

Reception conditions for asylum applicants: Council agrees mandate for negotiations

On 29 November 2017, the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) endorsed, on behalf of the Council, a mandate for negotiations on a directive laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection. On the basis of this mandate, the presidency will start negotiations with the European Parliament.

The main objectives of this draft directive are:

- to provide standard reception conditions to applicants for international protection, which should ensure they receive an adequate standard of living and comparable living conditions in all member states
- to limit secondary movements by further harmonising standards and limiting access to reception conditions to the member state responsible for the application for international protection

"In order to have effective asylum system, it is important that there are common rules for applicants in the Member States. I am pleased that we have closed this stage of negotiations and can start discussions with the European Parliament"

Andres Anvelt, minister of interior of Estonia

EU ambassadors endorsed the text of the mandate on the understanding that the parts relating to other files of the common European asylum system (CEAS) reform will be revisited at a later stage.

Reception conditions

The draft directive defines the reception conditions to which applicants will have access, including material reception conditions and access to health care. It also establishes that applicants shall have access to the labour market no later than 9 months after lodging an application for international protection. If applicants have sufficient means, they may be required to cover or contribute to the cost of their reception conditions.

The draft directive also takes into account persons with special reception needs, such as minors, in particular the right of the child to education and the need for an unaccompanied minor to have a representative appointed to guard their best interests.

Geographical limitations

To prevent secondary movements, the draft directive limits the provision of reception conditions to the member state responsible for the application for international protection. In addition, travel documents may only be provided to applicants when there are serious humanitarian reasons which justify the presence of the applicant in another member state.

The draft directive also allows for member states to restrict the applicants' freedom of movement to a geographical area within that territory, to assign them a specific residence or to define reporting obligations. Where these measures are not sufficient and there is a risk of absconding, member states can make use of detention.

Contingency planning

Each member state will need to draw up a contingency plan, which will set out the measures to ensure adequate reception conditions in cases where there is a disproportionate number of applicants. With the agreement of the member state, the EU agency for asylum will assist in the preparation and review of the contingency plans.

- [Reforming the common European asylum system \(background information\)](#)

Rue de la Loi 175 - B-1048 BRUSSELS - Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319
press.office@consilium.europa.eu - www.consilium.europa.eu/press