

September 2014

Asylum statistics Annual Trends

APPLICATIONS:

- In 2013 the number of applications for asylum in the UK, excluding dependants (23,507), was 8% higher than in 2012 (21,843). After a significant drop in the number of applications from 2009 to 2010 there has been an upward trend over the past three years with an overall 32% increase from 2010 to 2013.

Table 1: Asylum applications in the UK (excl. Dependants)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Applications	24,487	17,916	19,865	21,843	23,584
% change from previous year	-6%	-27%	+11%	+10%	+8%

Applications by nationality:

- In 2013 there were significant increases in the number of applicants from Albania, Eritrea and Syria compared with 2012.

Table 2: Top ten asylum applicant producing countries, 2013 (excl. Dependants)

	2012	2013	% change
Pakistan	3,280	3,359	+2%
Iran	2,659	2,410	-9%
Sri Lanka	1,744	1,811	+4%
Syria	988	1,648	+67%
Eritrea	728	1,387	+91%
Albania	819	1,325	+62%
Bangladesh	1,057	1,123	+6%
Afghanistan	1,008	1,038	+3%
India	1,087	974	-10%
Nigeria	959	931	-3%

- Over the past 5 years 16 different countries have appeared in the list of the top ten asylum applicant producing countries. Pakistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Eritrea, Afghanistan, and Nigeria have been in the top ten in every one of the last five years. In that period the number of applications from Afghanistan has declined while the number from Pakistan has increased significantly.

- Zimbabwe had the highest number of applicants in 2009 (5599) and third highest in 2010 (1446) but since then has never been in the top ten. China, Somalia, Sudan and Iraq are other countries where the number of applicants has declined in the last 2 or 3 years.
- Libya featured in the list in 2011, but not before or since. The number of applicants from Bangladesh and India has increased in recent years, bringing them into the top ten. In both 2012 and 2013 there were significant increases in the number of applications from Albania, Syria, and Eritrea.

Applications by location

- The majority of applications are made in-country rather than at ports. Over the past five years there have been only small variations in the percentage of applications made in-country, ranging from 88% to 92% of all applications.

Table 3: Applications by location (excl. Dependants), by year

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
In-country	22,476	16,176	17,546	19,202	20,796
% change from previous year	-3%	-28%	+8%	+9%	+8%
Port	2,011	1,740	2,319	2,641	2,788
% change from previous year	-26%	-13	+33%	+14%	+6%
Total	24,487	17,916	19,865	21,843	23,584
% change from previous year	-6%	-27%	+11%	+10%	+8%

DECISIONS:

- In 2013 63% of initial decisions were refusals, 33% were grants of asylum, 3% were grants of Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave, and just over 1% were grants of leave to remain under other categories, such as family or private life rules, a category introduced in 2011.
- Over the past five years there has been an upward trend in the percentage of decisions which have been to grant refugee status, but it is still only about a third of applications which result in this decision.
- There has been a steady decline in the number of decisions to grant discretionary leave to remain. This is related to a decline in the number of applications from unaccompanied children, who have frequently been granted discretionary leave when they were under 18.
- While the percentage of refusals has dropped slightly in recent years it remains at over 60% of applications.

Table 4: Initial Decisions (excl. Dependants)

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
Decisions	24,287		20,261		17,380		16,744		17,543	
Refugee status	4,188	17%	3,488	17%	4,312	25%	5,135	31%	5,736	33%
Humanitarian Protection	94	0.4%	91	0.4 %	81	0.5%	88	0.5%	53	0.3%
Discretionary Leave	2,460	10%	1,616	8%	1,256	7%	751	4%	533	3%
Other Grants of Leave							85	0.5%	220	1%
Refused	17,545	72%	15,066	74%	11,731	67%	10,715	64%	11,001	63%

- Among the countries with large numbers of asylum applicants those from which the highest percentages were given refugee status, humanitarian protection, or discretionary leave in 2013 were Iran, Syria, and Sudan as can be seen from the table below.
- Other countries with high recognition rates were Somalia, Turkey, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe; all with grants of status of 50% or more.
- In contrast, among the countries with large numbers of applicants, Bangladesh and Nigeria had high refusal rates, as did India. The larger number of decisions to grant discretionary leave for applicants from Afghanistan and Albania again relates to larger numbers of applications from unaccompanied children.

Table5: Asylum decisions by nationality, 2013, top ten countries for number of decisions

	Decisions	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	Family or Private Life	Refusals
Pakistan	2,624	557	4	16	12	2,035
Iran	1,919	1,013	9	37	4	856
Syria	1,318	1,106	7	3	0	202
Sri Lanka	1,287	245	1	9	7	1,025
Eritrea	960	779	1	6	1	173
Afghanistan	895	172	5	119	12	587
Bangladesh	759	26	1	16	7	709
Nigeria	742	66	4	17	18	637
Albania	728	58	0	157	10	503
Sudan	593	430	0	2	0	161

APPEALS:

- In 2013 25% of appeals were allowed, while 68% were dismissed.
- The success rate at appeal has remained steady for a number of years, but there has been a decline in the number of appeals heard in the last 2 to 3 years.

Table 6: Appeals determined

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
Determined	12,813		14,723		10,597		8,285		8,325	
Allowed	3,712	29%	4,029	27%	2,779	26%	2,208	27%	2,078	25%
Dismissed	8,627	68%	10,061	68%	7,139	67%	5,472	66%	5,681	68%
Withdrawn	474	4%	633	4%	679	6%	605	7%	566	7%

The figures on appeals may differ from those shown in earlier summaries due to changes in the data sources (see note at the end of this summary).

REFUGEES RESETTLED:

- Refugees may be accepted for resettlement in the UK via the Gateway programme, the Mandate Scheme, or most recently via the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.
- The UK commitment to the Gateway programme is for 750 refugees per year, referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Mandate scheme covers people who have been granted refugee status by UNHCR and have ties to the UK.
- The numbers resettled each year (including dependants) are shown in the table below.

Table 7: Refugees resettled (incl. Dependants)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gateway Programme	857	669	432	985	935
Mandate Scheme	90	49	22	54	32

ASYLUM SUPPORT:

- The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants) in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of 2013 was 23,459, of whom 20,687 were in dispersal accommodation and 2,772 were receiving subsistence only.
- The numbers rose during 2013 and are now at their highest since 2009, which relates to the rise in the number of applications for asylum.

- The region of the UK with the largest number in dispersal accommodation at the end of 2013 was the North West (5,393). This region has had the largest number since the beginning of 2008.
- 1,197 asylum seekers were in initial accommodation under Section 98 support at the end of 2013. There has been an upward trend in the numbers supported under Section 98 since 2009.

Table 8: Asylum seekers in receipt of asylum support (incl. Dependants)

	End of 2009	End of 2010	End of 2011	End of 2012	End of 2013
Dispersed accommodation	23,840	18,724	18,108	17,594	20,687
Subsistence only	4,672	3,315	2,786	2,588	2,772
Initial accommodation	634	650	962	1,067	1,197

Applicants supported under Section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- 5,786 decisions to grant Section 4 support were made in 2013. After a sharp decline in grants of Section 4 support from 2009 to 2011, numbers increased in 2012 and again in 2013.
- At the end of 2013 3,488 applicants, excluding dependants, were receiving Section 4 support, as well as 1,343 dependants. The number of dependants supported has only been published since the beginning of 2013.

Table 9: Grants of Section 4 Support

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of grants	10,109	6,621	3,788	4,841	5,786

Table 10: Numbers in receipt of Section 4 Support (excl. Dependants)

	End of 2009	End of 2010	End of 2011	End of 2012	End of 2013
Number supported	11,655	3,560	2,310	2,757	3,488

- For more detail on asylum support see the separate briefing on this subject produced by the Refugee Council.

ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE:

Removals (Asylum Applicants)

- Including dependants, in 2013, 8,995 asylum seekers were removed or departed voluntarily, a marginal decrease from 2012 (9,031).
- The total number of removals and voluntary departures has gone down in each year from 2009. The number of enforced removals has dropped in each of those years.

- 2,946 asylum seekers left under Assisted Voluntary Return schemes in 2013, the largest number since 2009.
- Other types of voluntary departure have tended to decrease year by year, with the exception of 2011 when there was a peak in the number of notified voluntary returns, and 2013 when there was a small increase in the number of other voluntary departures.

Table 11: Removals and voluntary departures of Asylum Applicants, incl. dependants

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Enforced	6,432	6,174	5,774	5,068	4,844
Notified Voluntary	465	482	1,565	841	562
Assisted Voluntary	2,983	2,698	2,071	2,529	2,946
Other Voluntary	1,756	1,040	667	593	643
Total	11,636	10,394	10,077	9,031	8,995

Detention

Persons leaving detention

- A total of 16,933 people were recorded as removed from the UK upon leaving detention in 2013, having been held solely under Immigration Act powers, of whom 37% were asylum detainees.

Persons Detained at the end of the year

- At the end of 2013 a total of 2,796 persons were detained, no children were in detention at this point in time; the only year end with any children in detention was 2012, when 1 child was detained.
- 1,684 persons who had sought asylum at some stage were being detained solely under Immigration Act powers (60% of all immigration detainees)
- 90% of all detainees were male.

Table 12: People in detention

	End of 2009	End of 2010	End of 2011	End of 2012	End of 2013
Total	2,595	2,525	2,419	2,685	2,796
Male	2,350	2,248	2,178	2,412	2,505
Female	245	277	241	273	291
Asylum detainees	1,770	1,612	1,370	1,676	1,684

Detained Asylum Seekers by Nationality

- At the end of 2013, of the countries with the largest numbers of asylum detainees, only China and Sudan do not also appear in the top ten countries for the number of asylum applications in 2013.
- Iran and Syria ranked second and fourth respectively for the number of asylum applications in 2013. However at the end of 2013 only 25 Iranian asylum seekers and 20 Syrian asylum seekers were in detention.

Table 13: Countries with largest numbers of asylum detainees, end of 2013

	End of 2012	End of 2013
Pakistan	296	383
Bangladesh	173	175
India	185	150
Afghanistan	131	137
Sri Lanka	45	93
Albania	48	89
China	105	75
Nigeria	105	75
Eritrea	21	45
Sudan	32	27

Children in Detention

- In 2013 228 children entered detention, of whom 164 were asylum detainees. 99 of these children were detained at the Cedars pre-departure accommodation, and 92 at Tinsley House Family Unit.
- *For more detail on children in detention see the separate briefing on this subject produced by the Refugee Council. There are also briefings on detention in the asylum system and the detained fast track process.*

CHILDREN:

Applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum

- The number of applications from Unaccompanied Children, excluding dependants, was 1,265 in 2013, a 12% increase compared with 2012.
- *Figures for years before 2012 in earlier briefings are not directly comparable to 2012 and 2013 figures because of a change in the way the statistics have been compiled. There is a link at the end of this document to the Home Office publication explaining the change. The Home Office has now updated the figures for the years before 2012 to reflect the change in methodology.*

Table 14: Asylum applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum (excl. Dependants)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Applications	2,857	1,515	1,248	1,125	1,265
% change to previous year	-28%	-47%	-18%	-10%	+12%

- Albania is now the country of origin for the largest number of unaccompanied children (37% of all applications in 2013). The number of applications from Afghanistan has declined sharply in recent years. 76% of all applications in 2013 were from 6 countries.

Table 15: Top child asylum applicant producing countries, 2013 (excl. Dependants)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Albania	55	32	123	265	470
Afghanistan	1,485	487	394	235	150
Eritrea	224	123	102	80	131
Iran	184	176	171	119	76
Vietnam	80	96	78	62	68
Syria	11	6	8	21	64

- In 2013 86% of applicants were male, a similar percentage to earlier years.

Age Disputed Cases

- The number of age disputed cases has been steadily falling over the past 5 years.

Table 16: Age Disputed Asylum applications (excl. Dependants)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Applications	1,146	530	370	337	323
% change to previous year	-24%	-54%	-30%	-9%	-4%

N.B. The Home Office statistics on age disputed cases do not include the category of those applicants who claim to be children but who are treated as adult because in the opinion of an Immigration officer "their physical appearance and/or general demeanour **very strongly** indicates that they are **significantly** over 18 years and no other credible evidence exists to the contrary"

Decisions

- The majority of decisions on asylum applications by unaccompanied children under the age of 18 have been grants of discretionary leave. In 2013 over 70% of all grants of discretionary leave were to children aged 17 and under, although they accounted for only 3% of total decisions.
- For decisions on unaccompanied children who have reached the age of 18 refusal rates tend to be much higher, there was a refusal rate of 70% in 2013.

- For unaccompanied children a new category, UASC leave, is being used in cases where the only reason for giving leave is that the applicant is a child who cannot be returned, and this will mean there are far fewer grants of discretionary leave.

Table 17: Initial asylum decisions on unaccompanied children aged 17 and under

	Total	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	UASC Leave	Family or Private Life	Refusals
2013	936	237	4	380	119	18	178
2012	594	159	3	342			90
2011	939	183	6	605			145
2010	1,627	264	11	1,089			263
2009	2,607	297	19	1,908			383

Table 18: Initial asylum decisions on unaccompanied children who have reached the age of 18

	Total	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	UASC Leave	Family or Private Life	Refusals
2013	176	50	0	3	0	2	121
2012	87	26	0	8		0	53
2011	127	27	3	9			88
2010	209	27	1	7			174
2009	193	27	0	4			162

ASYLUM APPLICATIONS (DEPENDANTS):

- In 2013 there were 6,291 applications from dependants, the majority of whom are under the age of 18.
- Dependant applications from under 18s are generally split more or less equally between boys and girls.
- Applications from dependants over the age of 18 are predominantly from women.

Table 19: Applications by Dependants by age

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Under 5	2,163	1,530	1,904	2,030	2,423
5 – 9 yo	1054	829	1,061	1,094	1,125
10 – 13 yo	654	470	587	566	590
14 – 15 yo	271	200	257	247	223
16 – 17 yo	220	158	201	191	210
18+ yo	1,366	1,129	1,667	1,658	1,705

Table 20: Applications by dependants aged 18 and over

	Total Applications	Male dependants	Female dependants	% Female
2013	1,705	406	1,299	76%
2012	1,658	385	1,273	77%
2011	1,667	379	1,288	77%
2010	1,129	314	815	72%
2009	1,366	366	1,000	73%

N.B. There are a number of cases (approx. 5%) where the age or sex of dependants is recorded as unknown.

WOMEN AND GIRLS:

.Applications

- In 2013 27% of asylum applications were made by women. This is comparable to other recent years.

Table 21: Applications by women (Excl. Dependants)

	Total Applications	Applications by women	% by women
2013	23,584	6,396	27%
2012	21,843	6,071	28%
2011	19,865	5,392	27%
2010	17,916	5,329	30%
2009	24,487	8,049	33%

- The proportion of women applicants varies considerably from country to country. For a few countries there are more women applicants than men, or a roughly equal number, whereas in others the proportion of women applicants is low.

Table 22: Women asylum applicants from the top ten applicant producing countries 2013

	Total Applications	Applications by women	% by women
Pakistan	3,359	756	23%
Iran	2,410	698	29%
Sri Lanka	1,811	300	17%
Syria	1,648	272	17%
Eritrea	1,387	486	35%
Albania	1,325	462	35%
Bangladesh	1,123	99	9%
Afghanistan	1,038	112	11%
India	974	166	17%
Nigeria	931	405	44%

Table 23: Top ten countries for women asylum applicants 2013

	Applications by women	% of total by women	Change in no. from 2012
Pakistan	756	23%	-54
Iran	698	29%	-18
Eritrea	486	35%	+111
Albania	462	35%	+208
Nigeria	405	44%	-31
China	356	48%	+30
Sri Lanka	300	17%	+5
Syria	272	17%	+138
Somalia	223	50%	-54
Zimbabwe	186	55%	+68

- In 2013 only 14% of asylum applications by unaccompanied children were by girls, and this is similar to earlier years.

Table 24: Applications by unaccompanied children seeking asylum

	Total Applications	Applications by girls	% Female
2013	1,265	179	14%
2012	1,125	188	17%
2011	1,248	221	18%
2010	1,515	293	19%
2009	2,857	338	12%

- The main countries of origin for unaccompanied girls seeking asylum in 2013 were those shown in the table below. There has been a general increase in applications from unaccompanied children from Albania in recent years. There were fewer than 10 girls applying from every other country in 2013.

Table 25: Applications by unaccompanied children seeking asylum (girls only)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Eritrea	53	45	56	44	36
Vietnam	21	29	23	13	26
Albania	4	5	14	14	22
Somalia	70	38	28	19	21
Congo (DRC)	17	18	4	12	13
Iran	3	4	3	5	10
Nigeria	21	24	21	18	10

Decisions

- Women asylum seekers are more likely than men to be granted asylum, and in recent years, since 2011, have been slightly more likely to be granted humanitarian protection or discretionary leave. The refusal rates for women have tended to be lower than for men, especially recently.

Table 26 Decisions by gender

	Granted Asylum		Granted HP or DL or other leave		Refused	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
2013	31%	38%	4%	5%	65%	57%
2012	29%	35%	5%	7%	66%	58%
2011	24%	27%	7%	9%	69%	64%
2010	16%	19%	9%	7%	75%	74%
2009	14%	23%	13%	5%	73%	72%

Appeals

- Women asylum seekers are more likely than men to win appeals. In each of the last 5 years the percentage of allowed appeals has been at least 4% higher for women than for men.

Table 27 Appeal decisions by gender

	Appeal Allowed		Appeal Dismissed		Appeal Withdrawn	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
2013	24%	28%	70%	64%	6%	8%
2012	25%	30%	68%	62%	7%	8%
2011	25%	30%	69%	64%	6%	6%
2010	25%	32%	71%	63%	4%	4%
2009	24%	37%	72%	59%	4%	4%

Removals

- In 2013 there were 1,246 women who had applied for asylum who were either removed from the UK (639) or left on a voluntary basis (607).
- Of the asylum enforced removals 13% were female (639 from a total of 4,844) and of asylum voluntary departures 15% were female (607 from a total of 4,151).
- In 2013 of the people recorded as removed from the UK on leaving detention 15% (2561) were female.

NOTE

Figures given in this summary may differ from those in earlier summaries. In some cases this is because of rounding which was done in Home Office Statistical Bulletins which is no longer done, and in other cases, particularly for more recent statistics, because of adjustments made as a result of more complete and accurate information becoming available.

There have been significant changes in the figures on appeals. These are now sourced from the UKVI database and are for main asylum applicants. The quarterly data used to be sourced from the Tribunals Service. The Tribunals Service figures were higher as they had a wider definition of asylum appeals, including, for example, some human rights cases and also included some individuals classed as dependants by UKVI. For a fuller explanation see the Control of Immigration quarterly statistical summary for the first quarter of 2011:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/control-immigration-q1-2011-t/?view=Standard&pubID=891312>

The change in the method of counting Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children is explained in the Home Office publication accompanying the statistics published in August 2013. See Page 66.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/232217/user-guide-immig-statistics.pdf

The full detailed statistics covering the most recent period can be found on the Gov.UK website via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2014>

For older statistics follow this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/migration-statistics>

About the Refugee Council

The Refugee Council is the largest organisation in the UK working with asylum seekers and refugees. We give help and support to asylum seekers and refugees, and also work with them to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed by decision-makers.

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