You will find below definitions of some terms used on the EU Immigration Portal. Words are presented in alphabetical order; you can click directly on any letter below to find all words starting by that letter. For other definitions on migration you can visit the [European Migration Network Glossary](https://ec.europa.eu/immigration/).

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

- **A**
  - *Alien*
    A person who is not a citizen of an EU country

- **Application**
  A formal request submitted to the competent authorities accompanied by the required documents for entry and stay in an EU country

- **B**
  - *Bachelor's Degree*
    An academic degree conferred by a college or university upon those who complete the undergraduate curriculum

- **Biometric passport**
  Biometric passports and travel documents are integrated with identifiers that establish a reliable link between the genuine holder and the document. These identifiers consist of a facial image and fingerprints. The integration of biometrics in passports and travel documents helps to improve document security and to prevent falsification of documents

- **Border (external EU)**
  The land borders of EU countries with non-EU countries, including river and lake borders, sea borders and their airports, river ports, sea ports and lake ports. These borders should not be confused with internal EU borders, which are those between EU countries
• Border control
  Border checks and border surveillance

• C

• Community Preference
  The preference given by an EU country to nationals, citizens of other EU countries and third-country nationals who are legal long-term residents over workers who are citizens of non-EU countries as regards access to its labour market

• Country of destination
  The country which is a destination for migratory flows (legal or irregular)

• Country of origin
  The country which is the source of migratory flows and of which a migrant may have citizenship

• Country of transit
  The country or countries through which a migrant passes in order to enter a country of destination from his/her country of origin

• D

• Degree
  A certificate given by higher education institutions at several levels for successfully-completed courses of study

• Dependant
  A person who is granted entry and residence by an EU country to stay with a family member who legally resides in that country and who has explicitly filed an application for reasons of family reunification
• Diaspora
People or populations who leave their traditional homelands, being dispersed throughout other parts of the world and who feel a strong connection to their origins

• Diploma
A qualification obtained from a university, or a comparable institution, that testifies to the successful completion of a course of study, conferring an academic degree

• Directive
An EU legal instrument that is binding, as to the results to be achieved, upon each EU country to which it is addressed. Each country is responsible for implementing the Directive into its own national legislation

• Economic migrant
A person who leaves his or her country of origin purely for economic reasons

• Educational institution
A school, college, institute of higher education or university

• Eligibility
The requirements an applicant must fulfil to apply

• Eligible
An applicant is eligible if he fulfils the applicable requirements
• Employee/employed worker
A person who provides services under the supervision of someone else for which she or he is paid

• Employer
Any natural person or any legal entity, including temporary employment agencies, for or under the direction and/or supervision of whom the employment is undertaken

• Employment
The exercise of activities covering whatever form of labour or work regulated under national law or in accordance with established practice for or under the direction and/or supervision of an employer

• Employment agency
An agency that finds workers and matches them to available jobs in other organisations

• Entry ban
An administrative or judicial decision or act preventing entry into and stay in the territory of the EU country for a specified period. Such a decision accompanies a Return Decision

• European Commission
The European Commission is the EU’s executive body and represents the interests of Europe as a whole (as opposed to the interests of individual countries). The term ‘Commission’ refers to both the college of commissioners and the institution itself – which has its headquarters in Brussels, Belgium with offices in Luxembourg. The Commission also has offices known as ‘representations’ in all EU member countries.

The Commission’s main roles are to: set objectives and priorities for action; propose legislation to Parliament and Council; manage and implement EU policies and the budget; enforce European Law (jointly with the Court of Justice); represent the EU outside Europe (negotiating trade agreements between the EU and other countries, etc.)

• European Economic Area (EEA)
The countries that are in the EEA are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. The EEA was created in 1994 by an agreement between three EFTA countries, the European Community, and all EU countries. It allows the EFTA states - Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway - to participate in the European Single Market together with the 27 EU countries without having to join the EU. The EFTA countries participate in all EU education and training programmes.

- **European Free Trade Association (EFTA)**
  EFTA was created in 1960 as an alternative for all the European states that were not allowed, or did not wish, to join the European Community. The EFTA Convention was initially signed by seven countries. Today only Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland remain members of EFTA. These countries, with the exception of Switzerland, signed the EEA Agreement that allows them to participate in the European Single Market. Switzerland is engaged in bilateral agreements with the EU.

- **European Union (EU)**
  The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership between 27 European countries.

- **F**

  - **Family members**
    People married to a migrant, or having a relationship legally recognised as equivalent to marriage, as well as their dependent children and other dependent persons who are recognised as members of the family by applicable legislation.

  - **Family reunification**
    Entry into and residence in an EU country by family members of a non-EU citizen residing lawfully in that EU country, whether the family relationship arose before or after the resident’s entry.

  - **Forced return**
    The compulsory return of an individual to the country of origin, transit or third country [country of return] on the basis of an administrative or judicial act.
- **Foreigner/Foreign national**
  A person who is not a citizen of an EU country

- **Higher education institution**
  An institution that provides post-secondary school higher education (be it short courses, diplomas, degree programmes or vocational or professional training). It is usually categorised according to its funding. Accordingly, higher education institutions include public institutions, government-dependent private institutions, and state-recognised private institutions

- **Highly-skilled/qualified worker**
  A person who is employed in an EU country, is protected as an employee under national employment law and/or in accordance with national practice, irrespective of the legal relationship, for the purpose of exercising genuine and effective work for, or under the direction of, someone else; is paid; and has the required adequate and specific competence, as proven by higher professional qualifications

- **Illegal/irregular entry**
  Crossing borders without complying with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the country

- **Illegal/irregular stay**
  The presence on the territory of an EU country of a non-EU citizen who does not fulfil, or no longer fulfils the conditions for entry, stay or residence in that country

- **Immigration**
  In EU context, the action by which a person from a non-EU country establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of an EU country for a period that is, or is expected to be, at least twelve months
• Intra-Corporate Transferee
A person working within a company or other organisation, other than a non-profit organisation, established in the territory of a country belonging to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) [13], and being temporarily transferred in the context of the provision of a service through commercial presence in the territory of an EU country.

• Labour market
The labour market consists of labour supply of the population on the one hand and labour demand of enterprises and other production units on the other hand. Labour markets may be local or national.

• Labour market access test
Sometimes carried out when a non-EU citizen applies for a job in order to check that there are no suitable candidates having the required qualifications already available on the labour market to fill the position.

• Labour migration
Cross-border movement of people for the purpose of employment in a foreign country.

• Long-stay visa
Authorisation or decision of an EU country required for entry for an intended stay in that country for more than three months.

• Master’s Degree
An academic degree conferred by a college or university on those who complete at least one year of described study beyond the Bachelor’s Degree.
• Member States (EU)
  European countries that are members of the EU: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

• Migrant
  A broader-term of an immigrant and emigrant that refers to a person who leaves from one country or region to settle in another, often in search of a better life

• Minor
  A person who, according to the law of his or her country, is under the age of majority, i.e. is not yet entitled to exercise specific civil and political rights

• Overstay(er)
  A person who remains in an EU country beyond the period for which entry was granted

• PhD
  PhD (Doctorate) is usually based on at least three years of post-graduate study and a dissertation. It is the highest degree awarded for graduate study

• Points-based system
  System based on the number of points in various categories an applicant must earn in order to qualify to come to work, train or study in a country

• Quota
  A quantitative restriction (quota or cap) which many countries place on the number of migrants
to be admitted to their territory each year

- R

- Re-admission agreement
  An agreement between the EU and/or EU country with a non-EU country, on the basis of reciprocity, establishing rapid and effective procedures for the identification and safe and orderly return of people who do not, or no longer, fulfil the conditions for entry to, presence in, or residence on the respective territory of the non-EU country or one of EU countries, and facilitate the transit of such people in a spirit of cooperation

- Refusal of entry
  The refusal of entry to a person who does not fulfil all entry conditions laid down in the national legislation of the country for which entry is requested

- Regularisation
  Any state procedure by which irregularly-staying non-EU citizens are granted a legal status

- Remittances
  All financial transfers from migrants to beneficiaries in their countries of origin

- Removal
  The enforcement of the obligation to return, namely the physical transportation out of the country of a person who is in another country irregularly

- Removal order
  An administrative or judicial decision or act ordering the Removal

- Remunerated trainee
  For the purposes of this Portal, a non-EU citizen who has been admitted to the territory of an EU
country for a training period with remuneration in accordance with its national legislation

- **Researcher**
  For the purposes of this Portal, a non-EU citizen holding an appropriate higher education qualification, which gives access to doctoral programmes (PhD) and who is selected by a research organisation to carry out a research project for which the above qualification is normally required

- **Residence permit**
  An authorisation issued by the competent authorities of an EU country allowing a non-EU citizen to stay legally on its territory

- **Return**
  The movement of a person who is returning to his/her country of origin, country of nationality or country of habitual residence usually after spending a significant period of time in another country. The return may or may not be voluntary

- **Return decision**
  An administrative or judicial decision or act, stating or declaring the stay of a non-EU citizen to be irregular and imposing or stating an obligation on that person to return

- **Schengen**
  Schengen is short for the Schengen Convention, named after the small town in Luxembourg where it was signed. Schengen removes controls at the common borders and allows freedom of movement for all citizens of the signatory EU countries, other EU countries or specified non-EU countries. Signed on 14 June 1985 by Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, it has been extended over time to cover: Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. Ireland has maintained its border controls, even if it has partly joined Schengen. The same situation applied to the United Kingdom until its withdrawal from the European Union on 31 January 2020.
• Schengen Information System
An information system for the EU and the EU countries that enables the relevant authorities to have access to notifications on persons and property via an automated search procedure. It is mainly used for the purposes of border checks and other police and customs checks. In some cases, it is also used for issuing visas, residence permits and for the administration of legislation in the context of the Schengen Convention.

• School pupil
For the purposes of this Portal, a non-EU citizen admitted to the territory of an EU country to follow a recognised programme of secondary education in the context of an exchange scheme operated by an organisation recognised for that purpose by the EU country in accordance with its national legislation or administrative practice.

• Seasonal worker
For the purposes of this Portal, a non-EU citizen who is resident in a non-EU country and employed in an activity dependent on the rhythm of the seasons in the territory of an EU country on the basis of a contract for a specified period and for specific employment.

• Self-employed worker
For the purposes of this Portal, a non-EU citizen who is pursuing a gainful activity in an EU country for his or her own account, under the conditions laid down by national law.

• Short-stay visa
The authorisation or decision of an EU country required for entry for an intended stay in that country or several EU countries for a period whose total duration does not exceed three months.

• Smuggling
Organising the irregular entry of someone into an EU country of which he or she is neither a national nor a permanent resident so as to obtain directly or indirectly a financial or other material benefit.

• Sponsor
A non-EU citizen who legally resides in an EU country and who applies for family reunification so that his or her family members can join him or her in that country.

- **Student**
  For the purposes of this Portal, a non-EU citizen accepted by a higher education institution and admitted to the territory of an EU country to pursue as his or her main activity a full-time course of study leading to a higher education qualification recognised by the EU country, including diplomas, certificates or doctoral degrees in a higher education institution, which may cover a preparatory course before such education, according to its national legislation.

- **Third country**
  A country or territory that is not in the EU.

- **Third country national**
  Any person who is not a citizen of the EU i.e. a non-EU citizen.

- **Trafficking**
  Trafficking in human beings is a serious crime and a gross violation of human rights; some people call it a modern form of slavery. Traffickers deceive and exploit people for financial profit by forcing them into prostitution or sexual exploitation; forcing them to work domestically with no or little pay often in inhuman condition; forcing them to beg, or forcing them to removing and selling their organs. The causes of, and contributing factors to, trafficking in human beings are manifold and complex and often linked to other forms of exploitation. You can find more information on the definition of trafficking on the [EU anti-trafficking website](https://www.eu-anti-trafficking.info/).

- **Trainee**
  For the purposes of this Portal, a worker whose presence in the territory of an EU country is strictly limited in duration and closely connected with increasing his/her skills and qualifications in the chosen profession before returning home to pursue a career.

- **Transit**
Passage through a country of transit by a non-EU citizen who is travelling from the country of origin to an EU country

- U

- Unremunerated trainee
  For the purposes of this Portal, a non-EU citizen who has been admitted to the territory of an EU country for a training period without remuneration in accordance with its national legislation

- V

- Usual residence
  The place where a person normally spends the daily period of rest, regardless of temporary absences for recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage or, in default, the place of legal or registered residence

- W

- Work permit
For the purposes of this Portal, an authorisation issued by the competent authorities of an EU country allowing a non-EU citizen to work legally in its territory

Source URL: https://ec.europa.eu/immigration/glossary_en

Links
[14] http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/section.action?sectionId=380a57d0-31bf-4c3a-8a95-5db0e7ddf223&sectionType=LIST_ENTITIES_SQUARE_IMAGES