

# Croatia

## EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET

# 2018

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN MIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION, INCLUDING LATEST STATISTICS



### LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

#### PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

There were no new developments in 2018, other than various updates of information made available online targeted at third-country nationals on accessing legal routes.

#### ECONOMIC MIGRATION

The annual quota for employment of foreigners was set at 38 769 permits, 27 479 permits for new employment and 9 000 permits for extension of already issued work permits, with 250 permits reserved for Intra-Corporate Transferees (ICT) permits and 2 040 for seasonal workers.

The Students and Researchers Directive<sup>1</sup> ((EU) 2016/801) was transposed into national legislation. Subsequently, the Act on Amendments to the Act on Foreigners as well as amendments to bylaws were adopted. The new Act on Amendments to the Foreigners Act, apart from transposing the Directive also aimed to eliminate certain shortcomings in the valid legal text observed during its implementation. With regard to the economic migration and in order to meet the labour market needs, the most important changes included:

<sup>1</sup> Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies,



### KEY POINTS

Croatia completely fulfilled its resettlement quota by resettling 152 Syrian individuals from Turkey, and is in the process of resettling additional persons from Turkey.



Amendments to the Act on International and Temporary Protection entered into force, *inter alia* establishing provisions concerning the right to accommodation for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection who did not possess the financial means to support themselves



Croatia adopted new legislation to improve the protection of unaccompanied minors, including on accommodation and age assessment.

- the possibility of issuing residence and work permits to citizens of third countries on the basis of agreements concluded by the Government of the Republic of Croatia with third countries;
- The possibility of issuing residence and work permits to third-country nationals specialising in the Republic of Croatia in the field of health care in accordance with special regulations;

training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing

- Third-country nationals are not obliged to submit proof of health insurance as a condition for applying for a temporary residence permit for the purpose of work on the basis of an employment contract with the employer in the Republic of Croatia.

Furthermore, the conditions under which a Police Administration or Police Station may refuse to grant residence permits were extended.<sup>2</sup>

Lastly, a new method to calculate the amount needed and the minimum funds required for a third-country national to be granted a residence permit was determined.

## FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Conditions for researchers to access family reunification were extended. Researchers would now have access to family reunification in the event that they were granted a temporary residence permit with the purpose to conduct research, or for other reasons such as seeking employment, or even by just being granted a temporary residence permit.

The Ordinance on amending the Ordinance on status and work of third-country nationals in the Republic of Croatia (OG, No 116/18) was adopted to more clearly indicate the status of family members of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection on residence permits. The aim is to resolve practical issues regarding the access to rights of family members of refugees and foreigners under subsidiary protection and in order to better identify family members and improve their access to rights.



## INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

Concerning the reception of asylum seekers, the reception centre in Zagreb reduced the number of spaces from 600 to 360 due to ongoing reconstruction (co-financed by AMIF) that included the refurbishment of premises to improve the quality of everyday life of asylum seekers.

Croatia began to conduct Dublin procedure transfers with Greece, but only one transfer took place in 2018.

<sup>2</sup> If an employer fails to pay a fine, if the employer is sanctioned for illegal or unregistered employment, or if the main purpose of

Moreover, the safe third country of origin list was applied for the first time in 2018 (concerning the return of an applicant of international protection to Serbia following a negative asylum decision in Croatia).

Amendments to the [Act on International and Temporary Protection](#) entered into force, which included changes to the suspension of the enforcement of decision in asylum matters. As a result, no automatic suspension of the decision of a claim could be brought before the Administrative Court regarding decisions on the right to accommodation and the recognition of the right to international protection.

Furthermore, the amendments established provisions concerning the right to accommodation for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection who did not possess the financial means to support themselves.

Concerning institutional changes, the ministry extended temporary employment contracts to employees working in the field of international protection as well as hired permanent staff. Trainings on detecting cases on exclusion from international protection were conducted to improve the quality of the safeguards, which was reinforced by a questionnaire developed by UNHCR and Croatia to assess the quality of first-instance decisions.

As regards relocation, despite pledging to relocate 40 individuals from Greece and Italy, only three individuals were relocated from Italy (19 were set to be relocated) and there were no new relocation requests from Greece.

Lastly, Croatia fulfilled its *resettlement quota* set in the 2015 Government Decision by resettling 152 Syrian individuals from Turkey (112 were resettled in 2018). It also started the resettlement of up to 100 additional refugees from Turkey in line with the 2017 Government Decision. The authorities signed an integration agreement concerning resettled individuals with the Jesuit Refugee Service.



## UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

Croatia adopted new [legislation](#) to improve the protection of unaccompanied minors, including on accommodation and age assessment. Information

establishing or acting employer is facilitating the entry of third country nationals

leaflets were made more accessible by UNHCR and the Croatian authorities.

Concerning unaccompanied minors not applying for international protection, specific training addressed at police forces was conducted. The new legislation cited above also applied to them, and they were also targeted by the new information leaflets.

Concerning other vulnerable groups, the Ministry of Interior started using a questionnaire for international protection applicants to identify whether they belonged to a vulnerable group, which might lead them to be subject to special reception conditions or procedural rights.



## INTEGRATION

Concerning integration through civic participation, the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities developed an updated version of the *Guide Through Integration*, which presented key information on third-country national's rights and obligations regarding status regulation, employment, work, housing, education, social welfare and healthcare.

The amendment to the Act on International and Temporary Protection placed the obligation to make housing available to beneficiaries of international protection with the State, that should either provide housing within properties at its disposal or lease housing from private individuals. Beneficiaries of international protection were noted as one of the target groups for active labour market measures to promote their integration through employment.

Within the project 'Supporting the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in Need of International Protection', the authorities conducted workshops in schools across the country to support integration of children benefitting from international protection by raising awareness as well as dispelling stereotypes. Participative meetings were also carried out with local representatives to propose key integration activities in different cities. Training and networking events were also conducted with local and regional authorities, as was a study on the capacities of local and regional authorities to support integration; its recommendations included fostering cooperation between different actors and check-lists for self-assessment of integration capacities. The authorities further implemented a nation-wide awareness-raising media campaign on television channels, radio stations, and social media.



## CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

Amendments to the Act on Croatian Citizenship were drafted in 2018, as was the new Croatian citizenship Act, which was subjected to a public consultation.



## BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISA

Two new border crossing points were built in 2018 and plans to build additional border crossing points were underway. New equipment for border control worth € 7.1 million was procured and trainings for border police officers were conducted in 2018. Over 1 000 mixed patrols were conducted in Croatia and in bordering countries in 2018.



## IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT SMUGGLING

Training for police officers from all police administrations and from all detention centres was organised as provided for by the amendments of the Protocol on the Treatment of Unaccompanied Children and Foreigners Acts.



## TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Croatia implemented the national project "Together" in cooperation with civil society to establish a referral mechanism for prevention and repression of trafficking in human beings (THB), through increased cooperation to spot victims of THB and respond quickly. Another plan ("*National plan for combatting trafficking in human beings for the period of 2018 to 2021*") was adopted in 2018 and aimed at preventing and repressing THB through developing indicators and tools to identify victims as well as to train and inform staff and volunteers working in reception centres.



## RETURN AND READMISSION

Croatia signed an agreement with the International Organisation for Migration to implement assisted voluntary return. The programme will cost €672 000, of which 75 % will be funded via the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

On the basis of the Agreement on the monitoring of forced return with the Croatian Law Centre, 63 forced returns were monitored in 2018 to ensure that the fundamental human rights of third-country nationals were respected.

## **STATISTICAL ANNEX**

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Croatia on aspects of migration and international protection (2015-2018), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as “N/A”.

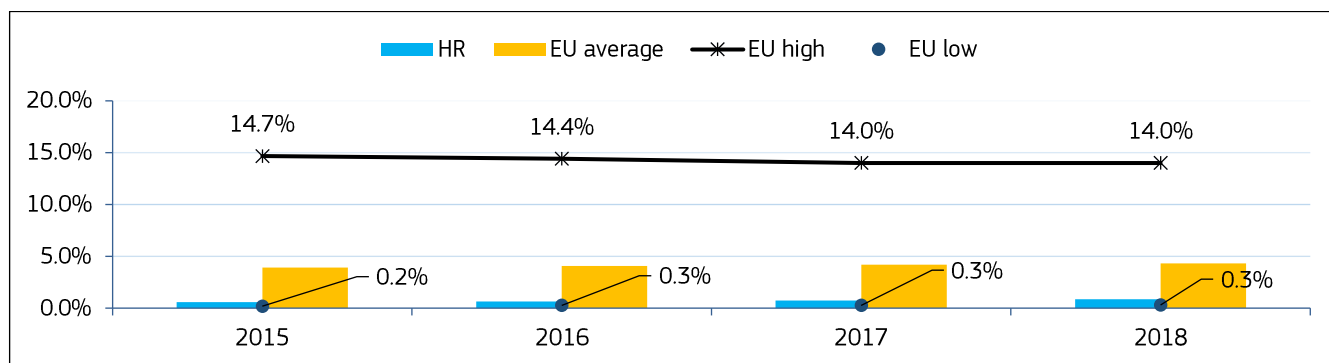
# STATISTICAL ANNEX: MIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN CROATIA (2015-2018)

## INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASYLUM

### LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Eurostat data on first residence permits for 2018 was not available at the time of writing. Please consult the 2018 ARM Statistical Annex for statistics on the number of first residence permits by reason (to be published in July 2019).

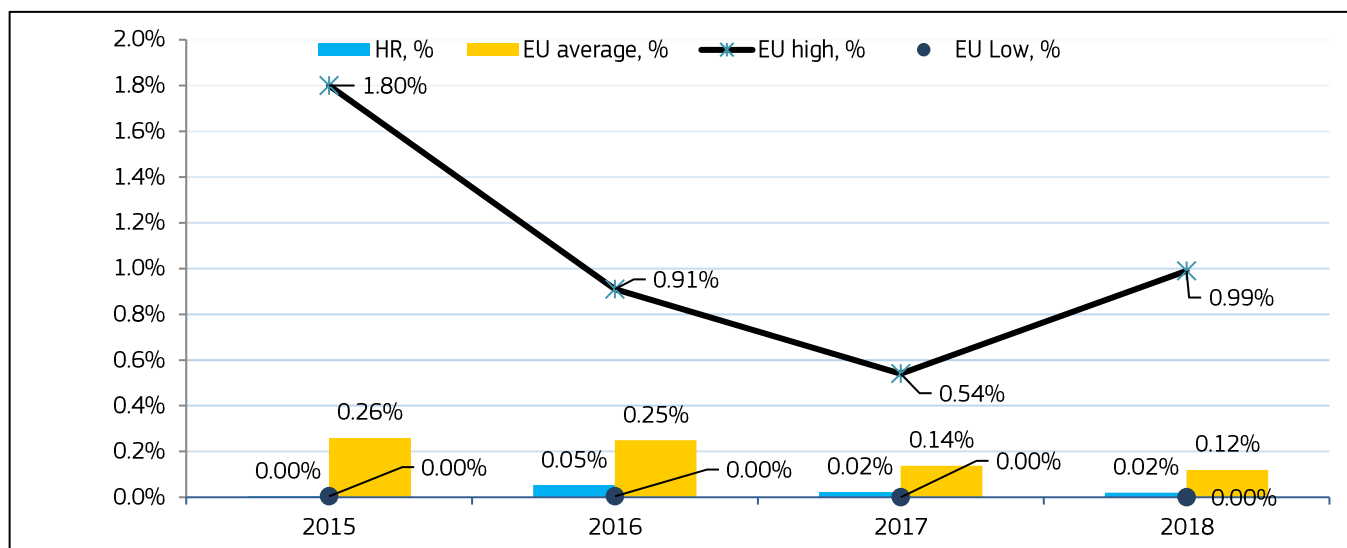
**Figure 1: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Croatia, EU average, EU high and low (2015-2018)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_pop1ctz](#)), data extracted 02.05.19

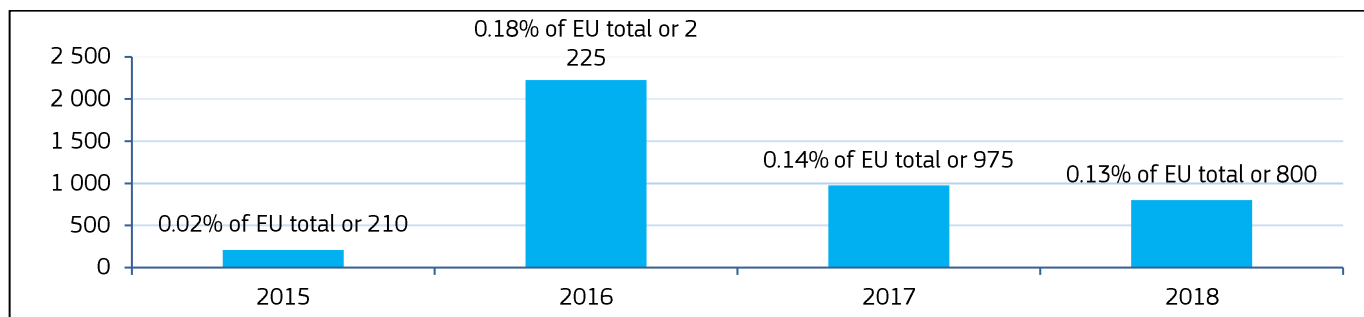
### INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

**Figure 2: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Croatia, EU average and EU high and low (2015-2018)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 26.04.19

**Figure 3: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2015-2018)**



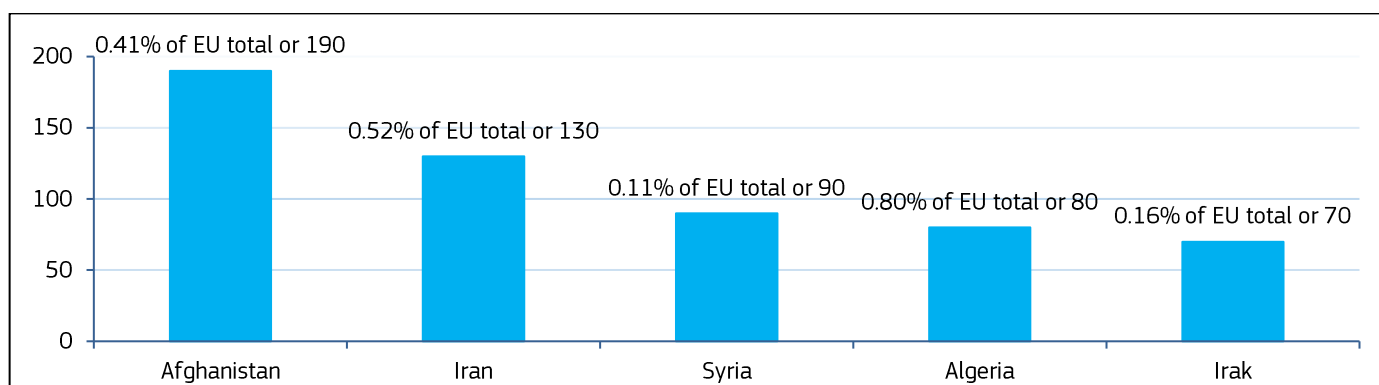
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 26.04.2019

**Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2015-2018)**

2015			2016			2017			2018		
Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total
Algeria, Syria	25	12%	Afghanistan	690	31%	Afghanistan	190	19%	Afghanistan	190	24%
Morocco, Nigeria	15	7%	Iraq	335	15%	Syria	155	16%	Iran	130	16%
Turkey, Kosovo, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iran	10	5%	Syria	335	15%	Pakistan	120	12%	Syria	90	11%
Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Cameroon, Tunisia, Gambia, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Lebanon	5	2%	Pakistan	180	8%	Algeria	85	9%	Algeria	80	10%
		0%	Iran	140	6%	Iran	65	7%	Iraq	70	9%

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 29.04.2019

**Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2018)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 26.04.2019

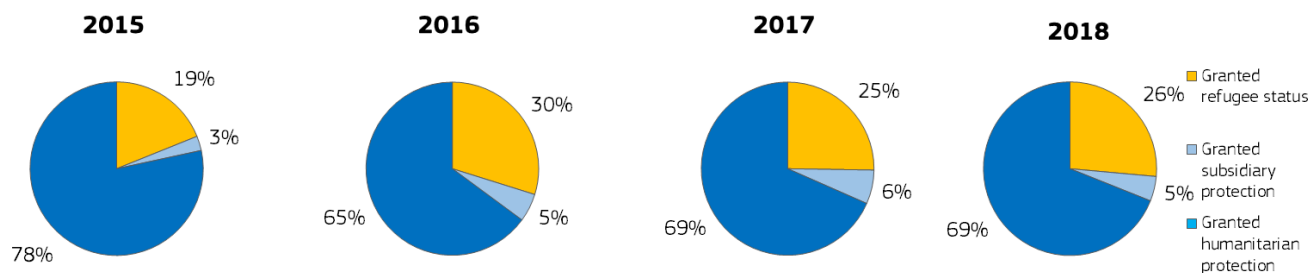
Note: the figure reads as: Croatia received 190 asylum applications from Afghanistan or 0.41 % of all asylum applications launched by Afghanistan in EU in 2018.

**Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2015-2018)**

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:		Humanitarian reasons	Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection		
2015	185	40	35	5	:	145
2016	285	100	85	15	:	185
2017	475	150	120	30	:	325
2018	435	135	115	20	:	300

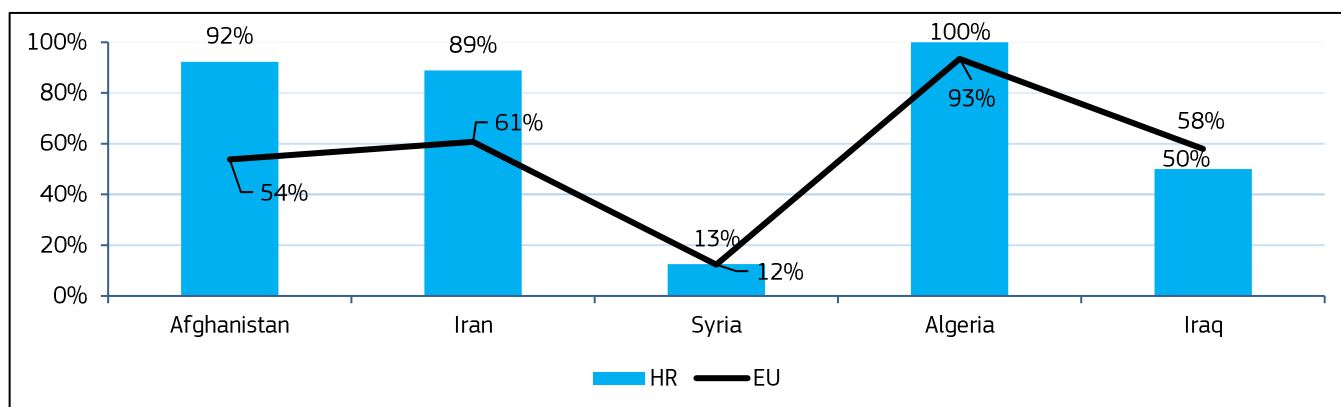
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 29.04.2019

**Figure 5: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2015-2018)**



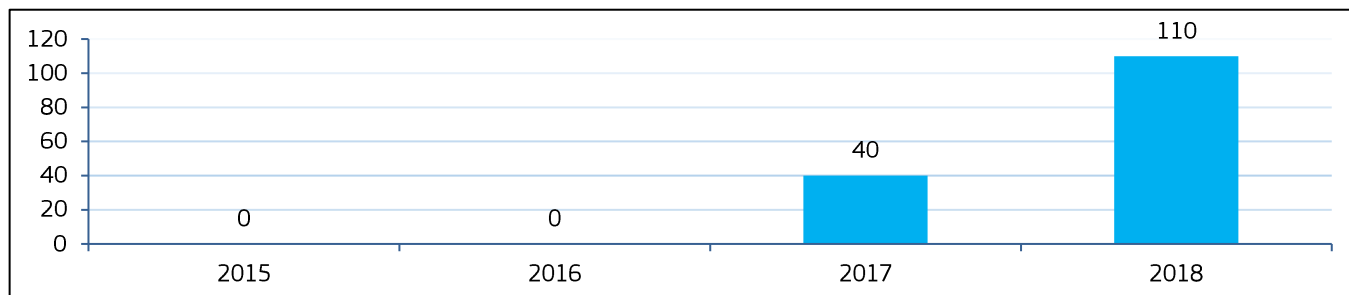
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 30.04.19

**Figure 6: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2018)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 30.04.19

**Figure 6: Third-country nationals resettled (2015-2018)**

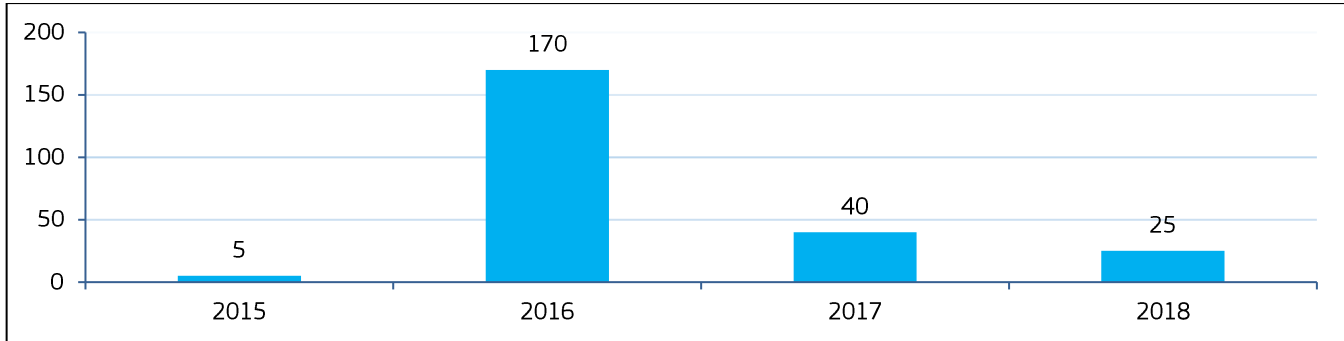


Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyresa](#)), data extracted 02.05.19



## UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

**Figure 7: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2015–2018)**



Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) ([migr\\_asyunaa](#)), data extracted 02.05.19.



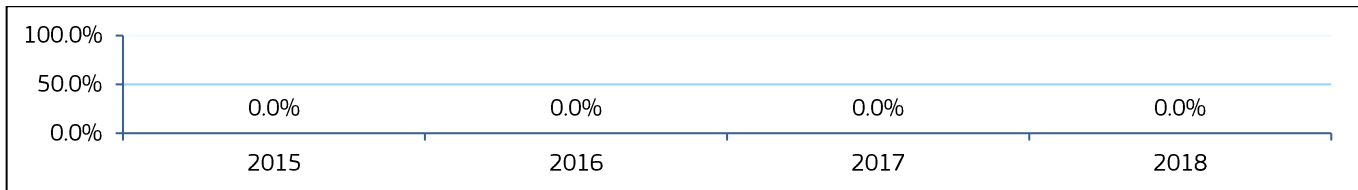
## BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISA

**Table 3: Number of Schengen visas applications (2015–2018)**

	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Uniform visas (short-stay visas)</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: DG Migration and Home – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

**Figure 8: Uniform visa applications received in Croatia as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2015–2018)**



Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

**Table 4: Top five countries in which the highest number of visa applications for Croatia was lodged (2015–2018)**

2015		2016		2017		2018	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs





## IRREGULAR MIGRATION

**Table 3: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders, found to be illegally present, ordered to leave and returned following an order to leave (2015–2018)**

Third country nationals:	2015	2016	2017	2018
Refused entry at external borders	9 355	9 135	10 015	13 240
Found to be illegally present	3 295	3 320	3 495	5 580
Ordered to leave	3 910	4 730	4 400	6 350
Returned following an order to leave	1 940	1 890	2 125	2 210

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_eirfs](#))([migr\\_eipre](#))([migr\\_eiord](#))([migr\\_eirtn](#)) data extracted 03.05.2019



## RETURN

**Table 4: Third-country nationals returned (2015-2018)**

Year	Returned as part of forced return measure	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2015	691	1 248	n/a
2016	950	942	n/a
2017	1 223	1027	0
2018	1 318	894	0

Source: EMN Croatia