

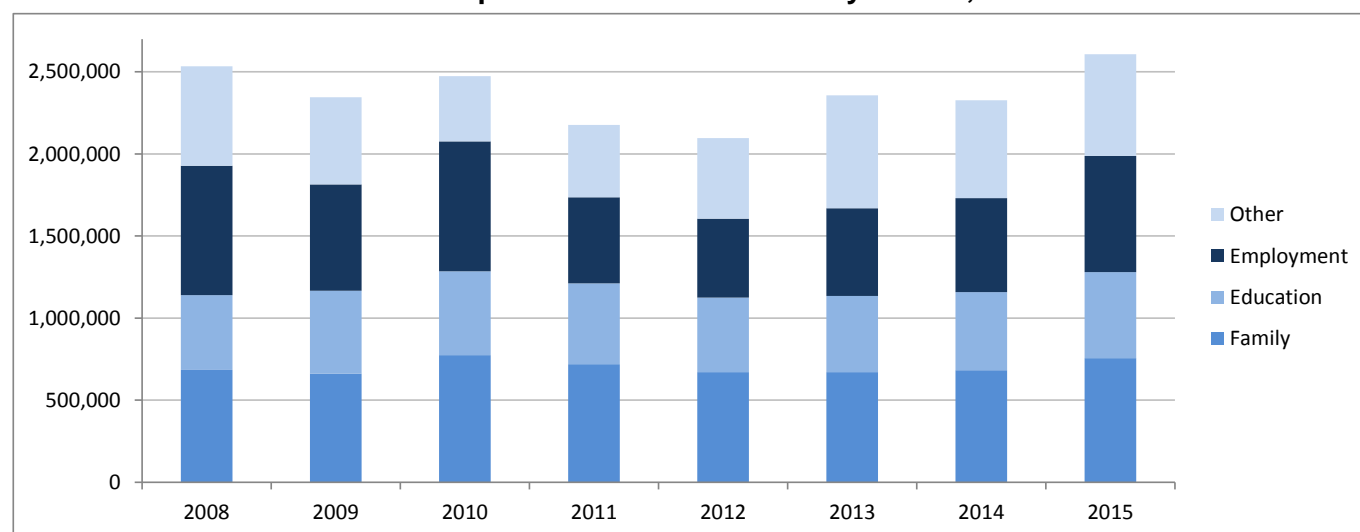
## Residence permits for non-EU citizens

# EU Member States issued a record number of 2.6 million first residence permits in 2015

## Main beneficiaries from Ukraine and the United States

In 2015, 2.6 million first residence permits were issued in the **European Union** (EU) to non-EU citizens, a record number since the data collection began (2008) and up by 12.1% compared with 2014. This increase was mainly due to the higher number of first permits issued for employment reasons (+23.5%, from slightly less than 0.6 million in 2014 to more than 0.7 million last year). Accounting for 28.9% of all first residence permits issued in the **EU** in 2015, family remained the main reason of deliverance, followed by employment (27.2%), other reasons (23.8%) and education (20.2%).

**First residence permits issued in the EU by reason, 2008-2015**



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

These administrative data on residence permits in the **EU** are published in a [report](#) issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

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

In 2015, one out of four first residence permits was issued in the **United Kingdom** (633 000 residence permits issued, or 24.3% of total permits issued in the EU) and one in five in **Poland** (541 600, or 20.8%). They were followed by **France** (226 600, or 8.7%), **Germany** (194 800, or 7.5%), **Spain** (192 900, or 7.4%) and **Italy** (178 900, or 6.9%).

Compared with the population of each Member State, the highest rates of first resident permits issued in 2015 were recorded in **Malta** (23.1 first residence permits issued per thousand population), **Cyprus** (18.4), **Poland** (14.3) **Sweden** (11.3) and the **United Kingdom** (9.7). In 2015, 5.1 first residence permits were issued per thousand population in the **EU**.

## First residence permits issued in the EU by reason, 2015

	Total		Of which:							
			Family reasons		Education reasons		Employment reasons		Other reasons	
	#	per 1000 average population	#	Share	#	Share	#	Share	#	Share
<b>EU</b>	<b>2 605 629</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>753 377</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>525 635</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>707 598</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>619 019</b>	<b>23.8%</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	50 085	4.5	26 206	52.3%	6 345	12.7%	4 948	9.9%	12 586	25.1%
<b>Bulgaria</b>	9 595	1.3	2 906	30.3%	874	9.1%	2 261	23.6%	3 554	37.0%
<b>Czech Republic</b>	68 804	6.5	21 265	30.9%	13 658	19.9%	19 931	29.0%	13 950	20.3%
<b>Denmark</b>	46 153	8.1	15 961	34.6%	9 248	20.0%	9 706	21.0%	11 238	24.3%
<b>Germany</b>	194 813	2.4	133 893	68.7%	16 683	8.6%	13 451	6.9%	30 786	15.8%
<b>Estonia</b>	3 984	3.0	1 351	33.9%	986	24.7%	1 279	32.1%	368	9.2%
<b>Ireland</b>	38 433	8.3	3 444	9.0%	22 075	57.4%	6 073	15.8%	6 841	17.8%
<b>Greece</b>	37 464	3.5	19 175	51.2%	871	2.3%	1 111	3.0%	16 307	43.5%
<b>Spain</b>	192 931	4.2	102 454	53.1%	33 096	17.2%	41 566	21.5%	15 815	8.2%
<b>France</b>	226 630	3.4	92 458	40.8%	70 027	30.9%	20 969	9.3%	43 176	19.1%
<b>Croatia</b>	3 433	0.8	1 852	53.9%	387	11.3%	790	23.0%	404	11.8%
<b>Italy</b>	178 884	2.9	109 328	61.1%	22 870	12.8%	17 370	9.7%	29 316	16.4%
<b>Cyprus</b>	15 569	18.4	2 580	16.6%	2 226	14.3%	7 337	47.1%	3 426	22.0%
<b>Latvia</b>	6 357	3.2	2 553	40.2%	1 117	17.6%	1 639	25.8%	1 048	16.5%
<b>Lithuania</b>	5 178	1.8	1 273	24.6%	743	14.3%	2 789	53.9%	373	7.2%
<b>Luxembourg</b>	4 918	8.6	2 806	57.1%	442	9.0%	1 257	25.6%	413	8.4%
<b>Hungary</b>	20 751	2.1	5 715	27.5%	5 876	28.3%	4 209	20.3%	4 951	23.9%
<b>Malta</b>	9 984	23.1	2 143	21.5%	2 346	23.5%	2 782	27.9%	2 713	27.2%
<b>Netherlands</b>	72 355	4.3	21 683	30.0%	15 263	21.1%	13 308	18.4%	22 101	30.5%
<b>Austria</b>	51 282	5.9	15 529	30.3%	7 063	13.8%	3 598	7.0%	25 092	48.9%
<b>Poland</b>	541 583	14.3	1 010	0.2%	39 308	7.3%	375 342	69.3%	125 923	23.3%
<b>Portugal</b>	29 021	2.8	12 916	44.5%	3 139	10.8%	6 805	23.4%	6 161	21.2%
<b>Romania</b>	11 289	0.6	3 770	33.4%	4 374	38.7%	1 680	14.9%	1 465	13.0%
<b>Slovenia</b>	11 417	5.5	4 593	40.2%	1 315	11.5%	5 423	47.5%	86	0.8%
<b>Slovakia</b>	9 279	1.7	2 541	27.4%	1 475	15.9%	3 142	33.9%	2 121	22.9%
<b>Finland</b>	21 797	4.0	7 682	35.2%	5 756	26.4%	5 026	23.1%	3 333	15.3%
<b>Sweden</b>	110 623	11.3	46 354	41.9%	8 975	8.1%	15 726	14.2%	39 568	35.8%
<b>United Kingdom</b>	633 017	9.7	89 936	14.2%	229 097	36.2%	118 080	18.7%	195 904	30.9%
<b>Iceland</b>	1 144	3.5	373	32.6%	384	33.6%	219	19.1%	168	14.7%
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	808	21.6	533	66.0%	43	5.3%	104	12.9%	128	15.8%
<b>Norway</b>	30 683	5.9	12 353	40.3%	4 126	13.4%	7 714	25.1%	6 490	21.2%
<b>Switzerland*</b>	41 105	5.0	18 563	45.2%	10 080	24.5%	10 169	24.7%	2 293	5.6%

\* Data for Switzerland on first residence permits by employment reasons come from another source. The source dataset can be found [here](#).

### For employment in Poland, for education in the United Kingdom

**Poland** (375 300 permits, or 53% of all permits issued for employment reasons in the EU in 2015) was by far the first destination for employment related permits, while the **United Kingdom** (229 100 permits, or 44%) was the primary destination in the EU for education related reasons. With over 100 000 permits each, **Germany** (133 900, or 18%), **Italy** (109 300, or 15%) and **Spain** (102 500, or 14%) were the three Member States with the highest number of permits issued for family reasons in 2015. They were closely followed by **France** (92 500, or 12%) and the **United Kingdom** (89 900, or 12%).

### Family reasons prevail across Member States

In fifteen Member States, the largest numbers of permits were issued for family reasons, with the highest shares observed in **Germany** (68.7% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Italy** (61.1%), **Luxembourg** (57.1%), **Croatia** (53.9%), **Spain** (53.1%), **Belgium** (52.3%) and **Greece** (51.2%). Education was the main reason in **Ireland** (57.4% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Romania** (38.7%), the **United Kingdom** (36.2%) and **Hungary** (28.3%). In six Member States, the main reason for issuing residence permits was employment, the highest shares being recorded in **Poland** (69.3% of all residence permits issued in the Member State), **Lithuania** (53.9%), **Slovenia** (47.5%) and **Cyprus** (47.1%).

## Almost a third of residence permits granted to citizens of Ukraine and the United States

In 2015, citizens of **Ukraine** (500 000 beneficiaries, or 19.2% of the total number of first residence permits issued in the EU) continued to receive the highest number of permits, ahead of citizens of the **United States** (261 800, or 10.0%), **China** (167 100, or 6.4%), **India** (135 500, or 5.2%), **Syria** (104 100, or 4.0%) and **Morocco** (96 100, or 3.7%). Around half of all first residence permits issued in the **EU** in 2015 were issued to citizens of these six countries.

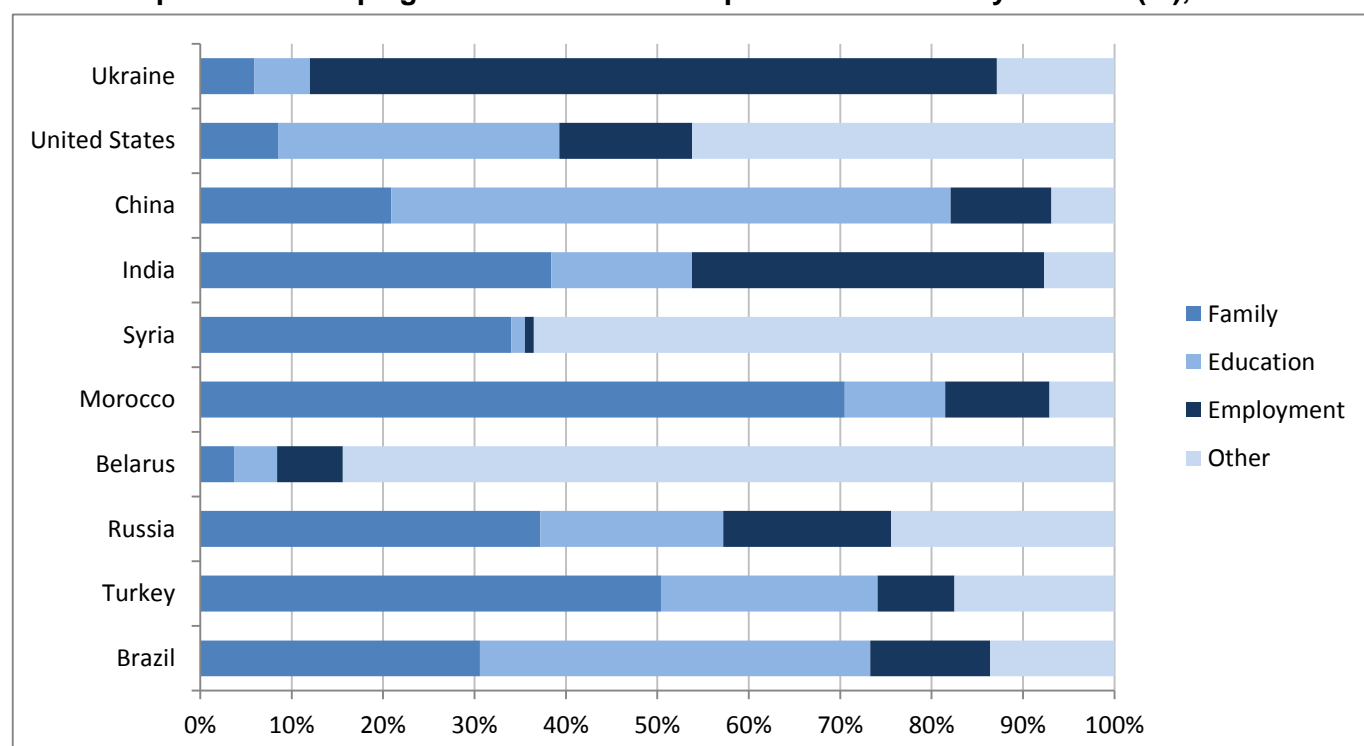
### Main citizenships of persons granted first residence permits in the EU by reasons, 2015

	Total	Of which:							
		Family reasons		Education reasons		Employment reasons		Other reasons	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2 605 629</b>	<b>753 377</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>525 635</b>	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>707 598</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>619 019</b>	<b>23.8%</b>
<b>Ukraine</b>	499 992	29 276	5.9%	30 356	6.1%	376 037	75.2%	64 323	12.9%
<b>United States</b>	261 760	22 292	8.5%	80 643	30.8%	37 861	14.5%	120 964	46.2%
<b>China</b>	167 118	34 938	20.9%	102 223	61.2%	18 396	11.0%	11 561	6.9%
<b>India</b>	135 514	52 001	38.4%	20 931	15.4%	52 188	38.5%	10 394	7.7%
<b>Syria</b>	104 134	35 373	34.0%	1 524	1.5%	1 090	1.0%	66 147	63.5%
<b>Morocco</b>	96 099	67 739	70.5%	10 572	11.0%	10 929	11.4%	6 859	7.1%
<b>Belarus</b>	82 024	2 995	3.7%	3 892	4.7%	5 903	7.2%	69 234	84.4%
<b>Russia</b>	73 528	27 316	37.2%	14 709	20.0%	13 511	18.4%	17 992	24.5%
<b>Turkey</b>	58 131	29 305	50.4%	13 755	23.7%	4 901	8.4%	10 170	17.5%
<b>Brazil</b>	57 027	17 439	30.6%	24 344	42.7%	7 472	13.1%	7 772	13.6%

### 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 2015, **Ukrainians** benefited from residence permits mainly for employment reasons (75.2% of the first residence permits issued to Ukrainians in 2015). **Chinese** (61.2%) and **Brazilians** (42.7%) were given residence permits mainly for education reasons, while **Moroccans** (70.5%) benefited from residence permits issued mainly for family reasons, as did **Turks** (50.4%).

### Top 10 citizenships granted first residence permits in the EU by reasons (%), 2015



## Ukrainians received permits mainly in Poland, US and Chinese citizens in the United Kingdom

Certain citizenships were granted residence permits predominantly by particular Member States. Of the half million **Ukrainians** granted residence permits in the **EU** in 2015, 86% were recorded in **Poland** (430 100). Of the 261 800 **US citizens** granted residence permits, more than three-quarters (77%) were registered in the **United Kingdom**, as were almost half (48%) of the 167 100 **Chinese**.

### First residence permits issued in the EU by citizenship, 2015

	Total #	Citizenships of main groups of residence permits beneficiaries								
		First group	#	%	Second group	#	%	Third group	#	%
<b>EU</b>	<b>2 605 629</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>	<b>499 992</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>261 760</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>China</b>	<b>167 118</b>	<b>6.4</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	50 085	Morocco	5 723	11.4	Syria	4 001	8.0	India	2 805	5.6
<b>Bulgaria</b>	9 595	Russia	2 782	29.0	Turkey	2 558	26.7	Ukraine	1 488	15.5
<b>Czech Republic</b>	68 804	Ukraine	23 207	33.7	Russia	11 289	16.4	Vietnam	7 543	11.0
<b>Denmark</b>	46 153	Syria	12 711	27.5	United States	4 157	9.0	India	3 785	8.2
<b>Germany</b>	194 813	Syria	26 383	13.5	Turkey	18 599	9.5	India	9 597	4.9
<b>Estonia</b>	3 984	Ukraine	1 447	36.3	Russia	970	24.3	R.N.C**	214	5.4
<b>Ireland</b>	38 433	Brazil	10 955	28.5	India	2 883	7.5	United States	2 690	7.0
<b>Greece</b>	37 464	Albania	26 342	70.3	Russia	1 175	3.1	Georgia	1 147	3.1
<b>Spain</b>	192 931	Morocco	37 184	19.3	China	12 581	6.5	Colombia	9 582	5.0
<b>France</b>	226 630	Algeria	27 491	12.1	Morocco	26 544	11.7	China	15 005	6.6
<b>Croatia</b>	3 433	Bosnia and Herzegovina	866	25.2	Serbia	446	13.0	United States	251	7.3
<b>Italy</b>	178 884	Morocco	16 948	9.5	Albania	16 477	9.2	China	14 722	8.2
<b>Cyprus</b>	15 569	Russia	2 069	13.3	Syria	1 911	12.3	Philippines	1 565	10.1
<b>Latvia</b>	6 357	Russia	2 084	32.8	Ukraine	1 591	25.0	Belarus	451	7.1
<b>Lithuania</b>	5 178	Ukraine	1 908	36.8	Russia	1 108	21.4	Belarus	768	14.8
<b>Luxembourg</b>	4 918	United States	598	12.2	China	525	10.7	India	355	7.2
<b>Hungary</b>	20 751	China	4 286	20.7	Ukraine	1 686	8.1	United States	1 679	8.1
<b>Malta</b>	9 984	Libya	2 147	21.5	Serbia	920	9.2	Russia	902	9.0
<b>Netherlands</b>	72 355	Syria	8 766	12.1	India	6 942	9.6	China	6 193	8.6
<b>Austria</b>	51 282	Syria	8 424	16.4	Serbia	5 288	10.3	Bosnia and Herzegovina	4 520	8.8
<b>Poland</b>	541 583	Ukraine	430 081	79.4	Belarus	75 394	13.9	Moldova	7 987	1.5
<b>Portugal</b>	29 021	Brazil	8 232	28.4	China	3 459	11.9	Cape Verde	2 394	8.2
<b>Romania</b>	11 289	Moldova	1 847	16.4	Turkey	1 173	10.4	China	851	7.5
<b>Slovenia</b>	11 417	Bosnia and Herzegovina	4 861	42.6	Serbia	1 874	16.4	Kosovo***	1 612	14.1
<b>Slovakia</b>	9 279	Ukraine	3 340	36.0	Serbia	1 394	15.0	Syria	899	9.7
<b>Finland</b>	21 797	Russia	3 126	14.3	China	1 737	8.0	India	1 586	7.3
<b>Sweden</b>	110 623	Syria	29 316	26.5	Eritrea	8 299	7.5	Thailand	6 594	6.0
<b>United Kingdom</b>	633 017	United States	201 040	31.8	China	80 724	12.8	India	71 651	11.3
<b>Iceland</b>	1 144	United States	235	20.5	Philippines	96	8.4	Vietnam	75	6.6
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	808	Switzerland	448	55.4	Turkey	34	4.2	Brazil	28	3.5
<b>Norway</b>	30 683	Eritrea	3 496	11.4	Philippines	2 488	8.1	India	2 266	7.4
<b>Switzerland</b>	41 105	United States	4 758	11.6	India	4 015	9.8	China	3 072	7.5

\* Data for Switzerland include information from another source on employment reasons.

\*\* 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.

## 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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