

Asylum in the EU in 2008

Around 20 000 asylum applicants registered each month in EU27

In 2008, there were nearly 240 000 asylum applicants¹ registered in the **EU27**, or 480 applicants per million inhabitants. The main countries of citizenship of these applicants were **Iraq** (29 000 or 12% of the total number of applicants), **Russia** (21 100 or 9%), **Somalia** (14 300 or 6%), **Serbia** (13 600 or 6%) and **Afghanistan** (12 600 or 5%).

These data on asylum applicants in the **EU27** are taken from a report² issued by **Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities**.

Highest number of applicants per inhabitant recorded in Malta and Cyprus

In 2008, among the Member States for which data are available, the highest number of applicants were registered in **France** (41 800 applicants). The **United Kingdom** recorded 30 500 applicants, however this figure covers only new applicants. **Germany** (26 900), **Sweden** (24 900), **Greece** (19 900), **Belgium** (15 900) and the **Netherlands** (15 300) followed.

When compared with the population of each Member State, the highest rates of applicants registered were recorded in **Malta** (6 350 applicants per million inhabitants), **Cyprus** (4 370), **Sweden** (2 710), **Greece** (1 775), **Austria** (1 530) and **Belgium** (1 495).

In some Member States, a large proportion of the applicants came from a single country. The Member States with the highest concentrations were **Poland** (91% of the applicants came from **Russia**), **Lithuania** (77% from **Russia**), **Hungary** (52% from **Serbia**), **Luxembourg** (48% from **Serbia**) and **Bulgaria** (47% from **Iraq**).

First instance decisions

In 2008 in the **EU27**, 193 690 first instance decisions³ were made on asylum applicants. There were 141 730 rejections (73% of decisions), 24 425 applicants (13%) were granted refugee status, 18 560 (10%) subsidiary protection and 8 970 (5%) were granted authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons.

The proportion of positive decisions varies considerably among Member States. However, it should be kept in mind that the country of origin of applicants also differs greatly between Member States.

Asylum applicants in the EU27, 2008

	Applicants		Citizenships of main groups of asylum applicants								
	2008 total	per million inhabitants*	First group	#	%	Second group	#	%	Third group	#	%
EU27**	238 365	480	Iraq	29 045	12	Russia	21 065	9	Somalia	14 335	6
BE	15 940	1 495	Russia	2 765	17	Serbia	1 695	11	Iraq	1 180	7
BG	745	100	Iraq	350	47	Armenia	70	9	Stateless	65	9
CZ	1 650	160	Ukraine	320	19	Turkey	250	15	Mongolia	195	12
DK	2 375	435	Iraq	560	24	Afghanistan	415	18	Iran	195	8
DE	26 945	330	Iraq	8 155	30	Serbia	2 250	8	Turkey	1 775	7
EE	15	10	Belarus	5	33	Russia	5	33	Other	5	33
IE	3 865	880	Nigeria	1 010	26	Pakistan	235	6	Iraq	205	5
EL	19 885	1 775	Pakistan	6 915	35	Afghanistan	2 285	11	Georgia	2 240	11
ES	4 440	100	Nigeria	795	18	Colombia	750	17	Ivory Coast	490	11
FR	41 845	655	Russia	3 730	9	Serbia	3 425	8	Mali	3 365	8
IT***	:	:	Nigeria	:	18	Somalia	:	15	Ivory Coast	:	7
CY	3 450	4 370	Syria	935	27	Sri Lanka	400	12	India	230	7
LV	55	25	Georgia	15	27	Afghanistan	10	18	Russia	5	9
LT	520	155	Russia	400	77	Afghanistan	15	3	Belarus	15	3
LU	455	940	Serbia	220	48	Bosnia & Herz.	30	7	Iraq	30	7
HU	3 175	315	Serbia	1 640	52	Pakistan	245	8	Somalia	205	6
MT	2 605	6 350	Somalia	1 080	41	Ivory Coast	260	10	Nigeria	220	8
NL	15 255	930	Iraq	5 310	35	Somalia	3 960	26	Afghanistan	705	5
AT	12 750	1 530	Russia	3 445	27	Serbia	1 700	13	Afghanistan	1 345	11
PL	8 515	225	Russia	7 760	91	Georgia	70	1	Iraq	70	1
PT	155	15	Colombia	25	16	Sri Lanka	25	16	D.R. Congo	20	13
RO	1 180	55	Pakistan	255	22	Iraq	175	15	Bangladesh	175	15
SI	260	130	Serbia	80	31	Turkey	75	29	Bosnia & Herz.	15	6
SK	905	170	Georgia	120	13	Moldova	115	13	Pakistan	110	12
FI	3 770	710	Iraq	1 195	32	Somalia	1 125	30	Afghanistan	230	6
SE	24 875	2 710	Iraq	6 325	25	Somalia	3 410	14	Serbia	2 035	8
UK****	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
IS***	:	:	Stateless	:	15	Serbia	:	8	Nigeria	:	8
NO	14 430	3 045	Iraq	3 135	22	Eritrea	1 800	12	Afghanistan	1 365	9
CH	16 605	2 185	Eritrea	2 850	17	Somalia	2 015	12	Iraq	1 440	9

* Number of applicants registered during the year relative to population as of 1st January 2008.

** EU27 total estimated.

*** Data available only for January - October 2008. Leading citizenships calculated based on available data, and only shares are shown.

**** The UK does not yet supply data on the number of applicants as required under Regulation (EC) 862/2007. The EU27 total includes the 30 545 new applicants registered in the UK in 2008. Data meeting the definition in the Regulation would be higher.

: not available

Data are rounded to the nearest 5

First instance decisions by outcome, 2008

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:			Rejected
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
EU27*	193 690	51 960	24 425	18 560	8 970	141 730
Belgium	13 095	2 985	2 550	430	-	10 115
Bulgaria	670	295	25	265	0	375
Czech Republic	1 555	350	170	150	30	1 200
Denmark**	:	:	:	:	:	:
Germany	20 215	8 750	7 310	1 445	0	11 465
Estonia	15	5	5	0	0	10
Ireland	4 790	1 465	295	5	1 165	3 325
Greece	29 460	380	360	15	5	29 080
Spain	4 325	215	120	80	15	4 115
France	31 765	5 150	4 475	675	-	26 610
Italy***	:	:	:	:	:	:
Cyprus	:	:	:	:	:	:
Latvia	15	5	0	0	0	10
Lithuania	115	70	15	55	-	50
Luxembourg	485	185	50	0	140	300
Hungary	910	395	170	65	160	510
Malta	2 685	1 410	20	1 385	0	1 275
Netherlands	10 925	5 675	515	1 610	3 550	5 245
Austria	1 085	670	560	110	:	420
Poland	4 245	2 770	185	1 075	1 510	1 475
Portugal	105	70	10	60	-	40
Romania	675	110	85	10	15	565
Slovenia	160	5	0	0	0	155
Slovakia	370	90	20	65	5	280
Finland	1 675	655	90	435	135	1 020
Sweden	29 545	7 845	1 695	4 825	1 325	21 700
United Kingdom	23 665	7 080	4 750	2 190	135	16 585
Iceland***	30	10	5	5	0	20
Norway	9 015	3 050	1 075	1 170	805	5 965
Switzerland	11 175	8 455	2 090	2 740	3 625	2 720

* EU27 total estimated excluding Cyprus.

** Data available only for Q1 2008.

*** Data available only for Q1-Q3 2008.

: not available

- not applicable

Data are rounded to the nearest 5

1. **Asylum applicant** means a person having submitted an application for international protection or having been included in such application as a family member during the reference period.

'Application for international protection' means an application for international protection as defined in Art.2(g) of Council Directive 2004/83/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. Within the same month every person being a subject of asylum application is counted only once, therefore repeat applications are not recorded if the first application has been lodged in the same month. However, such a repeat application will be recorded if lodged in a different reference month. It means that the annual figures, which are based on an aggregation of monthly data, may overestimate the number of persons applying for international protection. For reasons of simplicity, the term "applicant" has been used in this Release, because the data counts individuals rather than applications, which include in some cases several persons.

2. **Eurostat**, Data in Focus, 8/2009 "**Asylum applicants and decisions on asylum applications in Q4 2008**", available free of charge in pdf format on the Eurostat web site.

The data used for this publication are provided to Eurostat by the Ministries of Interior, Justice or immigration agencies of the Member States. Apart from statistics on new asylum applicants, 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.

3. **First instance decision** means a decision made in response to an asylum application at the first instance level of the asylum procedure. The number of asylum applicants and the number of first instance decisions during the same reference period differs. This is due to the time lag between the date of the asylum application and the date of the decision on the asylum application. The duration of this time lag may vary considerably depending on the national asylum procedure and the administrative workload. An asylum application lodged in one reference period may therefore result in a decision in a later period, while some asylum decisions reported for that period may relate to applications lodged in previous reference periods.

Rejected applicant means a person covered by first instance decision rejecting application for international protection, such as, inter alia, decisions considering applications as inadmissible or as unfounded and decisions under priority and accelerated procedures, taken by administrative or judicial bodies during the reference period. Rejected applicants have the possibility to appeal against refusal. The outcomes of the appeals may overturn the results of the first instance decisions and may vary greatly between countries.

Person granted refugee status at first instance means a person covered by first instance decision granting refugee status, taken by administrative or judicial bodies during the reference period. Refugee status means status as defined in Art.2(d) of Directive 2004/83/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(c) 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 at first instance means a person covered by first instance 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(f) of Directive 2004/83/EC. According to the Art.2(e) 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 origin, 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 at first instance means a person covered by other first instance 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.

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