



CYPRUS 2021

Main developments in migration
and international protection,
including latest statistics



EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET

August 2022



OVERARCHING CHANGES

No significant developments in 2021.



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

WORK-RELATED MIGRATION

The effects of the Council of Ministers' 2020 revision of the National Scheme for the issuance and renewal of residence and employment permits for staff from third countries employed by companies of foreign interests registered in the Republic became evident in 2021.

The Scheme allowed the employment of third-country nationals under the new category of 'specialised personnel', without undergoing a market test, provided a salary threshold was met. The quota for such specialists could reach 200 third-country nationals per company, depending on employer turnover. The Scheme stipulated no maximum allowable duration of stay and allowed access to family reunification. Between October 2020 and March 2021 - and despite COVID-19 restrictions - applications increased by 10% compared to November 2019-March 2020. The policy change, particularly the creation of the new category of specialised personnel, attracted companies to transfer their headquarters to Cyprus. 2021 saw a 25% increase in valid residence permits compared to 2019 and 2020.

On 15 October 2021, the Council of Ministers agreed the 'New Strategy for Attracting Business and Talent'. The

KEY POINTS



Significant increases in regular arrivals stretched reception capacity to its limits. 81% of all asylum applications were from people arriving illegally, mainly from areas not under Cypriot effective control.



On 19 July 2021, the first workshop on the development of a Reception Strategy for Cyprus took place, supported by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EASO). Further workshops and working groups continued to work on the Strategy throughout the year.



In October 2021, the new 'Limnes' accommodation centre opened in Mennoyia, with a capacity of 800 residents.

New Strategy cancelled quotas for third-country nationals employed in managerial/specialist positions at foreign companies operating in Cyprus. Companies could then freely employ any number of highly skilled third-country nationals without undergoing a market test, subject to qualifications and salary thresholds. Eligible companies are required to commit to 30% Cypriot and EU national personnel for a five-year timeframe. The New Strategy was set to enter into force on 2 January 2022.

FAMILY REUNIFICATION

On 15 October 2021, the Council of Ministers agreed the New Strategy for Attracting Business and Talent, set to

enter into force on 2 January 2022. It encourages family reunification, with spouses of highly skilled third-country employees eligible for free and direct access to paid employment without having to undergo a market test.



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

RELOCATION AND RESETTLEMENT¹

30 vulnerable applicants for international protection were transferred to Finland under the relocation mechanism, while 25 applicants were transferred to Italy, following the visit of Pope Francis to Cyprus and his invitation to host them in the Vatican. A total of 50 applicants will be transferred to Italy between 2021 and 2022.



MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

No significant developments in 2021.



INTEGRATION

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF ADULTS/ LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS

No legislative or policy measures addressed the education and training of adult migrants and adult asylum seekers. However, the Adult Education Centres (AEC) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth (MoECSY) offered free courses to people housed in the detention centre for undocumented migrants in Menogeia and the Kofinou Reception Centre. Courses included painting, chess, English language, Greek language, gymnastics, music and Greek dance.

BASIC SERVICES

One new action was implemented under the Asylum and Migration Integration Fund (AMIF) to smooth the operation of the First Reception Centre (Pournara) and coordinate the functioning of asylum procedures with the Asylum Service. The latter was to coordinate and manage all agencies actively present in Pournara, take responsibility for administrative staff cost, and manage the operation of the Centre.



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

No significant developments in 2021.



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

No significant developments in 2021.



IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT SMUGGLING

PREVENTING AND TACKLING IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

The dramatic increase in numbers of illegal migrants and asylum seekers saw the Cypriot Authorities request support from their EU counterparts. Competent EU agencies (Frontex, EUROPOL, EASO) developed operational support and deployed experts to combat irregular migration and smuggling of migrants.



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

IDENTIFICATION AND INFORMATION TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

A comprehensive guide for trafficking victims was drafted in 2021. Expected to be ready in 2022, it will guide victims through the identification procedure, criminal justice procedure and available support and protection measures.



RETURN AND READMISSION

MAIN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The number of effective returns increased significantly, from 1 060 in 2020 to 2 165 in 2021. That increase reflected the coordinated efforts of all Cypriot authorities, supported by Frontex.

Promoting voluntary return was the main priority of Cyprus' return policy. A new return counselling framework was established, supported by Frontex through the deployment of eight return counsellors from May 2021. Increased cash incentives were given to potential returnees to promote voluntary return. Cooperation with the European Commission and other Member States (e.g. Germany) was enhanced in order to improve capacity and effectiveness of the return system. A dedicated Working Group on Returns was established in March 2021, comprising Cyprus' authorities, the European Commission and Frontex. It aimed to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for all return-related procedures and to provide a better coordinating mechanism between Cyprus,

¹ Includes Humanitarian Admission Programmes

the Commission and Frontex. The SOPs were finalised in September 2021.



MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

No significant developments in 2021.



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 Cyprus 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.

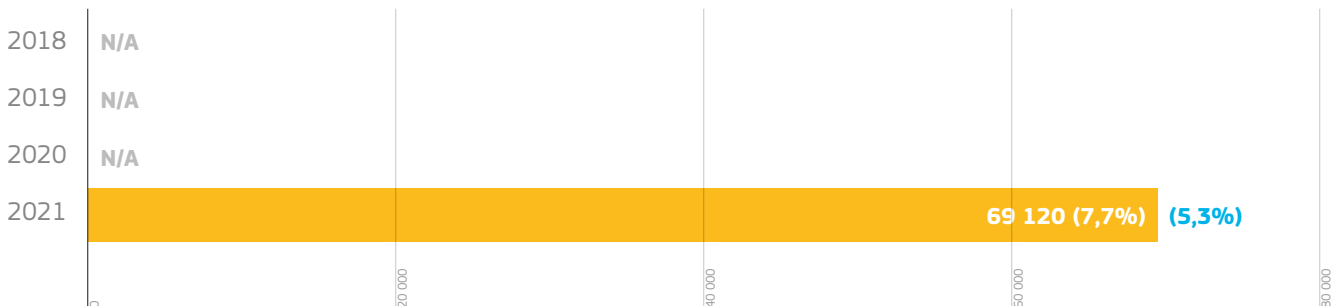
Data relative to Cyprus

Data relative to EU

LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

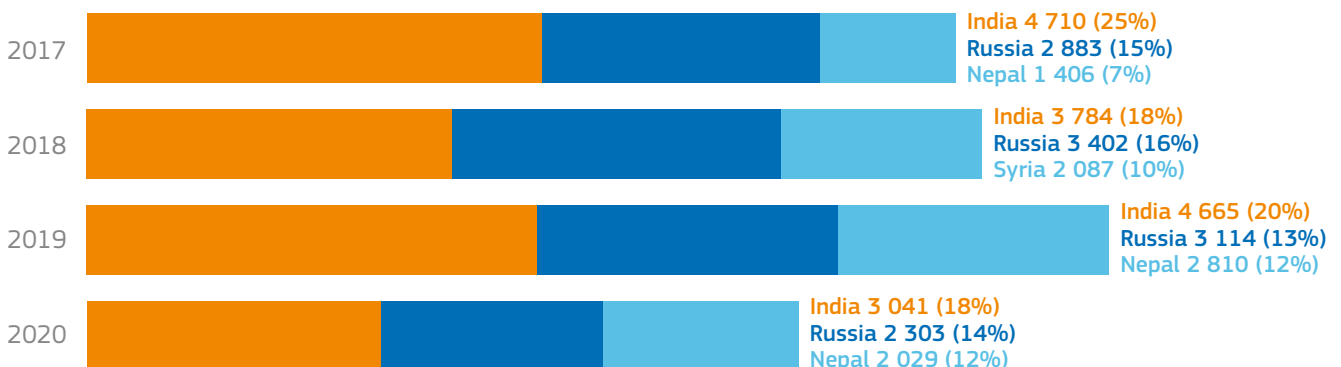
Third-Country Nationals (TCNs) as % of total population in the country (and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)



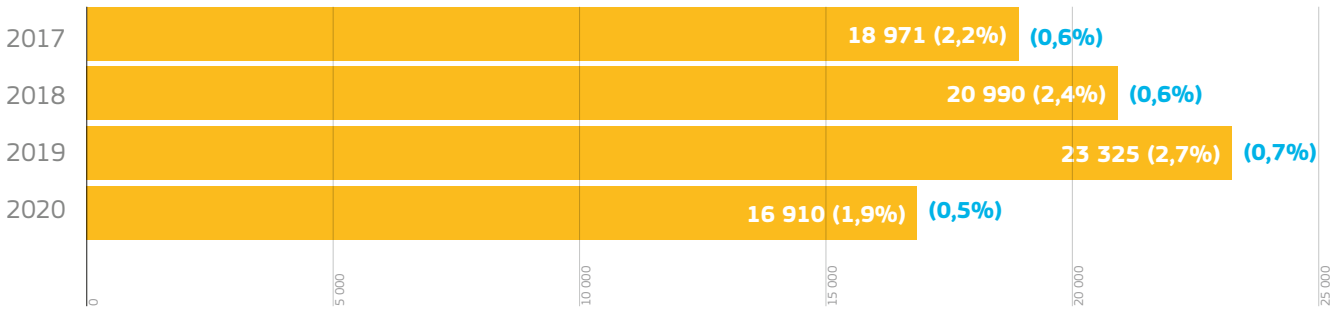
Top 3 nationalities of number of first residence permits annually issued: number of permits and % of total annual permits

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)v



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

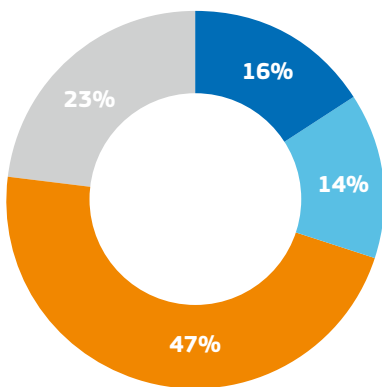
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_pop1ctz)



First residence permits annually issued by reason in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)

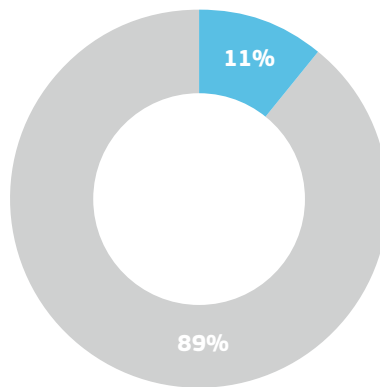
- Family
- Education
- Work
- Other



First residence permits annually issued for work reasons in 2020

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resocc)

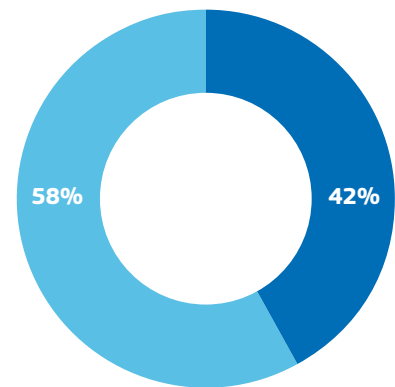
- EU Blue card
- Highly skilled
- Researchers
- Seasonal workers
- Other



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

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_resoth)

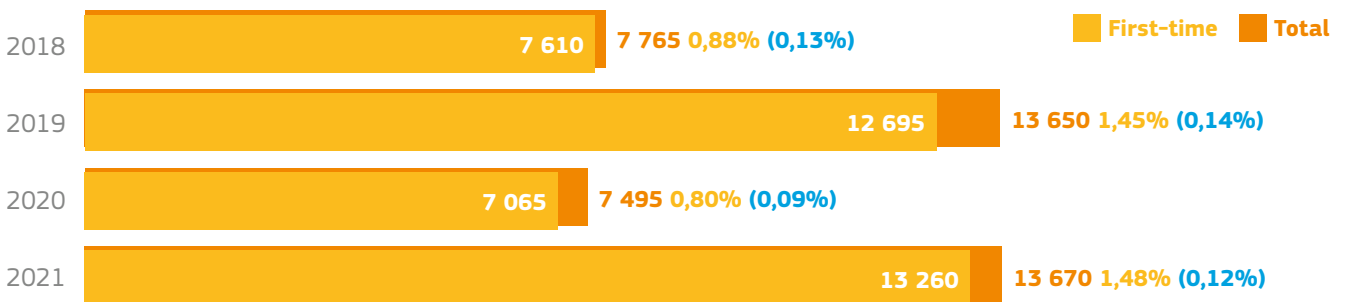
- Refugee/sub prot.
- Residence only
- Humanitarian
- Not specified



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

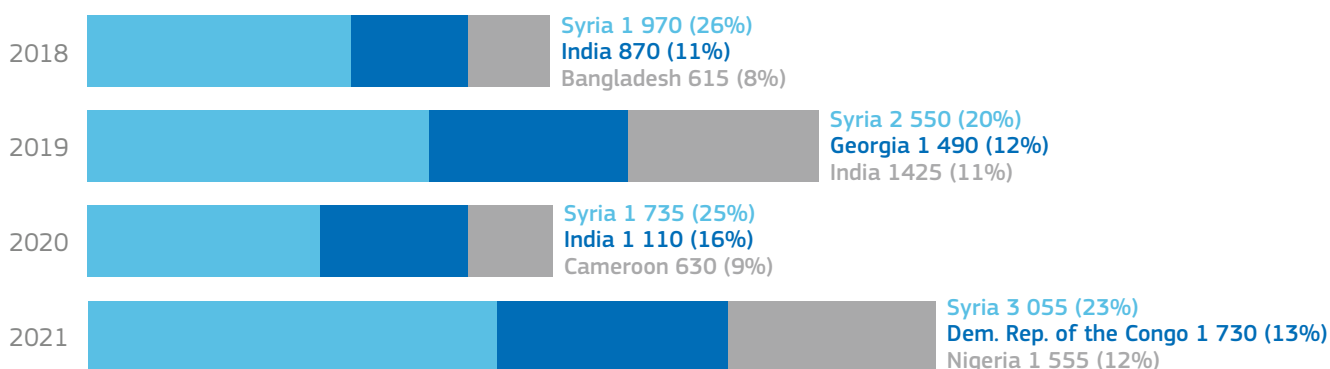
Total/first-time asylum applications; first-time asylum applications as % of population in the country (and in the EU)

SOURCE: eurostat (migr_asyappctza, migr_pop1ctz)



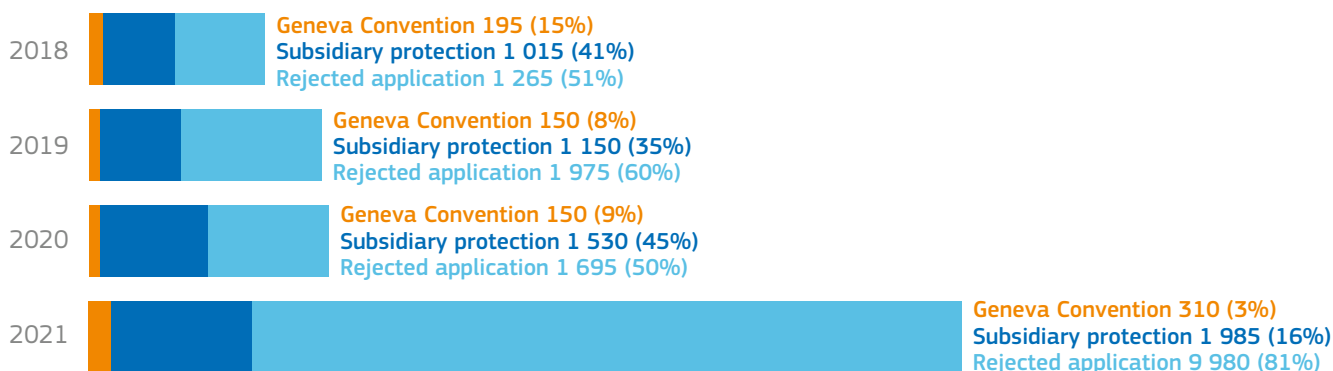
Top 3 nationalities of annual number of first-time asylum applications: number of applications and % of total first-time annual applications

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza)



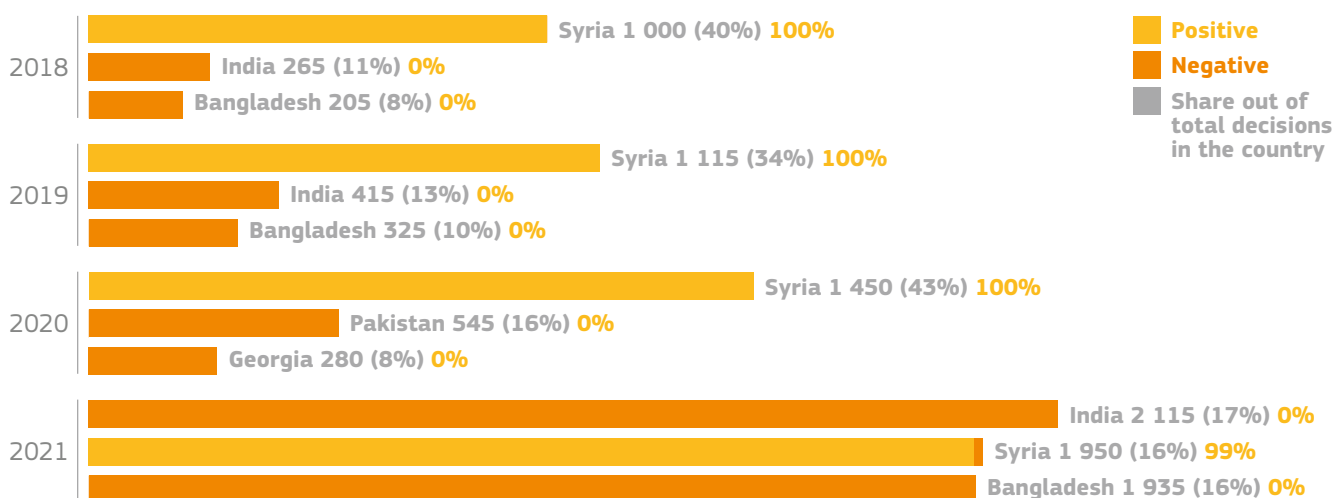
Number of first-instance asylum decisions by outcome (% of total decisions)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_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 EU

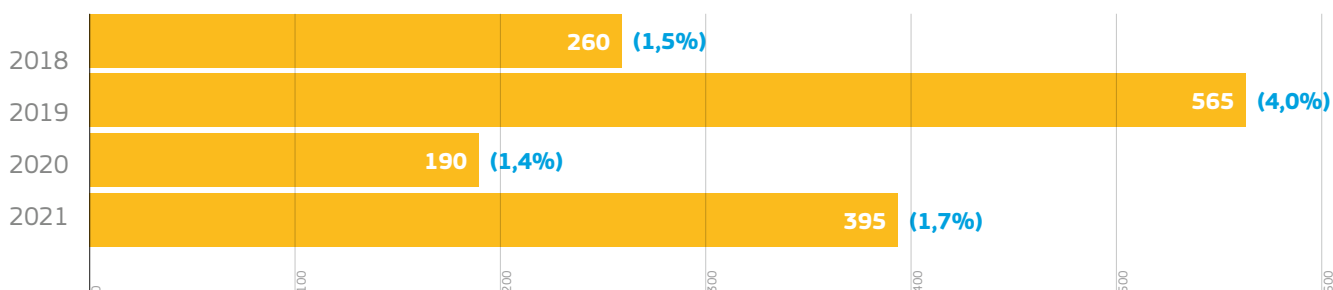
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyresa)



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

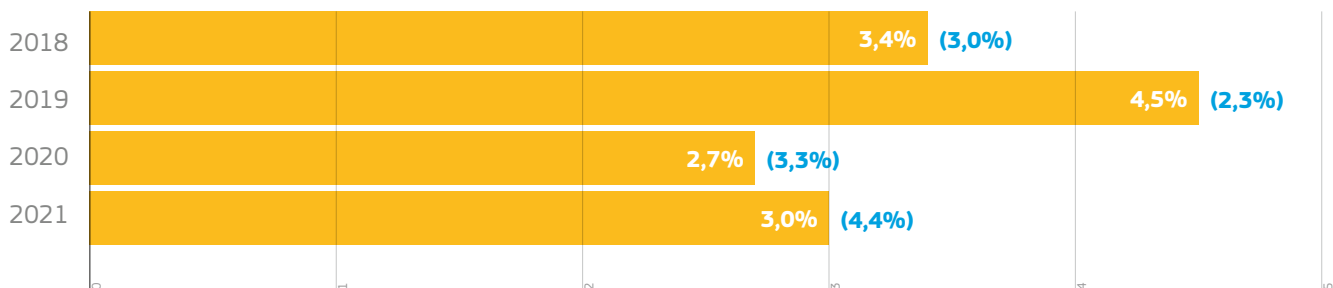
Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in the country (and % of total applications from unaccompanied minors in the EU)

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa)



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

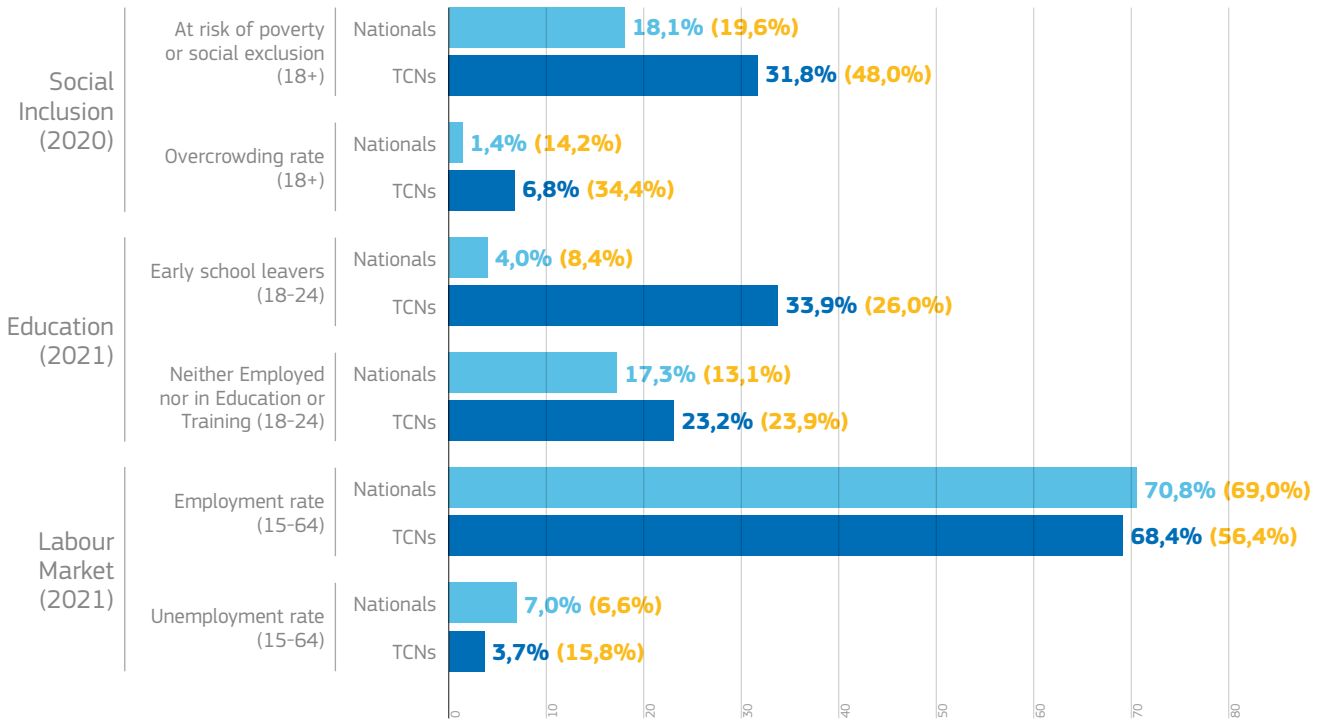
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_asyunaa, migr_asyappctza)



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.

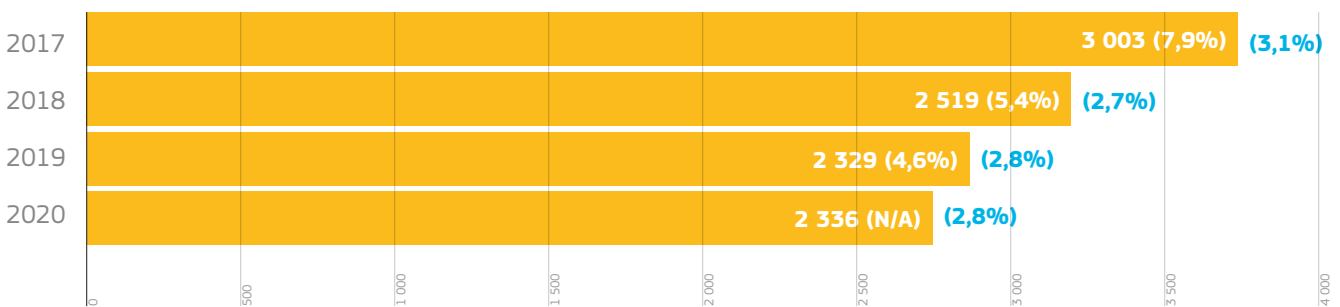
SOURCE: Eurostat (ilc_peps05, ilc_lwho15, edat_lfse_01, edat_lfse_23, lfsa_ergan, lfsa_urgan)



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

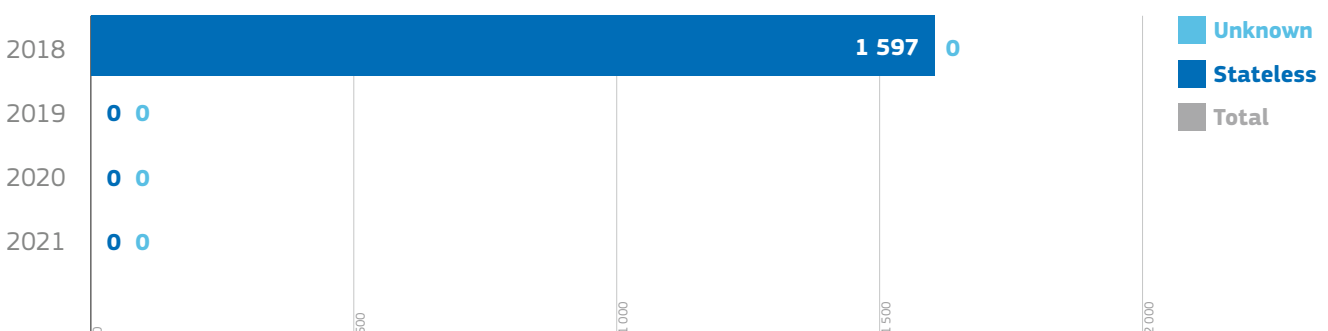
Third-Country Nationals who have acquired citizenship as a share of total Third-Country Nationals (in the country and in the EU) and in absolute numbers

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_acqs, migr_acq)



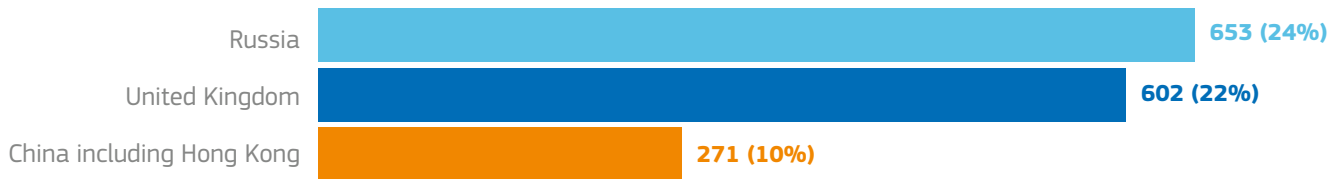
Stateless, unknown citizens and recognised non-citizens (RNC) - where present

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

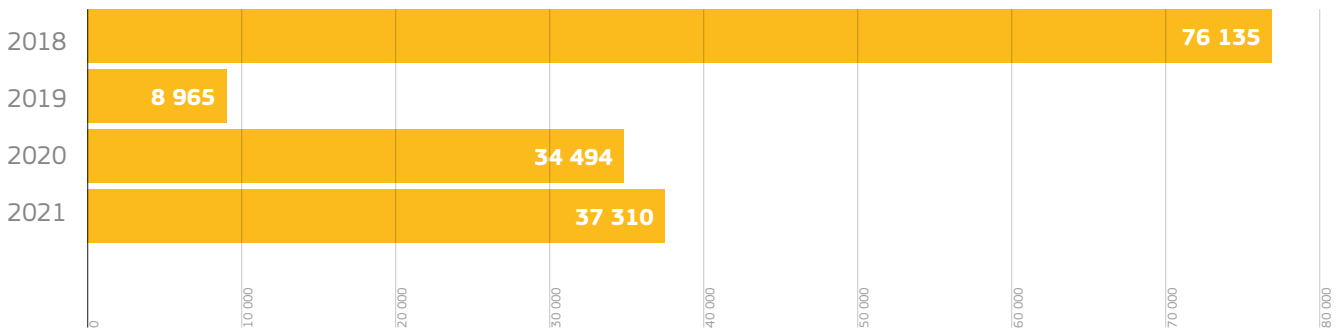
SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_acq)



BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

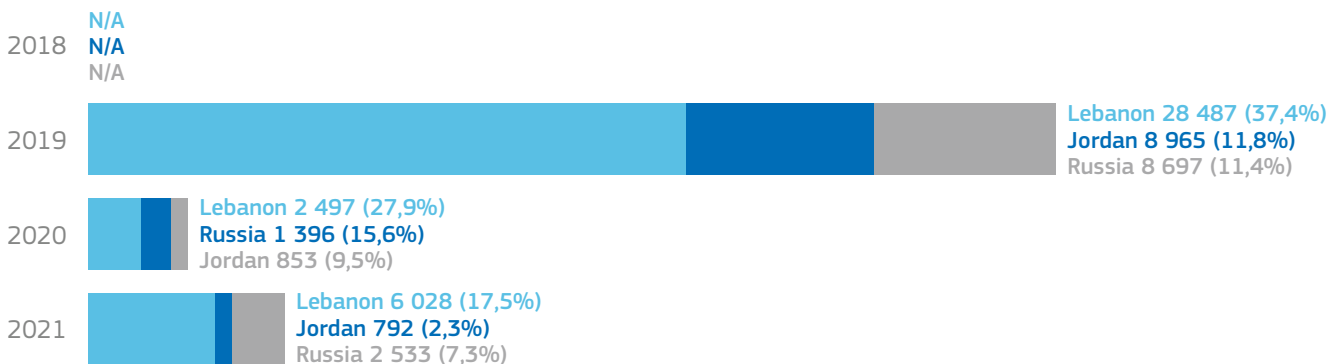
Short-term visa issued

SOURCE: DG Migration and Home Affairs



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

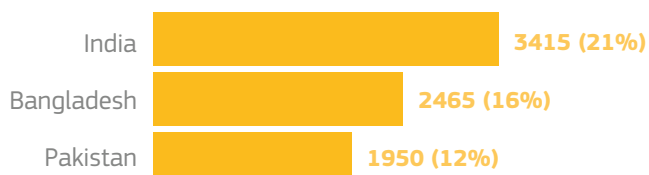
SOURCE: DG Migration and Home Affairs



IRREGULAR MIGRATION

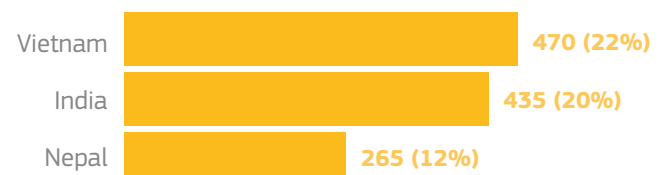
Top 3 nationalities ordered to leave the country in 2021, in absolute number and as a share of all nationalities ordered to leave the country

SOURCE: Eurostat (migr_eiord)



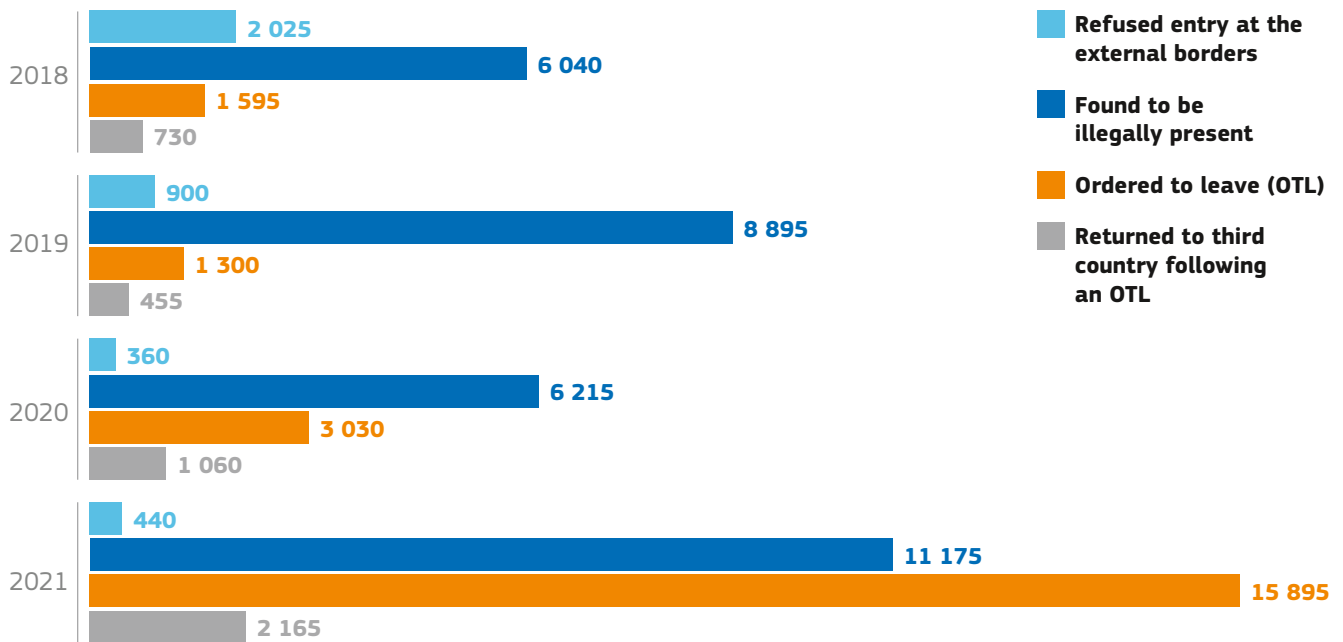
Top 3 nationalities returned to third country in 2021, in absolute number and as a share of all nationalities ordered to leave the country

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)

