



Answers to questions regarding the rights of international protection applicants and beneficiaries of international protection

1. While being asylum applicants in Greece, you have the following rights:

- i. You are provided with an international protection applicant's card, which allows you to move legally across the country.
- ii. You have access to medical treatment, free of charge.
- iii. Your children can go to school.
- iv. You have the right to be provided with housing, under the conditions described below.
- v. You have the right to work, under certain conditions.

2. Do I have the right to be provided with housing?

Asylum applicants, pursuant to Presidential Decree 220/2007 have the right to be housed. The Ministry of Labour is competent for that. The Asylum Service is responsible to transfer asylum applicants' housing applications to the competent authority, the National Social Solidarity Center (EKKA), which belongs to the Ministry of Labour. Although asylum applicants have the right to be provided with housing, right now there are about 1000 places available in housing facilities, and therefore not all housing applications can be attended to. Recognized refugees and recipients of subsidiary protection do not have the right to be housed, according to the EU asylum legislation.

3. Can the State find us a job?

Although asylum applicants and international protection beneficiaries have the right to work, the State cannot guarantee a job position for them, as it cannot guarantee a job position for Greek citizens.

4. So what rights shall we have in case we are provided with international protection (refugee status or subsidiary protection) in Greece?

i. You will be provided, free of charge, with a renewable three year long residence permit. This permit is going to be given to you 1-2 months after you are given your positive decision. Until then, you will have in your hands the international protection applicant's card, stamped with a "RESIDENCE PERMIT PENDING" seal.

ii. You will be provided with a travel document, after submitting the relevant application. You will have to pay the administrative fee of 85 euros for that. If you are granted with subsidiary protection (not refugee status) and you have or you can issue a passport from your country, you will not issue a travel document, since you can travel using your passport.

iii. You will have the right to work.

iv. You will have access to medical treatment.

v. Children can attend school.

vi. However, the State does not provide housing and cannot guarantee the right to work, or provide any allowance, except for a disability allowance to those who have a disability of any kind.

5. After a decision that grants me international protection (refugee status or subsidiary protection) is made, which is the procedure that must be followed before I receive a residence permit and a travel document?

After you get the decision from our Service, you will have to go to the competent Police Directorate (in Athens, that is the Aliens' Directorate, Nr. 24, Petrou Ralli St.) and submit the required documents for the issuance of your residence permit. Within 1 - 1.5 months after submitting the appropriate documents, you will have to come to the Asylum Service to receive it. At the same time, you can apply for the issuance of a travel document. You do not have to wait for your residence permit to be issued before you apply for a travel document. The two procedures may be processed at the same time.

6. Can we, adults, go to school? Where can we learn Greek?

Adults have access to the educational system under certain conditions. At times the State offers Greek language lessons. You will be informed from announcements of the Asylum Service, and also by the communities, clubs and non governmental organizations that have activities in that field.

7. Can we travel to the rest of Europe?

The only case that an asylum applicant may legally travel to another European country is through the procedure of the Dublin III Regulation, within the framework of family reunification. While being asylum applicants, you cannot travel to the rest of Europe, unless there are serious, proven health reasons that require your immediate transfer abroad.

If you are granted with refugee status or subsidiary protection, you may submit an application to be provided with travel documents. The procedure of being provided with travel documents may take 1-2 months to be completed. You can use the travel document to travel to other European countries, but you cannot settle in them. You can stay there for 3 months every 6 months but after the three months end, you will have to depart. In order to settle in another European country, you must fulfill the prerequisites that each country sets for third country citizens.

8. Can a beneficiary of international protection (a refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection) travel outside the EU with his travel document?

He can, however a visa must be issued by the Embassy or the Consulate of the State that he wishes to visit, if required. You will have to inquire To the Embassy or the Consulate of the country that you wish to visit for further information.

9. Who can we reunite with within the Dublin procedure?

Unaccompanied minors can be reunited with their parents, their brothers and sisters, their uncles and aunts and their grandparents.

Married couples can be reunited.

Parents may be reunited with under-aged children.

Adults (e.g. Adult brothers/sisters, parents with adult children) might be reunited by exception, for example in case of serious health problems, in case when somebody is an elderly person and needs to be cared after by his relative, etc.

10. What documents do we need for the Dublin procedure?

You will have to present documents which prove that the member of your family is staying in another European country as an asylum applicant or as a beneficiary of international protection (refugee or beneficiary subsidiary protection). It is advisable to present any documents that can prove your relation.

11. If we are granted refugee status, how can we bring our family here (from a country outside the EU)?

Refugee status beneficiaries have the right of family reunification with family members (spouse, under-aged children) who are living in their country of origin . You will have to submit a relevant application to the Service. This procedure is rather time-consuming and involves a lot of red tape, since different services are also involved, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, therefore it is not possible to assess how long it will take.

12. Do we have to have an occupation and residence in order to bring our family members to Greece?

If you submit an application for family reunification within three months after you are granted refugee status, you do not have to fulfill such prerequisites.

13. What documents are needed, which procedure is followed?

i. A recent family/marital status certificate, or other document officially translated and authenticated by a competent Greek authority, from which the family relation between the person to come and the refugee, as well as their age, occurs.

ii. An exact copy of the travel document of the member or members of the family.

iii. (If the refugee cannot bring the documents above, the competent authorities for the reception and examination of asylum claims will take into consideration other available evidence. The rejection of an application cannot be justified solely by the non existence of the documents).

iv. Upon approval of the application by the Asylum Service, the Consulate of Greece will have to issue a visa for your relative's journey to Greece.

The Consulate or embassy will require the following, in order to issue a visa:

v. A passport or other travel document recognized by our country, which must be valid for more than three months the expiry date of the visa.

vi. A criminal record copy from the alien Authorities, which certifies the applicant's criminal status. In cases that a final court decision exists, regardless of the penalty, in order to ascertain whether the nature of the criminal offence is relevant to reasons that would create a danger for public order and safety, special reasoning is requested and individual parameters are assessed, such as the severity of the offence, any recidivism and any delinquency of the third country citizen in general.

vii. A medical certificate from a recognized public or private service from which it occurs that the person does not suffer from an ailment capable of posing a threat to public health, according to international standards and the World Health Organisation, or any other infectious contagious disease that calls forth for imposing public health protection measures.

14. Can we travel to Europe with the residence permit that you give us?

No. You will also need a travel document.

15. Are there any exceptions, can someone who was recognized as a refugee travel outside Greece due to serious reasons before the issuance of travel documents?

No. However, in case that the occurrence of humanitarian grounds is proven, the procedure may possibly be expedited.

16. How long does it take to issue the travel documents after the beneficiary makes an application which is approved?

About 1 to 1,5 months.

17. What are the requirements in order to receive the Greek citizenship?

The prerequisites are mentioned in the Greek Citizenship Code -briefly, in your case, you must:

- i. Be an adult (over 18 years of age)**
- ii. Not have been finally convicted for certain criminal offences** mentioned in article 5 of the Greek Citizenship Code.
- iii. Have been recognized** as a refugee or as a beneficiary of subsidiary protection or be a family member of a refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection **and have the relevant residence permit (ADET).**
- iv. Be living legally in Greece for at least three consecutive years, in case you were recognized as a refugee or for at least seven consecutive years, in case you are a beneficiary of subsidiary protection.**
- v. Have sufficient knowledge of the Greek language.**
- vi. Have smoothly joined the financial and social life of the Country, and have the capability to participate actively and substantially in the Country's political life, according to the criteria posed by article 5A of the Greek Citizenship Code.**

18. How long is the ADET residence permit valid for, and how long is the travel document valid for?

The ADET residence permit is valid for three years. The ADET can be renewed upon your application. The travel document is valid for five years.

19. In case we have a disabled parent or brother/sister outside the European Union who used to live with us and were dependent on us before we left and not currently have anybody to care after him/her, can family reunification take place, and how?

Family reunification may be performed in exceptional cases between an adult refugee and his/her parent. Apart from the aforementioned regarding family reunification, you will have to additionally bring the following:

- i) A certificate from a public social security service which proves that the refugee has full medical insurance coverage for the full extent of occupational dangers for the respective categories of employed nationals, which covers all family members that are supported by him, or
- ii) A final tax statement by a revenue authority or any other official document which proves that he/she has a regular and stable personal income, sufficient for his/her needs and the needs of his family, which does not come from the social relief system of the country. This income cannot be less than the yearly income of the unskilled labourer, increased by 20% for his spouse and by 15% for every parent and child and
- iii) An authenticated copy of a contract of house purchase or a house leasing contract authenticated by a public tax service authority or any other authenticated document which proves that the refugee has a house that can cover his housing needs and the housing needs of his family.

You cannot reunite with your siblings (brothers/sisters).

20. Which illegal actions might exclude us from the refugee status or from the beneficiary of subsidiary protection status or lead to the withdrawal of the status already provided to us?

The following offences may cause the exclusion or withdrawal the international protection status (refugee status or subsidiary protection): A felony or misdemeanor which is punished by a penalty of at least three years imprisonment as well as the offences of severe injury (criminal code 310), abduction of minors (CC 324), involuntary kidnapping (CC327), sexual dignity insult (CC 337 par. 2-5), child seduction (CC 339), abuse of minors to indecent assault (CC 342), child pornography (CC 348A), attracting children for sexual purposes (CC 348B), pimping , prostitute exploitation, molesting a minor for money , blackmail (CC 385).

21. Can we resign from the international protection (refugee or subsidiary protection) any time we wish to do so?

You can resign from the asylum procedures any time you wish to do so. Also, you can resign from the refugee status or the subsidiary protection status, after it was provided to you. This, however, means that after your resignation you will have to depart from Greece, otherwise you will be staying in the country illegally and in case you wish to make another asylum application, it will be very difficult for the Service to accept this second application.