



Spain

National developments in 2024



Having received approximately 165,000 applications for international protection in 2024, Spain was among the top receiving countries in Europe, second only to Germany. As a result, the Spanish asylum and reception systems experienced significant pressure with thousands of third-country nationals arriving by sea¹ or air.

The increased inflow of applicants caused significant delays in accessing the asylum procedure throughout the country.² It also affected the border procedure resulting in severe overcrowding of applicants in unsanitary conditions at the Barajas airport in Madrid.³ UNHCR and civil society organisations, as well as the Spanish Ombudsperson, highlighted the concerning situation and requested the authorities to take urgent measures to guarantee the rights of people seeking asylum at the Barajas airport.⁴ To improve the situation, Spanish authorities took a number of measures, including deploying additional staff, creating a working group to address coordination challenges, training officials and lawyers, and implementing measures to streamline the identification of people and ensure respect of procedural guarantees.

Concerns continued to be expressed about effective access to territory for those seeking protection at the land and sea borders of Ceuta and Melilla.⁵ On the Canary Islands, facilities operated beyond their capacity and there were challenges with reception conditions, access to information and legal assistance, and the availability of qualified interpreters.⁶ The Spanish Ombudsperson visited the islands and issued a number of recommendations, particularly on the need to guarantee access to the procedure and adequate reception conditions to unaccompanied minors, whose numbers have been increasing.⁷ Concerns were also expressed about the long waiting period for applicants to schedule an appointment to officially launch their application.⁸

To improve efficiency, the national authorities took a number of actions in 2024. The Asylum Office was transformed into a Directorate General of International Protection, with more administrative staff and case officers, and an improved organisational structure to streamline processes (including the renewal of documents and administering notifications) and to reduce processing times at first and second instances.⁹ An increased budget was allocated to support, through concerted action, applicants of international protection and beneficiaries of temporary protection, including funds from the EU.¹⁰ In less than 10 years, the protection system as a whole has gone from 1,500 places in 2015 to 19,000 in 2024, and with a budget of EUR 652 million in 2024, compared to EUR 173 million in 2022.¹¹

A number of initiatives by state authorities and civil society focused on the effective integration of beneficiaries of protection, especially for accessing the labour market and increasing employability, as well as social cohesion and co-existence.¹² Steps were also taken to improve protection for people with vulnerabilities, including a new law against trafficking and exploitation of human beings;¹³ projects aimed at survivors and awareness-raising campaigns on human trafficking and female genital mutilation;¹⁴ and projects for the social and labour inclusion of migrants and refugees with disabilities through advice and training.¹⁵ Spain was also active in the area of resettlement,¹⁶ where, apart from the National Refugee Resettlement Programme,¹⁷ the Safe Mobility Offices in Central and South America continued promoting safe, orderly, regular and humanitarian-based migration from the region.¹⁸

To prepare for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, Spanish authorities have been working to adapt legislation to the provisions of the Pact, introduce new IT tools to further automate and simplify procedures, and put in place the needed administrative and practical arrangements.

More input from civil society:

- [Convive - Fundación Cepaim](#) | [Convive - Fundación Cepaim](#)
- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid](#) | [Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado](#)

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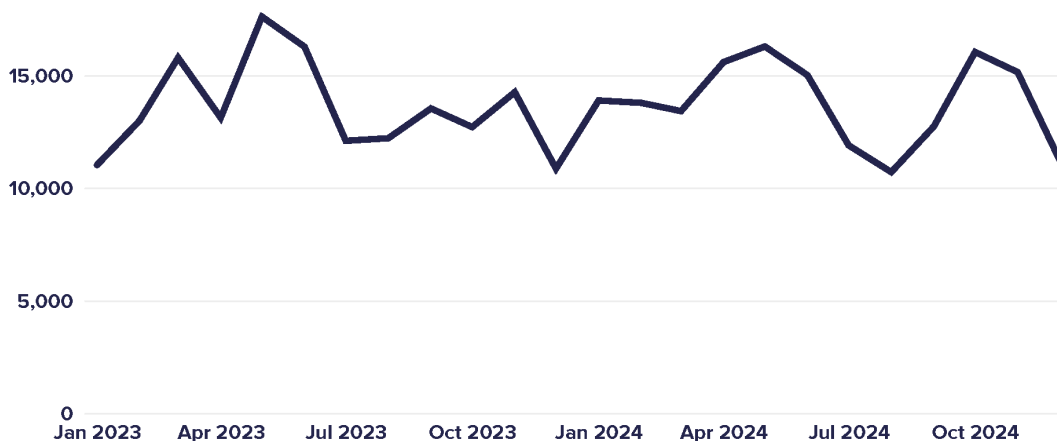
Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of asylum applications 2	Rank per capita (applications per 1M inhabitants) 4	Share of applications in EU+ 16.3%	Recognition rate 20%
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Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	165,767	162,439 →	2%	Venezuela (40%), Colombia (24%), Mali (6%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	251,540	182,691 ↑	38%	Colombia (35%), Venezuela (34%), Peru (9%)
First instance decisions	90,093	90,078 →	0%	Venezuela (36%), Colombia (20%), Mali (10%)
Refugee status	6,355	7,353 ↓	-14%	Nicaragua (19%), Syria (16%), Afghanistan (11%)
Subsidiary protection	11,456	3,834 ↑	199%	Mali (81%), Somalia (7%), Palestine (3%)
Negative	72,282	78,891 ↓	-8%	Venezuela (45%), Colombia (24%), Peru (8%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



For more developments, please consult the [Asylum Report 2025](#) and the [National Asylum Developments Database](#).





Sources

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⁵ Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid | Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado. (2024). [Input to the Asylum Report 2025](#).

⁶ Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid | Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado. (2024). [Input to the Asylum Report 2025](#).

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