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4.4.1. Reorganisation and future restructuring

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Section 4.4.1 Reorganisation

To enhance the effectiveness of asylum systems, in 2022, EU+ countries reorganised their determining authorities, increased their presence and, where necessary, updated their internal organisational rules.

In June 2022, the government of Iceland approved the Prime Minister's proposal to appoint a temporary Council of Ministers for Immigrants and Refugees. The purpose of the council is to work systematically on increasing the speed and efficiency of processing asylum cases, as well as build trust and transparency in decisions of immigration authorities.397

Poland reorganised the Department for Refugee Proceedings at the Office for Foreigners to have more specialised teams that could work with specific categories of applicants, such as detained applicants or applicants from specific countries of origin.

In Sweden, the Migration Agency's services were offered in eleven new locations since January 2022 *(see Section 4.9.1.1)*.398

In Bulgaria, the State Agency for Refugees, under the Council of Ministers, updated and published rules governing access to and activities for national and international NGOs in the territorial units of the agency.399

Several EU+ countries were considering changing the structure of competent authorities involved in the international protection procedure. For example, in Belgium, the State Secretary for Asylum and Migration announced that it considered plans to merge the Immigration Office, the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS) and Fedasil. This was based on an audit of the Belgian asylum process in 2021, which concluded that it would be better to merge the three services. Discussions were ongoing on the feasibility of this plan, including how to safeguard the independence assessing applications for international protection within this new system.

With the purpose of developing the best model of administration structures, the Ministry of the Interior in Finland commissioned a study to analyse the organisation of migration structures in Denmark, Germany and Sweden.400

In Greece, an amendment was presented to the parliament to establish a Fundamental Rights Officer at the Ministry for Migration and Asylum. The officer would have competence in evaluating complaints of fundamental rights violations during the international protection procedure and referring possible complaints to other competent authorities.401

In Portugal, a new asylum and migration agency was announced by the Minister of Home Affairs to expand capabilities to welcome, host and integrate refugees. The responsibilities of the Immigration and Border Service (SEF) will be reorganised, including three law enforcement agencies, with the Criminal Police (Polícia Judiciária), the Public Security Police and the National Republican Guard cooperating to ensure border security, integrated management, and countering illegal practices and human trafficking.402

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