



Section 8. Rights of beneficiaries of international protection for inclusion and integration

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icon for content of protection

Recognised refugees are granted certain rights and obligations, as outlined by the Geneva Convention. The recast QD outlines the content of international protection to harmonise what a recognised beneficiary of international protection can expect under national policies. Its provisions shape the integration of beneficiaries of international protection through standards on residence permits, employment, recognition of qualifications, education, social welfare, integration facilities and healthcare. Relevant articles of the directive also outline the criteria for the renewal, cessation and revocation of international protection.

The objective of the new Qualification Regulation is to ensure a common set of rights for all beneficiaries of international protection in all EU Member States. The further harmonisation of the content of protection is expected to limit secondary movements of recognised beneficiaries. The regulation clarifies the information that national authorities must provide to beneficiaries of international protection on the content of protection and it sets a clear deadline for delivering residence permits. Certain forms of social assistance may now be conditional on participation in integration activities, when the integration activities are accessible and free of charge. The grounds when international protection must be withdrawn are expanded.

The recognition rate significantly decreased from 42% in 2024 to 29% in 2025 (see *Figure 10*). The decline was impacted by the suspension of decision-making for Syrian applicants (who accounted for a large share of positive decisions in recent years).

Figure 10. Recognition rates at first instance by decision outcome, 2015-2025

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Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2026.

In addition, around 56% of decisions were issued to nationals of countries with a low recognition rate. Considering the 69 citizenships which were issued at least 1,000 decisions in 2025, 42 had a recognition rate of less than 20%. Nationals of Türkiye, Venezuela, Bangladesh and Colombia (in descending order) received one-third of all negative decisions which were issued. However, Venezuelans were often granted a national form of protection.

In Spain, new immigration rules came into force in May 2025 establishing several types of authorisations to stay, but each of them on the condition that the person applying is not an applicant for international protection.³⁷⁶ In addition, at the beginning of 2026 the government proposed a new Royal Decree to grant a 1-year permit to third-country nationals who have lived in Spain without authorisation for at least 5 months before 31 December 2025. Applicants for international protection who have not yet received a decision or had their application rejected can apply for this new permit, as long as the application for international protection was submitted before the end of 2025.³⁷⁷ The government estimated that around 500,000 people would be eligible for this regularisation.³⁷⁸

For rejected international protection applicants, a significant limitation was introduced in Sweden. They can no longer apply for a work-related residence permit from within the country. This exception existed previously for some rejected applicants under certain circumstances.³⁷⁹

The German BAMF published an analysis of the intentions of people with a tolerated stay and underlined the multiple factors influencing the decision to stay in Germany or to return to the home country. The analysis concluded a well-coordinated combination of measures which encourage returns and provide options for legal residence, so that situations of unduly-long tolerated stays are prevented.³⁸⁰

Recognition rates in EU+ countries are usually high for nationals from extreme- and high-conflict countries. In 2025, they ranged between 70%-90% for applicants from Sudan, Mali, Haiti, Ukraine and Myanmar/Burma (in descending order).

Figure 11. Recognition rates for the main citizenships across EU+ countries, 2025

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Source: EUAA EPS data as of 3 February 2026.

For nationals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the recognition rate in the EU+ was 17% as many applicants did not originate from conflict-affected areas within the country. For Somalis, the recognition rate dropped from 60% in 2024 to 49%. It should be noted that Somalis were more often granted national forms of protection in 2025 which are unregulated at the EU level and are therefore considered as negative asylum decisions. Belgium issued many negative inadmissibility decisions to Palestinians with a protection status in another Member State, thus the overall recognition rate for Palestinians decreased from 90% to 49%.

In recent years, UNHCR,³⁸¹ other international organisations,³⁸² think tanks, academia³⁸³ and civil society organisations³⁸⁴ have repeatedly warned about the potential negative impact of stricter rules for family reunification on the integration of beneficiaries of international protection. Nonetheless, national governments continued to limit arrivals by family reunification, ³⁸⁵ which was used, among others, as one of the measures to ease pressure on asylum and

reception systems,[386](#) and sometimes on national and municipal social systems.[387](#) In Austria, family reunification was halted for beneficiaries of international protection for an initial period of 6 months, which can be extended for a total of 2 years.[388](#) The German government suspended family reunification for this group for 2 years, addressing concerns raised by municipalities due to stretched local social services.[389](#) Similar measures were passed in the Netherlands, clearly distinguishing between refugees and people who were granted protection on other grounds.[390](#)

New family reunification rules entered into force in Belgium as well, introducing a 2-year waiting period for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, who must then fulfil all material conditions without exception.[391](#) In addition, with the aim to combat child and forced marriages, the minimum age for family reunification with a partner was raised from 18 to 21 years. In Norway, family reunification rules were changed to prevent bigamy and to avoid situations where a child was sent alone to the country and requested family reunification with the father and his multiple partners.[392](#)

A draft law was submitted to the parliament in Luxembourg, noting that facilitated conditions for family reunification for family members of beneficiaries of international protection would only apply for the nuclear family. The sponsor must provide adequate housing and sufficient financial resources when the request is to reunite with adult children, parents of an adult beneficiary or with a spouse or partner when the relationship is formed after entering Luxembourg.[393](#) UNHCR Luxembourg recommended the urgent reduction of processing times for family reunification requests of unaccompanied children.[394](#)

National courts continued to deliberate on the revocation of international protection, in particular when committing a serious crime or travelling back to the country of origin (see [here](#)). The CJEU clarified that international protection may be revoked for acts committed prior to entering the country of refuge, even if the acts would not lead to exclusion from international protection. The court also highlighted that a revocation of status is not a decision that implies possible *refoulement*, and thus the seriousness of the act does not need to reach the threshold of violating the ECHR for authorities to decide on a revocation.[395](#)

Legislative changes in Cyprus[396](#) and Finland[397](#) expanded the grounds to withdraw international protection by including cases when the person has committed a serious crime. The Swiss Federal Council proposed a bill banning asylum seekers, temporarily admitted persons and individuals under protection from travelling abroad. SEM would only be able to authorise travel in exceptional cases.[398](#) The proposal comes after legislation was passed on travel restrictions for these groups of people in 2021, which did not enter into force at that time. The Swiss legislator aimed to ensure that Ukrainians under temporary protection are not covered by these restrictions. However, since 1 November 2025 persons with protection status S are allowed to stay in Ukraine for up to 15 days per half-year, rather than 15 days per quarter as before.[399](#)

In Denmark, legislative amendments broadened the scope when a residence permit is ended, including cases when a person gives up residence in Denmark or leaves Denmark for more than 6 months (for temporary residence permits) or 12 months (for permanent residence permits). Earlier, the residence permit was ended only when a person took up residence in their home country or in a third country considered to be safe for a return.[400](#) The residence permit must also be revoked – with certain exceptions to respect international obligations – when the holder

relies on social assistance for more than 5 years after its issuance.[401](#)

For the integration of beneficiaries of international protection, a new Integration Strategy and Action Plan was launched in Malta[402](#) and a new, comprehensive integration strategy was adopted in Cyprus.[403](#) The new Dutch government introduced an action agenda for integration and an open and free society.[404](#) The CJEU delivered its preliminary ruling referred by the Dutch Council of State on the country's civic integration system,[405](#) and the Dutch court subsequently delivered its judgment in the original case, noting that the finding remained relevant for the new Civic Integration Act that entered into force in the meantime,[406](#) as the civic integration obligation and the possibility to receive a fine remained under the new system as well.[407](#)

At the EU-level, the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) indicated only a very small increase in results, with most countries implementing only halfway favourable migrant integration measures.[408](#) The index also found a significant difference between the scores of EU-14 compared to the more recently joined EU-13 countries, noting that this indicates important discrepancies in integration opportunities for migrants.[409](#) The index observed gains in the fields of labour market integration and education.[410](#) These areas were prioritised by national authorities in recent years,[411](#) and they remained in focus in 2025 as well.

The French government confirmed that it prioritises integration through employment[412](#) and continued to implement measures with this objective. For example, in July 2025 the AGIR programme for beneficiaries of international protection was fully deployed across the entire metropolitan territory. In addition, the number of territorial reception and integration contracts (CTAI) increased, with 103 contracts concluded in 2025 (including 72 renewals and 31 new contracts) with local authorities in 65 departments. Furthermore, a circular jointly signed by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour on 26 June 2025 was published, in order to strengthen the professional integration of foreigners with legal status, particularly in sectors with recruitment difficulties.[413](#) In order to improve integration through education, the objectives and methods of the Open School to Parents for Children's Success (OEPRE) programme, implemented since 2008 by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of National Education, were revised, with the ambition of making it a comprehensive tool for social, linguistic and professional integration.[414](#)

Building on the outcomes of the HELIOS Project (2019-2024), the HELIOS+ programme was launched in Greece to strengthen access to the labour market for beneficiaries of international protection by providing vocational training programmes and housing support for 12 months. Beneficiaries are now expected to participate in at least one individual integration counselling session, one individual employment counselling session, and at least 80% of the Greek language course.[415](#) In addition, an internship programme was established for refugees and migrants.[416](#)

In Norway, the integration programme was revised to emphasise employment orientation early on. The maximum duration of the introduction programme for participants with upper secondary education or higher was changed from 6 up to 12 months, without the possibility of extension. The introduction programme may be up to 4+1 years to allow beneficiaries to finish their upper secondary education and become skilled workers.[417](#) In addition, the government proposed to establish an integration declaration, which outlines expectations of beneficiaries, such as participating in society and being able to support oneself through work.[418](#)

The reform of the general Education Act in Czechia brought important changes for migrant students, including facilitated access to secondary and higher vocational schools and more funding for schools with a higher share of foreign students. Building on lessons learnt with the implementation of temporary protection, the minimum level of proficiency in the Czech language was reduced for certain profiles of teachers, allowing them to start teaching earlier.
[419](#)

In Switzerland, SEM launched a joint initiative with the association of Swiss higher education institutions to facilitate refugees' access to higher education and address the country's shortage in skilled labour.[420](#) A national meeting on labour market integration took place for the second time, bringing together 170 experts and formulating recommendations to enhance employment for refugees, temporarily admitted people and people with S protection status.[421](#)

Despite these initiatives, beneficiaries of international protection still faced multiple barriers across EU+ countries when trying to learn the language,[422](#) enrol in education[423](#) or search for a job.[424](#)

Challenges in accessing housing continued to impact integration prospects for beneficiaries of international protection.[425](#) The Czech Ministry of Regional Development launched a project in cooperation with the IOM to improve access to affordable and dignified housing for migrants.[426](#) In the Netherlands, the government offered incentives to municipalities to speed up beneficiaries' placements throughout 2025,[427](#) but then it introduced a ban to cease the prioritisation of beneficiaries of international protection in the distribution of municipal social housing as of January 2026. [428](#) COA warned that the measure risked destabilising the reception system by prolonging reliance on emergency places, increasing costs, harming residents' wellbeing and delaying integration, given that many current residents already stay longer than the usual 14 weeks and social housing waiting times are on average 7 years.[429](#) The Norwegian government recommended that municipalities take account of their capacity to rapidly set up services after a settlement agreement is signed, evaluate the share of foreign residents in certain parts of the municipality, and assess labour and educational opportunities when allocating a beneficiary of international protection into a municipality.[440](#)

While trends have been shifting towards more centralised provision of services in the asylum procedure, for example national authorities taking over the delivery of legal counselling, civil society organisations remained key in the delivery of support services for the integration of beneficiaries of international protection. Their wide range of projects in 2025 were noted in the European Commission's [Migrant Integration Hub](#), the EUAA [Database on International Protection in Europe](#) and civil society [input](#) to the Asylum Report 2026. Projects implemented by local authorities in Italy which participate in the Reception and Integration System were funded by AMIF to develop individual socio-economic integration plans for beneficiaries of international protection, promoting an integrated approach for the social and economic autonomy of refugees. In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies published a report on the activities of registered organisations which deliver services to migrants. It details the types of projects which have been implemented and their distribution across the country.[441](#)

The Norwegian Institute for Social Research, in collaboration with UNHCR, published a new report that examines how civil society in Norway can best support refugee reception and

integration.[442](#) The Norwegian government made changes to the funding scheme for civil society organisations to undertake integration projects and increased their budget, with an increased focus on labour market integration and language learning for migrant women.[443](#)

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