

# Slovak Republic

## EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET

2017

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN MIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION, INCLUDING LATEST STATISTICS



### LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

#### PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

The Slovak Republic adopted an amendment to the Act on Residence of Foreigners and the Act on Employment Services, effective since 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017. The amendment, among other things, transposed the EU Directives on Seasonal Workers (2014/36/EU) and on Intra-company Transfers (2014/66/EU) into Slovak legislation. Conditions of stay and employment were eased also for other groups of third-country nationals: Strategic Service Centres employees and businessmen with innovation projects.

The September 2017 amendment to the Act on Residence of Aliens<sup>1</sup> cancelled the possibility for language school students to obtain temporary residence. This group of third-country nationals is now under the national visa (visa D) regime. Granting a national visa is conditioned by the student being a third-country national, older than 15 and accepted to a language education of at least 25 classes per week at language school. As per the amendment to the Act on Employment Services of May 2017, an employer cannot employ such a third-country national.

#### ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Pertaining to the lack of qualified workforce in several professions in the Slovak labour market, a simplification of conditions for employing third-country nationals was proposed in 2017 for sectors with ongoing labour shortages, and for districts with a registered

<sup>1</sup> Act No. 82/2017 Coll. on changing and amending Act No. 404/2011 Coll. on Residence of Aliens.

### KEY POINTS



The Seasonal Workers Directive and Intra-Company Transfer Directive were transposed into national legislation.



A proposal to simplify conditions for employing third-country nationals for sectors with ongoing labour shortages was put forward.



Efforts in the area of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance continued, with a special focus on providing healthcare and education for refugee children in crisis situations.

unemployment rate lower than 5%. The approval of the proposed measures is expected in 2018.

Given the increased proportion of Serbian nationals working in the Slovak Republic (a yearly increase of above 200%), especially in unqualified or low-qualification jobs in manufacturing, the Slovak Republic and Serbia signed the Protocol on mutual cooperation in work and employment in November 2017.<sup>2</sup>

#### FAMILY REUNIFICATION

In May 2017, an amendment to the Act on the Residence of Aliens was introduced, shortening the time police departments have to issue a decision on applications for

<sup>2</sup> Protocol on Mutual Cooperation between the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic and Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans Affairs and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

temporary residence from 90 to 30 days for family members of Strategic Service Centres employees.<sup>3</sup> Several changes regarding family reunification are also to be adopted with the transposition of the Students and Researchers Directive (2016/801/EU) which, among other things, defines and/or extends the conditions of entry and residence of family members of researchers.

## MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

In 2017, the Slovak Republic did not implement any policies or measures regarding the management of the Schengen Area. A new National Border Control Management Plan building on the Regulation on the European Border and Coast Guard of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016 is to be prepared in 2018.



## INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

The number of registered asylum seekers in the Slovak Republic remained low also in 2017. The preparation of the amendment to the Act on Asylum started and should come into effect on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018. The reason for the amendment process is mainly the transposition of Art. 31 Par. 3 – 5 of Directive on Asylum Procedures (2013/32/EU) as well as the modification of certain provisions of the Act on Asylum based on knowledge and needs of practice.

The Slovak Republic finalised the brochure for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection entitled 'The New Start in the Slovak Republic'.

In 2017, relocations from Italy and Greece were continued based on the "First Relocation Decision" within which it voluntarily undertook to relocate 100 persons – 40 from Greece and 60 from Italy. The Slovak Republic also continued to enable the humanitarian transfers of refugees through its territory which have been carried out in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) since 2009.



## UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

The measures adopted in 2017 to protect unaccompanied minors in the Slovak Republic concerned mainly building and strengthening the capacity of socio-legal protection of children and social guardianship (SPCSG) authorities/bodies and of the Foster Home (FH) in Medzilaborce. In 2017, SPCSG bodies in cooperation

with the FH in Medzilaborce and the Police Force adopted measures to prevent the causes of absconding. The number of registered unaccompanied minors in the Slovak Republic remained low in 2017. However, unaccompanied minors escaping/disappearing from care facilities has remained a persistent problem and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family was preparing a final research report on this topic.

Important legislative changes related to the amendment of the Act on Social and Legal Protection of Children and on Social Guardianship (SPCSG) are planned for 2018. The changes will concern the deinstitutionalisation of foster care which has been ongoing in the Slovak Republic for a long time, as well as professional help focused on children staying or being returned to their parents' care.



## INTEGRATION

The Slovak Republic postponed the deadline for the State Integration Programme for Beneficiaries of International Protection from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 to mid-2018. In 2017, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic considered revising the Integration Policy. An amendment to the Act on Financial Compensation of Serious Physical Disablement had also been prepared and included extending the pool of eligible persons to holders of subsidiary protection.



## IRREGULAR MIGRATION

In 2017, there was a slight increase in cases of detected irregular migration to the Slovak Republic.

Relevant measures in 2017 concerned, among other things, the extension of possibilities for the police to take the identification details of foreigners to prevent potential abuse of identification documents, the implementation of several projects for the renewal of technical equipment needed for effective performance of border control and irregular migration prevention, activities within capacity building and education of experts and Police Force members serving in the Border and Aliens Police Service.

The liberalisation of the visa regime with regards to Ukrainian nationals had considerably influenced border management and control. The number of persons crossing from outside the EU into the Slovak Republic increased significantly and waiting periods were prolonged at border crossings. Cooperation with Ukraine was strengthened through the adoption of the Plan of

<sup>3</sup> Defined as a place in which the investment aid beneficiary provides services with high-added value which promote the employability of qualified specialists in centres developing computer programmes, specialist

implementation centres, centres preparing modified state-of-the-art technology and customer support centres.

Development of Cooperation between the Slovakian Bureau of the Border and Aliens Police of the Police Force Presidium and the State Border Service of Ukraine for 2017-2018. Further cooperation with Macedonia and Serbia in strengthening personnel and technical equipment to control their state borders is planned as well.

As far as fighting smuggling is concerned, the Slovak Republic signed the Agreement on Cooperation in the Prevention and Fight Against Crime with Vietnam and intensified the cooperation with the Czech Republic by setting up a new joint investigation team to facilitate international justice cooperation regarding criminal matters of tax offenses and illegal employment of foreigners without a work permit in the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.



## RETURN

The Slovak Republic adopted several measures in 2017 based on the European Commission Recommendations on making returns more effective when implementing the Return Directive (2008/115/EC). Some of the recommendations were applied directly as they did not require amending national legislation (e.g. broader definition of the risk of absconding). Other recommendations were already being applied in practice. Among the new measures was the introduction of the EU travel document which can be used for return purposes if necessary. Furthermore, the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior started to issue documents on entitlement to healthcare provision for persons who decided to enrol in Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration (AVRR) Programme. The Slovak Republic has been also preparing for a systematic entering of fingerprints in the Schengen Information System II.

In 2017, the monitoring of the implementation of administrative expulsion decisions, of the enforcement of expulsion sentences, and of "forced returns" was for the first time performed by the Slovak Humanitarian Council, a non-profit organisation. Different types of monitoring were applied in practice depending on the case.

IOM, in cooperation with the Bureau of the Border and Aliens Police of the Police Force Presidium, introduced a number of measures designed to raise third-country nationals' awareness of the possibility of return to their country of origin through AVRR. Such measures included updated Bureau's guidelines for informing foreigners mandatorily about the possibility of using the AVRR, involvement of interpreters in the information process and an IOM information campaign on social media.



## ACTIONS AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Since the number of third-country nationals who are at risk of becoming victims of labour exploitation has been growing in the Slovak Republic, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior initiated in 2017 several inter-institutional discussions on the measures that could possibly be taken in this field in his capacity as the national anti-trafficking coordinator.

In 2017, the Ministry of Interior started drafting the internal act related to the implementation of the Programme of Support and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings.

The Act on Victims of Criminal Acts introduced in 2017 also covers victims of human trafficking. Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018, the Act regulates the compensation of victims of violent criminal acts, including persons granted asylum, subsidiary protection, temporary shelter, residence or authorisation to remain in the country, if the health-related damage happened in the territory the Slovak Republic.

In March 2017, Slovakia signed the Agreement on Cooperation in the Prevention and Fight Against Crime with Vietnam which concerns mainly the transnational organised crime, human trafficking, migrant smuggling and terrorism including its funding, corruption, counterfeiting money as well as forbidden arms trafficking. The objective of the Agreement is to strengthen cooperation through operational information and to support the increase of professional capability through training for the personnel of respective executive bodies of the two countries.

The non-governmental organisation Slovak Catholic Charity became the provider of assisted voluntary returns for victims of trafficking in human beings.



## MAXIMISING DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

The Slovak Republic continued to incorporate migration into development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, focusing on healthcare and education of refugee children in crisis situations. The amendment of Act on Income Tax and Act on VAT brought tax relief to commercial providers of material for the Slovak humanitarian assistance abroad.

In the document entitled [Focus of Development Cooperation in 2017](#), the Slovak Republic continued to include South Sudan, Syria and neighbouring countries

from the Near and Middle-East among its territorial priorities as these are deemed to be the territories with exceptional humanitarian and development needs.

The Slovak Republic worked on making the system of Government scholarships to citizens of countries affected by the conflict more effective, providing 48 scholarships from 2016 till the end of 2017.

The Slovak Republic engaged in the V4 project in Kenya whose aim is to enhance the socio-economic situation of small farmers and to create jobs in that area.

## **STATISTICAL ANNEX**

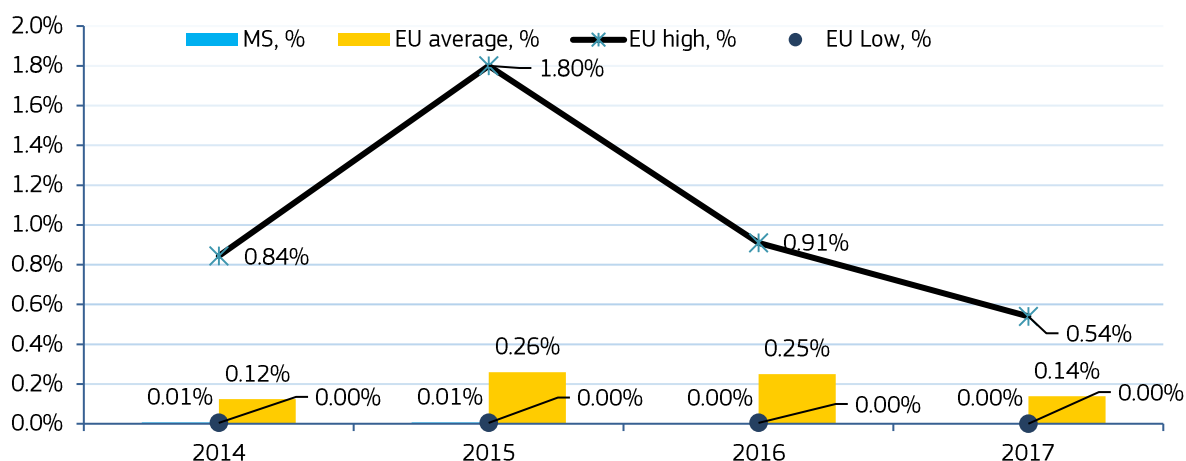
The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for the Slovak Republic on aspects of migration and international protection (2014-2017), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

# STATISTICAL ANNEX: MIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC (2014-2017)



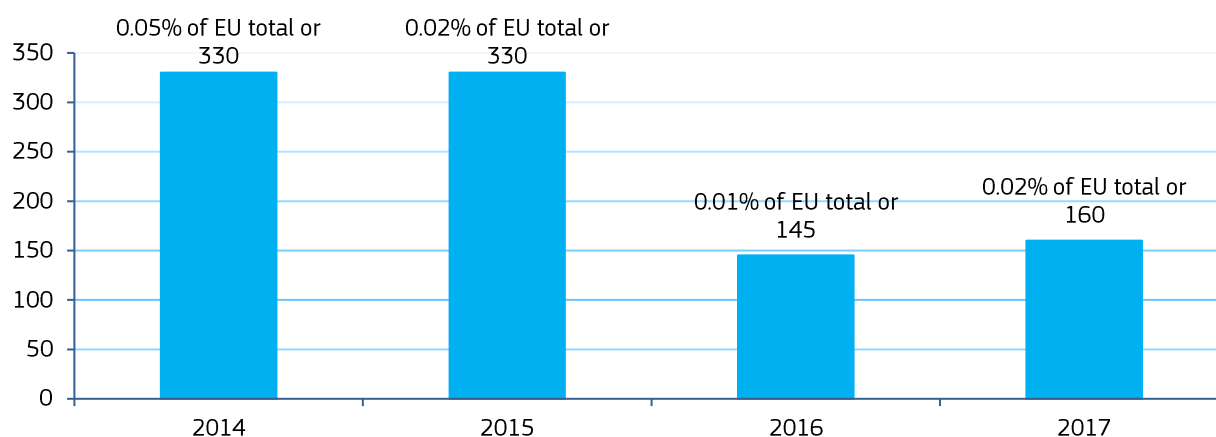
## 1. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASYLUM

**Figure 1: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in the Slovak Republic, EU average and EU high and low (2014-2017)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 30.03.18

**Figure 2: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2014-2017)**



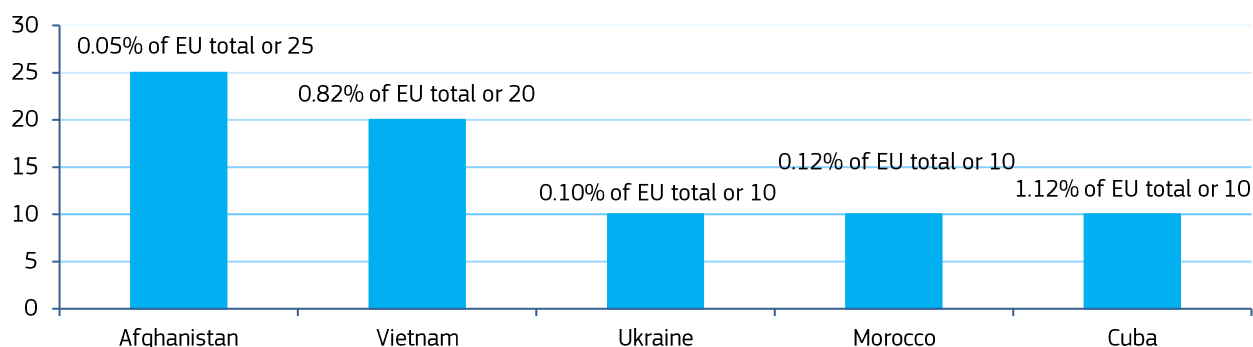
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 30.03.18

**Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2014-2017)**

2014			2015			2016			2017		
Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total	Nationality	Nr	% of total
Afghanistan	95	29%	Iraq	170	52%	Ukraine	25	17%	Afghanistan	25	16%
Syria	40	12%	Afghanistan	35	11%	Afghanistan	15	10%	Vietnam	20	13%
Ukraine, Vietnam	25	8%	Ukraine	25	8%	Pakistan	15	10%	Ukraine	10	6%
Somalia	20	6%	Unknown	15	5%	Iraq	15	10%	Morocco	10	6%
Georgia, Unknown	15	5%	Russia, India, Syria	10	3%	Syria	15	10%	Cuba	10	6%

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 30.03.18

**Figure 3: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU totals per given nationality (2017)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 30.03.18

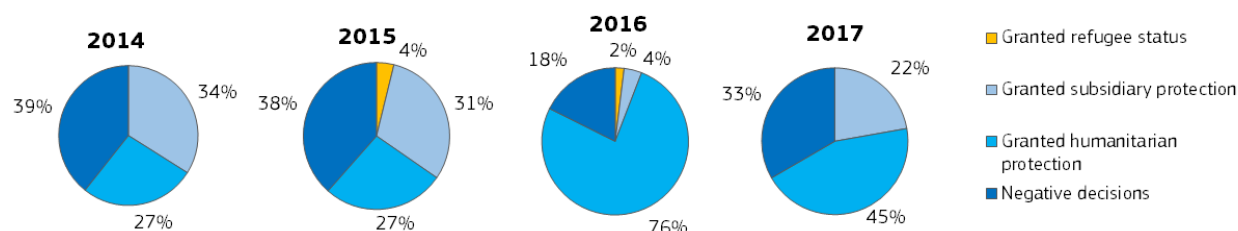
Note: the figure reads as: The Slovak Republic received 25 asylum applications from Afghanistan or 0.05% of all asylum applications launched by Afghanistan in EU in 2017.

**Table 2: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2014-2017)**

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:			Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
<b>2014</b>	280	170	0	95	75	110
<b>2015</b>	130	80	5	40	35	50
<b>2016</b>	250	210	5	10	195	45
<b>2017</b>	90	60	0	20	40	30

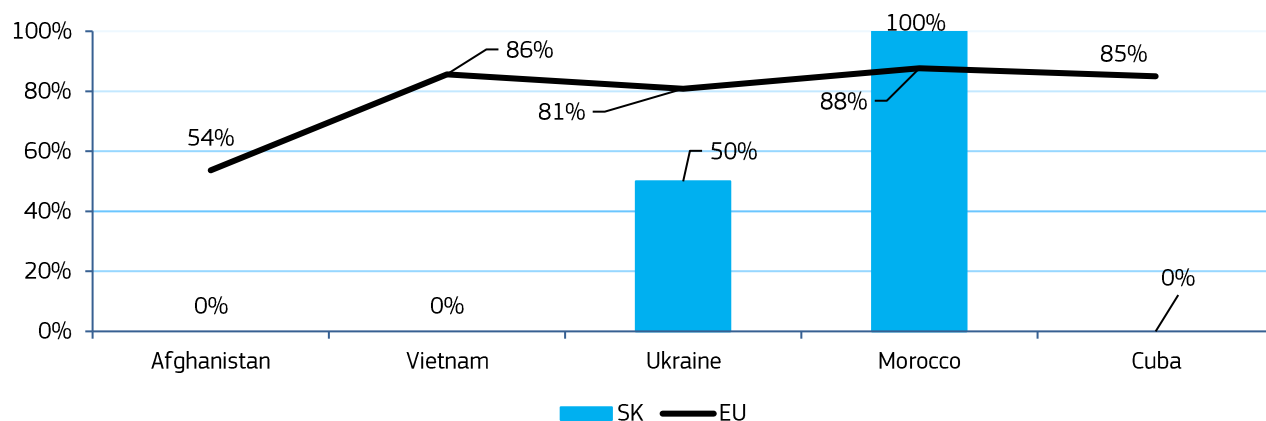
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 30.03.18

**Figure 4: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2014-2017)**



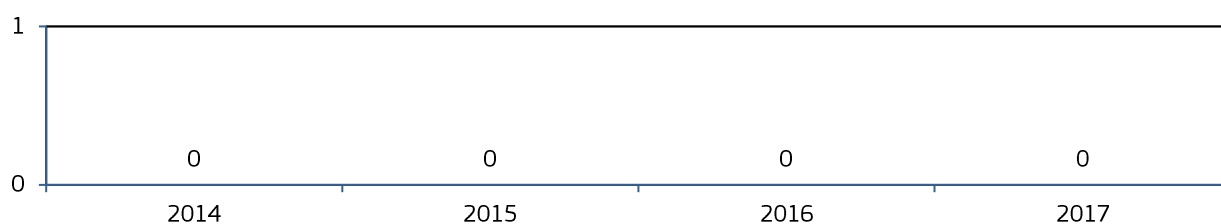
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 30.03.18

**Figure 5: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2017)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfsta](#)), data extracted 30.03.18

**Figure 6: Third-country nationals resettled (2014-2017)**

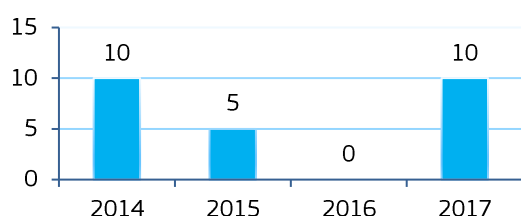


Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyresa](#)), data extracted 02.05.18



## 2. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

**Figure 7: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2014-2017)**



**Table 3: Unaccompanied minors (2014-2017)**

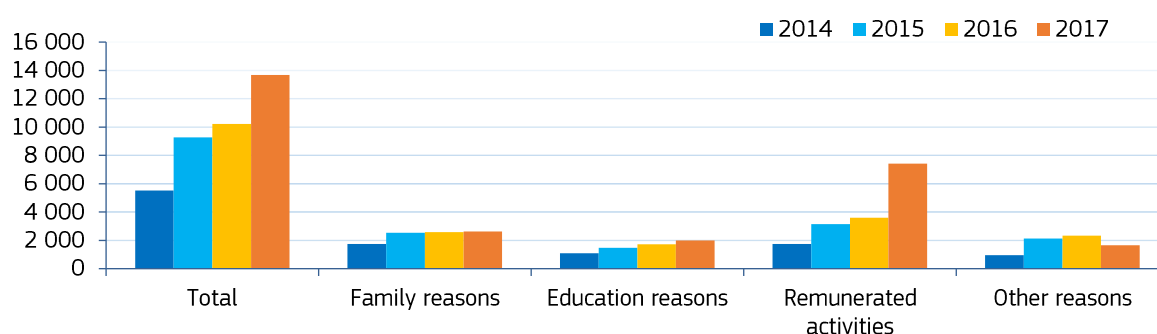
	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Unaccompanied minors (total)</b>	N/A	26	33	25
<b>Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants</b>	10	5	0	10

Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) ([migr\\_asyunaa](#)), data extracted 04.04.18; EMN NCPs



## 3. LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

**Figure 8: First residence permits, by reason (2014-2017)**



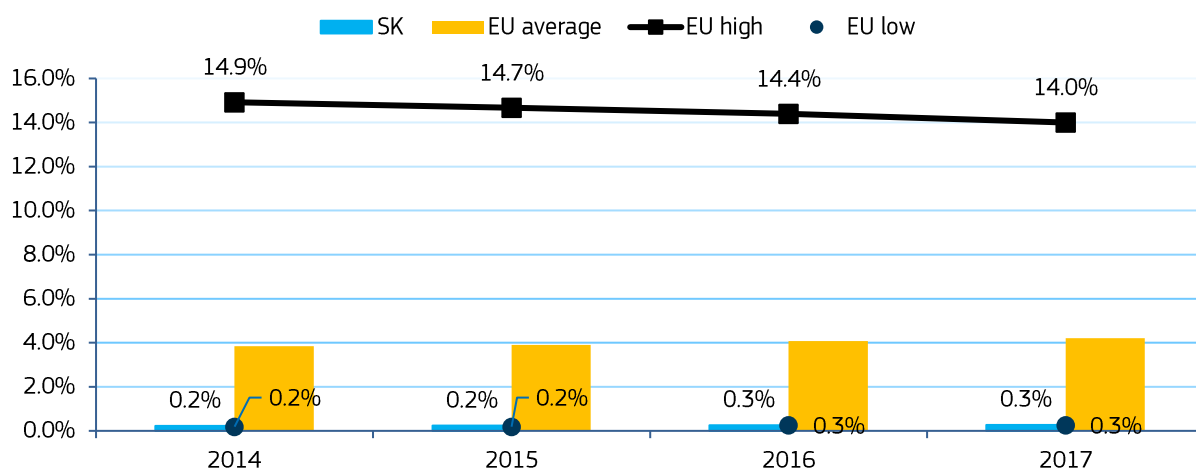
Source: Eurostat ([migr\\_resfirst](#)), data extracted 17.07.18.

**Table 4: First residence permits: Top five third-country nationalities (2014-2017)**

2014		2015		2016		2017	
Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number
Ukraine	1 592	Ukraine	3 340	Ukraine	3 016	Ukraine	4 268
Serbia	830	Serbia	1 394	Serbia	2 076	Serbia	4 140
Russia	494	Syria	899	Russia	743	Vietnam	1 114
South Korea	365	Russia	739	Iran	513	Russia	629
China (incl. Hong Kong)	226	South Korea	359	Syria	481	Iran	451

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_resfirst](#)), data extracted 17.07.18

**Figure 9: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in the Slovak Republic, EU average, EU high and low (2014-2017)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_pop1ctz](#)), data extracted 30.03.18



## 4. IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RETURN

**Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2014–2017)**

Third country nationals:	2014	2015	2016	2017
Refused entry at external borders	455	465	750	1,085
Found to be illegally present	1 155	1 985	2 035	2 590
Ordered to leave	925	1 575	1 735	2 375
Returned following an order to leave	695	1 230	1 410	1 740

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_eirfs](#))([migr\\_eipre](#))([migr\\_eiord](#))([migr\\_eirtn](#)) data extracted 02.05.18

**Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2014–2017)**

Year	Returned as part of forced return measure	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2014	275	418	57
2015	560	668	92
2016	314	1 094	116
2017	353	1 387	43

Source: EMN NCPs



## 5. SECURING EUROPE'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

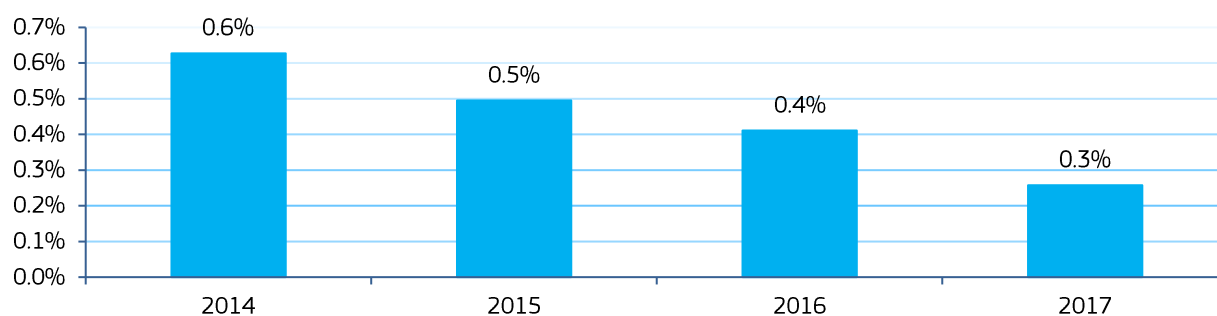
**Table 7: Number of Schengen visas applications (2014–2017)**

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Uniform visas (short-stay visas)	104 988	76 491	62 472	41 639

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



**Figure 13: Uniform visa applications received in the Slovak Republic as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2014-2017)**



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 the Slovak Republic was lodged (2014-2017)**

2014		2015		2016		2017	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number
Ukraine	49 466	Ukraine	45 727	Ukraine	38 426	Ukraine	16 299
Belarus	27 393	Russian Federation	11 268	Russian Federation	13 085	Russian Federation	11 478
Russian Federation	18 429	Belarus	8 811	Belarus	5 384	Belarus	4 148
China	1 317	China	1 944	China	3 456	China	1 810
Iraq	1 213	Kuwait	1 186	Kuwait	1 252	Turkey	1 401

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs