



# Germany



## General Information



### Population

83 280 000 (World Bank 2023)  
84 669 326 (STAT DE 2023)



### Immigration

1 271 219 (Eurostat 2023)  
2 665 772 (BAMF 2022)



### Emigration

3 855 268 (UN Emigration  
Stock 2020)  
1 203 683 (BAMF 2022)



### Working-age population

52 711 564 (World Bank 2023)  
53 847 634 (STAT DE 2023)



### Unemployment rate

3.1 % (World Bank 2023)  
5.7 % (STAT DE 2023)



### GDP

4 525 703 903 627.5 current  
prices USD (World Bank 2023)  
3 876 810 000 000 current  
prices EUR (STAT DE 2022)



### Refugees and IDPs

#### Refugees

2 667 191 (UNHCR 2024)  
32 065 (STAT DE 2021)

#### Asylum Seekers

356 767 (UNHCR 2024)  
190 816 (STAT DE 2021)

#### IDPs

0 (UNHCR 2024)



### Citizenship

#### By Birth

Yes (conditional) (GLOBALCIT  
2022)

#### By Descent

Yes (GLOBALCIT 2022)

#### Years of Residency

6-10 (GLOBALCIT 2022)



### Territory

357 022 km<sup>2</sup> (CIA World  
Factbook)

Data from international sources is updated automatically as it becomes available.

# Migration Authorities

## Responsible Body

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) under the Federal Ministry of the Interior Federal Government  
Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration

## Line Ministries

The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community

Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration

## Agencies

Central Register of Foreigners (AZR)

Federal Police

# Key Policy Documents

2008 (2020) Act on the Residence, Economic Activity and Integration of Foreigners in the Federal Territory

2019 Immigration Act for Skilled Workers

2008 (2016) Asylum Act

1997 (2022) Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act

2004 (2021) Regulation on Residence

2013 (2021) Regulation on Employment

2004 (2021) Regulation on Integration Courses for Foreigners and Ethnic Resettlers

National Plan of Action on Integration

In 2021, the population of Germany remained nearly unchanged and amounted to **83.2 million** people. Among them, **11.8 million** are foreigners and stateless persons and **22.3 million** are people with a migration background. Turkish nationals accounted for the largest group (1.3 million) of foreigners, followed by Syrian (787.000), Polish (774.000) and Romanian nationals (754.000). By 2035, according to national projections, the country's population of retirement age will reach a figure of **20 million**.

Being the EU's largest economy and the most populous nation, Germany is a prominent destination for migrants. In 2020, 54.6% of all immigrants came to Germany from another EU MS, as well as the United Kingdom. The **main sending countries** were Romania (15.7%), Poland (8.7%), Bulgaria (6.1%), Italy (3.8%), and Turkey (3%). Since its peak in 2015, the overall immigration decreased by half reaching **728.000** in 2020. Migrants come to the country for various reasons. In 2020, the most populous groups, after the EU internal migrants, were non-EU nationals who arrived for **educational purposes, followed by international protection, family reunification, and work reasons**.

Similar to in-migration, over half of all migrants left Germany for another EU MS, with the majority migrating to **Romania (15.4%), Poland (10.2%), Bulgaria (5.2%), Italy (3.5%) and Hungary (3%)**. When it comes to German emigrants, **over 220.000** German citizens left the country in 2020. These flows consist of long-term emigration and temporary migration for work, educational and family reasons. In 2020, the main destination countries among Germans were Switzerland, Austria, the US and the UK. Meanwhile, in 2021, these were Switzerland, Austria, Spain and France. Overall, Switzerland remains one of the key countries hosting German emigrants since 2005. In 2021, the stock of German emigrants in Switzerland exceeded **300.000**.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the decline in migration flows both to and from Germany. The number of immigrants decreased by 23.9%, and the number of emigrants by 21.5%. The net immigration, albeit being positive, was down from **327.060 in 2019 to 220.251 persons in 2020**. The in-migration and out-migration among young adults of 18 to 22 years of age dropped by **32% and 28%** respectively. The number of foreign students at German higher education institutions amounted to **86.529**, representing the lowest figure since 2014. The data on residence permits issued on family grounds show a decline of nearly 40% (**from 96.633 in 2019 to 58.022 in 2020**). Similarly, by 40% - **from 7.155 in 2019 to 4.309 in 2020** - declined the number of ethnic German resettlers (Spätaussiedler-) and their family members.

The pandemic has also resulted in a **28% decline** in the number of first asylum applications in 2020 compared to 2019. At the end of 2020, around **1.86 million people** sought international protection in Germany. The **majority** of them were single men (56,2%). Another **27,5% represented children** and minors, and almost **26% of asylum applicants** were children under the age of one. The fact that over 70% of all persons under international protection in Germany are of working age may have a positive implication for the German labour market. The **IAB report of 2020** confirmed that nearly every second person (49%) with a refugee or other protection status finds employment in about five years after arriving to Germany.

In the period 2019-2021, Syrians lodged the majority of first-time asylum applications, followed by nationals of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Turkey. In 2021, the number of first-time asylum applications from the first three groups of nationals exceeded the pre-pandemic figures by **40%, 144% and 13%** respectively when compared to 2019. Moreover, Syrian and Afghan nationals lodged more than half of all **repeated applications**. In the same year, 65% Eritreans, 50% Somalians, 36.4% Turks, 27.6 % Syrians, and 15.7% Afghans received **refugee status**.

In terms of labour migration, almost **30.000 non-EU nationals** came to Germany in 2020, which is over 50% less than in 2019. The majority of labour migrants were qualified or highly qualified workers from India, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, the US and Turkey. Altogether, nationals of the Western Balkan countries amounted to over 35% of labour migrants in Germany. At the end of 2021, **70.000 persons**, mostly from India, China, Turkey and Russia, had a Blue Card. Moreover, every fifth Blue Card holder has studied in Germany.

The German police crime statistics reflect **35.435** unauthorized entries in 2020 and **40.610** in 2019. Notwithstanding the downward trend on unauthorized entries, the number of smugglers grew from **1.224 in 2019 to 1.643 persons in 2020**. Consequently, the number of smuggled persons throughout German borders has also increased from **3.572 in 2019 to 5.449 in 2020**. Meanwhile, the number of third-country nationals found to be illegal present in Germany decreased by 9.7% from **122.958 cases in 2019 to 111.001 in 2020**.

As of April 2022, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and Frontex launched joint reintegration services offering individual **reintegration assistance** to returnees from Egypt, Ethiopia, Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Iraq, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Vietnam. In 2021, Germany executed 6800 voluntary returns, representing a 50 % decrease compared to the pre-pandemic 2019. **Most persons** under the REAG/GARP program were returned to Russia (734), Georgia (671), Iraq (696), North Macedonia (444), Azerbaijan (359) and Albania (356). In 2022, Germany suspended voluntary returns to **Afghanistan and Ukraine** due to the security situation in both countries.

In March 2022, Germany simplified the admission of Ukrainian nationals and recognized them as refugees of the war in accordance with the **EU Council decision on the Temporary Asylum Directive**. Ukrainians fleeing the war were **temporarily exempted** from the need to apply for a residence permit up to 31 August 2022 (can be extended). A year earlier, in August 2021, Germany amended its **Citizenship law** granting the right to the former Nazi-persecuted persons and their descendants to obtain German citizenship. The law applies to persons who have lost or not even received German citizenship due to Nazi persecution measures. Another important policy update represents the **Immigration Act for Skilled Workers (FEG- Fachkräfteeinwanderungsgesetz)**, which came into force in March 2020 and created a legal basis for the immigration of skilled workers from non-EU countries. The law aimed to address the growing need for qualified personnel that cannot be covered by the domestic and European labour force. In 2020, Germany became the **18th Member State of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)**.



# Relevant Publications

BAMF (2022): The 2020 Migration Report

EMN & BAMF (2021): The Migration, Integration, Asylum - Policy Report 2019

BAMF& EMN Germany & EMN (2022): Detention and alternatives to detention

The Expert Council on Integration and Migration (2021). Annual Report 2021: Diversity as the new normal? How Germany deals with difference as an immigration country