



FINLAND 2021

Main developments in migration
and international protection,
including latest statistics

EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET

August 2022



OVERARCHING CHANGES

On 30 June 2021, the Ministry of the Interior established a project to define the long-term objectives for Finland's comprehensive migration policy. The policy will bring together the responsibilities of different operators and set uniform long-term objectives, through cooperation and innovation. In autumn 2021, the Ministry launched a preliminary study on the need for amendments to the Aliens Act (301/2004) and how that reform should be implemented. The study will assess the current structure and content of the Aliens Act and identify the development needs arising from changes in the case-law and operating environment.



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

The D visa was proposed by the government to support implementation of the 14-day fast-track service pledge for specialists, growth entrepreneurs and their family members. The government submitted its proposal on the amendments to the Aliens Act and to Sections 3 and 5 of the Act on the Processing of Personal Data by Migration Authorities (605/2020) to Parliament on 16 September 2021. The Act is scheduled to enter into force in June 2022.

WORK-RELATED MIGRATION

The government's Talent Boost programme (a cross-administrative programme designed to boost the

KEY POINTS



Ministry of the Interior established a project to define long-term objectives for Finland's comprehensive migration policy.



Government Action Plan Against Trafficking in Human Beings was introduced.



National Action Plan 2021-2024 to Prevent Irregular Migration and Irregular Stay was finalised in May 2021.

immigration of senior specialists, employees, students and researchers) continued in 2021.

The 'Roadmap for Education-Based and Work-Based Immigration until 2035: A long-term action plan to achieve the objectives set for immigration of specialists, entrepreneurs, researchers and students' was adopted by the government in September 2021.

STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment led a project to develop legislation on foreign nationals and permit processes. A new legislative proposal was drafted to make it easier for foreign students and researchers to stay in Finland. Under the proposal, students would receive a residence permit for the entire duration of their studies, with the residence permit for researchers and graduates who have completed their studies (the so-called job-seeking permit) extended to two years.

FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Family reunification application requirements gained increased flexibility. Under the Programme for Government, the requirement for sufficient financial resources will be discontinued for minor family reunification sponsors who have been granted a residence permit on the basis of international protection.

Amid the difficult situation in Afghanistan and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Finnish Immigration Service allowed flexibility in family reunification applications, with in-person interviews replaced by written interviews, more time granted to submit attachments, and Afghan applications prioritised.

INFORMATION ON ROUTES TO AND CONDITIONS OF LEGAL MIGRATION

As part of an information campaign for foreign workers, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment published a brochure on employees' rights for those coming to work in Finland. It also launched a multilingual telephone advisory service for seasonal workers arriving from abroad.

OTHER MEASURES

At the request of the Ministry of the Interior, the Finnish Government commissioned a study examining the types of complementary pathways for legal migration available in different countries for people in need of international protection. The study focused on labour and study-based complementary pathways.



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The Reception Act was amended to give the Finnish Immigration Service central responsibility for preparedness planning for reception services in the event of a mass influx of migrants. The bill for the Act was approved by the President on 16 December 2021 for entry into force on 1 January 2022.

Given the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, an extraordinary meeting on 13 August 2021 saw the Finnish Government agree that Afghans (and their families) who worked for Finland, the EU and NATO could be admitted to Finland and issued residence permits.

RELOCATION AND RESETTLEMENT¹

Finland increased its refugee quota by 450 people, from 1050 to 1500, allocated to Afghan refugees from Iran. As part of the 2021 quota, Finland reported being able to take 30-40 unaccompanied minors.



MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

By law, accompanying minors in the asylum procedure are systematically heard if they have reached the

age of 12. A new practice developed in 2021 (to come into effect in early 2022) will see minors under the age of 12 heard more often, based on ex officio consideration or at the request of the minor, their parents or legal counsel. Some focus was also placed on guardianship and guardian's right of access and speech, with developments in the service of decisions and guidance on the opportunity to be heard. The Action Plan Against Trafficking in Human Beings was introduced in 2021 to tackle child trafficking and trafficking of adults. It included information about human trafficking and exploitation in the continuing education of professionals working with children and young people.



INTEGRATION

NATIONAL INTEGRATION STRATEGY

A government report proposed an extensive programme to speed up the integration of immigrants, including measures to:

- Accelerate immigrants' paths to work and education.
- Promote inclusion of immigrants in working life and society.
- Support immigrant women and their families to settle in Finland.
- Increase openness in the workplace and prevent polarisation in society.

A framework for promoting the integration of immigrants outside the labour force was also designed to improve the integration opportunities for immigrant women, especially stay-at-home mothers.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF ADULTS/ LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS

Finland allocated additional funds to teaching Finnish/Swedish as a second language, literacy and integration training in non-formal education (e.g. adult education).

FIGHTING RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

'An Equal Finland: Government Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups' was adopted in October 2021. The Plan aimed to dismantle structural inequalities in society, promote non-discrimination in Finnish working life, strengthen authorities' equality competence, raise awareness of racism and its various forms, and develop research/data collection on racism.



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

ACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP

The number of citizenship applications increased. For the second year in a row, Iraqi citizens were the largest group applying for Finnish citizenship.

¹ Includes Humanitarian Admission Programmes



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

BORDER MANAGEMENT

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions saw Border Guard controls (re-)established at internal borders between 19 March 2020 and 26 July 2021.

VISA POLICY

In December 2021, the Ministry of the Interior began the second phase of the legislative proposal on the long-term D visa.

SCHENGEN GOVERNANCE

Amendments to national legislation saw further harmonisation with Schengen Information System (SIS) regulations. Government proposal 35/2021 for national legislation to complement the SIS-regulations (EU) 2018/1860, (EU) 2018/1861 and (EU) 2018/1862 was introduced to the Finnish Parliament.



IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT SMUGGLING

PREVENTING AND TACKLING IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

The Action Plan 2021-2024 to Prevent Irregular Migration and Irregular Stay was finalised in May 2021. The Plan was designed as a holistic approach to prevent irregular migration, irregular stay, cross-border crime and the emergence of shadow societies. The 52-point Plan was agreed to be monitored by the Ministry of the Interior and the National Police Board.

The Border Guard paid special attention to the eastern land borders due to the situation in Belarus.



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

In 2021, the Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking was accepted by the Finnish Government. Various authorities were tasked with implementation of the Plan, which has five strategic objectives and 55 actions. It was designed to promote the detection of human trafficking,

improve victim standing, enhance the establishment of criminal liability, strengthen the mainstreaming of anti-trafficking into wider government activities, and intensify cooperation with civil society.

Due to political pressure and large-scale discussions in media, resources for tackling trafficking in human beings crimes were increased. The competence centre for human trafficking comprises an investigation unit within Helsinki Police and intelligence support from the National Bureau of Investigation.



RETURN AND READMISSION

MAIN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Finnish authorities working in the area of return implemented multiple projects on processing data and digitalisation of information systems. Legislative amendments to enable digitalization were passed.



MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Finland introduced its Africa Strategy, incorporating issues related to migration. The Strategy was drafted under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote Finland's ties with African countries. The goals of the strategy were set out: 1) to set realistic but ambitious goals for Finland's Africa policy; 2) to outline, on the basis of shared interest between Finland and African countries, a limited number of focus points for Finland's Africa policy and to define concrete actions for achieving them; 3) to emphasise strengthening political and economic relationships; and 4) to expand relationships from development cooperation into other forms of cooperation, while maintaining development cooperation as a part of the whole.



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 Finland 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 Finland

Data relative to EU



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

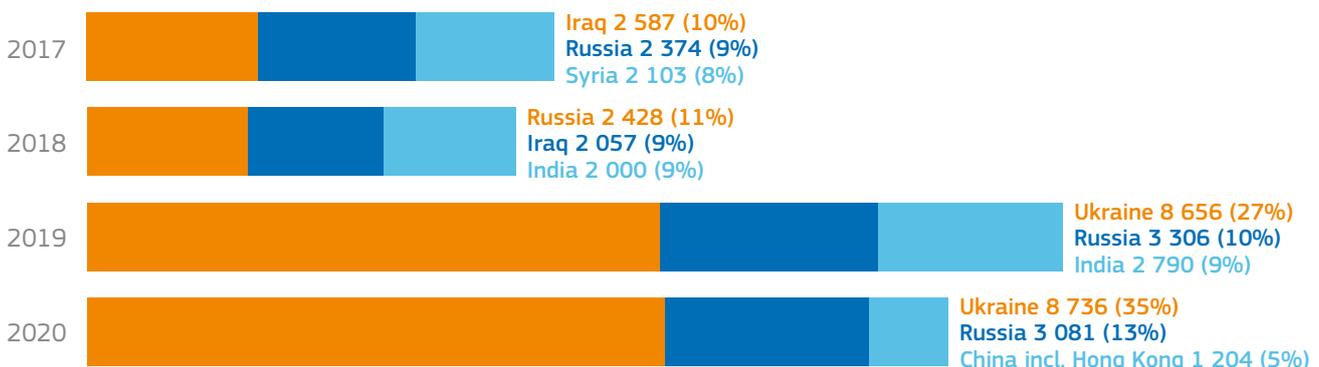
Third-Country Nationals (TCNs) as % of total population in the country (and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)



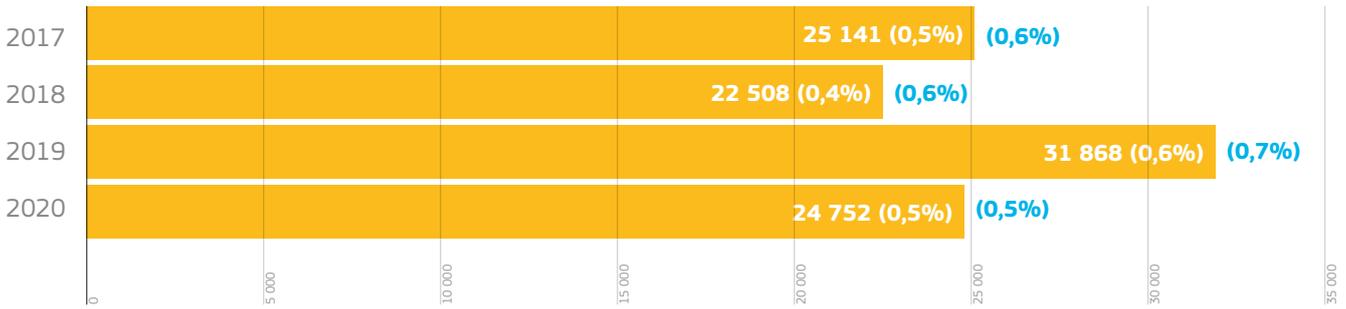
Top 3 nationalities of number of first residence permits annually issued: number of permits and % of total annual permits

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)



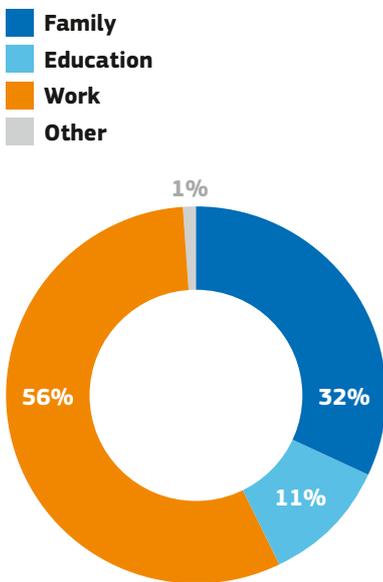
First residence permits annually issued: total number and % of total population in the country (and in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_pop1ctz)



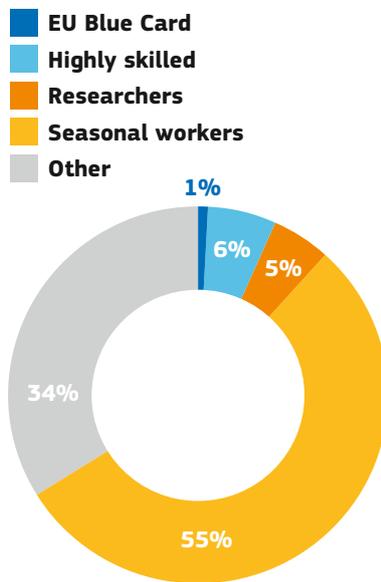
First residence permits annually issued by reason in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)



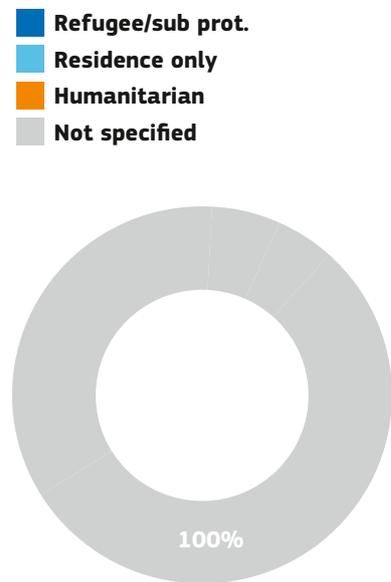
First residence permits annually issued for work reasons in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resocc)



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

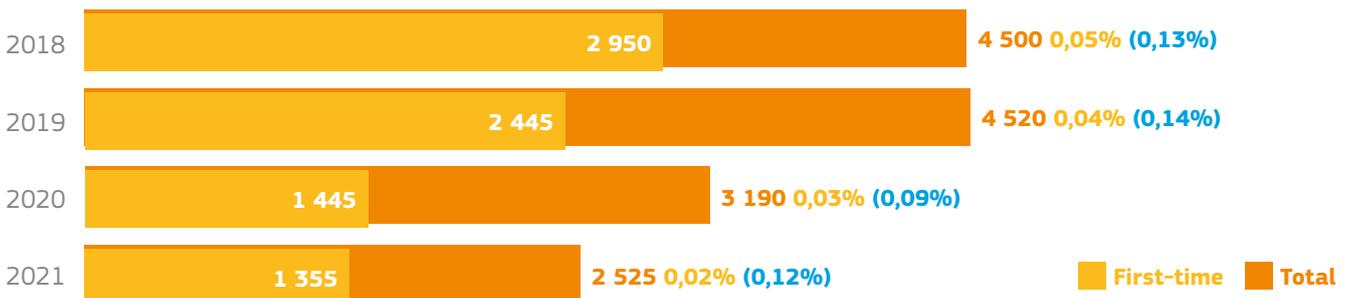
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resoth)



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

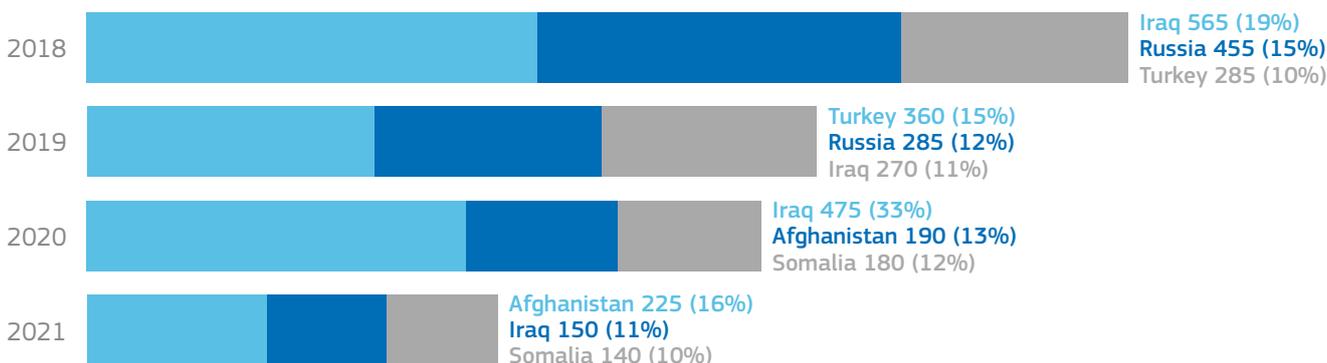
Total/first-time asylum applications; first-time asylum applications as % of population in the country (and in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza, migr_pop1ctz)



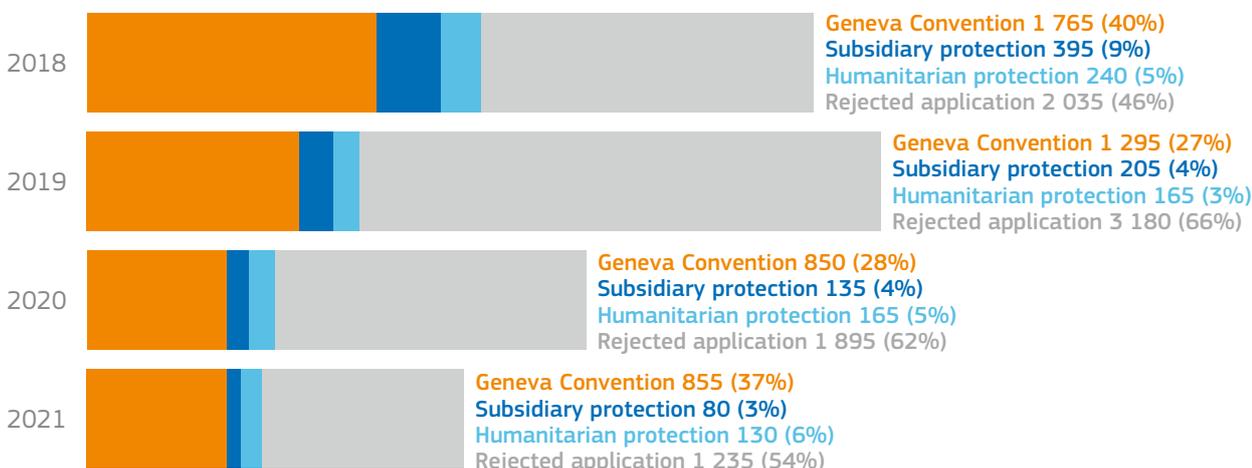
Top 3 nationalities of annual number of first-time asylum applications: number of applications and % of total first-time annual applications

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza)



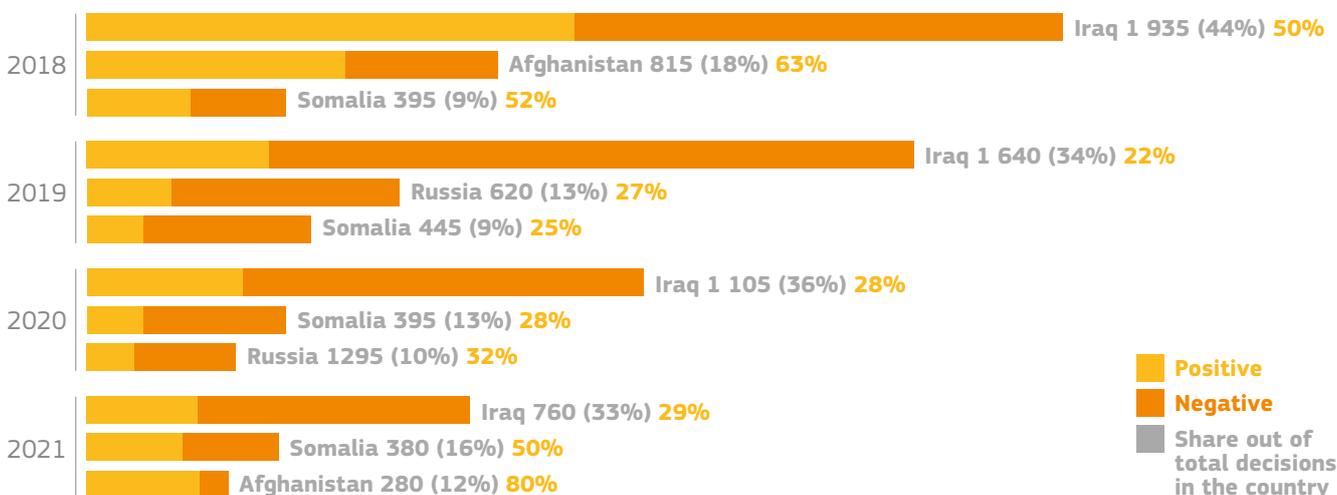
Number of first-instance asylum decisions by outcome (% of total decisions)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta)



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

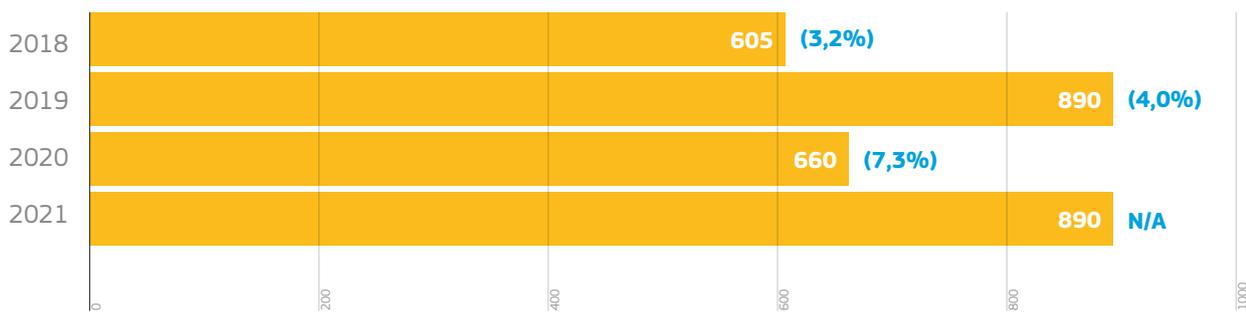
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta)



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

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

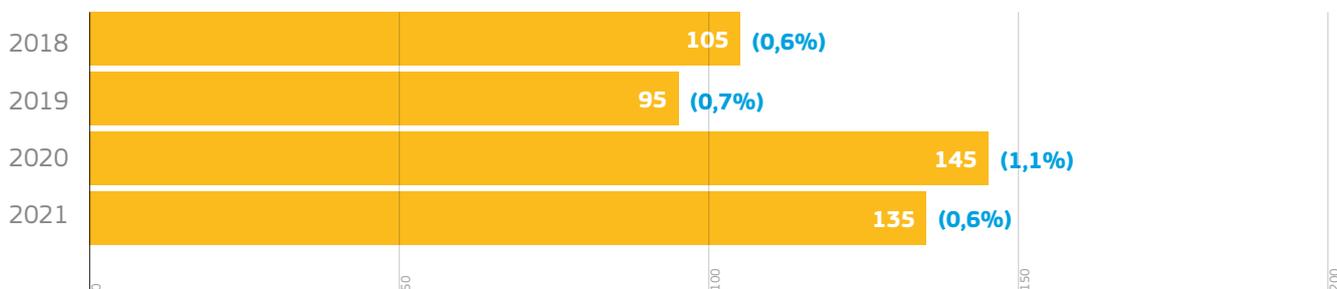
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyresa)



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

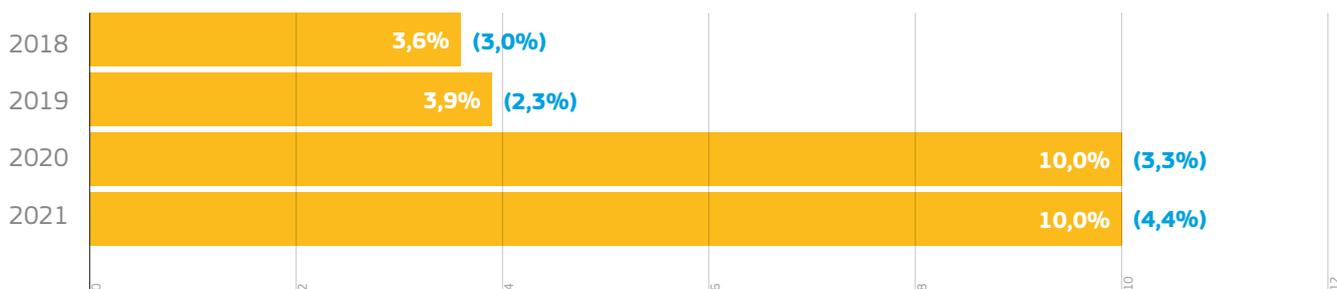
Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in the country (and % of total applications from unaccompanied minors in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa)



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

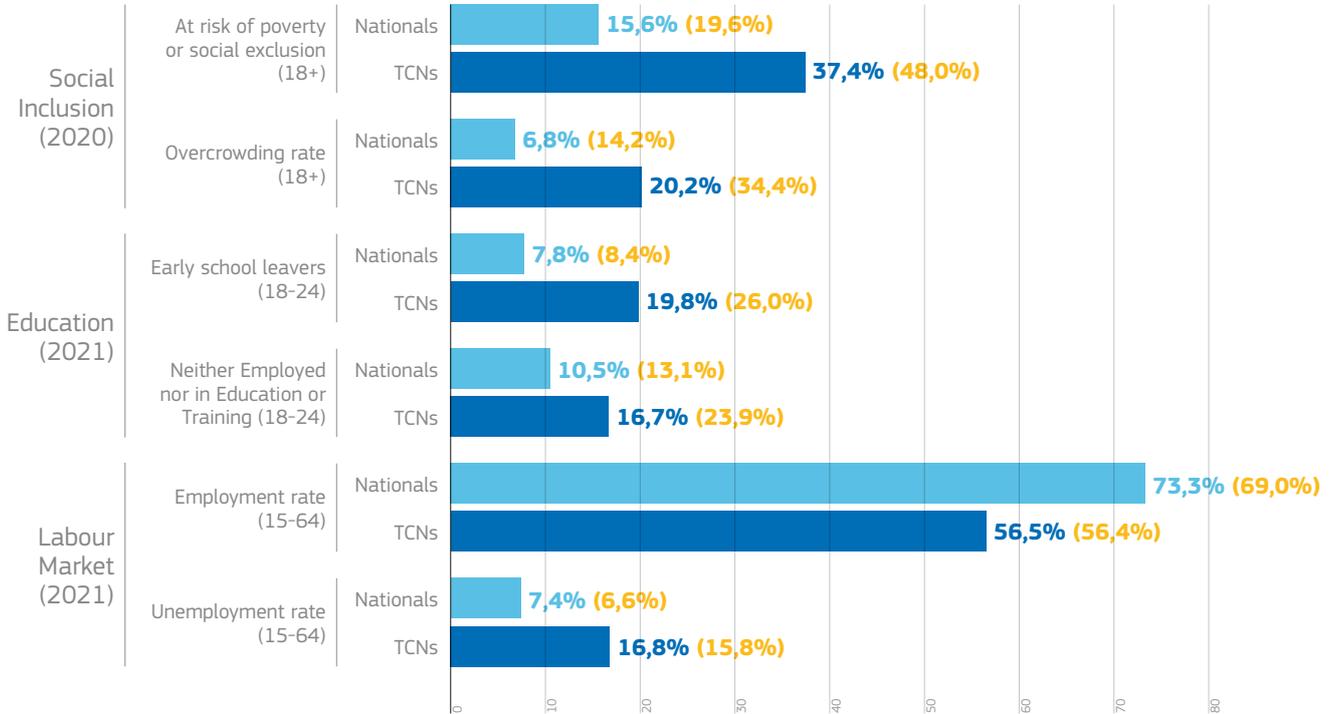
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa, migr_asyappctza)



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.

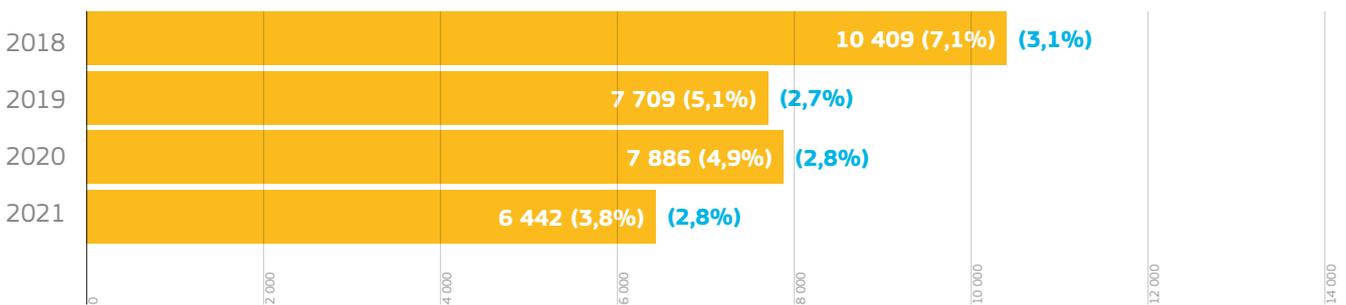
SOURCE: Eurostat (ilc_peps05, ilc_lvho15, edat_lfse_01, edat_lfse_23, lfsa_ergan, lfsa_urgan)



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

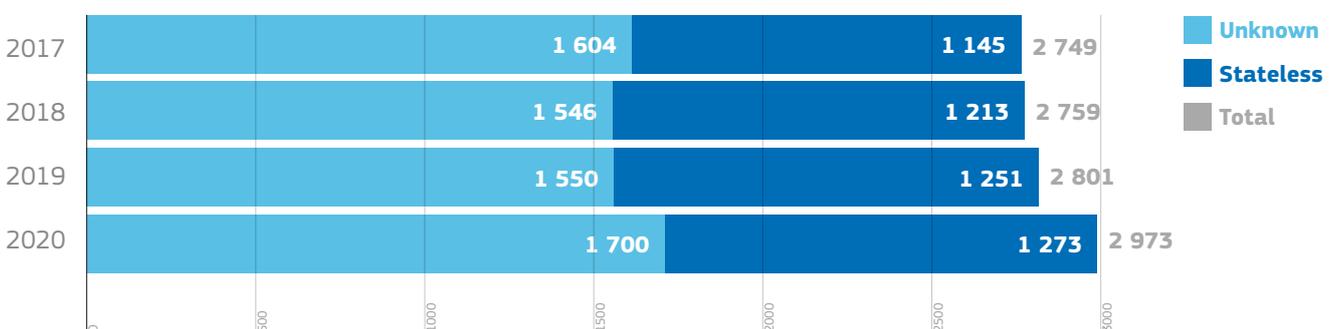
Third-Country Nationals who have acquired citizenship as a share of total Third-Country Nationals (in the country and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_acqs, migr_acq)



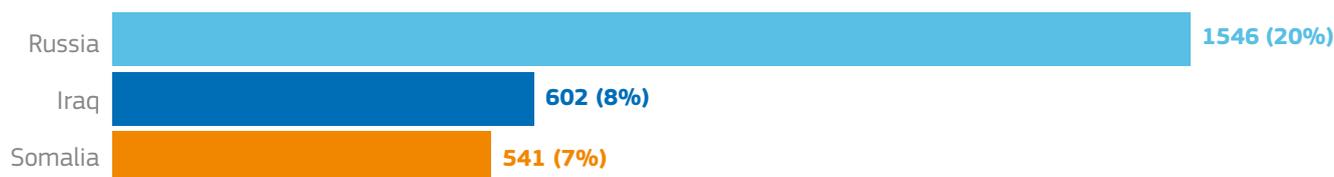
Stateless, unknown citizens and recognised non-citizens (RNC) - where present

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

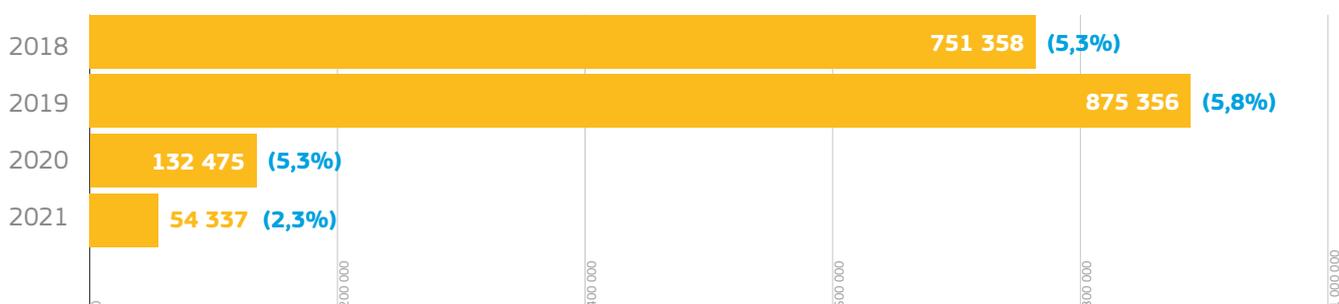
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_acq)



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

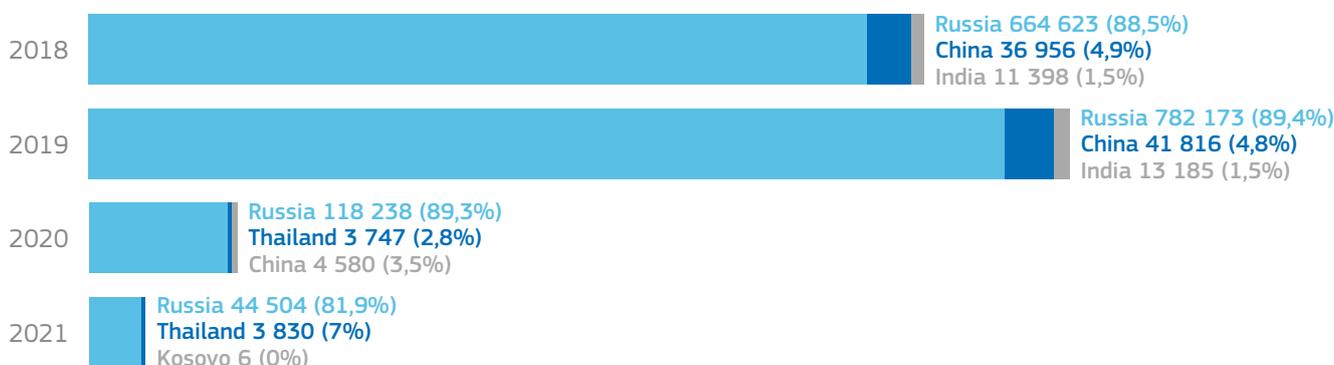
Short-term visa issued (% of Schengen)

SOURCE: DG Migration and Home Affairs



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

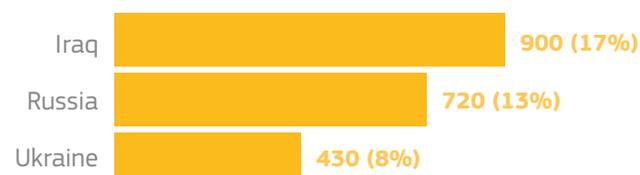
SOURCE: DG Migration and Home Affairs



IRREGULAR MIGRATION

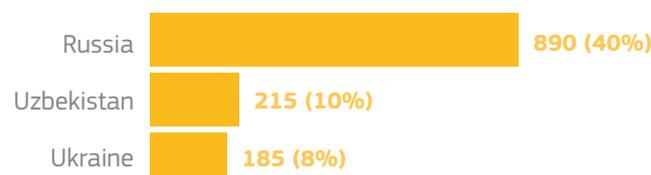
Top 3 nationalities ordered to leave the country in 2021, in absolute number and as a share of all nationalities ordered to leave the country

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_eiord)



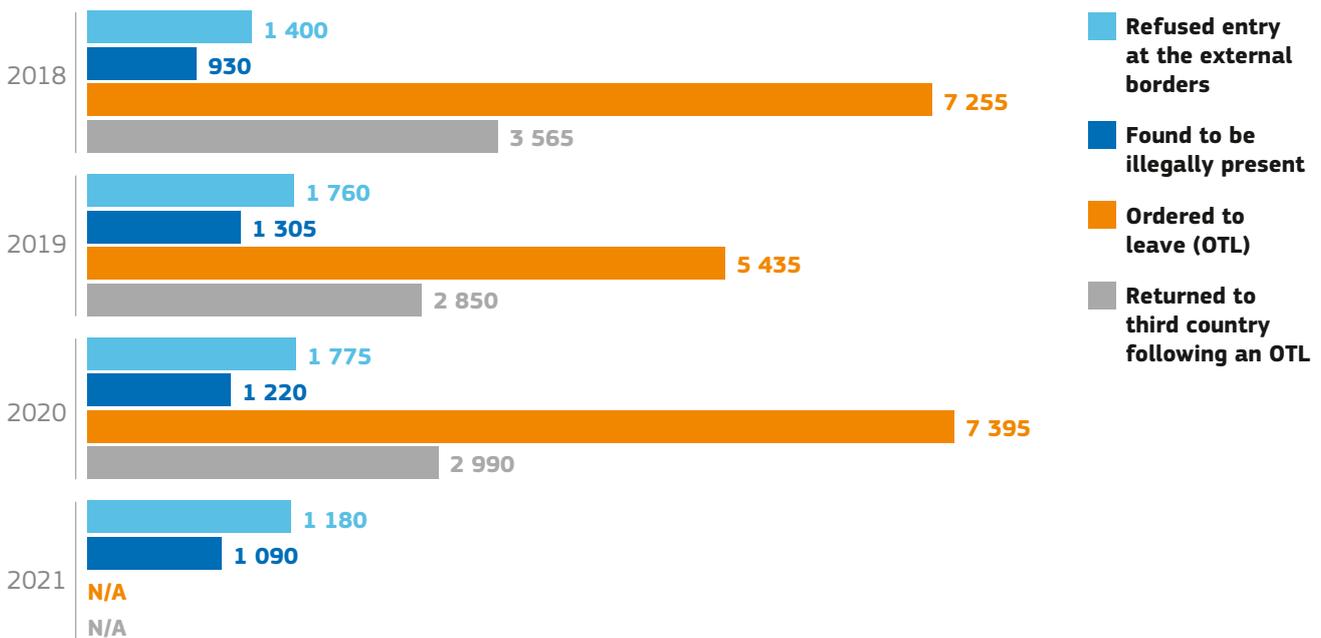
Top 3 nationalities returned to third country in 2021, in absolute number and as a share of all nationalities ordered to leave the country

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_eirtn)



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)

N/A



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

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

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resoth)

