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## Asylum applications in April down by almost one-third, compared to the peak of autumn 2023



The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has released an updated analysis showing that EU+ countries continue to receive fewer applications for asylum, compared to the seven-year peak of last autumn. In contrast, the number of cases pending at first instance in the EU+ reached levels not seen since the migration crisis of 2015-2016.

During the winter months of 2023-2024, there has been a general [decline in the number of asylum applications](#) received by EU+ countries. This trend continued in April 2024, with only 86 000 applications received by national asylum authorities. This is a notable decrease (-30%) when compared to the [recent peak](#) of 123 000 applications in October 2023.

In April, Syrians (12 000) lodged slightly more applications, compared to the previous month, though the number is down by a significant margin compared to the [seven-year peak](#) in the autumn.

The overall decrease in applications, however, has not been the case across all Member States. Following a surge of arrivals in the Canary Islands there was a commensurate increase in the number of asylum applications lodged by several citizenships, including Malian nationals. At the same time, applications in Italy remained [just below the record high](#) of March 2024. Overall, these trends contributed to the largest caseload at first instance, in seven years at an EU level.

## Persistent strain on most national systems, from both asylum seekers and beneficiaries of temporary protection

In April 2024, Germany (19 000 applications) remained the [top destination](#) for asylum seekers in the EU+, receiving nearly a quarter (23 %) of the total. Spain (16 000) followed with 18 % of applications, and Italy received a near-record high of 14 000 (17% of the EU+ total).

Although Germany has traditionally led in receiving asylum applications, it has seen a decline in recent months, while Italy has experienced a surge. The main receiving countries also differ in the origins of applicants: in Germany, over half comprised Syrians, Afghans and Turks; in Spain, more than two-thirds were Venezuelans, Colombians, and Malians; and in Italy, 40% were Bangladeshis, Peruvians, and Egyptians.

The Spanish asylum system was affected by several developments: first, there has been a well-documented surge of boat arrivals in the [Canary Islands](#) with commensurate increases in the number of asylum applications being lodged in the first few months of 2024. For example, in April 2024, [Malians](#) lodged 2,200 applications for asylum, which is the most on record and up five-fold compared to a year earlier. [Senegalese](#) lodged 1,200 applications which is up three-fold over the same period. Secondly, many [Venezuelans](#) and [Colombians](#) have, for some time, been seeking protection for the most part in Spain. These Latin American nationals, who enjoy visa-free access to the Schengen area, continued to submit significant numbers of applications in the EU+ in April 2024: 6,200 Venezuelan applications and 4,800 Colombian.

The number of applications is not always the most representative measure of pressure on EU+ countries, as they have different sized asylum and reception systems. In April 2024, the number of applications in Cyprus (1 500), with its small population size of around 921,000, amounted to 1 application for every 600 inhabitants, the most per capita across EU+ countries. Italy (14 000) and, neighbouring Austria (2 200), while receiving very different numbers of applications per se, actually received very similar numbers per capita: about 1 application for 4 100 inhabitants.

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