

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU

EU27 Member States granted citizenship to 776 000 persons in 2009

In 2009, 776 000 persons acquired citizenship¹ of an **EU27** Member State. In 2008 it was 699 000 persons. The main contribution to this increase at EU level came from the United Kingdom and was a consequence of the unusually low number of citizenships that, for purely administrative reasons, the United Kingdom granted in 2008.

The new citizens in the **EU27** in 2009 came mainly from **Africa** (29% of the total number of citizenships acquired), **Asia** (24%), **non-EU27 Europe** (22%), **North and South America** (15%) and **Oceania** (1%). 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 granted per 100 resident foreigners in Portugal, Sweden, Poland and the United Kingdom

In 2009, the highest number of citizenships were granted by the **United Kingdom** (204 000 persons), **France** (136 000) and **Germany** (96 000), which together accounted for more than half 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 **Portugal** (5.8 citizenships granted per 100 resident foreigners), **Sweden** (5.3), **Poland** and the **United Kingdom** (both 4.8), and the lowest rates in the **Czech Republic** (0.3), **Lithuania** and **Slovakia** (both 0.5). On average, 2.4 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** (8.1 citizenships granted per 1 000 inhabitants), **Cyprus** (5.1), the **United Kingdom** (3.3) and **Sweden** (3.2). Eight 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**.

Highest numbers of citizenships in the EU27 acquired by Moroccans, Turks, Indians and Ecuadorians

In 2009, the largest groups that acquired citizenship of an EU27 Member State were citizens of **Morocco** (59 900 persons), **Turkey** (51 900), **India** (31 100), **Ecuador** (27 800) and **Albania** (26 700). Among the Member States with the highest total number of citizenships acquired, the largest groups in the **United Kingdom** were Indians (13% of total citizenships acquired) and Pakistanis (10%), in **France**, they were Moroccans (19% of total citizenships acquired) and Algerians (15%) and in **Germany**, it was Turks (26%).

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 **Greece** (84% from **Albania**), **Romania** (67% from **Moldova**) and **Hungary** (66% from **Romania**). In **Latvia** and **Estonia**, 96% and 93% respectively of the new citizens were **recognised non-citizens**³.

Acquisition of citizenship in the EU27, 2009

	Total number of citizenships acquired in thousands		Citizenships acquired per:	
	2008	2009	100 resident foreigners*	1 000 inhabitants
EU27	698.6	776.1	2.4	1.6
Belgium	37.7	32.8	3.2	3.0
Bulgaria	7.1	9.2	:	1.2
Czech Republic	1.2	1.1	0.3	0.1
Denmark	6.0	6.9	2.1	1.2
Germany	94.5	96.1	1.3	1.2
Estonia	2.1	1.7	0.8	1.2
Ireland	3.2	4.5	0.9	1.0
Greece	16.9	17.0	1.8	1.5
Spain	84.2	79.6	1.4	1.7
France	137.3	135.8	3.6	2.1
Italy	53.7	59.4	1.5	1.0
Cyprus	3.5	4.1	3.2	5.1
Latvia	4.2	3.2	0.8	1.4
Lithuania	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1
Luxembourg	1.2	4.0	1.9	8.1
Hungary	8.1	5.8	3.1	0.6
Malta	0.6	0.8	4.5	2.0
Netherlands	28.2	29.8	4.1	1.8
Austria	10.3	8.0	0.9	1.0
Poland	1.8	2.5	4.8	0.1
Portugal	22.4	25.6	5.8	2.4
Romania	5.6	9.4	:	0.4
Slovenia	1.7	1.8	2.5	0.9
Slovakia	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.0
Finland	6.7	3.4	2.4	0.6
Sweden	30.5	29.5	5.3	3.2
United Kingdom	129.3	203.6	4.8	3.3
Iceland	0.9	0.7	3.0	2.3
Liechtenstein	0.3	0.1	:	2.9
Norway	10.3	11.4	3.8	2.4
Switzerland	44.4	43.4	2.6	5.6
Croatia	7.6	5.3	:	1.2
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1.1	0.8	:	0.4
Turkey	6.0	8.1	:	0.1

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

: Data not available

Largest groups acquiring citizenship in the EU27 Member States, 2009

	Largest group		Second largest group		Third largest group		Fourth largest group	
	Previous citizens of	%	Previous citizens of	%	Previous citizens of	%	Previous citizens of	%
EU27*	Morocco	7.7	Turkey	6.7	India	4.0	Ecuador	3.6
BE	Morocco	24.2	Turkey	8.4	Italy	5.6	Dem. Republic of Congo	5.0
BG	Former Yug. Rep. of Macedonia	47.9	Moldova	29.1	Serbia	5.9	Israel	5.2
CZ	Ukraine	43.7	Slovakia	12.0	Russia	5.9	Poland	5.0
DK	Iraq	17.6	Afghanistan	11.6	Turkey	7.6	Stateless*	6.7
DE	Turkey	25.6	Iraq	5.3	Serbia	4.3	Poland	4.0
EE	Recognised non-citizen ³	93.2	Russia	5.2	Ukraine	1.2	Lithuania	0.2
IE	Nigeria	10.0	Philippines	9.1	India	7.4	South Africa	6.9
EL	Albania	83.9	Georgia	3.2	Russia	2.4	Turkey	1.0
ES	Ecuador	32.3	Colombia	20.7	Morocco	8.4	Peru	8.0
FR	Morocco	19.2	Algeria	15.2	Tunisia	6.8	Turkey	6.8
IT	Albania	16.0	Morocco	15.3	Romania	4.6	Tunisia	3.5
CY	Greece	9.1	Russia	7.9	Ukraine	5.7	United Kingdom	5.3
LV	Recognised non-citizen ³	95.6	Russia	1.7	Ukraine	1.3	Stateless*	0.4
LT	Stateless*	52.2	Russia	28.6	Ukraine	11.8	Belarus	5.4
LU	Portugal	30.9	Italy	9.0	Germany	8.0	France	6.9
HU	Romania	65.6	Serbia and Montenegro**	11.6	Ukraine	9.6	Belarus	2.2
MT	Australia	38.2	United Kingdom	12.6	Canada	5.1	South Africa	4.7
NL	Morocco	18.5	Turkey	14.0	Suriname	3.8	Iraq	2.3
AT	Serbia	20.5	Bosnia and Herzegovina	18.3	Turkey	15.6	Croatia	5.5
PL	Ukraine	35.0	Belarus	14.3	Russia	6.5	Armenia	3.2
PT	Cape Verde	19.4	Brazil	14.5	Moldova	10.7	Guinea Bissau	8.4
RO	Moldova	67.2	Stateless*	22.0	Ukraine	1.4	Israel	1.4
SI	Bosnia and Herzegovina	27.2	Serbia	15.2	Croatia	11.0	Italy	10.5
SK	Ukraine	29.4	Czech Republic	18.3	Serbia	16.4	Hungary	6.5
FI	Russia	30.1	Somalia	8.5	Iraq	6.1	Afghanistan	5.4
SE	Iraq	10.8	Finland	8.2	Thailand	4.5	Turkey	4.1
UK	India	13.0	Pakistan	10.3	Bangladesh	5.9	Philippines	5.8
IS	Poland	21.0	Philippines	14.6	Serbia	10.4	Vietnam	7.0
LI	Turkey	32.0	Switzerland	27.2	Austria	9.7	Serbia and Montenegro**	7.8
NO	Somalia	15.2	Iraq	11.1	Afghanistan	7.5	Iran	6.9
CH	Serbia and Montenegro**	20.4	Italy	11.1	Germany	9.3	Turkey	6.0
HR	Bosnia and Herzegovina	48.4	Serbia	9.7	Australia	6.7	Chile	4.1
MK	Serbia	39.6	Albania	22.8	Austria	5.6	Turkey	4.3

* 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

- 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.
- Eurostat**, Statistics in Focus, 24/2011 "**Acquisitions of citizenship on the rise in 2009**", available free of charge in pdf format on the Eurostat web site.
- 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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