

CYPRUS

EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET 2022

Main developments in migration
and international protection,
including latest statistics

July 2023



OVERARCHING CHANGES




In February 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Minister of the Interior on behalf of the Republic of Cyprus and the Commissioner for Home Affairs on behalf of the European Commission for the management of migration flows in Cyprus. The MoU was co-signed by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), Frontex and Europol, in the presence of the President of the Republic of Cyprus and the Vice-President of the European Commission. The MoU includes Cyprus' Migration Action Plan, setting out specific actions to improve reception, asylum procedures, integration, and the efficiency of returns.



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

An amendment to the Aliens and Immigration Law (cap 105) on the issuance, modification or renewal of a single permit entered into force on 20 July 2022. A third-country national applicant must hold a valid passport or other travel document, valid for at least six months after the expiration of the permit requested. These proofs and their validity also apply to the residence permit for family reunification purposes and the Blue Card permitting third-country nationals to work.

KEY POINTS

-  In February 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Cyprus and the European Commission to manage migration flows.
-  A new Strategy for Attracting Business and Talent in Cyprus relaxed quotas for third-country national workers. Combined with the war in Ukraine, the Strategy saw the volume of applications double in 2022. It also encourages family reunification by allowing spouses free access to the labour market.
-  During 2022, Cyprus reached a record on returns on a national and European level, operating 4 630 returns during that calendar year, most of which (80 %) were voluntary.

Work-related migration

A new Strategy for Attracting Business and Talent in Cyprus came into force on 2 January 2022. It abolished the quotas for third-country nationals employed in managerial/specialised positions at companies of foreign interests operating in Cyprus. Companies can now freely employ any number of highly skilled third-country nationals without undergoing a labour market test, under certain conditions (minimum level of qualifications, salary thresholds). Eligible companies will have to commit to

recruit 30 % of Cypriot and EU nationals of their total personnel within a five-year timeframe. The volume of the applications submitted by third country nationals that fall under the new Strategy for Attracting Business and Talent in Cyprus, to the Civil Registry and Migration Department more than doubled compared to 2021, reflecting both the expanded Strategy and the war in Ukraine.

Students and researchers

In 2022, the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance revised the decree on the employment of third-country national students, expanding the sectors/professions in which students can be employed to include the hotel sector, food industry, ward assistants in health clinics and carer in elderly shelters/.

Family reunification

The new [Strategy for Attracting Business for Activities or/and Expansion of their Activities in Cyprus](#) came into force on 2 January 2022. It encourages family reunification, as spouses of highly skilled third-country employees can benefit from free and direct access to paid employment without a market test.



TEMPORARY PROTECTION

Main national developments in relation to temporary protection

The Council of Ministers endorsed the decision to activate the Temporary Protection Directive for Ukrainian refugees. In order to facilitate the submission and immediate registration process, the Asylum Service of the Ministry of the Interior posted asylum officers at all District Immigration Offices (Larnaca, Paphos, Limassol, Famagusta). Officers of the Immigration Police and of the Civil Registry and Migration Department were also appointed to apply a one-stop-shop to speed up registration of beneficiaries of temporary protection. In Nicosia, registrations were processed at the premises of the Asylum Service, with an online system also established. D. Biometric residence permits were issued by the Civil Registry Department within three days of the granting of temporary protection status. The EUAA Operating Plan to Cyprus was amended to support the efficient management and registration of beneficiaries of temporary protection.

The Deputy Ministry of Tourism provided accommodation at a number of hotels for Ukrainian nationals with no place of residence, while a helpline operates on a 24-hour basis. Those who do not fall under the categories defined in the Council Decision were advised to seek an alternative residence permit (relevant information at the websites of the Civil Registry and Migration Department and of the Asylum Service) or enter the asylum procedure.

Those who received temporary protection status have immediate access to healthcare, welfare allowance, labour market and education. The Ministry of Education established a plan to receive and integrate Ukrainian children in Cypriot schools.

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

Beneficiaries of temporary protection are entitled to financial support, granted by the Social Welfare Services. This applies to Ukrainian nationals who came to Cyprus following the Russian invasion on 24 February 2022, as well as Ukrainian nationals who were in the country for tourism purposes up to three months before the invasion. In addition, Ukrainian citizens who reside in Cyprus but do not fall into either of these categories can apply for financial support once they have obtained a temporary protection permit from the Civil Registry and Migration Department (CRMD).

Temporary protection beneficiaries have free access to employment, subject to the conditions determined by the regulatory and institutional framework in each profession. They also have access to education programmes, vocational training and employment programmes. The Public Employment Services (PES) of the Department of Labour offered all job seekers who have access to the labour market, including beneficiaries of temporary protection, assistance in finding employment through registration, job search services and placement services, including vocational guidance, counselling and referrals to training programmes and job vacancies.

Ukrainian nationals who fled the war were given temporary accommodation in hotels. The Deputy Ministry of Tourism concluded an agreement with a number of hotels in Cyprus to fulfil the need for temporary accommodation.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth warmly welcomed students from Ukraine into schools in Cyprus. A hotline was launched to assist Ukrainians with any queries relevant to school and higher education. All relevant information was communicated to the Ukrainian-Cyprus Friendship association and other volunteer organisations through the Ukrainian embassy in Cyprus. All relevant documents were translated into Ukrainian and easily accessible via the Ministry's website.



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Legislative and policy developments related to international protection

The new [Procedural Regulation \(Amendment\) \(No. 4\)](#) on the Operation of the Administrative Court of International Protection of 2022 was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Cyprus on 16 September 2022 (No. 4150). The new Regulation (a) introduced a structure to the procedure where the applicant has to apply to the Court for their right to remain by adding a deadline and a specific template, (b) changed the current procedure of the asylum service's legal representation in front of the Administrative Court of International Protection by the Attorney General's Law Office of the Republic only in cases of inadmissible applications and applications from safe country of origin applicants, (c) introduced an obligation for the applicant to appear before the Court at

any stage of the judicial procedure, regardless of whether or not they are represented by a lawyer.

The [Refugees \(Amendment\) Law of 2022](#) (L. 178(I)/2022) was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Cyprus on 25 November 2022 (No. 4923). It aims to harmonise national legislation with Article 14(2)(b) of Directive 2013/32/EU on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection (recast).

The Refugees (Amendment) Law of 2022 Bill was pending before the House of Representatives. It aims to amend the Refugees Law to include certain principles determined by jurisprudence, as well as to clarify the provisions of the law in relation to Directive 2013/32/EU on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection (recast).

The Law Commissioner commenced drafting the Bill amending the Cyprus Refugee Law, in cooperation with the asylum service (to be completed in 2023)

Relocation and resettlement ¹

In June 2022, 21 European countries signed the Declaration on Solidarity. It established the voluntary solidarity mechanism (VSM) that aims “to provide a concrete response to the migratory difficulties of the Mediterranean Member States” through relocation of asylum seekers and refugees or through financial contributions. Following the Declaration, the European Commission coordinates the relocation processes under VSM, in close collaboration with participant countries and with operational support from EU agencies. In Cyprus, the relocation exercise commenced in August 2022, offering 2 870 people relocation by 29 January 2023, of whom 2 552 completed a relocation interview (89 %). Of those, 2 243 people were eligible to be matched to a pledging Member State (88 %). They included 160 family units, and 414 vulnerable people.

The top three citizenships of eligible applicants were:

- Syria (1 119; 50 %);
- Afghanistan (680; 30 %);
- Iraq (120; 5 %).

377 candidates were accepted by other Member States by January 2023, with transfers planned for February and March, while 48 candidates were transferred to Germany in December 2022. In addition, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) began relocations from Cyprus to other EU Member States in autumn 2022.



MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

Minors

New standard operating procedures (SOPs) for vulnerable people have been drafted with the support/coordination of EUAA.

Other vulnerable groups

SOPs for the vulnerability assessment and related actions have been drafted in cooperation with EUAA.

The upgrade of the Limnes accommodation centre was approved in 2022 and will be implemented in 2023. It will include safe zones for vulnerable people except unaccompanied minors.



INTEGRATION

National integration strategy

In November 2022, a final version of the Asylum and Migration Integration Fund (AMIF) National Programme 2021-2027 was submitted to the European Commission for approval. Its implementation will include specific projects to promote integration.

Involvement of multi-stakeholders including non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

In the framework of the project ‘Building structures for intercultural integration in Cyprus’, implemented by the Intercultural Cities Programme and the European Commission’s Directorate General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) in partnership with the Civil Registry and Migration Department of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus, local authorities, NGOs, and migrant organisations had the opportunity to be part of the integration process. All integration stakeholders contributed to the five intercultural regional networks on the integration of migrants in areas such as participation, education, cultural and social life, urban planning, business, access to the labour market, anti-discrimination and multilingualism. The five intercultural regional networks were established in 2021 and comprise all integration stakeholders, local authorities, NGOs, and migrant organisations. They analysed the current integration situation in their region using the Intercultural Cities Index developed by the Council of Europe. Each also developed its own regional intercultural integration strategy, including specific actions.



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

Schengen governance

In 2019, Cyprus submitted a declaration of readiness for Schengen evaluation. During 2022, it was evaluated in five of the six evaluation areas (excluding the Schengen Information Systems (SIS/SIRENE) area). The Law on the Operation and Use of the Second-Generation Schengen Information System (SIS II) Law 2020 was ratified in February 2022.

¹ Includes Humanitarian Admission Programmes



IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT SMUGGLING

Preventing and tackling irregular migration in legal migration channels

During 2022, the number of illegal migrants and asylum seekers dramatically increased, with Cyprus' authorities requiring support from their EU counterparts. Operational support from competent EU agencies such as Frontex and EUAA was enhanced, with the deployment of additional experts to contribute to efforts to combat irregular migration and migrant smuggling.



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Identification and information to victims of trafficking in human beings

On 12 January 2022, the Ministry of Justice and Public Order and the Deputy Ministry of Social Welfare signed a Memorandum of Cooperation between the police and the social welfare services for the referral, handling, protection and briefing of potential and recognised victims of trafficking. The Memorandum supports the government's efforts to effectively combat trafficking and to protect victims, by systematising cooperation and strengthening the framework for the protection and support of victims. The Memorandum defines the responsibilities and obligations in respect of the referral and briefing of victims of trafficking. The actions to be taken by the competent services in identification, specialised evaluation, strengthening and support, through security and trust, both during the process of identification of victims and during the trial of a trafficking case, are systematically recorded until the return of the victims to their countries of origin. The Memorandum also includes special provisions for the treatment of minor victims.



RETURN AND READMISSION

Main national developments

On 1 February 2022, the Minister of the Interior and the Deputy Director-General of the European Commission signed an agreement on SOPs on returns. This is the first such agreement in Cyprus to involve Frontex and EUAA.

On 16 February 2022, the Republic of Cyprus and Frontex reached an agreement on the implementation of an operational action plan for returns. They agreed that Frontex would send additional return experts and experts on the verification of documents of third-country nationals, as well as conducting regular paid return flights and providing technical support on upgrading/developing the system for managing migration flows and returns. Two Frontex Operations – the 'Pre-Return Activities (PRA) FOA' and 'Return Activities FOA 2022 – assisted with return processes. In July 2022, a Returns Coordination Office was established at the Ministry of the Interior, with all competent authorities involved in returns now operating within the same premises. This aims to overcome bureaucracy and enhance return operations. During 2022, Cyprus reached a record on returns at national and European level, operating 4 630 returns during that calendar year, most of which (80 %) were voluntary returns.

In addition to the EU readmission agreements under which Cyprus operates returns (e.g. Pakistan and Bangladesh (SOPs)), a number of bilateral readmission agreements and/or implementation protocols have been proposed:

- Migration and mobility agreement with the Republic of India;
- Readmission agreement with the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- Readmission agreement with the Republic of Vietnam;
- Readmission agreement with the Republic of Nepal;
- Implementation Protocol with the Republic of Pakistan.



STATISTICAL ANNEX

The statistical annex available on the next pages complements the Country Factsheet and provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Cyprus 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](#).

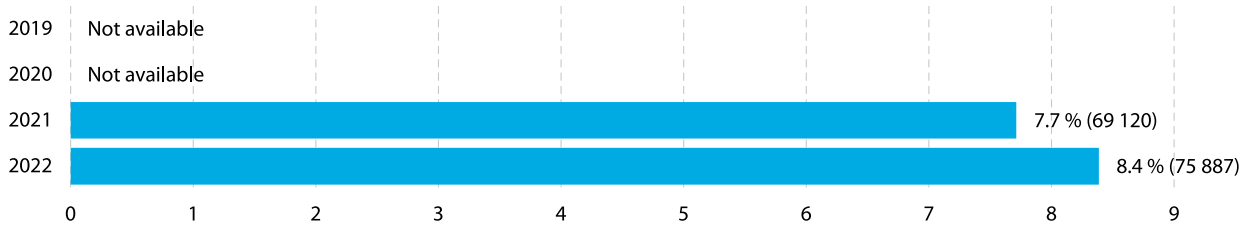
An online data code available under each table/figure can be used to directly access to the most recent data on [Eurostat's website](#).



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Third-country nationals, 1 January 2019–2022

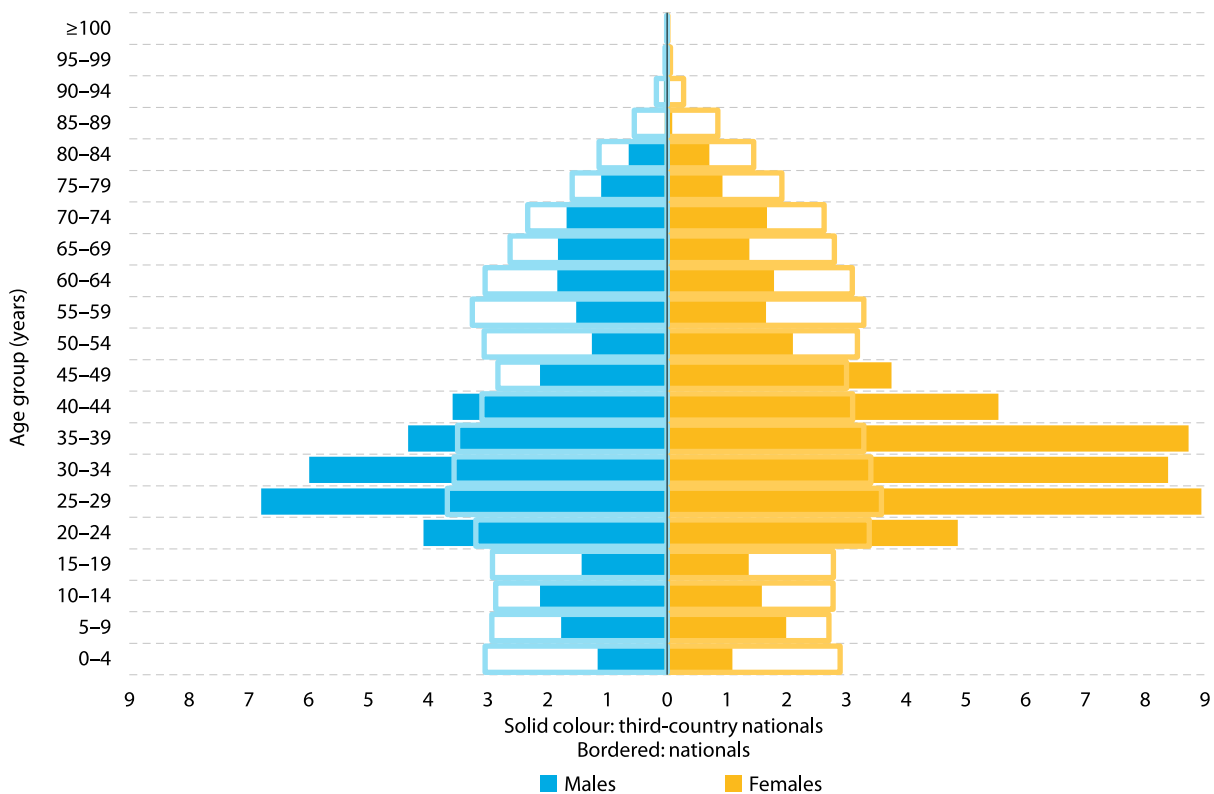
Share of the total population in % (and the absolute number)



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

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

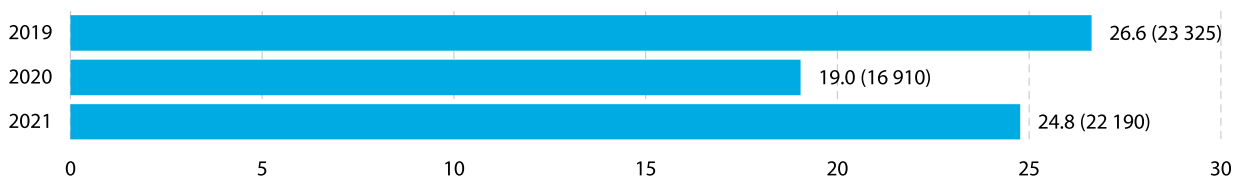
%



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

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

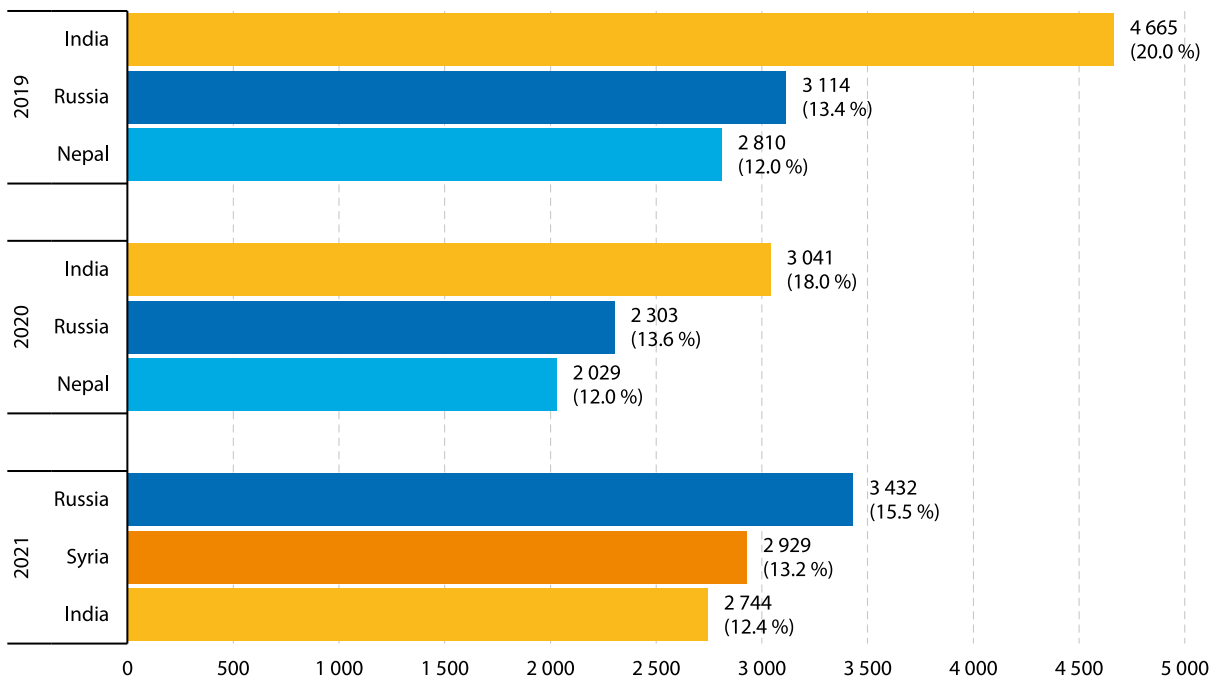
Number per 1 000 people (and the absolute number)



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)

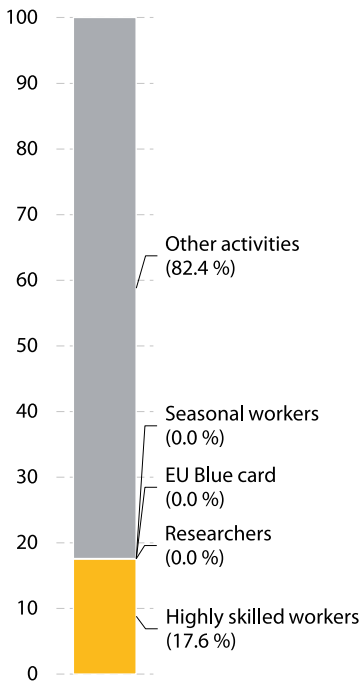


Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)

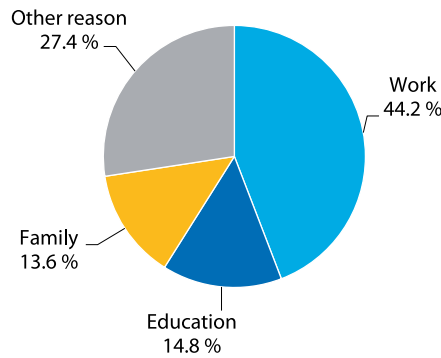
First residence permits issued, distribution by reason or type, 2021

%

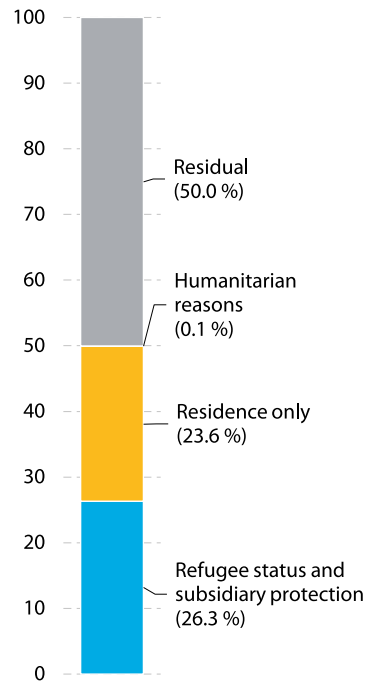
Work reason, by type



All permits, by reason



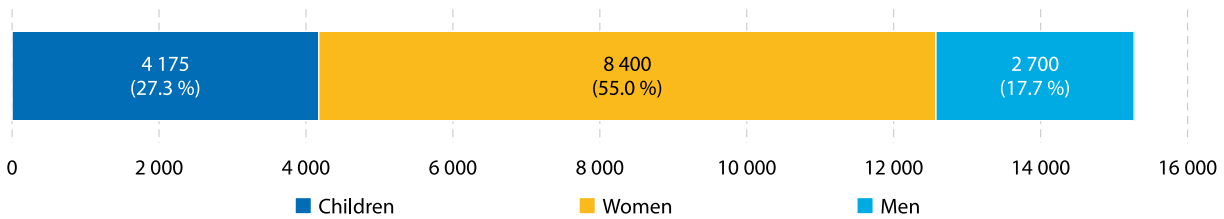
Other reason, by detailed reason



Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_resocc and migr_resoth)

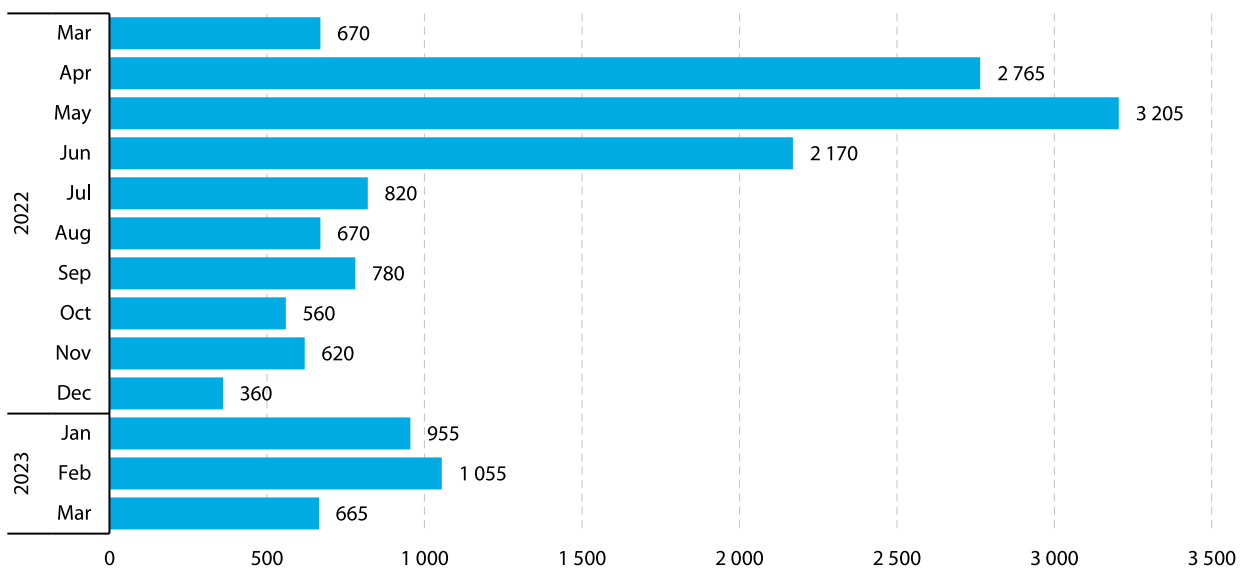
TEMPORARY PROTECTION

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)

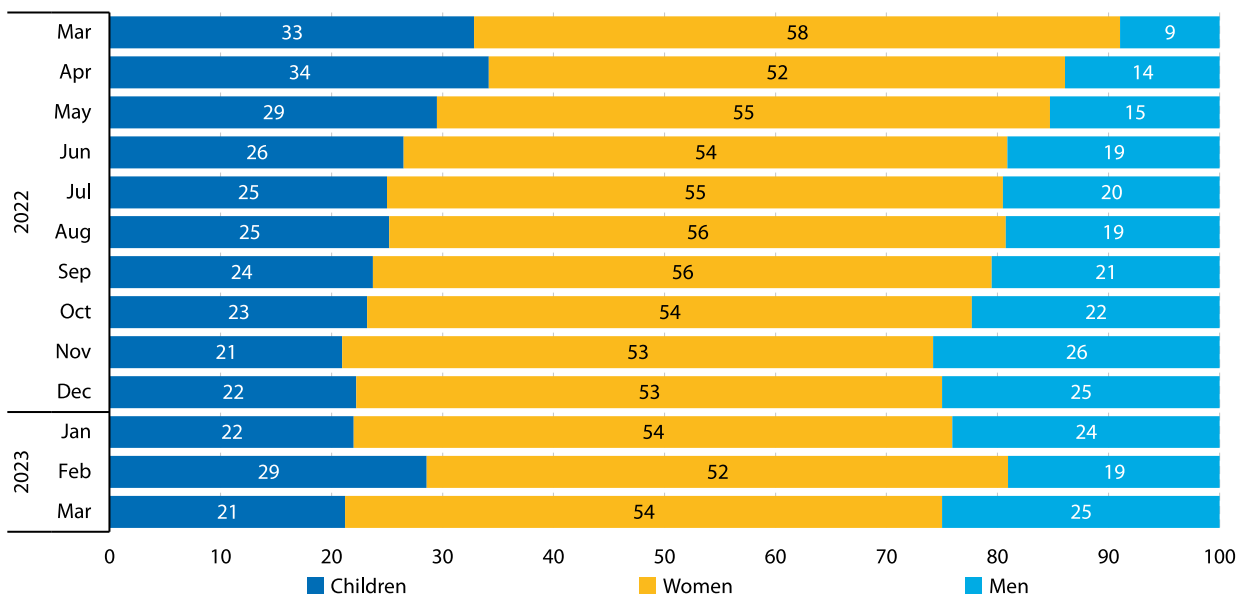
Number of decisions granting temporary protection to third-country nationals displaced from Ukraine due to Russia's invasion, March 2022–March 2023



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

%



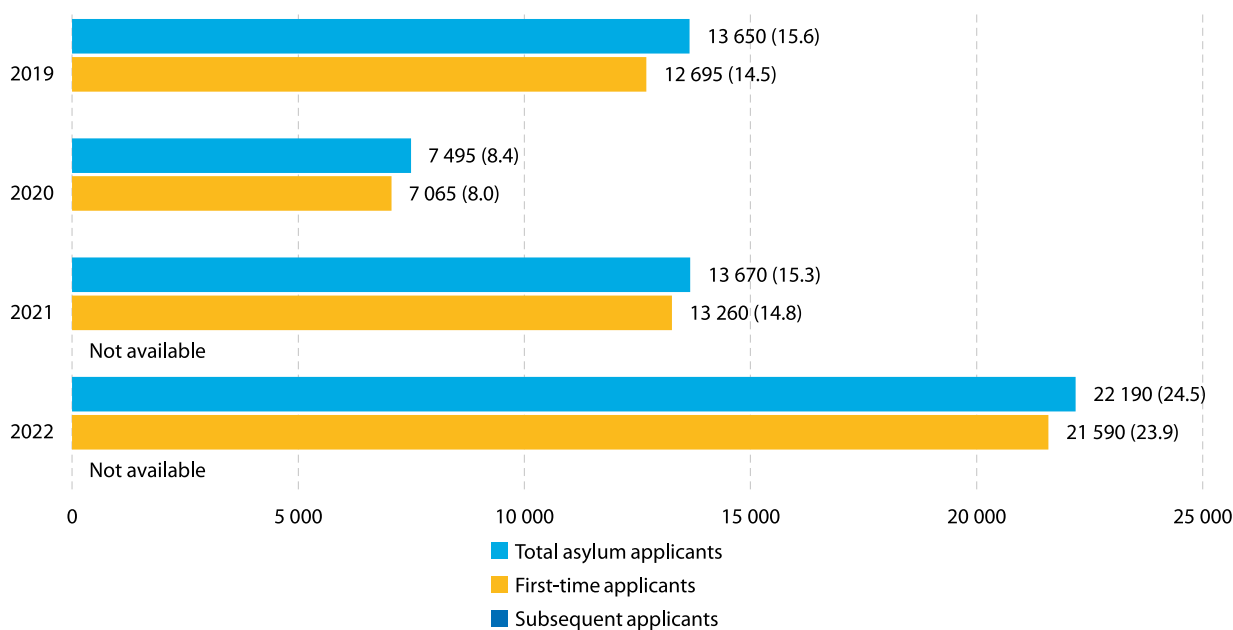
Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpfm)



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

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

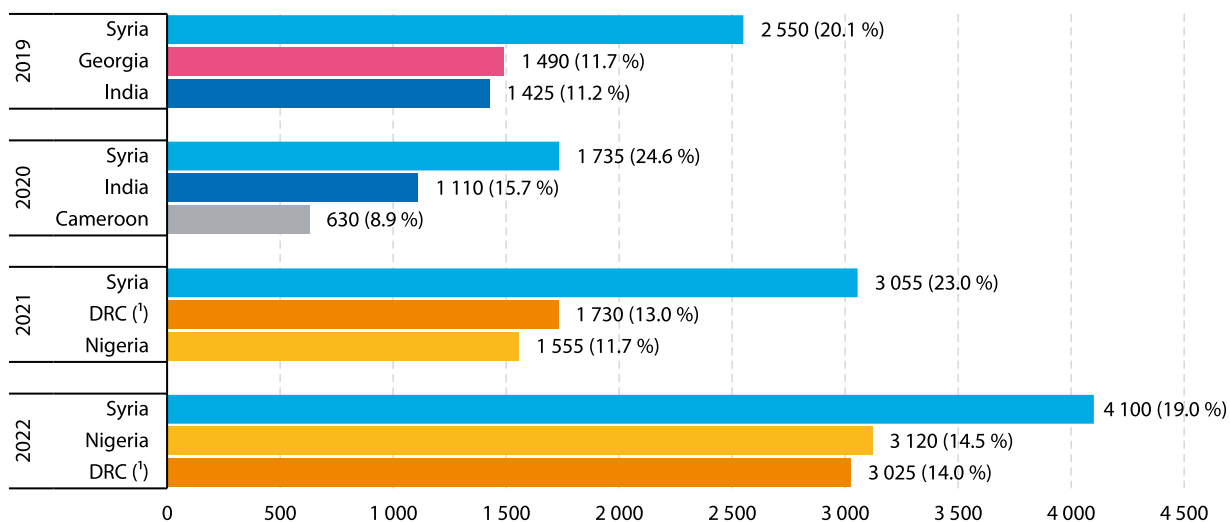
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



Source: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza and migr_pop1ctz)

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

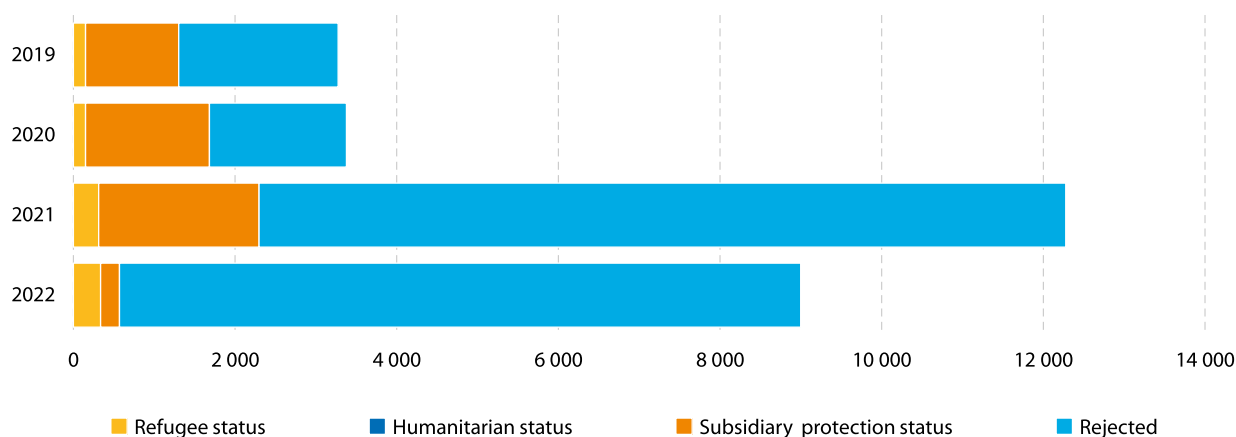
Absolute number (and the share in total number of first-time applicants)



(¹) Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Source: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza)

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



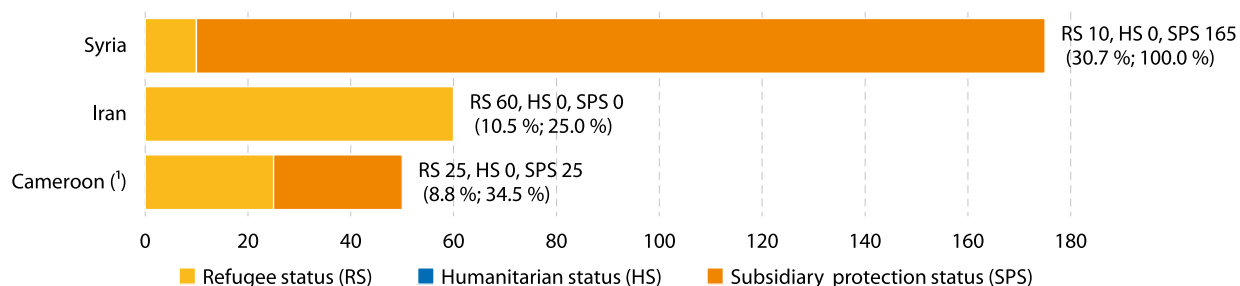
Refugee status		Humanitarian status		Subsidiary protection status		Rejected					
Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)				
2019	150	4.6	2019	0	0.0	2019	1 150	35.1	2019	1 975	60.3
2020	150	4.4	2020	0	0.0	2020	1 530	45.3	2020	1 695	50.2
2021	310	2.5	2021	0	0.0	2021	1 985	16.2	2021	9 980	81.3
2022	335	3.7	2022	0	0.0	2022	235	2.6	2022	8 425	93.7

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)

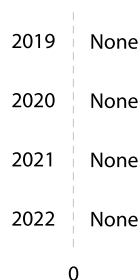


(†) Somalia: same number of positive decisions.

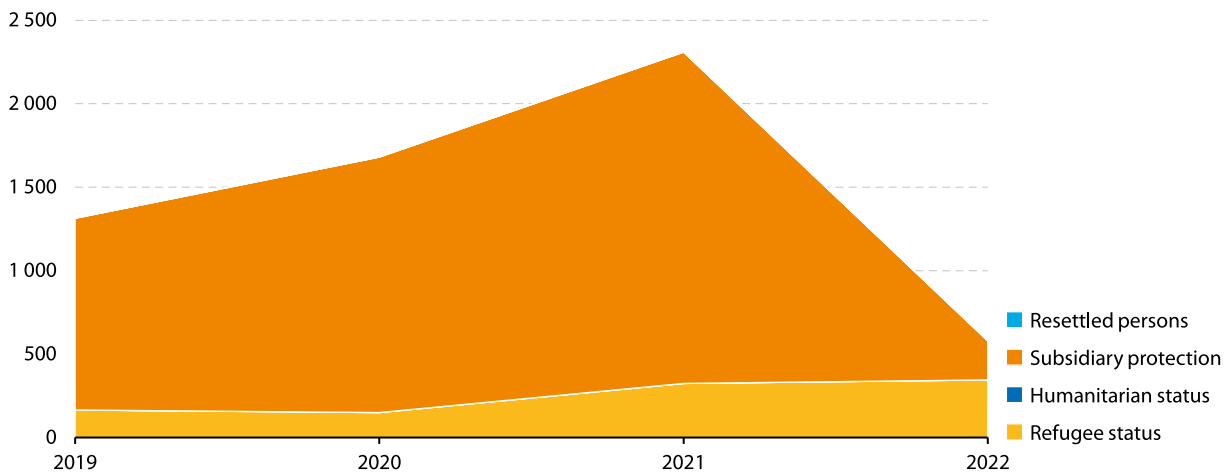
Source: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta)

Resettled third-country nationals, 2019–2022

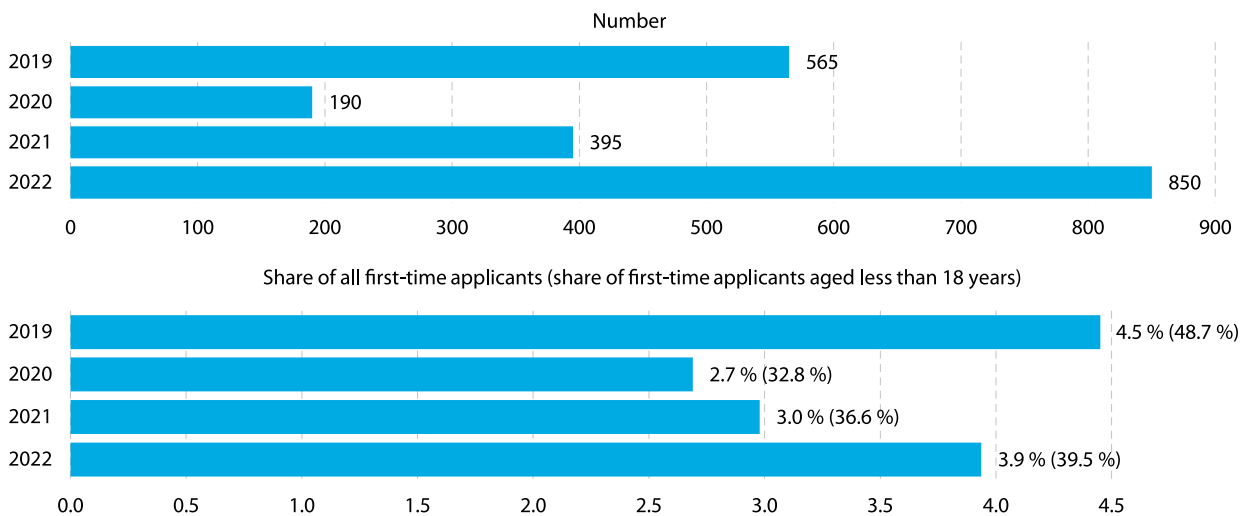
Absolute number (and the share of the total resettled within the EU)



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)

Not available

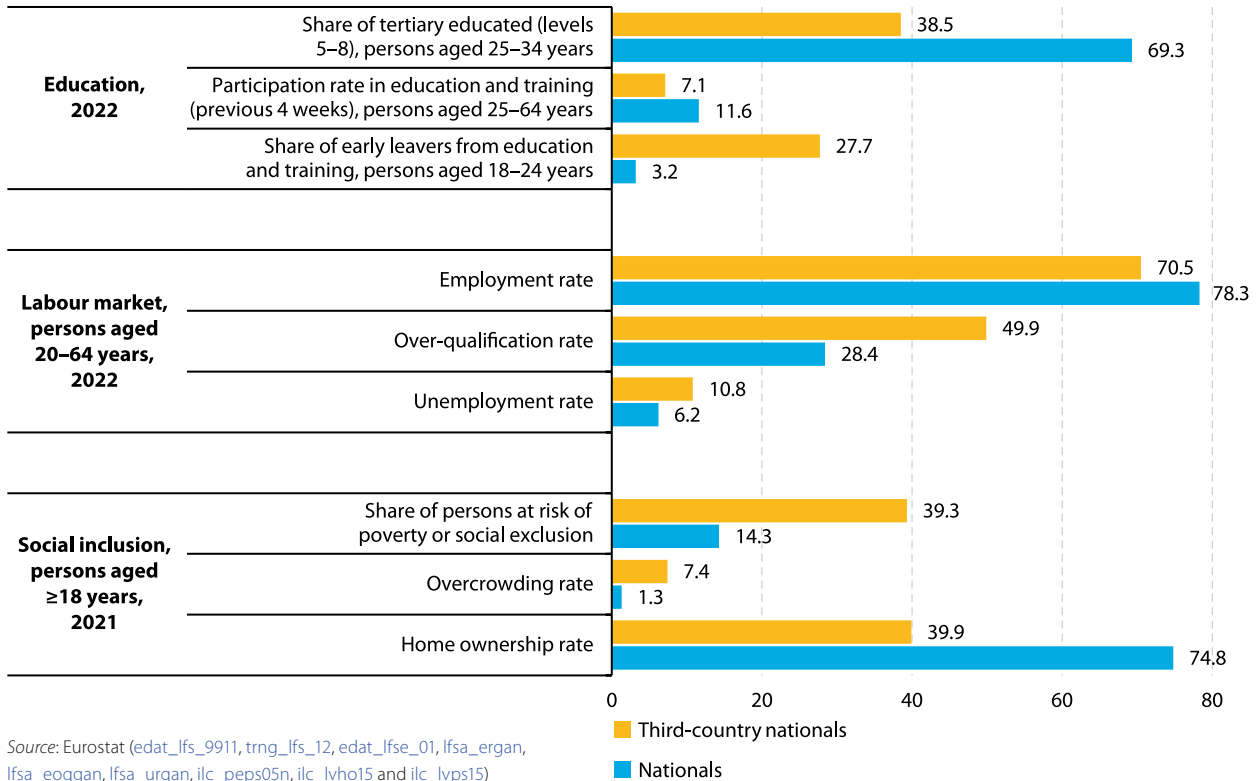
Source: Eurostat (migr_asyumdcfq)



INTEGRATION

Integration indicators, 2021 or 2022

%



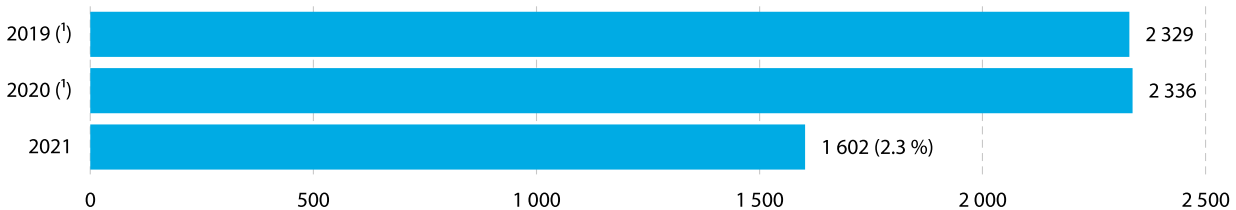
Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9911, trng_lfs_12, edat_lfse_01, lfsa_ergan, lfsa_eoqgan, lfsa_urgan, ilc_peps05n, ilc_lvho15 and ilc_lvps15)



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

Third-country nationals who acquired citizenship, 2019–2021

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



⁽¹⁾ Share of total third-country nationals in the country: not available.

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)



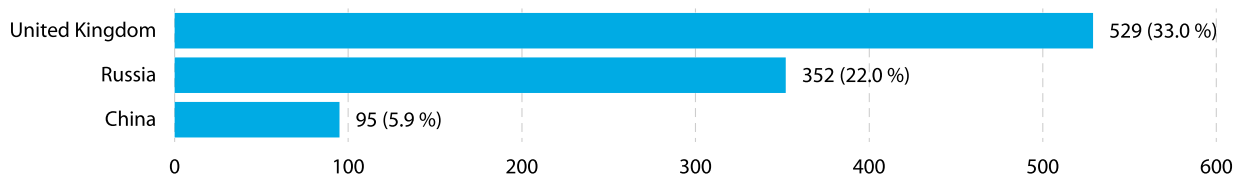
Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

■ Stateless (STLS)

■ Unknown (UNK)

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

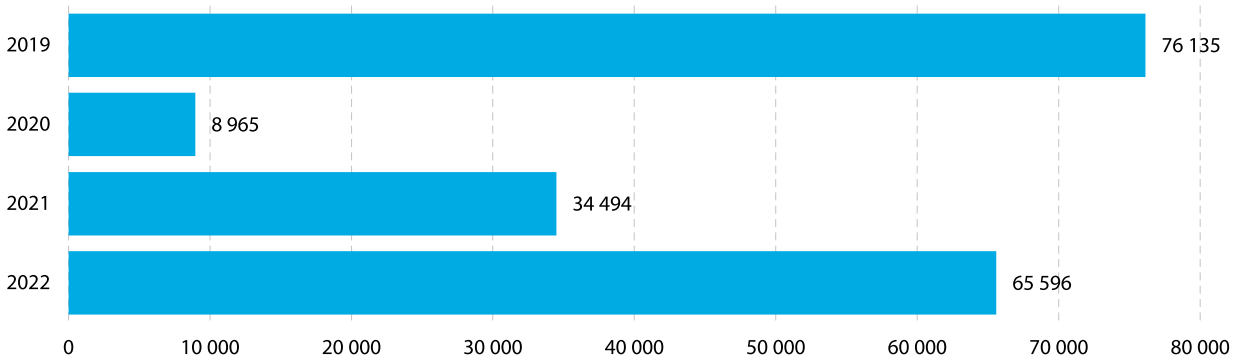
Absolute number (and the share of all acquisitions by third-country nationals plus stateless)



Source: Eurostat (migr_acq)

**BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS****Short-stay visas issued, 2019–2022**

Absolute number



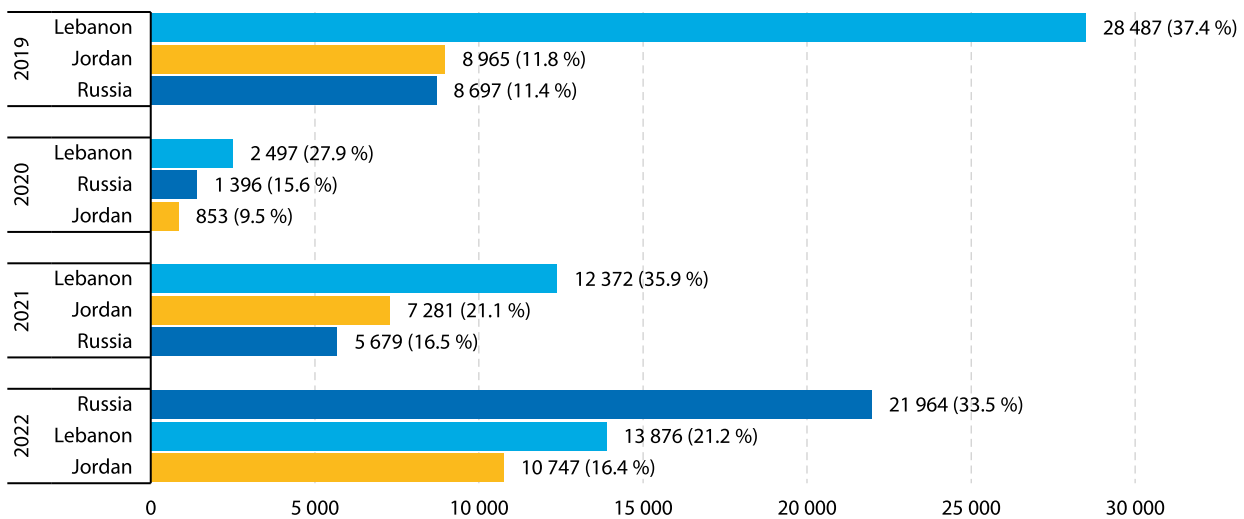
Note: Bulgaria, Ireland, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania were not part of the Schengen Area.

Note: 2019–2021, excluding visas issued at border crossings.

Source: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

Three consulate countries in which the most short-stay visas were issued, 2018–2021

Number of short-stay visas issued (and the share of all 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.

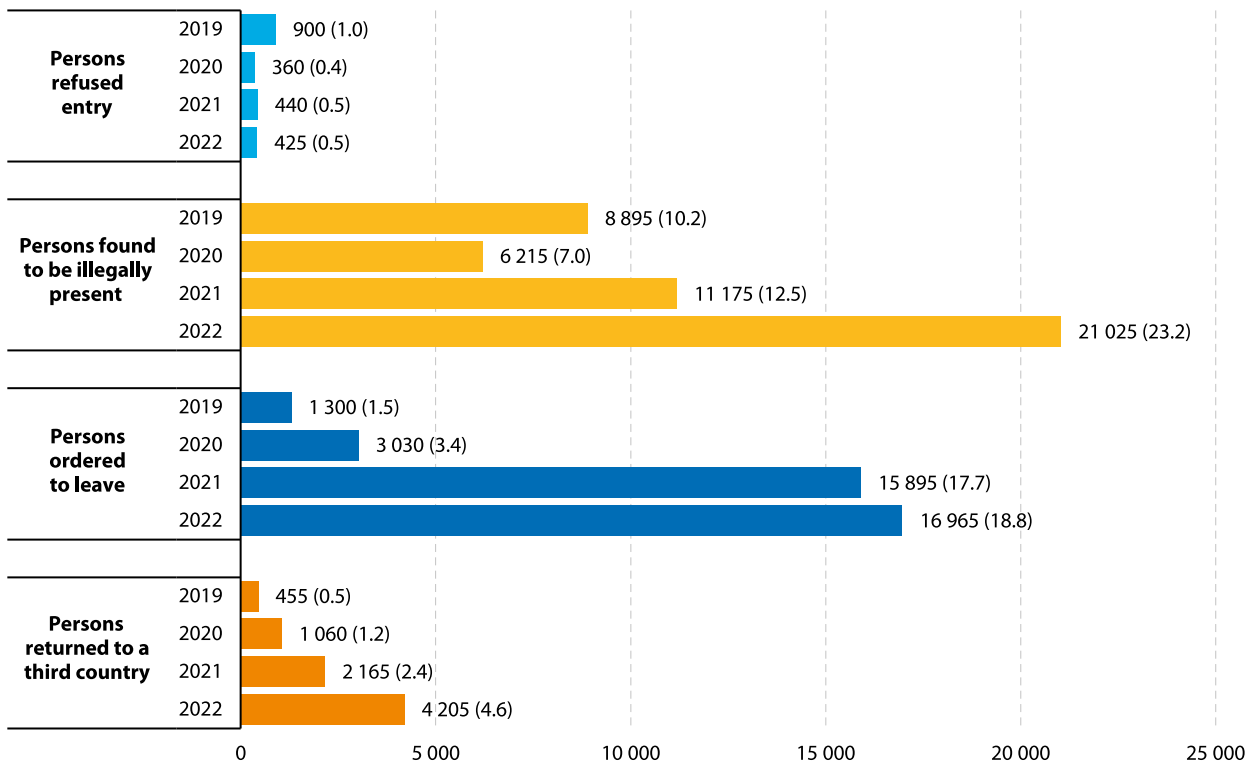
Source: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs



IRREGULAR MIGRATION

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

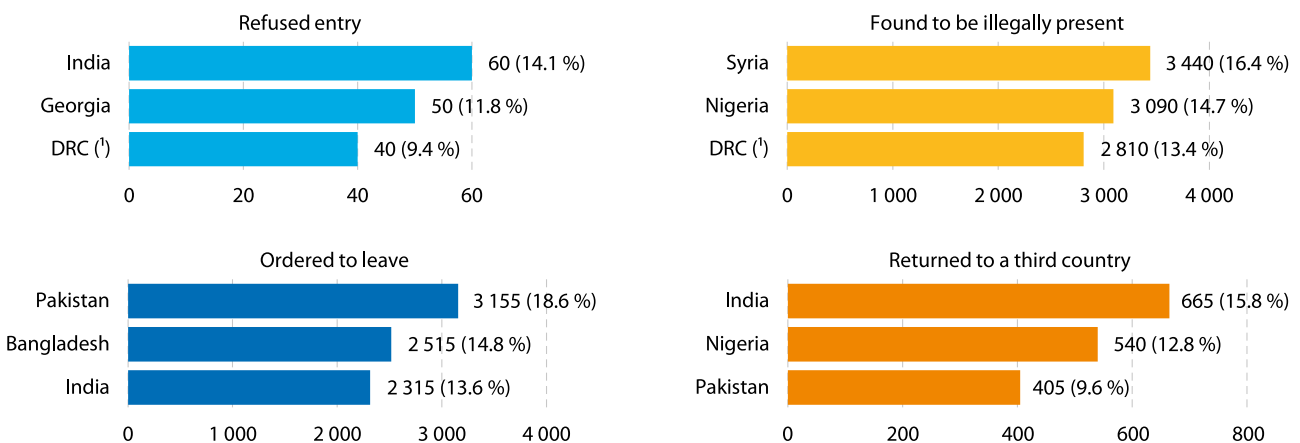
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



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) Democratic Republic of the Congo.

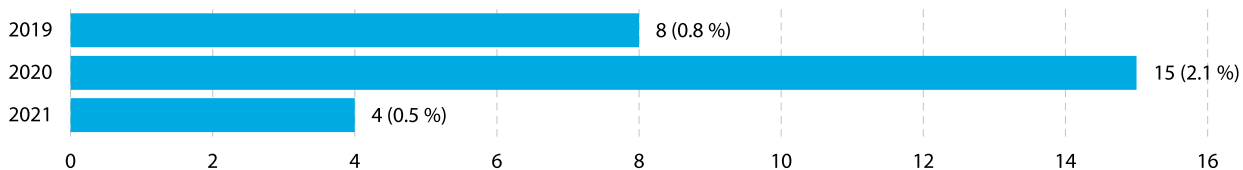
Source: Eurostat (migr_eirfs, migr_eipre, migr_eiord and migr_eirtn)



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)



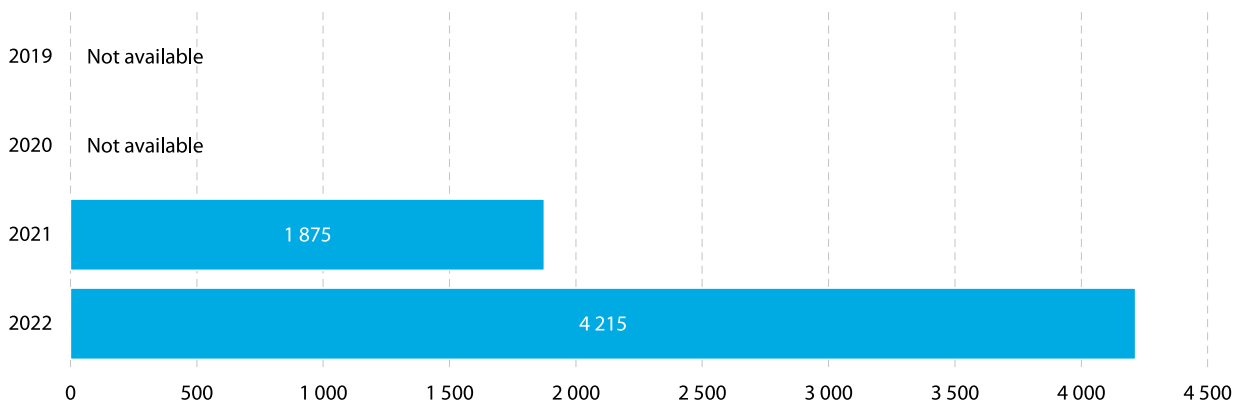
Source: Eurostat (migr_resoth)



RETURN AND READMISSION

Third-country nationals who left the territory, 2019–2022

Absolute number



Source: Eurostat (migr_eirt_vol, migr_eirtn1 and migr_eirt_ass)

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- at the following standard number: +32 22999696,
- via the following form: european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/write-us_en.

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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>