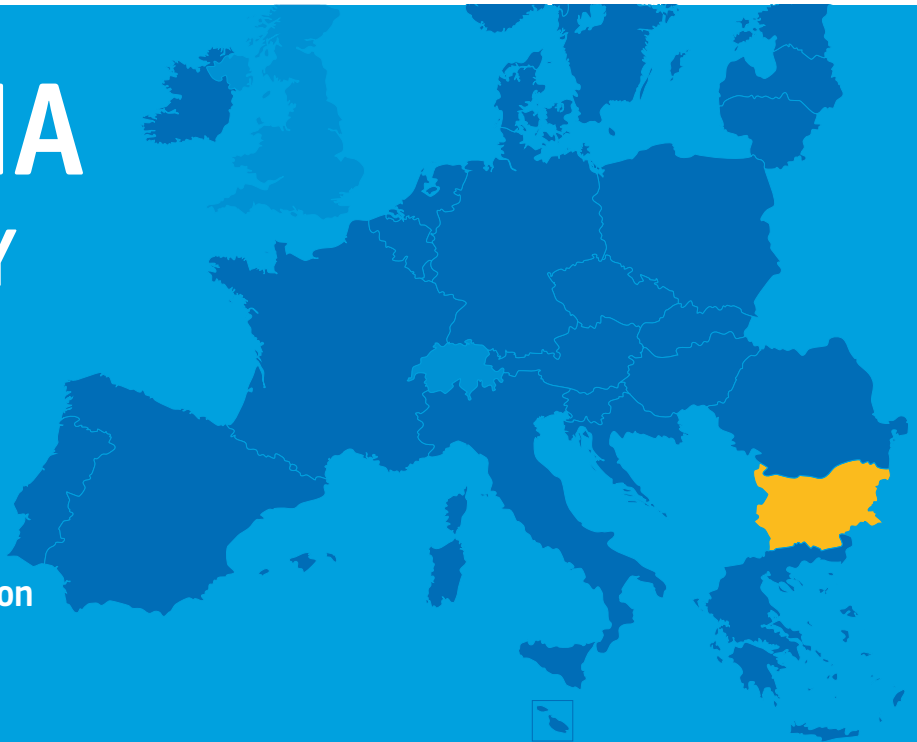


BULGARIA

EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET 2022

Main developments in migration
and international protection,
including latest statistics
August 2023



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Overarching legal or policy changes in legal migration

The proposed draft legislation amending the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria (LFRB) envisages the possibility to obtain a five-year residence-and-work permit for highly qualified employment, including for beneficiaries of international protection.

Work-related migration

Amendments were introduced to the Law on Labour Migration and Labour Mobility (notably, Article 9, para 5) to facilitate the integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection into Bulgarian society, particularly their access to the labour market.

Draft legislation amending the LFRB was prepared to reduce the administrative burden and facilitate the issuing of EU Blue Cards by reducing the decision-making period for its issuance and simplify the procedures for changing employer. Additionally, the amendments will allow those holding an EU Blue Card to work remotely on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

KEY POINTS



Following the activation of the EU Temporary Protection Directive, the Bulgarian government adopted Decision No 144/10.03.2022 to grant temporary protection to displaced persons from Ukraine.



In 2022, special focus was placed on Directive (EU) 2021/1883 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment, and repealing Council Directive 2009/50/EC. The national parliament (National Assembly) proactively legislated for the partial introduction of the new Blue Card in the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria (LFRB).



TEMPORARY PROTECTION

Main national developments in relation to temporary protection

The Bulgarian government adopted Decision No 144/10.03.2022 to grant temporary protection to displaced people from Ukraine and guarantee their associated rights, in accordance with the EU Council Implementing Decision.

The Law on Labour Migration and Labour Mobility was amended to facilitate the integration of beneficiaries of temporary protection into the Bulgarian labour market. An Act of the Council of Ministers allowed third-country nationals benefiting from temporary protection to access the labour market without a permit for the period of their temporary protection.

According to the Amendment to the Law on Asylum and Refugees (LAR) of 26 April 2022, foreigners benefiting from temporary protection have the same right to health insurance, medical assistance and medical services as Bulgarian citizens, with the exception of some medical assistance provided in accordance with the rules for the coordination of social security systems under Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71. Amendments were introduced to the LAR, in particular Article 39, to ensure clear definition of the package of rights of beneficiaries of temporary protection.

In order to facilitate integration of those granted a temporary protection status, the by-laws in education and socialisation were intensively applied, including psychological help.

A number of information measures were implemented urgently for the benefit of people fleeing Ukraine. Information was published on the websites of the [Council of Ministers](#), the [Ministry of the Interior](#) and the [State Agency for Refugees](#), as well as other national institutions targeting both those registering for temporary protection and potential applicants for protection. The information covered their options to reside in the Republic of Bulgaria, registration, rights, etc. The following rights were expressly mentioned and guaranteed: the right to remain in Bulgaria; the right to work and have professional training; the right to suitable accommodation or, where necessary, means of accommodation; the right to social assistance; the right to medical assistance in an emergency; and the right to unhindered return to their country of origin.

In Decision No 145/10.03.2022, the Bulgarian government approved the programme for the use of humanitarian aid for persons seeking temporary protection in the Republic of Bulgaria as a result of military action in Ukraine. In Decision No 147/12.03.2022, the Council of Ministers approved the guidelines establishing the order and rules of the humanitarian aid provided under the programme for supporting accommodation registered in the national tourist register and providing accommodation and food services to people seeking temporary protection.

In accordance with Article 41, para 1, item 5 of the LAR, SAR issued registration cards for the period of protection, under Article 4 of the abovementioned Directive and the EU Council Decision.



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

Border management

A National Plan for capacity development, border management and return of illegally staying third-country nationals was drafted and implemented.

Schengen governance

In 2022, the development of an automated case management information system –was completed. Its purpose is to meet the Schengen requirements for registering illegal migrants, issuing decisions on ‘return’ and ‘bans on entering the territory of the EU member states and the Schengen area’ (Regulation 2018/1860, Regulation 2018/1861) and collecting photographic and dactyloscopic data. The system will allow the Ministry of Interior and the State Agency for Refugees to track foreigners from the moment of their initial registration until their removal from the EU territory.



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

National strategic policy developments

The National Programme for the Prevention and Counteraction of Human Trafficking and Protection of Victims was drafted and adopted at a regular meeting of the Bulgarian National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (NCCTHB) on 29 September 2022.

Identification and information to victims of trafficking in human beings

In 2022, the administration of the NCCTHB (as a coordinator of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and equivalent mechanism of a national rapporteur) received and coordinated a total of 77 alerts, of which 70 were directly linked to trafficking. Of a total of 132 people identified as victims of trafficking, 12 were third-country nationals (eight citizens of Ukraine, three citizens of Syria and one citizen of the Philippines).



RETURN AND READMISSION

Main national developments

The Migration Directorate within the Ministry of the Interior became part of Frontex’s Reintegration Assistance Tool (RIAT) and Joint Reintegration Services provided by Frontex.



STATISTICAL ANNEX

The statistical annex available on the next pages complements the Country Factsheet and provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Bulgaria on aspects of migration and international protection. It was prepared by Eurostat and it is organised in ten thematic sections, including legal residence, temporary protection, asylum, unaccompanied minors, integration, irregular migration, return and visas. The dashboard-like layout of the annex allows comparability across countries as well as simultaneous visualisation of different indicators.

The data presented in the annex were extracted on 8 May 2023, with the exception of data on first-time applicants extracted on 7 June 2023. They cover the period 2019-2022. Since 2022 data were not available at the time of publication for certain datasets, in these cases the period 2019-2021 is covered.

For some indicators, data are rounded at the source. Due to this, in some cases, the sum of percentages or of individual values might not add up to 100 or to the total value.

A 'How to read the statistical annex' guide, describing each individual chart and providing links to the data sources, is available [here](#).

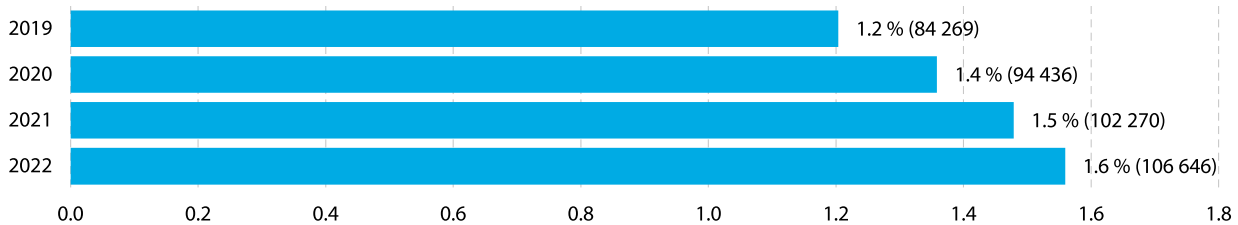
An online data code available under each table/figure can be used to directly access to the most recent data on [Eurostat's website](#).



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Third-country nationals, 1 January 2019–2022

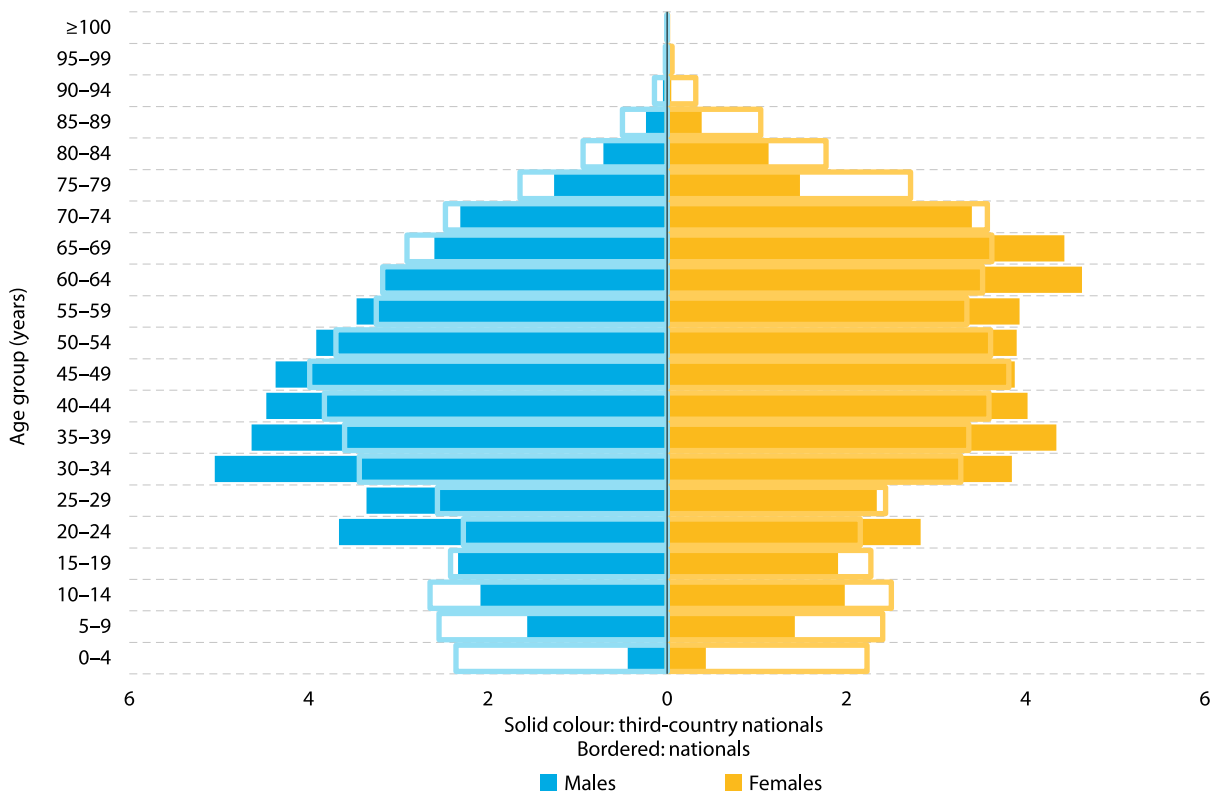
Share of the total population in % (and the absolute number)



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

Age structure of nationals and third-country nationals, 1 January 2022

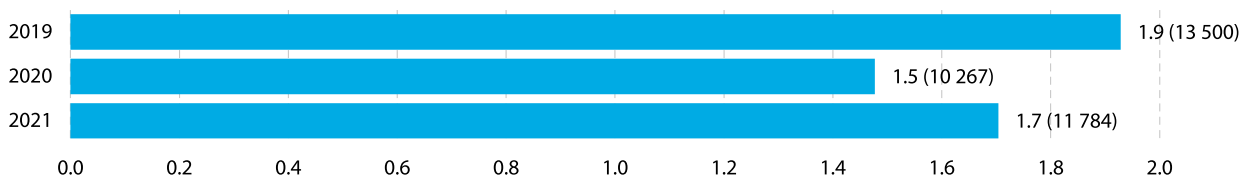
%



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

First residence permits issued to third-country nationals, 2019–2021

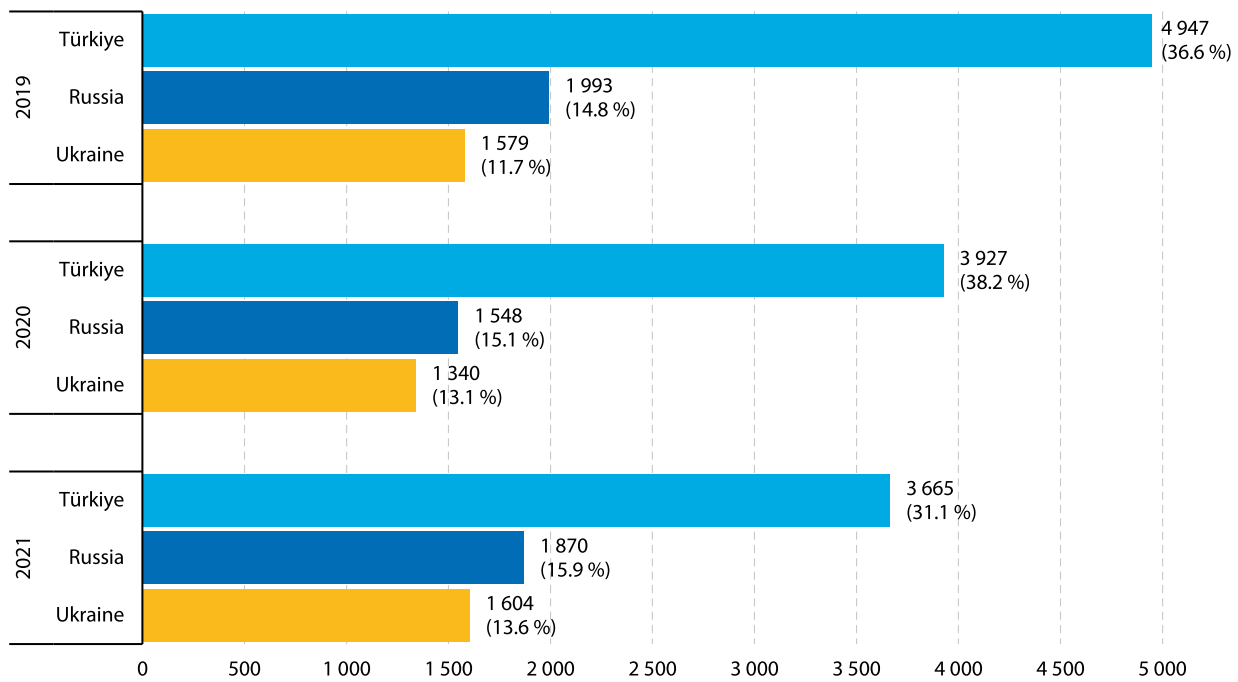
Number per 1 000 people (and the absolute number)



Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst and migr_pop1ctz)

Top 3 countries whose citizens received first residence permits, 2019–2021

Absolute number (and the share in total number)

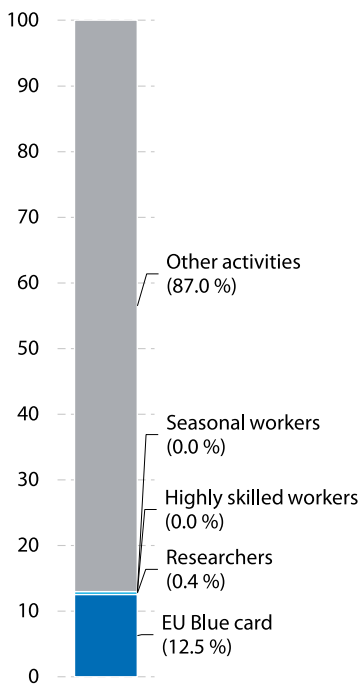


Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)

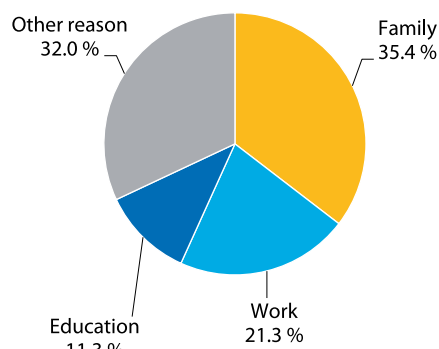
First residence permits issued, distribution by reason or type, 2021

%

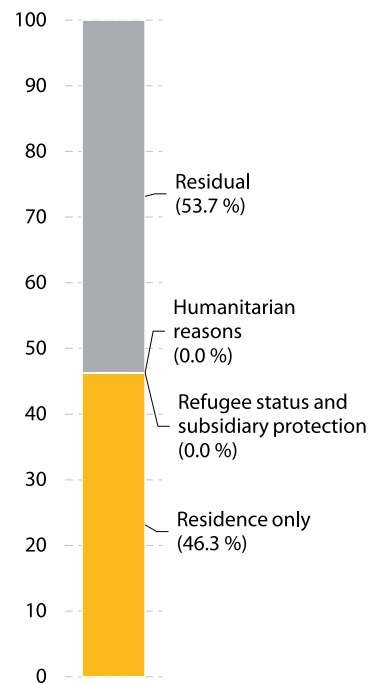
Work reason, by type



All permits, by reason



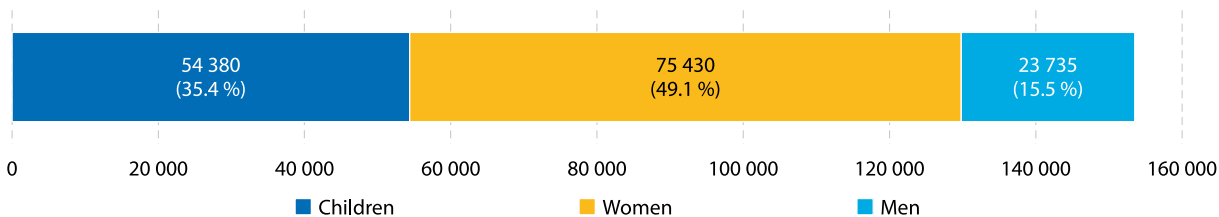
Other reason, by detailed reason



Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_resocc and migr_resoth)

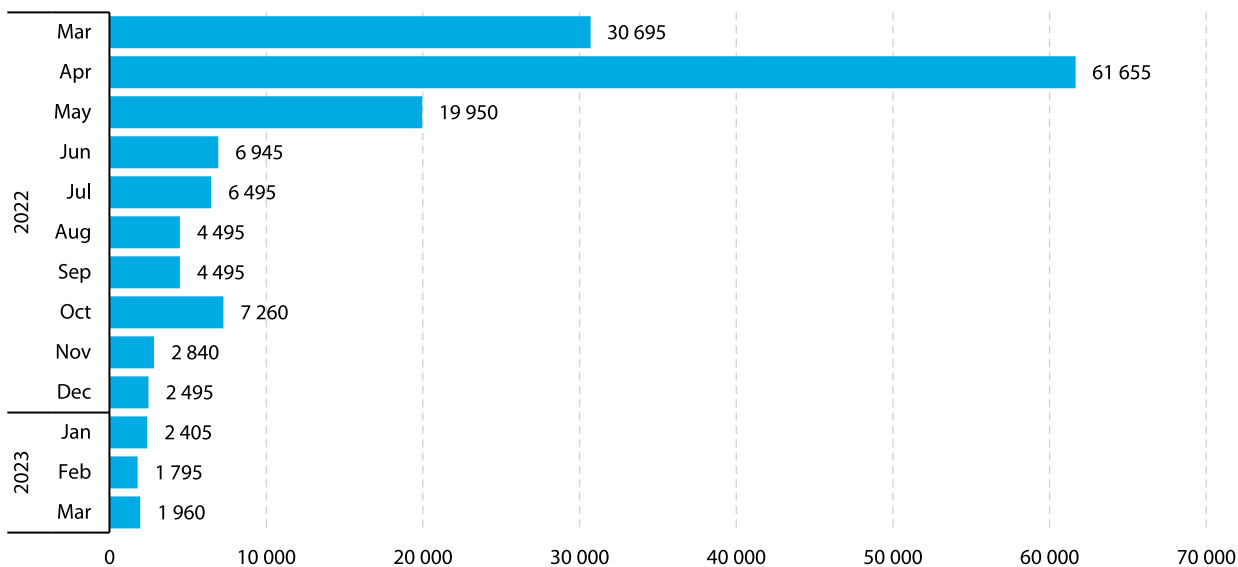
TEMPORARY PROTECTION

Third-country nationals who fled Ukraine and were benefitting from temporary protection at the end of March 2023
Absolute number (and the share within the total)



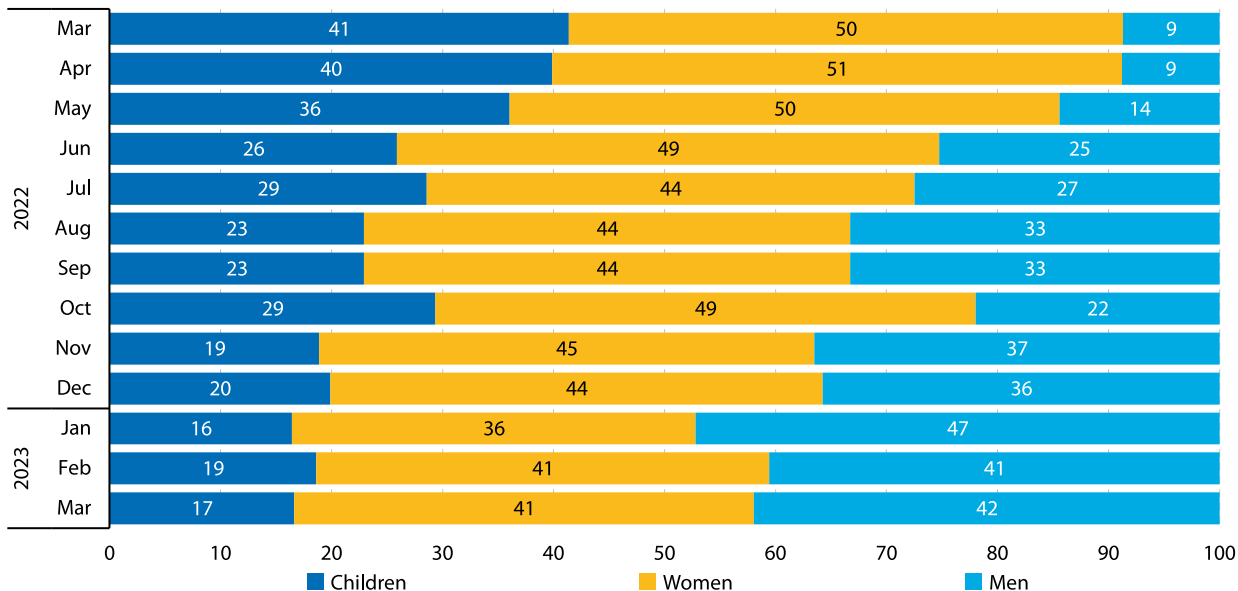
Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpsm)

Number of decisions granting temporary protection to third-country nationals displaced from Ukraine due to Russia's invasion, March 2022–March 2023



Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpfm)

Distribution by age and sex of decisions granting temporary protection to third-country nationals displaced from Ukraine due to Russia's invasion, March 2022–March 2023
%



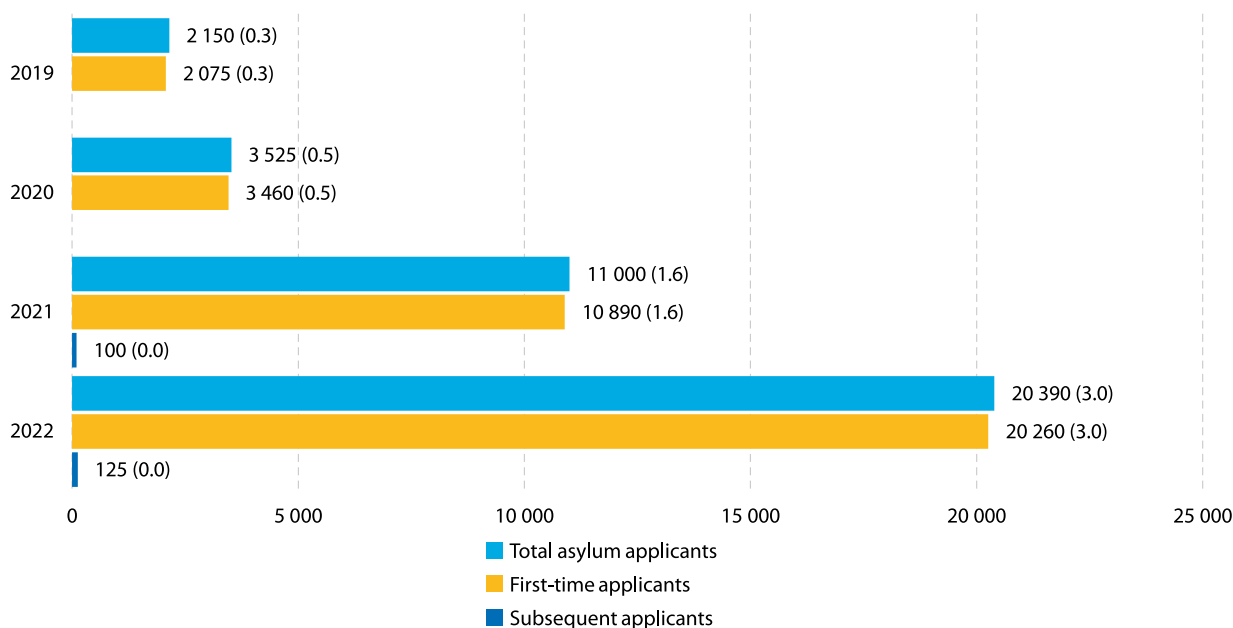
Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpfm)



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

Asylum applicants (third-country nationals), by type of application, 2019–2022

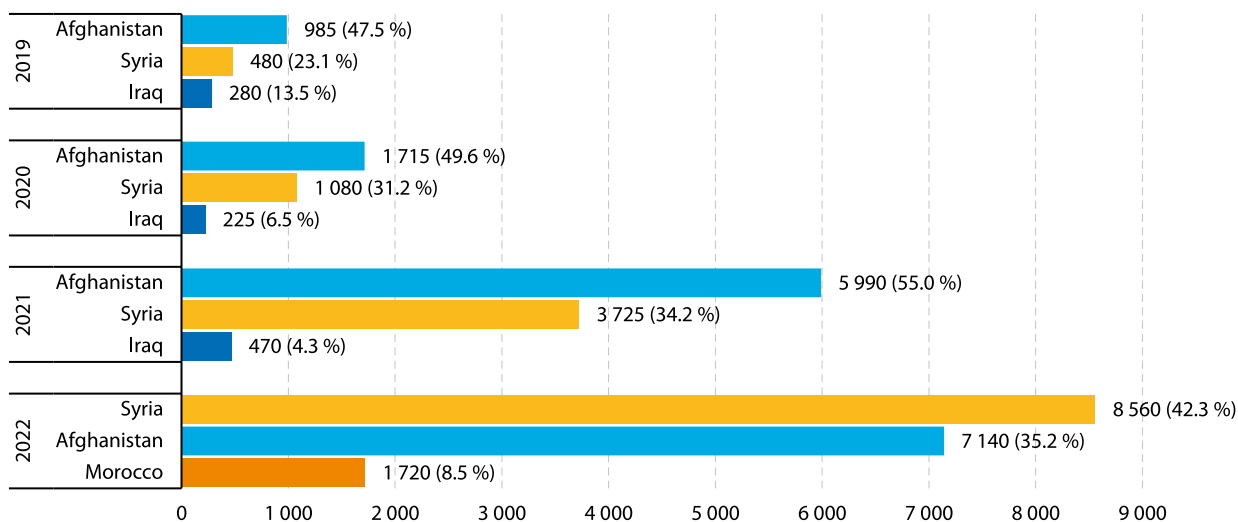
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



Source: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza and migr_pop1ctz)

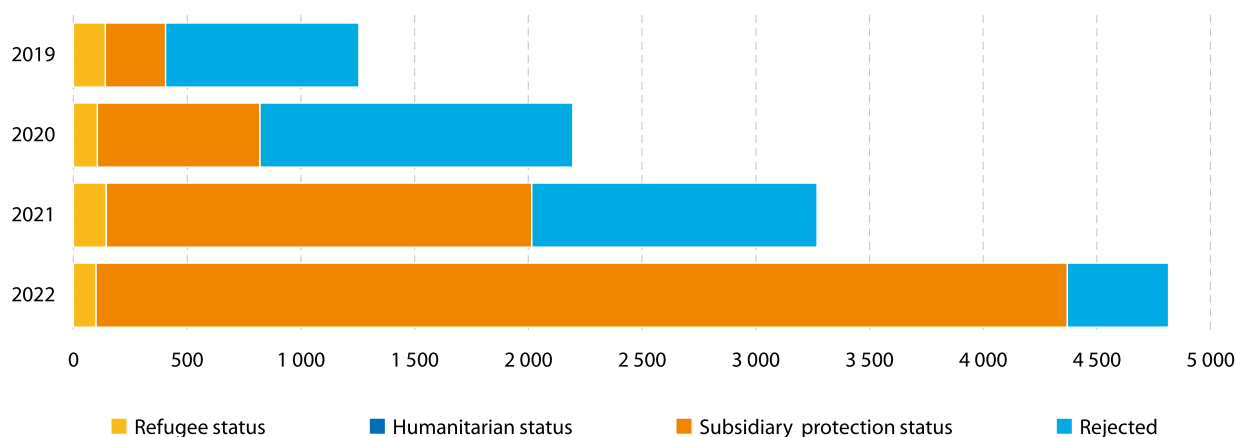
Top 3 countries of citizenship – first-time asylum applicants, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share in total number of first-time applicants)



Source: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza)

Number of first instance asylum decisions for third-country nationals, by outcome, 2019–2022



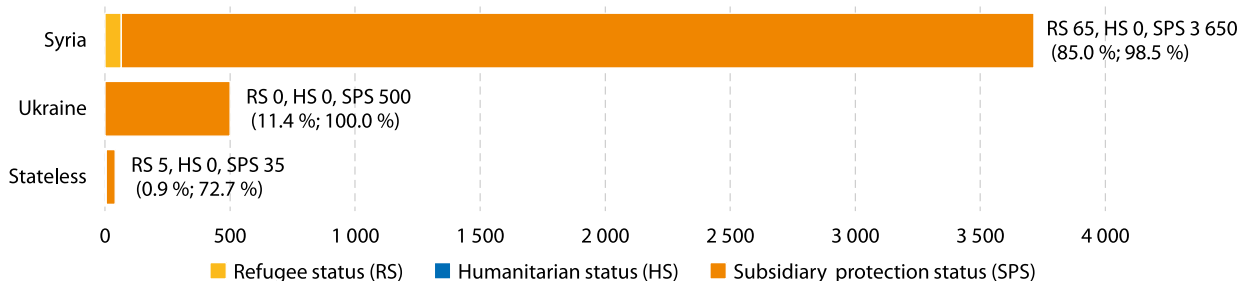
	Refugee status		Humanitarian status		Subsidiary protection status		Rejected	
	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)	Number	Share in total (%)
2019	140	11.2	–	–	265	21.1	850	67.7
2020	105	4.8	–	–	715	32.6	1 375	62.6
2021	145	4.4	–	–	1 870	57.2	1 255	38.4
2022	100	2.1	–	–	4 270	88.7	445	9.2

Note: the shares are calculated using the sum of the four outcomes as the denominator.

Source: Eurostat ([migr_asydcfsta](#))

Top 3 countries of citizenship granted positive asylum decisions at first instance, by outcome, 2022

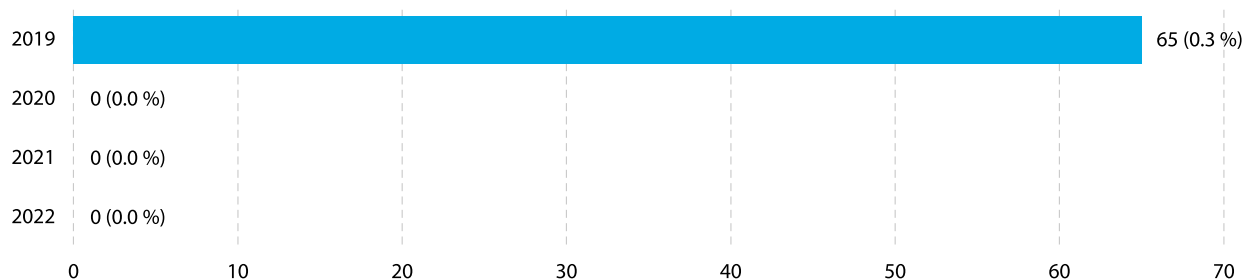
Absolute number (and share in total positive decisions; and the recognition rate)



Source: Eurostat ([migr_asydcfsta](#))

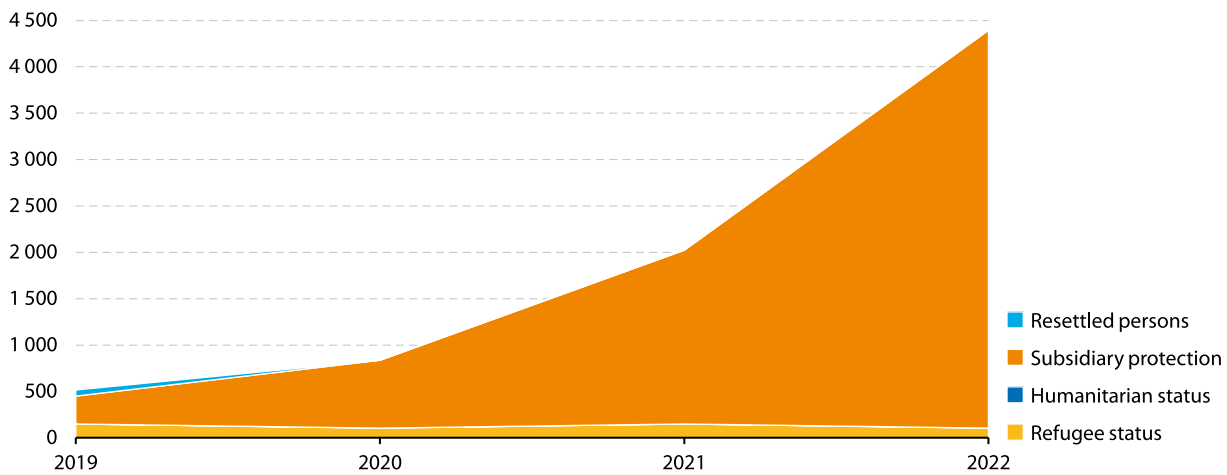
Resettled third-country nationals, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share of the total resettled within the EU)



Source: Eurostat ([migr_asyresla](#))

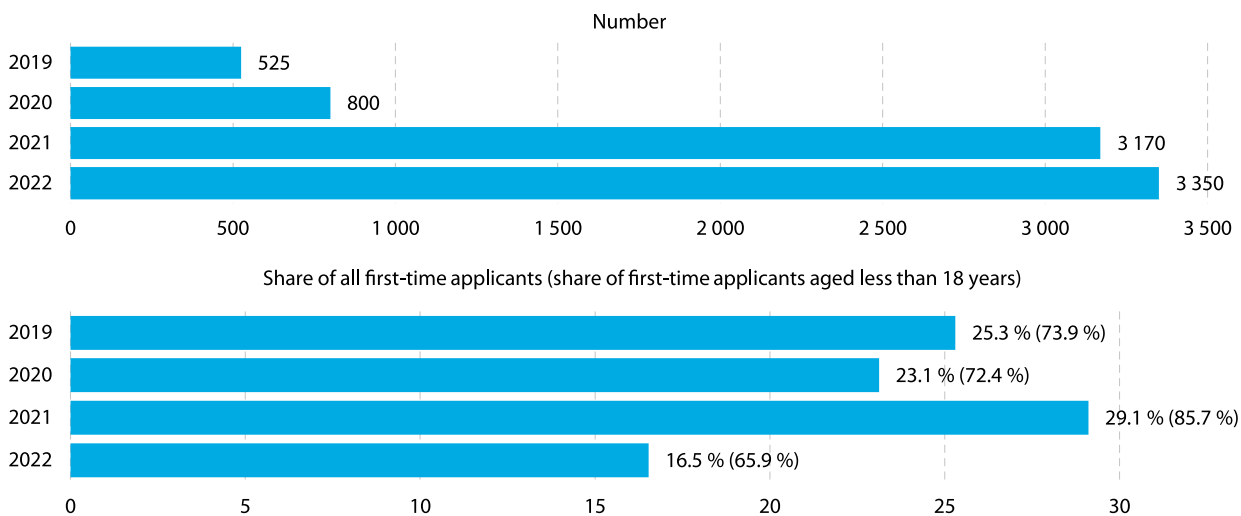
Number of positive decisions for third-country nationals, by outcome, 2019–2022



Source: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta, migr_asydcfina and migr_asyresa)

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

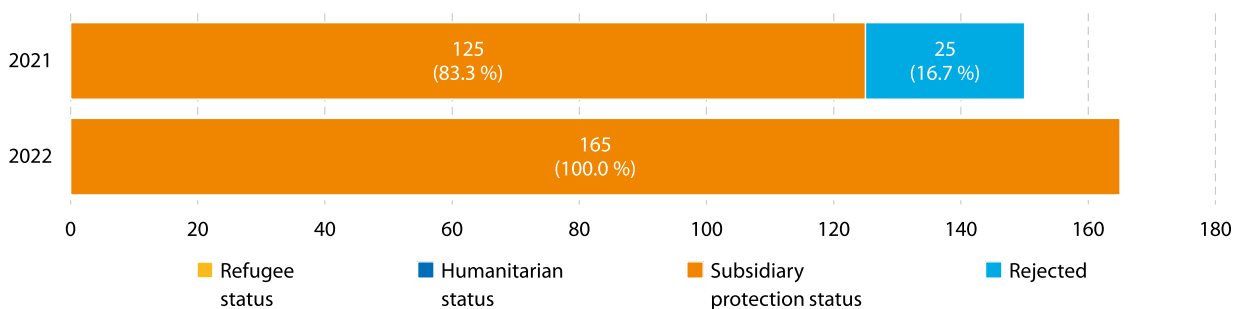
Unaccompanied minors (third-country nationals) applying for asylum, 2019–2022



Source: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa and migr_asyappctza)

First instance asylum decisions on applications lodged by unaccompanied minors (third-country nationals), by outcome, 2021 and 2022

Absolute number (and the share in the total)



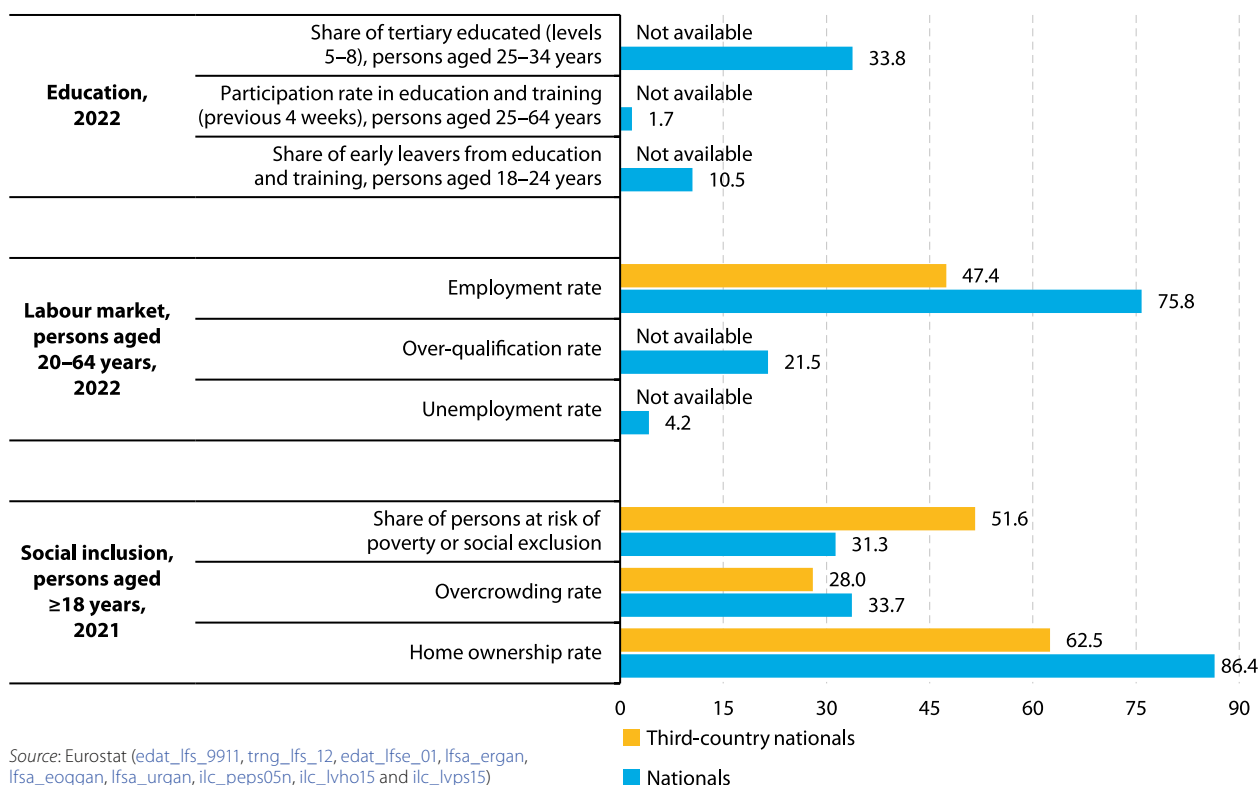
Source: Eurostat (migr_asyumdcfq)



INTEGRATION

Integration indicators, 2021 or 2022

%



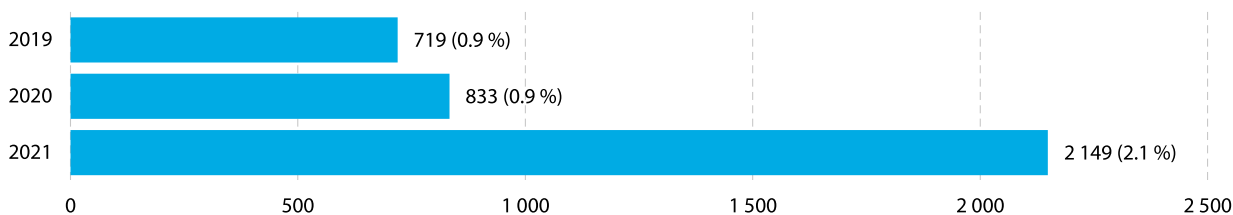
Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9911, trng_lfs_12, edat_lfse_01, lfsa_ergan, lfsa_eoqgan, lfsa_urgan, ilc_peps05n, ilc_lvho15 and ilc_lvps15)



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

Third-country nationals who acquired citizenship, 2019–2021

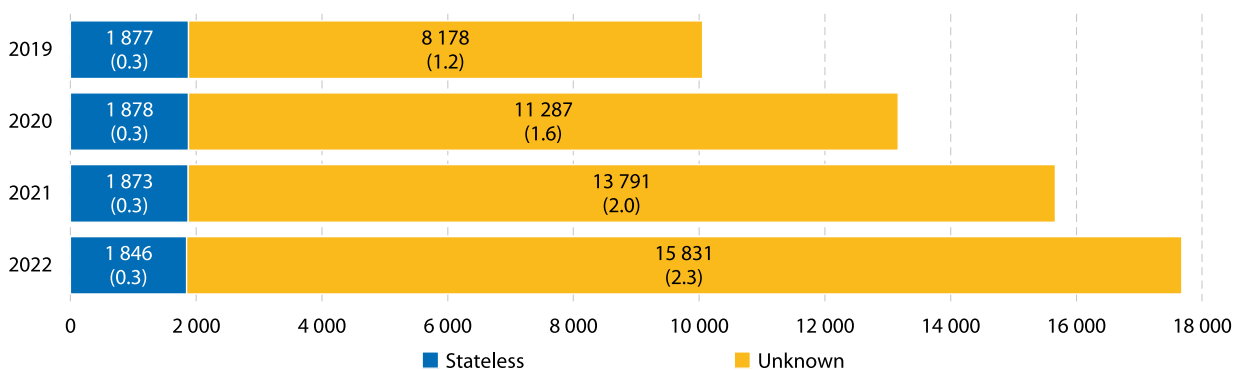
Absolute number (and share of total third-country nationals in the country)



Source: Eurostat (migr_acq and migr_pop1ctz)

Stateless persons, persons with unknown citizenship and recognised non-citizens, 2019–2022

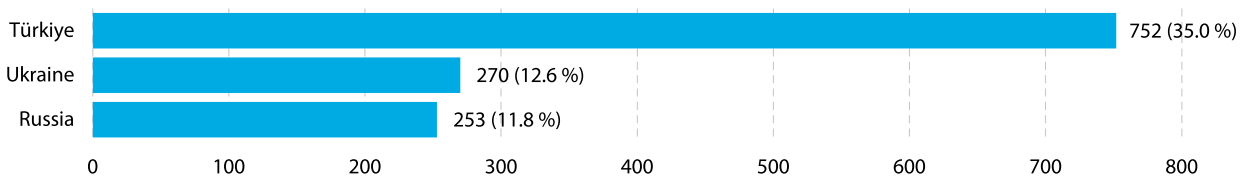
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

Top 3 countries of previous non-EU citizenships of persons acquiring citizenship, 2021

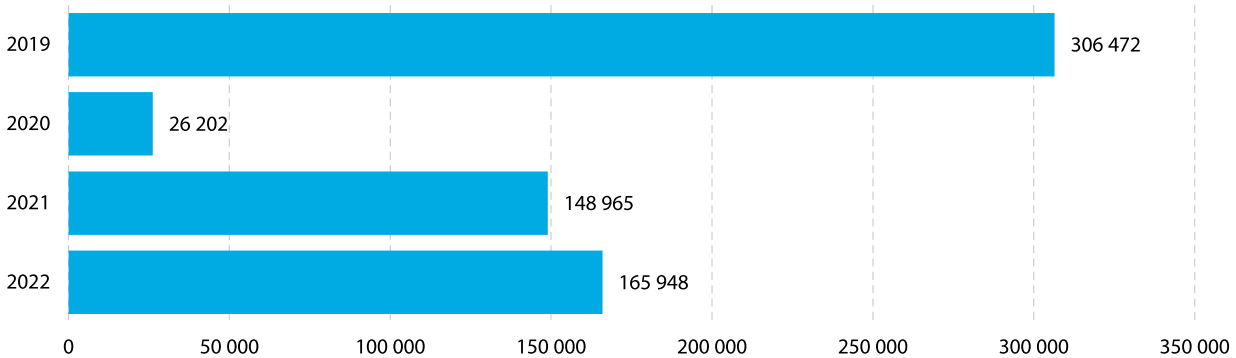
Absolute number (and the share of all acquisitions by third-country nationals plus stateless)



Source: Eurostat (migr_acq)

**BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS****Short-stay visas issued, 2019–2022**

Absolute number



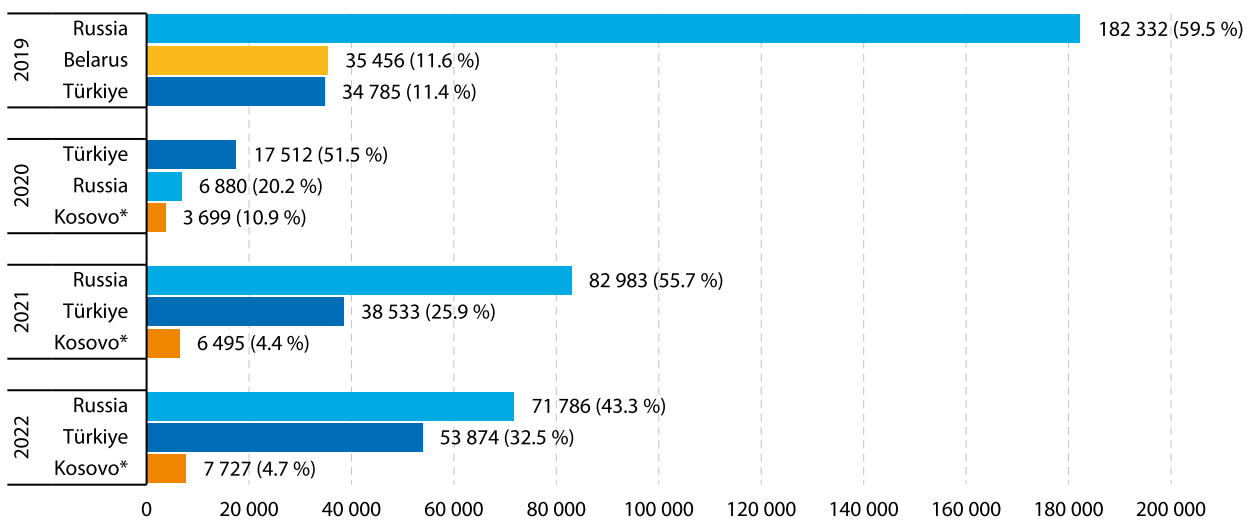
Note: Bulgaria, Ireland, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania were not part of the Schengen Area.

Note: 2019–2021, excluding visas issued at border crossings.

Source: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

Three consulate countries in which the most short-stay visas were issued, 2019–2022

Number of short-stay visas issued (and the share of all short-stay visas issued in consulate countries)



Note: the consulate country might not be the same as the country of citizenship of the visa applicant.

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

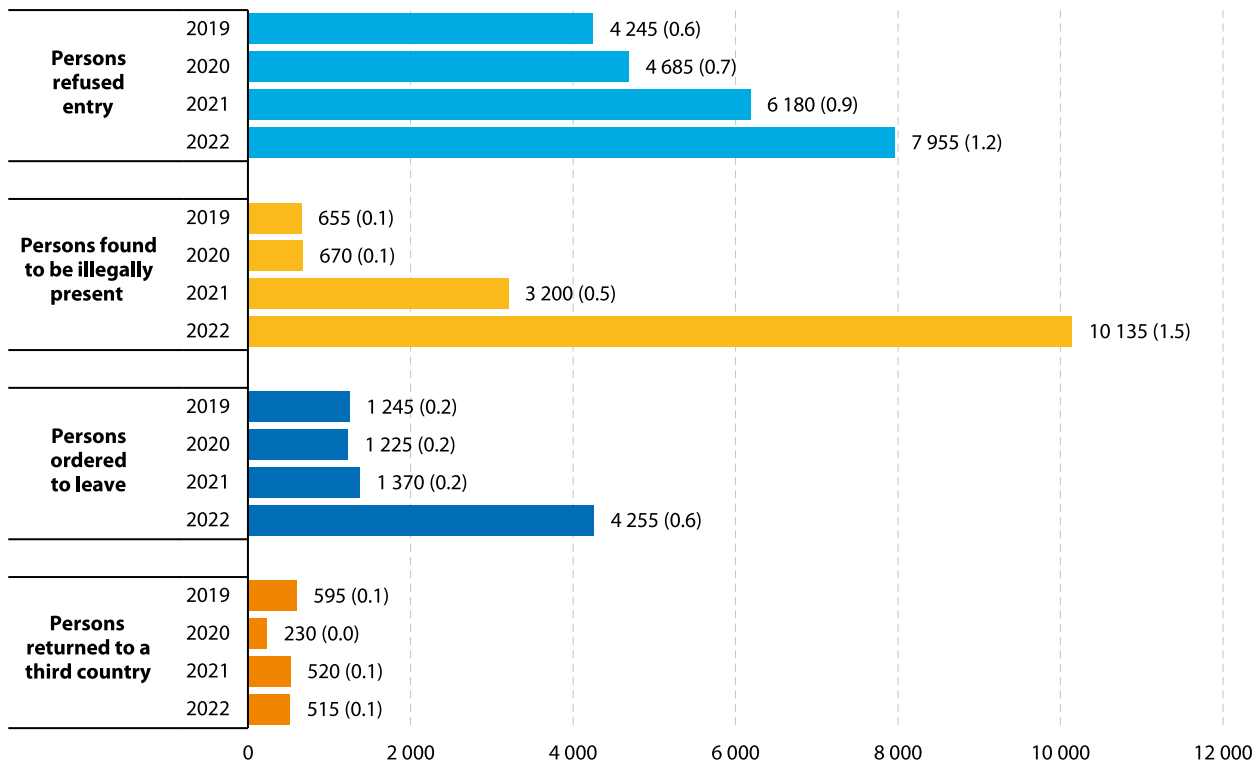
Source: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs



IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Third-country nationals subject to immigration law enforcement, 2019–2022

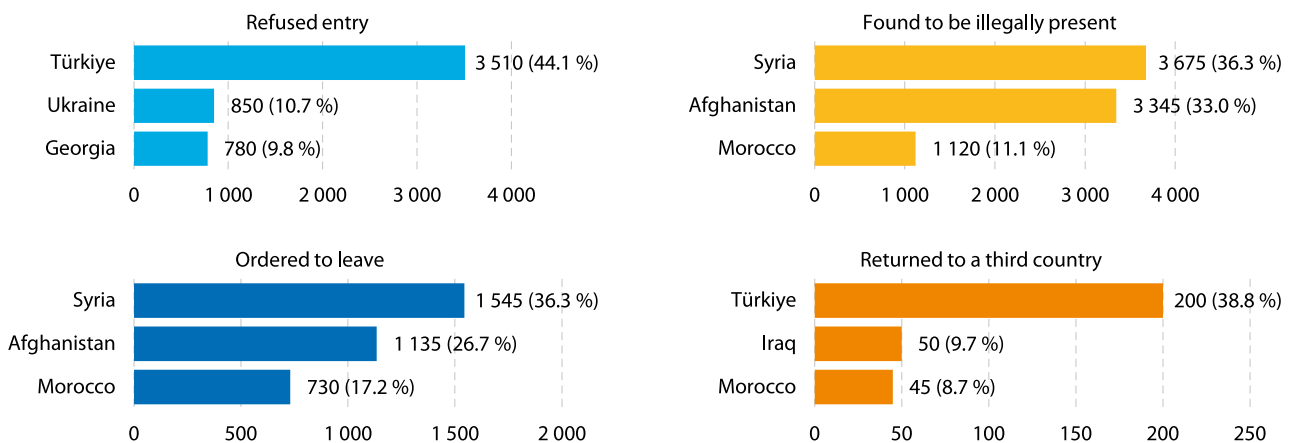
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



Source: Eurostat ([migr_eirfs](#), [migr_eipre](#), [migr_eiord](#), [migr_eirtn](#) and [migr_pop1ctz](#))

Top 3 countries of citizenship of third-country nationals subject to immigration law enforcement, 2022

Absolute numbers (and the shares in the respective totals)



Source: Eurostat ([migr_eirfs](#), [migr_eipre](#), [migr_eiord](#) and [migr_eirtn](#))



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

First residence permits issued to victims of trafficking in human beings, 2019–2021

Absolute number (and the share within the EU)

2019	None
2020	None
2021	None
0	

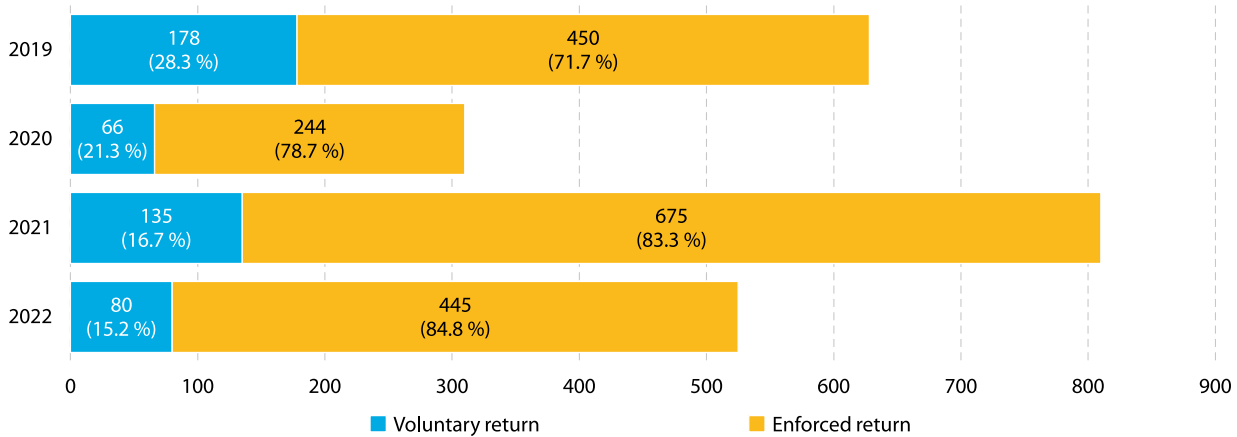
Source: Eurostat (migr_resoth)



RETURN AND READMISSION

Third-country nationals who left the territory, by type of return, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share within the total)

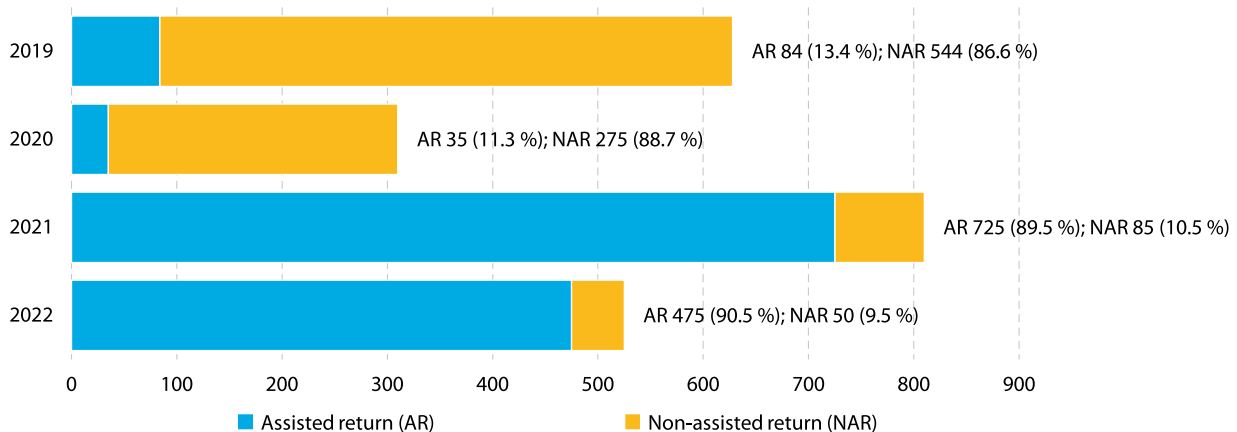


Note: data for 2019 and 2020 are from migr_eirt_vol. Data for 2021 and 2022 are from migr_eirtn1.

Source: Eurostat (migr_eirt_vol and migr_eirtn1)

Third-country nationals who left the territory, by type of assistance received, 2019–2022

Absolute number (and the share within the total)



Note: data for 2019 and 2020 are from migr_eirt_ass. Data for 2021 and 2022 are from migr_eirtn1.

Source: Eurostat (migr_eirt_ass and migr_eirtn1)

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For more information

EMN website: <http://ec.europa.eu/emn>

EMN LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-migration-network>

EMN Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/emnmigration>

EMN YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@EMNMigration>

EMN National Contact Points

Austria www.emn.at/en/

Belgium www.emnbelgium.be

Bulgaria www.emn-bg.com

Croatia <https://emn.gov.hr/>

Cyprus www.moi.gov.cy/moi/crmd/emnncpc.nsf/home/home?opendocument

Czechia www.emncz.eu

Denmark www.justitsministeriet.dk/

Estonia www.emn.ee/

Finland <https://emn.fi/en/>

France www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/Europe-et-International/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM3/Le-reseau-europeen-des-migrations-REM2

Germany <https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/EMN/emn-node.html>

Greece <http://emn.immigration.gov.gr/en/>

Hungary www.emnhungary.hu/en

Ireland www.emn.ie/

Italy www.emnitalyncp.it/

Latvia www.emn.lv/en/home/

Lithuania www.emn.lt/en/

Luxembourg <https://emnluxembourg.uni.lu/>

Malta <https://emn.gov.mt/>

The Netherlands <https://www.emnnetherlands.nl/>

Poland <https://www.gov.pl/web/europejska-siec-migracyjna>

Portugal <https://rem.sef.pt/>

Romania <https://www.mai.gov.ro/>

Spain <https://www.emnspain.gob.es>

Slovak Republic <https://emn.sk/en/>

Slovenia <https://emm.si/en/>

Sweden <http://www.emnsweden.se/>

Norway <https://www.udi.no/en/statistics-and-analysis/european-migration-network---norway>

Georgia https://migration.commission.ge/index.php?article_id=1&clang=1

Republic of Moldova <http://bma.gov.md/en>

Ukraine <https://dmsu.gov.ua/en-home.html>

Montenegro <https://www.gov.me/en/mup>

Armenia <https://migration.am/?lang=en>

Serbia <https://kirs.gov.rs/cir>