

In response to an FOI request for information concerning the number of applications for asylum received by the Secretary of State for the Home Department (SSHHD) during the period, and for each year, from 1992 to 1999, made by individuals from Kosovo.

The department received a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) requesting the following:-

I am writing with a query regarding the number of applications for asylum received by the Secretary of State for the Home Department (SSHHD) during the period, and for each year, from 1992 to 1999, made by individuals from Kosovo.

1. How many applications made during this period, received a decision by the SSHD, within a period of 1,2,3,4,5, or 6 years since the application was made?
2. What was the average or mean time frame in which decisions are made?
3. How many, of the applications made during this time, were at any point later granted refugee status?
4. Were any of those granted refugee status on the basis of a policy of the SSHD?
5. If so how many?
6. How many, of the applications made during this time, were late granted exceptional leave to remain?
7. Were any of those granted exceptional leave to remain on the basis of the SSHD's policy?
8. If so, how many?
9. How many during the period of 1992-1996, who were granted exceptional leave to remain later applied and received indefinite leave to remain?

IND Response

The table at Annex A shows asylum applications, initial decisions and decisions from the backlog clearance exercise for Kosovans, 1996-1999. It is not possible to provide data for earlier years. Note that initial decisions do not necessarily relate to applications made in the same year. This information is based on internal management information and as such is not of sufficient quality to be published as National Statistics

There are no data available on the length of, or average decision time relating to applications made in the period requested except by examination of individual case records. Second decisions or reconsiderations on asylum application decisions are also unavailable for this period except by examination of individual case records.

Not included in the table are those granted leave to remain under the UNHCR Humanitarian Evacuation Programme (HEP). Between 25 April and 25 June 1999, 4346 refugees from Kosovo arrived in the UK under HEP. A further 68 arrived on later medical evacuation flights. All those who came to UK under HEP were granted leave to remain in line with relatives already settled in the UK or 12 months' exceptional leave to remain (ELR).

From 15 June to 13 September 1999 consideration of all asylum cases from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was suspended and all asylum seekers who had applied before 24 March 1999 were given 12 months ELR.

On 13 September 1999, the Home Secretary announced a change in policy in light of the improved security position in Kosovo. All asylum applications from Kosovan Albanians would be now considered on their individual merits. In most cases, asylum applications would be

refused unless there were exceptional, individual consideration. Those with ELR would not have their leave curtailed, but neither would it be extended.

From 13 September 1999 – March 2000, in any cases (including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) where ELR was considered appropriate on humanitarian or compassionate grounds, this would be given in periods of one year at a time.

In March 2000, Policy Bulletin 2/2000 was issued, which stated “Pending ministerial advice on the length of ELR periods to be granted, no decisions should be taken on Kosovan cases where ELR is considered the appropriate outcome. This advice was restated in Policy Bulletin 3/2000, issued in April 2000.

Annex A

Asylum applications⁽¹⁾ received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions⁽²⁾ on applications, 1996-1999, Kosovo

	Applications			Decisions								Grants of ELR under backlog criteria ⁽⁵⁾⁽⁶⁾	Non compliance refusals under backlog criteria ⁽⁵⁾⁽⁷⁾
	Total	Port	In Country	Total decisions	Grants of asylum	Grants of ELR	Total refusals	Certified refusals	Other refusals	3rd ctry refusals ⁽³⁾	Non-compliance refusals ⁽⁴⁾		
1996	140	10	130	350	55	40	255	245	-	-	10	N/A	N/A
1997	600	-	600	1,400	1,340	45	15	*	5	-	10	N/A	N/A
1998	4,580	-	4,580	1,060	930	*	130	15	-	-	115	N/A	N/A
1999	9,850	-	9,850	3,115	2,405	20	130	20	15	35	65	550	10

(1) Figures rounded to nearest 5, with '*' = 1 or 2.

(2) Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.

(3) Refused on the grounds that the applicant had arrived from a safe third country.

(4) Paragraph 340 of Immigration Rules. For failure to provide evidence to support the asylum claim within a reasonable period, including failure to respond to invitation to interview.

(5) Cases decided under pragmatic measures aimed at reducing the pre '96 act asylum backlog.

(6) May include a small number of cases where asylum has been granted.

(7) May include a small number of cases where the application has been refused on substantive grounds.

N/A Not applicable.