



Migration statistics 2020-2024

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



Citizens of the European Union and their family members



Right of stay
— up to 3 months



Temporary right
of residence — up
to 5 years



Permanent right
of residence —
unspecified term



* (hereinafter TCN)



Source: Police and Border Guard Board

Overview of **2020–2024** migration statistics provides answers to the following questions:

- What is Estonia's population, immigration, emigration, and net migration?
- Which foreign country has the highest number of residents that are Estonian citizens?
- To whom, for what purpose, and how many visas were issued?
- How many registrations of short-term employment were there and in what areas?
- Who came to live in Estonia and for what reasons?
- Where did foreigners settle?
- Who were granted long-term resident's residence permits and permanent right of residence?
- Who was granted international protection? How many received temporary protection in Estonia?
- Who were expelled from the country?
- Who became Estonian citizens?
- Who became e-residents?
- How many foreigners participated in the adaptation program?
- Ukrainians in Estonia, 2024 overview

Overview prepared by
Estonian Contact Point for the European Migration Network
Design by PauPau Design



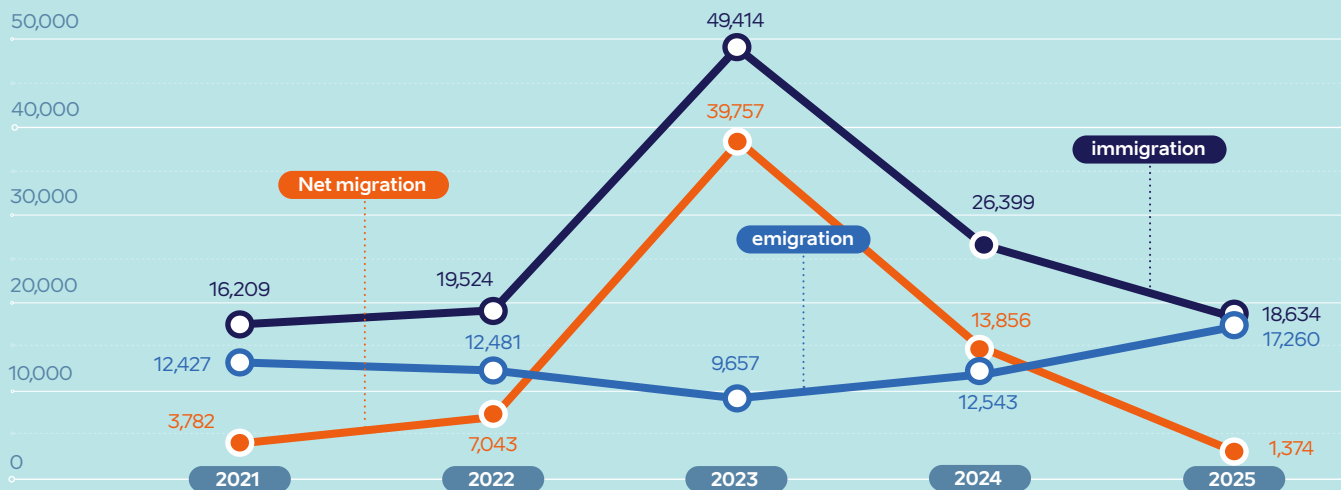
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this publication is to provide an overview of the main migration trends in Estonia during the period of 2020–2024 and to explain the different aspects of migration.

Net migration (Jan 1, 2025)



Change in population



SOURCE: Statistics Estonia

POPULATION OF ESTONIA

2021-2025 (of at Jan 1)



SOURCE: Statistics Estonia











According to the Statistics Estonia, the population of Estonia as of January 1, 2025 was 1,369,995, which is 0.34% less than a year ago. In 2024, 9,690 people were born in Estonia and 15,756 people died. Pursuant to registered migration, 18,634 individuals came to live in Estonia and 17,260 individuals left for abroad in 2024, which means that immigration exceeded emigration by 1,374 people. Similar to 2023, both the number of births (decrease of 11.5%) and immigrants (decrease of 29%) decreased in 2024. While in the last two years the positive migration balance has been able to compensate for the exceptionally low number of births, in 2024 the population as a whole also decreased by more than 4,692 people.

Starting from 2022, the main reason for increased immigration has been the arrival in Estonia of Ukrainian war refugees. In 2024, over 7,000 people, or 38%, of the immigrants were Ukrainian citizens, 3829 Ukrainian citizens left Estonia.

According to the Population Register, the number of Estonian citizens living abroad in the beginning of 2025 was 126,781, which shows an increase of 1,2% 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.

Which foreign country has the most Estonian citizens living there?

Top 10 countries (Jan 1, 2025)

 Finland	54,922
 Russia	18,925
 United Kingdom	9,815
 Germany	5,954
 United States	5,531
 Sweden	5,178
 Canada	3,317
 Australia	3,221
 Ireland	2,434
 Norway	1,844

SOURCE: Population Register

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 2024, 100 long-stay visas were issued for remote work purposes, which is 33% less than the previous year, when 149 digital nomad visas were issued. The main recipients of digital nomad visas were citizens of the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, India, and Turkey.

Estonian visas issued in 2020-2024

Short-term C visa



Long-term D visa



Issued Estonian visas (2024)

Short-term visas (Schengen visas) C visas



Long-term visas D visas



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Since 2022, the main driver of cross-border migration in Estonia has been the restrictions and sanctions imposed on citizens of the Russian Federation¹ in connection with the war in Ukraine. As several Estonian missions abroad have suspended accepting visa applications, a small number of C visas were issued in 2024 (8,883 visas, a change of +0.1% as compared to the previous year). However, the number of D visas issued remained at a record low (5,460 visas, a change of -19% as compared to the previous year).

Top 5 for issuing short-term visas (issued by purpose of travel , 2024)



Visiting family
and friends



Tourism



Business



Sports



Other

Top 5 for issuing long-term visas (issued by purpose of travel , 2024)



Short-term
employment



Studies



Visiting family
and friends



Business



Other

SOURCE: 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 2024. Starting from March 2022, Estonian foreign missions in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Pskov, and Minsk and visa centers of external service providers in the Russian Federation and Belarus suspended acceptance of visa applications. The embassies remained closed in 2024 as well. In April 2022, the Government of the Republic imposed a sanction to restrict the employment and business activities of citizens of the Russian Federation and Belarus in Estonia. From September 2022, an order of the Government of the Republic came into force, temporarily restricting the crossing of the external border for citizens of the Russian Federation with a short-stay visa. Starting from September 2023, motor vehicles bearing Russian license plates were prohibited from entering Estonia from across the external border, as such vehicles fall within the scope of relevant sanction.

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. The number of short-term employment registrations decreased by 24% in 2024 as compared to 2023. The main reasons for this was the war in Ukraine and the resulting change in the situation, as well as the economic downturn in Estonia. Thus, the percentage of Ukrainian citizens in short-term employment registrations has decreased year by year — in 2021, Ukrainian citizens accounted for 72% of the total number of short-term workers, in 2022 for 47%, and in 2023 and 2024 for 30%. Of the short-term employment registrations, 76% were issued to men and 24% to women (as compared to 2023, the percentage of men decreased by 5%).

In 2024 the number of short-term employment registrations for seasonal work decreased by 17% as compared to 2023.

Number of short-term employment registrations (2020–2024)



Top 5 citizenships of short-term employment registrations (2024)



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Areas where short-term employment was registered, top 5 (2024)



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

WHO CAME TO RESIDE IN ESTONIA AND FOR WHAT REASONS?

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 consec-

utive 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 on first-time temporary residence permits² issued in 2024 indicate the foreigners primarily come to Estonia on the grounds of employment, family migration, studies and business activities.

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



First-time temporary residence permits (2020-2024)



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Men	Woman
Total first-time residence permits	4,710	6,078	5,989	4,261	2,868	1,789	1,079
Family migration (reuniting with spouse/close relative)	1,958	2,642	2,867	1,686	1,154	445	709
Residence permit for study	533	1,078	551	424	389	234	155
Employment	2,089	2,249	2,463	2,054	1,235	1,040	195
Residence permit for business	111	106	85	85	71	56	15
Other reason*	19	12	23	12	19	14	5

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

*Other reason – participation in criminal proceedings and foreign treaty

The total number of first-time temporary residence permits decreased by 33% in 2024 as compared to 2023, which was significantly affected by three main aspects. Firstly, the Russian war in Ukraine – 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. The sec-

ond factor was the economic recession in Estonia, which was caused by the crisis in energy and commodity prices and the economic impact of the war in Ukraine. Thirdly, many Ukrainians, who previously made up the majority of labour migration, changed the basis of their residence permit and now applied for international protection.






Thus, the number of residence permits decreased across all bases of residence permits – family migration -31%, labour migration - 40%, study migration -8%, and business migration -16%.

First-time temporary residence permits and top 5 citizenships by migration type (2024)

Total temporary residence permits

 Ukraine	552
 India	268
 Russia	218
 Turkey	157
 Azerbaijan	108
TOTAL	2,868

Residence permit for employment

 Ukraina	
 India	
 Uzbekistan	
 Philippines	
 Moldova	
TOTAL	1,235

Family migration (to join spouse / close relative)

 Russia	
 Ukraine	
 India	
 Turkey	
 Nigeria	
TOTAL	1,154

Residence permit for studies

 Pakistan	
 China	
 Azerbaijan	
 India	
 USA	
TOTAL	389

Residence permit for business

 Turkey	
 Iran	
 China	
 Ukraine	
 USA	
TOTAL	71

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

LABOR MIGRATION

In 2024, the number of first-time temporary residence permits issued for employment decreased by a record 40% as compared to 2023, while the number of residence permits issued for employment as a top specialist fell by 47% and the number of residence permits issued for employment in a start-up company by 84%.

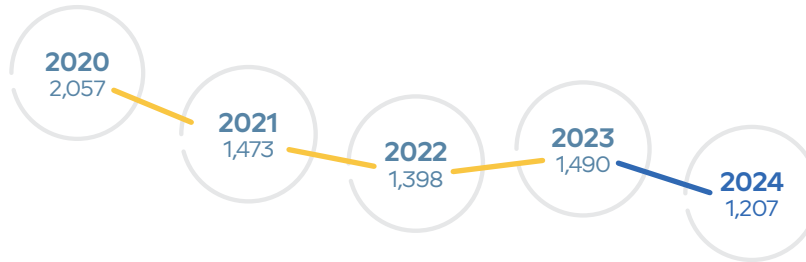
As from 2023, a new type of residence permit for short-term employment can be applied under the following conditions: he or she has previously worked for 9 months on the grounds of short-term employment registration, he or she continues to work for the same employer, and the employer has demonstrated its tax reliability. This residence permit is not subject to the immigration quota and is valid for up to 2 years. In 2024, 65 residence permits for short-term employment were issued, which is 76% less than the year before. The top 3 citizenships were Ukraine (12), Uzbekistan (9), and the Philippines (8).

First-time temporary residence permits for employment, by type of employment (2022-2024)

Labor migration	2022	2023	2024
General	1,267	1,155	783
Top specialist	645	320	170
Employment at a startup	345	116	18
Expert/advisor/consultant	81	33	40
Scientific activities/ lecturers	40	34	34
Member of the management body of a body corporate governed by private law	6	10	17
Athlete/coach/referee	9	26	15
EU Blue Card	18	10	13
Clergyman/monk/nun	17	34	22
Artistic personnel	7	8	17
Teacher	10	4	12
Short-term employment		273	65
Working in a growth company		12	23
Other	18	19	6
TOTAL	2,463	2,054	1,235

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Temporary residence permits issued for settling permanently in Estonia (2020-2024)



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board



The number of residence permits issued for settling permanently in Estonia decreased by 19% in 2024 as compared to 2023. In 2024, 65% of residence permit recipients were men and 35% were women.

SETTLING PERMANENTLY IN ESTONIA

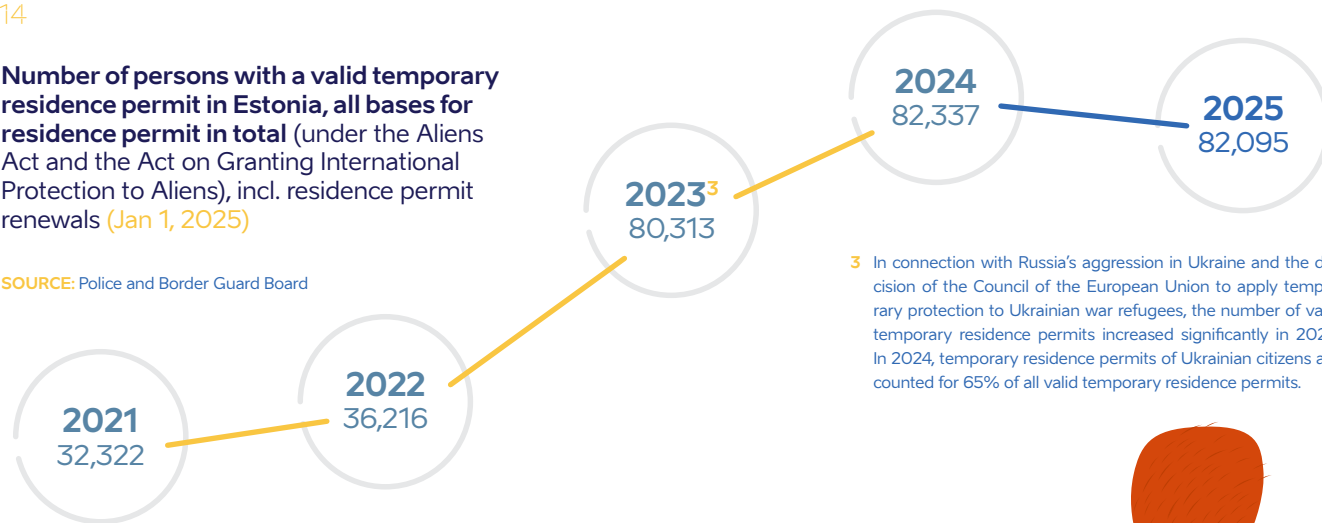


Since 2016, it is possible to apply for a residence permit to settle permanently in Estonia.

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 persons with a valid temporary residence permit in Estonia, all bases for residence permit in total (under the Aliens Act and the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens), incl. residence permit renewals (Jan 1, 2025)

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board



³ In connection with Russia's aggression in Ukraine and the decision of the Council of the European Union to apply temporary protection to Ukrainian war refugees, the number of valid temporary residence permits increased significantly in 2022. In 2024, temporary residence permits of Ukrainian citizens accounted for 65% of all valid temporary residence permits.

Number of persons with valid temporary residence permit by citizenship, top 5 (Jan 1, 2025)

 Ukraine	53,222
 Russia	8,722
 Undetermined citizenship	3,024
 India	1,868
 Belarus	1,654
TOTAL	82,095

SOURCE: 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 extended for 5 years if the residence of the citizen of the European Union continues to be registered in Estonia.

Family members of a citizen of the European Union who are third-country nationals⁴ and wish to reside in Estonia must apply for a temporary right of residence and its renewal. In their case, it is not sufficient to simply register their place of residence in the Population Register.

Citizens of the European Union and family members staying with them have the right to reside in Estonia for up to 3 months on the basis of a valid identity document without registering or applying for a right of residence.

Number of persons with valid EU citizen's temporary right of residence (Jan 1, 2025)







Number of persons with a valid temporary right of residence of a family member of an EU citizen (Jan 1, 2025)



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. As of 2021, a third country national also includes a citizen of the United Kingdom.

Number of EU citizens that registered their residence for the first time by citizenship, top 5
(Dec 31, 2024)

 Germany	499
 Finland	417
 Latvia	396
 France	345
 Spain	222
TOTAL	3,085






SOURCE: Population Register

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	184
 Ukraine	76
 Moldova	37
 Brazil	32
 Undetermined citizenship	24
TOTAL	583

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Number of persons with valid temporary right of residence of an EU citizen by citizenships, top 5
(as of Jan 1, 2025)

 Finland	5,357
 Latvia	3,588
 Germany	2,518
 France	1,778
 Italy	1,507
TOTAL	23,093

SOURCE: Population Register

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

 Russia	24
 Ukraine	14
 Brazil	9
 Moldova	8
 United Kingdom	8
TOTAL	113

SOURCE: 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.

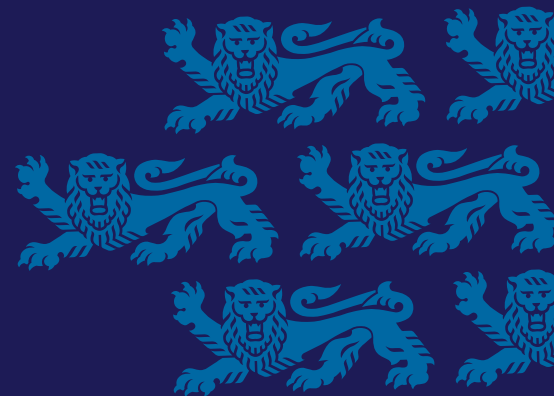
In 2024, the largest number of persons with a valid long-term residence permit were citizens of the Russian Federation and persons with undetermined citizenship. The largest number of people with a residence permit were in age groups 60-79 (57,882 valid permits) and 40-59 (45,481 valid permits). The smallest number were in the age group 0-19 (6,520 valid permits).

Persons with undetermined citizenship (holders of the so-called grey passport) are persons who settled in Estonia before July 1, 1990, and continue to live in Estonia. The number of persons with undetermined citizenship who are long-term residence permit holders has decreased year by year (from 127,318 persons in 2004 to 60,857 persons in 2024). In addition, as of 2024, there were 3,024 persons with undetermined citizenship with a valid temporary residence permit living in Estonia; the number of such individuals is also on a downward trend (for comparison, in 2004 the number of persons with undetermined citizenship with a temporary residence permit was 27,029). The main reasons for such a trend include the mortality or the acquisition of the citizenship of Estonia or another country.

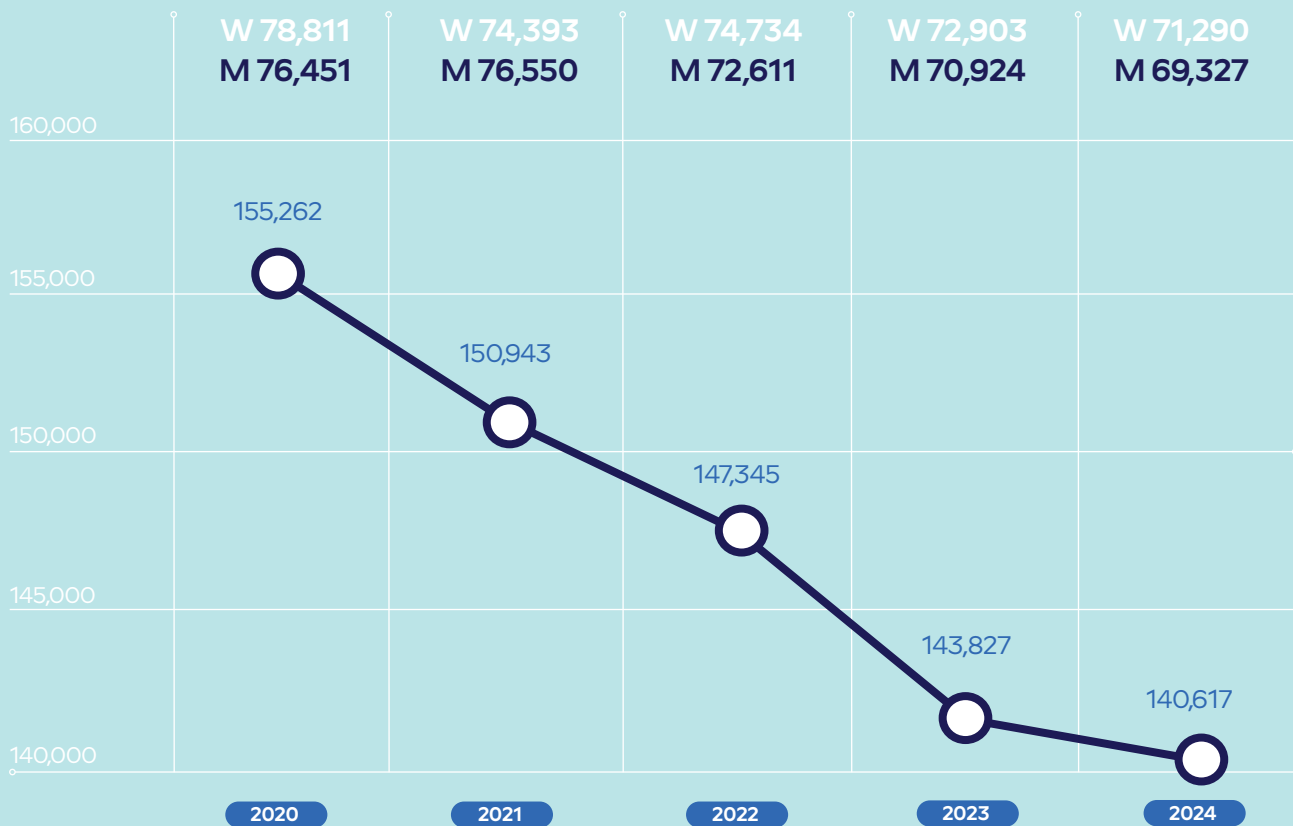
Foreigners with a valid long-term residence permit, top 5 citizenships (Dec 31, 2024)

 Russia	72,327
 Undetermined citizenship	60,857
 Ukraine	4,594
 Belarus	1,183
 USA	286
TOTAL	140,617

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board



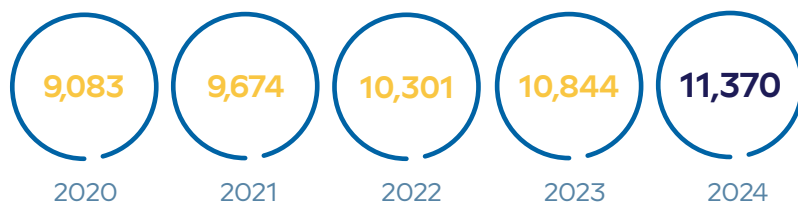
Number of persons with valid residence permits for
long-term residents permit in Estonia (2020-2024)



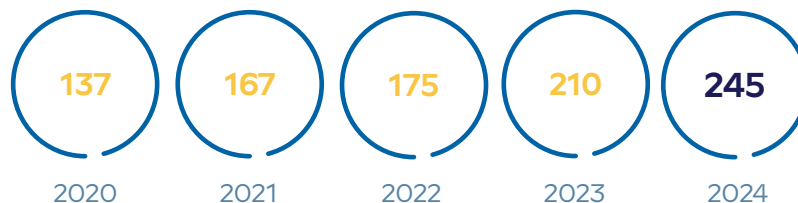
RIGHT OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE OF EU CITIZENS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS

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 (2020-2024)



Number of persons with valid permanent right of residence of a family member of an EU citizen by citizenships, top 5 (2020-2024)



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Number of persons with a valid EU citizen's right of permanent residence by citizenship, top 5 (Dec 31, 2024)

	Latvia	2,754
	Finland	2,684
	Lithuania	1,445
	Germany	696
	United Kingdom	669
TOTAL		11,370

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Number of persons with a valid EU citizen's family member's right of permanent residence by citizenship, top 5 (Dec 31, 2024)

	Russia	121
	Undetermined citizenship	27
	Ukraine	18
	Belarus	10
	USA	9
TOTAL		245

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

WHERE DID THE ALIENS SETTLE?

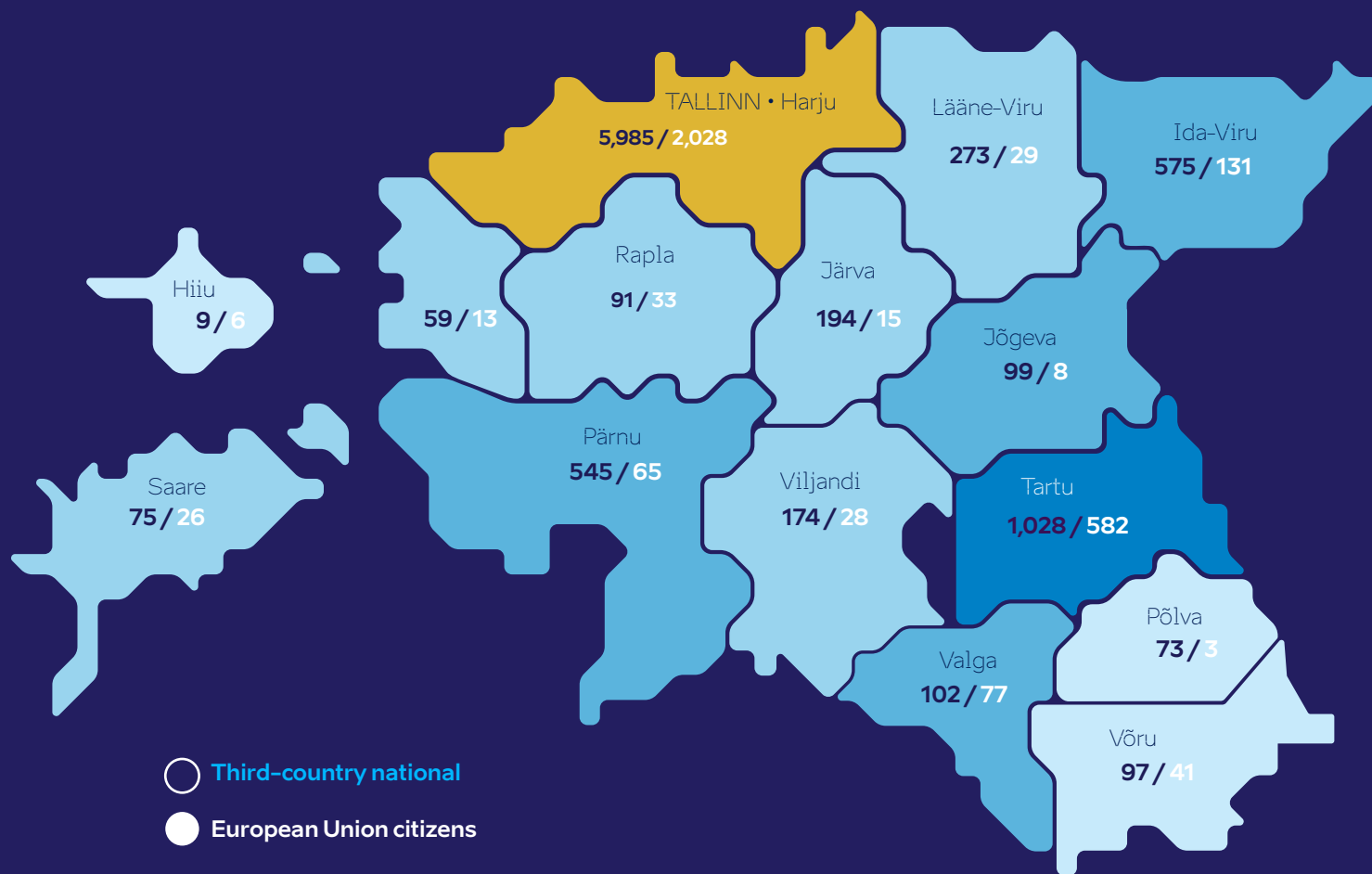
According to the Population Register, in the 2020-2024 period, the most people from both third countries and the European Union settled in Harju County and Tartu County.

The map shows the first-time residence registrations of European Union and third-country citizens in various Estonian counties in 2024.

Top 5 cities (2024)	Third-country national	Tallinn	Tartu	Pärnu	Maardu	Kohtla-Järve
		5,211	842	452	213	197
	European Union citizens	Tallinn	Tartu	Valga	Narva	Pärnu
		1,948	563	64	55	46

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 and beneficiaries of international protection in Estonia remained relatively low. A sharp increase 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 in 2022 and nearly 4,000 applications in 2023. International protection was granted to nearly 4,000 people in 2023 instead of the usual approximately 50 people. In 2024, 1,328 persons submitted applications (as compared to 2023, the number of applicants decreased by 66% in 2024), and international protection was granted to 1,369 individuals (the number of beneficiaries of protection decreased by 65% as compared to 2023).

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, 9,572 foreigners have applied for international protection (refugee status + subsidiary protection status, excluding temporary protection) from Estonia, and international protection has been granted to 7,995 foreigners. 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. Since 2010, a residence permit for a family member of a beneficiary of international protection has been granted to a total of nearly 200 individuals.

Number of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection and the number of the beneficiaries' family members (2020-2024)

	Applicants for international protection	Beneficiaries of international protection	Residence permits for family members of beneficiaries of international protection
2020	46	26	0
2021	76	46	1
2022	2,940	2,107	32
2023	3,980	3,918	31
2024	1,328	1,369	4



283



1,045



301



1,068








2



2






SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Number of applicants for international protection (excluding temporary protection) by nationality, top 5 (1997-2024)

 Ukraine	7,825
 Russia	511
 Georgia	128
 Belarus	107
 Afghanistan	106

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Number of beneficiaries of international protection (excluding temporary protection), including under the migration scheme, by citizenship, top 5 (1997-2024)

 Ukraine	7,311
 Syria	205
 Russia	156
 Afghanistan	67
 Iraq	42

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

APPLYING FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

International protection, including temporary protection, can be applied for either at an Estonian border crossing point or at the Police and Border Guard Board service. All procedures and decisions regarding applications for international protection are individual.

RECEPTION OF BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The beneficiary of protection has the same rights and obligations as a long-stay resident of Estonia. The Estonian state offers needs-based assistance (accommodation, translation services, finding a job, language training) when starting a new life. The beneficiary of protection has the right to family reunification. The beneficiary of protection undertakes to undergo adaptation and language training and to comply with Estonian laws.

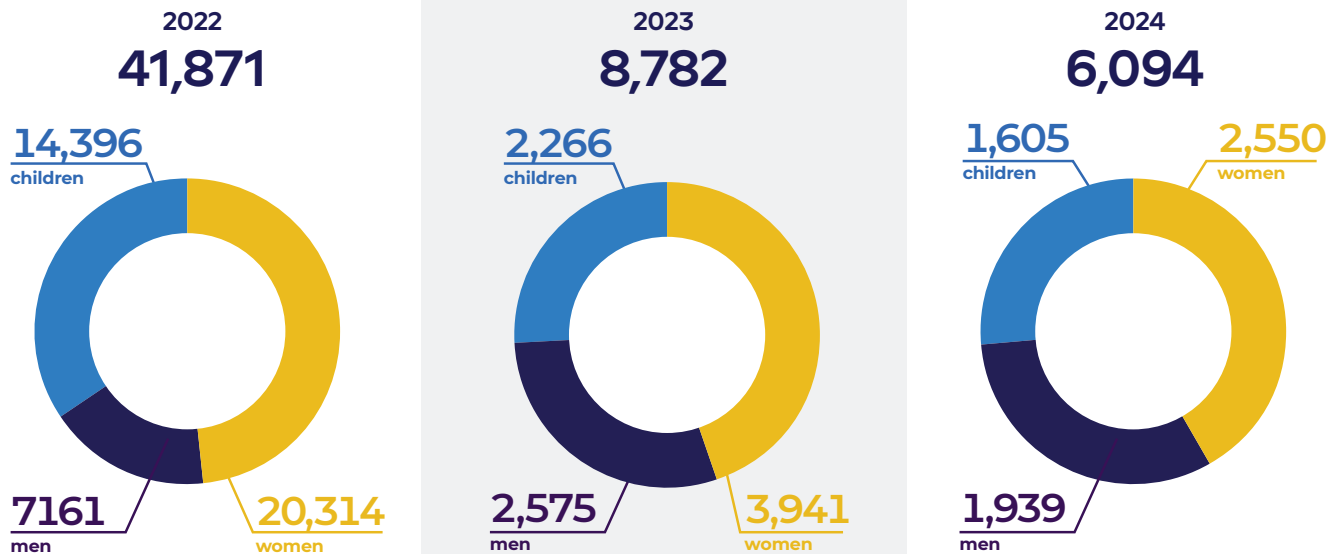
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEMPORARY PROTECTION DIRECTIVE WAS EXTENDED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Due to the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022, the Council of the European Union decided on March 4, 2022 to implement the Temporary Protection Directive in order to protect people fleeing the war in Ukraine. Estonia confirmed the granting of temporary protection to Ukrainian war refugees on March 8, 2022 with an Order of the Government of the Republic entitled "Application of Temporary Protection".

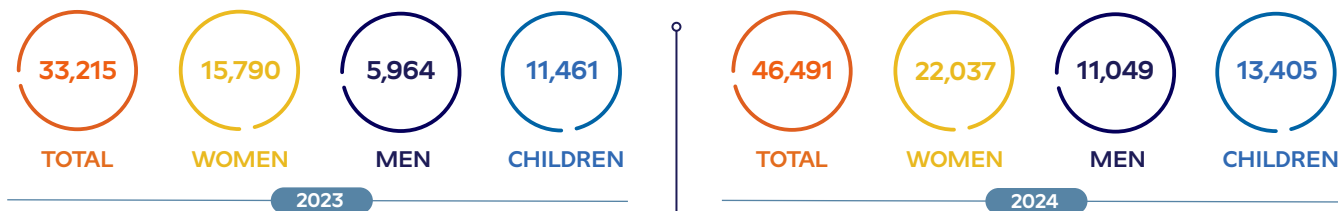
On June 25, 2024, the Council of the European Union adopted a decision regarding the extension of temporary protection. According to the decision, the implementation of temporary protection will continue until March 2026.



Applications for temporary protection from Ukrainian war refugees (2022-2024)



Renewals of temporary protection for Ukrainian war refugees (2023-2024)



**Number of recipients of temporary protection
in the European Union + Norway (as of Dec 31, 2024)**

Country	Number of beneficiaries of temporary protection	Number of beneficiaries of temporary protection per thousand people
EU	4,189,980	9.48
Germany	1,125,985	13.92
Poland	986,920	27.08
Czech Republic	387,810	35.65
Spain	222,190	4.66
Romania	177,915	9.43
Italy	162,295	2.77
Slovakia	130,790	24.25
Holland	118,870	6.76
Ireland	108,880	2.77
Belgium	85,485	7.38
Austria	84,580	9.34
Norway	78,225	14.19

Finland	68,580	12.38
Bulgaria	68,535	10.70
Portugal	56,695	6.14
France	56,315	0.85
Lithuania	48,050	16.72
Latvia	47,675	25.69
Sweden	45,890	4.40
Denmark	36,610	6.19
Hungary	38,725	4.09
ESTONIA	35,330	25.78
Greece	30,305	3.13
Croatia	25,765	6.72
Cyprus	21,805	22.93
Slovenia	10,040	4.78
Luxembourg	3,745	5.76
Malta	2,205	3.94

SOURCE: Eurostat (extract from Apr 26, 2025)

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.

Thus, in 2024, voluntary compliance to leave accounted for 92% of the total number of return decisions, which indicates an 2% decrease than the year before. In 2024, the largest

number of return decisions was issued to citizens of the Russian Federation, Moldova, and Uzbekistan.

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 2024, citizens of Georgia, Russia, and Uzbekistan were the most numerous to return to their country of origin with the support of VARRE.

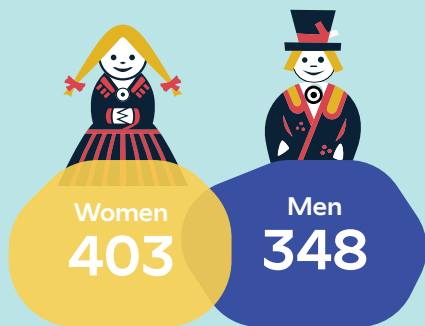
Departure of individuals on the basis of a retrun decision and voluntary repatriation or departure to another host country, supported by VARRE project (2020-2024)

	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 persons who voluntarily left the country with support of the VARRE project
2020	108	989	128
2021	104	1,089	40
2022	111	971	41
2023	170	861	91
2024	142	633	34

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

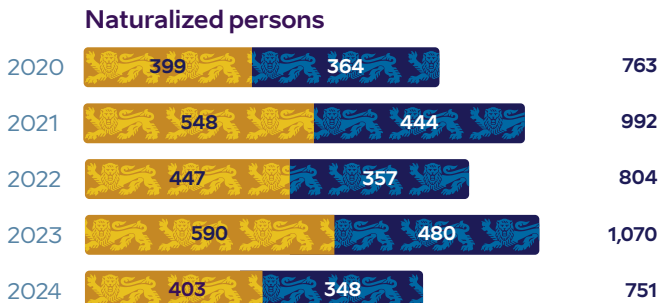
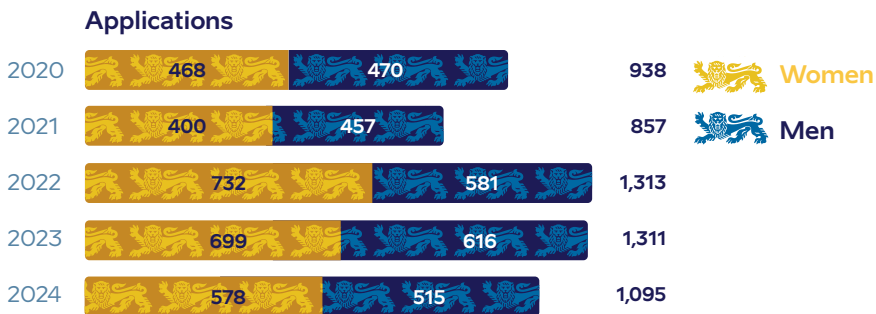
WHO BECAME ESTONIAN CITIZENS?

As compared to 2023, the number of individuals who received Estonian citizenship through naturalization⁵ in 2024 decreased by 30%.



⁵ Naturalization is the acquisition of citizenship not after birth, but under the conditions set out in the Citizenship Act.

Applying for and obtaining citizenship (2020-2024)



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board



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.



Top 5 previous citizenships of persons who acquired citizenship through naturalization (2024)

● Undetermined citizenship	409
● Russia	200
● Pakistan	21
● Ukraine	20
● Belarus	20

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board



E-RESIDENTS

Estonia was the first country in the world to offer e-residency, or digital identity, services to foreign citizens. Today, many other countries around the world have created and are creating similar programs, following Estonia's example.

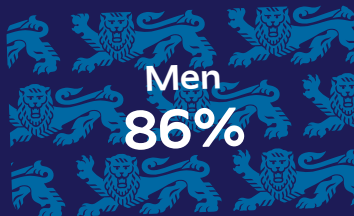
Starting from December 2014, non-residents can apply for Estonian e-resident status with an e-resident digital ID card, which is a state-guaranteed secure digital identification option that gives aliens the opportunity to use Estonian e-government services based on their needs and regardless of location. However, the e-resident digital ID is not a physical identity or travel document (it does not have a photo), nor does it grant citizenship, tax residency, a residence permit, or a permit to enter Estonia or the European Union.

Estonian e-residents use their digital document in addition to establishing companies in Estonia, to manage the companies, conduct online banking transactions, use international payment services, complete and submit income tax returns electronically, and digitally sign documents and contracts.

SOURCE: Enterprise Estonia

The total number of e-residents
as of Dec 31, 2024 is

120,383



Top citizenships (as of Dec 31, 2024)

 Ukraine

 Germany

 Spain

 Finland

 Russia

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Decisions to issue a digital ID
to e-residents and top 5 citizenships
(2020-2024)



12,955
2020

 Russia

 Germany

 China

 Ukraine

 Spain

14,549
2024

 Spain

 Ukraine

 Germany

 Turkey

 France

13,977
2021

 Russia

 Germany

 Spain

 Ukraine

 China

10,744
2022

 Spain

 Ukraine

 Germany

 Turkey

 Prantsusmaa

14,309
2023

 Spain

 Ukraine

 Germany

 Finland

 Turkey

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

SUPPORTING THE ADAPTATION OF 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 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 program for up to 5 years from the moment of their arrival in Estonia, and it is voluntary for them. The program offered to them consists of 6 thematic modules (basic, work, business, family, study and research module) and Estonian language courses at levels A1, A2 and B1. From the launch of the regular migration adaptation program until the end of 2024, 19,502 people participated in the training. In total, 1,278 individuals participated in the adaptation program training courses in 2024 (one person could also participate in several adaptation program modules), and 74 different adaptation program training courses were held, of which approximately 80% were online training courses. A large part of the program participants had arrived in Estonia with a family member or by starting employment here. Sim-

ilarly to previous years, the largest number of participants in 2024 came from Ukraine, Russia, Nigeria, and Turkey.

The second target group of the adaptation program is beneficiaries of international protection (refugees or subsidiary protection). The adaptation program is mandatory for beneficiaries of international protection — it consists of a 4-day international protection module, which provides basic information about the functioning of the Estonian state, Estonian society and culture, also Estonian language training at levels A1, A2 and B1. A 1-day short module was developed for Ukrainian war refugees, which harmonized the basic module of the adaptation program for beneficiaries of international protection and temporary protection. During the year, 27 people completed the mandatory 4-day training and 548 people completed the short module. Adult beneficiaries of temporary protection are obliged to complete an adaptation program, which consists of a one-day adaptation training and an Estonian language course at level A1. Starting in 2024, beneficiaries of temporary protection will be offered Estonian language training at levels A2 and B1, but it is not mandatory for them. From July 2022 to December 2024, 26,354 people completed adaptation training for recipients of temporary protection.

The adaptation program *Settle in Estonia*, which is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, is implemented with the support of the European Union's European Social Fund (ESF), the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and state budget funds.



Settle in Estonia programme

Helping you
adjust to life
in Estonia

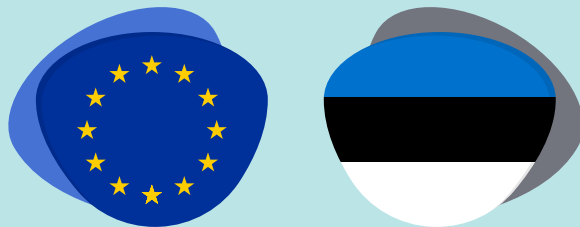


settle
estonia

**Participants in the adaptation program in 2020–2024,
regular migration and beneficiaries of international protection
(except beneficiaries of temporary protection)**

 Russia	 Russia	 Russia	 Ukraine	 Ukraine
 Ukraine	 Ukraine	 Ukraine	 Russia	 Russia
 Nigeria	 Nigeria	 Valgevene	 Nigeria	 Nigeria
 India	 India	 Nigeria	 Belarus	 Turkey
 Belarus	 Iran	 Turkey	 India	 Belarus
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1,950	2,005	2,262	4,788	3,343

SOURCE: Ministry of Culture



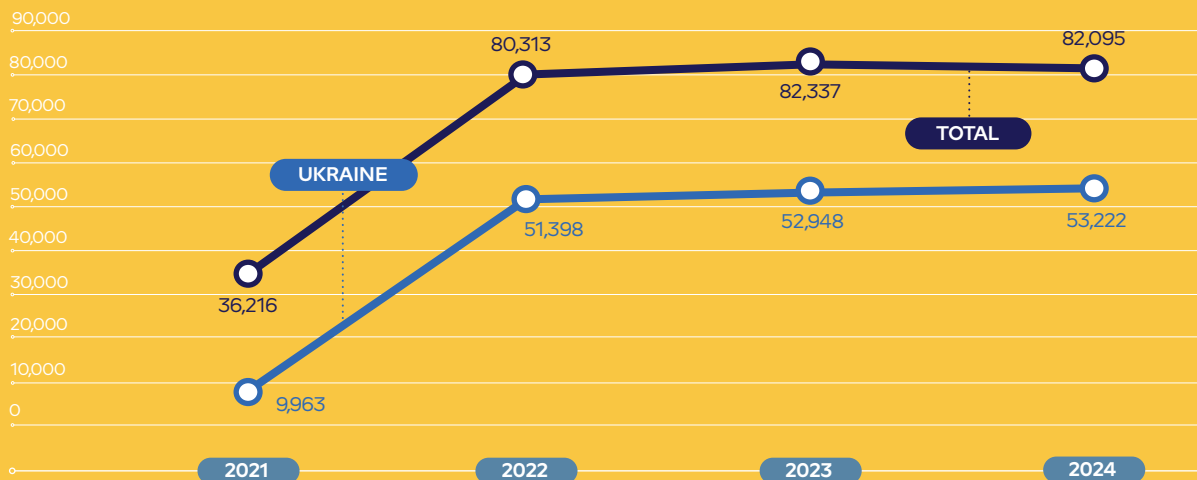
UKRAINIANS IN ESTONIA, 2024 OVERVIEW

According to Statistics Estonia, as of January 1, 2025 63 792 Ukrainian citizens lived in Estonia, which is 7% less than at the beginning of 2024, constituting 5% of the entire Estonian population.

In Estonia, the number of temporary residence permits for Ukrainian citizens has been increasing year by year. While in 2018, residence permits for Ukrainian citizens accounted for 6% of the total number of valid temporary residence permits, due to Russia's military aggression in Ukraine and the decision of the Council of the European Union to apply temporary protection to Ukrainian war refugees, the proportion of Ukrainian citizens has increased significantly since 2022. In 2024, residence permits for Ukrainian citizens accounted for 65% of the total number of temporary residence permits.



Number and total number of Ukrainian citizens with a valid temporary residence permit (all bases for residence permits in total, i.e. under the Aliens Act and the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, including residence permit renewals) (2021-2024)



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

The number of temporary residence permits for Ukrainian citizens increased dramatically in 2022 due to the arrival in Estonia of Ukrainian war refugees.

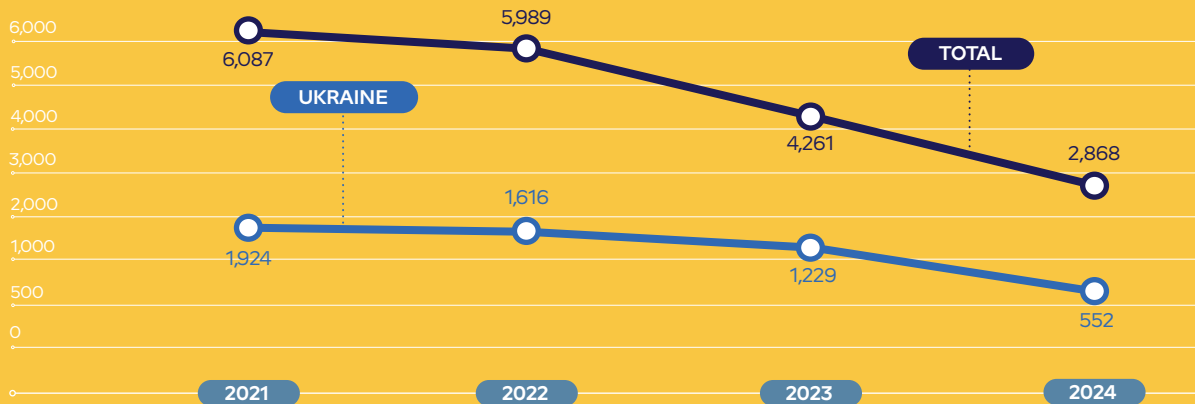
Of the valid long-term residence permits, residence permits for Ukrainian citizens account for nearly 3%, a number that has remained stable in recent years.

Number and total number of Ukrainian citizens with a valid long-term residence permit (2021-2024)

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Ukraine	4,249	4,355	4,472	4,594
Total	150,943	147,345	143,827	140,617

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

First-time temporary residence permits, excluding temporary protection, and total number (2021-2024)

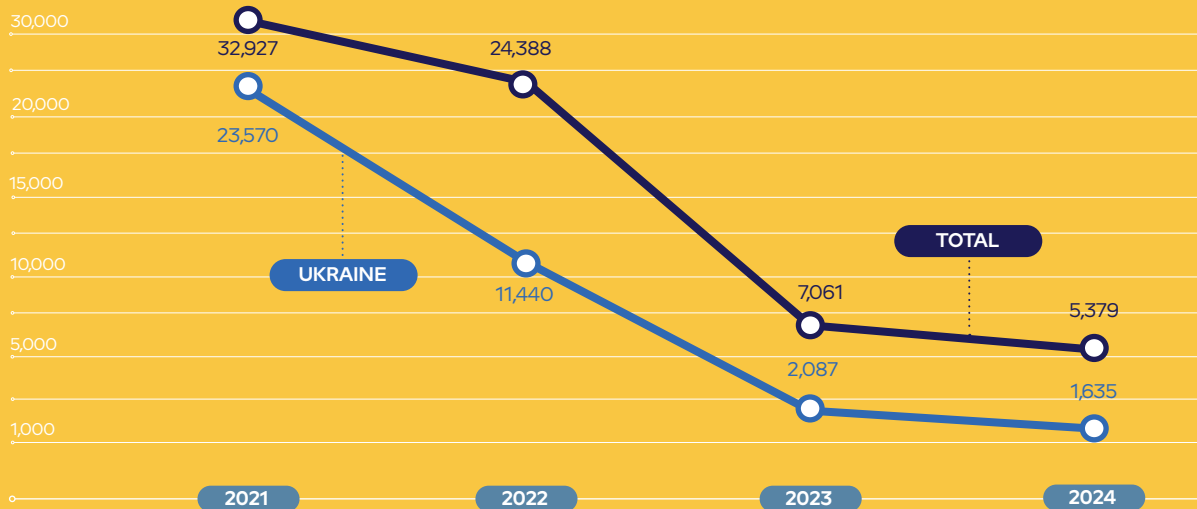


SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

First-time temporary residence permits, except for temporary protection, were issued to Ukrainian citizens mainly based on employment and family migration.

In 2024, 19% of all first-time temporary residence permits were issued to Ukrainian citizens.

Registrations and total number of short-term employment of Ukrainian citizens (2021-2024)



SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

The number of short-term employment registrations of Ukrainian citizens has been on a downward trend in recent years. The main reason for this is Russia's war in Ukraine. In 2024, Ukrainian citizens accounted for 30% of the total number of short-term workers.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND TEMPORARY PROTECTION

Ukrainians who have been granted a residence permit in Estonia based on the need for protection and the total number of beneficiaries of protection in Estonia (excluding extensions) (1997-2024)

NEED FOR PROTECTION

Refugee status for Ukrainian citizens	7	Total refugee status	506
Subsidiary protection status for Ukrainian citizens	7,304	Total subsidiary protection status	7,489
		Temporary protection status	56,747

SOURCE: Police and Border Guard Board

Ukrainian citizens
 Total

Temporary protection can be applied for by Ukrainian citizens and their family members who lived in Ukraine until February 24 and left Ukraine due to the military conflict since February 24. Also, people of another nationality who had international protection in Ukraine and their family members who lived in Ukraine until February 24 and left Ukraine due to the military conflict since February 24.

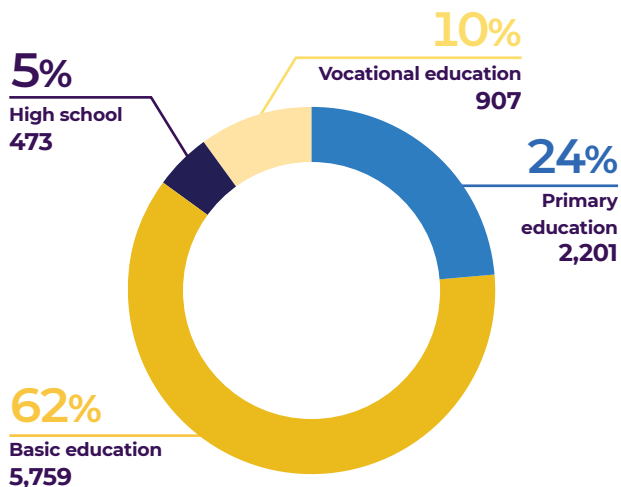
Temporary protection does not extend to Ukrainian citizens and their family members who lived or stayed in Estonia before February 24, 2022.

They have another legal basis that allows them to temporarily stay in Estonia, even if other grounds for stay (e.g. visa exemption or visa) have expired.



CONTINUING THE EDUCATIONAL PATH OF UKRAINIAN WAR REFUGEES

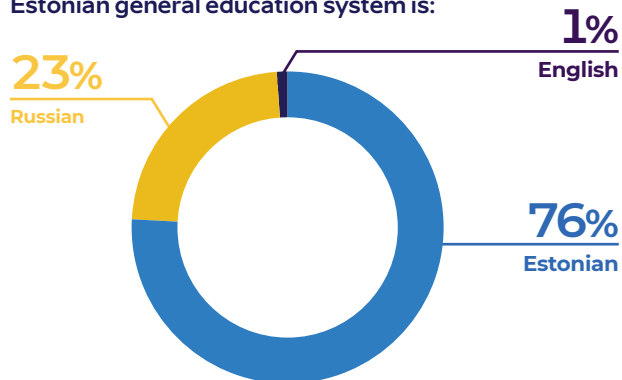
According to EHIS (Estonian Education Information System) data, there are **9,298** war refugees studying in Estonia (as of March 19, 2025), of whom*:



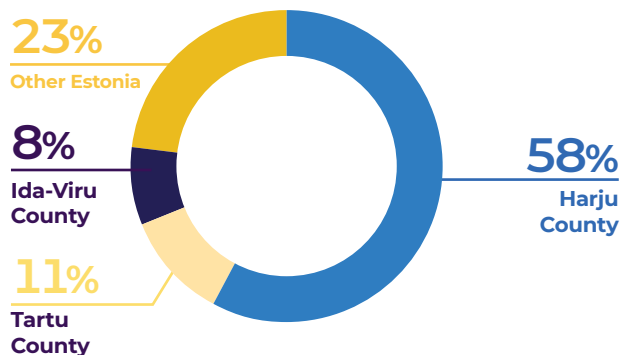
* The sum of the types of education is greater than the total number of students because a small number of students study in both general education and vocational education at the same time.

SOURCE: EHIS

The language of instruction for Ukrainian students in Estonian general education system is:

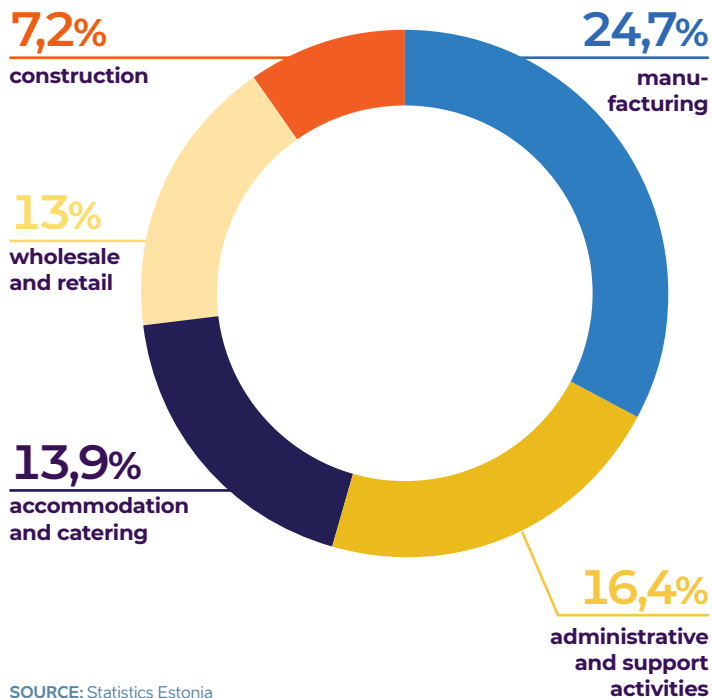


Locations of educational institution where Ukrainian students are studying in general education, by county:



EMPLOYMENT OF BENEFICIARIES OF TEMPORARY PROTECTION

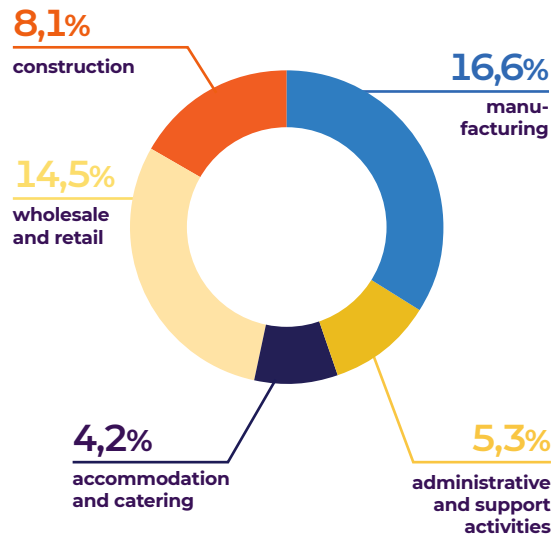
Beneficiaries of temporary protection have mainly been employed in the following areas:



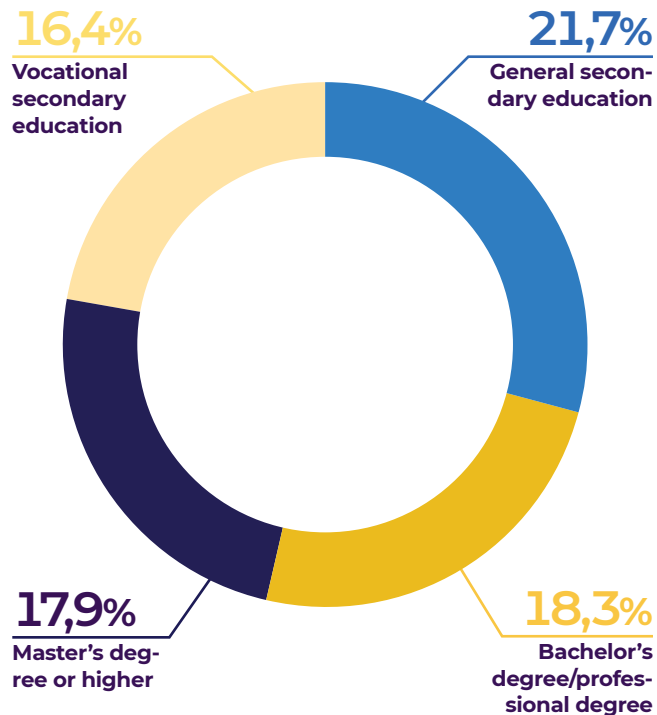
SOURCE: Statistics Estonia

According to Statistics Estonia, as of December 31, 2024, **10,616** beneficiaries of temporary protection (aged 20–64) were employed. **2,356** beneficiaries of temporary protection have registered as unemployed.

Comparison with entire labor market:



MAIN EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF EMPLOYED BENEFICIARIES OF TEMPORARY PROTECTION



Comparison with entire labor market:

