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Temporary protection prevented overburdening of Europe's asylum systems



The EU's activation of the Temporary Protection Directive for the first time ever had a strong immediate effect, with Ukrainians lodging far fewer asylum applications in April, while continuing to register for temporary protection at a very high rate. Extreme pressure on asylum case processing and long backlogs were averted as a result.

[Analysis](#) released by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) shows that **about 60 200 asylum applications were lodged in the EU+ in April 2022**,¹ almost 23 000 fewer than in March and back to the level seen in February. The decline was primarily due to a significant decrease in Ukrainian asylum applications (about 1 900), which was only a fraction of the peak level in March (14 000). In contrast, registrations for temporary protection² continued at a very high rate in April, when almost 1.1 million people registered.

Temporary Protection status, which grants beneficiaries access to accommodation, healthcare, and access to the labour market, not only helped meet the needs of persons fleeing Ukraine but, **prevented EU+ countries' asylum systems from coming under extreme pressure** that would have likely resulted in unprecedented backlogs. As of 3 July, **about 3.7 million persons have been registered** since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. **Almost all are Ukrainian nationals and a clear majority is female**.³

Continuously fewer applications by Iraqis

In terms of asylum applications, Ukrainians were only the eighth largest applicant group in April. **The largest groups were Afghans and Syrians** who lodged some 8 000 and 6 400 applications, respectively. They were followed by Venezuelans, Turks and Colombians. Lodging continuously fewer applications, Iraqis (1 800) were not among the 10 main nationalities in April, for the first time since 2014. This contrasts with 2021, when Iraqis were predominant on the irregular migration route from Belarus. Applications by Georgians (2 100), Russians (1 100) and Egyptians (1 000) remained relatively high in April despite decreases compared to March. **Some 2 400 applicants were self-claimed unaccompanied minors**, accounting for 4 % of all applicants.

The most pending cases at first instance since mid-2017

Asylum authorities in EU+ countries issued about 49 800 first instance decisions in April 2022, down from March but remaining relatively high. Ukrainians and Russians still received relatively few decisions, while Belarusians (870) received the most on record (i.e. since at least 2014). As first instance decisions remained high while applications declined considerably, **the gap between applications and decisions was the smallest in almost a year**, shrinking to 10 400 more applications than decisions. At the end of April 2022, **over half a million cases were awaiting a decision** at first instance. This was the most since mid-2017, which reflected high inflows of applications in recent months.

Very high recognition rates for Ukrainians, Syrians and Belarusians

The EU+ recognition rate⁴ was **40 % in April**, remaining significantly higher than the overall recognition rate for 2021 (35 %). More than three in five positive decisions in April granted refugee status and the remaining granted subsidiary protection. **The recognition rate for Ukrainians jumped to 93% in April** (albeit based on just 370 decisions) **and almost all positive decisions granted subsidiary protection**. Recognition rates were similarly high for Syrians (94 %) and Belarusians (96 %).

For more information and an interactive data visualisation, please visit the [Latest Asylum Trends](#) page.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Union Agency for Asylum's Press Office at the following email addresses:

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1

EUAA EPS data are preliminary and might differ from validated official statistics submitted to Eurostat at a later stage. Eurostat data are used in the annual EUAA Asylum Report. The total EPS numbers include an approximation for one EU+ country and may change after data updates.

2

European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs, [Temporary protection](#), 21 April 2022.

3

EUAA, [Analysis on Asylum and Temporary Protection in the EU+ in the Context of the Ukraine Crisis, Week 26 \(27 June – 3 July\) 2022](#), 5 July.

4

This refers to the recognition rate for EU-regulated forms of protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection) at first instance.