

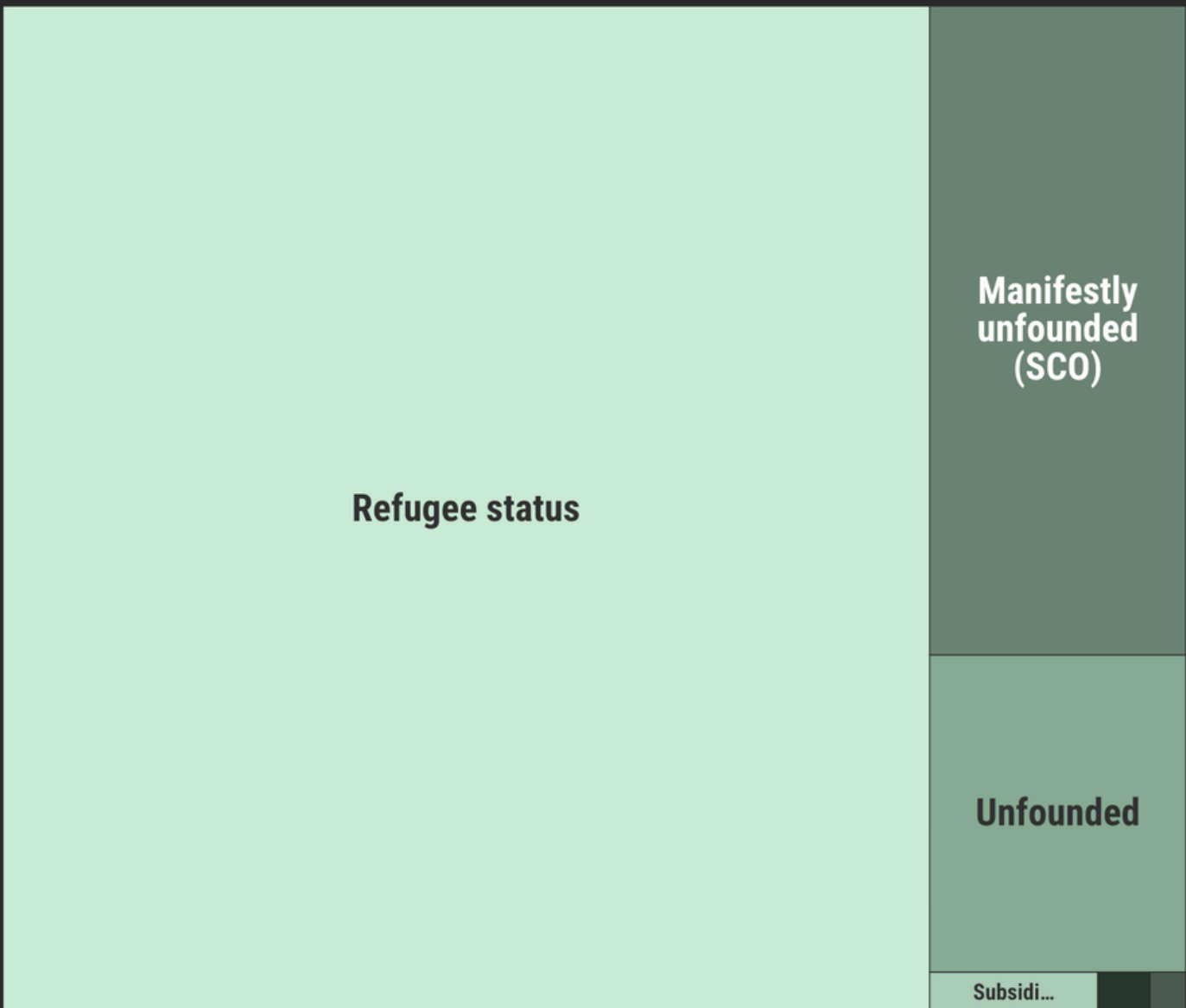
MAY 2025

POLICY NOTE

ASYLUM PROCEDURE STATISTICS IN GREECE 2024

Four in five asylum applications granted

In-merit decisions at first instance: 2024



■ Refugee status ■ Subsidiary protection ■ Unfounded ■ Manifestly unfounded (SCO)
■ Manifestly unfounded (other) ■ Exclusion

Asylum procedure statistics in Greece in 2024

Four in five asylum applications granted



Asylum applications

- 69,000** initial asylum applications, lodged mainly on the islands
- 4,688** subsequent asylum applications, including **867** following an inadmissible initial claim on "safe third country" grounds
- 1,223** subsequent applications subject to a 100 € fee per person



First instance procedure at the Asylum Service

- 79%** recognition rate, based almost exclusively on refugee status, mainly for Syria and Afghanistan
- 91.4%** recognition rate in the border procedure
- 7,050** manifestly unfounded rejections, of which **6,986** on "safe country of origin" grounds
- 2,143** inadmissibility decisions on "safe third country" grounds, of which **2,090** regarding Türkiye, including **1,256** in the border procedure
- 3,037** inadmissibility decisions on subsequent applications without new elements, of which **235** regarding initial claims dismissed on "safe third country" grounds
- 29,885** pending cases at first instance, including **14,142** awaiting an interview



Second instance procedure at the Appeals Committees

- 12,039** appeals, of which **7,902** received free legal assistance from the Registry of Lawyers of the Asylum Service
- 1,588** appeals dismissed due to failure to appear in person
- 1,526** appeals dismissed due to late submission
- 310** oral hearings at the appeal stage
- 10.1%** recognition rate at second instance, with positive decisions mainly for Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan



Judicial review at the administrative courts

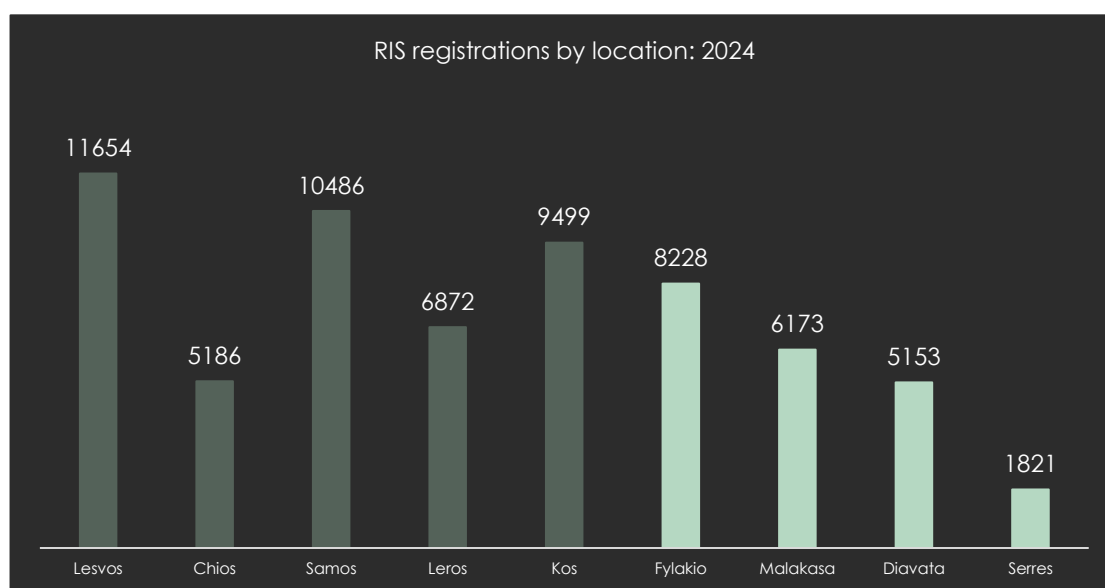
- 1,520** pending judicial review applications at the Administrative Courts of Athens and Thessaloniki
- 30.5%** approval rate for judicial review applications

This note analyses the workings of the Greek asylum procedure over the past year, based on monthly statistics published by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and figures provided in response to parliamentary questions.

Access to the asylum procedure

Official figures of the Greek authorities refer to a total of 62,053 recorded arrivals of undocumented persons in the past year. Of those, 7,587 arrived at the Evros land border, 39,016 via the Eastern Mediterranean on the Eastern Aegean islands, and 5,987 via the Central Mediterranean mainly on Crete and Gavdos.¹

The Reception and Identification Service (RIS) of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum conducts reception and identification (“screening”) procedures for every person arriving or present in Greece without documentation.² The RIS registered a total of 65,072 people in screening procedures, including 8,228 in Evros, 43,697 in the Closed Controlled Access Centres (CCAC) of the Eastern Aegean islands and 13,147 on the mainland. Most RIS registrations took place in CCAC Lesvos and Samos.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reception & identification statistics, Dec 2024

The Asylum Service and the RIS are designated responsible authorities for receiving asylum claims.³ The two authorities registered a total of 73,688 asylum seekers in 2024,⁴ a steady increase compared to 64,084 in 2023 and 37,362 in 2022. Similar to previous years, the overwhelming majority of asylum applications in Greece – 69,000 i.e. 93.6% of the total – were initial applications. In 2024 too, official statistics show that the number of initial asylum applications is significantly higher than the number of recorded arrivals and the number of people subjected to screening procedures at the RIS.

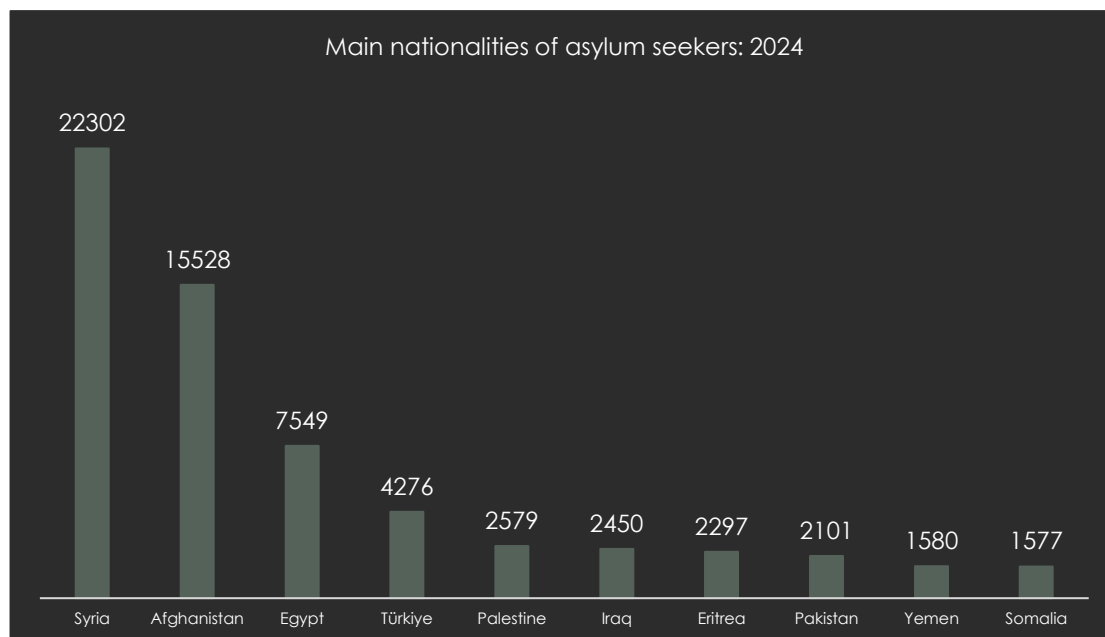
¹ RSA, ‘Crete – Gavdos: Sixfold increase in refugee arrivals in 2024 – Lack of organised first reception and accommodation infrastructure’, 30 January 2025, available [here](#).

² Articles 38 et seq. Greek Asylum Code, L 4939/2022, Gov. Gazette A’ 111/10.06.2022.

³ Article 1 (q) Greek Asylum Code.

⁴ According to the sum of figures in the monthly Ministry of Migration and Asylum reports.

The main nationalities of asylum seekers registered last year were as follows:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Dec 2024

The main countries of origin of asylum seekers include Syria and Afghanistan. The Greek government had designated Türkiye as a “safe third country” (STC) for the nationals of those countries based on a national list of safe third countries.⁵ Said list was quashed in March 2025 by the Plenary of the Council of State due to inadequate reasoning.⁶ The same list covered Pakistan, a country also designated as “safe country of origin” (SCO) in a separate national list. The latter list includes Egypt.⁷

Place of registration

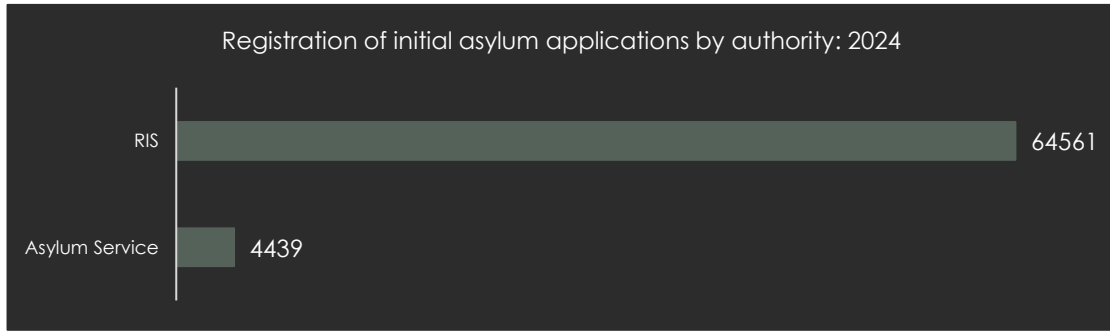
As a rule, initial asylum applications are lodged at the RIS upon completion of screening.⁸ The overwhelming majority of the 69,000 initial asylum claims lodged in 2024 were in fact registered by regional RIS services, namely the five CCAC on the Eastern Aegean islands, the Reception and Identification Centres (RIC) in Fylakio, Diavata and Malakasa, as well as the Mobile Registration Unit (MRU) in Sintiki, Serres.

⁵ JMD 538595/2023, Gov. Gazette B' 7063/15.12.2023.

⁶ Council of State, 'Ανακοίνωση του Προέδρου του Σ.τ.Ε. σχετικά με το αποτέλεσμα της διάσκεψης επί υποθέσεων, οι οποίες αφορούν τον χαρακτηρισμό της Τουρκίας ως ασφαλούς τρίτης χώρας', 21 March 2025, available [here](#); RSA & GCR, 'The Council of State annuls the designation of Turkey as a “safe third country” for asylum seekers', 27 March 2025, available [here](#).

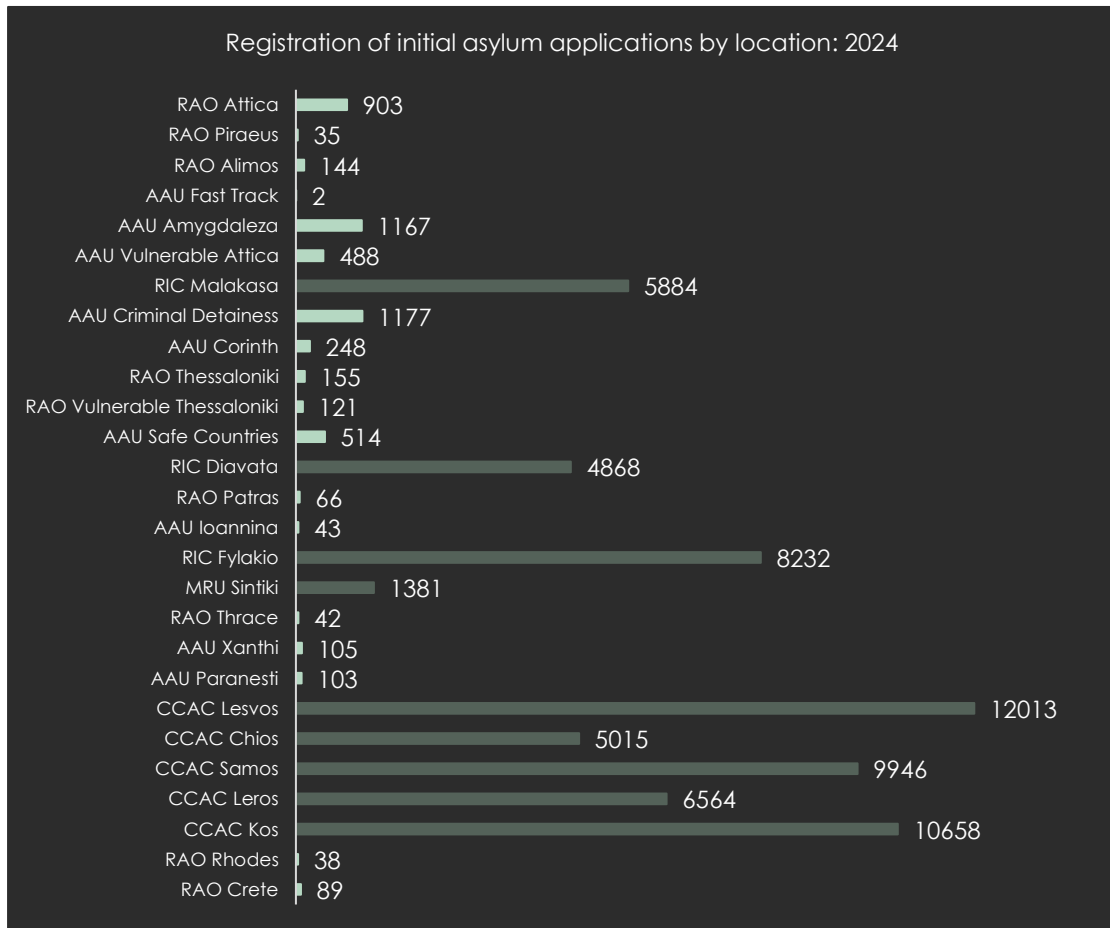
⁷ JMD 305652/2024, Gov. Gazette B' 7117/27.12.2024.

⁸ Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 'Καταγραφή αιτημάτων διεθνούς προστασίας από τα ΠΓΑ/ΑΚΑ της Υπηρεσίας Ασύλου', 2964/2025, 7 January 2025.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Dec 2024

The number of initial asylum applications lodged by Regional Asylum Office (RAO) / Autonomous Asylum Unit (AAU) of the Asylum Service or RIC /CCAC of the RIS was as follows:

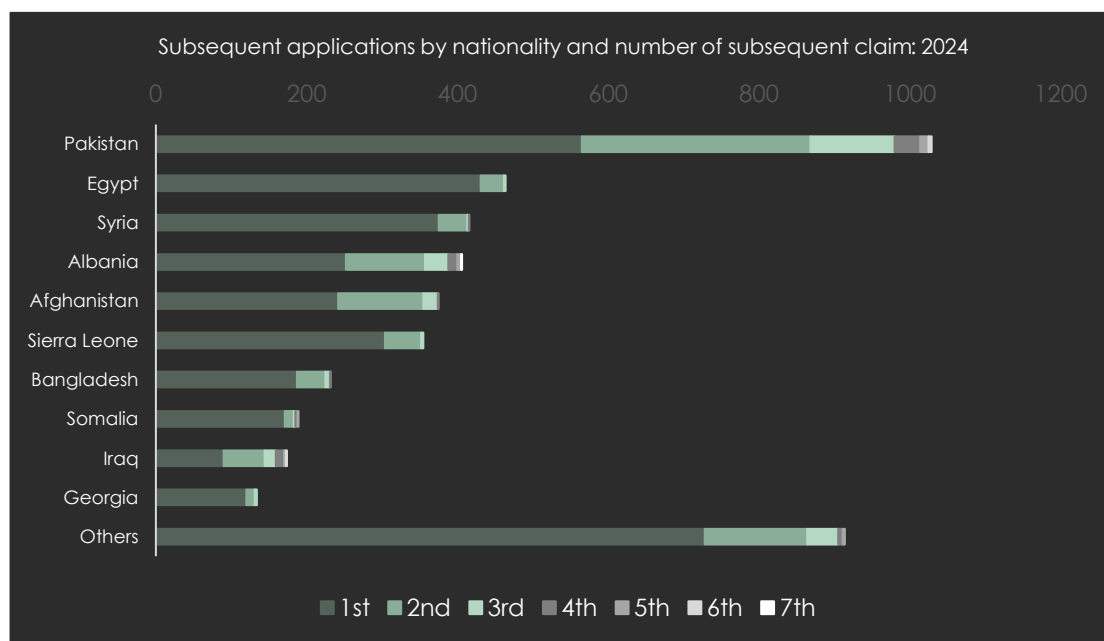


Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Dec 2024

The main places of registration of asylum applications throughout Greece in 2024 were CCAC Lesvos, Kos and Samos. Over 50% of asylum applications were lodged on the Eastern Aegean islands last year.

Subsequent applications

Subsequent asylum applications are lodged at the RAO and AAU of the Asylum Service. According to data supplied by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum in response to parliamentary questions, a total of 4,688 subsequent applications were lodged in 2024 following a final decision on the initial claim. This number represents a slight decrease compared to 6,326 applications in 2023. The main nationalities of people lodging subsequent applications in 2024 were as follows:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

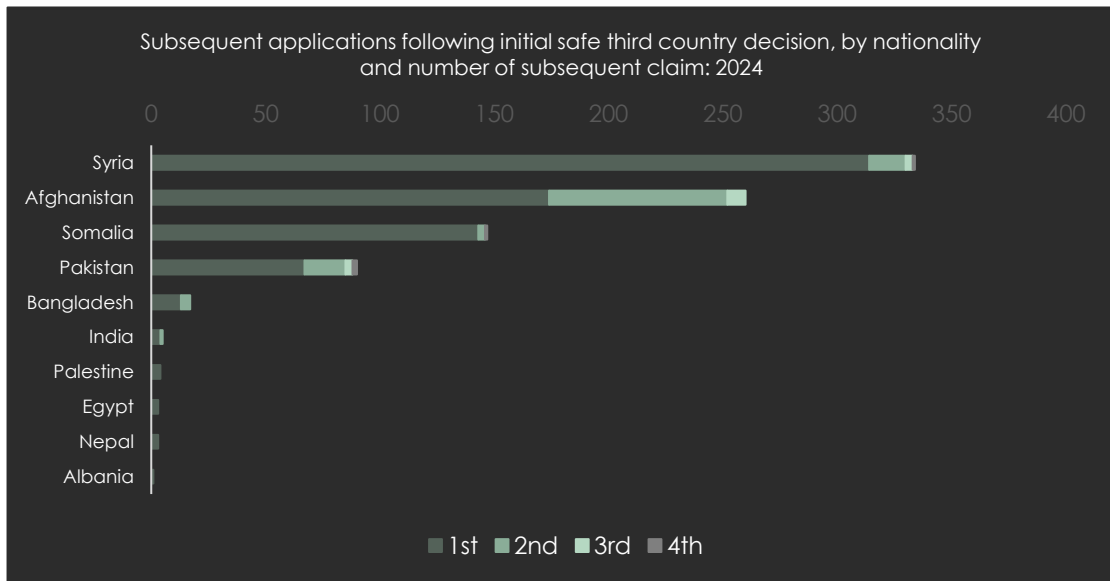
Out of a total of 4,688 subsequent asylum applications lodged last year, 1,223 were second or onward subsequent applications. Since 2022, these claims are subject to a fee of 100 € per person according to Greek legislation.⁹ No other EU Member State has enacted such a rule. In light of this, more than 120,000 € were paid to the Greek state in 2024 for access to the asylum process under that measure. The legality of this rule is being reviewed by the Council of State – the judgment is pending at the time of writing.

Second or onward subsequent applications subject to a 100 € fee per person were mostly lodged by nationals of Pakistan (464), followed by Albania (154) and Afghanistan (133).

The Ministry of Migration and Asylum data provide noteworthy details on the number of subsequent applications lodged following dismissal of the initial claim as inadmissible on “safe third country” grounds without an assessment on the merits. This concerned 867 subsequent applications. Of those, 334 concerned Syrian nationals, 260 Afghan and 147 Somali nationals for whom Türkiye was designated as a “safe third country” and a ground for inadmissibility was applicable.¹⁰

⁹ Article 94(10) Greek Asylum Code; JMD 472687/2021, Gov. Gazette B' 6246/27.12.2021.

¹⁰ Article 91 Greek Asylum Code; JMD 538595/2023. See also RSA & PRO ASYL, *The Concept of “Safe Third Country”: Legal Standards & Implementation in the Greek Asylum System*, February 2024, available [here](#).



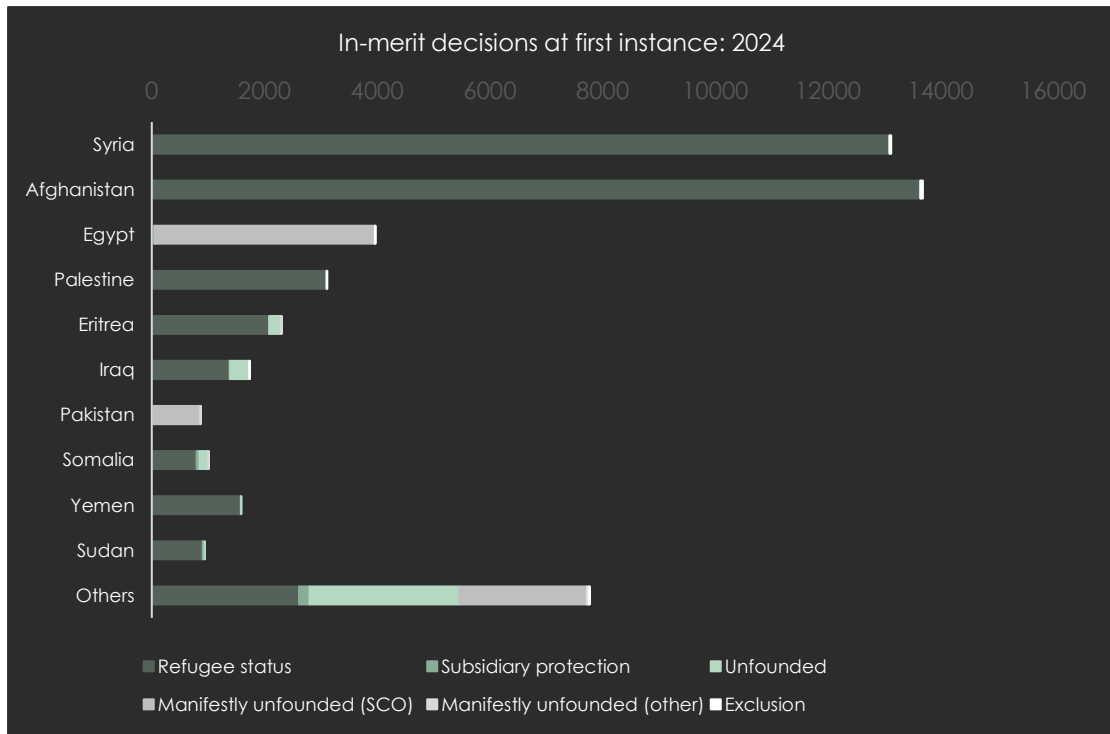
Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

First instance procedure at the Asylum Service

According to official statistics, 44,498 personal interviews of asylum seekers were carried out in 2024. Of those, 32,268 were conducted by Asylum Service caseworkers and 12,320 by European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) personnel. The Greek authorities did not disclose data on the number of interviews conducted via videoconference and on in-person interviews.

The Asylum Service issued 77,392 first instance decisions last year. 50,117 of those were decisions on the merits of asylum applications, assessing whether conditions for refugee status or subsidiary protection were met.

Almost $\frac{4}{5}$ of asylum applications examined on their merits by the Asylum Service were granted. The overall recognition rate at first instance reached 79%, up from 76.6% in 2023 and 62.3% in 2022. Specifically, 39,271 decisions taken in 2024 granted refugee status and 296 granted subsidiary protection, while 10,550 were rejections on the merits.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

Recognition rates remained extremely high for the main countries of origin of people seeking protection in Greece: over 99% for Syria, Afghanistan, Palestine and Yemen; 98% for Sudan; and over 80% for Iraq and Somalia. Official data therefore still confirm that the overwhelming majority of people applying for asylum in the country are refugees and are entitled to protection in Greece.¹¹

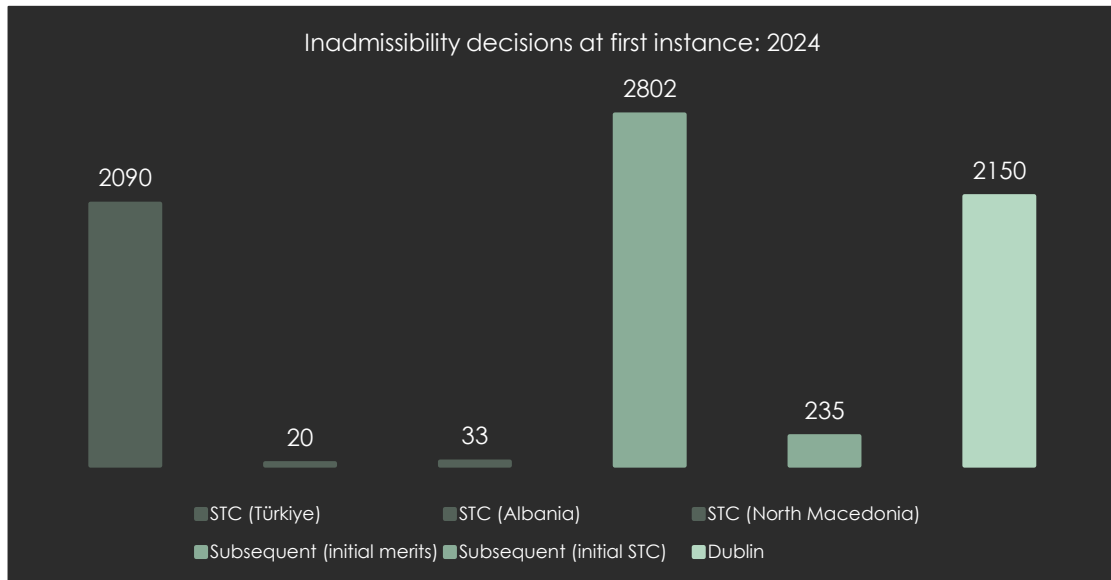
The majority of rejection decisions concern manifestly unfounded applications (5,164) rejected under the accelerated procedure,¹² almost exclusively based on the national list of "safe countries of origin". Manifestly unfounded rejections were issued mainly vis-à-vis nationals of Pakistan (1,631), Egypt (1,050), Bangladesh (522), Albania (503), India (485) and Georgia (404).

¹¹ Hence, the Asylum Service has applied Article 82(7) Greek Asylum Code for over one year, permitting omission of the personal interview in respect of several nationalities: European Commission, Email correspondence: 'meeting with GAS on 19 September', Ares(2024)7852319, 19 September 2024.

¹² Article 88(9) Greek Asylum Code.

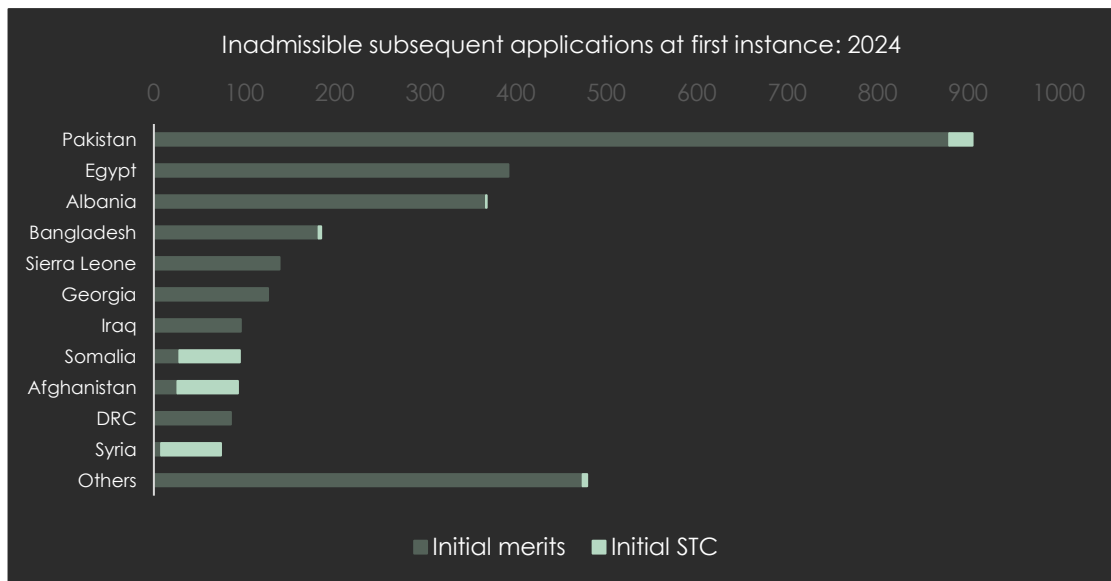
Inadmissible applications

The Asylum Service dismissed 7,330 asylum applications as inadmissible on various inadmissibility grounds,¹³ without any assessment of their merits and of qualification for refugee status or subsidiary protection.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

The primary ground for dismissal of applications as inadmissible remains subsequent applications without new elements. These claims undergo a preliminary admissibility assessment at the Asylum Service.¹⁴ Out of a total of 3,037 inadmissibility decisions on subsequent applications, 2,802 concern claims initially rejected on the merits and 235 claims initially dismissed on "safe third country" grounds. Subsequent applications dismissed as inadmissible at first instance mainly concern the following countries:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

¹³ Article 89(1) Greek Asylum Code.

¹⁴ Article 94(2) Greek Asylum Code.

The “safe third country” concept remains the second main ground for inadmissibility of asylum applications. This is based on the national list designating Türkiye as a “safe third country” for five nationalities, as well as Albania and North Macedonia for all asylum seekers entering Greece through their territories.

The “safe third country” concept continues to be implemented almost exclusively vis-à-vis Türkiye. The Asylum Service issued 2,090 inadmissibility decisions regarding Türkiye, as opposed to no more than 33 for North Macedonia and 20 for Albania. The countries of origin of asylum seekers against whom the concept was applied were as follows:

“Safe third country” decisions at first instance: 2024					
Türkiye		North Macedonia		Albania	
Syria	1,332	Nepal	20	Iran	8
Somalia	525	Syria	3	Nepal	4
Afghanistan	147	Türkiye	3	Bangladesh	3
Pakistan	51	Bangladesh	3	Sri Lanka	3
Bangladesh	25	India	2	Philippines	1
Palestine	6	Cuba	1	Afghanistan	1
Others	4	Albania	1		
Total	2,090	Total	33	Total	20

Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) has ruled that an asylum application may not be dismissed as inadmissible where the third country designated as safe does not accept readmissions. Following that ruling, the Plenary of the Greek Council of State held in 2025 that asylum applications were unlawfully dismissed as inadmissible on the basis that Türkiye is a “safe third country”, given that said country has suspended readmissions since March 2020. The Council of State also quashed the designation of Türkiye as a “safe third country” due to insufficient reasoning on the part of the Greek administration as to the fulfilment of the safety criteria in that country. Refugee Support Aegean (RSA) and the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) represented the case before the CJEU and the Greek Council of State. Already in early April 2025, however, Greece published a new list designating Türkiye again as a “safe third country” for nationals of Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Pakistan and Bangladesh.¹⁵

Border procedure

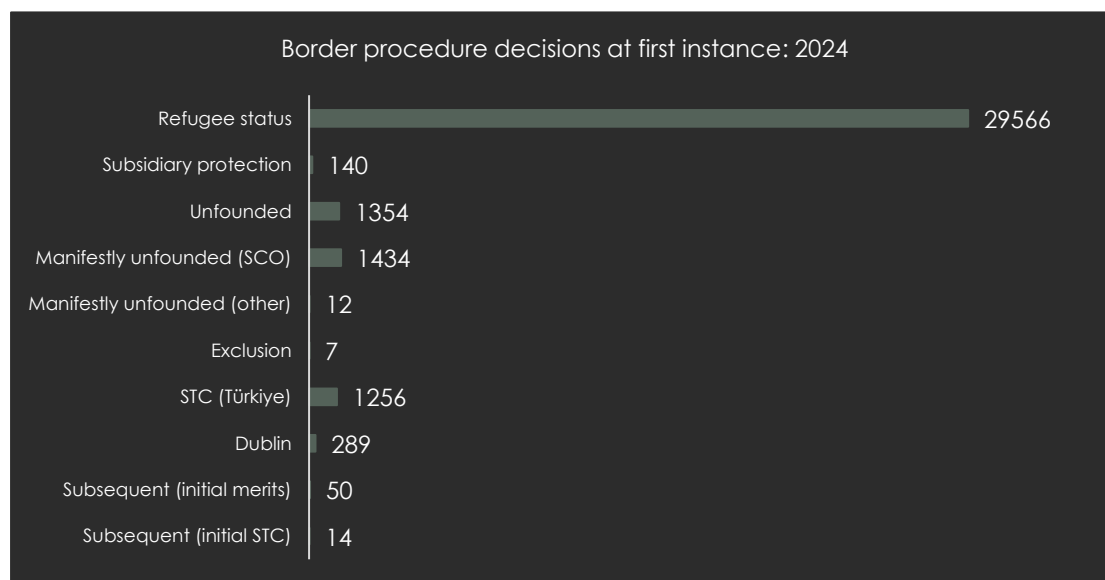
Still in 2024, Greece made systematic, arbitrary use of the border procedure to cases of people making asylum applications inside CCAC on the Eastern Aegean islands. The practice breaches the prohibition on applying this procedure to claims that are not made at the “borders” or in “transit zones”.¹⁶

Moreover, we have repeatedly stressed that the border procedure may only be used for the purpose of examining the admissibility of asylum applications or where one or

¹⁵ RSA & GCR, ‘New designation of Türkiye as a “safe third country” for refugees in defiant contempt of the Greek Council of State’s ruling’, 14 April 2025, available [here](#).

¹⁶ Article 95(1) Greek Asylum Code.

more grounds apply for examination of their merits under the accelerated procedure.¹⁷ Therefore, the border procedure may not substitute the regular procedure for the purpose of in-merit assessment of applications that are not presumed to be manifestly unfounded.¹⁸ The European Commission has also raised the matter with the Greek authorities.¹⁹



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

The Asylum Service took 34,122 decisions in the border procedure in 2024; more than quadrupling the 7,662 issued in 2023. Of those, 1,446 were manifestly unfounded rejections and 1,609 were inadmissibility decisions. Accordingly, the overwhelming majority of decisions taken in the border procedure exceed the boundaries of the law and should have been channelled into the regular procedure. This includes 1,354 unfounded rejections unlawfully issued by the Asylum Service in the border procedure.

No single case was exempted from the border procedure for reasons of vulnerability and need for special procedural guarantees.²⁰ This yet again raises serious questions as to Greece's compliance with the duty to afford special procedural safeguards to those asylum seekers who require them in order to navigate the asylum process.

The vast majority of decisions issued in the border procedure were positive, pointing to an extremely high recognition rate of 91.4%; by far exceeding the high overall recognition rate of 79%. 20,695 of the total of 29,566 refugee status grants issued in the border procedure concerned nationals of Syria and Afghanistan.

¹⁷ Articles 88(9) and 95(1) Greek Asylum Code.

¹⁸ Bearing in mind reduced procedural safeguards under that procedure. Note in that regard: Administrative Court of Athens, AΔ654/2024, 16 July 2014; AΔ54/2023, 23 January 2023; Administrative Court of Appeal of Piraeus, A65/2023, 10 February 2023; A296/2021; A292/2021; A94/2021, 25 May 2021; A106/2020, 21 February 2020.

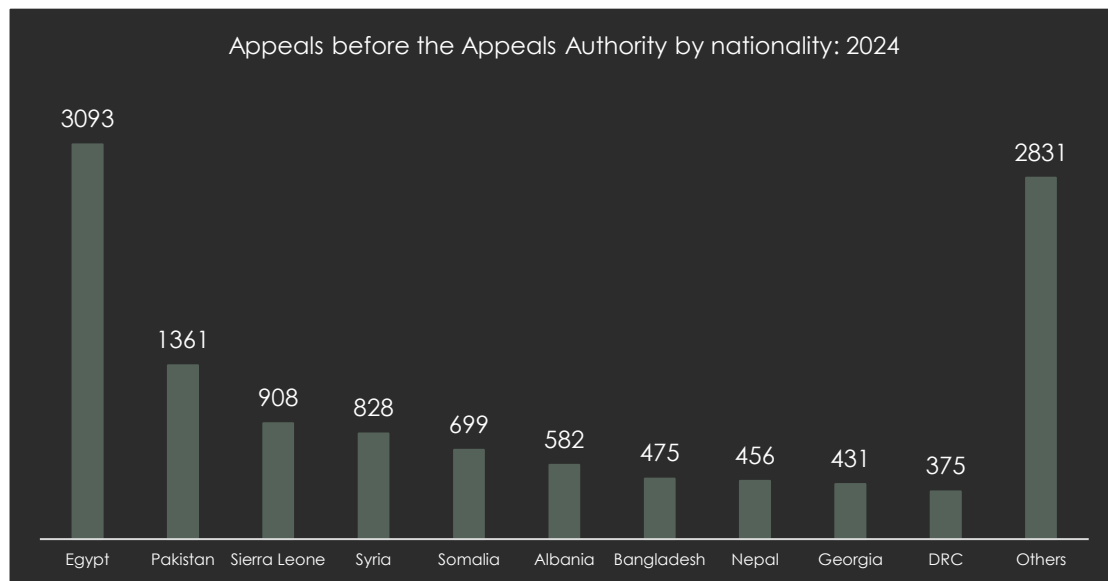
¹⁹ European Commission, Email correspondence: 'Jour Fixe with GAS on 23 May', Ares(2024)5412003, 23 May 2024.

²⁰ Article 72(3) Greek Asylum Code.

Second instance procedure at the Appeals Committees

Appeals

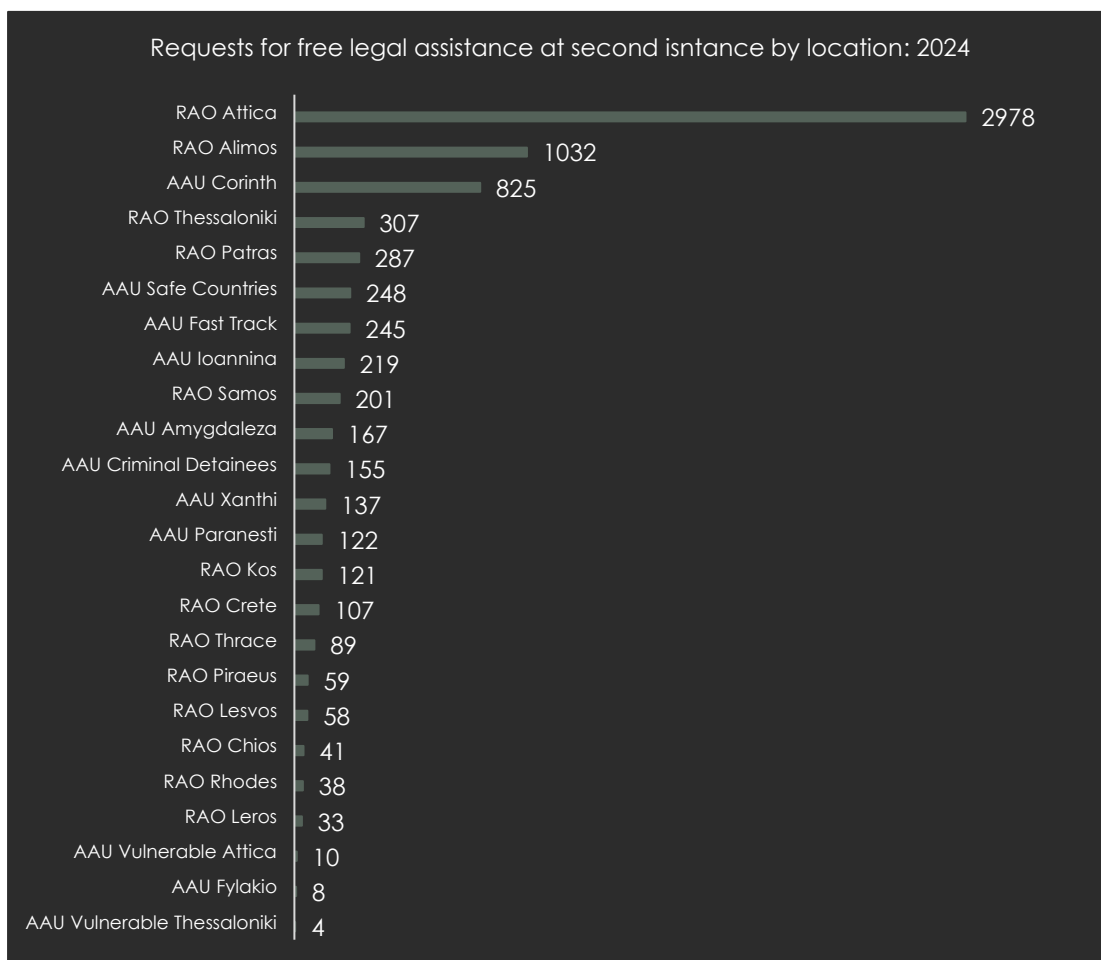
12,039 appeals were lodged before the Appeals Authority against Asylum Service decisions last year, up from 10,973 in 2023. The main countries of origin of appellants include countries listed as "safe countries of origin", namely Egypt and Pakistan, as well as countries for nationals of which Türkiye had been designated as a "safe third country" e.g. Syria and Somalia:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Dec 2024

Per official data supplied in response to parliamentary questions, there were 7,491 requests for free legal assistance by the Registry of Lawyers of the Asylum Service, representing 62% of lodged appeals. Figures refer to 7,902 people receiving free legal assistance from the Registry of Lawyers, a number exceeding the total sum of requests.

The majority of free legal assistance requests were lodged with RAO Attica, RAO Alimos and AAU Corinth.



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

Concerns emerge on closer reading of statistics on the operation of the Registry of Lawyers of the Asylum Service in the particular case of asylum seekers in immigration detention. AAU Corinth, responsible for the pre-removal detention centre of Corinth, received 825 requests for legal aid. On the other hand, AAU Amygdaleza, responsible for the largest pre-removal detention centre in Greece, received no more than 167.

Examination of appeals

The Appeals Committees took a total of 12,909 second instance decisions throughout the past year. The Committees examined appeals by way of oral hearing in no more than 310 cases.²¹ Oral examination of asylum applications at second instance thereby remained exceptional and extremely narrow despite recent guidance from Council of State case law, highlighting the duty of the Committees to order oral hearings so as to ensure adequate collection of the evidence forming the basis for examination of asylum claims.²²

The Appeals Committees dismissed 1,588 appeals due to failure on the part of appellants to attend the examination of the case in person or to make timely

²¹ Pursuant to Article 102(3) Greek Asylum Code.

²² Council of State, 1371/2023, 9 August 2023.

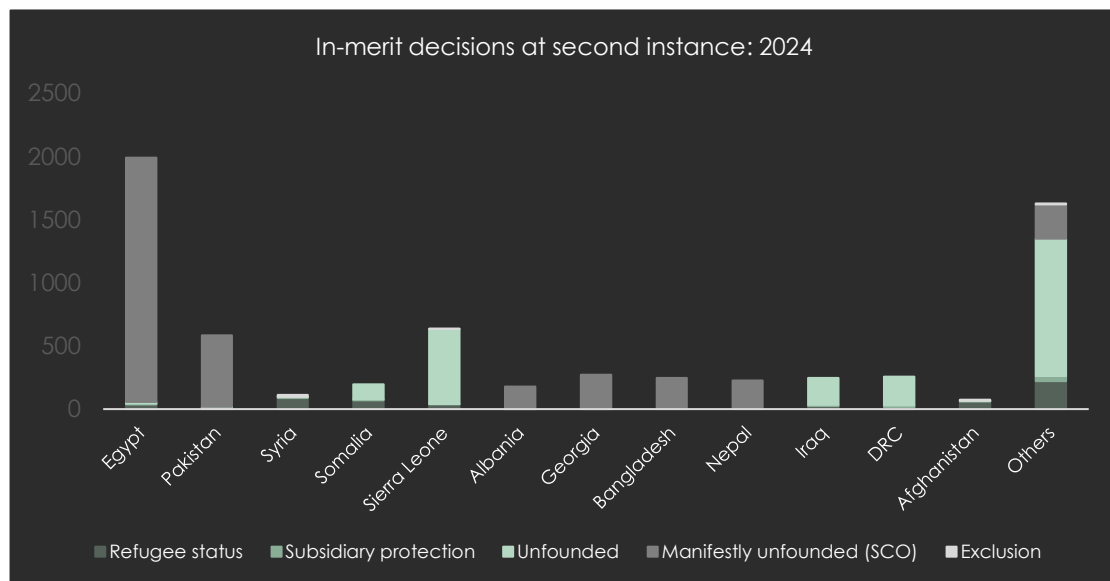
submission of a certificate of residence in a reception facility, even though such a failure may be attributable to the authorities.²³ The examination of the appeal is merely a formality, where the Committees only verify whether the person lodging the appeal has appeared before them so as to infer their intention to pursue their appeal.

This measure raises serious questions relating to respect for the right to an effective remedy insofar as it results in rejection of appeals regardless of the appellant's protection needs. The review of its legality has been referred before the CJEU, and the Advocate General of the Court has already deemed the rule to contravene EU law.²⁴

In addition, the Appeals Committees dismissed 1,526 appeals due to late submission in 2024. This figure also raises serious concerns, bearing in mind that late submission of appeals is closely related to circumvention of rules of notification of asylum decisions on the part of the authorities. Specifically, the Asylum Service continues to resort to email notifications of first instance decisions to people residing in RIS facilities, for whom notification of decisions must be made in person in the facilities. This obligation is expressly stated in the law and has been stressed by Greek administrative courts.²⁵

Decisions on the merits

Out of a total of 12,909 second instance decisions issued last year, 6,645 were decisions on the merits of asylum applications:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

The above figures point to an overall second instance recognition rate of 10.1%, a drop from 14.8% in 2023 and 11.8% in 2022.

²³ All those were rejected as manifestly unfounded pursuant to Article 102(2) Greek Asylum Code.

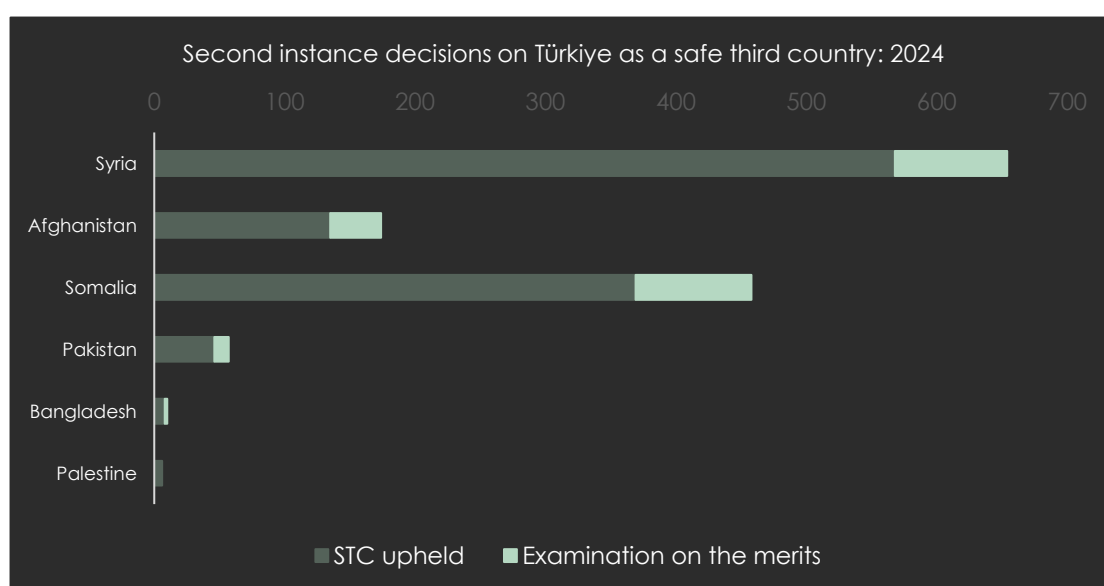
²⁴ CJEU, C-610/23 *Al Nasiria*, Advocate-General Opinion, 6 February 2025. See also Administrative Court of Athens AΔ940/2023, 31 May 2023; Administrative Court of Thessaloniki, AΔ370/2023, 8 May 2023.

²⁵ Article 87(4) Greek Asylum Code. See e.g. Administrative Court of Thessaloniki, AΔ6/2025, 13 January 2025; Administrative Court of Athens, NΔ324/2024, 28 June 2024.

Inadmissible applications

The Appeals Committees dismissed 2,984 asylum applications as inadmissible – beyond appeals dismissed due to late submission or rejected as “manifestly unfounded” due to failure to attend the examination in person or to submit a residence certificate. Here too, main grounds for inadmissibility are subsequent applications without new elements (1,693) and the “safe third country” concept (1,167), particularly as regards Türkiye.

The Ministry of Migration and Asylum has provided detailed figures on second instance decisions issued on appeals by the five nationalities for which Türkiye has been designated as a “safe third country”. These statistics reveal that most second instance decisions in “safe third country” cases upheld the Asylum Service inadmissibility decision and did not proceed to an assessment of the merits of the asylum claim:²⁶



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Reply to parliamentary question, 10 Mar 2025

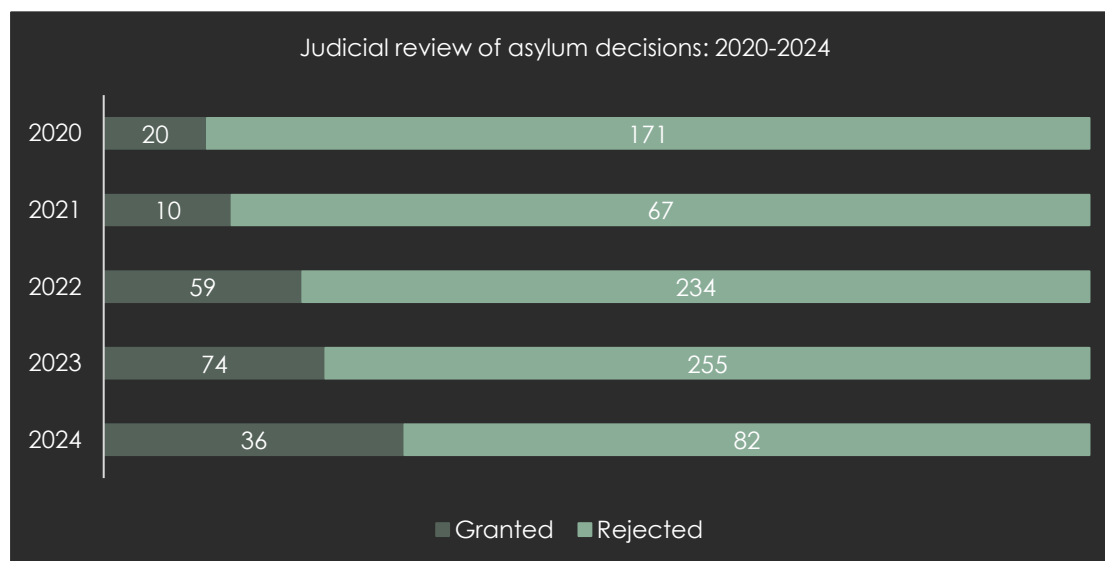
Judicial review at the administrative courts

1,520 applications for judicial review of Appeals Committee decisions were pending before the Administrative Courts of Athens and Thessaloniki at the end of 2024. Repeated postponements of hearings of asylum cases persist at the administrative courts, pending the publication of the Council of State Plenary judgment on the unconstitutionality of the legislative provision on single-judge composition of the Appeals Committees,²⁷ as well as the Council of State Plenary judgment on annulment of the designation of Türkiye as a “safe third country”.

²⁶ Note that the figures relate to definitive second instance decisions. They therefore do not include provisional decisions issued upon annulment of inadmissibility decisions for the purpose of ordering an oral hearing at second instance ahead of assessing the merits of the case.

²⁷ Article 5(7) L 4375/2016, Gov. Gazette A' 51/03.04.2016. Note Council of State, 'Ανακοίνωση του Προέδρου του ΣΤΕ σχετικά με το αποτέλεσμα της διάσκεψης επί υπόθεσης που αφορά τη συνταγματικότητα της ανάθεσης σε δικαστικό λειτουργό καθηκόντων

Ministry of Migration and Asylum data reflect judicial review of asylum decisions as follows:



Source: Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Statistics, Jan-Dec 2024

As regards judicial review applications examined on the merits, the approval rate at the courts was 30.5%, a notable increase from 22.6% in 2023 and 20% in 2022.

Available data confirm, however, that most judicial review applications are dismissed by the administrative courts as inadmissible due to non-compliance with admissibility requirements such as a notarised power of attorney and payment of court fees. 349 applications for judicial review were dismissed as inadmissible and 71 were withdrawn in 2024.

Judgments of the administrative courts may be appealed before the Council of State.²⁸ Only one such appeal was lodged in 2024 and is pending. Two appeals were withdrawn last year.

Pending applications

At the end of 2024, there were 26,623 asylum applications pending at first instance and 1,641 at second instance, as well as 1,520 applications for judicial review of second instance decisions before the administrative courts.

In 17,279 out of the 26,623 pending applications at first instance, the personal interview had not been conducted. All pending interviews had been scheduled for 2025. Most pending cases at first instance (21,173) were pending for less than six months, while 2,838 were pending for more than six months and 2,612 for over one year.

μονομελούς διοικητικού οργάνου που συζητήθηκε στην Ολομέλεια την 1η Νοεμβρίου 2024', 3 December 2024, available [here](#).

²⁸ Article 15(5) L 3068/2002, Gov. Gazette A' 274/14.11.2002.

The following conclusions may be drawn from the official data of the Greek authorities on the asylum process:

- ❖ The fact that overwhelming majority of people registered by the RIS and requesting asylum in Greece are refugees and obtain protection already at first instance remains a key feature of the Greek asylum system.
- ❖ Policies such as "safe third country" continue to lead to arbitrary denial of protection to thousands of refugees entitled thereto, and to severe breaches at the stages of both designation of safe countries and dismissal of individual asylum applications as inadmissible.
- ❖ The border procedure continues to be arbitrarily applied to all people arriving on the Eastern Aegean islands, even though most asylum applications are approved. Greece must respect the boundaries of the border procedure, bearing in mind that the majority of arrivals and registrations take place in the island CCAC.
- ❖ There is still an increase in the number of Appeals Committee decisions quashed in judicial review, albeit with significant delay. This raises concerns as to the quality of the second instance asylum procedure. Crucial issues at the level of Appeals Committees include the widespread dismissal of appeals – without examination – due to late submission or to failure to appear in person, as well as the extremely limited use of oral hearings.

Finally, we recall that data that are absolutely essential to a sound understanding of the Greek asylum procedure are only made available in response to parliamentary question. We therefore reiterate our constant demand for regular disclosure of all Ministry of Migration and Asylum statistics, with a view to providing comprehensive information on the asylum system and to substantiating its implementation.



<https://rsaegean.org/en/asylum-procedure-statistics-in-greece-2024>



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