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Almost 1 million asylum applications in the EU+ in 2022



In 2022, EU+ countries received some 966 000 applications for international protection, up more than 50 % from 2021, and the most since 2016. The largest applicant groups were Syrians, Afghans and Turks, but applications were also high for a wide range of other nationalities, while the caseload of applications pending decision hit its highest level since 2017.

New [analysis](#) released by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) estimates that, in 2022, **around 966 000 applications for asylum** were lodged in EU+ countries.^[1] This represents a significant increase on 2021, by around half, and is owed in part to the **removal of COVID-19-related restrictions** and longer-term underlying trends such as conflicts and food insecurity in many regions of origin, **resulting in strong push factors**. Furthermore, secondary movements within the EU and significant numbers of applications by nationals

from visa-free countries **who arrived legally**, contributed as well.

It comes in addition to around 4 million^[2] people fleeing Ukraine who benefit from temporary protection. In activating the [Temporary Protection Directive](#), the decision to offer a dedicated channel that does not require an individual examination of protection needs [prevented the collapse](#) of Europe's asylum systems. However, the combined **five million persons seeking protection in Europe** have placed its national reception systems under considerable pressure.



Record applications for a wide range of citizenships

Syrians (132 000) and **Afghans** (129 000) remained by far the largest applicant groups, and nationals of both countries lodged substantially more applications than in 2021, in fact the most since 2016. The EUAA has recently issued **Country Guidance on Syria and Afghanistan**, with conclusions largely [substantiating the protection needs](#) of Syrian nationals, and finding inter alia that restrictions placed on Afghan women by the Taliban [amount to persecution](#).

With more than doubling numbers, **Turkish applicants** (55 000) became the third largest group. They were followed by **Venezuelans** (51 000) and **Colombians** (43 000), who both lodged about three times as many applications as in 2021. Turks, Venezuelans, Colombians, **Bangladeshis** (34 000), and **Georgians** (29 000) all applied the most on record. At lower levels, record applications were also lodged by citizens of **India** (26 000), **Morocco** (22 000),

Tunisia (21 000), Egypt (15 000), Moldova (8 300), and several others.



Mounting caseload for national systems

In 2022, EU+ asylum authorities **issued some 632 000 decisions at first instance**, up by a fifth from 2021. However, applications increased by far more – in fact outnumbering them by about 333 000 – **resulting in the largest gap since 2015**. It largely translated into an increase in pending cases at first instance. At the end of the year, **some 636 000 cases were awaiting a decision** at first instance, a 44 % increase compared to 2021.

The EU+ recognition rate^[3] was 40 % in 2022, up by five percentage points from 2021 and the most in five years. Of the two-in-five applicants **receiving a positive decision** at first instance, around **147 000 were granted refugee status and 106 000 received subsidiary protection**. Recognition rates were especially high for Syrians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Eritreans, Yemenis, and Malians. In contrast, recognition rates were especially low (i.e., under 4 %) for citizens of India, North Macedonia, Moldova, Vietnam, Tunisia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Nepal among others.

EUAA operational support in half of the European Union

Equipped with a strengthened mandate to support the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), in 2022 the Agency substantially increased its technical and operational support.

The number of countries benefitting from the EUAA Operational Support **has quadrupled to 13 EU Member States** since just 2019 (e.g., Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain), with over 1 500 deployed personnel. The Agency is also providing support in a third country, Moldova.

For more information and an interactive data visualisation, please visit the [Latest Asylum Trends](#) page.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Union Agency for Asylum's Press Office at the following email addresses:

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- [\[1\]](#)EUAA EPS data are preliminary and might differ from validated official statistics submitted to Eurostat at a later stage. Eurostat data are used in the annual EUAA Asylum Report. The total EPS numbers include an approximation for one EU+ country and may change after data updates.
- [\[2\]](#)European Commission.
- [\[3\]](#)This refers to the recognition rate for EU-regulated forms of protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection) at first instance.

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