

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU

EU27 Member States granted citizenship to around 780 000 persons in 2011

In 2011, 783 100 persons acquired citizenship¹ of an **EU27**² Member State, down by 4% compared with 2010. This decline, which occurred after three consecutive years of increase, is mainly due to the decreases recorded in four of the five largest countries in terms of granted citizenships: the **United Kingdom** (177 600 persons, -9% compared with 2010), **France** (114 600, -20%), **Spain** (114 600, -7%) and **Italy** (56 200, -15%), while only **Germany** (109 600, +5%) registered an increase. These five countries together still accounted for almost three quarters of all citizenships granted by the EU27 Member States.

As regards the characteristics of the new citizens in the **EU27**, there was a slight predominance of women (52%) in 2011. The median age of persons granted citizenship was 32.5 years, with almost a third aged less than 25 years and nearly half aged 25 to 44, while those aged 55 or over accounted for less than 7%.

These data come from a report³ issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Highest number of citizenships granted per 100 resident foreigners in Hungary, per 1000 inhabitants in Luxembourg

The number of citizenships granted can be related to the number of resident foreigners i.e. non-nationals resident in the Member State. In 2011, the highest rates were registered in **Hungary** (9.8 citizenships granted per 100 resident foreigners), **Poland** (6.7), **Sweden** (5.8), **Malta** (5.3) and **Portugal** (5.2), and the lowest in the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia** (both 0.4), **Latvia** (0.6), **Estonia** and **Austria** (both 0.7). On average, 2.3 citizenships were granted per 100 resident foreigners in the **EU27**.

When compared with the total population of each Member State, the highest rates of citizenship granted were recorded in **Luxembourg** (6.6 citizenships granted per 1 000 inhabitants), **Sweden** (3.9), the **United Kingdom** (2.8) and **Belgium** (2.7). Ten EU27 Member States granted less than one citizenship per 1 000 inhabitants. On average, 1.6 citizenships were granted per 1 000 inhabitants in the **EU27**.

Almost a quarter of new EU citizens were Moroccans, Turks, Ecuadorians or Indians

The new citizens in the **EU27** in 2011 came mainly from **Africa** (26% of the total number of citizenships acquired), **Asia** (23%), **non-EU27 Europe** (19%), **North and South America** (17%) or **another EU27 Member State** (11%).

In 2011, the largest groups that acquired citizenship of an EU27 Member State were citizens of **Morocco** (64 300 persons, of which 55% acquired citizenship of France or Spain), **Turkey** (48 900, 58% acquired German citizenship), **Ecuador** (33 700, 95 % acquired Spanish citizenship) and **India** (31 700, 83% acquired British citizenship). Moroccans, Turks, Ecuadorians and Indians represented together almost a quarter of the total number of persons that acquired EU citizenship in 2011. **Romanians** (26 000 persons) were the largest group of EU citizens acquiring citizenship of another EU Member State, followed by **Poles** (11 000), **Italians** (7 500) and **Portuguese** (6 900).

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU27, 2011

	Total number of citizenships acquired in thousands		Citizenships acquired per:	
	2010	2011	1 000 inhabitants	100 resident foreigners
EU27²	812.4	783.1	1.6	2.3
Belgium	34.6	29.8	2.7	2.5
Bulgaria	0.9	0.6	0.1	1.6
Czech Republic	1.1	1.6	0.2	0.4
Denmark	4.0	4.2	0.8	1.2
Germany	104.6	109.6	1.3	1.5
Estonia	1.2	1.5	1.2	0.7
Ireland	6.4	10.7	2.4	2.6
Greece	9.4	17.5	1.6	1.8
Spain	123.7	114.6	2.5	2.0
France	143.3	114.6	1.8	3.0
Croatia	3.3	3.3	0.8	:
Italy	65.9	56.2	0.9	1.2
Cyprus	1.9	2.2	2.6	1.3
Latvia	3.7	2.5	1.2	0.6
Lithuania	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.8
Luxembourg	4.3	3.4	6.6	1.5
Hungary⁴	6.1	20.6	2.1	9.8
Malta	0.9	1.1	2.6	5.3
Netherlands	26.3	28.6	1.7	3.8
Austria	6.1	6.7	0.8	0.7
Poland	2.9	3.4	0.1	6.7
Portugal	21.8	23.2	2.2	5.2
Romania	:	:	:	:
Slovenia	1.8	1.8	0.9	2.1
Slovakia	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.4
Finland	4.3	4.6	0.8	2.7
Sweden	32.5	36.6	3.9	5.8
United Kingdom	194.8	177.6	2.8	3.9
Iceland	0.5	0.4	1.2	1.7
Liechtenstein	0.1	0.1	3.2	1.0
Norway	11.6	14.4	2.9	3.9
Switzerland	39.3	36.0	4.6	2.0
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1.2	1.2	:	:
Turkey	9.5	9.2	0.1	:

: Data not available

Largest groups acquiring citizenship in the EU27 Member States, 2011

	Largest group		Second largest group		Third largest group		Fourth largest group	
	Previous citizens of	%	Previous citizens of	%	Previous citizens of	%	Previous citizens of	%
EU27²	Morocco	8.2	Turkey	6.2	Ecuador	4.3	India	4.0
BE	Morocco	23.6	Italy	12.4	Turkey	7.9	Dem. Rep. of Congo	3.9
BG	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	44.4	Moldova	14.2	Russia	13.2	Ukraine	8.3
CZ	Ukraine	30.3	Slovakia	14.6	Poland	11.6	Vietnam	5.4
DK	Iraq	19.9	Afghanistan	14.1	Somalia	5.6	Turkey	5.5
DE	Turkey	25.7	Iraq	4.4	Ukraine	4.0	Poland	4.0
EE	Recognised non-citizen ⁵	88.3	Russia	10.3	Ukraine	0.7	Kazakhstan	0.2
IE	Philippines	16.3	Nigeria	11.2	India	8.8	Bangladesh	6.5
EL	Albania	88.1	Russia	1.6	Georgia	1.4	Armenia	0.9
ES	Ecuador	27.9	Colombia	17.3	Morocco	12.6	Peru	8.1
FR	Morocco	18.3	Algeria	13.1	Turkey	5.5	Tunisia	5.5
HR	Bosnia & Herzegovina	26.3	Argentina	9.5	Serbia	9.0	Chile	8.9
IT	Morocco	19.1	Albania	14.4	Romania	7.0	Egypt	4.2
CY	Greece	25.2	United Kingdom	15.2	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	13.8	Russia	7.8
LV	Recognised non-citizen ⁵	96.0	Russia	2.0	Ukraine	0.5	Belarus	0.5
LT	Stateless*	56.7	Russia	25.2	Ukraine	9.1	Belarus	4.7
LU	Portugal	31.9	Belgium	13.2	Italy	12.5	France	9.2
HU	Romania	76.2	Tanzania	10.6	Serbia	8.2	Slovakia	2.0
MT	Australia	46.9	United Kingdom	10.3	United States	6.5	Canada	4.7
NL	Morocco	23.9	Turkey	17.6	Suriname	3.3	Thailand	2.0
AT	Turkey	17.6	Bosnia & Herzegovina	17.5	Serbia	8.2	Croatia	5.4
PL	Ukraine	31.5	Belarus	10.9	Russia	7.4	Armenia	4.1
PT	Brazil	23.0	Cape Verde	15.1	Ukraine	10.1	Moldova	10.0
RO		:		:		:		:
SI	Bosnia & Herzegovina	35.8	Italy	11.5	Serbia	9.5	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	9.3
SK	Ukraine	22.4	Serbia	19.5	Czech Republic	16.5	Romania	6.6
FI	Russia	36.2	Estonia	6.6	Turkey	3.6	Iran	3.2
SE	Iraq	16.9	Finland	6.1	Poland	4.9	Thailand	4.2
UK	India	14.8	Pakistan	9.9	Nigeria	4.5	Philippines	4.0
IS	Poland	9.5	Philippines	9.5	Serbia	9.2	Thailand	7.3
LI	Switzerland	28.4	Austria	19.0	Germany	12.1	Italy	5.2
NO	Somalia	14.7	Afghanistan	8.8	Iraq	6.5	Stateless*	5.3
CH	Serbia	11.8	Italy	11.2	Germany	9.8	Portugal	6.1
MK	Albania	25.0	Serbia	20.4	Turkey	9.2	Germany	4.9

* A stateless person is someone who is not recognized as a citizen of any State

: Data not available

Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Ireland (IE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Croatia (HR), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT), Netherlands (NL), Austria (AT), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Slovenia (SI), Slovakia (SK), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE) and United Kingdom (UK).
Iceland (IS), Liechtenstein (LI), Norway (NO), Switzerland (CH) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MK).

1. **Citizenship** is the legal bond between an individual and a state, acquired by birth, naturalisation or other means according to national legislation. **Naturalisation** is the process by which a state grants its citizenship through a formal act on the application of the individual concerned. **Other ways** of granting citizenship may include spouses of nationals, minors adopted by nationals and descendants of nationals born abroad returning to the country of origin of their ancestors. Regulation 862/2007 Art 3.1(d) asks Member States to provide data on "persons having their usual residence in the territory of the Member State and having acquired during the reference year the citizenship of the Member State and having formerly held the citizenship of another Member State or a third country or having formerly been stateless, disaggregated by age and sex, and by the former citizenship of the persons concerned and by whether the person was formerly stateless".
2. The EU27 aggregates for 2011 and 2010 include 2009 data for Romania. Moreover, as the data presented in this News Release concern the year 2011, Croatia, which joined the EU on 1 July 2013, is not included in the EU aggregate.
3. See Statistics explained article on the Eurostat web site:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Acquisition_of_citizenship_statistics
4. The increase in Hungary is a consequence of the implementation of a new regulation simplifying the procedure and reducing the administrative burden regarding acquisition of citizenship.
5. A recognised non-citizen is a person who is neither a citizen of the reporting country nor of any other country, and who has established links to the reporting country which include some but not all rights and obligations of full citizenship. A majority of these persons were citizens of the former Soviet Union.

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