



31 March 2026

Vivian

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DOIA-REQ-0027132

Tēnā koe Vivian

Thank you for your FYI request of 7 March 2026 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

*Under the Official Information Act 1982, I request statistics on pending onshore refugee and protection claims handled by the Refugee Status Unit (RSU).*

*As at 28 February 2026, please provide:*

*The total number of cases within New Zealand that have formally lodged an application for refugee or protected person status and for which, as at that date, the RSU had not yet made a first-instance decision.*

#### **Our response**

There were 3,922 cases in New Zealand that had formally lodged an application for refugee or protected person status and were still awaiting a first-instance decision from the Refugee Status Unit (RSU) as at 28 February 2026.

Immigration New Zealand's (INZ) priority is to provide a robust and fair system that enables genuine asylum seekers to be processed as efficiently as possible. The core purpose of an asylum claim is to protect people who have a well-founded fear of being persecuted in their home country. Claims for refugee and protection status are assessed thoroughly on their own individual circumstances in accordance with New Zealand refugee law and the relevant international conventions. Further information, including processing times for refugee and protection claims, is available on the INZ website at [Claiming refugee or protected person status :: Immigration New Zealand](#).

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, or if you require any further assistance, please contact [INZOIAs@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:INZOIAs@mbie.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

Fiona Whiteridge  
**General Manager, Refugee and Migrant Services**  
Immigration New Zealand