



Migration statistics **2018–2022**

Opportunities for European Union and third country citizens* to enter and live in Estonia



A European Union citizen and his or her family member

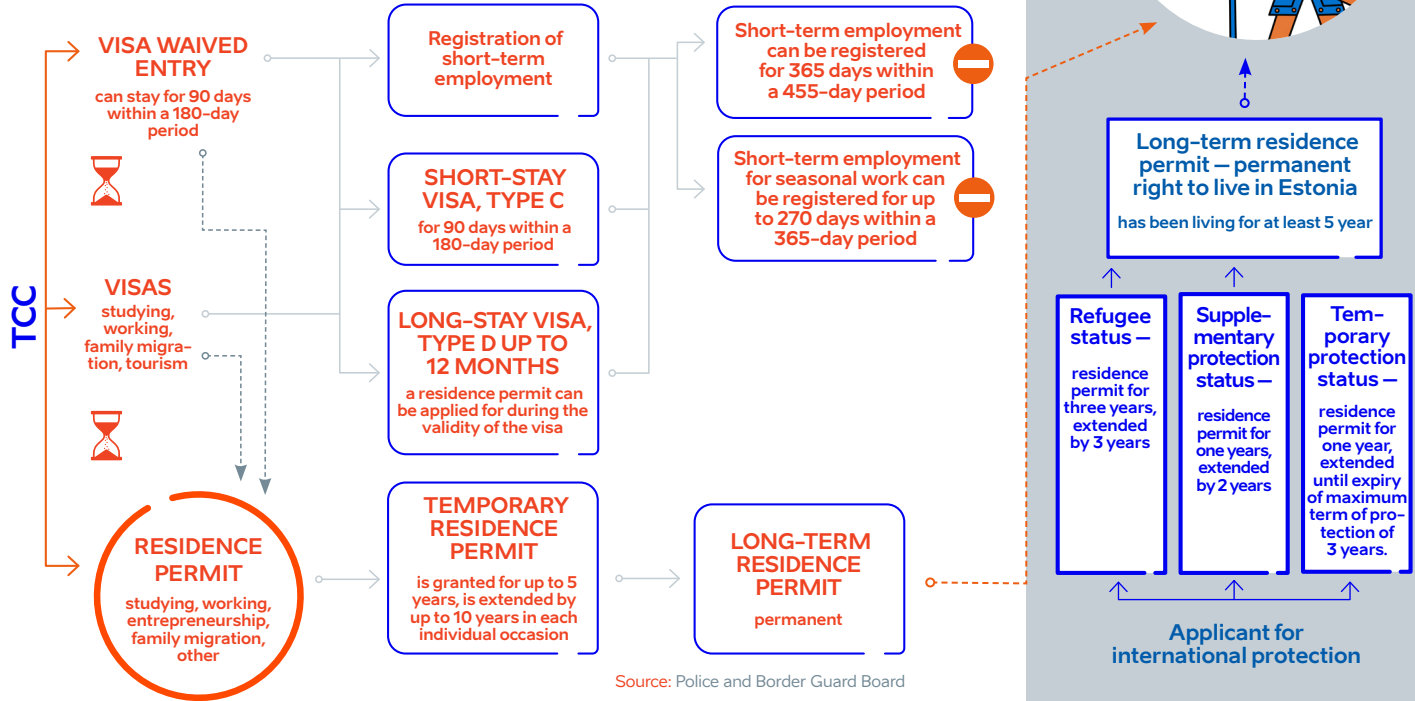
Right to stay — up to 3 months

Temporary right of residence — up to 5 years

Permanent right of residence — no fixed period



* hereinafter the 'TCCs'



Source: Police and Border Guard Board

This overview of migration statistics 2018–2022 provides answers to the following questions:

- What characterizes the emigration and return of Estonian citizens?
- Which foreign country has the most Estonian citizens living there?
- To whom, for what purpose, and how many visas were issued?
- How many registrations of short-term employment were there and in what fields?
- Who came to live in Estonia and what were the reasons?
- Where did the foreigners settle?
- Who were granted long-term residence permits and the right of permanent residence?
- Who became Estonian citizens?
- Who became e-residents?
- Who were given international protection? How many were given temporary protection in Estonia?
- Who were expelled from Estonia?
- How many foreigners participated in the Settle in Estonia program?

The overview was prepared by the **Estonian Ministry of Culture** and the **Estonian Contact Point** for the European Migration Network.
Designed by **PauPau Design**.



KULTUURIMINISTEERIUM



Euroopa Liit
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Eesti
tuleviku heaks



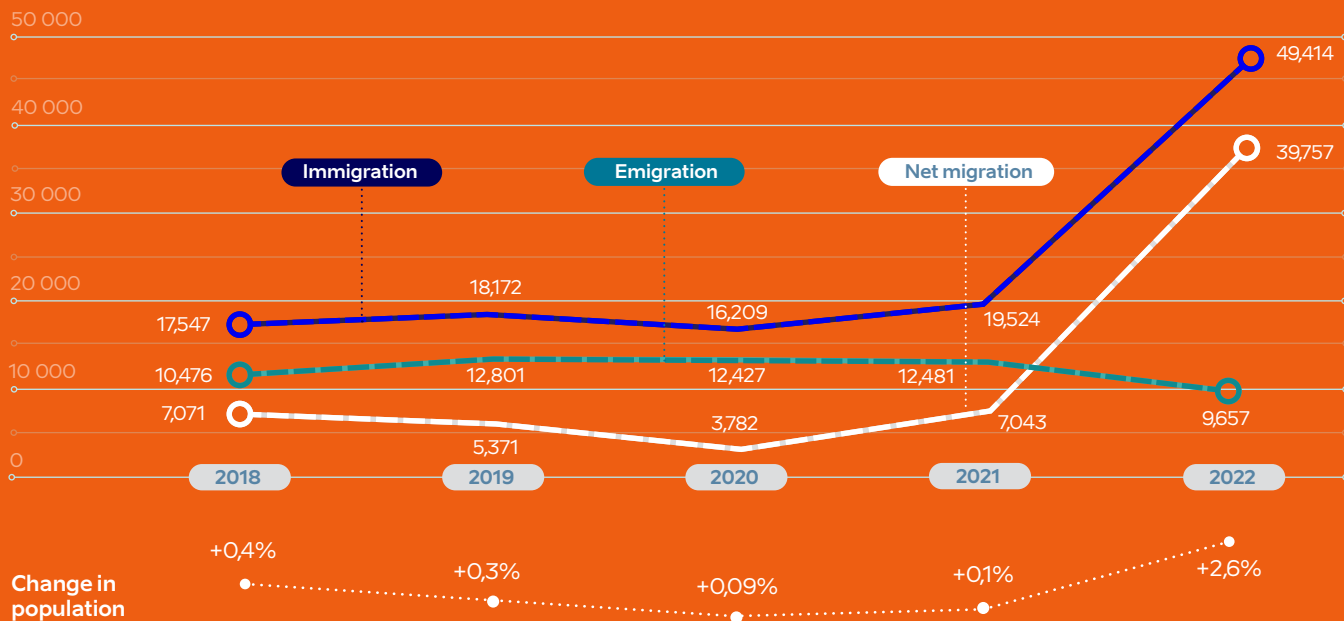
Euroopa rände võrgustik

EESTI

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this publication is to provide an overview of the main migration trends in Estonia during the period of 2018-2022 and to explain the different aspects of migration.

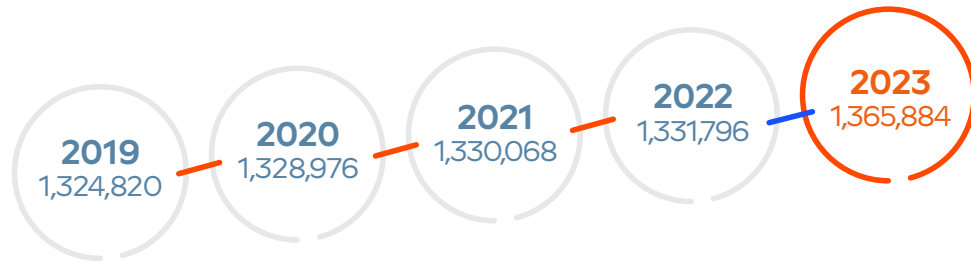
Net Migration (as of January 1, 2023)



ESTONIAN POPULATION

2019–2023
(as of January 1, 2023)

Source: Statistics Estonia

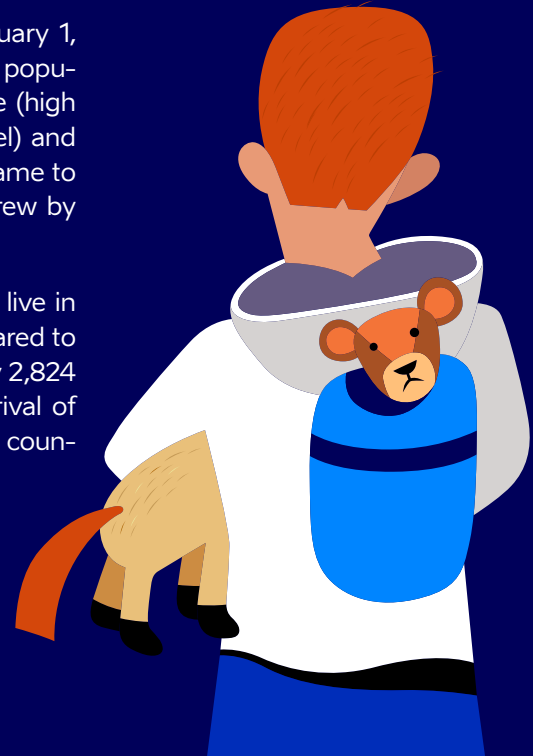


According to Statistics Estonia, the population of Estonia as of January 1, 2023 was 1,365,884, 2.6% more than the year before. In 2022, the population decreased by 5,559 individuals due to the natural growth rate (high mortality rate exceeded birth rate that dropped to a record low level) and increased by 39,757 individuals due to net migration (more people came to live in Estonia than left the country). Overall, Estonia's population grew by 34,088 individuals.

In 2022, by way of registered migration, 49,414 individuals came to live in Estonia and 9,657 individuals left for abroad. Consequently, as compared to 2021, immigration increased by 29,890 individuals and emigration by 2,824 individuals. The main reason for increased immigration was the arrival of Ukrainian war refugees in Estonia¹ – 75% of those who arrived in the country, i.e. 31,594 individuals, were Ukrainian citizens.

More information in the chapter on international protection on page 26.

¹ Ukrainian citizens were granted legal grounds for arrival and temporary stay in Estonia by order of the Director General of the Police and Border Guard Board on February 24, 2022, and from May 2022 on, on the basis of several amendments to the Republic of Estonia Aliens Act.



EMIGRATION AND RETURN OF ESTONIAN CITIZENS

In 2018-2022, the total number of Estonian citizens emigrating (32,371) was smaller than the total number of those that returned (35,038). In the last five years, 2,667 more individuals with Estonian citizenship have arrived in Estonia than left. Thus far, migrants have been men rather than women. People emigrate at a younger age of

20+ and return at the age of 30+. In 2022, the largest number of Estonian citizens returned from Finland (45%), Russia (10%), and United Kingdom (8%). Similarly, the largest number of people left for Finland (39%), Latvia (5%), and United Kingdom (4%).

Emigration of Estonian citizens (in 2018-2022)



Country from which Estonian citizens returned*

+	Finland	2,068
	Latvia	256
	UK	212
	Russia	151
	Germany	147



2022

Country from which Estonian citizens returned*

+	Finland	2,425
	Russia	528
	UK	410
	Germany	217
	USA	188

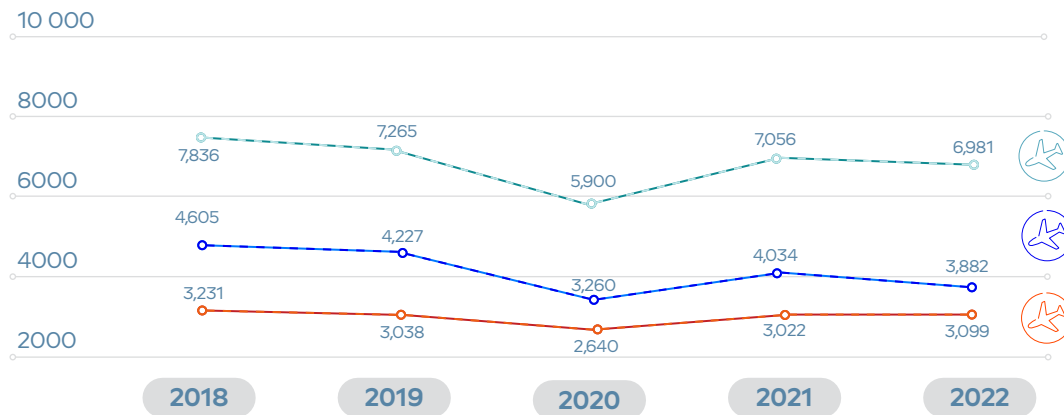


2022

Source: Statistics Estonia

*In the case of immigration and emigration of Estonian citizens, the country of origin or destination of migration is not always known.

Return of Estonian citizens (in 2018-2022)



Total




Women

Men

Source: Statistics Estonia

Which foreign country is home to the largest number of Estonian citizens?

Top 10 countries (as of January 1, 2023)

 Finland	54,766
 Russia	18,958
 UK	9,619
 Germany	5,718
 Sweden	5,091
 USA	5,004
 Canada	3,137
 Australia	3,078
 Ireland	2,467
 Norway	1,681

According to information in the Population Register, 123,613 Estonian citizens lived abroad as of the beginning of 2023 – 2% more than a year earlier. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that there are actually up to 200,000 people of Estonian origin living abroad.

Source: Population Register



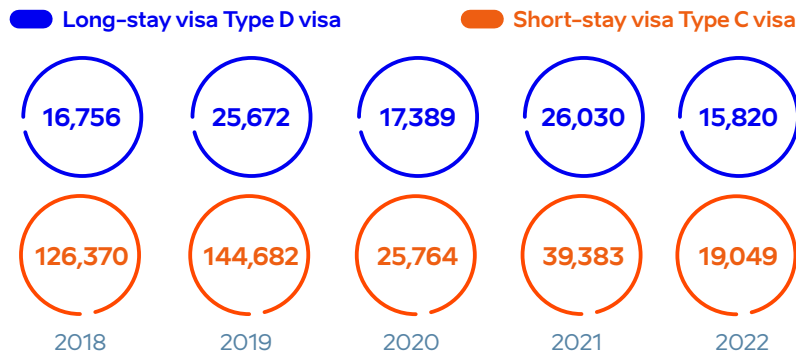
VISAS

The **Uniform Schengen Visa (type C visa)** allows one to travel freely throughout the Schengen Area for up to 90 days in a 180-day period.

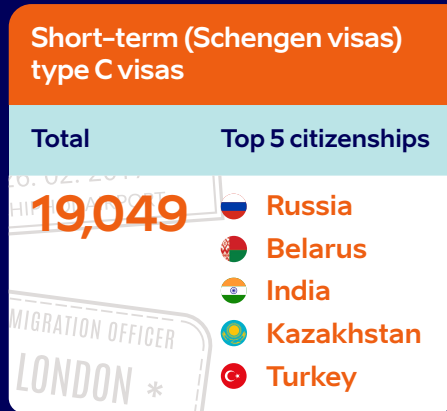
The **long-stay visa (type D visa)** is issued for staying in Estonia for up to 12 consecutive months for a maximum period of up to 365 days. The long-stay visa is a domestic visa that provides the right to travel freely throughout the rest of Schengen Area for up to 90 days in a 180-day period.

Starting from 2020, a foreigner can apply for both a short-stay and a long-stay visa for remote work (the so-called digital nomad visa) if the purpose of the foreigner's temporary stay in Estonia is the performance of duties of employment irrespective of the location. In 2022, 191 long-stay visas were issued for remote work – a 25% increase as compared to the year before when 153 digital nomad visas were issued. For the most part, visa recipients were citizens of United States of America, India, United Kingdom, Russian Federation, and Canada.

Visas issued by Estonia (in 2018-2022)



Visas issued by Estonia (in 2022)



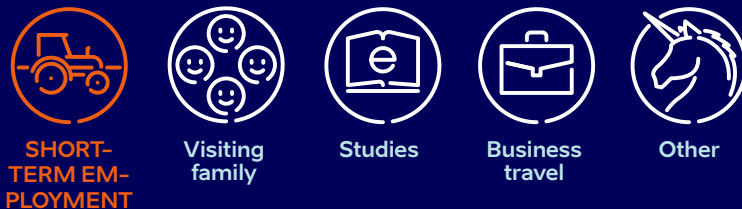
Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

While in 2020–2021 restrictions on the movement of people due to COVID-19 continued to be applied around the world, including Estonia, 2022 was most affected by the restrictions and sanctions imposed on citizens of the Russian Federation² in connection with the war in Ukraine. As a number of Estonian foreign representations stopped accepting visa applications, the number of short-stay type C visas issued was record low at 19,049 (-52% as compared to the previous year); the number of long-stay type D visas as well proved record low at 15,820 (-39% as compared to the previous year).

Top 5 issued short-stay visas by purpose of travel, (in 2022)



Top 5 issued long-stay visas by purpose of travel, (in 2022)



Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

² Due to Russia's war in Ukraine, several restrictions and sanctions have been put in place. As of March 2022, Estonian foreign missions in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Pskov, and Minsk as well as external service providers' visa centers in the Russian Federation and Belarus stopped accepting visa applications. In April, the Government of the Estonian Republic introduced a sanction to restrict working and business activities in Estonia for citizens of the Russian Federation and Belarus. As from September, an order of the Government of the Republic entered into force, temporarily restricting the crossing of the external border with a short-term visa for citizens of the Russian Federation.

SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT

Foreigners who are staying in Estonia temporarily (e.g. based on a visa or visa waiver) may work in Estonia if their right to work arises directly from the law or an international agreement or if their employer has registered their short-term employment with the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board before they commence employment. Registration of short-term employment alone without legal grounds for staying will not provide a foreigner with legal grounds to stay in Estonia.

Generally, short-term employment can be registered for up to 365 days in a 455-day period. Short-term employment for seasonal work can be registered for up to 270 days in a one year period. In 2022, the number of registrations of short-term employment decreased as compared to 2021 (-26% compared to the previous year). The main reason for this was the Russian Federation's war in Ukraine. While in 2021, Ukrainian citizens made up 72% of the total number of registered short-term workers, in 2022 respective percentage was only 47%, indicating that the war in Ukraine significantly affected the number of Ukrainian citizens registered for work in Estonia on a short-term basis.

Out of all registrations of short-term employment, 84% were men and 16% were women (as compared to 2021, the proportion of men increased by 2%).

The number of short-term employment registrations for seasonal work dropped 46% as compared to 2021.

Number of registrations of short-term employment (2018-2022)



Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Top 5 citizenships (2022)



Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Fields for employment in which short-term employment was registered, top 5 (2022)



Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

WHO CAME TO LIVE IN ESTONIA AND WHAT WERE THE REASONS?

Temporary residence permit: a permit issued to foreigners for settling in Estonia. A temporary residence permit may be issued to a foreigner to settle with a spouse or a close relative, for study, employment, or enterprise, in exceptional cases for participation in criminal proceedings, in case of substantial national interest, or on the basis of a treaty. In addition, a foreigner who has lived in Estonia for at least three years may be issued a residence permit for settling permanently in Estonia. A temporary residence permit is is-

sued with the period of validity of up to five years and may be extended for up to ten years.




Statistics on first-time temporary residence permits issued in 2022³ indicate that continuously most foreigners come to Estonia on the grounds of family migration, work, and studies. On the grounds of family migration, it is possible to settle in Estonia if the foreigner joins a spouse or close relative already living in Estonia or if the above settle in Estonia together.

³ A temporary residence permit issued for the first time is granted to a person who applies for an Estonian residence permit for the first time.





First-time temporary residence permits, top 5 citizenships by migration type (in 2022)

First-time temporary residence permit by citizenship

 Ukraine	1,616
 Russia	1,201
 India	387
 Belarus	320
 Turkey	263
TOTAL	5,989

Family migration (joining spouse / close relative)

 Russia	
 Ukraine	
 Belarus	
 India	
 Nigeria	
TOTAL	2,867

Residence permit for the purposes of studies

 Nigeria	
 Azerbaijan	
 India	
 Pakistan	
 Turkey	
TOTAL	551

Working

 Ukraine	
 Russia	
 India	
 Brazil	
 Belarus	
TOTAL	2,463

Residence permit for engagement in business

 Turkey	
 Iran	
 India	
 Pakistan	
 Ukraine	
TOTAL	85

First-time temporary residence permits and rights of residence by migration types (2018-2022)



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
Total first-time residence permits	4,912	5,984	4,710	6,087	5,989	3,365	2,624
Family migration (joining spouse / close relative)	1,661	2272	1,958	2642	2,867	981	1,886
Residence permit for the purposes of studies	1,267	1,330	533	1,078	551	303	248
Working	1,851	2,218	2,089	2,249	2,463	1,998	465
Residence permit for engagement in business	87	134	111	106	85	70	15
Family members of EU citizens EL	57	82	106	107	161	45	116
Other reason*	46	30	19	12	23	13	10

***Other reason** - participation in criminal proceedings, international agreement (treaty)

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

The total number of first-time temporary residence permits dropped by 2% as compared to 2021, which was also significantly affected by Russia's war in Ukraine. The number of residence permits increased by 8% in family migration and 9% in labor migration, but significantly decreased by 49% in learning mobility and 20% in business. While in previous years, most of the individuals that settled in Estonia on the basis of study

migration and business have been Russian citizens, due to the sanctions imposed by the Government of the Estonian Republic regarding the Russian Federation's aggression in Ukraine, short-term working in Estonia and the application of temporary residence permits and visas for the purpose of work, study, and business for Russian citizens have been limited.

LABOR MIGRATION:

In 2022, the number of recipients of first-time temporary residence permits for employment increased by 9% as compared to 2021; the number of residence permit issued for employment as a top specialists increased by 14% and the number of residence permits issued for employment in start-ups increased by 82%.

First-time temporary residence permits for employment by types of employment (2020-2022)

Labor migration	2020	2021	2022
General	1,256	1,248	1,267
Top specialists	384	566	645
Working in start-ups	232	190	345
Experts/advisers/consultants	53	64	81
Research activities/lecturers	36	52	40
Members of managing bodies of bodies corporate governed by private law	33	23	6
Athletes/coaches/referees	18	22	9
EU Blue Card	9	23	18
Minister of religion / monk / nun	22	29	17
Person engaged in creative activities	12	8	7
Teacher	12	14	10
Other	22	10	18
TOTAL	2,089	2,249	2,463

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

SETTLING PERMANENTLY IN ESTONIA



As of 2016, it is possible to apply for a residence permit to settle permanently in Estonia. On these grounds, a foreigner who has lived in Estonia for at least three years during five consecutive years, who has adapted well in Estonia, and whose residence in Estonia is in accordance with public interests can apply for a residence permit. A temporary residence permit for permanent residence in Estonia is valid for up to 5 years and can be extended for up to 10 years.

Temporary residence permits issued for settling permanently in Estonia (2018-2022)

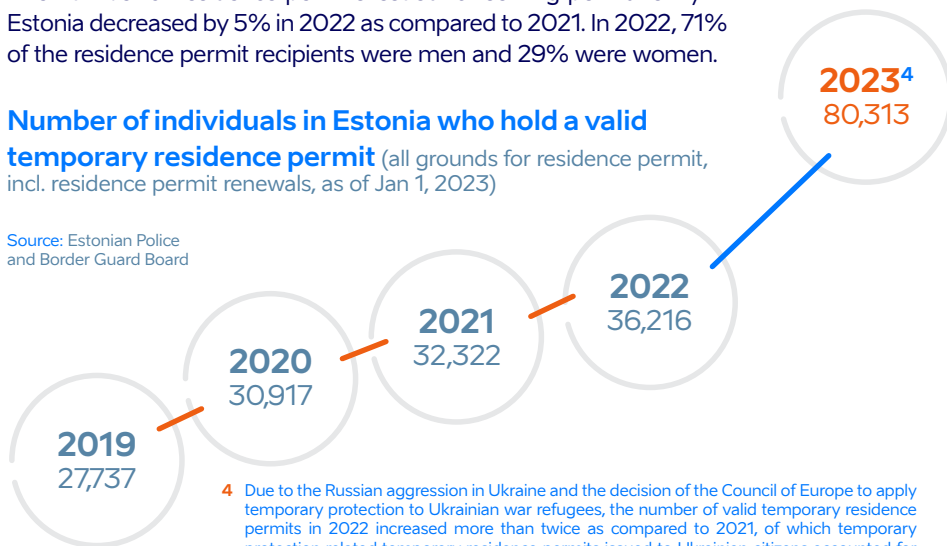
Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



The number of residence permits issued for settling permanently in Estonia decreased by 5% in 2022 as compared to 2021. In 2022, 71% of the residence permit recipients were men and 29% were women.

Number of individuals in Estonia who hold a valid temporary residence permit (all grounds for residence permit, incl. residence permit renewals, as of Jan 1, 2023)

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



⁴ Due to the Russian aggression in Ukraine and the decision of the Council of Europe to apply temporary protection to Ukrainian war refugees, the number of valid temporary residence permits in 2022 increased more than twice as compared to 2021, of which temporary protection related temporary residence permits issued to Ukrainian citizens accounted for 64%.

Number of individuals with valid temporary residence permit by citizenships, top 5 (as of Jan 1, 2023)

 Ukraine	51,398
 Russia	10,086
 Undetermined citizenship	3,476
 Belarus	1,822
 India	1,594
TOTAL	80,313

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

TEMPORARY RIGHT OF RESIDENCE OF EU CITIZEN AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBER

A citizen of the European Union acquires a temporary right of residence for up to 5 years if they register their place of residence in the Population Register. The temporary right of residence is automatically renewed for 5 years if the place of residence of a citizen of the European Union continues to be registered in Estonia.

Family members of a European Union citizen who are third-country nationals⁵ and wish to reside in Estonia must apply for a temporary right of residence and renewal thereof. In their case, it is not enough to register their place of residence in the Population Register.

A citizen of the European Union and a family member accompanying them have the right to stay in Estonia on the basis of a valid identity document for up to 3 months without registering and applying for a right of residence.

Number of individuals with valid temporary right of residence of an EU citizen (as of Jan 1, 2023)



Source: Population Register






Number of individuals with valid temporary right of residence of a family member of a EU citizen (as of Jan 1, 2023)



Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board






⁵ A third-country national is a foreigner who is a citizen of a country other than a Member State of the European Union, a Member State of the European Economic Area, or the Swiss Confederation. As of 2021, British citizens as well are third-country nationals.

EU citizens that registered their place of residence in Estonia in 2022, top 5 citizenships

 Latvia	507
 Germany	503
 Finland	435
 France	328
 Italy	286
TOTAL	3,468

Source: Population Register

Decisions on the right of temporary residence of family members of EU citizens, top 5 citizenships in 2022

 Russia	72
 Ukraine	23
 Brazil	8
 Undetermined citizenship	7
 Moldova	5
TOTAL	161






Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Number of individuals with valid temporary right of residence of a family member of a EU citizen by citizenship, top 5 (as of Jan 1, 2023)

 Russia	181
 Ukraine	76
 Moldova	29
 Brazil	27
 Undetermined citizenship	25
TOTAL	516

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Number of individuals with a valid temporary right of residence of a EU citizen by citizenship, top 5 (as of Jan 1, 2023)

 Finland	7,521
 Latvia	5,670
 Germany	2,758
 Lithuania	2,157
 France	1,791

Source: Population Register

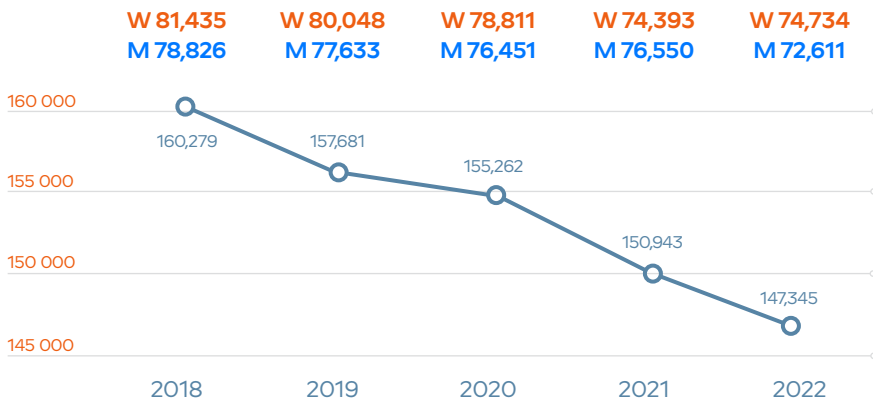
LONG-TERM RESIDENT'S RESIDENCE PERMIT

A long-term resident's residence permit is a residence permit issued for an unspecified term that can be applied for by third-country nationals if they have resided in Estonia on the basis of a residence permit for at least five years, have a valid temporary residence permit and permanent legal income, are insured, have registered their place of residence, and are proficient in Estonian at least at B1 level.

Recipients of a long-term resident's residence permit also include persons with undetermined citizenship (holders of the

so-called gray passport) who settled in Estonia before July 1, 1990 and have continued to reside in Estonia. The number of individuals with undetermined citizenship has decreased from year to year (from 66,682 individuals in 2021 to 64,584 individuals in 2022). In addition, as of 2022, there are 3,476 individuals of undetermined citizenship with a valid temporary residence permit living in Estonia, whose number is also exposed to a downward trend. The main reasons here are the death of relevant individual or the acquisition of Estonian or another country's citizenship.

Valid long-term resident's residence permits (2018-2022)



Foreigners that hold a valid long-term resident's residence permit, top 5 citizenships (as of Dec 31, 2022)

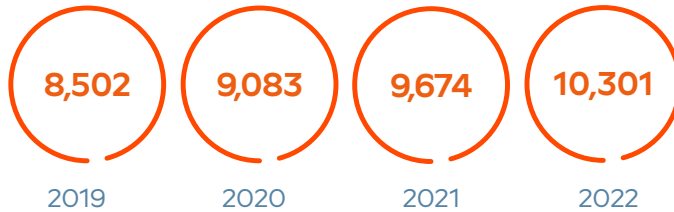
 Russia	75,827
 Undetermined citizenship	64,584
 Ukraine	4,355
 Belarus	1,201
 USA	255

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

PERMANENT RIGHT OF RESIDENCE OF EU CITIZEN AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBER

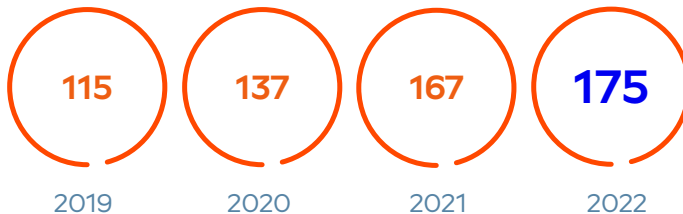
A citizen of the European Union and their family member who is a third-country national and who has resided in Estonia persistently for five consecutive years on the basis of a temporary right of residence have the right to apply for a permanent right of residence.

Number of EU citizens with permanent right residence (2019-2022)



Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Number of individuals with valid right of residence of a family member of a EU citizen (2019-2022)







Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Top 5 citizenships and the number of EU citizens with permanent right of residence (as of Dec 31, 2022)

 Latvia	2,538
 Finland	2,491
 Lithuania	1,425
 Germany	642
 Great Britain	559
TOTAL	10,301

Number of individuals with valid permanent right of residence of an EU citizen's family member by citizenship, top 5 (as of Dec 31, 2022)

 Russia	90
 Undetermined citizenship	23
 Ukraine	12
 USA	9
 Belarus	7
TOTAL	175

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

WHERE DID THE FOREIGNERS SETTLE?

According to data in the Population Register, in the 2018-2022 period, citizens of both third countries and the European Union settled most often in Harju County and Tartu County.

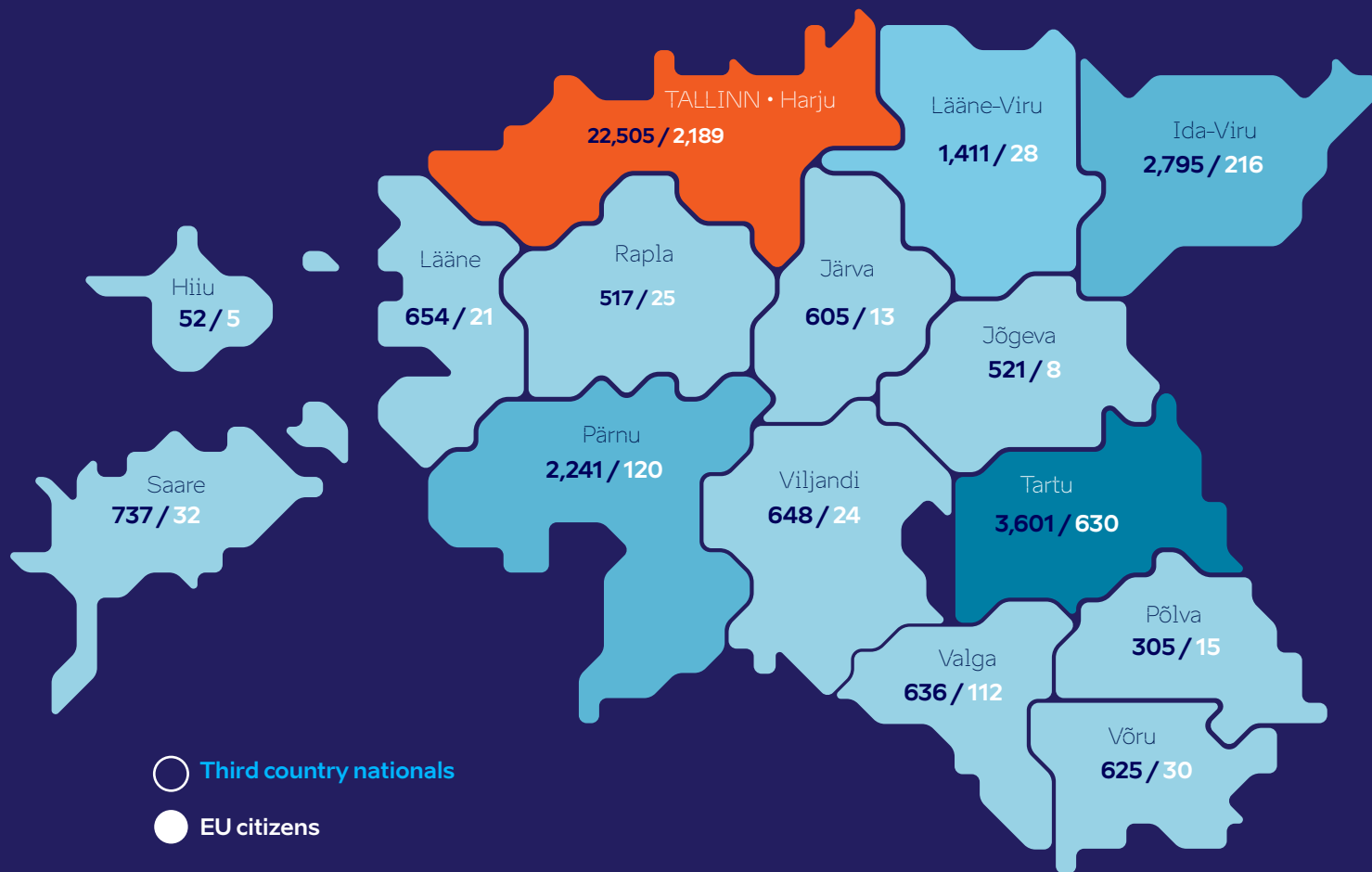
The map shows first-time registrations of the place of residence of European Union and third-country nationals in different Estonian counties in 2022.



Top 5 cities/towns (2022)

Third country nationals	Tallinn 19,015	Tartu 2,868	Pärnu 1,749	Kohtla-Järve 860	Narva 753
EU citizens	Tallinn 2,063	Tartu 614	Pärnu 100	Valga 95	Narva 85

Source: Population Register



WHO BECAME ESTONIAN CITIZENS?

In 2018–2022, Estonian citizenship was granted by naturalization⁶ to 4,093 individuals of whom 2,234 were women and 1,859 were men.



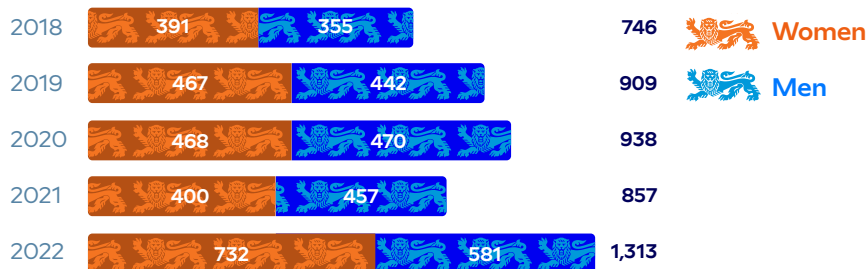
Women
2,234

Men
1,859

⁶ Naturalization means acquisition of citizenship not by birth under the terms and conditions provided for in the Republic of Estonia Citizenship Act.

Applying for and obtaining citizenship (2018–2022)

Applications



Naturalized individuals



Source: Republic of Estonia Ministry of the Interior

*incl. 66 children who automatically acquired Estonian citizenship from the moment of birth by naturalization, whose parents have undetermined citizenship, and who were born in Estonia.

HOW TO OBTAIN ESTONIAN CITIZENSHIP?

Acquisition, obtainment, and resumption of Estonian citizenship:

- Estonian citizenship is **acquired by birth** by a child whose at least one parent is an Estonian citizen upon the child's birth.
- Estonian citizenship is **obtained by naturalization**.
- Estonian citizenship is **restored** to a person who lost Estonian citizenship as a minor.
- As from 2016, Estonian citizenship is **automatically, by way of naturalization, granted to a child born in Estonia from the moment of their birth if the child's parents are not citizens of any country and have resided legally in Estonia for at least five years at the time of the child's birth.**

Source: Republic of Estonia Ministry of the Interior

As of 2019, the citizenship agreements system was launched, the aim of which is to facilitate the acquisition of citizenship. Foreigners who have lived in Estonia for at least five years can conclude a one-off language learning agreement with the state that, on the one hand, enables the foreigner to benefit from free language courses and, on the other hand, obligates them to pass an Estonian language exam at least at B1 level and apply for Estonian citizenship within one year of passing of the exam. Participants in the language courses are compensated by the state for up to 20 days of study leave in the amount of the average salary.



Previous citizenships of individuals who obtained citizenship by naturalization, top 5 (2022)

 Russia	359
 Undetermined citizenship	310
 Belarus	15
 Ukraine	10
 Latvia	6

Source: Republic of Estonia Ministry of the Interior

E-RESIDENTS

Estonia was the first country in the world to start offering e-residency or digital identity services to citizens of foreign countries. As of today, several other countries in the world have created and are creating similar programs following Estonia's example.

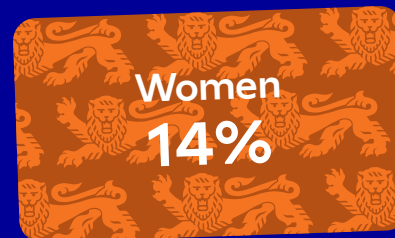
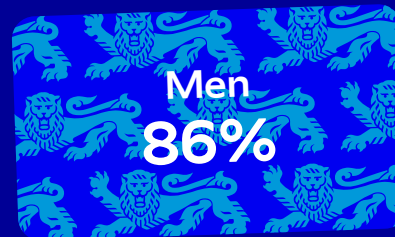
As from December 2014, non-residents can apply for Estonian e-resident status together with an e-resident digital ID card that is a state-guaranteed secure digital means of identification and enables foreigners to use Estonia's e-state services whenever needed and irrespective of location. However, the e-resident's digital ID is not a physical identity or travel document (it does not have a photo) nor does it grant citizenship, tax residence, a residence permit, or a permit to enter Estonia or the European Union.

In addition to establishing companies in Estonia, Estonian e-residents use their digital document to manage such founded companies, perform online banking transactions, access international payment services, file their income tax returns electronically, and digitally sign documents and agreements.

Source: Estonian Business and Innovation Agency

The total number of e-residents as of December 31, 2022 is

98,592



Top-5 citizenships (2022)

 Ukraine

 Germany

 Russia

 Finland

 China

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board






Decisions to issue an e-resident's digital ID (2018-2022)

22,367
2018

-  Japan
-  Russia
-  China
-  Ukraine
-  Germany



10,744
2022

-  Spain
-  Ukraine
-  Germany
-  Turkey
-  France

16,630
2019

-  Russia
-  Germany
-  Ukraine
-  India
-  China

12,955
2020

-  Russia
-  Germany
-  China
-  Ukraine
-  Spain

13,977
2021

-  Russia
-  Germany
-  Spain
-  Ukraine
-  China

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Applying for international protection is a fundamental human right. Estonia has taken on an international commitment to protect those foreigners who cannot live in their homeland safely. The beneficiary of international protection is a foreigner who has been recognized as a refugee, beneficiary of subsidiary or temporary protection and who has been granted an Estonian residence permit.

Until the beginning of 2022, the number of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection remained relatively low in Estonia. A sharp rise occurred after the Russian Federation's military aggression in Ukraine. As a result, instead of the usual 100 applications, a total of 2,940 applications were submitted during the year. International protection was granted to 2,107 individuals instead of the usual approximately 50 individuals.

Number of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection (2018-2022)

	Applicants for international protection	Beneficiaries of international protection (incl. under Agenda on Migration)	Recipients of residence permit for a family member of a foreigner who is a beneficiary of international protection
2018	90	35	3
2019	101	50	10
2020	46	26	0
2021	76	46	1
2022	2,940	2,107	32

Temporary protection was applied for the first time in the European Union

As a result of the military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine that commenced on February 24, 2022, the European Council made a decision on March 4, 2022 to implement the Temporary Protection Directive to protect people fleeing due to the war in Ukraine. Estonia approved the granting of temporary protection to Ukrainian war refugees on March 8, 2022 by an order of the Government of the Republic entitled "Application of temporary protection". Temporary protection is granted to those foreigners who are among the recipients of temporary protection based on the proposal of the European Commission and the implementing decision of the Council of the European Union. Temporary protection is applied exceptionally and when a large number of people are at risk, and its maximum term is up to 3 years.

In 2022 41,871 Ukrainian war refugees applied for temporary protection from Estonia, of whom 27,465 were women, 14,406 were men, and 14,396 were children. Temporary protection was granted to 41,639 Ukrainian citizens.

Drastic increase in number of applications to receive international protection

From 1997, 4,264 foreigners have applied for international protection (except temporary protection) from Estonia, and international protection (refugee status + subsidiary protection status) has been granted to a total of 2,709 foreigners. Compared to 2021, the number of applicants increased by 3768% in 2022, the number of beneficiaries increased by 4480% compared to 2021.

Since 1997, a total of 129 individuals have been granted a residence permit for a family member of a foreigner who has received international protection. Over time, many beneficiaries of international protection have either returned to their homeland or settled in another Member State, but there are also those for whom the grounds for their stay in Estonia have changed. For example, 11 beneficiaries of international protection have acquired Estonian citizenship by today.

Citizenship of beneficiaries, incl. under Agenda on Migration, of international protection, top 5 (1997-2022)

 Ukraine	2,134
 Syria	200
 Russia	103
 Afghanistan	52
 Iraq	42
TOTAL	2,709

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

REFUGEE STATUS is granted to a person who has been identified as having a well-founded fear of persecution on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, social group membership, or political orientation and has been granted **international** protection under the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION is granted to a foreigner who does not qualify as a refugee but whose return or repatriation could pose a serious risk to their person

(e.g. death penalty, torture, other inhuman or degrading treatment as punishment, international or domestic armed conflict).

TEMPORARY PROTECTION is granted to a foreigner who is among the recipients of temporary protection established by the decision of the European Council. This type of protection is used when a very large number of people are forced to leave their country of origin due to war or other dangerous situation.

APPLYING FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

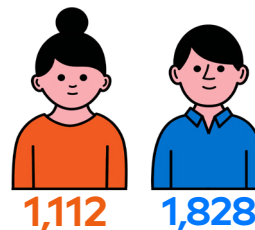
International protection, including temporary protection, can be applied for either at an Estonian border crossing or at a representative office of the Police and Border Guard Board. All international protection application procedures and related decisions are individual.

Reception of beneficiaries of international protection and their social rights and obligations

Beneficiaries of protection have the same rights and obligations as permanent residents of Estonia. The Estonian state also offers support (language courses, accommodation, translation service) upon starting a new life. Beneficiaries of protection have the right to family reunification. Beneficiaries of protection undertake to complete adaptation and language courses and to comply with Estonian laws.








Applicants for international protection by gender (2022)



Beneficiaries of international protection by gender (2022)



Citizenship of applicants for international protection, top 5 (1997-2022)

 Ukraine	2,818
 Russia	394
 Georgia	108
 Afghanistan	88
 Turkey	75
TOTAL	4,264

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

EXPULSION

A foreigner who has no legal basis to stay in Estonia is required to leave the country. A precept to leave the country is issued to a person staying in the country without a legal basis that the person must comply with within the shortest possible time. A precept to leave either imposes on the person an obligation to leave as subject to a term of voluntary performance (within the period of 7 to 30 days) or the obligation to leave is executed by way of compulsory enforcement through detention of the person and expulsion from Estonia. Voluntary departure is preferable to forced removal. In 2022, voluntary adherence to the precept to leave accounted for 90% - 1% less than the year before - of the total number of precepts to leave. The precept to leave lists the reasons as to why the person must leave the

country. In 2022, the largest number of precepts to leave was issued to citizens of the Russian Federation, Moldova, and Uzbekistan.

It is possible for a person who voluntarily performed the obligation to leave the country to receive return and reintegration support through the VARRE project, implemented by IOM's (International Organization for Migration) Estonian representation. The VARRE project was established in Estonia in 2010 and with its support more than 600 individuals have returned to their homeland. In 2022, citizens of Uzbekistan, Georgia, and Nigeria were the most numerous to return to their homeland with VARRE's support.

Departure of individuals on the basis of a precept to leave and voluntary repatriation or departure to another host country, supported by VARRE project (2018-2022)

	Number of individuals who left the country on the basis of a precept to leave subject to compulsory execution	Number of individuals who left the country on the basis of a precept to leave subject to a term of voluntarily performance	Number of individuals who left the country voluntarily with support of the VARRE project
2018	155	666	45
2019	208	1,000	132
2020	108	989	128
2021	104	1,089	40
2022	111	971	41

Source: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



ADAPTATION SUPPORT FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS

Settle in Estonia adaptation programme is a training programme offered by the Estonian state to help foreigners who have arrived in Estonia to integrate more easily and to adapt to local life. Various courses provide an overview of functioning of the Estonian state and society, and of the daily life in the country.

Since its launch in 2015, the adaptation programme's main target group have been foreigners who have arrived in Estonia through **regular migration** and who have temporary residence permit or right of residence. They can take part in the programme during up to 5 years from the moment of their arrival in Estonia, and participation is voluntary for them. The offered training programme consists of 6 topical modules (basic, work, business, family, study and research modules) and Estonian language courses at A1 and A2 levels.

The language courses are the indeed most popular – last year 1,239 individuals learned Estonian through the Settle in Estonia programme. During the year, there were 454 participants in the basic training introducing the main values and operating principles of the Estonian state. 274 people participated in courses related to working in Estonia, and 230 participants in business courses. In total, in 2022 the adaptation programme was attended 2,430 times (one person could participate in several of the adaptation programme modules), 169 different training courses took place as part of the adaptation programme, including 67 online courses. Many of the programme participants had come to Estonia with a family member or by commencing employment here. Similarly to previous years, most of the participants in 2022 were originally from Russia, Ukraine, Nigeria, and Belarus, all of them have received a residence permit or right of residence in Estonia within the last 5 years.

Since the launch of the programme for usual migration in 2015 and until the end of 2022, the training courses have been attended 13,115 times.

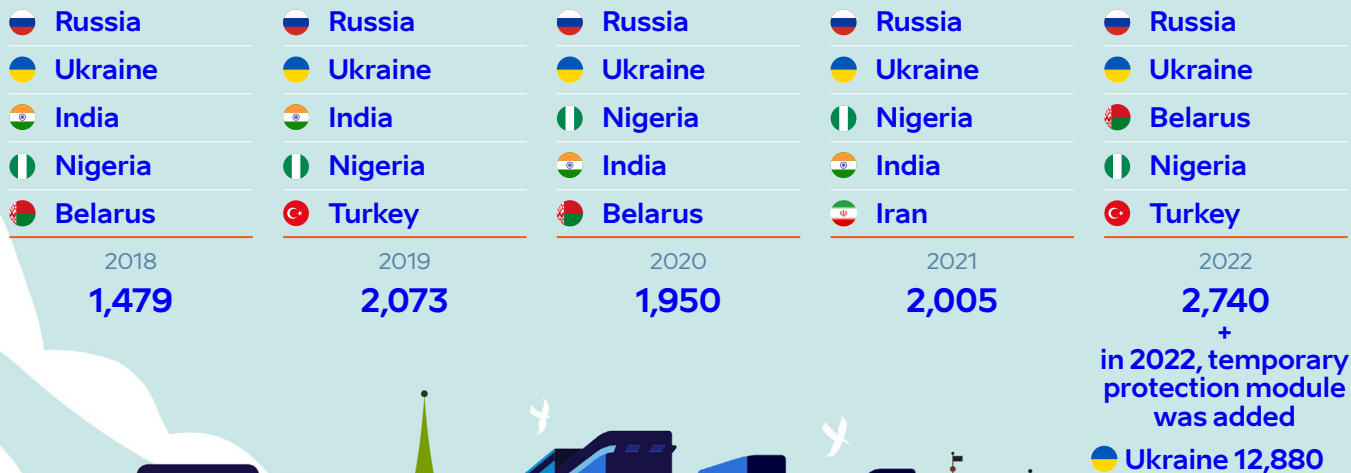
The second target group of the adaptation programme consists of beneficiaries of **international protection** (refugee status or subsidiary protection). Due to escalation of the war in Ukraine, the size of this target group has increased tenfold, and with it, the demand for a corresponding adaptation programme. The adaptation pro-

gramme is mandatory for beneficiaries of international protection, it consists of a 4-day international protection module that provides basic information about the functioning of the Estonian state and Estonian society and culture, and Estonian language courses at A1, A2, and B1 levels. During the year, nearly 310 people completed the mandatory 4-day training.

Ukrainian war refugees who received **temporary protection** were added as a new target group to the Settle in Estonia adaptation programme in 2022. The programme is mandatory for them, relevant modules (one day basic training and A1 Estonian language course) were launched in summer. From July to December 2022, nearly 13,000 individuals, or 57% of those who were referred to the programme, completed the basic training. Also, by the end of the year, more than 4,000 people had either completed or were continuing A1-level language courses for the same target group.

The national adaptation programme Settle in Estonia is curated by the Estonian Ministry of Culture and is funded from European Union's European Social Fund (ESF), Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and state budget funds.

Participants in the adaptation program 2017–2022, regular migration and beneficiaries of international protection (refugee and subsidiary protection status)



Adaptation programme for regular migration, participants by gender in 2022

men 44%, women 56%

Adaptation programme for beneficiaries of temporary protection, participants by gender in 2022

men 26%, women 74%