



Recognition rates: Granting international protection in EU+ countries

The information presented in this fact sheet is extracted from the [Asylum Report 2023](#).
Direct link to the section: <https://euaa.europa.eu/asylum-report-2023/4141-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.

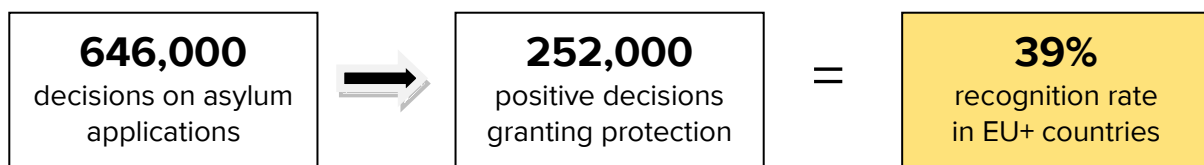


Key developments extracted from the Asylum Report 2023

Recognition rates at first instance

The overall EU+ recognition rate for first instance decisions on asylum applications was 39% in 2022. This means that out of 646,000 decisions issued, 252,000 were positive, granting the applicant either refugee status or subsidiary protection. The recognition rate went up by 5 percentage points compared to last year and was the highest since 2017. The rise was mainly due to more positive decisions being issued to Syrians.

Most positive decisions at first instance granted refugee status (149,000 or 59% of all positive decisions) and subsidiary protection was granted in the remaining 103,000 cases (41%). As a result, the share of positive decisions granting refugee status declined for the second consecutive year.



- The EU+ recognition rate of 39% excludes authorisations to stay for humanitarian reasons. If such authorisations were included, the recognition rate for 2022 would hike to 50%. This considerable difference is largely due to humanitarian status granted to Afghans in Germany and Venezuelans in Spain, which combined represented more than 7 in 10 humanitarian permissions to stay in EU+ countries.
- In 2022, more women and girls received positive decisions on their protection claims than a year earlier (45% compared to 41% in 2021). Men and boys, in turn, were granted protection in 36% of all decisions issued on their applications. However, the data available do not indicate which applications lodged by males or females were part of family groups.
- Overall, 55% of first instance decisions issued protection to minors, which is considerably higher than for applications lodged by the 18-34 age group (33%), 35-64 age group (31%) and applicants aged 65 years or older (30%). Nevertheless, in 2022, recognition rates were higher than in 2021 for asylum applicants of all age groups and especially for those between 35 and 64 years of age.
- In many EU+ countries, first instance recognition rates vary over time, usually because of changes in the volume or structure of caseloads. In 2022, overall recognition rates increased notably in some countries (see *Table 1*).

Table 1. Recognition rates in EU+ countries with notable increases in 2022

	2021 (%)	2022 (%)
Bulgaria	62	91
Estonia	60	96
Latvia	45	58
Lithuania	13	41
Netherlands	65	82
Poland	60	75
Portugal	60	78
Slovakia	23	40
Slovenia	9	59

- While the recognition rate also climbed in Hungary, from 58% to 86%, the overall number of decisions was very low (35 in 2022). This is due to the fact that since 2020, applicants are required 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 dropped substantially in Austria (62% to 42%), Switzerland (60% to 47%) and – to a lesser extent – Italy (34% to 28%), Norway (81% to 78%) and Romania (28% to 25%). They continued to decline in Cyprus (19% to 6%), Ireland (56% to 34%) and Malta (22% to 15%). In all other EU+ countries, recognition rates in 2022 were higher than or similar to 2021.

- To ease pressure on its reception system, Belgium prioritised certain categories of applicants. Targeted action was taken for countries with high recognition rates, which made it possible to take a decision granting an international protection status for certain profiles without the organisation of a personal interview and only based on the information in the file (including the interview at registration) (for example for applicants from Eritrea, Somalia and Syria).

Unaccompanied minors

- Overall, 45% of all first instance decisions issued to unaccompanied minors in Greece granted EU-regulated forms of protection in 2022. This represented a significant increase from the previous year (26%) as more decisions were issued to minors from countries with higher recognition rates.
- About 90% of first instance decisions issued to unaccompanied minors in Switzerland related to nationals of Afghanistan and almost all of them were granted temporary admission under Swiss law.
- The share of positive decisions also remained largely stable in Italy, with refugee and subsidiary status being (jointly) granted in 35% of all first instance decisions issued to unaccompanied minors, while about one-quarter of decisions granted humanitarian status under the national framework.

Specific nationalities

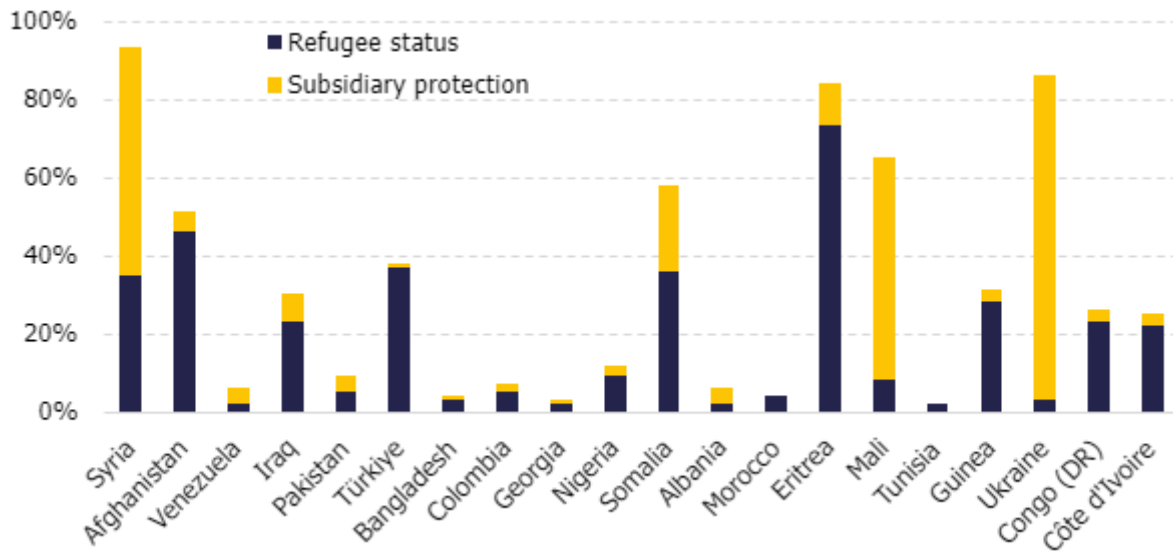
- Among the 20 nationalities which received the most first instance decisions in 2022, Syrians had the highest recognition rate at 93%. They were followed by Ukrainians (86%) and Eritreans (84%) (see *Figure 1*). Other groups with relatively high recognition rates included nationals of Mali (65%), Somalia (57%) and Afghanistan (51%).
- At the other end of the spectrum, some countries in specific regions had especially low recognition rates, such as Tunisians (2%) and Moroccans (5%) in northern Africa, Venezuelans (4%) and Colombians (6%) in Latin America, Albanians (6%) in the Western Balkans, as well as Bangladeshis (4%), Georgians (4%) and Pakistanis (9%).
- Outside the Top 20 nationalities, recognition rates continued to be notably high for Belarusians (85%), Yemenis (84%), Palestinians (63%), Chinese (60%) and stateless persons (58%).¹ 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, Moldova, North Macedonia and Serbia, as well as some Latin American countries, such as Argentina, Chile and Peru.

¹ Only nationalities with more than 1,000 decisions issued in 2022 were considered.



Syrians, Ukrainians and Eritreans had the highest recognition rates in 2022

Figure 1. First instance recognition rates for the Top 20 nationalities with the most decisions issued in EU+ countries, by nationality and status granted, 2022



Note: These 20 nationalities received the highest number of first instance decisions in EU+ countries in 2022. They are ordered (from the left to the right side) in terms of the number of decisions received.

Source: Eurostat [[migr_asycdfsta](#)] as of 13 April 2023.

- Overall, the recognition rate increased the most for Ukrainians (+74 percentage points from 2021) and Syrians (+22 percentage points and the most since 2016). For Ukrainian asylum applicants, this was caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. For Syrians – who have had a relatively high recognition rate since 2012 – the rate had dropped considerably in 2021, due to negative decisions issued on a high number of subsequent applications in Germany, which were submitted after a CJEU ruling on refusing to perform military service in the Syrian army as grounds for a well-founded fear of persecution.¹ In 2022, however, the recognition rate for Syrians bounced to high levels again.
- In addition, the CGRS in Belgium, where recognition rates for Syrians also increased significantly compared to 2021, prioritised certain files which had a likely positive outcome, and many of these files belonged to Syrian applicants.
- Afghan asylum applicants (especially in Germany) and Venezuelan applicants (especially in Spain) were often granted humanitarian status, which permits applicants to remain in the receiving country but is not counted towards positive decisions in the recognition rate. For Venezuelans, 7 in every 10 decisions issued in EU+ countries granted humanitarian status, whereas for Afghans, it was 3 in every 10 decisions. Afghans in Germany alone accounted for almost two-fifths (27,000) of all cases in which humanitarian status was granted in 2022 in EU+ countries, and Venezuelans in Spain for over one-quarter.

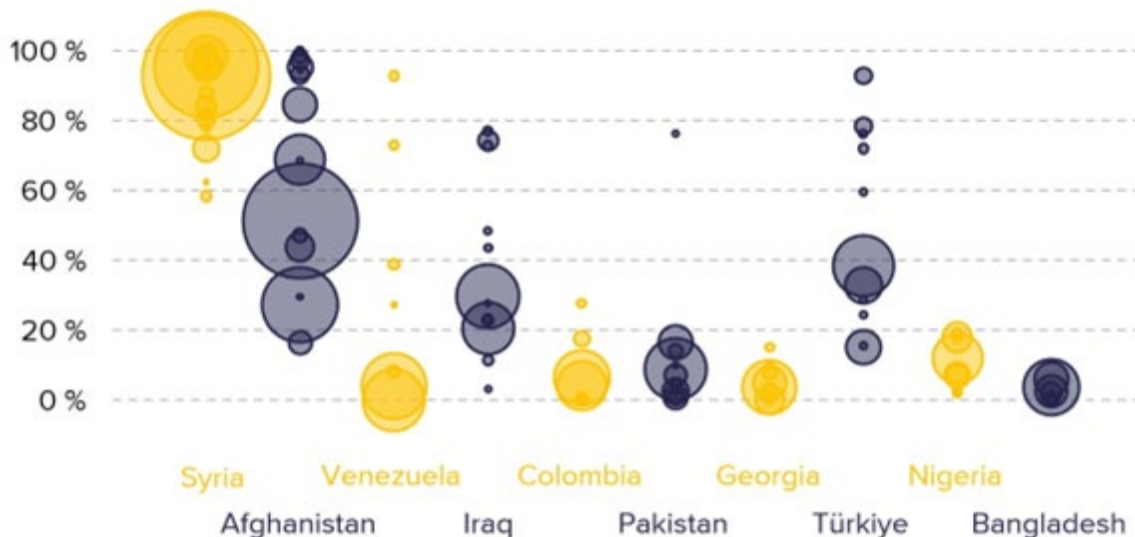
Variations in recognition rates for specific nationalities across receiving countries

- As in the past, large variations in national practices were seen in granting protection to specific citizenships of applicants. For example, the recognition rate for Afghans was at least 44% in most countries that issued more than 200 decisions (in total 14 EU+ countries), but it was only 16% in Switzerland, 27% in Germany and 30% in Romania (see Figure 2).
- Conversely, the recognition rate for nationals of Venezuela was below 39%, except in Iceland (93%) and Italy (73%). Similarly, the rate for Colombians did not exceed 4%, except in Italy (28%) and France (18%). In fact, Italy continued to have recognition rates at the upper end of the range for several citizenships, while countries with recognition rates at the lower end of the range varied depending on the nationality.
- Overall, discrepancies in recognition rates were most apparent for applicants from Afghanistan, ranging from 16% in Switzerland to 100% in Portugal. Wide ranges also continued for Turkish applicants (from 15% in France and Spain to 93% in Switzerland), as well as Iraqis (from 3% in Poland to 77% in the Netherlands) and Venezuelans (from 8% in Germany to 93% in Iceland).



Discrepancies in recognition rates were the most apparent for Afghan, Iraqi and Turkish applicants

Figure 2. Recognition rates for nationalities receiving the most decisions at first instance, by receiving country, 2022



Note: Each bubble represents a different EU+ country issuing more than 200 first instance decisions in 2022 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 2022 and the order is in terms of overall decisions.

Source: Eurostat [[migr_asycfstata](#)] as of 13 April 2023.

- There are several reasons why the same nationality 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. Recognition rates may also differ between first-time and subsequent applications lodged by the same nationality. Similarly, some applicants may have already received an EU protection status in another Member State, but they submitted a new application. EU+ countries may 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 at second or higher instances



If an appeal is lodged against a decision at first instance, a decision will be taken at second instance, and higher instances become involved after another appeal. The procedures following an appeal can vary: in some receiving countries, the case is reviewed entirely (*de novo* in fact and law), while in other countries, only the legality of the first instance decision is assessed.

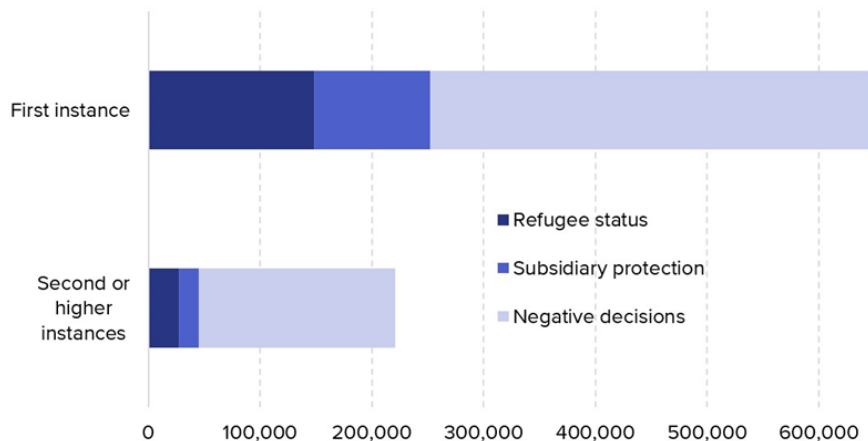
The data available do not indicate the outcome of the first instance decision that was appealed, as a positive decision can also be appealed. For example, a positive decision that grants fewer rights than refugee status (subsidiary protection or humanitarian status under national law) might be appealed. For this reason, cumulative recognition rates for all instances are not presented, and the outcomes at second or higher instances need to be considered separately.

- In 2022, the recognition rate at second or higher instances was 21%, meaning that there were 45,000 positive decisions within the total of 221,000 decisions at this level. This was in line with the previous year (22%). In fact, in most EU+ countries, recognition rates at second or higher instances remained more or less stable compared to 2021.
- As in previous years, the overall EU+ recognition rate at higher instances was lower than at first instance (39%). But the gap is growing. In 2022, the difference between the EU+ recognition rate at first instance and in appeals was the largest since 2016 (see Figure 3).



Refugee status and subsidiary protection were less often granted at second or higher instances than at first instance

Figure 3. Outcomes of decisions on asylum applications at first instance compared to second or higher instances in EU+ countries, 2022



Source: Eurostat [[migr_asydcfsta](#)] as of 13 April 2023.

Recognition rates at higher instances for specific nationalities

- Overall, the Top 20 nationalities receiving the most decisions at second or higher instances overlapped with those receiving most first instance decisions, with just four exceptions: nationals of The Gambia, Iran, Russia and Senegal. However, nearly all of these four countries of origin (except for The Gambia) featured among the Top 30 citizenships with most decisions issued at first instance.
- Among the Top 20 nationalities which received the most decisions at second or higher instances, Syrians (76%) had the highest recognition rate in 2022, followed by Ukrainians (62%). Other groups with recognition rates above the overall EU+ average included nationals of Mali (40%), Iran (39%), Afghanistan (31%), Somalia (29%) and Türkiye (25%).
- For the remainder of the Top 20 nationalities, fewer than one-quarter of decisions issued at second or higher instances granted international protection. Recognition rates were especially low for Georgians (2%), Albanians (4%), Colombians (4%) and Gambians (6%). All these nationalities had low recognition rates also at first instance in 2022.
- For one-half of the Top 20 nationalities, recognition rates at second or higher instances were similar to those at first instance, and for few of them – Nigerians, Pakistanis and Senegalese – there was no difference between recognition rates at the two decision-making instances. While only one of the Top 20 nationalities received higher recognition rates in appeals than at first instance (Bangladeshis), for several of them – such as Somalis, Malians, Ukrainians, Afghans, Syrians, Iraqis, Guineans, Turks, Russians and Congolese (DR) – recognition rates at second or higher instances were significantly

lower compared to those at first instance, the gap varying between 28 percentage points (for Somalis) and 9 percentage points (for nationals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

- Outside the Top 20 nationalities receiving decisions, recognition rates at higher instances were high for Yemenis (71%), Belarusians (49%), Eritreans (39%) and Sudanese (35%).² At the other end of the spectrum were nationals of India (1%), North Macedonia (1%), Moldova (1%), Serbia (2%), Comoros (2%), Haiti (3%), Armenia (4%), Ghana (5%) and Tunisia (6%). As was the case at first instance, low recognition rates partially coincided with countries exempt from visa requirements to enter the EU (for example applicants from North Macedonia, Moldova and Serbia).

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](#).

² Only nationalities with more than 1,000 decisions issued in 2022 were considered.

Sources

Please see [Sources on Asylum 2023](#) for the full list of over 1,000 references which were consulted for the Asylum Report 2022.

¹ Court of Justice of the European Union. (2020, November 19). *Press Release No 142/20*. <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2020-11/cp200142en.pdf>