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## Asylum applications remain 31% lower than in 2019



Just above 40 000 applications were registered in the EU+, slightly fewer than in July and far below the levels prior to the COVID-19 outbreak



Most applicants were from Syria, Afghanistan, Venezuela and Colombia



EU+ countries issued some 43 260 decisions at first instance, 24 % fewer than July



26 % of all decisions issued in August granted EU-regulated protection



Some 411 950 cases were pending at first instance at the end of August, down by 15 600 from July

***Despite a gradual increase in asylum applications since the initial easing of travel restrictions, August saw just over 40 000 registered, almost 40% fewer than in January.***

Figures [released](#) by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) show that the impact of COVID-19 restrictive measures remains evident across the EU+ . Data show that asylum applications in August were down slightly from July (almost 43 000 applications), and significantly below pre-COVID levels. In January 2020, 65 692 applications were registered.

Since the beginning of 2020, 295 075 applications for international protection have been lodged in the EU+, a **31% decrease compared to the same period in 2019**. This indicates that reduced mobility and pandemic emergency measures are still affecting the number of applications being lodged with national asylum authorities.

In August, **Syrians** (5 394; 13% of total) and **Afghans** (3 800; 10% of total) continued to lodge the most applications for international protection, followed by **Venezuelans** (3 600; 9% of total) and **Colombians** (3 300; 7% of total), but EASO analyses suggest that these applicants are not newly arrived to the EU+.

**Colombians** and **Peruvians** were the only prominent citizenships lodging more applications so far this year. Other citizenships are universally lodging fewer applications due to the pandemic.

In August, **26% of applications received a positive decision**, while in July only 23% received international protection. Overall, the recognition rate between January and August 2020 stands at 31%.

Despite the challenges, and because of new working arrangements in place, EU+ asylum authorities have been able to issue more first-instance decisions (over 43 200 in August) than there were applications lodged, which means that even in these difficult times, the **backlog is being reduced**.

The current public health situation makes it extremely difficult to make accurate forecasts about the EU+ asylum situation in the coming months. Nevertheless, the recent return of restrictive measures in some EU+ countries and the intra-EU travel restrictions in place are likely to also limit mobility for those in need of protection. Asylum applications are thus expected to remain at lower levels than in recent times.

***Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: [press@easo.europa.eu](mailto:press@easo.europa.eu)***