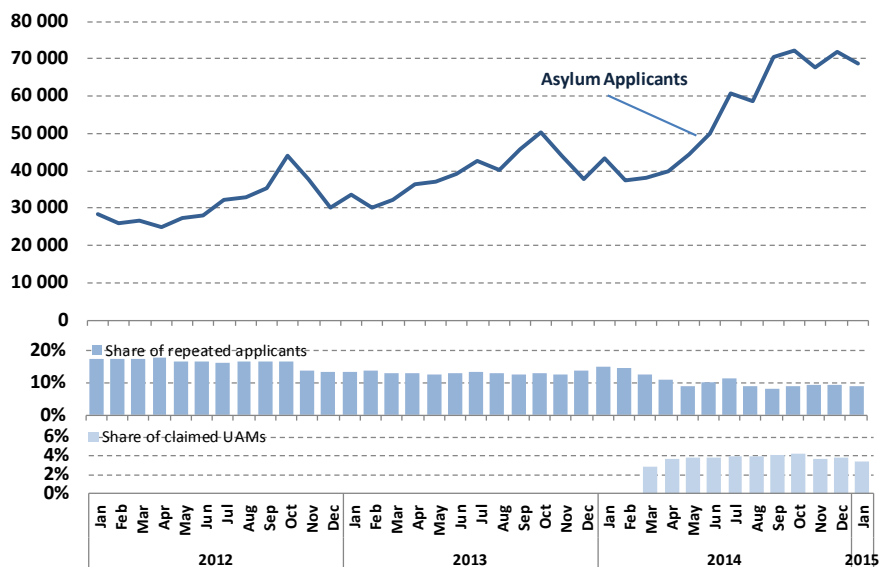


## Latest asylum trends and main countries of origin

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

In January 2015, the total number of applicants in the EU+ slightly decreased compared to December 2014. For the fifth consecutive month, the EU+ total hovered around 70 000 applicants while the seasonal decrease, experienced during the last quarter of 2012 and of 2013, did not occur in 2014. The rising trend continues, as shown by the comparison with the month of January of the last two years, with the total number of applicants in EU+ countries in January 2015 remaining significantly higher than 2013, + 103 % and 2014, + 59 %.

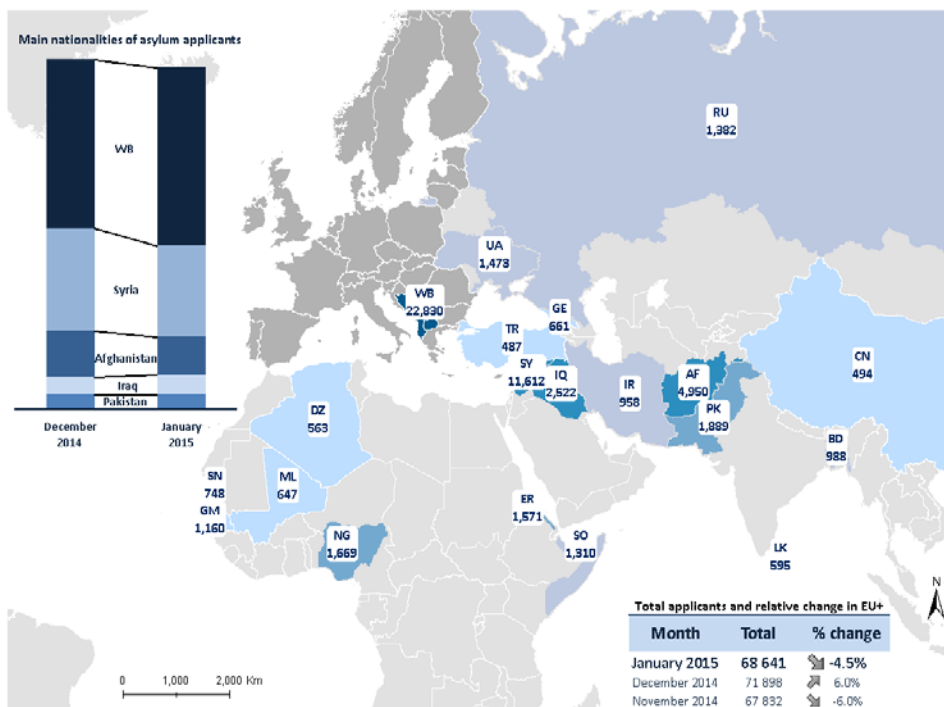


During the last six months, the share of repeated applicants in the EU+ has remained stable at 9% of total applicants.

In January, the number of applicants claiming to be unaccompanied minors fell by 16 % compared to December. As a consequence, the share of unaccompanied minors decreased to 3% of the total, a drop of one percentage point. In January 2015, one out of three applicants claiming to unaccompanied minors was an Afghan citizen, while Syrians accounted for a quarter of the remaining unaccompanied minors.

### 2. Main countries of origin of applicants in EU+ countries in January 2015

In January 2015, applicants from Kosovo represented, as in December 2014, the main citizenship of applicants in the EU+, their number exceeding that of Syrian applicants for the second consecutive month. The number of Syrian applicants further decreased for the fourth month since September. The number of applicants from Afghanistan fell by 20%, while the number from Iraq and Pakistan remained stable.



<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. It is important to emphasise that this term 'unaccompanied minor' here refers to applicants claiming to be minors and for whom an age assessment has not necessarily been carried out before provision of the data.

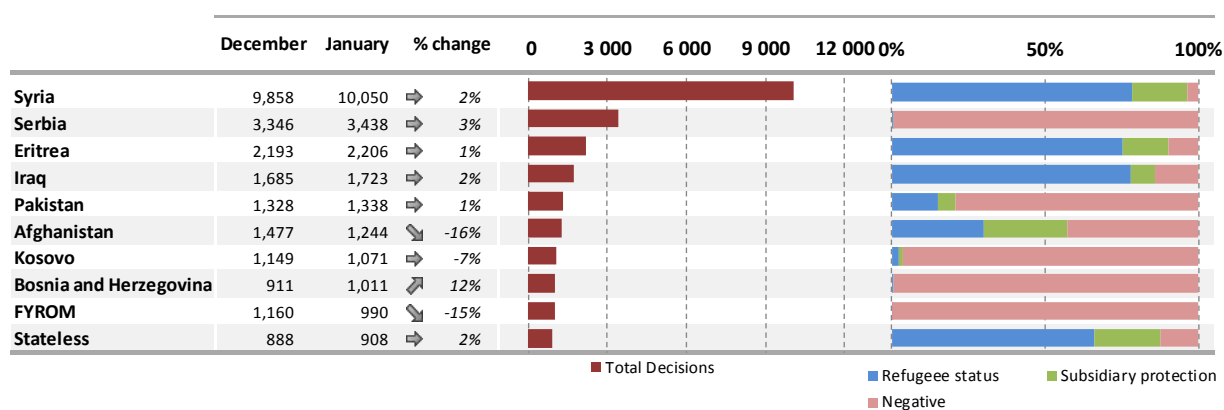
**Syria** – While the 11 % decrease from December in the number of Syrian applicants constitutes the fourth consecutive monthly decline, the number of applicants in January 2015 remains significantly higher than the number registered for the same month of recent years. Compared to January 2014, the total this January showed a 73 % increase, while compared to 2013 the rise was even higher (+ 231 %).

**Western Balkan nationals (WB)** – The number of applicants from the Western Balkan countries grew for the fourth consecutive month in January 2015 and reached almost 23 000 applicants. This rise was driven by increases in the number of applicants from Kosovo<sup>2</sup>, Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Compared to the last months of 2014, when the month-on-month growth rates were consistently over 20 %, in January, the monthly growth rate fell to a 5 % increase.

**Afghanistan** – After the high level recorded in December 2014, in January 2015, the number of Afghan applicants in EU+ countries decreased by 19 %. Nevertheless, the January 2015 total represents a substantial increase compared to the levels reported for January in the past two years, + 41 % compared to 2014 and + 103 % compared to 2013.

**Iraq** – In January 2015, there were 2 500 Iraqi applicants. Since June 2014, the number of Iraqi applicants has fluctuated around an average of 2 500 applicants per month. Over the same period, the share of first-time Iraqi applicants increased.

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



Syrians were by far the largest group of applicants in terms of decisions issued (over 10 000) in January 2015. These decisions were almost entirely positive (a 96 % recognition rate<sup>3</sup> consisting of 78 % refugee status and 18 % subsidiary protection). Compared to six months ago (August 2014) the overall recognition rate has slightly increased (from 93 % in August 2014) while the use of refugee status has become more frequent (compared to 47 % of all decisions issued in August 2014).

Eritreans, applicants considered Stateless and Iraqis followed as the countries of origin receiving the highest recognition rate in first instance in EU+ countries. In contrast, the recognition rates of applicants from Serbia, Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were below 10% at the EU+ level in January 2015.

<sup>2</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

<sup>3</sup> Recognition rate refers to the proportion of positive decisions granting EU-regulated international protection in overall first instance decisions, including only refugee status and subsidiary protection status, but excluding authorisations to stay for humanitarian reasons under national law concerning international protection.