

# 2 Composition of immigrant populations and households

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This chapter looks at the sizes of immigrant populations (Indicator 2.1) and the socio-demographic background characteristics of immigrants, which drive integration outcomes. They include age (see Chapter 6), gender (Indicator 2.2), differences in fertility (Indicator 2.3) geographical concentration (Indicator 2.4) and household and family structure (Indicators 2.5 and 2.6). In addition to such factors, which also apply to the native-born, there are certain immigrant-specific determinants like category of entry (Indicator 2.7), duration of stay, and region of origin (Indicator 2.8). A grasp of how they differ from country to country and how immigrants fare relative to the native-born is a prerequisite for understanding integration outcomes.

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# In Brief

## More than one in ten inhabitants is an immigrant

- The OECD is home to 141 million immigrants who account for more than 10% of the population. The share in the EU is slightly higher at 12% of the population, around 54 million foreign-born.
- Nearly one-third of immigrants in the OECD live in the United States, but that proportion has fallen by 3 percentage points over the last decade. Germany is the largest host country in the EU, being home to 25% of all foreign-born residents in the Union.
- The overall number of foreign-born has increased by 20% in both the OECD and EU over the past decade. The free movement of people in EU/EFTA and recent inflows of humanitarian migrants have been the key drivers of growth in foreign-born populations. Among the countries which have seen the largest increases in the population shares of their foreign-born populations are the Nordic countries, Malta, and two Latin American countries (Chile, Colombia) which previously had small immigrant populations.

## In most countries a larger share of migrants are women

- In the EU and OECD, women account for 51% of immigrants. Most long-term foreign-born residents are women, because women tend to live longer and are overrepresented among family migrants. Shares are highest in countries with aged immigrant populations (Latvia and Estonia) and low-educated labour migrants working in homecare (e.g. Italy and Cyprus).
- Due to the ageing of the foreign-born population and the large inflows of mainly male humanitarian migrants in 2015-16, the share of women in immigrant populations has dropped in the last 14 years in three-quarters of EU countries. At the same time, it increased in most non-EU countries and in some EU countries that had experienced large-scale immigration of low-skilled labour prior to the 2007-08 crisis.
- Immigrant women tend to have more children than their native-born peers. Their total fertility rate is 2.02 children in the EU and 2.46 in the United States, much higher than the 1.44 and 1.58 children per native-born woman, respectively. Fertility gaps between foreign- and native-born women are widest in countries where large shares of women have arrived as family migrants and/or are low-educated, such as in France, Germany, the United States and Costa Rica.

## Family reasons remain the most common admission category OECD wide, while in the EU most migrants benefit from free mobility schemes

- The intra-European free mobility of people has driven almost half of all permanent flows in the EU over the last 15 years. The driving category in the OECD overall, and specifically in the United States and France has been family migration, and labour migration in most settlement countries.
- In 2021, annual permanent immigration flows accounted for 0.6% of the EU's total population and 0.4% of the OECD's. Shares were highest in European countries with traditionally high intra-EU migrant intakes, such as Luxembourg (3.2%), Switzerland (1.4%) and Belgium (0.9%), as well as in Canada (1.1%). They are lowest (below 0.2% of the population) in Asian and Latin American OECD countries.

### Most immigrants have lived in their host country for at least a decade

- More than two-thirds of migrants in both the OECD and the EU have been resident in their host countries for 10 years or more. Migrants who arrived within the last five years account for at least 30% only in countries with recent humanitarian or largely temporary labour migration (e.g. Chile, Korea, Japan, Sweden, Bulgaria and Cyprus).
- Half of the EU immigrant population originates from European countries, with 30% coming from other EU member states. Foreign-born from other EU countries constitute a large majority in Luxembourg (75%), Hungary (62%) and the Slovak Republic (57%). Due to colonial legacies and guest-worker migration following World War II, a large share of foreign-born also come from Africa in France, Portugal, the Netherlands and Belgium, and from Latin America and the Caribbean in Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands. In the Nordic countries, due to humanitarian migration, a considerable share of immigrants were born in Asia (primarily the Middle East).
- In Asia, more than 79% of migrants are from Asian countries. In Canada and Australia, too, more than half of the foreign-born are from Asia, while over 50% of migrants in the United States were born in Latin America.

### Immigrants are more likely to live in urban areas than the native-born

- In all OECD countries, immigrants are overrepresented in densely populated areas, especially in longstanding destination countries and in Central and Eastern European countries. In the EU, over half of immigrant adults live in a densely populated area, against less than two in five of the native-born.
- Given the overall urbanisation trend among the native-born, and efforts to disperse labour and humanitarian migration, shares of the foreign- and native-born living in densely populated areas were more evenly balanced in 2020 than in 2012.
- Settling in a city is common practice among highly educated, recent and non-EU migrants and is even more widespread among recent migrants in the EU's largest immigrant countries, except in most Nordic countries, where new humanitarian migrants are distributed across the country.

### Immigrants are more likely than the native-born to live alone, or with children

- Across the EU, 12% of households are managed by at least one immigrant. Around two-thirds are immigrant-only households and one-third are mixed – where one responsible person is foreign- and the other native-born. Most households that comprise solely immigrants are managed by non-EU migrants.
- Outside Europe, shares of immigrant households are particularly numerous in Australia, New Zealand and Israel, where at least two in five households are managed by at least one immigrant. By contrast, shares are low in countries with small foreign-born populations like Mexico and Korea.
- Immigrant households are slightly larger than native-born ones in most countries, by 0.2 people EU-wide. This is not the case in some Latin American OECD countries, the Netherlands, Israel and most of Central and Eastern Europe.
- Immigrants are overrepresented among households with children, but also among single-person households. In fact, the single-person household is the most common living arrangement among immigrants in most countries, though families (adults with children) are most common in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Greece and Spain.

## 2.1. Size of the immigrant population

### Indicator context

The immigrant population is taken to be all people born outside the country in which they are resident. They may also be referred to as “the foreign-born”.

In 2021, the EU was home to 54 million immigrants, who account for 12% of its population. That share is slightly lower in the OECD, where 141 million foreign-born residents make up more than 10% of the total population. Immigrants represent more than one-fifth of the population in settlement countries like Australia, Canada and New Zealand. They also account for respectively slightly less than one-third and one-half of the population in Switzerland and Luxembourg. Both are longstanding destination countries with particularly large inflows from the EU/EFTA free mobility area over the past two decades. By contrast, most Asian, Latin American and Central European OECD countries have small immigrant populations which in 2021 accounted for less than 2.5% of the total populations of Mexico, Poland and Japan.

The overall number of immigrants has increased by more than 20% over the past decade, from 114 to 141 million in the OECD and from 44 to 54 million in the EU. The percentage of the foreign-born relative to the total population has grown in most countries, by over 2 percentage points in half of countries. The free movement of people in the EU/EFTA and recent inflows of humanitarian migrants in Europe and South America since 2015 have been the key drivers of growth in foreign-born populations. Their total number in the Nordic countries, for instance, has climbed by almost 50% – a rise of at least 2.5 percentage points in the overall population share of the 5 countries and over 5 points in Sweden and Iceland. In Malta, the share of the foreign-born has almost tripled, while increases have also been significant in countries with small immigrant populations in 2011. In Chile and Romania, the share of the foreign-born has actually more than tripled. And in Colombia it has climbed by almost 20 times due to the large inflows of humanitarian migrants from Venezuela. By contrast, new arrivals have not offset the ageing of the foreign-born population in Israel and the Baltic countries, which are among the few countries that have seen a drop in the foreign-born as a share of the total population. In the case of Israel, the fertility rate – one of the highest in the OECD – has also contributed to the decline in the share of the foreign-born.

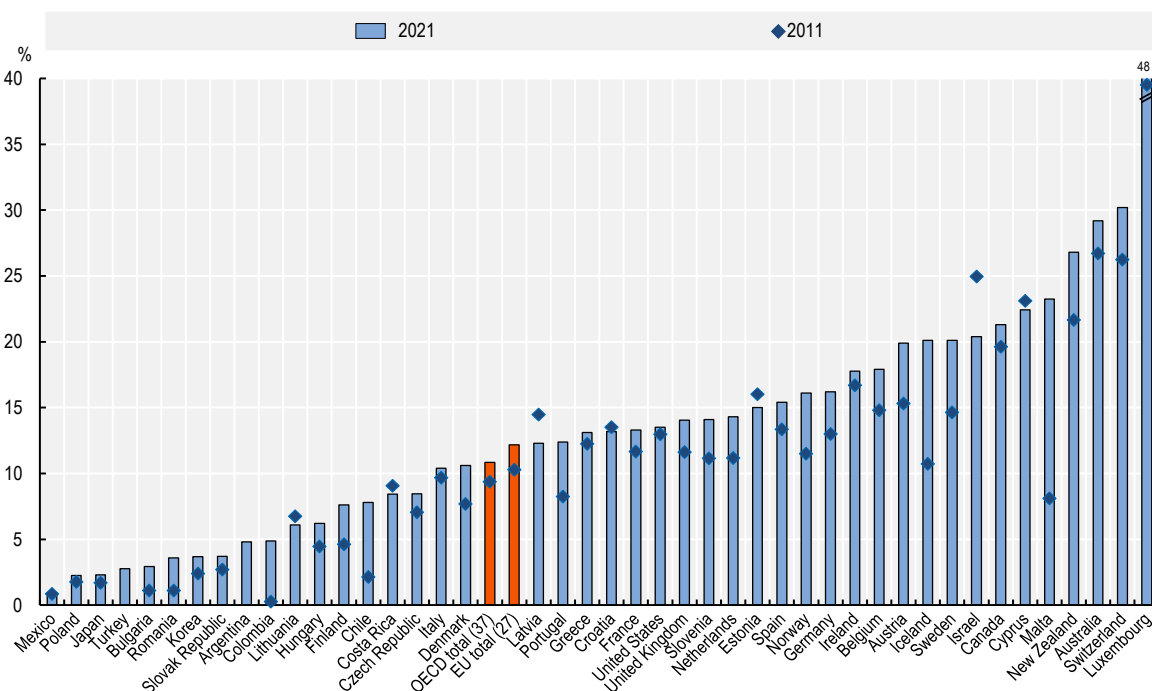
The distribution of the immigrant population by country of residence has diversified between 2011 and 2021 in both the OECD and the EU. Although nearly one-third of immigrants in the OECD live in the United States, that proportion has fallen by 3 percentage points. Germany is increasingly the largest host country in the EU, being home to 25% of all foreign-born residents. By contrast, the overall “market share” among other main recipient countries in the EU (e.g. France, Spain and Italy) has declined.

### Main findings

- The EU is home to 54 million immigrants, who account for 12% of its population’s stock. That share is slightly lower in the OECD, whose 141 million foreign-born residents account for more than 10% of the total population.
- Over the last decade, the immigrant population has increased in virtually all countries – by more than 20% overall in both the OECD and the EU.
- Among the countries which have seen the largest increases in the population shares of their foreign-born populations are the Nordic countries, Malta, and a number of Latin American countries (Chile, Colombia) that previously had small immigrant populations.

**Figure 2.1. Foreign-born shares of populations**

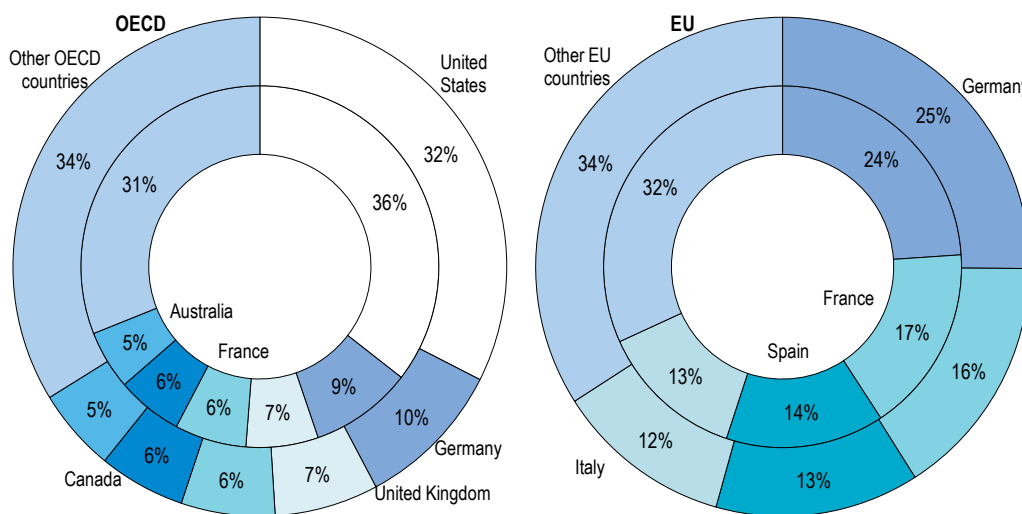
All ages, 2011 and 2021 or most recent year



StatLink <https://stat.link/ic4xdv>

**Figure 2.2. Distribution of the foreign-born population by host country**

2011 (inner ring of circle) and 2021 (outer ring)



StatLink <https://stat.link/jvoasw>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.

## 2.2. Share of women

### Indicator context

This indicator relates to the shares of people who declared themselves women in immigrant (or foreign-born) populations.

Whereas men account for the bulk of new immigrants in most countries, women make up most residents. Just as women tend to live longer, family migrants (where women are overrepresented) tend to stay longer in the host country. In the EU and the OECD, women account for 51% of immigrants of all ages, with higher shares (at least 54%) in Estonia, Latvia and Israel – countries with the largest proportions of immigrants aged over 65, where women are overrepresented because their life expectancy is longest. Female migrants are also overrepresented in Costa Rica and most Southern European countries, especially in Cyprus and Italy, which have attracted low-educated labour migrants over the last 20 years. Many work in the homecare sector where women are strongly overrepresented. At the other end of the spectrum, male foreign-born outnumber their female peers in most Nordic countries, Malta and Germany, all countries with recent large intakes of humanitarian migrants. Immigrant women are also underrepresented in countries where migrants have often come for employment and are concentrated in heavily male-dominated sectors, as in manufacturing and construction. This is the case in Central European countries and Korea. Indeed, women make up less than 46% of the immigrant population in Korea, Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

EU-wide, the female share of the immigrant population has remained stable over the last 14 years. Yet, shares have dropped in two-thirds of EU countries – by at least 6 percentage points in Lithuania, Malta and Poland. That pattern was driven mainly by two factors: first, the ageing (and associated mortality) of the immigrant population in Central and Eastern Europe as new immigration failed to offset female migrant deaths; second, large inflows of mainly male humanitarian migrants in the past decade, particularly in 2015-16. Such factors did not affect immigration in non-EU countries as much, so shares of women in immigrant populations have risen in most non-EU countries over the last 14 years. They also rose in some EU countries that experienced large-scale male labour immigration until the 2007-08 economic downturn, when some immigrant men lost their jobs and left host countries, while others were joined by their families, such as in Spain and Ireland. The share of women also grew considerably in Korea, largely due to marriage migration.

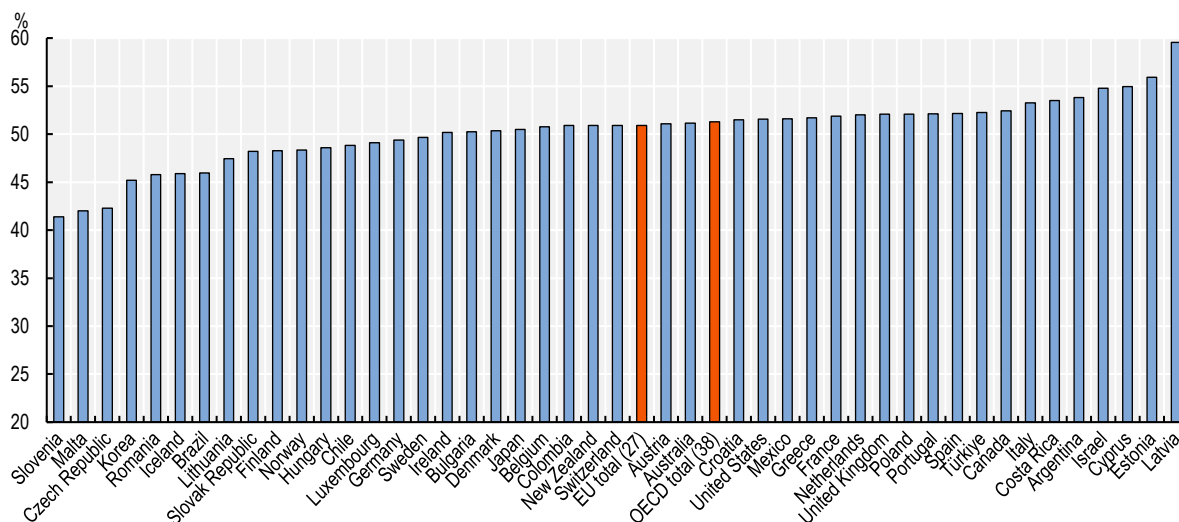
In the EU, EU-born are more likely than those from a third country to be women, a trend driven chiefly by the situation in Germany. In that country, EU-born women outnumber their male peers, while the opposite is true among non-EU migrants. Actually, while EU-born are more likely to be women in around two-thirds of EU countries, non-EU migrants are more likely to be women in all EU countries – except Slovenia, Romania, Sweden, Austria and Germany.

### Main findings

- In the EU and OECD, women account for 51% of immigrants. Shares are higher in countries with aged immigrant populations and low-educated labour migrants working in homecare (e.g. in Italy and Cyprus).
- Due to the ageing of the foreign-born population and humanitarian immigration, the share of women in immigrant populations has dropped in the last 14 years in two-thirds of EU countries, while it increased in most non-EU countries, especially Korea, as well as in Spain and Ireland.

Figure 2.3. Share of women among immigrants

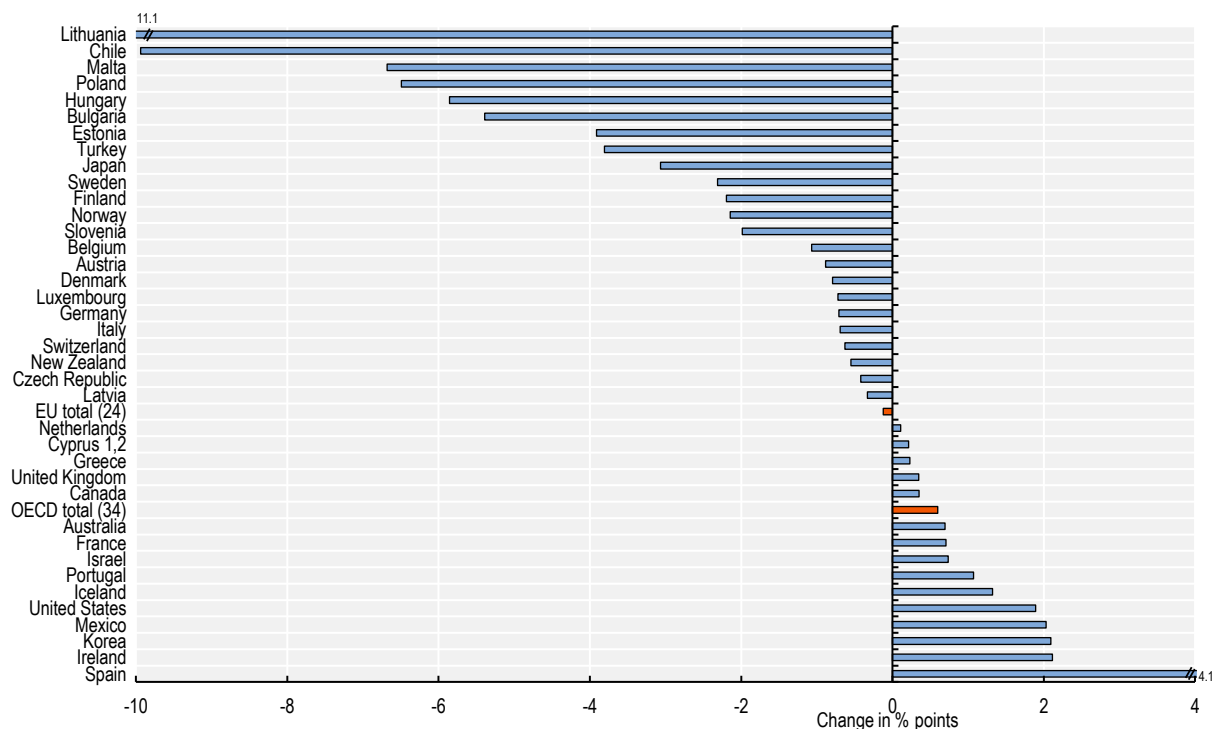
All ages, 2021



StatLink <https://stat.link/s7crp3>

Figure 2.4. How shares of women in the immigrant population have evolved

All ages, between 2007 and 2021



StatLink <https://stat.link/324vr8>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.

## 2.3. Fertility rate

### Indicator context

The total fertility rate (TFR) is the number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her lifetime if she were to spend her childbearing years bearing children in accordance with the age- and group-specific fertility rates of a given year.

TFRs are representative only of the female population that has given birth in the country of residence. Research shows that immigrant fertility may be disrupted, as women with a migration project usually prefer to delay their first birth until right after settling in the new host country. Therefore, the TFRs may be mechanically higher than what the “lifetime fertility” (children ever born at the end of fertile life of a specific cohort) would be. The reliability of these rates also depends on the reliability of the registration of vital statistics, on one hand, and the reliability of resident population estimates, on the other hand. Reliability is lower in countries which use a different reference year for their birth statistics and their population estimates. Estimates might also be biased in countries where the share of women/mothers with unknown countries of birth is high.

The TFR among immigrants was 2.02 children per woman in the EU in 2019 and 2.46 in the United States, much higher than the 1.44 and 1.58 children per native-born EU and US women, respectively. Foreign-born women had on average over 0.5 more children than their native peers in one-third of countries. Gaps between foreign- and native-born in total fertility are widest: in longstanding European destinations with high shares of non-EU immigrants from countries of high fertility (bar the Netherlands); in American OECD countries and most Southern European countries; and in Lithuania and Poland. Gaps exceed 0.8 child per woman in the two EU countries with the largest immigrant populations (Germany and France), the United States and Costa Rica. As explained in the box above, TFRs of immigrant women are higher than the lifetime fertility because some delay birth until right after migration. This is particularly true in countries where large shares of women have arrived as family migrants and/or are low educated. In the EU, the fertility of women born outside EU/EFTA is almost always higher than that of their EU-born and native-born peers, reaching 2.27 children EU-wide. By contrast, immigrant women have less children than native-born women in parts of Central and Eastern Europe, Australia, Türkiye, Japan, Israel, Iceland and Denmark. In Japan, TFR is lower among migrant women because many foreign-born women are international students or technical intern trainees with limited leave to remain. Mixed marriages in Japan are also more prone to divorce. TFRs are similar between the foreign- and native-born in Malta, Cyprus, Ireland and the Netherlands.

TFRs among both the foreign- and native-born fell between 2010 and 2019 in most countries for which data were available. Fertility trends in both groups are broadly similar, with some notable exceptions. In Ireland, the overall drop in TFR was driven solely by native-born women, while the rate among immigrants for the whole period remained unchanged. Conversely, TFRs declined among foreign-born women in Austria, Luxembourg and Portugal, while slightly increasing among their native-born peers. TFRs rose only among foreign-born women in Slovenia, and Malta.

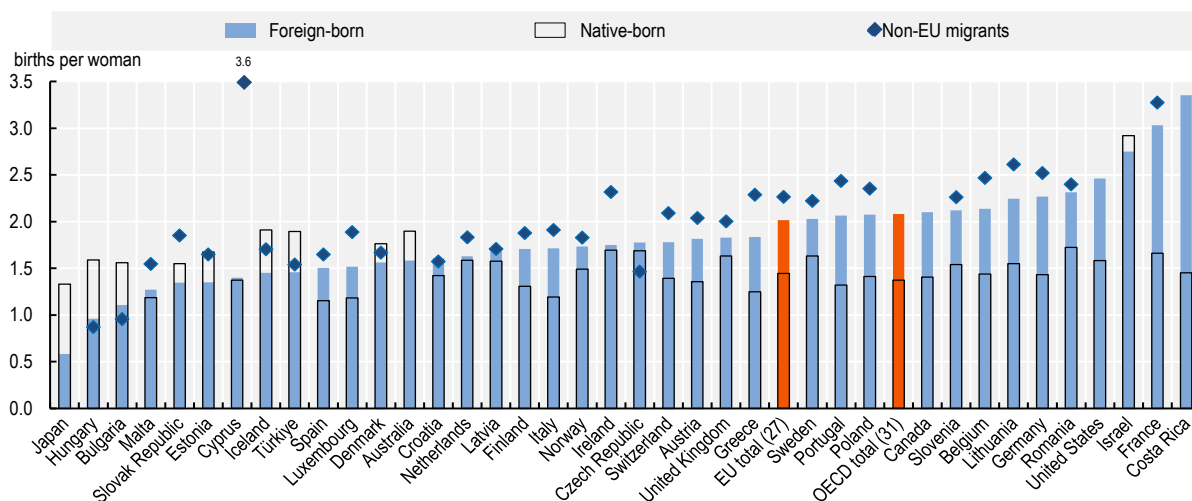
### Main findings

- The total fertility rate is 2.02 children per immigrant woman in the EU, much higher than the 1.44 children per native-born woman.
- Fertility gaps between foreign- and native-born women are widest in Costa Rica, the United States, France and Germany.



Figure 2.5. Total fertility rate

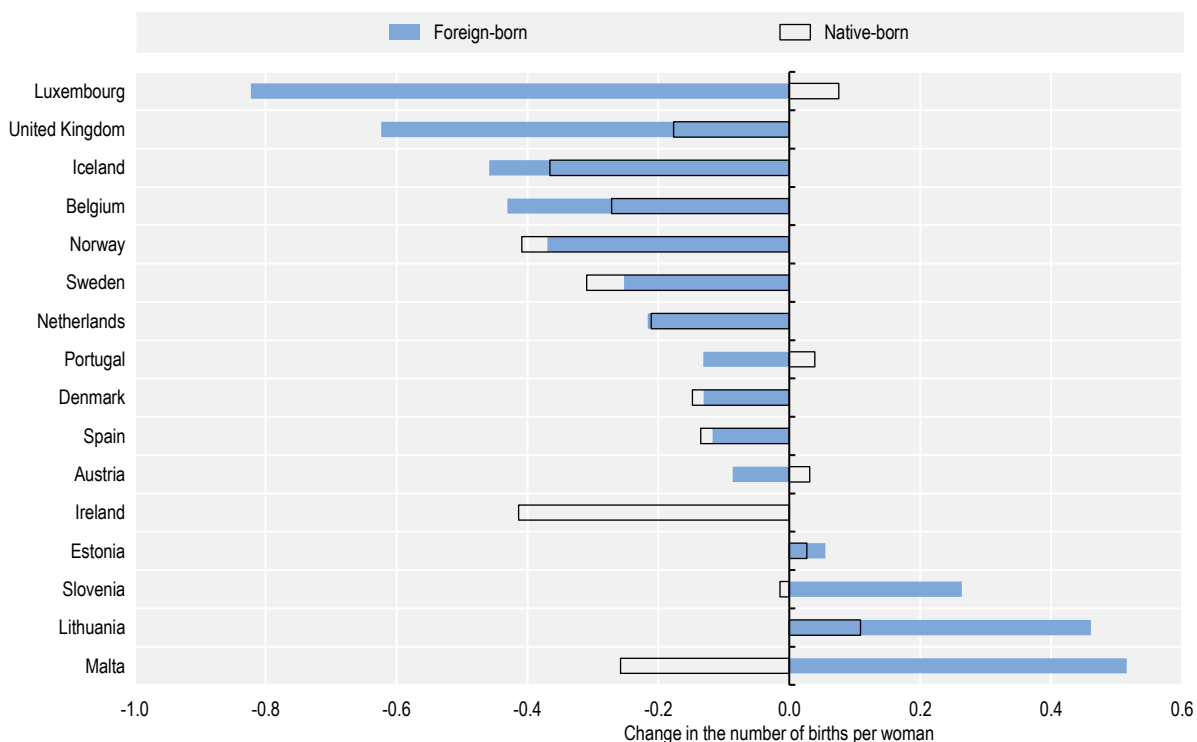
Women aged 15 to 49, 2019



StatLink <https://stat.link/9ltrw8>

Figure 2.6. How total fertility rates have evolved

Women aged 15 to 49, between 2010 and 2019



StatLink <https://stat.link/bydtk9>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.

## 2.4. Concentration in densely populated areas

### Indicator context

Economic opportunities and housing are not equally distributed across the country, with marked differences notably between densely populated and less populated areas.

A densely populated area is defined as a cluster of contiguous built-up grid cells with a certain minimum population threshold (generally at least 50 000 persons) and a minimum population density (generally at least 500 inhabitants per square kilometre). In European countries, the density measure is based on the number of individuals per square kilometre. In non-European countries, concentration is measured using municipality or metropolitan area boundaries with varying population thresholds, rendering both not fully comparable.

In all countries, immigrants are overrepresented in capital-cities and their metropolitan areas, where jobs and diasporas are concentrated. In the EU, more than half of foreign-born adults live in a densely populated area, while less than two in five native-born do. Immigrants are especially concentrated in most longstanding destination countries and Central and Eastern Europe. Outside Europe, immigrants are more heavily concentrated in densely populated areas than the native-born in the settlement countries and Latin America.

Foreign-born concentration in densely populated areas has grown in around two-thirds of countries between 2012 and 2020, in accordance with the overall urbanisation trend. As concentration increased even further for native-born in most countries, differences between the native- and foreign-born have dwindled, pointing to more evenly balanced urbanisation, partly due to efforts to disperse labour and humanitarian migration. In Central Europe, Ireland and some other countries, however, gaps have widened.

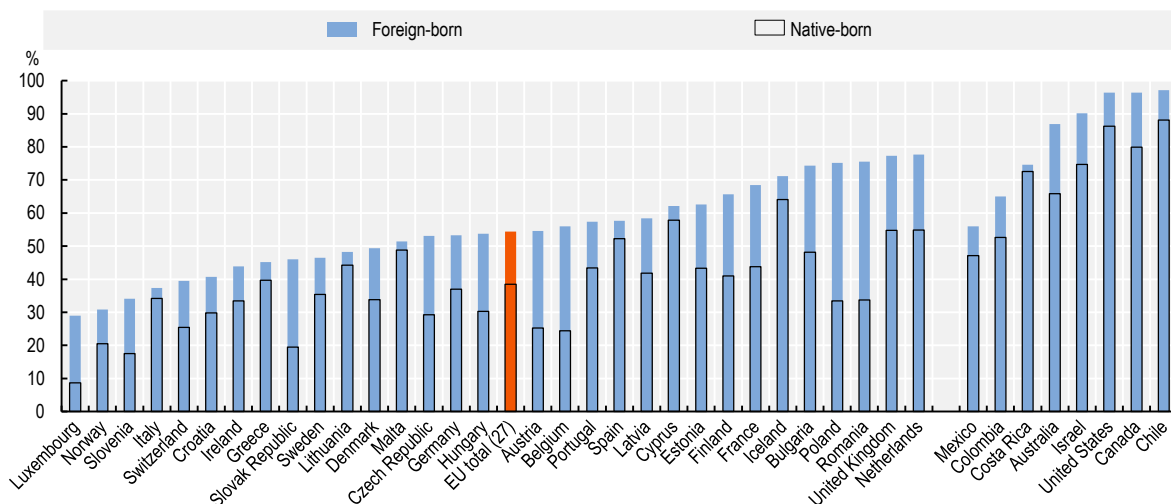
EU-wide, 59% of recent migrants (less than five years of residence) live in densely populated areas, compared to 52% of their long-settled peers (10 years or more). Compared with settled migrants, new arrivals are particularly likely to live in densely populated areas in Portugal, Ireland and Luxembourg. In Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland, where new humanitarian migrants are distributed across the country based on national legislation which allows them to choose their place of residence only after some years, settled migrants are actually more likely to live in densely populated areas than their recent peers. Immigrants born outside the EU are especially concentrated in densely populated areas. EU-wide, their share in 2020 was 58%, 13 percentage points higher than among EU-born and 19 points more than the native-born. The highly educated, whatever their place of birth, are more likely to live in urban areas virtually everywhere, where highly skilled job opportunities are concentrated. Only in Belgium and the United Kingdom are the low-educated – both foreign- and native-born – more likely to live in urban areas.

### Main findings

- In all countries, immigrants are overrepresented in densely populated areas, especially in most longstanding destination countries and Central and Eastern European countries.
- In most countries, shares of the foreign- and native-born living in densely populated areas were closer in 2020 than in 2012.
- Immigrants born outside the EU are particularly concentrated in densely populated areas. EU-wide, their share in 2020 was 58%, 13 percentage points higher than among EU-born and 19 points more than among native-born.

Figure 2.7. Shares of individuals living in densely populated areas

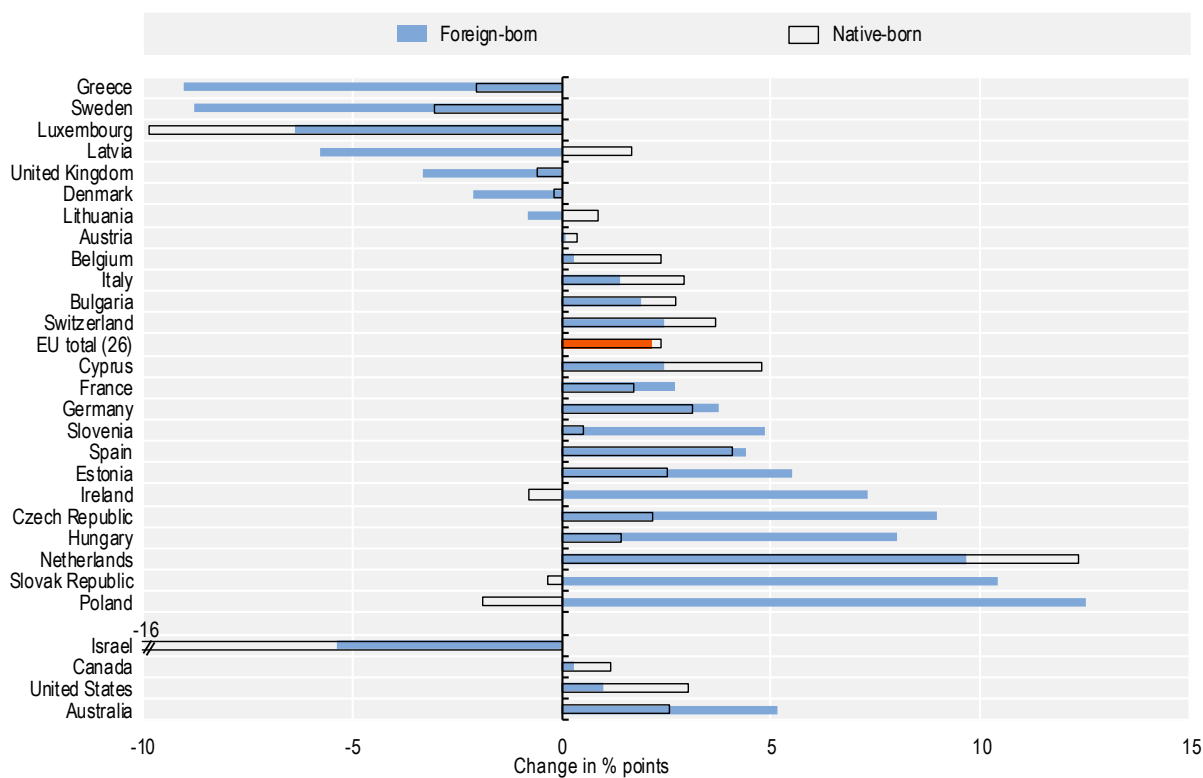
Population aged 15 to 64, 2020



StatLink <https://stat.link/irvf30>

Figure 2.8. How shares of individuals living in densely populated areas have evolved

Population aged 15 to 64, between 2010/12 and 2020



StatLink <https://stat.link/0wcuuy>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.

## 2.5. Immigrant households

### Indicator context

An immigrant household is a group of persons who share the same dwelling, where: i) at least one responsible person of the household (see glossary) is an immigrant (loose definition); or ii) all responsible persons of the household are immigrants (strict definition). The strict definition applies in this publication, unless otherwise stated. The average sizes of households are calculated for entirely foreign-born or entirely native-born households.

Across the EU, 12% of households are managed by at least one immigrant. In around two-thirds of these, all responsible persons of the household are immigrants, while around one-third of them are mixed – where one responsible person is foreign- and the other native-born. Immigrant households are particularly numerous in Australia, New Zealand and Israel, where at least two households in five are managed by at least one immigrant. Mixed households account for more than 30% of households with at least one foreign-born responsible person in: Central European countries, where the migrant population has been built by border changes, nation-building and national minorities; Portugal, Malta and Greece; and longstanding immigrant destinations with predominantly non-EU migrants (Germany, France and the Netherlands). By contrast, in other Southern European countries, Luxembourg, Estonia and Latvia, the vast majority of households with at least one foreign-born responsible person are managed solely by immigrants.

In the EU, over two-thirds of households that comprise solely immigrants are managed by non-EU migrants. Foreign-born from a third country are less common in mixed households, although they still account for over three-fifths of households with one foreign- and one native-born responsible person EU-wide. Austria, Belgium and Switzerland are the only countries where EU-born are the most widely represented in mixed households. Just 0.2% of households in the EU comprise one EU-born and one non-EU immigrant responsible for the household.

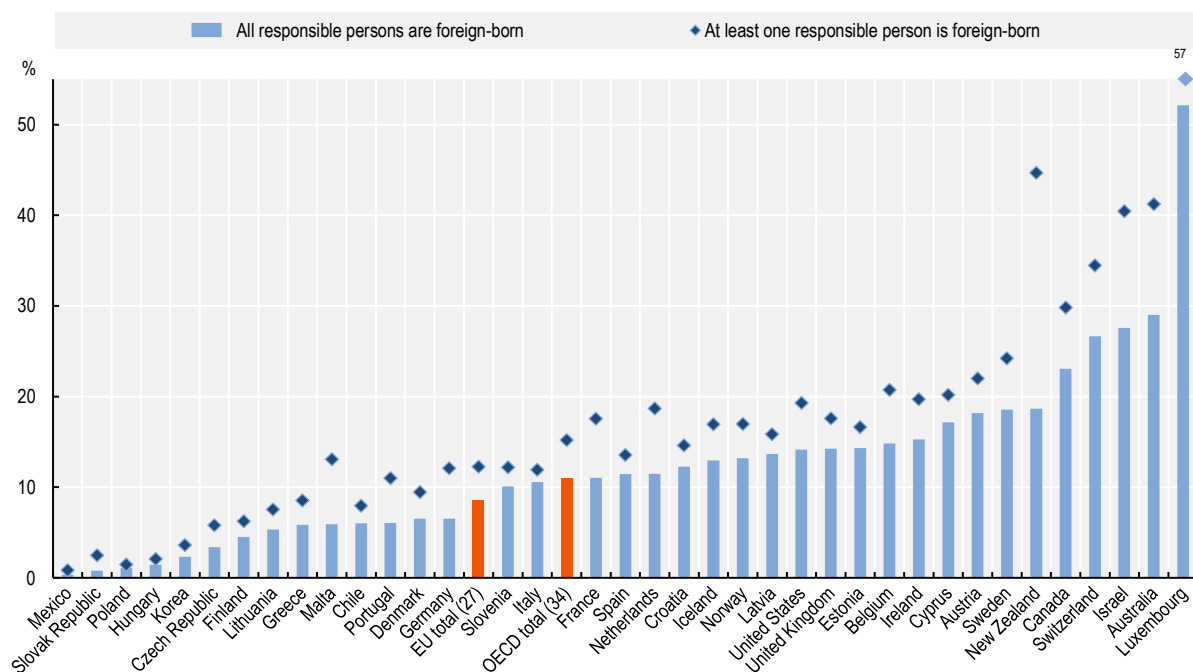
Immigrant households are larger than native-born ones in most OECD and EU countries. They are on average 0.2 people larger EU-wide and more than 0.5 larger in Spain, the United-States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Colombia, Costa Rica and Luxembourg. However, native-born households are larger, on average, in two-fifths of countries, as in Mexico, Chile, Israel, the Netherlands, and most of Central and Eastern Europe. As the number of children impacts on the size of a household, native-born households in Mexico and Israel, where native-born families are more likely to have children than immigrant ones, tend to be larger. Accordingly, in some Central and Eastern European countries where the foreign-born are older, native-born households are more than twice as likely to have children as their foreign-born peers. In the Netherlands, immigrant households are smaller, as most are single persons (see Indicator 2.6).

### Main findings

- Across the EU, 12% of households are managed by at least one immigrant. Outside Europe, shares of immigrant households tend to be much higher.
- Mixed households are more common among households with at least one foreign-born responsible person in Central European countries, Portugal, Greece, Malta and in longstanding immigrant destinations with predominantly non-EU migrants.
- Immigrant households are larger than native-born ones in most countries, though not in Israel, some Latin American countries, the Netherlands, and most of Central and Eastern Europe.

Figure 2.9. Households managed by immigrants

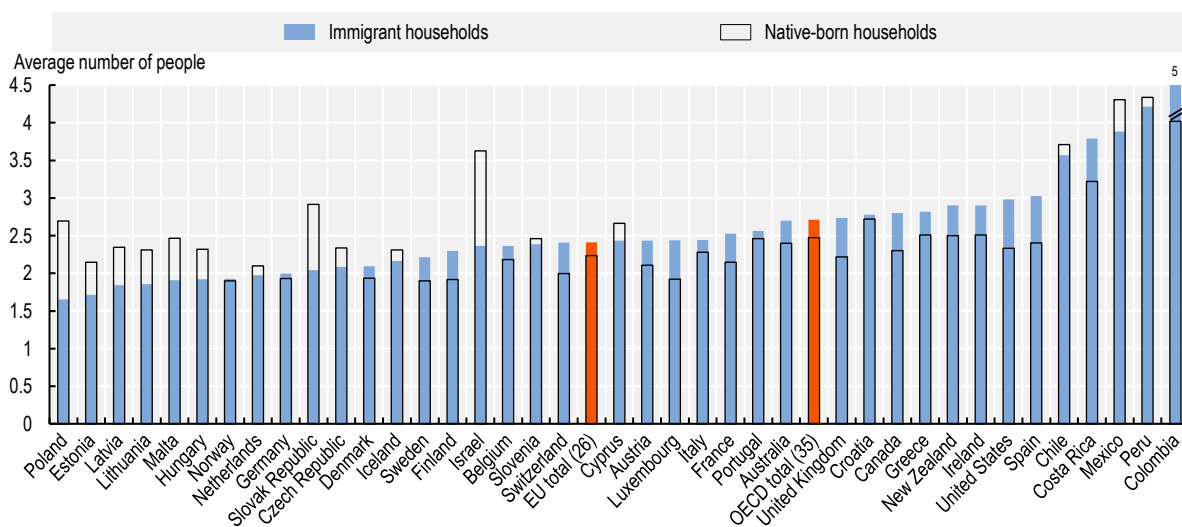
2020



StatLink <https://stat.link/w0ivyf>

Figure 2.10. Household sizes

Households with solely immigrant or native-born responsible persons, 2020



StatLink <https://stat.link/us39i2>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.

## 2.6. Immigrant household composition

### Indicator context

Households are divided into four categories: i) single-person households: one adult, no children; ii) adults without children; iii) single-parent families: single-parent households with at least one child; iv) families: adults with at least one child.

Almost 40% of immigrant households in the EU are single-person arrangements without children. Families and adults without children each make up 28% of all immigrant households, and 5% are single-parent families. Single-person households are the most common living set-up among immigrants in most European countries, Korea, Australia and Canada. Families are, however, the most common arrangements in most Latin American countries, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Greece and Spain. The United States has about half as many single-person households as in the EU, and as many families with children as without. Overall, around one-third of immigrant households have children in both the EU and the OECD, a share that rises to more than half in Ireland. By contrast, over 70% of immigrant households do not include any child in Central and Eastern European countries, where shares of older immigrants are greatest. Households without children also make up the vast majority of immigrant households in settlement countries with many labour migrants; longstanding European destinations where labour migrants who entered during the “guest worker” era are ageing; and in countries with large recent intakes of humanitarian migrants, such as Sweden and Norway.

The foreign-born are more likely to live alone than their native-born peers in over two-thirds of countries in the EU. This pattern is especially true in countries with older immigrant populations, such as the Baltic countries and Israel. This is also the case in longstanding destinations like Germany and the Netherlands, or countries like Italy that have recently taken in single labour migrants. By contrast, in most non-European countries and in European countries that usually attract immigrants from other EU countries (Luxembourg and Switzerland), the native-born are more likely to live alone than immigrants.

In three-fourths of countries, immigrants are also more likely than the native-born to live in households with adults and at least one child. The most widespread native-born living set-up is the household with adults without children, which includes couples without children, parents living with their adult children, and flat shares. In most OECD countries with ageing populations, elderly native-born couples indeed increase the incidence of households with adults but no children in the household. In countries where immigrants are on average younger than the native-born (see Indicator 6.1), immigrant households are more likely to be families, with the largest gaps in Spain, Greece, Finland, Ireland and some Latin American countries. Single-parent households are also more widespread among the foreign- than the native-born in two countries out of three. Although the incidence is usually only slightly higher, it is double in countries like Finland, the Netherlands and Belgium.

### Main findings

- The single-person household is the most common living arrangement among immigrants in most countries. Families (i.e. adults with children) are however the most common arrangements in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Greece, Spain and some Latin American countries.
- Immigrants are overrepresented among single-person households without children and in families with children.

**Table 2.1. Composition of households**

Percentages (4 columns on the left) and differences in percentage points (4 columns on the right), 2020

	Immigrant households				Difference (+/-) with native-born households +: higher than the native-born -: lower than the native-born			
	No child in the household		One child or more in the household		No child in the household		One child or more in the household	
	Single person	More than one adult	Single person	More than one adult	Single person	More than one adult	Single person	More than one adult
	Total=100				Difference in percentage points			
Australia	35.2	31.7	5.3	27.8	-3.3	-1.1	-1.1	+5.6
Austria	36.3	30.1	4.1	29.5	-3.8	-10.1	+2.8	+11.2
Belgium	42.0	22.9	8.2	26.8	+6.0	-17.2	+4.3	+6.9
Canada	36.8	30.0	6.6	26.6	-3.8	-4.3	+0.1	+8.0
Chile	14.7	28.5	9.3	47.4	-2.3	-11.3	+1.2	+12.3
Colombia	13.4	16.9	8.4	61.4	-3.8	-13.5	-0.1	+17.6
Costa Rica	12.7	23.3	8.8	55.2	-3.1	-17.3	+2.0	+18.1
Croatia	25.8	46.3	0.8	27.0	+1.2	-1.5	-0.7	+0.9
Cyprus	28.3	36.9	4.9	30.0	+8.3	-14.0	+3.0	+2.7
Czech Republic	43.2	30.3	4.4	22.1	+13.4	-11.1	+1.2	-3.5
Denmark	44.0	27.5	6.0	22.5	-2.2	-5.3	+1.8	+5.6
Estonia	53.6	35.7	2.3	8.5	+11.9	+4.5	-1.3	-15.1
Finland	39.9	17.8	7.0	35.3	-6.6	-16.8	+4.0	+19.4
France	37.5	31.1	5.1	26.3	+0.9	-6.9	+1.3	+4.8
Germany	49.6	25.3	4.1	21.0	+4.6	-10.8	+0.8	+5.4
Greece	23.7	34.5	1.9	39.9	-2.9	-17.1	+1.3	+18.7
Hungary	48.6	33.7	0.7	17.0	+16.5	-9.8	-1.5	-5.1
Iceland	39.8	31.5	3.9	24.8	+3.2	-1.8	-1.6	+0.2
Ireland	21.1	27.1	8.6	43.2	-9.3	-12.1	+3.8	+17.7
Israel	35.1	44.2	0.4	20.3	+17.0	+15.3	-2.1	-30.2
Italy	39.5	23.8	5.3	31.5	+6.8	-20.7	+2.5	+11.5
Korea	50.8	30.8	5.3	13.1	-4.7	-9.8	+1.7	+12.7
Latvia	46.1	43.0	1.5	9.4	+12.4	+6.4	-3.2	-15.6
Lithuania	43.3	44.8	1.6	10.3	+11.2	+3.0	-1.7	-12.5
Luxembourg	32.0	31.7	6.5	29.7	-12.1	-5.8	+1.5	+16.4
Malta	50.7	25.8	3.9	19.6	+22.7	-15.1	+0.3	-7.9
Mexico	34.7	32.6	6.8	25.9	+23.9	-1.9	+2.7	-24.7
Netherlands	56.4	18.0	6.4	19.2	+16.9	-21.0	+4.0	+0.1
New Zealand	30.1	33.2	6.1	30.6	-10.8	0.0	-2.4	+13.2
Norway	56.9	16.0	7.5	19.6	+8.2	-14.7	+3.4	+3.1
Poland	57.9	31.9	1.7	8.6	+30.3	-10.8	+0.4	-19.9
Portugal	25.2	37.6	6.8	30.4	+3.0	-13.1	+3.6	+6.6
Slovak Republic	46.0	36.5	4.0	13.5	+29.6	-14.6	+3.2	-18.1
Slovenia	32.8	39.4	1.4	26.4	+3.9	-3.4	-0.8	+0.4
Spain	20.6	32.5	5.4	41.5	-7.1	-15.3	+3.5	+18.9
Sweden	48.6	18.9	6.7	25.8	+1.2	-12.9	+1.9	+9.8
Switzerland	35.8	32.6	4.1	27.5	-6.2	-8.4	+1.8	+12.7
United Kingdom	24.5	31.2	6.6	37.8	-8.6	-10.7	+2.2	+17.0
United States	22.4	36.7	4.8	36.1	-8.8	-5.2	-0.3	+14.3
<b>OECD total (34)</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>-4.3</b>	<b>-8.7</b>	<b>+1.3</b>	<b>+11.7</b>
<b>EU total (26)</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>+3.5</b>	<b>-13.3</b>	<b>+2.4</b>	<b>+7.3</b>

StatLink  <https://stat.link/I9m60c>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.

## 2.7. Immigration flows by legal category

### Indicator context

Legal category of migration largely influences the integration path in labour market and society.

Permanent immigrants are foreign nationals who received a residence permit that either grants them the right to stay permanently or can be indefinitely renewed. This section considers: permanent immigration flows as a percentage of the total population; their composition by legal category of entry.

In 2021, 5 million immigrants were granted permanent residence in the OECD countries. The number was 2.4 million in the EU countries considered. Recent permanent inflows accounted for 0.6% of the EU's total population and 0.4% of the OECD's. Recent permanent immigrants make up the highest shares of the population in the European countries with traditionally high EU migrant intakes, such as Luxembourg (3.2%) and Switzerland (1.4%) and Belgium (0.9%), as well as in Canada (1.1%). They are slightly lower in Australia, New Zealand and Germany (over 0.6%), and much lower in OECD countries with large immigrant-intake, such as the United Kingdom (0.5%), France (0.4%) and the United States (0.2%). New permanent inflows in 2021 made up less than 0.2% of the population in Asian and Latin American OECD countries.

In 2020, the COVID-19 crisis caused the sharpest drop on record in migration flows. Most countries have not recovered from this decline. Nevertheless, immigration as share of the population in 2021 were significantly higher than in the decade before 2020 in about half of countries, especially in Poland, Portugal and the Czech Republic. Other countries experienced a relative decline in 2021, with the steepest falls in Luxembourg, the countries that kept their borders closed the longest (Australia and New Zealand), and those that took in large numbers of humanitarian migrants in the previous decade (Norway and Sweden).

Although it is difficult to clearly assess whether mobile EU citizens within the EU come on a temporary or permanent basis, the estimated free intra-EU movement of labour and people has driven almost half of all permanent flows in the EU over the last 15 years, and at least three-quarters in Luxembourg, Ireland and Switzerland. It accounted for more than family migration (28%) and labour migration (14%) of third-country nationals EU-wide. In the OECD, family migration (36%), free movement (28%), and labour migration and accompanying dependents (14% + 7%) have driven inflows over the last 15 years. Family migration represented behind nearly two-thirds of immigration to the United States and over 40% to France. Labour migration (including accompanying family) drove more than three-fifths of permanent flows into Australia and New Zealand with their large-scale labour migration programmes. Despite recent rises, humanitarian migration accounted for less than 10% of all permanent flows into the OECD and EU. Nevertheless, they represented over 15% of flows into Germany and Finland, and about a quarter into Sweden.

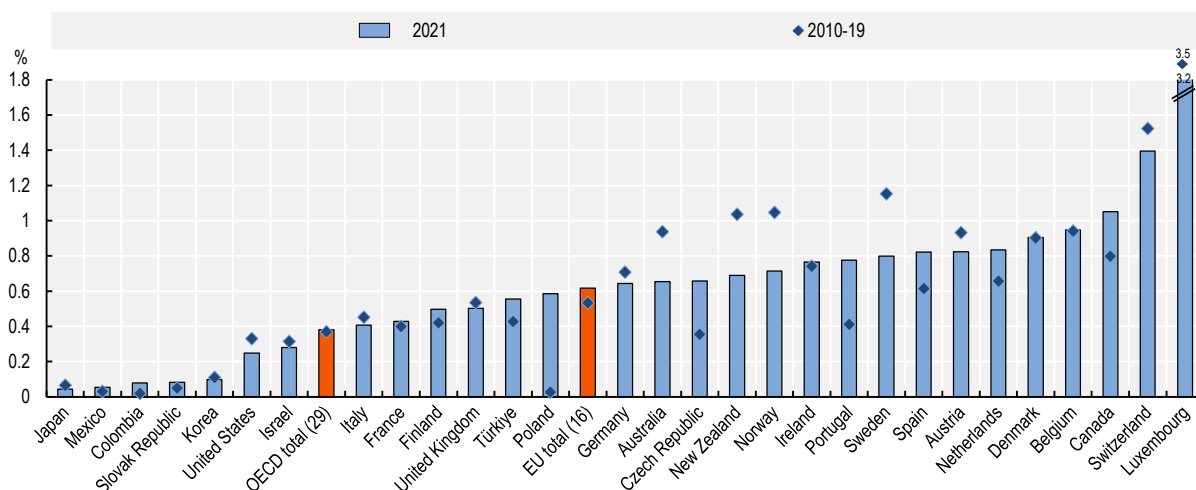
### Main findings

- In 2021, annual permanent immigration flows accounted for 0.6% of the EU's total population and 0.4% of the OECD's – respectively 2.4 and 5 million.
- Due to the COVID-19 crisis, inflows as shares of the population were still lower in 2021 than in 2010-19 in around half of countries, especially in Norway, New Zealand, Australia and Sweden.
- The intra-EU movement of labour and people has driven almost half of all permanent flows in the EU over the last 15 years. The driving category has been family migration in the United States and France, and labour migration in Australia and New Zealand.



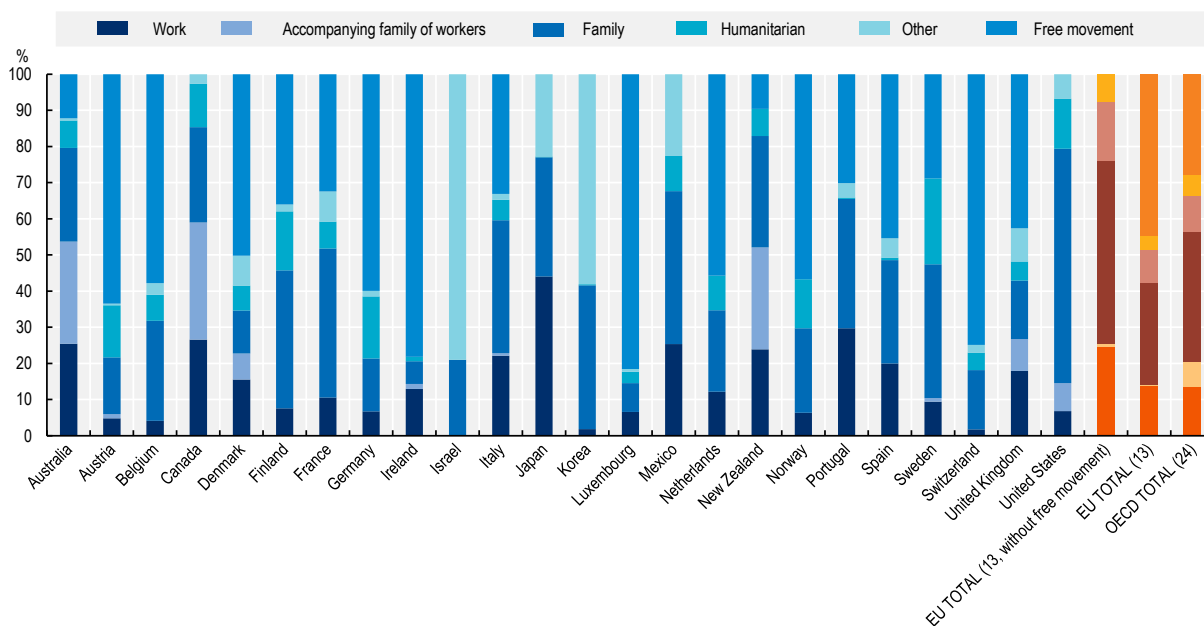
**Figure 2.11. Inflows of permanent migrants**

Share of the total population (all ages), in 2010-19 and 2021



StatLink  <https://stat.link/6r0ja5>

**Figure 2.12. Categories of entry, 2005-20**



StatLink <https://stat.link/zdc6jp>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.

## 2.8. Duration of stay and regions of origin

### Indicator context

The challenges newcomers face are different from those settled immigrants face. They need to learn the language, find a job, and build networks. Challenges may also differ according to the country of birth, which is often a proxy for category of migration where this is not available.

This section considers immigrants who arrived recently (less than 5 years ago) and those who settled (10 years or more). The region of birth differentiates between immigrants from Asia, Africa, Europe (including Türkiye), Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Canada/United States/Oceania.

In the EU and the OECD, more than two-thirds of the foreign-born have been in their host country for at least 10 years, while less than 17% of the overall immigrant population are recent arrivals. Settled migrants account for an overwhelming majority of the foreign-born in Croatia (96%) and the Baltic countries, where many are foreign-born due to nation building or border changes, as well as in Israel. Similarly, in some longstanding migrant destinations and settlement countries (the United States, France and the Netherlands), around three-quarters of the foreign-born have resided in their host-country for 10 years or more. The same holds true of the Southern European countries (except Cyprus and Malta), which saw a decline in their labour migrant intake in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. In countries whose intake is predominantly related to recent humanitarian or labour migration (e.g. Japan, Korea, Sweden, Bulgaria and Cyprus), recent migrants account for at least 30% of the foreign-born population. In Colombia, around eight immigrants in ten arrived less than five years previously, in Chile two-thirds, and in Korea one-half.

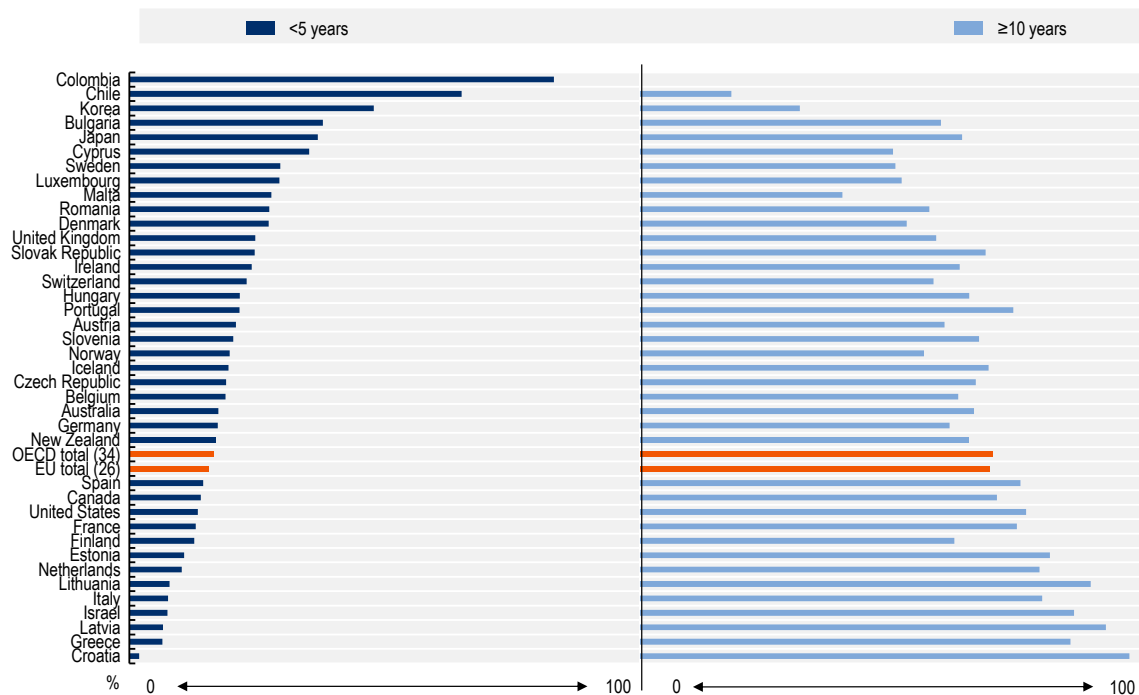
Half of the EU's immigrant population originates from European countries, with 30% coming from other EU member states. In around two in five EU countries, immigrants from Europe account for more than 70% of the foreign-born. EU-born constitute a large majority in Luxembourg (75%), Hungary (62%) and the Slovak Republic (57%). In over a quarter of EU countries, though, most immigrants come from outside Europe – partially due to colonial legacies and so-called guest-worker migration following World War II. In some longstanding destinations, such as France, 61% of the foreign-born come from Africa, as do 28% of the foreign-born in Belgium. In the Netherlands, shares of African, Asian and Latin American immigrants are similar in size (around 20% each). In Portugal, over one-third of migrants were born in Africa and Latin America (chiefly Brazil), while over two in five migrants in Spain are from Latin America. In the Nordic countries (except Iceland), characterised by significant humanitarian flows, a considerable share of immigrants, between 30% and 44%, were born in Asia (mainly the Middle East). In Japan and Korea, more than 79% of immigrants are from Asian countries. In Canada and Australia, too, more than half of the foreign-born are from Asia, while over 50% of migrants in the United States were born in Latin America. This is also the case for more than nine in ten immigrants in Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica.

### Main findings

- More than two-thirds of migrants in both the OECD and the EU have been residents in their host countries for 10 years or more.
- Around one-half of the EU's immigrant population comes from other European countries, 30% being born in EU27 member states.
- Immigrants outside Europe also tend to originate from the same region or neighbouring countries. More than 79% of immigrants in Japan and Korea are from Asia, more than 9 in 10 in Latin American countries were born in the Americas, as were half of US immigrants.

Figure 2.13. Duration of stay among immigrants

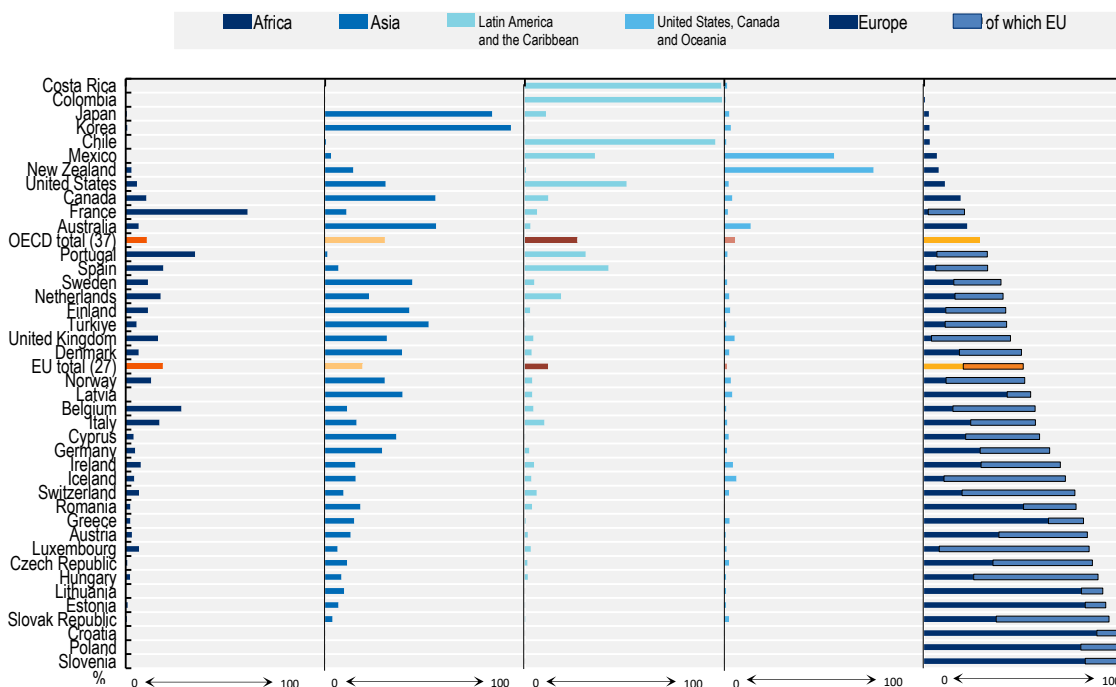
Population aged 15-64, 2020




StatLink  <https://stat.link/dvu2ob>

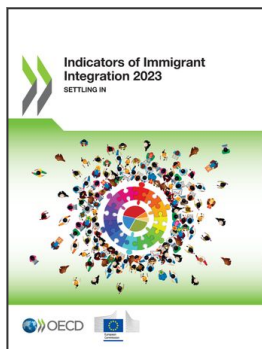
Figure 2.14. Regions of birth

Population aged 15 to 64, 2020



StatLink  <https://stat.link/5cn86k>

Notes and sources are to be found in the respective StatLinks.



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