

Asylum-Seekers and Refugees, a statistical report

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PREFACE

This third volume on asylum and refugee statistics deals with selected Central European countries. Earlier volumes dealt with the countries of the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)¹.

The aims of the project on asylum and refugee statistics in Central European countries are the following.

1. To list available data on asylum-seekers and refugees in selected Central European countries. Principally, the data are collected through national organisations (responsible ministries and national statistical institutes).
2. To analyse the legislative backgrounds regarding asylum-seekers and refugees, in order to come to a clear understanding and interpretation of the available data. This implies a description of the different stages in the asylum procedure.
3. To analyse, as far as possible, the relationship between statistics on asylum-seekers and refugees on the one hand, and official migration statistics on the other hand.
4. To analyse major trends in the selected countries with respect to asylum-seekers and refugees, given the degree of comparability of the data and data sources. This analysis includes a discussion of the backgrounds and consequences of the trends, as well as the role of policies and policy changes.

The current report contains the results of this study.

The study has been implemented on behalf of and within the framework of the EU Phare Programme. It was financed from Phare funds.

We gratefully acknowledge the national experts for responding to the questionnaires. Special thanks are due to Thana Chrissanthaki and Ann Singleton (Eurostat).

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¹ Eurostat, 1994, Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 1: EC Member States. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.
Eurostat, 1995, Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 2: EFTA countries. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and context of this study

In 1992 the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) launched a study on statistics of asylum-seekers and refugees in the countries of the European Union (EU), then twelve countries. The study was awarded to the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) and resulted in a report that was finalised in June 1993. Early 1994, this was published as:

Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 1: EC Member States.
(Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.)

A similar follow-up study was done by NIDI in 1994 for the countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), at that time seven countries. The results of this second study were released by Eurostat in the beginning of 1995:

Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 2: EFTA countries.
(Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.)

Given the increased interest in statistics from the Central European countries, it was considered useful to have a third volume with asylum and refugee statistics from these countries. A brief presentation of the proposed study was presented during the Eurostat Workshop on Migration Statistics that was held from 17 to 19 June, 1996 in Jūrmala, Latvia.

1.2 Objectives of the study

In line with the projects carried out for the EU and EFTA countries, this project aims to contribute to a better understanding of the current situation of asylum-seekers and refugees in the Central European countries through the collection and analysis of statistics.

More specifically, the objectives of the project are:

- a) to list available data on asylum-seekers and refugees in Central European countries;
- b) to analyse the legislative backgrounds regarding asylum-seekers and refugees;
- c) to analyse the relationship between statistics on asylum-seekers/refugees and official statistics on international migration;
- d) to analyse the major trends in Central European countries with respect to asylum-seekers and refugees, given the degree of comparability of the data and data sources.

1.3 Countries involved

The project covers eleven Central European countries:

1. Bulgaria (BG)
2. The Czech Republic (CR)
3. Estonia (EST)
4. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MAC)
5. Hungary (H)
6. Latvia (LAT)
7. Lithuania (LIT)

8. Poland (PL)
9. Romania (R)
10. The Slovak Republic (SR)
11. Slovenia (SLO)

Originally, Albania was also included. However, because of the political instability in this country it was not possible to get any response to the questionnaires.

1.4 Start-up activities

The start-up activities concerned the listing of major data sources and available data on asylum-seekers and refugees, preferably from 1990 onwards.

In principle, these data relate to:

- asylum-seekers by country of citizenship (or, if not available, country of origin), way of application, age, and sex;
- decisions on asylum procedures by year of application, stage of the procedure, outcome, and duration. If possible, these variables will be cross-classified with other variables concerning the asylum-seekers (country of citizenship/origin, age, and sex);
- appeals on (negative) decisions by year of application, stage of the procedure, outcome, and duration. If possible, these variables too will be cross-classified with other variables concerning the asylum-seekers (country of citizenship/origin, age, and sex);
- refugees invited by the government, if any, by country of citizenship/origin, age, and sex;
- stock of refugees by country of citizenship/origin, age, and sex, together with the changes in this stock during a fixed period by cause (arrival, departure, birth, death, etc.).

It was tried to collect data both through international organisations (like UNHCR, UNECE, Council of Europe, Eurostat) and national organisations (national statistical institutes, responsible ministries, etc.). In connection with the latter source, two questionnaires were created:

1. a questionnaire focusing on statistical aspects, to be completed by the national statistical institute (Appendix 7.1);
2. a questionnaire focusing on judicial aspects, to be completed by the ministry or special agency that deals with asylum and refugee matters (Appendix 7.2).

The role of these questionnaires turned out to be of crucial importance as only few data became available by means of (official) publications.

The first questionnaire was sent by Eurostat on August, 6, 1996. At the end of 1997 all national statistical institutes had responded. In this first questionnaire the respondents were asked to indicate the relevant institution/contact person to which the second questionnaire could be addressed (see question 8 of Appendix 7.1). Nine of the eleven selected countries, generally ministries, also returned the second questionnaire. Despite repeated requests, no answers were received from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Hungary.

1.5 General

Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, the number of requests for political asylum in Europe increased rapidly. Most of those arriving in Europe during the late 1980s came from countries in the third world, reflecting a world-wide increase in refugee numbers. Political instability, civil conflicts, violations of human rights, continued population growth, and

economic weakness underlie these flows. In addition, the end of the Cold War contributed to the acceleration in arrivals of asylum-seekers in Western and Northern Europe. On the one hand, it allowed people to leave their country freely. On the other hand, it resulted in the destruction of states and the creation of new states, which sometimes led to the escalation of tensions between ethnic, religious or linguistic groups.

Whereas the number of asylum-seekers grew rapidly, the proportion granted refugee status decreased rapidly at the same time. This may indicate that a growing number of asylum applicants have come to Europe for other reasons than those established by the United Nations. They are regarded as 'economic migrants', due to the strongly limited possibilities to immigrate in a 'normal' way. However, it may also indicate that asylum policies in Europe have become more restrictive, due to the highly arbitrary nature of the definition of a refugee. These more restrictive policies did not only lead to lower proportions of applications that were granted but also to an array of different measures intended to prevent or deter people from seeking refuge on their territory (UNHCR, 1998). As a result, the total number of asylum applications submitted in the industrialised countries has dropped significantly since 1992, even though the global scale of forced displacement has continued to grow. In Western Europe the number of asylum requests steadily declined from almost 700 thousand in 1992 to about 250 thousand in 1996.

The distinction between asylum-seekers and economic migrants is most difficult when people flee from countries where poverty is perpetuated by the political system. Economic sanctions designed to underscore the lack of legitimacy may lead to results on the political level, but in the meantime they cause further deterioration of living standards in an already devastated economy (UNHCR, 1993).

The line between the asylum-seeker and the voluntary migrant is often a fine one. Yet, it is important for states to be able to make the distinction in a fair and consistent manner to ensure that people who genuinely ask for asylum are granted a refugee status, and to prevent the protection system for refugees from getting overwhelmed by economically motivated migrants (UNHCR, 1993).

The basis of international refugee protection is formed by the Geneva Convention of 1951. According to this Convention, the term 'refugee' should be applied to persons who, as a consequence of events before 1951, found themselves outside their country of citizenship to which they could not or did not want to return because of well-founded fears of persecution due to race, religion, citizenship, political opinion, or belonging to a particular social group. The Convention was aimed at European refugees whose origins lay in the upheaval which followed the Second World War and the onset of the Cold War. However, it still continues to constitute the main international instrument in the field of refugees, together with the so-called Protocol of Bellagio of 1967 (also known as the New York Protocol) which extended the provisions of the Geneva Convention to non-Europeans and to events after 1951 (Giovanni Agnelli Foundation Studies and Research, 1991). Towards the end of 1996, almost 130 states were parties to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol (UNHCR, 1998j).

Convention refugees are those who obtain refugee status on the basis of the Geneva Convention. This category includes two groups:

- the 'quotas' of refugees accepted as a group from certain countries and with special visas (like the Vietnamese boat refugees in the late eighties). They are invited by the national governments at the request of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);
- spontaneous refugees who are granted asylum on the basis of an individual asylum request.

People applying for refugee status are known as *asylum-seekers* while they are awaiting a decision.

Despite its shortcomings, the 1951 Refugee Convention remains the strongest expression of international solidarity for the persecuted. It is still the clearest legal basis for protection against 'refoulement' or return to danger (UNHCR, 1992).

Although the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol are widely accepted, their interpretation is left to national legislations. As will be discussed later, national legislations show significant differences on procedures for requesting asylum, possibilities for appeal, length of the asylum procedure, the principle of manifestly unfounded claims, the principle of country of first asylum, the principle of safe country of origin, the existence and nature of accelerated procedures, and so on.

Asylum-seekers who are not granted refugee status under the 1951 Convention are not necessarily expelled. Firstly, they may have been granted another status, such as '*de facto*' *refugees* or *refugees recognised for humanitarian reasons*. These refugees do not meet the criteria set by the Convention, but have valid reasons not to return to their country of origin. Secondly, in some countries rejected asylum-seekers may be granted a deferral of the deportation, which means that their stay is 'tolerated'. However, the borderline between a humanitarian status and a tolerated status is often not well defined.

Finally, in connection with the (sudden) arrival of large groups of asylum-seekers (e.g. in the case of former Yugoslavia), many countries have introduced special statuses ('temporary protection for special groups'). The most important benefit of this approach has been a provision of immediate security to a large number of people whose lives and liberty were at risk. Furthermore, it relieved states of the need to examine thousands of individual applications. Last but not least, the temporary protection status was publicly and politically acceptable because it implied that people with such a status would repatriate once conditions had improved at home (UNHCR, 1998).

The variety in statuses in countries arises from legal responses to changes in the nature of refugee movements, and an unwillingness on the part of European states to recognise substantial numbers of asylum-seekers under the Convention. The rights enjoyed under non-Convention statuses are often more limited. This has caused a continuous debate on their legitimacy (Joly et al., 1992).

This report focuses on the statistical aspects of asylum and refuge in the Central European countries, on the basis of information available up to 1996/1997. The various legislative backgrounds are discussed in Chapter 2. Next, in Chapter 3 the statistics are examined according to quality, quantity, and comparability. A review of recent trends on asylum and refuge is provided in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 summarises the main findings and conclusions.

The underlying report is based on the results of a literature study and the two questionnaires. Also, use has been made of additional information supplied by national authorities on asylum and refuge in direct communications. However, data provided by different sources are not always consistent. Principally, those sources have been chosen where the data were most clearly defined. The sources used are mentioned at the end of each table and graph.

2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUNDS TO THE ASYLUM PROCEDURE

2.1 Introduction

Data on asylum-seekers and refugees are derived from different sources, which are mostly kept by the authority that co-ordinates the admission or reception of asylum-seekers and refugees. This usually is the Ministry of Interior, or in some cases an assistance organisation such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Central European countries are not equally affected by asylum and refugee matters. Some countries experience socio-economic or political difficulties which reduce their attractiveness to asylum-seekers and refugees, and these Central European countries may even produce asylum-seekers and refugees themselves. The situation in Albania proves to be the most intangible one in this respect, for which reason Albania has been excluded from the analysis. After years of massive and chaotic departures of migrants and asylum-seekers from Albania, the country started to receive large numbers of ethnic Albanian asylum-seekers from the neighbouring Yugoslav province of Kosovo when internal war broke out between ethnic Albanese and ethnic Serbs early 1998. Theoretically, Albania's procedures for granting asylum and refuge have suddenly become relevant as a result of the arrival of asylum-seekers from Kosovo, but in practice it is mainly the UNHCR and the Red Cross which provide assistance. The highly unstable political situation in Albania itself blocks any systematic approach by the state authorities towards the refugee question.

As can be concluded from the descriptions of the individual countries' legislation, not every Central European country has yet adapted national asylum legislation. Some countries recently introduced legislation, but are still struggling with the implementation of procedures.

2.2 Similarities and differences within the Central European countries

Most of the questionnaires on asylum legislation and procedures were sent to the responsible authorities in February 1997. Names and addresses were provided by the national statistical institutes who had been contacted in the first phase of the project. Completed questionnaires have been received from the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Information on legislation and procedures in Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Hungary has been derived from other sources, since they did not return the second questionnaire. Also, Estonia and Latvia were not able to fill in the questionnaire because there was no asylum legislation in force at the time of receipt of the questionnaires. They provided updated information at a later stage of the project.

At the end of 1997 all countries in Central Europe had acceded to the 1951 Geneva Convention. The last Central European countries to become party to the Convention and the 1967 New York Protocol were the Baltic States. For many years the Baltic States had opposed to signing the Convention and introducing legislation, mainly out of fear that the set up of a structural framework would merely attract more asylum-seekers to apply for asylum in one of the Baltic States instead of moving on to Western Europe. The Baltic States argued that they did not have sufficient financial resources to provide for adequate reception of asylum-seekers and refugees. Pressure from the neighbouring countries, the European Union and the UNHCR, along with financial assistance, finally won the Baltic States over to accede to the Convention and draw up legislation. Lithuania acceded in January and Estonia in February 1997. Latvia signed in June 1997, with the restriction that only asylum-seekers from Europe would be allowed access to the procedure. This restriction was lifted in October 1997. Hungary also applied a geographical restriction when

it signed the Convention in 1989, but will open the asylum procedure to non-European asylum-seekers in March 1998, with the coming into force of the new Asylum Law.

Most of the selected Central European countries have adopted and implemented legislation on asylum and refuge since they became democratic states. A few countries have adopted legislation which has not yet become effective. New legislation in Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania will come into force in 1998. At present only Bulgaria and Slovenia do not have specific laws to rule the procedures for granting asylum and refugee status. However, in both countries a draft law is under discussion in parliament. Because of rapid developments in the field of asylum some countries' legislation already needs revision. The Czech Republic, for example, is working on a new Refugee Law to replace the 1990 Act on Refugees. In general, the aims of the Central European countries to become member of the European Union have been of influence on the process of implementing asylum and refugee laws. Without legislation on asylum and refuge it would have been unlikely that the EU member states had approved of accession to the Union. Another noteworthy factor in the legislative process has been the role of the UNHCR. Local UNHCR offices have put much effort in promoting the implementation of legislation in accordance with the Geneva principles.

Table 2.2.1 summarises the available information on the asylum procedures in the Central European countries. For Estonia and Latvia there are no data in this table because details of the procedures to be implemented in both countries were not yet known at the time of the study. The table shows that, as far as information is available, in all countries applications for asylum or refugee status can either be filed at the border (including airports) or from within the country. Details on places of application were not available for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Hungary. Only Bulgaria and Romania mention the possibility to file an asylum application at an embassy or consular post abroad.

In all countries, except Bulgaria and Romania, the Ministry of Interior acts as the competent authority. The competent authority for asylum and refugee procedures in Bulgaria is the Bureau of Territorial Asylum and Refugees and in Romania a Commission composed of representatives of several Ministries.

A formal pre-screening or accelerated procedure to determine who will be allowed access to the standard asylum procedure is in place in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland and the Slovak Republic. Romania and Slovenia do not have a formal pre-screening procedure. Whether countries use an informal procedure is unclear, and is of course rather sensitive information. Informal procedures mean little legal security for the persons involved. An informal pre-screening procedure is used in Hungary to examine whether or not claims are manifestly unfounded. Usually a pre-screening or accelerated procedure does not take more than a week. However, in those countries where there is a possibility to appeal the decision with suspensive effect, the short procedure is likely to take more time.

Criteria underlying the pre-screening or accelerated procedures differ from country to country. Frequently, countries mention more than one reason. The Czech Republic applies a short procedure to those applicants whose claim is manifestly unfounded or who come from a safe country of origin. Manifestly unfounded claims are also in Poland reason to start an accelerated procedure, as is the situation in which the asylum-seeker could have applied for asylum in another country which he or she transited on their way to Poland ('country of first asylum'). The Slovak Republic bases the short procedure on the criterion of manifestly unfounded claims. The single criterion in Bulgaria is country of first asylum. The short procedure in Lithuania is based on country of first asylum and safe country of origin. In some countries possession of multiple citizenship or having committed a serious crime can also be reason to start an accelerated procedure.

All Central European countries have a standard asylum procedure with possibility to appeal at first and at second instance. In all countries appeal has suspensive effect. The Czech Republic is the only country that confines possibilities for appeal at second instance to exceptional cases.

In some countries the appeals authority at first instance is the court (Bulgaria, Romania), but in most countries appeal at first instance is being dealt with by the general competent authority or the government (Czech Republic, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovak Republic). The appeals authority at second instance is usually the Supreme Court.

One of the possible outcomes of the asylum procedure is the granting of refugee status in accordance with the Geneva Convention ('Convention refugee'). Each of the countries in Central Europe legally provides for the granting of refugee status, although in practice some hardly ever do grant such a status.

Other possible outcomes of the asylum procedure are the granting of a humanitarian status or temporary protection. Not every country created a possibility in the law to grant one of these statuses. Bulgaria, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia may grant either humanitarian status or temporary protection. Granting humanitarian status is also an option in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Poland. Hungary adopted a special Decree for the provision of temporary protection to persons from Former Yugoslavia. However, since the signing of the Dayton Agreement new applications for temporary protection in Hungary are only accepted in case of family reunification. Like Hungary, the Czech Republic regulates temporary protection by Decree. In those countries with provisions for the granting of humanitarian status or temporary protection, these are generally more easily acquired than refugee status.

Asylum laws do not always specify which procedures should follow on rejection of an asylum application. In a few occasions, such as in the Czech and Slovak Refugee Laws, reference is made to a general law on foreigners as to the proceedings after rejection of an asylum application. Standard procedure in all countries is to order the rejected applicant to leave the country. Sometimes there is explicit mentioning of enforcement of the return ('deportation'). This is the case in Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia. Most countries distinguish a separate category of rejected asylum-seekers who are temporarily not returned, for instance because their identity is not known. Another possible outcome of the asylum procedure specifically mentioned in Bulgaria and Poland is the so-called discontinuation of a claim, which usually occurs when the authorities find out that an asylum applicant has disappeared during the procedure. Many asylum-seekers who apply for asylum in one of the countries of Central Europe are in fact aiming to travel on to Western Europe and do so when they get the chance.

The average length of the procedure is often unknown. This is partly because countries only recently introduced legislation and therefore do not have enough experience in dealing with asylum applications as to indicate how long procedures generally take. And partly because some asylum laws do not determine a maximum period of time to reach a decision on an application or appeal.

Table 2.2.1 Characteristics of asylum procedures*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Place of application											
Airport/seaport	x	x					x	x	x	x	x
Land border	x	x					x	x	x	x	x
Inside the country	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Abroad (embassies/consulates)	x								x		
Competent authority in general											
Ministry		x		x	x		x	x		x	x
Special agency on migration/asylum											
Special agency on asylum only	x								x		
Pre-screening/accelerated procedure											
Formal procedure	x	x					x	x		x	
Informal procedure					x						
None				x					x		x
Based on:											
concept manifestly unfounded		x			x			x		x	
concept country of first asylum	x				x		x	x			
concept safe country of origin		x			x		x	x			
other criteria	x						x				
Applied to:											
all applicants	x	x			x		x	x		x	
airport and land border only											
airport only											
other											
Competent authority:											
general	x	x			x		x	x		x	
other											
Appeal possibility:											
with suspensive effect		x			x		x	x		x	
without suspensive effect											
exceptional cases only											
no											
Average duration:											
within one week	x	x								x	
between one week and one month											
more than one month											
unknown					x		x	x			
Normal/standard procedure											
Appeal at first instance:											
with suspensive effect	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x
without suspensive effect											
exceptional case only											
no											
Appeal at second instance:											
with suspensive effect				x	x		x	x	x	x	x
without suspensive effect											
exceptional case only		x									
no											

Table 2.2.1 Characteristics of asylum procedures (end)*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Possible outcomes of the procedure											
Granted refugee status (1951 Convention)	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Granted humanitarian status	x			x					x	x	
Granted temporary protection	x	x		x	x				x	x	x
Granted another status											
Rejected but temporarily not returned				x	x		x		x	x	x
Rejected and ordered to leave the country	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Rejected and mandatorily returned					x		x	x			x
Other	x							x			x
Average duration whole procedure											
Less than half a year					x						
Between half a year and one year		x								x	x
More than one year											
Unknown	x			x			x	x	x		

* Based on the questionnaires in Appendix 7.1 and Appendix 7.2.

In case of italics, the answers have been derived from other sources by the authors.

¹ Bulgaria did not return the questionnaire on legal aspects. Information was derived from the text of the Council of Ministers Decree 208/1994. The competent authority is the National Bureau of Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

Other factors in the pre-screening procedure are, amongst others, suspicion of a serious criminal offence and possession of citizenship or a valid stay permit of a safe third country.

Another possible outcome of the asylum procedure is the discontinuation of a refugee claim.

The average duration at the first instance is between one and three months, the average duration at the second instance is not known.

² The Refugee Law in the Czech Republic only concerns refugee status in accordance with the Geneva Convention. A separate Decree provides for humanitarian assistance (temporary protection). Information in the table refers to the procedure for refugee status only.

The actual application for refugee status is filled in at the refugee centre, but intention to apply must be expressed to the passport authorities when crossing the border.

The accelerated procedure cannot take more than 7 days (Art. 11.2) and includes an interview with the applicant. Appeal to the decision can be made within 3 days and has suspensive effect. An application is regarded as manifestly unfounded if (Art. 11.3): the applicant does not co-operate in establishing their citizenship; the applicant comes from a safe country of origin; the applicant has committed a serious crime; the reasons for applying for refugee status are solely based on economic grounds.

Appeal at second instance is only possible for a judicial review of the administrative decisions (Art. 16.4).

Refugee Law places the actions taken after rejection of an application within the regulations of Law 123/1992.

³ Estonia was not able to complete the questionnaire on legal aspects because the Law on Refugees that was adopted 18 February 1997 had not come into force yet. Later that year the law have become effective.

⁴ The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia did not return the questionnaire on legal aspects. Information in the table is based on the text of the Act on Movement and Residence of Aliens of 1992. The Ministry of Interior is the competent authority. Appeal can be filed at a Commission of the government.

⁵ Hungary did not return the questionnaire on legal aspects. Information was derived from other sources.

Asylum and refugee matters are the responsibility of the Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior (ORMA). Up to 1998 Hungary applied a geographical limitation to the Convention. Asylum is restricted to asylum-seekers from Europe; asylum applications of non-Europeans are redirected to the UNHCR. Non-European asylum-seekers whose claims are recognised by the UNHCR do not get residence in Hungary. They have to be resettled in another country.

Asylum-seekers who come from a safe country of origin or safe third country will not be granted refugee status. It is not clear whether these facts are determined in an accelerated procedure or in the standard procedure. An informal pre-screening procedure has been set up in order to discourage access to the procedure of asylum-seekers with manifestly unfounded claims. Temporary protection has been granted to persons from former Yugoslavia, as regulated by Council of Ministers Decree 101/1989.

The average duration of the procedure, including appeal, is between 120 and 150 days.

Return of rejected asylum-seekers is regulated by the Aliens Act of 1993. The principle of non-refoulement is part of this Act.

⁶ Latvia was not able to complete the questionnaire on legal aspects because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

- ⁷ The legal basis for asylum in Lithuania is the Law on Refugee Status in the Republic of Lithuania, adopted 4 July 1995, in force since 1997. The general competent authority is the Ministry of Interior. Appeal can be filed at the Refugee Board.
Other criteria in the accelerated procedure are amongst others (Art. 4): having committed a military crime or a crime against peace, humanity or UN principles; threatening the security of the Republic of Lithuania; possession of multiple citizenship enabling protection by one of the countries concerned; and dangerous infectious diseases. The average duration of both the accelerated and the normal procedure are presently not known because the Law only recently became effective.
- ⁸ In principle, the answers for Poland refer to the new Aliens Act of 1997. This act rules coherently the asylum procedure according to the Geneva Convention. Before 1997, there were two procedures in Poland connected with asylum issues:
- application for refugees status according to the Geneva Convention;
 - application for asylum (not related to Geneva Convention).
- The competent authority is the Ministry of Interior and Administration (before 1997: Ministry of Interior), Department (before 1997: Office) for Migration and Refugee Affairs.
Another possible outcome of the asylum procedure is the discontinuation of a refugee claim.
- ⁹ The responsible authority is a Commission appointed by the Government and made up by representatives of the Ministries of the Interior, of Foreign Affairs, and of Labour and Social Protection. A Law on Refugees is effective as from May 1996. A decision on the application should be taken within 30 days and can be appealed in court within ten days after receiving the decision. Romania applies the principle of non-refoulement.
- ¹⁰ The Slovak Refugee Act regulates both the refugee procedure and temporary protection.
The actual application for refugee status is filled in at the reception centre, but intention to apply must be expressed at the Police Department at the border, or within 24 hours after crossing the border at the Police Department at the place of stay.
The law states that decisions in the accelerated procedure should be taken within 7 days after the submission of the application (Art. 10). Appeal is possible within 3 working days, with suspensive effect of a maximum of 30 days. The accelerated procedure applies to asylum claims which are manifestly unfounded (Art. 10). Article 8 states that refugee status will not be given to applicants from a safe country of origin or safe third country. The law does not clarify whether these two criteria place the applicant in the accelerated procedure.
The law places the actions taken after rejection of an application within the regulations of Slovak National Council Law 73/1995
- ¹¹ Two offices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs deal with refugee and asylum matters: the Office for Foreigners (refugee procedure) and the Office for Immigration and Refugees (temporary protection). Procedures are based on the Law on Foreigners of 1991. A separate Asylum Act is being drafted.
An application for asylum should be filed at a police station within three days after arrival in Slovenia.
Appeal authority at first instance is the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and at second instance the Supreme Court. As follows from the Law on Foreigners, those foreigners who are not entitled residence in Slovenia can be expelled, deported, temporarily be taken in detention or in some cases allowed to stay temporarily (Art. 28). The principle of non-refoulement applies (Art. 33).

2.3 Information per country

2.3.1 Bulgaria

Bulgaria has acceded the 1951 Geneva Convention and 1967 New York Protocol on 12 May 1993. The competent authority and disseminating/processing authority for asylum and refuge is the National Bureau of Territorial Asylum and Refugees, working under the Council of Ministers/President of the Republic of Bulgaria. According to the Constitution, the President has the right to grant asylum. The National Bureau of Territorial Asylum and Refugees was established 1993 and started handling asylum requests early 1994 (US State Department, 1994).

The basis of the current asylum procedure in Bulgaria are Article 27 of Bulgaria's Constitution (1991) and the Council of Ministers Decree 208 of November 1994. Article 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria stipulates the right to asylum for foreigners in accordance with the Geneva Convention. Decree 208 regulates the procedure for the granting of refugee or humanitarian status. A draft Refugee Law has been sent to the National Assembly in 1994, and is expected to become adopted in 1998.

The National Bureau of Territorial Asylum and Refugees co-operates with the International Organisation for Migration. The Bulgarian Red Cross provides for assistance to asylum-seekers.

Asylum-seekers who are suspected to have committed a war crime, crime against peace or other serious crime will not be granted refugee status (Art. 3/Decree 208). Also, those who are guilty of acts against UN principles or the security of Bulgaria, or who have entered Bulgaria illegally and fail to submit an application within 48 hours after entry will not be granted refugee status. Furthermore, refugee status may not be granted if the asylum-seeker and/or their spouse (Art. 4/Decree 208):

- possess multiple citizenship;
- have been granted refugee status in another country;
- enjoy protection by a UN institution other than UNHCR;
- have passed through a safe third country;
- have a valid stay permit of a safe third country.

Asylum-seekers have to file an application for refugee status (within 48 hours if they have entered the country illegally) at the following places: a border crossing point, the National Bureau of Territorial Asylum and Refugees, a registration centre for refugees, the passport and visa departments of the regional Police, or a Bulgarian diplomatic or consular mission abroad. After filing the application a travel document with a validity of 48 hours is issued to travel to the refugee registration centre. The asylum-seeker's travel documents are withheld and sent together with the application to the National Bureau.

When one or more criteria of the Articles 3 and 4 of the Decree apply to the asylum-seeker's situation the National Bureau is informed immediately. The asylum-seeker cannot be expelled or sent back to the country of origin until a reply from the National Bureau has been received. The National Bureau should decide on whether or not to open the procedure within 24 hours. At the registration centre the asylum-seeker will be interviewed and has to undergo a medical examination. This procedure will take one month at maximum. When procedures at the registration centre have been finished, the asylum-seeker is accommodated in a refugee receiving centre or, if he/she can afford it, in private accommodation. In exceptional cases asylum-seekers may be allowed to work on a short-term basis.

The National Bureau should examine the application within one month after receiving the files and propose to the Director whether refugee status should be granted or refused, the procedure should be discontinued, or additional information is needed. The decisions by the Director can be appealed in court with suspensive effect. In exceptional cases, upon directions of the UNHCR, humanitarian status may be granted when the requirements for refugee status are not met (Art. 19, par. 1). Humanitarian status is granted for the period of one year, to be extended annually if conditions in the country of origin still prohibit return. Representatives of the UNHCR may assist in all stages of the asylum procedure.

The status of recognised refugees is equal to the status of permanent foreign residents in Bulgaria. Refugees are entitled to identity and travel documents, to be issued by the National Bureau.

Upon refusal of refugee status the asylum-seeker must leave the country within seven days, unless the Law on Stay of Aliens allows for stay on other grounds.

Bulgaria concluded re-admission agreements with Germany, Greece, Poland, Slovak Republic and Switzerland (European Parliament, 1996). Asylum-seekers from Former Yugoslavia were encouraged to file official applications for refugee status, although the

Decree provides for granting temporary protection. Potential asylum-seekers are sometimes denied entry at the border.

2.3.2 Czech Republic

The Former Czechoslovakia ratified the Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol on 26 November 1991. One year earlier national legislation had been introduced concerning the procedures for the granting of refugee status and reception of asylum-seekers.

Czech policy for the granting of refugee status and asylum is based on the Act on Refugees, (498/1990, 16 November), passed by the Federal Assembly of the former Czechoslovakia, and amended twice, by Law 317 on 8 December 1993, and most recently by Law 150 on 26 April 1996 (in force as of July 1996). The latter amendment changed the permitted stay of five years for refugees into an unlimited period (in accordance with the Geneva Convention). Article 43 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedom is part of the legal basis for granting asylum. The Czech Republic is in the process of drafting a new Refugee Law which should, amongst others, improve procedures for the granting of refugee status and introduce principles of safe country of origin and safe third country.

Besides the Refugee Act a Decree on Humanitarian Assistance was adopted in 1991. The Decree introduced Temporary Protected Status for nationals from former Yugoslavia. From 1994 onwards temporary protection has been granted only to nationals of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Temporary refugees are either housed in a humanitarian centre or can seek private accommodation. Asylum-seekers must file a written intention to apply for refugee status at the passport control authorities when crossing the border. The asylum-seeker is then issued with a special identity card valid for 24 hours to travel to the refugee centre. After arrival at the refugee centre an asylum application should be submitted within 24 hours. Passport or any other identity documents are taken and replaced by a special identity card for the period of stay in the refugee centre. Once asylum-seekers are recognised as refugees they are accommodated in one of the so-called 'integration centres' or seek private accommodation.

The Ministry of Interior is the responsible authority for the granting of refugee status, and also for admission and reception of asylum-seekers and persons in need of temporary protection. The Ministry has to make a decision within 90 days after submission of the application (this period can be extended). An appeal should be filed to the Ministry of the Interior within 15 days after the decision has been received. The law does not state the period of time for the Ministry to reach a decision about the appeal. The highest appeal authority is the Supreme Court (European Parliament, 1996).

In case of manifestly unfounded claims for asylum the Ministry should reject the application within 7 days. Manifestly unfounded applicants are those persons who hide their identity, in casu their citizenship, who come from a safe country of origin, or who base their application solely on economic grounds.

The actions taken after rejection of an application are described as follows (Art. 15.2): "...the alien shall be returned his or her retained document and his or her further stay on the territory of the Czech Republic shall be considered in accordance with special regulations"². A granted refugee status is valid for an indefinite period. Refugee status can be annulled when a refugee obtains a permanent residence permit or Czech citizenship, when they voluntarily give up refugee status or take up residence in the country they left in justified fear of persecution, or when they break the law or violate human rights as laid down in the Act on Refugees.

² I.e. Law 123/1992.

The Czech Ministry of the Interior distinguishes the following categories:

- persons with a refugee status;
- persons from Bosnia-Herzegovina with temporary refugee status;
- asylum-seekers.

The Czech Republic concluded re-admission agreements with Austria, Canada, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic (European Parliament, 1996).

2.3.3 Estonia

Estonia adopted a Law on Refugees on 18 February 1997 and ratified the Geneva Convention and New York Protocol on 19 February 1997. They have become effective later that year. The first asylum application was submitted by an Armenian on 11 July 1997, but no decision has yet been made on the case (UNHCR, 1998c).

Before Estonia acceded to the Geneva Convention asylum-seekers were treated as illegal immigrants, and were either deported immediately or detained for two months, a period of time that could be extended time and again. The Estonian government opposed establishing a formal refugee policy out of fear that more and more asylum-seekers would be attracted. The imprisonment of asylum-seekers met severe criticism of UNHCR officials, especially in view of the Estonian complaints of abuse of human rights by their former Soviet occupiers. Asylum-seekers who got stuck in Estonia were mainly on their way to Scandinavia, across the Baltic Sea.

With the Baltic States not having any legislation in relation to asylum-seekers and refugees, those that made it to Scandinavia knew they would not be sent back to the Baltic States. Because of the lack of legislation the Baltic States were not regarded as safe third countries. The UNHCR used this argument to try convince the Baltic States to adopt an official policy and start reception centres. They argued that numbers of transit asylum-seekers in Poland dropped the moment the Polish government had established an asylum policy, which included an agreement with Germany to re-admit asylum-seekers who had travelled through Poland and tried to apply for asylum in Germany.

Estonia concluded re-admission agreements with Latvia, Lithuania and Finland (European Parliament, 1996). However, no re-admission agreement has been signed with Russia and Belarus, the countries from/through which most illegal immigrants arrive in Estonia. There have been negotiations on such an agreement but they failed due to controversy about the precise location of the border. This may mean that actual implementation of the Law on Refugees will be delayed until such agreements have been concluded.

2.3.4 The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Former Yugoslavia had signed the Geneva Convention and New York Protocol. The obligations were transferred to the individual republics when they obtained independence.

The asylum procedure of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is based on the Act on Movement and Residence of Aliens (16 June 1992). Articles 39 to 55 of the Act stipulate conditions with regard to asylum and refugee status. Articles 58-61 concern rules regarding the issuance of travel documents for refugees. Article 77 mentions the official obligation to keep records on foreigners who were granted asylum and on foreigners who were granted refugee status. The precise procedure for granting asylum or refugee status has to be laid down in by-laws, as has the management of reception centres where asylum-seekers are accommodated (Art. 79).

The responsible authority for granting asylum and refugee status is the Ministry of the Interior. Asylum-seekers must submit their application for refugee status to the Ministry of the Interior within three days after arrival. Persons who acted against humanity or UN principles, or who pose a threat to the national security of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will not be granted refugee status. Asylum-seekers are accommodated in reception centres and are issued with a certificate of temporary residence.

The Ministry's decision on an asylum application can be appealed at a Commission of the government. Rejected asylum-seekers will be ordered to leave the country within a period of 30 days and six months after the decision has been taken. The principle of non-refoulement applies.

Recognised refugees have right to permanent residence in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and to a travel document for refugees. Refugee status is lost when a person voluntarily returns to the country of origin, when the reasons for flight no longer exist in that country and the person would be in the position to go back, when another citizenship is acquired, or when some-one leaves the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and does not return within the period of one year (Art. 50).

2.3.5 Hungary

The Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA) of the Ministry of the Interior is Hungary's responsible authority for asylum and refugee matters. Hungary acceded the Geneva Convention and the 1967 New York Protocol already in the March 1989, but is one of only a few countries that apply a geographical limitation to the Convention. Asylum is restricted to asylum-seekers from Europe; asylum applications of non-Europeans are redirected to the UNHCR. Non-European asylum-seekers whose claims are recognised by the UNHCR do not get residence in Hungary. They have to be resettled in another country. However, this situation is about to change because on 9 December 1997 the Hungarian Parliament adopted a Law on Asylum which allows refugees from non-European countries to request asylum from the Hungarian authorities. Furthermore, the Law on Asylum brings Hungarian asylum procedures into line with corresponding legislation in the EU member states. The law should have become effective on 1 March 1998.

The asylum procedure for European asylum-seekers is regulated by the Council of Ministers Decree 101/1989. European asylum-seekers should submit applications for the granting of refugee status either at the border or at the local offices of the Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs within 72 hours after arriving in the country. Asylum-seekers are issued with an identity card for the duration of the procedure. The Office should reach a decision on an application within 30 days, in justified cases to be extended with another 60 days. The Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs also decides on appeals at first instance. Appeal must be filed within five days after the decision was taken and has suspensive effect. At second instance the decision may be reviewed in court. Representatives of the UNHCR may take part in any stage of the procedure.

Asylum-seekers who come from a safe country of origin or safe third country will not be granted refugee status. It is not clear whether these facts are determined in an accelerated procedure or in the standard procedure. An informal pre-screening procedure has been set up in order to discourage access to the procedure of asylum-seekers with manifestly unfounded claims.

Medical screening forms part of the procedure and discovery of infectious or venereal diseases may lead to refusal of the claim on the grounds of endangering public health. This

is contradictory to the provisions of the Geneva Convention. Asylum-seekers are allowed to seek employment in jobs which do not require a work permit.

Persons recognised as refugees are given permanent residence in Hungary and enjoy the same rights as Hungarian citizens.

Hungary has provided temporary protection to persons from Former Yugoslavia on humanitarian grounds, but there is no legislation on the matter³. Persons under temporary protection are either privately accommodated or are lodged in a state-run refugee centre. They have to report to the authorities every four months to extend the validity of their identity cards. After the conclusion of the Dayton Agreement Hungary admitted new asylum-seekers from former Yugoslavia only in case of family reunification (European Parliament, 1996).

Return of rejected asylum-seekers falls within the competence of the Border Guard and National Police and is regulated by the Aliens Act of 1993.

Hungary concluded re-admission agreements with Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Switzerland and the Ukraine (ICMPD, 1997).

2.3.6 Latvia

The Law on Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the Republic of Latvia has been approved of in Parliament on 19 June 1997. According to this law, it should enter into force on 1 January 1998. Before that time, Latvia regarded asylum-seekers as illegal migrants. Both categories were routinely apprehended and deported.

Latvia acceded to the 1951 Convention on Refugees and its 1967 Protocol on 19 June 1997, with the restriction that only asylum-seekers from Europe would be allowed access to the procedure. This restriction was lifted in October 1997.

Latvia concluded re-admission agreements with Estonia and Lithuania (European Parliament, 1996). There is no re-admission agreement in place with Russia, and any implementation of a refugee policy will meet severe difficulties without such an agreement.

2.3.7 Lithuania

The refugee procedure in Lithuania is to be based on the Law on Refugee Status that was adopted on 4 July 1995. According to the law a refugee reception centre and a computer system had to be established before the review of claims for refugee status could take place. The reception centre has been set up and the second stage of dealing with applications started in 1997. A special government resolution momentarily regulates the procedure for handling refugee applications under the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior. Lithuania ratified the Geneva Convention on 21 January 1997.

Lithuania receives large-scale financial assistance for the implementation of refugee policies. One of the assisting countries is Denmark. The Danish Ministry of Interior participated in a joint project with the Lithuanian Ministries of Interior and of Social Welfare and Labour in 1996. The purpose of the project was to advise the Lithuanian migration authorities in dealing with asylum applications. A number of 48 asylum applications were investigated in the course of the project.

³ There is a Government Decree (129/1996) effective as from 8 August 1996 on 'certain services provided for temporary protected persons on the territory of Hungary' (Hungarian Ministry of the Interior, 1998).

The Ministry of the Interior deals with applications in the first instance. Requests for asylum have to be made at the border in writing or orally. If the asylum-seeker has entered the country legally the request may be filed at the local police office. There is an accelerated procedure for asylum-seekers who come from a safe country of origin or safe third country. Also, the accelerated procedure is applied to persons who have committed a military crime or a crime against peace, humanity or UN principles; who have threatened the security of the Republic of Lithuania; who are in possession of multiple citizenship enabling protection by one of the countries concerned; or who carry a dangerous infectious disease.

If there are no reasons to apply the accelerated procedure, the asylum-seeker is given so-called temporary territorial asylum and is issued with a temporary document to allow for free travel to the refugee reception centre. A decision on the application should be taken within six months. Appeal against the decision should be filed within 14 days to the Refugee Board, which has to decide on the appeal within ten days. The Refugee Board's decision can be appealed in court within 14 days, and the court should decide within ten days. The court's decision is final and not open to further appeal.

Rejected asylum-seekers are deported from Lithuania on decision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The principle of non-refoulement applies. Appeal against a deportation decision should be filed within 14 days, after which the court has to reach a decision on the appeal within ten days. The judgement of the court is final and cannot be appealed.

Article 18 of the law stipulates that the Lithuanian parliament should establish an annual quota for the number of refugees to be admitted.

Lithuania concluded re-admission agreements with Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia and the Ukraine (European Parliament, 1996).

2.3.8 Poland

Poland signed the Geneva Convention and New York Protocol on 27 September 1991. The responsible authority with regard to asylum-seekers and refugees is the Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, which regularly publishes data on the number of applications and grants. Before 1997, i.e. the restructuring of the government and state central administration, the responsible authority was the Office for Migration and Refugee Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior.

Poland recently implemented national legislation on refugees and asylum-seekers. A new Aliens Act was approved on 25 June 1997 and became effective 27 December 1997. Before, all immigration matters were regulated by the Aliens Act of 1963. Article 10 of this latter act only broadly defined the issue of asylum in accordance with the Geneva Convention. The new Aliens Act had already been drafted in 1993 but general political problems deferred its approval. The lack of updated legislation caused problems with procedures and criteria for the granting of refugee status (Salt et al., 1995).

The new Aliens Act defines the asylum procedure in coherence with the Geneva Convention (and New York protocol). The Aliens Act of 1963 also allowed for asylum applications not related to the Geneva Convention. However, there were no precise rules for these procedures.

Chapters 5 and 6 of the 1997 Aliens Act deal with refugee status and asylum. Applications must be filed at entry with the Border Guards or during stay with the Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs. Decisions on asylum applications are taken by the Ministry of Interior and Administration in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Asylum-

seekers arriving from a safe country of origin or safe third country whose claim for refugee status is manifestly unfounded will not be entered into the refugee granting procedure (Art. 35.3).

The Ministry of Interior and Administration also acts as the appeals authority at first instance. At second instance appeal can be filed at the Supreme Administrative Court. If an appeal has been rejected both in the first and second instance the asylum-seeker may be deported. Another possible outcome of the asylum procedure is the discontinuation of a claim. This usually means that an asylum-seeker has left Poland without notification and the authorities cancel the procedure.

Applicants are issued with a certificate of registration for the duration of the procedure. They are housed in refugee centres.

Poland concluded re-admission agreements with BENELUX, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, the Slovak Republic, Romania and Ukraine (European Parliament, 1996).

2.3.9 Romania

Romania recently introduced national legislation with regard to refugees and asylum-seekers. The Law on Refugees was approved on 1 April 1996 (Law 15/1996) and became effective as of 5 May 1996. Government Decision 1182 of 13 November 1996 further established rules for implementation of the law. The responsible authority for refugee and asylum procedures is a Commission appointed by the Government. The Commission consists of three persons: one is the Head of the Refugee Office of the General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports of the Ministry of the Interior, one representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and one representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. The UNHCR is allowed to attend working sessions of this Commission.

The Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol were signed by Romania in August 1991.

The Law on Refugees allows refugee status on the basis of the Geneva Convention and on humanitarian grounds (European Parliament, 1996). Motivated applications can be filed in writing or orally at entry or within ten days after entry at a unit of the border police, or at an embassy or consulate abroad. Asylum-seekers who apply for refugee status at the border should have valid documents to enter Romania, or otherwise should not have transited a safe third country where they could have applied for refugee status.

During the application period the asylum-seeker is issued with a temporary document for identification. There is one refugee centre in Romania which can accommodate approximately two hundred persons. More adequate reception centres are expected to open in the near future (UNHCR, 1998h). Asylum-seekers are allowed to work, but work permits are not easily obtained.

The law stipulates that decisions on applications for refugee status should be taken within 30 days. On rejection of an application the asylum-seeker has the right to appeal in the court of first instance within ten days. After rejection at first instance appeal at second instance is possible if filed within five days. At both instances the appeal has suspensive effect.

According to the law, refugee status is not granted to persons who committed a crime against peace or humanity, a serious crime inside or outside Romania, or who present a danger to Romania's national security or public order. Also, asylum will not be granted to persons with multiple citizenship who could have obtained protection of one of the countries of which he or she is a citizen. Decision 1182 stipulates that asylum claims based on economic grounds will not be granted (Art. 2.2).

Persons granted refugee status get a right of residence in Romania for a period of three years, which can be extended by another two years (Art. 22). This provision is not in accordance with the Geneva Convention. Upon request refugees may be granted a residence permit by the Ministry of the Interior, provided they are well integrated into society.

Rejected asylum-seekers should leave the country in accordance with the Law on Foreigners, except when they are granted humanitarian status (Art. 2) or temporary protection (Art. 5). The Law on Foreigners dates back to 1969 and is in the process of being redrawn.

Refugees may voluntarily renounce their status. They lose refugee status when taking up residence or citizenship of the country they had left for fear of persecution, when the reasons for granting refugee status have ceased to exist, or when obtaining a permanent residence permit or Romanian citizenship.

Romania concluded re-admission agreements with Austria, BENELUX, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Italy, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland (European Parliament, 1996).

2.3.10 Slovak Republic

A new Refugee Law came into force in the Slovak Republic in January 1996 (Act no. 283, adopted 14 November 1995). The previous law dated from 1990, from the period of the Republic of Czechoslovakia (Law on Refugees; Act no. 498). Criteria in the 1990 Act for granting refugee status had already been based on the Geneva principles and on other humanitarian reasons (Zirko, 1995). The 1990 Act on Refugees established procedures for processing applications for refugee status, and defined the rights and duties of asylum-seekers and refugees. Substantial changes in legislation were introduced in the 1995 Act. The main change is the introduction of temporary protected status, a so-called category of 'de facto refugees' (Art. 2b of the law)⁴. 'De facto refugees' have a similar status and protection as Convention refugees. After an initial stay in a refugee reception centre applicants for temporary protection are housed in a humanitarian centre, and applicants for refugee status in a refugee centre.

The responsible authority for asylum-seekers and refugees is the Migration Office of the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry co-operates with the United Nations High Officer for Refugees (UNHCR) during the determination of refugee status procedure. The representative of the office of UNHCR can at any time participate in the determination procedure (Art. 26).

Asylum-seekers must express written or oral intention to apply for refugee status or temporary protection at the Police Department either directly when entering the country or within 24 hours thereafter. The Police decides whether someone is given access to the procedure or not. These decisions seem to be taken in an arbitrary and inconsistent way, often without written justification (European Parliament, 1996). The asylum-seeker's passport or other identity document will be taken by the police and replaced by a card that is valid for 24 hours until arrival at the reception centre. A written application for the granting of refugee status should then be filed within 24 hours. The applicant receives a refugee identification card. The Ministry of the Interior will decide about the application within 90 days. An appeal may be filed with the Ministry of the Interior within 15 days after the decision has been received. The Ministry must decide on the appeal within 60 days. This decision can be reviewed by the Supreme Court.

⁴ De facto refugee: 'a person under temporary protection because of war conditions in the country of origin'.

Applicants with a manifestly unfounded asylum claim are entered into an accelerated procedure, which means that a decision on their claim will be taken within seven days (Art. 10). This decision, however, is open for appeal with suspensive effect. According to Article 8 refugee status will not be given to applicants from a safe country of origin or safe third country. Safe country of origin is defined as 'a legal state with a democratic system, where there is no persecution based on race, nationality or religion, or membership of a particular social group or political opinions', and safe third country as 'a safe country from which the alien arrives and where he/she can be safely refouled' (Art. 2h-i). The list of safe third countries and safe countries of origin was published as 'The decision of the Government of the Slovak Republic of 20.2.1996'.

There are several possible outcomes of the asylum procedure:

- refugee status according to Geneva Convention;
- humanitarian status;
- temporary protection;
- rejected applicant but temporarily not returned.

Decisions on applications seem to indicate the use of an unofficial criterion in the procedure, i.e. the ability to speak or learn the Slovak language (European Parliament, 1996). This is not in accordance with the Geneva Convention nor with Slovak Refugee Law.

A granted refugee status is valid for an indefinite period. Recognised refugees get a permanent residence permit, marked 'Refugee'.

After rejection of the application, Article 17.2 of the law says that "if an alien has not been granted refugee status, the competent police authority shall decide on further type of residence on the territory of the Slovak Republic"⁵.

The Slovak Republic concluded re-admission agreements with Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and Ukraine (European Parliament, 1996).

2.3.11 Slovenia

Former Yugoslavia was signatory to the Geneva Convention and New York Protocol. The obligations were transferred to the individual Republics when they obtained independence.

The procedure for granting refugee status and asylum is based on the Law on Foreigners of 1991. However, this law does not clearly define the term 'asylum-seeker' and does not set a minimum guarantee for the treatment of asylum-seekers. A new Asylum Act that caters for these shortcomings is now being prepared. Asylum-seekers and refugees are registered by the Office for Foreigners at the Ministry of the Interior. An application for refugee status has to be filed at a police station within three days after arrival in the country. The application may be lodged at seaports, at the land border, or at the airports, as well as inside the country. It is not possible to lodge an application for refugee status at diplomatic and consular missions of Slovenia abroad. Requests filed after three days are automatically rejected (European Parliament, 1996). However, these rejections are open for administrative appeal in the Supreme Court. Asylum-seekers are accommodated in the Transitional Hostel for Foreigners.

⁵ Actions to be taken according to Slovak National Council Law 73/1995 (Act about the residence of foreigners on the territory of the Czech Republic).

Apart from asylum requests, the Law on Foreigners also offers possibilities to apply for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds.

Furthermore, there is a separate Bureau for Immigration and Refugees that is responsible for persons under temporary protection. Temporary protection has been given to people who fled the war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. A Law on Temporary Protection was adopted in 1997. On the basis of this law a government Regulation came into force on the status of citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina who had been issued with a so-called 'Red Cross card' could apply for temporary protection. Temporary protection has been granted only to applicants who met one of the following conditions:

- coming from territory controlled by Bosnian Serbs;
- enrolled in education in Slovenia;
- a number of special conditions, such as being of old age, having an illness or a handicap.

Appeal authority at first instance is the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and at second instance the Supreme Court. As follows from the Law on Foreigners, those foreigners who are not entitled residence in Slovenia can be expelled, deported, temporarily be taken in detention or in some cases allowed to stay temporarily (Art. 28). The principle of non-refoulement applies (Art. 33). Asylum is not granted to persons who committed a crime against humanity or UN principles.

Refugee status is lost when a person voluntarily returns to the country of origin, when the refugee could return to that country because the reasons for flight no longer exist, or when Slovenian or another citizenship is acquired. Refugees whose status is granted according to the Geneva Convention are entitled to permanent residence and are issued with a refugee passport for travelling abroad. At the moment this is merely a theoretical situation since up to 1998 only two persons were granted with refugee status.

Slovenia concluded re-admission agreements with Austria, BENELUX, Canada, Croatia, France, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Switzerland (European Parliament, 1996).

3. STATISTICS

3.1 Introduction

Asylum and refugee statistics firstly serve political purposes: they support the development and evaluation (monitoring) of interrelating policies. Scientific purposes are served as well: for example, by means of statistical analyses the interdependency between asylum/refugee and various other societal phenomena (employment, education, integration, participation, etc.) can be studied. However, comprehensive and reliable statistics on asylum-seekers and refugees in Europe are difficult to collect. Some of the problems concerning the compilation of those statistics are methodological; others are influenced by how decisions are made and the overall view that compiling states wish to give (Joly et al., 1992).

In theory, the task of statistics on asylum-seekers is to describe, as precisely as possible, the potential path of an asylum-seeker from the moment the border is crossed or the application is submitted abroad, up to the definitive decision on the case (Lammer, 1991). Characteristics such as nature of stay/residence permit, country of citizenship, country of (ethnic) origin, country of birth, sex, date of birth, and family relationship should be included. As it is highly probable that the final decision will not be taken in the calendar year in which the application was made, but sometimes several years later, the approach should be longitudinal. This means that a cohort of asylum-seekers, determined by the year of application, has to be followed over the years ⁶.

The task of statistics on refugees is to describe the refugee population living in a country, distinguished by nature of stay/residence permit, country of citizenship, country of (ethnic) origin, country of birth, sex, date of birth, family relationship, date of entry into the country, and place in the country where one resides. In addition to stock data, these statistics include flow data as well. The flow data relate to changes in stock, such as arrivals, departures, deaths, births, naturalisations, and changes in the nature of the stay/residence permit.

The basic question with regard to statistics on asylum-seekers and refugees seems to be simple: who is counted as an asylum-seeker or a refugee? But, on second thought, this question is related to many other questions.

- Is there a difference between asylum-seeker and asylum application?
For example, are minor children counted as asylum-seekers in those cases where they do not file separate applications?
- Are applications filed abroad included in the number of asylum-seekers?
- Are denied entry requests at the border counted as asylum applications?
- Are second applications, in the same or in another country, considered as new applications or as the continuation of old ones?
- To what extent are asylum-seekers who are granted right to stay on other grounds than the 1951 Geneva Convention seen as refugees?
- Is a refugee who settled in the country more than ten years ago, or who was naturalised after several years, still counted as a refugee?
- Is a child born to a refugee parent also a refugee?

Although it is preferable, from a theoretical point of view, to create some kind of framework with answers to questions like those stated above, from a practical point of view it is more important that statistics refer to more or less the same answers. An overview of the similarities and differences in this respect will be provided in the next section.

⁶ However, in practice only few countries are able to study asylum-seekers longitudinally (see for an example Heiniger et al., 1998).

3.2 Overview of the availability, quality, and comparability of statistics in the Central European countries

Based on the information gathered from the questionnaires which were sent to the Central European countries (see Appendices 7.1 and 7.2), Table 3.2.1 presents an overview of the statistical definitions of asylum applications in the individual countries. The most recent total figures, according to the national definitions, have been added as well. Because of the lack of effective legislation, the columns for the two Baltic states Estonia and Latvia have been left blank.

Table 3.2.1 Definition of asylum applicant*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Pre-screening procedure											
Rejected applications	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>na</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>na</i>
Family application											
Spouse	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>
Minor children	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>e</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>e</i>
Individual application											
Minor children	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>		<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>i</i>
Resettlement											
Invited refugees	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>		<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>		<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>
Application abroad											
Embassy, etc.	<i>i</i>	<i>na</i>		<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>		<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>
Total figure											
Calendar year	97	96		96	96		97	97	96	96	96
Absolute (*1,000)	0.4	2.2		0.0	0.2		0.3	3.5	0.6	0.4	0.0
Per 10,000 of the population	0.5	2.1		0.0	0.1		0.9	0.9	0.3	0.8	0.2

* Based on the questionnaires in Appendix 7.1 and Appendix 7.2.

In case of italics, the answers have been derived from other sources by the authors.

i = included; *e* = excluded; *na* = not applicable.

¹ Bulgaria sent some tables but did not return both questionnaires.

² The Czech Republic did not return the questionnaire on statistical aspects.

Family applications: minors and spouses are counted separately. However, minors are *not* counted separately in the decisions on the applications, they then are included in the decision of one of the parents.

³ Estonia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁴ The Statistical Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia does not collect data on asylum-seekers and refugees. Besides, the questionnaire on legal aspects was not returned. The source for the number of applications in 1996 (three!) is ICMPD (1997).

⁵ Hungary did not return the questionnaire on legal aspects.

Up to 1998 Hungary applied a geographical limitation to the Convention. This meant that asylum was restricted to asylum-seekers from Europe.

⁶ Latvia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁷ The asylum procedure only recently came into force (1997). The total figure for 1997 was derived from UNHCR, 1998f.

⁸ In principle, the answers for Poland refer to the new Aliens Act of 1997. This act rules coherently the asylum procedure according to the Geneva Convention. Before 1997, there were two procedures in Poland connected with asylum issues:

■ application for refugees status according to the Geneva Convention;

■ application for asylum (not related to Geneva Convention).

The information given here refers to the application for refugee status only.

⁹ Different sources were contradictory about the in- or exclusion of dependants (spouse and children).

¹⁰ In the Slovak Republic there is no regular data exchange between the Ministry of Interior and the Statistical Office.

¹¹ Apart from asylum requests, the Law on Foreigners also offers possibilities to apply for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds.

Table 3.2.1 displays many similarities. If applicable, rejected applications are included in the total number of asylum applicants⁷. The same is true for applications abroad (applicable for Bulgaria and Romania). Individual applications of minors are included everywhere. The phenomena of resettled or invited refugees never occurs (contrary to the situation in various Western European countries).

Some differences can be observed for family applications. In only one country, Romania, spouses and children are not counted separately. In two countries, Lithuania and Slovenia, minor children of principal applicants are excluded. In the remaining countries all persons who request for asylum are counted separately. When comparing total national figures, one should be aware of some underestimation for Bulgaria. For the same reason, yet to a lesser extent, the figures for Lithuania and Slovenia could suffer from some underestimation.

Apart from other disturbing factors that influence the determination of the national figures (e.g. double counts because of renewed applications, the inclusion or partial inclusion of temporary protected people, etc.), it is possible to draw certain conclusions from the presented figures.

First of all, not surprisingly, the numbers of asylum applications in the Central European countries are much lower than in (most of) the Western European countries. Whereas this number varies from almost zero to a couple of thousand in Central European countries, it goes up to more than 10 thousand in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, and more than 100 thousand in Germany (UNHCR, 1998).

Within the selected Central European countries, Poland received most applicants in 1996/1997, followed at some distance by the Czech Republic. In the other countries the numbers were (much) less than one thousand.

Table 3.2.2 summarises the availability of asylum statistics in each of the selected countries, according to the national definitions as described in Table 3.2.1. Bold marks in Table 3.2.2 refer to tables in Appendix 7.3.

A distinction should be made in advance between statistics and collected data. From the questionnaires, it became clear that substantial parts of the collected data are not published or made available in statistical terms. The reason for the divergence between available statistics and collected data may be twofold. Firstly, political reasons may prevent certain data from being published. Secondly, for practical reasons, only those statistics are compiled which are requested. These reasons, combined with the circumstance that the compilation of asylum statistics is left to the responsible ministries or special agencies, which do so for administrative rather than statistical purposes, may explain the limited possibilities to describe the whole asylum process in statistical terms.

According to Table 3.2.2, in all countries, apart from the Baltic States and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, there is an official total number of asylum applications, subdivided by country of citizenship. Data on the place of application are provided only by Poland and are collected (but not published) in Romania. In five countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) information on the sex and age distribution of the asylum applicants is collected. However, these data are made available only in the Czech Republic (sex and age) and Slovenia (sex).

In most of the countries, there are some data on asylum procedure decisions, subdivided by citizenship. In theory, these decisions should be distinguished by all possible stages in the

⁷ It may be questionable, however, to what extent the theoretical inclusion of pre-screened rejected applicants is reflected by current practice.

asylum procedure (pre-screening, first instance, and second instance). Unfortunately, none of the countries can fulfil this condition.

From country to country, this results in a rather miscellaneous picture as regards asylum decisions, not only of the different stages in the procedure but also concerning the distinction between available and collected data. In this respect, the Czech Republic and Poland offer somewhat more information than the other countries. Decisions by year of application, necessary data in order to describe the asylum process properly, are only provided by the Czech Republic. Four other countries (Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovenia) do collect data but do not publish this information. Additional available data on decisions are scarce too (sex and age of the applicants whose cases have been decided upon and the time it took to reach a decision).

Statistics on pending asylum procedures are only obtainable for Bulgaria and Poland. For the Slovak Republic some estimates could be made in this respect. In most of the remaining countries data on pending procedures are only being collected.

Finally, none of the countries provides or collects information on asylum procedure appeals.

In summarising Table 3.2.2, it can be stated that there are many blank cells, indicating the absence of rather basic statistics on asylum. Of course, this is not surprising given the not yet or only recently introduced legislation on asylum and refuge in the selected countries. International comparisons of decision data meet even more difficulties than of application data because definition problems with regard to the different stages of the asylum process are exacerbated by the underlying definition problems of asylum applicants. If it is not clear to whom exactly the application data refer, how could it then be established to whom the decisions on the applications refer? Furthermore, to date only one of the countries, the Czech Republic, seems to offer possibilities for a longitudinal description of asylum procedures. There is also little room for the description of the asylum process in a more demographic way, i.e. by sex and age.

Table 3.2.2 Available statistics on asylum*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Applicant for asylum											
Total	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
by place of application								X	x		
country of citizenship	X	X			X			X	X	X	X
sex	x	X			x			x			X
age	x	X			x			x			x
other		X						x			x
Asylum procedure decisions											
Stage	<i>F</i>	F,B,C			<i>F</i>		<i>F</i>	B,C	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>E</i>
by calendar year	<i>F</i>	F,b,c			<i>F</i>			B,C	<i>E</i>		<i>E</i>
year of application		F,b,c			<i>f</i>			b,c	<i>e</i>		<i>e</i>
outcome	<i>F</i>	F,B,C			<i>F</i>			B,C	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>E</i>
country of citizenship	<i>F</i>	F,B,C			<i>F</i>			B,C	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>E</i>
sex	<i>f</i>	F,b,c			<i>f</i>			b,c			<i>E</i>
age	<i>f</i>	f,b,c			<i>f</i>			b,c			<i>E</i>
duration											
other								b,c			<i>e</i>
Pending asylum procedures											
Stage	<i>F</i>	F,b,c			<i>f</i>			B	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>E</i>
by calendar year	<i>F</i>	F,b,c			<i>f</i>				<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>E</i>
year of application	<i>F</i>	F,b,c			<i>f</i>			B			
country of citizenship		F,b,c			<i>f</i>						
sex	<i>f</i>	F,b,c			<i>f</i>						
age	<i>f</i>	f,b,c			<i>f</i>						
duration											
other											
Asylum procedure appeals											
Stage											
by calendar year											
year of application											
outcome											
country of citizenship											
sex											
age											
duration											
other											

* Based on the questionnaires in Appendix 7.1 and Appendix 7.2.

In case of italics, the answers have been derived from other sources by the authors.

CAPITALS REFER TO AVAILABILITY; normal marks indicate that those statistics are not available but might be available (because the data are collected).

Bold marks refer to tables in Appendix 7.3.

x = available according to the definition in Table 3.2.1.

a = pre-screening; b = first instance; c = following instance;

d = total of a and b; e = total of b and c; f = total of a, b and c.

¹ Bulgaria sent some tables but did not return both questionnaires.

All figures are broken down for adults and children.

² The Czech Republic also publishes data on asylum applicants by accommodation of reception (refugee centres, private). Furthermore statistics on temporary protection for ex-Yugoslavs are available.

³ Estonia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁴ The Statistical Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia does not collect data on asylum applications and decisions. Besides, no information on asylum and refugees was received from the Ministry of the Interior. The source for the number of applications in 1996 (three!) is ICMPD (1997).

⁵ Hungary did not return the questionnaire on legal aspects. Up to 1998 Hungary applied a geographical limitation to the Convention. This meant that asylum was restricted to asylum-seekers from Europe.

⁶ Latvia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

- ⁷ The asylum procedure only recently came into force (1997). Apart from total figures on applications and decisions in 1997 (UNHCR, 1998f), no data are available yet.
- ⁸ Other collected data on applicants: marital status, profession and education.
- ⁹ Different sources were contradictory about the in- or exclusion of dependants (spouse and children).
- ¹⁰ In the Slovak Republic there is no regular data exchange between the Ministry of Interior and the Statistical Office.
- ¹¹ All data are collected and kept by the Ministry of the Interior. The Statistical Office of Slovenia has not organised the collection of data on asylum-seekers and refugees in the National Statistical Programme. Other collected data on applicants and decisions on applications: place of birth and education.

Table 3.2.3 Definition of refugee*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Granted asylum application											
Refugee status (1951 Convention)	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Humanitarian status	x			x					x	x	
Temporary protection											
Rejected asylum application											
Temporarily not returned											
Resettlement											
Resettled / invited refugees											
Family-reunification											
Reunified family members											
Adjusted for											
Birth											
Departure / end of recognition		x									
Death		x									
Naturalisation		x									
Other events											
Total figure											
Absolute (* 1,000)	0.4	1.3			2.7		0.0	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.0
Per 10,000 of the population	0.4	1.3			2.7		0.0	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.0
Source	c	c			o		o	HC	o	HC	c

* Based on the questionnaires in Appendix 7.1 and Appendix 7.2.

In case of italics, the answers have been derived from other sources by the authors.

c = country concerned; HC = UNHCR; o = other.

¹ Bulgaria sent some tables but did not return both questionnaires.

The total figure, estimated and published by UNHCR (1998a), relates to the end of 1997.

² Mid 1997, the actual number of refugees (valid granted asylum applications) in the Czech Republic has been estimated 1.3 thousand.

³ Estonia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁴ The Statistical Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia does not collect data on refugees. Besides, no information on refugees was received from the Ministry of the Interior.

⁵ Hungary did not return the questionnaire on legal aspects.

Up to 1998 Hungary applied a geographical limitation to the Convention. This meant that asylum was restricted to asylum-seekers from Europe.

The total figure, drawn from ICMPD, 1997, relates to mid 1996.

⁶ Latvia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁷ The asylum procedure only recently came into force (1997). In 1997, only six people received a status. It is not yet fully clear how a refugee is defined statistically.

⁸ The total figure, estimated and published by UNHCR (1998g), relates to the end of 1997.

⁹ The total figure, estimated by the authors, relates to the end of 1996.

¹⁰ The total figure, estimated and published by UNHCR (1998i), relates to the beginning of 1998.

¹¹ Only two of all requests for asylum during the period 1991-1996 have been granted (Convention) refugee status. At the end of 1996, there were thirteen thousand temporarily protected persons in Slovenia.

Table 3.2.3 provides an overview of the refugee definitions in the various Central European countries. Obviously, due to the recent character of the refugee phenomena, there are many blanks in the table while the resulting stocks of refugees are almost negligible.

Supposedly, a narrow definition of refugee (Convention status only) is being used in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia. A somewhat broader definition of refugee (Convention and humanitarian status) is applied in Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania and the Slovak Republic. In all of these countries persons granted temporary protection are not counted in. Due to lacking legislation, there is no information for Estonia and Latvia.

Three countries, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia, have generated own estimates on the stock number of refugees. However, the methods of calculation used are not very sophisticated. The Czech Republic is the only country that seems to adjust the stock figure for departures, deaths and naturalisations. For two countries, Poland and the Slovak Republic, UNHCR is the only source of refugee stock figures. According to UNHCR, the reliability of these figures is weak, partly due to the lack of proper definitions. Finally, for Hungary, Lithuania and Romania other sources were used.

Without going into further detail, the conclusion may be drawn that none of the countries has seriously attempted to set up and maintain statistics on refugees (see Table 3.2.4), and as far as data are available, their credibility is limited. Again, because of the recent nature of the asylum and refuge issue in these countries, these conclusions do not come as a surprise.

Consequently, making international comparisons is tricky and often difficult to justify. Besides, none of the countries seem to have a well-defined refugee concept in the sense of who is to be considered a refugee and who is not or not any more. The lack of possibilities to trace refugees in the course of time in administrations or registers may be due to this.

A well-known but often not properly defined measure for the degree to which asylum applicants are granted refugee status is the recognition rate. According to similar demographic measures, the term 'rate' should be related to a population at risk. Thus, the denominator of the recognition rate has to count the total number of asylum-seekers who may be granted refugee status. This condition, combined with the fact that an asylum procedure may easily exceed one calendar year, implies a longitudinal approach for a proper calculation of the recognition rate. However, as can be derived from Table 3.2.5, only the Czech Republic offers possibilities for the calculation of a rate that is actually based on year of application.

In all countries that provide some information on decisions, the number of persons granted refugee status in a given calendar year can be divided by the total number of decisions in that year. To distinguish this (general) method of measuring the degree of recognition from the (cohort) recognition rate, it will be called recognition percentage.

Theoretically, a recognition rate is to be preferred to a recognition percentage. Apart from the endeavour to describe the asylum process longitudinally, a recognition percentage might be more or less misleading in the case of many pending procedures. If, for example, 100 requests are filed in a certain year, while only 10 of these requests and 30 former requests are decided upon, a recognition percentage only relates to those (heterogeneous) 40. For the remaining 90 cases of the relevant calendar year, this percentage might turn out to be quite different.

The more categories are included in the numerator of the recognition percentage, the higher its level will obviously be. The inverse is true of the denominator. In this respect, there are various differences between the selected countries. Some include only Convention refugees in the numerator; other countries also include humanitarian statuses. As far as the stage of the asylum

procedure is concerned, Poland can provide both first and second instance decisions, while in the other countries only final decisions seem to be available. It is not known to what extent double counts of decisions occurred (i.e. if a negative decision is overruled by a positive in second instance, the original decision should be cancelled). On the side of the denominator, the in- or exclusion of rejectees in the pre-screening procedure may significantly influence the size of the recognition percentage. However, countries hardly provided information on this issue.

Table 3.2.4 Available statistics on refugees*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Stock data											
Total on a fixed date by year of arrival	x	x			x			x	x	x	x
Flow data											
Changes during a fixed period by year of arrival											
country of citizenship											
sex											
age											
other											

Based on the questionnaires in Appendix 7.1 and Appendix 7.2.

In case of italics the answers have been derived from other sources by the authors.

Bold marks refer to tables in Appendix 7.3.

¹ UNHCR is the only source of the (rough) estimate.

² Data on the sex distribution are also available.

³ Estonia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁴ The Statistical Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia does not collect data on refugees. Besides, no information on refugees was received from the Ministry of the Interior.

⁵ Hungary did not return the questionnaire on legal aspects.

Up to 1998 Hungary applied a geographical limitation to the Convention. This meant that asylum was restricted to asylum-seekers from Europe. UNHCR is the only source of the (rough) estimate.

⁶ Latvia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁷ The asylum procedure only recently came into force (1997). No data are available yet.

⁸ UNHCR is the only source of the (rough) estimate.

⁹ The authors are the only source of the (rough) estimate. The Ministry of Interior might be able to provide some stock data too

¹⁰ Next to UNHCR, the Ministry of Interior might be able to provide some stock data too.

¹¹ Only two of all requests for asylum during the period 1991-1996 have been granted (Convention) refugee status.

Table 3.2.5 Definition of recognition percentage/rate*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Approach											
Calendar year based (percentage)	x	x			x		x	x	x	x	x
Application year based (rate)		x									
Asylum application											
Based on applicants (individuals)	x	x ²			x		x	x		x	x
Based on applications (dossiers)									x		
Numerator											
Granted asylum application											
refugee status (1951 Convention)	x	x			x		x	x	x	x	x
humanitarian status	x								x	x	
temporary protection											
Stage of asylum procedure											
only first instance								x			
final decisions (after appeals)	x	x			x			x	x	x	x
Resettled/invited refugees included											
Granted applicants abroad included											
Denominator											
Pending cases included		x ²									
Withdrawn/invalid applications included		x ²									
Rejectees in pre-screening included	u	x			u		u	u		u	
Latest figure											
Percentage	72	81			61		10	24	15	56	7
Rate		3									

* Based on the questionnaires in Appendix 7.1 and Appendix 7.2.

In case of italics, the answers have been derived from other sources by the authors.

u = unknown on the basis of the available tables.

¹ The latest recognition percentage relates to decisions in the year 1997 (1996: 85; 1995: 93; see also Table 7.3.1.3).

² Decisions on minors are *not* counted separately in the decisions on the applications; they are included in the decision of one of the parents. This may lead to some underestimation of the recognition rate.

Pending cases and withdrawn ('disappeared') applications are excluded in the calculation of the recognition percentage, but included in the calculation of the recognition rate.

The latest recognition percentage relates to decisions in the year 1996 (1995: 74; 1994: 40; see also Table 7.3.2.4).

The latest recognition rate, measured mid 1997, relates to decisions for the cohort 1996 (1995: 4; 1994: 5; see also Table 7.3.2.5).

³ Estonia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁴ The Statistical Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia does not collect data on asylum-seekers and refugees. Besides, no information was received from the Ministry of the Interior.

⁵ The latest recognition percentage (Europeans only) relates to decisions in the year 1996 (1995: 78; 1994: 89; see also Table 7.3.5.3).

⁶ Latvia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁷ The asylum procedure only recently came into force (1997). According to UNHCR (1998f) six people were granted refugee status in 1997 and 56 were rejected.

⁸ The latest recognition percentage relates to first instance decisions in the year 1996 (1995: 35; 1994: 68). For second instance decisions the percentage is 15 in 1996 and 5 in 1995 (see also Table 7.3.8.3).

⁹ The latest recognition percentage relates to decisions in the year 1996 (1995: 21; 1994: 7; see also Table 7.3.9.3).

¹⁰ The latest recognition percentage relates to decisions in the year 1996 (1995: 54; 1994: 63; see also Table 7.3.10.3). Including discontinued cases in the calculation of the recognition percentage leads to lower results (30 in 1995 and 36 in 1994).

¹¹ The recognition percentage for the period 1994-1996 is seven if discontinued cases are excluded, and three if they are included (see Table 7.3.11.3).

Another relevant factor in the calculation of recognition, especially for these Central European countries, is the treatment of so called discontinued cases (withdrawn requests, disappearances, etc.). Inclusion or exclusion of these numbers can influence the result substantially. For example, in the Slovak Republic for decisions taken in the year 1995, exclusion of discontinued cases leads to a recognition percentage of 54, while inclusion ends up in 30.

The case of the Czech Republic, the only country that allows for such analyses, shows a striking example of the difference between a recognition rate and a recognition percentage. If only decisions are taken into account, ignoring the numerous withdrawals and disappearances, a recognition percentage of 81 is reached in 1996. However, the recognition rate of asylum cohort 1996, measured mid 1997, is only 3!

First of all, the big difference between the recognition percentage and the recognition rate in the Czech Republic is due to the discontinued cases which significantly decrease the recognition rate. Secondly, as not all decisions concerning cohort 1996 had yet been taken by mid 1997, the rate is only preliminary and therefore too low. Finally, the recognition rate in the Czech Republic is based on adults, excluding dependent minors. Because the latter category is included in the total applications, this results in some underestimation.

From the foregoing explanation on the pros and cons of the recognition rate or percentage, it may be concluded that, in practice, the use of neither of the two indicators for the degree of recognition is ideal. A combination of both indicators, with an explanation of the differences, can be recommended. On a national level, assuming unchanged calculation methods, these indicators can provide adequate information on the degree of recognition in the course of time. However, in an international context, one should be aware of the consequences of the various calculation methods before drawing any conclusions. The results presented in Table 3.2.5 as such hardly allow for comparisons between countries.

3.3 Relation between statistics on asylum and migration statistics

Although one might argue whether asylum-seekers are to be considered as international migrants, and although one might also like to keep migration policies separate from asylum policies, from a demographic point of view, asylum-seekers create a flow of people coming into or leaving the country.

This section will discuss the ways in which asylum-seekers are incorporated into the systems of population accounting in the selected Central European countries. Because asylum-seekers are not handled separately in those systems, the question may be recorded as: to what extent are asylum-seekers included in migration statistics? In order to be able to distinguish asylum-seekers from other migrants, an additional question concerns the possibilities to identify asylum-seekers in the migration statistics.

The results, presented in Table 3.3.1, are not encouraging. Only four countries provided some information on the relation between asylum statistics and migration statistics. Of these four, Romania responded that asylum-seekers were included in the immigration statistics, but excluded from the emigration statistics. The other three countries declared no relation at all between both statistics.

Following the outcomes of Table 3.3.1, it can be stated that for all selected Central European countries, maybe with the exception of Romania, the statistics on international migration are not (yet) linked to the statistics on asylum, particularly as both sources are still under construction or

do not match ⁸. Certainly from the point of view of an adequate system of population accounting, improvements in the relation between those statistics should be pursued. A first step might be to include the analysis of asylum statistics in the work programmes of the national agencies (statistical institutes) dealing with the presentation and analysis of migration statistics. Specific studies on the relation between both statistics might result in recommendations to intensify this relation. National experiences in this field could be internationally exchanged during regular (Eurostat and United Nations) meetings of migration experts.

Table 3.3.1 Migration statistics and asylum-seekers*

	BG ¹	CR ²	EST ³	MAC ⁴	H ⁵	LAT ⁶	LIT ⁷	PL ⁸	R ⁹	SR ¹⁰	SLO ¹¹
Immigration statistics											
Asylum-seekers included					n				y	n	n
identifiable					na				n	na	na
time between arrival and registration					na				u	na	na
Emigration statistics											
Asylum-seekers/refugees included					n				n	n	n
identifiable					na				na	na	na
time between departure and registration					na				na	na	na

* Based on the questionnaires in Appendix 7.1 and Appendix 7.2.

y = yes; n = no; u = unknown; na = not applicable.

¹ No information on migration statistics was received from Bulgaria.

² No information on migration statistics was received from the Czech Republic.

³ Estonia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁴ Starting from 1992, the Statistical Office of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia collects data on internal and external migration. However, no data are collected on asylum applications and decisions. Besides, no information on asylum and refugees was received from the Ministry of the Interior.

⁵ All persons who apply for asylum are excluded from the migration statistics in Hungary.

⁶ Latvia was not able to complete the questionnaires because of lack of legislation up to 1997.

⁷ No information on migration statistics was received from Lithuania.

⁸ No information on migration statistics was received from Poland.

⁹ According to the returned questionnaire, asylum-seekers are included in the immigration statistics, but excluded from the emigration statistics.

¹⁰ All persons who apply for asylum are excluded from the migration statistics in the Slovak Republic.

¹¹ All persons who apply for asylum are excluded from the migration statistics in the Republic of Slovenia.

⁸ For an overview of sources of international migration data, see ICMPD(1997) and Van Dam et al. (1997; *in Dutch only*).

4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

4.1 Introduction

Differences in definitions and data availability, as pointed out in the previous chapters, complicate the construction of comparable asylum statistics for the Central European countries. This leads to the conclusion that the applicability of the available statistical information on asylum and refuge is primarily reserved for national purposes. Apart from the often limited availability of data, and also apart from relevant changes in registration methods, definitions, policies, and so on, these statistics may indeed properly describe national fluctuations in the number, composition and degree of recognition of asylum-seekers in the course of time. However, much work will have to be done in an international context:

- definitions should be harmonised before international comparisons may be made;
- agreements should be reached about the choice of variables to be collected, the choice of classifications to be used, the length of the time series, and the expected time span between collection and publication.

Ideally, the set of variables to be collected and the classifications to be used should also offer possibilities for a comprehensive (longitudinal) description of asylum processes in the various Central European countries⁹.

Until such a system of harmonised statistics has been set up, international statistical comparisons of asylum-seekers and refugees in the Central European countries remain fairly hazardous, especially as regards figures on the degree of recognition and on refugee stocks. As the use of relative numbers (index figures, distributions, etc.) may eliminate some of the disturbances, these figures are preferable and will be used in the next section.

4.2 Overview of recent developments in the Central European countries

Measured by both the absolute and relative number of asylum applicants in recent years, the conclusion can be drawn that the Czech Republic and Poland are the most important asylum countries in the selected Central European region (see Table 4.2.1).

However, one could also say that the Czech Republic and Poland are the least unimportant asylum countries. In all of the selected Central European countries, it appears that asylum and refuge are recent and not often occurring phenomena compared to, on the one hand, illegal and transit migration in those countries, and, on the other hand, asylum and refuge in Western European countries.

Table 4.2.1 does not show any obvious trends in the numbers of asylum requests since the beginning of the nineties. The only exceptions may be a decreasing trend for Hungary until 1995 and an increasing trend for Poland after 1995. The other countries (with data available) show considerable random fluctuations from year to year.

Table 4.2.2 provides an overview of the main regions of citizenship of the asylum applicants in seven selected Central European countries. Depending on the availability, these figures relate to different periods.

⁹ The Eurostat Working paper "Draft manual on Statistics of Asylum-seekers and Refugees" offers guidelines for a system of harmonised statistics on asylum and refuge.

Table 4.2.1 Asylum applications in selected Central European countries ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
absolute							
Bulgaria	:	:	:	:	451	283	416
Czech Republic	1977	817	2192	1189	1413	2159	:
Hungary	921	458	468	207	128	152	:
Poland	:	567	819	598	843	3206	3500
Romania	315	426	928	647	634	598	:
Slovak Republic	:	:	103	14	359	415	:
Slovenia	7	36	11	3	6	35	:
per 10,000 of the pop.							
Bulgaria	:	:	:	:	0.54	0.34	0.49
Czech Republic	1.92	0.79	2.12	1.15	1.37	2.09	:
Hungary	0.89	0.44	0.45	0.20	0.12	0.15	:
Poland	:	0.15	0.21	0.16	0.22	0.83	0.90
Romania	0.14	0.19	0.41	0.28	0.28	0.26	:
Slovak Republic	:	:	0.19	0.26	0.67	0.77	:
Slovenia	0.04	0.18	0.06	0.15	0.03	0.18	:
1995=100							
Bulgaria	:	:	:	:	100	63	92
Czech Republic	140	58	155	84	100	153	:
Hungary	720	358	366	162	100	119	:
Poland	:	67	97	71	100	380	415
Romania	50	67	146	102	100	94	:
Slovak Republic	:	:	29	4	100	116	:
Slovenia	117	600	183	50	100	583	:

¹ No information available for Estonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
Sources: see Appendix 7.3.

Table 4.2.2 reflects some remarkable similarities as well as differences:

- except for Romania and the Slovak Republic, former Yugoslavian asylum-seekers are ranked in the top five. In Hungary (1994-1996: 65 per cent) and Slovenia (1991-1996: 56 per cent) they are the most numerous category;
- asylum-seekers from the former Soviet Union filed a significant share of the asylum requests in the Czech Republic (1991-1996: 23 per cent), Poland (Armenians 15 per cent during 1992-1996), Hungary (1994-1996: 13 per cent) and the Slovak Republic (1993-1996: 11 per cent);
- other European citizenships worth mentioning, are the Bulgarian (35 per cent in the Czech Republic) and the Romanian (19 per cent in the Czech Republic and 16 per cent in Hungary);
- Asian citizenships are represented by Afghanistan (around 25 per cent in Bulgaria and the Slovak Republic), Bangladesh (22 per cent in Romania). Iraqis and Iranians are important categories for almost all of the selected countries of asylum;
- finally, asylum-seekers who originate from Africa are of minor importance for the Central European countries under consideration, except those from Somalia in Romania.

Some of the above-mentioned differences may be traced back to geographical position or historical links. Other differences may be due to social networks formed between the immigrants or asylum-seekers in the receiving countries, and their family, friends, and the community members in the country of origin (Kulu-Glasgow, 1992).

Table 4.2.2 Asylum applications by main countries of citizenship in selected Central European countries ¹

Country of asylum	Period	Country of citizenship	Percentage
Bulgaria	93-97	1. Afghanistan	25
		2. Iraq	12
		3. (ex) Yugoslavia	9
		4. Turkey	6
		5. Iran	5
Czech Republic	91-96	1. Bulgaria	35
		2. (ex) Soviet Union	23
		3. Romania	19
		4. Afghanistan	4
		5. (ex) Yugoslavia	3
Hungary	94-96	1. (ex) Yugoslavia	65
		2. Romania	16
		3. (ex) Soviet Union	13
Poland	92-96	1. Armenia	15
		2. Bosnia-Herzegovina	12
		3. Sri Lanka	12
		4. Afghanistan	10
		5. Iraq	8
Romania	91-96	1. Bangladesh	22
		2. Iraq	13
		3. Somalia	13
		4. Albania	9
		5. Sri Lanka	8
Slovak Republic	93-96	1. Iraq	32
		2. Afghanistan	26
		3. (ex) Soviet Union	11
		4. Turkey	5
		5. Iran	3
Slovenia	91-96	1. (ex) Yugoslavia	56
		2. Iraq	16
		3. Iran	11
		4. Liberia	7
		5. Albania	3

¹ No information available for Estonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
Sources: see Appendix 7.3.

Table 4.2.3 Recognition percentages according to national practices in selected Central European countries ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Bulgaria	:	:	:	:	:	85	72
Czech Republic	100	96	96	40	74	81	:
Hungary	:	:	:	89	78	61	:
Poland	:	56	31	67	33	24	:
Romania	100	100	n.a.	7	21	15	:
Slovak Republic	:	:	66	63	54	56	:
Slovenia	:	:	:	-	67	-	:

¹ All figures have been classified by year of decision (calendar year based).
No information available for Estonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
For explanation of national practices, see Table 3.2.5.
Sources: see Appendix 7.3.

With regard to the recognition percentage, it was previously concluded that the figures presented in Table 4.2.3 cannot easily be compared as such. In an international context, these indicators may only be used adequately against the background of their contents. Apart from period-based results, additional information should be obtained by means of the longitudinal approach, based on cohorts of asylum-seekers. Notwithstanding these recommendations, one could cautiously conclude from Table 4.2.3 that there is some evidence for a decreasing trend of the recognition percentage in most of the countries in the course of time. Besides, the recent recognition percentages for Romania and Poland seem to be significantly lower than in the other selected countries.

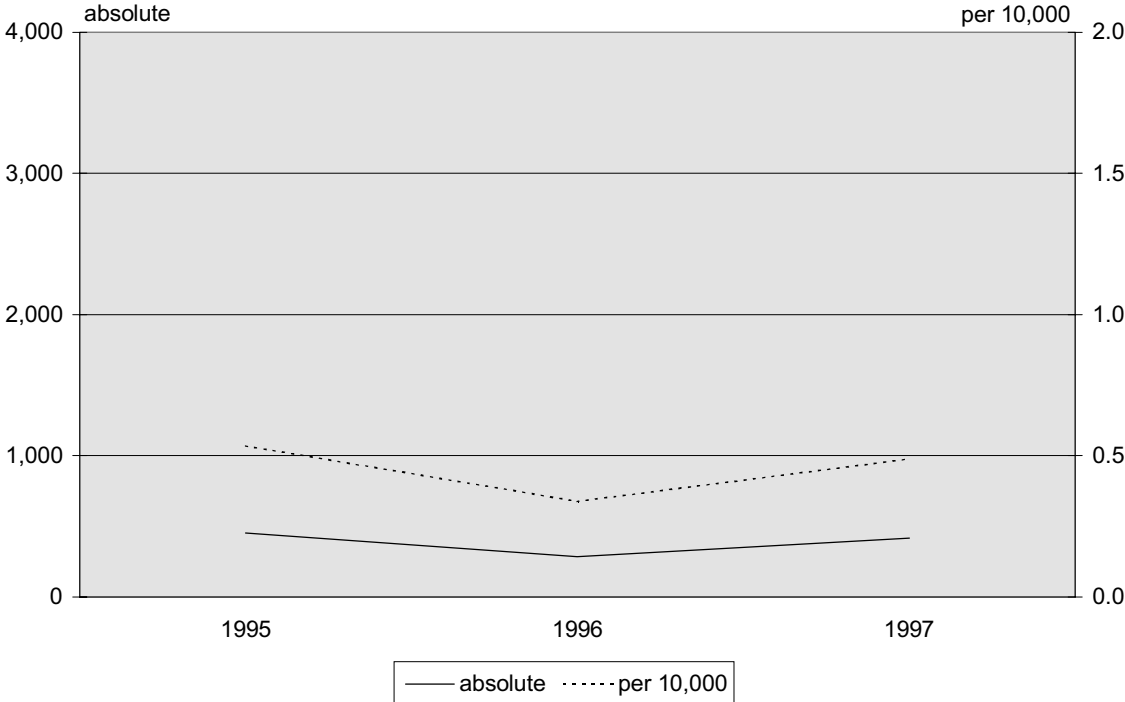
Due to the unavailability of data (on sex, age, household composition, etc.) or the incomparability and unreliability of data (refugee stock), it is not possible to make further international comparisons in this section. National overviews are provided in the next section.

4.3 Information per country

4.3.1 Bulgaria

Bulgaria has been an important source country of refugees and asylum-seekers for many years. Besides, it is one of the principal bridge countries for migration to Western Europe (IOM, 1994a). However, Bulgaria plays just a modest role as a destination country for refugees and asylum-seekers. During 1995, less than five hundred persons requested for asylum in Bulgaria. In 1996 and 1997, the numbers were even lower (see Figure 4.3.1.1 and Table 7.3.1.1). Mainly due to the unfavourable economic conditions, Bulgaria is far from attractive to asylum-seekers and refugees. The low level of income makes it hard to provide for elementary living conditions. Apart from that, people do not necessarily need to apply for asylum because Bulgaria’s liberal legislation provides housing and assistance irrespective of one’s status (Bobeva, 1996).

Figure 4.3.1.1 Asylum applications in Bulgaria, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹

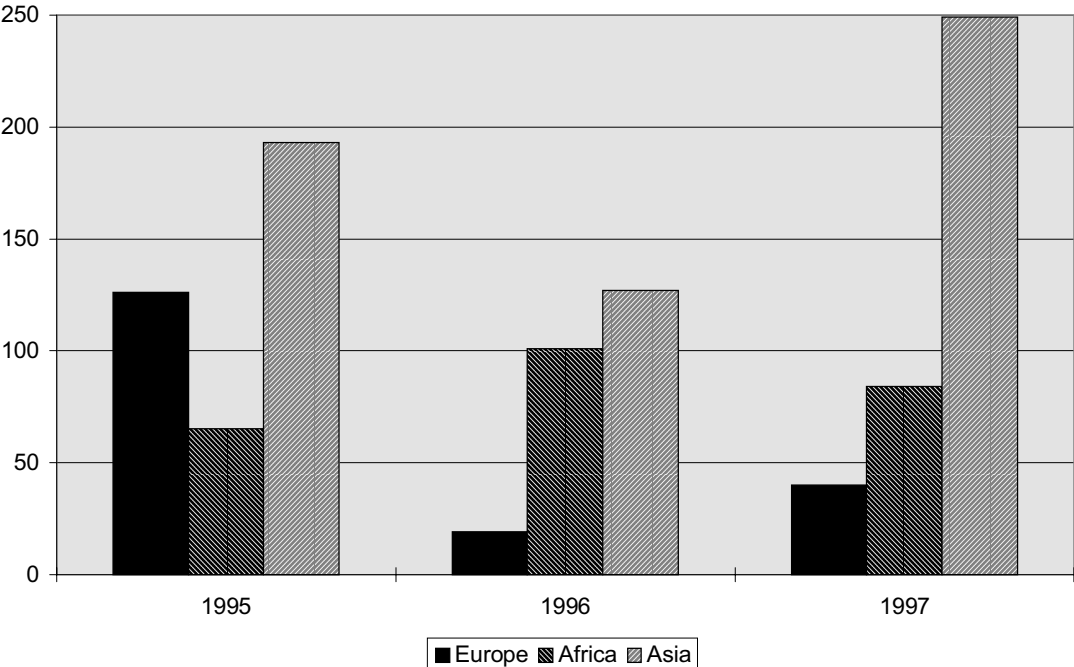


¹ Per 10,000 of the population on January 1st. Including dependants. Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

In 1995 most asylum-seekers came from Afghanistan and former Yugoslavia. The following year, Afghanistan together with Iraq and Liberia were the dominant countries of asylum. Iraq came up as the number one country of origin of asylum-seekers in 1997, followed by Afghanistan, Turkey and Iran (see Figure 4.3.1.2 and Table 7.3.1.2). Many of the asylum applicants are former students or graduates in Bulgaria, who were not able to return to their homeland because of political changes in those countries (UNHCR, 1998a).

Most of the asylum decisions taken in 1995 ended in a positive result. Two thirds resulted in a Geneva Convention status and 25 per cent in a status on humanitarian grounds. This means that less than ten per cent of the decisions were negative. The percentage of positive decisions also reached a high level in 1996: 85. For some countries the approval percentage was even 100 (e.g. Afghanistan; see Table 7.3.1.3). Much lower percentages in 1996 are shown for Iran (11), Turkey (25) and Iraq (27). The situation changed somewhat in 1997. The recognition percentage fell to almost 70 and for more countries than the year before the percentage did not exceed 50 (e.g. Liberia, Sudan and Iraq).

Figure 4.3.1.2 Asylum applications in Bulgaria by continent of citizenship ¹

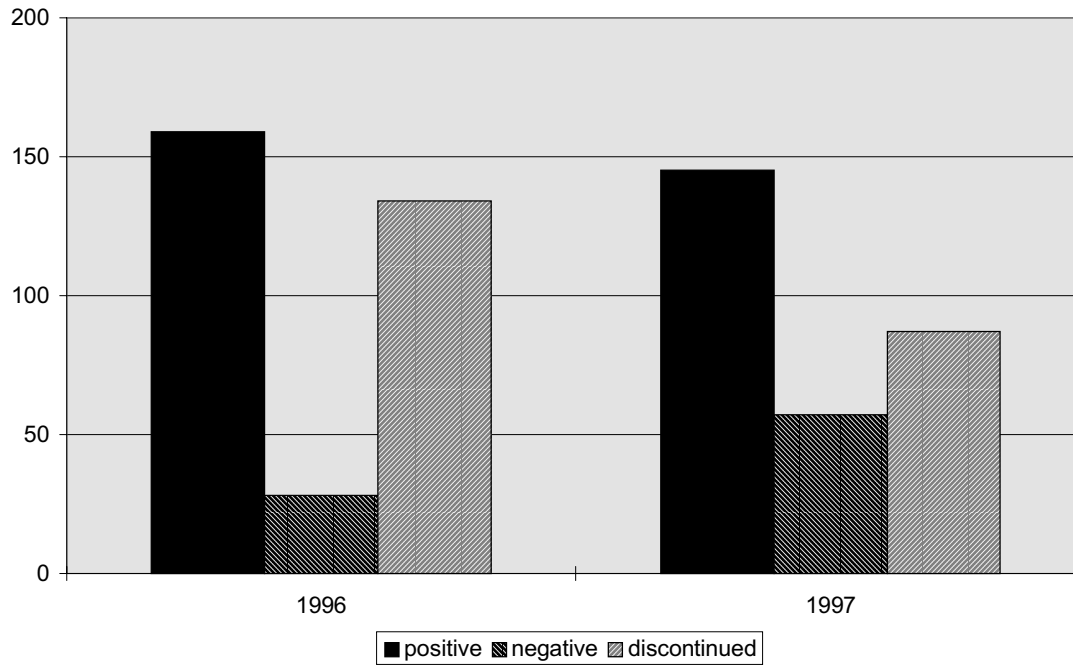


¹ Including dependants.
Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

The figures on discontinued asylum applications, available for 1996 and 1997, indicate that these numbers were much higher than the numbers of negatively decided cases (Figure 4.3.1.3). This means that many applicants left the country (or simply disappeared) before the end of the procedure. In 1997, according to Figure 4.3.1.4, this mainly concerned people from Ethiopia, Iran and Iraq.

On 1 January 1998 a total number of 1,250 applications were pending (including dependants). The years before this number was slightly lower (see Figure 4.3.1.5 and Table 7.3.1.4). Applicants from Afghanistan, former Yugoslavia and Iraq dominate this category.

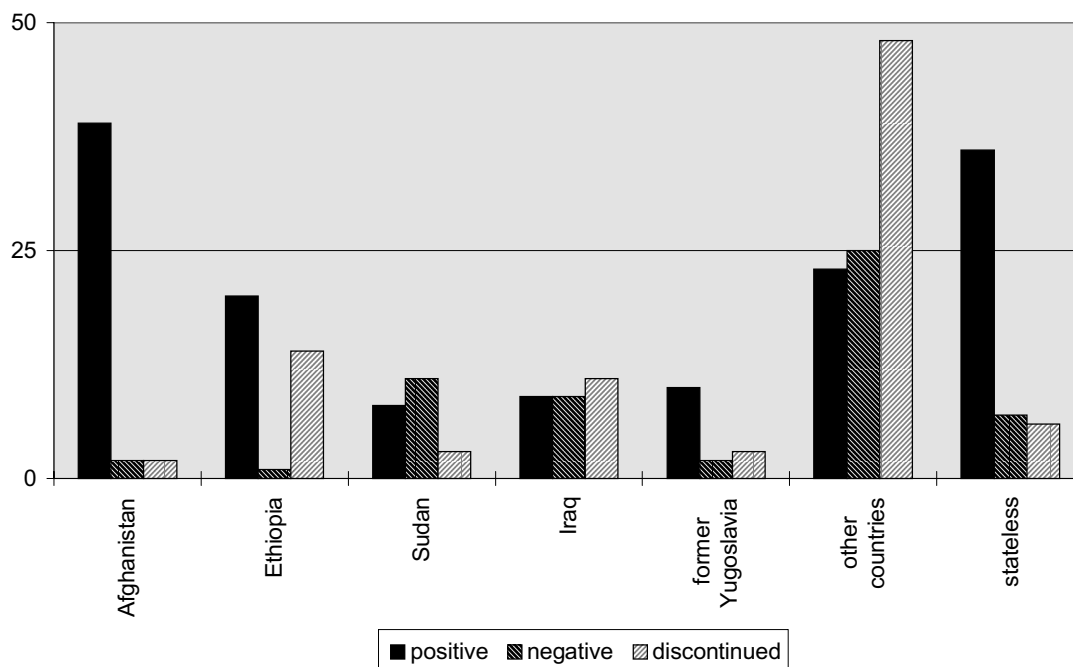
Figure 4.3.1.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Bulgaria by year of decision ¹



¹ Including dependants.

Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

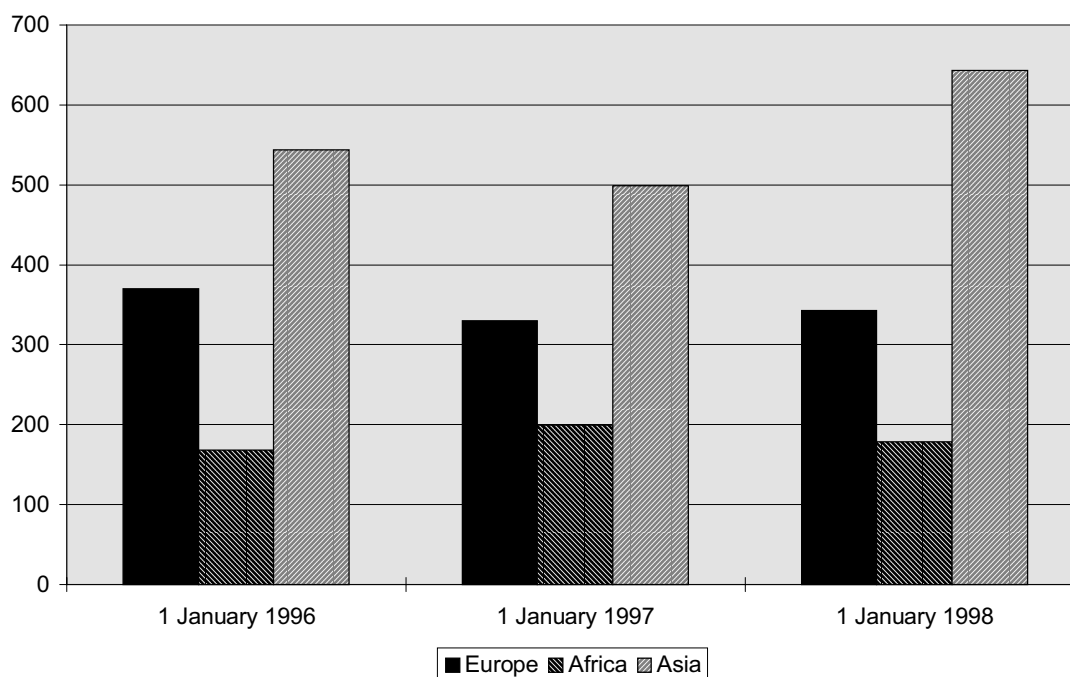
Figure 4.3.1.4 Decisions on asylum applications in Bulgaria in 1997 by citizenship ¹



¹ Including dependants.

Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

Figure 4.3.1.5 Pending asylum applications in Bulgaria by continent of citizenship ¹



¹ Including dependants.

Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

4.3.2 Czech Republic

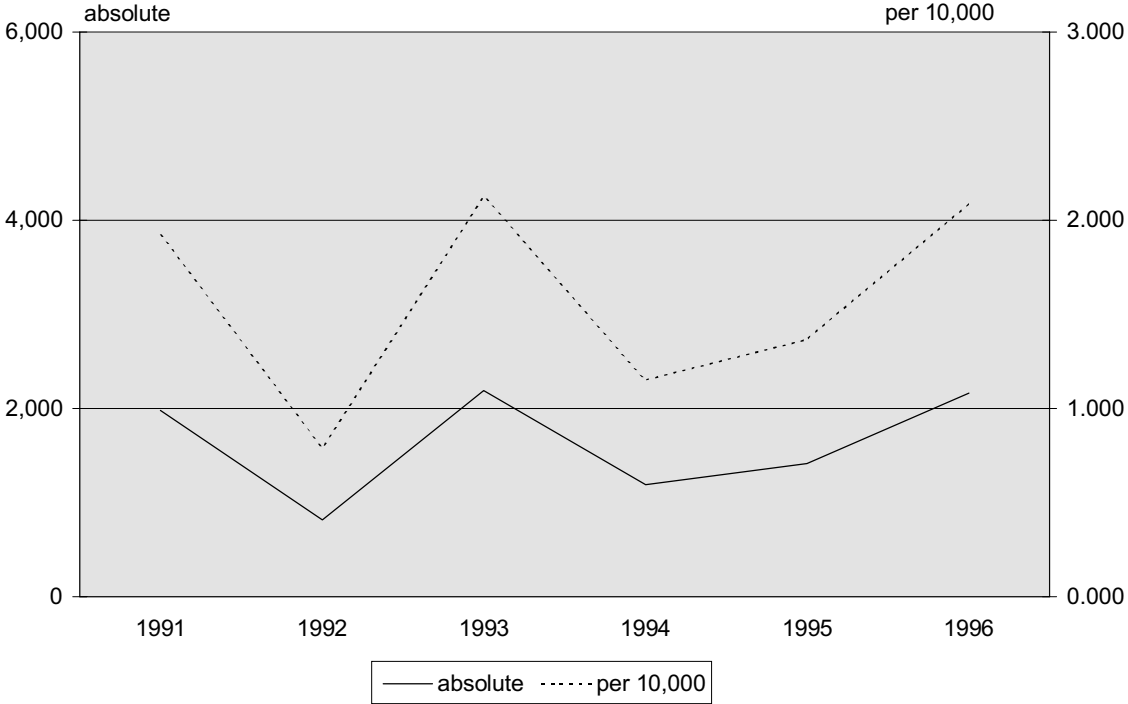
Like other Central European countries, after the democratic transformation in 1989 the Czech Republic has evolved from a refugee-producing to a refugee-receiving country (UNHCR, 1998b). However, above all the Czech Republic characterises as a transit country for international migrants. Only very few people who cross the Czech borders report themselves as asylum-seekers.

In the period August 1990 - June 1997 a total of 12.5 thousand asylum-seekers from more than forty countries arrived in the Czech Republic. About 1,500 (12 per cent) of these asylum-seekers were granted legal refugee status. In 1996, 2.2 thousand persons applied for refugee status. This is significantly more than in the previous two years, yet nearly the same as the number in 1993 (see Figure 4.3.2.1 and Table 7.3.2.1). A small portion of these requests were processed in accelerated procedures (five per cent in 1994 and 1995, two per cent in 1996).

The vast majority of asylum-seekers originates from other Central and East European countries, especially from Bulgaria and Romania (see Figure 4.3.2.2 and Table 7.3.3.2). Together, these countries accounted for 70 per cent of the total number of asylum applications in 1996. Other countries of citizenship worth mentioning in this context, are the former Soviet Union and Afghanistan. The role of the first country appears to diminish (from more than eight hundred asylum applications in 1993 to less than two hundred in 1996), while the role of the last country increases (from less than thirty in 1992 to more than one hundred in 1995 and 1996).

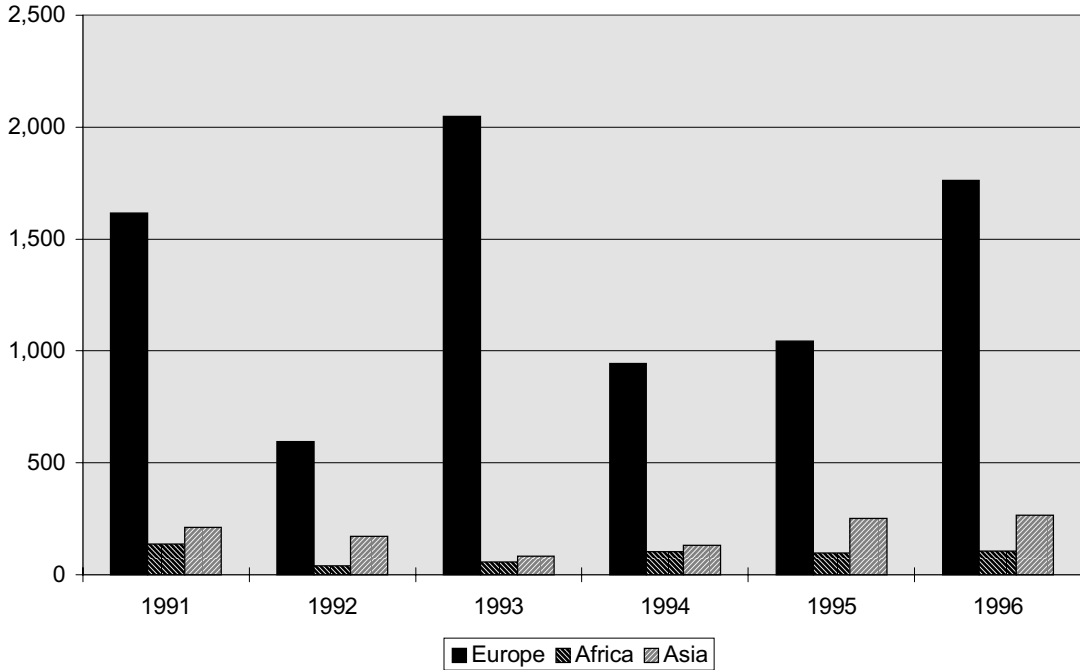
The number of asylum applications of former Yugoslavs is relatively small because of a special regime applied to people coming from former Yugoslavia, especially from Bosnia Herzegovina. In 1996, temporary protection status was granted to almost eight hundred persons from Bosnia Herzegovina.

Figure 4.3.2.1 Asylum applications in the Czech Republic, absolute and per 10,000 of the population¹



¹ Per 10,000 of the population on January 1st. Including dependants.
Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Figure 4.3.2.2 Asylum applications in the Czech Republic by country of citizenship¹

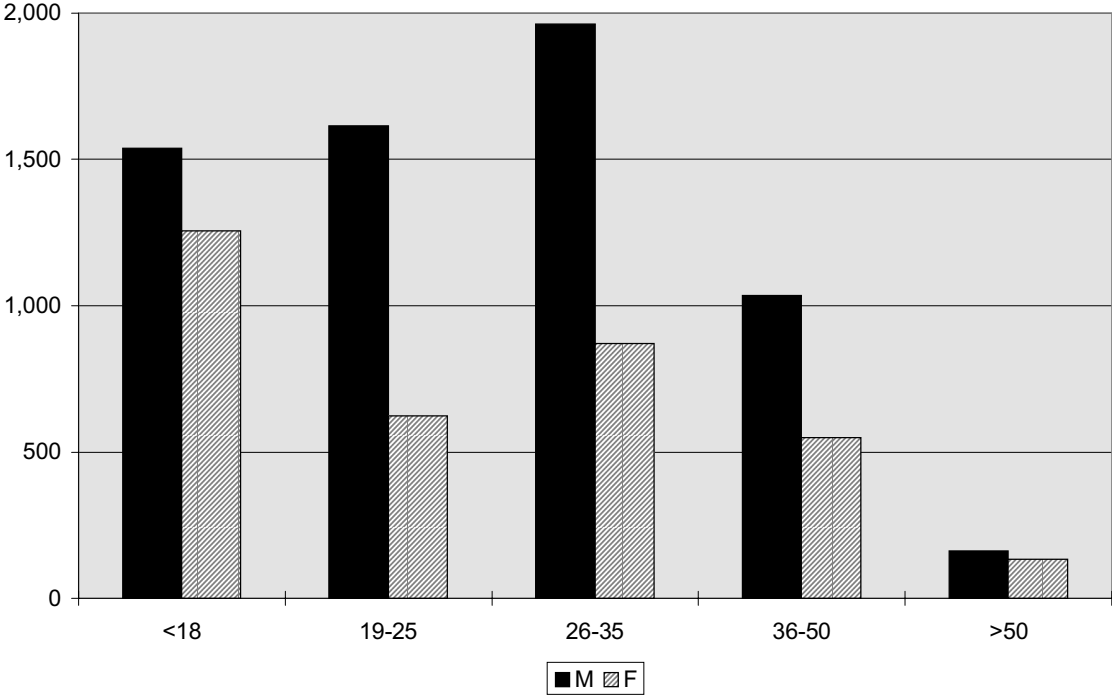


¹ Including dependants.
Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Between 1991 and 1996, six thousand ex-Yugoslavs were accommodated in humanitarian centres, with a peak of three thousand in 1992. However, these figures only indicate those being cared for in such centres and does not reflect the actual number of ex-Yugoslavs who are outside the official structures and whose numbers are not known (ICMPD, 1997)

The Czech Republic is one of the few countries that also publishes asylum data by sex and age. Two out of every three asylum applicants are men. Measured over the whole period 1991-1996, the male sex ratio is lowest (55 per cent) for the younger (under eighteen) and older (over fifty) asylum applicants, and highest for the age group 19-25 (72 per cent). Figure 4.3.2.3 (and Table 7.3.2.3) clearly shows that the older age groups are underrepresented. More than eighty per cent of all applicants is younger than 36.

Figure 4.3.2.3 Asylum applications in the Czech Republic by sex and age, 1991-1996 ¹



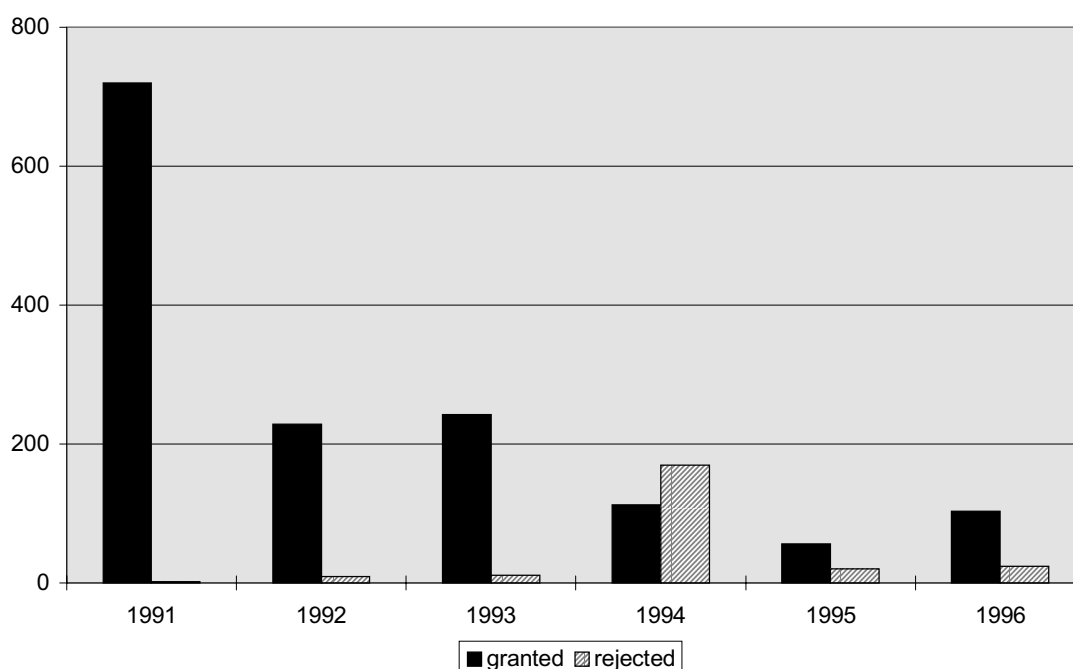
¹ Including dependants.
Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

At first sight, according to Figure 4.3.2.4 (and Table 7.3.2.4), most asylum decisions in the Czech Republic appear to be positive. Except for 1994, the percentage of granted asylum applications exceeds eighty. However, the numerous applications of people who disappeared have not been included in this figure. The reason for the high share of asylum-seekers who disappear before a decision has been taken, may be found in the fact that applying for refugee status is a strategy for transit migrants to stay legally in the Czech Republic (IOM, 1994b).

Because the Czech asylum data also offer possibilities for longitudinal analysis, an attempt is made to sketch an overall picture of the decision process for the asylum cohorts 1991-1996, including the disappearances. This picture is graphically presented in Figure 4.3.2.5. It emerges that the percentage of granted applications fell down from about 25 in 1991 and 1992 to less than five for the cohorts 1994 and 1995 (see Table 7.3.2.5) ¹⁰.

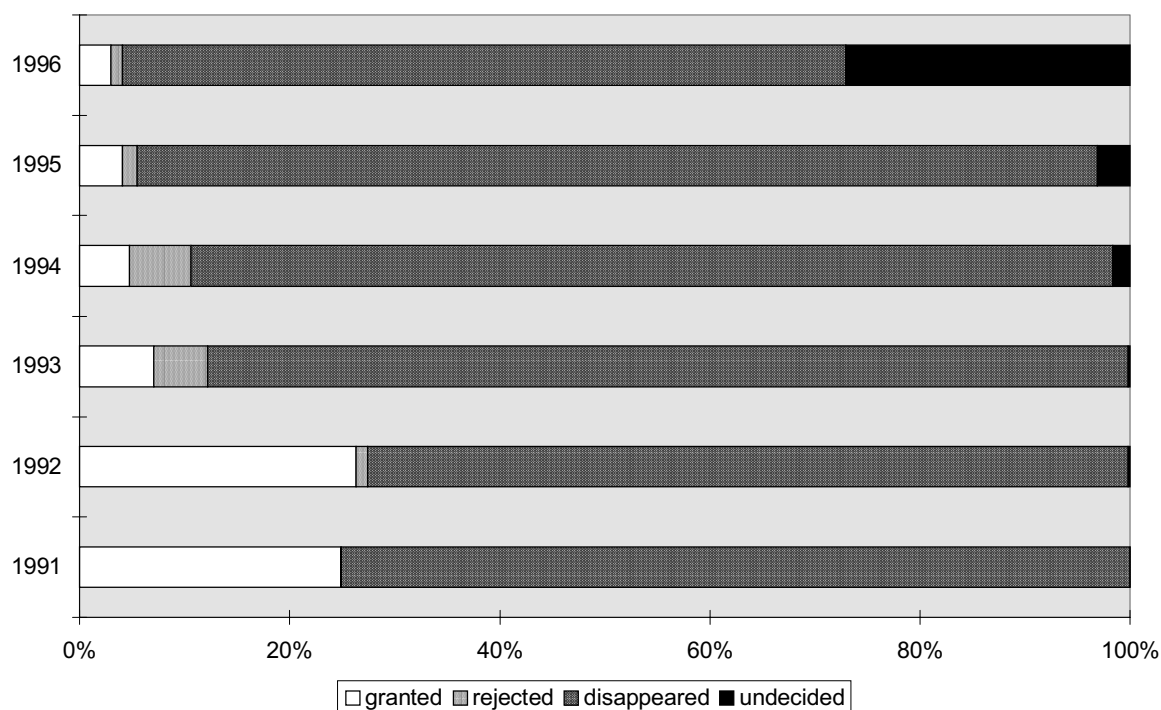
¹⁰ This percentage could suffer from such underestimation because of the fact that the decisions on applications of minors are included in the decision of the parents. Consequently, the percentage of withdrawn ('disappeared') applications could have been overestimated.

Figure 4.3.2.4 Decisions on asylum applications in the Czech Republic by year of decision ¹



¹ Decisions on applications of minors have not been counted separately; they are included in the decision of one of the parents. Excluding withdrawn/disappeared.
Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Figure 4.3.2.5 Decisions on asylum applications in the Czech Republic by year of application ¹



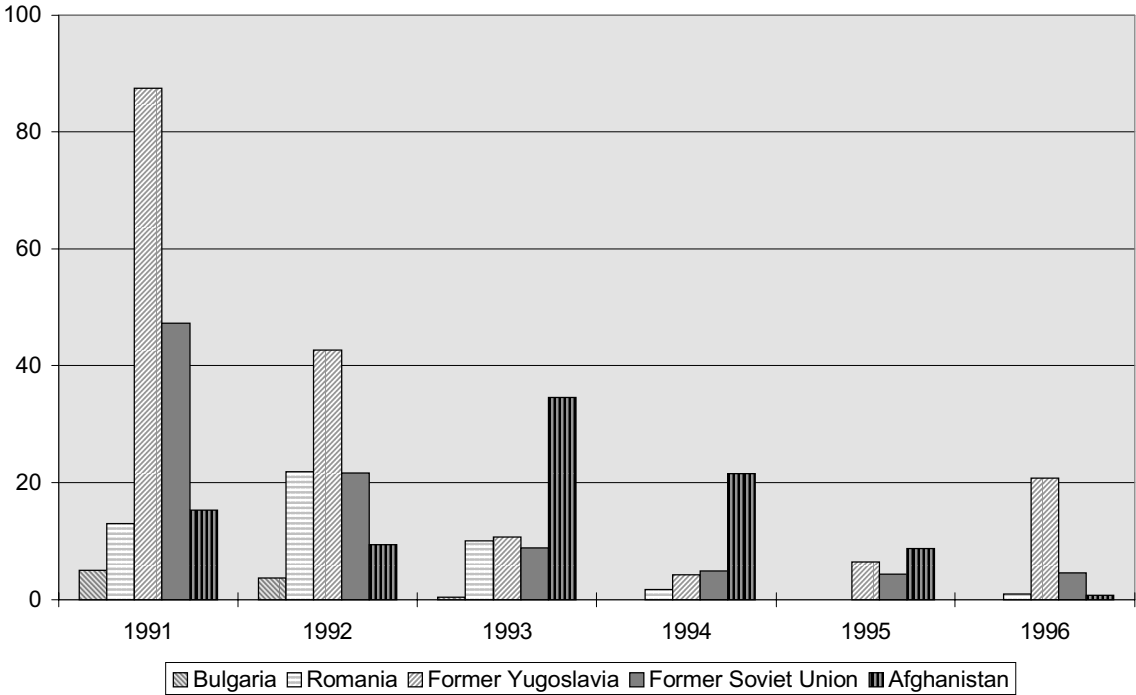
¹ Situation at the end of January 1997. Decisions on applications of minors have not been counted separately; they are included in the decision of one of the parents. Some figures have been estimated.
Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

For cohort 1996 the final percentage of granted requests could not yet be determined because of the substantial number of pending cases (at the end of January 1997). The vast majority of asylum-seekers (from 72 per cent for cohort 1992 to more than ninety per cent for cohort 1995) disappear before a decision is made. Most of them prefer to get asylum in Germany rather than in the Czech Republic (IOM, 1994b).

For the main countries of citizenship the percentages of asylum applications granted have been calculated on a cohort basis. The results are given in Figure 4.3.2.6 and Table 7.3.2.6. Remarkable differences appear to exist between cohorts and also between selected countries. The high percentages of granted asylum applications for cohort 1991 of people from former Yugoslavia (almost ninety per cent) and the former Soviet Union (almost fifty per cent) are noteworthy. Later cohorts show much lower outcomes, however. Of the asylum requests of ex-Yugoslavs and ex-Soviet Union citizens filed in 1994 and 1995, only about five per cent have been honoured. A relatively high percentage of granted requests can also be observed for the 1993 applications of Afghans (35). This percentage too can be considered exceptional compared to other cohorts. Of all countries of citizenship Bulgarians have the lowest chance of being granted refugee status. Recent Bulgarian applications appear to have no chance at all of obtaining refugee status in the Czech Republic. The same applies to recent Romanian requests.

Mid-1997, the actual number of refugees (valid granted asylum applications) in the Czech Republic has been estimated at 1,300.

Figure 4.3.2.6 Percentage granted asylum applications in the Czech Republic by year of application and country of citizenship ¹



¹ Situation at the end of January 1997. Decisions on applications of minors have not been counted separately; they are included in the decision of one of the parents. Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

4.3.3 Estonia

Since its independence in 1991, Estonia (1.5 million inhabitants of which 65 per cent ethnic Estonians and 28 per cent ethnic Russians) has become a transit country for asylum-seekers and irregular migrants heading for the Nordic countries. Estonia adopted a Law on Refugees on 18 February 1997 and ratified the Geneva Convention and New York Protocol on 19 February 1997. They have become effective later that year. The first asylum application was submitted by an Armenian on 11 July 1997, but no decision has yet been made on the case (UNHCR, 1998c). No other data on asylum-seekers and refugees are available.

Before Estonia acceded to the Geneva Convention asylum-seekers were treated as illegal immigrants, and were either deported immediately or detained.

4.3.4 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), independent since 1991, has around two million inhabitants. According to the population census of 1994, 66 per cent are Macedonians, 23 per cent Albanians, 4 per cent Turks and 9 per cent other ethnic groups (Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, 1996).

Starting from 1992, the Statistical Office of FYROM collects data on internal and external migration. However, no data are collected on asylum applications and decisions. Besides, no information on asylum and refugees was received from the Ministry of the Interior of FYROM.

In its report of December 1997, ICMPD says that up to 1995, 250 asylum requests were granted to persons of Macedonian origin who had fled from Albania in the course of preceding years. In addition, temporary protection was given to some five thousand persons from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Most of them should have returned by now. In 1996 only three asylum applications were filed (by Turkish, Zairan and Somali nationals). All three applications have been rejected.

4.3.5 Hungary

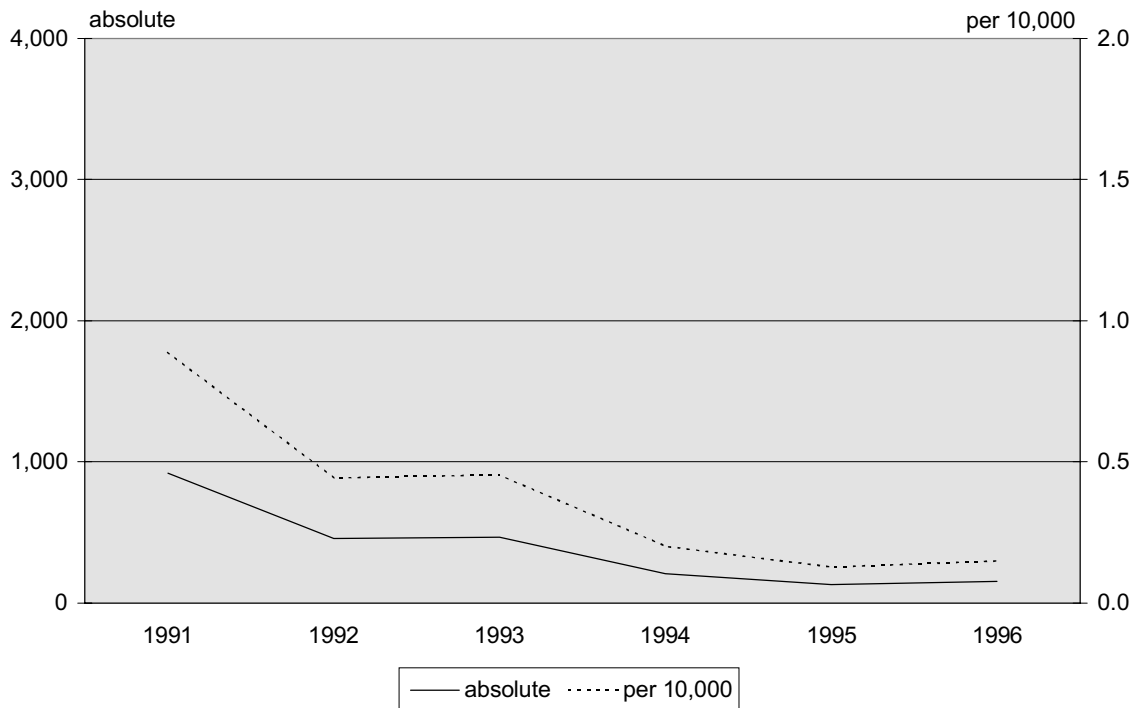
Hungary was the first country in Central and Eastern Europe to sign the 1951 Convention related to the status of refugees. However, up to 1998, Hungary applied a geographical limitation. This meant that only asylum-seekers coming from Europe could apply for refugee status with the Hungarian authorities. Refugee eligibility procedures for non-European asylum-seekers were handled by UNHCR (UNHCR, 1998d). They could not get residence in Hungary and had to be resettled in another country.

Non-European asylum-seekers in Hungary, screened by UNHCR, included a wide range of origins, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Iran, Sudan, Nigeria, Rwanda and the Philippines (ICMPD, 1997). Noticeable groups are Afghan nationals (200 in 1995), Iraqi nationals (110 in 1995) and Bangladeshi nationals (60 in 1994).

The following only relates to the European asylum-seekers, dealt with by the Hungarian Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs.

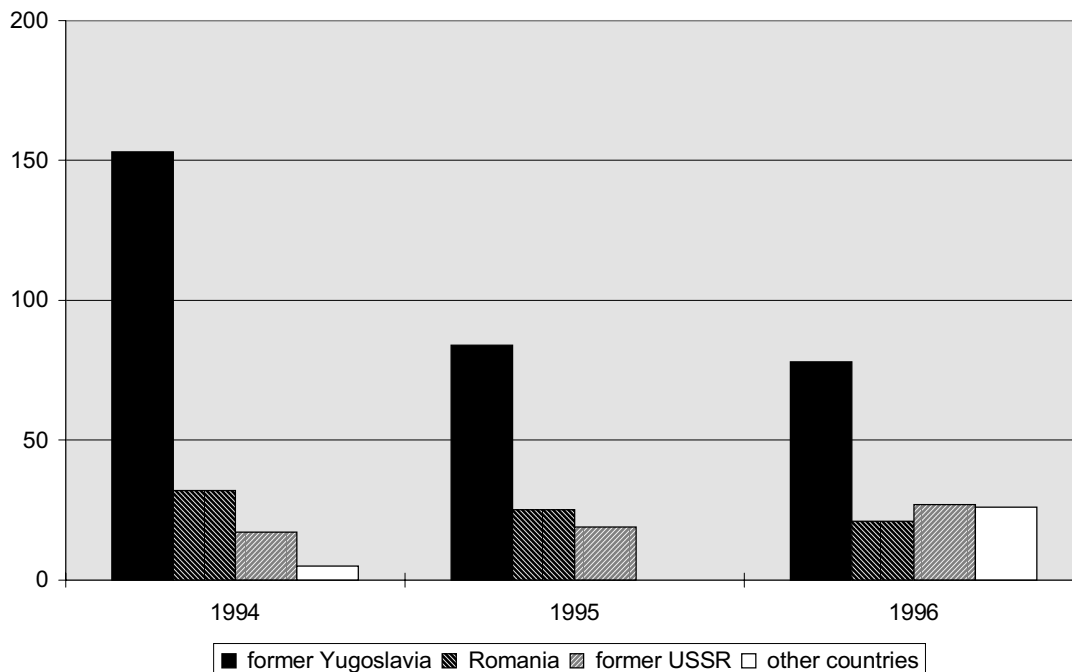
According to Figure 4.3.5.1 (and Table 7.3.5.1) the number of (European) asylum requests is small. Compared to the beginning of the nineties, a strong downward trend can be observed.

Figure 4.3.5.1 Asylum applications in Hungary, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹



¹ Per 10,000 of the population on January 1st. Including dependants.
Source: Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA).

Figure 4.3.5.2 Asylum applications in Hungary by country of citizenship ¹



¹ Including dependants.
Source: Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA).

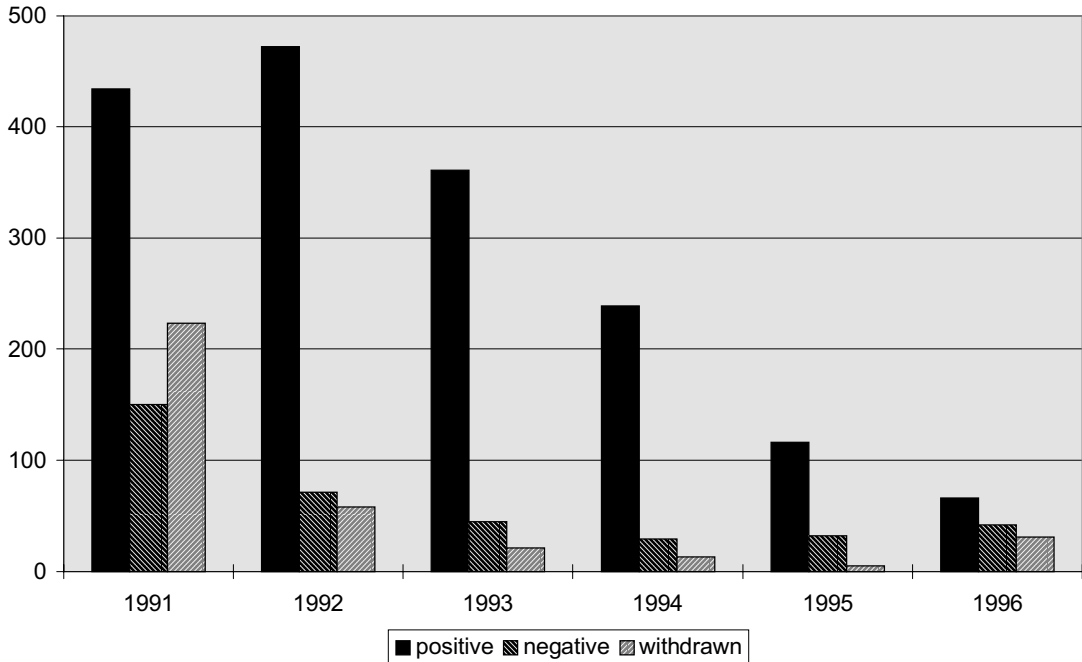
It should be noticed, however, that the majority of persons coming from the territory of former Yugoslavia are excluded from this figure. Those persons, estimated at about 70 thousand, only requested and received temporary protection. They are entitled to receive protection as long as they cannot return home in safe conditions. Following the signing of the Dayton accords, the Hungarian government decided that as of 15 January 1997 Hungary will cease to provide temporary protection to any further refugees (Hungarian Ministry of Interior, 1998).

As can be seen in Figure 4.3.5.2 (and Table 7.3.5.2), asylum-seekers come from three (European) regions: former Yugoslavia, Romania and the former Soviet Union.

The decreasing trend in the total number of applications can be contributed mainly to persons from former Yugoslavia. A similar decreasing trend is visible for the numbers of decisions taken, going down from about 800 in 1991 to less than 140 in 1996 (including withdrawn applications; see Figure 4.3.5.3). The number of positive decisions (granted Convention status) dropped most: from almost 500 in 1993 to nearly 70 in 1996. Less spectacular declines can be observed for the rejections and withdrawals.

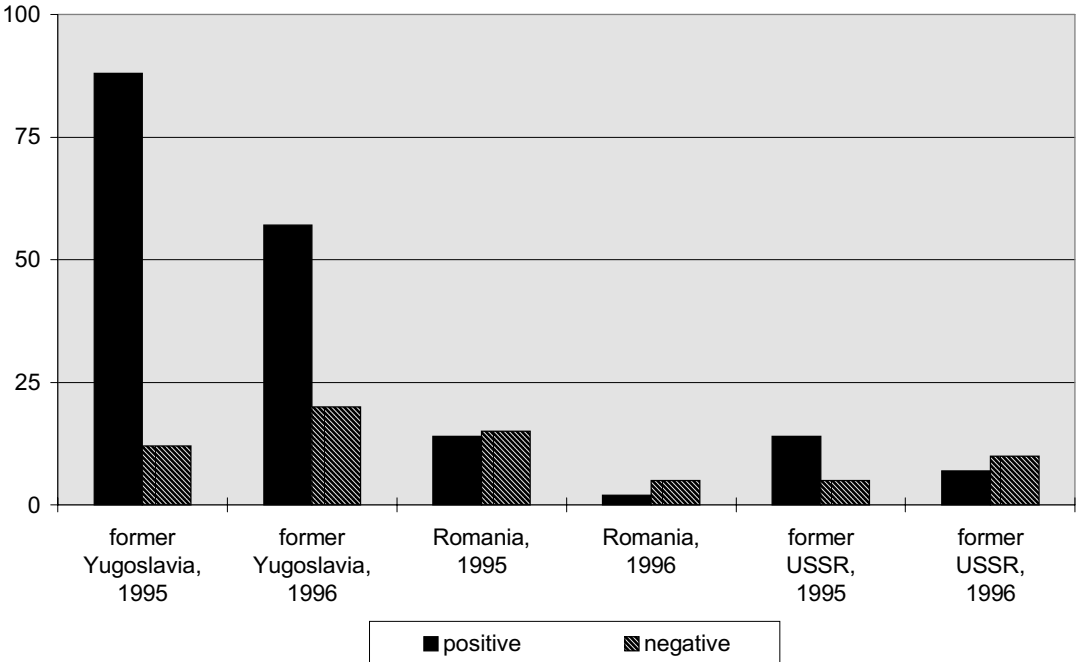
Figure 4.3.5.4 shows that the majority of former Yugoslavs were granted asylum in 1995 and 1996. The opposite is true for Romanians, while for asylum-seekers from the former Soviet Union the first statement is true for 1995 and the second for 1996.

Figure 4.3.5.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Hungary by year of decision ¹



¹ Including dependants.
Source: Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA).

Figure 4.3.5.4 Decisions on asylum applications in Hungary by citizenship ¹



¹ Including dependants.
Source: Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA).

4.3.6 Latvia

Latvia (2.5 million inhabitants of which 56 per cent are ethnic Latvians and 30 per cent ethnic Russians) adopted a national Refugee Law and ratified the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol on 19 June 1997. However, due to delays in the adoption of bylaws and regulations, the practical implementation of the new law is still pending. This means that no data on asylum-seekers are yet available. Up to then asylum-seekers are included in the number of 'illegal migrants'. Some of them were recognised as refugees under the UNHCR mandate and have been resettled (UNHCR, 1998e).

4.3.7 Lithuania

Lithuania (3.7 million inhabitants of which 80 per cent ethnic Lithuanians and 9 per cent ethnic Russians) has been a major transit country as well as potential safe haven for (would-be) asylum-seekers since the early nineties.

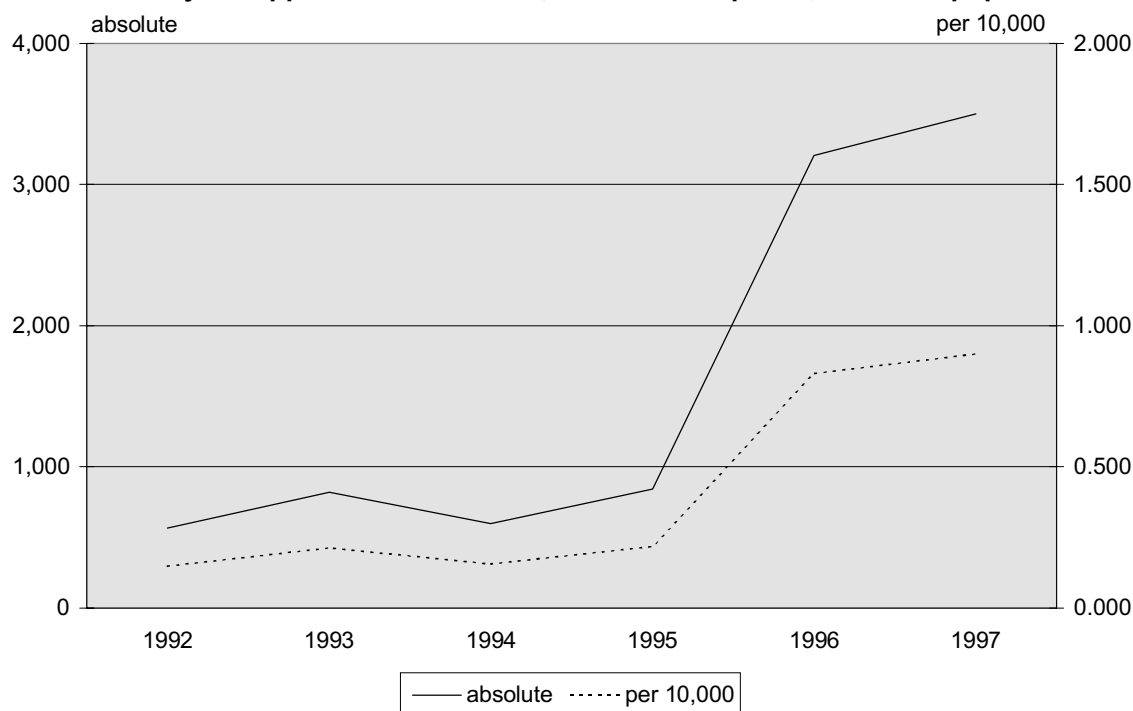
In the absence of effective refugee legislation up to 1997, Lithuania made no legal distinction between asylum-seekers and illegal migrants. Routinely, they were detained and sometimes deported from the country. Nearly two thousand people were detained for illegal entry in the period 1994-1996. Most of these people came from Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. They entered the country mainly via Russia and Belarus and were heading west towards Europe.

In 1997, the Law on Refugee Status in the Republic of Lithuania came into force. During that year a total of 320 people sought asylum. Six were granted refugee status and 56 people were rejected (UNHCR, 1998f). More data are not yet available.

4.3.8 Poland

Poland was a major refugee-producing country for more than 40 years after World War II. This trend reversed after the political changes in 1989. During the years 1992 up to 1995 the (official) numbers of asylum-seekers were low: less than one thousand per year. However, in 1996 the number almost quadrupled to 3,2 thousand. In 1997, numbers were slightly higher than the year before (see Figure 4.3.8.1 and Table 7.3.8.1).

Figure 4.3.8.1 Asylum applications in Poland, absolute and per 10,000 of the population¹



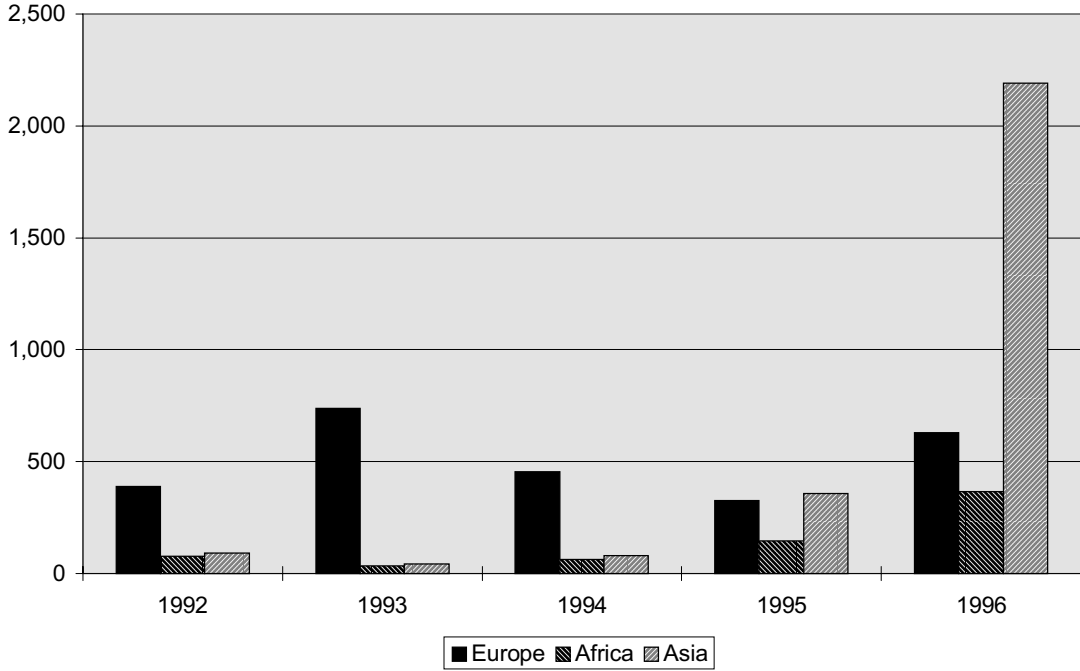
¹ Per 10,000 of the population on January 1st. Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

In 1996, the most important group of asylum-seekers consisted of citizens of Sri Lanka, followed by citizens of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Armenia (see Table 7.3.8.1). Together those four countries accounted for 57 per cent of the total number of applicants. The much higher number of asylum applications in 1996 compared to previous years, was primarily caused by an increase of the number of Asian asylum-seekers (see Figure 4.3.8.2).

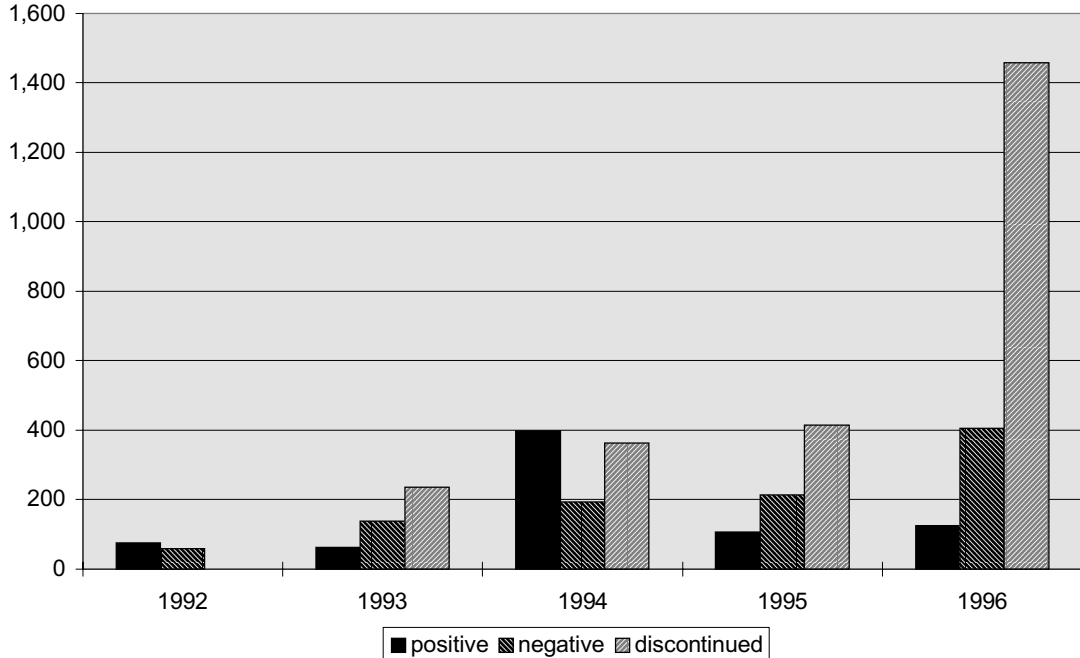
The majority of asylum-seekers in Poland arrive/stay illegally or have been expelled from a neighbouring country (Germany) on the basis of a re-admission agreement. Most of them perceive Poland as a stop over on the way to Western Europe (UNHCR, 1998g). This explains the high number of discontinued asylum procedures. Few applicants remain in contact with the asylum authorities for longer than a couple of months. They simply 'disappear', often assisted by a network of highly specialised and efficient traffickers (Okólski, 1997). In many of these cases the asylum procedure is obviously abused. Almost 1,500 procedures were discontinued in 1996 against only five hundred procedures that ended in a (positive or negative) decision (see Figure 4.3.8.3 and Table 7.3.8.3).

Figure 4.3.8.2 Asylum applications in Poland by continent of citizenship ¹



¹ Including dependants.
Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

Figure 4.3.8.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Poland, by year of decision ¹



¹ Decisions at first and second instance. Including dependants.
Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

The recent strong increase in the number of asylum applications in Poland is accompanied by a strong decrease in the percentage of positive (Geneva Convention granted) decisions. In 1994, almost 70 per cent of the decided cases resulted in Convention status. In the following years this percentage dropped to 35 (first instance) in 1995 and to 24 (first instance) in 1996.

Figure 4.3.8.4 shows that most of the discontinued procedures in 1996 relate to citizens of Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and Iraq. Most of them are likely to be part of a much more numerous group of probable asylum-seekers who transit through Poland to the West. They consider Poland to be a fairly comfortable 'waiting room' (IOM, 1994c). The Polish immigration authorities know that transit migrants constitute a sizeable proportion of the total number of asylum-seekers. For several reasons Poland is attractive to transit migrants, *inter alia* because of its:

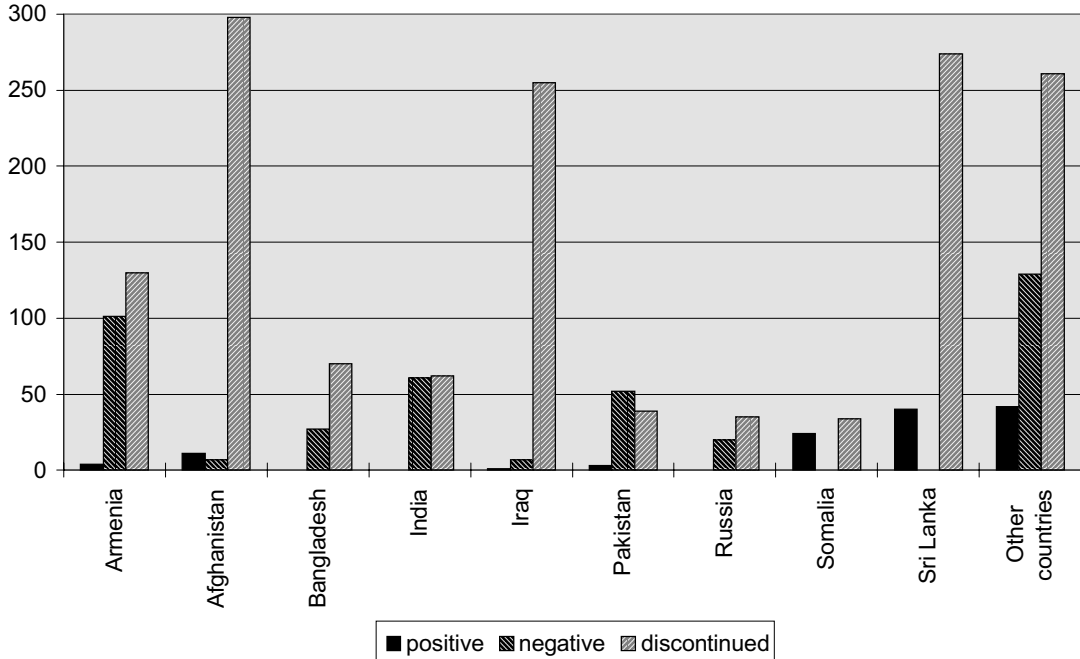
- liberal visa policies;
- easy accessible carriers (such as LOT and Polish Baltic Sailing);
- common border with Germany.

However, against the background of 'fortress Europe' and Poland being part of the *cordonne sanitaire* (Okólski, 1997), it can be expected that a growing share of the transit migrants will definitely settle in Poland, either in a legal or illegal way.

Just a small number of 125 asylum applicants were granted Convention status in 1996. Among them were 40 citizens of Sri Lanka and 24 citizens of Somalia. Asylum requests by persons from Armenia, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are hardly ever granted.

Finally, the strong increase of the number of asylum requests in 1996 has led to a substantive growth of pending cases. According to table 7.3.8.5 almost a thousand applications were waiting for a first decision as of 14 May 1997.

Figure 4.3.8.4 Decisions on asylum applications in Poland in 1996, by citizenship ¹

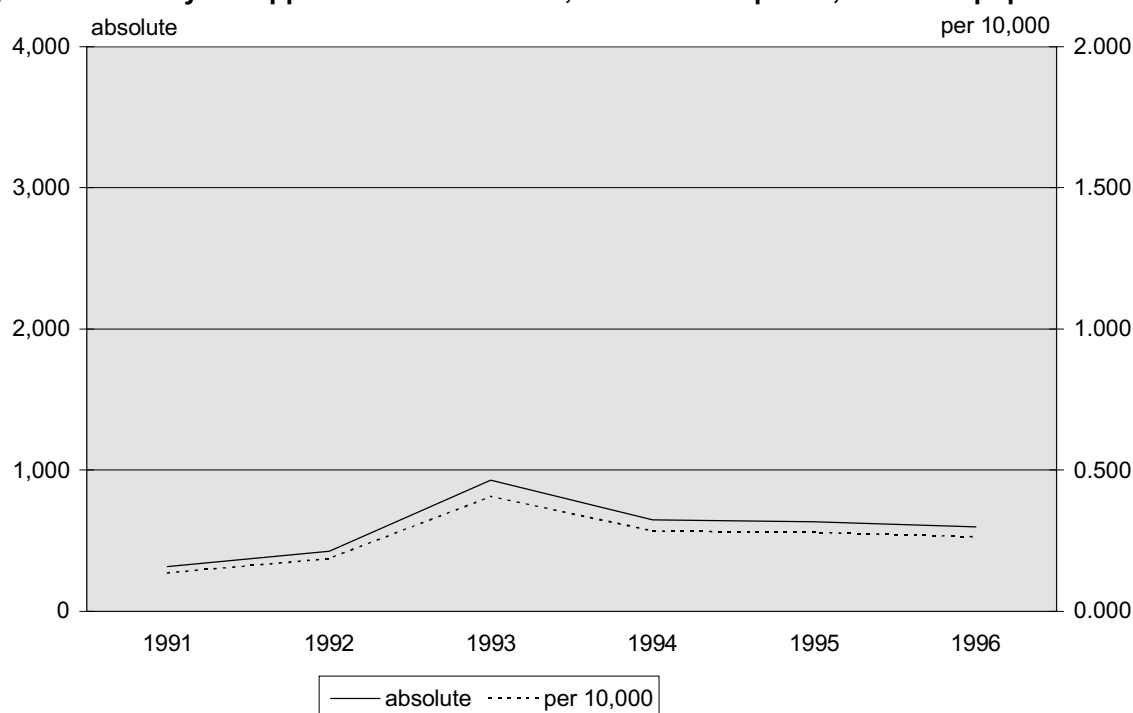


¹ Decisions at first and second instance. Including dependants.
Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

4.3.9 Romania

At present Romania is mainly a country of emigration. Continued wide-spread poverty and lack of confidence in social and political institutions contribute to a 'migration mentality' (ICMPD, 1997). Partly as a consequence of this mentality, Romania has been an important source country of asylum-seekers in the past few years. Compared to that, its role as a destination country for asylum-seekers is very limited. Between 1991 and 1996 3,500 people (principal applicants) sought asylum in Romania. A peak of almost one thousand asylum-seekers was reached in 1993. After this year the annual number of asylum applications stabilised at a level of about six hundred. The corresponding number expressed per 10,000 of the population is nearly 0.3 (see Figure 4.3.9.1 and Table 7.3.9.1).

Figure 4.3.9.1 Asylum applications in Romania, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹



¹ Per 10,000 of the population on January 1st. Excluding dependants.

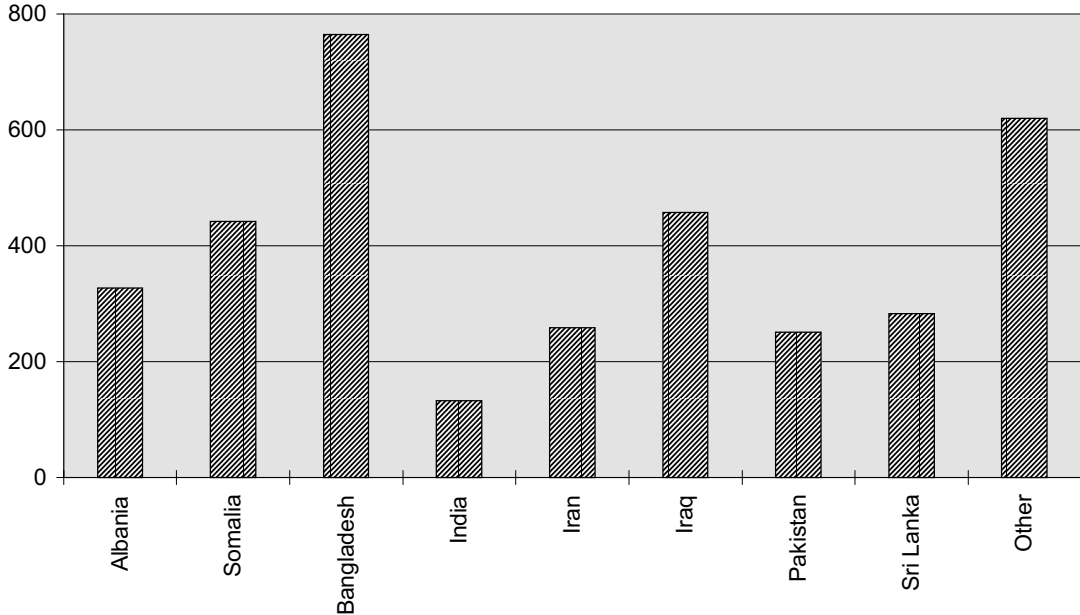
Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

During the period 1991-1996, the majority of asylum-seekers came from Asian countries, especially from Bangladesh and Iraq. From other parts of the world, the Somalis and Albanians are worth mentioning (see Figure 4.3.9.2 and Table 7.3.9.2).

About half of the applications in the years 1991-1996 came to a decision before 1997. Twelve per cent of the applications were discontinued. This means that the applicant withdrew his or her application, disappeared or voluntarily repatriated. As a result, around 1,500 applications were still pending at the beginning of 1997.

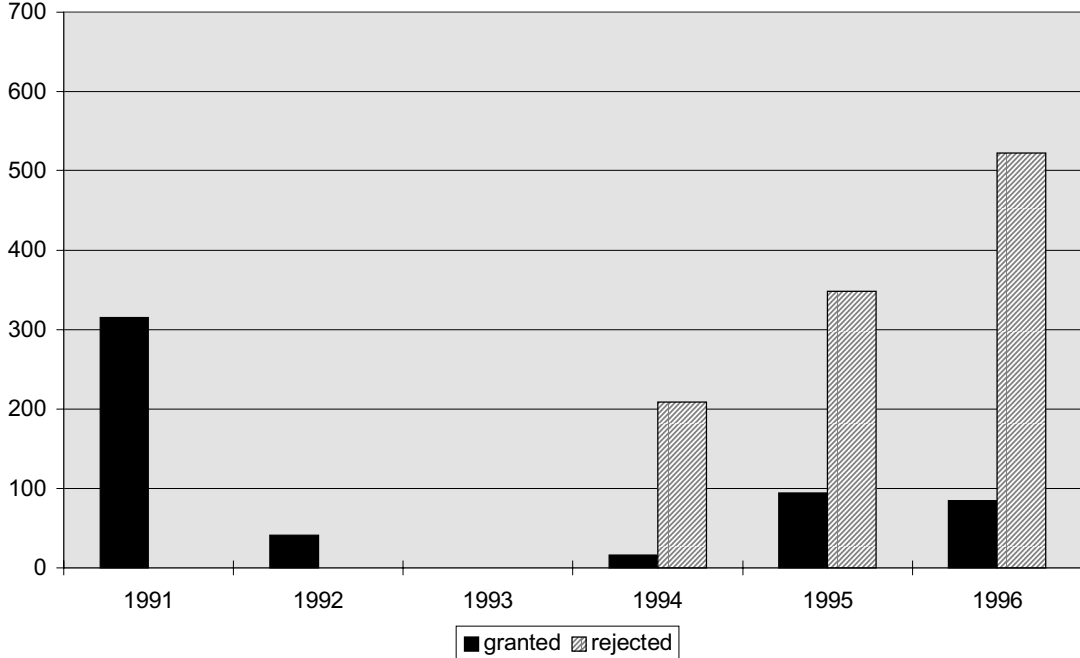
All decisions made in 1991 and 1992 were positive. For 1991, they only relate to Somalis who were granted stay for humanitarian reasons. According to the Ministry of Interior of Romania, no decisions were taken in 1993. In the years hereafter the picture has changed in the sense that the recognition percentage has gone down to about 15 (see Figure 4.3.9.3 and Table 7.3.9.3).

Figure 4.3.9.2 Asylum applications in Romania by country of citizenship, 1991-1996 ¹



¹ Excluding dependants.
 Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

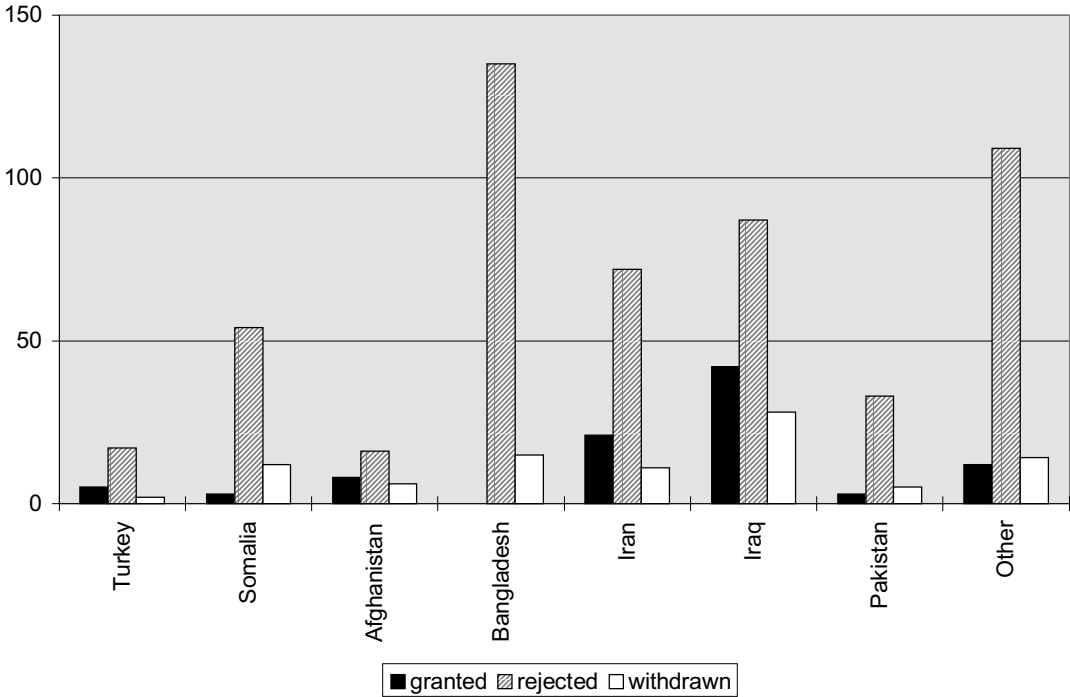
Figure 4.3.9.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Romania by year of decision ¹



¹ Excluding dependants; excluding discontinued cases.
 Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

For 1996, a lower than average recognition percentage (lower than ten per cent) can be observed for (principal) applicants from Bangladesh, Somalia and Pakistan. The percentage is notably higher, over 30 per cent, for people from Iraq and Afghanistan (see Figure 4.3.9.4 and Table 7.3.9.4).

Figure 4.3.9.4 Decisions on asylum applications in Romania by country of citizenship, 1996 ¹



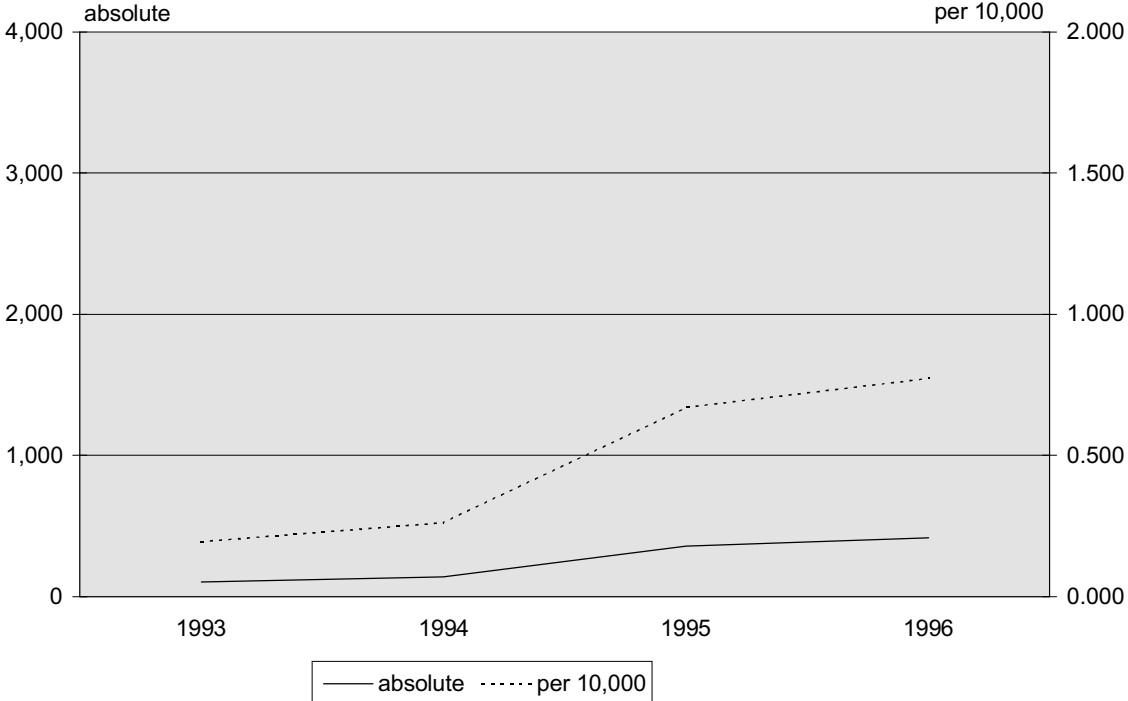
¹ Including dependants; withdrawn cases exclude the category voluntarily repatriated. Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

4.3.10 Slovak Republic

The Slovak Republic only recently became confronted with refugee and asylum issues. The change started with the secession of the country from the former Czechoslovakia, in 1993. However, despite signing the relevant international agreements, in view of the many problems facing the country, the question of asylum is not always considered a priority (UNHCR, 1998i).

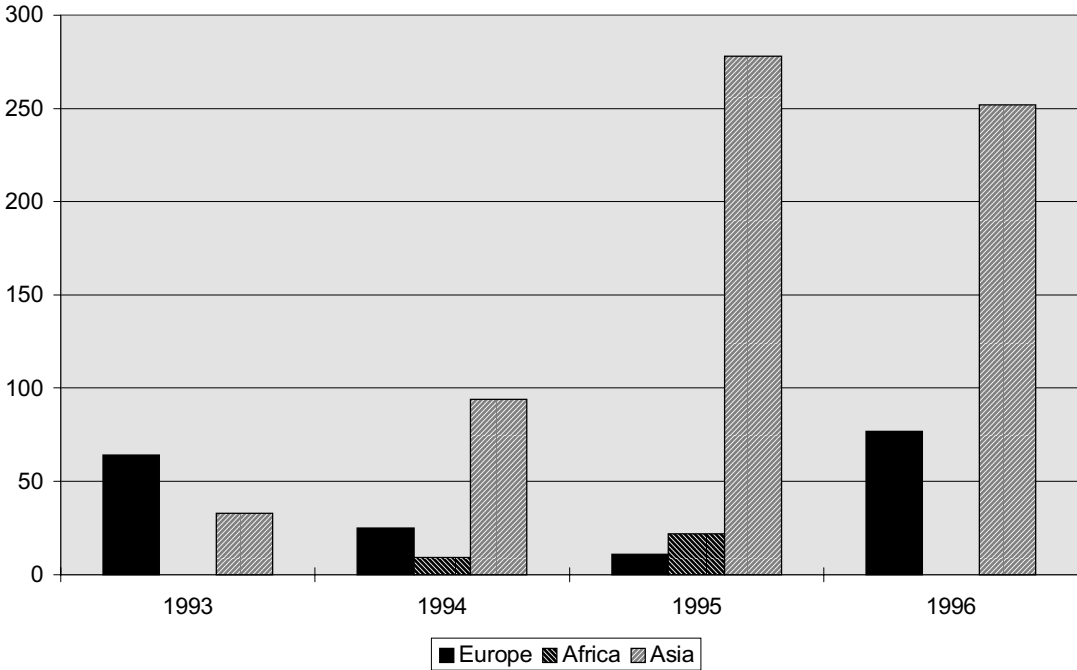
During the period 1993-1996, slightly more than one thousand persons requested asylum in the Slovak Republic. Although the numbers are very small, an increasing trend can be observed. In 1996, three times more applications were filed than in 1993 (see Figure 4.3.10.1 and Table 7.3.10.1). The relative number of asylum-seekers (expressed per ten thousand of the population) similarly increased from 0.2 in 1993 to 0.8 in 1996. For 1997, a further substantial increase of the number of applications was expected.

Figure 4.3.10.1 Asylum applications in the Slovak Republic, absolute and per 10,000 of the population¹



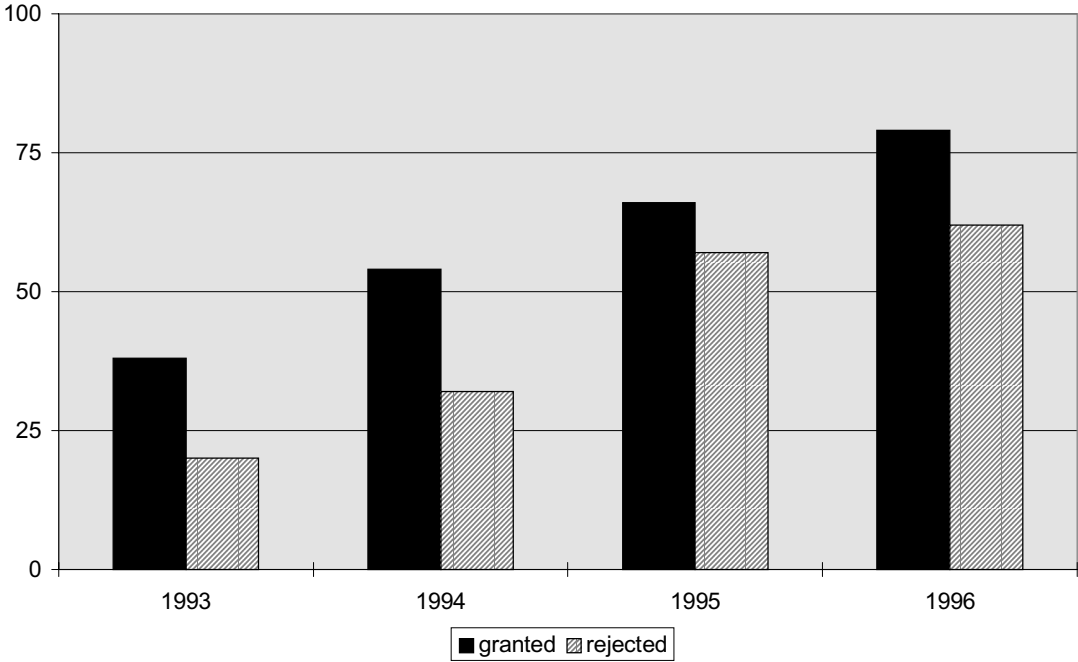
¹ Per 10,000 of the population on January 1st. Including dependants.
Source: ICMPD, 1997.

Figure 4.3.10.2 Asylum applications in the Slovak Republic by country of citizenship¹



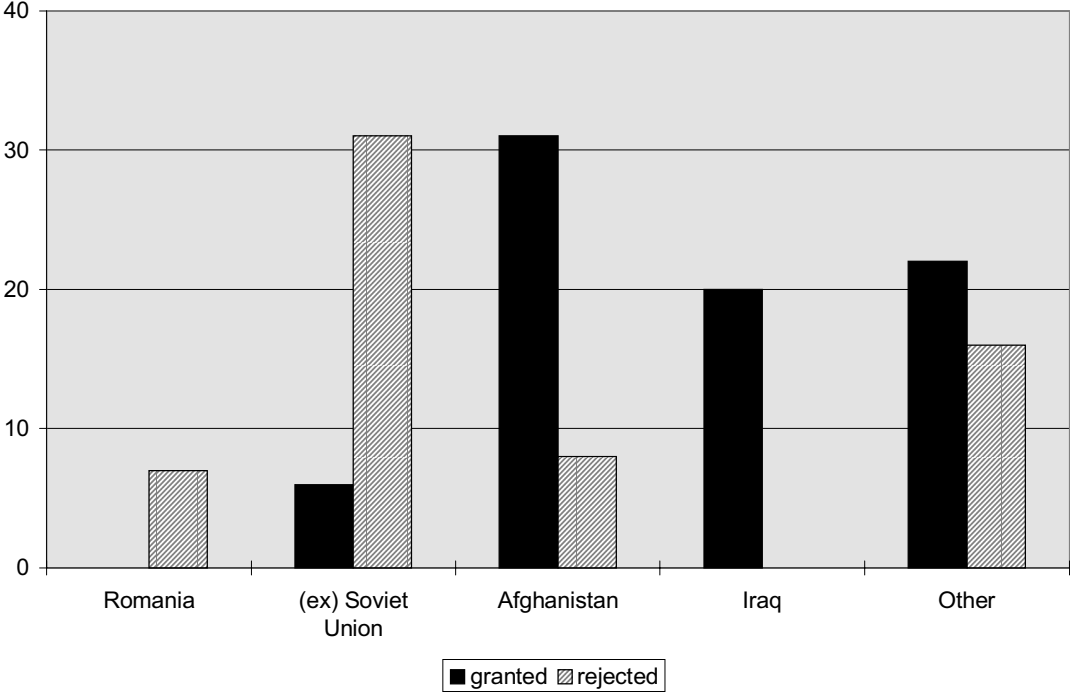
¹ Including dependants.
Source: ICMPD, 1997.

Figure 4.3.10.3 Decisions on asylum applications in the Slovak Republic by year of decision ¹



¹ Including dependants; excluding discontinued cases.
Source: Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic; ICMPD, 1997.

Figure 4.3.10.4 Decisions on asylum applications in the Slovak Republic by country of citizenship ¹



¹ Including dependants; excluding discontinued cases.
Source: ICMPD, 1997.

In 1993, most asylum-seekers came from the former Soviet Union and Iran. For the following years, asylum-seekers from Afghanistan and Iraq dominate the picture (see Figure 4.3.10.2 and Table 7.3.10.2).

The majority of asylum decisions turned out be positive. The percentage of granted refugee statuses varies from 66 in 1993 to 54 in 1995 (see Figure 4.3.10.3 and Table 7.3.10.3). In 1996, Asian asylum-seekers (Afghans and Iraqis) appeared to have much higher chances to be recognised as a refugee than European asylum-seekers (Romanians and ex-Soviets; see Figure 4.3.10.4 and Table 7.3.10.4).

The inclusion of discontinued cases in the calculation of the recognition percentage evidently leads to lower results: 46 in 1993, 36 in 1994 and 30 in 1995. Yet, the number of discontinued cases in the Slovak Republic is remarkably low compared to, for example, the Czech Republic.

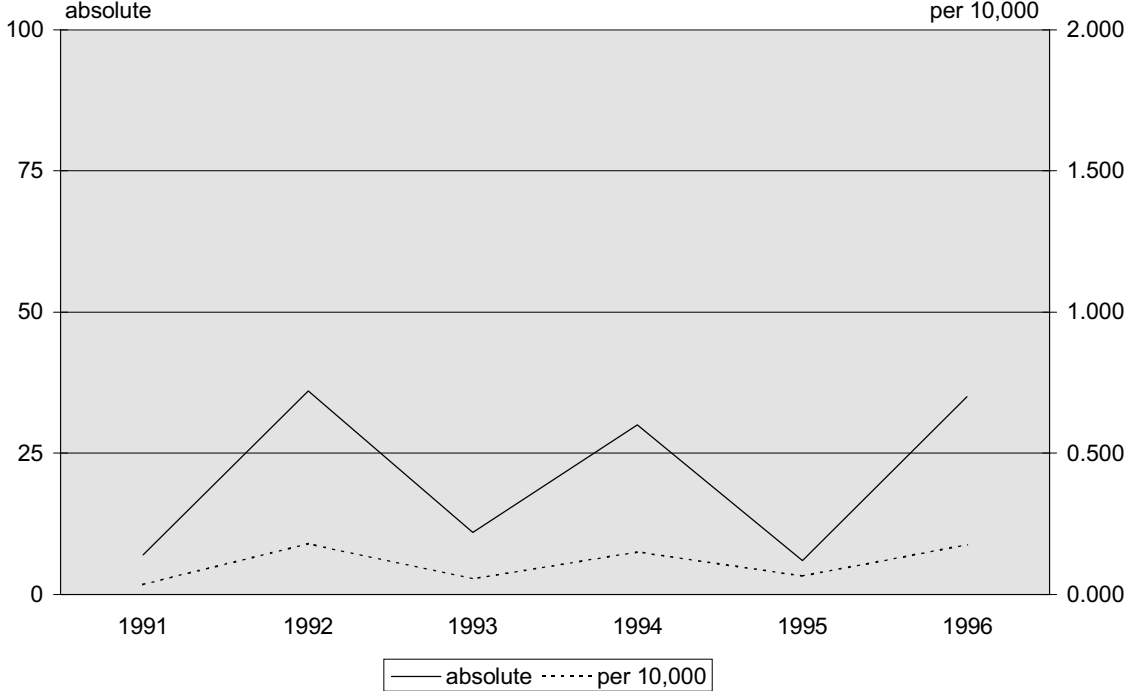
At the beginning of 1998 UNCHR (1998i) estimated the total stock of refugees in the Slovak Republic at about four hundred.

4.3.11 Slovenia

Slovenia became an independent republic on 25 June 1991. It has strong ties to Western Europe and suffered comparatively small damage during Yugoslavia’s break-up (CIA World Factbook, 1998).

During the years 1991-1996 a very low number of asylum-seekers arrived in Slovenia (in total 125; see Figure 4.3.11.1 and Table 7.3.11.1). Expressed per 10,000 of the population, this means an average level of 0.1.

Figure 4.3.11.1 Asylum applications in Slovenia, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹



¹ Per 10,000 of the population on January 1st.
Including spouses, excluding minors
Excluding applications for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds.
Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

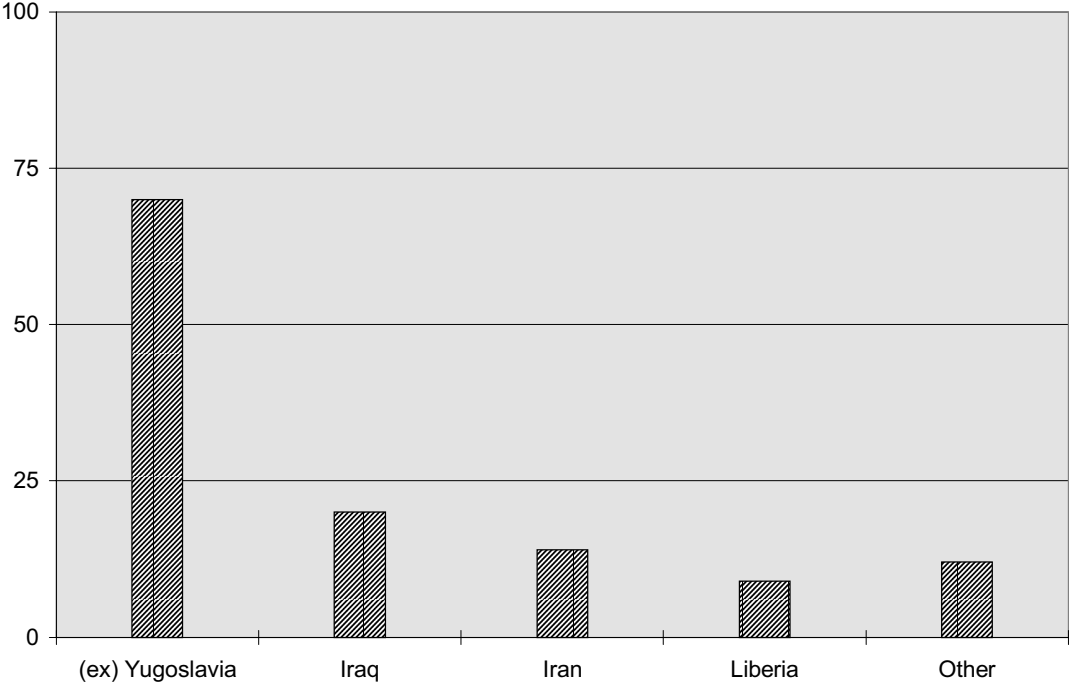
Most asylum-seekers came from other (former) Yugoslavian republics, especially from Bosnia-Herzegovina. A few others came from Iraq, Iran, Liberia, and Albania (see Figure 4.3.11.2 and Table 7.3.11.2)

Only two requests for asylum during the period 1991-1996 were granted (Convention) refugee status (in 1995; both men, one from Bosnia-Herzegovina and one from Yugoslavia).

During the years 1994-1996, 28 applications were rejected and 47 were discontinued (Figure 4.3.11.3 and Table 7.3.11.3). Hence, the recognition percentage for this period is seven if discontinued cases are excluded, and three if they are included.

Much more numerous than asylum-seekers are the persons under temporary protection in Slovenia. At the end of 1992, this number reached a peak of almost fifty thousand. Because of return to Bosnia-Herzegovina and other countries, the number dropped considerably to 13 thousand at the end of 1996 (see Figure 4.3.11.4 and Table 7.3.11.4).

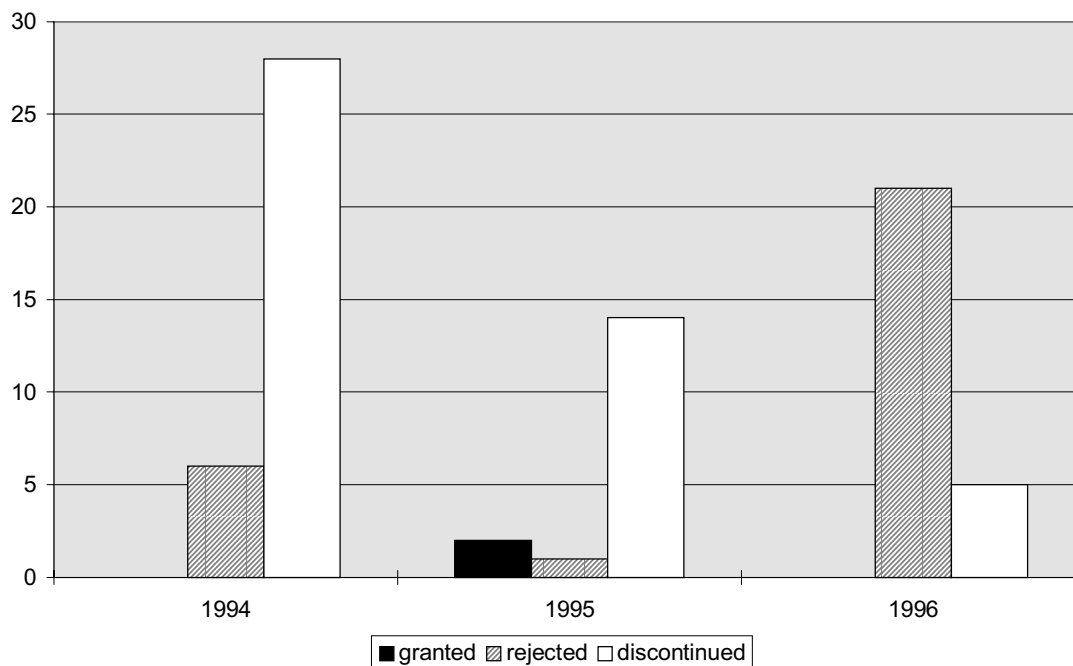
Figure 4.3.11.2 Asylum applications in Slovenia by country of citizenship, 1991-1996 ¹



¹ Including spouses; excluding minors.
 Excluding applications for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds.
 Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

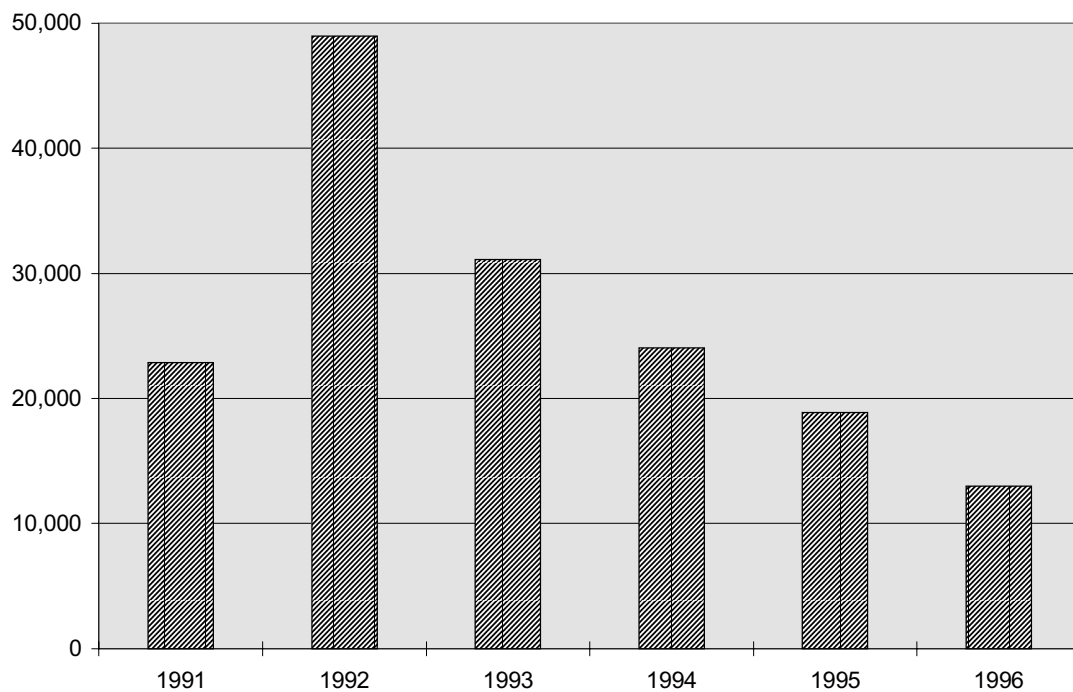
Finally, Slovenia, together with other countries of the Central and Eastern European region, is targeted mainly as a transit country from which to proceed towards the Western European countries. This role is illustrated by the nearly 200 million travellers who crossed Slovenia's borders in 1995 (ICMPD, 1997).

Figure 4.3.11.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Slovenia by year of decision ¹



¹ Including spouses; excluding minors.
 Excluding applications for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds.
 Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

Figure 4.3.11.4 Persons under temporary protection in Slovenia at the end of the year ¹



¹ Including dependants.
 Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

5. CONCLUDING SUMMARY

In line with earlier projects carried out for the EU and EFTA countries, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the current situation of asylum-seekers and refugees in the Central European countries, through the collection and analysis of statistics.

The objectives of the project were not only to collect available data on asylum-seekers and refugees in the Central European countries and link these data to general migration statistics, but also to describe the main aspects of asylum and refugee legislation and outline the general trends in the numbers of asylum-seekers and refugees coming to and staying in those countries.

Two questionnaires were created to collect data and obtain information on legislation and procedures from the national statistical institutes and the responsible ministries in the selected eleven countries. All countries responded to the first, and nine to the second questionnaire. Additional information has been derived from other sources, such as the UNHCR, UNECE, Council of Europe, and Eurostat.

All over Europe countries experienced a rapid increase in the number of people applying for political asylum throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, which was coupled with a growing diversity in countries of origin. At the same time the proportion of asylum-seekers who were granted refugee status decreased steadily. This is likely to have been caused by a combination of diminished possibilities to immigrate to Europe as an economic migrant - which resulted in a certain use of asylum procedures by people who did not qualify as a refugee under the UN Geneva Convention - and a development towards more restrictive asylum policies in Europe.

Although the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol have been widely accepted, their interpretation is left to national legislation. These show significant differences with regard to application procedures, appeals possibilities, maximum length of time involved, criteria of judgement, *et cetera*. Also, other refugee statuses besides a Convention status have come into existence. Firstly, there are 'de facto' refugees or refugees recognised for humanitarian reasons. These refugees do not meet the criteria for Convention refugee, but have valid reasons not to return to the country of origin. Secondly, in some countries, there are possibilities to grant a deferral of the deportation of rejected asylum-seekers. Although such a deferral is conceived as temporary, it is in many cases indefinite. Finally, in connection with the (sudden) arrival of massive groups of asylum-seekers, e.g. in the case of former Yugoslavia, many countries have provided special statuses hereto ('temporary protection for special groups'). The most important benefit of this latter approach has been that it provided immediate security to a large number of people whose lives and liberty were at risk. Furthermore, it relieved states of the need to examine thousands of individual applications. Last but not least, the temporary protection status was publicly and politically acceptable because of the understanding that the people with this status would repatriate once conditions had improved at home.

The Central European countries are not equally affected by asylum and refugee matters. Some countries experience socio-economic or political difficulties which reduce their attractiveness to asylum-seekers and refugees, and these countries may even produce asylum-seekers and refugees themselves. Not every Central European country has yet adapted national asylum legislation. Some countries recently introduced legislation, but are still struggling with the implementation of procedures.

By the end of 1997 all selected countries in Central Europe had acceded to the 1951 Geneva Convention. The last Central European countries to become party to the Convention and the 1967 New York Protocol were the Baltic States. For many years the Baltic States had opposed to signing the Convention and introducing legislation, mainly out of fear that the set up of a structural framework would merely attract more asylum-seekers to apply for asylum in one of the Baltic States instead of moving on to Western Europe.

Most of the selected Central European countries have adopted and implemented legislation on asylum and refuge since they became democratic states. A few countries have adopted legislation which has not yet become effective. New legislation in Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania will come into force in 1998. At present only Bulgaria and Slovenia do not have specific laws to rule the procedures for granting asylum and refugee status. However, in both countries a draft law is under discussion in parliament. Because of rapid developments in the field of asylum some countries' legislation already needs revision. Without legislation on asylum and refuge it would have been unlikely that the EU member states had approved of accession to the Union.

In all of the selected countries a standard asylum procedure is in place with possibility to appeal at first and at second instance with suspensive effect. Some countries apply a formal pre-screening or accelerated procedure to determine who will be allowed access to the standard asylum procedure. These are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland and the Slovak Republic. Criteria underlying the accelerated procedures differ from country to country. The criterion of manifestly unfounded claims is applied by the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Poland. Asylum-seekers from a safe country of origin face an accelerated procedure in the Czech Republic and Lithuania. Bulgaria, Lithuania and Poland use the principle of country of first asylum, which means that the asylum-seeker should have applied for asylum in the first safe transit country. In some countries possession of multiple citizenship or having committed a serious crime can also be reason to start an accelerated procedure.

Each of the countries legally provides for the granting of refugee status based on the Geneva Convention. However, some countries hardly ever do grant such a status. As for humanitarian status or temporary protection, these can legally be granted in Bulgaria, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Granting humanitarian status is also an option in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Poland. Hungary and the Czech Republic adopted a special Decree for the provision of temporary protection. In those countries with provisions for the granting of humanitarian status or temporary protection, these are generally more easily acquired than refugee status.

Asylum laws do not always specify which procedures should follow on rejection of an asylum application. Sometimes, as in the Czech and Slovak Republics, the general law on foreigners regulates the proceedings after rejection of an asylum application. Standard procedure in all countries is to order the rejected applicant to leave the country. The return may be enforced ('deportation'), as is mentioned in the legislation of Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia. Most countries distinguish a separate category of rejected asylum-seekers who are temporarily not returned, for instance because their identity is not known. Another possible outcome of the asylum procedure specifically mentioned in Bulgaria and Poland is the so-called discontinuation of a claim, which usually occurs when the authorities find out that an asylum applicant has disappeared during the procedure. Many asylum-seekers who apply for asylum in one of the countries of Central Europe are in fact aiming to travel on to Western Europe and do so when they get the chance.

The average length of the procedure is often unknown. This is partly because countries only recently introduced legislation and therefore do not have enough experience in dealing with asylum applications as to indicate how long procedures generally take. Also, some asylum

laws do not determine a maximum period of time to reach a decision about an application or appeal.

Asylum and refugee statistics are important for political and analytical purposes, yet comprehensive and reliable statistics on asylum-seekers and refugees in Europe are difficult to collect because of methodological problems and political sensitivities. Data on asylum-seekers and refugees in the Central European countries are usually derived from the Ministry of Interior, which is in most countries the co-ordinating authority for the admission or reception of asylum-seekers and refugees. In some countries information comes mainly from assistance organisations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Statistics should cover each step of an asylum-seeker's 'journey': from the moment the border is crossed or the application is submitted abroad, up to the final decision on the case. Preferably, the statistics should provide a breakdown by nature of stay/residence permit, country of citizenship, country of (ethnic) origin, country of birth, sex, date of birth, and family relationship. Because the period of time involved to reach a decision on an asylum application often ranges over more than one calendar year, the statistics should include data by year of application to allow for longitudinal analysis of individual cohorts of asylum-seekers.

Ideally, statistics on refugees should provide information on the refugee population living in a country ('stocks'), broken down by the same variables as asylum statistics and by date of entry into the country and place of residence. In addition to stock data, flow data are needed to account for changes in the stock: arrivals, departures, deaths, births, naturalisations, and changes in the nature of the stay/residence permit.

Each of the countries were asked to provide as much of the above-mentioned statistics as possible, including definitions and other relevant information. On the basis of the responses to the questionnaires, the conclusion may be drawn that different definitions of asylum and refuge are being used in the Central European countries. Consequently, comparisons of asylum figures on the international level would require some kind of correction mechanism, yet the necessary information to construct such a mechanism is usually not available.

On the aspect of availability of data, it became clear from the questionnaires that substantially more data are collected than published. The reason for the divergence between available statistics and collected data may be twofold. Firstly, political reasons may prevent certain data from being published. Secondly, for practical reasons, only those statistics are compiled which are requested. These reasons, combined with the circumstance that the compilation of asylum statistics is left to the responsible ministries or special agencies, which do so for administrative rather than statistical purposes, may explain the limited possibilities to describe the whole asylum process in statistical terms.

Apart from the Baltic States and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, all countries provide data on asylum applications by country of citizenship. Data on place of application are only provided by Poland and are collected (but not published) in Romania. Five countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) collect information on sex and age distribution of asylum applicants. However, only the Czech Republic (sex and age) and Slovenia (sex) publish these data.

Most of the countries collect some data on asylum decisions, broken down by citizenship. In theory, these decisions should be distinguished by all possible stages in the asylum procedure (pre-screening, first instance, and second instance). Unfortunately, none of the countries can fulfil this condition. Decisions by year of application, necessary data in order to describe the asylum process properly, are only provided by the Czech Republic. Four other countries

(Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovenia) collect data but do not publish this information. Additional data by sex, age and duration of the procedure are generally not available. Only Bulgaria and Poland compile statistics on pending asylum procedures, whereas the other countries just collect the data but do not publish them. None of the countries provides or collects statistical information on appeals.

It can be concluded that many basic statistics on asylum are missing in the selected Central European countries. In the light of not yet or only recently introduced legislation on asylum and refuge in these countries, this does not come as a surprise. Analytical problems arise because of different national definitions of asylum applicants and lack of information on the separate stages in the asylum process. Both restrain the use of asylum data for international comparisons. Furthermore, only the Czech data offer some possibilities for longitudinal analysis.

None of the countries has seriously attempted to set up and maintain statistics on (stocks of) refugees. As far as data on refugees are available, their reliability is limited. As with asylum statistics, they provide little opportunity for international comparisons. Besides, none of the countries seem to have a well-defined refugee concept in the sense of who is to be considered a refugee and who is not or not any more. This may be caused by difficulties of tracing refugees over a certain period of time in administrations or registers.

Measured by both the absolute and relative number of asylum applicants in recent years, the conclusion can be drawn that the Czech Republic (1996: 2.2 thousand; 2.1 per 10,000 of the population) and Poland (1997: 3.5 thousand; 0.9 per 10,000) are the most important asylum countries in the selected Central European region. However, one could also say that the Czech Republic and Poland are the least unimportant asylum countries. In all of the selected Central European countries, asylum and refugee issues may be characterised as recent phenomena of much smaller dimensions than in Western European countries, and as being overshadowed by illegal and transit migration.

General trends in the numbers of asylum requests since the beginning of the nineties cannot be discovered from the figures. The only exception may be a decreasing trend for Hungary until 1995 and an increasing trend for Poland after 1995. The other countries (with data available) show considerable random fluctuations from year to year.

A well-known but often not properly defined measure to calculate the degree in which asylum applications are granted is the recognition rate. According to similar demographic measures, the term 'rate' should be related to a population at risk. This implies a longitudinal approach based on year of application. Only the Czech Republic provides for these data. The other way of measuring the degree of recognition is to divide the number of persons granted refugee status in a given calendar year by the total number of decisions taken in that year (recognition percentage).

Theoretically, a recognition rate is to be preferred to a recognition percentage. A recognition percentage might be more or less misleading when there are many pending procedures. Also, the outcomes will vary depending on the range of granted statuses included, e.g. only Convention refugees or also humanitarian statuses. Furthermore, the in- or exclusion of rejected asylum-seekers in the pre-screening procedure may significantly influence the height of a recognition percentage. However, countries provided hardly any information on this issue. Another relevant factor, especially in case of the Central European countries, are the so-called discontinued cases (withdrawn requests, disappearances, etc.). Inclusion or exclusion of these numbers can influence the results substantially.

The case of the Czech Republic, the only country that allows for the calculation of a recognition rate, shows a striking example of the differences between a recognition rate (e.g. 26 for cohort

1992) and a recognition percentage (e.g. 96 for calendar year 1992). These differences are mainly due to discontinued cases which significantly decrease the recognition rate. With regard to the recognition percentage, one could cautiously conclude that there are some indications for a decreasing trend in most of the countries in the period under study. Recent recognition percentages for Romania and Poland are significantly lower than in the other countries.

In the selected countries, maybe with the exception of Romania, statistics on international migration are not (yet) linked to asylum statistics. In order to get an adequate system of population accounting, improvements in the relation between statistics on international migration and asylum should be pursued. A first step might be to include the analysis of asylum statistics in the work programmes of the national agencies (statistical institutes) dealing with the presentation and analysis of migration statistics. Specific studies on the relation between both statistics might result in recommendations to intensify this relation. National experiences in this field could be internationally exchanged during regular (Eurostat and United Nations) meetings of migration experts.

Due to differences in definitions and the availability of data, it is currently quite difficult to create asylum statistics for the Central European countries as a whole. This leads to the conclusion that the applicability of the available statistical information on asylum and refuge is primarily reserved for national purposes. On the national level these statistics may indeed properly describe fluctuations in the number, the composition, and the degree of recognition of asylum-seekers in the course of time. However, much work will have to be done in an international context on harmonisation of definitions and the choice and classifications of the variables to be collected and published. Up to then, international comparisons of asylum applications preferably make use of relative numbers (index figures, distributions, etc.) which may eliminate some of the disturbances.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1 Questionnaire 1

Introduction

This questionnaire has been developed on behalf of the Eurostat project on statistics of asylum-seekers and refugees in selected Central and Eastern European countries. This project will be carried out by the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI).

The project is an extension of similar earlier studies pertaining to the countries of the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)¹¹.

The aims of the project are the following.

1. To create an inventory of available data on asylum-seekers and refugees in selected Central and Eastern European countries. Principally, the data are collected through national organisations (responsible ministries and national statistical institutes).
2. To analyse the legislative backgrounds regarding asylum-seekers and refugees, in order to come to a clear understanding and interpretation of the available data. This implies a description of the different stages in the asylum procedure.
3. To analyse the relationship between statistics on asylum-seekers and refugees on the one hand, and official migration statistics on the other hand.
4. To analyse major trends in the selected countries with respect to asylum-seekers and refugees, given the degree of comparability of the data and data sources. This analysis includes a discussion of the backgrounds and consequences of the trends, as well as the role of policies and policy changes.

The current questionnaire focuses on points 1 and 3. Another questionnaire, focusing on points 2 and 4, will be sent to a representative of the ministry or bureau that deals with asylum and refugee matters.

¹¹ Eurostat, 1994, Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 1: EC Member States. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.
Eurostat, 1995, Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 2: EFTA countries. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

1. *Are statistics on asylum applications available by*

place of application (airport, seaport, land border, from within the country, abroad (embassies/consulates))?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

country of citizenship?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

sex?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

age?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

other characteristics?

- yes, namely
.....
- no; however, other data are collected, namely
.....
- no, other data are not collected

Please include a description of the definition of asylum applicant (for instance, whether family members are counted, renewed applications are in- or excluded, invited refugees are in- or excluded, applications filed abroad are in- or excluded, etc.).

2. *Are statistics on asylum decisions available by*

year of decision?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

year of application?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

type of procedure (short procedure, normal procedure at first instance, appeal)?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

type of outcome (e.g. granted refugee status, granted humanitarian status, granted temporary protection, granted another status, rejected but temporarily not returned, rejected and ordered to leave the country, rejected and mandatorily returned, etc.)?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

country of citizenship?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

sex?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

age?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

other characteristics?

- yes, namely
.....
- no; however, other data are collected, namely
.....
- no, other data are not collected

Please include a description of the definition of asylum decision (for instance, how granted is defined, how rejected is defined, whether cases or persons are counted, withdrawn applications are in- or excluded, applications rejected in the pre-screening procedure are in- or excluded, appeal decisions are in- or excluded, decisions on applications filed abroad are in- or excluded, etc.).

3. *Can you give estimates of the number of pending decisions (from 1990 onwards, if possible broken down by type (waiting for first decision versus appeal decision) and/or by year of application)?*

- yes, see attached Table
- partially, see attached Table
- no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

Please specify whether the pending decisions relate to cases (principal applicants) or persons.

4. *Can you give estimates of the total number (stock) of refugees in your country?*
- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
 - partially, see attached Table
 - no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
 - no, those data are not collected

Please specify:

- which statuses are included/excluded (Convention, humanitarian, etc.);
- whether invited/resettled refugees are included;
- whether family members re-unified afterwards are included/excluded;
- whether the number has been corrected for births, deaths, departures, naturalisations, etc.

5. *To what degree are asylum-seekers included in the (national) statistics on immigration?*
- all persons who apply for asylum are included
 - a selection of persons who apply for asylum is included:
 - only those who have themselves registered in a (local) population register
 - only those who are granted to stay (Geneva Convention, humanitarian grounds, etc.)
 - other, namely only those who
 - all persons who apply for asylum are excluded from the immigration statistics **(please go to question 6)**

- 5a. *In case all or some asylum-seekers are included in the immigration statistics, can any indication be given on the average time of delay between the moment of entry into the country and the moment of registration as an immigrant?*
- less than one month
 - more than one month but less than half a year
 - more than half a year but less than a year
 - more than a year
 - it is not possible to give an estimate

- 5b. *In case all or some asylum-seekers are included in the immigration statistics, can they be identified as such in those statistics?*
- yes
 - partially, only those who
 - no, not at all

6. *In case refugees are invited by your government, to what degree are they included in the statistics on immigration?*
- all invited refugees are included
 - a selection of invited refugees is included, namely those who
 - all invited refugees are excluded from the immigration statistics **(please go to question 7)**
 - not applicable **(please go to question 7)**

6a. *In case all or some invited refugees are included in the immigration statistics, can any indication be given on the average time of delay between the moment of entry into the country and the moment of registration as an immigrant?*

- less than one month
- more than one month but less than half a year
- more than half a year but less than a year
- more than a year
- it is not possible to give an estimate

6b. *In case all or some invited refugees are included in the immigration statistics, can they be identified as such in those statistics?*

- yes
- partially, only those who
.....
- no, not at all

7. *To what degree are asylum-seekers who left or should have left the country before or after the (negative) decision on asylum included in the (national) statistics on emigration?*

- all persons who left or should have left are included
- a selection of persons is included:
 - only those who left voluntarily with notification to the (local) authorities
 - only those who were officially expelled
 - other, namely only those who
.....
- all persons who left or should have left are excluded from the emigration statistics
(please go to question 8)

7a. *In case all or some asylum-seekers who left or should have left the country are included in the emigration statistics, can any indication be given on the average time of delay between the moment of departure and the moment of registration as an emigrant?*

- less than one month
- more than one month but less than half a year
- more than half a year but less than a year
- more than a year
- it is not possible to give an estimate

7b. *In case all or some asylum-seekers who left or should have left the country are included in the emigration statistics, can they be identified as such in those statistics?*

- yes
- partially, only those who
.....
- no, not at all

8. Please give the name and address of the person who provides the statistical bureau with the original data pertaining to asylum-seekers and refugees. This person may be contacted for further information.

.....

7.2 Questionnaire 2

Introduction

The following questions are included on behalf of the Eurostat project on statistics of asylum-seekers and refugees in selected Central and Eastern European countries. This project is being carried out by the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI).

The project is an extension of similar earlier studies pertaining to the countries of the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)¹².

The aims of the project are the following.

1. To create an inventory of available data on asylum-seekers and refugees in selected Central and Eastern European countries. Principally, the data are collected through national organisations (responsible ministries and national statistical institutes).
2. To analyse the legislative backgrounds regarding asylum-seekers and refugees, in order to come to a clear understanding and interpretation of the available data. This implies a description of the different stages in the asylum procedure.
3. To analyse the relationship between statistics on asylum-seekers and refugees on the one hand, and official migration statistics on the other hand.
4. To analyse major trends in the selected countries with respect to asylum-seekers and refugees, given the degree of comparability of the data and data sources. This analysis includes a discussion of the backgrounds and consequences of the trends, as well as the role of policies and policy changes.

The current questionnaire focuses on points 1, 2 and 4. Another questionnaire, focusing on point 3, has been sent to representatives of the national statistical institutes.

¹² Eurostat, 1994, Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 1: EC Member States. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.
Eurostat, 1995, Asylum-seekers and Refugees: a statistical report. Volume 2: EFTA countries. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

1. *What is the specific legal basis for granting asylum?*

.....
.....

Please attach a copy of (the relevant articles of) this law/act, preferably in English.

1a. *Has this law/act been changed during the last five years?*

- no
- yes, see Annex .. or last page of this questionnaire for a summary description of these amendments

2. *Who is (are) the competent authority (authorities) for deciding on asylum applications (first instance)?*

- a ministry, namely
.....
- a special agency on migration and asylum/refugees, namely
.....
- a special agency on asylum/refugees only, namely
.....
- other, namely
.....

2a. *Who is (are) the competent authority (authorities) for deciding on reviews/appeal procedures (second instance)?*

- a ministry, namely
.....
- a special agency, namely
.....
- other, namely
.....
- not applicable

3. *Where can applications for asylum be made?*

- at the airport(s)
- at seaports (if applicable)
- at the land border
- from within the country
- from abroad (embassy/consulate)
- other, namely
.....

3a. *Can you give estimates of the distribution of asylum-seekers according to the place where they applied for asylum?*

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- partially, see attached Table
- no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

4. *Is there some type of short procedure (e.g. admission procedure, pre-screening procedure, accelerated procedure)?*
- yes, see Annex .. or last page of this questionnaire for a summary description of this procedure
 - not a formal but an informal one, see Annex .. or last page of this questionnaire for a summary description of this procedure
 - no, not at all (**please go to question 5**)

4a. *Is this (formal or informal) short procedure (also) based on:*

the concept of manifestly unfounded claims?

- yes
- more or less, namely

.....
 no, not at all

the concept of safe third country or country of first asylum?

- yes
- more or less, namely

.....
 no, not at all

the concept of safe country of origin?

- yes
- more or less, namely

.....
 no, not at all

other criteria?

- yes, namely
- more or less, namely

.....
 no, not at all

4b. *To whom does this (formal or informal) short procedure apply to?*

- all applicants (including those already residing in the country)
- airport, seaport and land border applicants only
- airport applicants only
- others only, namely

4c. *Is there a possibility to appeal or review a negative decision of this (formal or informal) short procedure?*

- yes, with suspensive effect
- yes, but without suspensive effect
- only for exceptional cases, namely

.....
 no, not at all

- 4d. *Can you give for this (formal or informal) short procedure estimates of the number of cases and their outcomes (preferably from 1990 onwards, and, if possible, classified by year of application)?*
- yes, see attached Table *
 - partially, see attached Table *
 - no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
 - no, those data are not collected

* Please indicate whether only principal applicants or all applicants are involved.

5. *Can you give estimates of the number of cases that entered the standard or normal procedure (preferably from 1990 onwards, and, if possible, classified by year of application)?*
- yes, see attached Table *
 - partially, see attached Table *
 - no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
 - no, those data are not collected

* Please indicate whether only principal applicants or all applicants are involved.

- 5a. *Is there a possibility to appeal or review a negative decision of the normal procedure at first instance?*
- yes, with suspensive effect
 - yes, but without suspensive effect
 - only for exceptional cases, namely
.....
 - no, not at all (**please go to question 6**)

- 5b. *Is there a possibility to appeal or review a negative decision of the normal procedure at second instance (i.e. to appeal or review a negative appeal/review decision)?*
- yes, with suspensive effect
 - yes, but without suspensive effect
 - only for exceptional cases, namely
.....
 - no, not at all

6. *How are asylum-seekers arriving as a family counted in the (official) number of asylum applications (e.g. in case of a husband, wife and three minor children)?*
- husband, wife, and minor children are counted separately (in the example: 5)
 - only husband and wife are counted separately (in the example: 2)
 - one family is counted as only one application (in the example: 1)
 - other, namely
.....

7. Are the following categories of asylum applications included in the (official) number of asylum applications:

applications rejected in the short procedure?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

renewed applications?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

individual applications of minor children arriving alone?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

applications filed abroad (embassies/consulates)?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

resettled or invited refugees?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

8. Are statistics on asylum applications available by

country of citizenship?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

sex?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

age?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

other characteristics?

- yes, namely
.....
- no; however, other data are collected, namely
.....
- no, other data are not collected

9. *What are the possible outcomes of the asylum procedure?*

granted refugee status (1951 Geneva Convention)

- yes
- no, not applicable

granted humanitarian status

- yes
- no, not applicable

granted temporary protection

- yes
- no, not applicable

granted another status

- yes, namely
.....
- no, not applicable

rejected but temporarily not returned

- yes
- no, not applicable

rejected and ordered to leave the country

- yes
- no, not applicable

rejected and mandatorily returned (i.e. officially deported)

- yes
- no, not applicable

other

- yes, namely
.....
- no, not applicable

10. *How are decisions on family applications counted (e.g. in case of a husband, wife and three minor children)?*

- husband, wife, and minor children are counted separately (in the example: 5)
- only husband and wife are counted separately (in the example: 2)
- one family is counted as only one decision (in the example: 1)
- other, namely
.....

11. Are the following categories of asylum applications included in the (official) number of rejected applications:

withdrawn applications (applicants left or disappeared)?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

applications rejected in the short procedure?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

rejected applications that were filed abroad (embassies/consulates)?

- yes
- sometimes, namely

-
- no, not at all
 - not applicable

12. Are statistics on asylum decisions available by year of decision?

- yes, see attached Table (preferably from 1990 onwards)
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

year of application?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

type of procedure (short procedure, normal procedure at first instance, appeal)?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

type of outcome (see question 9)?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

country of citizenship?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

sex?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

age?

- yes, see attached Table
- no; however, those data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

other characteristics?

- yes, namely
.....
- no; however, other data are collected, namely
.....
- no, other data are not collected

12a. *Can you distinguish initial (first) decisions from final decisions (after appeal), or, to put it in other words, can you eliminate double counts from the point of view of the asylum-seeker?*

- yes, see attached Table
- partially, see attached Table
- no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

13. *Can you give estimates of the number of pending decisions (from 1990 onwards, if possible broken down by type (e.g. waiting for first decision versus waiting for appeal decision) and/or by year of application)?*

- yes, see attached Table *
- partially, see attached Table *
- no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

* Please specify whether the pending decisions relate to cases (principal applicants) or persons.

14. *Can you give an estimate of the current average duration in practice of the whole asylum procedure (including pre-screening and appeals)?*

- less than half a year
- more than half a year but less than a year
- more than a year
- it is not possible to give an estimate

15. *Can you give estimates of the total number (stock) of refugees in your country (preferably from 1990 onwards)?*

- yes, see attached Table *
- partially, see attached Table *
- no, those statistics are not available; however, the data are collected
- no, those data are not collected

* Please specify:

- which statuses are included/excluded (Convention, humanitarian, etc.);
- whether invited/resettled refugees are included;
- whether family members re-unified afterwards are included/excluded;
- whether the number has been corrected for births, deaths, departures, naturalisations, etc.

7.3 Tables per country

7.3.1 Bulgaria

Table 7.3.1.1 Asylum applications in Bulgaria, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Applications ²	:	:	0.451	0.283	0.416
Pop. January 1st ³	8,485	8,460	8,427	8,385	8,500
Applications per 10,000	:	:	0.535	0.338	0.489

¹ Including dependants.

² In 1995, 242 males, 88 females and 121 dependant children applied for asylum; in 1996, 252 adults and 31 children requested asylum; in 1997 382 adults and 34 children requested asylum.

³ Population on 1 January 1997 has been estimated.

Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

Table 7.3.1.2 Asylum applications and in Bulgaria by country of citizenship ¹

	1995		1996		1997	
	cases	persons	cases	persons	cases	persons
Europe	81	126	15	19	39	40
Albania	-	-	1	5	2	2
(ex) Yugoslavia	64	103	-	-	2	2
Turkey	17	23	14	14	31	31
rest	-	-	-	-	4	5
Africa	64	65	91	101	84	84
Algeria	3	3	7	7	8	8
Angola	1	1	9	9	1	1
Congo	1	1	6	8	21	21
Ethiopia	29	29	9	9	6	6
Liberia	1	1	27	29	16	16
Rwanda	-	-	8	8	2	2
Somalia	10	10	3	4	1	1
Sudan	7	7	11	11	12	12
Zaire	5	5	3	3	3	3
rest	7	8	8	13	14	14
Asia	96	193	96	127	212	249
Afghanistan	71	158	48	67	43	62
Bangladesh	1	1	-	-	20	20
Iran	2	5	10	15	29	33
Iraq	13	15	24	31	84	93
Lebanon	3	8	4	4	6	11
Pakistan	-	-	2	2	8	8
Syria	6	6	6	6	14	14
rest	-	-	2	2	8	8
Stateless/unknown	33	67	35	36	33	43
Total	274	451	237	283	368	416

¹ Data for 1997 are preliminary.

Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

Table 7.3.1.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Bulgaria by country of citizenship and year of decision ¹

	1995	1996				1997			
	pos.	pos.	neg.	total	disc.	pos.	neg.	total	disc.
Europe	18	8	4	12	47	10	8	18	12
(ex) Yugoslavia	18	7	1	8	29	10	2	12	3
Turkey	-	1	3	4	12	-	2	2	4
rest	-	-	-	-	6	-	4	4	5
Africa	15	29	1	30	40	47	25	72	33
Algeria	-	5	-	5	5	5	2	7	4
Ethiopia	3	1	-	1	16	20	1	21	14
Liberia	-	1	1	2	-	1	7	8	-
Sudan	3	2	-	2	1	8	11	19	3
rest	9	20	-	20	18	13	4	17	12
Asia	80	103	22	125	47	52	17	69	36
Afghanistan	71	99	-	99	24	39	2	41	2
Iran	1	1	8	9	1	2	5	7	14
Iraq	8	3	8	11	21	9	9	18	11
rest	-	-	6	6	1	2	1	3	9
Stateless/unknown	1	19	1	20	3	36	7	43	6
Total	114	159	28	187	137	145	57	202	87

¹ Data for 1997 are preliminary.

Including dependants. In 1995 five out of 75 cases got a negative decision. In 1995 86 adults and 28 dependant children were granted to stay. For 1996 these figures are 108 and 51, for 1997 119 and 26.

Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

Table 7.3.1.4 Pending asylum applications in Bulgaria by country of citizenship ¹

	January 1st 1996		January 1st 1997		January 1st 1998	
	cases	persons	cases	persons	cases	persons
Europe	194	370	172	330	193	343
Armenia	30	79	29	78	29	78
Azerbaijan	6	20	6	20	3	17
(ex) Yugoslavia	129	233	105	196	100	183
Turkey	24	30	27	28	53	53
rest	5	8	5	8	8	12
America/Australia	-	-	-	-	2	2
Africa	166	168	190	199	170	178
Algeria	39	39	36	36	33	33
Congo	1	1	7	9	24	26
Ethiopia	67	68	59	60	31	31
Liberia	5	5	30	32	38	40
Somalia	13	14	10	12	6	8
Sudan	6	6	14	14	4	4
Zaire	22	22	-	-	-	-
rest	13	13	34	36	34	36
Asia	306	544	315	499	462	643
Afghanistan	191	385	181	329	200	348
Bangladesh	15	15	15	15	32	32
Iran	21	33	26	38	43	50
Iraq	43	59	47	58	114	122
Syria	27	31	33	37	40	44
rest	9	21	13	22	33	47
Stateless/unknown	40	74	61	87	60	79
Total	706	1,156	738	1,115	887	1,245

¹ Data for 1 January 1998 are preliminary.

Source: National Bureau for Territorial Asylum and Refugees.

7.3.2 Czech Republic

Table 7.3.2.1 Asylum applications in the Czech Republic, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
*1,000						
Applications	1.977	0.817	2.192	1.189	1.413	2.159
Pop. January 1st	10,305	10,313	10,326	10,334	10,333	10,321
per 10,000						
Applications	1.919	0.792	2.123	1.151	1.367	2.092

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Table 7.3.2.2 Asylum applications in the Czech Republic by country of citizenship¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Europe	1,617	593	2,047	944	1,044	1,763
Albania	74	20	-	2	-	1
Bulgaria	538	81	1,125	512	330	835
Romania	532	78	60	58	491	675
(ex) Soviet Union	421	314	831	267	186	176
Turkey	26	22	1	8	2	15
(ex) Yugoslavia	24	75	28	94	31	53
rest	2	3	2	3	4	8
Africa	136	38	56	103	95	106
Angola	69	-	16	23	30	6
Nigeria	31	-	4	17	10	12
Somalia	-	1	1	11	27	27
Zaire	8	18	15	18	8	15
rest	28	19	20	34	20	46
Asia	209	170	81	130	252	264
Afghanistan	46	28	32	78	107	133
Iran	22	1	8	2	6	7
Iraq	57	10	14	22	80	88
Sri Lanka	8	5	-	16	29	5
Syria	12	1	1	8	6	2
Vietnam	49	118	19	-	8	3
rest	15	7	7	4	16	26
Rest	15	16	8	12	22	26
Total	1,977	817	2,192	1,189	1,413	2,159

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Table 7.3.2.3 Asylum applications in the Czech Republic by sex and age, 1991-1996¹

	1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		1996	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
< 15	206	169	95	90	335	272	131	127	202	172	315	287
15-18	59	15	12	6	52	27	25	16	30	28	76	48
19-25	456	128	157	47	299	161	198	61	192	84	312	144
26-35	453	144	197	83	393	222	299	101	274	126	347	195
36-50	202	104	69	40	228	118	126	70	157	82	252	135
>50	22	19	11	10	42	43	19	16	40	26	28	20
Total	1,398	579	541	276	1,349	843	798	391	895	518	1,330	829

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Table 7.3.2.4 Decisions on asylum applications in the Czech Republic by year of decision ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	91-96
Granted ²	720	228	242	112	56	103	1,461
Rejected ³	1	9	11	169	20	24	234
Total	721	237	253	281	76	127	1,695
Granted per 100 dec.	100	96	96	40	74	81	86

¹ Decisions on applications of minors have not been counted separately; they are included in the decision of one of the parents.

² For the period August 1990-January 1997, 79 per cent was granted at first instance and 21 per cent at second instance.

³ Excluding withdrawn/disappeared.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Table 7.3.2.5 Granted asylum applications in the Czech Republic by year of application and year of decision ¹

Year of decision	Year of application						
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
1991	403	317					
1992	13	127	88				
1993	22	39	111	70			
1994	2	8	8	56	38		
1995	-	-	1	13	12	30	
1996	-	1	7	17	7	27	44
Granted per 100 appl.	26	25	26	7	5	4	3

¹ Situation at mid 1997. Decisions on applications of minors have not been counted separately; they are included in the decision of one of the parents.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Table 7.3.2.6 Granted asylum applications in the Czech Republic by year of application and year of decision, for some selected countries of citizenship ¹

Year of decision	Year of application					
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Bulgaria						
1991	14					
1992	13	1				
1993	-	2	1			
1994	-	-	3	-		
1995	-	-	-	-	-	
1996	-	-	-	-	-	-
Granted per 100 appl.	5	4	-	-	-	-
Romania						
1991	35					
1992	10	5				
1993	19	11	3			
1994	5	-	3	1		
1995	-	1	-	-	-	
1996	-	-	-	-	-	6
Granted per 100 appl.	13	22	10	2	-	1
Former Yugoslavia						
1991	10					
1992	9	14				
1993	2	18	1			
1994	-	-	2	3		
1995	-	-	-	1	1	
1996	-	-	-	-	1	11
Granted per 100 appl.	88	43	11	4	6	21
Former Soviet Union						
1991	152					
1992	44	17				
1993	-	41	23			
1994	2	7	29	11		
1995	-	-	8	1	-	
1996	1	3	13	1	8	8
Granted per 100 appl.	47	22	9	5	4	5
Afghanistan						
1991	25					
1992	5	10				
1993	2	5	20			
1994	-	1	4	19		
1995	-	-	-	6	9	
1996	-	-	4	3	13	2
Granted per 100 appl.	15	9	35	22	9	1

¹ Situation at the end of January 1997. Decisions on applications of minors have not been counted separately; they are included in the decision of one of the parents.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

7.3.3 Estonia

No tables available yet.

7.3.4 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

No tables available.

7.3.5 Hungary

Table 7.3.5.1 Asylum applications in Hungary, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
*1,000						
Applications	0.921	0.458	0.468	0.207	0.128	0.152
Pop. January 1st	10,355	10,337	10,310	10,277	10,246	10,212
per 10,000						
Applications	0.889	0.443	0.454	0.201	0.125	0.149

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA).

Table 7.3.5.2 Asylum applications in Hungary by country of citizenship ¹

	1994	1995	1996
Europe	207	128	151
Albania	5	-	-
former Yugoslavia	153	84	78
Romania	32	25	21
former USSR	17	19	27
rest	-	-	25
Stateless/unknown	-	-	1
Total	207	128	152

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA).

Table 7.3.5.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Hungary by country of citizenship and year of decision ¹

	1994				1995				1996			
	pos.	neg.	total	withdr	pos.	neg.	total	withdr	pos.	neg.	total	withdr
Europe	239	29	268	13	116	32	148	5	66	41	107	:
former Yugoslavia	194	13	207	9	88	12	100	3	57	20	77	:
Romania	17	13	30	2	14	15	29	-	2	5	7	:
former USSR	28	3	31	1	14	5	19	1	7	10	17	:
rest	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	6	6	:
Stateless/unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	:
Total	239	29	268	13	116	32	148	5	66	42	108	31

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs (ORMA).

7.3.6 Latvia

No tables available yet.

7.3.7 Lithuania

In 1997, the Law on Refugee Status in the Republic of Lithuania came into force. During that year a total of 320 people sought asylum. Six were granted refugee status and 56 people were rejected (UNHCR, 1998f). More data are not yet available.

7.3.8 Poland

Table 7.3.8.1 Asylum applications in Poland, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
* 1,000					
Applications ²	0.567	0.819	0.598	0.843	3.206
Population on January 1 st	38,309	38,418	38,505	38,581	38,609
per 10,000					
Applications	0.148	0.213	0.155	0.219	0.830

¹ Including dependants.

² In 1996, 1,567 persons applied for asylum at the border while 1,639 persons did it from within the country. Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

Table 7.3.8.2 Asylum applications in Poland by main countries of citizenship ¹

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Europe	389	738	453	325	630
Armenia	44	77	289	151	350
Bosnia-Herzegovina	137	550	39	14	7
Yugoslavia	94	61	18	9	20
rest	114	50	107	151	253
Africa	77	34	62	146	365
Ethiopia	55	4	6	2	27
Somalia	9	2	-	73	188
rest	13	28	56	71	150
Asia	92	43	80	356	2,190
Afghanistan	3	5	7	73	488
Bangladesh	-	-	-	6	203
India	-	-	11	110	230
Iraq	30	9	39	57	359
Pakistan	-	-	5	34	173
Sri Lanka	-	-	8	60	630
rest	59	29	10	16	107
Rest	9	4	3	16	21
Total	567	819	598	843	3,206

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

Table 7.3.8.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Poland by year of decision ¹

	1992		1993		1994		1995		1996	
	1st inst.	2nd inst.	1st inst.	2nd inst.	1 st inst.	2nd inst.	1st inst.	2nd inst.	1st inst.	2nd inst.
Convention status	75	-	61	-	391	6	105	1	120	5
Rejected	58	-	135	3	188	4	193	21	375	29
Total	133	-	196	3	579	10	298	22	495	34
Positive per 100 dec.	56	-	31	-	68	60	35	5	24	15
Discontinued	-	-	235	-	362	-	394	21	1,454	4

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

Table 7.3.8.4 Decisions on asylum applications in Poland by country of citizenship and year of decision ¹

	1992-95			1996		
	positive	negative	discont.	positive	negative	discont.
Europe	406	433	676	26	167	285
Armenia	2	213	166	4	101	130
Bosnia-Herzegovina	373	6	324	10	-	7
Yugoslavia	8	62	95	3	9	20
rest	23	152	91	9	57	128
Africa	127	38	73	38	71	101
Ethiopia	50	8	5	-	7	17
Somalia	62	1	15	24	-	34
rest	15	29	53	14	64	50
Asia	102	119	252	61	161	1,067
Afghanistan	22	3	54	11	7	298
Bangladesh	-	-	6	-	27	70
India	-	52	50	-	61	62
Iraq	6	21	76	1	7	255
Pakistan	-	3	8	3	52	39
Sri Lanka	11	8	40	40	-	274
rest	63	32	18	6	7	69
Rest	4	12	11	-	5	5
Total	639	602	1,012	125	404	1,458

¹ Decisions at first and second instance. Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

Table 7.3.8.5 Pending first decisions in Poland by year of application, as of 14 May 1997 ¹

	1994	1995	1996
Pending first decisions	30	90	994

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of Interior and Administration, Department for Migration and Refugee Affairs.

7.3.9 Romania

Table 7.3.9.1 Asylum applications in Romania, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
*1,000						
Applications	0.315	0.426	0.928	0.647	0.634	0.598
Pop. January 1st	23,192	22,811	22,779	22,748	22,712	22,656
per 10,000						
Applications	0.136	0.187	0.407	0.284	0.279	0.264

¹ Excluding dependants.

Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

Table 7.3.9.2 Asylum applications in Romania by country of citizenship ¹

	1995	1996	1991-1996
Albania	:	:	327
Turkey	29	36	
Somalia	:	80	442
Afghanistan	:	29	
Bangladesh	172	89	764
India			132
Iran	92	66	258
Iraq	140	120	457
Pakistan	27	62	251
Sri Lanka			283
Other	174	116	620
Total	634	598	3,534

¹ Excluding dependants.

Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

Table 7.3.9.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Romania by year of decision ¹

	1991 ²	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Granted	315	41	-	16	94	94
Rejected ³	-	-	-	209	348	523
Total	315	41	-	225	442	617
Pos. Per 100 dec.	100	100	n.a.	7	21	15
Discontinued ⁴	-	50	20	16	210	140

¹ Excluding dependants.

² The number for 1991 relate to Somalis who were granted to stay for humanitarian reasons.

³ Excluding discontinued cases.

⁴ Withdrawn/ disappeared and voluntarily repatriated.

Nb. The number of pending cases as of January 1st 1997, has been estimated 1.5 thousand.

Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

Table 7.3.9.4 Decisions on asylum applications in Romania by country of citizenship, 1996¹

	Granted	Rejected	Withdrawn
Turkey	5	17	2
Somalia	3	54	12
Afghanistan	8	16	6
Bangladesh	0	135	15
Iran	21	72	11
Iraq	42	87	28
Pakistan	3	33	5
Other	12	109	14
Total	94	523	93

¹ Excluding dependants.² Excluding voluntarily repatriated.

Source: Ministry of Interior of Romania, General Directorate of Border Police, Aliens, Migration Problems and Passports, Refugee Office.

7.3.10 Slovak Republic

Table 7.3.10.1 Asylum applications in the Slovak Republic, absolute and per 10,000 of the population¹

	1993	1994	1995	1996
*1,000				
Applications	0.103	0.140	0.359	0.415
Pop. January 1st	5,314	5,337	5,356	5,368
per 10,000				
Applications	0.194	0.262	0.670	0.773

¹ Including dependants.

Source: ICMPD, 1997.

Table 7.3.10.2 Asylum applications in the Slovak Republic by country of citizenship¹

	1993	1994	1995	1996
Europe	64	25	11	77
Bulgaria	-	2	-	12
(ex) Soviet Union	64	21	-	25
Turkey	-	2	11	40
Africa	-	9	22	-
Angola	-	9	22	-
Asia	33	94	278	252
Afghanistan	-	37	83	141
Iran	33	-	-	-
Iraq	-	54	173	99
Sri Lanka	-	-	22	-
Rest	-	3	-	12
Rest	6	12	48	86
Total	103	140	359	415

¹ Including dependants.

Source: ICMPD, 1997.

Table 7.3.10.3 Decisions on asylum applications in the Slovak Republic by year of decision ¹

	1993	1994	1995	1996
Granted	38	54	66	79
Rejected ²	20	32	57	62
Total	58	86	123	141
Pos. per 100 dec.	66	63	54	56
Discontinued	25	65	100	:
Pending at end of year ³	107	96	232	:

¹ Including dependants.

² Excluding discontinued cases.

³ Estimated by author.

Source: Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic; ICMPD, 1997.

Table 7.3.10.4 Decisions on asylum applications in the Slovak Republic by country of citizenship, 1996 ¹

	Granted	Rejected	Total	% Granted
Romania	-	7	7	0
(ex) Soviet Union	6	31	37	16
Afghanistan	31	8	39	79
Iraq	20	-	20	100
Other	22	16	38	58

¹ Including dependants.

Source: ICMPD, 1997.

7.3.11 Slovenia

Table 7.3.11.1 Asylum applications in Slovenia, absolute and per 10,000 of the population ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
*1,000						
Applications	0.007	0.036	0.011	0.030	0.006	0.035
Pop. January 1st	2,000	1,999	1,994	1,989	1,989	1,990
per 10,000						
Applications	0.035	0.180	0.055	0.151	0.030	0.176

¹ Including spouses; excluding minors.

Excluding applications for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds..

Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

Table 7.3.11.2 Asylum applications in Slovenia by country of citizenship ¹

	1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		1996	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Albania	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(ex) Yugoslavia	7	-	24	7	8	3	7	2	5	1	2	4
Liberia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	3
Nigeria	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Somalia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Bangladesh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Iran	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	3
Iraq	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	7	-	-	1	-
Rest	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Total	7	-	28	8	8	3	21	9	5	1	25	10

¹ Including spouse; excluding minors.

Excluding applications for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

Table 7.3.11.3 Decisions on asylum applications in Slovenia by year of decision ¹

	1994	1995	1996
Granted Conv. Status	-	2	-
Rejected ²	6	1	21
Total	6	3	21
Pos. per 100 dec.	-	67	-
Discontinued ³	28	14	5

¹ Including spouses; excluding minors.

Excluding decisions on applications for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds

² Excluding discontinued cases.

³ Withdrawn/disappeared.

Nb. There were no pending cases as of January 1st 1997.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

Table 7.3.11.4 Persons under temporary protection in Slovenia at the end of the year ¹

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
December 31st	22,843	48,948	31,118	24,038	18,870	13,015

¹ Including dependants.

Source: Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia.

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