

Asylum decisions in the EU

EU Member States granted protection to more than 330 000 asylum seekers in 2015

Half of the beneficiaries were Syrians

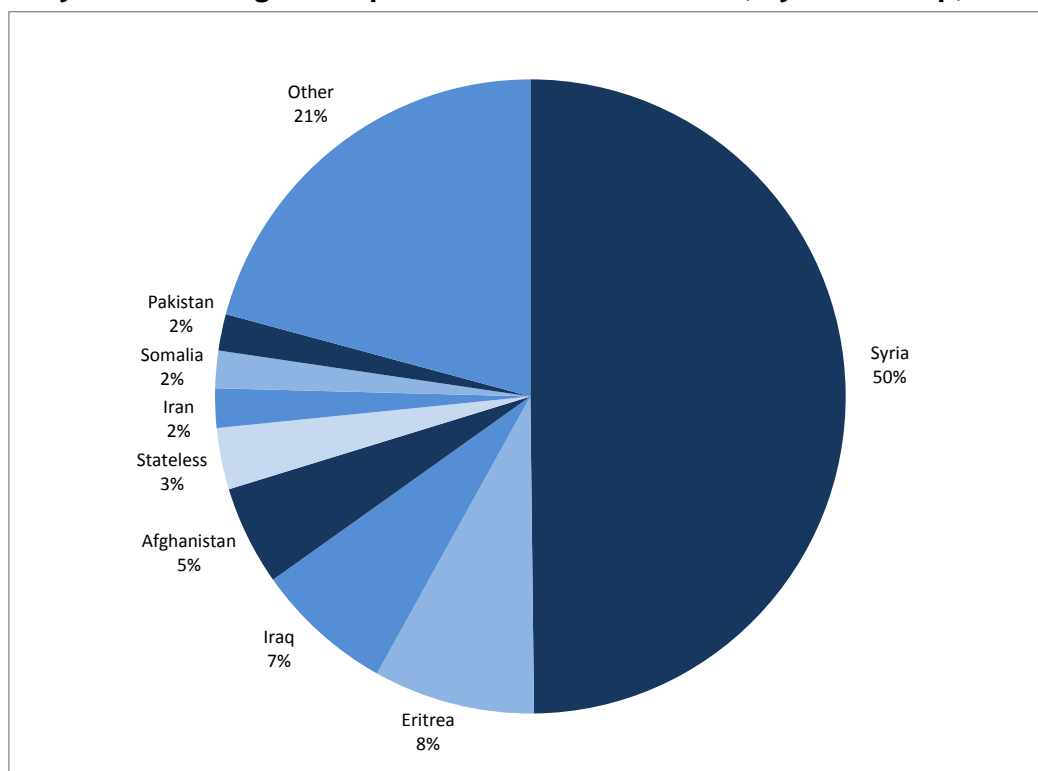
The 28 Member States of the **European Union** (EU) granted protection status to 333 350 asylum seekers in 2015, an increase of 72% compared with 2014. Since 2008, a total of nearly 1.1 million asylum seekers have been granted protection status in the EU.

The largest group of beneficiaries of protection status in the **EU** in 2015 remained citizens of **Syria** (166 100 persons, or 50% of the total number of persons granted protection status in the EU Member States), followed by citizens of **Eritrea** (27 600 or 8%) and those of **Iraq** (23 700 or 7%).

Syrians, for whom the number of decisions granting protection status has more than doubled compared with 2014, represented in 2015 the largest group granted protection status in more than half of the Member States. Of the 166 100 **Syrians** granted protection status in the **EU**, more than 60% were recorded in **Germany** (104 000). Of the 27 600 **Eritreans** granted protection, more than three-quarters were registered in three EU Member States: **Germany** (9 500), **Sweden** (6 600) and the **Netherlands** (4 900). Of the 23 700 **Iraqis**, 15 500 were granted protection status in **Germany** and 2 800 in **France**.

These data on the results of asylum decisions in the **EU** are released by **Eurostat**, the statistical office of the **European Union**.

Asylum seekers granted protection status in the EU, by citizenship, 2015



Three main citizenships granted protection status in the EU, 2015

	First			Second			Third		
	Citizens of	#	%*	Citizens of	#	%*	Citizens of	#	%*
EU	Syria	166 055	49.8	Eritrea	27 575	8.3	Iraq	23 685	7.1
Belgium	Syria	3 680	33.8	Afghanistan	995	9.1	Iraq	970	8.9
Bulgaria	Syria	5 320	95.0	Iraq	160	2.9	Stateless**	95	1.7
Czech Rep.	Ukraine	170	37.3	Syria	130	28.4	Cuba	55	11.7
Denmark	Syria	5 750	56.4	Eritrea	2 895	28.4	Stateless**	870	8.5
Germany	Syria	103 975	70.2	Iraq	15 470	10.4	Eritrea	9 455	6.4
Estonia	Ukraine	60	75.6	Sudan	15	16.7	^	^	^
Ireland	Afghanistan	85	12.3	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	85	12.0	Pakistan	55	7.6
Greece	Syria	3 160	53.8	Afghanistan	800	13.6	Iraq	370	6.3
Spain	Syria	655	63.8	Somalia	110	10.7	Pakistan	60	5.8
France	Syria	3 210	12.3	Iraq	2 760	10.6	Russia	1 800	6.9
Croatia	Turkey	5	11.9	Nigeria	5	11.9	Azerbaijan	5	11.9
Italy	Nigeria	3 745	12.6	Pakistan	3 500	11.8	Afghanistan	3 280	11.1
Cyprus	Syria	1 600	85.5	Iraq	65	3.6	Stateless**	60	3.2
Latvia	Syria	15	44.8	Afghanistan	10	27.6	Iraq	5	17.2
Lithuania	Ukraine	25	31.0	Iraq	20	23.8	Afghanistan	15	15.5
Luxembourg	Syria	80	37.6	Eritrea	30	14.3	Iraq	20	9.5
Hungary	Syria	170	31.3	Afghanistan	100	17.9	Somalia	75	13.3
Malta	Libya	785	59.3	Syria	280	21.3	Eritrea	60	4.5
Netherlands	Syria	7 975	46.8	Eritrea	4 930	28.9	Stateless**	1 895	11.1
Austria	Syria	8 255	46.5	Afghanistan	3 630	20.4	Stateless**	1 380	7.8
Poland	Russia	240	34.6	Syria	205	29.7	Iraq	50	6.9
Portugal	Ukraine	115	60.6	Sierra Leone	10	5.7	Somalia	10	4.1
Romania	Syria	335	63.9	Iraq	65	12.4	Afghanistan	30	5.7
Slovenia	Iran	20	38.0	Syria	15	28.0	Somalia	5	14.0
Slovakia	Ukraine	15	18.8	Iraq	15	16.3	Syria	10	13.8
Finland	Iraq	640	35.8	Somalia	480	26.7	Syria	135	7.5
Sweden	Syria	18 655	54.1	Eritrea	6 610	19.2	Stateless**	3 330	9.7
United Kingdom	Sudan	2 470	13.8	Iran	2 385	13.3	Syria	2 085	11.6
Iceland	Syria	15	19.8	Russia	10	9.3	Ukraine	5	7.0
Liechtenstein	Somalia	5	50.0	China	5	40.0	^	^	^
Norway	Eritrea	2 655	37.3	Syria	1 570	22.0	Afghanistan	775	10.8
Switzerland	Eritrea	4 975	35.2	Syria	3 420	24.2	Sri Lanka	1 265	8.9

Data are rounded to the nearest five. For this reason, parts may not add up to totals.

^ No data presented for those countries of citizenship where the number of positive decisions was fewer than 3 during the reference period.

* Persons with this citizenship granted protection status as a percentage of the total number of persons granted protection in this country.

** A stateless person is someone who is not recognized as a citizen of any state.

The source dataset can be found [here](#) for first instance decisions and [here](#) for final decisions.

Almost half of positive decisions granted in one single Member State: Germany

In 2015, the highest number of persons granted protection status was registered in **Germany** (148 200, or +212% compared with 2014), followed by **Sweden** (34 500, or +4%), **Italy** (29 600, or +44%), **France** (26 000, or +26%), the **United Kingdom** (17 900, or +26%), **Austria** (17 800, or +77%+) and the **Netherlands** (17 000, or +29%).

Out of all the persons who were granted protection status in 2015 in the **EU**, 246 200 persons were granted refugee status (74% of all positive decisions), 60 700 subsidiary protection (18%) and 26 500 authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons (8%). In addition to those granted protection status, the **EU** Member States received more than 8 100 resettled refugees. It should be noted that, while both refugee and subsidiary protection status are defined by EU law, humanitarian status is granted on the basis of national legislation.

Positive decisions on asylum applications in 2015

	Positive decisions*				Resettled refugees
	Total number	Of which:			
		Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
EU	333 350	246 175	60 680	26 500	8 155
Belgium	10 900	9 220	1 675	-	275
Bulgaria	5 605	4 705	895	-	0
Czech Republic	460	55	390	15	0
Denmark	10 200	7 815	2 315	70	450
Germany	148 215	142 305	2 230	3 685	510
Estonia	80	20	55	0	0
Ireland	710	335	375	-	175
Greece	5 875	5 020	705	150	0
Spain	1 030	220	805	0	0
France	26 015	20 620	5 395	-	620
Croatia	40	35	5	-	0
Italy	29 630	3 575	10 280	15 780	95
Cyprus	1 875	240	1 630	0	0
Latvia	30	5	25	-	0
Lithuania	85	15	65	0	5
Luxembourg	210	185	25	-	45
Hungary	545	170	370	5	5
Malta	1 320	290	955	75	0
Netherlands	17 045	6 915	9 655	475	450
Austria	17 750	14 330	2 950	-	760
Poland	695	360	195	135	0
Portugal	195	35	160	-	40
Romania	525	250	275	0	0
Slovenia	50	35	15	-	0
Slovakia	80	5	40	35	0
Finland	1 795	1 110	510	175	1 005
Sweden	34 470	13 510	18 460	2 500	1 850
United Kingdom	17 920	14 785	210	2 925	1 865
Iceland	85	45	20	20	15
Liechtenstein	10	5	0	5	20
Norway	7 150	5 610	780	760	2 375
Switzerland	14 135	6 360	2 640	5 135	610

Data are rounded to the nearest five. For this reason, totals may not add up.

0 means fewer than 3.

- Not applicable

* First instance and final decisions on appeal.

The source dataset can be found [here](#) for first instance decisions and [here](#) for final decisions.

Half of asylum decisions at the first instance made in the EU resulted in protection status

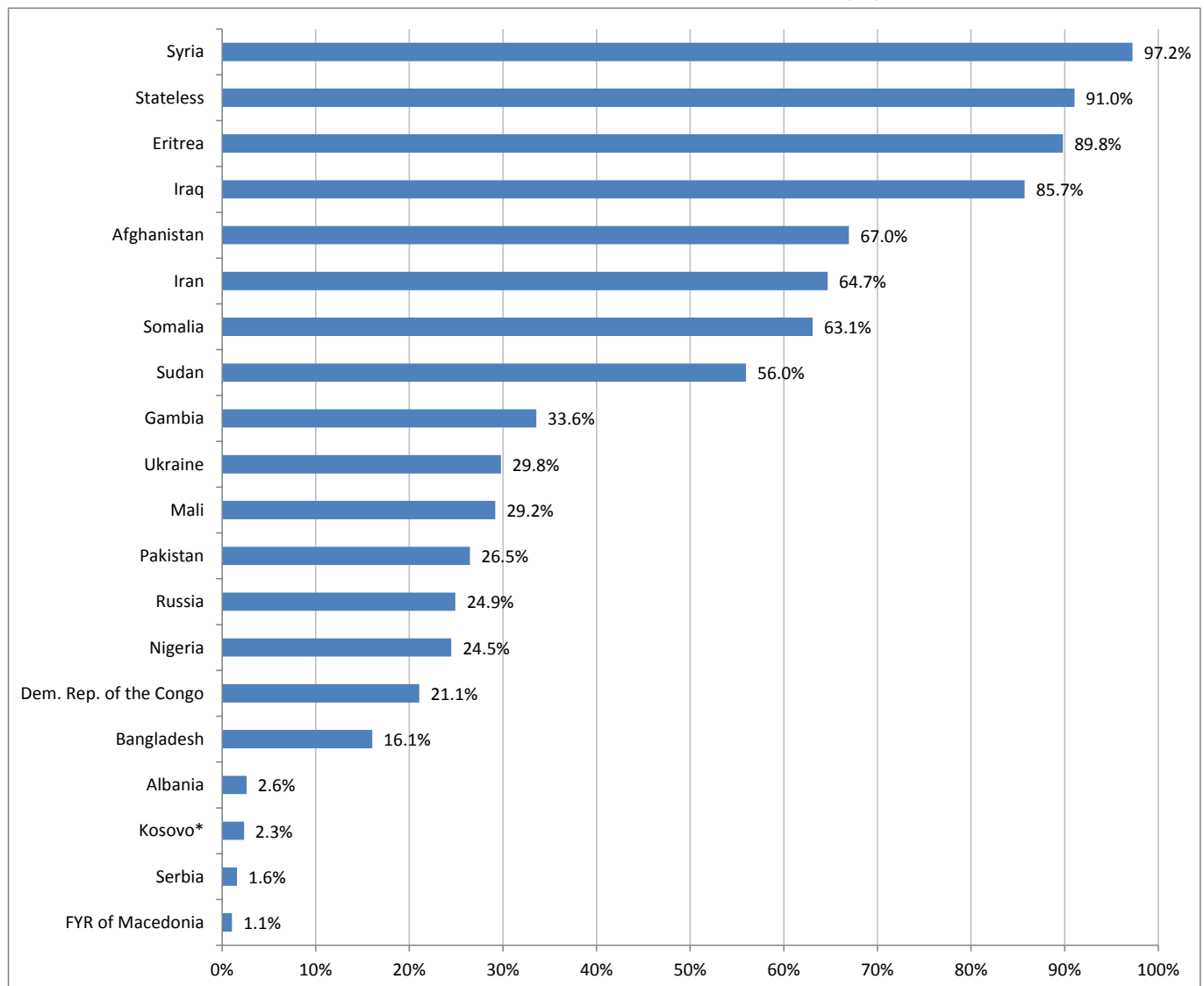
In 2015, almost 593 000 first instance decisions on asylum applications were made in the EU Member States and a further 183 000 final decisions following an appeal. Decisions made at the first instance resulted in nearly 308 000 persons being granted protection status, while a further 26 000 received protection status on appeal.

Recognition rates differs greatly between citizenships

The rate of recognition, i.e. the share of positive decisions in the total number of decisions, was 52% for first instance decisions in the EU. For final decisions on appeal, the recognition rate was 14%.

The outcomes of decisions on asylum applications, and therefore the recognition rate, vary between countries of citizenship of asylum applicants. Among the twenty main citizenships of asylum applicants on which decisions were taken at first instance in 2015, recognition rates in the EU ranged from less than 3% for citizens of the **Western Balkan countries** to more than 97% for **Syrians** (see graph below).

Recognition rates at first instance for the twenty citizenships with the highest number of first instance decisions in the EU, 2015 (%)



* Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99.

Recognition rates, 2015

	First instance decisions				Final decisions on appeal			
	Total number	Positive	Rate of recognition*		Total number	Positive	Rate of recognition*	
			Total	Refugee & subsidiary protection status			Total	Refugee & subsidiary protection status
EU	592 845	307 620	52%	48%	182 705	25 730	14%	12%
Belgium	19 420	10 475	54%	54%	7 685	425	6%	6%
Bulgaria	6 175	5 595	91%	91%	10	5	58%	58%
Czech Republic	1 335	460	34%	33%	395	0	1%	1%
Denmark	12 225	9 920	81%	81%	1 335	285	21%	21%
Germany	249 280	140 910	57%	56%	93 840	7 305	8%	6%
Estonia	180	80	44%	44%	10	0	0%	0%
Ireland	1 150	485	42%	42%	530	225	42%	42%
Greece	9 640	4 030	42%	42%	7 655	1 845	24%	22%
Spain	3 240	1 020	31%	31%	580	10	2%	1%
France	77 910	20 630	26%	26%	34 580	5 385	16%	16%
Croatia	185	40	22%	22%	85	0	1%	1%
Italy	71 345	29 615	42%	19%	20	20	82%	55%
Cyprus	2 065	1 585	77%	77%	575	285	50%	50%
Latvia	170	20	13%	13%	70	10	11%	11%
Lithuania	180	85	46%	46%	10	0	0%	0%
Luxembourg	775	185	24%	24%	470	25	5%	5%
Hungary	3 420	505	15%	15%	480	40	9%	9%
Malta	1 490	1 250	84%	79%	370	70	19%	19%
Netherlands	20 465	16 450	80%	78%	1 085	595	55%	47%
Austria	21 095	15 045	71%	70%	5 095	2 705	53%	51%
Poland	3 510	640	18%	15%	1 875	55	3%	2%
Portugal	370	195	52%	52%	85	0	0%	0%
Romania	1 320	480	36%	36%	110	45	42%	42%
Slovenia	130	45	34%	34%	35	5	14%	14%
Slovakia	130	80	60%	34%	25	0	8%	0%
Finland	2 960	1 680	57%	51%	170	115	67%	58%
Sweden	44 590	32 215	72%	69%	12 765	2 255	18%	9%
United Kingdom	38 080	13 905	37%	32%	12 750	4 015	31%	21%
Iceland	235	50	22%	20%	95	35	38%	22%
Liechtenstein	30	5	14%	7%	20	5	30%	10%
Norway	9 475	6 250	66%	64%	4 830	900	19%	6%
Switzerland	21 840	14 000	64%	41%	2 040	135	7%	4%

Data are rounded to the nearest five. For this reason, totals may not add up.

0 means fewer than 3.

* Rate of recognition is the share of positive decisions (first instance or final on appeal) in the total number of decisions at the given stage.

In this calculation, the exact number of decisions has been used instead of the rounded numbers presented in this table. Rates of recognition for humanitarian status are not shown in this table, but are part of the total recognition rate.

The source dataset can be found [here](#) for first instance decisions and [here](#) for final decisions.

Geographical information

The **European Union (EU)** includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definitions

Data on asylum decisions presented in this news release are provided to Eurostat by Ministries of the Interior or Justice, or immigration agencies, of the Member States. These data are supplied by Member States according to the provisions of Article 4 of the Regulation (EC) 862/2007 of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection.

A decision on an asylum application means a decision on an application for international protection as defined in Art.2(h) of Council Directive 2011/95/EC, i.e. including requests for refugee status or for subsidiary protection status, irrespective of whether the application was lodged on arrival at border, or from inside the country, and irrespective of whether the person entered the territory legally (e.g. as a tourist) or illegally.

First instance decision means a decision made in response to an asylum application at the first instance level of the asylum procedure.

Final decision on appeal means a decision granted at the final instance of administrative/judicial asylum procedure and which results from the appeal lodged by the asylum seeker rejected in the preceding stage of the procedure. As the asylum procedures and the numbers/levels of decision making bodies differ between Member States, the true final instance may be, according to the national legislation and administrative procedures, a decision of the highest national court. However, the applied methodology defines that 'final decisions' should refer to what is effectively a 'final decision' in the vast majority of all cases: i.e. that all normal routes of appeal have been exhausted.

Protection status includes three different categories of protection:

Person granted refugee status means a person covered by a decision granting refugee status, taken by administrative or judicial bodies during the reference period. Refugee status means status as defined in Art.2(e) of Directive 2011/95/EC within the meaning of Art.1 of the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951, as amended by the New York Protocol of 31 January 1967. According to the Art.2(d) of that Directive refugee means a third country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it.

Person granted subsidiary protection status means a person covered by a decision granting subsidiary protection status, taken by administrative or judicial bodies during the reference period. Subsidiary protection status means status as defined in Art.2(g) of Directive 2011/95/EC. According to the Art.2(f) of that Directive person eligible for subsidiary protection means a third country national or a stateless person who does not qualify as a refugee but in respect of whom substantial grounds have been shown for believing that the person concerned, if returned to his or her country of citizenship, or in the case of a stateless person, to his or her country of former habitual residence, would face a real risk of suffering serious harm and is unable, or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country.

Person granted authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons means a person covered by a decision granting authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons under national law concerning international protection, taken by administrative or judicial bodies during the reference period. It includes persons who are not eligible for international protection as currently defined in the first stage legal instruments, but are nonetheless protected against removal under the obligations that are imposed on all Member States by international refugee or human rights instruments or on the basis of principles flowing from such instruments. Examples of such categories include persons who are not removable on ill health grounds and unaccompanied minors.

In addition, **resettled refugees** means persons who have been granted an authorisation to reside in a Member State within the framework of a national or Community resettlement scheme. Resettlement means the transfer of third-country nationals or stateless persons, on a request from UNHCR, based on their need for international protection and a durable solution, to a Member State where they are permitted to reside with a secure legal status. Data relate to resettled persons who have actually arrived into the territory of the Member State. Resettled refugees are not included in the data on decisions on asylum applications.

For more information

Eurostat [database](#) on asylum and managed migration.

Eurostat [metadata](#) on decisions on applications and resettlement.

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on asylum quarterly data.


Eurostat [news release 44/2016](#) of 4 March 2016 on asylum applicants in 2015.

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