Council of the EU adopts first common list of safe countries of origin and revision of safe third country concept

On 23 February 2026, the Council of the EU formally adopted the first EU-wide list of safe countries of origin, as well as revisions to the safe third country concept. The EU list of safe countries of origin and the amendments to the safe third country concept will begin to apply on 12 June 2026, along with the Pact on Migration and Asylum.

The EU list of safe countries of origin includes Bangladesh, Colombia, Egypt, India, Kosovo,* Morocco and Tunisia.

EU accession candidate countries are also included as safe countries of origin at the EU level, unless:

- there is a situation of international or internal armed conflict in the candidate country;
- the EU has adopted restrictive measures against the candidate country in questions related to fundamental rights and freedoms; or
- the share of positive decisions by national authorities to applications for international protection by citizens from the candidate country is higher than 20%.

The safe third country concept allows Member States to declare an asylum application as inadmissible without assessing its substance. Under the new rules, Member States may apply the concept if the asylum seeker has a connection to a safe third country, has transited through one or an agreement exists with such a country.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Source(s)

- European Council | Council of the European Union (23 February, 2026), [Council gives final greenlight to measures to make the EU’s asylum system

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more efficient and robust],
https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2026/02/23/council-gives-final-greenlight-to-measures-to-make-the-eu-s-asylum-system-more-efficient-and-robust/

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