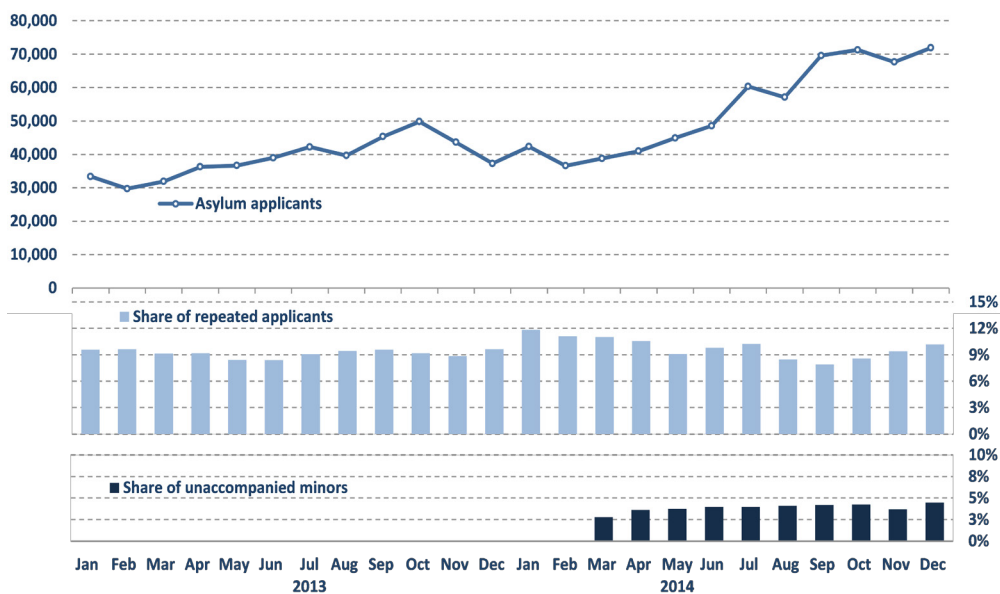


Latest asylum trends and main countries of origin

1. Number of applicants for international protection in EU+¹

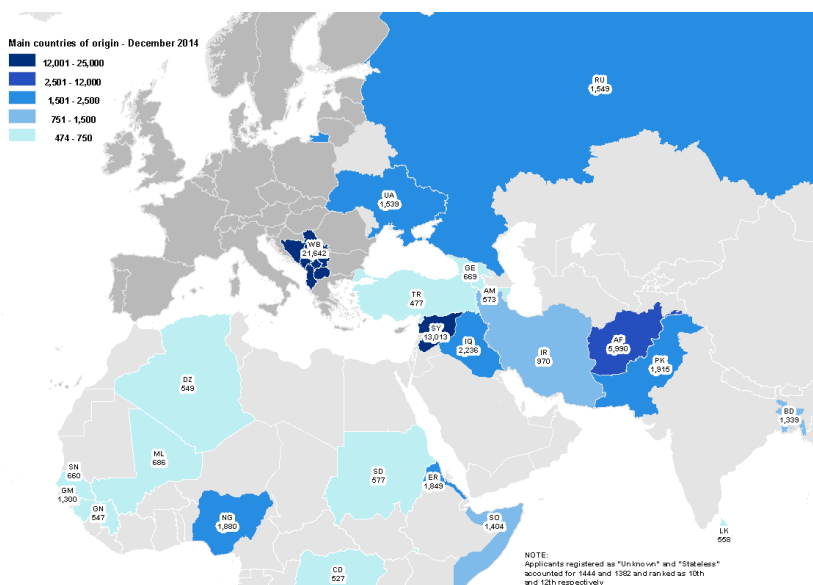
Monthly trend of asylum applicants, January 2013 to December 2014



Note: The share of repeated applicants is the proportion of 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. It is important to emphasise that this term 'unaccompanied minor' here refers to applicants claiming to be minors and for whom an age assessment has not necessarily been carried out before provision of the data.

In December 2014, the total number of asylum applicants in the EU+ again reached a new monthly high of around 70,000 applicants per month. Until December, the trend in 2014 had followed the same pattern as in 2013 but at a higher level. In previous years, levels have been lower in December due to seasonal factors, but this year December is the fourth consecutive month that EU+ totals have reached around 70,000 applicants. The second half of 2014 was characterised by monthly totals consistently higher than the peak registered in 2013. During the whole of 2014, EU+ countries recorded 650,000 applications for international protection, 40 % higher than in 2013 and the highest ever level since the beginning of EU-regulated data collection in 2008. In December 2014, the share of repeated applicants increased to 10 % of all applicants in the month, as a result of increased repeated applicants from the Western Balkan countries. Throughout 2014, the share of claimed unaccompanied minors (UAM) applicants represented roughly 4 % of all applicants, with the main nationalities of claimed UAM being Afghans, Syrians and Eritreans, applying mainly in Sweden and Germany.

2. Top 25 countries of origin in EU+ in December 2014



In December 2014, the number of Kosovar applicants in the EU+ exceeded the number of Syrian applicants. Since September the number of Syrian applicants has decreased and December is the first month of 2014 that they were not the top single citizenship of applicants in the EU+. The number of applicants from Afghanistan increased by 31%, while the number of Eritrean applicants fell once again. After 8 months in the top 5, Eritreans dropped to the eighth place in the ranking of top citizenships.

3. Latest country of origin trends

Syria - The 5 % decrease in the number of Syrian applicants compared to November constitutes the third consecutive monthly decline after the peak in September. For the whole of 2014, the number of Syrians applying for international protection in the EU+ totalled over 125,000, a 139 % increase compared to 2013.

Western Balkan nationals (WB) - Compared to November, the number of applicants from the Western Balkans² countries grew by 35 % in December and for the third consecutive month set a new all-time high, with over 21,000 applicants. The surge was almost entirely due to the high number of Kosovars (13,000, many of whom applied in Hungary) and Serbs reported by EU+ countries.

Afghanistan - December 2014 was also a record month for the number of Afghan applicants in the EU+ countries, who totalled almost 6,000. The main receiving countries are concentrated in Central/South-Eastern Europe.

Ukraine - After the decline in November, the number of Ukrainian applicants further declined by 16 % in December to levels comparable to the beginning of the summer.

2 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2), Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (1) (This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Kosovo declaration of independence).

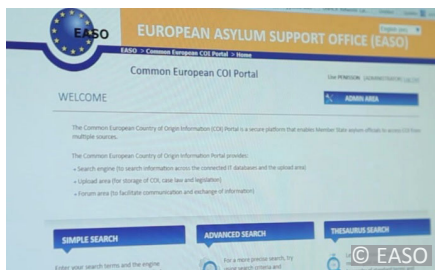
Additional data and reports

Quarterly reports are available here: easo.europa.eu/asylum-trends-analysis/quarterly-report

Other EASO documentation is available here: easo.europa.eu/asylum-documentation/easo-publication-and-documentation

COI Portal user training for Malta

On 27 and 28 January 2015, EASO held two training sessions on the Common European Country of Origin Information (COI) Portal for the Maltese migration board (Office of the Refugee Commissioner). In 2014, the office recruited 12 new caseworkers which needed to be trained. Participants welcomed this local training, tailored to their information needs and focussing on queries related to countries of origin they had specified beforehand (namely Libya, Syria, Eritrea, and Somalia).



Besides providing caseworkers with hands-on training on the COI Portal's main features, the sessions also aimed at presenting EASO's COI activities (including a brief outlook on the planned overhaul of the current COI Portal) and at reinforcing the Maltese National COI Portal Administrator's (NCPA) capacity to consolidate the knowledge acquired in the session. The training for Malta is the fifth in a row of successful regional user trainings, following sessions for caseworkers and COI researchers from Portugal, Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria, and Italy in 2014.

EASO participates in the informal JHA Council in Riga



EASO's Executive Director participated in the Informal Justice and Home Affairs Council, which took place on 29 and 30 January in Riga, Latvia.

Amongst various other topics, Ministers discussed questions related to the management of migratory flows. The agenda included a set of actions aimed at responding to human smuggling.

The aim of this discussion was to assess the current situation and identify how responses to the constantly evolving strategies of smugglers could be adjusted and whether there is a need to adapt the list of current measures in order to better manage the migration flows in the EU. Member States discussed how to provide their input, expectations and views to the Commission in its preparation of the forthcoming European Agenda on Migration.