

Quarterly asylum statistics

June 2022

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 first quarter of 2022. Many of the figures in recent 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 in Q4 2021 was the highest quarterly figure since 2003. The numbers reduced in Q1 2022.

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

Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
5,902	8,768	15,104	18,766	12,508

Applications by nationality:

- Compared with the corresponding quarter in 2021 there were large increases in the number of applicants from all the top ten countries of origin.

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

	Q1 2021	Q1 2022	% change
Afghanistan	257	1,655	+544%
Albania	943	1,344	+43%
Iran	690	1,179	+71%
Syria	375	874	+133%
Eritrea	411	807	+96%
Iraq	420	782	+86%
Sudan	211	513	+143%
India	163	458	+181%
Bangladesh	156	435	+179%
Pakistan	274	424	+55%

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 during 2021, and was 83% in Q1 2022.

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

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
In-country	5,199	7,795	13,549	16,409	10,421
Port	703	973	1,555	2,357	2,087
Total	5,902	8,768	15,104	18,766	12,508

DECISIONS:

- In Q1 2022 3,878 initial asylum decisions were made, excluding dependants; similar to the previous four quarters.
- 72% of initial decisions in Q1 2022 were to grant asylum, similar to Q3 and Q4 2021 and an increase on previous quarters. 5.1% of initial decisions in Q1 2022 were to grant Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave, and 23% were refusals, similar to Q3 and Q4 2021 and a significant decrease from previous quarters.

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

	Q1 2021		Q2 2021		Q3 2021		Q4 2021		Q1 2022	
Decisions	3,847		3,709		3,486		3,530		3,878	
Refugee status	2,354	61%	2,454	66%	2,438	70%	2,476	70%	2,786	72%
Humanitarian Protection	190	5%	131	3.5%	112	3.2%	146	4%	181	5%
Discretionary Leave	7	0.2%	5	0.1%	5	0.1%	9	0.3%	3	0.1%
Other Grants	47	1.2%	61	1.7%	26	0.7%	28	0.8%	23	0.6%
Refused	1,249	32%	1,058	28.5%	905	26%	871	25%	885	23%

- Countries with an above average percentage of applicants granted protection in Q1 2022 included Iran, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Sudan and Syria.

Table 5: Asylum decisions by nationality, Q1 2022, top ten countries for number of decisions

	Decisions	Refugee status	Humanitarian Protection	Discretionary Leave	Other Grants	Refusals
Iran	669	459	4	0	0	116
Eritrea	524	506	2	0	0	16
Afghanistan	393	385	3	0	0	5
Syria	304	299	1	0	0	4
Iraq	228	55	45	0	3	125
Albania	195	117	4	0	3	71
Vietnam	155	123	2	0	0	30
Pakistan	140	66	0	0	3	71
Sudan	94	85	0	0	0	9
Turkey	85	68	0	0	1	16

APPEALS:

- 963 appeals were determined in Q1 2022, similar to recent quarters but still lower than in previous years.
- The proportion of appeals allowed was 44% in Q1 2022, while 43% were dismissed. The remainder were withdrawn.

Table 6: Appeals determined, by quarter

	Q1 2021		Q2 2021		Q3 2021		Q4 2021		Q1 2022	
Determined	939		1,025		917		996		963	
Allowed	416	44%	447	44%	408	44.5%	355	36%	421	44%
Dismissed	405	43%	501	49%	432	47%	352	35%	410	43%
Withdrawn	118	13%	77	8%	77	8.4%	289	29%	132	14%

ASYLUM SUPPORT:

- The total number of asylum seekers (including dependants) in receipt of Section 95 asylum support at the end of Q1 2022 was 52,715, a decrease from Q4 2021.
- 4,618 of these asylum seekers were receiving subsistence only support at the end of Q1 2022.
- 48,097 of these asylum seekers were supported in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q1 2022
- The region of the UK with the largest number of people in dispersal accommodation at the end of Q1 2022 was North West England (10,035) followed by London (7,430).
- 26,859 asylum seekers were in initial accommodation under Section 98 support at the end of Q1 2022, a large increase from earlier quarters.

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

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Dispersed accommodation	40,396	41,633	40,490	49,949	48,097
Subsistence only	4,429	4,621	4,917	4,720	4,618
Initial accommodation (s98)	10,294	10,682	16,794	24,175	26,859

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

- At the end of Q1 2022 5,433 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).

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Number supported	6,122	5,935	6,096	5,613	5,433

ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE:

Removals (Asylum Applicants)

- In the year ending December 2021 779 asylum seekers were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK, a 48% decrease from the year ending December 2020 (1,510).
- 113 asylum seekers left via enforced removals from the UK in the year ending December 2021, an 77% decrease from the year ending December 2020 (486).
- 666 asylum seekers left under Voluntary Return schemes in the year ending December 2021, a 35% decrease from the year ending December 2020 (1,024).

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 March 2022 have not yet been published.

Detention

Persons entering and leaving detention

In the year ending March 2022 a total of 25,282 people were recorded as entering detention of whom 20,302 were asylum cases. In the same period 24,918 people left detention of whom 20,207 were asylum cases. Some people may have been in detention more than once.

Persons Detained at the end of Q1 2022

- At the end of Q1 2022 a total of 1,440 persons were detained, at this point there were no children in detention.
- 813 persons who had sought asylum at some stage were being detained solely under Immigration Act powers (56% of all immigration detainees).
- 93 children were recorded as entering detention during the year ending March 2022.

CHILDREN:

Applications by Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum

- The number of applications from unaccompanied children, excluding dependants, was 835 in Q1 2022, a decrease from the previous two quarters.

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

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Applications	516	715	1,235	1,296	835

- Afghanistan was the top country of origin for unaccompanied children (39% of all applications in Q1 2022). Sudan accounted for 14%, Eritrea and Iran for 10% each, Iraq for 5% and Syria for 4%. These six countries accounted for over 80% of all applications in Q1 2022.

- In Q1 2022 just over 5% of applicants were female, similar to recent quarters.
- In Q1 2022 44 asylum applications by unaccompanied children were made by girls.
- There are a small number of applications (3), recorded as sex unknown.

Table 10: Applications by unaccompanied children seeking asylum

	Total Applications	Applications by girls	% Female
Q1 2022	835	44	5%
Q4 2021	1,296	47	4%
Q3 2021	1,235	74	6%
Q2 2021	715	59	8%
Q1 2021	516	33	6%

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 Q1 2022 was 428. Cases had increased significantly in Q3 and Q4 2021 compared with the previous quarters. Afghanistan was easily the country with the largest number of cases (222), followed by Iran (46), Sudan (40), Eritrea (36) and Iraq (32).

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

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Applications	184	528	904	901	428

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. The wording of this policy reverted, in January 2022 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”. Between June 2019 and January 2022 the wording was “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
Q1 2022	164	155	5	0	0	0	4
Q4 2021	252	238	4	0	0	0	10
Q3 2021	220	206	5	0	3	0	6
Q2 2021	238	206	7	0	17	0	8
Q1 2021	182	166	4	1	4	0	7

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
Q1 2022	472	374	34	0	0	0	64
Q4 2021	498	412	30	9	9	9	56
Q3 2021	476	407	20	1	0	1	47
Q2 2021	380	300	18	0	0	2	60
Q1 2021	273	216	10	0	0	0	47

ASYLUM APPLICATIONS (DEPENDANTS):

- In Q1 2022 there were 2,944 dependants included in asylum applications.
- 1,986 of the dependants were under 18 years old and 1,652 were female.

Table 14: Dependants included in asylum applications

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Number of main applicants	5,902	8,768	15,104	18,766	12,508
Number of dependants	1,037	1,390	2,333	3,195	2,944

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
Q1 2022	1,417	787	630
Q4 2021	1,259	672	587
Q3 2021	1,717	907	810
Q2 2021	1,607	827	780
Q1 2021	1,551	866	685

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 Q1 2022, there were 2,405 applications where the main applicant was a woman or girl. This represents 19% of all applications, an increase from recent quarters.

Table 16: Applications by women or girls by quarter

	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Total	5,902	8,768	15,104	18,766	12,508
Female	1,227	1,337	1,804	2,201	2,405
% Female	21%	15%	12%	12%	19%

- 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 applicants in Q1 2022 Eritrea, India and Pakistan have above average percentages of female applicants. Of the countries with the largest number of female applicants Nigeria and the Philippines have more than 50% female applicants.

Table 17: Female applicants from the top ten applicant producing countries Q1 2022

	Female Applicants	Total	% Female
Afghanistan	68	1,655	4%
Albania	197	1,344	15%
Iran	197	1,179	17%
Syria	68	874	7%
Eritrea	176	807	22%
Iraq	126	782	16%
Sudan	31	513	6%
India	106	458	23%
Bangladesh	43	435	10%
Pakistan	98	424	23%

Table 18: Top ten countries for female applicants Q1 2022

	Female Applicants	% Female of total application
Albania	197	15%
Iran	197	17%
Eritrea	176	22%
El Salvador	139	36%
Iraq	126	16%
Nigeria	108	52%
India	106	23%
Pakistan	98	23%
China	89	44%
Philippines	83	89%

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-march-2022/list-of-tables>

For older statistics follow this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series/migration-statistics>

The user guide to the Immigration statistics can be found via this link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9>

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: 134 – 138 The Grove, Stratford, E15 1NS, United Kingdom VAT reg no: 936 519 988