

Irregular immigration in the EU: Facts and Figures

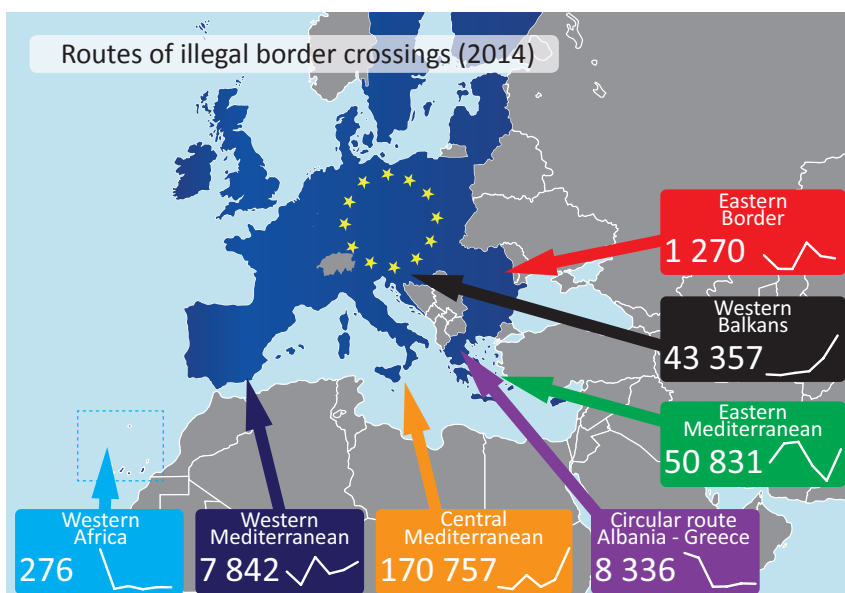
Irregular immigrants are third-country nationals who do not fulfil, or no longer fulfil, the conditions of entry as set out in Article 5 of the [Schengen Borders Code](#) or other conditions for entry, stay or residence in that Member State. In contrast, [asylum-seekers](#) are persons claiming international protection due to the risk of persecution in their home country. For data on asylum-seekers in the EU, please see our Infographic [Asylum in the EU: Facts and Figures](#).

The EU's legal framework for irregular immigration is scattered over many legal instruments. Those which apply at the point of a migrant's arrival focus on border management, and prevention of irregular immigration through cooperation with countries of origin and transit. For further information, please see our Briefing [EU legal framework on asylum and irregular immigration 'on arrival'](#).

Detections of illegal border crossings

[Frontex](#), the EU border surveillance agency, collects inter alia data on detections of illegal crossings of the EU's external borders by national border-control authorities. External borders are borders between Member States and third countries as well as between Schengen Associated Countries (e.g. Norway, Iceland and Switzerland) and third countries.

EU law does not provide for the regulated arrival of asylum-seekers, so their entry into EU territory is in most cases irregular, as they travel without the necessary documentation and/or use unauthorised border-crossing points. Illegal border crossings therefore include both categories, irregular immigrants and possible future asylum-seekers.



The bar chart shows the illegal border crossings by third-country citizens via sea or land routes. In 2014 there was an increase almost three fold, in comparison with 2013, due to a large increase in border crossings by citizens of Syria, Afghanistan and Eritrea.

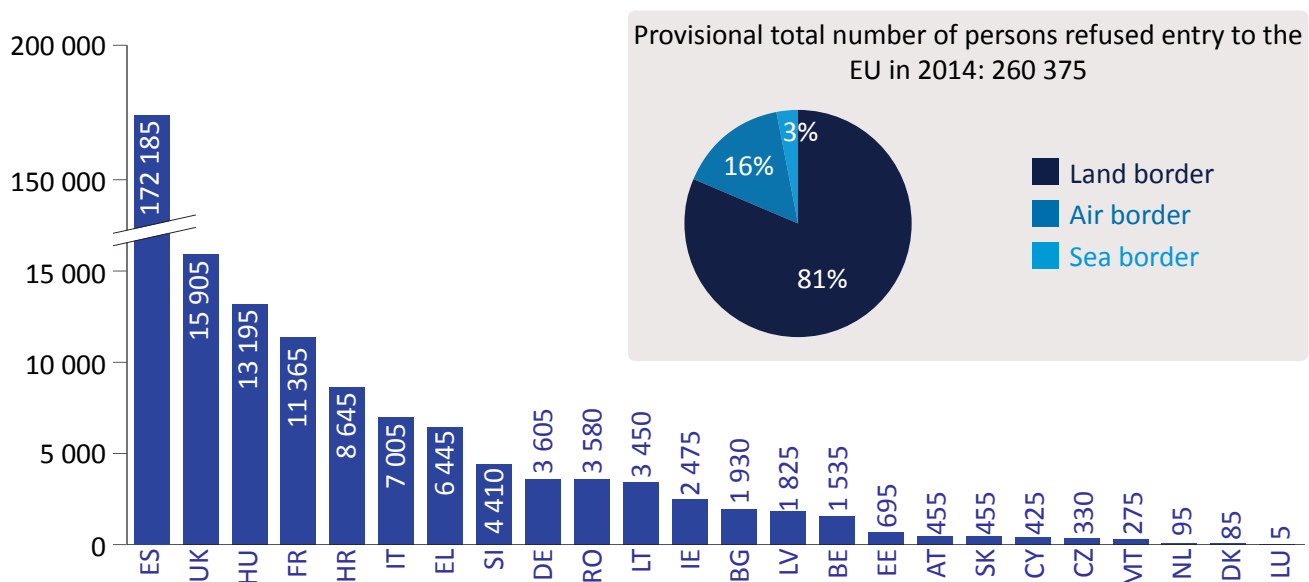
The map shows the routes of illegal entries in the year 2014. The Central Mediterranean route (Italy and Malta) is the most used, with 171 000 detections - an increase of more than four times compared to 2013. The line chart within each box shows the trend over the period 2009 - 2014.

Number of persons refused entry at the EU's external borders (2014)

Persons refused entry to the EU are third-country citizens who have been formally refused entry to the territory of a Member State. Each person is counted only once, no matter the number of refusals issued to that person. The reasons of refusal can be different, inter alia, having a false or invalid visa, residence permit or travel document; purpose and condition of stay not justified, or other reasons established in the Schengen Borders Code.

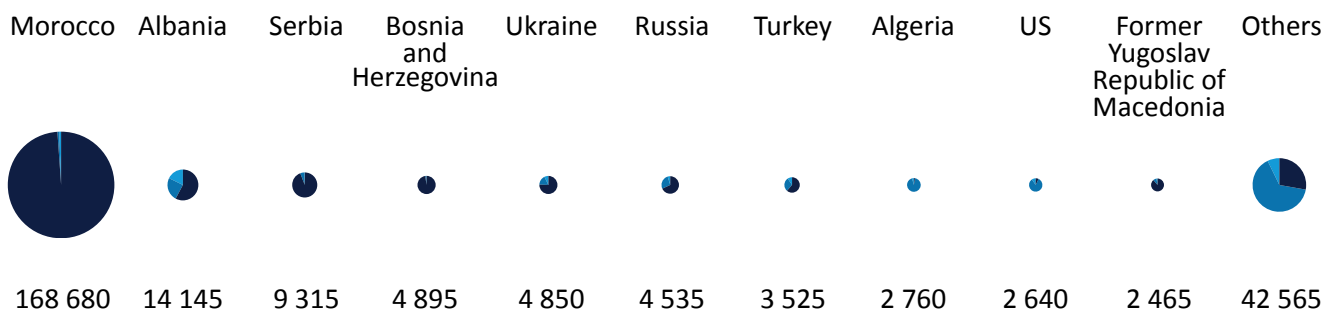
The bar chart shows the number of persons refused entry by Member States in 2014. The pie chart divides the refusals according to border type.

Spain has the highest number of entry refusals, with 97% of the citizens refused entry being Moroccans coming over the land border. Data for Poland, Finland, Portugal and Sweden are missing and this is reflected in the total EU number. For 2013, Poland reported 40 385 persons refused entry. It ranked second after Spain in entry refusals, with a large number of people coming from Russia, Ukraine and Georgia, accounting for 87% of the total refusals in Poland. The EU total for the year 2013 was 326 320 persons.



Top 10 nationalities of persons refused entry in the EU (2014)

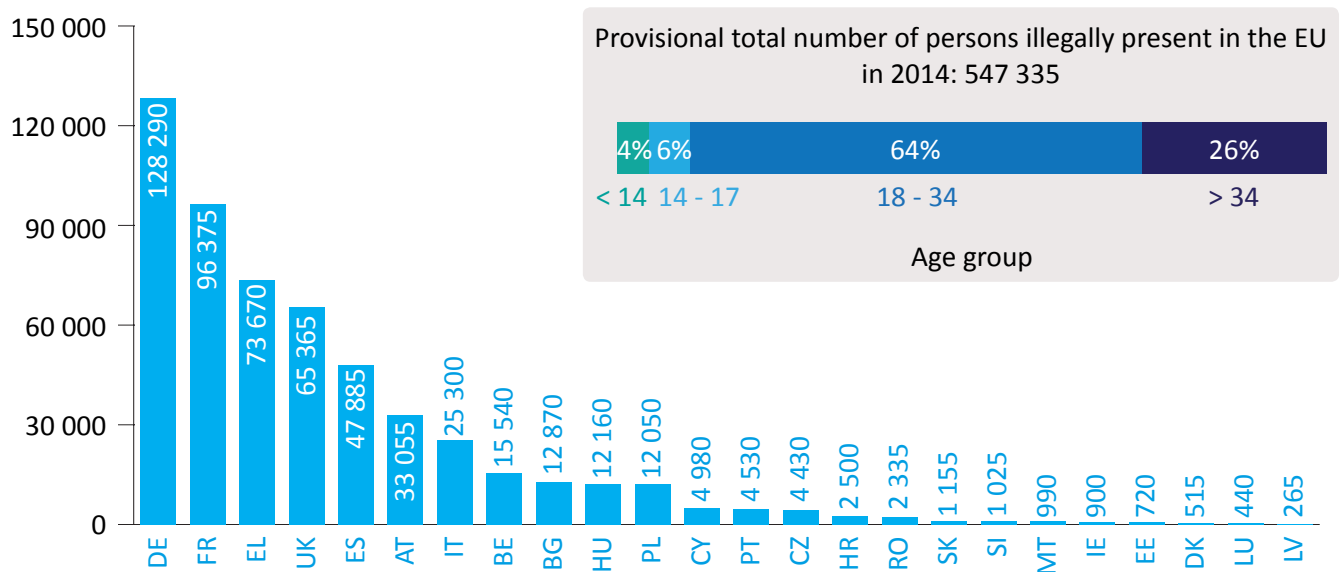
The following infographic shows the top 10 countries of nationality of persons refused entry to the EU28 in 2014. 65% of all third-country nationals refused entry were Moroccan. As mentioned above, data for Poland for 2014 is missing. In 2013, some 28 000 Russian and Ukrainian nationals were refused entry to Poland.



Number of persons found to be illegally present in EU Member States (2014)

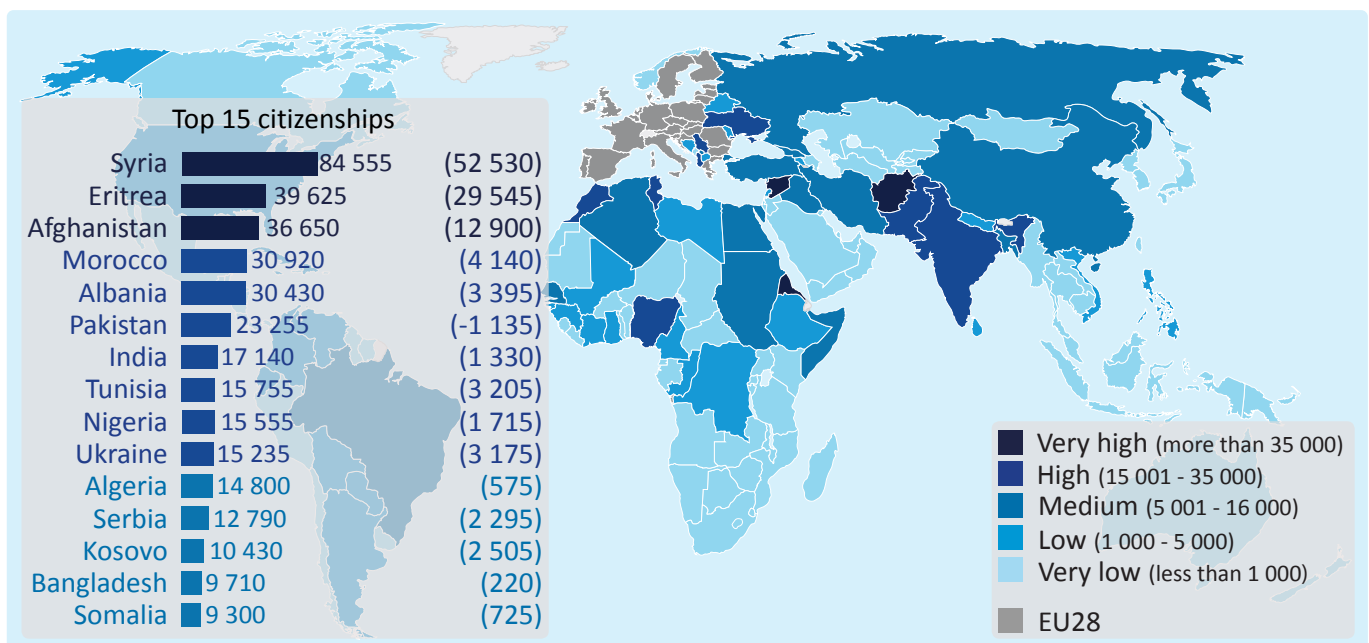
Persons found to be illegally present on EU territory are third-country nationals who have been detected by Member States' authorities and have been determined not to fulfil the conditions for entry, stay or residence in that Member State. These persons could have entered the EU avoiding immigration control or with false documents, or they may have entered legitimately but have stayed there on an illegal basis (for example by staying longer than the authorised period). As the number refers only to 'detected' irregular immigrants, it does not give the overall number of irregular immigrants in the Member States which is estimated to be much higher.

The bar chart shows the number of persons found to be illegally present in the EU28, split by Member State. No data are available for Sweden, Finland, Netherlands and Lithuania. The breakdown by age group at EU level is also presented.



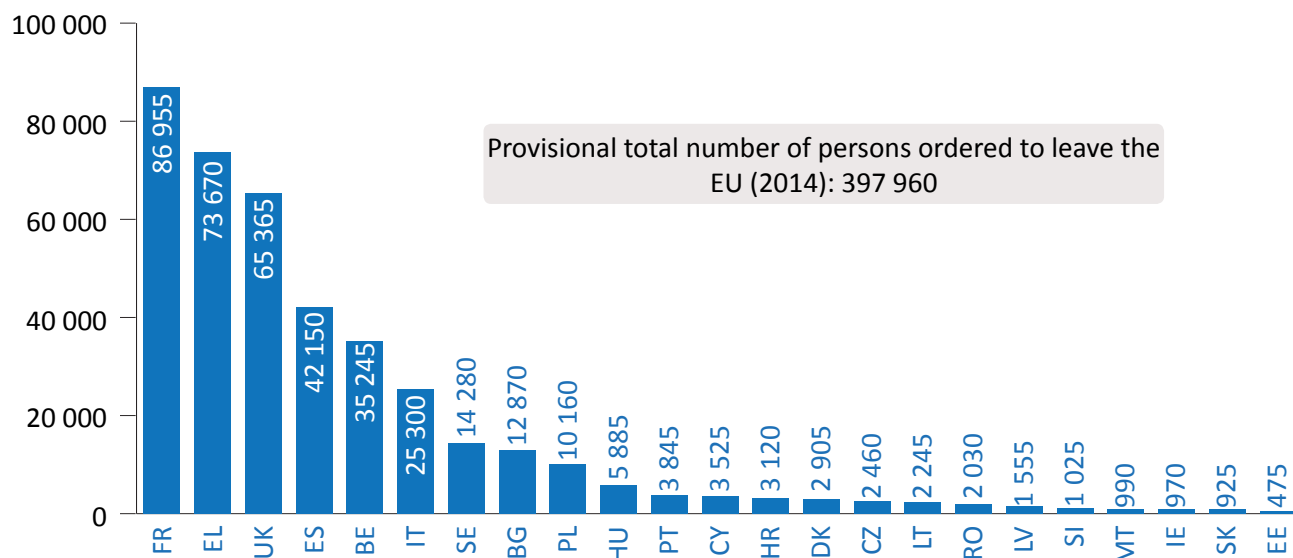
Nationality of persons found to be illegally present in the EU (2014)

Most citizens found to be illegally present in the EU are from Syria, Eritrea and Afghanistan, with citizens from these countries representing one third of the total. The top 10 altogether represents more than 50%.



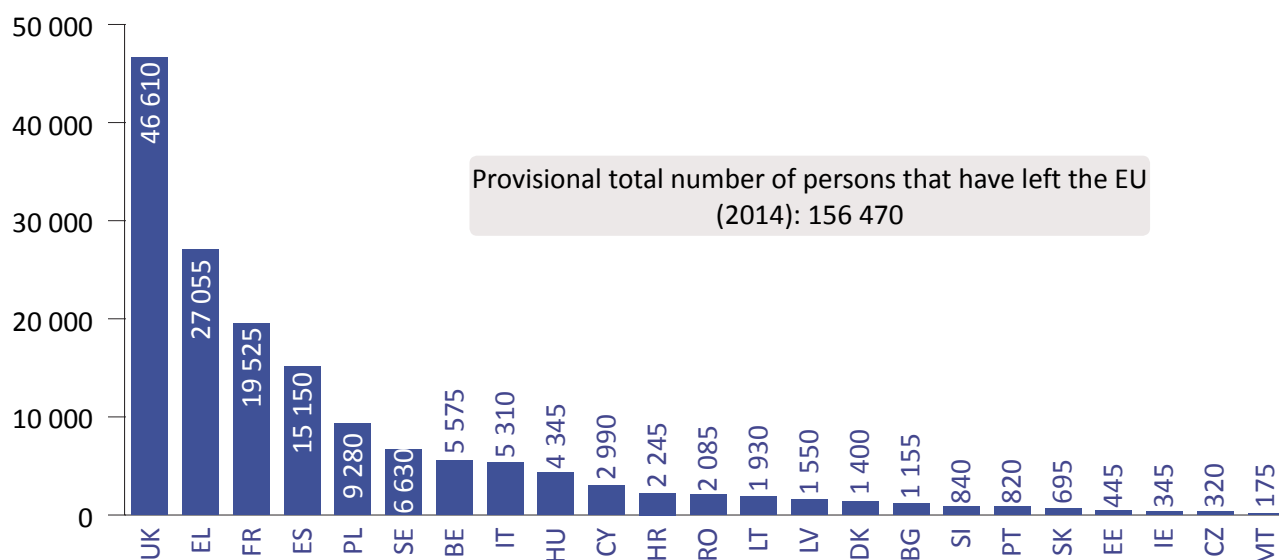
Number of persons ordered to leave the EU (2014)

The graph shows the number of persons that, after having been detected to be illegally present in the EU, have been ordered to leave the territory of the Member State in question. The statistics do not refer to persons transferred from one Member State to another under the 'Dublin Regulation'. Data refer to 2014 with values missing for Austria, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands. In 2013, the Netherlands ordered 32 435 irregular immigrants to leave and Austria slightly more than 10 000.



Number of persons returned following an order to leave (2014)

'Persons returned following an order to leave' are third-country nationals who have in fact left (have been removed from the territory or assisted to leave) the EU territory following an administrative decision stating that they are not authorised to stay. Persons who left the country in one year might have received the order the year before, therefore the number of persons who actually left may be greater than those who have been subject to a return decision. Data are not available for Austria, Germany, Finland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. In 2013, Germany reported 19 180 illegally staying persons who left the territory, the Netherlands more than 8 000 and Austria almost 7 000.



Country codes: Austria (AT), Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), Cyprus (CY), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Estonia (EE), Finland (FI), France (FR), Germany (DE), Greece (EL), Hungary (HU), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Malta (MT), Netherlands (NL), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Slovakia (SK), Slovenia (SI), Spain (ES), Sweden (SE), United Kingdom (UK), Switzerland (CH), Norway (NO), Iceland (IS) and Liechtenstein (LI).

Data source: Frontex and Eurostat ([migr_eirfs](#), [migr_eipre](#), [migr_eiord](#) and [migr_eirtn](#)). **Extraction date:** data were extracted in April 2015.

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