

COUNTRY FACTSHEET | JULY 2024

Main developments
in migration and
international
protection, including
latest statistics

CROATIA 2023



OVERARCHING AND CROSS-CUTTING CHANGES

On 17 March 2023, the Croatian Parliament passed the Act on Amendments to the International and Temporary Protection Act ([Official Gazette 33/2023](#)). The amendments entered into force on 1 April 2023. They have significantly improved the system of international protection and, particularly in relation to vulnerable

groups (children, victims of torture, etc.), strengthened the rights of people with approved international and temporary protection.

Provisions related to minors were amended to ensure additional protection and urgency in processing.

KEY POINTS

Act on Amendments to the International and Temporary Protection Act entered into force on 1 April 2023. By passing this act, the Republic of Croatia continues to improve the position of international protection seekers, as well as beneficiaries of international or subsidiary protection, and BoTP.

In 2023, the government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the National Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights and Suppression of Discrimination for the period until 2027, along with the accompanying Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights for 2023, and the Action Plan for Suppression of Discrimination for 2023.

The Ministry of the Interior has signed a memorandum of understanding with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) in the area of return.



LEGAL MIGRATION

On 16 January 2023, the Ministry of Science and Education passed the [Rulebook on the Procedure and Conditions for Hosting Researchers from Third Countries](#).

The rulebook prescribes the procedure and conditions for hosting researchers from third countries at research organisations for a period longer than three months for the purpose of conducting research.



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Amendments to the Act on International and Temporary Protection ([Official Gazette 33/2023](#)) have significantly improved the system of international protection, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups (children, victims of torture, etc.), and strengthened the rights of beneficiaries of international and temporary protection. These amendments prescribe an additional way for people to apply for international protection: by initiating a health examination for signs that may indicate persecution or serious injustice. The time within which asylum seekers can enter the labour market has been reduced from 9 to 3 months if a decision has not been made.

The reception centre in Kutina, which had a capacity of 140 people, temporarily increased its capacity by 27 container units to accommodate a total of 162 people.

In 2023, 29 people were relocated based on the Decision of the government of the Republic of Croatia on the relocation of citizens of third countries or stateless people who meet the conditions for approval of international protection ([Official Gazette 88/2022](#)) from 28 July 2022.



TEMPORARY PROTECTION AND OTHER MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO RUSSIA'S WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

A Decision of the government of the Republic of Croatia from 29 February 2024 extended temporary protection for displaced people from Ukraine until 4 March 2025.

By amending the Act on International and Temporary Protection ([Official Gazette 70/15, 127/17, 33/2023](#)), the rights of beneficiaries of temporary protection (BoTP) with regard to housing, healthcare and social welfare have been strengthened and largely harmonised with the rights of Croatian citizens.

As policy measures, the Ministry of Science and Education has published the following documents: Instructions and Protocols for Primary and Secondary Schools Regarding Enrolment of Students and Learning of Croatian Language (April 2023); and Decision on Enrolment of Displaced Ukrainian Students in the First

Grade of Secondary School in the 2023/2024 School Year (April 2023).

Croatian language courses are provided for BoTP, as well as vocational training in English funded through vouchers.



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

In the International and Temporary Protection Act, provisions related to minors have been amended to ensure additional protection and urgency in processing.

It is prescribed that, during the international protection procedure, the child is provided with access to recreational activities, including play and other activities appropriate for their age, including outdoor ones. The appointed guardian of an unaccompanied child has the obligation to take all necessary actions to find family members as soon as possible and reunite the child with the family, if it is in their interest.

On 30 March 2023, the government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the National Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights and Suppression of Discrimination for the period until 2027, along with the accompanying Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights for 2023, and the [Action Plan for Suppression of Discrimination for 2023](#). The latter defines and sets specific goals in connection with the exercise of human rights and suppression of discrimination in the Republic of Croatia.



INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS

The [Protocol for the Integration Process of People Provided with International Protection](#) was published in 2023. The protocol is designed for all stakeholders involved in the integration of people provided with international protection in the Republic of Croatia.



CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

No significant developments to report in 2023.



BORDERS, VISA AND SCHENGEN

Amendments to the Ordinance on the Treatment of Third-country Nationals ([Official Gazette 145/2023](#)) have come into effect.

The ordinance contains forms related to the national relief programme in the Entry/Exit System, which will help operationally, especially where there are frequent crossings of the state border by citizens of third countries,

including in truck traffic. This ordinance contains decisions on the refusal and cancellation of travel authorisation in the European Travel Information and Authorisation System.

A Schengen evaluation on common visa policy took place in Istanbul (Türkiye) and Pretoria (South Africa) in December 2023.

IRREGULAR MIGRATION

The Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia joined implementation of the Mechanism of Return of the Western Balkans project. The project was launched with the Ministry of Justice of the Netherlands and the Joint Coordination Platform, and its goal is to improve return procedures in the countries of the Western Balkans.

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

In 2023, the draft of the new National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in People for the period up to 2030, and the accompanying action plan for the period from 2024 to 2026, were completed, with their adoption expected in 2024.

RETURN AND READMISSION

The Ministry of the Interior signed a memorandum of understanding on return with Frontex in June 2023. According to the agreement, Frontex will provide support by supplying experts on return in the Republic of Croatia, while the Republic of Croatia will participate more actively in Frontex's activities and working groups with the aim of improving return.

In June 2023, Frontex held training in Zagreb on return counselling for 14 national experts working on return procedures in detention centres and police administrations.

The Ministry of the Interior participates in Frontex's Joint Reintegration Services, which provides counselling and reintegration assistance. In 2023, a total of 203 people were returned to their countries of origin through this programme (mostly citizens of Türkiye and India).

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

No significant developments to report in 2023.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

The statistical annex available on the next pages complements the Country Factsheet and provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Croatia 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 regard third-country nationals, which means persons who are not EU citizens, including stateless persons. The data cover the period 2020-2023. Since 2023 data were not available at the time of publication for certain datasets, in these cases the

period 2020-2022 is covered. Exceptionally, the monthly data on temporary protection covers the period until March 2024. **The data were extracted during April–May 2024. The manuscript was completed in May 2024.**

The Eurostat website is constantly updated. Therefore, it is likely that more recent data will have become available since. An online data code available under each figure can be used to directly access the latest data on [Eurostat's website](#).

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.

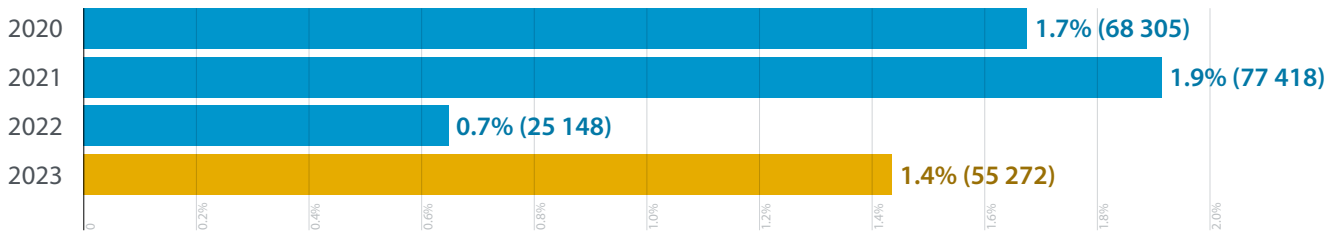
A 'How to read the statistical annex' guide, describing each individual chart and providing links to the data sources, is available [here](#).



LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Third-country nationals, 1 January 2020–2023

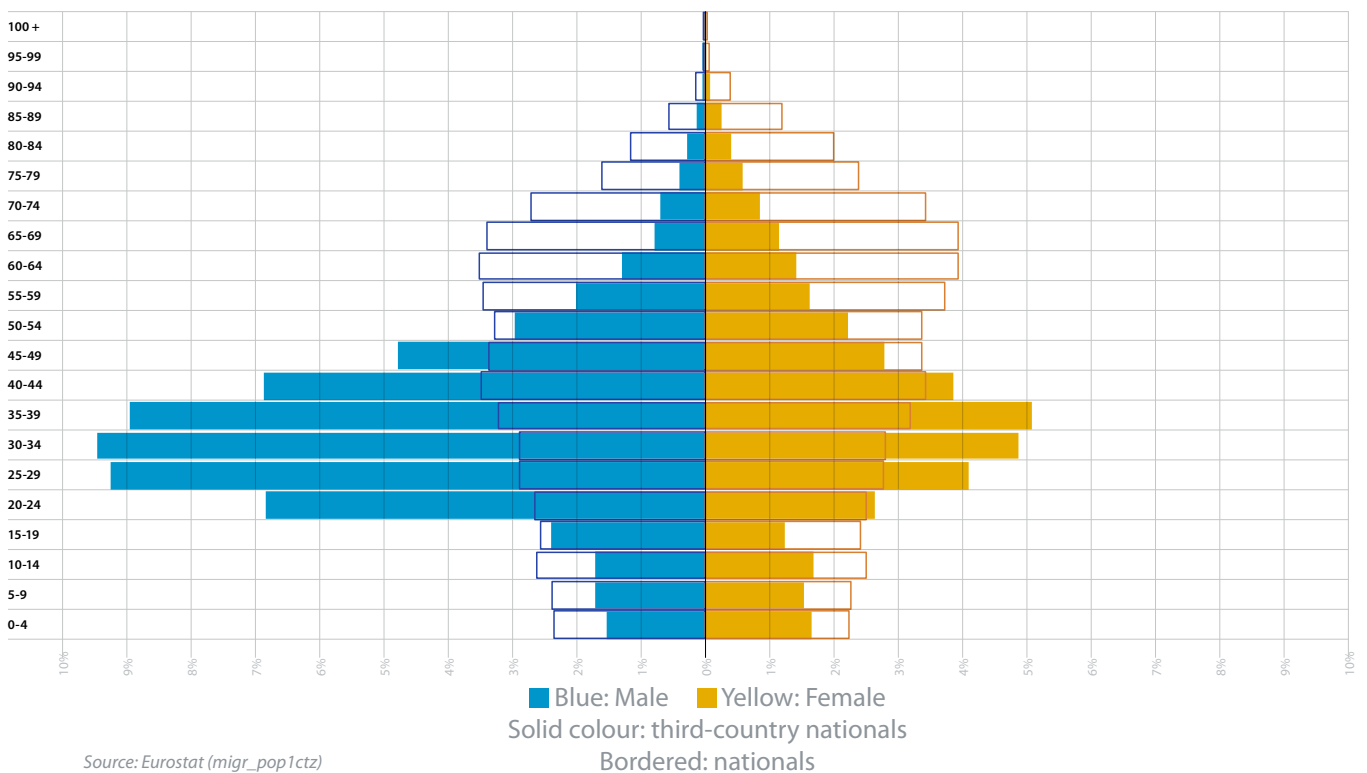
Share of the total population in % (and the absolute number)



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

Age structure of nationals and third-country nationals, 1 January 2023

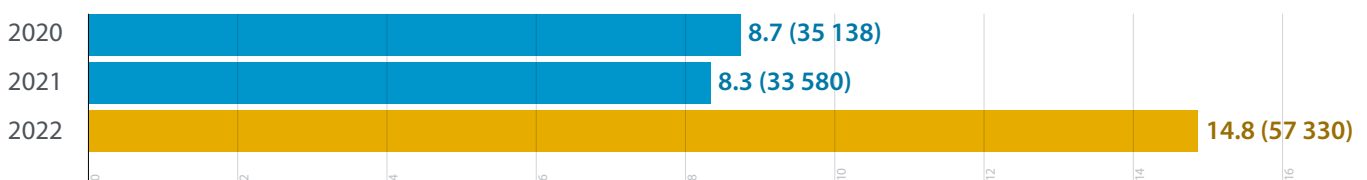
%



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

First residence permits issued to third-country nationals, 2020–2022

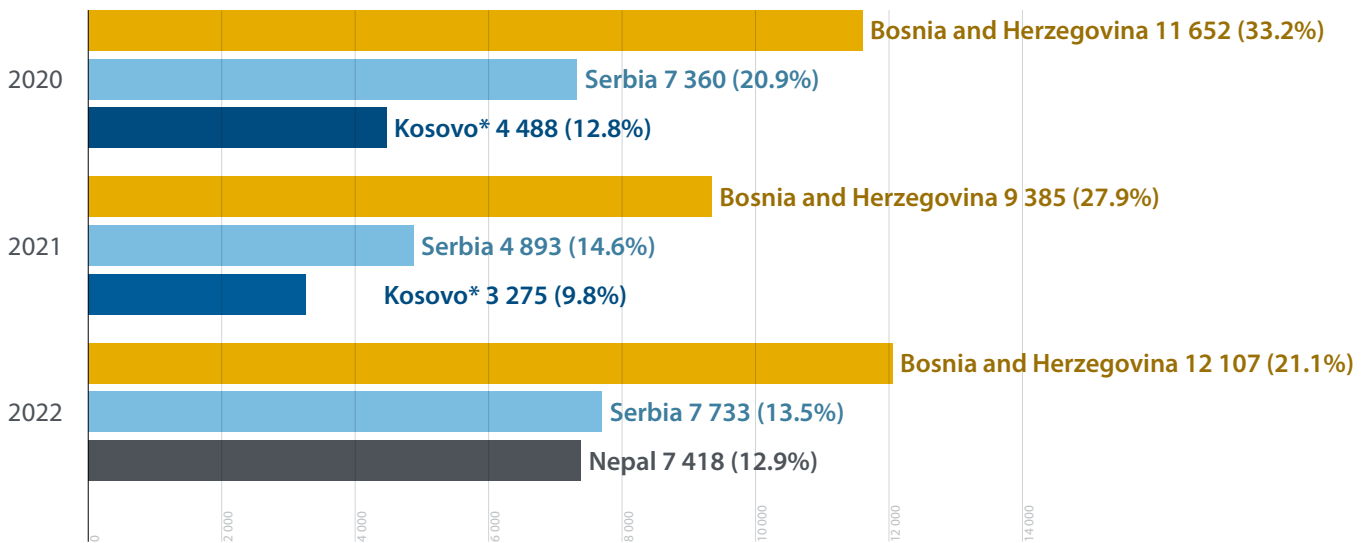
Number per 1 000 people (and the absolute number)



Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_pop1ctz and migr_resp)

Top 3 countries whose citizens received first residence permits, 2020–2022

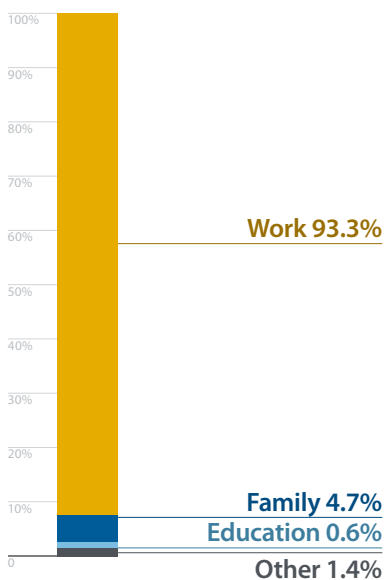
Absolute number (and the share in total number)



* 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: Eurostat (migr_resfirst)

First residence permits issued, distribution by reason or type, 2022

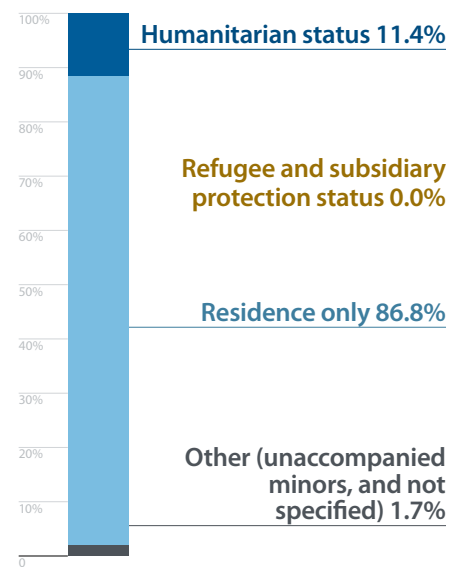
All permits,
by reason, %



Work reason,
by type, %



Other reason,
by detailed reason, %



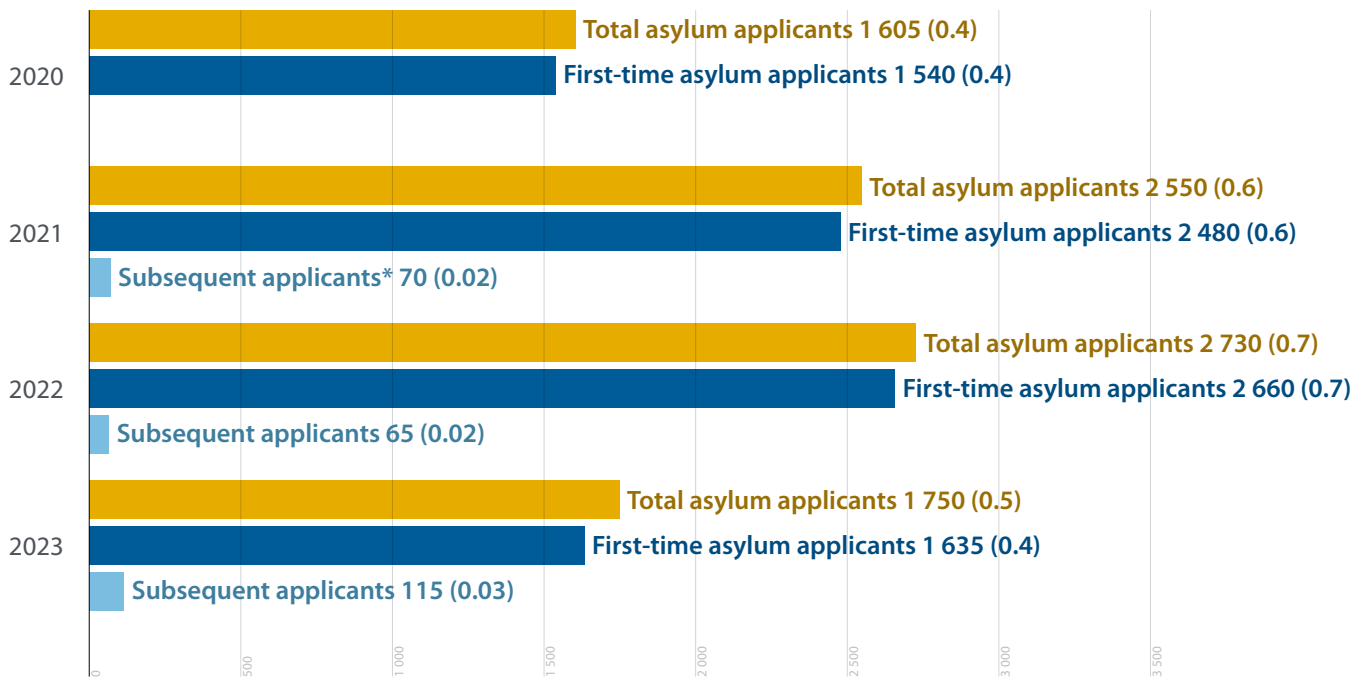
Source: Eurostat (migr_resfirst, migr_resfpc, migr_resocc and migr_resoth)



INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

Asylum applicants by type of application, 2020–2023

Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)

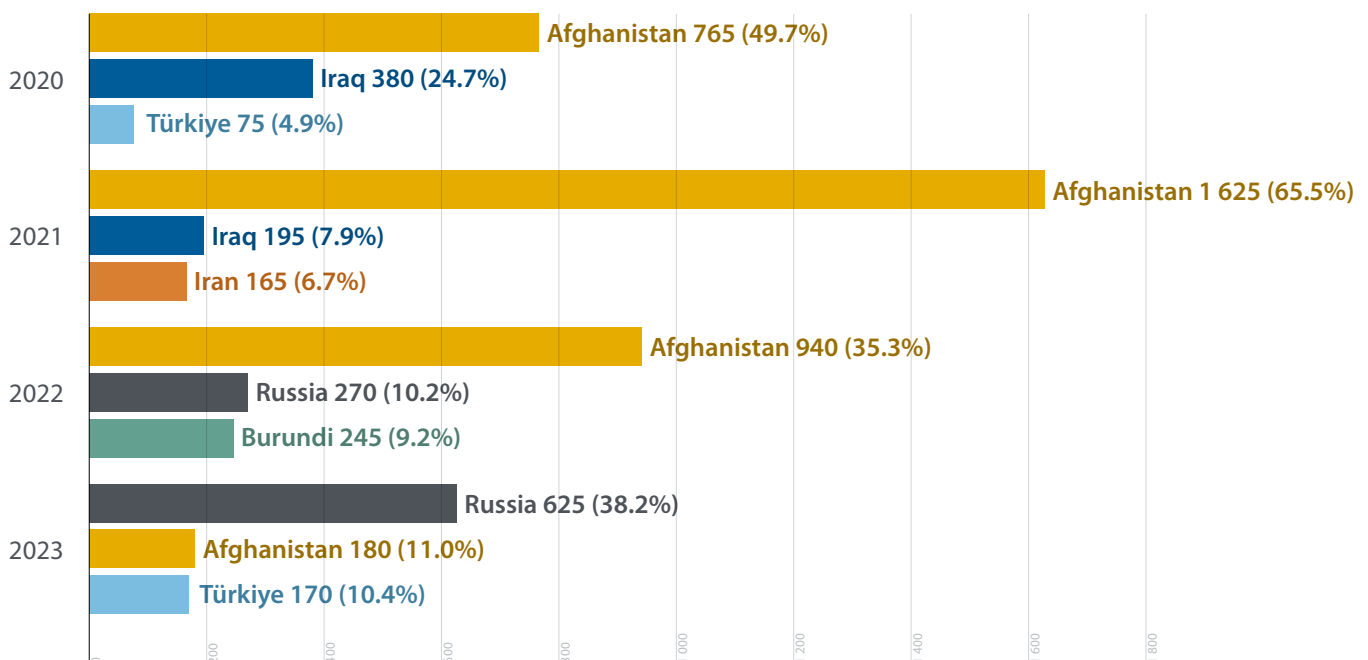


* Data collection from 2021.

Source: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza, migr_pop1ctz and migr_asyapp1mp)

Top 3 countries of citizenship – first-time asylum applicants, 2020–2023

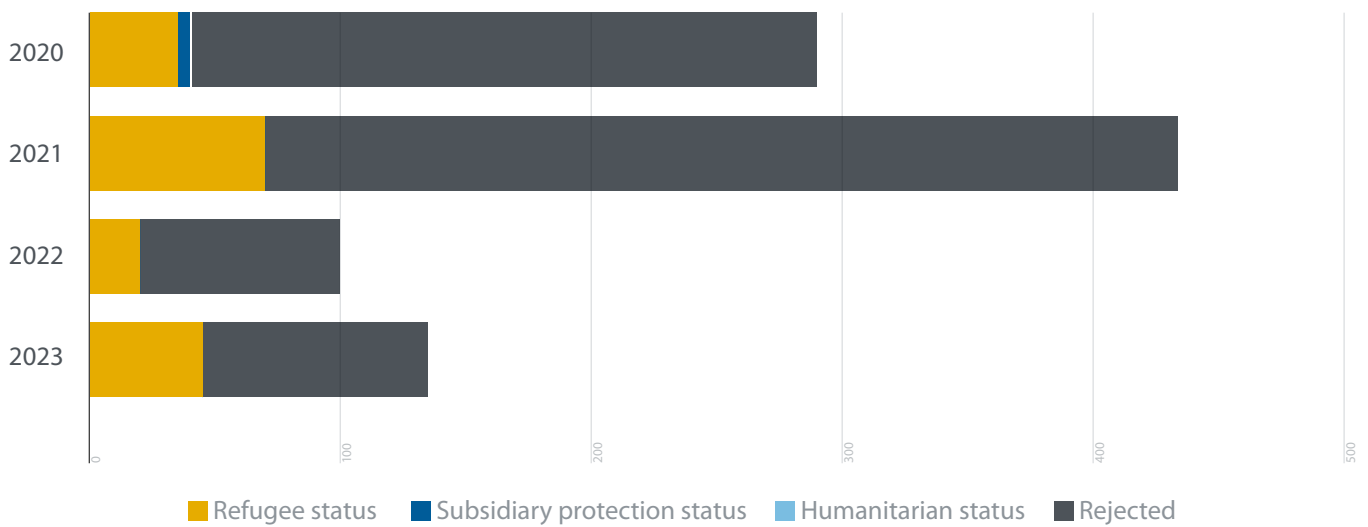
Absolute number (and the share in total number of first-time applicants)



Source: Eurostat (migr_asyappctza)

First instance asylum decisions by outcome, 2020–2023

Absolute number (and the share of the total)

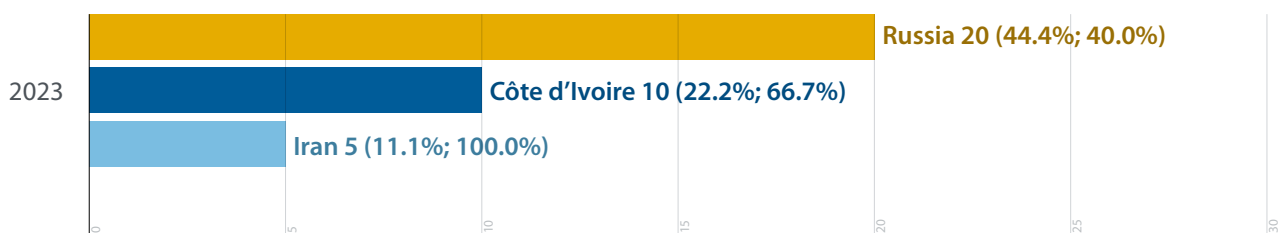


Year	Refugee status number (share of total)	Subsidiary protection status number (share of total)	Humanitarian status number (share of total)	Rejected number (share of total)
2020	35 (11.9%)	5 (2.0%)	–	250 (86.0%)
2021	70 (15.6%)	0 (0.0%)	–	365 (84.4%)
2022	20 (20.8%)	0 (0.0%)	–	80 (79.2%)
2023	45 (31.9%)	0 (0.0%)	–	90 (66.7%)

Source: Eurostat (*migr_asydcfsta* and *migr_asydec1pc*)

Top 3 countries of citizenship granted positive asylum decisions at first instance, 2023

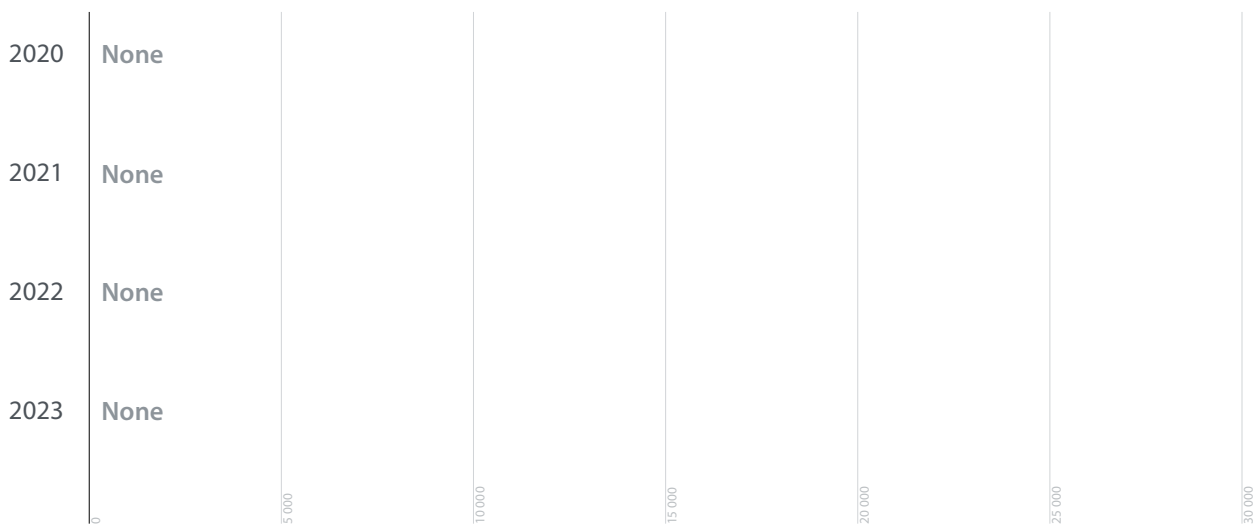
Absolute number (and the share in total positive decisions; and the recognition rate)



Source: Eurostat (*migr_asydcfsta*)

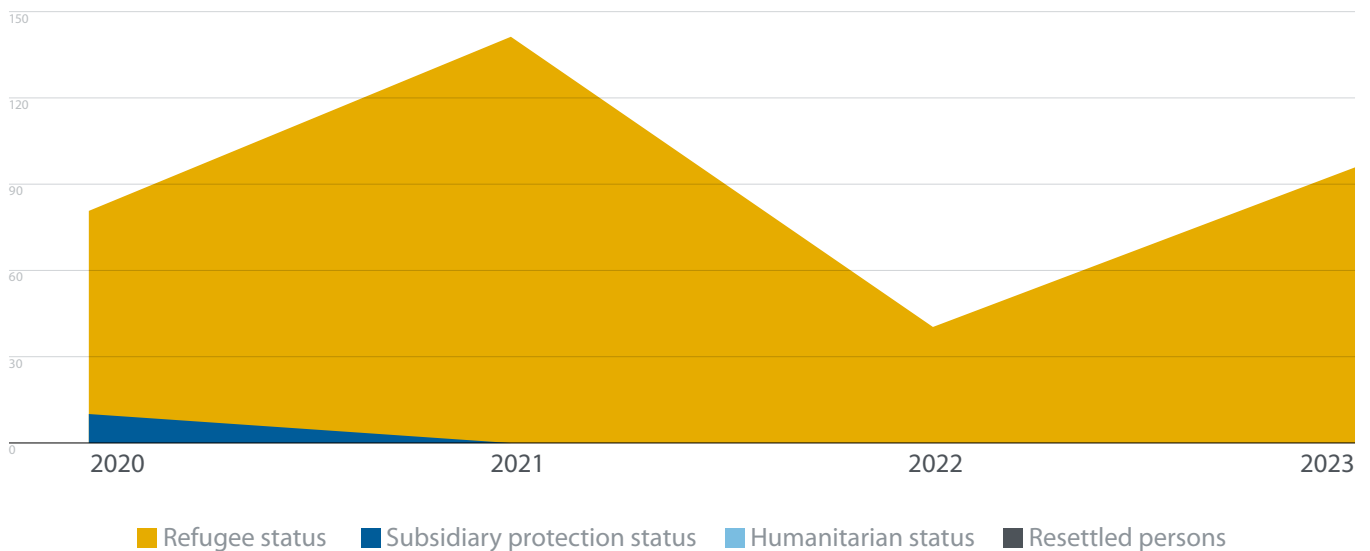
Resettled third-country nationals by sex, 2020–2023

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



Source: Eurostat (migr_asyresa)

Number of positive decisions for third-country nationals, by outcome, 2020–2023



Year	Refugee status	Subsidiary protection status	Humanitarian status	Resettled persons
2020	70	10	–	0
2021	140	0	–	0
2022	40	0	–	0
2023	95	0	–	0

Source: Eurostat (migr_asydcfsta, migr_asydcfina and migr_asyresa)

TEMPORARY PROTECTION

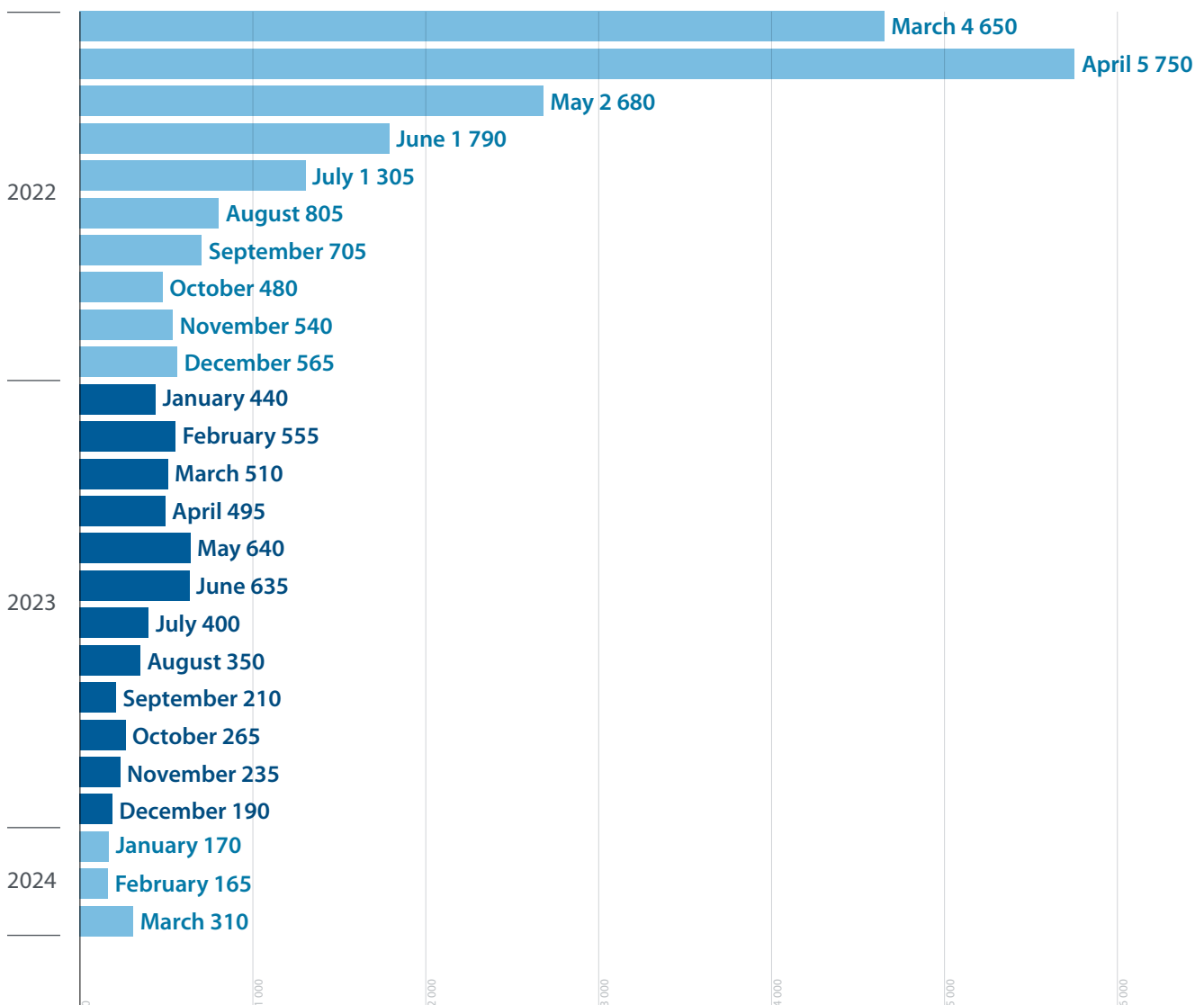
Beneficiaries of temporary protection by age and sex at the end of March 2024

Absolute number (and the share of the total)



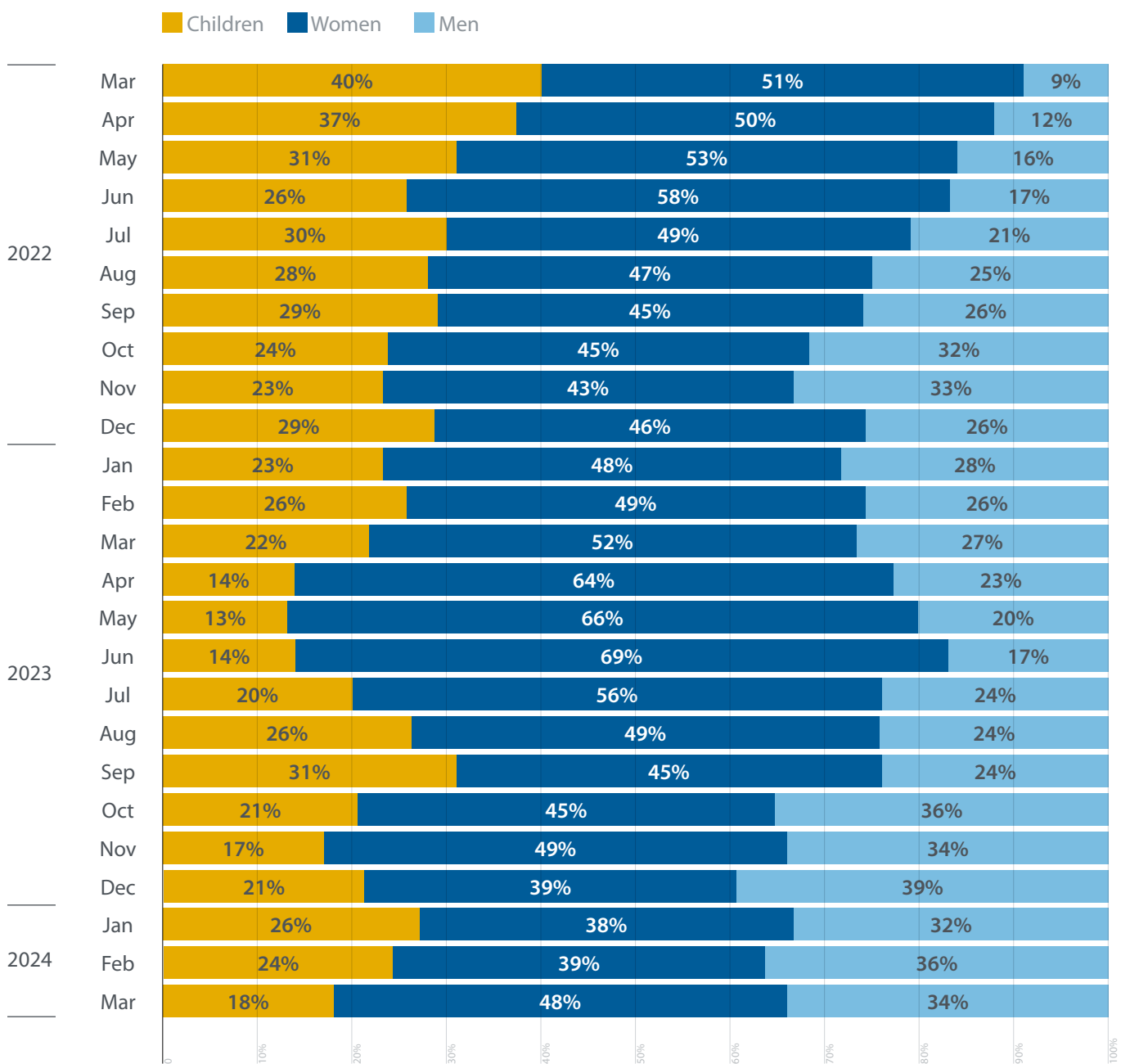
Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpsm)

Number of decisions providing temporary protection to people displaced from Ukraine due to Russia's invasion, March 2022–March 2024



Source: Eurostat (migr_asytpfm)

Distribution by age and sex of decisions providing temporary protection to people displaced from Ukraine due to Russia's invasion, March 2022–March 2024



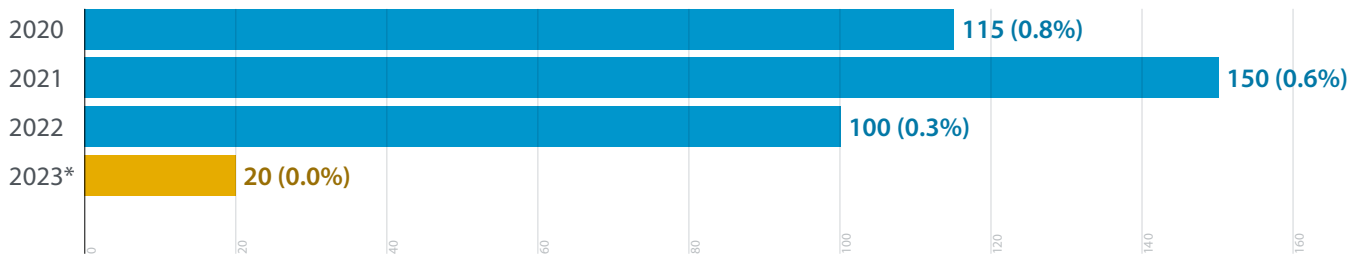
Source: Eurostat (migr_asypfm)



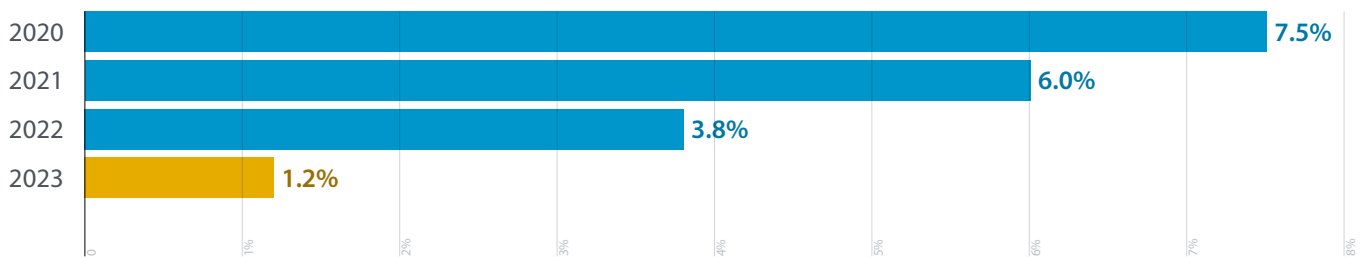
UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum, 2020–2023

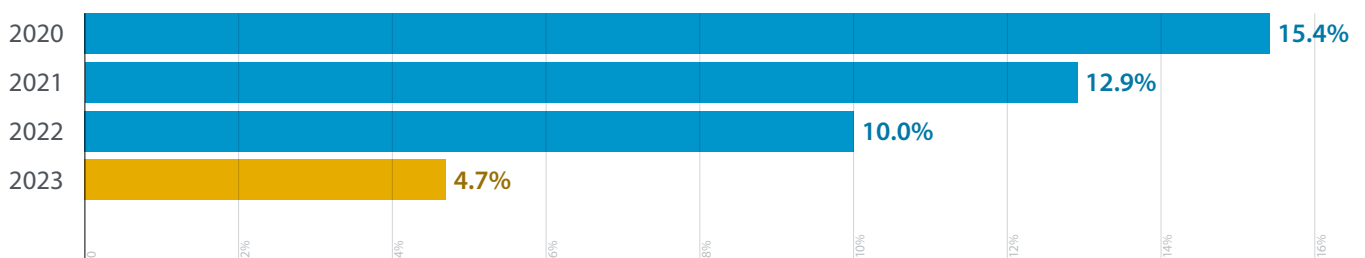
Number (and the share in total number of unaccompanied minors in the EU)



Share of all first-time asylum applicants



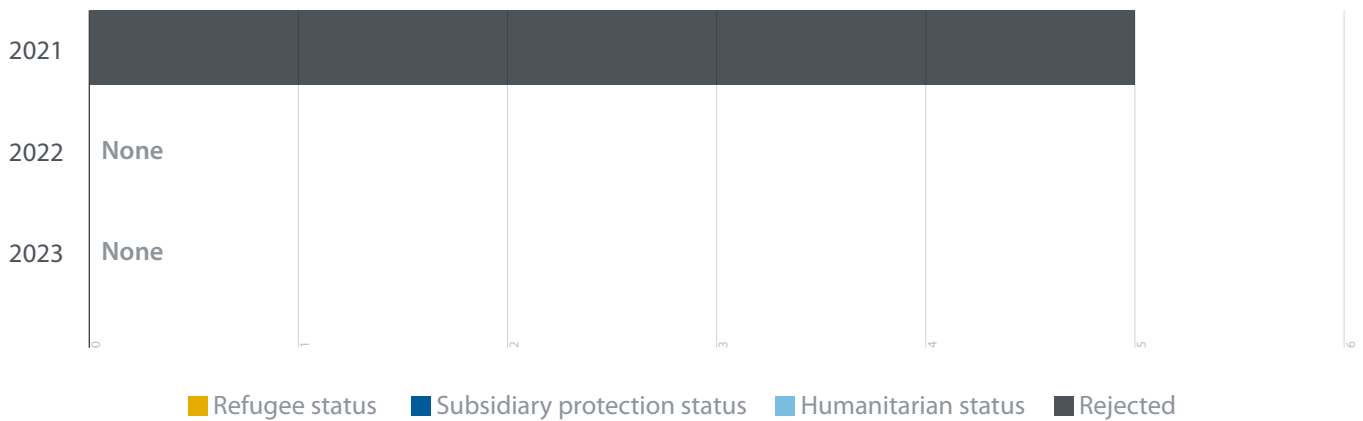
Share of all first-time asylum applicants aged less than 18 years



* The total number of unaccompanied minors in the EU used to calculate the share includes 2022 data for Cyprus.
Source: Eurostat (migr_asyuna and migr_asyappctza)

First instance asylum decisions on applications lodged by unaccompanied minors by outcome, 2021-2023

Absolute number (and the share of the total)



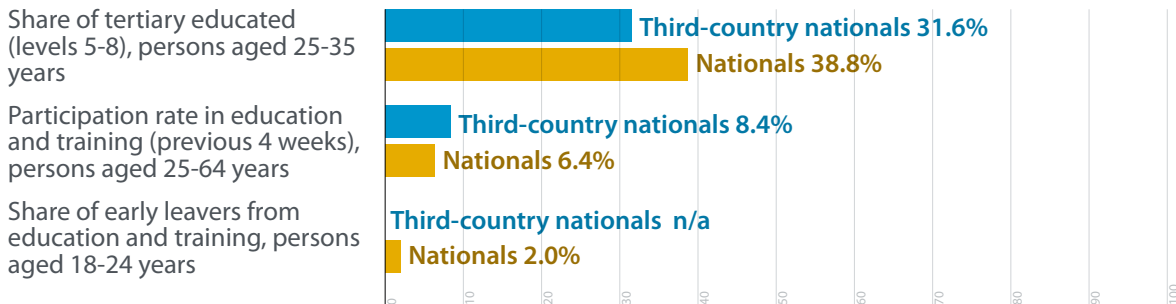
Year	Refugee status number (share of total)	Subsidiary protection status number (share of total)	Humanitarian status number (share of total)	Rejected number (share of total)
2021	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	–	5 (100.0%)
2022	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	–	0 (0.0%)
2023	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	–	0 (0.0%)

Source: Eurostat (migr_asyumdca)

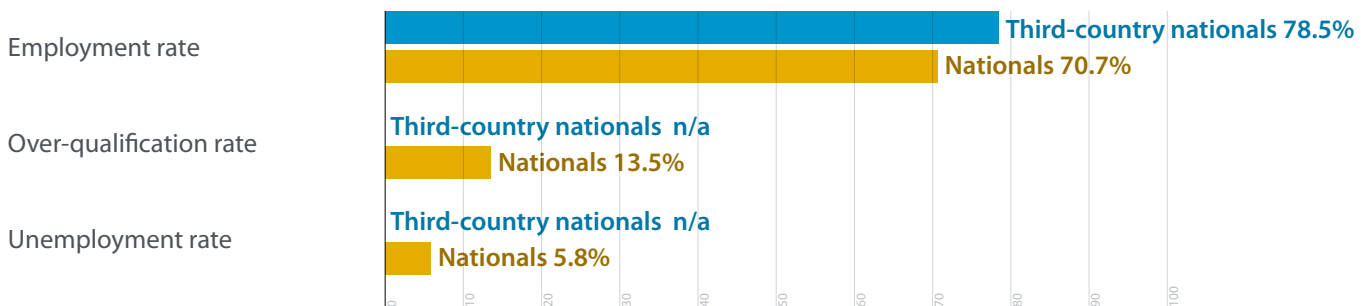
INTEGRATION

Integration indicators, 2022 or 2023

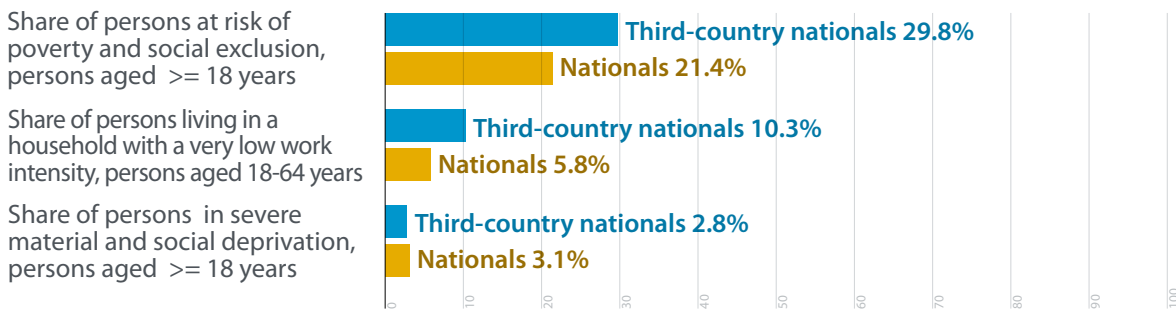
Education, 2023



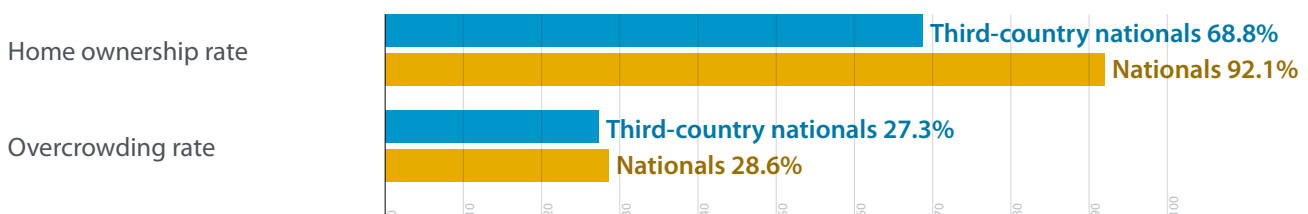
Labour market, persons aged 20-64 years, 2023



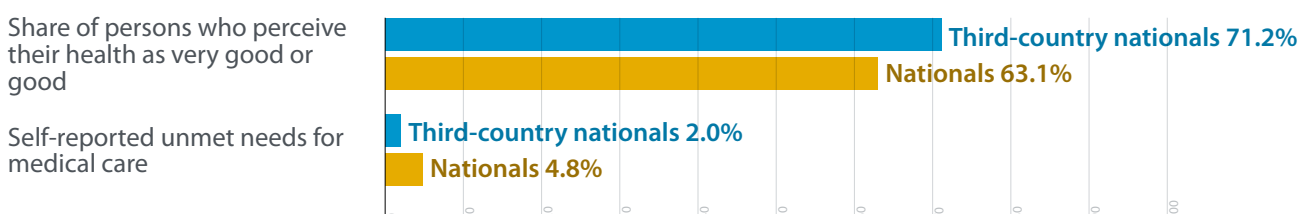
Social inclusion, 2023



Housing, persons aged >= 18 years, 2023



Health, persons aged >= 16 years, 2022

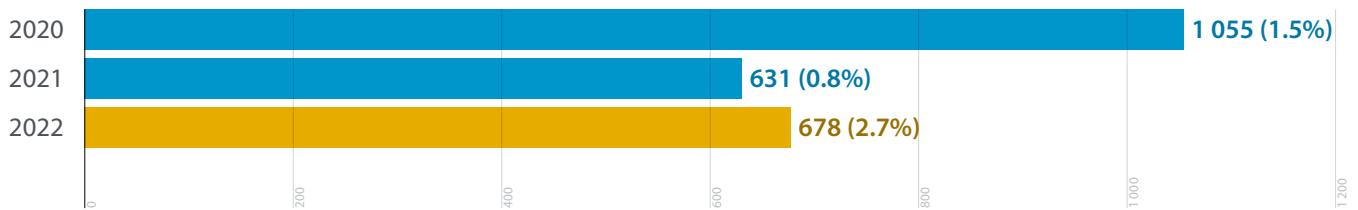




CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

Third-country nationals who acquired citizenship, 2020–2022

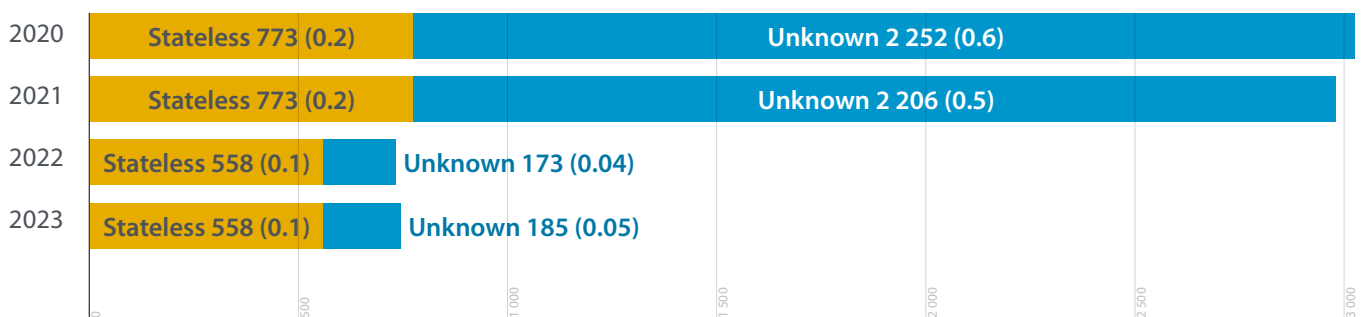
Absolute number (and share of total third-country nationals in the country)



Source: Eurostat (migr_acq and migr_pop1ctz)

Stateless persons and persons with unknown citizenship, 2020–2023

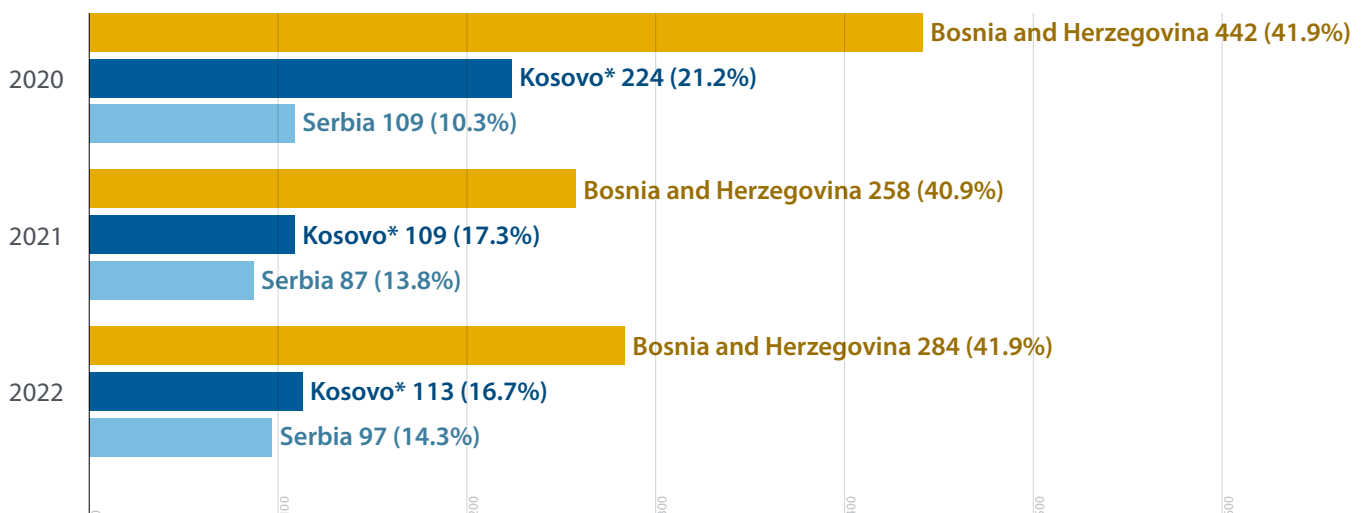
Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)



Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz)

Top 3 countries of previous non-EU citizenships of persons acquiring citizenship, 2020–2022

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

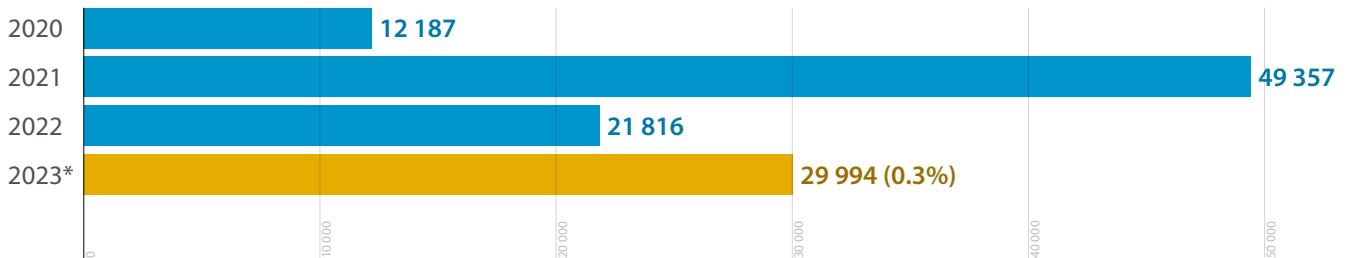


* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.
Source: Eurostat (migr_acq)

BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISAS

Short-stay visas issued, 2020–2023

Absolute number



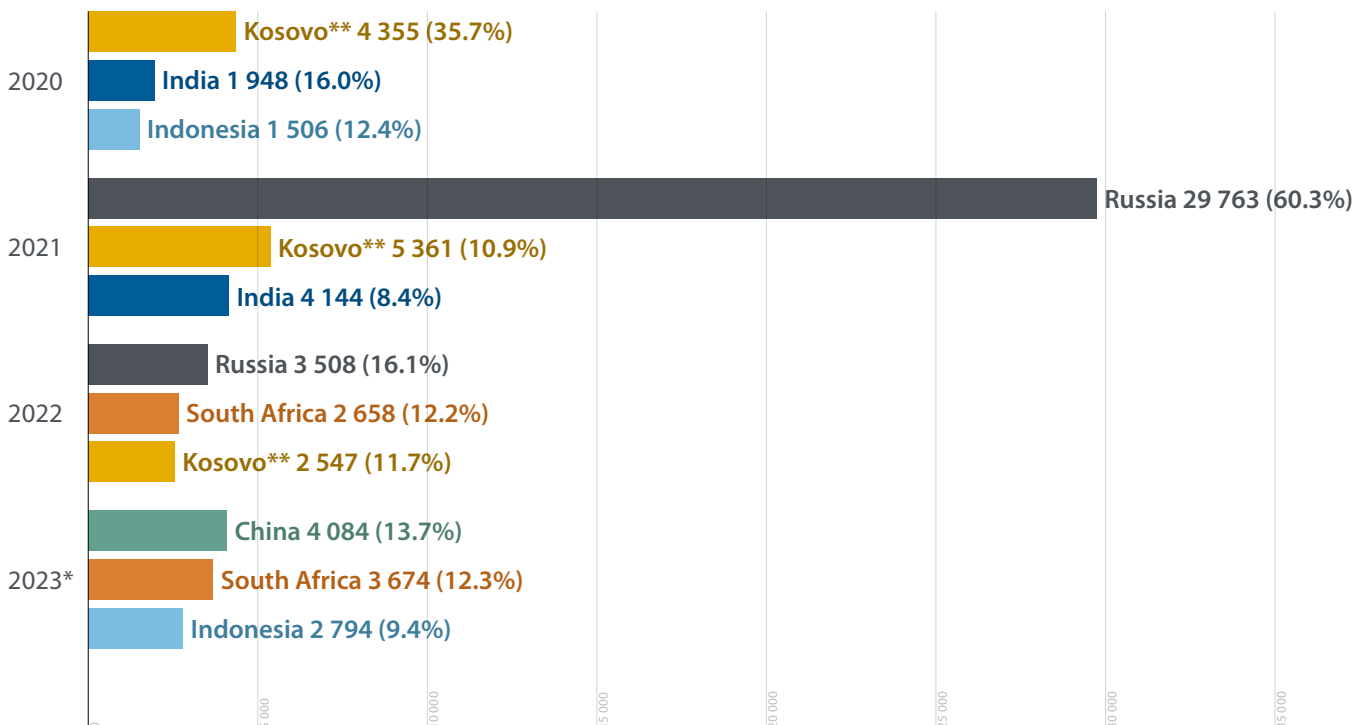
* Schengen uniform short-stay visas. In brackets: the share of all uniform short-stay visas issued within the Schengen Area.

Note: Croatia was not part of the Schengen Area till 2022. 2020–2022 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, 2020–2023

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



* Schengen uniform short-stay visas.

** 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.

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

Source: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

IRREGULAR MIGRATION

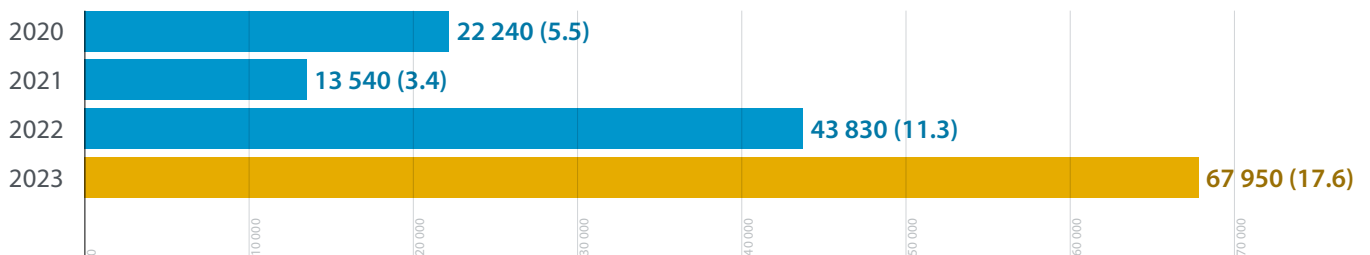
Third-country nationals subject to immigration law enforcement, 2020–2023

Absolute number (and the number per 1 000 people)

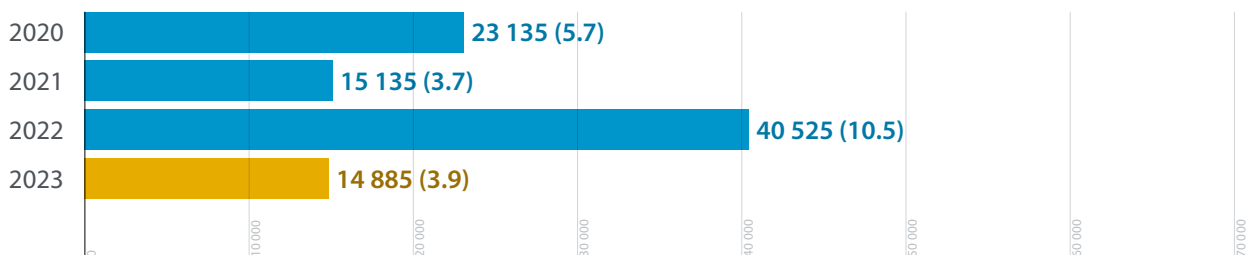
Persons refused entry



Persons found to be illegally present



Persons ordered to leave



Persons returned to a third country

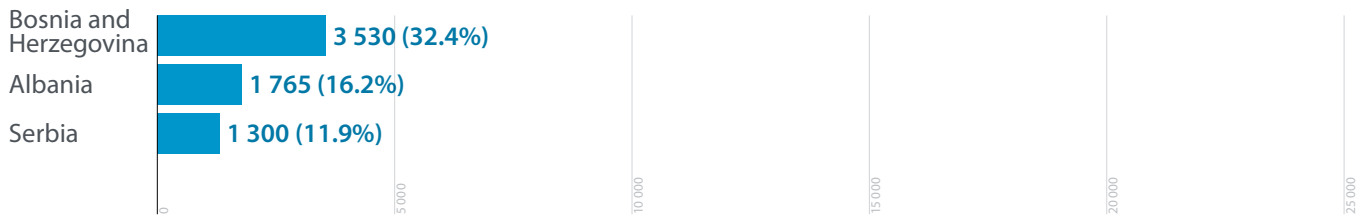


Source: Eurostat (migr_eirfs, migr_eipre, migr_eiord, migr_eirtn, demo_gind and migr_eilpop)

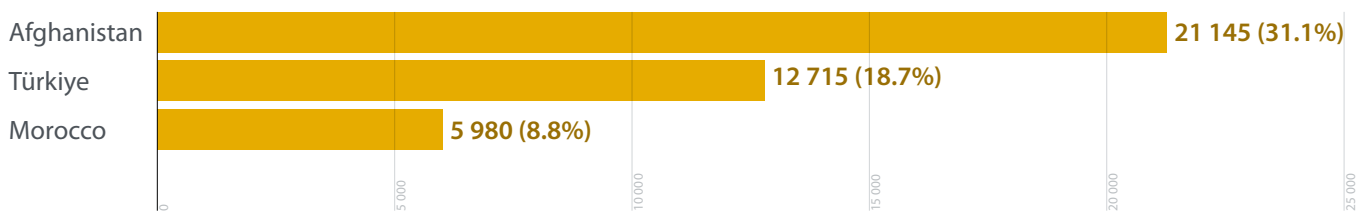
Top 3 countries of citizenship of third-country nationals subject to immigration law enforcement, 2023

Absolute numbers (and the shares in the respective totals)

Persons refused entry



Persons found to be illegally present



Persons ordered to leave



Persons returned to a third country



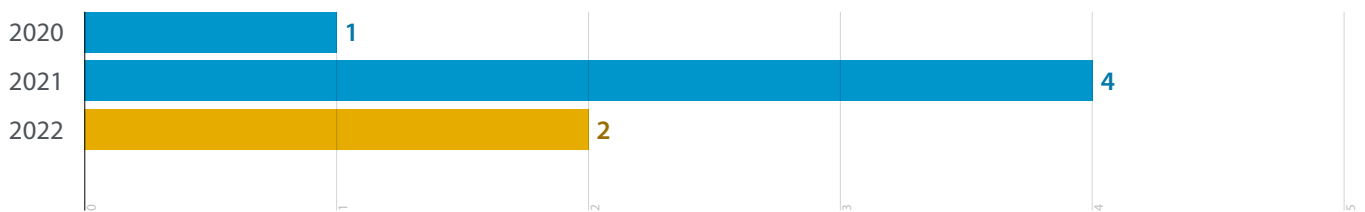
* Including Hong Kong.

Source: Eurostat (migr_eirfs, migr_eipre, migr_eiord and migr_eirtn)



TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Number of third-country nationals victims of trafficking in human beings, 2020-2022



Source: Eurostat (crim_thb_vctz)

Number of first residence permits issued to victims of trafficking in human beings, 2020–2022

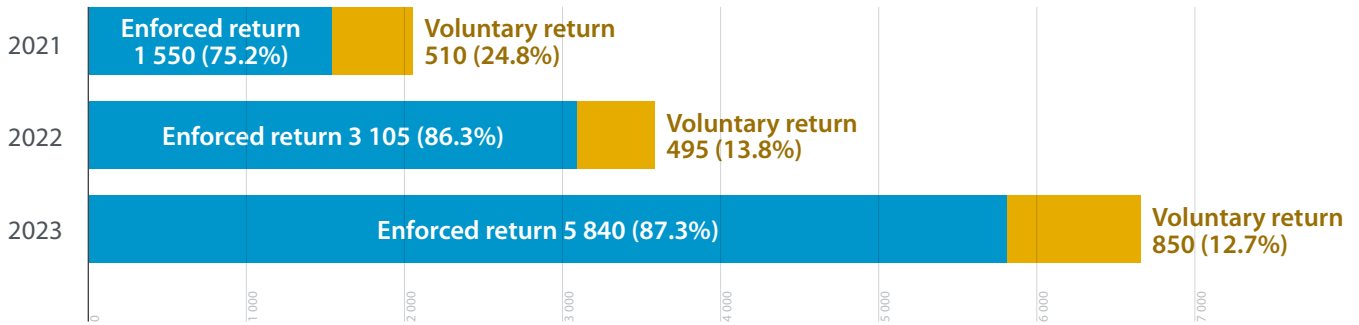


Source: Eurostat (migr_resoth)

RETURN AND READMISSION

Third-country nationals who left the territory, by type of return, 2021–2023

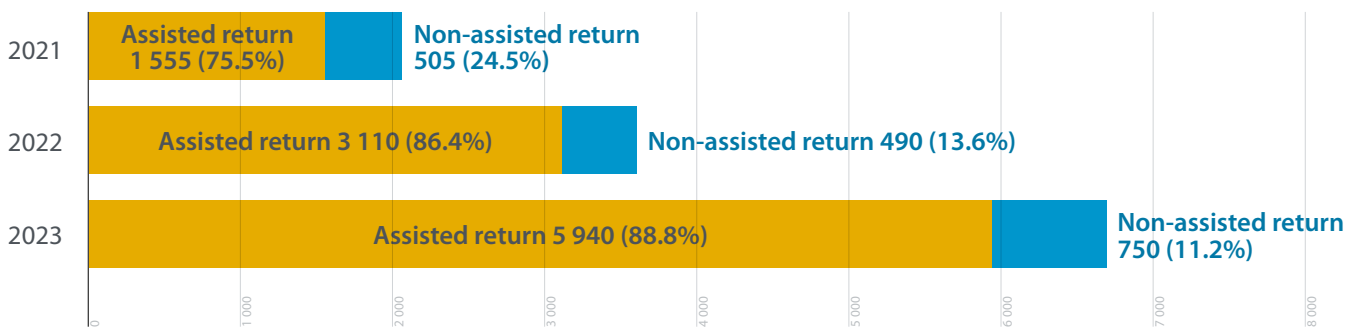
Absolute number (and the share of the total)



Source: Eurostat (migr_eirtn1)

Third-country nationals who left the territory, by type of assistance received, 2021–2023

Absolute number (and the share of the total)



Source: Eurostat (migr_eirtn1)