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# Venezuelans, Colombians, and Peruvians lodge near-record numbers of asylum applications in the EU+




**Over the last 12 months (April 2022-March 2023), EU+ countries have received many more applications for asylum compared to recent years, including before the pandemic. In March 2023, some 92 000 applications for asylum were lodged including more from Venezuelans, Colombians and Peruvians which, together, accounted for 16% of all applications lodged.**

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has released new data showing the extent to which applications for asylum in the EU+ are on the rise. Applications in March 2023 were at a level that has only been surpassed four times since the so-called migration crisis of 2015-2016, all in the last six months. In fact, applications were up by just under a third (31%) in the first quarter of 2023[1] (265 250) compared to the same period in 2022 and, up by more than half (52%) compared to the same period in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic.[2]

More citizenships are increasingly seeking protection in EU+ countries, including in March, especially **Venezuelans** (6 500), **Colombians** (6 100), and **Peruvians** (2 200), as well as Turks and Russians. At the same time, 4 million Ukrainians currently benefit from temporary protection in the EU.

## Main countries of origin

In March 2023, **Syrians** (10 000) and **Afghans** (9 500) continued to lodge the most applications for asylum, both with increases compared to a year ago, especially Syrians (+29%). More than half of all Syrian and Afghan applications were lodged in Germany. **Russians** (2 300) also lodged more applications for asylum and were more frequently granted international protection. **Turks** (5 900) lodged more than twice the number of applications than in March 2022, although the recognition rate has declined.

The increasing number of **applications being lodged by Venezuelans and Colombians** and, to a lesser extent **Peruvians**, are notable in that these nationals can enter the Schengen area without the need for a visa. Most of these applications were lodged in Spain.

## Pending Cases

As of March 2023, there were **665 000 applications awaiting a decision at first instance**, **a 32 %** increase year-on-year, and the most since early 2017 when EU+ countries were still processing applications lodged during the 2015-2016 so-called migration crisis.

For the most part, the citizenships with the most applications lodged also have the most cases awaiting decisions. For example, in March, **Syrians and Afghans had by far the most pending cases** (86 000 and 71 000, respectively). Pending cases have more than doubled over the last year for Colombians and Peruvians (mostly in Spain), Turks and Russians (mostly in Germany), and Egyptians (mostly in Italy).

## Recognition Rate

In March 2023, the **EU+ recognition rate fell to 36%** (from 41% in February 2023). This was largely a result of Spain issuing an additional 10 000 decisions on Venezuelan applications, which were mostly negative. This figure is deceptive however, as many Venezuelans receive national forms of protection in Spain, rather than refugee or subsidiary protection. National protection status is not reflected in recognition rate calculations.[3]

As can be expected, the recognition rate for **Ukrainians**, which jumped from 14% to 93% in April 2022 following the Russian invasion has remained at over 90% since. The recognition rate for **Turks** has fallen from 43% in March 2022 to 28% in March 2023.

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1

EUAA EPS data are preliminary and might differ from validated official statistics submitted to Eurostat at a later stage.

2

Data provided by the United Kingdom was removed for statistical comparison purposes.

3

The Qualification Directive (2011/95/EU) regulates refugee status and subsidiary protection status. As such, the EUAA does not include national forms of protection in its recognition rate calculations.

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