Please cite as: EUAA, '4.14.4.5. Welfare' in *Asylum Report 2023*, Μάιος 2023.

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icon for social welfare

In Germany, the legal framework on social benefits for German nationals and beneficiaries of international protection was revised completely, with the new rules entering into force on 1 January 2023. The amount of financial benefits was raised for several categories of beneficiaries, according to their profile. Additionally, grounds for penalties upon non-compliance with obligations to cooperate were reduced and the amount of financial reserves and extra income next to the unemployment benefits were raised. To soften the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation, the federal government introduced several additional measures, including monthly support for certain categories of beneficiaries.1251

The list of persons eligible for maternity allowance was extended in Italy; however, it still does not include persons with asylum application permits or beneficiaries of international protection. 1252 According to ASGI, this exclusion might amount to illegal discrimination under Italian law. 1253 The Tribunal of Bergamo referred a question to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling on whether national law could require beneficiaries of subsidiary protection to have a total of 10 years of residence in Italy, with 2 years of continuous residence, immediately before applying for welfare benefits, such as basic income.

As of January 2022, a new Civic Integration Act entered into force in the Netherlands. A part of this new system entails that beneficiaries of international protection will no longer be entitled to social benefits during the first 6 months of their legal stay in a Dutch municipality. Instead, the municipality will pay their costs for housing, energy bills and health care insurance, as far as the social benefits reach. The beneficiaries will receive the rest of the amount as an allowance, in addition to the benefits provided by the Tax Office and the Social Security Bank. The goal of this system is to support refugees from the start so they can focus more on their integration into Dutch society.1254

In Cyprus, beneficiaries of international protection have a right to apply for financial aid through the national Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI) scheme. The Cyprus Refugee Council reported that throughout 2021 and 2022 the examination of GMI applications, including the rental allowance, reached or passed 12 months, even in cases of vulnerable or homeless persons. During the examination period, an emergency allowance is provided which varies from district to district and is considered extremely low, at about EUR 100-150 for one person/month and approximately EUR 150-280 for a family/month.1255

DRC Greece noted issues for beneficiaries of international protection in accessing social benefits unless they could prove certain years of legal stay in Greece.1256

On several occasions, UNHCR reiterated its concerns from 20191257 on the fact that beneficiaries of subsidiary protection were entitled to a significantly lower level of basic care. 1258

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