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# Colombians and Peruvians lodged twice as many applications, year-on-year




**Analysis released by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) suggests that EU+ asylum authorities are under increasing pressure from the number of asylum applications they are receiving. In May 2023, some 87 000 applications were lodged, up by a quarter compared to a year previously, driven by increased flows of asylum seekers: Syrians, Afghans and Turks seeking protection in Germany, Venezuelans and Colombians applying for asylum in Spain, and Ivorians and Guineans lodging applications in Italy.**

In May 2023, some **87?000 applications for asylum were lodged in the EU+**, up by 16% compared to the previous month, and by nearly a quarter (24%). Indeed, since August 2022, there has been a major increase in applications for international protection in the EU+, fuelled by conflict, political and social upheaval, economic hardships, and food insecurity. Applications have been at, or exceeded, 100?000 which is reminiscent of the 2015-2016 refugee crisis. However, this high level of asylum applications underestimates the total number of persons arriving with protection needs, because an additional 4 million persons displaced from Ukraine also benefit from temporary protection.

## Rising applications in Spain and Germany

In May 2023, **Syrians** (12?000) and **Afghans** (8?100) continued to lodge the most applications for asylum, with Syrians lodging many more applications than in May 2022 (+48?%) but Afghans lodging fewer (-8?%). **Turks** (5?400) also lodged many applications in May 2023, **up by nearly two thirds compared to May 2022**. Each of these three citizenships lodged **more than half of all applications in Germany**.

**Venezuelans** and **Colombians**, and to a lesser extent, **Peruvians**, are all lodging many more applications for asylum, plus each of these three citizenships can enter the Schengen area without a visa, even on flights from their home countries. In May 2023, they lodged 7?100, 6?900 and 2?500 applications apiece, all down slightly from recent peaks but majorly increased compared to a year ago in May 2022 (+45?%, +90?% and +109?%, respectively). The vast majority of these applications were, and **continue to be, lodged in Spain** (more than 90?% of Venezuelan applications, and nearly 90?% of Colombians in May 2023). Practically all were first time applications which sometimes suggests that the applicants were newly arrived in the EU+.

In the first five months of 2023, **Ivorians**, and **Guineans** increasingly lodged asylum applications in the EU+. In May 2023, Ivorian nationals lodged just over 1?800 asylum applications, up by 155?% compared to same month in 2022, **and the most in nearly a decade**. As has been the case for many years, most Ivorians continue to lodge applications in France but **the recent increase in applications has mostly been taking place in Italy**, likely associated with increased detections in the Central Mediterranean.

## Recognition rate remaining stable

Over the last year, the recognition rate has fluctuated around 40?% and in line with the consistency, in May 2023 the recognition rate remained stable at 41?%. Recognition rates for most of the main citizenships differ wildly from each other but tend to remain fairly stable over time. However, the recognition rate for Syrians has been increasing (albeit slowly) from below 90?% in mid-2021 to 95?% or more in 2023, plus more of these decisions grant subsidiary protection (rather than refugee status); while the recognition rate for Ukrainians jumped from around 14?% in February 2022 to 93?% in April 2022 with nearly all decisions granting subsidiary protection (rather than refugee status).

## Continuing pressure on national authorities

At the end of May 2023, some 667?000 cases were awaiting a first instance decision which is up by 32?% compared to May 2022 and, notwithstanding the preceding month, is more than at any other point since early 2017 when EU+ countries were still processing cases lodged during the refugee crisis of 2015-2016. Syrians and Afghans had by far the most pending cases (86?000 and 70?000, respectively), increasingly so for Syrians (+37% compared to May 2022) but more or less stable for Afghans. However, pending cases have more than doubled over the last year for Colombians and Peruvians (mostly in Spain), Turks and Iranians (mostly in Germany), and Egyptians (mostly in Italy).

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