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icon for reception of applicants for international protection

The recast Reception Conditions Directive (RCD) 2013 sets the standards which must be met for the reception of asylum applicants and aims to ensure that applicants' rights and obligations are harmonised across all Member States.

The reception of applicants for international protection encompasses rules on material reception conditions (such as housing, food and clothing which are provided in kind, through financial allowances or in vouchers – or a combination of these three – and a daily expense allowance), freedom of movement, access to healthcare, education for children, access to the labour market, language instruction and socio-cultural orientation. The directive applies to all applicants throughout the whole asylum procedure from the moment an application is made and for all types of procedures until they are allowed to remain on the territory. The directive also outlines the circumstances when Member States may reduce or exceptionally withdraw material reception conditions. In addition, the directive lists the criteria, guarantees and conditions for the detention of applicants. Detention can occur at different stages of the procedure (at the start of the procedure, pending the examination of a claim, pending the implementation of a Dublin transfer and pending the implementation of a return) and may be governed by different legislative pieces (for example the Dublin III Regulation and Return Directive).

The new RCD 2024 aims to enhance convergence in adequate standards of reception that create comparable living conditions for applicants in all Member States. It provides more flexibility in the management of reception systems and aims for more efficiency in the prevention of secondary movements. It also seeks to strengthen safeguards for applicants related to detention, earlier access to the labour market, supporting physical and mental healthcare, and providing more protection for families, children and vulnerable applicants.

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5.1. Revising the organisation of national reception systems

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5.3. Limitations on applicants' freedom of movement and detention

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