous are those of Cadiz and Santa Cruz de Tenerife), in March there are the huge cardboard statues that burn in the Fallas in Valencia, around April the solemnity of Holy Week and the joy of the Feria de Abril and in summer (the time par excellence for fiestas in Spain) the Bonfires of San Juan, the traditional running of the bulls with San Fermín bulls or the Tomatina. Throughout the year there are more than 250 fiestas to choose from.

Etiquette and social behaviour in the community

In Spain, etiquette and social behaviour are marked by a combination of tradition, courtesy and hospitality. Although norms may vary slightly from region to region, some general rules and customs apply throughout the country.

- **Common greetings and introductions:** Shake hands (in a formal context), or two kisses on the cheek, starting with the left (in informal and trusting situations). "Tu" is used in informal contexts and "usted" in professional or more formal settings (e.g. with older people).

- **Punctuality:** While there is some flexibility in informal meetings, you may be 5-10 minutes late for an appointment with friends, punctuality is expected for professional appointments.
- **Communication:** You speak with expressiveness and closeness. There is a tendency to gesture and speak with enthusiasm. Eye contact is important, as it conveys confidence and sincerity.
- **Personal space:** Less than in other countries; more physical proximity is tolerated when talking, especially in informal encounters.
- **Etiquette at mealtimes:** In Spain, mealtimes are a key moment of socialising, sharing dishes is common. Politeness at the table and moderation in consumption are expected.
- **Dress:** Importance is given to personal care and appropriate dress, casual but neat in day-to-day life and a more sober style in the professional environment.
- **Respect for religious and local customs:** During processions or festivities, respect and silence are expected, avoiding attitudes or comments that may be offensive to participants or believers.
- **Respect for diversity:** Spain has great cultural and linguistic diversity, so it is advisable to show interest and respect for these differences: learn some words in the local language, take an interest in traditions, avoid clichés or stereotypes.

Granada - Andalusia

One of the most influential periods in shaping Spain's cultural diversity was the Muslim domination that began in 711 and lasted almost eight centuries. The Muslim presence, known as Al-Andalus, left a lasting legacy in architecture, gastronomy, music and cultural traditions in various Andalusian cities, including Granada.

Granada, situated at the foot of the Sierra Nevada, stands out as a symbol of this diversity, with a unique and vibrant identity.

Heritage and History: Granada is world famous for the Alhambra, a jewel of Islamic art and a World Heritage Site. The city preserves the Albaicín, a Moorish quarter with narrow streets and whitewashed houses, and Sacromonte, famous for its caves and flamenco. This Moorish heritage coexists with the Christian imprint of the Cathedral and the Royal Chapel, where the Catholic Monarchs are laid to rest.



Alhambra

Festivals and Celebrations:

Granada is especially known for: its Holy Week which is celebrated with solemn processions, Corpus Christi which is the city's main festival, the Albaicín and Sacromonte festivals with pilgrimages and music in the streets and the Day of the Taking (January 2nd) which

commemorates the conquest of Granada by the Catholic Monarchs in 1492.

Flamenco and Social Life: Granada has a strong flamenco tradition, especially in Sacromonte, where zambras (gypsy flamenco parties) are held in caves. Music and dance are an essential part of everyday life. Gatherings in bars and squares, tapas and hospitality are part of the social culture.

Local Customs: Grenadians value their history and traditions, combining local pride with hospitality. The use of typical expressions and a strong sense of community are common. Dress on festive occasions may include flamenco costume. In addition, respect for religious festivities is observed in Granada, but with a festive and participatory atmosphere.

5. LOCAL LANGUAGE LEARNING.

IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY. RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING. CONVERSATION AND EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION.

Fluency in the local language is crucial for effective communication, cultural and professional integration, as well as personal growth. Language can be a major barrier that makes it difficult for migrants to participate as citizens, and it is also key to getting a job or vocational training.

Learning the local language is essential for a foreign student, as it acts as a key tool for both academic and social integration. Fluency in the language facilitates active participation in classes, understanding of content and communication with teachers and classmates, which improves academic performance and reduces the feeling of isolation. It also allows students to function with greater autonomy in everyday life -from carrying out formalities to establishing social relations-, favouring a quicker and more effective adaptation to the new environment.

RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING IN ITALY

Italian is the official and predominant language in Italy. In addition, there are regions with co-official languages, such as German in South Tyrol or French in Valle d'Aosta. Knowledge of Italian is essential for the social integration, access to employment and education of migrants and refugees.



The Italian government, together with various non-governmental organisations, offers free programmes and resources to facilitate language learning. Some of these resources are:

GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

Provincial Centres for Adult Instruction (CPIA) offer free Italian language courses for adults. These centres are distributed throughout the country and are open to foreign citizens with a residence permit.

Ministry of Interior - Integration Agreement: establishes an "Integration Agreement" for foreigners applying for a long-term residence permit. This agreement includes the obligation to reach a basic level of knowledge of the Italian language, and free courses are offered to help meet this requirement.

Migrant Integration Portal: The Migrant Integration Portal provides a collection of online courses, applications and materials useful for learning Italian at a distance, facilitating access to educational resources for migrants.

Specialised universities: The Universities for Foreigners in Siena and Perugia offer intensive and long-term programmes for foreign students.

Overseas students, in addition to government or university courses, are eligible for:

- Italian government scholarships: Scholarships are available for foreign students wishing to study in Italy, including courses in Italian language and culture.
- Erasmus+ programmes: The Erasmus+ programme allows university students to participate in exchange programmes with Italian universities.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS



Centro Astalli (Jesuit Refugee Service - JRS Italy): offers free Italian language classes for asylum seekers and refugees, with branches in several Italian cities, including Rome, Bologna and Palermo.

Caritas Italiana: Caritas provides free Italian language courses for migrants and refugees in various regions of Italy as part of its social and labour integration programmes.

Red Cross: offers Italian language courses, educational and cultural activities, occupational training for integration in Italy.

Società Dante Alighieri: This organisation offers Italian courses for foreigners, with teachers specialised in teaching the language.

Dianova Italia: Dianova offers Italian language courses for migrants, as well as vocational training programmes to facilitate their integration into the Italian labour market.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Rai Scuola - Italiano per Stranieri: this government portal offers free Italian language courses for foreigners, from level A1 to B2.

Free Italian Language Literacy Courses: Free Italian language literacy courses are offered to immigrant citizens without prior registration.

Puntolingua: A site with grammar exercises, level tests, and free online correction, aimed at foreigners.

One World Italian: Multimedia course structured in units, currently for A1 and A2, with plans to expand to B1 and B2.

ITALIAN FOR IMMIGRANTS IN SARDINIA. CONVERSATION AND EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION

Italian is the main language used in administration and education in Sardinia. Secondly, Sardinian, which is a Romance language and one of the oldest in Europe, is still spoken by many. Today it is considered an endangered language, so there are initiatives to promote its use and preservation. Sardinians speak several dialects that vary from region to region. Gallurese, spoken in the north-eastern part of Sardinia, including Tempio Pausania, is more widespread and standardised in the Tempisian ("timpiésu") variant, which has been widespread since the 17th century in a large part of Gallura. In fact, several studies have

shown that the Gallurese community shows a high degree of loyalty to its own language. In Gallura there are approximately 117,000 people who understand Gallurese (96.3% of the population), 64.2% of the inhabitants (about 70,000 people) have an active proficiency and 32.1% have a passive proficiency.

Sardinians tend to place a high value on personal relationships and communication, often combining verbal expression and non-verbal signals such as gestures. While their communicative style can be direct and honest, it is also characterised by respect and formality, especially in rural or more traditional settings. Humour and storytelling are key components of their communicative style, used to create bonds and express emotions. People greet each other with friendly phrases such as "Ciao" or "Buongiorno", and conversations are often lively.

In various areas of northern Sardinia, public institutions, universities and private entities offer language integration programmes in Italian for foreigners. Adult education is promoted by the CPIAs (Provincial Centres for Adult Education), established by Presidential Decree no. 263 of 29 October 2012. These represent a type of autonomous educational institution, endowed with its own staff and a specific teaching and organisational structure. In Sardinia there are five CPIA sites: Cagliari, Serramanna, Nuoro, Oristano and Sassari. Adults who can enrol in the CPIA include:

- Adults, including foreigners, who do not yet have a diploma of compulsory secondary education and wish to obtain the certificate of completion of the first cycle of education.
- Adults, including foreigners, who lack the basic skills related to compulsory schooling.
- Foreign adults who wish to enrol in literacy and Italian language learning programmes.

There are also linguistic integration initiatives in Olbia; for example, **Labint** (Intercultural Laboratory for Integration), which is the Italian language school for foreigners located in the premises of the Liceo Scientifico Mossa. On the other hand, **UNISSTRAL** - University School of Italian Language and Culture for Foreigners of Alghero, was founded as a direct branch of the Department of Human and Social Sciences of the University of Sassari, in

collaboration with the Municipality of Alghero, with the aim of offering foreign students the opportunity to learn or deepen their knowledge of Italian language and culture.

RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING IN LITHUANIA

Lithuanian is the official and predominant language throughout the country. Although there are linguistic minorities, such as Polish and Russian, knowledge of Lithuanian is essential for social integration, access to employment and education. Therefore, the Lithuanian government and various organisations offer free programmes and resources to facilitate language learning for migrants and refugees. Some of them are:

RESOURCES FROM GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Universities: Almost all universities in Lithuania have language learning programmes for foreign students.

Ministry of Interior - Integration Agreement: This agreement includes an obligation to reach a basic level of Lithuanian language proficiency, and free courses are offered to help meet this requirement.

RESOURCES FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

Caritas Lithuania: Caritas offers free Lithuanian language courses for third-country nationals who have already obtained a residence permit in Lithuania. These courses are designed to facilitate the social and labour integration of immigrants and refugees.

Lithuanian Red Cross: provides free Lithuanian language courses for refugees and asylum seekers. In addition, they offer legal, psychological and vocational counselling, as well as civic orientation and participation in community events.

Kaunas Cultural Centre for Diverse Nations: This centre organises cultural and educational events aimed at preserving the cultural identities of national minorities and promoting their positive integration into Lithuanian society. They also offer Lithuanian language courses and intercultural workshops.

IOM Lithuania: Working with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour to facilitate the integration of foreigners, has created MiCenter.lt: a website offering a variety of learning resources, including online courses, language applications and information on Lithuanian culture.

SPEAK Lithuania: This project connects locals and newcomers to learn languages and explore local culture. They offer free face-to-face classes in Vilnius and Kaunas, including materials.

ONLINE RESOURCES

World Schoolbooks App: A free app available in over 100 languages that provides resources for learning Lithuanian easily.

"Lithuania For You (YouTube): A channel providing Lithuanian lessons, especially useful for those who already have basic knowledge of the language.

<https://www.refugeeslt.com/> A portal that includes many free resources to learn the language online and free of charge.

Applications such as LinGo Play, Ling, Learn Lithuanian, Pimsleur and Mondly can be used to learn Lithuanian in a playful format.

LITHUANIAN FOR IMMIGRANTS IN KAUNAS. CONVERSATION AND EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION

Lithuanian is the official and main language used in administration, education and everyday life in Kaunas. The Baltic language is one of the oldest in Europe and is considered one of the most archaic living Indo-European languages, making it an important symbol of national identity. Although Lithuania is a relatively homogeneous country in linguistic terms, Russian and Polish speakers can also be found in Kaunas, a legacy of its history and cultural diversity.

Kaunas people place a high value on personal relationships, and communication is often a



Kaunas

combination of direct and discreet verbal expression, accompanied by restrained gestures. Although they may at first appear reserved, Lithuanians tend to be warm and welcoming when trust is established. Communication is marked by respect and politeness, especially in more traditional or formal contexts. Storytelling, the use of subtle humour and lively conversation are part of their communicative style, often accompanied by friendly phrases such as "Labas" (Hello) or "Laba diena" (Good morning).

Kaunas, as an academic and cultural city, has a wide range of Lithuanian language learning programmes for foreigners.

Adult and Continuing Education Centres, as well as public and private institutions, offer free or subsidised Lithuanian language courses, especially designed for immigrants and

foreign residents seeking to improve their language skills and facilitate their integration. These courses often include language classes and cultural orientation to better understand everyday life in Kaunas.

Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) offers Lithuanian language and culture courses for international students, as well as integration workshops that help participants become familiar with local traditions.

Kaunas College: Organises intensive Lithuanian language courses for foreigners,

InLT Refugee and Migrant Integration Centre in Kaunas: Offers a range of services, including language training, civic orientation, legal and psychological counselling, according to the European website on integration.

Caritas and Red Cross in Kaunas: They offer assistance to third country nationals, including help with language learning and integration.

Speak Kaunas offers free vouchers for language courses for refugees:

The Centre for Social Cooperation and Innovation: organises free Lithuanian language courses for migrant women.

RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SPAIN

Several languages are spoken in Spain. Castilian or Spanish, the official language throughout the country, is the predominant mother tongue in almost all of Spain's autonomous communities and is spoken by 98.9% of the Spanish population. In Spain, the main language is often referred to as Castilian rather than Spanish in order to differentiate the main language from other languages that are also Spanish (Catalan, Valencian, etc.). In addition, six autonomous communities in Spain have other official languages alongside Spanish (in

Catalonia, for example, Catalan, in Valencia, Valencian, in the Basque Country, Basque, etc.). Bilingualism in these communities tends to be common practice.

In 2019, according to the Pew survey, the languages spoken at home were Spanish in 81% of households, Catalan/Valencian in 12% (8% Catalan and 4% Valencian), Galician in 3%, Basque in 1% and the remainder by other languages.

In Spain, both at regional and national level, Spanish language learning programmes have been developed for migrants and refugees in order to promote their integration and access to education, work, etc. Some of these resources or programmes are:

RESOURCES FROM GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

The Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas (EOI), a public school that depends on the autonomous communities, offers language courses at low prices and prepares students for the official language diplomas.

Most **Spanish universities** offer Spanish courses to their foreign students.

Adult Education Centres (EPA): They offer courses in Spanish as a foreign language (ELE) for immigrants, often with specific programmes for social and labour integration.

City councils: They organise Spanish courses and workshops in civic centres and cultural centres as part of their basic training programmes.

Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration - Immigrant Integration and Inclusion Programme: Through occupational training centres, they offer Spanish language courses to facilitate the labour market integration of immigrants.

Instituto Cervantes: although many courses are fee-paying, they also offer free resources for immigrants.

RESOURCES FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS OR SUPPORT NETWORKS

Language tandems and language exchange groups: These are activities organised by universities, cultural centres or platforms such as Tandem.net or Meetup, where students practise the language in conversation with native speakers.

CEAR (Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid) offers language courses to foreigners.

RED CROSS: The Red Cross offers Spanish courses for immigrants and refugees in different regions. These courses are usually free of charge and focus on basic communication, literacy and preparation for exams such as the DELE (Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera).

YMCA: NGO for the integration of young people and with some 30 centres in Spain offers courses for foreigners.

RED ACOGE: federation of social entities specialised in the accompaniment of migrants and refugees in Spain, with some 20 centres in Spain.

CARITAS: Caritas Spain offers a wide range of services and programmes for migrants, including Spanish language courses, vocational training and job search support.

ACCEM: Present in almost all of Spain, it works with undocumented migrants or refugees - among its programmes is the teaching of Spanish.

F. MERCED Migrations: offers free Spanish classes for migrants and applicants for international protection

LIGA Española de la educación: has a programme to improve the communicative competence in Spanish of the immigrant community.

Online Resources:

Instituto Cervantes: Aula Virtual: AVE - Some free modules and resources are available for learning Spanish online, although registration is required to gain full access.

Real Academia Española (RAE): Provides online tools and resources such as the Pan-Hispanic Dictionary of Doubts and the New Spanish Grammar.

Online platforms: Duolingo, BBC Spanish, and FluentU offer online Spanish courses, some with free versions.

Todo ELE: A platform with educational materials for learning Spanish as a foreign language.

Practicaespanol.com: Collaborative platform for practising Spanish with native speakers.

Proyecto Minerva: Web with didactic resources to teach Spanish to immigrants and refugees.

SPANISH FOR MIGRANTS IN GRANADA. CONVERSATION AND DAILY COMMUNICATION

Spanish is the main language used in administration, education and everyday life in Granada. This language, which is the second most widely spoken in the world by number of native speakers, reflects the cultural and literary heritage of Spain.

Grenadians place a high value on personal relationships, and their way of communicating is usually close, expressive and cordial. Although conversation can be direct, it is characterised by friendliness and the frequent use of humour, which creates a welcoming atmosphere for newcomers.



Headquarters of the UGR rectorate

Gestures often accompany speech, especially in informal situations, and eye contact is important to convey sincerity. Greetings such as "Hello" or "Good morning" are often used, accompanied by two kisses or a handshake, depending on the degree of trust.

Granada, as a university and multicultural city, has a wide range of Spanish language learning programmes for foreigners. The **University of Granada (UGR)**, internationally recognised, offers Spanish language and culture courses for international students, as

well as workshops and activities to facilitate integration.

In addition, as Granada is a university city, you can find many **language tandem** programmes **and** language **exchange groups**, organised by the University or support groups, which are organised in cafés, bars, events and cultural visits. They combine language learning with getting to know the city and culture of Granada.

The **Permanent Education Centres** and the **Official Language Schools (EOI)** also offer Spanish courses for foreigners, many of them subsidised or free of charge, aimed at those who wish to learn the language in order to better integrate into life in Granada. These programmes include both linguistic and cultural aspects, favouring the understanding of the social reality and local customs.

The Temporary Language Adaptation Classrooms (Aulas Temporales de Adaptación Lingüística, ATAL) develop a Spanish language teaching programme aimed at foreign pupils with no knowledge of the Spanish language, taught during school hours by specific teachers. This programme is implemented in public primary and compulsory secondary schools.

Finally, different associations carry out socio-educational actions aimed at empowering people and breaking social exclusion

6. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY.

FINDING HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION. PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE. LOCAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

Arriving in a new country can be exciting but also challenging, especially when faced with such important issues as housing and social integration.

Having a home in the host country is essential for any migrant for several key reasons:

- **It is a pillar of stability and security:** Having a home of one's own provides a sense of security and emotional stability. People can feel safe, protected from the weather, from potential conflicts and with a place to return to every day.
- **Promotes social integration:** a home facilitates rootedness in the new environment. By having a fixed address, it is possible to establish neighbourly relations, access basic services (health, education, employment) and participate in community life (schools, associations, local activities).
- **It is key to accessing rights and services:** in many countries, as we have seen, it is necessary to have a home and to be registered in order to access health care, education, to carry out certain legal procedures and to apply for social benefits.
- **It facilitates financial stability:** having a home provides a base from which to seek employment, establish oneself professionally and plan for the long term. Many people need an address to sign employment contracts, open bank accounts or even obtain permits.

- **It contributes to self-esteem and well-being:** having a home, even a modest one, strengthens personal dignity, self-esteem and a sense of belonging. Living in precarious conditions, without stable housing, can have negative effects on physical and mental health.

A home is not just a roof; it is the space where personal and family projects are built. It allows you to plan for the future, educate your children and feel part of a new society.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE



Participation in community life is essential for any migrant, as it not only improves integration, but also allows them to build social networks, learn the language and contribute to society. Although there are many similarities in the three countries, each offers resources and opportunities tailored to its context.

Common forms of community participation

In Spain, Italy and Lithuania, migrants can integrate and participate through:

- Cultural, civic or community centres: spaces where workshops, cultural, sporting and educational activities are organised.
- Local festivals and celebrations: festivals, processions, fairs and gastronomic events offer opportunities to get to know the local culture.
- Volunteering and non-profit associations: collaborate with NGOs, food banks, social projects and neighbourhood activities.

- Immigrant and cultural associations: offering counselling, community activities, language courses and multicultural events.
- Sports and recreational activities: many local organisations and NGOs organise sports, arts and crafts, art and activities for children and adults.
- Schools and educational projects: integration programmes for immigrant students are promoted in schools, with intercultural workshops and community activities.

Country specificities

◆ Italy:

- For foreign students, many Italian universities, especially those with a strong international presence (such as those in Bologna, Rome, Milan or Florence), offer mentoring programmes, cultural tutorials and integrative events organised by international relations offices or student associations such as ESN Italia (Erasmus Student Network).
- The parishes and oratories are common meeting places, with cultural, sporting and solidarity activities.
- Local festivals (sagre, food festivals, patron saint celebrations) encourage interaction.
- Importance of volunteering in Caritas, ARCI, ACLI, Comunità di Sant'Egidio.
- Cultural and immigrant associations organise Italian language courses, workshops and events.

◆ Lithuania:

- Major universities in the country, such as Vilnius University or Vytautas Magnus University, have international relations offices and student associations (such as ESN

Lithuania) that organise cultural, solidarity and community activities. These initiatives facilitate contact between foreign and local students.

- Municipal cultural centres and local events are spaces for participation.
- Regional celebrations and festivals mixing local and international traditions.
- Volunteering in Caritas Lithuania, Lithuanian Red Cross and similar organisations.
- Lithuanian language courses and multicultural activities promoted by local NGOs and associations.

◆ **Spain:**

- For foreign students in Spain, many universities include extracurricular activities and cultural welcome programmes specifically designed for international students. These experiences not only favour adaptation, but also transform the stay abroad into a more complete, meaningful and enriching experience.
- Participation in local festivals (Fallas, Feria de Abril, patron saint festivals) as key spaces for integration.
- The civic and cultural centres offer free workshops (languages, vocational training, theatre).
- Immigrant associations play an active role in offering support and activities.
- Participation in voluntary work in NGOs such as Red Cross, Caritas, CEAR.

Comparative Table: Community Involvement in Spain, Italy and Lithuania

Aspect	Spain	Italy	Lithuania
University Participation	Host programmes, mentoring, ESN, cultural and sporting activities	International offices, networks such as ESN Italy, mentorships, university volunteering	ESN Lithuania, intercultural mentoring, student clubs, multicultural events
Meeting places	Civic centres, associations, cultural centres	Parishes, oratories, cultural centres	Municipal cultural centres, local events
Local celebrations	Fallas, Feria de Abril, patron saint festivities	Sagre, gastronomic festivals, patron saint's fiestas	Local festivals, regional festivals
Volunteering	NGOs such as Red Cross, Caritas, CEAR, ACCEM, etc.	Caritas, ARCI, ACLI, Sant'Egidio	Caritas, Lithuanian Red Cross, Refugee Council
Immigrant associations	Active and diverse	Present and offer courses, events, support	Local cultural associations and clubs
Recreational/cultural activities	Workshops, sports, crafts, art	Workshops, sports, crafts, art	Workshops, sports, crafts, art
Educational projects	Schools with integration programmes	Schools with intercultural projects	Schools with intercultural programmes
Languages and workshops	Free Spanish courses, various workshops	Italian language courses, multicultural workshops	Lithuanian language courses, multicultural workshops

HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION SEARCH IN SPAIN, ITALY AND LITHUANIA

Finding a place to live is one of the main concerns for migrants arriving in Spain, Italy or Lithuania. Although the process is similar in all three countries, there are differences in requirements, types of housing and available resources. Moreover, in all three countries we

find that in addition to the common resources, foreign students can opt for accommodation more adapted to their needs, which we will see in the section on local resources and support services.

Common accommodation options

In all three countries, migrants can opt for:

- **Rooms in shared flats:** an affordable and flexible option, popular with those arriving alone or with limited resources.
- **Rental of complete dwellings (flats or houses):** preferred by families or individuals looking for more privacy.
- **Social or social housing:** offered by local authorities to people on low incomes, with specific residence and economic status requirements.
- **Temporary or emergency accommodation:** provided by NGOs or public entities for those in vulnerable situations or asylum seekers.

Channels for finding housing

- **Online portals:** Idealista, Fotocasa and Milanuncios in Spain; Idealista.it, Subito.it and Bakeca.it in Italy; Aruodas.lt, Skelbiu.lt and Domoplius.lt in Lithuania.
- **Social networks and local groups:** Facebook, WhatsApp, community groups.
- **Local advertisements:** boards in supermarkets, parishes, associations.
- **Real estate agencies:** offer professional service, but charge commission.

Common rental requirements

- **Formal rental contract,** detailing conditions and rights.
- **Deposit:** generally equivalent to 1-3 months' rent.

- **Documentation:** identification (NIE or passport in Spain, codice fiscale and residence permit in Italy, asmens kodas and permit in Lithuania).
- **Proof of income or guarantees:** these are often required in all three countries, especially in private rentals.

Practical advice for migrants

- Look for flexible landlords, especially if you are not in stable employment.
- Avoid signing unclear contracts or contracts without legal backing.
- Turn to NGOs or municipal services for counselling and mediation.
- Check local market prices and conditions.

Comparative Table: Spain, Italy and Lithuania in the Search for a Home

Aspect	Spain	Italy	Lithuania
Types of accommodation	Rooms, complete flats, social housing, temporary accommodation	Rooms, complete flats, social housing, temporary accommodation	Rooms, complete flats, social housing, temporary accommodation
Main online portals	Idealista, Fotocasa, Milanuncios, Habitaclia	Idealista.it, Subito.it, Bakeca.it	Aruodas.lt, Skelbiu.lt, Domoplius.lt
Social/community networks	Facebook, WhatsApp, local groups	Facebook, WhatsApp, local associations	Facebook, local groups, boards

Real estate agencies	Common, charge commission	Common, charge commission	Common, charge commission
Common requirements	Contract, bond, NIE/passport, income	Contract, bond, codice fiscale, residency	Contract, bond, passport, residency
Proof of income	Often necessary, especially in private	Often necessary, with guarantees or collateral	Frequent, especially in private
Access to social housing	With legal residence and income requirements	With legal residence and low income	With legal residence and low income
Temporary accommodation	NGOs (Red Cross, Caritas, CEAR) and social services	NGOs (Caritas, Sant'Egidio, ARCI) and SPRAR/SIPROIMI	NGOs (Caritas, Lithuanian Red Cross) and shelters
Key tips	Seek local help, verify conditions, avoid informal contracts	Seek local help, check conditions, avoid informal contracts	Seek local help, verify conditions, avoid informal contracts

ACCOMMODATION: LOCAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Specific accommodation for foreign students in Lithuania, Italy and Spain:

While as a migrant, you can find support networks for accommodation, there are specific networks for international students:

Comparison of Accommodation Resources for Foreign Students

Aspect	Spain	Italy	Lithuania
University residences	Public and private, many reserve places for foreigners. E.g.: [Resa](https://www.resa.es), [Livensa Living](https://www.livensaliving.com).	Public (ESU, ADISU) and private residences. Some offer Erasmus agreements. E.g.: [ESU Padova](https://www.esu.pd.it).	Universities such as [Vilnius University](https://www.vu.lt) offer affordable residences for foreign students.
Shared rental	Very common among students. Platforms such as [Idealist](https://www.idealista.com), [Badi](https://badi.com), [Uniplaces](https://www.uniplaces.com).	Widespread use. Platforms such as [StanzaZoo](https://www.stanzazoo.com), [HousingAnywhere](https://housinganywhere.com).	Common use. Platforms such as [Aruodas.lt](https://www.aruodas.lt), [Erasmus Play](https://www.erasmusplay.com).
Host families	Promoted by some schools and universities. Facilitates cultural immersion.	More common in religious or bilateral exchange programmes. Less institutionalised.	Available in some Erasmus programmes or agreements with NGOs.
Institutional support	International offices help to manage residencies and contracts.	Erasmus offices and university services offer guides and agreements with halls of residence.	International services assist in the search and processing of applications.

Budget/subsidised accommodation	Scholarships and grants from autonomous communities or universities. Cheaper public residences.	Subsidised regional residences for mobile and low-income students.	Very affordable university halls of residence; possible support for Erasmus.
Specialised platforms	[ErasmusU](https://www.erasmusu.com), [Spotahome](https://www.spotahome.com), [Student.com](https://www.student.com), [Uniplaces](https://www.uniplaces.com)	[HousingAnywhere](https://housinganywhere.com), [Uniplaces](https://www.uniplaces.com), [Spotahome](https://www.spotahome.com), [StanzaZoo](https://www.stanzazoo.com)	[Erasmus Play](https://www.erasmusplay.com), [Aruodas.lt](https://www.aruodas.lt), [Student Global](https://studentglobal.com)
Temporary accommodation on arrival	Universities offer temporary help: hostels, guest houses.	Some university services offer initial temporary accommodation.	Universities book temporary accommodation or guide towards transitional solutions.

Other accommodation resources as a migrant:

Immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees can access a range of resources and support services to find housing and settle in the country. These resources include public programmes, municipal social services and NGO support. Below are resources in each of the countries (Spain, Italy and Lithuania).

ACCOMMODATION RESOURCES IN ITALY

Public housing (ERP): This is social rental housing managed by municipalities and regions. To be eligible, you must be legally resident, have a low income and have been registered on the local census. You must be registered on a waiting list.

Municipal social services (Servizi Sociali): In each municipality there is a social services point (Ufficio dei Servizi Sociali). Among other things, they offer advice on finding housing, financial assistance for rent or deposit and mediation between landlords and tenants.

NGOs and charitable organisations: among other associations that can help in Italy to find or obtain accommodation are:

- **Caritas Italiana:** Provides social and material support, including temporary accommodation (shelters, hostels, transitional flats) for people in vulnerable situations, including migrants.
- **Comunità di Sant'Egidio:** Provides shelter programmes for homeless people, immigrants and refugees. Manages solidarity housing and rental mediation.
- **ARCI** (Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana): Offers support in finding housing, especially for asylum seekers and vulnerable people.
- **ACLI** (Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani): Provides guidance and accompaniment in accessing services, including housing, training and social support.
- **Refugees Welcome Italia:** Promotes family and solidarity networks for refugees, facilitating their integration in shared housing with Italian families.
- **Centro Astalli:** Provides temporary housing and counselling to find stable solutions for asylum seekers and refugees.

SPRAR/SIPROIMI (Sistema di Protezione di Protezione per Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati): is a public reception network for asylum seekers and refugees, with housing, maintenance, training and social mediation programmes. It is managed by local authorities and in collaboration with NGOs.

Fondo Nazionale Sostegno Affitti: State or regional aid for the partial payment of rent.

How can these resources be accessed? You can access them in the following ways:

- Go to the **Comune** (town hall) and ask for "Servizi Sociali" or "Ufficio ERP".
- Contact NGOs (Caritas, Sant'Egidio, ARCI) for direct assistance.
- Registering on public housing waiting lists or applying for rental assistance.
- See official websites: <https://www.interno.gov.it>, <https://www.caritas.it>.

ACCOMMODATION RESOURCES IN LITHUANIA



Municipal social housing (Savivaldybių socialinis būstas): Social housing is managed by municipalities and intended for people with low income or in a socially vulnerable situation, including legally residing immigrants and refugees. To be eligible, it is necessary, among other things, to be registered in the municipality, to have valid residence permits and to demonstrate an economic or social need. You must join a waiting list.

Municipal social services (Savivaldybės socialinės paslaugos): Each municipality has a social services centre, where immigrants can receive guidance in finding accommodation,

apply for specific financial aid (rent, deposit, etc...) or access mediation programmes with accommodation owners. To access social services, you must have your identity card and residence permit.

NGOs and support organisations: There are a number of non-governmental organisations that offer assistance to vulnerable migrants and refugees, among others:

- **Caritas Lithuania:** Provides support to migrants and refugees with emergency accommodation, social counselling and integration activities. It is present in several dioceses and major cities.
- **Red Cross (Lietuvos Raudonasis Kryžius):** Provides temporary accommodation for asylum seekers, support in finding stable housing, legal assistance and integration programmes.
- **Refugee Council (Pabėgėlių Taryba):** Aims to support refugees and asylum seekers by providing counselling, temporary housing and support services.
- **Migration Information Centre - IOM:** Provides information and guidance to migrants on housing, employment, education and other resources.
- **Socialiniai partneriai (Social Partners):** Partners with municipalities and NGOs to run temporary housing, employment guidance and social support programmes for vulnerable people, including migrants.

Reception centres for asylum seekers and refugees: centres for international protection seekers that provide them with accommodation, food and basic assistance, among others. This service is financed and managed by the State and NGOs collaborate.

Rent subsidies (Nuomos subsidija): state or local programme that allows people on low incomes (including legally resident immigrants) to access financial assistance to cover part of the monthly rent. Documentation proving family income, legal residence and registration in the municipality must be submitted to.

How to access these resources? We advise you:

- Go to the Savivaldybė (local council) and go to the social services centre to apply for assistance, counselling and social housing lists.
- Contact NGOs such as Caritas, Lithuanian Red Cross or Refugee Council for direct assistance and support.
- If you are an asylum seeker, go to the official reception centres.
- See the official websites of the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour: <https://socmin.lrv.lt> and the above-mentioned NGOs for more details and requirements.

ACCOMMODATION RESOURCES IN SPAIN

Public or subsidised housing: Managed by the Autonomous Communities and City Councils, this consists of rented housing at reduced prices for people with fewer resources. European immigrants and those from outside the EU with a residence permit can access this housing if they meet certain income and seniority requirements.

Municipal Social Services: municipal services offer guidance and support for people at risk of exclusion or vulnerability (including immigrants), such as: advice on finding suitable housing, specific financial assistance (e.g. to pay a month's rent or a deposit) or mediation with landlords in case of non-payment or conflict.

NGOs and third sector organisations: Some organisations offering specific resources and counselling for migrants:

- **Spanish Red Cross:** programmes to help migrants and refugees, including finding temporary accommodation, rental mediation, legal support and social counselling.

- **Caritas:** offers emergency accommodation, rental assistance, accompaniment and guidance in finding housing.
- **CEAR (Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado):** provides assistance to asylum seekers and refugees, including temporary accommodation, rental assistance and counselling.
- **ACCEM:** specialised in the reception and integration of refugees and immigrants, offering temporary accommodation, training and housing intermediation.
- **Provivienda:** with several centres in Spain, they work for the right to housing, especially for the most vulnerable people, including migrants. It also manages reception places for people seeking or benefiting from international protection.

Specific public programmes for migrants and refugees: You can find the following public programmes:

- **Reception System for Applicants for International Protection** (managed by the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration): provides accommodation, food and support during the asylum application process.
- **Autonomous and local integration programmes:** some Autonomous Communities (e.g. Madrid, Catalonia, Andalusia) offer specific programmes for immigrants, including guidance on finding housing and assistance.

Network of reception or emergency flats: For homeless people, asylum seekers or those at risk of social exclusion, there are temporary reception flats managed by NGOs or social services, where temporary accommodation is provided until a stable solution is found.

Rental subsidies (State Housing Plan): These include aid to pay part of the monthly rent or the initial deposit.

Social renting: driven by public entities or partnerships with banks, it offers affordable rents for people with low incomes, including regular migrants.

How can you access these resources? There are several ways:

- Contact the City Council (Social Services or Immigration Information Point).
- Approach NGOs (Red Cross, Caritas, CEAR, ACCEM) that offer counselling and temporary accommodation.
- Ask for information at the Foreigners' Office or at the Social and Cultural Integration Centres.

Check the official websites of the Ministry of Inclusion (<https://www.inclusion.gob.es>) and of the Autonomous Communities.

7. EMPLOYMENT AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES: SECTORS WITH HIGHEST DEMAND FOR EMPLOYMENT.

JOB SEARCH AND LOCAL LABOUR MARKET. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS CREATION.

EMPLOYMENT AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN ITALY: SECTORS WITH THE HIGHEST EMPLOYMENT DEMAND

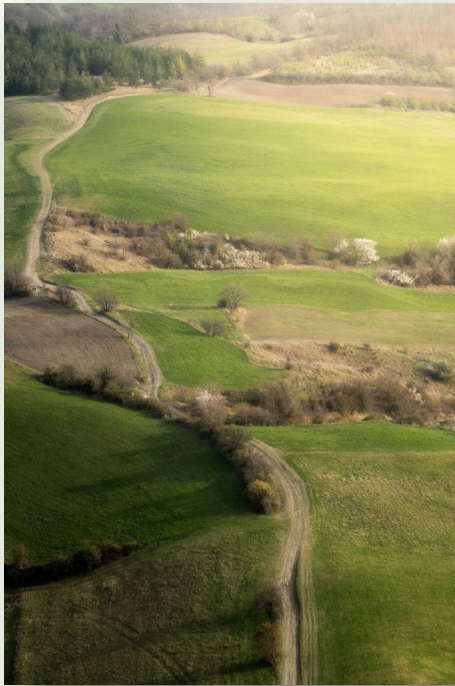
Italy has a significant participation of migrants in its labour market, especially in sectors such as personal care, agriculture, construction and domestic work. While there are job opportunities, there are also challenges such as informality, discrimination, difficulties in the recognition of qualifications and limited access to skilled jobs.

Migrants, especially those from outside the European Union, often face more precarious working conditions, high seasonality and lower wages. However, they represent an essential component in several key sectors of the Italian economy.

Sectors with the highest demand for foreign employment:

I. Personal services and care:

- Care of elderly and dependent persons (badanti).



Fields in Emilia-Romagna

- Domestic work (colf): cleaning, cooking, housekeeping.

2. **Agriculture:**

- Seasonal work such as fruit picking, harvesting, and crop care.

- The regions with the highest demand are Puglia, Sicily, Campania and Emilia-Romagna.

3. **Construction:**

- Bricklayers, labourers, formworkers and public works workers.

- Physical jobs predominate and in many cases they are informal.

4. **Hotel and catering:**

- Waiters, cooks, kitchen assistants, cleaning staff in hotels and restaurants.

5. **Manufacturing and logistics:**

- Workers in factories, product packaging, warehousing, transport and distribution.

6. **Cleaning and maintenance services:**

- Cleaning staff in offices, hospitals, schools and public spaces.

The most common jobs for **foreign students** in Italy are:

- I work in the hotel and tourism sector.
- I work in restaurants, cafés and bars.

-
- I work in supermarkets and shops.
 - I work as a teacher of English or other languages.

Recent data (2023-2024, Ministero del Lavoro and ISTAT):

- More than 70% of foreign workers are employed in the sectors of personal services, construction, agriculture and light industry.
- In some northern regions such as Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna and Veneto, there is a growing demand for foreign labour also in manufacturing and logistics.

The **Italian Ministry of Labour** periodically publishes "Decreti Flussi", which determine the quotas and sectors in which the entry of non-EU workers is authorised.

What is the Flussi Decree?

It is an Italian government law that regulates how many non-European citizens can enter Italy to work legally. It sets annual quotas and conditions for three types of work:

- Seasonal work (lavoro stagionale)
- Non-seasonal subordinate employment (lavoro subordinato)
- Self-employment (lavoro autonomo)

It also regulates the conversion of other residence permits (such as study permits) into work permits.

For example, in 2025 the government will allow the entry of 165,000 non-European migrants. In addition, outside this quota, people coming from countries with repatriation agreements, those who have completed vocational and language training in their home country or foreign students in Italy who want to convert their permit can apply for a work visa.

JOB SEARCH AND LOCAL LABOUR MARKET IN ITALY

Prerequisites:

EU/EEA/Switzerland citizens: can work freely in Italy. They must register at the "Comune" of residence and obtain the "codice fiscale" (Resident Alien Identity Card).

Third-country nationals: need a residence and work permit. They can access through: Family reunification, Permit for humanitarian reasons, subsidiary protection or asylum, authorisation through the "Decreti Flussi" or Permit for work or study reasons converted into a work permit.

Applicants for asylum or international protection can legally work 2 months after the submission of the application, if the Territorial Commission has not yet issued a decision. In addition, they have access to the labour market while their application is pending or if they have been granted international protection.

Foreign students wishing to work in Italy must obtain a residence permit for study purposes and then follow the employment regulations for international students, especially non-European citizens who must also obtain a work permit (through a job offer from an employer). As a student you will be able to look for part-time work, usually up to 20 hours per week.

Practical tips for finding a job:

Once you have all the essential documentation in order: (Codice fiscale and valid residence permit) you must update or follow the next steps.

- Make your CV up to date and adapted to the Italian format (with photo, clarity and focus on work experience).
- Short cover letter.

- Languages and training: it is essential to learn Italian if you want a more stable and qualified job. In addition, you will need to start getting your diplomas recognised or take Italian vocational training courses.

In Italy, it is important to actively search for jobs through different channels:

1. Online portals: Indeed, InfoJobs, LinkedIn, Monster, trovolavoro.
2. Centri per l'Impiego (Italian employment centre): they offer free guidance and courses.
3. Third sector entities (NGOs, migrant associations) acting as labour mediators.
4. Social cooperatives and local labour exchanges.
5. Temporary work agencies: Adecco, randstad
6. Job fairs and regional events (especially in the north).
7. Eures network for EU citizens.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN ITALY

Public and state programmes:

- **Garanzia Giovani:** a job placement programme for young people aged 15-29, with guidance, training and internships, also accessible to migrants with residence permits.
- **Corsi di formazione professionale:** training subsidised by the regions, open to regular migrants.
- **CPIA (Centri Provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti):** centres offering free courses in Italian, digital literacy, citizenship and job training.

EURES NETWORK:

-
- Accessible to European citizens and their family members. Supports professional mobility between EU countries.

NGOs and associations:

- **Caritas Italiana, ARCI, Centro Astalli, Refugees Welcome**, among others, offer:
 - Employment and legal counselling.
 - Italian language and job skills workshops.
 - Specific programmes for migrant women.
- Social cooperatives and local associations develop labour integration projects for migrants and refugees (programmes co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund - FAMI).

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS CREATION IN ITALY

Italy favours entrepreneurship, and many migrants have set up small businesses in commerce, catering, fashion, agriculture or personal services.

1. EU/EEA citizens:

- You do not need a special permit to start a business; you only need to register in the municipal register.
- They must obtain a codice fiscale, register as self-employed (partita IVA) and comply with tax and social security obligations.

2. Third-country nationals:

They can undertake if they have a **valid residence permit** (for work, studies, international protection, family reasons, etc.).

They can **change their permit** to a specific permit for self-employment if they meet the economic and professional requirements.

They can also apply to enter Italy for self-employment from abroad (within the quotas of the *Flussi Decree*).

General requirements for entrepreneurship:

- Viable business plan.
- Codice fiscale and registration at the Chamber of Commerce (Camera di Commercio).
- Registration with the Partita IVA (Italian tax authorities).
- Registration with INPS (social security) and INAIL (occupational risk prevention).
- Compliance with local regulations and municipal licences.

Common types of entrepreneurship:

I. Self-employed (*lavoratore autonomo*): How to become self-employed?

Change of permit (for those already residing in Italy):

- Submit the application within 60 days of the expiry of the current permit.
- Documentation required:
 - VAT item
 - Registration with the Chamber of Commerce (if applicable)
 - Proof of sufficient income
 - Housing documentation

- Documents according to type of activity (commercial, professional, craft, etc.)

How to become self-employed from abroad (new entry):

- Apply for consular visas within the quotas of the Flussi Decree.
- Submit:
 - Declaration of non-existence of obstacles to the activity
 - Documentation of financial means and accommodation
 - Certification from the Chamber of Commerce or other competent authority

2. Small companies or partnerships:

How to set up a company?

1. Transforming the idea into a project:

- Conduct a **feasibility study** or *business plan*, ideally with professional advice.
- Support is available from the *Progetti d'impresa* of the Province of Bologna or other regional bodies.

2. Administrative formalities:

- Request the **Partita IVA** and tax code from the *Agenzia delle Entrate*.
- **Register in the Register of Companies** of the Chamber of Commerce.
- Declare the start of activity in the *SUAP* (Sportello Unico per le Attività Produttive) of the municipality.
- Obtain special permits if the activity requires it (food, transport, etc.).

3. Possible legal forms:

- Sole proprietorship (self-employed)
- Company (partnership or joint stock)
- Independent professional

Key requirements for entrepreneurship:

- Demonstrate minimum income (approx. €8,500/year) or adequate investment.
- Have professional knowledge or qualification if the activity requires it (e.g. hairdressing, plumbing).
- For regulated professions (lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc.), recognition of the diploma and registration with the relevant professional body is required.

Resources available for entrepreneurship:

- Local business advice centres (such as *Sportelli Impresa* or *Progetti d'impresa*).
- SUAP municipal: one-stop shop for permits, declarations, guidance and simplified procedures.
- Chambers of Commerce (CCIAA): registration, advice and sectoral statistics.
- Trusteeships: help with immigration or tax applications and formalities.
- Regional entrepreneurship support programmes (subsidies, training, incubators).
- Ministries competent for the recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications.

EMPLOYMENT AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN LITHUANIA: SECTORS WITH THE HIGHEST EMPLOYMENT DEMAND

Lithuania faces a significant labour shortage due to an ageing population and emigration of young people, which has led to a growing demand for foreign workers. In 2024, the number of foreign workers increased by 18.3%, reaching more than 150,000 people from 160 countries.



Sectors with the highest employment demand for foreigners

1. Transport and Logistics:

Long-distance truck and bus drivers are in high demand, especially for international freight transport.

2. Construction:

Occupations such as welders, bricklayers, electricians, plumbers and concrete layers are essential in this sector.

3. Manufacturing:

Workers in manufacturing industries, including machine operators and assemblers, are needed to maintain industrial production.

4. Trade and services

Retail and customer services also present opportunities for migrants, especially in roles such as shop assistants, cashiers and customer service staff. Demand is steady in this sector, although skill requirements tend to be lower.

5. Cleaning and maintenance services

There is a continuing need for cleaning, maintenance and support staff in hotels and offices. These roles are often filled by migrant workers, with a significant proportion of women in these positions.

6. Information Technology (IT):

Software developers, data analysts and cybersecurity specialists are sought after due to the growth of the technology sector.

7. Health:

Medical and nursing professionals are required to meet the needs of an ageing population.

8. Agriculture and Food Processing:

Agricultural workers and food processors are essential, especially in harvest seasons.

Additional considerations

- **Quota system:** Lithuania sets annual quotas for the recruitment of workers from third countries. In 2024, these quotas were quickly reached, reflecting the high demand for foreign labour.
- **Countries of origin:** Most migrant workers come from Belarus, Ukraine, Russia and Central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.
- **Requirements:** To work in Lithuania, EU citizens can work freely. Third-country nationals need a work permit, which is usually arranged by the employer. Knowledge of the Lithuanian language is not always compulsory, but can be an advantage, especially in sectors such as health and public services.

Foreign students can find different job opportunities in Lithuania, especially in fields such as tourism, hospitality, customer service and information technology. The possibility of working depends on the country of origin and whether a work visa is needed.

Job opportunities for foreign students in Lithuania:

- **Hospitality and Tourism:**

- **Seasonal work:** Students can find employment in resorts, hotels and restaurants, especially during the high season.
- **Customer service:** Many companies seek students for customer service roles, especially in English, given the international community in Lithuania.

- **Information Technology:**

- **Internships and junior roles:** Lithuanian companies offer opportunities for internships and junior roles in the field of IT, such as software developers and analysts.

- **Other areas:**

- **Social work, education, construction, tailoring, cleaning:** In general, Lithuania is looking for professionals in various fields, and students can find opportunities in these areas.
- **Work exchange:** Platforms such as Worldpackers offer work exchanges where students can help with various tasks in exchange for accommodation and other benefits.

JOB SEARCH AND LOCAL LABOUR MARKET IN LITHUANIA

As mentioned above, in Lithuania, the requirements for a migrant to gain legal access to the labour market depend on his or her nationality and migration status:

I. EU/EEA and Swiss nationals

They do not need a work permit. They can work, start a business or study in Lithuania with the same rights as Lithuanian citizens. However:

- If they stay longer than 90 days, they must register with the EU Citizens' Register at the Migration Department.
- They must obtain a tax identification number (VMI) and register with the Social Security if they are going to work or start a business.

2. Third-country nationals (NON EU/EEA)

If you are abroad and wish to work in Lithuania:

They must have:

1. A valid job offer from a company registered in Lithuania.
2. Work permit issued by the Employment Service (*Užimtumo tarnyba*), unless the position is on the list of occupations in demand, in which case this step can be omitted.
3. Temporary residence permit for work purposes, applied for at the Lithuanian embassy or consulate in your home country.

From 2025 onwards, it is not necessary for the employer to demonstrate the lack of local candidates if the job is on the list of shortage occupations (such as driver, welder, machine operator, etc.).

If they are already in Lithuania with legal residence (e.g. studies, temporary protection, etc.):

- They can apply for a change of status of their permit to a work permit if they have a job offer.
- Those with international or temporary protection (such as refugees or displaced persons from Ukraine) can work without an additional work permit.

Documents usually required:

- Valid passport.
- Employment contract.
- Accommodation confirmed in Lithuania.
- Health insurance.
- Vocational qualification tests (where required).
- Proof of payment of administrative fees.

Permits and authorisations

- Temporary residence permit for work purposes: valid for up to 2 years (renewable).
- EU Blue Card: for highly qualified workers, with a minimum wage requirement and a contract for at least 1 year.
- National visa type D for students which allows working from 20 hours per week up to 40 hours.
- Family reunification visa holders are typically granted equal access to the labour market, especially if they hold dependent permits linked to startup, study, or work visas.

Important: The Lithuanian labour system is regulated by a **quota system** that establishes the number of foreign workers that can be **hired annually**. Therefore, it is essential to prepare an application that meets the required standards. From this, it is essential to take into account a couple of key points:

- European **CV** format: it is key that you highlight relevant skills and experience.
- **Proficiency in Lithuanian or English:** While Lithuanian is the official language, English is widely used in the workplace.

- **Apply in advance** through specialised portals, such as EURES (for Europeans), or contact companies in high-demand sectors directly.

Process:

- Every process starts with a concrete job offer.
- The employer must be registered and have no debts with the State.
- The process usually takes between 1 and 3 months from abroad.
- Persons with temporary protection (such as many Ukrainian nationals) can work without restrictions for the duration of their legal status.
- Fast-Track Permit Routes: Lithuania has piloted fast-track application processes for certain third-country nationals with STEM or healthcare qualifications, aligned with EU Talent Pool initiatives.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN LITHUANIA

Public Services

- **Public Employment Service (Užimtumo tarnyba):** offers a variety of services to facilitate the labour integration of migrants, including:
 - Job counselling and personalised advice: Help in finding a job and adapting to the Lithuanian labour market.
 - Vocational training programmes: Courses designed to improve the skills and competencies of participants.
 - Grants for self-employment: Financial support and advice for those interested in starting their own business.

- Subsidies for employers: Incentives for companies that hire migrants.
- In addition, the service participates in EU-funded projects, such as "Discover Yourself" and "New Start", which offer training, internships and subsidised employment for young people aged 15-29, including migrants registered as unemployed.
- **MiCenter (IOM Lithuania):** Provides labour market counselling, retraining opportunities and training for migrants.

Non-Governmental Organisations

- **Integration projects:** Initiatives such as the PITCH project have developed gender-sensitive integration strategies for migrant women.
- **NGOs such as Caritas, UNHCR, Red Cross:** They offer training and labour integration programmes for vulnerable sectors, including migrants.

For foreign students, although universities in Lithuania do not usually have specific placement programmes for foreign students, they do offer support in various forms to help students find employment. This may include organising job fairs, offering interview preparation classes, and providing access to databases of companies with job offers. In addition, universities often have agreements with local and international companies looking to hire students.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS CREATION IN LITHUANIA

Who can start a business in Lithuania?

I. EU/EEA citizens

European citizens have the right to entrepreneurship: They can set up business in Lithuania without special permits. They only need to have a residence registration if the stay exceeds

3 months, to have a tax code and a registration as a self-employed person or a company incorporation.

2. Third-country nationals

- **With a valid residence permit:** They can undertake if they have a residence permit for work, studies, international protection, family reasons, among others.
- **Change of permit:** It is possible to change the current permit to a specific permit for self-employment if the economic and professional requirements are met.
- **Entry from abroad:** You can apply to enter Lithuania for self-employment from abroad, if you meet the requirements. Some visas for entrepreneurship in Lithuania are:
 - **Startup Visa:** Designed for founders of innovative startups. Requires an innovative business idea, a viable business plan and sufficient financial resources. Allows initial residency for two years, renewable for three more.
 - **National Type D Business Visa:** For general business activities. Requires a sound business plan and proof of financial means.

General requirements for entrepreneurship

- **Viable business plan:** It is advisable to present a business plan that demonstrates the economic viability of the project.
- **Tax code:** Mandatory for all economic activities.
- **Registration in the Register of Legal Entities:** For companies, registration in the official register is required.
- **Registration with the Tax Agency:** Compulsory for the declaration and payment of taxes.

- **Social security registration:** To ensure health and pension coverage.
- **Compliance with local regulations:** Obtaining municipal licences and compliance with activity-specific regulations.

Common forms of entrepreneurship in Lithuania:

I. Self-employed (Individuali veikla)

How to become self-employed? If necessary, a change of residence or work permit must be made. The requirements are:

- Submit the application within 60 days of the expiry of the current permit.
- Documentation required:
 - Tax code.
 - Registration of economic activity.
 - Demonstration of sufficient income.
 - Housing documentation.
 - Documents according to the type of activity (commercial, professional, craft, etc.).

How to become self-employed from abroad?

- Apply for a consular visa for self-employment, presenting.
 - Declaration of non-existence of obstacles to the activity.
 - Documentation of financial means and accommodation.
 - Competent authority certification.

2. Small companies or partnerships

How to set up a company?

Transforming the idea into a project:

- Conduct a feasibility study or *business plan*, ideally with professional advice.
- Help is available from business support programmes and local organisations.

Administrative formalities:

- Apply for the tax code at the Tax Agency.
- Registration in the Register of Legal Entities.
- Declare the start of the activity at the corresponding municipal office.
- Obtain special permits if the activity requires it (food, transport, etc.).

Possible legal forms:

- Sole proprietorship (self-employed).
- Limited Liability Company (UAB).
- Public Limited Company (AB).
- Cooperatives and other forms of association.

Key requirements for entrepreneurship in Lithuania:

- **Demonstrate minimum income:** Depending on the activity, it is required to demonstrate sufficient income to sustain the business.
- **Minimum share capital:** For a UAB, a minimum capital of €1,000 is required.

- **Professional knowledge or qualification:** If the activity requires it (e.g. hairdressing, plumbing).
- **Recognition of diplomas:** For regulated professions (lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc.), recognition of the diploma and registration with the relevant professional body is required.

Resources available for entrepreneurship

- **Local business advice centres:** They offer guidance on setting up and running a business.
- **Municipal offices:** One-stop shop for permits, declarations, guidance and simplified procedures.
- **Chambers of Commerce:** Registration, advice and sectoral statistics.
- **Non-governmental organisations (NGOs):** Help in handling immigration or tax applications and procedures.
- **Regional entrepreneurship support programmes:** Grants, training, incubators and other resources.
- **Relevant ministries:** e.g. for the recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications.
- **Lithuania Startup Visa:** A dedicated scheme for non-EU founders launching innovative startups. Requires an MVP/prototype, demonstrated innovation, and financial means (e.g., capital or grants). Residence permit - 2 years initially, renewable up to a total of 5 years. Family members can join and spouses can work without additional permits.
- **Entrepreneur Visa / National D Visa (Self-Employment):** For third-country nationals planning general business activities (non-startup). Based on presenting a viable

business plan, financial means, local registration, and compliance with legal requirements.

- **E-Residency & E-Entrepreneurship:** Lithuania's e-Residency, launched in 2021, allows non-residents to register businesses, manage taxes, and open bank accounts remotely—valid for 3 years
- **Ukreate Hub, Tech-Park Kaunas & FRIDA Foundation:** Business incubators offering events, networking, childcare, and gender-responsive entrepreneurship support for Ukrainian women

Private Sector Mentors (e.g., Tesonet): Venture builders and accelerators like Tesonet offer mentorship, investor connections, and integration into global tech networks.

EMPLOYMENT AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN SPAIN: SECTORS WITH THE HIGHEST EMPLOYMENT DEMAND

In Spain, foreigners have a significant participation in the labour market, especially in sectors such as services, agriculture and construction. Although they face challenges such as the homologation of studies and access to qualified jobs, their activity and employment rate is higher than the national average.

It should be noted that, as a general rule, immigrants suffer from worse employment conditions, such as greater temporariness, precariousness, discrimination and difficulty in accessing other jobs with higher qualifications.

Sectors with the highest employment demand for foreigners

I. Services sector: this is the main employer of foreigners in Spain. Within this sector, the following areas stand out:

- **Hospitality:** The most common occupations include waiters, cooks and kitchen assistants.

- Commerce: roles as salespersons in shops and warehouses.
- Administrative activities and auxiliary services: including jobs such as cleaning staff and logistics clerks.

2. Construction: Construction is the second sector with the second highest demand for foreign employment. The most prominent occupations include:

- Construction labourers: They represent an important part of the contracts in this sector.
- Bricklayers: This occupation has a high rate of hiring stability.

3. Agriculture: Agriculture is a key sector for the employment of foreigners, especially in seasonal activities. The occupations most in demand are:

- Agricultural labourers:
- Horticultural workers:

4. Industry: Although less representative than the previous sectors, industry offers opportunities in areas such as:

- Manufacturing: Labourers in manufacturing industries are the third most employed occupation among foreign nationals
- Transport and warehousing: This sub-sector has shown significant growth in foreign affiliation.

5. High value-added activities: some sectors with high value-added activities are increasing the recruitment of foreigners:

- Information and communications:
- Professional, scientific and technical activities
- Financial and insurance activities.

On the other hand, the Spanish Public Employment Service (SEPE) publishes on a quarterly basis and organised by provinces a "**Catalogue of Occupations that are difficult to fill**" with those job offers that are difficult to fill in Spain. This implies that the company has the possibility of processing an initial authorisation for temporary residence and work as an employee for the foreigner. For non-EU foreign workers, the catalogue represents a legal way to access the Spanish labour market. If a Spanish company wishes to hire a foreigner for an occupation included in the catalogue, it can initiate the process of applying for a residence and work permit without having to prove that there are no national or EU candidates available. This speeds up



the recruitment process and facilitates the incorporation of foreign workers in sectors with labour shortages.

Most common jobs for foreign students:

- **Hospitality:** Restaurants, bars, hotels and other tourist establishments are often looking for staff to work in high season or during weekends.
- **Language teaching:** If you have a good level in English or another language, you can find work as a private teacher or in language schools.
- **Tourism:** Jobs as a tour guide, reception staff in hotels, or even in souvenir shops can be a good option.
- **Customer service:** Many shopping centres, shops and service companies are looking for staff to work in customer service or sales.
- **Other options:** Opportunities can also be found in multinational companies, in sectors such as construction or digitalisation.

JOB SEARCH AND LOCAL LABOUR MARKET IN SPAIN

Before starting your job search you should **know your legal status in the country**, have your empadronamiento and NIE (foreigner's identification number) as well as your national insurance number if necessary.

If you are a citizen of the European Union or of member states of the Agreement on the European Economic Area (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and Switzerland, you can freely access the Spanish labour market with the same rights. You can stay for three months in the country looking for a job or establishing yourself on your own. After this period, you must register with the Central Register of Foreigners and a registration certificate will be issued to you.

If you are a **citizen of a country that does not belong to the European Union**: you must be in possession of a residence and work visa. In order to be authorised to reside and work, a series of requirements must be met: The national employment situation must allow hiring or the employer must be able to accredit the difficulty of hiring; the employer must be registered with the Social Security and up to date with the Social Security and the Tax Agency; and the worker must not be in an irregular situation in Spain, must not have a criminal record and, if applicable, must have the qualifications or professional qualifications required to exercise the profession in Spain.

If you have a **student visa** in Spain, you can work up to 30 hours a week, as long as the work does not interfere with your studies and complies with current regulations for foreign students.



If you have **refugee status in Spain**: you have the right to access the Spanish labour market six months after formalising your application as a refugee. The authorisation to work will be specified in the international protection applicant document commonly known as the *red card*.

Once the first 6 months have elapsed and you have obtained a favourable decision on your asylum application, you can access the Spanish labour market under the same conditions as other Spanish citizens.

Practical tips for job search:

Once you have all the legal issues resolved you should:

- Prepare your CV and your professional profile: Create a CV adapted to the Spanish format, with photo (optional), education, experience and competences.
- Write a clear and brief cover letter.
- If necessary, you should improve your Spanish, start the procedures for the homologation of your qualifications or take training or qualification courses to help you access the labour market in Spain.

Remember to take into account the sectors of greatest demand that we have described above (services, agriculture, construction, etc.) as well as those listed in the Catalogue of Occupations that are Difficult to Cover.

In Spain, it is very important to actively search for employment, through the different existing channels:

1. **Job portals:** InfoJobs, LinkedIn, Indeed, Job Today, etc.
2. Consult offers at **SEPE** (Servicio Público de empleo Estatal) and **EURES** for European mobility.
3. Contact **local companies** directly (self-candidacy) or through **migrant associations**.
4. Send your CV to the different **temporary employment agencies** or recruitment agencies.
5. Attend **job fairs** and networking events.
6. If you are a university student, you can look for information about job offers on university websites or even ask your teachers or classmates.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN SPAIN

In Spain, there are various programmes to promote employment training and help citizens, especially the most vulnerable sectors (including migrants), to enter the labour market.

SEPE (State Public Employment Service) Programmes

Free vocational training courses: For unemployed and active workers, including foreigners with valid permits, they offer nationally recognised certificates of professionalism, both face-to-face, blended and online. The subjects are very varied (hospitality, commerce, transport, social and health care, etc...).

Specific programmes for vulnerable groups: Aimed at foreigners at risk of social exclusion, such as immigrants in a regularised situation. They offer employment guidance, basic training, and support for labour market integration.

EURES NETWORK (European Employment Network)

For Europeans, there is a European cooperation network that facilitates the free movement of workers and labour mobility between the countries of the European Union (EU), Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. It provides information and advice to workers seeking employment in other EU countries and to companies looking for staff in Europe. It also has a job portal to facilitate mobility and access to employment in Europe.

Regional and Local Programmes

All the autonomous communities (Catalonia, Madrid, Andalusia, Valencia...) offer occupational training plans (courses adapted to local demands), as well as employment guidance and integration programmes for immigrants.

Non-Governmental Organisations and Associations

- Immigrant associations and NGOs offer training and employment for foreigners, some examples are: Spanish Red Cross: Basic training, labour orientation, intermediation; Accem: Comprehensive support for migrants; Cepaim Foundation: Social and labour integration projects.

Dual Training Programmes: combine training and paid employment, especially in sectors such as hospitality, industry and commerce. This type of programme is ideal for foreigners with residence and work permits.

Homologation and Vocational Training: To access qualified jobs, it is important to homologate foreign qualifications (educacionyfp.gob.es). In addition, there are specific training programmes in collaboration with professional associations.



Practical Recommendations

- ✓ Check with your local employment office and ask for guidance on courses and programmes.
- ✓ Take advantage of SEPE online resources and regional initiatives.

-
- ✓ Consider dual training or training contracts to gain experience.
 - ✓ Contact immigrant associations to access opportunities tailored to your profile.
 - ✓ Create your support network and professional contacts

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS CREATION IN SPAIN

According to the latest studies, the majority of new companies or entrepreneurs that have been created in Spain have been migrants. Spain is an attractive destination for entrepreneurship and it is not usually complicated. Many international students choose to work as freelancers, but this requires additional authorisation.

The requirements vary depending on whether the entrepreneur is a citizen of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA) or comes from a third (non-European) country.

EU/EEA citizens

- **Residence and work permit:** Not required. EU/EEA citizens can reside and work freely in Spain, including self-employed persons and entrepreneurs.
- **Basic obligations:**
 - Obtain the **NIE** (Foreigner's Identification Number).
 - Be registered in the municipality of residence.
 - Register with the **Social Security** and obtain a number.
 - Registering as **self-employed** or setting up a **company** with the standard procedures.

2. Third-country nationals (non-Europeans)

- **Authorisation for residence and self-employed work:** Requirement to exercise economic activities.
- **Access routes:**
 - From the country of origin: Apply for a self-employment visa or a visa for entrepreneurs if the project is innovative and has high economic potential.
 - From Spain: If you are already legally resident, you can apply for an initial authorisation for residence and self-employment.
- **General requirements:**
 - Present a viable business plan and demonstrate its technical, economic and professional feasibility.
 - Provide proof of sufficient financial means for the development of the business.
 - To have the necessary insurance and licences for the activity.
 - Comply with tax and labour requirements (registration with the Tax Authorities and Social Security).

Once you have decided to become an entrepreneur, you can either become self-employed or set up your own company (SL, SA...).

I Self-employed worker (self-employed).

The common steps for all:

- 1** Obtain the NIE and Social Security number.
- 2** Register with the Tax Authorities: File form 036 or 037 to notify the start of the activity.
- 3** Register with the RETA (Special Regime for Self-Employed Workers) and start paying social security contributions.

4 Apply for sectoral licences or permits (depending on the type of activity).

5 Keep proper accounts and comply with tax obligations (IRPF, VAT).

Specific requirements for non-European migrants:

- They must have prior authorisation to undertake, which includes:
 - Sound business plan (market analysis, financial plan, economic impact).
 - Justification of financial means (a minimum amount may be required).
 - Demonstrate professional experience or qualifications for the activity.
 - In some cases, they may qualify for self-employed status (for persons who have been in Spain for at least 3 years and fulfil the requirements).

2. Business start-ups (companies)

Setting up a company (e.g. a Sociedad Limitada - S.L.) involves more formal procedures and is suitable for businesses with higher projection or risk.

◆ Common steps:

1 Define the legal form: Sociedad Limitada (S.L.), Sociedad Anónima (S.A.), cooperative, etc.

2 Obtain the NIE of foreign partners.

3 Apply for the negative certification of the name at the Central Mercantile Register.

4 Draft the articles of association and go to a notary to execute the deed of incorporation.

5 Obtain the provisional NIF and register with the tax authorities.

6 Register the company in the Commercial Register.

7 Apply for the definitive NIF.

8 Register the company and its employees with the Social Security.

9 Comply with tax obligations: Corporate Tax, VAT, withholdings.

◆ Requirements for non-Europeans:

- If they do not have previous residence, they must apply:
 - Entrepreneur visa (for innovative projects) managed by the Large Companies Unit (UGE-CE).
 - Authorisation for residence and self-employment (for more general activities).

They must demonstrate the feasibility of the project and have the necessary resources.

8. SUPPORT NETWORKS AND ASSOCIATIONS.

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS THAT SUPPORT THE FOREIGN POPULATION.

Spain, Italy and Lithuania share a common basis in terms of policies and resources for the care and inclusion of foreigners. As Member States of the European Union and signatories to international human rights conventions, all three countries offer a similar set of resources aimed at ensuring the protection, humanitarian assistance and integration of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and other persons in a situation of mobility.

In all three countries there are institutions with direct or associated presence that offer comprehensive support to migrants, such as the Red Cross, IOM, UNHCR, Caritas or the Jesuit Refugee Service, guaranteeing homogeneous attention in different national contexts.



Red Cross

- **Red Cross:** offers a wide range of services for migrants in need. These include basic assistance such as food, clothing and health care, as well as temporary shelter in centres or flats, where legal guidance, psychological support and training are also provided. The organisation develops activities to

facilitate social integration, such as language classes, advice on finding employment and housing, and accompaniment in family reunification processes. It also provides

specific attention to seasonal workers, unaccompanied minors and people who wish to return voluntarily to their country of origin.

Spanish Red Cross: <https://www.cruzroja.es/>

Croce Rossa Italiana (Italian Red Cross): <https://www.cri.it/>

Lietuvos Raudonasis kryžius (Lithuanian Red Cross): <https://www.redcross.lt/>

- **IOM (International Organisation for Migration):** provides migrants with key services such as humanitarian assistance (food, shelter, health), support for voluntary return and reintegration, legal orientation and help with migration procedures. It also provides psychosocial care, protection for victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors, access to education, health and job training, as well as social and cultural integration activities.

IOM Spain: <https://spain.iom.int/>

IOM Italy: <https://eca.iom.int/italy>

IOM Lithuania: <https://lithuania.iom.int/>

- **UNHCR** offers a wide range of services to protect and assist refugees, displaced and stateless persons. In emergency situations, it provides shelter, food, water, medical care, help with family reunification and ensures their safety. It also works to safeguard human rights, working with governments to improve laws and systems to enable access to documentation, education, employment and basic services. In addition, it promotes durable solutions such as safe return, local integration or resettlement in third countries.

Web: <https://www.acnur.org/>

- **Caritas:** offers a wide range of services for migrants focusing on reception, orientation and social integration. Its main support includes legal and administrative advice on immigration matters, basic social care (food, temporary accommodation, clothing), psychosocial accompaniment and training and job placement programmes. It also promotes spaces for intercultural encounters and language classes.

Caritas Spain: <https://www.caritas.es/>

Caritas Italy: <https://www.caritas.it/>

Caritas Lithuania: <https://www.caritas.lt/>

- **Jesuit Refugee Service:** offers comprehensive support to refugees, asylum seekers and forced migrants, focusing on reception, protection and promotion of their rights. Its services include legal and psychosocial care, guidance on the asylum process, accompaniment in situations of vulnerability, educational and vocational training programmes, as well as support for labour and social integration.

Web: <https://jrs.net/en/home/>

- **Resources for European students abroad:** <https://www.european-funding-guide.eu/>

Support resources for migrants in ITALY

In Italy, migrant students can apply for a study visa (D visa) and a residence permit for vocational training or university, and then apply for a tax code and health insurance, with the help of "Welcome Offices" in universities such as NABA or Trento that help with these procedures. NGOs such as Centro Astalli (JRS Italy) offer Italian language classes, accommodation, legal advice, medical and humanitarian care for asylum seekers. Universities publish scholarships for foreign students (including refugees), both merit-based and financial

aid, and the Italian government offers its own scholarship programmes. There are also networks such as Rete degli Studenti Medi that promote student integration and support, including second-hand book markets.

In addition to the resources mentioned above, Italy has other Non-Governmental Organisations dealing with migration issues.

- **"Rifugiato a casa mia":** a project of Caritas Italiana that promotes the home hosting of refugees or persons under international protection, facilitating their stay with families for several months in order to favour their social integration through daily and community tools.

Web: <https://www.caritasambrosiana.it/aree-di-bisogno/stranieri/rifugiatoacasamia>

- **INTERSOS:** provides protection, health care, training and job placement for migrants and refugees.

Web: <https://www.intersos.org/en/what-we-do/italy/>

- **Welcome Association Italia (WAI):** its main services include assistance with immigration procedures (visas, residence permits, registration), private health insurance valid for residence permits, legal and tax advice and intercultural mediation.

Web: <https://www.waitaly.net/en/>

- **Jumamap:** is a national platform that maps services for asylum seekers and refugees, including legal, health, social and training assistance, locating resources available throughout the territory in several languages.

Web: <https://www.jumamap.it/it/>

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- **Refugees Welcome Italia:** its main service is "home-sharing": connecting local individuals or families with a room available in their home with refugees, thus facilitating accommodation, cultural exchange and access to the local community.

Web: <https://refugees-welcome.it/>

Resources to support migrants in the Tempio Pausania region

- **The Mediterranean Association:** is active in promoting cultural integration between foreign residents and the local community. The association organises cultural and social activities and language workshops, and performs a social intermediation function, helping foreigners to integrate into the social and economic fabric of Tempio Pausania.
- **The La Quercia cooperative:** manages various activities in the field of social services, and has an important function of reception for migrants and refugees. Its services include reception centres, psychological support activities and job guidance. The cooperative is also involved in projects that aim to foster social inclusion and support for vulnerable people, including foreigners.
- **The Right to Asylum association:** is active in providing support to refugees and immigrants arriving in Sardinia. They offer legal assistance, psychological support, and orientation activities to local services. In addition, they promote awareness-raising activities for citizenship on immigrants' rights and the importance of integration.
- **The Sardegna Accoglienza project:** is a network of associations and cooperatives that deals with the reception and integration of migrants and refugees in Sardinia. Although it is a regional initiative, it collaborates with the Municipality of Tempio Pausania and other local realities to offer reception services, legal guidance, and integration support.

Resources to support migrants in LITHUANIA

In Lithuania, migrant students can access a **national D-type visa** or a **temporary residence permit via MIGRIS**, managed by the Migration Department, which allows them to study and work, and to renew it for up to two years or more for master's or doctoral studies. The **MiCenter (IOM-Lithuania)** offers free personalised attention: legal advice, academic and professional guidance, emotional support and support groups. Several universities have **international offices** (Erasmus+, recognition, scholarships, integration) and collaborate with NGOs to support exiled students. NGOs such as **Refugee Council** or **Caritas Lithuania** provide legal advice, humanitarian and educational assistance. In addition, networks such as the **Erasmus Student Network** and cultural centres (such as the one in Kaunas) organise integration, cultural and social support activities to strengthen student inclusion.

Resources include:

The main associations active in Lithuania are the Red Cross, Caritas, International Organisation for Migration, mentioned earlier in the guide.

WWW.STUDYIN.LT - national non-commercial information and support centre for students wishing to study in Lithuania.

artscape.lt - Through forms of professional art, we create and develop inclusion strategies and spaces for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, aiming toward a vision of an open society. Organises refugee week <https://artscape.lt/en/>

Save children Lithuania - for Ukrainian refugees' child and family support - <https://gelbekitvaikus.lt/>

Food bank - distributes collected food aid to low-income families and individuals, unemployed persons, at-risk families and their children, people with disabilities and seniors living on limited incomes, large or single-parent families, and others in need. Assists low-income families and individuals, unemployed persons, at-risk families and their children,

people with disabilities and seniors living on limited incomes, large or single-parent families, and others in need. <https://www.maistobankas.lt/>

Kaunas Cultural Centre of Various Nations - ethnic minority centre - <https://154kulturos.lt/>

NGO 'Diversity Development Group' (DDG) - non-profit organisation with an objective to carry out scientific, applied and infrastructural projects in the fields of human rights, education, equal opportunities, diversity, migration and integration - <https://www.diversitygroup.lt/en/>

Support resources for migrants in SPAIN

In Spain, migrant students have the right to compulsory schooling and can access scholarships and study visas for vocational training and university. There are public centres such as the CEPIs that offer Spanish classes, school support, legal and employment guidance. In addition, NGOs such as CEAR, Accem or CEPAIM provide accommodation, legal advice, training and psychological support. There are also university offices for foreigners and, in some cases, private agencies that help with paperwork, visas and accommodation.

The most prominent resources for migrants are:



CEAR (Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado)

include temporary shelter and accommodation, legal advice specialising in international protection, psychological care, language and employment training, as well as social counselling.

- **CEAR (Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado):** provides comprehensive care for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in vulnerable situations. Its services

Web: <https://www.cear.es/>

- **ACCEM (Asociación Comisión Católica Española de Migraciones):** its main services include temporary accommodation, management of flats and reception centres; legal and juridical assistance in asylum and immigration processes; psychosocial support and psychological care programmes; socio-labour insertion, with personalised itineraries, professional orientation, training and help in finding employment; financial aid, support in documentation, homologation of diplomas and accompaniment in health procedures.

Web: <https://www.accem.es/>

- **Red Acoge:** facilitates migrants' access to social assistance, legal, health, housing, educational, cultural and leisure services.

Web: <https://redacoge.org/>

- **NGO Rescate Internacional:** offers comprehensive care for migrants and refugees, with a special focus on women, minors and LGTBIQ+ groups. Its services include reception and accommodation, legal advice on asylum and immigration procedures, psychological support and intercultural mediation, as well as job orientation and training for socio-occupational integration.

Web: <https://ongrescate.org/>

- **Médecins du Monde Spain:** offers health mediation, favouring referral to public health care in cases of emergency, prevention or chronicity, regardless of administrative status. It also provides psychosocial and mental health support through emotional accompaniment and specialised care.

Web: <https://www.medicosdelmundo.org/>

- **White Cross Foundation:** offers shelter and accommodation services, specialised humanitarian care -including for victims of trafficking and social exclusion-, psychosocial and health support, as well as socio-occupational insertion and vocational training programmes.

Web: <https://www.fundacioncruzblanca.org/>

- **Provivienda:** offers migrants temporary housing services with social accompaniment, access to affordable rental housing (for those with residence and work permits), as well as social and legal guidance on housing and immigration issues, including for those whose situation has not been regularised.

Web: <https://provivienda.org/>

Support associations for migrants in Granada

- **Immigrant Assistance Service (SAI):** provides information and legal and social guidance, support in regularisation procedures, registration, family regrouping and homologation of diplomas, and also acts in cases of racial discrimination or xenophobia. It also collaborates with other entities in training, translation and interpretation, and community integration activities.

Web:

<https://www.granada.org/inicio.nsf/xtelefonodetal?open&unid=D4AB6D08EE8238C5C1257370003801EA>

- **Asociación SARA E - Solidaridad, Apoyo y Recursos para la Autonomía y Empoderamiento (Solidarity, Support and Resources for Autonomy and Empowerment):** specialises in accompanying migrant women who face situations

of particular vulnerability, such as gender-based violence, human trafficking or social exclusion. SARAЕ offers legal and employment advice, psychological support, empowerment spaces and training workshops aimed at personal and economic autonomy.

Web: <https://asociacionsarae.org/index.html>

- **OCREM:** offers shelter services to families in vulnerable situations, including accommodation in normalisation flats or foster homes.

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