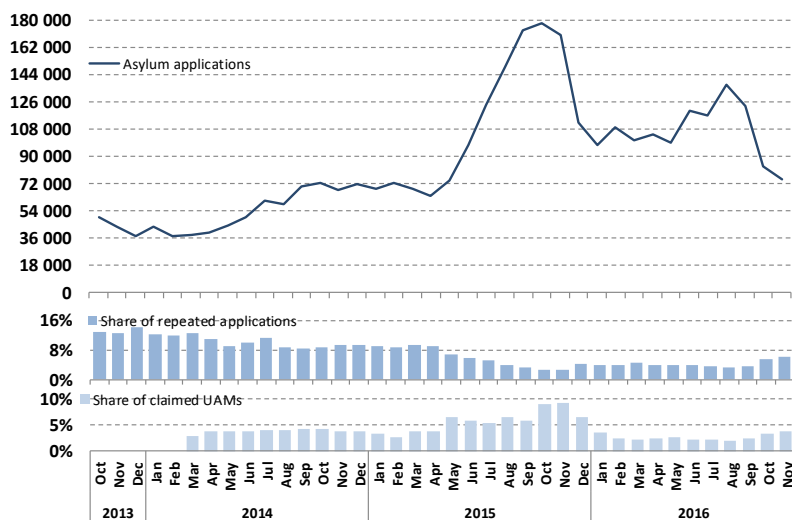


## Latest asylum trends – November 2016

### Number of applications for international protection in the EU+<sup>1</sup>

In November 2016, EU+ countries recorded 75 844 applications for international protection<sup>2</sup>. This was third consecutive month with decrease in numbers of lodged applications and the lowest monthly total since May 2015. The number of



asylum applicants this month was half the level observed in November 2015. **Since the beginning of 2016, 1 171 138 applications have been recorded in the EU+.** This is 6 % less than in the same period of 2015 when 1 242 572 applications were lodged. The share of repeated applications (having previously lodged an application in the same EU+ country) rose from 5 % in October to 6 % in November. **4 % of all applicants claimed to be unaccompanied minors (UAMs)<sup>3</sup>** when lodging an application. 22 % of all UAM applicants were Afghan citizens, 12 % Eritreans and 10 % Gambians.

### Main countries of origin of applicants

Syria and Afghanistan were the top two citizenships of applicants. The third top country of origin changed compared to previous months as Nigeria replaced Iraq. Syria has been the main citizenship of applicants since April 2015. In November



2016, EU+ countries recorded 11 295 Syrian applications, 15 % less than in the previous month (13 312). The number of Afghan applicants also decreased, to about 7 235 from 10 121. These top-three citizenships together accounted for 32 % of all applications lodged in the EU+. Iraq (5 097) and Eritrean (3 845) nationals ranked in fourth and fifth position while the top 10 of citizenships was completed by Pakistan (3 277), Albania (2 847), Iran (2 071), Bangladesh (1 987) and Guinea (1 732). Except for citizens from Pakistan, Albania and Bangladesh which recorded increases by + 4 %, + 5 % and + 12 % respectively, the

number of applicants from other top ten citizenship groups decreased compared to October 2016, with the largest decrease observed among citizens from Iran (- 26 %).

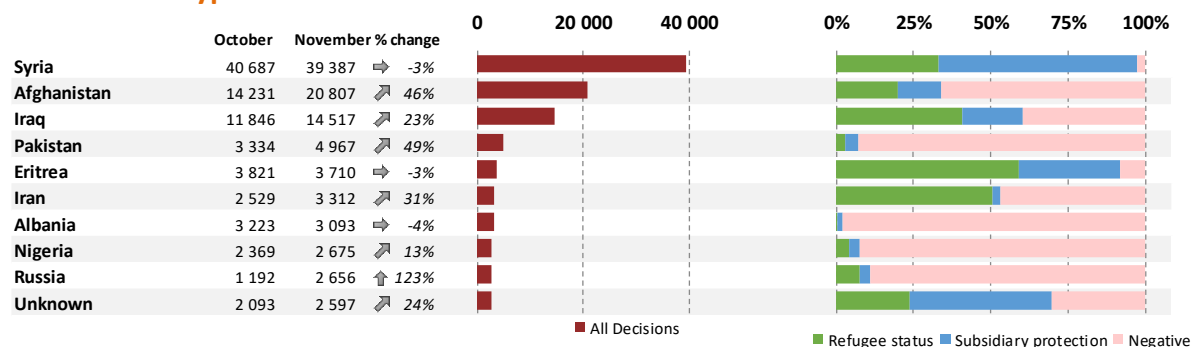
<sup>1</sup>The EU+ is composed of EU28 plus Norway and Switzerland. The share of repeated applicants is the proportion of repeated applicants in the total number of applicants for international protection. The share of claimed UAMs represents the proportion of asylum applicants claiming to be below the age of 18 years in the total number of applicants rather than those assessed to be such after an age assessment has been carried out.  
<sup>2</sup>Asylum applications were available for 29 EU+ countries. No data were available for Romania. For Malta and Cyprus weekly estimates from weeks 45-48 was used as proxy for monthly.  
<sup>3</sup>Several EU+ countries have difficulties reporting on claimed UAMs in the framework of the EPS, these figures should therefore be considered as underestimations of the actual proportion of claimed UAMs.

**Syria** – In October 2016, Syria remained the main country of origin of applicants for international protection in the EU+ with 11 295 applications. This was 15 % less than the number of Syrian applications recorded in October and the lowest number of Syrian applicants since April 2015. The share of Syrian applicants in the total of applicants also became smaller, down from 23% in September to 15 % in November. In November 2015, when the asylum influx was at its height, just over 55 000 Syrians applied for international protection in the EU+. Syrian applicants remained widespread throughout the EU+ with 19 EU+ countries counting Syrian nationals among their top-three citizenships of applicants.

**Afghanistan** – Afghanistan was in second place of the citizenships with most applicants for the eighth consecutive month. The numbers fell for third consecutive month, with a drop of 29 % to 7 235 applications in November. This was the lowest number since May 2015. Afghanistan remained the main citizenship of claimed UAMs (22 %). 12 EU+ countries reported Afghan applicants in their national top-three citizenships.

**Nigeria** – In November 2016, the number of Nigerian applicants increased by 6 % to 5 603. Compared to November 2015, about 2 683 more Nigerian applications were recorded in November 2016. Only 3 EU+ countries counted Nigerian applicants among the top-three citizenships, namely Italy, Austria and Ireland.

### Number and type of decisions issued in first instance in EU+ countries



In November 2016, EU+ countries issued 130 542 first-instance decisions<sup>4</sup>, about 18 % more than in October 2016 when the highest level since the start of EPS monthly data collection in 2014 was recorded. Compared to October 2015 when 68 654 decisions were issued, the number of decisions almost doubled, demonstrating the increased decision-making capacity implemented in a number of EU+ countries. The EU+ recognition rate reached 53 % in November, five percentage points lower than in the previous month. More positive decisions granted subsidiary protection (52 % of all positive decisions) than refugee status (48 %). One third of all decisions were issued to Syrian applicants, namely 39 693 decisions, 3 % fewer than in the previous month. For the second consecutive month the recognition rate for Syrian applicants remained at 97 %, with refugee status granted to 44 % and subsidiary protection granted to 66 % of total positive decisions. The number of decisions issued to Afghan applicants increased by 46 % to 20 810. The recognition rate for Afghan nationals was on the same level as in the previous month: 34 %. Of total positive decisions, 59 % resulted in refugee status and 41 % in subsidiary protection, with an increasing proportion for refugee status throughout the past year. The number of decisions on Iraqi applications increased by 22 % to 14 526, with a 60 % recognition rate. Most Iraqi applicants were issued refugee status (67 % of all positive decisions). Of 10 citizenships with the most first-instance decisions issued, Eritrea showed the second highest recognition rate (92 %). The lowest recognition rates were observed for Albanian (2 %), Pakistani and Nigerian (7 %) applicants.

### Cases awaiting a first-instance decision

For the second time in 2016, the number of cases awaiting a first-instance decision decreased by 7 % to 943 261.<sup>4</sup> This slight decrease in pending cases is explained by the continued increase in the number of first-instance decisions issued, combined with a lower number of applications lodged. 54 % of all cases were pending for longer than six months. The largest shares of applicants awaiting first instance decision for longer than six months was observed in Sweden (89 %), Norway (87 %) and Austria (86 %).

<sup>4</sup> Data on these indicators were not yet available for Romania, Malta and Cyprus.