On 5 and 11 February 2026, the Minister of the Interior presented the draft amendments to the Act on Foreigners and the Law on International and Temporary Protection, driven by the need to harmonise the legal framework with EU law, namely the EU Single Permit Directive and the instruments of the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

The Act on Foreigners is planned to incorporate the screening of third-country nationals at the external border, an independent mechanism to monitor compliance with fundamental rights during screenings, as well as a return border procedure for persons whose asylum applications have been rejected. Further changes include the extension of study and seasonal work permits, a flexibilisation of rules regarding the foreign worker's change of employer and the period of permitted unemployment within the validity of residence permits, and amendments concerning the revocation of residence and work permits upon refusal of job offers.

The draft Law on International and Temporary Protection, for its part, envisages establishing quality control mechanisms regarding the reception of international protection applicants, the possibility of restrictions of movement on public order grounds or to prevent absconding, a focus on early integration measures, and obligations for beneficiaries to take an A1 Croatian language exam within one year of recognition and an A2 exam within three years.

Additionally, the law will incorporate a lower age threshold for registration in the Eurodac database (which has been reduced from 14 to 6), new criteria and shorter deadlines for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum request, and the introduction of a mandatory solidarity mechanism in the form of relocation of applicants, financial contributions, and other support measures for Member States under migratory pressure.

The Ministry of the Interior also highlighted that the draft Law on International and Temporary Protection introduces a mandatory border asylum procedure for applications meeting certain criteria, introduces an EU common list of safe countries of origin with the possibility of establishing a national list, and allows flexibility in certain procedural aspects in cases of mass influxes of applicants, instrumentalisation, or force majeure.

In late February 2026, various CSOs submitted comments to the Croatian Parliament on the Proposal for Amendments to the Law on International and Temporary Protection. The Croatian Law Centre raised concerns regarding minimum standards for the detention of applicants for international protection,

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Document generated on 25-11-2026
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safeguards for unaccompanied children, and the rights to healthcare, legal aid, and family reunification.

For its part, the Centre for Peace Studies (CMS) welcomed certain aspects of the proposal, such as the possibility of translating relevant documentation at the administration's expense. However, CMS raised concerns about the omission of an explicit provision allowing representatives of UNHCR and other organisations to participate in the procedure, their access to applicants during border procedures and in detention, as well as provisions related to age assessment and the detention of children. CMS also highlighted the need to regulate the role of security authorities in the asylum procedure and to clarify applicants' rights during security clearance.

Source(s)

- Ministry of the Interior | Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova (11 February, 2026), Potpredsjednik i ministar Davor Božinović predstavio Nacrt prijedloga zakona o izmjenama i dopunama Zakona o međunarodnoj i privremenoj zaštiti [Deputy Prime Minister and Minister Davor Božinović presented the Draft Bill on Amendments to the Law on International and Temporary Protection], https://mup.gov.hr/vijesti/potpredsjednik-i-ministar-davor-bozinovic-predstavio-nacrt-prijedloga-zakona-o-izmjenama-i-dopunama-zakona-o-medjunarodnoj-i-privremenoj-zastiti/297220
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Related development(s)

Government proposes amendments to the Asylum Act to transpose the EU Pact on Asylum and Migration

Date of development

11.02.2026

Country

Croatia

Thematic area(s)

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General asylum and migration development, Access to procedures and non-refoulement, Access to territory, First instance determination, Border procedure, Content of protection, Integration, Pact on Migration and Asylum, Crisis and Force majeure Regulation, Eurodac Regulation, Screening Regulation, Temporary Protection

Development type

Legislation

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