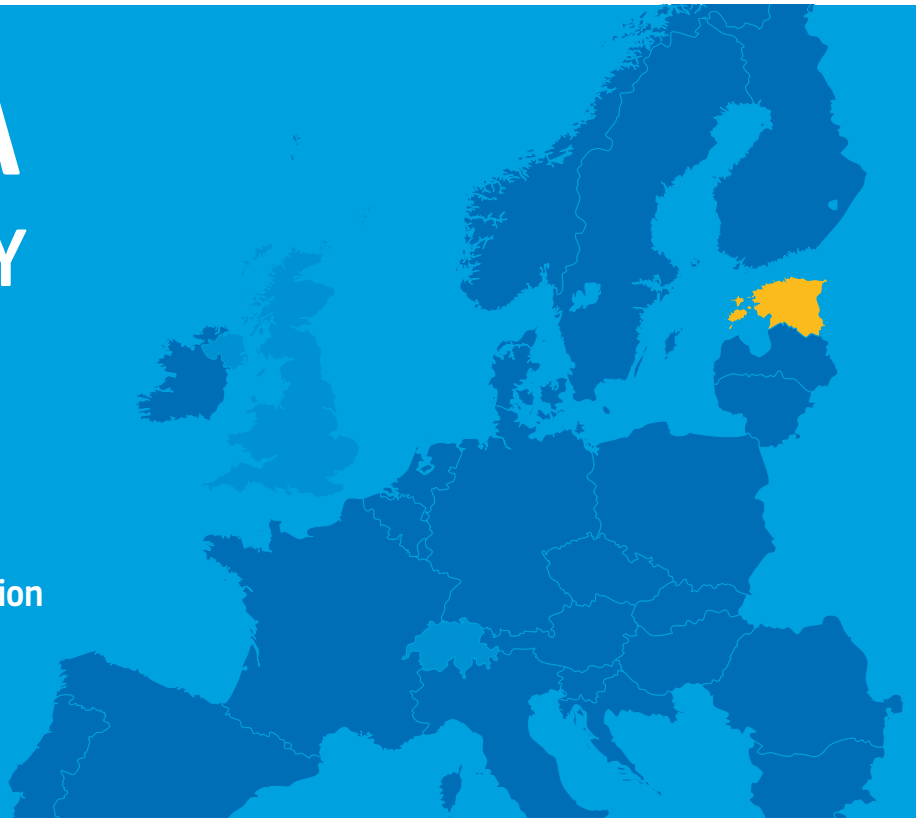


ESTONIA

EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET 2022

Main developments in migration
and international protection,
including latest statistics

August 2023



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

The Government of the Republic of Estonia approved a [regulation on 8 April 2022](#), 'Imposing of sanctions of Government of Republic in connection with aggression of Russian Federation and Republic of Belarus in Ukraine' on citizens of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus applying for all types of Estonian visas (both Schengen C-type and national D-type visa) for employment, teleworking or engagement in business, including start-ups, or residence permits for employment or engaging in business (including start-ups and large investors). The regulation also restricted registration for short-term employment unless the Russian/Belarusian citizen already had a legal basis for stay in Estonia. The regulation was amended four times to add exceptions.

Work-related migration

In May 2022, amendments to [the Aliens Act](#) introduced a new type of temporary residence permit for short-term employment (entered into force on 1 January 2023). It will allow foreigners who have worked in Estonia on a short-term basis (at least nine months) to apply for a residence permit that is valid for up to two years (also called a 1+2 scheme). Another amendment introduced new incentives for hiring foreign labour to a growth company (also entered into force on 1 January 2023). A 'growth company' is defined as a company registered in Estonia with the purpose of developing a business model with high global growth potential, innovative

KEY POINTS



A [Decree of the Government of the Republic of Estonia](#) implemented the Temporary Protection Directive (Council Directive 2001/55/EC), entering into force on 9 March 2022. The Aliens Act was subsequently amended, providing Ukrainian citizens legal basis for entry and stay in Estonia. Amendments also eased Ukrainians conditions and requirements for short-term employment to ensure smooth entry into the labour market.



Restrictive measures were implemented to condemn the Russian Federation and Belarus for the military attack in Ukraine, including (1) not issuing new visas and residence permits for employment (with some exceptions) for citizens of Russian Federation and Belarus, and (2) restricting entry to short-term Schengen visa-holding Russian citizens travelling for tourism, sport, culture, visiting friends or family, regardless of their country of destination or visa issuing country.



By the end of 2022, Estonia had received 41 871 applications for temporary protection, of which 66% were women and 32% were minors. The number of international protection applicants was also remarkably high (2 941), an increase of 3 800% compared to 2021.

and replicable, that shall significantly contribute to the development of the Estonian business environment. This will allow growth companies (head offices, developmental units, etc.) to stay in Estonia, attract a skilled workforce, and stimulate the technology sector.

Students and researchers

In May 2022, amendments to [the Aliens Act](#) sought to prevent possible misuse of resident permits for study by setting the condition that the student must live in Estonia on the basis of a residence permit for study for at least two years before their spouse can apply for a residence permit to settle with them. The amendment does not limit the possibility of visiting a family member studying in Estonia based on a visa, nor applying for a residence permit/visa individually.

Other measures

To modernise the migration management systems, the Police and Border Guard Board continued to develop the following information systems: RIS (migration information system), MIGIS (migration surveillance system), VIISA 2.0 (visa information system), and RAKS2 (international protection system). Developments in 2022 included a self-service portal for short-term employment registration and the residence permit application process, enabling applicants to launch applications, monitor the process, and communicate with the Police and Border Guard Board.



TEMPORARY PROTECTION

Main national developments in relation to temporary protection

Estonia implemented the Temporary Protection Directive (Council Directive 2001/55/EC) with a [Decree of the Government of the Republic of Estonia](#) (entered into force on 9 March 2022). This decision allowed citizens of Ukraine and their family members, as well as beneficiaries of international protection in Ukraine and their family members who fled the country after the Russian military aggression started on 24 February to register for temporary protection. The Aliens Act was amended accordingly, providing Ukrainian citizens with a legal basis for entry and stay in Estonia, including those who resided in Estonia prior to the start of the aggression and whose legal basis to stay would otherwise have expired.

In May 2022, amendments to [the Aliens Act](#) also addressed the specifications of employment for those to whom temporary protection may be applied and to citizens of Ukraine who were staying in Estonia before 24 February 2022. According to the amendment, if a person has been granted a legal basis to enter and stay in Estonia, provisions on short-term employment do not apply to them. The employer is required to pay them a remuneration that is at least equal to the average annual gross monthly salary of Estonia in the area of activity of the employment (last published by Statistics Estonia), multiplied by a coefficient of 0.8.

In April 2022, [Tallinn City Government opened a school for around 200 Ukrainian students](#) and 10 teachers (some

Ukrainian) on Räägu Street. In May 2022, the Ministry of Education and Research founded the [Freedom School](#) (Vabaduse Kool) for children and young people beneficiaries of temporary protection. The school teaches in Estonian and Ukrainian, with pupils learning Ukrainian language and culture in addition to compulsory subjects.

In June, registration began for the adaptation programme for beneficiaries of temporary protection in Estonia. The programme is compulsory and provides information on issues related to the functioning of the Estonian state and society, daily life, working, studying, and family, as well as provides language courses at A1 level.

Main measures taken outside of the legal framework of the Temporary Protection Directive

Before temporary protection was activated and amendments to the Aliens Act were passed on 14 May 2022, exceptions for Ukrainian citizens and their family members to enter and stay in Estonia were based on [the order of the Director General of the Police and Border Guard Board on 24 February 2022 no 1.1-4.1/8](#). The Order was in force from 24 February until 30 June 2022 and it gave the right to enter and stay in Estonia to: (1) Ukrainian citizens and their family members who did not have a biometric passport or whose basis for stay in Estonia would otherwise have expired, (2) Ukrainian citizens who lived in Ukraine until 24 February and left Ukraine on or after 24 February, who did not have a valid Estonian visa and had not yet received a residence permit of temporary protection, (3) those persons and their family members who had been granted international protection in Ukraine, irrespective of their citizenship and who did not have a valid visa, and (4) Ukrainian citizens who were legally staying in Estonia before 24 February 2022 and who did not have a valid visa.



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

Acquisition of citizenship

In August 2022, amendments to the [Citizenship Act](#) came into force for people who have obtained Estonian citizenship by naturalisation, specifying the revocation of citizenship in case of their admission to the state or military service of a foreign state or military organisation, if such a service is associated with a threat to public order or national security. The amendments were introduced in the context of the Russian war in Ukraine.



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

Border management

In August, the amendment to [the State Border Act](#) and other related legislation came into force, ensuring the protection of public order and national security in an emergency situation caused by a mass influx. The

amendment stipulates that in the event of a threat to public order or national security, the Police and Border Guard Board may refuse to accept the application for international protection of any third-country national who has irregularly crossed the external border in an emergency situation caused by a mass influx and send them back without issuing a return decision or an entry ban. Immediate return of a person who has crossed the border irregularly is permitted only in case of danger to public order or national security and on the condition that the person had not tried to enter Estonia legally, i.e. through an open border point. The aspect of non-refoulement must be taken into account.

Visa policy

In March 2022, Estonian embassies in the Russian Federation and Belarus stopped accepting visa applications from Russian Federation and Belarus citizens.

Schengen governance

In March 2022, Estonia temporarily restored its Schengen border control on the Estonian-Latvian border. Restrictions were removed at the end of May, as the number of people fleeing Ukraine via Latvia had significantly decreased and the numbers of refugees arriving via Russia had significantly increased.



IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT SMUGGLING

Preventing and tackling irregular migration in legal migration channels

In September 2022, the Police and Border Guard Board and the Estonian Defence League held a joint

training exercise 'Müür' (Wall) to practice the implementation of an emergency plan in case of a mass influx of migrants.

Preventing facilitation of irregular migration ('smuggling') and preventing irregular stay

In June, amendments to [the Obligation to Leave and Prohibition on Entry Act](#) came into force, specifying in more detail the possibility of detaining a third country national for identification procedures and for establishing, whether a person is subject of obligation to leave the country.



RETURN AND READMISSION

Cooperation with third countries

On 15 December 2022, Estonia and Kazakhstan signed a bilateral agreement on readmission of irregularly staying people.



MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Estonia started the implementation of the EU Global Gateway strategy through Team Europe initiatives. It is participating in initiatives that help to transform economies and societies, create employment, and strengthen education systems, contributing to reducing refugee flows in the longer term.



STATISTICAL ANNEX

The statistical annex available on the next pages complements the Country Factsheet and provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Estonia on aspects of migration and international protection. It was prepared by Eurostat and it is organised in ten thematic sections, including legal residence, temporary protection, asylum, unaccompanied minors, integration, irregular migration, return and visas. The dashboard-like layout of the annex allows comparability across countries as well as simultaneous visualisation of different indicators.

The data presented in the annex were extracted on 8 May 2023, with the exception of data on first-time applicants extracted on 7 June 2023. They cover the period 2019-2022. Since 2022 data were not available at the time of publication for certain datasets, in these cases the period 2019-2021 is covered.

For some indicators, data are rounded at the source. Due to this, in some cases, the sum of percentages or of individual values might not add up to 100 or to the total value.

A 'How to read the statistical annex' guide, describing each individual chart and providing links to the data sources, is available [here](#).

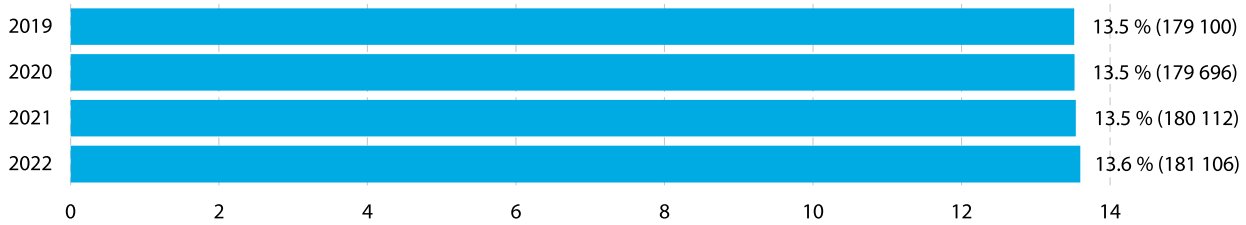
An online data code available under each table/figure can be used to directly access to the most recent data on [Eurostat's website](#).



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Third-country nationals, 1 January 2019–2022

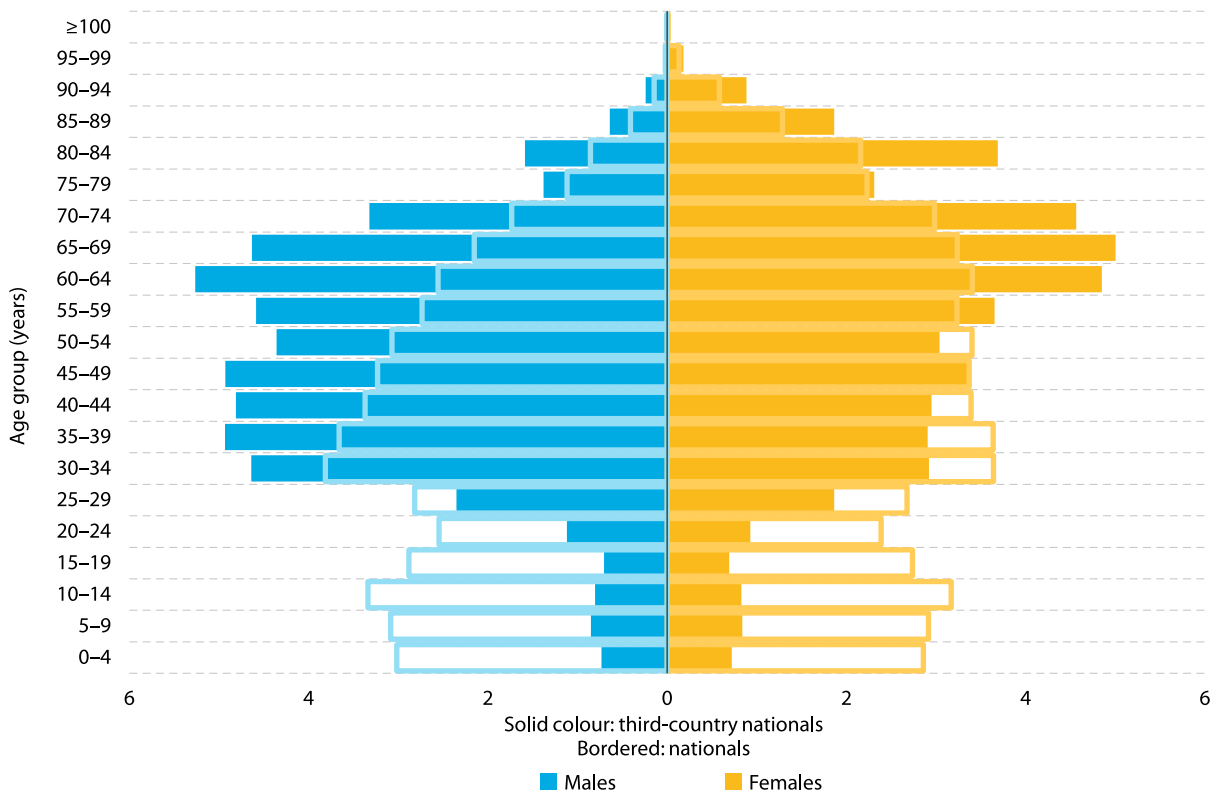
Share of the total population in % (and the absolute number)



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

Age structure of nationals and third-country nationals, 1 January 2022

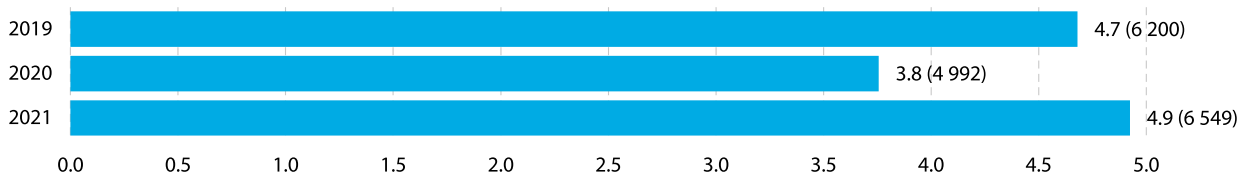
%



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

First residence permits issued to third-country nationals, 2019–2021

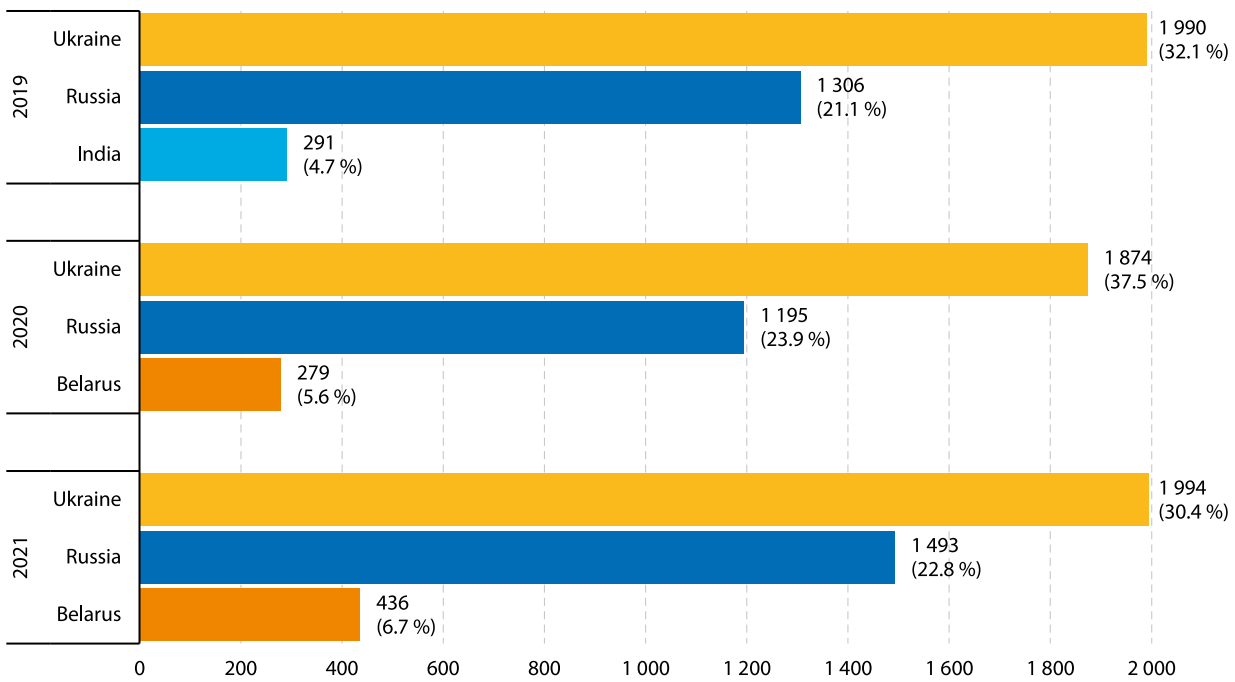
Number per 1 000 people (and the absolute number)



Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst and migr_pop1ctz)

Top 3 countries whose citizens received first residence permits, 2019–2021

Absolute number (and the share in total number)

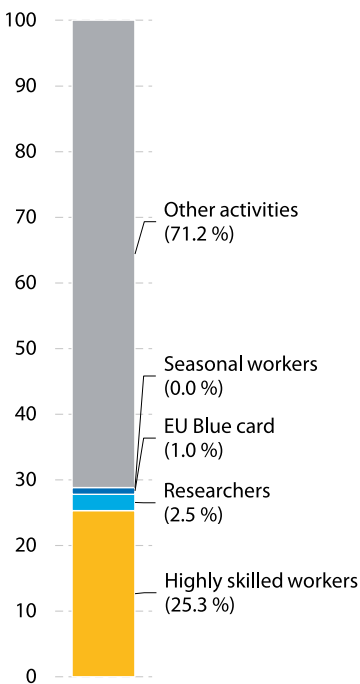


Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)

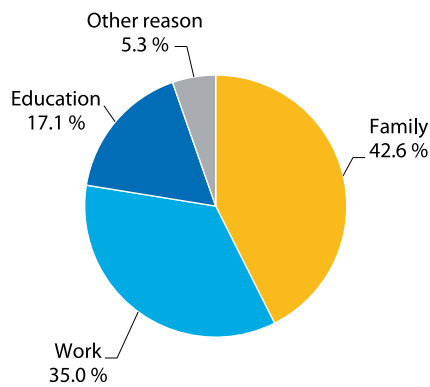
First residence permits issued, distribution by reason or type, 2021

%

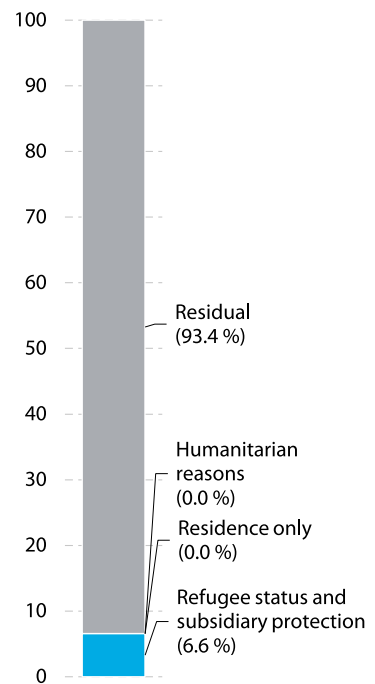
Work reason, by type



All permits, by reason



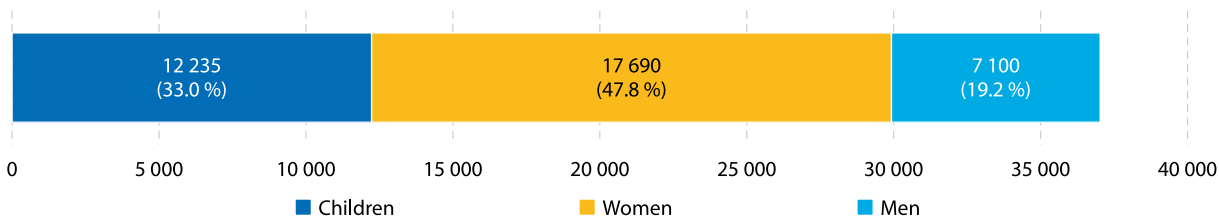
Other reason, by detailed reason



Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_resocc and migr_resoth)

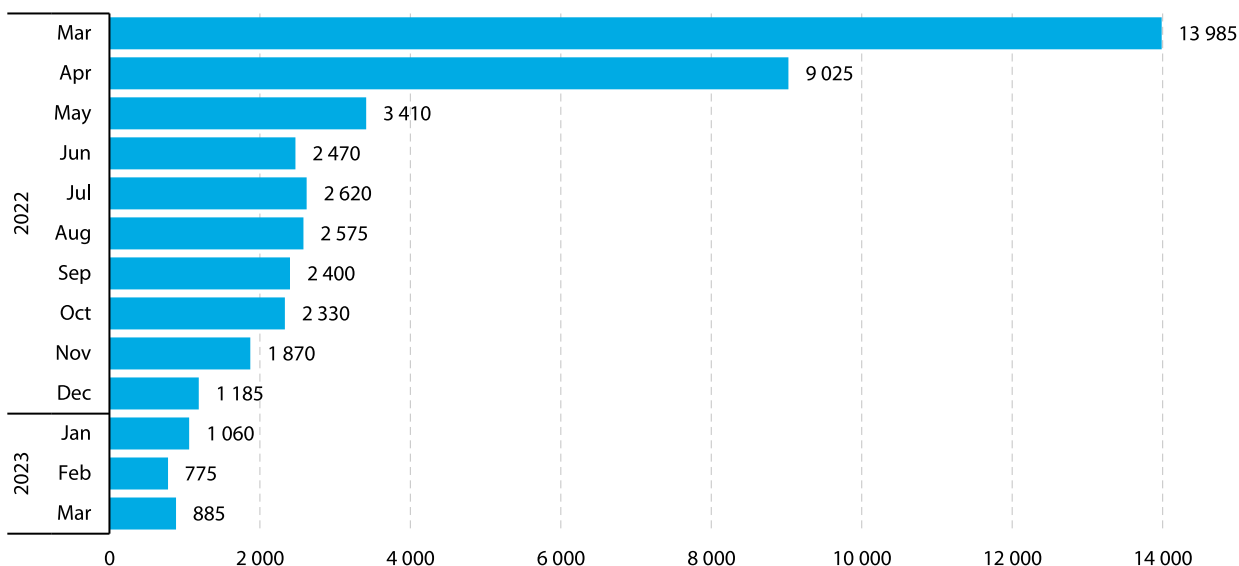
TEMPORARY PROTECTION

Third-country nationals who fled Ukraine and were benefitting from temporary protection at the end of March 2023
 Absolute number (and the share within the total)



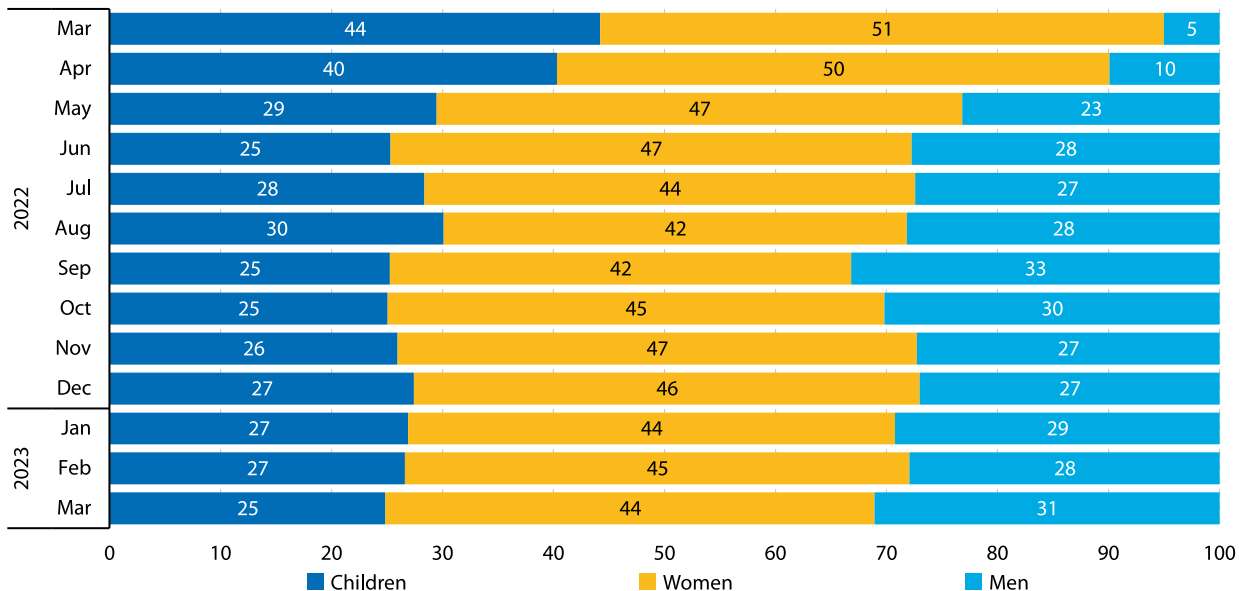
Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpsm)

Number of decisions granting temporary protection to third-country nationals displaced from Ukraine due to Russia's invasion, March 2022–March 2023



Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpfm)

Distribution by age and sex of decisions granting temporary protection to third-country nationals displaced from Ukraine due to Russia's invasion, March 2022–March 2023
 %



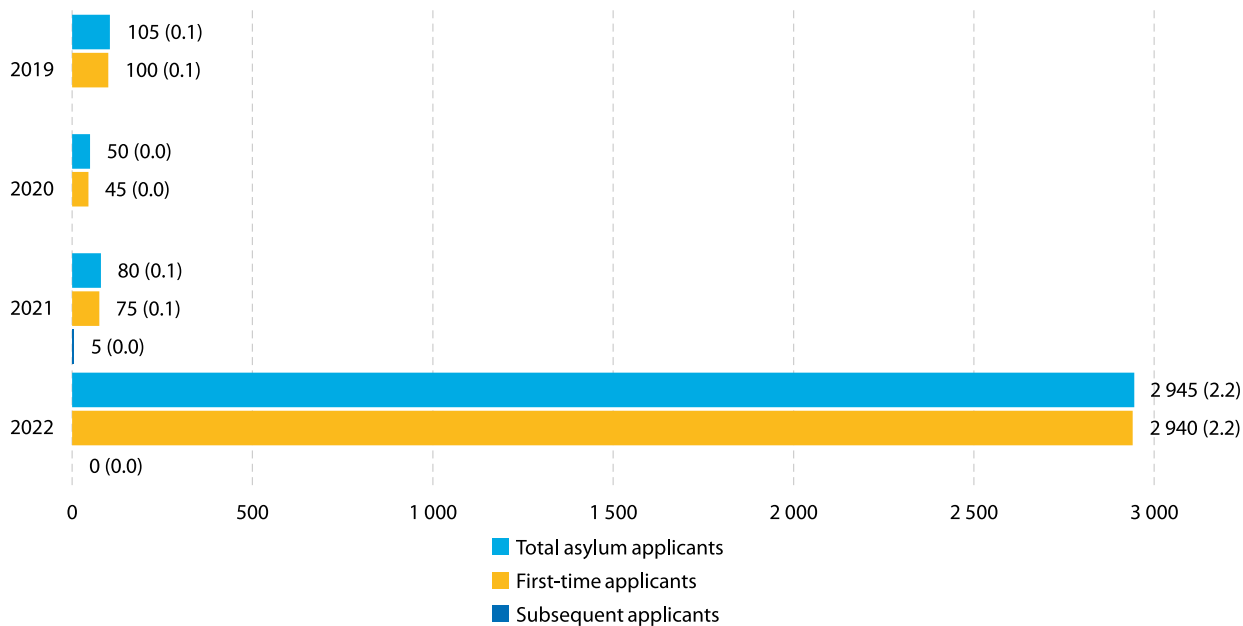
Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpfm)



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

Asylum applicants (third-country nationals), by type of application, 2019–2022

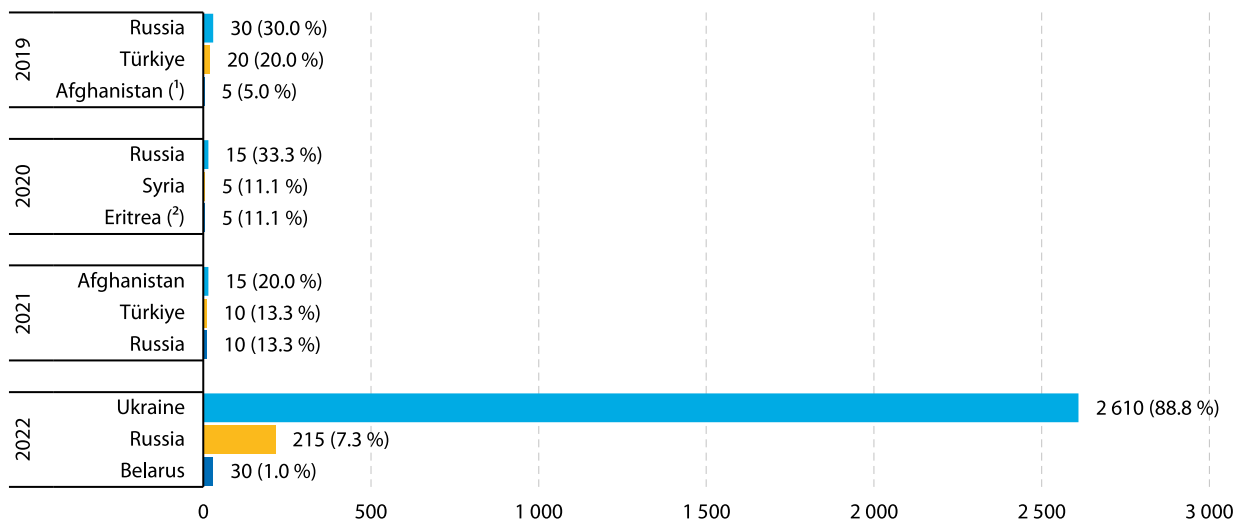
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



Source: Eurostat ([migr_asyappctza](#) and [migr_pop1ctz](#))

Top 3 countries of citizenship – first-time asylum applicants, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share in total number of first-time applicants)

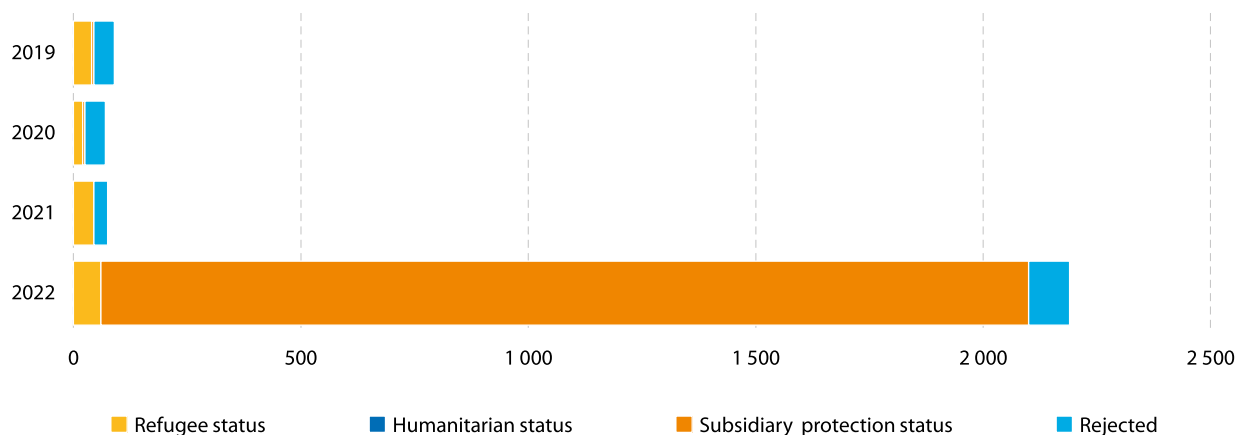


(¹) Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Syria and Ukraine: same number.

(²) Tajikistan and Türkiye: same number.

Source: Eurostat ([migr_asyappctza](#))

Number of first instance asylum decisions for third-country nationals, by outcome, 2019–2022



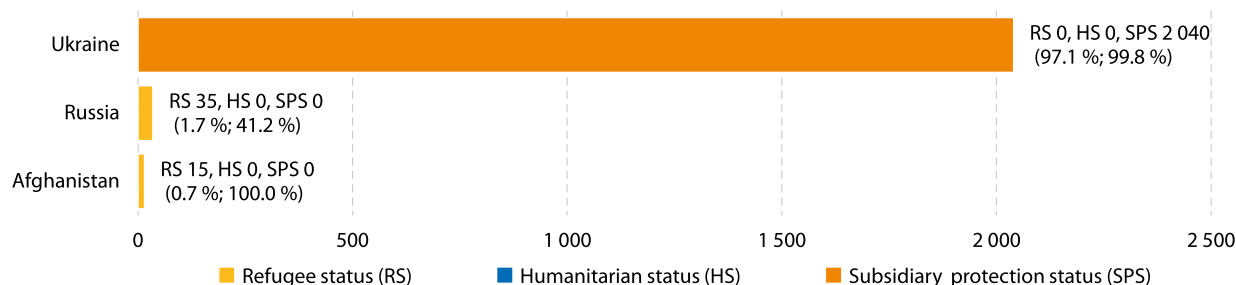
	Refugee status		Humanitarian status		Subsidiary protection status		Rejected	
	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)
2019	40	44.4	0	0.0	5	5.6	45	50.0
2020	20	28.6	0	0.0	5	7.1	45	64.3
2021	45	60.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	30	40.0
2022	60	2.7	0	0.0	2 040	93.2	90	4.1

Note: the shares are calculated using the sum of the four outcomes as the denominator.

Source: Eurostat ([migr_asydcfsta](#))

Top 3 countries of citizenship granted positive asylum decisions at first instance, by outcome, 2022

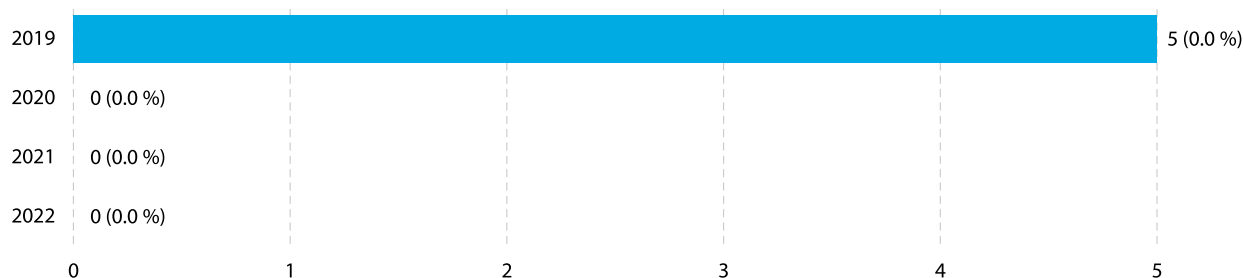
Absolute number (and share in total positive decisions; and the recognition rate)



Source: Eurostat ([migr_asydcfsta](#))

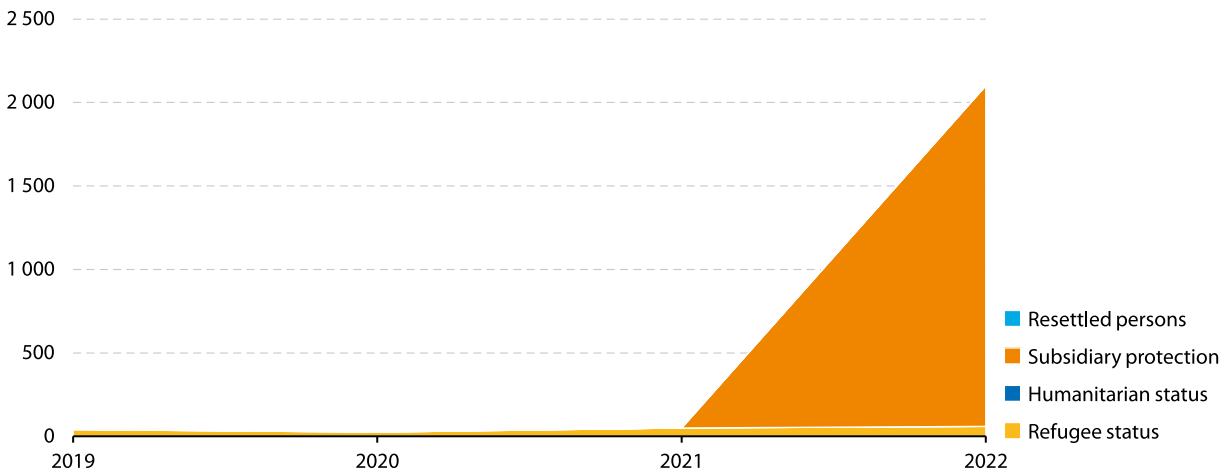
Resettled third-country nationals, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share of the total resettled within the EU)



Source: Eurostat ([migr_asyresa](#))

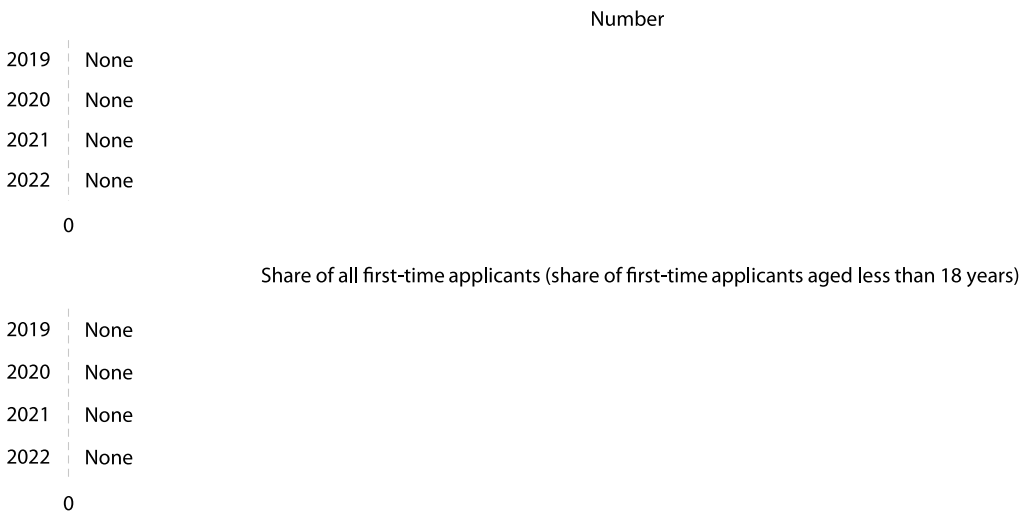
Number of positive decisions for third-country nationals, by outcome, 2019–2022



Source: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta, migr_asydcfina and migr_asyresa)

 UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

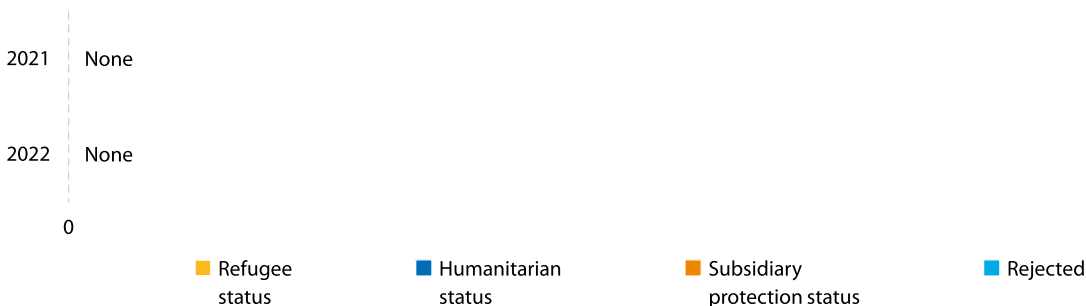
Unaccompanied minors (third-country nationals) applying for asylum, 2019–2022



Source: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa and migr_asyappctza)

First instance asylum decisions on applications lodged by unaccompanied minors (third-country nationals), by outcome, 2021 and 2022

Absolute number (and the share in the total)



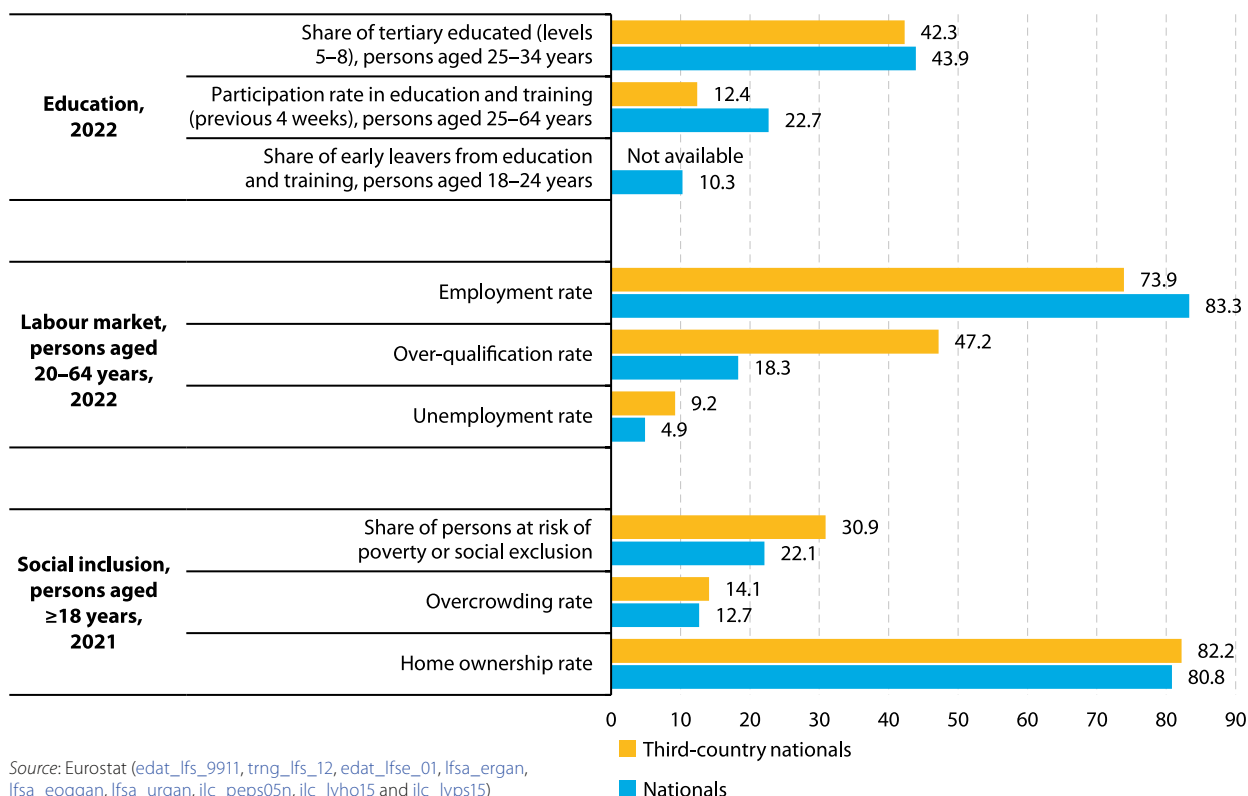
Source: Eurostat (migr_asyumdcfq)



INTEGRATION

Integration indicators, 2021 or 2022

%



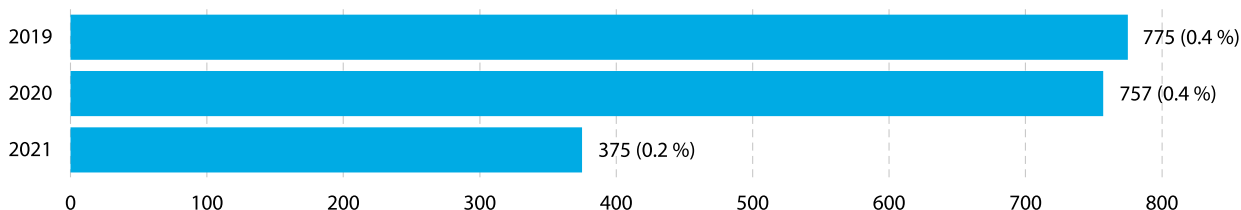
Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9911, trng_lfs_12, edat_lfse_01, lfsa_ergan, lfsa_eoqgan, lfsa_urgan, ilc_peps05n, ilc_lvho15 and ilc_lvps15)



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

Third-country nationals who acquired citizenship, 2019–2021

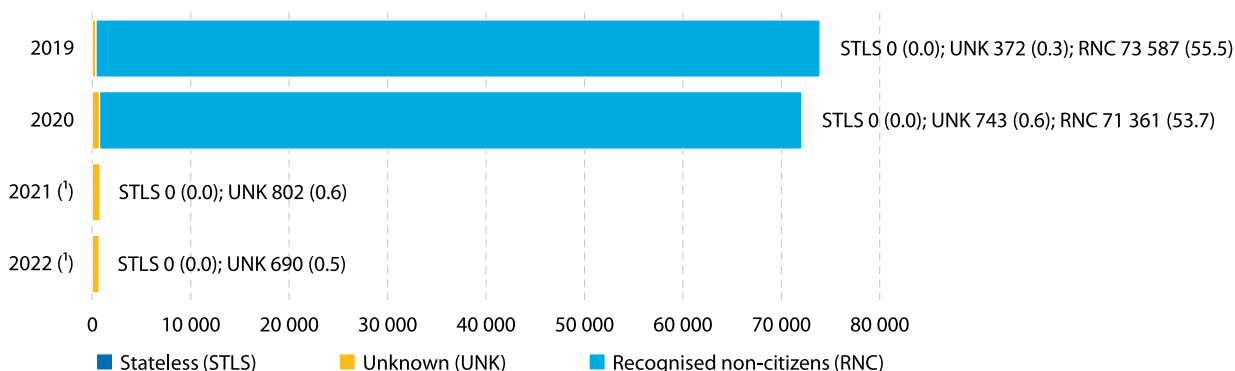
Absolute number (and share of total third-country nationals in the country)



Source: Eurostat (migr_acq and migr_pop1ctz)

Stateless persons, persons with unknown citizenship and recognised non-citizens, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)

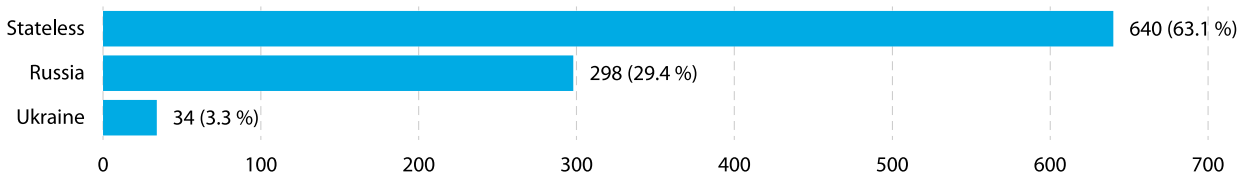


(*) Recognised non-citizens: not available.

Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

Top 3 countries of previous non-EU citizenships of persons acquiring citizenship, 2021

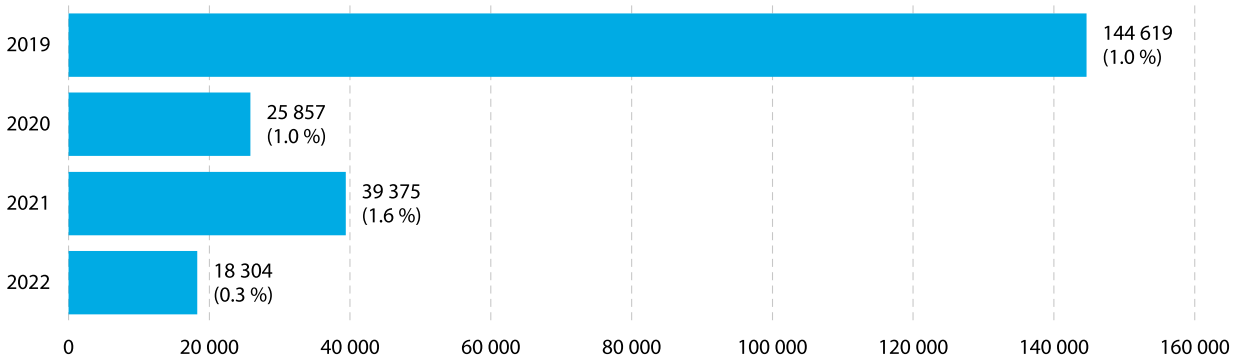
Absolute number (and the share of all acquisitions by third-country nationals plus stateless)



Source: Eurostat (migr_acq)

**BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS****Schengen uniform short-stay visas issued, 2019–2022**

Absolute number (and the share of all uniform short-stay visas issued within the Schengen Area)

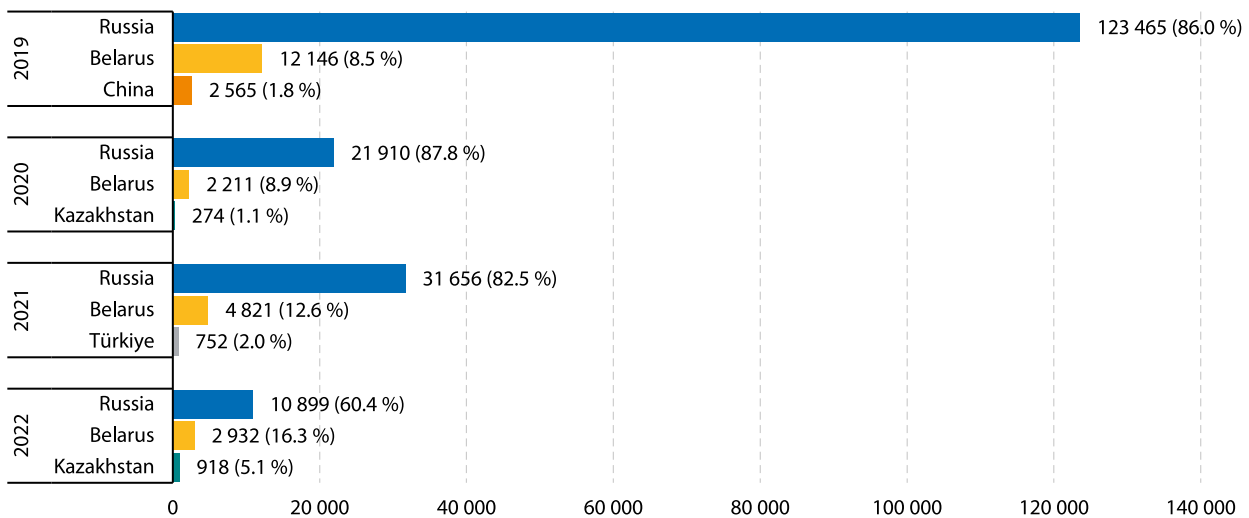


Note: Bulgaria, Ireland, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania were not part of the Schengen Area. Uniform short-stay visas (C visas) entitle the holder to stay in the territories of all Schengen States for up to 90 days within a 180-day period. Such visas may be issued for the purpose of a single entry or multiple entries.

Source: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

Three consulate countries in which the most Schengen uniform short-stay visas were issued, 2019–2022

Number of uniform short-stay visas issued (and the share of all uniform short-stay visas issued in consulate countries)



Note: the consulate country might not be the same as the country of citizenship of the visa applicant.

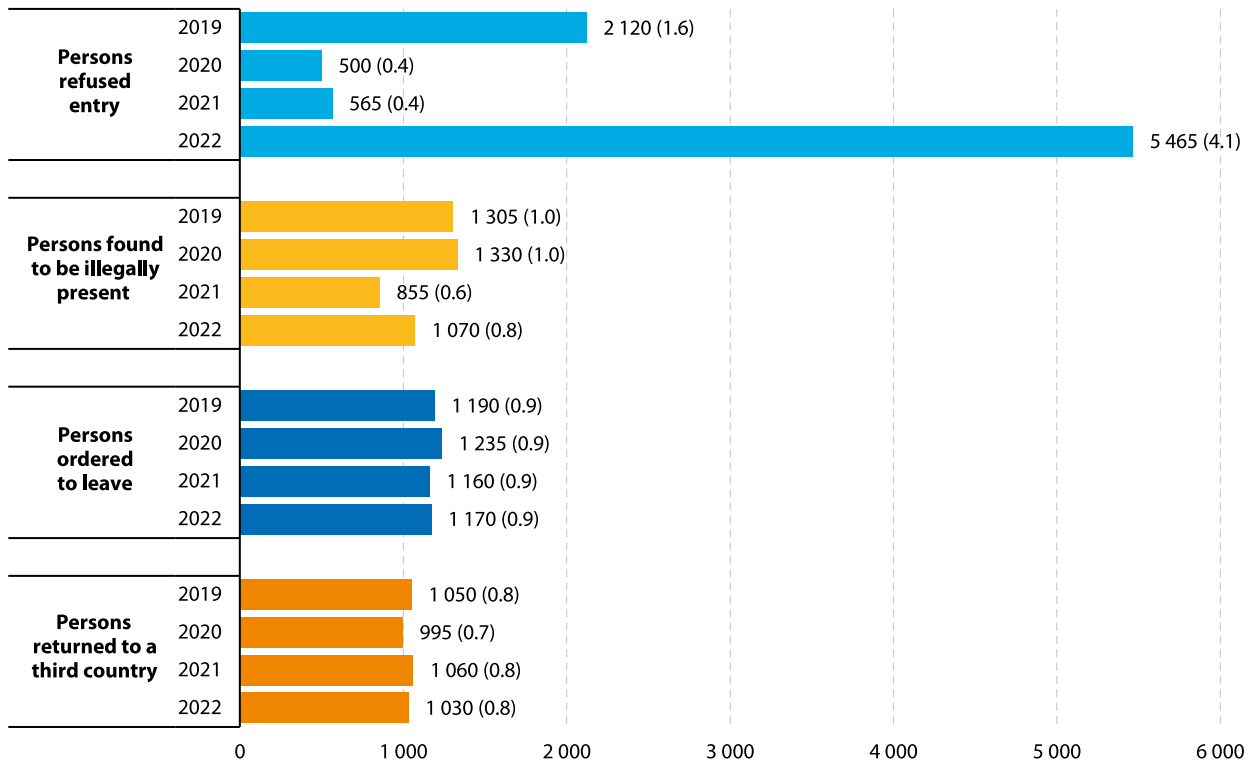
Source: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs



IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Third-country nationals subject to immigration law enforcement, 2019–2022

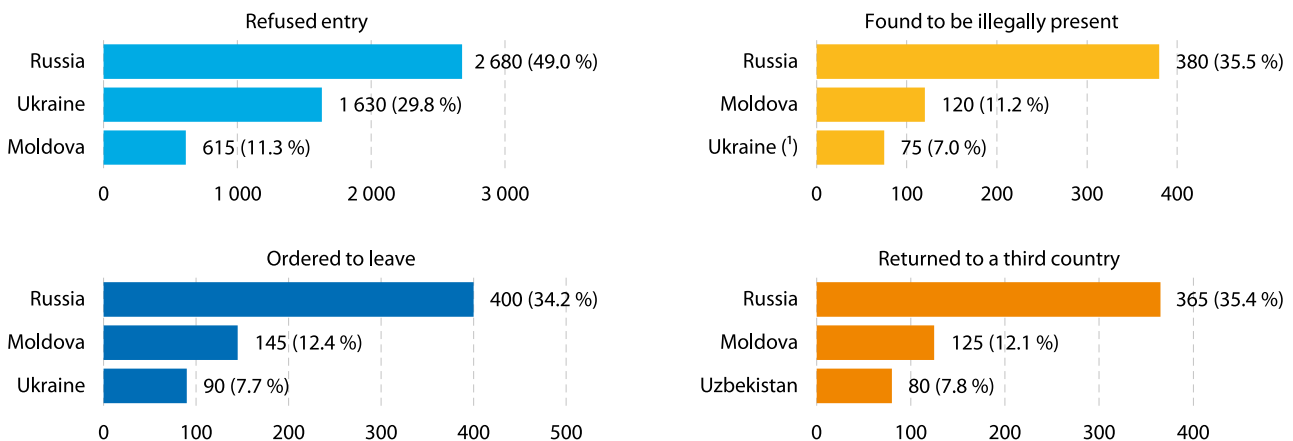
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



Source: Eurostat (migr_eirfs, migr_eipre, migr_eiord, migr_eirtn and migr_pop1ctz)

Top 3 countries of citizenship of third-country nationals subject to immigration law enforcement, 2022

Absolute numbers (and the shares in the respective totals)



(¹) Uzbekistan: same number.

Source: Eurostat (migr_eirfs, migr_eipre, migr_eiord and migr_eirtn)



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

First residence permits issued to victims of trafficking in human beings, 2019–2021

Absolute number (and the share within the EU)

2019	None
2020	None
2021	None
	0

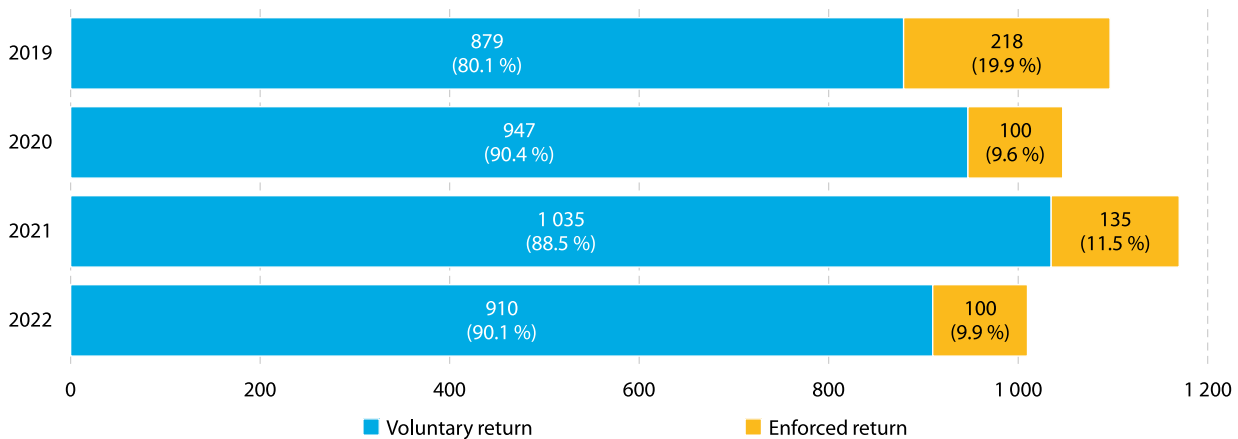
Source: Eurostat (migr_resoth)



RETURN AND READMISSION

Third-country nationals who left the territory, by type of return, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share within the total)

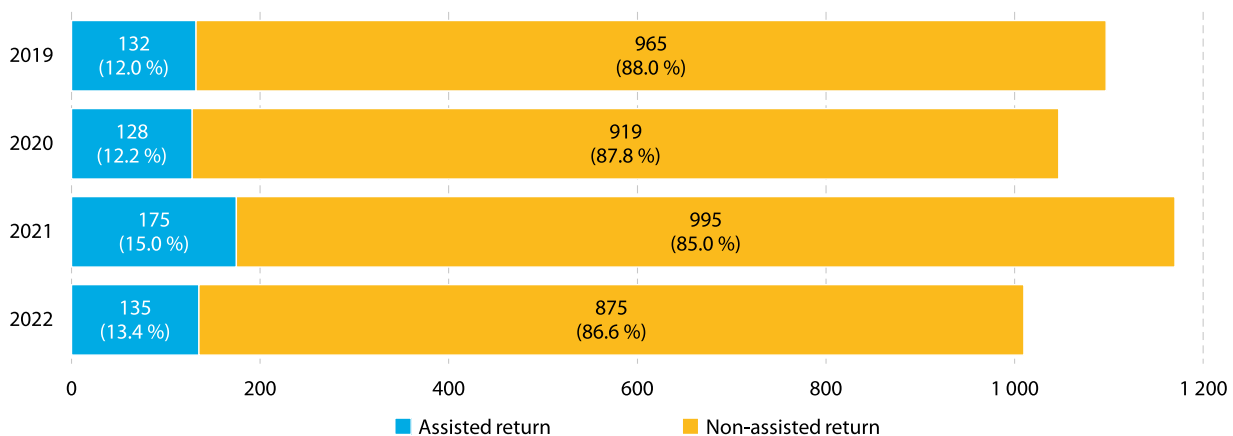


Note: data for 2019 and 2020 are from migr_eirt_vol. Data for 2021 and 2022 are from migr_eirtn1.

Source: Eurostat (migr_eirt_vol and migr_eirtn1)

Third-country nationals who left the territory, by type of assistance received, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share within the total)



Note: data for 2019 and 2020 are from migr_eirt_ass. Data for 2021 and 2022 are from migr_eirtn1.

Source: Eurostat (migr_eirt_ass and migr_eirtn1)

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE EU

In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you online (european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us_en).

On the phone or in writing

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696,
- via the following form: european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/write-us_en.

FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU

Online

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website (european-union.europa.eu).

EU publications

You can view or order EU publications at op.europa.eu/en/publications. Multiple copies of free publications can be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local documentation centre (european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us_en).

EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex (eur-lex.europa.eu).

EU open data

The portal data.europa.eu provides access to open datasets from the EU institutions, bodies and agencies. These can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes. The portal also provides access to a wealth of datasets from European countries.



For more information

EMN website: <http://ec.europa.eu/emn>

EMN LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-migration-network>

EMN Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/emnmigration>

EMN YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@EMNMigration>

EMN National Contact Points

Austria www.emn.at/en/

Belgium www.emnbelgium.be

Bulgaria www.emn-bg.com

Croatia <https://emn.gov.hr/>

Cyprus www.moi.gov.cy/moi/crmd/emnncpc.nsf/home/home?opendocument

Czechia www.emncz.eu

Denmark www.justitsministeriet.dk/

Estonia www.emn.ee/

Finland <https://emn.fi/en/>

France www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Europe-et-International/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM3/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM2

Germany <https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/EMN/emn-node.html>

Greece <http://emn.immigration.gov.gr/en/>

Hungary www.emnhungary.hu/en

Ireland www.emn.ie/

Italy www.emnitalyncp.it/

Latvia www.emn.lv/en/home/

Lithuania www.emn.lt/en/

Luxembourg <https://emnluxembourg.uni.lu/>

Malta <https://emn.gov.mt/>

The Netherlands <https://www.emnnetherlands.nl/>

Poland <https://www.gov.pl/web/europejska-siec-migracyjna>

Portugal <https://rem.sef.pt/>

Romania <https://www.mai.gov.ro/>

Spain <https://www.emnspain.gob.es>

Slovak Republic <https://emn.sk/en/>

Slovenia <https://emm.si/en/>

Sweden <http://www.emnsweden.se/>

Norway <https://www.udi.no/en/statistics-and-analysis/european-migration-network---norway>

Georgia https://migration.commission.ge/index.php?article_id=1&clang=1

Republic of Moldova <http://bma.gov.md/en>

Ukraine <https://dmsu.gov.ua/en-home.html>

Montenegro <https://www.gov.me/en/mup>

Armenia <https://migration.am/?lang=en>

Serbia <https://kirs.gov.rs/cir>