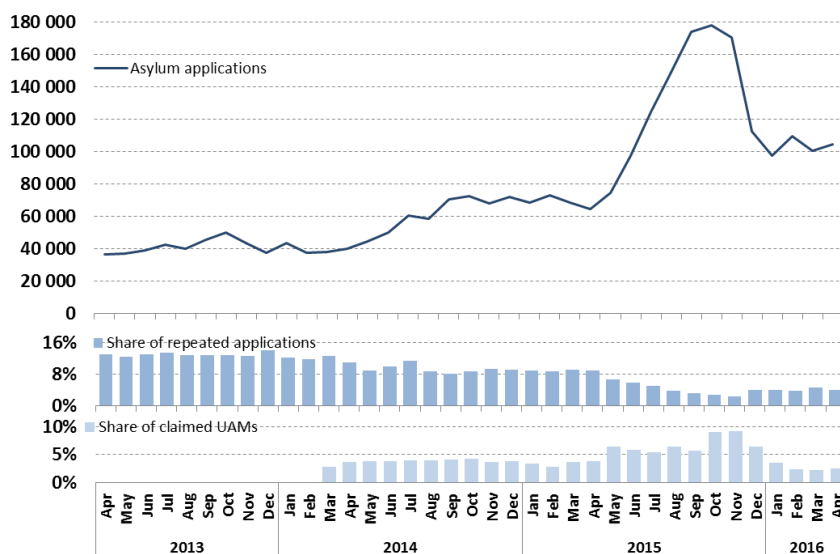


## Latest asylum trends – April 2016

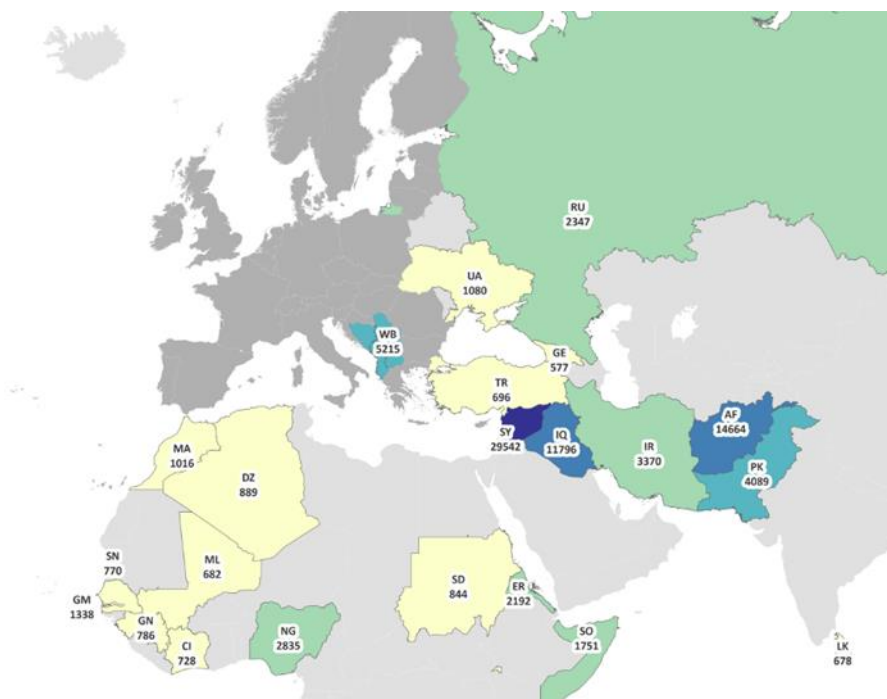
### 1. Number of applications for international protection in the EU+<sup>1</sup>

EU+ countries recorded around 104 000 applications for international protection during April 2016.<sup>2</sup> This total number represented a slight increase of 4 % compared to the previous month. Compared to applications lodged in April 2015, the total number of asylum applications was 62 % higher. **Between January and April 2016, about 412 000 applications were lodged across EU+ countries;** more than the yearly number of applications recorded between 2008 and 2012.



The number of applicants who claimed to be **unaccompanied minors (UAMs) at the moment of lodging an application rose to 2 460**. As a share of the total population of applicants, UAM represented 2.4 % - one of the lowest shares reported since monthly collection began. This rise was mainly driven by a sharp increase of Afghan UAMs who nearly doubled from 595 in March to 1 116 in April. Afghan UAMs represented 45 % of all UAM applicants followed by Somalia (8 %), The Gambia (6 %) and Pakistan (5 %).

### 2. Main countries of origin of applicants



**Syria remained the main citizenship** for the twelfth consecutive month with 29 542 applications. **Afghan and Iraqi nationals were the second and third most represented citizenships**, with 14 664 and 11 796 applications, respectively. Altogether, these three citizenships accounted for 54 % of all applications in the EU+. As a group, **applicants from Western Balkan (WB) countries remained in fourth position** with 5 215 applications on a par with the previous month. Despite a 9 % decrease, **Pakistan remained the fifth main country of origin** of applicants in the EU+. The top ten citizenship groups in April 2016

<sup>1</sup> The EU+ is composed of EU-28 plus Norway and Switzerland. The share of repeated applicants is the proportion of repeated applicants in the total number of applicants for international protection. The share of UAM (unaccompanied minors) represents the proportion of asylum applicants claiming to be below the age of 18 years in the total number of applicants rather than those assessed to be such after an age assessment has been carried out.

<sup>2</sup> Data were available for all 30 EU+ countries. Weekly estimates were used for one country.

also included Iran, Nigeria, Russia, Eritrea and ‘Unknown’ citizenship<sup>3</sup>. The citizenships remained the same ones as for March 2016 but showed significant increases for Nigeria, Russia and Eritrea.

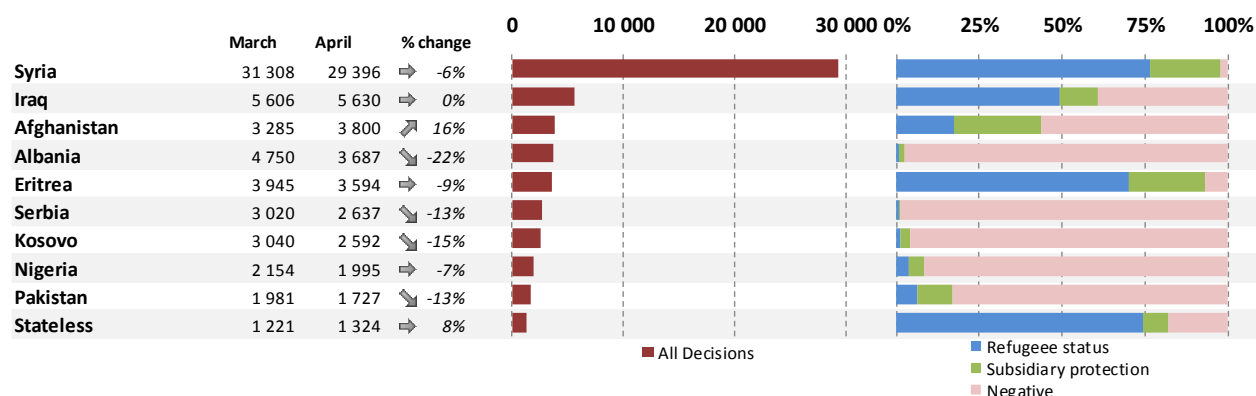
**Syria** – Syrian citizens lodged 29 542 applications in EU+ countries in April and represented about 30 % of the total applications lodged in the EU+. Compared to March, 9 % fewer Syrian nationals applied, while compared to April 2015 the level of applications had nearly tripled. 17 EU+ countries recorded Syrian nationals in their top three citizenships.

**Iraq** – The number of Iraqi applicants decreased by 4 % between March and April to 11 796. This level however remained more than three times higher than in the same month in 2015. Only 8 EU + countries reported Iraqi applicants in their top three citizenships in April, down from 15 in March.

**Afghanistan** – After four months of decreases, applications lodged by Afghan nationals increased by 23 % to 14 664 in April, a level that remained 2.5 times higher than one year before. The number of Afghan claimed UAMs also rose sharply to 1 116 applications in April. Yet this number remained well below the 11 000 Afghan UAM reported in November 2015. 16 EU+ countries reported Afghan applicants in their national top three citizenships.

**Western Balkan nationals (WB)** – The number of WB nationals applying for international protection in the EU+ remained stable in April with 5 215 applications. Within the group of WB applicants, Albanian nationals accounted for the largest share (43 % of all WB applicants), followed by Kosovar and Serbian applicants (each about 19 %). Applications from WB nationals clearly dropped compared to the 16 331 applications lodged in April 2015.

### Number and type of decisions issued in first instance in EU+ countries



For the second consecutive month since August 2015, the **number of first instance decisions issued in the EU+ decreased, to 77 423 decisions** (a 9% drop). Despite this fall, the number of first instance decisions issued was still nearly twice as large as the level recorded in April 2015. The **share of positive decisions was 57 % of the total decisions in first instance in the EU+**, two percentage points higher than in March 2016.

A total of 29 396 decisions were issued to **Syrian** applicants, a 6 % decrease compared to March 2016. Syrian nationals however still represented by far the largest citizenship to whom first instance decisions were issued: 38 % of all decisions issued in the EU+ involved a Syrian applicant. 98 % of decisions for Syrian nationals resulted in the granting of some form of international protection: 76.8 % resulted refugee status and 21.2 % subsidiary protection. Compared to the previous months, subsidiary protection was increasingly granted to Syrian applicants. 5 630 decisions were taken on **Iraqi** cases - a similar number to last month. With a recognition rate of 61 % (three percentage points lower than in March), Iraqi nationals remained below the eligibility threshold of 75 % for relocation for the fourth month running. The number of decisions issued on **Afghan** cases (3 800) increased by 16 %, while the recognition rate dropped by four more percentage points to 44 %.

For the other citizenships in the top ten, the number of first-instance decisions issued in April decreased compared to March for WB nationals (Albania, Serbia and Kosovo) as well as for Eritrean, Nigerian and Pakistani nationals. In contrast, more, mostly positive, decisions were taken for ‘Stateless’ applicants (1 324).

<sup>3</sup> Information from Member States indicates that the majority of such cases are usually persons of Palestinian origin who were long-time residents of countries such as Syria.