



Federal Office  
for Migration  
and Refugees

**REPORTS ON MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION – SERIES 2**

# Freedom of Movement Monitoring: Migration of EU Nationals to Germany

Annual Report 2018

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# At a Glance

## KEY TRENDS

- According to the figures recorded in the Central Register of Foreigners (CRF), in 2018 635,537 EU nationals immigrated to Germany. This is roughly on a par with the two previous years.
- In 2018, almost half of the immigrants from other EU countries were aged between 18 and 35. 90% were in the working age group between 16 and 64.
- The emigration of EU nationals has been rising continually since 2011. At a total of 395,392 persons in 2018, it was still well below the immigration figures (in absolute terms).
- Romania, Poland and Bulgaria are the most important countries of origin with regard to both immigration and emigration. Whereas the immigration figures from Poland fell in 2018, the corresponding figures for Romania and Bulgaria rose. The emigration figures increased for nationals of all three countries.
- Overall, Germany has continually shown net migration gains in relation to every single EU country since 2011. However, the positive net migration figure fell by 37.2% between 2015 (382,449) and 2018 (240,145).
- At the end of 2018, 4,789,753 EU nationals were living in Germany (+1.9% compared to the previous year).
- In September 2018, 2,160,607 EU nationals were employed on the German labour market and subject to social insurance contributions (+7.9% compared to the corresponding month in the previous year).

# 1. Introduction and Database

In the Freedom of Movement Monitoring report, which is published bi-annually as part of the series of “Reports on Migration and Integration”, the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees presents current developments relating to immigration and emigration of EU nationals to and from Germany. Therefore, the report contains corresponding analyses of information from the nationwide Central Register of Foreigners (CRF). As such, the Freedom of Movement Monitoring complements the “Migration Monitoring” (series 1 of the Reports on Migration and Integration), which focuses on third country nationals. The Migration Monitoring also refers to the CRF as its central source of information, but is concerned primarily with the issuance of residence titles to third country nationals, in particular for the purposes of training, education and gainful employment in Germany.

The migration figures based on the CRF, which are presented in the Freedom of Movement Monitoring, differ from the case-related immigration and departure statistics, which are published by the Federal Statistical Office based on the figures for registrations and notices of departure. In contrast, the CRF data relate to individuals. In addition, persons are only registered when they are not only temporarily present in the federal territory but are resident for longer than 90 days (Central Register of Foreigners Act, Section 2 (1)). The migration statistics furthermore do not include both births and deaths of foreign nationals in Germany and German immigration to and emigration from Germany.

The data listed in this report are subject to a three-month follow-on period, i.e. the data for 2018 were obtained by retrieval on 31 March 2019. This enhances the validity of the data, because subsequent entries in the CRF in the first quarter of 2019, which relate to migration activities in 2018, are included.

In addition to presenting a breakdown of migration figures according to nationals of the individual EU countries since 2011 (Chapters 2 and 3) and the net migration figures (Chapter 4), a particular focus of this report is on immigration and emigration of nationals

- from the so-called **EU 8 countries** (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Hungary), for which full freedom of movement within the EU for employment purposes has applied since 1 May 2011;
- from the so-called **EU 2 countries** (Romania and Bulgaria), for which full freedom of movement within the EU for employment purposes has applied since 1 January 2014;
- from **Croatia**, which acceded to the EU on 1 July 2013 and for whose nationals full freedom of movement within the EU for employment purposes has applied since 1 July 2015, and
- from the southern European member states of Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain (so-called **GIPS countries**) which were particularly severely affected by the financial and economic crisis, and which have long enjoyed full freedom of movement within the EU for employment purposes.

The Freedom of Movement Monitoring report closes with an overview of the number of EU nationals resident in Germany on the reference date of 31 December 2018 (Chapter 5). 90% of new immigrants from the EU are in the working age group between 16 and 64. However, based on the CRF data, which does not contain employment information, it is not possible to draw any conclusions as to actual employment among these persons. It is thus necessary to refer to the data published by the Federal Labour Office, which is presented in Chapter 6. The Migration Monitoring report similarly refers to this source with regard to persons from third countries who are employed in Germany.

## 2. Immigration of EU Nationals to Germany

According to the CRF, in 2018 635,537 EU nationals (excluding Germans) migrated to Germany. This represents a minimal rise of 701 persons or 0.1% in comparison to the previous year (634,836). Table 1 shows the annual numbers

of EU nationals immigrating to Germany since 2011 and the percentage changes from 2017 to 2018, differentiated in each case according to the respective nationalities.

**Table 1: Numbers of EU nationals (excluding Germans) immigrated to Germany since 2011, by nationality**

| Nationality                               | 2011           | 2012           | 2013           | 2014           | 2015           | 2016           | 2017           | 2018           | Difference 2017/2018 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Austria                                   | 7,133          | 7,057          | 7,351          | 7,925          | 8,792          | 8,740          | 8,860          | 8,321          | -6.1%                |
| Belgium                                   | 1,545          | 1,773          | 1,883          | 2,149          | 2,382          | 2,406          | 2,474          | 2,345          | -5.2%                |
| Bulgaria                                  | 34,507         | 41,694         | 45,177         | 63,140         | 71,709         | 66,790         | 66,872         | 67,883         | +1.5%                |
| Croatia*                                  | 8,089          | 9,019          | 18,633         | 37,060         | 50,646         | 51,163         | 50,283         | 48,618         | -3.3%                |
| Cyprus                                    | 163            | 220            | 412            | 445            | 439            | 419            | 406            | 320            | -21.2%               |
| Czechia                                   | 6,299          | 7,288          | 7,904          | 8,971          | 9,476          | 7,966          | 8,163          | 7,905          | -3.2%                |
| Denmark                                   | 1,351          | 1,373          | 1,431          | 1,484          | 1,613          | 1,733          | 1,777          | 1,720          | -3.2%                |
| Estonia                                   | 952            | 828            | 928            | 819            | 807            | 740            | 679            | 701            | +3.2%                |
| Finland                                   | 1,424          | 1,453          | 1,500          | 1,692          | 1,963          | 1,905          | 1,913          | 1,717          | -10.2%               |
| France                                    | 8,707          | 8,916          | 10,411         | 11,058         | 12,505         | 12,916         | 13,111         | 12,214         | -6.8%                |
| Greece                                    | 16,258         | 24,567         | 24,921         | 23,361         | 23,910         | 22,330         | 22,227         | 20,967         | -5.7%                |
| Hungary                                   | 31,293         | 43,433         | 47,023         | 48,063         | 48,099         | 42,302         | 40,014         | 36,293         | -9.3%                |
| Ireland                                   | 1,077          | 1,141          | 1,129          | 1,312          | 1,660          | 1,792          | 1,936          | 1,987          | +2.6%                |
| Italy                                     | 17,784         | 24,684         | 34,416         | 43,676         | 47,457         | 42,698         | 43,431         | 43,351         | -0.2%                |
| Latvia                                    | 6,793          | 6,513          | 6,174          | 5,810          | 5,400          | 5,289          | 6,062          | 5,968          | -1.6%                |
| Lithuania                                 | 7,492          | 7,723          | 7,114          | 6,832          | 8,220          | 7,790          | 8,721          | 10,203         | 17.0%                |
| Luxembourg                                | 1,392          | 1,341          | 1,920          | 2,066          | 2,420          | 2,375          | 2,306          | 2,310          | +0.2%                |
| Malta                                     | 79             | 65             | 72             | 65             | 89             | 71             | 88             | 84             | -4.5%                |
| Netherlands                               | 6,952          | 6,798          | 7,907          | 8,350          | 9,174          | 8,791          | 8,580          | 7,929          | -7.6%                |
| Poland                                    | 106,003        | 117,890        | 136,682        | 143,760        | 147,910        | 123,134        | 118,024        | 113,408        | -3.9%                |
| Portugal                                  | 5,903          | 8,572          | 10,426         | 9,175          | 8,653          | 8,025          | 7,383          | 6,604          | -10.6%               |
| Romania                                   | 64,668         | 82,557         | 102,753        | 156,440        | 174,779        | 171,380        | 179,838        | 194,615        | +8.2%                |
| Slovakia                                  | 9,175          | 10,621         | 11,475         | 12,567         | 12,000         | 10,019         | 10,118         | 9,813          | -3.0%                |
| Slovenia                                  | 1,654          | 2,417          | 3,194          | 3,477          | 3,852          | 2,839          | 2,720          | 2,294          | -15.7%               |
| Spain                                     | 10,305         | 15,929         | 21,552         | 21,375         | 20,144         | 18,668         | 16,238         | 15,621         | -3.8%                |
| Sweden                                    | 1,449          | 1,426          | 1,629          | 1,770          | 2,271          | 2,092          | 2,279          | 2,313          | +1.5%                |
| United Kingdom                            | 6,420          | 6,861          | 7,492          | 7,401          | 9,115          | 9,663          | 10,333         | 10,033         | -2.9%                |
| <b>Total EU nationals (incl. Croatia)</b> | <b>364,867</b> | <b>442,159</b> | <b>521,509</b> | <b>630,243</b> | <b>685,485</b> | <b>634,036</b> | <b>634,836</b> | <b>635,537</b> | <b>+0.1%</b>         |

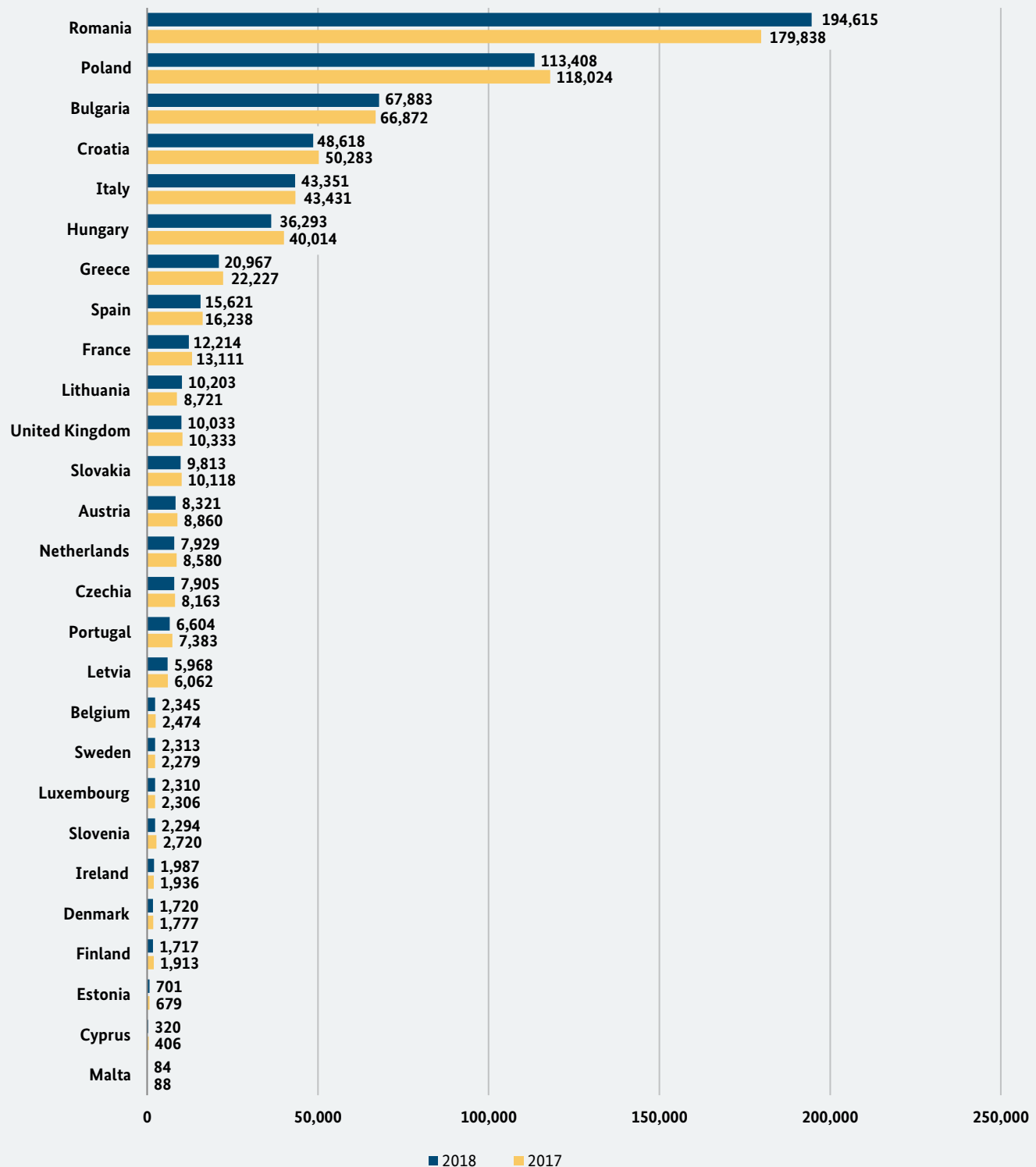
\* Croatia has been a member of the European Union since 01/07/2013. For the purpose of comparison, the immigration figures for Croatian nationals have been added to the migration figures for EU nationals as of 2011.

Source: Central Register of Foreigners

Nationals of Romania (194,615 persons), Poland (113,408 persons) and Bulgaria (67,883 persons) make up the largest immigration groups. In comparison to the previous year, the migration of nationals from seven EU member states has risen and migration from 20 member states has fallen. In comparison, in the previous year eleven EU countries

showed an increase of migration. The strongest increase (in absolute terms) also applied to nationals from Romania (+14,777 persons), while the largest drop was among Polish nationals (-4,616 persons). Overall, annual immigration from EU countries has thus remained at a relatively constant level of around 635,000 persons since 2016.

Figure 1: Numbers of EU nationals (excluding Germans) immigrated to Germany in 2018, by nationality (figures for 2017 for purposes of comparison)



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

Complete freedom of movement has applied for the EU 8 states since 1 May 2011. A notable rise in immigration of nationals of these countries has been observed since this date. In 2018, immigration from these countries fell in comparison to the previous year by -7,916 persons or -4.1%, to a total of 186,585 persons. Less people came from six of the eight countries (Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czechia and Hungary), while migration from the remaining two countries (Estonia and Lithuania) increased. The immigration of Polish nationals recorded the largest reduction in absolute terms, as it was also the case between 2016 and 2017.

The number of immigrants from the EU 2 countries Bulgaria and Romania has also increased substantially since the introduction of unrestricted free movement within the EU for employment purposes on 1 January 2014, with Bulgaria reaching its highest level to date in 2015. Romania subsequently peaked in 2018. In the reporting year of 2018 only a slight rise in immigration to Germany is to be observed for Bulgarian nationals (+1,011 persons or 1.5% compared to the previous year), while a more pronounced rise applies to Romanian nationals (+14,777 persons or 8.2%).

Since joining the EU in 2013, migration from Croatia has increased. Both 2013 and 2014 saw a two-fold increase in the number of persons emigrating from Croatia to Germany in comparison to the respective preceding years. 2015 also witnessed an increase of 13,586 persons or 36.7% in comparison to 2014. In the current reporting year of 2018 the immigration of Croatian nationals fell by 3.3% compared to 2017 (-1,665 persons), following on from a 1.7% drop in the previous year. With 50,283 immigrants from January to December 2018, Croatia nevertheless ranks fourth among the leading EU countries of origin for immigration (cf. Figure 1), behind Romania, Poland and Bulgaria.

This means that more than three quarters of EU nationals who immigrated to Germany in 2018 (497,701 persons; 78.3%) came from countries for which complete freedom of movement was only recently introduced (EU 8, EU 2, Croatia). In addition, 86,543 EU nationals (13.6%) immigrated to Germany from the southern European member states of Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, which the financial and economic crisis had particularly severely affected. Each of these four countries shows a drop in the numbers of their citizens immigrating to Germany in 2018 as compared to 2017.

## Age and gender of EU nationals immigrated to Germany in 2018

Based on the data presented in Table 2, 90.0% of EU nationals who immigrated to Germany in 2018 belong to the working age group from 16 to 64. The age group comprising 25 to 35 year-olds makes up the largest share of the overall group (28.4%). For the large majority of countries of origin, this age group contains the highest number of persons. This characteristic age distribution indicates a high level of employment among immigrants from EU countries. Only in France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Spain and Cyprus the (even younger) age group of 18 to 25 year-olds is the dominant group. This may be attributable in part to the nationals of these countries studying in Germany. As the CRF does not record the purpose of residence in the case of EU nationals, this is only an assumption.

The share of women among all immigrating EU nationals stands at 36.2%. However, this figure varies strongly between the respective countries of origin. The share of women immigrating to Germany compared to the share of men is only larger for two countries of origin - Finland (54.4%) and Cyprus (50.9%), while Hungary, Poland and Romania show the smallest shares of female immigrants (33.6%, 33.4% and 32.7% respectively). All countries whose female share is below the overall average belong to the EU 2 or EU 8 countries.

**Table 2: Breakdown of EU nationals immigrating to Germany in 2018 by nationality and age groups**

| Nationality               | Age groups in years |                |                |                |                |                |                |              | Total          |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
|                           | 0 to under 16       | 16 to under 18 | 18 to under 25 | 25 to under 35 | 35 to under 45 | 45 to under 55 | 55 to under 65 | 65 and older |                |
| Austria                   | 559                 | 63             | 2,012          | <b>3,000</b>   | 1,159          | 856            | 438            | 234          | <b>8,321</b>   |
| Belgium                   | 149                 | 19             | 676            | <b>733</b>     | 325            | 239            | 145            | 59           | <b>2,345</b>   |
| Bulgaria                  | 9,324               | 991            | 10,859         | <b>16,732</b>  | 15,097         | 10,398         | 3,705          | 777          | <b>67,883</b>  |
| Croatia                   | 6,407               | 535            | 9,011          | <b>12,322</b>  | 9,651          | 7,173          | 3,048          | 471          | <b>48,618</b>  |
| Cyprus                    | 18                  | 2              | <b>129</b>     | 100            | 40             | 23             | 4              | 4            | <b>320</b>     |
| Czechia                   | 821                 | 109            | 1,574          | <b>2,486</b>   | 1,551          | 951            | 310            | 103          | <b>7,905</b>   |
| Denmark                   | 132                 | 27             | 544            | <b>557</b>     | 178            | 168            | 84             | 30           | <b>1,720</b>   |
| Estonia                   | 61                  | 15             | 141            | <b>261</b>     | 113            | 69             | 31             | 10           | <b>701</b>     |
| Finland                   | 116                 | 27             | 548            | <b>618</b>     | 225            | 110            | 55             | 18           | <b>1,717</b>   |
| France                    | 806                 | 130            | <b>5,451</b>   | 3,554          | 1,197          | 645            | 260            | 171          | <b>12,214</b>  |
| Greece                    | 2,725               | 312            | 3,670          | <b>5,528</b>   | 3,825          | 3,010          | 1,294          | 603          | <b>20,967</b>  |
| Hungary                   | 2,077               | 268            | 7,267          | <b>10,365</b>  | 7,916          | 5,983          | 2,074          | 343          | <b>36,293</b>  |
| Ireland                   | 95                  | 14             | <b>802</b>     | 602            | 259            | 132            | 61             | 22           | <b>1,987</b>   |
| Italy                     | 4,370               | 573            | 10,747         | <b>13,826</b>  | 6,347          | 4,714          | 1,927          | 847          | <b>43,351</b>  |
| Latvia                    | 519                 | 58             | 972            | <b>1,760</b>   | 1,289          | 926            | 378            | 66           | <b>5,968</b>   |
| Lithuania                 | 634                 | 71             | 2,317          | <b>2,968</b>   | 1,868          | 1,519          | 708            | 118          | <b>10,203</b>  |
| Luxembourg                | 202                 | 34             | <b>887</b>     | 539            | 192            | 193            | 158            | 105          | <b>2,310</b>   |
| Malta                     | 4                   | -              | 24             | <b>33</b>      | 12             | 5              | 3              | 3            | <b>84</b>      |
| Netherlands               | 753                 | 64             | 1,466          | <b>2,171</b>   | 1,195          | 1,159          | 708            | 413          | <b>7,929</b>   |
| Poland                    | 5,038               | 500            | 25,046         | <b>31,483</b>  | 22,664         | 18,049         | 8,964          | 1,664        | <b>113,408</b> |
| Portugal                  | 580                 | 70             | 1,415          | <b>1,900</b>   | 1,291          | 886            | 334            | 128          | <b>6,604</b>   |
| Romania                   | 16,550              | 1,567          | 38,992         | <b>56,875</b>  | 42,953         | 29,300         | 7,087          | 1,291        | <b>194,615</b> |
| Slovakia                  | 760                 | 106            | 2,375          | <b>2,894</b>   | 1,932          | 1,242          | 457            | 47           | <b>9,813</b>   |
| Slovenia                  | 194                 | 29             | 471            | <b>749</b>     | 422            | 254            | 147            | 28           | <b>2,294</b>   |
| Spain                     | 1,856               | 183            | <b>4,947</b>   | 4,548          | 2,196          | 1,299          | 432            | 160          | <b>15,621</b>  |
| Sweden                    | 245                 | 29             | 568            | <b>802</b>     | 334            | 221            | 74             | 40           | <b>2,313</b>   |
| United Kingdom            | 635                 | 40             | 2,538          | <b>3,133</b>   | 1,702          | 1,149          | 578            | 258          | <b>10,033</b>  |
| <b>Total EU nationals</b> | <b>55,630</b>       | <b>5,836</b>   | <b>135,449</b> | <b>180,539</b> | <b>125,933</b> | <b>90,673</b>  | <b>33,464</b>  | <b>8,013</b> | <b>635,537</b> |

Note: The coloured backgrounds indicate the age group with the highest number of cases for the respective countries.

Source: Central Register of Foreigners



### 3. Emigration of EU Nationals from Germany

According to the CRF, 395,392 EU nationals (excluding Germans) moved away from Germany in 2018. This represents a 4.6% increase in emigration compared to 2017 (377,892 emigrants). The highest number of emigration was recorded among Romanian nationals (113,413 persons), followed by Polish (81,198 persons) and Bulgarian nationals (37,833). As

such, these three countries account for the highest levels of immigration and emigration, indicating high dynamics of migration. Table 3 and Figure 2 provide detailed country-specific information on emigration of EU nationals from Germany since 2011.

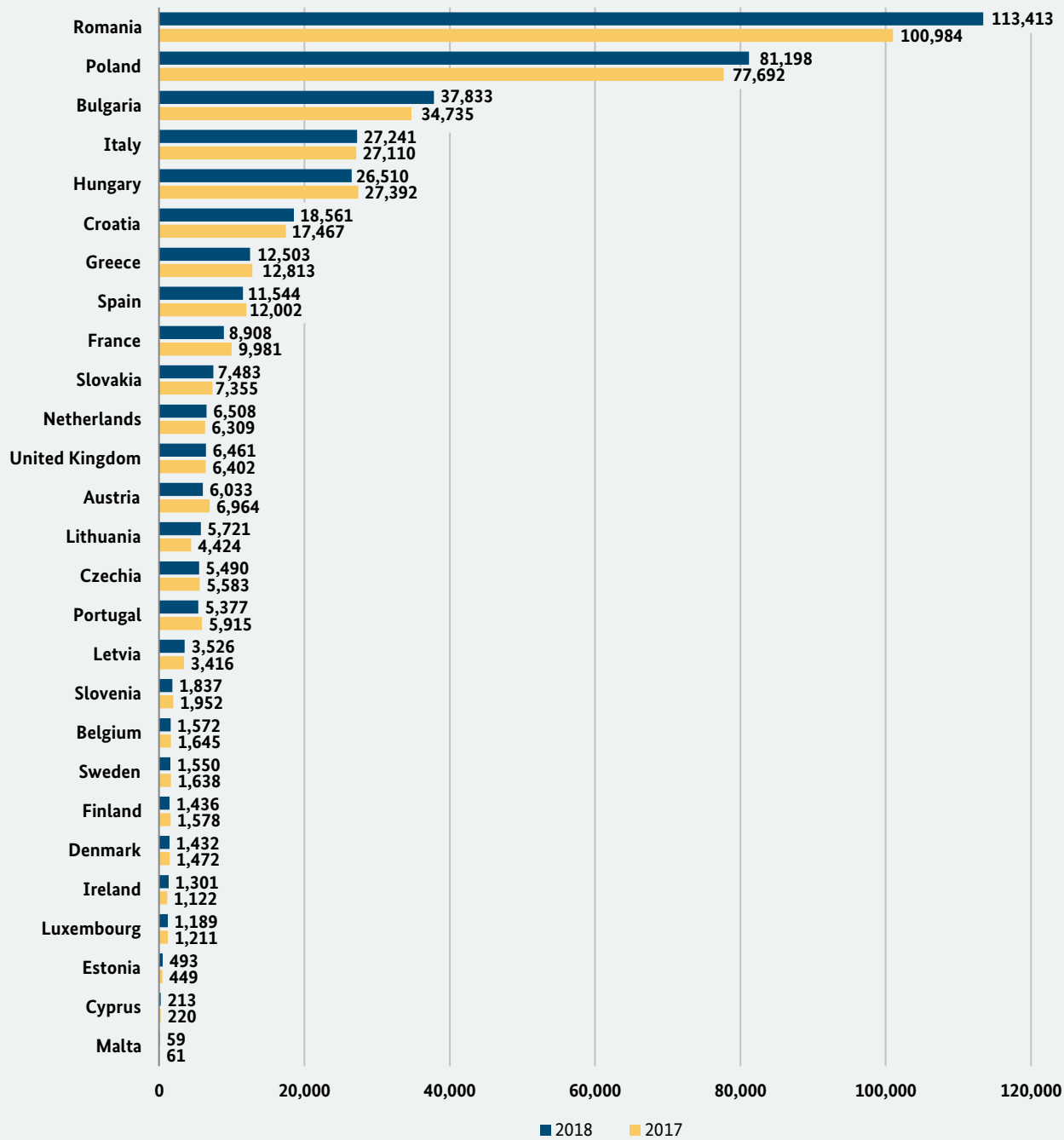
**Table 3: Numbers of EU nationals (excluding Germans) emigrated from Germany since 2011, by nationality**

| Nationality                               | 2011           | 2012           | 2013           | 2014           | 2015           | 2016           | 2017           | 2018           | Difference 2017/2018 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Austria                                   | 4,951          | 4,912          | 4,861          | 5,948          | 5,192          | 5,473          | 6,964          | 6,033          | -13.4%               |
| Belgium                                   | 1,087          | 895            | 1,019          | 1,396          | 1,269          | 1,311          | 1,645          | 1,572          | -4.4%                |
| Bulgaria                                  | 13,896         | 16,255         | 19,401         | 24,466         | 26,299         | 32,036         | 34,735         | 37,833         | +8.9%                |
| Croatia                                   | 6,846          | 6,501          | 6,642          | 9,416          | 11,789         | 15,122         | 17,467         | 18,561         | +6.3%                |
| Cyprus                                    | 48             | 51             | 79             | 175            | 159            | 150            | 220            | 213            | -3.2%                |
| Czechia                                   | 3,166          | 3,280          | 3,821          | 4,868          | 4,858          | 5,455          | 5,583          | 5,490          | -1.7%                |
| Denmark                                   | 928            | 819            | 871            | 1,270          | 1,061          | 1,220          | 1,472          | 1,432          | -2.7%                |
| Estonia                                   | 425            | 398            | 387            | 511            | 436            | 438            | 449            | 493            | +9.8%                |
| Finland                                   | 1,112          | 1,102          | 1,097          | 1,414          | 1,243          | 1,322          | 1,578          | 1,436          | -9.0%                |
| France                                    | 5,838          | 5,297          | 5,708          | 7,934          | 7,666          | 8,150          | 9,981          | 8,908          | -10.8%               |
| Greece                                    | 5,851          | 6,509          | 7,366          | 10,127         | 9,733          | 11,498         | 12,813         | 12,503         | -2.4%                |
| Hungary                                   | 13,358         | 15,301         | 19,378         | 23,679         | 23,253         | 25,396         | 27,392         | 26,510         | -3.2%                |
| Ireland                                   | 614            | 604            | 669            | 873            | 859            | 1,079          | 1,122          | 1,301          | +16.0%               |
| Italy                                     | 12,459         | 11,160         | 13,450         | 19,702         | 21,601         | 24,152         | 27,110         | 27,241         | +0.5%                |
| Latvia                                    | 2,301          | 2,769          | 2,654          | 3,199          | 2,827          | 2,989          | 3,416          | 3,526          | +3.2%                |
| Lithuania                                 | 2,593          | 3,002          | 3,282          | 3,764          | 3,687          | 4,058          | 4,424          | 5,721          | +29.3%               |
| Luxembourg                                | 828            | 749            | 717            | 1,113          | 1,051          | 1,101          | 1,211          | 1,189          | -1.8%                |
| Malta                                     | 38             | 40             | 43             | 52             | 47             | 53             | 61             | 59             | -3.3%                |
| Netherlands                               | 4,530          | 4,155          | 4,480          | 5,404          | 5,460          | 5,910          | 6,309          | 6,508          | +3.2%                |
| Poland                                    | 45,425         | 47,384         | 57,227         | 70,700         | 70,740         | 72,983         | 77,692         | 81,198         | +4.5%                |
| Portugal                                  | 3,213          | 3,074          | 3,957          | 5,219          | 4,954          | 5,198          | 5,915          | 5,377          | -9.1%                |
| Romania                                   | 27,654         | 32,371         | 43,953         | 63,363         | 73,183         | 87,853         | 100,984        | 113,413        | +12.3%               |
| Slovakia                                  | 4,534          | 4,787          | 6,000          | 7,082          | 6,803          | 6,737          | 7,355          | 7,483          | +1.7%                |
| Slovenia                                  | 958            | 1,179          | 1,418          | 1,723          | 1,890          | 1,926          | 1,952          | 1,837          | -5.9%                |
| Spain                                     | 4,723          | 5,091          | 6,918          | 10,352         | 10,287         | 11,382         | 12,002         | 11,544         | -3.8%                |
| Sweden                                    | 1,133          | 1,026          | 1,064          | 1,402          | 1,303          | 1,432          | 1,638          | 1,550          | -5.4%                |
| United Kingdom                            | 4,377          | 3,894          | 4,331          | 5,782          | 5,386          | 5,599          | 6,402          | 6,461          | +0.9%                |
| <b>Total EU nationals (incl. Croatia)</b> | <b>172,886</b> | <b>182,605</b> | <b>220,793</b> | <b>290,934</b> | <b>303,036</b> | <b>340,023</b> | <b>377,892</b> | <b>395,392</b> | <b>+4.6%</b>         |

\* Croatia has been a member of the European Union since 01/07/2013. For the purpose of comparison, the emigration figures for Croatian nationals have been added to the migration figures for EU nationals as of 2011.

Source: Central Register of Foreigners

Figure 2: Numbers of EU nationals (excluding Germans) emigrated from Germany in 2018, by nationality (figures for 2017 for purposes of comparison)



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

It is to be noted that the extent of emigration among EU nationals depends, among other things, on the level of immigration in the preceding years (cf. Chapter 2) and the number of EU nationals most recently living in Germany (cf. Chapter 5). In contrast to the immigration figures,

which rose strongly between 2011 and 2015 and have been relatively stable since 2016 (Table 1), the emigration figures show a continual increase since 2011 amounting to almost 130% in total (Table 3). In absolute terms however, they still fall well short of the immigration figures.

## 4. Net Migration

The net migration figure represents the difference between immigration and emigration figures. This provides information on changes among the foreign segments of the population in Germany. In analysing the net migration from the

respective countries of origin, the number of nationals of these countries who are resident in Germany should always be considered (Chapter 5).

**Table 4: Net migration of EU nationals (excluding Germans), by nationality since 2011**

| Nationality                               | 2011           | 2012           | 2013           | 2014           | 2015           | 2016           | 2017           | 2018           | Difference 2017/2018 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Austria                                   | 2,182          | 2,145          | 2,490          | 1,977          | 3,600          | 3,267          | 1,896          | 2,288          | +20.7%               |
| Belgium                                   | 458            | 878            | 864            | 753            | 1,113          | 1,095          | 829            | 773            | -6.8%                |
| Bulgaria                                  | 20,611         | 25,439         | 25,776         | 38,674         | 45,410         | 34,754         | 32,137         | 30,050         | -6.5%                |
| Croatia                                   | 1,243          | 2,518          | 11,991         | 27,644         | 38,857         | 36,041         | 32,816         | 30,057         | -8.4%                |
| Cyprus                                    | 115            | 169            | 333            | 270            | 280            | 269            | 186            | 107            | -42.5%               |
| Czechia                                   | 3,133          | 4,008          | 4,083          | 4,103          | 4,618          | 2,511          | 2,580          | 2,415          | -6.4%                |
| Denmark                                   | 423            | 554            | 560            | 214            | 552            | 513            | 305            | 288            | -5.6%                |
| Estonia                                   | 527            | 430            | 541            | 308            | 371            | 302            | 230            | 208            | -9.6%                |
| Finland                                   | 312            | 351            | 403            | 278            | 720            | 583            | 335            | 281            | -16.1%               |
| France                                    | 2,869          | 3,619          | 4,703          | 3,124          | 4,839          | 4,766          | 3,130          | 3,306          | +5.6%                |
| Greece                                    | 10,407         | 18,058         | 17,555         | 13,234         | 14,177         | 10,832         | 9,414          | 8,464          | -10.1%               |
| Hungary                                   | 17,935         | 28,132         | 27,645         | 24,384         | 24,846         | 16,906         | 12,622         | 9,783          | -22.5%               |
| Ireland                                   | 463            | 537            | 460            | 439            | 801            | 713            | 814            | 686            | -15.7%               |
| Italy                                     | 5,325          | 13,524         | 20,966         | 23,974         | 25,856         | 18,546         | 16,321         | 16,110         | -1.3%                |
| Latvia                                    | 4,492          | 3,744          | 3,520          | 2,611          | 2,573          | 2,300          | 2,646          | 2,442          | -7.7%                |
| Lithuania                                 | 4,899          | 4,721          | 3,832          | 3,068          | 4,533          | 3,732          | 4,297          | 4,482          | +4.3%                |
| Luxembourg                                | 564            | 592            | 1,203          | 953            | 1,369          | 1,274          | 1,095          | 1,121          | +2.4%                |
| Malta                                     | 41             | 25             | 29             | 13             | 42             | 18             | 27             | 25             | -7.4%                |
| Netherlands                               | 2,422          | 2,643          | 3,427          | 2,946          | 3,714          | 2,881          | 2,271          | 1,421          | -37.4%               |
| Poland                                    | 60,578         | 70,506         | 79,455         | 73,060         | 77,170         | 50,151         | 40,332         | 32,210         | -20.1%               |
| Portugal                                  | 2,690          | 5,498          | 6,469          | 3,956          | 3,699          | 2,827          | 1,468          | 1,227          | -16.4%               |
| Romania                                   | 37,014         | 50,186         | 58,800         | 93,077         | 101,596        | 83,527         | 78,854         | 81,202         | +3.0%                |
| Slovakia                                  | 4,641          | 5,834          | 5,475          | 5,485          | 5,197          | 3,282          | 2,763          | 2,330          | -15.7%               |
| Slovenia                                  | 696            | 1,238          | 1,776          | 1,754          | 1,962          | 913            | 768            | 457            | -40.5%               |
| Spain                                     | 5,582          | 10,838         | 14,634         | 11,023         | 9,857          | 7,286          | 4,236          | 4,077          | -3.8%                |
| Sweden                                    | 316            | 400            | 565            | 368            | 968            | 660            | 641            | 763            | +19.0%               |
| United Kingdom                            | 2,043          | 2,967          | 3,161          | 1,619          | 3,729          | 4,064          | 3,931          | 3,572          | -9.1%                |
| <b>Total EU nationals (incl. Croatia)</b> | <b>191,981</b> | <b>259,554</b> | <b>300,716</b> | <b>339,309</b> | <b>382,449</b> | <b>294,013</b> | <b>256,944</b> | <b>240,145</b> | <b>-6.5%</b>         |

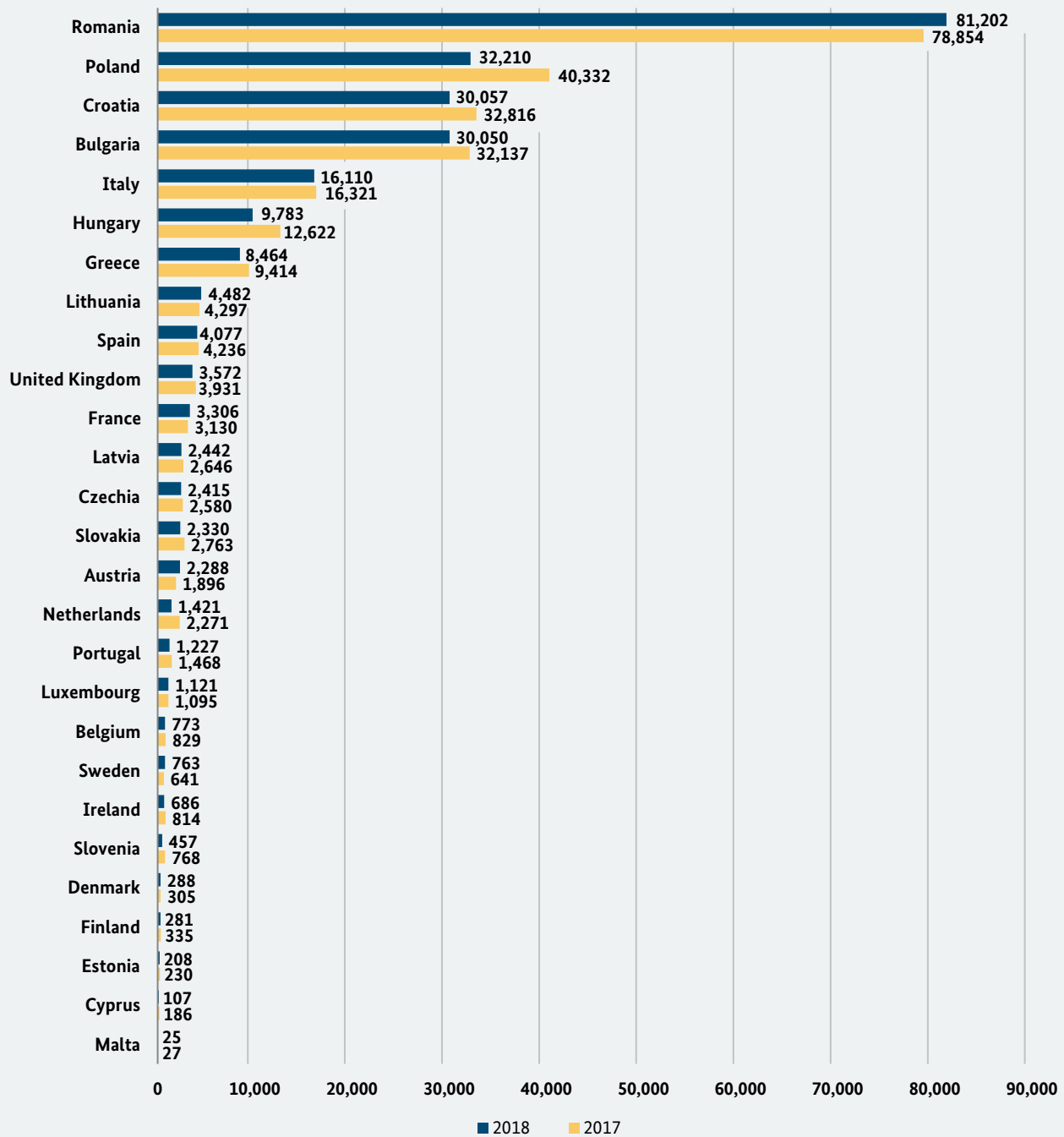
\* Croatia has been a member of the European Union since 01/07/2013. For the purpose of comparison, the immigration and emigration figures for Croatian nationals have been added to the migration figures for EU nationals as of 2011.

Source: Central Register of Foreigners

Table 4 shows Germany to have had net migration gains in relation to every single EU country over the recent years. This trend continued in the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018, during which the net inflow of EU nationals into Germany stood at +240,145. This represents a slight decline in net migration in 2018 as compared to the previous year (-16,799 persons or 6.5%). The highest level within the overall period under review stood at 382,000 in 2015.

Figure 3 shows a breakdown of EU nationals according to net migration levels in 2018. As in the previous year, Romania remains the country of origin with which Germany has the highest net migration gain. Romanian nationals alone account for around one third (33.8% or 81,202 persons) of Germany’s overall net migration gain among EU nationals in 2018. Poland, Croatia and Bulgaria also show a particularly high positive migration balance (32,210, 30,057 and 30,050 persons respectively), whereby Poland remains on a pronounced downward trend, as in the previous year.

Figure 3: Net migration of EU nationals (excluding Germans) in 2018, by nationality (figures for 2017 for purposes of comparison)



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

A comparison between the net migration figures for the individual nationality groups in 2018 and those for the previous year shows a reduced but still positive net migration figure for 21 EU countries. Only six EU countries show a rise in net migration. In absolute figures, Romanian nationals show the largest rise in net migration compared to the previous year, at 2,348 persons, while the largest drop was recorded for Polish nationals, at -8,122 persons.

### Net migration of EU 8 nationals

As Table 4 shows, the introduction of full freedom of movement for employment purposes for nationals of EU countries with effect from 1 May 2011 had a particularly pronounced impact on the net migration of Polish and Hungarian nationals. While the annual net migration gain for all other EU 8 countries was well below 10,000 persons, this figure attained its highest level for Hungarian migrants to date in 2012, at 28,132 persons. Net migration from Poland rose substantially more steeply, peaking at 79,455 in 2013.

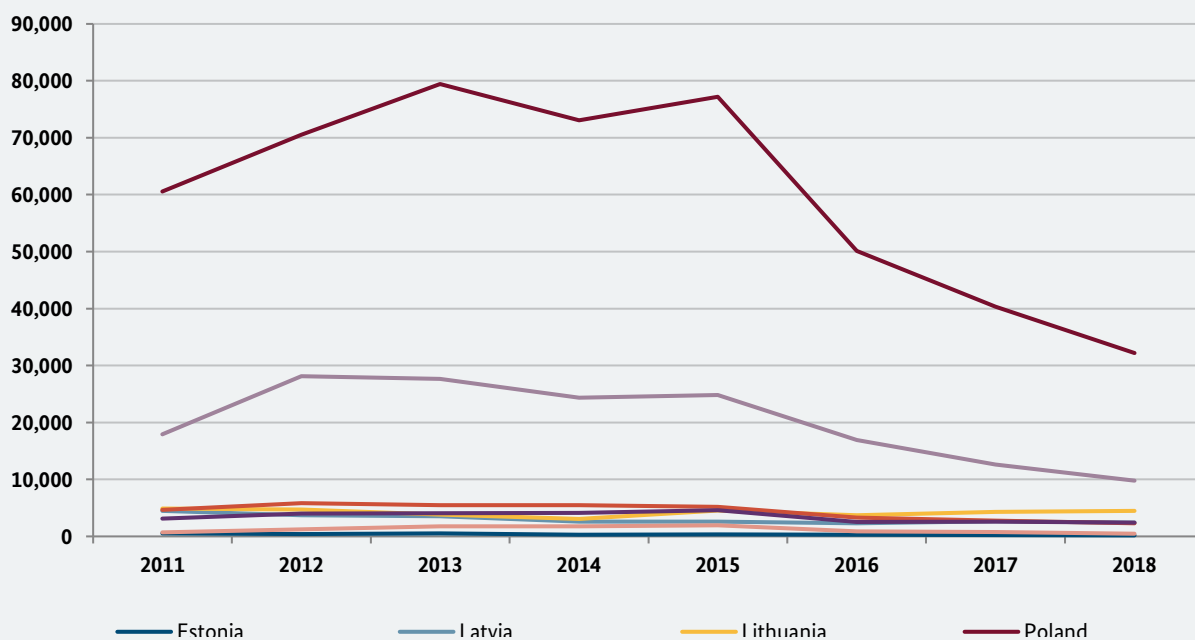
Substantial drops for the EU 8 countries occurred for the first time in 2016. In 2016, the net migration figures decreased below the levels recorded in 2011 - the year in which full freedom of movement for employment purposes was introduced for all EU 8 countries - except from Slovenia (EU 8 as a whole in 2016: 80,097 persons, as compared to 96,901 persons in 2011). Following a further decline in

2017, net migration from the EU 8 countries show once again pronounced drops in the reporting year 2018. Aggregated net migration by these nationals fell by -11,911 persons or 18.0% compared to the previous year, to 54,327 - once again well below the figure for 2011 (cf. Figure 4).

### Net migration of EU 2 nationals

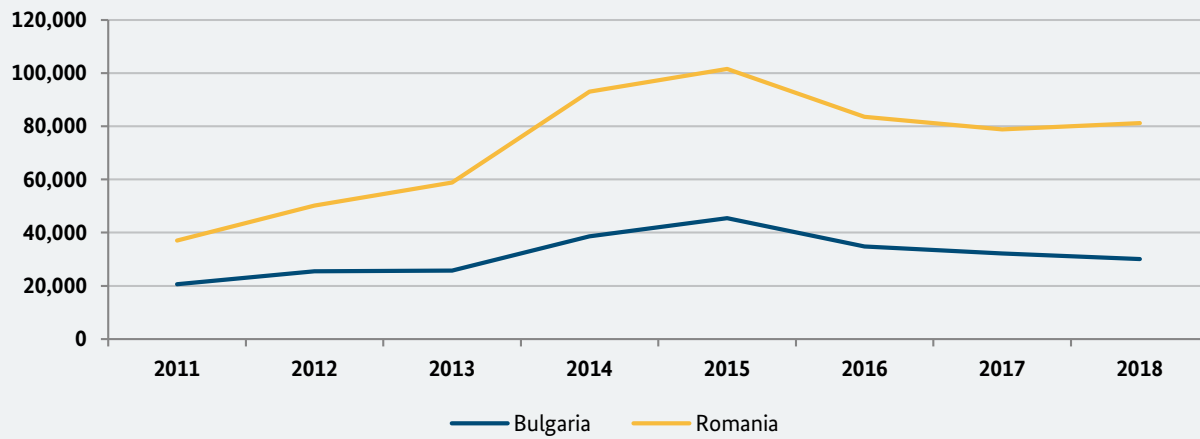
Net migration figures for nationals of the two EU countries Romania and Bulgaria rose continually until 2015 - in the light of their accession to the EU on 1 January 2007 and the introduction of full freedom of movement for employment purposes as of 1 January 2014 - but in 2016 and 2017 the figures declined here too. Immigration figures from both countries dropped strongly in 2016. They then rose only minimally in relation to the number of nationals from these countries leaving Germany. As a result, a reduction in the net migration gain from the two countries occurred. This trend continued in 2018 for Bulgarian nationals (-2,087 persons or 6.5%), while the net migration gain for Romanian nationals rose again slightly (+2,348 persons or 3.0%) owing to a higher increase in immigration. Figure 5 shows the annual net migration for EU 2 nationals since 2011.

Figure 4: Net migration trends from the EU 8 countries since 2011



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

Figure 5: Net migration trends from the EU 2 countries since 2011



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

### Net migration of Croatian nationals

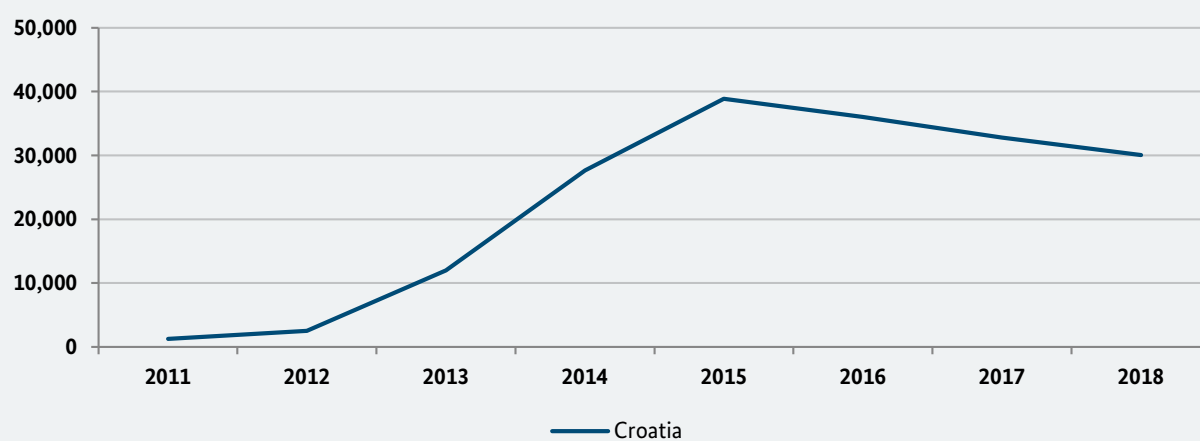
The net migration of Croatian nationals rose strongly in the first half of this decade. This was primarily attributable to Croatia’s accession to the EU on 1 July 2013 and the attendant easing of provisions relating to the immigration and residence of these nationals. Net migration rose from 11,991 persons in 2013 to 38,857 persons in 2015. The highest level recorded so far is presumably attributable to the introduction of full freedom of movement within the EU for Croatian citizens for employment purposes on 1 July 2015. However, net migration fell continually in the following years. This trend continued in 2018, with a drop of -2,759 persons or 8.4% to 30,057 persons in comparison to 2017 (Figure 6).

### Net migration of nationals from southern European EU member states (so-called GIPS countries)

The European financial and economic crisis prompted an increase in net migration compared to the reference year of 2011 from the southern European member states of Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain (so-called GIPS countries), which were particularly severely affected by the crisis. Within the last years, the levels of migration between Germany and these countries have fallen again (Table 4 and Figure 7).

Net migration from Greece rose sharply from 2011 (+10,407 nationals) to its peak in 2012 (+18,058 nationals). The decline, which began in 2013 and resumed until 2018, was only interrupted in 2015 (net migration 2018: +8,464 persons; -10.1% compared to 2017).

Figure 6: Net migration trend for Croatian nationals since 2011



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

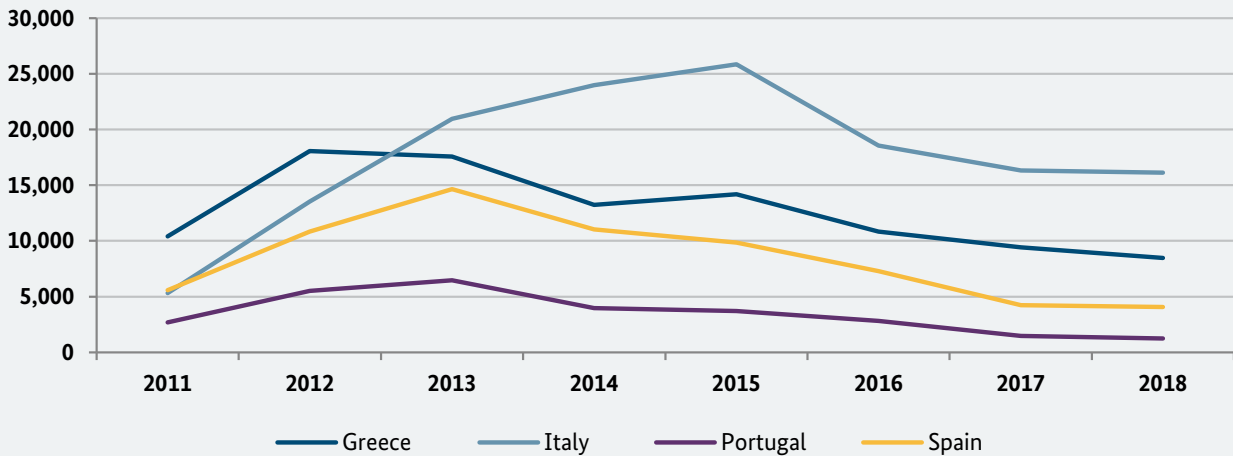
Net migration by Portuguese and Spanish nationals peaked in 2013 (Portugal: +6,469 persons, Spain: +14,634 persons). It subsequently declined year on year for both countries. Net migration among Portuguese nationals decreased to +1,227 in 2018 (-16.4% compared to 2017). For Spanish nationals, a net migration gain of 4,077 persons was recorded, which represents a drop of 3.8% compared to 2017.

Among the GIPS countries, net migration has risen most sharply since 2011 among Italian nationals with its peak in

2015, at 25,856 persons. As in the previous year, emigration from Germany by Italian nationals rose in 2018, while the number of immigrants stagnated. As a result, net migration dropped here to +16,110 persons, which was 1.3% less than in 2017.

Net migration from these four countries of origin as a whole increased in 2018 by 1,561 persons or 5.0% in comparison to 2017.

Figure 7: Net migration trends from the GIPS countries since 2011



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

## 5. EU Nationals Resident in Germany

According to the CRF, 4,789,753 nationals of other EU countries<sup>1</sup> were resident in Germany on the reference date of 31 December 2018, representing a rise of 88,463 persons or 1.9% in comparison to 31 December 2017. EU nationals thus make up less than half (43.9%) of all foreigners resident in Germany (10,915,455 persons in total).

Among all EU nationals living in Germany, Polish nationals constitute the largest group at 860,146 persons (18.0% of resident EU nationals). Romanian nationals (696,274 persons or 14.5%) and Italian nationals (643,531 persons or 13.4%) follow up in second and third places. Compared to the situation at the end of 2017, the number of persons resident in Germany increased for 13 countries, while it decreased for the other 14.<sup>2</sup> The largest increase in absolute terms applied to Romanian nationals (+73,493 persons or 11.8%), while the United Kingdom showed the strongest reduction (-10,314 persons or 8.9%). Figure 8 shows the numbers of all EU nationals broken down by the respective nationalities.

Gender and age characteristics for resident EU nationals and for EU nationals immigrating to Germany in 2018 (cf. Chapter 2) reveal differences. In contrast to the area of immigration, in which 90.0% of the persons concerned are in the working age group between 16 and 64, only 79.1% of resident persons belong to this age group. While the share of under 18 year-olds is only slightly higher, at 10.9% (compared to 8.8% among immigrants in 2018), the share of over 64 year-olds is substantially higher, at 9.9% as compared to 1.3%. The share of women is also markedly higher than among immigrants in 2018, at 46.2% compared to

36.2%. It is not possible to conclude at this stage whether this is attributable to a shift in the gender structure among immigrants in recent years or to the subsequent generations born in Germany to migrants who have long been resident in the country.

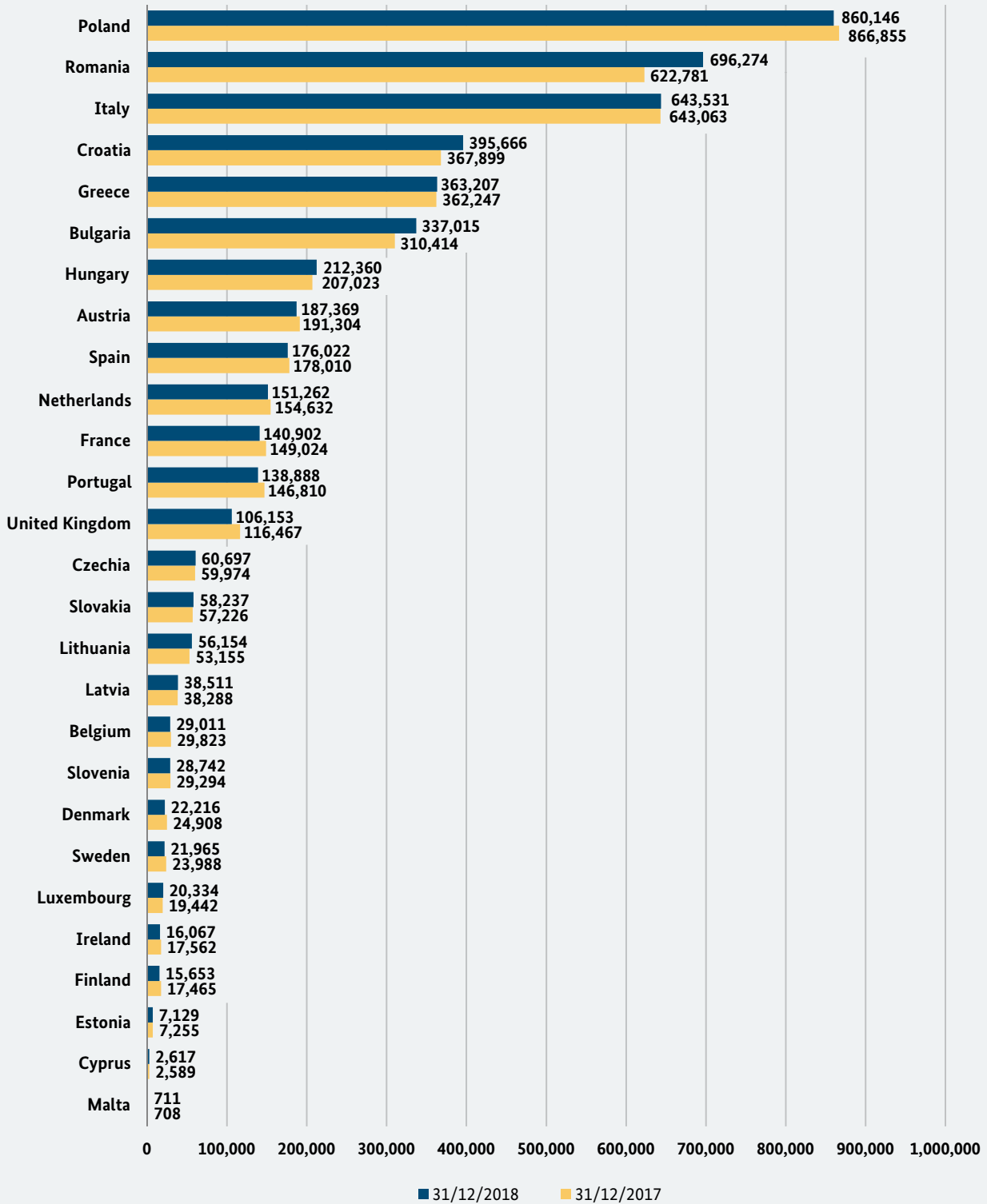
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1 Total number of resident nationals of all EU countries apart from Germany (see Figure 8) plus immigrants from former Czechoslovakia who are not clearly assignable to one of the successor states (Czechia or Slovakia).

2 The change in the number of foreign EU nationals resident in Germany compared to the previous year results from the net migration figure, the number of births and deaths among these nationals in Germany and the number of naturalisations and changes of nationality. Amendments and corrections to data in the CRF are further contributory factors.



Figure 8: Numbers of EU nationals resident in Germany on 31 December 2018 (excluding Germans), by nationality (figures for 31 December 2017 for purposes of comparison)



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

## 6. EU Nationals on the German Labour Market

As the CRF does not record the purpose of residence of EU nationals, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from these data on the integration of EU nationals in the German labour market. Application of the data provided by the Federal Labour Office is necessary for this purpose.<sup>3</sup> Table 5 shows the number of EU nationals (excluding Germans) employed in Germany and subject to social insurance contributions as per September 2018.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, 2,160,607 foreign EU nationals were employed and subject to social insurance contributions in Germany on the stated reference date (i.e. excluding self-employed or marginally employed persons and civil servants, but including cross-border commuters). This represents a rise of 158,964 persons or 7.9% in comparison to the corresponding month in the previous year. The share of women stood at 38.0%.

Around one third of these persons (31.4%) came from the EU 8 countries, 22.7% originated from the EU 2 countries, 8.4% from Croatia and 25.3% from the GIPS countries. As such, these 15 countries account for almost 90% of foreign EU nationals who are in employment on the German labour market and subject to social insurance contributions. France is the country with the largest share outside of the stated group, comprising 81,722 persons or 3.8%. A substantial share of cross-border commuters can be assumed here, similarly to the other countries bordering with Germany.

Among the ten most common countries of origin, Romania (16.7%), Bulgaria (15.7%) and Croatia (11.7%) show the highest rates of increase compared to the corresponding month in the previous year.

EU nationals thus account for approx. 6.5% of all persons employed on the German labour market and subject to social insurance contributions (33,422,016 persons in total). They also make up the majority (54.5%) of all 3,965,662 foreigners in employment. This is at odds with the ratio of resident EU nationals to resident foreigners as a whole (Chapter 5), but the reference data available for the purposes of this report do not deliver explanations. This may be attributable to a higher employment rate among EU nationals, the number of cross-border commuters or a higher share of employment subject to social insurance contributions, compared to other forms of employment.

<sup>3</sup> Federal Labour Office (2018): Beschäftigte nach Staatsangehörigkeiten (Quartalszahlen). Deutschland, Länder und Kreise. 30 September 2018. Nuremberg.

<sup>4</sup> As the data are subject to a waiting period of six months, this report cannot use the quarterly figures for the end of 2018.

**Table 5: Foreign EU nationals who were in employment and subject to social insurance contributions in Germany in September 2018, by nationality**

| Nationality                     | Number of employees subject to social insurance contributions |              | Difference to same month of the previous year |             |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------|---|-------------|
|                                 | absolute  | in %         | absolute                                      | in %        |
| <b>Total EU nationals</b>       | <b>2,160,607</b>  | <b>100.0</b> | <b>158,964</b>                                | <b>7.9</b>  |
| <b>EU-8 countries</b>           | <b>678,303</b>  | <b>31.4</b>  | <b>46,222</b>                                 | <b>7.3</b>  |
| <b>EU-2 countries</b>           | <b>490,099</b>  | <b>22.7</b>  | <b>69,153</b>                                 | <b>16.4</b> |
| <b>GIPS countries</b>           | <b>546,644</b>  | <b>25.3</b>  | <b>18,545</b>                                 | <b>3.5</b>  |
| <b>Main countries of origin</b> |   |              |   |             |
| Poland                          | 429,667   | 19.9         | 29,651  | 7.4         |
| Romania                         | 361,023   | 16.7         | 51,645  | 16.7        |
| Italy                           | 269,031   | 12.5         | 10,177  | 3.9         |
| Croatia                         | 182,560   | 8.4          | 19,168  | 11.7        |
| Greece                          | 145,813   | 6.7          | 5,718   | 4.1         |
| Bulgaria                        | 129,076   | 6.0          | 17,508  | 15.7        |
| Hungary                         | 105,440   | 4.9          | 4,947   | 4.9         |
| France                          | 81,722  | 3.8          | 2,146   | 2.7         |
| Spain                           | 69,784  | 3.2          | 1,704   | 2.5         |
| Austria                         | 64,857  | 3.0          | 1,074   | 1.7         |
| Other EU countries              | 321,634   | 14.9         | 15,226  | 5.0         |

Source: Federal Labour Office

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Johannes Graf is a research associate at the Research Centre for Migration, Integration and Asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Division FIII - Migration and Integration: Monitoring and Series of Reports).

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## IMPRINT

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**Publisher:**  
Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge  
Forschungszentrum Migration, Integration und Asyl  
90461 Nürnberg

**Date:**  
07/2019

**Layout:**  
Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF)

**Download:**  
<https://www.bamf.de/DE/Themen/Forschung/Veroeffentlichungen/veroeffentlichungen-node.html>

**Picture:**  
Cover: iStock

**Suggested citation:**  
Graf, Johannes (2019): Freedom of Movement Monitoring: Migration of EU Nationals to Germany. Annual Report 2018. Reports on Migration and Integration. Series 2. Nuremberg: Research Centre for Migration, Integration and Asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

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