News Published: 3 August 2018

Number of asylum applications lodged in EU in early summer remains stable

Recent analyses released by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) reveal that the number of applications for international protection lodged in the EU+ in June 2018 registered a slight decrease compared to the previous month [i]. Approximately 51 300 applications were lodged in June; about 1 600 fewer than in May, while in the first half of 2018, some 301 390 applications were lodged in the EU+, a 15% decrease compared to the first half of 2017 [ii].

The main countries of origin of applicants in June were Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Nigeria. Of these, Syrians and Afghans lodged slightly fewer applications, whereas nationals of Iraq (+182, +6%) and Pakistan (+303, +14%) lodged more applications than in May. During the reporting period, Venezuelan applicants, which have steadily increased over the first five months of 2018, lodged fewer applications than in May (-921, -30%), although monthly applications remained at a much higher level (+67%) than at the beginning of the year.

Other countries with fewer applicants were Bangladesh (-283, -20%), Colombia (-269, -19%) and Somalia (-243, -21%). Of note was a rise in applications by Turkish nationals in June, with 2,157 applications lodged (+32% compared to May), the highest level since the EPS data exchange was established, and rising for the third successive month. Sudanese applicants also lodged more applications (+216, + 36%).

The overall **EU+ recognition rate** for decisions issued in the January-June period was 32%, down from 42% during the same period of 2017. Positive decisions more often granted refugee status (63%) than subsidiary protection (37%). Among citizenships with the most decisions issued [iii], the highest recognition rates were for nationals of Syria (86%), Eritrea (83%) and Stateless applicants (60%).

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Approximately 2.5 % of all applicants in June were **self-claimed unaccompanied minors (UAMs)** [iv]. As has been a regular trend, most UAM applicants were from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Pakistan, while the highest concentration was among applicants from Vietnam (15% of all Vietnamese applicants claimed to be UAMs), Gambia and Eritrea (11% each).

At the end of June, there were 420 238 applications awaiting a decision in first instance, around 3 000 fewer than at the end of May[v]. **Pending cases** are an important measure of the workload that national asylum authorities face, as well as of the pressure on the national reception systems.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: press@easo.europa.eu.

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[i] The EU+ is composed of 28 EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland. Data on applications for international protection were available for 27 EU+ countries. Monthly data from two EU+ countries were missing in both May and June.
[ii] The discrepancy is likely to be narrower, due to differences in data missing for the two reference periods.
[iii] To avoid sensitivity to low numbers.
[iv] Not all EU+ countries report on the number of UAMs, thus the total number is likely higher.
[v] Data on pending cases were available for 25 EU+ countries.

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