

## Quarterly asylum statistics

**November 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 third 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 Q3 2021 than in the previous four quarters and was the highest quarterly figure since 2003.

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

Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
8,657	7,788	5,902	8,768	15,104

### Applications by nationality:

- Compared with the corresponding quarter in 2020 there were significant increases in the number of applicants from all but one of the top ten countries of origin. The exception was Sudan. Kuwait has never before appeared in the top ten list.

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

	Q3 2020	Q3 2021	% change
Iran	1,097	3,304	+201%
Eritrea	931	2,250	+142%
Iraq	691	1,595	+131%
Albania	550	1,074	+95%
Afghanistan	457	964	+111%
Syria	462	948	+105%
Sudan	1,074	791	-26%
Vietnam	254	397	+56%
Ethiopia	150	317	+111%
Kuwait	70	275	+293%

## 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, 89% in Q2 2021 and 90% in Q3 2021.

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

	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
In-country	7,714	6,175	5,199	7,795	13,549
Port	943	1,613	703	973	1,555
Total	8,657	7,788	5,902	8,768	15,104

## DECISIONS:

- In Q3 2021 3,486 initial asylum decisions were made, excluding dependants; similar to the previous two quarters.
- 70% of initial decisions in Q3 2021 were to grant asylum, an increase on the previous four quarters. 3.3% of initial decisions in Q3 2021 were to grant Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave, and 26% were refusals, a significant decrease from previous quarters.

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

	Q3 2020		Q4 2020		Q1 2021		Q2 2021		Q3 2021	
<b>Decisions</b>	2,657		3,716		3,847		3,709		3,486	
<b>Refugee status</b>	632	24%	1,498	40%	2,354	61%	2,454	66%	2,438	70%
<b>Humanitarian Protection</b>	64	2.4%	125	3.4%	190	5%	131	3.5%	112	3.2%
<b>Discretionary Leave</b>	2	0.1%	13	0.3%	7	0.2%	5	0.1%	5	0.1%
<b>Other Grants</b>	56	2%	50	1.3%	47	1.2%	61	1.7%	26	0.7%
<b>Refused</b>	1,903	72%	2,030	55%	1,249	32%	1,058	28.5%	905	26%

- Countries with an above average percentage of applicants granted protection in Q3 2021 included Iran, Eritrea, Sudan, Syria, Turkey and Vietnam but refusal rates were high for some countries.

Table 5: Asylum decisions by nationality, Q3 2021, top ten countries for number of decisions

	Decisions	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	Other Grants	Refusals
Iran	650	593	3	0	0	54
Eritrea	372	349	1	0	0	22
Syria	286	281	3	0	0	2
Iraq	227	80	33	0	1	113
Vietnam	214	156	0	0	1	57
Sudan	207	194	0	0	0	13
Pakistan	165	92	1	0	4	68
Turkey	115	86	0	0	0	29
Albania	109	55	1	0	1	52
Bangladesh	107	33	0	0	3	71

## APPEALS:

- 917 appeals were determined in Q3 2021, similar to the last three quarters but still lower than in previous years.
- The proportion of appeals allowed was 44.5% in Q3 2021, while 47% were dismissed. The remainder were withdrawn. The percentage withdrawn was above average in earlier quarters.

Table 6: Appeals determined, by quarter

	Q3 2020		Q4 2020		Q1 2021		Q2 2021		Q3 2021	
Determined	403		871		939		1,025		917	
Allowed	145	36%	337	39%	416	44%	447	44%	408	44.5%
Dismissed	163	40%	412	47%	405	43%	501	49%	432	47%
Withdrawn	95	24%	122	14%	118	13%	77	8%	77	8.4%

## ASYLUM SUPPORT:

- The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants) in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of Q3 2021 was 45,857, similar to the previous two quarters.
- 4,917 of these asylum seekers were receiving subsistence only support at the end of Q3 2021.
- 40,490 of these asylum seekers were supported in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q3 2021
- The region of the UK with the largest number of people in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q3 2021 was North West England (8,388).
- 16,794 asylum seekers were in initial accommodation under Section 98 support at the end of Q3 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)

	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
Dispersed accommodation	42,389	41,302	40,396	41,633	40,490
Subsistence only	4,131	4,324	4,429	4,621	4,917
Initial accommodation (s98)	10,315	12,235	10,294	10,682	16,794

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

- At the end of Q3 2021 6,096 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).

	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
Number supported	6,074	6,180	6,122	5,935	6,096

## ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE:

### Removals (Asylum Applicants)

- In the year ending June 2021 1,119 asylum seekers were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK, a 50% decrease from the year ending June 2020 (2,241).
- 273 asylum seekers left via enforced removals from the UK in the year ending June 2021, an 70% decrease from the year ending June 2020 (908).
- 846 asylum seekers left under Voluntary Return schemes in the year ending June 2021, a 36% decrease from the year ending June 2020 (1,333).

**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 September 2021 have not yet been published.

### Detention

#### Persons entering and leaving detention

In the year ending September 2021 a total of 21,365 people were recorded as entering detention of whom 16,629 were asylum cases. In the same period 20,878 people left detention of whom 16,400 were asylum cases. Some people may have been in detention more than once.

#### Persons Detained at the end of Q3 2021

- At the end of Q3 2021 a total of 1,410 persons were detained, at this point there was 1 child in detention.
- 881 persons who had sought asylum at some stage were being detained solely under Immigration Act powers (62% of all immigration detainees).
- 112 children were recorded as entering detention in the year ending September 2021.

## CHILDREN:

### Applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum

- The number of applications from unaccompanied children, excluding dependants, was 1,235 in Q3 2021, higher than in the previous four quarters.

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

	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
Applications	888	637	516	715	1,235

- Iran was the top country of origin for unaccompanied children (30% of all applications in Q3 2021). Afghanistan accounted for 14%, Sudan for 11%, Eritrea for 10%, Iraq for 8%, Syria for 7% and Vietnam for 4%. These seven countries accounted for over 80% of all applications in Q3 2021.

- In Q3 2021 only 6% of applicants were female, similar to recent quarters.
- In Q3 2021 74 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
<b>Q3 2021</b>	1,235	74	6%
<b>Q2 2021</b>	715	59	8%
<b>Q1 2021</b>	516	33	6%
<b>Q4 2020</b>	637	50	8%
<b>Q3 2020</b>	888	74	8%

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 Q3 2021 was 904, a large increase compared with the previous quarters. Iran (376), Afghanistan (156), Eritrea (85), Sudan (66) and Iraq (64) were the countries of origin with the largest number of age disputed cases in Q3 2021.

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

	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
Applications	343	249	184	528	904

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. Decisions on over 18s have increased in recent quarters.

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
<b>Q3 2021</b>	220	206	5	0	3	0	6
<b>Q2 2021</b>	238	206	7	0	17	0	8
<b>Q1 2021</b>	182	166	4	1	4	0	7
<b>Q4 2020</b>	128	114	1	1	4	0	8
<b>Q3 2020</b>	98	77	1	0	6	0	14

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>Q3 2021</b>	476	407	20	1	0	1	47
<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

## ASYLUM APPLICATIONS (DEPENDANTS):

- In Q3 2021 there were 2,333 dependants included in asylum applications.
- 1,699 of the dependants were under 18 years old and 1,360 were female.

Table 14: Dependants included in asylum applications

	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
Number of main applicants	8,657	7,788	5,902	8,768	15,104
Number of dependants	1,825	1,868	1,037	1,390	2,333

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>Q3 2021</b>	1,717	907	810
<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

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

## WOMEN AND GIRLS:

- In Q3 2021, there were 1,804 applications where the main applicant was a woman or girl. This represents 12% of all applications, lower than previous quarters.

Table 16: Applications by women or girls by quarter

	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
Total	8,657	7,788	5,902	8,768	15,104
Female	1,635	1,704	1,227	1,337	1,804
% Female	19%	22%	21%	15%	12%

- 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 Q3 2021 El Salvador, Nigeria, Somalia (and Stateless) have high or above average percentages.

Table 17: Female applicants from the top ten applicant producing countries Q3 2021

	Female Applicants	Total	% Female
Iran	191	3,304	6%
Eritrea	370	2,250	16%
Iraq	126	1,595	8%
Albania	137	1,074	13%
Afghanistan	50	964	5%
Syria	49	948	5%
Sudan	18	791	2%
Vietnam	54	397	14%
Ethiopia	52	317	8%
Kuwait	35	275	16%

Table 18: Top ten countries for female applicants Q3 2021

	Female Applicants	% Female of total application
Eritrea	370	16%
Iran	191	6%
Albania	137	13%
Iraq	126	8%
Nigeria	68	55%
Somalia	56	22%
Stateless	56	27%
Vietnam	54	14%
El Salvador	53	38%
Ethiopia	52	8%

## **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.