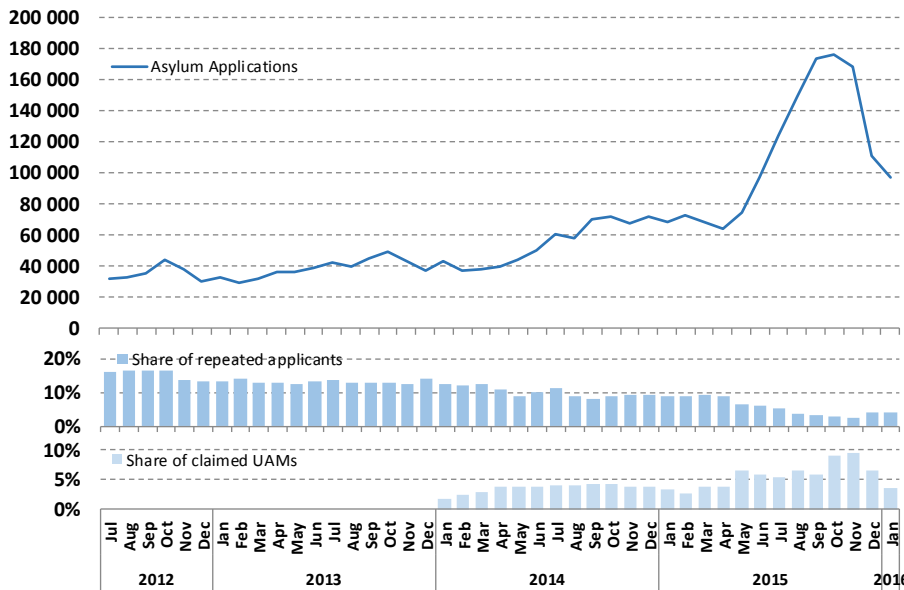


Latest asylum trends

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

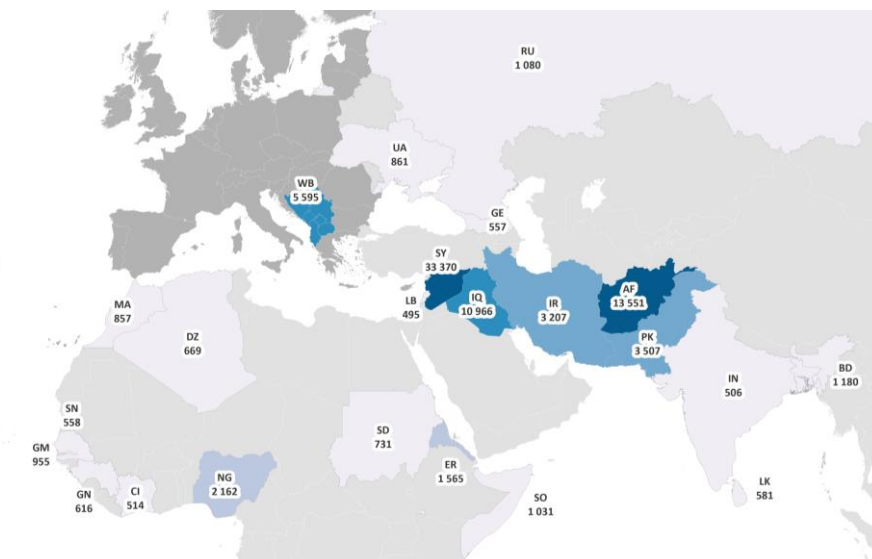
In January 2016, EU+ countries registered 97 222 asylum applications². This was a 13 % decrease compared to December and the third consecutive month with fewer applications. While the number of applications returned to levels last seen in June, the influx of asylum applicants in the EU+ was more than 40 % higher than in January 2015.



The share of applicants who claimed to be unaccompanied minors (UAMs) at the moment of lodging an application fell to 4 % of the total in January from 7 % in December. For the second consecutive month, the number of UAMs halved, falling to 3 488 applications. The share of UAMs from Afghanistan remained highest (46%), despite the decrease from 4 894 to 1 597 applications. The number of Syrian and Iraqi UAM applicants also decreased compared to the December 2015, but remained in second and third place, with 11 % and 7 % of all UAM applications, respectively.

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

Within the top ten citizenship groups of asylum applicants in January 2016, only applications by Pakistani and Nigerian nationals increased. Registrations of applications from all the other main citizenships fell by between 7 % and 37 %. **Syria remained, for the ninth consecutive month, the top citizenship** with 33 370 applications registered in the EU+. **Afghanistan was in second place** (13 551) with a second month of decrease. **Iraq was third** with 10 966 applications.



The number of applications from **Western Balkan (WB) nationals decreased further** to 5 595 in January, the lowest number registered since May 2014. As a group, applicants from WB countries remained in fourth position.

With no change from December, the remaining top ten citizenships was made up of applicants from Pakistan, Iran, Nigeria, Eritrea, Bangladesh 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 27 of the 30 EU+ countries.

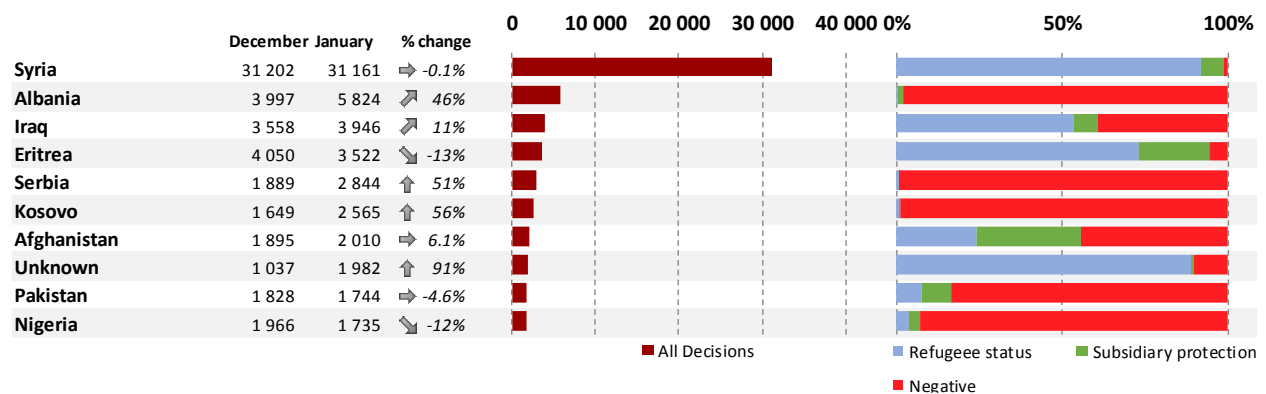
Syria – EU+ countries registered 33 370 applications lodged by Syrian citizens in January, a decrease of 7 % compared to December 2015, but still three times the level recorded in January 2015. It was the fourth month of consecutive decrease. The share of applications by Syrian nationals registered in Germany rose to above 80 % of the EU+ total, followed by Austria and Sweden. While most other EU+ countries saw numbers decrease, Germany registered more applications by Syrian nationals than in December. Of the main receiving countries, Sweden, Belgium and Denmark registered large relative drops. Seventeen EU+ countries had Syrian applicants in their top three citizenships.

Afghanistan – The number of applications lodged by Afghan nationals dropped for the second consecutive month after nine months of consecutive growth. A total of 13 511 applications were registered in EU+ countries, 37 % less than in December, but still almost three times as high as in January 2015. Numbers went down in all EU+ countries except for Germany, Italy and France. The largest decrease in applications by Afghan citizens was in Sweden.

Iraq – The number of applications lodged by Iraqi citizens (10 966) fell by 8 % in January, the third month of decrease. Still, the number of Iraqi applicants in January was much higher than the levels recorded during 2014 and the first half of 2015. Applications increased in Germany and Bulgaria, the two main receiving countries, but decreased in most other countries. As with Afghan applicants, a major decrease was reported in Sweden where applications dropped to one fourth of the December total.

Western Balkan nationals (WB) – The number of applications from WB nationals dropped once again, falling by 13 % to 5 595 applications, the lowest number registered since May 2014. The number of applications by WB nationals in Germany, which continued to be the main receiving country, fell by 10 %. In France, the second receiving country, applications decreased by 25 %.

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



The number of first-instance decisions issued in the EU+ continued to rise, to 76 753 decisions, a new monthly high since data collection started in March 2014 and double the level recorded in January 2015. **The share of positive decisions was 58 % of total decisions in first instance in the EU+, 3 % lower than in December.**

Syrian nationals continued as the citizenship receiving the largest share of decisions at first instance: **31 161 decisions, comprising 41 % of the EU+ total.** Of those decisions, 99 % resulted in a positive outcome: 92 % granted refugee status and 7 % granted subsidiary protection. After remaining stable in December, the number of **decisions issued on Albanian cases (5 824) rose again significantly by 46 %**, and of these, almost all (98 %) were negative. The number of **decisions on Iraqi cases increased by 11 % (3 946)**, surpassing the number of decisions on Eritrean cases. At EU+ level, 61 % of all first-instance decisions for Iraqi applicants were positive, much lower than the 76 % share recorded in December.

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