

Migrants and refugees in Northern Italy: focus on access to work

This snapshot offers some insights on the personal, educational and professional background of migrants and refugees in Northern Italy (Piedmont and Liguria regions) as well as the drivers of migration. It also looks into their experiences regarding access to work in Italy with a focus on the differences between youth and older respondents. This snapshot aims to contribute towards a solid evidence base to inform targeted responses on the ground, as well as advocacy efforts related to the situation of refugees and migrants in Italy.

Key findings

- The top 3 reasons for migration mentioned by respondents are 1) violence, 2) personal/family reasons, and 3) economic reasons.
- Unemployment in country of departure is higher among young respondents (18-25), while unemployment in Italy is higher among older respondents (above 25).
- The majority of the respondents are not currently working (72%), and did not receive sufficient information on access to work, which is considered the main challenge in Italy by 68% of the respondents who decided to settle in the country.
- Optimism about finding work in Italy is slightly higher among older people.

Profiles

The snapshot is based on 104 interviews conducted face-to-face in five different locations in Northern Italy between January and May 2021. Figure 1 shows the locations where the interviews were conducted. More than half of the respondents (63%) were interviewed in Ventimiglia (n=35) and Turin (n=30), key cities and border areas where migrants and refugees gather.

Figure 1. Place of interview



The respondents were mostly men (93 men and 11 women). The data was disaggregated into two age groups (18-25 and above 25), with most respondents (67/104) being over 25.

Figure 2. Age and gender

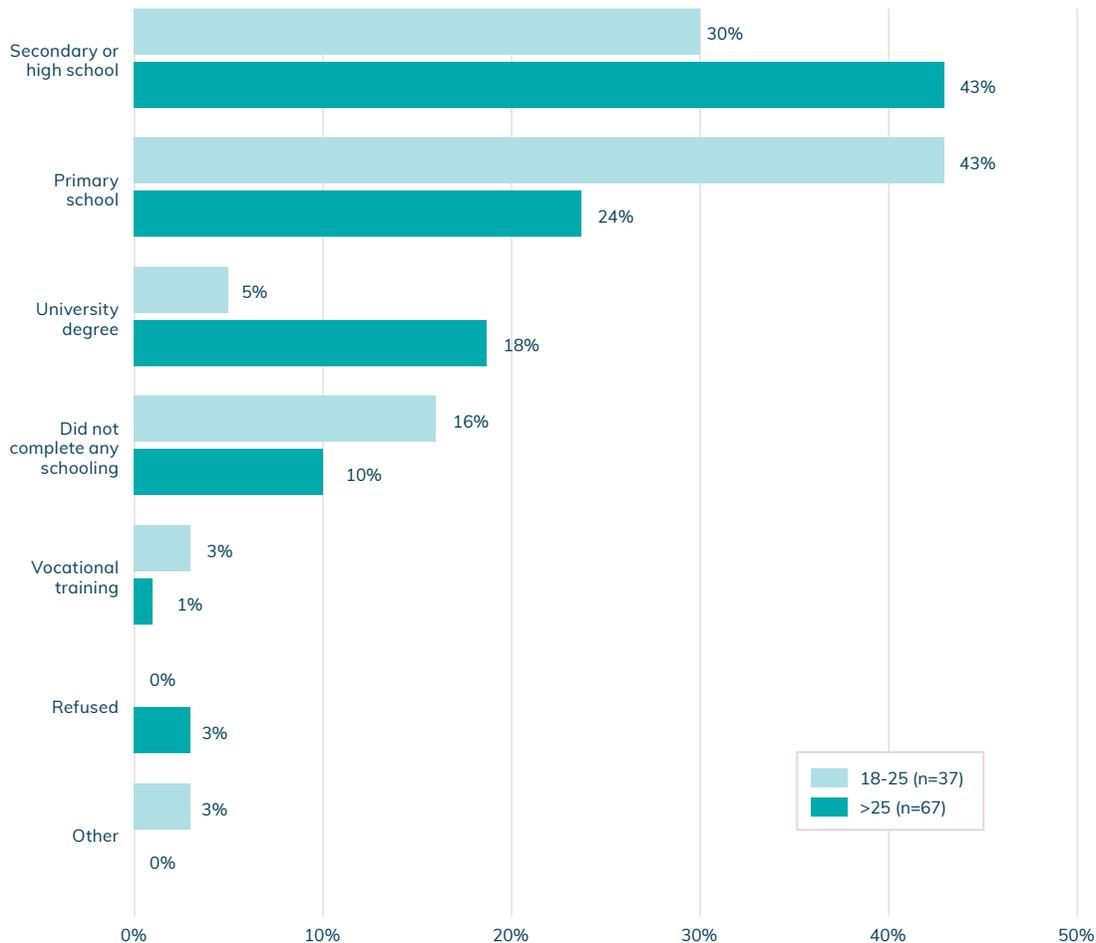
Age	Male	Female	Grand Total
18-25	35	2	37
>25	58	9	67
Grand Total	93	11	104

The respondents were of various nationalities, with the largest groups from Pakistan (n=19), Nigeria (n=11) and Somalia (n=10). While the older group has a higher proportion of respondents from Pakistan, Algeria and Tunisia, the youth group has a higher proportion of Somalis, Moroccans and Nigerians.

Education level in country of departure is lower among younger people

The majority of all respondents (63%, n=65) has a level of education corresponding to primary/secondary school, with a low percentage of respondents having completed university (13%, n=14). The results of the analysis also show that education level is lower among younger people. 59% of 18-25s had not completed secondary school, compared to 34% of over 25s (having either no education or only primary school education).

Figure 3. Level of education

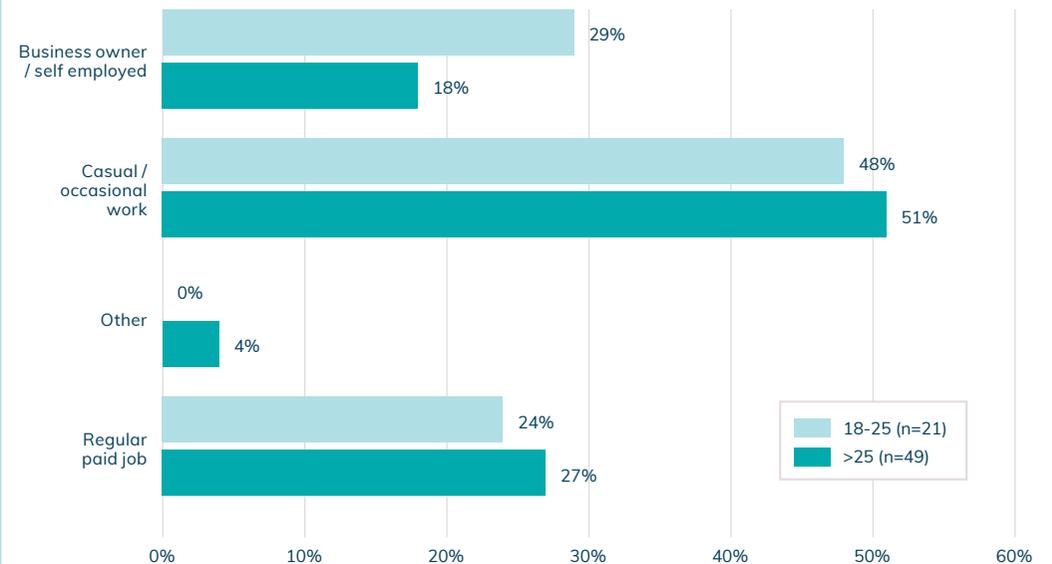


Precarious working conditions in country of departure

Access to work and livelihoods opportunities in country of departure can contribute to shape people's decision-making around migration.

Two-thirds of respondents said they were making money before starting their migration journey (n=70/104), including a much higher proportion of over 25s (86% compared to 57%). Among those working, only one-quarter (n=18) had a regular paid job while the biggest share (50%, n=35) is composed of migrants and refugees having precarious jobs (i.e. casual/occasional job). The younger age group more frequently said they had been self-employed.

Figure 4. Type of employment

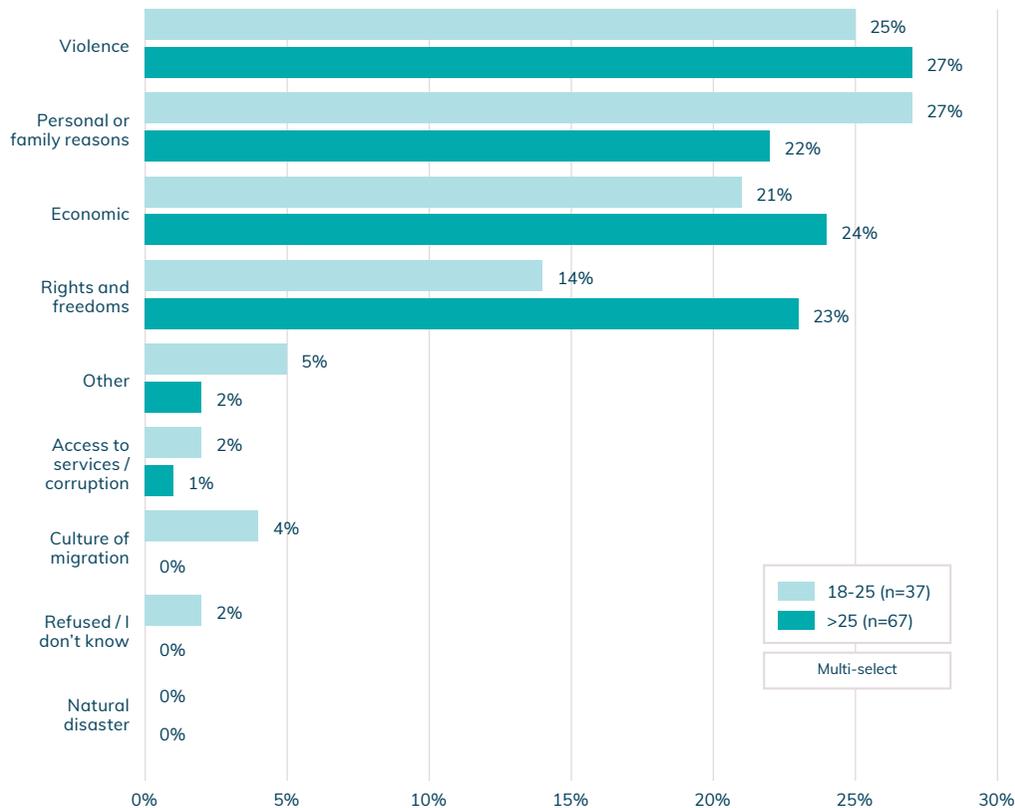


Refugees and migrants moved due to violence, and for economic and personal and/or family reasons

The data show that people are moving for more than one reason. We have seen from Figure 4 how the majority of the respondents had precarious jobs before their departure towards Europe, and among the top 3 nationalities interviewed, there are countries with either deteriorating economic conditions, or instable social and political environments.

All this reflects the reasons mentioned by respondents for migrating. When asked “Why did you leave your country?” the most common answer was “violence” (n=41) followed by “personal/family reasons” (n=37) and “economic reasons” (n=36). Figure 5 below show that the older group more frequently reported violence and economic reason as a driver while the younger group mentioned more frequently personal/family reasons.

Figure 5. Drivers for migration



The second part of the snapshot focuses on the challenges related to access to work of the respondents who decided to remain in Italy (n=68).

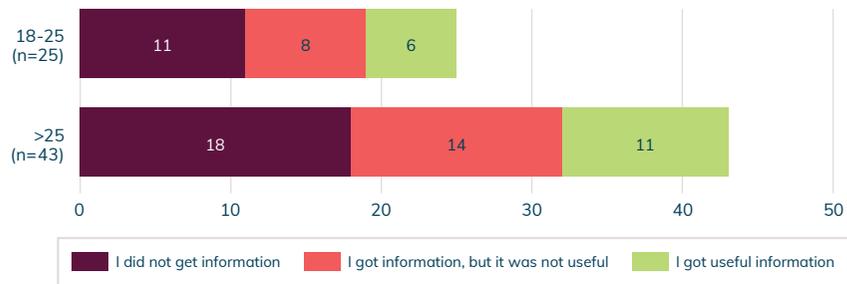
Access to work is perceived as the main challenge in Italy

Access to decent work and livelihoods opportunities are paramount to ensure migrants' integration and wellbeing. The respondents who intended to stay in Italy were asked about the major challenges of living in Italy, and the most common, by a long way, was access to work (n=46/68).

What are the major challenges in Italy?	n
Access to decent work	46
The language	20
Access to adequate housing	17
Administrative procedures	16
Access to asylum	14
Other	10
Access to education	5
Overcoming the stress of my migration experience	4
Safety	3
Understanding and adjusting to the culture	1

Asked about the information they received on access to work, 29 of 68 did not receive reliable and sufficient information, 22 did not find the information useful.

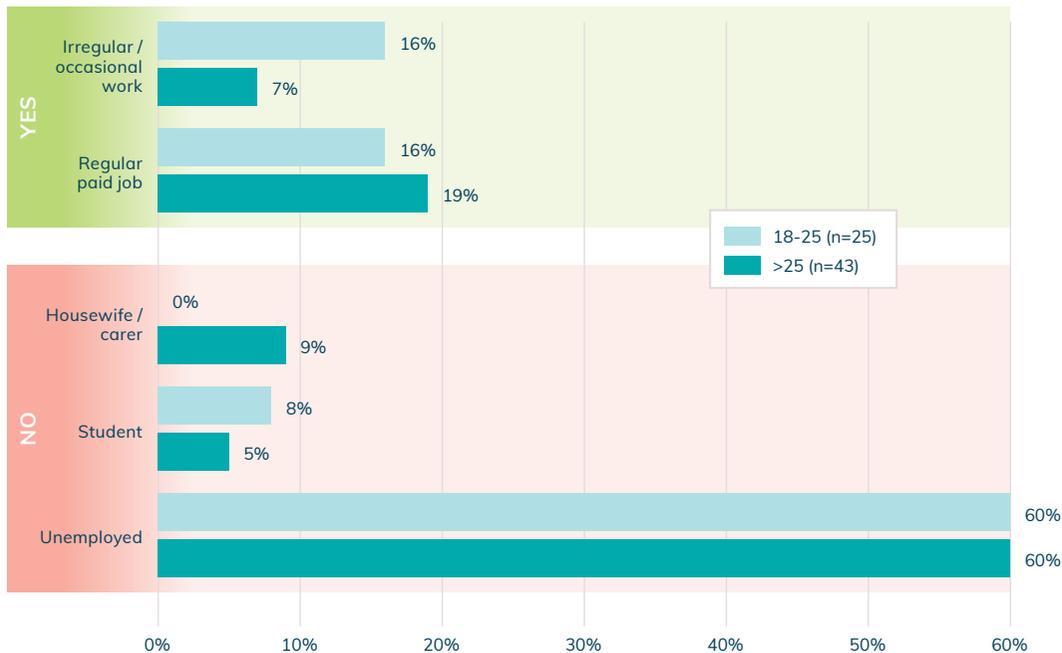
Figure 6. Information received on access to work



High rates of unemployment among refugees and migrants settling in Italy

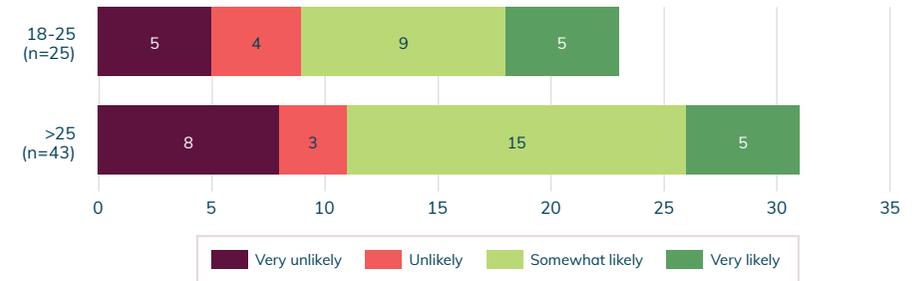
72% of the respondents reported being unemployed in Italy (n=49) and 12 of them had a regular job at the time of the interview. While the youth group was more frequently not working before departing (perhaps because of their age), in Italy the level of unemployment was equal between both age groups. The youth group was more frequently engaged in irregular or occasional work.

Figure 7. Are you working now?



Respondents did not appear very optimistic about finding a job in Italy. The most common answer was that it was somewhat likely (n=24). Older respondents were slightly more optimistic about finding work 65% (20/31) consider it likely, to some extent, compared to 14/23 respondents aged 18-25 (61%).

Figure 8. Likelihood of finding job



*14 respondents refused to answer or said they didn't know (2 between 18-25 and 12 above 25).



4Mi

The [Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative](https://www.mixedmigration.org/4mi) (4Mi) is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements.

This snapshot is based on a customized survey targeting refugees and migrants in primarily destination countries, and focusing on experiences in the country of interview, which was conducted in Italy in early 2021. Findings derived from the surveyed sample should not be used to make inferences about the total population of refugees and migrants, as the sample is not representative. For more information on 4Mi tools, data and analysis, go to: www.mixedmigration.org/4mi