

France



After a number of years of strong growth (13% annual average between 1995 and 2003), permanent inflows have slowed down significantly since 2004. In 2006, approximately 135 000 foreigners were admitted for residence, a level comparable to that of 2005. This levelling off is due to the decrease in the number of foreigners granted asylum in France (–6 400 in comparison with 2005) and the increase in family migration (+4 300) and labour migration (+1 500).

The lower number of refugees is due mainly to the sharp decline in asylum applications since 2004 (approximately 30 750 first asylum applications in 2006, or –38% in comparison with 2005 and nearly half the level of 2004). As a result, France has been overtaken by the United States as the OECD country in which the most applications were filed.

Most of the increase in family migration is due to persons entering under the title of “personal and family ties” (+7 800 in comparison with 2005), in particular following the regularisation procedure during the summer of 2006, which was aimed at certain parents of children enrolled in school in France. At the same time, inflows for the purpose of family reunification have decreased (–3 500).

Labour migration, measured by the direct inflows of foreign nationals into the labour market, remains small in comparison with permanent migration as a whole (10 000 persons, or less than 8% of all inflows), but it has risen sharply since 2004 (+19% per year on average between 2004 and 2006).

With regard to the origin of migrants, recent trends continued in 2006: Africa remains the principle region of origin, followed by Asia. In all, one-third of new immigrants come from Algeria and Morocco.

A new law on the management of immigration, integration and asylum entered into force on 20 November 2007, replacing the law of 24 July 2006 on immigration and integration.

The new law stipulates that in order to qualify for family reunification, foreigners between the ages of 16 and 64 are now required to pass a test in their country of residence evaluating their knowledge of the French language and the values of the French Republic. If necessary, they must receive training in their country and then take the test again. This new procedure also applies to foreigners married to a French spouse when they apply for a visa for a stay lasting longer than three months.

Resource requirements for foreigners residing in France who wish to bring their family have also been reinforced: the minimum resource threshold has been raised and is now proportional to the size of the family.

Lastly, the parents of children admitted for residence under family reunification must now sign a reception and integration contract (*contrat d'accueil et d'intégration*, CAI) for the family. Under this contract, they must receive training on the rights and duties of parents in France and make a commitment to respect the requirement to educate their children.

A number of measures are aimed at promoting labour migration: the procedures for issuing “employee on mission” and “competencies and talents” residence cards have been relaxed and those who hold them are not required to sign the reception and integration contract.

In addition, a provision of the law of 24 July 2006 states that foreigners requesting a work permit in certain occupations experiencing recruitment difficulties would no longer be subject to labour market testing. At the end of 2007, the French Government defined two separate lists specifying which occupations were covered: the first concerns the nationals of ten EU member states subject to transitional measures and comprises 150 occupations, including those with low skills; the second concerns the nationals of third countries and comprises 30 professions which are skilled, in general.

Another provision of the new law of 2007 allows temporary “employee” type residence permits to be issued on the basis of an exceptional admission for residence, which opens the way to regularisation on a case-by-case basis to foreigners with highly sought professional skills. The ministerial circular of 7 January 2008 specifies that these regularisations will be limited to the occupations contained on the list of occupations experiencing recruitment difficulties.

The law of 2007 also includes a section on asylum. The most important measure, which responds to a condemnation of France by the European Court of Human Rights, concerns foreigners who reach French borders seeking asylum and are refused entry to France: they can now file an appeal with suspensive effect against the decision to deny entry.

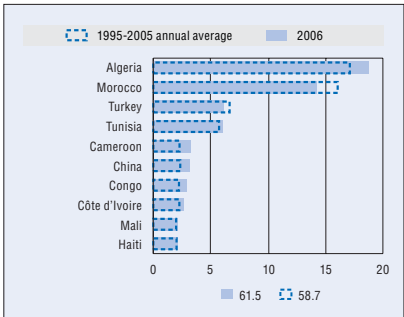
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www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr/imindco

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Flow data on foreigners

Migration flows (foreigners) National definition	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Inflows	0.8	1.6	2.2	2.2	1.3	2.2	135.1
Outflows	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type Permit based statistics (standardised)	Thousands		% distribution		Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners		
	2005	2006	2005	2006			
Work	8.9	10.3	5.3	6.1			
Family (incl. accompanying family)	95.4	99.7	56.2	59.0			
Humanitarian	13.8	7.4	8.1	4.4			
Free movements	33.8	33.8	19.9	20.0			
Others	17.8	17.7	10.5	10.5			
Total	169.7	169.0					
Temporary migration	2000	2005	2006	Annual average 2000-2006	Inflows of asylum seekers		
					Average		Level ('000)
<i>Thousands</i>							
International students	36.1	46.2	47.3	47.5	1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
Trainees	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.9	30.7
Working holiday makers	..	..	..	..
Seasonal workers	7.9	16.2	17.2	13.7			
Intra-company transfers	..	..	..	..
Other temporary workers	7.6	10.5	10.7	9.8			
Inflows of asylum seekers	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
					0.4	0.9	30.7

Macroeconomic, demographic and labour market indicators

Macroeconomic indicators	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
Real GDP (growth, %)	2.1	3.9	1.7	2.0	2.8	1.7	
GDP/capita (growth, %) – level in US Dollars	1.8	3.2	1.1	1.4	2.4	1.0	26 821
Employment (growth, %) – level in thousands	1.0	2.8	0.6	0.9	1.6	0.5	25 095
Unemployment (% of labour force)	9.9	8.1	8.8	8.8	9.7	8.4	
Components of population growth	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>							
Total	4.1	5.3	5.6	6.1	4.4	5.6	
Natural increase	3.4	4.1	4.0	4.5	3.6	4.0	
Net migration	0.7	1.2	1.6	1.5	0.8	1.6	
Total population	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>(Annual growth %)</i>							
Native-born	..	0.5	0.4	0.4	..	0.5	56 275
Foreign-born	..	1.8	2.5	2.4	..	2.5	5 078
National	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Foreign	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Naturalisations	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level
					1995-2000	2001-2006	2006
<i>As a percentage of foreign population</i>	..	4.6	..	4.2	..	..	147 868
Labour market outcomes	1995	2000	2005	2006	Average		Level ('000)
					1995-2000	2001-2006	
<i>Employment/population ratio</i>							
Native-born men	68.3	69.8	68.6	68.3	68.5	69.5	
Foreign-born men	65.6	66.7	66.1	64.6	65.4	65.9	
Native-born women	53.6	56.6	58.7	58.9	54.7	58.3	
Foreign-born women	44.2	45.6	48.0	47.3	44.3	47.4	
<i>Unemployment rate</i>							
Native-born men	9.1	7.7	8.1	8.5	9.2	7.5	
Foreign-born men	16.5	14.5	13.3	15.4	16.8	14.0	
Native-born women	13.5	11.3	9.2	9.6	13.1	9.5	
Foreign-born women	19.0	19.7	16.5	17.1	20.3	16.5	

Notes and sources are at the beginning of the Chapter.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/434141332303>