

Children in migration - residence permits for family reasons

Statistics Explained

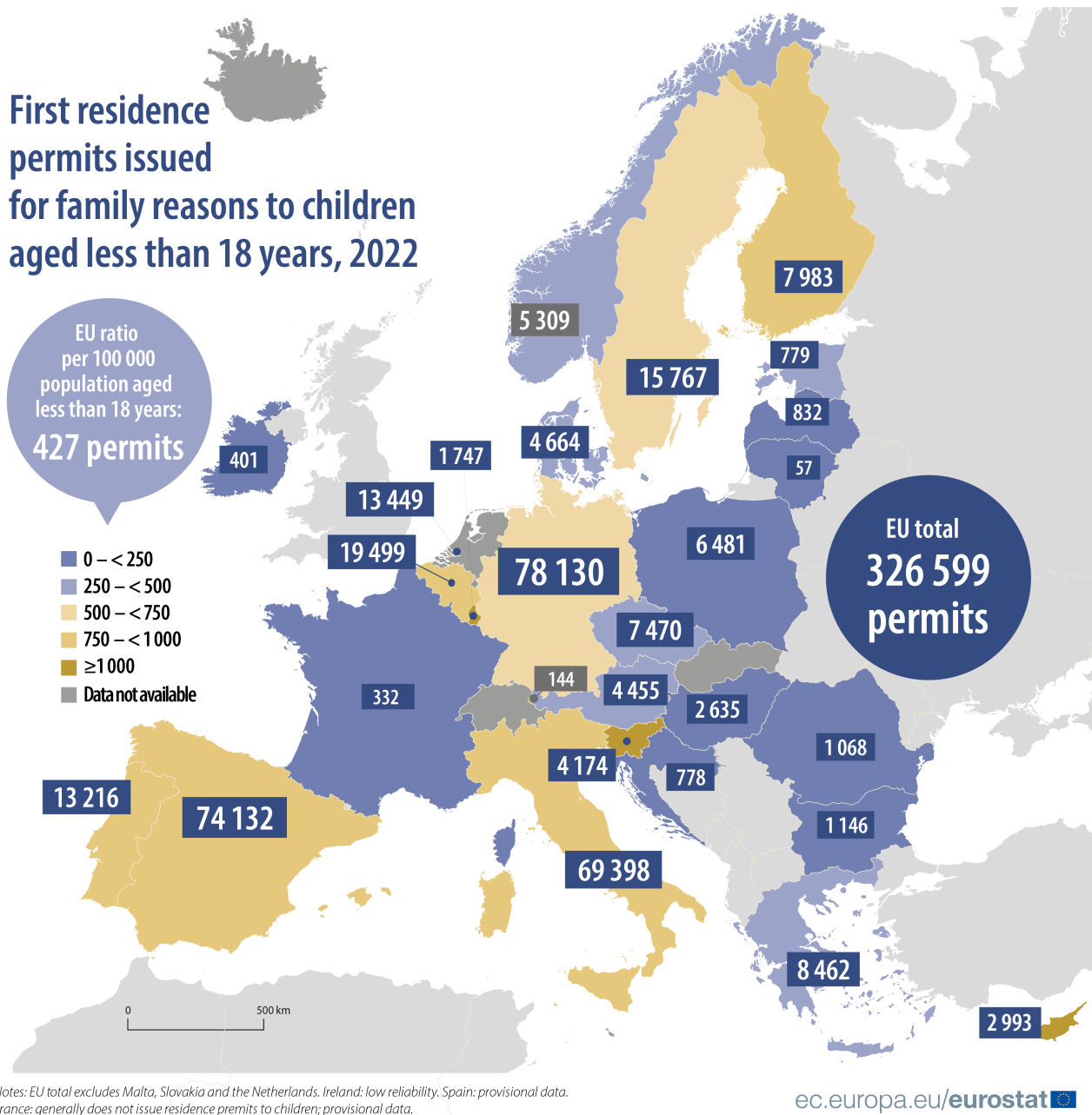
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" In 2022, 327 000 first residence permits for family reasons were issued in the EU to children aged less than 18 years who were not EU citizens. Among these children, 52 % were aged less than 5 years. "

" Moroccan, Albanian and Indian were the three most common citizenships in 2022 for first residence permits delivered for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years who were not EU citizens. "

First residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years, 2022



First residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years, 2022 (number) Source: Eurostat (migr_refas) and (demo_pjan)

Among all migrants, children are a particularly vulnerable group who need special attention. Based on first residence permit statistics, this article focuses on one of the main indicators of immigration for children who are not [European Union \(EU\)](#) citizens: the number of children issued with a first residence permit for family reasons.

Family reasons for residence permits include family formation (such as marriages or adoptions) and reunification with family members already residing lawfully in an EU Member State. For more information, please consult (page 6 of) the [main definitions and methodological concepts](#) .

Residence permit statistics collected by [Eurostat](#) are based on the administrative steps taken to issue residence permits. It should be noted that, until reference year 2021, the compilation of residence permit statistics analysed by age and sex was voluntary; as such, data are not complete for all EU Member States and years presented in this article.

Latest information for the EU

In 2022, the total number of first residence permits issued in the EU for family formation and reunification reasons to children aged less than 18 years was 326 599 (excluding Malta, Slovakia and the Netherlands). As such, first residence permits issued for family reasons represented 61.8 % of all first permits issued to children in the EU. Another 201 838 first permits were issued to children for reasons other than family reasons: 16 478 for education-related reasons, 1 500 for employment reasons and 183 860 for other reasons. By comparison, for the same year the number of first-time asylum applicants¹ aged less than 18 years was 219 005.

Figure 1 shows that, in 2022, children aged less than 5 years accounted for 51.7 % of the number of first residence permits issued in the EU for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years. It also shows that the share of males (52.0 %) was somewhat higher than that of females (48.0 %). In comparison with the breakdown by sex of first-time asylum applicants aged less than 18 years (59.5 % for males in 2022 and 58.1 % on average from 2014 to 2022), the gender gap was narrower for first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years.

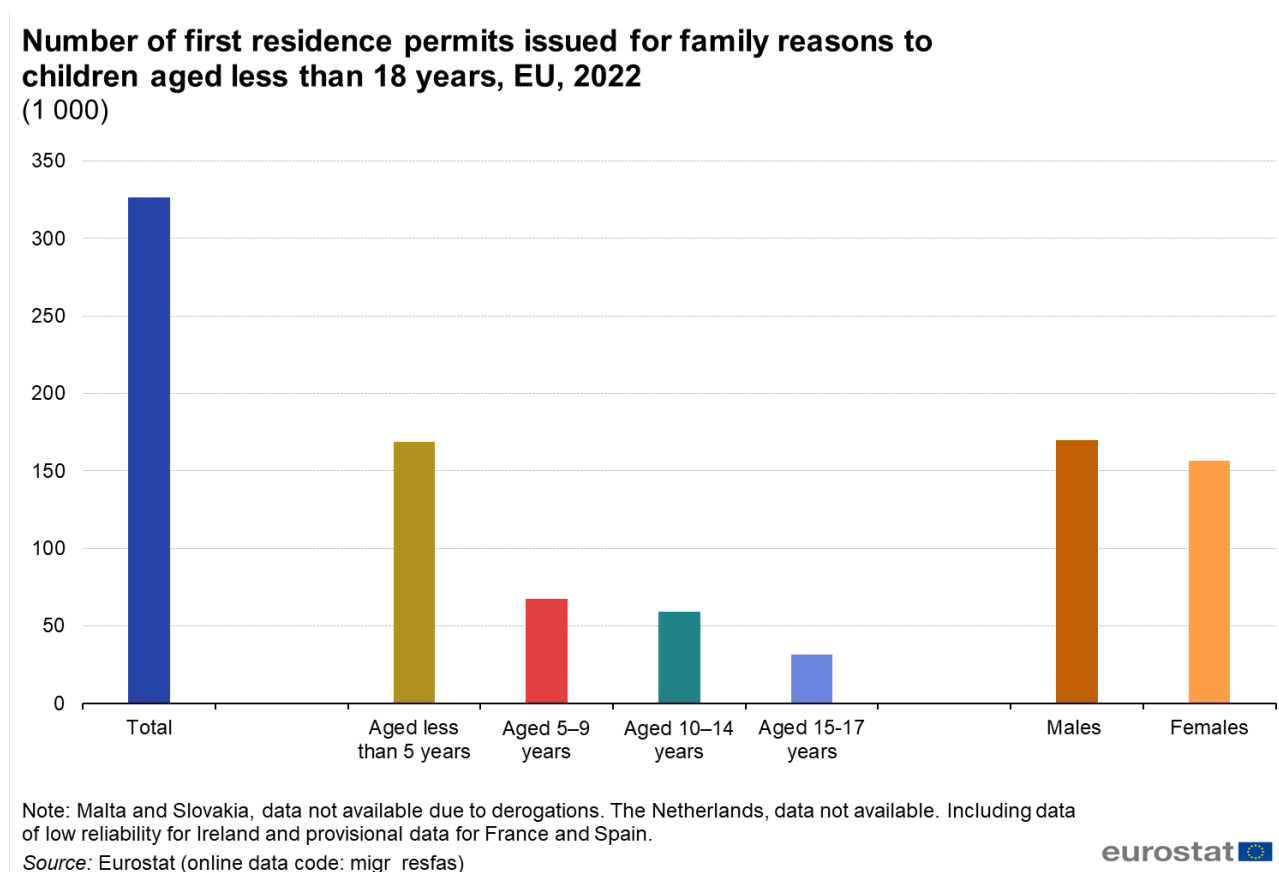


Figure 1: Number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years, EU, 2022 (1 000) Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas)

In 2022, the EU Member States which issued the most residence permits for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years were Germany (23.9 % of the EU total), Italy (22.7 %) and Spain (21.2 %). They were followed at some distance by Belgium (6.0 %), Sweden (4.8 %) and Portugal (4.0 %) – see Table 1.

The number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years relative to the population aged less than 18 years gives an indicator in relative terms of the weight of first residence permits

¹See the database [migr_asyappctza](#).

delivered for family reasons to children. In 2022, this ratio averaged 427 per 100 000 population aged less than 18 years in the EU. This ratio was more than double the EU average in Spain, Slovenia, Luxembourg and Cyprus, peaking in the last of these at 1 730 per 100 000 population aged less than 18 years. In six EU Member States – Bulgaria, Poland, Ireland, Romania, Lithuania and France – this ratio was less than 100 per 100 000; it should be noted that France (where the lowest value of 2 per 100 000 was recorded), generally does not issue residence permits to children aged less than 18 years.

Table 1 also shows the share of children aged less than 5 years among all children aged less than 18 years having been issued with first residence permits for family reasons. In the EU, this averaged 51.7 % in 2022. By far the highest share for this indicator was observed in Belgium (63.3 %) and Italy (62.2 %). Luxembourg, Czechia, Slovenia and Sweden were the only other EU Member States to record shares above the EU average. By contrast, the lowest share of children aged less than 5 years among all children aged less than 18 years having been issued with first residence permits for family reasons was observed in Portugal (15.1 %), Ireland (9.7 %) and France (4.2 %).

First residence permits issued for family reasons to children, 2022

	First residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years			Issued to children aged less than 5 years as a share of the total of such permits issued to children aged less than 18 years (%)
	total (number)	EU Member States' share in the EU total number (%)	relative to the population aged less than 18 years (per 100 000)	
EU (*)	326 599	100.0	427	51.7
Belgium	19 499	6.0	838	63.3
Bulgaria	1 146	0.4	96	32.4
Czechia	7 470	2.3	373	56.7
Denmark	4 664	1.4	405	50.8
Germany	78 130	23.9	564	49.0
Estonia	779	0.2	300	35.4
Ireland (*)	401	0.1	34	9.7
Greece	8 462	2.6	484	50.4
Spain (*)	74 132	22.7	911	50.4
France (*)	332	0.1	2	4.2
Croatia	778	0.2	117	40.9
Italy	69 398	21.2	753	62.2
Cyprus	2 993	0.9	1 730	37.4
Latvia	832	0.3	233	36.8
Lithuania	57	0.0	12	38.6
Luxembourg	1 747	0.5	1 424	58.0
Hungary	2 635	0.8	154	37.7
Malta	:	:	:	:
Netherlands	:	:	:	:
Austria	4 455	1.4	287	49.6
Poland	6 481	2.0	94	45.1
Portugal	13 216	4.0	808	15.1
Romania	1 068	0.3	29	36.7
Slovenia	4 174	1.3	1 109	56.7
Slovakia	:	:	:	:
Finland	7 983	2.4	771	49.2
Sweden	15 767	4.8	717	53.6
Liechtenstein	144	–	2 081	63.9
Norway	5 309	–	479	57.7

: data not available.

– not applicable.

(*) Malta and Slovakia, data not available due to derogations. The Netherlands, data not available. Including data of low reliability for Ireland and provisional data for France and Spain.

(*) Low reliability.

(*) Provisional.

(*) Children generally are not granted residence permits. Provisional.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: migr_resfas and demo_pjan)

eurostat 

Table 1: First residence permits issued for family reasons to children, 2022 Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas) and (demo_pjan)

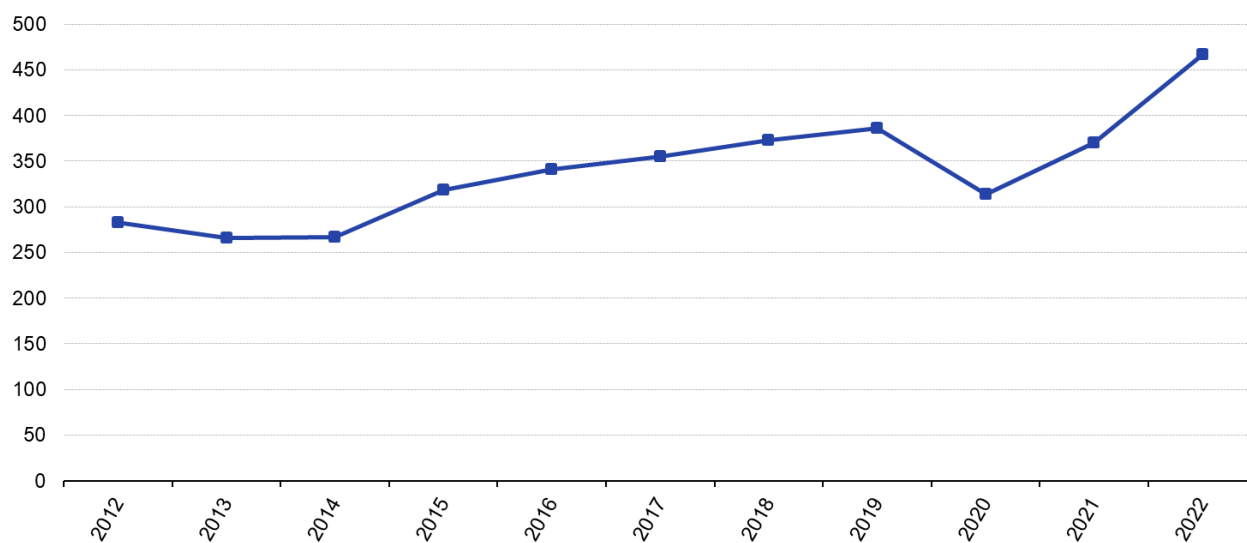
Developments during the period from 2012 to 2022

This section focuses on first residence permits granted to children under 15 years old for family reasons, as data for the age group 15-17 is only available in the years 2021 and 2022. To enhance comparability across different time periods and among EU Member States (and other countries), the data is presented as a ratio per 100,000 population under 15 years of age. The EU total for each year is calculated based on available Member State data for that year; the data on the population aged less than 15 years used as the denominator for this ratio are calculated based on the same availability of Member States as for the data on first residence permits.

As shown in Figure 2, the ratio for first residence permits issued in the EU to children for family reasons followed a downward path from 2012 to 2013. It stabilised in 2014 before increasing in 2015 and each year through until 2019. In 2020, there was a sharp fall, at least in part explained by the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions, for example on international travel. In 2021, the ratio rebounded to a level close to that observed in 2019. In 2022, the ratio went up to the highest level since the beginning of the presented time series. This means more children got residence permits for family reasons in the EU in 2022 than in any year since 2012. Over the whole period shown in Figure 2, this ratio ranged between a low of 266 permits per 100 000 population aged less than 15 years and a high of 467. By comparison, the same ratio calculated for first-time asylum applicants by children aged less than 18 years varied (in the period 2014–2022) between a low of 159 in 2020 and a high of 461 in 2016.

Number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 15 years relative to the population aged less than 15 years, EU, 2012–2022

(per 100 000 population aged less than 15 years)



Note: based on available data for EU countries for each year (as shown in Table 2).

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: migr_resfas and demo_pjangroup)

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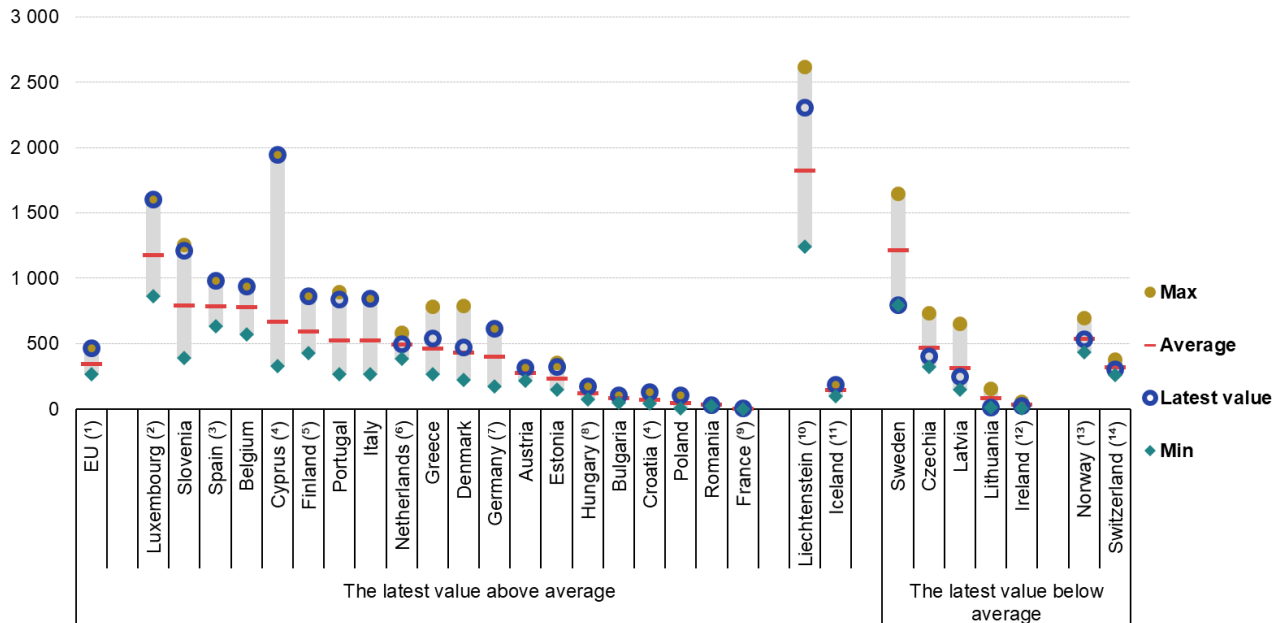
Figure 2: Number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 15 years relative to the population aged less than 15 years, EU, 2012–2022 (per 100 000 population aged less than 15 years) Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas) and (demo_pjangroup)

In Figure 3, the circular marker shows the highest (maximum) value of the ratio of the number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 15 years relative to the population aged less than 15 years for any year from 2012 to 2022; the lowest (minimum) value is indicated by the green square marker. The distance between these two markers (shown by the vertical grey bar) indicates the range observed over the whole period. The differences between the maximum and minimum values recorded between 2012 and 2022 in Slovenia (a range of 870 permits per 100 000) and Sweden (851) were 4 times as high as the range recorded for the EU average (201 per 100 000); an even greater range was observed for Cyprus (1 618 per 100 000).

Figure 3 also includes a blue circular marker to show the latest value of the same ratio and a red line for the average from 2012 to 2022. Within the figure, the Member States and EFTA countries have been classified in two groups, depending on whether their latest value for this ratio lies above or below their average for 2012 to 2022; within these two groups they have been ranked according to the average value. Most of the EU Member States are in the first group, indicating that the latest value of the ratio was above the average from 2012 to 2022. The reverse was observed for five Member States, most notably in Sweden, and to a lesser extent in Czechia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ireland; this was also the case in Norway and Switzerland.

Average, maximum, minimum and latest number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 15 years relative to the population aged less than 15 years, 2012–2022

(per 100 000 population aged less than 15 years)



Note: Malta and Slovakia, not available due to derogations. Grouped depending on whether the latest value was above or below average and then ranked within these groups on the average.

(1) Based on available data for EU Member States for each year (as specified in the footnotes below and also shown in Table 2).

(2) 2013, 2016–2022.

(3) 2022: provisional.

(4) 2015–2022.

(5) 2019–2022.

(6) 2016–2021.

(7) 2020–2022.

(8) 2012–2015: definition differs.

(9) Children generally are not granted residence permits. 2012–2021. 2021 and 2022: provisional.

(10) 2013–2022.

(11) 2012–2019.

(12) 2021 and 2022: low reliability.

(13) 2014, 2016–2022.

(14) 2012–2015, 2019 and 2021.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: migr_resfas and demo_pjangroup)

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Figure 3: Average, maximum, minimum and latest number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 15 years relative to the population aged less than 15 years, 2012–2022 (per 100 000 population aged less than 15 years) Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas) and (demo_pjangroup)

Focusing on the average for the period 2012 to 2022, relatively low ratios were observed in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Croatia (2015–2022), Poland, Romania, Ireland and France; in all of these, the national average was less than a quarter of the EU average (340 per 100 000). By contrast, ratios that were at least three times as high as the EU average were recorded in Luxembourg (2013 and 2016–2022) and Sweden; Liechtenstein also recorded a particularly high average ratio (2013–2022).

Number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 15 years relative to the population aged less than 15 years, 2012–2022
(per 100 000 population aged less than 15 years)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Max	Min	Average
EU (*)	283	266	267	319	341	355	373	386	313	371	467	467	266	340
Belgium	630	573	626	755	750	871	887	897	718	889	937	937	573	776
Bulgaria	64	72	81	95	88	91	80	81	50	72	102	102	50	80
Czechia	322	356	350	648	689	398	430	731	362	451	404	731	322	467
Denmark	223	303	411	785	589	509	418	370	297	341	468	785	223	429
Germany	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	390	174	615	615	174	393
Estonia	211	181	182	192	193	146	190	294	249	353	323	353	146	229
Ireland (*)	7	10	13	43	55	28	21	46	17	26	23	55	7	26
Greece	367	264	317	524	780	440	534	573	265	421	537	780	264	457
Spain (*)	857	780	739	696	719	727	749	798	631	946	980	980	631	784
France (*)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	2	0	1
Croatia	.	.	.	48	39	51	50	60	62	115	127	127	39	69
Italy	331	292	265	466	523	590	605	524	408	840	846	846	265	517
Cyprus	.	.	.	345	374	471	634	531	328	663	1 946	1 946	328	662
Latvia	239	493	653	321	285	239	277	269	146	240	245	653	146	310
Lithuania	54	71	154	117	85	56	53	55	42	139	13	154	13	76
Luxembourg	.	864	.	.	1 054	1 173	1 212	1 322	943	1 228	1 602	1 602	864	1 175
Hungary (*)	73	84	172	146	103	70	108	119	101	124	169	172	70	115
Malta	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Netherlands	.	.	.	.	386	498	527	585	448	496	.	585	386	490
Austria	289	261	287	309	294	248	245	242	215	266	312	312	215	270
Poland	12	9	6	7	17	28	49	68	55	62	105	105	6	38
Portugal	396	303	313	286	268	363	546	863	893	633	836	893	268	518
Romania	24	26	26	29	31	25	28	31	20	29	31	31	20	27
Slovenia	387	470	631	523	540	650	763	1 257	1 109	1 135	1 214	1 257	387	789
Slovakia	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Finland	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	473	424	606	862	862	424	591
Sweden	1 075	1 151	1 168	1 276	1 305	1 645	1 631	1 325	1 031	906	795	1 645	795	1 210
Iceland	143	144	103	96	161	141	151	183	.	.	.	183	96	140
Liechtenstein	.	1 598	1 239	1 593	1 283	1 298	1 660	2 246	2 395	2 616	2 306	2 616	1 239	1 824
Norway	.	.	437	.	646	698	500	558	435	470	533	698	435	534
Switzerland	352	376	298	282	.	.	.	262	.	305	.	376	262	313

: data not available.

— not applicable.

(*) Based on available data for EU Member States for each year (as shown in the table).

(*) 2021 and 2022: low reliability.

(*) 2022: provisional.

(*) Children generally are not granted residence permits. 2021 and 2022: provisional.

(*) 2012–2015: definition differs.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: migr_resfas and demo_pjangroup)

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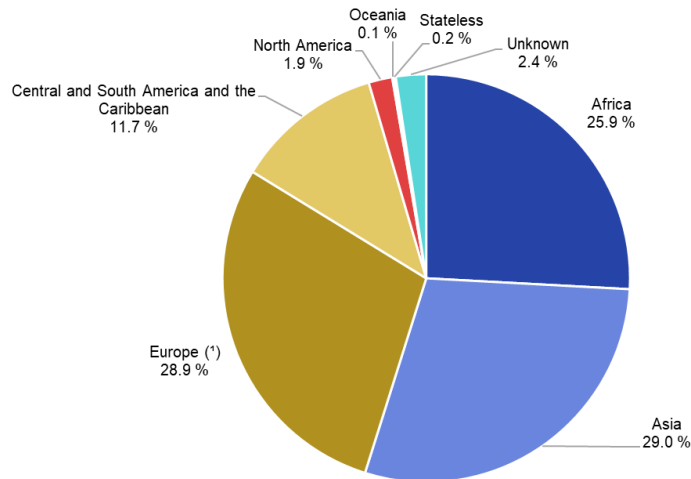
Table 2: Number of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 15 years relative to the population aged less than 15 years, 2012–2022 (per 100 000 population aged less than 15 years) Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas) and (demo_pjangroup)

Analysis of countries of citizenship: EU overview

Figure 4 provides a summary analysis (at a continental level) of countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued first residence permits for family reasons in the EU in 2022. The total was 326 599, of which Asia (29.0 %), Europe (28.9 %) and Africa (25.9 %) collectively accounted for 83.7 %. Central and South America and the Caribbean (11.7 %) and North America (1.9 %) collectively accounted for 13.6 %. The share of children aged less than 18 years who were citizens of countries of Oceania (0.1 %) was very low as was the share of children who were stateless (0.2 %; 526 permits). The share with unknown citizenship was 2.4 % (7 835 permits).

Distribution by continent of citizenship of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children less than 18 years, EU, 2022

(%)



Note: Malta and Slovakia, data not available due to derogations. The Netherlands, data not available. Including data of low reliability for Ireland and provisional data for France and Spain.

(*) Including recognised non-citizens.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_resfas)

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Figure 4: Distribution by continent of citizenship of first residence permits issued for family reasons to children less than 18 years, EU, 2022 (%) Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas)

Table 3 provides similar information to that in Figure 4 but includes also the top five countries of citizenship for the four continents with the largest shares.

- For Africa, the main country of citizenship was Morocco; its citizens aged less than 18 years received 39 569 first residence permits for family reasons in the EU in 2022, equivalent to 12.1 % of the overall total.
- For Asia, India (5.6 % of the total for all countries of citizenship) was the country with the highest number of citizens aged less than 18 years having been issued a first residence permit for family reasons in the EU in 2022; the next highest was Syria (4.4 %).
- For Europe, Albania (6.0 %) and Ukraine (5.1 %) were the two main countries whose citizens aged less than 18 years had been issued a first residence permit for family reasons in the EU in 2022.
- For Central and South America and the Caribbean, Brazil (3.1 %) recorded the largest number of its citizens aged less than 18 years having been issued a first residence permit for family reasons in the EU in 2022.

First residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years, by main geographical area of citizenship, EU, 2022

	Number	Share (%)		Number	Share (%)
Africa	84 430	25.9	Europe (*)	94 314	28.9
Morocco	39 569	12.1	Albania	19 675	6.0
Egypt	6 955	2.1	Ukraine	16 771	5.1
Nigeria	6 745	2.1	Russia	12 427	3.8
Senegal	4 222	1.3	Serbia	11 961	3.7
Tunisia	3 190	1.0	Bosnia and Herzegovina	7 064	2.2
Other African countries	23 749	7.3	Other European countries	26 416	8.1
Asia	94 754	29.0	Central and South America and the Caribbean	38 224	11.7
India	18 198	5.6	Brazil	10 184	3.1
Syria	14 251	4.4	Colombia	5 034	1.5
Pakistan	12 405	3.8	Peru	4 027	1.2
Bangladesh	7 675	2.3	Honduras	2 428	0.7
China including Hong Kong	7 123	2.2	Dominican Republic	2 328	0.7
Other Asian countries	35 102	10.7	Other Central, South American and Caribbean countries	14 223	4.4
North America	6 126	1.9	Stateless	526	0.2
Oceania	390	0.1	Unknown	7 835	2.4

Note: Malta and Slovakia, data not available due to derogations. The Netherlands, data not available. Including data of low reliability for Ireland and provisional data for France and Spain.

(*) Including recognised non-citizens.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_resfas)

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Table 3: First residence permits issued for family reasons to children aged less than 18 years, by main geographical area of citizenship, EU, 2022 Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas)

Table 4 shows a simple list of the countries of citizenship with the highest number of children aged less than 18 years having been granted a first residence permit for family reasons in the EU in 2022. Alongside the category of unknown citizenship, the 19 countries shown consisted of seven European countries, six Asian countries, three African countries, Brazil and Colombia from Central and South America and the Caribbean and the United States from North America.

Top 20 countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued with first residence permits for family reasons, EU, 2022

Country of citizenship	Number	Share (%)
Morocco	39 569	12.1
Albania	19 675	6.0
India	18 198	5.6
Ukraine	16 771	5.1
Syria	14 251	4.4
Russia	12 427	3.8
Pakistan	12 405	3.8
Serbia	11 961	3.7
Brazil	10 184	3.1
Unknown	7 835	2.4
Bangladesh	7 675	2.3
China including Hong Kong	7 123	2.2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7 064	2.2
Egypt	6 955	2.1
Türkiye	6 819	2.1
Nigeria	6 745	2.1
North Macedonia	5 828	1.8
United States	5 439	1.7
Colombia	5 034	1.5
Iraq	4 675	1.4
Stateless	526	0.2
Other countries	99 440	30.4
Total	326 599	100.0

Note: Malta and Slovakia, data not available due to derogations. The Netherlands, data not available. Including data of low reliability for Ireland and provisional data for France and Spain.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_resfas)

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Table 4: Top 20 countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued with first residence permits for family reasons, EU, 2022 Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas)

EU Member States as destinations

Some of the factors that may influence the destination chosen by non-EU citizens who are granted residence permits include:

- geographical proximity (for example, a high number of Moroccans sought residence in Spain);
- historical and linguistic links (for example, a high number of Brazilians, Angolans and Cape Verdeans sought residence in Portugal);
- established migrant networks (for example, a high number of citizens of Türkiye sought residence in Germany).

Table 5 contains a selection of the 10 largest countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued with first residence permits for family reasons. Each country shows the three largest EU Member States destinations in 2022 as well as a residual total for all other Member States. Table 6 reverses the perspective, showing for each EU Member State the five main countries of citizenship as well as a residual for all other countries of citizenship. The relative share of the residuals in each of these tables give an idea of the geographical diversity of flows related to the issuance of first residence permits for family reasons to children between country of citizenship and the host Member States.

When looking at the destination of children aged less than 18 years from the top 10 countries of citizenship in Table 5, the category of other Member States (as the destination) is below one-third (33.3 %) in six countries of citizenship – Morocco, Albania, Syria, Pakistan, Serbia and Brazil – as well as for the unknown country of citizenship. This indicated that their target destination focuses on a relatively small number of Member States. In the case of Syria, it can be noted that the top three destinations include Germany, Sweden and Belgium, each of which received a large share of Syrian asylum applicants during the migration crisis in 2015–2016. By contrast, the level of the residual category was highest for Russian children (at 48.5 % respectively), indicating a more diversified breakdown by country of destination.

Top 10 countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued with first residence permits for family reasons and their main destinations, EU, 2022

Country of citizenship	Top destination Member States	Number	Share (%)
Morocco	Spain	27 706	70.0
	Italy	9 478	24.0
	Belgium	1 337	3.4
	Other Member States	1 048	2.6
Albania	Italy	10 516	53.4
	Greece	5 175	26.3
	Germany	3 054	15.5
	Other Member States	930	4.7
India	Germany	5 218	28.7
	Italy	3 520	19.3
	Sweden	2 565	14.1
	Other Member States	6 895	37.9
Ukraine	Poland	4 084	24.4
	Italy	3 444	20.5
	Czechia	3 320	19.8
	Other Member States	5 923	35.3
Syria	Germany	12 007	84.3
	Sweden	835	5.9
	Belgium	775	5.4
	Other Member States	634	4.4
Country of citizenship	Top destination Member States	Number	Share (%)
Russia	Germany	2 412	19.4
	Cyprus	2 126	17.1
	Spain	1 856	14.9
	Other Member States	6 033	48.5
Pakistan	Spain	4 787	38.6
	Italy	3 098	25.0
	Sweden	1 559	12.6
	Other Member States	2 961	23.9
Serbia	Germany	9 900	82.8
	Austria	809	6.8
	Italy	287	2.4
	Other Member States	965	8.1
Brazil	Portugal	6 841	67.2
	Spain	965	9.5
	Germany	786	7.7
	Other Member States	1 592	15.6
Unknown	Belgium	4 651	59.4
	Germany	1 837	23.4
	Sweden	663	8.5
	Other Member States	684	8.7

Note: Malta and Slovakia, data not available due to derogations. The Netherlands, data not available. Including data of low reliability for Ireland and provisional data for France and Spain.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_resfas)

eurostat 

Table 5: Top 10 countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued with first residence permits for family reasons and their main destinations, EU, 2022 Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas)

By applying the same reasoning based upon the level of the other countries category, Table 6 provides information on the diversity of the citizenship of children issued with a first residence permit for family reasons in each EU Member State.

- In seven Member States – Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Finland and Sweden – the share of the residual category was above half (50.0 %).

- By contrast, also in seven Member States – Czechia, Greece, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia – the share of the residual category was below one-quarter (25.0 %).

Table 6 also reflects some specific links (such as economic, historical or proximity). For example, in Greece a high share of the first residence permits issued to children aged less than 18 years for family reasons were for Albanians (61.2 % of the Greek total). Equally, there were large shares for Russians (71.0 %) in Cyprus, Ukrainians (63.0 %) in Poland and Brazilians (51.8 %) in Portugal .

Top five countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued first residence permits for family reasons, 2022

Belgium			Bulgaria			Czechia			Denmark		
Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%
Unknown	4 651	23.9	Russia	511	44.6	Ukraine	3 320	44.4	India	1 220	26.2
Morocco	1 337	6.9	Ukraine	126	11.0	Vietnam	1 190	15.9	Ukraine	483	10.4
India	1 032	5.3	Türkiye	103	9.0	Mongolia	538	7.2	Iran	441	9.5
Palestine	784	4.0	Israel	36	3.1	Russia	388	5.2	United States	238	5.1
Syria	775	4.0	United States	29	2.5	India	288	3.9	China (*)	188	4.0
Other countries	10 920	56.0	Other countries	341	29.8	Other countries	1 746	23.4	Other countries	2 094	44.9

Germany			Estonia			Ireland (²)			Greece		
Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%
Syria	12 007	15.4	Ukraine	207	26.6	South Africa	105	26.2	Albania	5 175	61.2
Serbia	9 900	12.7	Russia	197	25.3	Brazil	51	12.7	China (*)	475	5.6
India	5 218	6.7	Belarus	52	6.7	Nigeria	32	8.0	Russia	332	3.9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3 782	4.8	India	41	5.3	Pakistan	26	6.5	Egypt	271	3.2
Türkiye	3 728	4.8	Nigeria	37	4.7	Moldova	17	4.2	Lebanon	239	2.8
Other countries	43 495	55.7	Other countries	245	31.5	Other countries	170	42.4	Other countries	1 970	23.3

Spain (³)			France (⁴)			Croatia			Italy		
Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%
Morocco	27 706	37.4	Morocco	39	11.7	Bosnia and Herzegovina	234	30.1	Albania	10 516	15.2
Pakistan	4 787	6.5	Tunisia	23	6.9	North Macedonia	107	13.8	Morocco	9 478	13.7
Colombia	4 298	5.8	Russia	20	6.0	Kosovo*	104	13.4	Bangladesh	5 265	7.6
Honduras	2 324	3.1	Türkiye	17	5.1	Russia	66	8.5	Egypt	4 776	6.9
China (*)	2 030	2.7	Afghanistan	17	5.1	Serbia	49	6.3	India	3 520	5.1
Other countries	32 987	44.5	Other countries	216	65.1	Other countries	218	28.0	Other countries	35 843	51.6

Cyprus			Latvia			Lithuania			Luxembourg		
Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%
Russia	2 126	71.0	Russia	397	47.7	Belarus	22	38.6	India	289	16.5
Belarus	195	6.5	Ukraine	89	10.7	Ukraine	16	28.1	Russia	100	5.7
Ukraine	148	4.9	Belarus	70	8.4	Russia	9	15.8	United States	93	5.3
Israel	135	4.5	Uzbekistan	54	6.5	Kazakhstan	2	3.5	Brazil	80	4.6
India	101	3.4	India	46	5.5	Iran	2	3.5	Montenegro	75	4.3
Other countries	288	9.6	Other countries	176	21.2	Other countries	6	10.5	Other countries	1 110	63.5

Hungary			Malta			Netherlands			Austria		
Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%
Russia	371	14.1	:	:	:	:	:	:	Serbia	809	18.2
Vietnam	346	13.1	:	:	:	:	:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	635	14.3	
Ukraine	257	9.8	:	:	:	:	:	North Macedonia	458	10.3	
India	217	8.2	:	:	:	:	:	Türkiye	380	8.5	
China (*)	191	7.2	:	:	:	:	:	Russia	232	5.2	
Other countries	1 253	47.6	:	:	:	:	:	Other countries	1 941	43.6	

Poland			Portugal			Romania			Slovenia		
Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%
Ukraine	4 084	63.0	Brazil	6 841	51.8	Moldova	201	18.8	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 890	45.3
Belarus	1 101	17.0	Angola	904	6.8	Türkiye	190	17.8	Kosovo*	914	21.9
India	276	4.3	Cabo Verde	575	4.4	United States	76	7.1	Unknown	593	14.2
Vietnam	219	3.4	India	510	3.9	China (*)	70	6.6	North Macedonia	296	7.1
Russia	186	2.9	Pakistan	488	3.7	Unknown	41	3.8	Serbia	203	4.9
Other countries	615	9.5	Other countries	3 898	29.5	Other countries	490	45.9	Other countries	278	6.7

Slovakia			Finland			Sweden			Liechtenstein		
Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%	Citizen of	Number	%
:	:	:	Russia	1 536	19.2	India	2 565	16.3	Switzerland	58	40.3
:	:	:	India	758	9.5	Pakistan	1 559	9.9	Kosovo*	10	6.9
:	:	:	Philippines	394	4.9	Eritrea	1 001	6.3	Dominican Republic	8	5.6
:	:	:	Sri Lanka	369	4.6	Syria	835	5.3	United States	7	4.9
:	:	:	Kosovo*	358	4.5	Unknown	663	4.2	Brazil	7	4.9
:	:	:	Other countries	4 568	57.2	Other countries	9 144	58.0	Other countries	54	37.5

Norway		
Citizen of	Number	%
Syria	792	14.9
India	650	12.2
Eritrea	453	8.5
Pakistan	281	5.3
Philippines	280	5.3
Other countries	2 853	53.7

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo

(¹) Including Hong Kong.

(²) Low reliability.

(³) Provisional.

(⁴) Children generally are not granted residence permits. Provisional.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_resfas)

eurostat 

Table 6: Top five countries of citizenship of children aged less than 18 years issued first residence permits for family reasons, 2022 Source: Eurostat (migr_resfas)

Source data for tables and graphs

- Children in migration – residence permits for family reasons: tables and figures

Data sources

Residence permits statistics

The statistics used for this article are provided to Eurostat by the responsible authorities in each of the EU Member States and EFTA countries, principally ministries of the interior / home affairs or various immigration agencies. The data are based entirely on administrative sources and are supplied to Eurostat as part of an annual residence permits data collection exercise according to the provisions of Article 6 of [Regulation \(EC\) No 862/2007](#) on Community statistics on migration and international protection. [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 216/2010](#) on Community statistics on migration and international protection, as regards the definitions of categories of the reasons for the residence permits, provides the list and definition of reasons for permits being issued.

Before the 2021 reference year, the analysis by age of the number of first residence permits was reported by EU Member States and EFTA countries on a voluntary basis. Starting with the 2021 reference period, there were several improvements in the data collection, including the methodological aspects. These changes were introduced through the implementation of [Regulation \(EU\) 851/2020](#) amending Regulation (EC) 862/2007. More details are available in the following document: [2021 Residence Permits Technical Guidelines](#).

Methodological notes

Data on residence permits are based on administrative and judicial decisions and, therefore, not directly comparable with international migration statistics² which are based on the concept of 'permanent residence' and include intra-EU immigration flows, the number of births and deaths of migrant population as well as emigration flows.

The EU totals presented in this article are calculated as the sum of the available data for EU Member States. Data for Malta and Slovakia not available due to derogations.

The data for France are relatively low in value as, in most cases, France does not issue residence permits to children aged less than 18 years and the minors who arrive can stay in France without a permit.

The "u" flag in Irish residence permit data highlights limited data quality reported by the Irish authorities. For the process of generating resident permits data that involves both the Irish Police and the Department of Justice an old information system is currently being used. The current system's limitations, which misses unique identifier of persons, require manual data checks, which may lead to potential quality issues. According to Irish authorities a comprehensive modernization programme of the information systems to ensure more accurate data management is in progress.

Context

The term 'children in migration' covers all children (persons aged less than 18 year) who are a) not citizens of an EU Member State and b) forcibly displaced or migrate to and within the EU. They may be with their (extended) family, with a non-family member (separated children) or alone; they may or may not be seeking asylum.

In recent years, the number of children in migration arriving in the EU, many of whom are unaccompanied, has increased dramatically, particularly in 2015 and 2016. Besides asylum applicants, a substantial number of non-EU children migrate for family reasons.

Protecting children is primarily about upholding European values of respect for human rights, dignity and solidarity. This is why protecting all children in migration, regardless of status and at all stages of migration, is a priority. The EU Member States and the EU, with the support of the relevant EU agencies (European Border and Coast Guard Agency; European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)), have been active in this area for many years. The existing EU policies and legislation provide a solid framework for the protection of the rights of children in migration covering all aspects including reception conditions, the treatment of their applications and integration.

²See the summary of methodology for [demography, population stock and balance](#) .

The protection of children in migration starts by addressing the root causes which lead so many to embark on perilous journeys to Europe. This means addressing the persistence of violent and often protracted conflicts, forced displacements, inequalities in living standards, limited economic opportunities, and access to basic services through sustained efforts to eradicate poverty and deprivation and to develop integrated child protection systems in non-EU countries. The EU and the Member States have stepped up efforts to establish a comprehensive external policy framework to reinforce cooperation with partner countries in mainstreaming child protection at global, regional and bilateral levels. The EU is fully committed to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which calls for a world in which all children grow up free from violence and exploitation, have their rights protected and have access to quality education and health care. The 2015 Valletta Summit's political declaration and its [action plan](#) called for the prevention of and the fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings (with a specific focus on women and children).

In the EU [Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child](#) renew the EU's commitment to promote and protect the indivisibility of the rights of the child in its relations with non-EU countries, including countries of origin or transit. In this context, the [Council](#) reaffirmed the need to protect all refugee and migrant children, regardless of their status, and give primary consideration at all times to the best interests of the child, including unaccompanied children and those separated from their families, in full compliance with the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and its optional protocols. In April 2021, the European Commission presented a new [EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings \(2021–2025\)](#) .

Within the [European Commission](#) , the [Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs](#) is responsible for immigration policy, whereas the [Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers](#) is in charge of child policy. All information regarding the EU's migration and asylum policies can be accessed on the [European Commission's website](#) . Recent developments for the EU's overall immigration policy can be found in the [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) .

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