



Migration Statistics

2019–2023

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



A European Union citizen and his or her family member

Right to stay — up to 3 months

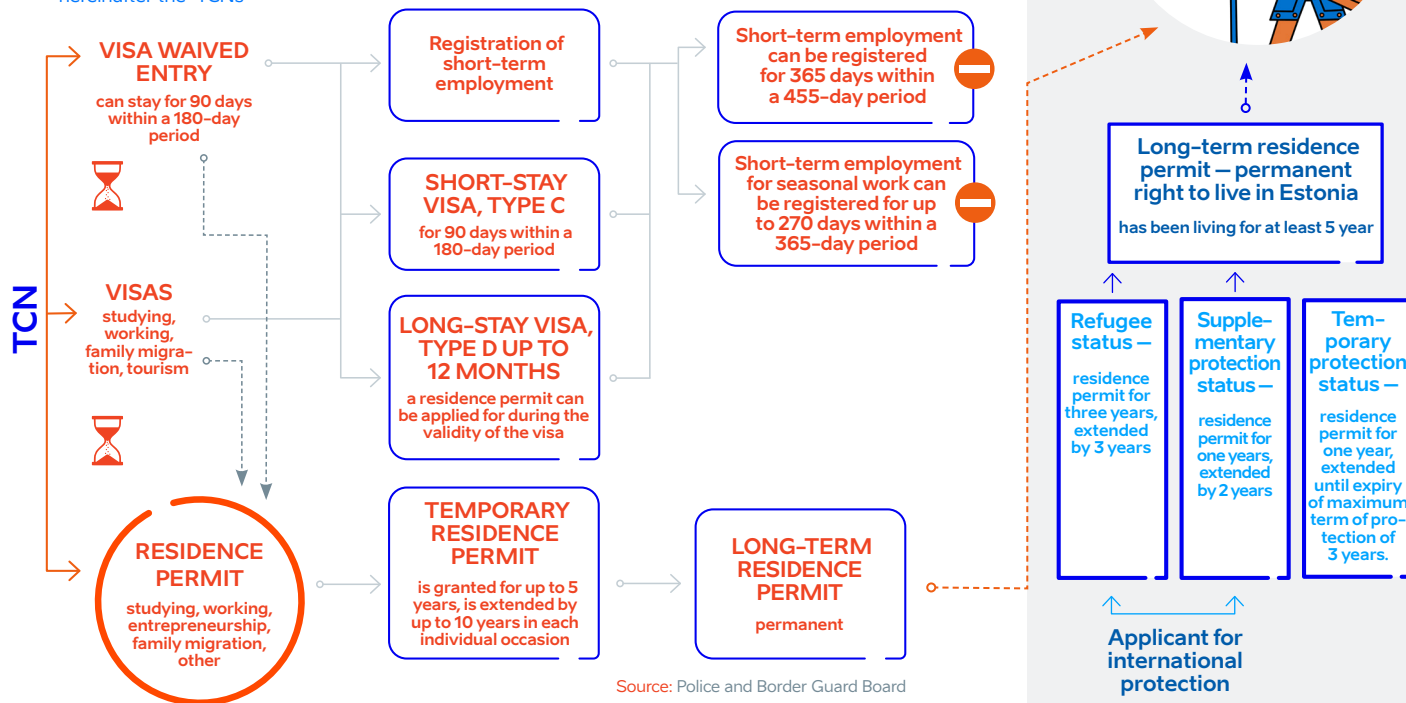
Temporary right of residence — up to 5 years

Permanent right of residence — no fixed period

Estonian citizenship



* hereinafter the 'TCNs'



Source: Police and Border Guard Board

This overview of migration statistics 2019–2023 provides answers to the following questions:

- What is Estonia's population, immigration, emigration and net migration?
- Which foreign country has the most Estonian citizens living there?
- How many visas were issued and to whom and for what purpose?
- How many registrations of short-term employment were made and in what fields?
- Who came to live in Estonia and what were the reasons?
- Who were granted long-term residence permits and the right of permanent residence?
- Where did the foreigners settle?
- Who were granted international protection? How many people received temporary protection in Estonia?
- Who were expelled from Estonia?
- Who became Estonian citizens?
- Who became e-residents?
- How many foreigners participated in the *Settle in Estonia* programme?
- How has migration to Estonia changed since joining the European Union?

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



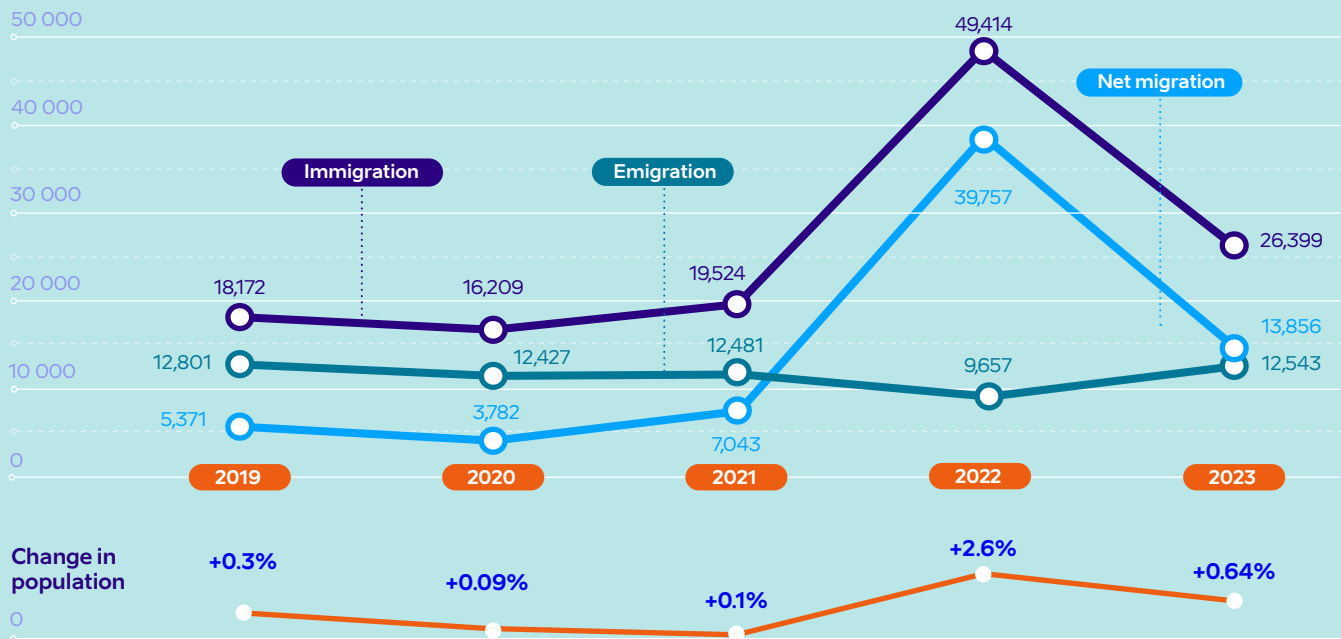
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INTRODUCTION

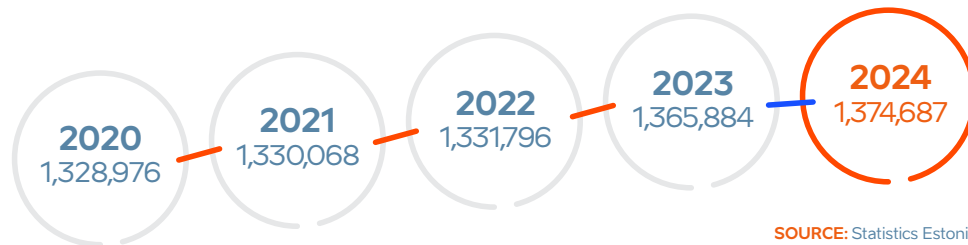
The purpose of this publication is to provide an overview of the main migration trends in Estonia during the period of 2019–2023 and to explain the different aspects of migration.

Net Migration (01.01.2024)



ESTONIAN POPULATION

2020–2024
(as on Jan 1)



SOURCE: Statistics Estonia

According to Statistics Estonia, the population of Estonia as of January 1, 2024 was 1,374,687, which indicates an increase of 0.64% compared to the previous year. In 2023, 10,949 individuals were born and 16,002 died in Estonia. Pursuant to registered migration, 26,399 individuals came to live in Estonia and 12,543 individuals left for abroad in 2023. Thus, the number of births in Estonia was 5,053 less than the number of deaths, whereas the number of individuals who settled in Estonia was 13,856 bigger than the number of people who left Estonia. The positive net migration exceeded somewhat the negative natural growth rate, which contributed to the fact that the population change was slightly positive. Overall, Estonia's population grew by 8803 individuals.

Since 2022, the main reason for increased immigration has been the arrival of Ukrainian war refugees in Estonia — 75% of those who arrived in the country, i.e. 31,594 individuals, were Ukrainian citizens. At the beginning of 2024, there were 60,414 people of Ukrainian citizenship living in Estonia, accounting for 4.4% of the population. 44,480 of them, have arrived in Estonia since the beginning of 2022.

Which foreign country has the most Estonian citizens living there,
top 10 countries (as of January 1, 2024)

	Finland	54,936
	Russia	18,956
	United Kingdom	9,712
	Germany	5,876
	United States	5,190
	Sweden	5,152
	Canada	3,228
	Australia	3,135
	Ireland	2,447
	Norway	1,767

SOURCE: Population Register

According to the Population Register, the number of Estonian citizens living abroad in the beginning of 2024 was 125,236, which shows an increase of 1% comparing to the previous year. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that there are actually up to 200,000 people of Estonian origin living abroad.

VISAS

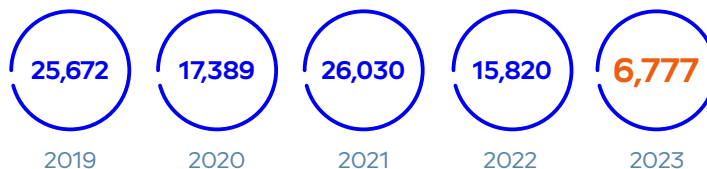
The **uniform Schengen visa (type C visa)** allows a person to travel freely throughout the Schengen Area for up to 90 days in a 180-day period.

The **long-term visa (type D visa)** is issued to a person for staying in Estonia for up to 12 consecutive months for a maximum period of up to 365 days. The long-term visa is a domestic visa that allows a person 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-term and a long-term visa for remote working (the so-called digital nomad visa) if the purpose of the foreigner's temporary stay in Estonia is the performance of work duties irrespective of the location. In 2023, 149 long-term visas were issued for remote working, which indicates a 22% decrease as compared to the previous year when 191 digital nomad visas were issued. For the most part, visa recipients were citizens of the United States, United Kingdom, Turkey, Armenia and Canada.

Visas issued by Estonia (2019–2023)

Long-term visa – type D visa



Short-term visa – type C visa



Visas issued by Estonia (in 2023)

Short-term type C visas (Schengen visas)

Total

Top 5 citizenships

8,870



Russia



India



Belarus



Turkey



China

Long-term type D visas

Total

Top 5 citizenships

6,777



Moldova



Ukraine



Russia



Uzbekistan



Georgia

In 2020–2021, the cross-border movement of people around the world, including in Estonia, was hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic, whereas in 2022, it was primarily affected by the restrictions and sanctions ⁽¹⁾ imposed on citizens of the Russian Federation due to the war in Ukraine. As several Estonian foreign missions stopped accepting visa applications, the numbers of type C and type D visas issued in 2023 were record low — 8,870 and 6,777 respectively (-53% and -57%, respectively, as compared to the previous year).

Top 5 short-term visas issued by purpose of travel (in 2023)



VISITING
FAMILY



Tourism



Business



Other



Sports

Top 5 long-term visas issued by purpose of travel (in 2023)



SHORT-TERM
EMPLOYMENT



Visiting family



Studies



Business



Other

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

¹ Due to Russia's war in Ukraine, several restrictions and sanctions have been imposed since 2022, which were also in force in 2023. As of March 2022, Estonian foreign missions in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Pskov and Minsk, as well as visa centres of foreign service providers in the Russian Federation and Belarus, stopped accepting visa applications. In April, the Government of the Republic introduced a sanction to restrict working and business activities in Estonia for citizens of the Russian Federation and Belarus. An order of the Government of the Republic entered into force in September 2022, temporarily limiting the crossing of the external border for the citizens of the Russian Federation with a short-term visa. Embassies remained closed also in 2023, and as from September 2023, motor vehicles with a Russian license plate were prohibited from crossing the external border and entering Estonia, as they fall under the scope of the sanction.

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT

Foreigners staying temporarily in Estonia (e.g. based on a visa or visa waiver) may work in Estonia if their right to work arises directly from legislation or an international agreement (a treaty) 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 does not provide a foreigner with legal grounds to stay in Estonia.

In general, 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 2023, the number of registrations of short-term employment decreased by 71% as compared to 2022. The main reason for this was the Russian Federation's war in Ukraine. While in 2021, Ukrainian citizens accounted for 72% of the total number of short-term workers, in 2022 the respective percentage was 47%, and in 2023 only 30%.

Out of all registrations of short-term employment, 81% were related to men and 19% to women (the proportion of men decreased by 3% as compared to 2022).

The number of short-term employment registrations for seasonal work dropped by 56% as compared to 2022.

Number of short-term employment registrations

(2019-2023)



Top 5 citizenships (2023)



SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Fields for employment in which short-term employment was registered, top 5 (in 2023)



SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

WHO AND FOR WHAT REASONS CAME TO LIVE IN ESTONIA?

Temporary residence

permit is a permit that allows a foreigner to live in Estonia for a specified period. A temporary residence permit may be issued to a foreigner to settle with a spouse or a close relative, to study, employment or enterprise, in exceptional cases also to participate in criminal proceedings, in cases of compelling national interest, or on the basis of an international agreement (a treaty). In addition, a foreigner who has lived in Estonia for at least three years within five

consecutive years can be granted a residence permit for settling permanently in Estonia. A temporary residence permit is valid for up to 5 years and can be extended for up to 10 years.

Statistics of first-time temporary residence permits issued in 2023² indicate the foreigners primarily come to Estonia on the grounds of employment, family migration, studies and business activities.

² A first-time temporary residence permit is granted to a person who applies for an Estonian residence permit for the first time.



First-time temporary residence permits and rights of residence by type of migration (2019-2023)



	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		
Total number of first-time residence permits	5,984	4,710	6,087	5,989	4,261	2,653	1,608
Family migration (joining a spouse/close relative)	2,272	1,958	2,642	2,867	1,686	615	1,071
Studies	1,330	533	1078	551	424	232	192
Employment	2,218	2,089	2249	2,463	2,054	1,724	330
Business activities	134	111	106	85	85	73	12
Family members of EU citizens	82	106	107	161	111	36	75
Other reason*	30	19	12	23	12	9	3

Other reason* – participation in criminal proceedings, based on international agreement (treaty)






SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

In 2023, the total number of first-time temporary residence permits dropped by 29% as compared to 2022, which was also significantly affected by Russia's war in Ukraine. The number of residence permits decreased across all grounds for residence permit – family migration by 41%, employment by 17%, studies by 23%. Only the number of residence permits issued for business activities remained stable. In previous years, Russian citizens formed a large





part of those who settled in Estonia on the basis of a residence permit. However, the short-term employment of Russian citizens in Estonia and the application for temporary residence permits and visas by Russian citizens have been limited due to the sanctions imposed by the Government of the Republic for the aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine.

First-time temporary residence permits, top 5 citizenships by type of migration (in 2023)

Number of recipients of a first-time temporary residence permit by citizenship

 Ukraine	1,229
 Russia	449
 India	294
 Turkey	252
 Uzbekistan	164
TOTAL	4,261


Family migration (joining a spouse/close relative)

 Russia	
 Ukraine	
 Turkey	
 India	
 Belarus	
TOTAL	1,686

Studies

 Pakistan	
 China	
 Azerbaijan	
 India	
 Turkey	
TOTAL	424

Employment

 Ukraine	
 India	
 Uzbekistan	
 UNITED STATES	
 Brazil	
TOTAL	2,054

Business activities

 Turkey	
 Iran	
 India	
 UNITED STATES	
 Azerbaijan	
TOTAL	85

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

LABOUR MIGRATION

In 2023, the number of recipients of the first-time temporary residence permit issued for employment decreased by 17% compared to 2022, whereas the number of residence permits issued for employment as a top specialist decreased by 50% and the number of residence permits issued for employment in start-ups decreased by 66%.

First-time temporary residence permits for employment by types of employment (2021-2023)

Labour migration	2021	2022	2023
General	1,248	1,267	1,155
Top specialists	566	645	320
Employment in start-ups	190	345	116
Experts/advisers/consultants	64	81	33
Researchers/lecturers	52	40	34
Members of managing bodies of legal entities governed by private law	23	6	10
Athletes/coaches/referees	22	9	26
EU Blue Card	23	18	10
Ministers of religion/monks/nuns	29	17	34
Persons engaged in creative activities	8	7	8
Teachers	14	10	4
Short-term employment			273
Employment in growth companies			12
Other	10	18	19
TOTAL	2,249	2,463	2,054

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

As from 2023, a new type of residence permit for short-term employment can be applied under the following conditions: he or she has previously worked for 9 months on the grounds of short-term employment registration, he or she continues to work for the same employer, and the employer has demonstrated its tax reliability. This residence permit is not subject to the immigration quota and is valid for up to 2 years.

In addition, more favourable conditions were established for growth companies to recruit foreign employees – in order to work in a growth company, the employee's salary must be at least 80% of the latest annual average gross monthly salary published by Statistics Estonia and is not subject to the immigration quota.

Settling permanently in Estonia

Temporary residence permits issued for settling permanently in Estonia (2019-2023)



1,049
2023



441
2023

In 2023, the number of residence permits issued for settling permanently in Estonia increased by 6% compared to 2022. 70% of the residence permit recipients were men and 30% were women in 2023.

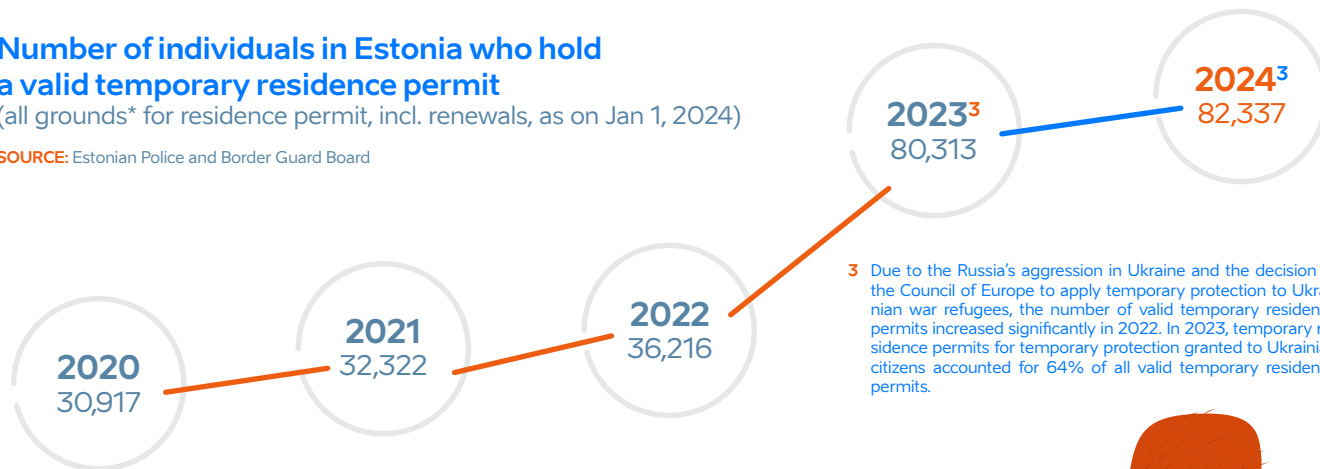
SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Since 2016, it is possible to apply for a residence permit to settle permanently in Estonia. On this ground, a residence permit can be applied for by 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 line with public interests. A temporary residence permit for settling permanently in Estonia is valid for up to 5 years and can be extended for up to 10 years.

Number of individuals in Estonia who hold a valid temporary residence permit

(all grounds* for residence permit, incl. renewals, as on Jan 1, 2024)

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



³ Due to the Russia's 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 increased significantly in 2022. In 2023, temporary residence permits for temporary protection granted to Ukrainian citizens accounted for 64% of all valid temporary residence permits.

Number of persons with valid temporary residence permit by citizenships, top 5 (as on Jan 1, 2024)

 Ukraine	52,948
 Russia	9,533
 Undetermined citizenship	3,247
 Belarus	1,770
 India	1754
TOTAL	82,337

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



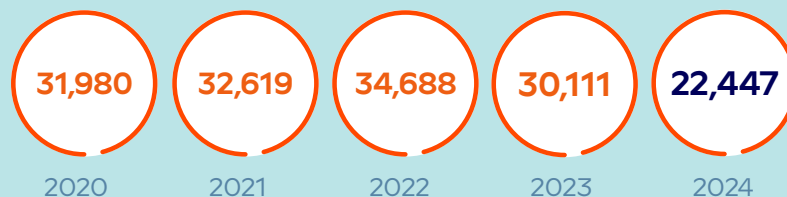
TEMPORARY RIGHT OF RESIDENCE OF EU CITIZENS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

Citizens of the European Union acquire 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 nationals⁴ 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.

EU citizens and their 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 persons with valid temporary right of residence of an EU citizen (as of Jan 1, 2024)



Number of persons with valid temporary right of residence of a family member of an EU citizen (as of Jan 1)



SOURCE: Population Register

⁴ 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. Since 2021, third-country nationals include also UK citizens.

EU citizens who registered their place of residence for the first time, top 5 citizenships (2023)

 Germany	467
 Finland	425
 Latvia	378
 France	254
 Italy	251
TOTAL	2,986

SOURCE: Population Register

Number of persons with valid temporary right of residence of an EU citizen by citizenships, top 5 (as of Jan 1, 2024)

 Finland	5,390
 Latvia	3,571
 Germany	2,379
 France	1,664
 Italy	1,454

SOURCE: Population Register

Decisions on the right of temporary residence of family members of EU citizens, top 5 citizenships (2023)

 Russia	38
 Ukraine	15
 Brazil	10
 Undetermined citizenship	5
 Moldova	5
TOTAL	111

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Number of persons with valid temporary right of residence of a family member of an EU citizen by citizenships, top 5 (as of Jan 1, 2024)

 Russia	189
 Ukraine	79
 Moldova	36
 Brazil	31
 Undetermined citizenship	25
TOTAL	546

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR LONG-TERM RESIDENT






Residence permit for long-term resident is a residence permit issued for an unspecified term. Third-country nationals can apply for this residence permit if they have resided in Estonia for at least five years on the basis of a residence permit, 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.

In 2023, persons with the citizenship of the Russian Federation and people with undetermined citizenship accounted for the largest share of recipients of valid long-term residence permit. Recipients of this residence permit fall mostly into the age groups 60–79 (57,483 valid permits) and 40–59 (46,867 valid permits). The fewest recipients of this residence permit are in the age group 0–19 (6,701 valid permits).

Persons with undetermined citizenship (holders of the so-called grey passport) are persons who settled in Estonia before July 1, 1990 and have continued to reside in Estonia. The number of people with undetermined citizenship who are in possession of a long-term residence permit has decreased from year to year (from 64,584 individuals in 2022 to 62,647 individuals in 2023). In addition, there were 3,247 individuals with undetermined citizenship living in Estonia on the basis of a valid temporary residence permit in 2023; the number of such people is also showing a downward trend. The main reasons for such a trend include the mortality or the acquisition of the citizenship of Estonia or another country.

Foreigners with a valid long-term residence permit, top 5 citizenships

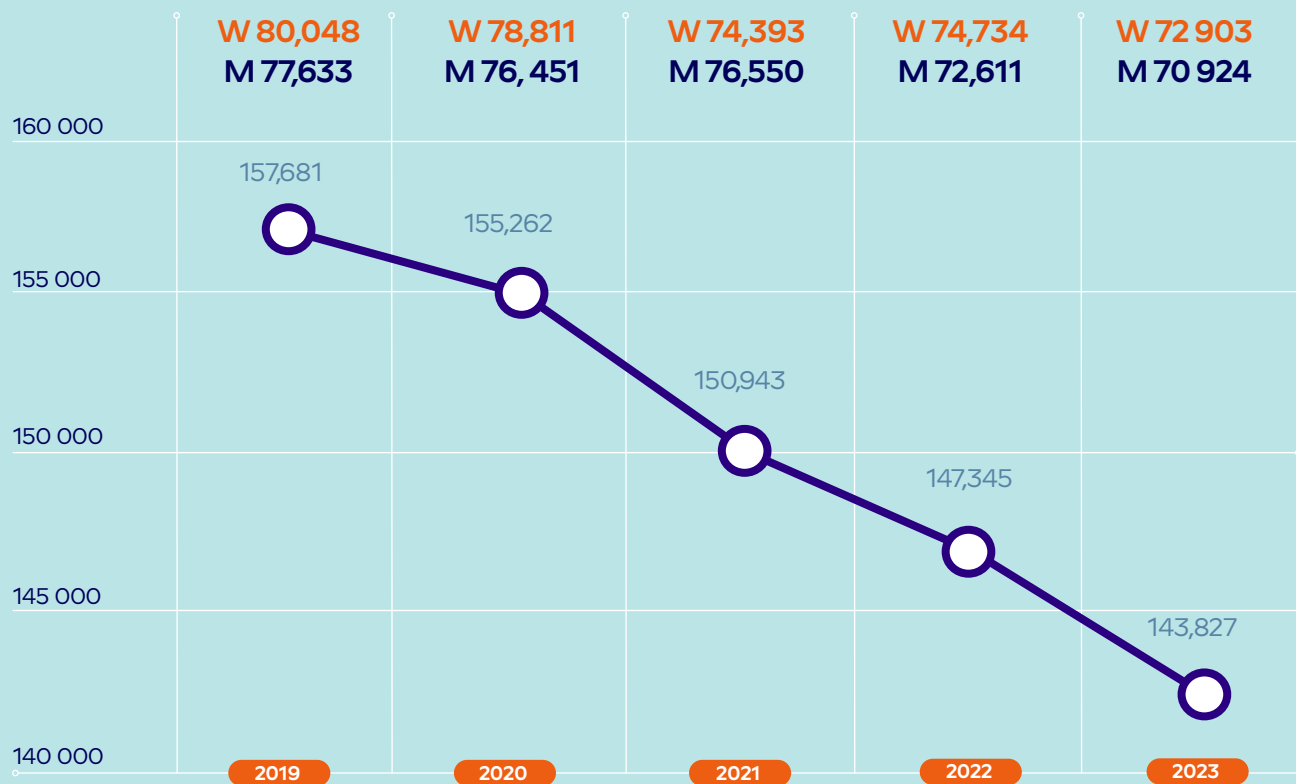
(as of Dec 31, 2023)

	Russia	74,011
	Undetermined citizenship	62,647
	Ukraine	4,472
	Belarus	1,198
	USA	266

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



Valid residence permits for long-term residents (2019-2023)



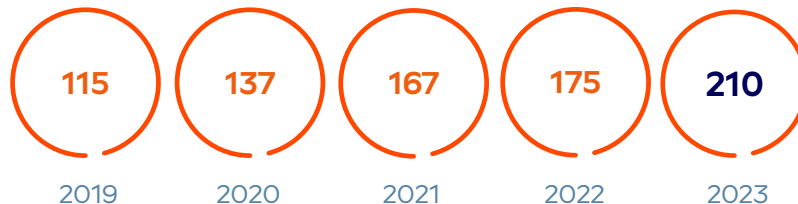
PERMANENT RIGHT OF RESIDENCE OF EU CITIZENS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

Permanent right of residence can be applied for by citizens of the European Union and their family members who are third-country nationals, if they have resided in Estonia persistently for five consecutive years on the basis of a temporary right of residence.

Number of EU citizens with a valid permanent right of residence
(2019–2023 (as of Dec 31))



Top 5 citizenships and the number of EU citizens with permanent right of residence (as of Dec 31, 2023)








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, 2023)

 Finland	2,595
 Latvia	2,664
 Lithuania	1,427
 Germany	670
 United Kingdom	613
TOTAL	10,844

Number of persons with valid permanent right of residence of a family member of an EU citizen by citizenships, top 5
(as of Dec 31, 2023)

 Russia	108
 Undetermined citizenship	25
 Ukraine	16
 United States	9
 Belarus	8
TOTAL	210

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

WHERE DID THE FOREIGNERS SETTLE?

According to the Population Register, in the period of 2019–2023, citizens of both third countries and the European Union settled primarily in Harju County and Tartu County. The map shows first-time registrations of the place of residence of EU citizens and third-country nationals in different counties of Estonia in 2023.

Top 5 cities/towns (2023)

Third-country nationals

Tallinn
8,620

Tartu
1,520

Pärnu
649

Maardu
425

Kohtla-Järve
321

EU citizens

Tallinn
1,807

Tartu
563

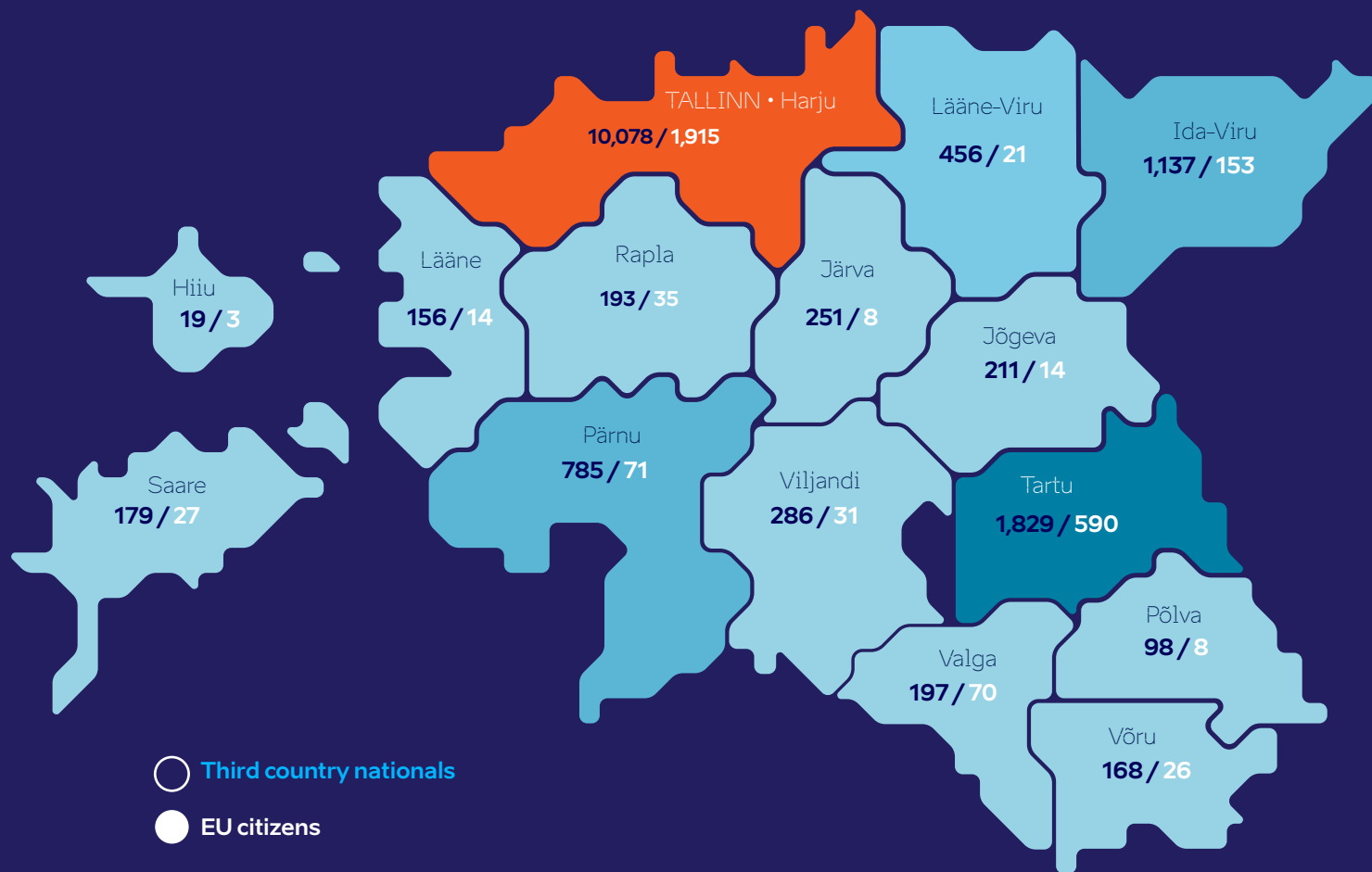
Pärnu
58

Valga
58

Narva
53

SOURCE: Population Register





INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Applying for international protection is a fundamental human right. Estonia has taken on an international commitment to protect the foreigners who cannot live safely in their country of origin. A beneficiary of international protection is a foreigner who has been recognized as a refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection and who has been granted an Estonian residence permit. A beneficiary of temporary protection means a foreigner who belongs to the group of people designated by the implementing act of the Council of the European Union and who has been granted an Estonian residence permit.

Until the beginning of 2022, the number of applicants for 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 nearly 3,000 applications were submitted during the year, and international protection was granted to more than 2,000 people instead of the usual 50. This trend continued in 2023, when 3,984 applications were submitted (in 2022, the number of applications increased by 35% compared to 2022), and international protection was granted to 3,918 people (the number of beneficiaries increased by 86% compared to 2022).

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 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 to the country of origin may result in a serious risk to the person (e.g. death penalty, torture, other inhuman or degrading treatment as punishment, international or internal armed conflict).

TEMPORARY PROTECTION is granted to a foreigner who is among the persons eligible for temporary protection based on the proposal of the European Commission and the implementing decision of the Council of the European Union. 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 any other dangerous situation. Temporary protection is applied when an exceptionally large number of people are at risk and currently with a term of up to 3 years.

Since 1997, 8,244 foreigners have applied for international protection (excluding temporary protection) from Estonia, and international protection (refugee status + subsidiary protection status) has been granted to 6,626 foreigners. Since 2010, a residence permit of a family member of a beneficiary of international protection has been granted to a total of 160 individuals. Over time, many beneficiaries of international protection have either returned to their country of origin or settled in another EU Member State, but for some people the grounds for staying in Estonia have changed.

Number of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection, as well as the number of family members of the beneficiaries of international protection (2019-2023)

	Applicants for international protection	Beneficiaries of international protection	Recipients of a residence permit for a family member of a beneficiary of international protection
2019	101	50	10
2020	46	26	0
2021	76	46	1
2022	2,940	2,106	32
2023	3,980	3,918	31



938



3,042



922



2,996

Citizenship and number of applicants for international protection (excluding temporary protection), top 5

(1997-2023)

	Ukraine	6,592
	Russia	467
	Georgia	121
	Afghanistan	104
	Belarus	92

Citizenship and number of beneficiaries of international protection (excluding temporary protection), including on the basis of a migration scheme, top 5 (1997-2023)

	Ukraine	5,981
	Syria	202
	Russia	139
	Afghanistan	64
	Iraq	42

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

APPLYING FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

International protection, including temporary protection, can be applied for either at any Estonian border crossing point or at a representative office of the Police and Border Guard Board. All international protection application procedures are managed and related decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

RECEPTION OF BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

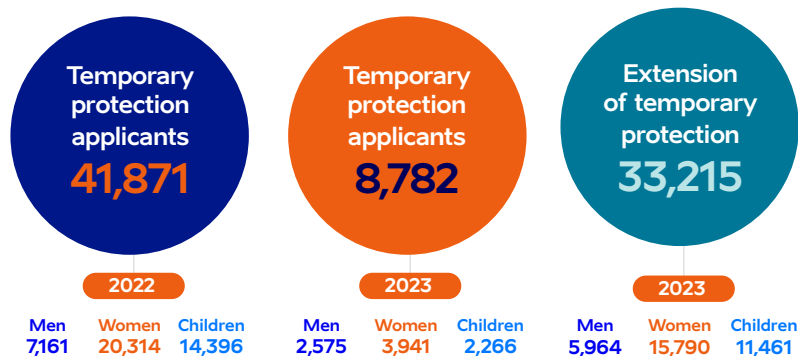
Beneficiaries of protection have the same rights and obligations as permanent residents of Estonia. The Estonian state offers need-based support (accommodation, translation service, finding a job, language courses) upon starting a new life. Beneficiaries of protection have the right to family reunification. Beneficiaries of protection have an obligation to complete adaptation and language courses and to comply with Estonian legislation.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEMPORARY PROTECTION DIRECTIVE WAS EXTENDED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

As a result of the military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine that commenced on February 24, 2022, the Council of the European Union adopted a decision on March 4, 2022 to implement the Temporary Protection Directive in order to protect the people fleeing due to the war in Ukraine. Estonia approved the granting of temporary protection to Ukrainian war refugees on March 8, 2022 by the order of the Government of the Republic entitled "Application of temporary protection".

In September 2023, a decision was adopted regarding the extension of temporary protection. According to the decision, the implementation of temporary protection will continue until the beginning of March 2025.

The number of applicants and extensions of temporary protection



EXPULSION

A foreigner who has no legal grounds to stay in Estonia is required to leave the country. A person staying in the country without any legal grounds is issued a return decision and that person must comply with the precept within the shortest possible time. With the return decision, the person is obliged to leave either with a voluntary deadline (between 7 and 30 days) or the obligation to leave is enforced through detention of the person and expulsion from Estonia. Voluntary departure is preferred to forced removal. In 2023, voluntary compliance to leave accounted for 94% of the total number of return decisions, which indicates an increase of 4% compared to the previous year. In 2023, the largest number of return decisions was is-

sued to citizens of the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan and Moldova.

A person who voluntarily performs the obligation to leave the country can receive return and reintegration support through the VARRE project, implemented by the Estonian office of IOM (International Organization for Migration). The VARRE project was launched in Estonia in 2010, and with its support more than 700 individuals have returned to their country of origin. In 2023, citizens of Uzbekistan, Georgia and Tajikistan were the most numerous to return to their country of origin with the support of VARRE.

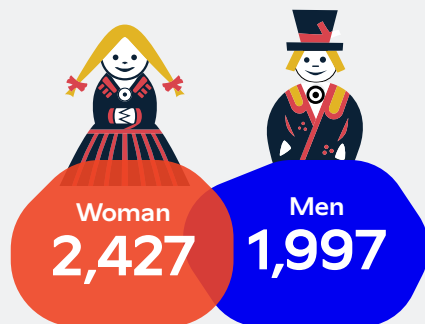
Departure of individuals on the basis of a precept to leave and voluntary repatriation or departure to another host country, supported by VARRE project (2019-2023)

	Number of individuals who left the country on the basis of a return decisions subject to compulsory execution	Number of individuals who left the country on the basis of a return decisions with the term for voluntary compliance	Number of individuals who left the country voluntarily with the support of the VARRE project
2019	208	1,000	132
2020	108	989	128
2021	104	1,089	40
2022	111	971	41
2023	170	861	91

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

WHO BECAME ESTONIAN CITIZENS?

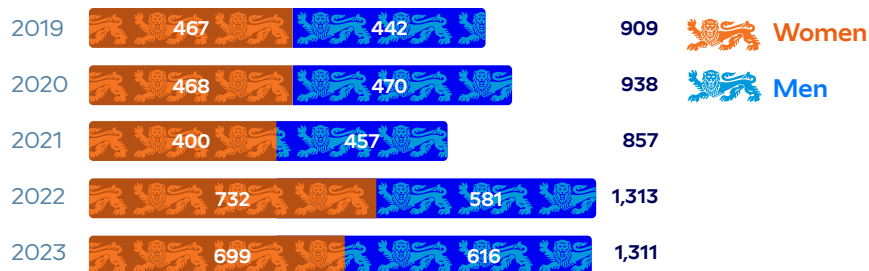
In the period 2019–2023, Estonian citizenship was granted by naturalisation⁵ to 4,424 individuals, of whom 2,427 were women and 1,997 were men.



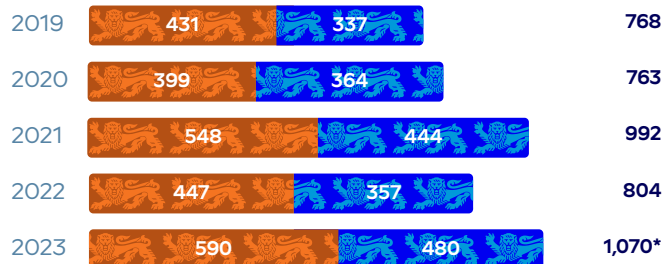
⁵ Naturalisation means the acquisition of citizenship not by birth under the conditions specified in the Citizenship Act.

Applying for and obtaining citizenship (2019–2023)

Applications



Naturalised individuals



SOURCE: Ministry of the Interior





*Incl. 59 children who automatically acquired Estonian citizenship from the moment of birth by naturalisation, 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 at least one of whose parents holds Estonian citizenship at the time of the birth of the child.
- Estonian citizenship is **obtained by naturalisation**.
- Estonian citizenship is restored to a person who lost the Estonian citizenship as a minor.
- Since 2016, a child born in Estonia is automatically granted Estonian citizenship from the moment of birth by way of naturalisation, if the child's parents are not citizens of any country and they have resided legally in Estonia for at least five years at the time of the birth of the child.

Previous citizenships and number of individuals who obtained citizenship by naturalisation, top 5 (2023)

○ Undetermined citizenship	516
 Russia	460
 Belarus	17
 Ukraine	12
 Latvia	9

SOURCE: 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. Today, several other countries in the world have created and are creating similar programs following Estonia's example.

Since December 2014, non-residents can apply for Estonian e-resident status together with an e-resident digital ID card, which is a state-guaranteed secure digital identification option that enables a foreigner 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 document or a travel document (it does not have a photo), nor does it grant citizenship, tax residency, 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 companies and to perform electronic banking transactions, international payment services, electronic filing of income declarations and digital signing of documents and contracts.

SOURCE: Estonian Business and Innovation Agency

As on December 31, 2023, the total number of e-residents is a

109,245



Men
86%

Women
14%

The top 5 citizenships

(As on December 31, 2023)



Ukraine



Germany



Finland



Russia



Spain

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Decisions to issue e-resident's digital ID (2019–2023)

16,630
2019

 Russia

 Germany

 Ukraine

 India

 China



14,309
2023

 Spain

 Ukraine

 Germany

 Finland

 Turkey

12,955
2020

 Russia

 Germany

 China

 Ukraine

 Spain

13,977
2021

 Russia

 Germany

 Spain

 Ukraine

 China

10,744
2022

 Spain

 Ukraine

 Germany

 Turkey

 France

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board, Estonian Business and Innovation Agency

ADAPTATION SUPPORT FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS

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

Since the launch of the adaptation program in 2015, its main target group has been the foreigners who have arrived in Estonia through **regular migration** and who have a temporary residence permit or right of residence. They can participate in the adaptation programme for 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. From 2024, Estonian language training at B1 level will also be offered.

In total, the adaptation programme was attended 2,533 times in 2023 (one person could participate in several modules of the adaptation programme), 134 different training courses took place as part of the adaptation programme, including 67 online courses. A large number of participants

in the programme had come to Estonia with a family member or by commencing employment here. Similarly to previous years, most of the participants in 2023 were originally from Ukraine, Russia, Nigeria and Belarus, all of them have received a residence permit or right of residence in Estonia within the last 5 years.

The training courses have been attended 18,224 times during the period between the launch of the programme for regular migration in 2015 and the end of 2023.

The second target group of the adaptation programme consists of **beneficiaries of international protection** (refugees 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 the corresponding adaptation programme also increased. The adaptation programme 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 its society and culture, and Estonian language courses at A1, A2, and B1 levels. During the year, the mandatory 4-day training was completed by 2,531 individuals.

Ukrainian war refugees who received **temporary protection** in 2022 were added as a new target group to the *Settle in Estonia* adaptation programme. Adult beneficiaries



Participants in the adaptation program in 2019–2023, regular migration and beneficiaries of international protection (refugees and persons with subsidiary protection status)



SOURCE: Ministry of Culture

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

of temporary protection have to complete the adaptation programme designed for them, which was launched in the summer of 2022 and consists of a one-day adaptation training and an Estonian language course at A1 level. During the period from July 2022 to December 2023, nearly 23,000 individuals completed the adaptation training designed for the beneficiaries of temporary protection. More

than 10,000 individuals had either completed or were continuing A1 level language training designed for the same target group.

ESTONIA'S 20 YEARS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION, 2004-2024

Estonia joined the European Union in 2004, thus it celebrated its 20th anniversary of EU membership on May 1, 2024. In 2007, Estonia joined the Schengen visa area, which allows the residents of Estonia to move between countries without any border control.

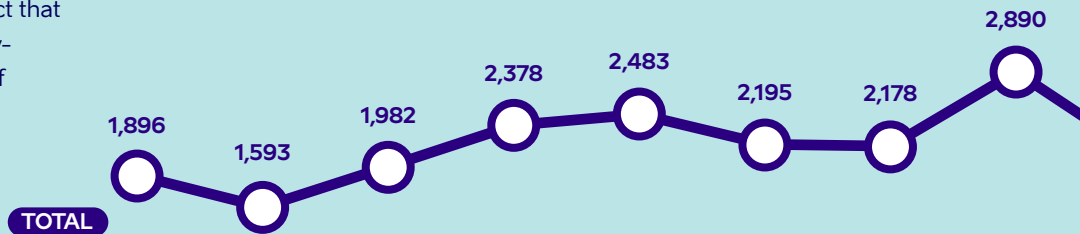
Estonia's migration policy has always encouraged the settlement of foreigners whose presence is in line with public interests while preventing the arrival of those foreigners who may pose a threat to public order or national security.

Immigration to Estonia has been strongly correlated with international agreements, the legal space of the European Union, public migration policy (e.g. exclusion of foreigners from the immigration quota) and significant events (like the COVID-19 pandemic and Russian aggression in Ukraine).

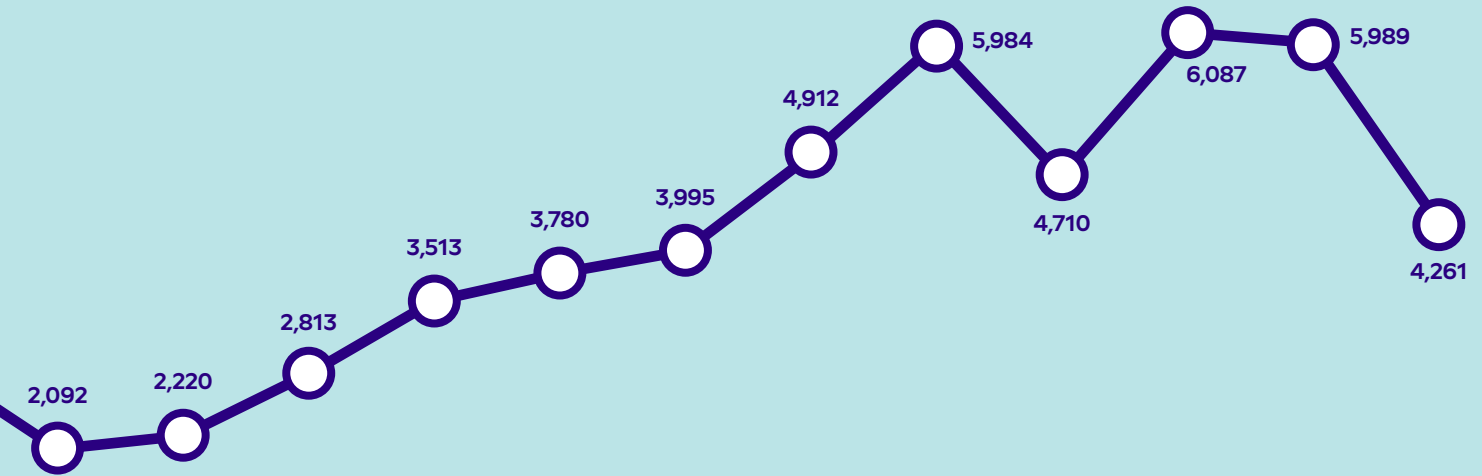


First-time temporary residence permits pursuant to the Aliens Act (2004-2023)

The statistic of first-time temporary residence permits generally show a continuing growth trend from year to year (except during exceptional years when migration was significantly affected throughout Europe). However, in the case of residence for study purposes, which has been affected by changes in legislation (both encouraging or limiting incl. sanctions), the statistics show more variability. The fact that more men come to Estonia for employment and more women on the basis of family migration has remained stable. The top three citizenships among migrants have been Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.












	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Family migration	600	613	904	1,241	1,154	917	862	1,174
Employment	387	335	438	589	695	623	684	1,053
International agreement	578	427	427	298	248	199	121	86
Legal income	93	45	35	28	28	47	41	55
Studies	236	166	165	222	318	341	405	388
Business activities	2	2	6	0	40	68	65	134
TOTAL	1,896	1,593	1,982	2,378	2,483	2,195	2,178	2,890



2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1,007	976	1,105	1,195	1,233	1,184	1,661	2,272	1,958	2,642	2,867	1,686
526	549	804	1,216	1,325	1,501	1,851	2,218	2,089	2,249	2,463	2,054
74	75	86	70	46	46	46	30	19	12	23	12
5											
425	577	793	1,009	1,160	12,11	1,267	1,330	533	1,078	551	424
55	43	25	23	16	53	87	134	111	106	85	85
2,092	2,220	2,813	3,513	3,780	3,995	4,912	5,984	4,710	6,087	5,989	4,261

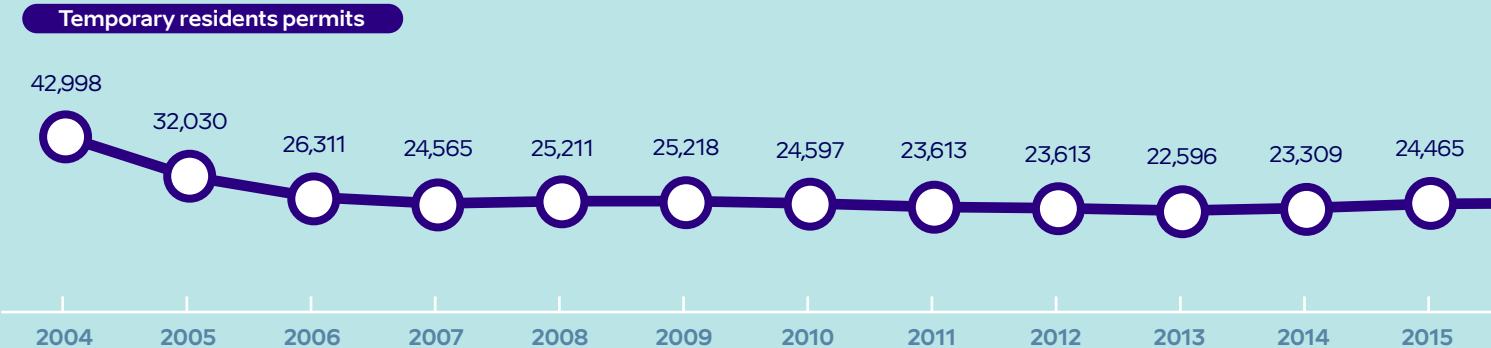
SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Top 3 citizenships and the number of valid temporary residents permits (as of Dec 31)

2003	Number	2013	Number	2023	Number
 Undetermined citizenship	27,029	 Undetermined citizenship	10,005	 Ukraine	53,008
 Russia	17,490	 Russia	7,700	 Russia	9,541
 Ukraine	1,057	 Ukraine	1,903	 Undetermined citizenship	3,247

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Valid temporary and permanent/long-term residence permits pursuant to the Aliens Act (2004-2023)



The top three citizenships holding a valid temporary residence permits remained stable until 2022, when there was a surge in the number of temporary residence permits. This increase was due to Ukrainian war refugees being granted residence permits under temporary protection.



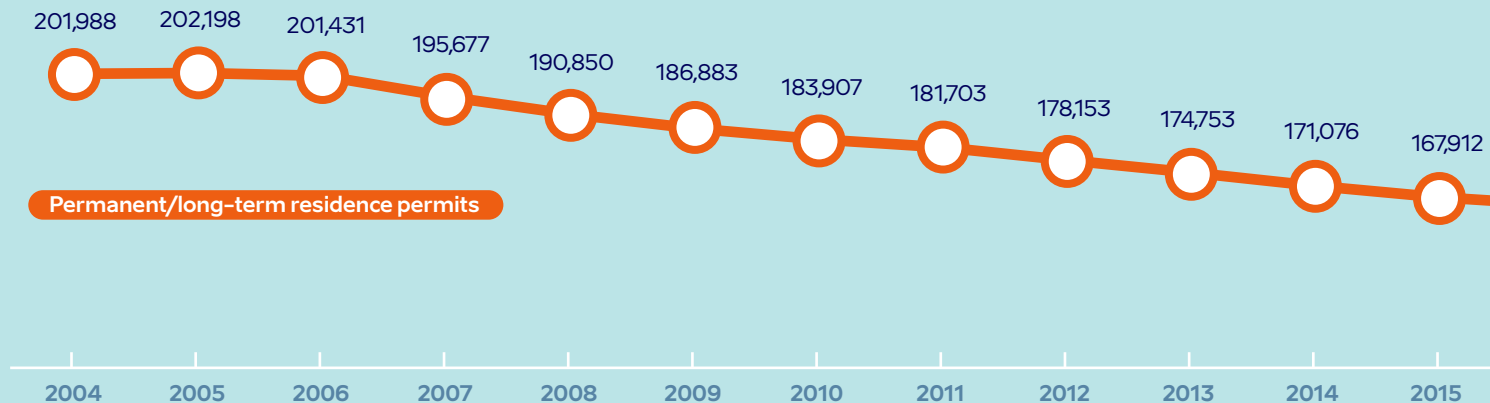
SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Top 3 citizenships and the number of permanent/long-term residents permits (as of Dec 31)

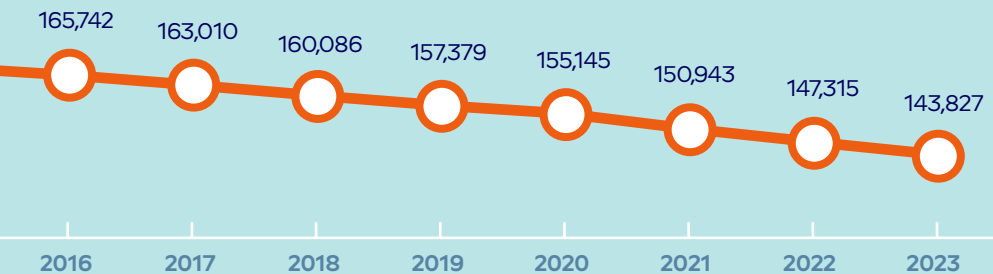
2003	Number	2013	Number	2023	Number
○ Undetermined citizenship	127,318	🇷🇺 Russia	87,358	🇷🇺 Russia	74,012
🇷🇺 Russia	74,379	○ Undetermined citizenship	81,231	○ Undetermined citizenship	62,647
🇺🇦 Ukraine	2,790	🇺🇦 Ukraine	4,083	🇺🇦 Ukraine	4,472

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Valid temporary and permanent/long-term residence permits pursuant to the Aliens Act (2004-2023)



The top three recipients of permanent/long-term residence permits have also been stable over the last decade. Any changes in the first place have occurred due to the decrease in the number of persons with undetermined citizenship.



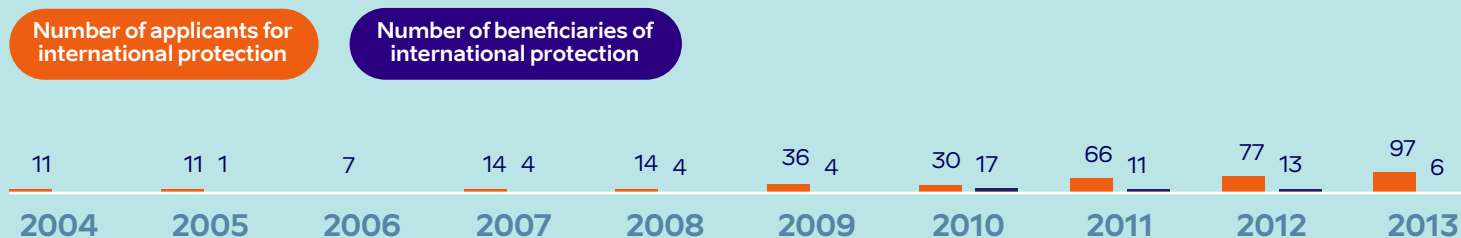
SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

International protection (2004-2023)

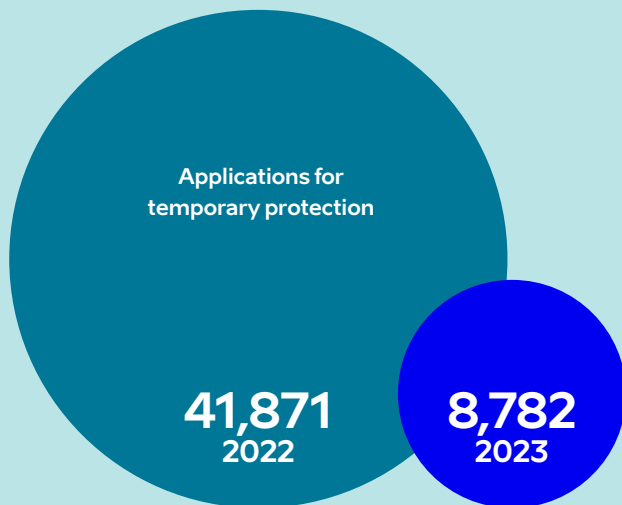
The number of applicants for international protection in Estonia remained relatively small until 2022 with a slight increase due to the war in Ukraine starting in 2014 and Estonia's participation in resettlement and relocation activities, in 2015-2017. The rapid growth in the number of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection in recent years is linked to the Russian full-scale invasion in Ukraine.

In 2022, Ukrainian citizens accounted for 89% of applicants for international protection, and in 2023, 94% of applicants.

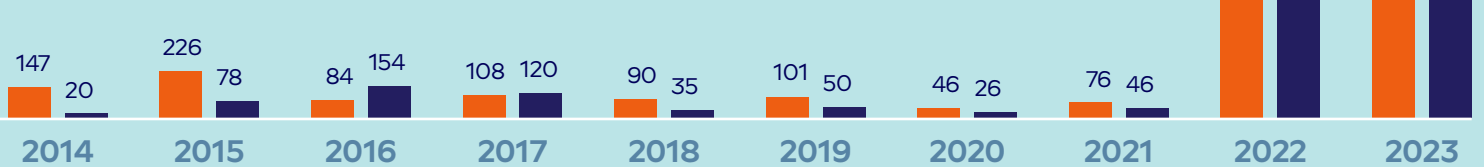
As on December 31, 2023, a total of 50,653 individuals have applied for temporary protection. 35,384 individuals have applied for the extension of temporary protection.



Temporary protection (2022-2023)



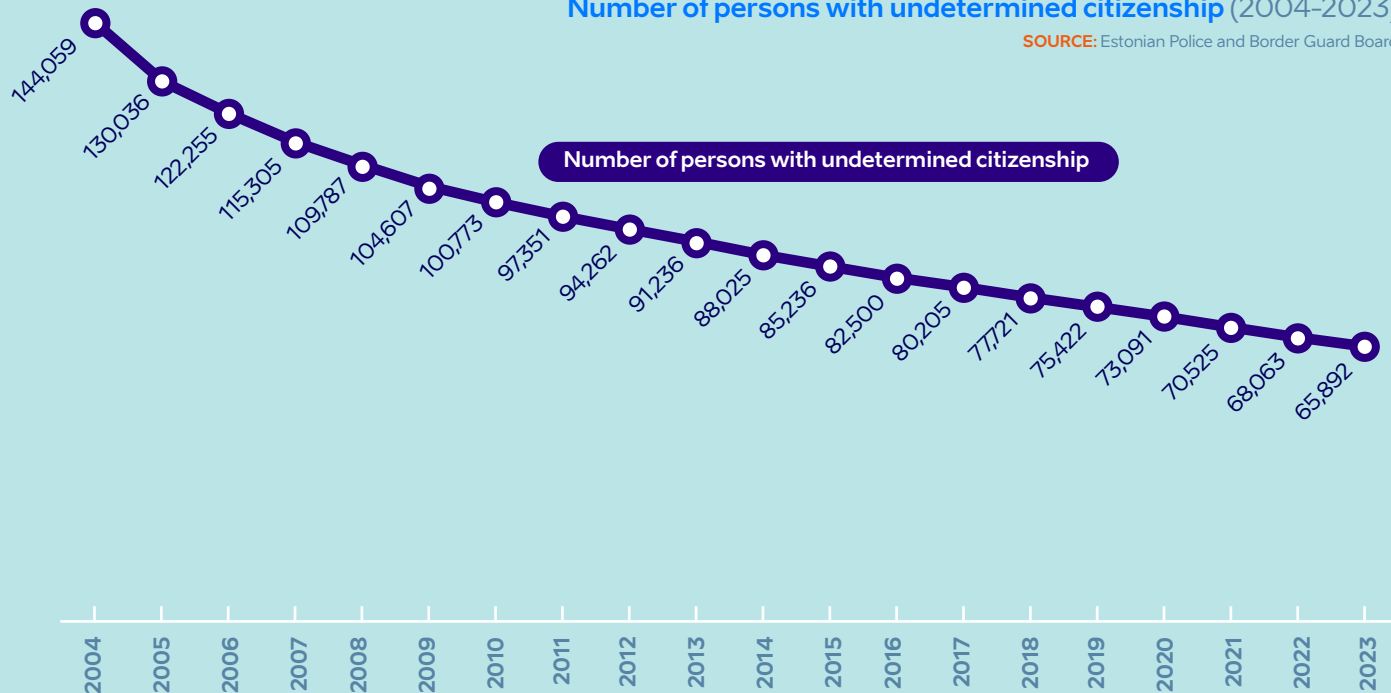
SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

Number of persons with undetermined citizenship (2004-2023)

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board

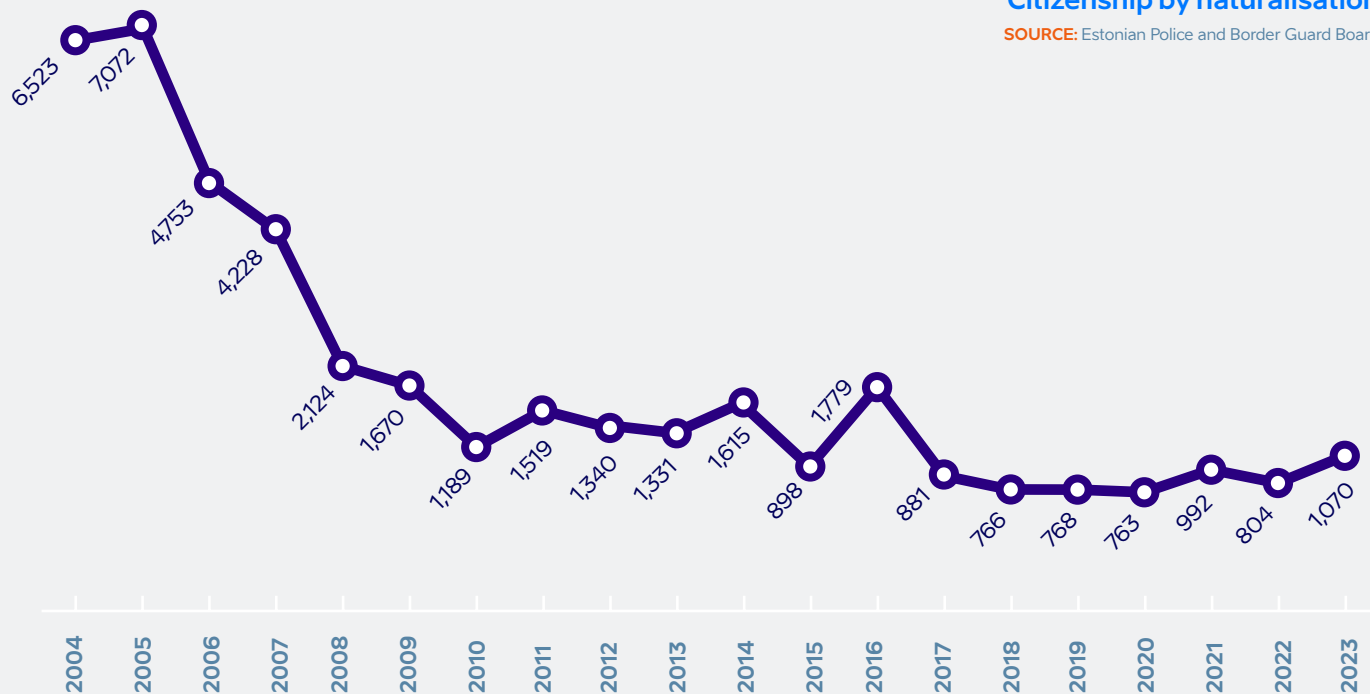


The number of persons with undetermined citizenship who have a valid residence permit in Estonia (temporary and long-term residence permits combined) has de-

creased by more than half over the past twenty years. Most of them fall into the 60+ age group.

Citizenship by naturalisation

SOURCE: Estonian Police and Border Guard Board



Since 2004, 42,092 individuals have received citizenship in Estonia through naturalisation. The recipients of Esto-

nian citizenship are mainly persons with undetermined citizenship and previous citizens of Russia.



Belgium 1958



Denmark 1973



Finland 1995



Estonia 2004



Poland 2004



France 1958



Ireland 1973



Sweden 1995



Czech 2004



Slovakia 2004



Germany 1958



Greece 1981



Hungary 2004



Slovenia 2004



Italy 1958



Portugal 1986



Latvia 2004



Bulgaria 2007



Luxembourg 1958



Spain 1986



Lithuania 2004



Romania 2007



Nederland 1958



Austria 1995



Cyprus 2004



Malta 2004



Croatia 2013