This second bulletin on asylum-seeker statistics is a product of the continued collaboration between Eurostat and the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia (IGC), initiated with the publication of Statistics in Focus 1996-1 “Asylum-seekers in Europe 1985-95”.

This issue provides an overview of the evolution of asylum seeking in Europe during the first six months of 1996 and a comparison with the situation during the first six months of 1995. The focus is on changes within and between the reporting countries and changes in the number of applications coming from Turkey throughout the period 1985-95.

Highlights*

- The total number of asylum applications in the EU member states during the period January-June 1996 was 107,144. This compares with 121,651 for the same period in 1995, representing a fall of 14,507 or around 12%, continuing the trend which began in 1993. The largest percentage drops in individual countries occurred in Italy (63%), Sweden (43%), France (32%) and the United Kingdom (25%).

- Germany remained the country with the largest number of applications, although the decrease in numbers was the fourth largest of the Member States. The overall downward trend that began across the EU in 1993 therefore continued in the first months of 1996.

- The total number of asylum applications in each of the EFTA countries rose slightly. The total increase for EFTA was 451 (around 5%). The USA reported an increase of 12,100 (19%).

- In Germany and Switzerland the number of asylum-seekers remained relatively stable. Significant decreases have occurred in the Netherlands, France and Sweden. The major increase registered in the UK in 1995 stopped in the second quarter of 1996.

- Almost 365,000 asylum applications from Turkey were registered in Europe throughout the period 1985-95 ranking Turkey the third most important sending country in total in Europe and second most important since 1994. Germany received most claims. France and Switzerland were also major receiving countries in the 1980s while the UK was second most important in the 1990s.

*It should be noted that a significant number of Yugoslavs from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are under Temporary Protection or other status, and do not always appear in the data on asylum applications. Applicants coming from Bosnia, Croatia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia can sometimes be erroneously included in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
This quarterly bulletin has been produced by the Population, migration, employment and
unemployment unit at Eurostat and the Secretariat of the Inter-governmental Consultations
on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia (IGC).
The data presented are collected annually by Eurostat from the EU and EFTA countries and
on a monthly and annual basis by IGC from their participating countries.

The Secretariat of the IGC
The Secretariat of the Inter-governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration
Policies in Europe, North America and Australia (IGC) arranges meetings, prepares docu­
ments, provides statistics and analytical reports to the following fifteen Governments: Aus­
tralia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway,
Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. It is an
informal non-decision making forum for information exchange and policy concertation for 10
EU Member States, 2 EFTA (Norway and Switzerland) and 3 Overseas states (Australia,
Canada and USA).

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Decreases in the EU and increases in the Overseas States in the first six months of 1996

197,000 asylum applications were registered in the 15 EU Member States, Norway, Switzerland, and Australia, Canada and the United States of America, in the first six months of 1996. Of these applications, 107,000 were registered in the EU Member States, almost 9,000 in total for Norway and Switzerland and 80,000 in IGC’s Overseas States combined (Australia, Canada and the United States of America, although data for Canada from February onwards and Australia from May onwards are missing).

Data for the 15 EU Member States do not include data for Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and Portugal. The number of asylum applicants in these countries is very small.

Compared with the overall number of asylum applications for the first half of 1995, there was a slight overall decrease in 1996 (14,000 or 11%) in the number of asylum applications to the EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland. Compared with the second half of 1995 the decrease was more significant (34,000 or 23%). The overall downward trend that started in 1993 thus continued in the first six months of 1996.
Table 1:
Monthly number of asylum applications, 1995-1996

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¹ Data on asylum applications do not include dependents
² Data do not include minor dependents
### Table 1:
**Monthly number of asylum applications, 1995-1996**

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The main receiving countries were Germany, France, UK and Netherlands.

Compared with 1995, the relative position of the three main receiving countries in the EU remained unchanged.

The number of asylum applications to Germany was some 57,000 in the first six months of 1996, half of all applications registered in the EU. The relatively stable number of claims in Germany in the first six months combined with the overall downward trend in Europe mainly caused by significant decreases in France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom, increased Germany's share slightly from 46% in 1995 to 55% in the first two quarters of 1996 of all asylum claims in the EU.

In the first six months of 1996, the UK was the recipient of the second largest number of claims in the EU with a total of some 15,000. The Netherlands received the third largest number, some 10,000.

**Figure 2:**
Asylum applications in the first six months of 1996

![Asylum applications in the first six months of 1996](image-url)
Special section: Turkey

Turkey ranks third largest sending country to Europe in 1985-95

In the following paragraphs the focus is on asylum applicants coming from Turkey during the period 1985-95. Turkey became the third most important sending country for asylum-seekers to Europe during the period 1985-95, with former Yugoslavia ranking first and Romania second. Since 1994 Turkey has replaced Romania as the second most important citizenship claiming asylum in Europe. Whereas applications from both the former Yugoslavia and Romania were concentrated in the 1990s, the number of asylum-seekers coming from Turkey continued to be of major importance throughout the period 1985-95.

From 1985-1995, almost 365 000 asylum applications from Turkey were registered in the 15 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland (Figure 3). Of these applications, some 310 000 were registered in the EU Member States and some 50 000 in total for Norway and Switzerland. The overall trend can be divided into three periods. The number of claims rose between 1988 and 1989, when they reached a peak of 55 000. From 1990 to 1993 an overall decrease of claims from Turkey was registered in Europe bringing the total down to some 25 000 in 1993. Since 1994 European countries have witnessed an increase in the number of asylum-seekers bringing the total up to almost 35 000 in 1995.

**Major EU-wide trends are dominated by changes in Germany, France and Switzerland**

With a total of some 200 000 asylum applications registered for the whole period of 1985-95, Germany stands out as the recipient of the largest number of claims, accounting for more than half of all asylum applications in Europe in the 1980s and rising to a predominant position with a share of over 70% in the 1990s. As can be seen in Figure 4, changes in the number of asylum applications coming from Turkey to Europe were essentially associated with the changes in Germany.

There were some important exceptions to the above pattern which can be summarised as follows: although Germany experienced a slight increase in applications from Turkey, it should be noted that the sudden rise in the number of asylum-seekers registered in the late 1980s can mainly be associated with the significant increases to France and Switzerland, accounting altogether for nearly half of all applications from Turkey to Europe in 1989. However, in the following years the number of claims in France and Switzerland dropped considerably and both countries went from being major to minor receiving countries in Europe as regards applications from Turkey. In 1995, their share was down to almost 10% combined. Figure 4 also shows that France and Switzerland remained the second and third major recipient countries up to 1991.

Finally, major increases up to 1989 were also noted for asylum applications registered in Austria and the UK. The rise in the number of claims to Austria dropped in the beginning of the 1990s, and has remained at a low level since then whereas the number of claims to the UK remained stable throughout the 1990s and thus became the second most important receiving country in Europe as from 1992. However, compared with the position of France and Switzerland in the 1980s, in the 1990s the UK played a minor role as the second most important receiving country, accounting for some 5% of all applications from Turkey to Europe.

**Figure 3:**
Asylum applications from Turkey

![Graph showing asylum applications from Turkey](image)
Figure 4:
Major receiving countries, applications from Turks, 1988-1995

Belgium

Denmark

Germany

France

Netherlands
Figure 4:
Major receiving countries, applications from Turks, 1988-1995

Austria

Sweden

United Kingdom

Norway

Switzerland
For further information

Eurostat
Migration Statistics 1995
Asylum-seekers and refugees, a statistical report; Volume 1, EU Member States, 1994
Asylum-seekers and refugees, a statistical report; Volume 2, EFTA countries, 1994

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Report on Temporary Protection in States in Europe, North America and Australia, August 1995 (Purple Book)
Illegal Aliens: A Preliminary Study, June 1995 (Red book)

Definitions, abbreviations and symbols:

For more information on definitions: see Eurostat’s publications on Asylum-seekers and IGC’s Blue Book

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