

5.2.2. Standards and safeguards for applicants

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icon for entitlements to material reception conditions

Several countries introduced changes impacting the reduction and withdrawal of reception conditions. Poland repealed provisions that allowed for the full withdrawal of material reception conditions for applicants deemed seriously disruptive,279 although these provisions had no longer been applied in practice since the CJEU judgment in *Haqbin* v *Belgium*.280

Criteria to grant and suspend social assistance and medical care for applicants, as well as rules and safeguards for applicants residing outside of reception centres, were further clarified. In Belgium, amendments to the Reception Act introduced additional grounds to withdraw material reception conditions, notably for applicants who had already received a final decision on their international protection application in another Member State and minors lodging an asylum application independently after their parents' case has been rejected.281 The Constitutional Court temporarily suspended the application of the legislation and referred questions to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling.282 An amendment also ensured that reception conditions are limited to the provision of material support in reception centres.283 Applicants can be exclusively provided with material reception conditions, and thus financial assistance from the Public Centre for Social Welfare is no longer possible. This followed rulings by Belgian courts in previous years which confirmed that applicants are entitled to material reception conditions from the outset and any other practice would not meet obligations under EU law.284

Similarly, as part of Sweden's transition from apartment-based accommodation to collective reception facilities, eligibility for financial support was made conditional upon residing in accommodation assigned by the Swedish Migration Agency.285 Germany adopted new legislation to allow reception conditions to be withdrawn when applicants seriously breach house rules or fail to remain in the reception centre assigned to them.286

In France, the Council of State ruled that the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) qualifies as an asylum authority empowered to withdraw reception conditions when applicants fail to appear when summoned.287 The Council of State also joined the French authorities to remedy the breach of equal treatment among asylum-seekers with respect to covering transport

costs for asylum-related procedures.288

Following a 2024 Dutch court ruling that restrictions for applicants with low prospects of being granted protection lacked a legal basis in national legislation,289 in 2025 the Netherlands piloted small reception units with closer supervision of applicants who display disruptive behaviour, for a maximum of 4 weeks. Their asylum applications were accelerated. Leaving the designated area without authorisation could trigger detention.290

A further trend in 2025 concerned the introduction or expansion of requirements to contribute to reception costs for applicants with sufficient financial resources. In this context, the Netherlands decided that these applicants would be required to contribute to healthcare costs.291 In Ireland, the Department of Justice proposed policy changes to require applicants for international protection who reside in IPAS facilities and employed to make financial contributions toward the cost of their accommodation, based on their weekly earnings.292 At the same time, several EU+ countries invested in strengthening access to healthcare. Lithuania launched a mental health programme. Malta strengthened the provision of mental healthcare in reception centres through an ongoing programme launched by the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS). In Belgium, the payment system for healthcare was simplified for asylum applicants through the CAAMI project.293

In Lithuania, the newly-established Reception and Integration Agency began operating on 1 January 2025, centralising responsibility for reception conditions and social services for applicants within a single institution. During the year, the agency developed a socio-cultural training programme, rolled out a centralised interpretation system to support reception staff294 and began developing an information provision app. Czechia and France worked on new civic education and language learning courses or platforms to foster integration and inclusion into the labour market. To the same end, Fedasil in Belgium designed a series of digital skills modules.295

Several Member States amended or began drafting amendments to national legislation to align with the revised RCD, which shortens the waiting period from 9 to 6 months to access the labour market. Similarly to Croatia and Slovenia's current legislations, Germany adopted changes granting asylum applicants access to employment after 3 months as a rule, with Germany maintaining a 6-month limit in certain situations, such as Dublin cases.296

Additionally, both the Swiss Refugee Council and the Maltese reception agency (AWAS) maintained dedicated complaint mechanisms to safeguard applicants' rights within reception systems. The Swiss mechanism has been in a pilot phase since 2023 and relies on a network of external reporting offices.297

In mid-2025, the Council of the EU extended temporary protection until 2027, along with the obligation for EU+ countries to provide access to suitable accommodation, social welfare, healthcare, education, the labour market and other benefits under the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD).298 This continued to impact EU+ countries reception capacities.

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