

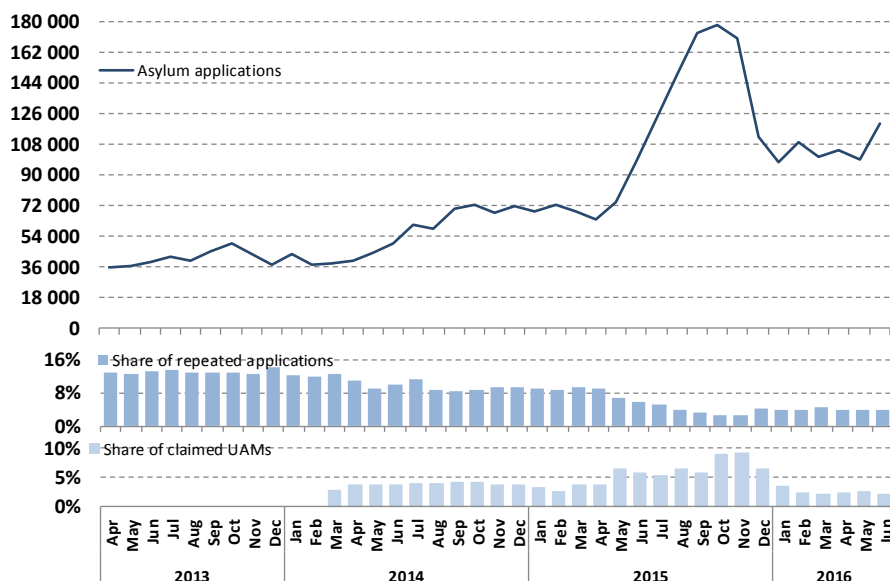
## Latest asylum trends – June 2016

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

In June 2016, EU+ countries recorded 120 471 applications for international protection, the highest number of applications since November 2015.<sup>2</sup> The number of applications rose by 21 % compared to May, when EU+ countries counted 99 187 applications. The current month also remained at a higher level than June 2015, when 97 462 applications were recorded. For the first half of the year 2016, more than 632 000 claims for international protection were lodged in

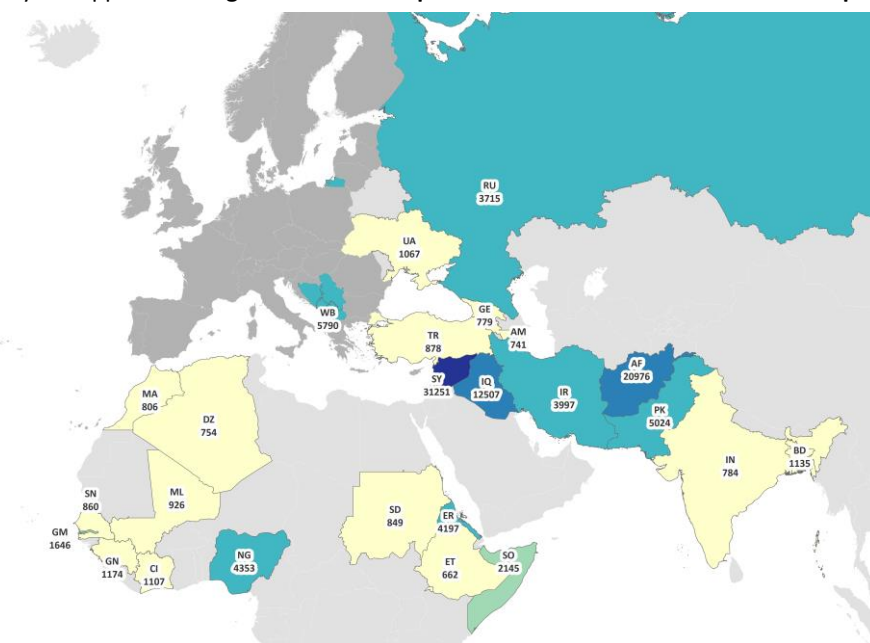
the EU+, almost 200 000 more than in the first half of 2015 with 446 736 applications.

**96 % of all applicants were first-time applicants**, i.e. they had not previously lodged an application for international protection in the same EU+ country. **2 % of all applicants claimed to be unaccompanied minors (UAMs)** when lodging an application. 37 % of all UAM applicants were Afghan citizens, followed by Eritrean (9 %), Somalian and Syrian (each 6 %) nationals.



### Main countries of origin of applicants

Syria has remained the main citizenship of applicants since April 2015. In June 2016, EU+ countries recorded 31 251 Syrian applicants. Afghanistan and Iraq remained the second and third most represented citizenships, with 20 976 and 12 507 applications respectively.



These top-three citizenships together accounted for 54 % of all EU+ applications. Pakistan was the fourth most common citizenship, following at a distance with 5 024 applications. Nigeria was in fifth position with 4 353 applications. The remaining most frequent citizenships of origin completing the top ten were Eritrea, Iran, Russia, Albania and Somalia. All top ten citizenships of origin increased considerably compared to May, with rises ranging between 62 % (Eritrean nationals) and 11 % (Syrian nationals).

<sup>1</sup> The EU+ is composed of EU-28 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 UAM (unaccompanied minors) 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.

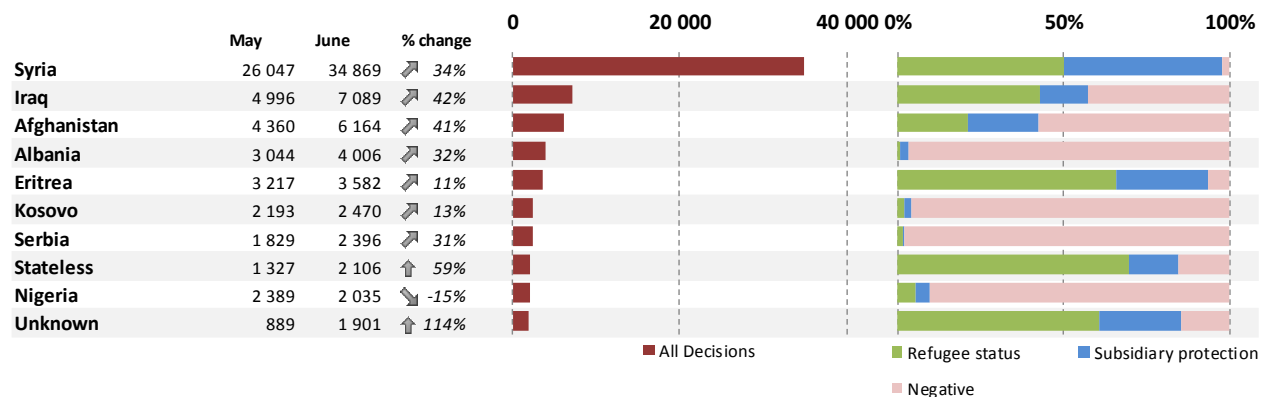
<sup>2</sup> Data were available for 30 EU+ countries. Weekly estimates were used for one country.

**Syria** – With 31 251 applications, Syria remained the main citizenship of origin in the EU. One out of four applications in EU+ countries was linked to a Syrian citizenship. The number of applicants from Syria in June 2016 was almost 11 000 applications higher than in June 2015. Applications by Syrian nationals were again widely distributed with 22 EU+ countries recording Syria among their top-three citizenships.

**Afghanistan** – Afghanistan remained in second place of the citizenships with most applications, and this for the third consecutive month. The number of Afghan applications also increased for the third month in a row, reaching 20 976 applications. With this 34 % rise compared to May, the number of Afghan applications was higher than any other month in 2016. Afghanistan remained the main citizenship of claimed UAMs (37 %). 14 EU+ countries reported Afghan applicants in their national top-three citizenships.

**Iraq** – In June 2016, 12 507 Iraqi applications were recorded in EU+ countries, 20 % more than in the previous month which marked the lowest point so far in 2016. In the same month of 2015 about half the number of Iraqi applicants had applied for international protection. 8 EU+ countries reported Iraqi applicants in their top-three citizenships in June.

### Number and type of decisions issued in first instance in EU+ countries



**In June 2016, EU+ countries issued 90 398 first instance decisions, a steep 25 % rise compared to May, and the first increase since February.** Compared to June 2015, the number of decisions has doubled. In the first half of 2016, EU+ countries issued 487 968 decisions, twice as many as in the first half of 2015. The **share of positive decisions was 59 % of all first-instance decisions issued in the EU+**, four percentage points higher than in the previous month. This rise was largely due to an increase in decisions taken on Syrian cases with clear grounds for protection. **Syrian** applicants received most decisions (34 869), 34 % more than in May 2016. Their recognition rate was 98 %. As in previous months, the share of positive decisions granting subsidiary protection continued to increase. In June, nearly as many Syrian applicants were granted subsidiary protection as refugee status (48 % and 50 %, respectively). The number of decisions issued to **Afghan** applicants has been increasing month after month and reached 6 164 decisions in June, 41 % more than in May and the highest number of decisions recorded for Afghans since EPS data collection started in 2014. 42 % resulted in a positive decision, with refugee status and subsidiary protection granted in 21 % of the cases. While the proportion of decisions granting subsidiary protection increased for Syrians applicants, the opposite is true for Afghan cases, for which the proportion of decisions granting protection status dropped by 6 percentage points. While the number of decisions issued to **Iraqi** applicants increased by 42 % to 7 089 decisions, the recognition rate dropped from 64 % in May to 57 % in June, keeping Iraqi applicants below the eligibility threshold for relocation. This drop reflected policy changes in Finland, assessing Iraqi applicants on a case-by-case basis and prioritising clearly negative cases so as to eliminate backlog.<sup>3</sup> In June, the number of monthly decisions increased for all top 10 nationalities except for Nigeria with a 15 % decrease.

### Cases awaiting a first-instance decision

**At the end of June 2016, 984 392 cases were awaiting a decision in first-instance.** Despite the record high level of first-instance decisions issued, this marked a further 2.4 % increase from the stock of cases pending at the end of May 2016, and represented the highest stock recorded in EPS data. More than half of these cases (53 %) have been pending for longer than six months.

<sup>3</sup> Finnish Immigration Service, [Asylum decisions for Iraqis: The share of negative decisions has increased](#), 6 July 2016, accessed 25 July 2016.