

Reduced mobility of asylum seekers continues to limit the number of asylum applications, but unaccompanied minors lodged more applications in October



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Partial lockdowns, travel bans, and other preventive health measures continue to reduce the mobility of asylum seekers in general and the extent to which they are able to reach the EU+ and lodge asylum applications.

Analysis released by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) shows that the number of applications for international protection lodged in the EU+ remained stable but still at two thirds of pre-COVID-19 levels. National asylum authorities have adapted their practices and made an effort to ensure the lodging of applications can proceed as smoothly as possible,¹ but fewer illegal border-crossings² and fewer opportunities for legal entry to the EU+ continue to curb the number of applications being lodged.

In October 2020, just 43 200 applications were lodged in the EU+³ compared to more than 60 000 applications lodged per month before the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications have been stable for the last few months, but this was underscored by different trends across nationalities. For example, Afghans and Pakistanis continued to lodge more applications for the sixth successive month, but Colombians, and Venezuelans sought asylum less often than in each of the past four months.

There was a noteworthy rise in the number of (self-claimed)

unaccompanied minor (UAM) applicants. UAMs lodged almost 2 000 applications, representing an increase for the second month in a row and reaching the highest value in a year. UAMs accounted for 5 % of all applications in the EU+ in October, a proportion slightly higher than in the previous months. Close to half of the UAMs were Afghans. The number of Afghan UAMs has been rising during the past six months.

EU+ countries issued over 41 300 decisions at first instance, fewer than in each of the past three months. As a result, for the first time since February 2020 applications outnumbered decisions. At the end of October some 419 600 cases were pending at first instance in EU+ countries.

For more information and an interactive data visualisation, please visit the Latest Asylum Trends page.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address:
press@easo.europa.eu.

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Press Contacts

1. **Eric Mamer**

Chief Spokesperson

eric.mamer@ec.europa.eu

+32 2 299 40 73

2. **Dana Spinant**

Deputy Chief Spokesperson

dana.spinant@ec.europa.eu

+32 2 299 01 50

3. **Elisaveta Dimitrova**

Head of Unit

elisaveta.dimitrova@ec.europa.eu

+32 2 295 88 38

4. **Johannes Bahrke**

Coordinating Spokesperson

johannes.bahrke@ec.europa.eu

+32 2 295 86 15

5. **Vivian Loonela**

Coordinating Spokesperson

vivian.loonela@ec.europa.eu

+32 2 296 67 12

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