

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU

EU27 Member States granted citizenship to 696 000 persons in 2008

In 2008, 696 000 persons acquired citizenship¹ of an **EU27** Member State, compared with 707 000 in 2007. The new citizens in 2008 came mainly from **Africa** (29% of the total number of citizenships acquired), **non-EU27 Europe** (22%), **Asia** (19%) and **North and South America** (17%). Citizens of one EU27 Member State who acquired citizenship in another Member State accounted for 8% of the total.

These data on the acquisition of citizenship of the EU27 Member States are taken from a report² issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Highest number of citizenships per resident foreigner granted in Sweden and Portugal

In 2008, the highest number of citizenships were granted by **France** (137 000 persons), the **United Kingdom** (129 000) and **Germany** (94 000), which together accounted for over 50% of all citizenships granted by the EU27 Member States.

The number of citizenships granted can be related to the number of resident foreigners i.e. non-nationals resident in the Member State. The highest rates were registered in **Sweden** (54 citizenships granted per 1 000 resident foreigners), **Portugal** (51), **Poland** (48), **Finland** (47) and **Hungary** (43), and the lowest rates in the **Czech Republic** (3), **Ireland** and **Luxembourg** (both 6). The **EU27** average was 23 citizenships granted per 1 000 resident foreigners.

When compared with the population of each Member State, the highest rates of citizenship granted were recorded in **Sweden** (3.3 citizenships granted per 1 000 inhabitants), **Luxembourg** (2.5), **France**, **Portugal** and the **United Kingdom** (all 2.1). Ten Member States granted less than one citizenship per 1 000 inhabitants, with the lowest rate observed in **Poland**, followed by the **Czech Republic**, **Lithuania** and **Slovakia**. The **EU27** average was 1.4 citizenships granted per 1 000 inhabitants.

Most citizenships in the EU27 acquired by Moroccans, Turks and Ecuadorians

In 2008, the largest groups that acquired citizenship of an EU27 Member State were citizens of **Morocco** (64 000 persons), **Turkey** (50 000), **Ecuador** (27 000), **Algeria** (23 000) and **Iraq** (20 000). **France** granted 45% of all the citizenships acquired in the EU27 by **Moroccans**, **Germany** 49% of those acquired by **Turks**, **Spain** 93% of those acquired by **Ecuadorians**, **France** 88% of those acquired by **Algerians** and the **United Kingdom** 44% of those acquired by **Iraqis**.

In some Member States, a large part of the citizenships was granted to citizens from only one country. The Member States with the highest concentrations were **Romania** (89% of the new citizens had been citizens of **Moldova**), **Hungary** (68% came from **Romania**), **Greece** (59% from **Albania**) and **Bulgaria** (51% from the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**). In **Latvia** and **Estonia**, 96% and 92% respectively of the new citizens were **recognised non-citizens**³.

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU27, 2008

	Total number of citizenships acquired		Citizenships acquired per:	
	2007	2008	1 000 inhabitants	1 000 resident foreigners**
EU27*	707 110	695 880	1.4	23
Belgium	36 060	:	:	:
Bulgaria	5 970	7 140	0.9	:
Czech Republic	2 370	1 200	0.1	3
Denmark	3 650	6 020	1.1	19
Germany	113 030	94 470	1.2	13
Estonia	4 240	2 120	1.6	10
Ireland	4 650	3 250	0.7	6
Greece	3 920	16 920	1.5	18
Spain	71 940	84 170	1.8	15
France	132 000	137 320	2.1	37
Italy	45 490	53 700	0.9	14
Cyprus	2 780	:	:	:
Latvia	8 320	4 230	1.9	10
Lithuania	370	310	0.1	7
Luxembourg	1 240	1 220	2.5	6
Hungary	8 440	8 100	0.8	43
Malta	550	640	1.6	36
Netherlands	30 650	28 230	1.7	39
Austria	14 010	10 270	1.2	12
Poland	1 540	1 800	0.0	48
Portugal	:	22 410	2.1	51
Romania	30	5 590	0.3	:
Slovenia	1 550	1 690	0.8	24
Slovakia	1 480	480	0.1	9
Finland	4 820	6 680	1.3	47
Sweden	33 630	30 460	3.3	54
United Kingdom	164 540	129 260	2.1	31
Croatia	13 240	7 570	1.7	:
Iceland	650	910	2.9	37
Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	1 710	1 140	0.6	:
Turkey	4 360	5 970	0.1	:
Norway	14 880	10 310	2.1	34
Switzerland	43 890	44 370	5.8	27

* Includes estimates for Member States for which data are not available.

** Data on foreign population are not available or fully comparable for Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

: Data not available

Largest groups acquiring citizenship in the EU27 Member States, 2008

	Largest group			Second largest group			Third largest group		
	Previous citizens of	#	%	Previous citizens of	#	%	Previous citizens of	#	%
EU27*	Morocco	63 823	9.2	Turkey	49 546	7.1	Ecuador	27 322	3.9
BE	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
BG	Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	3 637	50.9	Moldova	2 463	34.5	Serbia	252	3.5
CZ	Ukraine	397	33.0	Kazakhstan	122	10.1	Slovakia	116	9.6
DK	Iraq	1 170	19.4	Turkey	588	9.8	Somalia	527	8.8
DE	Turkey	24 449	25.9	Serbia	6 267	6.6	Poland	4 245	4.5
EE	Rec. non-citizen ³	1 950	91.8	Russia	149	7.0	Ukraine	16	0.8
IE	Nigeria	319	9.8	Pakistan	196	6.0	India	163	5.0
EL	Albania	9 996	59.1	Georgia	1 285	7.6	Russia	834	4.9
ES	Ecuador	25 536	30.3	Colombia	15 408	18.3	Morocco	8 615	10.2
FR	Morocco	28 699	20.9	Algeria	20 256	14.8	Turkey	10 202	7.4
IT	Morocco	9 156	17.1	Albania	4 546	8.5	Romania	2 857	5.3
CY	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
LV	Rec. non-citizen ³	4 077	96.4	Russia	93	2.2	Ukraine	24	0.6
LT	Stateless**	149	48.1	Russia	104	33.5	Ukraine	17	5.5
LU	Portugal	293	24.1	Italy	109	9.0	Serbia & Montenegro***	81	6.7
HU	Romania	5 535	68.3	Ukraine	857	10.6	Serbia & Montenegro***	758	9.4
MT	Australia	226	35.1	United Kingdom	110	17.1	USA	44	6.8
NL	Morocco	5 034	17.8	Turkey	3 147	11.1	Suriname	1 006	3.6
AT	Serbia	2 582	25.1	Bosnia & Herzegovina	2 207	21.5	Turkey	1 664	16.2
PL	Ukraine	587	32.6	Belarus	238	13.2	Russia	107	5.9
PT	Cape Verde	6 013	26.8	Brazil	4 080	18.2	Guinea Bissau	2 754	12.3
RO	Moldova	4 967	88.9	USA	85	1.5	Turkey	54	1.0
SI	Serbia	551	32.6	Bosnia & Herzegovina	481	28.4	Croatia	238	14.1
SK	Ukraine	181	37.9	Czech Republic	90	18.8	Vietnam	37	7.7
FI	Russia	2 211	33.1	Somalia	595	8.9	Iraq	379	5.7
SE	Iraq	4 224	13.9	Finland	2 535	8.3	Bosnia & Herzegovina	1 764	5.8
UK	India	11 825	9.1	Pakistan	9 440	7.3	Iraq	8 890	6.9
HR	Bosnia & Herzegovina	3 539	46.7	Serbia	747	9.9	Australia	722	9.5
IS	Poland	164	17.9	Philippines	126	13.8	Serbia	107	11.7
MK	Serbia	656	57.8	Albania	150	13.2	Bosnia & Herzegovina	56	4.9
TR	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
NO	Somalia	1 315	12.8	Iraq	1 072	10.4	Afghanistan	877	8.5
CH	Serbia & Montenegro***	10 272	23.2	Italy	4 921	11.1	Germany	3 022	6.8

: Data not available.

* Includes estimates for Member States for which data are not available.

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

*** Data refer to Serbia & Montenegro, which existed between 2003 and 2006.

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.
2. **Eurostat**, Statistics in Focus, 36/2010 "**Acquisitions of citizenship slightly declining in the EU**", available free of charge in pdf format on the Eurostat web site.
3. A majority of these persons were citizens of the former Soviet Union. 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.

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