

Asylum Report 2025



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Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union

June 2025



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Foreword

The adoption of the Pact on Migration and Asylum was a milestone in the evolution of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), signalling the transition to a new era. The legal and operational instruments of the Pact have equipped Europe with tools that are flexible to address protection needs in an environment of increased uncertainties, shifting migratory patterns and unpredictable foreign policy shifts. Time and again, European countries, acting as a community of values, have proven their commitment to work together, pool their assets, integrate their efforts and develop solutions to ensure access to protection for those in need.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has played a key role in helping EU+ countries to lay the groundwork and optimise protection responses. To this end, significant advances took place in 2024. For example, the Agency's dedicated Pact Programme helped Member States to prepare for the practical implementation of the Pact by providing tailor-made training, situational awareness, and quality tools and guidance on practices. Furthering its role as a centre of training excellence, the EUAA received official recognition as a provider of higher education from the Maltese authorities. Through this mechanism, the Agency will build capacity in Member States to operate effective and harmonised asylum and reception systems.



The adoption of the Agency's first-ever Fundamental Rights Strategy demonstrates our commitment to ensure that the rights of applicants for international protection are fully respected across our activities. Likewise, the establishment of the EUAA Monitoring Mechanism aims to prevent or identify possible shortcomings in the functioning of national systems, thus enhancing the practical application of CEAS. The first pilot monitoring exercises are already under way in 2025. To further assist national operations, the Agency has deployed a record number of personnel across 13 Member States.

Acknowledging that situational awareness based on high-quality, diverse sources of information is the cornerstone of informed policymaking, the Agency produces a wealth of analytical outputs on asylum, among which is this flagship publication. This year, the Asylum Report is delivered to you in a revamped, more succinct format to present annual developments related to CEAS and focused country overviews. This new format has kept the essence of the Asylum Report unchanged: it is your go-to source for an analytical and balanced insight into asylum in Europe. As such, it will be used as an important resource for the first ever Annual Asylum and Migration Report prepared by the European Commission.

Nina Gregori
Executive Director
European Union Agency for Asylum

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We are grateful to the European Commission for its continued support and feedback during the drafting process. Experts from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also provided valuable input.

Through various channels, civil society organisations, academia and research institutions provided the EUAA with research findings and information from the ground. To present the full picture of asylum in 2024 and take account of all perspectives, contributions from these institutions and organisations were included in this report. To this end, the EUAA would like to acknowledge the following contributors:

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Council of Europe, Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme
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CSO I want to help refugees
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Depaul Ireland
Dutch Advisory Council on Migration
Equal Legal Aid
European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
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submission)
Swedish Network of Refugee Support
Groups (FARR)
Swedish Refugee Law Center
Swiss Refugee Council (OSAR)





Acronyms and abbreviations

AIMA	Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (Portugal)
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
AMMR	Asylum and Migration Management Regulation
APD	Asylum Procedures Directive
APR	Asylum Procedure Regulation
BAMF	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Germany)
CALL	Council for Alien Law Litigation (Belgium)
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CGRS	Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (Belgium)
CIP	Common Implementation Plan for the Pact on Migration and Asylum
CJEU	Court of Justice of the EU
COA	Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Netherlands)
COI	country of origin information
CRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
ECHR	European Charter of Human Rights
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
ENS	European Network on Statelessness
EU	European Union
EU+	European Union Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
eu-LISA	European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
FGM/C	female genital mutilation/cutting
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GII	General Inspectorate for Immigration (Romania)
IAB	Immigration Appeals Board (Ireland)
IDS	Information and Documentation System
IND	Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Netherlands)
IPA	International Protection Agency (Malta)
IPAT	International Protection Appeals Tribunal (Ireland)
IPO	International Protection Office (Ireland)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MedCOI	medical country of origin information
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MOAS	Migrant Offshore Aid Station (Malta)
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OFPRA	Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (France)
QD	recast Qualification Directive
RCD	recast Reception Conditions Directive
SAR	State Agency for Refugees (Bulgaria)
SMA	Swedish Migration Agency (Sweden)
SOGIESC	sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex characteristics





UDI	Directorate for Immigration (Norway)
UNE	Immigration Appeals Board (Norway)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East





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Section 1. Introduction



2024 ushered in a new era for asylum and migration management in Europe. The adoption of the Pact on Migration and Asylum equipped the EU with a modern, robust and flexible architecture of legal and operational instruments to address evolving protection needs at a global level. Planning for the swift implementation of the Pact was a priority in 2024 (as the large majority of provisions enter into application in June 2026), with the European

Commission presenting the Common Implementation Plan (CIP) in June 2024 and almost all Member States delivering their National Implementation Plans by the end of 2024. The EUAA established its dedicated Pact Programme to support the implementation process. Countries will need to allocate significant resources to ensure the asylum and reception systems provided for by the Pact operate successfully and can effectively address the changing environment of migration and asylum.

The number of forcibly displaced people worldwide continued to grow for the 12th consecutive year, as sources of persecution, violence, conflict and human right violations persisted. In the first semester of 2024, 5.3 million new displacements occurred, reaching a total of 122.6 million displaced people worldwide at the end of June 2024.¹ Key hotspots for displacement included the inter-ethnic conflicts in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Russia's war in Ukraine; political violence in Myanmar, Colombia and Venezuela; and deteriorating gang violence in Haiti. While Palestinians started to return to Gaza following the January 2025 ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, millions of people were displaced due to the conflict and found themselves in a critical humanitarian situation.² Most of the world's displaced people who have crossed international borders, continued to be hosted in low- and middle-income countries, which typically experience disproportionate pressure and a significant strain on their resources.³

In 2024, those fleeing in search of safety at times encountered complex or inaccessible protection systems, within economies that are still struggling to recover from the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and within political realities that seem to be drifting toward anti-refugee, populist rhetoric. These phenomena have produced environments that are growingly restricting access to protection for those in need.⁴ Countries and areas of the world that have traditionally been among the leading migratory destinations seem to be downsizing their involvement in international humanitarian efforts, limiting access to asylum and placing additional emphasis on enforcement and border control.⁵ At the same time, international efforts continued to increase the availability of protection and facilitate safe mobility through multi-stakeholder cooperation, such as the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) and the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#).

Against this global background, Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland (EU+ countries) were faced with a dual challenge: they continued receiving and processing a steadily high number of applicants for international protection (over 1 million in 2024), while allocating significant resources in designing and implementing the reforms foreseen in the different instruments of the Pact on Migration and Asylum. In parallel, as Russia's war in Ukraine continued for a third year, protection solutions were provided for displaced persons from Ukraine hosted in EU+ countries.



Using diverse sources, including observations from civil society, the 2025 EUAA Asylum Report offers an overview of efforts made in 2024 by European institutions and EU+ countries to manage migration and asylum effectively. It synthesises qualitative information on legislative, policy and practical developments; key indicators; and case law from European and national courts, covering major thematic areas under the building blocks of the Pact's CIP. As the go-to source of information on asylum, the report provides a comprehensive and balanced insight into asylum by highlighting main trends at the European and national levels and reflecting current and upcoming discourses and practices.



Section 2. Major developments in asylum in the European Union in 2024



Following the adoption of the Pact on Migration and Asylum in May 2024, EU institutions, Agencies and Member States intensified their efforts to prepare for its implementation, while continuing to address a steadily high number of people seeking protection in Europe. The question of effective management of borders maintained its prominence in the European policy discourse, amidst discussions on the importance of ensuring respect for fundamental rights at the EU's external borders.

In 2024, the EU continued to provide protection to millions of displaced people from Ukraine. With Russia's war of aggression continuing, temporary protection was extended until March 2026, offering stability and predictability to more than 4 million beneficiaries.

2.1. A new era for Europe's migration and asylum management



Four years after it was proposed by the European Commission as a comprehensive framework for managing migration and asylum in Europe, the Pact on Migration and Asylum was adopted by the European Parliament on 10 April 2024 and by the Council on 14 May 2024.⁶ In an environment of shifting migration patterns, evolving needs and political discourse centred on migration in EU+ countries, the Pact aims to establish a common approach to migration and asylum based on the principles of solidarity, fair sharing of responsibility and respect for fundamental rights. The [legislative instruments of the Pact](#), most of which become applicable by mid-2026, operationalise the four fundamental components of Europe's migration and asylum policy:

- **Secure external borders** by robust screening whereby those not fulfilling the conditions to enter the EU are registered and subject to identification, security and health and vulnerability checks. Asylum applicants who are unlikely to need protection, mislead the authorities or present a security risk are subject to a mandatory asylum border procedure, while efficient returns, coupled with reintegration support, will apply for those who do not qualify for protection. In this area, the Pact offers solutions for situations of crisis and migrant instrumentalisation through rapid measures, operational support and funding.⁷
- **Fast and efficient procedures** by streamlining procedural rules and harmonising criteria for international protection and reception standards. While emphasis is placed on strengthening safeguards to ensure respect for fundamental rights, clear obligations are set out for applicants to cooperate with authorities and consequences of non-compliance are defined.⁸



- **Effective system of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility** to ensure that EU countries under migratory pressure receive support from other EU countries, and financial and operational support from EU funding and EU Agencies. The criteria to determine the country responsible for assessing an asylum application are clarified, and additional safeguards have been put in place to discourage secondary movements of asylum applicants.⁹
- **Embedding migration in international partnerships** based on an understanding that migration is a complex phenomenon with broader implications, thus requiring collaborative, multi-stakeholder efforts. This includes cooperation with a number of actors at a global level to prevent irregular departures and loss of life along migration routes; fight migrant smuggling; and reinforce cooperation with returns and readmissions. The Pact promotes legal pathways to migration in the EU.¹⁰

Following the successful closure of the legislative process, the next stage of the reform entails turning the complex set of legislative acts into an operational reality by the end of a 2-year transitional period, in June 2026. With support from the European Commission and relevant EU Agencies, Member States need to put in place the necessary legal, administrative and practical arrangements for the application of the Pact provisions. To guide this work, the European Commission issued the [CIP for the Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) in July 2024, setting specific milestones to be achieved by a foreseen timeline. The CIP was developed through close collaboration with Member States and EU Agencies, and consultations with civil society organisations and UNHCR. The CIP grouped together the legal, technical and operational work that Member States need to carry out into ten building blocks.

In addition to the CIP, the European Commission, with input from EU Agencies, conducted a needs assessment for each Member State to identify existing resources and areas where adaptations to national asylum and reception systems are required. The European Commission also launched a new [Technical Support Instrument](#) through which Member States could receive tailor-made expertise to identify the reforms needed. Nine Member States submitted requests and received support with the preparation of their National Implementation Plan in such areas as asylum procedures, screening, migration management, resettlement, integration, the external dimension of migration and the strategic use of EU funds.¹¹

Drawing from the needs assessment and the guidance provided in the CIP, EU+ countries needed to develop their individual National Implementation Plans by the end of 2024. They established working groups and task forces to coordinate efforts and identify gaps for the implementation of the Pact. They brought together all authorities foreseen to be involved in the implementation of the Pact to provide input, cross-fertilise ideas and develop action plans for the way ahead. The focus of working groups typically corresponded to the building blocks of the CIP. When applicable, regional administrations were also involved in the process, especially for areas under their jurisdiction, such as social affairs, education and integration. Consultations with civil society organisations on the development of National Implementation Plans were uneven, with a minority of Member States actively reaching out to elicit input, while others had limited or no consultations even though some organisations are subcontracted to deliver services in asylum and reception.



Preparing for the implementation of the Pact has been a particularly resource-intensive process for Member States. A reform of such scale and complexity, implemented within tight timelines, required the allocation of extensive financial, administrative and human resources, which has challenged the capacity of many Member States, especially while they maintained business continuity in processing a constantly high inflow of applications. For several countries, introducing the necessary arrangements for screening, which needed to be built from scratch, is the most common challenge, in addition to adapting technical capabilities to the new large IT systems to support the new Eurodac. During this process, EU Agencies played a pivotal role by sharing resources and expertise. For example, the EUAA through its dedicated Pact Programme provided support in a number of ways. Table 1 presents an overview of the EUAA activities for each of the building blocks defined in the CIP.

Table 1. EUAA support in the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum

Building block	EUAA support
A common migration and asylum information system: Eurodac	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop information material on Eurodac. Draft a practical guide on the use of Eurodac.
A new system to manage migration flows at the EU's external borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidance on alternatives to detention. Produce convergence reports to support Member States in determining which nationalities will fall under the border procedures. Update existing training modules and guidelines for personnel in the context of border procedures.
Rethinking reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a standard information template and guidance on alternatives to detention. Update existing guidance documents, tools and training material. Revise the EUAA standards and indicators for reception and vulnerability.
Fair, efficient and convergent asylum procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a network of responsible national authorities and update all information, training material, guidance documents and indicators that should be considered during the decision-making process (including for courts and tribunals). Continue to provide country of origin information (COI) and country guidance to all national administrative and judicial authorities. Adjust existing databases, such as the Early Warning and Preparedness System, to the new frameworks. Provide the European Commission with information and analysis of safe country concepts.
Efficient and fair return procedures	-Not involved-
A fair and efficient system: Making the new responsibility rules work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the European Commission to organise meetings of the Dublin expert group. Develop a template for family-related cases and guidelines for tracing and identification of family members. Assist in the production of comprehensive information material and provide guidance on conducting personal interviews by videoconference. Adjust the functioning and scope of the EUAA network of Dublin units and update guidelines supporting the application of the new responsibility rules.



Making solidarity work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In cooperation with the European Commission, provide the tools to identify and match the persons to be relocated with the contributing Member State. ■ Along with other Agencies, gather data and provide input to the European Commission for the European Annual Asylum and Migration Report. ■ Prepare templates and operating procedures for solidarity pledges and contributions. ■ Organise with the European Commission's expert meetings for the exchange of expertise and to facilitate the correct application of the new system.
Preparedness, contingency planning and crisis response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a template for national contingency plans on reception and asylum. ■ Provide support to Member States in developing and reviewing their contingency plans, when requested by Member States.
New safeguards for applicants and vulnerable persons; increased monitoring of fundamental rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide guidance on alternatives to detention and a template for information provision. ■ Revise the EUAA Guidance on Vulnerability - Standards and Indicators to reflect the new legislation. ■ Update training modules relating to vulnerability and the protection of minors. ■ Provide operational support for legal counselling when requested by Member States.
Resettlement, inclusion and integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Facilitate the exchange of good practices in the context of the EUAA Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Network. ■ Develop adapted information material and guidelines supporting the application of the new rules. ■ Provide operational support to Member States in the implementation of the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework.

As the Pact becomes applicable, the EUAA is also tasked with monitoring the operational and technical application of the EU asylum *acquis* by Member States. This new responsibility under the EUAA Regulation aims to prevent or identify possible shortcomings in asylum and reception systems, assess national capacity and preparedness to manage situations of disproportionate pressure, and contribute to the improvement of the functioning of CEAS.

Since the presentation of the Pact proposals in 2020, a number of stakeholders have expressed concerns about certain provisions included in its legal instruments. With the adoption of the Pact and the preparations for its implementation throughout 2024, such voices underlined again aspects that they viewed with reservations, including what was seen as expanding the circumstances to process applications through special procedures, with shorter timelines and fewer guarantees;¹² the mandatory application of the border procedure on nationality-based criteria, thus possibly undermining individual assessments;¹³ the possibility for a temporary suspension or derogation from the EU asylum *acquis* which may lead to a parallel asylum system with fewer guarantees and more risks to fundamental rights;¹⁴ expanding the circumstances under which applicants' freedom of movement is restricted;¹⁵ and, in regard to a key premise of the Screening Regulation, third-country nationals are not considered to have officially entered the territory of a Member State if they arrive through irregular routes.¹⁶ These reactions drew attention to areas where EU institutions and Member States must ensure the provision of adequate resources to duly guarantee the effective application of procedural safeguards and full adherence of the fundamental rights of people seeking protection in the EU.¹⁷



2.2. Key issues in European asylum discourse and practices



Throughout 2024, issues related to migration and asylum continued to feature prominently in the European policy agenda. The EU Strategic Agenda for 2024-2029, which sets the priorities and orientation for the current institutional cycle, highlighted the pursuit of a comprehensive approach to migration and border management as a priority area.¹⁸ The agenda places emphasis on:

- the protection of external borders;
- the proper functioning of the Schengen system;
- cooperation with countries of origin and transit to address long-term challenges of irregular migration; and
- the need to calibrate the EU against instrumentalised migration, which is framed as a security threat.

Equally reflecting the importance accorded to migration and asylum, both the Belgian and the Hungarian Presidencies of the European Council in 2024 prioritised increasing the resilience of the Schengen zone, curtailing irregular migration and human smuggling, and enhancing cooperation with third countries.¹⁹ The Belgian Presidency had a special focus on the reform of the migration and asylum system in Europe. In its recommendations in January 2024, UNHCR advised the two Presidencies to consider seven priority elements for migration and asylum, including:

- the provision of protection for migrants arriving spontaneously and addressing rights violations at the EU's external borders;
- safeguarding fundamental rights in reformed asylum procedures;
- ensuring functioning solidarity measures that also work for displaced persons;
- promoting a route-based approach as a more effective way to address mixed migration and reduce human suffering on dangerous journeys;
- enhancing resettlement and complementary pathways;
- addressing statelessness; and
- making EU funding for developments and humanitarian aid abroad adequate, more agile and responsive.²⁰

Amidst the developments related to the adoption and implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, themes that merit highlighting include the efforts to effectively control the EU's external land and sea borders; initiatives to further address trafficking in human beings; and acknowledging collaboration with civil society in discussing, designing and providing protection solutions.

CJEU jurisprudence in 2024

In its role to ensure a harmonised interpretation and application of EU law, in 2024 the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) issued approximately 20 judgments and orders interpreting various provisions of CEAS, covering topics related to:

- Admissibility of applications for international protection
- Dublin procedure
- Detention measures
- Safe country concepts
- Examination of subsequent applications
- Assessment of protection provided by UNRWA
- Gender-based persecution of women
- Secondary movements of beneficiaries of international protection
- The effects of refugee protection in extradition proceedings
- Family reunification
- Temporary protection
- Return following a negative asylum decision.

For more information, read [Jurisprudence related to asylum pronounced by the Court of Justice of the EU in 2024, Fact Sheet No 32](#).

2.2.1. Calibrating European border management



Likely the most intensely debated aspect of migration management in Europe over the past years is managing external borders effectively while considering legal, political and humanitarian dimensions. An effective border management system allows for controlling the crossing of external borders; addresses transnational crimes, such as trafficking in human beings; increases internal security and safeguards the free movement of people within the EU;

incorporates plans to swiftly respond to external threats, such as the instrumentalisation of migrants and situations of crisis; and enables those who arrive in Europe seeking protection to effectively do so, in full respect of fundamental rights, including by rescuing people in distress at the borders. This intricate set of objectives, which at times seem opposing, is not easy to achieve: it is essential to be able to respond to external emergencies and threats, while providing effective access to protection for people in need.

Over the past years, the EU has focused on catering to all of these essential elements. The strategic policy for a European Integrated Border Management was a major step,²¹ and a whole-of-the-route approach was solidified in the four EU Action Plans for the Western Balkans, Central Mediterranean, Western Mediterranean and Atlantic, and Eastern Mediterranean routes to address migration together with countries of origin and transit.²²

Building on this ongoing reform, in May 2024 the Council of the EU adopted a new Schengen Borders Code in the event of a crisis at its external borders.²³ The updated code foresees the possibility -following a Council decision- to adopt EU-wide measures that restrict the access of third-country nationals to the EU during a large-scale public health emergency. It also allows Member States to limit the number of border-crossing points, reduce opening hours and introduce enhanced border surveillance measures. The code clarifies the conditions in which internal border controls may be introduced as a measure of last resort. To help tackle secondary movements, a new procedure allows a Member State to transfer third-country

nationals to the Member State from which they departed when they are apprehended in the border area and staying illegally on its territory.²⁴ These functions are supported through large-scale IT systems and inter-agency cooperation to enhance migration governance and crisis preparedness. With the full Schengen accession of Bulgaria and Romania as of January 2025, Europe's border-free zone expanded further.²⁵

To strengthen the EU's policy response, in December 2024 the European Commission adopted a Communication with financial, political and operational measures to support Member States in countering hybrid attacks from the weaponisation of migration by Russia and Belarus.²⁶ The measures may entail serious interferences with fundamental rights, such as the right to asylum and related guarantees. The Communication, however, outlines the conditions under which such measures may be taken and emphasises that they must be proportionate, limited to what is strictly necessary in clearly defined cases and temporary.²⁷

Effective border management also entails safe and effective access to territory and the asylum procedure for those wishing to seek protection in Europe. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has estimated that from 2014 to January 2025 close to 31,000 people have died or went missing while attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe in the pursuit of safety or a better life.²⁸ Throughout 2024, EU institutions and Agencies, UNHCR, and international and civil society organisations continued to scrutinise policies and practices in some EU+ countries at the borders – including the criminalisation of search and rescue operations by NGO vessels.²⁹ Efforts are needed to further highlight in practice that protecting lives at the EU's external borders is a priority for the EU.

To this end, the EU and its Member States continued to render assistance to people in distress at external land and sea borders. Thousands of lives were saved in 2024 on the Mediterranean and Western African routes.³⁰ Member States have been using the Voluntary Relocation Mechanism, implemented since 2022, to relocate asylum seekers from frontline countries to show support and alleviate the pressure while waiting for the permanent solidarity framework foreseen in the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation (AMMR) to take effect. In 2024, 2,280 such relocations took place.

2.2.2. Intensifying efforts to address trafficking



A key element of effective border management is curtailing the work of smuggling networks and human traffickers. According to data from Europol and Interpol, 90% of people who cross the EU's external borders have paid migrant smugglers.³¹ Following up on the European Commission's legislative proposals of November 2023³² and the launching the [Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling](#),³³ the European Parliament finalised the amended 'Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims', which entered into force in July 2024.³⁴ The amended directive expanded the forms of exploitation that fall under trafficking, introduced more stringent penalties for persons or entities accountable for trafficking offences; and reinforced support for survivors to human trafficking.³⁵ To strengthen the operational dimension, in June 2024 EU Member States agreed on the Council's negotiating mandate for a regulation to enhance the role of Europol in the fight against migrant smuggling.^{36 37}

A [progress report](#) on combating trafficking in human being was published by the European Commission in January 2025 to provide an overview of the progress made by the EU in the fight against human trafficking over the past years.³⁸

2.2.3. Eliciting the expertise of civil society



Civil society organisations contribute significantly to the field of asylum by delivering services at the operational level, conducting research, and engaging in advocacy and litigation. They generally have well-honed operational experience and an insight into the experiences of applicants by working closely with them within reception and throughout the asylum procedure. This expertise allows civil society to make normative assessments into the practical functioning of asylum and reception systems, while calling for attention to deficiencies, when they exist. This unique angle also allows civil society to make invaluable contributions to the functioning of asylum and reception systems through ideas, recommendations and practical involvement.

The European Commission and civil society organisations continued to hold consultations throughout 2024, while numerous projects carried out by civil society organisations are financed by the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs.³⁹ In May 2024, the European Commission and representatives from civil society organisations discussed the practical implementation of the Pact and the key role civil society can play in it, especially in the areas of information provision, reception and integration, as well as in monitoring mechanisms to ensure respect of fundamental rights.⁴⁰

The 2024 edition of the European Migration Forum brought together participants from over 200 civil society organisations, the European Economic and Social Committee, local and regional authorities, migrant-led organisations, international organisations and the European Commission. The two-day conference highlighted the key role of civil society organisations in implementing the Pact.⁴¹ In December 2024, the EU Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration, Magnus Brunner, participated in a Youth Policy Dialogue on Schengen, security and migration with 30 students from different countries. Insights generated through the discussion will feed into policy development to ensure that the views of young people are taken into consideration.⁴²

The EUAA [Consultative Forum](#) is the main channel for dialogue and cooperation with civil society organisations working in asylum at the local, European and international levels. The organisations actively participate in EUAA activities and provide feedback to publications. The Consultative Forum exercises its tasks independently and advises the Executive Director and the Management Board on asylum-related matters, in accordance with the Agency's specific needs in priority areas. In 2024, the number of consultations with the forum exceeded expectations due to their increased involvement following the entry into force of the EUAA Regulation. With the upcoming legislative changes linked to the Pact on Migration and Asylum, the forum was consulted on products related to the new tasks of the Agency, such as the drafting of [guidelines on alternatives to detention](#).

2.3. EU solidarity with Ukraine



Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU has provided its unwavering political, financial and humanitarian support to Ukraine and hosted millions of displaced persons. The decision of the Council of the European Union in June 2024 to extend temporary protection until March 2026 provided stability and security to more than 4.4 million beneficiaries of temporary protection residing in EU countries.⁴³ To ensure maximum flexibility in Member

States' support to people fleeing the war, the European Commission enabled the use of unspent cohesion funds, making available up to EUR 17 billion.⁴⁴

The EU continued as a core actor in the [Ukraine Donor Platform](#), which brings together key stakeholders to coordinate action toward Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction.⁴⁵ A dedicated instrument, the Ukraine Facility for 2024-2027, was launched in March 2024, which offers up to EUR 50 billion to bolster recovery and reconstruction, support reforms on the way to EU accession, mobilise investments and support Ukrainian society.⁴⁶ Since the Russian invasion, the EU has been coordinating its largest operation under the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#), delivering more than 150,000 tonnes of in-kind assistance to Ukraine.⁴⁷ Overall, the EU and its Member States have provided approximately EUR 134 billion to support Ukraine since the beginning of the war.⁴⁸

The response of the EU and its Member States to address the consequences of the Russian aggression in Ukraine has been decisive and constructive. Quick, sustained and synergistic action was catalysed by a number of factors, including strong political will; the existence of fit-for-purpose legislation, financial instruments, and humanitarian and civil protection mechanisms; and unity among key stakeholders, not only across but also within Member States, with national and local authorities and civil society working together to streamline and optimise the provision of services to displaced persons from Ukraine.

The increasing complexity of the international geopolitical landscape and diplomacy add to the uncertainty of the situation in Ukraine. Thus, as the war has entered its fourth year, Europe's role in the effective integration of displaced persons from Ukraine in the countries of residence remains key. *(See Box 6 for an overview of measures taken by EU+ countries in 2024 to address the needs of displaced persons from Ukraine.)*

2.4. External dimension of the EU's asylum policy



With migration being a global reality, over the years the EU has adopted a whole-of-route, multi-stakeholder approach toward migration and asylum management.⁴⁹ An effective response requires comprehensive partnerships with countries of origin and transit in a number of areas,⁵⁰ including efforts to address root causes of irregular migration; increased capacity in managing borders and curtailing the work of smuggling networks; protection solutions to displaced populations around the world; and safe and legal pathways to Europe as an alternative to irregular migration.

An important instrument for addressing the external dimension of migration is the Budapest process, a key platform to promote international cooperation on migration management among countries from Europe and Asia. Following the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process in November 2024, an action plan for 2025-2030 was presented, focusing on six priorities in addressing migration challenges:

- Prevent irregular migration and fight against migrant smuggling;
- Strengthen pathways for legal migration and mobility;
- Strengthen cooperation for safe, effective and prompt returns, readmissions and sustainable reintegration;
- Strengthen the positive impact of migration on development, while addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement;



- Ensure international protection and respect of the rights of refugees and people in need of international protection; and
- Support effective integration into host countries.⁵¹

To help address the conditions that generate forced displacement and irregular migration, the EU provides development aid and promotes fundamental rights around the world. Multi-annual indicative plans define policy areas and outline the overall basis of cooperation with different countries and regions.⁵²

In light of the latest developments in the region, in January 2025 the European Commission announced a humanitarian package of EUR 120 million to assist Palestinians in Gaza, bringing the total assistance to EUR 450 million since 2023. The EU also launched a Humanitarian Air Bridge operation, which has transported over 3,800 tonnes of aid materials to Gaza.⁵³

In March 2025, the Brussels Conference on “Supporting the future of Syria and the region” took place with the dual objective of mobilising humanitarian and financial aid for Syrians and host communities in the wider region, while rallying the international community to support a comprehensive and credible political solution to the Syrian conflict.⁵⁴ To this end, the EU committed nearly EUR 2.5 billion for 2025 and 2026.⁵⁵

A priority in addressing mixed migratory movements and enhancing border management has been cooperation with partner countries in the EU’s neighbourhood. This increased engagement with the Western Balkans has taken place through the joint implementation of the EU Action Plan on Western Balkans, presented by the European Commission in December 2022.⁵⁶ It covers a comprehensive approach on migration: border management, asylum and reception capacities, migrant smuggling, readmission and returns, and visa policy alignment. An important deliverable in this context in 2024 was the agreement signed in June 2024 between the EU and Serbia on operational cooperation in border management with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) (status agreement), which will allow Frontex to carry out additional joint operations in Serbia, including by deploying the standing corps at Serbia’s borders with non-EU neighbours.⁵⁷

This added to the status agreements already in force with Albania, North Macedonia and Montenegro.⁵⁸ Negotiations on a status agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina were finalised in December 2024. Along the same lines, the newly-created position of the Commissioner for the Mediterranean incorporates in its agenda a migration-related portfolio,⁵⁹ and the forthcoming Pact for the Mediterranean aims to address illegal migration, fight human smuggling, build partnerships and create legal migration pathways so that migration can benefit both sides of the Mediterranean.⁶⁰

The collaboration with Türkiye, a key EU partner on migration, also continued in 2024. The [EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey](#) manages a total of EUR 6 billion to provide humanitarian assistance, support for basic needs, education, healthcare and socioeconomic support. The EU has supported refugees beyond the facility; since 2011, EUR 12.5 billion have been allocated to assist refugees and host communities in Türkiye, including a total of EUR 878 million for migration management.⁶¹

In March 2024, a comprehensive partnership agreement was signed between the EU and Egypt covering six pillars of strategic importance. Out of a financial and investment package of EUR 7.4 billion, EUR 200 million will be allocated to cooperation in the area of migration and mobility to facilitate legal migration and curtail irregular migration through border management,





anti-smuggling efforts and returns.⁶² The European Commission also launched a new migration partnership with Mauritania in March 2024. Through the partnership, EUR 210 million was mobilised to support migration management and the fight against migrant smuggling, while promoting security and stability, providing humanitarian aid for refugees in Mauritania, and supporting host communities.⁶³

Under the 2024-2025 EU Resettlement and Humanitarian admission scheme, [14 EU countries provided 61,000 pledges](#) for resettlement and humanitarian admission.⁶⁴ To help coordinate work in this area, the High-Level Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Committee was launched in November 2024. The committee is chaired by the European Commission and brings together representatives from the European Parliament, the Council, EU Member States, the EUAA, UNHCR, the IOM and civil society organisations. Supporting the implementation of the [Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework Regulation](#), which was adopted in May 2024 as part of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, the committee helps the European Commission define the 2-year Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission plan that outlines the number of refugees to be admitted to the EU on a voluntary basis, and the countries or regions from which candidates for resettlement and humanitarian admission should take place.⁶⁵



Section 3. Managing access to international protection



Similar to the recast Asylum Procedures Directive (APD), the Asylum Procedure Regulation (APR) outlines access to the procedure as a three-step process, including the making, registering and lodging of an application. Effective access to the asylum procedure means that people seeking international protection can reach the authorities and are afforded a fair and efficient process. This is inexorably linked with effective access to the territory to make an application. In addition to the APR, specific EU legal instruments govern access to the asylum procedure in Europe:

- The Screening Regulation sets up uniform rules for EU Member States to ensure that people having crossed the external border in an unauthorised manner without fulfilling entry conditions undergo identity, security, health and vulnerability checks and are channelled towards the appropriate procedure (border, accelerated or regular asylum procedure or return procedure);
- The Eurodac Regulation establishes an interoperable asylum and migration database to support the asylum system and help manage irregular migration; and
- The Crisis and Force Majeure Regulation establishes measures for situations of crisis and instrumentalisation of migrants.

The principle of *non-refoulement* is a core principle of international and EU laws to ensure that an applicant is not returned to a country where they will face persecution (recast Qualification Directive (QD), Recital 3). It constitutes an essential and crucial safeguard throughout the asylum procedure, including for the access to the procedure, as obstructing access to territory and access to the procedure may, in certain circumstances, result in a person being returned to a country where their life or freedom may be threatened, breaching the international principle of *non-refoulement*.

With over 1 million applications for international protection in 2024, EU+ countries continued experiencing pressure on asylum systems. At the same time, there was a significant 38% drop in the number of irregular border-crossings at the EU's external borders,⁶⁶ due to sharp decreases in arrivals through the Central Mediterranean and the Western Balkan routes. This was a result of regional efforts which focused on actively reducing irregular migration and fighting smuggling networks. Nonetheless, the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the situation along the borders with Belarus kept exerting pressure on the EU's eastern borders, where a threefold increase in crossings was reported. Increases, to a lesser degree, were also recorded in the Eastern Mediterranean and Western African routes.⁶⁷

With the continued high inflow of applicants for international protection, EU-level and national discourses revolved around effectively protecting the EU's borders while ensuring access to the procedure for those in need of protection. EU+ countries used a combination of proactive and reactive measures to prevent and manage irregular migration, which at times risked impacting effective access to territory. Naturally, additional resources were allocated to put in place the necessary legislative provisions by their entry into application in 2026 and build the

organisational, administrative and technical infrastructure for the implementation of screening and border procedures foreseen by the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

3.1. Access to territory



Faced with attempts to instrumentalise migrants, the European Commission adopted a communication on countering hybrid threats from the weaponisation of migration and strengthening security at the EU's external borders.⁶⁸ In addition, several countries closed parts of their borders and introduced stricter border protection regimes to prevent illegal border-crossings, for example at the Polish and Latvian borders with Belarus⁶⁹ and the Finnish borders with Russia.⁷⁰ These measures were coupled with legislative initiatives, such as the Finnish Act on Temporary Measures to Combat Instrumentalised Migration,⁷¹ the Polish Regulation on establishing a buffer zone at the borders with Belarus,⁷² and the Polish draft amendment to the Act on Granting Protection to Foreigners.⁷³ When activated, the regulations may temporarily allow:

- Border closures, reducing access to territory only through specified border points and, similarly, introducing temporal and territorial restrictions in receiving applications for international protection;
- Creation of buffer zones at the borders, where temporary bans on staying within specified areas apply;
- Intensified patrolling of the border areas by search and rescue teams;
- Simplified procedures to return third-country nationals to the border when they crossed the border illegally;
- Increased budget for human and technical resources for border protection.

The instrumentalisation of migration is often framed as a question of national security and there has been growing agreement among several Member States that they should have the possibility, if necessary, to temporarily derogate from existing EU law for the protection of the nation.⁷⁴ Over the past years, several EU countries have reintroduced or intensified border checks at internal EU borders,⁷⁵ a practice that deviates from the principles of the Schengen system. Thus, the Schengen Borders Code was revised in 2024 to formalise flexibility and define the conditions when additional internal border controls can be activated.⁷⁶ The integration of Bulgaria and Romania into the Schengen framework in March 2024 has facilitated movement across internal borders, while the two countries have intensified cooperation and increased capacity in the management of external borders, with support from the European Commission and EU agencies.⁷⁷

Digitalisation played a key role in improving the management of borders. EU+ countries invested in updating information systems in accordance with the Pact on Migration and Asylum. New technologies were also used in border surveillance to improve the quality of border management at sea and on land; better identify people in distress; and support the fight against cross-border crime.⁷⁸

EU+ countries engaged in bilateral and regional cooperation on migration management in an effort to address irregular migration, curb organised crime and human trafficking, and prevent the loss of life along migration routes. Examples include the tripartite cooperation between



Bulgaria, Greece and Türkiye to control irregular flows at their land borders and the regional cooperation among countries along the Western Balkan route.⁷⁹ Cooperating with third parties, especially countries along migration routes, is an integral part of the external dimension of migration for EU+ countries.⁸⁰

The greater emphasis on the external dimension of migration management at times led to discussions and practices, whereby migrants rescued at sea would be brought to the territory of partner countries where they are identified and their applications are processed. This approach was exemplified by the Italy-Albania protocol of 2023, which set up a mechanism and the conditions under which Italy would carry out the processing of asylum applications under Italian jurisdiction in designated areas of Albanian territory for third-country nationals originating from the list of safe countries of origin and who are rescued or intercepted in international water by vessels of Italian authorities.⁸¹ UNHCR and civil society organisations raised concerns about border externalisation and procedural specifics and guarantees.⁸² Various sources framed the agreement as an example of what is considered a growingly popular deterrence strategy in the area of migration and asylum.⁸³ In August 2024, UNHCR announced that: “In recent meetings, the Italian government has provided further information on the implementation of the protocol and reiterated its strong desire that it be in line with international law and standards. Based on an exchange of letters with the Italian Ministry of the Interior, UNHCR will therefore undertake a role of monitoring and counselling people to ensure that the right to seek asylum is protected and that the processes put in place under the protocol are consistent with relevant international and regional human rights standards, are fair, and promote protection and solutions for those in need of international protection”.⁸⁴

In 2024, the practical application of the agreement proved expensive and faced scrutiny by Italian courts in the application of the accelerated border procedure. In the first operation in October 2024, the two centres in Gjader and Shengjin, initially designed to accommodate a few thousands, received only a small number of Egyptian and Bangladeshi applicants who were soon transferred to Italy. For the first group of Egyptian and Bangladeshi applicants, the Tribunal of Rome did not validate their detention orders,⁸⁵ citing the CJEU judgment in [CV v Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky, Odbor azylové a migrační politiky](#). This judgment held that a country cannot be designated as a safe country of origin when certain parts of its territory do not fulfil the criteria for that designation.⁸⁶ In this case, the Italian court raised the question whether Bangladesh and Egypt could be considered as safe countries of origin despite the fact that for certain categories of people they are not considered to be safe, also taking into account that “a third country may be considered as a safe country of origin where, on the basis of the legal situation, the application of the law within a democratic system and the general political circumstances, it can be shown that there is generally and consistently no persecution as defined in Article 9 of Directive 2011/95, no torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and no threat by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict”.

Italy then carried out two more operations (in November 2024 and January 2025), which encountered similar judicial challenges. For a second group of applicants, the Tribunal of Rome referred a set of issues to the CJEU concerning the new national list of safe countries of origin and its consistency with relevant EU law. As a consequence of the referral, the tribunal suspended the proceedings without taking any decision, and due to the 48-hour constitutional time limit for the validation of administrative detention, the applicants automatically acquired the right to be set free. This was one of the several referrals sent by the Tribunal of Rome and other tribunals. The advocate general’s opinion was delivered on 10 April 2025, concluding that a Member State may designate safe countries of origin by a legislative act and must disclose the



sources of information leading to that designation for the purposes of a judicial review. The advocate general also found that – upon certain conditions – a Member State may designate a country of origin as safe, while at the same time identifying a limited categories of people who would still be at risk of persecution of serious harm in that country.⁸⁷

Measures by EU+ countries to further secure their borders raised questions among human rights institutions, international and civil society organisations about effective access to territory and, consequently to the asylum procedure for third-country nationals seeking protection.⁸⁸ Concerns were voiced about restricted access to fundamental rights; alleged pushbacks at the EU's eastern borders, land borders in the Balkans and in the Eastern Mediterranean route; and the return of people in distress at sea to countries that may not be safe or where they risk chain *refoulement*.⁸⁹ They also underscored the need for a route-based approach and coordinated search and rescue operations;⁹⁰ highlighted the importance of providing legal information at borders, hotspots and transit zones;⁹¹ and called on authorities to end practices that may inhibit effective access to territory and, consequently, to the asylum procedure.⁹² To provide guidance on legal interpretations for governments and other stakeholders, in September 2024 UNHCR issued guidelines on the non-penalisation of refugees on account of their irregular entry or presence and restrictions on their movements in accordance with Article 31 of the 1951 Geneva Convention.⁹³ It also provided legal consideration on asylum and *non-refoulement* in the context of migrant instrumentalisation, outlining state obligations under international refugee and human rights law for admission to the territory and access to asylum.⁹⁴

In July 2024, the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published a report which highlights the inadequacy of investigations into reported serious and widespread rights violations at the EU's borders and offers a set of recommendations to promote effective national investigations.⁹⁵ To help reduce the risk of fundamental rights violations at the external borders, FRA prepared a guide on national independent monitoring mechanisms for fundamental rights during screening and the asylum border procedure. Foreseen by the Screening Regulation and the Asylum Procedures Regulation, these independent mechanisms set up by Member States will aim to monitor compliance with fundamental rights during the screening of new arrivals and when assessing asylum claims at external borders.⁹⁶

In this context, European and national courts stepped in to review the practices of national authorities and ensure the correct interpretation of the EU asylum *acquis*. For example, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) issued a number of decisions finding violations of Article 2 of the ECHR (use of force not 'absolutely necessary'), Article 3 (prohibition of torture), Article 4 of Protocol 4 (prohibition of collective expulsion), Article 5(a) and (b) (unlawful detention) in cases concerning Cyprus, Greece, Hungary and Poland.⁹⁷ In June 2024, the CJEU ordered Hungary to pay a lump sum of EUR 200 million and a penalty payment of EUR 1 million per day of delay for failing to comply with the CJEU judgment in *European Commission v Hungary* (C-808/18) pronounced on 17 December 2020. In the 2020 judgment, the court found that Hungary had failed to comply with EU law on procedures for granting international protection and returning illegally-staying, third-country nationals.⁹⁸ (For more jurisprudence in this area, see the [EUAA Case Law Database](#).)

3.2. Streamlining access to the procedure



Continuing a trend from past years, some EU+ countries introduced practices to distinguish at the earliest possible time between those in need and those not in need of protection, with the latter being directed to return procedures. For example, to relieve the workload in asylum proceedings and pressure in reception, the so-called 24-hour procedure in Switzerland, which had been tested on a small scale since 2023, was generally introduced in 2024 for applicants from the Maghreb states. The aim of the procedure is to very quickly process asylum applications that have low chances of success.⁹⁹

Other initiatives brought together competent authorities in one location to facilitate coordination among authorities and decrease processing times. The ‘France Asile’ territorial hubs, introduced by the 2024 law on controlling immigration and improving integration, will bring together the authority responsible for registration (*prefectures*), the authority responsible for the lodging of applications (Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, OFPRA) and the authority responsible for granting material reception conditions (OFII) in order to complete these steps on the same day. Pilot sites will be implemented as of 2025.¹⁰⁰

In Spain, building on the experience of a one-stop model for people coming from Ukraine, the model is being tested for applicants for international protection.¹⁰¹ EU+ countries also introduced additional obligations for applicants to collaborate with authorities in sharing as much information and as early as possible about their age, identity, nationality and countries of residence or transit.¹⁰² In recent years, the introduction of digital innovations in registering and lodging applications also aimed to address this dual goal of gathering more information from applicants and decreasing processing times,¹⁰³ and for example, in 2024, the Irish International Protection Office (IPO) introduced a new digital application procedure for all applicants.¹⁰⁴

Despite efforts by national authorities, throughout 2024 delays were reported in a number of countries in accessing the asylum procedure, with applicants on certain occasions waiting for months to obtain an appointment to formalise their application.¹⁰⁵ This occurred, for example, in Spain in the Canary Islands;¹⁰⁶ in Greece due to interruptions in the provision of interpretation services;¹⁰⁷ and in Italy at police headquarters, particularly in large cities like Rome, Milan and Florence.¹⁰⁸ In addition, the Barajas airport in Spain experienced some saturation periods in 2024 due to a high number of applicants.¹⁰⁹

With stricter border control regimes at the EU’s external borders, the automatic detention of migrants who crossed the border irregularly became a more frequent occurrence. Civil society organisations voiced concerns that these practices inhibited or delayed effective access to the asylum procedure.¹¹⁰ Within their role to guide the correct implementation of asylum law, courts often stepped in to review these practices and deemed the detention unlawful.¹¹¹

3.3. Border procedures



Many EU+ countries, especially those that do not have a border procedure, focused their efforts on introducing the necessary legislative and practical amendments to prepare for the implementation of the provisions of the Pact (see Figure 1). In Finland, for example, an amendment to the Aliens Act entered into force in September 2024 which introduced the border procedure.¹¹² The

border authorities could refer an application to the border procedure only if the grounds presented in the application suggest that the Finnish Immigration Service would consider the application inadmissible or use an accelerated procedure to process the application.

Figure 1. Countries with a border procedure in their national legislation at the end of 2024



Notes: Slovenia has not applied it in practice. Slovakia applies the border procedure very rarely when a foreigner who does not meet the conditions for entry to the territory applies for asylum in the transit area of an international airport.

Finland introduced a border procedure in 2024.

Among the provisions on the management of migration flows which was approved by the Italian government in October 2024 (converted into law in December 2024), one sets out that the accelerated border procedure is extended to applicants who entered or stayed irregularly in Italy and applied for international protection, without justified reasons, beyond 90 days after having entered Italian territory. A new provision was added, according to which a migrant who has already materially entered the territory of the state may be the recipient of a deferred refusal to entry orders. The new provision is applicable to those who are taken to areas designated for carrying out the border procedure, after being traced during surveillance activities at the external borders of the EU, including as a result of search or rescue operations at sea. In addition, Decree Law No 145/2024 reduced the time limit from 14 to 7 days to appeal against a negative asylum decision for a first-time application which was channelled into the accelerated border procedure.¹¹³

In 2024, significant delays were reported in Spain in accessing the procedure, including at the Madrid Barajas airport.¹¹⁴ To ameliorate the situation, Spanish authorities deployed additional staff to the airport to process requests. The national authority noted that the measures prevented similar collapses from recurring, and work continues in an effort to improve the joint management of the reception rooms at the airport.¹¹⁵

As EU+ countries proceed with preparing for the new procedures in the Pact, a possible challenge in this area relates to the tight time limits foreseen, which will require the allocation of significant resources to ensure compliance.

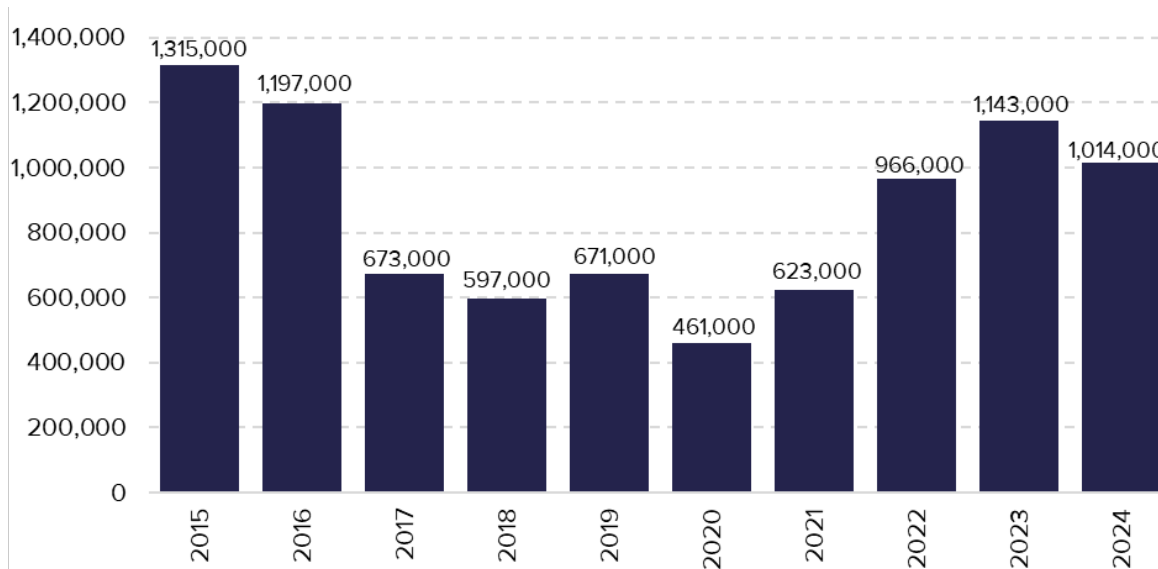
3.4. Data on applications for international protection



In 2024, applications for international protection declined by 11% compared to 2023, with just over 1 million applications received by EU+ countries for the second consecutive year (see Figure 2). The only time the figure has been over this threshold for two years in a row was in 2015 and 2016, during the peak of the refugee crisis.

Almost four-fifths of all applications in EU+ countries were received by just five countries: Germany (237,000 applications), Spain (166,000), Italy (159,000), France (159,000) and Greece (74,000). This was a slightly higher share than in 2023. However, this does not reflect the number of temporary protection decisions issued by EU+ countries in 2024 (see Box 6).

Figure 2. Number of applications for international protection in EU+ countries, 2015-2024



Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

The inflow decreased or remained stable in all but five EU+ countries. For example, Poland experienced the highest *relative* year-on-year increase, with 17,000 applications representing an increase by four-fifths compared to 2023. This was driven mainly by an unprecedented number of applications by Ukrainians. Italy experienced the largest *absolute* increase, receiving approximately 30,000 more applications than in 2023.

In contrast, Romania with 2,400 applications experienced the largest *relative* decrease among EU+ countries, down by almost three-quarters compared to 2023. The largest *absolute* decrease was experienced by Germany which received approximately 97,000 fewer applications than in 2023.

Relative pressure from asylum-related migrationⁱ



When considering asylum applications in relation to population size (see *Figure 3, outer circle*), on average about 2,200 applications per 1 million inhabitants were lodged across EU+ countries in 2024. Cyprus and Greece topped the list with each receiving over 7,000 asylum applications per capita. While the relative pressure declined notably from 2023 in Cyprus and Austria, national authorities in Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Poland were faced with more applications in relation to their population than a year earlier.

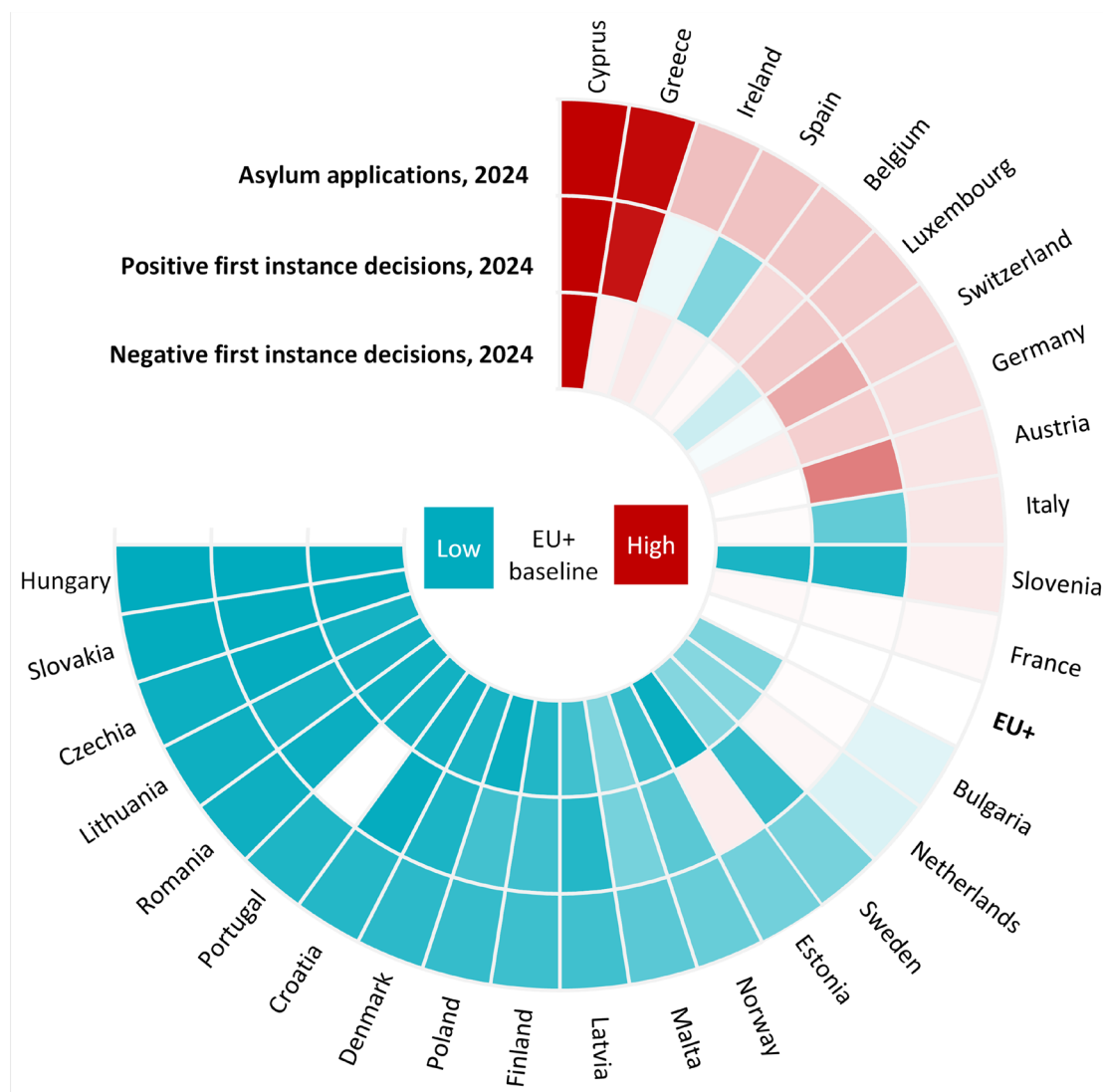
As seen in the past, EU+ countries issued more negative first instance decisions per capita (990 decisions per 1 million inhabitants) than positive ones (720). Both positive and negative decisions require resources, from providing support services (such as housing, education and healthcare) to beneficiaries of international protection to costs related to the removal of rejected asylum applicants. Cyprus faced the highest pressure from negative decisions (see *Figure 3, inner circle*), while both Cyprus and Greece issued the most positive decisions per capita (see *Figure 3, middle circle*).

The Top 5 nationalities of applicants for international protection in EU+ countries remained the same as in 2023: Syrians (151,000 applications), Afghans (87,000), Venezuelans (74,000), Turks (56,000) and Colombians (52,000). With the exception of Venezuelans who lodged a record number of applications, the remaining four citizenships lodged fewer applications than in the previous year. The most notable drop was by Turkish nationals seeking international protection.

While applications decreased for many nationalities beyond the Top 5, other citizenships reached all-time highs, including Bangladeshis (43,000 applications), Peruvians (27,000), Malians (17,000), Senegalese (14,000), Haitians (12,000), Sri Lankans (9,800), Chinese (7,200) and Mauritians (5,700). In 2024, there was also a record number of Palestinians (12,000 applications) and a related increase in stateless applicants (3,600). Ukrainians (27,000) lodged the most applications since 2022 (even though this number was still much smaller than registrations for temporary protection). Almost one-half of all applications were lodged by 37 different nationalities which had recognition rates of 20% or lower at first instance.

ⁱ Any mention of 'pressure' on asylum and reception systems in EU+ countries should not be construed as referring to a situation of 'migratory pressure' as defined in the forthcoming Asylum and Migration Management Regulation, whereby it implies disproportionate obligations and might lead to solidarity contributions.

Figure 3. Number of asylum applications and number of positive and negative first instance decisions per capita by EU+ country compared to the EU+ average, 2024



Note: Countries with higher per capita values than the EU+ average are marked in shades of red. Countries with lower per capita values than the EU+ average are marked in shades of teal. The EU+ average is marked in white. Data on positive first instance decisions in 2024 were incomplete for Portugal and not used in the analysis (middle circle of the figure, marked in white).

Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025 and Eurostat [demo_gind](#) as of 9 January 2025.

Around one-quarter of asylum applications in EU+ countries were lodged by nationals of countries with visa-free access to the Schengen area, which means they can arrive on flights directly from their home countries. Spain received the largest share of such applications, with visa-free nationals accounting for three-quarters of its total inflow. Venezuelans and Colombians represented the majority of visa-free applicants in EU+ countries.

When examining the flows from the top countries of origin to the receiving countries, in 2024 the main dyads were Syrian, Afghan and Turkish applicants in Germany; Venezuelan and Colombian applicants in Spain; Bangladeshi applicants in Italy; and Syrian applicants in Greece.

Section 4. Initiatives for more streamlined and harmonised asylum procedures



CEAS is based on the principle of common standards to grant international protection, while ensuring fair and efficient procedures. The aim is that similar asylum cases are treated in a similar manner in all Member States, leading to uniform decision-making and convergence across the EU, while ensuring that an individual assessment is provided in each case.

The procedures foreseen in the recast APD aim to ensure that decisions on applications for international protection are taken on the basis of facts and by persons with appropriate knowledge and training, after an adequate and complete examination has been undertaken without undue delay and subject to remedies. Within this framework, Member States have established their asylum systems and procedures in various ways.

The APR aims to further replace disparate asylum procedures with a common procedure which is governed by the same rules, achieve a high level of convergence and limit the secondary movement of applicants for international protection between Member States due to differences in legal frameworks. The regulation sets the guarantees and rights which are afforded to applicants, including the right to free legal counselling in the administrative procedure, legal assistance and representation in the appeal procedure and comprehensive information on the asylum procedure in a language understood by the applicant.

4.1. Adapting procedures at first instance

4.1.1. Making asylum systems more resilient



Legislative and policy debates in 2024 centred around building resilient and efficient asylum systems. For example, legislative changes in Finland¹¹⁶ and France¹¹⁷ did not reform the asylum procedure itself but considered access to the asylum procedure (see *Section 3*), shortened the length of the residence permit granted to beneficiaries of international protection (see *Section 8*) and

aimed to make returns more efficient (see *Box 5*). Reform initiatives were launched, for example in Belgium,¹¹⁸ but changes in the government resulted in a change of direction to adapt to the new government's policy and the implementation of the Pact. For example, the new government in the Netherlands aims to move towards the strictest ever asylum system.¹¹⁹

In Switzerland, 5 years after the complete revision of the Asylum Act and procedures, a collaborative process among the confederation, cantons, cities and municipalities was launched to elaborate a new comprehensive asylum strategy. One objective is to rapidly remove unfounded asylum applications from the asylum system and devote more resources to victims of persecution.¹²⁰ The Portuguese government approved an action plan on migration, which



includes several measures to restructure and increase the resources of the newly-established Agency on Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA) to strengthen its efficiency.¹²¹

Initiatives to further digitalise asylum procedures continued in 2024. Major projects were ongoing in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Ireland and the Netherlands. The new director of the Norwegian Directorate for Migration (UDI) committed to digitalising the whole migration sector, including developing a new IT and case management system for the agency.¹²² These initiatives work towards the IT infrastructure which is necessary for requirements of the Pact.

After the adoption of the legislative package of the Pact on Migration and Asylum in June 2024, EU+ countries started preparations for its implementation and organised working groups and task forces (usually overseen by the Ministry of the Interior) to draft their National Implementation Plan by the end of 2024. National authorities identified areas where the most challenges would be faced, such as ensuring adequate coordinating structures and sufficient financial and human resources.

Anticipating the needs, the Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees (SAR) recruited new staff and further trained existing staff,¹²³ including through staff exchanges to other national authorities.¹²⁴ The national budget dedicated to asylum authorities was significantly increased in Ireland¹²⁵ and Lithuania¹²⁶ so new employees could be recruited and trained. To reduce costs in the asylum sector in Switzerland, the recruitment of additional staff was approved in order to tackle the backlog of pending cases and to achieve substantial savings.¹²⁷ While Italian authorities planned to increase the number of staff, the number of employees in fact decreased in 2024 due to a high turnover. Administrative staff of the National Asylum Commission and the Territorial Commissions in Italy went on strike demanding better working conditions in May 2024.¹²⁸ High turnover and difficulties in recruiting and training new staff were challenging for the Croatian authorities as well.

Some governments committed to a swift implementation of the Pact. For example, two draft laws were already approved by the German federal government,¹²⁹ and the Federal Minister of the Interior stated that the cabinet was counting on a rapid and comprehensive implementation of the new rules.¹³⁰ The new Dutch government expressed its wish to opt out of CEAS in case of EU Treaty amendments, while it considered the implementation of the Pact to be essential for limiting the influx of migrants to the Netherlands and thus pledged to prioritise its implementation.¹³¹



Box 1. Common migration and asylum information systems and digital innovation in 2024



The digitalisation of asylum processes and migration management is a key element of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, which entered into force on 11 June 2024. The revised Eurodac Regulation and the new Screening Regulation rely heavily on the use of EU-wide information systems and databases, as well as national IT infrastructure to facilitate the storing and sharing of data. Throughout 2024, the European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (eu-LISA) continued to work on the new Eurodac system and updating of DubliNet in preparation for the Pact. In addition, eu-LISA continued the development of its interoperability structure,ⁱⁱ which will include Eurodac as an integral part.¹³²

Member States have already started to ramp up their digital capacity and included General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) considerations of new digitalised systems into amended legislation and policies.¹³³ While requiring substantial financial investment, the digitalisation of asylum procedures has led to simplified processes and faster processing times.

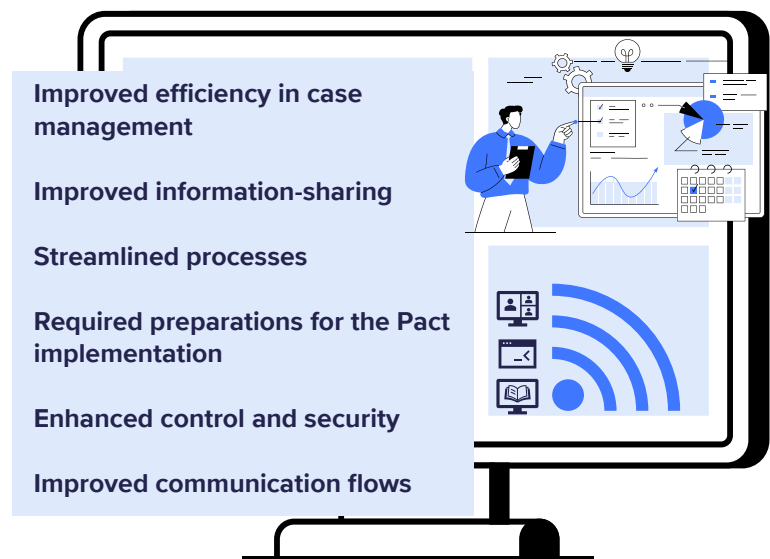
Steps taken by EU+ countries to digitalise international protection procedures in 2024

Created or upgraded IT systems to manage resources and services and expand the type of data that can be collected.
(e.g. Czechia, Finland, Germany and Slovakia)

Use of AI for language assessments to confirm the country of origin
(e.g. CELIA project in the Netherlands)

Digitalised residence permits and storing of biometric data from residence permits for longer periods of time
(e.g. Czechia and Germany)

Online application process
(e.g. for family reunification in France)



ⁱⁱ Namely the Entry/Exit System (EES), the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS), the European Criminal Records Information System on Third-Country Nationals and Stateless Persons (ECRIS-TCN), the central repository for reporting and statistics (CRRS), and interoperability components: European search portal (ESP), shared biometric matching service (SBMS), common identity repository (CIR) and multiple-identity detector (MID).



4.1.2. Ensuring applicants' rights and obligations



The Pact will bring several changes to applicants' rights and obligations. In 2024, discussions centred around the right to legal counselling and legal assistance and representation. The APR introduces the term legal counselling in EU asylum legislation without providing a definition, which – according to the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) – risks leading to different interpretations.¹³⁴

In recent years, some EU+ countries have reallocated the task of legal assistance and legal representation to public bodies instead of funding civil society organisations for this service. This change in Austria and the new agency's independence was scrutinised by the Constitutional Court at the end of 2023.¹³⁵ The law was amended in June 2024 to ensure compliance with the ruling.¹³⁶ Nonetheless, projects funded by the state and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) remained essential to ensure that applicants receive advice in the asylum procedure. These projects were implemented for example in Czechia,¹³⁷ Croatia, Germany,¹³⁸ Greece, Lithuania,¹³⁹ Slovakia¹⁴⁰ and Switzerland.¹⁴¹ At times, AMIF-funding or UNHCR support filled in gaps when legal assistance should be provided by law, but applicants faced issues in effectively accessing it.

Challenges remained in several areas, mainly concerning the possibility to receive advice and counselling at the very beginning of the procedure, especially at the borders and in detention, to receive advice following a negative decision and to appeal when the timelines are particularly short.¹⁴²

While the new rules of the Pact will require information on the asylum procedure to be updated, in 2024 only a few authorities published new information material. These typically focused on practical tips for everyday life and integration.¹⁴³ The International Protection Appeals Tribunal (IPAT) in Ireland launched a new video in 10 different languages to inform applicants about the appeal procedure.¹⁴⁴ Some campaigns focused on the prevention of irregular migration, for example, in Cyprus, while others aimed at raising public awareness about asylum, like in Latvia.¹⁴⁵

Several EU+ countries have launched mobile applications to support asylum seekers and this continued in 2024, for example Poland. To cater to applicants with different backgrounds, new hotlines were launched to provide information on the asylum procedure in Poland and the reception system in Spain, and authorities started to simplify the language of communication and information materials in the Netherlands¹⁴⁶ and Slovakia.

To ensure clear communication between applicants and the authorities, several countries undertook measures to have a sufficient number of quality interpreters. In Belgium, the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS) worked in collaboration with the Immigration Office and the Council for Alien Law Litigation (CALL) on a new regulation on the recruitment and status of interpreters, including improved remuneration. The Italian National Commission for the Right to Asylum, in cooperation with UNHCR and the EUAA, produced a handbook for interpreters involved in the international protection procedure in territorial commissions.¹⁴⁷ The Finnish Immigration Service developed a specific training programme for interpreters.¹⁴⁸ In Ireland, a new contract was awarded to an external company to provide high-quality interpretation in the asylum procedure to give confidence in the procedure to both the applicant and the relevant authority. To address shortages,¹⁴⁹ new calls for interpreters were launched in Cyprus and Malta.



The relatively few developments concerning the organisation of personal interviews in 2024 focused on digitalisation and improving efficiency. The IPO in Ireland launched a pilot project in May 2024 to conduct online video interviews and established interview booths in the initial reception centre for families with children. The Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) continued with the pilot to inform applicants about the interview by a text message. The Finnish Immigration Service did a pre-study to explore the possibility of using speech-to-text software for interviews on the merits of the case and planned a follow up project in 2025 if AMIF support was secured.

Changes to EU law and new digital environments also require adjustments to national legislative frameworks regarding the transfer of personal data. In 2024, these rules were amended for example in France¹⁵⁰ and Switzerland.¹⁵¹

4.1.3. Examining the admissibility of an application and applying special procedures and safe country concepts






Courts played a key role in shaping practices related to safe country concepts and subsequent applications in 2024, which is expected to impact how countries can implement new requirements in the APR. Only a few legislative and policy changes took place in 2024, for example in Bulgaria and Iceland, but as countries begin to align national legislation to the new EU rules, this is expected to change.

In recent years, several EU+ countries have highlighted the challenges of secondary movements of recognised beneficiaries of international protection. In related court cases, the CJEU clarified that when an application from a beneficiary in another Member State cannot be rejected as inadmissible, the asylum authorities must carry out a new examination. They are not bound by the decision of the authority of another Member State, but they must take it into account during the new examination.¹⁵²

Various EU+ countries received a high or increased number of subsequent applications, and the CJEU delivered two rulings in this context. One confirmed that a judgment from the court may constitute a new element which justifies a full re-examination of the application if it significantly adds to the likelihood of an applicant qualifying for international protection.¹⁵³ The other judgment highlighted that EU law does not allow the presumption that circumstances created by the applicant after leaving the country of origin (such as religious conversion) stem from abusive intent, and thus, subsequent applications must be assessed on an individual basis.¹⁵⁴ The rulings underline the obligations of national authorities and highlight that a thorough examination must take precedence over short-cuts for efficiency gains.

The new APR applies safe country of origin concepts in a broader manner and several analyses have highlighted grey areas in interpretation.¹⁵⁵ Still interpreting provisions of the recast APD, the CJEU ruled that a country cannot be designated as a safe country of origin when certain regions do not fulfil the criteria for that designation.¹⁵⁶ This led to an update in legislation and practices for example in Italy and the Netherlands (see *Figure 4*). In addition, the Tribunal of Naples concluded that the CJEU's argumentation also applied to Egypt.¹⁵⁷ The case was invoked by the Tribunal of Rome when deliberating on transfers under the protocol between the Italian and Albanian governments (see *Section 3*).¹⁵⁸

Figure 4. Overview of changes to lists of safe countries, 2024

 Countries added to safe countries of origin list	 Countries removed from safe countries of origin list	Other developments
Belgium Moldova	Italy Following the CJEU judgement in C-406/22: Cameroon, Colombia, Nigeria	Bulgaria A national list of safe third countries was adopted: Bangladesh, Iran, Türkiye
Bulgaria New list adopted: Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Georgia, Ghana, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Serbia, Tanzania, Tunisia, Türkiye	Netherlands Following the CJEU judgement in C-406/22, in practice: Georgia, India	Cyprus List updated with no changes on 31 May 2024.
Ireland Algeria, Botswana, Brazil, Egypt, India, Malawi, Morocco	Norway Ukraine	
Italy Bangladesh, Cameroon, Colombia, Egypt, Peru, Sri Lanka	Switzerland Benin	

Sources: Bulgaria,¹⁵⁹ Belgium,¹⁶⁰ Cyprus,¹⁶¹ Greece,¹⁶² Ireland,¹⁶³ Italy,¹⁶⁴ Netherlands,¹⁶⁵ Norway¹⁶⁶ and Switzerland.¹⁶⁷

Nonetheless, ambiguities continued when applying the safe country of origin lists. A question for a preliminary ruling was pending in front of the CJEU on whether a country can be designated as safe with the exception of certain risk profiles,¹⁶⁸ and another follow-up question to C-406/22 was referred to the CJEU by the Tribunal of Bologna, seeking clarification about not applying national legislation when there is a conflict between the conditions for designation and EU law.¹⁶⁹ At the national level, the Court of Cassation in Italy ruled on the ministry's authority to set out a list of safe countries of origin and on the adjudicating authority's duty to investigate the safety of countries included in the list and disapply the designation if it conflicts with EU or national law, considering the applicant's specific circumstances.¹⁷⁰

In C-134/23, the CJEU ruled that Greece may designate Türkiye as a safe third country in its laws, but Greek authorities may not reject an application as inadmissible on this basis if the designated country does not readmit asylum seekers.¹⁷¹ The Bulgarian Administrative Court of Sofia referred questions to the CJEU on the criteria used to establish a connection with a third country.¹⁷²

The Irish High Court found that there were shortcomings in the procedure for the designation of safe third countries.¹⁷³ Legislation was passed to ensure that serious harm would be taken into account in the designation process.¹⁷⁴

4.1.4. Managing caseloads and assessing applications for international protection

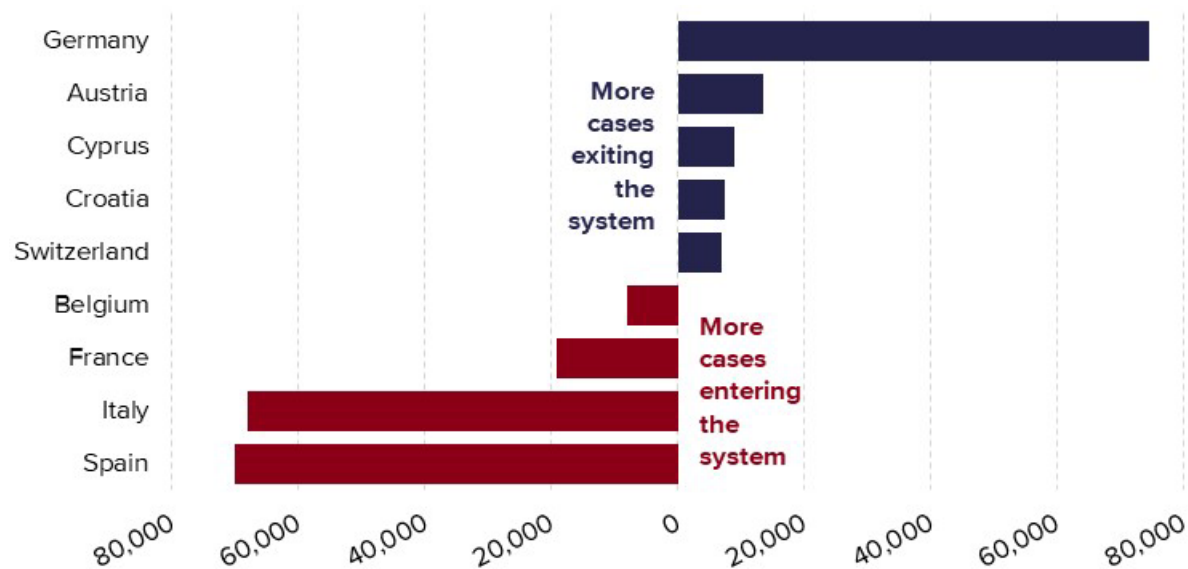


In 2024, EU+ asylum authorities issued 795,000 first instance decisions on asylum applications. This is the most since 2017. For the fourth year in a row, the most decisions were issued by Germany and France, together accounting for almost one-half of the EU+ total in 2024. Germany issued 251,000 decisions, which was the most since 2017. This increase mostly comprised negative

decisions. France, with 138,000 decisions, issued the most on record. The output was driven by a surge in positive decisions issued to Haitians (7,300) and Ukrainians (6,800).

Italy (85,000) had the largest absolute increase among EU+ countries, almost doubling the number of decisions from the previous year. The increase was driven by positive decisions issued to applicants from Burkina Faso and Mali, and negative decisions issued to applicants from Bangladesh, Egypt, Pakistan, Morocco and Tunisia (in descending order). Greece (55,000) issued the most decisions at first instance in 4 years. Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland and Poland reached record highs.

Figure 5. Disparity between asylum applications and case closures (first instance decisions, discontinuations after withdrawals and otherwise closed cases) in EU+ countries with the largest gaps, 2024

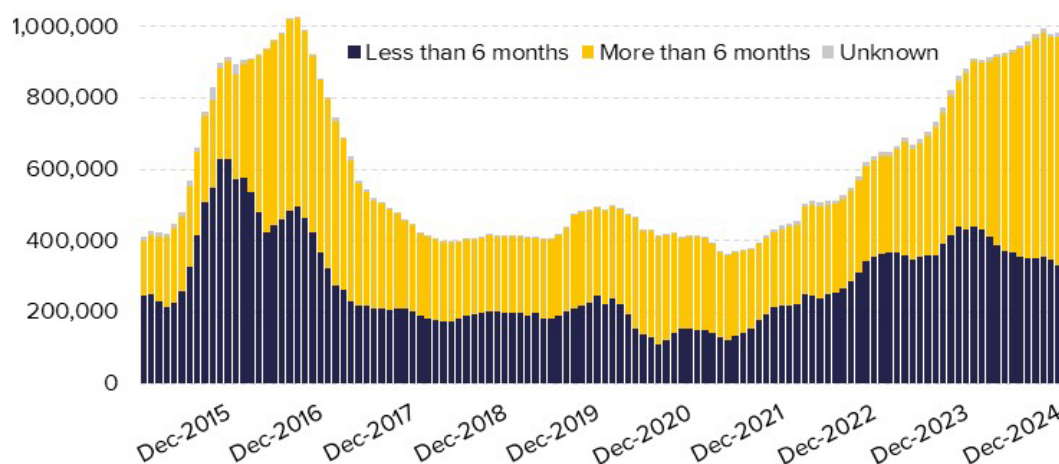


Note: Data on withdrawn applications were missing for Spain (January 2024). Data on otherwise closed cases were missing for Belgium (since October 2022), Italy (September 2024) and Spain.
Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

Despite the increased number of decisions taken in many countries, there were 981,000 pending cases at the end of December 2024 – among the highest on record. As seen in Figure 6, the share of cases which were pending for more than 6 months also increased in 2024.

Three countries jointly accounted for over two-thirds of all pending cases at the end of 2024: Spain (with 252,000 open cases), Italy (227,000) and Germany (213,000). Pending cases at first instance reached unprecedented levels in the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Poland, Luxembourg, Croatia and Portugal (in descending order). However, Croatia and Poland managed to reverse the trend and ended 2024 at a lower level than in the previous year. Indeed, 16 EU+ countries decreased their numbers of pending cases compared to the end of 2023, with the largest absolute decrease reported in Germany.

Figure 6. Pending cases for less than 6 months, for more than 6 months and unknown across EU+ countries, January 2015–December 2024



Note: Data on pending cases were missing for Czechia (December 2024) and Slovakia.

Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

Against this background, many authorities focused on making the asylum procedure even quicker and more efficient. Authorities aimed to clear out their backlogs as much as possible before the mandatory application of the pact in June 2026 in order to avoid having to apply old and new rules in parallel (depending on the date of the application) for an extensive amount of time. In addition to staff recruitment and digitalisation, authorities applied different case load management methods to increase their efficiency. For example, a new template was piloted in Czechia to support case officers with drafting decisions, while new standard operating procedures were developed in Sweden for case officers for the identification of special needs and the application of exclusion grounds. The Belgian CGRS implemented a specific action plan to process applications from Palestinians more quickly.¹⁷⁵ Several countries used prioritisation policies (see *Figure 7*).

These policies often formed part of a more comprehensive plan to increase efficiency and decrease backlogs, and yielded promising results. The Belgian *Tabula Rasa* project, which tested new practices such as a preliminary questionnaire before the personal interview and the shortened reasoning of decisions, was finalised at the beginning of 2024¹⁷⁶ and found to be very efficient without compromising the quality of decisions. As a result, the procedures have continued in 2025 under the *Prisma* project. The Dutch IND managed to process 18,000 additional applications within the prioritisation project between May 2023 and mid-July 2024.¹⁷⁷

Despite these measures, asylum procedures remained lengthy in some cases. For example, the possibility to extend the asylum procedure to 21 months remained in place in the Netherlands.¹⁷⁸ Ombudspersons and courts decided on complaints in individual cases of long processing times.¹⁷⁹

Figure 7. Examples of prioritisation policies in 2024

Belgium	Fast-track procedure for applicants from Georgia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Western Balkan countries and for applicants who already have a protection status in another EU Member State
Ireland	Prioritising applicants from countries with the highest number of applications in the past 3 months (Nigeria, Jordan)
Luxembourg	Prioritising older cases by date of lodging
Netherlands	Prioritising applicants with high chances of receiving protection (by a specialised project team), applications by nationalities with little chances of obtaining international protection and applicants who cause a nuisance or disturbance

Sources: Ireland¹⁸⁰ and Netherlands.¹⁸¹

Specific policies for applicants from certain countries of origin helped with case load management and assessments. EU-wide responses were triggered by developments in Syria in December 2024, when most EU+ countries suspended decisions on the protection needs of Syrian applicants until there was more clarity on the situation in the country (see Table 2). Typically authorities still continued with decisions on admissibility or Dublin transfers of Syrian applicants, but the caseload is anticipated to grow.

Table 2. Reactions from asylum authorities of EU+ countries on the situation in Syria

Country	Reactions
Austria	According to media sources, Chancellor Karl Nehammer instructed the Minister of the Interior Gerhard Karner to suspend all current Syrian asylum applications and to review all cases in which asylum was granted. Reuters. (9 December 2024). Austria stops processing Syrians' asylum applications after Assad falls .
Belgium	The CGRS suspended the examination of applications and personal interviews that were already scheduled. The CGRS maintained personal interviews and decisions for those who already have protection in another Member State. CGRS. (9 December 2024). Suspension temporaire du traitement des dossiers des demandeurs Syrie .
Bulgaria	SAR continued with the processing of applications based on its updated policy. SAR. (3 February 2025). Отчетен доклад за проведената процедура за международна закрила за 2024 г.
Croatia	The Ministry of the Interior instructed the relevant services to temporarily suspend the processing of applications from Syrian nationals. The ministry still receives applications for international protection by Syrian nationals, and they are accommodated within the reception centres, provided with material reception conditions, and given the necessary medical and psychosocial care. Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova Republike Hrvatske. (9 December 2024). Ministar Božinović: Hrvatska privremeno obustavlja zahtjeve za azil Sirijcima .
Cyprus	The Ministry of the Interior announced that the examination of cases by Syrian applicants was suspended already in April 2024, as a result of increased arrivals. ¹⁸² Κυβερνητική Πύλη. (13 April 2024). Ανακοίνωση για την εφαρμογή νέας πολιτικής σε σχέση με τη διαχείριση των Σύρων αιτητών ασύλου .

Czechia	<p>The Ministry of the Interior suspended the procedure for applications for international protection and the procedure for the extension of subsidiary protection for Syrian nationals.</p> <p>Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky. (9 December 2024). Ministerstvo vnitra pozastavilo rozhodování o žádostech Syřanů o azyl.</p>
Denmark	<p>The Danish Immigration Service suspended the processing of cases by individuals from Syria. The appeals body also suspended cases on appeal, with the Coordination Committee of the Refugee Appeals Board set to review the suspension at its next meeting on 16 January 2025.</p> <p>Danish Immigration Service. (10 December 2024) Suspension of asylum cases regarding individuals from Syria.</p> <p>Refugee Appeals Board. (9 December 2024). Flygtningenævnet berostiller behandlingen af sager vedrørende personer fra Syrien (for cases on appeal and returns)</p>
Finland	<p>The Finnish Immigration Service suspended the examination of applications by Syrians (approximately 350 pending applications) and is reviewing its COI on the area to allow decision-making to restart.</p> <p>Finnish Immigration Service. (9 December 2024). Decision-making on asylum applications from Syrians paused by Finnish Immigration Service.</p>
France	<p>OFPPA is closely monitoring the situation in Syria. As always, in the event of a changing situation in an asylum seeker's country of origin, this may lead to the temporary suspension of decisions on certain cases lodged by Syrian nationals, depending on the reasons of the application.</p> <p>OFPPA. (9 December 2024). Communiqué de presse – Syrie.</p>
Germany	<p>The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) postponed decisions for Syrian applicants, noting that it is not yet possible to predict whether the current developments will lead to refugee movements in or out of the region. It is also not possible to predict what impact the changing situation will have on the opportunities for Syrian refugees to return to their homeland.</p> <p>BAMF. (9 December 2024). Rückstellung von Entscheidungen Syrien.</p>
Greece	<p>The Greek government suspended decisions on the merits of asylum applications by Syrians.</p> <p>UNHCR. (14 January 2025). For Syrians in Greece.</p>
Italy	<p>According to media sources, the government decided to suspend proceedings on asylum applications from Syria.</p> <p>Reuters. (9 December 2024). Italy pauses asylum applications from Syria.</p>
Latvia	<p>According to media sources, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs suspended decisions on granting international protection to Syrian citizens.</p> <p>Latvijas Sabiedriskais medijs. (10 December 2024). Arī Latvijā aptur lēmumu pieņemšanu par starptautiskās aizsardzības statusa piešķiršanu Sīrijas pilsoņiem.</p>
Lithuania	<p>According to media sources, the Head of Migration Department noted that only one Syrian asylum request was pending and was not a reason to suspend decisions.</p> <p>Lithuanian National Radio and Television. (11 December 2024). Syrian asylum issue not currently relevant in Lithuania – migration chief.</p>
Luxembourg	<p>The Ministry of Home Affairs announced the suspension of the examination of applications from Syrian nationals. The Ministry highlighted that the suspension is temporary, allowing time and consultation with other EU Member States on the situation, and that this does not impact the Dublin procedure.</p> <p>Ministère des Affaires intérieures, Direction générale de l'immigration. (10 December 2024). Suspension de l'examen des demandes de protection internationale des ressortissants syriens.</p>
Malta	<p>The International Protection Agency (IPA) temporarily suspended the examination of pending and new asylum applications for international protection by Syrian nationals.</p> <p>IPA. (10 December 2024). Press release by the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security and Employment.</p>



Netherlands	<p>The IND suspended the examination of applications and return decisions. However, the IND will take decisions on applications submitted more than 21 months ago that due to individual circumstances, regardless of the security situation, lead to a positive decision on residence in the Netherlands. Syrians who were previously registered in another EU country (Dublin claimants), Syrians who already have international protection in another EU Member State, and public order and 1F cases are exempted from both the decision and the departure moratorium.</p> <p>IND. (9 December 2024). Voorlopig geen beslissing op asielaanvragen Syrië.</p>
Norway	<p>The UDI announced the suspension of the processing of asylum applications lodged by Syrians, while noting that scheduled interviews will still take place.</p> <p>UDI. (9 December 2024). Information regarding the situation in the Middle East and applications for residence in Norway.</p>
Poland	<p>According to media sources, the Polish Office for Foreigners will not issue decisions on Syrian citizens' applications for international protection until the situation in Syria is clarified.</p> <p>Reuters. (11 December 2024). European countries halt Syrian asylum applications after Assad's fall.</p>
Portugal	<p>According to media sources, the government had no intention to suspend the processing of pending cases.</p> <p>Rádio e Televisão de Portugal. (11 December 2024). Síria. Portugal mantém 1.243 refugiados no país, mas sem decisão sobre futuro.</p>
Slovakia	<p>The Ministry of the Interior was monitoring the situation.</p> <p>Ministerstvo vnútra SR (10 December 2024). Vývoj situácie v Sýrii ministerstvo vnútra monitoruje.</p>
Sweden	<p>The Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) suspended the examination of asylum applications for Syrians. The suspension was prolonged on 10 March 2025 for a period of maximum 3 months.</p> <p>SMA. (9 December 2024, updated on 12 March 2025). Migrationsverket beslutar om besluts- och verkställighetsstopp till Syrien.</p>
Switzerland	<p>In December 2024, the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) decided that decisions on asylum application by Syrians would not be taken until further notice. The volatile situation in Syria following the overthrow of the Assad regime does not allow for a thorough examination of the reasons to seek asylum. Nonetheless, Syrians could still apply for asylum.</p> <p>Swiss State Secretariat for Migration (SEM). (9 December 2024). Information regarding Syria.</p>

At the end of 2024, the highest numbers of pending cases at first instance were recorded for [Syrians](#) (109,000 cases), Colombians (97,000) and Venezuelans (93,000). Together they represented close to one-third of the total. More than one-half of all pending cases pertained to 37 nationalities with low recognition rates, i.e. those which had recognition rates of 20% or below in 2024.ⁱⁱⁱ

Court decisions increasingly shaped national authorities' assessment policies throughout 2024, for example related to Gaza, Syria, military conscription in Russia and westernised lifestyle versus the mere fact of living in Europe.¹⁸³ The CJEU delivered several significant rulings, for example on women as a whole and women who identify with the value of equality between women and men as a particular social group, UNRWA's protection and assistance, and the assessment of cases lodged by Afghan women.¹⁸⁴

ⁱⁱⁱ Nearly 200 citizenships were issued asylum decisions in 2024, but many in very small numbers which can lead to unstable or misleading recognition rates. Of the 200, 65 citizenships were issued at least 1,000 decisions and among them 37 had recognition rates of $\leq 20\%$.



COI units updated their products based on the changing situation in countries of origin, linked with the most common profiles in their national context.¹⁸⁵ In line with the new mandate of the Belgian CGRS on the statelessness determination procedure, the country of origin information research unit (CEDOCA) updated its COI on statelessness for Palestinians and Kurds. It also undertook a number of fact-finding missions (Armenia, Burundi, Cameroon, El Salvador, Morocco, Rwanda and Türkiye), while the Austrian BFA went to Syria, the German BAMF organised a mission to Türkiye about Syrian applicants, and the French OFPRA organised a mission to Colombia.

Figure 8. Examples of policies on the assessment of asylum applications in the national context in 2024

Belgium	New policy on applicants from Somalia
	Resuming the processing of cases by Russian nationals
	Resuming the processing of certain cases by Sudanese applicants
	Suspension of the notification of decisions granting or refusing subsidiary protection for applicants from Lebanon
Cyprus	Suspension of the examination of cases by Syrian applicants due to mass arrivals in April 2024
Luxembourg	Guidance on the assessment of applications by Turkish nationals affiliated with the Gülen movement
	Guidance on the assessment of applications by Syrian applicants at risk of being conscripted into compulsory military service
Netherlands	Adjusted policy on applications from Yemen
	Resumption of decisions on applications from Palestinians, following the Council of State's ruling that the moratorium was not lawful
	Decision and departure moratorium on applications from Lebanese nationals
	New policy on applications by nationals of Sudan
Norway	Updated guidelines on processing asylum cases by Ukrainian nationals who are not covered by collective protection
Sweden	Update of legal position on the assessment of cases by Afghans
	Update of the legal position related to the assessment of certain Yemeni homeland passports

Sources: Belgium,¹⁸⁶ Cyprus,¹⁸⁷ Netherlands¹⁸⁸ and Norway.¹⁸⁹

To provide more targeted support to case officers, training initiatives were expanded both in Belgium and Germany. A new project (Consultancy@PO) was launched in Belgium to allow case officers to ask questions and hold consultations with researchers. In Germany, a BAMFGPT was piloted to allow case officers to make inquiries via chat. The Irish IPO aimed to increase the efficiency and quality of its decision-making by ensuring a uniform approach to COI research and establishing a separate COI unit.

Box 2. Identifying statelessness in the asylum context



Statelessness is a legal anomaly which affects people who are not considered a national by any state. Lacking any state's protection, stateless persons may not be able to fully exercise their fundamental rights.

Stateless persons and refugees are two distinct categories in international law. Nevertheless, a person can be both a refugee and stateless. In the context of asylum, statelessness may also be relevant to determine international protection needs, as in many instances the reasons why a person left their country are connected to reasons why they are stateless.

For the first time in the EU *acquis*, the Pact on Migration and Asylum introduced binding provisions on statelessness. This holds relevance in the context of asylum in Europe as key countries of origin of applicants have known stateless populations. To improve identification, the Screening Regulation (SR), Recital 37 and Article 12(3) and the APR, Article 27(2) require EU Member States to assess indicators of statelessness and clearly register it when a person claims to have no nationality, pending the determination of whether this person is stateless.

In 2024, EU+ countries took positive steps to identify and address statelessness, while national courts issued protection-oriented decisions for stateless persons, such as for ethnic Armenians from Nagorno Karabakh and the 'non-citizens' of Latvia.¹⁹⁰ Following the [CJEU judgment C-563/22](#),¹⁹¹ several countries granted refugee status to stateless Palestinians who were registered with UNRWA by considering that protection from UNRWA could no longer be considered effective or guaranteed given the security and humanitarian situation in Gaza after 7 October 2023.¹⁹²

In parallel, some countries added conditions or exemptions that reduced the possibility for stateless persons fleeing the conflict in Ukraine to access the territory and retain or apply for temporary protection. International and civil society organisations continued to raise awareness on existing limitations and advocate for further improvements.

The [European Network on Statelessness](#) (ENS), a civil society alliance carrying out [multi-faceted work](#) to address statelessness in Europe, among other issues, underlined the importance of identifying statelessness during return procedures and when issuing detention decisions, as stateless persons very likely do not have a country to return to and may end up in a legal limbo.¹⁹³ In cooperation with civil society organisations in Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany and Romania, the ENS developed and published country-specific toolkits to aid frontline asylum practitioners to identify statelessness and respond accordingly.¹⁹⁴ In an October 2024 briefing, the ENS published detailed recommendations for Member States, EU bodies and agencies, and other actors on how to effectively implement Pact provisions related to statelessness.¹⁹⁵

The High-Level Segment on Statelessness took place in October 2024 and mobilised over 100 government delegations, 50 intergovernmental organisations, civil society organisations and stateless-led groups to formally launch the [Global Alliance to End Statelessness](#). Through multi-stakeholder collaboration, the alliance aims to catalyse and accelerate solutions that bring an end to statelessness. In response to evolving needs, UNHCR, in consultation with key stakeholders, also reviewed and updated the [Global Action Plan to End Statelessness](#) and published a guide on using litigation to address issues related to statelessness.¹⁹⁶



4.2. Appealing first instance asylum decisions

4.2.1. Adapting the organisation of courts and tribunals



Several EU+ countries introduced institutional changes within appeals bodies in an effort to increase efficiency. Appeals bodies were decentralised in France¹⁹⁷ and Lithuania,¹⁹⁸ and panels were reduced to a single judge as a main rule in France¹⁹⁹ and Germany,²⁰⁰ while maintaining collegiality for complex cases. In France, the changes aim to bring the appeal body closer to the applicant and to meet the objective of equal treatment for all applicants, regardless of where they live in France. The authorities noted that this may also allow for a diversification of available lawyers, beyond the Paris area. France terre d'asile provided comments on the changes, which are not implemented yet.²⁰¹

The higher number of cases pending on an appeal prompted courts to shift staff and processing capacity. As the Directorate of Immigration in Iceland cleared its backlog of applications lodged by Venezuelan nationals, a backlog was created in appeals. The Immigration Appeals Board (IAB) hired more lawyers and case officers to reduce the case load. Belgium and Ireland also recruited staff or assigned judges and legal professionals from other areas to asylum cases. The re-assignments entailed the need for swift training, and a specific training programme was developed by CALL in Belgium for this purpose, while an online induction video was being developed in Ireland.

The competence of courts in asylum cases shifted in some countries. In Belgium, the competence of CALL was extended due to the introduction of a procedure to apply for a residence permit based on statelessness. It now covers annulment appeals without a suspensive effect which were lodged against a negative decision on requests for residence due to statelessness.²⁰²

New legislation in Italy brought changes to the competence of courts of appeals concerning border procedures and detention. A second appeal before the courts was introduced for decisions pronounced in the accelerated border procedure.²⁰³ In addition, the validation of detention measures was changed, giving courts of appeals competence for the judicial validation of detention measures.²⁰⁴

4.2.2. Continuing to ensure applicants' rights and obligations at second or higher instances



Changes to legislation and practices aimed to strengthen procedural safeguards for children in appeal procedures. For example, a legislative amendment in Norway lowered the threshold for conducting hearings by the Immigration Appeals Board (UNE) in deportation cases involving children.²⁰⁵ Belgium introduced summons letters that explain the course of a hearing in a child-friendly manner, as recommended by the guidelines of the Council of Europe. A pilot project at the Belgian CALL tailored a courtroom to encourage interaction between a minor and the judge.²⁰⁶

To improve the quality of judicial processes, several courts provided continuous professional development for judges, often with the support of the EUAA.²⁰⁷ In Ireland, the High Court clarified the duties of the first level of appeal, IPAT. It ruled in January 2024 that IPAT had at a minimum the duty to analyse the COI presented by the applicant and if the tribunal's position was to reject the COI or use other COI, the tribunal needs to provide an explanation for its



reasoning.²⁰⁸ The ECtHR ruled in a case against Poland that an appeal against a refusal of entry and a further appeal to the domestic administrative courts were not effective remedies within the meaning of the Convention because they did not have an automatic suspensive effect.²⁰⁹

Civil society organisations reported on some gaps in the appeals procedure that may undermine applicants' rights. For example, Asylex and the Swiss Refugee Council noted that the absence of an oral hearing before the second instance body in Switzerland continued to be a significant hindrance, as the appeal is exclusively conducted in writing, and only in rare cases a hearing is organised to clarify the facts.²¹⁰ In addition, Asylex noted a systematic reduction of access to legal assistance before the Federal Administrative Court.²¹¹ The Refugee Council identified different obstacles to an effective appeal procedure, including the fact that the court may request, if the appeal is *prima facie* without merit, an advance payment of about CHF 750 for presumed costs of the appeal proceedings, under penalty of the inadmissibility of the appeal. Unaccompanied minors are exempt from the payment.²¹²

In recent years, issues have arisen over applicants' right to know and access classified information.²¹³ It was welcomed that in Malta a legal notice introduced the possibility for the International Protection Appeals Tribunal to access information in the applicant's file relating to national security.²¹⁴ The Dutch district court in Roermond referred to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling to clarify what information is included in the concept of 'information in the applicant's file upon the basis of which a decision is or will be made' within the meaning of the recast APD, Article 23(1) and whether this also includes access to information on the manner in which that information was gathered and obtained.²¹⁵

The extent of a judicial review in the context of the recast APD, Article 46(1) and (3) read in the light of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 47 and the meaning of the full and *ex nunc* examination of an application for international protection continued to give rise to referrals for preliminary rulings. The CJEU delivered a judgment on this matter in October 2024²¹⁶ and April 2025.²¹⁷ The Dutch district court in Zwolle referred to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling on whether the court can make its own assessment of the credibility of an asylum claim, replacing the assessment made by the determining authority.²¹⁸

4.2.3. Changes in the implementation of procedures at second or higher instances



Similarly to previous years, appeal bodies suspended the examination of cases on appeal for specific profiles of applicants or adapted practices and updated guidelines due to developments in countries of origin. For example, IPAT in Ireland updated its "Guideline on Country Information" for assessing COI.²¹⁹

The UNE in Norway lifted bans on returns to Yemen in February 2024²²⁰ and extended the temporary suspension of the obligation to return to Gaza (with the exception of the West Bank) until March 2025. The UNE also published a summary of their considerations in cases submitted by Afghan nationals.²²¹

A legislative amendment in Iceland changed the prioritisation of cases so that cases nearing the time limit for processing are reviewed first and those which already passed the deadline are processed later. The IAB in Iceland provided clarifications on time limits on appeal, their extension, the aspects taken into account when deciding on the length of the deadlines,²²² procedures for assessing the best interests of the child applying for international protection,²²³ interviewing procedures²²⁴ and criteria for the suspension of the legal effect of the IAB's decisions in cases concerning international protection.²²⁵



Several procedural aspects were either clarified by higher courts or referred to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling. For example, the Council of State in France clarified that to determine whether an appeal sent by post has been lodged within the set time limit, the date to be taken into consideration is the date of dispatch of the appeal, as evidenced by the postmark, rather than the date of receipt of the appeal by the court.²²⁶ In Finland, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled that when the determining authority provides an incorrect notice of appeal, the appeal must not be dismissed for missing the time limit if sent to the wrong court or following a wrong procedure.²²⁷

Some countries, like Cyprus and Ireland, started to digitalise court files and to exchange them electronically.

With the growing workload of courts, challenges remained in several countries with the excessive length of procedures.²²⁸ New rules under the Pact have initiated reflection on the re-organisation of appeal procedures in several EU+ countries, with many of them noting this as a challenging area, where national judicial traditions and the quickly-changing realities of international protection need to be reconciled.

Box 3. Focus on jurisprudence related to international protection



The [EUAA Case Law Database](#) contains over 3,700 judgments pronounced by European and national courts on international protection. The most recurrent topics in 2024 concerned the Dublin procedure, reception, detention and temporary protection.

The CJEU delivered various judgments on the Dublin procedure, focusing on systemic flaws in the asylum procedure in the Member States responsible, consecutive detention prior to a Dublin transfer and the application of the discretionary clause (see [Jurisprudence Related to Asylum Pronounced by the Court of Justice of the EU in 2024](#), Fact Sheet No 32). Several national judgments, for example in Belgium, Croatia, Lithuania, Romania and Spain, found that the principle of mutual trust could be relied upon when analysing reception conditions and access to the asylum procedure in view of a Dublin transfer.

Reception was a key focus for the ECtHR, with several judgments finding violations of Article 3 of the European Charter of Human Rights (ECHR) due to inadequate reception conditions, especially for vulnerable applicants. The EUAA shed light on divergent practices by examining case law from 2019-2024 on the application of Article 20 of the recast RCD in [Jurisprudence on Material Reception Conditions in Asylum – Sanctions, Reductions, and Withdrawals](#).

The ECtHR ruled extensively on detention, finding violations of Articles 3, 5(1) and 5(4) of the ECHR due to arbitrary, unlawful or prolonged detention, inadequate detention conditions and a lack of effective remedies. National courts also issued decisions on the legality of detention, most commonly addressing detention pending a return, detention on grounds of national security risks, prolonged detention, and judicial reviews of detention. In Finland, the Supreme Administrative Court [referred](#) questions to the CJEU on the lawfulness of extended detention pending a removal.

Border and accelerated procedures featured before national courts. The Belgian CALL [referred](#) questions to the CJEU on whether a procedure conducted in a location within the national territory but classified as a border area qualifies as a border procedure and on the right to an effective remedy. In Italy, significant cases arose from the implementation of the accelerated border



procedure, also in application of the Italy-Albania protocol, including referrals to the CJEU on the safe country of origin concept, based on the landmark CJEU judgment in [CV](#) (C-406/22, 4 October 2024). Similarly, the concept of safe third countries was referred to the CJEU by the [Greek Council of State](#) and the [Administrative Court of Sofia City](#).

National courts addressed the status of Syrian applicants, with a significant number of cases originating from Austria. In June 2024, the Supreme Administrative Court [acknowledged](#) Syria's catastrophic human rights situation, deeming returns to be unsafe. In October 2024, the court [delivered](#) a judgment on the necessary link between acts of persecution and the reason for persecution in the case of conscientious objection or forced recruitment.²²⁹ In March 2025, the court highlighted that there was no automatic assumption that every Syrian living abroad who has not completed his military service is assumed to have an oppositional attitude in his country of origin and would therefore face disproportionate punishment.²³⁰ The Constitutional Court [assessed](#) the feasibility of returns to Damascus, considering the security situation and individual circumstances of the applicant. At the same time, the Federal Administrative Court [referred](#) questions to the CJEU on the possibility of paying an exemption fee to avoid military service in Syria. In Denmark, the Refugee Appeals Board [ruled](#) in October 2024 that, while the security situation in the Homs province remained serious, mere presence in the area no longer posed a real risk of treatment in violation of Article 3 of the ECHR. Subsequently in December 2024, after the fall of the Assad regime and the uncertain situation, the Danish Refugee Appeals Board suspended the processing of cases by Syrian applicants.

Protection for women and girls facing gender-based violence was strengthened by the CJEU in 2024 through three landmark judgments assessing gender as a characteristic of a particular social group. A significant body of case law on the topic emerged from the International Protection Administrative Court of Cyprus, addressing various forms of gender-based violence. The EUAA's report, [Jurisprudence Related to Gender-Based Violence against Women](#), outlines the legal framework on this topic and presents relevant case law from 2020 to 2024.

Case law on unaccompanied minors increased significantly in 2024. The CJEU [ruled](#) on their right to family reunification with parents or a vulnerable sibling, when the sponsoring beneficiary reaches adulthood during the procedure. In the Netherlands, the Council of State [revised](#) the national policy on age assessments, ruling that mutual trust does not apply, although age registrations from other Member States can be considered. The Supreme Court of Spain [established](#) doctrinal guidance on the qualification of third-country nationals as beneficiaries of residence permits for humanitarian reasons linked to international protection, which is a national form of protection. It also clarified the procedural requirements for their examination. The Supreme Court ruled that the determining authority must assess *ex officio* whether the applicant deserves such a permit if the person has vulnerabilities. Finally, after finding Malta in violation of Article 3 of the ECHR for inadequate conditions in detention for unaccompanied minors, the ECtHR ordered the national authority to adopt concrete measures to provide for an effective remedy against detention conditions and ensure an independent and impartial Immigration Appeals Tribunal.

Collective expulsions continued to be addressed by the ECtHR, which found violations of Article 4 of Protocol No 4 of the ECHR in cases involving the removal of individuals without assessing their circumstances, vulnerability, safety and risk of *refoulement*, and denying access to the asylum procedure. An additional case on this topic is [pending](#) before the Grand Chamber and will be decided in 2025.

Temporary protection also featured in case law in 2024, primarily on clarifying eligibility criteria. To this end, the EUAA's report on [Jurisprudence on the Application of the Temporary Protection Directive: Analysis of Case Law from 2022-2024](#) examines how courts refined Member States' interpretation of eligibility, in particular for third-country nationals who were not nationals or permanent residents of Ukraine. The CJEU delivered its first rulings related to temporary protection in December 2024²³¹ and in February 2025.²³²

Section 5. Rethinking reception



The recast Reception Conditions Directive (RCD) 2013 sets the standards which must be met for the reception of asylum applicants and aims to ensure that applicants' rights and obligations are harmonised across all Member States.

The reception of applicants for international protection encompasses rules on material reception conditions (such as housing, food and clothing which are provided in kind, through financial allowances or in vouchers – or a combination of these three – and a daily expense allowance), freedom of movement, access to healthcare, education for children, access to the labour market, language instruction and socio-cultural orientation. The directive applies to all applicants throughout the whole asylum procedure from the moment an application is made and for all types of procedures until they are allowed to remain on the territory. The directive also outlines the circumstances when Member States may reduce or exceptionally withdraw material reception conditions. In addition, the directive lists the criteria, guarantees and conditions for the detention of applicants. Detention can occur at different stages of the procedure (at the start of the procedure, pending the examination of a claim, pending the implementation of a Dublin transfer and pending the implementation of a return) and may be governed by different legislative pieces (for example the Dublin III Regulation and Return Directive).

The new RCD 2024 aims to enhance convergence in adequate standards of reception that create comparable living conditions for applicants in all Member States. It provides more flexibility in the management of reception systems and aims for more efficiency in the prevention of secondary movements. It also seeks to strengthen safeguards for applicants related to detention, earlier access to the labour market, supporting physical and mental healthcare, and providing more protection for families, children and vulnerable applicants.

5.1. Revising the organisation of national reception systems



Several challenges and critical situations in reception in recent years have catalysed authorities in many EU+ countries to comprehensively review their reception systems (see *Table 3*).²³³ The adoption of the recast RCD 2024 spurs further changes for the management of reception, going beyond simple adjustments.²³⁴

The pressure on reception systems decreased in a few countries in 2024, typically due to a decrease in applications – this was for example the case in Austria. Finland decreased accommodation places by not extending contracts for additional reception centres.²³⁵ In view of this, the Finnish Immigration Service encouraged some residents in reception centres (typically under temporary protection) to apply for municipality residence.²³⁶ Similarly in Sweden, many under temporary protection obtained the right to register in the population registry and transfer from reception to municipalities. Thus, a gradual outflow of persons under temporary protection also contributed to a normalisation of the reception situation. Pressure remained stable in Norway due to a continued number of persons fleeing Ukraine, so the UDI replaced temporary emergency accommodation with regular reception centres in 2024.²³⁷ However, in the

beginning of 2025, the situation reversed, and the UDI decided to close down several centres hosting Ukrainians.

Table 3. Examples of strategic changes in national reception systems in 2024

	Belgium	A legal framework was established for the use of accommodation places for returns and Dublin transfers. ²³⁸
	Bulgaria	A comprehensive reception strategy was being drafted. ²³⁹
	Denmark	The division responsible for reception and accommodation was moved under the Department of Asylum within the Danish Immigration Service. The objective was to streamline processes, foster greater coordination and enhance communication between staff working on asylum and reception.
	Ireland	The government presented a new comprehensive accommodation strategy for international protection applicants. The strategy aims to reform the system over the medium and long term, moving away from a full reliance on private service providers towards a core of state-owned accommodation. ²⁴⁰
	Lithuania	Following the reorganisation and restructuring of the Refugee Reception Centre, a new Reception and Integration Agency was established, with operations starting in January 2025. ²⁴¹
	Luxembourg	A new centre was established for people of the following profiles: i) people in the Dublin procedure; ii) people awaiting a voluntary return after their applications for international protection have been definitively rejected and where all possible appeals have been exhausted; iii) occasionally, irregular third-country nationals who did not apply for international protection.
	Netherlands	The Distribution Act came into force, aiming to ensure more structural reception places and a more balanced distribution of applicants across the country. The new government announced its intention to withdraw this act, as a way to deter new applications, but the act remained in force in 2024 and its implementation was ongoing, with strong support from COA and the majority of municipalities. ²⁴²
	Sweden	Following a government assignment, the SMA prepared for a reformed reception system with accommodation based on collective reception centres or return centres for rejected applicants. ²⁴³ Since 1 March 2025, applicants are entitled to financial support if they live in the facility they were assigned to. Under certain circumstances exceptions can be made, for example, if an applicant lives with immediate family, assuming they are residents in Sweden. Applicants are also obliged to participate in courses on the Swedish society. ²⁴⁴
	Switzerland	Following the pilot project of the 24-hour procedure in Zürich, this working method was extended to all federal centres with procedural functions. As a result, even though the number of applications increased, the pressure on the reception system was eased, with the average length of stay decreasing as well. Furthermore, this led to fewer security incidents in reception facilities. ²⁴⁵



In contrast, reception systems remained saturated in the Benelux and Ireland,²⁴⁶ despite the fact that new places were opened and additional staff were recruited in each country.²⁴⁷ Belgium had a record number of reception places in 2024 but still was unable to meet demand.²⁴⁸ In addition to continuously high numbers of applications and delays in asylum procedures, each country experienced issues with outflow from reception, as several rejected applicants overstayed while recognised beneficiaries could not transfer to their own accommodation due to a general housing crisis. Court judgments condemned national authorities for failing to provide reception to applicants or to abide by agreements with municipalities, and obliged many authorities to pay penalties in these cases.²⁴⁹ In its appeal to one of the judgments, the Dutch Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) underlined that the penalties did not solve the issue of the overcrowded initial reception centre in Ter Apel, and allocating asylum seekers to other crowded reception centres would mean a violation of agreements with these municipalities as well.²⁵⁰

5.2. Standards and safeguards for applicants in reception



Similarly to previous years, the continued pressure on reception and related court cases arising from delays in accessing reception prompted the judiciary to underline that applicants must be ensured suitable material reception conditions from the moment of making an application, and any other practice (for example, the use of waiting lists) would not be sufficient to meet obligations under EU law.²⁵¹ In Sweden, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled that even a rejected applicant with a legally-binding deportation order must continue to receive reception when they use their right to apply for a residence permit on grounds of work within 2 weeks from the rejection.²⁵²

The tightening of rules on the period and amount of entitlement continued in 2024. For example in Belgium, there is still a 30-day notice period after a final negative asylum decision, but the end of the right to material reception conditions is now linked to the notification of such a final negative asylum decision and not to the notification of an order to leave the territory, which typically happened at a later stage.²⁵³ Changes in French law now oblige authorities to revoke material reception conditions received in cash in certain circumstances, while this was previously not obligatory.²⁵⁴ The Finnish government decreased the financial allowance for all applicants to the minimum permitted by EU and national laws and proposed amendments to exclude applicants from material reception conditions when they submit several subsequent applications after a negative decision.²⁵⁵

Another trend pointed to the strict implementation of the rules requiring applicants with a certain amount of financial resources to contribute to the cost of reception. These rules were often already included in national legislation but were not applied in practice.²⁵⁶

Jurisprudence continued to grow on the interpretation of a dignified standard of living and how authorities should apply the rules on reducing or withdrawing material reception conditions.²⁵⁷ These questions have multiplied, as authorities have strived to deter secondary movements and subsequent applications by changing the scope of material reception conditions (often replacing in cash with in kind benefits).²⁵⁸ In addition, altering or reducing material reception conditions have been used as sanction measures for incidents of breaching house rules repeatedly or security incidents related to substance abuse or involvement in criminal gangs.²⁵⁹





Several referrals for a preliminary ruling were pending at the CJEU, which will provide further guidance on the application of these rules.²⁶⁰

Conditions in reception have been at the centre of concern in several countries, although some countries experienced some relief and improved conditions as their number of applications decreased. Where overcrowding persisted, both applicants and reception staff were at increased risk for their safety, residents lacked privacy, and support services were often inadequate (for example to address applicants' health needs or to ensure that children are enrolled in school quickly).²⁶¹ Some applicants remained in destitute situations and were homeless while waiting to access reception.²⁶² The ECtHR delivered several judgments in 2024 which were related to inadequate reception conditions in Greece for applicants who were accommodated in 2016 and in 2018-2019.²⁶³

EU+ countries invested significant resources in recent years to improve their reception facilities.²⁶⁴ Nonetheless, international organisations and civil society continued to report on several issues throughout 2024, including infrastructural issues, concerns related to the safety of staff and residents, gaps in the provision of healthcare services (including mental health support), gaps in educational support for children and challenges in accessing the labour market.²⁶⁵

The focus of legislative changes and new projects to provide services to applicants were divergent, according to the specific situation in an EU+ country. For example in Austria, the amount of pocket money was reduced and applicants (with a few exceptions) must now attend mandatory orientation courses and undertake community services in federal reception centres – and only then they can receive pocket money which corresponds to the previously full amount.²⁶⁶ Belgium and the Netherlands continued projects to facilitate the employment of applicants.²⁶⁷ In Finland, stricter rules apply to ending the right to work for rejected applicants.²⁶⁸

The Irish Supreme Court referred a question to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling on interpreting the notion of a delay that can be attributed to the applicant when counting the time limit to access the labour market,²⁶⁹ while IPAT clarified that the parents of a minor in the international protection procedure cannot be granted access to the labour market on behalf of their minor child or as a derived right.

To improve access to healthcare for applicants, Belgium implemented a digitalisation project to administratively and financially simplify the invoicing of medical costs. Amendments were made to their legislation to allow for the personal data of applicants to be processed electronically.²⁷⁰ In Greece, the IOM was mandated to implement the Hippocrates programme, aiming to provide primary health services and psychosocial care to applicants and ease the burden on general local health services and hospitals.²⁷¹





5.3. Limitations on applicants' freedom of movement and detention



Many court decisions in 2024 influenced when and how applicants and former applicants can be detained. In addition, provisions in the Pact on Migration and Asylum cover allocation to a geographical area, limitations on the freedom of movement and the use of alternatives to detention, which will guide EU+ countries in the upcoming years in implementing new practices.

Detention in the context of access to the procedure continued to be highly debated at the political level and in the context of the Pact, while the ECtHR and national courts looked into its legality in individual cases, for example detention in transit zones which were in place in Hungary between 2015-2020 (see *Section 2*). The Dutch Council of State clarified that people requesting to be registered for temporary protection at the border cannot be detained on the legislative basis used for the detention of applicants for international protection at the border.²⁷²

A series of cases deliberated on the legality of detention when national authorities considered that a person is a threat to national security. The ECtHR reiterated on several occasions the need for a close connection between detention and the aim to prevent unauthorised entry as an interest of national security.²⁷³

Allocation to a specific geographical area and limitations on the freedom of movement were considered by Dutch, Lithuanian and Swiss courts. The Dutch Council of State ruled that transferring an applicant to a specific reception facility for disruptive applicants did not amount to detention, despite this measure being a significant restriction on the freedom of movement.²⁷⁴ In contrast, a district court found that the process availability location (PBL), where restrictions on the freedom of movement were used for applicants with a low probability of being recognised, did not have a sufficient legal basis in national legislation.²⁷⁵ In Lithuania, the court concluded that an accommodation which restricts movement (applicants cannot leave the facility) cannot be considered as an alternative to detention but *de facto* detention.²⁷⁶ The Swiss Federal Administrative Court underlined the importance of the right to family unity when an applicant requested to change the canton to which he was allocated.²⁷⁷ A legislative amendment eased the rules for requesting a change of canton based on proximity to employment.²⁷⁸

A central element to decide on the lawfulness of a detention order remained the prospect of a viable removal within a reasonable period. While Greek courts released applicants from detention by considering that there was no real prospect of a return to Türkiye,²⁷⁹ the Dutch Council of State confirmed that the possibility to return to Algeria was restored and, when necessary, detention pending a return may be applied.²⁸⁰

The use of alternatives to detention received greater interest with the Pact reiterating the key principles and safeguards, while introducing new elements, such as the obligation of the authorities to state in written in the detention order the reason why a less coercive measure could be applied.²⁸¹ The EUAA received the mandate to develop [guidelines](#) on alternatives to detention under the Return Border Procedure Regulation, which were published in December 2024.²⁸² UNHCR called states to reform legislation and mobilise resources to end the detention of asylum seekers and refugees for immigration-related reasons and implement alternatives to detention.²⁸³ Following its introduction in 2023, Italian legislation was amended to adjust the rules requiring certain applicants to pay a bail of EUR 2,500-5,000 as an alternative to



detention pending the outcome of their asylum application.²⁸⁴ As a consequence, the Italian Court of Cassation communicated to the CJEU that a preliminary ruling, requested earlier in 2024,²⁸⁵ was no longer necessary and the case was removed from the register (see *Table 4*).²⁸⁶

Conditions in immigration detention remained a source of concern for international and civil society organisations.²⁸⁷ Comprehensive reports were published for Cyprus,²⁸⁸ Denmark,²⁸⁹ Estonia,²⁹⁰ Greece,²⁹¹ Italy,²⁹² Norway,²⁹³ Poland²⁹⁴ and Switzerland.²⁹⁵

Box 4. Towards enhanced preparedness, contingency planning and crisis response



The legislative instruments of the Pact require Member States to develop asylum and reception systems that are sufficiently resilient and flexible to respond to sudden crisis situations.²⁹⁶ The European Commission's Common Implementation Plan (CIP) highlights that a Member State is considered to be prepared if it has adequate

human, material and financial resources and infrastructure, to ensure that the asylum and migration systems function properly, and that a coordination mechanism is in place between national and EU-level stakeholders.²⁹⁷ Establishing an appropriate contingency plan covering reception and the asylum procedure is part of this preparedness.²⁹⁸ The European Commission's European Annual Asylum and Migration Report will inform about the level of preparedness of Member States.²⁹⁹ The EUAA published guidance on contingency planning in reception already in 2018³⁰⁰ and in the asylum procedure in 2024.³⁰¹ These documents are now being adapted to the new measures of the Pact and are planned to be published in 2026. In addition, the EUAA developed a contingency plan template and manual in 2024, which form the basis for drafting the national contingency plans.

In the first step, Member States have focused on adapting legislation on contingency planning and developing or updating contingency plans and related workflows. Some countries have started to map existing capacities and identify challenges that may involve several organisations and different governance levels. One of the key challenges in this area is to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to meet the needs, both in terms of funding and human resources. Some Member States have initiated discussions on improving their coordination mechanisms for contingency planning and strengthening cooperation with local authorities and other stakeholders, be it other national authorities or civil society organisations.

Section 6. Responsibility for an application for international protection



The objective of the Dublin III Regulation is to guarantee that each person has effective access to the asylum procedure and that each application will be examined by one Member State only. To this end, the regulation establishes a set of hierarchical criteria under Chapter III to determine the Member State which is responsible for the examination of an asylum application.

The AMMR, which will replace the Dublin III Regulation by July 2026, clarifies the responsibility criteria and streamlines the rules for the determination of responsibility for an application for international protection. The criterion of the presence of family members is still emphasised in determining responsibility, and family cases are prioritised while providing applicants with more information and legal support. The regulation also introduces provisions to foster solidarity with Member States that are under disproportionate migratory pressure. The new Solidarity Mechanism foresees mandatory expressions of solidarity to support Member States while offering flexibility in contributions.

In crisis or force majeure situations, the Crisis and Force Majeure Regulation allows for deviations from the rules of the AMMR.

In 2024, EU+ countries continued to enhance the effectiveness of the Dublin III Regulation. For example, the implementation of the Dublin Roadmap, which was adopted in November 2022 to improve the implementation of Dublin transfers, continued throughout 2024. See Figure 10 for some of the achievements made by EU+ countries.

Figure 10. Examples of national developments in reaching the objectives of the Dublin Roadmap, 2024

Objective 1 – Limiting absconding



Focus on information provision on the responsible EU+ country (i.e. swift interview after transfers decision, use of [Dublin transfer fact sheets](#))

Austria, Denmark, Netherlands



Focus on improving the process for applying detention and alternatives to detention

Czechia, Luxembourg, Sweden

Objective 2 – Improving communications between Member States

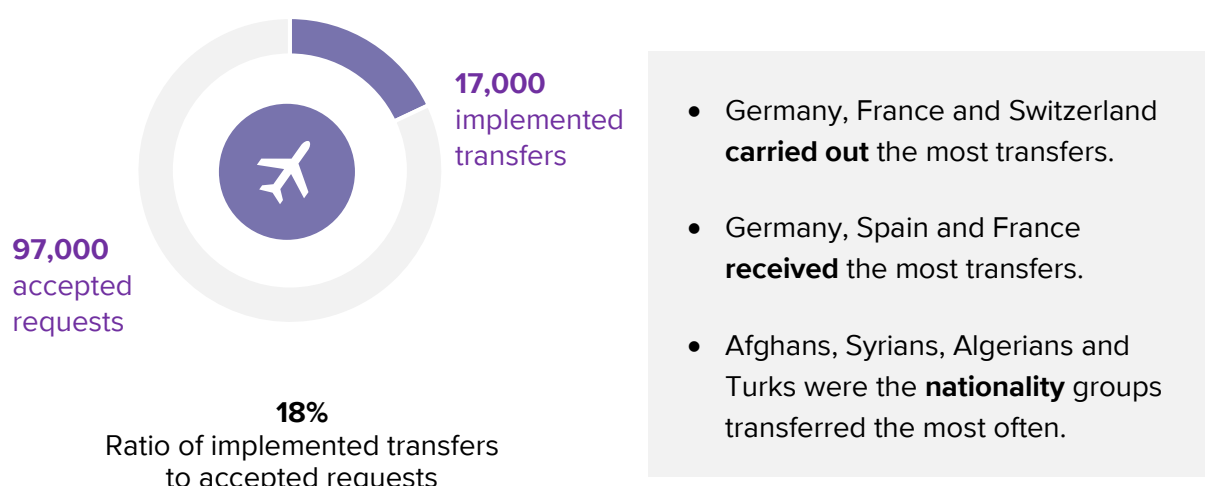


Use of liaison officers

Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Spain

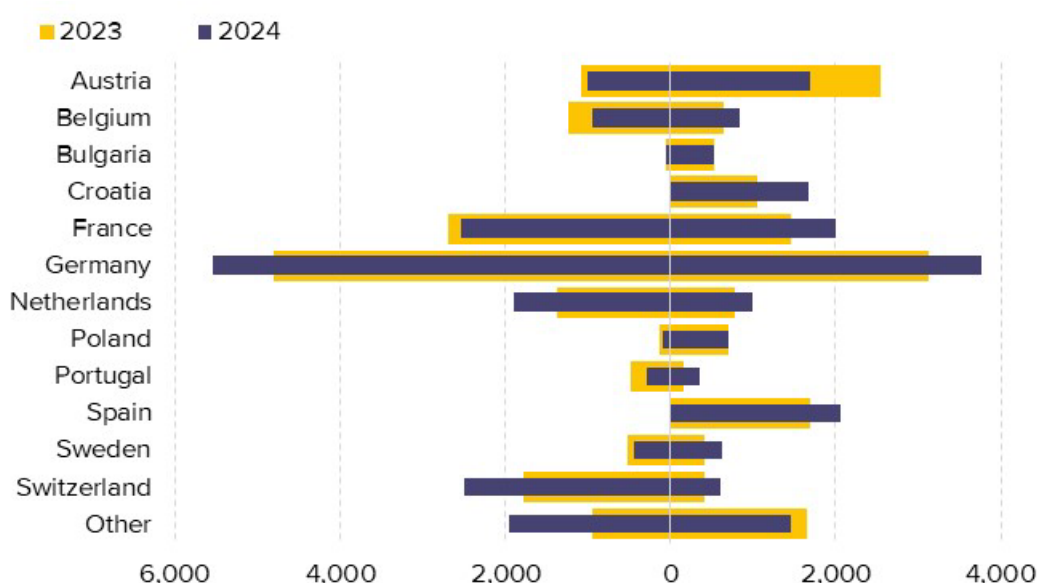
	Bilateral agreements	Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Romania
Objective 3 – Overcoming practical obstacles when implementing transfers		
	Charter flights	Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg
	Reduced notification period for incoming transfers	Hungary
	Enhanced cooperation with police	Spain, Luxembourg, Sweden
Objective 4 – Ensuring sufficient resources to effectively implement Dublin transfers		
	Significant increase in the number of staff	Finland, Ireland
Objective 5 – Increasing compliance with EU law, including court rulings		
	Specialised court unit for the Dublin procedure	Austria
	Making updated information available for courts through revised Dublin transfer fact sheets	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Germany, Greece, Spain, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden

In total, 17,000 Dublin transfers were implemented in 2024, representing about a 14% increase compared to 2023. This was the most since 2019, while still far below pre-pandemic levels. Several reporting countries implemented more transfers than in 2023, with some implementing the most transfers on record, such as Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, Norway and Slovenia. As in 2023, the top implementing countries were Germany (with 5,500 transfers), France (2,500), Switzerland (2,500) and the Netherlands (1,900).



Germany also continued to be the top receiving country (with 3,800 transfers), followed by Spain (2,100) and France (2,000) (see *Figure 11*). Transfers to Croatia and Latvia grew to the highest on record, while transfers to Austria fell by one-third. Overall, in 2024 Austria received more transfers than it carried out to other countries (as was the case in 2022 and 2023). However, this trend started to change in August 2024, and more transfers were carried out to other countries than transfers received to Austria. Transfers to Italy remained very low due to the circular issued by the Italian Dublin unit at the end of 2022, which was still in place, that incoming transfers were temporarily suspended except for the reunification of unaccompanied minors with their family. At the end of 2024, during a press conference after a working meeting with the Swiss Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, the Italian Minister of the Interior announced that he was willing to engage in discussions on resuming transfers with EU+ countries.³⁰²

Figure 11. Number of outgoing Dublin transfers implemented by sending (left) and receiving (right) country for selected countries, 2024 compared to 2023



Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

EU+ countries further invested in digitalisation and ICT projects, either specifically for Dublin units or as part of larger initiatives involving asylum or immigration processes in general. For example, an automated process was piloted in the Netherlands to close Dublin cases in the IT system and automatically generate related correspondence. The Irish Dublin unit digitalised its paper files and made applications digitally available on a new portal. It also started to issue Dublin transfer decisions electronically. The unit noted that these developments helped to decrease processing times. The Dublin module was under development in the Belgian Immigration Office, as part of a wider digitalisation project called E-migration.

Cooperation among EU+ countries continued beyond the formalised channels of liaison officers and bilateral agreements. Several EU+ countries participated in 2024 in an EUAA exchange programme on effective family reunification. Bilateral study visits allowed specific countries to further strengthen their collaboration, such as the visit from the Romanian General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII) to the Swedish SMA. The GII delegation gained insights on the organisation of the Dublin unit and the procedure followed in Sweden, which can be used to reinforce processes in Romania.

EU+ countries reported that the caseload of Dublin units remained stable while most continued to face various challenges. To this end, the EUAA provided operational support for the implementation of the Dublin III Regulation in eight EU+ countries throughout 2024. The support included tasks at various stages of the Dublin procedure in Cyprus, Greece, Germany, Italy, Malta and Slovenia. Romania received support to optimise its Dublin workflows, while in Bulgaria, it consisted of the completion of Dublin-related administrative tasks.

A shortage of staff remained an important concern, in particular for Dublin units in Germany, Norway and Spain. To address the issue, Ireland's Dublin unit recruited new staff and has planned further increases in 2025. Likewise, the Dublin unit in Spain recruited more staff and planned more increases before the Pact enters into application in 2026. In Italy, the high turnover of staff was reported to be the most significant issue. The Dublin unit in Finland faced challenges in having a sufficient number of trained staff.

In 2024, 147,000 decisions were issued in response to outgoing Dublin requests, according to provisional data which are regularly exchanged between the EUAA and 29 EU+ countries.^{iv} This represented an 18% decrease from 2023 when there were a record number of decisions, because asylum applications dropped by over one-tenth and the ratio of Dublin decisions to applications decreased to 14% (the lowest in 8 years). The decrease suggests a reduction in the number of asylum seekers moving from the first country of arrival to another to lodge a new application (referred to as secondary movements) and, accordingly, an impact on asylum caseloads overall.

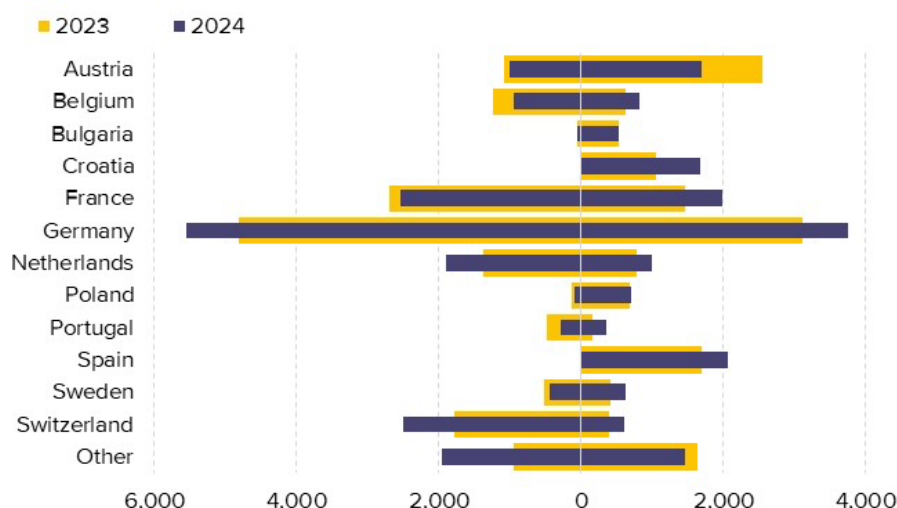
Among EU+ countries receiving the most decisions on Dublin requests in 2024, several experienced declines compared to 2023 (see *Figure 12, left panel*), in particular Austria (65% less), France (35% less) and Slovenia (41% less). Conversely, decisions on requests issued by Italy and Norway rose by 18% and 23%, respectively.

For Dublin decisions issued, the most notable decline was in Austria, which issued more than 60% less than in 2023. This decrease was mainly due to high numbers in 2022 and 2023, and overall the number of decisions issued remained at a moderate level. This was followed by Romania issuing more than one-half fewer decisions, and Bulgaria and Croatia with about one-third less (see *Figure 12, right panel*). Greece, on the other hand, recorded a spike in decisions

^{iv} Greece did not report on Dublin indicators in 2024.

as they doubled compared to 2023. As in the past, more decisions were issued than received in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia and Italy, and vice versa in countries in Central and Western Europe.

Figure 12. Top 10 EU+ countries by Dublin decisions issued and received, 2024 compared to 2023 and share of decisions issued from total decisions in 2024



Note: Greece did not report on Dublin indicators in 2024.

Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

In the second half of the year, EU+ countries started preparations for the implementation of the AMMR. Civil society organisations, for example ECRE, welcomed the new solidarity mechanism, but argued for a complete overhaul of the criteria to identify the Member State responsible for an asylum application.³⁰³ To support the implementation of the Pact at the national level, the EUAA started to work on new information provision leaflets on the AMMR and Eurodac, new guidance and a common template on family tracing, as well as guidance on remote interviewing (including for Dublin interviews).

In 2024, Dublin units adapted processes in response to judgments delivered by the CJEU in 2023 and 2022. Nonetheless, some ambiguities remained. The implementation of the 2022 CJEU judgment in [C-19/21](#), which allowed unaccompanied minors to appeal the refusal of a take charge request in family reunification cases, still remained challenging for many countries. For example, the Dublin unit in Italy was waiting for guidance from the judicial branch on this matter. Likewise, the CJEU decision on the ‘[chain rule](#)’ was delivered in 2023, but questions remained around the responsibility determination procedure, both in legal and practical terms. The European Commission and the EUAA provided support to EU+ countries on these issues. The judgment, along with [C-753/22](#), also led to an increased exchange of information requests based on the Dublin III Regulation, Article 34, adding to the workload of Dublin units.


In 2024, the CJEU delivered five judgments related to the Dublin III Regulation: deliberating on the principle of interstate trust ([C-392/22](#)), whether an effective remedy against a decision not to apply the discretionary clause should be available ([C-359/22](#)), examining an application when the applicant is already a beneficiary of international protection in another Member State but cannot be readmitted ([C-753/22](#)), potential release of a person who is kept detained based on two consecutive detention measures on different legal grounds ([C-387/24](#)), and situations when a Member State suspends the acceptance of a transfer for an indefinite period of time ([C-185/24](#) and [C-189/24](#)). Adhering to case [C-753/22](#), in particular, requires national authorities to

reflect on revising their practices to take full account of another Member State's decision to grant international protection when taking their own decision on an application. While this did not change the rules for determining responsibility, it has led to an increased number of information requests and increased workload for Dublin units. The judgment in case C-359/22 had a noted impact on the practice in Ireland, as Dublin transfers can now be enforced even when the application on the discretionary clause is pending a judicial or ministerial review.

Among case law from national courts presented in the [EUAA Case Law Database](#) for 2024 (see *Table 5*), the vast majority concerned transfers to specific countries, including to Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Spain. Only a few courts did not confirm the transfer but typically referred the case back to the lower instance or the national authority for failing to sufficiently investigate the specific circumstances for the possibility of implementing the transfer in each individual case.³⁰⁴

In several cases, the courts found that the applicants would be at risk of treatment contrary to the EU Charter, Article 4 if sent back to Hungary, due to systemic deficiencies in the asylum procedure.³⁰⁵ Similarly, the Danish Refugee Appeals Board noted that it was highly unlikely that Italian authorities would issue individual guarantees when they currently receive a very limited number of transfers. Thus, the board overturned the transfers to Italy.³⁰⁶

Table 5. Topic of court cases related to the Dublin procedure, 2024

Dublin transfers to specific countries	Application of the discretionary clause	Principle of interstate mutual trust	Information provision on the Dublin procedure
Suspensive effect of a review	Language of the procedure	Incorrect information in a take charge request	Impact of failure to transfer within the time limits
Scope of judicial review under the Dublin III Regulation	Assessing differences in protection policies	Definition of family member under the Dublin III Regulation	

Other court cases concerned the application of the discretionary clause in the Dublin III Regulation,³⁰⁷ such as two cases in front of the Italian Supreme Court which deliberated on the links between the Dublin procedure and the procedure to grant national forms of protection. The cases were referred for further assessment by the court's United Sections, due to the importance of the matter.³⁰⁸

The Dutch Council of State delivered noteworthy judgments concluding that national authorities cannot rely solely on the principle of mutual trust for age assessments³⁰⁹ and that the failure to transfer an applicant within the time limits of the Dublin III Regulation did not mean that the original application for international protection ceased. In addition, the date of the original application for international protection is the one to take into account for the residence permit.³¹⁰

The Italian Court of Cassation ruled that the failure by the national authority to comply with the obligation to provide information specifically on the Dublin procedure led to the annulment of a transfer decision.³¹¹

For more information, see Analysis of Jurisprudence on the Implementation of the Dublin Procedure, [Fact Sheet No 33](#).



Section 7. Harmonised approach for resettlement and humanitarian admission



Resettlement means the admission to the territory of a Member State, following a referral from UNHCR, of a third-country national or a stateless person from a third country to which that person has been displaced, who is eligible for admission pursuant to the Regulation (EU) 2024/1350 establishing the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework, Article 5(1), does not fall under the grounds for refusal set out in Article 6 of that regulation and is granted international protection in accordance with Union and national law and has access to a durable solution.³¹²

Resettlement and humanitarian admission are an expression of international solidarity, involving several national and international stakeholders. Under the new Union Resettlement Framework, EU resettlement and humanitarian admission schemes are based on 2-year national pledges corresponding to the number of third-country nationals that Member States commit to admit on a voluntary basis. They aim to manage migration based on predictable timelines and ensure common grounds for eligibility, while carrying out rigorous security checks.

The [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1350 establishing the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework](#) was adopted in 2024, providing common procedures for all Member States, such as harmonised eligibility criteria and grounds for refusal. The new framework will contribute to strengthening the EU's partnership with third countries and other global actors (see *Section 2*). Although the regulation reflects the existing infrastructure, countries must make some adjustments for the regulation's implementation. These adjustments include planning their programmes within the scope of the 2-year Union Plan previously adopted by the Council, deciding on the admission within the established deadline, the recording of certain information related to the admitted refugees and compliance with the timelines for data storage.

7.1. Data on implementing pledges

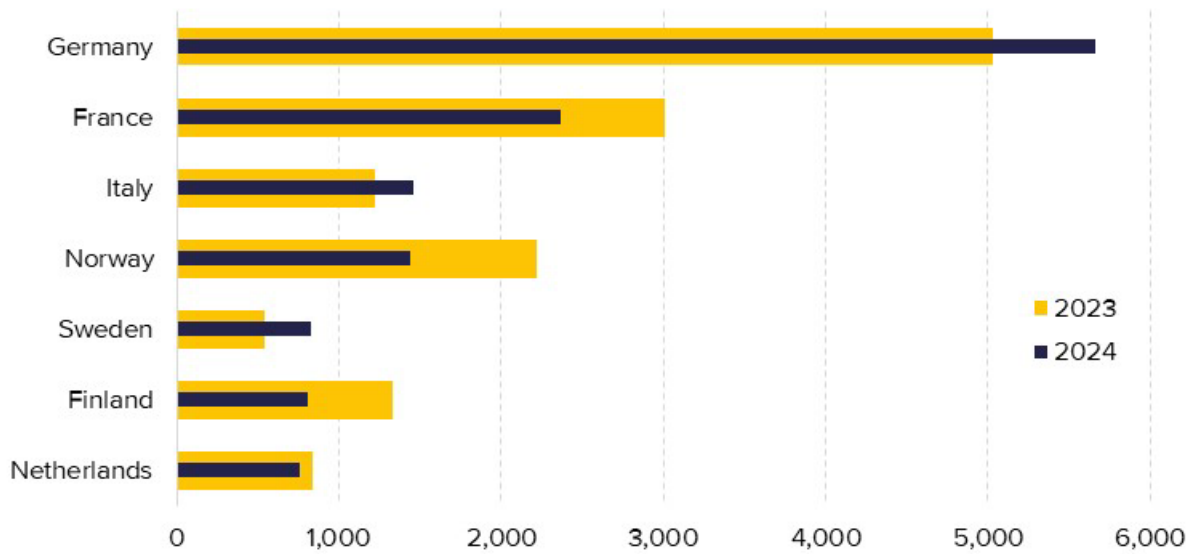


Nearly 14,000 refugees were resettled from third countries to the EU+ in 2024, the second-lowest number recorded since 2016 (the lowest was in 2020, when transfers were severely hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic). Germany and France accounted for almost 60% of the resettlements (see *Figure 13*). Norway resettled the lowest number on record (1,400), and Finland (810) and the Netherlands (760) also resettled fewer people than in previous years.

Syrians remained the most resettled group, accounting for 40% of the total with 5,300 resettlements, despite this being the lowest number on record (see *Figure 14*). They were mainly resettled from Türkiye and Jordan. In contrast, there were more resettlements in 2024 than in 2023 for Afghans (2,300), Congolese (DR) (2,000) and Sudanese (1,300).

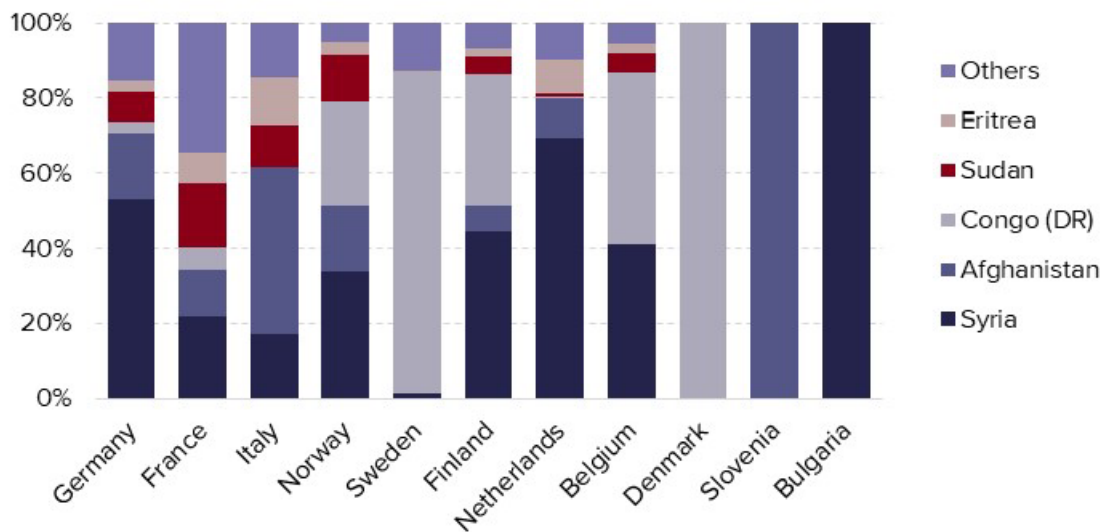


Figure 13. Top EU+ countries receiving resettled persons, 2024 compared to 2023



Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

Figure 14. EU+ countries of resettlement by main citizenship of resettled refugees, 2024



Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

7.2. National commitments for 2024-2025



Data on resettled refugees should be interpreted in the context of pledges made by Member States. Under the 2024-2025 EU Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission scheme, 14 EU countries provided 61,000 pledges for resettlement and humanitarian admissions underpinned by EU financial support.³¹³ In 2024-2025, the focus continues to be on resettling Afghans, refugees in countries along the Central Mediterranean route, as well as from

Central and South America. While Syrians have been at the forefront of EU efforts in recent years, the suspension of processing applications for international protection by Syrians in



several EU+ countries until the situation stabilises in the country has also impacted decisions on the status of Syrian nationals identified for resettlement.

In addition to pledges by EU countries, Norway and Switzerland made adjustments to their commitments during the year. For example, Switzerland approved its national programme to receive 1,600 refugees during 2024-2025, although all operations have been suspended since April 2023 due to the pressure on its reception system.³¹⁴ Norway approved a decrease in the number of resettled refugees from 1,000 to 500 refugees in 2025 (while more than 1,400 refugees arrived in 2024), with the aim to ensure that they receive adequate support in reception and are successfully integrated into the society.³¹⁵ The lack of accommodation places was seen across EU+ countries, hindering the implementation of resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes. In addition, access to general services, such as education and health, were also impacted by the continued high number of applicants for international protection and support provided to displaced persons from Ukraine. In France, relocation under the Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism also had an impact on reception capacity.

To alleviate the situation in some countries, dedicated groups within municipalities were set up to assist refugees in finding housing and private individuals provided support. In some countries, such as Switzerland³¹⁶ and Belgium,³¹⁷ the shortage in reception capacity resulted in the authorities putting their resettlement programmes on hold.

Solutions to better integrate refugees in their local communities continued drawing the attention of countries and other stakeholders. For example, as part of the admission procedure, the new Regulation on the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework includes the possibility for countries to show preferences for third-country nationals or stateless persons who demonstrate social links or other characteristics that can facilitate integration into the country of resettlement, including language skills or previous residence in the country. Civil society organisations and academia framed this as the concept of 'potential integration' and assessed that interpreting this concept in a broad manner could lead to discrimination and may result in the instrumentalisation of resettlement.³¹⁸

Some EU+ authorities noted that internal challenges related to procedures and insufficient human resources affected the processing time for the registration of resettled refugees upon arrival or delays in issuing their residence permit.

At an operational level, the volatile security situation in the Middle East due to the war in Gaza, the fragile security situation in Lebanon and the fall of the Assad regime in Syria in December 2024 had a considerable impact on the organisation of selection missions, pre-departure orientation sessions and travel arrangements for selected refugees in those areas. High inflation in several countries of first asylum significantly increased operational costs. In terms of refugees' transfers, challenges persisted in obtaining exit permits from countries of departure, such as Iran, Lebanon and Pakistan, where exit fees are applicable.

Several national administrations turned to community sponsorship programmes³¹⁹ to ease pressure on reception systems and to foster inclusive and welcoming communities for integration. Through these programmes, municipalities and local communities, including companies and private individuals, assist refugees in finding long-term housing and access to public services to facilitate a smooth transition to self-sufficiency.³²⁰



The focus of the programmes varies depending on multiple factors. Many EU-funded projects continued in 2024, for example the [Complementary Pathways Network \(COMET\)](#) which is a supra-national platform that brings together different schemes, the [Displaced Talent for Europe \(DT4E\)](#) pilot project implemented in Belgium, Portugal, Switzerland and the UK which focuses on labour integration, [EU-Passworld](#), a 3-year project linking community sponsorship to labour and education pathways and which creates a multi-stakeholder consortium in Belgium, Ireland and Italy, [HUMCORE](#) which aims to foster integration by improving the procedures and practices of the humanitarian corridors, and the [Reunification Pathways for Integration \(REPAIR\)](#) project which assesses and aims to reduce obstacles in family reunification.

The difficulty in mobilising and recruiting sponsor groups, along with securing affordable housing, have been cited as hindrances in expanding community sponsorship programmes. In addition, civil society organisations advocate for finding long-term solutions, such as the possibility for sponsors to directly nominate individuals for admission when in the country of first asylum, which is being piloted in Ireland and Italy.³²¹

In November 2024, the EUAA published “Guidelines on the EU approach to community sponsorship” to establish minimum quality standards for the various phases of community sponsorship programmes. The report provides recommendations and examples of good practices to assist all stakeholders involved in the implementation of these programmes.³²²

Labour pathways, which prioritise the selection of refugees based on their professional skills and jobs available in the country of resettlement, continued to be an option for the arrival of refugees in 2024. For example, Spain received Nicaraguan refugees through a pilot project which was started in 2023.

EU+ countries continued with the implementation of their existing humanitarian admission programmes, including humanitarian corridors implemented by faith-based organisations, without major developments in 2024.

Box 5. Changes for efficient and fair return procedures



The European Commission highlighted in its Common Implementation Plan for the Pact that “(t)he EU’s migration policy can only be sustainable if those who do not have the right to stay in the EU are effectively returned”.³²³ It presented its proposal in March 2025 for the establishment of a common system for the return of third-country nationals who are staying illegally in the EU.³²⁴ EU+ countries have long pointed out that this area needs strengthening and the rate of people who are effectively returned after a negative asylum decision must increase.

Instances of criminal acts by people with an immigrant background, including rejected applicants, have fuelled a populist narrative calling for the tightening of return laws, which was reflected in current policies in some countries. Improving returns is a goal for example of the new Finnish government which plans to make legislative changes. To this end, the Ministry of the Interior is gathering experiences from stakeholders who implement returns.³²⁵ Major changes happened in Germany as well, where the Return Improvement Act was adopted in February 2024,³²⁶ and the Security Package, adopted in October 2024, contained several measures to facilitate returns.³²⁷ In Belgium, the Proactive Return Policy Law was adopted.³²⁸



Countries aimed to harmonise and streamline the workflow among stakeholders in the return procedure and – anticipating the changes under the Pact – link a negative asylum decision to a return decision, for example, in France³²⁹ and Lithuania.³³⁰ The Swiss Federal Council contributed to costs related to detention in a cantonal return centre since the number of irregular entries had been exceptionally high. In addition, legal advice and representation providers were given limited access to MIDES, an information system on accommodation at airports, to improve data protection and facilitate the implementation of return processes.³³¹ In Czechia, a consortium of NGOs launched a project providing free legal advice for people in the return procedure.³³²

In both Belgium and Luxembourg, national authorities reported increased return rates after the establishment of specific return places for rejected applicants.

Many EU+ countries concluded bilateral agreements with third countries including measures that facilitate repatriation and return.³³³

The ECtHR and national courts frequently assessed cases involving the possibility of a return for people with special needs, especially with medical issues. National courts often deliberated on the lawfulness of detention pending a return or on the legality of an entry ban issued as part of a return decision. A German court referred questions to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling on the latter issue.³³⁴ In a previously referred case, the CJEU clarified that authorities must provide a written confirmation when the return temporarily cannot be enforced, but they are not obliged to provide a right to stay on humanitarian grounds.³³⁵ In addition, the court also clarified the obligation of national authorities to examine compliance with the principle of *non-refoulement*.³³⁶

At the same time, civil society organisations frequently identified practices leading to fundamental rights violations in 2024.³³⁷ FRA observed several gaps through its yearly review of forced return monitoring activities.³³⁸ In addition, the agency published a position paper on the conditions that the planned return hubs – closed facilities located in third countries – need to meet to respect fundamental rights and comply with EU law, underlining that these facilities cannot be rights-free zones.³³⁹ Academia highlighted the need for carefully balancing the objective of efficiency with the protection of fundamental rights and CJEU and ECtHR principles, when implementing the provisions of the Pact.³⁴⁰



Section 8. Rights of beneficiaries of international protection for inclusion and integration

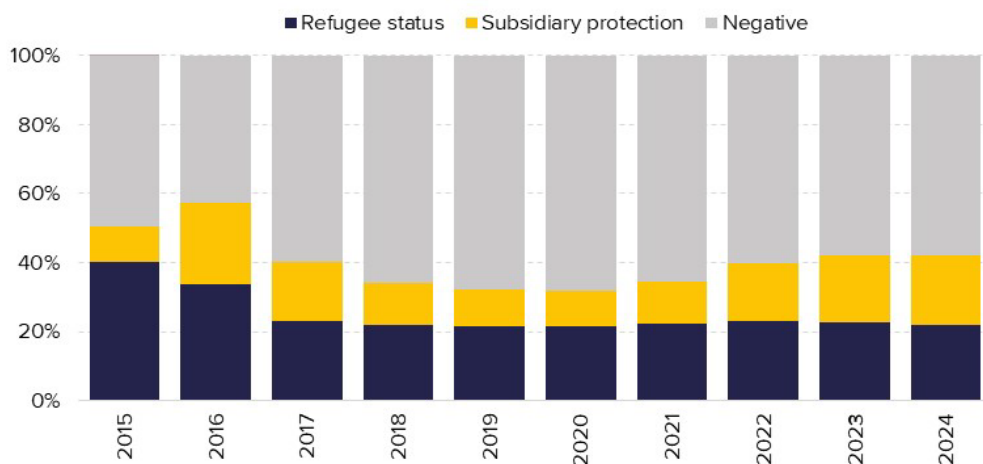


Recognised refugees are granted certain rights and obligations, as outlined by the Geneva Convention. The recast QD outlines the content of international protection to harmonise what a recognised beneficiary of international protection can expect under national policies. Its provisions shape the integration of beneficiaries of international protection through standards on residence permits, employment, education, social welfare and healthcare. Relevant articles of the directive also outline the criteria for the renewal, cessation and revocation of international protection.

The objective of the new Qualification Regulation is to ensure a common set of rights for all beneficiaries of international protection in all EU Member States. The further harmonisation of the content of protection is expected to limit secondary movements of recognised beneficiaries. The regulation clarifies the information that national authorities must provide to beneficiaries of international protection on the content of protection and it sets a clear deadline for delivering residence permits. Social assistance may now be conditional on participation in integration activities. The grounds when international protection must be withdrawn are expanded.

In 2024, the recognition rate remained stable at 42% (see Figure 15). However, this aggregate percentage masks variations across two dimensions. Among positive decisions, the share of decisions granting subsidiary protection has been increasing over the past 2 years. In addition, significant variations in positive decisions are noted across nationalities. Recognition rates at first instance were the highest for Palestinians (91%), Syrians (90%), Burkinabe (85%), Malians (84%), Eritreans (82%) and Ukrainians (80%).

Figure 15. Recognition rates at first instance by decision outcome, 2015-2024

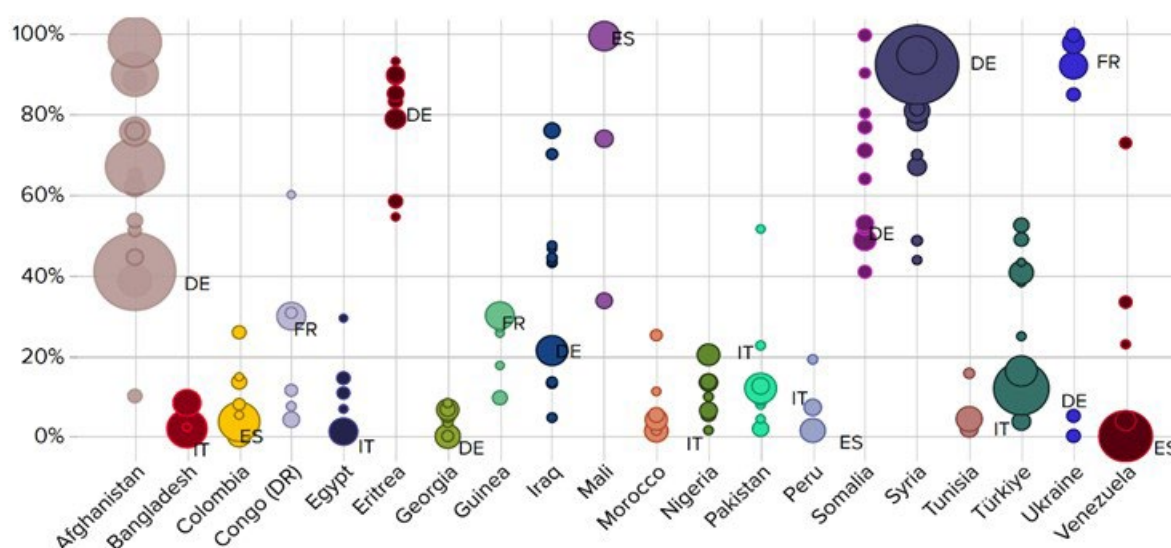


Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

Compared to 2023, there was an increase in the share of applicants from various citizenships who were not likely to receive international protection. For over one-quarter of the citizenships which were issued the most decisions in 2024, the recognition rates were 5% or below. Their share accounted for one-fifth in 2023. When looking at the threshold of 20% or less recognition rate, three-fifths of citizenships accounted for this group, compared to just over one-half in 2023.

Figure 16 illustrates recognition rates across EU+ countries for various citizenships. In each column, individual circles of the same colour represent different issuing countries, with the size of each circle reflecting the number of decisions issued, and their placement on the vertical axis indicating the corresponding recognition rate - the percentage of decisions that granted refugee status or subsidiary protection.

Figure 16. Recognition rates for the main citizenships across EU+ countries, 2024



Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.

Besides the EU-regulated forms of international protection and temporary protection, EU+ countries may also grant a national form of protection. Among negative decisions, around 23% granted some form of national protection. As in the past, such national forms were mostly issued in Spain and Germany, followed by Italy. In recent years, there have seen several legislative and policy developments in this field, for example, allowing a stay based on humanitarian considerations or advanced integration of a person due to residing for an extended period in the country.³⁴¹ In 2024, only a few clarifications were added to existing legislation and policies by national authorities³⁴² or the courts.³⁴³ The CJEU held that Member States had no obligation to provide a right to stay on humanitarian grounds for people who cannot be returned.³⁴⁴

The political debate in many national contexts continued to focus on aspects related to the length of residence permits for beneficiaries of international protection, the perspectives for acquiring long-term residence or citizenship, and the grounds for the renewal or withdrawal of international protection. For example, the Citizenship Act was amended in Germany to facilitate naturalisation at the beginning of 2024, aiming to reward special integration efforts with earlier qualification for naturalisation. The amendments also allow the original citizenship to be

retained upon naturalisation, which has been a long-debated issue in the country.³⁴⁵ However, in response to a terrorist attack in Solingen in August 2024, two draft laws were adopted by the federal government, including a new ground for revoking international protection, when a beneficiary of international protection travels to the country of origin and this travel is not deemed to be “morally essential” by the authorities.³⁴⁶

As another example, the Finnish government proposed to shorten the length of residence permits for beneficiaries of international protection to the minimum length allowed by the recast QD, instead of the previous long-term approach. Grounds for revoking or terminating international protection were also expanded, for example, to include circumstances when the person is a danger to national security or to the society or commits an aggravated offence.³⁴⁷

In 2024, national courts deliberated on the impact of providing false information or committing a crime and the possibility to revoke international protection.³⁴⁸ The CJEU held that a Member State may not extradite a person to a third country while this person has still international protection in another Member State.³⁴⁹

The conflict between national security considerations based on classified data and a person’s right to know the reasons for the revocation or cessation of the international protection status gave rise to several court cases in recent years.³⁵⁰ The Hungarian Helsinki Committee coordinated the drafting of comparative research on the application of European standards in 25 EU countries, noting that only six countries complied fully with these standards.³⁵¹ The findings are particularly significant as the new QR makes it obligatory for national authorities to withdraw international protection when the person can be regarded as a danger to the Member State’s security.

The Greek Council of State delivered a ruling underlining that a travel document may only be refused for a refugee after the Asylum Service performs an individual assessment on the specific public order and national security reasons.³⁵²

While many beneficiaries of international protection from previous waves of arrivals began to qualify for long-term residence permits, courts were more often faced with unclarities around the starting date for counting the years to qualify for a new permit.³⁵³

Following trends from previous years, several EU+ countries aimed to tighten the rules for family reunification.³⁵⁴ Some exceptions included Belgium, where the parents of an accompanied minor with international protection now also have the right to reunite with their child and stateless persons are now entitled to the same rights as beneficiaries of international protection in terms of family reunification. Other amendments were triggered by recent CJEU judgments.³⁵⁵ The Swiss Federal Council launched the process to reduce the waiting period for family reunification for people with temporary admission, following a ECtHR judgment in 2021.³⁵⁶ The Danish Immigration Service drew the attention of the municipalities again to a change based on a court judgment from 2020, as it emerged that several municipalities were still not aware that a child’s maintenance obligation for parents over 60 years ceases when the parent is granted a permanent residence permit.³⁵⁷ UNHCR published its guidelines on international legal standards for family reunification, noting that this is often the only safe pathway to international protection.³⁵⁸

The CJEU ruled on unaccompanied children’s rights to family reunification, concluding that the beneficiary should be considered as a child, even when reaching majority during the family reunification procedure. In the specific case, one conclusion highlighted that the child must be



reunited with the adult sister as well since the sister was fully dependent on the parents.³⁵⁹ The court received a new referral for a preliminary ruling, asking for clarifications on the counting of the 3-month period during which refugees may apply for family reunification under facilitated conditions.³⁶⁰

Once granted international protection, beneficiaries continued to face challenges in their successful integration. A main area of concern remained the transition from a reception facility to the mainstream housing market.³⁶¹ As the joint inform by the European Migration Network (EMN) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) observes, only 12 Member States cover the issue of housing as part of the civic orientation training curriculum.³⁶² The topics of the training remain the norms, values and obligations in a country (including on gender equality and the prevention of violence) and labour market integration.³⁶³ Many of the integration initiatives for beneficiaries of international protection presented on the European Website on Integration (EWSI) for 2024 continued to focus on facilitating and speeding up their employment.³⁶⁴ Some of these programmes already start in reception and continue once protection has been granted (see Section 5). An EWSI analysis from 2024 highlighted good practices from Czechia, Denmark and the Netherlands on bridging courses which allow refugees to complement their qualifications acquired prior to arrival and supporting them in finding jobs which match their education and skills.

Municipalities are increasingly at the forefront of the implementation of national integration strategies. For example, communal pacts and a municipal commission are two of the pillars for the application of the new law on intercultural living in Luxembourg, which came into force in 2024.³⁶⁵ In Finland, municipalities have a leading role in the provision of integration services, following the reform of the Integration Act in January 2025.³⁶⁶

Services delivered by civil society organisations remain key, and they often fill gaps in support services. Input by civil society organisations to the EUAA's Asylum Report 2025 showcases the wide range of services these organisations covered in 2024, while the EUAA's Who is Who in International Protection in the EU+ presents an up-to-date overview of self-reported organisations directly delivering services within asylum and reception systems, whether on behalf of national authorities or independently.³⁶⁷

Box 6. Temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine

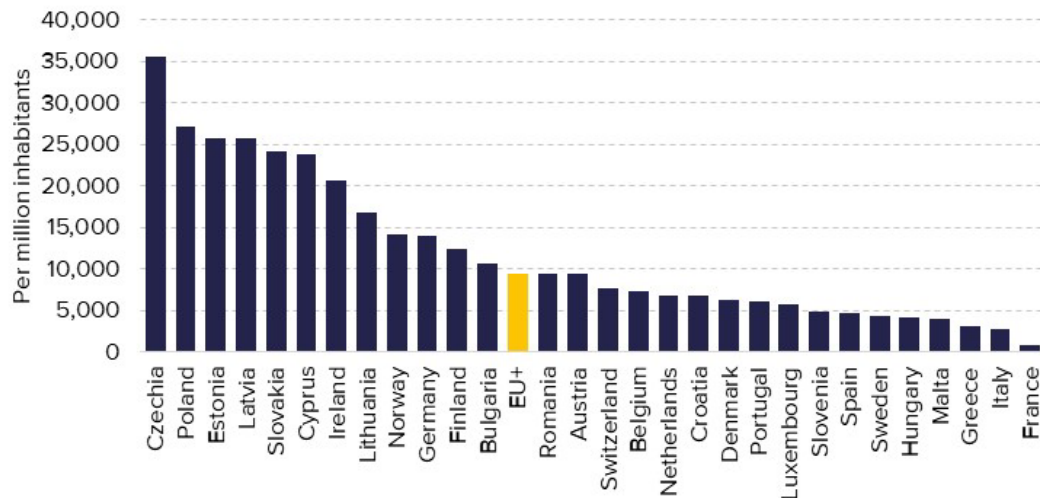


As Russia's military aggression in Ukraine entered its third year, the Council of the European Union decided to prolong temporary protection for eligible beneficiaries until March 2026.³⁶⁸ Consequently, all EU+ countries extended the validity of residence permits for 1 more year.

At the end of 2024, approximately 4.4 million individuals were under temporary protection across EU+ countries. This figure has remained relatively stable since early 2023 and continues to significantly contribute to the overall number of people in Europe with protection needs. Nearly one-half of all beneficiaries of temporary protection were in Germany (1.2 million) and Poland (just below 1 million). Relative to population size, Czechia hosted the highest number of beneficiaries per capita (see Figure 17).



Figure 17. Number of persons under temporary protection per 1 million inhabitants by receiving country, 2024



Source: Population sizes: Eurostat (DEMO_GIND) extracted on 5 February 2025. Beneficiaries of temporary protection: Eurostat (MIGR_ASYTPSM) extracted on 5 February 2025.

Countries focused more and more on the integration of displaced Ukrainians. For example, several EU+ countries (e.g. Austria,³⁶⁹ Bulgaria,³⁷⁰ Czechia,³⁷¹ Estonia,³⁷² Finland,³⁷³ Germany,³⁷⁴ Spain³⁷⁵ and Sweden³⁷⁶) introduced initiatives to support access to the labour market, language acquisition, community activities and obtaining long-term residence permits. Finland³⁷⁷ and Sweden³⁷⁸ commissioned studies to assess future needs and intentions of displaced Ukrainians in order to inform policy changes. UNHCR continued with the implementation of its Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) in the Baltics, Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova.³⁷⁹ Projects and initiatives continued to support children specifically, while UNICEF highlighted that access to school remained a challenge and approximately one-half of Ukrainian children were not enrolled in national education in hosting countries (although enrolment rates varied greatly across countries and one-half is an estimated average of the situation in different states).³⁸⁰

Some countries tightened rules and procedures for eligible beneficiaries. Norway limited protection for individuals from Ukrainian regions deemed to be safe, such as Lviv and Zakarpattia, and reduced state-provided accommodation.³⁸¹ The Netherlands introduced a cost-sharing system requiring beneficiaries to contribute to food and accommodation expenses.³⁸²

For potential returns to Ukraine, Czechia initiated a pilot programme which offers assistance to those who wish to voluntarily return home, for example for family or health reasons.³⁸³ Slovakia and Ukraine signed a readmission protocol for individuals no longer eligible for protection,³⁸⁴ while Italy faced criticism from UNHCR over a court decision allowing the repatriation of Ukrainian minors.³⁸⁵

Many countries began to encourage beneficiaries of temporary protection to leave reception and further integrate into society by acquiring their own housing. To address reception challenges, Spain adopted community sponsorship practices and decentralised reception to reduce urban strain and accelerate integration.³⁸⁶

Based on analysis of over 8,200 responses collected between February 2023 and December 2024 from displaced Ukrainians in EU+ countries, the EUAA's [Survey of Arriving Migrants for Displaced People from Ukraine](#) showed that the intention to return to their country had significantly decreased for Ukrainians, from 52% wanting to return in 2023 to 31% in 2024. The main barrier to employment in the host country was no or low proficiency in the local language, followed at a distance by unrecognised qualifications and a lack of childcare.



In Joined Cases [C-244/24](#) and [C-290/24](#), the [CJEU](#) ruled that a Member State may withdraw temporary protection from certain categories of displaced persons without waiting for the temporary protection granted under EU law to end. The decision concerned third-country nationals who held temporary residence permits in Ukraine before February 2022 and to whom optional temporary protection was granted. However, according to the judgment, these individuals cannot be the subject of a return decision while the optional protection remains in force.

A judicial decision in Austria [clarified](#) the exclusion grounds in Article 28 of the Temporary Protection Directive and “overturned a return order, holding that despite the applicant's conviction for smuggling of persons, he did not pose a danger to national security, as in this specific case the court did not consider the crime to be a particularly serious crime”.

The Federal Administrative Court in Switzerland [confirmed](#) a negative decision on the request for temporary protection submitted by an Ukrainian national who had been previously granted protection in Poland.

A Regional Administrative Court in Germany [ruled](#) that a spouse of a Ukrainian national from a third country of origin is entitled to temporary protection without prior legal residence.

France's Council of State [clarified](#) the emergency condition which is required to suspend the execution of an administrative decision in a case involving a Ukrainian applicant whose request to renew his residence permit based on temporary protection was refused on the grounds that he was a threat to public order. The council recalled that the required emergency condition should, in principle, be regarded as met when the decision was one refusing to renew, revoke or withdraw a residence permit because its execution may harm, in a sufficiently serious and immediate manner, the public interest, the situation of the applicant or the interests of the person it intends to defend.

Sweden's Migration Board faced criticism from the Parliamentary Ombudsman for the lack of a time limit to freeze the assessment of asylum applications for displaced persons from Ukraine and for the fact that the legal basis was not formulated clearly enough.³⁸⁷



EUAA Case Law Database



Jurisprudence on the Application of the Temporary Protection Directive



Who is Who: Temporary Protection for Displaced Persons from Ukraine

Section 9. Safeguards for children and applicants with special needs



EU legislation contains provisions to address the special needs of applicants who may be considered particularly vulnerable in the asylum system. These provisions ensure that vulnerable applicants receive adequate support to benefit from their rights and comply with the obligations which are defined under CEAS so that they can be on an equal footing with other applicants.

The concept of vulnerability is present across the legislative pieces under the Pact, obliging authorities in Member States to swiftly identify and follow up on potential special procedural and reception needs. Vulnerability assessments must start as soon as possible and an applicant's situation is to be monitored throughout the international protection procedure. The assessment is individualised and undertaken by staff who must be qualified, specialised and continuously trained, with the assistance of an interpreter.

The best interests of the child must be the primary consideration of national authorities when applying the Pact instruments. Applicants receive information on their specific rights and obligation as applicants with special needs, which must also be available in a child-friendly manner. A representative is appointed as soon as possible for unaccompanied children for the entire procedure. The representative is a natural person who must be qualified and trained, may be in charge of a maximum number of children and has specific tasks identified under each piece of legislation. As a rule, children are not detained, and when detention would put an applicant's physical or mental health at serious risk, they should not be detained either.



Prior to their displacement and during their journey, applicants for international protection may be subjected to abuse, exploitation and violence.³⁸⁸ Among them, numerous women, girls and boys have experienced extreme forms of violence, including sexual violence.³⁸⁹ National authorities noted that perpetrators often film these acts and use this to blackmail their victims for further exploitation. Against

this background, the successful application of the additional safeguards under the Pact is key, including the measures for swifter identification and fast follow-up for vulnerabilities and special procedural and reception needs.³⁹⁰

National authorities highlighted their commitment to meet these new requirements, but they also expressed that this area was one of the most challenging. Civil society organisations across several EU+ countries also assessed that one of the major issues was the lack of sufficient resources for swift identification, age assessments, legal guardians and follow-up services, such as mental healthcare.³⁹¹ To support the process, the EUAA has developed a Guidance on Vulnerability in Asylum and Reception.³⁹²

As the pressure continued on asylum and reception authorities in 2024 (see *Sections 4 and 5*), there was reduced capacity to provide adequate follow-up for physical and mental health issues, including trauma.³⁹³ For example in Ireland, resources dedicated to vulnerability assessments were redirected to vulnerability triage for all single men whom the International Protection Accommodation Services could not accommodate. The vulnerability assessment

programme for all families recommenced in November 2024 with further plans to extend to single women and couples in 2025. The vulnerability triage remains operational due to the ongoing shortage of accommodation for single men. The distribution procedure resumed in July 2024 in Berlin, Germany, after it was suspended due to the high arrival of unaccompanied children in 2022 and 2023.



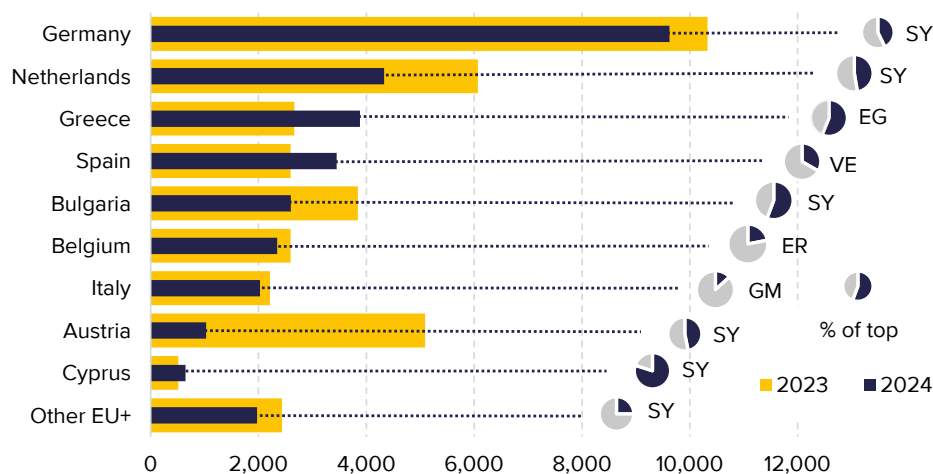
The EU's revised Anti-Trafficking Directive was adopted in May 2024, expanding its scope to include forced marriage, illegal adoption and the exploitation of surrogacy as crimes. The directive also obliges Member States to implement more rigorous tools to investigate and prosecute new forms of exploitation and provide a higher level of support services to victims of trafficking. Several EU+ countries drafted or updated their national anti-trafficking action plans based on the new rules. For the practical implementation of the plans, initiatives varied from staff training to the development of multilingual information tools, which were typically implemented in cooperation with civil society organisations and local authorities. Stakeholders observed with concern the rapidly-evolving and growing use of new technologies for trafficking and exploitation and underlined the need for harmonised data collection to better understand the phenomenon and prepare more adequate counter-measures.³⁹⁴



In 2024, 32,000 asylum applications were lodged by self-claimed unaccompanied minors, approximately 16% less than in 2023. Although experiencing a slight decline, Germany continued to be the top receiving country accounting for 30% of the total, with 9,600 applications (see Figure 18). Among the top receiving countries, Austria had the most significant drop in applications by unaccompanied minors, with 1,000 applications representing an 80% decrease.

In contrast, Greece received an unprecedented number of applications by unaccompanied minors. The 46% increase (3,900 applications) was primarily due to many more Egyptians. Although at lower levels, applications by unaccompanied minors increased by over a quarter in Cyprus (650 to the second-highest number on record).

Figure 18. Top EU+ countries receiving applications by self-claimed unaccompanied minors, 2024 compared to 2023 and share of applications lodged by the main citizenship of unaccompanied minors, 2024



Note: Data on applications by unaccompanied minors were not available for France and Czechia and were partially unavailable for Switzerland.

Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025

Almost one-half of unaccompanied minor applicants in the EU+ were either Syrians (10,000 applications) or Afghans (4,500). While both decreased, applications by Afghans dropped sharply to their lowest level since 2019. In contrast, record numbers of applications were lodged by unaccompanied minors from Egypt (2,900 applications, almost all of them in Greece and Bulgaria), Ukraine and Peru. In addition, applications by unaccompanied minors from Guinea, The Gambia, Mali and Senegal spiked to the highest levels since at least 2018.

The majority of initiatives by national authorities in 2024 focused on supporting minors, especially unaccompanied children. Greece continued to host a large number of unaccompanied children, many of them in precarious living conditions or homeless and trapped in addiction and crime.³⁹⁵ To assist, the EU provided essential funding for the National Emergency Response Mechanism (NERM), which was launched by Greek authorities in 2021. Since its creation, the mechanism has contributed to the early detection and safe accommodation of almost 5,000 migrant children.³⁹⁶

Another significant change took place in Slovenia, where a new regulation entered into force on measures to ensure adequate accommodation, care and treatment for unaccompanied minors.³⁹⁷ A new regulation in Italy revised the template for the entry interview that reception facility operators conduct with unaccompanied children, aiming to harmonise approaches in identification and follow-up.³⁹⁸ Improvements in the care for unaccompanied children were prompted by recommendations of the Commissioner for Children's Rights and the Commissioner for Human Rights in Poland³⁹⁹ and legislative amendments,⁴⁰⁰ while Croatian authorities embarked on the harmonisation of the protocol for unaccompanied minors in light of the Pact. The Norwegian UDI and UNE prepared amendments to their procedures based on the findings of a study that analysed their practices in the assessment of the best interests of the child. The study found that at times considerations of immigration regulations overshadowed the consideration of the best interests of the child.⁴⁰¹ The Austrian Federal Administrative Court updated its guidance for judges on the best interests of the child in asylum and immigration procedures.⁴⁰²

Practices in age assessments were finetuned in several countries, following developments in medical and legal standards, for example in Ireland, Malta⁴⁰³ and Sweden. Civil society organisations noted that this area still needed improvement in several EU+ countries and highlighted the need for a multidisciplinary approach going beyond medical assessments.⁴⁰⁴

Several AMIF projects were running in 2024 to better support minors. For example, one project aimed to establish systematic sport activities for young adults in COA facilities⁴⁰⁵ in the Netherlands, while another focused on the child-friendliness of reception centres in Belgium.⁴⁰⁶

A worrying phenomenon continued with the detention of children across EU+ countries, as documented in court judgments (including at the level of the ECtHR),⁴⁰⁷ and reports from international and civil society organisations.⁴⁰⁸ The recast RCD 2024 now states that minors cannot be detained “as a rule”, and for example, Belgium and France amended legislation in 2024 to spell this out.⁴⁰⁹



Another area of focus was the protection of female applicants, marked by several CJEU landmark judgments, C-621/21,⁴¹⁰ C-646/21⁴¹¹ and C-608/22 and C-609/22.⁴¹² With these judgments, the court established that:

- gender is an innate characteristic fulfilling the first criteria for membership of a social group and women as a whole may qualify for international protection, as well as groups of women who share an additional common characteristic;
- women, including minors, who identify with the fundamental value of equality between women and men during their stay in a Member State may belong to particular social group which can face persecution in their country of origin;
- an individual risk assessment is not necessary when discriminatory state measures amount to acts of persecution, and that refugee protection may be granted after establishing only gender and nationality.⁴¹³

Court rulings in the national context highlighted that asylum authorities must provide an adequate investigation and reasoning, using reliable and up-to date COI to assess the situation in the applicants' country and area of origin, with a particular focus on gender-based violence and harm. They also overturned decisions by asylum authorities for failure to assess the need for special procedural guarantees for vulnerable women who were victims of gender-based violence.⁴¹⁴



Two national authorities reported important changes that aimed to strengthen safeguards for victims of sexual violence and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). In France, a new decree was adopted on the medical examination of FGM/C cases⁴¹⁵ and a new webpage was launched for healthcare professionals with a section devoted to the issuance of medical certificates related to FGM/C cases.⁴¹⁶ The Belgian CGRS adopted new internal guidelines on the handling of applications for international protection based on the ground of sexual violence. The policy on follow-up to FGM/C cases was also changed after serious considerations: girls who were granted international protection for fear of FGM/C must undergo a medical check every 3 years, instead of every year. The authority made this change noting the difficulty for some girls to participate in the yearly checks and the psychological impact of the checks. These measures were accompanied by civil society initiatives, for example the EU-funded END FGM E-Campus project which is implemented by a group of universities and civil society organisations.⁴¹⁷



Amid the scarcity of information available on applicants with disabilities, the EUAA published two comprehensive reports which provide an overview of policies, practices, legislation and diverse initiatives for asylum applicants and displaced Ukrainians with temporary protection. The reports also describe the challenges in EU+ countries.⁴¹⁸ Throughout 2024, only a few developments followed at the national level. For example, Belgium continued with a project to strengthen the approach of the CGRS on the participation of applicants with physical or mental disabilities in the asylum procedure and the substantive assessment of their cases.⁴¹⁹ At the same time, country reports published by the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) highlighted the difficulties applicants with disabilities faced in accessing support services.⁴²⁰ For example, the timely access to psychological support starting from initial reception remained a concern.⁴²¹



A request for a preliminary ruling was pending with the CJEU on the possibility of courts to directly order the national authority to refer an applicant for a medical examination as part of the right to an effective medical remedy.⁴²² ECRE argued for strategic litigation to clarify the scope of guarantees for applicants with disabilities, based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the CRPD.⁴²³



The daily life of applicants with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) remained marked with different challenges.⁴²⁴ According to a FRA report, while reporting of incidents was low in general, asylum applicants with SOGIESC reported more frequently than their non-applicant peers about discrimination and hate-motivated violence.⁴²⁵ In order

to support EU+ countries in the correct and effective implementation of the relevant EU rules, the EUAA developed a guide on SOGIESC in asylum, covering aspects related to reception, the examination procedure and cross-cutting elements of these two fields, accompanied by an information note on SOGIESC-related concepts and terms.⁴²⁶

Court decisions in 2024 indicated several gaps in the adequate assessment of SOGIESC claims,⁴²⁷ and research efforts continued to address systemic stereotypes that lead to incorrect decisions.⁴²⁸ Among national developments, only the Danish Immigration Service highlighted a new guide which was launched to raise awareness among reception staff on the specific needs and support measures for applicants with diverse SOGIESC.⁴²⁹

Section 10. EUAA support in 2024

The Agency

is mandated to improve the functioning of CEAS and assist Member States by providing:

The EUAA supports Member States in applying the package of EU laws that govern asylum and reception systems, known as the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)



Operational support
by deploying personnel and providing infrastructure and services



Technical support
by collecting, analysing and disseminating asylum-related data and developing operational standards



Capacity-building
to national asylum and reception officials



Operational support

EUAA support to Member States reached unprecedented levels in 2024.*

1,077

full-time equivalent personnel deployed across **13** countries

85,000

registrations supported

16,000

interviews conducted in **5** countries of operations



The [Resettlement Support Facility](#) in Türkiye supported

34 resettlement missions and assisted **4,100** refugees, the most since the establishment of the facility in 2019.



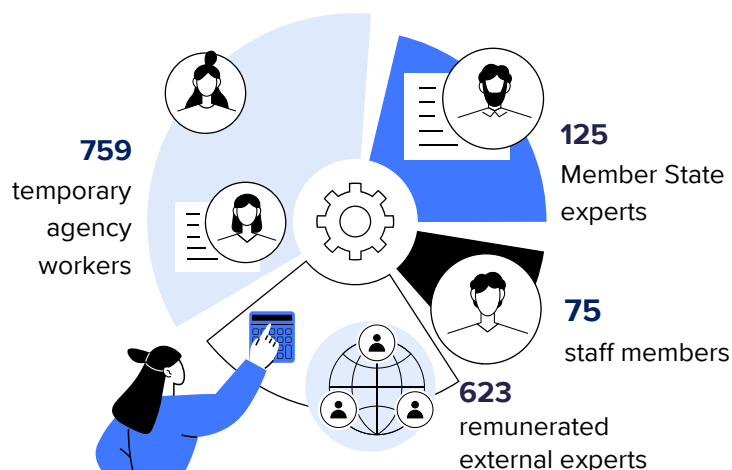
* The EUAA's activities in 2024 are detailed in the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2024.

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Asylum Support Teams

A total of **139 Member State experts** were nominated to Asylum Support Teams by **18 Member States**



Nominated experts by country

• Austria	7
• Belgium:	5
• Bulgaria	1
• Croatia	2
• Czechia	11
• Denmark	6
• Finland	5
• France	21
• Germany	2
• Hungary	5
• Latvia	1
• Netherlands	16
• Norway	9
• Poland	12
• Slovakia	12
• Spain	14
• Sweden	8
• Switzerland	2



Capacity-building

The EUAA revised and enhanced its **training modules**, while designing new modules to fill identified gaps.

In December 2024, the **EUAA was accredited** by the Maltese authorities as a **provider of further and higher education**.



29% increase in the EUAA's training activities compared to 2023, with about **18,000** participations.

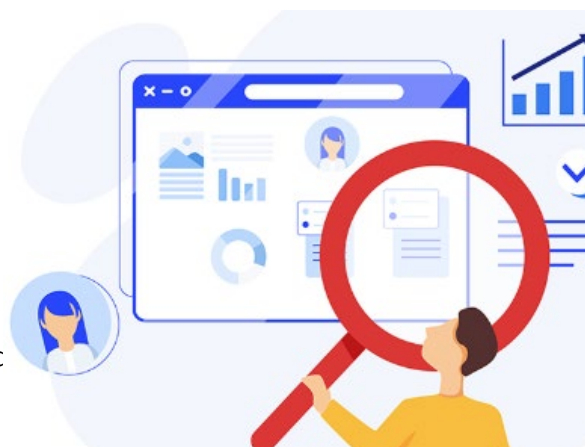
The European Asylum Curriculum remained a dynamic, comprehensive and relevant resource to support asylum and reception officials.



Asylum knowledge

With an increased demand for COI and MedCOI, the **EUAA published information** on monitoring the situation in key countries of origin, such as **Afghanistan, Syria and Ukraine**.

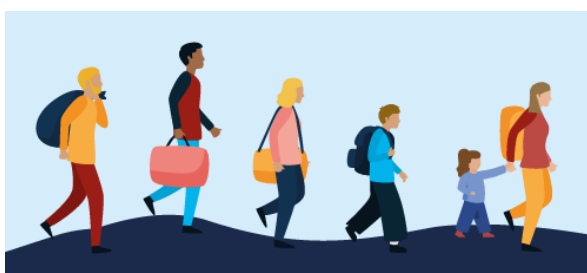
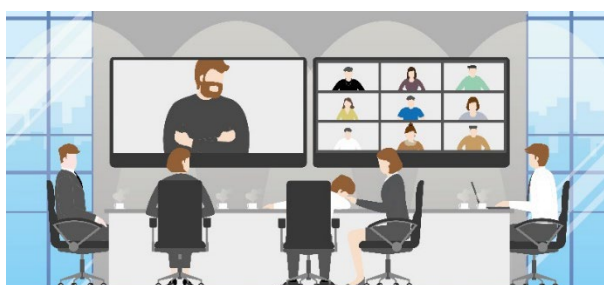
In 2024, the Agency developed or updated **21 guides and tools**, for example on quality assurance, information provision in the asylum procedure, registration, contingency planning and alternatives to detention.



Over 600 new cases registered in the **EUAA Case Law Database**.

New pages included and content updated on the **EUAA Who is Who** platform, including a mapping of national human rights institutions in Europe.

More than 2,500 participants from national authorities, courts and organisations attended EUAA thematic meetings and workshop to foster cooperation and knowledge exchange.



A new report, **Voices in Europe: Experiences, hopes and aspirations of forcibly displaced persons from Ukraine**, jointly prepared with the OECD and with a contribution from Gradus Research Company, captured the experiences of over 1,500 respondents of the **EUAA Survey of Arriving Migrants from Ukraine**.

Getty Images and iStock

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Asylum knowledge

Monitoring the operational and technical application of CEAS

In preparation for the Agency's monitoring mechanism, a [common monitoring methodology](#) and a [multiannual monitoring programme](#) for 2026–2030 were adopted.



Supporting the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum



A dedicated programme was developed to facilitate an effective transition by Member States to an overhauled CEAS (*see more details in Section 2.1*).

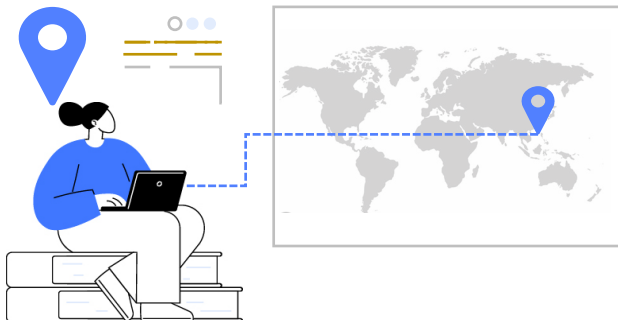
Tailor-made training was developed for Member States to address their needs resulting from the obligations of the Pact's legislative instruments.

The Agency developed guidance documents, quality tools, standards and indicators to support Member States with the practical implementation of the Pact.



International cooperation

The EUAA continued to **support** national authorities in **third countries**, namely in the **Western Balkans, Türkiye** and the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)** region.



The **external evaluations** of the roadmaps for cooperation with **Kosovo** and **Montenegro** indicated that **EUAA initiatives were highly relevant to the needs of partner authorities** and contributed in strengthening asylum procedures. The evaluations recommended to align the goal, scope and timeline of the roadmaps with the available resources.

Training sessions were organised for third country asylum and reception professionals.



Fundamental rights

Protection of fundamental rights

The Agency's first **Fundamental Rights Strategy** and the establishment of a **complaints mechanism** were adopted.

The **Fundamental Rights Officer (FRO)**

provided consultations for seven new operational plans, six amendments to existing plans, and three evaluations. The FRO also issued eight observation reports following operational visits to countries where the EUAA has operations.

The FRO received six complaints in 2024

2 for alleged acts in **Cyprus**

1 for alleged acts in **Greece**

1 for alleged acts in **Germany**

2 in countries outside of the EUAA's operational activities

Concerning:

Alleged violations of the **right to asylum** (Article 18, CFR)

The right to **human dignity** (Article 1, CFR)

Non-discrimination (Article 21, CFR)



4 complaints were deemed inadmissible (did not involve members of an EUAA Asylum Support Team or the facts did not constitute a fundamental rights violation)

1 was stayed pending further information

1 remained **under examination**

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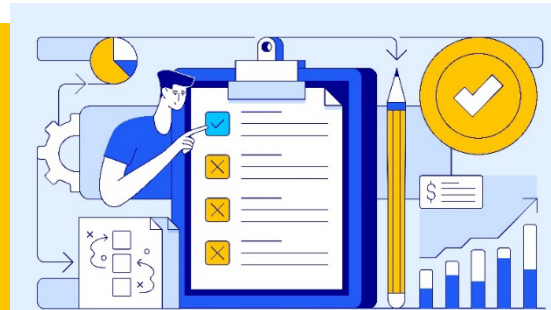
Evaluation

Highlights from evaluations of EUAA country operations

In 2024, the Agency completed three internal evaluations covering its operational support in [Czechia](#) in 2022-2023, and [Austria](#) and [Slovenia](#) in 2023-2024. It commissioned external evaluations of operations in Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta, started the evaluation of its operational support in Belgium, Lithuania and Romania.

A horizontal evaluation of EUAA operations in 2022-2024 indicated that national asylum and reception systems were improved through expert deployment, training, and technical support. The evaluation recommended to refine the involvement of the Agency's centres in the operational needs assessment beyond an output-driven approach. It also recommended defining and discussing the conditions and criteria for a phase-out and maintaining flexibility in the use of resources.

The EUAA shifted to **multi-annual planning** in its operations for more **strategic** and long-term **engagement** and moved from short-term responses to **sustainable structural support**, ensuring long-term impact.



Czechia operations 2022-2024

Effective training support, strong cooperation, adaptive responses and transparency in the documentation of transfers of material upon closure of the operations.



Cyprus operations 2022-2024

Built capacity and sustainability in managing asylum, temporary protection (TP) and Dublin caseloads.



Greece operations 2022-2024

Targets were surpassed in capacity-building, training, the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs), registrations, Dublin procedures and schemes for unaccompanied minors.



Italy operations 2022-2024

Strengthened Italy's asylum system, and adapted to evolving needs, benefiting from a shift to a three-year plan. Pending asylum cases were effectively reduced through stakeholder collaboration and adaptability.



Malta operations 2022-2024

Reduced backlogs at first instance, enhanced capacity in reception, and successful support with vulnerability assessments, social work and temporary protection applicants.



Austria operations 2023-2024

Support provided to reception facilities, benefiting 10,985 individuals through information provision; 2,344 through vulnerability and social work-related activities; and 5,694 children through child protection measures.



Slovenia operations 2023-2024

Significant support in reception, including interpretation, capacity-building and workflow management. Also successful support with the Dublin procedure and quality assurance.

Concluding remarks

In 2024, asylum remained at the heart of many public discussions and policies in Europe, with the adoption of the Pact on Migration and Asylum standing out as a major milestone in the evolution of the Common European Asylum System. While the number of applications declined by 11% in 2024, EU+ countries still received over 1 million applications for international protection for the second year in a row. In addition, 4.4 million displaced persons from Ukraine were under temporary protection in Europe, resulting in continued pressure on national asylum and reception systems.

Key efforts by national authorities focused on streamlining asylum procedures to make the processing of applications more efficient and introducing strategic changes in national reception systems to optimise the use of resources. Despite these efforts, instances of delayed access to the procedure, overcrowding, increased safety risks and suboptimal access to services kept occurring. In parallel, important resources were allocated by EU+ countries to plan and implement the reforms required by the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

The continued inflow of applicants further instigated discussions around effectively managing irregular migration, while ensuring access to protection for those in need. Over the past years, discussions and policies on asylum seem to be becoming more restrictive among policymakers, also as a result of political pressure by domestic constituencies. An eagerness to increase effectiveness in border controls, including internal borders, has at times led to practices that have inhibited effective access to protection on the one hand or the smooth functioning of the Schengen system on the other. Efforts to reduce costs and optimise the use of human and financial resources have at times resulted in deteriorating reception conditions and benefits or access to services being reduced for applicants in reception.

Judicial institutions, both at the European and national levels, have scrutinised such policies, illustrating that they are part and parcel of the effective functioning of asylum systems, they hold a decisive role in interpreting the EU asylum *acquis* and they guide its practical implementation. As the practical implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum progresses, it is important for judicial authorities to invest in training and professional development to further develop expertise among judges on issues which are specific to asylum and migration.

It is undeniable that European countries have allocated important resources in order to provide protection to people in need. To put these efforts into perspective, in addition to receiving over 1 million applications for international protection in 2024, EU+ countries issued around 746,000 decisions granting temporary protection to persons fleeing the war in Ukraine. The future of Ukraine is highly unpredictable, with a key parameter being the direction of US foreign policy in the region. Protection needs will continue to exist, especially in the integration of displaced persons from Ukraine. European countries have repeatedly expressed their commitment to continue catering to the needs of displaced Ukrainians while supporting the reconstruction of Ukraine. At the same time, this population is not available to the Ukrainian labour market and for the possible reconstruction of the country.

The Pact on Migration and Asylum, adopted in 2024, reflects a compromise between countries that have varying experiences with migratory pressures and, accordingly, diverging needs. As such, during its implementation, one of the testing grounds will be the capacity to address the diverging needs and not to be perceived either as too strict and not being protection-oriented

enough or as too lax and not designed to significantly address irregular migration. Nonetheless, the political importance of the Pact should not be underestimated. It reflects European countries working together to identify and embrace a *common* framework, based on *common* values, toward a *common* end: to stay true to the fundamental principles of the EU by creating a framework that offers the tools to protect those in need and return in dignity those not in need of protection. To achieve this major breakthrough in the evolution of CEAS, the culture of cooperation the EU has built over the decades was catalytic, and while this may be characteristic of the Union, it should not be taken for granted.

The practical value and functionality of the Pact will fully unfold in the years to come. As EU Member States are preparing for its implementation, it should be highlighted that no matter how advanced or comprehensive a framework is, the most essential question concerns its practical and effective use. The Pact must also prove in practice that it helps Member States solve pressing challenges at the national level. It presents a unique opportunity to provide the catalyst for the convergence of policies and practices of EU countries in the area of asylum. Intensive work by national authorities, as well as support and guidance from the European Commission and EU Agencies, will be required. This is not a question of material and administrative resources alone; qualified human resources are of essence too for the successful functioning of the European asylum system. It is, therefore, imperative to continue investing in expertise-sharing, training and professional development, and effective and clear interpretation of the practical provisions of the Pact to guide its implementation. While the primary actors driving the implementation of the Pact are EU and national institutions, close cooperation with civil society, grassroot organisations and local authorities is equally important to ensure that all stakeholders in the field pull toward the same direction. Apart from key sources of operational experience and expertise in asylum, these actors at regional and local levels can provide insightful feedback on the impact of the Pact on the ground and offer informed suggestions to tackle practical challenges, such as addressing safeguards for applicants with special needs.

The coming years will require EU+ countries to exceed themselves in putting into place the arrangements for the implementation of the Pact, while receiving a steadily high number of incoming applications for protection and while operating two parallel systems, processing old and new applications under a different set of rules. The EUAA, as the EU's centre of expertise on asylum, will continue to provide technical, operational and training support to EU+ countries, throughout this transitional period and beyond. The Agency's dedicated Pact Programme has made a key contribution by developing and providing quality tools and services to assist with the implementation of the Pact. The Agency will monitor the operational and technical application of the EU asylum *acquis* and will work with EU+ countries to identify and address possible shortcomings in the functioning of their asylum and reception systems, with the first pilot exercises taking place in 2025. In a collective effort to address migratory pressures in Europe in a constructive, protection-oriented approach, a well-equipped EUAA will play an integral role.



Painting created by Jamil Khan, who travelled from Afghanistan to Greece to seek international protection. He now works as an EUAA Mentor for Unaccompanied Minors for the General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection, helping children during the asylum process.



Country overviews

The following section presents a summary of major developments in international protection and statistical trends in 2024 by country.

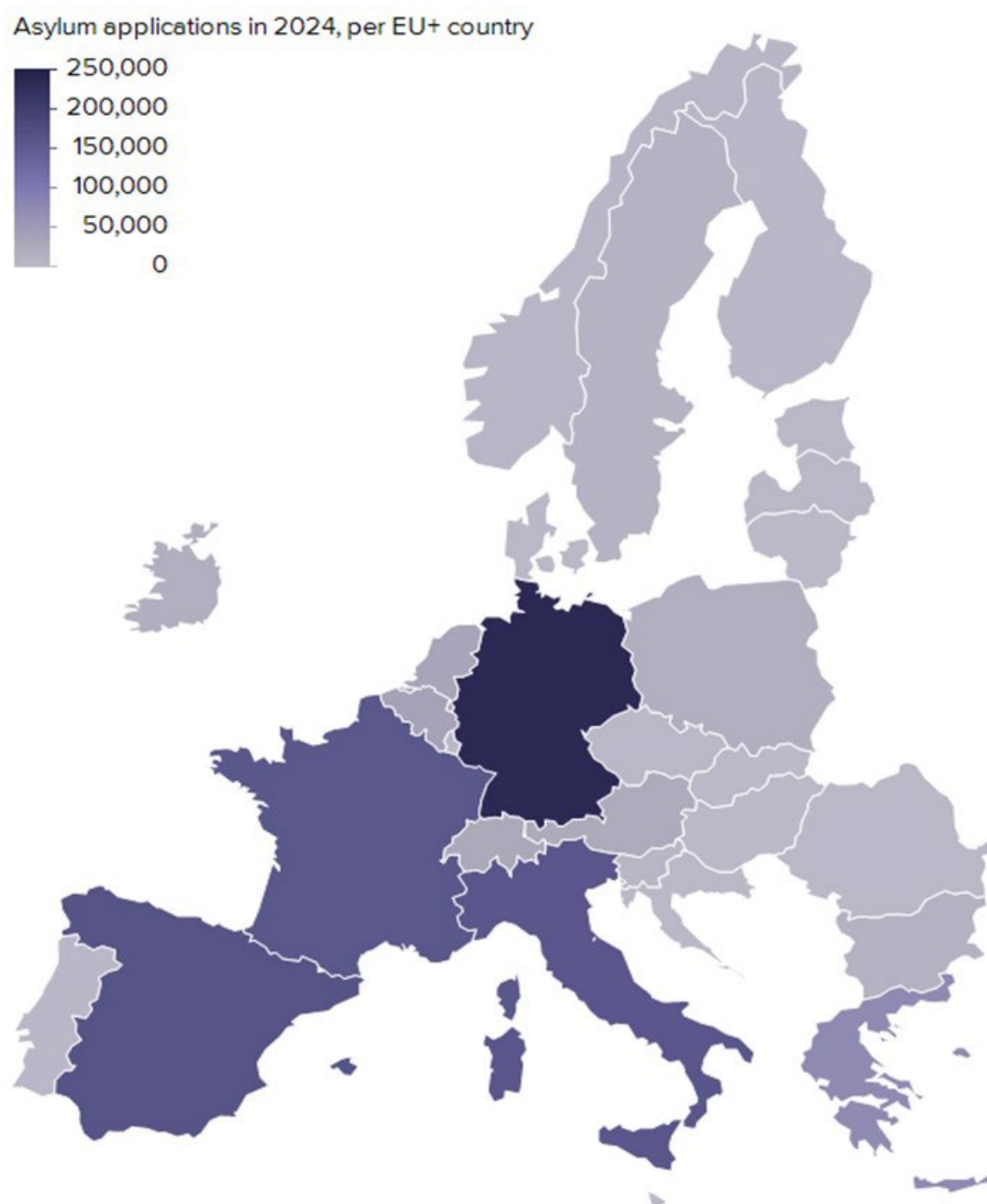


For more information on national developments, please consult the [National Asylum Developments Database](#). Updates can be searched by country, topic, year and type of development.



The key indicators for 2024 are based on EUAA EPS monthly data provided by EU+ countries (except Iceland and Liechtenstein) through their ministries and national administrations, in the framework of the EUAA Regulation, Articles 5 and 6. EPS data was extracted on 3 February 2025 and may have been subsequently updated. The data are provisional and unvalidated and, therefore, may differ from validated data submitted to Eurostat, in line with Regulation (EU) 2020/851 amending Regulation (EC) 862/2007.

The recognition rate includes EU-regulated forms of protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection) and excludes national protection forms (for example based on humanitarian reasons, etc.). It is calculated by dividing the number of positive first instance decisions (granting refugee status or subsidiary protection) by the total number of decisions issued. Negative decisions comprise both rejections and decisions not granting EU-regulated forms of protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection).

Figure 19. Asylum applications by EU+ country, 2024

Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2025.



Austria

National developments in 2024



Following a sharp decrease in the number of applications, the implementation period for the EUAA's operational support was reduced and the operational plan was successfully concluded in June 2024.⁴³⁰ The plan combined frontline support in reception, with a particular focus on supporting vulnerable applicants, as well as structural support for the enhanced management of the reception system.⁴³¹

The law establishing the Federal Agency for Reception and Support Services (BBU GmbH) was amended to comply with the Constitutional Court's 2023 ruling on legal advice.⁴³² The independence of the organisation was enshrined in federal law, and the legal advisors' protection against dismissal and termination were strengthened. In addition, the agency has a Quality Advisory Board that provides advice and makes recommendations to BBU's management and the ministries responsible for the agency, when they identify potential for improvement.⁴³³ This board was created with eight experts from the legal field, including representatives from the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Association of Austrian Judges and UNHCR.⁴³⁴

Among its recommendations to the new Austrian federal government, UNHCR advocated to improve the distribution mechanism for applicants, for example, through the specialisation of federal states in certain reception needs.⁴³⁵

Implementing the government's stance that asylum applicants must give back to the Austrian society, remunerated community service was intensified for applicants in June 2024.⁴³⁶ Those who do not participate in remunerated community service receive reduced pocket money. The obligation covers 10 hours per month, with applicants with certain disabilities or illnesses being exempt.⁴³⁷

The number of family reunification cases drastically decreased following changes in the procedure in May 2024, which involves re-verifying files, more systematic use of DNA tests and additional document checks.⁴³⁸ UNHCR, civil society organisations and the Austrian Bar argued that the increased checks would lengthen the time families are separated and potentially delay the integration of beneficiaries.⁴³⁹ Family reunification was halted for Syrian nationals in December 2024 in cases when the international protection of the relevant family member resulted from a fear of persecution by the Assad regime (especially related to the refusal of military service). The fall of the Assad regime resulted in a need to reexamine the reasons for continued international protection status and to temporarily suspend family reunification proceedings for those cases. In the meantime, applications for family reunification can still be lodged. Due to high migratory pressure on the educational sector, as well as health and social services, new legal provisions are currently in the process of being adopted by Parliament.

The digitalisation of the asylum procedure continued in 2024, making a shift to completely electronic files.

People with temporary protection were granted the right to transfer to a long-term, more favourable residence permit, the Red-White-Red Card Plus, if they fulfil certain conditions. Those qualifying also retain their temporary protection in parallel. After welcoming the extension of temporary protection⁴⁴⁰ and advocating for more long-term perspectives for people fleeing Ukraine,⁴⁴¹ UNHCR applauded this initiative and argued for creating other opportunities for groups of people who do not qualify for this residence permit, such as the elderly, people with special needs or people currently in low-wage jobs.⁴⁴²

In the framework of the UN "Orange the World" campaign, the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF), the Federal Administrative Court (BVwG) and the BFA launched a new initiative to combat violence against female applicants, beneficiaries of international protection and displaced women from Ukraine.⁴⁴³

More input from civil society:

- [Austrian Bar Association | Österreichischer Rechtsanwaltskammertag](#)
- [Austrian Red Cross - Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research Documentation](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)



Austria

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

9

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

9

Share of applications
in EU+

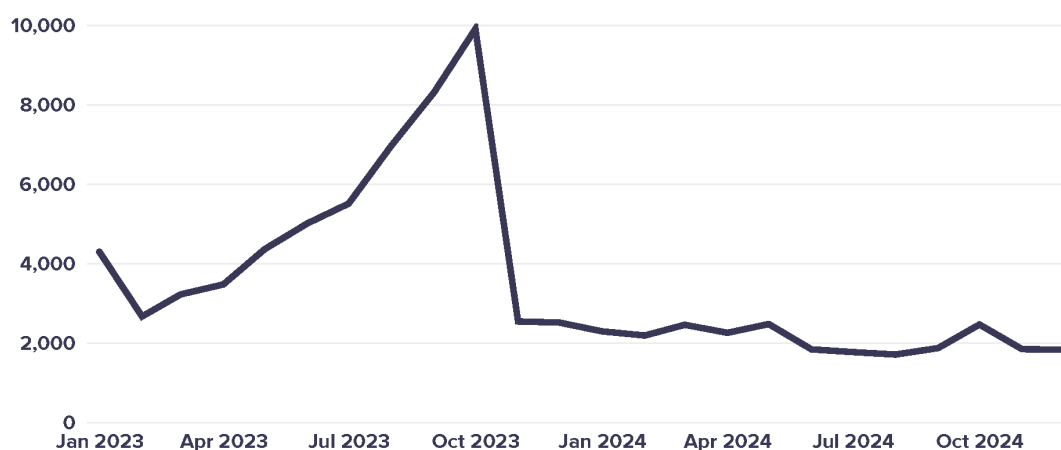
2.5%

Recognition
rate

70%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	24,941	58,686 ↓	-58%	Syria (55%), Afghanistan (13%), Türkiye (4%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	13,093	23,188 ↓	-44%	Syria (46%), Afghanistan (15%), Türkiye (10%)
First instance decisions	31,692	37,161 ↓	-15%	Syria (54%), Afghanistan (11%), Türkiye (8%)
Refugee status	14,640	14,639 →	0%	Syria (75%), Afghanistan (11%), Somalia (3%)
Subsidiary protection	7,438	8,213 ↓	-9%	Syria (71%), Afghanistan (14%), Somalia (8%)
Negative	9,614	14,309 ↓	-33%	Türkiye (26%), Morocco (11%), Syria (9%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Belgium

National developments in 2024



Migration and asylum featured prominently in the agenda of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2024, during which the Pact on Migration and Asylum was finalised and adopted.⁴⁴⁴ Several high-level meetings were organised, for example to re-iterate the need for greater convergence in laws and practices across Member States,⁴⁴⁵ to discuss the operationalisation of the Pact,⁴⁴⁶ multistakeholder models in the context of reception,⁴⁴⁷ building an effective identity management in the field of migration, and returns and reintegration.⁴⁴⁸

Belgium proactively initiated the process of drafting a National Implementation Plan for the Pact. The Secretary of State for Asylum and Migration established a national Steering Group in April 2024, bringing together stakeholders at the federal level and reaching out to regional administrations on an ad hoc basis for issues related to their competencies. The draft of the new Migration Code was presented in January 2024 under the previous government,⁴⁴⁹ and the way forward on aligning the provisions with the Pact and adopting the draft is to be decided by the new government.

The number of applications increased again in 2024 and secondary movements remained a major issue for national authorities. Secondary movements consist of a large number of applicants covered under the Dublin III Regulation and applicants who already have an international protection status in another Member State. The latter group accounted for 14% of all applicants in Belgium in 2024. Against this background, one of the objectives of the Proactive Return Policy Law was to increase the efficiency of returns and Dublin transfers, for example by creating special return and Dublin places in reception, establishing in law proactive coaching to prepare for a transfer or return, the duty to cooperate in the transfer or return, and clarifying the responsibility for taking a decision for extending the transfer period in Dublin cases. The law also underlines that children cannot be detained.⁴⁵⁰

Each organisation involved in the asylum procedure pursued its efforts for increased efficiency and quality. The Immigration Office moved registrations to a new location and developed a new brochure and website to provide information on the application process.⁴⁵¹ The CGRS finalised and evaluated its project (Tabula Rasa) on increasing efficiency and quality in its workflow and, at the beginning of 2025, launched a new project (Prisma) based on the lessons learnt, recruited new staff and implemented a fast-track procedure for a number of specific nationalities. Fedasil launched a new public tender framework for reception.⁴⁵² CALL increased its capacity with asylum appeals by assigning cases to judges and legal professionals who worked previously on migration cases.

A new law established a specific procedure to apply for admission with the Immigration Office to stay on the grounds of statelessness, which impacted the organisation of the CGRS, its tasks (for example within the COI unit) and added specific tasks on appeals for CALL.⁴⁵³

Despite the heavy workload, the CGRS made it a priority to continue with its projects on applicants with special needs, including applicants with physical and mental vulnerabilities, training on gender and children, issuing new guidelines on applications due to sexual violence and establishing a new follow-up procedure for FGM/C cases.

The reception system continued to be saturated, despite efforts to create more capacity and reaching a new record of 36,000 reception places in 2024.⁴⁵⁴ The Belgian state had been condemned for more than 10,000 instances in several court rulings when single males could not be accommodated immediately,⁴⁵⁵ with litigation on various aspects ongoing throughout the year. The EUAA provided support in reception through its operational plan.⁴⁵⁶ Fedasil continued with its project on making reception facilities and support more child-friendly through AMIF-funded projects.⁴⁵⁷ Due to the pressure on the asylum and reception systems, the State Secretary decided to pause the country's resettlement programme in June 2024. Several legislative changes were enacted to address aspects that contribute to saturating the reception system. For example, the end of the right to material reception conditions is now linked to a final negative decision on an asylum application and not to the notification of an order to leave the territory (which was taken at a later stage).⁴⁵⁸ Applicants with a professional income in a reception facility must contribute to the reception costs, and a new Royal Decree established stronger monitoring and sanctions mechanism for the implementation of this rule.⁴⁵⁹

The rules for family reunification were also amended, allowing parents to reunite with their accompanied minor child with international protection under certain conditions, expanding family reunification for people with a residence permit on the grounds of statelessness and adjusting the determination of minority to recent CJEU case law.⁴⁶⁰

For further reading:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [Group for the Abolition of Female Sexual Mutilation | Groupe pour l'Abolition des Mutilations sexuelles Féminines | Groep voor de afschaffing van vrouwelijke genitale verminking](#)

Belgium

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

6

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

5

Share of applications
in EU+

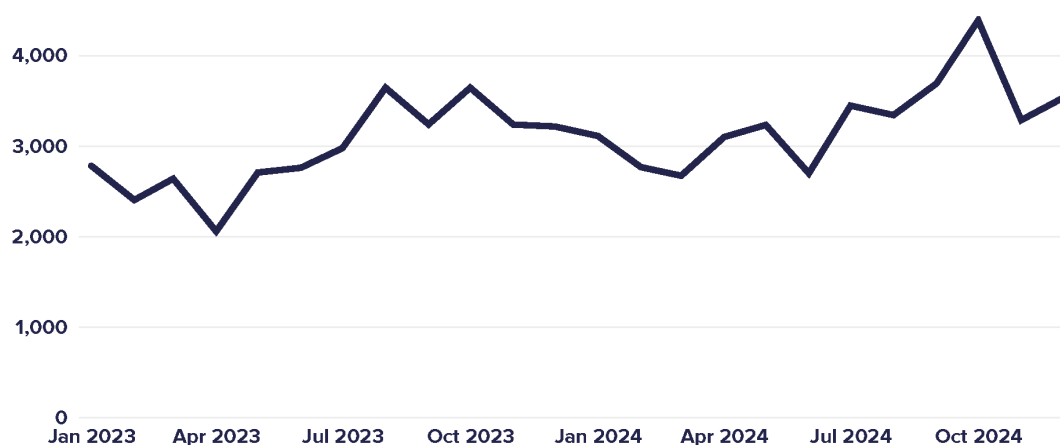
3.9%

Recognition
rate

49%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	39,206	35,248	↑ 11%	Palestine (15%), Syria (14%), Afghanistan (9%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	43,093	39,429	↑ 9%	Palestine (14%), Syria (11%), Türkiye (8%)
First instance decisions	29,135	25,613	↑ 14%	Afghanistan (16%), Palestine (12%), Syria (11%)
Refugee status	13,823	11,054	↑ 25%	Palestine (22%), Syria (18%), Eritrea (15%)
Subsidiary protection	512	382	↑ 34%	Yemen (44%), Syria (31%), Sudan (5%)
Negative	14,800	14,177	⇒ 4%	Afghanistan (19%), Congo (DR) (5%), Colombia (5%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024





Bulgaria

National developments in 2024



While applications significantly decreased in 2024 in Bulgaria, national authorities continued to improve frontline elements of its asylum and reception systems and implemented structural changes to its central management.

SAR under the Council of Ministers implemented an operational support project financed by AMIF, which aimed to strengthen the administrative capacity of the organisation with additional staff and technical maintenance of reception facilities.⁴⁶¹ For example, a concept note on digitalisation was approved and started to be implemented in this framework. The agency continued to receive operational support from the EUAA, focusing on asylum processing at first instance and first- and second-line reception.⁴⁶² SAR also completed a project funded by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism that focused on capacity-building through training, staff exchanges and the development of guidance material.⁴⁶³ The agency noted that feedback for example from the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee was taken into account when updating some internal rules for asylum interview invitations.⁴⁶⁴

A safe country of origin list and a safe third country list were adopted in 2024, for the first time since the country's accession to the EU. The previous list, which was adopted before accession, was not applied in practice.⁴⁶⁵ Following the re-start of the practical implementation of these rules, the Administrative Court in Sofia referred questions for a preliminary ruling by the CJEU on the connection between the applicant and the safe third country.⁴⁶⁶

Courts noted a rise in appeals from Russian applicants and had to deliberate on persecution due to military conscription or political opinion.⁴⁶⁷

SAR launched the process to develop a comprehensive reception strategy, with support from the EUAA. The strategy focuses on enhanced cooperation with various stakeholders and aims to provide integration perspectives for beneficiaries of international protection.⁴⁶⁸ In 2024, the rules for reception facilities were amended with new curfew hours and a monitoring protocol when a resident does not comply with the rules. The agency faced an increasing number of incidents outside of the reception facilities, and outside of its scope of action, and requested the Ministry of the Interior for additional support in ensuring security in reception facilities and beyond.⁴⁶⁹

The agency opened a third safe zone for unaccompanied children in the Harmanli registration and reception centre, with a capacity of 98 that may be further increased in case of a crisis situation.⁴⁷⁰

Some of the projects delivered by civil society organisations focused on strengthening strategic litigation for children's immigration detention⁴⁷¹ and the development of a practitioners' guide on the rights of unaccompanied minors and separated children under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.⁴⁷²

A legislative proposal was presented, anticipating the eventual expiry of temporary protection, which would help beneficiaries of this status to apply for a humanitarian status. It also simplifies the rules for the examination of these cases to ensure that SAR's workload remains manageable.

More input from civil society:

- [Centre for Legal Aid - Voice in Bulgaria | Център за правна помощ – Глас в България](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)



Bulgaria

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

12

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

13

Share of applications
in EU+

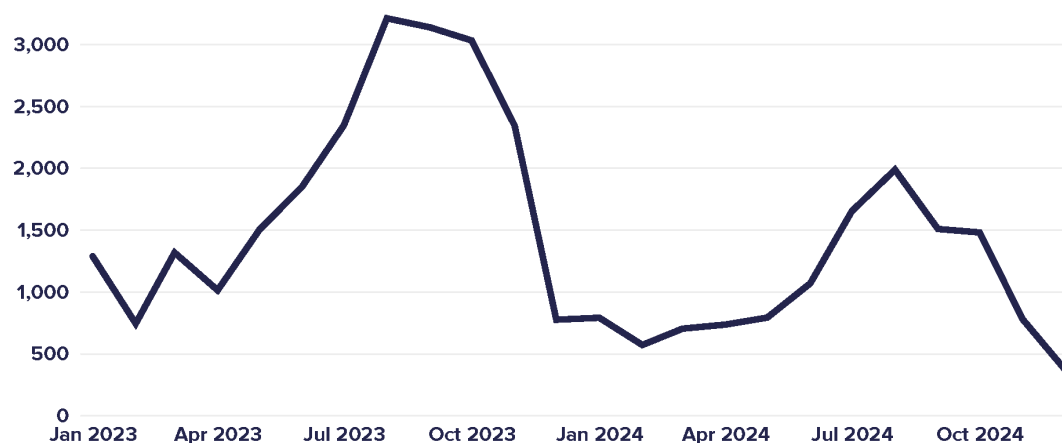
1.2%

Recognition
rate

61%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	12,412	22,519 ↓	-45%	Syria (62%), Afghanistan (16%), Morocco (7%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	6,051	11,951 ↓	-49%	Syria (67%), Afghanistan (21%), Egypt (3%)
First instance decisions	8,090	8,739 ↓	-7%	Syria (73%), Morocco (10%), Iraq (5%)
Refugee status	56	107 ↓	-48%	Syria (43%), Russia (32%), Stateless (9%)
Subsidiary protection	4,894	5,682 ↓	-14%	Syria (97%), Stateless (1%), Afghanistan (1%)
Negative	3,140	2,950 ↑	6%	Syria (36%), Morocco (26%), Iraq (12%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Croatia

National developments in 2024



After a surge in applications following Croatia's admission to the Schengen area in 2023, the number of applications decreased in 2024. As in recent years, many applicants continued to move onwards to other EU+ countries after a few days, often without formalising their asylum application after expressing their intention to apply. The Ministry of the Interior underlined again its zero tolerance toward illegal action by police officers and the non-persecution of criminal offences by police officers against migrants in the border areas, in response to civil society organisations reporting on instances of violence in the region. The ministry's "Independent Monitoring Mechanism for the Protection of Fundamental Human Rights" project continued in 2024, while it noted that fewer activities were carried out in the first half of 2024 due to communication breakdowns but the police's full cooperation during ad hoc visits and meetings were recognised.⁴⁷³ The Border Police established a new area at the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina to facilitate the screening, registration and identification of apprehended applicants, which is expected to become one of the key sites once the Pact is implemented.

Following the CJEU's ruling that the fact that a Member State has carried out pushbacks of applicants at the borders in itself does not preclude the implementation of a Dublin transfer,⁴⁷⁴ national courts across EU+ countries typically confirmed transfers to Croatia,⁴⁷⁵ leading to an increased workload for the country's Dublin unit. Planning for the implementation of the Pact, a new service for Dublin procedures is foreseen.

The International Protection Service was faced with high staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment in 2024, hindering the expansion of the pool of staff and knowledge retention in the service. This was noted to be a particularly pressing issue in light of the human resources necessary for the implementation of the Pact. In order to speed up decision-making, the EU-funded LIDA project aims to support digitalisation and improve credibility assessments by using a language recognition software.

While the occupancy rates in the reception facilities in Kutina and Zagreb remained around 70%, authorities expect an increase in the number of applicants following the changes introduced by the Pact. They planned to increase capacity with new, smaller centres, which would be easier to manage and adapt to changing needs.

A new project was launched in 2024 to finance legal assistance in the return procedure, and another project is to be launched for asylum applicants in 2025. This was also in anticipation of the requirements under the Pact and its expanded scope for providing legal assistance.

The Croatian Red Cross and the Education Agency trained educators and teachers to be able to provide better psychological support for Ukrainian children and support their integration in the class and into Croatian society.⁴⁷⁶

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)

Croatia

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

23

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

23

Share of applications
in EU+

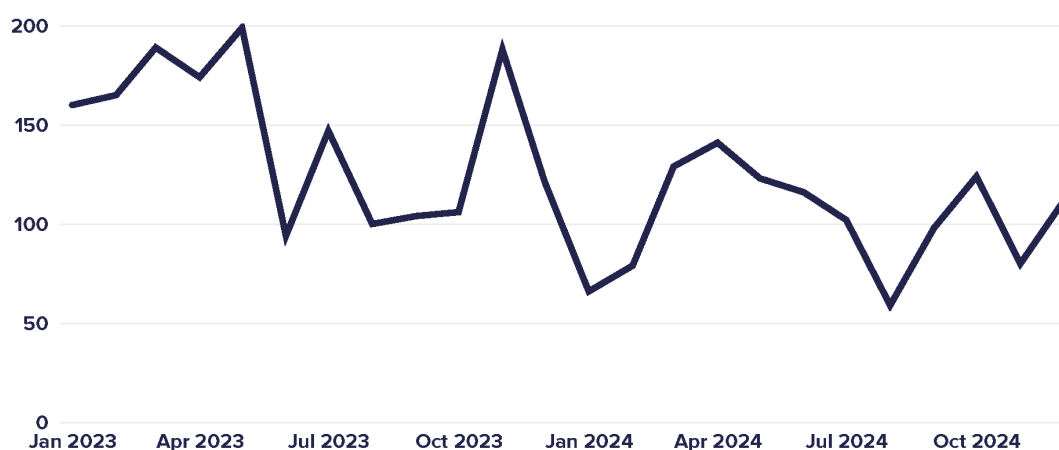
0.1%

Recognition
rate

21%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	1,228	1,747 ↓	-30%	Russia (29%), Syria (16%), Türkiye (15%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	1,120	1,538 ↓	-27%	Russia (28%), Türkiye (12%), Syria (11%)
First instance decisions	312	92 ↑	239%	Russia (26%), Burundi (12%), Türkiye (9%)
Refugee status	61	30 ↑	103%	Syria (23%), Russia (18%), Cameroon (11%)
Subsidiary protection	4	1 ↑	300%	Palestine (75%), Russia (25%)
Negative	247	61 ↑	305%	Russia (28%), Burundi (13%), Türkiye (11%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Cyprus

National developments in 2024



A Deputy Ministry for Migration and International Protection was established in June 2024 so that competences related to migration and asylum are under a single institution.⁴⁷⁷

The upgrade of the Pournara First Reception Centre continued throughout 2024. It is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2025.⁴⁷⁸

Throughout the year, discussions centred around the external dimension of migration, for example by providing support to neighbouring third countries, such as Lebanon, which host large numbers of migrants to enhance their infrastructure for the reception of migrants. During a ministerial meeting with seven other Member States, the possibility of reassessing certain areas of Syria as safe was discussed.⁴⁷⁹ In parallel, there was an increased number of arrivals by sea in the first half of 2024.⁴⁸⁰ As a result, in April 2024 the Ministry of the Interior announced that the examination of cases by Syrian applicants was suspended.⁴⁸¹

Several clarifications were announced about the decree which changed the right to access the labour market for asylum seekers from 1 month to 9 months. Possible sanctions and more stringent labour inspections were also explained.⁴⁸²

For months, several migrants remained stranded in the buffer zone along the Green Line.⁴⁸³ The Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights raised concerns about their precarious living conditions and allegations of unnecessary use of force by law enforcement agents. The commissioner reminded that Cyprus' obligations under international refugee and human rights law also apply in the buffer zone and called on the authorities to ensure effective access to the asylum procedure and adequate reception conditions.⁴⁸⁴ All migrants were eventually admitted to the areas under the effective control of the government of the Republic of Cyprus.

The ECtHR ruled for the first time against Cyprus on *refoulement* and the expulsion of foreigners in *M.A. and Z.R.* (No 39090/20).⁴⁸⁵ National courts continued to rule on the need to identify and consider vulnerabilities throughout the asylum procedure.⁴⁸⁶

A legislative proposal on the procedure for granting legal aid for appeals before the International Protection Administrative Court (IPAC) was adopted and entered into force in December 2024.⁴⁸⁷ Legal aid to beneficiaries of international protection and illegally-staying, third-country nationals will only be granted if the appeal is filed within the deadlines. In addition, legal aid representatives will now be appointed based on a directory of the Cyprus Bar Association.⁴⁸⁸

To prepare for the implementation of the Pact on Asylum and Migration, a bottom-up approach was established whereby small groups work on different building blocks of the National Implementation Plan. Coordination of the work of the groups is carried out at a central level by the Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Deputy Minister for Migration and International Protection.

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)

Cyprus

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

14

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

1

Share of applications
in EU+

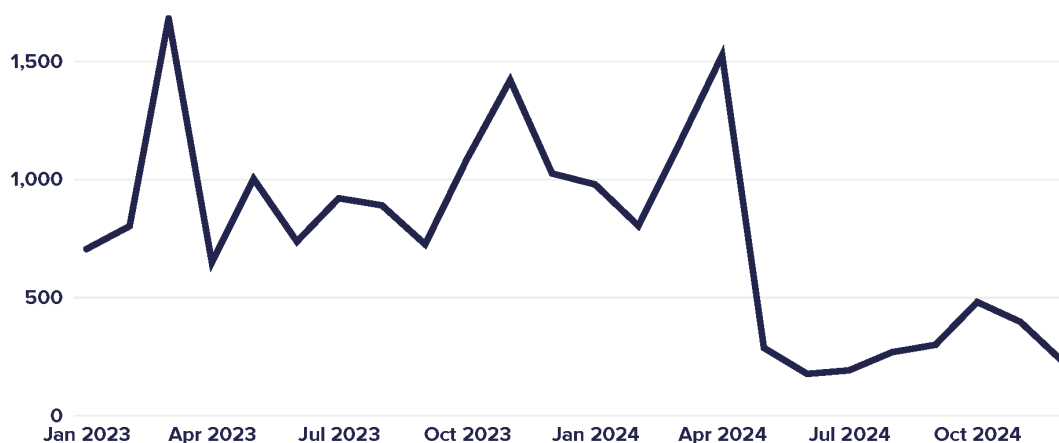
0.7%

Recognition
rate

29%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	6,763	11,617 ↓	-42%	Syria (62%), Afghanistan (6%), Iran (5%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	20,652	26,599 ↓	-22%	Syria (67%), Congo (DR) (9%), Afghanistan (6%)
First instance decisions	13,242	16,588 ↓	-20%	Syria (20%), Cameroon (15%), Congo (DR) (14%)
Refugee status	1,317	755 ↑	74%	Palestine (17%), Afghanistan (14%), Somalia (11%)
Subsidiary protection	2,467	2,308 ↑	7%	Syria (71%), Somalia (15%), Cameroon (6%)
Negative	9,458	13,525 ↓	-30%	Congo (DR) (19%), Cameroon (18%), Nigeria (15%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Czechia

National developments in 2024



When considering population size, Czechia hosts the largest number of beneficiaries of temporary protection per capita in Europe. Thus in 2024, Czechia focused efforts on improving the experience of displaced persons from Ukraine and planning long-term, sustainable solutions. The national authorities have continued to offer multi-faceted support from initial accommodation to integration, while targeted information campaigns informed about the services available and the procedures to access rights linked with temporary protection.⁴⁸⁹ In 2024, Czechia amended its so-called 'Lex Ukraine' to extend temporary protection until March 2026 and allow displaced Ukrainians who are economically self-sufficient and independent of the state benefits system to obtain regular residence status.⁴⁹⁰

To facilitate effective access to and assistance during the asylum procedure, civil society organisations and UNHCR launched new or continued projects to offer free legal aid and social counselling, with special attention on vulnerable applicants.⁴⁹¹ UNICEF financed child-friendly spaces in the Centres for Support of Integration of Foreigners (CPIC/RFA). In addition to the [website](#) for applicants for international protection, which provides advice and tips on the asylum procedure and life in Czechia, the Ministry of the Interior launched a new [Facebook page](#), which also provides up-to-date information on the conditions to obtain and extend residence permits and on the rights and obligations of foreigners. Several initiatives were implemented for the integration of foreigners, often through synergies among national and local authorities and civil society organisations.⁴⁹²

Throughout 2024, Czechia was a leading advocate of a common European solution to migration and asylum policy, highlighting that the effective management of the external borders is a precondition for the proper functioning of the Schengen system.⁴⁹³ In the second half of 2024, work on the progressive implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum was a priority for the Czech government. The Ministry of the Interior, primarily through the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy (OAMP), served as the main coordinator of the preparatory work, having put in place a comprehensive structure comprising three task forces to operationalise planning.

According to the National Implementation Plan, which was developed in close cooperation with key authorities across the Czech administration, regulatory, administrative and capacity adjustments to the current asylum and migration system will be necessary to align the system with the Pact obligations. This may include tighter procedural deadlines, as well as IT-related upgrades, such as new operational procedures for the Eurodac system. For specific technical requirements, adjustments will mainly be required for measures at the airport. Maximising the use of EU funds will be necessary to ensure the required financial, material and personnel capacities.

More input from civil society:

- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [Organisation for Aid to Refugees | Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům](#)

Czechia

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

24

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

27

Share of applications
in EU+

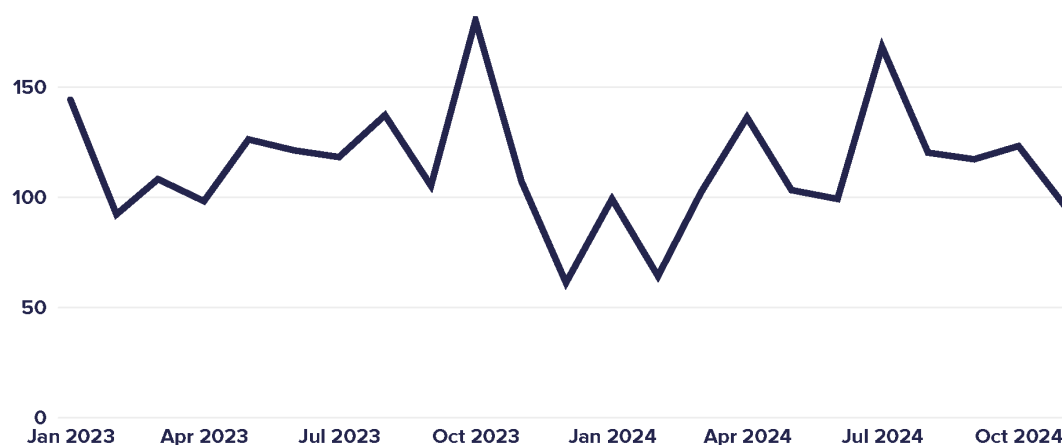
0.1%

Recognition
rate

17%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	1,227	1,397 ↓	-12%	Uzbekistan (16%), Ukraine (14%), Viet Nam (13%)
Pending cases (Nov '24)	664	611 ↑	9%	Russia (21%), Ukraine (19%), Syria (6%)
First instance decisions	1,124	1,338 ↓	-16%	Uzbekistan (16%), Viet Nam (13%), Ukraine (10%)
Refugee status	53	56 →	-5%	Myanmar/Burma (42%), Russia (25%), Belarus (15%)
Subsidiary protection	141	253 ↓	-44%	Ukraine (60%), Syria (13%), Afghanistan (6%)
Negative	930	1,029 ↓	-10%	Uzbekistan (20%), Viet Nam (16%), Türkiye (10%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Denmark

National developments in 2024



The number of applications decreased slightly in 2024, but due to the steady arrival of displaced persons from Ukraine, there was a rising demand for reception places and a new accommodation centre was opened in December 2024. Within the reception system, new operational agreements were signed and a booklet for staff was updated on the core responsibilities and services in accommodation centres.⁴⁹⁴ The Danish Immigration Service published a guidance document on addressing the specific needs of LGBTIQ applicants in reception.⁴⁹⁵ The Danish Refugee Council observed through its legal counselling services that more applicants had to wait longer for a decision on their case, which also extended their stay in reception.⁴⁹⁶

In line with the initiatives of some other EU+ countries, the Danish Immigration Service (DIS) started to process asylum cases lodged by Ukrainian citizens who do not fall under the country's Special Act. While no other major developments were highlighted in relation to the first instance asylum procedure, the COI Unit was active in 2024 and published several reports, for example on Ukraine,⁴⁹⁷ Syria,⁴⁹⁸ Ethiopia,⁴⁹⁹ the readmission of Palestinians into Algeria,⁵⁰⁰ and the security and human rights situation in the West Bank.⁵⁰¹

The Refugee Appeals Board issued landmark rulings related to countries of origin, for example stating that not every person in the province of Homs in Syria can be assumed to be at a real risk of treatment in violation of Article 3 of the ECHR.⁵⁰² However, once the Assad regime fell, the processing of cases by Syrians was suspended due to the uncertain situation.⁵⁰³ In addition, the departure date for returns and decisions on extensions of residence permits were suspended for Syrians.

The Refugee Appeals Board also delivered two important rulings on Dublin transfers to Italy, noting that under the current circumstances it is unlikely that DIS can obtain individual guarantees from the Italian authorities.⁵⁰⁴

Amendments to the Aliens Act were adopted to better protect minors.⁵⁰⁵ This includes assigning a representative to a minor (both unaccompanied and accompanied) who is in a forced (religious or informal) marriage. The amendments also facilitate the allocation of a suitable reception place in specialised facilities for children requiring special support.

In preparation for implementing the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, a parliamentary resolution endorsed Denmark's accession to certain legislative instruments, including the Eurodac Regulation, provisions of the AMMR and the Crisis and Force Majeure Regulation in June 2024,⁵⁰⁶ and the Screening Regulation and the Return Border Procedure Regulation in November 2024.⁵⁰⁷ However, decisions on accession to these pieces of legislation and implementation of certain measures were still pending. The government introduced a new strategy to strengthen external border management by deploying advanced IT systems, reducing border-crossing points and implementing the Screening Regulation.⁵⁰⁸

More input from civil society:

- [Danish Refugee Council](#)

Denmark

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

20

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

22

Share of applications
in EU+

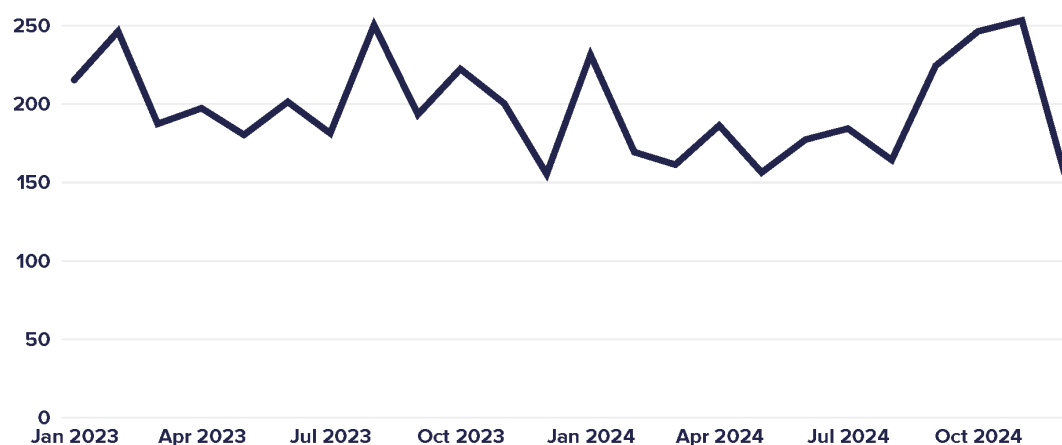
0.2%

Recognition
rate

43%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	2,307	2,427 ➡	-5%	Syria (20%), Türkiye (11%), Eritrea (10%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	2,155	2,119 ➡	2%	Ukraine (29%), Syria (16%), Türkiye (10%)
First instance decisions	1,110	1,360 ↓	-18%	Syria (30%), Eritrea (12%), Afghanistan (10%)
Refugee status	461	855 ↓	-46%	Syria (30%), Eritrea (25%), Afghanistan (19%)
Subsidiary protection	18	14 ↑	29%	Syria (50%), Eritrea (28%), Iran (11%)
Negative	631	491 ↑	29%	Syria (30%), Iran (8%), Russia (4%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



* Please see [disclaimer](#).



Estonia

National developments in 2024



A key priority remained the provision of temporary protection, with Estonia registering approximately 6,000 Ukrainian nationals in 2024.⁵⁰⁹ Efforts placed on their inclusion in previous years came to fruition in 2024, with more students transitioning from Ukrainian-taught classes to Estonian. And thus, the number of Ukrainian-language classes in schools were reduced for the 2024-2025 academic year.⁵¹⁰ The IOM, UNHCR and other organisations continued to provide support to Ukrainian nationals through language training, employment assistance and mental health support.⁵¹¹ During his visit to Estonia, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi acknowledged the efforts of organisations working with refugees – such as the Estonian Refugee Council, Mondo and the Estonian Human Rights Centre – in addressing language barriers, providing counselling and community-based protection to better support the inclusion of refugees in Estonian society.⁵¹²

Programmes facilitating access to the labour market were also provided by civil society organisations. For instance, the Estonian Refugee Council, in partnership with the Labour Inspectorate, launched a programme to assist job-seeking refugees by providing training in job search strategies and fostering access to the labour market.⁵¹³

No legislative changes related to asylum and reception were undertaken during the year. However, national courts addressed the grounds for detention in asylum and return procedures, particularly with regard to the risk of absconding⁵¹⁴ and detention based on a threat to national security. Additionally, the Supreme Court clarified the state legal fees which are provided to lawyers representing detained applicants in appeal procedures.

In preparation for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, Estonia is working on its National Implementation Plan. A key focus of the plan is capacity-building for border procedures, which is a new concept to be implemented in Estonia, as well as enhancing the reception system and exploring alternatives to detention.

More input from civil society:

- [European Network on Statelessness](#)



Estonia

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

22

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

16

Share of applications
in EU+

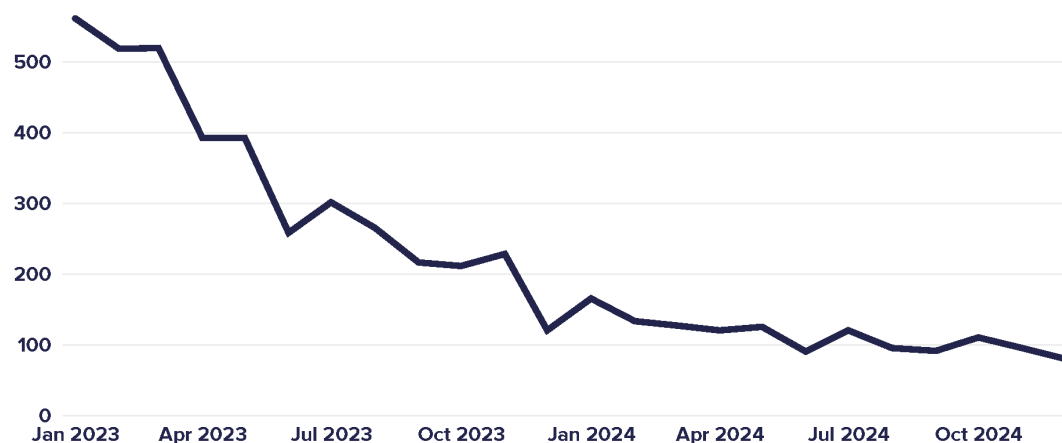
0.1%

Recognition
rate

96%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	1,351	3,981 ↓	-66%	Ukraine (91%), Russia (3%), Belarus (1%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	148	354 ↓	-58%	Ukraine (67%), Russia (16%), Belarus (5%)
First instance decisions	1,381	3,987 ↓	-65%	Ukraine (94%), Russia (3%), Belarus (0.7%)
Refugee status	34	59 ↓	-42%	Russia (41%), Belarus (21%), Türkiye (15%)
Subsidiary protection	1,294	3,805 ↓	-66%	Ukraine (100%), Syria (0.2%)
Negative	53	123 ↓	-57%	Russia (42%), India (13%), Ukraine (8%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Finland

National developments in 2024



Faced with increased pressure at the eastern border due to instrumentalised migration, in 2024 Finland introduced a number of institutional and legislative changes to effectively manage the situation and migratory patterns. Measures were taken to enhance situational awareness and safeguard borders by preventing illegal crossings.

The organisational structure of the Finnish Immigration Service was reformed in June 2024 based on process management through four departments: Permit and Citizenship Department; Department for International Protection; Reception Services Department; and Control and Monitoring Department. The reformed structure aims to ensure the seamless processing of applications for different types of permits without any delay, while preventing abuse of the permit system and providing for more streamlined and controlled immigration processes. In addition, the new organisation supports contingency planning and preparedness in a changed operating environment.

The President approved the Act on Temporary Measures to Combat Instrumentalised Migration in July 2024 to improve border security and ensure that Finland can effectively combat instrumentalised migration.⁵¹⁵ The act lays down the conditions under which a government plenary session can decide to restrict the reception of applications for international protection in a limited area on Finland's national border and in its immediate vicinity. If the act is applied, applications for international protection would not, apart from certain exceptions, be received in the area under the restriction and instrumentalised migrants would be prevented from entering the country. The new act takes into account the situation of people in a particularly vulnerable position.

Amendments to the Aliens Act in September 2024 introduced a new border procedure to expedite the examination of applications that are likely to be unfounded and the return of applicants who receive a negative decision. New grounds were also included to use the accelerated procedure to process asylum applications at the Finnish Immigration Service. UNHCR provided its observations when these acts were at the stage of proposals.⁵¹⁶

The government introduced several legislative measures to address situations of evading entry requirements and the misuse of the asylum system. Applicants or former applicants who receive a negative decision can no longer acquire a residence permit based on employment, self-employment or studies. As of January 2025, the length of a residence permit on grounds of international protection was shortened to the minimum duration foreseen by EU law, while new provisions were added on ending of international protection.⁵¹⁷ Certain restrictions and conditions were also introduced on the right to work for persons who have received a negative asylum decision.⁵¹⁸ Other amendments in the Aliens Act focused on detention,⁵¹⁹ stricter rules for family reunification⁵²⁰ and the duration and content of protection for beneficiaries of temporary protection.⁵²¹ In addition, applicants' reception and spending allowances were reduced in September 2024.

Several initiatives focused on facilitating the integration of foreigners and the new Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration entered into force in January 2025.⁵²² Reforms aimed to increase efficiency in the allocation of government finances and to foster migrants' responsibility in using available resources.⁵²³ Multilingual social orientation courses were opened to beneficiaries on the values and norms of Finnish society, on individual rights and obligations, and on employment.⁵²⁴ To highlight the importance of successful integration, a legislative amendment tightened the conditions and increased the period of residence required to acquire Finnish citizenship to 8 years, except when applicants meet the language requirement, in which cases the period is reduced to 5 years.⁵²⁵

From the second half of 2024, the necessary reforms for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum were being planned in parallel with the implementation of the government's objectives to reform immigration and asylum legislation. Finland submitted its National Implementation Plan in December 2024, outlining the legislative and operational changes needed to implement the Pact. The implementation requires changes to the initial stages of the asylum procedure, such as the making/registering/lodging of an application and the provision of free legal counselling, and for the end of the procedure, such as the notification of negative decisions. Finnish authorities are reviewing national legislation and identifying the amendments required to align with the provisions of the Pact, aiming to establish the foundation for a more effective asylum procedure while safeguarding applicants' legal rights.

Finland

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

17

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

20

Share of applications
in EU+

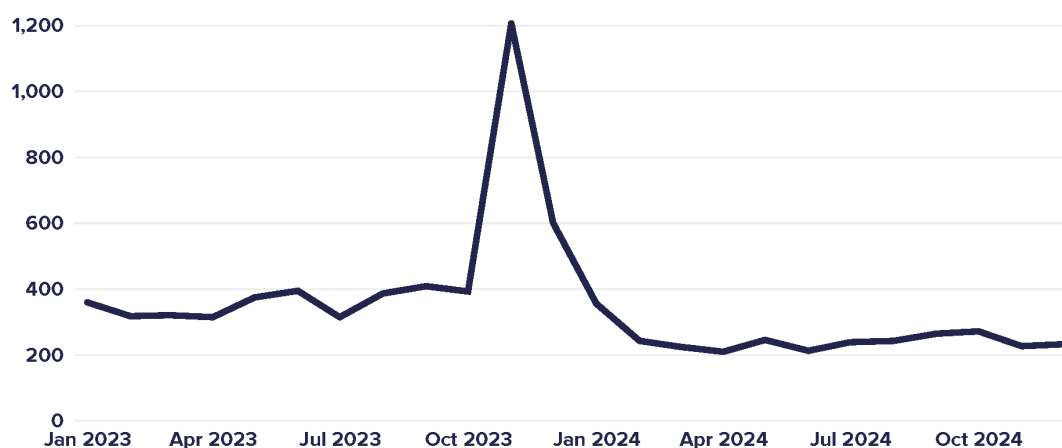
0.3%

Recognition
rate

57%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	2,948	5,372 ↓	-45%	Somalia (13%), Iraq (10%), Afghanistan (9%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	4,228	7,421 ↓	-43%	Somalia (15%), Russia (15%), Syria (9%)
First instance decisions	1,763	1,995 ↓	-12%	Somalia (16%), Syria (11%), Afghanistan (11%)
Refugee status	936	1,084 ↓	-14%	Somalia (20%), Syria (18%), Afghanistan (17%)
Subsidiary protection	74	70 ↑	6%	Syria (31%), Somalia (19%), Yemen (19%)
Negative	753	841 ↓	-10%	Iraq (16%), Somalia (11%), Russia (10%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



France

National developments in 2024



The entry into force of the Law for Controlling Immigration and Improving Integration brought several important changes to France's migration management framework.⁵²⁶ These changes focused on reinforcing border controls, making returns more efficient, fighting the trafficking of human beings and sanctioning the exploitation of foreigners, better integration through language, employment and the respect of the country's principles, structural reform of the asylum and reception systems, simplifying appeals in the foreigner's law, and adapting migration policy to the specificities of its overseas territories.⁵²⁷ Throughout the year, several decrees were adopted for the implementation of the law.

The law streamlines the first steps of the asylum procedure by bringing together different authorities responsible for the registration and lodging of an asylum application in one place under the umbrella of 'France Asile' hubs.⁵²⁸ The change aims to make the process simpler and swifter, and to bring the determining authority closer to the applicant.

Secondary movements remain an issue for French authorities. As a deterrence measure, OFPRA may now take an inadmissibility decision when an applicant already receives protection equivalent to international protection in a third country. The possibility to use videoconferencing for interviews was extended to inadmissibility decisions for these cases.⁵²⁹ Prefectures must now systematically issue an obligation to leave the French territory within 15 days following the expiration of the right to remain, unless they consider granting a residence permit on grounds other than asylum.⁵³⁰

In 2024, around 72% of applicants entitled to material reception conditions were accommodated in France's reception system.⁵³¹ The government announced its intention to close emergency facilities and not to open more planned facilities, as a budget saving measure.⁵³² Legislative changes in 2024 made it obligatory for authorities to exclude from or withdraw material reception conditions for certain groups of applicants, as it is permitted by EU law.⁵³³

The new law states that children cannot be detained.⁵³⁴ As a consequence, an alternative should be applied for families, such as a house arrest.⁵³⁵ Asylum applicants may now be placed under house arrest or in detention when authorities conclude that they represent a threat to public order.⁵³⁶ The length of the initial detention period without a judicial order and the maximum period for house arrest were all expanded.⁵³⁷

In order to streamline the appeals procedure before the CNDA, the procedure with a single judge ruling alone has become standard. The same procedural guarantees are granted to the appellant as with the collegiate procedure (panel of three judges). The latter is used when a case raises more complex questions. In addition, the court created five territorial chambers to bring the judge closer to the asylum seeker.⁵³⁸ These chambers are an integral part of the court. As a further effort to simplify appeals in return and detention cases, three types of procedures replaced the previous twelve.⁵³⁹

Beneficiaries of international protection continued to be supported in their integration path through the signature of a Republican Integration Contract (CIR) which includes language training and a 4-day civic course. The most vulnerable beneficiaries benefit from the programme *Accompagnement global et individualisé des réfugiés* (AGIR), which focuses on access to employment and housing. In addition, parents must commit to raising their children to respect the values and principles of the country and to support them in integration and learning French.⁵⁴⁰

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Forum réfugiés-Cosi](#)
- [France Terre d'Asile](#)
- [Safe Passage International](#)

France

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

4

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

12

Share of applications
in EU+

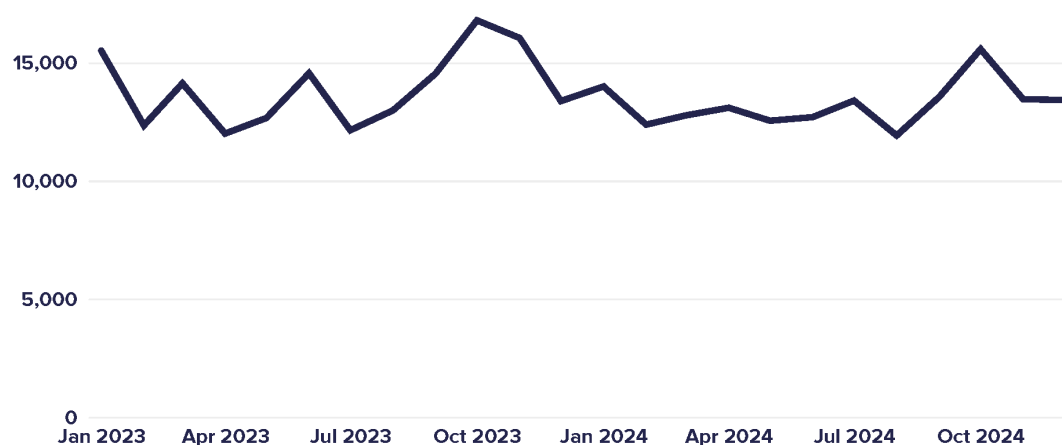
15.6%

Recognition
rate

38%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	158,730	167,002 ➡	-5%	Ukraine (9%), Afghanistan (8%), Haiti (8%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	66,196	53,323 ⬆	24%	Guinea (10%), Ukraine (9%), Côte d'Ivoire (8%)
First instance decisions	137,789	132,568 ➡	4%	Afghanistan (13%), Türkiye (7%), Haiti (7%)
Refugee status	29,879	31,511 ➡	-5%	Afghanistan (34%), Guinea (7%), China (6%)
Subsidiary protection	22,153	10,141 ⬆	118%	Haiti (32%), Ukraine (30%), Afghanistan (8%)
Negative	85,757	90,916 ⬇	-6%	Türkiye (10%), Bangladesh (8%), Afghanistan (7%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Germany

National developments in 2024



The German political debate on asylum and migration was largely impacted by a series of terrorist attacks in the country in 2024. A 'security package' was adopted with two laws, including one to improve domestic security and the asylum system. Some of the measures include: BAMF may now use biometric data to identify applicants; applicants in the Dublin procedure no longer receive social benefits when the other country has accepted responsibility and the transfer is possible; and recognised beneficiaries of international protection lose their status when they travel to the country of origin, unless the travel is considered to be 'morally essential' by the authorities.⁵⁴¹ An "Influx Limitation Act" was presented by the opposition in January 2025, which was rejected by a narrow majority. The law would have ended family reunification for people with subsidiary protection.⁵⁴²

Early in 2024, new laws were adopted on citizenship and returns. Special integration efforts are now rewarded with earlier qualification for naturalisation and allowing to retain the original citizenship upon naturalisation, while search and custody options were extended to identify the country of origin of a person who will be returned or locate people who are obliged to return.⁵⁴³ The minister pledged for a rapid implementation of the new CEAS legislation and the federal government approved two draft laws with this objective already in November 2024.⁵⁴⁴ Due to the premature end of the legislative period, it was not possible to conclude the parliamentary procedure.

The Federal Ministry of the Interior published a summary of expert statements and original statements on different models to implement asylum procedures in third countries. In its summary, the ministry noted that while in principle these models are legally possible depending on how they are designed, their implementation is expected to be costly, involves legal and practical hurdles, and not all models may deter arrivals.⁵⁴⁵ The Federal Minister of the Interior noted that the assessment of this option continues, also in the framework of the safe third country concept provided for in the APR.⁵⁴⁶ UNHCR underlined in its expert statement the impact that a German approach which is open to the externalisation of asylum procedures may have on policies related to externalisation in other EU countries and highlighted some risks.⁵⁴⁷

Secondary movements from other EU+ countries significantly added to the workload of national authorities, especially within the Dublin unit. The EUAA provided operational support with the aim of increasing national capacity to process Dublin cases.⁵⁴⁸ Given the large number of appeals, German courts were often faced with situations which they had not interpreted before, and thus they referred several questions to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling.⁵⁴⁹ In addition, to ease the burden on the appeal instance, a legislative proposal aimed to expand the use of single judges to the regular asylum procedure (it is currently the case for the accelerated procedure). Cases would only be adjudicated in a chamber when they involve particularly difficult legal or factual elements or when the legal matter is of fundamental significance.⁵⁵⁰

The situation in reception was still impacted at the beginning of 2024 by the high number of arrivals in previous years, in particular by unaccompanied minors in Berlin. AMIF funding was used to create around 20,000 reception places in 2023, which eased the pressure on facilities in several federal states.⁵⁵¹

Germany continued with the implementation of its resettlement pledges, but due to the security situation in Lebanon and challenges with resettlements from Pakistan, the pledges could not be implemented and were counterbalanced with additional missions in Kenya, Egypt and Jordan.

To continue facilitating the entry of people fleeing Ukraine, the possibility to enter Germany without a residence title was extended for the fifth time, but now only covering the scope of people that fall under the Council Implementing Decision.⁵⁵²

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)
- [Jesuit Refugee Service Europe](#)
- [Refugee Council of Lower Saxony | Flüchtlingsrat Niedersachsen e.V.](#)

Germany

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

1

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

8

Share of applications
in EU+

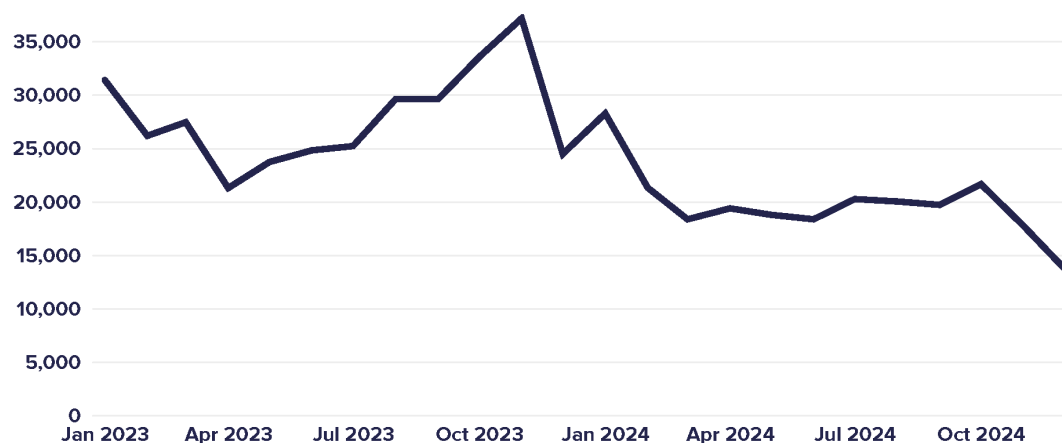
23.4%

Recognition
rate

45%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	237,314	334,109 ↓	-29%	Syria (31%), Afghanistan (14%), Türkiye (13%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	212,656	239,614 ↓	-11%	Syria (23%), Türkiye (21%), Afghanistan (18%)
First instance decisions	251,043	218,547 ↑	15%	Syria (33%), Afghanistan (15%), Türkiye (14%)
Refugee status	37,730	42,462 ↓	-11%	Afghanistan (38%), Syria (19%), Türkiye (10%)
Subsidiary protection	75,026	71,213 ➡	5%	Syria (94%), Afghanistan (1%), Sudan (0.8%)
Negative	138,287	104,872 ↑	32%	Türkiye (22%), Afghanistan (16%), Iraq (6%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Greece

National developments in 2024



In 2024, Greece continued to experience pressure on its asylum and reception systems, receiving the highest number of applicants for international protection (74,000) in 5 years and having the second-highest number of applications per capita among EU+ countries (7,080 per 1 million inhabitants). With the Eastern Mediterranean route experiencing an increase of 14% in the detection of irregular border-crossings,⁵⁵³ border management was a pressing issue.⁵⁵⁴ At times effective access to territory and the asylum procedure was put into question.⁵⁵⁵ The ECtHR issued a number of decisions on cases from previous years when effective access to territory was inhibited.⁵⁵⁶ Disruptions in interpretation services both on the islands and in the mainland, as well as a 2-month abstention from duties by lawyers under the state-funded legal aid scheme at the appeal stage, caused delays in asylum procedures, overall affecting access to other services as well.⁵⁵⁷

Greece invested in the professional development of asylum and reception personnel, with almost 4,000 registered participants in EUAA training and over 350 trainees registered in sessions conducted by the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government. Efforts to improve reception conditions continued, often in cooperation with civil society organisations.⁵⁵⁸ The Reception and Identification Service (RIS) issued guidance on the identification and management of cases of human trafficking, as well as the management of cases of reception residents who seek employment or are already employed. At the same time, concerns were voiced about sufficient reception conditions in some facilities, reportedly with certain services being suspended for a short period of time, such as the provision of cash and transportation to asylum offices and hospitals.⁵⁵⁹

With regard to the Dublin system, a substantial increase was noted in 2024 in both take back requests and incoming information requests, which virtually doubled compared to the previous year. This was the result of the [CJEU ruling C-753/22](#), according to which Member States are not required to automatically recognise refugee status granted in another Member State when the competent authority cannot reject the asylum request as inadmissible of an applicant to whom another Member State granted protection. Instead, they must carry out a new, individual, full and up-to-date examination of the case.

A number of initiatives were undertaken to increase access to information for applicants and beneficiaries, including on accessing the public service system, enrolment in school, submission of tax returns, personal hygiene and monthly budgeting.⁵⁶⁰ Significant advances were reported in the area of child protection with the launch of a new national guardianship system in 2024 and the adoption of harmonised procedures on best interests which offer more individualised care to unaccompanied minors. Collaborative, multi-stakeholder efforts aimed to improve the well-being of asylum-seeking and migrant children.⁵⁶¹ Some concerns in the area of child protection were reported by civil society organisations, citing poor conditions in reception facilities,⁵⁶² while the ECtHR issued a number of decisions on incidents from past years when Greece was found in violation of several articles of the European Convention in cases of unaccompanied minors and other applicants with vulnerabilities (e.g. [T.K. v Greece](#), [A.I. v Greece](#), [O.R. v Greece](#) and [W.S. v Greece](#)).

Efforts were made in 2024 to improve care for persons with vulnerabilities, including establishing asylum units for vulnerable groups in Attica and Thessaloniki.⁵⁶³ Significant resources were allocated to projects facilitating the integration of refugees and migrants into the Greek society, including the establishment of a Task Force on Integration following a proposal by the European Commission.⁵⁶⁴ With regard to second instance procedures, the setting and composition of the Independent Appeals Committees were reformed, and additional resources were allocated to increase expertise among members in assessing international protection cases.⁵⁶⁵

To plan and support the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, a working group was established to coordinate action among relevant authorities.

More input from civil society:

- [Equal Legal Aid](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [FENIX Humanitarian Legal Aid](#)
- [Greek Council for Refugees | Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)
- [Mobile Info Team](#)
- [Network for Children's Rights | Δίκτυο για τα Δικαιώματα του Παιδιού](#)
- [Save the Children](#)

Greece

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

5

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

2

Share of applications
in EU+

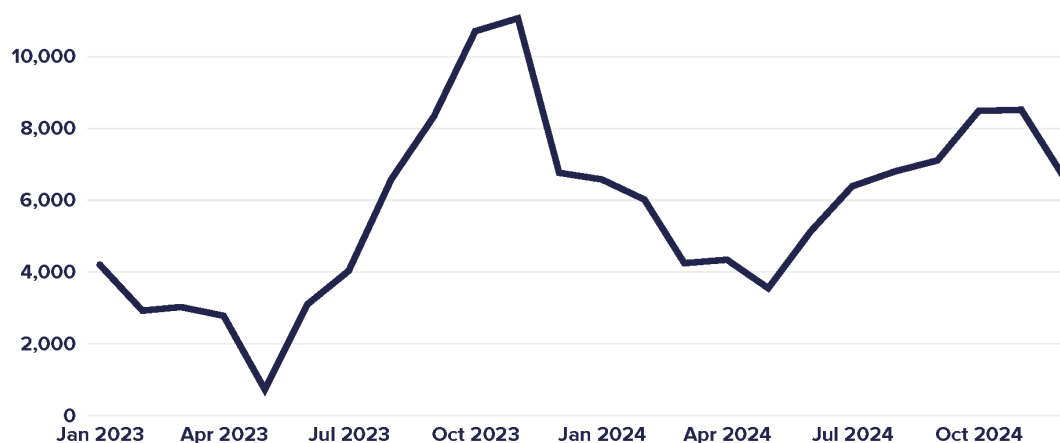
7.3%

Recognition
rate

71%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	73,688	64,084	↑ 15%	Syria (30%), Afghanistan (21%), Egypt (10%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	26,623	29,885	↓ -11%	Syria (28%), Afghanistan (16%), Egypt (15%)
First instance decisions	55,392	40,181	↑ 38%	Syria (26%), Afghanistan (25%), Egypt (8%)
Refugee status	39,303	24,332	↑ 62%	Afghanistan (35%), Syria (33%), Palestine (8%)
Subsidiary protection	296	590	↓ -50%	Ukraine (22%), Somalia (18%), Mali (12%)
Negative	15,793	15,259	⇒ 3%	Egypt (27%), Pakistan (11%), Syria (9%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Hungary

National developments in 2024



Issues from past years persisted in Hungary, with the ‘embassy procedure’⁵⁶⁶ remaining in place and being codified in a Government Decree, which changed the legal basis of the measure from epidemiological reasons to a crisis situation due to the war in Ukraine.⁵⁶⁷ Persons under a measure effecting their personal liberty were added to the categories which are exempt from this procedure, but this only applies when they did not enter the country in an irregular manner.⁵⁶⁸ The procedure has been applied since 2020, despite the CJEU ruling in 2023 which concluded that this practice limited effective access to the asylum procedure.⁵⁶⁹ In 2024, the CJEU ordered the government to pay a lump sum of EUR 200 million and a penalty payment of EUR 1 million per day of delay for failing to comply with the judgment C-808/18, hindering effective access to the asylum procedure, and impeding the right to remain pending a final decision on an asylum application.⁵⁷⁰ The court considered that this conduct was a “serious threat to the unity of EU law”.⁵⁷¹ In one case, the Budapest District Court ruled that the national authority should have not relied on general epidemiological circumstances when refusing to issue travel documents for a family who submitted a declaration of intent to apply for international protection in the embassy procedure in 2021; however, since the CJEU found these rules contrary to EU law, the court noted that the national authority cannot be required to issue the travel documents any longer.⁵⁷² In another case, the court concluded that the requirement for a prior declaration of intent should not be applied, following the CJEU judgment based on the primacy of EU law.⁵⁷³

The ECtHR continued to deliver judgements condemning Hungary for practices in the transit zones (which were in place between 2015-2020), such as violating the prohibition of collective expulsion, arbitrary detention (including of minors) and violating the prohibition of torture by depriving applicants of food and adequate healthcare.⁵⁷⁴ In addition, the court condemned Hungary in several cases for arbitrary detention pending a removal.⁵⁷⁵

In 2024, Hungary hosted a large group of displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection. A change in the scope of support resulted in several thousand – mainly women and children – needing to leave their accommodation and facing the risk of homelessness.⁵⁷⁶ Since August 2024, only displaced persons having residency in zones directly impacted by the war at the time of the entry can receive accommodation support.⁵⁷⁷ Several people requested to remain in their accommodation based on fairness considerations, but only a few were granted the request.⁵⁷⁸ Court cases were pending to rule on the legality of the evictions.⁵⁷⁹

The Budapest District Court ruled on eligibility for temporary protection of third-country family members of people with dual Hungarian-Ukrainian citizenship. It underlined that these people should not be in a less favourable position and their recognition as a beneficiary of temporary protection cannot be excluded solely on the ground of dual citizenship.⁵⁸⁰

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Hungarian Helsinki Committee](#) | [Magyar Helsinki Bizottság](#)

Hungary

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

29

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

29

Share of applications
in EU+

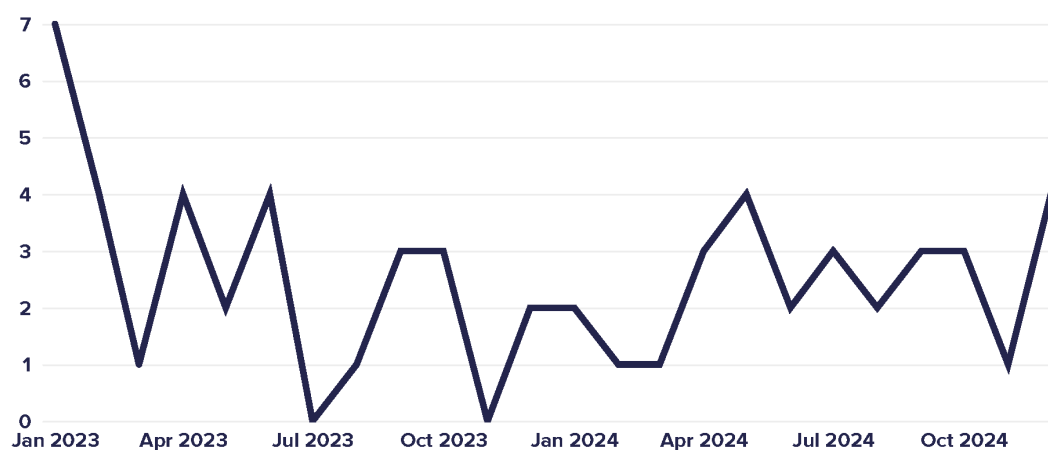
0.0%

Recognition
rate

58%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	29	31 ↓	-6%	Unknown (17%), Syria (14%), Nigeria (10%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	16	15 ↑	7%	Nigeria (19%), Burundi (13%), Russia (13%)
First instance decisions	24	35 ↓	-31%	Unknown (25%), Russia (21%), Nigeria (8%)
Refugee status	8	11 ↓	-27%	Russia (50%), Unknown (25%), Myanmar/Burma (13%)
Subsidiary protection	6	11 ↓	-45%	Unknown (67%), Sudan (17%), Iran (17%)
Negative	10	13 ↓	-23%	Viet Nam (20%), Nigeria (20%), Russia (10%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024





Iceland

National developments in 2024



Despite a decrease in the number of applications for international protection received in 2024, Iceland faced backlogs in processing due to increases in arrivals in previous years. In this context, legislative and policy changes in Iceland in 2024 aimed to increase efficiency in asylum-related processes.

Amendments to the Act on Foreigners, adopted in June 2024, introduced various changes to the procedure for applications for international protection and the legal effects of international protection.⁵⁸¹

- **Validity and extension of residence permits:** The validity period of residence permits connected to protection statuses was shortened. In addition, residence permits connected to the local equivalent of subsidiary protection can only be renewed if the Immigration Service assesses and concludes that the conditions for granting this form of protections are still met.
- **Family reunification for holders of subsidiary protection:** A condition was introduced that the right to family reunification for holders of this status is permitted only after the status is renewed at least once. Nevertheless, exceptions may be granted for compelling reasons.
- **Family reunification for holders of humanitarian permits:** A condition was introduced that the right to family reunification for holders of this status is permitted only after the status is renewed twice. Exceptions may be granted for urgent care considerations.
- **Equivalent of admissibility procedure:** The requirement for authorities to examine an applicant's relation to Iceland was repealed in cases when: i) Iceland is not responsible for the asylum application under the rules of the Dublin III Regulation; ii) applicants have already received protection in another Member State; and iii) applicants are eligible to receive protection in a safe third country. The provision requiring substantive processing of an application if no final decision has been issued at the administrative level within 12 months was also repealed.
- **Processing applications at second instance:** Members of the Immigration Appeals Committee are no longer appointed part-time. The committee will consist of three full-time members, and the committee chairperson and vice-chairperson have the authority to rule on their own in certain cases.

To ease the pressure on the protection system and avoid lengthy, costly proceedings, the Ministry of Justice introduced changes to encourage applicants for international protection to voluntarily return home.⁵⁸² Staff capacity was reinforced in this area through expertise-sharing by Norway and training by Frontex.

Iceland started to develop a strategy for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum. To this end, working groups were created across the Ministry of Justice, Directorate of Migration and the police to identify and operationalise concrete actions towards applying the new legislative instruments. Iceland is not bound by the instruments included in the pact and has chosen to voluntarily opt in to some of them.





Iceland

Key indicators for 2024



Iceland and Liechtenstein do not currently take part in the EUAA's [\(EPS\) data exchange](#), and thus these indicators are not available for the report.



Ireland

National developments in 2024



Ireland received a record number of asylum applicants, with approximately 18,500 applications, ranking third among EU+ countries in terms of applications per capita (3,570 per 1 million inhabitants). Against the background of the increased pressure, Ireland focused on reducing processing times, addressing existing backlogs and reforming reception.

In July 2024, the European Commission confirmed Ireland's opt-in to seven of the instruments of the Pact on Migration and Asylum.⁵⁸³ Following the confirmation, efforts in Ireland focused on introducing the necessary reforms in asylum and reception in accordance with the Pact.

Taking an important step toward modernising migration management, the Department of Justice announced a EUR 25 million package for end-to-end investment in the immigration system. The package includes a EUR 5 million investment in digital innovations to modernise immigration systems, reduce processing times, increase the implementation of returns and strengthen border security. Significant resources were directed to streamline the asylum process, with approximately 400 more employees to be recruited for the end-to-end international protection system, including IPO and the Repatriation and Returns function.⁵⁸⁴ Additional staff were also recruited in other authorities and institutions involved in matters of asylum, such as the IPAT and the Legal Aid Board.

To speed up access to the procedure, the IPO introduced the possibility for individuals to file a digital application. A pilot project, in a limited number of cases, also allowed for online interviews. To cope with the number of arrivals and improve the registration capacity, the IPO established a second facility in West Dublin. In order to meet the faster processing requirements of the Pact, the IPO also introduced a new ground for accelerating the asylum procedure for applicants from countries with the highest number of applications. The new grounds were also effective in reducing the backlog. Changes were made to the list of safe countries of origin by adding Algeria, Brazil, Botswana, Egypt, Egypt, India, Malawi and Morocco.⁵⁸⁵

To address the accommodation shortage and reform the reception system, the government adopted the Comprehensive Accommodation Strategy for International Protection. The reform signals a move away from full reliance on private providers and toward state-owned accommodation, delivering 14,000 state-owned beds by 2028. In addition, the strategy includes designing and building new Reception and Integration Centres and upgrading some existing accommodation centres.⁵⁸⁶

Following a 300% increase in appeals in 2023, the significant pending caseload at second instance persisted in 2024. To ameliorate the situation, the Department of Justice made efforts to bring the number of administrative staff at IPAT and the number of tribunal members to a proportionate equivalent to the staff numbers and decision-makers in the IPO.

More input from civil society:

- [Depaul Ireland](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Irish Refugee Council](#)

Ireland

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

10

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

3

Share of applications
in EU+

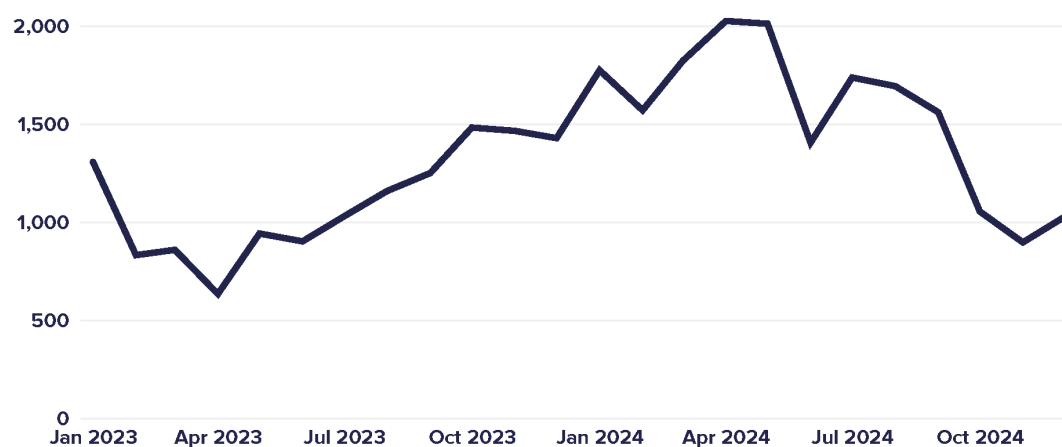
1.8%

Recognition
rate

27%

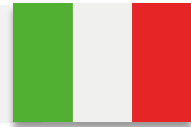
Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	18,563	13,278	↑ 40%	Nigeria (22%), Jordan (15%), Pakistan (8%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	22,548	18,311	↑ 23%	Nigeria (21%), Jordan (10%), Pakistan (8%)
First instance decisions	13,113	8,465	↑ 55%	Georgia (14%), Nigeria (14%), Algeria (12%)
Refugee status	3,259	2,467	↑ 32%	Somalia (25%), Afghanistan (20%), Nigeria (8%)
Subsidiary protection	288	242	↑ 19%	Somalia (35%), Afghanistan (17%), Sudan (14%)
Negative	9,566	5,756	↑ 66%	Georgia (19%), Nigeria (17%), Algeria (15%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Italy

National developments in 2024



Italy experienced an increase in asylum applications alongside a decrease in staffing in 2024. In place since April 2023, the state of emergency due to increased migration flows remained and was extended for 2025.⁵⁸⁷ Aiming to safeguard unaccompanied children in these circumstances, a protocol was signed to prevent the disappearance of unaccompanied foreign minors.⁵⁸⁸ In addition, a new project was launched to promote family foster care placements.⁵⁸⁹ The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies took on new duties related to unaccompanied minors in the asylum system,⁵⁹⁰ and Decree No 98/2024 established procedures for the initial interview of minors upon arrival at a reception centre.⁵⁹¹

In 2024, the Italy-Albania protocol was ratified,⁵⁹² with UNHCR assuming monitoring responsibilities⁵⁹³ and civil society organisations raising concerns about this role.⁵⁹⁴ As the asylum-processing centres in Albania became operational, the Immigration and Asylum Board (*Tavolo Asilo e Immigrazione*, TAI) noted irregularities in the procedures.⁵⁹⁵ Various tribunals did not validate detention orders issued for applicants who were transferred to Albania⁵⁹⁶ and made several referrals to the CJEU about the interpretation of the notion of a safe country of origin.⁵⁹⁷ The Court of Cassation confirmed the judges' duty to scrutinise the safety of these countries.⁵⁹⁸

Access to the asylum procedure remained a key issue, as reported by civil society organisations.⁵⁹⁹ Several measures were implemented with the aim of reducing processing times, for example through the EUAA's operational plan,⁶⁰⁰ through an agreement between the Ministry of the Interior and UNHCR. With an agreement with the IOM, UNHCR provided registration experts and cultural mediators at police headquarters.⁶⁰¹ Challenges continued in reception conditions, with civil society organisations noting significant shortages in accommodation.⁶⁰² Poor conditions in pre-removal centres were noted by the Committee for the Prevention of Torture.⁶⁰³ New tender specifications for reception services and services in pre-removal detention centres (CPRs) were issued.⁶⁰⁴ The specifications aimed, for example, to strengthen assistance and support in CPRs, particularly for healthcare, and improve the quality of services. Following the publication in June 2023 of the vademecum on identification, referral and care of persons with vulnerabilities, specific activities were launched in 2024, for example seminars and refresher courses.

To enhance access to information, the National Commission for the Right to Asylum updated its practical guide for international protection applicants, with translations in 14 languages.⁶⁰⁵ Additionally, a new welcome centre for migrants and refugees was opened in Milan, providing services such as legal aid, job placement, language support, and inclusion assistance.⁶⁰⁶ The list of safe countries of origin was first updated by a ministerial decree,⁶⁰⁷ and then included in primary norm by Decree Law No 158/2024.⁶⁰⁸ The decree law also introduced procedural changes, such as the possibility to challenge suspension decisions of first instance courts before the Court of Appeal. Law No 187/2024 was adopted, converting Decree Law No 158/2024,⁶⁰⁹ and it introduced new provisions: i) to allow a deferred refusal to entry order to be issued to applicants who are traced during surveillance activities at the external borders, including as a result of search and rescue operations, and are taken to areas designated for carrying out a border procedure; and ii) to reduce the timeframe to appeal a rejected asylum application to 7 days.

Through humanitarian admission programmes, Italy transferred victims of torture and ill treatment from Libya,⁶¹⁰ refugee students through university corridors,⁶¹¹ Afghans and Palestinians.

The Court of Cassation ruled on several cases related to the Dublin procedure, particularly on the obligation to provide sufficient information⁶¹² and the optional use of discretionary clauses in light of the *non-refoulement* principle and fundamental rights.⁶¹³

In the framework of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, the European Commission assigned Italy the largest quota of applications to process in the border procedure, in accordance with the formula foreseen in the regulation.⁶¹⁴ Italy received technical support from the European Commission to prepare its National Implementation Plan.⁶¹⁵ A national coordination committee was established to oversee its execution and assess the resources required.⁶¹⁶

More input from civil society:

- [Arca di Noè Società Cooperativa Sociale](#)
- https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-02/3_association_for_legal_studies_on_immigration_asgi.pdf
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)
- [Jesuit Refugee Service Europe](#)
- [Save the Children](#)

Italy

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

3

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

10

Share of applications
in EU+

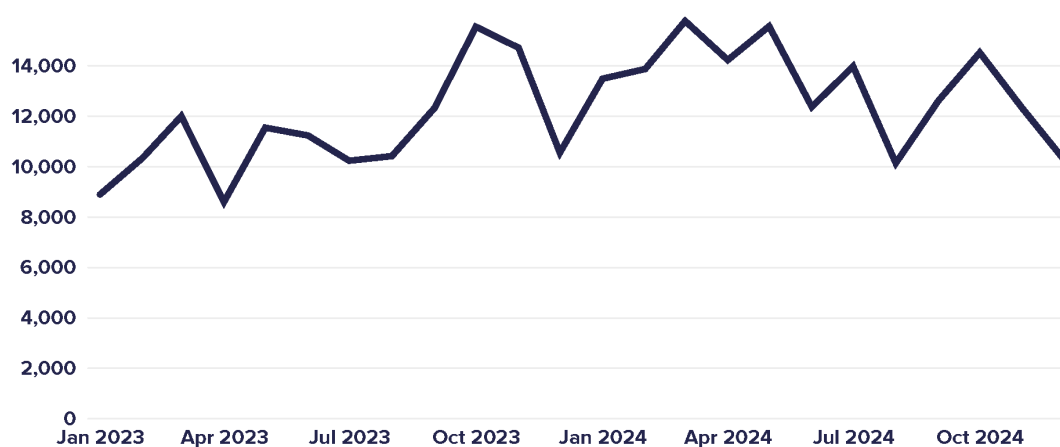
15.7%

Recognition
rate

19%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	158,867	136,138	↑ 17%	Bangladesh (21%), Peru (10%), Pakistan (8%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	227,127	162,091	↑ 40%	Bangladesh (19%), Pakistan (12%), Egypt (11%)
First instance decisions	85,203	42,972	↑ 98%	Bangladesh (20%), Pakistan (12%), Egypt (9%)
Refugee status	6,040	4,920	↑ 23%	Afghanistan (14%), Nigeria (11%), Côte d'Ivoire (9%)
Subsidiary protection	10,372	6,519	↑ 59%	Burkina Faso (33%), Mali (17%), Pakistan (8%)
Negative	68,791	31,533	↑ 118%	Bangladesh (24%), Pakistan (13%), Egypt (11%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024





Latvia

National developments in 2024



With an increase in asylum applications in 2023, the national authority worked on the backlog of cases in 2024 while reception capacity continued to be strained. In addition, many cases were reopened after applicants who had absconded were transferred back to Latvia through the Dublin procedure. The Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) also noted a growing number of individuals who submitted subsequent applications to extend their stay, which were mostly found to be unsubstantiated. The authority highlighted the diverse profile of applicants, coming from 38 countries, meaning that some case management techniques that work well in other EU+ countries with distinct groups of applicants could not be used in Latvia to expedite the processing of asylum application. The implementation of return procedures was complicated by many applicants entering the country without identification documents.

Throughout 2024, an emergency situation continued to be declared in five administrative regions, resulting in an enhanced border protection regime. Thus, people seeking international protection could only apply at official border-crossing points. The ECtHR case *H.M.M and Others v Latvia* was pending before the Grand Chamber on alleged pushbacks in the vicinity of the Latvian-Belarusian border starting from 10 August 2021.⁶¹⁷

A new building was opened in Riga to accommodate Ukrainian nationals and provide social services. Legislative amendments entered into force in December 2024 to facilitate access to the labour market, education and documentation for displaced Ukrainians. Their temporary residence permits were extended for 3 years (as of 24 December 2024) and expired Ukrainian travel documents will be valid in Latvia until 28 February 2026.

Following the sharp increase in the number of applicants, OCMA launched awareness-raising campaigns about the asylum process for asylum seekers, including activities in reception centres aiming to bring together locals and residents.⁶¹⁸ The authority also started another campaign to prevent human trafficking among displaced Ukrainian.⁶¹⁹

In preparation for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, a high-level working group, led by the Ministry of the Interior, drafted the National Implementation Plan. Areas that require concerted effort include the use of the border procedure, combining rejected claims with the return procedure, and changes to reception and time limits.

More input from civil society:

- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [I want to help refugees | Gribu palīdzēt bēgļiem](#)

Latvia

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

25

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

19

Share of applications
in EU+

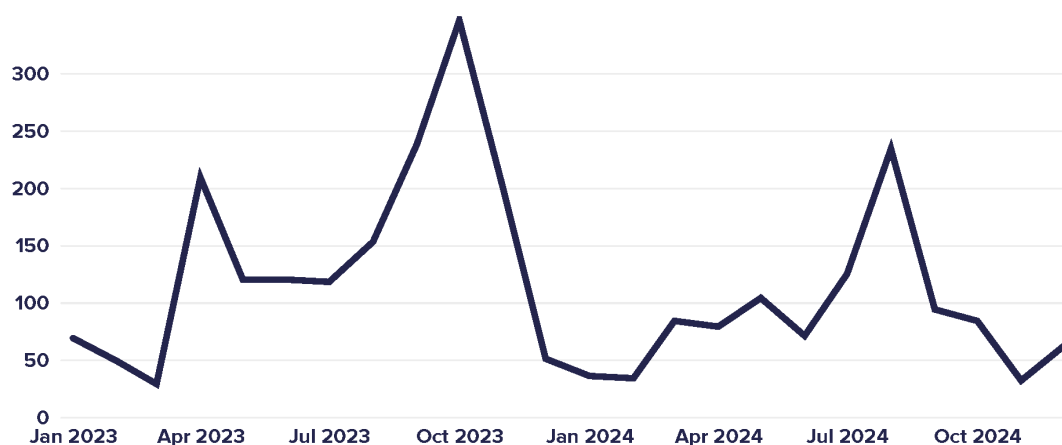
0.1%

Recognition
rate

29%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	1,039	1,701 ↓	-39%	Afghanistan (18%), Tajikistan (16%), India (13%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	221	591 ↓	-63%	Tajikistan (27%), Afghanistan (21%), Russia (11%)
First instance decisions	670	269 ↑	149%	Afghanistan (14%), India (13%), Russia (11%)
Refugee status	109	82 ↑	33%	Afghanistan (62%), Russia (20%), Belarus (13%)
Subsidiary protection	87	36 ↑	142%	Syria (33%), Afghanistan (33%), Ukraine (9%)
Negative	474	151 ↑	214%	India (18%), Cameroon (12%), Russia (9%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024





Lithuania

National developments in 2024



The implementation of legislative and policy changes continued in Lithuania in 2024, with the objective to make the asylum and reception systems more resilient following a surge in asylum applicants in previous years.

The Migration Department obtained more funding to increase its staff and provide higher salaries for current employees as a measure to retain more colleagues and decrease high turnover.⁶²⁰ Nonetheless, the organisation remained understaffed in 2024, while the impact of the new measures is expected to be seen in the long term.

The parliament approved an amendment to reorganise the reception system.⁶²¹ To this end, restructuring started in 2024 so that the new Reception and Integration Agency could start its operations in January 2025.⁶²² It was clarified that interpretation in reception and during the lodging of the application would be the responsibility of the new agency, while interpretation during the asylum interview remains the responsibility of the Migration Department. State-guaranteed legal aid became the responsibility of the new agency, instead of the Migration Department.⁶²³ EUR 10 million of AMIF support was granted to improve the infrastructure of existing reception facilities and expand capacity with the involvement of municipalities.⁶²⁴

With an important increase in asylum appeals cases,⁶²⁵ changes to the legal structure are expected to decrease pressure. One Regional Administrative Court was established in Vilnius, replacing regional administrative courts with branches across the country.⁶²⁶

The Supreme Administrative Court ruled on legal uncertainties, for example, noting that a minor may automatically receive international protection without the need for an individual assessment when the parents had already been granted protection.⁶²⁷ It referred a question to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling on exclusion from international protection and the impact of a sentence already served or pardon or amnesty granted to the person.⁶²⁸

The state of emergency was maintained along the border with Belarus, and based on the law amendment in 2023, border guards could return migrants crossing into Lithuanian territory irregularly.⁶²⁹ Litigation related to this practice was ongoing both at the national level⁶³⁰ and in front of the ECtHR.⁶³¹ During a state of emergency, specific restrictions may be applied on the freedom of movement of migrants, and the Supreme Administrative Court clarified that restricting the freedom of movement within a reception facility should be considered as detention and not an alternative to detention.⁶³²

Preparations for the implementation of the Pact have started with the establishment of an inter-agency working group, which will assess capacity, gaps and needs to implement the legislative package.

More input from civil society:

- [Lithuanian Red Cross Society | Lietuvos Raudonojo Kryžiaus](#)
- [Refugee Council of Lithuania | Pabėgėlių Taryba](#)



Lithuania

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

27

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

26

Share of applications
in EU+

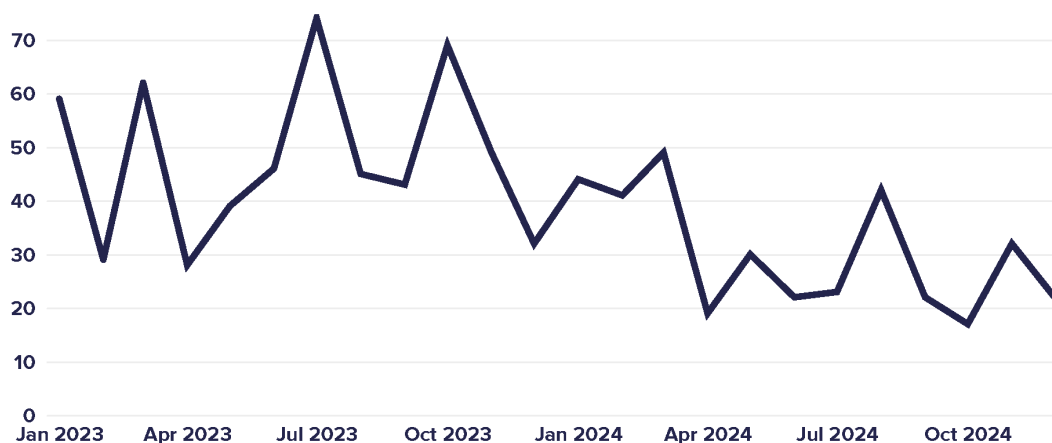
0.0%

Recognition
rate

46%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	363	575 ↓	-37%	Belarus (39%), Russia (13%), Ukraine (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	219	346 ↓	-37%	Belarus (46%), Russia (19%), Ukraine (5%)
First instance decisions	380	582 ↓	-35%	Belarus (46%), Russia (14%), Tajikistan (6%)
Refugee status	163	403 ↓	-60%	Belarus (67%), Russia (15%), Tajikistan (5%)
Subsidiary protection	12	1 ↑	1100%	Syria (50%), Mali (17%), South Sudan (17%)
Negative	205	178 ↑	15%	Belarus (33%), Russia (14%), Iraq (7%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024





Luxembourg

National developments in 2024



Luxembourgish authorities focused efforts in 2024 on increasing efficiency in processing applications for international protection by optimising workflows. An internal prioritisation was adopted for first instance cases based on the date of lodging, and national guidance was applied for processing applications by Turkish nationals affiliated with the Gülen movement, by Syrian applicants at risk of being conscripted into military service and by Eritrean applicants. The decision-making unit was reinforced with new recruitments to maintain business continuity, as many employees were also involved in the preparations for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Reception structures in Luxembourg operated at full capacity in 2024, and authorities utilised emergency accommodation to address the needs. In view of the transposition of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, a new centre was established for people of the following profiles: i) people in the Dublin procedure; ii) people awaiting a voluntary return after their applications for international protection have been definitively rejected and where all possible appeals have been exhausted; and iii) occasionally, irregular third-country nationals who did not apply for international protection. The centre, which serves as an alternative to detention, is a semi-open facility where residents report in the evening, stay overnight and report in the morning, while they are offered dedicated social support. To expand the services available, the National Reception Office (ONA) launched a number of calls for AMIF-funded projects, for example for the provision of psycho-social support and rehabilitation services, in particular targeted to vulnerable persons, including minors, pregnant women and women with small children.⁶³³ Nonetheless, single, non-vulnerable men often needed to be put on a waiting list to access facilities managed by ONA and were accommodated in structures which were originally designed for homeless people during the winter (*Wanteraktioun*, WAK).

In the second half of 2024, Luxembourgish began to identify legislative and practical changes which will be necessary to adhere to the Pact on Migration and Asylum. Additional resources will be allocated to infrastructure for the practical implementation of the screening process, the tight deadlines foreseen for second instance procedures, and the additional safeguards for unaccompanied minors.

Luxembourg

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

21

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

6

Share of applications
in EU+

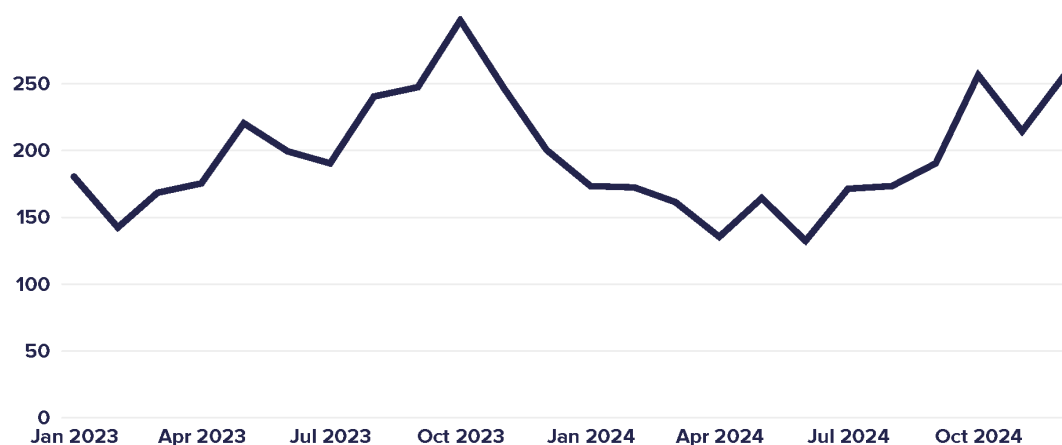
0.2%

Recognition
rate

64%

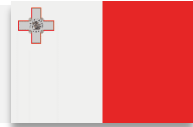
Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	2,197	2,504 ↓	-12%	Eritrea (20%), Syria (17%), Algeria (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	3,199	3,085 →	4%	Syria (26%), Eritrea (20%), Venezuela (7%)
First instance decisions	1,484	1,242 ↑	19%	Syria (42%), Eritrea (15%), Afghanistan (8%)
Refugee status	733	625 ↑	17%	Syria (50%), Eritrea (28%), Afghanistan (9%)
Subsidiary protection	221	252 ↓	-12%	Syria (87%), Türkiye (4%), Ukraine (3%)
Negative	530	365 ↑	45%	Venezuela (12%), Syria (12%), Türkiye (10%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Malta

National developments in 2024



For a fifth year in a row, the number of applications for international protection lodged in Malta decreased (439), to the lowest since 2010. Nonetheless, asylum and migration continued being an important theme in public debates and policy discussions.

The position of an Ambassador for Migration was established to enhance collaboration on issues of migration internationally, in particular with countries of origin. The ambassador is also responsible for formulating Malta's positions at an EU level and coordinating among entities dealing with migration and asylum.

Throughout 2024, Malta was vocal at the European level in highlighting the importance of effective border management, impeding irregular journeys and strengthening strategic cooperation with third countries, with an emphasis on returns and fighting smuggling networks.⁶³⁴ Collaborative efforts continued with Libya in law enforcement and sea rescues, with the aim of curbing organised crime, including human trafficking, in the Mediterranean.⁶³⁵

At a technical level, legislative amendments were initiated to introduce changes in a number of areas, including the second instance authority having access to an applicant's file in cases involving national security;⁶³⁶ medical examinations to determine the age of unaccompanied minors, after which if there are still doubts authorities assume minority;⁶³⁷ further clarification of the distinction between unfounded and manifestly unfounded applications;⁶³⁸ the expansion of the profiles of applicants that could potentially be subjected to detention;⁶³⁹ and the revocation, ending or refusal to renew subsidiary protection when there was misrepresentation or an omission of facts which were decisive for granting subsidiary protection.⁶⁴⁰ UNHCR in cooperation with the government created material for refugees and asylum seekers to ensure that applicants receive information in a language they understand.,⁶⁴¹ The IPA issued a public tender to increase interpretation capacity.⁶⁴²

Civil society organisations continued to voice concern about detention and search and rescue matters, publishing several statements and opinions throughout 2024.⁶⁴³ A number of UN Human Rights Treaty bodies identified and shared key areas for improvement with the Maltese authorities, including preventing arbitrary detention, adhering with the prohibition of *refoulement*, facilitating prompt search and rescue activities, ensuring safe and rapid disembarkations, and supporting humanitarian rescue operations.⁶⁴⁴ The government provided detailed replies to these observations, rebutting allegations of possible violations; expressing its strong commitment to upholding its international obligations; highlighting that in the past 20 years the country has hosted a significant community of refugees and beneficiaries of international protection when compared to the size of the population; and emphasising that, over the past years, Maltese authorities have contributed to the rescue of thousands of lives.⁶⁴⁵ In addition, they indicated that detention orders are not issued arbitrarily but following an individual assessment and are used as a last resort, after having established that other less coercive alternative measures cannot be applied effectively.⁶⁴⁶

Relocations from Malta to other Member States continued through the Mechanism for Voluntary Solidarity in collaboration with the IOM and the EUAA.⁶⁴⁷

More input from civil society:

- [aditus foundation](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [Jesuit Refugee Service Europe](#)

Malta

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

26

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

18

Share of applications
in EU+

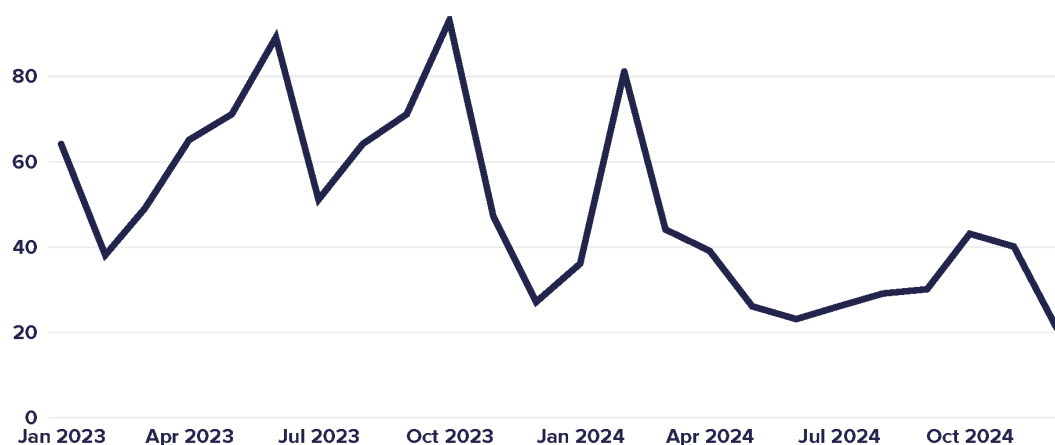
0.0%

Recognition
rate

40%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	438	729 ↓	-40%	Syria (44%), Colombia (6%), Bangladesh (5%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	507	832 ↓	-39%	Syria (23%), Ukraine (18%), Sudan (11%)
First instance decisions	471	951 ↓	-50%	Syria (37%), Pakistan (7%), Libya (5%)
Refugee status	50	18 ↑	178%	Palestine (18%), Syria (16%), Iran (14%)
Subsidiary protection	140	243 ↓	-42%	Syria (89%), Eritrea (5%), Ukraine (2%)
Negative	281	690 ↓	-59%	Syria (19%), Pakistan (11%), Bangladesh (9%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Netherlands

National developments in 2024



Despite comprehensive programmes to address issues in the asylum and reception systems, challenges persisted throughout 2024 and were central in Dutch political debates. The new government announced its intention to establish the “strictest-ever asylum regime”,⁶⁴⁸ which would allow for deviations from the main rules of the asylum procedure in extraordinary circumstances. The government then proposed the enactment of the Asylum Emergency Measures Act and the Law introducing Two Status Systems, including proposals limiting residence permits for beneficiaries of international protection to a period of 3 years, stricter family reunification and naturalisation rules, and more possibilities for forced returns.⁶⁴⁹ Following a review by the Council of State in February 2025,⁶⁵⁰ these laws were yet to be passed by the parliament. Resettlement was limited to a maximum of 200 refugees a year. The government declared its intention to opt out of CEAS if the EU Treaty is amended. At the same time, it committed to a swift implementation of the new rules under the Pact.⁶⁵¹ Due to the stricter rules, the government foresees a significant decrease in asylum applications and proposed less funding for the IND and COA.

The backlog of asylum cases persisted and the decision to extend the time limit from 6 months to 15 months to decide on asylum cases was prolonged until 1 January 2025.⁶⁵² The IND continued its rigorous work on increasing the efficiency of processes. A new project was launched to establish a suitable IT infrastructure for the implementation of the Pact. The AMIF-funded CELIA project started to develop new language analysis methods using AI and optimising and standardising language analysis across EU+ countries.⁶⁵³ Several work instructions and country policies were updated to guide case officers.⁶⁵⁴ The organisation managed to process 18,000 additional asylum applications thanks to a project-based approach, focusing on cases where applicants were highly likely to receive protection.⁶⁵⁵ The project also included other innovations, such as allowing applicants to schedule the interview or holding the interview at reception centres. Following a CJEU judgment,⁶⁵⁶ the organisation stopped considering Georgia and India as safe countries of origin.⁶⁵⁷ Secondary movements remained a great concern for authorities, and courts were often called to deliberate on the application of the principle of mutual trust.⁶⁵⁸

The EUAA continued to provide support in increasing the capacity of the IND to process asylum applications and supporting COA to provide adequate reception conditions.⁶⁵⁹

The situation in the Ter Apel application centre remained critical.⁶⁶⁰ A court judgment obliged COA to maximise occupancy at 2,000 people or pay a penalty fee,⁶⁶¹ which was further increased in October 2024 for frequently exceeding the maximum limit.⁶⁶² Another significant judgment found that the measures limiting the freedom of movement of applicants in the process availability location (PBL) in Ter Apel did not have an adequate legal basis.⁶⁶³ A care centre for applicants with serious mental issues was also lacking places.⁶⁶⁴ Aiming to alleviate the pressure on the reception system, the Distribution Act entered into force in 2024.⁶⁶⁵ Although the government expressed its intention to repeal the act, it remained in force and COA emphasised the importance of proceeding with its implementation.⁶⁶⁶ COA continued with its projects to increase the number of applicants in employment⁶⁶⁷ and to invest in sports for the physical and mental wellbeing of applicants and to prevent a rise in disruptive and criminal behaviours.⁶⁶⁸

A deadline was added to the registration process for displaced persons from Ukraine to ensure that each person who is registered within a municipality has their case assessed by the IND within 4 weeks.⁶⁶⁹ Beneficiaries of temporary protection with an income, but staying in collective accommodation, are now also obliged to contribute to the costs of their reception and do not receive a living allowance.⁶⁷⁰

More input from civil society

- [Dutch Advisory Council on Migration | Adviesraad Migratie](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [Gave Foundation | Stichting Gave](#)
- [Nidos Foundation | Stichting Nidos](#)

Netherlands

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

7

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

14

Share of applications
in EU+

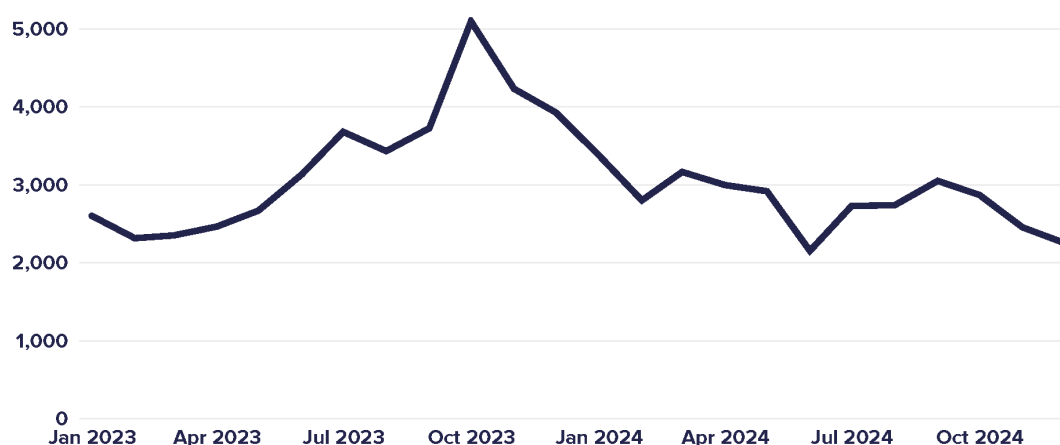
3.3%

Recognition
rate

62%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	33,437	39,550 ↓	-15%	Syria (35%), Iraq (7%), Türkiye (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	46,855	43,924 ↑	7%	Syria (32%), Türkiye (8%), Iraq (8%)
First instance decisions	24,586	20,134 ↑	22%	Syria (45%), Türkiye (6%), Eritrea (5%)
Refugee status	5,259	3,290 ↑	60%	Syria (55%), Türkiye (15%), Iran (4%)
Subsidiary protection	9,905	10,469 →	-5%	Syria (73%), Eritrea (10%), Yemen (6%)
Negative	9,422	6,375 ↑	48%	Ukraine (12%), Syria (9%), Algeria (9%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Norway

National developments in 2024



The number of applications in the regular procedure decreased in 2024, but a high demand for reception places continued due to a surge in arrivals of displaced Ukrainians in the autumn of 2023. Thus, many developments centred around temporary protection.

To optimise efficiency, the newly-appointed director of the UDI focused on the digitalisation of the entire migration sector.⁶⁷¹ Staff and asylum workflows were structurally reorganised. Instead of teams by specific field or country, teams formed on expertise and experience work together on assignments for about 6 months, following prioritisation through an analysis of pending asylum cases.

A new sector was opened in the Råde arrival centre, where people fleeing the war in Ukraine must now register along with new arrivals.⁶⁷² At the same time, emergency reception centres that catered to the increased arrivals in 2022 were closed and replaced by regular reception centres.⁶⁷³ Ukrainians choosing to live privately are no longer entitled to financial support.⁶⁷⁴

The UDI started to process applications by displaced persons from Ukraine who are not covered by temporary protection in the regular procedure,⁶⁷⁵ and updated its guidelines for these applications in May 2024.⁶⁷⁶ In September 2024, the policy for temporary protection was changed and people from certain areas of Ukraine are no longer covered – they are channelled through the regular procedure instead.⁶⁷⁷ Overall, the authorities witnessed an increase in the number of unaccompanied Ukrainian youth, around 17 years old.

The concept of safe third countries was expanded to more countries, but still does not apply automatically and cases are assessed individually.

The UDI commissioned a report on the assessment of the best interests of the child in asylum cases, which confirmed solid practices around unaccompanied children but also assessed that the best interests of the child were not sufficiently considered in several cases.⁶⁷⁸ Following the report, the UNE changed its practices to always hold a hearing for return cases involving children. Tighter family reunification rules were proposed to protect the best interests of the child, in an effort to prevent child abduction and bigamy.

Throughout the year, several courts litigated on exclusion from international protection and the withdrawal of international protection. While the budget for funding legal assistance increased,⁶⁷⁹ the budget for resettlement was reduced from 1,000 places to 500 for 2025, as the government assessed that capacity to integrate newcomers in municipalities was close to a breaking point.⁶⁸⁰

Norway will implement the parts of the Pact that are relevant to the Schengen system and the Dublin procedure, including the AMMR, Parts 3, 5 and 7, the Screening Regulation, the recast Eurodac Regulation, Crisis and Force Majeure Regulation, Articles 12 and 13 and, pending a decision on whether Norway will introduce a national asylum border procedure, the Return Border Procedure Regulation.

Norway

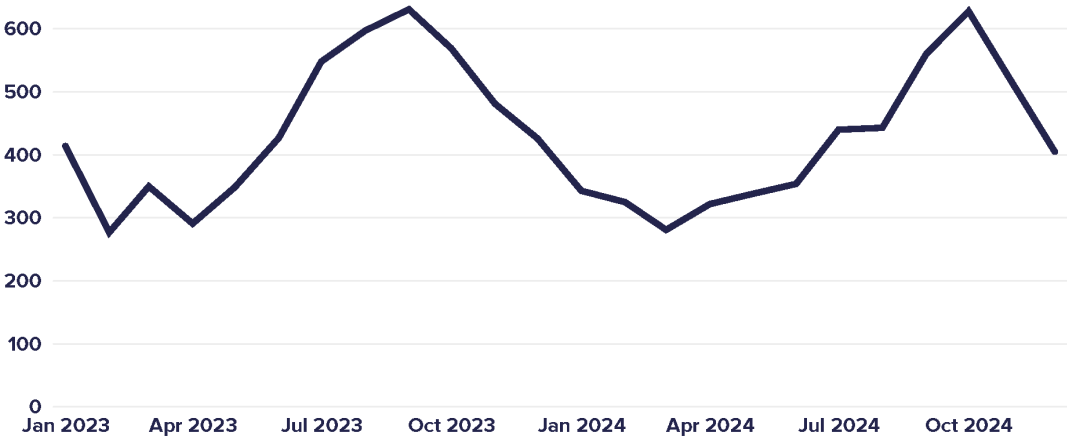
Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of asylum applications	Rank per capita (applications per 1M inhabitants)	Share of applications in EU+	Recognition rate
16	17	0.5%	54%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	4,941	5,348 ↓	-8%	Syria (43%), Ukraine (17%), Eritrea (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	5,282	4,535 ↑	16%	Syria (44%), Ukraine (15%), Türkiye (7%)
First instance decisions	2,622	2,892 ↓	-9%	Syria (37%), Afghanistan (9%), Eritrea (9%)
Refugee status	1,289	1,980 ↓	-35%	Syria (64%), Eritrea (9%), Türkiye (8%)
Subsidiary protection	131	120 ↑	9%	Afghanistan (40%), Yemen (15%), Eritrea (10%)
Negative	1,202	792 ↑	52%	Colombia (11%), Syria (11%), Türkiye (11%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Poland

National developments in 2024



Poland experienced a sharp increase in the number of asylum applications. During the year, a new migration strategy for 2025-2030⁶⁸¹ was adopted and legislation was drafted in response to threats of instrumentalisation of migration by introducing the possibility of a temporary and territorial suspension of the right to apply for asylum. A package of four draft laws was adopted by the Council of Ministers in December 2024, which includes amendments to the Act on Granting Protection to Foreigners. The draft laws introduce the possibility of temporarily limiting the right to lodge an asylum application except for vulnerable applicants (i.e. pregnant women, unaccompanied minors and people who require special treatment) and included additional grounds to withdraw refugee status.⁶⁸² The legislation was adopted in February 2025 and entered into force in March 2025.⁶⁸³

The situation at the border with Belarus remained a priority in 2024. While focusing on the continued recruitment for the Border Guard, Poland also introduced a buffer zone to prevent illegal entries, with a temporary ban on staying in a specific area adjacent to the border with Belarus.⁶⁸⁴ Civil society organisations reacted negatively to the regulation,⁶⁸⁵ while the Polish Commissioner for Human Rights highlighted aspects on which improvements were necessary.⁶⁸⁶ The Ministry of the Interior replied with the list of safeguards it implemented to ensure respect for human rights.⁶⁸⁷ As civil society organisations petitioned the Prime Minister, the topic of collective expulsions to Belarus became a prominent one.⁶⁸⁸

In addition, in *Sherov and Others v Poland*, the ECtHR held that Poland carried out collective expulsions to Ukraine, failed to initiate a procedure at the border crossing to examine the applications for international protection of four Tajik nationals, did not examine whether Ukraine was safe for them, if they would have access to an effective asylum procedure or would be exposed to a risk of chain *refoulement*. The court noted that the expulsions were part of a wider policy of not receiving applications for asylum at the Polish-Ukrainian border and of returning those persons to Ukraine, in violation of domestic and international laws. Lastly, it held that Poland did not provide an effective remedy, as an appeal against a refusal of entry and a further appeal to the domestic administrative courts lacked an automatic suspensive effect.⁶⁸⁹ On the same topic, the Grand Chamber will decide in 2025 the case of *R.A. and Others v Poland* concerning collective expulsions of Afghan nationals to Belarus.⁶⁹⁰

The Office for Foreigners made information on the international protection procedure more readily available by opening a new hotline,⁶⁹¹ launching a new mobile application in five languages⁶⁹² and publishing an information brochure in seven languages. It also published a reminder on the website about downloading material to learn Polish.⁶⁹³ The organisation updated its policy on the protection of children against abuse in centres for foreigners run by the Office for Foreigners, following amendments to the Act on Counteracting Threats of Sexual Crime and Protection of Minors and the Family and Guardianship Code.⁶⁹⁴

Poland continued to host a large group of beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine. In July 2024, changes related to their assistance made the payment of benefits contingent on compulsory schooling of children and ended benefits for costs borne by private homeowners hosting beneficiaries of temporary protection. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration launched the project “Together to Independence” which offers financial support and activities for integration, including career counselling, assistance in finding a job and Polish language courses.⁶⁹⁵ Lastly, Polish courts clarified the rights of beneficiaries of temporary protection who have a disability.⁶⁹⁶

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)
- [Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights | Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)
- [Jesuit Refugee Service Europe](#)
- [Kids in Need of Defence](#)
- [Save the Children](#)
- [University of Warsaw, Centre of Migration Research](#)

Poland

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

11

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

21

Share of applications
in EU+

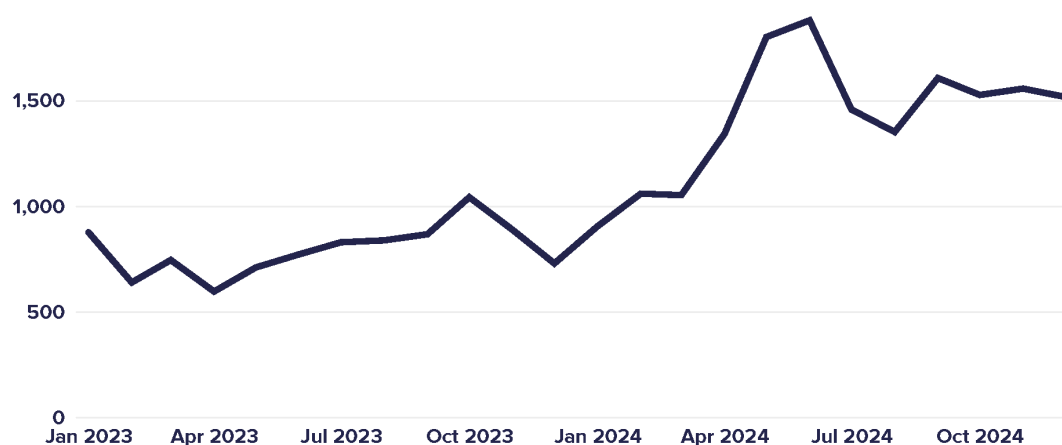
1.7%

Recognition
rate

82%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	17,038	9,519	↑ 79%	Ukraine (41%), Belarus (23%), Russia (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	10,325	6,930	↑ 49%	Ukraine (33%), Russia (27%), Belarus (19%)
First instance decisions	8,580	6,525	↑ 31%	Ukraine (47%), Belarus (32%), Russia (10%)
Refugee status	592	603	→ -2%	Belarus (50%), Russia (21%), Afghanistan (7%)
Subsidiary protection	6,425	4,032	↑ 59%	Ukraine (61%), Belarus (36%), Russia (1%)
Negative	1,563	1,890	↓ -17%	Russia (42%), Belarus (10%), India (6%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Portugal

National developments in 2024



In 2024, the Portuguese Council of Ministers approved an action plan on migration that largely impacted the responsibilities and organisation of the new AIMA,⁶⁹⁷ which became operational at the end of 2023.⁶⁹⁸ One of the objectives of the plan is to ensure sufficient human and technical resources for the agency, allowing for the establishment of efficient procedures. To this end, AIMA plans to maximise its staff attendance in the accredited training offered by the EUAA. In order to speed up the processing of current cases, the organisation signed an agreement with the Portuguese Bar Association and the Order of Solicitors and Enforcement Agents to provide legal support in case processing and promote an exchange of knowledge and practices.⁶⁹⁹

Several legislative pieces were issued throughout the year to clarify the roles and specific tasks of various organisations, adopt their structures and appoint management; however, the asylum procedure itself was not amended and the same rules continued to apply.

With an increase in the number of applicants in recent years, issues with reception capacity emerged. A civil society organisation, Santa Casa Misericórdia de Lisboa, noted the need for structural solutions,⁷⁰⁰ and national authorities identified this as a focus area in the National Implementation Plan for the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Despite the challenges in reception, resettlement activities restarted, and AIMA signed a new agreement with the IOM for a project until 2026. The agency reconfirmed its commitment to resettle 600 refugees currently residing in Türkiye and Egypt.⁷⁰¹

A particular challenge emerged related to the validity of residence permit documents for foreigners, including for applicants and beneficiaries of international protection. According to a law adopted at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, residence permits that expired after 22 February 2020 must be accepted until 30 June 2025, and even after this date, if there is proof of an appointment for a renewal.⁷⁰² However, the Ombudsperson's Office received several complaints that public service employees were not aware of this law and residence permits were not accepted, which led to a sudden increase in AIMA's workload. The Ombudsperson reiterated the need for better dissemination of information on this rule in the public service.⁷⁰³

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Jesuit Refugee Service Europe](#)
- [Portuguese Refugee Council | Conselho Portugues para os Refugiados](#)
- [Santa Casa Misericórdia de Lisboa](#)

Portugal

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications
18

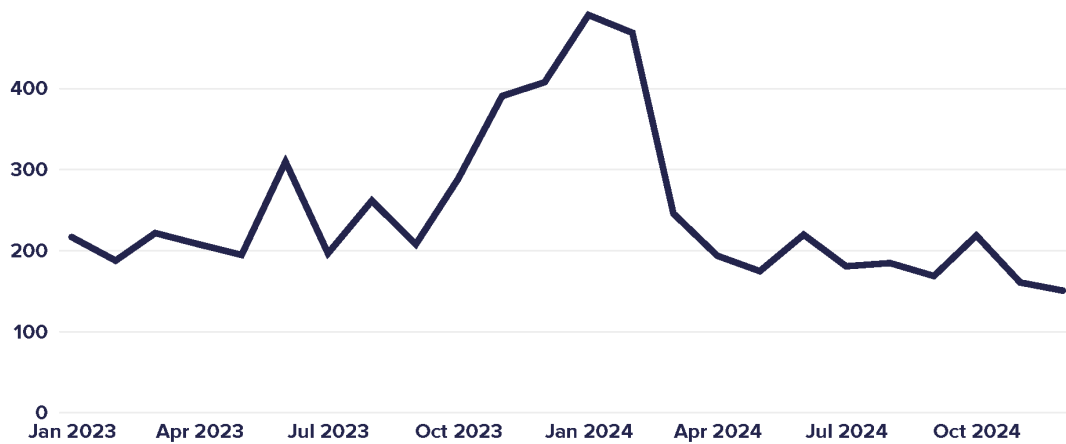
Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)
24

Share of applications
in EU+
0.3%

Recognition
rate
n.a.

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	2,849	3,083 ↓	-8%	Senegal (15%), The Gambia (14%), Colombia (9%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	129	363 ↓	-64%	Venezuela (18%), China (17%), Angola (12%)
First instance decisions	785	408 ↑	92%	Senegal (29%), The Gambia (13%), Angola (9%)
Refugee status		277	n.a.	
Negative	785	131 ↑	499%	Senegal (29%), The Gambia (13%), Angola (9%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024





Romania

National developments in 2024



Romania registered a marked decrease in the number of applications for international protection in 2024. Still, a needs assessment exercise indicated the need for continued support by EUAA in 2024 as well, focusing on effective implementation of temporary protection, enhanced capacity for the processing of asylum applications and enhanced capacity to provide reception conditions in line with the CEAS.⁷⁰⁴ In this framework, for example, Romania increased its reception capacity, as modular buildings from 71 containers were installed in the reception centres in Maramureş, Rădăuţi and Galaţi.⁷⁰⁵ Regarding the quality of reception conditions, the Ombudsperson visited the accommodation centres in Giurgiu,⁷⁰⁶ Maramureş⁷⁰⁷ and Rădăuţi⁷⁰⁸ in 2024 and provided recommendations related to adequate access for persons with disabilities, building maintenance, recruiting medical personnel and optimising sanitary services.

While no further major changes impacted the asylum procedure or the reception system, amendments touched upon the area of return, relocation and temporary protection. Legislative amendments in March 2024 changed the time limit to appeal a return decision from 3 days to 10 days. The court examines the appeal within 5 days from the date of its receipt, and the court decision is final.⁷⁰⁹ In addition, Article 3(1) of Government Decision No 1596/2008 concerning the resettlement of refugees to Romania was amended to allow the resettlement of a total of 200 refugees to Romania during 2024-2025.⁷¹⁰

Romania replaced previous provisions on benefits for beneficiaries of temporary protection with Government Emergency Ordinance No 96/2024, which focuses on their integration and granting financial support to cover accommodation and food expenses for a determined period of time, as well as granting access to the national social protection system, social benefits and public services.⁷¹¹ Romania also issued Government Decision No 505 of 16 May 2024 which modified the issuance of residence permits based on temporary protection.⁷¹² The permits now include an additional line on the address of the person: either a full address or only the municipality and the county when there is no proof of address .

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Save the Children Romania | Salvati Copiii România](#)



Romania

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

19

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

25

Share of applications
in EU+

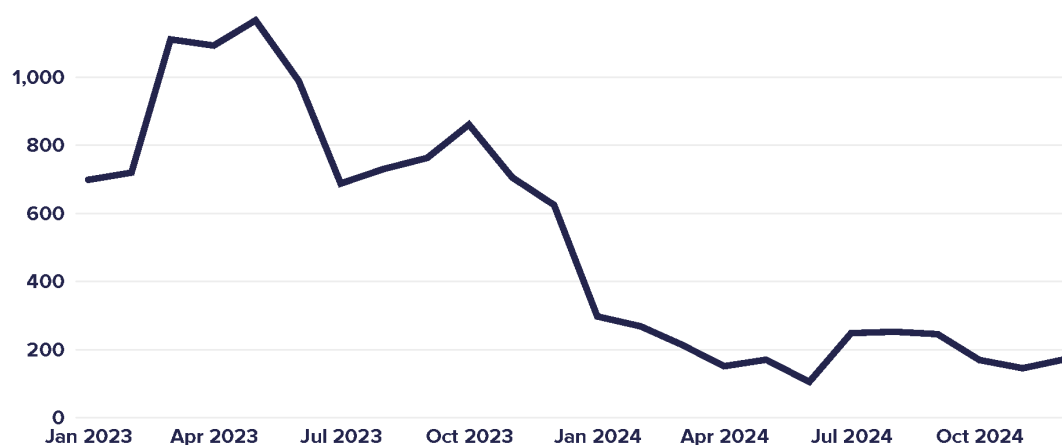
0.2%

Recognition
rate

37%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	2,424	10,129 ↓	-76%	Syria (33%), Iraq (10%), Nepal (9%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	166	1,062 ↓	-84%	Syria (50%), Iraq (21%), Sudan (4%)
First instance decisions	1,822	5,327 ↓	-66%	Syria (29%), Nepal (9%), Palestine (8%)
Refugee status	225	455 ↓	-51%	Palestine (36%), Somalia (27%), Syria (11%)
Subsidiary protection	441	421 ➡	5%	Syria (53%), Sudan (18%), Palestine (14%)
Negative	1,156	4,451 ↓	-74%	Syria (24%), Nepal (15%), Bangladesh (8%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Slovakia

National developments in 2024



While receiving a small number of applicants for international protection, ranking second last among EU+ countries, Slovakia hosted more than 130,000 beneficiaries of temporary protection by the end of 2024. To this end, developments focused on managing the needs of displaced persons from Ukraine, but initiatives were also taken toward improving services in asylum and reception.

Slovakia invested in expanding the qualifications of case officers through training and professional development, in particular when dealing with survivors of human trafficking. To ensure that applicants fully understand their rights and obligations and make informed decisions throughout the asylum process, interpreters were trained and information material was simplified. In November 2024, legislative amendments extended the scope of legal aid offered by the Centre for Legal Aid in asylum matters and made it more accessible to people with low income, including applicants for international protection, by amending the calculation for sufficient means.⁷¹³

Efforts to increase the availability and quality of services in reception continued. The Ministry of the Interior concluded an agreement with the Slovak Humanitarian Council to provide supplementary care to applicants in reception and integration support to beneficiaries of protection.⁷¹⁴ The ministry also signed a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR for the provision of material aid to people in reception, including displaced persons from Ukraine. The memorandum also foresees expertise-sharing and enhanced technical cooperation with a view to expanding capacity of the international protection system in Slovakia to respond to evolving pressures.⁷¹⁵ At the same time, renovations and reconstruction in a number of accommodation centres aimed to improve the living conditions of applicants.

To facilitate a coordinated multi-sector response to the arrival of displaced persons from Ukraine, the Ministry of the Interior and UNHCR developed a dedicated response plan. The goal was to enable actors from different sectors to support the government's efforts by providing complementary assistance in areas such as the protection of vulnerable groups, education, healthcare, mental health and psychological services.⁷¹⁶ Following the amendment of the Act on Asylum, beneficiaries of temporary protection are offered accommodation for a maximum of 120 days, with the exception of people with vulnerabilities who can stay in reception facilities beyond this time. The government allowance for property owners who hosted displaced Ukrainians was reduced to 120 days.⁷¹⁷ The amendment also simplified the procedure to grant temporary protection to newborns. In October 2024, the humanitarian centre in Gabčíkovo, which hosted displaced persons from Ukraine, was closed, while newly-arriving persons from Ukraine were entitled to accommodation in other reception facilities, along with asylum applicants.

More input from civil society:

- [Slovak National Centre for Human Rights | Slovenské národné stredisko pre ľudské práva](#)

Slovakia

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

28

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

28

Share of applications
in EU+

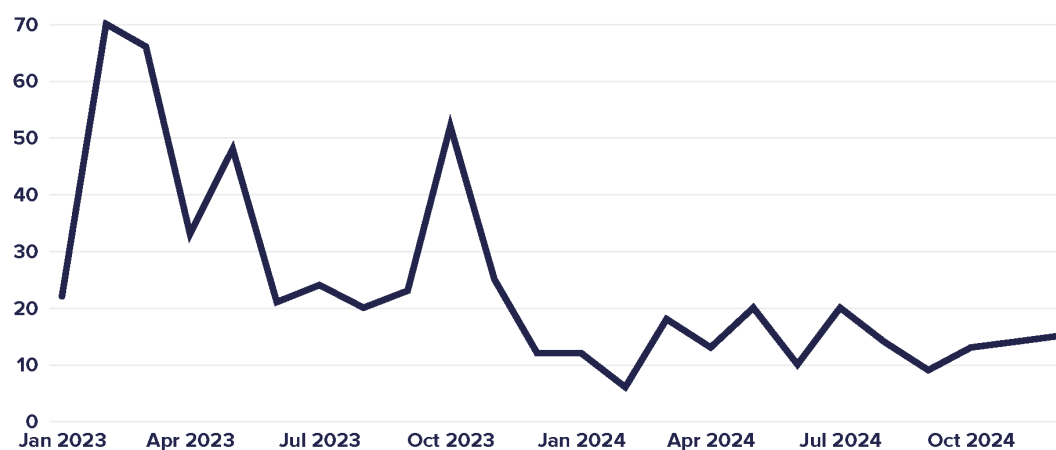
0.0%

Recognition
rate

49%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	164	416 ↓	-61%	Ukraine (18%), Afghanistan (12%), Belarus (10%)
First instance decisions	124	163 ↓	-24%	Afghanistan (16%), Ukraine (10%), Morocco (8%)
Refugee status	39	32 ↑	22%	Afghanistan (38%), Belarus (21%), Morocco (10%)
Subsidiary protection	22	38 ↓	-42%	Ukraine (45%), Syria (36%), Afghanistan (9%)
Negative	63	93 ↓	-32%	Germany (16%), Türkiye (11%), Russia (10%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Slovenia

National developments in 2024



Slovenia continued with initiatives from previous years and amended laws, policies and practices to adapt to the changing realities of asylum. While there was a slight drop in the number of applications in 2024, the volume overall has been high in recent years.

The government adopted a strategy in the field of migration, which also covers international protection, and consulted with municipalities on establishing reception and registration facilities.⁷¹⁸ The EUAA's operational plan for 2022-2024 was also completed.⁷¹⁹

At the beginning of 2024, authorities planned to set up temporary reception centres at the border with Croatia. However, they were no longer needed as the number of migrants arriving through the route decreased.

While the total number of applications decreased, authorities were faced with a growing number of subsequent applications, including second or third requests for reopening an asylum procedure. The Migration Directorate prioritised cases by vulnerable applicants, unaccompanied children and detained applicants. An upgrade of the main asylum database was also in progress in order to increase the authority's efficiency.

A major legislative development was the entry into force of the 'Decree on the method of ensuring adequate accommodation, care and treatment of unaccompanied minors'. The long-awaited systemic solution was welcomed by the authorities. It entails the obligation to set up an individualised plan for every child, who should have an assigned professional social worker. The implementation of the decree brought some challenges in ensuring that a sufficient number of staff and guardians were available, despite several calls throughout 2024.⁷²⁰

For applicants in detention, the 'Rules on staying in the Foreigners' Centre and issuing a permission to remain was adopted,⁷²¹ but authorities noted that detention was rarely used in 2024.

Slovenia continued to host many Ukrainians under temporary protection. The financial assistance scheme for accommodation was amended, which can now be reduced under certain conditions up to 15% after 2 years following the recognition of temporary protection status.⁷²² In 2024, a new act on temporary protection was in the government coordination phase to simplify the registration process, clarify the relation with international protection and immigration procedures, and harmonise the rights of beneficiaries of temporary protection and international protection. The act was adopted in March 2025 and came into force in April 2025.⁷²³

Slovenia started the preparations for the implementation of the Pact. The government appointed a working group to coordinate and carry out these activities. The National Implementation Plan was sent to the European Commission in December 2024 and was presented in an informal session to NGOs and UNHCR. Among the challenges, the authorities noted the need for significant financial resources to implement the changes, as well as the short time for the drafting of the NIP.

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)

Slovenia

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

15

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

11

Share of applications
in EU+

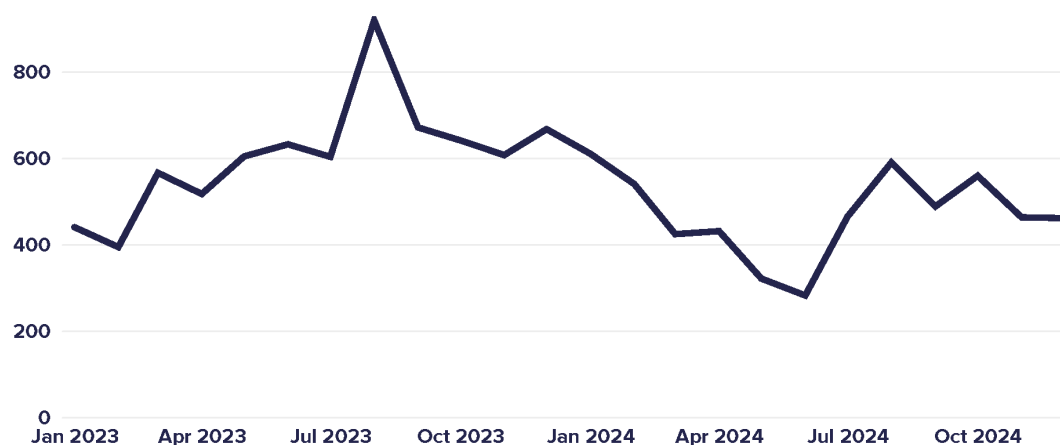
0.6%

Recognition
rate

44%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	5,634	7,261 ↓	-22%	Morocco (63%), Algeria (8%), Afghanistan (7%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	850	1,147 ↓	-26%	Morocco (43%), Ukraine (15%), Algeria (7%)
First instance decisions	410	301 ↑	36%	Morocco (33%), Burundi (13%), Afghanistan (11%)
Refugee status	151	76 ↑	99%	Burundi (36%), Afghanistan (28%), Bangladesh (11%)
Subsidiary protection	31	51 ↓	-39%	Ukraine (97%), Mali (3%)
Negative	228	174 ↑	31%	Morocco (59%), Algeria (14%), Israel (3%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Spain

National developments in 2024



Having received approximately 165,000 applications for international protection in 2024, Spain was among the top receiving countries in Europe, second only to Germany. As a result, the Spanish asylum and reception systems experienced significant pressure with thousands of third-country nationals arriving by sea⁷²⁴ or air.

The increased inflow of applicants caused significant delays in accessing the asylum procedure throughout the country.⁷²⁵ It also affected the border procedure resulting in severe overcrowding of applicants in unsanitary conditions at the Barajas airport in Madrid.⁷²⁶ UNHCR and civil society organisations, as well as the Spanish Ombudsperson, highlighted the concerning situation and requested the authorities to take urgent measures to guarantee the rights of people seeking asylum at the Barajas airport.⁷²⁷ To improve the situation, Spanish authorities took a number of measures, including deploying additional staff, creating a working group to address coordination challenges, training officials and lawyers, and implementing measures to streamline the identification of people and ensure respect of procedural guarantees.

Concerns continued to be expressed about effective access to territory for those seeking protection at the land and sea borders of Ceuta and Melilla.⁷²⁸ On the Canary Islands, facilities operated beyond their capacity and there were challenges with reception conditions, access to information and legal assistance, and the availability of qualified interpreters.⁷²⁹ The Spanish Ombudsperson visited the islands and issued a number of recommendations, particularly on the need to guarantee access to the procedure and adequate reception conditions to unaccompanied minors, whose numbers have been increasing.⁷³⁰ Concerns were also expressed about the long waiting period for applicants to schedule an appointment to officially launch their application.⁷³¹

To improve efficiency, the national authorities took a number of actions in 2024. The Asylum Office was transformed into a Directorate General of International Protection, with more administrative staff and case officers, and an improved organisational structure to streamline processes (including the renewal of documents and administering notifications) and to reduce processing times at first and second instances.⁷³² An increased budget was allocated to support, through concerted action, applicants of international protection and beneficiaries of temporary protection, including funds from the EU.⁷³³ In less than 10 years, the protection system as a whole has gone from 1,500 places in 2015 to 19,000 in 2024, and with a budget of EUR 652 million in 2024, compared to EUR 173 million in 2022.⁷³⁴

A number of initiatives by state authorities and civil society focused on the effective integration of beneficiaries of protection, especially for accessing the labour market and increasing employability, as well as social cohesion and co-existence.⁷³⁵ Steps were also taken to improve protection for people with vulnerabilities, including a new law against trafficking and exploitation of human beings;⁷³⁶ projects aimed at survivors and awareness-raising campaigns on human trafficking and female genital mutilation;⁷³⁷ and projects for the social and labour inclusion of migrants and refugees with disabilities through advice and training.⁷³⁸ Spain was also active in the area of resettlement,⁷³⁹ where, apart from the National Refugee Resettlement Programme,⁷⁴⁰ the Safe Mobility Offices in Central and South America continued promoting safe, orderly, regular and humanitarian-based migration from the region.⁷⁴¹

To prepare for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, Spanish authorities have been working to adapt legislation to the provisions of the Pact, introduce new IT tools to further automate and simplify procedures, and put in place the needed administrative and practical arrangements.

More input from civil society:

- [Convive - Fundación Cepaim](#) | [Convive - Fundación Cepaim](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid](#) | [Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado](#)

Spain

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of asylum applications

2

Rank per capita (applications per 1M inhabitants)

4

Share of applications in EU+

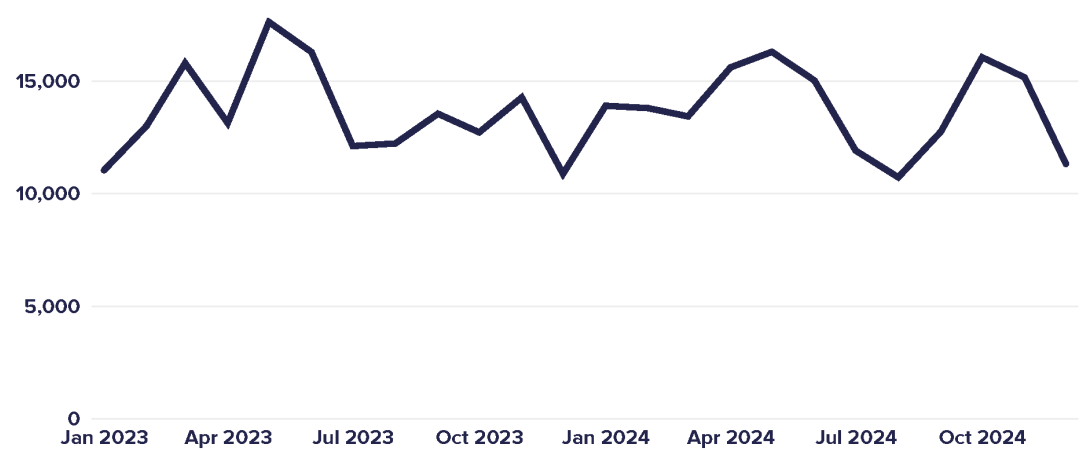
16.3%

Recognition rate

20%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	165,767	162,439 ➡	2%	Venezuela (40%), Colombia (24%), Mali (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	251,540	182,691 ⬆	38%	Colombia (35%), Venezuela (34%), Peru (9%)
First instance decisions	90,093	90,078 ➡	0%	Venezuela (36%), Colombia (20%), Mali (10%)
Refugee status	6,355	7,353 ⬇	-14%	Nicaragua (19%), Syria (16%), Afghanistan (11%)
Subsidiary protection	11,456	3,834 ⬆	199%	Mali (81%), Somalia (7%), Palestine (3%)
Negative	72,282	78,891 ⬇	-8%	Venezuela (45%), Colombia (24%), Peru (8%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Sweden

National developments in 2024



Over the last few years, Sweden's migration and asylum policy have been undergoing a paradigm shift, with intensified efforts to curtail irregular migration. In this context, the SMA requested an increase in the administrative budget in 2025 and 2026 for the examination of applications, implementing political reforms, managing the effects of the war in Ukraine and investing in digitisation and IT security.⁷⁴²

In 2024, Sweden undertook initiatives aimed at ensuring quality, consistency and uniformity of processes.⁷⁴³ To guide case officers and achieve converge in the assessment of applications, a number of legal positions for specific profiles of applicants were produced or updated.⁷⁴⁴ Lifos, the Country of Origin Unit of the SMA, continued to produce or update reports on [Afghanistan](#), [Bangladesh](#), [Belarus](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Gaza](#) and [UNRWA's activities in Gaza](#), Georgia, [Iran](#), [Syria](#), [Tunisia](#), [Türkiye](#) and the [West Bank](#). The SMA updated a legal position on the examination of applications for temporary protection, which included an update on the categories of persons eligible for temporary protection.⁷⁴⁵

An internal review of detention decisions was undertaken. Possible improvements were identified, including optimising the working methodology and the interview protocol to better assess the risk of absconding, as well as improving the cooperation between relevant units (applications, reception and Dublin units).

Following a government inquiry into the reception of applicants for international protection which reviewed existing legislation and proposed measures in the area of reception, amendments to the Reception Act were proposed by the government to support a more efficient asylum process and effective returns by reducing apartment housing in favour of accommodation provided by the SMA.⁷⁴⁶ The proposals aim for applicants to live in accommodation provided by the SMA rather than arranging for their own, and applicants are entitled to financial assistance during the period they reside in the reception centre to which they have been assigned.⁷⁴⁷ New regulations reflecting these changes entered into force in March 2025.⁷⁴⁸ In October 2024, the inquiry proposed further amendments to the reception legislation, including additional measures to support a more efficient asylum and return process.⁷⁴⁹

The number of implemented returns increased with the SMA, the police and the Prison and Probation Service working together in one operation centre, resulting in a smoother handover from one authority to the other and allowed for a more synergistic planning of return operations.⁷⁵⁰ To further streamline returns, in January 2025 the government adopted a bill that aims to ensure that more people with a removal order are returned to their country of origin. A removal order will apply for 5 years from the date a third-country national leaves the country or longer if a re-entry ban is in force, which may be issued if a third-country national does not leave the country by the indicated deadline.⁷⁵¹

The current asylum system is considered a solid basis for the implementation of the new regulatory framework of the Pact on Migration and Asylum. Nonetheless, new arrangements will be required for screening, border procedures and the new Eurodac system. An ongoing inquiry is reviewing the need for legislative changes, including questions related to fundamental rights monitoring mechanisms. Consultations with civil society organisations have been held to reflect on their role in the new processes.⁷⁵²

More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Rights](#) | Riksförbundet för homosexuella, bisexuella, transpersoners, queeras och intersexpersoners rättigheter; & [Queer Youth Sweden](#) | RFSL Ungdom
- [Swedish Network of Refugees Support Group](#) | Flyktinggruppernas Riksråd
- [Swedish Refugee Law Center](#) | Asylrättscentrum

Sweden

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

13

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

15

Share of applications
in EU+

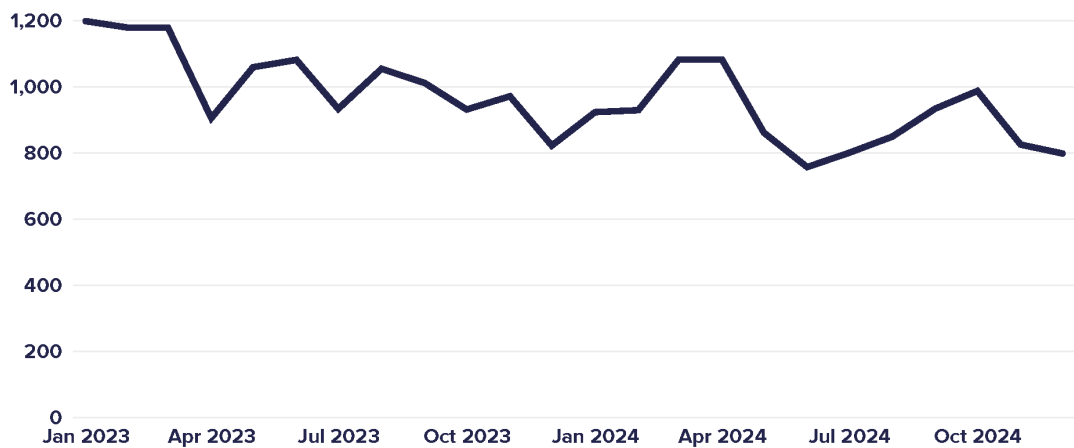
1.1%

Recognition
rate

23%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	10,815	12,309 ↓	-12%	Syria (10%), Afghanistan (8%), Iraq (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	3,812	5,189 ↓	-27%	Syria (17%), Afghanistan (8%), Iran (7%)
First instance decisions	7,049	11,155 ↓	-37%	Afghanistan (9%), Syria (8%), Iraq (7%)
Refugee status	1,091	1,982 ↓	-45%	Afghanistan (24%), Syria (13%), Eritrea (11%)
Subsidiary protection	503	570 ↓	-12%	Syria (55%), Palestine (8%), Afghanistan (7%)
Negative	5,455	8,603 ↓	-37%	Uzbekistan (9%), Iraq (8%), Afghanistan (7%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



Switzerland

National developments in 2024



A high number of applications over the past years have led to an increase in spending on asylum, which is expected to rise in the coming years particularly in the areas of social assistance and integration.⁷⁵³

In May 2024, the Federal Council took note of a package of measures to reduce costs in the area of asylum and optimise available resources. The aim is to save around CHF 700 million by 2028 by reducing the number of pending cases, speeding up procedures and increasing the employment rate among beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine. In parallel, 5 years after the restructuring of the asylum sector, the Confederation, the cantons, cities and municipalities have been working together on a comprehensive asylum strategy taking account of the lessons learned. Key objectives are the implementation of fast and fair asylum procedures, the dignified accommodation of people seeking protection, and the quick and systematic returns of people not entitled to protection.⁷⁵⁴ With regard to border management, eight authorities at various levels of the federalist system that are responsible for controlling the country's external Schengen borders drew up the new Integrated Border Management Strategy to increase efficiency and improve coordination.⁷⁵⁵

At the beginning of 2024, the situation in the asylum centre in Chiasso, Ticino was critical due to the high occupancy rate and reported security concerns. To relieve the asylum workload and pressure in reception, the so-called 24-hour procedure, which had been tested on a small scale in Zurich, was extended to all regions.⁷⁵⁶ The aim of the procedure is to deal with asylum applications that have low chances of success in the shortest possible time. To achieve this, the essential steps of the procedure are carried out within 24 hours, including registration, fingerprinting, the first medical consultation, claimed grounds for protection or the Dublin interview, the application to other Dublin states and the decision in the Dublin procedure or asylum procedure.⁷⁵⁷ Civil society organisations remarked that the particularly short deadlines make it difficult for legal representatives to provide adequate assistance and support to the applicants.⁷⁵⁸

Responding to concerns about security incidents and a growing feeling of insecurity among the population, the authorities held roundtable consultations with local stakeholders in different cantons and introduced measures, such as external patrols and mediation programmes, to increase security in and around reception facilities.⁷⁵⁹ In addition, efforts were made to improve security in reception facilities and address recidivism of repeat offenders among asylum applicants and beneficiaries.⁷⁶⁰ In October 2024, SEM announced that places in nine temporary reception facilities would be put on hold as the number of applications was lower than expected.⁷⁶¹

Efforts were made to further integrate foreigners, including refugees and beneficiaries of temporary protection from Ukraine, into the labour market through increased awareness among employers and jobseekers, the recognition of diplomas and the assessment of skills, and simplifying the process for temporary residence permit holders to change cantons for work-related purposes.⁷⁶²

Switzerland continued contributing to the effective management of migration across Europe by providing assistance to certain EU Member States. The framework credit for migration amounts to CHF 200 million. The partner states are selected on the basis of criteria that reflect the scale of migration pressure, the structural needs in the country and Switzerland's interests. Thematic areas that can be supported include asylum procedures, infrastructure, assisted voluntary returns and reintegration, and integration measures.⁷⁶³

Throughout 2024, Switzerland undertook steps to implement its commitments in view of the Pact on Migration and Asylum by reviewing national legislation and identifying needed amendments, including through consultations with civil society and relevant stakeholders.⁷⁶⁴

More input from civil society:

- [Asylex](#)
- [Swiss Refugee Council | Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe | Organisation suisse d'aide aux réfugiés](#)

Switzerland

Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of
asylum applications

8

Rank per capita (applications
per 1M inhabitants)

7

Share of applications
in EU+

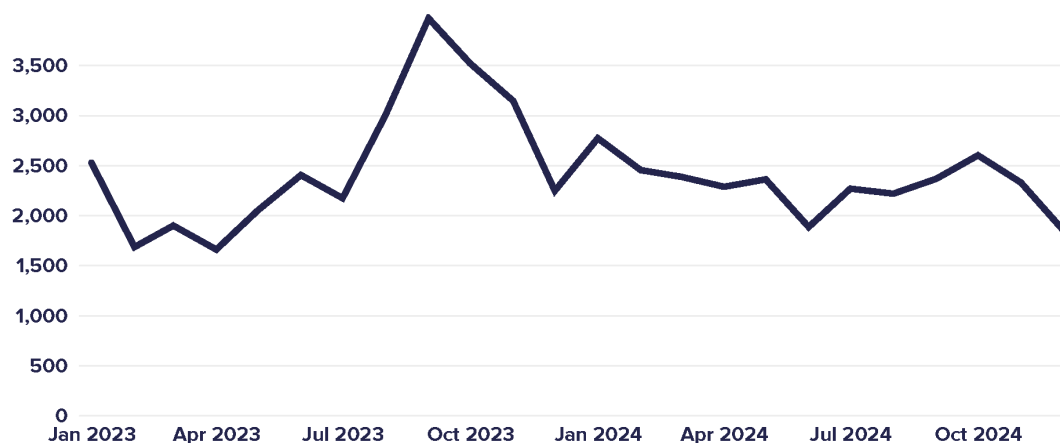
2.7%

Recognition
rate

66%

Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	27,740	30,238 ↓	-8%	Afghanistan (31%), Türkiye (15%), Algeria (8%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	11,921	15,567 ↓	-23%	Türkiye (33%), Afghanistan (10%), İran (5%)
First instance decisions	25,007	17,000 ↑	47%	Afghanistan (41%), Türkiye (21%), Eritrea (8%)
Refugee status	10,390	6,348 ↑	64%	Afghanistan (55%), Türkiye (19%), Eritrea (12%)
Subsidiary protection	6,060	6,689 ↓	-9%	Afghanistan (60%), Syria (9%), Eritrea (6%)
Negative	8,557	3,963 ↑	116%	Türkiye (36%), Afghanistan (12%), Algeria (5%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024





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⁷³⁵ Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration | Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones. (2024, August 6). [Inclusión subvenciona con más de 25 millones de euros actuaciones de defensa de los derechos humanos y que favorecen la convivencia y cohesión social](#) [Inclusion subsidizes with more than 25 million euros actions that defend human rights and promote coexistence and social cohesion]. Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration | Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones. (2024, October 28). [El Ministerio de Migraciones impulsa programas de formación y empleabilidad con cinco multinacionales para solicitantes de protección internacional](#) [The Ministry of Migration promotes training and employability programs with five multinationals for applicants for international protection]. European Website on Integration. (2024, March 11). [Spain: Support and self-empowerment for migrant mothers](#). Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid | Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado. (2024, September 13). [‘Planeta Empleo. Por un refugio sostenible’, el proyecto de inserción sociolaboral y sostenible de CEAR en Sevilla](#) [‘Planet Employment. For a Sustainable Asylum,’ CEAR's sustainable social and labour integration project in Seville].

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⁷³⁸ Accem. (2024, November 13). [Accem y Fundación ONCE se unen para fomentar la inclusión laboral de las personas migrantes y refugiadas con discapacidad](#) [Accem and ONCE Foundation join forces to promote the labour inclusion of migrants and refugees with disabilities]. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2024, December 11). [ACNUR, Fundación ONCE y CERMI se unen para visibilizar las necesidades de las personas refugiadas con discapacidad en España](#) [UNHCR, the ONCE Foundation, and CERMI join forces to highlight the needs of refugees with disabilities in Spain].

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⁷⁴² Swedish Migration Agency | Migrationsverket. (2024, March 1). [Migrationsverket föreslår utökad förvaltningsanslag](#) [The Swedish Migration Agency proposes increased administrative funding].

⁷⁴³ Swedish Agency for Public Management | Statskoret. (2024, October 7). [Många öar små – Migrationsverkets styrning och uppföljning av den rättsliga kvaliteten i asylprocessen](#) [Many small islands - The Swedish Migration Agency's management and follow-up of the legal quality in the asylum process].

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⁷⁴⁷ Swedish Parliament | Sveriges Riksdag. (2025, January 29). [New procedures for asylum seekers' accommodation.](#) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2025, January 15). [UNHCR Observations on the Legislative Proposals in the Final Report "The Reception Act: A New Law for the Organized Reception of Asylum-seekers and Efficient Returns"](#).

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⁷⁵³ State Secretariat for Migration | Staatssekretariat für Migration | Secrétariat d'État aux migrations | Segreteria di Stato della migrazione. (2024, June 10). [Un train de mesures pour réduire les coûts dans le domaine de l'asile](#) [A package of measures to reduce costs in the area of asylum].

⁷⁵⁴ State Secretariat for Migration | Staatssekretariat für Migration | Secrétariat d'État aux migrations | Segreteria di Stato della migrazione. (2024, November 21). [Le comité de pilotage met à jour la stratégie globale en matière d'asile](#) [The steering committee updates global asylum strategy].

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⁷⁵⁸ Swiss Refugee Council | Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe | Organisation suisse d'aide aux réfugiés. (2024). [Input to the Asylum Report 2025](#).

⁷⁵⁹ Federal Council | Der Bundesrat | Conseil fédéral | Consiglio federale. (2024, March 20). [Beat Jans visite le centre pour requérants d'asile de Boudry](#) [Beat Jans visits the asylum seekers' centre in Boudry]. Federal Council | Der Bundesrat | Conseil fédéral | Consiglio federale. (2024, April 24). [Le Conseil fédéral adopte le message visant à renforcer la sécurité au sein des centres fédéraux pour requérants d'asile](#) [Federal Council adopts message to strengthen security in federal asylum centres].

⁷⁶⁰ Federal Council | Der Bundesrat | Conseil fédéral | Consiglio federale. (2024, May 10). [Les mesures visant à désengorger le système de l'asile font leurs preuves](#) [Measures to ease the pressure on the asylum system are proving effective].

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Reader's guide

Legal basis

The *EUAA Asylum Report: Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union* is produced in accordance with the EUAA Regulation, Articles 69, 16(4), 20(7), 35(6), 50(5b) and 51(10).

The production process follows the methodology and basic principles agreed by the Agency's Management Board in 2013. A draft of the report is disseminated to the Management Board for their comments prior to its formal adoption and public launch.

Qualitative information

Primary factual information presented in the report is collected by the EUAA throughout the year in the framework of its the information management activities organised around the EUAA [Information and Documentation System](#) (IDS). This involves desk research on developments related to each step of the asylum procedure and the validation of the information by representatives of national authorities.

The European Commission was consulted during the drafting process. In accordance with its role under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Article 35, which is reflected in EU Treaties and the asylum *acquis* instruments, UNHCR was also consulted during the drafting process, and public information produced by its experts were included in the report.

An open call for contributions was launched to members of the Agency's Consultative Forum and other civil society organisations to share relevant publications and information on their work which is relevant to the functioning of CEAS.

The Asylum Report covers the period 1 January to 31 December but also refers to relevant developments in the year of writing.

Quantitative information

Quantitative information is gathered through the EUAA's [\(EPS\) data exchange](#), which comprises data collected from EU+ countries on a monthly basis (Iceland and Liechtenstein do not presently take part in the EPS data exchange). The data are submitted by ministries and national administrations, in the framework of the EUAA Regulation, Articles 5 and 6.

The data shared with the EUAA by EU+ countries are provisional and unvalidated, and therefore may differ from validated data submitted at a later date to Eurostat, according to Regulation (EU) 2020/851 amending Regulation (EC) 862/2007.

The EPS data published in this report were extracted on 3 February 2025 and may have been subsequently updated.

Editions prior to 2024 of this report are primarily based on data collected by Eurostat in the context of Regulation (EU) 2020/851 amending Regulation (EC) 862/2007. As such, the figures presented in the reports pre- and post-2024 are not fully comparable.

Accompanying products to the Asylum Report 2025

The *Asylum Report* is accompanied by various, user-friendly tools which can be used to filter information which is presented in the report.

The [Executive Summary](#) of the report is translated into all EU+ languages, in addition to Arabic, Turkish and Western Balkan languages.

A [storytelling feature](#) on the EUAA website presents a short summary of the key topics addressed in the main report.

The [National Asylum Developments Database](#) presents the legislative, institutional and policy developments which are described in the report. Updates can be searched by country, topic, year and type of development. The information is also summarised and presented in a table by country and by thematic area in a PDF document.

The report presents a selection of jurisprudential developments based on the [EUAA Case Law Database](#). The hyperlinks within the text will bring readers to the specific case in the database.

The sources used for the production of the *Asylum Report* are presented in the list of references at the end of the report. They are also available in a separate, detailed [Sources on Asylum 2025](#), grouped by type of source.



Annex. Statistical tables

Table A1. Number of asylum applicants in EU+ countries by reporting country and main citizenships, 2023-2024

	2023	2024	Share in EU+	Change from 2023	2024		
					First	Second	Third
Germany	334,109	237,314	23.4% ↓	-29.0%	Syria (31%)	Afghanistan (14%)	Türkiye (13%)
Spain	162,439	165,767	16.3% →	2.0%	Venezuela (40%)	Colombia (24%)	Mali (6.4%)
Italy	136,138	158,867	15.7% ↑	16.7%	Bangladesh (21%)	Peru (9.9%)	Pakistan (7.8%)
France	167,002	158,730	15.6% →	-5.0%	Ukraine (8.6%)	Afghanistan (8.2%)	Haiti (7.6%)
Greece	64,084	73,688	7.3% ↑	15.0%	Syria (30%)	Afghanistan (21%)	Egypt (10%)
Belgium	35,248	39,206	3.9% ↑	11%	Palestine (15%)	Syria (14%)	Afghanistan (9.0%)
Netherlands	39,550	33,437	3.3% ↓	-15.5%	Syria (35%)	Iraq (6.9%)	Türkiye (5.7%)
Switzerland	30,238	27,740	2.7% ↓	-8.3%	Afghanistan (31%)	Türkiye (15%)	Algeria (7.6%)
Austria	58,686	24,941	2.5% ↓	-57.5%	Syria (55%)	Afghanistan (13%)	Türkiye (4.5%)
Ireland	13,278	18,563	1.8% ↑	39.8%	Nigeria (22%)	Jordan (15%)	Pakistan (7.5%)
Poland	9,519	17,038	1.7% ↑	79.0%	Ukraine (41%)	Belarus (23%)	Russia (5.7%)
Bulgaria	22,519	12,412	1.2% ↓	-45%	Syria (62%)	Afghanistan (16%)	Morocco (7.1%)
Sweden	12,309	10,815	1.1% ↓	-12%	Syria (10%)	Afghanistan (8.0%)	Iraq (6.1%)
Cyprus	11,617	6,763	0.7% ↓	-42%	Syria (62%)	Afghanistan (6.4%)	Iran (5.5%)
Slovenia	7,261	5,634	0.6% ↓	-22.4%	Morocco (63%)	Algeria (8.0%)	Afghanistan (6.8%)
Norway	5,348	4,941	0.5% ↓	-7.6%	Syria (43%)	Ukraine (17%)	Eritrea (5.7%)
Finland	5,372	2,948	0.3% ↓	-45.1%	Somalia (13%)	Iraq (9.9%)	Afghanistan (9.3%)
Portugal	3,083	2,849	0.3% ↓	-7.6%	Senegal (15%)	The Gambia (14%)	Colombia (8.7%)
Romania	10,129	2,424	0.2% ↓	-76.1%	Syria (33%)	Iraq (10%)	Nepal (8.7%)
Denmark	2,427	2,307	0.2% →	-4.9%	Syria (20%)	Türkiye (11%)	Eritrea (9.5%)
Luxembourg	2,504	2,197	0.2% ↓	-12%	Eritrea (20%)	Syria (17%)	Algeria (6.3%)
Estonia	3,981	1,351	0.1% ↓	-66.1%	Ukraine (91%)	Russia (3.3%)	Belarus (1.1%)
Croatia	1,747	1,228	0.1% ↓	-30%	Russia (29%)	Syria (16%)	Türkiye (15%)
Czechia	1,397	1,227	0.1% ↓	-12.2%	Uzbekistan (16%)	Ukraine (14%)	Viet Nam (13%)
Latvia	1,701	1,039	0.1% ↓	-39%	Afghanistan (18%)	Tajikistan (16%)	India (13%)
Malta	729	438	0.0% ↓	-40%	Syria (44%)	Colombia (6.4%)	Bangladesh (5.5%)
Lithuania	575	363	0.0% ↓	-37%	Belarus (39%)	Russia (13%)	Ukraine (6.3%)
Slovakia	416	164	0.0% ↓	-61%	Ukraine (18%)	Afghanistan (12%)	Belarus (10%)
Hungary	31	29	0.0% ↓	-6%	Unknown (17%)	Syria (14%)	Nigeria (10%)
EU+	1,143,437	1,014,420	100.0% ↓	-11.3%	Syria (15%)	Afghanistan (8.6%)	Venezuela (7.3%)
Type of applicant					Countries of origin		
First time	1,062,587	928,958	91.6% ↓	13%	Syria (16%)	Afghanistan (8.1%)	Venezuela (7.8%)
Repeated	78,872	84,757	8.4% ↑	7.5%	Afghanistan (14%)	Türkiye (6.9%)	Haiti (6.8%)
Relocated	1978	705	0.1% ↓	64%	Syria (40%)	Afghanistan (22%)	Somalia (10%)
Claimed unaccompanied minors					Countries of origin		
Not UAMs	1,101,442	965,009	95.1% ↓	-12.4%	Syria (14%)	Afghanistan (8.1%)	Venezuela (7.5%)
Claimed UAMs	40,598	32,924	3.2% ↓	-18.9%	Syria (31%)	Afghanistan (14%)	Egypt (8.8%)
Unknown	1,397	16,487	1.6% ↑	1080%	Afghanistan (27%)	Türkiye (14%)	Algeria (7.7%)
Countries of origin					Reporting countries		
Syria	181,269	150,766	14.9% ↓	-16.8%	Germany (49%)	Greece (15%)	Austria (9.1%)
Afghanistan	114,416	87,382	8.6% ↓	-24%	Germany (39%)	Greece (18%)	France (15%)
Venezuela	67,948	73,817	7.3% ↑	8.6%	Spain (90%)	Germany (4.1%)	Italy (3.3%)
Türkiye	100,809	55,705	5.5% ↓	-44.7%	Germany (54%)	France (16%)	Greece (7.7%)
Colombia	63,211	51,529	5.1% ↓	-18.5%	Spain (78%)	Germany (7.5%)	Italy (6.6%)
Bangladesh	40,332	43,236	4.3% ↑	7.2%	Italy (77%)	France (15%)	Ireland (2.3%)
Ukraine	14,469	27,437	2.7% ↑	89.6%	France (50%)	Poland (26%)	Italy (6.1%)
Peru	23,255	27,242	2.7% ↑	17.1%	Italy (58%)	Spain (38%)	France (1.8%)
Egypt	26,514	25,434	2.5% →	-4.1%	Italy (47%)	Greece (30%)	Germany (5.4%)
Morocco	30,924	25,347	2.5% ↓	-18.0%	Italy (41%)	Spain (17%)	Slovenia (14%)
Other	480,290	446,525	44.0% ↓	-7.0%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Notes: Data were not available for Czechia for December 2024. Data of a magnitude of 5 or lower are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Thus, a 0 may not necessarily indicate a real zero value but could also represent a value of 1 or 2.

Table A2. Number of decisions at first instance in EU+ countries by reporting country and main citizenships, 2023-2024

	2023	2024	Share in EU+	Change from 2023	2024		
					First	Second	Third
Germany	218,547	251,043	31.6%	↑ 15%	Syria (33%)	Afghanistan (15%)	Türkiye (14%)
France	132,568	137,789	17.3%	↔ 3.9%	Afghanistan (13%)	Türkiye (7.4%)	Haiti (7.2%)
Spain	90,078	90,093	11.3%	→ 0.0%	Venezuela (36%)	Colombia (20%)	Mali (10%)
Italy	42,972	85,203	10.7%	↑ 98.3%	Bangladesh (20%)	Pakistan (12%)	Egypt (9.2%)
Greece	40,181	55,392	7.0%	↑ 37.9%	Syria (26%)	Afghanistan (25%)	Egypt (7.9%)
Austria	37,161	31,692	4.0%	↓ -15%	Syria (54%)	Afghanistan (11%)	Türkiye (8.2%)
Belgium	25,613	29,135	3.7%	↑ 14%	Afghanistan (16%)	Palestine (12%)	Syria (11%)
Switzerland	17,000	25,007	3.1%	↑ 47.1%	Afghanistan (41%)	Türkiye (21%)	Eritrea (7.7%)
Netherlands	20,134	24,586	3.1%	↑ 22%	Syria (45%)	Türkiye (6.3%)	Eritrea (5.1%)
Cyprus	16,588	13,242	1.7%	↓ -20%	Syria (20%)	Cameroon (15%)	Congo (DR) (14%)
Ireland	8,465	13,113	1.7%	↑ 55%	Georgia (14%)	Nigeria (14%)	Algeria (12%)
Poland	6,525	8,580	1.1%	↑ 31%	Ukraine (47%)	Belarus (32%)	Russia (10%)
Bulgaria	8,739	8,090	1.0%	↓ -7%	Syria (73%)	Morocco (10%)	Iraq (5.0%)
Sweden	11,155	7,049	0.9%	↓ -36.8%	Afghanistan (9.3%)	Syria (8.4%)	Iraq (7.1%)
Norway	2,892	2,622	0.3%	↓ -9%	Syria (37%)	Afghanistan (9.4%)	Eritrea (8.7%)
Romania	5,327	1,822	0.2%	↓ -66%	Syria (29%)	Nepal (9.4%)	Palestine (8.3%)
Finland	1,995	1,763	0.2%	↓ -12%	Somalia (16%)	Syria (11%)	Afghanistan (11%)
Luxembourg	1,242	1,484	0.2%	↑ 19.5%	Syria (42%)	Eritrea (15%)	Afghanistan (7.6%)
Estonia	3,987	1,381	0.2%	↓ -65%	Ukraine (94%)	Russia (2.6%)	Belarus (0.7%)
Czechia	1,338	1,124	0.1%	↓ -16%	Uzbekistan (16%)	Viet Nam (13%)	Ukraine (9.9%)
Denmark	1,360	1,110	0.1%	↓ -18.4%	Syria (30%)	Eritrea (12%)	Afghanistan (9.8%)
Portugal	408	785	0.1%	↑ 92%	Senegal (29%)	The Gambia (13%)	Angola (9.3%)
Latvia	269	670	0.1%	↑ 149%	Afghanistan (14%)	India (13%)	Russia (11%)
Malta	951	471	0.1%	↓ -50%	Syria (39%)	Pakistan (7.4%)	Libya (5.5%)
Slovenia	301	410	0.1%	↑ 36%	Morocco (33%)	Burundi (13%)	Afghanistan (11%)
Lithuania	582	380	0.0%	↓ -35%	Belarus (46%)	Russia (14%)	Tajikistan (5.5%)
Croatia	92	312	0.0%	↑ 239%	Russia (26%)	Burundi (12%)	Türkiye (9.0%)
Slovakia	163	124	0.0%	↓ -23.9%	Afghanistan (16%)	Ukraine (10%)	Morocco (8.1%)
Hungary	35	24	0.0%	↓ -31.4%	Unknown (25%)	Russia (21%)	Viet Nam (8.3%)
EU+	696,668	794,496	100.0%	↑ 14.0%	Syria (19%)	Afghanistan (12%)	Türkiye (7.3%)
Type of applicant					Countries of origin		
First time	511,654	603,501	76.0%	↑ 18.0%	Syria (22%)	Afghanistan (13%)	Türkiye (8.8%)
Unknown	111,022	109,825	13.8%	→ -1.1%	Venezuela (30%)	Colombia (17%)	Syria (9.2%)
Repeated	72,341	79,016	9.9%	↑ 9%	Afghanistan (15%)	Haiti (6.4%)	Türkiye (6.4%)
Relocated	1,651	2154	0.3%	↑ 30%	Afghanistan (28%)	Syria (23%)	Eritrea (12%)
Type of decision					Countries of origin		
Negative	289,723	355,868	44.8%	↑ 22.8%	Türkiye (13%)	Bangladesh (6.3%)	Afghanistan (4.9%)
Refugee	157,866	174,046	21.9%	↑ 10.2%	Afghanistan (29%)	Syria (24%)	Türkiye (5.5%)
Subsidiary	136,200	160,417	20.2%	↑ 18%	Syria (57%)	Ukraine (8.2%)	Mali (7.0%)
Nat. forms of prot.	112,879	104,165	13.1%	↓ -7.7%	Venezuela (32%)	Colombia (17%)	Afghanistan (17%)
Countries of origin					Recognition rate		
Syria	131,639	147,228	18.5%	↑ 12%	Subsidiary (62%)	Refugee (28%)	Negative (8.9%)
Afghanistan	88,624	93,765	11.8%	↑ 5.8%	Refugee (54%)	Nat. form of protectic	Negative (18%)
Türkiye	38,112	58,132	7.3%	↑ 53%	Negative (82%)	Refugee (16%)	Subsidiary (1.1%)
Venezuela	45,118	38,433	4.8%	↓ -15%	Nat. form of protectic	Negative (11%)	Subsidiary (1.8%)
Colombia	20,826	27,522	3.5%	↑ 32%	Nat. form of protectic	Negative (31%)	Refugee (3.6%)
Bangladesh	20,547	26,373	3.3%	↑ 28%	Negative (85%)	Nat. form of protectic	Refugee (2.8%)
Pakistan	18,013	18,684	2.4%	↔ 3.7%	Negative (77%)	Nat. form of protectic	Refugee (6.2%)
Ukraine	10,229	16,874	2.1%	↑ 65.0%	Subsidiary (78%)	Negative (19%)	Refugee (1.8%)
Somalia	14,310	16,297	2.1%	↑ 14%	Refugee (35%)	Negative (33%)	Subsidiary (25%)
Georgia	24,207	16,147	2.0%	↓ -33%	Negative (90%)	Nat. form of protectic	Refugee (2.2%)
Other	285,043	335,041	42.2%	↑ 17.5%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Notes: Data were not available for Czechia for December 2024 and Portugal for October-December 2024. Data of a magnitude of 5 or lower are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Thus, a 0 may not necessarily indicate a real zero value but could also represent a value of 1 or 2.

Table A3. Number of decisions granting refugee status at first instance in EU+ countries by reporting country and main citizenships, 2023-2024

	2023	2024	Share in EU+	Change from 2023	2024		
					First	Top three groups Second	Third
Greece	24,332	39,303	23%	↑ 61.5%	Afghanistan (35%)	Syria (33%)	Palestine (7.9%)
Germany	42,462	37,730	22%	↓ -11.1%	Afghanistan (38%)	Syria (19%)	Türkiye (10%)
France	31,511	29,879	17%	↓ -5%	Afghanistan (34%)	Guinea (7.5%)	China (6.4%)
Austria	14,639	14,640	8.4%	→ 0%	Syria (75%)	Afghanistan (11%)	Somalia (3.3%)
Belgium	11,054	13,823	7.9%	↑ 25%	Palestine (22%)	Syria (18%)	Eritrea (15%)
Switzerland	6,348	10,390	6.0%	↑ 63.7%	Afghanistan (55%)	Türkiye (19%)	Eritrea (12%)
Spain	7,353	6,355	3.7%	↓ -14%	Nicaragua (19%)	Syria (16%)	Afghanistan (11%)
Italy	4,920	6,040	3.5%	↑ 23%	Afghanistan (14%)	Nigeria (11%)	Côte d'Ivoire (8.9%)
Netherlands	3,290	5,259	3.0%	↑ 60%	Syria (55%)	Türkiye (15%)	Iran (4.4%)
Ireland	2,467	3,259	1.9%	↑ 32%	Somalia (25%)	Afghanistan (20%)	Nigeria (7.7%)
Cyprus	755	1,317	0.8%	↑ 74.4%	Palestine (17%)	Afghanistan (14%)	Somalia (11%)
Norway	1,980	1,289	0.7%	↓ -35%	Syria (64%)	Eritrea (8.7%)	Türkiye (7.5%)
Sweden	1,982	1,091	0.6%	↓ -45%	Afghanistan (24%)	Syria (13%)	Eritrea (11%)
Finland	1,084	936	0.5%	↓ -13.7%	Somalia (20%)	Syria (18%)	Afghanistan (17%)
Luxembourg	625	733	0.4%	↑ 17%	Syria (50%)	Eritrea (28%)	Afghanistan (9.1%)
Poland	603	592	0.3%	→ -1.8%	Belarus (50%)	Russia (21%)	Afghanistan (6.6%)
Denmark	855	461	0.3%	↓ -46%	Syria (30%)	Eritrea (25%)	Afghanistan (19%)
Romania	455	225	0.1%	↓ -50.5%	Palestine (36%)	Somalia (27%)	Syria (11%)
Lithuania	403	163	0.1%	↓ -60%	Belarus (67%)	Russia (15%)	Tajikistan (4.9%)
Slovenia	76	151	0.1%	↑ 99%	Burundi (36%)	Afghanistan (28%)	Bangladesh (11%)
Latvia	82	109	0.1%	↑ 32.9%	Afghanistan (62%)	Russia (20%)	Belarus (13%)
Croatia	30	61	0.0%	↑ 103%	Syria (23%)	Russia (18%)	Cameroon (11%)
Bulgaria	107	56	0.0%	↓ -48%	Syria (43%)	Russia (32%)	Stateless (8.9%)
Czechia	56	53	0.0%	↓ -5.4%	Myanmar/Burma (42%)	Russia (25%)	Belarus (15%)
Malta	18	50	0.0%	↑ 178%	Palestine (18%)	Syria (16%)	Iran (14%)
Slovakia	32	39	0.0%	↑ 22%	Afghanistan (38%)	Belarus (21%)	Morocco (10%)
Estonia	59	34	0.0%	↓ -42%	Russia (41%)	Belarus (21%)	Türkiye (15%)
Hungary	11	8	0.0%	↓ -27.3%	Russia (50%)	Unknown (25%)	Poland (13%)
Portugal	277	:		n.a.			
EU+	157,866	174,046	100%	↑ 10.2%	Afghanistan (29%)	Syria (24%)	Türkiye (5.5%)
Type of applicant					Countries of origin		
First time applicant	141,523	155,249	89%	↑ 9.7%	Afghanistan (28%)	Syria (25%)	Türkiye (5.9%)
Repeated applicant	7,035	10,192	5.9%	↑ 44.9%	Afghanistan (59%)	Iran (5.5%)	Syria (4.5%)
Unknown	8,215	7,728	4.4%	↓ -6%	Nicaragua (15%)	Syria (14%)	Afghanistan (12%)
Relocated applicant	1,093	877	0.5%	↓ -20%	Afghanistan (56%)	Syria (23%)	Eritrea (6.4%)
Countries of origin					Reporting countries		
Afghanistan	44,393	50,617	29%	↑ 14%	Germany (28%)	Greece (27%)	France (20%)
Syria	33,333	41,302	24%	↑ 24%	Greece (32%)	Austria (26%)	Germany (17%)
Türkiye	8,837	9,487	5.5%	↑ 7.4%	Germany (42%)	Switzerland (21%)	France (15%)
Eritrea	8,114	9,086	5.2%	↑ 12.0%	Germany (25%)	Greece (23%)	Belgium (23%)
Palestine	7,529	7,319	4.2%	↓ -3%	Greece (42%)	Belgium (42%)	Italy (4.6%)
Somalia	5,379	5,699	3.3%	↑ 6%	Germany (32%)	Ireland (14%)	Greece (14%)
Iran	3,692	4,074	2.3%	↑ 10.3%	Germany (50%)	France (10%)	Belgium (7.6%)
Iraq	8,060	3,853	2.2%	↓ -52%	Germany (44%)	Greece (36%)	Italy (3.7%)
Guinea	2,520	3,145	1.8%	↑ 25%	France (71%)	Germany (14%)	Belgium (5.5%)
Côte d'Ivoire	2,083	2,402	1.4%	↑ 15.3%	France (71%)	Italy (22%)	Spain (2.9%)
Other	33,926	37,062	21%	↑ 9.2%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Notes: Data on first instance decisions were not available for Czechia for December 2024 and Portugal for October-December 2024. Data of a magnitude of 5 or lower are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Thus, a 0 may not necessarily indicate a real zero value but could also represent a value of 1 or 2.

Table A4. Number of decisions granting subsidiary protection at first instance in EU+ countries by reporting country and main citizenships, 2023-2024

	2023	2024	Share in EU+	Change from 2023	2024		
					First	Top three groups	Third
						Second	
Germany	71,213	75,026	47%	↑	5% Syria (94%)	Afghanistan (1.0%)	Sudan (0.8%)
France	10,141	22,153	14%	↑	118% Haiti (32%)	Ukraine (30%)	Afghanistan (8.3%)
Spain	3,834	11,456	7.1%	↑	199% Mali (81%)	Somalia (7.2%)	Palestine (2.8%)
Italy	6,519	10,372	6.5%	↑	59% Burkina Faso (33%)	Mali (17%)	Pakistan (8.3%)
Netherlands	10,469	9,905	6.2%	↓	-5% Syria (73%)	Eritrea (10%)	Yemen (5.6%)
Austria	8,213	7,438	4.6%	↓	-9% Syria (71%)	Afghanistan (14%)	Somalia (7.7%)
Poland	4,032	6,425	4.0%	↑	59.4% Ukraine (61%)	Belarus (36%)	Russia (1.2%)
Switzerland	6,689	6,060	3.8%	↓	-9% Afghanistan (60%)	Syria (9.1%)	Eritrea (6.2%)
Bulgaria	5,682	4,894	3.1%	↓	-14% Syria (97%)	Stateless (1.3%)	Afghanistan (0.7%)
Cyprus	2,308	2,467	1.5%	↑	7% Syria (71%)	Somalia (15%)	Cameroon (5.9%)
Estonia	3,805	1,294	0.8%	↓	-66% Ukraine (100%)	Syria (0.2%)	
Belgium	382	512	0.3%	↑	34% Yemen (44%)	Syria (31%)	Sudan (4.7%)
Sweden	570	503	0.3%	↓	-11.8% Syria (55%)	Palestine (8.0%)	Afghanistan (7.0%)
Romania	421	441	0.3%	↔	5% Syria (53%)	Sudan (18%)	Palestine (14%)
Greece	590	296	0.2%	↓	-49.8% Ukraine (22%)	Somalia (18%)	Mali (12%)
Ireland	242	288	0.2%	↑	19.0% Somalia (35%)	Afghanistan (17%)	Sudan (14%)
Luxembourg	252	221	0.1%	↓	-12.3% Syria (87%)	Türkiye (4.1%)	Ukraine (3.2%)
Czechia	253	141	0.1%	↓	-44% Ukraine (60%)	Syria (13%)	Afghanistan (5.7%)
Malta	243	140	0.1%	↓	-42% Syria (89%)	Eritrea (5.0%)	Ukraine (2.1%)
Norway	120	131	0.1%	↑	9% Afghanistan (40%)	Yemen (15%)	Sudan (9.9%)
Latvia	36	87	0.1%	↑	141.7% Syria (33%)	Afghanistan (33%)	Ukraine (9.2%)
Finland	70	74	0.0%	↑	6% Syria (31%)	Yemen (19%)	Somalia (19%)
Slovenia	51	31	0.0%	↓	-39% Ukraine (97%)	Mali (3.2%)	
Slovakia	38	22	0.0%	↓	-42% Ukraine (45%)	Syria (36%)	Afghanistan (9.1%)
Denmark	14	18	0.0%	↑	29% Syria (50%)	Eritrea (28%)	Iran (11%)
Lithuania	0	12	0.0%		n.a. Syria (50%)	South Sudan (17%)	Mali (17%)
Hungary	11	6	0.0%	↓	-45% Unknown (67%)	Sudan (17%)	Iran (17%)
Croatia	0	5	0.0%		n.a. Palestine (75%)	Russia (25%)	
Portugal	:	:					
EU+	136,198	160,418	100%	↑	18% Syria (57%)	Ukraine (8.2%)	Mali (7.0%)
Type of applicant					Countries of origin		
First time applicant	121,478	135,191	84%	↑	11.3% Syria (62%)	Ukraine (9.4%)	Afghanistan (5.8%)
Unknown	11,824	18,817	12%	↑	59.1% Mali (50%)	Syria (36%)	Somalia (6.4%)
Repeated applicant	2,662	5,920	3.7%	↑	122% Haiti (53%)	Syria (10%)	Afghanistan (6.7%)
Relocated applicant	236	489	0.3%	↑	107% Syria (56%)	Sudan (26%)	Iraq (6.5%)
Countries of origin					Reporting countries		
Syria	89,698	91,861	57%	→	2% Germany (77%)	Netherlands (7.8%)	Austria (5.8%)
Ukraine	8,997	13,156	8.2%	↑	46% France (51%)	Poland (30%)	Estonia (9.8%)
Mali	3,127	11,206	7.0%	↑	258% Spain (83%)	Italy (16%)	France (0.6%)
Afghanistan	9,830	8,419	5.2%	↓	-14.4% Switzerland (43%)	France (22%)	Austria (13%)
Haiti	1,074	7,200	4.5%	↑	570% France (99%)	Spain (0.6%)	Greece (0.3%)
Somalia	3,628	4,060	2.5%	↑	12% Spain (20%)	France (19%)	Austria (14%)
Burkina Faso	588	3,633	2.3%	↑	517.9% Italy (95%)	Spain (3.7%)	France (0.8%)
Sudan	1,071	2,641	1.6%	↑	147% France (49%)	Germany (23%)	Spain (9.4%)
Belarus	2,675	2,307	1.4%	↓	-14% Poland (100%)	Czechia (0.3%)	Germany (0.1%)
Eritrea	1,713	2,036	1.3%	↑	19% Netherlands (51%)	Germany (25%)	Switzerland (19%)
Other	13,797	13,899	8.7%	→	1% Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Notes: Data on first instance decisions were not available for Czechia for December 2024 and Portugal for October-December 2024. Data of a magnitude of 5 or lower are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Thus, a 0 may not necessarily indicate a real zero value but could also represent a value of 1 or 2.

Table A5. Recognition rate (RR) at first instance for selected citizenships (Top 30), 2023-2024

	2023		2024	
	Decisions	RR	Decisions	RR
Countries of origin				
Syria	131,639	93%	147,228	90%
Ukraine	10,229	91%	16,874	80%
Eritrea	11,840	83%	13,634	82%
Mali	5,598	69%	14,162	84%
Palestine	8,990	87%	8,701	91%
Somalia	14,310	63%	16,297	60%
Afghanistan	88,624	61%	93,765	63%
Sudan	3,869	66%	6,340	74%
Iran	8,730	46%	10,832	40%
Türkiye	38,112	25%	58,132	17%
Guinea	9,242	30%	12,915	27%
Iraq	21,491	44%	16,053	31%
Russia	10,343	32%	11,598	23%
Côte d'Ivoire	9,154	26%	12,293	23%
Congo (DR)	11,496	24%	12,672	25%
Cameroon	4,496	24%	6,802	23%
Haiti	3,689	38%	10,043	74%
Nigeria	14,522	13%	14,051	14%
Senegal	3,966	16%	5,936	9%
Pakistan	18,013	11%	18,684	11%
Algeria	5,216	7%	7,312	6%
Egypt	7,537	6%	15,616	4%
Colombia	20,826	7%	27,522	5%
Peru	5,437	5%	8,816	4%
Albania	9,169	7%	6,486	5%
Morocco	17,359	5%	14,780	4%
Georgia	24,207	4%	16,147	4%
Bangladesh	20,547	5%	26,373	4%
Venezuela	45,118	3%	38,433	3%
Tunisia	6,032	5%	10,375	4%
Other	106,867	24%	115,624	27%

Notes: Data on first instance decisions were not available for Czechia for December 2024 and Portugal for October-December 2024.

Table A6. Withdrawn applications in EU+ countries by reporting country and main citizenships, 2023-2024

	2023	2024	Share in EU+	Change from 2023	2024		
					First	Second	Third
Greece	11,254	20,900	19.7%	↑ 86%	Syria (43%)	Türkiye (21%)	Egypt (6.8%)
Germany	12,165	19,055	18.0%	↑ 57%	Türkiye (32%)	Syria (6.5%)	Afghanistan (5.6%)
Italy	6,986	10,003	9.5%	↑ 43%	Egypt (21%)	Pakistan (16%)	Bangladesh (12%)
Croatia	2,277	8,298	7.8%	↑ 264%	Syria (24%)	Türkiye (21%)	Russia (15%)
Bulgaria	16,394	7,442	7.0%	↓ -54.6%	Syria (59%)	Afghanistan (27%)	Egypt (6.4%)
Spain	4,216	5,649	5.3%	↑ 34%	Colombia (40%)	Nicaragua (11%)	Cuba (9.5%)
Netherlands	3,204	4,381	4.1%	↑ 36.7%	Ukraine (26%)	Algeria (12%)	Syria (6.5%)
Belgium	4,499	4,244	4.0%	↓ -6%	Moldova (8.6%)	Afghanistan (7.8%)	Palestine (7.6%)
Switzerland	3,244	3,994	3.8%	↑ 23%	Algeria (28%)	Morocco (16%)	Türkiye (8.9%)
Poland	2,310	3,418	3.2%	↑ 48%	Eritrea (13%)	Somalia (13%)	Syria (11%)
Austria	30,846	3,320	3.1%	↓ -89.2%	Türkiye (27%)	Afghanistan (18%)	Syria (18%)
Slovenia	2,285	3,215	3.0%	↑ 41%	Morocco (71%)	Algeria (8%)	Afghanistan (5.2%)
Cyprus	3,147	3,030	2.9%	↓ -4%	Syria (37%)	Congo (DR) (14%)	Nigeria (9.1%)
Romania	3,844	1,282	1.2%	↓ -67%	Syria (34%)	Bangladesh (13%)	Ethiopia (8.3%)
France	840	1,129	1.1%	↑ 34%	Ukraine (8.8%)	Kosovo (8.2%)	Türkiye (7.2%)
Sweden	1,908	1,107	1.0%	↓ -42%	Ukraine (17%)	Syria (8.5%)	Afghanistan (6.6%)
Norway	702	998	0.9%	↑ 42%	Ukraine (60%)	Israel (3.5%)	Afghanistan (3%)
Finland	590	968	0.9%	↑ 64.1%	Syria (22%)	Russia (17%)	Ukraine (7.7%)
Latvia	1,091	716	0.7%	↓ -34%	Afghanistan (17%)	Tajikistan (13%)	India (12%)
Denmark	795	585	0.6%	↓ -26%	Ukraine (25%)	Syria (16%)	Afghanistan (5.3%)
Ireland	361	552	0.5%	↑ 53%	Jordan (29%)	Palestine (8.9%)	Nigeria (7.1%)
Malta	613	476	0.4%	↓ -22%	The Gambia (20%)	Syria (15%)	Sudan (9.2%)
Portugal	1,190	442	0.4%	↓ -63%	Senegal (22%)	The Gambia (10%)	Afghanistan (7.2%)
Czechia	311	267	0.3%	↓ -14%	Türkiye (28%)	Ukraine (11%)	Russia (7.1%)
Luxembourg	95	139	0.1%	↑ 46%	Syria (17%)	North Macedonia (13%)	Eritrea (7.2%)
Lithuania	250	105	0.1%	↓ -58%	Belarus (33%)	Iraq (14%)	Russia (8.6%)
Estonia	131	74	0.1%	↓ -44%	Ukraine (53%)	Russia (14%)	India (11%)
Slovakia	315	55	0.1%	↓ -83%	Ukraine (25%)	Türkiye (15%)	Iran (15%)
Hungary	0	0	0.0%	n.a.			
EU+	115,863	105,844	100.0%	↓ -9%	Syria (19%)	Türkiye (14%)	Afghanistan (6.1%)
Type of withdrawal					Countries of origin		
Implicit	96,505	88,376	83.5%	↓ -8.4%	Syria (21%)	Türkiye (13%)	Afghanistan (6.8%)
Explicit	15,505	16,182	15.3%	↑ 4%	Türkiye (18%)	Syria (9%)	Ukraine (7.6%)
Unknown	3,854	1,286	1.2%	↓ -67%	Syria (34%)	Bangladesh (13%)	Ethiopia (8.2%)
Outcome of withdrawal					Countries of origin		
Discontinuation	102,625	94,462	89.2%	↓ -8.0%	Syria (20%)	Türkiye (15%)	Afghanistan (6.6%)
Negative	9,395	10,100	9.5%	↑ 7.5%	Egypt (13%)	Syria (11%)	Pakistan (8.3%)
Unknown	3,844	1,282	1.2%	↓ -67%	Syria (34%)	Bangladesh (13%)	Ethiopia (8.3%)
Countries of origin					Reporting countries		
Syria	17,043	20,483	19.4%	↑ 20%	Greece (44%)	Bulgaria (22%)	Croatia (9.9%)
Türkiye	10,457	14,408	13.6%	↑ 38%	Germany (43%)	Greece (30%)	Croatia (12%)
Afghanistan	18,614	6,483	6.1%	↓ -65%	Bulgaria (30%)	Germany (17%)	Greece (10%)
Morocco	7,985	5,304	5.0%	↓ -34%	Slovenia (43%)	Switzerland (12%)	Spain (9.2%)
Egypt	3,989	4,684	4.4%	↑ 17%	Italy (45%)	Greece (30%)	Bulgaria (10%)
Russia	2,602	3,383	3.2%	↑ 30%	Croatia (38%)	Germany (31%)	Poland (9.8%)
Ukraine	2,460	3,279	3.1%	↑ 33%	Netherlands (35%)	Norway (18%)	Germany (12%)
Iraq	3,635	3,262	3.1%	↓ -10%	Germany (26%)	Greece (25%)	Croatia (17%)
Pakistan	4,556	3,117	2.9%	↓ -32%	Italy (50%)	Greece (21%)	Germany (5.4%)
Colombia	1,205	3,013	2.8%	↑ 150%	Spain (74%)	Germany (9.1%)	Belgium (5.4%)
Other	43,317	38,428	36.3%	↓ -11%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Notes: Data on withdrawn applications were not available for Czechia for December 2024, Portugal for October-December 2024 and Spain for January 2024. Data of a magnitude of 5 or lower are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Thus, a 0 may not necessarily indicate a real zero value but could also represent a value of 1 or 2.



Table A7. Pending cases at the end of the year in EU+ countries by reporting country and main citizenships, 2023-2024

	2023	2024	Share in EU+	Change from 2023	2024		
					First	Top three groups Second	Third
Spain	182,691	251,540	26%	↑	38% Colombia (35%)	Venezuela (34%)	Peru (8.9%)
Italy	162,091	227,127	23%	↑	40% Bangladesh (19%)	Pakistan (12%)	Egypt (11%)
Germany	239,614	212,656	22%	↓	-11% Syria (23%)	Türkiye (21%)	Afghanistan (18%)
France	53,323	66,196	6.7%	↑	24% Guinea (10%)	Ukraine (9.3%)	Côte d'Ivoire (7.6%)
Netherlands	43,924	46,855	4.8%	↑	7% Syria (32%)	Türkiye (7.7%)	Iraq (7.5%)
Belgium	39,429	43,093	4.4%	↑	9.3% Palestine (14%)	Syria (11%)	Türkiye (8.3%)
Greece	29,885	26,623	2.7%	↓	-11% Syria (28%)	Afghanistan (16%)	Egypt (15%)
Ireland	18,311	22,548	2.3%	↑	23% Nigeria (21%)	Jordan (10%)	Pakistan (7.9%)
Cyprus	26,599	20,652	2.1%	↓	-22% Syria (67%)	Congo (DR) (8.8%)	Afghanistan (6.2%)
Austria	23,188	13,093	1.3%	↓	-44% Syria (46%)	Afghanistan (15%)	Türkiye (10%)
Switzerland	15,567	11,921	1.2%	↓	-23% Türkiye (33%)	Afghanistan (10%)	Iran (4.7%)
Poland	6,930	10,325	1.1%	↑	49% Ukraine (33%)	Russia (27%)	Belarus (19%)
Bulgaria	11,951	6,051	0.6%	↓	-49% Syria (67%)	Afghanistan (21%)	Egypt (3.1%)
Norway	4,535	5,282	0.5%	↑	16% Syria (44%)	Ukraine (15%)	Türkiye (7.3%)
Finland	7,421	4,228	0.4%	↓	-43% Somalia (15%)	Russia (15%)	Syria (8.8%)
Sweden	5,189	3,812	0.4%	↓	-27% Syria (17%)	Afghanistan (7.6%)	Iran (6.8%)
Luxembourg	3,085	3,199	0.3%	↔	4% Syria (26%)	Eritrea (20%)	Venezuela (6.6%)
Denmark	2,119	2,155	0.2%	↔	2% Ukraine (29%)	Syria (16%)	Türkiye (10%)
Croatia	1,538	1,120	0.1%	↓	-27% Russia (28%)	Türkiye (12%)	Syria (11%)
Slovenia	1,147	850	0.1%	↓	-26% Morocco (43%)	Ukraine (15%)	Algeria (6.9%)
Malta	832	507	0.1%	↓	-39% Syria (23%)	Ukraine (18%)	Sudan (11%)
Latvia	591	221	0.0%	↓	-63% Tajikistan (27%)	Afghanistan (21%)	Russia (11%)
Lithuania	346	219	0.0%	↓	-37% Belarus (46%)	Russia (19%)	Ukraine (5.5%)
Romania	1,062	166	0.0%	↓	-84% Syria (50%)	Iraq (21%)	Sudan (3.6%)
Estonia	354	148	0.0%	↓	-58% Ukraine (67%)	Russia (16%)	Belarus (4.7%)
Portugal	363	129	0.0%	↓	-64% Venezuela (18%)	China (17%)	Angola (12%)
Hungary	15	16	0.0%	↑	7% Nigeria (19%)	Uganda (13%)	Russia (13%)
Czechia	673	:					
Slovakia	:	:					
EU+	882,773	980,732	100.0%	↑	11% Syria (11%)	Colombia (9.9%)	Venezuela (9.4%)
Type of applicant					Countries of origin		
First time	652,234	688,564	70%	↑	6% Syria (15%)	Türkiye (9.2%)	Afghanistan (8%)
Unknown	195,661	257,810	26%	↑	32% Colombia (34%)	Venezuela (33%)	Peru (8.7%)
Repeated	33,311	32,829	3.3%	↔	-1.4% Russia (12%)	Afghanistan (11%)	Syria (8.1%)
Relocated	1567	1529	0.2%	↔	-2% Syria (16%)	Sudan (15%)	Afghanistan (14%)
Duration of pending					Countries of origin		
More than 6 months	436,992	639,194	65%	↑	46% Colombia (12%)	Venezuela (9.1%)	Syria (8.7%)
Less than 6 months	432,856	331,233	34%	↓	-23% Syria (15%)	Venezuela (10%)	Afghanistan (7.2%)
Unknown	12,925	10,305	1.1%	↓	-20.3% Syria (46%)	Afghanistan (16%)	Iran (2.8%)
Countries of origin					Reporting countries		
Syria	122,753	108,529	11%	↓	-12% Germany (45%)	Netherlands (14%)	Cyprus (13%)
Colombia	76,673	97,160	9.9%	↑	27% Spain (90%)	Italy (4.9%)	Germany (1.9%)
Venezuela	58,621	92,606	9.4%	↑	58% Spain (92%)	Italy (3.6%)	Germany (2.3%)
Türkiye	83,964	66,098	6.7%	↓	-21.3% Germany (67%)	Switzerland (6%)	Netherlands (5.5%)
Afghanistan	72,509	61,151	6.2%	↓	-16% Germany (62%)	France (7%)	Greece (6.9%)
Bangladesh	32,946	47,778	4.9%	↑	45% Italy (89%)	France (5.6%)	Ireland (2.9%)
Peru	28,932	44,856	4.6%	↑	55% Spain (50%)	Italy (48%)	Germany (0.6%)
Pakistan	31,745	33,398	3.4%	↑	5% Italy (78%)	Ireland (5.3%)	Germany (4.6%)
Egypt	25,864	32,552	3.3%	↑	26% Italy (75%)	Greece (12%)	Germany (3.6%)
Eritrea	19,332	18,659	1.9%	↓	-3% Italy (50%)	Netherlands (15%)	Germany (13%)
Other	329,434	377,945	39%	↑	15% Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Notes: Data on pending cases were not available for Czechia and Slovakia for December 2024. Data of a magnitude of 5 or lower are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Thus, a 0 may not necessarily indicate a real zero value but could also represent a value of 1 or 2.

Table A8. Resettled persons in EU+ countries by reporting country and main citizenships, 2023-2024

	2023	2024	Share in EU+	Change from 2023	2024		
					First	Top three groups	Third
						Second	
Germany	5,028	5,665	40.9% ↑	12.7%	Syria (53%)	Afghanistan (17%)	Sudan (8.4%)
France	3,012	2,371	17.1% ↓	-21.3%	Syria (22%)	Central African Republic (22%)	Sudan (17%)
Italy	1,223	1,456	10.5% ↑	19%	Afghanistan (44%)	Syria (17%)	Eritrea (13%)
Norway	2,222	1,435	10.4% ↓	-35%	Syria (34%)	Congo (DR) (28%)	Afghanistan (17%)
Sweden	544	826	6.0% ↑	52%	Congo (DR) (85%)	South Sudan (12%)	Syria (1.2%)
Finland	1,332	808	5.8% ↓	-39%	Syria (45%)	Congo (DR) (35%)	Afghanistan (6.8%)
Netherlands	833	761	5.5% ↓	-9%	Syria (69%)	Afghanistan (10%)	Eritrea (9.2%)
Belgium	284	449	3.2% ↑	58%	Congo (DR) (46%)	Syria (41%)	Sudan (5.3%)
Denmark	152	40	0.3% ↓	-74%	Congo (DR) (100%)		
Slovenia	23	27	0.2% ↑	17%	Afghanistan (100%)		
Bulgaria	9	11	0.1% ↑	22.2%	Syria (100%)		
Estonia	0	0					
Latvia	0	0					
Luxembourg	0	0					
Malta	0	0					
Poland	0	0					
Ireland	0	0					
Switzerland	376	:					
Romania	154	:					
Portugal	138	:					
Lithuania	0	:					
Slovakia	0	:					
Austria	0	:					
Croatia	0	:					
Czechia	0	:					
Greece	0	:					
Hungary	0	:					
Cyprus	:	:					
Spain	:	:					
EU+	15,330	13,849	100.0% ↓	-10%	Syria (39%)	Afghanistan (17%)	Congo (DR) (14%)
Citizenship					Countries of departure		
Türkiye	3,106	3,873	28.0% ↑	25%	Syria (83%)	Afghanistan (17%)	Palestine (0.2%)
Jordan	856	1,305	9.4% ↑	52%	Syria (91%)	Iraq (3.2%)	Yemen (3.1%)
Pakistan	438	1,168	8.4% ↑	167%	Afghanistan (100%)		
Egypt	1,725	1,096	7.9% ↓	-36.5%	Sudan (44%)	South Sudan (16%)	Syria (13%)
Rwanda	1,211	1,059	7.6% ↓	-13%	Congo (DR) (76%)	Eritrea (10%)	Sudan (7.8%)
Kenya	531	827	6.0% ↑	56%	Somalia (34%)	Congo (DR) (30%)	South Sudan (28%)
Lebanon	2,890	769	5.6% ↓	-73%	Syria (97%)	Palestine (0.7%)	Pakistan (0.7%)
Libya	161	589	4.3% ↑	266%	Sudan (56%)	Eritrea (20%)	Ethiopia (8.3%)
Tanzania	10	512	3.7% ↑	5020%	Congo (DR) (98%)	Burundi (1.8%)	Congo (0.2%)
Iran	1,185	477	3.4% ↓	-60%	Afghanistan (100%)		
Other	3,217	2,174	15.7% ↓	-32%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
Countries of departure					Citizenship		
Syria	7,637	5,345	38.6% ↓	-30%	Türkiye (60%)	Jordan (22%)	Lebanon (14%)
Afghanistan	2,016	2,341	16.9% ↑	16%	Pakistan (50%)	Türkiye (28%)	Iran (20%)
Congo (DR)	1,686	1,957	14.1% ↑	16%	Rwanda (41%)	Tanzania (26%)	Kenya (12%)
Sudan	1,062	1,287	9.3% ↑	21.2%	Egypt (38%)	Libya (26%)	Chad (15%)
Eritrea	809	678	4.9% ↓	-16%	Ethiopia (29%)	Egypt (21%)	Libya (18%)
South Sudan	351	605	4.4% ↑	72%	Kenya (38%)	Egypt (29%)	Uganda (16%)
Central African Republic	534	545	3.9% →	2.1%	Cameroon (51%)	Chad (43%)	Niger (1.8%)
Somalia	364	405	2.9% ↑	11%	Kenya (70%)	Egypt (15%)	Ethiopia (4.9%)
Ethiopia	64	128	0.9% ↑	100%	Libya (38%)	Egypt (38%)	Somalia (9.4%)
Burundi	51	98	0.7% ↑	92%	Kenya (55%)	Rwanda (34%)	Tanzania (9.2%)
Other	756	460	3.3% ↓	-39%	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified

Notes: Data were not available for Czechia for December 2024. For several other countries, it is unclear whether there were zero resettlements or data were missing. Data of a magnitude of 5 or lower are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Thus, a 0 may not necessarily indicate a real zero value but could also represent a value of 1 or 2.

Asylum Report 2025

As the go-to source of information on international protection in Europe, the Asylum Report 2025 provides a comprehensive overview of key developments in asylum in 2024.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) collates information on all aspects of the Common European Asylum System. To this end, the report outlines the main trends in policies, practices and legislation related to international protection and presents key indicators for the reference year 2024. Examples of case law are featured to interpret European and national laws in the context of the EU asylum *acquis*.

In a new, enriched format, the Asylum Report 2025 draws on information from a wide range of sources – including perspectives from national authorities, EU institutions, international organisations, civil society organisations and academia – to include diverse perspectives. The report, covering 1 January to 31 December 2024, serves as a reference for the latest developments in international protection in Europe.



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