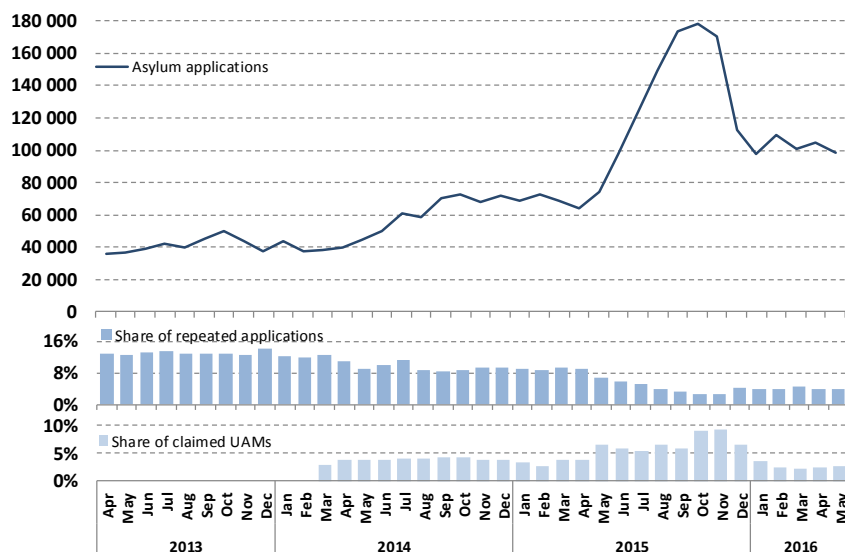


Latest asylum trends – May 2016

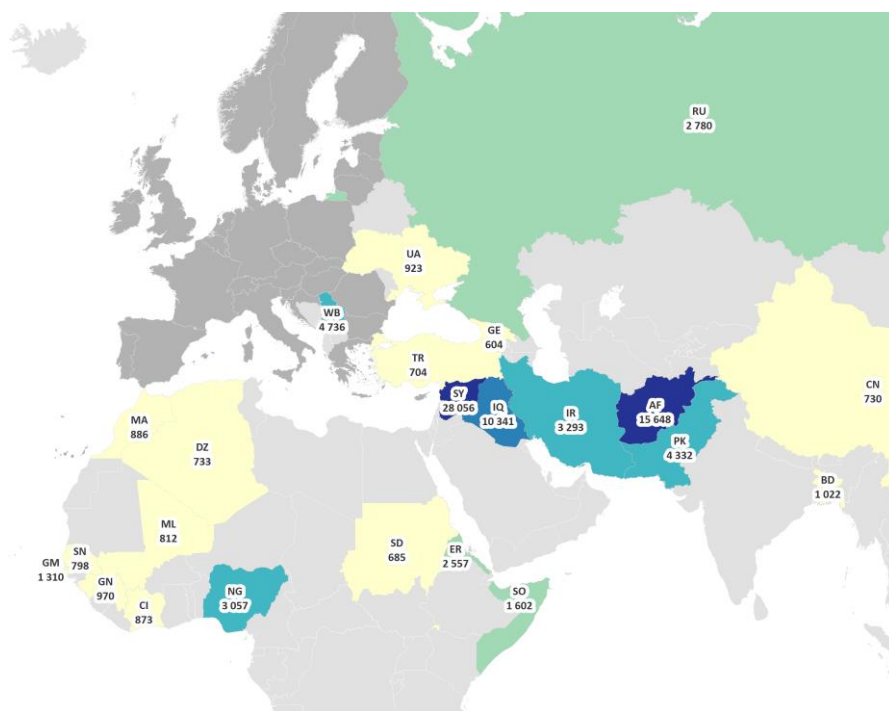
Number of applications for international protection in the EU+¹

In May 2016, EU+ countries recorded more than 99 000 applications for international protection.² Compared to April, this was a decrease of 5 %. Applications in the first five months of 2016 have already exceeded the half million mark. In comparison, the first five months of 2015 produced fewer than 350 000 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. Of all 99 000 applicants, 2 633 or 2.7 % claimed to be unaccompanied minors (UAMs) when lodging an application. While the total of UAMs remained stable, their share of the total was slightly higher than the previous month. 42 % of all UAM applicants were Afghan citizens, followed by Somali (8 %), Syrian (7 %) and Pakistani (6 %) nationals.

Main countries of origin of applicants



Syria has been the main citizenship of applicants for more than a year, with 28 056 applicants in May. Afghanistan and Iraq remained the second and third most represented citizenships, with 15 648 and 10 341 applications respectively. These top-three citizenships together accounted for 55 % of all EU+ applications. As a group, applicants from Western Balkan (WB) countries remained in fourth position with 4 736 applications, a lower number than in April. Pakistan remained stable as the fifth main country of origin of applicants in the EU+. The top 10 citizenship groups in April 2016 included Iran, Nigeria,

¹ 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.

² Data were available for all 30 EU+ countries. Weekly estimates were used for two countries.

Russia, Eritrea and ‘Unknown’ citizenship³. The citizenships composing the top 10 have remained the same for four consecutive months. Russian and Eritrean applicant numbers increased most, while there were significant decreases for Iraqi, Syrian, Western Balkan applicants and applicants with ‘Unknown’ citizenship.

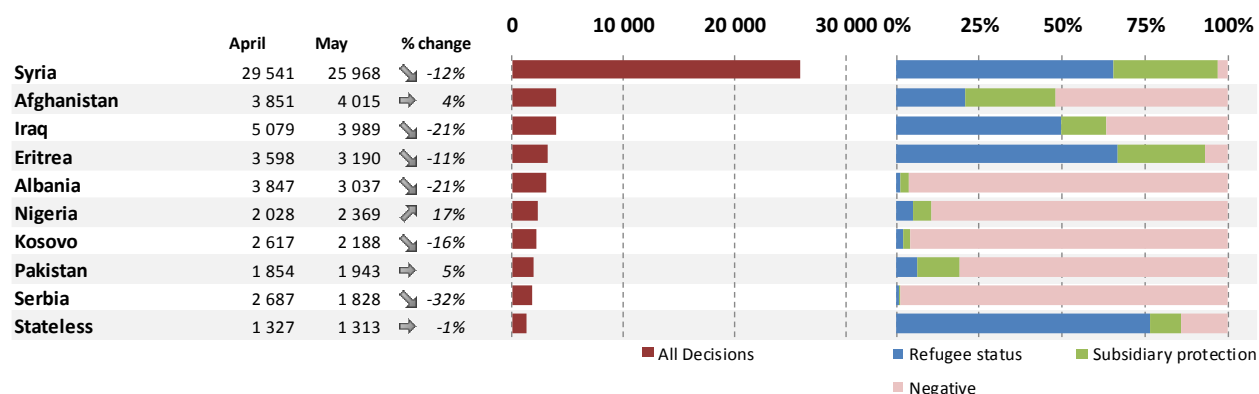
Syria – With 28 056 applications, Syrian nationals remained the citizenship with the most applications throughout the EU+. They represented 28 % of all applications lodged. Nevertheless, fewer Syrian applicants were recorded for the third month running with a 12 % decrease on the previous month. Compared to May 2015, the monthly total was twice as high in May 2016. 21 EU+ countries recorded Syrian nationals in their top-three citizenships.

Iraq – Compared to last month, the number of Iraqi applicants decreased by 16 % to 10 341, the lowest number recorded in 2016. In the same month of 2015, however, only half as many Iraqi applicants had applied for international protection. Nine EU+ countries reported Iraqi applicants in their top-three citizenships in May.

Afghanistan – The number of Afghan applicants increased for the second consecutive month to 15 648, a 5 % rise. It is the largest number recorded in 2016. There were also about 6 000 more applications by Afghan nationals than during the same month of 2015. Afghanistan remained the main citizenship of claimed UAMs. Half of all EU+ countries reported Afghan applicants in their national top-three citizenships.

Western Balkan nationals (WB) – Applications by all WB nationals decreased by 11 % to 4 736 applicants. This is the second-lowest number recorded since the beginning of the EPS monthly data collection in 2014. Within this citizenship group, Albanian nationals lodged most applications (44 %). Of all WB nationalities, only Kosovar applicants slightly increased, becoming the second citizenship in this group (21 %). Serbian nationals represented 15 %. The decrease is even more obvious when compared to May 2015, when WB nationals lodged 13 234 applications.

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



The number of first-instance decisions issued in EU+ countries decreased for the third consecutive month to 71 825 decisions (- 9 %). Still, almost twice as many decisions were issued as in the same month of 2015. So far in 2016, EU+ countries have issued more than 400 000 decisions, double the total of the first five months of 2015. The share of positive decisions was 55 % of all first-instance decisions issued in the EU+, in line with the overall recognition rate reported in April. More than one in three first-instance decisions were issued to Syrian applicants (25 968). Compared to April, this represented 12 % fewer decisions. The recognition rate for Syrian applicants decreased by one percentage point to 97 %, with a continued shift from refugee status (65 % compared to 77 % in April) towards subsidiary protection (32 %, up from 21 % in April). For Afghan applicants, 4 015 decisions were taken, 4 % more than in April. 48 % resulted in a positive decision with 21 % granted refugee status and 27 % granted subsidiary protection. The number of decisions issued to Iraqi applicants decreased significantly, by 21 %, to 3 989 decisions. The recognition rate increased slightly to 64 %, still below the eligibility threshold for relocation. In May, more decisions were issued to Nigerian and Pakistani applicants, whereas this number decreased for Albanian, Eritrean, Kosovar, Serbian nationals and stateless applicants.

³ Information from Member States indicates that the majority of such cases are usually persons of Palestinian origin who were long-time residents of countries such as Syria.