Migrant integration statistics - overview

Data extracted in April 2015. Most recent data: Further Eurostat information, Main tables and Database.

This article provides an introduction to the European Union (EU) statistics on the integration of migrants. Migrants' integration is measured in terms of employment, health, education, social inclusion and active citizenship in the hosting country. A detailed analysis of integration indicators (except those on 'health' and 'active citizenship') can be found in a series of specific articles. The 'health' and 'active citizenship' indicators include a slightly more in-depth analysis within this article, pending the availability of dedicated articles in Statistics Explained.

In order to achieve better comparability among EU Member States, the 2010 Zaragoza declaration agreed on a set of common indicators which were further developed in the study Indicators of immigrant integration — a pilot study of 2011. Apart from the existing Zaragoza indicators, this article also discusses new indicators, as proposed by the report Using EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration — final report prepared for DG Migration and Home Affairs of 2013, with the objective of boosting the monitoring and assessment of the situation of migrants, along with the relative outcomes of integration policies.

Main statistical findings

Employment

The employment of migrants is measured through a series of Zaragoza indicators which are:

- the unemployment rate;
- employment rate;
- the activity rate;
- self-employment; and
- the over-qualification rate.

Three additional employment-related indicators — a subset of the new indicators proposed in the report 'Using EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration' — are also used:

- temporary employment;
- part-time employment; and
- long-term unemployment.

Statistics on migrant employment are based on the Labour force survey (LFS).

A statistical analysis of the employment situation of migrants can be read in the article Migrant integration statistics - employment.

Table 1: Shares in the total and the foreign-born population aged 20–64, perceiving their health status as 'good', 2009–11
(%)
Source: Eurostat (EU-SILC)

Table 2: Share of residents in EU Member States having acquired citizenship, by former citizenship, 2009–13
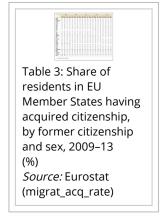(%)
Source: Eurostat (migrat_acq_rate)

Health

The health situation of migrants is measured via the Zaragoza 'Self-reported health status'. However most EU Member States could not provide reliable aggregated data for the foreign population or could not provide such data at all. A range of new indicators have been proposed and allow for a better assessment of the situation. They are:

- self-reported unmet need for medical care;
- life expectancy; and
- healthy life years.

With the exception of the 'life expectancy' indicator, which is calculated from demographic data, all indicators are measured through the EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) survey.

At the EU-28 level, for the years 2009–11, the share of the foreign-born population perceiving their health as 'good' was equivalent to that of the total population (Table 1). Taking into account only the EU Member States for which the data are reliable for the year 2011 (Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Portugal and Slovakia), significant differences were observed in the shares of 'good' self-perceived health of the foreign-born population compared with the share of the total population. The largest difference in favour of the total population was observed in Latvia (55 % of the total population vs 37 % of the foreign-born population) although low ratings in such self-measurement results should be interpreted with caution. Differences of the order of + 10 percentage points (pp) in favour of the total population were seen in Bulgaria (+ 12 pp), Austria (+ 10 pp) and Slovakia (+ 9 pp). Differences of the order of + 10 pp in favour of the foreign population were seen in Malta (+ 11 pp), Portugal (+ 10 pp) and Hungary (+ 9 pp). Overall, the differences in the EU Member States seemed to balance each other out and result in almost equivalent shares at the EU-28 level.

Table 3: Share of residents in EU Member States having acquired citizenship, by former citizenship and sex, 2009–13 (%)
Source: Eurostat (migrat_acq_rate)

Education

Education, as a measure of migrant integration, is currently evaluated using the following existing Zaragoza indicators:

- educational attainment;
- tertiary;
- early school leaving; and
- language skills of non-native speakers.

These indicators are based on the core (regular) annual LFS data collection, except for the indicator 'language skills of non-native speakers' for which data are not yet available.

Two additional LFS indicators [1] are also currently being used:

- participation in lifelong learning; and
- not in education, employment or training (NEET).

A detailed look at the issue of migrant education is provided in the article Migrant integration statistics - education.

Social inclusion

As for other topics of migrant integration, the analysis of social inclusion is carried out both through the existing Zaragoza indicators and a set of additional proposed indicators. The Zaragoza indicators are:

- median net income;
- persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion;
- at-risk-of-poverty rate; and
- property ownership.

The new proposed indicators are:

- child poverty;
- housing cost overburden;
- overcrowding;
- in-work poverty risk; and
- persistent poverty risk.

However, Eurostat also puts forward two possible additional indicators:

- severe material deprivation rate; and
- people living in households with very low work intensity.

The social inclusion indicators for migrant integration are all based on the EU-SILC survey. A detailed look at the issue of social inclusion of migrants is provided in the article Migration integration statistics - at risk of poverty and social exclusion while a detailed analysis of the housing situation of migrants is presented in the article Migrant integration statistics - housing.

Active citizenship

Two Zaragoza indicators are dedicated to assessing active citizenship:

- naturalisation rate [2]; and
- the share of long-term residence.

From 2009 to 2013, the share of non-EU citizens having acquired an EU citizenship, although generally quite low, varied substantially, between EU Member States (Table 2). Citizen acquisition is considered an important integration factor since naturalised foreign and non-EU citizens are better integrated in the labour market and society in general. It should be noted that the numbers of citizen acquisition by foreign citizens were generally higher than for non-EU citizens across all EU Member States (an observation that applies to the entire 2009–13 period).

In 2013, the five leading EU Member States in terms of citizenship acquisition by non-EU citizens were Sweden (5.7 %), Portugal (5.6 %), Spain (4.3 %), Ireland (4.1 %) and Finland (4.0 %). However, the evolution of their shares varied substantially between EU Member States. Whereas the shares of citizenship acquisition were relatively stable in Portugal from 2009 to 2013 (5.4 % versus 5.6 %), the share in Sweden increased by almost 2 percentage points (pp) (from 3.9 % to 5.7 %), almost doubled in Finland (2.1 % versus 4.0 %), almost tripled in Spain (1.5 % versus 4.3 %) and quadrupled in Ireland (0.7 % versus 4.1 %).

At the bottom end of the scale, Luxembourg and Slovakia (both 0.2 %), the Czech Republic and Denmark (both 0.4 %), Cyprus and Lithuania (both 0.2 %) were the EU Member States with the smallest share of citizen acquisitions by non-EU citizens in 2013. These low figures were generally stable from 2009 to 2013, except for Denmark and Cyprus, where shares declined substantially (from 2.0 % to 0.4 % and 1.4 % to 0.5 % respectively).

Looking at the figures by sex, it appears that from 2009 to 2013 — in most EU Member States — relatively more non-EU women acquired an EU citizenship than men (Table 3). The only EU Member States where the reverse was true in 2013 were Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Italy and Latvia, whereas the shares were identical in Denmark, Germany, France, Cyprus and Luxembourg. However, generally the difference in shares of women and men having acquired an EU citizenship in individual EU Member States tended to be relatively small (generally not more than 1 pp). Echoing the figures for the foreign population, the figures by sex indicate that the number of citizen acquisitions by foreign citizens were generally higher than for non-EU citizens. Interestingly, the women/men ratio in terms of citizenship acquisition by the non-EU population was replicated almost identically in the foreign population of the EU Member States.

Data sources and availability

For the purpose of this article and the topical articles the following terms are being used to describe various migrant groups.

For the population by country of birth:

- Native-born: the population born in the reporting country;
- Foreign-born: the population born outside the reporting country;
- EU-born: the population born in the EU, except the reporting country; and
- Non-EU-born: the population born outside the EU.

For the population by citizenship:

- Nationals: the citizens of the reporting country;
- Foreign citizens: the non-citizens of the reporting country;
- EU citizens: the citizens of the EU Member States, except the reporting country; and
- Non-EU citizens: the citizens of non-EU Member States.

Data used for the indicators on migrant integration come mainly from the EU labour force survey or EU-LFS (e.g. employment and education indicators) and the EU statistics on income and living conditions survey (for social inclusion and health) or EU-SILC, complemented by administrative data sources such as population registers, registers of foreigners, and registers of residence or work permits (for naturalisation rates). Migrant indicators are calculated for two broad groups of the migrant population:

- the foreign population by country of birth (COB); and
- the foreign population by country of citizenship (COC).

Foreign population by country of birth is the population most commonly described as migrants, as these persons have migrated to their current country of residence at some stage during their lives. It includes persons with foreign citizenship as well as persons with the citizenship of their country of residence, either from birth or acquired later in life.

Foreign population by country of citizenship are foreign citizens residing in the EU Member States and EFTA countries. As citizens of another country, the members of this group are in a different situation than nationals with regard to their legal rights. This is particularly the case for non-EU citizens (third-country nationals). Persons in this group may have migrated into their country of current residence or may have been born there. The data analyses in the articles on migrant integration are performed either by country of birth or country of citizenship, based on data availability and reliability per case. The data are generally presented for the following age categories:

- **20–64**: this group has been selected because it is relevant to the first Europe 2020 target (employment of 75 % of this population by 2020);
- **25–54**: this is considered as the most appropriate group for the analysis of the situation of migrants of working age, as it minimises the effect of migration for non-economic reasons (e.g. study or retirement) and forms a more homogeneous group, large enough to produce reliable results; and
- **55–64**: this age group focuses on the older migrants — caution is however needed for the interpretation of the results, due to small sample sizes.

Additionally Eurostat produces statistics on a range of migrant integration issues such as education, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.

Migration statistics

EU migration statistics are collected on an annual basis and are supplied to Eurostat by the national statistical authorities of the EU Member States. Since 2008 the collection of data has been based on Regulation 862/2007. This defines a core set of statistics on international migration flows, population stocks of foreigners, the acquisition of citizenship, residence permits, asylum and measures against illegal entry and stay. Although EU Member States may continue to use any appropriate data according to national availability and practice, the statistics collected under the Regulation must be based on common definitions and concepts.

Most EU Member States base their statistics on administrative data sources such as population registers, registers of foreigners, registers of residence or work permits. Some EU Member States use sample surveys or estimation methods to produce migration statistics.

More specifically, the data on the acquisition of citizenship are produced from administrative systems and provided to Eurostat by the EU Member States on an annual basis through the Joint Annual Migration Data Questionnaire. Residence permits data are also collected annually from administrative sources.

As regards the dimensions of employment and education, the data are based on the results of the EU-LFS. The EU-SILC covers topics relevant to social inclusion: people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, income distribution and monetary poverty, living conditions and material deprivation. The EU-SILC also provides data on the health status of the foreign population, in the form of 'self-perceived health status'. However, the available data are limited and in many cases unreliable, due to the various practices followed at the national level for the inclusion of foreign population in the survey.

The EU labour force survey (EU-LFS)

The EU labour force survey (LFS) is a large quarterly sample survey that covers the resident population aged 15 and above in private households in the EU, EFTA (except Liechtenstein) and candidate countries. It provides detailed quarterly data on employment and unemployment, broken down along many dimensions, including age, gender and educational attainment. Regulations set by the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission define how the LFS is carried out, whereas some countries have their own national legislation for the implementation of this survey. The LFS is an important source of information on the structure and trends of the EU labour market.

EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC)

The EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) survey is the main source for the compilation of statistics on income, social inclusion and living conditions. It provides comparable micro data on income, poverty, social exclusion, housing, labour, education and health. EU-SILC is implemented in the EU Member States, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. It provides two types of annual data: cross-sectional data pertaining to a given time or a certain time period with variables on income, poverty, social exclusion and other living conditions and longitudinal data pertaining to individual-level changes over time, observed periodically over a four-year period.

The LFS 2014 ad hoc module on the labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants

The LFS 2014 ad hoc module on the labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants is an improvement of the LFS 2008 ad hoc module on the labour market situation of migrants, aiming at boosting

the quality of the data, and in particular the cross-country comparability and implementability of the module. The target population of the LFS 2014 ad hoc module consists of all persons aged 15–64. The ad hoc module variables will be collected for all persons in the household in the target group age. The collection of data on the country of birth of the father and the mother will enable the identification of second-generation migrants. Other variables of the LFS 2014 ad hoc module relevant to the migrant integration indicators are:

- level of educational attainment of the parents;
- over-qualification information;
- obstacles to getting suitable jobs; and
- language skills in the host country language and participation in language courses.

Data sources: advantages and limitations

As already mentioned, the production of migrant integration indicators is generally based on sample surveys or on population registers/registers of resident foreign citizens. A key advantage is the exploitation of data from the EU-LFS and EU-SILC. Both surveys are highly harmonised and optimised for comparability. However, for both types of data sources (administrative and survey data) there are certain limitations.

With regard to survey data, limitations arise with respect to the coverage of migrant populations. By design, both the EU-LFS and EU-SILC target the whole resident population and not specifically the migrants. Coverage issues of survey data arise in the following cases:

- Recently arrived migrants: this group of migrants is missing from the sampling frame in every hosting country resulting in under-coverage of the actual migrant population in the EU-LFS and EU-SILC.
- Collective households: the EU-SILC only covers private households. Persons living in collective households and in institutions for asylum seekers and migrant workers are excluded from the target population. This also results in under-coverage of migrants in the survey.
- Non-response of migrant population: a significant disadvantage of the surveys is the fact that a high percentage of the migrant population does not respond to them. This may be due to language difficulties, misunderstanding of the purpose of each survey, arduousness in communicating with the interviewer, and fear on behalf of migrants of a possible negative impact on their authorisation to remain in the country after participating in the surveys.
- Sample size: given the nature of the EU-LFS and EU-SILC as sample surveys, these cannot fully capture the characteristics of migrants in EU Member States with very low migrant populations.
- Information on country of citizenship and country of birth: this information is asked from all persons in private households sampled in the EU-LFS, whilst in the EU-SILC this information is collected only for those aged 16 and over, resulting in an under-estimation of the number of migrants by country of citizenship and country of birth.

With regard to administrative data, one main problem refers to the comparability of the data used to estimate migrant integration indicators. The administrative data sources are not harmonised and there are also variations in methods and definitions. For example, some countries produce estimates for the migrant population to account for non-response, while others leave this problem untreated. Coverage gaps are reported by certain EU Member States with regard to some types of excluded international migrants (e.g. asylum seekers). In other cases, there are significant numbers of departed migrants uncovered by the registration systems.

Context

Policy background

The continued development and integration of the European migration policy remains a key priority in order to meet the challenges and harness the opportunities that migration represents globally. The integration of third-country nationals legally living in the EU Member States has gained increasing importance in the European agenda in recent years.

The origins of the integration of the European migration policy can be traced back to the Tampere Programme (1999) focusing, among other issues, on the closely related topic of asylum and migration. In 2002, following a request from the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council to establish National Contact Points on Integration, the European Council of June 2003 invited the European Commission to publish 'Annual reports on migration and integration'. The Brussels European Council conclusions of November 2004 on The Hague Programme and the Thessaloniki European Council conclusions of June 2003 called upon the importance to establish 'Common basic principles' for the immigrant integration policy.

In addition, in 2005 the European Commission adopted the Communication 'A common agenda for integration — Framework for the integration of third-country nationals in the European Union' (COM(2005) 389 final) with the aim of providing its first response to the European Council's request of establishing a coherent European framework for integration. The cornerstones of the framework are proposals for concrete measures with a view of putting in place the 'Common basic principles' through a series of supportive EU mechanisms.

Furthermore, the Commission Communication of 3 March 2010 entitled 'Europe 2020, a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' emphasised the need for establishing a new agenda for migrant integration in order to enable them to take full advantage of their potential.

Finally, in July 2011, the Commission proposed a 'European agenda for the integration of third-country nationals', focusing on actions to increase economic, social, cultural and political participation by migrants and emphasising local action. This new agenda highlights challenges that need to be addressed if the EU is willing to fully benefit from the potential offered by migration and the value of diversity. It also explores the role of countries of origin in the integration process. A Commission Staff Working Paper (SEC(2011)957) is annexed to the Communication and contains a list of EU initiatives supporting the integration of third-country nationals.

Measuring migrant integration

With regard to the measurement of migrant integration, the Stockholm Programme for the period 2010–14 (2009) embraced the development of core indicators in a limited number of relevant policy areas (e.g. employment, education and social inclusion) for the monitoring of the results of integration policies, in order to increase the comparability of national experiences and reinforce the European learning process.

The 2010 European Ministerial Conference on Integration which took place in Zaragoza, resulted in the Zaragoza Declaration which called upon the European Commission to undertake a pilot study examining proposals for

common integration indicators and reporting on the availability and quality of the data from agreed harmonised sources necessary for the calculation of these indicators. The proposals in the pilot study were further examined, developed and elaborated in a project which delivered the recently published report 'Using EU indicators of immigrant integration'. The existing and proposed indicators are largely based on this report.

Legislative background

There is a strong link between integration and migration policies since successful integration is necessary for maximising the economic and social benefits of immigration for individuals as well as societies. EU legislation provides a common legal framework regarding the conditions of entry and stay and a common set of rights for certain categories of migrants. So far, eight directives have been adopted:

- Directive 2014/36/EU on the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals for the purpose of employment as seasonal workers;
- Directive 2014/66/EU on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer;
- Directive 2011/98/EU on a single application procedure for a single permit to reside and work in the EU and on a common set of rights for third-country workers;
- Directive 2009/50/EC concerning the admission of highly skilled migrants;
- Directive 2005/71/EC for the facilitation of the admission of researchers into the EU;
- Directive 2004/114/EC on the admission of students;
- Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification;
- Directive 2003/109/EC on a long-term resident status for non-member nationals.

Finally, the European Commission has also presented a proposal for a new directive:

- Proposal COM/2013/151 finalProposal COM/2013/151 final for a Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing.

EU instruments to promote integration

The EU has targeted the promotion of immigrant integration and for this reason has established actors, institutions and instruments to promote such integration: the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, Ministerial Conferences, National Contact Points on Integration, the European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals, the European Integration Forum, the European website on integration, handbooks on integration, European integration modules, etc.

See also

- All articles on asylum and migration
- Migrant integration statistics - online publication

Further Eurostat information

Publications

- EU Member States granted citizenship to almost 1 million persons in 2013 - News Release 119/2015
- EU Member states granted citizenship to more than 800 000 persons in 2010 - Statistics in focus 45/2012
- Migrants in Europe, A statistical portrait of the first and second generation, 2011 edition
- Indicators of immigrant integration - a pilot study

Database

The indicators of integration of migrants are presented for four main areas:

- Employment (mii_emp), see:

Activity rates (mii_act)
Unemployment (mii_une)
Employment and self-employment (mii_em)

- Education (mii_educ), see:

Participation in lifelong learning of population aged 18+ (mii_trng)
Young people by educational and labour status (incl. neither in employment nor in education and training — NEET) (mii_edatt0)
Distribution of the population by educational attainment level (mii_edata)
Early leavers from education and training (mii_edatt1)

- Social inclusion (mii_soinc), see:

Income distribution and monetary poverty (mii_ip)
People at risk of poverty and social exclusion (mii_pe)
Living condition (mii_lc)
Material deprivation (mii_md)

- Active citizenship (mii_actctz), see:

Long-term residents among all non-EU citizens holding residence permits by citizenship on 31 December (%) (migr_resshare)
Residents who acquired citizenship as a share of resident non-citizens by former citizenship and sex (%) (migr_acqs)

Dedicated section

- Migrant integration

Methodology / Metadata

- Acquisition and loss of citizenship (ESMS metadata file — migr_acqn_esms)
- Educational attainment and outcomes of education (ESMS metadata file — edat_esms)
- Income and living conditions, incl. self-perceived health (ESMS metadata file — ilc_esms)
- LFS series - Detailed annual survey results (ESMS metadata file — lfsa_esms)
- People at risk of poverty or social exclusion (ESMS metadata file — Indicator profile)

- Residence permits (ESMS metadata file — migr_res)

Source data for tables and figures (MS Excel)

- Migrants integration — Overview 📊

Other information

External links

- European Commission - DG Migration and Home Affairs - Migrant integration
- European website on integration
- ILO - Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)
- OECD - Indicators for the Integration of Migrants and their Children (PDF download)
- The 2010 Zaragoza Declaration
- Using EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration - final report prepared for DG Migration and Home Affairs (PDF download)

Notes

1. ↑ The report 'Using EU indicators of immigrant integration' (2013) also includes other indicators based on the PISA survey which focuses on the 15-year-old student population.
2. ↑ The share of foreign citizens that have acquired citizenship is the ratio between the number of residents who acquired citizenship in a country during a calendar year and the total number of resident foreign citizens in that country at the beginning of the year. This indicator is commonly referred to as 'naturalisation rate', even if this terminology may be misleading since the acquisitions considered are all modes of acquisitions in force in each country, and not only naturalisations (residence-based acquisitions requiring an application by the person concerned).

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