



Highlights of International Protection in Europe

Vol. 1, January-March 2026

Dear readers,

The EUAA's Information and Analysis Sector (IAS) is excited to bring to you quarterly updates of key developments in international protection. This edition contains highlights recorded between January–March 2026.

The [Database on International Protection in Europe](#) (DIP) is now live and is continuously upgraded with new features and improvements. It documents the functioning of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) in 30 EU+ countries (EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) and covers developments in legislation, policies, practices and institutional changes at the European and national levels. The comprehensive overview of [recent developments](#) can be filtered by country, thematic area, type of development, source and date to ease your search for information.

IAS has also continued to support actors working in the field through the collection and analysis of jurisprudence on international protection. To this end, in February 2026, IAS completed the first ever EUAA grant project, the **EUAA Case Law Grant**, which enriched the [Case Law Database](#) with over 400 additional judgements and two analytical reports produced by the Comillas Pontifical University – University Institute of Studies on Migration.

Operationalisation of the EU Pact

With the date of entry into application of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum rapidly approaching, the first quarter of 2026 saw advancements in national legislative processes for its operationalisation, including in [Austria](#), [Croatia](#), [Cyprus](#), [Denmark](#), [Estonia](#), [Ireland](#), [Italy](#), [Luxembourg](#), [Norway](#) and [Slovakia](#).

Other notable developments aimed to increase efficiency, modernisation and digitalisation in preparation for the Pact. This included:

- the approval of a [draft bill](#) in **Luxembourg** to create a dedicated asylum and immigration court;
- the publication of a [draft law](#) in **Romania** to provide the legal basis to establish screening centres;



- a project launched by the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) in **Latvia** which aims to modernise technical infrastructure related to the [asylum system](#) and the [Register for Deported Foreigners and Entry Bans](#);
- a [project](#) launched by the Ministry of the Interior in **Finland** aimed at streamlining asylum processes; And
- [Croatia](#) allocated funds to upgrade and maintain Eurodac fingerprinting stations.

Changes impacting profiles of applicants

In response to geopolitical shifts and evolving uncertainties in countries of origin, several EU+ countries introduced changes affecting the processing of applications from certain profiles of applicants.

Measures concerning **Iranian applicants** included suspending decisions on protection needs in [Belgium](#), [Denmark](#), [Finland](#), and [the Netherlands](#), while [Norway](#) and [Sweden](#) temporarily halted returns.

Regarding **Lebanon**, [Denmark](#), [Norway](#) and [Sweden](#) temporarily suspended returns, while [Belgium](#) paused the processing of asylum applications except for positive and inadmissibility decisions for persons with a protection status in another Member State.

Approaches to **Syria** also evolved, with the Law Office of [Cyprus](#) confirming rejections and returns, the Refugee Appeals Board in [Denmark](#) ruling that general conditions in the country are no longer sufficient to justify a residence permit, and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security in [Norway](#) lifting its suspension of returns for rejected applicants while issuing updated processing guidelines.

In addition, [Norway](#) resumed returns to **Libya**, while [Belgium](#) restarted the processing of cases submitted by applicants from the **West Bank** who are not registered with UNRWA.

Developments in reception systems

In the first 3 months of 2026, **France** revised the content of [agreements](#) between the State and operators managing reception centres, and **Finland** tightened [eligibility criteria](#) for reception allowances. During the same period, **Italy** adopted a new decree to strengthen and expand its reception system for [repatriation](#), while extending the Italian Red Cross' [management](#) of the Lampedusa hotspot until the end of 2027.



Several countries rolled out new initiatives within reception systems. For example, OCMA in **Latvia** launched a [project](#) to provide medical, psychological and material support to asylum seekers, while the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) in **Germany** is expanding language and first orientation [courses](#) for asylum applicants.

The State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) in **Switzerland** issued a tender for an external [reporting mechanism](#) in reception centres enabling both asylum applicants and staff to report irregularities. Highlighting the role of municipalities in reception, **Norway** signed a [cooperation agreement](#) with local authorities to monitor associated costs. With fewer arrivals, it also reduced reception capacity for [unaccompanied minors](#).

Looking ahead, [Italy](#) and [the Netherlands](#) set out plans to expand accommodation capacity.

Initiatives for integration

Spain proposed an [extraordinary regularisation](#) allowing applicants for international protection who have not received a decision or have been denied to apply for a 1-year residence permit.

In terms of policy implementation, **Cyprus** approved the first comprehensive [National Strategy for the Integration of Migrants 2026 – 2029](#) and **Luxembourg** launched new initiatives to strengthen migrant [integration](#). In the meantime, the BAMF in **Germany** is expanding and restructuring federal [integration courses](#), the Ministry of Immigration and Asylum in **Greece** issued a tender for [intercultural mediation](#) in health services, and **Bulgaria** signed an agreement with the Reachout Foundation to enhance the [integration](#) of asylum-seeking and refugee children.

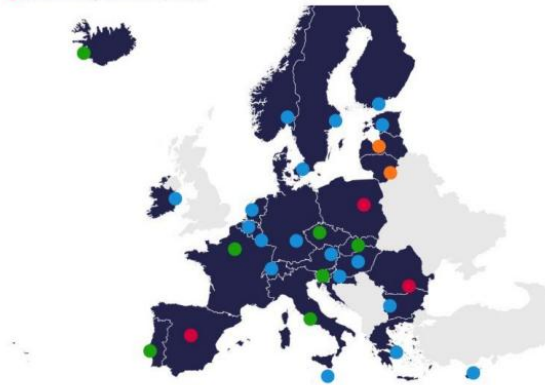
During the same period, **Norway** encouraged employment to reduce reliance on social benefits by [restructuring](#) the refugee integration policy, and signed an agreement with local authorities for the [settlement](#) of refugees. It further proposed [amendments](#) to the Integration Act requiring participants in the integration programme to sign a declaration containing information on their duties, expectations and rights after arrival. In parallel, **Slovakia** adopted legislative amendments clarifying the rules governing [residence permits](#).



Latest publications analysing developments in asylum

Figure 1. Countries implementing safe country concepts in processing asylum applications

- Implementing the concept of safe countries of origin and safe third countries
- Implementing the concept of safe countries of origin
- Implementing safe third country concept
- Not implementing the safe country concept



Source: European Union Agency for Asylum

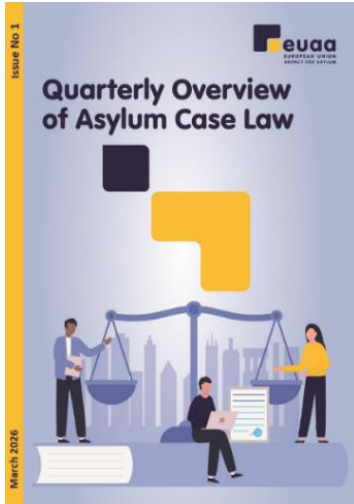
Situational updates

Two new situational updates were published on [national implementation plans](#) (March 2026) and the implementation of [safe country concepts](#) (January 2026).

Analysing case law

Two fact sheets cover case law related to applicants in the [Dublin procedure](#) (February 2026) and a compilation of asylum-related cases pronounced by the [CJEU](#) (March 2026).





Quarterly Overview of Asylum Case Law

The latest edition is now out which covers a [summary of cases](#) which were pronounced from December 2025 to February 2026.

Jurisprudence on Asylum Pronounced by the ECtHR

Under an EUAA grant, Comillas University published a [fact sheet](#) on ECtHR case law issued in 2024-2025.



We want to hear from you! Please take a moment to share your thoughts on the new format by completing this [short survey](#).