

The Challenges of Immigration in a Small European State

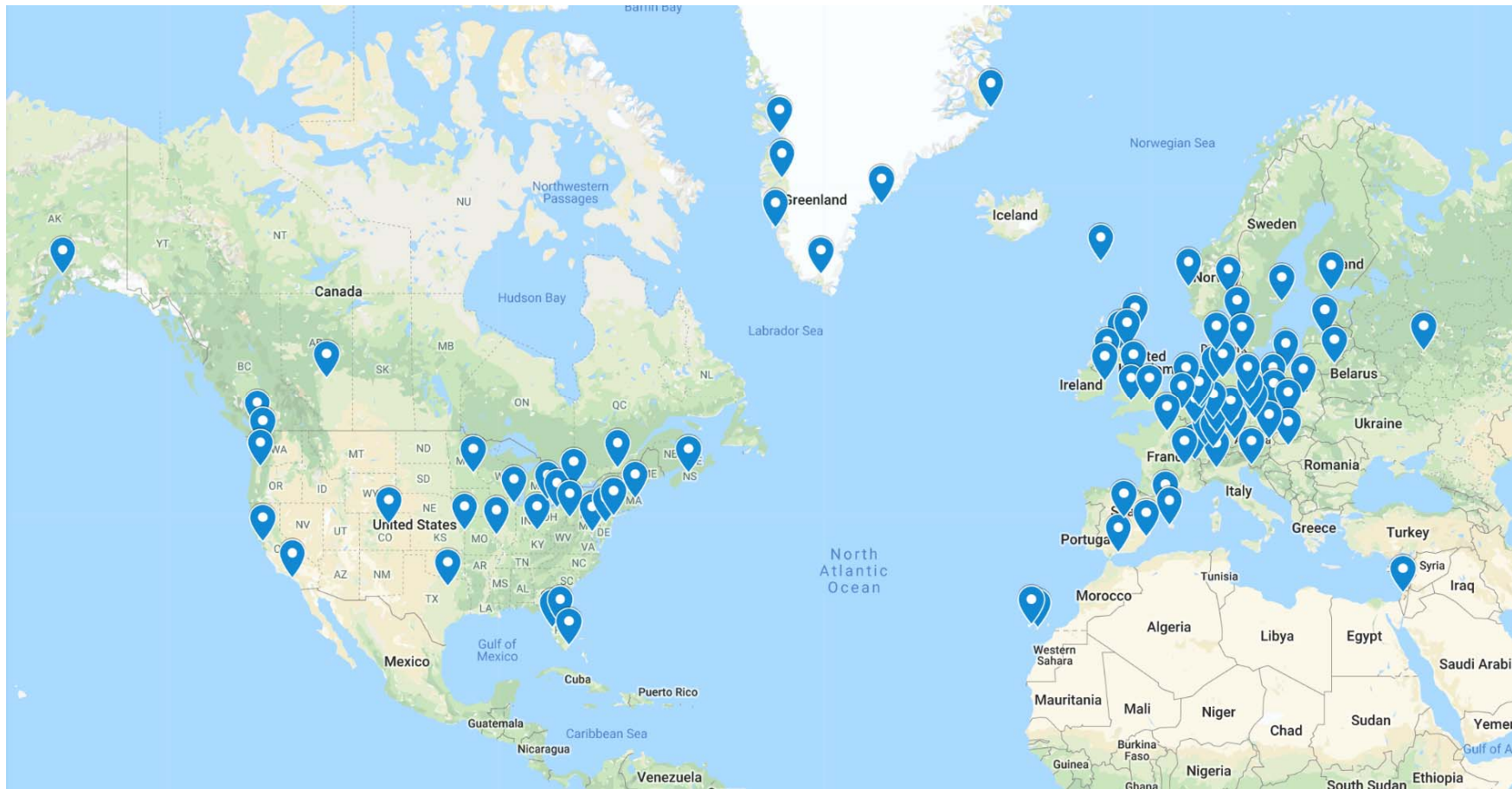
Iceland

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Map

- Provide a Map indicating the location of your country and highlighting the main 'approach routes' / transit routes taken by immigrants coming to your country in recent years.

Map



Population Trends

- Indicate how the local population has grown/declined in the last 100 years, explaining any trends

Population Trends

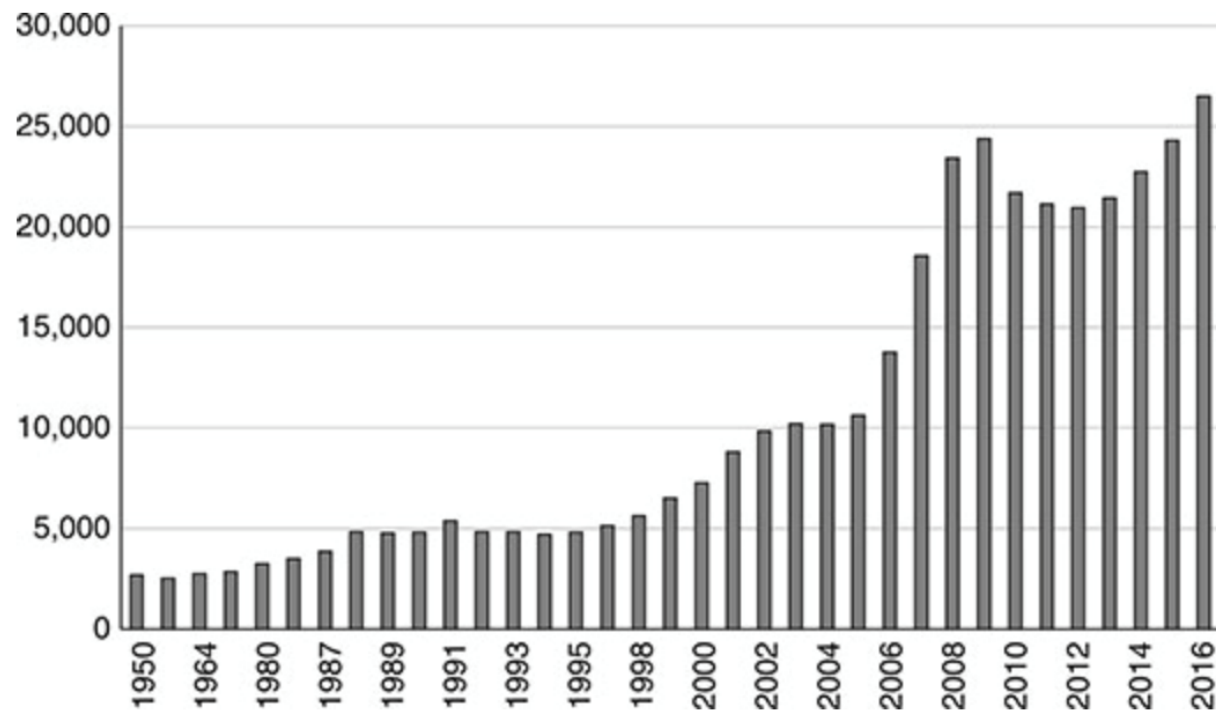


Figure 5.3 Foreign citizens in Iceland, 1950–2016.

Source: Statistics Iceland 2018b.

Population Trends

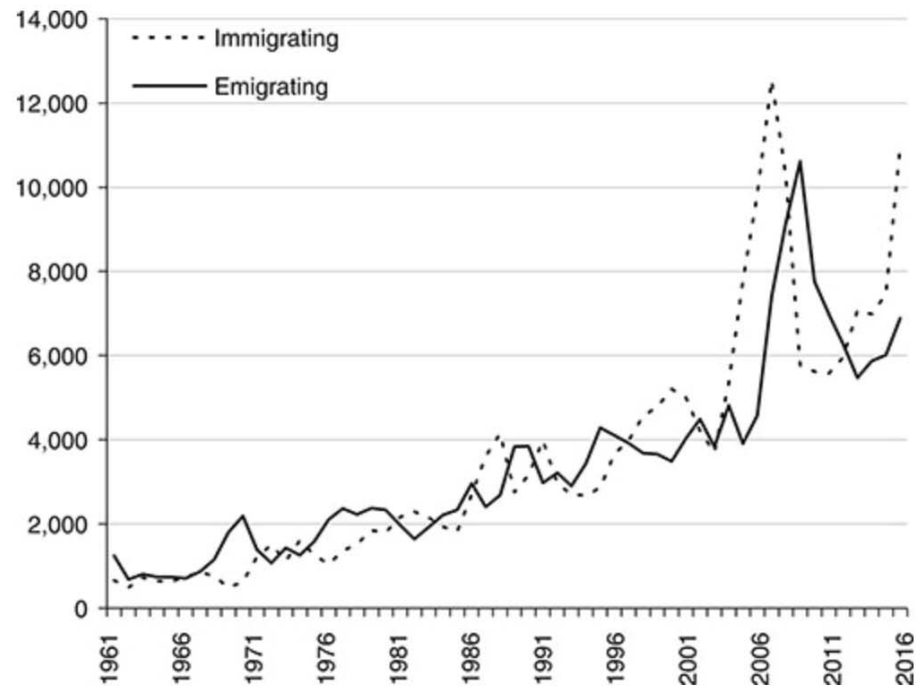


Figure 5.4 Number of people moving to and from Iceland, 1961–2016.

Source: Statistics Iceland 2018a.

Note

The numbers before 1986 are underestimated since registration only took place once a year and, thus, may not include people emigrating/immigrating between registration dates. Nowadays, registration takes immediate effect.

Population Trends

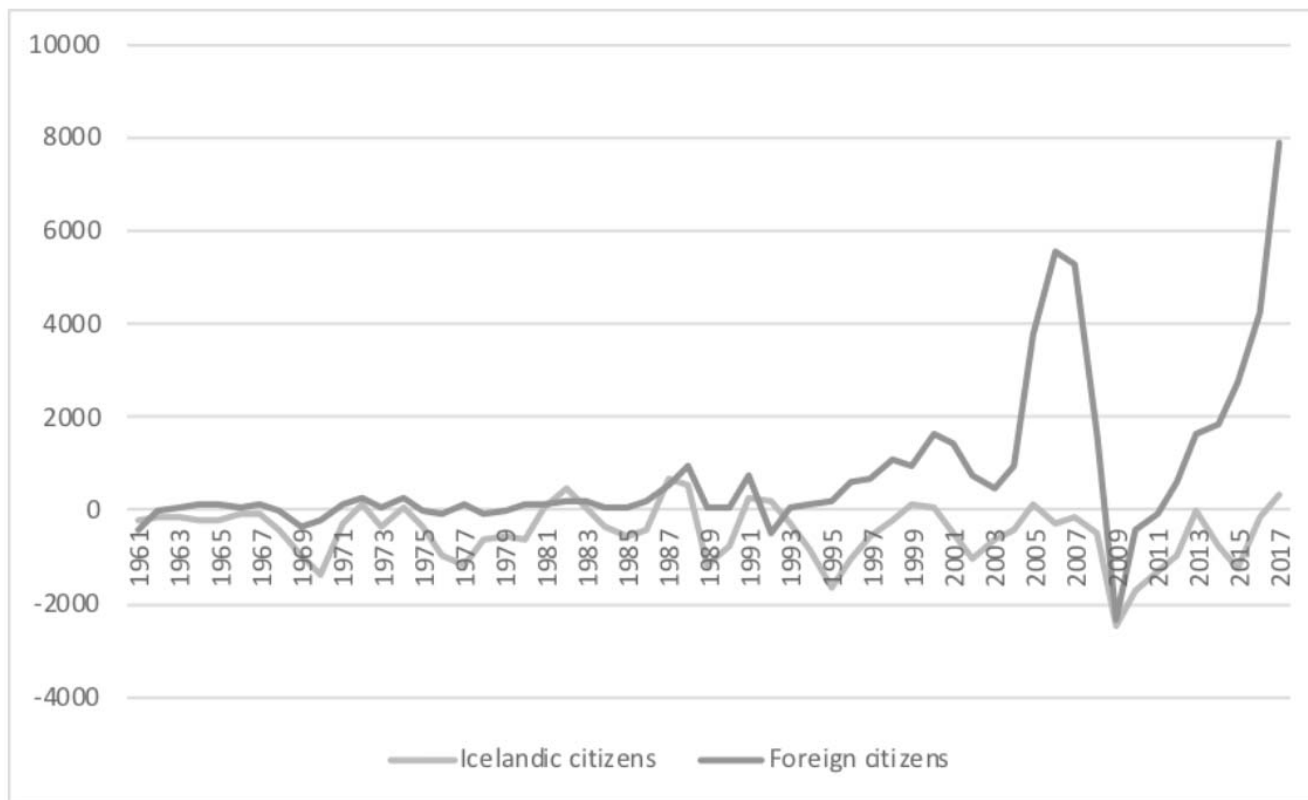


Figure 1. Net migration to Iceland 1961-2017

Source: Magnússon et al. 2018. "Here to stay? The rapid evolution of the temporary staffing market in Iceland." *Icelandic Review of Politics and Administration* ⁷

Population Trends

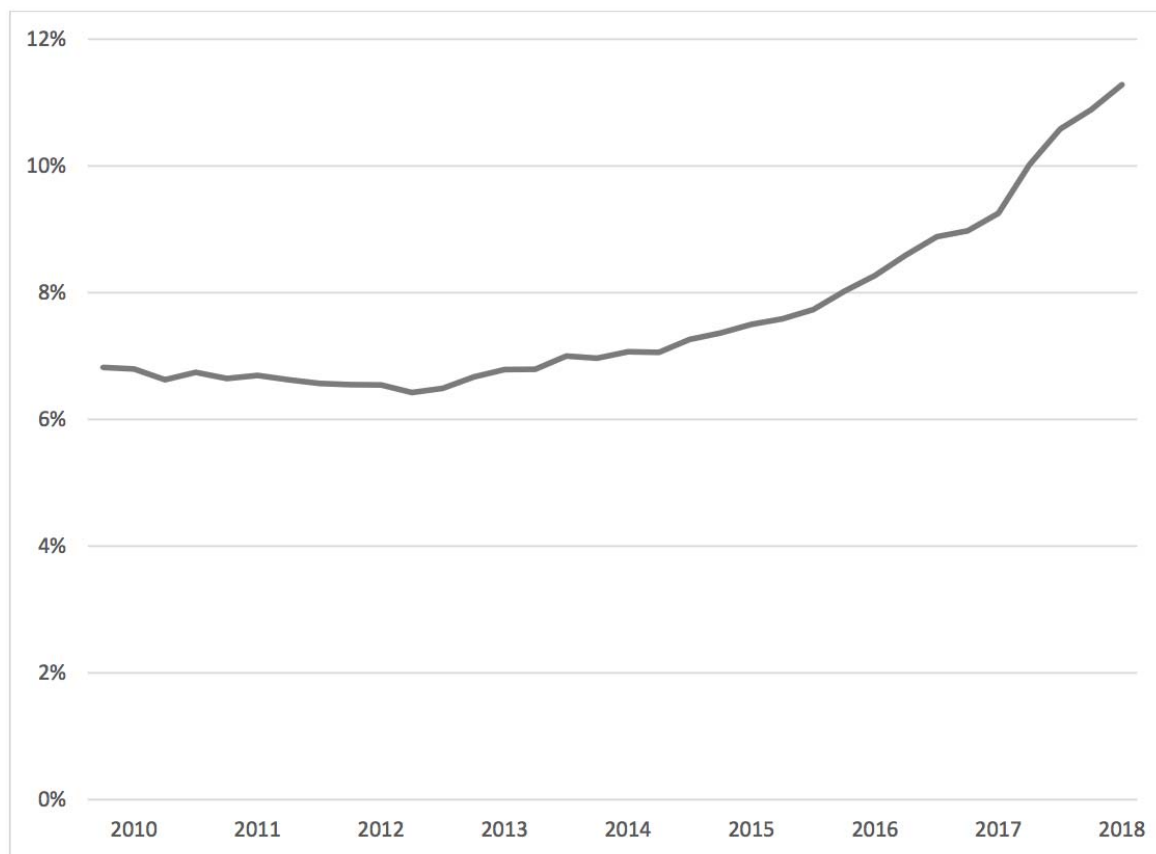


Figure 2. The proportion of inhabitants of Iceland that are foreign citizens 2009-2018

Source: Magnússon et al. 2018. "Here to stay? The rapid evolution of the temporary staffing market in Iceland." *Icelandic Review of Politics and Administration*

Population Dynamics

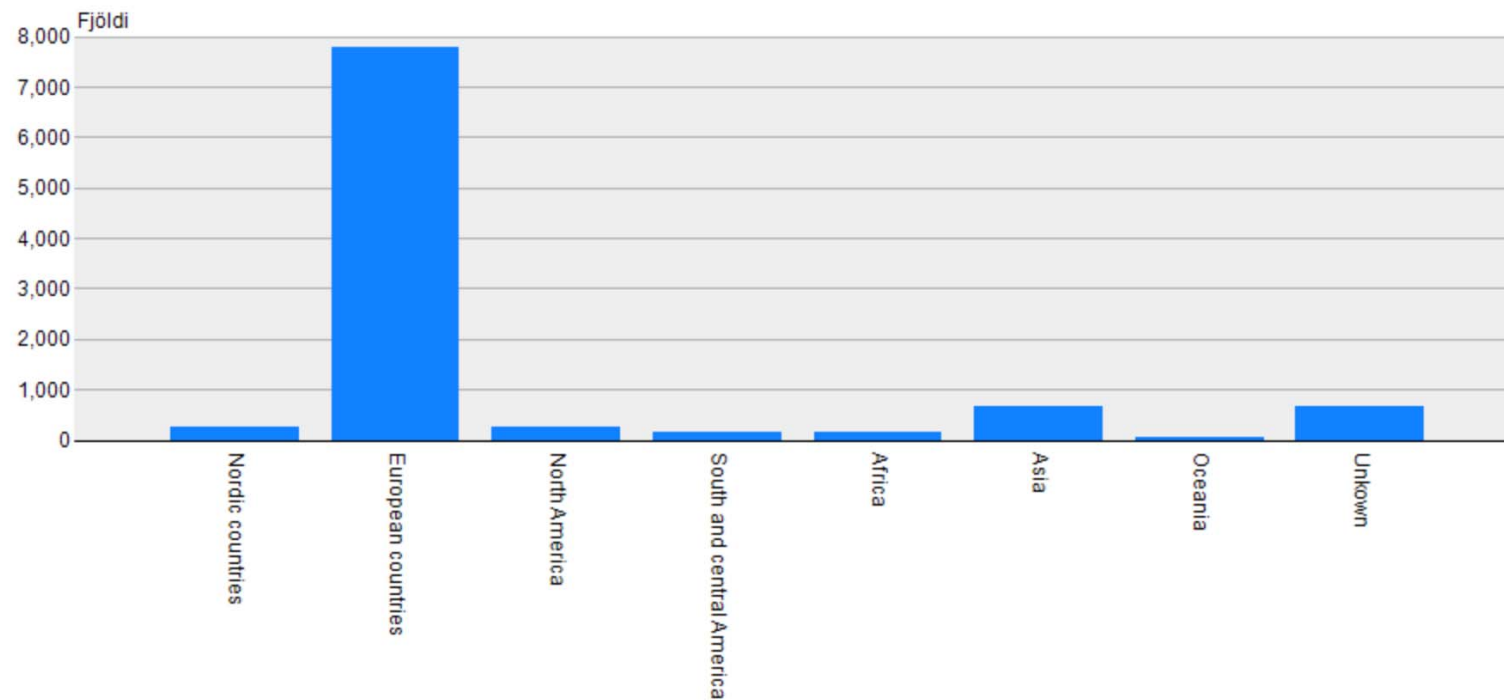
- How is the Local Population divided?
(Ethnically; Residents, Citizens, Foreign/Guest Workers)
Provide Total Numbers and Percentages (Latest Estimates)

Population Dynamics

- Foreign citizens: 10.9% (2018)
- Largest immigrant groups:
 - Polish (38.8% of total immigrant population)
 - Lithuanian (5.5%)
 - Philippine (4.0%)
 - Historically (most of the 20th century): Danish

Population Dynamics

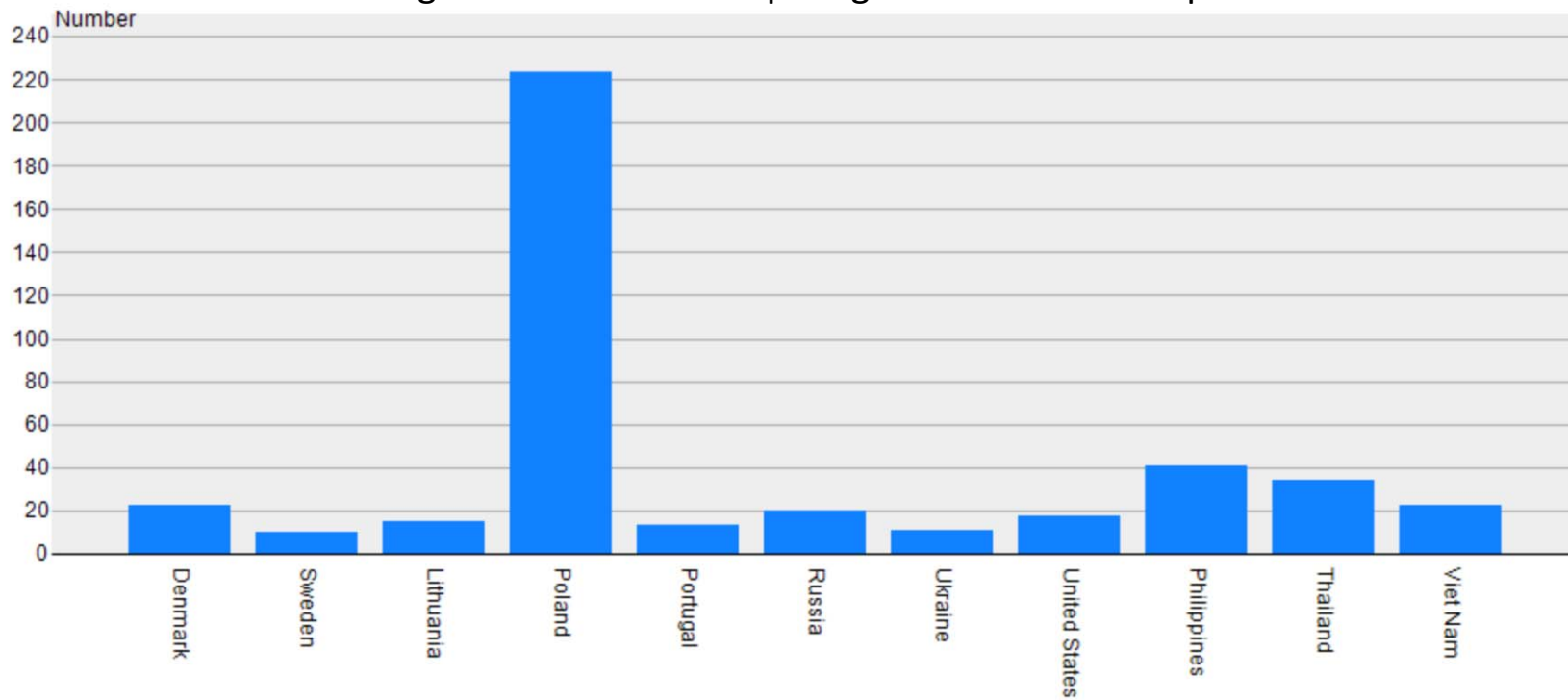
Region of origin for immigrants who arrived in Iceland in 2017



Source: Statistics Iceland 2019.

Population Dynamics

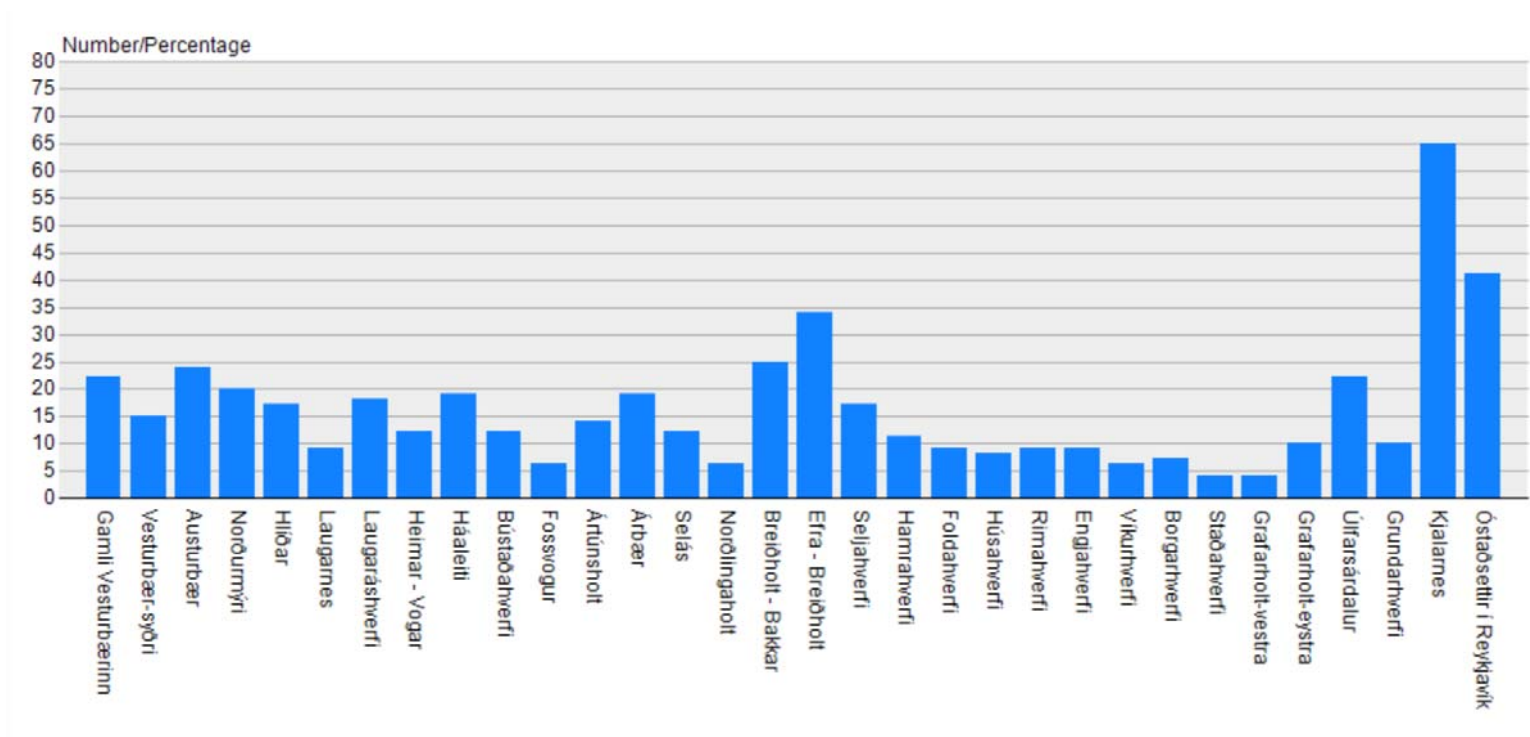
Countries of origin for individuals acquiring Icelandic citizenship in 2017



Source: Statistics Iceland 2019.

Population Dynamics

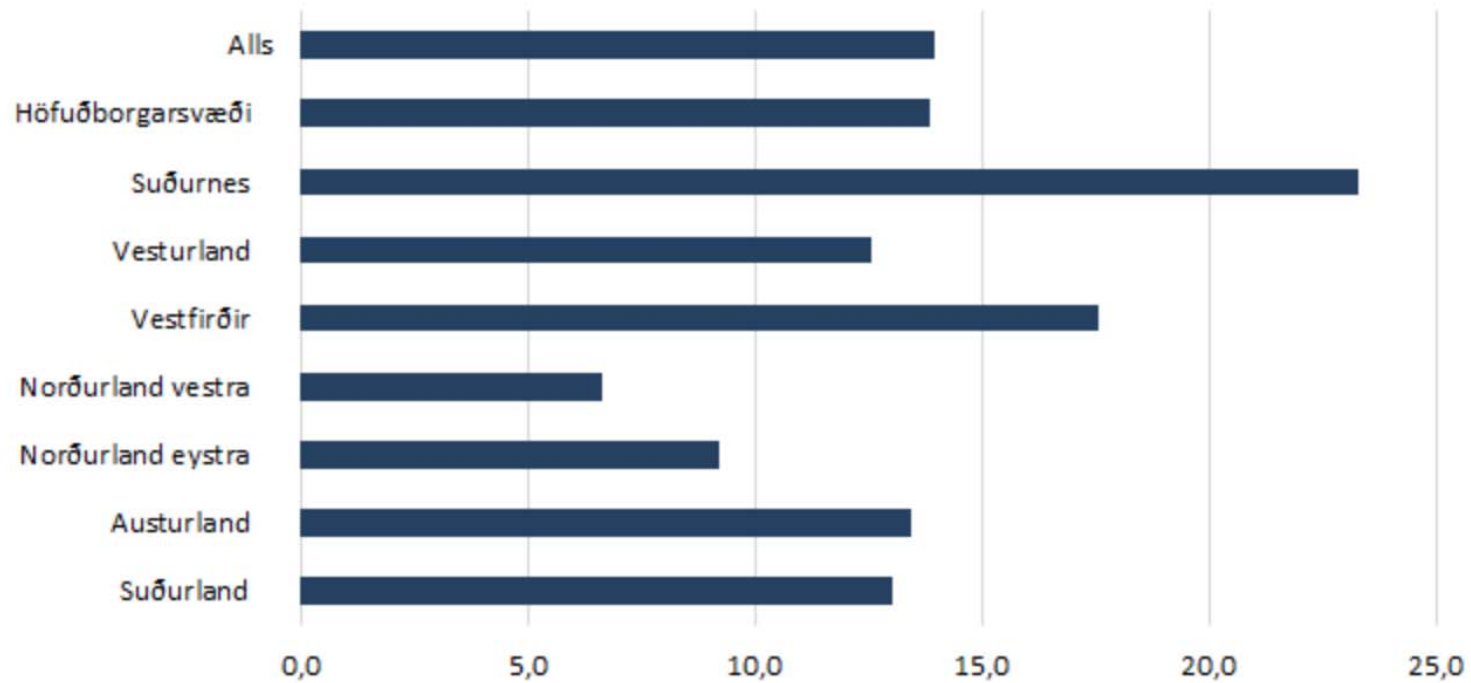
Immigrants as a share of the total population in Reykjavik districts, 2018



Source: Statistics Iceland 2019.

Population Dynamics

Immigrants as a share of the total population in Reykjavik districts, 2018



Source: Statistics Iceland 2019.

Types of Immigration

- Explain the type of persons who are immigrating to your country, the reasons for their migration (both PUSH and PULL Factors), and whether they intend to stay or leave.

Types of Immigration

- Pull factors:
 - The state of the Icelandic economy (booms/busts)
 - High wages in Iceland attract migrants from EEA states with lower wages
 - Construction booms
 - Tourism
 - Low barriers to labor mobility
 - EEA, 1994
 - Schengen, 2000
 - Cheap flights
 - Large temporary projects
 - Kárahnjúkar power plant
 - Reyðarfirði aluminium smelter
 - Temporary workers brought here by temporary staff agencies
 - Image of Iceland
- Push factors:
 - Human rights violations and conflict
 - Refugees and asylum seekers
 - Economic

Challenges to Immigration (1)

- Explain what are the main challenges that emerge as a consequence of migration to your country.

Challenges to Immigration (1)

- Concerns over weakened labor standards
 - Circumventing minimum wage standards
 - Underpaying skilled staff
 - Payments in cash
 - Workers are unaware of their rights
- Concerns over exploitation of foreign labor
 - Deceptions re: lodging, fees, work clothes, food
- Racism and bigotry
- Refugees and asylum seekers
 - Contentious in domestic politics
 - No rise in far-right populism however
- Housing/rental market
- Segregation
 - Primarily in regards to temporary workers
- Gender ratio

Challenges to Immigration (2)

- How does being a SMALL STATE nuance / exacerbate / influence these main challenges that have emerged as a consequence of migration to your country.
- Homogeneity
- Weak public administrations
- Vulnerable to economic fluctuations

Challenges to Immigration (2)

- But...
 - It needs to be emphasized that immigration can on the whole be a net benefit
 - Most studies show beneficial effects on the economy and public coffers, native educational attainment and innovation, without any significant impact on crime.
 - In *Small States and Shelter Theory*, we argue that immigration is absolutely crucial for small states, as immigration can alleviate several disadvantages unique to small states.
 - Problem: Vulnerability to economic fluctuations
 - Solution: Adds to the flexibility of the small state economy
 - Problem: Homogeneity, tradition and isolation
 - Solution: Create a more vibrant marketplace of ideas

Responses to Immigration

- Explain what are the main strategies and policies that have been developed (by the State, by NGOs, by local communities . . .) to address the challenges resulting from migration.

Responses to Immigration

- Actors:
 - The state
 - Labor unions
 - Red Cross
 - Local communities and individuals

Flashpoints

- Describe a particular episode/s that occurred in your country and which highlight/s some of the challenges in addressing migration appropriately.
 - (Prohibition of African-American soldiers)
 - (Refugees and asylum seekers)
 - (Anti-Muslim sentiment)

Conclusion: Prospects

- Looking forward, what can one expect of immigration in your country?
 - Short answer: If the economy remains healthy, immigration should increase