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Similarly to previous years, appeal bodies suspended the examination of cases on appeal for specific profiles of applicants or adapted practices and updated guidelines due to developments in countries of origin. For example, IPAT in Ireland updated its “Guideline on Country Information” for assessing COI.219

The UNE in Norway lifted bans on returns to Yemen in February 2024220 and extended the temporary suspension of the obligation to return to Gaza (with the exception of the West Bank) until March 2025. The UNE also published a summary of their considerations in cases submitted by Afghan nationals.221

A legislative amendment in Iceland changed the prioritisation of cases so that cases nearing the time limit for processing are reviewed first and those which already passed the deadline are processed later. The IAB in Iceland provided clarifications on time limits on appeal, their extension, the aspects taken into account when deciding on the length of the deadlines,222 procedures for assessing the best interests of the child applying for international protection,223 interviewing procedures224 and criteria for the suspension of the legal effect of the IAB’s decisions in cases concerning international protection.225

Several procedural aspects were either clarified by higher courts or referred to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling. For example, the Council of State in France clarified that to determine whether an appeal sent by post has been lodged within the set time limit, the date to be taken into consideration is the date of dispatch of the appeal, as evidenced by the postmark, rather than the date of receipt of the appeal by the court.226 In Finland, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled that when the determining authority provides an incorrect notice of appeal, the appeal must not be dismissed for missing the time limit if sent to the wrong court or following a wrong procedure.227

Some countries, like Cyprus and Ireland, started to digitalise court files and to exchange them electronically.

With the growing workload of courts, challenges remained in several countries with the excessive length of procedures.228 New rules under the Pact have initiated reflection on the re-organisation of appeal procedures in several EU+ countries, with many of them noting this as a challenging area, where national judicial traditions and the quickly-changing realities of international protection need to be reconciled.

- 219

  International Protection Appeals Tribunal (26 January 2024). Updated Guideline on Country Information.

- 220

  Immigration Appeal Board | Utlendingsnemnda (UNE).)(22 February 2024). UNE opphever returstopp til Jemen, [UNE lifts return ban to Yemen].

- 221

  Immigration Appeals Board | Utlendingsnemnda (UNE). (10 October 2024). Ny praksisbeskriving om beskyttelsesspørsmål i Afghanistan-saker [New practice description on protection issues in Afghanistan cases]. The Immigration Appeals Board | Utlendingsnemnda (UNE). (1 October 2024). Beskyttelsesspørsmål i Afghanistan-saker, [Protection issues in Afghanistan cases].

- 222

  Immigration Appeals Board | Kærunefnd útlendingamála. (17 December 2024). Verklagsreglur varðandi greinargerðarfresti – alþjóðleg vernd [Procedures regarding reporting deadlines – international protection].

- 223

  Immigration Appeals Board | Kærunefnd útlendingamála. (17 December 2024). Verklagsreglur vegna mats á hagsmunum barns sem sækir um alþjóðlega vernd [Procedures for assessing the best interests of a child applying for international protection}.

- 224

  Immigration Appeals Board | Kærunefnd útlendingamála. (17 December 2024). Verklagsreglur vegna viðtala [Interview procedures].

- 225

  Immigration Appeals Board | Kærunefnd útlendingamála. (17 December 2024). Viðmið vegna frestunar réttaráhrifa á úrskurðum kærunefndar í málum vegna alþjóðlegrar verndar

[Criteria for the suspension of the legal effect of appeals board decisions in cases concerning international protection].

- 226

  France, Council of State, 13 May 2024, N° 466541, A. In this case, the decision concerned disciplinary proceedings and the issue was the admissibility of the appeal (second jurisdiction) before cassation.

- 227

  Finland, Supreme Administrative Court [Korkein hallinto-oikeus], *Applicant* v *Finnish Immigration Service (Maahanmuuttovirasto, FIS)*, ECLI:FI:KHO:2024:78, 22 May 2024.

- 228

  Equal Legal Aid. (2024). Input to the Asylum Report 2025. Convive - Fundación Cepaim. (2024). Input to the Asylum Report 2025.

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