The Ministry of Justice tabled a legislative proposal for the amendment of the Foreign Nationals Act (No. 80/2016) with regards to the framework governing temporary protection in situations of mass displacement. The amendments concern both institutional arrangements and substantive provisions, notably Articles 9 and 44 of the Act.

Institutional changes: The proposal transfers responsibility for the Refugee Committee from the Ministry of Social Affairs to the Ministry of Justice. It further provides that, upon entry into force of the law, the mandates of current committee members shall terminate and a new committee shall be appointed in accordance with the amended provisions.

Terminology: The proposal replaces the term “collective protection” with “temporary protection” throughout the Article 44 of the Foreign Nationals Act. This amendment is limited to terminology and does not modify the legal status of individuals benefiting from temporary protection.

Amendments to the provisions of residence permits: The proposal removes provisions allowing for the granting of residence permits on humanitarian grounds following the expiry of temporary protection, and includes additional options of obtaining a permanent residence permit after one year under such a scheme. The draft bill provides that individuals benefiting from temporary protection may continue to apply for residence permits under other legal bases provided for in the Foreign Nationals Act. These include, inter alia, permits issued on the grounds of employment, education, or family reunification. Such applications are subject to the general conditions and procedures laid down in national legislation.

A new provision authorises the Minister of Justice to adopt detailed rules, by regulation, concerning the implementation of Article 44, including its scope, application, and possible derogations.

Source(s)

- Parliamentary Gazette | Althingistídindi (18 June, 2026), Frumvarp til laga um breytingu á lögum um útlendinga, nr. 80/2016 (tímabundin vernd vegna fjöldaflótta o.fl.). [Bill on amendments to the Act on Foreigners, No. 80/2016 (temporary protection due to mass exodus, etc.).], https://www.althingi.is/altext/157/s/1032.html

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