



# ITALY 2021

Main developments in migration  
and international protection,  
including latest statistics

## EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET

 August 2022



### MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

In the first part of the year, Italy continued to manage the pandemic, although it was in the process of becoming less severe. This meant adapting interventions and structuring migration policies on asylum and integration. Changes also aimed to mitigate the short- and medium-term effects of the pandemic, on the migrant population most exposed to risks of social exclusion, poverty, exclusion, illness and psychological vulnerability. In particular, the government's efforts have focused on expanding, strengthening and consolidating both reception services and proximity community services, to increase access to inclusion and integration processes, ensuring healthcare. Challenges relating to migration reemerged during the second half of the year, due to the resumption of migratory flows and the increased political instability in the countries of origin, like Afghanistan.



### LEGAL MIGRATION

#### LABOUR MIGRATION

The quotas of incoming third-country nationals for 2021 were defined by a special Decree of Transitional Programming adopted on 21 December 2021 by the President of the Council of Ministers. According to the document, third-country nationals are admitted to Italy for the purpose of subordinate, seasonal and non-seasonal employment and self-employment within a maximum overall quota of 69,700 people.

Such quotas, which increased from those established by last year's decree, were defined on the basis of the needs

### KEY POINTS



A new memorandum of understanding and national guidelines addressed labour exploitation and 'caporalato' (illegal hiring of farm labourers).



With regard to the reception system, innovative measures were taken to implement specialised integration services for applicants for international protection.



The national integration strategy was developed and strengthened in order to increase the accessibility of local services also for foreign beneficiaries.

highlighted by the national economic and productive world.

### OTHER MEASURES

The fight against labour exploitation and caporalato is confirmed as a crucial objective of the Government's policies. To this end, on 14 July 2021, the new Memorandum of Understanding for the prevention of and the fight against labour exploitation and caporalato in agriculture was signed by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Agricultural Policies and ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities). The document aims to activate effective inter-institutional synergies to achieve the objectives of the three-year plan to combat labour exploitation in agriculture, and to promote the implementation of relevant projects on a national level.

On 7 October 2021, the Unified Conference endorsed the agreement for the adoption of the new National Guidelines on the identification, protection, and assistance of victims of labour exploitation in agriculture, drafted within the framework of the three-year Plan to combat labour exploitation in agriculture and caporalato (2020 - 2022). The Guidelines define the minimum common standards and general principles for the implementation of a National Referral Mechanism with public support for the identification, protection and assistance of victims of exploitation. The aim is to define a model that increases victims' trust in institutions and breaks the chain of exploitation.

Concrete actions were also taken to combat labour exploitation. In this regard, the National Labour Inspectorate started in November 2021 a collaboration with the inter-institutional Anticaporalato Helpdesk service, implemented and promoted within the P.I.U. Su.Pr.Eme project, Percorsi individualizzati di Uscita dallo Sfruttamento (Tailored pathways out of exploitation). The project is implemented in areas with a greater number of seasonal migrant workers in the agricultural sector and in urban areas in the south of Italy.



## INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

### LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

With regard to the area of international protection, the main developments concern the interventions aimed at harmonising the interpretation and implementation of the amendments made by Law 173/2020 and the reception and integration system at the domestic level.

On 19 July 2021, the National Asylum Commission issued a circular with indications to the Police Headquarters and Territorial Commissions for the proper application of Law no. 173/2020, in particular the procedure for recognising special protection and limits of eligibility, as well as the interpretation criteria of the prohibition of expulsion and rejection in the light of the new legislation.

The main changes occurred in the field of reception in 2021, on the other hand, concern:

- The adoption, by decree of the Minister of the Interior, of new specifications for the management of reception facilities. The measure raised the levels of assistance to be provided at governmental and extraordinary reception centres, introducing additional services for asylum seekers. In addition, the charges for the provision of services and the allocation of staff related to the essential services already guaranteed, such as material reception, health care, social assistance, linguistic-cultural mediation, and legal counselling, were revised.
- The definition, in a decree published in the Official Gazette no. 214 of 7 September 2021, of hygiene, housing and security standards in reception centres for migrants, as well as appropriate prevention, control and surveillance measures in relation to active participation in or propaganda for international terrorist organisations.

- The expansion of the SAI (Sistema Accoglienza e Integrazione – System for Reception and Integration) network by a total of 3,000 places for Afghan citizens evacuated following the crisis in the country.

## RELOCATION AND REINTEGRATION

Despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic, Italy continued to implement the voluntary relocation mechanism formalised after the Malta Declaration of 23 September 2019. However, the number of persons relocated decreased due to reduced availability among Member States: 181 compared to 567 in 2020.



## MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

### MINORS

In 2021, efforts to adapt Prime Minister's Decree 535 of 1999 to Law 47/2017 continued. Specifically, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy resumed the process of approving the new regulation on implementing legislation on the protection of unaccompanied foreign minors.

In line with the increased migration flows of unaccompanied minors, the SAI network was expanded by 2,339 places reserved for them.

In particular, with the resources of the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), a one-year project called 'Strengthening the reception capacity, inclusion and support for the autonomy of unaccompanied foreign minors in the SIPROIMI (Protection System for Beneficiaries of International Protection and Unaccompanied Foreign Minors) network' was launched in the summer of 2021, which provides for the launch of new projects by local authorities.

Seven projects were approved to raise awareness about the practice of fostering unaccompanied minors, assessing the appropriateness of placing them in a family, and supporting local social services in implementing programmes to assist minors.

Moreover, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the Central Service of the SAI, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) prepared an operational guide to provide information on the best practices to support those involved in the reception and care of unaccompanied minors.

Several inter-institutional and inter-agency collaborations were established over the course of the year. These include:

1. A statement of intent for an 18-month collaboration between the Ministry of the Interior and UNICEF was signed on 18 March 2021, aiming to monitor the methods and quality of the reception of migrant children and adolescents.
2. An agreement between the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior and Terres des Hommes Italia Onlus was signed on 8 June 2021, which provides that the organisation will provide psychological and psychosocial

support to unaccompanied foreign minors and families with children arriving in Italy, until 31 December 2022, free of charge.

3. The renewal, on 21 December 2021, of the 2019 agreement between the Ministry of the Interior and Save The Children Italia Onlus in order to provide protection, support and legal guidance to unaccompanied foreign minors and minors in families, free of charge, until 31 December 2022.

In 2021, the project “Percorsi di formazione, lavoro e integrazione dei giovani migranti” (“Training, work and integration paths for young migrants”) entered its fourth phase. It promotes the consolidation of socio-occupational integration measures and services for unaccompanied minors in transition to adulthood or for young migrants received in Italy as unaccompanied minors, through a six-month traineeship and a range of related services. During the first three phases of the project, 1,738 placements were completed.

The project also used resources from the Complementary Operational Programme (COP) on Legality.

## OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

Over the course of the year, the SAI Network was expanded by 194 places for people with mental/social difficulties.

Several guidance documents were produced and disseminated throughout the year.

On 21 January 2021, the Department of Civil Liberties for Immigration and Asylum sent a circular to the Prefectures and to the Central Service for the management of SAI projects, an operational guide developed by IOM, together with UNHCR and UNICEF, entitled ‘How to provide initial support to survivors of gender-based violence’. The document is addressed to practitioners working with victims of violence and aims to provide guidance in first support actions, while respecting the survivors’ safety, confidentiality, dignity and the principle of non-discrimination.

In June 2021, an inter-institutional and inter-agency Working Group was also set up to prepare a handbook addressed to the actors and operators who take care of people that arrive to Italy. It aimed to promote a governance model for improved care of people with vulnerabilities during all phases of reception, starting with their prompt identification upon arrival.



## INTEGRATION

### NATIONAL INTEGRATION STRATEGY

Actions under the national integration strategy were intensified in 2021. The management of the 2014-2020 AMIF continued. In particular, projects continued in the following areas of intervention: healthcare, support to local authorities, promotion of autonomy, literacy teaching, education and training, orientation to work, access to services, anti-discrimination, capacity building of public services and support to the public administration). Fifty new projects were financed, aimed at supporting Prefectures-UU.TT.G. in the provision of qualified services to migrants, at promoting foster care within the framework

of the national reception system for foreign unaccompanied minors, and at preventing and combating violence against foreign minors.

On 26 February 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior and the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) to investigate and disseminate knowledge on migration phenomena and foster a culture of integration.

The General Directorate for Immigration of the Ministry of Labour implemented a series of interventions for the social and labour integration of vulnerable categories (holders of international and humanitarian protection, unaccompanied minors). The interventions were based on an integrated model of assistance centred on the person (individual subsidy) and on multi-level governance including local services for employment, training and integration.

## INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS, INCLUDING NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

On 22 December 2021, UNHCR and ANPAL Servizi signed a memorandum of understanding to promote the integration of refugees and asylum seekers into the labour market through a series of joint activities. The agreement aims to increase the involvement of the private sector, providing companies with information and tools to receive refugees and enhancing the skills of the network of employment services and civil society actors that support inclusion processes. The aim is also to raise awareness of the economic and social benefits of economic inclusion of refugees.

In September 2021, the Minister of Labour and Social Policies signed a statement of intent with the President of the Conference of Regions and Autonomous Provinces and the ANCI delegate for immigration, establishing a partnership for the social and labour integration of foreign citizens. The document recognises the importance of the regional and urban dimension in integration and the need for approaches that take into account local peculiarities.

## PRE-DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL PROGRAMMES

In 2021, the pre-departure training and orientation activities for foreign citizens entitled to enter Italy for reasons of family reunification, work and internship funded by the Directorate General for Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, as the Delegated Authority of AMIF, continued.

All funded initiatives promote information campaigns and involve a considerable number of recipients through dedicated websites, face-to-face events, awareness-raising workshops and individual meetings.

Such activities were conducted in 15 non-EU countries. Some of them have bilateral agreements currently in place with the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and are countries of origin of the largest migrant

communities in Italy. Projects will end by 30 September 2022.<sup>1</sup>

## BASIC SERVICES

Law No. 238 of 23 December 2021, containing provisions for the fulfilment of obligations arising from Italy's membership of the European Union (European Law 2019-2020), provided for the amendment of Article 41 of Legislative Decree No. 286/98 (Consolidation Immigration Act - Testo unico sull'immigrazione, TUI) to close infringement procedure 2019/2100. This also concerned sector-specific regulations (allowance for large families, maternity allowance, birth grant), and aimed to extend them to all holders of a single permit for work under Article 12 of Directive 2011/98/EU.

## COMBATING RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

In November 2020, the Minister of Labour and Social Policies and the Minister for Youth Policies and Sport signed an agreement (pursuant to Art. 15 L. 241/1990) to set out a multi-year plan of actions to promote sport as a tool for promoting dialogue and social inclusion and for combating discrimination. Following discussions with the associated Working Group, the areas of activity for the years 2021 and 2022 were established, with activities formally starting on 20 October 2021.



## CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

### STATELESSNESS

The Central Directorate for Civil Rights, Citizenship and Minorities of the Ministry of the Interior launched the creation of the Inter-Institutional Table on the Legal Status of Rom, Sinti and Wonderers Communities, ('Tavolo interistituzionale sullo status giuridico delle comunità Rom, Sinti e Camminanti') with the task of examining issues related to de facto statelessness.



## BORDERS, VISAS AND SCHENGEN

### BORDER MANAGEMENT

Due to the pandemic, it was necessary to ensure the enforcement of the measures concerning health surveillance or quarantine before entering the reception circuit for all irregular migrants arriving in our country. Prefectures identified facilities for quarantine in the territories of the regions affected by the arrivals and, following the appointment of the Head of the Department for Civil Liberties as Implementing Party, special 'quarantine ships' were chartered to implement the preventive measures with the highest level of security. Starting from October 2020, unaccompanied minors have been spending the period of health surveillance prior to their placement in dedicated reception centres in facilities in the territory.

## SCHENGEN GOVERNANCE

Italy reintroduced internal border controls on the occasion of the G20 in Rome from 27 October to 1 November 2021, as an additional measure to ensure that law enforcement agencies could prevent terrorist threats.



## IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT TRAFFICKING

Cooperation activities with third countries to prevent irregular migration continued.



## HUMAN BEINGS' TRAFFICKING

Training activities on trafficking for members of the National Commission and Territorial Commissions continued.

- In January 2021, a training course on trafficking of human beings was held at the Catania Territorial Commission, organised by the National Commission and UNHCR, involving members of the Commission and practitioners working for anti-trafficking bodies.
- In September-October 2021, officials from the National Asylum Commission (NAC) participated in international training with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on 'Combating Human Trafficking along the Mediterranean Migration Routes'.



## RETURN AND READMISSION

With regard to assisted voluntary return, the activities of the six AVR projects accepted for funding under AMIF were extended over the course of 2021 following the publication of a specific public notice in October 2018.

Consequently, these projects, implemented by the following entities - GUS PULETTI, CEFA, CIES, CIR, COESO, ARCI Mediterraneo -, will conclude their activities in 2022 (with different deadlines)



## MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The draft "Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Development (MAECI)/DGCS - AICS Guidelines" was prepared, provided for in the framework of the 2020-2022 AICS-DGCS Effectiveness Plan, the MAECI/DGCS-AICS Three-Year Programming and Steering Document, as well as in the recommendations made by the OECD in the framework of the 2019 Peer Review.

<sup>1</sup> <https://integrazionemigranti.gov.it/it-it/Dettaglio-progetto/id/13/Formazione-professionale-e-civico-linguistica-pre-partenza>

The Agreement was signed on 22 December 2021 for the launch of the initiative “DRAFT THE FUTURE! Towards the National Forum of Diasporas”, financed by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and implemented by IOM, affecting policies and actions aimed at involving diaspora associations operating in Italy and supporting the development of their countries of origin.



## STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex was prepared by ICF, the European Migration Network Service Provider, with statistics provided by Eurostat. It provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Italy on aspects of migration and international protection (2018-2021), including legal residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, integration, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics were not available at the time of publication, this is indicated in the Annex as “N/A”.



# STATISTICAL ANNEX

## ! GENERAL NOTES

This statistical annex complements the Country Factsheet with relevant migration-related data organised in up to nine thematic sections – depending on data availability. The dashboard-like layout of the annex allows comparability across countries as well as simultaneous visualisation of different indicators. Whenever data are not available, the relative chart is indicated with 'N/A'. Data are provided for the latest available year or the latest available four-year period. For some indicators, data are rounded in the source. The sum of percentages or of individual values might not add up to 100 or to the total value. This is due to rounding and confidence intervals in the original data. For this edition, figures for Third Country Nationals refer to 'non-EU27 nor reporting country' across all indicators and years. The How to Read Guide is available [here](#).

## COLOUR LEGEND

Whenever not specified, the following colour legend is adopted. Colours for multiple nationalities are randomly chosen.

Data relative to Italy

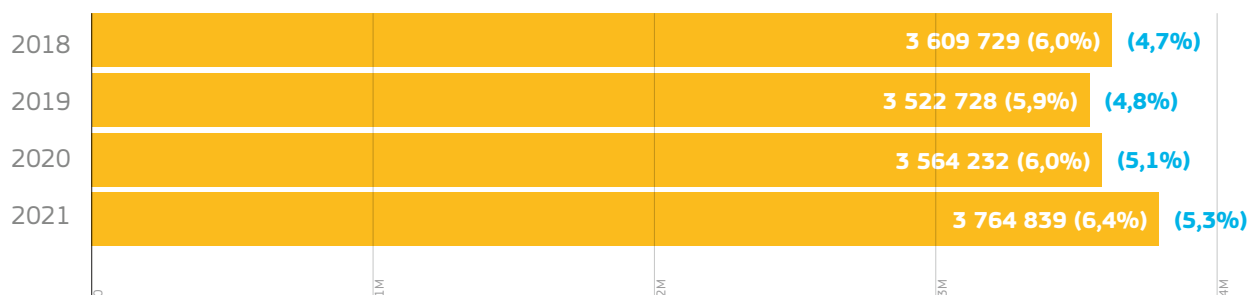
Data relative to EU



## LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

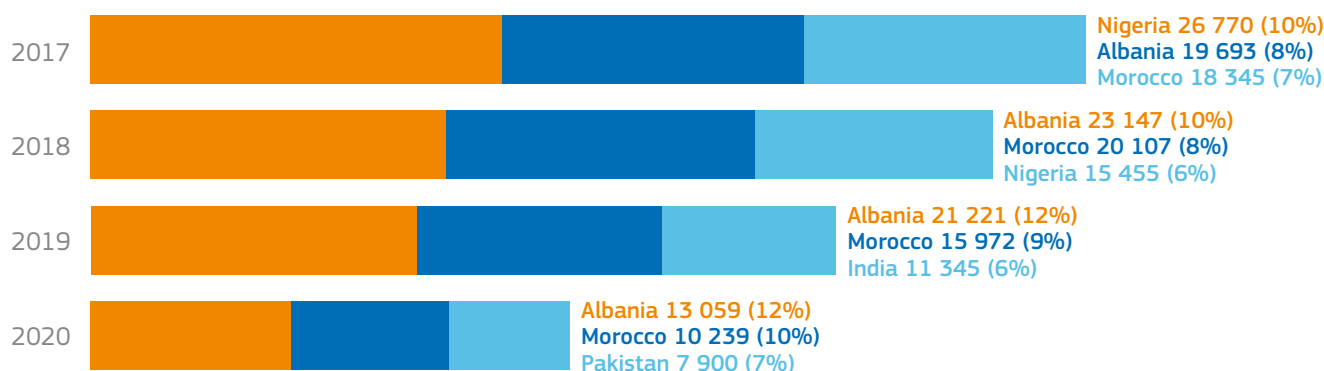
### Third-Country Nationals (TCNs) as % of total population in the country (and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_pop1ctz)



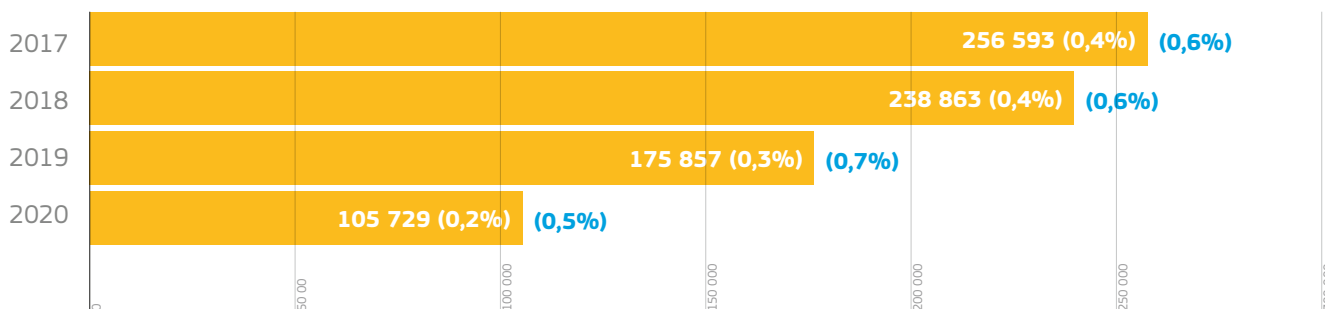
### Top 3 nationalities of number of first residence permits annually issued: number of permits and % of total annual permits

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_resfirst)



## First residence permits annually issued: total number and % of total population in the country (and in the EU)

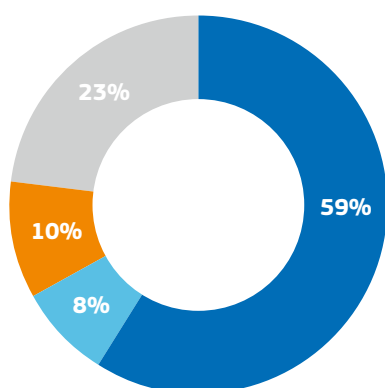
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_resfirst, migr\_pop1ctz)



### First residence permits annually issued by reason in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_resfirst)

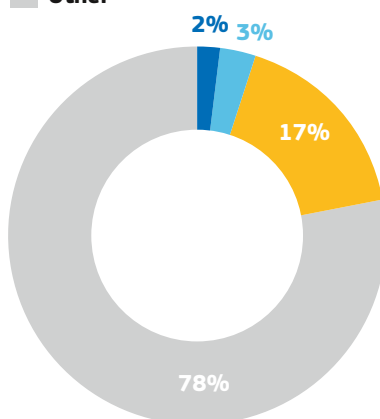
- Family
- Education
- Work
- Other



### First residence permits annually issued for work reasons in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_resocc)

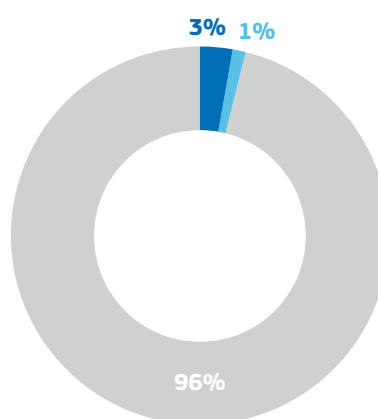
- EU Blue card
- Highly skilled
- Researchers
- Seasonal workers
- Other



### First residence permits annually issued for 'other reasons' in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_resoth)

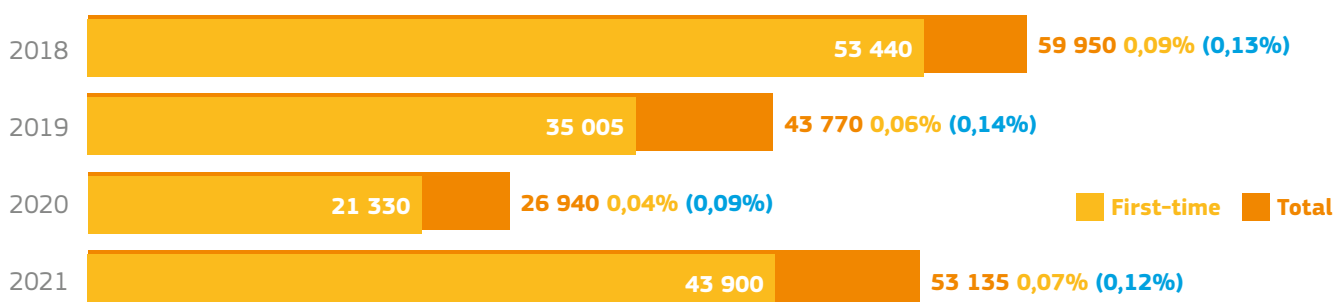
- Refugee/sub prot.
- Residence only
- Humanitarian
- Not specified



## INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

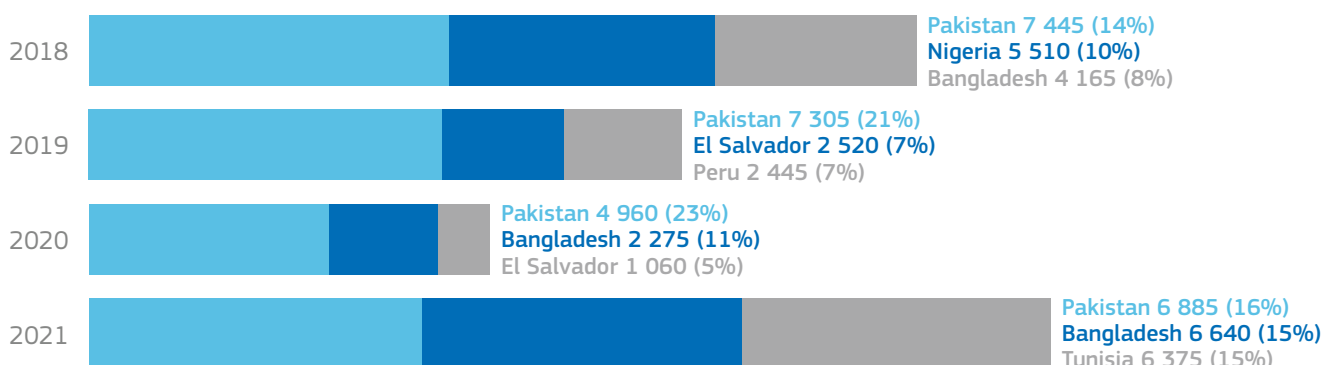
### Total/first-time asylum applications; first-time asylum applications as % of population in the country (and in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_asyappctza, migr\_pop1ctz)



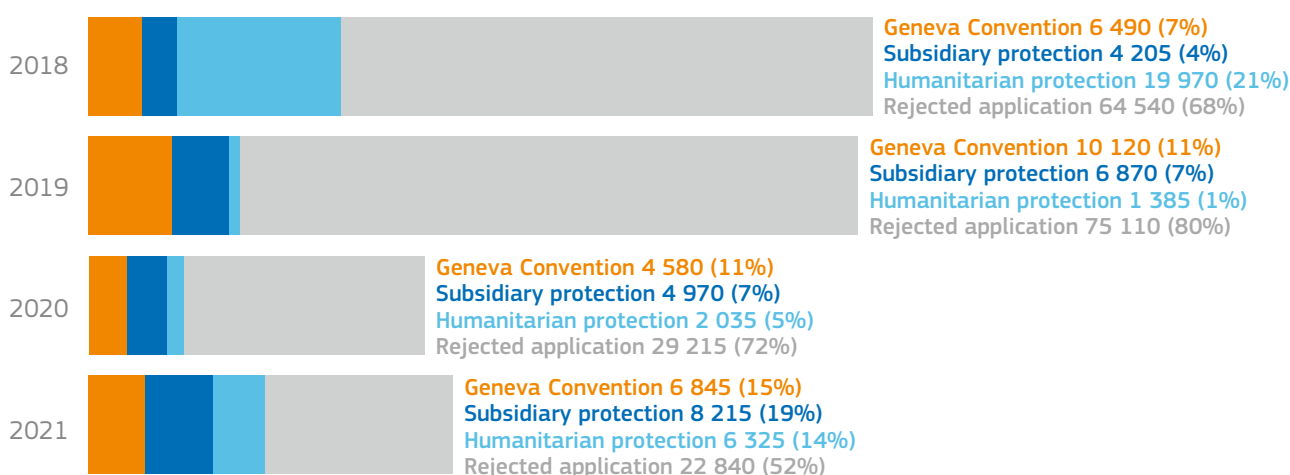
## Top 3 nationalities of annual number of first-time asylum applications: number of applications and % of total first-time annual applications

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_asyappctza)



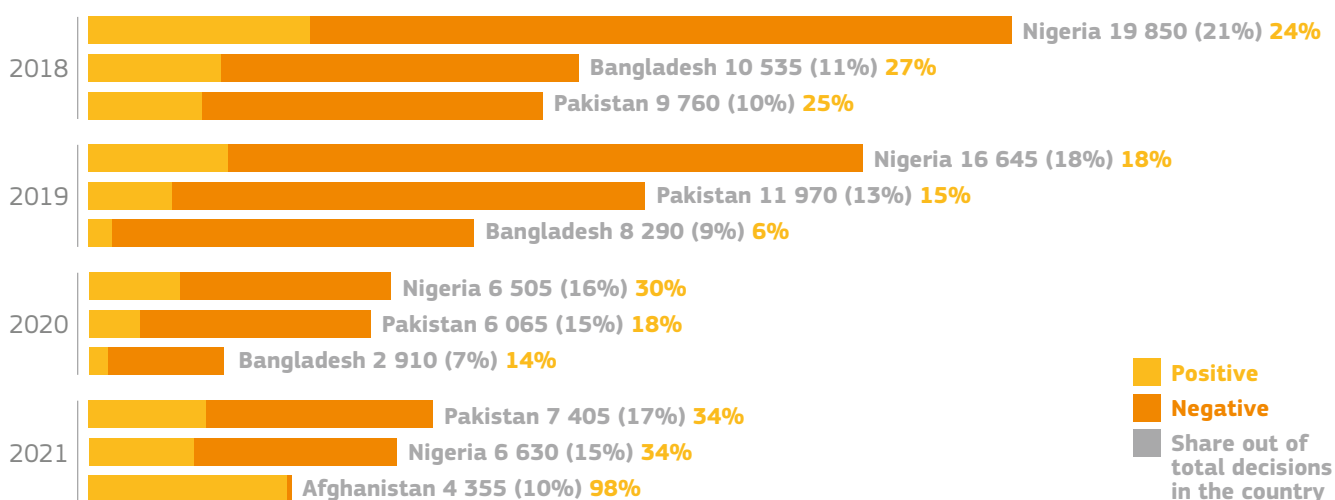
## Number of first-instance asylum decisions by outcome (% of total decisions)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_asydcfst)



## Top 3 nationalities of annual number of first-instance decisions: number of decisions (% of total decisions in the country) and % of positive outcomes

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_asydcfst)

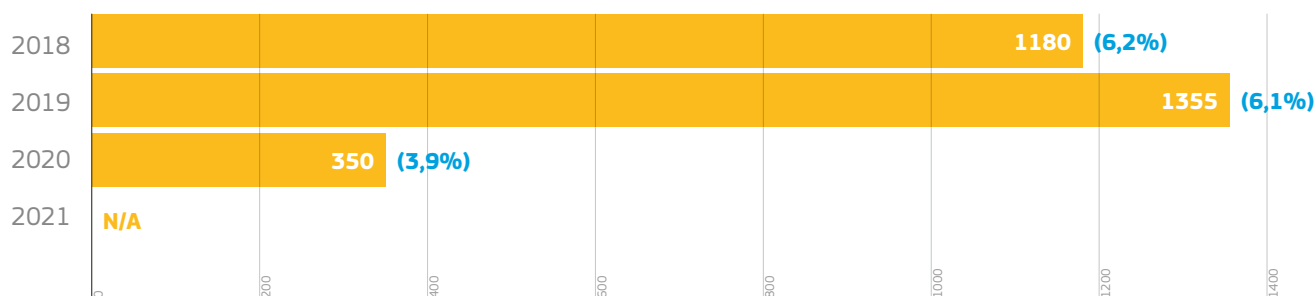


■ Positive  
■ Negative  
■ Share out of total decisions in the country



## Third-Country Nationals resettled: absolute number and as % of total resettled in the EU

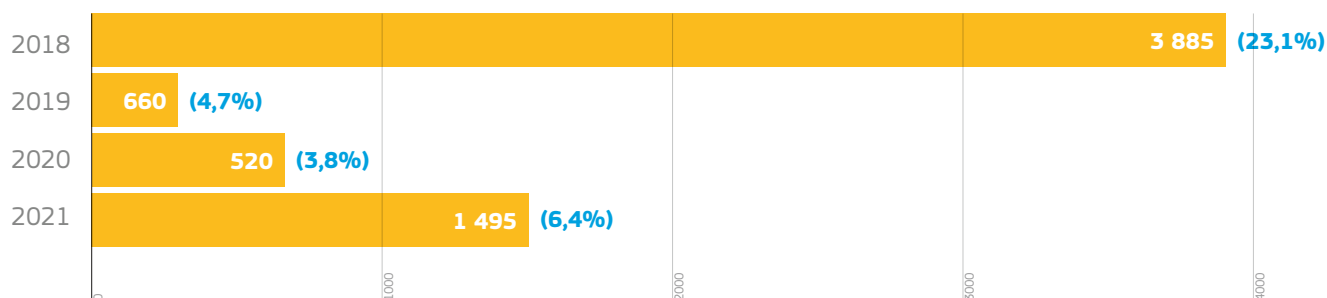
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_asyresa)



## UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

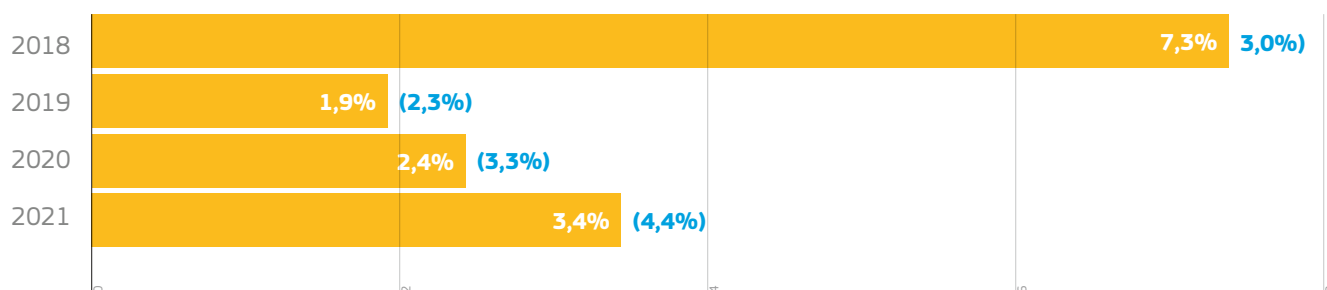
### Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in the country (and % of total applications from unaccompanied minors in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_asyunaa)



### Unaccompanied minors as % of first asylum applications in the country (and in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_asyunaa, migr\_asyappctza)

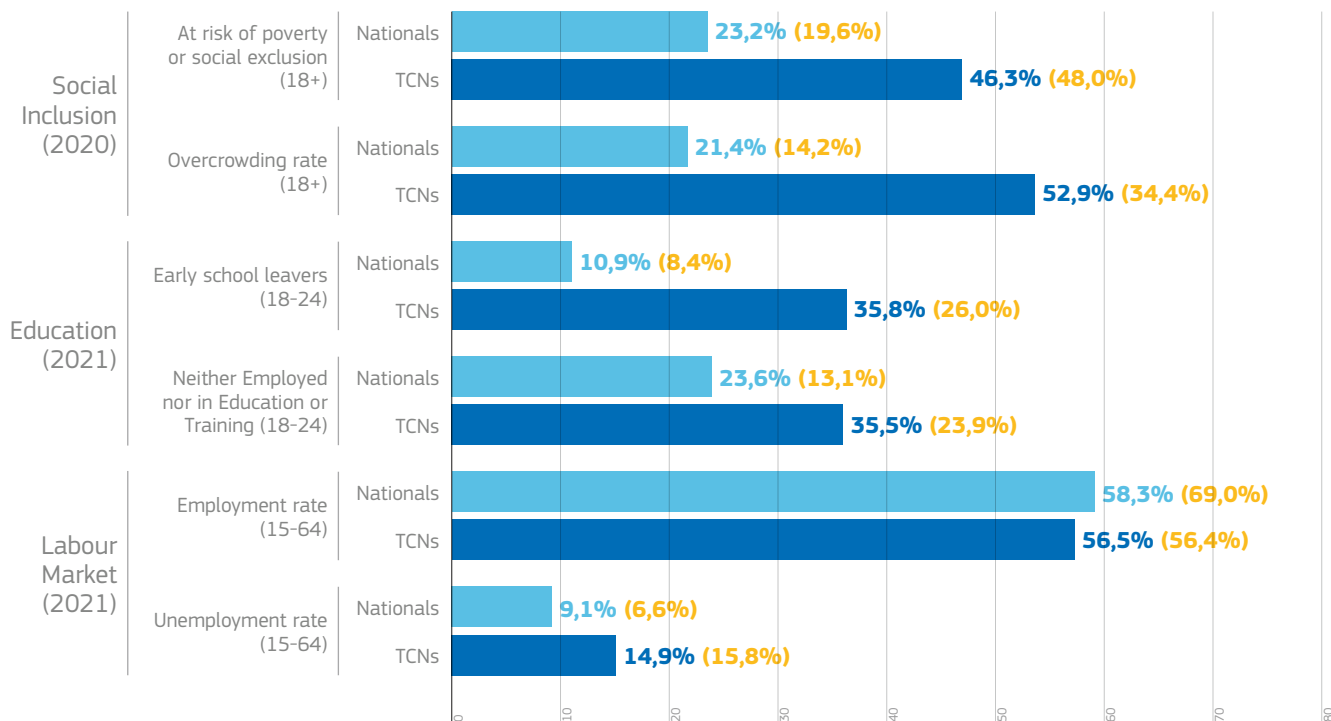




## INTEGRATION

Integration indicators for nationals (light blue) and Third-Country Nationals (dark blue) in the country (when available). The same indicator is provided in yellow for the EU.

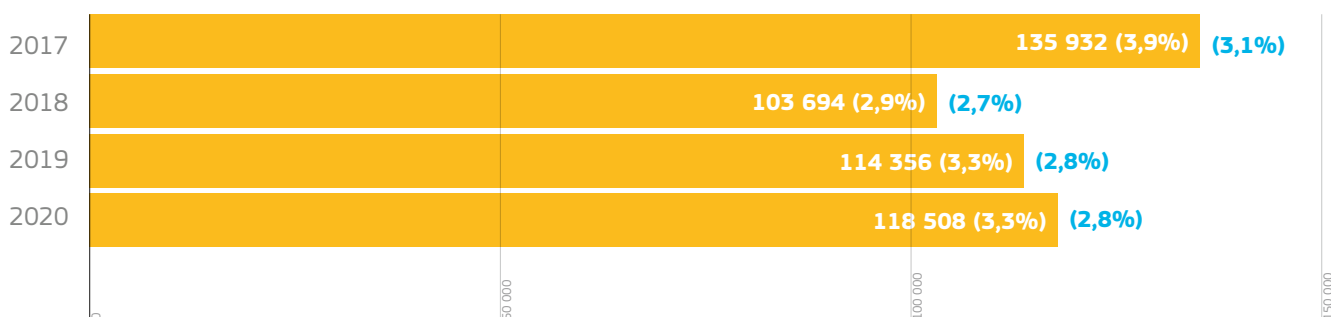
SOURCE: Eurostat (ilc\_peps05, ilc\_lwho15, edat\_lfse\_01, edat\_lfse\_23, lfsa\_ergan, lfsa\_urgan)



## CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

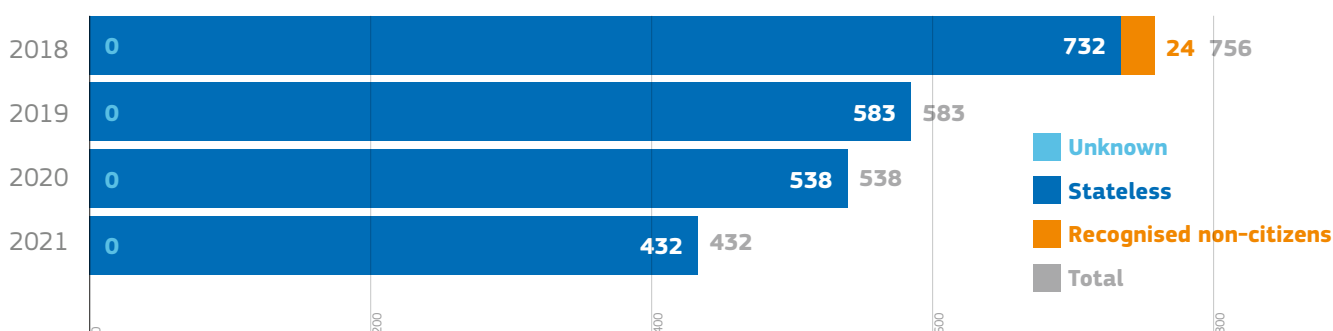
Third-Country Nationals who have acquired citizenship as a share of total Third-Country Nationals (in the country and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_acqs, migr\_acq)



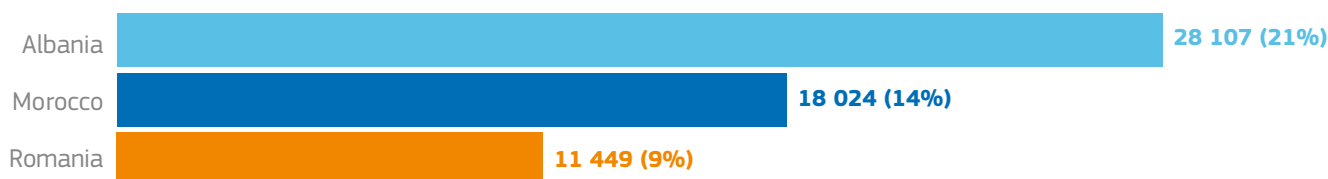
Stateless, unknown citizens and recognised non-citizens (RNC) - where present

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_pop1ctz)



## Top 3 nationalities by number of citizenship acquisition in 2020: absolute number and % of total acquisitions in the country by Third-Country Nationals

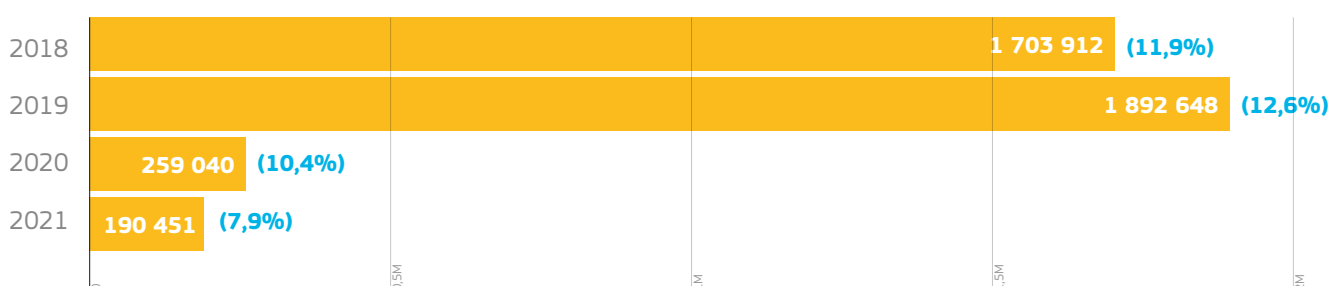
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_acq)



## BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

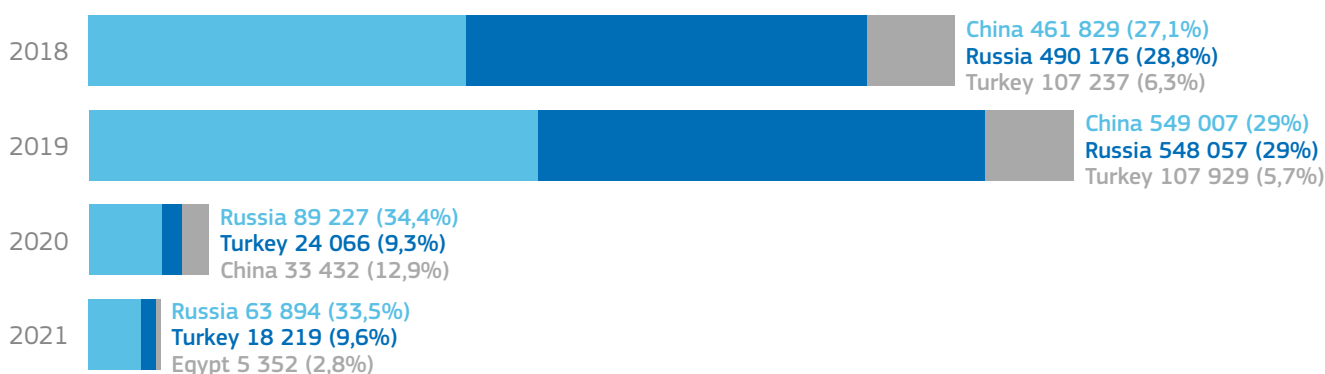
### Short-term visa issued (% of Schengen)

SOURCE: DG Migration and Home Affairs



### Short-term visa issued in top 3 consulate countries (and % of total issued)

SOURCE: DG Migration and Home Affairs



## IRREGULAR MIGRATION

### Top 3 nationalities ordered to leave the country in 2021, in absolute number and as a share of all nationalities ordered to leave the country

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_eiord)

N/A

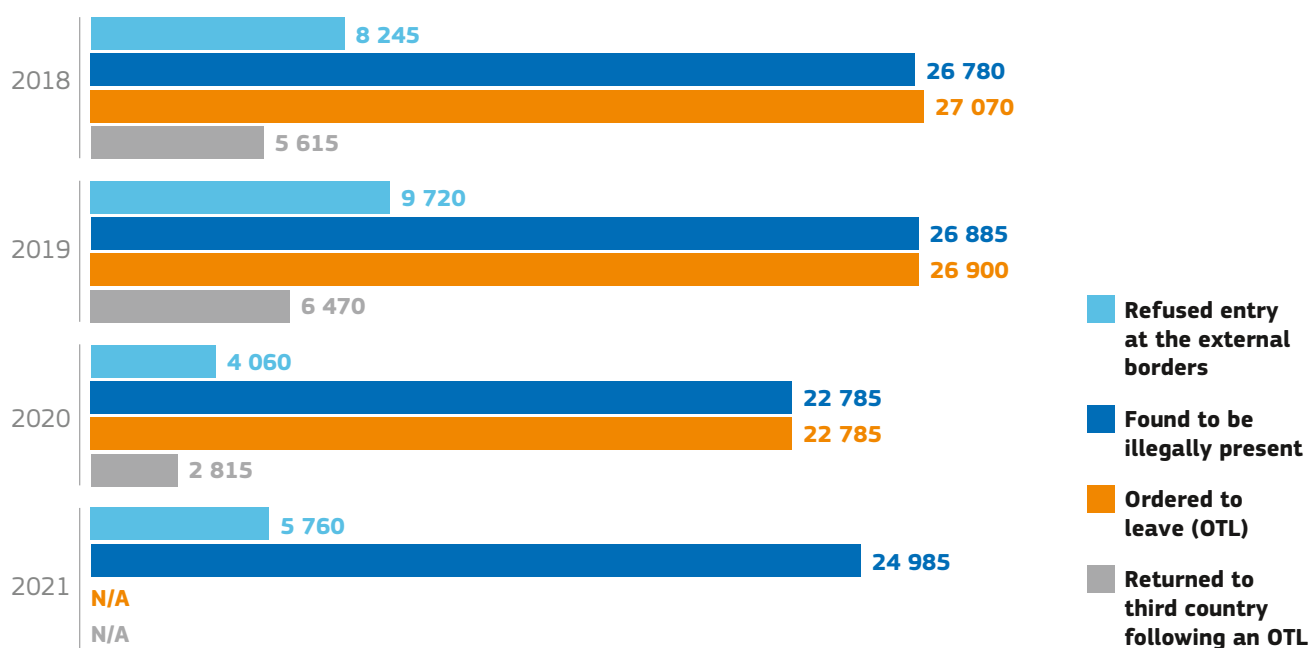
### Top 3 nationalities returned to third country in 2021, in absolute number and as a share of all nationalities ordered to leave the country

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_eirtn)

N/A

## General statistics on irregular migration

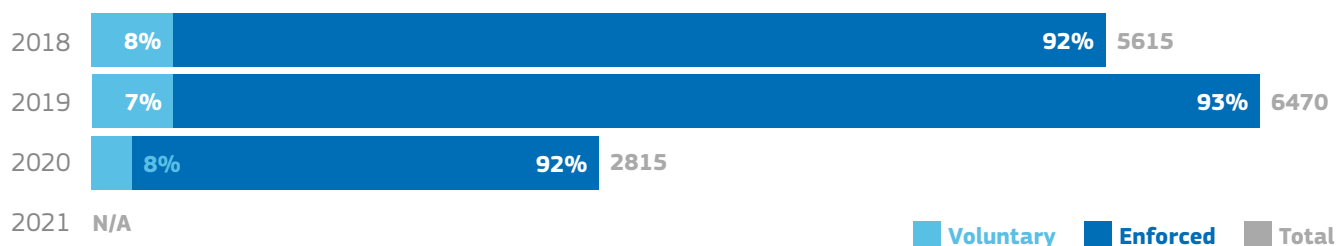
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_eirfs, migr\_eipre, migr\_eiord, migr\_eirtn)



## RETURN AND READMISSION

### Number of Third-Country Nationals who left the territory by type of return (in %) and total returns

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_eirt\_vol)



## TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

### Number of first residence permits issued to victims of trafficking in human beings

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr\_resoth)

