

Quarterly asylum statistics

August 2020

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

The most recent period for which statistics have been published is the 2nd quarter of 2020, April to June. Many of the figures show the impact of coronavirus and the lockdown restrictions and differ significantly from previous quarters as a result.

APPLICATIONS:

- The number of applications for asylum in the UK decreased sharply in Q2 2020 compared with previous quarters.

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

Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
7,657	9,179	9,939	8,455	4,850

Applications by nationality:

- Compared with the corresponding quarter in 2019 there was a decrease in the number of applicants from eight of the top ten countries of origin. The only increases were Syrian and Stateless applicants. 'Stateless' has never previously featured in the top ten.

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

	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	% change
Iran	871	751	-14%
Iraq	706	578	-18%
Albania	761	398	-48%
Eritrea	388	347	-11%
Syria	221	302	+37%
Sudan	333	234	-30%
Pakistan	453	227	-50%
Afghanistan	324	214	-34%
Stateless	125	142	+14%
Vietnam	319	142	-55%

Applications by location

- The proportion of applications made at ports and in-country has changed only marginally in the past few quarters before Q2 2020 but increased hugely to 97% in Q2 2020.

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

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
In-country	6,162	7,136	7,405	6,527	4,716
Port	1,495	2,043	2,534	1,928	134
Total	7,657	9,179	9,939	8,455	4,850

DECISIONS:

- In Q2 2020 2,734 initial asylum decisions were made, excluding dependants; a large decrease compared with previous quarters.
- 35% of initial decisions in Q2 2020 were to grant asylum, much lower than previous quarters. 3.4% of initial decisions in Q2 2020 were to grant Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave, similar to Q2 2019 and 59% were refusals, a large increase from earlier quarters.

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

	Q2 2019		Q3 2019		Q4 2019		Q1 2020		Q2 2020	
Decisions	5,000		5,212		5,096		5,244		2,734	
Refugee status	2,285	46%	2,382	46%	2,449	48%	2,658	51%	957	35%
Humanitarian Protection	151	3%	160	3%	192	4%	226	4%	94	3%
Discretionary Leave	19	0.4%	14	0.3%	13	0.3%	10	0.2%	12	0.4%
Other Grants	136	2.7%	140	2.7%	143	2.8%	105	2%	58	2%
Refused	2,409	48%	2,516	48%	2,299	45%	2,245	43%	1,613	59%

- Countries with an above average percentage of applicants granted protection in Q2 2020 included Iran, Eritrea, Sudan and Syria. Several countries had very high refusal rates.

Table 5: Asylum decisions by nationality, Q2 2020, top ten countries for number of decisions

	Decisions	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	Other Grants	Refusals
Iran	430	197	0	0	11	222
Iraq	351	39	29	4	12	267
Eritrea	189	102	0	0	0	87
Sudan	163	96	0	0	0	67
Afghanistan	133	60	2	0	3	68
Pakistan	126	39	0	2	4	81
Albania	121	47	0	0	6	68
Syria	111	60	0	0	1	50
Nigeria	87	20	1	3	4	59
Stateless	83	34	0	0	0	49

APPEALS:

- 462 appeals were determined in Q2 2020, a large decrease from the previous four quarters.
- The proportion of appeals allowed was 37% in Q2 2020, while 48% were dismissed. The remainder were withdrawn and the percentage withdrawn was higher than usual.

Table 6: Appeals determined, by quarter

	Q2 2019		Q3 2019		Q4 2019		Q1 2020		Q2 2020	
Determined	2,398		2,378		2,199		2,060		462	
Allowed	1,002	42%	1,029	43%	898	41%	836	41%	169	37%
Dismissed	1,233	51%	1,197	50%	1,115	51%	1,089	53%	221	48%
Withdrawn	163	7%	152	7%	186	8%	135	7%	72	16%

ASYLUM SUPPORT:

- The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants) in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of Q2 2020 was 45,769, an increase from the previous four quarters.
- 3,480 of these asylum seekers were receiving subsistence only support at the end of Q2 2020.
- 42,289 of these asylum seekers were supported in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q2 2020
- The region of the UK with the largest number of people in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q2 2020 was the North West (10,083).
- 5,444 asylum seekers were in initial accommodation under Section 98 support at the end of Q2 2020, a large increase from previous quarters.

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

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Dispersed accommodation	42,182	41,214	40,702	41,388	42,289
Subsistence only	3,021	2,942	2,847	2,856	3,480
Initial accommodation	1,583	3,049	2,738	2,577	5,444

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

- At the end of Q2 2020 5,357 applicants, including dependants, were receiving Section 4 support.

Table 8: Numbers in receipt of Section 4 Support at the end of the quarter (incl. dependants).

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Number supported	3,893	3,857	3,804	4,077	5,357

ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE:

Removals (Asylum Applicants)

- In the year ending June 2020 2,216 asylum seekers were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK, a 38 decrease from the year ending June 2019 (3,555).
- 999 asylum seekers left via enforced removals from the UK in the year ending June 2020, a 46% decrease from the year ending June 2019 (1,835).
- 1,217 asylum seekers left under Voluntary Return schemes in the year ending June 2020, a 29% decrease from the year ending June 2019 (1,720).

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

Detention

Persons entering and leaving detention

In the year ending June 2020 a total of 19,128 people were recorded as entering detention of whom 11,427 were asylum cases. In the same period 20,097 people left detention of whom 12,379 were asylum cases. Some people may have been in detention more than once.

Persons Detained at the end of Q2 2020

- At the end of Q2 2020 a total of 698 persons were detained, at this point no children were in detention.
- 292 persons who had sought asylum at some stage were being detained solely under Immigration Act powers (42% of all immigration detainees)
- 41 children were recorded as entering detention in the year ending June 2020.

CHILDREN:

Applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum

- The number of applications from unaccompanied children, excluding dependants, was 118 in Q2 2020, a large decrease from previous quarters.

Table 9: Asylum applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum (excl. dependants)

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Applications	780	921	1.066	763	118

- Iraq was the top country of origin for unaccompanied children (20% of all applications in Q2 2020). Afghanistan accounted for 17%, Iran for 16%, Sudan for 13%, Eritrea for 10% and Syria for 8%. Together these six countries accounted for over 80% of all applications in Q2 2020.

- In Q2 2020 only 2.5% of applicants were female, a much lower percentage than usual.
- In Q2 2020 only 3 asylum applications by unaccompanied children were made by girls.
- There are a small number of applications recorded as sex unknown.

Table 10: Applications by unaccompanied children seeking asylum

	Total Applications	Applications by girls	% Female
Q2 2020	118	3	2.5%
Q1 2020	763	90	12%
Q4 2019	1,066	122	11%
Q3 2019	921	99	11%
Q2 2019	780	75	10%

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 Q2 2020 was 31, a large decrease compared with the previous four quarters. Afghanistan (9), Iran (6) and Iraq (5), were the countries of origin with the largest number of age disputed cases in Q2 2020.

Table 11: Age Disputed Asylum applications (excl. dependants)

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Applications	148	170	189	125	31

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, according to Home Office policy. This used to state that 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" but the wording has changed since June 2019 to "very strongly suggests that they are 25 years or over".

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. Very few decisions were made in Q2 2020.

Table 12: 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
Q2 2020	39	32	1	0	0	3	3
Q1 2020	323	263	11	1	28	1	19
Q4 2019	410	330	19	0	31	1	29
Q3 2019	463	355	22	0	53	0	33
Q2 2019	523	400	22	0	41	2	58

Table 13: 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
Q2 2020	40	30	1	0	0	0	9
Q1 2020	244	142	7	0	0	0	95
Q4 2019	223	125	9	0	0	0	89
Q3 2019	263	154	11	1	0	1	96
Q2 2019	331	154	18	3	0	2	154

ASYLUM APPLICATIONS (DEPENDANTS):

- In Q2 2020 there were 939 dependants included in asylum applications.
- 649 of the dependants were under 18 years old and 494 were female.

Table 14: Dependants included in asylum applications

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Number of main applicants	7,633	9,140	9,871	8,455	4,850
Number of dependants	2,115	2,696	2,419	2,114	939

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 apply for entry to the UK.

Table 15: Family reunion entry clearance visa grants by quarter

	Total	Under 18	18 and Over
Q2 2020	131	79	52
Q1 2020	2,006	1,077	929
Q4 2019	2,305	1,119	1,186
Q3 2019	1,878	917	961
Q2 2019	1,681	854	827

The very small number of cases dealt with in Q2 2020 will mean there is a very significant backlog of applications.

WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- In Q2 2020 there were 1,087 applications where the main applicant was a woman or girl. This represents 22% of all applications, a similar figure to previous quarters, bearing in mind the very small number of applications from unaccompanied girls in this quarter.

Table 16: Applications by women or girls by quarter

	Q2 2019	Q3 2019	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020
Total	7,633	9,140	9,871	8,455	4,850
Female	2,023	2,292	2,515	2,236	1,087
% Female	27%	25%	25%	26%	22%

- The proportion of female applicants varies considerably from country to country. For a very small number of countries there are more female than male applicants whereas in many countries the percentage of female applicants is low. Among the countries with the largest number of female applicants in Q2 2020 China, Nigeria, Philippines and Kenya have high percentages.

Table 17: Female applicants from the top ten applicant producing countries Q2 2020

	Female Applicants	Total	% Female
Iran	88	751	12%
Iraq	79	578	14%
Albania	147	398	37%
Eritrea	61	347	18%
Syria	29	302	10%
Sudan	12	234	5%
Pakistan	59	227	26%
Afghanistan	14	214	7%
Stateless	8	142	6%
Vietnam	60	142	42%

Table 18: Top ten countries for female applicants Q2 2020

	Female Applicants	% Female of total application
Albania	147	37%
Iran	88	12%
Iraq	79	14%
Nigeria	63	61%
China	62	61%
Eritrea	61	18%
Vietnam	60	42%
Pakistan	59	26%
Philippines	54	87%
Kenya	36	69%

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/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets>

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.