Beat: Politics

EU Member States granted citizenship to almost 1 million persons in 2013

Moroccans continue to be main recipients

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USPA NEWS - In 2013, around 985,000 persons acquired citizenship of a Member State of the European Union (EU), up by 20% (or about 163,000 persons) compared with 2012. Of the total number of persons obtaining the citizenship of one of the EU Member States in 2013, 89% were citizens of non-EU countries.

The largest groups acquiring citizenship of an EU Member State in 2013 were citizens of Morocco (86,500 persons, of which 84% acquired citizenship of Spain, Italy or France), India (48,300, three-quarters acquired British citizenship), Turkey (46,500, 60% acquired German citizenship), Colombia (42,000, 93% acquired Spanish citizenship), Albania (41,700, 95% acquired citizenship of Greece or Italy) and Ecuador (40,400, 95% acquired Spanish citizenship). Moroccans, Indians, Turks, Colombians, Albanians and Ecuadorians represented together almost a third (31%) of the total number of persons who acquired EU citizenship in 2013.

Romanians (23,000 persons) and Poles (18,000) were the two largest groups of EU citizens acquiring citizenship of another EU Member State. In twelve EU Member States, at least 9 persons out of every 10 who obtained citizenship in 2013 were citizens of a non-EU country: Estonia (100%), Latvia and Romania (both 99%), Greece and Lithuania (both 97%), Spain and Portugal (both 96%), Bulgaria (94%), Ireland and Italy (both 93%), the United Kingdom (91%) and Croatia (90%).

In contrast, Luxembourg (81%) and Hungary (80%) were the only Member States where the majority of persons acquiring citizenship in 2013 were citizens of another EU Member State. At EU level, 89% (or 871,300 new citizens) of those granted citizenship were citizens of a non-EU country, and 10% (98 500) of another EU Member State, according a press release of Eurostat.

Highest naturalisation rate in Sweden, Hungary and Portugal

The naturalisation rate is the ratio of the number of persons who acquired the citizenship of a country during a year over the stock of foreign residents in the same country at the beginning of the year. In 2013, the highest naturalisation rates were registered in Sweden (7.6 citizenships granted per 100 resident foreigners), Hungary (6.5) and Portugal (5.9), and the lowest in Slovakia (0.3), the Czech Republic and Denmark (both 0.5). On average, 2.9 citizenships were granted per 100 resident foreigners in the EU.

Of the five EU Member States that granted the most citizenships in 2013, the naturalisation rate was above the EU average in Spain (4.5) and the United Kingdom (4.2), while below the EU average in France (2.4), Italy (2.3) and Germany (1.5). Almost half of all persons who acquired an EU citizenship in 2013 became citizens of either Spain (225,800 persons, or 23% of all citizenships granted in the EU in 2013) or the United Kingdom (207,500 or 21%). When compared with the total population of each Member State, the highest rates of citizenship granted were recorded in Ireland (5.3 citizenships granted per 1,000 resident population), Sweden (5.2), Spain (4.8) and Luxembourg (4.7).

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