

# Numbers of asylum seekers surge in Spain as Venezuelans take refuge in Europe

Refugees from crisis-hit Venezuela are driving up the number of asylum seekers in Europe according to the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) annual report findings

According to **Nina Gregori**, the EASO's new Executive Director, the number of asylum seekers increased by 11% in the first half of 2019, compared to the same period in 2018.

Spain is the top choice for most Venezuelans due to the ease of moving to a country with both language and cultural ties. A total of 18,400 asylum applications were filed by Venezuelan citizens, all of whom were fleeing the months-long political struggle between pro- and anti-regime forces.

That number, which was registered between January through May of this year, was twice as many as the same period in 2018, making it the second ethnic group with the highest number of applications in Europe after Syria.

Due to Venezuela's economic collapse, an estimated 3 million Venezuelans have fled the country in recent years. Most of the people that leave the area choose to go to Venezuela's neighboring countries, but those who seek refuge in the EU, end up in Spain.

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Source:

<https://www.neweurope.eu/article/numbers-of-asylum-seekers-surge-in-spain-as-venezuelans-take-refuge-in-europe/>

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