

Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors

Over 31 000 unaccompanied minors among asylum seekers registered in the EU in 2017

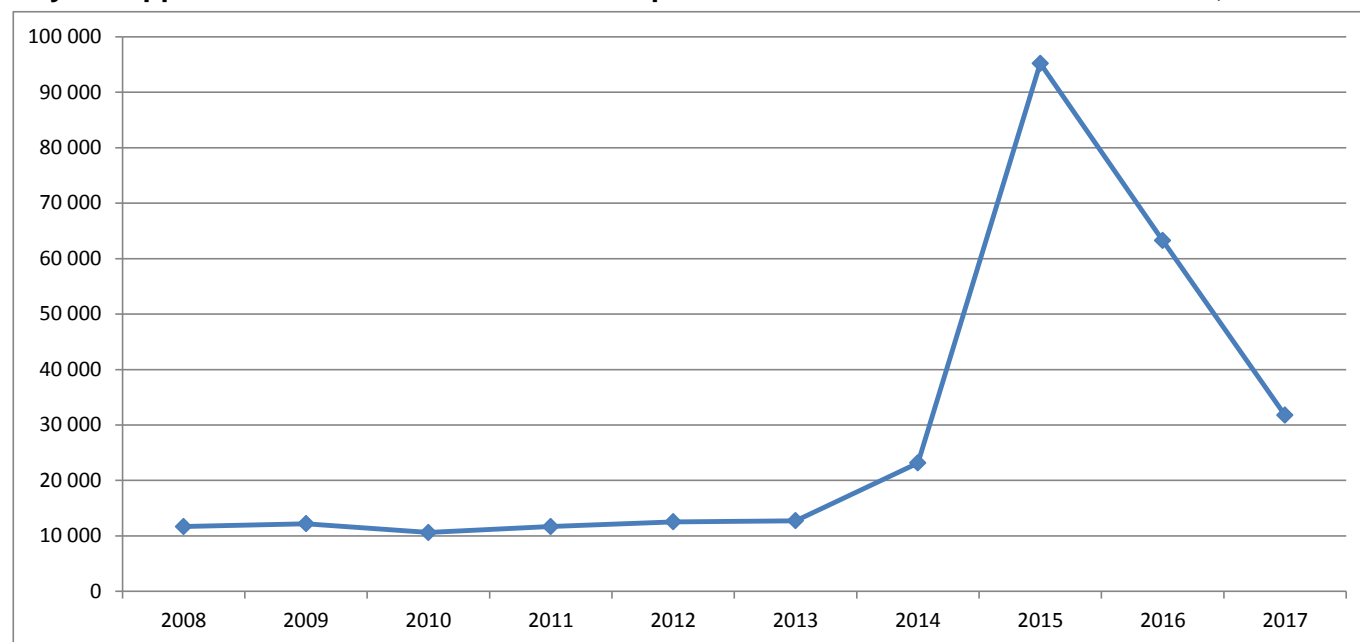
Afghan continued to be the top citizenship

In 2017, 31 400 asylum seekers applying for international protection in the Member States of the **European Union** (EU) were considered to be unaccompanied minors. This was nearly half the number recorded in 2016 (63 200 unaccompanied minors registered) and almost one-third of the peak registered in 2015 (95 200), but over two and a half times higher than the annual average during the period 2008-2013 (around 12 000 per year). In total in the **EU**, unaccompanied minors accounted for 15% of all asylum applicants aged less than 18.

In 2017, a majority of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum were males (89%). Considering age, over two-thirds were aged 16 to 17 (77%, or about 24 200 persons), while those aged 14 to 15 accounted for 16% (around 5 000 persons) and those aged less than 14 for 6% (almost 2 000 persons). Afghan (17%, or around 5 300 persons) continued to be the main citizenship of asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors in the **EU**.

This information is issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States*, 2008-2017



* excluding Croatia for the period 2008-2011

Almost 1 in 3 applied for asylum in Italy

In 2017, the highest number of asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors was registered in **Italy** (with over 10 000 unaccompanied minors, or 32% of all those registered in the EU Member States), followed by **Germany** (9 100, or 29%), **Greece** (2 500, or 8%), the **United Kingdom** (2 200, or 7%), **Austria** (1 400, or 4%) as well as **Sweden** (1 300, or 4%) and the **Netherlands** (1 200, or 4%). Together these seven countries accounted for nearly 90% of all asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors registered in the EU. Among these Member States, the number of asylum seekers considered to be unaccompanied minors rose compared with the previous year in **Italy** (nearly 4 000 more unaccompanied minors in 2017 than in 2016, or +66%) and increased slightly in **Greece** (100 more, or +4%). In contrast, decreases were recorded in **Germany** (26 900 fewer, or -75%), **Austria** (2 500 fewer, or -65%), the **United Kingdom** (1 000 fewer, or -31%), **Sweden** (900 fewer, or -40%) and the **Netherlands** (500 fewer, or -31%).

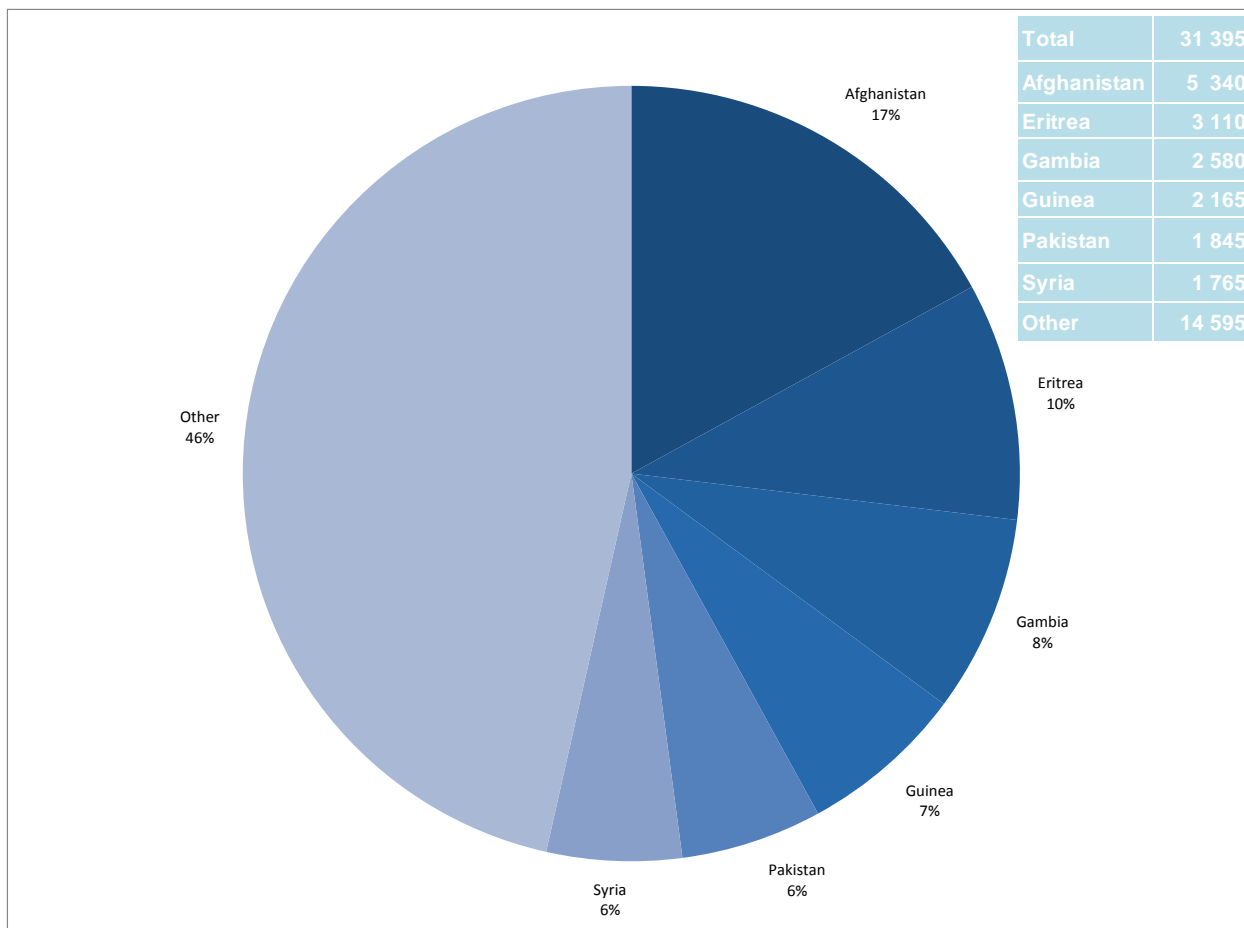
More than six in ten young asylum seekers were unaccompanied minors in Italy

Among Member States with more than 1 000 asylum seekers considered to be unaccompanied minors in 2017, the largest share of such applicants was recorded in **Italy** (where 65% of all asylum applicants aged less than 18 were unaccompanied), followed by the **United Kingdom** (29%) and the **Netherlands** (28%).

Afghan: main citizenship

Afghanistan (17% of the total number of unaccompanied minors registered) was in 2017 the main country of citizenship of asylum seekers considered unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States. Of the 5 300 Afghans considered unaccompanied minors in the EU, two out of five were registered in **Germany** (2 200). Afghans represented the most numerous citizenship of asylum seekers considered unaccompanied minors in nine EU Member States. Eritrea was the second main country of citizenship of asylum seekers considered unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States. Of the 3 100 Eritreans seeking protection in the EU Member States and considered unaccompanied minors, nearly half applied in **Germany** (1 500).

Asylum applicants considered unaccompanied minors in the EU, by country of citizenship, 2017



The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Asylum applicants considered unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States, 2017

	Total number 2016	Total number 2017	of which:		Share in all minor applicants (%)
			Males (%)	Aged below 14 (%)	
EU	63 245	31 395	89	6	14.8
Belgium	1 020	735	82	16	13.2
Bulgaria	2 750	440	94	13	36.6
Czech Republic	0	0	-	-	-
Denmark	1 185	460	95	14	39.2
Germany	35 950	9 085	86	6	9.4
Estonia	0	0	-	-	-
Ireland	35	30	70	7	3.6
Greece	2 350	2 455	94	5	12.4
Spain	30	20	86	0	0.3
France	475	590	76	4	2.8
Croatia	170	40	95	7	23.6
Italy	6 025	10 005	93	1	64.5
Cyprus	215	225	64	4	32.4
Latvia	5	10	73	0	8.3
Lithuania	0	0	-	-	-
Luxembourg	50	50	98	6	7.9
Hungary	1 220	230	97	32	14.5
Malta	15	5	-	-	-
Netherlands	1 705	1 180	83	7	27.6
Austria	3 900	1 350	93	11	11.2
Poland	140	115	50	80	4.8
Portugal	25	40	84	5	6.8
Romania	45	265	83	29	16.6
Slovenia	245	390	99	10	76.1
Slovakia	0	10	73	9	31.4
Finland	370	175	78	14	13.1
Sweden	2 160	1 285	77	21	14.3
United Kingdom	3 175	2 205	89	4	28.8
Iceland	20	10	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	5	0	-	-	-
Norway	270	175	73	18	16.3
Switzerland	1 985	765	84	9	10.9

Number of unaccompanied minors is rounded to the nearest 5. For this reason, totals may not add up and 0 means 3 or fewer.

Provided percentages are based on exact data, excluding the category "unknown" for both sex and age.

- Not applicable or not available (no calculations made if number of unaccompanied minors is 10 or less).

The source dataset can be found [here](#) by sex and [here](#) by age group.

Asylum applicants considered unaccompanied minors, by country of citizenship, 2017

	Applicants	Three main countries of citizenship of asylum applicants considered unaccompanied minors								
	#	First citizenship	#	%	Second citizenship	#	%	Third citizenship	#	%
EU	31 395	Afghanistan	5 340	17	Eritrea	3 110	10	Gambia	2 580	8
Belgium	735	Afghanistan	300	41	Guinea	70	9	Albania	55	8
Bulgaria	440	Afghanistan	280	64	Iraq	90	21	Syria	30	7
Czech Republic	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Denmark	460	Morocco	195	43	Afghanistan	55	12	Syria	40	9
Germany	9 085	Afghanistan	2 215	24	Eritrea	1 545	17	Somalia	1 205	13
Estonia	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ireland	30	Albania	10	-	Afghanistan	5	-	Iraq	5	-
Greece	2 455	Pakistan	1 180	48	Afghanistan	510	21	Syria	310	13
Spain	20	Syria	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	590	Afghanistan	180	30	Sudan	75	12	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	55	9
Croatia	40	Afghanistan	25	62	Pakistan	10	-	Syria	5	-
Italy	10 005	Gambia	2 125	21	Nigeria	1 165	12	Bangladesh	1 130	11
Cyprus	225	Syria	105	46	Somalia	85	38	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	15	6
Latvia	10	Vietnam	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lithuania	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luxembourg	50	Albania	10	24	Morocco	10	-	Algeria	5	-
Hungary	230	Afghanistan	185	79	Pakistan	25	12	Iraq	5	-
Malta	5	Syria	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	1 180	Eritrea	480	41	Syria	135	11	Morocco	75	6
Austria	1 350	Afghanistan	695	51	Pakistan	205	15	Nigeria	110	8
Poland	115	Russia	75	65	Vietnam	10	-	Ukraine	5	-
Portugal	40	Eritrea	10	-	Guinea	10	-	Afghanistan	10	-
Romania	265	Iraq	185	69	Afghanistan	35	13	Syria	25	9
Slovenia	390	Afghanistan	270	70	Algeria	40	11	Pakistan	25	6
Slovakia	10	Vietnam	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Finland	175	Syria	40	21	Afghanistan	30	16	Somalia	20	12
Sweden	1 285	Afghanistan	220	17	Morocco	215	17	Syria	160	13
United Kingdom	2 205	Sudan	335	15	Eritrea	320	15	Vietnam	270	12
Iceland	10	Albania	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norway	175	Eritrea	50	27	Afghanistan	45	24	Syria	40	22
Switzerland	765	Afghanistan	145	19	Somalia	120	16	Eritrea	90	12

Number of unaccompanied minors is rounded to the nearest 5. For this reason, totals may not add up and 0 means 3 or fewer.

Calculations are based on exact data.

- Not applicable or not available (no calculations made if number of unaccompanied minors is 10 or less)

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Geographical information

The **European Union (EU)** includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definitions

Data on asylum are provided to Eurostat by the Ministries of Interior, Justice or immigration agencies of the Member States according to the provisions of Article 4 of the Regulation (EC) 862/2007 of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection.

An **asylum applicant considered to be an unaccompanied minor** is a minor (aged less than 18) who arrives on the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by an adult responsible for him or her whether by law or by the practice of the Member State concerned, and for as long as he or she is not effectively taken into the care of such a person. It includes a minor who is left unaccompanied after he or she has entered the territory of the Member States. 'Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors' refer to all applicants for international protection who are considered by the national authority to be unaccompanied minors during the reference period. The age of unaccompanied minors reported by Member States shall refer to the age accepted by the national asylum authority. In case the national authority carries out an age assessment procedure in relation to the applicant claiming to be an unaccompanied minor, the age reported shall be the age determined by the age assessment procedure.

'**Application for international protection**' means an application for international protection as defined in Art. 2(g) of Council Directive 2004/83/EC, i.e. including requests for refugee status or for subsidiary protection status, irrespective of whether the application was lodged on arrival at the border, or from inside the country, and irrespective of whether the person entered the territory legally (e.g. as a tourist) or illegally.

For more information

Eurostat [database](#) on asylum and managed migration


Eurostat [metadata](#) on asylum applications statistics

Eurostat news release [47/2018](#) of 20 March 2018 on asylum applicants in 2017.

Eurostat news release [67/2018](#) of 19 April 2018 on asylum decisions in 2017.

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