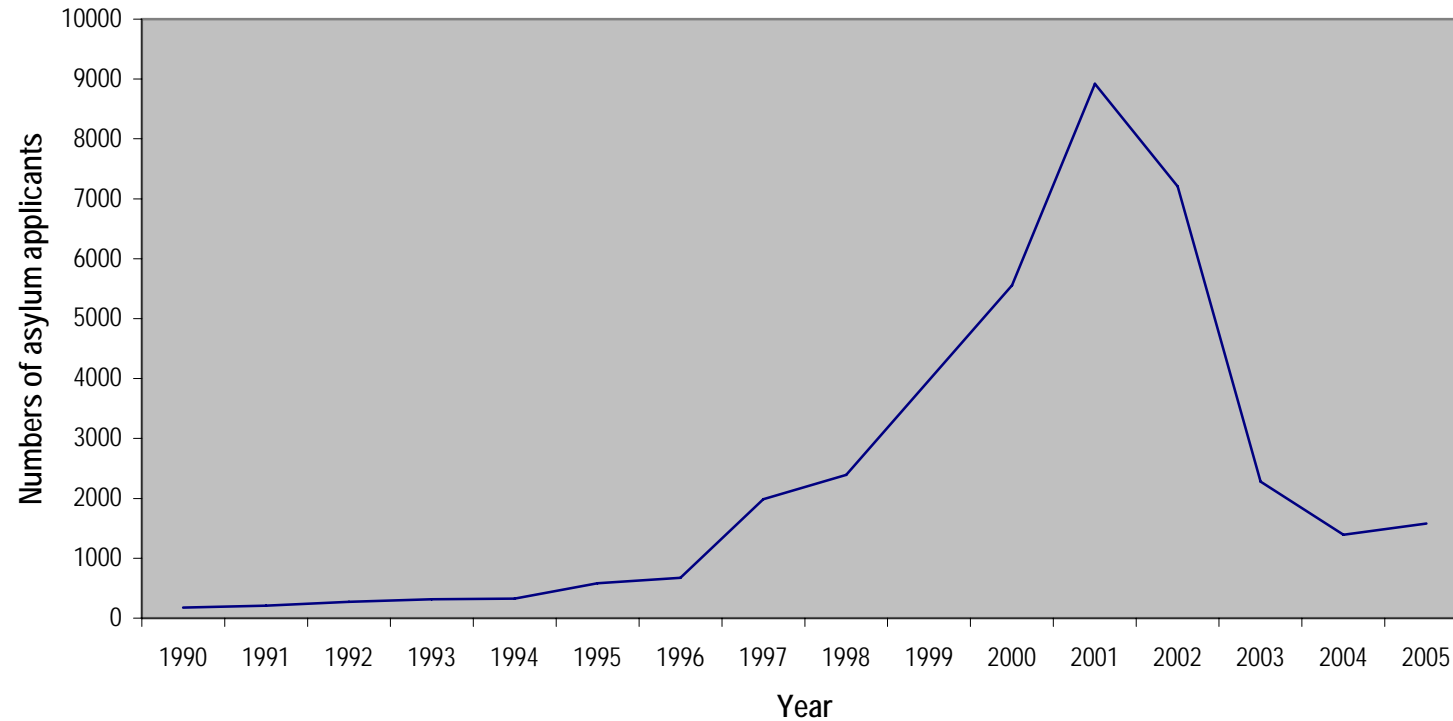




Statistical snapshot series
Afghan asylum applications to the UK 1990-2005^{(1) (2) (3)}

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 ⁽⁴⁾	Total
<i>Total number of asylum applications received</i>	26,205	44,840	24,605	22,370	32,830	43,965	29,640	32,500	46,015	71,160	80,315	71,025	84,130	49,405	33,960	25,710	718,675
<i>Asylum applications received from Afghan nationals</i>	175	210	270	315	325	580	675	1,085	2,395	3,975	5,555	8,920	7,205	2,280	1,395	1,580	36,940
<i>Percentage Afghan of total applications received (rank⁽⁵⁾)</i>	1%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	5% (5)	6% (5)	7% (5)	13% (1)	9% (3)	5% (8)	4% (9)	6% (5)	5% (N/A) ⁽⁶⁾
<i>Number granted refugee status, ELR, DL or HP ⁽⁷⁾⁽⁸⁾</i>	60	50	215	85	5	710	440	655	1,535	1,195	1,070	9,820	4,880	600	455	495	22,270
<i>Granted refugee status ⁽⁷⁾</i>	15	5	10	*	5	15	25	20	35	15	375	2,320	115	40	35	30	3,060
<i>Granted ELR, DL or HP ⁽⁷⁾</i>	45	45	205	85	*	695	415	635	1,500	1,180	695	7,500	4,765	560	420	465	19,210
<i>Total number of refusals ^{(7) (9)}</i>	5	5	10	25	10	40	50	75	65	90	1,515	2,545	3,300	3,375	2,225	1,050	14,385

Afghan asylum applications to the UK 1990-2005



General notes on these statistics

- (1) Figures are rounded to the nearest five with * representing 1 or 2. These figures have not been included in the final total column.
- (2) Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole figure.

- (3) Figures exclude dependants.
- (4) The figures given for 2005 are provisional.
- (5) Rank is only given in places where the number of asylum applications received from Afghan nationals is within the top ten of the total number of applications received.
- (6) N/A implies that figures are unavailable.
- (7) Decision figures do not necessarily relate to applications received in that year, and the figures quoted above are indicative of initial decisions only and are not updated to reflect cases won on appeal.
- (8) These numbers include those who have been granted **refugee status**, **exceptional leave to remain (ELR)**, **humanitarian protection (HP)** and **discretionary leave (DL)**. Prior to 1999, those people recognised as refugees and granted asylum only qualified for settlement after four years' residence in the UK. After 1999, people granted asylum and given refugee status are automatically given indefinite leave to remain (ILR) and 'settlement'.

ELR is an alternative form of protection that was granted until April 2003 when an asylum seeker had failed to advance a successful asylum claim but was able to advance other reasons why s/he should not be removed. This applied when a case was accepted under the Human Rights Act 1998 or the UK's obligations under the 1984 UN Convention Against Torture (which the UK ratified in 1988). Prior to 1999, a person who had completed seven years on exceptional leave could apply for indefinite leave to remain (ILR). After 1999, this was reduced to four years. Those who have been granted ELR have many of the same rights and entitlements as those who have been granted refugee status, such as the same employment rights and access to benefits and other state support, but lack others such as automatic right to family reunion.

ELR was replaced by humanitarian protection (HP) and discretionary leave (DL) from 1 April 2003. Humanitarian protection (HP) is granted for up to three years. It is granted to people who have been refused refugee status, but cannot be returned to their country of origin as they face a serious risk to life or person for one or more of the following reasons: death penalty, unlawful killing, torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Discretionary leave (DL) is granted outside the immigration rules in very limited circumstances to people who have been refused refugee status but who do not fulfil the criteria for HP. DL may be granted when the applicant:

- has an Article 8 claim under the European Convention on Human Rights;
- has an Article 3 claim under the European Convention on Human Rights only on medical grounds or severe humanitarian cases;
- is an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child for whom adequate reception arrangements in their country are not available;
- would qualify for asylum or humanitarian protection but has been excluded; or
- is able to demonstrate particularly compelling reasons why removal would not be appropriate.

DL is granted for up to three years (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are normally granted DL for three years or until their 18th birthday, whichever is earlier) and will be reviewed at the end of that period. At that point it can be extended for a further three years.

Those granted HP are eligible to apply for settlement after three years and those on DL are normally eligible to apply for settlement after completing six years in this category.

- (9) Asylum applicants may be refused any form of protection on the basis of one of three grounds:
1. Refusal after full consideration – This means that applicants have been refused since it is deemed that they are not in need of protection. In 2005, the number of applications initially refused after full consideration was 18,965. This is 69% of the total number of refusals at the initial decision stage. **In 2005, 790 Afghan asylum applications were refused asylum and ELR after full consideration at the initial decision stage** (excluding dependents). This is 51% of the total number of refusals at the initial decision stage for Afghan asylum applications in 2005.
 2. Refusal on safe third country grounds – When applications are refused on these grounds it means that applicants have arrived from countries considered to be safe by the Home Office. As such their application is automatically refused. In 2005, 1,775 asylum applications were refused on such grounds at the initial decision stage; this represents 6% of the total number of refusals at the initial decision stage. **In 2005, 190 Afghan asylum applications were refused on safe third country grounds at the initial decision stage.** This is 12% of the total number of refusals at the initial decision stage for Afghan asylum applications in 2005. All figures exclude dependents.
 3. Refusal on the grounds of non-compliance – These are for failure to provide evidence to support the asylum claim 'within a reasonable period'. If asylum applicants fail to submit the Statement of Evidence Form (SEF), submit it late or do not complete it in English, they can be refused asylum on these grounds. From November 1991, asylum seekers can also be refused on such grounds if they fail to respond to invitations to attend an interview, or fail to attend the interview. In 2005, 1,915 asylum applications were refused on such grounds at the initial decision stage; this represents 7% of the total number of refusals at the initial decision stage. **In 2005, 70 Afghan asylum applications were refused on the grounds of non-compliance at the initial decision stage.** This is 5% of the total number of refusals at the initial decision stage for Afghan nationals in 2005.

Other observations

- 'We have already ended routine grants of ELR status for Afghan asylum seekers. The situation in Afghanistan has changed considerably in recent months and we have agreed with the Afghan government that we will start enforced returns of failed asylum seekers in April' David Blunkett, 'Asylum figures: Tough year ends with early signs of progress from reform' (Home Office press release, ref. 058/2003), 28 February 2003.
- In 2003, the number of applications received from Afghan asylum seekers fell significantly (-68%) compared with 2002.
- In 2004, the number of applications received from Afghan asylum seekers fell (-39%) compared with 2003.
- In 2005, the number of applications received from Afghan asylum seekers increased (+ 13%) compared with 2004.
- Afghanistan is not placed in the top ten asylum applicant-producing countries within the period beginning in 1985 and ending in 1998.

Sources

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¹ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hosb902.pdf>.

² <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hosb803.pdf>.

³ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/hosb1104.pdf>.

⁴ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1305.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosb1406.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/practice/order.htm>