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Broad increase in applications for asylum, including by Afghans



EU+ countries received substantially more asylum applications in June. A broad range of nationalities lodged more applications than in May, often approaching or exceeding pre-COVID-19 levels. In the case of Afghans, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, the increases continued a rising trend from previous months.

Analysis released by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) shows that **about 46 300 applications for international protection were lodged in the EU+ in June 2021**,[1] a fifth more than in May. Total applications were the highest since the outbreak of COVID-19 but remained below the pre-pandemic level. A broad range of nationalities lodged more applications in June, which might suggest that COVID-19-induced constraints on asylum-related migration have lately had a weaker impact.

Applications by Afghans on the rise

The top origin countries in June 2021 were Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Morocco and Iraq. **Afghans lodged over 6 000 applications in June, almost 1 000 more than in May** and the most since February 2020. While Afghan applications were still not exceptionally high, they increased for the fourth consecutive month.

This rising trend over time contrasted with most other nationalities but was similar for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, who might often use the same migration routes as Afghans. Increasing arrivals of **Afghans would likely affect a range of EU+ countries** given that in June, many received a substantial number of Afghan applications (100 or more). Increasing applications by Iraqis (1 800) were partly due to the new irregular migration route via Belarus.

More unaccompanied minors, especially from Afghanistan

Self-claimed unaccompanied minors lodged at least 1 900 applications in the EU+ in June, after 1 500 in May. This increase was roughly in line with the growth of total applications and unaccompanied minors still represented a share of 4 %. Unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan lodged disproportionately more applications and accounted for half of all unaccompanied minors in June. At a lower level, also unaccompanied minors from Bangladesh applied in growing numbers.

New applications outpace decisions issued by EU+ asylum authorities

EU+ asylum authorities issued at least 36 900 first instance decisions in June,[2] slightly more than in May but outpaced by new applications. A third of all decisions were issued to Syrians, Afghans and Pakistanis. Despite the increase in applications, pending cases at first instance were stable at approximately 361 600 at the end of June.[3] **Similarly low levels of the backlog last occurred in 2014.**

Based on preliminary data, **the EU+ recognition rate[4] was 39 % in June**. Three fifths of all positive decisions granted refugee status, while the remainder granted subsidiary protection. Recognition rates were especially high for Syrians (87 %), Eritreans (77 %), Palestinians (57 %) as well as Afghans and Somalis (56 % each). In contrast, recognition rates were relatively low for Pakistanis (10 %), Moroccans (6 %) and Bangladeshis (4 %).

For more information and an interactive data visualisation, please visit the Latest Asylum Trends page.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu

[1] EASO EPS data are preliminary and might differ from validated official statistics submitted to Eurostat at a later stage. Eurostat data are used in the annual EASO Asylum Report. The total EPS numbers include approximations for two EU+ countries and may change after data updates.
[2] For two EU+ countries, data on decisions in June were not available and the comparison with applications was adapted.
[3] For two EU+ countries, May values were used as June data were not available.

[4] This refers to the recognition rate for EU-regulated types of protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection) at first instance.

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