



# National Asylum Developments 2024



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June 2024



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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2024

PDF BZ-AK-24-001-EN-N ISBN 978-92-9403-952-1 ISSN 2811-7786 doi: 10.2847/218184

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# Introduction

This summary presents legislative, institutional and policy developments in asylum and reception in EU+ countries in 2023, as presented in the [Asylum Report 2024](#). Details for each development and further analysis are provided in the report.

This information is also available in a searchable database, the EUAA National Asylum Developments Database: <https://euaa.europa.eu/national-asylum-developments-database>



## Legislative developments

	Country	Thematic area	Development
	Belgium	The Dublin procedure	The Council of Ministers approved a reform package on the migration model. It would codify in national law that the Immigration Office can extend the timeline for a Dublin transfer from 6 to 12 months when the applicant is detained in a penal institution, and to 18 months when the person has absconded.
	Belgium	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Georgia was removed from the list of safe countries of origin.
	Belgium	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Council of Ministers approved a royal decree which obliges applicants who work to contribute to reception costs. In addition, applicants who are in a stable and sustainable professional situation with high salaries can be asked to leave the reception network.
	Belgium	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Council of Ministers approved the draft law to amend the law on the reception of asylum seekers. The right to material assistance will end with a final negative decision in the international protection procedure.
	Belgium	Detention during the asylum procedure	The draft of the new Migration Code makes clear that children cannot be held in closed centres.
	Belgium	Interpretation services	Amendments to laws were prepared on the recruitment and status of interpreters.
	Belgium	Statelessness in the context of asylum	The Council of Ministers approved a draft legislation which would become law in early 2024, setting up a specific procedure and a specific legal right to stay for stateless people, provided they have involuntarily lost their nationality, cannot obtain or retrieve one, and prove they cannot receive a residence permit in any another country.
	Belgium	Content of protection	The Flemish region of Belgium introduced an obligatory, standardised Dutch language test for newcomers, including beneficiaries of international protection, as part of civic integration courses.
	Belgium	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The Council of Ministers approved the creation of a separate residence right for parents when their children qualify for international protection but they themselves do not.
	Bulgaria	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The authorities adopted a circular for the implementation of the accelerated procedure, pending the amendment of the Law on Asylum and Refugees.













	Bulgaria	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Legislation is being amended to enable a negative decision on international protection and a return decision to be issued jointly.
	Bulgaria	Interpretation services	National legislation on asylum was amended to allow EUAA interpreters to support the registration and assessment of applications for international protection.
	Croatia	Reception of applicants for international protection	Amendments to the Law on International and Temporary Protection clarified that a recognised beneficiary of international protection may stay in the reception centre for 60 days following a positive decision. Within 8 days, they may request accommodation from the competent regional office or they need to find suitable accommodation on the private market.
	Croatia	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Law on International and Temporary Protection was amended to reduce the waiting period to access the labour market for applicants for international protection from 6 to 3 months. Applicants need to request a work permit, which is delivered within 1 month, and if they conclude a work contract, they must inform the reception facility within 15 days. Once the applicant status ceases, the work permit must be returned within 15 days.
	Croatia	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Law on International and Temporary Protection was amended to extend applicants' access to medical care beyond emergency situations, upon a doctor's recommendation.
	Croatia	Detention during the asylum procedure	The Law on International and Temporary Protection was amended to introduce new grounds for applying restrictions on the movement of applicants, including multiple consecutive attempts to leave the country during an asylum procedure. The decision on the restriction is regularly reviewed by the administrative court if it lasts longer than 1 month and if there is a change in circumstances that may affect the legality of the decision. The court also reviews the decision upon request by the applicant.
	Croatia	Legal assistance and representation	The Law on International and Temporary Protection was amended to introduce two new obligations related to visits and communication of the detained asylum seekers with legal advisers, UNHCR, family members and the right to orally receive information on legal aid in a language the applicant can understand, when such information cannot be provided in writing.













	Croatia	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	Amendments to the Law on International and Temporary Protection specified that the guardian is obliged to start family tracing as soon as possible for an unaccompanied child. In addition, confidentiality must be respected when managing information on a child and the family in order not to jeopardise the child's safety
	Croatia	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	Amendments to the Law on International and Temporary Protection clarified that children in reception must be offered appropriate recreational activities, including outdoor activities.
	Cyprus	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Ministry of the Interior published a draft bill proposing to establish a Deputy Ministry of Migration and Asylum. This would result in one institutions being responsible for creating and implementing an integrated strategy for migration and asylum.
	Cyprus	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The law was amended to state that asylum seekers who do not consent to the medical examination for an age assessment are presumed to be adults. However, they can submit additional information at any stage of the process to establish their minority and can request the medical examination at a later stage, which cannot be disregarded by the Asylum Service.
	Cyprus	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	A bill proposal on guardianship and fostering children was approved by the Council of Ministers to enhance protection and support for children in the care of the Social Welfare Services.
	Czechia	Access to procedure	After the amendment to the Act on Asylum, through Act No 173/2023, it is no longer possible for third-country nationals to apply for international protection in hospitals.
	Czechia	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Legislative amendments transferred the responsibility from the municipal court to the Regional Court in Prague for appeals against decisions on applications made in the transit area of the international airport.
	Czechia	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Legislative amendments established the possibility for applicants who made an asylum application at the transit area of the international airport to file a cassation complaint with the Supreme Administrative Court if the appeal is rejected by a court of first instance.
	Czechia	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Armenia and the United Kingdom were added to the list of safe countries of origin, while Ukraine was removed. Exceptions were removed for Georgia and Moldova.





	Czechia	Processing asylum applications at first instance	New legislation entered into force in July 2023 aiming to streamline the asylum procedure before administrative authorities and administrative courts.
	Czechia	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	Act No 173/2023 amended the Asylum Act to provide a detailed overview of time limits to lodge an appeal.
	Czechia	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	An amendment introduced by Act No 173/2023 provides that, when assessing an appeal, the court must also consider new, important facts that have arisen after the administrative decision, if they relate to possible persecution or the threat of serious harm. The court must cancel the administrative decision and return the case to the administrative body for further proceedings if the facts have an effect on the administrative body's decision on the merits.
	Czechia	Reception of applicants for international protection	An amendment introduced by Act No 173/2023 allows for an employee designated by the reception facility operator to prevent an applicant from entering or remove them from the facility if the applicant is under the influence of alcohol or other addictive substances, or if the person is a threat to him/herself or to others, to the property, public order or had already caused harm.
	Czechia	Detention during the asylum procedure	Act No 173/2023 introduced changes to the timelines in detention.
	Czechia	Statelessness in the context of asylum	An amendment of the Act on the Residence of Foreigners went into effect in July 2023. It provides a definition of a stateless person and includes relevant provisions concerning recognition, relevant procedures and the content of protection for stateless persons.
	Czechia	Content of protection	According to an amendment of the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals, third-country nationals whose application for international protection was rejected can no longer acquire a permanent residence permit by having lived in the country for 4 years.
	Czechia	Content of protection	An Amendment of the Act on Asylum clarified what type of travel document are issued to beneficiaries of protection, according to their status.
	Czechia	Content of protection	An amendment of the Act on the Residence of Foreign Nationals introduced reductions in administrative fees for procedures related to the issuance of a residence permit and replacing a damaged, lost or stolen card.
	Denmark	Special procedures to assess protection needs	The Russian Federation was removed from the list of safe countries of origin.



	Denmark	Content of protection	The Special Act for Persons having Assisted Danish Authorities in Afghanistan was extended until 30 November 2025. The act was adopted in 2021 and initially granted a 2-year residence permit for Afghans who qualified.
	Denmark	Content of protection	A new law makes it mandatory for people who receive social support benefits to participate in internships and employment programmes for 37 hours a week.
	Finland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The new government presented a proposal to introduce a border procedure.
	Finland	Detention during the asylum procedure	The Ministry of the Interior worked on amendments to the grounds for immigration detention to include public order, security and the commission of serious crimes. The proposal also extends the length of detention from 6 to 12 months.
	Finland	Content of protection	The Ministry of the Interior published a draft bill proposing to limit residence permits to 3 years based on refugee status and to 1 year for a permit based on subsidiary protection, with extended permits limited to 2 years. The bill also proposes withdrawing a person's international protection status and their residence permit based on that status if the person commits a serious offence in Finland that endangers public order and security or if the person endangers national security.
	France	Access to procedure	A new asylum and immigration law was debated, with several proposals suggesting changes and adjustments for a more efficient registration process. The law was promulgated at the beginning of 2024.
	Germany	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Georgia and Moldova were added to the list of safe countries of origin.
	Germany	Reception of applicants for international protection	All applicants can have access to the BAMF language programme, regardless of their prospects for being recognised.
	Germany	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	Providers of counselling sessions can transmit the personal data of an applicant to the authorities if it arises during the discussion that the person is in need of special procedural guarantees or has special needs in reception, provided the applicant consents to this transfer of information.
	Germany	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The reform of the Guardianship and Care Law came into effect.



	Greece	Legal assistance and representation	The government adopted a decision which defines practical aspects of the Asylum Code, in particular access to free legal aid in the appeals procedure, the functioning of the Registry of Lawyers, lawyers' tasks, obligations and payment.
	Hungary	Access to procedure	The embassy procedure continued to be implemented, despite the CJEU ruling considering the legislation in breach of EU law.
	Iceland	Special procedures to assess protection needs	The Aliens Act was amended to provide clearer definitions of what constitutes delays in case processing attributable to applicants.
	Iceland	Special procedures to assess protection needs	According to amendments to the Aliens Act, the decision to reject an asylum application as inadmissible is now automatically appealed to the Immigration Appeals Board (in Dublin-cases, cases when the applicant already received international protection in another country or has a connection to another country (safe third country) that it can be considered reasonable that they stay there), unless the applicant specifically expresses the intention not to appeal the decision.
	Iceland	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Subsequent applications can now be dismissed, unless new information is available that increases the applicant's probability of being recognised as a beneficiary of international protection.
	Iceland	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	Appeals on the rejection of a subsequent application are decided by the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Appeals Board instead of a panel of committee members.
	Iceland	Reception of applicants for international protection	Amendments to the law specified that applicants with a final rejection retain their reception rights for a maximum 30 days after the administrative decision becomes final. Several exemptions exist to this rule. In addition, the police may authorise to postpone the termination of the rights in certain cases.
	Iceland	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The Icelandic Law on Foreigners now specifies that authorities are obliged to take into account the minority of an applicant in the assessment of an application for international protection if the child turned 18 after arriving in the country.
	Iceland	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	Legislative amendments require the minister in Iceland to establish a regulation on the assessment of the interests of a child who have applied for international protection, but a residence permit on humanitarian consideration may still be granted.



	Ireland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	A number of acts in the statute relating to immigration, including legislation on international protection, were amended in 2023 to allow for electronic immigration notices. Previously, immigration notices were generally only possible through the postal service. These amendments support efforts to modernise Ireland's immigration system.
	Ireland	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	The term of office of a member appointed in a whole-time capacity on the tribunal was amended from 3 to 5 years.
	Italy	Access to procedure	Italy and Albania concluded a protocol on strengthening cooperation in migration matters.
	Italy	Access to procedure	The penalty for human trafficking was increased and a new crime of "death or injury as a consequence of crimes in the field of illegal immigration" was introduced.
	Italy	Access to procedure	A state of emergency was introduced due to the increased number of arrivals.
	Italy	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Law No 50/2023 allows for the accelerated processing of applications at the border or transit zones for applicants coming from safe third countries or who attempted to evade border checks. These applicants may also be detained at the border. The authorities must decide on their application within 7 days.
	Italy	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, Nigeria and The Gambia were added to the list of safe third countries by Decree of 17 March 2023.
	Italy	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Amendments specified that a subsequent application may only be considered admissible if external circumstances prevented the applicant from submitting new elements earlier. The applicant must explain and prove the reasons for the delay. The suspensive effect of an appeal is no longer automatic when a first subsequent application has been considered as inadmissible or a negative decision was issued on the merits.
	Italy	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Law No 50/2023 introduced the possibility to address staff shortages in the determining authority by using officers of the local prefecture. The law requires new staff to be adequately trained.
	Italy	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	Law No 50/2023 provided that, before filing an appeal, lawyers may access the video recording of the applicant's hearing before the Territorial Commission.
	Italy	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	Law No 50/2023 provided that for appeals registered before 31 December 2021 and still pending, a motion may be presented by the lawyer to prioritise the assessment of the right













			to special protection before the assessment of the right to international protection.
	Italy	Reception of applicants for international protection	The criteria to redistribute applicants among Italian regions was revised.
	Italy	Reception of applicants for international protection	Law No 50/2023 allows for the derogation of certain laws to facilitate the opening and operating of hotspots and government reception centres. It also allows the Italian Red Cross to manage the Lampedusa hotspot.
	Italy	Reception of applicants for international protection	Law No 50/2023 foresees that, to alleviate pressure on hotspots, foreigners can be transferred to similar facilities on the national territory to undergo identification and registration. When government reception centres are full, the prefect may identify temporary reception facilities.
	Italy	Reception of applicants for international protection	Legislative amendments underlined that applicants do not have access to second-line reception (SAI), with the exception of resettled applicants, displaced persons from Ukraine and Afghanistan, and applicants with vulnerabilities. All female applicants are considered to be vulnerable and thus have access to SAI.
	Italy	Detention during the asylum procedure	Law No 50/2023 established that new return and repatriation centres (CPRs) may be established and maintained with a derogation from some laws (e.g. procurement) until 31 December 2025 to ensure that centres can be opened quickly.
	Italy	Detention during the asylum procedure	According to Law No 50/2023, applicants may be detained to determine elements on which the asylum claim is based and which cannot be established without detention, within the limits of places in CPRs.
	Italy	Detention during the asylum procedure	Law No 50/2023 extended the circumstances for a risk of absconding to include when the applicant does not have a passport or when the applicant provides a false identity.
	Italy	Detention during the asylum procedure	According to Law No 50/2023, applicants may be detained in hotspots or CPRs when lodging an application at the border to assess their right to enter the country if they arrive from a safe country of origin or by evading relevant border checks.
	Italy	Detention during the asylum procedure	According to Law No 50/2023, applicants can provide a financial guarantee as an alternative to detention.
	Italy	Detention during the asylum procedure	For applicants awaiting a Dublin transfer, Law No 50/2023 allows their detention in CPRs if there is a significant risk of absconding, but only for the time strictly necessary for the execution of the transfer and for a maximum of 6 weeks.



	Italy	Content of protection	The criteria for national forms of protection was revised. The wording of the ECHR, Article 8 was cancelled. This national (special) protection may be granted on the basis of international or constitutional obligations.
	Italy	Content of protection	Amendments specified that a short-term return to the country of origin is enough for the cessation of international protection status, unless the travel takes place for serious and proven reasons for strictly the necessary period. An additional ground for withdrawing international protection was added, when the beneficiary for international protection submits an application for another type of permit.
	Italy	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	Unaccompanied minors turning 18 are now issued a residence permit with a maximum duration of 1 year.
	Italy	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	A new legislative decree allows the public security authority to order anthropometric tests or other medical examinations (such as X-rays) to identify age in the event of emergency conditions (e.g. substantial, multiple and frequent arrivals, rescues at sea, etc.). In such cases, the authority must give immediate notice to the Public Prosecutor's Office at the Tribunal for Minors, which authorises the execution in writing or, in cases of particular urgency, orally and subsequently confirmed in writing. The law has also foresees a detailed procedure for drafting the reports for examinations and appeal mechanisms.
	Italy	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The ordinary age assessment procedure was amended, providing that the age assessment must be carried out by a multidisciplinary and multi-professional team of experts (composed of a paediatrician, a psychologist specialised in child development or a child neuropsychiatrist, a cultural mediator and a social assistant) and completed within 60 days.
	Italy	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	Legislative amendments prescribe that unaccompanied minors are accommodated in SAI facilities, following an initial stay in a government reception facility. In the event of mass arrivals of unaccompanied children when reception cannot be provided by a municipality, the prefect must activate dedicated temporary structures for minors. When these structures are momentarily not available either, youngsters above the age of 16 may be accommodated in special sections of facilities foreseen for adults for a maximum of 90 days.



	Latvia	Access to procedure	A new law provides the Cabinet of Ministers with the authority to declare a situation of emergency when it considers that there is a disproportionately high number of cases of illegal or attempted crossings of the state border.
	Latvia	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	A new local court was afforded the competence to receive asylum appeals.
	Lithuania	Access to procedure	The Lithuanian parliament adopted amendments which allow border guards to return migrants who cross into Lithuania irregularly during a state of emergency.
	Lithuania	Reception of applicants for international protection	Draft amendments were approved by the government to establish an agency on the basis of the Refugee Reception Centre which will be in charge of the reception of and support for applicants, an entity under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.
	Lithuania	Reception of applicants for international protection	A legislative amendment stipulates that the decision for an applicant's accommodation must be made by the Migration Department. Applicants must be accommodated without their freedom of movement restricted, if certain conditions are met. When assessing restrictions on the freedom of movement, the authorities must also assess the applicant's age, health, family situation and other relevant circumstances.
	Lithuania	Reception of applicants for international protection	A legislative amendment established that the process to appeal the decision on accommodation must be done within 14 days before the district court.
	Lithuania	Detention during the asylum procedure	Amendments revising detention provisions came into force in Lithuania at the end of 2023, including a new alternative to detention which allows a person to leave the assigned accommodation only with the permission of the head of facility.
	Lithuania	Legal assistance and representation	Following legislative amendments, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, or an institution authorised by it, will replace the Migration Department in the organisation of state-guaranteed legal aid for third-country nationals.
	Luxembourg	The Dublin procedure	The Law on International and Temporary Protection was amended to include a list of circumstances when there is a significant risk for absconding and when to detain an applicant.
	Luxembourg	Reception of applicants for international protection	Changes made to accessing material reception conditions established that applicants must first lodge an application at the General Department of immigration before they can request accommodation.



	Luxembourg	Reception of applicants for international protection	Legislative amendments clarified the amount of food and hygiene products to be received and defined the same amount of basic assistance for all applicants, regardless of age. Material reception conditions may also be given in cash.
	Luxembourg	Reception of applicants for international protection	Labour market tests were abolished to facilitate access to employment.
	Luxembourg	Content of protection	A new law on intercultural living entered into force in January 2024.
	Netherlands	Reception of applicants for international protection	The new Distribution Act was adopted in January 2024. It aims to proportionally divide the responsibility for reception places among municipalities.
	Netherlands	Statelessness in the context of asylum	In June 2023, the Dutch Parliament passed a legislative package pertaining to statelessness. The Statelessness Determination Procedure Act established a new procedure and an amendment to the Dutch Nationality Act provides stateless children born in the Netherlands with a pathway to Dutch nationality.
	Portugal	Statelessness in the context of asylum	Parliament passed a law in August 2023 that defines a stateless person and recognises that people who meet the criteria of the 1954 Convention are entitled to both stateless status and a travel document.
	Romania	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Emergency Ordinance No 35/2023 was approved to provide that the General Inspectorate for Immigration will issue a negative decision on international protection jointly with a return decision. The legislation also provides a third-country national's right to remain in Romania until the asylum procedure is completed and for 15 days after the procedure is finalised, and clarifies that applicants benefit from their rights until the procedure is finalised.
	Romania	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Emergency Ordinance No 35/2023 was approved to provide for the participation of EUAA experts in the registration and assessment of asylum applications.
	Slovakia	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	Changes to the court system came into effect in June 2023. Three new administrative courts were created in Bratislava, Banská Bystrica and Košice. Two of them – the administrative courts in Bratislava and Košice – have jurisdiction over administrative actions in asylum, detention and administrative expulsion matters. The Supreme Administrative Court is competent to decide on cassation against rulings of these specialised administrative courts.

















	Slovenia	Reception of applicants for international protection	Amendments to the Act Amending the Employment, Self-Employment and Work of Foreigners Act enables asylum seekers the right to access the labour market after 3 months.
	Slovenia	Reception of applicants for international protection	A decree providing appropriate accommodation, care and treatment for unaccompanied minors was adopted in October 2023, which established a dedicated reception facility and accommodation centre. The decree became operational in April 2024.
	Slovenia	Statelessness in the context of asylum	The government announced accession to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
	Spain	Reception of applicants for international protection	A new regulation was adopted on sanctions for breaching the house rules in reception facilities.
	Sweden	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Swedish Migration Agency suspended enforcement to Sudan.
	Sweden	Country of origin information	A new legal position was published on the protection needs of nationals from Yemen.
	Sweden	Statelessness in the context of asylum	A new legal position was published on statelessness.
	Sweden	Content of protection	The Swedish Migration Agency updated its legal position and clarified that the need for a new personal interview before the decision on revocation must be decided individually.
	Switzerland	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	The Federal Council repealed the COVID-19 ordinance on 15 December 2023, thus for accelerated procedures the expanded appeal time limit resumed from 30 days to 7 working days and for interim rulings from 10 to 5 working days.



# Policy developments

	Country	Thematic area	Development
	Austria	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Nationals of Bangladesh, India and Morocco were channelled through the accelerated procedure, based on an individual assessment.
	Austria	Reception of applicants for international protection	Federal provinces received additional reimbursements for their costs for beneficiaries of material reception conditions from October 2022 to March 2023 to cover for inflation and higher living costs. Operators of collective reception facilities and hosts of private accommodation received increased reimbursements per person.
	Austria	Country of origin information	Methodology was revised to introduce new specifications for reporting on country of origin information.
	Austria	Country of origin information	The Country of Origin Information–Content Management System (COI-CMS) now offers the possibility to mechanically translate COI reports into 24 different languages through DeepL.
	Austria	Country of origin information	To simplify the review process to decide if a country is still considered to be safe from a COI perspective and to include it in the new Content Management System (COI-CMS), the COI unit ( <i>Staatendokumentation</i> ) now notes in each country fact sheet (under "Country information notes") if the country is on the list of safe countries of origin and if this still applies in light of recent COI updates or whether changes have occurred.
	Austria	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The authorities launched an information campaign to raise awareness and fight violence against women.
	Austria	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The BBU developed and published a child protection concept. BBU staff received compulsory online training on child protection.
	Belgium	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The START section was created within the CGRS, where all newly-recruited case officers will start their career with 6 months of training, followed by integration into existing sections or units.
	Belgium	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The pilot project 'Tabula Rasa' was launched to maximise the number of decisions and eliminate the backlog.
	Belgium	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The CGRS suspended the examination of cases and notification of decisions for applicants from Gaza and the West Bank between October 2023 and January 2024. Exceptionally, positive decisions for refugee protection and














			inadmissibility decisions for persons with a protection status in another Member State continued to be pronounced.
	Belgium	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The CGRS published a new policy in January 2024 on the security situation in Somalia to guide the assessment of applications for international protection.
	Belgium	Processing asylum applications at first instance	In March 2023, the CGRS adjusted its procedure to enable applicants to submit documents by email.
	Belgium	Reception of applicants for international protection	Around 2,000 additional places were established in the reception system. The search for new centres continued throughout the year.
	Belgium	Reception of applicants for international protection	Fedasil increased the number of reception places for unaccompanied children.
	Belgium	Reception of applicants for international protection	Fedasil and the Auxiliary Fund for Health and Invalidity Insurance launched a new project to simplify and digitalise the billing system for applicants' medical support.
	Belgium	Access to information	The Fedasil Info Point was reopened in 2023 next to the Bordet reception centre with expanded tasks to support applicants residing outside of the reception network, migrants in transit and people without a legal residence.
	Belgium	Access to information	A campaign was set up to combat irregular migration from Guinea in response to their increased number of applications.
	Belgium	Interpretation services	The code of ethics for interpreters was updated.
	Belgium	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	A new reception facility to host up to 115 resettled refugees was opened in Alveringem.
	Belgium	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	Alongside the Community Sponsorship Programme, which has been running in Belgium since 2020, Fedasil launched an initiative in 2023 to find new partners to provide reception support, including housing, to resettled refugees. Various partnerships were signed in 2023, and the process of finding new partners continued in 2024.
	Bulgaria	The Dublin procedure	Staff members in the Dublin unit were assigned specific tasks to avoid each officer following up on all aspects of the Dublin procedure.
	Bulgaria	Special procedures to assess protection needs	Authorities proposed the adoption of a new methodology for age assessments, following EUAA guidelines. The methodology is planned to be piloted from March 2024.
	Bulgaria	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Authorities started preparations for the adoption of two lists with designated safe countries of origin and safe third countries.



	Bulgaria	Processing asylum applications at first instance	A draft concept note to establish a database was developed with the aim of digitalising the asylum system.
	Bulgaria	Reception of applicants for international protection	A third safe zone for unaccompanied minors fleeing Ukraine was being constructed in the Harmanli reception centre.
	Bulgaria	Access to information	The State Agency for Refugees presented a video of social services available to unaccompanied minors. The video was produced by UNHCR and is available in Arabic, Bulgarian, Dari, English and Pashto.
	Bulgaria	Content of protection	The State Agency for Refugees issued new instructions on the family reunification procedure for beneficiaries of international protection, noting that both the submission of the family reunification request and the subsequent registration of the family members must be carried out in the same registration and reception centre where the decision to grant international protection was issued.
	Croatia	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Ministry of Internal Affairs updated the project on the Independent Monitoring Mechanism for the Protection of Fundamental Human Rights, which will continue to observe the actions of police officers of the ministry who work on border protection, illegal migration and international protection.
	Croatia	Reception of applicants for international protection	The authorities started planning the opening of new reception centres in 2024, including one near the border and under the management of the border police.
	Cyprus	Reception of applicants for international protection	The expansion of the centre in Kofinou was planned. The Pournara First Reception Centre was upgraded to include new prefabricated housing units and equipment.
	Cyprus	Detention during the asylum procedure	The expansion of the capacity of the pre-departure detention centre in Limnes was planned as part of an overall plan to manage migration.
	Cyprus	Access to information	An information kiosk was set up in Pournara where applicants can seek information on the status of their file and ask questions about the asylum procedure in general.
	Cyprus	Access to information	The authorities launched an information campaign in Nigeria warning about the realities of the journey and arrival in Cyprus.
	Czechia	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Cases lodged by specific nationalities were decided faster, for example for nationals of Syria, Ukraine and Yemen, with a first instance decision being delivered quickly.



	Denmark	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The policy on women and girls from Afghanistan was changed so that they can be generally granted asylum on the basis of their gender as they are victims of discriminatory legislation. The policy does not apply automatically, as an individual examination of an applicant's case still takes place.
	Denmark	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Immigration Service temporarily suspended the processing of applications from stateless Palestinians from Gaza, after the Refugee Appeals Board suspended their cases on 12 October 2023.
	Estonia	Access to procedure	The Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB) signed a cooperation agreement with UNHCR in August 2023, which aims to ensure that the treatment of refugees arriving in Estonia complies with all applicable rights.
	Estonia	Content of protection	The Ministry of Culture published a draft regulation which outlines the conditions for Estonian language courses for beneficiaries of international protection. Beneficiaries of international protection who fail to fulfil the commitments made when registering for language courses must assume the costs.
	Estonia	Content of protection	A refugee employability programme was launched to welcome beneficiaries of international protection who want to access the labour market or change jobs.
	Finland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Finnish Immigration Service carried out a study on the use of a transcription tool which produces minutes of the interview through speech-to-text.
	Finland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Applications from Russian nationals and other third-country nationals from the eastern border, which could be processed as manifestly unfounded, were prioritised.
	Finland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Finnish Immigration Service changed the guidelines on applications made by Afghan women and girls to grant them refugee status based on COI on their deteriorating rights.
	Finland	Reception of applicants for international protection	The municipal model for reception was terminated at the end of 2023 because the reception system was expanded.
	Finland	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Oulu reception centre was transformed into a registration centre and used by the security authorities due to the situation at the eastern border.
	Finland	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Ministry of the Interior initiated a project to examine the possibility to reduce the allowance granted to applicants for international protection.



	Finland	Reception of applicants for international protection	Newly-tendered reception units for children started operating in November 2023.
	Finland	Country of origin information	The project 'ENNACOI' on predictive country information was launched to create a new working process in the Country Information Service and anticipate and prepare for fluctuations in the number of asylum applicants.
	Finland	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The resettlement pledge was decreased from 1,050 refugees in 2023 to 500 refugees per year over the next 4 years, prioritising children, women and persons with disabilities.
	France	The Dublin procedure	The central Dublin unit produced new guidelines for booking flights and a tool to have a better overview of the different restrictions, in an effort to support local Dublin units and the border police in implementing transfer decisions.
	France	Reception of applicants for international protection	4,900 additional reception places were created.
	France	Access to information	Welcome booklets for beneficiaries of protection were updated.
	France	Legal assistance and representation	OFPRO published specific information dedicated to lawyers working on asylum cases, on their role during the interview, access to the case file and payment of expenses.
	France	Content of protection	The programme "Accompagnement global et individualisé des réfugiés (AGIR)" continued in 2023 and was offered to 26 additional departments.
	Germany	The Dublin procedure	The Dublin unit adapted to the increased workload by adjusting its workflows and prioritising certain tasks and cases.
	Germany	The Dublin procedure	The Dublin unit initiated an IT project which aims to support the workflow of outgoing requests and transfer procedures.
	Germany	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The federal government and federal states agreed on speeding up asylum procedures by ensuring that all asylum applications are filed within 2 weeks and a BAMF hearing must be held within 4 weeks.
	Germany	Reception of applicants for international protection	Plans were announced to extend the scheme of applicants' payment cards at the federal level.
	Germany	Interpretation services	Language experts carried out random quality checks of interpretation and translation services in the asylum procedure.
	Germany	Interpretation services	The code of ethics for interpreters was updated.
	Germany	Country of origin information	The "Country Analysis Model 2030" was created to strengthen cooperation with all stakeholders involved in the international protection procedure and to expand



			cooperation with academia, civil society organisations and the public. This also led to an increase in publicly accessible products as part of a realignment of the product portfolio. In addition, fact-finding missions were resumed.
	Germany	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	After its 3-year pilot phase, the Neustart im Team (NesT) programme became permanent. ETM Libya was moved from Niger to Rwanda.
	Germany	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The federal government announced further steps to develop a National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings.
	Greece	Access to information	The asylum authority's website was enhanced to make content accessible to persons with disabilities, such as dyslexia and visual impairments.
	Greece	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	To accelerate the transfer of unaccompanied minors from the Greek islands to the mainland, dermatological and tuberculosis examinations prior to the departure were discontinued.
	Iceland	Access to information	A new web application was launched to provide information to asylum applicants.
	Ireland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Department of Justice introduced new operating plans so that applicants from safe countries of origin will receive decisions within 3 months instead of the current 17-24 months.
	Ireland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The International Protection Office hired additional staff (200 new staff and 160 panel members) to address the backlog of applications.
	Ireland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Minister for Justice published the International Protection Modernisation Programme 2023-2024, which includes recommendations on the development of IT systems, exploring the use of robotic process automation to replace manual data entry tasks, and the wider use of video-conferencing for interviews.
	Ireland	Reception of applicants for international protection	Government approval was obtained to create a statutory agency to tackle and reduce domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, which will be tasked with overseeing reception and support for applicant and refugee victims.
	Ireland	Reception of applicants for international protection	The government established an Accommodation Working Group to assist the authorities in the agile delivery of accommodation.
	Ireland	Access to information	A new website was launched with information on international protection, such as statistics, types of protection and procedures to follow.



	Ireland	Access to information	The International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) published a leaflet on Internet safety which was targeted at both staff and parents of children who are housed in accommodation centres.
	Ireland	Content of protection	The government decided to extend the suspension of the Council of Europe's Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees for an additional 12 months.
	Ireland	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	A revised national referral mechanism for victims of human trafficking aimed to establish clear definitions for identification and to clarify the rights of trafficking victims.
	Ireland	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The Irish Ministry of Justice launched a third national action plan on human trafficking, which aims to provide victims with protection from removal and to increase awareness and the use of cultural mediators.
	Italy	The Dublin procedure	The Dublin unit started working on an IT solution to improve the workflow of outgoing transfers and transfer decision appeals.
	Italy	Special procedures to assess protection needs	The establishment of a first centre for accelerated returns at the border was announced for applicants arriving from safe countries of origin.
	Italy	Interpretation services	The National Commission for the Right to Asylum (NAC), in cooperation with UNHCR and the EUAA, produced a handbook for interpreters.
	Italy	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The Ministry of the Interior, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation signed a new memorandum of understanding with the National Institute for the Promotion of the Health of Migrant Populations (INMP), UNHCR, the Community of Saints Egidio, Federation of Evangelical Churches and ARCI to resettle 1,500 refugees living in Libya over a 3-year period.
	Italy	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The Ministry of the Interior issued guidance on the identification, referral and support to applicants with special needs in an effort to harmonise territorial practices.
	Italy	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The national referral mechanism was updated for the identification, assistance and protection of victims of human trafficking and exploitation.
	Latvia	Reception of applicants for international protection	A new reception centre was opened in Alūksne, with a capacity of 252 places for single people.
	Lithuania	Access to procedure	Lithuania maintained the state of emergency along the border with Belarus as it continued to face challenges with migrants attempting to enter the country.





	Lithuania	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Migration Department used a questionnaire to screen citizens of Belarus and Russia on their attitudes on the war in Ukraine and information on former employers and service to identify possible threats to state security and cases in which exclusion clauses would be applicable.
	Lithuania	Interpretation services	Remote interpretation was increasingly used to circumvent the continued lack of interpreters.
	Lithuania	Country of origin information	Due to its geographical location and the instrumentalisation of migration, the authorities focused on producing COI on Belarus, as well as on countries in Central Asia.
	Luxembourg	Reception of applicants for international protection	Four AMIF-funded projects were initiated, including mental health services and information and services around birth.
	Luxembourg	Access to information	A new website with information for asylum applicants was launched in February 2023 (it is only accessible from within the country).
	Luxembourg	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The testing of a systematic and standardised identification and assessment tool was launched for special reception needs, including for disabled applicants.
	Malta	Special procedures to assess protection needs	The International Protection Agency engaged in a review of the admissibility decision template.
	Malta	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The International Protection Agency launched a recruitment process to hire additional staff to address the backlog of applications, reduce processing times and speed up the examination procedure.
	Malta	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The International Protection Agency suspended the assessment of applications lodged by Sudanese nationals from May to October 2023.
	Malta	Detention during the asylum procedure	A new clinic was launched to house the Migrant Health Service, independent from the Detention Service Agency, providing primary care services to detainees.
	Malta	Access to information	The International Protection Agency expanded a booklet to include more information on the asylum procedure and began developing booklets specifically for unaccompanied minors and beneficiaries of protection.
	Malta	Content of protection	A public consultation was launched on the second integration policy and national action plan for the upcoming 5 years.
	Malta	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The government launched its third LGBTIQ Equality Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027.
	Netherlands	Access to procedure	The IND began the process of reviewing digital solutions to reduce the number of in-person appointments by asylum applicants and residence permit holders.



	Netherlands	Access to procedure	The Dutch authorities made adjustments to the application process for family members arriving in the Netherlands through family reunification with a beneficiary of international protection, with reunified family members required to register at Zevenaar and no longer in Ter Apel.
	Netherlands	The Dublin procedure	Authorities set up a pilot project whereby a special team processes the cases of applicants with a certain profile, including those with disruptive behaviour in the Dublin procedure. The IND processes their cases in an accelerated manner and the Repatriation and Departure Service prioritises their Dublin transfers.
	Netherlands	The Dublin procedure	New process availability facilities ( <i>proces beschikbaarheidslocaties</i> , PBL) were piloted to swiftly process Dublin cases and efficiently implement transfers.
	Netherlands	Special procedures to assess protection needs	In January 2023, the IND considered that Colombia cannot be regarded as a safe third country.
	Netherlands	Special procedures to assess protection needs	In March 2023 and October 2023, respectively, the IND concluded that Mauritania and Djibouti can be regarded as safe third countries.
	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The credibility assessment framework was under review and measures relating to group policies were developed.
	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The IND planned to draft clearer instructions for searching the Internet during standard screening in asylum and family reunification processes, and an agreement would be made to guarantee minimal search enquiries. It also planned to adapt its processes to ensure that a more extensive open-source investigation is undertaken by specialist employees when there are signs that the applicant may be a possible danger to national security.
	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The IND continued to work on improving the quality of investigations into threats to national security when carrying out the asylum and family reunification screening processes.
	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The prioritisation policy was applied to applicants in the Dublin procedure (Track 1 procedure), applicants from safe countries of origin and applicants who were already recognised in another EU+ country (Track 2 procedure), and applicants from countries with low recognition rates, such as Algeria and Moldova.
	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The IND piloted additional quality checks on positive decisions.



	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The IND stopped a pilot project on written interviews following a parliamentary motion.
	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	A decision and departure moratorium was introduced for applicants from Palestine in December 2023.
	Netherlands	Processing asylum applications at first instance	A decision and departure moratorium was introduced for applicants from Sudan in July 2023. The decision was extended for an additional 6 months in December 2023.
	Netherlands	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Council of Ministers agreed to more stable funding for the reception agency, allowing COA to maintain a fixed reception capacity of 41,000 places.
	Netherlands	Reception of applicants for international protection	COA established a recurrent satisfaction survey with its residents, repeated every 2 years.
	Netherlands	Access to information	The IND started to modernise the digital system so that the latest information is rapidly available, such as the status of an application and when a decision is expected.
	Netherlands	Access to information	COA produced a new video (in Dutch) in which staff present their daily work and describe how accommodation, daily life and support are organised for unaccompanied children.
	Netherlands	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The government restarted resettlements from Türkiye in June 2023 in the framework of the EU-Turkey Agreement, following some measures which were implemented in reception.
	Netherlands	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	Updated work instructions were published on the age assessment process.
	Netherlands	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	For unaccompanied children turning 18 with a residence permit, the Dutch Nidos may now offer extended care and these children may stay with their reception family or a small-scale reception facility.
	Norway	The Dublin procedure	Following the increased workload of Dublin units since 2022, the recruitment and training of new staff continued.
	Norway	Processing asylum applications at first instance	A new instruction to the UDI from the Ministry of Justice and Emergency Preparedness in May 2023 provided further guidance for the processing of applications for women and girls from Afghanistan, stressing the need for an individual assessment of cases.
	Norway	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The UDI suspended the examination of applications lodged by Sudanese applicants.



	Norway	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	The Ministry of Justice and Emergency Preparedness amended the Immigration Regulations in September 2023 to strengthen the right to a hearing before the UNE in specific cases.
	Norway	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	The UNE suspended the examination of appeals lodged by Sudanese nationals due to the outbreak of war in Sudan. The examination of appeals and the suspension of the obligation to leave for Sudan were lifted in November 2023.
	Norway	Processing asylum applications at second or higher instance	The UNE updated its practice note on the assessment of persecution based on sexual orientation.
	Norway	Reception of applicants for international protection	Norway announced an assistance programme to support Ukrainians in finding employment rapidly to allow them to support themselves during their stay.
	Norway	Reception of applicants for international protection	Scaling up the reception capacity continued, and agreements were concluded for additional ordinary reception centres and emergency accommodation places.
	Norway	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Ministry of Justice and Public Security issued new instructions to the UDI on applicants' accommodation, outlining the roles and responsibilities of the different authorities involved in the reception process and highlighting the need to provide suitable accommodation as part of an efficient and flexible reception system.
	Norway	Reception of applicants for international protection	With the expansion of reception capacity, more training was provided to UDI staff acting as contact points for reception centres and staff employed in reception centres.
	Norway	Access to information	The UDI awarded a 4-year contract to Caritas Norway to provide information and guidance to newly-arrived asylum seekers as of 1 June 2023.
	Norway	Access to information	The UDI launched an application process for organisations to receive grants (NOK 1 million in total) to inform illegally-residing individuals who reside outside of the reception system about assisted returns.
	Norway	Access to information	The UDI launched a "New in Norway" website targeted at newly-arrived displaced persons from Ukraine.
	Norway	Country of origin information	The authorities explored the potential use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools for COI research and analysis.
	Norway	Country of origin information	Landinfo conducted fact-finding missions with other COI units.





	Norway	Content of protection	The authorities informed that temporary collective protection status may be converted into residence permits for employment or family reunification.
	Norway	Content of protection	Ukrainians who also have citizenship in a safe country will no longer receive temporary collective protection.
	Norway	Content of protection	Ukrainians who return to Ukraine risk having their protection status revoked.
	Norway	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	It was decided to resettle 1,000 refugees in 2024.
	Poland	Content of protection	New centres for the integration of refugees opened as part of the project “Building structures for the integration of foreigners in Poland”.
	Slovenia	Access to information	The Ministry of the Interior developed a support tool on information provision within the asylum procedure in several languages.
	Slovenia	Content of protection	An integration strategy was adopted for foreigners who are not EU citizens. The strategy defines knowledge of the Slovenian language as a pre-condition for successful integration and suggests measures for the efficient implementation of language courses.
	Spain	The Dublin procedure	A new asylum database was deployed in 2023, which is also applicable for Dublin cases, and in 2024 the unit plans to adapt the Dublin forms for it.
	Spain	Reception of applicants for international protection	Authorities continued to work to increase reception capacity under the network of reception centres under the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration (centres for international protection, <i>centros de acogida de proteccion internacional</i> , CAPI). Several humanitarian assistance centres were opened throughout 2023, and works started for the operationalisation of more centres in 2024.
	Spain	Content of protection	The Spanish State Secretary for Migration signed an agreement with the group of companies Tragsa and other third sector entities to facilitate access to the labour market for migrants arriving mainly from Central and South America, with job offers mainly sent to beneficiaries of international protection.
	Spain	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The Spanish government committed to receive 3,400 people under humanitarian admission programmes for 2024 and 2025, in addition to the yearly quota of 1,200 places under resettlement programmes.



	Spain	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The Spanish Secretary of State for Migration and UNHCR announced the extension of the action protocol on gender-based violence to humanitarian reception centres and temporary reception centres (CETI) in Ceuta and Melilla.
	Sweden	Processing asylum applications at first instance	A commission appointed by the government recommended the introduction of competence requirements for interpreters and translators working in migration matters, provided that certain requirements are met.
	Sweden	Access to information	As of October 2023, expanded services of the Swedish Migration Agency are available in more service offices. These offices are administrated by the state and provide information from several government agencies in one place.
	Sweden	Legal assistance and representation	The Swedish Ministry of Justice initiated a review to amend the requirements for public counsels who are legal aid providers in matters related to the mandate of the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA).
	Sweden	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The authorities considerably reduced its annual quote for resettlements for 2023 and pledged to receive 900 refugees.
	Sweden	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	Sweden pledged to receive 100 people over a 2-year period under humanitarian admissions.
	Sweden	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The authorities introduced integration criteria for the assessment of cases within resettlement.
	Sweden	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	A new policy on age assessments from May 2023 indicates that MRI pictures of a knee joint can be only made in one location.
	Switzerland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	As a matter of policy, women and girls from Afghanistan can be granted asylum based on their gender as victims of discriminatory legislation, following an individual examination of the case.
	Switzerland	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP) suspended the national resettlement programme as of April 2023 due to pressure on the asylum system and lack of housing.
	Switzerland	Resettlement and humanitarian admissions	The government approved a new quota for 2024-2025 that can be activated only after consultations with the cantons and the municipalities, and based on availability in the reception system.



## Institutional developments


	Country	Thematic area	Development
	Belgium	The Dublin procedure	The Immigration Office's Dublin Unit was restructured in 2023, creating additional sub-divisions and further dividing tasks.
	Cyprus	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Asylum Service planned to hire additional staff handling subsequent applications to eliminate a backlog of approximately 1,000 cases.
	Cyprus	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Asylum Service planned to hire additional staff to address the backlog of applications, reduce processing times and speed up the examination procedure.
	Czechia	Access to procedure	A new information system, IS AZYL III, was developed to manage the registration of applications for international protection and related information.
	Denmark	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Office for Reception of Asylum Seekers was moved to the Centre for Asylum of the Danish Immigration Service on 1 January 2024.
	Greece	Access to procedure	The Ministry of Migration and Asylum upgraded the Asylum Service's unified information system for reception and asylum to "Alkyoni II". The upgrade facilitated several services for asylum seekers and refugees in multilingual and digital formats, such as registering applications, booking interviews and submitting documents.
	Greece	The Dublin procedure	A dedicated policy sub-division was created within the Dublin Unit, which was tasked to provide advice on the interpretation of the relevant legal framework and suggest improvements to the procedure.
	Greece	The Dublin procedure	The Dublin Unit undertook a mapping of internal workflows and standard operating procedures to establish a standardised workflow.
	Greece	Content of protection	A new helpdesk for the social integration of beneficiaries of international protection was launched by the Directorate of Social Integration of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.



	Greece	Unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups	The Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors within the Ministry of Migration and Asylum was abolished and replaced by the General Secretariat of Vulnerable Citizens and Institutional Protection.
	Iceland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	Training was provided to ensure the continued professional development of staff working in international protection.
	Luxembourg	The Dublin procedure	The Dublin Unit was re-structured, and tasks and responsibilities were redistributed.
	Luxembourg	Reception of applicants for international protection	Reception-related responsibilities were transferred to the Ministry of Family Affairs, Solidarity, Living Together and Reception of Refugees.
	Malta	Detention during the asylum procedure	The Maltese Detention Service was transformed into an Agency.
	Malta	Interpretation services	Malta equipped new facilities for legal professionals with a phone system to access interpretation services remotely.
	Netherlands	Access to procedure	Additional staff were deployed for the identification and registration process to address a backlog of asylum applications.
	Netherlands	Reception of applicants for international protection	Reception arrangements were adjusted to accommodate more applicants. The Expo Hall in Assen was converted from an emergency shelter to a waiting area for newly-arrived asylum seekers in Ter Apel until October 2023.
	Poland	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The Department of Refugee Proceedings at the Office of Foreigners was re-organised according to the type of procedure to which cases are assigned.
	Portugal	Processing asylum applications at first instance	The new Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA) started operating on 29 October 2023, taking over some of the competences of the Immigration and Border Service (SEF), with the separation of police and administrative functions.
	Spain	Processing asylum applications at first instance	By Royal Decree No 1009/2023 of 5 December 2023, the structure of the new Directorate-General for International Protection was established. It will include the Asylum and Refugee Office.





	Spain	Reception of applicants for international protection	The Spanish Directorate General responsible for reception changed its name to the General Directorate for the Management of International and Temporary Protection Reception Systems (DGGSAPIIT) to reflect its responsibility for managing reception centres for persons with temporary protection.
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