

Classification of international migration in Russia based on administrative data

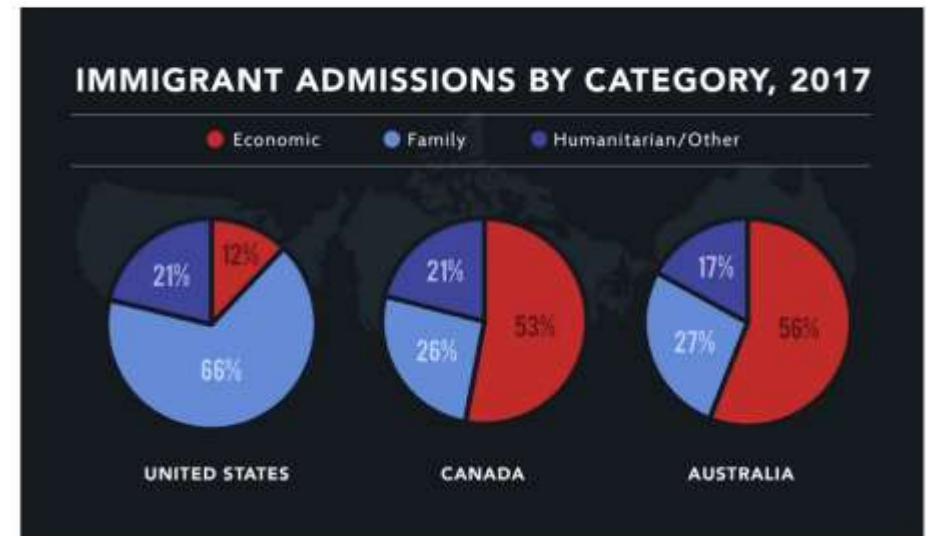


In world practice, the description of immigration channels to a particular country is often based on statistics of residence permits, which are already sorted by a certain class at the stage of issuance.

Understanding **what legal “gates” for migration exist and which ones migrants choose most often** allows us to assess the nature of migration policy (although this does not always reflect the individual’s reasons for move).

The traditional approach to classifying classes of admission is to highlight migration: through family reunification, economic (labour) migration, students, refugees and some other categories

Immigrant Admissions by Category, 2017



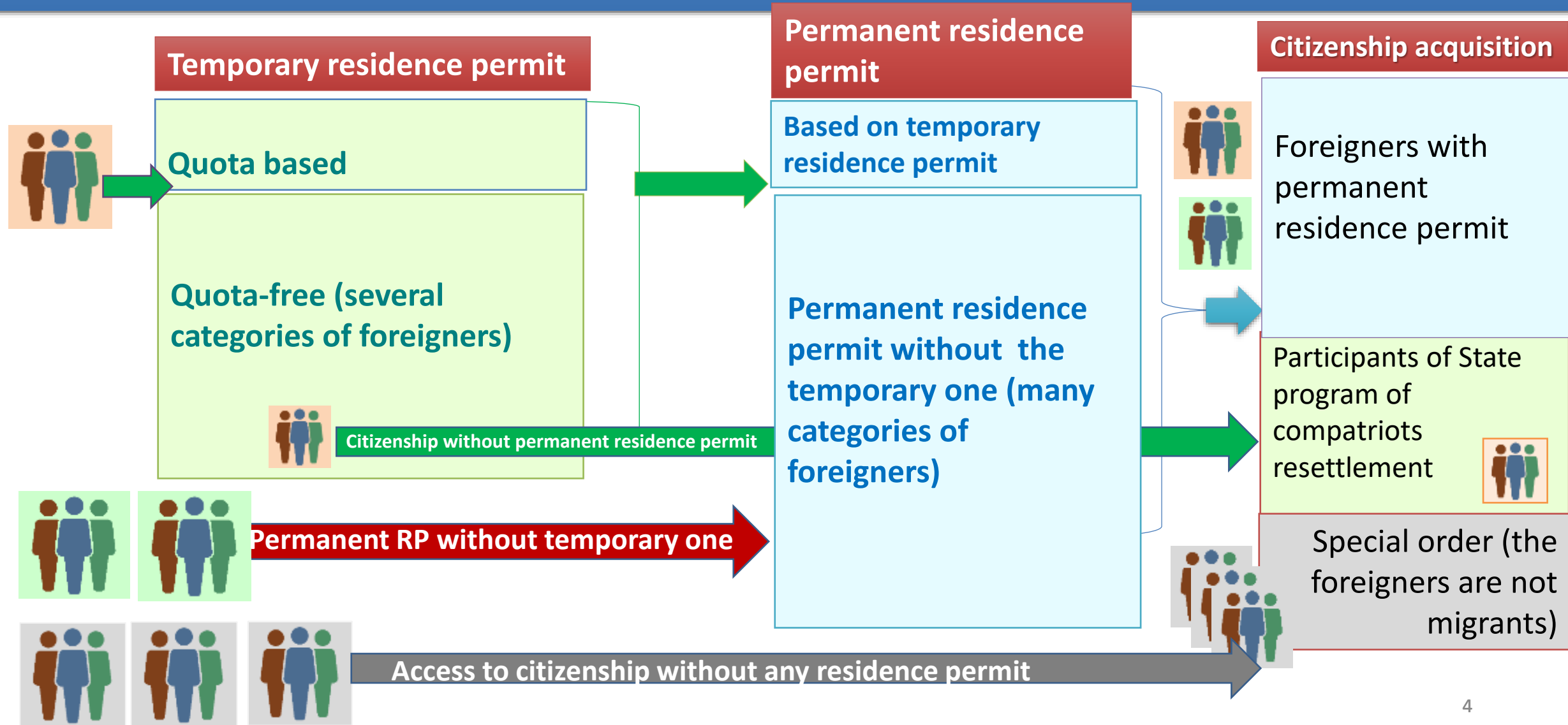
<https://www.americanactionforum.org/series/building-a-pro-growth-legal-immigration-system/>

Considerable gaps in understanding classes of admission of foreigners to residence and naturalization in Russia and possible solutions

- Russia is one of the main migrants receiving countries of the world
- Stock of international lifetime migrants in accordance with the UN DESA estimates amounted to 11,6 million in 2020 (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). International Migrant Stock 2020.)
- From 2010 to 2023, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, 5.6 million temporary and permanent residence permits (2.4 million and 3.2 million respectively) were issued in Russia, 4.4 million people were granted citizenship through the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- However we still have a very vague understanding of what formal grounds are most often used when the authorities make decisions on granting foreigners a particular status.
- There are no aggregated statistics of this kind in Russia, although there is information that allows us to shed light on this important issue.
- The choice is the administrative data of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs on temporary residence permits, residence permits and citizenship.
- Despite the differences in approaches in different countries, these data have much in common and can be considered comparable. If there is a distribution by admission class, they provide an idea of through which “gates” migrants are allowed to reside in the country.
- One more advantage: these are understandable and comparable statuses and data, they are relatively easy to interpret

The issue of definitions and comparability of data is acute in migration statistics. Unlike Rosstat data, statistics on residence permits and citizenship are relatively comparable in an international context

Access of foreigners to the right to reside and acquire citizenship in Russia: different populations receive temporary and permanent residence permit, as well as citizenship (only partial overlapping)



Two basic laws define the statuses that give a foreigner the right to reside and acquire citizenship:

The Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens (FZ-115) (to be amended) and

the Law on Citizenship of the Russian Federation (FZ-62 and from 26.10.2023 - FZ-138).

(* Law on migrants' registration ... № 109)

- The law does not distinguish admission or compliance classes. And the positions are not in a "thematic" sequence.
- But one can see the commonalities in them and try to group them

Статья 8. Постоянное проживание иностранных граждан в Российской Федерации

ГАРАНТ:

См. комментарии к статье 8 настоящего Федерального закона

1. Вид на жительство может быть выдан иностранному гражданину, прожившему в Российской Федерации не менее одного года на основании разрешения на временное проживание.

Информация об изменениях:

Статья 8 дополнена пунктом 1.1 с 1 января 2023 г. - [Федеральный закон от 14 июля 2022 г. N 357-ФЗ](#)

1.1. Вид на жительство может быть выдан иностранному гражданину, получившему разрешение на временное проживание в целях получения образования, после завершения обучения в государственной образовательной или государственной научной организации по программе бакалавриата, программе специалитета, программе магистратуры, программе ординатуры, программе ассистентуры-стажировки, имеющим государственную аккредитацию, или по программе подготовки научных и научно-педагогических кадров в аспирантуре (адъюнктуре).

2. Без получения разрешения на временное проживание вид на жительство выдается:

1) иностранному гражданину, родившемуся на территории РСФСР и состоявшему в прошлом в гражданстве СССР;

2) иностранному гражданину, который не достиг возраста 18 лет (усыновитель, опекун, попечитель) которого является иностранцем, постоянно проживающим в Российской Федерации;

3) иностранному гражданину, не достигшему возраста 18 лет, выданному совместно с родителем (усыновителем, опекуном, попечителем) - иностранным гражданином;

4) иностранному гражданину, имеющему родителя (усыновителя, опекуна, попечителя) или дочь, состоящих в гражданстве Российской Федерации и постоянно проживающих в Российской Федерации;

5) иностранному гражданину, достигшему возраста 18 лет, признанному недееспособным либо ограниченным в дееспособности, получающему вид на жительство совместно с родителем (усыновителем, опекуном, попечителем) - иностранным гражданином;

6) иностранному гражданину, который достиг возраста восемнадцати лет, в соответствии с законодательством иностранного государства признан недееспособным либо ограниченным в дееспособности и родитель (усыновитель, опекун, попечитель) которого является иностранным гражданином и постоянно проживает в Российской Федерации;

7) иностранному гражданину, признанному носителем русского языка в соответствии со [статьей 33.1](#) Федерального закона от 31 мая 2002 года N 62-ФЗ "О гражданстве Российской Федерации";

8) иностранному гражданину, который сам либо родственник по прямой восходящей линии

Categories of foreigners eligible to get the status

Data description

- Statistical reports of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia (formerly the FMS) in the form 2-RD
- "Registration and visa work" – based on the Law “On the legal status of foreigners ...”
- "Citizenship"– based on the Law on Citizenship;
- There is also a report "External labor migration", not considered in this work
- Microsoft excel file with two sheets - on one the data is distributed by citizenship of migrants, on the second - by regions of Russia.
- Distribution of procedures by individual positions of the law.
- Although admission to citizenship is not actually migration, it can be considered as its final phase - in the sense of changing the status of a migrant.

An example of the statistical report 2-RD with data distributed by individual provisions of the law "On Legal status of foreigners in the RF"

Temporary residence permits

Abbreviations denote certain positions of the law "On the Legal status of Foreign Citizens": for example, paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 3 of Article 6 of Federal Law No. 115 are minor children and adults who are incapacitated and receive an ETA together with a parent. Only similar items are grouped.

ФОРМА "2-РД" Раздел 1. Сведения о результатах разрешительно-визовой работы за январь - декабрь 2021 года	Код по ОКСМ	Код строки	РАЗРЕШЕНИЯ на ВРЕМЕННОЕ ПРОЖИВАНИЕ														Число ИГ и ЛБГ, имеющих действительные разрешения на временное проживание на конец	
			Принято заявлений о выдаче ИГ и ЛБГ разрешений на временное проживание	из них в пределах установленной квоты текущего года	Принято решений о выдаче разрешений на временное проживание	в том числе												
						текущего года	предыдущего года	подпункт 1	подпункт 2 и подпункт 6	подпункт 3 и подпункт 5	подпункт 4	подпункт 7	подпункт 8	подпункт 9	подпункт 10	подпункт 11		подпункт 12
РОССИЯ			190 691	18 990	167 596													236 259
КОНТРОЛЬНОЕ ЗНАЧЕНИЕ 1-РД =>			190 691	18 990	167 596													236 259
Код строки по 1-РД			в3.20.1	в3.21.1	в3.22.1													в3.52.1
Код графы по 2-РД			PBP15	PBP16	PBP17	PBP18	PBP19	PBP53	PBP54	PBP27	PBP23	PBP55	PBP24	PBP56	PBP57	PBP29	PBP30	
ВСЕГО		c1	190 691	18 990	167 596	15 106	7 352	3 081	841	3 749	56 844	5	13	46	6 934	26 192	397	236 259
Абхазия	895	c2	69	7	85	9	7	1	1	4	61	0	0	2	0	0	0	205
Австралия	036	c3	22	5	18	5	0	0	0	1	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
Австрия	040	c4	18	0	16	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
Азербайджан	031	c5	11 357	1 120	9 990	937	407	193	50	174	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23 255
Албания	008	c8	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Алжир	012	c9	97	8	76	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	102
Американское Самоа	016	c10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ангилья	660	c11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ангола	024	c12	6	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Антарктида	010	c259	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Андорра	020	c13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Paragraph 9 of Part 3 of Article 6 of Federal Law No. 115 - participants in the State Program of Assistance to Voluntary Resettlement of Compatriots (repatriates)

Data limitations

- No detail in the statistics of temporary residence permits (TRP) until 2014, and residence permits until 2021 (after the transition of many categories of “TRP outside the quota” to “Permanent residence permit without temporary residence permit”)
- 2019-2023 many changes in legislation, rapid expansion of the list of grounds for obtaining a residence permit, bypassing a temporary residence permit, over the past three years (issues of comparability and aggregation)
- The modernization of the form lags behind changes in legislation. There is a problem of large uncategorized balances; feedback from the data producer is not easy.

When legislation changes (in recent years - intensively), a regrouping and redistribution of migrants occurs through other formal channels, When a migrant chooses the “gate” of admission to status, considerations of ease of achieving the goal dominate, rather than the accuracy of “hitting” the relevant clause of the law.

Classification results

Class of admission	Categories included	Peculiarities or limitations
Family reunification	Children, parents, spouses, persons under guardianship	No (not counting family members included in other classes – with the main applicants, but this is inevitable) There are questions about "marital" migration, but there is no evidence...
Human capital	Graduates, Highly skilled specialists, holders of professions in demand, IT specialists, talents	-
Ethno-cultural ties with Russia	State program of compatriots resettlement and Russian language native speakers	The participants of the State Program in fact represent two other classes – skilled workers and family members. In addition, in the mid–2010 s and in 2022, many participants in the State Program were the people who received temporary protection status
Preferences by country of birth, citizenship or residence	Several categories, including "for humanitarian purposes" when applying for citizenship	Citizenship: the majority of applicants in 2019-2022, apparently, were not migrants. Eligibility to get citizenship for humanitarian purposes actually implies residence in a country with unstable political processes.
Status regularization	Regularization, recognition, restoration (in citizenship)	-
Students – (since 2023 and only for temporary residence permits)	Students of tertiary system of education	The category is not filled so far, it reflects only a small part of the total number of international students, the interest is selective and depends on the country of student's citizenship.

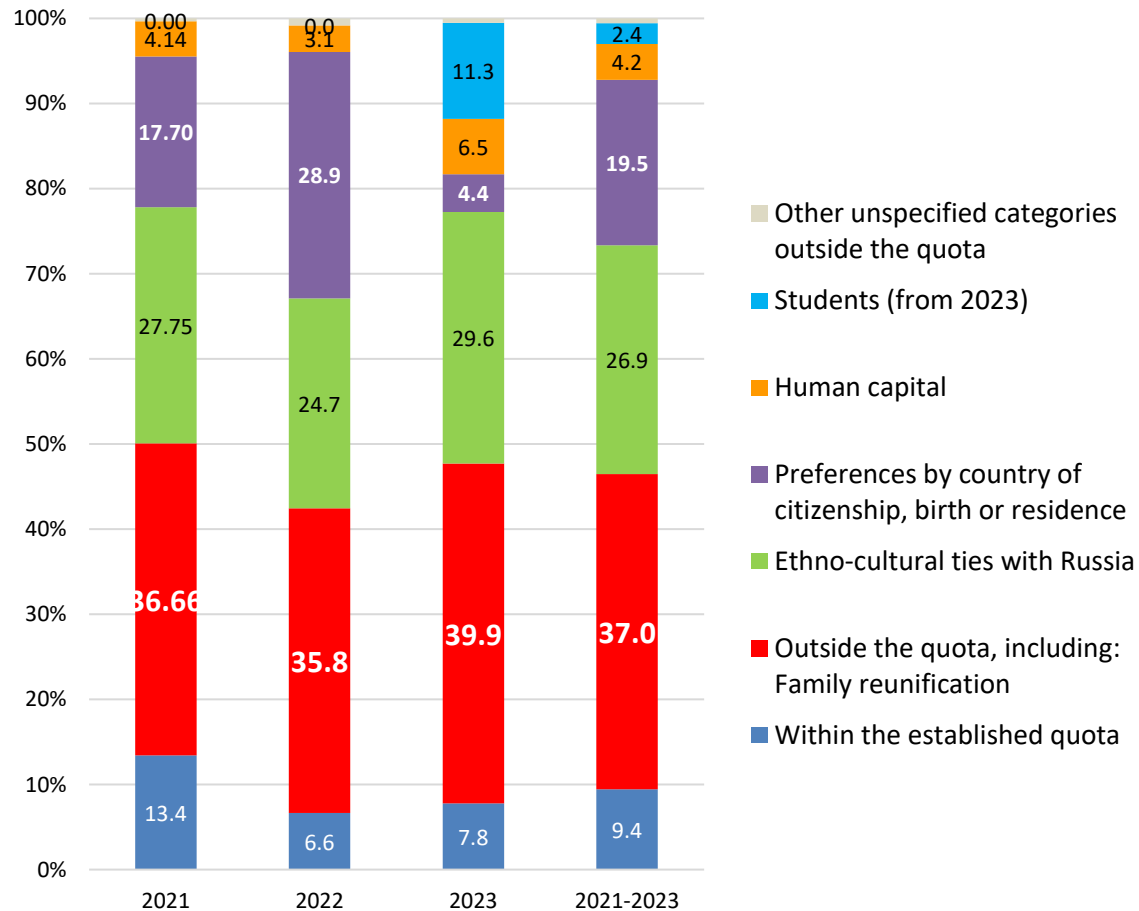
The class of refugees (or persons receiving protection) is not defined. Only a few refugees acquired citizenship in recent years (42 persons in 2021-2023) (included in the "other" category). "Temporary protection" – applicants receive statuses already as participants of the State Program of compatriots resettlement

Main results in figures

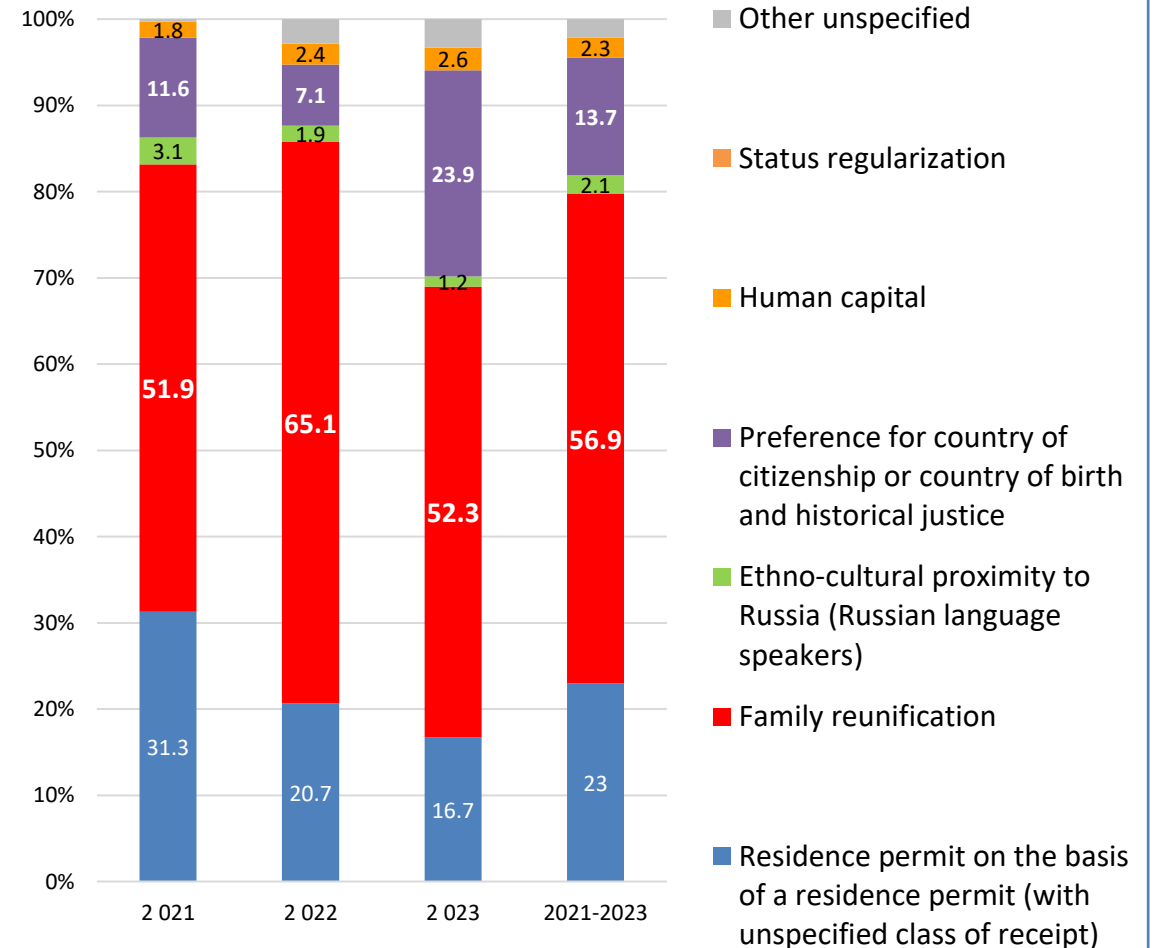
Family reunification class prevails. Temporary residence permits often issued to migrants from “Ethno-cultural ties” class (State Program of compatriots resettlement)

On the charts: distribution of received temporary and permanent residence permits by classes of admission 2021-2023, percent. Based on the data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia

Temporary residence permits

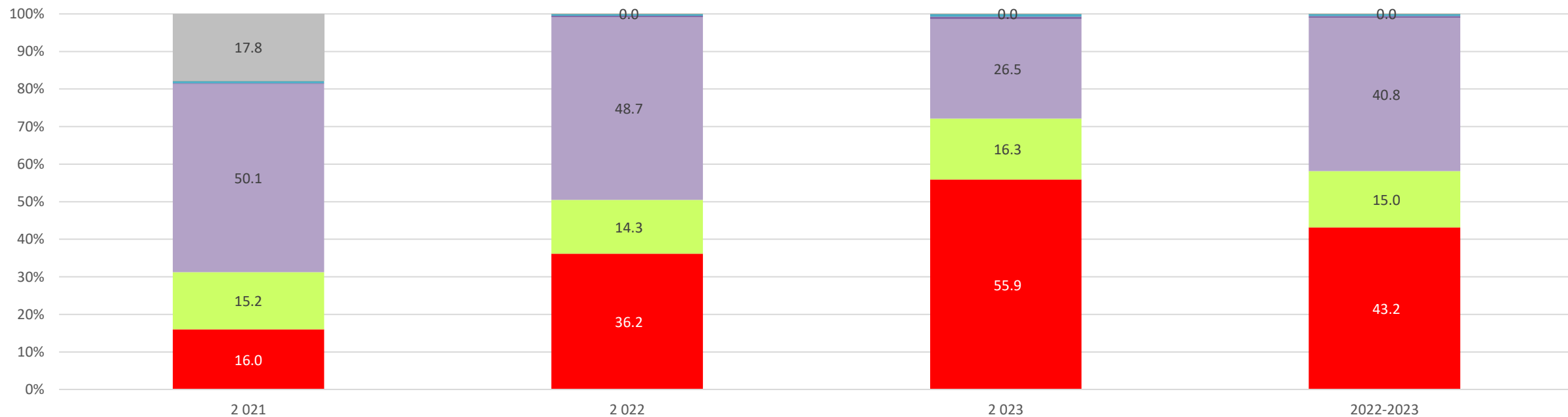


Permanent residence permits



Citizenship acquisition. The structure of recent years has been influenced by the mass admission of Ukrainian citizens (a shift in the structure of classes of admission to citizenship in favor of preferences by country of citizenship, birth or residence). In 2023, the proportion between classes became more “traditional”

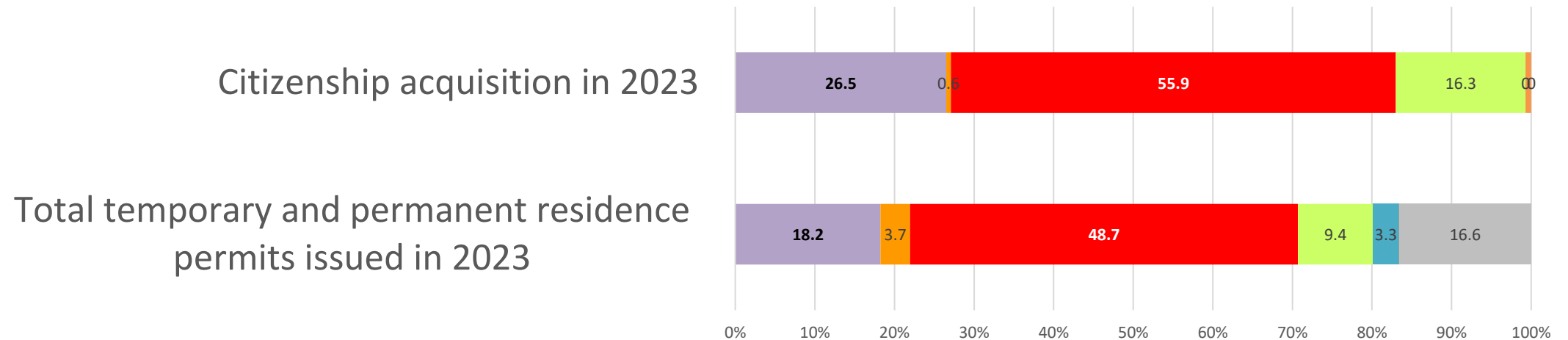
Distribution of persons granted citizenship of the Russian Federation, by class of admission, 2021-2023, percent



- Family reunification
- Ethno-cultural ties with Russia
- Preferences by country of citizenship, birth or residence
- Human capital
- Status regularization

Main finding: majority of foreigners in Russia get residence permit and acquire citizenship via family reunification class of admission

Distribution of persons granted Russian citizenship and of decisions on the issuance of temporary residence permits and residence permits (total) in 2023 by class of admission, percent



- Preference based on country of citizenship. Birth or residence
- Human capital
- Family reunion
- Ethnocultural ties
- Students
- Regularization of status
- Other

data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia

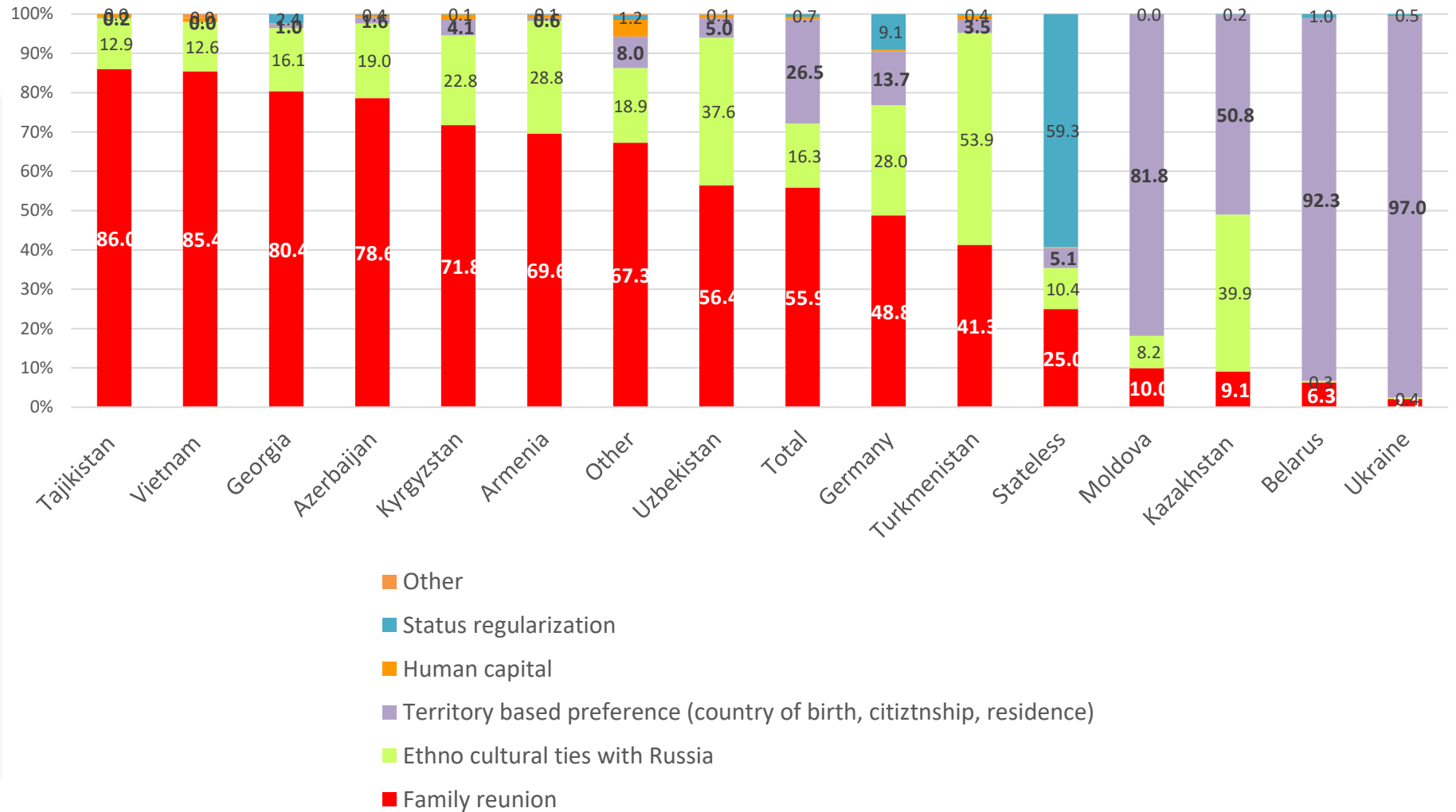
Potential of the data used

- Possibility to analyze individual classes of migration and naturalization, their composition and changes in indicators
- Analysis of differences in the choice of channels (and admission classes) of migration and naturalization by citizens of different states
- Analysis of law enforcement practice in the field of issuance of a residence permit, residence permit and admission to citizenship at the level of individual regions of Russia
- Availability of data for previous years – a retrospective analysis of the situation, its dynamics by country and by region

An example of country-specific composition of naturalization classes

The distribution of persons admitted to citizenship of the Russian Federation by enlarged classes showed large differences between citizens of different countries in the choice of formal channels of naturalization (more pronounced than with a detailed approach)

Distribution of citizens of selected countries by class of Russian citizenship acquisition. 2023 , percent. Based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia data



Assessment of the scale of labor, educational and forced migration

- Residence permits and admission to citizenship statistics cannot be a good basis for such immigration measurement.
- The majority of labor and educational migrants, apparently - within the framework of current legislation – can legally stay in Russia on the basis of other documents and having the status of a temporary resident / Moreover, with regard to labor migrants, this reflects the position of the state to maintain their temporary status. Apparently, qualified migrants receive a PRTR. Residence permit and citizenship through other channels, including through the State Program.
- Forced migration is quickly "absorbed" by migration in the class of "Ethnocultural ties with the Russian Federation" – due to the origin of the majority of forced migrants and their compliance with the definition of "compatriot"

Legislation is changing New provisions, new categories of migrants eligible for residence permit issuance or citizenship acquisition

- Since October 2023, a new law on citizenship has been in force
- Starting this year, the adoption of the federal law "On the conditions of entry (exit) and stay (residence) in the Russian Federation of foreign citizens and stateless persons" is expected - the institution of temporary residence permits will be excluded. There will be a "long-term stay regime" differentiated by purpose of stay. But it is not yet clear how this will be reflected in the statistics.
- 10 categories of foreigners will be eligible to get residence permit in a simplified manner. They can also be combined into classes.
- It is expected that the form 2-RD will be changed. Comparability of indicators for individual categories should be good (because the formulations are inherited from previous laws)

Concluding remarks

- The administrative data used made it possible (at least partially) to close the gap in understanding the structure of long-term migration flows by formal classes of admission for residence and naturalization
- The conducted consolidation of categories and their classification simplifies the analysis and gives an idea of the organization of formal channels for permanent residence in Russia and admission to Russian citizenship.
- Using this approach, it is possible to objectively observe the **predominance of grounds related to family reunification**, which indicates that the nature of long-term migration in the Russian Federation corresponds to the most common situations in migrant-receiving countries and the **compliance of the migration policy of the Russian Federation with the task of simplifying family reunification** (although this aspect is not mentioned among the stated tasks of migration policy)
- There is also an imbalance towards formal (declared) **preferences based on criteria unrelated to the availability of human capital**, but they can mask the true characteristics of migrants.
- The proposed approach showed that Russia's **policy on skilled labor migration is aimed at maintaining the temporary status** of foreign workers.
- Formal channels of long-term migration and naturalization in no way reflect the volume of migration of individual species. It is necessary to use special types of statistics to estimate real volumes of these categories of migrants
- The continuation of the analysis of administrative data will be possible only if there is access to the data...

- Thank you for your attention!