

166/2018 - 25 October 2018

Residence permits for non-EU citizens

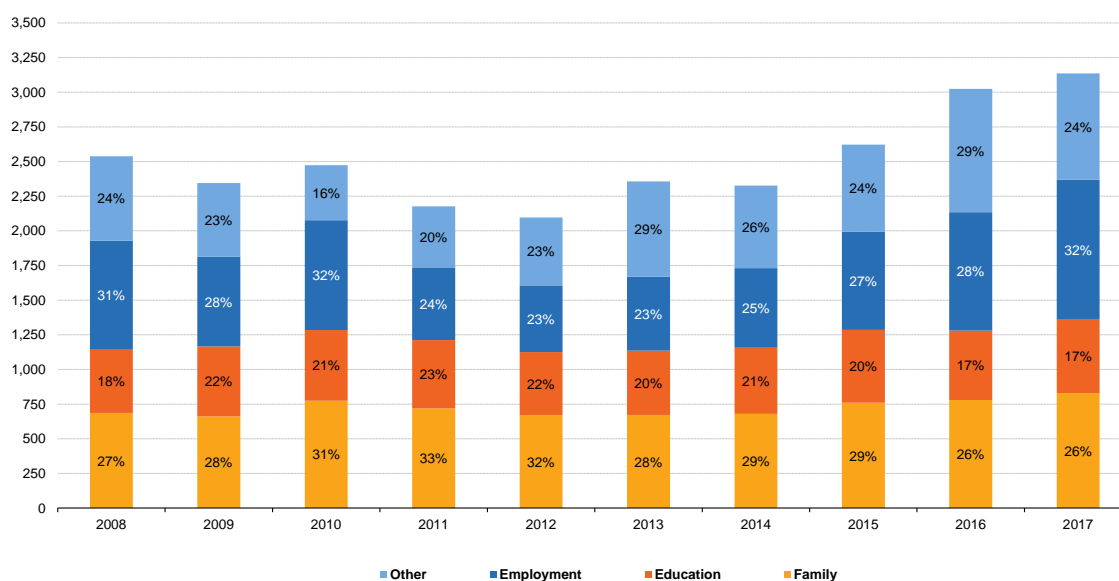
First residence permits issued in the EU Member States remain above 3 million in 2017

Main beneficiaries from Ukraine and Syria

In 2017, about 3.1 million first residence permits were issued in the **European Union** (EU) to non-EU citizens. The number increased almost by 4% (or 112 000) compared with 2016. Employment reasons accounted for almost one-third (32%) of all first residence permits issued in the **EU** in 2017, family reasons for 26%, education reasons for 17%, and other reasons, including international protection, for 24%.

The increase in the total number of first residence permits in 2017 in comparison with 2016 was mainly due to the increasing number of first permits issued for employment reasons (up by 155 000, or 18%), family reasons (up by 49 000, or 6%) and education reasons (up by 30 000, or 6%), whereas the number of first permits issued for other reasons decreased by 123 000 (-14%).

First residence permits issued in the EU by reason, 2008-2017 (1 000 persons)



EU aggregate excluding Luxembourg for 2008 and Croatia for the years 2008-2012. The source dataset can be found [here](#).

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

In 2017, one out of five first residence permits was issued in **Poland** (683 000, or 22% of total permits issued in the EU), followed by **Germany** (535 000, or 17%), the **United Kingdom** (517 000, or 16%), **France** (250 000, or 8%), **Spain** (231 000, or 7%), **Italy** (187 000, or 6%) and **Sweden** (130 000, or 4%). Compared to the population of each Member State, the highest rates of first resident permits issued in 2017 were recorded in **Malta** (23 permits issued per thousand population), **Cyprus** (22), **Poland** (18), **Sweden** (13) and **Luxembourg** (12). For the **EU** as a whole in 2017, 6 first residence permits were issued per thousand population.

First residence permits issued in the EU by reason, 2017

	Total		Of which:							
			Family reasons		Education reasons		Employment reasons		Other reasons	
	#	per 1000 population*	#	share %	#	share %	#	share %	#	share %
EU	3 136 141	6.1	829 922	26.5	529 994	16.9	1 009 427	32.2	766 798	24.5
Belgium	56 246	4.9	28 653	50.9	6 896	12.3	5 948	10.6	14 749	26.2
Bulgaria	10 958	1.5	3 615	33.0	1 267	11.6	1 822	16.6	4 254	38.8
Czechia	57 721	5.4	15 448	26.8	11 076	19.2	23 327	40.4	7 870	13.6
Denmark	37 123	6.4	12 601	33.9	10 681	28.8	10 347	27.9	3 494	9.4
Germany	535 446	6.5	156 973	29.3	48 637	9.1	52 915	9.9	276 921	51.7
Estonia	4 380	3.3	1 270	29.0	1 193	27.2	1 531	35.0	386	8.8
Ireland	47 901	10.0	3 058	6.4	27 588	57.6	9 398	19.6	7 857	16.4
Greece	29 995	2.8	13 798	46.0	850	2.8	2 022	6.7	13 325	44.4
Spain	231 153	5.0	125 637	54.4	39 664	17.2	42 672	18.5	23 180	10.0
France	250 175	3.7	92 759	37.1	78 758	31.5	27 556	11.0	51 102	20.4
Croatia	9 733	2.4	1 694	17.4	591	6.1	6 987	71.8	461	4.7
Italy	186 786	3.1	112 607	60.3	17 963	9.6	8 409	4.5	47 807	25.6
Cyprus	18 971	22.1	2 741	14.4	4 923	26.0	8 204	43.2	3 103	16.4
Latvia	6 647	3.4	2 062	31.0	1 603	24.1	2 158	32.5	824	12.4
Lithuania	10 207	3.6	1 001	9.8	994	9.7	7 572	74.2	640	6.3
Luxembourg	7 207	12.1	3 277	45.5	579	8.0	1 783	24.7	1 568	21.8
Hungary	32 229	3.3	3 788	11.8	10 852	33.7	13 210	41.0	4 379	13.6
Malta	10 974	23.4	1 584	14.4	1 527	13.9	5 997	54.6	1 866	17.0
Netherlands	97 395	5.7	30 968	31.8	17 239	17.7	17 744	18.2	31 444	32.3
Austria	55 968	6.4	13 857	24.8	4 591	8.2	2 938	5.2	34 582	61.8
Poland	683 228	18.0	3 517	0.5	34 709	5.1	596 916	87.4	48 086	7.0
Portugal	37 242	3.6	17 126	46.0	4 764	12.8	8 327	22.4	7 025	18.9
Romania	13 264	0.7	3 578	27.0	4 448	33.5	2 952	22.3	2 286	17.2
Slovenia	19 609	9.5	5 417	27.6	1 784	9.1	12 194	62.2	214	1.1
Slovakia	13 688	2.5	2 631	19.2	1 989	14.5	7 421	54.2	1 647	12.0
Finland	25 141	4.6	8 762	34.9	5 094	20.3	6 221	24.7	5 064	20.1
Sweden	129 754	12.9	60 358	46.5	10 101	7.8	18 644	14.4	40 651	31.3
United Kingdom	517 000	7.8	101 142	19.6	179 633	34.7	104 212	20.2	132 013	25.5
Iceland	1 598	4.7	493	30.9	464	29.0	393	24.6	248	15.5
Liechtenstein	793	20.9	539	68.0	45	5.7	104	13.1	105	13.2
Norway	30 713	5.8	14 242	46.4	4 236	13.8	7 784	25.3	4 451	14.5
Switzerland	42 179	5.0	19 013	45.1	10 625	25.2	10 033	23.8	2 508	5.9

* Refers to the average resident population 2017.
The source dataset can be found [here](#).

For employment in Poland, for education in the United Kingdom

Poland (597 000 permits, or 59% of all permits issued for employment reasons in the EU in 2017) was the top country for employment related permits. The **United Kingdom** (180 000 permits, or 34%) was the top country in the EU for education related reasons. With over 100 000 permits each, **Germany** (157 000, or 19%), **Spain** (126 000, or 15%), **Italy** (113 000, or 14%) and the **United Kingdom** (101 000, or 12%) were the four Member States with the highest number of permits issued for family reasons in 2017. **Germany** was also the top country in the EU for other reasons with 277 000 permits (36%), issued in 2017, of which the majority were for refugee status and subsidiary protection (248 000) and protection for humanitarian reasons (21 000).

Employment reasons tend to prevail across individual Member States

In 2017, in eleven Member States, the largest numbers of permits were issued for employment reasons, with the highest shares observed in **Poland** (87% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Lithuania** (74%), **Croatia** (72%) and **Slovenia** (62%). In ten Member States, the main reason for issuing residence permits was family related, with the highest shares being recorded in **Italy** (60% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Spain** (54%) and **Belgium** (51%). Education was the main reason in **Ireland** (58% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), the **United Kingdom** (35%) and **Romania** (34%). Other reasons were predominant in four Member States: **Austria** (62% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Germany** (52%), **Bulgaria** (39%) and the **Netherlands** (32%).

Half of residence permits granted to seven citizenships

In 2017, citizens of **Ukraine** (662 000 beneficiaries, of which almost 88% in Poland) continued to receive the highest number of permits in the EU, ahead of citizens of **Syria** (223 000, of which almost two-thirds in Germany), **China** including Hong Kong (193 000, of which almost half in the United Kingdom), **India** (163 000, of which 44% in the United Kingdom) and the **United States** (147 000, of which over half in the United Kingdom), **Morocco** (108 000, of which 41% in Spain) and **Afghanistan** (87 000, of which around 61% in Germany). About half of all first residence permits issued in the **EU** in 2017 were issued to citizens of these seven countries.

First residence permits issued in the EU by citizenship, 2017

	Total #	Main citizenships of first residence permits beneficiaries								
		First	#	%	Second	#	%	Third	#	%
EU	3 136 141	Ukraine	661 874	21.1	Syria	223 170	7.1	China*	193 002	5.2
Belgium	56 246	Syria	6 172	11.0	Morocco	5 203	9.3	India	3 436	6.1
Bulgaria	10 958	Turkey	4 060	37.1	Russia	2 137	19.5	Ukraine	1 115	10.2
Czechia	57 721	Ukraine	18 877	32.7	Russia	6 852	11.9	Vietnam	5 195	9.0
Denmark	37 123	United States	4 359	11.7	India	4 125	11.1	Ukraine	3 156	8.5
Germany	535 446	Syria	140 325	26.2	Afghanistan	52 824	9.9	Iraq	46 750	8.7
Estonia	4 380	Ukraine	1 336	30.5	Russia	881	20.1	R.N.C**	178	4.1
Ireland	47 901	Brazil	11 901	24.8	United States	5 903	12.3	India	5 877	12.3
Greece	29 995	Albania	16 468	54.9	China*	1 851	6.2	Georgia	1 707	5.7
Spain	231 153	Morocco	44 644	19.3	Colombia	14 658	6.3	China*	14 185	6.1
France	250 175	Algeria	30 877	12.3	Morocco	29 266	11.7	Tunisia	16 088	6.4
Croatia	9 733	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5 526	56.8	Serbia	1 031	10.6	Ukraine	463	4.8
Italy	186 786	Albania	19 565	10.5	Morocco	17 657	9.5	China*	11 469	6.1
Cyprus	18 971	India	4 710	24.8	Russia	2 883	15.2	Nepal	1 406	7.4
Latvia	6 647	Russia	1 625	24.4	Ukraine	1 528	23.0	India	809	12.2
Lithuania	10 207	Ukraine	4 725	46.3	Belarus	2 874	28.2	Russia	720	7.1
Luxembourg	7 207	Syria	657	9.1	India	656	9.1	United States	597	8.3
Hungary	32 229	Ukraine	7 808	24.2	China*	2 879	8.9	Serbia	2 409	7.5
Malta	10 974	Serbia	2 033	18.5	Philippines	1 180	10.8	India	784	7.1
Netherlands	97 395	Syria	17 022	17.5	India	10 129	10.4	China*	7 272	7.5
Austria	55 968	Syria	13 058	23.3	Afghanistan	7 688	13.7	Serbia	4 426	7.9
Poland	683 228	Ukraine	585 439	85.7	Belarus	42 756	6.3	Moldova	7 803	1.1
Portugal	37 242	Brazil	13 101	35.2	China*	3 275	8.8	Cape Verde	2 209	5.9
Romania	13 264	Moldova	2 204	16.6	Turkey	1 466	11.1	China*	994	7.5
Slovenia	19 609	Bosnia and Herzegovina	10 414	53.1	Serbia	3 259	16.6	Kosovo***	2 016	10.3
Slovakia	13 688	Ukraine	4 268	31.2	Serbia	4 140	30.2	Vietnam	1 114	8.1
Finland	25 141	Iraq	2 587	10.3	Russia	2 374	9.4	Syria	2 103	8.4
Sweden	129 754	Syria	22 103	17.0	Afghanistan	12 546	9.7	India	9 720	7.5
United Kingdom	517 000	China*	96 079	18.6	United States	75 551	14.6	India	72 235	14.0
Iceland	1 598	United States	296	18.5	Philippines	185	11.6	Syria	77	4.8
Liechtenstein	793	Switzerland	442	55.7	Brazil	34	4.3	Ukraine	33	4.2
Norway	30 713	Syria	4 635	15.1	India	2 490	8.1	Eritrea	2 277	7.4
Switzerland	42 179	United States	4 687	11.1	India	4 418	10.5	China*	3 125	7.4

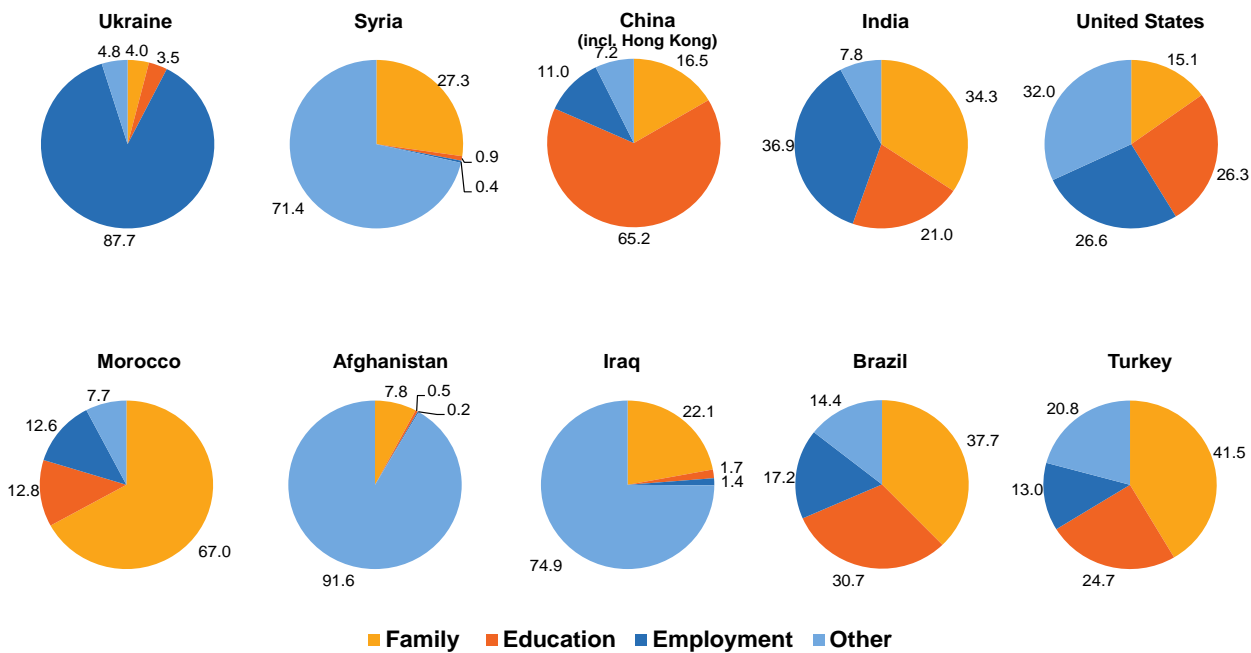
* China including Hong Kong.

** 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.

*** Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

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

Top 10 citizenships granted first residence permits in the EU by reason (%), 2017



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

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 2017, **Ukrainians** benefited from residence permits mainly for employment reasons (88% of the first residence permits issued to Ukrainians in 2017), **Chinese** for education (65%), while **Moroccans** (67%) benefited from residence permits issued mainly for family reasons. Other reasons (and specifically refugee status, subsidiary protection and humanitarian status reasons) were predominant among **Afghans** (92%), **Iraqis** (75%) and **Syrians** (71%).

Main citizenships of persons granted first residence permits in the EU by reason, 2017

	Total	Of which:							
		Family reasons		Education reasons		Employment reasons		Other reasons	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
TOTAL	3 136 141	829 922	26.5	529 994	16.9	1 009 427	32.2	766 798	24.5
Ukraine	661 874	26 296	4.0	23 134	3.5	580 499	87.7	31 945	4.8
Syria	223 170	60 877	27.3	1 952	0.9	897	0.4	159 444	71.4
China (incl. Hong Kong)	193 002	31 854	16.5	125 835	65.2	21 321	11.0	13 992	7.2
India	163 074	56 011	34.3	34 226	21.0	60 172	36.9	12 665	7.8
United States	147 317	22 235	15.1	38 751	26.3	39 187	26.6	47 144	32.0
Morocco	107 757	72 157	67.0	13 782	12.8	13 573	12.6	8 245	7.7
Afghanistan	87 132	6 753	7.8	404	0.5	186	0.2	79 789	91.6
Iraq	70 618	15 598	22.1	1 173	1.7	964	1.4	52 883	74.9
Brazil	67 596	25 504	37.7	20 732	30.7	11 643	17.2	9 717	14.4
Turkey	66 888	27 770	41.5	16 490	24.7	8 714	13.0	13 914	20.8

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

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

Geographical information

The **European Union (EU)** includes Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, 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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