

MIGRATION PROFILE

2023



Republika e Kosovës
Republika Kosova – Republic of Kosovo
Qeveria – Vlada – Government

Ministria e Punëve të Brendshme/ Ministarstvo Unutrašnjih Poslova/Ministry of Internal Affairs

MIGRATION PROFILE

2023

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of figures	5
Abbreviations	8
Glossary/Definitions	9
Map and Key Statistics	12
Executive Summary	14
Introduction	16
A. Migration trends and characteristics	19
A.1. Immigration	19
A.1.1. Immigration stock	19
A.1.2. Immigration flows	19
A.1.3. Visa regime	20
A.1.4. Foreigners with regular residence	23
A.1.5. Acquisition and reacquisition of citizenship	32
A.1.6. Applicants for international protection	37
A.2. Emigration	40
A.2.1. Emigration stock	40
A.2.2. Emigration flow	40
A.2.3. Schengen visa applications	41
A.2.4. Emigration to the European Union and the Schengen Area	42
A.2.5. Asylum seekers in the European Union and the Schengen Area	46
A.2.6. Renunciation of Citizenship	48
A.3. Irregular immigration	50
A.3.1 Rejection of entries	50
A.3.2. Unauthorized border crossing	51
A.3.3. Combating smuggling and trafficking of migrants	53

A.3.4. Foreigners with regular residence	53
A.4. Irregular emigration	57
A.4.1 Entries refused by the EU Member States and the Schengen Area countries	57
A.4.2 Irregular residence in EU Member States and the Schengen Area	58
A.4.3 Orders for removal from EU Member States and the Schengen Area	59
A.5. Readmission and reintegration	61
A.6. Internal migration	64
B. Impact of migration	66
B.1. Migration and economic development	66
B.2. Migration and the healthcare system	70
B.3. Migration and education	72
C. Migration governance	74
C.1. Policy framework	75
C.2. Legislative and regulatory framework	76
C.3. Responsible authorities	79
C.4. Regional and international cooperation	81
D. Key findings and recommendations	83
D.1. Key findings on migration trends and characteristics	83
References	86

List of figures

Figure 1. Map of the Republic of Kosovo	12
Figure 2. Approved entry visas to the Republic of Kosovo by category, 2023.	21
Figure 3. Approved entry visas to the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of applicants, 2023.....	22
Figure 4. Number of visas approved and rejected at consulates, 2023	23
Figure 5. The number of temporary residence permits by nationality of applicants, 2021-2023	24
Figure 6. Number of first-time and ongoing temporary residence permits, 2021-2023	25
Figure 7. Number of temporary residence permits by category, 2021-2023.	26
Figure 8. The number of temporary residence permits for work by nationality of applicants, 2021-2023.	27
Figure 9. Number of short-term work permits by category, 2021-2023	28
Figure 10. Number of short-term work permits by nationality of applicants, 2023.....	29
Figure 11. Number of permanent residence permits, 2021-2023	30
Figure 12. The number of permanent residence permits by nationality of applicants, 2021-2023.....	31
Figure 13. Number of permanent residence permits by category, 2021-2023	32
Figure 14. Number of acquisitions of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023	33
Figure 15. Number of acquisitions of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of the applicant, 2021-2023.....	34
Figure 16. Number of reacquisition of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023.....	35
Figure 17. Number of reacquisition of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of the applicant, 2021-2023	36
Figure 18. Number of applicants for international protection, 2021-2023	37
Figure 19. Number of applicants for international protection by nationality of the applicants, 2021-2023	38
Figure 20. Number of visa applications, approvals and rejections by country, 2023.	41
Figure 21. Applications, approvals and rejections of Schengen visas, 2021-2023.....	42
Figure 22. Stocks of residence permits by country of destination, 2021-2023.....	43
Figure 23. Number of first-time residence permits by category, 2023.....	43
Figure 24. Number of first-time residence permits by country, 2021-2023	44
Figure 25. Number of first-time residence permits by destination and category, 2023	45
Figure 26. Number of asylum applications in EU countries and the Schengen Area, 202-2023	46

<i>Figure 27. Number of first-time asylum applications in EU countries and the Schengen Area, 202-2023</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Figure 28. Number of renunciations of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Figure 29. Number of renunciations of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of the applicants, 2021-2023</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Figure 30. Number of entry rejections at border crossing points, 2021-2023.....</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>Figure 31. Number of unauthorized entries at border crossing points by country of origin, 2023.</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>Figure 32. Number of irregular migrants in the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Figure 33. Number of persons accommodated in TRCM by country of origin, 2023.</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>Figure 34. Number of removal decision by category, 2021-2023.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Figure 35. Entries refused a the borders of EU countries and the Schengen Area by reason, 2023.</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Figure 36. Number of Kosovo citizens present in EU Member States and the Schengen Area by the type of irregular residence, 2023</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Figure 37. Number of removal orders by country, 2021-2023</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Figure 38. Number of persons readmitted by category, 2021-2023</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Figure 39. Number of persons readmitted by country, 2023</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Figure 40. Internal urban-rural and rural-urban migration by regions, 2023.....</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Figure 41. Internal inter-urban and inter-rural migration by region, 2023</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Figure 42. Income, in billions of euro, from remittances, 2021-2023</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Figure 43. Foreign direct investments, in millions of euro and percentage of GDP, 2021-2023.....</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Figure 44. Revenue, in millions of euros, from visitor travel services, 2021-2023.....</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>Figure 45. Total revenues from the diaspora, 2021-2023</i>	<i>69</i>
<i>Figure 46. Number of certificates on ethical and professional background, 2021-2023.....</i>	<i>71</i>
<i>Figure 47. Number of applications for medical treatment outside the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023</i>	<i>71</i>

List of tables

Table 1. Data on the Republic of Kosovo for 2023 13

Table 2. Key indicators of irregular migration in the Republic of Kosovo, 2023 50

Table 3. Emigration of students by education level, 2023 72

Table 4. Immigration of students by education level, 2023 72

Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Description
EARK	Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo
GMA	Government Authority on Migration
KAS	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
CBK	Central Bank of Kosovo
DMF	Directorate for Migration and Foreigners
DRRPIF	Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons and Integration of Foreigners
DCAM	Department of Citizenship, Asylum and Migration
EUROSTAT	Statistical Office of the European Union
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investments
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KIESA	Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency
MLGA	Ministry of Local Government Administration
MFLT	Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers
MIET	Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade
MCR	Ministry of Communities and Returns
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MFAD	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora
MH	Ministry of Health
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation
ME	Ministry of Economy
KCC	Kosovo Chamber of Commerce
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
KP	Kosovo Police
BCP	Border Crossing Points
GRK	Government of the Republic of Kosovo
RKS	Republic of Kosovo
NDS	National Development Strategy
USA	United States of America
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Glossary/Definitions

The definitions below aim to familiarize the reader with key terms in the area of migration. All definitions are taken from the IOM Glossary on Migration (IOM, 2019a), except where otherwise specified.

Asylum - The grant, by a State, of protection on its territory to persons outside their country of nationality or habitual residence, who are fleeing persecution or serious harm or for other reasons. Asylum encompasses a variety of elements, including nonrefoulement, permission to remain on the territory of the asylum country, humane standards of treatment and eventually a durable solution.

Asylum seekers - An individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every recognized refugee is initially an asylum seeker.

Country of destination - In the migration context, a country that is the destination for a person or a group of persons, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly.

Country of origin - In the migration context, a country of nationality or of former habitual residence of a person or group of persons who have migrated abroad, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly.

Diaspora - Migrants or descendants of migrants whose identity and sense of belonging, either real or symbolic, have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country.

Economic migrant - While not a category in international law, the term is sometimes used to refer to any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State, solely or primarily motivated by economic opportunities.

Emigrant - From the perspective of the country of departure, a person who moves from his or her country of nationality or usual residence to another country, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

Emigration - From the perspective of the country of departure, the act of moving from one's country of nationality or usual residence to another country, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

Forced migration - A migratory movement which, although the drivers can be diverse, involves force, compulsion, or coercion. Note: While not an international legal concept, this term has been used to describe the movements of refugees, displaced persons (including those displaced by disasters or development projects), and, in some instances, victims of trafficking. At the international level, the use of this term is debated because of the widespread recognition that a continuum of agency exists rather than a voluntary/forced dichotomy and that it might undermine the existing legal international protection regime.

Forced return - The act of returning an individual, against his or her will, to the country of origin, transit or to a third country that agrees to receive the person, generally carried out based on an administrative or judicial act or decision.

Immigrant - From the perspective of the country of arrival, a person who moves into a country other than that of his or her nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

Immigrant stock - The total number of international migrants present in a country at a given time (DESA, 2017a).

Immigration - From the perspective of the country of arrival, the act of moving into a country other than one's country of nationality or usual residence, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

Irregular migration - Movement of persons that takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination.

Labour migration - Movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment.

Migrant - An umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally defined, such as smuggled migrants; as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students.

Migrant in an irregular situation - A person who moves or has moved across an international border and is not authorized to enter or to stay in a State pursuant to the law of that State and to international agreements to which that State is a party.

Migrant flow (international) - The number of international migrants arriving in a country (immigrants) or the number of international migrants departing from a country (emigrants) during a specified period.

Migrant stock (international) - For statistical purposes, the total number of international migrants present in a given country at a particular point in time who have ever changed their country of usual residence.

Migration - The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State.

Migration governance - The combined frameworks of legal norms, laws and regulations, policies and traditions as well as organizational structures (subnational, national, regional and international) and the relevant processes that shape and regulate States' approaches with regard to migration in all its forms, addressing rights and responsibilities and promoting international cooperation.

Net migration - Net number of migrants in a given period, that is, the number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants.

Refugee (1951 Convention) - A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

Regular migration - Migration that occurs in compliance with the laws of the country of origin, transit and destination.

Remittances (migrant) - Personal monetary transfers, cross border or within the same country, made by migrants to individuals or communities with whom the migrant has links.

Return migration - In the context of international migration, the movement of persons returning to their country of origin after having moved away from their place of habitual residence and crossed an international border. In the context of internal migration, the movement of persons returning to their place of habitual residence after having moved away from it.

Smuggled migrant - A migrant who is or has been the object of the crime of smuggling, regardless of whether the perpetrator is identified, apprehended, prosecuted or convicted.

Map and Key Statistics

Figure 1. Map of the Republic of Kosovo



Source: Kosovo Agency of Statistics

Table 1. Data on the Republic of Kosovo for 2023

Geography	
Total area	10,908 km ²
Human and social development	
GDP per capita, in thousands of EUR	6,100.9
Remittances and other financial flows	
Inward remittances, millions, EUR	1,335.8
Outward remittances, millions, EUR ¹	40.2
Net inward remittance flows, millions, EUR	1,295.6
Foreign Direct Investments, millions, EUR	840.1
Inward remittance flows, percentage of GDP	13.8
Population²	
Total	1,586,659
Female, thousands	791,614
Male, thousands	795,045
Born abroad, thousands	9,457
International migration³	
Migrant stock (international), thousands	965,031
Migrant stock (international), % of population	60.8
Net rate of international migration, 1,000 per population	10

Source: Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo.

¹ The source of data for outward remittances is primarily the International Transactions Reporting System (ITRS) and direct reporting by international institutions in Kosovo such as UNMIK, KFOR, EULEX, and embassies.

² The population data are preliminary data from the 2024 Population Census, KAS.

³ The population data are preliminary data from the 2024 Population Census, KAS.

Executive Summary

Data on migratory movements during 2023 indicate an increase in emigration and immigration in the Republic of Kosovo. The resident population in Kosovo at the end of 2023 is estimated to be 1,586,659 residents. The emigration flow is estimated at 21,158 persons (1.33% of the population), the immigration flow at 5,846 persons (0.37% of the population), and the net international migration balance at -15,312 persons (0.96% of the population).⁴ As in previous years, labour emigration and immigration dominate as categories. There has been a notable increase in labour emigration to Germany, driven by migration reforms and employment facilitation policies for foreigners, prompted by the workforce shortages in that country. Worker emigrants from the Republic of Kosovo to Germany predominantly work in the construction, manufacturing, trade and hospitality and gastronomy sectors. Regarding other categories of emigration, after Germany, Slovenia and Croatia dominate in employment, while Italy, Finland and France are the main destinations for family reunification. For the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo, the driving factors of labour emigration to EU countries are favourable working conditions, including higher wages, respect for contracts and workers' rights, and quality of life, including effective healthcare and educational systems. At the same time, attracting factors include legislative amendments in destination countries, such as Germany, easing procedures for obtaining residence permits for employment purposes.

The increase in regular emigration of citizens of the Republic of Kosovo has influenced a rise in immigration to the country. The shortage of local workforce has led to an increase in demand for foreign workforce, primarily from Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. Notably, the high demand for workforce in the construction sector has resulted in a new stock of temporary work permits for citizens from Bangladesh. Unlike previous years, 2023 saw a decline in applications for international protection in the Republic of Kosovo. The highest number of applications for international protection came from citizens of Syria, Turkey and Morocco. Apart from the opening of the Temporary Reception Center for Migrants, which has enabled the profiling of migrants seeking international protection, other influencing factors in this decline include the stabilization of situations in countries previously considered active conflict zones and changes in migration trends towards EU countries through the Western Balkans. In 2023, irregular immigration to the Republic of Kosovo also declined. Factors contributing to this decline include an increase in the number of visa

⁴ The population and migration data are preliminary data from the 2024 Population Census, KAS.

applications from third countries, increased border control and strengthened internal controls within the country.

Regarding migration governance, the Republic of Kosovo has a legal, strategic and institutional framework that is continuously developed and consolidated. One of the main commitments of the Government Authority on Migration in 2023 was inter-institutional coordination and the operationalization of six thematic groups. Other commitments include managing the visa liberalization process with the EU through the establishment of the Early Warning Mechanism for Monitoring Migration Trends.

Lastly, based on the findings of this document on migration trends and their impact on the socio-economic and demographic development of the country, the Government Authority on Migration recommends improving migration governance through strengthening the capacities of GAM, enhancing the system of data collection and analysis in accordance with international standards, strengthening regional and international cooperation for migration data exchange, developing capacities for monitoring internal and international migration, promoting regular migration through bilateral mobility agreements for work and promoting diaspora investments through strategic policies linked to the National Development Strategy.

Introduction

Migration is a complex phenomenon with a multidimensional impact on various socio-economic, demographic, political and security areas of origin, transit and destination countries.⁵ The terms “migration” and “migrant” lack a universally accepted definition; however, there are widely recognized definitions, such as those from the UN Recommendations on International Migration Statistics (a person living for more than 12 months outside their country of birth).⁶ The technical definitions, concepts and categories of migration and migrants can be informed by various geographical, legal, political, temporal and other factors. Consequently, there are many ways to define migration-related phenomena, including place of birth, citizenship, residency, duration of stay etc.⁷

Purpose of the Migration Profile

The purpose of the Migration Profile is to provide an overview of developments in the area of migration (immigration and emigration) during 2023 in the Republic of Kosovo. The Migration Profile includes analyses based on statistics and concludes with recommendations that can serve decision-making mechanisms in the development of state, sectoral and intersectoral policies related to migration and the socio-economic development of the country. The Migration Profile for 2023 has been prepared by experts and officials from the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo, who are also members of the Governmental Authority on Migration. This document outlines developments and amendments in policies and legislation, institutional developments, as well as the analysis of statistical data related to the area of migration throughout 2023. The structure of the Migration Profile is divided into four chapters, which include:

- A. **Migration trends and characteristics.** This chapter describes the main migration trends in the Republic of Kosovo, namely regular and irregular immigration and emigration, as well as the characteristics of migrants categorized by gender, age group, nationality and other relevant categories (where data is available).
- B. **Impact of Migration.** This chapter provides an analytical view of the relationship between migration and economic, social, educational, environmental and demographic developments in the Republic of Kosovo.

⁵ International Organization for Migration (2020). World Migration Report 2020. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf

⁶ International Organization for Migration (2024). World Migration Report 2024. <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2024>

⁷ Ibid.

- C. **Migration governance.** This chapter outlines the legal and institutional framework, as well as the key policy documents in the area of migration governance in the Republic of Kosovo. It also includes information on regional and international cooperation, bilateral agreements and local initiatives and programs in the area of migration.
- D. **Key findings and recommendations.** This chapter outlines the key findings regarding migration movements and migration policies in 2023 in the Republic of Kosovo. It also contains specific recommendations in the area of migration governance, linking migration to sectoral and intersectoral development policies and recommendations for improving migration statistics and data-driven policymaking.

Methodology

The structure and methodology of this document align with international guidelines for drafting Migration Profiles, namely the European Commission Communication⁸ and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Guide.⁹ In this context, the document provides significant data and analyses for policymakers and decision-makers in drafting coherent migration policies. The analysis of migration trends presented in this document covers a one-year period from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023, illustrated through figures and tables. In relevant cases, such as significant changes in migration trends, data and analyses also include the two preceding years. It is important to emphasize that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on population movement and the socio-economic development of the country in 2021 resulted in considerable statistical differences in various area of migration during that year compared to 2022 and 2023.

The administrative and statistical data used in this document are sourced from existing information systems of the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora, the Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers, the Ministry for Communities and Return, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, the Kosovo Police, the Central Bank of Kosovo (CBK), and the Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo. Other national and

⁸ European Commission. (2005). Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM%3A2005%3A0390%3AFIN%3AEN%3APDF>

⁹ International Organization for Migration (2012). Migration Profile Guide. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migrationprofileguide2012_1oct2012.pdf

international sources utilized in this report include data and reports from Eurostat and IOM, as well as reports from civil society organizations, namely the GAP Institute and the Balkans Policy Research Group (BPRG).

The Migration Profile, as an essential document for understanding migration trends and informing policies, has certain limitations. Limited institutional resources for collecting, analyzing and reporting migration data pose the main challenges in drafting this profile. The lack of institutional data, particularly disaggregated data by gender, age, or other relevant categories, has resulted in analytical gaps. Another challenge in developing comprehensive analyses is the absence of qualitative data, as this profile relies entirely on statistical data. While numbers can reveal migration trends, qualitative data provide insights into the social aspects of migratory movements, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the motivating-driving factors of migration.

An additional limitation of the Migration Profile is its focus on migratory movements of the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo to European Union (EU) countries. While this data provide valuable insights into movements within the EU, the lack of data from other countries limits a broader understanding of migration patterns, including other significant destinations such as the United States, Canada, etc. The exclusion of data from other countries stems from the unavailability of such data at the time of this profile publication. As a result, this profile does not fully reflect migratory movements within and outside the Republic of Kosovo, which may affect the formulation of migration policies.

A. Migration trends and characteristics

The Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) conducts annual assessments of the population, including the collection of migration data through a standardized methodology ensuring the inclusion of all migration groups.¹⁰ According to KAS, the resident population of Kosovo at the end of 2023 (31 December 2023) is estimated to be 1,586,659 residents. Among them: 791,614 (49.89%) are female and 795,045 (50.10%) are male.

A.1. Immigration

Based on the definitions of international organizations with universal application, from the perspective of the destination country, immigration refers to ‘the movement of migrants from their country of origin or usual residence to the destination country, which effectively becomes their new usual place of residence’.¹¹

A.1.1. Immigration stock

The immigration stock refers to the total number of immigrants residing in a country at a specific point in time.¹² According to KAS, the immigration stock in the Republic of Kosovo for 2023 is 98,913, or 6.23% of the population.¹³ This figure includes returned Kosovo citizens as well as foreigners in the Republic of Kosovo, regardless of the reason for immigration.

A.1.2. Immigration flows

Immigration flows refer to the number of international immigrants who arrive in a country during a specific period of time.¹⁴ According to KAS, it is estimated that the immigration flow in the Republic of Kosovo during 2023 was 5,846 persons, or 0.37% of the resident population. Of whom, 4,584 were citizens of the Republic of Kosovo, while 1,262 were foreign nationals.¹⁵

¹⁰ EU-Eurostat Regulation on the 2021 Population and Housing. (2019). <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/63224b98-cf3c-4ebc-99ed-a9da02e38b4a.pdf>
UNECE Recommendations for the 2020 Censuses of Population and Housing. (2015). <https://askapi.rks-gov.net/Custom/e1f03a8d-1326-4bdc-9650-5678af8ceb96.pdf>

¹¹ International Organization for Migration. (2019). Key migration terms. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ The population and migration data are preliminary data from the 2024 Population Census,

¹⁴ International Organization for Migration (2019). Key migration terms. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

¹⁵ The population and migration data are preliminary data from the 2024 Population Census,

A.1.3. Visa regime

Visas issued for entry into the Republic of Kosovo provide an overview of the number of foreign nationals from countries with which the Republic of Kosovo has a visa regime, who are granted permission to enter the country.¹⁶ The Republic of Kosovo has a number agreements with the regional countries, including Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, for short-term travel and residence for nationals of these countries through identity cards. Countries that are subject to the visa regime are specified by the Government Decision on the Visa Regime for Foreigners in the Republic of Kosovo, No. 12/108.¹⁷ Since 2012, this decision has undergone amendments depending on the country's developments regarding visa policy. Applications for entry visas to Kosovo are made at the following diplomatic/consular missions: New York, Paris, Tirana, Skopje, Zagreb, Riyadh, Sofia, Vienna, Brussels, London, Istanbul, Canberra, Berlin, Tokyo, Geneva, Budapest, Podgorica, Dhaka, Doha, and at the Border Crossing Points (BCPs) of the Republic of Kosovo: BCP Hani i Elezit, BCP Vermica, BCP "Adem Jashari" Airport, BCP Jarinje. The visa regime policy of the Republic of Kosovo is regulated by Law No. 04/L-219, as amended and supplemented by Law No. 06/L-036 on Foreigners. According to this law, there are four types of visas:

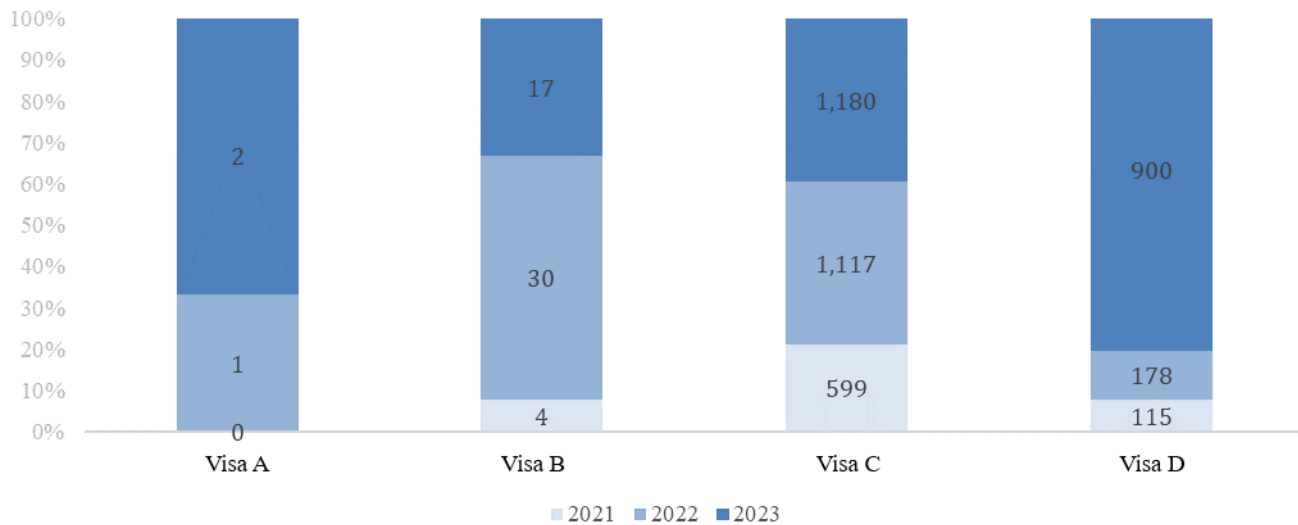
- 1) **Transit Visa – Type A:** This is the airport transit visa that grants the foreigner the right to enter and stay in the international transit area of the airport until the departure of the flight to the destination country. The validity of this visa is granted in accordance with the time and ticket booking for the trip(s) in which the applicant intends to pass through transit.
- 2) **Transit Visa – Type B:** It is issued to a foreigner for the purpose of passing through the territory of the Republic of Kosovo, in the form of transit through entry/exit from Border Crossing Points.
- 3) **Entry Visa – Type C:** It is issued for the purpose of entry and stay in the territory of the Republic of Kosovo and grants the holder the right to enter and stay in the Republic of Kosovo for no more than 90 days within any 180-day period.
- 4) **Entry Visa – Type D:** This is the entry visa issued to a foreign national who intends to enter and stay in the Republic of Kosovo for more than 90 days, and to obtain a short-term residence permit for the purpose of family reunification, employment or study.

¹⁶ Embassies of Kosovo. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora. <https://ambasadat.net/vizat/>

¹⁷ Ministry of Internal Affairs. (2018). Extended Migration Profile 2018 - 2022. <https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/2711/PROFIL%20I%20ZGJERUAR%20I%20MIGRIMIT%202018%20-%202022%20SHQ.pdf>

In 2023, 2,595 applications for entry visas were received in the Republic of Kosovo. Of this number, 2,138 (82.4%) were approved, and 457 (17.6%) were rejected.

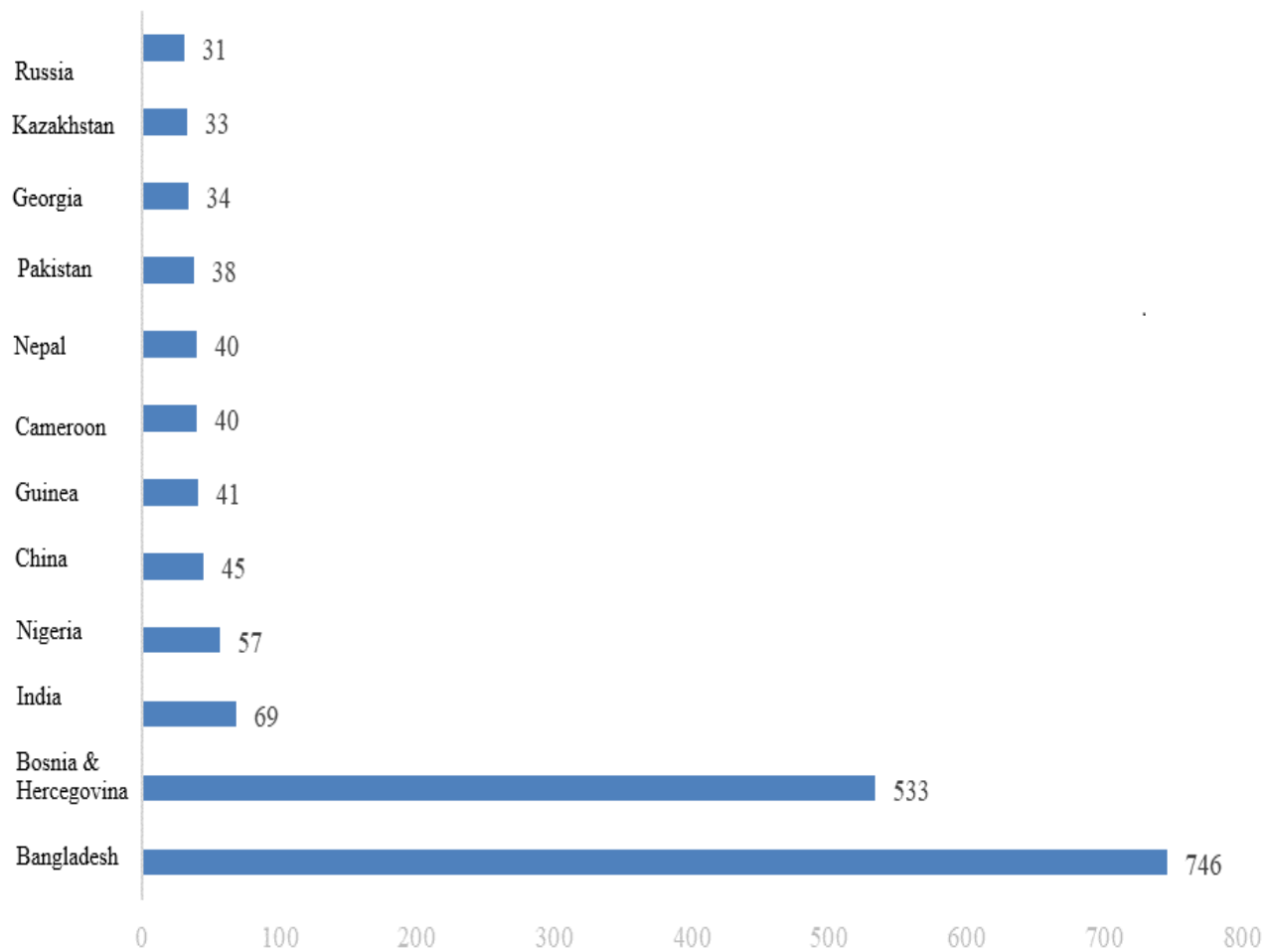
Figure 2. Approved entry visas to the Republic of Kosovo by category, 2023.



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora

Regarding the types of approved visas, the data shows a linear upward trend over the past three years for C and D category visas. The significant increase in the demand and approval of category D visas has resulted from the rising demand for labour in the job market, which has attracted migrant workers from Bangladesh. In 2023, the largest number of approved visas was for nationals from Bangladesh (34.94%), followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina (24.97%), India (3.23%), Nigeria (2.67%), China (2.10%), Guinea (1.92%), Cameroon (1.87%), Nepal (1.87%), Pakistan (1.78%), Georgia (1.59%), Kazakhstan (1.54%), the Russian Federation (1.45%) and others (18.55%).

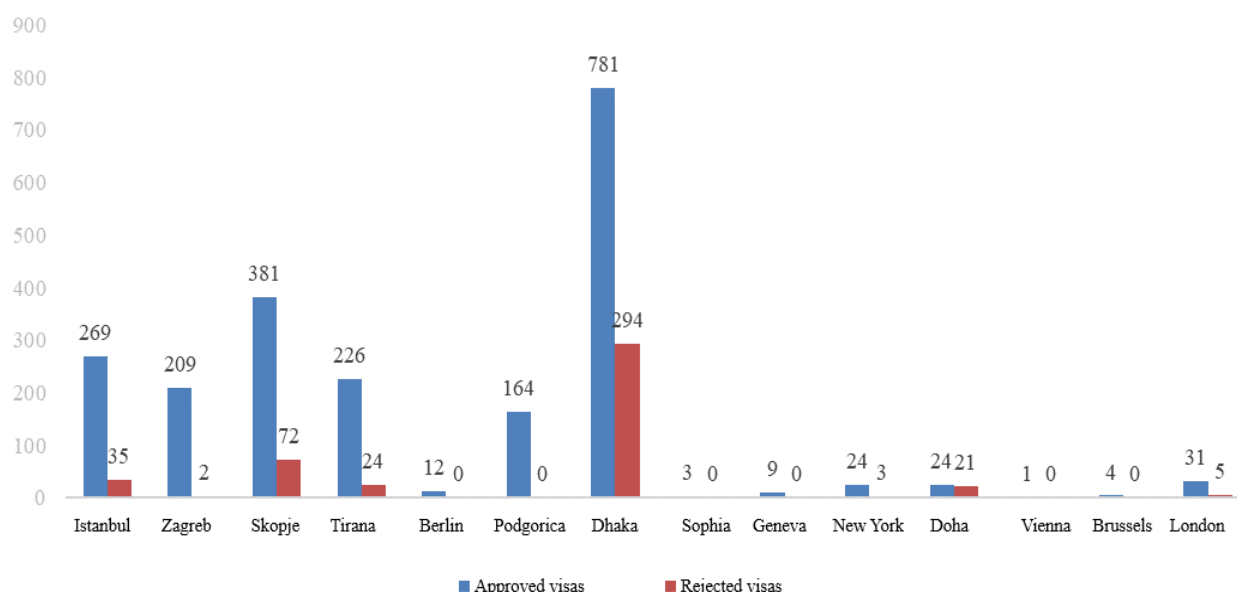
Figure 3. Approved entry visas to the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of applicants, 2023.



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora

In 2023, 2,595 applications for entry visas to the Republic of Kosovo were received at diplomatic missions abroad. Of these, 2,138 (82.42%) applications were approved, and 457 (17.57%) were rejected. The largest number of applications was 1,075 at the consulate in Dhaka, followed by 453 in Skopje, 304 in Istanbul, 250 in Tirana, 211 in Zagreb, 164 in Podgorica and 138 in other locations.

Figure 4. Number of visas approved and rejected at consulates, 2023



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora

A.1.4. Foreigners with regular residence

In 2023, there were 7,924 applications for residence permits in the Republic of Kosovo. Of these, 7,682 applications were for temporary residence permits, and 242 applications were for permanent residence permits.

Foreigners with temporary residence permits

A temporary residence permit is granted to foreigners who are staying or intend to stay in the territory of the Republic of Kosovo for the purpose of employment, family reunification, education or humanitarian reasons. The temporary residence permit is issued for a period of up to one (1) year, unless otherwise stipulated by the Law on Foreigners.¹⁸ After this period, foreigners have the right to apply for an extension of their temporary residence permit as provided by the Law on Foreigners.¹⁹

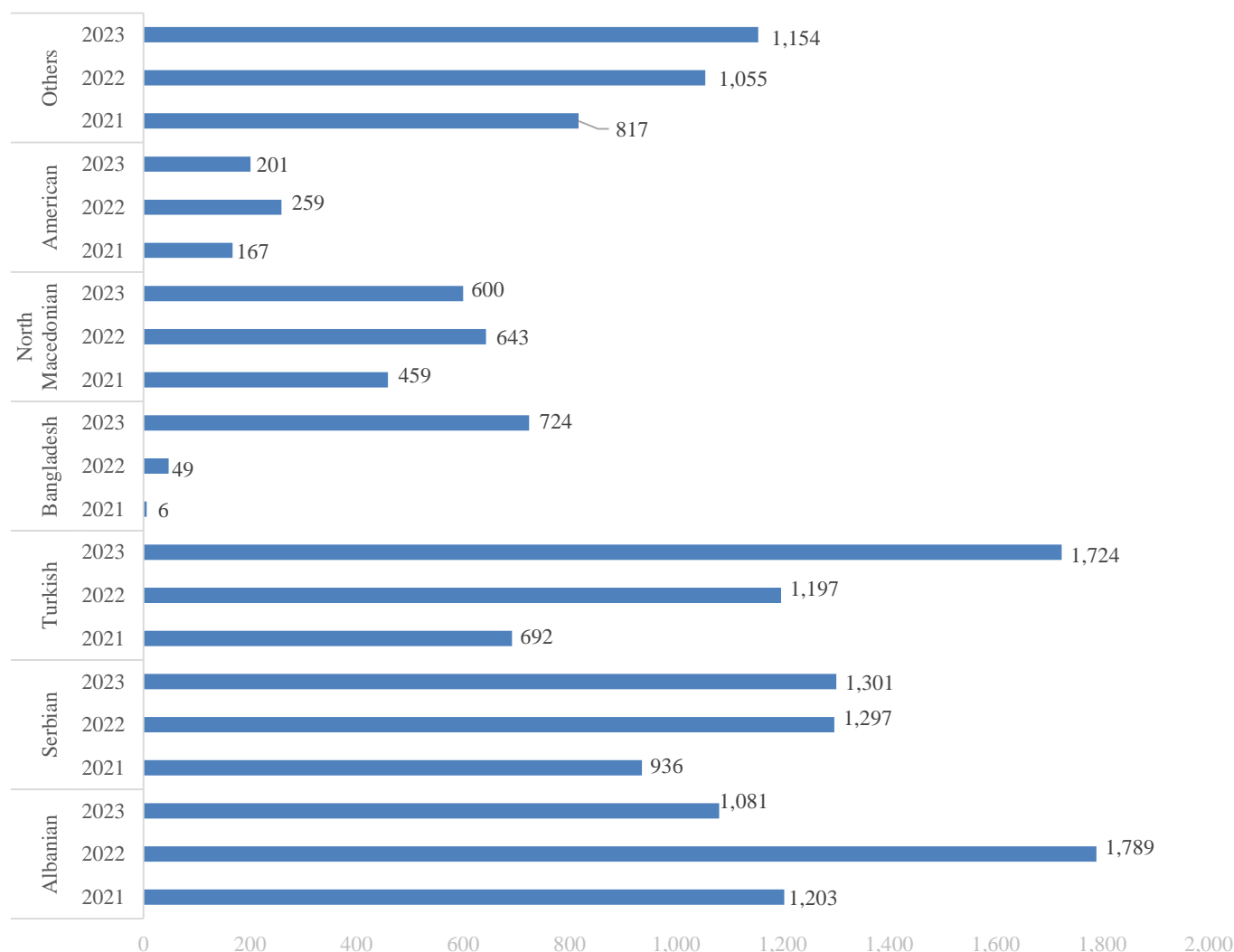
In 2023, the number of foreigners with temporary residence permits was 6,785. Of this number, 3,493 (51.5%) were male, while 3,292 (48.5%) were female. Data for the period 2021-2023 show an increasing trend for foreign nationals with temporary residence permits in the Republic of Kosovo. The number of foreigners with temporary

¹⁸ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo Law on Foreigners, (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8876>

¹⁹ Ibid.

residence permits in 2023 increased by 9% compared to 2022 and by 59% compared to 2021. By nationality, the highest number of temporary residence permits belong to nationals from Turkey (25%), Serbia (19%), Albania (16%), Bangladesh (11%), North Macedonia (9%) and other countries (20%).²⁰

Figure 5. The number of temporary residence permits by nationality of applicants, 2021-2023



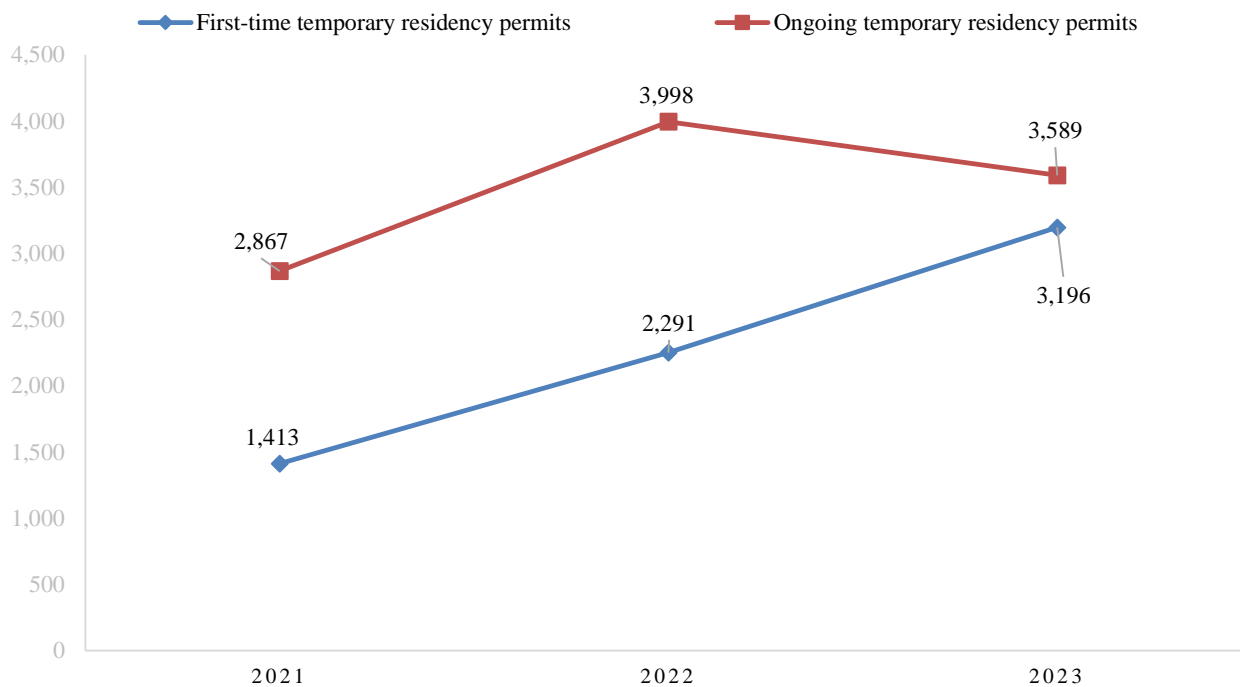
Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

According to the types of temporary residence permits, in 2023 there was a 10% decrease in ongoing temporary residence permits compared to 2022. One of the factors that contributed to this decrease is the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania for

²⁰ Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

simplifying the procedures and conditions for obtaining temporary residence permits for nationals of Albania and Kosovo. This Agreement, which came into effect in 2023, allows Albanian nationals to obtain a temporary residence permit in the Republic of Kosovo with a validity of 5 years.²¹ As a result, in 2023, 1,045 applications for temporary residence permits were received from Albanian nationals, a number that represents a 93% decrease compared to 2,014 applications from the previous year.

Figure 6. Number of first-time and ongoing temporary residence permits, 2021-2023

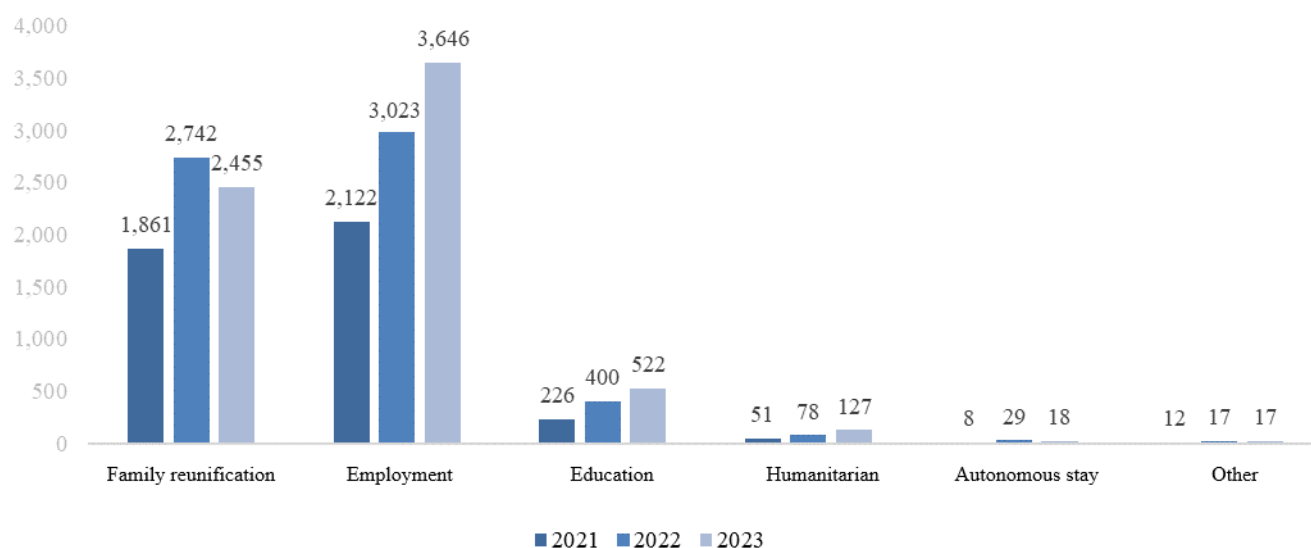


Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

The highest number of residence permits for 2023 belong to the labour category with 3,646 cases, a number that shows an increase of 22% compared to 2022 and 72% compared to 2021.

²¹ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania for simplifying the procedures and conditions for obtaining temporary residence permits (2012). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=51220>

Figure 7. Number of temporary residence permits by category, 2021-2023.



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

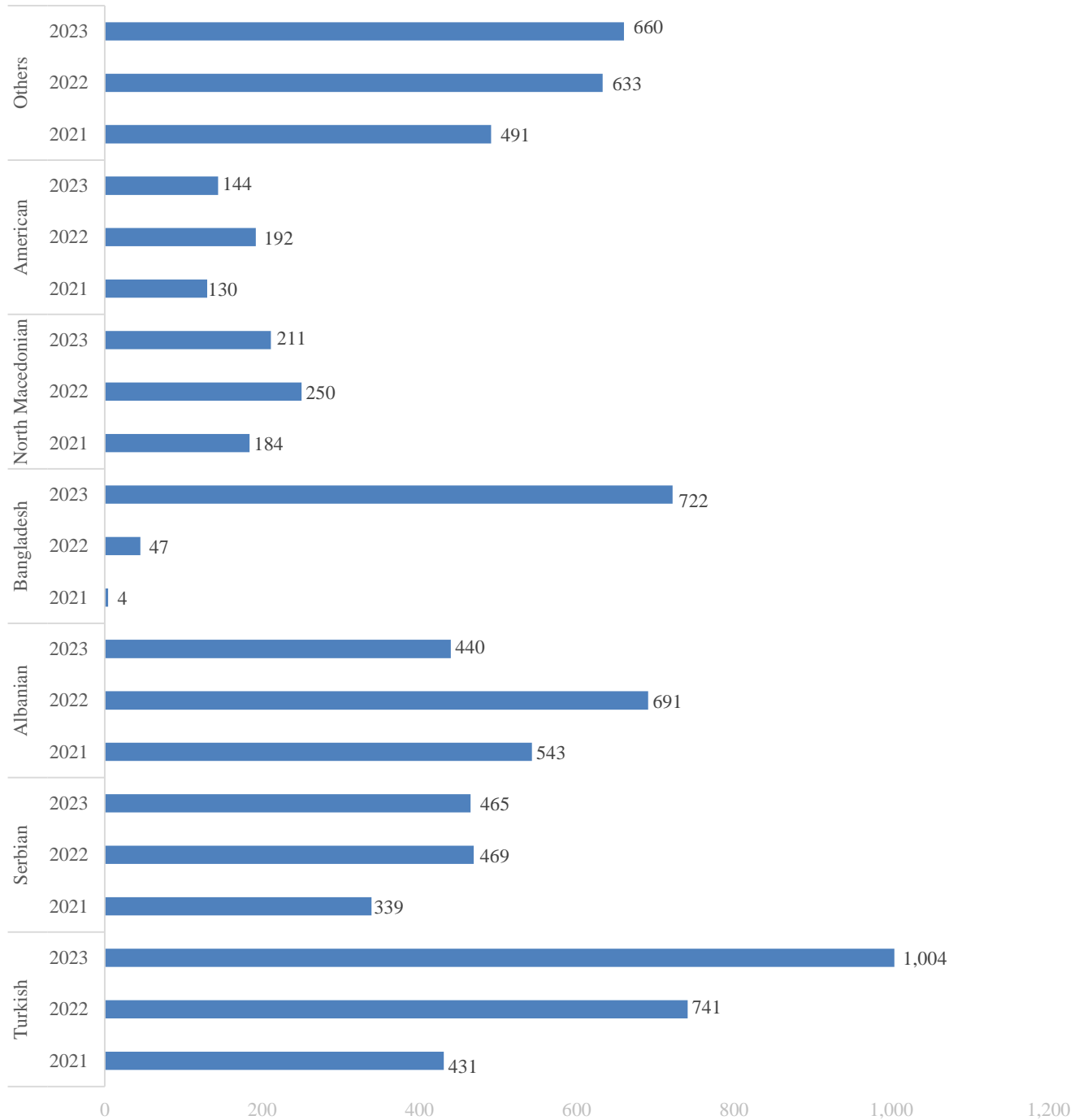
This increase has resulted from labour market demands for workforce in the construction sector. In previous years, there was a decline in employment in the construction sector. The number of employees in this sector experienced a drastic drop due to the COVID-19 pandemic²²; however, in recent years, there has been an annual increase of approximately 25%²³ in employment within this sector. As a result, this growth has facilitated an increase in foreign employment in the construction sector through category D employment visas. In particular, during 2023, the Republic of Kosovo saw a new stock of temporary residence permits for employment in the construction sector for nationals from Bangladesh. By nationality of migrant workers, Turkey led with the highest number in 2023 (28%), followed by Bangladesh (20%), Serbia (13%), Albania (12%), North Macedonia (6%) and other countries (21%).²⁴

²² GAP Institute. (2022). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market. https://www.institutigap.org/documents/97205_covid_tregu_punes.pdf

²³ GAP Institute. (2024). Employment of Kosovars in Germany and Kosovo: sectors and wages by the purchasing power. https://www.institutigap.org/documents/67323_Pun%C3%ABsimi%20i%20kosovar%C3%ABve%20ne%20Gjermani%20dhe%20Kosov%C3%AB.pdf

²⁴ Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

Figure 8. The number of temporary residence permits for work by nationality of applicants, 2021-2023.

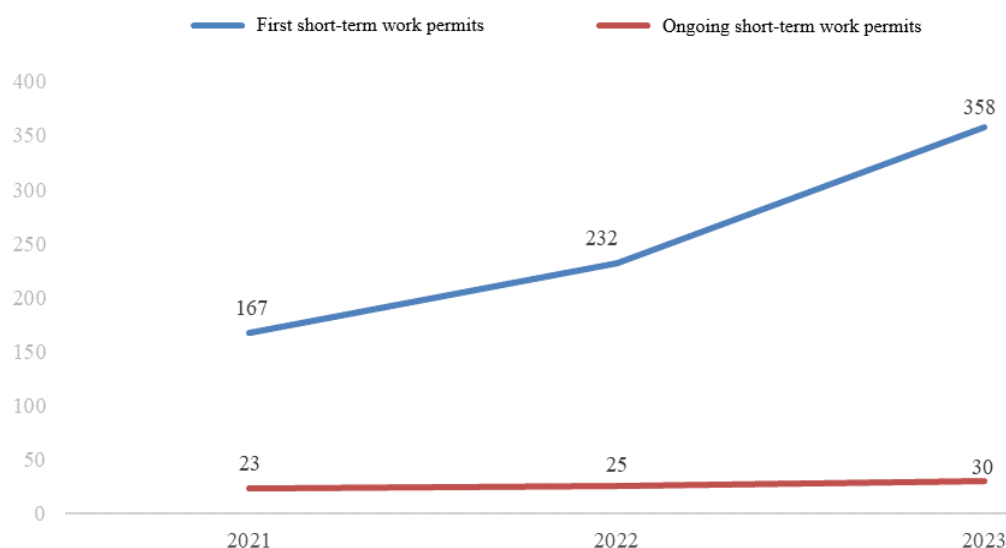


Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

Foreign nationals with short-term work permits

The short-term work permit for foreign nationals is issued to individuals who reside or intend to reside in the territory of the Republic of Kosovo for employment purposes for up to ninety (90) days within any period of one hundred and eighty (180) days within one (1) year.²⁵ In 2023, a total of 388 individuals were issued short-term work permits. Of these, 301 (77.57%) were male, and 87 (22.42%) were female. As in previous years, the majority of short-term work permits were issued for the first time, accounting for 92%, while the remaining 9% were renewals.

Figure 9. Number of short-term work permits by category, 2021-2023



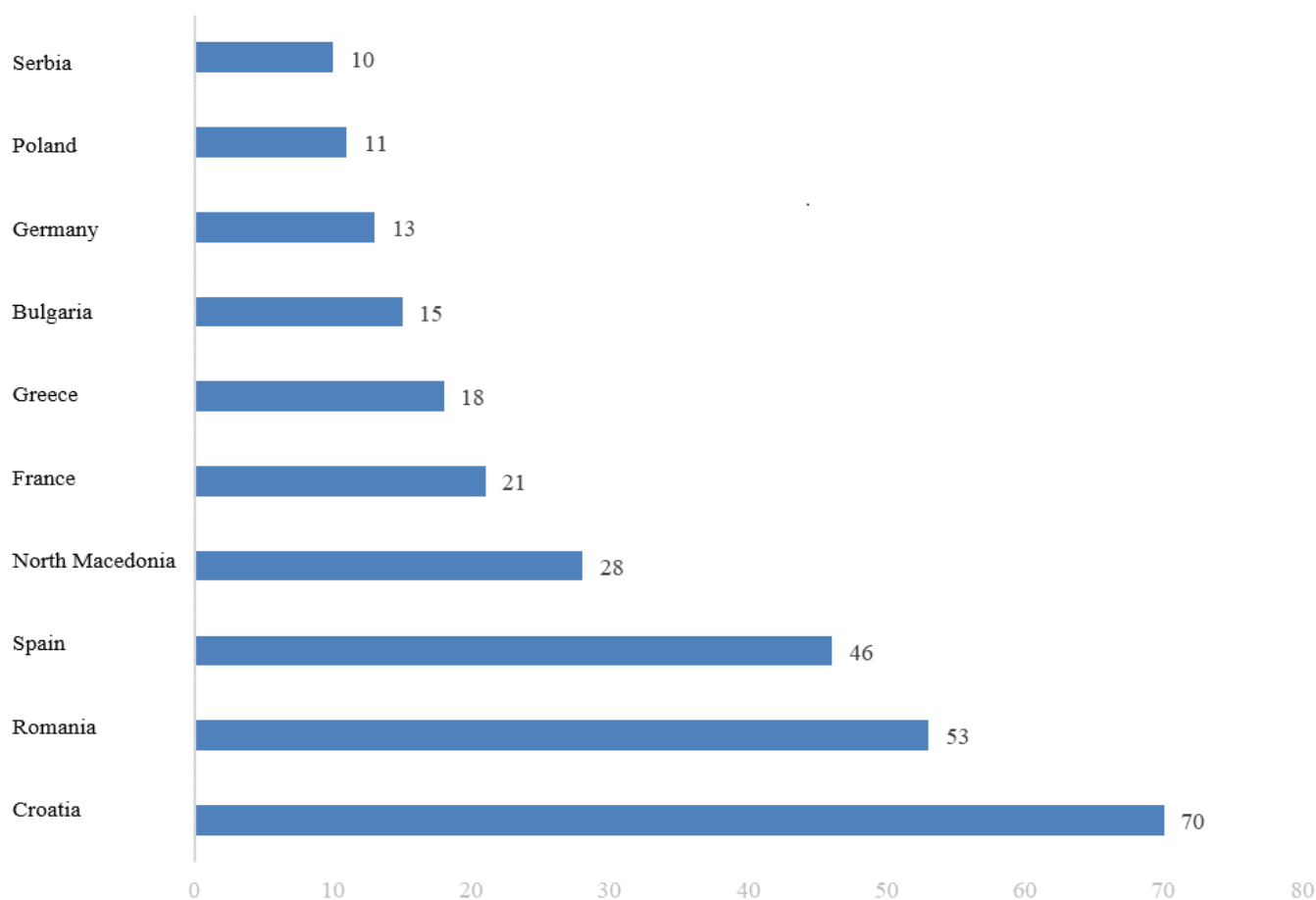
Source: Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo

Of the total number of permits issued, the highest number was for European Union nationals (274 or 63.65%). By nationality, the highest number of short-term residence permits was issued to nationals from Croatia 18.04%, Romania 13.65%, Spain 11.85%, North Macedonia 7.21%, France 5.41%, Greece 4.63%, Bulgaria 3.86%, Germany 3.35%, Poland 2.83%, Serbia 2.5% and other countries 30%.²⁶

²⁵ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo Law on Foreigners, (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8876>

²⁶ Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

Figure 10. Number of short-term work permits by nationality of applicants, 2023



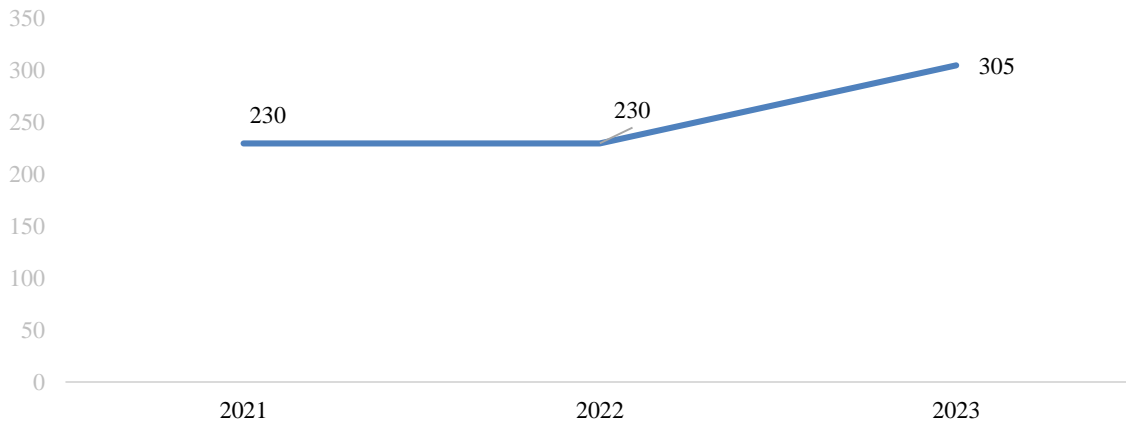
Source: Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo

Foreigners with permanent residence permit

A permanent residence permit may be granted to a foreigner who, at the time of submitting the application, has held an uninterrupted temporary residence permit for five (5) years in the Republic of Kosovo.²⁷ In 2023, the number of foreigners with permanent residence was 305, of which 157 (51.5%) were male and 148 (48.5%) were female. Data from 2021-2023 show an increasing trend in the number of foreign nationals with permanent residence in the Republic of Kosovo. The number of foreigners with permanent residence permit in 2023 showed a 33% increase from 2022 and a 33% increase from 2021.

²⁷ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo Law on Foreigners, (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8876>

Figure 11. Number of permanent residence permits, 2021-2023

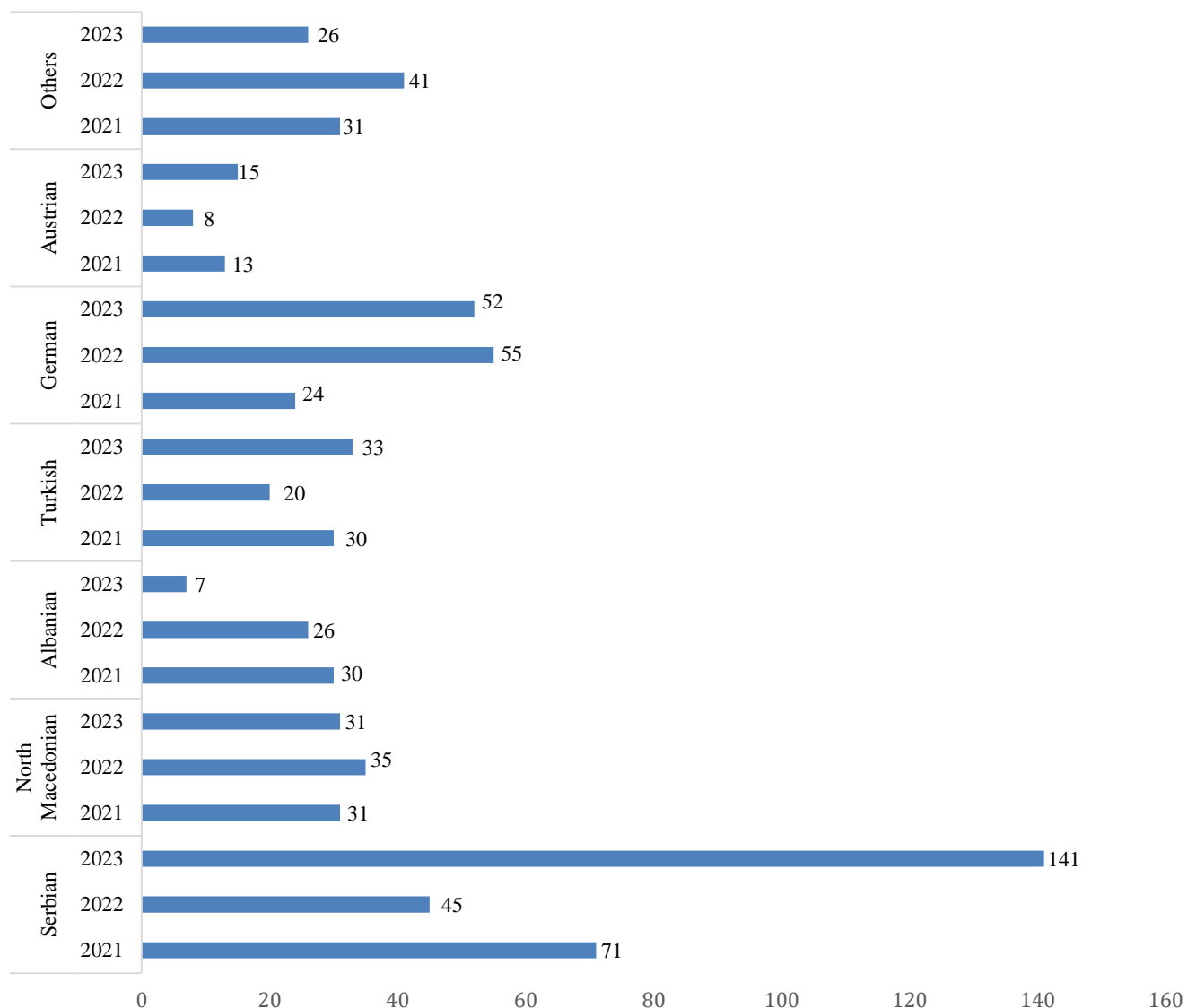


Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

By nationality, the highest number of permanent residence permits were granted to citizens from Serbia (46.2%), Germany (17%), Turkey (11%), North Macedonia (10.2%), Austria (5%) and other countries (11%).²⁸

²⁸ Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

Figure 12. The number of permanent residence permits by nationality of applicants, 2021-2023

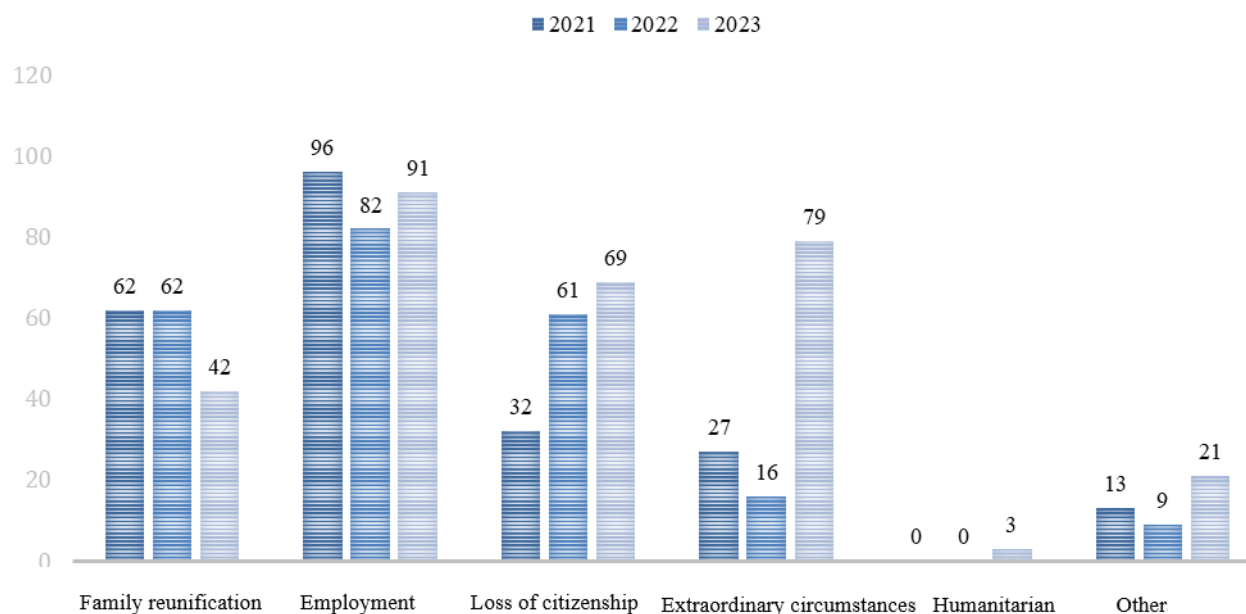


Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

The highest number of permanent residence permits belong to the labour category, renunciation of citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, and extraordinary circumstances. The “extraordinary circumstances” category refers to residence permits issued to foreigners who have lived in the Republic of Kosovo for at least 5 years prior to the entry into force of the Law on Foreigners in 2019.²⁹ Before this period, these individuals could not obtain regular residence permits in the Republic of Kosovo.

²⁹ Administrative Instruction on the Procedure and Criteria for Issuing Residence Permits for Foreigners. (2019). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=23314>

Figure 13. Number of permanent residence permits by category, 2021-2023



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

A.1.5. Acquisition and reacquisition of citizenship

The category of acquiring citizenship includes individuals who have submitted an application for naturalization based on the criteria of the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, such as naturalization by residence, naturalization based on marriage and naturalization based on origin. Another form of acquiring citizenship is the naturalization of diaspora members.³⁰ On the other hand, the category of reacquiring citizenship includes individuals who have reacquired the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo after renouncing their citizenship upon their request to obtain another citizenship.³¹ In 2023, there were 1,259 applications for acquiring citizenship and 169 applications for reacquiring citizenship.

Acquisition of citizenship

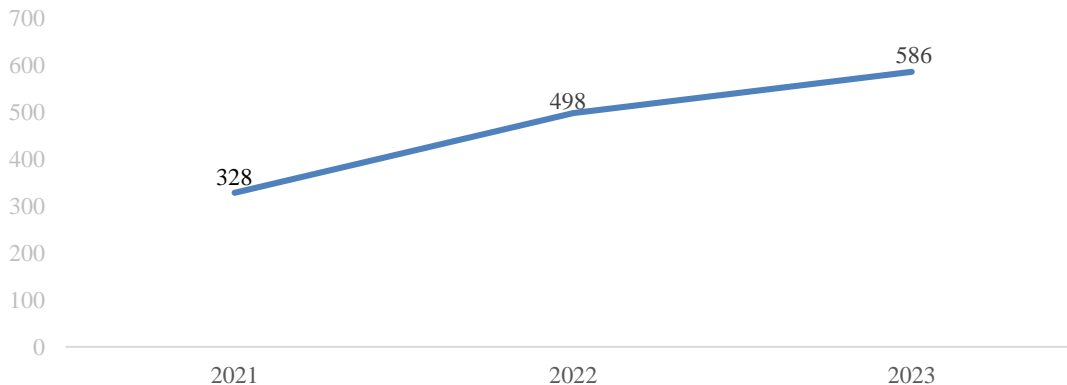
In 2023, a total of 586 individuals acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, with 252 (43%) being male and 334 (57%) being female. The discrepancy between the number of applications for acquiring

³⁰ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Citizenship of Kosovo. (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8873>

³¹ Ibid.

citizenship and the number of acquisitions of citizenship is due to the legal decision-making deadlines (within 90 days), which may result in the transfer of applications from one year to the next.

Figure 14. Number of acquisitions of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023



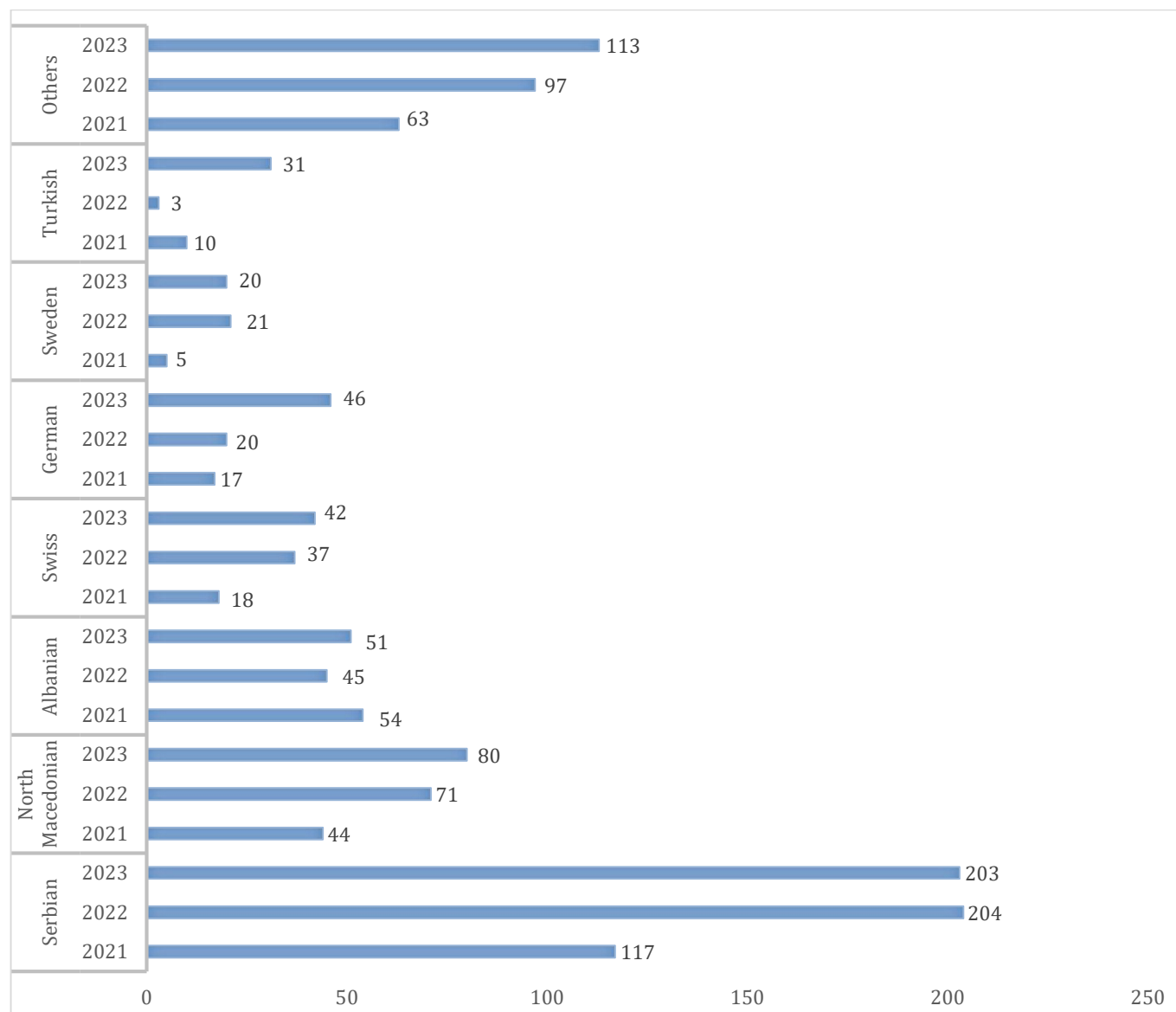
Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

The data indicates an upward trend in citizenship acquisitions, with an 18% increase from 2022 and a 79% increase from 2021. Among the 586 individuals who acquired citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, the majority were from the region, including Serbia (34.6%), North Macedonia (13.7%) and Albania (8.7%). From other countries, the highest numbers were from Germany (7.8%), Switzerland (7.2%), Turkey (5.3%) and others (22.7%).³² Compared to other countries, there has been a notable increase in the acquisition of Kosovo citizenship by individuals from Turkey. This number has increased from 3 individuals in 2022 to 31 individuals in 2023. One factor potentially influencing this increase is the European Commission's announcement in April 2023 regarding visa liberalization for travel to the EU and the Schengen Area for citizens of the Republic of Kosovo.³³ This announcement may have spurred an increase in applications for Kosovo citizenship through naturalization of diaspora members.

³² Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the "other" category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

³³ European Commission. (2024). Visa-free travel for Kosovo citizens to the EU. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/neës/visa-free-travel-kosovo-citizens-eu-2024-01-03_en

Figure 15. Number of acquisitions of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of the applicant, 2021-2023



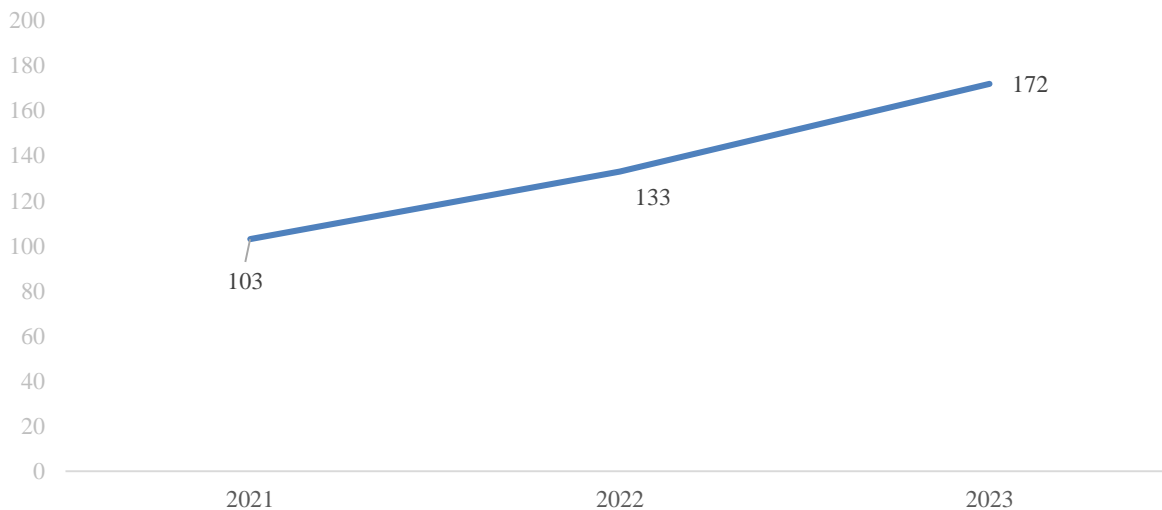
Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

In 2023, 39 individuals acquired citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo by presidential decree. Of whom, 16 (41%) were female and 23 (59%) were male. This number represents a 34% increase compared to 2022 (29 individuals) but a 7% decrease compared to 2021 (42 individuals). Among the 39 individuals who acquired citizenship by presidential decree, the majority were from the region, including Serbia (41%), North Macedonia (10.2%) and Albania (10.2%), while individuals from other countries accounted for 38.4%.

Reacquisition of citizenship

In 2023, 172 individuals reacquired citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo. Of whom, 122 (71%) were male and 50 (29%) were female.

Figure 16. Number of reacquisitions of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023

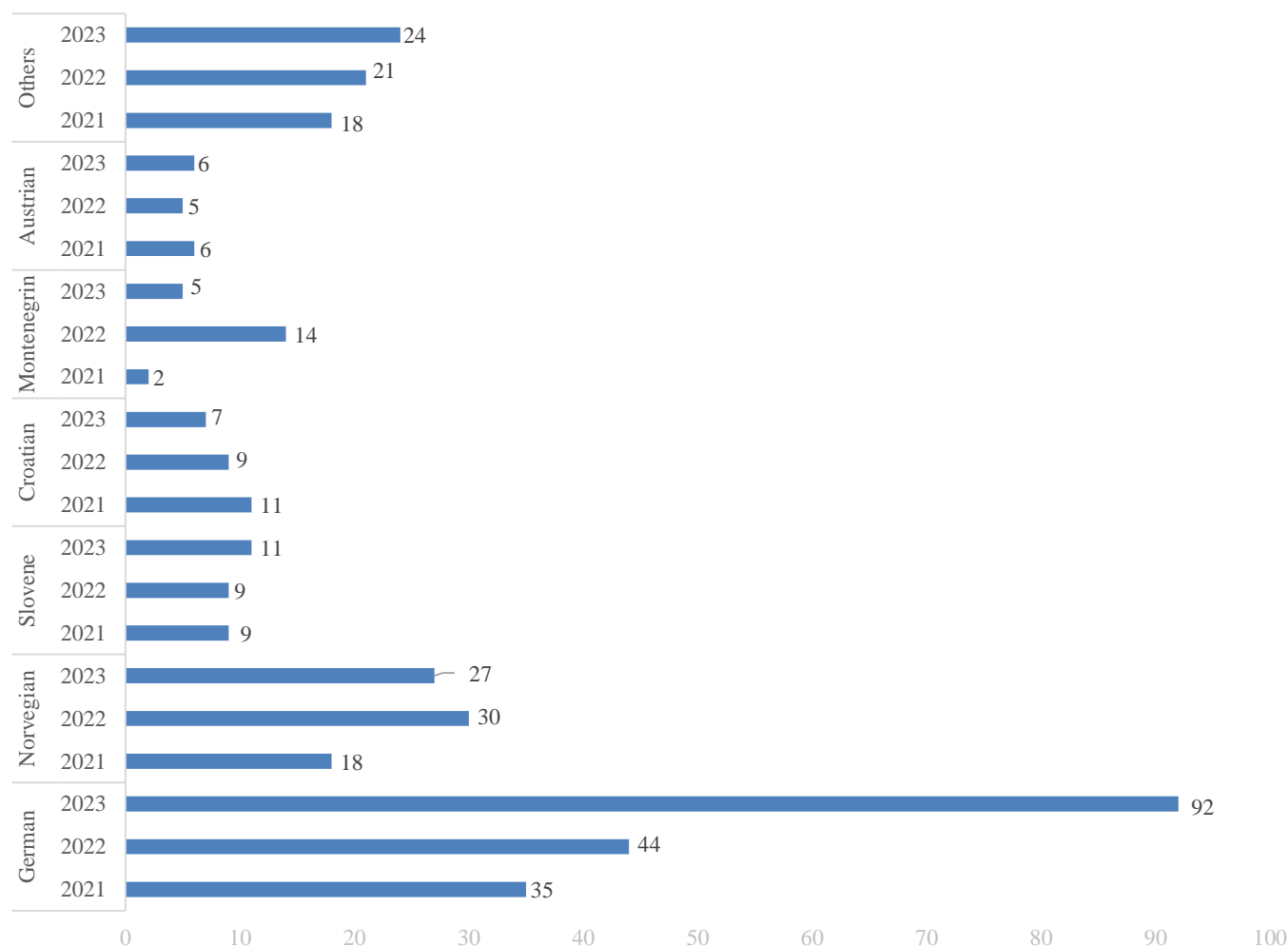


Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

The data shows an increasing trend in the reacquisition of citizenship, with a 27% increase from 2022 and a 64% increase from 2021. In 2023, there was a notable rise in applications for the reacquisition of citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo from individuals holding German citizenship, accounting for 53% of the total. One of the contributing factors to this increase could be Germany's announcement regarding the allowance of dual citizenship, a law set to take effect in June 2024. This announcement may have influenced the increase in applications for reacquisition of citizenship, considering that between 2009 and 2023, over 52,000 individuals renounced the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo to acquire German citizenship. Following the adoption of this law, a surge in applications for reacquiring Kosovo citizenship is expected. After Germany, the highest number of applications came from individuals with citizenship from Norway (16%), Slovenia (6%), Croatia (4%) and other countries (21%).³⁴

³⁴ Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the "other" category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

Figure 17. Number of reacquisition of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of the applicant, 2021-2023



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

Recognition of stateless status

Stateless persons are not considered nationals of any state within their legal frameworks.³⁵ The recognition of the status of stateless persons within the Republic of Kosovo enables them to reside in the country through the issuance of a residence permit valid for one (1) year, with the possibility of renewal.³⁶ In 2023, a total of 5 individuals were granted stateless status, of whom 2 were male and 3 female, all belonging to the age group of 18-34 years.

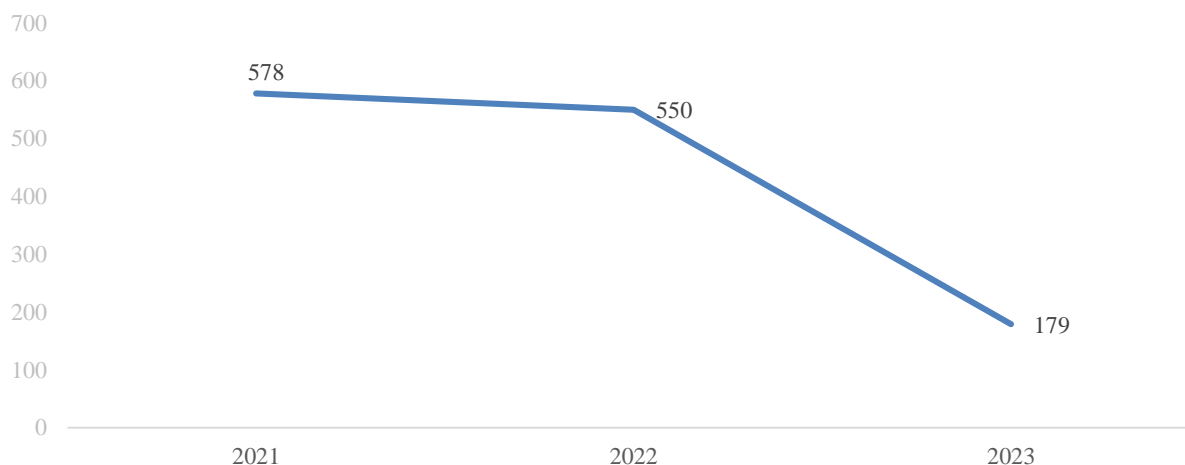
³⁵ UNHCR. (2023). Definition of “stateless person”. <https://emergency.unhcr.org/protection/legal-framework/stateless-person-definition>

³⁶ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Citizenship of Kosovo. (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8873>

A.1.6. Applicants for international protection

International protection, as an institutional legal category, refers to human rights and freedoms and the obligation of states to protect such rights. Law No. 06/L-026 on Asylum regulates the conditions and procedures for recognizing refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection, as well as the status, rights and obligations of applicants, persons with refugee status, and those granted subsidiary protection and temporary protection.³⁷ The Kosovo Police, namely the Directorate for Migration and Foreigners (DMF), is responsible for registering applicants for international protection, while the Asylum Center is responsible for the reception, registration, accommodation and issuance of personal documents to applicants. The Asylum Division, as the first-instance body, examines the applications, conducts interviews and makes decisions regarding the recognition of status.

Figure 18. Number of applicants for international protection, 2021-2023



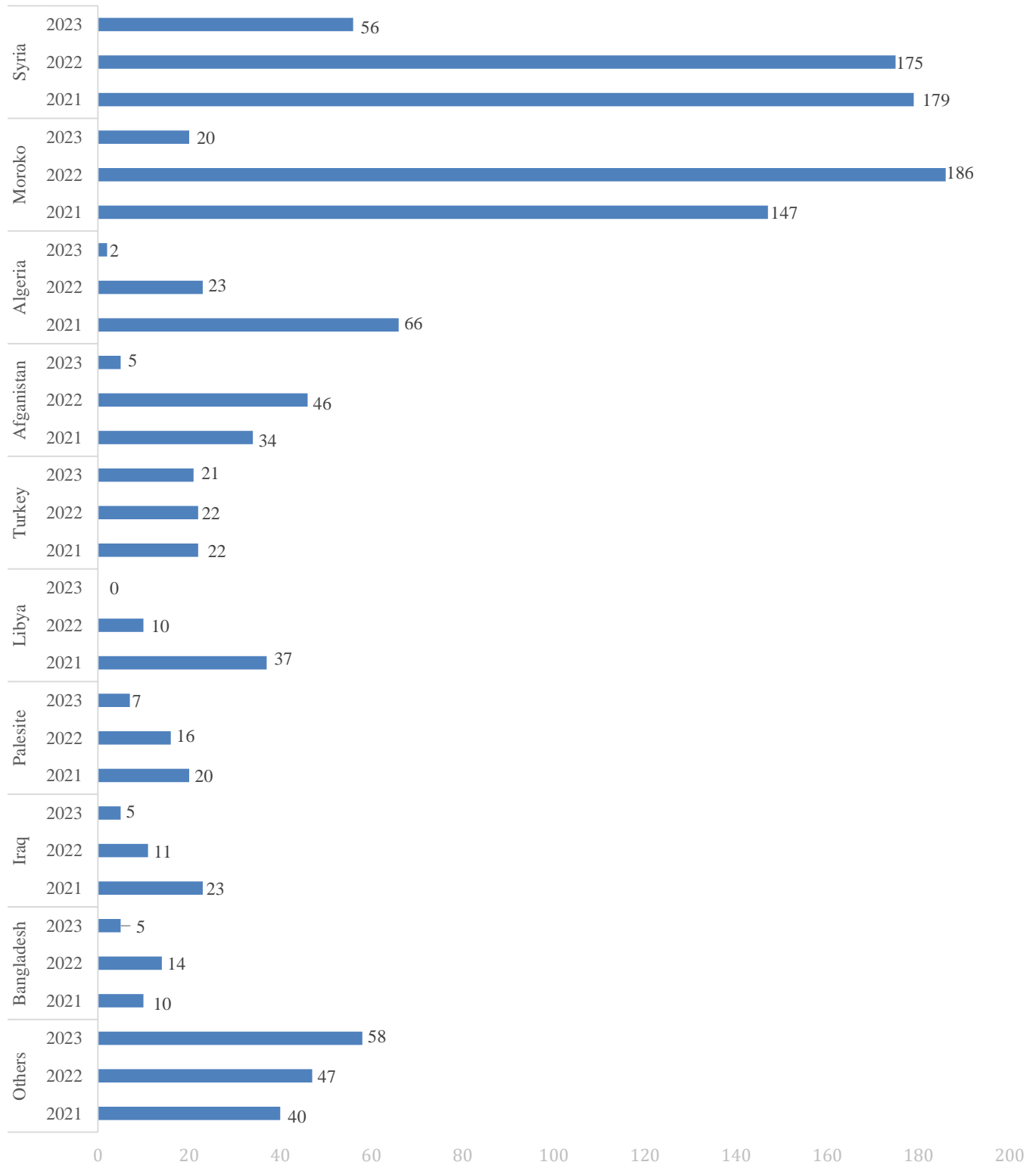
Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

In 2023, a total of 179 applicants for international protection were registered in the Asylum Center in the Republic of Kosovo. The highest number of applications for international protection came from citizens of Syria (31.2%), Turkey (12%), Morocco (11%), Iran (6.1%) and other countries (39.7%).³⁸

³⁷ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Asylum. (2015). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=16389>

³⁸ Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

Figure 19. Number of applicants for international protection by nationality of the applicants, 2021-2023



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

In line with previous years, data from 2023 show that the highest number of applicants for international protection belong to the age group 18-34 (63.7%), followed by the age group 35-64 (25.7%). Unlike previous years, in 2023 there was a significant decrease in the number of applicants for international protection from the age groups 0-13 (6.7%) and 14-17 (3.9%), who were children with families. From the total number of applicants for international protection, one was an unaccompanied minor. In previous years, the high number of minors was the result of families leaving conflict and unsafe zones such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, whereas in 2023 these countries are no longer considered active war zones. The overall number of applications for international protection decreased by 67% compared to 2022 and by 69% compared to 2021. In addition to the stabilization of the situation in countries that were previously considered active conflict and unsafe zones, another influencing factor for this decline is the opening of the Temporary Migrant Reception Center in 2023. The opening of this center has enabled profiling, which, in turn, has led to a decrease in the number of applicants for international protection in the Republic of Kosovo. This is also reflected in the number of people accommodated in the Reception Center, which in 2023 was 461, marking an increase of 27% compared to 2022 (363 people). Another influencing factor in the decline of international protection applications is the change in the migrant route to western countries through the 'Balkan Route', which has led to a decrease in the use of the Republic of Kosovo as a transit country.³⁹

Decisions on applications for international protection

Out of the total number of decisions made on applications for international protection, 124 (56%) resulted in the termination of the procedure due to applicants leaving the Republic of Kosovo, 30 (13%) resulted in refugee status, 24 (11%) in subsidiary protection, 19 (9%) in temporary protection, 13 (6%) in the termination of the procedure at the request of the applicants, and 11 (5%) requests were rejected.

³⁹ International Organization for Migration (2024). DTM Kosovo - Flow Monitoring Surveys with Migrants traveling through Kosovo* (July-August 2023). <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/kosovo-floë-monitoring-surveys-migrants-travelling-through-kosovo-july-august-2023>

A.2. Emigration

Emigration refers to the act of moving from one's country of origin or heritage to another country with the aim of making the destination country effectively the new usual place of residence for purposes such as employment, study, family reunification, etc.⁴⁰ In recent years, the Republic of Kosovo has faced a high emigration trend; however, due to the fact that official data from population census do not reflect all migratory movements, it is difficult to determine the exact number of citizens who have emigrated from the country. Since not all citizens officially declare their temporary and permanent residence abroad, KAS collects data on these emigrants only through family members who have remained in the Republic of Kosovo. In cases where the entire family emigrates and no member remains for reporting, KAS is unable to register this data.

A.2.1. Emigration stock

The emigration stock refers to the total number of individuals from a country who currently live abroad within a specific period of time.⁴¹ This number includes all persons who have left the country, regardless of when they emigrated or their immigration status in the destination country. According to KAS, the stock of emigrants from the Republic of Kosovo for 2023 is 359,244, or 22.6% of the population.⁴²

A.2.2. Emigration flow

Emigration flow refers to the number of migrants leaving a country (emigrants) during a specific period.⁴³ According to KAS, the emigration flow in the Republic of Kosovo for 2023 is estimated to be 21,158 persons, or 1.33% of the resident population.⁴⁴ This number includes all emigrants from the Republic of Kosovo, regardless of the reason for migration and their status in the destination country (regular and irregular).

⁴⁰ International Organization for Migration. (2019.) Migration glossary. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf

⁴¹ International Organization for Migration. (2019). Key migration terms. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

⁴² The population and migration data are preliminary data from the 2024 Population Census,

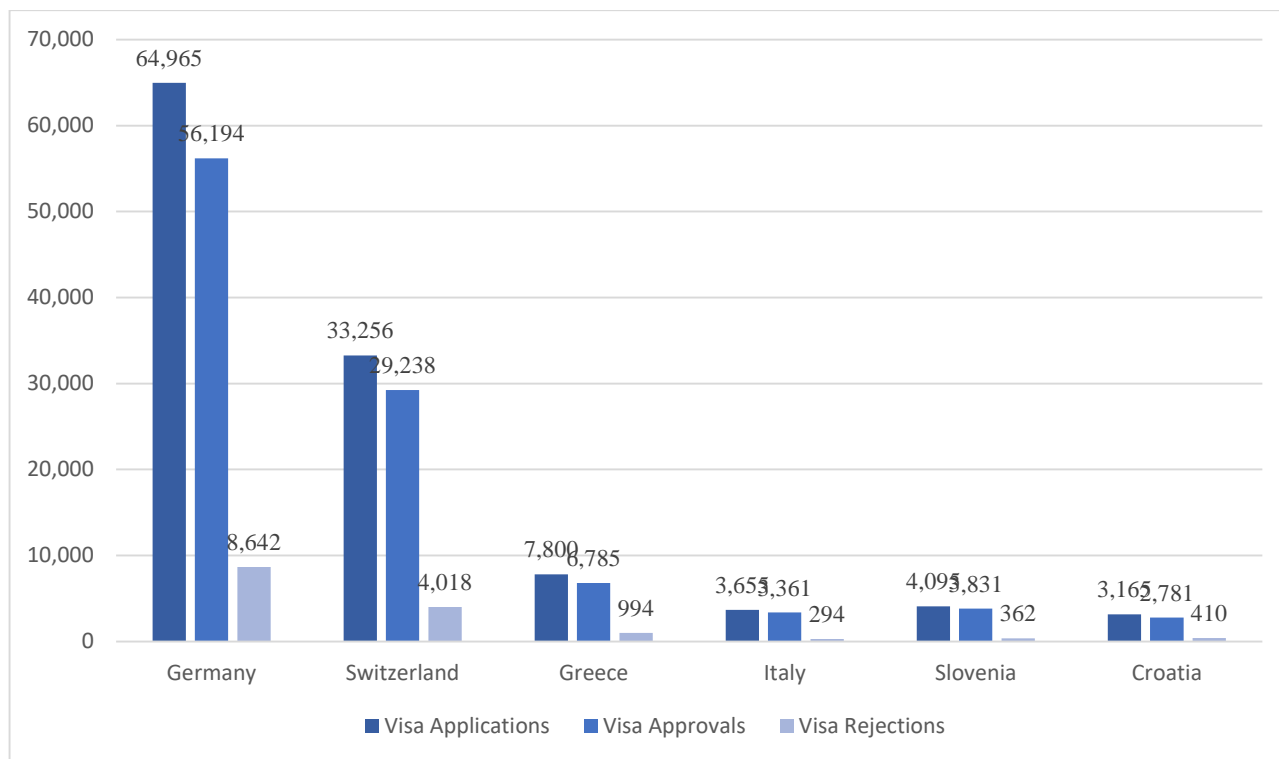
⁴³ International Organization for Migration. (2019). Key migration terms. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

⁴⁴ The population and migration data are preliminary data from the 2024 Population Census,

A.2.3. Schengen visa applications

In 2023, a total of 120,573 Schengen visa applications were received at the diplomatic and consular missions of EU Member States and the Schengen Area accredited in the Republic of Kosovo and other countries.⁴⁵ Out of the total number of applications from Kosovo citizens for Schengen visas, 105,460 were approved, while 15,338 were rejected.⁴⁶ Germany was the main destination for visa applications, with 54%, followed by Switzerland at 28%, Greece at 6%, Slovenia at 3% and other states at 9%. Germany granted the majority of visas for Kosovo applicants, with 56,194 visas approved and an approval rate of 86.50%. Slovenia had the highest visa approval rate at 93.55%, while Hungary had the highest refusal rate at 80.36%.

Figure 20. Number of visa applications, approvals and rejections by country, 2023.



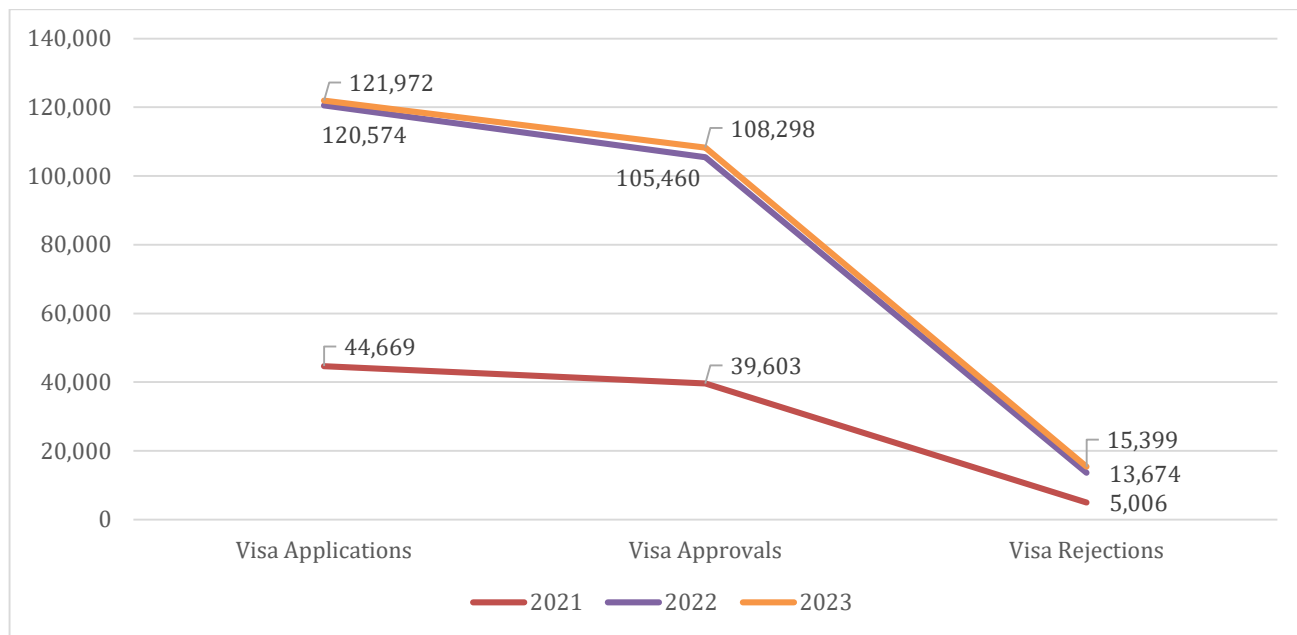
Source: Schengen Visa Info

⁴⁵ Schengen Visa Info. (2024). Statistics for Kosovo 2023. <https://schengenvisainfo.net/statistics/kosovo/>

⁴⁶ Ibid. Note: Statistical discrepancy between the number of applications and the number of approvals and rejections is due to the timeliness for decision-making, which may result in the transfer of applications from one year to the next.

The data indicate that over the past three years, there has been a growing trend in Schengen visa applications by citizens of the Republic of Kosovo. However, compared to 2022, a decrease of 1.15% in applications was recorded during 2023. One of the contributing factors to this decline may be the approval of the European Commission’s proposal for visa-free travel to Schengen countries for Kosovo citizens. This proposal, approved in April 2023, allows Kosovo passport holders, starting from 1 January 2024, to travel to the EU without a visa for up to 90 days within any 180-day period.⁴⁷

Figure 21. Applications, approvals and rejections of Schengen visas, 2021-2023



Source: Schengen Visa Info

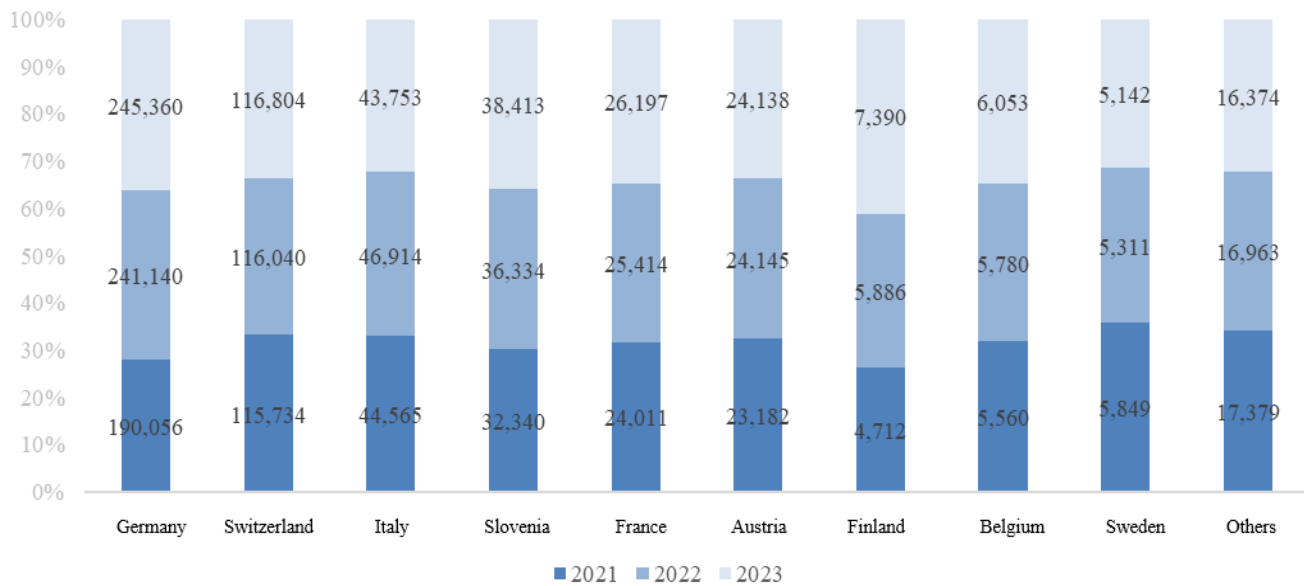
A.2.4. Emigration to the European Union and the Schengen Area

The analysis of regular migration of citizens of the Republic of Kosovo to EU member states and the Schengen Area primarily focuses on first-time residence permit statistics during 2023. A residence permit is any authorization valid for at least three months issued by the authorities of an EU Member State, allowing a third-country national to legally reside within its territory. A first-time residence permit is a permit issued to a person for the first time in the destination country.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ European Commission. (2024). *Visa-free travel for Kosovo citizens to the EU*. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/nees/visa-free-travel-kosovo-citizens-eu-2024-01-03_en

⁴⁸ European Commission. (2023). *Registration of residence in the EU*. https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/residence/documents-formalities/registering-residence/index_en.htm

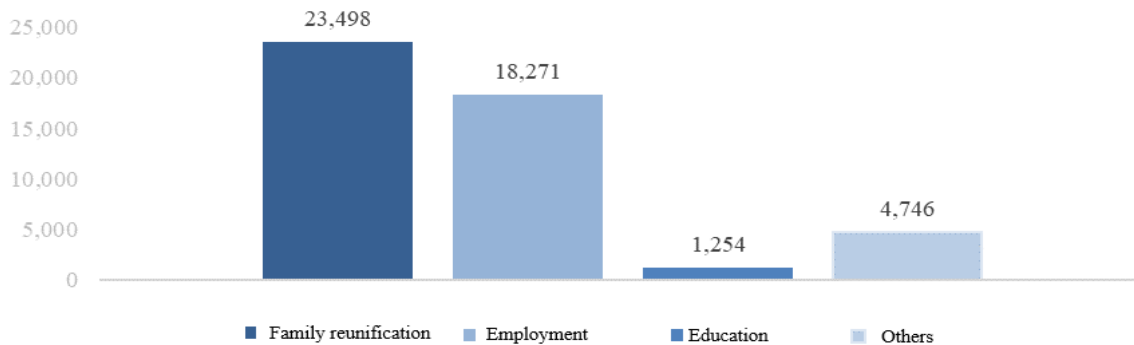
Figure 22. Stocks of residence permits by country of destination, 2021-2023



Source: Eurostat

In 2023, a total of 45,856 first-time residence permits were issued to citizens of Kosovo.⁴⁹ This number represents a 7% decrease compared to the 49,428 permits issued in 2022 and is on the same level as the 46,057 permits issued in 2021. Of all residence permits issued to Kosovo citizens, family reunification accounted for almost half of the cases (48%), followed by employment (39%), educational purposes (3%) and other reasons (10%).

Figure 23. Number of first-time residence permits by category, 2023

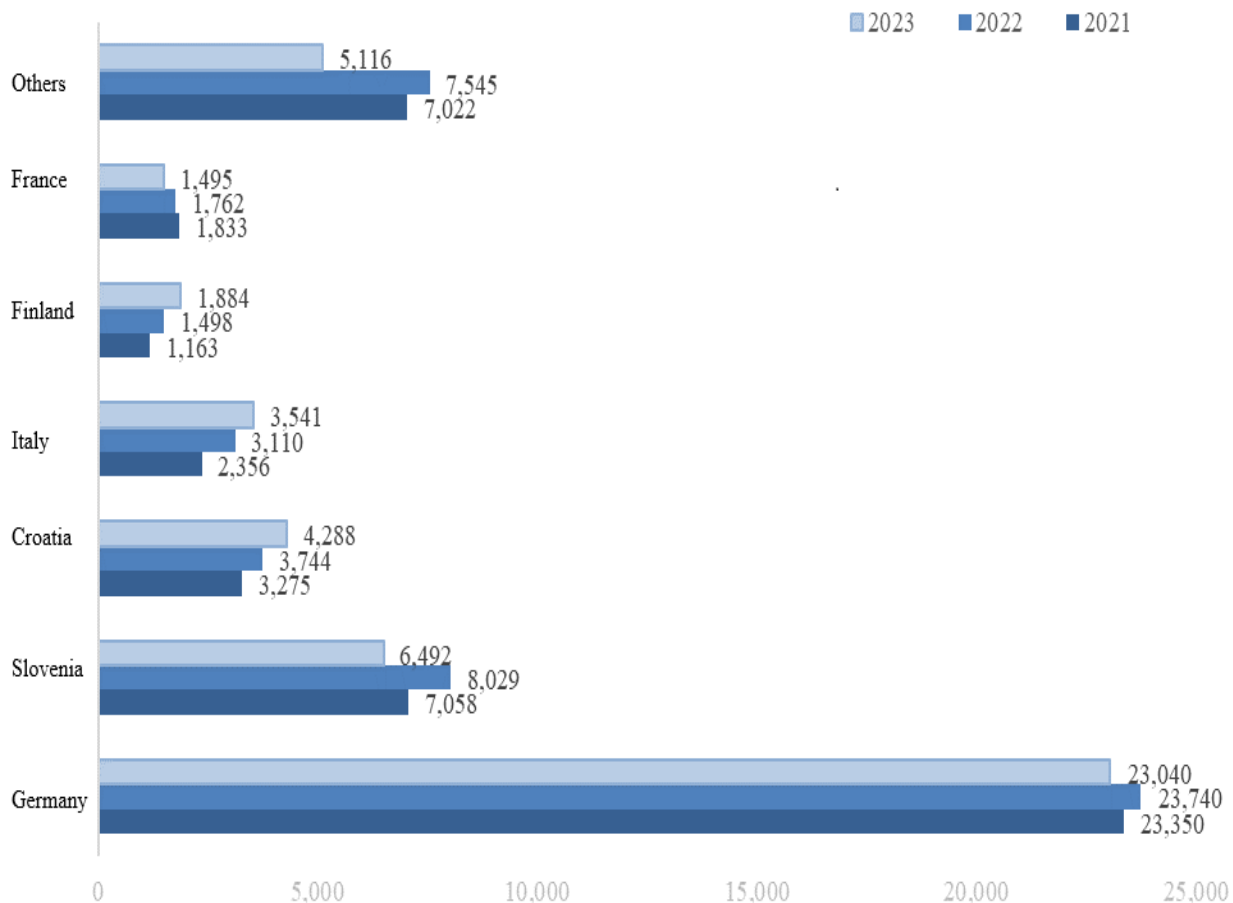


Source: Eurostat

⁴⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_resfirst_custom_12567667/default/table?lang=en Data for Switzerland is not available at the time of the publication of this document.

The primary destination with the highest number of first-time residence permits issued to Kosovo citizens was Germany (50%), followed by Slovenia (14%), Croatia (9%), Italy (8%), Finland (4%), and other countries (15%). This trend has remained consistent over the past three years, as demonstrated in the table below.

Figure 24. Number of first-time residence permits by country, 2021-2023



Source: Eurostat

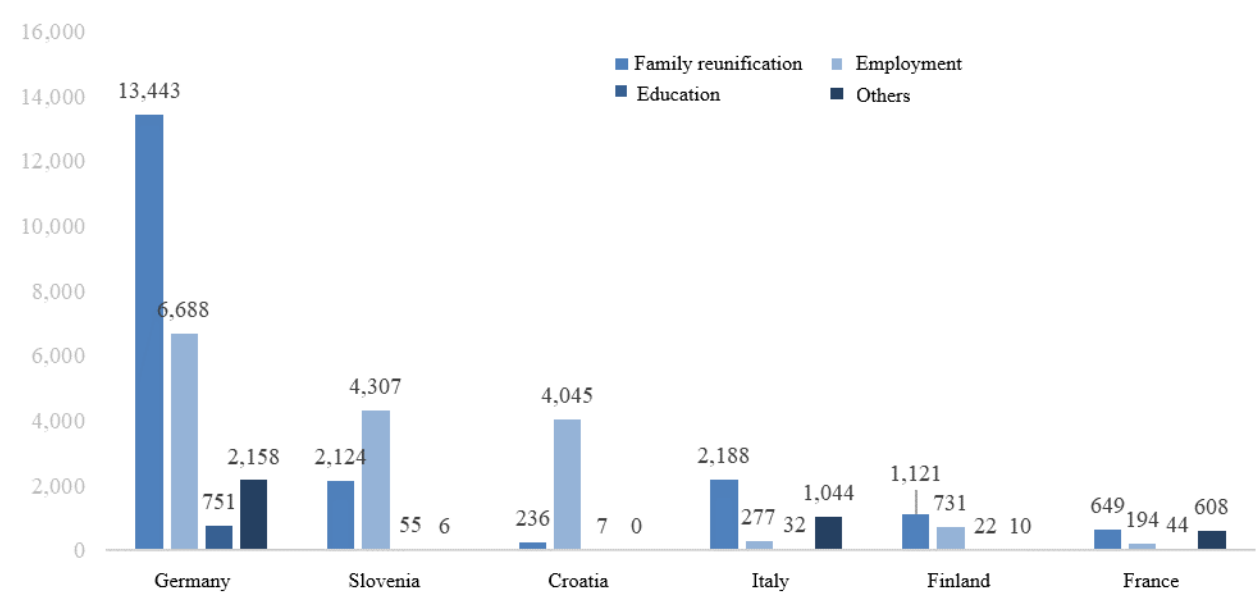
In 2023, Germany continued to lead as the main destination for emigrants from the Republic of Kosovo. Notably, the increasing trends in emigration for labour and family reunification purposes are driven by growing demand for labour in Germany and the facilitation of employment and migration policies through the Western Balkans Regulation.⁵⁰ This regulation, set to last until 2023, has enabled citizens of the Western

⁵⁰ Center for Global Development. (2021). Migration routes: Western Balkans Regulation. <https://gsp.cgdev.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CGD-Legal-Pathways-Database-Western-Balkan-Regulation-1.pdf>.

GAP Institute. (2024). Employment of Kosovars in Germany and Kosovo: sectors and wages by the purchasing power. https://www.institutigap.org/documents/67323_Pun%C3%ABsimi%20i%20kosovar%C3%ABve%20ne%20Gjermani%20dhe%20Kosov%C3%AB.pdf

Balkans to obtain temporary work visas, provided they have a job offer from a German employer, regardless of their qualifications. Kosovo citizens dominate employment in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, trade, hospitality and gastronomy.⁵¹ Regarding other migration categories, after Germany, Italy, Finland and France are dominant destinations for family reunification, while Slovenia and Croatia lead in the employment category. The driving factors for labour migration to EU countries include favourable working conditions, such as higher wages, compliance with contracts and workers’ rights, and a high quality of life, including efficient healthcare and education systems.⁵²

Figure 25. Number of first-time residence permits by destination and category, 2023



Source: Eurostat

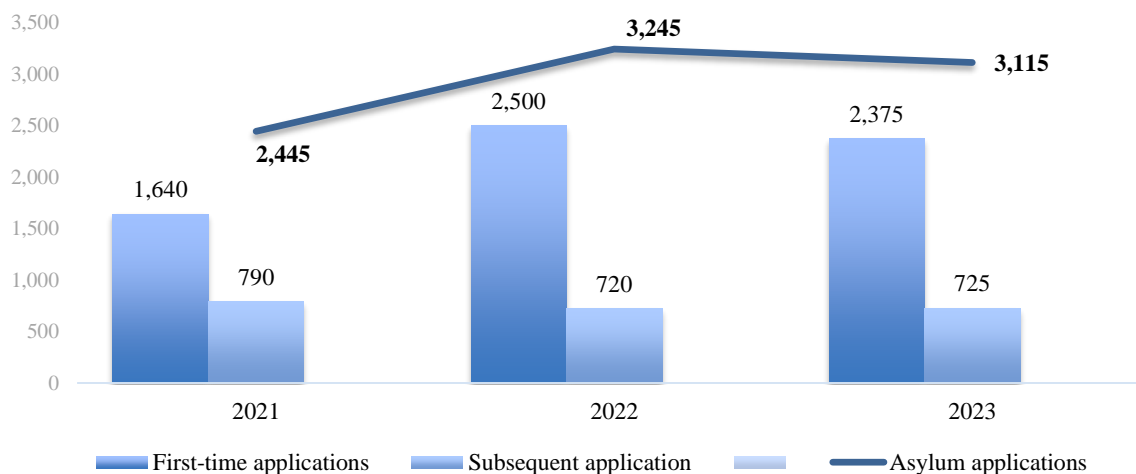
⁵¹ GAP Institute. (2024). Employment of Kosovars in Germany and Kosovo: sectors and wages by the purchasing power. https://www.institutigap.org/documents/67323_Pun%C3%ABsimi%20i%20kosovar%C3%ABve%20ne%20Gjermani%20dhe%20Kosov%C3%AB.pdf; Deutsche Welle. (2023).

⁵² Germany: The new Law on migration is expected in March. <https://www.dw.com/sq/gjermani-n%C3%AB-mars-pritet-ligji-i-ri-migracionit/a-64473927>

A.2.5. Asylum seekers in the European Union and the Schengen Area

According to data from Eurostat, in 2023, 1.1 million asylum seekers applied for international protection in the EU, an 18% increase compared to the previous year.⁵³ The Republic of Kosovo is not among the main countries of origin for asylum seekers in the EU and the Schengen Area. In 2023, EU countries received 2,375 first-time asylum applications and 725 subsequent applications from individuals with Kosovo citizenship. A “*first-time asylum applicant*” refers to a person who has made a request for international protection, or who is included in this request as a family member, for the first time. A person can be registered as a first-time applicant only if he/she has never applied for international protection in the reporting country in the past, regardless of applications in other EU Member States.⁵⁴ A “*subsequent asylum application*” refers to a further application for international protection made after a final decision has been made on a previous application.⁵⁵ Compared to the previous year, the number of first-time asylum applications decreased by 5%. The data for the year does not show significant gender differences, as 60% of applications were from males and 40% from females. By age, 935 (40%) applications were from the age group 18-34, 675 (29%) were from those under 14 years old (minors), 620 (27%) were from the age group 35-64, and 90 (4%) were from the age group 14-17.

Figure 26. Number of asylum applications in EU countries and the Schengen Area, 202-2023



Source: Eurostat

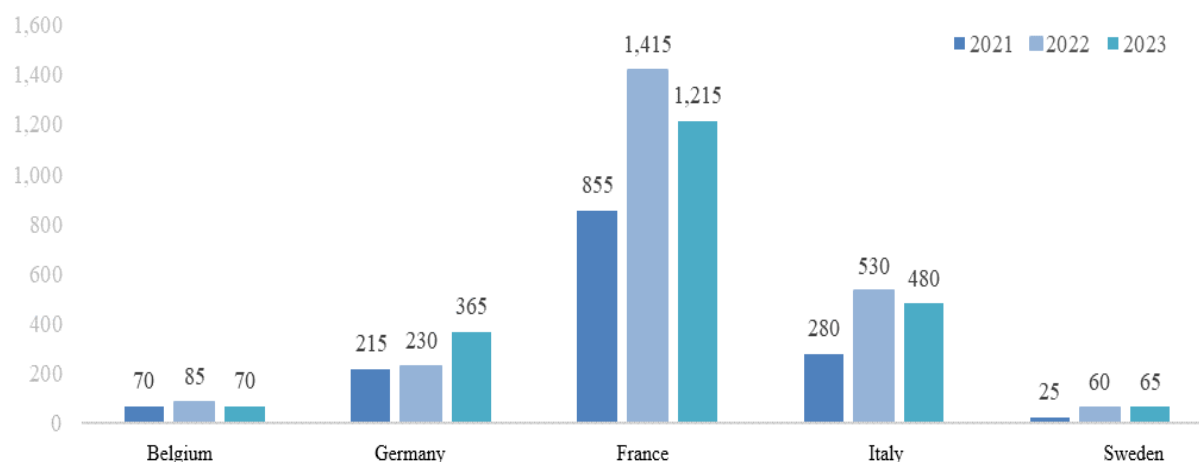
⁵³ European Union Agency for Asylum. (2023). Recent trends in asylum. <https://euaa.europa.eu/latest-asylum-trends-2023>

⁵⁴ Eurostat. (2024). Glossary: First-time asylum applicant. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:First_time_asylum_applicant

⁵⁵ Ibid.

France was the main destination for first-time asylum applications, accounting for more than half (51%) of the applications from Kosovo citizens. The main reasons for the high number of asylum requests in France include the social services guaranteed to asylum seekers, including medical treatment.⁵⁶ In line with previous years, other destinations for asylum continue to be Italy (20%), Germany (15%), Belgium (3%), Sweden (3%) and other countries (8%).

Figure 27. Number of first-time asylum applications in EU countries and the Schengen Area, 202-2023



Source: Eurostat

In 2023, a total of only 5 asylum applications were received in EU and Schengen Area countries from unaccompanied minors from Kosovo. Compared to the previous year, where only 20 applications were received, this number marks a 75% decrease. While in 2023 all the applications were registered in Italy, in previous years there were more applications in Slovenia (15 in 2022 and 20 in 2021).

In 2023, EU Member States and Schengen Area countries issued approximately 2,395 first-instance decisions (initial decisions) on asylum applications from Kosovo citizens. This represents an increase of 9.6% compared to 2022 (2,185). Of these decisions, 2,145 were negative (90%), while 245 were positive (10%). Of the total number of positive first-instance decisions, 42% resulted in Geneva Convention Status, 28% in Humanitarian Status and 30% in subsidiary protection status. Of the positive decisions, 125 (51%) were

⁵⁶ Express Newspaper. (2014). France is the most sought-after destination for asylum by Albanians. <https://www.gazetaexpress.com/franca-me-e-kerkuara-nga-shqiptaret-per-azil/>

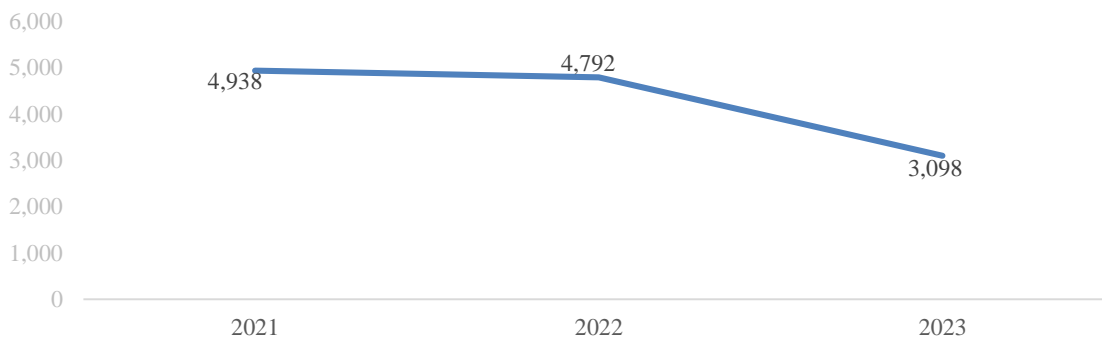
granted by France, 65 (26.5%) by Italy, 20 (8%) by Switzerland and 35 (14.5%) by other countries. Of the negative decisions, 1,180 (55%) were granted by France, 630 (29%) by Germany, 95 (5%) by Italy, 85 (4%) by Sweden, 70 (3%) by Belgium and 85 (4%) by other countries.

A.2.6. Renunciation of Citizenship

Citizens of the Republic of Kosovo may submit an application for renunciation of this citizenship if they hold the citizenship of another state or have a guarantee issued by the competent authority of the other state that they will acquire the citizenship of that state.⁵⁷ In 2023, a total of 3,108 applications for renunciation of Kosovo citizenship were received, and 3,098 individuals were renounced Kosovo citizenship. As with applications for acquiring citizenship, this statistical discrepancy between the number of applications for renunciation and the number of renunciations results from the legal decision-making deadlines (within 90 days), which may affect the transfer of requests from one year to the next.

The data from previous years shows a decrease in renunciations of citizenship, with a 35% decrease compared to 2022 and a 38% decrease compared to 2021. Of this number, 1,562 (50.4%) are male and 1,536 (49.6%) are female.

Figure 28. Number of renunciations of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023



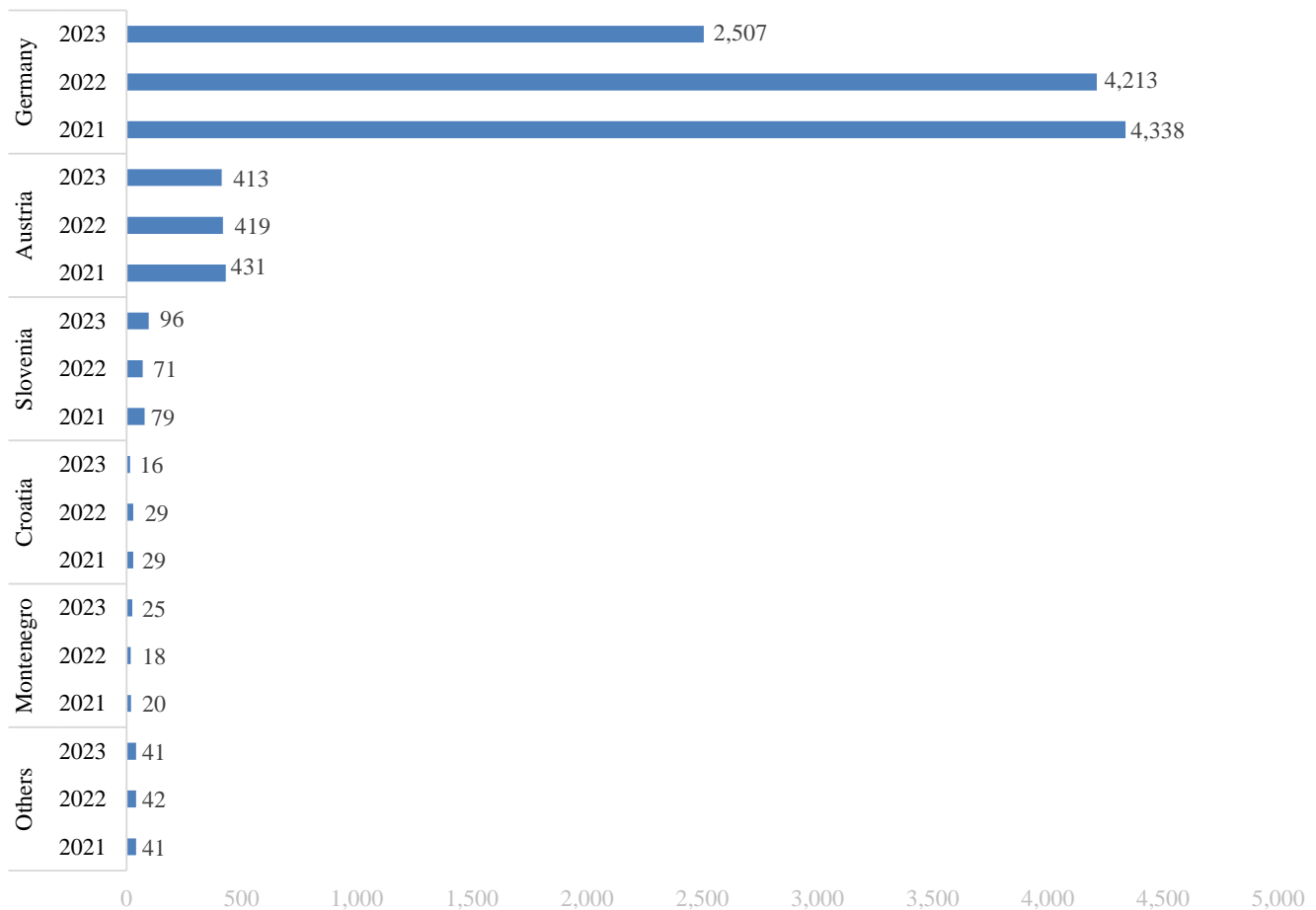
Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

Of the 3,098 persons who were renounced Kosovo citizenship, 2,507 (81%) are citizens of Germany, 413 (13.3%) of Austria, 96 (3%) of Slovenia, 25 (0.8%) of Montenegro, 16 (0.5%) of Croatia, and 41 (1.3%) from other countries.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Citizenship of Kosovo. (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8873>

⁵⁸ Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

Figure 29. Number of renunciations of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo by nationality of the applicants, 2021-2023



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

The individuals who have renounced the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo are mostly from the age group 18-34 years, with 1,583 (52%), followed by the age group 35-64 years with 921 (30%), the age group 14-17 years with 275 (9%), the age group 6-13 years with 180 (6%), and other age groups with 139 (3%). In 2023, there was a decline in applications for renunciation of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, particularly from the state of Germany. This decline is mainly attributed to legal amendments in Germany that will ease the naturalization procedures for German citizenship by shortening the waiting time, as well as the possibility of holding dual citizenship.⁵⁹ Following the approval of this law in June 2024, a downward trend in applicants for renunciation of the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo, who are also German citizens, is expected.

⁵⁹ RT Partner. (2024). Control of the right to naturalization 2024. <https://www.rtpartner.de/en/immigration/einbuengerungs-check/>

A.3. Irregular immigration

Although there is no universally recognized definition, irregular migration refers to movements that occur outside the laws, regulations or international agreements that govern entry or exit from the country of origin, transit or destination.⁶⁰ This chapter examines the irregular entries of foreigners into the Republic of Kosovo during 2023.

Table 2. Key indicators of irregular migration in the Republic of Kosovo, 2023

Irregular migration: Key indicators	
Foreigners whose entry was rejected at the external borders (flows)	3,432
Foreigners found to be present in the country illegally (flows)	206
Foreigners ordered to leave the country (flows)	214
Foreigners who committed administrative violations (flows)	1.261

Source: Risk and Threat Assessment Unit, Border Department – Kosovo Police

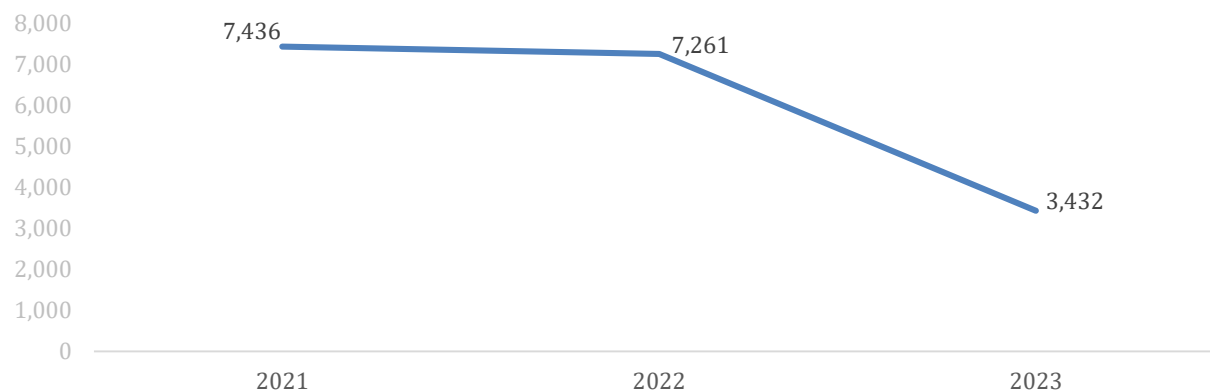
A.3.1 Rejection of entries

In 2023, a total of 14,013,947 individuals entered the Republic of Kosovo, while 3,452 individuals were denied entry. This number of entry rejections at Border Crossing Points (BCPs) marks a 53% decrease compared to 2022 and a 54% decrease compared to 2021. Some of the factors that have contributed to the reduction in this number include the easing of border crossing procedures, such as the exemption from the passport requirement for EU and Western Balkans⁶¹ citizens, an increase in the number of applications for entry visas for third-country nationals, and the removal of the COVID-19 vaccination certificate requirement.

⁶⁰ International Organization for Migration. (2019). Key migration terms. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

⁶¹ Government Decisions. Republic of Kosovo (Meeting 158/2013). (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=61893>

Figure 30. Number of entry rejections at border crossing points, 2021-2023



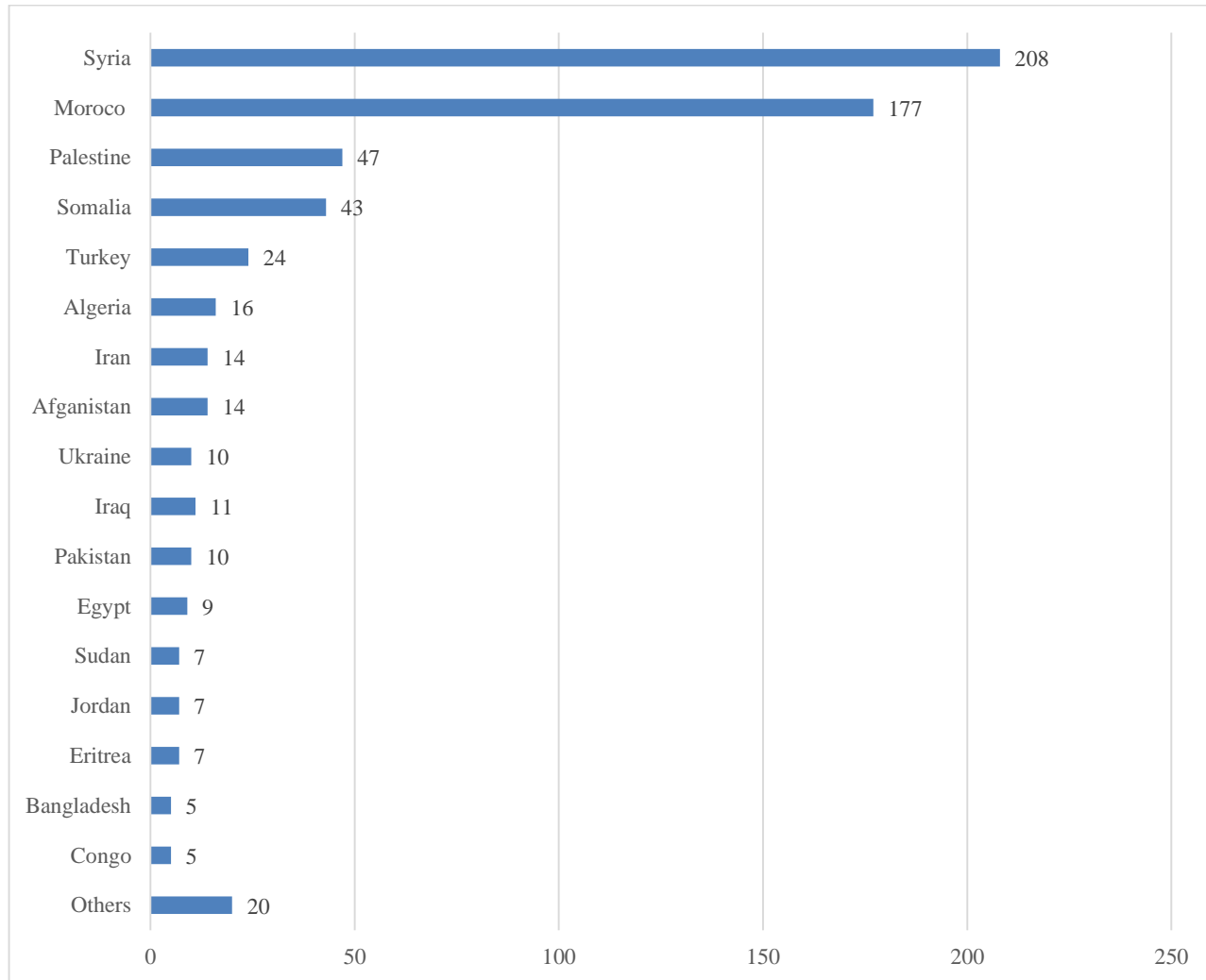
Source: Risk and Threat Assessment Unit, Border Department – Kosovo Police

Of the total number of individuals denied entry at the border in 2023, 60% were from Western Balkan countries, 34% from Asian countries, 3% from EU Member States and Schengen countries and 3% from other countries. The main reasons for entry rejections at the border include the lack of valid travel documents (49.9%) and the lack of valid visas or residence permits (23.4%).

A.3.2. Unauthorized border crossing

In 2023, a total of 634 migrants crossed the border and entered the territory of the Republic of Kosovo unauthorized. Of these, 582 (92%) were male, 52 (8%) were female, 598 (94%) were adults and 36 (6%) were under 18 years of age. Out of the total number of irregular migrants who entered Kosovo through the land border, 312 (49%) entered from Albania, 166 (26%) from North Macedonia, 82 (13%) from Serbia and 3 (0.4%) from Montenegro. Through the air border at Prishtina Airport, 71 (11%) irregular migrants entered, who did not present any valid border crossing documents and, upon the first contact with the police, requested international protection. The majority of the irregular migrants were from Syria (33%), followed by Morocco (28%), Palestine (7%), Somalia (7%), Turkey (4%), Algeria (3%) and other countries (18%).

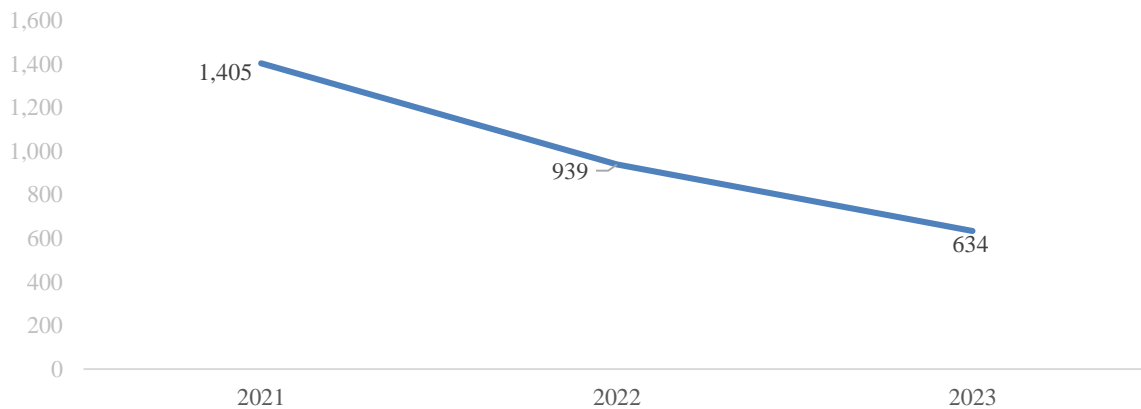
Figure 31. Number of unauthorized entries at border crossing points by country of origin, 2023.



Source: Risk and Threat Assessment Unit, Border Department – Kosovo Police

Compared to previous years, the number of irregular migrants in the Republic of Kosovo has decreased significantly due to the change in migration routes and Kosovo not being used as a transit point towards the EU. Compared to 2022, there is a 32% decrease, while compared to 2021, there is a 55% decrease.

Figure 32. Number of irregular migrants in the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023



Source: Risk and Threat Assessment Unit, Border Department – Kosovo Police

A.3.3. Combating smuggling and trafficking of migrants

In 2023, 23 persons were suspected of migrant smuggling, and 16 cases were investigated and processed. Compared to 2022, there was a 32% decrease, and compared to 2021, a 55% decrease in migrant smuggling cases. Some of the factors influencing this decline include increased police control at border crossing points and enhanced international cooperation for identifying and preventing smuggling activities. Of the total number of persons suspected of smuggling migrants, 15 are citizens of the Republic of Kosovo, 2 are citizens of the Republic of Serbia and 3 are from other countries. In 2023, 2 migrants were identified as victims of human trafficking, who were returned to their country of origin and received the services provided under the SOP for victims of trafficking. This number remains at the same level as in previous years.

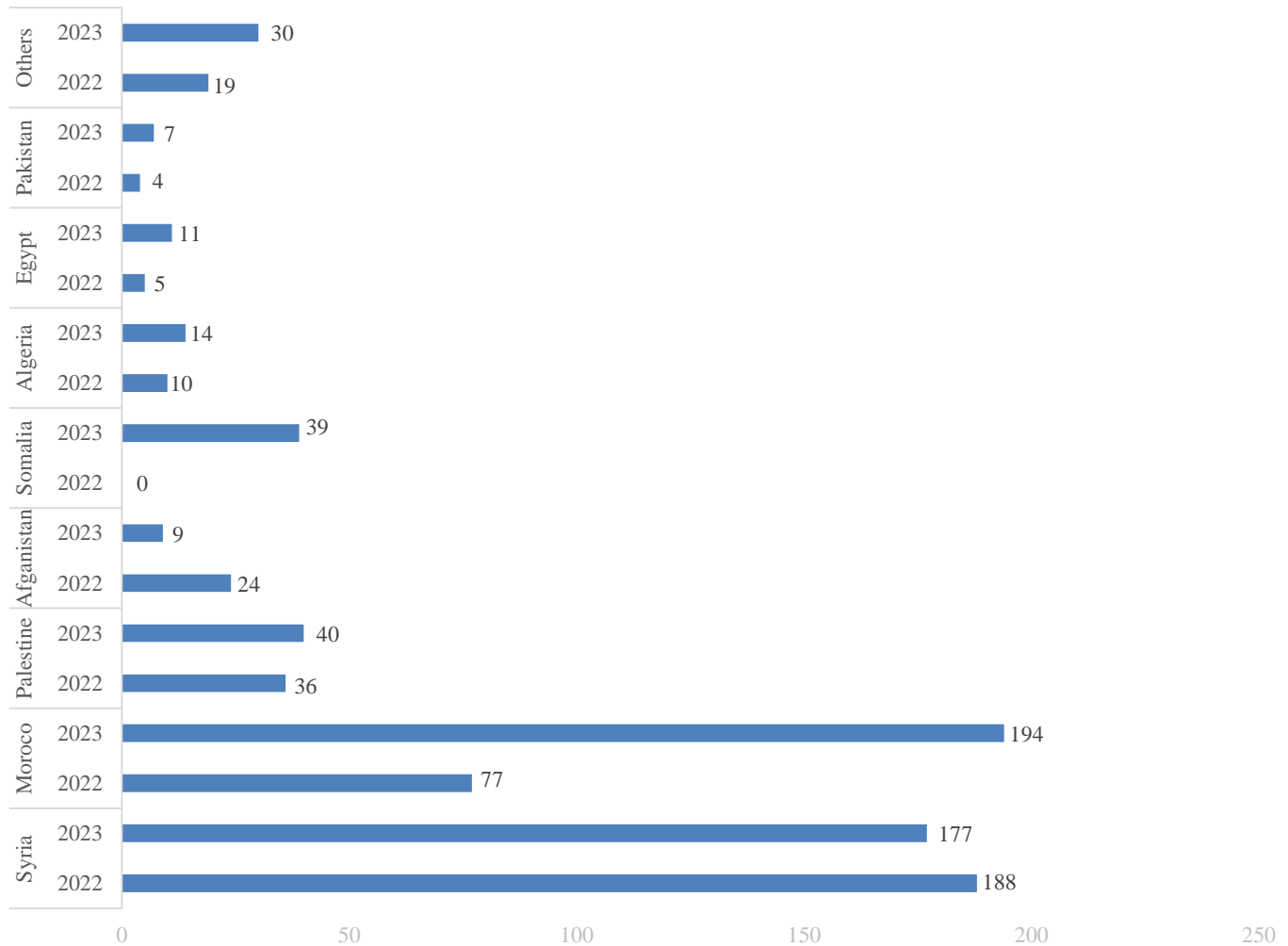
A.3.4. Foreigners with regular residence

Temporary Reception Center for Migrants

In 2023, a total of 461 migrants were received and accommodated at the Temporary Reception Center for Migrants (TRCM). Of them, 441 (96%) are male, and 20 are female (4%). This number marks a 27% increase compared to 2022 (when the Center was opened), with 363 migrants. The largest number of migrants in this Center belong to the following age groups: 392 (85%) from the age group 18-34 years and 48 (10.4%) from the age group 35-64 years, followed by other age groups (4.6%). The largest number of migrants in this

Center are from Morocco (42%), Syria (25.4%), Palestine (8.7%), Somalia (8.4%), Algeria (3%) and other countries (12.4%).⁶²

Figure 33. Number of persons accommodated in TRCM by country of origin, 2023.



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration

Voluntary removal decision

In 2023, there was an increase in voluntary removal decision from the territory of the Republic of Kosovo by 72% compared to 2022 and 66% compared to 2021 (see Figure 38). The main reasons for issuing voluntary removal decision for foreigners with irregular stay in the Republic of Kosovo were the lack of a valid residence permit, cancellation or revocation of the residence permit, or individuals being found working in

⁶² Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

violation of the provisions of the Law on Foreigners or other applicable laws. Of the total number of voluntary removal decision, 84 (45%) were for individuals from Bangladesh, 35 (19%) from Turkey, 15 (8%) from Albania and 42 (23%) from other countries. Among the total number of voluntary removal decision, the male gender leads with 141 (76%) compared to the female gender with 45 (24%).

Assisted voluntary removal through IOM

Compared to previous years, which were characterized by a higher number of voluntary returns of migrants through IOM assistance, in 2023 only 3 migrants were returned to their country of origin (see Figure 38). Of these, 2 persons were from Morocco, 1 person from the Philippines, and 1 from Iraq.

Forced removal decisions

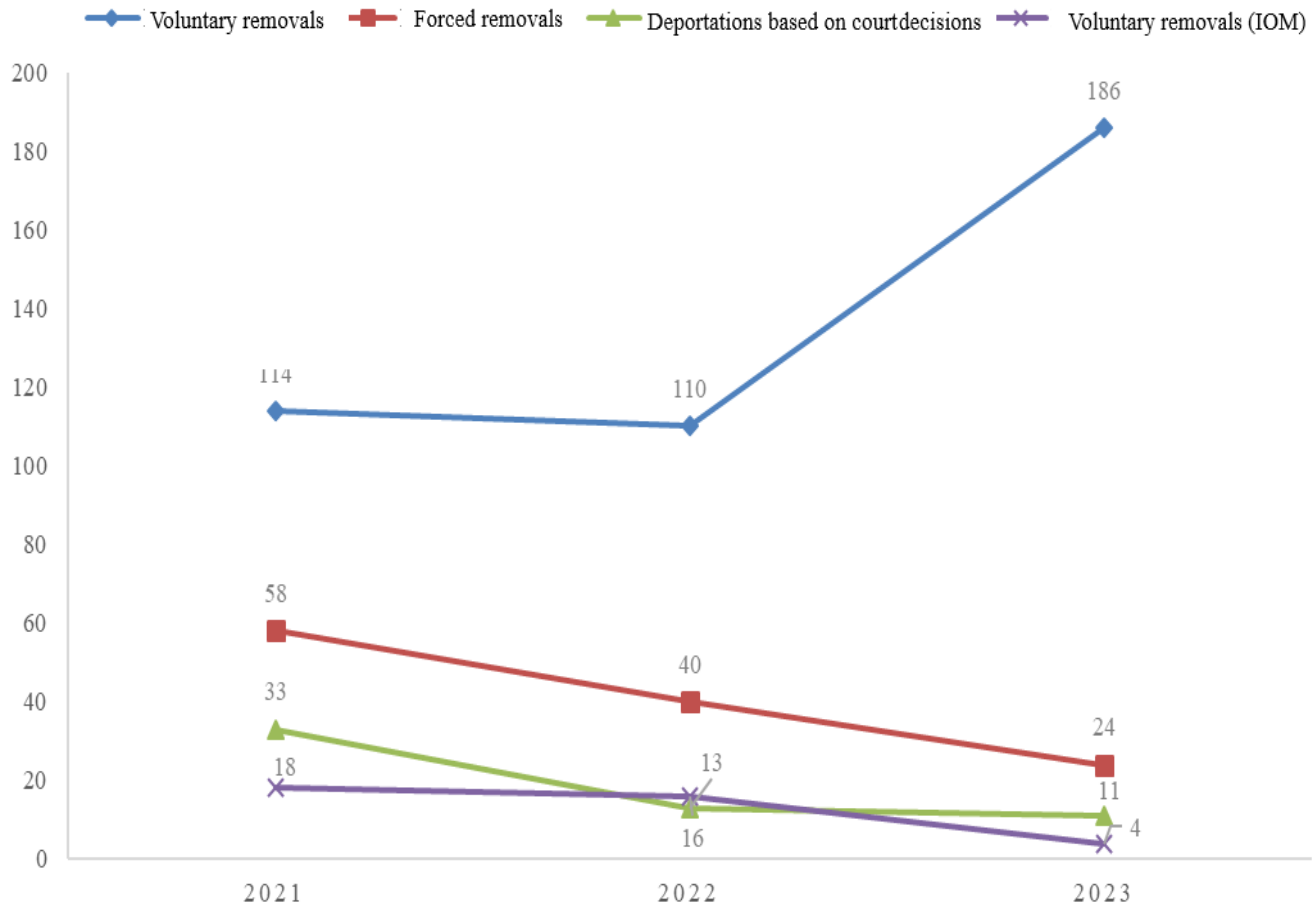
In 2023, 17 forced removal decisions on irregular migrants were issued. This number represents a decrease of 58% compared to 2022 and 71% compared to 2021 (see Figure 38). Of the total number, 12 persons were citizens of Albania and the remaining 5 were citizens of Serbia, Turkey, North Macedonia and Spain. By gender, 13 (76%) of those deported under forced removal decisions were female, while 4 (24%) were male.

Deportations by court decision

Based on the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo, in 2023, 11 persons were deported under decisions from Kosovo's courts.⁶³ Compared to 2022, this number decreased by 15% and compared to 2021, it decreased by 67% (see Figure 38). Of these deportations, 4 persons were from Serbia, 2 from the Netherlands and the remaining 5 were from Albania, Russia, Romania, the Philippines and Poland. By gender, 9 (82%) of those deported by court decision were male and 2 (18%) were female.

⁶³ Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo. (2019). <https://md.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/6A2D4377-6AE1-4530-909F-3FB2680CD1EC.pdf>

Figure 34. Number of removal decision by category, 2021-2023



Source: Risk and Threat Assessment Unit, Border Department

Detention Center for Foreigners

Irregular migrants who are subject to return to their country of origin accommodated in Detention Center for Foreigners (DCF). In 2023, 9 individuals with foreign citizenship were detained at this Center, 1 of whom was female and 10 were male. All of them belong to the 18-34 age group. Of them, 2 persons were citizens of Albania, while the other 7 persons were citizens of North Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Poland, Spain, Morocco and Jordan.

A.4. Irregular emigration

This section of the Profile refers to the irregular migration of Kosovo nationals to EU Member States and the Schengen Area. In the context of the EU, a “third-country national present in the territory of a Schengen state” refers to individuals who do not meet, or no longer meet, the entry requirements as defined in Regulation (EU) 2016/399 (Schengen Borders Code) or other entry conditions.⁶⁴ This chapter examines data published by Eurostat for 2023 regarding Kosovo nationals who were rejected entry at the borders of EU Member States and the Schengen Area, who were found to be with irregular residence within the territories of EU Member States and the Schengen Area, who were ordered to leave by these Member States, and who were removed from these states based on a removal order.

A.4.1 Entries refused by the EU Member States and the Schengen Area countries

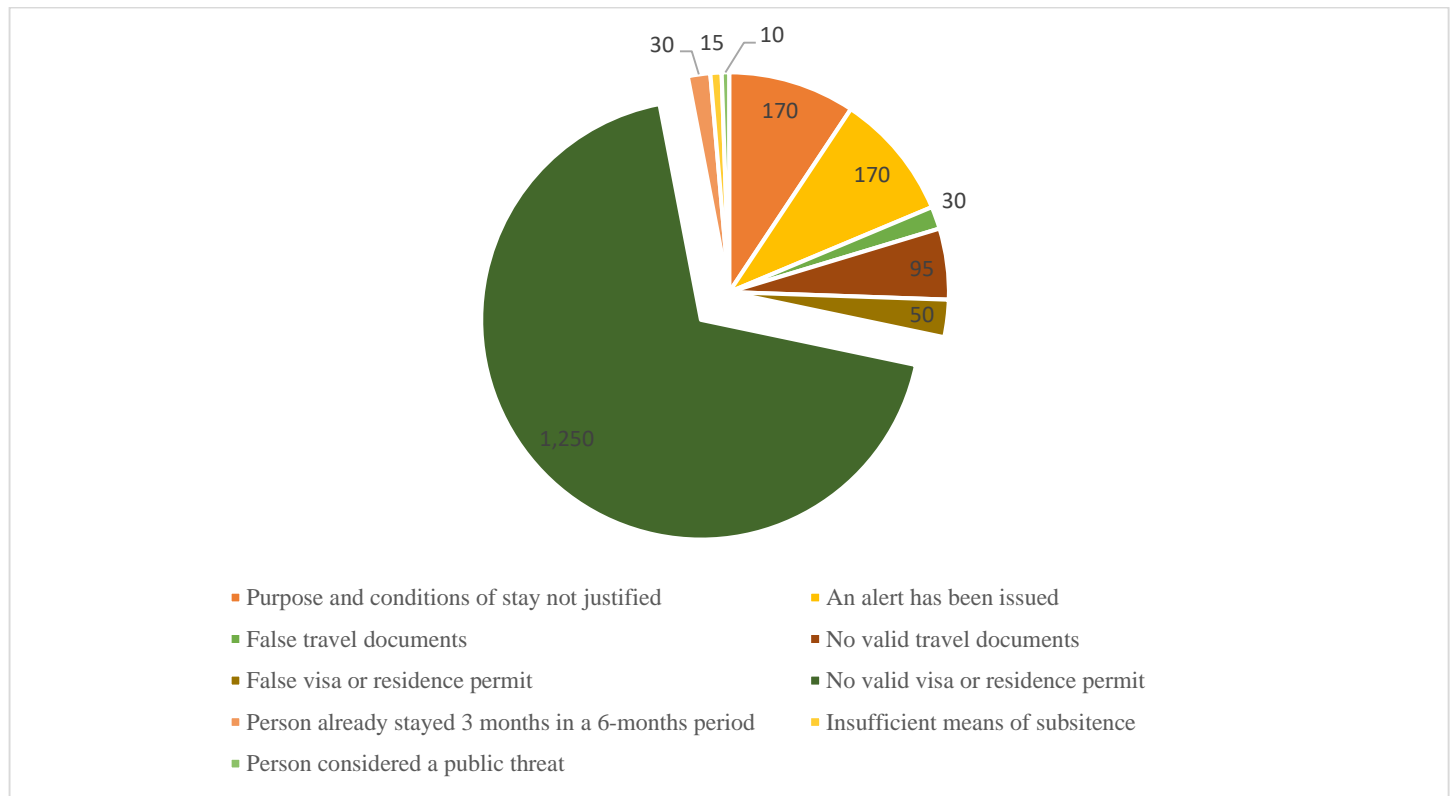
In 2023, a total of 1,870 citizens of the Republic of Kosovo were rejected entry or detained at the external borders of EU Member States and the Schengen Area countries.⁶⁵ Compared to the rejections in the previous year (1,830), this number shows a slight increase of 2.19%. Out of the total number of rejections registered for Kosovo citizens, 680 (36%) were refused at the Croatian borders, 310 (17%) in Bulgaria, 270 (15%) in Germany, 190 (10%) in Hungary, 100 (5%) in France and 320 (17%) in other countries. Of the total entry refusals for Kosovo citizens at the borders of EU Member States and the Schengen Area, 1,325 (71%) were at land borders, 500 (27%) at air borders and 45 (2%) were at sea borders, mainly at the Italian borders. The main reasons for entry refusal at the external borders of the EU and Schengen Area were the lack of a valid visa or residence permit (69%), unjustified purpose and conditions of residence (9%), triggering of an alert⁶⁶ (9%), lack of valid travel documents (5%), possession of a false visa or residence permit (3%), possession of false travel documents (2%), staying for more than 3 months within a 6-month period (2%), lack of sufficient means of subsistence (1%), and being considered a public threat (1%).

⁶⁴ European Migration Network. (2024). Dictionary “Illegal migrant”. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/net%e0rks/european-migration-net%e0rk-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary/glossary/irregular-migrant_en

⁶⁵ Eurostat. (n.d.). Third-country nationals whose entry was refused at the external borders - annual data. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databro%e0ser/vie%e0/migr_eirfs_custom_11678007/default/table?lang=en

⁶⁶ Third-country nationals are refused entry at the external borders of the EU and the Schengen Area if the data from official databases such as the Schengen Information System (SIS) alert that they pose a security, legal or migration risk.

Figure 35. Entries refused at the borders of EU countries and the Schengen Area by reason, 2023.



Source: Eurostat

A.4.2 Irregular residence in EU Member States and the Schengen Area

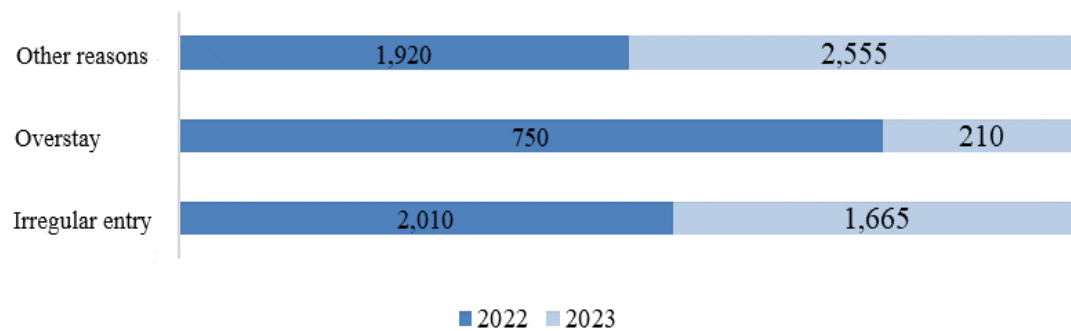
In 2023, a total of 4,505 citizens of the Republic of Kosovo were present illegally and without the right of stay within the territory of EU Member States and the Schengen Area.⁶⁷ Compared to 2022, this number marks a decrease of 19.4% (5,030 persons), and it is at the same level as in 2020 (4,405 persons). One of the influential factors for this decrease is considered to be the amendment in legislative policies for labour migrants from these countries, particularly from Germany, which have impacted the increase in regular migration from citizens of the Republic of Kosovo.⁶⁸ Of the cases identified as irregular residence and without the right to residence in the territory of EU Member States and the Schengen Area, 56% were the result of

⁶⁷ Eurostat. (n.d.). Third-country nationals found illegally present - annual data. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_eipre_custom_11711287/default/table?lang=en

⁶⁸ Deutsche Welle. (2023). Germany: The new Law on Migration is expected in March. <https://www.dw.com/sq/gjermani-n%C3%AB-mars-prietet-ligji-i-ri-migracionit/a-64473927>

irregular entry, a decrease of 17.6% compared to the previous year; 6% of cases were the result of overstaying, while 37% are categorized as “other reasons”.

Figure 36. Number of Kosovo citizens present in EU Member States and the Schengen Area by the type of irregular residence, 2023



Source: Eurostat

Of the total number of cases registered for irregular presence and unauthorized residence within the territory of EU Member States and the Schengen Area, 2,085 (46%) were in Germany, 470 (10.4%) in Croatia, 430 (9.5%) in Austria, 425 (9.4%) in France, 327 (7%) in Italy and 770 (17%) in other countries. By gender, 3,515 (88%) cases were male, while 465 (12%) cases were female. The dominance of males in this category is considered to be linked to irregular migration for informal employment purposes. This is further supported by the dominance of age groups that accounted for the highest number of cases, including the 18-34 age group with 2,270 (57%) cases and the 35 years and older group with 2,010 (46%) cases. The age group under 14 years old accounted for 95 (2.7%) cases, the 14-17 age group for 80 (1.3%) cases, and unknown ages accounted for 1%.

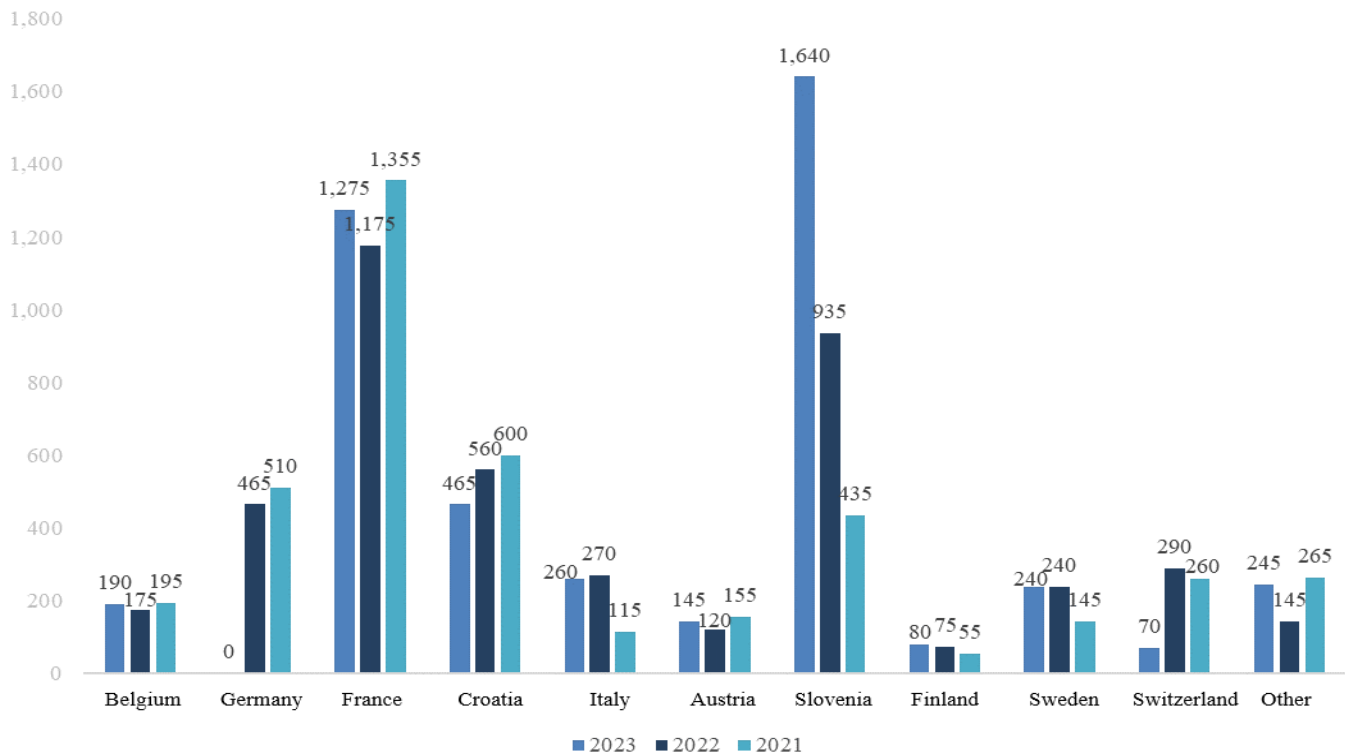
A.4.3 Orders for removal from EU Member States and the Schengen Area

In 2023, approximately 4,625 Kosovo citizens were ordered to leave EU Member States and the Schengen Area.⁶⁹ This number marks a 3.7% increase compared to 2022, with 4,460 cases registered. Slovenia reported the highest number of removal orders for Kosovo citizens found to be in the country illegally, at 37%,

⁶⁹ Eurostat. (n.d.). Third-country nationals ordered to leave - annual data.
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databroeser/view/migr_eiord_custom_12035193/default/table?lang=en.

followed by France at 29%, Croatia at 10%, and other countries at 24%. Compared to the previous year, there has been an increase in the number of Kosovo citizens ordered to leave Slovenia (75%) and France (9%).⁷⁰

Figure 37. Number of removal orders by country, 2021-2023



Source: Eurostat

From the total number of removal orders issued, males represented approximately 3,905 (88%) of the cases, females represented 470 (11%), while 35 (1%) were unidentified. Compared to the previous year (410 cases), the female gender saw a slight increase of about 14.63%. In 2023, 96% of the Kosovo citizens ordered to leave were of working-age adulthood. Young people in the age group 18-34 years accounted for more than half, 56% of all Kosovo citizens ordered to leave EU Member States and the Schengen Area, followed by those aged 35 and above (25%) and those under 18 years old (4%), with 1% unidentified. In 2023, a total of 1,475 cases of Kosovo citizens being removed from the territories of EU Member States and the Schengen Area were reported.⁷¹ Compared to 2022, when 1,540 cases were reported, this number marks a decrease of

⁷⁰ The data on the number of Kosovo citizens ordered to leave Germany was available at the time of the publication of this document.

⁷¹ Eurostat. (n.d.). Third-country nationals returned after being ordered to leave - annual data. This category includes third-country nationals who have been removed from the territory of an EU Member State after receiving a removal order to be sent to another EU+EFTA country or a third country. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_eirtn_custom_12054844/default/table?lang=en.

4.4%. By country, Croatia had the highest number of removals, with 410 (28%), followed by Switzerland with 350 (22%), Germany with 220 (15%), Sweden with 135 (9%), France with 165 (11%) and other countries with 22%. One of the influencing factors for the high number of removals from Croatia may be the use of this destination as an entry point into the EU area. By gender, males represented 1,245 (86%) of the cases, compared to 210 (14%) cases for females. By age group, 690 (48%) cases were in the 18 to 34 age category, 630 (44%) in the 35 and older age group, 85 (6%) cases were under 14 years old, and 25 (2%) were in the 14 to 17 age group.

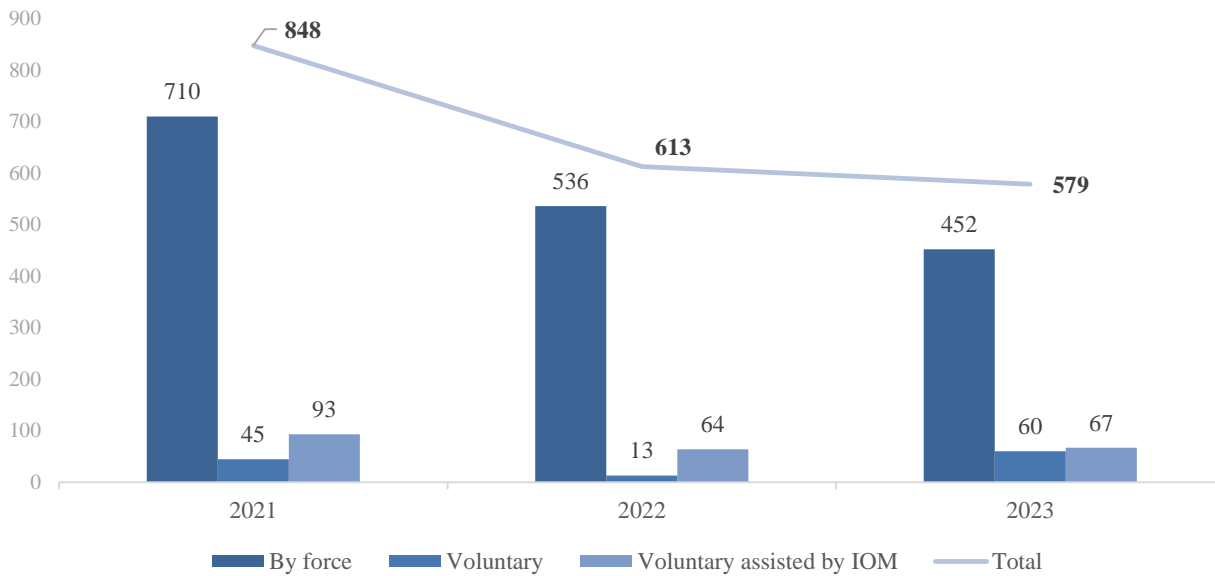
A.5. Readmission and reintegration

The process of readmission and reintegration of citizens of the Republic of Kosovo refers to the process of returning to Kosovo as a result of an administrative order or a judicial decision from the receiving country, which has denied the individual regular and legal residence in that country. Readmitted persons, who return at border crossing points, fall into three categories: forced returnees, voluntary returnees and voluntarily assisted returnees by IOM.

As of 2023, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo signed repatriation agreements with 24 countries, 20 of which are EU Member States and Schengen Area countries. In 2023, 579 persons were readmitted to the Republic of Kosovo, of which 452 (78.1%) were forcibly returned, 60 (10.4%) voluntarily and 67 (11.6%) voluntarily assisted by IOM. Of these, 453 (78.2%) were male and 126 (21.8%) were female. The majority of the group consisted of economically active age groups, including those aged 35-64 (43.4%), 18-34 years (37.7%), and other age groups (19%).

Data show that the readmission trends for the three categories are declining. The number of repatriated individuals in 2023 decreased by 6% compared to 2022 and by 32% compared to 2021. This decline is also reflected in the number of applications for readmission, which in 2023 amounted to 435 applications, a 15% decrease compared to 2022 (513 applications) and a 26% decrease compared to 2021 (589 applications). This decrease in applications is attributed to the facilitation of regular migration procedures for citizens of Kosovo to EU countries, resulting in a reduction in irregular migration in previous years.

Figure 38. Number of persons readmitted by category, 2021-2023

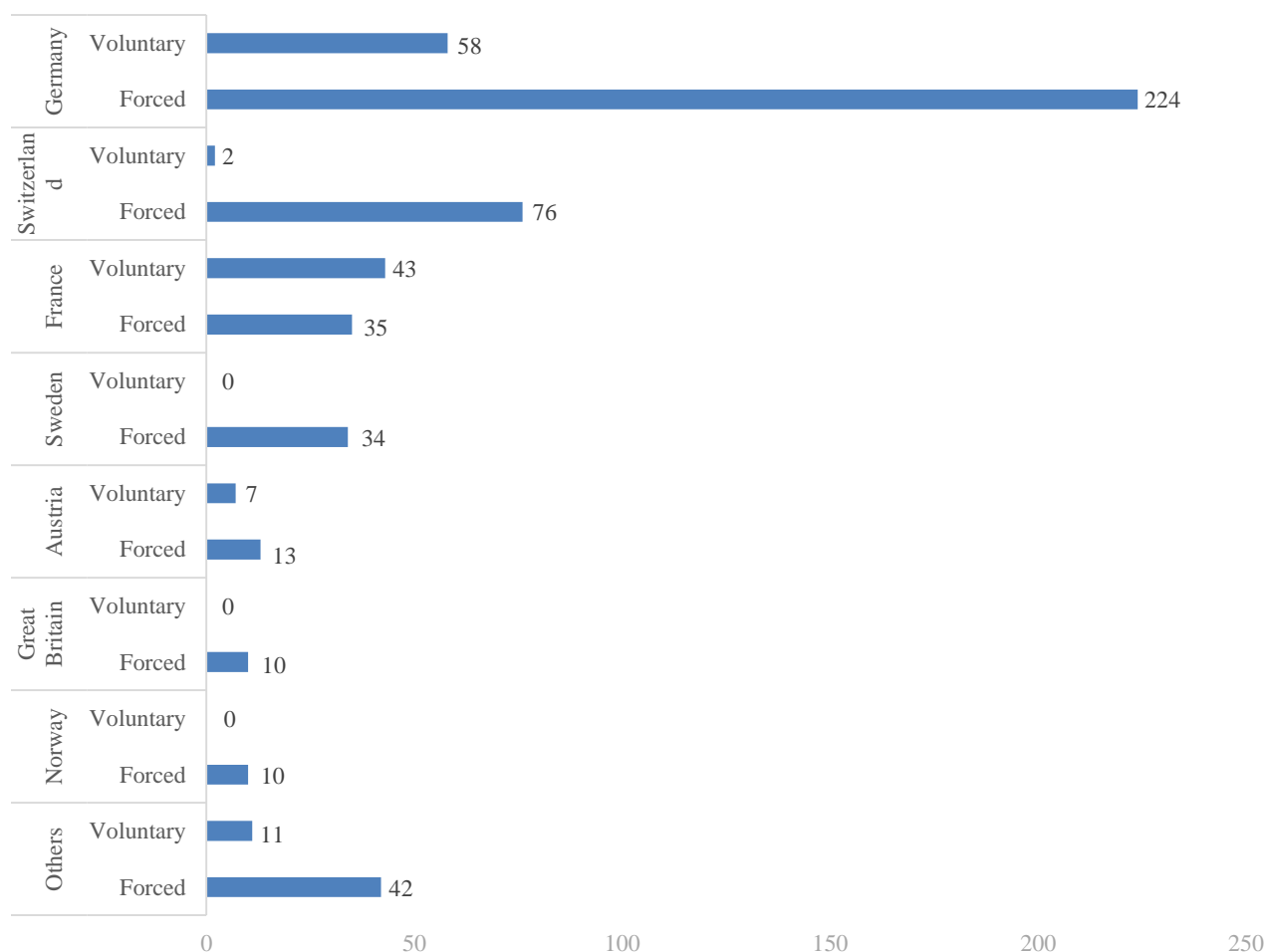


Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration; IOM

In 2023, the highest number of readmission continued to come from countries with the highest number of Kosovo emigrants in EU countries, including Germany (48.7%), Switzerland (13.5%), France (13.5%), Sweden (6%), Austria (3.4%) and other countries (15%).⁷²

⁷² Due to the large volume, some of the statistical data are reported under the “other” category. To request access to data for all countries, please contact the email address dsham.dmdhm@rks-gov.net

Figure 39. Number of persons readmitted by country, 2023



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs - Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration; IOM

Reintegration schemes

The policies of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo in the area of migration and reintegration of repatriated persons are defined by the State Migration Strategy 2021-2025 and the Action Plan 2021-2023, as well as Regulation GRK No. 22/2020 on the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons.⁷³ In 2023, at the Center for Reception of Repatriated Persons at the Prishtina International Airport “Adem Jashari” and other border crossing points, 305 individuals were registered, informed and counseled. Among them, 292 repatriated persons benefited from the reintegration schemes.⁷⁴

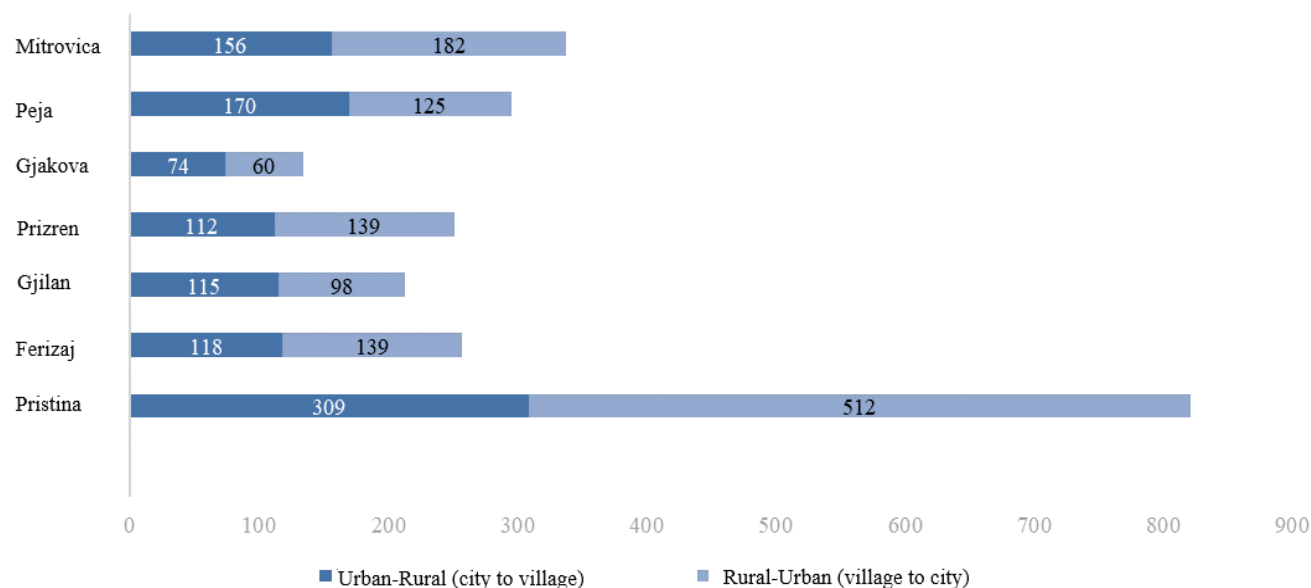
⁷³ Regulation on the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons. (2020). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=31862>

⁷⁴ This number includes only persons repatriated in 2023 who benefited from the reintegration schemes. The total number of persons benefiting from these schemes during 2023 is higher, as individuals repatriated in previous years continue to benefit from these schemes. Additionally, this number does not include the support provided by international and local organizations.

A.6. Internal migration

Internal migration refers to the movement of people within a country with the aim of establishing a new temporary or permanent residence.⁷⁵ In the Republic of Kosovo, internal migration is mainly characterized by the movement of citizens from rural areas to urban areas for purposes such as employment, education and family reunification.⁷⁶ In 2023, the number of citizens of the Republic of Kosovo who moved within the country was 3,860. Of this number, 2,580 (67%) were male, while 1,280 (33%) were female. The Prishtina region led with the highest number of citizen movements, accounting for 33.5%, followed by the Mitrovica region with 13.6%, the Prizren region with 12.3%, the Peja region with 11.8%, the Ferizaj region with 11.5%, the Gjilan region with 8.7%, and the Gjakova region with 8.3%.

Figure 40. Internal urban-rural and rural-urban migration by regions, 2023

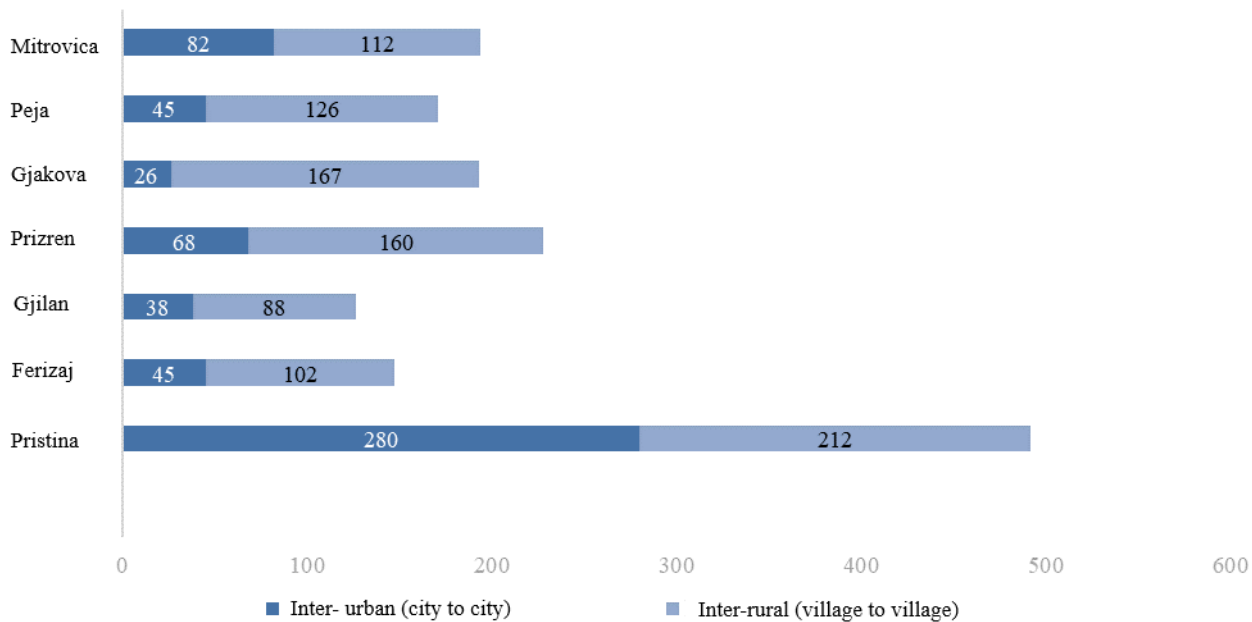


Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, Civil Registration Agency

⁷⁵ International Organization for Migration. (2019). Key migration terms. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

⁷⁶ Balkans Policy Research Group. (2020). Kosovo: migration trends require a new strategic approach. https://balkansgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Kosova_Trendet-e-Migrimit-kerkojne-nje-qasje-te-re-strategjike-.pdf

Figure 41. Internal inter-urban and inter-rural migration by region, 2023



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs, Civil Registration Agency

Return of displaced persons

This group includes individuals who were displaced within the Republic of Kosovo or the region from 1998 to March 2004. In 2023, 689 persons returned from internal displacement within the country and from other regional countries such as Montenegro, Serbia and North Macedonia. Among the displaced persons, several issues related to the return process include lengthy periods for decision-making on returns, selection processes, lack of infrastructure and institutional support. Depending on the place of return, issues of security and rule of law are also highlighted, with particular emphasis on individuals displaced from their properties in the northern part of the Republic of Kosovo.

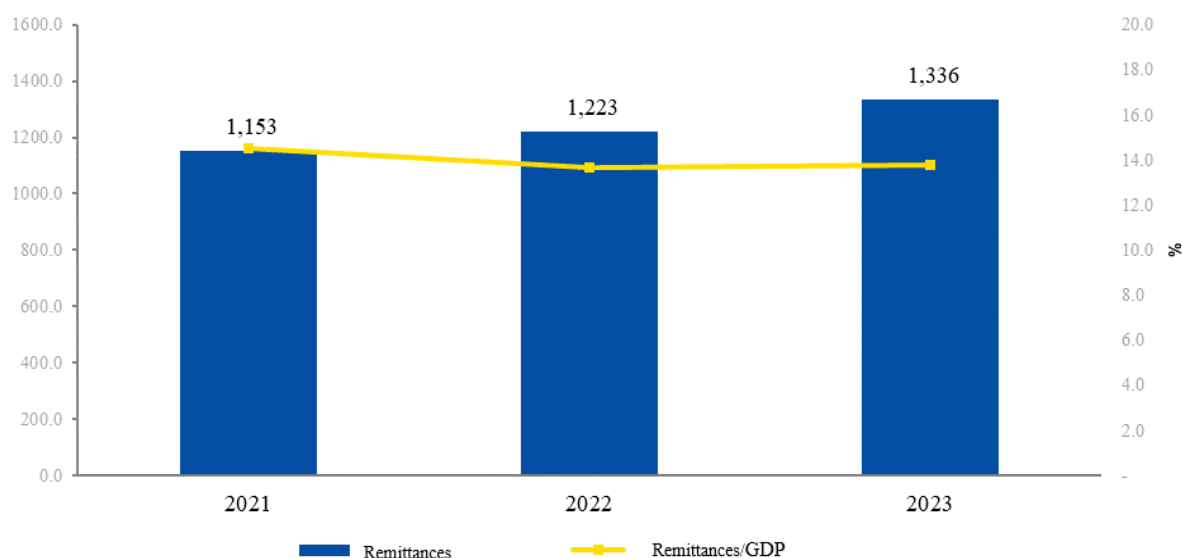
B. Impact of migration

B.1. Migration and economic development

Remittances from emigrants

Remittances generally have a multifaceted impact on key development aspects in Kosovo. Income from emigrant remittances has been increasing because of the growing trend of regular migration for employment purposes. In 2023, remittances to Kosovo reached €1,335.8 million, compared to €1,223.0 million in 2022. Emigrant remittances in 2023 contributed 13.8% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Figure 42. Income, in billions of euro, from remittances, 2021-2023



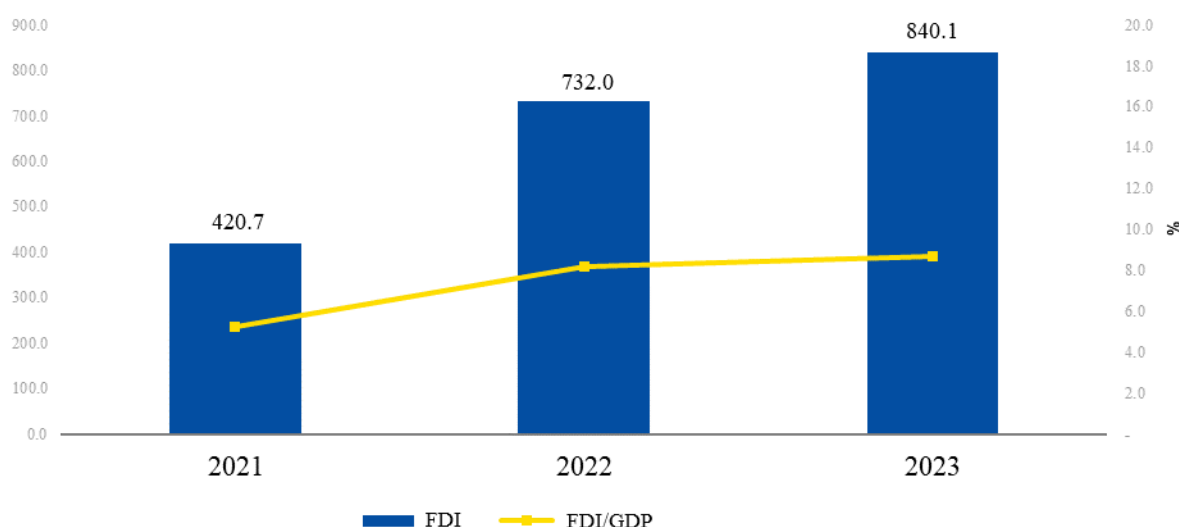
Source: Central Bank of Kosovo

Approximately 72.6% of emigrant remittances in 2023 were transferred through the financial system, while the remainder includes goods and other means transferred through informal channels. The primary sources of emigrant remittances continue to be Germany with 38.2%, Switzerland with 18.8%, followed by the United States with 7.3%, Austria and Italy with 4.6% each and France with 3.7%.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Kosovo for 2023 reached €840.1 million, marking a 15% increase compared to the previous year. The chart below illustrates the FDI trend in Kosovo during the period 2013-2023.

Figure 43. Foreign direct investments, in millions of euro and percentage of GDP, 2021-2023



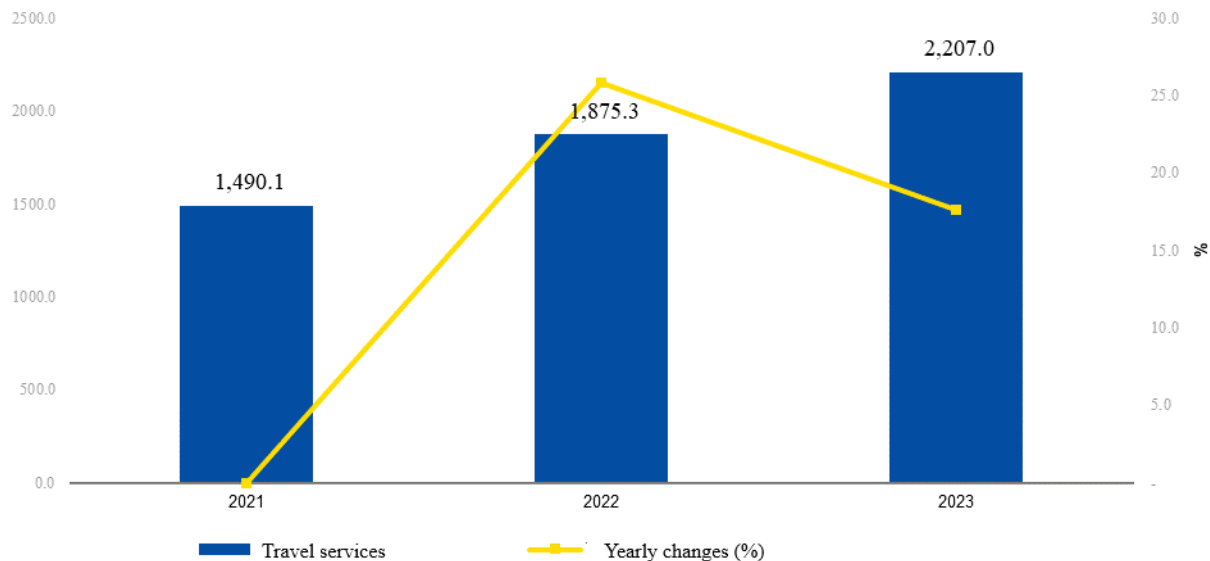
Source: Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo

Sectors that experienced positive trends compared to the previous year and contributed to the increase in investments during 2023 include real estate, financial activities, mining, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply, as well as construction. The share of real estate in total direct investments in Kosovo in 2023 was 61.5% (€517.1 million), financial activities accounted for 21% (€176.6 million), mining for 2.7% (€22.9 million), electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply for 6.9% (€58.5 million), and construction for 1.4% (€11.8 million).

Visitor travel services in Kosovo / Diaspora tourism in Kosovo

Kosovo benefits significantly from diaspora tourism, especially during the summer and winter holiday seasons. Income from travel services has continuously increased since 2010 (excluding the pandemic period). In 2023, travel services reached a total of €2,207.0 million, representing a 17.7% increase compared to the previous year. The dominant share of this income, approximately 95%, is attributed to the diaspora.

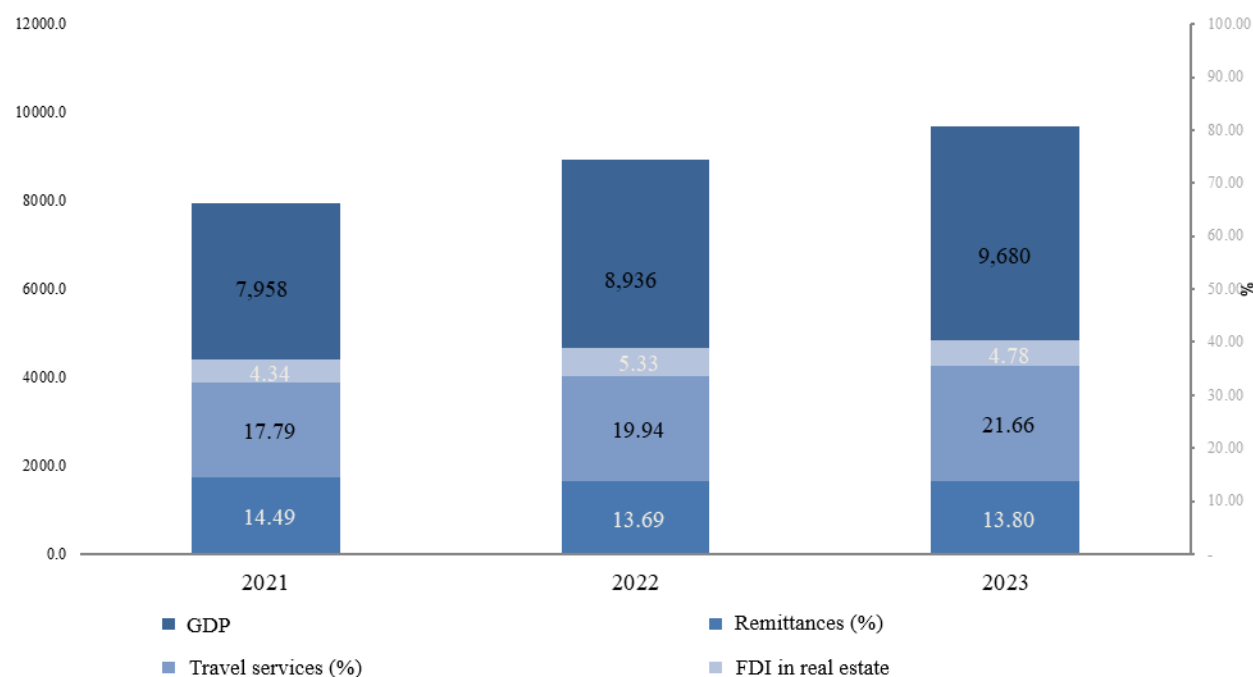
Figure 44. Revenue, in millions of euros, from visitor travel services, 2021-2023



Source: Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo

The importance of the diaspora is also reflected in its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product, where remittances account for approximately 13.8% of GDP, diaspora travel services represent 21.6%, and the share of FDI in real estate makes up 5.3% (as shown in Figure 22). Considering that the sum of these three components constitutes around 40% of the GDP, the respective revenues from migration are a crucial factor in enabling domestic consumption (consumption plus investments) and supporting the growth of domestic production.

Figure 45. Total revenues from the diaspora, 2021-2023



Source: Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo

Businesses owned by the diaspora

Out of 11,436 businesses registered in 2023 in the Republic of Kosovo, 1,401 were foreign businesses and 34 were owned by the diaspora. Compared to the previous year, when 11,039 businesses were registered, of which 15 were owned by the diaspora, this number marks an increase.⁷⁷ One of the contributing factors to this growth may be the adoption of the Industry Development and Business Support Strategy 2023-2030, which includes activities related to the diaspora, such as business mentoring programs, engagement of business expertise and support in cooperation with external business partners and the diaspora.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Diaspora-owned businesses are defined as those that, during registration, declare their ownership by members of the diaspora.

⁷⁸ Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade Industry Development and Business Support Strategy 2023-2030 (2023) <https://kiesa.rks-gov.net/desk/inc/media/8B38124D-657F-43CF-ACAB-B9991AD1BFA0.pdf>

B.2. Migration and the healthcare system

The healthcare sector in the Republic of Kosovo has undergone various phases of institutional reform aimed at improving the quality, safety and accessibility of healthcare services for both citizens and foreigners. This includes restructuring healthcare institutions, strengthening professional capacities and implementing new healthcare policies addressing urgent needs and public health priorities. Despite the progress achieved, Kosovo's healthcare sector continues to face challenges, particularly the incomplete functioning of the Health Information System (HIS). As a result, the lack of comprehensive data on the current and past state of the healthcare system limits the ability to conduct thorough analyses on the interconnection between migration and the healthcare system in the Republic of Kosovo.

Emigration of healthcare professionals

The Republic of Kosovo continues to face a high emigration rate of healthcare professionals. The primary reasons for emigration among healthcare personnel include low salaries, poor working conditions and high demand for healthcare workers in EU countries.⁷⁹ In 2023, the total number of employees in the public healthcare sector was 13,894.⁸⁰ Of these, 7,714 were nurses, 3,258 were specialist doctors, 376 were dentists, 77 pharmacists, 52 physiotherapists, 174 healthcare associates, and 2,243 non-medical staff. The Ministry of Health does not have a specific mechanism for documenting the emigration of medical personnel and the data reported in this profile are based on certificates of ethical and professional conduct requested by healthcare professionals emigrating for labour purposes.⁸¹ Consequently, these statistics do not reflect the exact number of healthcare professionals who have emigrated from the Republic of Kosovo but only indicate the number of certificates issued. In 2023, a total of 946 certificates of ethical and professional conduct were issued by the Chambers of Healthcare Professionals. Compared to previous years, there has been an increase in requests for these certificates, with the highest number, 713 (75%), issued to nurses, followed by 167 (18%) for doctors, 36 (4%) for pharmacists and 30 (3%) for dentists.

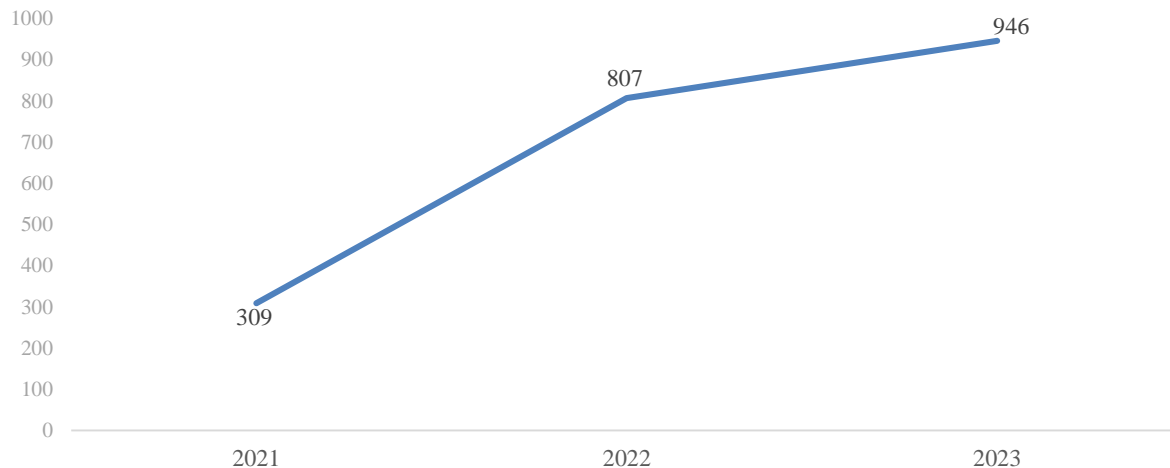
⁷⁹ Balkan Group. (2023). Health in Kosovo: Emigration of doctors and health workers. <https://balkangroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Shendetesia-ne-Kosove-Emigrimi-i-mjekeve-dhe-punetoreve-shendetesor.pdf>;

Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies. (2020). Healthcare professionals in demand: Chain mobility across European countries. <https://wiiw.ac.at/health-professionals-wanted-chain-mobility-across-european-countries-p-5339.html>

⁸⁰ Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2023). Press release: Health statistics, 2023. <https://ask.rks-gov.net/Releases/Details/8320>

⁸¹ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Chambers of Health Professionals. (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8697>

Figure 46. Number of certificates on ethical and professional background, 2021-2023

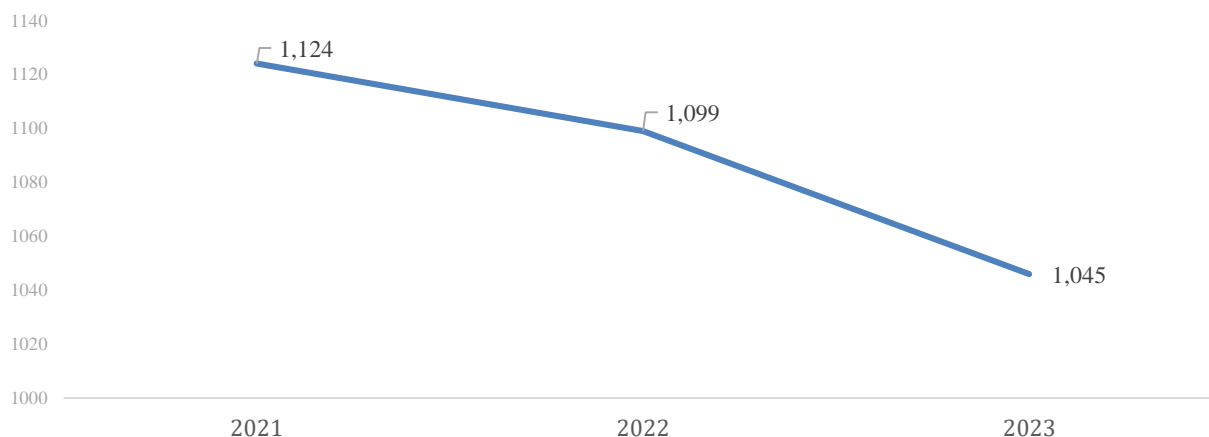


Source: Ministry of Health

Program for medical treatment outside public healthcare institutions

The Republic of Kosovo has the lowest number of patients treated in the region.⁸² In 2023, a total of 1,665 patients benefited from healthcare services through the medical treatment program outside public healthcare institutions. Data for the past three years show a decrease in the number of applications for treatment abroad. In 2023, 1,045 patients applied for this type of service, marking a 5% decrease compared to 2022 and a 7% decrease compared to 2021.

Figure 47. Number of applications for medical treatment outside the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2023



Source: Ministry of Health

⁸² Balkan Group. (2023). Health in Kosovo: Emigration of doctors and health workers. <https://balkangroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Shendetesia-ne-Kosove-Emigrimi-i-mjekeve-dhe-punetoreve-shendetesor.pdf>

B.3. Migration and education

According to MESTI data, during the 2023 school year, the highest number of student emigration and immigration was from primary and lower secondary school students, followed by upper secondary school and preschool students. Currently, there is no available data on the reasons for migration, methods of migration (regular or irregular), or the destination countries of these students.

Table 3. Emigration of students by education level, 2023

Level	2022/23			2023/24		
	M	F	S	M	F	S
Preschool (age 0-5)	11	5	16	19	14	33
Primary and lower secondary (g. 1 – 9)	326	308	634	354	317	671
Upper secondary (g. 10 – 12)	136	35	171	71	42	113
Total	473	348	821	444	373	817

Source: Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation

Table 4. Immigration of students by education level, 2023

Level	2022/23			2023/24		
	M	F	S	M	F	S
Preschool (age 0-5)	4	3	7	4	4	8
Primary and lower secondary (g. 1 – 9)	125	117	242	160	141	301
Upper secondary (g. 10 – 12)	35	11	46	51	35	86
Total	164	131	295	215	180	395

Source: Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation

B.4. Migration and environment

Currently, there is no data or measurable indicators available to analyze the impact of the environment on migration movements inside and outside the Republic of Kosovo. However, it is important to emphasize that increasing movements, particularly from rural to urban areas, contribute to the depopulation of certain regions and the environment. Overpopulation of large urban areas, because of private investments in the construction sector without proper urban planning, impacts the development of adequate environmental policies, consequently affecting air quality and the overall quality of life. According to the Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency, despite better air quality in 2023 compared to previous years, the Republic of Kosovo continues to face high air pollution, particularly in industrial and urban areas.⁸³

⁸³ Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure (2023). *Annual report on air quality status*.. <https://www.ammk-rks.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/Raporti%20%20vjeter%20per%20cilesi%20te%20ajrti%202023%20-final%20alb.pdf>

C. Migration governance

The effective governance of migration through institutional mechanisms and the development of strategic data-based policies are among the key priorities of the Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo. Kosovo has a legal, strategic and institutional framework that has been built and developed over the years, continuously consolidated to respond to the challenges of the time, changing migration trends, as well as the standards of the European Union and other global initiatives in the area of migration. Throughout 2023, the focus has been on enhancing the work of the Government Authority on Migration (GAM) through the operationalization of six (6) Thematic Groups. All of these groups have been operationalized, developed their respective work plans, rules and working procedures, and established links with the strategic GAM level etc. In 2023, the first results of the operationalization of these groups were achieved through initiating research, analysis, preparation of data-based recommendations, capacity building, etc.

One of the main commitments of the Government Authority on Migration in 2023 was inter-institutional coordination and preparation for the management of the visa liberalization process with the EU. In this regard, GAM, specifically the Thematic Group for Communication, supported the Working Group led by the Office of the Prime Minister in implementing an awareness campaign to inform citizens about the rights and obligations of the visa-free movement process in the Schengen Area. Also, by decision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, No. 22/178, dated 13.12.2023, the Early Warning Mechanism for Monitoring Migration Trends was established as a temporary body within the Government Authority on Migration. The functioning of this mechanism is part of the Plan of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo for managing the post-visa liberalization process with the EU. The purpose of the early warning system is to support the responsible institutions in the country in managing the process after visa liberalization with the Schengen Area countries. Furthermore, in 2023, the concept document for residence and settlement was approved, which precedes the drafting of the Law on Residence as a basic law regulating the area of internal migration.

C.1. Policy framework

The Republic of Kosovo has adopted a strategic policy framework in the area of migration management. These policy documents reflect the strategic priorities of the Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo in the area of migration, always considering the changes in migration trends and flows, as well as their connection to development policies. The key policy documents are summarized as follows:

Migration Strategy (2021-2025)⁸⁴ – It is the primary strategic document in the area of migration. The Migration Strategy 2021-2025 reflects the priorities of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo in managing migration and fulfilling the obligations arising from the Stabilization and Association Agreement between the Republic of Kosovo and the European Union, as well as commitments stemming from the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration.⁸⁵ The Strategy is structured into 4 strategic objectives, 15 specific objectives, and 91 implementing measures which aim to strengthen the responsible state institutions for migration governance, particularly the Government Authority on Migration (GAM), enhance the system for managing internal migration, strengthen the system for international protection, ensure safe and regular migration, deepen regional cooperation and with specialized international organizations, etc.

National Integrated Border Management Strategy (2020-2025)⁸⁶ – It defines the policy of the Republic of Kosovo for border management, control and security. The key objective of this Strategy is to ensure coordination and cooperation of relevant border authorities involved in border control and security, with the aim of creating an effective border management system that guarantees open yet controlled and secure borders, through an integrated approach of cooperation within border authorities, cooperation between border authorities and international cooperation.

National Strategy against Trafficking in Human Being (2022-2026)⁸⁷ – It is the primary document of the national strategic policies against trafficking in human being. The Strategy against Trafficking in Human Being outlines specific actions and measures aimed at preventing and effectively combating trafficking, focusing on advancing institutional accountability mechanisms, prevention and raising awareness of the

⁸⁴ Ministry of Internal Affairs. (2021). *Migration Strategy 2021-2025* <https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/378/Strategjia-e-Migrimit-2021-2025.pdf>

⁸⁵ United Nations. (2018). Global compact for safe, regular and legal migration. https://refugeemigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180713_agreed_outcome_global_compact_for_migration.pdf

⁸⁶ Republic of Kosovo (2020). National Integrated Border Management Strategy of the Republic of Kosovo 2020-2025. <https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/364/Strategjia%202020-2025.pdf>

⁸⁷ Ministry of Internal Affairs. (2022). National Strategy against Trafficking in Human Being 2022-2026 <https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/2472/Strategjia%20TQNJ%202022-2026.pdf>

consequences of trafficking, strengthening the system from victim identification to long-term reintegration, increasing efficiency in the criminal prosecution of human trafficking perpetrators, as well as enhancing regional and international cooperation.

Response Plan for Managing Potential Flows of Migrants, Refugees, and Applicants for International Protection (2021)⁸⁸ – The purpose of this plan is to manage the flow of migrants, refugees and applicants for international protection, defining coordinated preparatory and response actions by the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo. This plan specifies the competent authorities, organizations and their responsibilities in the event of a flow of migrants, refugees and applicants for international protection, as well as the measures and activities that should be undertaken and the necessary resources for its implementation. The plan outlines five possible scenarios, the response measures for each scenario, timeframes and the costs for implementing each activity.

C.2. Legislative and regulatory framework

The basic legislation in the area of migration in the Republic of Kosovo consists of the following legal acts:

Law No. 04/L-219 on Foreigners⁸⁹ – This law regulates the conditions for the entry, residence and employment of foreigners in the territory of the Republic of Kosovo. In May 2018, the basic Law on Foreigners No. 04/L-219 was amended and supplemented by **Law No. 06/L-036**.

Law No. 06/L-026 on Asylum⁹⁰ - It regulates the conditions and procedures for recognizing refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection, as well as the status, rights and obligations of applicants, persons with refugee status, and those granted subsidiary protection and temporary protection.

Law No. 04/L-215 on the Citizenship of Kosovo⁹¹ – It defines the ways of acquiring, losing and reacquiring the citizenship of the Republic of Kosovo.

⁸⁸ Ministry of Internal Affairs. (2021). The response plan for managing potential flows of migrants, refugees, and applicants for international protection. <https://mpb.rks-gov.net/Uploads/Documents/Pdf/AL/376/Plani%20i%20Reagimit%20p%C3%ABr%20Menxhimin%20e%20Fluksit%20t%C3%AB%20Mundsh%C3%ABm%20T%C3%AB%20Migrant%C3%ABve.pdf>

⁸⁹ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Foreigners, (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8876>

⁹⁰ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Asylum. (2015). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=16389>

⁹¹ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Citizenship of Kosovo. (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8873>

Law No. 03/L-208 on Readmission⁹² - This law defines the rules and procedures for the readmission of a person who is either a citizen of the Republic of Kosovo or a foreigner, who does not fulfill or no longer fulfills the applicable requirements for entering or residing in the territory of the requesting State. The implementation of legislation on readmission applies regarding cooperation on readmission with countries with which Kosovo has not yet signed a bilateral readmission agreement.

Law No. 04/L-072 on State Border Control and Surveillance⁹³ – This law regulates border control, the powers of the police within the state, as well as the cooperation between state bodies with the border management authorities.

Law No. 04/L-216 on Cooperation Between Authorities Involved in Integrated Border Management⁹⁴ – It regulates cooperation between all authorities involved in Integrated Border Management (Police, Customs, Food and Veterinary Agency) in implementing joint plans of these authorities related to the prevention, detection and investigation of illegal criminal activities, border control and management, as well as international cooperation.

Law No. 04/L-218 on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting Victims of Trafficking⁹⁵ – It defines the legal provisions through which it assigns responsibility to competent authorities for preventing and combating human trafficking in all its forms, the protection of trafficked victims, including the provision of rights such as legal aid, medical assistance, psychosocial support, ensuring compensation and other rights, as well as national and international cooperation to prevent and combat human trafficking and ensure assistance and protection for trafficked victims.

Law No. 04/L-076 on Police⁹⁶ – This law regulates the powers and duties of the Police of the Republic of Kosovo, its organization and other matters related to the activities and actions of the Police of the Republic of Kosovo.

⁹² Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Readmission. (2010). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2687>

⁹³ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo Law on State Border Control and Surveillance. (2012) <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2801>

⁹⁴ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo Law on Cooperation Between Authorities Involved in Integrated Border Management. (2013). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8868>

⁹⁵ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo Law on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting Victims of Trafficking; <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=8875>

⁹⁶ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Police. (2012). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2806>

Law No. 04/L-003 on Civil Status⁹⁷ – This Law regulates the definition and components of the civil status of citizens of Kosovo, foreign citizens and stateless persons, with temporary or permanent residence in the Republic of Kosovo. It also determines the rules for creating, maintaining and changing civil status records, as well as organizing and operating the civil status service in the Republic of Kosovo.

Law No. 02/L-121 on Dwelling and Emplacement⁹⁸ - This law uniquely regulates the notification and deregistration of the dwelling and residence of citizens, the change of residence address, the competencies, and the manner of maintaining the relevant records.

Law No. 04/L-036 on Official Statistics of Republic of Kosovo⁹⁹ - The Law on Official Statistics aims to define the fundamental principles and establish a legal framework for the organization, production and publication of official statistics of Kosovo.

Law No. 04/L-083 on Registration and Records of the Unemployed and Jobseekers¹⁰⁰ - The purpose of this law is to regulate the conditions and procedures for the registration of the unemployed, job seekers and employers, as well as the provision of employment services and measures by the Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo.

Law No. 04/L-095 on Diaspora and Migration¹⁰¹ - It aims to preserve and cultivate the national, linguistic, cultural and educational identity of members of the diaspora and emigrants and their connection with the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo. This law also aims to assist in organizing emigrants in the various countries where they reside, as well as to help, encourage, and develop intercultural relations between the Republic of Kosovo and the countries where emigrants are present.

Law No. 03/L-125 on Consular Service of Diplomatic and Consular Missions of the Republic of Kosovo¹⁰² - It regulates consular activities, supports cooperation between the Republic of Kosovo and the receiving states in the field of consular services, and promotes the strengthening of friendly relations between the Republic of Kosovo and the receiving states.

⁹⁷ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Civil Status (2011). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2743>

⁹⁸ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Dwelling and Emplacement (2008). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2589>

⁹⁹ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Official Statistics of Republic of Kosovo (2011). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=2782>

¹⁰⁰ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law No. 04/L-083 on Registration and Records of the Unemployed and Jobseekers. (2016). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=12743>

¹⁰¹ Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Diaspora and Migration (2012). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2831>

¹⁰² Official Gazette of the Republic of Kosovo. Law on Consular Service of Diplomatic and Consular Missions of the Republic of Kosovo. (2009). <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2618>

C.3. Responsible authorities

The primary institutional mechanisms in the area of migration are:

National Coordinator on Migration (NCM) - He/she coordinates, monitors and reports on the implementation of policies, activities and actions in the area of migration. He/she initiates and coordinates the drafting of state policies related to migration, addresses recommendations proposed by the Governmental Authority on Migration from relevant institutions, monitors the work and functioning of the Governmental Authority on Migration and represents the state in various regional and international migration initiatives.

Governmental Authority on Migration (GAM) - It is by Government Decision 08-158 on 29.11.2013, amended by Decision No. 14-96 on 14.09.2022, functioning as an inter-institutional advisory mechanism in the area of migration through the development of policies and data-based analyses.

Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) - It is responsible for migration policies, including bilateral readmission agreements, primarily through the Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration (DCAM), which processes requests for citizenship, residence permits, asylum, international protection and readmission. It also oversees the Detention Center for Foreigners, Temporary Reception Center, and Center for Asylum Seekers. Another important aspect addressed by the MIA in this area is the reintegration of repatriated persons through reintegration programs that are developed, implemented and monitored by the Department for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons and Integration of Foreigners, as well as the Center for Temporary Accommodation of Repatriated Persons. Additionally, the MIA coordinates policies for the integration of legally residing foreigners in the Republic of Kosovo.

Kosovo Police (KP) - It is responsible for the control and surveillance of migratory movements at border crossing points and within the territory, monitoring irregularly residing foreigners, investigating and prosecuting individuals suspected of smuggling migrants and trafficking in human beings, etc.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora (MFAD) – The activities of this institution in the area of migration include linking migration and development through the involvement of the Diaspora, signing agreements in this area (e.g., bilateral readmission agreements), issuing guidelines for the Kosovo Visa Information System (KVIS), instructions for visa issuance procedures at diplomatic/consular missions and border crossing points, determining the format and content of the Visa Sticker, and deciding on visa issuance

through the diplomatic/consular missions of the Republic of Kosovo for citizens of countries subject to Kosovo's visa regime.

Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers (MFLT) - The Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers is the competent authority responsible for assessing the financial implications of migration policies and their implementation. The MFLT is also responsible for licensing and supervising non-public providers of employment services, including foreign nationals immigrating to the Republic of Kosovo for labour purposes. Additionally, the MFLT is tasked with drafting employment and vocational training policies. The **Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo (EARK)** organizes and coordinates the annual planning of activities and initiatives to implement the annual employment and vocational training policies developed by the MFLT. The Employment Agency of the Republic of Kosovo issues short-term permits for foreign nationals, valid for up to 90 days within 180 days, based on Law No. 06/L-036 amending and supplementing Law No. 04/L-219 on Foreigners.

Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) - The activities of this ministry directly related to migration include providing services for the reintegration of repatriated persons into the school system. MESTI is also responsible for registering foreign nationals in Kosovo's education system and implementing programs for the mobility of Kosovo students.

Ministry of Industry, Trade and Entrepreneurship (MIET) - It implements through the Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency (KIESA) programs aimed at specifically addressing the needs of investors from the Diaspora, as well as promoting investment, exports, and tourism, with a focus on countries where the Kosovo Diaspora is concentrated.

Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) - It collects, analyzes and provides statistics related to migratory movements, including internal migration.

Civil Registration Agency (CRA) - It is responsible for all processes related to the application, personalization, and issuance of documents for citizens of the Republic of Kosovo and foreign nationals. Additionally, the CRA is responsible for collecting, processing and analyzing data on internal migration, specifically the movement of citizens within the country.

Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo (CBK) - It collects, analyzes and provides relevant statistics in the area of migration, particularly data related to remittances, foreign direct investment and travel services of the Diaspora (visitors from the Diaspora).

C.4. Regional and international cooperation

Bilateral and multilateral international agreements

One of the key instruments whereby the Republic of Kosovo has strengthened its international cooperation in the area of migration is the signing of bilateral agreements:

- In the area of readmission, the Republic of Kosovo signed 22 agreements with 24 countries. Of these agreements, 18 are with the European Union Member States and 4 with the Western Balkans countries. In 2023, 14 initiatives for negotiating new Readmission Agreements were approved with EU Member States and countries of origin of migrants.
- In the area of data exchange in migration, a Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed with the state of Hungary.
- In the area of labour mobility, the Republic of Kosovo signed a Cooperation Agreement with the Republic of Albania. Additionally, in this area, another agreement was signed between the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania to facilitate procedures and conditions for obtaining temporary residence permits for Albanian citizens.

Regional and international initiatives in the area of migration

The institutions of the Republic of Kosovo have developed various forms of cooperation with international and regional organizations and specific initiatives in the area of migration. Kosovo has also established bilateral cooperation in the area of migration with a considerable number of countries deemed to be of interest. Regarding cooperation and participation in international and regional migration initiatives, the Republic of Kosovo has consistently participated in activities within the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), the Prague Process, both in high-level meetings and in training sessions. Furthermore, to strengthen the capacities of the Government Authority on Migration and to support the National Migration Coordinator, MIA has been supported by the Global Program of GIZ and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation under the Migration Partnership Agreement between Kosovo and Switzerland. The activities of this project have included thematic training sessions, the development of

migration research and the organization of campaigns to inform citizens about the visa-free movement rules in the Schengen area.

International programs and projects in the area of migration

Throughout 2023, the Republic of Kosovo continued its cooperation with regional and international organizations in the area of migration. In this context, the Republic of Kosovo has received support through programs and projects funded or implemented by organizations as follows:

- International Organization for Migration (IOM);
- German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ);
- Swiss Cooperation Office (SDC);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Kosovo;
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);
- International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD);
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);
- European Union Office in Kosovo (EUO);
- Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI);
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC);
- CARITAS Switzerland;
- European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA);
- European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex);
- Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS).

D. Key findings and recommendations

D.1. Key findings on migration trends and characteristics

Data on migratory movements during 2023 indicate an increase in emigration and immigration in the Republic of Kosovo. The resident population in Kosovo at the end of 2023 is estimated to be 1,586,659 residents. The emigration flow is estimated at 21,158 persons (1.33% of the population), the immigration flow at 5,846 persons (0.37% of the population), and the net international migration balance at -15,312 persons (0.96% of the population). As in previous years, labour emigration and immigration dominate as categories. There has been a notable increase in labour emigration to Germany, driven by migration reforms and employment facilitation policies for foreigners, prompted by the workforce shortages in that country. Worker emigrants from the Republic of Kosovo to Germany predominantly work in the construction, manufacturing, trade and hospitality and gastronomy sectors.

Regarding other categories of emigration, after Germany, Slovenia and Croatia dominate in employment, while Italy, Finland and France are the main destinations for family reunification. For the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo, the driving factors of labour emigration to EU countries are favourable working conditions, including higher wages, respect for contracts and workers' rights, and high quality of life, including effective healthcare and educational systems. At the same time, attracting factors include legislative amendments in destination countries, such as Germany, easing procedures for obtaining residence permits for employment purposes.

The increasing emigration of citizens of the Republic of Kosovo has also been reflected in the socio-economic and demographic developments within the country. The shortage of local workforce in the local labour market has led to an increase in demand for foreign workforce, primarily from Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. Notably, the high demand for workforce in the construction sector has resulted in a new stock of temporary work permits in construction industry for citizens from Bangladesh.

Unlike previous years, 2023 saw a decline in applications for international protection in the Republic of Kosovo. The highest number of applications for international protection came from citizens of Syria, Turkey and Morocco. Apart from the opening of the Temporary Reception Center for Migrants, which has enabled the profiling of migrants seeking international protection, other influencing factors in this decline include the stabilization of situations in countries previously considered active conflict zones and changes in

migration trends towards EU countries through the Western Balkans. In 2023, irregular immigration to the Republic of Kosovo also declined. Factors contributing to this decline include an increase in the number of visa applications from third countries, increased border control and strengthened internal controls within the country etc.

D.2. Recommendations on the migration governance framework

Based on the migration trends outlined in this document, as well as the analysis of motivating and driving factors, and the impact of migration trends on the socio-economic and demographic development of the country, the Government Authority on Migration presents the following recommendations:

Strategic recommendations

- Strengthening migration governance through the empowerment of the GMA and the consolidation of the system for collecting, processing and analyzing data.
- Promoting regular and safe migration through the establishment of bilateral agreements in the field of labor mobility.
- Consolidating the system for monitoring and evaluating internal migration.
- Developing strategic policies aimed at creating conditions for investment by the Kosovo diaspora to focus on the economic development of the country.
- Developing policies aimed at promoting diaspora investments, including integration with the National Development Strategy.

Specific/thematic recommendations

- Strengthening the GMA's capacity through experience exchange programs and specialized training on migration.
- Building capacities in migration data management, including the collection of data based on gender, age and other relevant categories, enabling the development of comprehensive analyses and policy-making in the area of migration.
- Adapting standard methodologies for collecting, analyzing and reporting data in accordance with international standards (IOM, UNHCR, Eurostat, etc.) from all institutions that collect migration data.

- Strengthening cooperation in the exchange of migration data at the regional and international levels through agreements and Memorandums of Cooperation.
- Making operational the Migration Management Information System (MMIS) through linking institutional systems that collect migration data.
- Strengthening cooperation between KAS and central and local institutions on migration data and analyses.
- Consolidating a mechanism at the central and local levels for collecting data on the migration of students and teachers.
- Assessing healthcare services and treatments (costs, availability, etc.) in the Republic of Kosovo as driving factors for emigration abroad.
- Evaluating the needs of the local labour market as a result of changes in migration trends.
- Initiating agreements and programs for labour mobility, including the enhancement of skills and qualifications and the reintegration of these skills into the local labour market.
- Developing employment programs and policies aimed at addressing gaps in the local labour market and the private sector's demand for skilled workers.
- Advancing the DCAM information system through the provision of data for migrants with residence permits for work purposes in the Republic of Kosovo, including professional profiles, work address, residence address, etc.
- Providing specific data on diaspora investments from, including businesses registered with diaspora and foreign owners, by sector.
- Advancing the Kosovo Visa Information System, including integration with the DCAM database, specifically the module for foreigners regarding type D visas.
- Implementing electronic visas (e-visa) to facilitate the process.

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