

Freedom of Movement Monitoring: Migration of EU Nationals to Germany; Annual Report 2019

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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 2019

Johannes Graf

Forschung



Research Centre
Migration, Integration and Asylum



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At a Glance

KEY TRENDS

- According to the figures recorded in the Central Register of Foreigners, 593,987 EU nationals immigrated to Germany in 2019. For the first time since 2016 the number declined in comparison to the previous year (-6.5 %).
- With regard to the emigration of EU nationals from Germany, the steadily rising trend of recent years continued. The figure stood at 432,854 in 2019, representing an increase of 9.5 % in comparison to the previous year. However, in absolute terms, emigration remains well below the level of immigration.
- Romania, Poland and Bulgaria are the most important countries with regard to both immigration and emigration. The immigration figures for Polish and Romanian nationals declined in 2019, contrasting with a further slight increase among Bulgarians. The emigration figures increased for nationals of all three countries.
- Germany showed net migration gains in relation to all other EU countries with the exception of Denmark and Finland. The positive overall migration balance has fallen sharply (down by 32.9 % on the previous year).
- At the end of December 2019, 4,882,495 EU nationals were living in Germany (+0.9 % compared to December 2018).
- In September 2019, 2,276,958 EU nationals were employed on the German labour market and subject to social insurance contributions (+5.4 % compared to the corresponding month in the previous year). Polish nationals made up the largest group here (19.7 %), as well as among foreigners resident in Germany.

1. Introduction and Database

In the report “Freedom of Movement Monitoring”, which is published bi-annually as part of the series “Reports on Migration and Integration”, the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees presents current developments relating to the immigration and emigration of EU nationals¹ to and from Germany. Corresponding analyses of information from the nationwide Central Register of Foreigners (CRF) are undertaken to this end. 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. The main focus is not on migration per se, however, but rather on 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 on the basis of the figures for registrations and notices of departure. The CRF data relate to individuals. Furthermore, persons included in these data 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)). Births or deaths of foreign nationals in Germany are not included in the statistics. As only data relating to foreign nationals are recorded in the CRF, the migration figures also do not include Germans immigrating to and emigrating from Germany.

The data presented in this report are subject to a three-month follow-on period, i.e. the data for 2019 were obtained by retrieval on 31 March 2020. This enhances the validity of the data, as subsequent entries in the CRF in the first quarter of 2020 which relate to migration activities in 2019 are also 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 annual report is on the 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 closes with an overview of the number of EU nationals resident in Germany on the reference date of 31 December 2019 (Chapter 5) and information on the participation of these categories of persons in the German labour market (Chapter 6). It is not possible to draw any conclusions as to actual employment among these persons on the basis of the CRF data, as such information is not collected on EU nationals. Nevertheless, figures show that approx. 90 % of new immigrants from the EU are in the working age group between 16 and 64. For the purposes of an analysis of the labour market, it is thus necessary to refer to the data published by the Federal Employment Agency. The Migration Monitoring similarly refers to this source with regard to persons from third countries who are in employment in Germany.

¹ In this report ‘EU nationals’ include nationals of the United Kingdom, because the United Kingdom’s exit from the EU took place after the end of the reporting period (31 January 2020).

2. Immigration of EU Nationals to Germany

According to the CRF, a total of 593,987 EU nationals (excluding Germans) immigrated to Germany in 2019. This represents a drop of 41,550 persons or 6.5 % in comparison to the previous year (635,537 persons). Table 1 shows the

annual numbers of EU nationals immigrating to Germany since 2011 and the percentage changes from 2018 to 2019, 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	2019	Difference 2018/2019
Austria	7,133	7,057	7,351	7,925	8,792	8,740	8,860	8,321	7,730	-7.1 %
Belgium	1,545	1,773	1,883	2,149	2,382	2,406	2,474	2,345	2,285	-2.6 %
Bulgaria	34,507	41,694	45,177	63,140	71,709	66,790	66,872	67,883	68,815	+1.4 %
Croatia*	8,089	9,019	18,633	37,060	50,646	51,163	50,283	48,618	40,151	-17.4 %
Cyprus	163	220	412	445	439	419	406	320	281	-12.2 %
Czechia	6,299	7,288	7,904	8,971	9,476	7,966	8,163	7,905	7,536	-4.7 %
Denmark	1,351	1,373	1,431	1,484	1,613	1,733	1,777	1,720	1,738	+1.0 %
Estonia	952	828	928	819	807	740	679	701	683	-2.6 %
Finland	1,424	1,453	1,500	1,692	1,963	1,905	1,913	1,717	1,486	-13.5 %
France	8,707	8,916	10,411	11,058	12,505	12,916	13,111	12,214	11,741	-3.9 %
Greece	16,258	24,567	24,921	23,361	23,910	22,330	22,227	20,967	18,884	-9.9 %
Hungary	31,293	43,433	47,023	48,063	48,099	42,302	40,014	36,293	30,382	-16.3 %
Ireland	1,077	1,141	1,129	1,312	1,660	1,792	1,936	1,987	2,070	+4.2 %
Italy	17,784	24,684	34,416	43,676	47,457	42,698	43,431	43,351	39,947	-7.9 %
Latvia	6,793	6,513	6,174	5,810	5,400	5,289	6,062	5,968	5,820	-2.5 %
Lithuania	7,492	7,723	7,114	6,832	8,220	7,790	8,721	10,203	9,381	-8.1 %
Luxembourg	1,392	1,341	1,920	2,066	2,420	2,375	2,306	2,310	2,354	+1.9 %
Malta	79	65	72	65	89	71	88	84	95	+13.1 %
Netherlands	6,952	6,798	7,907	8,350	9,174	8,791	8,580	7,929	7,612	-4.0 %
Poland	106,003	117,890	136,682	143,760	147,910	123,134	118,024	113,408	101,467	-10.5 %
Portugal	5,903	8,572	10,426	9,175	8,653	8,025	7,383	6,604	6,368	-3.6 %
Romania	64,668	82,557	102,753	156,440	174,779	171,380	179,838	194,615	188,091	-3.4 %
Slovakia	9,175	10,621	11,475	12,567	12,000	10,019	10,118	9,813	10,071	+2.6 %
Slovenia	1,654	2,417	3,194	3,477	3,852	2,839	2,720	2,294	1,990	-13.3 %
Spain	10,305	15,929	21,552	21,375	20,144	18,668	16,238	15,621	15,170	-2.9 %
Sweden	1,449	1,426	1,629	1,770	2,271	2,092	2,279	2,313	2,162	-6.5 %
United Kingdom	6,420	6,861	7,492	7,401	9,115	9,663	10,333	10,033	9,677	-3.5 %
Total EU nationals (incl. Croatia)	364,867	442,159	521,509	630,243	685,485	634,036	634,836	635,537	593,987	-6.5 %

* Croatia has been a member of the European Union since July 1st, 2013. For reasons of comparison, the immigration and emigration figures of Croatian nationals have been added to the immigration figures of EU nationals as of 2011.

Source: Central Register of Foreigners

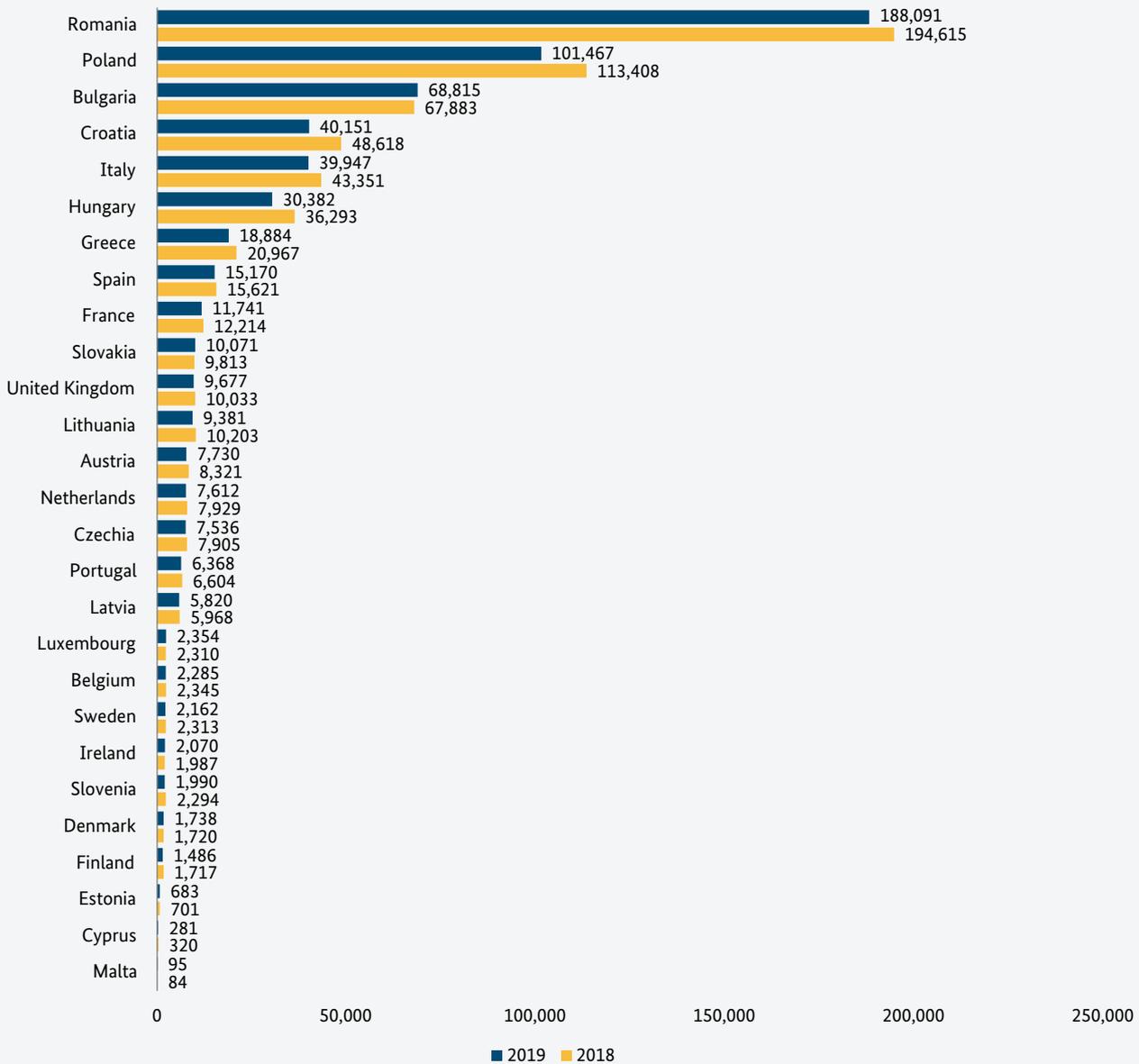
Nationals of Romania (188,091 persons), Poland (101,467 persons) and Bulgaria (68,815 persons) make up the largest immigration groups (see Figure 1). In comparison to the previous year, the migration of nationals has risen from only six EU member states and migration from 21 member states has fallen. Two years previously, 16 states showed a rise in immigration. The strongest increase (in absolute terms) applied to nationals from Bulgaria (+932 persons), while the largest drop was among Polish nationals (-11,941 persons).

Complete freedom of movement has applied for the EU 8 states since 1 May 2011. A rise in the overall migration of nationals of these countries to Germany was observable up

to 2015. The ensuing decline continued in 2019, increasing two-fold in comparison to the previous year, to a total of -19,255, or -10.3 %. Only Slovakia showed an increase in the number of nationals migrating to Germany compared to the previous year. As in the preceding years, in absolute terms Polish nationals once again account for the largest reduction in immigration over the reporting period, with a drop of -11,941 persons making up more than half of the total decline among the group of EU 8 states.

The number of immigrants who are nationals of the EU 2 countries Bulgaria and Romania has also increased substantially since the introduction of unrestricted free movement within the EU for these nationals for employment purposes

Figure 1: Numbers of EU nationals (excluding Germans) immigrated to Germany in 2018 and 2019, by nationality



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

on 1 January 2014, with Bulgaria reaching its highest level to date in 2015. Romania peaked in 2018. While the gentle upward trend which was in evidence in the previous years continued for Bulgaria (+932 persons or +1.4 % in comparison to the previous year), the immigration figures for Romanian nationals fell again in 2019 (-6,524 persons or -3.4 %).

Increased immigration from Croatia has been observable since this country acceded to the EU in July 2013. In the reporting period, immigration by Croatian nationals dropped by a substantial 17.4 % (-8,467 persons) in comparison to the previous year, following on from slight declines in 2017 and 2018.

This means that more than three quarters of the EU nationals who immigrated to Germany in 2019 (464,387 persons; 78.2 %) were nationals of countries for which complete freedom of movement was introduced less than a decade ago (EU 8, EU 2, Croatia). In addition, a total of 80,369 EU nationals (13.5 %) immigrated to Germany from the southern European member states of Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, which were particularly severely affected by the European financial and economic crisis. As in 2018, each of these four countries shows a drop in the numbers of their nationals immigrating to Germany in 2019 as compared to the previous year. The total number of nationals from these countries migrating to Germany has been in decline since 2016.

Overall, the reporting period shows a marked drop in immigration by EU nationals. This had been forecast in numerous instances, owing to changes in the demographic structures or labour markets in the countries of origin (see i.a. Fuchs et al., 2019²). Future Freedom of Movement Monitoring reports will show whether this trend consolidates or even becomes more pronounced in the coming years. A special dip in the trend is additionally to be expected for 2020 on account of the corona crisis and the related restrictions on travel. The effects of the United Kingdom's exit from the EU on 31 January 2020 on internal mobility within the EU will also become apparent in this context.

Age and gender of EU nationals immigrated to Germany in 2019

On the basis of the data presented in Table 2, around 90 % of the EU nationals who immigrated to Germany in 2019 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 this overall group (27.7 %). For most countries of origin, this age group contains the highest number of persons. This characteristic age spread indicates a high level of employment among the immigrants from EU countries. Only in Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain the (even younger) age group of 18 to 25 year-olds is the dominant group.³ 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, however, this can only be assumed.

The share of women among all immigrating EU nationals stands at 36.2 %⁴. This figure varies strongly between the respective nationalities. However, the share of women immigrating to Germany is only larger than the share of men for one country of origin - Finland (53.4 %) - while Poland, Hungary and Romania show the smallest shares of female immigrants (32.5 %, 33.6 % and 33.8 % respectively).

2 Fuchs, Johann/Kubis, Alexander/Schneider, Lutz (2019): Zuwanderung und Digitalisierung. Wie viel Migration aus Drittstaaten benötigt der deutsche Arbeitsmarkt künftig, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung.

3 This age group spans a range of only seven years. However, the same breakdown still applies if 16 to 18 year-olds are also included.

4 671 persons were recorded in the CRF without specifying their gender, three persons were classified as 'diverse'.

Table 2: Age distribution of EU nationals who immigrated in 2019, by nationality

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	576	52	1,900	2,689	1,125	769	403	216	7,730
Belgium	172	15	638	683	355	247	127	48	2,285
Bulgaria	9,241	1,012	10,669	16,609	15,053	11,232	4,102	897	68,815
Croatia	5,136	470	7,591	9,580	7,790	6,123	2,971	490	40,151
Cyprus	8	6	86	105	39	27	7	3	281
Czechia	815	126	1,502	2,246	1,535	900	335	77	7,536
Denmark	135	20	551	549	168	169	102	44	1,738
Estonia	62	10	147	217	131	73	33	10	683
Finland	114	21	484	521	189	99	36	22	1,486
France	827	121	5,200	3,385	1,145	625	274	164	11,741
Greece	2,392	272	3,380	5,024	3,329	2,743	1,195	549	18,884
Hungary	1,894	199	6,212	8,478	6,166	5,162	1,909	362	30,382
Ireland	117	22	778	616	284	158	68	27	2,070
Italy	3,781	503	10,138	12,618	5,771	4,325	1,943	868	39,947
Latvia	457	59	1,052	1,644	1,250	882	410	66	5,820
Lithuania	482	50	2,197	2,587	1,740	1,517	686	122	9,381
Luxembourg	211	37	871	541	204	185	175	130	2,354
Malta	12	-	20	31	19	10	3	-	95
Netherlands	725	65	1,463	2,035	1,140	1,101	722	361	7,612
Poland	4,431	454	22,213	27,901	20,319	16,463	7,950	1,736	101,467
Portugal	532	56	1,257	1,851	1,247	909	373	143	6,368
Romania	15,933	1,572	38,284	52,849	40,400	30,172	7,414	1,467	188,091
Slovakia	864	100	2,327	2,853	2,030	1,356	477	64	10,071
Slovenia	156	20	426	610	409	237	107	25	1,990
Spain	1,918	196	4,422	4,369	2,266	1,380	450	169	15,170
Sweden	269	23	461	742	347	174	90	56	2,162
United Kingdom	509	29	2,227	3,040	1,714	1,197	678	283	9,677
Total EU nationals	51,769	5,510	126,496	164,373	116,165	88,235	33,040	8,399	593,987

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, a total of 432,854 EU nationals (excluding Germans) moved away from Germany in 2019. This represents a 9.5 % increase in emigration compared to 2018 (395,392 emigrants). The highest number of emigrations was recorded among Romanian nationals (124,373 persons), followed by Polish (85,720 persons) and Bulgarian nation-

als (42,938). As such, these three countries account for the highest levels of both immigration and emigration, indicating highly dynamic migratory activity. Detailed country-specific information on the emigration of EU nationals from Germany since 2011 is provided in Table 3 and Figure 2.

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

Nationality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Difference 2018/2019
Austria	4,951	4,912	4,861	5,948	5,192	5,473	6,964	6,033	6,611	+9.6 %
Belgium	1,087	895	1,019	1,396	1,269	1,311	1,645	1,572	1,695	+7.8 %
Bulgaria	13,896	16,255	19,401	24,466	26,299	32,036	34,735	37,833	42,938	+13.5 %
Croatia*	6,846	6,501	6,642	9,416	11,789	15,122	17,467	18,561	19,634	+5.8 %
Cyprus	48	51	79	175	159	150	220	213	209	-1.9 %
Czechia	3,166	3,280	3,821	4,868	4,858	5,455	5,583	5,490	6,143	+11.9 %
Denmark	928	819	871	1,270	1,061	1,220	1,472	1,432	1,950	+36.2%
Estonia	425	398	387	511	436	438	449	493	516	+4.7 %
Finland	1,112	1,102	1,097	1,414	1,243	1,322	1,578	1,436	1,617	+12.6 %
France	5,838	5,297	5,708	7,934	7,666	8,150	9,981	8,908	11,089	+24.5 %
Greece	5,851	6,509	7,366	10,127	9,733	11,498	12,813	12,503	14,492	+15.9 %
Hungary	13,358	15,301	19,378	23,679	23,253	25,396	27,392	26,510	26,842	+1.3 %
Ireland	614	604	669	873	859	1,079	1,122	1,301	1,612	+23.9 %
Italy	12,459	11,160	13,450	19,702	21,601	24,152	27,110	27,241	30,352	+11.4 %
Latvia	2,301	2,769	2,654	3,199	2,827	2,989	3,416	3,526	4,195	+19.0 %
Lithuania	2,593	3,002	3,282	3,764	3,687	4,058	4,424	5,721	6,808	+19.0 %
Luxembourg	828	749	717	1,113	1,051	1,101	1,211	1,189	1,401	+17.8 %
Malta	38	40	43	52	47	53	61	59	67	+13.6 %
Netherlands	4,530	4,155	4,480	5,404	5,460	5,910	6,309	6,508	6,765	+3.9 %
Poland	45,425	47,384	57,227	70,700	70,740	72,983	77,692	81,198	85,720	+5.6 %
Portugal	3,213	3,074	3,957	5,219	4,954	5,198	5,915	5,377	5,961	+10.9 %
Romania	27,654	32,371	43,953	63,363	73,183	87,853	100,984	113,413	124,373	+9.7 %
Slovakia	4,534	4,787	6,000	7,082	6,803	6,737	7,355	7,483	7,951	+6.3 %
Slovenia	958	1,179	1,418	1,723	1,890	1,926	1,952	1,837	1,821	-0.9 %
Spain	4,723	5,091	6,918	10,352	10,287	11,382	12,002	11,544	12,684	+9.9 %
Sweden	1,133	1,026	1,064	1,402	1,303	1,432	1,638	1,550	1,863	+20.2 %
United Kingdom	4,377	3,894	4,331	5,782	5,386	5,599	6,402	6,461	7,545	+16.8 %
Total EU nationals (incl. Croatia)	172,886	182,605	220,793	290,934	303,036	340,023	377,892	395,392	432,854	+9.5 %

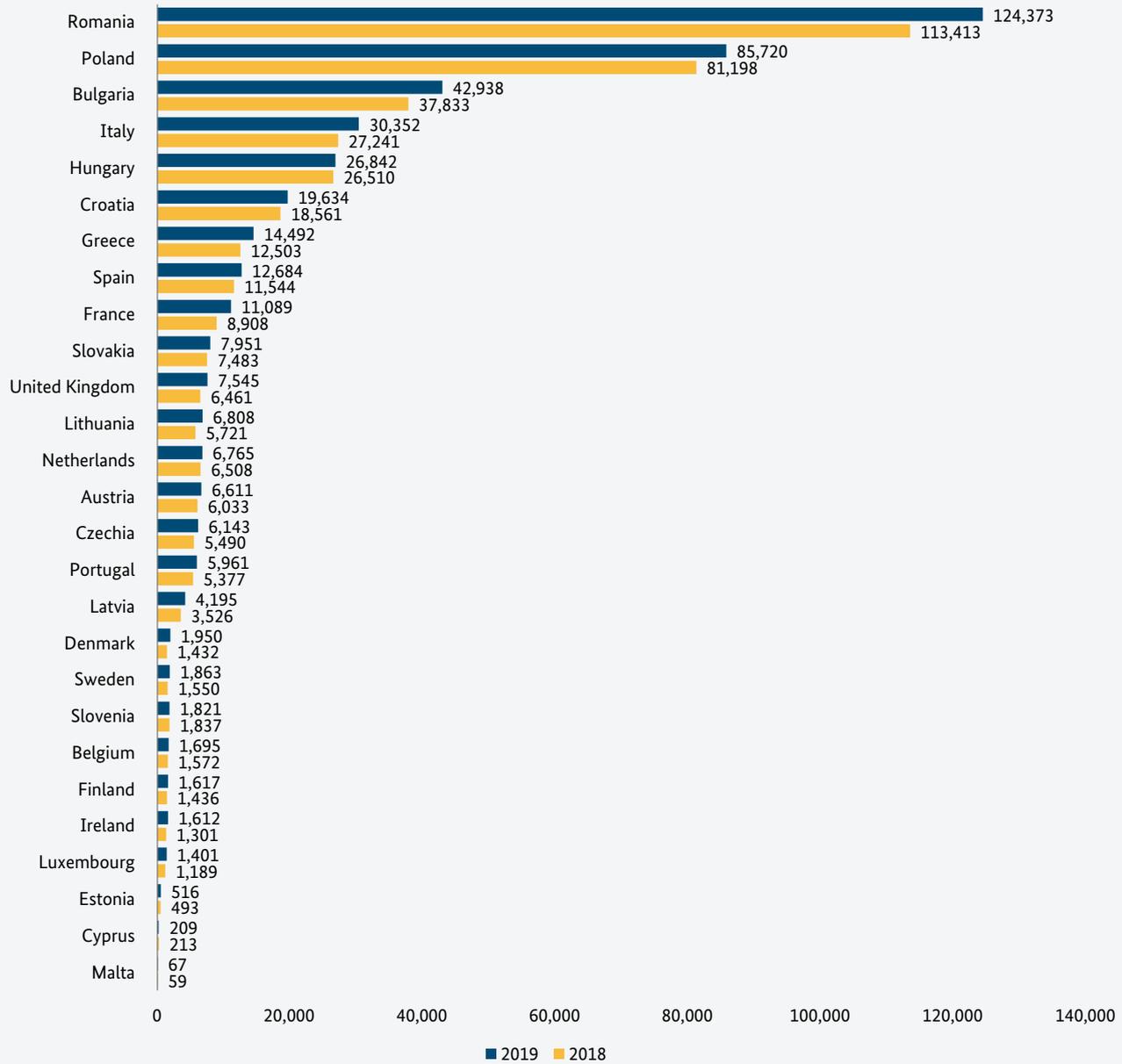
* Croatia has been a member of the European Union since July 1st, 2013. For reasons of comparison, the immigration and emigration figures of Croatian nationals have been added to the immigration figures of EU nationals as of 2011.

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 in some instances between 2011 and 2015, remained relatively stable from 2016 to 2018 and declined slightly in 2019 (Table 1), the emigration figures show a continual increase since 2011 (Table 3). In absolute terms however, they still fall well short of the immigration figures.

Figure 2: Numbers of EU nationals (excluding Germans) emigrated from Germany in 2018 and 2019, by nationality



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

4. Net Migration

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

for the individual nationalities, the corresponding numbers of persons resident in Germany should always be considered (Chapter 5), as this factor has a substantial influence on the extent of emigration.

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

Nationality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Difference 2018/2019
Austria	2,182	2,145	2,490	1,977	3,600	3,267	1,896	2,288	1,119	-51.1 %
Belgium	458	878	864	753	1,113	1,095	829	773	590	-23.7 %
Bulgaria	20,611	25,439	25,776	38,674	45,410	34,754	32,137	30,050	25,877	-13.9 %
Croatia*	1,243	2,518	11,991	27,644	38,857	36,041	32,816	30,057	20,517	-31.7 %
Cyprus	115	169	333	270	280	269	186	107	72	-32.7 %
Czechia	3,133	4,008	4,083	4,103	4,618	2,511	2,580	2,415	1,393	-42.3 %
Denmark	423	554	560	214	552	513	305	288	-212	-173.6 %
Estonia	527	430	541	308	371	302	230	208	167	-19.7 %
Finland	312	351	403	278	720	583	335	281	-131	-146.6 %
France	2,869	3,619	4,703	3,124	4,839	4,766	3,130	3,306	652	-80.3 %
Greece	10,407	18,058	17,555	13,234	14,177	10,832	9,414	8,464	4,392	-48.1 %
Hungary	17,935	28,132	27,645	24,384	24,846	16,906	12,622	9,783	3,540	-63.8 %
Ireland	463	537	460	439	801	713	814	686	458	-33.2 %
Italy	5,325	13,524	20,966	23,974	25,856	18,546	16,321	16,110	9,595	-40.4 %
Latvia	4,492	3,744	3,520	2,611	2,573	2,300	2,646	2,442	1,625	-33.5 %
Lithuania	4,899	4,721	3,832	3,068	4,533	3,732	4,297	4,482	2,573	-42.6 %
Luxembourg	564	592	1,203	953	1,369	1,274	1,095	1,121	953	-15.0 %
Malta	41	25	29	13	42	18	27	25	28	+12.0 %
Netherlands	2,422	2,643	3,427	2,946	3,714	2,881	2,271	1,421	847	-40.4 %
Poland	60,578	70,506	79,455	73,060	77,170	50,151	40,332	32,210	15,747	-51.1 %
Portugal	2,690	5,498	6,469	3,956	3,699	2,827	1,468	1,227	407	-66.8 %
Romania	37,014	50,186	58,800	93,077	101,596	83,527	78,854	81,202	63,718	-21.5 %
Slovakia	4,641	5,834	5,475	5,485	5,197	3,282	2,763	2,330	2,120	-9.0 %
Slovenia	696	1,238	1,776	1,754	1,962	913	768	457	169	-63.0 %
Spain	5,582	10,838	14,634	11,023	9,857	7,286	4,236	4,077	2,486	-39.0 %
Sweden	316	400	565	368	968	660	641	763	299	-60.8 %
United Kingdom	2,043	2,967	3,161	1,619	3,729	4,064	3,931	3,572	2,132	-40.3 %
Total EU nationals (incl. Croatia)	191,981	259,554	300,716	339,309	382,449	294,013	256,944	240,145	161,133	-32.9 %

* Croatia has been a member of the European Union since July 1st, 2013. For reasons of comparison, the immigration and emigration figures of Croatian nationals have been added to the immigration figures of EU nationals as of 2011.

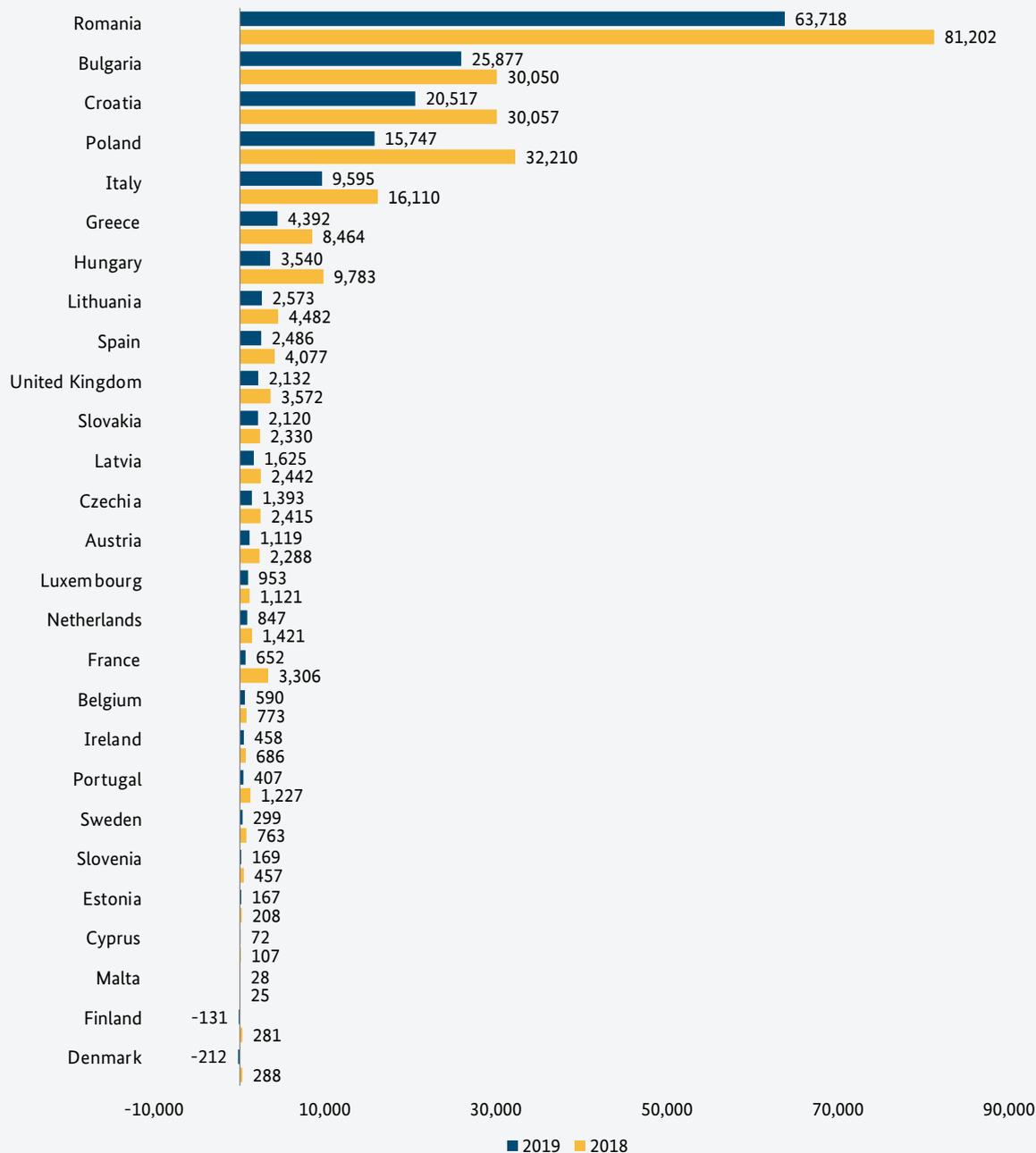
Source: Central Register of Foreigners

Germany has shown net migration gains in relation to every single EU country in recent years, i.e. the number of persons immigrating to Germany exceeded the number of persons emigrating from Germany (Table 4). However, for the first time since the beginning of the overall period under review in 2011, two countries (Denmark and Finland) show negative annual net migration figures of their nationals in 2019 in relation to migration to Germany. The net migration gain from all EU countries also fell substantially: the net inflow

of EU nationals into Germany stood at +161,133, representing a drop of 79,012 persons or 32.9 % in comparison to the previous year. As a result, for the first time the total figure is below the total that applied in 2011.

Figure 3 shows a breakdown of EU nationals according to net migration levels in 2019. As in the previous year, Romania remains the country of origin with which Germany has the highest net migration gain. Romanian nationals alone

Figure 3: Net migration of EU nationals (excluding Germans) in 2018 and 2019, by nationality



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

account for more than one third (39.5 % or 63,718 persons) of Germany’s overall net migration gain among EU nationals in the reporting period. Bulgaria, Croatia and Poland also show a particularly high positive migration balance (25,877, 20,517 and 15,747 persons respectively), whereby a pronounced downward trend is to be observed for all these countries.

A comparison of the net migration figures for the individual nationality groups in 2019 with those of the previous year shows a reduced figure for 26 EU countries. Malta is the only EU country to show an increased net migration gain, although the influence of this development on total migration is negligible. In absolute figures, Romanian nationals show the largest drop in net immigration compared with the previous year, at 17,484 persons or 21.5 %.

Net migration of EU 8 nationals

As Table 4 shows, the introduction of full freedom of movement for employment purposes for nationals of the EU countries with effect from 1 May 2011 had a particularly pronounced effect on the net migration of Polish and Hungarian nationals. While the annual net migration gain for nationals of all other EU 8 countries was well below 10,000 persons in each instance over the entire period under review, for Hungarian migrants this figure attained its highest level to date in 2012, at 28,132 persons. Net immigration was even higher among Polish nationals, peaking

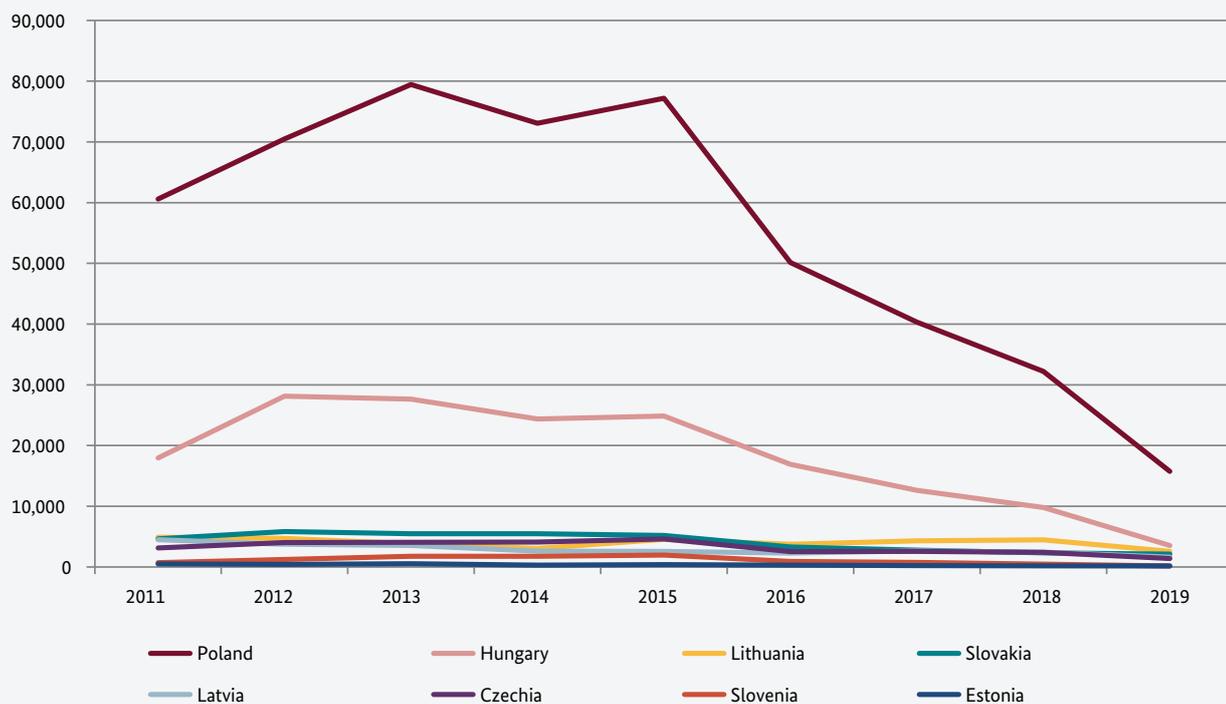
at 79,455 persons in 2013. Since these peaks, both of these groups have been on almost continual downward trends.

Continual declines in net immigration by EU 8 nationals as a whole have been recorded since 2016. Since 2018, net immigration from all these countries has remained below the level recorded in 2011 – the year in which full freedom of movement for employment purposes was introduced. Net immigration fell by a further 26,993 persons or 49.7 % in 2019, to a total of 27,334 persons. This means that net migration from these countries does not even amount to one quarter of the peak figure from 2013 (cf. Figure 4).

Net migration of EU 2 nationals

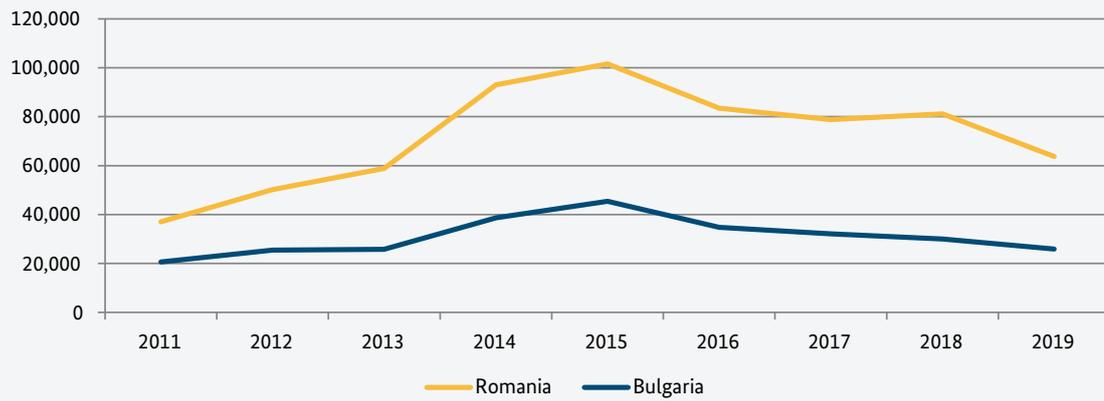
Net migration figures for nationals of the two EU countries Romania and Bulgaria rose continually in the years up to 2015, against the background of their accession to the EU on 1 January 2007 and the introduction of full freedom of movement for employment purposes as of 1 January 2014. A decline was to be observed here too in 2016 and 2017, however. Immigration from both countries dropped in 2016 and rose only minimally in 2017 in relation to the numbers of nationals from these countries leaving Germany, resulting in a reduction in the net migration gain from the two countries. This trend continued in the two following years for Bulgarian nationals (2019 in comparison to 2018: -4,173 persons or 13.9 %), while the net migration gain for Romanian nationals rose again slightly owing to an increase

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

in immigration. It fell markedly in 2019, due to declining immigration figures (-17,484 persons or 21.5 %). Figure 5 shows the annual net migration for EU 2 nationals since 2011.

Net migration of Croatian nationals

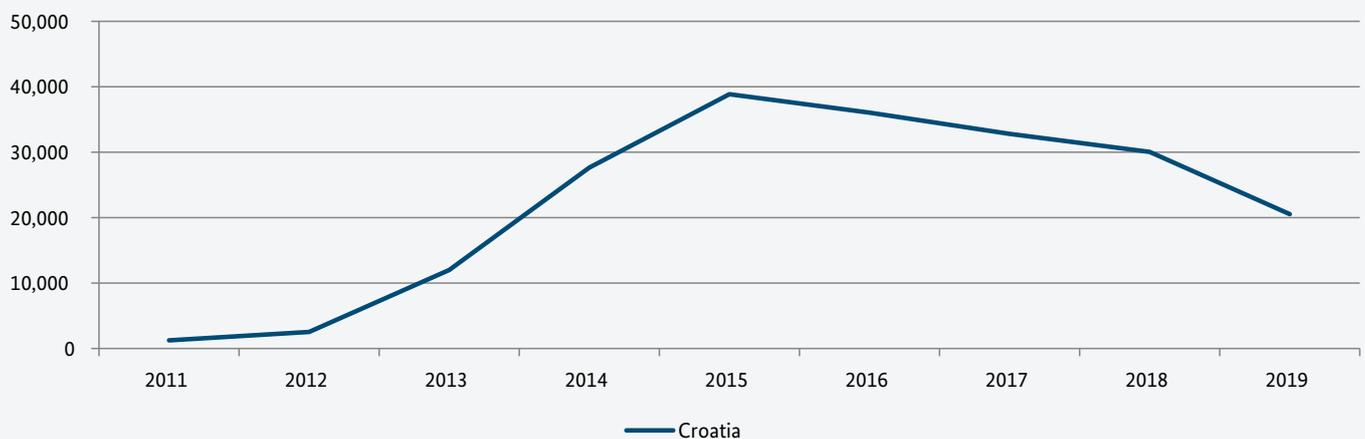
The net migration of Croatian nationals rose strongly in the first half of the last decade. This may be attributed to Croatia’s accession to the EU on 1 July 2013 and the attendant easing of provisions relating to the immigration and residence of these nationals. The net migration gain rose from 2,518 persons in 2012 to 38,857 persons in 2015. This highest level recorded to date is most probably attributable to the introduction of full freedom of movement within the EU for Croatian nationals for employment purposes on 1 July 2015. However, net migration fell continually in the following years. This trend continued in 2019, with a drop of 9,540 persons or 31.7 % in comparison to the previous year, to a total of 20,517 persons (Figure 6).

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

Nationals of 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, showed an increase in net migration at the beginning of the period under review, in 2011 and 2012. The levels of migration between Germany and these countries have since fallen again (Table 4 and Figure 7). The net migration gain from GIPS nationals fell overall by 12,998 persons or 43.5 % in 2019 as compared to 2018, dropping below the figure for 2011 (24,004 persons) for the first time, at 16,800 persons.

Net migration from Greece rose from 10,407 persons in 2011 to peak within a year at a level of 18,058 persons in 2012. The decline which subsequently began in 2013 was only interrupted in 2015, and also continued in 2019

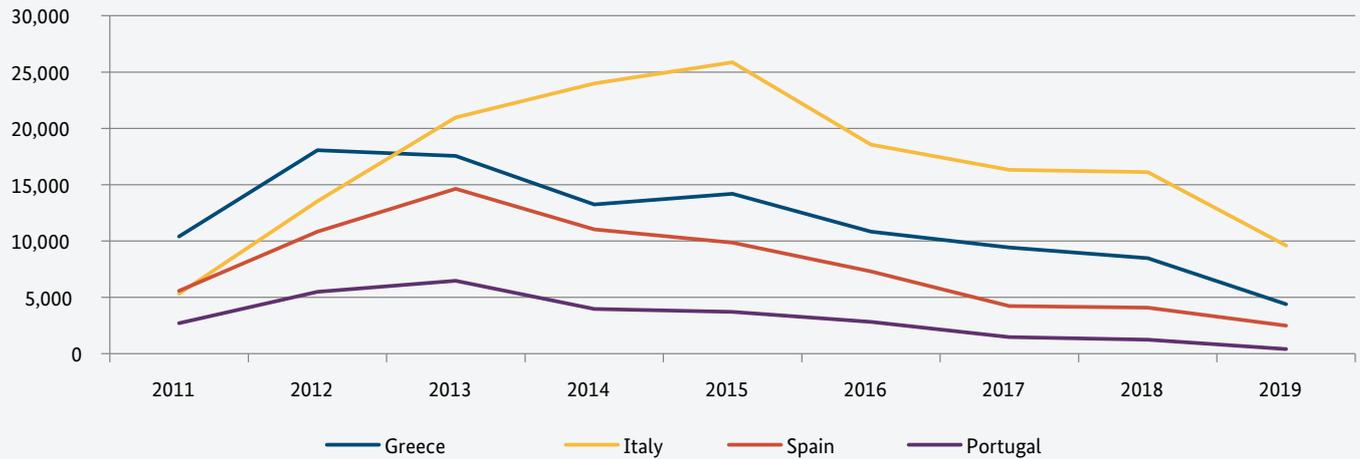
Figure 6: Net migration trend for Croatian nationals since 2011



Source: Central Register of Foreigners



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



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

(-48.1 % compared to 2018). At 4,392 persons, the current net migration gain for 2019 does not even amount to half of the figure for 2011.

Net migration by Portuguese and Spanish nationals peaked in 2013 (Portugal: 6,469 persons, Spain: 14,634 persons). This peak was followed by an annually declining trend for both of these groups. The net migration gain from Portuguese nationals fell to 407 in 2019 (down by 66.8 % compared to 2018). For Spanish nationals, a net migration gain of 2,486 persons was recorded in the same year (down by 39.0 % compared to 2018).

Among the GIPS countries, net migration has risen most sharply since 2011 among Italian nationals. The net migration gain peaked here in 2015, at 25,856 persons. Emigration from Germany by Italian nationals rose in the following years, while the number of immigrants fell overall. As a result, net migration dropped here to 9,595 persons, which was 40.4 % less than in 2018.

5. EU Nationals Resident in Germany

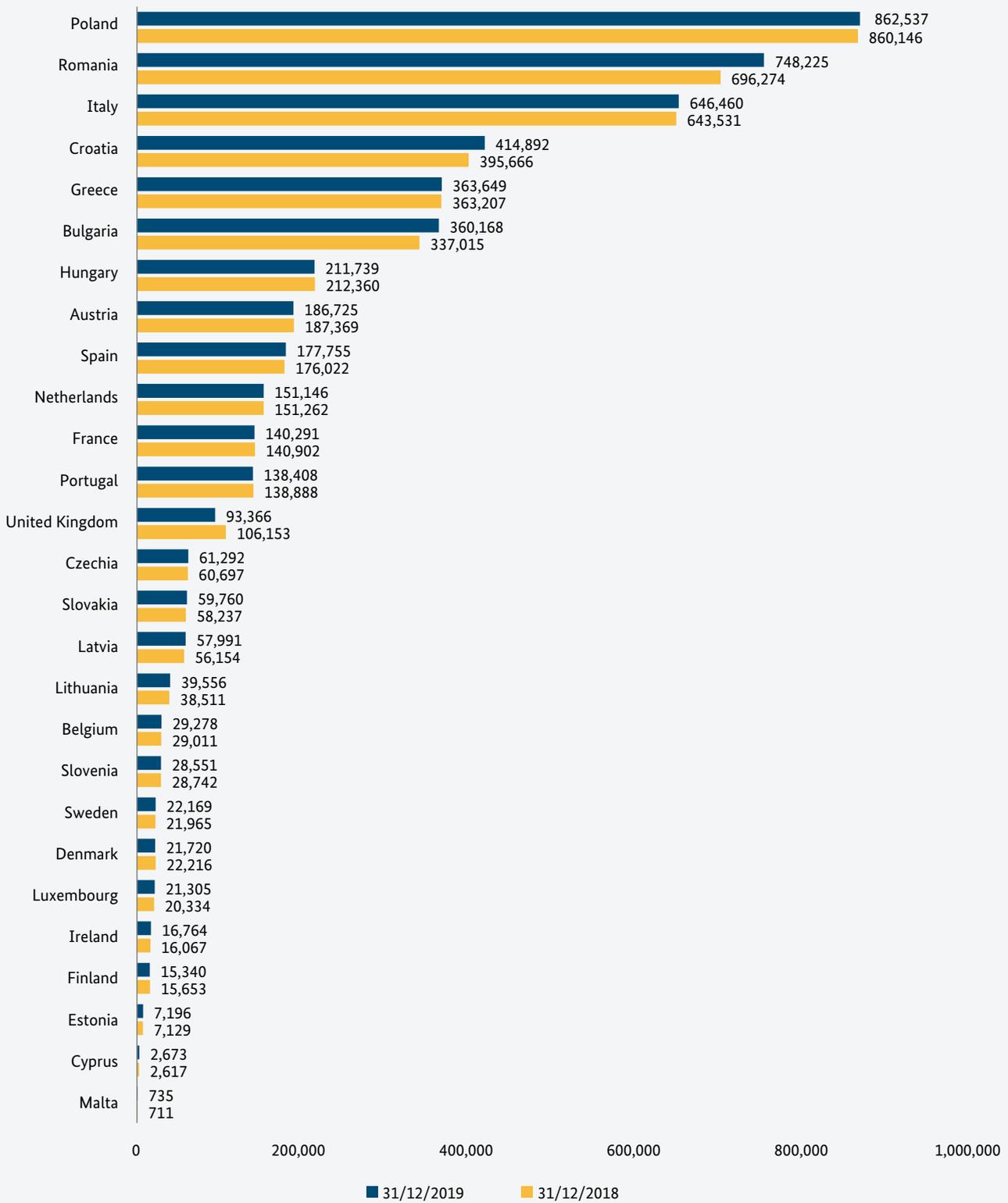
According to the CRF, 4,882,495 nationals of other EU countries⁵ were resident in Germany on the reference date of 31 December 2019, representing a rise of 92,742 persons or 1.9 % in comparison to 31 December 2018.⁶ EU nationals thus made up just under half (43.5 %) of all foreigners resident in Germany (11,228,298 persons in total). The share of women stood at 45.4 %.

Figure 8 shows the numbers of EU nationals resident in Germany broken down according to the respective nationalities. At 862,537 persons, Polish nationals constitute the largest nationality group among the nationals of other EU countries resident in Germany (17.7 %). Romanian nationals (748,225 persons or 15.3 %) and Italian nationals (646,460 persons or 13.2 %) follow up in second and third places. Compared to the situation as per 31 December 2018, the number of persons resident in Germany increased with regard to 18 countries, while the other nine EU nationalities showed a drop. The largest increase in absolute terms applied to Romanian nationals (+51,951 persons or 7.5 %), while the United Kingdom showed the strongest reduction (-12,787 persons or 12.0 %).

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

6 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 (excluding Germans) on 31 December 2018 and 2019, by nationality



Source: Central Register of Foreigners

6. EU Nationals on the German Labour Market

As the purpose of residence of EU nationals is not recorded in the CRF, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from these data regarding the integration of EU nationals in the German labour market. Therefore this report additionally uses data provided by the Federal Employment Agency.⁷ Table 5 shows the number of EU nationals holding only a non-German nationality who were employed in Germany and subject to social insurance contributions as per 30 September 2019.⁸

Accordingly, a total of 2,276,958 foreign EU nationals were in employment and subject to social insurance contributions in Germany on the stated reference date (i.e. excluding self-employed persons, part-time employees and civil servants, but including cross-border commuters). This represents a rise of 116,351 persons or 5.4 % in comparison to the corresponding month in the previous year. Last year, this figure was slightly higher, at 7.9 %. The share of women stood at only 38.2 %.

Around one third of all these persons (31.1 %) held the nationality of an EU 8 country. 24.6 % were nationals of a GIPS country and 24.0 % were nationals of an EU 2 country. Another 8.6 % held the Croatian nationality. 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 (88.3 %). France is the country with the largest share outside of the stated group, comprising 82,614 persons or 3.6 %. 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, Bulgaria (+12.4 %), Romania (+11.1 %) and Croatia (+7.7 %) show the highest rates of increase compared to the corresponding month in the previous year.

EU nationals thus account for approx. 6.7 % of all persons employed on the German labour market and subject to social insurance contributions (33,938,159 persons in total). EU nationals also make up the largest share (53.4 %) of all foreigners who are in employment (4,260,341). This is at odds with the ratio of resident EU nationals to resident foreigners as a whole (Chapter 5). It is not possible to conclude on the basis of the reference data available for the purposes of this report whether this is attributable to a higher employment rate among EU nationals or whether it is due solely to the number of cross-border commuters or a higher share of employment subject to social insurance contributions as opposed to other forms of employment.

⁷ Federal Employment Agency (2020): Beschäftigte nach Staatsangehörigkeiten (Quartalszahlen). Deutschland, Länder und Kreise. 30 September 2018, Nuremberg: Federal Employment Agency.

⁸ As the data are subject to a waiting period of six months, the figures for the end of 2019 cannot be used in this report.

Table 5: Foreign EU nationals with employment subject to social security contributions in Germany (30.09.2019), by nationality

Nationality	Employees subject to social insurance contributions		Difference to same month of the previous year	
	Number	Share	Absolute	Percentage
Total EU nationals	2,276,958	100.0 %	116,351	5.4 %
EU 8 countries	707,898	31.1 %	29,595	4.4 %
EU 2 countries	546,244	24.0 %	56,145	11.5 %
GIPS countries	560,274	24.6 %	13,630	2.5 %
Top 10 nationalities				
Poland	449,400	19.7 %	19,733	4.6 %
Romania	401,161	17.6 %	40,138	11.1 %
Italy	275,955	12.1 %	6,924	2.6 %
Croatia	196,680	8.6 %	14,120	7.7 %
Greece	149,502	6.6 %	3,689	2.5 %
Bulgaria	145,083	6.4 %	16,007	12.4 %
Hungary	106,732	4.7 %	1,292	1.2 %
France	82,614	3.6 %	892	1.1 %
Spain	71,892	3.2 %	2,108	3.0 %
Austria	65,674	2.9 %	817	1.3 %
Other EU countries	332,265	14.6 %	10,631	3.3 %

Source: Federal Employment Agency (own calculation)

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