



AN EU 'SAFE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN' LIST

What is a 'Safe country of origin'?

International Law (the Geneva Convention) and EU law (the Asylum Procedures Directive) consider a country safe when there is a democratic system and generally and consistently:

- No persecution
- No torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- No threat of violence
- No armed conflict

The Copenhagen Criteria

When EU Member States decide to make a country a candidate for EU membership, they check they fulfill the 'Copenhagen criteria' of guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities. Candidates for EU membership are thus usually 'safe'.

No automatic rejections

Any citizen has the right to apply for asylum. Applications will continue to be assessed on an individual, case-by-case basis. Strong safeguards, including the right to appeal, remain in place.

Fighting abuses of EU and national asylum systems

Around 17% of the total number of applications lodged in the EU come from citizens of the 7 countries on the proposed list.

Applications from nationals of countries on the Safe List will be fast-tracked, allowing for faster returns if the individual assessments of the applications confirm no right of asylum.

This will:

- increase the efficiency of asylum systems.
- deter attempts to abuse the European Asylum System
- allow Member States to devote greater resources to protection for persons in need

An EU List:

12 EU countries* already have national lists of safe countries of origin. The Commission is proposing one, common EU list designating as 'safe'.

Albania:

- 7.8% of applications were well-founded in 2014
- 8 Member States already designate as a safe country of origin
- An EU candidate country

Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- 4.6% of applications were well-founded in 2014
- 9 Member States already designate as a safe country of origin

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:

- 0.9% of applications were well-founded in 2014
- 7 Member States already designate as a safe country of origin
- An EU candidate country

Kosovo:

- 6.3% of applications were well-founded in 2014
- 6 Member States already designate as a safe country of origin

Montenegro:

- 3% of applications were well-founded in 2014
- 9 Member States already designate as a safe country of origin
- An EU candidate country

Serbia:

- 1.8% of applications were well-founded in 2014
- 9 Member States already designate as a safe country of origin
- An EU candidate country

Turkey:

- 23.1% of applications were well-founded in 2014
- 1 Member State already designates as a safe country of origin
- An EU candidate country

+ Others may be added in the future

* Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia and the United Kingdom.

The Commission can suspend a country from the list immediately, in case of a sudden deterioration of the situation in that country which would mean it could no longer be considered 'safe'.

Current National Lists

Member State	Country considered as safe
Austria	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, EEA Countries/Switzerland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand
Belgium	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, India
Bulgaria	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine, Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Armenia, Bangladesh, China, Georgia, India, Turkey
Czech Republic	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, EEA Countries/Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Canada, USA, Mongolia, Australia, New Zealand
Denmark	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, EFTA Countries, Moldova, Russian Federation, Canada, USA, Mongolia, Australia, Japan, New Zealand
France	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova, Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mauritius, Senegal, Tanzania, Armenia, Georgia, India, Mongolia
Germany	Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Ghana, Senegal
Ireland	South Africa
Luxembourg	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine, Benin*, Cape Verde, Ghana*, Senegal
Malta	EFTA Countries/Switzerland, Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Gabon, Ghana, Senegal, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Uruguay, USA, India, Australia, Japan, New Zealand
Slovakia	Montenegro, EEA Countries/Switzerland, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Canada, USA, Australia, Japan, New Zealand
United Kingdom	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, Ukraine, Gambia*, Ghana*, Kenya*, Liberia*, Malawi*, Mali, Mauritius*, Nigeria, South Africa, Sierra Leone*, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador*, Jamaica, Peru, India, Mongolia, South Korea

* Safe only for males