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Section 4.4. Processing asylum applications at first instance

icon for processing applications at first instance

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CEAS is based on the principle of common standards to grant and withdraw international protection across EU+ countries in an effort to ensure fair and efficient procedures. Fairness and common standards in asylum procedures ensure that similar asylum cases are treated in a similar manner in all Member States, leading to uniform decision-making and convergence across the EU, while ensuring that an individualised assessment is provided in each case.

The procedures foreseen in the recast Asylum Procedures Directive aim to ensure that decisions on applications for international protection are taken on the basis of facts and by persons with appropriate knowledge and training, after an adequate and complete examination has been undertaken without undue delay and subject to remedies. Within this framework, Member States have established their asylum systems and procedures in various ways.

In the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic and related health measures, EU+ countries continued to organise remote interviews with applicants for international protection, delaying the initial interview for applicants who showed symptoms of COVID-19 infection. In general, remote procedures were no longer exceptional but rather the new normal. Developments in EU+ countries included long-term policy developments, efforts to improve the quality of first instance decisions, concerns over data protection and privacy considerations, and new guidelines for certain profiles of applicants from specific countries of origin in which the situation was continuously evolving in 2021.

The EUAA published a practical guide on the welfare of asylum and reception staff to build resilience in managers and staff faced with risk factors related to daily work in asylum. The guide includes standards and policies for developing staff welfare strategies,523 a staff welfare toolbox with good practices from EU+ countries, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of the measures.

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4.4.1. Reorganisation of first instance asylum authorities

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4.4.6. Right to be heard and the personal interview

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4.4.12. Processing of applications lodged by specific nationalities

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