

EMN Asylum and Migration Overview 2024 in Poland

NATIONAL REPORT

The report was prepared by the Office for Foreigners acting as the coordinator of the National Contact Point to the European Migration Network in Poland (EMN Poland).

PART 2
Poland 2024



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This Report follows the common specifications and methodology prepared by the European Migration Network. The European Migration Network was established by Council Decision 2008/381/EC in order to provide up-to-date objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum to Community institutions, Member States authorities and to general public, with a view to supporting policy-making in the EU. The European Migration Network is a Europe-wide network providing information on migration and asylum.

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The electronic version (both English and Polish) of the National Report is available on [HTTPS://WWW.GOV.PL/WEB/EUROPEAN-MIGRATION-NETWORK](https://www.gov.pl/web/european-migration-network) under "Publications".

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CONTENTS

0	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4			
	INTRODUCTION	5			
1	OVERVIEW OF KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN MIGRATION AND ASYLUM	6	7	CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS	28
2	LEGAL MIGRATION	14	8	SCHENGEN GOVERNANCE AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN BORDER MANAGEMENT AND VISA POLICY	31
3	INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION	17	9	IRREGULAR MIGRATION	33
4	TEMPORARY PROTECTION AND OTHER MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO PERSONS FLEEING THE WAR IN UKRAINE	20	10	TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS	35
5	UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS	23	11	RETURN AND READMISSION	39
6	INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION	25	12	MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT	41
			*	APENDIXES A, B	43

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, Poland introduced a number of key strategic, legal and policy changes in the field of migration and asylum. The most notable development was the adoption of the migration strategy **“Regain Control. Ensure Security” for the years 2025–2030**¹, which outlines a comprehensive framework covering regular migration, asylum, integration, return, and border management. This strategy aims to strengthen the state’s capacity to manage migration in a secure, controlled, and predictable manner.

In the area of legal migration, Poland introduced measures affecting the access of foreigners to the labour market, education, and healthcare. Noteworthy legislative changes included the termination of simplified procedures for licensing Ukrainian medical professionals, new obligations to prove Polish language skills, and updated visa regulations. Work also progressed on bills to combat abuse in the employment and visa systems.

In light of the ongoing war in Ukraine and pursuant to the Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1836 of 25 June 2024² extending the application of temporary protection across the European Union, Poland has prolonged temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine until September 2025. This extension ensures continuity of legal stay and access to rights for the largest group of beneficiaries of temporary protection within the EU. In parallel, Polish authorities have reinforced support mechanisms in key sectors such as education – through the continued engagement of intercultural assistants and additional language support – healthcare, and labour market integration. Furthermore, legal pathways have been introduced to facilitate the transition of Ukrainian citizens from temporary protection to national migration regimes, enabling a more stable and long-term legal status for those planning to remain in Poland.

1. <https://www.gov.pl/web/premier/odzyskac-kontrolę-zapewnić-bezpieczeństwo--strategia-migracyjna-na-lata-2025--2030>
2. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32024D1836>

International protection procedures were subject to additional restrictions in response to hybrid threats at the Polish-Belarusian border, and reception conditions were improved, particularly regarding child protection and special needs assessment.

Progress was also made in addressing the needs of unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups, including amendments extending support for young people leaving foster care and expanding access to psychological services.

Significant steps were taken to reinforce integration and inclusion, such as the nationwide rollout of Foreigner Integration Centres and the implementation of training programmes for integration professionals. Efforts were also undertaken to streamline access to education and support for children with migration experience.

While there were no major changes to citizenship or statelessness procedures, the field of border management saw legislative alignment with EU requirements on the Entry/Exit System (EES)³, and progress was made on the national ETIAS and Integrated Border Management strategies. Measures were also adopted to manage visa misuse, including the introduction of visa requirements for Colombian nationals engaged in gainful activities.⁴

In 2024, Poland reinforced its response to irregular migration and migrant smuggling, particularly at the eastern border with Belarus, including through legal amendments and establishing temporary, restricted buffer zones. Preparations were also made to strengthen return and readmission mechanisms, in line with broader EU frameworks.

Overall, 2024 was a year of strategic consolidation and legal refinement in Poland’s migration governance, with enhanced attention to national security, orderly migration management, and integration of displaced persons, particularly from Ukraine.

3. <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20240001688/O/D20241688.pdf>

4. <https://www.gov.pl/web/kolumbia/zmiana-przepisow-wizowych>

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by the National Contact Point of the European Migration Network (EMN) in Poland as Part II of the national contribution to the Asylum and Migration Overview 2024. It complements Part I of the report⁵, which presents key legal and policy developments in Poland in the broader EU context, by providing a more detailed account of national activities, strategic directions, and cooperation with stakeholders, with a specific focus on developments relevant to the Polish public and national institutions.

In accordance with Article 9(1) of Council Decision 2008/381/EC establishing the European Migration Network (EMN), each EMN National Contact Point (NCP) is required to provide an annual report describing the migration and asylum situation and developments in the Member State, as well as statistical data.

The purpose of this report is to inform the national audience, including policymakers, academics, civil society, and the general public, about significant changes in Poland's migration and asylum systems that occurred between 1 January and 31 December 2024. It highlights developments in national legislation, strategy, practice, and implementation, especially in areas such as legal migration, international protection, temporary protection for persons fleeing the war in Ukraine, and integration of migrants.

The data and information presented in this report were collected using publicly available official documents, legislative records, and information provided by key government ministries and agencies. Particular attention was given to the strategic direction set out in the new migration policy document "Regain Control. Ensure Security", which influences multiple domains of migration governance in Poland.

5. <https://www.gov.pl/web/european-migration-network/annual-policy-reports>

1

OVERVIEW OF KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN MIGRATION AND ASYLUM

In 2024, the most significant overarching development in Poland's migration and asylum policy landscape was the adoption of a strategic policy document titled "Regain Control. Ensure Security" Migration Strategy document for Poland for 2025–2030, approved by the Council of Ministers on 15 October 2024. This marked a pivotal moment in national policymaking, establishing a coherent and long-term framework for regulating migration, asylum, return, integration, and border management.

The strategy sets out a synthetic, directional agenda for the coming years and reflects Poland's growing need to manage migration more effectively in light of demographic trends, geopolitical pressures, and the evolving role of migration in national security. It includes specific sections on labour migration, international protection, integration, border governance, and return procedures, with the stated aim of enhancing state control and institutional coherence.

This strategic shift represents a response to the lack of a coordinated migration policy and acknowledges the need to launch a wider national debate on migration. It also serves as a reference point for legislative and procedural reforms introduced across several domains in 2024, including visa policy, access to the labour market for Ukrainian nationals, health credential recognition, and support systems for vulnerable groups.

In terms of crosscutting developments in migration and asylum policy in Poland, progress was made in the area of digitalisation and integrated service delivery. Preparatory work continued on legislative and technical frameworks for the Entry/Exit System (EES) and the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). Simultaneously, Poland initiated efforts to launch a nationwide network of Foreigner Integration Centres (CICs)⁶, envisioned as "one-stop shops" providing coordinated services at the regional level, from legal counselling to language training and labour market integration support.

Additionally, as Poland prepares to assume the Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2025, 2024 was marked by the early coordination of thematic priorities. While formal presidency-related activities will take place in 2025, preparatory discussions have already highlighted the importance of external border security, EU return policy, and the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum as potential focus areas.

These overarching and preparatory efforts in 2024 underscore Poland's intention to institutionalise a more secure, planned, and rules-based approach to migration, both in national practice and in its future contributions at the EU level.

MIGRATION AND ASYLUM SITUATION IN POLAND

In 2024, the migration situation in Poland continued to be dominated by the influx of Ukrainian citizens and the ongoing consequences of the armed conflict in Ukraine. At the same time, significant challenges persisted in addressing the humanitarian crisis at the Polish-Belarusian border and in balancing the needs of the Polish labour market with the inflow of labour migrants.

The data presented in this section were prepared by the Office for Foreigners.

As of 2024, due to system-related errors, the methodology for calculating the number of applicants for residence permits was revised. Therefore, the figures below refer to the number of applications submitted, rather than the number of individual applicants. Consequently, the data may differ from those published in previous years.

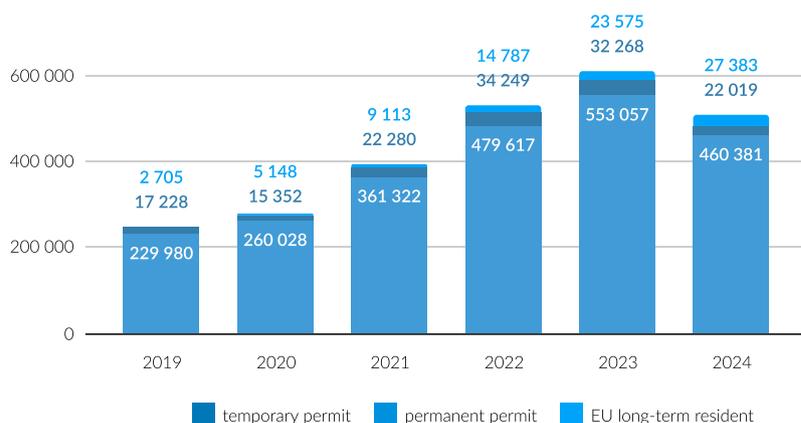
RESIDENCE PERMITS

In 2024, foreign nationals submitted nearly 510,000 applications for temporary, permanent, and long-term EU residence permits – 99,000 fewer (-16%) than in 2023. Ukrainian citizens remained the dominant nationality among applicants, accounting for 56% (287,000) of all applications. Other major nationalities included Belarusians (48,000; 9%), Georgians and Colombians (19,000 each; 4%), Indians (16,000; 3%), as well as Uzbeks and Turks (10,000 each; 2%).

In 2024, Poland issued nearly 397,000 decisions concerning temporary, permanent, and long-term EU residence permits – 15,000 fewer than in 2023. The majority of decisions were positive (approximately 347,000; 87% of all decisions), followed by around 35,000 negative decisions (9%) and over 15,000 discontinued proceedings (4%).

⁶ <https://www.gov.pl/web/dfe-mswia/famio201-iz00-00424---tworzenie-centrow-integracji-cudzoziemcow-cic-na-obszarze-polski>

Number of applicants for selected types of residence permits in the years 2019–2024



The highest number of temporary residence permits were granted to citizens of Ukraine (196,000), Belarus (33,000), India (10,000), Georgia (8,000), and Türkiye (5,000). Permanent and long-term EU residence permits were most frequently granted to Ukrainians (23,000), Belarusians (9,000), Russians and Vietnamese (1,000 each), and Turkish citizens (0.3 thousand).

At the end of 2024, the number of foreign nationals entitled to reside in Poland amounted to nearly 1.975 million (this figure does not include visas). At the end of 2023, the corresponding number was approximately 1.877 million, representing a nearly fourfold increase over the past three years.

The largest groups of foreign nationals in Poland were: Ukrainians – 1.538 million (78%), Belarusians – 141,000 (7%), Georgians – 27,000 (1%), Indians – 24,000 (1%), Russians – 22,000 (1%), Germans – 15,000 (1%), Vietnamese – 14,000 (0.7%), Turkish citizens – 14,000 (0.7%), Uzbeks – 11,000 (0.6%), and Moldovans – 9,000 (0.5%).

In 2024, as in the previous year, documents issued under temporary protection remained the predominant basis for residence, accounting for 50% (991,600) of all valid documents. They were followed by temporary residence permits – 36% (721,300), permanent residence

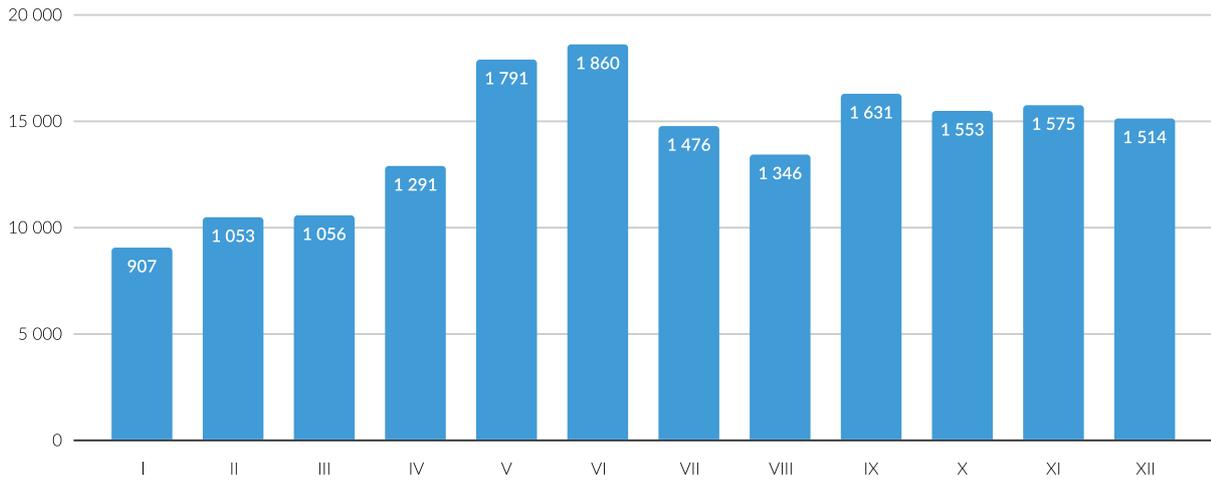
permits – 6% (124,400), documents issued to EU citizens – 3% (66,400), long-term EU residence permits – 2% (46,000), and documents issued to beneficiaries of international or national protection – 1% (19,300).

Ukrainian citizens held three-quarters of all valid residence documents in Poland. Among them, 64% (986,900) were issued under temporary protection, 30% (455,500) under temporary residence, 4% (56,200) under permanent residence, 2% (33,800) as long-term EU residents, and 0.3% (4,200) as beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. In addition, 713 persons held residence documents as family members of EU citizens, 345 on humanitarian grounds, 70 held refugee status, and 12 were granted tolerated stay. The number of Belarusian citizens holding valid residence documents also increased markedly in 2024 compared to 2023, reaching 23,200 persons (+20%).

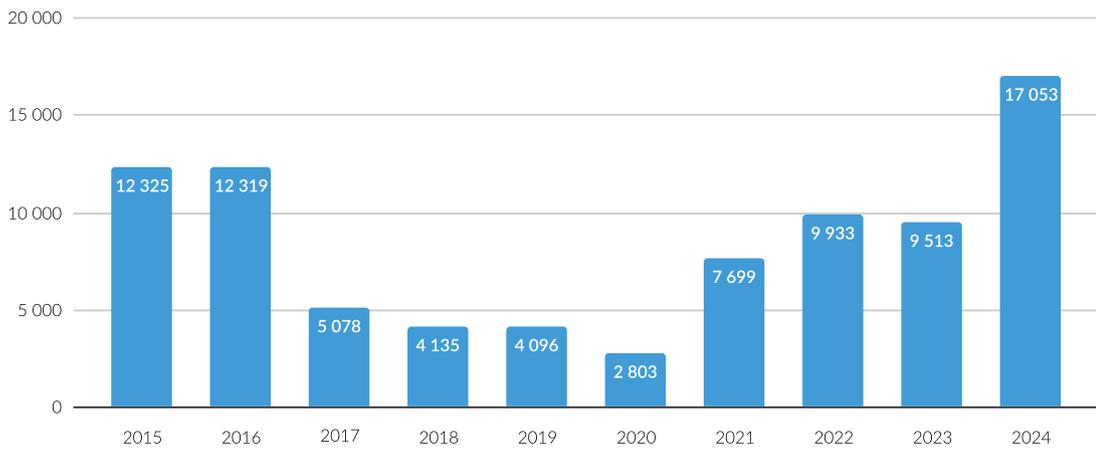
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In 2024, foreign nationals submitted the highest number of applications for international protection in Poland's history – 17,000, representing an increase of 79% (+7,500) compared to 2023. This was also the largest year-on-year percentage increase among EU Member States. In terms of the total number of applications received, Poland ranked eleventh among European countries.

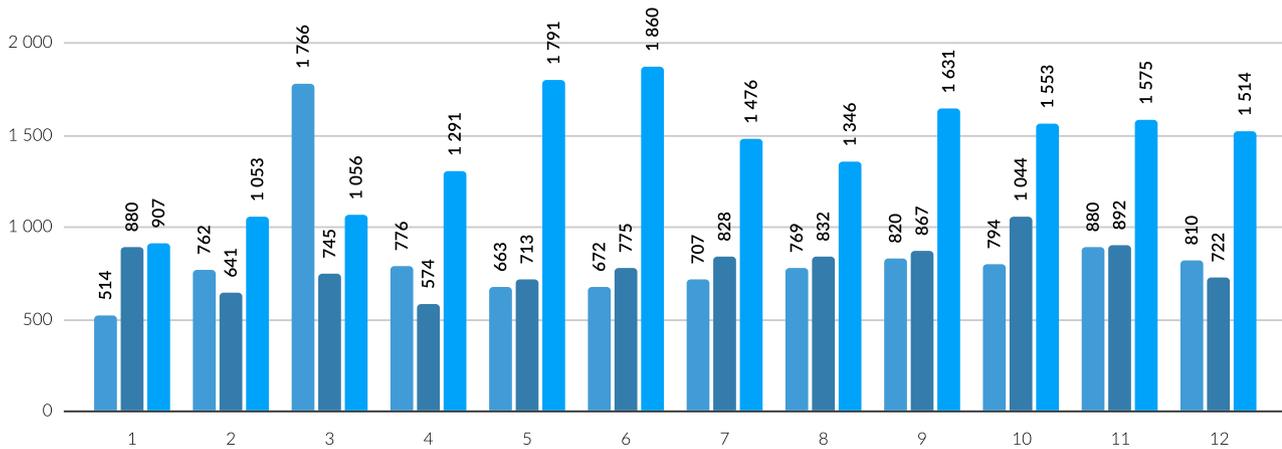
International protection applicants in Poland in 2024



International protection applicants in Poland in 2015–2024



International protection applicants in Poland in 2015–2024 by month

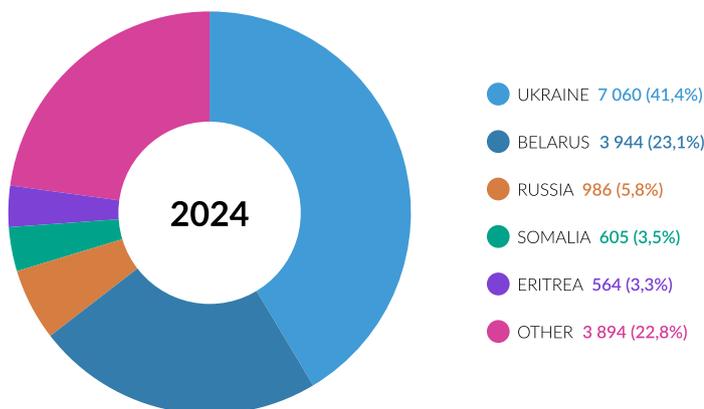
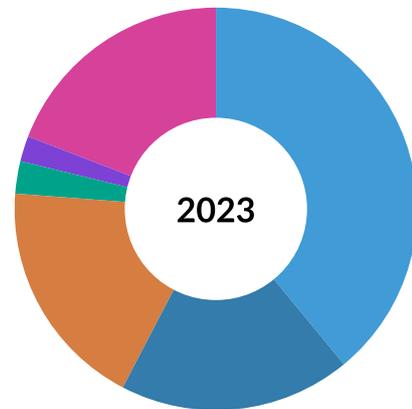
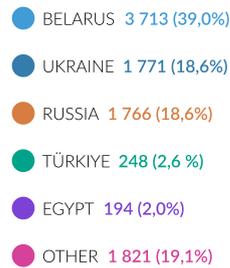
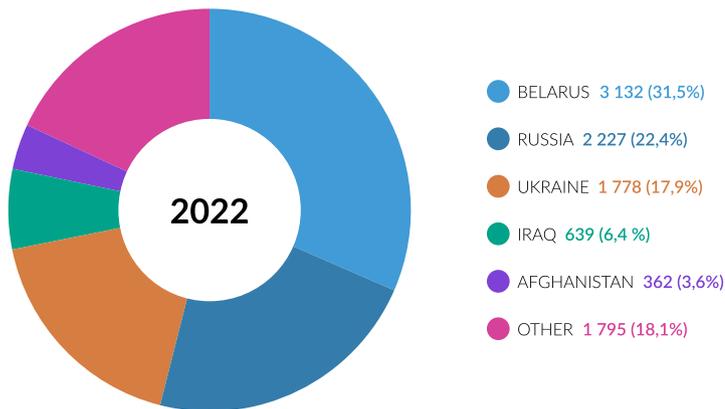


Applications were lodged by citizens of 85 countries, with the main countries of origin being Ukraine (7,000), Belarus (3,900), Russia (1,000), Somalia (600), and Eritrea (600). As in 2023, 70% of all applications were submitted by nationals of the three largest countries of origin.

Compared with the previous year, the composition of the main nationalities changed considerably: applications from Ukrainian citizens quadrupled, while those

from Belarusian citizens increased by 6%, and those from Russian citizens decreased by 44%. The most significant increases were observed among Eritrean nationals (sixteenfold) and Somali nationals (tenfold). For the first time, Ukraine became the top country of origin among applicants. The profile of Ukrainian applicants also changed notably: 67% were men (4,700 persons), of whom 83% were aged 18–64.

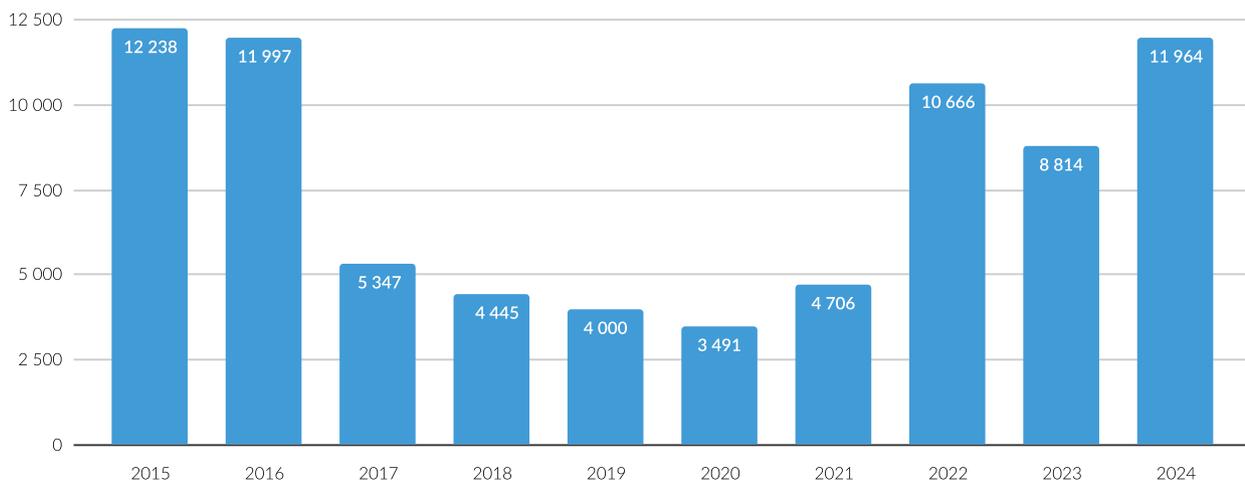
International protection applicants in 2022–2024



The Head of the Office for Foreigners issued 12,000 decisions on applications for international protection in 2024. A total of 7,000 persons were granted protection, including 600 refugee statuses and 6,400 subsidiary protections. Refugee status was most frequently granted to citizens of Belarus (298), Russia (119), Afghanistan (39), Iran (32), and Türkiye (29). Subsidiary protection was most commonly granted to Ukrainians (3,897), Belarusians (2,291), Russians (75), Ethiopians (25), and Afghans and Tajiks (20 each).

A total of 1,546 applications were rejected, most of which concerned citizens of Russia (656), Belarus (153), India (93), Ukraine (91), and Egypt (67). Proceedings concerning 3,411 persons were discontinued, mainly for applicants from Eritrea (455), Somalia (440), Syria (391), Ethiopia (350), and Russia (331). In 2024, the recognition rate amounted to 82%, while the average processing time was 131 days. As of 31 December 2024, there were approximately 6,900 cases pending.

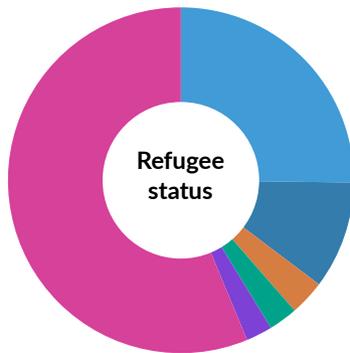
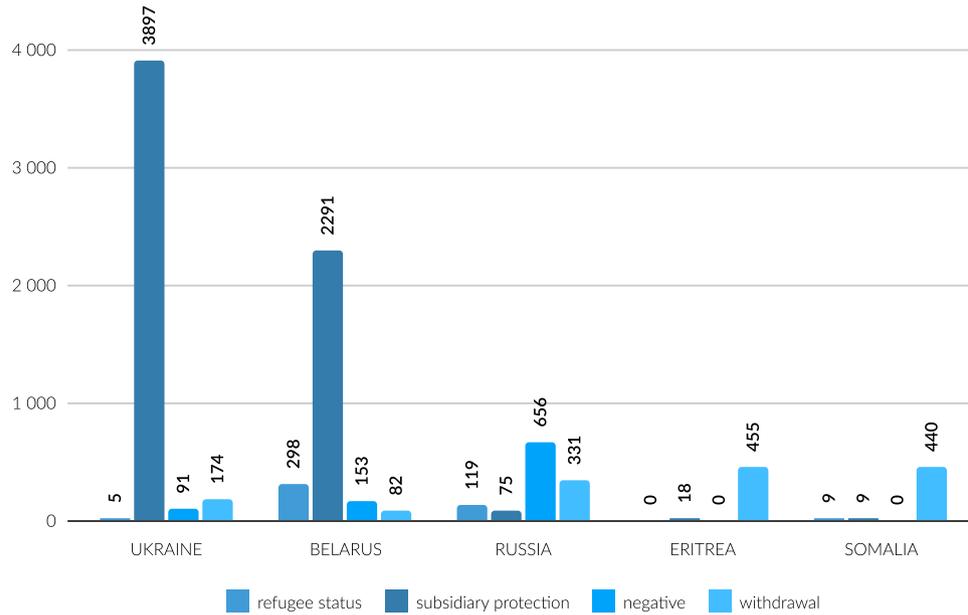
First instance decisions in 2015–2024



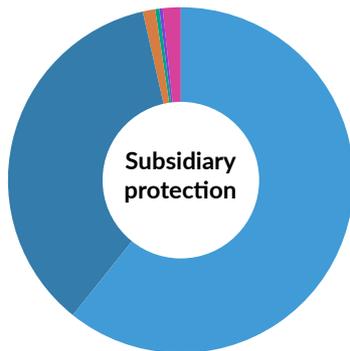
First instance decisions in 2024



First instance decisions granting international protection in 2024

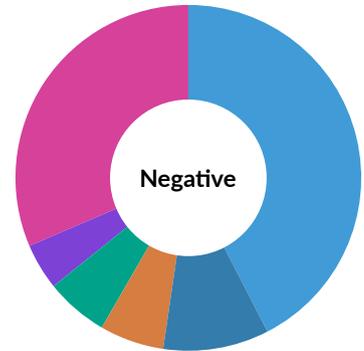


- BELARUS 298 (25,2%)
- RUSSIA 119 (10,1%)
- AFGHANISTAN 39 (3,3%)
- IRAN 32 (2,7%)
- TÜRKIYE 29 (2,5%)
- OTHER 665 (56,3%)

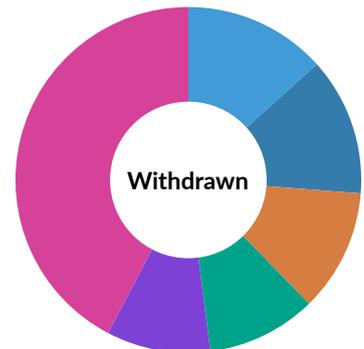


- UKRAINE 3897 (60,7%)
- BELARUS 2291 (35,7%)
- RUSSIA 75 (1,2%)
- ETHIOPIA 25 (0,4%)
- AFGHANISTAN 20 (0,3%)
- OTHER 108 (1,7%)

First instance decisions in 2024



- RUSSIA 656 (42,4%)
- BELARUS 153 (9,9%)
- INDIA 93 (6,0%)
- UKRAINE 91 (5,9%)
- EGYPT 67 (4,3%)
- OTHER 486 (31,4%)



- ERITREA 455 (13,3%)
- SOMALIA 440 (12,9%)
- SYRIA 391 (11,5%)
- ETHIOPIA 350 (10,3%)
- RUSSIA 331 (9,7%)
- OTHER 1444 (42,3%)

TEMPORARY PROTECTION

From the outbreak of the war until the end of 2024, nearly 1.96 million persons were registered for temporary protection in Poland, the vast majority being Ukrainian citizens – over 1.948 million.

In 2024, the Head of the Office for Foreigners issued a total of 1,403 certificates confirming that a person is benefiting from temporary protection in Poland (issued upon request, mainly to third-country nationals who fled Ukraine and are covered by the EU temporary protection framework; temporary protection for Ukrainian nationals is handled by municipalities). The largest group among certificates issued in 2024 were Russian nationals (502; 36% of all certificates issued that year).

As of 31 December 2024, the number of beneficiaries of temporary protection amounted to 991,634 persons. The group was overwhelmingly composed of Ukrainian citizens – 986,900 (99.5%), followed by Russians – 1,545 (0.16%), Belarusians – 637 (0.06%), Moldovans – 360 (0.04%), and Georgians – 356 (0.04%).

The largest age group among beneficiaries were young adults aged 18–34 (233,000 persons). In terms of gender, women constituted 61% (604,000), while men accounted for 39% (388,000) of all beneficiaries.

2

LEGAL MIGRATION

In 2024, Poland implemented a series of legislative and administrative changes in the area of legal migration, with a particular focus on labour migration, access to regulated professions, and addressing irregularities in visa and employment procedures. These developments were part of a broader policy shift articulated in the strategic document “Regain Control. Ensure Security. A Comprehensive and Responsible Migration Strategy for Poland for 2025–2030”,⁷ adopted by the Council of Ministers on 15 October 2024. The strategy outlines a systemic and long-term approach to managing legal migration, with particular emphasis on state control, institutional coherence, and reducing vulnerabilities to abuse.

- A key development concerned the employment of Ukrainian citizens in Poland. Amendments to the Act on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine (entered into force on 1 July 2024⁸) introduced more precise rules for employer notifications and reinforced employment standards. Employers are now required to notify the district labour office within 7 days of the start of employment, using electronic means only, and must declare at least the applicable minimum wage or hourly rate. Additionally, Ukrainian workers are explicitly exempted from liability in cases where employers failed to fulfil their notification obligations. Citizens of Ukraine holding temporary residence permits under Article 42r may also undertake business activity on the same terms as Polish citizens.
- In the area of regulated professions, Poland discontinued the simplified procedure for conditional licensing of Ukrainian doctors and dentists qualified outside the EU. This procedure was initially introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic and later extended for Ukrainian nationals following the outbreak of war in Ukraine. As of 24 October 2024, new applications for conditional licences are no longer accepted. At the same time, the Minister of Health was empowered to recognise the professional experience of such practitioners (if amounting to two years of full-time practice) as equivalent to a postgraduate internship. An obligation was also introduced for these professionals to provide formal documentation certifying Polish language proficiency at a minimum B1 level⁹.
- Similar changes were applied to nurses and midwives. From October 2024, individuals trained outside the EU must present a certificate of B1-level Polish language in order to be granted the right to practise. These changes are intended to improve communication between staff and patients and ensure a high standard of care.
- Work was also undertaken on several legislative initiatives aiming to strengthen control over legal migration channels. A draft law was prepared to restrict access to temporary residence and work permits for certain categories of third-country nationals, particularly those entering Poland with short-term or specific-purpose visas (e.g. cultural, sporting, or transit visas). The intention is to address irregularities and tighten access to national procedures.
- In the area of seasonal work, a draft law was introduced to reform the procedures for entrusting work to foreigners¹⁰. The proposed legislation seeks to prevent exploitation, combat undercutting of labour standards, and introduce mechanisms to penalise landlords who charge excessive rent to migrant workers. These changes also support the implementation of the EU Directive on employer sanctions.
- Legislative proposals were also made in relation to self-employment. A draft law amending economic and administrative regulations proposes limiting the category of foreigners allowed to conduct unregistered business activity in Poland. This aims to improve regulatory oversight and reduce circumvention of business rules.
- A draft act on employment services is also under preparation. It will introduce new rules governing employment agencies that assign third-country nationals to work, with the objective of enhancing transparency and reducing abuse in intermediary services.

No substantial legislative changes were introduced in 2024 concerning students, researchers, trainees, au pairs or volunteers, nor were there any notable reforms regarding family reunification procedures. Similarly, there were no significant updates in the area of information provision on legal migration pathways or with respect to investor migration.

7. <https://www.gov.pl/web/premier/odzyskac-kontrolę-zapewnić-bezpieczeństwo—strategia-migracyjna-na-lata-2025—2030>

8. <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20240000854>

9. <https://www.gov.pl/web/zdrowie/komunikat-w-sprawie-ogloszenia-wykazu-dokumentow-poswiadczajacych-znajomosc-jezyka-polskiego-minimum-na-poziomie-b1>

10. <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20250000622>

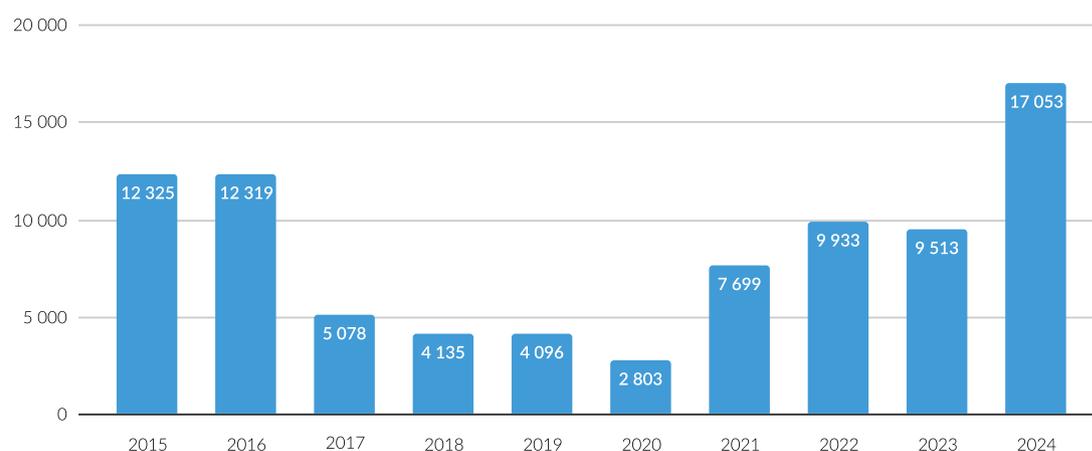
3

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Poland's approach to international protection in 2024 was shaped by growing geopolitical tensions and continued migration pressure at its eastern border, particularly from Belarus. In response, authorities introduced targeted legal reforms designed to enhance national security and reinforce the resilience of the asylum system against hybrid threats.¹¹ At the same time, procedural and institutional adjustments were made to strengthen child protection within reception facilities and maintain alignment with evolving EU standards.

In terms of reception conditions, 2024 saw updates to child protection procedures in accommodation facilities for asylum seekers. The Office for Foreigners revised its internal policy document titled "Policy for the Protection of Children from Abuse in Centres for Foreigners"¹⁴, aligning it with amended provisions of the Act on Counteracting the Risk of Sexual Offences and the Protection of Minors¹⁵. These changes aim to improve safeguards for minors housed in state-run facilities and ensure compliance with updated child protection standards.

Persons applying for international protection in the years 2015–2024



A key legal development was the adoption by the Council of Ministers on 18 December 2024 of a draft law aimed at counteracting the instrumentalisation of migration at Poland's eastern border.¹² This legislative initiative introduced the possibility of temporarily and territorially limiting the right to apply for international protection in response to state-backed efforts to destabilise the Polish and EU asylum systems¹³. The primary objective of the draft law is to provide the Polish authorities with the tools to prevent artificial migration flows created by third countries, which pose a threat to internal stability and public order. The measure reflects a broader EU-level recognition of hybrid threats and the need for Member States to adapt their asylum systems accordingly.

Although no major changes were introduced in the first-instance asylum procedure itself, the government placed renewed emphasis on preparedness and vulnerability assessment, particularly in the context of rising pressure on the Polish-Belarusian border. Measures to reinforce institutional readiness included updates to documentation, internal training, and adjustments in resource allocation.

There were no significant changes in the areas of withdrawal of international protection, family reunification for beneficiaries of protection, or first-instance appeal procedures in 2024.

In terms of relocation and resettlement, Poland did not introduce new programmes or formal pledges in 2024. The state's efforts remained primarily focused on responding to ongoing challenges related to temporary protection of Ukrainian citizens and spontaneous arrivals on the Polish-Belarusian border.

11. <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm10.nsf/druk.xsp?nr=924>

12. <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm10.nsf/PrzebiegProc.xsp?nr=924>

13. <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20250000389>

14. <https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc/polityka-ochrony-dzieci-przed-krzywdzeniem-w-osrodkach-dla-cudzoziemcow-prowadzonych-przez-udsc2>

15. <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20240001228>

However, the reception of applicants continued to be adapted to evolving needs, particularly concerning children and individuals with special reception needs. Policy emphasis was placed on maintaining family unity, improving early identification of vulnerabilities, and supporting staff working with vulnerable populations. Some operational changes were also introduced to better coordinate healthcare provision within reception centres, although no legislative changes were adopted in this domain in 2024.

Overall, Poland's 2024 actions in the area of international protection were characterised by a strategic shift towards preparedness, deterrence of hybrid threats, and strengthening institutional safeguards, especially at the borders, while continuing to maintain core elements of the existing asylum infrastructure.

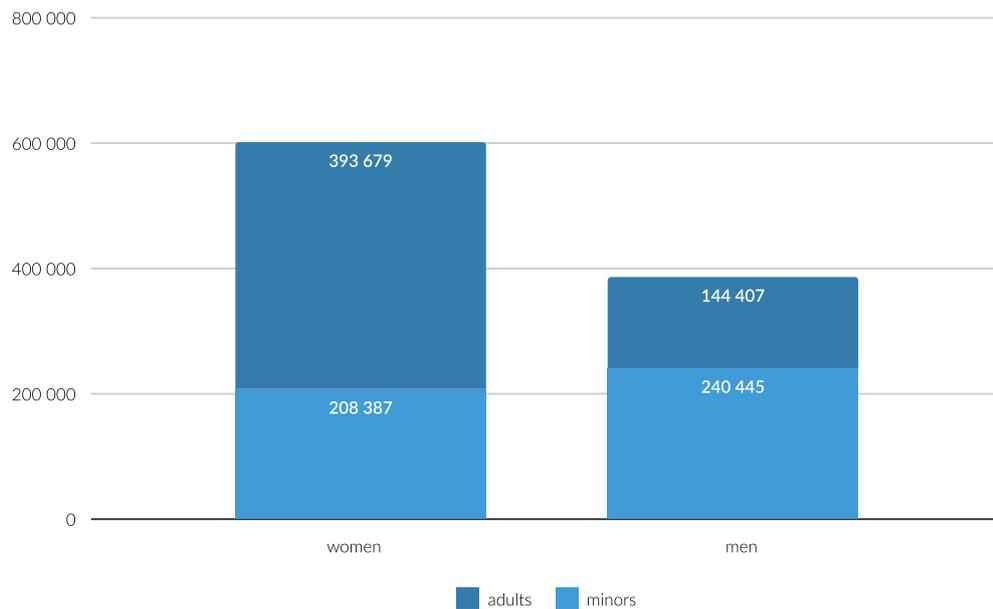
4

TEMPORARY PROTECTION AND OTHER MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO PERSONS FLEEING THE WAR IN UKRAINE

Throughout 2024, Poland maintained its central role as a host country for persons displaced by the ongoing war in Ukraine, implementing a range of legislative amendments and support measures aimed at both stabilising legal status and facilitating integration. Key developments included the extension of temporary protection, increased access to services, and new pathways for transition from temporary protection to national residence regimes.

automatic extension of residence titles held by Ukrainian nationals whose legal stay in Poland would otherwise have expired after 24 February 2022. Under Article 42 of the Act, the validity of national visas, temporary residence permits, permanent residence permits, long-term EU residence permits, and other residence documents issued to Ukrainian citizens is prolonged by operation of law until 30 September 2025. This mechanism ensures the uninterrupted legality of stay for persons residing

As of 31 December 2024, 991,000 Ukrainian citizens held temporary protection in Poland



The overarching legal framework governing Poland’s response was updated through the amendment to the Act of 12 March 2022 on Assistance to Citizens of Ukraine, which entered into force on 1 July 2024. This amendment extended the period of temporary protection until 30 September 2025, taking into account the structure of the Polish academic year. The amendment also introduced various technical and legal clarifications, based on two years of practical experience with the Special Act, and aimed to streamline procedures for both beneficiaries and administrative bodies. Notably, it marked the end of financial support for private hosts providing accommodation and meals to Ukrainian citizens.

In terms of legal status, a separate amendment to the Act on assistance to Ukrainian citizens introduced an

in Poland on the basis of such permits, regardless of the date of their most recent entry into the country. It also covers residence permits granted to holders of the “Pole’s Card”, given that these permits constitute residence titles under Polish law, whereas the “Pole’s Card” itself merely confirms Polish origin and does not, on its own, constitute a basis for legal stay.

In addition, new regulations clarified the conditions under which beneficiaries of temporary protection may transition to standard migration statuses. As of 1 April 2023 (under provisions still in force in 2024), Ukrainian citizens holding a PESEL number with the “UKR”¹⁶ annotation became eligible to apply for temporary residence

¹⁶ In Poland, Ukrainian nationals benefiting from temporary protection are registered by municipalities and may obtain a PESEL personal identification number with the “UKR” marker (“PESEL UKR”), which confirms their registration under the temporary protection arrangements and facilitates access to public services

permits granted for employment, business activity or family purposes. These categories include, among others, single permits for temporary residence and work as well as other types of employment-related residence permits. Obtaining such a permit automatically terminates temporary protection, thereby creating a legal bridge between the temporary protection regime and long-term residence pathways in Poland.

Regarding access to rights and services, legislative changes further consolidated access to publicly funded healthcare. According to Article 42r of the amended Special Act, Ukrainian nationals who receive a residence card under the new transitional framework become entitled to health services under the same conditions as Polish citizens, contingent on insurance status. These individuals lose temporary protection status upon receiving the residence card, but automatically gain access to the Polish healthcare system based on general legal provisions.

Education remained a critical area of intervention. The Act of 15 May 2024¹⁷, which entered into force on 7 June 2024, introduced mandatory school attendance from 1 September 2024 for Ukrainian children aged 7–18 residing in Poland. An exception was made for pupils completing their final year in the Ukrainian education system via distance learning, who will be allowed to finish their education remotely. Other measures included the extension of free Polish language tuition from 24 to 36 months for pupils who enrolled in 2022–2024, the introduction of intercultural assistants in schools¹⁸, and continued financial and organisational support for municipalities providing education to Ukrainian students.

Two European Social Fund Plus+ projects were implemented. The first focused on preparing and delivering final exams for elementary and upper secondary school students, available in the Ukrainian language. The second aimed to analyse and compile best practices for integrating migrant students into the Polish education system. The third initiative, also financed by EFS+ – the “Friendly School” programme – aims to promote an inclusive educational policy. It entered public consultation in late 2024 and will be implemented from 2025 to 2027. This programme will support the formal education of Ukrainian children and youth within the Polish system through teacher training, intercultural assistance, and psychological support.

Overall, 2024 marked a year of consolidation and strategic recalibration in Poland’s temporary protection regime. While maintaining broad access to core rights, the legal and institutional frameworks increasingly focused on transition, system integration, and preparedness for protracted displacement.

17. <https://eli.gov.pl/eli/DU/2024/854/ogl>

18. <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20240000737>

5

UNACCOMPAINED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

In 2024, Poland adopted several legal amendments and support measures aimed at improving the identification, protection, and long-term support of unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups, particularly in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine and its humanitarian consequences.

A notable legal development affecting unaccompanied minors was introduced through the amendment to the Special Act on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens¹⁹. This amendment extended the retention period for data collected in the registry of minors from 12 to 36 months. It also added the date of departure of the child from Poland to the set of required registry information and expanded the obligation of District Family Support Centres to provide timely and comprehensive updates. These changes are aimed at improving data consistency and allowing for verification of eligibility for post-foster care benefits, particularly for individuals transitioning into adulthood.

Further legislative changes targeted the transition to adulthood for young people leaving foster care, many of whom arrived in Poland as unaccompanied minors following the outbreak of war in Ukraine. The Special Act reintroduced the temporary possibility for Ukrainian-trained psychologists to provide psychological and psychiatric care in Poland. This provision, valid until 31 December 2025, enables individuals holding Ukrainian psychology degrees to deliver services related to addiction treatment and mental health support, thereby expanding access to care for adolescents and young adults with migration experience.

The changes also reflect the growing recognition of the need for continuity of care, particularly as young refugees and asylum seekers navigate legal adulthood and often lose access to standard child protection services. While no changes were made in 2024 to guardianship or age assessment procedures, existing mechanisms were reinforced through better coordination between care providers, health services, and educational authorities.

¹⁹ <https://eli.gov.pl/eli/DU/2024/854/ogl>

In relation to other vulnerable groups, Poland did not introduce specific legislative measures targeting particular sub-groups in 2024 (e.g. persons with disabilities, pregnant women, or victims of serious psychological or physical violence), but several of the broader integration and healthcare reforms reported under other sections of this report, such as enhanced mental health services, intercultural support in education, and expanded legal aid, also benefitted persons at risk of marginalisation or exclusion.

Overall, national policy in 2024 continued to shift toward a more structural and systemic approach to child protection, data management, and psychosocial support, with an emphasis on longer-term inclusion and service continuity for minors and vulnerable young adults.

On 28 March 2024, Polish-Ukrainian intergovernmental consultations were held in Warsaw. During the talks, ministers responsible for social policy in both countries agreed on joint actions to search for Ukrainian foster families in Poland for children temporarily evacuated due to the war.

In response to these needs, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland, in cooperation with UNICEF and the Foster Care Administration Centre in Łódź, prepared the “Nadzieja” programme. Its objectives include, among others, the recruitment of new Ukrainian foster families, thereby reducing the number of Ukrainian children staying in Polish foster care institutions.

The programme also supports the deinstitutionalisation of Ukrainian foster care in Poland, based on European standards of care. In addition, it provides for the implementation of a campaign promoting foster parenthood under the slogan “Test of Heart”, conducted in both Polish and Ukrainian.

6

INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION

In 2024, Poland's integration policy continued to evolve in response to increasing numbers of third-country nationals residing in the country, particularly those displaced by the war in Ukraine. The national focus shifted toward creating more systematised, decentralised, and professionalised integration structures, supported by strategic and legislative frameworks.

The overarching policy direction was shaped by the adoption of the "Regain Control. Ensure Security" Migration Strategy for 2025–2030, which includes a dedicated chapter on social integration. While the strategy outlines general principles and objectives, it does not provide a detailed sectoral diagnosis or operational recommendations in specific domains such as housing, employment, or healthcare. Nonetheless, its adoption provides a cohesive policy vision and paves the way for further development of sector-specific instruments.

A landmark development in 2024 was the announcement of the nationwide expansion of Foreigner Integration Centres (Centra Integracji Cudzoziemców – CICs). These centres, implemented in cooperation with provincial governments, non-governmental organisations, and voivodes, are designed as "one-stop shops" providing coordinated services to third-country nationals. The aim is to standardise service delivery across regions while maintaining flexibility to respond to local needs. Each CIC is expected to offer mandatory and optional services, including Polish language instruction, legal counselling, job search assistance, and social integration support. The roll-out of the CIC network is a major institutional innovation intended to harmonise integration standards nationally.

In parallel, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy launched the "Mocowiec" programme, which focuses on the training of integration professionals. The programme provides both legal and intercultural training to staff of the CICs, with the goal of improving service quality and fostering a new professional cadre specialising in migrant integration.

In the field of education and training, significant support was channelled toward migrants with recent school-leaving experience. Efforts were also undertaken to create educational responses tailored to the needs of migrants with lower Polish language proficiency or interrupted education histories. Although adult education reforms specifically targeting third-country nationals were not introduced legislatively in 2024, national education policies increasingly integrated a migration-sensitive perspective, and several ESF+ projects addressed this target group indirectly.

In the 2021-2027 Regional Programmes, ESF+ funds are being used to support foreigners, including through services that facilitate their functioning in Polish society (Polish language courses, adaptation courses, vocational training, and providing practical information on various aspects of life in Poland). By the end of 2024, seven Foreigner Integration Centres had been established using ESF+ funds. Under the specific ESF+ objective dedicated to them, 6,338 third-country nationals were supported.

Regarding the labour market, while 2024 did not bring new national legislation on the recognition of qualifications or vocational training targeted specifically at migrants, preparatory work began on strategies to strengthen the employability of third-country nationals, including access to regional labour offices, employer support schemes, and further digitisation of employment services.

Basic service access—including to housing, healthcare, and social welfare—continued to rely on mainstream systems, with some regional and local adaptations supported through EU funds. Although no national legislative reform was enacted, municipal cooperation with CICs and NGOs increasingly bridged the gap between local services and migrant-specific needs.

In 2024, no overarching national programmes were introduced to promote migrant participation in civic life or fight discrimination specifically targeting third-country nationals. However, intercultural assistants in schools and municipal integration officers in CICs were tasked with fostering community relations and social cohesion at the local level. Anti-discrimination policies continued to operate under general equality frameworks without targeted amendments.

In summary, Poland's 2024 approach to integration was defined by institutional consolidation, particularly the launch of a nationwide integration centre network and accompanying training programmes. These measures reflect an important step toward the professionalisation, regionalisation, and normalisation of integration policy, with a growing emphasis on multi-stakeholder coordination and service delivery capacity.

7

CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

No legal or policy changes were introduced in the area of citizenship or statelessness during the reporting period. The acquisition of Polish citizenship by third-country nationals continued to follow existing procedures, governed by the Act on Polish Citizenship and its implementing regulations. Operational aspects such as application processing, online access, or document requirements remained unchanged.

Similarly, there were no developments regarding statelessness determination or procedures for recognising and granting rights to stateless persons. Poland did not

amend its legal framework in this area, nor did it introduce new mechanisms or policy tools for identifying stateless individuals or granting legal status based on statelessness.

While general access to naturalisation and administrative guidance on stateless persons remained in place, no significant debates or policy proposals emerged during 2024 that would signal an intent to reform this area in the short term.

Citizenship	Administrative mode ²⁰	Granted by the President of the Republic of Poland ²¹
AFGHANISTAN	5	2
ALBANIA	4	4
ALGERIA	14	13
ANGOLA	8	1
ARGENTINA	0	3
ARMENIA	103	44
AUSTRALIA	0	1
AUSTRIA	1	2
AZERBAIJAN	11	3
BANGLADESH	17	1
BELARUS	5664	166
BENIN	1	0
BOLIVIA	5	0
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	2	0
BRAZIL	10	6
BULGARIA	3	1
CAMBODIA	0	1
CAMEROON	5	2
CANADA	4	5

TABLE 1: Number of people who acquired Polish citizenship in 2024 w// Data source: Dane.gov.pl

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	1	2
CHILE	2	1
CHINA	4	0
COLOMBIA	2	0
CONGO	1	0
COSTA RICA	1	0
CROATIA	0	2
CUBA	3	3
DENMARK	1	2
EGYPT	31	18
EKWADOR	0	2
FRANCE	5	2
GAMBIA	1	0
GEORGIA	15	5
GERMANY	3	34
GHANA	2	1
GREAT BRITAIN	14	10
GREECE	2	1
HUNGARY	8	12
ICELAND	0	1
INDIA	28	12
INDONESIA	1	0
IRAN	7	3
IRAQ	9	0

20. https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/2089,liczba-decyzji-uznanie-za-obywatela-polskiego/resource/65791/table?page=1&per_page=20&q=&sort=

21. <https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/814,liczba-postanowien-prezydenta-rp-w-sprawach-o-nadanie-obywatelstwa-polskiego/resource/65804/table>

IRELAND	1	0
ISRAEL	10	5
ITALY	2	8
JORDAN	3	4
KAZAKHSTAN	47	0
KENYA	6	2
KOSOVO	0	1
KYRGYZSTAN	7	0
LATVIA	3	3
LEBANON	2	1
LIBYA	2	2
LITHUANIA	8	6
MALAYSIA	0	1
MALI	2	0
MEXICO	4	6
MOLDOVA	35	6
MONGOLIA	7	3
MONTENEGRO	1	0
MOROCCO	20	5
NEPAL	5	11
NETHERLANDS	2	4
NICARAGUA	0	1
NIGERIA	7	11
NORTH MACEDONIA	3	3
NORWAY	0	6
PAKISTAN	23	5
PALESTINE	5	2
PANAMA	1	1
PERU	1	1
PHILIPPINES	2	1
PORTUGAL	1	0
ROMANIA	16	10
RUSSIA	716	37
SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE	1	0
SENEGAL	1	2
SERBIA	15	4
SLOVAKIA	4	4
SPAIN	0	6
SRI LANKA	1	1

STATELESS	5	2
SUDAN	0	1
SWEDEN	1	4
SWITZERLAND	0	1
SYRIA	21	7
TAJIKISTAN	2	2
THE CZECH REPUBLIC	4	10
TOGO	0	1
TUNISIA	19	13
TÜRKIYE	70	25
TURKMENISTAN	8	1
UGANDA	1	0
UKRAINE	7460	759
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	12	21
UZBEKISTAN	20	1
VENEZUELA	1	0
VIETNAM	235	136
YEMEN	7	1
Total	14828	1514

8

SCHENGEN GOVERNANCE AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN BORDER MANAGEMENT AND VISA POLICY

Several important developments took place in 2024 concerning Poland's participation in Schengen governance and its alignment with EU border management frameworks. These changes focused on improving interoperability, increasing national preparedness for new EU-wide systems, and responding to migratory pressures at Poland's eastern border.

In the area of Schengen governance, the European Commission adopted an Implementing Decision on 17 December 2024, presenting the results of the Schengen evaluation of Poland conducted earlier that year. The evaluation did not identify any serious infringements but issued recommendations for adjustments in law and practice. Poland is now required to submit a corrective Action Plan and report biannually on progress toward implementation. The evaluation was part of the regular multiannual cycle established by Regulation (EU) 2022/922.

Regarding external border management, a major milestone was the adoption of the national law on participation in the Entry/Exit System (EES) on 18 October 2024. This law provides the legal framework for Polish authorities to connect with and operate the EES in line with EU Regulation 2017/2226. It defines responsibilities for data processing and the legal competencies of institutions involved in EES operations.

Poland also advanced preparations for the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). A dedicated draft of the national act of law was undergoing intra-ministerial consultation by the end of 2024. Following the EU-wide postponement of the ETIAS implementation to the fourth quarter of 2026, no operational rollouts were carried out.

Additionally, work continued on the transposition of requirements stemming from Regulations (EU) 2019/817 and 2019/818 concerning interoperability and the Integrated Border Management (IBM) framework. A new National IBM Strategy for 2024–2027 and corresponding Action Plan were drafted and prepared for adoption in early 2025. The Strategy outlines Poland's national objectives in line with the Frontex Technical and Operational Strategy and the European Commission's multiannual strategic policy cycle. Key priorities include smoother traffic flow, infrastructure development, and enhanced operational capacity.

As part of managing visa risks, Poland introduced a visa requirement for Colombian nationals entering the country for employment or other gainful activities, effective 15 August 2024. This decision was based on a sharp rise in work permit applications from Colombian citizens, growing evidence of visa misuse, and reported labour rights violations. The restriction was enacted under the safeguard clause of Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 and relevant bilateral agreements with Colombia.

Concerning internal borders, Poland lifted temporary controls with Slovakia on 2 March 2024. These controls, initially reintroduced in October 2023 in response to increased irregular migration via the Balkan route, were deemed no longer necessary due to a stabilisation of the situation. Authorities have retained the option to reintroduce checks should migration pressure increase again.

9

IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Efforts to address irregular migration in Poland during 2024 focused predominantly on countering organised smuggling networks and managing heightened pressure at the country's eastern border. Legislative and operational measures were adopted to reinforce national security and to deter irregular entry, particularly in response to what has been characterised as instrumentalised migration facilitated by neighbouring third countries.

A central measure was the issuance of a regulation by the Minister Of The Interior And Administration on 12 June 2024, introducing a temporary stay ban in a specific section of the border zone with Belarus²². The zone, covering 60.67 Kilometres of the border, was closed to unauthorised persons for a 90-day period, with extensions granted in September and December. This decision was justified on national security grounds and aimed to protect law enforcement and bystanders, while disrupting the operations of smuggling groups. In the same context, authorities reported a sharp increase in attempted irregular crossings – over 30,000 in 2024 compared to 26,000 in 2023.

Another legal development was the application of an amendment to Article 264 of the Penal Code, which came into force on 1 October 2023 and began to be applied more widely in 2024 following a clarifying opinion from the National Prosecutor's Office. The amendment introduced criminal liability for organising unlawful crossings of foreign borders, in line with Poland's obligations under international and EU law. This change enhanced the country's legal arsenal against migrant smuggling and facilitation of unauthorised entry.

Poland also continued to participate in EU-level initiatives on migration monitoring and coordination, with operational focus directed at border intelligence, cross-agency cooperation, and prevention of irregular stay. However, no bilateral agreements or new information campaigns in countries of origin were initiated during the year.

In sum, Poland's 2024 policy response to irregular migration remained primarily focused on border control, legal deterrence, and public order, with fewer developments related to social inclusion or legal regularisation of individuals already residing irregularly within the country.

²². <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20240000861>

10

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Poland's counter-trafficking efforts in 2024 were marked by continued refinement of the national support system and improved interinstitutional coordination, with a focus on victim identification and protection, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups such as migrants and beneficiaries of temporary protection.

In a report published on July 24, 2024, the US Department of State, Poland's efforts were recognized by once again classifying the country into the first group (tier 1). This means that the Government of the Republic of Poland fully meets the minimum standards in the fight against human trafficking, as set forth in The American Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).

At the strategic level, the draft National Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings for 2025–2027 was finalised and submitted for approval. The plan outlines objectives related to prevention, prosecution, victim support, and institutional capacity-building. It places particular emphasis on training frontline actors, improving data quality, and strengthening multi-agency cooperation. The new national action plan not only continues current initiatives but also introduces new solutions for modern challenges. It expands training programs to include new professional groups, such as crisis intervention workers, and emergency call operators, as well as ngo staff who support migrants. The plan also puts more emphasis on education and prevention for young people and for teachers and school counsellors, responding to the increased use of social media by predators to recruit victims. Finally, it strengthens efforts for job seekers, particularly foreigners and those in difficult economic situations, which is crucial because forced labour is still the dominant form of exploitation in Poland. Implementation of the plan began in early 2025.

In terms of detection and identification, the National Consulting and Intervention Centre for Victims of Trafficking (KCIK) continued to play a central role in coordinating assistance and disseminating expertise. In 2024, the Centre intensified its cooperation with Border Guards, local governments, labour inspectors, and NGOs, contributing to a more systematic identification process. The authorities also updated internal guidelines on recognising indicators of trafficking, including among persons granted temporary protection.

No legislative changes were introduced in 2024, however at the end of the year the minister of the interior and administration appointed a new ad hoc working group on developing a separate draft act on combating and preventing human trafficking²³. Such solution will increase the effectiveness of prosecuting the crime of human trafficking, improve the situation of victims and allow for greater transparency and facilitate better application of the law. Improvements were made in service coordination. Victims of trafficking continued to be eligible for crisis intervention services, safe housing, legal aid, and psychological support, with provisions in place for reflection periods and temporary residence permits. Efforts were made to improve accessibility of services for non-polish-speaking victims, particularly through the use of interpreters and translated materials.

The implementation of the National Referral Mechanism²⁴ (NRM) in 2024 marks a crucial step in Poland's strategy to combat human trafficking. This mechanism ensures a more effective and coordinated approach to identifying cases, prosecuting perpetrators, and providing comprehensive support to victims. By establishing clear procedures and a systematic framework for cooperation among various state and non-governmental institutions, the nrm enhances the overall efficiency of the anti-trafficking system. Its introduction is a key element in fulfilling Poland's EU obligations in this area. Most importantly, the NRM guarantees a humane approach, ensuring that victims of trafficking have access to the necessary support and protection to recover from their ordeal.

Information provision remained a key area of intervention. Awareness campaigns targeted at Ukrainian nationals under temporary protection were continued, including the dissemination of multilingual leaflets and videos on how to identify signs of trafficking and where to seek help. Special focus was placed on preventing labour and sexual exploitation, particularly among women and children. Expanding on these efforts, in December 2024, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, in cooperation with the Border Guard, launched a new

23. <https://www.gov.pl/web/sprawiedliwosc/powolanie-grupy-roboczej-ds-opracowania-ustawy-o-przeciwdzialaniu-handlowi-ludzmi>

24. <https://www.gov.pl/web/handel-ludzmi/krajowy-mechanizm-referencyjny>

social campaign titled "Employed in Slavery". The campaign aims to raise public awareness of the forced labour phenomenon, and a number of promotional materials were designed and distributed in both electronic and paper form to Provincial Anti-Trafficking teams from all 16 voivodeships.

Although there were no new bilateral agreements concluded in 2024, cooperation with neighbouring third countries and international partners was sustained through participation in regional fora and operational task forces. Polish representatives remained active in the EU Network of National Rapporteurs and Equivalent Mechanisms on Trafficking in Human Beings.

Complementing these public awareness activities, a strong emphasis was also placed on professional development. In June, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration commissioned to one of the NGOs to conduct 12 editions of specialist training for representatives of the Voivodeship Teams for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings.

Overall, national efforts in 2024 concentrated on institutional strengthening, information outreach, and strategic planning to ensure preparedness for evolving trafficking patterns and to enhance the protection of those most at risk, including displaced persons and irregular migrants.

In 2024, work began on a draft law on combating human trafficking. According to the adopted schedule, the work is to be completed in 2026.

As part of the annual training program, employees from the Office for Foreigners responsible for asylum proceedings, along with social workers, underwent specialized training on the identification of human trafficking victims among asylum seekers. A total of 30 employees participated in this training.

In 2024, a total of 38 temporary residence permits were issued for victims of human trafficking, with the vast majority of recipients being Latin American citizens. Additionally, during the asylum procedures, five foreign nationals were initially identified as potential victims. Of this group, two individuals (both Russian citizens) were officially confirmed as victims of THB and received reflection period certificates.

The number of human trafficking crimes registered in the National Police Information System as part of investigations conducted in 2024 amounted to 11 crimes, all of which were registered under Article 189a § 1 of the Criminal Code.

Of the crimes recorded:

- 7 Were recorded as exploitation in forced labour or services;
- 3 In prostitution, pornography, or other forms of sexual exploitation;
- 1 In begging;

In 2024, 23 alleged victims of human trafficking were identified, including 18 adults and 5 minors (12 women and 11 men). In most cases (9 people), the victims were Polish citizens. The following were revealed: 5 victims from Ukraine, 4 victims from Moldova, 1 victim from Uzbekistan, 1 victim from Mauritius, 1 victim from Bulgaria, 1 victim from Kyrgyzstan, and 1 victim from India.

Most victims (15 people) were exploited in forced labour or services, 5 people were exploited in prostitution, pornography, or other forms of sexual exploitation, and 3 people were forced into begging.

In 2024, there was again an increase in the number of victims of forced labour compared to those exploited in prostitution and pornography in the broad sense. Predictions indicate that this will be a continuing trend worldwide in the coming years, especially given the current geopolitical situation related to the armed conflict in Ukraine and the situation of Ukrainian refugees, as well as the influx of migrants from Latin American countries.

Of the total number of alleged victims of human trafficking identified in 2024, 15 people were exploited in Poland, 4 people (3 men and 1 woman) in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1 man in Germany and Poland (for forced labour), 1 woman in Poland and Latvia (for begging), and 1 woman in Poland and Sweden (for forced labour).

Four persons identified by the police expressed their willingness to receive assistance and support for victims of human trafficking within the framework of the KCIK (National Intervention and Consultation Center for Victims of Human Trafficking).

In 2024, the police issued 10 certificates to foreigners on the presumption of being victims of human trafficking (pursuant to Article 170 of the Act on Foreigners).

11

RETURN AND READMISSION

Return policy in 2024 remained an important component of Poland's migration management system, with continued emphasis on both forced and voluntary return procedures. Operational and legal developments aimed to enhance efficiency, improve inter-agency coordination, and strengthen safeguards for returnees.

In the area of forced return, authorities expanded capacity for detention and pre-return processing. Meanwhile, the existing network of guarded centres continued to operate under the legal framework of the Act on Foreigners, with no changes to the legal basis for detention introduced in the reporting period.

Administrative practice in the field of return focused on streamlining procedures for issuing return decisions, particularly in cases involving national security concerns.

Pursuant to the amended Act on Foreigners, the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard is the sole authority responsible for arranging assistance for a foreigner's voluntary return. Current regulations allow for the commissioning of activities in this area to entities whose statutory responsibilities include organizing voluntary returns. This solution allows for the implementation of these activities based on cooperation with two entities: International Organization for Migration (IOM); Frontex. Additionally, actions are being taken to select an additional entity responsible for cooperation with the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard in the field of organizing assistance in voluntary return as well as the possibility of providing foreigners with assistance in reintegration.

In 2024, the programme was expanded to include new counselling locations, particularly in southern and eastern regions of the country, in response to changing migration routes and patterns. Reintegration assistance remained available to eligible returnees, focusing on accommodation support, vocational training, and small business start-up grants in countries of origin.

No significant legislative amendments were introduced in 2024 regarding voluntary return mechanisms. However, public communication materials and guidance on AVRR were updated in multiple languages to improve accessibility for migrants from diverse backgrounds.

Cooperation with third countries continued to centre around bilateral readmission arrangements and engagement through EU-level platforms. Although no new readmission agreements were signed at the national level during the reporting period, Poland actively participated in Joint Return Operations coordinated by Frontex, with returnees sent primarily to countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

Return and readmission operations also benefitted from enhanced interoperability of databases and border systems, which improved identification procedures and case tracking. This development was aligned with broader national efforts to prepare for full implementation of EU interoperability regulations.

In summary, Poland's return system in 2024 was characterised by advancing digital upgrade and targeted geographic expansion of voluntary return assistance, while continuing to use existing legal frameworks and multilateral cooperation tools.

12

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

No major legislative or institutional changes were introduced in this area. However, selected initiatives continued to promote policy coherence between migration governance and international development cooperation, particularly through existing funding instruments and multilateral engagement.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to implement the Multiannual Development Cooperation Programme for 2021–2030, which recognises migration as a cross-cutting theme. In this framework, selected projects in Eastern Partnership countries and Sub-Saharan Africa included migration-related components, such as support for local labour markets, education systems, and governance reforms. While not designed as dedicated migration and development programmes, these interventions aimed to address root causes of migration and support conditions conducive to voluntary return and reintegration.

Although no new circular migration schemes were launched in 2024, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy maintained the legal framework for seasonal and temporary labour migration, particularly in agriculture and construction. These channels—used primarily by nationals of Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Asian Countries—continued to function as de facto circular migration mechanisms, enabling repeated, time-limited stays for work purposes without long-term settlement.

No public debates or national strategic documents explicitly focused on enhancing migration-development synergies were launched in 2024. However, the issue remains embedded in broader foreign policy and labour mobility considerations.

Annex A:

Methodology and definitions

Methodology

The information required for drafting Part II of the national report was obtained by sending information requests and summarising the responses received from the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of National

Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Office for Foreigners, the Polish Border Guard Headquarters, and the Police Headquarters.

Terms

All terms used in the report are compatible with the definitions used in any relevant EU Directives and EU legislation, as well as definitions given in the EMN Asylum and Migration Glossary.

Annex B:

National statistics

Section 10 – statistics on human trafficking

(Prepared by the polish police headquarters)

Statistics 2020–2024

Article 189a CC.	Proceedings initiated	Crimes found	Alleged victims of human trafficking Identified by police officers
2020	14 8 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity; 3 – in forced labour or services; 2 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 1 – in the form of preparation, concerned the procurement of cells, tissues or organs in contravention of the law	11 6 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 3 – in forced labour or services; 2 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity;	17 9 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 8 – in forced labour or services;
2021	21 12 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity; 6 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 2 – in forced labour or services; 1 – in begging;	9 9 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation;	23 17 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 5 – in forced labour or services; 1 – in begging;

2022	20 7 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 5 – in forced labour or services; 4 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity; 3 – in begging; 1 – for the procurement of cells, tissues or organs;	23 20 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 1 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity; 1 – in begging; 1 in slavery;	31 13 – in forced labour or services; 12 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 3 – in begging; 3 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity;
2023	13 8 – in forced labour or services (including 1 in the form of preparation); 2 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity; 1 – in begging; 2 – for the procurement of cells, tissues or organs;	12 4 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation (including 1 in the form of preparation); 3 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity; 3 – in begging; 2 – in forced labour or services;	30 16 – in forced labour or services; 8 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 6 – in begging;
2024	11 7 – in forced labour or services; 3 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 1 – in begging;	17 8 – in forced labour or services; 6 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 1 – in other forms of exploitation degrading human dignity; 1 – in begging; 1 – in slavery;	23 15 – in forced labour or services; 5 – in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation; 3 – in begging;

Alleged victims of human trafficking 2020

form	total alleged victims	gender		Age		Citizenship		
		M	F	adult	minor	Poland	Colombia	Bulgaria
at work or in compulsory services	8	7	1	8		5	3	
in prostitution, pornography or other forms sexual abuse	9		9	8	1	6		3
total	17	7	10	16	1	11	3	3

Alleged victims of human trafficking – 2021

form	total alleged victims	gender		Age		citizenship		
		M	F	adult	minor	Poland	Bulgaria	Ukraine
at work or in compulsory services	5	5		5		4	1	
in prostitution, pornography or other forms sexual abuse	20		20	19	1	16	3	1
in begging	1		1	1				1
total	26	5	21	25	1	20	4	2

Alleged victims of human trafficking – 2022

form	total alleged victims	gender		age		citizenship								
		M	F	adult	minor	Poland	Ukraine	Vietnam	Belarus	Colombia	Romania	Slovakia	Czech Republic	Latvia
at work or in compulsory services	13	8	5	13		8		3				1	1	
in prostitution, pornography or other forms sexual abuse	12		12	10	2	2	8		2					
in begging	3	1	2	2	1		1				1			1
in slavery and other forms	3	3		3		1				2				
total	31	12	19	28	3	11	9	3	2	2	1	1	1	1

Alleged victims of human trafficking – 2023

form	total alleged victims	gender		age		citizenship										
		M	F	adult	minor	Ukraine	Colombia	Moldova	Poland	Bangladesh	Bulgaria	Mali	Russia	Thailand	Zimbabwe	
at work or in compulsory services	16	15	1	15	1	6	5		2	2						1
in prostitution, pornography or other forms sexual abuse	8		8	7	1	2			3		1	1		1		
in begging	6	1	5	2	4			5					1			
total	30	16	14	24	6	8	5	5	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	1

Alleged victims of human trafficking – 2024

form	total alleged victims	gender		age		citizenship								
		M	F	adult	minor	Poland	Ukraine	Moldova	Bulgaria	Republic of Mauritius	Kyrgyzstan	India	Uzbekistan	
at work or in compulsory services	15	11	4	13	2	5	4	3		1				1
in prostitution, pornography or other forms sexual abuse	5		5	3	2	2	1		1		1		1	
in begging	3	1	2	2	1	2		1						
total	23	12	11	18	5	9	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	1

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