Government presents draft law operationalising the Pact for public consultation

The Asylum and Migration Pact Adaptation Act (AMPAG) was presented for public consultation. The consultation period runs until 12 February 2026.

The Ministry of the Interior called the process the most significant amendment of the national framework since 20 years and noted that it brings several stricter measures.

Some of the major changes highlighted:

- Border asylum procedures are planned to be centralised at the Vienna-Schwechat Airport. Applicants could previously be also detained within the border control area or at an initial reception centre. A legal basis is to be created for detention for the purposes of the border asylum procedure.
- Foreigners under return may be ordered to stay at specific return facilities run at the federal level. Mandatory return counselling is planned to be expended.
- All circumstances for the possibility for reducing or withdrawing material reception conditions under the 2024 RCD will be introduced in national law.
- Family reunification for beneficiaries of international protection will be dependent on a quota. This quota can be set at zero.
- Applicants will must abide by a charter of values. Applicants and beneficiaries of international protection who commit crimes will serve a minimum sentence in Austria, after which period their return to their country of origin is initiated to serve the rest of their sentence.

During the press conference, it was underlined that discussions are planned to be intensified with third countries for the establishment of return centres there.

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- Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum | Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl (16 January, 2026), EU-Asylpakt in Umsetzung: Größte Fremdenrechts-Novelle seit 20 Jahren [EU Asylum Pact in implementation: Most significant amendment to immigration law in 20 years], https://www.bmi.gv.at/news.aspx?id=6D39755468676A306553513D
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Date of development
15.01.2026
Country
Austria
Thematic area(s)
Pact on Migration and Asylum
Development type
Legislation

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