

Acquisitions of citizenship slightly declining in the EU

The number of people acquiring citizenship of an EU Member State declined for the second consecutive year in 2008 after rising for more than eight years. The decline, roughly 2%, was smaller than that recorded for 2007 (around 4%). The total number of acquisitions recorded in the EU in 2008 was slightly below 700 000.

The highest number of acquisitions was recorded in France, the United Kingdom and Germany. These three countries accounted for more than 50% of the EU total. While France recorded a moderate increase compared with 2007, the other two countries granted over 20% fewer citizenships in 2008.

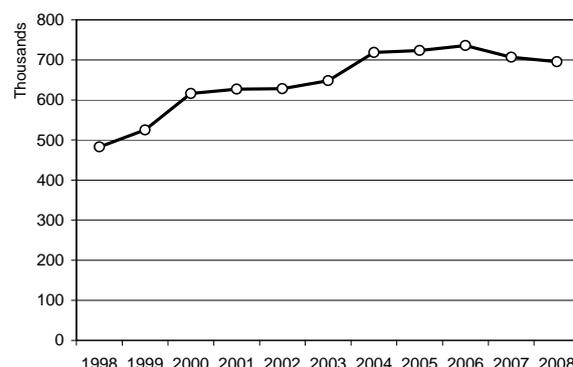
Sweden was the country with the highest number of acquisitions per inhabitant in the EU, followed by Luxembourg, France and the United Kingdom. Sweden was also the country with the highest number of new citizenships granted in relation to the size of the resident foreign population.

As in most recent years, Moroccans and Turks represented the largest groups among those who became citizens of an EU Member State with 9% and 7% of the EU total respectively.

France, United Kingdom and Germany granted half of all new citizenships in the European Union

For the second consecutive year the total number of acquisitions of citizenship has decreased in the European Union in 2008, to a level slightly below 700 000. This corresponds to a decrease of roughly 2% with respect to the number recorded in 2007, which was 4% lower than for 2006.

Figure 1: Total acquisitions of citizenship in the EU-27

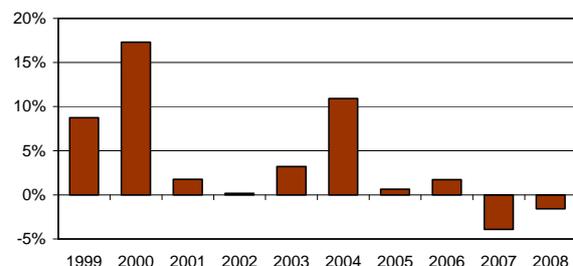


Figures include Eurostat estimates

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

A significant decrease in new citizenships granted by the United Kingdom and Germany (respectively -21% and -16%) was not counterbalanced completely by the increases recorded in Italy (18%), Spain (17%), and France (4%). Some Member States, particularly Greece, Portugal and Romania, saw a high increase in the number of citizenships granted, mostly due to changes and simplifications introduced in their respective nationality laws.

Figure 2: Total acquisitions of citizenship in the EU-27, relative change on previous year



Figures include Eurostat estimates

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

Table 1: Acquisitions of citizenship, 1998-2008

| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| EU-27 ^s | 483 047 | 525 272 | 616 127 | 627 032 | 628 164 | 648 201 | 718 937 | 723 501 | 735 928 | 707 107 | 695 875 |
| Belgium | : | 24 196 | : | 62 160 | 46 417 | 33 709 | 34 754 | 31 512 | 31 860 | 36 063 | : |
| Bulgaria | : | : | : | : | 3 544 | 4 382 | 5 783 | 5 882 | 6 738 | 5 966 | 7 140 |
| Czech Republic | : | 7 309 | : | : | 3 261 | 2 199 | 5 020 | 2 626 | 2 346 | 2 371 | 1 204 |
| Denmark | 10 262 | 12 416 | 18 811 | 11 902 | 17 300 | 6 583 | 14 976 | 10 197 | 7 961 | 3 648 | 6 022 |
| Germany | 106 790 | 143 120 | 186 688 | 180 349 | 154 547 | 140 737 | 127 153 | 117 241 | 124 566 | 113 030 | 94 470 |
| Estonia | 9 969 | 4 534 | 3 425 | 3 090 | 4 091 | 3 706 | 6 543 | 7 072 | 4 781 | 4 242 | 2 124 |
| Ireland | 1 474 | 1 433 | 1 143 | 2 817 | : | 3 993 | 3 784 | 4 079 | 5 763 | 4 649 | 3 245 |
| Greece | 807 | : | : | : | : | 1 896 | 1 425 | 1 711 | 1 962 | 3 921 | 16 922 |
| Spain | 12 550 | 16 384 | 16 743 | 16 743 | 21 805 | 26 517 | 38 220 | 42 860 | 62 375 | 71 936 | 84 170 |
| France | 81 449 | 94 002 | : | : | 92 552 | 139 938 | 168 826 | 154 827 | 147 868 | 132 002 | 137 320 |
| Italy | : | : | : | : | : | 13 406 | 19 140 | 28 659 | 35 266 | 45 485 | 53 696 |
| Cyprus | : | 97 | 296 | : | 126 | 247 | 4 534 | 3 952 | 2 917 | 2 780 | : |
| Latvia | : | 12 914 | 13 482 | 9 947 | 9 421 | 9 951 | 17 178 | 20 106 | 18 964 | 8 322 | 4 230 |
| Lithuania | 562 | 567 | 490 | 507 | 504 | 471 | 610 | 435 | 467 | 371 | 310 |
| Luxembourg | 631 | 549 | 684 | 496 | 754 | 785 | 841 | 954 | 1 128 | 1 236 | 1 215 |
| Hungary | 6 203 | 6 066 | 5 393 | 8 590 | 3 369 | 5 261 | 5 432 | 9 870 | 6 101 | 8 442 | 8 104 |
| Malta | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | 474 | 553 | 644 |
| Netherlands | 59 173 | 62 090 | 49 968 | 46 667 | 45 321 | 28 799 | 26 171 | 28 488 | 29 089 | 30 653 | 28 229 |
| Austria | 17 786 | : | 24 320 | 31 731 | 36 011 | 44 694 | 41 645 | 34 876 | 25 746 | 14 010 | 10 268 |
| Poland | : | : | : | 1 070 | 1 182 | 1 653 | 1 937 | 2 866 | 1 064 | 1 542 | 1 802 |
| Portugal | 519 | 1 228 | 1 625 | 2 217 | 2 704 | 2 435 | 2 855 | 2 981 | 4 447 | : | 22 408 |
| Romania | : | 247 | : | 363 | 242 | 139 | 282 | 767 | 29 | 31 | 5 585 |
| Slovenia | 3 321 | 2 337 | 2 102 | 1 346 | 2 808 | 3 306 | 3 333 | 2 684 | 3 204 | 1 551 | 1 691 |
| Slovakia | : | : | : | 2 886 | 3 484 | 3 492 | 4 016 | 1 393 | 1 125 | 1 478 | 478 |
| Finland | 4 017 | 4 730 | 2 977 | 2 720 | 3 049 | 4 526 | 6 880 | 5 683 | 4 433 | 4 824 | 6 682 |
| Sweden | 46 520 | 37 777 | 43 474 | 36 399 | 37 792 | 33 222 | 28 893 | 39 573 | 51 239 | 33 629 | 30 461 |
| United Kingdom | 53 934 | 54 902 | 82 210 | 89 785 | 120 125 | 130 535 | 148 275 | 161 755 | 154 015 | 164 540 | 129 255 |
| Croatia | : | : | : | : | : | 12 654 | 8 940 | : | 12 292 | 13 240 | 7 571 |
| Iceland | 352 | 288 | 328 | 423 | 434 | : | : | : | : | 647 | 914 |
| FYR of Macedonia | : | : | 2 048 | 1 700 | 1 914 | : | 2 625 | 2 660 | 2 147 | 1 713 | 1 135 |
| Turkey | : | : | : | : | : | 24 785 | 8 238 | 6 901 | 5 072 | 4 359 | 5 968 |
| Liechtenstein | : | 567 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Norway | 9 244 | 7 988 | 9 474 | 10 838 | 9 041 | 7 867 | 8 154 | 12 655 | 11 955 | 14 877 | 10 312 |
| Switzerland | 21 277 | 20 363 | 28 700 | 27 583 | 36 515 | 35 427 | 35 685 | 38 437 | 46 711 | 43 889 | 44 365 |

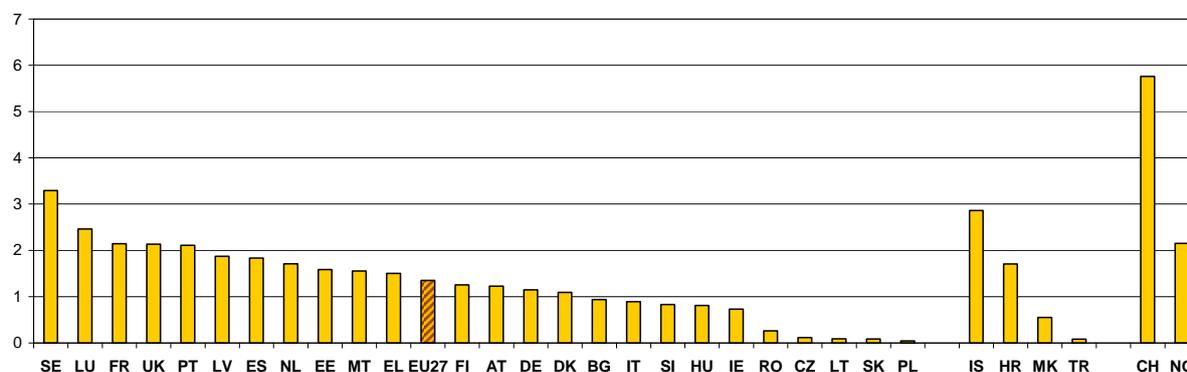
s: Eurostat estimates

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

In absolute terms, France, the UK and Germany granted the highest number of new citizenships. Since 2002 these three countries have always been the top three, but their contribution to the EU-27 total has decreased from an average of 60% over the period 2002-2007 to slightly more than 50% in 2008.

Relative to the resident population, Sweden and Luxembourg were the EU countries which granted the highest number of citizenships per inhabitant. In both cases, however, the ratio per thousand inhabitants recorded in 2008 was lower than in 2007 (a decline from 3.7 to 3.3 for Sweden, and from 2.6 to 2.5 for Luxembourg).

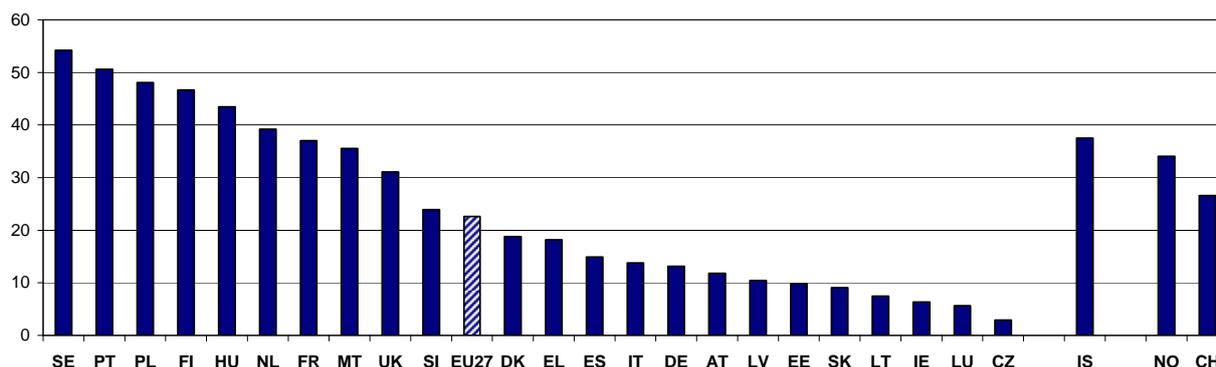
Figure 3: Acquisitions of citizenship per thousand inhabitants, 2008



Data not available for BE, CY and LI

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#), [migr_pop1ctz](#))

Figure 4: Acquisitions of citizenship per thousand non-nationals, 2008



BG, RO, HR and TR are excluded because the available data on foreign population stocks are not fully comparable
Data not available for BE, CY, MK and LI

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#), [migr_pop1ctz](#))

Outside the EU-27 a very high number of new citizenships per thousand inhabitants was granted by Switzerland (approximately 5.8, the same value as for 2007). Also Iceland, Norway and Croatia granted a relatively high number of new citizenships, above the EU-27 average.

Particularly relevant is the ratio between the total number of new citizenships granted by each country and the size of the resident foreign population. The average for the EU-27 was slightly more than 23 acquisitions per thousand foreigners in 2008, a value 2% lower than that recorded for 2007. The countries with the highest ratios were Sweden and Portugal, with more than 50 acquisitions per thousand foreigners. The ratio for Sweden, while still the highest within the EU-27, has been decreasing over the last few years. The figure recorded in 2008 was 20% lower than for 2007 and about half of what was recorded in 2006.

At EU level, more than 90% of those who acquired citizenship of a Member State were previously citizens of non-EU countries. This is true for almost all Member States, with very few exceptions. Only in two cases was the majority of new citizenships granted to citizens of another EU Member State: in Hungary (72%) and Luxembourg (56%). In the case of Hungary this was largely due to persons of Romanian citizenship. In the case of Luxembourg, the persons were citizens of Portugal, Italy, Belgium or Germany.

In absolute terms the main groups of citizens of an EU Member State who became citizens of another Member State were Portuguese becoming citizens of France (7 778 persons), Romanians becoming

citizens of Hungary (5 535 persons), and Poles becoming citizens of Germany (4 245 persons).

Table 2: Acquisitions of citizenship by group of previous citizenship, 2008

| | Total | EU-27 Member States | | Non EU-27 Member States | |
|--------------------|---------|---------------------|------|-------------------------|-------|
| | | | (%) | | (%) |
| EU-27 ^a | 695 875 | 59 449 | 8.5 | 636 426 | 91.5 |
| Belgium | : | : | : | : | : |
| Bulgaria | 7 140 | 26 | 0.4 | 7 114 | 99.6 |
| Czech Republic | 1 204 | 278 | 23.1 | 926 | 76.9 |
| Denmark | 6 022 | 357 | 5.9 | 5 665 | 94.1 |
| Germany | 94 470 | 14 029 | 14.9 | 80 441 | 85.1 |
| Estonia | 2 124 | 1 | 0.0 | 2 123 | 100.0 |
| Ireland | 3 245 | 199 | 6.1 | 3 046 | 93.9 |
| Greece | 16 922 | 449 | 2.7 | 16 473 | 97.3 |
| Spain | 84 170 | 1 404 | 1.7 | 82 766 | 98.3 |
| France | 137 320 | 12 475 | 9.1 | 124 845 | 90.9 |
| Italy | 53 696 | 6 402 | 11.9 | 47 294 | 88.1 |
| Cyprus | : | : | : | : | : |
| Latvia | 4 230 | 8 | 0.2 | 4 222 | 99.8 |
| Lithuania | 310 | 1 | 0.3 | 309 | 99.7 |
| Luxembourg | 1 215 | 683 | 56.2 | 532 | 43.8 |
| Hungary | 8 104 | 5 829 | 71.9 | 2 275 | 28.1 |
| Malta | 644 | 186 | 28.9 | 458 | 71.1 |
| Netherlands | 28 229 | 1 679 | 5.9 | 26 550 | 94.1 |
| Austria | 10 268 | 854 | 8.3 | 9 414 | 91.7 |
| Poland | 1 802 | 190 | 10.5 | 1 612 | 89.5 |
| Portugal | 22 408 | 353 | 1.6 | 22 055 | 98.4 |
| Romania | 5 585 | 96 | 1.7 | 5 489 | 98.3 |
| Slovenia | 1 691 | 142 | 8.4 | 1 549 | 91.6 |
| Slovakia | 478 | 142 | 29.7 | 336 | 70.3 |
| Finland | 6 682 | 795 | 11.9 | 5 887 | 88.1 |
| Sweden | 30 461 | 5 758 | 18.9 | 24 703 | 81.1 |
| United Kingdom | 129 255 | 3 850 | 3.0 | 125 405 | 97.0 |
| Croatia | 7 571 | 598 | 7.9 | 6 973 | 92.1 |
| Iceland | 914 | 256 | 28.0 | 658 | 72.0 |
| FYR of Macedonia | 1 135 | 133 | 11.7 | 1 002 | 88.3 |
| Turkey | 5 968 | : | : | : | : |
| Liechtenstein | : | : | : | : | : |
| Norway | 10 312 | 965 | 9.4 | 9 347 | 90.6 |
| Switzerland | 44 365 | 13 848 | 31.2 | 30 517 | 68.8 |

s: Eurostat estimates

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

Table 3: Main previous citizenships of persons acquiring citizenship in the EU-27, EFTA and Candidate countries, 2008

| EU-27 ^s | | Bulgaria | | Czech Republic | | Denmark | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------|------------------------|--------|------|------------------------|-------|------|
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | |
| Morocco | 63 800 | 9.2 | FYR of Macedonia | 3 637 | 50.9 | Ukraine | 397 | 33.0 | Iraq | 1 170 | 19.4 |
| Turkey | 49 500 | 7.1 | Moldova | 2 463 | 34.5 | Kazakhstan | 122 | 10.1 | Turkey | 588 | 9.8 |
| Ecuador | 27 300 | 3.9 | Serbia | 252 | 3.5 | Slovakia | 116 | 9.6 | Somalia | 527 | 8.8 |
| Algeria | 23 000 | 3.3 | Russian Federation | 232 | 3.2 | Russian Federation | 88 | 7.3 | Afghanistan | 360 | 6.0 |
| Iraq | 20 400 | 2.9 | Ukraine | 186 | 2.6 | Romania | 82 | 6.8 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 293 | 4.9 |
| Other | 511 875 | 73.6 | Other | 370 | 5.2 | Other | 399 | 33.1 | Other | 3 084 | 51.2 |
| Germany | | Estonia | | Ireland | | Greece | | | | | |
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | |
| Turkey | 24 449 | 25.9 | Recognised non-citizen | 1 950 | 91.8 | Nigeria | 319 | 9.8 | Albania | 9 996 | 59.1 |
| Serbia | 6 267 | 6.6 | Russian Federation | 149 | 7.0 | Pakistan | 196 | 6.0 | Georgia | 1 285 | 7.6 |
| Poland | 4 245 | 4.5 | Ukraine | 16 | 0.8 | India | 163 | 5.0 | Russian Federation | 834 | 4.9 |
| Iraq | 4 229 | 4.5 | Belarus | 3 | 0.1 | Russian Federation | 159 | 4.9 | Turkey | 212 | 1.3 |
| Morocco | 3 130 | 3.3 | Moldova | 2 | 0.1 | South Africa | 112 | 3.5 | United States | 175 | 1.0 |
| Other | 52 150 | 55.2 | Other | 4 | 0.2 | Other | 2 296 | 70.8 | Other | 4 420 | 26.1 |
| Spain | | France | | Italy | | Latvia | | | | | |
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | |
| Ecuador | 25 536 | 30.3 | Morocco | 28 699 | 20.9 | Morocco | 9 156 | 17.1 | Recognised non-citizen | 4 077 | 96.4 |
| Colombia | 15 408 | 18.3 | Algeria | 20 256 | 14.8 | Albania | 4 546 | 8.5 | Russian Federation | 93 | 2.2 |
| Morocco | 8 615 | 10.2 | Turkey | 10 202 | 7.4 | Romania | 2 857 | 5.3 | Ukraine | 24 | 0.6 |
| Peru | 8 206 | 9.7 | Tunisia | 9 471 | 6.9 | Brazil | 1 930 | 3.6 | Belarus | 13 | 0.3 |
| Argentina | 5 189 | 6.2 | Portugal | 7 778 | 5.7 | Russian Federation | 1 772 | 3.3 | Lithuania | 6 | 0.1 |
| Other | 21 216 | 25.2 | Other | 60 914 | 44.4 | Other | 33 435 | 62.3 | Other | 17 | 0.4 |
| Lithuania | | Luxembourg | | Hungary | | Malta | | | | | |
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | |
| Stateless | 149 | 48.1 | Portugal | 293 | 24.1 | Romania | 5 535 | 68.3 | Australia | 226 | 35.1 |
| Russian Federation | 104 | 33.5 | Italy | 109 | 9.0 | Ukraine | 857 | 10.6 | United Kingdom | 110 | 17.1 |
| Ukraine | 17 | 5.5 | Serbia and Montenegro | 81 | 6.7 | Serbia and Montenegro | 758 | 9.4 | United States | 44 | 6.8 |
| Belarus | 15 | 4.8 | Belgium | 77 | 6.3 | Belarus | 167 | 2.1 | Canada | 34 | 5.3 |
| Armenia | 9 | 2.9 | Germany | 76 | 6.3 | Russian Federation | 156 | 1.9 | Italy | 27 | 4.2 |
| Other | 16 | 5.2 | Other | 579 | 47.7 | Other | 631 | 7.8 | Other | 203 | 31.5 |
| Netherlands | | Austria | | Poland | | Portugal | | | | | |
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | |
| Morocco | 5 034 | 17.8 | Serbia | 2 582 | 25.1 | Ukraine | 587 | 32.6 | Cape Verde | 6 013 | 26.8 |
| Turkey | 3 147 | 11.1 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 2 207 | 21.5 | Belarus | 238 | 13.2 | Brazil | 4 080 | 18.2 |
| Suriname | 1 006 | 3.6 | Turkey | 1 664 | 16.2 | Russian Federation | 107 | 5.9 | Guinea Bissau | 2 754 | 12.3 |
| Iraq | 866 | 3.1 | Croatia | 824 | 8.0 | Stateless | 104 | 5.8 | Moldova | 2 230 | 10.0 |
| Afghanistan | 584 | 2.1 | Romania | 382 | 3.7 | Sweden | 59 | 3.3 | Angola | 2 075 | 9.3 |
| Other | 17 592 | 62.3 | Other | 2 609 | 25.4 | Other | 707 | 39.2 | Other | 5 256 | 23.5 |
| Romania | | Slovenia | | Slovakia | | Finland | | | | | |
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | |
| Moldova | 4 967 | 88.9 | Serbia | 551 | 32.6 | Ukraine | 181 | 37.9 | Russian Federation | 2 211 | 33.1 |
| United States | 85 | 1.5 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 481 | 28.4 | Czech Republic | 90 | 18.8 | Somalia | 595 | 8.9 |
| Turkey | 54 | 1.0 | Croatia | 238 | 14.1 | Vietnam | 37 | 7.7 | Iraq | 379 | 5.7 |
| Israel | 51 | 0.9 | Italy | 106 | 6.3 | Russian Federation | 26 | 5.4 | Iran | 329 | 4.9 |
| Syrian Arab Republic | 47 | 0.8 | FYR of Macedonia | 100 | 5.9 | Romania | 19 | 4.0 | Serbia and Montenegro | 324 | 4.8 |
| Other | 381 | 6.8 | Other | 215 | 12.7 | Other | 125 | 26.2 | Other | 2 844 | 42.6 |
| Sweden | | United Kingdom | | Croatia | | Iceland | | | | | |
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | |
| Iraq | 4 224 | 13.9 | India | 11 825 | 9.1 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 3 539 | 46.7 | Poland | 164 | 17.9 |
| Finland | 2 535 | 8.3 | Pakistan | 9 440 | 7.3 | Serbia | 747 | 9.9 | Philippines | 126 | 13.8 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 1 764 | 5.8 | Iraq | 8 890 | 6.9 | Australia | 722 | 9.5 | Serbia | 107 | 11.7 |
| Thailand | 1 261 | 4.1 | Somalia | 7 160 | 5.5 | Argentina | 334 | 4.4 | Thailand | 62 | 6.8 |
| Stateless | 1 131 | 3.7 | Zimbabwe | 5 705 | 4.4 | FYR of Macedonia | 227 | 3.0 | Vietnam | 52 | 5.7 |
| Other | 19 546 | 64.2 | Other | 86 235 | 66.7 | Other | 2 002 | 26.4 | Other | 403 | 44.1 |
| FYR of Macedonia | | Norway | | Switzerland | | | | | | | |
| Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | Previous citizens of | (%) | | | | | | |
| Serbia | 656 | 57.8 | Somalia | 1 315 | 12.8 | Serbia and Montenegro | 10 272 | 23.2 | | | |
| Albania | 150 | 13.2 | Iraq | 1 072 | 10.4 | Italy | 4 921 | 11.1 | | | |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 56 | 4.9 | Afghanistan | 877 | 8.5 | Germany | 3 022 | 6.8 | | | |
| Croatia | 47 | 4.1 | Pakistan | 773 | 7.5 | Turkey | 2 866 | 6.5 | | | |
| Germany | 36 | 3.2 | Russian Federation | 515 | 5.0 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 2 855 | 6.4 | | | |
| Other | 190 | 16.7 | Other | 5 760 | 55.9 | Other | 20 429 | 46.0 | | | |

s: Eurostat estimates - Data not available for BE, CY and LI - Breakdown by citizenship not available for TR

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

In the EU almost one new citizen out of ten was a citizen of Morocco

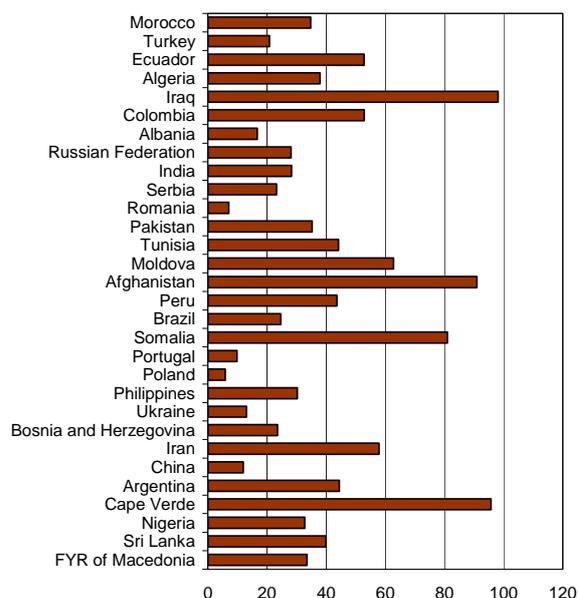
As in previous years, citizens of Morocco and Turkey are the largest groups who acquired citizenship of an EU Member State in 2008. Compared to 2007, the number of Moroccans acquiring citizenship in the EU rose by 7%, while the number of Turks fell by 10%.

The majority of Moroccans acquired citizenship either in France (28 699 persons), or in Italy (9 156 persons), or in Spain (8 615 persons). In contrast, Turks mainly acquired citizenship either in Germany (24 449 persons), or in France (10 202 persons).

Focussing on the first thirty groups of previous citizenship, that account for approximately two thirds of total acquisitions, we observe that for nearly half of them the majority of total acquisitions occurred in one single Member State. In some cases this percentage exceeds 70%: citizens of Algeria, Tunisia and Portugal becoming French citizens, citizens of India, Pakistan and Somalia becoming UK citizens, citizens of Ecuador, Colombia and Peru becoming Spanish citizens, and citizens of Cape Verde becoming Portuguese citizens.

It is interesting to evaluate the ratio between the total number of acquisitions from a particular group and the size of the foreign population of that group in the EU-27. Considering the thirty groups that record the highest number of acquisitions, we see that this ratio is particularly high for citizens of Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Cape Verde. In the first three cases, the result is linked to the flow of refugees and asylum seekers from these countries, for whom there might be a strong incentive to acquire citizenship in their new country of residence.

Figure 5: Main previous citizenship of persons acquiring citizenship in the EU-27, per thousand foreign population of the same citizenship, 2008



Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#), [migr_pop1ctz](#))

Table 4: Main previous citizenship of persons acquiring citizenship in the EU-27 and main EU Member States granting citizenship, 2008

| Country of previous citizenship | Total number of acquisitions in the EU-27 (thousands) | Main EU-27 Member States granting citizenship | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------------|------------|------------|-----------|--|--|--|--|
| | | Rank 1 (%) | Rank 2 (%) | Rank 3 (%) | Rank 4 (%) | Other (%) | | | | |
| Morocco | 63.8 | FR 45.0 | IT 14.3 | ES 13.5 | NL 7.9 | 19.3 | | | | |
| Turkey | 49.5 | DE 49.3 | FR 20.6 | UK 9.4 | NL 6.4 | 14.3 | | | | |
| Ecuador | 27.3 | ES 93.5 | IT 2.6 | UK 2.1 | SE 0.3 | 1.5 | | | | |
| Algeria | 23.0 | FR 87.9 | UK 4.1 | DE 1.4 | ES 1.4 | 5.1 | | | | |
| Iraq | 20.4 | UK 43.5 | DE 20.7 | SE 20.7 | DK 5.7 | 9.4 | | | | |
| Colombia | 19.0 | ES 81.1 | IT 6.4 | UK 5.9 | FR 1.8 | 4.7 | | | | |
| Albania | 16.9 | EL 59.1 | IT 26.9 | UK 5.5 | FR 2.2 | 6.3 | | | | |
| Russian Federation | 16.8 | FR 21.1 | DE 14.5 | FI 13.2 | IT 10.6 | 40.6 | | | | |
| India | 15.2 | UK 77.7 | DE 4.9 | IT 4.4 | FR 3.1 | 9.8 | | | | |
| Serbia | 14.4 | DE 43.4 | FR 23.4 | AT 17.9 | UK 4.0 | 11.3 | | | | |
| Romania | 13.9 | HU 39.9 | IT 20.6 | DE 15.4 | FR 5.7 | 18.3 | | | | |
| Pakistan | 13.4 | UK 70.4 | DE 9.0 | FR 6.1 | IT 1.6 | 12.9 | | | | |
| Tunisia | 12.8 | FR 74.3 | IT 13.1 | DE 5.8 | UK 1.2 | 5.7 | | | | |
| Moldova | 11.2 | RO 44.4 | BG 22.0 | PT 19.9 | IT 6.3 | 7.4 | | | | |
| Afghanistan | 10.8 | UK 51.5 | DE 23.4 | SE 7.5 | NL 5.4 | 12.2 | | | | |
| Peru | 10.5 | ES 78.3 | IT 10.2 | DE 2.6 | SE 2.4 | 6.6 | | | | |
| Brazil | 10.0 | PT 41.0 | IT 19.4 | ES 10.5 | DE 9.7 | 19.4 | | | | |
| Somalia | 9.9 | UK 72.4 | SE 8.0 | FI 6.0 | DK 5.3 | 8.2 | | | | |
| Portugal | 9.8 | FR 79.7 | ES 5.8 | UK 4.1 | DE 3.0 | 7.3 | | | | |
| Poland | 8.6 | DE 49.3 | IT 19.1 | SE 8.0 | FR 6.9 | 16.8 | | | | |
| Philippines | 8.6 | UK 62.4 | ES 9.1 | IT 6.0 | DE 5.6 | 16.9 | | | | |
| Ukraine | 8.6 | DE 22.8 | IT 18.7 | HU 10.0 | UK 8.2 | 40.2 | | | | |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 8.4 | AT 26.3 | DE 22.4 | SE 21.1 | IT 11.0 | 19.2 | | | | |
| Iran | 8.2 | DE 33.3 | UK 26.8 | SE 13.6 | FR 5.8 | 20.5 | | | | |
| China | 8.0 | UK 35.0 | DE 14.7 | FR 14.1 | NL 6.8 | 29.4 | | | | |
| Argentina | 7.6 | ES 68.3 | IT 23.0 | DE 2.3 | FR 2.1 | 4.3 | | | | |
| Cape Verde | 7.2 | PT 83.1 | FR 10.3 | IT 3.1 | ES 1.3 | 2.3 | | | | |
| Nigeria | 7.2 | UK 62.8 | DE 9.1 | IT 8.4 | IE 4.4 | 15.2 | | | | |
| Sri Lanka | 7.2 | UK 45.9 | FR 21.6 | DE 20.8 | IT 6.2 | 5.6 | | | | |
| FYR of Macedonia | 6.6 | BG 55.2 | DE 14.8 | IT 10.6 | AT 5.7 | 13.6 | | | | |

Table includes Eurostat estimates for the Member States for which detailed data by citizenship are not available

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

Nearly half of new citizens in the EU aged under 30 years

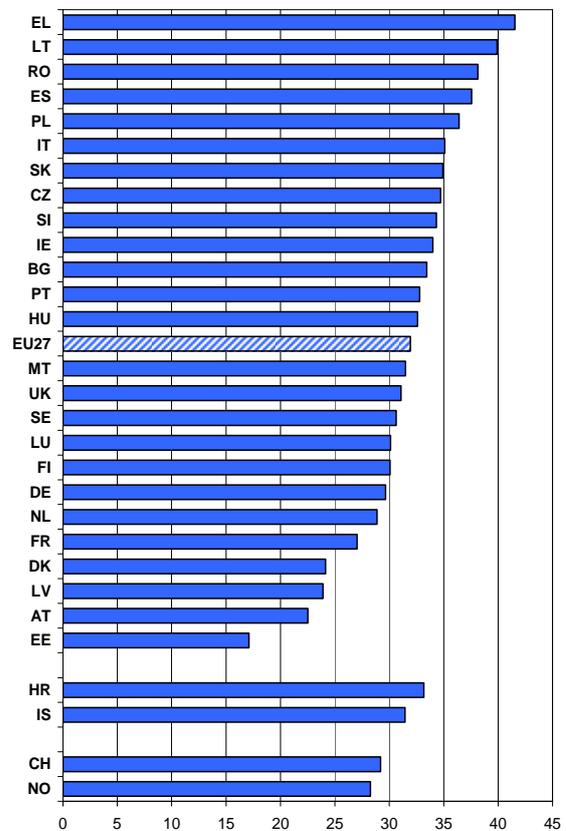
The distribution by sex of persons who acquired citizenship of an EU Member State in 2008 was quite balanced, with a slight predominance of females (52.3%) at EU level. This was true for the vast majority of Member States: males exceeded females only in five cases, namely in Bulgaria, Romania, Portugal, Slovenia and Greece.

The highest proportion of males was recorded for Bulgaria () and the highest proportion of females for Italy (56.2%).

The data show that the persons acquiring a new citizenship are primarily young adults and children. The distribution by age of new citizens at EU level shows two distinct peaks, one corresponding to the age group 10-14 and a second, also the absolute peak, corresponding to the age group 30-34. The latter age group accounts for approximately one in seven acquisitions, and includes the overall median age for the EU-27, 31.9 years.

For the vast majority of Member States the median age of new citizens is included in the range between 25 and 35 years. The most notable exceptions are Estonia, for which half of the new citizens were younger than 17.1 years, and Greece, for which half of the new citizens were older than 41.5 years.

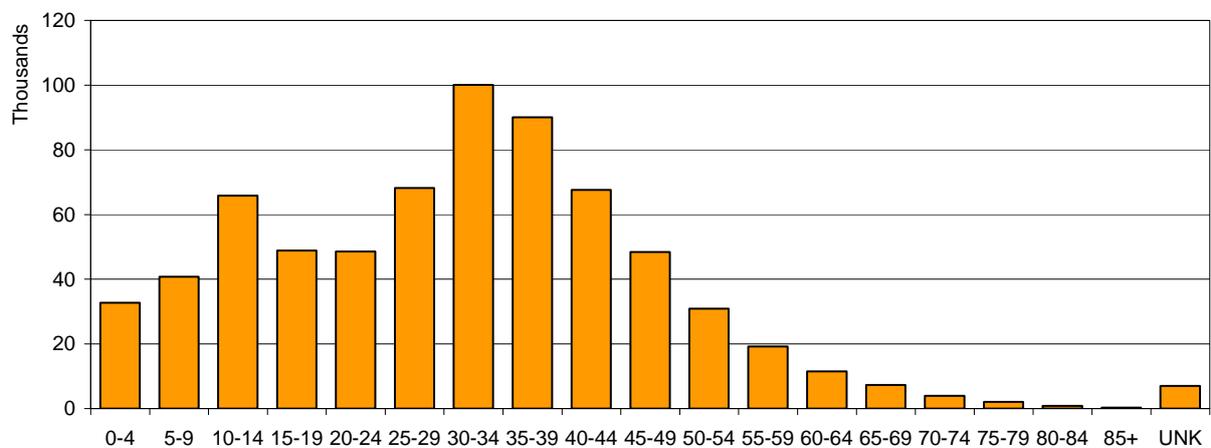
Figure 6: Median age of persons acquiring citizenship in the EU-27, EFTA and Candidate countries, 2008



Data not available for BE, CY and LI
Breakdown by age not available for MK and TR

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

Figure 7: Age distribution of persons acquiring citizenship in the EU-27, 2008



Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

Table 5: Sex and age distribution of the persons acquiring citizenship of EU-27, EFTA and Candidate countries, 2008

| | Total | Distribution by sex (in %) | | Median age | Distribution by age (in %) | | | | | | Unknown |
|--------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------|------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|---------|
| | | Males | Females | | 0-14 | 15-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-55 | 55+ | |
| EU-27 ^s | 695 875 | 47.7 | 52.3 | 31.9 | 20.0 | 14.0 | 24.2 | 22.7 | 11.4 | 6.5 | 1.0 |
| Belgium | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Bulgaria | 7 140 | 65.0 | 35.0 | 33.4 | 0.6 | 14.0 | 41.0 | 24.1 | 14.6 | 5.7 | 0.0 |
| Czech Republic | 1 204 | 40.1 | 59.9 | 34.7 | 11.0 | 15.9 | 23.8 | 26.3 | 13.5 | 9.4 | 0.0 |
| Denmark | 6 022 | 46.9 | 53.1 | 24.1 | 33.6 | 18.5 | 17.7 | 20.4 | 7.6 | 2.2 | 0.0 |
| Germany | 94 470 | 49.8 | 50.2 | 29.6 | 15.2 | 24.1 | 25.9 | 21.9 | 8.2 | 4.8 | 0.0 |
| Estonia | 2 124 | 41.3 | 58.7 | 17.1 | 42.3 | 30.5 | 14.6 | 6.5 | 4.1 | 2.1 | 0.0 |
| Ireland | 3 245 | 49.1 | 50.9 | 34.0 | 11.5 | 12.6 | 30.1 | 32.2 | 9.8 | 3.8 | 0.0 |
| Greece | 16 922 | 51.6 | 48.4 | 41.5 | 4.0 | 9.5 | 22.8 | 11.1 | 21.1 | 18.4 | 13.1 |
| Spain | 84 170 | 43.4 | 56.6 | 37.6 | 7.1 | 8.2 | 25.2 | 33.5 | 18.2 | 7.5 | 0.2 |
| France | 137 320 | 49.3 | 50.7 | 27.0 | 33.2 | 12.8 | 15.2 | 16.7 | 10.9 | 8.1 | 3.1 |
| Italy | 53 696 | 39.1 | 60.9 | 35.1 | 23.0 | 5.7 | 21.1 | 27.8 | 16.6 | 5.8 | 0.0 |
| Cyprus | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Latvia | 4 230 | 45.7 | 54.3 | 23.9 | 18.0 | 35.2 | 15.1 | 10.9 | 10.8 | 10.0 | 0.0 |
| Lithuania | 310 | 44.2 | 55.8 | 39.9 | 0.0 | 11.3 | 22.3 | 30.0 | 16.8 | 19.7 | 0.0 |
| Luxembourg | 1 215 | 46.6 | 53.4 | 30.1 | 0.0 | 35.9 | 27.4 | 20.7 | 10.6 | 5.4 | 0.0 |
| Hungary | 8 104 | 43.8 | 56.2 | 32.6 | 11.5 | 10.6 | 36.7 | 18.8 | 9.1 | 13.3 | 0.0 |
| Malta | 644 | 49.1 | 50.9 | 31.5 | 11.6 | 21.4 | 23.6 | 16.8 | 14.8 | 11.8 | 0.0 |
| Netherlands | 28 229 | 45.7 | 54.3 | 28.9 | 20.8 | 20.5 | 24.5 | 19.8 | 7.4 | 7.0 | 0.0 |
| Austria | 10 268 | 46.8 | 53.2 | 22.5 | 33.1 | 21.0 | 17.0 | 18.6 | 6.5 | 3.8 | 0.0 |
| Poland | 1 802 | 46.6 | 53.4 | 36.4 | 5.7 | 10.0 | 30.3 | 25.2 | 14.4 | 14.4 | 0.0 |
| Portugal | 22 408 | 55.8 | 44.2 | 32.8 | 19.2 | 10.5 | 27.8 | 28.1 | 11.8 | 2.6 | 0.0 |
| Romania | 5 585 | 59.9 | 40.1 | 38.1 | 4.5 | 11.3 | 20.7 | 38.8 | 15.9 | 8.8 | 0.0 |
| Slovenia | 1 691 | 52.9 | 47.1 | 34.3 | 16.7 | 12.2 | 22.6 | 19.5 | 13.0 | 15.9 | 0.0 |
| Slovakia | 478 | 46.4 | 53.6 | 34.9 | 13.2 | 13.0 | 24.1 | 24.3 | 10.5 | 15.1 | 0.0 |
| Finland | 6 682 | 43.5 | 56.5 | 30.1 | 26.3 | 17.4 | 16.4 | 19.7 | 11.7 | 8.5 | 0.0 |
| Sweden | 30 461 | 44.4 | 55.6 | 30.6 | 21.5 | 15.6 | 24.6 | 20.1 | 10.7 | 7.4 | 0.0 |
| United Kingdom | 129 255 | 49.4 | 50.6 | 31.1 | 19.5 | 13.0 | 32.7 | 22.8 | 7.9 | 4.1 | 0.0 |
| Croatia | 7 571 | 48.1 | 51.9 | 33.2 | 11.4 | 20.6 | 21.8 | 18.8 | 14.5 | 12.9 | 0.0 |
| Iceland | 914 | 42.6 | 57.4 | 31.4 | 24.8 | 9.2 | 29.1 | 23.2 | 10.6 | 3.1 | 0.0 |
| FYR of Macedonia | 1 135 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Turkey | 5 968 | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Liechtenstein | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Norway | 10 312 | 45.5 | 54.5 | 28.3 | 24.7 | 18.9 | 23.0 | 20.3 | 8.6 | 4.4 | 0.0 |
| Switzerland | 44 365 | 47.4 | 52.6 | 29.2 | 25.2 | 19.6 | 15.3 | 21.7 | 12.0 | 6.2 | 0.0 |

s: Eurostat estimates

Source: Eurostat ([migr_acq](#))

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Citizenship – The particular legal bond between an individual and his or her State, acquired by birth or naturalisation, whether by declaration, choice, marriage or other means according to the national legislation. International law does not provide detailed rules, but it recognises the competence of every State in cases like: spouses of nationals, minors adopted by nationals, descendants of nationals born abroad returning to the country of origin of their ancestors, etc.

Countries differ considerably in terms of the conditions to be fulfilled to acquire citizenship: in general a period of legally registered residence is required, combined with other factors such as evidence of social and economic integration and knowledge of national languages. Different conditions may apply for persons who were born in the country concerned (*jus soli*), or who have parents or other relatives with that country's citizenship (*jus sanguinis*). For an overview of the conditions to be fulfilled in each country, see the Annex on national methodologies in the [Eurostat Metadata page](#).

Median age – The age that divides a population into two groups that are numerically equivalent.

Recognised non-citizen - Person who is not a citizen of the reporting country nor of any other country, but who has established links to that country which include some but not all rights and obligations of full citizenship. This category is particularly relevant in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

ABBREVIATIONS:

EU-27 Member States: Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Ireland (IE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), 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).

Candidate countries: Croatia (HR), Iceland (IS), The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MK) and Turkey (TR).

EFTA countries: Liechtenstein (LI), Norway (NO) and Switzerland (CH).

Further information

Eurostat Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Data on "Population – International Migration and Asylum"
<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database>

More information about "International Migration and Asylum"
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/publications/migration_asylum

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