"In 2020, more than half of the foreign-born core working-age populations of Romania, Poland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Bulgaria and Estonia had attained a tertiary level of educational attainment."

"People born outside the EU recorded higher participation rates in adult learning than their native-born peers in Poland, Finland, Denmark, Ireland, Portugal, Germany, the Netherlands, Czechia, Sweden, Cyprus, Lithuania and Belgium in 2020."

"In Greece, the share of young foreign-born people who were early leavers from education and training in 2020 was 9.3 times higher than the share for young native-born people."

This article presents EU statistics for a range of education indicators, contrasting the situation of migrants with the native population; the information may be used as part of an on-going process to monitor and evaluate migrant integration policies. The indicators presented are based on: a set of Council conclusions from 2010 on migrant integration; a subsequent study *Indicators of immigrant integration — a pilot study* from 2011; and a report titled *Using EU indicators of immigrant integration* from 2013. The article analyses information from the list of *Zaragoza indicators* that were agreed by EU Member States in Zaragoza (Spain) in April 2010, alongside additional information derived from the 2013 report on migrant integration. More specifically, it presents statistical data on the following:

- levels of educational attainment according to the *international standard classification of education (ISCED)*;
- adult participation in learning (previously referred to as *lifelong learning*);
- the share of *early leavers from education and training*; and
- the share of young people *not in education, employment or training (NEET)*.

Figures 1, 8, 10 and 12 show time series of the developments between 2010 and 2020 for several indicators. When analysing these developments it should be remembered that the early years cover a period when the EU was recovering from the global financial and economic crisis, while the development between 2019 and 2020 may reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its related containment measures. The impact of the latter was particularly notable for two indicators related to the labour market: participation in adult learning (which may often take place within a work environment; see Figure 8); the share of young people aged 15-29 years neither in employment nor in education and training (see Figure 12). This article forms part of an online *Eurostat* publication — *Migrant integration statistics*.

**Educational attainment**

In 2020, among the EU Member States, the share of non-EU-born persons aged 25-54 years with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment was on average more than twice as high as the share observed among their native-born peers.

An analysis for the population aged 25-54 years (hereafter referred to as the core working-age population), shows that in 2020 just over one third (37.2 %) of non-EU-born persons (hereafter referred to as persons born outside the EU) living in the EU had successfully completed at most a lower secondary level of education (ISCED levels 0-2);
this figure was 0.1 percentage points lower than a year earlier, and 5.4 points lower than in 2010. In 2020, the share of EU-born foreigners (in other words, those born in another EU Member State from the one where they were living) in the core working-age population who had at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment stood at 23.1 % in the EU; this was also 5.4 percentage points lower than in 2010. By contrast, the share of native-born individuals residing in their Member State of birth who had no more than a lower secondary level of education was 15.9 %; this was 6.7 points lower than in 2010. As such, the share of the EU core working-age population born outside the EU with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment was more than twice as high as the share among those living in their Member State of birth.

There was little difference in general developments (between 2010 and 2020) across the EU concerning the share of the core working-age population with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment when comparing the results by country of birth and by citizenship (see Figure 1). Nevertheless, while the developments were similar, the share of core working-age migrants with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment who were not EU citizens was notably higher than the share among those born outside of the EU (respectively 44.0 % and 37.2 % in 2020). This suggests that there are groups of people who were particularly likely to have at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment, including: persons born outside of the EU who did not become EU citizens (either citizens of the Member State where they were residing or citizens of another EU Member State); and people born within an EU Member State who were not a citizen of an EU Member State. The remainder of this section concentrates on presenting more detailed results by country of birth.

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**Figure 1: Development of the share of the population aged 25-54 years with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment, EU, 2010-2020 (%)**

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9912) and (edat_lfs_9911)

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Note: 2014, break in series.

(*) Other than in the reporting Member State.

(**) Other than national citizens.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: edat_lfs_9912 and edat_lfs_9911)
Figure 2 extends this analysis by presenting two additional broad levels of educational attainment: upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED levels 3 and 4) and tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-8). At the top end of the education spectrum, in 2020 just over one third (36.7 %) of the EU core working-age population living in their Member State of birth had attained a tertiary level of education. A slightly lower share (35.6 %) was recorded among the population of core working-age who were born elsewhere in the EU. A 29.6 % share of core working-age persons who were born outside the EU possessed a tertiary level of educational attainment in 2020 (some 7.1 percentage points below the average for the native-born population).

Analysis of the population aged 25-54 years, by educational attainment level and country of birth, EU, 2020 (%)

In the 25-54 age group, for all three populations analysed, the proportion of tertiary graduates was higher among women than among men.

In 2020, the share of core working-age women in the EU with a tertiary level of educational attainment was consistently higher (than the share for men) across all three populations detailed in Figure 3. The largest gap between the sexes was recorded for the native-born core working-age population, where the share of women with a tertiary level of education stood at 40.6 % compared with 32.9 % for men (a gap of 7.7 percentage points), while the difference between the sexes was 5.0 points among persons born elsewhere in the EU and 4.1 points among persons born outside the EU. These shares were reversed for the two lower groups of levels of educational attainment, with a higher proportion of core working-age men (than women) possessing an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary level of education, or at most a lower secondary level of education. This pattern was observed across all three populations: native-born, born elsewhere in the EU and born outside the EU.
Across the whole of the EU, just under one sixth (15.9 %) of the core working-age population living in their Member State of birth possessed at most a lower secondary level of education in 2020 (see Figure 4), while the corresponding share among the foreign-born population of core working-age was close to one third (33.2 %).

In 2020, Italy (49.1 %), Greece (39.2 %) and Spain (36.1 %) had the highest proportions of foreign-born persons with low educational attainment; in Italy and Spain, a relatively high share of their native-born core working-age population also had at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment.

For the EU, the gap between the share of the foreign-born and native-born core working-age populations with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment was 17.3 percentage points in 2020: a higher share being recorded for the foreign-born population. This pattern — a higher share for the foreign-born population — was repeated in 18 of the 23 EU Member States for which data are available (incomplete data for Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia), with the share of the foreign-born population having at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment at least 20 points higher than the share for the native-born population in Sweden, Germany and Greece. By contrast, there were five Member States where a higher share of the native-born (rather than foreign-born) population had at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment: Latvia (where the gap was 3.5 points), Estonia (4.9 points), Ireland (5.4 points), Malta (11.1 points) and Portugal (14.1 points).
Share of the population aged 25-54 years with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment, by country of birth, 2020 (%)

Figure 4: Share of the population aged 25-54 years with at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment, by country of birth, 2020 (%). Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9912)

Figure 5 presents similar information at the other end of the education spectrum, concerning the share of the core working-age population with a tertiary level of educational attainment. In 2020, there was a difference of 5.4 percentage points between the proportion of native-born (36.7 %) and foreign-born (31.3 %) core working-age populations in the EU with a tertiary level of educational attainment. Among the EU Member States, there were 15 where a lower share of the foreign-born population (compared with the native-born population) had a tertiary level of educational attainment, while there were 12 Member States where a higher share of the foreign-born population...
had a tertiary level of educational attainment. Among the Member States where the native-born population had a higher share, the largest gaps in attainment — where the share of the native-born population with a tertiary level of educational attainment was at least 15 percentage points higher than that recorded among the foreign-born population — were recorded in Finland, Spain, Slovenia and Greece.

In 2020, more than half of the foreign-born core working-age populations of Romania, Poland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Bulgaria and Estonia had attained a tertiary level of educational attainment. In each case, the difference in tertiary educational attainment between their foreign-born and native-born populations was at least 7 percentage points (in favour of the foreign-born population). In other words, these six EU Member States had attracted not only a foreign-born population with a relatively high share of highly-educated people, but also one that had a clearly higher share of highly-educated people than did their native-born population. Note that these statistics do not provide any information concerning the roles or occupations that their highly-educated workforces carried out. By contrast, Cyprus (54.3 %), Ireland (52.2 %) and Finland (50.7 %) were the only EU Member States that reported that more than half of their native-born core working-age population in 2020 had attained a tertiary level of educational attainment.
The analysis presented in Figure 6 focuses on the educational attainment of the core working-age population exclusively born outside of the EU; it can therefore be contrasted with Figure 5 which provided more aggregated figures for all foreign-born populations (people born in another EU Member State or born outside the EU). The educational attainment of persons born outside the EU was skewed towards a larger share for people with at most a lower secondary level of education (37.2 %), and a smaller share for people with a tertiary education (29.6 %); between these two lay the share for people who had attained an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education (33.1 %).

In 2020, more than half of the core working-age population born outside the EU and living in Hungary, Estonia, Luxembourg, Bulgaria and Poland had a tertiary level of educational attainment, with this share reaching 65.3 % in...
Ireland and peaking in Romania at 72.8%. By contrast, in Slovenia, Italy and Greece, less than one fifth of persons born outside the EU had a tertiary level of educational attainment.

**Analysis of the population born outside the EU and aged 25-54 years, by educational attainment level, 2020**

![Graph showing educational attainment levels for different countries.](image)

Note: ranked on tertiary education.

(*) At most lower secondary education as well as upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education: not available. Tertiary education: low reliability.

(?) At most lower secondary education: not available.

(?) At most lower secondary education: low reliability.

(*) Provisional.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: edat_lfs_9912)

**Figure 6: Analysis of the population born outside the EU and aged 25-54 years, by educational attainment level, 2020 (%) Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9912)**

**Share of 30-34 year-olds with a tertiary level of educational attainment**

Some 40.9% of 30-34 year-old persons born in another EU Member State had completed a tertiary level of educational attainment.

The next analysis focuses on a much narrower age range, namely persons aged 30-34 years. One of the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) is to ensure that the proportion of 30-34 year-olds with a tertiary level of educational attainment should reach at least 40% by 2020. This target was achieved for the EU in 2019, when the share reached 40.3%, rising 0.9 percentage points compared with 2018. Further growth was recorded in 2020, as the share reached 41.0%. Note that seven new targets have been established by Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) (2021/C 66/01), including that the share of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary educational attainment in the EU should be at least 45%, by 2030.

Figure 7 shows that, in 2020, some 41.8% of the native-born population aged 30-34 years in the EU had attained a tertiary level of education. A slightly lower share (40.9%) of the population aged 30-34 years and born in another EU Member State had a tertiary level of educational attainment, while the equivalent share among persons born outside the EU was (also) above one third (35.5%).

Information on national targets for 2020 for tertiary educational attainment is also provided in Figure 7. In 17 of the
27 EU Member States, the share of the native-born population aged 30-34 years with a tertiary level of educational attainment was above the national target. The same national targets for 2020 had already been reached or surpassed in 13 (from 19 with data available) Member States for persons born in another EU Member State and for 12 (from 24 with data available) Member States for persons born outside the EU.

The share of the population aged 30-34 years born in another EU Member State that had a tertiary level of educational attainment was just over 50 % in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Malta, reaching 61.1 % in Denmark, 69.6 % in Sweden, 71.6 % in Luxembourg and peaking at 95.9 % in Estonia. A similar analysis for persons born outside the EU reveals that the highest shares of the population aged 30-34 years with a tertiary level of educational attainment were recorded in Hungary and Latvia (just over 50.0 %), Poland (65.7 %), Luxembourg (66.8 %), Estonia (70.4 %), Lithuania (73.3 %) and Ireland (73.9 %).

Figure 7: Share of the population aged 30-34 years with a tertiary level of educational attainment, by country of birth, 2020

![Graph showing the share of the population aged 30-34 years with a tertiary level of educational attainment, by country of birth, 2020.](http://sc.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4411192/4411431/Europe_2020_Targets.pdf)

Note: ranked on total share of the population aged 30-34 years (for all places of birth) with a tertiary level of educational attainment. Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia: EU-born and non-EU-born, not available. Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia: EU-born, not available.

(*) Non-EU-born: low reliability.

(*1) EU-born: low reliability.

(*2) Provisional.

(*3) Other than in the reporting Member State.

(*4) Denmark and the Netherlands: greater than the target. Germany: ISCED levels 4-8. France: for the age group 17-33 years. Italy: the target is 20-27 %. Latvia: the target is 34-36 %. Finland: excluding former tertiary vocational education and training. Sweden: the target is 45-50 %.


Figure 7: Share of the population aged 30-34 years with a tertiary level of educational attainment, by country of birth, 2020 (%) Source: Eurostat (edat_ifs_9912) and Europe 2020 Targets

Adult participation in learning

In 2020 among the core working-age population, the highest share of persons who participated in adult learning was recorded among those born outside the EU.

The participation rate in adult learning is expressed as the percentage of people who received education or training (formal or non-formal) during the four weeks preceding the labour force survey. Figure 8 presents overall...
developments for the EU during the period covering 2010-2020 for those aged 25-54 years. There was an increase between 2010 and 2020 in the share of the core working-age population participating in adult learning for all of the three populations shown in Figure 8; this was despite relatively large falls between 2019 and 2020. For example, for the native-born population an increase was observed nearly every year during the period studied, except for 2015 when the share was stable and 2020 when it fell by 1.8 percentage points. The overall magnitude of the change between 2010 and 2020 for the native-born population (up 1.5 points) was largely due to a considerable increase in 2013 (up 1.9 points) and it should be noted that there is a break in series for France in 2013, which impacts on the results presented for the EU. There were quite different smaller increases in the share of the core working-age foreign populations who participated in education and training between 2010 and 2020: the share for persons born outside the EU rose overall by 1.9 points (with a decrease of 1.1 points in 2020 compared with 2019); the share for persons born in another EU Member State increased overall by 0.6 percentage points (with a decrease of 0.4 points between 2019 and 2020).

The second part of Figure 8 provides similar information, although the analysis is by citizenship rather than by country of birth. The share of EU core working-age nationals who participated in adult learning increased between 2010 and 2012, jumped in 2013 (note that there is a break in series), and then increased again through to 2019 before falling in 2020 (down 1.8 percentage points). The proportion of core working-age EU citizens (other than nationals) who participated in education or training also increased most years between 2010 and 2019, with falls in 2011, 2015 and 2018; a further fall was recorded in 2020 (down 0.5 points). A similar situation was observed for the share of non-EU citizens who participated in education or training, with increases most years, a fall in 2012 and stability in 2015; in 2020, the share fell 1.4 points. Overall between 2010 and 2020, the share of core working-age persons participating in adult learning increased by 2.2 points among non-EU citizens, by 1.5 points among nationals and by 0.5 points among EU citizens.
In 2020, there was a small difference in the share of the EU core working-age population that participated in adult learning when comparing the native-born population with the two foreign populations: 9.3 % for the EU-born population, 10.7 % for the native-born population and 11.4 % for persons born in another EU Member State (see Figure 9).

Regardless of where members of the workforce were born, the Nordic Member States reported the highest participation rates for adult learning in 2020 in Sweden and Finland and more than one fifth in Denmark, as was also the case in the Netherlands. In a minority of the EU Member States for which data are available (for at least two of the three populations), the highest participation rates were recorded among the native-born core working-age population. People born in another EU Member State recorded the highest participation rates for adult learning in Hungary (data are not complete), Austria and Czechia, while those born outside the EU recorded the highest rates in Belgium, Portugal, Cyprus, Lithuania (data are not complete), the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, Finland, and Poland (data are not complete). Note that participation in language courses and other integration-focused learning activities are included in the concept of adult learning.
Young persons who were foreign-born were at greater risk of leaving education and training early than their native-born peers

Early leavers from education and training are defined as people aged 18-24 years having attained at most a lower secondary level of educational attainment and who did not participate in further (formal or non-formal) education or training in the four weeks preceding the labour force survey.

As shown in Figure 10, young persons who were foreign-born or foreign citizens were generally at greater risk of leaving education without having completed more than a lower secondary level of education. The share of EU early leavers from education and training generally fell during the period covering 2010-2020, regardless of country of birth or citizenship although shares for foreign-born people and for foreign citizens have been relatively stable or increasing in some of the most recent years: the share rose in 2015 and 2017 for EU born foreigners and in 2015, 2016 and 2017 for citizens of another EU Member State, while it increased in 2018 and 2020 for people born outside the EU and in 2018, 2019 and 2020 for non-EU citizens. Overall between 2010 and 2020, in percentage point terms, the proportion of foreign-born persons who were early leavers from education and training fell at a faster rate than recorded for the native-born population, although the share of early leavers among the native-born population remained much lower than the shares recorded for foreign-born persons and in 2016 fell below the 10 % target set as part of the strategic framework for education and training (ET 2020). Note that seven new targets have been established by Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030), including that the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 9 %, by 2030.

Note: ranked on total share of the population aged 25-54 years participating in adult learning (for all places of birth): Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia: EU-born and non-EU-born, not available. Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland: EU-born, not available. Hungary: non-EU-born, not available.

(*) Provisional.

(*) EU-born: low reliability.

(‡) Non-EU-born: low reliability.

(∗) Other than in the reporting Member State.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: trng_lfs_13)

Figure 9: Share of the population aged 25-54 years participating in adult learning, by country of birth, 2020 (%) Source: Eurostat (trng_lfs_13)
In 2020, among the 17 EU Member States for which data are available, the highest shares of foreign-born early leavers from education and training were found in Italy (32.1 %), Spain (29.0 %), Malta (28.5 %), Greece (27.0 %), Cyprus (26.8 %) and Germany (25.5 %). By contrast, the proportion of early leavers from education and training was in single digits among the foreign-born populations in Luxembourg (8.7 %) and Slovenia (7.4 %).

The largest differences between the shares of foreign-born and native-born early leavers from education and training (with higher shares for foreign-born populations) were recorded in Greece (24.1 percentage points), Cyprus (21.9 points), Italy (21.1 points) and Germany (17.7 points), while Spain, Austria, Malta and Sweden also recorded double digit differences (see Figure 11). There were no EU Member States where the share of early leavers was higher among the native-born population than among the foreign-born population.
Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

The share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training was higher among persons born outside the EU.

The indicator for young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) corresponds to the percentage of the population of a given age group (in this case aged 15-29 years) who are not employed and not involved in further education or training. In 2020, one in eight (12.7 %) of the EU native-born population aged 15-29 years could be described as NEET, whereas higher shares were recorded among foreign-born populations and foreign citizens, in particular for those who were born outside the EU and those who were non-EU citizens.

Figure 12 shows the development of NEET rates in the EU by country of birth and by citizenship. Irrespective of these two characteristics, there was a general pattern insofar as the share of NEETs tended to rise in the aftermath of the global financial and economic crisis, peaking in 2012 and/or 2013, before falling at a relatively fast pace through to 2019. This development was reversed in 2020, as the rate increased for all populations, a pattern that may be linked to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated containment measures. In 2020, the NEET rate for young people aged 15-29 years in the EU was 12.7 % among the native-born population, while the rates for young people born in another EU Member State (18.6 %) and those born outside the EU (24.6 %) were higher.
Subject to data availability, the highest NEET rates among the native-born populations of the EU Member States were recorded in Italy, Bulgaria, Greece and Romania. Indeed, Italy recorded the highest NEET rate for the native-born population (21.8 %), for young people born in another EU Member State (35.3 %) and for people born outside the EU (36.3 %) — see Figure 13. Greece and Spain recorded the second and third highest NEET rates for both of the foreign-born populations: both Member States recorded a rate of 26.0 % for young people born in another EU Member State; Greece recorded 36.1 % and Spain 28.6 % for people born outside of the EU. Slovenia, Cyprus, Croatia and Hungary also recorded high shares of their young EU-born populations being neither in employment nor in education and training (19.5-25.8 %), as did Belgium, France, Austria, Germany, Croatia and Cyprus (19.7-27.5 %) for young people born outside of the EU.

NEET rates were lower for young native-born (rather than foreign-born) populations in 2020. This pattern held for all of the EU Member States for which data are available, except for Czechia, where the rate for young people born in another EU Member State was lower. The highest NEET rates for young people were often recorded for people born outside the EU, but this was not the case in Croatia, Ireland, Cyprus, Denmark, Malta and Slovenia as the rate for young people born in another EU Member State was higher.
Young people aged 15-29 years neither in employment nor in education and training, by country of birth, 2020 (%)

Source: Eurostat (edat lfse_28)

Data sources

The main data source for educational attainment statistics is the EU labour force survey (EU-LFS). The EU-LFS is a quarterly sample survey that covers the resident population aged 15 years and above in private households. It provides data for the EU Member States, EFTA (except Liechtenstein) and candidate countries. The survey is designed to provide population estimates for a set of main labour market characteristics, covering areas such as employment, unemployment, economic inactivity and hours of work, as well as providing analyses for a range of socio-demographic characteristics, such as sex, age, educational attainment, occupation, household characteristics and region of residence.

Since the first quarter of 2020, the LFS in Germany has been integrated as a subsample into the newly designed Mikrozensus (micro census). Technical issues and the COVID-19 crisis have had a large impact on the data collection processes, resulting in low response rates and a biased sample. Changes in the survey methodology also led to a break in the data series. The published German data are preliminary. For more information, see here.

A set of Council, European Parliament and European Commission regulations define how the EU-LFS is carried out, while some countries have their own national legislation for the implementation of the survey. The key advantage of using EU-LFS data is that they come from a survey which is highly harmonised and optimised for...
comparability. However, there are some limitations when considering the coverage of the EU-LFS for migrant populations, as the EU-LFS was designed to target the whole resident population and not specific parts of the overall population, such as migrants. The following issues should be noted when analysing migrant integration statistics:

- recently arrived migrants — this group of migrants is missing from the sampling frame in every host EU Member State, which results in under-coverage of the actual migrant population for EU-LFS statistics;
- non-response — one disadvantage of the EU-LFS is the high percentage of non-response that is recorded among migrant populations, which may reflect:
  - language difficulties;
  - misunderstanding concerning the purpose of the survey;
  - difficulties in communicating with the survey interviewer;
  - fear concerning the negative impact that participation in the survey could have (for example, damaging a migrants chances of receiving the necessary authorisation to remain in the host EU Member State);
- sample size — given the EU-LFS is a sample survey, it is possible that some of the results presented for labour market characteristics of migrants are unrepresentative, especially in those EU Member States with small migrant populations (note that for cases where data are considered to be of particularly low reliability, statistics are not published).

This article focuses on comparisons between national and migrant populations. The results for the migrant population are usually disaggregated into migrants from other EU Member States and migrants from outside the EU, with information presented by age and by sex. Migrant indicators are calculated for two broad groups: the foreign population determined by country of birth and the foreign population determined by citizenship. Although providing some main indicators for the latter, this article focuses on information for migrant integration by country of birth: the two parts of the foreign population defined by country of birth are generally somewhat larger and therefore allow a more complete and robust data set to be presented. That said, results by country of birth are generally representative of those by citizenship.

The following analyses are presented:

**For the population by country of birth**

- Native-born — the population born in the reporting country
- Foreign-born — the population born outside the reporting country; subdivided into
  - EU-born — the population born in the EU, except the reporting country and
  - Non-EU-born — the population born in non-EU countries

**For the population by citizenship**

- Nationals — the population of citizens of the reporting country
- Foreign citizens — the non-nationals; subdivided into
  - EU citizens — the citizens of EU Member States, except the reporting country
  - Non-EU citizens — the citizens of non-EU countries

**For the population by age**

- 18-24 and 15-29 years — these age cohorts represent the youth population
- 25-54 years — this cohort is considered as the most appropriate group for an analysis of the situation of core working-age migrants as it minimises the effects of migration related to non-economic reasons (for example, educational studies, training or early retirement), while forming a homogenous group that is large enough to produce reliable results
The international standard classification of education (ISCED) provides the basis for compiling internationally comparable education statistics. Data by level of education up until 2013 were classified according to ISCED 1997, while data for reference years from 2014 onwards are classified according to ISCED 2011; as a result, there is a break in series in 2014.

Educational attainment is defined in relation to the highest level of education that has been ‘successfully completed’, in other words, a level of education where the pupil/student has obtained a certificate/diploma; in those cases where there is no certification, successful completion must be associated with full attendance on the specified course. Note that data on educational attainment exclude persons who did not answer the EU-LFS question concerning their highest level of education or successfully completed training.

**Context**

In 2010, the Zaragoza Declaration (and the subsequent Council conclusions) identified a number of common indicators (so-called ‘Zaragoza indicators’) and called upon the European Commission to undertake a pilot study examining proposals for a set of common migrant integration indicators and to report on the availability and quality of data for a range of harmonised sources necessary for the calculation of these indicators. The proposals in the pilot study were examined and developed in a report published by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs Using EU indicators of immigrant integration.

A European Commission staff working paper EU initiatives supporting the integration of third-country nationals (SEC (2011) 957 final) accompanied the European agenda for the integration of third-country nationals focusing on actions to stimulate levels of economic, social, cultural and political participation among migrants. The agenda highlighted that education is one of the cornerstones of migrant integration in the EU, as it not only has the potential to provide adequate skills to be successful in the labour market but also contributes to the active participation of migrants through the exchange of cultural values. Furthermore, as migrants account for a growing share of the EU's population, they also play an important role in relation to achieving the overall targets for education as set out in the EU's strategic framework for education and training 2020 (ET 2020).

ET 2020 established the following targets for 2020: reducing early school leaving rates to below 10 %; raising the share of 30-34 year-olds who possess a tertiary level of educational attainment to 40 %; raising the average share of adults (aged 25-64 years) who participate in learning to at least 15 %; reducing the share of low-achieving 15 year-olds in reading, mathematics and science to less than 15 %; and increasing the share of children participating in early childhood education to at least 95 % (for those aged between four years and the compulsory starting age for primary education).

Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) has established seven new targets, to replace those from ET 2020. Five of these have been set for 2030:

- the share of 15-year-olds who are low-achieving in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15 %;
- the share of eighth-graders who are low-achieving in computer and information literacy should be less than 15 %;
- at least 96 % of children between 3 years of age and the starting age for compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education and care;
- the share of early leavers from education and training should be less than 9 %;
- the share of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 45 %.

Two of the targets have been set for 2025:

- the share of recent graduates from VET benefiting from exposure to work-based learning during their vocational education and training should be at least 60 %;
- at least 47 % of adults aged 25-64 years should have participated in learning during the previous 12 months.

1 ‘Third-countries’ is a synonym for non-member countries, in other words countries outside of the EU.
The Justice and Home Affairs Council developed a set of common basic principles for immigrant integration policy in November 2004; they were subsequently reaffirmed by the Council in June 2014 as part of the general framework for the integration of nationals of non-member countries legally residing in the EU. These common principles include many of the key aspects concerned with the integration process, including education, employment, or access to institutions, goods and services. The common basic principles also define integration as a two-way process of mutual accommodation by all migrants and residents in EU Member States.

A new pact on migration and asylum was presented by the European Commission in September 2020. This sought to provide new tools for faster and more integrated procedures, a better management of the Schengen area and borders, as well as flexibility and crisis resilience. The new pact on migration and asylum sets out what is intended to be 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.

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.

Other articles

- Education and training
- Migrant integration statistics — online publication
- Migrant integration statistics introduced
- Migrant integration statistics — at risk of poverty and social exclusion
- Migrant integration statistics — employment conditions
- Migrant integration statistics — housing
- Migration and migrant population statistics

Publications

- All publications on migrant integration
- All publications on asylum and managed migration

Database

- Migrant integration (mii), see:

  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)
Dedicated section

- Migrant integration

Methodology

- LFS series — detailed annual survey results (ESMS metadata file — lfsa_esms)
- Migrant integration — methodology

External links

- Conclusions on integration as a driver for development and social cohesion
- European Commission — Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs — Legal migration and Integration
- European Commission — EU Immigration Portal (EUIP)
- European Commission — New pact on migration and asylum
- European Commission — The 2010 Zaragoza declaration
- European Commission — Using EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration — final report prepared for DG Migration and Home Affairs
- European Migration Network (EMN) — Annual Report on Migration and Asylum
- European Commission website on integration
- Harvard Educational Review — Immigration, youth and education
- International Labour Organisation — Migrant integration policy index (MIPEX)
- OECD — International Migration Outlook
- OECD — Settling in 2018 — Indicators of immigrant integration