

Asylum decisions in the EU

EU Member States granted protection to more than half a million asylum seekers in 2017

Almost one-third of the beneficiaries were Syrians

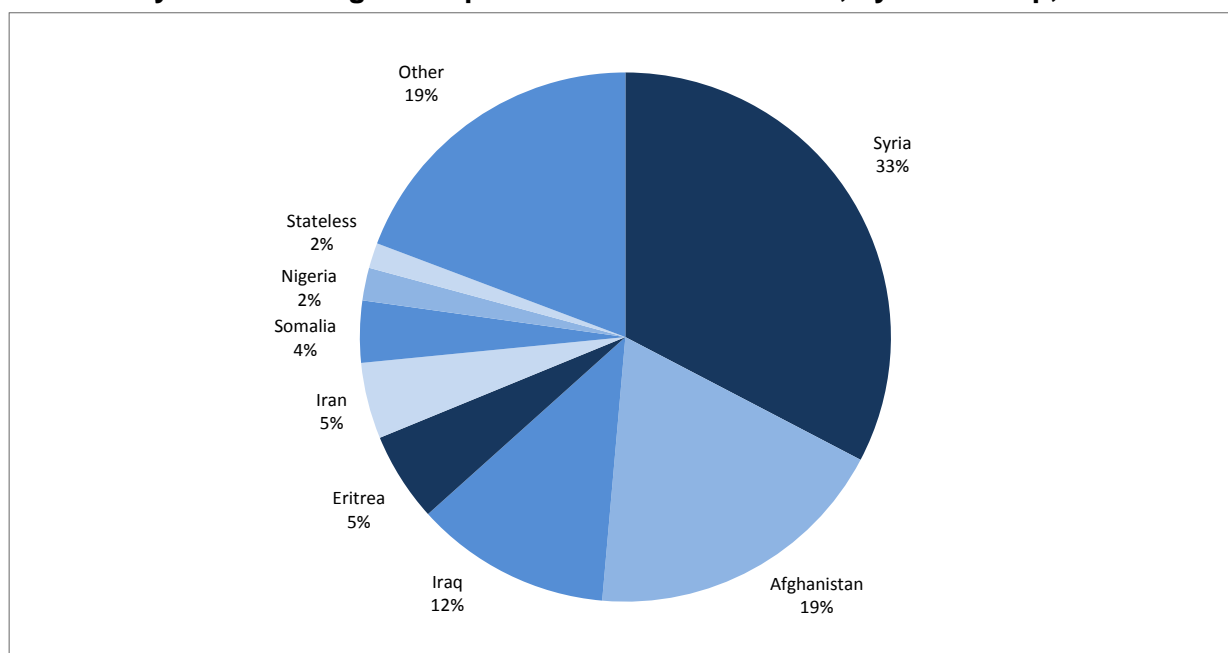
The 28 Member States of the **European Union** (EU) granted protection status to 538 000 asylum seekers in 2017, down by almost 25% from 2016. In addition to these, the EU Member States received nearly 24 000 resettled refugees.

The largest group of beneficiaries of protection status in the **EU** in 2017 remained citizens of **Syria** (175 800 persons, or 33% of the total number of persons granted protection status in the EU Member States), followed by citizens of **Afghanistan** (100 700 or 19%) and those of **Iraq** (64 300 or 12%).

The number of decisions granting protection status to **Syrian citizens** has dropped since 2016 (when they accounted for a share of 57% of all grants) however, they remained the largest group granted protection status in eighteen Member States in 2017. Of the 175 800 **Syrian citizens** granted protection status in the **EU**, more than 70% received protection status in **Germany** (124 800).

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, 2017



Three main citizenships granted protection status in the EU, 2017

	First			Second			Third		
	Citizens of	#	%*	Citizens of	#	%*	Citizens of	#	%*
EU	Syria	175 855	33	Afghanistan	100 705	19	Iraq	64 270	12
Belgium	Afghanistan	3 030	23	Syria	2 880	22	Iraq	1 120	9
Bulgaria	Syria	1 530	90	Iraq	110	6	Stateless**	25	2
Czech Rep.	Syria	35	25	Ukraine	35	22	Iraq	15	10
Denmark	Syria	1 035	38	Iran	725	26	Afghanistan	370	13
Germany	Syria	124 845	38	Afghanistan	63 715	20	Iraq	46 485	14
Estonia	Syria	70	76	Ukraine	10	9	Iraq	5	6
Ireland	Syria	470	65	Iraq	65	9	Libya	30	4
Greece	Syria	5 055	42	Iraq	1 725	14	Afghanistan	1 695	14
Spain	Syria	3 490	74	Ukraine	275	6	Palestine	245	5
France	Afghanistan	6 685	16	Syria	4 990	12	Sudan	4 945	12
Croatia	Syria	105	62	Iraq	30	17	Eritrea	10	7
Italy	Nigeria	5 075	14	Pakistan	3 615	10	Gambia	2 925	8
Cyprus	Syria	1 005	78	Somalia	75	6	Iraq	50	4
Latvia	Syria	210	77	Eritrea	20	7	Afghanistan	15	5
Lithuania	Syria	195	67	Eritrea	25	9	Iraq	20	7
Luxembourg	Syria	450	40	Iraq	295	26	Afghanistan	180	16
Hungary	Afghanistan	580	45	Syria	385	30	Iraq	190	15
Malta	Libya	315	39	Syria	240	29	Eritrea	100	12
Netherlands	Syria	2 915	32	Eritrea	1 550	17	Iran	860	9
Austria	Syria	14 925	44	Afghanistan	8 730	26	Iraq	2 540	7
Poland	Ukraine	280	50	Russia	115	21	Tajikistan	35	6
Portugal	Syria	225	45	Eritrea	85	17	Ukraine	45	9
Romania	Syria	655	49	Iraq	460	34	Afghanistan	65	5
Slovenia	Syria	100	66	Eritrea	25	17	Palestine	10	5
Slovakia	Afghanistan	10	15	Syria	10	15	Ukraine	10	13
Finland	Iraq	1 805	42	Afghanistan	800	19	Syria	695	16
Sweden	Afghanistan	10 770	34	Syria	7 355	24	Iraq	4 075	13
United Kingdom	Eritrea	2 475	16	Iran	2 230	14	Afghanistan	1 330	8
Iceland	Iraq	35	28	Afghanistan	25	21	Syria	20	15
Liechtenstein	Syria	10	38	China	5	25	Afghanistan	5	17
Norway	Syria	1 880	36	Afghanistan	940	18	Eritrea	790	15
Switzerland	Eritrea	5 385	36	Afghanistan	3 050	21	Syria	2 420	16

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.

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 2017, the highest number of persons granted protection status was registered in **Germany** (325 400), ahead of **France** (40 600), **Italy** (35 100), **Austria** (34 000) and **Sweden** (31 200).

Out of all the persons who were granted protection status in 2017 in the **EU**, 271 600 persons were granted refugee status (50% of all positive decisions), 189 000 were given subsidiary protection (35%) and 77 500 authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons (14%). It should be noted that, while both refugee and subsidiary protection status are defined by EU law, humanitarian status is granted only on the basis of national legislation.

Positive decisions on asylum applications in 2017

	Positive decisions*					Resettled refugees
	Total number		Of which:			
	Number	Per million population**	Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
EU	538 120	1 050	271 630	188 960	77 530	23 925
Belgium	12 895	1 135	9 945	2 950	-	1 310
Bulgaria	1 705	240	800	905	-	0
Czech Republic	145	15	25	120	5	0
Denmark	2 750	480	1 525	1 180	45	5
Germany	325 370	3 945	154 485	120 465	50 420	3 015
Estonia	95	70	50	45	0	20
Ireland	720	150	605	45	70	275
Greece	12 015	1 115	9 925	1 130	955	0
Spain	4 700	100	605	4 090	5	1 490
France	40 575	605	24 405	16 170	-	2 620
Croatia	170	40	140	30	0	40
Italy	35 130	580	6 275	8 835	20 015	1 515
Cyprus	1 300	1 520	235	1 065	0	0
Latvia	275	140	40	235	-	40
Lithuania	295	105	275	20	0	0
Luxembourg	1 130	1 915	1 085	45	-	180
Hungary	1 290	130	105	1 110	75	0
Malta	815	1 770	190	610	10	15
Netherlands	9 090	530	3 505	4 820	760	2 265
Austria	33 925	3 865	24 320	8 805	805	380
Poland	560	15	150	370	40	0
Portugal	500	50	120	380	-	0
Romania	1 330	70	875	455	0	45
Slovenia	150	75	140	15	-	0
Slovakia	60	10	0	20	40	0
Finland	4 255	775	2 935	845	475	1 090
Sweden	31 235	3 125	15 215	13 595	2 425	3 410
United Kingdom	15 645	240	13 640	620	1 385	6 210
Iceland	125	370	85	35	5	45
Liechtenstein	25	660	15	5	0	0
Norway	5 270	1 000	3 980	230	1 055	2 815
Switzerland	14 785	1 755	6 355	1 085	7 345	665

Data are rounded to the nearest five. For this reason, totals may not add up and 0 means 2 or fewer decisions recorded in the reference period

- Not applicable

* First instance and final decisions on appeal.

** Refers to resident population on 1 January 2017.

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

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

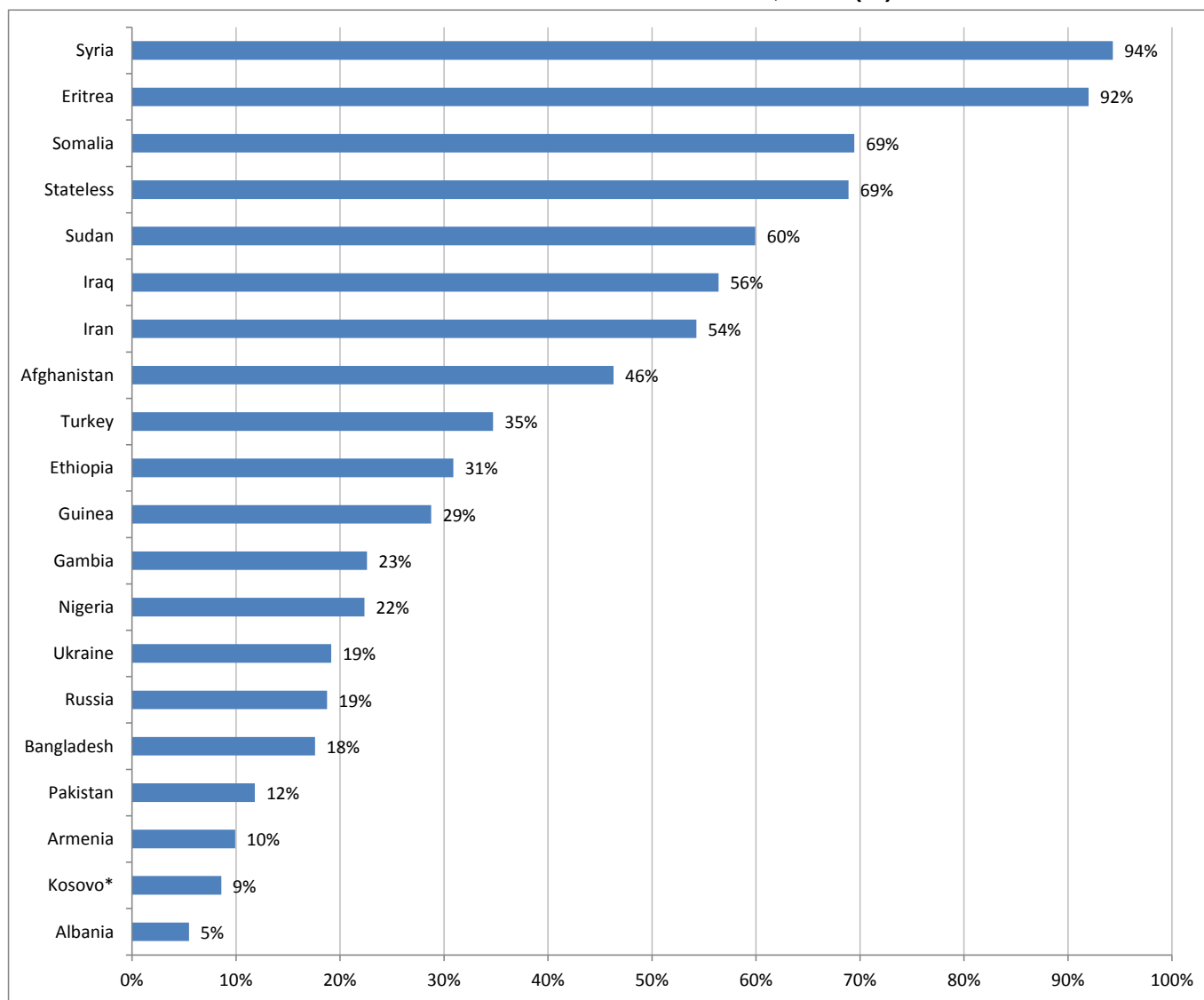
In 2017 more than 970 000 first instance decisions on asylum applications were made in the EU Member States and further 266 000 final decisions following an appeal. Decisions made at the first instance resulted in almost 443 000 persons being granted protection status, while a further 95 000 received 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 46% for first instance decisions in the EU. For final decisions on appeal, the recognition rate was 36%.

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 2017, recognition rates in the EU ranged from around 5% for citizens of Albania to 94% for Syria and 92% for Eritrea (see graph below).

Recognition rates at first instance for the twenty citizenships with the highest number of first instance decisions in the EU, 2017 (%)



* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Recognition rates, 2017

	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	973 330	442 880	46%	39%	266 700	95 240	36%	30%
Belgium	24 045	12 585	52%	52%	5 065	310	6%	6%
Bulgaria	4 740	1 695	36%	36%	20	10	48%	48%
Czech Republic	1 190	145	12%	12%	395	0	1%	1%
Denmark	6 875	2 365	34%	34%	2 055	385	19%	19%
Germany	524 185	261 620	50%	42%	158 085	63 750	40%	34%
Estonia	155	95	61%	61%	40	0	0%	0%
Ireland	805	715	89%	80%	10	10	80%	80%
Greece	24 510	10 455	43%	43%	9 545	1 560	16%	6%
Spain	13 345	4 670	35%	35%	620	30	5%	4%
France	110 945	32 565	29%	29%	33 230	8 005	24%	24%
Croatia	475	150	31%	31%	95	20	20%	20%
Italy	78 235	31 795	41%	16%	12 590	3 335	26%	23%
Cyprus	2 450	1 245	51%	51%	355	55	15%	15%
Latvia	360	265	74%	74%	45	5	14%	14%
Lithuania	370	285	78%	78%	40	5	18%	18%
Luxembourg	1 715	1 125	66%	66%	315	5	1%	1%
Hungary	4 170	1 290	31%	29%	0	0	:	:
Malta	1 110	760	69%	68%	395	50	13%	13%
Netherlands	15 945	7 810	49%	45%	2 180	1 280	59%	53%
Austria	56 285	30 000	53%	52%	6 960	3 925	56%	52%
Poland	2 060	510	25%	24%	1 770	50	3%	2%
Portugal	955	500	52%	52%	0	0	:	:
Romania	2 065	1 245	60%	60%	185	85	45%	45%
Slovenia	240	150	63%	63%	40	0	0%	0%
Slovakia	90	60	68%	25%	10	0	0%	0%
Finland	7 180	3 430	48%	42%	1 260	825	65%	58%
Sweden	61 065	26 775	44%	42%	18 915	4 460	24%	17%
United Kingdom	27 770	8 560	31%	28%	12 470	7 085	57%	52%
Iceland	390	70	18%	17%	505	55	11%	11%
Liechtenstein	40	25	55%	58%	5	0	14%	14%
Norway	6 700	4 770	71%	59%	4 730	500	11%	5%
Switzerland	16 225	14 610	90%	45%	1 970	175	9%	7%

Data are rounded to the nearest five. For this reason, totals may not add up and 0 means 2 or fewer decisions.

* 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 annual data

Eurostat [news release 47/2018](#) of 20 March 2018 on asylum applicants in 2017.


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