Strategic Analysis

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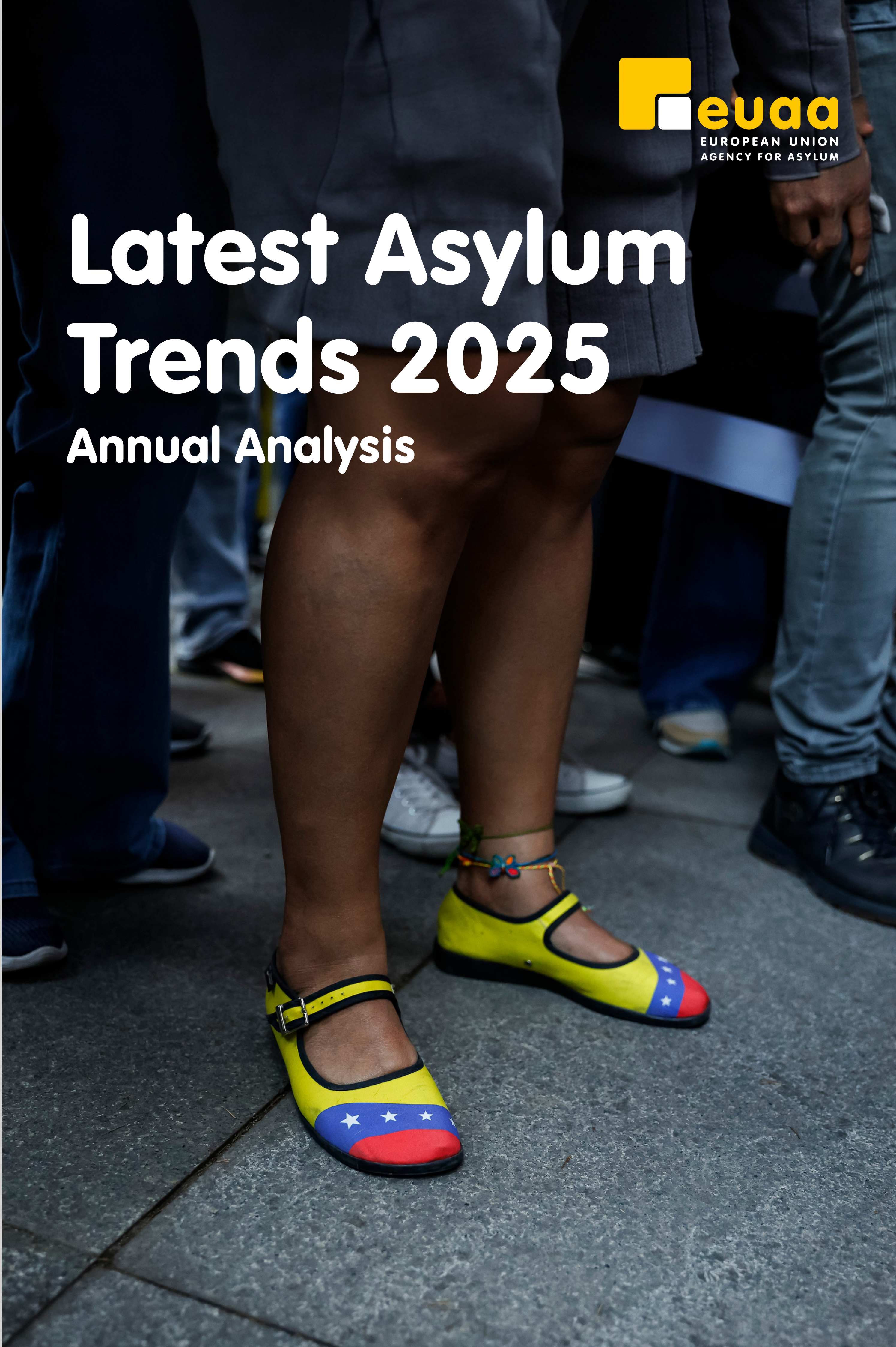
AGENCY FOR ASYLUM

Latest Asylum Trends 2025

Annual Analysis



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Cover photo/illustration: "*A Venezuelan opposition supporter wears shoes with flag of Venezuela as she demonstrates outside the Spanish Parliament on support of her leader Edmundo Gonzalez on September 10, 2024 in Madrid, Spain.*" © *Getty Images, 2024. Editorial #: 2171214660*

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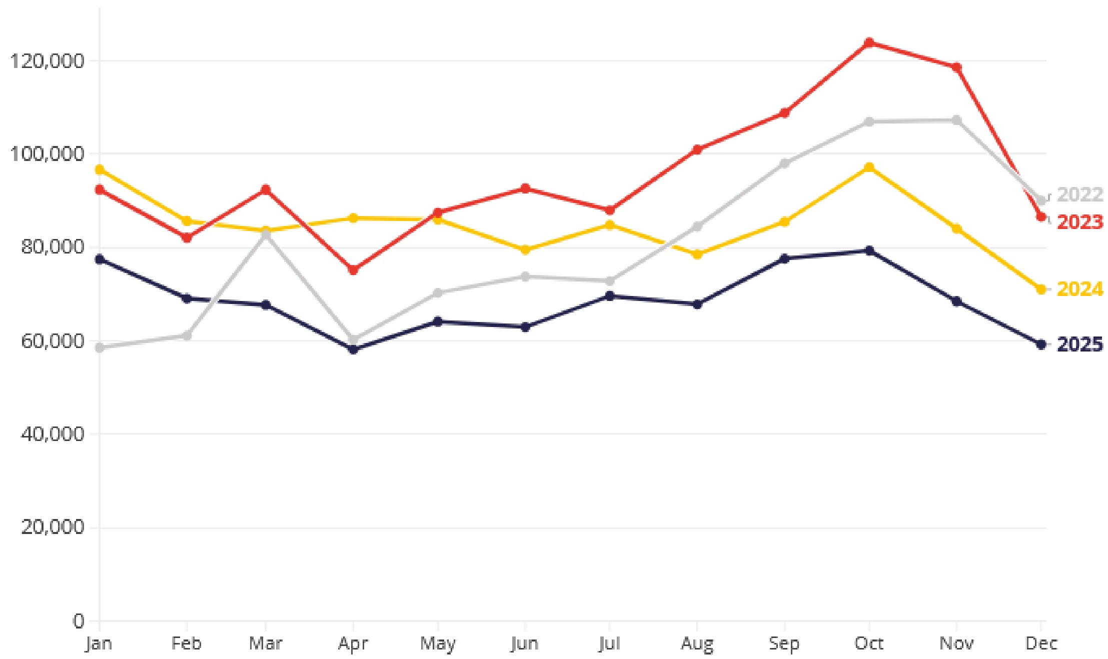
List of abbreviations

Term	Definition
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
EPS	EUAA’s Early warning and Preparedness System
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
EU	European Union
EU+ countries	Member States of the European Union plus Norway and Switzerland
Member States	Member States of the European Union
SAM-UKR	Survey of Arriving Migrants for Displaced People from Ukraine

Overview

Figure 1. Monthly asylum applications lodged in the EU+, by year



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

Asylum applications in the EU+ fell by around one fifth in 2025 compared to 2024. This decline occurred alongside an even sharper reduction in detections of irregular border-crossings but it did not stem from a single cause. Rather, it reflected a structural reconfiguration of asylum dynamics, shaped by distinct developments affecting different nationalities, as well as broader policy and geopolitical shifts.

The largest numerical change concerned Syrian nationals, whose applications dropped sharply following a regime change in Syria. At the same time, a landmark caselaw within the EU+ reshaped applications lodged by Afghans, leading to a surge in repeated applications without any corresponding increase in arrivals at the external border. Meanwhile, Venezuelan nationals continued to apply in record numbers, driven by a combination of ongoing crisis at home, shifting political responses abroad, and the availability of visa-free mobility into the EU+.

Taken together, these developments eased immediate pressure on asylum systems in 2025. However, they point less to a resolution of displacement drivers than to a reconfiguration of migration pathways and protection strategies, both within and beyond the EU+.

PART I — Major Nationality-Driven Shifts in 2025

Syrians: Regime Change and Deferred Mobility

Syria's political turnaround was a crucial factor underpinning the overall decline in EU+ asylum applications. The December 2024 ousting of Bashar al-Assad and the establishment of a transitional government marked a decisive shift after years of protracted conflict. Through much of 2025, Syria experienced an uneasy pause in major hostilities, which had a sizable impact on EU+ asylum trends.

In 2025, Syrian applications in the EU+ dropped sharply to around 42,000, representing a 72% year-on-year decline. Syrians also fell from the top rank of EU+ asylum seekers. They were much less frequently detected at the external border, further illustrating the scale of the shift in mobility patterns.

One year into the transition, UNHCR recorded the return of over 1.4 million Syrians from abroad (mostly neighbouring countries) and welcomed voluntary returns as part of Syria's reconstruction, while stressing that there should be no forced returns of refugees. Many Syrians appear to have adopted a wait-and-see approach, postponing onward movement while assessing whether conditions would stabilise.

However, hopes for sustained peace have already been tested. The renewal of conflict in parts of Syria is challenging earlier assumptions about large-scale return and long-term stability. While Syria's transitional government has advocated for refugee repatriation and reconstruction, prompting some EU+ countries and Agencies to explore repatriation arrangements, escalating violence in certain areas raises renewed protection concerns. Many Syrians abroad remain fearful that return could expose them to risk, particularly minorities and individuals associated with former opposition groups.

The sharp decline in Syrian applications therefore reflects a temporary geopolitical shift rather than a definitive resolution of displacement drivers. However, the political changes in Syria have resulted in changes of profiles in need of international protection. For updated analysis of the situation in Syria following the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad, read EUAA Syria Country Focus report from July 2025. For an analysis of key profiles, read EUAA's Syria Country Guidance and its explanatory statement .

Afghans: Legal Harmonisation and Repeated Applications

While the Syrian decline was driven primarily by developments within Syria, the 2025 shift in Afghan applications originated largely within the EU+ legal space.

Legal developments within the EU+ can shape asylum trends by harmonising and clarifying protection thresholds. In October 2024, the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) altered the protection landscape for Afghan women, holding that they face a general risk of persecution under Taliban rule. Nationality and gender alone were deemed sufficient grounds for granting refugee status. Afghan women and girls were thus recognised as a particular social group at acute risk, in light of the Taliban's systematic oppression — described by the European

Parliament as gender apartheid. These developments built on EUAA Country Guidance, which had emphasised that the systematic exclusion of women and girls from public life in Afghanistan could amount to persecution. UNHCR issued guidance supporting similar conclusions.

In 2025, these legal clarifications triggered a surge in repeated applications by Afghan women and their families already present in the EU+. Indeed, of all applications lodged by Afghans in 2025, 42% were by repeats, up sharply from 14% the previous year. Crucially, this increase was not matched by a rise in detections at the EU's external borders and instead, reflected re-applications by persons already inside the EU. Furthermore, although it coincided in time with reports of Iran stepping up returns of Afghan nationals, the rise in EU+ applications was not linked to onward movements of Afghans expelled from Iran.

The surge was concentrated in Germany, where authorities reported a sharp rise in Afghan women's asylum claims in mid-2025, noting that nearly half were repeated applications. On a smaller scale, there was an increase in Austria in the first half of 2025.

Against this backdrop, many EU+ countries are pushing for increased deportations of Afghans who are residing illegally in the EU+, either voluntarily or by force. The UN urges that returns to Afghanistan should be voluntary, safe, dignified and consistent with international law.

Venezuelans: Visa-Free Mobility and Divergent Political Responses

By mid-2025, Venezuelan nationals had become the second largest asylum-seeking group in the EU+. By the end of the year, approximately 91,000 Venezuelans had applied for asylum in the EU+, the highest level ever recorded and a 23% increase compared to 2024. Nearly all claims were lodged in Spain.

This sustained inflow reflects the interaction of external crisis and mobility opportunities. Venezuela remains mired in severe economic and political turmoil, marked by hyperinflation and the displacement of more than 7.9 million citizens since 2014. At the same time, several neighbouring Latin American countries tightened visa requirements for Venezuelans, narrowing mobility options within the region.

The United States adopted a markedly tougher stance toward Venezuelan nationals in 2025. Many who had benefited from Temporary Protected Status or other relief measures were treated as immigration violators and pressured to leave. In early 2026, US forces captured Maduro and removed him from power, an event Washington framed as opening the door to democratic transition. However, the regime remains largely intact and the trajectory remains uncertain.

Against this backdrop, Spain's position stands in sharp contrast. Venezuelans can enter the Schengen area visa-free for short stays, allowing many to travel legally to Spain and subsequently apply for asylum. Spain has also pursued flexible migration policies to address labour shortages and demographic ageing, including humanitarian permits and regularisation pathways available for Latin American nationals. Venezuelans who do not qualify for asylum are often granted humanitarian status permitting residence and work. See the EUAA National Asylum Developments Database for more information.

PART II — Policy Developments

The nationality-driven shifts described above unfolded within a broader context of policy developments across the EU+. While external geopolitical developments and legal harmonisation shaped applications among specific groups, 2025 was also marked by efforts in border management, integration of labour migration, and strengthened cooperation with countries of departure and transit. These system-level adjustments interacted with, and in some cases amplified, the trends observed among Syrians, Afghans and Venezuelans.

Policy reforms reinforce a more restrictive asylum environment across the EU

At EU level, political agreement was reached at the end of 2025 on the aligned use of safe countries of origin and safe third country concepts, enabling more applications to be declared inadmissible and accelerating border and return procedures. The reforms aim to facilitate faster rejection of claims deemed unlikely to succeed and to strengthen the link between asylum and return policy.

At national level, several EU+ countries implemented or reinforced restrictive asylum-related measures in 2025, including more restrictive asylum measures adopted in Czechia and the Netherlands, the facilitation of deportations in Germany and other EU+ countries, temporary suspension of family reunification in Austria and Germany (for subsidiary protection holders only), discouraging information campaigns for migrants in countries of origin and transit in Belgium, and the extension of internal border controls in relation to irregular migration concerns in 9 countries.

In November 2025, the European Commission published the first European Annual Asylum and Migration Report, marking the launch of the Pact's annual migration management cycle. The report confirmed a broad easing of pressure on EU+ asylum systems until mid-2025, while highlighting that the decline was driven primarily by fewer irregular border crossings and the sharp reduction in Syrian applications. At the same time, it underscored that asylum pressure remained unevenly distributed.

Labour Market Pragmatism Amid Political Sensitivities

While restrictive measures sought to limit irregular migration and facilitate returns, several EU+ countries simultaneously adopted pragmatic approaches to address acute labour shortages and demographic decline. Ageing populations and shrinking workforces increasingly influenced policy development, even where political rhetoric remained focused on deterrence. A recent report from MPI highlights several initiatives to employ refugees across the EU.

Spain provides a clear example of this dual dynamic. It ended 2025 with a record 3.1 million foreign nationals contributing to social security — approximately 14% of its employed workforce. Migrants have added over 800,000 workers since 2021, helping to ease demographic pressures. Displaced Venezuelans, many of whom may have been issued negative asylum decisions, accounted for more than 40,000 new social-security registrations in 2025 alone. Spain has framed legal migration as essential to counter demographic decline and sustain economic growth, combining humanitarian concern with economic pragmatism.

Greece illustrates a more enforcement-oriented variant of the labour–migration nexus. Legislation expected to pass in early 2026 would streamline the recruitment of tens of thousands of workers from countries such as India, Bangladesh and Egypt to address acute shortages in tourism, construction and agriculture, including through fast-track procedures for major projects. At the same time, the bill explicitly excludes migrants who entered irregularly from any pathway to legal status and strengthens penalties for irregular entry and assistance. Unlike Spain's broader regularisation of irregular residents, Greece's approach combines expanded external labour recruitment with a hardline stance towards irregular migration.

The labour market impact of displaced Ukrainians under temporary protection further demonstrates this dynamic. Nearly one million displaced Ukrainians are currently hosted in Poland; back in 2024 three quarters of them had entered the workforce, contributing an estimated 2–3% to GDP growth in 2024. Similar benefits have been reported in Czechia, where Ukrainians constitute one of the largest per capita labour market additions in recent years. In Germany, where over 1.2 million displaced Ukrainians are hosted, employment rates have steadily increased as integration barriers are addressed.

Cooperation with Countries of Departure and Transit

Another key component of the EU's migration strategy in 2025 was the strengthening of bilateral and regional cooperation with countries of departure and transit. These efforts aimed to manage mixed migration flows, reduce irregular crossings and address root causes.

Spain and Morocco intensified operational coordination on border management and maritime surveillance. This coincided with a sharp reduction in irregular migration along the Western African route, where detections fell by 63%. Departures from Morocco declined by 17%, in contrast to increased departures from neighbouring Algeria.

In the Central Mediterranean, Italy renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with Libya, supporting the Libyan coastguard in intercepting irregular departures. The arrangement continues to attract criticism regarding so-called pull-backs and the treatment of migrants returned to Libya. Italy also signed a new agreement with Türkiye in 2025 to expand joint coastguard operations and intelligence sharing aimed at countering smuggling networks.

Along the Western Balkans route, detections fell by 42%, supported by reinforced controls and the launch of a new Frontex joint operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in November 2025. This built on existing agreements with Moldova, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Serbia.

Beyond operational cooperation, wider EU-level partnerships combined border management with economic and governance engagement. The EU and Jordan consolidated a Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership in 2025, covering migration cooperation and refugee support. The EU–Mauritania partnership, launched in 2024, became operational in 2025 with actions spanning border support, anti-smuggling cooperation, legal mobility and economic development. Toward the end of the year, the Pact for the Mediterranean was also launched with the aim of reshaping the EU's relationship with neighbouring countries through a broader focus on job creation and economic partnerships, alongside migration management.

Humanitarian Funding Contraction as a Forward Risk

Despite the relative easing of pressure on EU+ asylum systems in 2025, global displacement dynamics remained volatile. In mid-2025, UNHCR reported a slight overall decline in global displacement, driven primarily by return movements in a limited number of countries such as Syria, rather than by any broader easing of conflict or instability.

At the same time, 2025 as a whole was characterised by a dramatic contraction in global humanitarian funding, which fell by approximately 30% compared with the previous year. The closure of major aid programmes and the scaling back of US-funded development and humanitarian initiatives across multiple regions reduced support for fragile states and displacement-affected populations.

UNHCR reported a sharp contraction in its funding, resulting in the closure of numerous offices worldwide and the loss of approximately 3,500 permanent staff positions, alongside hundreds of temporary posts. These reductions translated into significant operational cutbacks, constraining the agency's capacity to respond to emergencies and leaving millions of displaced people at heightened risk. IOM likewise reported substantial funding shortfalls with severe repercussions for vulnerable migrant communities.

While this humanitarian funding shock did not yet materialise as a measurable driver of increased asylum applications to the EU+ in 2025, it constitutes a major structural risk factor for 2026 and beyond. Reduced regional protection capacity, diminished assistance and weakened registration systems in neighbouring countries of first asylum could accelerate onward movements to the EU in the event of renewed instability.

PART III — 2026 Outlook: Reform Amid Volatility

The easing of asylum pressure in 2025 occurred against a backdrop of heightened geopolitical uncertainty and structural fragility. While Syrian applications fell sharply and internal legal and policy adjustments reshaped other trends, the broader international environment became highly volatile. The decline in applications should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Geopolitical Uncertainty and Latent Displacement Risks

One potential flashpoint is Iran, recently the second largest refugee hosting country in the world, which entered 2026 engulfed in nationwide unrest linked to economic collapse and political repression. The Iranian regime faces sustained domestic pressure alongside heightened international tensions. In 2025, the US and Israel conducted strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, further destabilising an already fragile situation.

Although Iranian displacement has so far remained limited (just 8,000 applications for asylum in the EU+ in 2025, ranked 31st), the scale of potential risk is significant. With a population of approximately 90 million, even partial destabilisation could generate refugee movements of an unprecedented magnitude. Displacement of just 10% of Iran's population would rival the largest refugee flows of recent decades. While such a scenario remains highly speculative, and is tied to the use of Türkiye as a transit country, observers increasingly view Iran's turmoil as a major and long-term risk, for which the outlook remains highly uncertain.

More broadly, the contraction of humanitarian funding described above compounds these geopolitical risks. The reduction in protection and assistance capacity in regions of origin and first asylum could accelerate onward movement should new crises erupt. In this sense, the humanitarian funding shock of 2025 functions less as an immediate driver and more as a risk multiplier for future instability.

The Pact on Migration and Asylum Enters into Force

Against this uncertain external environment, the EU+ is entering a period of institutional reform. Most of the measures in the Pact on Migration and Asylum are scheduled to enter into application in mid-2026 following years of negotiation and adoption in 2024. The Pact introduces an obligatory border screening process, new procedures intended to accelerate decisions on certain categories of applications, a system of solidarity contributions among Member States, and enhanced international cooperations.

It also aligns with new digital border management systems expected to become operational in 2026, including the Entry/Exit System (EES) and the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). Together, these measures aim to strengthen external border management and enhance coordination across the EU+ asylum and migration systems.

The implementation of the Pact marks a shift toward a more institutionalised and collectively managed migration and asylum framework. It aims at delivering greater predictability and strengthening resilience against systemic shocks due to, inter alia, changes in the surrounding geopolitical environment.

Interpreting the 2024–2025 Decline in Applications

EU+ asylum authorities enter 2026 with applications at a relative lull, underpinned by the sharp decline in Syrian claims, along with other decreases and the absence of new large-scale inflows. However, this breathing space rests on contingent developments rather than on any meaningful resolution of displacement drivers.

Shrinking workforces and demographic decline have begun to shape migration policy choices in some EU+ countries, even as political discourse favours restriction. Cooperation with countries of origin and departure may have contributed to fewer detections at the external border, while legal harmonisation temporarily reshaped protection demand within the EU+. At the same time, geopolitical volatility and dramatic budget cuts introduce new layers of uncertainty.

The decline observed in 2025 therefore reflects a temporary convergence of factors rather than a definitive turning point. A renewed escalation in conflict, regional destabilisation or systemic crisis could rapidly alter the trajectory of asylum applications in the EU+.

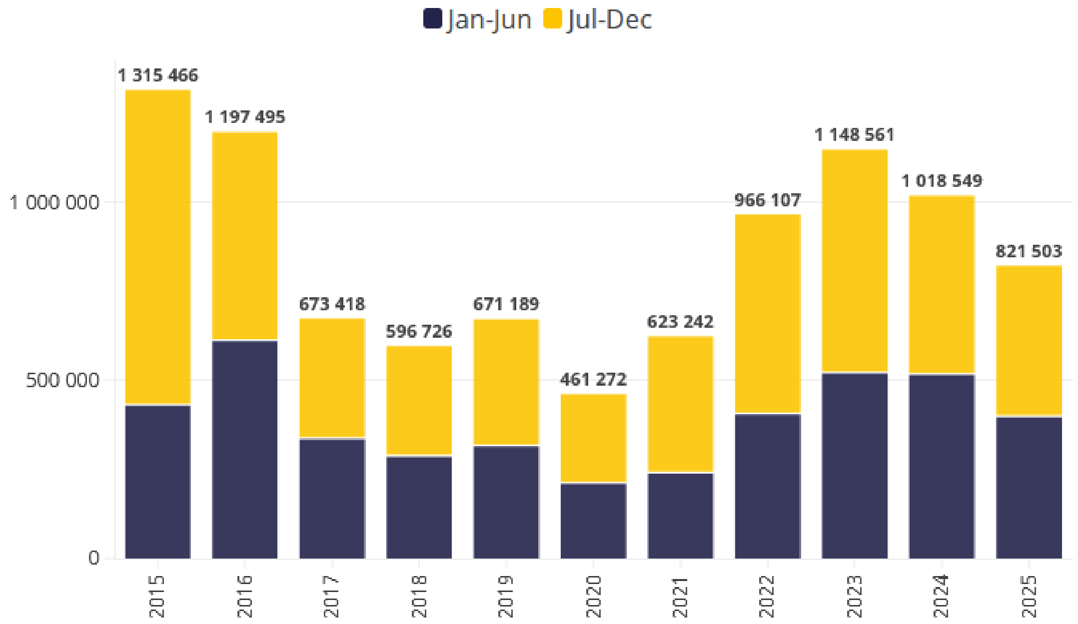
As the Pact enters into force, the EU+ seeks to institutionalise a more coordinated and controlled response to migration pressures. Its effectiveness will be tested against a backdrop of highly unpredictable geopolitical shifts and constrained humanitarian capacity. The only certainty heading into 2026 is that migration and asylum will remain central to EU policy and international cooperation in the year ahead.

Key Data

- In 2025, approximately 822,000 applications for international protection were lodged in the EU+, representing a 19% decrease compared to 2024.
- The decline was driven largely by fewer Syrian applications: down by 72%, from 151,000 in 2024 to 42,000 in 2025, following political developments in Syria. There were notable decreases also for Turks and Colombians, among others.
- In contrast, Afghan and Venezuelan applications increased. Venezuelan applicants mainly entered the EU+ via visa-free travel, while many Afghan applications were repeat claims lodged by individuals already present in the EU+ following legal developments.
- Germany received the most applications, followed by France, Spain and Italy, while Greece and Cyprus received the most per capita.
- At the end of 2025, approximately 863,000 cases were pending at first instance. Across all instances, an estimated 1.2 million cases remained pending.
- The EU+ recognition rate fell to 29% in 2025, largely because fewer decisions were issued to Syrian applicants, who historically have higher recognition rates but also due to more decisions issued to low-recognition-rate nationalities.
- At the end of 2025, approximately 4.5 million beneficiaries of Temporary Protection were registered in the EU+, having fled Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion. Germany and Poland hosted the largest numbers, while Czechia hosted the highest number per capita.

Applications

Figure 2. Annual applications for asylum in the EU+, 2015–2025



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

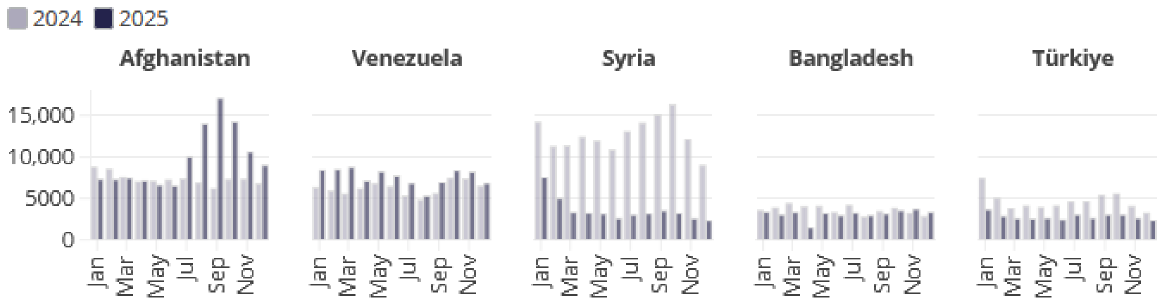
Applications in 2025 were concentrated among a limited number of nationalities. The five largest groups were citizens of Afghanistan (14% of all applications), Venezuela (11%), Syria (5%), Bangladesh (4%) and Türkiye (4%). Together these accounted for approximately 39% of all applications lodged in the EU+.

However, their trajectories diverged sharply. Applications by Afghan nationals increased by 33% and Venezuelan claims rose by 23%, while Syrian applications fell by a staggering 72%. Applications from Bangladeshis and Turks also declined, by 15% and 40% respectively. These contrasting movements help explain both the overall 19% reduction in EU+ asylum applications and the reconfiguration of the nationalities in 2025.

The following section examines trends for each of these citizenships in turn, highlighting the distinct drivers underlying their respective increases and decreases.

Five Main Citizenships

Figure 3. Applications for asylum in the EU+ for the top 5 citizenships, 2024 and 2025



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

Afghans

The increasingly repressive conditions in Afghanistan, particularly the systematic exclusion of women and girls from public life under Taliban rule, triggered the adoption of EUAA Country Guidance on Afghanistan in January 2023 (and updated May 2024), unanimously endorsed by EU+ countries. This guidance confirmed that Taliban-imposed restrictions amount to persecution. UNHCR also released guidance in 2023 supporting similar conclusions. These developments laid the groundwork for a ruling by the CJEU in October 2024, which confirmed that Taliban-imposed restrictions on women amount to persecution. As a result, Afghan women may qualify for refugee status solely based on their nationality and gender.

Since early 2025 and peaking over the summer, Afghan women, some of whom were previously granted subsidiary or national forms of protection, lodged more repeated applications in pursuit of full refugee status, which provides broader rights, including family reunification. As a result, there was a sharp increase in repeated Afghan applications, evidently women – first in Austria and later on a larger scale in Germany, despite a decline in 'newly arrived' first-time applicants. By the end of the 2025, Afghans had submitted 117,000 applications which is a one-third increase compared to 2024 though the total is broadly comparable with the number of applications lodged in 2023 and lower than in 2022.

This increase should not be interpreted as evidence of a more permissive asylum environment. On the contrary, in 2025 Germany revoked resettlement pledges for Afghans in Pakistan and resumed deportations of Afghan nationals with criminal records. Nevertheless, more positive decisions issued at first instance particularly to repeated applicants, pushed the overall recognition rate for Afghans up to 68% for EU-regulated protection (see section on Recognition Rates).

For an overview of the general situation in Afghanistan under Taliban rule, read the EUAA Country Focus 2026.

Venezuelans

Venezuela's deepening political and economic crisis continued to drive large-scale displacement in 2025. Over 2.8 million Venezuelans remain in Colombia, 1.7 million in Peru, and hundreds of thousands more in Brazil, Chile and Ecuador. At the same time, changes to US migration policy further restricted access to international protection, while the removal of President Maduro introduced additional political uncertainty, even as elements of the former regime remained in place. Several Latin American countries also reintroduced or tightened visa requirements for Venezuelan nationals, narrowing mobility options across the region. In Colombia, many of the programmes previously designed to assist Venezuelan residents were dismantled in 2025. While some voluntary returns have occurred, large numbers remain stranded in host countries with limited access to protection or livelihoods.

In contrast, Spain has adopted a more open and integration-oriented approach. In 2024, it introduced a new immigration policy focused on employment, education and family reunification, supported by IOM. The plan reduced residency requirements and expanded job-seeker visa access to align with labour market and pension system needs. In early 2026, Spain announced plans to regularise the status of undocumented migrants—an initiative expected to benefit at least half a million people. Against this backdrop, Venezuelan asylum applications in the EU+ reached a record 91,000 in 2025 which represents a 23% increase over the previous year. Spain remained by far the main destination, receiving the vast majority of claims and continuing to grant humanitarian protection to applicants not qualifying for international protection. In fact, the majority of Venezuelans receive such national forms of protection as the recognition rate for EU-regulated types of protection is just 2%. Given tightening conditions elsewhere in the Americas and Spain's comparatively supportive policies, it is unsurprising that growing numbers of Venezuelans view the EU+ as a more stable and accessible destination.

Syrians

The situation in Syria underwent a series of major developments in 2025. After Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) ousted Bashar al-Assad at the end of 2024, a transitional government was formed in March 2025. This shift prompted the EU and US to lift most sanctions and remove HTS from their respective terrorism lists. In October 2025, Syria held its first, albeit restrictive parliamentary elections, marking a symbolic milestone in the country's long path to recovery. Despite these steps, Syria remains extremely fragile following over a decade of conflict and authoritarian rule. As of early 2026, a tense standoff between the transitional government and Kurdish-led forces in the northeast risks reigniting broader instability.

Reflecting these geopolitical shifts, Syrian asylum applications in the EU+ dropped significantly by 72% from 151,000 in 2024 to just 42,000 in 2025. During 2025, most EU+ countries temporarily paused the processing of Syrian asylum claims pending greater clarity on the evolving situation, though they continued to accept new applications. Notably, far fewer Syrians chose to apply for asylum, with some expressing cautious optimism about returning to rebuild their communities. As of January 2026, UNHCR estimates that 1.4 million Syrians have returned from abroad since the fall of Assad, primarily from neighbouring countries.

For updated analysis of the situation in Syria following the overthrow of Bashar Al-Assad, read two EUAA Syria Country Focus reports from July 2025. For an in-depth analysis of the situation in Syria, focussing on the key elements of qualification for international protection, read EUAA's Syria Country Guidance and an explanatory statement.

Bangladeshis

Bangladesh experienced profound political and social upheaval following the collapse of the former government in August 2024. Triggered by mass student protests against the reinstatement of a civil service quota system, the situation rapidly escalated into nationwide unrest. Violence peaked in what some observers described as the "July massacre," during which state security forces and pro-government actors clashed with demonstrators, leaving an estimated 1,400 dead and thousands injured. In the face of mounting civilian resistance and a refusal by the military to open fire on protesters, former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country. An interim government, led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, was appointed with a mandate to guide Bangladesh toward democratic reform ahead of the next elections.

Despite initial stabilisation by late 2024, the country remained volatile throughout 2025. Law enforcement gaps persisted, contributing to a significant rise in violent crime, mob justice, and gender-based violence. The number of reported murders, robberies and abductions surged compared to previous years. In response, the interim government launched a joint military-police operation to curb lawlessness, but security remained tenuous. High-profile incidents of sexual violence, public lynchings and targeted attacks, often driven by political retribution or communal tensions, reinforced a climate of fear. Human rights monitors documented a sharp increase in deaths due to mob violence, with rates reaching decade-long highs. Although political institutions began rebuilding under interim leadership, the overall deterioration in law and order contributed to heightened protection concerns throughout the year. At the time of writing, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party won a landslide majority in first election since the uprising, promising sweeping constitutional reforms.

In 2025, Bangladeshis lodged 37,000 applications for asylum, down by 15% compared to 2024 but still ranking them fourth among all citizenships applying for asylum in the EU+. According to Frontex, Bangladeshis were also the citizenship most frequently detected illegally crossing the external border, especially in the Central Mediterranean. Click here for a comparison of asylum applications and detections at the border. The first instance recognition rate for Bangladeshis has remained low at just 3% (see section on Recognition Rates), and Bangladesh was included in the first EU list of safe countries of origin.

For an overview of human rights, security and socioeconomic under the interim government in Bangladesh read the EUAA Country Focus 2025.

Turks

Turkish asylum applications fell from more than 100,000 in 2023 to just 33,000 applications in 2025, placing Turkish nationals as the fifth-largest group among all asylum seekers in the EU+. Türkiye's domestic climate remained repressive, with economic challenges and institutional decay continuing to shape outward mobility. These conditions contributed to surging applications in earlier years. However, applications halved in 2024 and fell further in 2025.

Analysts have linked the decline primarily to diminished pull factors, including stricter border controls along the Western Balkans Route and lower recognition rates (just 13% in 2025, see section on Recognition Rates) which might discourage potential applicants. Turkish media have likewise noted that many people leaving for predominantly economic reasons struggle to meet asylum criteria. Click here for a comparison of asylum applications and detections of illegal border crossing.

In sum, persistent pressure factors in Türkiye continue to act as viable push factors, but tighter border controls and reduced prospects of being granted protection might be deterring many from seeking asylum in the EU+. This interpretation is supported by a rise in the proportion of repeated applications, which increased from around 5% of all Turkish applications in 2023 to more than 20% in 2025, suggesting that a growing share of Turkish applicants are already present in the EU+ rather than newly arriving from their country of origin.

At the same time, Turkish nationals continue to pursue regular mobility channels in record numbers. In 2024, around one million Schengen visas were issued to Turkish citizens, mainly by Greece and Germany, indicating sustained outward mobility despite declining asylum applications.

In 2025, the EUAA and Türkiye renewed their commitment to strengthening Turkish asylum and reception systems in line with standards of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Read more in the Roadmap for Cooperation between the EUAA and Türkiye 2025–2028.

Visa-free Citizenships

In the past two years, around a quarter of all asylum applications in the EU+ are lodged by nationals of countries with visa-free access to the Schengen area, meaning they can arrive on flights legally and directly from their home countries. Spain tends to receive the largest share of such applications, with visa-free nationals usually accounting for around three quarters of its total inflow.

Venezuelans, Ukrainians and Colombians represent the majority of visa-free asylum applicants in the EU+: in 2025, Venezuelans lodged a record 91,000 applications, ranking second among all nationalities, while Ukrainians lodged 25,000 and Colombians 22,000.

In late 2025, the European Parliament approved a reform of the EU visa suspension mechanism covering the 61 countries whose nationals can currently travel visa-free to the Schengen area for short stays. The mechanism allows the European Commission to reintroduce visa requirements when there are security concerns, including substantial increases in unsuccessful asylum applications.

Repeated Applications

In 2025, repeated applications, those submitted in the same receiving country after a final decision on a previous application, increased to 15% of all asylum applications in the EU+.

This share typically hovers around 10%, but in 2025 it was driven markedly higher by a surge in repeated applications from Afghan women following updated legal and policy guidance.

Indeed, among Afghan applicants in 2025, 41% of all applications were repeated, up sharply from 14% in the previous year. Other nationalities with a high proportion of repeated applications included Haitians (45%), Turks (21%), and Guineans and Iraqis (19%). In contrast, several citizenships recorded very low levels of repeated applications, likely indicating that they had newly arrived in the receiving country, most notably Peruvians (1%), Venezuelans (2%), Sudanese (3%), Colombians and Bangladeshis (4%), and Syrians (6%).

Repeated applications also tended to be geographically concentrated. Almost all repeated applications by Afghans were lodged in Germany, while the majority of repeated applications by Haitians and Guineans were lodged in France.

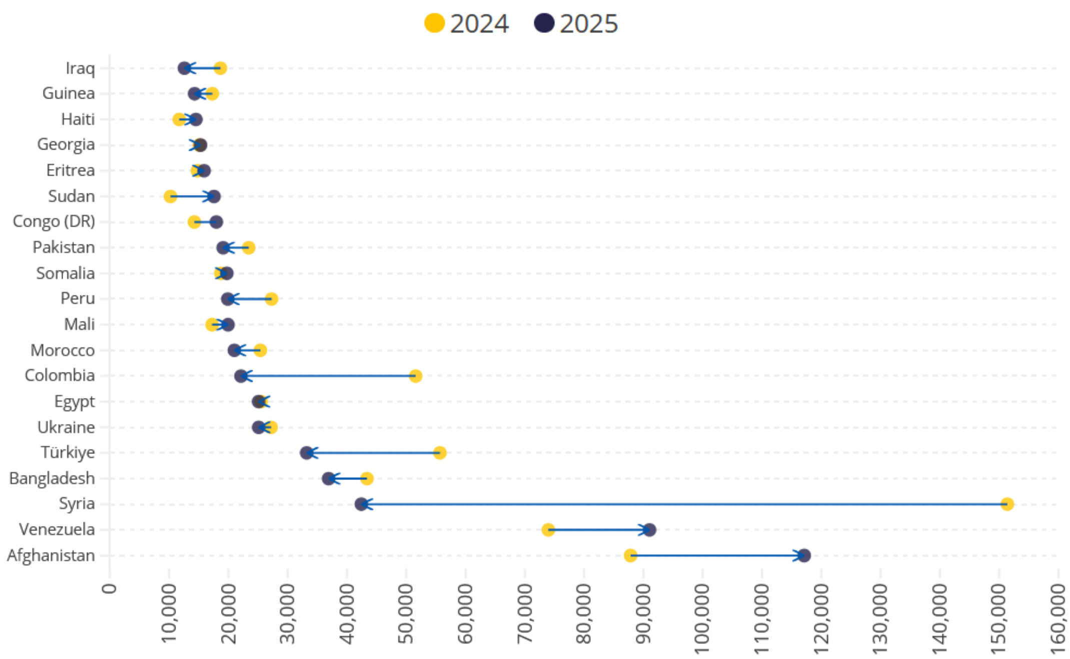
Citizenships Trends per Member State

This report focuses on trends at the EU+ level, which are summarised in Figure 4. The figure presents the 20 citizenships lodging the highest number of asylum applications in 2025 (blue), compared with 2024 (yellow), thereby highlighting both the scale of applications and year-on-year changes.

At the lower end of the chart, Afghans and Venezuelans lodged the most asylum applications in 2025. Both citizenships recorded notable increases compared with 2024, with Afghan applications rising by 33% and Venezuelan applications by 23%. In contrast, Syrians, who by far constituted the largest group of applicants in 2024, saw a dramatic decline in 2025, with applications falling by 72%.

Other pronounced shifts are also evident. Applications lodged by Turkish nationals declined by 40%, while Colombian applications fell even more sharply, decreasing by 57% year on year. Taken together, these contrasting movements illustrate how the overall decline in EU+ asylum applications in 2025 conceals highly divergent nationality-specific trajectories, shaped by a combination of legal, political and policy-related factors. Click here for an interactive chart.

Figure 4. Asylum applications for main citizenships, 2025 (blue) versus 2024 (yellow)



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2025.

Click for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

Figures at the EU+ level provide an essential overview, but they can conceal important changes taking place within individual EU+ countries. To illustrate this, the online interactive version of Figure 4 allows users to explore trends for the 20 main citizenships across the five EU+ countries receiving the highest number of applications.

Several distinct national patterns emerge:

- **Germany:** Asylum trends in 2025 were dominated by three citizenships. Afghan applications increased sharply (+83%), but this rise was largely offset by steep declines among Syrians (-69%) and Turks (-53%).
- **France:** The overall asylum situation reflected contributions from a wider range of citizenships. The three largest groups all lodged more applications in 2025 than in 2024, including Afghans (+15%), Haitians (+24%) and Congolese (DR) (+31%).
- **Spain:** Trends were shaped primarily by two citizenships. Venezuelan applications increased further (+29%), while Colombian applications declined sharply (-64%), producing a pronounced divergence within the overall total.
- **Italy:** Bangladeshis remained by far the largest group of applicants in both 2024 and 2025, despite a moderate decline between the two years (-17%). Peruvians and Egyptians followed at a distance, with application numbers remaining broadly stable year on year.

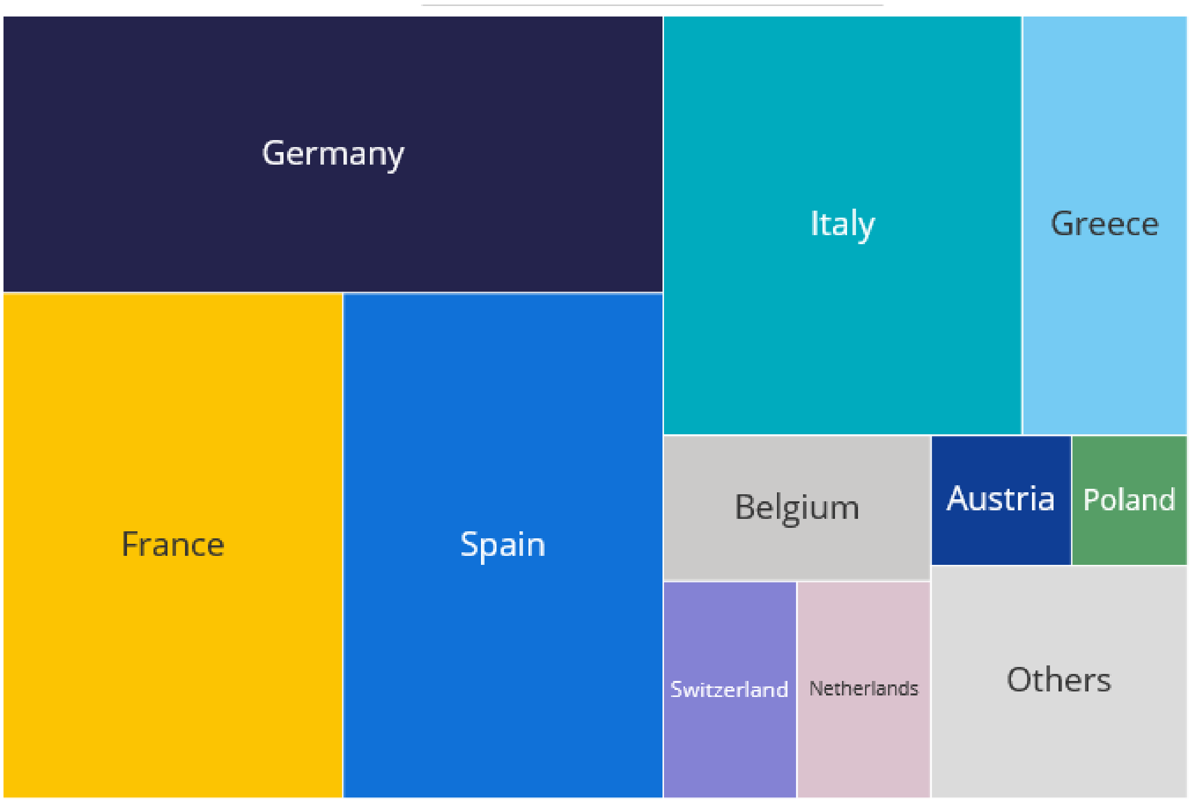
- **Greece:** Syrians lodged the most applications in 2024, but numbers fell dramatically in 2025 (-84%). Afghans became the largest group in 2025, with application numbers remaining broadly stable compared to the previous year, while applications by Sudanese nationals increased markedly (+447%).

Taken together, these examples show that EU-level trends often reflect the net effect of sharply diverging national dynamics. The interactive chart therefore provides critical additional context, revealing how changes among specific citizenships can offset one another across different EU+ countries.

Destination Countries

In 2025, Germany remained the foremost destination for asylum seekers in the EU+, receiving around one fifth of all applications lodged in the EU+ (163,000). This was despite a substantial year-on-year decline of 31%. As outlined in the previous section, trends in Germany were shaped by a rapid reduction in applications from Syrians, combined with an increase in applications lodged by Afghans—many of whom were already present in the country and submitted repeated claims.

Figure 5. Applications for asylum in the EU+, by country of origin, 2025



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

France also received close to one fifth of all EU+ asylum applications (152,000), with volumes remaining broadly stable compared to 2024. Spain followed closely, registering 143,000 applications, accounting for 17% of the EU+ total, despite a decline of 15% compared to the previous year. In this way, Spain remained one of the key destinations in the EU+, even as overall volumes moderated.

Italy recorded a similar pattern, with 134,000 applications lodged in 2025, representing a year-on-year decline of 16%. A comparable decrease was observed in Greece, where applications fell by 16% to 62,000, accounting for around 8% of the EU+ total.

As illustrated in the chart, asylum applications in 2025 remained highly concentrated in a small number of EU+ countries, with Germany, France, Spain, Italy and Greece together accounting for 80% all applications lodged across the EU+.

Some citizenships applying for asylum in the EU+ are highly concentrated in a single receiving country, often to an extent that effectively ties that citizenship EU-level trend to developments in a single national asylum system. The most extreme example in 2025 was Haitians, who effectively lodged all (99%) their applications in France, reflecting strong linguistic, historical and diaspora links, as well as proximity to French Guiana. A similarly pronounced concentration was observed among Venezuelans, 94% of whom applied in Spain, underscoring Spain's role as the primary entry and protection destination for this group within the EU+.

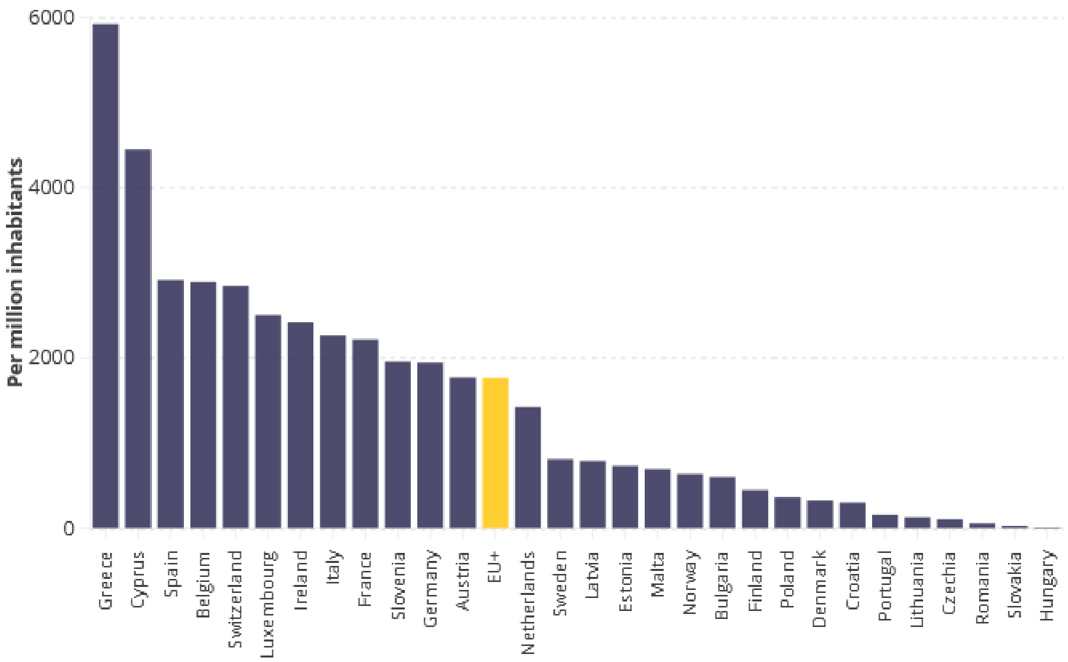
Other citizenships also showed very strong, though slightly less absolute, concentration patterns. Malian applications were overwhelmingly concentrated in Spain (80%), while Peruvians (77%) and Bangladeshis (76%) were largely concentrated in Italy. In a similar vein, Congolese (DR) applicants displayed a marked concentration in France, where 75% of all EU+ applications were lodged.

Taken together, these patterns highlight that for several citizenships, asylum dynamics at the EU+ level are largely shaped by developments in a single EU+ country, rather than reflecting a broadly distributed EU-wide phenomenon. This has important implications for EU-level situational awareness, as sudden policy or operational changes in one country can disproportionately affect overall EU+ trends for specific citizenships.

Asylum Applications per Capita

Comparing absolute numbers of asylum applications across EU+ countries can be misleading, as national asylum and reception systems differ markedly in size and capacity. To provide a more nuanced assessment of pressure on national authorities, this analysis considers the number of asylum applications lodged **per million inhabitants**, using Eurostat population data. This metric allows trends to be assessed relative to population size rather than in absolute terms alone.

Figure 6. Applications for asylum million inhabitants by receiving country, 2025



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026. Population sizes: Eurostat (DEMO_GIND) extracted on 5 February 2025.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

In 2025, Greece recorded the highest number of asylum applications per capita in the EU+. Based on around 62,000 applications and a population of approximately 10 million, this corresponds to roughly 5,900 applications per million inhabitants, or one application for every 169 residents. This places Greece clearly at the top of the EU+ ranking in per-capita terms, underlining the sustained pressure on its asylum system despite a decline in absolute volumes compared to earlier years. According to this analysis, Cyprus was the next country in terms of applications per capita, with one application for every 225 residents.

This per-capita analysis also highlights how very different absolute numbers can translate into similar levels of relative pressure. For example, Spain and Belgium received markedly different numbers of applications in 2025 (143,000 versus 34,000) but their different population sizes resulted in broadly comparable pressure per capita (1 application for approximately every 345 residents).

These results align with the first European Annual Asylum and Migration Report which identified Greece and Cyprus as receiving the most applications relative to their GDP and population size. The report concluded that, Greece and Cyprus were under disproportionate migratory pressure mostly due to asylum applications, whereas Italy and Spain primarily were also under pressure because of disembarkations following search and rescue operations. As a result, these four EU+ countries will have access to the Annual Solidarity Pool when Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 enters into application.

At the other end of the scale, Hungary stands out due to an exceptionally low number of asylum applications relative to its population. This reflects Hungary's legal framework, which currently restricts access to the asylum procedure by requiring applications to be initiated at Hungarian diplomatic missions outside the EU. As a result, per-capita indicators for Hungary do not reflect asylum pressure in the same way as in other EU+ countries and should therefore be interpreted with caution. At the same time, Hungary has continued to grant protection selectively, including to a former Polish deputy justice minister under investigation in Poland over allegations of misuse of public funds.

In June 2024, the CJEU fined Hungary for breaching EU asylum rules, a ruling that Hungary has since contested. More broadly, human rights groups have continued to raise concerns regarding rule-of-law standards and the protection of fundamental rights in Hungary, issues that are central to the effective functioning of asylum systems across the EU+. For more information consult the EUAA National Asylum Developments Database.

Recognition Rates

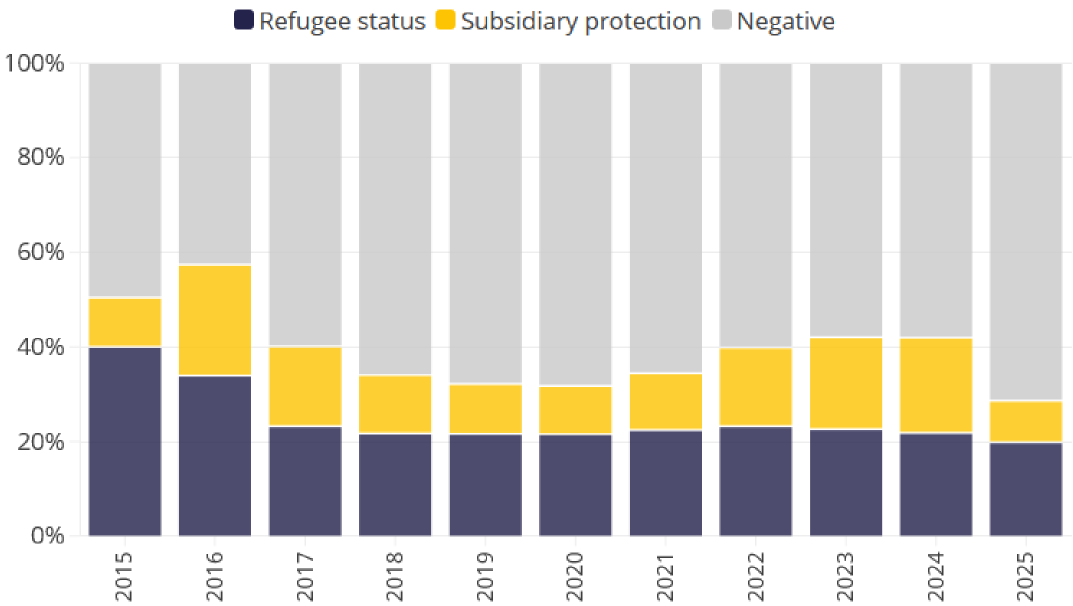
Main Citizenships

Over the past three years, the recognition rate—which reflects the percentage of asylum applicants granted refugee status or subsidiary protection—has fluctuated around 40% at first instance, with refugee status usually being granted more frequently than subsidiary protection.

In 2025, the EU+ recognition rate fell sharply, reaching 29% for the year as a whole, the lowest yearly level on record. This decline was driven primarily by a sharp reduction in decisions issued to Syrian applicants, who historically accounted for a large share of positive decisions at EU+ level.

This development is largely the result of procedural factors and the issuance of more decisions to low recognition rate nationalities. In several EU+ countries, the processing of Syrian asylum claims was partially suspended in 2025 pending greater clarity on the security and political situation in Syria. As a result, decisions continued to be taken only in specific circumstances, such as cases where an assessment of current conditions in Syria was not required, including applications from Syrians already granted protection in another EU+ country (*e.g.*, Belgium, Germany). In addition, some Syrian applicants withdrew their asylum applications, which, in certain national statistical systems, is recorded as a negative decision. Given the previously large weight of Syrian cases in overall EU+ decision making, these procedural changes had a disproportionate impact on the overall recognition rate.

Figure 7. Annual recognition rates at first instance by decision outcome, 2015–2025



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

More broadly, the EU+ recognition rate is a composite indicator, shaped by differing citizenship profiles and evolving protection needs. Recognition rates vary widely by nationality and tend to remain relatively stable over time. Examples of such relatively stable rates include Bangladeshis who have a 2025 recognition rate of 3%, and Pakistanis at 12%.

Several citizenships, however, have experienced marked changes in recent years, all of which can be seen in the interactive version of Figure 7:

- **Türkiye:** a slow but steady decline in the recognition rate, from 54% in 2019 to 13% in 2025
- **Afghans**: a strong increase over the past four years, particularly in refugee status which rose from below 20% in 2017 to 68% in 2025
- **Haiti**: a dramatic rise in the recognition rate from less than 20% in 2021 to nearly 90% in 2025, with the vast majority of positive decisions granting subsidiary protection
- **Mali**: recognition rate increased sharply from less than 20% in 2019 to more than 80% in 2024 and 2025
- **Iraq**: a long-term downward trend, reaching 19% in 2025

It should be noted that some applicants, especially those from Venezuela and to a lesser extent from Somalia and Pakistan are often granted national (rather than international) forms of protection which are unregulated at the EU level and are therefore considered as negative asylum decisions in these statistics. Also, the recognition rates presented here are based on first instance decisions issued by asylum authorities and thus do not account for cases decided by the judiciary and other authorities at second or higher instance, i.e. in appeal and review.

Across the EU+

The aim of the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) is to foster a harmonised implementation of the CEAS across the EU+, with the objective that an application for international protection would receive the same decision regardless of where it is lodged. Recognition rates, the share of asylum decisions granting refugee status or subsidiary protection, are sometimes cited as an indicator of the degree of such harmonisation across EU+ countries.

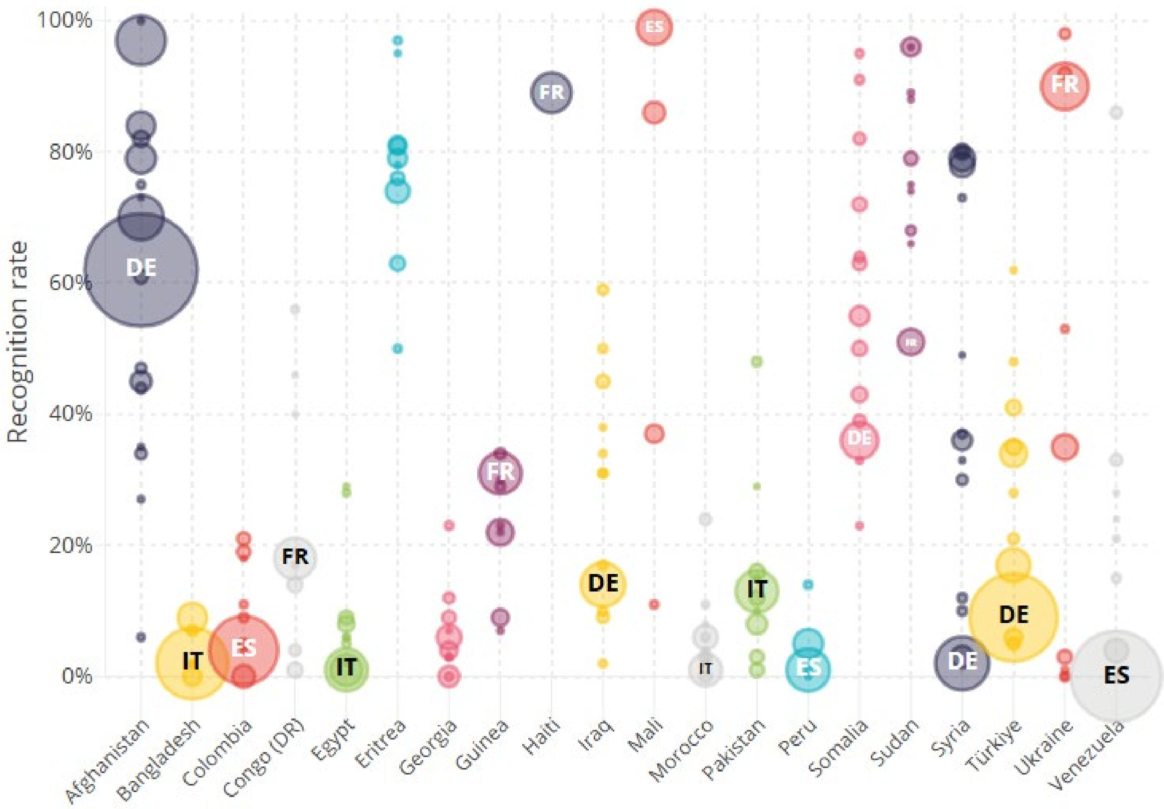
It is important to recognise, however, that several factors can lead to variation in recognition rates. For example, the assessment of an asylum application cannot be reduced to a single characteristic such as nationality. Differences in applicant profiles, national jurisprudence, national policies, and the application of specific legal concepts may all influence outcomes and result in observable variation in recognition rates.

For more information, read the EUAA Pilot Convergence Analysis which examines main factors driving differences in recognition rates as well as on measures to achieve greater convergence.

Even under fully harmonised decision-making practices, variation in outcomes would still be expected. This reflects the non-random distribution of asylum applicants across the EU+, as displaced persons often move towards countries where they have family ties, social networks or established migration communities. Applicants originating from similar locations and displacement contexts therefore tend to cluster in specific EU+ countries, reinforcing nationality-specific migration patterns over time. As a result, EU+ countries may process systematically different applicant profiles within the same nationality, leading to different recognition rates even when the legal framework and decision-making standards are applied consistently.

Against this background, Figure 8 illustrates recognition rates across the EU+ for selected citizenships. Within each column, circles of the same colour represent different issuing countries; circle size reflects the number of decisions issued, while vertical position indicates the corresponding recognition rate.

Figure 8. Recognition rates for the main citizenships across EU+ countries, 2025



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

Notes: In each column, bubbles represent different EU+ countries. The sizes depict the number of decisions issued, while the placement on the vertical (y) axis illustrates the recognition rate. The EU+ country issuing the most decisions is labelled for each citizenship. Bubbles containing fewer than 1000 decisions are not shown.

Viewed from the perspective of individual nationalities, three broad patterns emerge from this analysis. First, a small number of citizenships display consistently high recognition rates across the EU+, pointing to broadly shared assessments of protection needs. This is most clearly the case for Eritreans (76%) and Sudanese (70%) whose recognition rates remain high across most EU+ countries.

Second, several citizenships show consistently low recognition rates across the EU+, suggesting widespread assessments that most applicants do not meet the criteria for international protection. This group includes Bangladeshis (3%), Moroccans (4%), Egyptians (3%) Peruvians (3%) and Colombians (5%), whose recognition rates remain low irrespective of where decisions are issued.

A third group of nationalities exhibits rather variable recognition rates across the EU+, with 2025 recognition rates ranging from very low to very high. For Ukrainians, recognition rates in 2025 ranged from above 90% in some EU+ countries to near zero in others. Malians show an even starker contrast, with recognition rates close to 100% in some EU+ countries and around 10% in others. For Iraqis, recognition rates range broadly from around 50–60% at the upper end to below 10% in some cases, while for Somalis they span from around 20–30% in some countries to over 90% in others.

A final nuance concerns what the overall recognition rate in Figure 8 can and cannot show. Even where recognition rates appear similar across EU+ countries for a given citizenship, the *composition* of decisions may differ substantially. Some EU+ countries grant mainly refugee status, while others grant mainly subsidiary protection. At the same time, negative decisions included in Figure 8 should not be interpreted as implying that applicants receive no protection of any kind, as national forms of protection may be granted following a negative decision for international protection. As a result, the chart can mask two distinct sources of variation: differences in the ratio between refugee status and subsidiary protection among positive decisions, and differences in the extent to which negative international-protection decisions coincide with grants of national protection.

For example, Eritreans are among the nationalities with consistently high recognition rates across the EU+, a pattern that might suggest similar a high degree of convergence in protection outcomes. However, a closer examination of the type of protection granted reveals important differences. In particular, the Netherlands (80% of decisions) and to a lesser extent Germany (20% of decisions) and Switzerland (19%) often grant subsidiary protection, whereas other EU+ countries more frequently grant refugee status. For an interactive chart, click here.

Similarly, Sudanese applicants have consistently high recognition rates across the EU+ but this apparent convergence also conceals differences in the type of protection granted. In several key issuing countries, including Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland, the majority of positive decisions for Sudanese take the form of subsidiary protection, while Greece stands out for granting refugee status in a much larger share of cases. For an interactive chart, click here.

Finally, Afghans also have relatively high recognition rates across the EU+, yet a closer look at the composition of decisions reveals substantial variation in protection outcomes. While refugee status accounts for the majority of positive decisions in several key issuing countries such as Austria, Greece and Germany, other EU+ countries grant subsidiary protection in a much larger share of cases. This is particularly evident in Italy, where subsidiary protection represents half of all decisions and where a non-negligible share of Afghan applicants (16%) are granted a national form of protection. To visualise some of the discussed decision-making practices, click here and to learn more read EUAA Country Guidance on Afghanistan and EUAA Country Focus on Afghanistan.

≤20% Recognition Rates

A new feature of the EU Asylum and Migration Pact is the mandatory border procedure, which as of June 2026 will apply to certain categories of asylum seekers including those coming from countries with low recognition rates for international protection. The aim of the border procedure is to make a quick assessment at the EU's external borders of whether applications are unfounded or inadmissible. People in the asylum border procedure would not be authorised to enter the territory of the EU. For more details read the Asylum Procedures Regulation Art. 42(j) 2024/1348.

In 2025, some 49% of applications were lodged by citizenships who had recognition rates of 20% or less in 2024. This estimation was calculated using EUAA data, plus to ensure statistical reliability, our calculations excluded citizenships that received fewer than 1,000 decisions in 2024. This exclusion is necessary because, when the sample size is small, a few additional positive or negative decisions can dramatically alter the calculated recognition rate, potentially leading to unstable or misleading estimates.

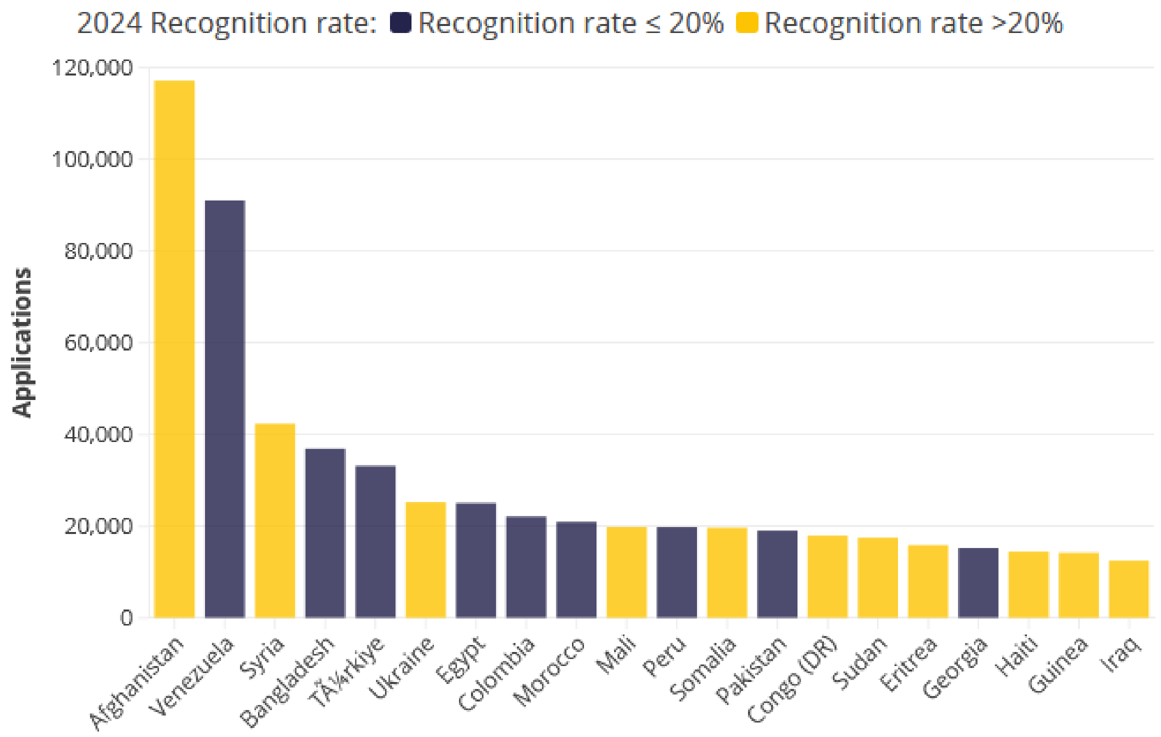
Figure 9 shows the main citizenships that applied for asylum in 2025, separated into whether or not they fall into the category of having a recognition rate of 20% or less in 2024. Applications visualised in the chart capture three quarters (73%) of all applications lodged in 2025.

In the context of asylum, the term 'safe country' refers to countries which generally do not generate protection needs for their people. In April 2025, the European Commission published a proposal of seven countries of origin considered safe at the Union level. A political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council of the EU was reached in December 2025 but a formal adoption is still pending. For an overview of the state of play of safe country concepts currently see EUAA, *Overview of the Implementation of Safe Country Concepts, Situational Update Issue No 24* of 23 January 2026.

In practice, the application of this list means Member States will use an accelerated procedure to individually assess asylum applications from nationals of these countries. The proposed list of safe countries of origin includes Bangladesh, Colombia, Egypt, India, Kosovo[1], Morocco and Tunisia which together accounted for 16% of all applications lodged in 2025, as well as nationals of all EU candidate countries. Read the EUAA, *Overview of the Implementation of Safe Country Concepts, Situational Update No 22* of 24 July 2025, for the state of play of EU+ countries implementing safe country concepts in the processing of asylum applications.

[1] Kosovo mentioned without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ opinion on Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Figure 9. Applications lodged in 2025 for the main citizenships, by 2024 recognition rate



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

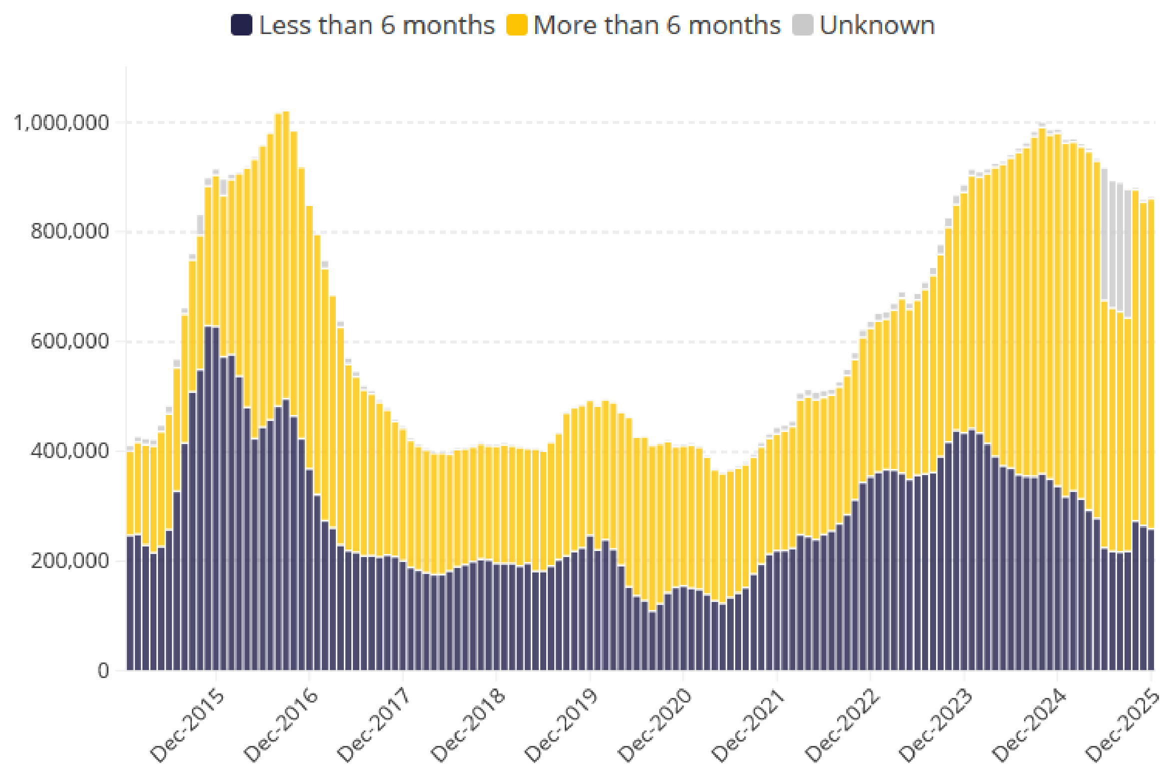
Pending Cases

First Instance

While an asylum application is awaiting a first-instance decision, it remains part of the caseload under examination by national asylum authorities, commonly referred to as first-instance pending cases. The number of pending cases is a key indicator of the workload faced by asylum authorities and the pressure on national asylum systems, including reception capacity.

While asylum applications in the EU+ declined by around 19% in 2025, the stock of pending cases fell more modestly. The total number of first instance pending cases decreased from approximately 986,000 at the end of 2024 to 863,000 by the end of 2025, a reduction of about 13%. This level remains among the highest on record and is more than double the number of pending cases reported at the end of several recent years, highlighting the persistence of structural pressure on asylum systems despite fluctuations in application volumes.

Figure 10. Pending cases at first instance at the end of each month by duration



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

In general, citizenships lodging the most applications also tend to account for the largest volumes of pending cases but changes in the overall stock of pending cases in 2025 were uneven across nationalities. The largest caseload was Venezuelan pending cases which increased by nearly a third, from around 93,000 at the end of 2024 to 120,000 by the end of 2025. In contrast, pending cases for Syrian nationals declined moderately over the same period (from approximately 109,000 to 100,000), following a dramatic decline in the number of applications being lodged. While several EU+ countries temporary paused processing Syrian cases in late 2024, partial resumptions took place during 2025.

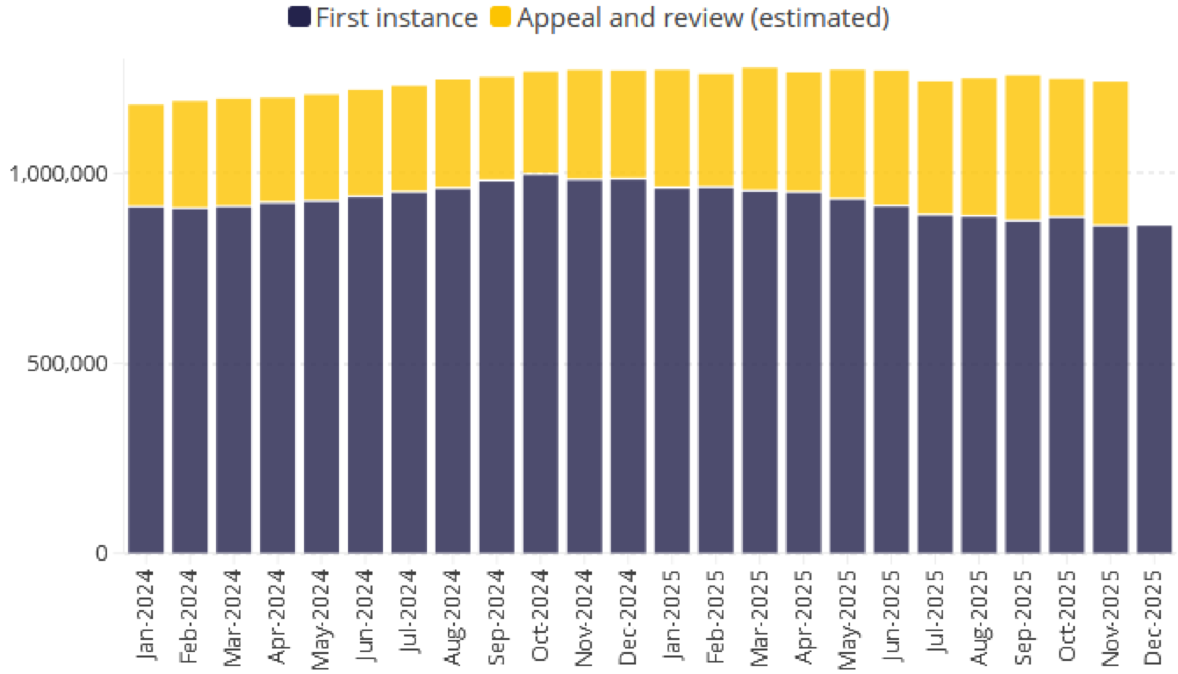
Several other major nationalities recorded substantial reductions in pending cases, including Colombians (from 98,000 to 70,000), Afghans (from 62,000 to 43,000) and Turkish nationals (from 66,000 to 23,000), pointing to accelerated decision making and/or declining inflows for these groups. By contrast, changes among other nationalities were more limited: pending cases for Peruvians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Egyptians declined only modestly, while Eritrean and Moroccan pending cases increased slightly year on year.

All Instances

Under the Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS), EU+ asylum authorities regularly report to the EUAA the number of cases that they have pending at first instance—that is, newly lodged applications still awaiting an initial decision. However, this indicator does not reflect the full scope of the caseload being processed across the EU+ because there are also many cases pending in appeal and in review: cases pending in appeal refer to those that have been challenged before the judiciary, where applicants contest the first instance decision on points of fact and/or law. At the same time, other cases are pending in review, meaning the asylum authority has been requested to re-examine its original decision—often due to procedural concerns or new information.

To get a more comprehensive picture of the total number of all pending cases, Eurostat maintains an indicator, which tracks the number of asylum cases pending at all procedural instances. According to this indicator, at the end of November 2025 (latest available data), there were approximately 1.2 million asylum cases pending across the EU+. This number is now at near record levels, and even exceeds the refugee crisis of 2015–2016.

Figure 11. Total pending cases at first instance at the end of each month by instance



Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026.

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

Migrants from Ukraine

Survey with Asylum-related Migrants (SAM)

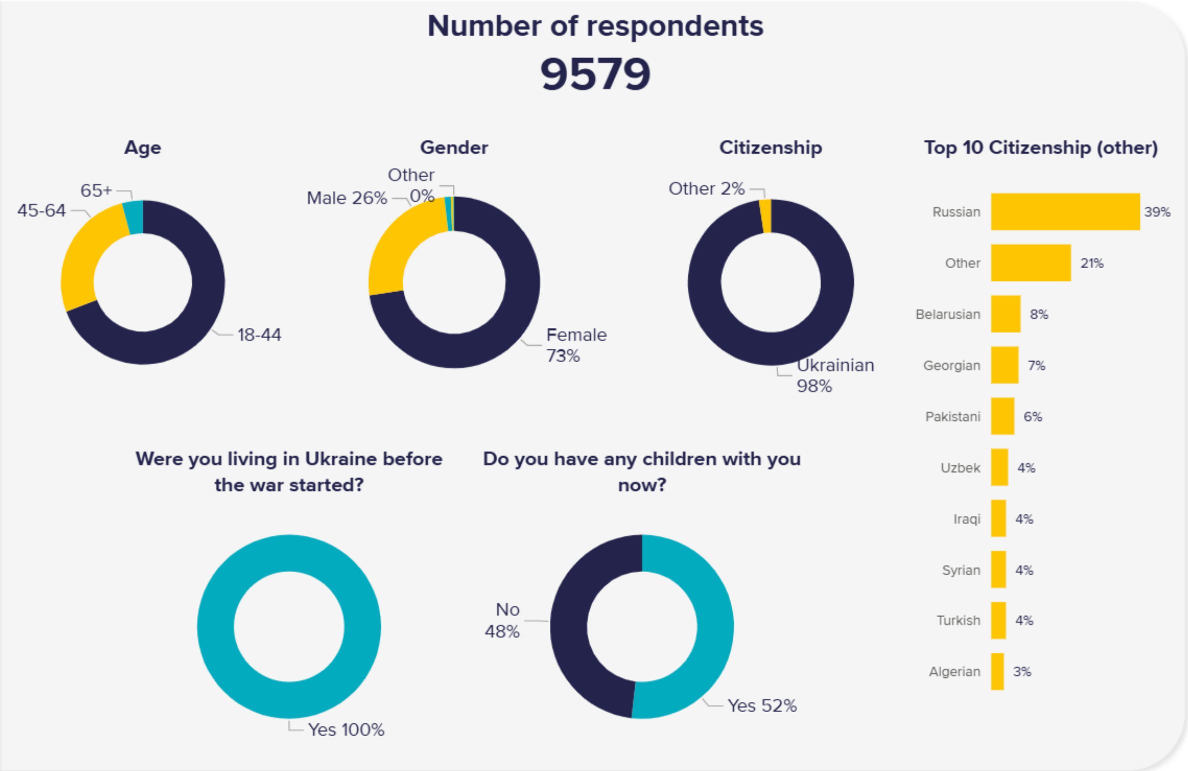
The Survey with Asylum-related Migrants (SAM) collects testimonies directly from people seeking international protection across the EU+. Online, self-administered surveys can be completed on smartphones and by large numbers of migrants at the same time. The objective of SAM is to collect data on push and pull factors, travel histories, and migrants' future aspirations. The results facilitate general preparedness to deal with a high number of arrivals and inform operational partners about the needs and expectations of migrants.

On 11 April 2022, the EUAA launched the Survey of Arriving Migrants for Displaced People from Ukraine, with the support of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Demographics of the responses since February 2023, as of 10 December 2025, are shown In Figure 12 but for more detailed information read the EUAA Movements and Returns report and the Voices report, drafted in collaboration with OECD and Gradus Research based in Kyiv.

In September 2025 the EUAA published an hoc Report on the situation in Ukraine, displacement to the EU+ as well as drivers of migration. The multi-source report draws on EUAA data on the asylum situation, Eurostat data on temporary protection, EUAA surveys of persons displaced from Ukraine, a Gradus Research Company survey with Ukrainians in Ukraine, interview with an expert, and open-source information. Read the full report here: Situation in Ukraine and Displacement to the EU+: Trends, Drivers and Future Prospects.

The survey is accessible in Ukrainian, Russian and English at: https://tellusyourstorysurvey.eu/.

Figure 12. Demographic breakdown of survey respondents



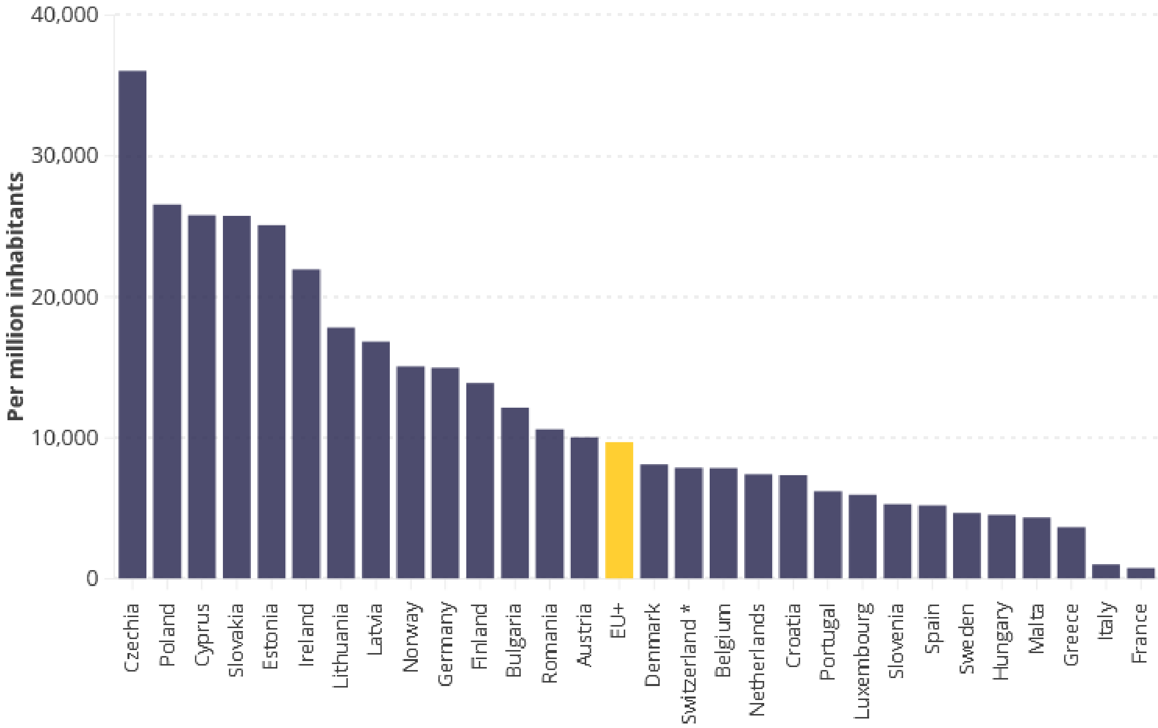
Last update: 10 December 2025

Temporary Protection per Capita

In addition to asylum applications, at the end of 2025, approximately 4.5 million individuals were benefiting from temporary protection in the EU+. This figure has remained relatively stable since early 2023 but continues to significantly contribute to the overall number of people in the EU+ with protection needs. Temporary protection is granted under the 2001 Temporary Protection Directive, which was activated for the first time in 2022 in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, enabling the rapid and effective provision of assistance to those displaced to the EU+. For further details, refer to the EUAA report on the Application of the Temporary Protection Directive.

At the end of 2025, nearly half of all beneficiaries of temporary protection were in Germany (1.2 million) and Poland (1 million) according to Eurostat data. To place these figures in comparative context, Figure 13 illustrates the number of beneficiaries of temporary protection per capita across EU+ countries, highlighting substantial variation once population size is taken into account.

Figure 13. Number of persons benefitting from Temporary Protection per million inhabitants by receiving country, December 2025



Source: Population sizes: Eurostat (DEMO_GIND) extracted on 5 February 2025. Beneficiaries of temporary protection: Eurostat (MIGR_ASYTPSM) extracted on 10 February 2026. * = older data

Click here for an interactive chart. Click here for Data Tables: EU+ Countries and Citizenships.

For instance, at the end of 2025 Czechia continued to host the most beneficiaries per capita equating to 36,000 per million inhabitants, equivalent to one beneficiary for every 28 residents. Available analyses suggest that many displaced Ukrainians in Czechia entered employment relatively quickly and achieved a comparatively high level of integration, reflecting the presence of a well-established Ukrainian diaspora and prior exposure to the Czech language. Indeed, more than 200,000 Ukrainian nationals were residing in Czechia immediately prior to the full-scale Russian invasion. Poland and Slovakia hosted markedly different absolute numbers of beneficiaries (approximately 966,000 and 139,000, respectively), yet due to their different population sizes exhibited similar per-capita levels of temporary protection, with each hosting nearly one beneficiary for every 40 residents. Key pull factors towards these countries include geographic proximity to Ukraine, established diaspora communities, and linguistic and cultural proximity, notably similar Slavic languages.

At the other end of the scale, France and Italy hosted relatively small numbers of beneficiaries in per-capita terms, with around 750 beneficiaries per million inhabitants, corresponding to approximately one beneficiary for every 1,300 residents in France and one for every 970 residents in Italy.

The Council of the EU has extended temporary protection for people fleeing Russia's aggression against Ukraine until 4 March 2027. Read more here.

Annexes – Data Tables

Figure 14. Key first instance indicators by receiving EU+ country, 2025

■ First time applications ■ Repeated applications

EU+ country	Asylum applications	Top 3 countries	Type of application	Decisions issued	Positive decisions	Pending cases	Withdrawn applications	Resettlement arrivals
Germany	162,664	AF SY TR		273,983	75,214	101,606	20,202	2,227
France	152,291	AF HT CD		151,041	60,465	55,252	1,260	3,057
Spain	143,170	VE ML CO		141,674	17,418	233,247	16,344	859
Italy	133,520	BD PE EG		115,899	17,453	257,482	697	915
Greece	61,631	AF EG SD		45,933	26,747	28,317	13,986	0
Belgium	34,425	AF PS ER		26,870	8,211	44,502	5,964	44
Switzerland	25,781	AF ER TR		21,990	11,968	9,487	3,809	40
Netherlands	25,747	SY ER TR		18,261	6,364	49,683	4,117	541
Austria	16,284	AF SY SO		17,469	10,139	10,126	1,942	0
Poland	13,396	UA BY RU		7,591	3,675	12,734	2,919	0
Ireland	13,155	SO NG PK		19,035	3,303	15,314	525	290
Sweden	8,606	AF IR SY		8,441	1,610	3,221	797	894
Cyprus	4,357	SY NG CD		8,591	677	15,921	3,712	0
Slovenia	4,172	MA EG DZ		230	70	752	2,464	0
Bulgaria	3,895	MA AF SY		4,606	982	1,632	2,658	0
Norway	3,587	UA SY ER		2,133	567	5,128	1,165	656
Finland	2,549	AF IQ SO		3,812	1,859	1,779	523	729
Denmark	1,978	ER AF SY		878	324	2,190	619	358
Portugal	1,763	CO CN AO		488	289	8,730	875	193
Luxembourg	1,707	ER SY DZ		1,090	575	2,673	251	0
Latvia	1,473	SO AF TJ		507	148	559	625	0
Romania	1,197	SY PS IQ		994	569	101	604	140
Czechia	1,184	VN UA UZ		929	197	627	260	0
Croatia	1,179	TR RU SY		295	14	506	13,650	0
Estonia	1,008	UA RU BY		803	745	292	51	0
Malta	401	SY CO BD		394	134	411	175	0
Lithuania	381	BY SO RU		307	133	162	118	0
Slovakia	162	UA AF BY		120	56	38	48	0
Hungary	113	SY UNK IR		52	34	50	19	0

Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026. Click here for Data Table.

Figure 15. Key first instance indicators by country of origin, 2025

Positive Negative

Country of origin	Asylum applications	Top 3 EU+ countries	First time applications	Decisions issued	Recognition rate %	Pending cases	Withdrawn applications	Resettlement arrivals
Afghanistan	117,113	DE EL FR	68,236	135,022		43,476	6,117	2,941
Venezuela	91,030	ES IT DE	89,660	61,384		120,079	982	45
Syria	42,425	DE AT EL	39,810	38,407		99,594	16,342	1,757
Bangladesh	36,901	IT FR EL	35,245	43,523		41,692	1,170	0
Türkiye	33,202	DE FR CH	26,100	71,453		22,947	11,599	16
Ukraine	25,267	FR PL NO	24,214	23,907		14,867	3,140	0
Egypt	25,091	IT EL FR	22,544	23,225		32,574	4,383	2
Colombia	22,124	ES IT DE	21,329	38,989		70,352	8,807	1
Morocco	21,002	IT ES SI	19,645	15,483		15,619	3,795	0
Mali	19,935	ES FR IT	18,776	13,755		13,821	224	0
Peru	19,895	IT ES FR	19,604	19,184		42,968	2,794	0
Somalia	19,735	DE FR IE	17,958	21,100		14,072	1,903	223
Pakistan	19,114	IT EL IE	16,724	21,151		31,963	1,750	11
Congo (DR)	17,962	FR BE DE	15,696	16,521		11,419	733	1,552
Sudan	17,564	EL FR NL	17,100	9,945		12,400	514	1,428
Eritrea	15,895	CH NL BE	15,000	13,706		22,742	935	541
Georgia	15,295	FR IT DE	12,788	12,408		11,577	1,026	0
Haiti	14,514	FR EL ES	7,949	10,722		5,105	64	0
Guinea	14,297	FR DE BE	11,548	20,301		13,049	741	2
Iraq	12,574	DE EL IT	10,201	18,928		12,033	2,754	47
Other	220,841	FR IT DE	186,658	245,302		210,173	30,606	2,377

Source: EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 4 February 2026. Click here for Data Table.

Definitions

Asylum applications/applicants include all persons who have lodged or have been included in an application for international protection as a family member in the reporting country during the reporting period.

EU+ refers to the 27 European Union Member States, plus Norway and Switzerland.

First instance decisions include all persons covered by decisions issued on granting EU-regulated international protection status (refugee or subsidiary protection) following a first time or repeated application for international protection in the first instance determination process.

Pending cases include all cases for which an asylum application has been lodged and are under consideration by the national authority responsible for the first instance determination of the application for international protection (until the first instance decision has been issued) at the end of the reference period (i.e. last day of the reference month). It refers to the "stock" of applications for which decisions at first instance are still pending.

The **EU+ recognition rate** includes EU-regulated forms of protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection) and excludes national protection forms (humanitarian reasons). 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.

Low-recognition-rate citizenships refers to citizenships that were issued decisions that granted either refugee status or subsidiary protection in ≤20% of cases. To ensure statistical reliability, we excluded citizenships that received fewer than 1,000 decisions annually. This exclusion is necessary because, when the sample size is very small, even one or two additional positive or negative decisions can dramatically alter the calculated recognition rate, potentially leading to unstable or misleading estimates.

This analysis was performed by the EUAA's Situational Awareness Unit (SAU) based on monthly data exchanged under the Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS) as of 4 February 2026. Some data were incomplete at the time of going to press. The data shared with the EUAA by EU+ countries are provisional and unvalidated and, therefore, may differ from validated data submitted to Eurostat at a later stage under Regulation (EU) 2020/851.

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EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR ASYLUM