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As seen in previous years, some countries modified their institutional organisation to clarify roles and responsibilities within the Dublin process. The number of staff working in Dublin units was also adapted in 2021 to manage increasingly complex cases. In order to facilitate the exchange of information between Dublin units, the Network of Dublin Units, together with the EUAA, developed recommendations to prepare, send, receive and reply to information requests in an effective manner.430

An amendment was pending approval by the Council of Ministers in Bulgaria to modify the "Regulation on responsibilities and coordination of public authorities implementing action on the application of the Dublin III and Eurodac Regulations".431 The changes clarify the responsibilities of and improve coordination among the different public authorities involved in the process.

In Belgium, the Council for Alien Law Litigation (CALL) ruled432 that Dublin case officers of the Immigration Office have not been explicitly authorised by law to take the decision to extend the time limits for a transfer when an applicant has absconded. This competence is with the State Secretary for Asylum and Migration and has not been delegated, thus the extensions of the time limits decided by the Immigration Office were declared invalid. The legislative process was underway to prepare a new law reflecting proactive return policies, and this law would also settle the Immigration Office's competencies related to the decision to extend Dublin transfer time limits, in accordance with the Dublin III Regulation, Article 29(3). In the meantime, the State Secretary remained responsible for taking such decisions.

Almost the entire staff of the Dublin unit changed in Finland, but this did not have any impact on cooperation with the country. The new colleagues received extensive training throughout the year. In France, most staff in the Dublin unit were renewed and they received specialised training.

In Spain, temporary contracts to manage the Dublin procedure finished and were replaced by permanent staff. The Dublin unit in Greece moved to new premises at the beginning of the year. Some Dublin units continued to work in shifts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, in

Poland.

- 430European Union Agency for Asylum. (December 2021). Recommendations on information exchange between Dublin Units: EASO Practical Guide Series. https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/Recommendations-information-exchange-Dublin-units.pdf
- 431State Agency for Refugees at the Council of Ministers | Държавната агенция за бежанците при Министерския съвет. (2021, January 20). Цели на Държавната агенция за бежанците при Министерския съвет през 2021 г [Goals of the State Agency for Refugees under the Council of Ministers in 2021]. http://aref.government.bg/sites/default/files/uploads/docs2021-01/%D0%A6%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B8_2021docx.pdf
- 432Belgium, Council for Alien Law Litigation [Conseil du Contentieux des Étrangers - CALL], X v Immigration Office, 12 January 2021.

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