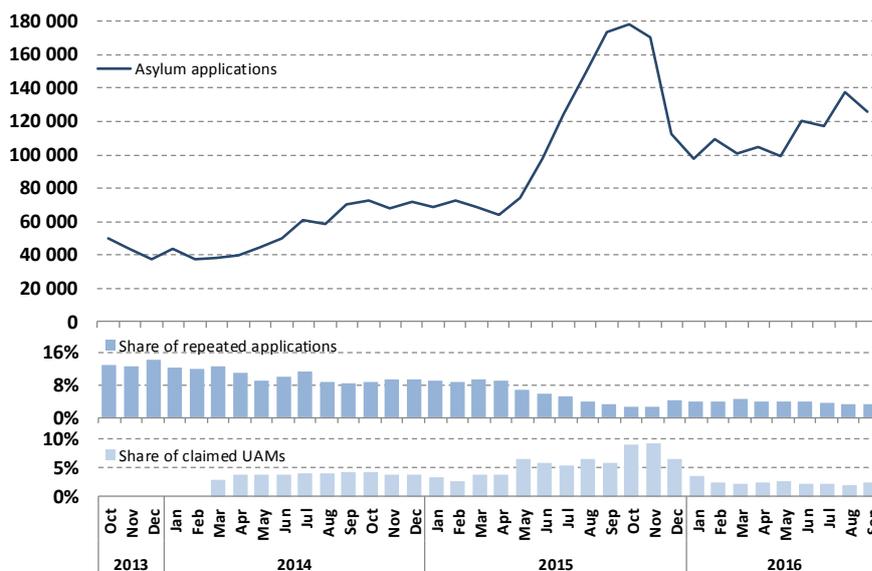


## Latest asylum trends – September 2016

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

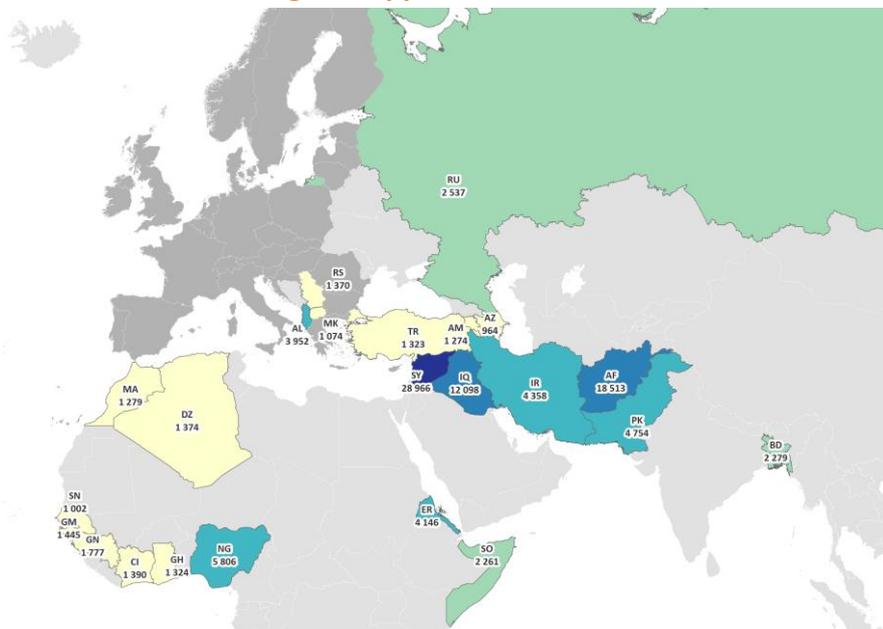
In September 2016, EU+ countries recorded approximately 125 809 applications for international protection.<sup>2</sup> Despite a 9 % decrease compared to August, this was still the second-highest level in 2016. By comparison, in September 2015 when applications started to peak, 173 880 applications were lodged, or 38 % more than in September 2016. **Since the beginning of 2016, 1 013 053 applications have been recorded in the EU+.**



**This compares to 894 028 applications lodged in the same period of 2015.**

In line with the previous months, **96 % of all applicants were first-time applicants, i.e. they had not previously lodged an application for international protection in the same EU+ country. 2 % of all applicants claimed to be unaccompanied minors (UAMs)<sup>3</sup> when lodging an application. 27 % of all UAM applicants were Afghan citizens, 12 % Syrian and 9 % Eritrean.**

### Main countries of origin of applicants



**Syria has been the main citizenship of applicants since April 2015.** In September 2016, EU+ countries recorded 28 966 Syrian applications. **Afghanistan and Iraq were still the second and third most represented citizenships** with 18 513 and 12 098 applications, respectively. These top-three citizenships together accounted for half of all applications lodged in the EU+.

Nigerian (5 806) and Pakistani (4 754) nationals ranked in fourth and fifth position while the top 10 of citizenships was completed by Iran (4 358), Eritrea (4 146), Albania (3 952), Russia (2 537) and Bangladesh (2 279). With the exception of Albanian and Bangladesh citizenships, all top 10 citizenships decreased compared to the previous month. The sharpest decreases were recorded for Afghan (- 24 %), Russian (- 15 %) and Pakistani (- 15%) applicants.

<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 claimed UAMs 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>Asylum applications were available for all 30 EU+ countries, estimates based on weekly data were used for three countries.

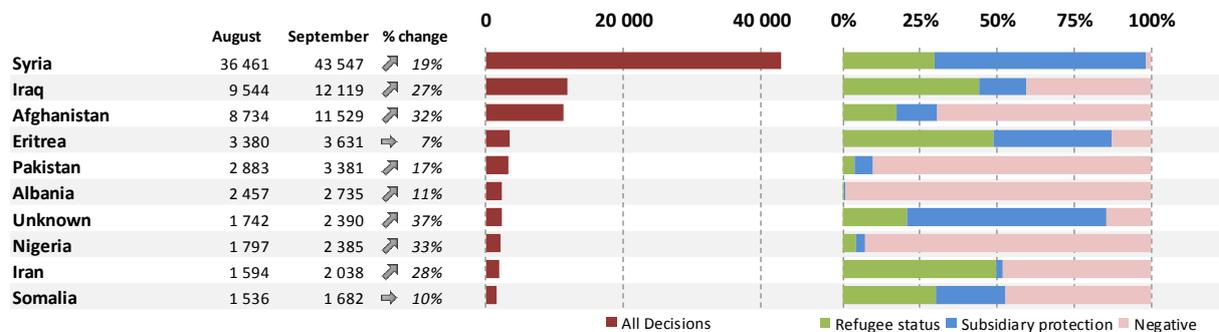
<sup>3</sup>Several EU+ countries have difficulties reporting on claimed UAMs in the framework of the EPS, these figures should therefore be considered as underestimations of the actual proportion of claimed UAMs.

**Syria** – In September 2016, Syria was once more the main citizenship of origin of applicants for international protection in the EU+. With 28 966 applications, one in four applications recorded throughout the EU+ during this month was lodged by Syrian nationals. Compared to August, the number of Syrian applicants decreased by 20 %. Compared to September 2015, only half as many Syrians applied for international protection in September 2016. 22 EU+ countries counted Syrian nationals among their top three citizenships of applicants.

**Afghanistan** – Afghanistan was in second place of the citizenships with most applications for the sixth consecutive month. After an increase in numbers in August, September noted a 24 % decrease in Afghan applications to 18 513. Afghanistan remained the main citizenship of claimed UAMs (27 %). 16 EU+ countries reported Afghan applicants in their national top-three citizenships.

**Iraq** – In September 2016, 12 098 Iraqi applications were recorded in EU+ countries, 14 % fewer than in August 2016 and less than half than in September 2015. Fifteen EU+ countries counted Iraqi applicants among the top-three citizenships.

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



In September 2016, EU+ countries issued 109 803 first-instance decisions<sup>4</sup>, the highest level since the start of EPS monthly data collection in 2014. Compared to August, 20 % more decisions were issued and, compared to September 2015 when 46 505 decisions were issued, the number more than doubled. The EU+ recognition rate reached 63 % in September, two percentage points higher than the previous month. As in August, there were more decisions granting subsidiary protection than refugee status (58 % of all positive decisions granting subsidiary protection vs. 42 % refugee status). The large majority of decisions were issued to **Syrian** applicants, with 43 547 decisions seeing a 19 % increase compared to August. The recognition rate for Syrian applicants remained stable at 98 %. The share of subsidiary protection issued to Syrian applicants further increased to 68 % of all positive decisions. The number of decisions on **Iraqi** applications increased to 12 119, with a 59 % recognition rate. Most Iraqi applicants were issued refugee status (74 % of all positive decisions). The recognition rate for Iraqi applicants therefore stayed well below the threshold for relocation eligibility. The number of decisions issued to **Afghan** applicants increased by 32 % to 11 529, close to the number of decisions issued to Iraqi nationals. The recognition rate for Afghan nationals was 30 %, five percentage points lower than in August. Of these positive decisions, 57 % resulted in refugee status and 43 % in subsidiary protection. Out of the remaining 10 citizenships with the most first-instance decisions issued, Eritrea showed the second-highest recognition rate (87 %) together with applicants of unknown citizenship (86 %). The lowest recognition rates were for Albanian (1 %), Nigerian (7 %) and Pakistani (9 %) applicants.

### Cases awaiting a first-instance decision

Despite the increased processing capacity in EU+ countries, the influx of asylum applications still exceeded EU+ countries' capacities to handle them. The level of the number of decisions issued in September was similar to that observed in August. This situation resulted in an accumulation of cases awaiting a first-instance decision. **At the end of September 2016, there were about 1 050 000 pending cases<sup>4</sup>**, out of which more than half (52 %) have been pending for longer than six months.

<sup>4</sup> Data on these indicators were not yet available for three EU+ countries. Estimates are based on the volume of first instance and pending cases reported by these countries in August 2016.