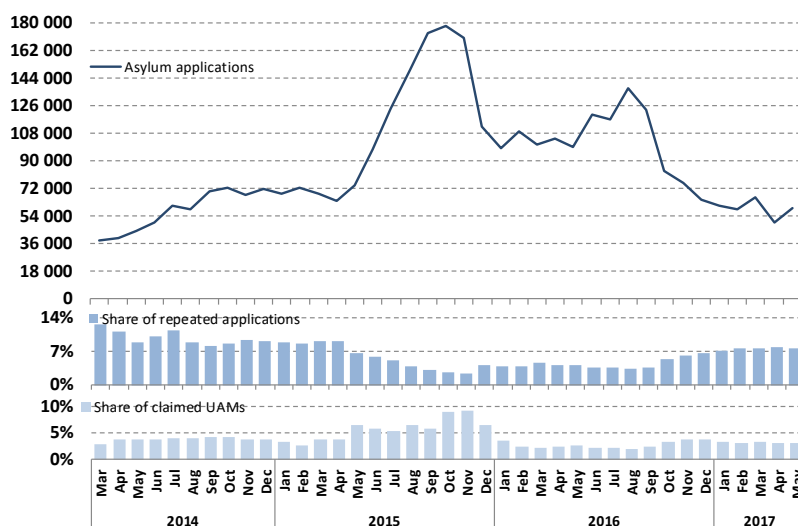


## Latest asylum trends – May 2017

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



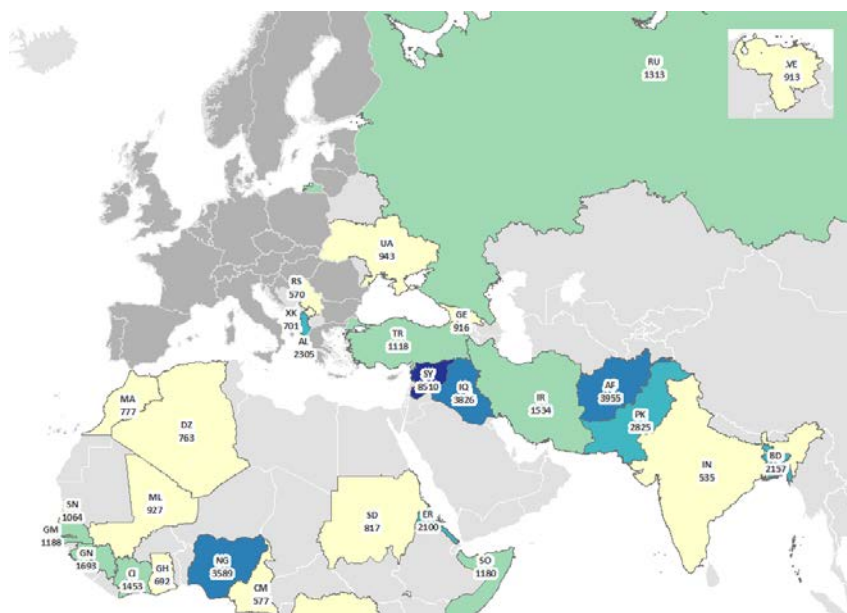
In May, EU+ countries recorded **59 128** applications for international protection.<sup>2</sup> This represented a 18 % increase compared to April. The number of applications lodged in May 2017 was 40 % lower than that of May 2016 and 21 % lower than the same month in 2015 when the refugee crisis started.

Similar to the first months of 2017, 8 % of these applicants had already lodged a claim in the same EU+ country (repeated applicants). **3 % of all applicants claimed to be unaccompanied minors (UAMs)**<sup>3</sup>

when lodging an application. The largest share of claimed UAM applicants were, as in the previous months, Afghan citizens (17 %), closely followed by Gambian citizens (8 %).

### Main countries of origin of applicants

In May, the top four citizenships of origin of applicants was composed of **Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Nigeria**. The group of applicants from Syria was still the largest (14 % of EU + total applications) twice as big as group of applicants from Afghanistan (7 % of EU + total).



In May the groups of Iraqi and Nigerian applicants were almost as numerous as group of applicants from Afghanistan, each consisting of approximately 6 %. These four citizenships together accounted for 34 % of all applications lodged in the EU+. The list of the 10 most frequent citizenships of origin was completed by Pakistan (5 %), Albania (4 %), Bangladesh (4 %), Eritrea (4 %), Guinea and Iran (3 % each). Except for Albanian and Iranian applicants all top 10 citizenships recorded more applicants than in April 2017. The highest increase was seen for Iraqi and Syrian applicants: + 34 %, and + 32 %, respectively.

<sup>1</sup>The EU+ is composed of EU28 plus Norway and Switzerland. The share of repeated applicants is the proportion of repeated applicants in the total number of applicants for international protection. The share of claimed UAMs represents the proportion of asylum applicants claiming to be below the age of 18 years in the total number of applicants rather than those assessed to be such after an age assessment has been carried out.

<sup>2</sup>Information on asylum applications were available for 29 EU+ countries. Weekly estimates were used for Malta.

<sup>3</sup>Several EU+ countries have difficulties reporting on claimed UAMs in the framework of the EPS, these figures should therefore be considered as underestimations of the actual proportion of claimed UAMs.

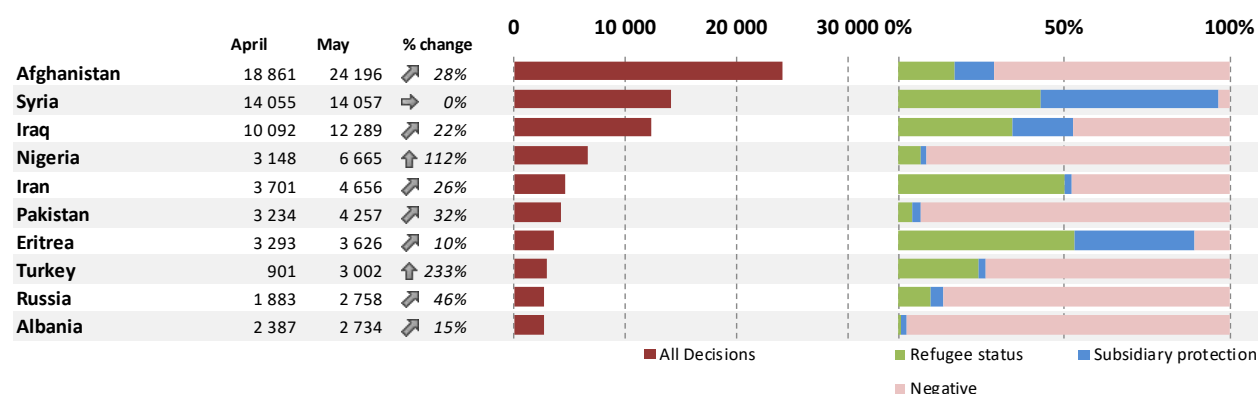
**Syria** – Syria has been the main citizenship of origin of applicants in the EU+ since April 2015. In May 2017, 8 510 Syrian applications were recorded, 32 % more than in April. Syrian nationals represented 14 % of all applicants in the EU+ in May 2017. However, they remained widespread throughout the EU+ with 20 out of 29 reporting countries counting Syrian nationals among their top-three citizenships of applicants.

**Afghanistan** – In May 2017, Afghan citizens lodged 3 955 applications in EU+ countries. This was 19 % more than in April. Similar numbers of applications lodged by Afghans were observed in first half of the 2014. Afghanistan remained the main citizenship of claimed UAMs (17 % of total). Eleven out of 29 EU+ reporting countries had Afghan applicants in their national top-three citizenships.

**Iraq** - The number of Iraqi applicants in the EU+ in May 2017 amounted to 3 826, a 34 % increase compared to April 2017. The number of Iraqi applicants exceeded Nigerian applicants, the citizenship group that was in the top three in the previous month. Iraqi nationals were in the top three citizenships of origin in 10 out of 29 EU+ countries.

**Nigeria** – In May 2017, Nigeria with 3 589 applications lodged was the fourth-ranked country of origin. However, only two EU+ countries counted Nigerian applicants among their top-three citizenships.

### Number and type of decisions issued in first instance in EU+ countries<sup>4</sup>



**In May, EU+ countries issued 115 540 first-instance decisions issued, 31 % more than in the previous month.** Exactly half of all decisions were issued to applicants from the same four countries of origin (Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and Nigeria). One out of five decisions was issued to Afghan applicants (21 %), after which the highest shares of first-instance decisions were issued to Syrian (12 %), Iraqi (11 %) and Nigerian (6 %) applicants. Among the 10 countries for which most decisions were issued in May, the highest increases in the number of decisions issued were observed for Turkish and Nigerian applicants (+233 % and +112 %, respectively). **The EU+ recognition rate dropped by 4 percentage points compared to the previous months to 37 %.** As in in previous months, more positive decisions led to refugee status (59 % of all positive decisions) than subsidiary protection (41 %). Among the 10 countries of origin to which most decisions were issued in May, the highest recognition rates related to applicants from Syria (97 %) and Eritrea (89 %). The recognition rate for Afghan nationals remained at the same level as in April (29 %). The share of positive decisions leading to refugee status was the highest among Iranian and Turkish applicants (96 % and 92 % of total positive decisions, respectively) although only 53 % and 26 % of all decisions were positive. Only 45 % of positive decisions issued to Syrian applicants led to refugee status.

### Cases awaiting a first-instance decision

At the end of May, 595 490 cases were awaiting a decision in first instance<sup>5</sup>, a 10 % decrease compared to April. Of all pending cases, 17 % involved Afghan applicants, followed by Syrian and Iraqi applicants (8% each). The number of pending cases for Afghans and Iraqi applicants decreased by 17 % and for Syrian nationals by 15 % compared to previous month. At the end of May the share of cases pending for longer than six months was 59 %, four percentage points lower than the month before when this share reached the highest level.

<sup>4</sup> Data on these indicators were only available for 29 countries (data missing for Malta).

<sup>5</sup> Data on these indicators were only available for 27 countries (data missing for Malta, Slovakia and Ireland).