

Non-national populations in the EU Member States

Statistics in focus

POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

8/2006

Population

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Proportion of non-nationals and composition by citizenship vary considerably in the EU

According to official national statistics and Eurostat estimates, the total number of non-nationals living in the European Union in 2004 was around 25 million, just below 5.5 percent of the total population. In absolute terms, the largest numbers of foreign citizens reside in Germany, France, Spain, the United Kingdom and Italy.

The data for the period 2000-2004 indicate that the non-national population varied from less than 1 percent of the total population in Slovakia to 39 percent in Luxembourg, but in the majority of countries the figure was between 2 and 8 percent (Table 1). A non-national proportion above 8 percent was also observed in Latvia, Estonia, Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Belgium and Greece and below 2 percent in Lithuania, Hungary and Poland. It should be noted that the figures for Latvia and Estonia included citizens of the former Soviet Union permanently resident in those countries who have not taken the citizenship of the host country since the break-up of the Soviet Union, and that the official figures for some Central and Eastern European countries underestimate the stocks of foreigners by including permanent residents only.

In all EU Member States, except Luxembourg, Belgium, Ireland and Cyprus, the majority of foreigners are citizens of non-EU-25 countries. The number of citizens from the 10 new Member States residing in the EU-15 is very small: around 0.2 percent of the total population of the EU-15, the largest proportion in Germany – around 0.6 percent.

Between 1990 and 2004, in most countries the percentage of foreign citizens either did not change significantly or it increased. Latvia was the only country with a significant decrease (around five percentage points from 1998 to 2004). The most significant growth was observed in Luxembourg, Spain, Cyprus, Greece, Ireland and Austria. This was due to an increase in population from outside the EU-25, except for Luxembourg, where an increase in the number of EU-15 citizens was dominant. Regularisation programmes had a significant effect on the size of non-national populations in Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

The citizenship structures of foreign populations in the EU Member States vary greatly (Tables 1 and 2). As well as geographical proximity, the composition of the non-national population in each country, examined against the proportion of the five largest groups of non-nationals, strongly reflects their history, in particular labour migration, recent political developments and historical links. For example, the largest non-national groups include Turkish citizens in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands; citizens of former colonies in Portugal (citizens of Cape Verde, Brazil and Angola) and in Spain (Ecuadorians and Moroccans); migrants from Albania in Greece; citizens from other parts of the former Yugoslavia in Slovenia; Czech citizens in Slovakia; and citizens from other former Soviet Union countries in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.



					Largest group of non-nationals (country of citizenship)				
	Year	Nationals (1000)	Non-nationals (1000)	Non-nationals %		Year	Nationals (1000)	Non-nationals (1000)	Non-nationals %
Belgium	2004	9 536	860	8.3	Italy	1990	9 067	881	8.9
Czech Republic	2004	10 016	195	1.9	Ukraine	1990	10 327	36	0.3
Denmark	2004	5 126	271	5.0	Turkey	1990	4 985	151	2.9
Germany	2004	75 190	7 342	8.9	Turkey	1990	74 267	4 846	6.1
Estonia	2000c	1 096	274	20.0	Russia	1990	:	:	:
Greece	2004e	10 149	891	8.1	Albania	1990	9 979	142	1.4
Spain	2004	39 426	2 772	6.6	Ecuador	1990	38 428	398	1.0
France	1999c	55 258	3 263	5.6	Portugal	1990	53 055	3 597	6.3
Ireland	2002c	3 585	274	7.1	United Kingdom	1990	3 426	81	2.3
Italy	2004	55 898	1 990	3.4	Albania	1990	56 338	356	0.6
Cyprus	2002c	625	65	9.4	Greece	1992	577	26	4.2
Latvia	2004	1 804	515	22.2	Russia	1998	1788	671	27.3
Lithuania	2001c	3 450	34	1.0	Russia	1990	:	:	:
Luxembourg	2004	277	174	38.6	Portugal	1990	270	109	28.7
Hungary	2004	9 987	130	1.3	Romania	1995	10 199	138	1.3
Malta	2004	389	11	2.8	United Kingdom	1990	352	6	1.6
Netherlands	2004	15 556	702	4.3	Turkey	1990	14 251	642	4.3
Austria	2004	7 375	765	9.4	Serbia and Montenegro	1990	7 211	434	5.7
Poland	2002c	37 530	700	1.8	Germany	1990	:	:	:
Portugal	2003p	10 169	239	2.3	Cape Verde	1990	9 819	101	1.0
Slovenia	2004	1 951	45	2.3	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1995	1 942	48	2.4
Slovakia	2004	5 350	30	0.6	Czech Republic	1990	:	:	:
Finland	2004	5 113	107	2.0	Russia	1990	4 953	21	0.4
Sweden	2004	8 500	476	5.3	Finland	1990	8 071	456	5.3
United Kingdom	2003	55 636	2 760	4.7	Ireland	1990	55 043	2 416	4.2

c - Census data; e - Estimated figures; p - Provisional data.

Table 1: National and non-national population in the European Union Member States, around 2004 and 1990.

GERMANY						PORTUGAL					
1990	(1000)	%	2004	(1000)	%	1990	(1000)	%	2003	(1000)	%
Turkey	1612.6	33.3	Turkey	1877.6	25.6	Cape Verde	28.0	27.7	Cape Verde	52.4	21.9
BA+HR+MK+	610.5	12.6	BA+HR+MK+	1054.7	14.4	Brazil	10.5	10.4	Brazil	24.9	10.4
CS+SI			CS+SI								
Italy	519.5	10.7	Italy	601.3	8.2	United Kingdom	7.8	7.7	Angola	24.6	10.3
Greece	293.6	6.1	Greece	355.6	4.8	Spain	7.3	7.2	Guinea Bissau	19.1	8.0
Poland	220.4	4.5	Poland	326.9	4.5	US	6.4	8.4	United Kingdom	15.9	6.7
Other	1589.1	32.8	Other	3119.6	42.5	Other	41.0	40.6	Other	101.9	42.7
LUXEMBOURG						GREECE					
1991	(1000)	%	2004	(1000)	%	1994	(1000)	%	2001	(1000)	%
Portugal	37.6	34.2	Portugal	63.8	36.6	US	15.1	10.1	Albania	438.0	57.5
Italy	19.9	18.1	France	21.9	12.6	United Kingdom	13.5	9.0	Bulgaria	35.1	4.6
France	13.0	11.8	Italy	18.9	10.8	Russia	10.3	6.9	Georgia	22.9	3.0
Belgium	9.5	8.6	Belgium	16.0	9.2	Germany	9.2	6.2	Romania	22.0	2.9
Germany	8.8	8.0	Germany	10.3	5.9	Poland	8.8	5.9	US	18.1	2.4
Other	21.3	19.4	Other	43.3	24.9	Other	92.4	62.0	Other	225.3	29.6
CZECH REPUBLIC			HUNGARY			SLOVAKIA			SLOVENIA		
2004	(1000)	%	2004	(1000)	%	2004	(1000)	%	2004	(1000)	%
Ukraine	56.4	28.9	Romania	55.7	42.8	Czech Republic	5.4	18.0	BA	21.8	48.2
Slovakia	33.1	17.0	Ukraine	13.1	10.1	Ukraine	4.8	16.1	CS	7.6	16.8
Vietnam	25.6	13.1	CS	12.4	9.5	Poland	2.4	7.9	Croatia	7.0	15.4
Poland	16.1	8.2	Germany	7.4	5.7	Romania	1.9	6.5	MK	4.1	9.0
Russia	12.5	6.4	China	6.8	5.2	Vietnam	1.8	5.9	Ukraine	0.9	1.9
Other	51.7	26.5	Other	34.8	26.7	Other	13.6	45.6	Other	3.9	8.7

BA - Bosnia and Herzegovina, HR - Croatia, MK - Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, CS - Serbia and Montenegro, SI - Slovenia, US - United States of America.

Table 2: Citizenship composition of non-national population in selected EU Member States.

Germany, which in absolute numbers hosts the largest foreign population in the European Union, experienced a remarkably stable order of the five largest non-national populations: Turks, (ex-) Yugoslavs, Italians, Greeks and Poles (Table 2).

Luxembourg, which has the largest percentage of non-nationals in the EU (and at the same time the highest

proportion of foreigners from other EU-15 countries), also has a stable composition of the largest groups of foreign citizens, which remained almost unchanged between 1991 and 2004. The most significant change in the composition of the recorded non-national population occurred in Greece, following regularisation programmes (see Table 2).

Non-nationals tend to be younger than nationals

There are considerable differences in the age structures of national and non-national populations in the European Union (Figure 1). According to the data for 2002, the proportions of children and adolescents do not differ significantly: 0-19 year-olds made up 23 percent of nationals and 20 percent of non-nationals, but for older age groups significant differences were observed.

The foreign population was dominated by young adult age groups, with 41 percent of non-nationals between the ages of 20 and 39, compared with 28 percent of nationals. The 25-29 and 30-34 age groups, the two most numerous in the population of non-nationals, accounted together for 22 percent (14 percent in the case of nationals).

The most significant relative differences in the age structure could be observed for the population aged 65 and over, which accounted for 17 percent of the national population – almost twice as much as the corresponding share for foreign citizens (9 percent). The result is that the immigrant population tends in the short term to rejuvenate the total population. However, it should be kept in mind that this rejuvenation is limited; the percentage of non-nationals in the total population is small in most countries and the current relatively

numerous young adult immigrants will, in future, contribute to an increase in the older population age groups. Lack of data prevents a complete study of the relative proportions of males and females in the non-national populations. However, available data indicate that the proportion of males in the non-national populations in some countries is significantly higher than in the total population.

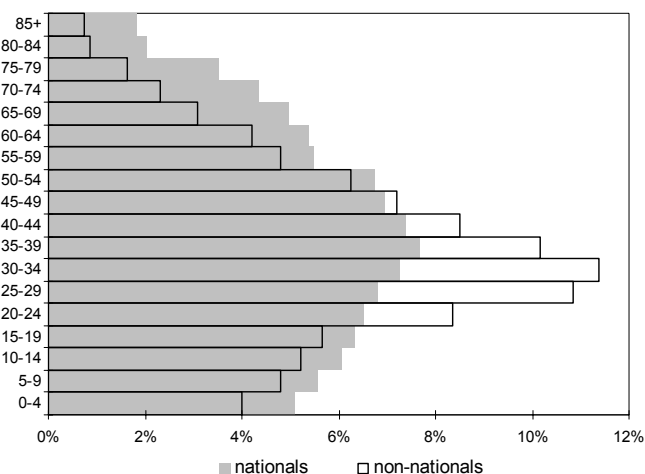


Figure 1: Nationals and non-nationals by age, EU-25, 2002.

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Non-national population refers here to persons who are not citizens of the country in which they reside, including persons of unknown citizenship and stateless persons.

Due to various differences as regards concepts, definitions and data sources, as well of varying rules on the acquisition of citizenship, the international comparability of figures on non-nationals is restricted to some extent. Figures concerning population by country

of birth offer a more complete picture of the origin of the population. Unfortunately, these are not available for a number of countries.

Statistics on acquisition of citizenship were presented in Statistics in Focus, Theme 3 - 3/2004. Data on the foreign born population in selected EU-15 countries are also included in this issue.

Further information:

Data:

[EUROSTAT/Website/Population and social conditions/International Migration and Asylum/Population by citizenship/Population by sex and citizenship](#)

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