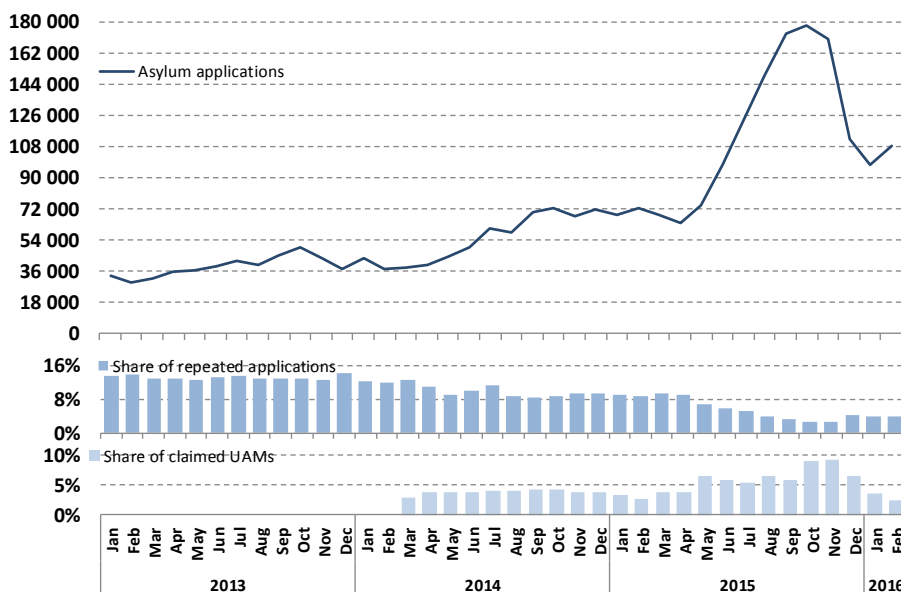


Latest asylum trends

1. Number of applications for international protection in the EU+ in February 2016¹

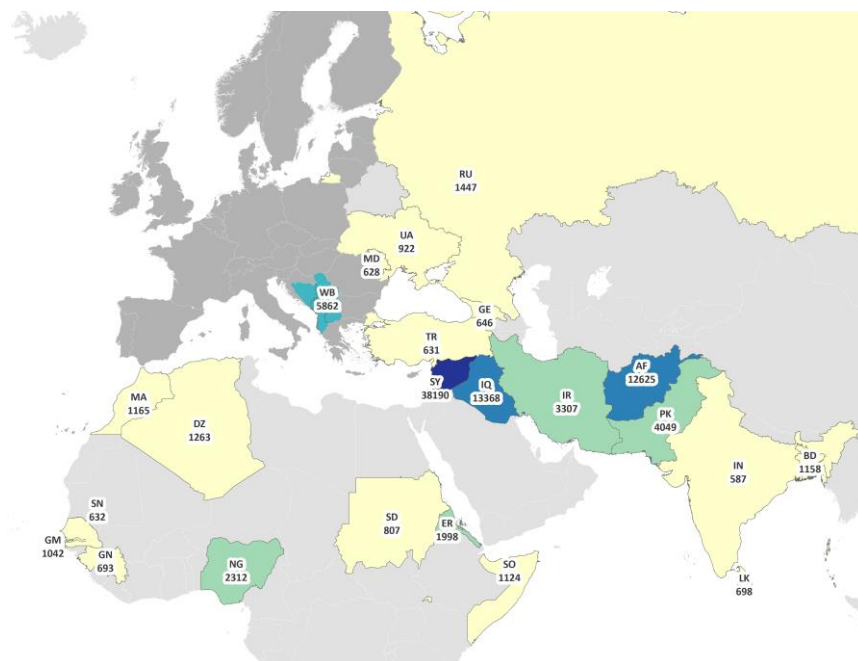
In February 2016, EU+ countries registered 108 490 asylum applications². After three months of consecutive decreases, February saw an 11 % increase compared January. The number of applications received in the EU+ was on a par with the levels last seen at the beginning of summer 2015 and 49 % higher than in February 2015.



The share of applicants who claimed to be unaccompanied minors (UAMs) at the moment of lodging an application continued to decline, comprising 2.4 % of the total in February down from 3.6 % in January. Indeed, for the third consecutive month, the number of UAMs decreased, falling to 2 645 applications. The share of UAMs from Afghanistan remained highest (36%), despite the decrease from 1 597 to 943 applications. The number of Syrian and Iraqi UAM applicants also decreased compared to January 2016, but were still in second and third place, with 11 % and 8 % of all UAM applications.

2. Main countries of origin of applicants in the EU+ in February 2016

Within the top ten citizenship groups of asylum applicants in February 2016, only applications by Afghan nationals decreased. Registrations of applications from all the other main citizenships rose by between 2 % and 34 %. Syria remained, for the tenth consecutive month, the top citizenship with 38 190 applications registered in the EU+. Iraq came in second place (13 368) displacing Afghanistan which fell to third place (12 625).



The top three citizenships, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan together accounted for almost 60 % of all applications in the EU+. After six consecutive months of decrease, the number of applications from nationals Western Balkan (WB) countries rose slightly to 5 862 in February. As a group, applicants from WB countries remained in fourth position.

Further to a sharp increase compared to January, Algeria joined the list of top ten citizenships in February which was also comprised of Pakistan, Iran, Nigeria, Eritrea and the Russian Federation.

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 At the time of writing this note, data were available for 28 of the 30 EU+ countries.

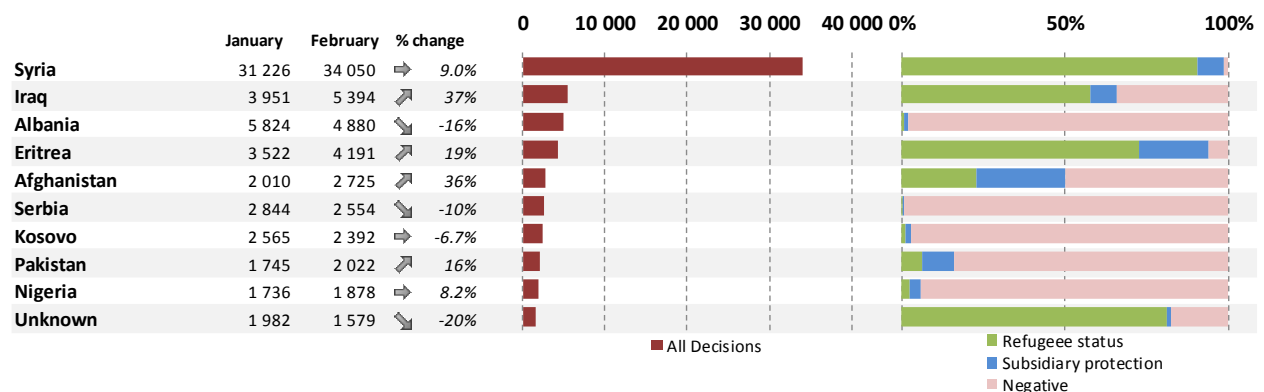
Syria – EU+ countries registered 38 190 applications lodged by Syrian citizens in February, a rise of 14 % compared to January 2016, and more than four times the level recorded in February 2015. 18 EU+ countries registered applications by Syrian nationals in their top three citizenships.

Afghanistan – The number of applications lodged by Afghan nationals fell for the third consecutive month. A total of 12 625 applications were registered in EU+ countries, 7 % less than in January, but still close to three times as high as in February 2015. In parallel with the decrease of Afghan applicants, the number of Afghan claimed UAM applicants also dropped sharply from 4 896 in December 2015 down to 1 597 in January and 943 in February 2016.

Iraq – Following three months of decrease, the number of applications lodged by Iraqi citizens (13 368) increased by 22 % in February. However, the level in February remained much higher than the figures recorded during 2014 and the first half of 2015. A total of 14 EU+ countries reported Iraqi applicants in their top three citizenships.

Western Balkan nationals (WB) – After six consecutive months of decrease, the number of applications from WB nationals rose slightly by 5 % to 5 862. This rise followed increases in applications by nationals from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina which offset decreases in Kosovar and Montenegrin applicants.

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



The number of **first-instance decisions issued in the EU+ rose further to 83 612 decisions**, the sixth consecutive month of increase. This was about double the level recorded in both February and August 2015. The **share of positive decisions was 59 % of total decisions in first instance in the EU+**, one percentage point above the rate recorded in January 2016.

Syrian nationals continued to be the citizenship receiving the largest share of decisions at first instance: **34 050 decisions, comprising 41 % of the EU+ total**. Of those decisions, 99 % resulted in a positive outcome: 91 % granted refugee status and 8 % granted subsidiary protection. The number of **decisions on Iraqi cases increased significantly by 37 % (5 394)**, surpassing the number of decisions on Albanian cases. However, the share of positive decisions issued at EU+ level on Iraqi applications remained below the 75 % eligibility threshold for relocation for the second month running. The number of decisions issued on Albanian cases (4 880) fell by 16 %, most of which continued to be negative with only 2 % resulting in a positive outcome.

For the other citizenships in the top ten, the number of first-instance decisions issued in February increased compared to January for Eritrean, Afghan, Pakistani and Nigerian applicants, and decreased for Serbian and Kosovar applicants.