

## 2. POPULATION AND FAMILY

At the end of 2010, the resident population in Sicily numbered 5,051,075 inhabitants, accounting for 8.3% of the national total, and exceeding the previous year's total by 8,073. Over the last year the number of deceased (47,975) fell below the number of births (48,083), whilst the migratory balance (109,182 officially registered in Sicily against 101,207 deletions) remains positive, and shows an increase over 2009.

In 2009, the last year available, there were 23,290 weddings in Sicily (corresponding to 4.6 legal unions per 1,000 residents), 23.8% of these (5,544) being celebrated with a civil marriage. There was a slight overall fall of 4.3% in legal marriages compared to the previous year in Sicily, there being a decrease of 5.65% of weddings celebrated with a religious rite, and a slight increase of 0.3% for civil marriages. In Italy as a whole, over the last year, the trend was towards fewer marriages (-6.5% of total marriages) as a result of a fall in both religious (-7.2% when compared with 2008) and civil marriages (-5.4%).

More specifically, up to December 31st, 2010, the population of Sicily had increased by 0.6% over the previous year, 2009. There was a -3.9% fall in the number of births (-1,134), and a -3.1% fall in the number of deaths (-1,554). The natural component showed a positive balance of 108 units, a reversal of trend when compared to 2009. The birth-rate stood at 9.5 units per 1,000 inhabitants, not too far from the national average of 9.3. The mortality-rate was 9.5 per 1,000 inhabitants, in line with data for the country as a whole, lower than the Centre-north (10.1), but higher than the overall figure for the South and the islands (9.1).

In 2010 there were 141,904 foreign residents in Sicily, representing 2.8% of the overall population on the island, and a 11% increase compared to the previous year, of 14,594 units registered at the General Registry Offices in Sicily. The index of the elderly in Sicily reveals that there were 122.2 elderly persons (over the age of 64 years) for every 100 young people (under the age of 15 years), a figure that was considerably lower than the corresponding figure (144.5) for the nation as a whole.

Statistical analysis reveals a slow, but constant increase in the population of Sicily, an increase of 6.8 units per 1,000 residents over the year 2006, and a steady increase in the number of foreign citizens resident in Sicily, from 78,242 in 2006 to 141,904 in 2010 (+81.4%); the proportion of minors remains more or less constant at about 20% in the period 2006-2009 (last available data).

The ageing process of the population of Sicily can be observed in the number of elderly people (over the age of 74 years) as a percentage of the resident population (a figure which went from 8.6% in 2006 to 9.4% in 2010), whereas the percentage of the resident population aged under 6 years in the

same period, was more or less stable (going from 6% to 5.9%). In 2010, 24.7% of the island's population resided in the Province of Palermo (1,249,577), 21.6% in Catania (1,090,101) and 13% in Messina (653,737), whereas considerably lower figures were registered in the Provinces of Caltanissetta (5.4%, 271,729) and Enna (3.4%). With regard to birth-rate, data shows figures that are equal to, or higher than, 10 births per 1,000 inhabitants in the Provinces of Catania (10.0) and Palermo (10.2). In the Provinces of Ragusa, Siracusa, Caltanissetta and Agrigento the birth-rate is above 9 per 1,000 inhabitants, whereas Trapani (8.5) and Messina (8.6 per 1,000 inhabitants) again find themselves in last place. On the other hand, analysis of the mortality-rate reveals a higher incidence in Messina (10.6 per 1,000 inhabitants), Enna (10.8) and Trapani (10.0), with similar figures for Caltanissetta and Agrigento, whereas Catania had the lowest rate (8.7 per 1,000).

The migratory balance showed positive values in most Provinces except for Enna (-1.5 per 1,000 inhabitants), Caltanissetta (-0.7 per 1,000 residents) and Agrigento (-0.4). With regard to the resident population the highest proportion of foreigners was to be found in the Province of Ragusa (6.5%), a further increase over the year 2009, and in Messina (3.6%), whereas Caltanissetta (2.2%) and Enna (1.7%) showed the lowest figures. The other Provinces had percentage figures in line with the averages for Sicily (2.8%).

Due to their greater population density the Provinces with the highest number of weddings were naturally Palermo, Catania and Messina (14,166 marriages in all, accounting for 60.8% of the total). The highest number of civil weddings were recorded in the Provinces of Catania (30.1%) and Siracusa (32.9%); Messina (24%) and Palermo (24.3%) had relatively fewer weddings, but one wedding out of every five was still a civil wedding. Agrigento (12.7%) and Trapani (14.8%) had the lowest figures.

The indices of the elderly recorded in the Provinces of Catania (107.5) and Palermo (113.4) were relatively close to 100, whilst much higher figures were recorded in Trapani (137.3), Enna (133.8) and especially in Messina with 153.9, a figure which exceeded the average corresponding national figure of 144.5 by 9.4 points and the figure for Sicily (122.2) by 31.7 points.

## ***Glossary***

**Birth-rate:** ratio between the number of live births in one year and the total average resident population (multiplied by 1000).

**Deletion-rate:** ratio between the number of those struck off at the registry office in a given year, and the average total resident population, multiplied by 1000.

**Deletions:** can be divided into:

- Deletions abroad (i.e. the number of persons struck off following transfer of residence abroad)
- Deletions domestically (i.e. the number of persons struck off following transfer of residence to another Italian Municipality)

**Family:** a body of people living together and related or linked by matrimonial ties, affinity, adoption, guardianship or emotionally.

**General Registry Office:** a continuous system of registration of the population, constantly up-dated by the Communal administration via registration of births by resident parents, deletions because of death and changes of residence.

**Index of child-dependence:** percentage ratio between persons aged 0-14 years and persons aged 15-64 years.

**Index of dependence of the elderly:** percentage ratio between those aged over 64 years and those aged 15-64 years.

**Migratory balance:** surplus or deficit of registrations of immigrants from abroad (or another Municipality) compared to the deletions of registrations for emigrants abroad (or to another Municipality).

**Mortality-rate:** ratio between the number of deaths in one year and the average total resident population, multiplied by 1000.

**Natural balance:** surplus or deficit of births compared to deaths.

**Index of the elderly:** percentage ratio between those aged 65 years and over and those aged between 0-14 years.

**Registered persons:** can be divided into:

- Registered from abroad (i.e. the number of persons registered following transfer of residence from abroad)
- Registered domestically (i.e. the number of persons registered following transfer of residence from another Italian Municipality)

**Registration-rate:** ratio of number of registered persons in one year to the average total resident population, multiplied by 1000.

**Total dependence index:** percentage ratio between persons who are not autonomous for demographic reasons (aged 0-14 and over 64) and persons who are presumed to be working and supporting them (aged 15-64)

## **Further reading**

### Publications

Italian Statistical Yearbook – 2011 – ISTAT  
Causes of mortality in the Regions– Years 2000-2003 – ISTAT  
Deaths – demographic and social characteristics – 2002 - ISTAT  
Weddings, separations and divorces – 2008 – ISTAT  
Having children in Italy – 2002 - ISTAT  
Immigration Statistics Dossier 2011 – CARITAS  
Compendium of official statistics for domestic administration

## **Internet**

[www.censimenti.istat.it/](http://www.censimenti.istat.it/)

14° General Census of the Population and Habitations – data consultation

<http://www.istat.it>

Daily life in 2008 - Multiscopo survey of the family "Aspects of daily life"  
The foreign population living in Italy – demographic and social characteristics – 2008  
Foreigners in surveys of the labour-force  
Italian Statistical Yearbook 2011 – Chapter 2: “Population”  
Income and living conditions – 2008  
Preliminary estimates of death by cause in the Italian Regions –2004

[demo.istat.it](http://demo.istat.it)

Population and demography: data-warehouse  
Tables regarding mortality in the resident population – year 2004

[www.minori.it](http://www.minori.it)

Thematic site of documentation and analysis of childhood and adolescence

[www.caritas.it](http://www.caritas.it)

ITALY - Resident foreigners  
New statistical data about Italians in the world

[www.alef-fvg.it](http://www.alef-fvg.it)

Data about immigration

[www.starnet.unioncamere.it](http://www.starnet.unioncamere.it)

Thematic area – population – analysis and data

[www.cnel.it](http://www.cnel.it)

Data-bank of territorial statistics – demography and foreign component of population

Data-bank immigration