



Recognition rates: Granting international protection in EU+ countries

The information presented in this fact sheet is extracted from the [Asylum Report 2022](#).
Direct link to the section: <https://euaa.europa.eu/asylum-report-2022/4141-granting-international-protection-recognition-rates>

Who is granted international protection in Europe? The recognition rate can be used to better understand who meets the criteria for asylum. The rate represents the number of positive outcomes as a percentage of the total number of decisions on applications for international protection. For reporting in the Asylum Report, positive decisions included in the recognition rate include EU-harmonised statuses only (e.g. refugee and subsidiary protection).

The recognition rate for specific nationalities of applicants can indicate which citizenships are granted protection more frequently and which are rejected.



Key developments extracted from the Asylum Report 2022

Recognition rates at first instance

The overall EU+ recognition rate for first instance decisions on asylum applications was 34% in 2021. This means that out of 535,000 decisions issued, 182,000 were positive, granting the applicant either refugee status or subsidiary protection. As such, two-thirds of all first instance decisions were negative.

Most positive decisions at first instance granted refugee status (118,000 or 65% of all positive decisions) and subsidiary protection was granted in the remaining 64,000 cases (35% of all positive decisions). While the recognition rate for EU-regulated types of protection has remained stable since 2018, the share of positive decisions granting refugee status dropped in 2021.



- The EU+ recognition rate of 34% excludes authorisations to stay for humanitarian reasons. If such authorisations are included, the recognition rate for 2021 would be 40%. This considerable difference is largely due to humanitarian status granted to Venezuelans in Spain, which represented more than two-fifths of all humanitarian permissions to stay in EU+ countries. Moreover, Afghans received one-seventh of all humanitarian permissions, most of which were issued by Germany and Switzerland.
- In 2021, women received more positive decisions on their protection claims (41% of all decisions) than men, who were granted protection in 31% of all decisions. This difference was slightly higher than in 2020 (35% compared to 28%). However, the data available do not indicate which applications lodged by males or females were part of family groups.
- The same caveat applies to the situation of children, whether their application is lodged as part of a family submission or alone. Overall, 53% of decisions issued protection to minors younger than 18 years, which is considerably higher than for applications lodged by the 18-34 age group (28%), 35-64 age group (24%) and applicants aged 65 years or older (25%).
- In some EU+ countries, first instance recognition rates varied over time, usually because of changes in caseloads. Partially because of more positive decisions issued to Afghan applicants, overall recognition rates increased for example in Bulgaria (from 37% in 2020 to 62% in 2021), Czechia (10% to 27%), Denmark (23% to 41%), Estonia (36% to 67%), Latvia (13% to 40%), Lithuania (23% to 45%), Poland (17% to 67%) and Portugal (23% to 62%).
- While the recognition rate also climbed in Hungary, from 27% to 73%, the overall number of decisions was low (55 decisions in 2021) and new legislation requires applicants to submit a declaration of intent at a Hungarian embassy in a non-EU country before they can enter the country and apply for international protection.
- In contrast, recognition rates declined substantially in Cyprus (50% to 19%), Greece (55% to 44%) and Iceland (63% to 45%).

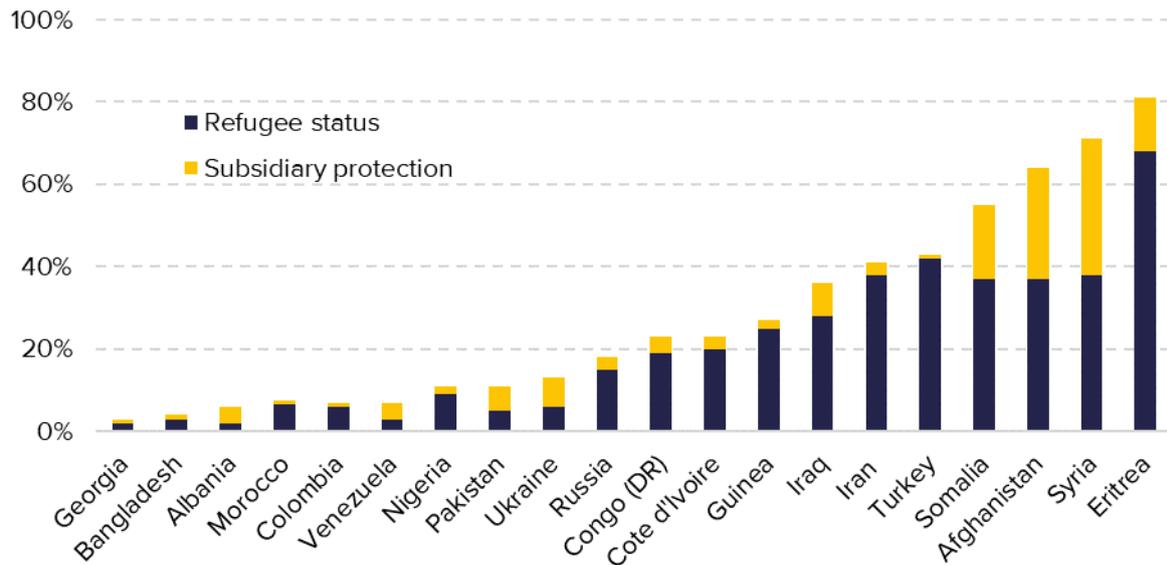
Recognition rates for specific nationalities

- Among the 20 nationalities receiving the most first instance decisions in 2021, Eritreans had the highest recognition rate at 81%. The high rates of acceptance have been the case for this group of applicants since 2015, ranging from 79% to 89%. This was followed by Syrians (71%), Afghans (64%) and Somalis (55%) (see *Figure 1*).
- For the remainder of the top nationalities, recognition rates remained relatively low. For example, nationals of Albania, Bangladesh, Colombia, Georgia, Morocco and Venezuela had recognition rates ranging from only 3% to 8%.
- Among the top 20 nationalities, more than one-half of all positive decisions granted subsidiary protection to nationals of Albania, Pakistan, Ukraine and Venezuela.



> Eritreans, Syrians and Afghans had the highest recognition rates

Figure 1. First instance recognition rates in EU+ countries by nationality and status granted, 2021



Note: These 20 nationalities received the highest number of first instance decisions issued in 2021 in EU+ countries.

Source: Eurostat [[migr_asycdfstq](#)] as of 22 April 2022.

- Outside the top 20 nationalities, recognition rates were notably high for nationals of Belarus (80%), Yemen (77%), Burundi (65%), Palestine (64%), China (51%), South Africa (50%), as well as stateless persons (55%).
- However, low recognition rates were more common, particularly for citizens of countries which are exempt from visa requirements to enter the EU. These comprised applicants from the vicinity of the EU, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, as well as some Latin American countries, such as Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela.
- In the specific case of Venezuelans, seven in every ten decisions granted humanitarian status, which permits them to remain in the EU but is not counted towards positive decisions in the recognition rate. Venezuelans in Spain alone accounted for over two-fifths (12,865) of all cases in which humanitarian status was granted in 2021 in EU+ countries.
- Recognition rates have remained high for nationals of Yemen, although their rate has declined from a 92% peak in 2017. The share of positive decisions has also remained high for Syrian applicants, although the 71% recognition rate in 2021 was the lowest value in a decade. This may have been partially related to the unprecedented number of repeated applications lodged by Syrians in Germany, which are rejected as inadmissible if there is a lack of grounds for reopening the case.¹

- Recognition rates have been increasing for Afghan nationals, from 31% in 2017 to 64% in 2021. If humanitarian protection were included in the calculation, the overall recognition rate for Afghans would increase to 72%. The climb was partially triggered by the fact that some EU+ countries temporarily suspended issuing negative decisions to Afghans in the context of the Taliban takeover.²
- The political background also prompted the rise in recognition rates for Belarusian applicants, from 25% in 2020 to 80% in 2021. Afghans and Belarusians had the highest recognition rates in EU+ countries since at least 2008.

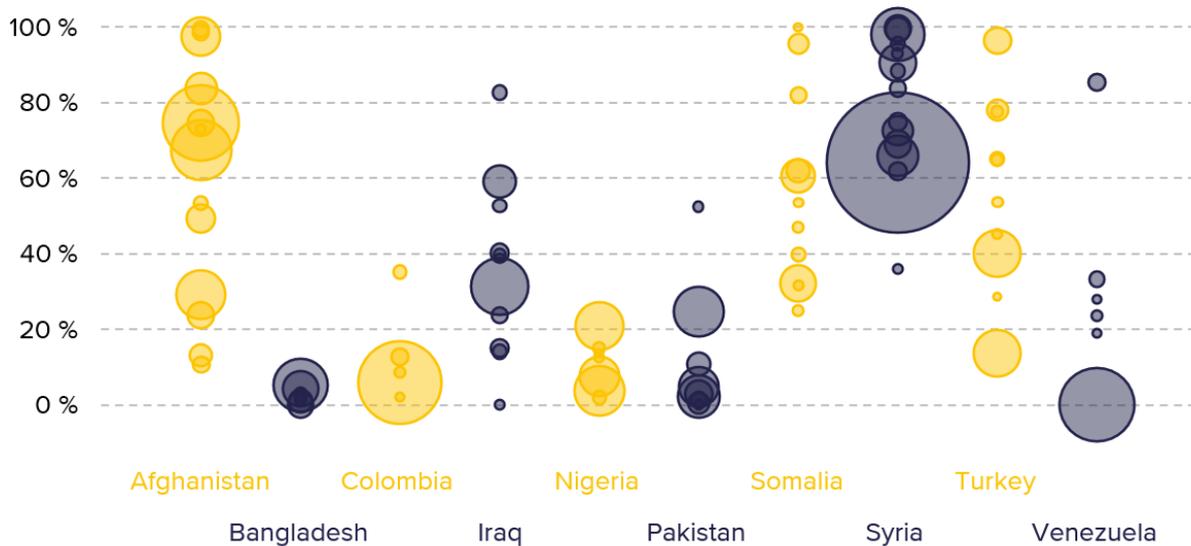
Differences in recognition rates for specific nationalities across receiving countries

- As in the past, large differences in national practices were seen in granting protection to the Top 10 citizenships of applicants. With bubble sizes indicating the number of decisions, Figure 2 shows the recognition rates for selected countries of origin. For example, the recognition rate for Syrians was at least 62% in most countries that issued many decisions (more than 200), but it was only 36% in Denmark.
- Conversely, the recognition rate for nationals of Venezuela was below 33%, except in Italy (85%). Similarly, the rate for Colombians did not exceed 13%, except in Italy (35%). In fact, recognition rates in Italy were at the upper-end of the range for many citizenships, including Afghans, Iraqis and Somalis.
- Overall, discrepancies in recognition rates were most apparent for applicants from Afghanistan, ranging from 11% in Bulgaria to 99% in Poland and Spain. Wide ranges also occurred for Iraqi applicants (from 0% in Poland to 83% in Italy) and Turks (from 16% in France to 96% in Switzerland). However, extremely high or low percentages can sometimes be a result of very few decisions being issued.
- There are several reasons why the same citizenship may have different recognition rates across EU+ countries. For example, applicants with the same citizenship can have significantly different profiles and protection needs, or come from different regions of the same country. This has been the case for applicants from Afghanistan, where the security situation varied considerably from one region to another until the takeover by the Taliban.
- Recognition rates may also differ between first-time and repeated applications lodged by the same nationality. Similarly, some applicants may have already received an EU protection status in another Member State but they submit a new application. EU+ countries may also differ slightly in terms of their national policies and guidelines on asylum, in addition to the interpretation of certain legal concepts. In particular, receiving countries can have different lists of safe countries of origin and safe third countries or assess internal protection alternatives and the level of indiscriminate violence differently, which can impact eligibility for subsidiary protection.



➤ Recognition rates for certain citizenships differed significantly across EU+ countries

Figure 4.24. Recognition rates for nationalities receiving the most decisions at first instance, by receiving country, 2021



Note: Each bubble represents a different EU+ country issuing more than 200 first instance decisions in 2021 for the selected nationality. The bubble size indicates the number of first instance decisions and the placement on the vertical axis denotes the recognition rate. The 10 nationalities presented received the most first instance decisions in 2021.

Source: Eurostat [[migr_asyappctzm](#)] as of 22 April 2022.

Stateless applicants

- The share of positive decisions on asylum applications at first instance for stateless persons in EU+ countries is generally high. But there has been a decreasing trend since 2014, with an 86% recognition rate in 2014 compared to 55% in 2021.
- In addition, the recognition rate for applicants registered as of 'unknown' nationality was consistently and significantly lower than for applicants registered as 'stateless' from 2012 to 2019, while for 2020 and 2021 it was higher (62% for 'unknown' compared to 56% for 'stateless' in 2020; and 60% compared to 55% in 2021).

To search for more developments by topic, country or year, consult the [National Asylum Developments Database](#).

To read more case law related to asylum, consult the [EUAA Case Law Database](#).

Sources

Please see [Sources on Asylum 2022](#) for the full list of over 1,000 references which were consulted for the Asylum Report 2022.

¹ Federal Office for Migration and Refugees | Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge. (December 2021). *Asylgeschäftsstatistik [Asylum Statistics]*.

https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Statistik/AsylinZahlen/aktuelle-zahlen-dezember-2021.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=5; AIDA Germany. (2022). *Country Report: Germany - 2021 Update*. Edited by ECRE. Written by Paula Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik. https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/AIDA-DE_2021update.pdf

² European Union Agency for Asylum. (2021, December 1). *Developments in asylum procedures in EU+ countries in response to the situation in Afghanistan*. <https://euaa.europa.eu/publications/developments-asylum-procedures-eu-countries-response-situation-afghanistan>