



COUNTRY FACTSHEET: CROATIA 2016

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Croatia during 2016, including latest statistics.

2. International Protection including Asylum

During 2016, the Ministry of Interior recorded a **major increase in the number of filed applications for international protection**, overall applications for international protection increased by 632% and applications by unaccompanied minors increased by 8100% when compared to 2015. The reception capacity to accommodate asylum seekers was strengthened through the **establishment of two new reception centres** in Trilj and Tovarnik near the border with Bosnia Herzegovina and Serbia respectively.

As for legal developments, an **Ordinance on the forms and data collections** during process for granting international and temporary protection came into force in 2016.¹

Measures were taken to enhance the provision of **information to applicants for international protection**. A set of information sheet posters (consisting of pictograms and text) were developed in English, Arabic, Farsi and Urdu and disseminated among migrants. Information sheets were also displayed at various community rooms with details about the services available, the reception centres' house rules, the provision of legal counselling and the asylum procedure, among other issues. In addition, the Croatian Law Centre, a local NGO offering free legal aid and counselling for asylum seekers and irregular migrants, conducted a number of information workshops.

In 2016 there continued to be a **deficit of interpreters** of infrequent languages who could translate into Croatian. The Ministry of the Interior, international organisations and local NGOs made an extra effort to redress this gap by hiring additional interpreters.

In the area of **relocation**, four Syrian asylum seekers were relocated from Italy on 4th July 2016 and ten from Greece on 22nd August 2016. All asylum seekers were accommodated in Zagreb, in the Interior Ministry Reception Centre, and granted international protection. In addition, on 3rd October 2016, five applicants from Eritrea were relocated from Italy. All relocated people were firstly accommodated in the reception centre until they were all granted international protection. Subsequently, they were provided with paid – private or government owned- accommodation.

3. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

In the second half of 2016, a Committee was established in order to develop an Amendment to the Protocol on the **treatment of unaccompanied children** who are foreign nationals. The new Protocol should re-define the actors responsible, and the procedures in place, for enabling the identification and provision of assistance and protection to migrant and/or refugee children separated from their parents.

4. Legal Migration and Mobility

4.1 PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

No relevant changes to report in 2016.

4.2 ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Croatia planned to introduce Amendments to the Foreigners Act in 2017 with a view to transpose the [Seasonal Workers Directive \(2014/36/EC\)](#) and the [Intra-corporate Transferees Directive \(2014/66/EC\)](#) into Croatian legislation.

¹ Official Gazette No. 85/2016

4.3 FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Amendments to the Foreigners Act regarding family reunification of third-country nationals who are family members of Croatian nationals are planned to be introduced in 2017.

4.4 MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY²

Croatia continued to make **preparations for joining the Schengen area**. A Schengen evaluation took place in June 2016 and identified a number of shortcomings in the application of the Schengen acquis.

5. Integration

The Croatian government adopted an Ordinance on the Modalities and Conditions for Obtaining the **Right to Accommodation** for Beneficiaries of International Protection and on the Modalities of their Financial Participation in Accommodation Costs.³ Beneficiaries of international protection were hereby entitled to accommodation, food, clothing in kind, in-cash allowances and to the reimbursement of travel expenses incurred into in connection with the asylum procedure.

In addition, Croatia planned to amend the Act on International and Temporary Protection during the first semester of 2017 in order to further specify the right to accommodation of persons granted international protection. The changes will also alter the division of responsibilities among the authorities competent for ensuring access to accommodation and regulate the modalities for granting and withdrawing the right to accommodation.

In addition, the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities launched the process for the adoption of a new strategic document on integration issues through Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) 2012.

6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

No relevant changes to report in 2016.

7. Irregular Migration and Return

4.5 THE FIGHT AGAINST FACILITATION OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Continuous measures were taken in order to **control the external border** of the EU, ensure public order and fight against crime in border areas. The Croatian border surveillance system focused on controlling the eastern 'green' borders with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Serbia and Montenegro.

During the period from 1st March to 30th June 2016, the migrant influx situation in Croatia changed significantly. From an average of 5,000 migrant arrivals a day prior to 1st March 2016, the number of arrivals had halved by March 2016 following a political decision to close the so-called 'Balkans route'. As a result, several hundred **migrants remained stranded in Croatia** and were provided with temporary accommodation in the Reception and Transit Centre.

The Ministry of Interior conducted **intensive procurement to acquire specialised equipment** for the detection of forged documents at border crossing points through Schengen Facility Fund. In addition, the False and Authentic Documents Online (FADO) system was installed and police officers trained for its operation.

4.6 RETURN OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS

With a view to further adapt the Croatian legal framework to the [Return Directive \(2008/115/EC\)](#), amendments to the Foreigners Act are planned to be introduced in 2017.

8. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

No relevant changes to report in 2016.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Croatia on aspects of migration and asylum (2012-2016), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

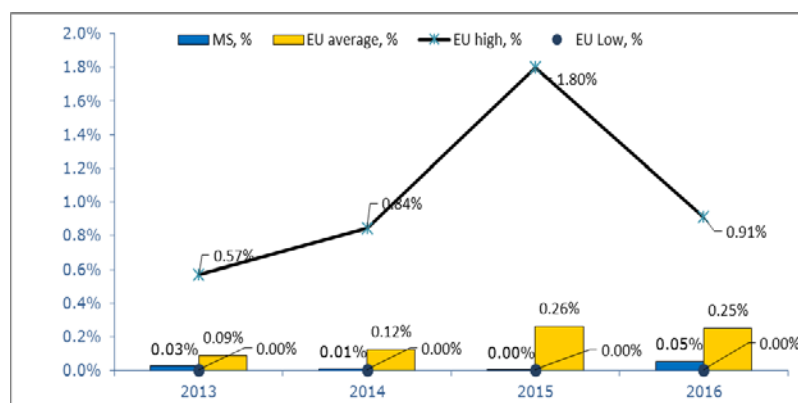
² "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

³ Official Gazette No 03/16

Statistical Annex: Migration and Asylum in Croatia (2013-2016)

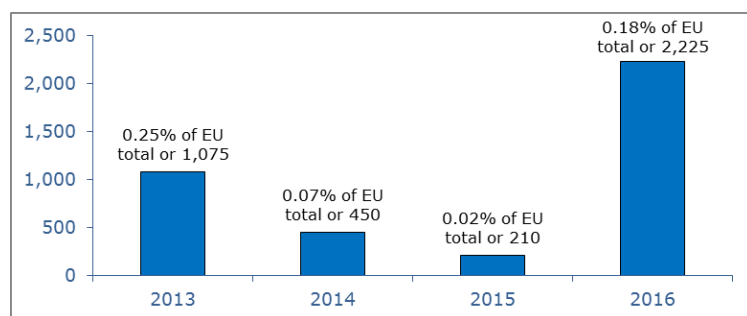
1. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASYLUM

Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Croatia, EU average and EU high and low (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#))⁴, data extracted 03/08/2017

Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017

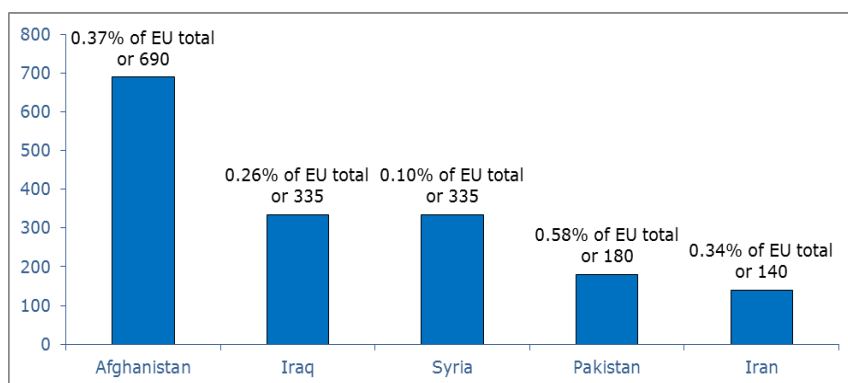
Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2013–2016)

2013			2014			2015			2016		
Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total
Syria	195	18%	Algeria	75	17%	Algeria Syria	25	12%	Afghanistan	690	31%
Afghanistan	185	17%	Syria	65	14%	Morocco Nigeria	15	7%	Iraq	335	15%
Somalia	135	13%	Pakistan	25	6%	Turkey Kosovo Ukraine Afghanistan Iran	10	5%	Syria	335	15%
Algeria	130	12%	Egypt Morocco Tunisia Nigeria Bangladesh	20	4%	Bulgaria Montenegro Serbia Bosnia and Herzegovina Russia Cameroon Tunisia Gambia The Bangladesh India Pakistan Azerbaijan Iraq Lebanon	5	2%	Pakistan	180	8%
Tunisia	70	7%							Iran	140	6%

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017

⁴ Figures regarding the total population were extracted from Eurostat ([demo_gind](#))

Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017

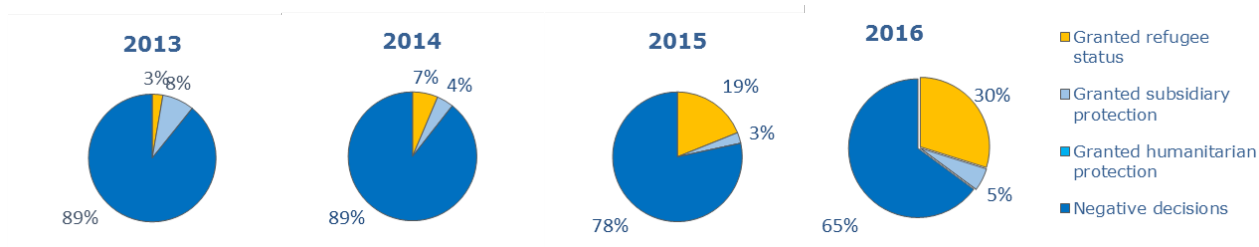
Note: the figure reads as: Croatia received 690 asylum applications from Afghanistan or 0.37% of all asylum applications launched by Afghanistan in EU in 2016.

Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2013-2016)

Year	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:		Humanitarian reasons	Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection		
2013	185	25	5	15	N/A	165
2014	235	25	15	10	N/A	210
2015	185	40	35	5	0	145
2016	285	100	85	15	0	185

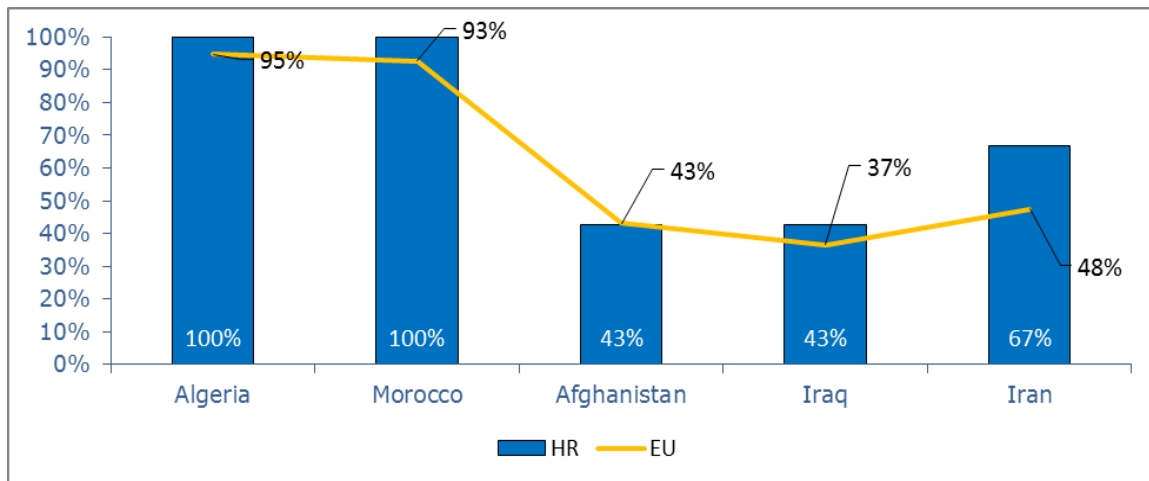
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017

Figures 4-7: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2013-2016)



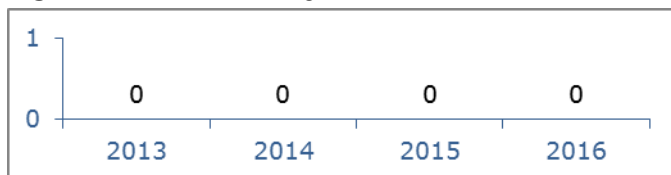
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 17/04/2017

Figure 8: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017

Figure 9: Third-country nationals resettled (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_asyresa](#)), data extracted 09/05/2017

2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Figure 10: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2013-2016)

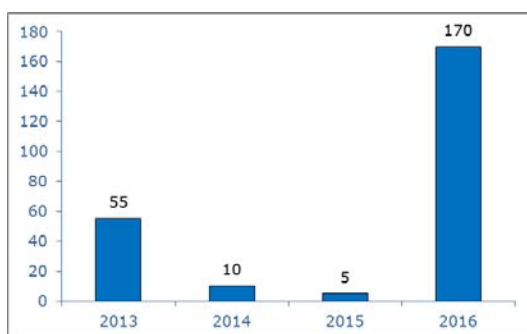


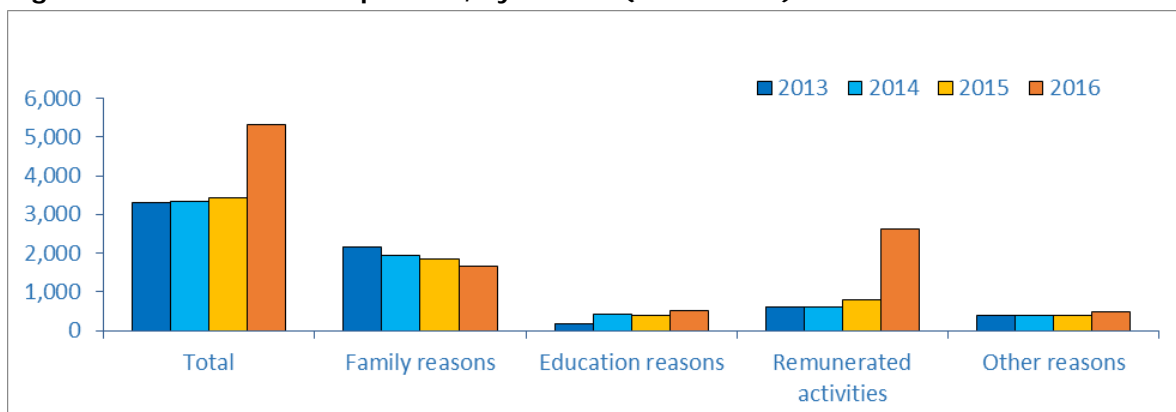
Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2013-2016)

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Unaccompanied minors (total)	N/A	N/A	5	N/A
Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants	55	10	5	170

Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) ([migr_asyunaa](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017; EMN NCPs

3. LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Figure 11: First residence permits, by reason (2013-2016)



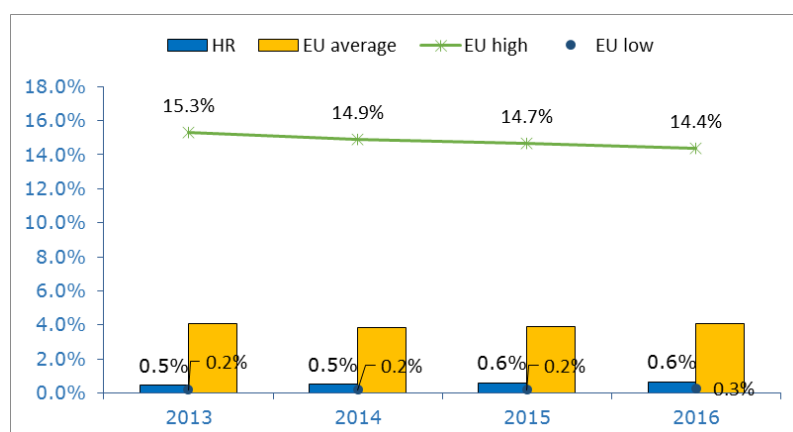
Source: Eurostat ([migr_resfirst](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017; EMN NCPs

Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2013–2016)

2013		2014		2015		2016	
Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,284	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,002	Bosnia and Herzegovina	866	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,382
Serbia	430	Serbia	456	Serbia	446	Serbia	678
FYROM	229	FYROM	261	United States	251	Ukraine	294
United States	204	United States	252	FYROM	234	United States	254
Kosovo	193	Kosovo	195	Russia	219	FYROM	249

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_resfirst](#)), data extracted 03/08/2017

Figure 12: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Croatia, EU average, EU high and low (2013-2016)



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_pop1ctz](#)), data extracted 17/04/2017

4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2013–2016)

Third country nationals:	2013	2014	2015	2016
Refused entry at external borders	10,015	8,645	9,355	9,135
Found to be illegally present	4,150	2,500	3,295	3,320
Ordered to leave	4,355	3,120	3,910	4,730
Returned following an order to leave	2,530	2,245	1,940	1,890

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr_eirfs](#))([migr_eipre](#))([migr_eiord](#)),([migr_eirtn](#)) data extracted 09/05/2017

Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2013-2016)

Year	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2013	494	850	N/A
2014	N/A	N/A	N/A
2015	691	1,248	N/A
2016	950	942	N/A

Source: EMN NCPs

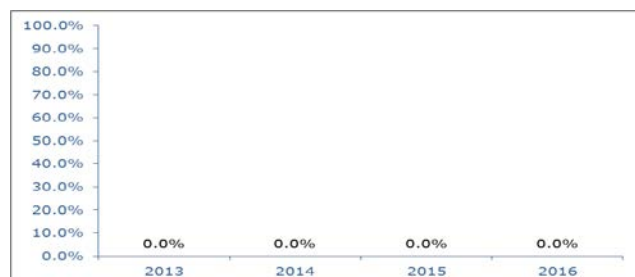
5. SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

Table 7: Number of Schengen visas applications (2013–2016)

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Uniform visas (short-stay visas)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: DG Migration and Home – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Figure 13: Uniform visa applications received in MS as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2013-2016)



Source: DG Migration and Home affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

Table 8: Top five countries in which the highest number of visa applications for MS was lodged (2013-2016)

2013		2014		2015		2016	
Countries	Number	Countries	Number	Countries	Number	Countries	Number
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs