



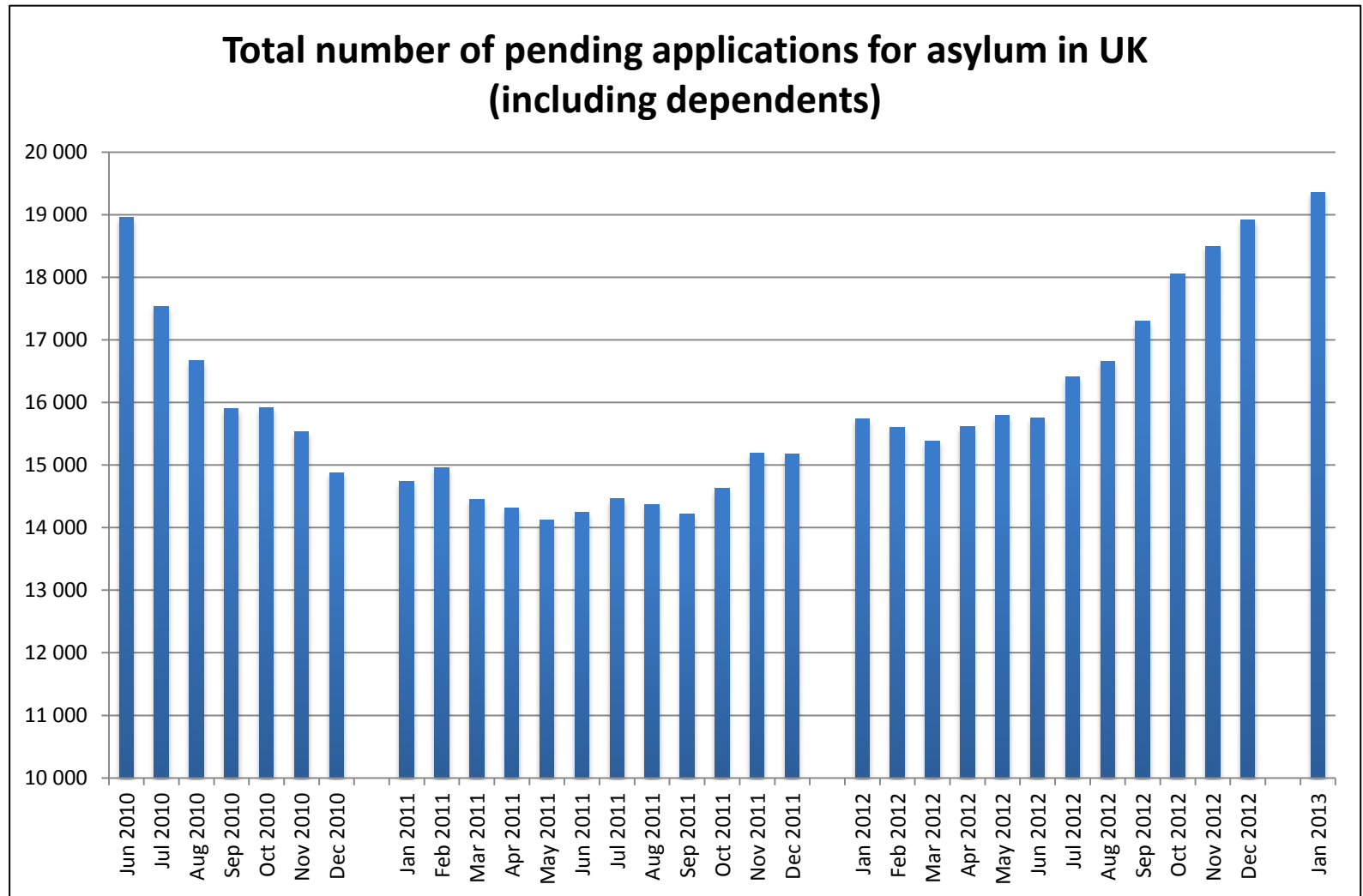
Home Office



The reception system for asylum in the United Kingdom

7th May, 2013

Number of applicants



Number of applicants

- 28,175 applications in calendar 2012
 - 445 per million inhabitants
 - 2,406 applications received in January, 2013
 - 8% of total applicants across the EU
 - Principal countries of origin: Pakistan (4,880); Iran (3,250); Sri Lanka (2,160)
- Across the EU-27, total applications in 2012 of 331,975*
 - 660 per million inhabitants*

Source : Eurostat. Newsrelease 48/2013 – 22 March 2013

* Eurostat estimate including the Netherlands

UK approach to Asylum

- Since March 2007, every new asylum application is placed with a single person who will deal with every aspect of it from beginning to end. This person is known as a **case owner**.
- The case owner aims to conclude an application within six months. This means that within six months:
 - A successful applicant will start integration into life in the United Kingdom; or,
 - An unsuccessful applicant will return home, either voluntarily or by enforced removal.
- Once a person has applied for asylum, there are six stages to the process. The process begins with initial screening and concludes with a decision being made.

Where can asylum claims be registered?

- Port of entry to the UK (airport, seaport) -11% of claims
 - Nearly all port claims are made at the airports.
- Asylum Screening Unit (ASU) based in Croydon – 44%
 - Majority book an appointment.
- Local Immigration Teams (LIT)/Immigration Compliance and Engagement teams (ICE - regional enforcement teams) - 45%
 - Lorry drops
 - Operational enforcement activity, police call outs and claims made whilst detained
 - Exceptional cases unable to attend the ASU (disability, unaccompanied children)

What are the objectives of the screening process?

- Aim to complete registration and administration of application at the same time.
- To register a claim for asylum
- To establish the applicant's identity
- To establish the applicant's immigration status
- To record a brief explanation of the claim to asylum
- To gather information to assist with onward case handling (which will be either to the Third Country Unit, Detained Fast Track or non-detained case work teams)
- To issue appropriate documentation and provide the applicant with information about the asylum process
- To clarify whether accommodation is required
- To ask about any medical conditions

Asylum Screening Unit

Has an appointment process and walk-in process and a separate children's process

- Walk-in process – open principally for those that are destitute or have a particular need/vulnerability
- Appointment – person phones for an appointment if they already have access to accommodation (e.g. their own or with friends).
- Will be asked questions via an interpreter.
- Allows for the most suitable slot to be booked for the individual.
- If the person is thought to be at risk/vulnerable they will be invited to the ASU as soon as possible (e.g. next day).

ASU Children's Team

- Specialist children's team within the ASU to ensure children are dealt with sensitively.
- Have own separate appointment process for social services to contact ASU.
- Children who attend the ASU to lodge their own asylum claims are able to wait in a separate and secure waiting area, with a television and toys for the younger children and an offer of refreshments.
- The team works in partnership with on-site social workers from Croydon Council and a Metropolitan Police Child Protection officer, who will investigate any child protection issues that may arise.
- If they do not attend with social services the child will be referred to social services for accommodation and transported from the ASU to their accommodation if unaccompanied. If there is an accompanied asylum seeking child then social services will still be informed of their presence in their region.

How do we decide who processes the asylum claim?

All claims during the registration process are referred to the National Asylum Intake Unit who will decide where the claim should be routed/referred to:

- Third Country Unit - The Third Country Unit decides whether an asylum applicant should be removed and have their application determined by another country. Mainly by using a set of criteria known as the Dublin II Regulations to determine the appropriate EU member state (plus Norway, Switzerland and Iceland).
- Detained Fast Track - Any case may be suitable for being processed by the Detained Fast Track process, if a case is deemed to be capable of having a quick decision, and if there are no exclusion factors (such as being a child, or heavily pregnant or having certain medical conditions) the person may be detained for the duration of their asylum claim
- Certain cases are suitable for the Detained Non-Suspensive Appeals process (these are cases where the country of origin has been designated as safe and a right of appeal may be exercised from abroad), part of the Detained Fast Track process.
- All other cases are processed in a non-detained environment by case work teams across the UK

What happens after the screening interview?

- If the person requires accommodation the NAIU will arrange accommodation and transport to Initial Accommodation.
- We issue an Application Registration Card (ARC) – which is evidence that an asylum claim has been submitted. It is not an identity card. It does contain a photo and biometric information (fingerprints) along with biographic information. Allows for RepArc – linking reporting with collecting support payments.
- We issue documentation showing where the applicant is expected to reside and details of the reporting regime (which is one of the ways we keep contact with those applicants who aren't detained).
- We provide written information about the asylum process which explains, an applicants rights, responsibilities and where they can go to get additional help and advice, available in range of languages.
- The asylum application is passed to the relevant asylum team for considering the case, as appropriate.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) receive support from local authorities through national arrangements for the care of children in need. Central government provide funding to the local authorities for each child supported in this way irrespective of the outcome of the asylum claim.
- Children who are under 16 are likely to be supported through fostering arrangements while those aged 16-18 are more likely to be placed in semi-independent living arrangements.

Initial Accommodation and support

- No person who has sought asylum in the UK need be destitute whilst awaiting a decision on their claim. Asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute can obtain support to avoid destitution from the time they arrive in the UK, until their claim is fully determined and they have exhausted their appeal rights.
- While eligibility for longer term support is being considered, destitute asylum seekers can be accommodated in Initial Accommodation (“IA”). IA is provided in the form of hostel type accommodation and is mainly full board with regular meals and essential toiletries provided as required.

Initial Accommodation and support

- IA is provided through specific third party accommodation providers pursuant to contractual arrangements entered into for this purpose ('COMPASS Contracts'). The COMPASS contracts ensure that facilities provided to asylum seekers comply with specified standards; related services are provided by the accommodation providers; and facilities and services provided are cost-effective for the Home Office and the UK taxpayer.
- If the asylum seeker has access to their own accommodation but can not afford to buy essential items they can apply for subsistence only support.

Services provided in Initial Accommodation

- Information briefings to new claimants on their rights and responsibilities whilst in the United Kingdom, on the asylum process, accessing legal advice and dispersal process, provided by either a Wrap-Around Service Provider (Voluntary Sector) or accommodation provider.
- A health care service delivered by a healthcare team independent of the Home Office is available to new claimants within most Initial Accommodation facilities
- Assistance with the completion of the asylum support application form (ASF1), provided by a Wrap-Around Service Provider.

Services provided after Initial Accommodation

- After leaving IA, longer term support is provided in the form of accommodation and a cash allowance.
- The support lasts until an asylum claim is finally determined at which point the property has to be vacated and the cash allowance is turned off.
- However, failed asylum seekers that have children living in their household remain eligible for support until they leave the UK.

Longer term accommodation

- The Home Office ensures suitable accommodation is allocated according to the specific needs of the asylum seeker and their dependants.
- Longer term accommodation is primarily self-catering High Multiple Occupancy (HMO) accommodation, which consists of a mix of bedsits, self-contained accommodation and maisonettes to house singles, couples and single parents with one child. There is also family accommodation in the form of larger maisonettes and houses.
- From December 2012 all longer term, dispersed accommodation for asylum applicants has been provided under COMPASS

Cash allowance

- Asylum seekers who cannot meet their essential living needs are provided with a cash allowance which is used to purchase food and essential toiletries.
- Support is provided on a weekly basis at different levels to singles, couples and families on a sliding scale
- In addition to the weekly cash allowance rates a single one-off payment of £300 may be provided to supported asylum seekers to help with the costs arising from the birth of a new baby. This is known as a maternity payment

Reception Conditions

- Asylum seekers can access the National Health Service (NHS) and register with a doctor.
- All children, 16 and under, are required to attend school – will rise to 18 in 2015.
- If an asylum seeker had permission to work before they claimed asylum they may be allowed to continued to work. Otherwise asylum seekers do not have permission to work unless their decision has been outstanding for a year and it is the fault of the Home Office.

Refugee Status

- A successful asylum seeker is granted refugee status and five years leave to remain leading to settlement.
- As soon as a person is granted leave as a refugee, they have immediate access to the labour market and to all key mainstream benefits. They also enjoy access to family reunion provisions and the Refugee Convention Travel Document.

Flexibility

- Arrangements in place under ‘Commercial and Operational Managers Procuring Asylum Support Services (COMPASS)’ to provide for initial and longer term accommodation
 - 3 providers allocated to 6 geographic regions
- Analysis and forecasting expertise to help plan for unexpected fluctuations to inflows

Contact details

Thank you!

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