

Quarterly asylum statistics

February 2017

This briefing covers the latest quarterly asylum statistics. For annual and longer term trends see the Refugee Council briefing on asylum trends.

APPLICATIONS:

- The number of applications for asylum in the UK decreased in Q4 2016 compared with Q4 2015, and also compared with the first two quarters in 2016.

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

Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
10,196	8,228	7,810	7,146	7,419

Applications by nationality:

- Compared with the corresponding quarter in 2015 there was a decrease in the number of applicants from most of the top ten countries of origin and for those where there was an increase it was small.

Table 2: Top ten asylum applicant producing countries by quarter (excl. Dependants)

	Q4 2015	Q4 2016	% change
Iran	1,462	832	-43%
Iraq	1,120	659	-41%
Pakistan	686	606	-11%
Afghanistan	804	578	-28%
Sudan	523	512	-2%
Eritrea	888	442	-50%
Bangladesh	427	439	+3%
Albania	412	416	+1%
India	358	360	+0.6%
Nigeria	257	273	+6%

Applications by location

- The proportion of applications made at ports and in-country has changed only marginally in the past year, and for in-country applications was 84% in Q4 2016.

Table 3: Applications by location (excl. dependants), by quarter

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
In-country	9,156	7,304	7,029	6,125	6,259
Port	1,040	924	781	1,021	1,160
Total	10,196	8,228	7,810	7,146	7,419

DECISIONS:

- In Q4 2016, 6,088 initial asylum decisions were made, excluding dependants; a decrease compared with Q4 2015 (6,868) and similar to the previous two quarters.
- 32% of initial decisions in Q4 2016 were to grant asylum, compared with 35% in Q4 2015. 1% of initial decisions in Q4 2016 were to grant Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave, compared with 1.2% in Q4 2015 and 64% were refusals, a 3% increase on Q4 2015.

Table 4: Initial Decisions (excl. dependants) by quarter

	Q4 2015		Q1 2016		Q2 2016		Q3 2016		Q4 2016	
Decisions	6,868		6,644		6,185		6,067		6,088	
Refugee status	2,382	35%	1,963	30%	1,794	29%	1,426	24%	1,953	32%
Humanitarian Protection	38	0.6 %	16	0.2%	26	0.4%	109	1.8%	38	0.6%
Discretionary Leave	40	0.6%	36	0.5%	23	0.4%	31	0.5%	25	0.4%
Other Grants	247	4%	347	5%	284	5%	202	3%	193	3%
Refused	4,161	61%	4,282	64%	4,058	66%	4,299	71%	3,879	64%

- Countries with a high percentage of applicants granted protection in Q4 2016 included Eritrea, Sudan and Syria. Several countries had very high refusal rates.

Table 5: Asylum decisions by nationality, Q4 2016, top ten countries for number of decisions

	Decisions	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	Other Grants	Refusals
Eritrea	949	742	19	1	4	183
Iran	891	323	1	0	32	535
Pakistan	505	62	0	1	6	436
Iraq	490	32	7	1	21	429
Afghanistan	391	94	1	2	51	243
Bangladesh	307	14	0	0	1	292
Syria	283	232	0	0	0	51
Sudan	278	223	0	0	0	55
Nigeria	228	9	0	3	4	212
India	203	0	0	0	1	202

APPEALS:

- 4,077 appeals were determined in Q4 2016, a significant increase on all the previous four quarters.
- The proportion of appeals allowed was 35% in Q4 2016, while 57% were dismissed. The remainder were withdrawn.

Table 6: Appeals determined, by quarters

	Q4 2015		Q1 2016		Q2 2016		Q3 2016		Q4 2016	
Determined	2,026		1,974		2,936		3,317		4,077	
Allowed	877	43%	840	43%	1,359	46%	1,368	41%	1,435	35%
Dismissed	1,056	52%	1,036	52%	1,470	50%	1,855	56%	2,337	57%
Withdrawn	93	5%	98	5%	107	4%	94	3%	305	8%

ASYLUM SUPPORT:

- The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants) in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of Q4 2016 was 39,389, an increase of 15% from Q4 2015.
- 2,763 of these asylum seekers were receiving subsistence only support at the end of Q4 2016.
- 36,626 of these asylum seekers were supported in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q4 2016.
- The region of the UK with the largest number in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q4 2016 was the North West (9,491).
- 1,990 asylum seekers were in initial accommodation under Section 98 support at the end of Q4 2016

Table 7: Asylum seekers in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of each quarter (incl. Dependants)

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Dispersed accommodation	31,432	32,935	34,367	35,254	36,626
Subsistence only	2,931	2,748	2,663	2,704	2,763
Initial accommodation	1,985	2,240	1,889	1,993	1,990

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

- 1,271 decisions to grant Section 4 support were made in Q4 2016, a small increase compared with the previous quarter.
- At the end of Q4 2016 2,424 applicants, excluding dependants, were receiving Section 4 support. 1,349 dependants were also receiving Section 4 support.

Table 8: Grants of Section 4 Support

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Number of grants	1,137	937	1,104	1,218	1,271

Table 9: Numbers in receipt of Section 4 Support at the end of the quarter (excl. dependants)

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Number supported	2,525	2,366	2,419	2,441	2,424

For the detailed statistics on asylum support see the Refugee Council briefing on asylum support.

ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE:

Removals (Asylum Applicants)

- Including dependants, 779 asylum seekers were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK in Q4 2016, a 38% decrease from Q4 2015 (1,263).
- 640 asylum seekers left via enforced removals and notified voluntary departures from the UK in Q4 2016, a 32% decrease from Q4 2015 (944).
- 78 asylum seekers left under Assisted Voluntary Return schemes in Q4 2016, a 64% decrease from Q4 2015 (215).
- 61 asylum seekers left via other types of voluntary departures in Q4 2016, a 41% decrease from Q4 2015 (104).

Table 10: Removals and voluntary departures of asylum applicants, incl. dependants, by quarter

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Enforced	747	567	546	466	483
Assisted Voluntary	215	58	117	124	78
Notified Voluntary	197	209	151	129	157
Other Voluntary	104	113	88	99	61
Total	1,263	947	902	818	779

Detention

Persons leaving detention

- A total of 3,425 people were recorded as having been removed from the UK upon leaving detention, having been held solely under Immigration Act powers in Q4 2016; 834 (24% of the total) were asylum detainees.
- Of those removed from the UK from detention in Q4 2016, 1,213 people had been detained for 3 days or fewer and a further 1,150 had been detained for 28 days or fewer. 12 people had been detained for 12 – 24 months and 1 person for 24 months or more.

Persons Detained at the end of Q4 2016

- At the end of Q4 2016 a total of 2,738 persons were detained, at this point none of these were children.
- 1,626 persons who had sought asylum at some stage were being detained solely under Immigration Act powers (59% of all immigration detainees)
- 91% of all detainees at the end of Q4 2016 were male.

Children in Detention

- 3 children were recorded as entering detention in Q4 2016. All of these were asylum detainees. In the same period 5 children left detention.

Detained Asylum Seekers by Nationality

Table 11: Countries with largest numbers of asylum detainees, end of Q4 2016

	End of Q4 2015	End of Q4 2016
India	157	193
Pakistan	99	175
Bangladesh	107	139
Nigeria	67	98
Iraq	97	97
Afghanistan	59	93
Albania	66	91
Vietnam	36	80
China	68	78
Iran	70	70

For the detailed statistics on detention see the Refugee Council briefing on detention in the asylum system.

CHILDREN:

Applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum

- The number of applications from unaccompanied children, excluding dependants, was 1,161 in Q4 2016, a small increase compared with Q4 2015 (1,130), and significantly higher than the previous quarters of 2016.

Table 12: Asylum applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum (excl. dependants)

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Applications	1,130	661	658	695	1,161

- Afghanistan was the top country of origin for the number of unaccompanied children (21% of all applications in Q4 2016). Eritrea accounted for 20% of applications, Sudan for 18%, Albania for 10% and Ethiopia for 7%. Together these five countries accounted for 76% of all applications in Q4 2016.
- In Q4 2016 86% of applicants were male, a lower percentage than earlier quarters.
- In Q4 2016 162 asylum applications by unaccompanied children were made by girls.

Table 13: Applications by unaccompanied children seeking asylum

	Total Applications	Applications by girls	% Female
Q4 2016	1,161	162	14%
Q3 2016	695	64	9%
Q2 2016	658	45	7%
Q1 2016	661	43	7%
Q4 2015	1,130	84	7%

For the detailed statistics on the main countries of origin for unaccompanied girls seeking asylum see the Refugee Council briefing on annual trends in statistics.

Age Disputed Cases

- The number of age disputed cases raised in Q4 2016 was 189, a decrease compared with Q4 2015 (271), and to previous quarters in 2016. Afghanistan (45), Eritrea (25), Iran (25) and Iraq (25) were the countries of origin with the largest number of age disputed cases in Q4 2016.

Table 14: Age Disputed Asylum applications (excl. dependants)

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Applications	271	296	216	217	189

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 used to be grants of discretionary leave. In 2013, for example, 72% of all grants of discretionary leave were to children aged 17 and under, although they accounted for only 5% of total decisions. For unaccompanied children a new category, UASC leave, has been used since 2013 in cases where the only reason for giving leave is that the applicant is a child who cannot be returned, and this means there are far fewer grants of discretionary leave.

Table 15: Initial asylum decisions on unaccompanied children aged 17 and under by Quarter

	Total	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	UASC Leave	Family or Private Life	Refusals
Q4 2016	330	130	8	0	151	0	41
Q3 2016	312	76	21	3	160	0	52
Q2 2016	463	131	15	2	235	2	78
Q1 2016	550	160	6	9	290	0	85
Q4 2015	424	110	7	4	208	0	95

Table 16: Initial asylum decisions on unaccompanied children who have reached the age of 18 by Quarter

	Total	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	UASC Leave	Family or Private Life	Refusals
Q4 2016	77	41	2	0	0	0	34
Q3 2016	58	14	3	0	0	2	39
Q2 2016	105	37	1	1	0	1	65
Q1 2016	64	25	1	0	1	0	37
Q4 2015	74	13	0	1	0	0	60

ASYLUM APPLICATIONS (DEPENDANTS):

- In Q4 2016 there were 1,852 dependants included in asylum applications.
- Statistics which deal with the age and gender of dependants are published only in annual statistics, and not on a quarterly basis. These statistics are published in August each year.

Table 17: Dependants included in asylum applications

	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Number of main applicants	10,196	8,228	7,810	7,146	7,419
Number of dependants	1,838	1,910	2,030	2,122	1,852

For the detailed statistics on dependants see the Refugee Council briefing on annual trends in statistics.

WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- The detailed data relating to asylum applications by women, including countries of origin, decisions, and appeals is published only on an annual basis, in August of each year. There are no quarterly statistics available.

For the detailed statistics on women and girls see the Refugee Council briefing on annual trends in statistics.

NOTE

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/publications/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016/asylum>

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 one of the leading organisations 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.