



COUNTRY FACTSHEET: GERMANY 2016

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Germany during 2016, including latest statistics.

2. International Protection including Asylum

Following the significant increase in the number of asylum applications between 2015 and 2016, procedures in connection with the **asylum procedure at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)** were adapted. The aim was to optimise and accelerate the processing of applications and to expand BAMF's capacities.

For example, the following measures were carried out:

- ★ **Building infrastructure:** by the end of 2016, BAMF had 24 arrival centres (all of which were established in 2015/16), 47 branch offices (26 of which were established in 2015/16), four decision-making centres and seven other organisational units, such as waiting rooms, processing lines, delivery centres, and a training centre.
- ★ **Introducing a new workflow for the asylum procedure:** this significantly reduces the applicants' waiting times and allows the authorities involved better control and dovetailing of admission, asylum procedure, integration and, if applicable, return.
- ★ **Enhancing security aspects of the asylum procedure:** at the branch offices and arrival centres, fingerprints can be checked almost in real time so that identifying applicants is only a matter of seconds. Personal data and fingerprints from all asylum procedure files are automatically transmitted to the federal security authorities for daily checks against their databases.

With regard to asylum procedures, the '**Act on the Introduction of Fast-Track Asylum Procedures**' entered into force in March 2016, in conformity with the recast Asylum Procedures Directive (Directive 2013/32/EU), which provides for **fast-track asylum procedures for persons from safe countries of origin**. Decisions are issued within one week. Within another week of that decision, applicants can appeal for immediate legal protection against a negative decision. The administrative court should then rule on the appeal within a further week. Furthermore, special reception and accommodation centres for asylum seekers were established i.a. for these cases.

In February 2016, the essential parts of the 'Data Sharing Improvement Act' came into force. It allows for certain personal data of asylum seekers, persons who irregularly crossed the border into Germany and persons staying in Germany without the requisite residence title, to be recorded in a central key data system, which has been made available to all authorities dealing with these groups in order to fulfil their tasks. Federal, state and local authorities have been able to access the centralised data system since May 2016. After their registration, asylum seekers will be given a proof of their arrival in form of an official paper with integrated forgery-proof elements.

As to **resettlement** activities, by the end of 2016, on the basis of the Council Conclusions of 20 July 2015, 1,060 Syrian refugees (including their relatives) had been resettled from Turkey to Germany, and 155 from Lebanon. This figure includes the annual 500 resettlement places under the national UNHCR resettlement programme.

On the basis of EU Council Decisions of 2015 and 2016, Germany offered 1,600 resettlement places for Syrian refugees from Turkey. Regarding **relocation activities**, in 2016, 444 persons from Italy and 634 persons from Greece were relocated to Germany under the Council Decisions on relocation¹ of September 2015.

¹ Council Decision establishing provisional measures in the area of

international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece (12098/15) and Council Decision (2016/1754)

All in all, Germany agreed to admit 10,500 refugees under the first Council Decision and 17,036 under the second Council Decision. Furthermore, the increased resettlement contingent and a new humanitarian admission scheme shall also meet the commitment under the second Council Decision. In addition, six federal states conducted humanitarian admission programmes, receiving private support for Syrian refugees in 2016.

Germany also deployed 75 staff members for asylum support teams to Greece and Italy at the request of European Asylum Support Office, mainly in support of the relocation procedure and EU-Turkey Agreement of 18 March 2016.

3. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

With regard to **vulnerable groups**, as of March 2016 municipalities received investment loans of up to 200 million euro for the construction, conversion, acquisition and equipment of refugee **accommodation centres to be used exclusively** by women, children and other highly vulnerable groups of persons, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex (LGBTI) persons.

Furthermore, in June 2016, a federal initiative was launched with UNICEF to protect women and children in refugee accommodation centres. In 2017, the number of accommodation centres **supported by the coordinating offices for the protection against violence** will rise from 25 to 100. One of the tasks of these coordinating offices is to cooperate with the managers of refugee accommodation centres in developing and implementing protection strategies for such centres.

4. Legal Migration and Mobility

4.1. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

An act transposing both the **Intra-Corporate Transferees Directive** (2014/66/EU) and the **Seasonal Workers Directive** (2014/36/EU) as well as the Students and Researchers Directive (2016/801/EU) entered into force on 1 August 2017.

4.2. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

As a result of the significant increase of asylum applications, legal provisions to the Residence Act introduced in 2016, provided for the suspension of the right to family reunification for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection for a period of two years until 16 March 2018 and the reduction of obstacles for deportation due to medical reasons.

4.3. MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY²

The **Visa Information System** rollout was completed in 2016. Germany decided to prolong its **temporary**

internal border controls beyond mid-February 2017, in line with the Schengen Borders Code, due to control deficits at external borders, the Dublin system, and with respect to the specific security situation as demonstrated by the terrorist attack in Berlin in December 2016.

5. Integration

In July 2016, the **Integration Act** came into force. Asylum seekers who have good prospects of being allowed to stay permanently can take **integration courses** and take advantage of job and training opportunities sooner than before. Those asylum seekers who refuse to take an integration course or who refuse to cooperate **can be sanctioned** with cutbacks of their social benefits. The federal states can assign them a place of residence during the first three years of stay, with the intention to avoid concentration in urban centres. The Federal Employment Agency suspended its labour market priority check for refugees for a period of three years, depending on the regional job situation. The law also provides low level introduction into the employment market through refugee integration programmes. As an incentive for integration, refugees are now granted a **permanent settlement permit after only three years** (instead of five) if they have fulfilled certain conditions (i.e. they master the German language and are largely able to support themselves).

During 2016, Germany continued to implement and develop different programmes and projects to facilitate labour integration and foster civic participation of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection, such as:

- ★ As early as September 2015, 24 Youth Migration Services all over Germany have included young refugees and young people whose deportation has been suspended (aged 12 to 27) within the framework of the model project 'jmd2start - Begleitung für junge Flüchtlinge' (jmd2start - Accompanying young refugees), supporting the educational, professional, social and linguistic integration of this age group;
- ★ Several other projects targeting female refugees in employment and training intended to integrate them in the labour market and increase the number of female business starters;
- ★ Under the programme 'Federal Voluntary Service with a special focus on refugees' voluntary commitment for refugees was encouraged, with up to 10,000 additional posts in 2016. These additional posts were also open to persons granted asylum status and asylum applicants with a good prospect of being granted a lawful and permanent stay in Germany;

² 'Managing migration and mobility' refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

- ★ A federal programme has supported every-day language education in day-care centres since early 2016. From 2017 – 2020, resources will be made available to create about 7,000 additional part-time posts in day-care centres and counselling facilities;
- ★ Another federal programme which will run from 2017-2020 is intended to make it easier to access the system of early childhood education and institutional childcare for those who do not yet (fully) benefit from it.

6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

In 2016, Information Points on Migration, Vocational Training and Career (DIMAK) were set up in Albania and Serbia. They provide advice to potential migrants and returnees on job and vocational training opportunities in their countries of origin and their countries of immigration. In 2017, the DIMAK approach will be expanded to include North Africa.

To counter **brain drain** the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) financed a project to manage migration challenges in Niger. The aim was to help selected local government bodies and relevant national institutions in Niger improve their ability to respond and act in view of the effects of migration. The project covered the regions along the migration routes.

On behalf of the BMZ, the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) supports migrant organisations which promote the social development of their countries of origin through small-scale development projects, with 16 projects funded in 2016. In 2016, the programme was expanded to include projects of migrant organisations working in the field of migration and refugees in their countries of origin.

Since its launch in April 2016, Germany has been participating in the EU's 'Better Migration Management' programme, which aims at supporting countries that are part of the Khartoum Process in their efforts to improve migration management in the region, and to address the trafficking and smuggling of migrants within and from the Horn of Africa. Cooperation is planned with Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Tunisia and Uganda.

7. Irregular Migration and Return

7.1. THE FIGHT AGAINST FACILITATION OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION

In 2016, Germany provided training and equipment assistance to the border police in numerous third countries, such as Tunisia, Egypt, Albania, and Kosovo. In addition, the Federal Police expanded its network of national immigration liaison officers (ILOs) by

appointing a new officer to Egypt. In total, the Federal Police now deploys 24 ILOs in 23 countries. Also, since its launch on 3 February 2016, the Federal Police has been participating in a twinning project to support Ukraine in improving its border management. Throughout 2016, the Federal Police continued to fight document-related offences and identify fraud, with a total of 4,337 forged and falsified travel documents having been detected.

7.2. RETURN OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

In 2016, Germany issued a total of 70,005 orders to leave to third-country nationals, which constitutes the second highest number within the EU after France.

Two major legal changes took place with regard to return. Firstly, grounds for ordering the expulsion of third-country nationals were expanded³ and secondly, stricter rules for stopping deportations for health reasons were implemented⁴, making this only possible in case of life-threatening and very serious illnesses.

Furthermore, a return initiative to incentivise return was launched. It aims at linking the return advisory activities of the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees with activities of the BMZ in the individual countries of origin, thereby creating new prospects for returnees in their home countries. To this end, voluntary returnees will be able to participate in local vocational training and employment programmes.

On 4 April 2016, Germany and Georgia signed an Implementing Protocol on the readmission of irregular migrants. Throughout 2016, Germany increased its use of return measures coordinated/funded by Frontex. For example 399 German police officers participated in 19 Frontex-coordinated return measures. The main destinations were Kosovo, Albania and Serbia.

8. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

As regards trafficking and exploitation of **children**, a **national co-operation strategy** was developed. The goal of this strategy is to improve the identification and protection of victims of human trafficking and exploitation of minors.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Germany on aspects of migration and asylum (2013-2016), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as 'N/A'.

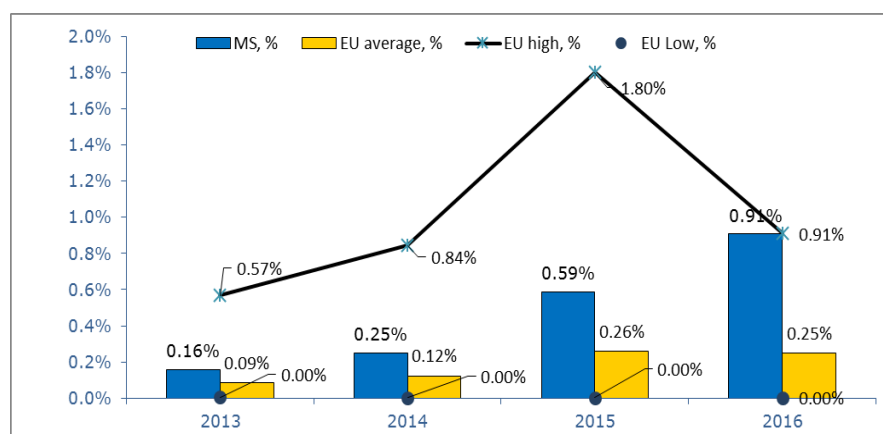
³ By the 'Act on the Faster Expulsion of Criminal Foreigners and Extended Reasons for Refusing Refugee Recognition to Criminal Asylum Seekers', which entered into force on 17 March 2016.

⁴ By the 'Act on the Introduction of Fast-Track Asylum Procedures', which entered into force on 17 March 2016.

Statistical Annex: Migration and Asylum in Germany (2013-2016)

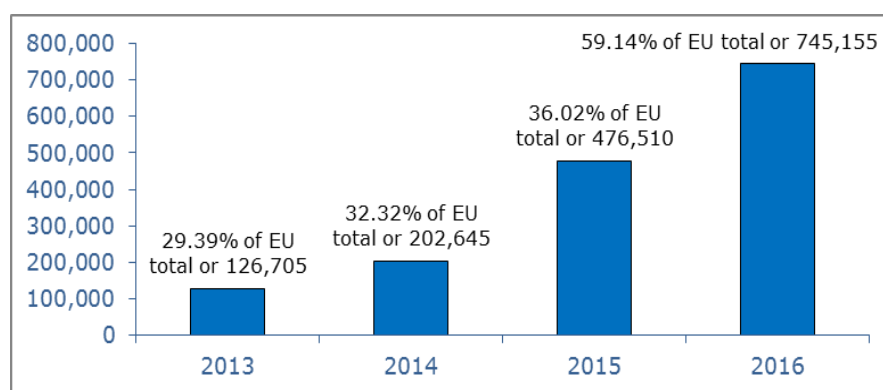
1. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASYLUM

Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Germany, EU average and EU high and low (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#))⁵, data extracted 31/07/2017

Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 31/07/2017

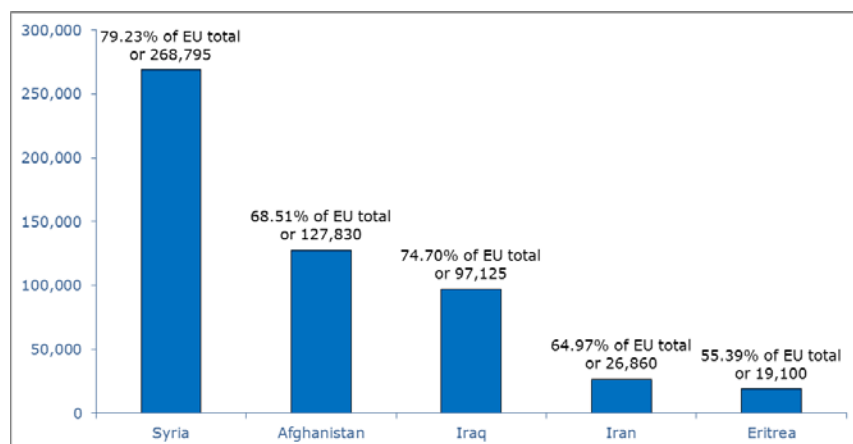
Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2013–2016)

2013			2014			2015			2016		
Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total
Serbia	18,000	14%	Syria	41,100	20%	Syria	162,495	34%	Syria	268,795	36%
Russia	15,475	12%	Serbia	27,145	13%	Albania	54,760	11%	Afghanistan	127,830	17%
Syria	12,855	10%	Eritrea	13,255	7%	Kosovo	37,095	8%	Iraq	97,125	13%
FYROM	9,415	7%	Afghanistan	9,675	5%	Afghanistan	31,895	7%	Iran	26,860	4%
Afghanistan	8,240	7%	Iraq	9,495	5%	Iraq	31,380	7%	Eritrea	19,100	3%

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 31/07/2017

⁵ Figures regarding the total population were extracted from Eurostat ([demo_gind](#))

Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 31/07/2017

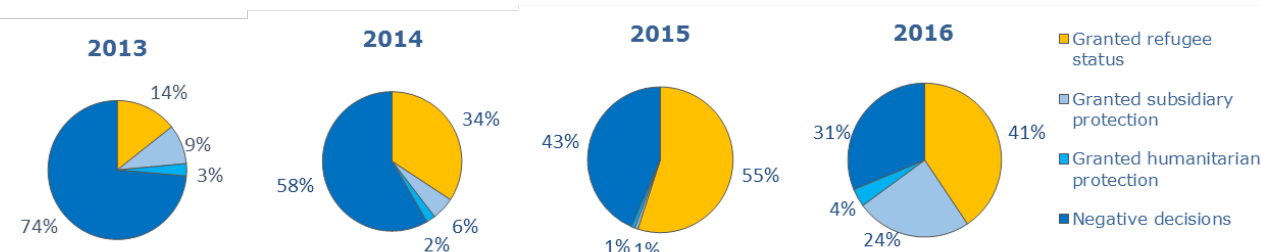
Note: the figure reads as: Germany received 268,795 asylum applications from Syrians or 79.23% of all asylum applications lodged by Syrians in EU in 2016

Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2013-2016)

Year	Total decisions	Positive decisions ⁶	Of which:			Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
2013	76,165	20,125	10,910	7,005	2,205	56,040
2014	97,275	40,560	33,310	5,175	2,075	56,715
2015	249,280	140,910	137,135	1,705	2,070	108,370
2016	631,085	433,905	256,135	153,695	24,080	197,180

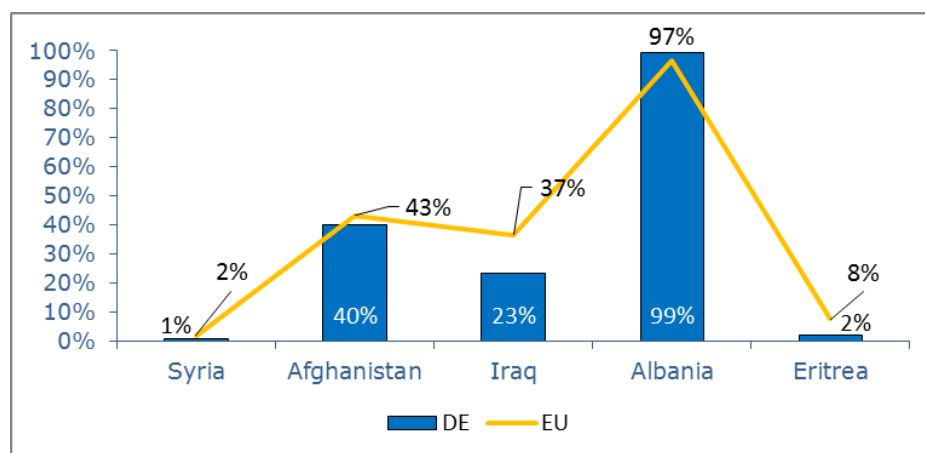
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 17/07/2017

Figures 4-7: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 17/07/2017

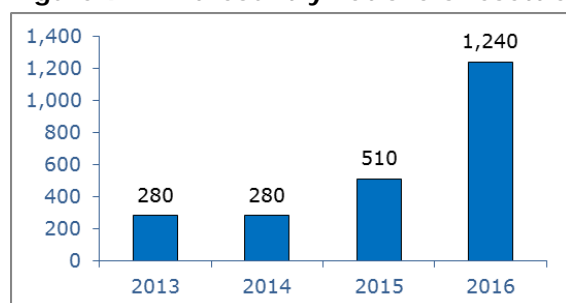
Figure 8: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 17/04/2017

⁶ The number of positive decisions also includes those granted on humanitarian reasons.

Figure 9: Third-country nationals resettled to Germany (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyresa](#)), data extracted 09/05/2017

2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Figure 10: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2013-2016)

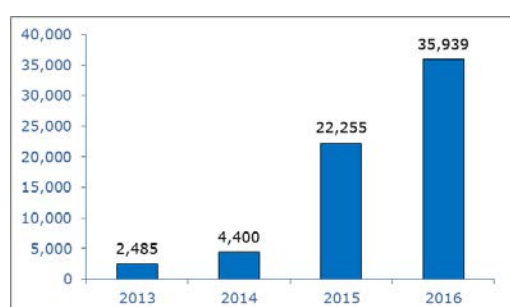


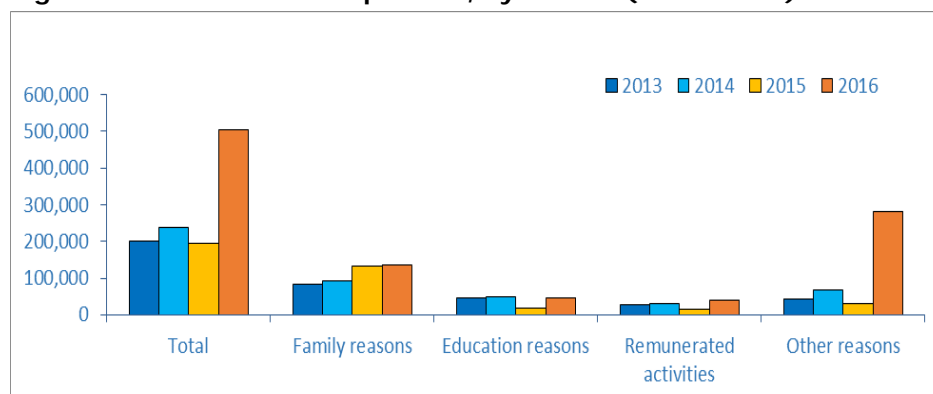
Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2013-2016)

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Unaccompanied minors taken into care by youth welfare offices (total)	6,584	11,642	42,309	ca. 50,000
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	2,485	4,400	22,255	35,939

Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) ([migr_asyunaa](#)), data extracted 17/04/2017; EMN NCPs

3. LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Figure 11: First residence permits, by reason (2013-2016)



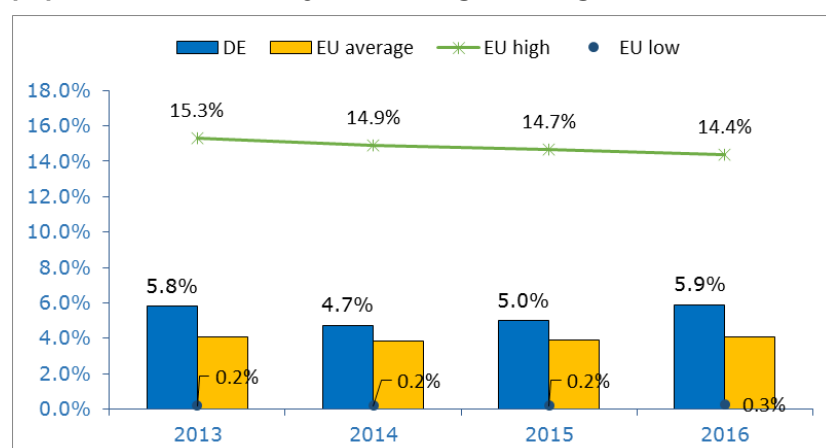
Source: Eurostat ([migr_resfirst](#)), data extracted 17/04/2017; EMN NCPs

Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2013–2016)

2013		2014		2015		2016	
Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number
Turkey	18,601	Syria	29,757	Syria	26,383	Syria	221,440
China (incl. Hong Kong)	13,654	Turkey	18,934	Turkey	18,599	Iraq	29,701
United States	11,829	China (incl. Hong Kong)	14,603	India	9,597	Turkey	18,043
India	10,491	India	11,863	Russia	9,054	Eritrea	15,553
Syria	10,301	United States	11,722	Kosovo	8,260	China (incl. Hong Kong)	14,031

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_resfirst](#)), data extracted 17/04/2017

Figure 12: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Germany, EU average, EU high and low (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_pop1ctz](#)), data extracted 17/04/2017

4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2013–2016)

Third country nationals:	2013	2014	2015	2016
Refused entry at external borders	3,845	3,605	3,670	3,775
Found to be illegally present	86,305	128,290	376,435	370,555
Ordered to leave	25,380	34,255	54,080	70,005
Returned following an order to leave	19,180	21,895	55,340	75,815

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_eirfs](#))([migr_eipre](#))([migr_eiord](#)),([migr_eirtn](#)) data extracted 09/05/2017

Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2013-2016)

Year	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2013	14,696	6,903	10,251
2014	13,851	N/A	13,574
2015	22,369	N/A	35,514
2016	26,654	N/A	54,006

Source: EMN NCPs: Data on AVR(R) only includes the federal program "REAG/GARP". Numbers on returnees who were supported by AVR(R)-programs in the Länder or on local level are not included.

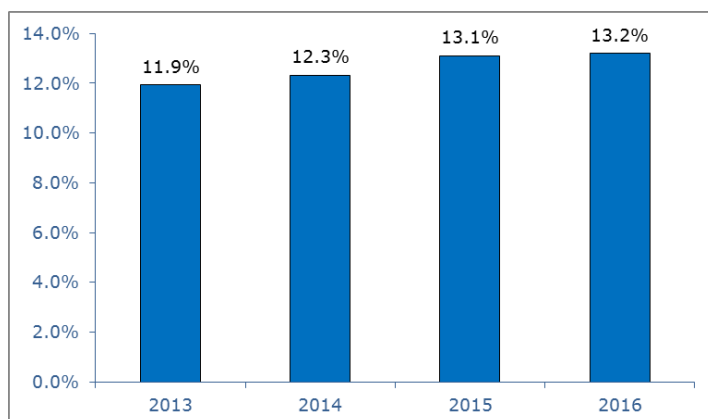
5. SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

Table 7: Number of Schengen visas applications (2013–2016)

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Uniform visas (short-stay visas)	2,062,979	2,061,137	2,022,870	2,004,235

Source: DG Migration and Home – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Figure 13: Uniform visa applications received in MS as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2013-2016)



Source: DG Migration and Home affairs –Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Table 8: Top five countries in which the highest number of visa applications for MS was lodged (2013-2016)

2013		2014		2015		2016	
Countries	Number	Countries	Number	Countries	Number	Countries	Number
Russia	474,399	Russia	427,880	China	362,132	China	395,241
China	290,023	China	316,197	Russian Federation	298,449	Russian Federation	263,126
Turkey	190,304	Turkey	196,941	Turkey	222,208	Turkey	234,187
Ukraine	112,209	India	109,730	India	121,002	India	142,860
India	102,862	Ukraine	101,867	Ukraine	97,907	Ukraine	104,257

Source: DG Migration and Home affairs