



Frequently Asked Questions and Answers on Relocation

Following the recent tragedies and the drama of the thousands of immigrants and refugees trying to cross the Mediterranean, the European Union took action with the aim of finding European solutions which will be based on internal solidarity and on the acceptance of the principle that the formulation of an effective immigration policy is a common responsibility.

What is the Relocation Program?

The Relocation Program of the European Union concerns the transfer of persons who require international protection (asylum and subsidiary protection) from one member state of the European Union to another. It is a European mechanism for tackling the refugee crisis, the aim of which is the fairer distribution of asylum seekers in the member states of the European Union.

Whom does it concern / Who can benefit?

The Relocation Program concerns citizens of countries (and in the case of stateless persons, the countries of their former habitual residence) for which the rate of granting international protection is over 75%, based on the European average recognition rates derived from the quarterly data published by Eurostat. Consequently, it is very likely that citizens from these countries require international protection. At the moment, the Relocation Program concerns Syrians, Iraqis, Eritreans, nationals of the Central African Republic and stateless persons whose former habitual residence were these countries. In the case of Greece, and on the basis of numbers of arrivals, the large majority of beneficiaries will be Syrians. In a two-year period, it is foreseen that 66,400 persons will be relocated from Greece to various other member states of the European Union. In its initial phase, the Relocation Program will necessarily be conducted as a pilot.

Special categories of asylum seekers such as unaccompanied minors, persons with a medical history and health problems or persons who in the past have submitted asylum applications in Greece, have the right to be included in the Relocation Program.

How can someone be included in the Relocation Program?

In order for someone to be included in the Relocation Program, he or she will have to have entered Greece after 16 September 2015. He or she will also have to have submitted an asylum application to the Asylum Service and to have been fingerprinted, like all other asylum seekers.

How will relocation take place?

The asylum seeker does not have the right to choose the member state to which he or she will be relocated. However, in order to decide the member state to which relocation will take place, the Asylum Service will take into account three criteria: vulnerability of the asylum seeker, the existence of relatives in a particular member state, his or her language skills. The aim is the smooth integration of asylum seekers in the member state where they will be relocated.

In the case of families of asylum seekers, all the family members will be relocated to the same member state in order to preserve family unity.

How and when will transfer take place?

The transfer of the asylum seekers to the member state where they will be relocated will be effected within two months at the latest, free of charge, by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with which the Asylum Service will cooperate for the realization of the Relocation Program.

What does relocation mean in practice?

Although the application for international protection (asylum) is submitted to the Greek Asylum Service, in the case of relocation, the application will be examined by the competent authorities of the member state to which the asylum seeker will be relocated. Consequently, in the event of international protection status being granted, the asylum seeker will receive his or her residence permit from the member state where he or she has been relocated.

Furthermore, while the asylum application is pending in the member state where the asylum seeker has been relocated, he or she will be integrated in the reception system of this member state in order for his or her basic needs to be satisfied.

For more information, please go to

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-15-5597 en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5597_en.htm)

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