People in the EU - statistics on origin of residents

This is one of a set of statistical articles that forms Eurostat’s flagship publication People in the EU: who are we and how do we live?; it presents a range of statistics that cover the cultural diversity of the population living in the European Union (EU).

A paper edition of the publication was released in 2015. In late 2017, a decision was taken to update the online version of the publication (subject to data availability). Readers should note that while many of the statistical sources that have been used in People in the EU: who are we and how do we live? have been revised since its initial 2015 release, this was not the case for the population and housing census, as a census is only conducted once every 10 years across the majority of the EU Member States. As a result, the analyses presented often jump between the latest reference period — generally 2015 or 2016 — and historical values for 2011 that reflect the last time a census was conducted.

General overview

Beyond its intrinsic value, cultural diversity has the potential to contribute to economic growth, job creation, innovation and competitiveness. With freedom of movement across the EU, its residents have a broad range of options to expand their horizons and to increase their social and cultural interactions through study, work, travel for business or for leisure, as well as shopping across borders.

The EU promotes intercultural dialogue, the exchange of views and opinions between different cultures, and diversity across European society, encompassing linguistic, political, religious, ethnic and sexuality differences. Language provides a good example of the wide range of diversity in the EU, insofar as there are 24 official languages and more than 60 regional and minority languages, together with more than 100 migrant languages.

History provides evidence as to the importance of protecting minorities and allowing different identities to flourish. EU policies promote a pluralistic approach, human rights and equality with the goal of ensuring an open, tolerant and equal society for all.

Within the context of this article, cultural differences are analysed through a comparison of migration statistics, using information broken down by citizenship and by place of birth to provide a more detailed description of a range of socioeconomic measures. Migration is influenced by a combination of economic, political and social factors: either in a migrant’s country of origin (push factors) or in the country of destination (pull factors). Historically, the relative economic prosperity and political stability of the EU are thought to have exerted a considerable pull effect on immigrants. In destination countries, international migration may be used as a tool to solve specific labour market shortages. However, migration alone will almost certainly not reverse the ongoing trend of population ageing currently being experienced in many parts of the EU.

In 2016, EU-28 migrants from other EU Member States were outnumbered by those from countries outside the EU . . .

Eurostat’s migration statistics provide information in relation to population distributions by place of birth (see Figure 1). In 2016, the latest figures suggest that more than 9 out of every 10 persons living in the EU-28 had been born in the country where they were living, with some 4.1 % of the total number of inhabitants born outside the EU and 3.1 % born in another EU Member State; the share of the EU-28 population that was stateless or unknown was marginal (0.04 %) in size.

A closer analysis by EU Member State reveals that there were considerable differences in the composition of the different populations, with the native-born population barely accounting for a majority of the population in Luxembourg (53.3 % of the total number of inhabitants), whereas the native-born population accounted for at least 99.0 % of the population in Croatia, Lithuania, Romania and Poland.

Figure 1: Population, by place of birth, 2016(% share of total population)Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

... although in 2011, a majority of the foreign-born people living in EU Member States were from elsewhere in Europe

According to the population and housing census, there were almost 51 million people resident in the EU-28 in 2011 who had been born outside of the Member State where they were living (excluding stateless persons and those whose place of birth was unknown), representing approximately 10 % of the EU-28 population.

Figure 2 shows that Europeans accounted for approximately half of all the foreign-born people who were resident in an EU Member State. More than one third (36.9 %) of foreign-born residents — some 18.8 million persons — were born in other EU Member States, while 7.4 million (14.6 %) were born in other European countries from outside of the EU; as such, Europeans (born in other EU Member States and non-member countries) accounted for more than half (51.5 %) of the total number of foreign-born people living in the EU-28’s Member States in 2011. Residents in EU Member States who were born in Asia made up 20.6 % of the foreign-born total, while
EU residents born in Africa accounted for 16.9 % of the total and residents born in the Caribbean, Central and South America made up 8.7 %. There were relatively small shares for those born in North America (1.7 %) and Oceania (0.6 %).

The EU Member States have a long tradition of receiving immigrants from other European countries and considerably further afield. For example, post-war immigration in Belgium saw a flow of migrant workers from Italy, Portugal and Spain to work in the industrial economy, while in the United Kingdom migrants from the Indian sub-continent or the Caribbean contributed to economic regeneration in the 1960s. More recently, there have been substantial migrant flows between EU Member States following successive expansions of the EU, while political instability, wars and human rights abuses have resulted in an increasing flow of migrants from outside the EU many of whom seek asylum.

Figure 2: Foreign-born residents, by place of birth, EU-28, 2011(% share of all foreign-born residents)
Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz) and (Census hub HC15)

Foreign-born residents from countries outside the EU

Table 1 provides more information from the population and housing census in relation to the 20 largest foreign-born communities living across the EU Member States in 2011. It focuses on EU residents who were born in non-member countries (in other words, those outside the EU). This information covers the stock of foreign-born residents and not the flow of migrants for a single year; for more information on the latter, please refer to an article on Changing places — geographic mobility.

In 2011, the Moroccan community was the largest foreign-born community in the EU

In 2011, the top 20 foreign-born communities from outside the EU numbered 18.5 million residents in the EU-28, which was equivalent to 3.7 % of the total EU-28 population. These 20 communities together accounted for 58.3 % of the foreign-born residents from outside of the EU.

The largest foreign-born community from a country outside of the EU was composed of EU residents born in Morocco. There were 2.3 million people born in Morocco who lived in the EU-28 in 2011, which equated to 7.2 % of all foreign-born residents from non-member countries or 0.5 % of the total EU-28 population. The largest Moroccan community in any of the EU Member States was in France, although Moroccan-born residents in Belgium accounted for a higher share of the total population.

The second and third largest foreign-born communities resident in the EU-28 were composed of people born in Turkey and Russia (2.1 million and 1.8 million persons), while there were in excess of one million residents.
living in the EU originating from each of Algeria, Ukraine and India. It is interesting to note that there were more Chinese-born residents living in the EU-28 (826 thousand) than American-born residents (584 thousand).

Table 1: Largest 20 foreign-born communities living in the EU-28, 2011

Source: Eurostat (Census hub HC28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born in</th>
<th>Persons born outside the EU living in the EU-28 (thousands)</th>
<th>Share of all persons born outside the EU living in the EU-28 (%)</th>
<th>Share of total EU-28 population (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>2,287</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>2,076</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1,912</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>1,511</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1,091</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,002</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>626</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>584</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>522</td>
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<td>Ecuador</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat (Census hub HC28)

Marriages

This next section analyses one particular aspect of demographic diversity, namely, the proportion of marriages where at least one of the spouses is of a different nationality to the country in which they reside.

In 2015, marriages involving at least one foreigner accounted for 10.5 % of all marriages in the EU

Eurostat’s annual demography data collection provides information on, among others, marriages and divorces. Slightly fewer than 9 out of every 10 (89.5 %) marriages that took place in 2015 in the EU-28 were formed by a bride and groom who were both nationals of the EU Member State in which they were married, while 4.7 % of marriages involved a foreign bride, 3.7 % a foreign groom, and 2.1 % both a foreign bride and a foreign groom. Note that this information is based on data for only 21 of the EU Member States and excludes Germany, France and the United Kingdom (see Figure 3 for coverage).

Luxembourg was the only EU Member State where marriages between a bride and groom who were both nationals accounted for less than half (37.9 %) of all marriages, while such marriages accounted for fewer than four out of every five marriages in Malta, Latvia and Slovenia (59.2 %, 79.4 % and 79.7 % respectively). By contrast, more than 19 out of every 20 marriages in Hungary and Poland were formed by spouses who were both nationals of the Member State where the marriage took place.

The proportion of marriages between spouses from different EU Member States may be expected to increase as a result of increased integration, freedom of movement, as well as cross-border labour and education opportunities. A very low proportion of marriages in most of the Member States that joined the EU since 2004 involved two foreign spouses. With the exception of Croatia, the proportion of marriages that involved a foreign groom was higher than the proportion involving a foreign bride in each of the Member States that joined the EU since 2004; this pattern was particularly apparent in the Baltic Member States and Slovakia. By contrast, with the exception of Finland, a higher proportion of marriages involved foreign brides in those EU Member States that were already members of the EU before 2004.
Foreign-born residents from another EU Member State

In 2016, almost 40 % of all residents in Luxembourg had been born in another EU Member State

As presented in Figure 1, some 3.1 % of the EU-28’s population was born in another EU Member State. In 2016, residents that were born in another EU Member State accounted for more than 1 in 25 residents in Spain (4.2 %), Germany (4.6 %) and the United Kingdom (4.9 %), for more than 1 in 20 residents in Austria (7.1 %), Belgium (7.7 %) and Ireland (8.1 %), and for more than 1 in 10 residents in Cyprus (12.9 %). However, by far the highest share was recorded in Luxembourg, where almost 4 out of 10 residents (39.8 %) were born in another EU Member State. By contrast, less than 1 % of the residents in each of Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Romania and Poland were born in another EU Member State.

In 2011, more than one tenth of those born in Cyprus, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland and Romania lived abroad in another EU Member State . . .

The population and housing census also provides information on foreign-born residents living in the EU. This may be used to analyse the opposing situation, namely, the share of the native-born population who had emigrated to live abroad in another EU Member State. In 2011, those residents born in one EU Member State but living in another accounted for 3.7 % of the EU-28’s population (see Figure 4). This share peaked at 12.8 % for Cyprus and 12.5 % for Romania, while double-digit shares were also recorded for emigrants born in Ireland, Luxembourg and Poland. By contrast, the five largest EU Member States in population terms — Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain — recorded some of the lowest shares of their native-born populations choosing to live abroad in another Member State, their share stood at 2.1 % for Germany (the highest among the five largest Member States), falling to 1.2 % for Spain. Among the other EU Member States, Denmark (2.1 %) and Sweden (1.6 %) also reported a relatively low share of their native-born populations living abroad in other EU Member States.
Figure 4: Native-born population living in another EU Member State, 2011 (% share of total population) Source: Eurostat (Census hub HC28)

... while more than one in five of those EU residents born in one but living in another EU Member State originated from Poland

Following the fall of communism in much of Eastern Europe, a new wave of migration into the EU from eastern neighbours began; this became more pronounced following successive enlargements of the EU, as people from the new Member States could progressively circulate freely within the EU.

According to the population and housing census, more than one fifth (22.0 %) of all the residents born in one of the EU Member States and living in another EU Member State originated from Poland (see Figure 5). This was considerably more than the shares recorded for those born in Romania (13.7 %) or Germany (8.9 %), while France, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Italy each accounted for 5.2 %–6.2 % of the residents born in one EU Member State and living in another. By contrast, there were eight (relatively small) Member States that accounted for less than 1 % of the total number of residents born in one EU Member State and living in another: Sweden, Latvia, Denmark, Cyprus, Slovenia, Estonia, Luxembourg and Malta.
In 2011, there were 2.7 million Polish-born residents living in Germany...

Table 2 — also based on information from the population and housing census — provides information on the main communities of people born in one EU Member State and living in another. In 2011, the 20 largest communities of such residents collectively numbered just over 10.0 million persons, equivalent to more than half (53.3 %) of the total number of residents born in one Member State and living in another.

By far the largest community, in absolute terms, was the Polish-born community living in Germany (2.7 million persons), while there were an additional 654 thousand Polish-born residents in the United Kingdom (the fourth largest such community).

Several EU Member States that were traditionally countries of emigration have in recent years started to receive immigrants. This is particularly the case in Italy and Spain, in part due to a flow of migrants across the Mediterranean Sea, but also as a result of internal flows of migrants born elsewhere in the EU: the second and third largest communities of people born in one Member State and living in another were Romanian-born residents living in Italy (769 thousand) and Spain (691 thousand). The only other such community that numbered in excess of half a million residents was the Portuguese-born community living in France (617 thousand).

... while three quarters of the residents living in the Czech Republic who were born in another EU Member State originated from Slovakia

The information presented in Table 2 also provides details of the largest such communities in relative terms, in other words, as a share of the total number of residents living in the reporting country having been born in another EU Member State. The ranking is unsurprisingly often characterised by pairs of neighbouring countries. For example, almost three quarters (74.8 %) of all residents in the Czech Republic who were born in another Member State were born in Slovakia; this was the highest share among the Member States in 2011. The next
four country pairings were also neighbours: Croatian-born residents living in Slovenia, Czech-born residents living in Slovakia, Romanian-born residents living in Hungary, and Lithuanian-born residents living in Latvia; each accounting for shares of between 65% and 70% of all residents born in another Member State.

There were, however, some exceptions to the rule, as people born in the United Kingdom accounted for almost 6 out of 10 (59.5%) of the total number of residents living in Malta who were born in another EU Member State, many of whom were retirees. In a similar vein: almost half (49.1%) of the residents who were born in another EU Member State who lived in Italy were born in Romania, while the share of Romanians in Spain’s population of residents who were born in another EU Member State was just over one third (36.5%); almost half (47.7%) of all the residents living in Croatia who were born in another EU Member State were born in Germany, as were just over one third (34.6%) of the residents who were born in another EU Member State who lived in Greece; close to half (45.3%) of the residents living in Portugal who were born in another EU Member State were born in France; just over one third (37.8%) of the residents living in Luxembourg who were born in another EU Member State were from Portugal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>People living in ...</th>
<th>... but born in</th>
<th>In absolute numbers</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>People living in ...</th>
<th>... but born in</th>
<th>As a relative share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>2,746,070</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>74.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
<td>789,634</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>99.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>693,955</td>
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<td>Slovakia</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
<td>656,010</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: subject to data availability; some values are confidential. (*) Reading note: people born in Slovakia made up 74.8% of the population living in the Czech Republic who were born in another EU Member State.

Table 2: Largest 20 communities of people born in one EU Member State and living in another, 2011 Source: Eurostat (Census hub HC28)

Activity rates by place of birth

Having established some general patterns of cultural diversity in relation to the distribution of foreign-born and EU-born populations, this article continues by analysing a range of socioeconomic factors according to the place of birth, starting with the economic activity status of the resident population. According to the population and housing census, just over half (51.9%) of the native-born population of the EU-28 in 2011 was economically inactive (for example studying, retired or not working for some other reason), while 42.7% were employed and 5.1% unemployed.

In 2011, a higher share of the EU-28’s foreign-born (compared with its native-born) population was in employment

Migration policies within the EU in relation to citizens of non-member countries are increasingly concerned with attracting migrants with particular profiles, often in an attempt to alleviate particular skills shortages. Selection criteria include, for example, language proficiency, work experience or educational qualifications. Alternatively, employers may directly select immigrants, who then migrate with a job available upon arrival.

Across the whole of the EU-28, the share of foreign-born residents who were employed was systematically higher than for native-born residents. In 2011, this proportion reached two thirds (66.7%) for residents of EU Member States who were born in Oceania, and was also greater than 50% among residents of EU Member States who were born in Asia. The lowest proportions were recorded for those born in another EU Member State (45.2%) and those born in Africa (44.8%); in both cases these shares remained higher than for the
native-born population (42.7%).

The data presented in Figure 6 relates to the whole of the foreign-born population. It should be borne in mind that many foreign-born migrants decide to move residence when they are relatively young adults (often without a family) and some may decide to return to their country of birth when they are approaching or have reached retirement; the impact of this is to push up the share of economically active people (employed or unemployed) among the foreign-born population. By contrast, some people may decide to move residence in their retirement, and the impact of this is to push down the share of economically active people among the foreign-born population of the destination country.

During the period 2006-2016, EU-28 activity rates were systematically higher for the population born in another EU Member State than they were for the native-born population.

Figure 7 provides an analysis of activity rates for those persons of working age (15-64 years), according to their place of birth; note that this information comes from the EU’s labour force survey (EU-LFS). During the period 2006 to 2016, the activity rate for residents of one EU Member State who had been born in another was consistently higher — generally by 4-5 percentage points — than the activity rates recorded for either the native-born population or the population born in countries outside the EU. It is interesting to note that during the global financial and economic crisis, the activity rate of people born in one EU Member State but living in another continued to increase (as did the rate for native-born residents), while there was a reduction in the activity rate of those born in countries outside of the EU.
Female activity rates

Women and men have a range of rights in the EU, such as: the right to freely and consensually choose a spouse; parental rights to a child irrespective of marital status; or the right to choose a profession/occupation when in work. Despite the considerable progress that has been made, gender inequalities persist, perhaps nowhere more so than in the workplace: for example, women continue to experience a gender pay gap and they often have low levels of representation in positions of power, such as within senior management or in government (which may also impact on the level of harassment they experience in the workplace).

Female activity rates in 2016 were lower than male activity rates, with this gender gap linked to some extent to family and care activities, often referred to as the 'supportive environment', which tends to affect people's availability and/or willingness, to participate in the labour force. This is especially the case in those EU Member States where traditional family units continue to thrive and/or where care services are lacking or do not meet the needs of (full-time) working parents, with women tending to decrease their paid working hours when they are parents, while men tend to increase theirs.

In 2016, female activity rates for women born in countries outside the EU were generally low

Figure 8 (which is also based on information from the EU-LFS) shows that EU-28 female activity rates for those aged 15-64 years were highest in 2016 among women born in another EU Member State (72.0 %), while the activity rates of native-born women (67.7 %) and women born in a country outside the EU (61.0 %) were much lower. Women born in countries outside the EU may face a range of issues that explain their relatively low levels of economic activity, among which: migrating under family reunification provisions (which may involve constraints on employment rights); lower levels of educational attainment and language barriers; different cultural practices that highlight a women’s role at home; higher fertility rates; and various obstacles in accessing information about childcare services that are available and rights to use such services.
The gap in activity rates between native-born women and women born outside of the EU was greatest in the EU Member States characterised by some of the highest female activity rates, namely, the Nordic Member States, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, France and the United Kingdom. In each of these cases, the activity rate for native-born women in 2016 was at least 10 percentage points higher than that for women born outside the EU.

By contrast, in the southern EU Member States — where activity rates for native-born women tended to be much lower — it was common to find activity rates for women born outside the EU were higher; this was particularly true in Portugal, Greece, Cyprus and Malta. In Portugal, the activity rate for women born outside the EU was 77.1 %, which was the highest rate recorded among any of the EU Member States.

![Figure 8: Female activity rates for women aged 15-64, by place of birth, 2016(%)Source: Eurostat (lfsa_argacob)](image)

**Employment status by place of birth**

Figure 9 provides an analysis by place of birth of the employment status of working people in the EU-28 in 2011; it is based on data from the population and housing census. It shows the employment status of foreign-born residents varied as a function of where they were born. For each group, employees accounted for the overwhelming majority of the workforce (more than four out of every five persons): their shares were highest among people living in EU Member States but born in the Caribbean, Central and South America (88.5 %), Africa or European countries outside of the EU (both 88.2 %), while employees accounted for an 84.5 % share of the native-born workforce. Residents of EU Member States born in Oceania (13.6 %) and North America (13.1 %) had a relatively high propensity to be own-account workers when compared with the EU Member States’
native-born workforce (9.1 %), while residents born in Asia (6.0 %) or in North America (5.6 %) were more likely to be employers than the EU Member States’ native-born workforce (4.9 %). The employment status of residents in an EU Member State who were born in another EU Member State closely resembled that of native-born residents.

Figure 9: People in employment, by employment status and by place of birth, EU-28, 2011(% share)
Source: Eurostat (Census hub HC33)

According to the population and housing census, a higher proportion of foreign-born residents living in the EU-28 were in some form of employment (52.6 %) than the corresponding share for the native-born population (46.4 % were in some form of employment). Given that relatively few persons are employers or working on their own-account, the most striking aspect of the analysis presented in Figure 10 concerns the differences in the proportion of the foreign-born and native-born populations that are employees and those that are not in employment.

On the one hand, there was a group of EU Member States where a higher proportion of the foreign-born population (compared with the native-born population) were employees and a lower proportion was not in employment. This was particularly the case in the southern EU Member States of Spain, Cyprus, Portugal, Malta, Italy, and Greece, as well as in Ireland, Slovenia and Luxembourg.

On the other hand, a second group of EU Member States were characterised by their foreign-born population displaying a relatively high share of people not in employment and a lower proportion of employees. These differences were most pronounced in Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic, and to a lesser degree in Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Bulgaria, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.
Figure 10: Population, by employment status and by place of birth, 2011(% share)Source: Eurostat (Census hub HC33)
Occupation by place of birth

As noted above, migration policy within the EU for citizens of non-member countries is increasingly concerned with attracting migrants with particular profiles; note that while such policies may impact on new migrant arrivals, they are unlikely to affect those migrants already permanently resident within the EU.

In 2011, just over one fifth of foreign-born residents had elementary occupations (such as being labourers or cleaners)

Table 3 (also based on data from the population and housing census) provides information on the occupations of native-born and foreign-born residents. In 2011, the most striking difference between these two subpopulations was recorded in relation to people who had elementary occupations. Just over one fifth (20.6 %) of all the foreign-born residents living in EU Member States who were in employment carried out elementary occupations such as being a cleaner, agricultural or construction labourer, food preparation assistant, or refuse worker; this could be compared with less than one tenth (9.7 %) of the native-born workforce.

Workers in elementary occupations accounted for a particularly high share of the foreign-born workforce in Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, Spain, Luxembourg, Denmark and Germany, as their shares of the foreign-born workforce were at least 10 percentage points higher than within the native-born workforce.

A REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF ELEMENTARY OCCUPATIONS

The population and housing census provides more detailed information at the level of NUTS level 2 regions. This shows (subject to data availability; no information for Belgium or Austria) that there were eight regions in the EU with a higher absolute number of foreign-born residents (compared with native-born residents) who were employed in elementary occupations. These eight regions included: the Swedish capital region of Stockholm; two Greek regions (Peloponnisos and the capital region of Attiki), the French overseas region of Guayane; the capital and neighbouring region of Inner and Outer London in the United Kingdom; as well as Cyprus and Luxembourg (both single regions at this level of detail). In Luxembourg, the number of foreign-born residents with an elementary occupation was almost three times as high as the number of native-born residents with an elementary occupation.

The share of foreign-born residents with an elementary occupation was higher than the corresponding share among native-born residents in 209 out of the 252 NUTS level 2 regions for which data are available (again, no information for Belgium or Austria). The gap between these two shares was highest in three southern regions of the EU, namely, Sterea Ellada (Greece), Lombardia and Emilia-Romagna (both Italy); in all three cases the share of foreign-born residents with an elementary occupation was at least 20 percentage points higher than the corresponding share among native-born residents.

By contrast, some 15.4 % of the EU Member States’ native-born workforce was employed as a technician or associate professional, which was 4.5 percentage points higher than the corresponding share for the foreign-born workforce. Equally, a higher proportion of the native-born workforce was occupied as clerical support workers (3.3 percentage points difference) and professionals (2.7 points). Professional occupations cover, among others, scientists, engineers, health and teaching professionals, business and administration professionals, information and communications technology professionals, legal professionals, journalists and linguists. However, there were a number of EU Member States where a considerably higher proportion of the foreign-born workforce (compared to the native-born workforce) had a professional occupation, principally, Romania (16.5 percentage points difference), Poland (13.2 points), Hungary (6.9 points) and Bulgaria (6.3 points).

In 2011, some 17.8 % of the foreign-born workers in Bulgaria were managers . . .

According to the population and housing census, managers accounted for 5.4 % of the foreign-born workforce in the EU-28 in 2011. The relative share of managers in the foreign-born workforce was considerably higher in several of the EU Member States, rising to 17.8 % in Bulgaria, while it was also higher than 10.0 % in Malta, Romania, Poland, Latvia and the United Kingdom.
Figure 11 provides a contrasting analysis, showing the relative share of native-born and foreign-born managers in the total number of managers by EU Member State. In 2011, just less than 1 in 10 of all managers in the EU (no information available for Belgium and Austria) were foreign-born, with 6.2 % of the total born in a country outside the EU and 3.6 % born in another EU Member State.

... while more than half the managers in Luxembourg were born in another EU Member State.

The relative share of foreign-born managers (from the EU or from non-member countries) was less than 5.0 % in Hungary, Denmark, Slovakia, Finland, Bulgaria, Romania and Poland; in the latter, foreign-born managers accounted for just 1.0 % of the total number of managers. The majority of the EU Member States reported that foreign-born managers accounted for between 5.0 % and 15.0 % of all managers, although there were somewhat higher shares in Croatia (17.6 %), Ireland (19.0 %) and Cyprus (20.1 %). The pattern in Luxembourg was atypical insofar as a large majority (62.1 %) of managers were foreign-born, with more than half (51.5 %) of the total having been born in another EU Member State.

Luxembourg was one of only eight EU Member States where the share of foreign-born managers from other EU Member States was higher than the corresponding share for foreign-born managers from outside the EU. This difference was also quite large in Ireland, where managers born in another EU Member State accounted for 14.7 % of the total number of managers, compared with 4.3 % among those born in a foreign country outside the EU. The other six Member States that recorded much smaller differences (not greater than 2.1 percentage points) were: Malta, Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Finland and Sweden.
The information presented in Figure 12 and in Table 4 complements that already shown for occupations, insofar as it refers to the economic activities (by NACE) where foreign-born and native-born residents were employed in 2011; it is also derived from the population and housing census.

In 2011, a higher proportion of the native-born workforce was working in the public administrations of most EU Member States.

One quarter (25.0%) of the EU Member States’ native-born population who were in employment in 2011 were working within public administration, defence, education, health and social work; this equated to 51.2 million persons. By contrast, there were 4.9 million foreign-born residents who were working in the same economic activities, equivalent to 18.9% of the foreign-born workforce. The difference in the relative shares of these two subgroups — 6.1 percentage points — was the largest recorded for any of the activities analysed in Figure 12.
A more detailed analysis, by EU Member State, is provided in Table 4. This shows that a slightly higher share of the foreign-born workforce (compared with the native-born workforce) was employed in public administration, defence, education, and healthcare in Romania, Slovakia, and Sweden, with the difference rising to 2.4 percentage points in Poland. By contrast, in all of the remaining Member States, the share of the native-born workforce employed in public administration, defence, education, and social work was higher, with a gap of more than 10 percentage points in Spain, Greece, Cyprus, and Luxembourg, where almost half (46.7%) of the native-born workforce was working in these activities. These figures suggest that in some of the EU Member States there may be considerable — formal or informal — barriers which prevent foreign-born residents being employed in these largely public sector activities.

A higher proportion of the EU Member States’ native-born workforce (compared with their foreign-born workforce) was also employed in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (a difference of 2.1 percentage points), industry (1.5 points), financial and insurance activities (0.9 points), and information and communications (0.1 point). By contrast, higher shares of the foreign-born workforce were employed in various service activities and in the construction sector.

In the Baltic Member States and Germany, a relatively high share of the foreign-born workforce was employed within the industrial economy. In 2011, these activities accounted for 21–22% of the foreign-born workforce in Latvia and Lithuania and for close to 28% in Estonia and Germany, while the share of the foreign-born workforce employed in industrial activities was 3.6 percentage points higher than for the native-born workforce in Lithuania, 4.0 points higher in Latvia, 5.3 points higher in Germany, peaking at 7.4 points higher in Estonia. Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Greece were the only other EU Member States where a higher proportion of foreign-born residents were employed within the industrial economy, although the shares for the native-born workforce were never more than 2 percentage points lower.

In 2011, the aggregate heading covering distributive trades, transport, accommodation, and food services provided employment to just less than one quarter (23.4%) of the native-born workforce in the EU-28. The share of the foreign-born workforce employed in these activities was somewhat higher, at 27.1%. This pattern of a higher share of the foreign-born workforce being employed in distributive trades, transport, accommodation, and food services was repeated in all but three of the EU Member States, the exceptions being Slovenia, Greece, and Slovakia. In a majority (18) of the Member States, between 20% and 30% of the foreign-born workforce was employed in distributive trades, transport, accommodation, and food services, with the share of these activities rising to more than 30% in the remaining 10 Member States.
Evidence presented earlier in this article concerning the occupations and economic activities in which foreign-born residents work appears to suggest that it remains relatively difficult for foreign-born residents to convert their educational attainment into occupations generally associated with higher qualifications, and that a considerable proportion of foreign-born residents may therefore be overqualified in their jobs.

In 2016, a higher share of foreign-born (compared with native-born) residents possessed a tertiary level of educational attainment. In 2016, the gap between the proportion of foreign-born and native-born residents with a tertiary level of educational attainment peaked at 23.9 percentage points in Bulgaria, while much higher shares of foreign-born residents possessed a tertiary level of educational attainment in Luxembourg (a difference of 19.2 percentage points), Ireland (16.5 points), the United Kingdom (12.8 points), Poland (11.8 points) and Portugal (10.6 points).
and there were an additional eight EU Member States where a higher share of foreign-born residents possessed a tertiary level of educational attainment.

By contrast, there were 12 EU Member States where a higher proportion of native-born (rather than foreign-born) residents had attained a tertiary level of education; these included Spain, Germany, France and Italy. However, the largest gaps in educational attainment were recorded in Finland (where the share for native-born residents was 9.4 percentage points higher), Greece (11.3 points) and Slovenia (15.4 points).

![Figure 13: Tertiary educational attainment for people aged 25-74, by place of birth, 2016(%) share](Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9912))

North Eastern Scotland recorded the highest share of foreign-born residents possessing a tertiary level of educational attainment in 2011.

A regional analysis for the same indicator is provided in Map 1; note that the source of this information is the population and housing census and that the information presented is for 2011 and covers people aged 25 years and over (rather than people aged 25-74 years). The map confirms, to some degree, the results shown in Figure 13 insofar as many of the regions with very high levels of tertiary education attainment for foreign-born residents were located in Ireland, the United Kingdom and Bulgaria; the lower share in Luxembourg may be explained, at least to some degree, by economic migrants deciding to leave Luxembourg after having completed their working lives.

Looking in more detail, the NUTS level 2 region with the highest share of tertiary educational attainment among foreign-born residents in 2011 was North Eastern Scotland, which includes the city of Aberdeen which provides support to much of the British offshore oil and gas activity. More than four fifths (81.6 %) of its foreign-born residents possessed a tertiary level of educational attainment. It was followed by the neighbouring region of Eastern Scotland — which includes Edinburgh — where a ratio of 77.7 % was reported.
There were eight NUTS level 2 regions in the EU-28 where fewer than 10% of the foreign-born residents had a tertiary level of educational attainment in 2011, which were: four regions from the Czech Republic (Jihozapad, Severovychod, Moravskoslezsko and Severozapad), two Polish regions (Lubuskie and Opolskie), the Ciudad Autonoma de Melilla (Spain) and the French overseas region of Guyane; the latter had the lowest share in the EU-28 at 6.2%.
Foreign-born persons aged 25 and over with a tertiary level of educational attainment, by NUTS level 2 region, 2011 (% share)

Map 1: Foreign-born persons aged 25 and over with a tertiary level of educational attainment, by NUTS level 2 region, 2011 (% share) Source: Eurostat (Census hub HC34 and HC55)
Source data for tables and graphs

- Native diversity — residents’ origin: tables and figures

Other articles

- All articles from People in the EU: who are we and how do we live?

Main tables

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Database

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- Demographic statistics: a review of definitions and methods of collection in 44 European countries
- Legislation relevant for population statistics

External links

- European website on intercultural dialogue
- European website on diversity management
- European website on integration
- European Commission — Directorate-General for home affairs — Migration
- European Commission — Directorate-General for home affairs — Common European asylum system

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