Fact sheet EUAA/2026/46
August 2026

Data Analysis of Asylum Applications by Unaccompanied Minors in 2025

The information presented in this fact sheet complements the information on asylum applications in the Asylum Report 2026.

Data from Eurostat (extracted on 10 July 2026)[1] are used in this fact sheet. Data on asylum applications, which are published in the Asylum Report 2026, are based on the EUAA's Early Warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data exchange. EPS data shared with the EUAA are provisional and unvalidated and therefore may differ from validated data submitted to Eurostat at a later date, according to Regulation (EU) 2020/851 amending Regulation (EC) 862/2007.

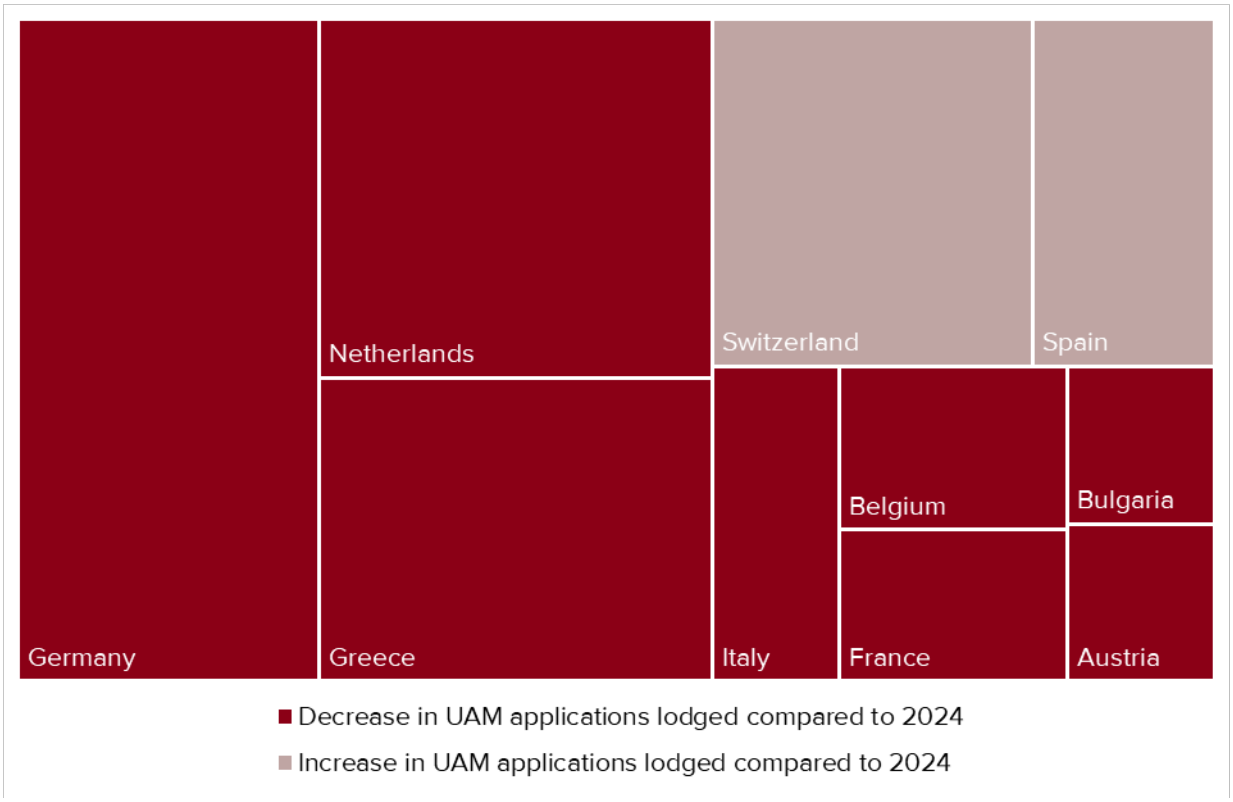
In 2025, unaccompanied minors[2] lodged 22,000 applications for international protection in EU+ countries.[3] Applications dropped by almost 40% compared to the previous year and to the lowest level since 2020, remaining still significantly above the years immediately before the COVID-19 pandemic. This drop was largely due to significantly fewer applications lodged by unaccompanied minors from Syria.

Germany (4,900), the Netherlands (3,500) and Greece (2,900) were the top countries of destination, accounting for over one-half of applications by unaccompanied minors. In all three countries, significantly fewer applications were lodged, with Germany reporting the steepest decrease (-63%). Conversely, sharp increases from the previous year were recorded for Switzerland (2,700, +183%), Spain (1,600, +71%) and Latvia (170, +1033%) *(see Figure 1)*.

[1] Data on pending cases were extracted from Eurostat on 27 July 2026.
[2] For 0.07% of asylum applications, the age of the unaccompanied minor was unknown. Unknowns have been excluded from the analysis of these indicators.
[3] EU-27 countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Asylum applications by unaccompanied minors down by almost two-fifths

Figure 1. Share of asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied minors in the top 10 receiving EU+ countries, 2025



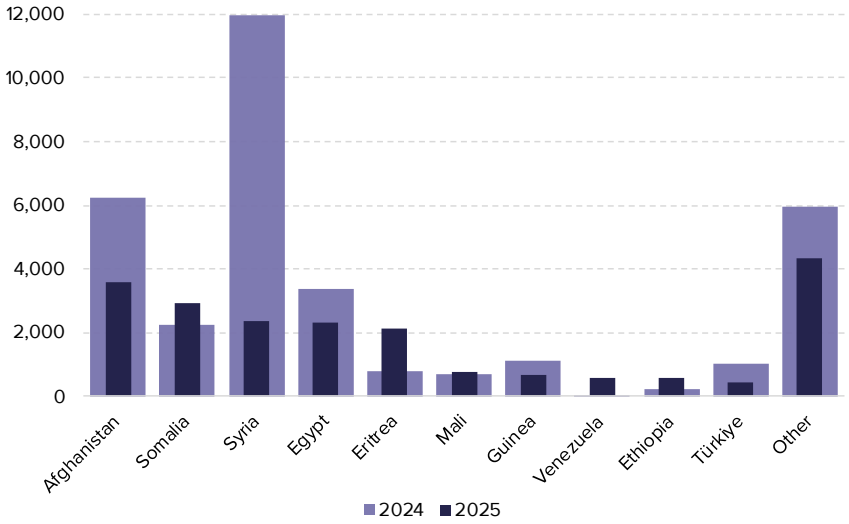
Source: Eurostat [migr_asyunaa] as of 10 July 2026.

Sharp drops for multiple major citizenships but surge in Eritrean and Somali applicants

Afghanistan (3,600), Somalia (2,900), Syria (2,400) and Egypt (2,300) were the main countries of origin, accounting for over one-half of all applications lodged by unaccompanied minors. Applications lodged by Afghan (-43%), Syrian (-80%) and Egyptian (-31%) unaccompanied minors dropped sharply from the previous year.

Conversely, major increases in applications were recorded for multiple African national groups, and in particular for those of the Greater Horn of Africa, in almost all instances mainly driven by surges in Switzerland and the Netherlands. This was the case for Somalis, with applications by unaccompanied minors increasing by almost one-third, Eritreans (2,100, +179%), Ethiopians (560, +147%) and Sudanese (430, +89%, with the main increases in Greece and the Netherlands) *(see Figure 2).* A similar trend was seen for Algerians (330, +78%), driven by an increase in applications lodged in Switzerland.

Figure 2. Asylum applications lodged in EU+ countries by unaccompanied minors from the top 10 countries of origin and others in 2025, 2025 compared to 2024



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyunaa] as of 10 July 2026.

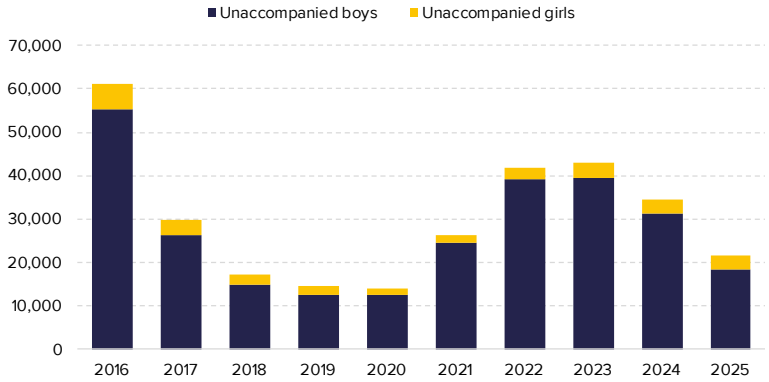
1. Sex and age of unaccompanied minor applicants

As in previous years, more unaccompanied boys than girls sought asylum. In fact, 86% of unaccompanied minors were male, although the share of females steadily increased over recent years and in 2025 was almost double the level of 2023 *(see Figure 3)*.

The distribution of applicants by age group was similar to previous years. In 2025, unaccompanied minors aged 16-17 years accounted for over 7 out of 10 applications lodged, while one-fifth were aged 14-15 years. Less than one-tenth of unaccompanied minor applicants were younger than 14 years.

Unaccompanied boys continued to seek asylum much more frequently than girls

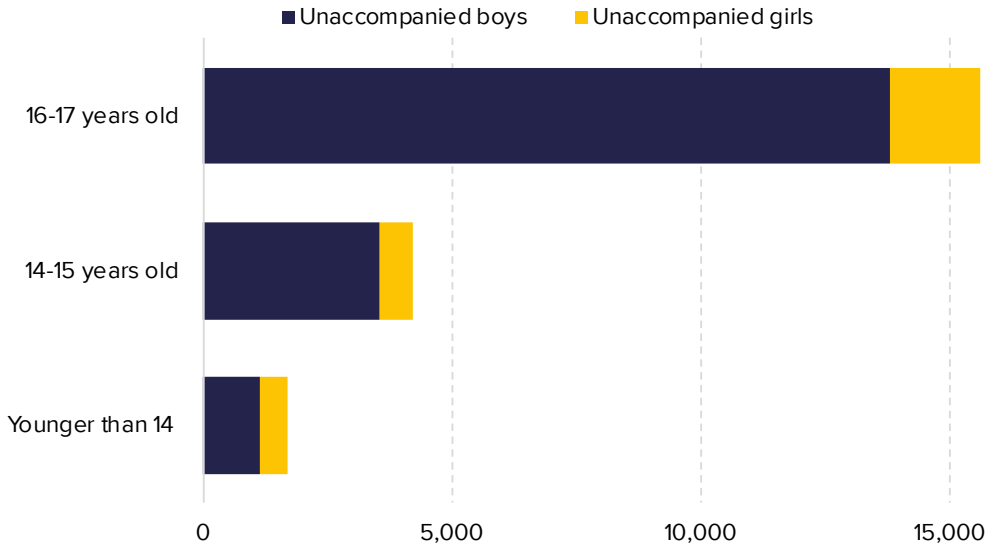
Figure 3. Asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied minors in EU+ countries by sex, 2016–2025



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyunaa] as of 10 July 2026.

Boys represented the vast majority in each age group. Girls accounted for one-third of applications by unaccompanied minors younger than 14 years – the highest share of all age groups – mainly on account of more Venezuelan female applicants in this age category compared to the other nationalities. Boys aged 16-17 years were the largest group of applicants, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the total number of applications lodged by unaccompanied minors in EU+ countries *(see Figure 4).*

Figure 4. Asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied minors in EU+ countries by age and sex, 2025



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyunaa] as of 10 July 2026.

Most unaccompanied minors were boys aged 16-17 years, except in Poland

The overall sex and age patterns across EU+ countries showed some variation across destination countries and some of the largest nationalities of asylum seekers. Boys accounted for at least three-quarters of all unaccompanied minor applicants in most destination countries, but lower shares were reported, for example, in Finland (50%), Poland (55%) and France (65%).

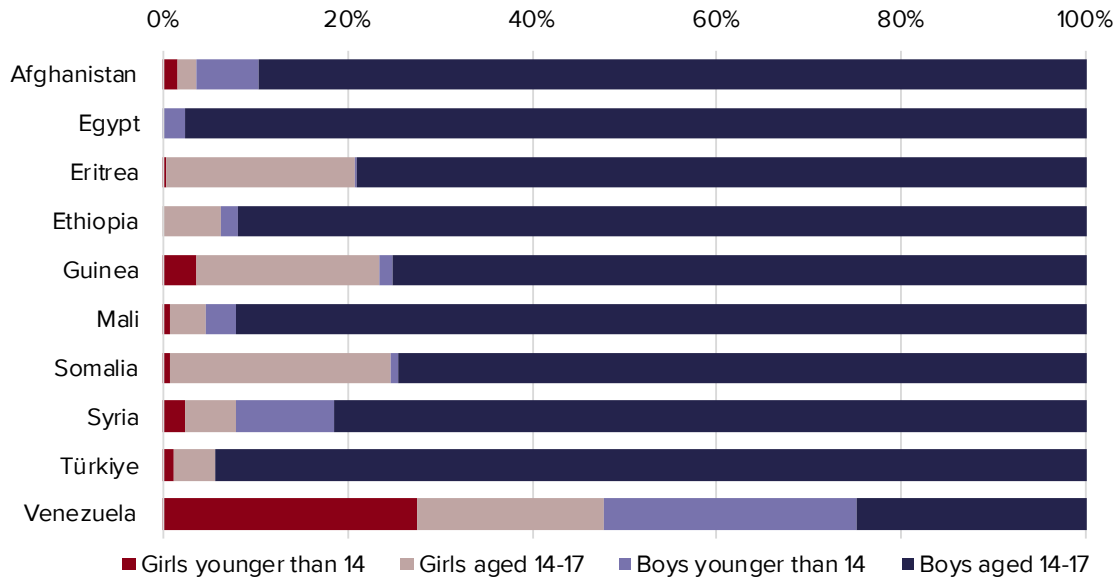
Unaccompanied minors aged 16-17 years were the majority in all destination countries apart from Poland.[4] Poland stands with the highest share of unaccompanied minors who were under 14 years of age (72%), mainly on account of applicants from Ukraine and Belarus.

For most countries of origin, unaccompanied boys lodged the vast majority of applications.[5] Among the top nationalities, girls made up the majority of unaccompanied minor applications lodged by nationals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and made up a sizeable share of the total also among unaccompanied minors from Angola and Venezuela *(see Figure 5).*

[4] Only reporting countries with at least 50 asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied minors in 2025 were considered in this and the following sections.
[5] Only citizenships with at least 100 asylum applications lodged by unaccompanied minors in 2025 were considered.

Over one-half of Venezuelan unaccompanied minors belonged to younger age groups

Figure 5. Share of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in EU+ countries for the top 10 countries of origin by age and sex cohorts, 2025



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyunaa] as of 10 July 2026.

Unaccompanied minors aged 16-17 years represented the majority of applicants in all countries of origin except for Venezuela, where applicants below the age of 14 accounted for over one-half of the total.

Finally, a few countries experienced surges in the number of applications lodged by unaccompanied minors from the younger age categories, particularly for applicants aged 14-15 years old. This was the case for Somalis in Switzerland (115, +1050%) and in the Netherlands (185, +131%) and Eritreans in the Netherlands (450, +190%) and in Switzerland (40, +700%).

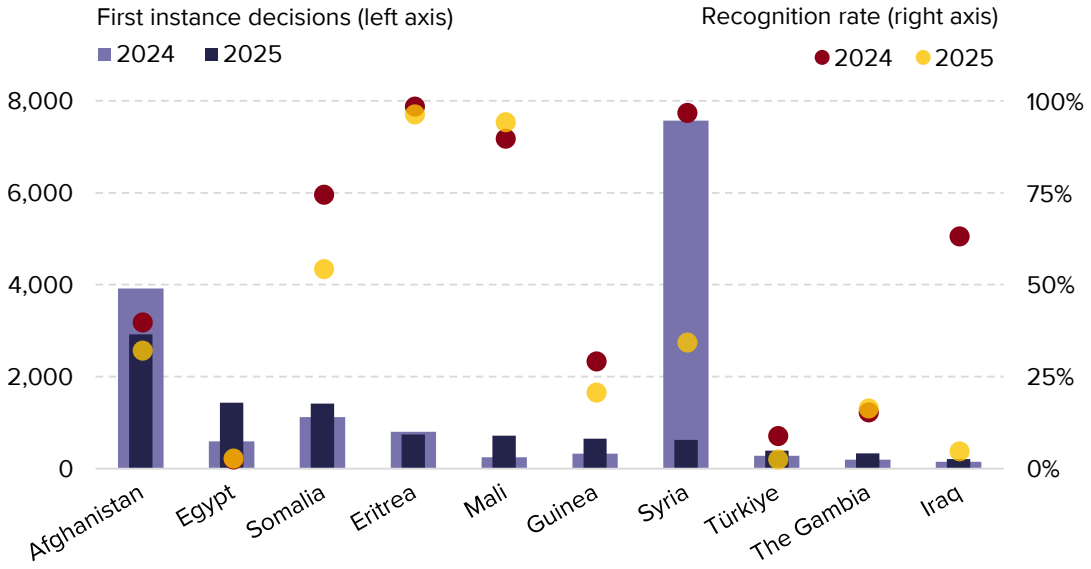
2. Decisions at first instance and recognition rates[6]

In 2025, EU+ asylum authorities issued just over 12,000 first instance decisions to unaccompanied minors, representing nearly a one-third drop from 2024 and the least since 2022.[7] This decrease was largely due to far less decisions issued to Syrian unaccompanied minors (630, -92%), as well as to Afghans (2,900, -26%), albeit to a smaller degree. In contrast, the largest absolute increases were recorded in decisions issued to Egyptians, Malians, Guineans, Somalis, Gambians and Turks (in descending order) *(see Figure 6)*. The top 10 countries of origin, shown in Figure 6, accounted for more than four in five decisions issued to unaccompanied minors in 2025.

[6] The recognition rate is calculated as the proportion of first instance decisions granting EU-regulated types of protection out of all first instance decisions.
[7] Data on first instance decisions on applications of unaccompanied minors were missing for Poland.

Decisions to unaccompanied minors drop to the lowest in three years, largely due to far less decisions issued to Syrians

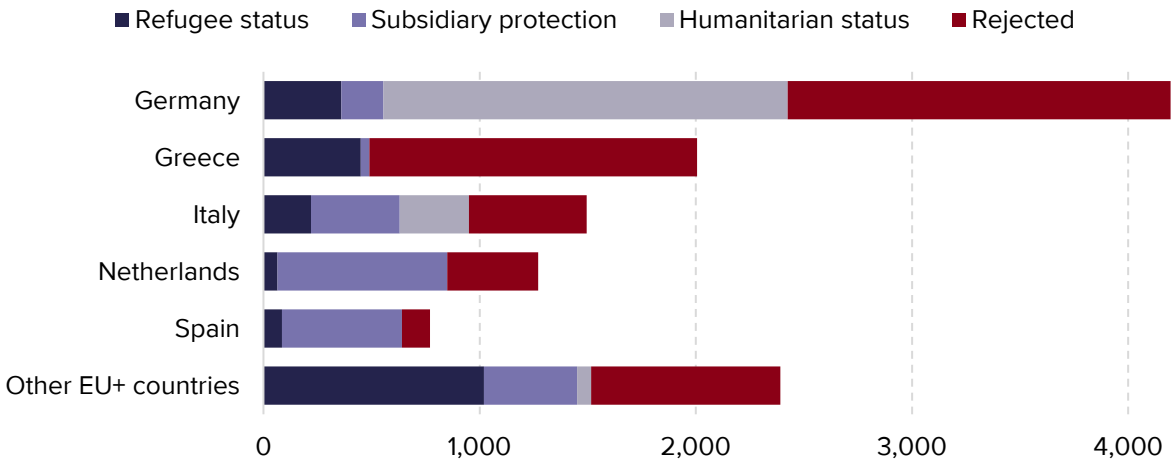
Figure 6. First instance decisions issued to unaccompanied minors and respective recognition rates for the top 10 countries of origin in 2025, 2025 compared to 2024



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyumdcfa] as of 10 July 2026.

Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain issued the most first instance decisions on applications lodged by unaccompanied minors in 2025 *(see Figure 7).* Jointly they accounted for over four-fifths of all decisions issued to unaccompanied minors. Germany and the Netherlands reported the largest decreases compared to 2024, primarily linked to drops in decisions issued to Syrians. Belgium also reported a significant drop in decision-making to unaccompanied minors, similarly linked to Syrians but also Afghans. In contrast, Spain and Greece reported the largest increases, on account of rises in decisions issued to Malians and Egyptians, respectively.

Figure 7. Outcome of first instance decisions issued to unaccompanied minors by top 5 EU+ countries and others, 2025



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyumdcfa] as of 10 July 2026.

Overall, 87% of decisions were issued to unaccompanied boys, largely due to the high number of decisions issued to Afghans and Egyptians, of which almost all were issued to males (96% and almost 100%, respectively). In contrast, the share of decisions issued to female applicants was highest for applicants from Angola (57%), Congo (DR) (52%), Peru (50%) and Somalia (38%).[8] In relative terms, Finland (48%), Ireland (43%) and France (31%) issued the most decisions to unaccompanied girls.

The recognition rate for unaccompanied minors in the EU+ decreased from 70% in 2024 to 37% in 2025, largely impacted by the sharp decrease in total decisions issued to Syrian unaccompanied minors coupled with a reduction in the respective recognition rate (34% in 2025, down from 97% in 2024). Decreases were, however, also reported for most other top nationalities. Most notably, the recognition rate for Iraqis (5%) declined by 59 percentage points as the Netherlands issued three times as many decisions to Iraqi unaccompanied minors than in 2024, all of which were negative, thereby reducing the recognition rate there from 88% to 0%.[9] The recognition rate also dropped significantly for Somalis (54%, -20 p.p.) due to drops across multiple issuing countries.

As in previous years, the outcome of decisions varied significantly across countries of origin. Among the top nationalities, refugee status and subsidiary protection were granted to almost all Eritreans (97%), Malians (94%) and Burkinabe (92%), whereas only a small minority of positive decisions were issued to unaccompanied minors from Egypt and Türkiye (both at 3%).

3. Withdrawn applications

An asylum application can be explicitly or implicitly withdrawn for various reasons before a final decision has been issued, regardless of whether an application is pending at first or higher instances.

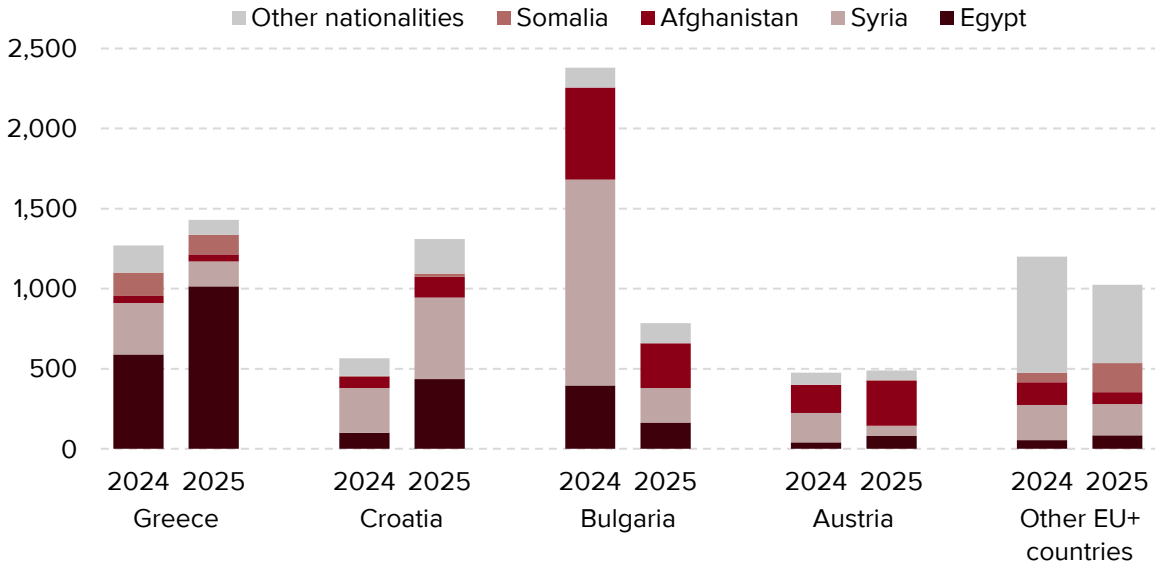
In 2025, about 5,000 applications were withdrawn by unaccompanied minors in EU+ countries.[10] This represented a decrease of around 14% from 2024, whereas withdrawn applications by all applicants remained stable. Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria and Austria (in descending order) reported the most withdrawals by unaccompanied minor applicants in 2025, jointly accounting for 80%, as Greece and Croatia overtook Bulgaria—the country with the most withdrawn applications in the previous year *(see Figure 8)*.

Indeed, the overall decrease in withdrawn applications by unaccompanied minors was spurred mainly by drops in Bulgaria (790, -67%), driven by a significant drop in withdrawn applications by Syrians and to a smaller degree Afghans and Egyptians. At the same time, the number of withdrawn applications by Egyptians almost doubled in Greece (1,400, +13%), making up for decreases for other nationalities. Croatia (1,300, +132%) had the largest absolute increase amongst EU+ countries, on account of rising numbers of withdrawn applications by Egyptians, Syrians (unlike in most other countries), Turks and Afghans.

[8] Citizenships with at least 50 first instance decisions issued to unaccompanied minors in 2025 were considered.
[9] This drop is likely linked to developments noted by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) with regards to how asylum applications are assessed, as well as policy changes, including for Iraqis. (Immigration and Naturalisation Service, Explanation of the asylum application acceptance rate, accessed on 31 July 2026.)
[10] Data for withdrawn asylum applications of unaccompanied minors were missing for Poland and Switzerland.

Sharp decrease in withdrawals of asylum applications in Bulgaria, while they more than doubled in Croatia

Figure 8. Withdrawals by unaccompanied minors for the top 4 EU+ countries and others in 2025, by top countries of origin, 2025 compared to 2024



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyumwita] as of 10 July 2026.

The top nationalities remained Egyptians, Syrians, Afghans and Somalis, however with notable shifts compared to 2024. Egyptians and Somalis increased by over one-half, whereas Syrians and Afghans dropped by one-half and one-fifth, respectively. Collectively, these four nationalities accounted for four-fifths of withdrawals by unaccompanied minor applicants in 2025, similar to 2024.

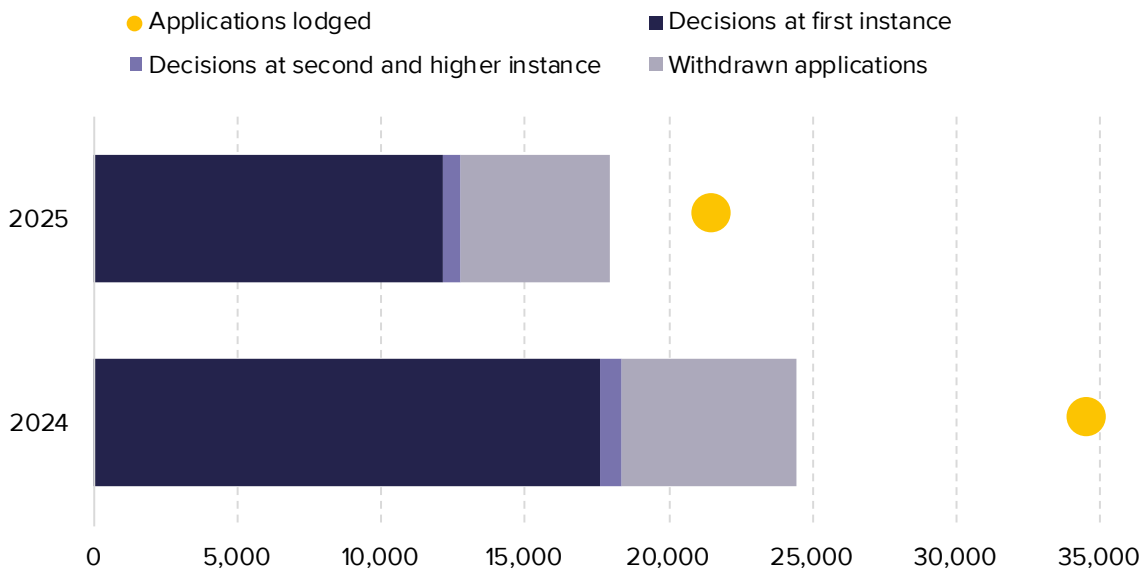
As in previous years, applications continued to be predominantly withdrawn by unaccompanied boys aged 14-17, accounting for 92% of all withdrawals by unaccompanied minors in 2025. Moreover, as previously, nearly all withdrawals were implicit, suggesting that the unaccompanied minors did not notify the authority of their intention to withdraw the application. At times, an implicitly withdrawn asylum application indicates that the applicant applies again in another country, resulting in secondary movements to other EU+ countries.

4. Pending cases

There were around 25,000 cases relating to unaccompanied minors awaiting a decision at all instances at the end of 2025, down by around one-fifth compared to a year earlier.[11] Despite the decrease in case closures compared to 2024,[12] this was outweighed by the larger drop in applications, thus the gap narrowed significantly *(see Figure 9)*.

Caseload of applications by unaccompanied minors down by around a fifth from 2024, as the inflow-outflow gap narrows

Figure 9. Asylum applications by unaccompanied minors that were lodged, withdrawn at any instance and closed with a decision at first and second or higher instance, 2025 compared to 2024

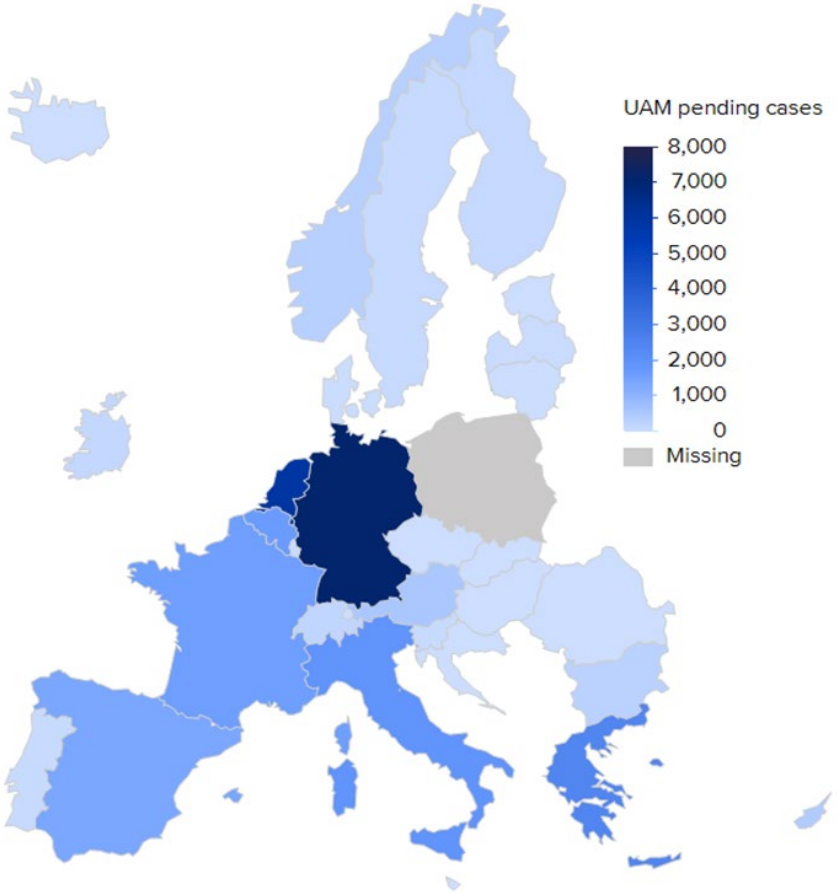


Source: Eurostat [migr_asyumpctm] as of 10 July 2026.

The overall drop in the caseload was on account of decreases across several countries, in particular Germany (-4,400, -38%), Bulgaria (-1,100, -78%) and Austria (-550, -49%). At the end of 2025, just under 3 in 10 pending cases related to unaccompanied minors were pending in Germany (7,200, down from almost two-fifths a year earlier), almost one-quarter in the Netherlands (5,900) and one-quarter in Greece, Italy and Belgium *(see Figure 10)*. Indeed, dynamics in pending cases of unaccompanied minors differed among these top destination countries as they decreased significantly also in Italy (-16%) and Greece (-11%), while they remained relatively stable in the Netherlands and Belgium.

[11] Data for pending asylum applications of unaccompanied minors were missing for Poland for December 2024 and December 2025 and for Switzerland for December 2024.
[12] Case closures include applications withdrawn or closed at any instance and those for which a decision was issued at first or second or higher instances.

Figure 10. Pending cases of unaccompanied minors by EU+ country, end of 2025

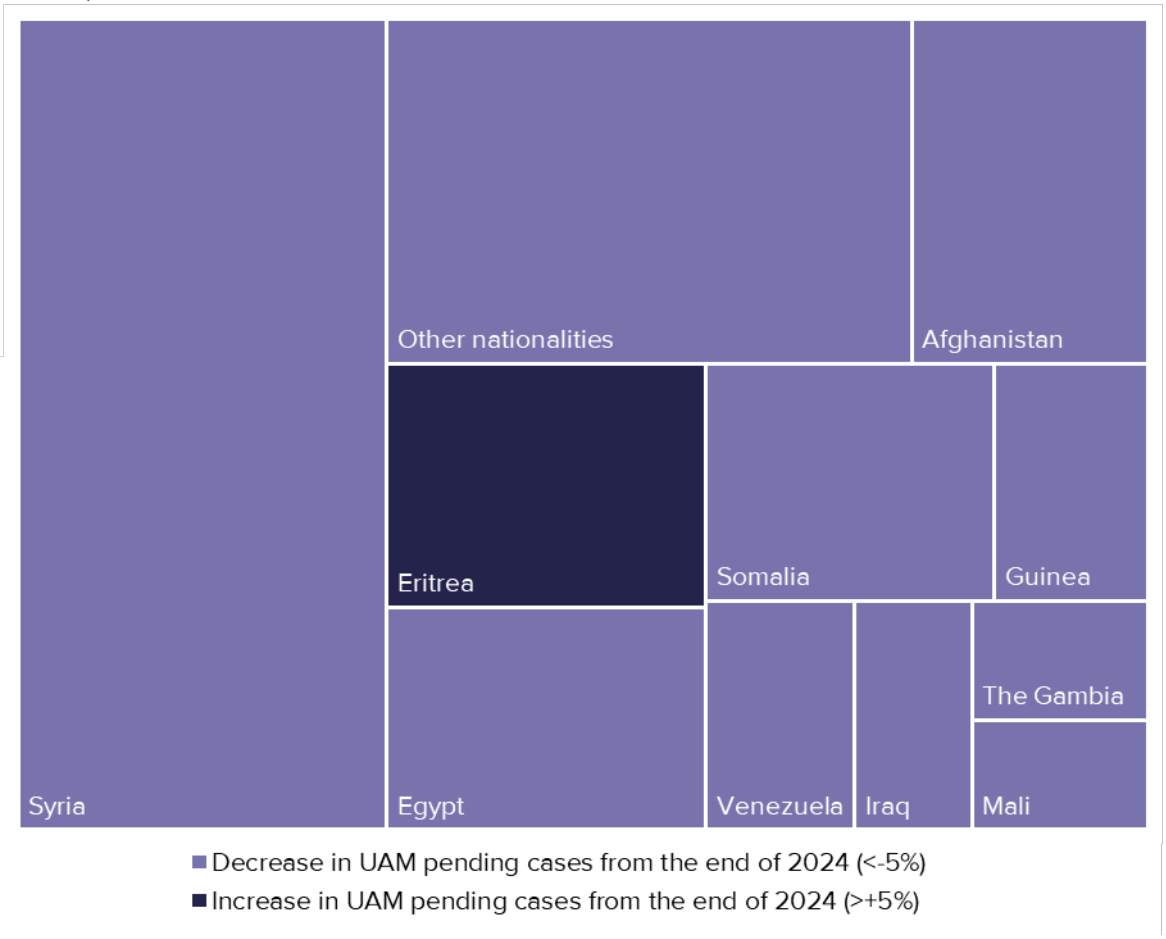


Note: Data on pending cases for unaccompanied minors were not available for EU+ countries marked in grey.
Source: Eurostat [migr_asyumpctm] as of 27 July 2026.

Pending cases for Eritrean unaccompanied minors more than doubled from 2024, as all other top nationalities saw declines

One-third of all pending cases of unaccompanied minors at the end of 2025 related to children from Syria (7,900), with another third from Afghanistan (2,200), Eritrea (2,100), Egypt (1,900) and Somalia (1,800). Almost all top nationalities had significant drops compared to the end of 2024, particularly Afghans (-3,000, -59%) and Syrians (-2,800, -26%). However, the caseload for Eritrean unaccompanied minors more than doubled from 1,000 to 2,100 by December 2025 *(see Figure 11)*.

Figure 11. Pending cases of unaccompanied minors for the top 10 countries of origin and others, end of 2025[13]



Source: Eurostat [migr_asyumpctm] as of 27 July 2026.

To read latest data analysis on asylum trends, consult the EUAA Latest Asylum Trends.

To search for more developments by topic, country or year, consult the National Asylum Developments Database.

[13] Data for pending asylum applications of unaccompanied minors were missing for Venezuela for Spain for December 2024 and were assumed to be the same as January 2025.