

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU

EU28 Member States granted citizenship to almost 820 000 persons in 2012

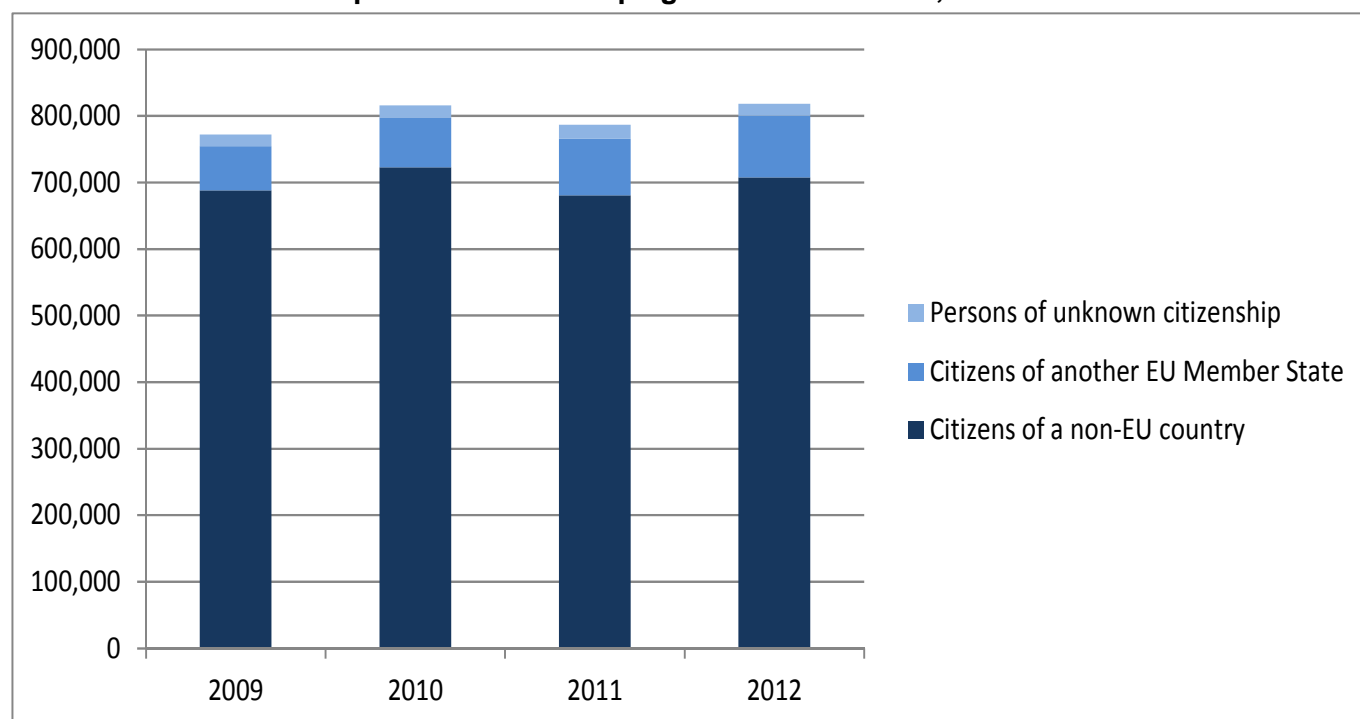
Moroccans continue to be main recipients

In 2012, 818 000 persons acquired citizenship¹ of an **EU28**² Member State, up by 4% compared with 2011 and by 6% compared with 2009. In 2012, the highest naturalisation rates³ were registered in **Hungary** (12.8 citizenships granted per 100 resident foreigners), **Sweden** (7.8) and **Poland** (6.6), and the lowest in the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia** (both 0.4), **Estonia** (0.6) and **Austria** (0.7). On average, 2.4 citizenships were granted per 100 resident foreigners in the **EU28**.

As regards the characteristics of the new citizens in the **EU28**, the median age⁴ of persons granted citizenship in 2012 was 31.4 years (compared with 41.6 for the total EU28 population), with more than a third (35.3%) aged less than 25 years and more than half (58.4%) aged 25 to 54, while those aged 55 or over accounted for around 6%. For the whole EU28 population as of 1st January 2012, the shares were 27.3%, 42.2% and 30.4% respectively.

These data come from a [report](#)⁵ issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Recipients of citizenships granted in the EU28, 2009-2012



Highest number of citizenships granted per 1000 inhabitants in Luxembourg

Three quarters of all persons that acquired an EU28 citizenship in 2012 became citizens of one of the following six Member States: the **United Kingdom** (193 900 persons, or 23.7% of all citizenships granted in the EU28 in 2012), **Germany** (114 600 or 14.0%), **France** (96 100 or 11.7%), **Spain** (94 100 or 11.5%), **Italy** (65 400 or 8.0%) and **Sweden** (50 200 or 6.1%).

When compared with the total population of each Member State, the highest rates of citizenship granted were recorded in **Luxembourg** (8.7 citizenships granted per 1 000 inhabitants), **Ireland** (5.5) and **Sweden** (5.3). On average, 1.6 citizenships were granted per 1 000 inhabitants in the **EU28**.

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU28, 2012

	Total number of recipients of citizenships in thousands			Citizenships acquired per:	
	Total	Of which		1 000 inhabitants	100 resident foreigners
		Citizens of another EU Member State	Citizens of a non-EU country		
EU28²	818.0	92.4	707.8	1.6	2.4
Belgium	38.6	8.6	29.8	3.5	3.2
Bulgaria	1.7	0.0	1.7	0.2	4.4
Czech Republic	1.8	0.5	1.2	0.2	0.4
Denmark	3.6	0.3	3.3	0.6	1.0
Germany	114.6	20.7	93.4	1.4	1.5
Estonia	1.3	0.0	1.3	1.0	0.6
Ireland	25.0	1.4	23.6	5.5	4.6
Greece	16.2	0.2	15.5	1.5	1.7
Spain	94.1	1.4	92.7	2.0	1.8
France	96.1	8.2	74.3	1.5	2.4
Croatia	1.1	0.3	0.8	0.3	4.6
Italy	65.4	5.7	59.6	1.1	1.4
Cyprus	2.3	1.3	1.1	2.7	1.3
Latvia	3.8	0.0	3.8	1.9	1.2
Lithuania	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.9
Luxembourg	4.7	4.1	0.6	8.7	2.0
Hungary	18.4	14.9	3.5	1.9	12.8
Malta	1.1	0.3	0.8	2.7	5.6
Netherlands	31.0	2.4	27.3	1.8	4.4
Austria	7.0	1.2	5.9	0.8	0.7
Poland	3.8	0.4	3.4	0.1	6.6
Portugal	21.8	0.7	21.1	2.1	5.0
Romania	:	:	:	:	:
Slovenia	1.5	0.3	1.1	0.7	1.7
Slovakia	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.4
Finland	9.1	1.1	7.9	1.7	5.0
Sweden	50.2	7.4	41.3	5.3	7.8
United Kingdom	193.9	10.5	183.3	3.0	4.0
Iceland	0.4	0.1	0.3	1.3	1.8
Liechtenstein	0.1	0.0	0.1	3.2	1.0
Norway	12.7	1.2	11.6	2.5	3.5
Switzerland	33.5	15.1	18.4	4.2	2.0

Figures may not add up due to unknown.

: Data not available

More than 85% of persons granted an EU citizenship in 2012 were non-EU citizens

In eleven Member States, more than 9 persons out of every 10 that acquired citizenship in 2012 were citizens of a non-EU country: **Estonia** (99.7%), **Latvia** (99.1%), **Lithuania** (99.0%), **Spain** (98.5%), **Bulgaria** (96.9%), **Portugal** (96.6%), **Greece** (95.4%), the **United Kingdom** (94.5%), **Ireland** (94.3%), **Italy** (91.2%) and **Denmark** (90.8%). On the contrary, the majority of persons that were granted citizenship in 2012 were citizens of another EU28 Member State in **Luxembourg** (86.6%), **Hungary** (81.1%) and **Cyprus** (54.4%). At **EU** level, 86.5% (or 708 000 new citizens) of those granted citizenship were citizens of a non-EU country, and 11.3% (92 000) of another EU28 Member State.

Main recipients of citizenships granted in the EU28 Member States, 2012

	Main recipients		Second main recipients		Third main recipients		Fourth main recipients	
	Citizens of	%	Citizens of	%	Citizens of	%	Citizens of	%
EU28²	Morocco	8.2	Turkey	6.2	Ecuador	4.3	India	4.0
BE	Morocco	20.4	Italy	8.3	Turkey	6.5	Dem. Rep. of Congo	1.9
BG	Russia	23.4	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	16.3	Moldova	13.9	Ukraine	12.1
CZ	Ukraine	29.0	Slovakia	11.6	Russia	10.4	Poland	9.8
DK	Iraq	20.3	Afghanistan	12.9	Turkey	8.3	Somalia	5.1
DE	Turkey	29.0	Serbia	5.2	Poland	4.0	Russia	3.7
EE	Recognised non-citizen ⁶	83.9	Russia	12.9	Ukraine	1.8	Belarus	0.4
IE	Nigeria	22.7	Philippines	15.3	India	10.5	Pakistan	5.1
EL	Albania	84.2	Egypt	1.8	Syria	1.2	Ukraine	1.1
ES	Ecuador	28.9	Colombia	17.1	Morocco	9.9	Peru	9.0
FR	Morocco	17.4	Algeria	12.9	Tunisia	5.2	Turkey	5.0
HR	Bosnia & Herzegovina	38.9	Serbia	16.2	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	6.5	Germany	6.2
IT	Morocco	22.5	Albania	14.5	Romania	5.0	Tunisia	3.9
CY	Greece	34.8	United Kingdom	17.1	South Africa	8.0	Russia	8.0
LV	Recognised non-citizen ⁶	95.4	Russia	2.2	Belarus	0.4	Ireland	0.2
LT	Stateless*	47.0	Russia	27.2	Ukraine	11.4	Belarus	6.4
LU	Belgium	33.8	Portugal	24.7	France	9.9	Italy	8.8
HU	Romania	78.3	Ukraine	9.6	Serbia	7.2	Slovakia	1.7
MT	Australia	22.3	United Kingdom	14.0	Russia	6.4	United States	5.4
NL	Morocco	20.2	Turkey	14.0	Iraq	4.2	Somalia	3.7
AT	Turkey	17.0	Bosnia & Herzegovina	16.1	Serbia	10.1	Croatia	5.7
PL	Ukraine	31.5	Belarus	12.0	Russia	6.4	Germany	4.5
PT	Brazil	21.1	Ukraine	15.2	Cape Verde	14.8	Moldova	9.4
RO		:		:		:		:
SI	Bosnia & Herzegovina	39.4	Italy	10.5	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	10.4	Serbia	9.3
SK	Ukraine	23.5	Serbia	21.6	Czech Republic	14.1	Romania	9.8
FI	Russia	27.3	Somalia	6.7	Estonia	5.7	Afghanistan	5.6
SE	Iraq	33.1	Finland	4.5	Thailand	3.8	Poland	3.3
UK	India	14.6	Pakistan	9.5	Nigeria	4.6	Philippines	4.2
IS	Philippines	11.9	Poland	7.3	Serbia	6.5	Thailand	6.3
LI	Switzerland	32.8	Turkey	18.5	Austria	10.9	Germany	8.4
NO	Iraq	12.9	Somalia	12.8	Afghanistan	7.9	Stateless*	7.0
CH	Italy	11.9	Serbia	10.0	Germany	10.0	Portugal	6.2

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

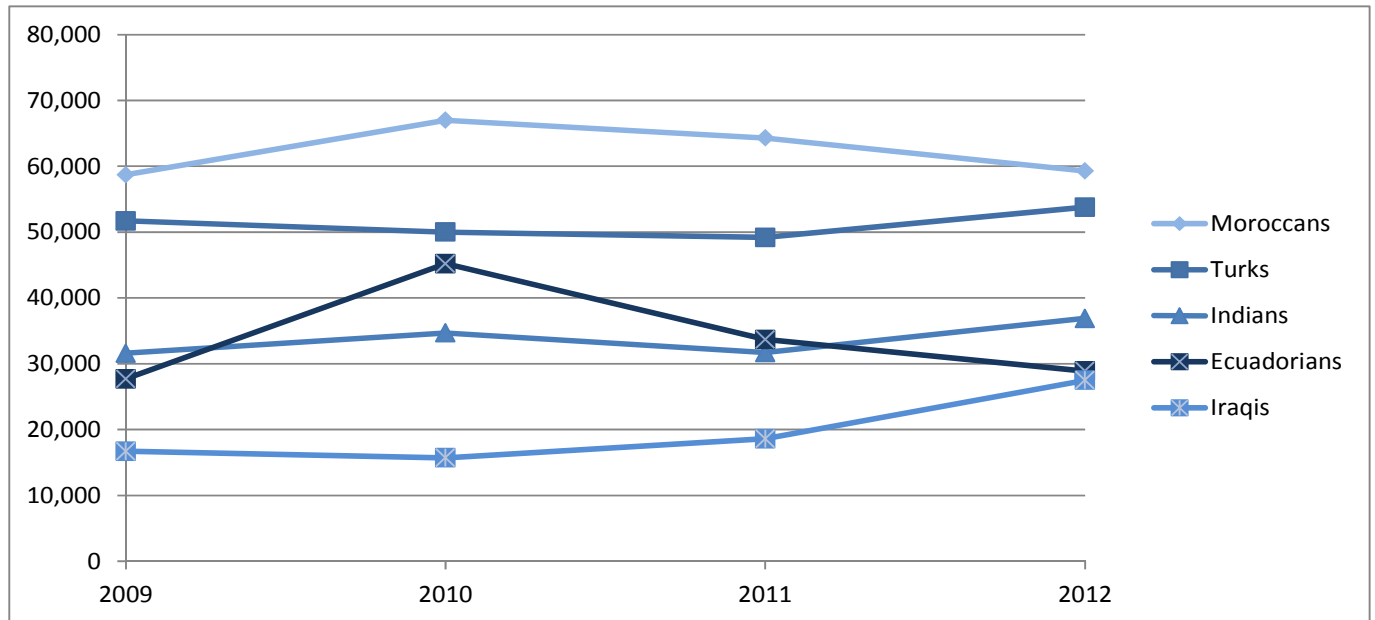
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Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Ireland (IE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Croatia (HR), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (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) and Switzerland (CH).

A quarter of new EU citizens were Moroccans, Turks, Indians, Ecuadorians or Iraqis

In 2012, the largest groups acquiring citizenship of an EU28 Member State were citizens of **Morocco** (59 300 persons, of which 53% acquired citizenship of France or Italy), **Turkey** (53 800, 62% acquired German citizenship), **India** (36 900, 77% acquired British citizenship), **Ecuador** (28 900, 94% acquired Spanish citizenship) and **Iraq** (27 500, 61% acquired Swedish citizenship). Moroccans, Turks, Indians, Ecuadorians and Iraqis represented together 25% of the total number of persons that acquired EU citizenship in 2012. **Romanians** (25 200 persons) were the largest group of EU citizens acquiring citizenship of another EU Member State, followed by **Poles** (12 800) and **Italians** (7 900).

Top 5 nationalities receiving citizenship in the EU28 Member States, 2009-2012



- 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".
- The EU28 aggregates for the period 2010-2012 include 2009 data for Romania.
- The **naturalisation rate** is the ratio of the number of persons who acquired the citizenship of a country during a calendar year over the stock of foreign residents in the same country at the beginning of the year. The 'naturalisation rate' should be used with caution because the numerator includes all modes of acquisitions and not just naturalisations of eligible residing foreigners and the denominator includes all foreigners and not the relevant population, i.e. those foreigners who are eligible for naturalisation.
- Median age** is the age that divides a population into two numerically equal groups; that is, half the people are younger than this age and half are older.
- See Statistics explained article on the Eurostat web site: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Acquisition_of_citizenship_statistics
- 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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