

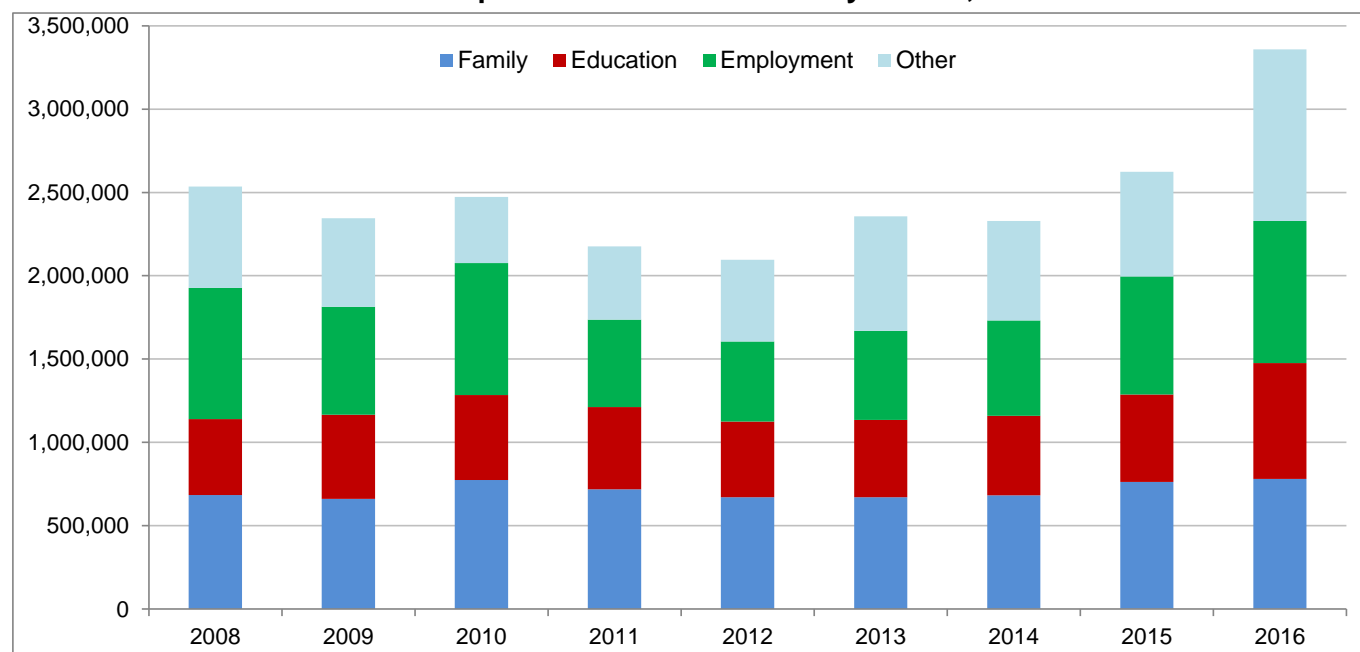
Residence permits for non-EU citizens

New high in first residence permits issued in the EU Member States in 2016

Main beneficiaries from Ukraine, Syria and the United States

In 2016, about 3.4 million first residence permits were issued in the **European Union** (EU) to non-EU citizens, a record number since comparable data are available (2008) and up by 28% (or nearly 735 000 residence permits) compared with 2015. This increase was mainly due to the larger number of first permits issued for 'other reasons' (+64%) as well as for employment reasons (+21%). Employment reasons accounted for a quarter (25.4%) of all first residence permits issued in the **EU** in 2016, family for 23.2% and education for 20.7%, while other reasons, including international protection and humanitarian status (about 14% of all first permits issued in 2016), represented 30.7%.

First residence permits issued in the EU by reason, 2008-2016



EU aggregate excluding Luxembourg for 2008 and Croatia for the years 2008-2012.

These administrative data on residence permits in the **EU** are complemented with an [article](#) issued by **Eurostat**, the statistical office of the European Union.

Highest number of first residence permits issued in the United Kingdom, Poland and Germany

In 2016, one out of four first residence permits was issued in the **United Kingdom** (865 900 residence permits issued, or 25.8% of total permits issued in the EU). It was followed by **Poland** (586 000, or 17.5%), **Germany** (504 800, or 15.0%), **France** (235 000, or 7.0%), **Italy** (222 400, or 6.6%), **Spain** (211 500, or 6.3%) and **Sweden** (146 700, or 4.4%).

Compared to the population of each Member State, the highest rates of first resident permits issued in 2016 were recorded in **Malta** (20.6 first residence permits issued per thousand inhabitants), **Cyprus** (19.9), **Poland** (15.4) **Sweden** (14.8) and the **United Kingdom** (13.2). For the **EU** as a whole in 2016, 6.5 first residence permits were issued per thousand inhabitants.

First residence permits issued in the EU by reason, 2016

	Total		Of which:							
			Family reasons		Education reasons		Employment reasons		Other reasons	
	#	per 1000 population	#	Share	#	Share	#	Share	#	Share
EU	3 355 506	6.5	779 301	23.2%	694 648	20.7%	852 747	25.4%	1 028 810	30.7%
Belgium	53 096	4.7	26 325	49.6%	6 303	11.9%	5 181	9.8%	15 287	28.8%
Bulgaria	7 942	1.1	3 240	40.8%	1 067	13.4%	276	3.5%	3 359	42.3%
Czech Republic	80 070	7.6	24 568	30.7%	17 099	21.4%	23 097	28.8%	15 306	19.1%
Denmark	41 440	7.2	12 883	31.1%	10 481	25.3%	10 208	24.6%	7 868	19.0%
Germany	504 849	6.1	136 982	27.1%	46 083	9.1%	39 552	7.8%	282 232	55.9%
Estonia	4 308	3.3	1 424	33.1%	1 114	25.9%	1 339	31.1%	431	10.0%
Ireland*	38 433	8.1	3 444	9.0%	22 075	57.4%	6 073	15.8%	6 841	17.8%
Greece	44 072	4.1	23 598	53.5%	902	2.0%	2 133	4.8%	17 439	39.6%
Spain	211 533	4.6	115 143	54.4%	35 636	16.8%	38 154	18.0%	22 600	10.7%
France	235 011	3.5	93 873	39.9%	73 572	31.3%	23 076	9.8%	44 490	18.9%
Croatia	5 315	1.3	1 673	31.5%	526	9.9%	2 634	49.6%	482	9.1%
Italy	222 398	3.7	101 269	45.5%	16 847	7.6%	9 389	4.2%	94 893	42.7%
Cyprus	16 970	19.9	2 332	13.7%	3 313	19.5%	7 385	43.5%	3 940	23.2%
Latvia	6 037	3.1	2 197	36.4%	1 314	21.8%	1 736	28.8%	790	13.1%
Lithuania	6 750	2.4	1 173	17.4%	928	13.7%	4 082	60.5%	567	8.4%
Luxembourg	5 627	9.7	2 952	52.5%	420	7.5%	1 340	23.8%	915	16.3%
Hungary	22 842	2.3	4 730	20.7%	7 874	34.5%	5 851	25.6%	4 387	19.2%
Malta	8 995	20.6	1 719	19.1%	1 848	20.5%	3 036	33.8%	2 392	26.6%
Netherlands	95 753	5.6	24 962	26.1%	16 317	17.0%	14 621	15.3%	39 853	41.6%
Austria	50 066	5.7	15 635	31.2%	5 770	11.5%	3 337	6.7%	25 324	50.6%
Poland	585 969	15.4	8 416	1.4%	32 676	5.6%	493 960	84.3%	50 917	8.7%
Portugal	30 993	3.0	14 847	47.9%	3 837	12.4%	5 948	19.2%	6 361	20.5%
Romania	11 867	0.6	3 871	32.6%	4 631	39.0%	1 766	14.9%	1 599	13.5%
Slovenia	13 517	6.5	4 592	34.0%	1 799	13.3%	6 894	51.0%	232	1.7%
Slovakia	10 227	1.9	2 582	25.2%	1 723	16.8%	3 590	35.1%	2 332	22.8%
Finland	28 792	5.2	7 833	27.2%	6 235	21.7%	5 381	18.7%	9 343	32.4%
Sweden	146 740	14.8	47 697	32.5%	8 803	6.0%	15 632	10.7%	74 608	50.8%
United Kingdom	865 894	13.2	89 341	10.3%	365 455	42.2%	117 076	13.5%	294 022	34.0%
Iceland	1 469	4.4	479	32.6%	423	28.8%	304	20.7%	263	17.9%
Liechtenstein	785	20.8	533	67.9%	50	6.4%	99	12.6%	103	13.1%
Norway	38 349	7.3	15 133	39.5%	3 673	9.6%	7 021	18.3%	12 522	32.7%
Switzerland*	40 021	4.8	19 506	48.7%	10 222	25.5%	10 033	25.1%	2 258	5.6%

* Ireland: 2015 data instead of 2016.

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

For employment in Poland, for education in the United Kingdom

Poland (494 000 permits, or 58% of all permits issued for employment reasons in the EU in 2016) was by far the first destination for employment related permits, while the **United Kingdom** (365 500 permits, or 53%) was the primary destination in the EU for education related reasons. With over 100 000 permits each, **Germany** (137 000, or 18%), **Spain** (115 100, or 15%) and **Italy** (101 300, or 13%) were the three Member States with the highest number of permits issued for family reasons in 2016. They were closely followed by **France** (93 900, or 12%) and the **United Kingdom** (89 300, or 11%).

Family reasons tend to prevail across individual Member States

In eleven Member States, the largest numbers of permits were issued for family reasons, with the highest shares observed in **Spain** (54.4% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Greece** (53.5%) and **Luxembourg** (52.5%). Education was the main reason in **Ireland** (57.4% of all residence permits issued in the Member State in 2015), the **United Kingdom** (42.2%), **Romania** (39.0%) and **Hungary** (34.5%). In seven Member States, the main reason for issuing residence permits was employment, the highest shares being recorded in **Poland** (84.3% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Lithuania** (60.5%), **Slovenia** (51.0%) and **Croatia** (49.6%). Other reasons, which include international protection status and humanitarian reasons, were predominant in the six remaining Member States, notably in **Germany** (55.9% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Sweden** (50.8%) and **Austria** (50.6%).

Almost half of residence permits granted to five citizenships

In 2016, citizens of **Ukraine** (588 900 beneficiaries, of which 87% in Poland) continued to receive the highest number of permits in the EU, ahead of citizens of **Syria** (348 100, of which almost two-thirds in Germany), the **United States** (250 900, of which almost three-quarters in the United Kingdom), **India** (198 400, of which over 60% in the United Kingdom) and **China** (195 600, of which a majority in the United Kingdom). Around half of all first residence permits issued in the **EU** in 2016 were issued to citizens of these five countries.

First residence permits issued in the EU by citizenship, 2016

	Total	Main citizenships of first residence permits beneficiaries								
		#	First	#	%	Second	#	%	Third	#
EU	3 355 506	Ukraine	588 927	17.6	Syria	348 082	10.7	United States	250 936	7.5
Belgium	53 096	Syria	6 725	12.7	Morocco	5 512	10.4	India	2 899	5.5
Bulgaria	7 942	Turkey	2 838	35.7	Russia	1 509	19.0	Ukraine	1 086	13.7
Czech Republic	80 070	Ukraine	24 223	30.3	Russia	12 122	15.1	Vietnam	8 160	10.2
Denmark	41 440	Syria	8 366	20.2	India	4 449	10.7	United States	4 387	10.6
Germany	504 849	Syria	221 440	43.9	Iraq	29 701	5.9	Turkey	18 043	3.6
Estonia	4 308	Ukraine	1 303	30.2	Russia	1 051	24.4	RNC**	162	3.8
Ireland*	38 433	Brazil	10 955	28.5	India	2 883	7.5	United States	2 690	7.0
Greece	44 072	Albania	30 958	70.2	Georgia	1 408	3.2	China	1 248	2.8
Spain	211 533	Morocco	39 570	18.7	China	13 210	6.2	Colombia	12 557	5.9
France	235 011	Algeria	28 709	12.2	Morocco	27 184	11.6	China	16 126	6.9
Croatia	5 315	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2 382	44.8	Serbia	678	12.8	Ukraine	294	5.5
Italy	222 398	Nigeria	20 562	9.2	Morocco	17 257	7.8	Albania	17 167	7.7
Cyprus	16 970	India	3 072	18.1	Russia	2 337	13.8	Syria	1 796	10.6
Latvia	6 037	Russia	1 653	27.4	Ukraine	1 435	23.8	India	470	7.8
Lithuania	6 750	Ukraine	2 828	41.9	Belarus	1 207	17.9	Russia	971	14.4
Luxembourg	5 627	Syria	532	9.5	China	483	8.6	United States	479	8.5
Hungary	22 842	China	2 889	12.6	Ukraine	2 375	10.4	United States	2 245	9.8
Malta	8 995	Serbia	1 072	11.9	Libya	984	10.9	Philippines	711	7.9
Netherlands	95 753	Syria	23 612	24.7	India	8 105	8.5	China	6 326	6.6
Austria	50 066	Syria	8 391	16.8	Serbia	5 018	10.0	Bosnia and Herzegovina	4 060	8.1
Poland	585 969	Ukraine	512 552	87.5	Belarus	28 165	4.8	Moldova	7 613	1.3
Portugal	30 993	Brazil	9 061	29.2	China	3 794	12.2	Cape Verde	2 378	7.7
Romania	11 867	Moldova	2 160	18.2	Turkey	1 213	10.2	China	958	8.1
Slovenia	13 517	Bosnia and Herzegovina	6 330	46.8	Serbia	2 399	17.7	Kosovo****	1 397	10.3
Slovakia	10 227	Ukraine	3 016	29.5	Serbia	2 076	20.3	Russia	743	7.3
Finland	28 792	Iraq	3 535	12.3	Russia	3 433	11.9	Afghanistan	2 179	7.6
Sweden	146 740	Syria	54 140	36.9	Stateless***	8 711	5.9	Eritrea	8 511	5.8
United Kingdom	865 894	United States	183 867	21.2	India	122 075	14.1	China	103 248	11.9
Iceland	1 469	United States	267	18.2	Philippines	115	7.8	Syria	88	6.0
Liechtenstein	785	Switzerland	447	56.9	Turkey	38	4.8	Brazil	35	4.5
Norway	38 349	Syria	9 374	24.4	Eritrea	3 104	8.1	Philippines	2 218	5.8
Switzerland	40 021	India	2 213	5.5	United States	2 041	5.1	China	566	1.4

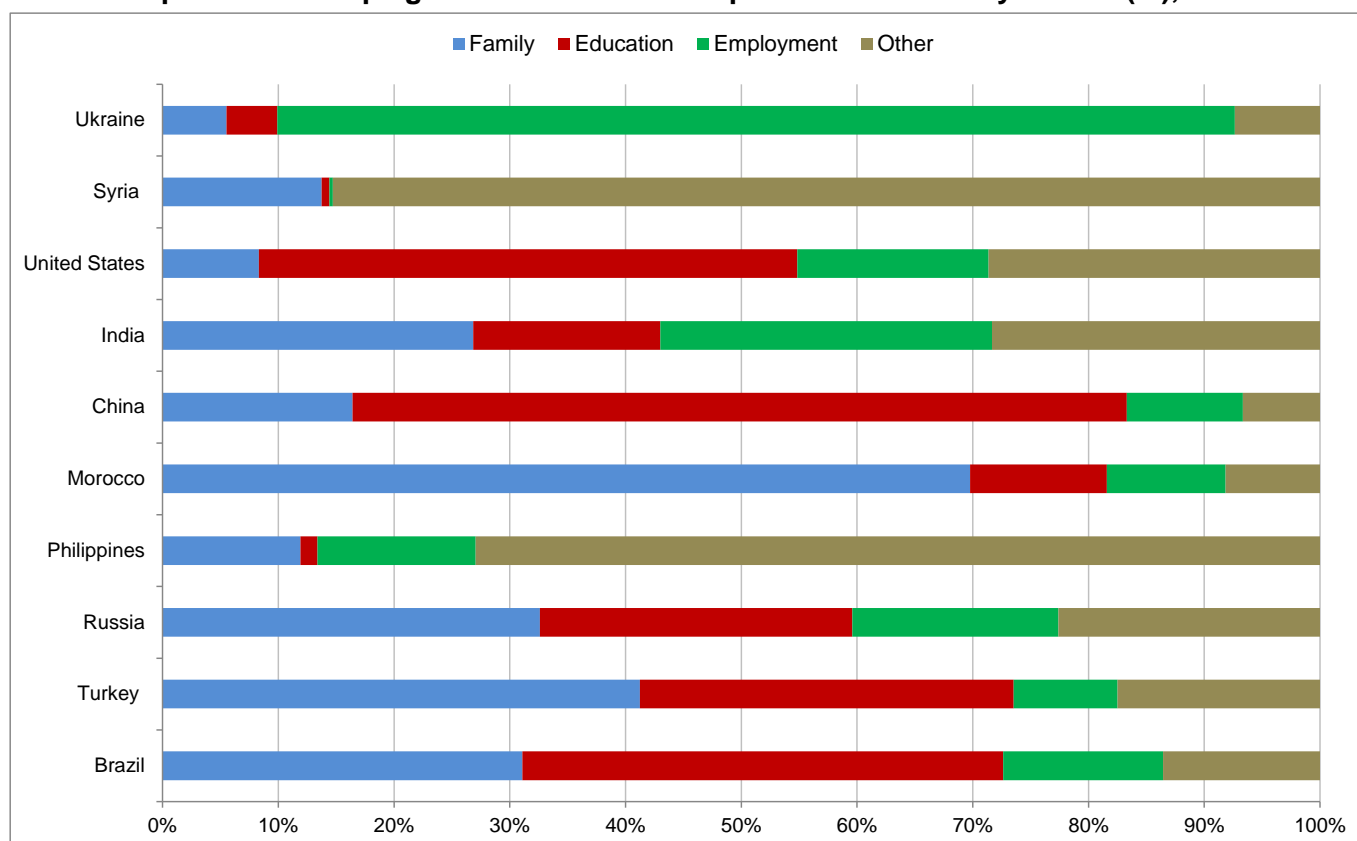
* Ireland: 2015 data instead of 2016

** A recognised non-citizen (R.N.C) is a person who is neither a citizen of the reporting country nor of any other country, and who has established links to the reporting country which include some but not all rights and obligations of full citizenship. A majority of these persons were citizens of the former Soviet Union.

*** A stateless person is someone who is not recognized as a citizen of any state.

**** Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

Top 10 citizenships granted first residence permits in the EU by reason (%), 2016



Ukrainians for employment, Chinese for education and Moroccans for family reasons

The reasons for residence permits being issued differ between citizenships. Among the top 10 citizenships granted permits in the EU in 2016, **Ukrainians** benefited from residence permits mainly for employment reasons (82.7% of the first residence permits issued to Ukrainians in 2016). **Chinese** (66.9%), **US citizens** (46.5%) and **Brazilians** (41.6%) were given residence permits mainly for education reasons, while **Moroccans** (69.8%) benefited from residence permits issued mainly for family reasons, as did **Turks** (41.2%).

Main citizenships of persons granted first residence permits in the EU by reason, 2016

	Total	Of which:							
		Family reasons		Education reasons		Employment reasons		Other reasons	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
TOTAL	3 355 506	779 301	23.2%	694 648	20.7%	852 747	25.4%	1 028 810	30.7%
Ukraine	588 927	32 507	5.5%	25 873	4.4%	487 181	82.7%	43 366	7.4%
Syria	348 082	47 837	13.7%	2 326	0.7%	1 037	0.3%	296 882	85.3%
United States	250 936	20 862	8.3%	116 745	46.5%	41 465	16.5%	71 864	28.6%
India	198 359	53 240	26.8%	32 082	16.2%	56 839	28.7%	56 198	28.3%
China	195 612	32 122	16.4%	130 828	66.9%	19 628	10.0%	13 034	6.7%
Morocco	100 529	70 147	69.8%	11 865	11.8%	10 317	10.3%	8 200	8.2%
Philippines	93 762	11 168	11.9%	1 392	1.5%	12 814	13.7%	68 388	72.9%
Russia	79 397	25 884	32.6%	21 432	27.0%	14 141	17.8%	17 940	22.6%
Turkey	67 076	27 662	41.2%	21 654	32.3%	6 021	9.0%	11 739	17.5%
Brazil	63 610	19 772	31.1%	26 431	41.6%	8 778	13.8%	8 629	13.6%

Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

In this News Release, data for China include Hong Kong.

Methods and definitions

The data in this release are provided to Eurostat by Ministries of the Interior or Justice, or immigration agencies, of the Member States. These administrative data are supplied by Member States according to the provisions of Article 6 of the Regulation (EC) 862/2007 of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection.

First residence permit means a residence permit issued to a person for the first time. A residence permit is considered as a first permit also if the time gap between the expiry of the previous permit and the start of validity of the new permit is at least 6 months.

Residence permit means any authorisation valid for at least 3 months issued by the authorities of a Member State allowing a non-EU citizen to stay legally on its territory. When national laws and administrative practices of a Member State allow for specific categories of long-term visa or immigration status to be granted instead of residence permits, such visas and grants of statuses are also included in these statistics.

Statistics on first residence permits presented in this report refer to non-EU citizens only and include persons subject to an authorisation to stay with a validity of at least 3 months and consequently these statistics are different than statistics on migration to the reporting countries (according to migration statistics a migrant is a person who stays or intends to stay in the country for at least 12 months).

Other reasons include permits issued for residence only (e.g. pensioners with sufficient financial means), international protection status (including refugee status and subsidiary protection), humanitarian reasons, permits issued to non-asylum related unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking in human beings and other reasons not specified (e.g. beneficiaries of national regularisation programmes).

Country note: United Kingdom

The statistics for the United Kingdom use different data sources to those used in other Member States. For that reason, statistics for the UK presented in this News Release may not be fully comparable with other statistics presented here. Statistics for the United Kingdom are not based on records of residence permits issued (as the United Kingdom does not operate a system of residence permits), but instead relate to the numbers of arriving non-EU citizens permitted to enter the country under selected immigration categories. According to the United Kingdom authorities, data are estimated from a combination of information due to be published in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin 'Control of Immigration: Statistics, United Kingdom' and unpublished management information. The 'Other reasons' category includes: diplomat, consular officer treated as exempt from control; retired persons of independent means; all other passengers given limited leave to enter who are not included in any other category; non-asylum discretionary permissions.

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) dedicated to statistics on managed migration

Eurostat [database](#) on managed migration

Eurostat [metadata](#) on residence permits statistics

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on residence permits statistics

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