

Quarterly asylum statistics

February 2019

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 increased in Q4 2018 compared with Q4 2017 and with each of the earlier quarters of 2018.

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

Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
7,225	6,713	6,584	7,444	8,639

Applications by nationality:

- Compared with the corresponding quarter in 2017 there was an increase in the number of applicants from six of the top ten countries of origin. The largest percentage increases were from Iran, Eritrea, and Albania, particularly Iran and Albania.

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

	Q4 2017	Q4 2018	% change
Iran	677	1,350	+99%
Iraq	767	928	+21%
Albania	363	669	+84%
Eritrea	407	648	+59%
Pakistan	612	446	-27%
Sudan	444	431	-3%
Afghanistan	364	347	-5%
Vietnam	284	347	+22%
India	261	335	+28%
Bangladesh	385	305	-21%

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 78% in Q4 2018.

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

	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
In-country	5,930	5,545	5,256	5,940	6,742
Port	1,295	1,168	1,328	1,504	1,897
Total	7,225	6,713	6,584	7,444	8,639

DECISIONS:

- In Q4 2018 4,806 initial asylum decisions were made, excluding dependants; a decrease compared with all four previous quarters.
- 34% of initial decisions in Q4 2018 were to grant asylum, compared with 24% in Q4 2017. 3.2% of initial decisions in Q4 2018 were to grant Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave, compared with 1.1% in Q4 2017 and 60% were refusals, a decrease from recent quarters.

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

	Q4 2017		Q1 2018		Q2 2018		Q3 2018		Q4 2018	
Decisions	5,448		5,990		5,223		5,100		4,806	
Refugee status	1,294	24%	1,164	19%	1,225	23%	1,519	30%	1,650	34%
Humanitarian Protection	39	0.7%	165	3%	138	2.6%	145	2.8%	136	2.8%
Discretionary Leave	22	0.4%	28	0.5%	33	0.6%	24	0.5%	19	0.4%
Other Grants	166	3%	213	3.5%	220	4%	144	2.8%	110	2.3%
Refused	3,927	72%	4,420	74%	3,607	69%	3,268	64%	2,891	60%

- Countries with an above average percentage of applicants granted protection in Q4 2018 included Eritrea, Iran and Sudan. Several countries had very high refusal rates.

Table 5: Asylum decisions by nationality, Q4 2018, top ten countries for number of decisions

	Decisions	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	Other Grants	Refusals
Iran	479	252	1	0	11	215
Eritrea	457	286	0	0	0	171
Iraq	387	52	21	0	21	293
Sudan	364	228	0	0	0	136
Pakistan	350	77	0	0	3	270
Afghanistan	288	135	8	5	13	127
Bangladesh	263	22	1	0	3	237
Vietnam	174	55	9	0	8	102
Albania	168	4	0	0	10	154
Turkey	140	74	1	0	1	64

APPEALS:

- 2,707 appeals were determined in Q4 2018, similar to the previous three quarters.
- The proportion of appeals allowed was 38% in Q4 2018, while 57% were dismissed. The remainder were withdrawn.

Table 6: Appeals determined, by quarter

	Q4 2017		Q1 2018		Q2 2018		Q3 2018		Q4 2018	
Determined	2,675		3,030		2,867		2,818		2,707	
Allowed	998	37%	1,116	37%	1,136	40%	1,100	39%	1,027	38%
Dismissed	1,596	60%	1,785	59%	1,617	56%	1,976	56%	1,532	57%
Withdrawn	81	3%	129	4%	114	4%	142	5%	148	5%

ASYLUM SUPPORT:

- The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants) in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of Q4 2018 was 44,258, an increase of 9% from Q4 2017.
- 2,949 of these asylum seekers were receiving subsistence only support at the end of Q4 2018.
- 41,309 of these asylum seekers were supported in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q4 2018.
- The region of the UK with the largest number of people in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q4 2018 was the North West (9,948).
- 2,129 asylum seekers were in initial accommodation under Section 98 support at the end of Q4 2018

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

	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Dispersed accommodation	37,716	39,132	39,876	40,481	41,309
Subsistence only	3,020	3,220	2,932	2,902	2,949
Initial accommodation	1,802	1,562	1,738	2,089	2,129

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

- 493 decisions to grant Section 4 support were made in Q4 2018, the number of grants has reduced during 2018.
- At the end of Q4 2018 2,744 applicants, excluding dependants, were receiving Section 4 support. 1,282 dependants were also receiving Section 4 support.

Table 8: Grants of Section 4 Support

	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Number of grants	1,389	618	404	492	493

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

	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Number supported	2,689	2,890	2,809	2,757	2,744

ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE:

Removals (Asylum Applicants)

- Including dependants, 627 asylum seekers were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK in Q4 2018, a 49% decrease from Q4 2017 (1,222).
- 445 asylum seekers left via enforced removals and notified voluntary departures from the UK in Q4 2018, a 53% decrease from Q4 2017 (943).
- 140 asylum seekers left under Assisted Voluntary Return schemes in Q4 2018, a 16% decrease from Q4 2017 (166).
- 42 asylum seekers left via other types of verified voluntary departures in Q4 2018, a 63% decrease from Q4 2017 (113).

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

	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Enforced	618	590	431	439	282
Assisted Voluntary	166	228	211	157	140
Notified Voluntary	325	300	293	265	163
Other Verified Returns	113	133	62	73	42
Total	1,222	1,251	997	934	627

Note: The most recent figures are often revised in later statistical releases, usually upwards, so percentage decreases can change significantly when this happens.

Detention

Persons leaving detention

- A total of 2,728 people were recorded as having been removed from the UK upon leaving detention, having been held solely under Immigration Act powers in Q4 2018; 469 (17% of the total) were asylum detainees.
- Of those removed from the UK from detention in Q4 2018, 1,237 people had been detained for 3 days or less and a further 977 had been detained for 28 days or less. 10 people had been detained for 12 – 24 months. Nobody had been detained for 24 months or more.

Persons Detained at the end of Q4 2018

- At the end of Q4 2018 a total of 1,784 persons were detained, at this point none of those detained were children.
- 1,085 persons who had sought asylum at some stage were being detained solely under Immigration Act powers (61% of all immigration detainees)
- 91% of all detainees at the end of Q4 2018 were male.

Children in Detention

- 14 children were recorded as entering detention in Q4 2018. 7 of them were asylum detainees. In the same period 14 children left detention.

Detained Asylum Seekers by Nationality

Table 11: Countries of origin with largest numbers of asylum detainees, end of Q4 2018

	End of Q4 2017	End of Q4 2018
India	195	126
Albania	92	123
China	81	105
Bangladesh	183	94
Pakistan	167	82
Vietnam	51	53
Iraq	45	52
Nigeria	97	39
Afghanistan	41	35
Somalia	49	34

CHILDREN:

Applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum

- The number of applications from unaccompanied children, excluding dependants, was 900 in Q4 2018, an increase compared with the previous four quarters.

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

	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Applications	663	600	573	799	900

- Eritrea was the top country of origin for unaccompanied children (24% of all applications in Q4 2018). Sudan accounted for 14% of applications, Iraq for 12%, Iran and Vietnam for 11% each, Albania for 10%, Afghanistan for 6%, and Ethiopia for 3%. Together these eight countries accounted for over 90% of all applications in Q4 2018.

- In Q4 2018 88% of applicants were male, a similar percentage to the previous quarter.
- In Q4 2018 90 asylum applications by unaccompanied children were made by girls.
- There are a small number of applications recorded as sex unknown.

Table 13: Applications by unaccompanied children seeking asylum

	Total Applications	Applications by girls	% Female
Q4 2018	900	107	12%
Q3 2018	799	90	11%
Q2 2018	573	61	11%
Q1 2018	600	61	10%
Q4 2017	663	62	9%

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 2018 was 288, an increase compared with recent quarters. Eritrea (76), Iran (43), Iraq (38), Sudan (37) and Afghanistan (22) were the countries of origin with the largest number of age disputed cases in Q4 2018.

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

	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Applications	211	190	157	237	288

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

- If an unaccompanied child’s claim for international protection is refused, they may be granted UASC leave. Since 2013 this leave is granted in cases where the only reason for giving leave is that the applicant is a child who cannot be returned. It is not granted for anyone over the age of 17 and a half.

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 2018	302	205	20	1	47	0	29
Q3 2018	365	219	9	0	68	1	68
Q2 2018	332	171	8	1	106	0	46
Q1 2018	328	176	7	0	98	0	47
Q4 2017	421	245	10	1	94	1	70

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 2018	164	78	11	1	0	1	73
Q3 2018	198	68	8	1	0	0	121
Q2 2018	230	74	5	0	0	1	150
Q1 2018	232	79	5	0	0	1	147
Q4 2017	201	76	4	1	0	0	120

ASYLUM APPLICATIONS (DEPENDANTS):

- In Q4 2018 there were 2,191 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 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Number of main applicants	7225	6,713	6,584	7,444	8,629
2,191	1,975	1,903	1,793	2,196	2,191

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

FAMILY REUNION:

Adults who have been granted refugee status or humanitarian protection are entitled to apply for family reunion. Immediate family members, defined as spouses or partners and children under the age of 18 are eligible to obtain entry to the UK.

Table 18: Family reunion entry clearance visa grants by quarter

	Total	Under 18	18 and Over
Q4 2018	1,379	713	666
Q3 2018	1,384	594	790
Q2 2018	1,256	593	663
Q1 2018	1,881	881	1,000
Q4 2017	1,486	734	752

The number of outstanding family reunion applications at the end of Q4 2018 was 1,405, of which 1,270 were outstanding for less than 6 months, and 106 for over a year.

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-year-ending-december-2018/list-of-tables>

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.

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Registered office: Gredley House, 11 Broadway, Stratford, E15 4BQ, United Kingdom VAT reg no: 936 519 988