

70/2017 - 26 April 2017

Asylum decisions in the EU

EU Member States granted protection to more than 700 000 asylum seekers in 2016

Over half of the beneficiaries were Syrians

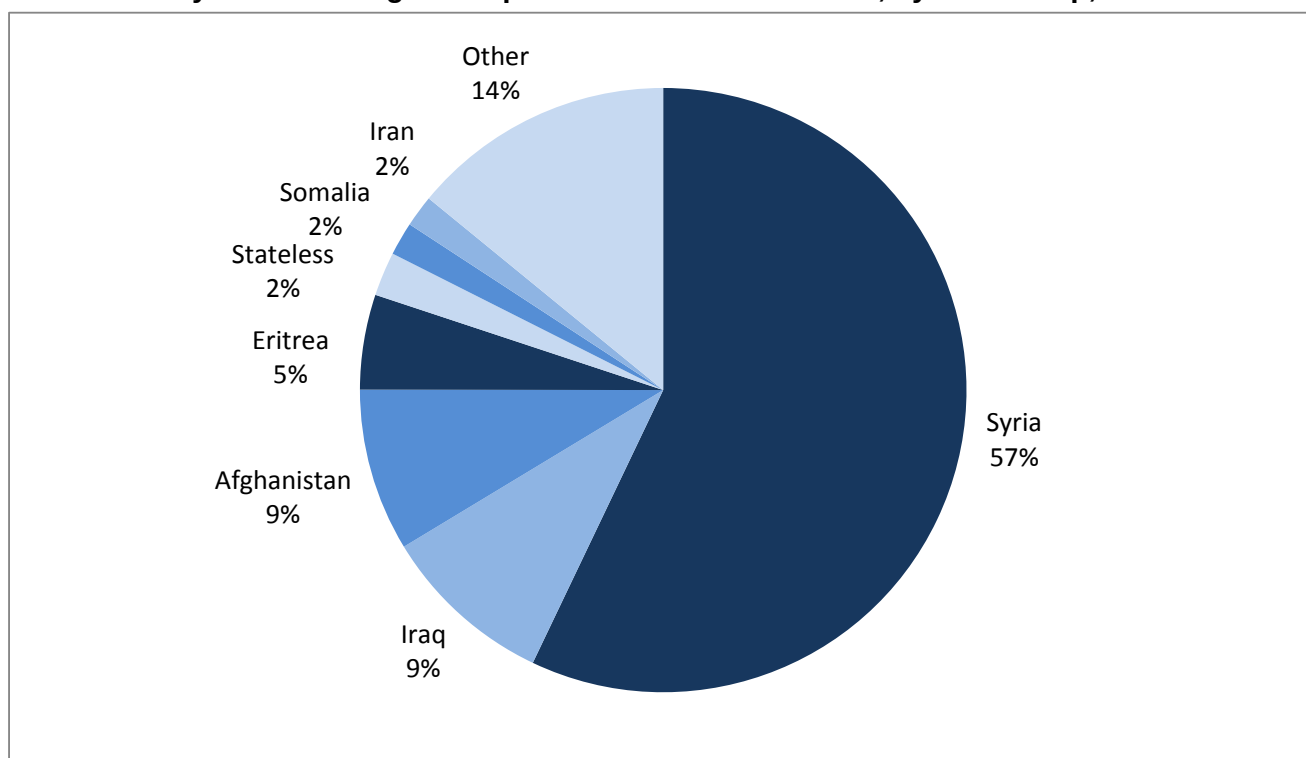
The 28 Member States of the **European Union (EU)** granted protection status to 710 400 asylum seekers in 2016, more than double the number of 2015. In addition to these, the EU Member States received over 14 000 resettled refugees.

The largest group of beneficiaries of protection status in the **EU** in 2016 remained citizens of **Syria** (405 600 persons, or 57% of the total number of persons granted protection status in the EU Member States), followed by citizens of **Iraq** (65 800 or 9%) and those of **Afghanistan** (61 800 or 9%).

The number of decisions granting protection status to **Syrians** has more than doubled since 2015: they were the largest group granted protection status in nineteen Member States in 2016. Of the 405 600 **Syrians** granted protection status in the **EU**, more than 70% were recorded in **Germany** (294 700).

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, 2016



Three main citizenships granted protection status in the EU, 2016

	First			Second			Third		
	Citizens of	#	%*	Citizens of	#	%*	Citizens of	#	%*
EU	Syria	405 620	57	Iraq	65 765	9	Afghanistan	61 820	9
Belgium	Syria	6 605	43	Iraq	3 355	22	Afghanistan	1 490	10
Bulgaria	Syria	1 220	89	Iraq	75	6	Stateless**	20	2
Czech Rep.	Iraq	150	33	Syria	95	21	Ukraine	50	11
Denmark	Syria	5 260	71	Stateless**	560	8	Eritrea	530	7
Germany	Syria	294 710	66	Iraq	48 820	11	Afghanistan	39 270	9
Estonia	Syria	45	37	Iraq	25	19	Ukraine	20	16
Ireland	Syria	150	19	Afghanistan	70	9	Zimbabwe	65	8
Greece	Syria	1 910	22	Bangladesh	1 350	16	Pakistan	1 190	14
Spain	Syria	6 225	91	Somalia	100	1	Palestine	95	1
France	Syria	5 360	15	Afghanistan	3 875	11	Sudan	3 360	10
Croatia	Syria	35	37	Iraq	20	21	Afghanistan	15	17
Italy	Nigeria	4 610	13	Pakistan	4 300	12	Afghanistan	4 000	11
Cyprus	Syria	1 155	81	Palestine	100	7	Iraq	80	6
Latvia	Syria	70	49	Iraq	35	24	Afghanistan	15	10
Lithuania	Syria	140	71	Stateless**	15	7	Russia	10	5
Luxembourg	Syria	535	70	Iraq	100	13	Eritrea	25	3
Hungary	Afghanistan	100	23	Syria	95	21	Iraq	70	16
Malta	Libya	545	43	Syria	360	29	Eritrea	105	8
Netherlands	Syria	13 155	60	Eritrea	3 325	15	Stateless**	1 750	8
Austria	Syria	18 775	59	Afghanistan	4 445	14	Iraq	2 640	8
Poland	Russia	130	33	Ukraine	95	24	Syria	45	11
Portugal	Ukraine	150	46	Syria	60	19	Eritrea	30	9
Romania	Syria	500	61	Iraq	140	17	Eritrea	40	5
Slovenia	Syria	90	53	Iraq	30	17	Eritrea	20	13
Slovakia***	Iraq	150	72	Afghanistan	15	6	Syria	5	3
Finland	Iraq	2 865	39	Afghanistan	1 735	24	Syria	1 090	15
Sweden	Syria	44 905	65	Eritrea	6 120	9	Stateless**	6 005	9
United Kingdom	Eritrea	2 540	15	Iran	2 375	14	Syria	1 850	11
Iceland	Iraq	30	25	Syria	20	16	Iran	15	12
Liechtenstein	Somalia	15	31	China	10	29	Ukraine	5	12
Norway	Syria	7 430	56	Eritrea	1 685	13	Afghanistan	1 555	12
Switzerland	Eritrea	5 780	43	Syria	2 380	18	Afghanistan	1 410	11

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

* 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.

*** Data are provisional

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

More than 60% of positive decisions granted in one single Member State: Germany

In 2016, the highest number of persons granted protection status was registered in **Germany** (445 210, or triple compared with 2015), followed by **Sweden** (69 350, or double the number of 2015), **Italy** (35 450, or +20%), **France** (35 170, or +35%), **Austria** (31 750, or +79%) and the **Netherlands** (21 825, or +28%).

Out of all the persons who were granted protection status in 2016 in the **EU**, 389 670 persons were granted refugee status (55% of all positive decisions), 263 755 subsidiary protection (37%) and 56 970 authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons (8%). 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 2016

	Positive decisions*					Resettled refugees
	Total number		Of which:			
	Number	Per million inhabitants	Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
EU	710 395	1 390	389 670	263 755	56 970	14 205
Belgium	15 395	1 360	12 080	3 315	-	450
Bulgaria	1 365	190	765	600	-	0
Czech Republic	450	45	145	300	5	0
Denmark	7 405	1 295	4 475	2 880	50	310
Germany	445 210	5 420	264 645	154 550	26 010	1 240
Estonia	130	100	65	65	0	10
Ireland	790	165	645	140	-	355
Greece	8 545	790	3 240	405	4 900	0
Spain	6 875	150	375	6 500	5	375
France	35 170	525	23 225	11 945	-	1 420
Croatia	100	25	85	15	-	0
Italy	35 450	585	4 805	12 120	18 530	1 045
Cyprus	1 420	1 675	230	1 190	0	0
Latvia	150	75	45	100	-	5
Lithuania	195	70	180	15	0	25
Luxembourg	770	1 335	745	30	-	50
Hungary	440	45	160	270	5	5
Malta	1 255	2 890	190	1 010	55	0
Netherlands	21 825	1 285	10 080	11 280	465	695
Austria	31 750	3 655	25 525	5 705	520	200
Poland	390	10	125	200	65	0
Portugal	320	30	105	215	-	0
Romania	820	40	605	215	0	0
Slovenia	175	85	140	30	-	0
Slovakia**	210	40	5	10	195	0
Finland	7 365	1 340	4 505	1 755	1 105	945
Sweden	69 350	7 040	17 900	48 300	3 150	1 890
United Kingdom	17 080	260	14 585	585	1 910	5 180
Iceland	115	345	60	40	20	55
Liechtenstein	40	1 065	20	10	15	0
Norway	13 190	2 530	11 695	460	1 035	3 290
Switzerland	13 330	1 600	5 945	1 815	5 570	620

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.

** Data are provisional

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

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

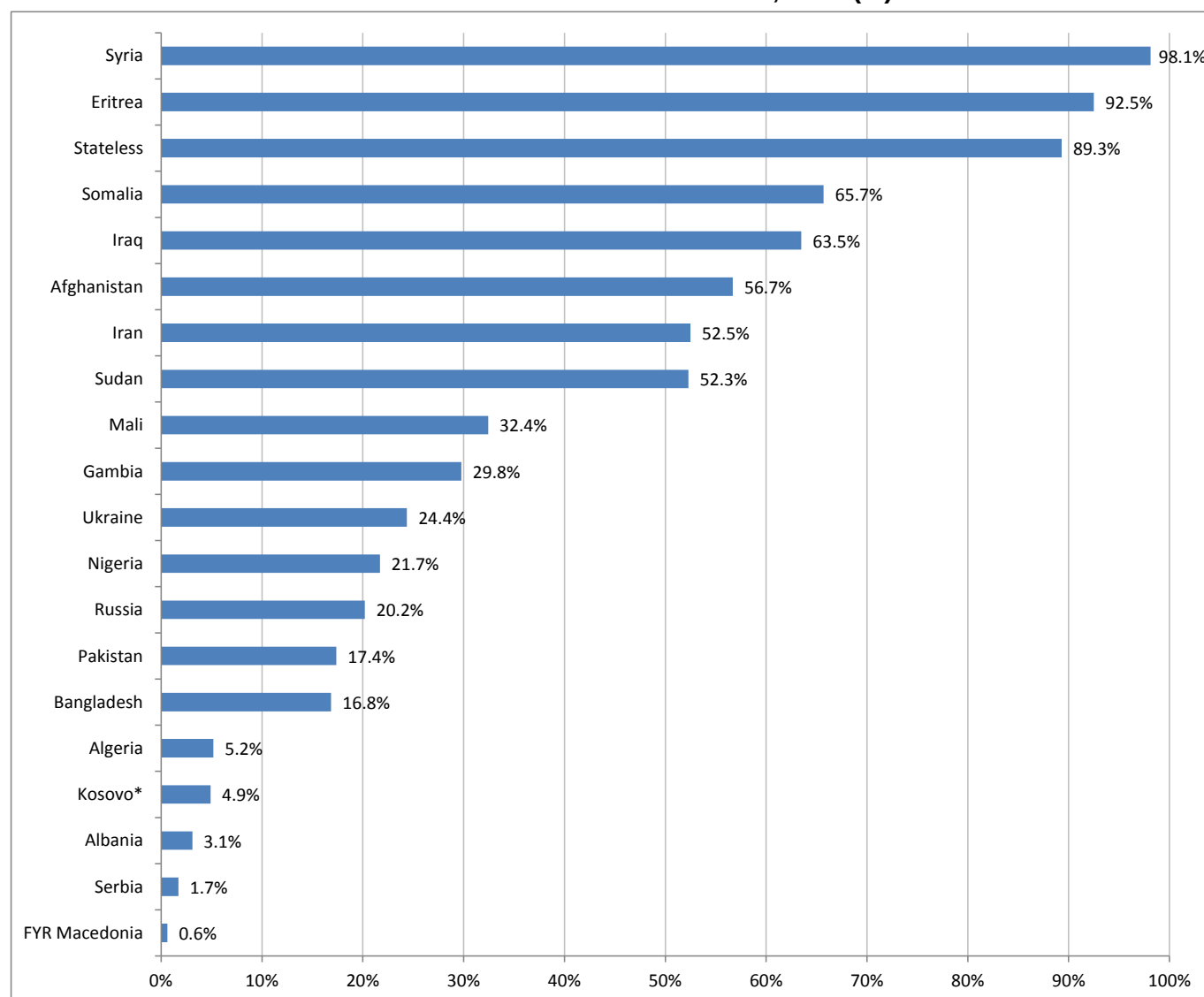
In 2016, over 1 100 000 first instance decisions on asylum applications were made in the **EU** Member States and a further 221 000 final decisions following an appeal. Decisions made at the first instance resulted in almost 673 000 persons being granted protection status, while a further 38 000 received 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 61% for first instance decisions in the **EU**. For final decisions on appeal, the recognition rate was 17%.

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 2016, recognition rates in the **EU** ranged from less than 5% for citizens of the **Western Balkan countries** to 98% 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, 2016 (%)



* Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99.

Recognition rates, 2016

	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	1 106 175	672 655	61%	56%	221 020	37 735	17%	13%
Belgium	24 960	15 045	60%	60%	5 375	350	6%	6%
Bulgaria	3 045	1 350	44%	44%	25	15	65%	65%
Czech Republic	1 300	435	34%	33%	405	10	3%	3%
Denmark	10 410	7 125	68%	68%	1 425	280	20%	20%
Germany	631 085	433 905	69%	65%	123 700	11 305	9%	8%
Estonia	190	130	67%	67%	40	0	0%	0%
Ireland	2 130	485	23%	23%	690	305	44%	44%
Greece	11 455	2 715	24%	24%	12 485	5 830	47%	7%
Spain	10 250	6 855	67%	67%	515	20	4%	3%
France	87 485	28 755	33%	33%	41 285	6 415	16%	16%
Croatia	285	100	35%	35%	105	0	0%	0%
Italy	89 875	35 405	39%	19%	110	50	44%	29%
Cyprus	1 975	1 300	66%	66%	250	120	49%	49%
Latvia	260	135	52%	52%	45	15	30%	30%
Lithuania	280	195	69%	69%	5	0	0%	0%
Luxembourg	1 255	765	61%	61%	320	5	1%	1%
Hungary	5 105	430	8%	8%	775	5	1%	1%
Malta	1 435	1 190	83%	79%	325	65	20%	20%
Netherlands	28 875	20 810	72%	71%	1 760	1 015	58%	52%
Austria	42 415	30 370	72%	71%	3 480	1 380	40%	34%
Poland	2 495	305	12%	10%	1 285	85	6%	5%
Portugal	590	320	54%	54%	185	0	0%	0%
Romania	1 295	805	62%	62%	115	15	15%	15%
Slovenia	265	170	64%	64%	35	5	8%	8%
Slovakia**	250	210	83%	5%	20	5	18%	14%
Finland	20 750	7 070	34%	29%	695	295	43%	34%
Sweden	95 540	66 340	69%	67%	11 825	3 010	25%	18%
United Kingdom	30 915	9 935	32%	28%	13 740	7 145	52%	48%
Iceland	540	95	18%	17%	155	20	12%	5%
Liechtenstein	75	40	55%	36%	30	0	0%	0%
Norway	19 310	12 755	66%	62%	4 965	415	7%	5%
Switzerland	22 580	13 185	58%	34%	1 985	145	7%	5%

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.

** Data are provisional

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 annual data

Eurostat [news release 46/2017](#) of 16 March 2017 on asylum applicants in 2016.

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

Vincent BOURGEAIS

Tel: +352-4301-33 444

eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu



EurostatStatistics



@EU Eurostat



ec.europa.eu/eurostat

Production of data:

Alexandros BITOULAS

Tel: +352-4301-37 608

alexandros.bitoulas@ec.europa.eu

Piotr JUCHNO

Tel: +352-4301-36 240

piotr.juchno@ec.europa.eu



Media requests: Eurostat media support / Tel: +352-4301-33 408 / eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu