

Policy Note

Asylum procedure statistics in Greece : first half 2026

October 2026

Three out of five asylum claims granted



Photo: migration.gov.gr

Asylum procedure statistics in Greece: first half 2026

Three out of five asylum claims granted



Asylum applications

21,101 initial asylum applications, of which **19,538** lodged with RIS services

2,261 subsequent asylum applications

522 subsequent claims subject to a 300 € fee per person



First instance procedure at the Asylum Service

60.6% recognition rate, with most positive decisions concerning Afghanistan and Sudan

80% recognition rate in the border procedure

5,308 manifestly unfounded rejections

50 inadmissibility decisions on "safe third country" grounds, most of which concerning North Macedonia

1,398 inadmissibility decisions on subsequent applications without new elements

23,139 pending claims at first instance, of which **13,185** pending interview



Second instance procedure at the Appeals Authority

7,464 appeals, of which **5,405** with free legal assistance from the Asylum Service Registry of Lawyers

664 appeals dismissed due to failure to appear in person

1,120 appeals dismissed due to late submission

101 oral hearings at the appeal stage

9.7% recognition rate at second instance



Judicial review at the administrative courts

1,070 pending judicial review applications at the Administrative Courts of Athens and Thessaloniki

35% approval rate in judicial review

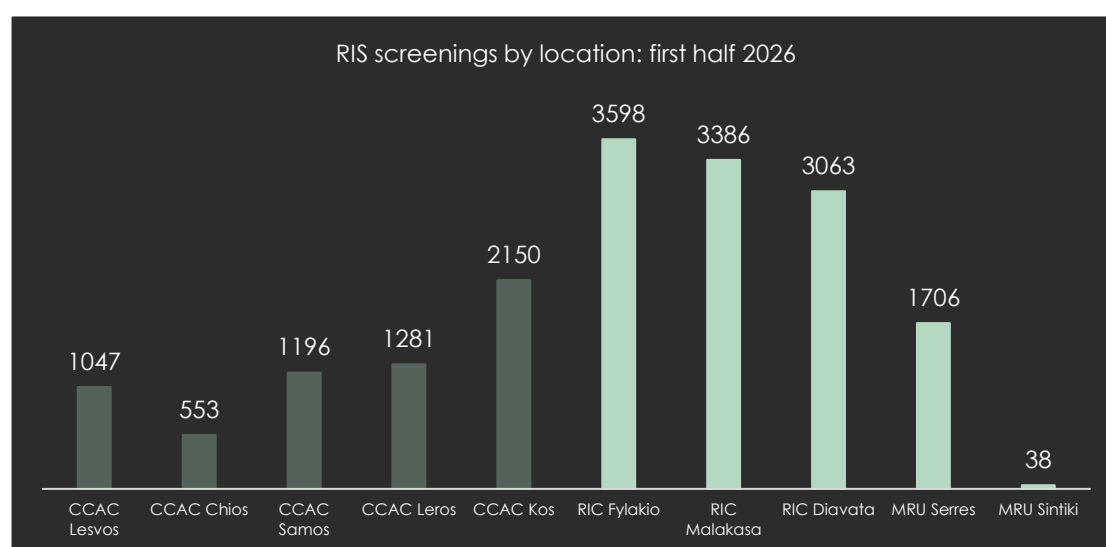
Still in 2026, most people seeking protection in Greece are entitled to asylum according to official half-year statistics supplied in response to parliamentary questions¹ and analysed in the present note. This forms part of RSA's ongoing documentation of asylum data, with a view to strengthening transparency in public debates on refugee protection and on the workings of asylum procedures, particularly in light of the structural changes brought about in June 2026 by the New Pact on Migration and Asylum and by its implementing act in Greece.²

Registration

Official figures of the Greek authorities refer to a total of **16,196** arrivals in the first half of 2026, most of which concern arrivals via the Central Mediterranean (**8,677**). Crete is currently the main point of arrival in Greece.³

Screening

People arriving or present in Greece without documentation are subject to reception and identification procedures – now “screening” under the Screening Regulation – by the Reception and Identification Service (RIS) of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and the Hellenic Police.⁴ These procedures are implemented in Closed Controlled Access Centres (CCAC), Reception and Identification Centres (RIC) and Mobile Registration Units (MRU) of the RIS.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Screening statistics, Jun 2026

¹ Hellenic Parliament, *Λειτουργία της διαδικασίας ασύλου*, available [here](#).

² Pact Implementation Act, L 5307/2026, Gov. Gazette A' 90/11.06.2026. See also RSA, 'A mother and her two children arrested upon seeking asylum, a couple arbitrarily detained for a month: Two stories from the first month of the implementation of the New Pact', 20 July 2026, available [here](#); *Εφαρμοστικός νόμος του νέου Κοινού Ευρωπαϊκού Συστήματος Ασύλου*, May 2026, available [here](#).

³ RSA, 'Crete - Gavdos: 8,552 refugee arrivals in the first half of 2026 – The issue of safe accommodation remains unresolved', 15 July 2026, available [here](#).

⁴ Articles 5 and 7 Regulation (EU) 2024/1356 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 introducing the screening of third-country nationals at the external borders [2024] OJ L 22.5.2024. See also Articles 4 et seq. Pact Implementation Act.

The RIS screened a total of **18,018** people in the first half of 2026. Contrary to previous years, most screenings took place not on the Eastern Aegean islands but in RIC Fylakio (**3,598**), RIC Malakasa (**3,386**) and RIC Diavata (**3,063**), mostly concerning arrivals on Crete and Gavdos.

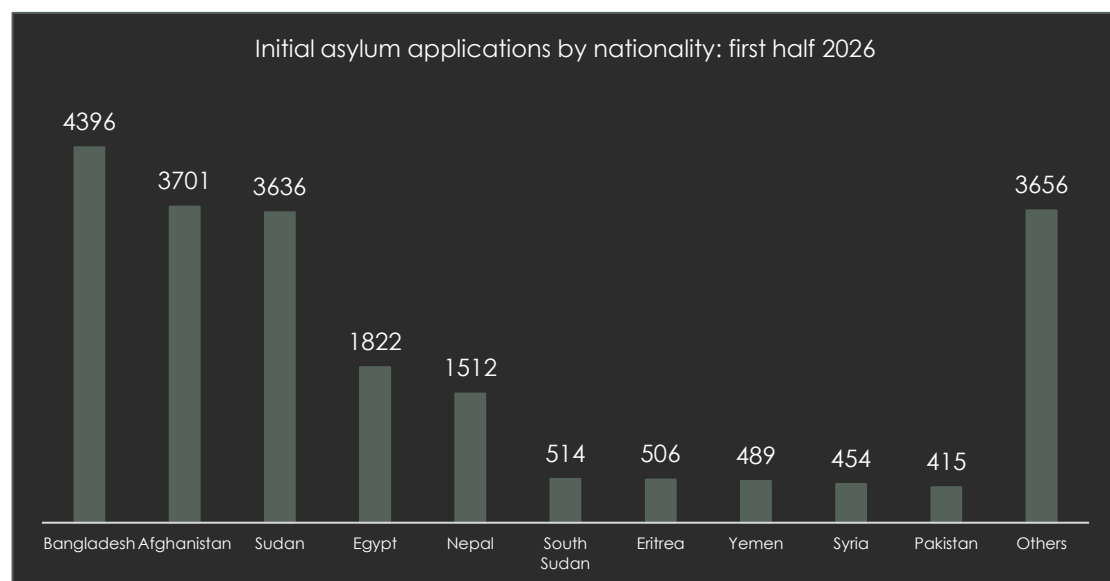
More than half of the people undergoing screening were deemed to be vulnerable (**8,322**). Of those, most were victims of torture and violence (**5,843**).

Access to the asylum procedure

Competence to register asylum applications in Greece lies with the Asylum Service and the RIS.⁵ The two services registered initial asylum claims from **21,101** people in the first half of 2026.⁶ This year too, the overwhelming majority of applications were registered by RIS services.

Official figures show yet again that the number of initial asylum claims exceeds both the number of recorded arrivals and the number of people undergoing screening by the RIS. Therefore, there continue to be asylum seekers who do not fall within the scope of screening or have not previously undergone screening.

The main nationalities of asylum seekers lodging initial asylum applications before the RIS and the Asylum Service in the first half of 2026 were as follows:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Jun 2026

Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Sudan were the main countries of origin of asylum seekers.

⁵ Articles 95(c) and (d), 109(3) and 110(7) Pact Implementation Act.

⁶ Based on the aggregate of figures in the monthly reports of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

According to the Asylum Procedures Regulation,⁷ asylum seekers from countries designated as “safe countries of origin” (SCO) or from countries subject to an EU-wide average first instance recognition rate of 20% or lower must be channelled into the accelerated procedure.⁸ Said procedure entails shorter deadlines and lower protection safeguards compared to the regular procedures. SCO designated at EU level include Egypt and Bangladesh,⁹ while Nepal and Pakistan are designated as SCO at Greek level.¹⁰

Place of registration of initial applications

More than 90% of initial asylum applications in the first half of 2026 were lodged by RIS regional services, meaning the five CCAC on the Eastern Aegean islands, the RIC of Fylakio, Diavata and Malakasa, and the MRU of Sintiki and Serres. Only exceptionally were claims lodged before the Regional Asylum Offices (RAO) and Autonomous Asylum Units (AAU) of the Asylum Service.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Jun 2026

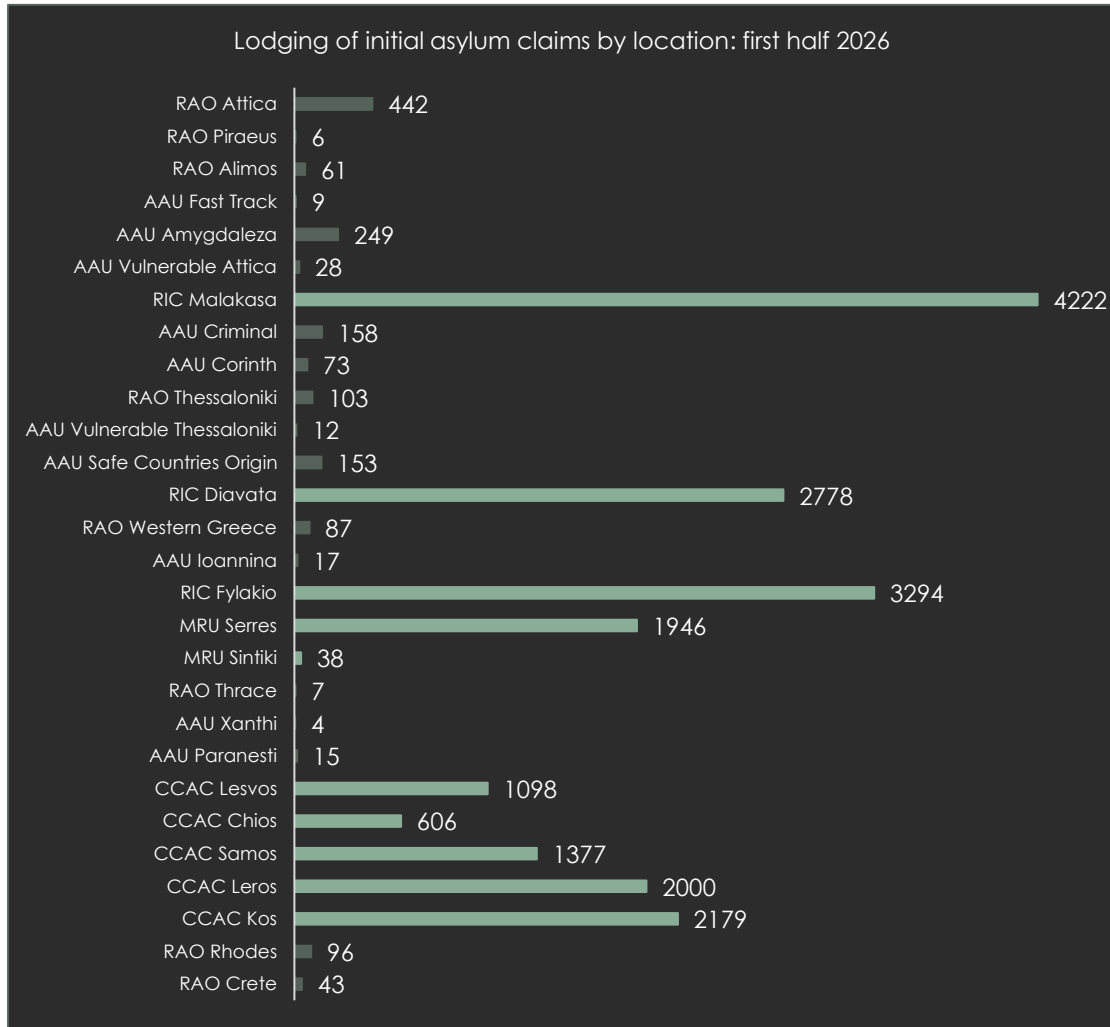
The breakdown of initial asylum applications lodged by RIC, CCAC and MRU of the RIS and by RAO and AAU of the Asylum Service was as follows:

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a common procedure for international protection in the Union [2024] OJ L 22.5.2024.

⁸ Article 42(1) Asylum Procedures Regulation.

⁹ Annex II Asylum Procedures Regulation, as inserted by Regulation (EU) Regulation (EU) 2026/464 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 February 2026 amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 as regards the establishment of a list of safe countries of origin at Union level [2026] OJ L 26.2.2026.

¹⁰ JMD 9603/2026, Gov. Gazette B' 188/20.01.2026.



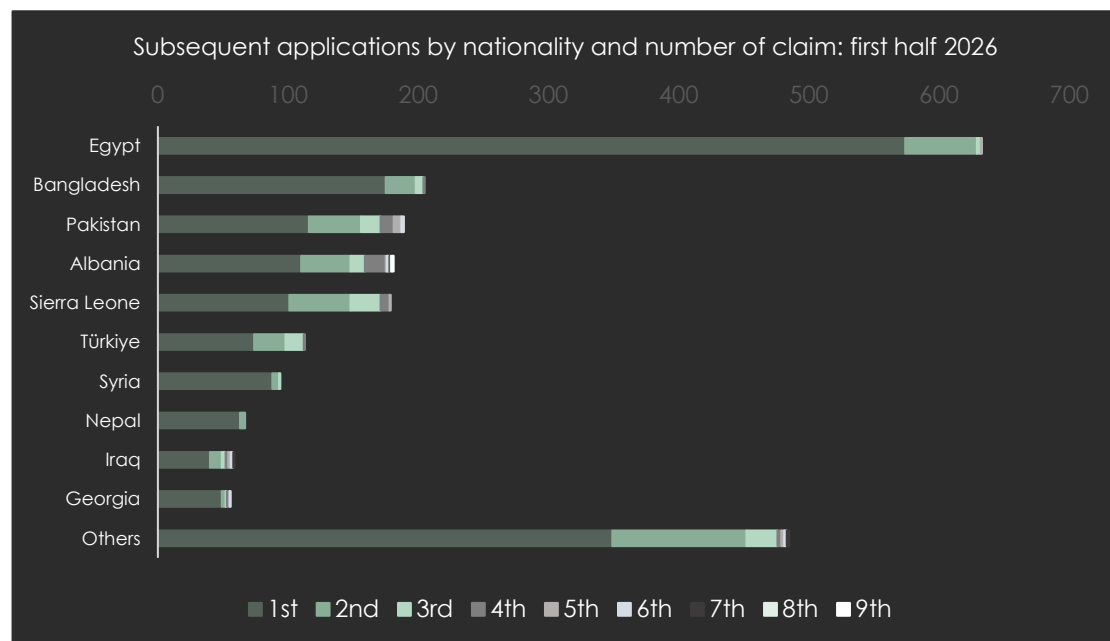
Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Jun 2026

The primary points of registration of asylum applications throughout Greece during the first half of the year were RIC Malakasa, RIC Fylakio and RIC Diavata.

Subsequent applications

Subsequent asylum applications are exclusively lodged before the RAO and AAU of the Asylum Service, upon appointment via an online platform that faces repeated interruptions.¹¹

According to official data for the first half of 2026, a total of **2,261** subsequent asylum claims were lodged following a final decision on an initial claim. The main nationalities of people lodging subsequent applications were as follows:

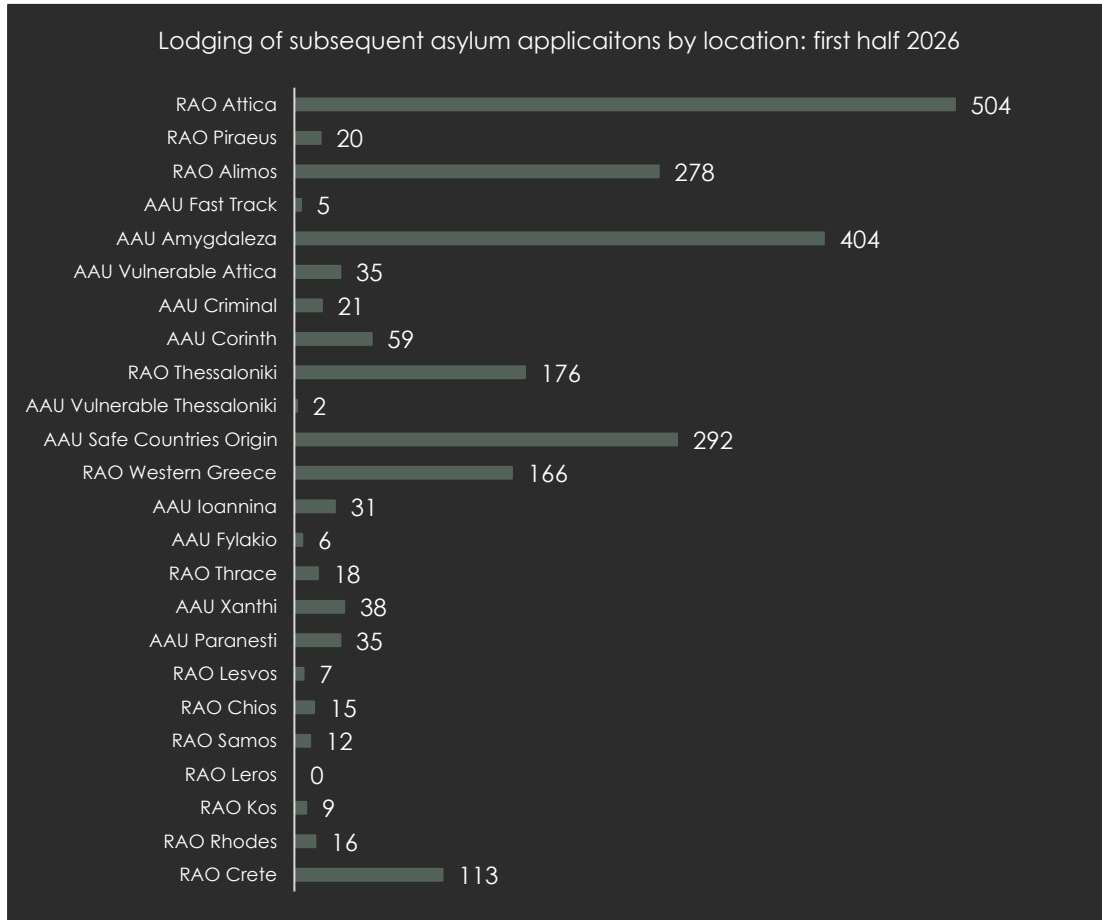


Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

Out of a total of 2,261 subsequent asylum applications, **522** were second or onward subsequent applications subject to a fee of 300 €. The Council of State has yet to rule on the legality of fees on subsequent asylum applications, more than four years since it was seized to perform judicial review. Second or onward subsequent applications subject to a 300 € fee per person were mostly lodged by nationals of Sierra Leone (**78**), Pakistan (**73**) and Albania (**71**).

The majority of subsequent applications were lodged in Attica:

¹¹ RSA et al., 'Απουσία πρόσβασης στη διαδικασία ασύλου μετά την έναρξη ισχύος του Ν 5307/2026', 8 July 2026, available [here](#).



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Jun 2026

First instance procedure at the Asylum Service

According to official statistics, **18,780** personal interviews of asylum seekers were conducted in the first half of 2026. Of those, **12,221** were carried out by Asylum Service caseworkers and **6,559** by European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) personnel. The Greek authorities failed again to provide statistics on the number of interviews conducted remotely and on in-person interviews. The Asylum Procedures Regulation permits interviews via videoconference only by way of derogation and under exceptional circumstances.¹²

Recognition rates in the asylum process reflect the probability of determining that a person requesting international protection is in fact entitled to it. Hence, rates must be calculated based on decisions on the merits of asylum applications, i.e. those which decide whether or not the conditions for refugee status or subsidiary protection are met. Other decisions such as those dismissing the claim as inadmissible or discontinuing the examination of the application on formal grounds such as failure to attend an

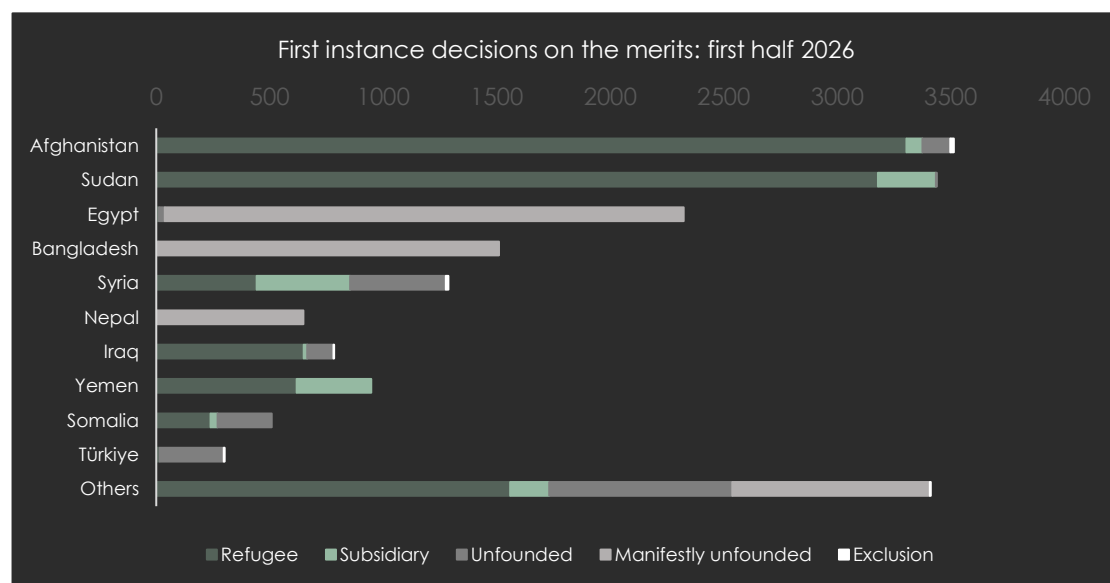
¹² Article 13(10) and Recital 15 Asylum Procedures Regulation.

interview or to renew an asylum seeker card are unrelated to the individual's protection needs and should not be counted in the calculation of recognition rates.¹³

We note in this regard that the 39% rate recently cited by the Minister of Migration and Asylum, Thanos Plevris (as opposed to a 72% rate in 2024, per his statement),¹⁴ does not correspond to any of the official statistics released by the Ministry itself. The official data, as presented in this note, point to a 60.6% recognition rate for the first half of 2026, as opposed to a 79% rate for 2024.¹⁵ These inconsistencies highlight the need to apply the correct methodology when presenting and interpreting recognition rates, as explained above.

The Asylum Service took **18,675** first instance decisions on the merits of asylum applications. Of those, **10,026** granted refugee status, **1,286** granted subsidiary protection, and **7,363** were rejections on the merits.

More than $\frac{3}{5}$ of asylum applications examined on the merits by the Asylum Service were granted, pointing to a **60.6%** first instance recognition rate in the first half of 2026, down from 70.6% in 2025 and 79% in 2024. Therefore, this year too, most people seeking asylum in Greece are refugees and are entitled to protection in Greece.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

Recognition rates remained extremely high for many of the main countries of origin of people seeking protection in Greece: **100%** for Yemen; **99.9%** for Sudan; **97.4%** for Palestine; **96%** for Afghanistan and **85%** for Iraq and South Sudan. The recognition rate for Syria underwent a significant drop from 91% in 2025 to **66%** in the first half of 2026.

¹³ ECRE, *Asylum statistics and the need for protection in Europe: Updated Factsheet*, 24 July 2026, available [here](#).

¹⁴ I Efimerida, 'Πλεýρης στο iefimerida: Δεν θα δώσουμε λογαριασμό σε κανέναν, ειδικά στις ΜΚΟ, για το πώς θα φυλάμε τα σύνορά μας', 29 July 2026, available [here](#).

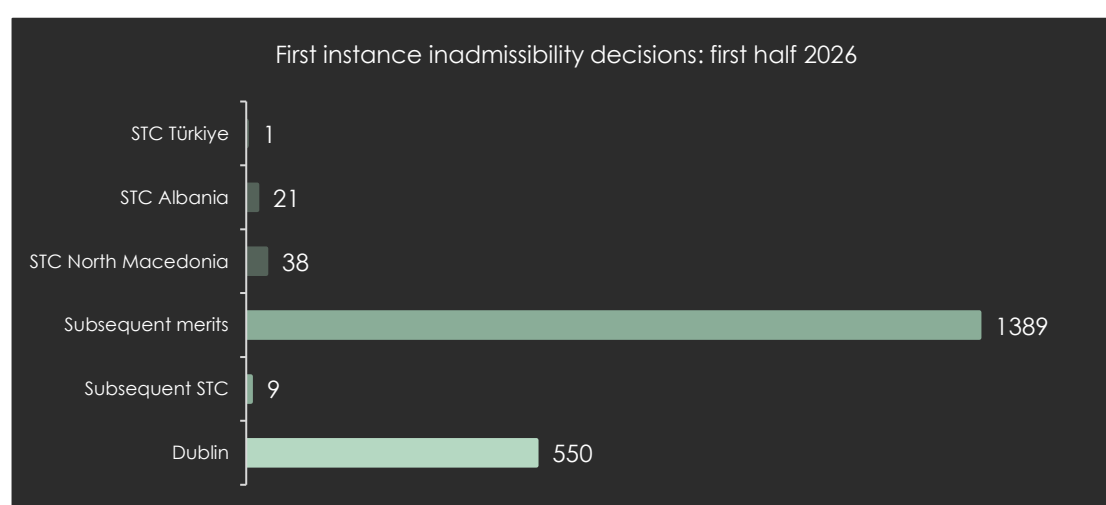
¹⁵ RSA, *Asylum procedure statistics in Greece 2024: Four in five asylum applications granted*, May 2025, available [here](#).

Conversely, recognition rates stood at zero levels for Nepal, near-zero levels for Egypt (0.5%) and Bangladesh (0.3%) and just 1.8% for Pakistan, with most asylum applications rejected in the accelerated procedure as manifestly unfounded on SCO grounds.

As for Türkiye, recognition rates continued to drop from 11% in 2025 to just 5% in the first half of 2026. Türkiye is currently designated as SCO at EU level due to its status as EU candidate country.¹⁶

Inadmissible applications

The Asylum Service dismissed **2,008** asylum applications as inadmissible based on applicable inadmissibility grounds,¹⁷ without assessing their merits and pronouncing itself on qualification for refugee status or subsidiary protection.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

The main ground for dismissal of applications as inadmissible relates to subsequent applications without new elements. These applications undergo a preliminary admissibility check by the Asylum Service.¹⁸ The second main ground concerned the application of the Dublin Regulation, now Asylum and Migration Management Regulation,¹⁹ where dismissal of the asylum application is tied to the applicant's transfer to another EU Member State.

The “safe third country” (STC) concept was applied to no more than **50** cases, namely in relation to people arriving in Greece through North Macedonia.

Border procedure

2026 saw a continuation of Greece's systematic, arbitrary use of the border procedure to people making asylum claims inside CCAC on the Eastern Aegean islands. This breaches the prohibition on applying the border procedure to applications not

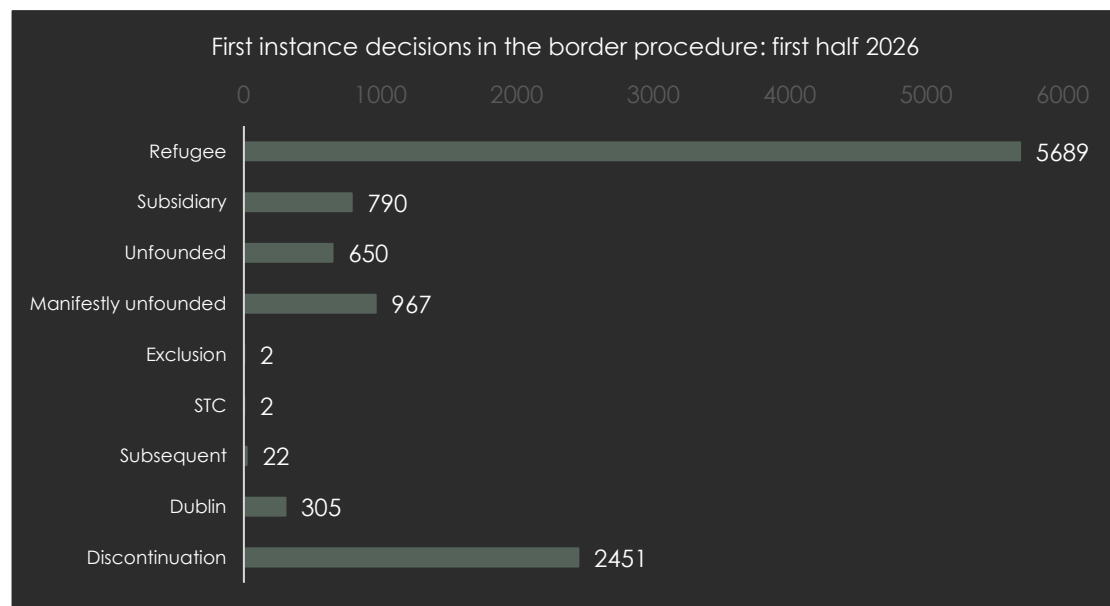
¹⁶ Article 61(1b) Asylum Procedures Regulation, as inserted by Regulation (EU) 2026/464.

¹⁷ Article 38(1) Asylum Procedures Regulation; Article 122 Pact Implementation Act.

¹⁸ Article 55 Asylum Procedures Regulation; Article 131 Pact Implementation Act.

¹⁹ Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on asylum and migration management [2024] OJ L 22.5.2024.

submitted “at the border” or “in transit zones”,²⁰ on the one hand, and to applications that are neither inadmissible nor manifestly unfounded.²¹



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

The Asylum Service issued **10,878** decisions in the border procedure during the first half of 2026. Of those, only **967** were manifestly unfounded rejections and **329** were inadmissibility decisions.

Therefore, the vast majority of decisions taken in the border procedure exceed the boundaries of the law and should have been channelled into the regular procedure. This is notably the case for **650** rejections on the merit unlawfully issued by the Asylum Service in the border procedure.

No asylum claim was exempted from the border procedure for reasons such as vulnerability and need for special procedural guarantees.²² This corroborates our constant concerns on the state's compliance with the duty to afford special procedural guarantees to those asylum seekers who require them in order to navigate the asylum process. Referral from the border procedure to the regular procedure was only ordered in **294** cases initially assessed on admissibility due to STC grounds and ultimately deemed admissible.

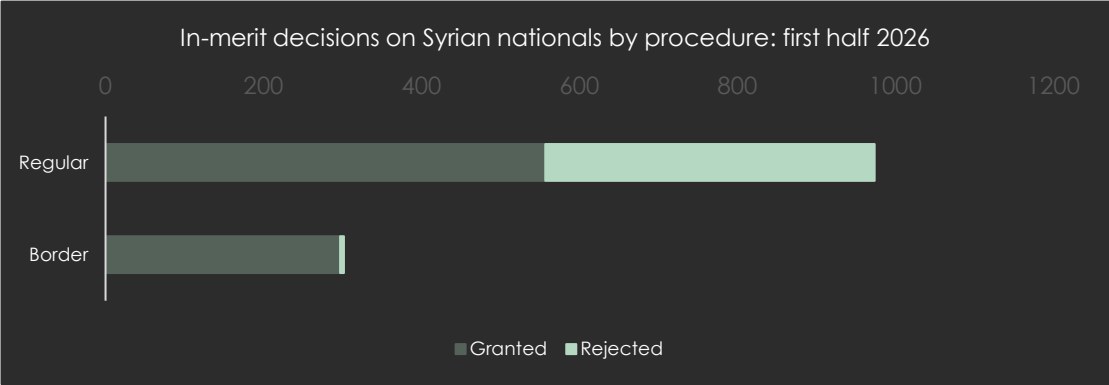
Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of decisions issued in the border procedure were positive, leading to an **80%** recognition rate that well exceeds the 60.6% overall recognition rate in the asylum process. Out of **5,689** refugee status decisions taken in the border procedure, **2,419** concerned nationals of Afghanistan and **1,164** nationals of Sudan.

²⁰ Article 95(1) L 4939/2022. Article 43(1) Asylum Procedures Regulation now sets a broader scope for the border procedure.

²¹ Articles 88(9) and 95(1) L 4939/2022. The same restrictions are applicable under Article 44(1) Asylum Procedures Regulation.

²² Article 53(2) Asylum Procedures Regulation.

Important findings continue to be drawn on comparison of the border and regular procedures vis-à-vis asylum claims relating to the same profiles of applicants e.g. Syrian nationals. Last year, Syrian nationals had a higher recognition rate in the border procedure (99.7%) compared to the regular procedure (82%). The disparity between the two procedures increased further throughout the first half of 2026: **98.3%** in the border procedure and just **57.2%** in the regular procedure:

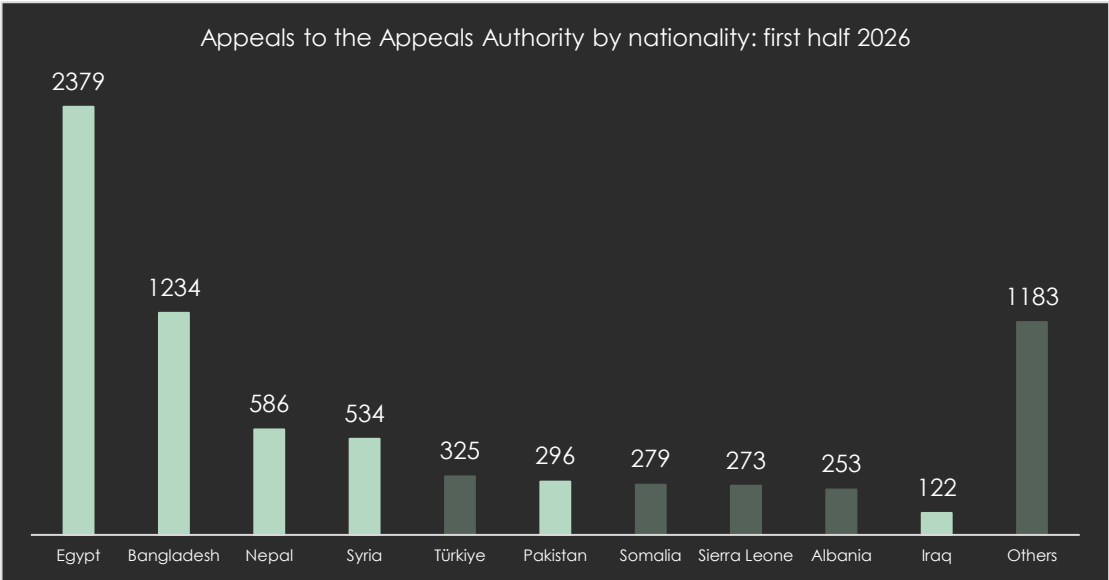


Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

Second instance procedure at the Appeals Committees

Appeals

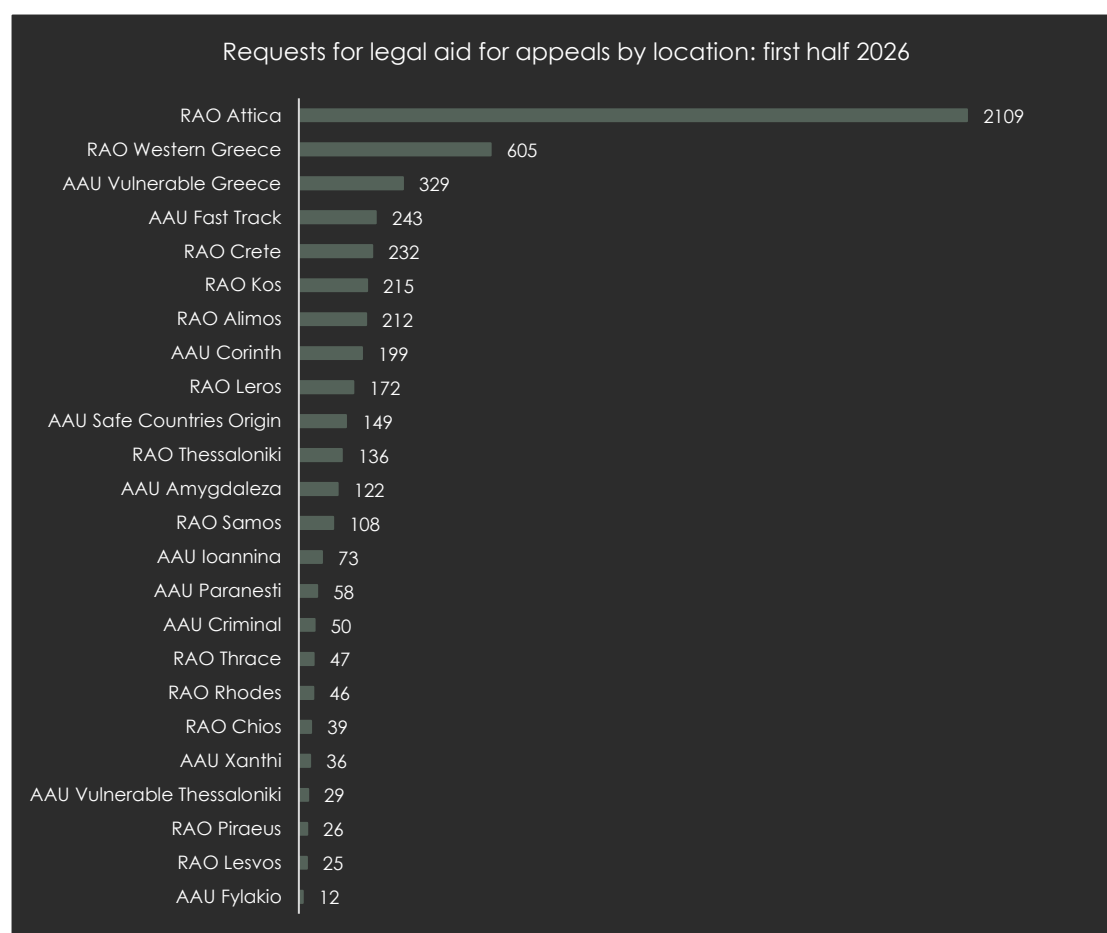
7,464 appeals against Asylum Service decisions were lodged with the Appeals Authority in the first half of 2026. Egypt and Bangladesh were by far the main countries of origin of appellants:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Jun 2026

Official figures supplied in response to parliamentary questions refer to **5,272** requests for free legal assistance under the Asylum Service Registry of Lawyers, corresponding to **70.6%** of submitted appeals. Statistics refer to **5,405** people benefitting from free

legal assistance from said Registry of Lawyers, thereby exceeding the total number of requests. Most free legal assistance requests were submitted before RAO Attica, RAO Western Greece and RAO Alimos.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

Timely provision of legal aid by the state remains an issue in practice. In **1,253** cases, nearly ¼ of the total, the appeal was lodged to the Appeals Authority before the appellant had had the opportunity to meet with the lawyer of the Asylum Service Registry of Lawyers who represented the appeal.

Examination of appeals

Asylum appeals are examined by 20 Appeals Committees, each composed of three administrative judges. The Appeals Committees held oral hearings in no more than **101** cases.²³ This shows that oral hearings remain highly exceptional, despite the guidance offered by Council of State case law on the need for Committees to conduct oral hearings with a view to properly collecting the evidence based on which they assess asylum claims.²⁴

The Appeals Committees issued a total of **7,232** second instance decisions during the first half of 2026. They dismissed **664** appeals as manifestly unfounded due to failure on

²³ Pursuant to Article 140(3) Pact Implementation Act.

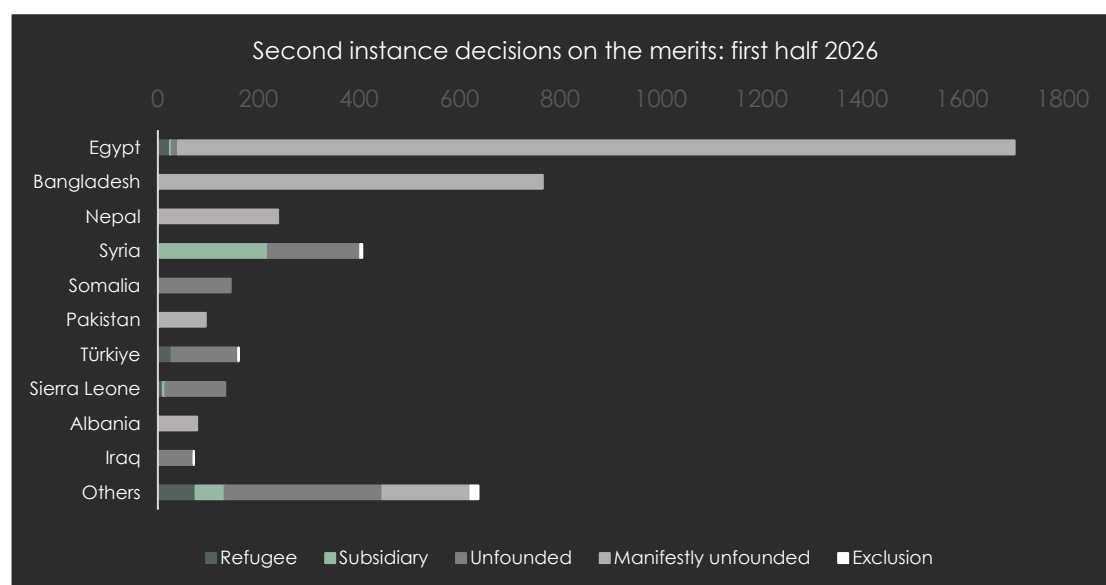
²⁴ Council of State, 1371/2023, 9 August 2023.

the part of the appellant to appear in person or to submit a certificate of residence in a reception facility in due time.²⁵ The domestic law rule permitting rejection of the appeal for those reasons was declared unlawful by the CJEU.²⁶ Yet, Committees continued to apply it in breach of EU law. The provision was eventually amended in June 2026 and now sets less onerous procedural requirements for attendance before the Appeals Authority.²⁷

In addition, Appeals Committees dismissed **1,120** appeals due to late submission in the first half of 2026, whereas the Asylum Service has continued to unlawfully notify first instance decisions via email to people residing in RIS camps, despite express legislative provisions requiring notifications to those persons to be done in person in the camps.²⁸ This year, Greek courts submitted preliminary references to the CJEU in two cases relating to appeals dismissed due to late submission, the first relating to poor representation by a lawyer of the Asylum Service Registry of Lawyers,²⁹ the second regarding notification of decisions via email.³⁰

Decisions on the merits

Out of a total of 7,232 second instance decisions issued in the first semester of 2026, **4,440** were decisions on the merits of asylum applications:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

The overall recognition rate at second instance remains particularly low, despite a slight increase from 8.5% in 2025 to **9.7%** in the first half of 2026.

²⁵ Article 102(2) L 4939/2022.

²⁶ CJEU, C-610/23 *Al Nasiria*, 3 July 2025.

²⁷ Article 140(2) Pact Implementation Act.

²⁸ Article 120(4) Pact Implementation Act. Note e.g. Administrative Court of Thessaloniki AΔ6/2025, 13 January 2025; Administrative Court of Athens, NΔ324/2024, 28 June 2024.

²⁹ Administrative Court of Thessaloniki, AΔ72/2026, 19 March 2026, registered as CJEU, C-328/26 *Gafaris*.

³⁰ Administrative Court of Thessaloniki, AΔ248/2026, 18 June 2026, registered as CJEU, C-752/26 *Anori*.

This year too, most decisions were manifestly unfounded rejections (**3,011**) mainly concerning nationals of Egypt (**1,665**) and Bangladesh (**763**). In any event, the Appeals Committees granted international protection in extremely limited cases even vis-à-vis countries of origin with a notable or high recognition rate at first instance e.g. Iraq and Somalia:

Recognition rates at first and second instance for selected nationalities: first half 2026		
Country of origin	Asylum Service	Appeals Authority
Iraq	85%	4.2%
Somalia	48.3%	2.1%

Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

Judicial review at the administrative courts

Application for judicial review at the administrative courts of first instance

According to the official data on judicial review of asylum decisions at the Administrative Courts of Athens and Thessaloniki,³¹ **41** applications for judicial review were granted and **76** were rejected on the merits in the first half of 2026. This means that the courts quashed **35%** of asylum decisions examined on the merits. The approval rate of judicial review applications against asylum decisions at the courts therefore remains important, despite a drop from 47.3% in 2025. The breakdown of decisions by administrative court is as follows:

Judicial review decisions by administrative court: first half 2026			
Decision	Athens	Thessaloniki	Total
Granted	16	25	41
Rejected	13	63	76
Inadmissible	115	50	165
Discontinued	20	4	24

Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

Available figures reveal that most applications for judicial review continue to be dismissed by the administrative courts as inadmissible on formal grounds such as power of attorney or payment of court fees, particularly at the Administrative Court of Athens. This trend raises concerns against the backdrop of serious delays in the adjudication of cases particularly in Athens, where applications for judicial review are heard two or three years after submission and judgments may exceed a year from the hearing.³²

³¹ Note that there are slight discrepancies between the data released by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and the data supplied by the Ministry of Justice. This note cites the former.

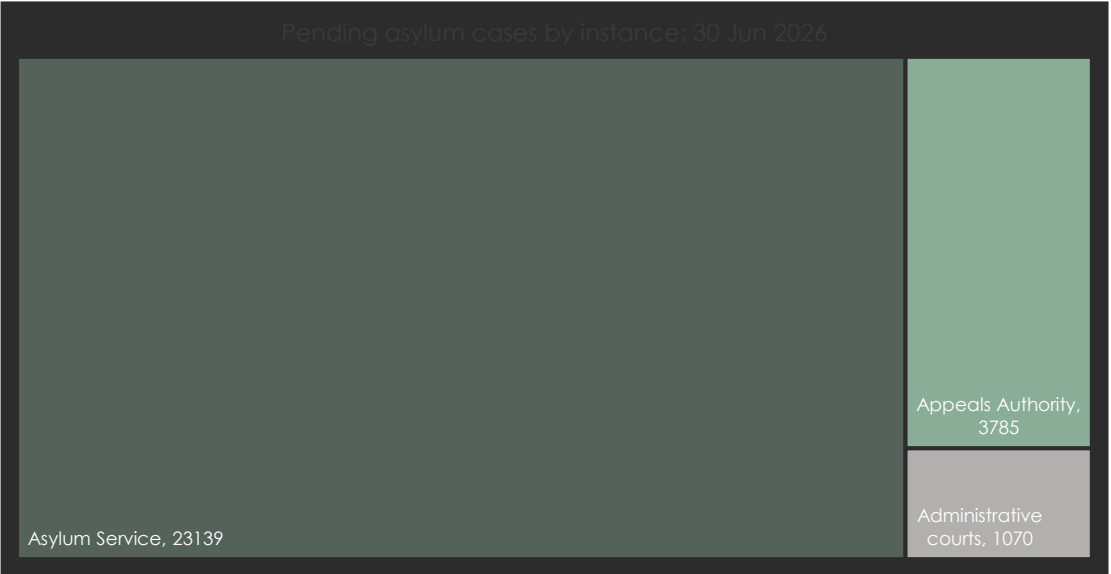
³² RSA et al., *Ακυρωτικός έλεγχος ασύλου, πέντε χρόνια μετά τη μεταφορά της αρμοδιότητας στα διοικητικά πρωτοδικεία*, September 2025, 6, available [here](#).

Appeal on points of law at the Council of State

Rulings of the administrative courts on judicial review of asylum decisions may be appealed on points of law before the Council of State.³³ Two such appeals were lodged in the first half of 2026.³⁴

Pending applications

At the end of June 2026, **23,139** asylum claims were pending at first instance and **3,785** at second instance, as well as **1,070** applications for judicial review against second instance decisions at the administrative courts of first instance.



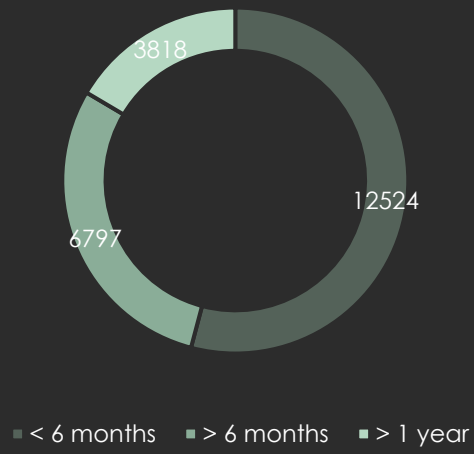
Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

In **13,185** out of **23,139** pending applications at first instance, the personal interview had not yet taken place. **3,818** applications were pending for over a year.

³³ Article 15(5) L 3068/2002, Gov. Gazette A' 274/14.11.2002.

³⁴ Ministry of Justice, Reply to parliamentary question, 211/2026, 31 August 2026, available [here](#).

Pending asylum cases at first instance by duration: 30 Jun 2026



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 6 Aug 2026

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