

IMMIGRANT POPULATION BY REGION OF ORIGIN AND GENDER

At the time of the 2000 censuses, about 80 million residents in OECD countries were immigrants. With the OECD database on the foreign-born, some basic information on the origin, characteristics and distribution of immigrants is now available for the first time for almost all OECD countries.

Definition

Immigrants, or foreign-born persons, are persons who are born in a different country from the one in which they currently reside.

Comparability

The data are mainly based on the year 2000 round of censuses. Due to their comprehensive coverage, censuses are particularly well-adapted to identifying and studying small population groups. In several countries, however, there has been no population census and it has been necessary to turn to data from population registers or from large-sample surveys.

Overview

The origins of the immigrant population vary widely across OECD countries. About half of all immigrants to OECD countries originate in another OECD country. The proportions range from as low as 6 per cent of immigrants in Japan aged 15 and above being born in another OECD country to around 80 per cent in Luxembourg, the Slovak Republic, Ireland and the Czech Republic.

The data also show that the geographical origin of the immigrant population strongly reflects historical links and geographical proximity. France and Portugal, for example, have many immigrants who have been born in Africa, which is to a considerable degree attributable to their colonial past. Cultural and linguistic or geographical proximity is also mirrored in the large share of Latin Americans among immigrants to Mexico and Spain, and of Asian immigrants to Japan.

In most OECD countries, women account for a larger proportion of the immigrant stock than men. The share of women is particularly pronounced among immigrants from Latin America. The only country with sizeable immigration from Latin America where men are more numerous is Japan. Many of these are descendants of former Japanese emigrants to Latin America.

In contrast, men are more numerous among the immigrants from Africa in almost all OECD countries where immigration from Africa has been important, with the notable exceptions of Portugal and the United Kingdom.

Data for Japan and Korea were not available by country of birth. For these countries, it has been assumed that the country of nationality is the country of birth. This seems a reasonable assumption for the foreign-born, given the very low rate and number of naturalisations in Japan and Korea. However, it will tend to overestimate the number of foreign-born relative to other countries, because persons born in Japan and Korea to foreigners will tend also to be recorded as foreign and thus be classified as foreign-born.

Figures for Germany and the Netherlands are estimates based on labour force survey data. Because the data on immigrants from certain countries of origin appear in larger geographic groupings for these countries, it is not always possible to distinguish between immigrants from OECD and those from non-OECD countries. For Germany and Turkey, the data do not permit the identification of immigrants from Latin America, who appear in the statistics for other regions. In addition, the German labour force survey only identifies whether or not a person was born abroad, but not the country of birth. For foreigners born abroad, it was assumed that the country of nationality was the country of birth. For nationals born abroad (naturalised foreign-born persons and "ethnic" German immigrants who obtained German nationality upon entry into Germany), the German Socio-Economic Panel was used to adjust the data for Germany for those countries of birth for which the samples were of sufficient size.

Source

- OECD (2006), *International Migration Outlook: SOPEMI – 2006 Edition*, OECD, Paris.

Further information

Methodological publications

- OECD (2005), "Counting immigrants and expatriates in OECD countries – a new perspective", *Trends in International Migration: SOPEMI – 2004 Edition*, OECD, Paris.

Online databases


- *International Migration Statistics*.

Foreign-born population, aged 15 and above by region of origin and gender

Circa 2000

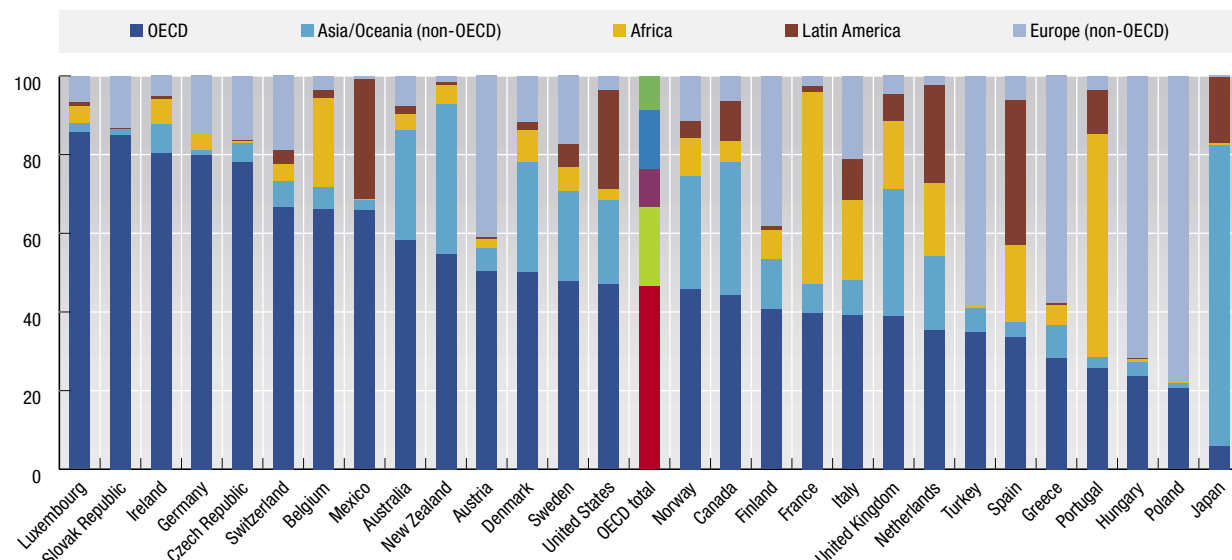

As a percentage from each region
among total foreign-bornAs a percentage of women
among the foreign-born by regionAs a percentage of women
among all foreign-born

	OECD	Asia and Oceania (non-OECD)	Africa	Latin America (non-OECD)	Europe (non-OECD)	OECD	Asia and Oceania (non-OECD)	Africa	Latin America (non-OECD)	Europe (non-OECD)	All continents
Australia	58.2	27.9	4.3	1.9	7.7	49.8	52.7	49.8	52.3	49.5	50.6
Austria	50.5	5.6	2.4	0.5	40.9	54.2	48.9	32.2	62.4	51.0	52.1
Belgium	66.1	5.4	22.8	1.9	3.7	53.3	56.8	46.8	59.8	55.3	51.9
Canada	44.3	33.8	5.2	10.3	6.4	51.9	51.8	47.8	54.8	51.0	51.9
Czech Republic	78.1	4.8	0.4	0.3	16.4	55.1	39.2	23.5	37.5	56.5	54.5
Denmark	50.1	27.8	8.2	2.2	11.7	52.5	49.6	46.0	57.1	53.9	51.4
Finland	40.6	12.8	7.2	1.3	38.1	43.4	49.4	33.3	52.5	61.5	50.4
France	39.7	7.3	49.0	1.4	2.6	53.3	49.9	48.0	57.3	53.5	50.5
Germany	79.8	1.3	4.1	..	14.8	46.1	48.1	27.9	..	52.8	50.8
Greece	28.2	8.3	5.1	0.6	57.7	57.8	37.0	48.9	68.5	47.7	49.9
Hungary	23.6	3.6	0.6	0.4	71.8	58.7	40.1	19.2	48.2	56.1	55.9
Ireland	80.4	7.3	6.5	0.8	5.1	51.7	44.1	46.4	47.2	44.8	50.4
Italy	39.1	9.0	20.2	10.7	21.0	60.2	49.3	41.2	64.5	53.5	54.4
Japan	5.9	76.5	0.4	16.9	0.3	37.0	56.3	20.8	44.7	72.2	53.2
Luxembourg	85.6	2.5	4.1	1.0	6.7	50.3	55.9	51.4	61.8	50.3	50.6
Mexico	65.8	2.6	0.3	30.3	0.9	48.6	43.3	39.7	52.2	56.3	49.5
Netherlands	35.5	18.7	18.5	25.0	2.2	53.7	48.8	44.4	53.7	47.4	51.4
New Zealand	54.7	38.1	4.8	0.6	1.7	51.2	53.0	51.0	53.9	50.8	51.9
Norway	45.9	28.7	9.5	4.4	11.5	51.5	49.9	43.1	52.3	56.4	51.1
Poland	20.5	1.3	0.3	0.1	77.7	57.8	42.0	26.1	41.5	61.1	59.9
Portugal	25.8	2.6	56.7	11.4	3.5	53.6	46.7	51.3	51.9	23.2	50.9
Slovak Republic	85.0	1.3	0.2	0.2	13.3	56.6	32.2	25.2	36.5	57.3	56.3
Spain	33.5	4.0	19.4	36.8	6.3	51.9	41.9	36.9	56.1	45.3	49.7
Sweden	47.8	23.0	6.0	5.9	17.3	52.7	50.0	44.7	50.3	52.4	51.4
Switzerland	66.7	6.5	4.5	3.5	18.8	53.0	52.5	48.4	66.5	49.9	52.2
Turkey	34.8	6.2	0.4	..	58.6	52.0	44.8	39.2	..	53.4	52.2
United Kingdom	39.0	32.3	17.1	7.0	4.6	56.5	50.7	50.9	55.6	50.2	53.3
United States	47.0	21.4	2.7	25.2	3.6	49.3	51.0	44.9	52.4	52.8	50.4
OECD Total	46.5	20.2	9.5	15.0	8.8	51.0	51.3	46.8	53.1	52.6	51.2

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/804145430641>

Foreign-born population by region of origin

As a percentage of total foreign-born population, aged 15 and above, circa 2000

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/516224313186>