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Shift in EU+ asylum landscape continued in March 2025



The EUAA has published updated figures on asylum applications lodged in the EU+. In March, the 29 EU+ countries received around 67 000 asylum applications. These latest data suggest an ongoing shift to a new asylum landscape in the EU+, one in which Syrians are no longer the top nationality seeking international protection, and Germany is no longer the main destination of asylum seekers.

The fall of the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria on 8 December 2024 may be the beginning of a sea change in the asylum landscape of the EU+, according to newly released analysis from the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). In March 2025, the EU+ **received around 67 000 asylum applications**, which is part of an ongoing decreasing trend that began in October 20241.

Shifting to a new asylum landscape in the EU+

After a decade during which they were almost always the top citizenship seeking protection in the EU+; in March, **Syrians (3 300)** lodged the fewest monthly applications on record outside of the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, decreasing by almost 80 % compared to October 2024. **Venezuelans (8 900)**, however, continued to lodge increasing numbers of asylum applications in the EU+; this is likely owed both

to economic and political instability in Venezuela, as well as restrictive asylum policies in the United States of America.

Applications from **Afghans (7 400)** remained stable, though the figure was much decreased from a previous peak in October 2023. Though eligible for temporary protection in the EU, **Ukrainians (3 400)** continued to lodge increasing numbers of asylum applications, up by 77 % compared to March 2024. Another notable shift saw **Bangladeshis (3 300)** lodging slightly more applications than Syrians in March 2025.

The above trends directly impacted which EU+ countries received the most asylum applications. In March, **Spain (14 000)** received the most applications in the EU+, with three fifths of applications there being lodged by Venezuelans. **Italy (13 000)** received the second most applications, though these are still down by 16 %, year-over-year. In fact, Bangladeshis lodged around 85% of their applications in Italy. **France (13 000)** received about three quarters of applications lodged by **Congolese** nationals and nearly all applications from **Haitian** nationals. A significant share of Ukrainians also applied there. **Greece (4 600)** continued to receive increasing asylum applications from Afghan nationals.

hierarchy visualization

Pending cases and recognition rates

The changing asylum landscape is increasingly reflected in the number of applications that are pending a decision at first instance in the EU+. As of the end of March 2025, the number of such cases stood at a stable, but high, level of 955 000. **Syrians (113 000)**, **Venezuelans (105 000)** and **Colombians (88 000)** were awaiting the most first instance decisions. Among the citizenships with the most cases awaiting decisions, the biggest year-on-year increases occurred for **Ukrainians** (+ 66 %), **Venezuelans** (+ 58 %), **Peruvians** (+ 33 %) as well as **Bangladeshis** (+ 25 %). When accounting for asylum applications that are pending at higher administrative or judicial instances, based on data provided by Eurostat, the EUAA estimates that there **were approximately 1.3 million asylum cases pending** across the EU+ at the end of February 2025.

In the first quarter of 2025, the EU+ recognition rate – which is the proportion of decisions granting refugee status or subsidiary protection – stood at 25 %, down by about 15 percentage points from previous monthly levels in 2024. This decline was mainly driven by a sharp drop in decisions issued to Syrian applicants, as most EU+ countries have paused processing their applications until the situation in Syria is clearer.

Under the Pact on Migration and Asylum, which was agreed one year ago, EU countries may subject certain categories of applicants to a border procedure, and must accelerate the examination of their applications (with initial decisions to be taken within 12 weeks). One indicator is if the applicant comes from a country of origin with a low recognition rate (? 20 %) in the previous year2. In March 2025, some 53 % of applications were lodged by such citizenships3,consistent with previous months, suggesting that **a large share of asylum applications** lodged in the EU+ may be unfounded or inadmissible.

For more information and a series of data visualisations, visit the Latest Asylum Trends page.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Union Agency for Asylum's Press Office at the following email addresses:

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1

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

2

Regulation (EU) 2024/1348, which becomes applicable on 12 June 2026, requires Member States to accelerate the examination of some cases including inter alia those from low recognition rate countries.

3

This estimation is calculated using EUAA data. To ensure statistical reliability, it excludes citizenships that received fewer than 1 000 decisions in 2024.

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