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LITHUANIA 2021

Main developments in migration
and international protection,
including latest statistics

EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET

August 2022



OVERARCHING CHANGES

Although the quarantine announced in 2020 was terminated on 1 July 2021, the country-wide COVID-19 emergency remained effective throughout 2021. On 2 July 2021, in the context of an ongoing hybrid attack from Belarus, the government also declared a country-wide extreme situation due to the mass influx of foreigners. On 9 November 2021, the Seimas declared a state of emergency at the Lithuania-Belarus border, extending 5 kilo-metres into the interior and covering specific foreigner accommodation facilities (including a 200 m radius). These decisions and the related legal regulations had a substantial impact on legal migration, asylum applications, and Lithuania's management of irregular migration.

The Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners introduced provisions regulating the requirements and procedure for granting and withdrawing electronic resident status.



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

A temporary residence permit could be issued for up to one year to a foreigner who could not leave Lithuania for humanitarian reasons, or who could not return to their country of origin due to persecution by an undemocratic regime and/or because they suffered or may suffer repressions carried out by such a regime. Other States' soldiers, civilians attached to military units, contractors, and their dependents who participate in international operations, training and other events could be issued a Status Certificate, which grants the same rights as a

KEY POINTS



Following the sudden increase in the flow of irregular migrants from Belarus from May 2021, the government strengthened border protection and initiated changes to the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners.



Requirements for obtaining temporary residence permits were facilitated for third-country nationals arriving as 1) employees, shareholders or chief executives of an investor implementing a large investment project, or as 2) investors, investor employees and their family members.



The Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners was amended to make it easier for third-country national students, researchers, or those who completed their studies or research in Lithuania, to look for work and start working in Lithuania.

residence permit. National visas were no longer distinguished into single-entry and multiple-entry visas, and single-entry visas were phased out.

WORK-RELATED MIGRATION

Third-country national employees, shareholders and chief executives of an investor implementing a large investment project in Lithuania were declared eligible for a temporary residence permit. Companies investing in Lithuania under investment agreements had better conditions for transferring some or all of their employees from

third countries to Lithuania. The requirements for such residence permits are regulated by the Law of Investment and not the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners.

Foreigners with a temporary residence permit and those who arrive to work in Lithuania with a national visa were allowed to sign employment contracts with more than one employer. The provisions of Article 12 of the Directive on subcontracting liability (2014/67/EU) were transposed. International House Vilnius was established, providing centralised migration and integration services in English and Russian to highly qualified foreign specialists and their family members.

STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS

Foreigners who completed their studies or vocational training in Lithuania could take up employment immediately while waiting for a new residence permit or obtain a residence permit to look for a job. If they applied for a temporary residence permit within two years of finishing their studies or vocational training, they were exempt from the work experience and qualification-related requirements. Researchers were allowed to work as lecturers and, on completing their research, could start another job immediately while waiting for a new residence permit, or obtain a one-year residence permit to look for a job in Lithuania.



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

In July 2021, various amendments were made to the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners regulating the conditions and rights of asylum seekers and irregular migrants during a state of war, a state of emergency, an extreme situation due to a mass influx of foreigners or an extreme event. The amendments provided for their accommodation in border control points, transit zones and other suitable places without the right to move freely in the territory of Lithuania, detention due to irregular border crossing, extension of terms for examining asylum applications, and proportional and reasonable restrictions of some of the rights of asylum seekers where necessary.

In July 2021, the procedure for reviewing appeals against negative decisions in asylum applications was changed. The Migration Department will now review such appeals in a pre-trial procedure. The amendments of 12 August 2021 established that in the event of a state of war, a state of emergency, an extreme situation due to a mass influx of foreigners or an extreme event, asylum applications should be submitted at designated places and that applications submitted without observing the rules may be refused.

RELOCATION AND RESETTLEMENT¹

A new resettlement quota was set for 2022 – 59 under humanitarian admission programmes and 20 under resettlement programmes.



MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

To simplify and accelerate the procedure for appointing a legal guardian, the appointment of a guardian to unaccompanied minors was changed and no longer requires a court application.



INTEGRATION

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF ADULTS/ LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS

New programmes were prepared for teaching the Lithuanian language and improving teachers' skills. A report was drawn up on the availability of resources and experience of teaching the Lithuanian language to third-country nationals and stateless persons.



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

ACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP

It was established that the period of residence is terminated by the period of serving a custodial sentence imposed by a court. Amendments to the Law on Citizenship reduced the requirements for persons below the age of 18 to apply for citizenship of Lithuania.

STATELESSNESS

On 1 January 2021, the Law on Citizenship was amended to establish that the child of a stateless person who is lawfully residing in Lithuania has citizenship of Lithuania by birth, regardless of their actual place of birth.



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

BORDER MANAGEMENT

On 2 July 2021, the government declared an extreme situation due to the mass influx of foreigners in Lithuania. On 9 November 2021, the Seimas declared a state of emergency at the border with Belarus. On 12 August 2021, the Law on the Installation of the Physical Barrier on the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania at the European Union's External Border with the Republic of Belarus came into effect. It facilitated the necessary legal, financial and organisational conditions for the urgent construction of a physical barrier, as well as creating a mechanism for effective decision-making and managing the required works.

In July 2021, Frontex forces were sent to Lithuania to strengthen protection of the border between Lithuania and Belarus through physical surveillance and monitoring. In addition to material resources (cars, two helicopters,

¹ Includes Humanitarian Admission Programmes

and a vehicle with thermovision surveillance equipment), Frontex brought teams of expert interviewers and translators.

SCHENGEN GOVERNANCE

On 6 October 2021, a new edition of the national Schengen Information System (SIS) regulations was approved, implementing European Parliament and Council Regulations No. 2018/1860, No. 2018/1861 and No. 2018/1862.



IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT SMUGGLING

No significant developments in 2021.



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

IDENTIFICATION AND INFORMATION TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

On 14 January 2021, the Law on Assistance to Victims of Crime was passed. It defined the rights of victims of crime, including the crime of trafficking in human beings, as well as the organisation and funding of assistance measures.



RETURN AND READMISSION

MAIN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Amendments to the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners were passed on 23 December 2021, setting shorter terms for the submission of appeals against decisions and their examination by courts. The new provisions enabled the expulsion and return of foreigners not considered to have entered Lithuania. Foreigners arriving during an extreme situation or a state of emergency will be able to obtain a temporary residence permit if the decision regarding their expulsion from Lithuania was not implemented within five years. The State Border Guard Service or the Migration Department can support foreigners' voluntary return and reintegration in their country of origin, including a lump sum disbursement.

COOPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

Lithuania established relations with competent Iraqi institutions on issues related to the return of Iraq's nationals.



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 Lithuania 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".



MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

No significant developments in 2021.

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.

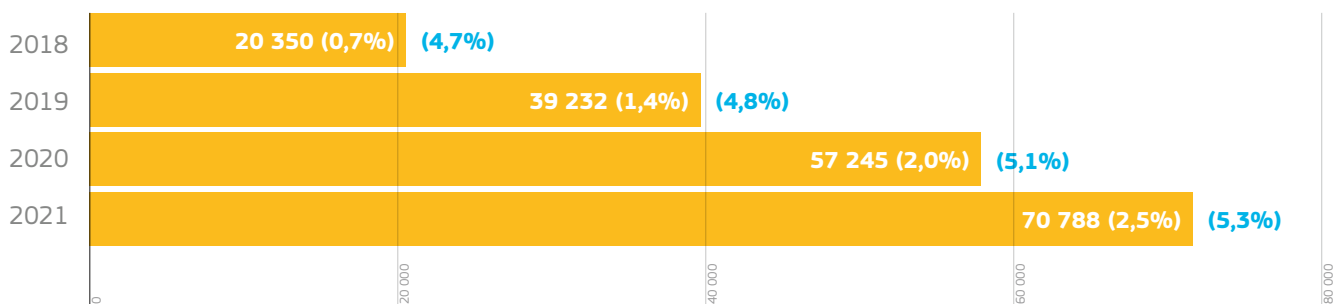
Data relative to Lithuania

Data relative to EU

LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

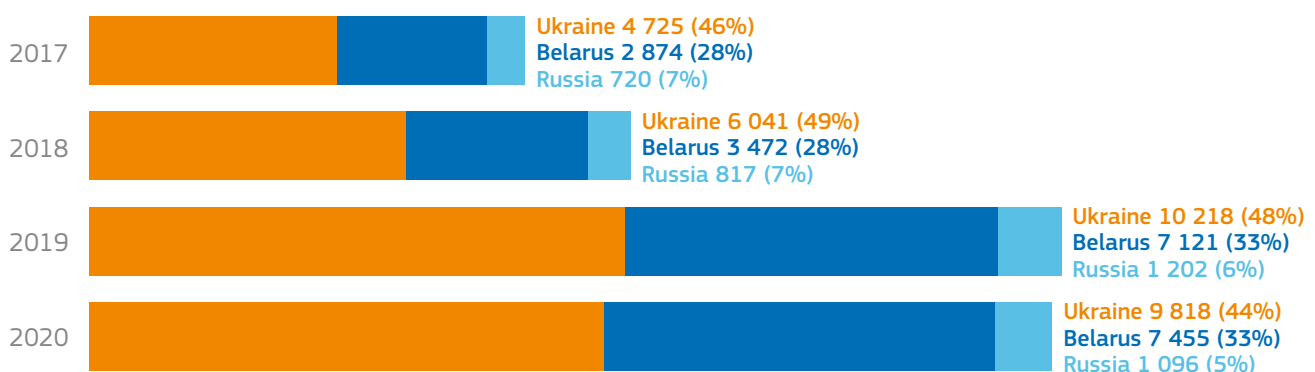
Third-Country Nationals (TCNs) as % of total population in the country (and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)



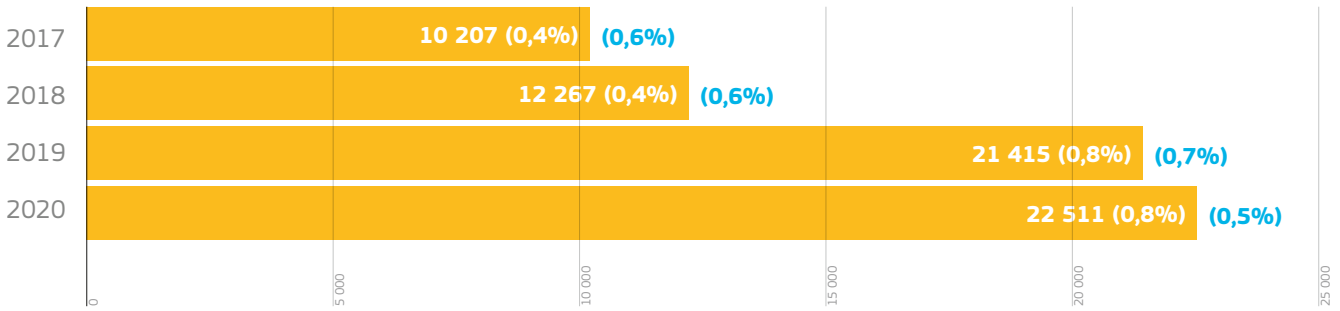
Top 3 nationalities of number of first residence permits annually issued: number of permits and % of total annual permits

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)



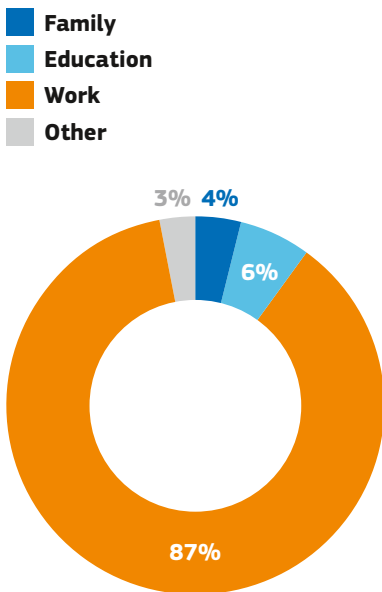
First residence permits annually issued: total number and % of total population in the country (and in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_pop1ctz)



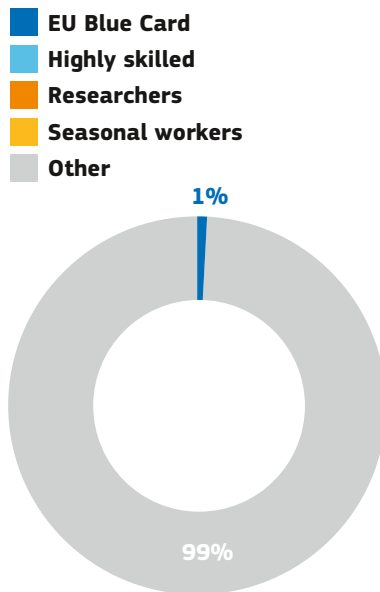
First residence permits annually issued by reason in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)



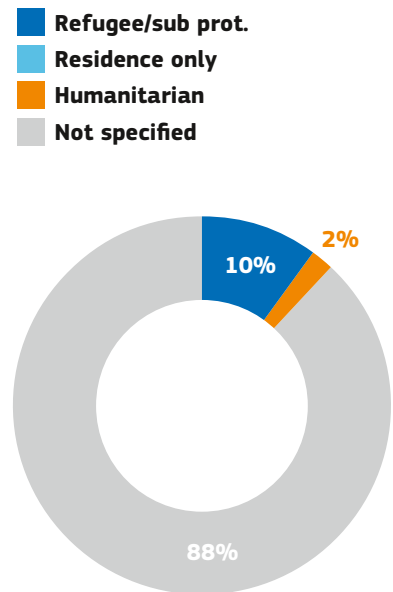
First residence permits annually issued for work reasons in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resocc)



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

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resoth)



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

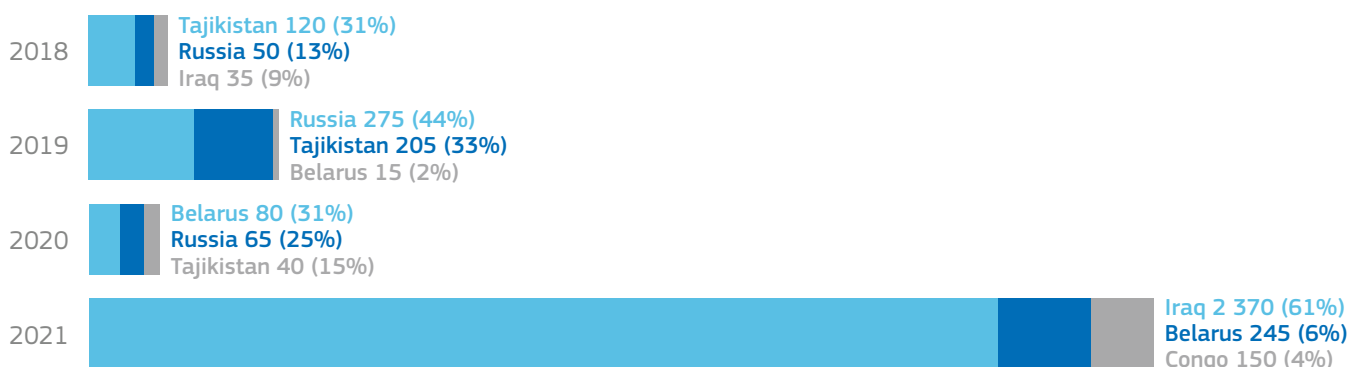
Total/first-time asylum applications; first-time asylum applications as % of population in the country (and in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza, migr_pop1ctz)



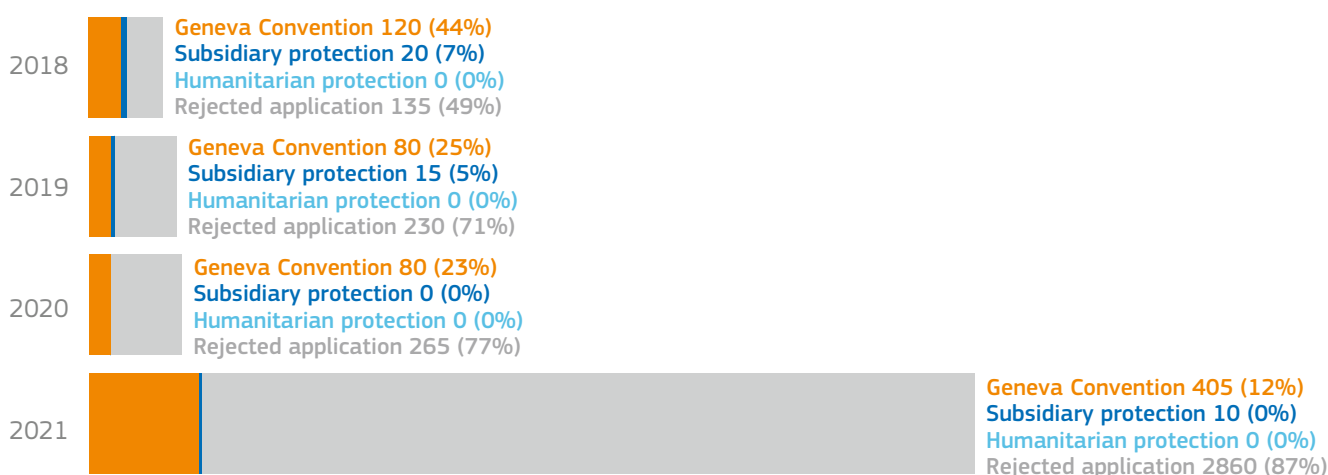
Top 3 nationalities of annual number of first-time asylum applications: number of applications and % of total first-time annual applications

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza)



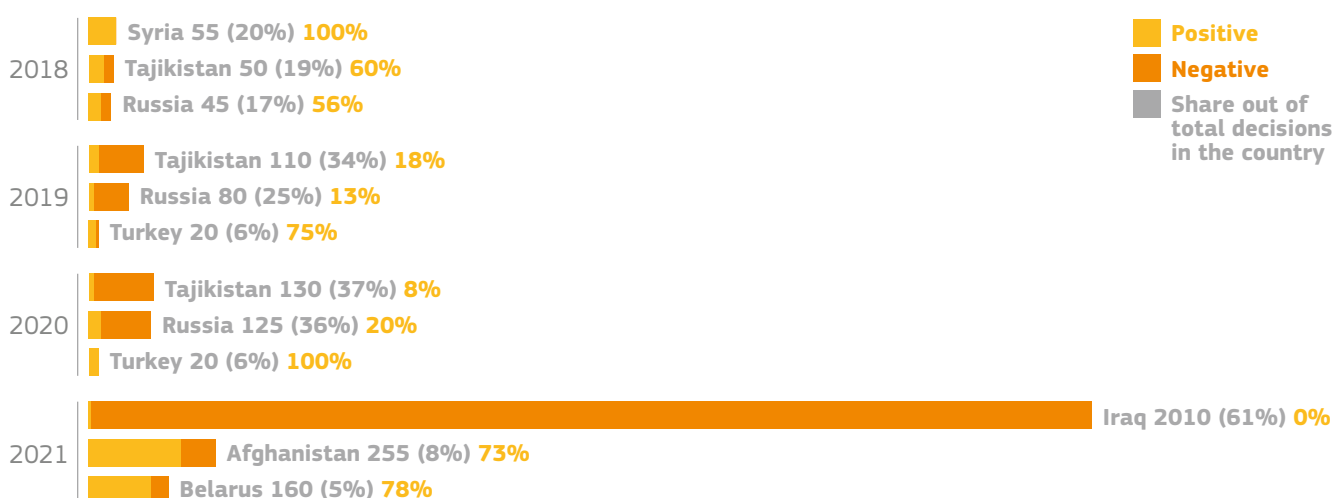
Number of first-instance asylum decisions by outcome (% of total decisions)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta)



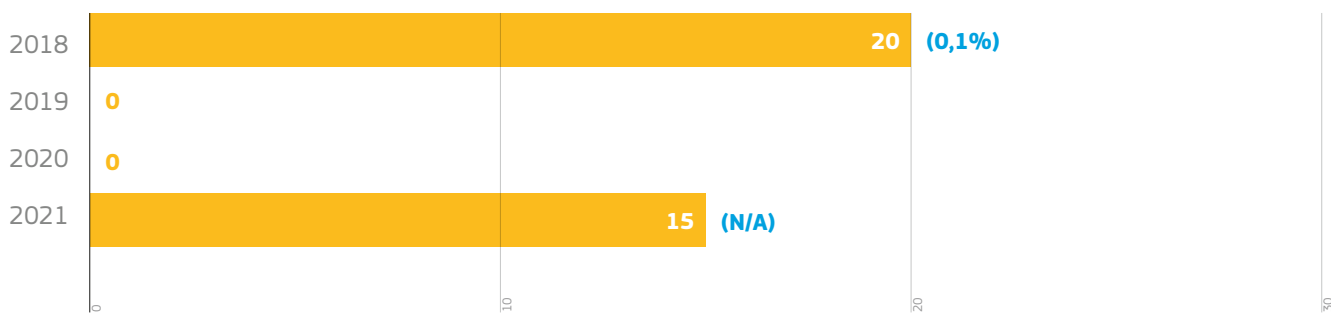
Top 3 nationalities of annual number of first-instance decisions: number of decisions (% of total decisions in the country) and % of positive outcomes

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta)



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

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyresa)



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

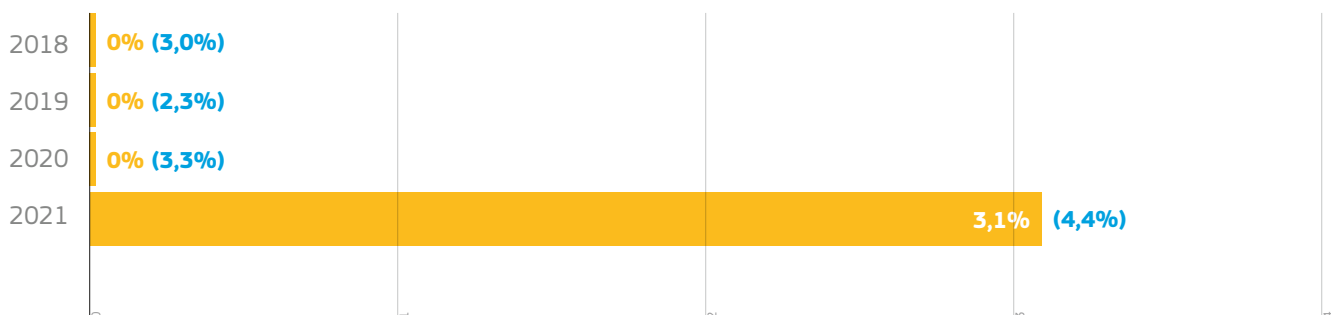
Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in the country (and % of total applications from unaccompanied minors in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa)



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

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa, migr_asyappctza)

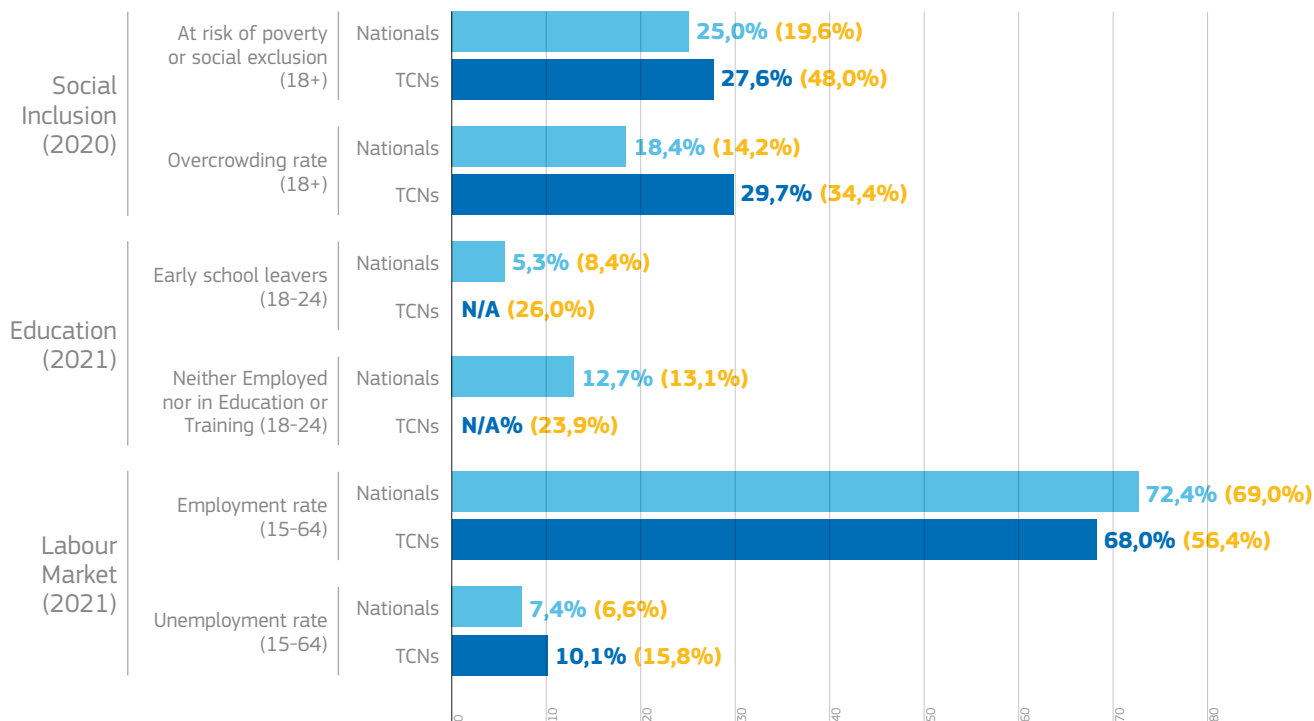




INTEGRATION

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.

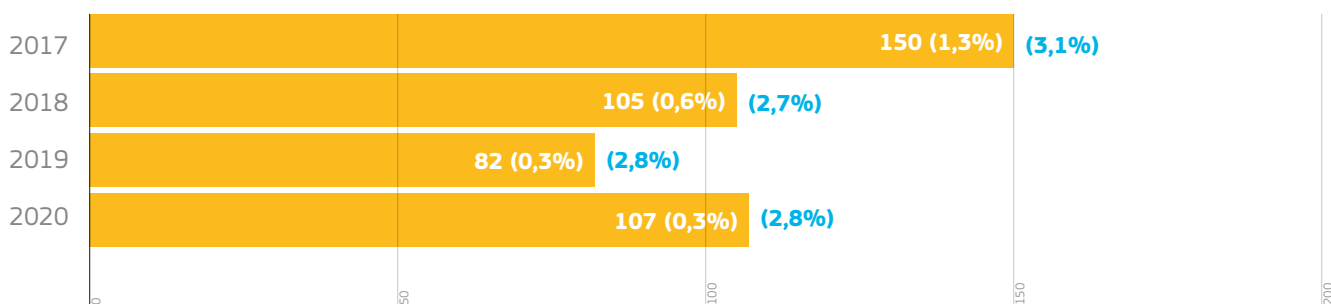
SOURCE: Eurostat (ilc_peps05, ilc_lwho15, edat_lfse_01, edat_lfse_23, lfsa_ergan, lfsa_urgan)



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

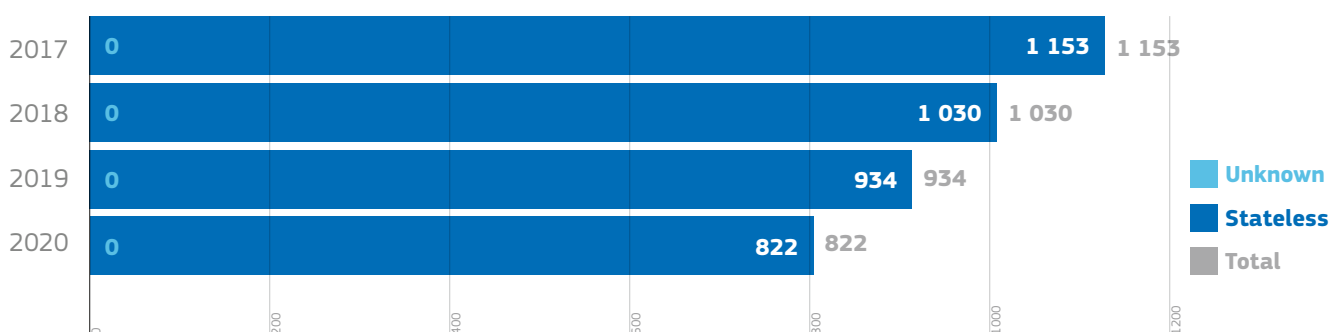
Third-Country Nationals who have acquired citizenship as a share of total Third-Country Nationals (in the country and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_acqs, migr_acq)



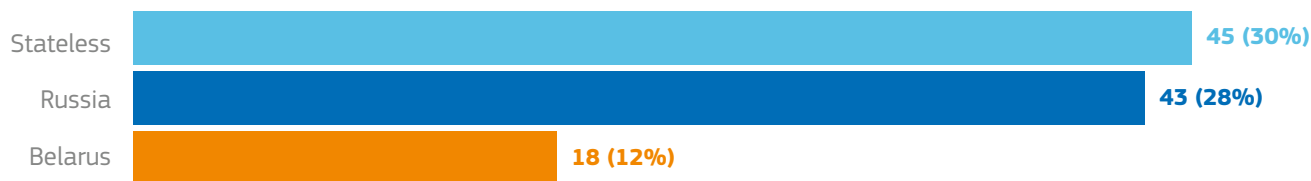
Stateless, unknown citizens and recognised non-citizens (RNC) - where present

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

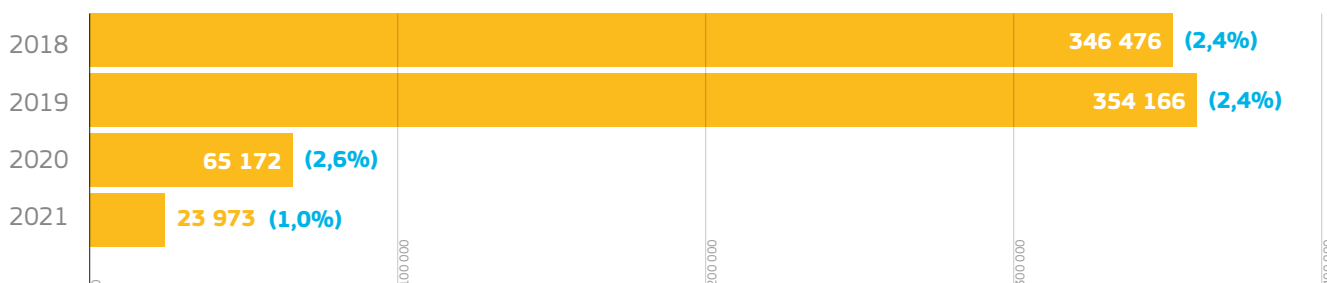
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_acq)



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

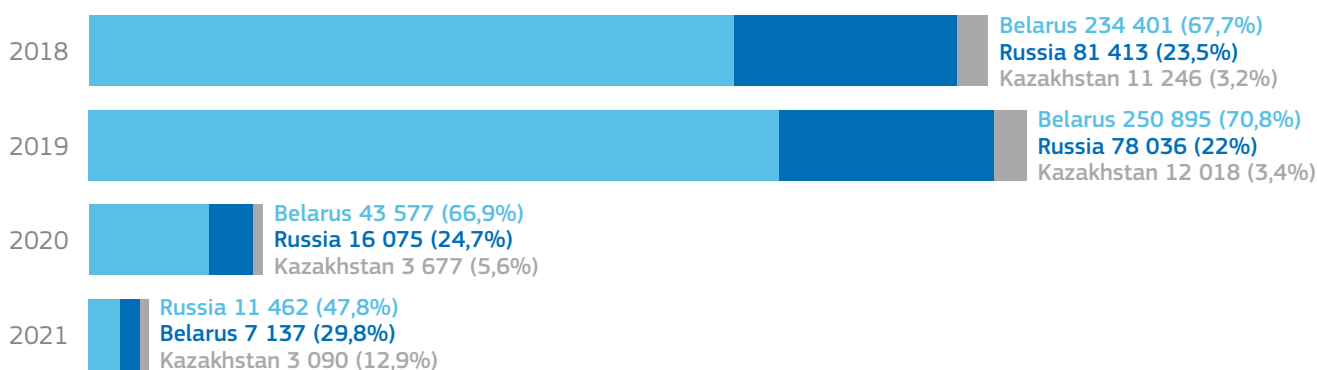
Short-term visa issued (% of Schengen)

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

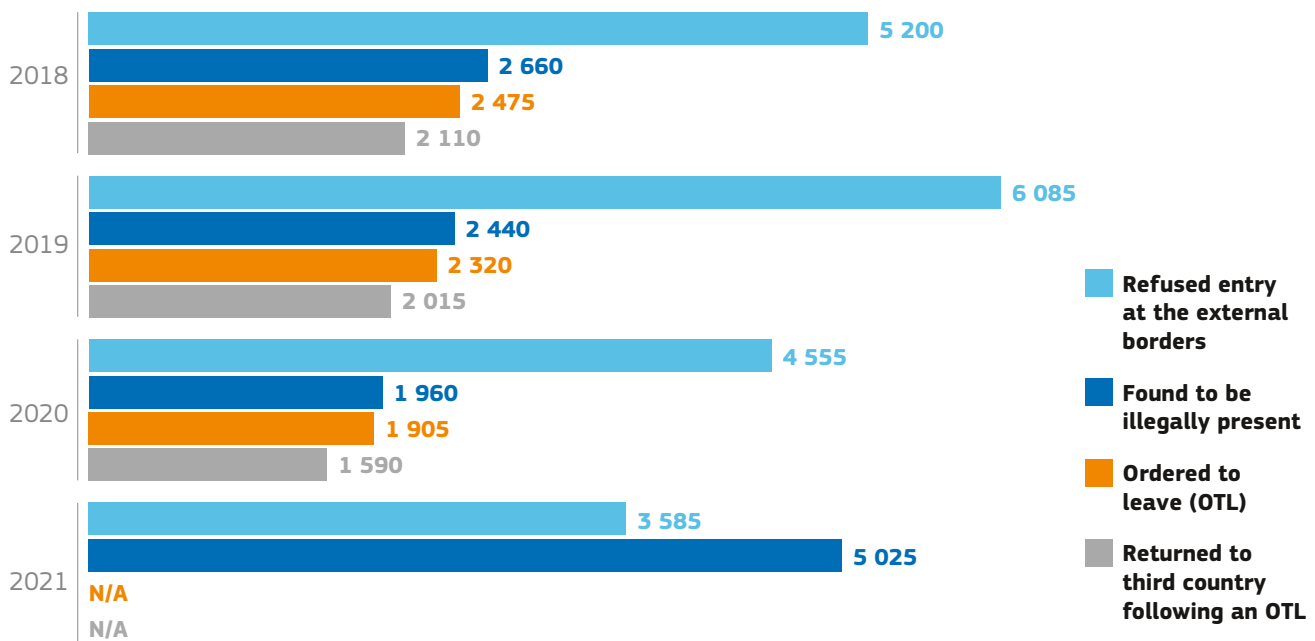
Top 3 nationalities returned to third country in 2021, in absolute number and as a share of all nationalities ordered to leave the country

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)

N/A



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

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

SOURCE: Eurostat(migr_resoth)

