

Asylum applications in the EU increase by 13% in 2019

For the first time since 2015, applications increased from the previous year. The increase was not largely driven by irregular migration, but rather by applications from countries with visa-free access to Schengen.

More than 714 000 applications were lodged in the EU+ in 2019, up by 13% from 2018, when fewer than 635 000 were registered. This is the first time since 2015 that there have been more applications than the previous year and occurred despite reduced irregular migration towards the European Union.

This initial information was released by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) on 26 February 2020 in a public summary. Commenting on the release, EASO's Executive Director, Nina Gregori, stated: *"Today's figures highlight that while we remain well below the situation of a few years ago, we need to continue to be vigilant and strengthen our asylum practices. A sustainable, fair and crisis-proof asylum system in the European Union is needed. To further feed into this process, on 26 June EASO will release its Annual Report, which will provide a more detailed picture of the state of the EU's asylum system, as well as where it is heading."*

The top three countries of origin of applicants were Syria (about 72 000), Afghanistan (60 000) and Venezuela (45 000). Afghans sought asylum in far larger numbers than a year earlier, as did Venezuelans, who lodged more than twice as many applications (approximately 22 000 applications in 2018).

For more information, you can read EASO's [Press Release](#) & visit the [Latest Asylum Trends](#) page.

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