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People who have obtained a form of international protection in an EU+ country are granted a range of rights and benefits. A positive decision may grant refugee or subsidiary protection status (also referred to as EU-harmonised statuses). The recognition rate refers to the number of positive outcomes as a percentage of the total number of decisions on applications for international protection.

In 2021, the overall EU+ recognition rate for first instance decisions on asylum applications was 34%. This means that out of 535,000 decisions issued, 182,000 were positive, granting the applicant either refugee status or subsidiary protection. Most positive decisions at first instance granted refugee status (118,000 or 65% of all positive decisions) and subsidiary protection was granted in the remaining 64,000 cases (35% of all positive decisions). Beyond EU-regulated statuses, if authorisations to stay for humanitarian reasons are included in the calculation, the overall EU+ recognition rate for first instance decisions in 2021 would be 40%.

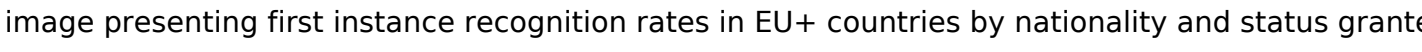
The extent and quality of rights and services that beneficiaries of protection receive shape the prospects of their effective integration into the host society. 2021 marked the first year of implementation of the EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027. Several Member States updated their integration strategies to match the EU Action Plan, so efforts in 2021 focused on implementing these new strategies. As a result, many legislative changes related to integration entered into force in 2021 or the beginning of 2022.

Discussions on national forms of protection and regularisation measures came to the forefront, due in part to COVID-19 travel restrictions and the reduced possibility of implementing returns. Countries also addressed the increased use of status reviews of cessation and revocation grounds in previous years. Cases were referred to the courts frequently throughout 2021 to provide guidance on family reunification.

The number of studies from various stakeholders – national authorities, research institutes, think tanks, academia and civil society organisations – evaluating the efficiency and impact of national integration strategies continued to grow, and the reports provided useful insights to further improve integration approaches. While practical barriers persisted in many aspects of everyday life for beneficiaries of international protection, national authorities – often together with local authorities and civil society organisations – undertook initiatives to overcome these

challenges, especially in the field of children’s education.

Figure 2. First instance recognition rates in EU+ countries by nationality and status granted, 2021



Note: These 20 nationalities received the highest number of first instance decisions issued in 2021 in EU+ countries.
Source: Eurostat [migr_asydcfstq] as of 22 April 2022.

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