

## Quarterly asylum statistics

## August 2021

*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 second quarter of 2021. Many of the figures in the last 4 quarters 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 was higher in Q2 2021 than in the previous four quarters.

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

| Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 4,889   | 8,657   | 7,788   | 5,902   | 8,768   |

### Applications by nationality:

- Compared with the corresponding quarter in 2020 there were increases in the number of applicants from all but one of the top ten countries of origin. This relates to the fact that the number of applications in Q2 2020 was significantly lower than in other quarters, probably reflecting the impact of coronavirus during that period and travel restrictions.

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

|             | Q2 2020 | Q2 2021 | % change |
|-------------|---------|---------|----------|
| Eritrea     | 348     | 1,057   | +204%    |
| Iran        | 754     | 1,015   | +35%     |
| Albania     | 415     | 977     | +135%    |
| Vietnam     | 143     | 863     | +503%    |
| Sudan       | 233     | 634     | +172%    |
| Iraq        | 577     | 595     | +3%      |
| Syria       | 301     | 555     | +84%     |
| Afghanistan | 215     | 394     | +83%     |
| Pakistan    | 227     | 216     | -5%      |
| Bangladesh  | 133     | 185     | +39%     |

## Applications by location

- The proportion of applications made at ports and in-country changed only marginally before Q2 2020 but increased hugely to 97% in-country in Q2 2020 and remained high, at 89%, in Q3 and then fell to 79% in Q4 but rose again to 88% in Q1 2021 and 89% in Q2 2021.

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

|            | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| In-country | 4,755   | 7,714   | 6,175   | 5,199   | 7,795   |
| Port       | 134     | 943     | 1,613   | 703     | 973     |
| Total      | 4,889   | 8,657   | 7,788   | 5,902   | 8,768   |

## DECISIONS:

- In Q2 2021 3,709 initial asylum decisions were made, excluding dependants; similar to the previous two quarters.
- 66% of initial decisions in Q2 2021 were to grant asylum, an increase on the previous four quarters. 3.6% of initial decisions in Q2 2021 were to grant Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave, and 28.5% were refusals, a significant decrease from previous quarters.

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

|                                | Q2 2020 |      | Q3 2020 |      | Q4 2020 |      | Q1 2021 |      | Q2 2021 |       |
|--------------------------------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|-------|
| <b>Decisions</b>               | 2,731   |      | 2,657   |      | 3,716   |      | 3,847   |      | 3,709   |       |
| <b>Refugee status</b>          | 957     | 35%  | 632     | 24%  | 1,498   | 40%  | 2,354   | 61%  | 2,454   | 66%   |
| <b>Humanitarian Protection</b> | 94      | 3%   | 64      | 2.4% | 125     | 3.4% | 190     | 5%   | 131     | 3.5%  |
| <b>Discretionary Leave</b>     | 12      | 0.4% | 2       | 0.1% | 13      | 0.3% | 7       | 0.2% | 5       | 0.1%  |
| <b>Other Grants</b>            | 58      | 2%   | 56      | 2%   | 50      | 1.3% | 47      | 1.2% | 61      | 1.7%  |
| <b>Refused</b>                 | 1,610   | 59%  | 1,903   | 72%  | 2,030   | 55%  | 1,249   | 32%  | 1,058   | 28.5% |

- Countries with an above average percentage of applicants granted protection in Q2 2021 included Iran, Eritrea, Sudan, Syria and Vietnam but refusal rates were high for some countries.

Table 5: Asylum decisions by nationality, Q2 2021, top ten countries for number of decisions

|             | Decisions | Refugee status | Humanitarian Protection | Discretionary Leave | Other Grants | Refusals |
|-------------|-----------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------|----------|
| Iran        | 631       | 557            | 3                       | 0                   | 3            | 68       |
| Eritrea     | 405       | 399            | 1                       | 0                   | 0            | 5        |
| Iraq        | 354       | 132            | 32                      | 0                   | 7            | 183      |
| Syria       | 248       | 245            | 0                       | 0                   | 0            | 3        |
| Sudan       | 235       | 229            | 1                       | 0                   | 0            | 5        |
| Vietnam     | 175       | 112            | 0                       | 0                   | 2            | 61       |
| Afghanistan | 173       | 96             | 9                       | 1                   | 10           | 57       |
| Pakistan    | 164       | 73             | 0                       | 0                   | 10           | 81       |
| Albania     | 124       | 51             | 0                       | 1                   | 5            | 67       |
| Bangladesh  | 102       | 32             | 0                       | 1                   | 3            | 66       |

## APPEALS:

- 1,025 appeals were determined in Q2 2021, an increase from the last four quarters but still lower than in previous years.
- The proportion of appeals allowed was 44% in Q2 2021, while 49% were dismissed. The remainder were withdrawn. The percentage withdrawn was above average in the previous four quarters.

Table 6: Appeals determined, by quarter

|            | Q2 2020 |     | Q3 2020 |     | Q4 2020 |     | Q1 2021 |     | Q2 2021 |     |
|------------|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| Determined | 475     |     | 403     |     | 871     |     | 939     |     | 1025    |     |
| Allowed    | 171     | 36% | 145     | 36% | 337     | 39% | 416     | 44% | 447     | 44% |
| Dismissed  | 226     | 48% | 163     | 40% | 412     | 47% | 405     | 43% | 501     | 49% |
| Withdrawn  | 78      | 16% | 95      | 24% | 122     | 14% | 118     | 13% | 77      | 8%  |

## ASYLUM SUPPORT:

- The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants) in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of Q2 2021 was 46,254, similar to the previous two quarters.
- 4,621 of these asylum seekers were receiving subsistence only support at the end of Q2 2021.
- 41,633 of these asylum seekers were supported in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q2 2021
- The region of the UK with the largest number of people in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q2 2021 was North West England (9,058).
- 10,682 asylum seekers were in initial accommodation under Section 98 support at the end of Q2 2021, a very large increase from quarters earlier than Q3 2020.

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

|                             | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Dispersed accommodation     | 42,289  | 42,389  | 41,302  | 40,396  | 41,633  |
| Subsistence only            | 3,480   | 4,131   | 4,324   | 4,429   | 4,621   |
| Initial accommodation (s98) | 5,444   | 10,315  | 12,235  | 10,294  | 10,682  |

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

- At the end of Q2 2021 5,935 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 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number supported | 5,357   | 6,074   | 6,180   | 6,122   | 5,935   |

## ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE:

### Removals (Asylum Applicants)

- In the year ending March 2021 982 asylum seekers were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK, a 66% decrease from the year ending March 2020 (2,873).
- 244 asylum seekers left via enforced removals from the UK in the year ending March 2021, an 80% decrease from the year ending March 2020 2019 (1,211).
- 738 asylum seekers left under Voluntary Return schemes in the year ending March 2021, a 56% decrease from the year ending March 2020 (1,662).

**Note:** The most recent figures are often revised in subsequent statistical releases, usually upwards, so percentage decreases can change significantly when this happens. The figures for the year ending June 2021 have not yet been published.

### Detention

#### Persons entering and leaving detention

In the year ending June 2021 a total of 17,088 people were recorded as entering detention of whom 12,258 were asylum cases. In the same period 16,209 people left detention of whom 11,576 were asylum cases. Some people may have been in detention more than once.

#### Persons Detained at the end of Q2 2021

- At the end of Q2 2021 a total of 1,550 persons were detained, at this point no children were in detention.
- 1,007 persons who had sought asylum at some stage were being detained solely under Immigration Act powers (65% of all immigration detainees)
- 113 children were recorded as entering detention in the year ending June 2021.

## CHILDREN:

### Applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum

- The number of applications from unaccompanied children, excluding dependants, was 715 in Q2 2021, higher than in three of the previous four quarters.

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

|              | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Applications | 462     | 888     | 637     | 516     | 715     |

- Afghanistan was the top country of origin for unaccompanied children (17% of all applications in Q2 2021). Iran accounted for 16%, Eritrea for 14%, Sudan for 13%, Vietnam for 10%, Syria for 8% and Iraq for 6%. These seven countries accounted for over 80% of all applications in Q2 2021.

- In Q2 2021 only 8% of applicants were female, similar to recent quarters.
- In Q2 2021 59 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 2021 | 715                | 59                    | 8%       |
| Q1 2021 | 516                | 33                    | 6%       |
| Q4 2020 | 637                | 50                    | 8%       |
| Q3 2020 | 888                | 74                    | 8%       |
| Q2 2020 | 462                | 24                    | 5%       |

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 2021 was 528, a large increase compared with the previous quarters. Iran (102), Afghanistan (85), Sudan (83), Vietnam (76) and Eritrea (56) were the countries of origin with the largest number of age disputed cases in Q2 2021.

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

|              | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Applications | 131     | 343     | 249     | 184     | 528     |

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. A smaller number of decisions than usual were made from Q2 2020 onwards.

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 2021 | 238   | 206            | 7                       | 0                   | 17         | 0                      | 8        |
| Q1 2021 | 182   | 166            | 4                       | 1                   | 4          | 0                      | 7        |
| Q4 2020 | 128   | 114            | 1                       | 1                   | 4          | 0                      | 8        |
| Q3 2020 | 98    | 77             | 1                       | 0                   | 6          | 0                      | 14       |
| Q2 2020 | 134   | 98             | 5                       | 0                   | 19         | 0                      | 12       |

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 |
|----------------|-------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------------|----------|
| <b>Q2 2021</b> | 380   | 300            | 18                      | 0                   | 0          | 2                      | 60       |
| <b>Q1 2021</b> | 273   | 216            | 10                      | 0                   | 0          | 0                      | 47       |
| <b>Q4 2020</b> | 185   | 139            | 6                       | 0                   | 0          | 1                      | 39       |
| <b>Q3 2020</b> | 129   | 57             | 6                       | 0                   | 0          | 0                      | 66       |
| <b>Q2 2020</b> | 131   | 75             | 13                      | 0                   | 0          | 1                      | 42       |

## ASYLUM APPLICATIONS (DEPENDANTS):

- In Q2 2021 there were 1,390 dependants included in asylum applications.
- 974 of the dependants were under 18 years old and 771 were female.

Table 14: Dependants included in asylum applications

|                           | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of main applicants | 4,889   | 8,657   | 7,788   | 5,902   | 8,768   |
| Number of dependants      | 1,080   | 1,825   | 1,868   | 1,037   | 1,390   |

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 |
|----------------|-------|----------|-------------|
| <b>Q2 2021</b> | 1,607 | 827      | 780         |
| <b>Q1 2021</b> | 1,551 | 866      | 685         |
| <b>Q4 2020</b> | 1,667 | 914      | 753         |
| <b>Q3 2020</b> | 1,624 | 922      | 702         |
| <b>Q2 2020</b> | 131   | 79       | 52          |

The number of cases dealt with has increased from the very small number of cases dealt with in Q2 2020 but that may be due to a significant backlog of applications.

## WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- In Q2 2021, there were 1,337 applications where the main applicant was a woman or girl. This represents 15% of all applications, lower than previous quarters.

Table 16: Applications by women or girls by quarter

|          | Q2 2020 | Q3 2020 | Q4 2020 | Q1 2021 | Q2 2021 |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Total    | 4,889   | 8,657   | 7,788   | 5,902   | 8,768   |
| Female   | 1,098   | 1,635   | 1,704   | 1,227   | 1,337   |
| % Female | 22%     | 19%     | 22%     | 21%     | 15%     |

- 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 2021 Philippines, China and Nigeria have high percentages.

Table 17: Female applicants from the top ten applicant producing countries Q2 2021

|             | Female Applicants | Total | % Female |
|-------------|-------------------|-------|----------|
| Eritrea     | 174               | 1,057 | 16%      |
| Iran        | 55                | 1,015 | 5%       |
| Albania     | 102               | 977   | 10%      |
| Vietnam     | 128               | 863   | 15%      |
| Sudan       | 6                 | 634   | 1%       |
| Iraq        | 55                | 595   | 9%       |
| Syria       | 39                | 555   | 7%       |
| Afghanistan | 18                | 394   | 5%       |
| Pakistan    | 48                | 216   | 22%      |
| Bangladesh  | 15                | 185   | 8%       |

Table 18: Top ten countries for female applicants Q2 2021

|             | Female Applicants | % Female of total application |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Eritrea     | 174               | 16%                           |
| Vietnam     | 128               | 15%                           |
| Albania     | 102               | 10%                           |
| Nigeria     | 84                | 51%                           |
| Philippines | 65                | 90%                           |
| China       | 56                | 47%                           |
| Iran        | 55                | 5%                            |
| Iraq        | 55                | 9%                            |
| Pakistan    | 48                | 22%                           |
| Stateless   | 48                | 27%                           |

## **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/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2021/list-of-tables#asylum-and-resettlement>

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.