



Frequent Questions

About International Protection

Who have the right to asylum/international protection?

The Greek state protects (by granting asylum, refugee-international protection status) citizens of third countries or stateless people who are persecuted due to race, religion, nationality, participation in a special social group or due to their political views or because they are in danger of serious harm in their country of origin or former residence, mainly because they are in danger of capital punishment or execution, torture or inhumane treatment or because their life or integrity is in danger due to an international or civil conflict.

How do I apply for asylum?

You may apply for asylum/international protection during your stay at the Reception and Identification Center (RIC). In case you make such a request, the members of the RIC personnel will refer you to the competent Asylum Service Unit for your application.

Alternatively, you may register your application on-line on the following app: <https://apps.migration.gov.gr/selfregistration/login>

Do I need to pay to apply?

No. Access to the international protection procedure is open and free of charge.

Can I also apply for my wife and children?

You may apply for your family members as well, provided that they are with you in Greece and that they wish to do so.



How does my case handler decide if I will be granted asylum or not?

The case handler makes a decision on your application taking into account your statements during your personal interview, the evidence that you have submitted to substantiate your application, the relevant information on your country of origin and all the information included in your administrative file.



Can I travel after I apply for asylum and while I wait for a decision?

No. As an international protection applicant, you **cannot** travel outside of Greece. Exceptions are made under special circumstances, i.e. on serious humanitarian grounds that dictate your presence in another country, such as proven serious health reasons. You will have to apply to the Service for the purpose of issuing travel documents. If you leave the country without informing the Asylum Service, your application will be rejected.



Do I need to bring an interpreter to the interview? What happens if I don't speak English?

The Asylum Service will ensure that there will be an interpreter who speaks your language, or a language that you understand during your every transaction with the Service.



How can I find out the status of my application?

It is required for you or your authorized lawyer to be presenting yourselves to the Service, as no information is given over the phone. However, due to high attendance daily, we recommend that you present yourselves at the expiration date of your asylum seeker's card, when you will also be informed about the progress of your case.



Can I apply even if I am in Greece illegally?

Yes. The fact that you entered the country illegally does not affect the access to the procedure and the examination of your application, as long as you apply within a short time from your entrance into the country. In case you have entered Greece illegally, it is mandatory that you stay in a Reception and Identification Center, and you may apply for international protection at an Asylum Service Unit operating inside the Center.



 **Can I apply if I am a minor?**

Yes. If you are under fifteen (15) years old, your parent or the adult responsible for your care will apply on your behalf, or your assigned representative, if you are unaccompanied. If you are over fifteen (15) years old, you can apply yourself. If you are an unaccompanied minor, the Authorities will assign you a guardian who will be responsible for your protection and your accommodation in an environment appropriate for minors, and they will be helping you with your international protection application.

 **Can someone be with me to assist me with my interview?**

In the interview you may be accompanied by your authorized lawyer, a doctor, a social worker or a psychologist.

 **Do I have access to health care while I wait for the outcome of my application?**

Yes. In order to have access to health and hospital care, you will receive your Provisional Insurance and Health Care Number (PAAYPA), as soon as you apply.

 **Can I travel after I am granted asylum (after my application is approved)?**

In case you are granted refugee status, you will be able to apply for travel documents (TDV), however you will be disallowed to travel to your country of origin. In case you are granted subsidiary protection, you will also be able to apply for travel documents, however the Service will administer it to you only if assessed that you are not able to issue national passport by the authorities of your country.

 **Is my personal data given during the interview/application protected?**

Yes, all parties involved are committed to the duty of confidentiality. The Asylum Service bounds to refrain from giving any information regarding your application to the authorities of your country, it might, however, give some information to other Greek authorities.

 **Where can I find the respective legislature regarding Asylum in Greece?**

Laws 4686/2020, 4636/2019, 4825/2021 concerning international protection have been posted in Greek on the website of the Asylum Service.



What is the difference between an asylum applicant and a recognized refugee -from a rights standpoint?

An asylum applicant is an International Protection Applicant Card holder, which gives them the right to reside permanently in the country and benefit from the rights for any necessary transactions until a decision regarding their case is reached. International protection beneficiaries and residence permit holders enjoy rights equivalent to those enjoyed by Greek citizens.



What happens in case my application is rejected?

You may challenge the decision free of charge before the independent body of the second instance, the Appeals Authority, within the deadline written on your decision. Moreover, at this stage, you have access to legal aid free of charge. In case your application is finally rejected, a decision for your removal from the country will be executed.



How long does the examination of my application last until the final decision is reached?

In total, the examination of your application may last from twenty (20) days to six (6) months, depending on your case.