



# Belgium

## National developments in 2025



Belgium's main priority in 2025 was to align with the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum by updating legislation. The Aliens Act and the Reception Law were revised, while the procedural rules before CALL were reformed and incorporated into a new Law on the Council for Alien Law Litigation. The process to adopt the new Law on the Council for Alien Law Litigation and the revised Aliens Act was launched. In addition, new procedural requirements arising from the Pact were addressed through amendments to the Royal Decree concerning the Immigration Office and the CGRS.<sup>1</sup> Existing frameworks for border procedures, returns, legal safeguards and monitoring were considered to be largely conform with the new rules. Preparations for the entry into force of the Pact also focused on implementing new processes, upgrading equipment and infrastructure, strengthening coordination between different national authorities, and increasing operational and financial support.

Another essential objective was addressing the persistent backlog of asylum applications due to a high influx of applicants, often as a result of secondary movements, which keeps the reception network under great pressure. National authorities highlighted that additional staff and operational adjustments were necessary, and in 2025, the CGRS recruited 60 new staff members. Due to this high pressure, Belgium signed an operational plan with the EUAA in December 2024, which provides support to national authorities (Immigration Office, CGRS, Fedasil) in registration, processing of applications at first instance and Dublin cases, interpretation, reception and the identification of vulnerabilities.<sup>2</sup> In a number of judgments, CALL confirmed the legality of EUAA support in supporting first instance processing.<sup>3</sup> The European Commission determined Belgium to be at risk of migratory pressure.<sup>4</sup>

Important legislative changes aimed to address some specific challenges in the country's asylum and reception systems.<sup>5</sup> An application for international protection submitted by a foreigner who has already received a final decision on a previous application in another EU Member State is now registered and considered as a subsequent application.<sup>6</sup> Corresponding amendments to the Reception Act mean that Fedasil may limit or withdraw material reception conditions for applicants who received a positive decision in another EU Member State. The legislative change also allows Fedasil to limit or withdraw material reception conditions, when a minor applies for international protection after the parents have already applied for international protection in the child's name.<sup>7</sup> In February 2026, the Constitutional Court temporarily suspended the application of this legislation and referred questions to the CJEU for a preliminary ruling.<sup>8</sup> UNHCR argued that applicants should be guaranteed access to reception conditions without discrimination until a final decision on the application.<sup>9</sup>

CGRS suspended the processing of cases of non-UNRWA applicants from the West Bank in March 2025,<sup>10</sup> which resumed in March 2026.<sup>11</sup> The suspension of processing of cases by Syrians was lifted on 1 November 2025.<sup>12</sup> The CGRS noted that the overall recognition rate was, as in other EU+ countries, impacted by the change of regime in Syria in December 2024, which resulted in a suspension of case processing until 1 November 2025. In addition, approximately 18% of decisions issued in 2025 concerned applicants who already had an international protection status in another EU Member State. This also applied to Palestinian applicants, a large share of whom had already been granted international protection status in another EU Member State, which explains the relatively low recognition rate.

The authority continued with the implementation of the fast-track procedure, which allows the organisation to take a quicker final decision for applicants with a first application with a low chance of being granted international protection.<sup>13</sup> The list of safe countries was amended: Morocco was added to the list, while India and Moldova were removed.<sup>14</sup>

The Immigration Office launched new information campaigns on YouTube, with dissuasive messages about Belgium's asylum and migration policy, targeting applicants with small chances of protection, both in countries of origin and transit.<sup>15</sup>

In order to make the processing of applications on appeal more efficient, CALL took part in a project in the framework of the TSI to pilot the use of an AI-powered search system to retrieve information faster. In addition, the court implemented several initiatives to make the appeal process more child-friendly.<sup>16</sup>

While the reception system continued to remain under pressure in 2025, with fewer asylum applications and a slight increase in the number of residents leaving the system, the number of people on the waiting list also slightly decreased. In parallel, Fedasil implemented several measures throughout 2025 to mitigate the reduction in reception capacity resulting from the closure of several reception centres.<sup>17</sup> As the profile of residents changed due to a decrease in the number of unaccompanied children, Fedasil converted these to family places.<sup>18</sup> The project Being a Child in a Reception Centre concluded in 2025. As part of this project, a tool was launched to support authorities in gathering applicant children's experiences on their stay in reception, complementary to a tool that allows authorities to assess the situation of children and families.<sup>19</sup> AMIF-funded projects related to LGBTIQI applicants, the restorative approach and child-friendly reception centres also concluded in 2025. The PATH project was implemented to assist beneficiaries of international protection to transition from reception to sustainable housing.<sup>20</sup>

Following a court case,<sup>21</sup> a legislative reform repealed the articles which allowed the non-designation of the mandatory place of registration and the removal or withdrawal of such a place. By repealing these provisions, applicants can exclusively be provided with material reception conditions, and financial assistance from the Public Centre for Social Welfare is no longer possible. The withdrawal of the mandatory place of registration remains applicable in the context of the 'Cumul' Royal Decree.<sup>22</sup>

To address issues created by the absconding of an applicant, the period within which an applicant may provide a reason for being absent from a personal interview is reduced from 15 to 8 days.<sup>23</sup>

New family reunification rules entered into force in August 2025. The period to be exempt from material conditions for refugees applying for family reunification was reduced from 12 months to 6 months, while it was entirely removed for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. While no waiting period applied previously, now beneficiaries of subsidiary protection must wait 2 years before they can apply for family reunification. The minimum age to apply for family reunification with a partner was raised from 18 to 21 years, aiming to combat child and forced marriages.<sup>24</sup>

### More input from civil society:

- [European Council on Refugees and Exiles](#)
- [European Network on Statelessness](#)

# Belgium

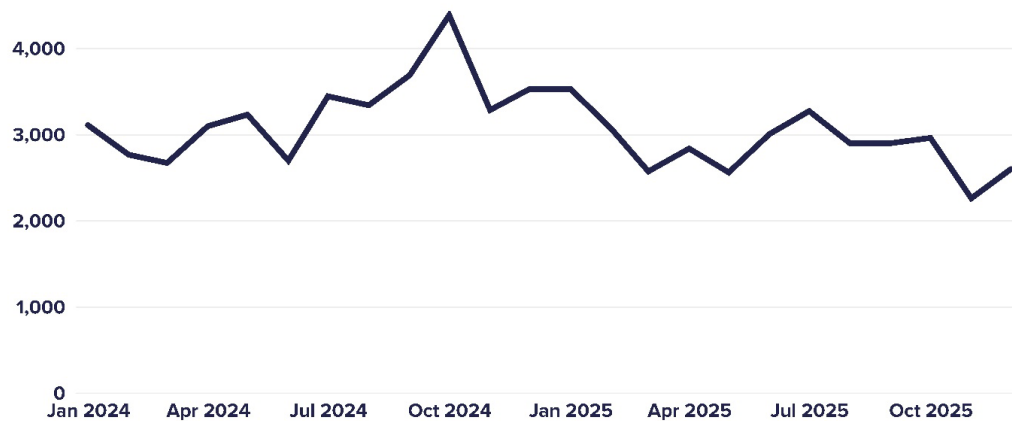
## Key indicators for 2025



Rank by number of asylum applications <b>6</b>	Rank per capita (applications per 1M inhabitants) <b>4</b>	Share of applications in EU+ <b>4.2%</b>	Recognition rate <b>31%</b>
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Indicator	2025	2024	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	34,425	39,206 ↓	-12%	Afghanistan (11%), Palestine (10%), Eritrea (8%)
Pending cases (Dec '25)	44,502	43,093 →	3%	Syria (13%), Türkiye (9%), Palestine (8%)
First instance decisions	26,870	29,135 ↓	-8%	Palestine (19%), Afghanistan (11%), Eritrea (6%)
Refugee status	7,649	13,823 ↓	-45%	Palestine (19%), Afghanistan (17%), Eritrea (15%)
Subsidiary protection	562	512 ↑	10%	Yemen (52%), Eritrea (20%), Sudan (5%)
Negative	18,659	14,800 ↑	26%	Palestine (20%), Afghanistan (8%), Congo (DR) (7%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2024-2025



For more developments, please consult the [Asylum Report 2026](#) and the [National Asylum Developments Database](#).





## Sources

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