

# *Austria Approves Tough Rules to Block Migrants' Access*

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Vienna, March 31 (RHC)-- On Wednesday, Austria moved to further tighten migrants' access to the country by placing tough new restrictions on asylum eligibility and making it easier to reject asylum seekers at the border. Some 14,000 people have already applied for asylum in Austria so far this year, according to the country's interior ministry.

As of mid-May, the government will only accept cases of refugees facing threats to their safety in a neighboring transit country or whose relatives are already in Austria.

Interior Minister Johanna Mikl-Leitner justified the decision saying European Union law allowed member states to take national measures in emergency situations.

Under the new rules, illegal migrants caught inside the country will be taken to the border, while rejected asylum-seekers will be returned to the nation from where they crossed into Austria.

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