

Asylum in the EU Member States

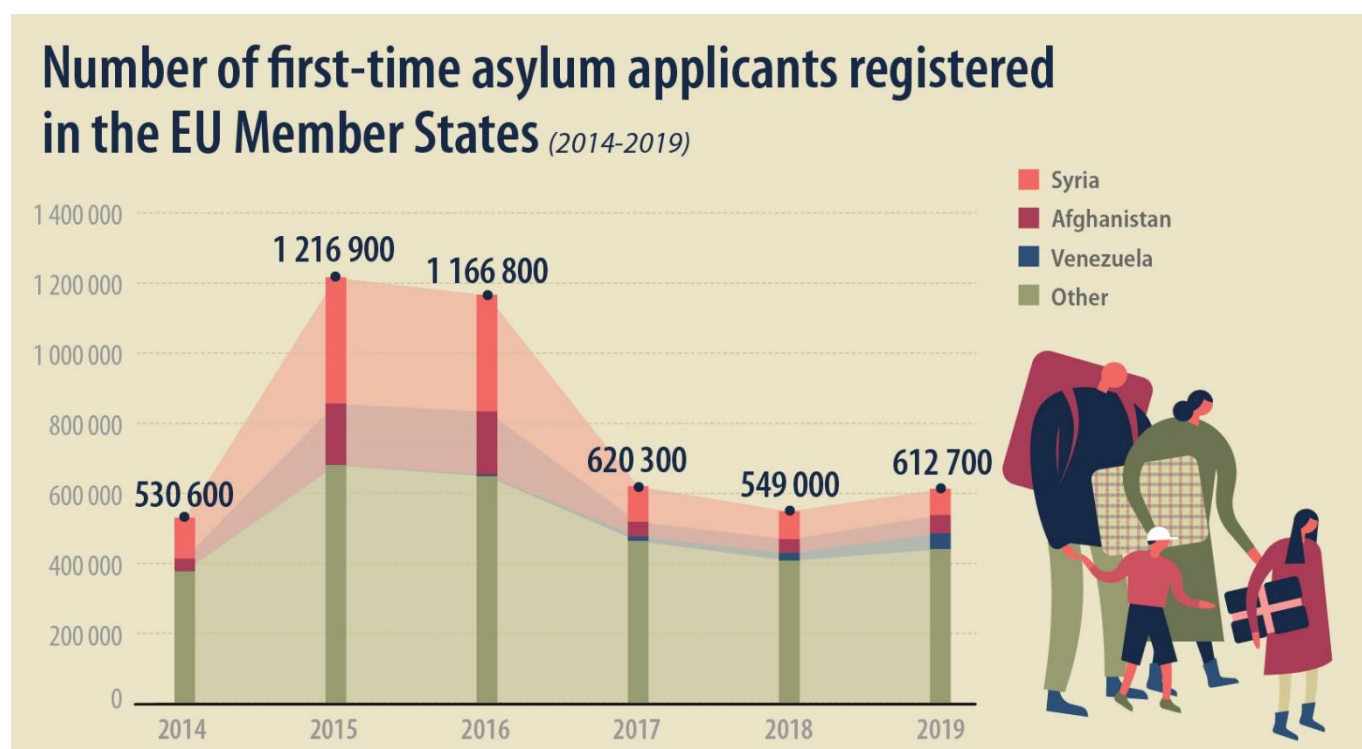
612 700 first-time asylum seekers registered in 2019, up by 12% compared with 2018

Syrians, Afghans and Venezuelans: the top citizenships

In 2019, 612 700 first-time asylum seekers applied for international protection in the 27 Member States of the **European Union** (EU), up by 12% compared with 2018 (549 000), but around half of the number recorded in the peak year 2015 when 1 216 900 first-time asylum applicants were registered.

Syrian (74 400 first-time applicants) and **Afghan** (52 500) continued to be the main citizenship of people seeking international protection in the EU Member States in 2019, followed by **Venezuelan** (44 800), which moved up from fifth place in 2018 to third in 2019, together accounting for 28% of all first-time applicants.

These data on asylum applicants in the **EU** are issued by **Eurostat**, the **statistical office of the European Union**. They are complemented with an [article](#) and an [infographic](#) available on the Eurostat website.



Number of first-time applicants is rounded to the nearest 100.

Almost 1 in 4 applied for asylum in Germany

With 142 400 first-time applicants registered in 2019, **Germany** accounted for 23% of all first-time applicants in the EU Member States. It was closely followed by **France** (119 900, or 20%) and **Spain** (115 200, or 19%), ahead of **Greece** (74 900, or 12%) and **Italy** (35 000, or 6%).

Among EU Member States with more than 5 000 first-time asylum seekers in 2019, the number of first-time applicants rose most compared with the previous year in **Spain** (+118%, or 62 400 more first-time asylum seekers in 2019 than in 2018) and **Cyprus** (+67%, or 5 100 more), ahead of **Sweden** (+28%, or 5 000 more), **Belgium** (+27%, or 5 000 more), **Greece** (+15%, or 9 900 more), the **Netherlands** (+10%, or 2 000 more) and **France** (+8%, or 8 500 more).

In contrast, the largest relative decreases were recorded in **Italy** (-34%, or 18 400 fewer), **Germany** (-12%, or 19 400 fewer) and **Austria** (-7%, or 800 fewer).

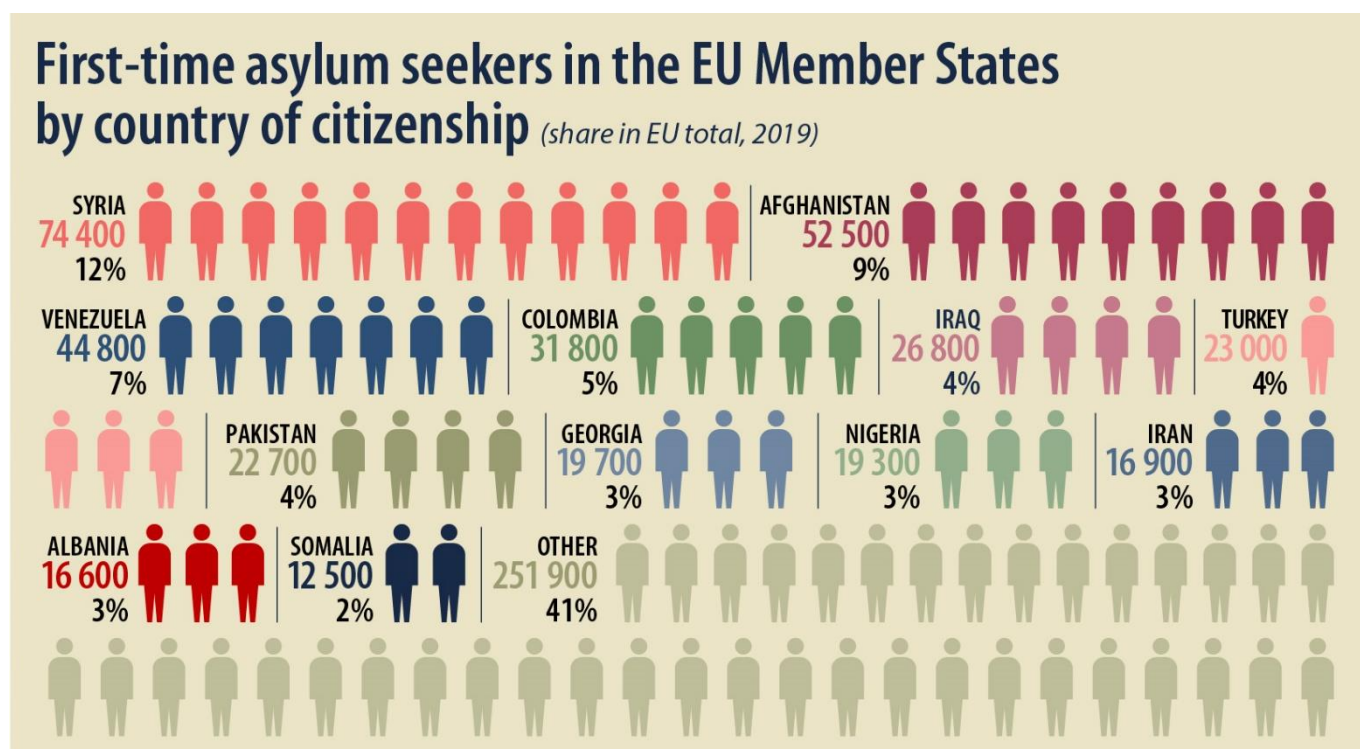
Syrian, Afghan and Venezuelan – main citizenships of asylum seekers

Syrian (12% of the total number of first-time applicants) was the main citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU Member States in 2019, a position it has held each year since 2013. Of the 74 400 **Syrians** who applied for asylum for the first-time in the EU in 2019, more than half were registered in **Germany** (39 300, or 53%). **Syrian** was the main citizenship of asylum seekers in seven EU Member States.

With 52 500 first-time applicants (or 9% of the EU total) in 2019, **Afghan** was the second main citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU Member States. Almost half of **Afghans** (45%) applied in **Greece** (23 700). **Afghan** was the main citizenship of asylum seekers in five EU Member States.

Venezuelan (7% of the total number of first-time applicants) was the third main citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU Member States in 2019. Of the 44 800 **Venezuelans** seeking asylum protection for the first-time in the EU in 2019, the vast majority (90%) applied in **Spain** (40 300). **Venezuelan** was the main citizenship of asylum seekers only in **Spain**.

While the number of applicants from **Syria** decreased compared to 2018 (-7%, or 5 700), the number of **Afghans** and **Venezuelans** increased by 35% (13 600) and 102% (22 600) respectively.



Number of first-time applicants is rounded to the nearest 100. Calculations are based on exact data.

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Highest number of first-time applicants relative to the population in Cyprus, lowest in Slovakia

The highest number of registered first-time applicants in 2019 relative to the population of each Member State was recorded in **Cyprus** (14 495 first-time applicants per million population), ahead of **Malta** (8 108), **Greece** (6 985) and **Luxembourg** (3 585).

In contrast, the lowest numbers were recorded in **Slovakia** (39 applicants per million population), **Hungary** (48), **Poland** (73), **Estonia** (76) and **Latvia** (93).

In 2019, in the **EU** as a whole, there were 1 371 first-time asylum applicants per million population.

Around 840 000 asylum applications pending at the end of 2019

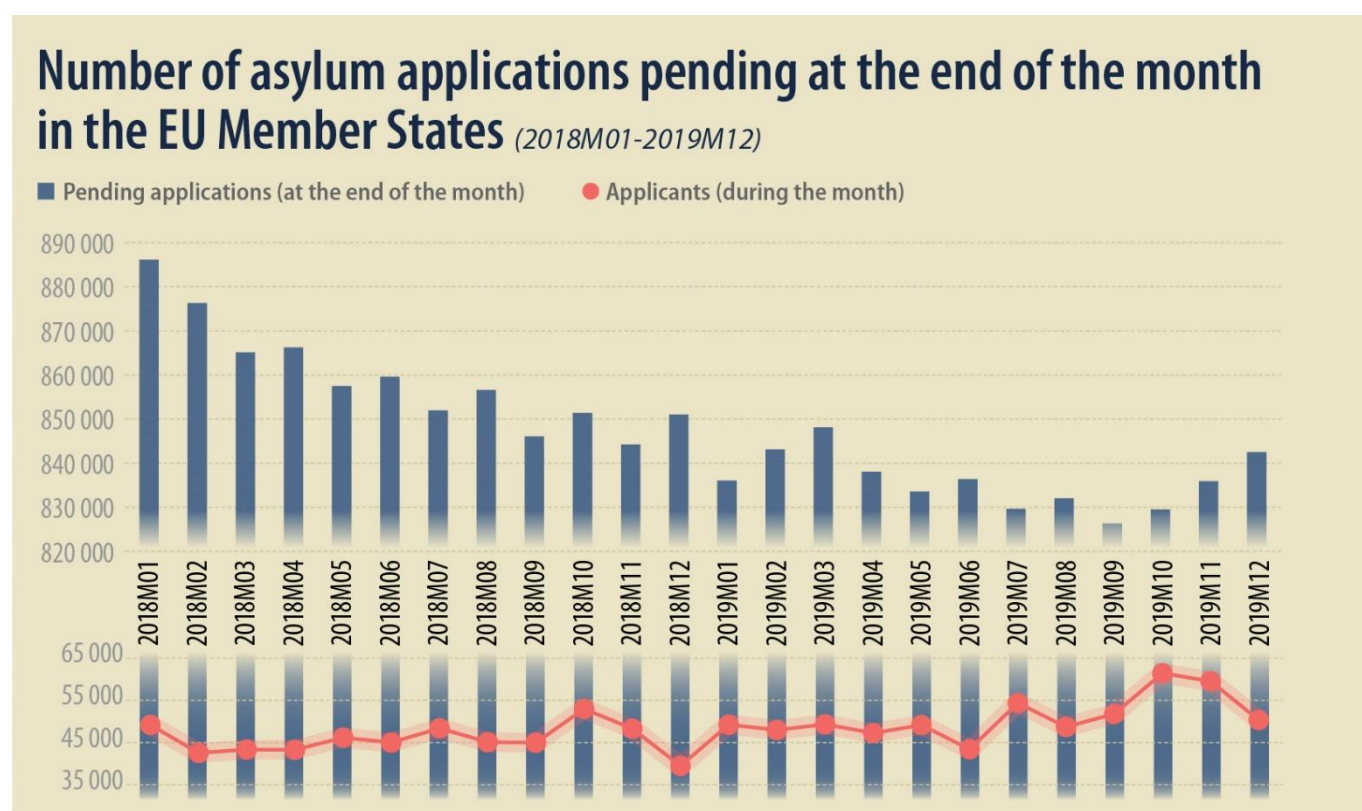
Pending applications for international protection are applications that have been made at any time and are still under consideration by the national authorities at the end of the reference period. In other words, they refer to the number of asylum seekers waiting for a decision at the end of the year. This statistic is also intended to measure how the national authorities are facing the workload implied by the arrival of asylum applicants in the Member States.

At the end of 2019, 842 500 applications for international protection in the **EU** Member States were still under consideration by the national authorities. At the end of 2018, this figure was slightly higher (851 000).

Germany had the largest share of applications pending in the EU at the end of 2019 (326 800, or 39% of the EU total), ahead of **Spain** (133 000, or 16%), **Greece** (105 400, or 13%), **France** (74 400, or 9%) and **Italy** (47 000, or 6%).

Among EU Member States with more than 5 000 pending applications at the end of 2019, the number of pending applications rose most compared with the previous year in **Cyprus** (+85%, or 8 600 more pending applications in 2019 than in 2018), **Spain** (+69%, or 54 300 more), and **Belgium** (+49%, or 9 500 more).

The largest relative decreases were recorded in **Italy** (-54%, or 56 000 fewer), **Austria** (-29%, or 10 900 fewer) and **Sweden** (-27%, or 10 100 fewer).



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Source dataset: [migr_asypentzm](#)

Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU27) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

The United Kingdom left the European Union on 31 January 2020. Information on dissemination of European statistics from 1 February 2020 is published on the [Eurostat website](#).

Methods and definitions

Data on asylum are provided to Eurostat by the Ministries of Interior, Justice or immigration agencies of the 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. In addition, all Member States provide data on first-time asylum applicants on a voluntary basis.

The EU total is calculated as an aggregation of Member States data. Member State data refer to the number of persons applying for asylum for the first-time in that Member State. Persons may however apply for international protection in more than one Member State in a given reference year. Consequently, the EU total may be overestimated due to such multiple applicants.

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

'First-time asylum applicant/seeker' means a person having submitted an application for international protection or having been included in such application as a family member, for the first-time. Applications submitted by persons who are subsequently found to be a subject of a Dublin procedure are included in the statistics on first-time asylum applicants if such persons are also a subject of first asylum application. A person can be recorded as first-time applicant only if he or she had never applied for international protection in the reporting country in the past, irrespective of the fact that he or she is found to have applied in another Member State of the European Union.

This news release refers to the number of 'First-time asylum applicants'. The indicator 'First-time asylum applicants' excludes repeat applicants i.e. persons applying for asylum more than once in one country and therefore more accurately presents the number of persons applying for international protection in the EU Member States. The use of this indicator is now possible as all Member States are able to provide it to Eurostat.

A person being the subject of a **'pending application'** means a person who is the subject of an application for international protection under consideration by the responsible national authority at the end of the reference period. It includes the number of persons with pending applications at all instances of the administrative and/or judicial procedure (see Art 4.1(b) of the Regulation).

For more information

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

Eurostat [metadata](#) on asylum applications statistics

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

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

Eurostat [interactive infographic](#) on asylum applicants in 2019

European Statistics [Code of Practice](#)

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First-time asylum applicants in the EU Member States

	Number of first-time applicants			Share in EU total (%)	Number of first-time applicants per million population**
	2018	2019	Change (in %)	2019	2019
EU27*	548 955	612 685	12%	100.0%	1 371
EU28	587 350	656 920	12%	100.0%	1 279
Belgium	18 130	23 105	27%	3.8%	2 017
Bulgaria	2 465	2 075	-16%	0.3%	296
Czechia	1 350	1 570	16%	0.3%	148
Denmark	3 465	2 605	-25%	0.4%	448
Germany	161 885	142 450	-12%	23.2%	1 716
Estonia	90	100	12%	0.0%	76
Ireland	3 655	4 740	30%	0.8%	967
Greece	64 975	74 910	15%	12.2%	6 985
Spain	52 730	115 175	118%	18.8%	2 454
France	111 415	119 915	8%	19.6%	1 789
Croatia	675	1 265	87%	0.2%	311
Italy	53 440	35 005	-34%	5.7%	580
Cyprus	7 610	12 695	67%	2.1%	14 495
Latvia	175	180	1%	0.0%	93
Lithuania	385	625	62%	0.1%	223
Luxembourg	2 225	2 200	-1%	0.4%	3 585
Hungary	635	465	-26%	0.1%	48
Malta	2 035	4 000	97%	0.7%	8 108
Netherlands	20 465	22 485	10%	3.7%	1 301
Austria	11 580	10 775	-7%	1.8%	1 216
Poland	2 405	2 765	15%	0.5%	73
Portugal	1 240	1 735	40%	0.3%	169
Romania	1 945	2 455	26%	0.4%	126
Slovenia	2 800	3 615	29%	0.6%	1 738
Slovakia	155	215	40%	0.0%	39
Finland	2 950	2 445	-17%	0.4%	443
Sweden	18 075	23 125	28%	3.8%	2 260
United Kingdom	38 400	44 250	15%	-	664
Iceland	730	805	10%	-	2 261
Liechtenstein	145	40	-71%	-	1 094
Norway	2 530	2 165	-14%	-	406
Switzerland	13 465	12 545	-7%	-	1 468

Number of first-time applicants is rounded to the nearest 5. Calculations are based on exact data.

* EU27 represents the European Union of 27 Member States after 1 February 2020.

** Refers to the resident population on 1 January 2019.

- Not applicable

Source dataset: [migr_asyappctza](#)

First-time asylum applicants by country of citizenship in 2019

	Applicants	Main citizenships of first-time asylum applicants								
	#	First citizenship	#	%	Second citizenship	#	%	Third citizenship	#	%
EU27*	612 685	Syria	74 375	12	Afghanistan	52 540	9	Venezuela	44 755	7
EU28	656 920	Syria	75 740	12	Afghanistan	54 675	8	Venezuela	44 790	7
Belgium	23 105	Syria	2 730	12	Palestine	2 320	10	Afghanistan	2 245	10
Bulgaria	2 075	Afghanistan	985	47	Syria	480	23	Iraq	280	13
Czechia	1 570	Armenia	330	21	Ukraine	215	14	Georgia	190	12
Denmark	2 605	Syria	490	19	Eritrea	480	18	Stateless**	200	8
Germany	142 450	Syria	39 270	28	Iraq	13 740	10	Turkey	10 785	8
Estonia	100	Russia	30	30	Turkey	20	20	Ukraine	5	5
Ireland	4 740	Albania	970	20	Georgia	635	13	Zimbabwe	445	9
Greece	74 910	Afghanistan	23 665	32	Syria	10 750	14	Pakistan	6 420	9
Spain	115 175	Venezuela	40 305	35	Colombia	28 880	25	Honduras	6 730	6
France	119 915	Afghanistan	9 995	8	Albania	8 010	7	Georgia	7 735	6
Croatia	1 265	Iraq	300	24	Afghanistan	240	19	Iran	165	13
Italy	35 005	Pakistan	7 305	21	El Salvador	2 520	7	Peru	2 445	7
Cyprus	12 695	Syria	2 550	20	Georgia	1 490	12	India	1 425	11
Latvia	180	Azerbaijan	35	19	Russia	25	14	India	15	8
Lithuania	625	Russia	275	44	Tajikistan	205	33	Syria	15	2
Luxembourg	2 200	Eritrea	565	26	Syria	375	17	Afghanistan	170	8
Hungary	465	Afghanistan	185	40	Iraq	155	33	Pakistan	25	5
Malta	4 000	Sudan	1 045	26	Syria	430	11	Libya	255	6
Netherlands	22 485	Syria	3 675	16	Nigeria	2 105	9	Iran	1 535	7
Austria	10 775	Syria	2 660	25	Afghanistan	2 515	23	Iran	655	6
Poland	2 765	Russia	1 770	64	Ukraine	215	8	Turkey	115	4
Portugal	1 735	Angola	305	18	Gambia	175	10	Guinea-Bissau	155	9
Romania	2 455	Iraq	620	25	Syria	450	18	Afghanistan	190	8
Slovenia	3 615	Algeria	1 010	28	Morocco	720	20	Pakistan	520	14
Slovakia	215	Afghanistan	85	40	Iran	45	21	Armenia	15	7
Finland	2 445	Turkey	360	15	Russia	285	12	Iraq	270	11
Sweden	23 125	Syria	5 015	22	Stateless**	1 165	5	Eritrea	1 155	5
United Kingdom	44 250	Iran	5 455	12	Albania	3 940	9	Iraq	3 895	9
Iceland	805	Venezuela	180	22	Iraq	135	17	Nigeria	50	6
Liechtenstein	40	Kosovo***	10	25	Georgia	5	13	Afghanistan	5	13
Norway	2 165	Syria	535	25	Turkey	360	17	Eritrea	180	8
Switzerland	12 545	Eritrea	2 500	20	Afghanistan	1 350	11	Turkey	1 225	10

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* EU27 represents the European Union of 27 Member States after 1 February 2020.

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

*** Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99

Source dataset: [migr_asyappctza](#)