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## Asylum applications down by 23% in the first half of 2025



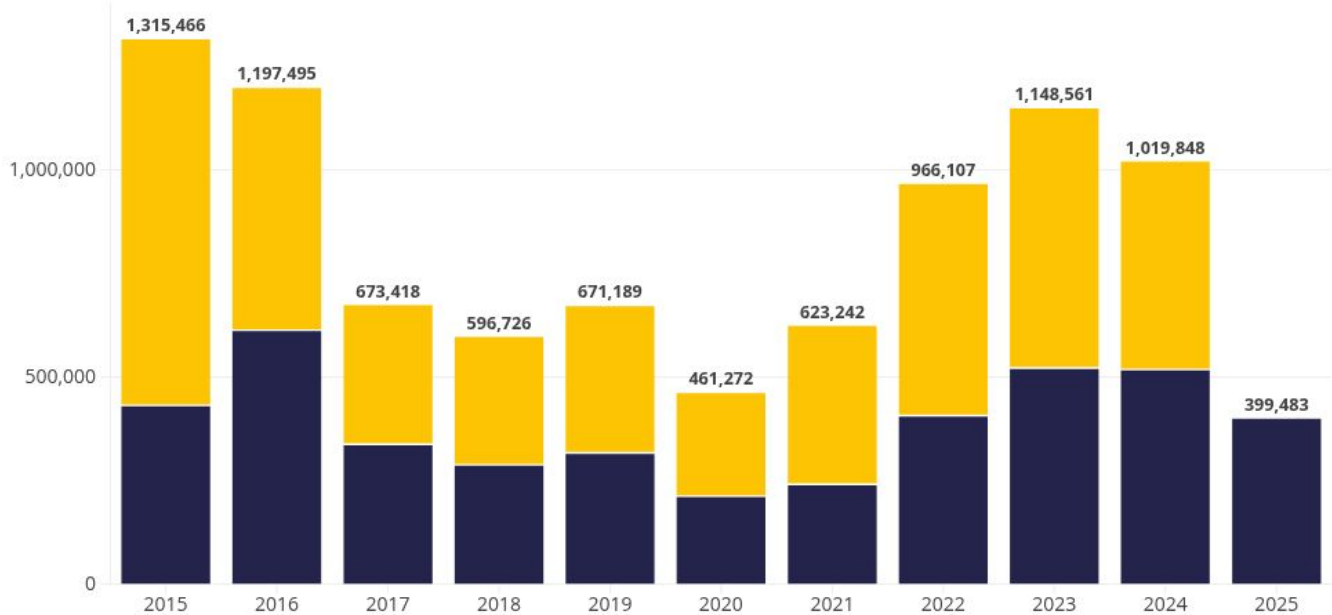
Europe's asylum landscape underwent a series of significant shifts in the first half of 2025. By the end of June, EU+ countries received 399 000 asylum applications, a 23 % decrease year-over-year. A two-thirds drop in Syrian applications meant that Germany was no longer the main receiving EU+ country, with both France and Spain receiving more applications. A majority of applications continued to be lodged by citizenships with low recognition rates in the EU+.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has just published its [Mid-Year Review](#) of the Latest Asylum Trends, paired with detailed analysis of the main citizenships seeking asylum and the key European countries receiving their applications. By the end of June 2025, **EU+ countries received 399 000 asylum applications, a 23 % decrease** compared to the first half of 2024.<sup>1</sup> This shift was driven by far fewer **Syrians (25 000)** applying, for whom the number of applications **dropped by two thirds (- 66 %)**. However, **Venezuelans (49 000)** [applied in significant numbers](#), up by almost a third (+ 31 %) year-over-year.

# Applications for asylum

All - select citizenship here ▾

■ Jan-Jun ■ Jul-Dec



Source: EUAA Early Warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 6 August 2025. [Click here for Data Tables \(EU+ Countries\)](#). [Click here for Data Tables \(Citizenships\)](#)



## Changing trends belay a complex asylum landscape

Following the fall of the Assad regime in Syria last December, and after a decade during which Syrians were consistently the main citizenship seeking protection in the EU+, **Venezuelans became the largest nationality group** in the first half of 2025. This shift had a significant impact on the main receiving EU+ countries of asylum applications. By the end of June, **France (78 000)** and **Spain (77 000)** both received more applications than Germany (**70 000**). They were followed by **Italy (64 000)** and **Greece (27 000)**. Greece received the most applications *per capita*: 1 application for every 380 residents. Importantly, while the number of applications in France was stable, year-over-year, applications in Germany (- 43 %), Italy (- 25 %) and Spain (- 13 %) all **fell** compared to the first half of 2024.

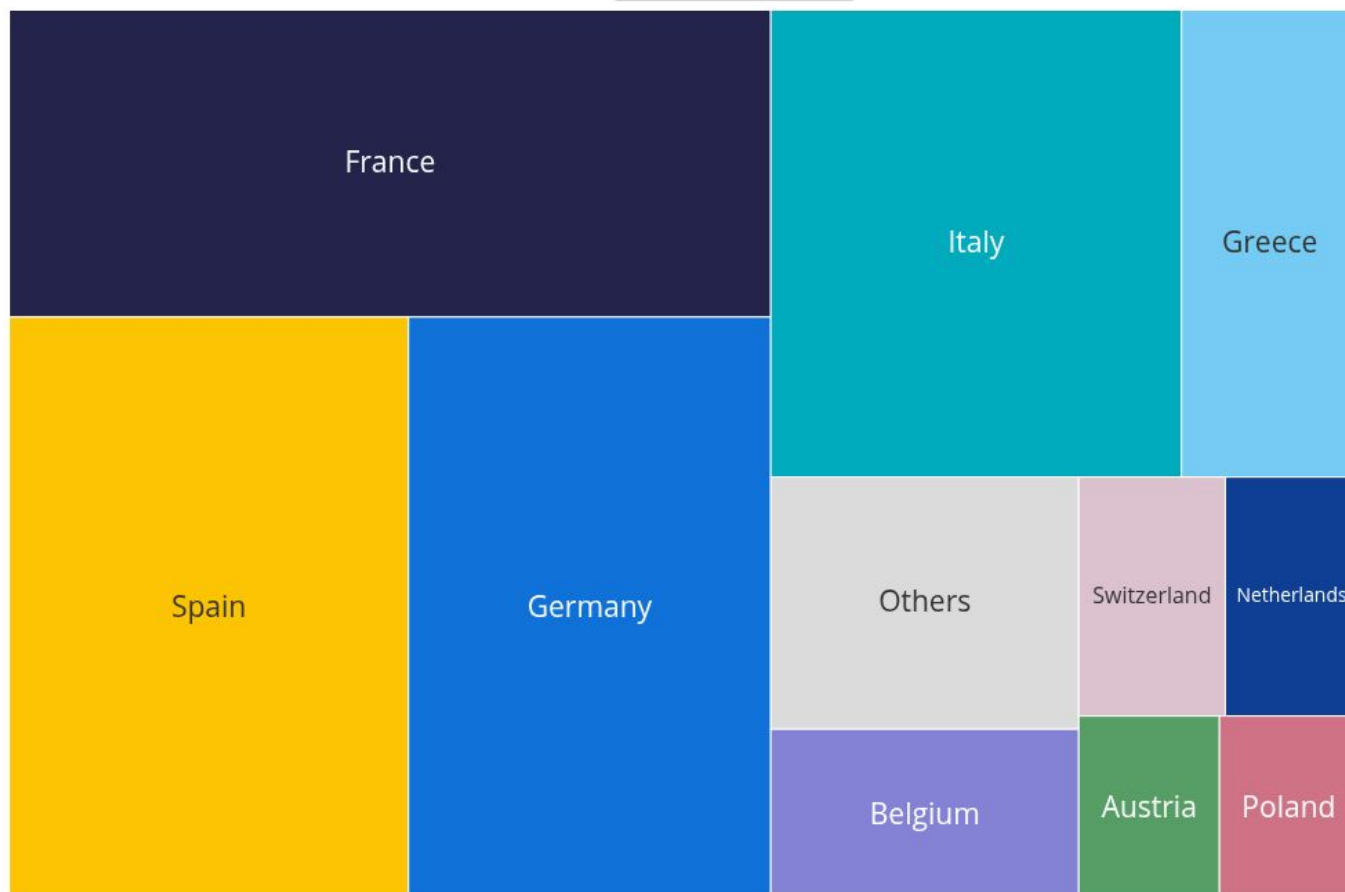
Third country nationals tend to favour specific EU+ countries when seeking international protection. **Venezuelans tend to apply in Spain** due to a shared language, an existing diaspora and a tendency by the Spanish authorities to grant them a national form of protection. Indeed, Venezuelans lodged [almost all of their applications](#) in Spain (93 %). Compounding this reality, Venezuelan applications in Spain also **rose by almost a third** (+ 29 %), compared to the first half of 2024. Typically, around a quarter of asylum applications in the EU+ are lodged by citizenships with [visa-free access](#) to the Schengen area. Venezuelans and [Colombians](#) represent the majority of such applicants. The European Parliament is expected to vote on a stronger and more flexible [visa suspension mechanism](#) next month.

In addition to Venezuelans, other citizenships displayed increased trends. **Ukrainians (16 000)** have continued to lodge increasing numbers of asylum applications, also up by 29 %. **France** accounted for nearly half of all [Ukrainian applications](#), whereas **Poland** accounted for almost one third. However, these figures were dwarfed by the 4.3 million Ukrainian beneficiaries of temporary protection at the end of June 2025.

**Afghans (42 000)** were the second largest applicant group in the first half of 2025. Despite representing a tenth of all applications, the semi-annual figure **has been on a downward trend** since 2023. Following Syrians, **Bangladeshis (17 000)** and **Turks (17 000)** also lodged fewer applications, recording decreases of 26 % and 41 %, respectively, year-over-year.

## Applications lodged Jan – Jun 2025

Select : All citizenships ▾



Source: EUAA Early Warning and Preparedness System (EPS) data as of 6 August 2025. [Click here for Data Tables \(EU+ Countries\)](#). [Click here for Data Tables \(Citizenships\)](#)

## Lowest EU+ recognition rate on record

The EU+ recognition rate for the first half of the year stood at 25 %, which is the **lowest overall semi-annual or annual recognition rate on record**. This was driven by a sharp drop in protection decisions issued to Syrians for whom most EU+ countries have kept the processing of applications on hold. Importantly, this figure does **not reflect a stricter interpretation of protection needs** but is owed to procedural factors. For example, when Syrians withdraw their applications, some national authorities record this, statistically, as a negative decision.

For some citizenships, EU+ recognition rates have remained stable over time, including for Bangladeshis (4 %), Pakistanis (10 %) and Nigerians (10 %). However, other nationalities **have seen significant shifts**. The EU+ recognition rate for Malians was up from 41 % (in 2021) to 79 % and, in the case of Haitians, up from 10 % (in 2020) to 86 % during the first half of 2025. Applications from **Malians (9 000)** were stable (-6 %); whereas Haitians (7 200) lodged 27 % more applications in the first half of 2025. Around **three quarters of Malians applied in Spain**, whereas **almost all Haitians applied in France (99 %)**. In fact,

Haitian applications in France **were up by almost three fifths** (+ 57 %).

During the first half of 2025, around 51 % of applications came from citizenships for whom the recognition rate was low (? 20 %). Many such applications may be subject to an accelerated examination under new rules that become applicable in mid-2026.<sup>2</sup> The number of applications pending a decision at first instance **stood at 918 000 at the end of June 2025**.

A series of interactive visualisations can be found on the [Latest Asylum Trends page](#). The underlying data tables, on the [main citizenships applying](#) and the receiving [EU+ countries](#) are available there as well.

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## 1

The EUAA's [EPS data](#) are preliminary and might differ from validated official statistics submitted to Eurostat at a later stage. Data on applications pending at first instance in Italy for the month of June 2025 were missing, and an approximation was used.

## 2

[Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1348](#), which becomes applicable on 12 June 2026, requires Member States to accelerate the examination of some cases including inter alia those from low recognition rate countries.