

Beat: Politics

Almost 90,000 unaccompanied minors among asylum seekers registered in the EU

Slightly more than half are Afghans

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USPA NEWS - A total of 88,300 asylum seekers applying for international protection in the Member States of the European Union in 2015 were considered to be unaccompanied minors. While their number always stood between 11,000 and 13,000 in the EU over the period 2008-2013, it almost doubled in 2014.

In 2015, a substantial majority of unaccompanied minors were males (91%) and over half were aged 16 to 17 (57%, or 50,500 persons), while those aged 14 to 15 accounted for 29% (25,800 persons) and those aged less than 14 for 13% (11,800 persons). Around half (51%) of asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors in the EU in 2015 were Afghans.

In 2015, the highest number of asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors was registered in Sweden (with almost 35,300 unaccompanied minors, or 40% of all those registered in the EU Member States), followed by Germany (14,400, or 16%), Hungary (8,800 or 10%) and Austria (8,300 or 9%). Together these four Member States accounted for three-quarters of all asylum applicants considered unaccompanied minors registered in the EU in 2015.

The largest shares of unaccompanied minors among all young asylum applicants in 2015 were recorded notably in Italy (where 56.6% of all asylum applicants aged less than 18 were unaccompanied in 2015) and Sweden (50.1%), followed by the United Kingdom (38.5%), the Netherlands (36.5%), Denmark (33.7%), Finland (33.2%) and Bulgaria (33.1%). In total in the EU, unaccompanied minors accounted for almost a quarter (23.0%) of all asylum applicants aged less than 18 in 2015.

Most of the asylum applicants considered unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States were Afghans (51% of the total number of unaccompanied minors registered in 2015). Of the 45,300 Afghans considered unaccompanied minors in the EU in 2015, more than half were registered in Sweden (23,400). Afghans represented the most numerous citizenship of asylum seekers considered unaccompanied minors in fifteen EU Member States.

Syria (16% of the total number of unaccompanied minors) was the second main country of citizenship of asylum seekers considered unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States in 2015. Of the 14,300 Syrians seeking protection in the EU Member States and considered unaccompanied minors in 2015, 7 in 10 applied in one of the following three Member States: Germany (4,000), Sweden (3,800) and Hungary (2,200).

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