

An estimate of the number of refused asylum seekers in Northern Ireland

There is no publically available data on the number of refused asylum seekers in Northern Ireland. However, in the absence of such data and by extrapolating the data that is available, the Law Centre estimates that there are less than 100 refused asylum seekers each year in Northern Ireland.

Specifically, we estimate that:

- a) In 2012, 63 individuals *became* refused asylum seekers in Northern Ireland.
- b) When dependents are included, this number increases to 79 refused asylum seekers for the same year.

Not all refused asylum seekers are eligible for government asylum support. However, some refused asylum seekers are eligible and are in receipt of support known as section 4 NASS support.

We estimate that:

- c) In the last quarter of 2012, there were 47 refused asylum seekers (including dependents) being housed in s.4 NASS support in Northern Ireland.

Note on the calculation

- a) The estimate of 63 individuals becoming asylum seekers in 2012 was calculated as follows:

The UKBA received 140 first time asylum applications in 2012.¹ UK wide cohort data for 2011 indicates that:²

- 37% of asylum applicants are granted some form of leave to remain³
- 18% of asylum applicants are either removed or make a voluntary return
- 45% of asylum applicants are refused but neither removed nor make a voluntary return or their decision is unknown.

By applying these percentages to Northern Ireland figures, we can estimate that:

- 52 applicants were granted leave
 - 25 applicants left the jurisdiction
 - 63 applicants are refused but remain here
- b) The estimate of an additional 16 dependent family members was calculated as follows:

¹ This is the most recent data available and was provided by UKBA to NISMP:

<http://www.migrationni.org/demographic-trends#asylum>

² Data collected by Oxford University Migration Observatory, 'Briefing: Migration to UK – Asylum' (Feb 2013) <http://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/migration-uk-asylum> Unfortunately this data relates to 2011; we do not have cohort data for 2012

³ Refugee status, discretionary leave or humanitarian protection

A recent Home Office report of there being an average of one dependent for every four main applicants.⁴ For a group of 63 refused asylum seekers, we can estimate there are 16 dependents.

- c) The estimate of the number of asylum seekers in s.4 NASS accommodation for refused asylum seekers was calculated as follows:

In the final quarter of 2012, Home Office data shows that there were a total of 342 asylum seekers (including dependents) living in s.95 NASS accommodation in Northern Ireland.⁵ Because UK wide figure data is available, we can calculate that Northern Ireland hosts 1.69% of the UK's asylum seekers in receipt of s.95 support.⁶

We also know that 2,757 asylum seekers are in receipt of s.4 NASS accommodation across the UK. Assuming that Northern Ireland also hosts 1.69% of UK's refused asylum seeker population, we can calculate that Northern Ireland hosts 47 individuals.⁷

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⁴ Home Office, 'Immigration Statistics: October to December 2012' (28 February 2013), section 9.6

⁵ Home Office, 'Immigration Statistics: October to December 2012' (28 February 2013) Asylum Vol.5 Table 17

⁶ There are 20,182 asylum seekers in s.95 NASS accommodation across the UK of which 342 live in Northern Ireland. This equates to 1.69%. The data relates to Home Office, 'Immigration Statistics: October to December 2012' (28 February 2013) Asylum Vol.5 Table 18

⁷ Home Office, 'Immigration Statistics: October to December 2012' (28 February 2013) Asylum Vol.5 Table 18