Migrant integration statistics introduced

Statistics Explained

This article provides an introduction to the European Union (EU) statistics on the integration of migrants . Successful integration of migrants into society in the host country is the key to maximising the opportunities of legal migration and making the most of the contributions that immigration can make to EU development.

Migrants' integration is measured in terms of employment, education, health, social inclusion and active citizenship in the hosting country. A detailed analysis of integration indicators can be found in a series of specific articles .

Migrant integration in the EU

The continued development and integration of the European migration policy remains a key priority in order to meet the challenges and harness the opportunities that migration represents globally. The integration of third-country nationals legally living in the EU Member States has gained increasing importance in the European agenda in recent years.

The origins of the integration of the European migration policy can be traced back to the Tampere Programme (1999) focusing, among other issues, on the closely related topic of asylum and migration.

The importance of integration of third-country nationals legally living in the EU Member States and the establishment of policies for a secure labour environment for the migrants has seen a considerable development in 2000 when the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) and the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC) were adopted in order to prohibit discrimination in employment, occupation, social protection education and access to public goods on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, race and ethnic origin.

The Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy, which were adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council in November in 2004 and reaffirmed in 2014, form the foundations for EU policy cooperation on integration and for the member countries to assess their own efforts. The Common Basic Principles include the main aspects of the integration process, including employment, education, access to institutions, goods and services, and to society in general. Most importantly, the Common Basic Principles define integration as a two-way process of mutual accommodation by all migrants and by residents of the EU Member States.

In addition, in 2005 the European Commission adopted the Communication A common agenda for integration — Framework for the integration of third-country nationals in the European Union (COM(2005) 389 final) with the aim of providing its first response to the European Council's request of establishing a coherent European framework for integration. The cornerstones of the framework are proposals for concrete measures with a view of putting in place the 'Common basic principles' through a series of supportive EU mechanisms.

Furthermore, the Commission Communication of 3 March 2010 entitled Europe 2020, a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth emphasised the need for establishing a new agenda for migrant integration in order to enable them to take full advantage of their potential.

In July 2011, the Commission proposed a European agenda for the integration of third-country nationals , focusing on actions to increase economic, social, cultural and political participation by migrants and emphasising local action. This new agenda highlights challenges that need to be addressed if the EU is willing to fully benefit from the

potential offered by migration and the value of diversity. It also explores the role of countries of origin in the integration process. A Commission Staff Working Paper (SEC(2011)957) is annexed to the Communication and contains a list of EU initiatives supporting the integration of third-country nationals.

On 7 June 2016 the European Commission adopted an Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals . The Action Plan provides a comprehensive framework to support Member States' efforts in developing and strengthening their integration policies, and describes the concrete measures the Commission will implement in this regard. While it targets all third-country nationals in the EU, it contains actions to address the specific challenges faced by refugees .

The Plan includes actions across all the policy areas that are crucial for integration:

- Pre-departure and pre-arrival measures, including actions to prepare migrants and the local communities for the integration process;

- Education, including actions to promote language training, participation of migrant children to Early Childhood Education and Care, teacher training and civic education;

- Employment and vocational training, including actions to promote early integration into the labour market and migrants entrepreneurship;

- Access to basic services such as housing and healthcare;

- Active participation and social inclusion, including actions to support exchanges with the receiving society, migrants' participation to cultural life and fighting discrimination.

It also presents tools to strengthen coordination between the different players working on integration at national, regional and local level - for example through the European Integration Network promoting mutual learning between Member States — and a more strategic approach on EU funding for integration.

In November 2020, an *Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027* (COM(2016) 377 final) was adopted. It seeks to detail targeted and tailored support to reflect the individual characteristics that may present specific challenges to people with a migrant background, such as gender or religious background.

In April 2024, the European Parliament adopted the Pact on Migration and Asylum, followed by the Council in May 2024. The pact on migration and asylum , sets out a fairer, more European approach to managing migration and asylum. It aims to put in place a comprehensive and sustainable policy, providing a humane and effective long-term response to the current challenges of irregular migration, developing legal migration pathways, better integrating refugees and other newcomers, and deepening migration partnerships with countries of origin and transit for mutual benefit.

Legislative background

There is a strong link between integration and migration policies since successful integration is necessary for maximising the economic and social benefits of immigration for individuals as well as societies. EU legislation provides a common legal framework regarding the conditions of entry and stay and a common set of rights for certain categories of migrants:

- Directive 2016/801/EU on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing;

- Directive 2014/36/EU on the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals for the purpose of employment as seasonal workers;

- Directive 2014/66/EU on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer;

- Directive 2011/98/EU on a single application procedure for a single permit to reside and work in the EU and on a common set of rights for third-country workers;

- Directive 2009/50/EC concerning the admission of highly skilled migrants;

- Directive 2005/71/EC for the facilitation of the admission of researchers into the EU;

- Directive 2004/114/EC on the admission of students;

- Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification;

- Directive 2003/109/EC on a long-term resident status for non-member nationals.

Measuring migrant integration

The Stockholm Programme for the period 2010–14 (2009) embraced the development of core indicators for monitoring the results of integration policies in a limited number of relevant policy areas (e.g. employment, education and social inclusion).

The Zaragoza declaration adopted in 2010 by the European Ministerial Conference on Integration in Zaragoza identified a number of policy areas relevant to migrant integration and agreed on a set of common indicators for monitoring the situation of immigrants and the outcome of integration policies.

In 2011, the European Commission in the pilot study Indicators of immigrant integration examined proposals for common integration indicators and reported on the availability and quality of the data from agreed harmonised sources necessary for the calculation of these indicators. The following report Migrants in Europe - A statistical portrait of the first and second generation provided a statistical analysis of a broad range of characteristics of migrants living in the European Union and EFTA countries.

The proposals in the pilot study were further developed and elaborated in a project which delivered the report Using EU indicators of immigrant integration published in 2013, with the objective of boosting the monitoring and assessment of the situation of migrants, along with the relative outcomes of integration policies. Following this guidance, Eurostat progressively worked on identifying and publishing additional indicators in these areas based on available statistics. Thus, this article presents not only the core Zaragoza indicators, but also new indicators as proposed by the report.

In July 2015, the European Commission, jointly with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), released the report indicators of immigrant integration Settling In — 2015 . While in the thematic chapters of that publication the analysis was focused on the foreign-born population, there was a specific chapter dealing with the situation of non-EU citizens in the EU, aimed specifically at monitoring the Zaragoza indicators. The second edition of Settling In was released in December 2018. The analysis of migrant integration can be carried out both through the core Zaragoza indicators and a set of supplementary indicators:

Employment

The employment of migrants is measured through a series of Zaragoza indicators which are:

- unemployment rate;

- employment rate;

- activity rate .

Additional employment-related indicators — a subset of the new indicators proposed in the report 'Using EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration' and by Eurostat — are also used:

- self-employment;

- over-qualification rate;

- temporary employment;

- part-time employment;

- long-term unemployment; .

Statistics on migrant employment are based on the Labour force survey (LFS) and are available at the national and regional level (by NUTS level 2 classification and by degree of urbanization).

A statistical analysis of the employment situation of migrants can be read in the articles: Migrant integration statistics – labour market indicators , Migrant integration statistics - regional labour market indicators , Migrant integration statistics - employment conditions and Migrant integration statistics - over-qualification .

Education

Education, as a measure of migrant integration, is currently evaluated using the following available Zaragoza indicators:

- highest educational attainment ;

- share of 30–34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment ;

- share of early leavers from education and training .

These indicators are based on the core (regular) annual LFS data collection.

Two additional LFS indicators[1] are also currently being used:

- participation in Lifelong learning ;

- not in education, employment or training (NEET).

A detailed look at the issue of migrant education is provided in the article Migrant integration statistics - education .

Social inclusion

As for other topics of migrant integration, the analysis of social inclusion is carried out both through the existing Zaragoza indicators and a set of additional proposed indicators. The Zaragoza indicators are:

- median net income;

- at-risk-of-poverty rate ;

- property ownership.

The additional proposed indicators are:

- persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion ;

- child poverty;

- housing cost overburden ;

- overcrowding ;

- in-work poverty risk;

- persistent poverty risk .

- severe material deprivation rate ;

- material and social deprivation rate;

- people living in households with very low work intensity .

The social inclusion indicators for migrant integration are all based on the EU-SILC survey. A detailed look at the issue of social inclusion of migrants is provided in the article Migrant integration statistics - poverty and social exclusion while a detailed analysis of the housing situation of migrants is presented in the article Migrant integration statistics - housing .

Health

The health situation of migrants has been proposed to be measured via the Zaragoza 'Self-perceived health status' together with a range of new indicators that allow for a better assessment of the situation. They are:

- Self-reported unmet need for medical care ;

- Self-reported unmet needs for dental examination;

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[1] The report 'Using EU indicators of immigrant integration' (2013) also includes other indicators based on the PISA survey which focuses on the 15-year-old student population.

- People having a long-standing illness or health problem ;

- Self-perceived long-standing limitations in usual activities due to health problem;

- Current depressive symptoms;

- Severity of bodily pain;

- Persons reporting a chronic disease;

- Body mass index (BMI) ;

- Performing health-enhancing physical activity;

- Daily consumption of fruit and vegetables;

- Frequency of fruit and vegetables consumption;

- Smoking of tobacco products;

- Frequency of alcohol consumption;

- Overall perceived social support.

The indicators are measured through the EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) survey and European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) .

Active citizenship

Two Zaragoza indicators are dedicated to assessing active citizenship:

- naturalisation rate [2];

- the share of long-term residence.

Data on active citizenship are collected annually by reporting countries from two main datasets that cover the acquisition and loss of citizenship and residence permits. From 2008 both datasets are ruled under Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 .

Recent data on the two indicators mentioned above are presented in the article Migrant integration statistics - active citizenship .

Key concepts

Two different concepts can be used to define migrant population:

- the concept of country of birth (COB);

- the concept of country of citizenship (COC).

Based on these concepts, two broad groups of the migrant population can be defined. The data analyses in the articles on migrant integration are performed either by country of birth or country of citizenship, based on data availability and reliability per case.

According to the concept of country of birth, the population can be divided into the following groups:

- Native-born: the population born in the reporting country;

- Foreign-born: the population born outside the reporting country, of which

    - EU-born: the population born in the EU, except the reporting country;

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[2]The share of foreign citizens that have acquired citizenship is the ratio between the number of residents who acquired citizenship in a country during a calendar year and the total number of resident foreign citizens in that country at the beginning of the year. This indicator is commonly referred to as 'naturalisation rate', even if this terminology may be misleading since the acquisitions considered are all modes of acquisitions in force in each country, and not only naturalisations (residence-based acquisitions requiring an application by the person concerned).

– Non-EU-born: the population born outside the EU.

Foreign population by country of birth is the population most commonly described as migrants, as these persons have migrated to their current country of residence at some stage during their lives. It includes persons with foreign citizenship as well as persons with the citizenship of their country of residence, either from birth or acquired later in life.

According to the concept of country of citizenship, the population can be divided into the following groups:

• Nationals: the citizens of the reporting country;

• Foreign citizens: the non-citizens of the reporting country, of which

– EU citizens: the citizens of the EU Member States, except the reporting country;

– Non-EU citizens: the citizens of non-EU Member States.

Foreign population by country of citizenship are foreign citizens residing in the EU Member States and EFTA countries. As citizens of another country, the members of this group are in a different situation than nationals with regard to their legal rights. This is particularly the case for non-EU citizens (third-country nationals). Persons in this group may have migrated into their country of current residence or may have been born there.

For the purpose of the topical articles the data on migrants are generally presented for the following age categories:

• **15-29** : this group represents the population of young migrants and is targeted by the EU Youth Strategy

• **20–64** : this group has been selected because it is relevant to the first Europe 2020 target (employment of 75 % of this population by 2020);

• **25–54** : this is considered as the most appropriate group for the analysis of the situation of migrants of working age as it minimises the effect of migration for non-economic reasons (e.g. study or retirement) and forms a more homogeneous group, large enough to produce reliable results;

• **55–64** and **55 and more** : these age groups focus on the older migrants.

Data sources

Data used for the indicators on migrant integration come mainly from the EU labour force survey (EU-LFS) and the EU statistics on income and living conditions survey (EU-SILC), and are complemented by the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) and administrative data sources.

As regards the dimensions of employment and education, the data are based on the results of the EU-LFS. The EU-SILC covers topics relevant to social inclusion (people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, income distribution and monetary poverty, living conditions and material deprivation), to health care and also provides data on the health status of the foreign population, in the form of 'self-perceived health status'. The European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) provides the data on the health status and health determinants.

EU migration statistics are collected on an annual basis and are supplied to Eurostat by the national statistical authorities of the EU Member States. Since 2008 the collection of data has been based on Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 . Together with the Commission implementing Regulation (EU) No 351/2010 , they define a core set of statistics on international migration flows, population stocks of foreigners, the acquisition of citizenship, residence permits, asylum and measures against illegal entry and stay. Most EU Member States base their statistics on administrative data sources such as population registers, registers of foreigners, registers of residence or work permits.

The EU labour force survey (EU-LFS)

The EU labour force survey (EU-LFS) is a large quarterly sample survey that covers the resident population aged 15 and above living in private households. It provides detailed quarterly data on employment and unemployment, broken down along many dimensions, including age, gender and educational attainment.

EU-LFS ad hoc modules on the labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants

In addition to the core variables, the EU-LFS also has ad hoc modules (AHMs) . These are a supplementary set of variables, added to the core, on a clearly defined labour market relevant topic. Topics are chosen in cooperation between the national statistics institutes, various policy directorate generals of the European Commission and Eurostat, on the basis of policy and analysis needs. The topic "The labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants" has now been covered three times in the EU-LFS ad hoc modules in 2008, 2014 and in 2021.

EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC)

The EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) survey is the main source for the compilation of statistics on income, social inclusion and living conditions. It provides comparable micro data on income, poverty, social exclusion, housing, labour, education and health. It provides two types of annual data: cross-sectional data pertaining to a given time or a certain time period with variables on income, poverty, social exclusion and other living conditions and longitudinal data pertaining to individual-level changes over time, observed periodically over a four-year period.

European Health Interview Survey (EHIS)

The European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) aims to measure the health status (including disability), health determinants (including environment) and use and limitations in access to health care services of the EU citizens on a harmonised basis and with a high degree of comparability among Member States. The EHIS data are provided every five years. **Coverage**

The production of migrant integration indicators is generally based on sample surveys or on population registers/registers of resident foreign citizens. The combined usage of LFS, SILC and EHIS data to derive migrant integration indicators is possible due to their high harmonisation. Also, the two surveys are designed in such a way that the data comparability among Member States is optimised. However, for both types of data sources (administrative and survey data) there are certain limitations.

With regard to survey data, limitations arise with respect to the coverage of migrant populations. By design, the LFS, SILC and EHIS target the whole resident population and not specifically the migrants.

Coverage issues of survey data arise in the following cases:

- Recently arrived migrants

This group of migrants is missing from the sampling frame in every hosting country, resulting in under-coverage of the actual migrant population in the LFS, SILC and EHIS.

- Collective households

The surveys only cover private households. Persons living in collective households and in institutions for asylum seekers and migrant workers are excluded from the target population. This also results in under-coverage of migrants in the survey.

- Non-response of migrant population

A significant disadvantage of the surveys is the fact that a high percentage of the migrant population does not respond to them. This may be due to language difficulties, misunderstanding of the purpose of each survey, arduousness in communicating with the interviewer, and fear on behalf of migrants of a possible negative impact on their authorisation to remain in the country after participating in the surveys.

- Sample size

Given the nature of the LFS, SILC and EHIS as sample surveys, these cannot fully capture the characteristics of migrants in EU Member States with very low migrant populations.

- Information on country of citizenship and country of birth

This information is asked from all persons aged 15 or older in private households sampled in the LFS and EHIS and in the EU-SILC for those aged 16 and over. This results in an under-estimation of the number of migrants by country of citizenship and country of birth.

With regard to administrative data, one main problem refers to the comparability of the data used to estimate migrant integration indicators. The administrative data sources are not harmonised and there are also variations in

methods and definitions. For example, some countries produce estimates for the migrant population to account for non-response, while others leave this problem untreated. Coverage gaps are reported by certain EU Member States with regard to some types of excluded international migrants (e.g. asylum seekers). In other cases, there are significant numbers of departed migrants uncovered by the registration systems.

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Footnotes

Explore further

Other articles

- All articles on migration and asylum
- Migrant integration statistics - facts and figures - online publication

Database

The indicators of migrant integration are presented for the following areas

- City statistics (mii_urb)

Population by citizenship and country of birth - cities and greater cities (urb_cpopcb)

Population by citizenship and country of birth - functional urban areas (urb_lpopcb)

- Social inclusion (mii_soinc)
- Income distribution and monetary poverty (mii_ip)

People at risk of poverty and social exclusion (mii_pe)

Living condition (mii_lc)

Material deprivation (mii_md)

- Health (mii_health)

Health status (mii_hlth_state)

Health determinants (mii_hlth_det)

Health care (mii_hlth_care)

- Education (mii_educ)

Distribution of the population by educational attainment level (mii_edata)

Early leavers from education and training (mii_edatt1)

Young people by educational and labour status (incl. neither in employment nor in education and training - NEET) (mii_edatt0)

Participation in lifelong learning of population aged 18+ (mii_trng)

- Education - regional series (mii_educ_r)

Distribution of the population by educational attainment level (mii_edata_r)

Young people by educational and labour status (incl. neither in employment nor in education and training - NEET) (mii_edatt0_r)

- Employment (mii_emp)

Population by sex, age, citizenship and labour status (1 000) (lfsa_pganws)

Population by sex, age, country of birth and labour status (lfsa_pgacws)

Activity rates (mii_act)

Unemployment (mii_une)

Employment and self-employment (mii_em)

- Employment - regional series (mii_emp_r)

Regional population (mii_pop_r)

Activity rates (mii_act_r)

Unemployment (mii_une_r)

Employment and self-employment (mii_em_r)

- Employment - quarterly series (mii_emp_q)

Population (mii_lfsq_pop)

Activity (mii_lfsq_act)

Employment (mii_lfsq_emp)

Unemployment (mii_lfsq_unemp)

Inactivity (mii_lfsq_inac)

- Active citizenship (mii_actctz)

Residents who acquired citizenship as a share of resident non-citizens by former citizenship and sex (migr_acqs)

Long-term residents among all non-EU citizens holding residence permits by citizenship on 31 December (%) (migr_resshare)

- Recent immigrants - LFS series (mii_lfst)

Recent immigrants by sex, age and citizenship (lfst_rimgpnga)

Recent immigrants by sex, age and country of birth (lfst_rimgpcga)

Active recent immigrants by sex, age and citizenship (lfst_rimganga)

Active recent immigrants by sex, age and country of birth (lfst_rimgacga)

Employed recent immigrants by sex, age and citizenship (lfst_rimgenga)

Employed recent immigrants by sex, age and country of birth (lfst_rimgecga)

- LFS ad-hoc modules on migrants (mii_lfso)

2021. Labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants (lfso_21_cc)

2014. Migration and labour market (lfso_14)

2008. Labour market situation of migrants (lfso_08)

Thematic section

- Migrant integration

Publications

- All publications on migrant integration

- All publications on managed migration

- All publications on asylum

- All publications on international migration, citizenship

Methodology

- Acquisition and loss of citizenship (ESMS metadata file — migr_acqn_esms)

- Educational attainment level and transition from education to work (ESMS metadata file — edat1_esms)

- Participation in education and training (based on EU-LFS) (ESMS metadata file — trng_lfs_4w0)

- Income and living conditions, incl. self-perceived health (ESMS metadata file — ilc_esms)

- LFS series - Detailed annual survey results (ESMS metadata file — lfsa_esms)

- Residence permits (ESMS metadata file — migr_res)

- European Health Interview Survey (ESMS metadata file — hlth_det_esms)

External links

EU institutions and agencies

- Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME): Migrant integration

- DG HOME: Statistics on migration to Europe

- DG HOME: European Migration Network (EMN)

- DG HOME: Migrant integration hub

- DG HOME: Declaration of the European Ministerial Conference on Integration (Zaragoza, 15 & 16 April 2010)

- European Commission's Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography (KCMD)

- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): Legal migration and integration

International organizations

- International Organization for Migration (IOM): World Migration Report 2020 - Migration, inclusion and social cohesion: Challenges, recent developments and opportunities

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): Integration policies and indicators