

## Asylum in the EU Member States

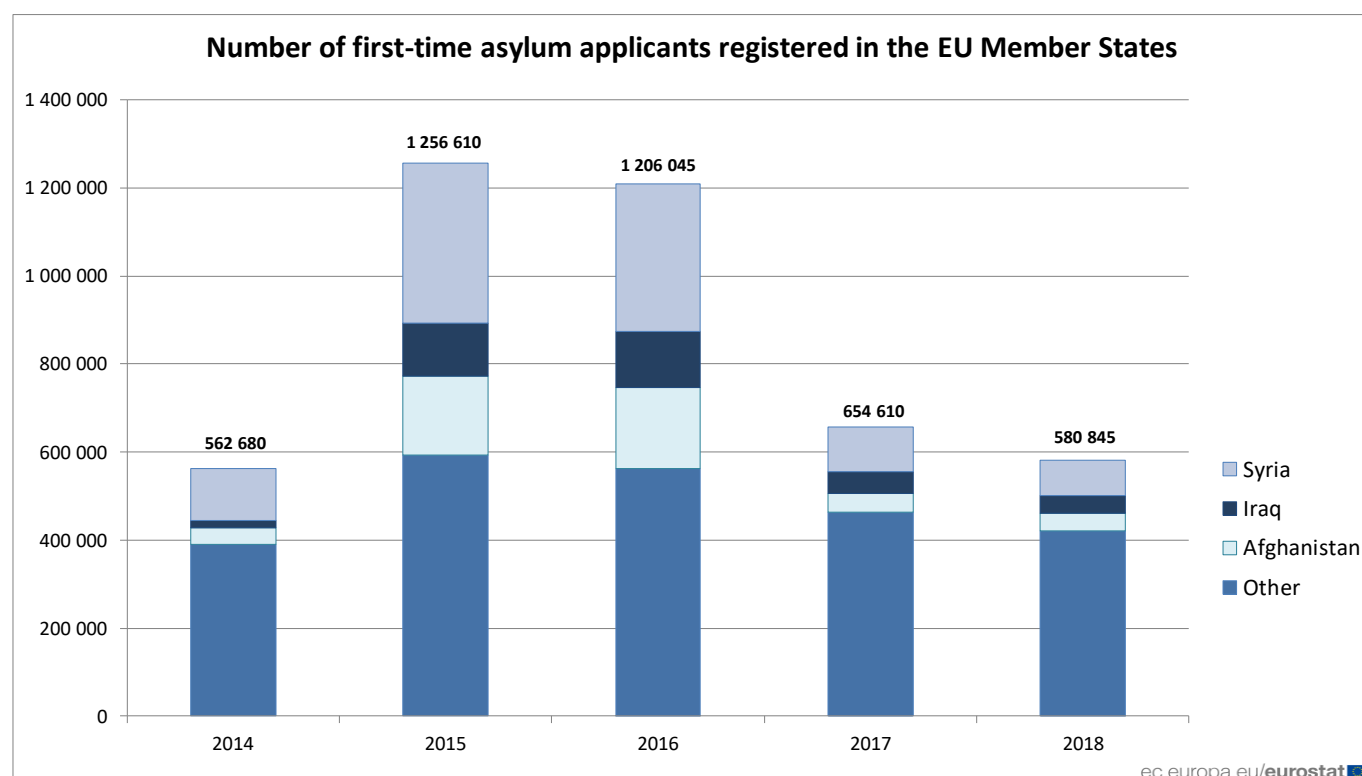
# 580 800 first-time asylum seekers registered in 2018, down by 11% compared with 2017

Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis continued to be the top citizenships

In 2018, 580 800 first-time asylum seekers applied for international protection in the Member States of the **European Union** (EU), down by 11% compared with 2017 (654 600) and less than half of the number recorded in the peak year 2015 when 1 256 600 first-time asylum applicants were registered. The number of asylum applicants in 2018 is comparable to the level recorded in 2014, before the peaks of 2015 and 2016.

**Syrian** (80 900 first-time applicants), **Afghan** (41 000) and **Iraqi** (39 600) continued to be the main citizenships of people seeking international protection in the EU Member States in 2018, together accounting for almost 30% 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.



## Almost 3 in 10 applied for asylum in Germany

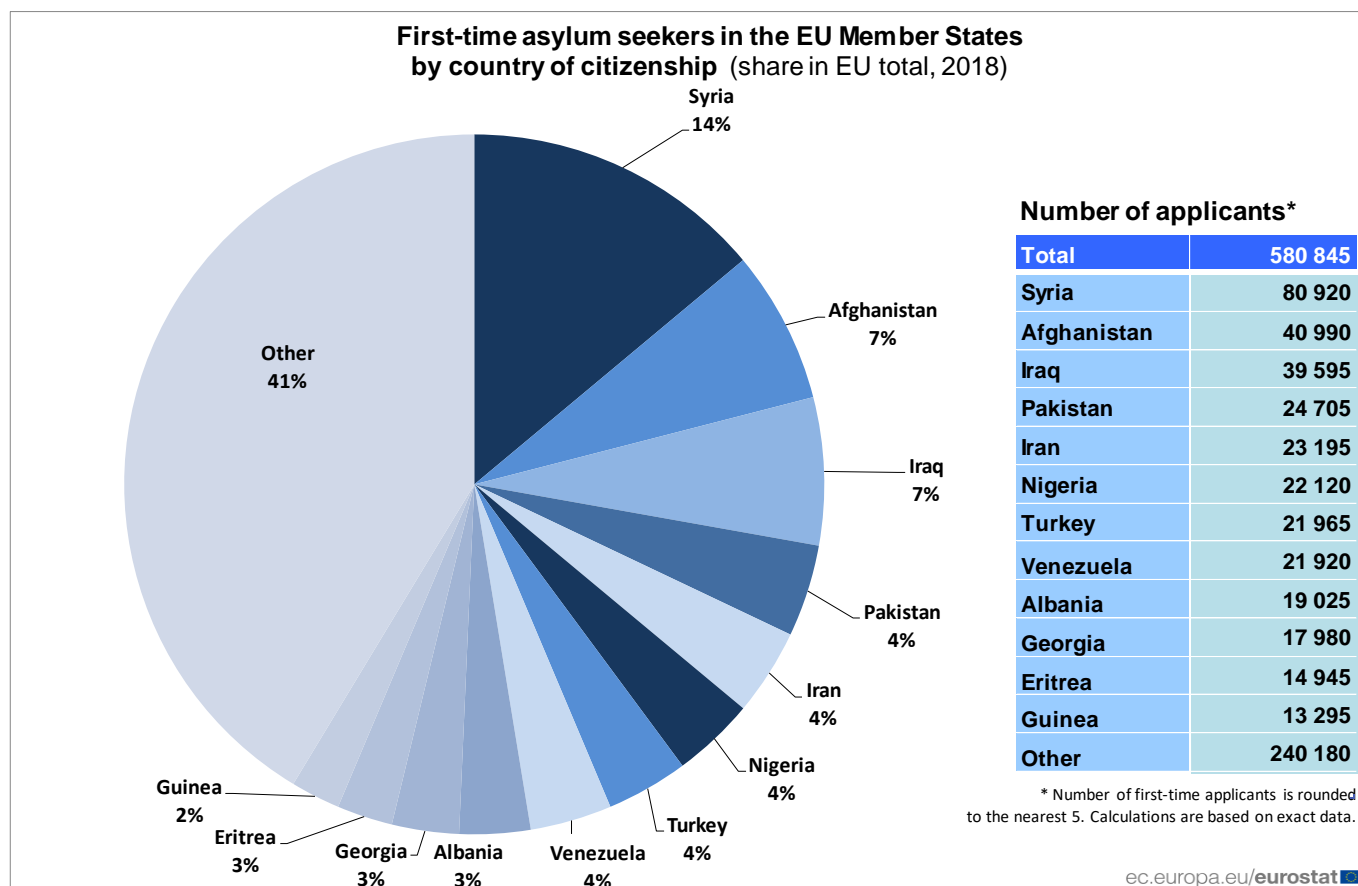
With 161 900 first-time applicants registered in 2018, **Germany** accounted for 28% of all first-time applicants in the EU Member States. It was followed by **France** (110 500, or 19%), **Greece** (65 000, or 11%), **Spain** (52 700, or 9%), **Italy** (49 200, or 8%) and the **United Kingdom** (37 300, or 6%). Among Member States with more than 5 000 first-time asylum seekers in 2018, the number of first time applicants, rose most compared with the previous year in **Cyprus** (+70%, or 3 100 more first-time asylum seekers in 2018 than in 2017) and **Spain** (+60%, or 19 700 more), ahead of **Belgium** (+29%, or 4 100 more), the **Netherlands** (+27%, or 4 400 more), **France** (+20%, or 18 500 more) and **Greece** (+14%, or 8 000 more). In contrast, the largest relative decreases were recorded in **Italy** (-61%, or 77 400 fewer), **Austria** (-49%, or 11 100 fewer), **Sweden** (-19%, or 4 100 fewer) and **Germany** (-18%, or 36 400 fewer).

## Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi – main citizenships of asylum seekers

**Syrian** (14% of the total number of first-time applicants) was the main citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU Member States in 2018, a position it has held each year since 2013. Of the 80 900 **Syrians** who applied for asylum for the first-time in the EU in 2018, more than half were registered in **Germany** (44 200, or 55%). **Syrian** was the main citizenship of asylum seekers in eight EU Member States.

With 41 000 first-time applicants (or 7% of the EU total) in 2018, **Afghan** was the second main citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU Member States. Almost 29% of **Afghans** applied in **Greece** (11 800). **Afghan** was the main citizenship of asylum seekers in five EU Member States.

**Iraqi** (7% of the total number of first-time applicants) was the third main citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU Member States in 2018. Of the 39 600 **Iraqis** seeking asylum protection for the first-time in the EU in 2018, more than 41% applied in **Germany** (16 300). **Iraqi** was the main citizenship of asylum seekers in two EU Member States.



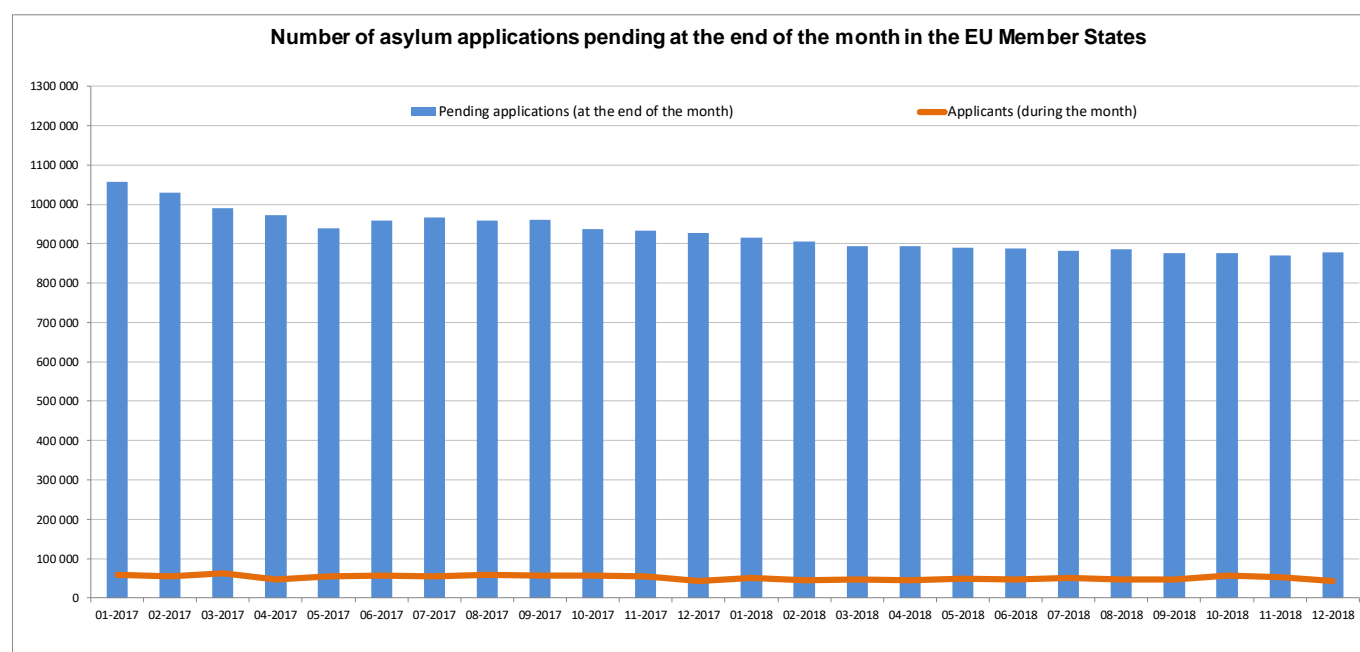
## Highest number of first-time applicants relative to the population in Cyprus, lowest in Slovakia

The highest number of registered first-time applicants in 2018 relative to the population of each Member State was recorded in **Cyprus** (8 805 first-time applicants per million population), ahead of **Greece** (6 051), **Malta** (4 276) and **Luxembourg** (3 694). In contrast, the lowest numbers were recorded in **Slovakia** (28 applicants per million population), **Poland** (63), **Hungary** (65), **Estonia** (68) and **Latvia** (91). In 2018, in the **EU** as a whole, there were 1 133 first-time asylum applicants per million population.

## Less than 900 000 asylum applications pending at the end of 2018

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 “stock” of applications for which decisions are still pending. This statistic is intended to measure the workload of the national authorities.

At the end of 2018, 878 600 applications for international protection in the **EU** Member States were still under consideration by the national authorities (excluding **Finland**, as data not available). At the end of 2017, this figure was slightly higher (927 000). **Germany** had the largest share of applications pending in the EU at the end of 2018 (384 800, or 44% of the EU total), ahead of **Italy** (103 000, or 12%), **Spain** (78 700, or 9%) and **Greece** (76 300, or 9%).



The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Pending applications: data not available for Finland for October-December 2018

## Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) 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, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

## 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 include 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 2018

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

**Renata PALEN**  
Tel: +352-4301-33 444  
[eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu)

Production of data:


**Gabor KURZ**  
Tel: +352-4301-32 859  
[gabor.kurz@ec.europa.eu](mailto:gabor.kurz@ec.europa.eu)

**Piotr JUCHNO**  
Tel: +352-4301-36 240  
[piotr.juchno@ec.europa.eu](mailto:piotr.juchno@ec.europa.eu)

 [EurostatStatistics](#)

 [ec.europa.eu/eurostat/](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/)

 [@EU\\_Eurostat](#)

 **Media requests:** Eurostat media support / Tel: +352-4301-33 408 / [eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu)

## 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*
	2017	2018	Change (in %)	2018	2018
<b>EU</b>	<b>654 610</b>	<b>580 845</b>	<b>-11%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1 133</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	14 035	18 130	+29%	3.1%	1 588
<b>Bulgaria</b>	3 470	2 465	-29%	0.4%	350
<b>Czechia</b>	1 140	1 350	+19%	0.2%	127
<b>Denmark</b>	3 125	3 465	+11%	0.6%	599
<b>Germany</b>	198 255	161 885	-18%	27.9%	1 954
<b>Estonia</b>	180	90	-51%	0.0%	68
<b>Ireland</b>	2 910	3 655	+26%	0.6%	756
<b>Greece</b>	56 940	64 975	+14%	11.2%	6 051
<b>Spain</b>	33 035	52 730	+60%	9.1%	1 130
<b>France</b>	91 965	110 485	+20%	19.0%	1 644
<b>Croatia</b>	880	675	-23%	0.1%	165
<b>Italy</b>	126 550	49 165	-61%	8.5%	813
<b>Cyprus</b>	4 475	7 610	+70%	1.3%	8 805
<b>Latvia</b>	355	175	-50%	0.0%	91
<b>Lithuania</b>	520	385	-26%	0.1%	137
<b>Luxembourg</b>	2 320	2 225	-4%	0.4%	3 694
<b>Hungary</b>	3 115	635	-80%	0.1%	65
<b>Malta</b>	1 610	2 035	+26%	0.4%	4 276
<b>Netherlands</b>	16 090	20 465	+27%	3.5%	1 191
<b>Austria</b>	22 455	11 390	-49%	2.0%	1 291
<b>Poland</b>	3 005	2 405	-20%	0.4%	63
<b>Portugal</b>	1 015	1 240	+22%	0.2%	120
<b>Romania</b>	4 700	1 945	-59%	0.3%	100
<b>Slovenia</b>	1 435	2 800	+95%	0.5%	1 355
<b>Slovakia</b>	150	155	+3%	0.0%	28
<b>Finland</b>	4 325	2 945	-32%	0.5%	535
<b>Sweden</b>	22 190	18 075	-19%	3.1%	1 786
<b>United Kingdom</b>	34 355	37 290	+9%	6.4%	563
<b>Iceland</b>	1 065	730	-31%	-	2 098
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	145	145	+2%	-	3 857
<b>Norway</b>	3 350	2 530	-24%	-	477
<b>Switzerland</b>	16 615	13 465	-19%	-	1 587

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

\* Refers to the resident population on 1 January 2018.

- Not applicable

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

## First-time asylum applicants by country of citizenship in 2018

	Applicants	Main citizenships of first-time asylum applicants								
	#	First citizenship	#	%	Second citizenship	#	%	Third citizenship	#	%
<b>EU</b>	<b>580 845</b>	<b>Syria</b>	<b>80 920</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>40 990</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Iraq</b>	<b>39 595</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	18 130	Syria	2 770	15	Palestine	2 420	13	Afghanistan	1 045	6
<b>Bulgaria</b>	2 465	Afghanistan	1 065	43	Iraq	620	25	Syria	495	20
<b>Czechia</b>	1 350	Ukraine	280	21	Cuba	145	11	Georgia	140	10
<b>Denmark</b>	3 465	Eritrea	675	19	Syria	600	17	Georgia	405	12
<b>Germany</b>	161 885	Syria	44 165	27	Iraq	16 330	10	Iran	10 855	7
<b>Estonia</b>	90	Ukraine	15	17	Russia	10	11	Egypt	10	11
<b>Ireland</b>	3 655	Albania	460	13	Georgia	450	12	Syria	330	9
<b>Greece</b>	64 975	Syria	13 145	20	Afghanistan	11 820	18	Iraq	9 640	15
<b>Spain</b>	52 730	Venezuela	19 070	36	Colombia	8 465	16	Syria	2 725	5
<b>France</b>	110 485	Afghanistan	10 205	9	Albania	8 280	7	Georgia	6 750	6
<b>Croatia</b>	675	Afghanistan	170	25	Iran	120	18	Syria	80	12
<b>Italy</b>	49 165	Pakistan	7 315	15	Nigeria	5 140	10	Bangladesh	4 160	8
<b>Cyprus</b>	7 610	Syria	1 970	26	India	870	11	Bangladesh	615	8
<b>Latvia</b>	175	Russia	50	29	Iraq	20	11	Azerbaijan	15	9
<b>Lithuania</b>	385	Tajikistan	120	31	Russia	50	13	Iraq	35	9
<b>Luxembourg</b>	2 225	Eritrea	410	18	Syria	280	13	Iraq	185	8
<b>Hungary</b>	635	Afghanistan	270	43	Iraq	215	34	Syria	50	8
<b>Malta</b>	2 035	Syria	455	22	Somalia	310	15	Libya	305	15
<b>Netherlands</b>	20 465	Syria	2 960	14	Iran	1 870	9	Eritrea	1 410	7
<b>Austria</b>	11 390	Syria	3 275	29	Afghanistan	1 735	15	Iran	1 040	9
<b>Poland</b>	2 405	Russia	1 600	67	Ukraine	225	9	Iraq	65	3
<b>Portugal</b>	1 240	Angola	225	18	Ukraine	135	11	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	130	10
<b>Romania</b>	1 945	Iraq	970	50	Syria	350	18	Iran	140	7
<b>Slovenia</b>	2 800	Pakistan	775	28	Algeria	470	17	Afghanistan	455	16
<b>Slovakia</b>	155	Afghanistan	30	19	Yemen	20	13	Azerbaijan	15	10
<b>Finland</b>	2 945	Iraq	565	19	Russia	455	15	Turkey	285	10
<b>Sweden</b>	18 075	Syria	2 615	14	Iran	1 095	6	Iraq	1 065	6
<b>United Kingdom</b>	37 290	Iran	3 955	11	Iraq	3 595	10	Pakistan	2 575	7
<b>Iceland</b>	730	Iraq	110	15	Albania	90	12	Somalia	50	7
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	145	Serbia	25	17	Georgia	25	17	Belarus	20	14
<b>Norway</b>	2 530	Turkey	770	30	Syria	415	16	Eritrea	220	9
<b>Switzerland</b>	13 465	Eritrea	2 495	19	Syria	1 195	9	Afghanistan	1 125	8

Number of first-time applicants is rounded to the nearest 5. Calculations are based on exact data.  
The source dataset can be found [here](#).