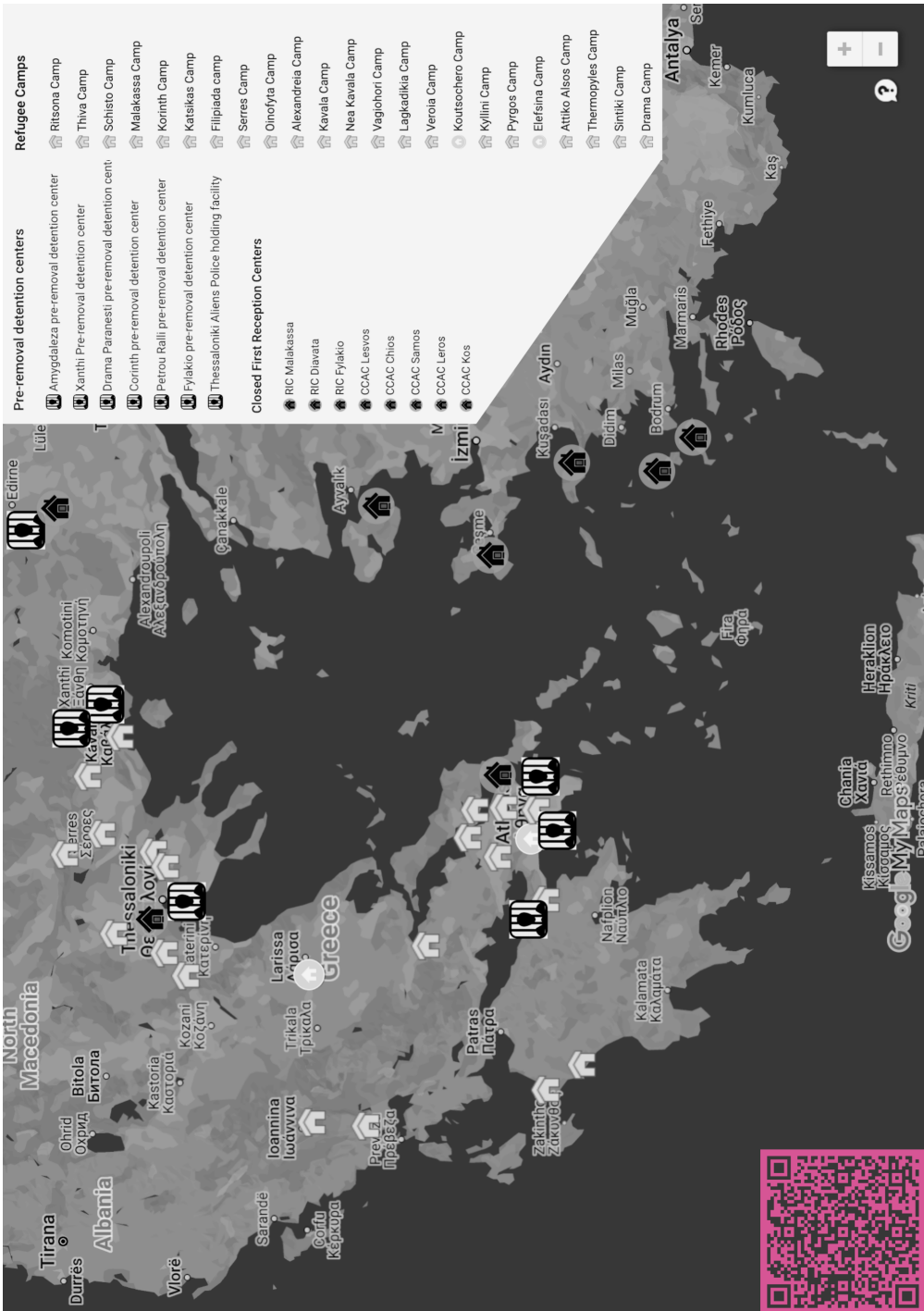









INFORMATION

for refugee women
in mainland
Greece





Pre-removal detention centers

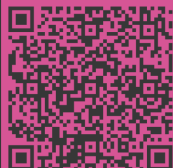
-  Amygdaleza pre-removal detention center
-  Xanthi Pre-removal detention center
-  Drama Paranesti pre-removal detention cent
-  Corinth pre-removal detention center
-  Petrou Ralli pre-removal detention center
-  Fylakio pre-removal detention center
-  Thessaloniki Aliens Police holding facility

Closed First Reception Centers

-  RIC Malakassa
-  RIC Diarata
-  RIC Fylakio
-  CCAC Lesvos
-  CCAC Chios
-  CCAC Samos
-  CCAC Leros
-  CCAC Kos

Refugee Camps

-  Ritsona Camp
-  Thiva Camp
-  Schisto Camp
-  Malakassa Camp
-  Korinth Camp
-  Katsikas Camp
-  Filipada camp
-  Serres Camp
-  Oinoftya Camp
-  Alexandreia Camp
-  Kavala Camp
-  Nea Kavala Camp
-  Vagjohori Camp
-  Lagkadikia Camp
-  Verola Camp
-  Koutsothero Camp
-  Kyllini Camp
-  Pyrgos Camp
-  Elisfina Camp
-  Attiko Alsos Camp
-  Thermopyles Camp
-  Sintiki Camp
-  Drama Camp



Welcome!

We are happy you arrived safely in Greece! This information booklet was made by women for women. You have arrived in Greece alone or with your family and want to or already have applied for asylum. We are women from *INFOMOBILE / welcome to europe* network, who for over 10 years, have been offering free legal advice to people on the move in and around Athens (Greece). We would like to share with you information about your asylum procedure and your rights in Greece as refugees and as women. We are independent from the government and our motivation is to stand in solidarity with women on the move. We believe in freedom of movement and equal rights for all.

In our open advice shifts, we often hear from women that it is hard and stressful to understand the asylum procedure, the law and their rights. Women have explained to us that it is a great burden to take such life changing decisions without having the necessary information. At the same time, we know that most of you live in camps and far away from the cities. Transportation is costly and time consuming and often hard to manage especially when you are alone with children. Inside the camps the living situation is not easy and there are no lawyers or independent organisations to offer help nearby. This is why we reach out to you with this booklet.

We collected this information so that you feel less lost and more able to make your own decisions and know what to do. Information is crucial not only to get asylum but also to know your rights in general and be able to fight for them. In this booklet you will find different topics with the most common questions and answers we have heard during our advice shifts with women. Information is provided in simple language, where technical words are introduced (including difficult terms from asylum law), we underline them and explain them either directly in separate info boxes. We also added a chapter on common misunderstandings of terms and questions to the end of the booklet.

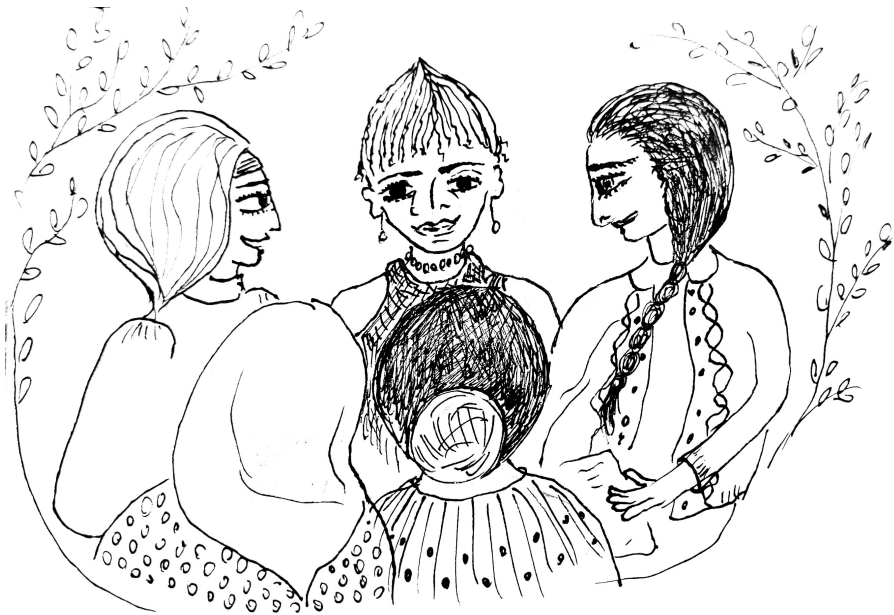
Though you may feel far away from the cities and any help, we want to tell you that you are not alone! There are many organisations in Athens that offer

free help for refugees, some of which are exclusively for women. If you need a lawyer, doctor, psychologist, social worker or want to attend some classes or find humanitarian aid, check the contacts in this booklet or on:

<http://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/contacts>

Never forget that despite all the horrors you may have lived through until now and despite this feeling that many share, that “I am unlucky and all others have already had their interview, gotten asylum and moved on”, you had the strength to survive and to arrive here. Most people never reach Europe, but you did. Take a deep breath, you have all the reasons to be proud of yourself and you have the strength to continue until you reach safety and peace. We believe in you and wish you good luck in pursuing your hopes and dreams!

INFOMOBILE / w2eu.info



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BEING A REFUGEE WOMAN IN GREECE

? *As a woman, who wants to seek asylum in Greece, am I considered to belong to a group that needs special protection and has increased protection or rights in the asylum procedure*

Within the asylum procedure persons who have higher needs because they face increased problems and thus have certain extra rights are called “vulnerable”. You are not considered more vulnerable merely by being a woman and you do not enjoy special privileges only due to your gender or for traveling as a single woman.

BUT there are categories of vulnerability you could be part of:

- ◆ unaccompanied minors (if you’re under 18 and without any family)
- ◆ single mothers of minor children (under the age of 18)
- ◆ pregnant women
- ◆ women with serious illnesses
- ◆ women with mental and psychiatric disabilities (stress disorder, depression etc.)
- ◆ disabled women
- ◆ elderly women (above 65 years)
- ◆ survivors of torture, rape or other severe forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or domestic violence
- ◆ direct relatives of those killed in shipwrecks (parents, siblings, children, spouses)
- ◆ survivors of trafficking (when you have been forced, compelled or coerced to labour, services or commercial sex by a third person or group)

! **Attention:** In order to register your vulnerability remember that in many cases you have to disclose it actively and if possible provide proof such as **■** doctor/psychologist certificates or social reports.

Violence you have suffered from your partner or your family members, behind closed doors in your home, is called “**domestic violence**” - it is just as serious as any other kind of violence and is illegal too.

It is very important to understand that this is not considered normal or acceptable and it is very important to speak about in your claim for asylum. Violence can be physical, psychological, verbal and also financial, where the perpetrator deprives you of resources, opportunities, goods and services (they don't allow you to work or they control your income).

„**FGM**“ is where a woman's vagina is cut, usually when they are a baby or a young girl. It is sometimes called “cutting” or “circumcision”. In some cultures it is considered a normal practice but in Greece it is against the law and in your asylum claim it is considered a form of serious violence against women, so it is very important to mention if this has happened to you or for example you have a daughter(s) who are expected to undergo this. It is considered a continuous harm against women, connected to their unique characteristics.

„**Torture**“ according to law is when somebody working with the government, on its order or with its consent creates severe pain or suffering to you (whether physical or mental) and when this violence is meant to: a. obtain a confession, b. to punish you for something you (supposingly) did, c. to intimidate or coerce you or a third person, or d. for any reason based on discrimination of any kind.

„**Rape**“ is where you have sex without your consent. In Greece it is considered a crime. Anyone who penetrates you - in your vagina, anus or mouth - when you do not want, can be reported for rape. It does not matter that the person is your husband, partner, family member... In Greece also marital rape is a crime considered a felony. If you do not want or if you agree because of force or fear, this is rape.

„**Sexual violence**“ includes rape, but also sexual acts that you did not consent to. If you have been forced or manipulated into doing anything sexual that you did not want to do, this is understood in Greece as a form of violence that is relevant to your claim for asylum.

? *What are the special rights of “vulnerable” persons within ■ the asylum procedure*

Persons who have proof of vulnerability may have faster access to register their asylum claims with the help of a lawyer. A lawyer legally representing you can contact the asylum authorities and ask for a quicker appointment of registration. Note that success is not guaranteed.

Vulnerability strengthens your asylum case as it presents (extra) reasons why you cannot be returned to a “safe third country” (such as Turkey) or your home country.

Based on your vulnerability a lawyer can request from the competent asylum or appeals authorities a. special procedural guarantees within the asylum procedure and from the competent Reception and Identification Service (RIS) of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum b. special reception conditions. However, in practice a vulnerability assessment takes place only upon registration of your asylum claim and even then vulnerabilities sometimes go identified, so the legal guarantees are not provided automatically. This is why it is very important to have the support of a lawyer if possible, and to proactively inform the Asylum Service about your issues and experiences directly. “Reception conditions” can be provided by the state in the form of money, material aid (for example shelter in camps and cooked food handed out there) or services (for example medical first aid or Greek language classes). In practice, people new in Greece are given only access to general reception conditions once they register their asylum claim and hold an applicant's card, as it is considered by the state that only then the asylum procedure has officially been started.

Requesting special procedural guarantees or reception conditions is your legal right. Even though in practice the Greek state does not provide adequately for vulnerable people such as women, asking for your rights should not harm your situation but could bring along some small improvements – mostly in the form of awareness of the involved actors in the Asylum Service and the camp management and accordingly increased sensitivity to you. In any case, there is no other form of reception conditions in Greece than being sheltered in

camp, so reception conditions are unlikely to improve based on such applications.

In general the documentation/proof of your vulnerability and its recording by the asylum authorities are highly important and you should pursue this from the very beginning of your arrival in Greece.

A “**safe third country**” is a country you passed through on your journey to Greece, that the Greek Asylum Service believes is generally safe for you. The Greek Asylum Service presumes that you are able to claim asylum and your human rights are generally protected in that country. Greek law currently considers Turkey, Albania and North Macedonia as “safe third countries”. It is called a “third” country, because it is not Greece and it is not your home

In law “**reception conditions**” means shelter, food, clothes, health care and education.

According to law, where applicants have been identified as being in need of “**special procedural guarantees**”, they shall be provided with adequate support for the asylum procedure. Special procedural guarantees are for example: the possibility of additional breaks during the personal interview or to move during the interview if your health condition so requires; and leniency to minor inconsistencies and contradictions, to the extent that they relate to your health condition. Caseworkers conducting an asylum interview should be sensitive and trained in particular as of the special needs of vulnerable persons.

? *How can I document and prove my vulnerability*

There are some visible vulnerabilities (i.e. pregnancy, physical disability) and others not always visible (i.e. psychological problems, being a survivor of any form of violence). In any case, a great part of the asylum procedure is conducted in written form, for example with online applications or email correspondence and your file at the asylum service is a data collection of written documents. Thus, it is crucial to collect as much proof of vulnerability as well as documents to support your asylum claim in written/printed form. This could be doctor/psychologist medical certificates, medicine prescriptions, psycho-social reports, photos etc.

Attention: Never submit any documents to the Asylum Service without consulting your lawyer if you have one, or seeking advice from a qualified legal adviser if possible. Everything you submit will be added to your file and cannot be taken back. All information in your file must be consistent. Therefore, it is crucial to always double check that all documents have the same correct writing of your name, family name and birthdate. For more detailed reports including parts of your life history it is also crucial that the information is correct and consistent with what you have stated before the Asylum Service and other state authorities. Always seek an oral translation of the content once you receive such a report and consult with your lawyer who knows your asylum case well to check if everything has been understood and written correctly.



UPON ARRIVAL

? *I have recently arrived in Greece through the land border without being arrested / registered and want to apply for asylum. Where and how can I do that*

You can register your claim for asylum in one of the state's closed first reception centres. On the mainland they are officially called „Reception and Identification Centres“ - RICs. If you arrive by land without being arrested, you can only register your claim for asylum in Diavata RIC (for North Greece, including Thessaloniki) or Malakasa RIC (for South Greece, including Athens). If you are apprehended by authorities after crossing the land border, you may be taken to another RIC called Fylakio - there is no online booking system to make an appointment here.

In general, these RICs normally do not let you enter if you turn up without an appointment. You can book an appointment using an online application form of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, however often the website does not work, or says that there are “no appointments available”.

If you are a family you have to name the number of persons (family means: spouses and minor children) when you book an appointment for registration and the form will ask you only to submit the name of one adult member. You will then go together with your family to the registration appointment.

! **Attention:** Print your appointment in two copies at least if you are a family so that both spouses can hold one paper in case of police controls. The appointment is not an identity document legally protecting you from arrest, but it's proof of your attempt to apply for asylum and better than not holding any documents.

! **Attention:** In some areas in Greece more near to the Turkish border, people have been reportedly arrested and unlawfully sent back to Turkey, which is why most newcomers try to reach camps further away in West-, Central or Southern Greece.

Find the online application form to apply for an appointment to register your asylum claim here: https://apps.migration.gov.gr/international-protection-registration/registration_appointment?lang=en

Attention: To use the form you must have an email address and know your password to this email account, because a code will be automatically sent to you by email, which you need to log in and fill the form.

Attention: Always monitor your email - the spam folder as well as the inbox - as the Asylum Service can send you important information by email such as decisions on your case or changes of interviews and appointments.

? *Where can I find shelter until I register my asylum claim*

According to law, you have the right to reception conditions as an asylum seeker, therefore you can attempt to ask for shelter in one of the open camps of mainland Greece in advance of registering your asylum claim officially. If a camp accepts you to stay there and you do not have an appointment to register your claim for asylum in Malakasa or Diavata, they should arrange your appointment directly with Malakasa or Diavata. There have been periods with delays of weeks and even months, in order to arrange this though.

Attention: There is no official procedure to accept persons prior to the official asylum application in these camps. You can only ask for their help and tell them that you are homeless and want to ask for asylum and explain your situation.

? *What is the procedure of registering my asylum claim inside Malakasa or Diavata RICs*

The registration of your asylum claim within one of these two closed first camps may take up to 25 days according to law. In practice, people sometimes stay longer than this 25 day period - you should contact a legal aid organisation if this happens. (See section „Contacts“) in the end of the booklet) During the time you are in Malakasa or Diavata, you are generally

forbidden from leaving the camp. You can leave if you wish, but you will lose your chance to register your claim for asylum and have to obtain another appointment to enter Malakasa or Diavata again in future. You are allowed to use your phone freely and the RICs should have Wifi.

Attention: It is possible that the camp management allows you exit and re-entry for short periods of time, but this is not guaranteed.

During registration you will be photographed and your fingerprints will be taken. Your fingerprints will be put into a European Union database called „EURODAC“, which is designed to identify recognised refugees, asylum seekers and people who have crossed borders without legal permission. EURODAC allows European countries to see where someone was first fingerprinted - this is considered the first country of arrival which is responsible for the claim for asylum - but there can be exceptions to this rule. (See also section „Asylum procedure“)

Through „EURODAC“ your fingerprint is connected to information on when you got first fingerprinted in which European country. It includes information such as your personal data (name, family name, birthdate and nationality) as well as the date and place of your first asylum application in Europe, the date you got a refugee status (including the type of status) and dates of any further fingerprints and asylum procedures in other EU-countries. Not just EU countries are part of EURODAC, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland also have access. The UK can only see information in EURODAC from before 2021, when it left the EU.

You will also have a short interview as part of your registration. You will be asked your basic personal information such as name, family name, birthdate, nationality, mother's and father's name, years you attended school, your job, family status, religion and you will be asked to answer very briefly why you left your country of origin and in some cases also why you didn't stay in Turkey. If you hold identity documents of your country (or photos of these) you may show them for proper writing of your personal data. If you have the original passport from your country, the Greek authorities will take this and not give it back. That is because as an asylum seeker you are saying you cannot return to your home country.

Though the questions in this interview may seem simple, it is very important to understand that your answers are being recorded and will be kept on your

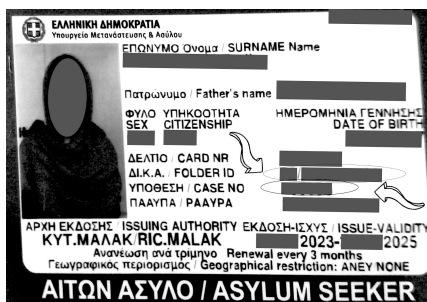
file, forming the foundations of your claim for asylum. It is important to have legal information before this interview, because one of the questions will ask you why you left your country and why you cannot return there - it is important to understand which parts of your story are relevant (and therefore essential) to state here. (See section „Asylum procedure“ for more information on who is considered a refugee according to law)

Remember: If you have close family members in another European country, you may be able to request family reunification when you register your asylum claim in Greece.

Attention: This is not the asylum interview but it is important when being asked why you left your country to state one sentence for each reason. Do not generalise but be specific about your reasons for persecution. You may name more than one reason why you were not safe in your country and cannot return there.

During the procedure of registration of your asylum claim you will also be briefly examined by a doctor. At this stage it is important to explain any illnesses, medications you need, psychological problems, disabilities, pregnancy and also if you are a victim of any form of violence (such as torture, rape, domestic violence or other). Many health problems are not visible as well as special conditions or experiences of violence. You should explain these to the doctor as he or she is responsible to register any special needs or vulnerabilities.

Attention: If you are a parent and your children are underage you have to speak also on their behalf. Children 15 years old and above are briefly interviewed too.



Once the registration procedure is completed, you will be handed an asylum applicant card - this is a legal form of identification in Greece and it shows that you are in the asylum procedure. On your asylum seeker card are registered your personal file number (FOLDER ID), your asylum case number (CASE NO), your

asylum card number (CARD NR) and your social insurance number (PAAYPA). With the PAAYPA number you have access to the Greek public health system – meaning you can book appointments and visit doctors, make examinations in the hospitals and pay less for prescribed medicines. In the bottom of the card it is noted first the validity of the card (i.e. for two years) and below when you have to renew your card (i.e. “every 3 months”). Ideally every adult should also receive a tax number (AFM), which will be printed on a white paper including your personal details. You will also be given an appointment for your asylum interview.

Attention: In some cases, people have their asylum interviews within the RIC where registration takes place - usually this only happens to single men from countries that the Greek state considers safe according to law (see section „Asylum procedure“), but there have been cases where women from countries that have high chances of being granted asylum are interviewed also. For this reason it is good to have proper advice about asylum, before going to register your claim.

Remember: Never miss the date for renewing your asylum applicant card, as otherwise your asylum file might be closed and your asylum procedure ended.

Attention: The expiry date on your applicant card does not mean that you have legal permission to be in Greece until that date. If you receive a negative decision on your claim for asylum and you do not successfully appeal, your card will be deactivated. This means that also the PAAYPA number will not work anymore and if you are stopped by police and they check your case number, you could be detained. In practice, women are less often arrested and detained than men and deportations to most of the countries of origin are not implemented. So don't be scared but be careful to renew your card in time and in case of a rejection appeal or submit a new application!

Attention: 30 days after you are given a positive asylum decision your PAAYPA will be deactivated as you need to turn it into a social insurance number for the recognized refugees - called AMKA. Once you receive your residence permit, the asylum applicant card will be deactivated.

? *I have an appointment for my asylum claim registration in Malakasa/ Diavata, but currently I have no documents in Greece.
■ Am I in danger of being arrested and detained*

According to the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, the appointment by itself is not a legal document of identity as it does not hold a photo and it is issued only on the name of the main applicant not including information on the other core family members. There have been people detained for being without papers while holding such an appointment paper but human rights lawyers appealed their arrests mostly successfully and the arrested got released after some time.

! **Attention:** If arrested and detained you can still access the asylum procedure.

! **Attention:** While there is always a risk of arrest and detention also for women holding no other documents in Greece than an appointment for the registration of their asylum claim, the real risks are much lower than for single men.

! **Attention:** In case of arrest and detention, inform the police that you hold an appointment for registration and in which camp you reside and repeat that you want to apply for asylum. If you have relatives or friends in the camp you live in, tell them to inform the camp management of your arrest and place of detention. Take a lawyer to struggle for your quick release.

? *Can women on mainland Greece be detained*

Usually, refugee women are not detained in Greece for lacking identity documents. Detention centres where refugees are imprisoned are generally for men only, but women can be detained in Athens Aliens Department („Allodapon“), in Amygdaleza “pre-removal detention centre” – a closed container camp in Acharnes area (north-western outskirts of Athens) or in Fylakio pre-removal detention centre at the land border to Turkey.

If you have a relative or friend detained, ask for the official visiting hours. You can bring food and other essential items to give to your friend, but nothing should be in a glass or metal container, as it is considered the materials could be used as weapons. The police will check the things and decide what they allow you to give and what not.

A “**pre-removal detention centre**” is a detention centre for the detention of undocumented refugees. Detention is aimed to ease deportation (removal). There are currently seven pre-removal detention centres in Greece: Amygdaleza (also known as: „Menidi“) and Petrou Ralli for Athens broader region, Korinth, Xanthi, Paranesti in Drama, Fylakio (at the land border to Turkey) and on the islands of Lesbos, Kos and Samos.

? *Where will I live after registering my asylum application and what support will I get*

From the beginning of your asylum procedure you have the right to seek support from the Greek government for housing and cash assistance (as the main provisions of reception conditions). When you register your claim for asylum you will be asked if you need accommodation - if you request accommodation, housing will then be provided in one of about 33 camps in mainland Greece – upon choice of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum. If you were already staying in an open camp before going to Malakasa or Diavata to register your claim, you may be allowed to return there or you may get transferred to another camp. If you do not wish to be housed in the camp assigned to you, you have the right to reject staying in a camp in general and choose your own place of residence at your own expenses, but you will lose the right to have a cash card as you will be considered “not in need of reception conditions in general”.

“**Cash assistance**” is the money asylum seekers receive from the state during their asylum procedure through a “cash-card”. You will first receive the card after getting your asylum applicants card, though there can be some weeks delay before receiving the card and the first money to be charged on it.

If you did not request accommodation when you claimed asylum and are not currently living in a camp but are in need of it, some NGOs with social workers (find contacts here: <http://w2eu.info/countries/greece/contacts>) are able to make a request for accommodation in a camp to the Ministry on your behalf. It can take some a while to process and again, you will not have a choice which camp you go to. If you choose not to go to the camp that the Ministry offers you, they cannot punish you in any way and this doesn't affect your asylum procedure, however the Ministry does not have to give you another choice of accommodation.

The Greek government prefers asylum seekers to live in camps and outside of the cities in order to “manage” and “control” them, which is why it is favoring residents of camps by providing to them faster procedures (i.e. to get IDs and travel documents) and exclusive access to special procedures or programs such as relocation (legal procedures to be transferred to another EU country) or HELIOS integration program for people holding asylum status or other benefits, which is run by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM). (See more details on HELIOS in section „Upon receiving a positive asylum decision“)

Currently there are only few „**relocation programs**“ in place carried out in cooperation between the Greek asylum service and one other EU-country (such as France). You can not pro-actively apply for relocation, but usually camp staff suggest and refer individuals/families to the asylum service. If chosen, you will be asked if you agree to apply for relocation and to proceed with the application procedure. You have free choice to accept or deny the proposal without any harm to your asylum procedure in Greece. If you agree, you will have an additional interview with the authorities of the respective EU country, through which they determine that there are no reasons to exclude and reject you for relocation. They mainly examine if you are no person that would be a threat to the national security of that country, meaning that you haven't been participating in (war) crimes, are not part of any terrorist organisation etc. You can withdraw from the procedure anytime.

Most camps are located around the cities Athens and Thessaloniki in 1-2 hours driving distance, but there are some more distant camps near other Greek cities such as Ioannina, Volos, Serres, Corinth, Kavala or Larissa. In the majority, the camps consist of prefabricated houses in forms of containers.

Korinth camp is currently the only camp where people are housed in separate rooms inside big tents (so called rub-halls).

Attention: Most camps in mainland Greece are located far from urban centres, they are fenced, controlled by security and cameras. Inside the camps work state employees of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and the Health Ministry offering very basic services.

Remember: Even if moving around seems difficult and expensive, try to visit the nearest city for legal, medical, psychological, humanitarian and other kinds of support and don't limit yourself to a life inside the camp depending only on the Ministries' employees. You have a right to take a lawyer of your choice, go to the doctor, visit classes or seek other kinds of support outside the camps.

? *I have recently arrived in Greece through the sea / Greek islands. Where can I find help*

This info-booklet provides information for women already on the mainland. We decided to set this focus as the situation on the different Greek Islands is in each locality slightly different, changing constantly and special procedures apply there such as the "fast track border" asylum procedure that is aimed to conclude within only short periods. As soon as you get transferred to a camp in the mainland your case has to be proceeded with the "regular" procedure.

However, if you are still on one of the Greek Islands that provide for first reception and identification camps (RICs), we would like to suggest to you to seek information and help locally from one of the refugee rights organisations present and near to you - whose assistance is free of charge. (See section „Contacts“)



ASYLUM PROCEDURE

? *As a woman, do I have special rights in the asylum procedure*

There are two forms of international protection status when you apply for asylum: 1. Refugee Status and 2. Subsidiary protection.

According to law a „**refugee**“ is „*someone who is unable to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.*“

“**Subsidiary protection**“ applies to persons who do not qualify for refugee status, but who would face a real risk of suffering serious harm if she returned to her country of origin.¹⁴ Serious harm is defined as the risk of: “(a) *death penalty or execution; or (b) torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in the country of origin; or (c) serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reasons of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict.*“ Thus, this status is issued based on the overall situation in your country of origin, when there are no individual reasons for persecution.

In practice, the boundaries between those two forms of asylum status are quite fluid and are sometimes interpreted differently by different case workers and regional Asylum Service offices.

Generally speaking, if in the country you come from you as a woman were not free (freedom of decision and expression, forced marriage, child marriage, no freedom of moving around), had no equal rights to men (no access to schools or higher education, no or very limited possibility of work), suffered from gender discrimination and/or gender-based and/or sexual violence (sexual harassment, rape, domestic violence, female circumcision etc.), these are important reasons for your asylum case and you should describe your personal experiences and circumstances of persecution and danger as a woman *additionally* to any other reasons of persecution - if they exist.

Women (and children) are more likely to be victims of all sorts of violence and exploitation also during their journey to Europe and may suffer consequently more often from mental or physical problems (sicknesses). Any such experiences you had after escaping your country of origin you should also report in your asylum interview.

You have the right to request from the asylum service to be interviewed by a woman and have a female interpreter.

You have the right to seek information, legal advice and legal aid for your asylum procedure. As interviews are conducted always individually you should seek to understand the asylum procedure and your rights and obligations - also if you are accompanied by your spouse.

Attention: If you have a lawyer for your family, it is best if the preparation of your asylum case is conducted partly together (for consistency) and partly separately (for privacy), so that you (and your spouse) can be sure not to have contradictory accounts but also be able to speak freely about everything important to you as a family but also as individuals.

Often, the interviews of a wife and her husband are conducted on the same date and by the same case-worker. If this is the case, usually the man will have his interview first and the wife second. This is based on the assumption that in most cases the man has been the person mostly acting outside of home in the country of origin and is thus more likely to be the main person persecuted who also can explain more details of the reasons of persecution.

Attention: Your account, your perspective and your reasons for persecution are equally important.

? *How can I best prepare for my asylum interview to explain the reasons for persecution that made me flee my country and that don't allow me to go back*

When you claim asylum, you are asking for protection. In order for the Greek Asylum Service to assess whether you should be granted protection (given a positive decision as a refugee, or subsidiary protection) so that you can stay in

Greece, the Greek Asylum Service interviews you. During the asylum interview, a case worker representing the Greek Asylum Service asks you questions in order to examine your personal situation in your home country, the individual reasons why you left your country of origin and why you cannot return. A translator assists the communication. The decision over your claim will be made by a different case worker than the one who conducted the interview taking into account the general security situation in your own country for your profile (i.e. single woman).

You will be asked if you are feeling good and if you can proceed with the interview. This is the first important opportunity to explain if you (and your children) have any important health or psychological problems, explain symptoms, name the prescribed medication or treatment and show relevant medical certificates. You can say that you are not fine generally - if that's the case - but add that you still want to proceed with your interview, if you are well enough to do so and don't want the interview to be postponed.

Then the personal information you already shared during registration will be cross-checked with you and you should check whether all the names and birthdates, religion, nationalities, ethnicities and years of school etc. are recorded correctly.

In the rest of the interview, you will be asked a number of standard questions and some extra questions, specific to your story, for better understanding of your case. The most important questions are the following two openly asked ones, where you should explain everything important in a longer answer and talk as much as necessary to explain all important events, reasons, fears and thoughts. These two questions are not the same as most of the other questions where you are asked for specific information. Here you are invited to talk freely so try to tell everything:

- A. Why did you leave your home country? - meaning what dangers did you face that forced you to escape
- B. Why can you not return to your country and what would happen if you would return? - meaning what dangers would you face upon return and who are the actors you are scared of and why would they find you and put you in danger anywhere in your country (the state authorities, specific other groups, your relatives etc)

It is important to understand that you can get a positive decision, even if you escaped before being persecuted in your country. Nothing in the law says that you must already have been persecuted. If you have already suffered persecution, it is important to explain as this can indicate to the Greek Asylum Service that something bad might happen again if you returned. But if you have already been persecuted in your country, it does not mean you will always get a positive decision in Greece. Even if the Greek Asylum Service believes you, they will only give you a positive decision to stay in Greece as a refugee, if they believe that it is not safe for you to go back to your country now. It is very important to focus on the risk to you in future, to explain your fear of return, not just what has already happened to you.

In your answers, try to reply carefully to the questions, be clear, precise and give as much detail as possible especially about the events or issues that caused you to leave and fear return to your home country. Make sure you understand the question and answer it directly - do not be shy to say that you do not understand and need the interviewer to rephrase questions. It can cause problems if you answer a question that you do not understand as you may give irrelevant information or make it seem as if you do not want to answer the question.

Prepare for your interview beforehand. It is important to be able to tell the events that finally brought you to the decision to escape your home country in a chronological order to help the interviewer to understand. These crucial events that explain also the dangers you faced you have to explain in detail as this is considered a sign of your credibility.

„**Credibility**“ is an important concept in the asylum procedure, it is essentially whether the Greek Asylum Service believes what you say. (see section “Common misunderstandings” for full explanation)

If you do not remember exact dates when something happened, don't force yourself to say anything you are not sure of, but say as much as you can to describe the point of time an event took place. For example: “this happened around my child's 3rd birthday”, “I think it was the summer before we left”, “it was 3-4 years ago, I don't remember exactly”, “it happened after I got the first time attacked” etc.

Attention: Do not listen to non-lawyers telling you about “strong cases” or what documents to file with your case. Prepare all this together with someone who is specialised in asylum law.

? *I have suffered from horrors I haven't been able to share with anyone and I don't want my family or anyone else to know about.*
■ *Do I need to speak about these things in my interview and will this information be shared with my family*

The asylum interview is the most important part of your asylum procedure. You have to speak about all forms of danger, persecution, rights violations, threats, violence and fears etc. that you experienced in order to increase your chances to get asylum. It's for your own best. Say as much as you can and know that after you won't have to talk about these things again if you don't wish. You can prepare yourself with a psychologist or even be accompanied by a psychologist/social worker/lawyer to make you feel more safe during your hearing. The employee of the Asylum Service and the translator are obliged to keep every information you share private. They will not share anything with your family. Interviews are conducted individually, which means that if you have a husband and/or children none of them will attend your interview.

In most of the cases of families arriving together when the marriage is considered credible, spouses receive the same case number and the Asylum Service creates a common file and the case will then be considered together. However, if you do not have the same nationality the asylum service will register your cases separately and you will get different case numbers. Your cases will not be treated as a family but your files will be linked. You will be issued an asylum decision together mentioning a brief summary of the reasons of persecution you (both) named.

Attention: If you revealed information in your interview you don't want to be shared with your spouse (through the asylum decision later), you have to ask for separate asylum decisions.

Attention: If you started your asylum procedure together as a couple (with the same case number) but separated later and want your cases to be considered separately, you can apply at any point of time until your date of interview for a separation of files. After that point you can separate the files only upon proof of separation from your spouse such as a signed declaration stating that you are no longer together.

For a separation of files apply here: <https://applications.migration.gov.gr/apps/type-6-applications/create?locale=en>

? Which countries of origin does Greece think are safe and what does this mean for my claim for asylum

A country is categorised as a “safe country of origin” when according to Greek authorities it is evident that persons in these countries do not generally suffer persecution, nor torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, nor a threat resulting from the use of generalised violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict. Essentially, the Greek authorities believe that people from these countries are not usually fitting within the legal definition of who is a refugee.

Greece provides for a catalogue of “safe countries of origin” in law similar to other EU countries. As for the year 2023 there are currently 16 countries listed: Ghana, Senegal, Togo, Gambia, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Albania, Georgia, India, Armenia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Nepal and Egypt. This list is reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis every November, thus it’s important to stay updated on changes.

Coming from one of these countries does not mean that you cannot claim asylum. You have the same right to claim asylum and have your case properly considered. However, in your asylum interview with the Asylum Service and in your asylum procedure in general, you must explain any serious reasons that your home country is not safe - in your specific circumstances and bearing in mind the legal definition of a person in need of refugee status or subsidiary protection explained above. However, you have the full burden of proof, meaning that you and only you have to persuade the authorities and prove that you are in danger in your country even though it is considered as safe.

The asylum procedure for persons from “safe countries of origin” is conducted as an “accelerated procedure”. This is a fastened procedure based on the assumption that it’s likely you will not receive international protection. In practice the difference of the accelerated procedure is shorter deadlines for the issuance of decisions (20 days instead of six months) and for submitting appeals (20 days instead of 30). Rejections are issued as “manifestly unfounded” (instead of merely “unfounded”) and in most cases, appeals do not have automatically have a suspensive effect. That means that in order to protect you from the risk of deportation your lawyer has to make a separate application.

? *Who is affected by the “accelerated procedure”*

Most people affected by the accelerated procedure come from the “safe countries of origin” as explained above. However, this faster procedure can also be applied if you are from a country that is not on the list of “safe countries of origin”. In practice this happens rarely, but it can happen for example if you do not explain any reasons for leaving your country that are relevant to the law about receiving protection (refugee status / subsidiary protection, see above). It also can be applied when the asylum authorities have strong reasons to believe that you are deliberately misleading them, presenting false information and forged documents or presenting severe contradictions in your case. Another example is when you refuse to cooperate in giving fingerprints or if there are strong reasons for the Asylum Service to believe that you disposed of your identity documents in an attempt to hide your real nationality and identity. Finally, the accelerated procedure can be applied when asylum authorities consider there are serious grounds to believe you are a threat to the public order or national security of Greece.

? *What is the procedure for people who have already claimed asylum in Europe before*

As mentioned above (in section „Upon arrival“), your fingerprints in another European country will most likely be found in EURODAC, when you register your claim for asylum in Greece, if you have claimed asylum in Europe before.

If you have not left the Schengen Area for more than 3 months before reaching Greece now (and hold proof of this), then Greece will make a request to this other EU-country to see if they take you back or not. You should think beforehand if you want to be sent to that country or not. IF not, and IF the Greek Asylum Service informs you that they will request you to go back, you should ask for the advice of a lawyer to help you stay. If you want to be sent back because you have your old “first” fingerprints in – for example – Germany or some other country, you can inform the Greek Asylum Service yourself about your fingerprints there and provide them with evidence. Yet it depends on the reasons and the way you left the country (deported, voluntary return etc.) and on other factors if they will take you back or not and in general we haven’t heard of any such cases lately. Ask a lawyer about your individual case to be sure.

The „**Schengen Area**“ consists of 26 European countries, of which not all are in the EU. The area had largely abolished passport and any other type of border control at their mutual borders, while sharing a common visa-policy. But as a result of the on-going “migration crisis” and with the excuse of security issues, a number of countries temporarily reintroduce controls on some or all of their borders with other Schengen countries.

In any case, you will have to explain new reasons for persecution that occurred after your first asylum procedure in Europe was ended (additionally to your old reasons of escape from your home country). You are allowed to make a new claim for asylum, as your old claim closes after a certain period of time, when you do not appear to be in the country.

? *What is the admissibility procedure (Turkey interview)*

According to current law, if you have entered Greece through Turkey and if you belong to the following five nationalities: Syrian, Afghan, Somali, Pakistan and Bangladesh, after registering your asylum application you will first undergo an “admissibility procedure” where it will be examined if you are safe to be returned to Turkey and conduct your asylum procedure there. Due to the Greek Law that provides Turkey to be a safe country for those five

nationalities, you have to persuade the Greek Asylum Service that in your individual and personal case Turkey was not safe and is not safe to go back. Only after receiving a positive decision, can you proceed with your asylum procedure.

However, since March 2020 no legal returns (readmissions) to Turkey have been implemented. That means that a rejection would currently not put you in real danger to be returned, but it would lengthen your asylum procedure.

„**Readmissions**“ are deportations of persons based usually on bilateral agreements between two countries, such as for example Greece and Turkey.

Attention: Always ask for up to date information to know if the situation concerning returns to Turkey has changed!

Attention: If you have been in Greece for over 1 year and you do not have strong connections to Turkey the Greek Asylum Service allows asylum claims to continue in Greece.

Attention: Admissibility procedures are also implemented for the few people arriving in Greece through North Macedonia or Albania. If you declare that you travelled through Albania or North Macedonia, whatever your nationality, you will have an admissibility interview, in order to understand if you can proceed with your asylum case in Greece. We haven't heard of cases of readmissions (legal returns) to those two countries and there is also no information available to the public. However, if you are affected seek advice from a lawyer as these cases are very specific and depend on your individual circumstances.

For more information on the admissibility procedure see here:
<https://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/admissibility-interview>

? *I want to make my asylum procedure faster. How can I do that*

The asylum procedure in Greece in general has been fastened up compared to the last years, so even though you may experience every day as a burden, in terms of the duration of the asylum procedure it's generally better than before. As we receive many requests of support to speed up asylum procedures – which is understandable – we want to emphasise, that less time to prepare your asylum case is in most of the cases not helpful. If you don't have enough time to seek legal information about the asylum procedure, to prepare your case, find a lawyer and collect any available evidence for your cases and your vulnerability, you may face negative results although having a strong case. It can also be helpful to be in Greece longer, if the “admissibility procedure” (or “Turkey, North Macedonia, Albania - Interview”, see above question) applies to you.

If you still want to apply for a faster asylum procedure there is an online application form available on the page of the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum where you can submit such an application for free:

<https://applications.migration.gov.gr/apps/type-3-applications/create>

You can change the language of the page on the top right. As a reason you can choose between “vulnerability” or “other”. In the latter case you have to further explain the “other” reasons. Below you should upload any documents that prove your vulnerability or the “other reasons”.

Attention: If you apply for a faster interview appointment it may be accepted or not. If accepted, the new date could even be tomorrow, in a few days, next week. For this reason we recommend not to apply unless you have fully prepared all relevant documents for your interview and you are able to explain in detail and in a chronological manner the events that lead to your escape from your home country and the reasons why you had to leave and why you cannot return. It is best to prepare as well as possible for the interview in order to receive a positive decision at first instance and not face the difficult appeal procedure. Please understand how important your first asylum interview will be for your future. It is highly recommended to take your time instead of hurrying through the asylum procedure.

? *Who can help me with my asylum procedure*

Proper information and advice is best from professional Greek lawyers experienced in refugee law that can support your case. All major NGOs supporting refugees provide lawyers for free. As they may have some waiting times, try as soon as possible after arriving in Greece to find a lawyer. You also have the right to get a private lawyer if you prefer, but paying a lawyer or even paying a lot of money does not automatically guarantee that you will have better support. If you search for a private lawyer make sure to choose one specialised in asylum law. A good lawyer you do not recognize by the fact that he or she is able to speed up your asylum procedure but by the fact that he or she will spend sufficient time asking you questions and understanding your story, your family and health situation and reading through all your documents. The lawyer will explain to you in detail the asylum procedure and also answer all your questions. To be represented by a lawyer you must sign an authorization letter which should be legalised once you have papers (asylum card) by your official signature before a municipality office (KEP) or by Ministry's staff in the camp where you live. The authorization will be sent by your lawyer to the asylum service where it will be placed in your file. If you lack valid papers you may either put your mere signature (without legalisation) or - if needed according to your lawyer - you will have to sign in front of a notary at the given costs (around 50-70 Euros). The power of attorney is a paper that gives the lawyer your consent to communicate with the Greek authorities on your behalf, send applications or file supportive documents, appeals etc. - generally speaking to work on your case officially.

Attention: You can be only represented by one lawyer in your asylum procedure. If you are represented by a lawyer from an NGO, it is possible that other lawyers from the same organisation also support your case.

Attention: Greece provides for a system of free legal aid from the government only in the appeals procedure. You can request the assistance of a lawyer from the asylum service in case of a rejection online here:

<https://applications.migration.gov.gr/apps/type-7-applications/create>

While you search for a lawyer, you can also seek legal advice and information from independent support groups such as Mobile Info Team or INFOMOBILE /

welcome to europe. They may also be able to connect you to NGOs/lawyers in case you haven't been successful yet in your search.

Attention: The case workers of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum working within the camps cannot be your lawyers or represent you in your asylum procedure and you won't have any problem with the camp authorities if you seek the help of a lawyer. Proper legal representation is your right and it also eases the work of the camp authorities, once there is a professional supporting you in your asylum procedure. Lawyers and the Ministry's case workers working in the camps cooperate, so do not be afraid to take a lawyer.

Find contacts with organisations that offer free legal aid and/or information in the end of this booklet or check online here:

<https://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/contacts>

Find **Mobile Info Team's** Whatsapp hotline numbers here:

English: +30 694 828 5026; Arabic: +30 694 222 2325, Farsi: +30 694 228 8922, Urdu: +30 694 828 5104 and French: +30 694 828 5102

Send any information requests about Greece or other EU countries to **welcome to europe / w2eu** here: contact@w2eu.info

? *Can I change my lawyer*

Yes, you can change your lawyer at any given time by informing him or her and you have the right to take a copy of your complete file with you. Some lawyers request a written statement, that you withdraw from their help, others not. In any case, if you have made oral or written agreements of payment with a private lawyer you are obligated to pay the agreed price before any change. Some private lawyers may charge you also for printed copies of your file. You can also request to receive any documents via E-mail - as long as they exist in digital format.

Attention: Don't forget to always take copies of any documents shared by the Asylum Service with your lawyer. You may later lose the contact with that lawyer and it will be more time consuming and difficult to regain the documents from the asylum service. Keep all your documents together in one file.

? ***Can I take somebody with me to the asylum interview for my support***

You can take along your authorised Greek lawyer, doctor, psychologist/psychiatrist and/or social worker.

Attention: If you have a lawyer, doctor, psychologist/psychiatrist or social worker who is not Greek it is very likely that they won't have a Greek work permit in their profession (especially if they don't speak Greek) so it is not guaranteed that the Asylum Service will accept them to join you during the hearing. Usually, asylum seekers are accompanied by their authorised Greek lawyers.

? ***How are my children included in the asylum procedure***

When families with children or single parents apply for asylum, the asylum cases of parents and children are linked. Children under the age of 14 usually are not interviewed. In any case the parents always have to speak also on behalf of the children during the interview. Explain also why they were in danger in your home country and what kind of dangers they would face upon return.

Attention: If you have arrived with your spouse but requested separate cases/files, a new case number will be provided to the requester, but the children usually remain under the first case number unless a court decision provides otherwise and the requester also has custody of them.

? I arrived in Greece with my husband (and child/ren), but we don't have a marriage certificate. Do we need to prove to the asylum service that we are married and how can we do that

Most people arriving as refugees and irregularly in Greece have not been able to bring along their identity documents, family status documents or other printed proof as it got lost, stolen or confiscated on the way. First of all it's important to tell the Asylum Service that you are a married couple and secondly if you have original proof or copies/photos you can show these. Usually, reported marriage is registered as marriage - especially when you arrive together. But sometimes when the asylum service employees have severe doubts, it is not. Then you will have separated case numbers and asylum files.



? *Which asylum service is responsible for our family's case if me and my husband are different nationalities*

Greece has asylum service offices in different parts of the country. According to your place of residence, your case is handled by the nearest office. However, in Athens there are multiple offices which are each responsible for different nationalities of people. Therefore if you live in or around Athens, the asylum office responsible for your case will depend on your nationality. If your family members have a different nationality to your own, different offices may be responsible.

! Attention: Sometimes this results in a confusion about which office will be responsible for your children that can lead to delays in the procedure - the asylum office of your children will depend on whether they have their mother or father's case number AND whose nationality they hold.

? *My family name and the family name of my children are different. Does that affect my asylum procedure, custody or future life*

Having different family names within your family does not negatively affect your asylum case. Sometimes wife and husband hold the same family name, sometimes they don't. Thus, children can have the same family name as their mother, or in case it differs from the name of her husband, they can also have a different family name (the one of the father).

! Remember: If you arrived without your husband but with children, state the full name of your husband during your asylum case. This will be important later for any family status documents or custody procedures.

? *I arrived in Greece without my spouse/fiancé. Is it important to mention him in my asylum case*

You will be asked if you are married. If you state you are married or you have a fiancé this will be recorded in your asylum file. Based on this information you may later at some point be possibly able to apply for family reunion or family reunification. If your spouse or fiancé is back in your home country, or in

another country outside of Europe (i.e. Turkey) you may try to reunite once you get a positive asylum decision (family reunion). If your spouse is in another country in Europe where you want to join him you can either apply for family reunification (based on the [Dublin III Regulation](#)) once you register your asylum claim in Greece or for family reunion (through a visa procedure at the competent embassy) once he holds refugee status. (For more information on these two procedures read section „Family reunification“)

The „**Dublin III Regulation**“ sets out that you can only apply for asylum in one country within the Schengen Area and only this country is responsible for your asylum procedure. It regulates which country is responsible under different circumstances. According to the Regulation, you could be forcibly returned to the country responsible for you (where you were first fingerprinted) or transferred to another country of the one you reside in - in case of family reunification. The procedures of “Dublin Returns” or “Dublin family reunifications” are defined in detail as well as your right to appeal against return decisions or rejections of family reunification applications.

Attention: You will remain registered as married and if you later separate and want to marry a different person, you must first divorce. If you have a fiancé this is not necessary. If you are a married couple, you automatically share custody of your children, according to Greek law. In order to get full custody you have to take legal steps. (See section „Marriage and custody“)

? *Is it better to hold my asylum interview through video conference in the camp or face-to-face in the office of the Asylum Service*

Generally speaking it is always better face-to-face as you sit in front of the case worker and the interpreter and communication and understanding is much more guaranteed. Through video calls, there might be technical issues that create obstacles to the mutual understanding (i.e. bad sound or interruptions in the connection). While the distance means that the caseworker will not be able to see your reactions so clearly, your body language is still very important as it can give an impression of your credibility. On the other hand, we understand that many women live in distant camps so traveling to the competent asylum service for the interview is costly and tiring - especially if your family consists of many people. If possible, try to conduct the interview face-to-face. If you come from a country where many people get

rejections it is even more important to create the best possible circumstances for your interview and thus try to hold it at the asylum service.

? *My asylum application has been rejected (in the first instance). What can I do now*

You have the right to appeal the decision (be it an admissibility or an asylum decision) within the lawful deadline which is either 10 days, 20 days or 30 days (depending on the reason of the rejection) from the day you received the decision by email or post/in the camp. If you received the decision via email then another 2 more days are added to the deadline. You find the deadline at the end of your decision. When you get a printed decision you receive a paper note with the date of receipt marked. If you received the decision by email you have to check the date it arrived in your inbox inside your gmail (email account).

You need to file a signed appeal at the Asylum Service. The appeals are examined by the so-called appeals committees (not the same institution that examined your asylum application). You need to personally appear at the date your appeal is examined otherwise your asylum procedure may be terminated, but in most cases you won't be interviewed or heard. For this reason it is crucial to have a lawyer filing a properly prepared appeal and representing you at the appeals committee. Your lawyer will also inform you if you have to present yourself at the committee, when and where.

An important part of the preparation of your appeal is that your lawyer has access to your asylum file (your registration and asylum interview and any documents you shared with the Asylum Service), in order to understand what exactly has been recorded until that point about you and your reasons of persecution and your possible vulnerability. This is crucial in order to not write anything contradictory to what you already stated but also to strengthen your case where possible. The lawyer will also ask you in a personal meeting about your story and background to collect additional information for the appeal.

You can apply for a free lawyer at the asylum service if you cannot find one at any refugee support organisation within the deadline or if you don't take a

private lawyer. Ask camp employees to help you or apply yourself here: <https://applications.migration.gov.gr/apps/type-7-applications/create?locale=en>

If a camp employee applies on your behalf for a lawyer paid by the government, they will ask you to share your contact number and email and fill in the form for you. You will receive an answer to your application by email and you will be told to visit the asylum service to meet your lawyer and sign your appeal in person.

The acceptance rate of appeals decisions is generally very low in Greece, so you have to prepare well. It is crucial to prepare the appeal in the best way as everything written or said in the appeals procedure will become part of your asylum case (your file) and will be the grounds also for the continuance of the procedure later.

Remember: Don't worry, even after a rejection of an appeal you can either bring your case to a court in case of errors in law and/or file a subsequent application - so a rejection in this phase of your asylum procedure is not the end of your journey.

Attention: Seek proper legal aid at any instance of your asylum procedure!

? *What steps can I take to prepare my appeal better*

■ Before meeting up with your lawyer you can save time and prepare yourself. These are helpful steps you can take yourself in advance:

◆ An authorised lawyer can request a copy of your full file from the authorities but there is very little time to prepare for an appeal and find a lawyer, so having crucial documents in your possession already can be very helpful. Either get the copies from your former lawyer (in case you changed lawyers) or request a copy of your asylum file at the asylum service via the online platform of the Ministry here:

<https://applications.migration.gov.gr/apps/type-2-applications/create>

◆ Ask the camp employees to provide you with proof of residency, stating that you live in the following camp/address.

- ◆ If your child/ren are enrolled in public school, ask for a certificate from the school that proves their enrollment
- ◆ If you have health problems or psychological problems collect doctors/psychologist certificates that write your medical condition and necessary treatment

Attention: Show your lawyer the original documents or scan/take good photos of them and send them to your lawyer.



? *I received a positive decision but my husband got a rejection (or vice versa), what can I do*

Normally this should not happen as your cases should be considered together. However, when you don't apply for asylum at the same time it can happen that the wife and husband get different asylum decisions. Also in some cases, if you left your country for reasons related to only one of you, the requirements to be recognized as a refugee might not be fulfilled for both of you.

If one of you got a positive decision and the other got a first rejection and missed the deadline to appeal or got a second rejection, then this latter person can lodge an application for regularisation to receive a residence permit based on family grounds. This residence permit is mainly meant for core family members (spouse, minor children). But if you suffer from mental or physical disability or serious sickness and depend on the help of a relative who is not your spouse (i.e. your parent, adult sibling or child) or vice versa, it's also possible to apply for it. Law allows one to apply for this residence permit once no more options are left within asylum law.

? *I arrived in Greece after my spouse, who had a positive asylum decision in Greece. What are my options to get a residence permit too*

Your spouse should inform the Asylum Service that his wife arrived. He can also accompany you for the registration to the RIC of Malakasa/Diavata. If he brings along a proof of address and any other documents that may prove that he needs your help (for example if your child is already living with him) or you need his assistance (for example because you are pregnant), you may be able to avoid the 25-day stay inside the camp for registration. Then you have to apply for asylum (opening your own case file). In case your asylum application gets rejected in a second instance you can then file an application for a residence permit based on family grounds. (See above)

? **What can I do to continue my asylum case if I receive a second rejection**

In order to obtain (again) documents there are two possible ways: A. You have the right to lodge an application for annulment (Greek: „aitisi akirosis“) before the Administrative Court of First Instance i.e. of Athens or Thessaloniki within 30 days from the notification of the rejection if there has been an error of law during your asylum procedure and B. you can make a subsequent claim for asylum (claim asylum again with additional new grounds).

A. The court procedure has expenses of some hundred Euros and makes sense only if a lawyer after reading your asylum decisions recommends it based on the fact that there were procedural wrongdoings by the asylum service. You definitely need a lawyer for this procedure.

Attention: You have the right to apply for legal aid for court representation for this stage (so that the state provides you with a free lawyer in case you have no income/a very low income) however in practice this is currently not functioning well for multiple reasons. Also you can apply at the court to be excluded from paying the fees / part of the fees (Greek: „evergetima tis peinas“).

B. If you apply for a subsequent application, this procedure has no expenses and is conducted again by the asylum service. This is a new asylum application based on new reasons and/or new proof. It is based on your first asylum claim but must include new/additional facts that have not been already stated in your asylum procedure, such as new events of persecution (i.e. a new act of threat) or new situations (change of government/law in your country, sickness, a change in your family situation etc) or new documents you obtained have not yet shared with the Greek authorities (i.e. court decisions, medical certificates etc).

Attention: If you are already represented by a lawyer from one of the refugee organisations, ask if he/she can represent you also in this procedure. It is very difficult (but not impossible) to find a lawyer from a refugee organisation to take your case in this part of the procedure, so start searching immediately. Very few organisations take such cases to the courts

and also provide for the expenses, mostly, if they already represented your case in earlier stages and/or if they estimate your case to have good chances to win. It is equally hard (but not impossible) to find free legal aid for subsequent applications.

Attention: If you file a second subsequent application this costs 100 Euros per person, so better to prepare a first subsequent application in the best way - also because every new asylum application you file gets more difficult to argue for and to have again new reasons or proof.

? *How do I make a subsequent application*

The procedure to file a subsequent application once you have new reasons and/or proof is:

- A. Request an appointment at the competent asylum service through the online platform here: https://asylum.migration.gov.gr/international-protection-registration/subsequent_registration_appointment
- B. Visit the asylum service on the date appointed to you holding all relevant new documents of proof and being prepared to explain your new (additional) reasons of persecution and any change that occurred since your appeal. You have to appear with all your core family (including children) and participate in a short interview. You will be handed a paper that states that you applied for a subsequent application (usually valid for 2 weeks), which you can show in any police control in place of an identity document. Within the next weeks the asylum service based on the information you shared with them will decide whether or not they will allow a subsequent examination of your case.
- C. Visit the asylum service within the next 2 weeks to either obtain the decision or renew this paper.
- D. Upon decision, if your application was rejected as inadmissible you can appeal against this decision within a very short deadline of five days. If it gets accepted you will be issued a new case number and new asylum seeker cards and you will receive a date for your interview.

? *What about my accommodation and support if I receive a second rejection*

You will receive the negative decision either from the camp, the Asylum Service directly for example upon renewal of your applicant's card or by email. Your asylum applicant cards will become invalid, if you receive your rejection from the Asylum Service in person (not by post or email) they will take your asylum applicant card. Your case closes and you no longer have legal permission to be in Greece which puts you theoretically in danger of arrest and detention during the period after the rejection and before a subsequent application is filed. Also your social insurance number (PAAYPA) will not work anymore in this period and you won't have access to the public health system except in emergency cases. Your monthly cash allowance will be stopped when you receive the rejection too. If you are living in a camp, the law says that you should leave within 30 days. However, in reality people often remain in their camp - practices vary according and are liable to change but you will most probably stop receiving food from the authorities (at least the adults). You may face problems to enter/exit the camp you reside in or you may even be asked to leave the camp and find another place to stay by yourself.

In Athens there are a couple of organisations that offer humanitarian aid (usually in the form of food and hygiene items) in such situations and others that provide for medical aid also for undocumented people. Check the current (english) contact list here (for change of language click on your language on the top of the page): <https://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/contacts#O4V0rYZOZITwcRX0>

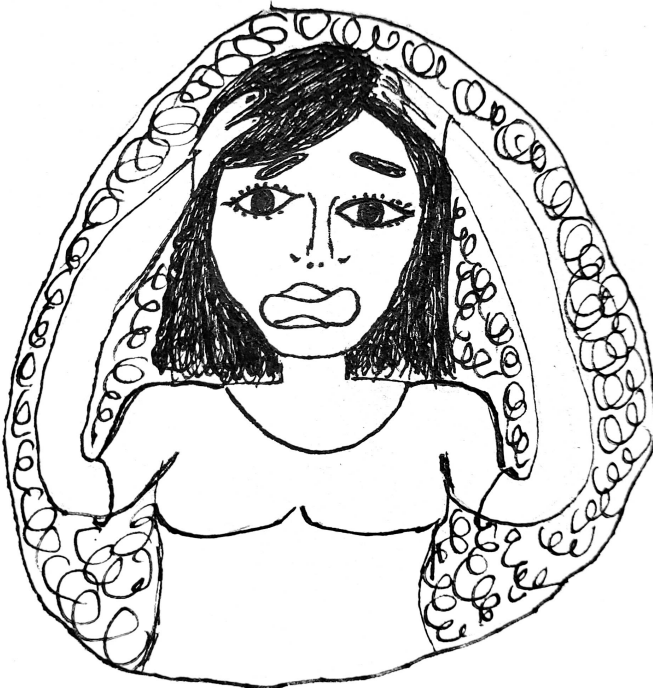
? *What is the average waiting time to receive my asylum decision or why do others get their decisions faster*

There is no single answer to this question. It depends on the workload of the asylum service, the complexity of your case and respectively the efforts of the case worker to argue for or against a positive decision. Every case is different and every situation is different. Currently people receive answers between 1-6 months, but sometimes also sooner or later.

! **Attention:** In times with higher arrival numbers, when camps are full or in other periods of crisis you might observe exceptional procedures and durations of asylum procedures.

! **Attention:** Do not get stressed if others get quicker answers. That's no negative sign for your case.

! **Attention:** Sometimes a decision may have been issued but the information did not reach the person affected. It is good to contact the asylum service to ask whether or not your decision was already issued, but it is not helpful to send an email everyday. If you have a lawyer, he/she can ask on your behalf.



UPON RECEIVING A POSITIVE ASYLUM DECISION

? *What happens after I get my positive decision*

■ If you live in a camp, once you have a positive asylum decision, your Cash Card won't be charged again and you may stop receiving food. Law also states that 30 days after receiving your positive decision you have to leave the camp you reside. However, practices vary and are constantly changing - currently this 30 day deadline is not imposed and camp residents are requested to leave the camp only after they obtain both their residence permits and their travel documents (refugee passports).

? *How can I apply for the first issuance of my residence permit and a travel document (refugee passport)*

You will receive your decision either directly by email, or in the camp you reside. Along with the asylum decision, you will also get the decisions for the issuance of residence permits and travel documents (for each person separately). Check if your personal data is correct on all documents! Sometimes these decisions have faults or lack proper signature or stamps. In this case you will need to visit the competent Asylum Service office to receive the decision in the proper form. Once you hold these, you can book an appointment at the nearest Police Office/Passport Office via email to submit your fingerprints, recent passport photos and sign the application to obtain the printed residence permit (ADET). You can ask camp employees, your lawyer or legal advisors to assist you.

Email for Allodapon - Athens: tallodathinon.anagnprof@astynomia.gr or tallodathinon@astynomia.gr

Email for Allodapon - Thessaloniki: talloddytthessalonikis@astynomia.gr

If all of your family members hold the necessary decisions from the Asylum Service, and in case of being a single parent you also hold relevant proof of sole custody (see section „Marriage and custody“), and after paying the relevant passport fees, you can apply to have the appointment for residence permit and passport on the same date. You can also first apply for the residence permits, if necessary papers for the passports are not yet ready and apply for the passports afterwards. Then check regularly if your residence permit/refugee passport are ready on the page of the Asylum Service in order to pick them up.

Check here for residence permits (page in English):

<https://migration.gov.gr/en/gas/aitoyntes-kai-dikaioychoi/adeies-diamonis/listes-etoimon-adeion-diamonis/>

Check here for passports (page in English):

<https://migration.gov.gr/en/gas/aitoyntes-kai-dikaioychoi/taxidiotika-eggrafa/etoima-taxidiotika-eggrafa/>

Attention: You need to hold a valid asylum seekers card when you go to the police for this application!

Attention: If you are a single parent, you must also bring proof that you have custody of your children, if you want to apply for refugee passports for your children.

Attention: Contact emails for the Aliens police departments responsible for the applications for residence permits and passports may change. If your email is not delivered, check here for up to date contact information: <https://migration.gov.gr/en/gas/aitoyntes-kai-dikaioychoi/adeies-diamonis/>

? As a recognized refugee do I hold the same rights as Greek nationals

Once recognised as a refugee in Greece, you should have equal access to work, education, social welfare and medical care as Greek citizens. Bear in mind that many Greek citizens also struggle to survive, because of the poor economy and lack of support from the government.

In practice, refugees face more barriers than Greek citizens to access the limited state support. For example, some state benefits require you to live in Greece for a minimum number of years, and language barriers can also be a problem. Refugees may also encounter racism when accessing state services. Racism is unacceptable. (See section „Reporting rights abuses by the state“)

The main difference to Greek nationals is that as a recognized refugee you are not automatically given the freedom to work or live for longer periods in another EU-country. This is only possible when you lived and worked for many years in Greece and gained either an unlimited stay residency with the freedom to travel within EU or Greek citizenship.

? *I got a positive asylum decision, my cash card was cut and I was asked to leave the camp. Where can I find help*

In order to help you integrate and build a life in Greece, there are two possibilities for state support, which we will explain here briefly, though they are limited and dysfunctional in many ways. First, and in order to transition from the asylum seeker reception conditions to the Greek welfare system, you can apply for the HELIOS program, which is run by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM). HELIOS supports recognised refugees for a maximum period of 12 months upon receiving your positive asylum decision. They mainly provide for rent subsidies, Greek classes and support to find a job. The biggest problem refugee women report is that before you can receive this help, you need to first find a flat and second sign the contract - which can only happen if you pay the first 1 or 2 months rents plus any requested guarantees. You must hold a house contract from the official Greek government platform (called TAXISnet) which you will need codes for and assistance to access. You must also have a Greek bank account. HELIOS is only available for people who were previously living in a camp - you cannot access the program if you were living independently during your asylum procedure.

! **Attention:** In practice, HELIOS has repeatedly faced funding gaps when transitioning from one program to the other which has led to a temporary **■** halt of rent subsidies and enrollment options, leaving people relying on this support in difficulties.

The other option for state support (or second step, if you are already in the HELIOS program) is available to Greeks as well as migrants and recognised refugees legally residing in the country. Once you hold refugee status and get your residence permit, you can apply for the so-called Guaranteed Minimum Income (Greek: „elachisto engiimeno eisodima“, formerly known as KEA) which is a €200 monthly allowance per household, plus €100 per additional adult and €50 per additional child. In order to apply for these social benefits, you need either a registered address proven by a rental contract in your name or a “homelessness certificate” from the municipality. The benefits are accessible only to people living below the poverty line, which means people who have no or very little income. To apply you also need to hold a valid residence permit, a tax number (AFM), access to your online tax system (TAXISnet credentials), a tax clearance, a social insurance number (AMKA) and a bank account. Families with children also have to provide certificates that child/ren are enrolled in school. You can inform yourself and get help for the application at the Integration Offices for Immigrants (KEM) who have limited translation available or the Service Centers of your municipality of residence (KEP). There you can also ask for any other social benefits you could apply for. Seek information directly from HELIOS and respectively at the municipality’s “Integration Offices for Immigrants” (KEM).

◆ HELIOS

Contact via WhatsApp here:

English - French - Ukrainian - Greek +30 6909868980

Arabic +30 6906656134

Sorani, Kurmanji, Turkish +30 6906956107

Farsi - Pashto - Urdu - Hindi - Panjabi +30 6906656125.

◆ KEM Athens / Thessaloniki

In Athens visit directly: Maizonos Street 45, Athens. Or book an appointment: Tel. +30 2105246722 or E-mail: kem@athens.gr. Languages: Greek, English, Farsi and Urdu. Bring along all your documents (AFM, Asylum card or residence permit, proof of residence, bank account, your AMKA or PAAYPA, school documents etc.). In Thessaloniki there are three addresses: 1. Call +30 2313318560 and visit Kleanthous 57 in Ano Toumba (open 08:-14:00), 2. call +30 2313318531 and visit Eirinis 4 in Bardari area (open 08:30-14:00) or 3. call +30 2313318646 – 8647 or 8623 and visit Monastiriou 93B on the 1st floor (open 08:30-14:00).

From our experience, integration works best in friendly environments and with specialised supporters. We recommend that you contact organisations providing educational classes, workshops and employability projects, while you're in the asylum procedure. Don't wait for your asylum decision. If possible, be active in advance. Start with language classes, seek advice from social workers and employability advisors and attend workshops or on job training. The more people you know, the more organisations you visit, the greater your support network will be and the more information and help you will find.

Check the [w2eu.info](https://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/contacts) contact list for Greece under the sections “education, workshop and sports” and “services for women”, here: <https://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/contacts>

? *What are the documents I need to build my life in Greece*

For most integration steps and in daily life you will need to have:

- ◆ AMKA (social insurance number, like the temporary PAAYPA you have)
- ◆ AFM (tax identification number)
- ◆ An official proof of address (house contract, address certificate from the camp, hosting declaration or other)
- ◆ Access codes to the online tax system (TAXISnet credentials) which you need to apply for at the competent tax office (you can receive the help of an accountant, see section „Financial support“)
- ◆ Tax clearance (see section „Financial support“)
- ◆ A bank account
- ◆ An official proof of your phone number from the relevant telecommunication company
- ◆ School diplomas and vaccination booklets of your children
- ◆ Family status certificates such as marriage, divorce, birth and death certificates or family books and custody court decisions (i.e. from the Asylum Service, Greek notaries or courts or verified originals from your country of origin)

Important but not always necessary are the following:

- ◆ An unemployment card - with which you can get also a free public transportation card and access employability programs
- ◆ A unique ID number (AMA) from the National Service for Social Insurance - EFKA (Greek: „Ethnikos Foreas Koinonikis Asfalis” - for work

Attention: Many of these documents you can get before receiving a positive asylum decision. Ask camp employees or social workers from NGOs for more information and assistance. Keep all your documents well organised and safe.

Attention: In Greece, public services are increasingly digitalised. Inform yourself which services can be provided online. In most cases you can access them either upon holding a bank account and internet banking access or with your online tax access codes - as these can be used to verify your identity.

Attention: Always keep all your information with the authorities updated. If you change address, phone number, you renew your identity documents/ passports, your family status changes etc. inform the relevant authorities - such as the municipality, the civil status registry, the tax office and also your bank.



LEAVING GREECE

? *I applied for asylum in Greece but have to leave and go to another European country, will I be sent back to Greece*

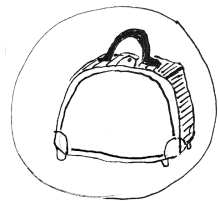
The good news first. The last two years there have been very low numbers of people returned to Greece and most were single healthy young men! However, despite the difficult conditions in Greece, people who have continued their journey from Greece to another EU country according to law can face forced return back to Greece. This is a risk for people who have been fingerprinted in Greece or claimed asylum there, as well as people who got positive decisions in Greece and were given refugee status. Currently, the majority of the dozens annually returned, concern people who had asylum in Greece. The risk of a forced return depends on the person (your particular characteristics including gender and any vulnerabilities, your fingerprints and asylum status in Greece) and the country you move on to (different countries have different policies about returning people to Greece, and this is something that is always changing). It also depends on the willingness of Greece to accept you back. As the situation can always change to the worse, if you leave Greece after being fingerprinted here (and possible also claimed asylum and received a positive decision), it is vital if possible to document the reasons you left (i.e. difficulty to survive, attempts to build a life, possible dangers you faced, separation of family members across two countries etc) and explain these upon claiming asylum somewhere else. It is also important to take a good lawyer in the country you move to in order to help explain the general and personal problems you faced in Greece and the reality you would face if you returned. You cannot be sent back if Greece doesn't accept you back or if you can prove that you faced inhuman and degrading conditions in Greece and you are at high risk of being exposed to them again if sent back and authorities and courts take this into account. That is to say you had no secured access to water-food-shelter, you were exposed to human rights violations while in Greece (i.e. push backs, no access to the asylum system and/or reception conditions, degrading detention conditions, police violence etc.), you could not access your rights (i.e. social welfare, education, medical care), faced violence, discrimination, exploitation etc.

For more information on forced returns to Greece and how to prevent these please continue reading on: <http://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece>

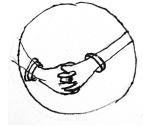
Attention: Other EU governments have always had a strong interest in sending refugees back to Greece in order to decrease arrival numbers. The current low of forced returns is not only due to Greece's denial of cooperation but also a result of the successful struggles of refugees, lawyers and supporters in front of national courts, in church asylum or anti-deportation campaigns. You always need to seek up-to-date information on latest developments in order to better estimate the risks, take your decision on where to build your life and prepare yourself to fight for your right to stay in Greece or elsewhere.

Attention: If you move to another EU-country while holding a protection status (asylum) from Greece, you won't get automatically a refugee recognition and you cannot just "exchange the Greek asylum with another" of the new country you arrived. As you are allowed to travel legally within Europe for up to three months, and in case you want to stay you have to again apply for asylum from the beginning. Once the problem not to be returned to Greece is solved, you will have a new examination of your asylum claim in the new country with a new decision, which can also be a different decision than the decision that was taken in Greece. In some European countries there may be other options for a legal stay - other than a new asylum application, please seek advise in the country you are from competent lawyers or legal advisors.

Remember: Women and even more vulnerable women are less in danger of being returned to Greece, so there is usually less reason to worry. BUT you still always have to be prepared to explain and if possible prove the problems you faced in Greece in a specific interview held for the admissibility procedure in the European country you flee to!



FAMILY REUNIFICATION



? *My spouse/child/ren got separated from me and he/she/they is/are now in Turkey. Can he/she/they come to Greece through family reunification*

There are very limited chances that this will work quickly or work at all. As long as you are in the asylum procedure in Greece, there is no official legal pathway, but in very rare cases specifically of unaccompanied minors back in Turkey, these worked with the help of UNHCR when the family members had passports and IDs and proof that they are family. Ask a lawyer for advice on that.

Once you get asylum in Greece you have the right to bring your close family members also from Turkey through family reunion and the Greek embassy in Turkey, but you will again need identity documents of your home country and in the best case also proof of being family (if not DNA tests can theoretically be conducted instead). This procedure – if preconditions are met – will usually take a lot of time though and success depends on many factors, such as the documents you have (or lack), the cooperation of the involved embassies, your asylum status etc.

? *Can I bring my spouse/minor children from my country or origin (or a transit country outside of Europe) once I get asylum in Greece*

In case you received refugee status, you can apply for family reunion at the Greek Asylum Service to bring your core family (spouse/minor children) and in exceptional cases if they are dependent on you, also adult children or parents. You should request family reunification within 3 months of receiving your refugee status - if you want to reunite with dependent adult children or parents, there is always more documents needed, but if you want to reunite with your spouse or minor children, the documents required are much less if you start the procedure within the 3 month deadline.

The procedure is initiated by you in Greece at the Asylum Service and proceeds in cooperation with the competent Greek embassy nearest to the place of residence of your relatives. Necessary documents are: valid passports, identity cards and documents proving your family status and relation to the family members you want to bring (family book, birth certificates, marriage certificate etc). All these documents should be verified by the Greek consulate in the country of origin. This actually creates huge obstacles, as many Greek consulates/embassies are reluctant to process these cases. A precondition to apply for family reunion is also that you have mentioned the existence of those relatives before the Asylum Service during your asylum procedure. After you submit the family reunion application you will go through an interview at the Asylum Service.

Attention: According to Greek law ONLY recognized refugees have the right to apply for family reunion and NOT those that have the subsidiary protection status.

Attention: In practice family reunion procedures to refugees resident in Greece often take many years but it is still very important to file your application within the deadline to document your attempt to reunite your family also for the future. Consult a lawyer before the application appointment at the Asylum Service to get detailed information and advise in advance.

Attention: All EU countries give you the right to bring your family with the same procedure and preconditions once you get refugee status. If your relatives hold subsidiary status (or other) consult a lawyer once you move to another EU-country to get information about other options that may exist based on national law, the duration of the respective procedures, and the actual practice in that country.

? ***My close family member is in another European country, can I go to them***

The European DUBLIN III Regulation (explained above in section „Asylum procedure“) includes the possibility to request family reunification if you have close family members in another European country. This kind of Dublin family

reunification is different to other family reunion visa applications, because under Dublin you are requesting to have your claim for asylum transferred to the country where your family is - that means if your request is successful, you go to that country to continue your asylum claim, you don't automatically have a visa to stay with your family.

This is why, to request family reunification under Dublin, you must first claim asylum in Greece even though you don't want to stay here. You cannot request your asylum claim to be transferred to another country if you have no asylum claim! So that the Greek authorities know as soon as possible that you are a "Dublin"- case, they ask during the registration of your asylum claim i.e. in Malakasa/Diavata or on the islands (Lesvos, Samos, Kos, Leros, Chios) if you have family members elsewhere in Europe. The procedure is initiated by you in Greece (not the relative in the other EU country). According to law, the preconditions for family reunification are: that your relative(s) is/are in the asylum procedure in the other country and applied for asylum before you applied for asylum in Greece (the date of registration of the asylum claim is counted) and that most family members live in the other country. Otherwise a family reunification could be requested in reverse manner, from the country where your relative(s) live towards Greece. But due to the bad conditions for asylum seekers/refugees in Greece and the refusal of Greece to take back asylum seekers, family reunification in the last years in most of the cases goes out of Greece and to the family member(s) in the other EU country - even when you applied for asylum before your relatives abroad did and even if most family members are in Greece!

Attention: Your relative(s) don't necessarily need to have already received an asylum decision in order for you to apply, however if the relative has received a negative decision and an appeal is pending the procedure has lower chances to succeed as the country of residence is not obligated to accept your family reunification request! If the person(s) received a final rejection the asylum procedure is considered concluded negatively and family reunification will most likely be rejected. If your relative has received a positive decision other than international protection (refugee status or subsidiary status) like i.e. a national humanitarian stay again the country of residence is not obligated to accept your family reunification application. If your relative has applied for asylum but had prior fingerprints in another EU

country and thus is still in the admissibility procedure pending a decision, family reunification to this relative is not possible.

Attention: In any case, before applying for family reunification, check what your relative(s) stated to the authorities concerning his/her/their family.
Ask him/her/them to send you: a. A copy of their papers from the country of residence (both sides); B. the address and phone number; C. any documents that prove your relationship/family status (birth certificates/marriage certificates or other); D. a copy of their asylum interview in order to check if you are mentioned in their asylum case and how your name/birthdate or age were recorded there.

If you are 1-17 years old at the time you register your claim for asylum and you are without any close family member in Greece you can apply for family reunification with:

- A. Most efficient:
Mother / father – brother / sister or persons who were the responsible adults in place of the parents already before leaving the home country (guardians)
- B. Working well:
Uncle – aunt – grandmother / grandfather who can take care of you
- C. Possible:
Other relatives

The family you want to be reunited with must be legally in the country you want to go to - they could be asylum seekers (in the process of their own case without a positive decision yet), recognised as refugees or with any other legal status (their case is finished and they have a residence permit /ID card).

If you are an adult you can apply for family reunification with:

- A. Most efficient:
Spouse or your minor unmarried child, if they
- have refugee status/ subsidiary protection
- B. Working well:
- if they are in the asylum procedure (marriage/family relationship must have been already in the country of origin)

C. Possible:

- have another right to stay

If you are an adult and you want to be reunited with your adult child(ren), brother / sister or mother / father, you can request reunification on the basis of dependency - that means that you and your family member(s) need each other for one of the following reasons:

- ◆ Pregnancy
- ◆ Newborn child
- ◆ Serious illness
- ◆ Severe disability
- ◆ Old age

As well as proving the dependency for one of these reasons, the relationship with your family member(s) must have existed in your home country and you must also show that they can take care of you and that they are legally present in the country they are now that you want to go to.

Attention: Requests for this kind of family reunification are very difficult - especially if you have been separated from your family member(s) for long periods of time and have managed to survive without them until now. For the best chance of success, you should have evidence from professionals - for example doctors, social workers, psychologists - to support your request and show why you need to be together with your family again.

If you wish to be reunited with family members not mentioned in this section so far, it may still be possible but based only on humanitarian reasons. These are very hard cases and you must show strong family, cultural or other reasons that you need to be reunited. Include as much evidence as possible to support your request.

If your family reunification request is rejected, you have 3 weeks to request your case is reconsidered - a new decision will then be issued. If it is negative again, you can again ask for your case to be reconsidered again. If your case is finally refused, try to find a lawyer in the country you're trying to go to, to see if there's any further possibility to challenge the refusal.

From the day your application for family reunification gets registered there are deadlines the authorities of the two countries have to respect that can give you an idea of the maximum duration of the procedure:

1. Greece has three months to ask the other EU country for the family reunification. BUT if you miss this 3 month deadline, your case will be weaker. You cannot apply if you have already received a decision on your claim for asylum in Greece.
2. The other country has two months to send its answer back to the Dublin office in Greece.
3. After a positive decision, Greece has six months to “send” you to the country you applied to go. You cannot book your own ticket and go earlier. You do not need any passport to travel because your journey will be planned and facilitated by the authorities.

This means that the procedure should take a maximum of 11 months, starting when you first register your claim for asylum in Greece and finishing when you are transferred to the other country and reunited with your family. However, if you do not receive a positive answer to your request the first time, the time will be longer, as there could be month(s) spent re-examining your case.

Attention: There are right now a lot of people asking for asylum registration so nobody knows how long it will actually take until one can apply for family reunification. It is important to explain to any lawyer or authorities that you wish to request family reunification, so that they can try to prioritise your asylum registration.

Under specific circumstances your lawyer can try to fast-track the procedure (without guarantees of success). That's the case for:

- A. Unaccompanied minors applying for family reunification from within detention can ask for a fast track procedure, where the answer has to be submitted within one month.
- B. If you or your relatives are seriously sick (physically or mentally) or await a serious operation and depend on your assistance urgently, get a doctor's certificate and hand it to the authorities.

For more detailed information on family reunification during your asylum procedure check here: <https://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/family>

Attention: While the general procedures and conditions are outlined in the Dublin III Regulation for all EU countries in the same way, in practice each country may interpret details differently. Thus, each country may temporarily have a more restrictive practice. Ask your lawyer for further details on your specific case constellation.

? *Are there other ways to legally join my family in another European country*

Yes, once your relative(s) in another EU country receive(s) a positive decision in their asylum case you may also (in a separate procedure) be able to try requesting family reunion to them through the embassy of the other EU country where they reside. This procedure is started by the relative in the other EU-country by applying for family reunion in order to bring you to them and it is completed by you in the embassy of their country of residence in Greece (i.e. if your relative has refugee status in Germany, you will have to go to the German embassy in Greece). Applications by people with refugee status to reunite with core family members should usually be straightforward. Persons with subsidiary status may also have a right to apply but with less chances/a different procedure - always depending on national law.

Attention: Ask a legal advisor / lawyer in the country your relative resides/ holds asylum status to support your attempt of family reunion. In general the procedure between Greece and other EU countries is faster than the same procedure between an EU country and a non-EU country such as your home country, Turkey or other.

Attention: If your relative(s) received a positive decision you may proceed also parallel both with the above mentioned Dublin III procedure AND the embassy procedure.

? *I have been separated from my spouse and/or children or he/she/ them disappeared. How can I find them*

You can address the specialised Red Cross section which has offices in Greece and all over the world and file a missing person report and request from them to search one or more members of your core family.

! Attention: It's important to explain these events of separation also in your asylum interview.

◆ Red Cross Greece / Tracing Section

Email: tracingstaff@redcross.gr or ath_tracing@icrc.org. Call +30 2105230043 (Monday-Friday 08:00-14:00) or +30 210 8259069 (Monday-Friday 9:00-17:30). For more information download the info collected by the network Alarm Phone in your language here: <https://alarmphone.org/en/2022/08/06/searching-for-people-who-went-missing-in-greece/>



MARRIAGE AND CUSTODY

? *Can I get married in Greece*

You have the right to choose your partner or spouse and decide if you want to have an official relationship or not!

You can marry without a religious procedure before the Greek civil authorities (at the municipality of your residence) with the necessary documents. You need to bring them the necessary documents (such as valid identity papers, birth certificates and proof that you are not married) and apply for a permit of marriage.

Generally, marriage is very difficult as long as you are still in the asylum procedure, and easier once you get a positive decision and the right to stay. The main problem for marriage during your asylum procedure is that you would normally need a certificate of celibacy from your home country (stating that there are no obstacles to marriage meaning you are not currently married) and you need your birth certificate - all with the relevant official stamps. But getting in contact with your country's embassy in order to obtain such a document, will likely jeopardise your asylum claim as it could be interpreted that you are not in danger by your home country's state and you could get a negative decision. If the municipality doesn't issue you the necessary permit of marriage as you lack the above mentioned documents, you can appeal before a court against this. The procedure is very time consuming and has expenses as you need a lawyer for that. Only in a few cases asylum seekers managed to marry while still waiting for their asylum decision. However, once you get your positive asylum decision you can get instead a family status certificate from the Greek Asylum Service, thus, it makes more sense to wait up to that point.

! Attention: Marriages concluded before unauthorised priests or in informal churches are not valid.

Attention: Consult a lawyer to help you for marriage and advise on your individual case!

? *What other forms of official relationships between two adult partners exist in Greece*

If you don't want to marry but seek for another official form of relationship you can make a "cohabitation agreement" before a Greek notary which has to be later registered at the Civil Registry of residence. This is a legal agreement between a couple who choose to live together, allowing them similar rights as a married couple. Cohabitation agreements are also possible for same sex couples.

? *What are my rights within a marriage*

You have the legal right to be respected and not to be insulted or threatened in any way, whether physically, emotionally or sexually. Sexual interaction with your husband should be agreed by both partners. All family members - including you - have the right to a life without violence within the family. You have the right to work (see also section „Working women“) and to attend any form of education or training.

? *Can I get a divorce in Greece*

Generally, divorce is possible both while you are an asylum seeker and after getting a positive decision, but as an asylum seeker it has extra expenses and takes more time. That is because as an asylum seeker the law of your country/ countries of origin may still apply and at court you will have to present a legal expert opinion of the "institute of foreign law" suggesting the applicable law first, which has to be paid by you and costs several hundreds Euros. As a recognized refugee Greek law applies for the divorce and the procedure is a bit faster and much cheaper. It is thus suggested to better wait for your asylum decision in order to get a divorce.

All women have the right to ask for a divorce - equal to men. You can divorce even though you might have married in another country and even if your husband is not in Greece.

A divorce can be taken upon agreement of both spouses (“consensual divorce”) and also if only one of the spouses applies for it (“contested divorce”). The latter is more time consuming and complex. Divorce generally has expenses.

For a contested divorce, you have to file a divorce petition through a lawyer at the competent court. The petition has then to be served to your spouse. You have to provide the court with the relevant documentation proving the marriage and your family status with the relevant family status certificate issued by the Greek Asylum Service. The court takes place within some months. Either you attend the court with your lawyer or your lawyer attends representing you in your absence holding a power of attorney signed before a notary office of the Greek Consular Office. You have to wait a few months more for the judgement, which then comes into effect when the deadline for legal remedies expires.

Attention: If you are thinking of divorce, first make sure if your marriage has been registered in Greece by the Asylum Service or not, in order to understand if divorce is necessary for you.

Attention: Cohabitation agreements can be resolved in front of a notary while your ex-partner does not need to be present to dissolve it. You only need to formally inform him about your intention to dissolve the cohabitation agreement.

? *What is child custody*

In Greek law there is a differentiation of custody levels between “parental responsibility” (Greek: „ghoniki merimna“) and a smaller degree of child custody (Greek: „epimelia“). Parental responsibility includes all serious matters such as choice of religion, exposure to a serious operation, name giving etc. - it is the broader level of responsibility of the child. The smaller

degree of child custody refers to daily life decisions in school, choice of doctors, clothes, shelter and food.

? *Who has the custody*

If you have children together, you and your spouse are not only a couple but also parents. If the relationship as a couple comes to an end for whatever reason, you still remain both parents of your child/ren.

According to Greek law, in a married couple custody of the minor children is automatically shared. If an unmarried woman gives birth and no father has been registered, the mother holds sole custody. But if a father has been registered or applied successfully at a court to register his fatherhood the custody is shared. If the parents do not live together, law is applied as in divorce for custody issues. In case of consensual divorce, the custody of the children is assigned either to both parents or to one of them without gender-based discrimination. If the parents cannot agree on the custody it has to be resolved in front of a court. At court both parents will have to explain why they want sole custody, explain why they are a good parent and can fulfill their obligations towards the child/ren in its/their best interest. If the child/children are of mature age, the judge might request a meeting with the child/children and ask their opinion on who they'd prefer to live with.

? *My husband is not in Greece, how do I formally get sole custody*

It is possible to apply for sole custody at the competent court of your residency - also if your husband is not in Greece, if the separation/divorce occurred outside of Greece, if he has disappeared or is not anymore alive. An application to obtain sole custody has to be written carefully in Greek in the respective form. You file an application which has to be delivered to the spouse's address (wherever he lives inside or outside Greece). The court will most likely take place after some months. If there are reasonable urgent grounds why you need custody faster a lawyer can file interim measures (Greek: „asfalistika“) for a faster procedure (appointments will be giving

within some weeks) which can also include additionally a request for a provisional order (Προσωρινή διαταγή) (appointments will be given within a few days). These fastened court procedures in case of success provide you with a temporary document of custody UNTIL the actual court will take place.

At court, you have to generally present yourself with a lawyer. It is best to have also a witness who knows you well to support your arguments, but it's not mandatory as there are other forms of proof like documents or statutory declarations of witnesses (if your witness lives abroad or cannot come on the day of the court hearing). In any case, it is crucial to present to the court some facts that explain and prove your case, such as that your child/ren go to school and have medical and/or psychological care if needed.

When the court issues its judgement (not on the same day), it will become effective as soon as deadlines for legal remedies have passed. If you applied for interim measures possibly also including a request for the issuance of a provisional order (the two faster procedures mentioned above), which have no deadline for appeals the decisions are usually issued within a few work days but are only valid until the date of the actual court. The decisions remain only valid when the deadline to submit the official lawsuit is respected (your lawyer needs to file the lawsuit in time). The complete duration of each procedure can only be estimated taking into consideration the current workload of the court of your residence.

Attention: To get further information on custody issues ask a lawyer from an organisation supporting refugees. If you are not already supported by a lawyer, see contact list at the end of this booklet!

Attention: To get sole custody a court needs to assign it to you!

Attention: Temporary decisions or interim decisions can only be granted if there are reasonable arguments for the urgency.

Attention: Ask a lawyer to explain more details on this procedure to you and according to your specific case. The court sets out the minimum wage you have to pay a lawyer. If your custody case is represented by a Greek refugee rights organisation, you won't be charged any money. If you take a

private lawyer you have to pay at least the minimum fee for a lawyer, but each lawyer can also decide to get a higher payment (for the court procedure up to interim measures a minimum fee around 600 Euros is normal). There are additional expenses within the procedure for the obligatory official notification of the other parent, that vary according to the individual circumstances (where the father lives and if his address is known around 100-150 Euros).

? *If I have sole custody of the children, can my ex-husband still see them*

When only one of the parents holds custody of the children and there is no (functioning) communication between the parents, the other still has the right to apply to the court to visit and communicate with his / her children. A court decision can set specific visiting hours/days.

? *Do I get financial support from my ex-husband if I have custody of our children*

The person not holding custody has the responsibility to pay an amount to the other parent holding custody named "maintenance obligation". A court can set the amount in case the parents cannot agree.

! Attention: Children born out of wedlock have equal rights as those born within marriage or a cohabitation agreement. Fathers must provide financial support for out-of-wedlock children if a court decides so.

! Attention: You have the right to ask for alimony if you are not working, provided that your ex was the one working during your marriage.

? *Where is my family status registered in Greece*

Marriage and in general family status and children for all Greeks and legal residents in Greece are registered in the civil registry of the municipality of your residence. They are also registered at the asylum service according to the information shared by you and documents you may have handed in. You can request a certificate of your family status from the Asylum Service and/or the competent civil status registry. You may need such a document at different public services such as the tax office or for legal procedures such as an application for custody.

! Attention: A family status certificate from the Asylum Service is issued upon your request and after getting a positive asylum decision as only then your statements (given during the registration of your claim and your interview) are considered verified.



MINOR CHILDREN

? *Do children have rights in Europe*

YES! Children have rights in law regardless of the child, their parent's or legal guardian's race, religion, abilities, sex, views, financial or any other status (i.e. legal status). Governments should ensure every child's right to life, survival and development. They should help parents and legal guardians by providing services to support them. Children's rights have to be protected by governments and their parents as well as the broader civil society. The "best interest of the child" should always be a primary consideration when decisions affecting children are made and the children's wellbeing should always be protected from any harmful practices or living conditions.

As a parent, always seek to keep your children informed about their rights. Read here a non-exclusive list.

Every child has the right to:

- ◆ express their opinion, and this opinion is listened to and taken seriously in all matters affecting the child;
- ◆ think and believe what they like and be whatever religion they choose, with their parents providing them with guidance;
- ◆ play, rest and leisure, and to participate freely in culture and the arts;
- ◆ privacy;
- ◆ the highest attainable standard of health and access to quality health care services, clean water, nutritious food, a clean environment and information to help them stay healthy;
- ◆ education, with primary education compulsory and available free to all. They should have access to education, which helps develop their personality, mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential, and encourages them to respect the human rights of all;
- ◆ enjoy their own culture, and use the language and customs of their families, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live, so long as this brings no harm to them or others;

- ◆ every child who is disabled – be it mental or physical – has the right to special care, education, health and other services to help them lead a full and independent life;
- ◆ be with their family; therefore families who live in different countries should be allowed to move between these countries (legally, i.e. through family reunification procedures) so that parents and their children can stay in contact or reunite as a family. Governments should deal with these requests in a positive, humane and expeditious manner;
- ◆ help if they have been hurt, neglected or poorly treated; and
- ◆ governments should ensure that every child is protected from all forms of physical and mental violence, abuse, neglect, (sexual and work) exploitation, sexual abuse, drugs and dangerous substances, abduction, being sold or trafficked!

? *I arrived in Greece with my minor child/ren but my husband is not living with us anymore. How can I obtain travel documents for my child/ren*

When custody is shared either both parents have to appear before the aliens police to sign the application for the travel documents or the one parent who cannot appear has to give a written authorization to the other parent permitting to apply without his presence. This authorization needs to be signed in front of the competent authorities. This is because in shared custody where mother and father have equal responsibilities and rights, a child can travel only outside the country of residence if both parents are informed and agree.

In case your husband is living in another country (outside of Greece), and if you are in (good) contact with your husband, he may cooperate with you and visit a Greek embassy in the country he resides to make an official declaration that he permits you to apply for and receive the travel documents for your child/ren. This is only possible though if he holds valid identity documents which could be also an asylum applicant card or a residence permit or an ID.

In cases where the husband has died, you divorced or obtained custody, you need to bring official and original proof of his death, the divorce of the

custody from the authorities of your country of origin that are stamped and then officially translated to Greek.

When this is also not possible and for all other cases, there are two different pathways according to your specific circumstances in order to obtain the right to apply for the passports of your children by yourself by obtaining relevant documents in Greece. Firstly, if you divorced, got separated, escaped from, lost your husband or he died in your country of origin then you can make a solemn declaration either at an attorney's office or at a district court (**Ειρηνοδικείο**) describing the events that left you as a single mother, the time and your situation thereafter and that you have no official document from your country of origin for X reasons. It needs to be written in Greek, and stamped/signed by the attorney or court. You should ask your lawyer for help and know that depending on where you do the procedure (attorney or court) there will be expenses of approx. 10-60 Euros. There needs to be a translator present too. This procedure needs preparation with a lawyer to describe in written form all the relevant events and circumstances correctly and consistent with your statements in your asylum interview. For the proper writing of the declaration the lawyer needs hours of reading your asylum file, asking you all necessary questions and writing. Once prepared carefully the following procedure takes only a few hours.

Secondly, if you divorced, separated, escaped from, lost your husband or he died in any other country (outside your country of origin and including Greece), then you will need to apply for custody at a Greek court. (See for this procedure section „Marriage and custody“)

Attention: The solemn declaration will be accepted to issue you the travel documents but it's no official custody decision.

Attention: If you get a “provisional order” from the court, this is currently not accepted by the Greek Asylum Service equal to a court decision, thus, it needs to state explicitly that you can apply and receive travel documents for your child/children with it!

Attention: Every case and situation is different! Don't listen to others who got necessary documents in Greece for obtaining travel documents for their children fast or late, but seek legal advice on your specific case to know the

procedure you have to follow and to receive a careful estimation of its duration.

Attention: Even though it might be disappointing to wait for a court, once you have custody your position as a single mother is legally strengthened for the future. It may be worth the wait even if you could get the travel documents by a solemn declaration. You will not only be able to get travel documents for your child/ren but also you will have an official paper valid in the EU that proves you are the sole caretaker.

Attention: It's best to seek legal advice on this matter from lawyers working for refugee rights organisations as they will explain the procedures to you and be careful to write the solemn declaration or court application wisely and based on the facts recorded already in your asylum file. While everyone seeks quick solutions – which we understand – they may in the long run neither solve your problems but even create new ones. Whichever lawyer to seek help from – private or from a human rights organisation – always ask to receive a full explanation of the legal procedures based on your specific circumstances.

Remember: If the lawyer representing you for custody is not the same lawyer who represented you for your asylum case, bring along copies of your asylum file (interview, decision) in order to make sure that relevant information is recorded correctly also in any custody procedure.

? *Do my minor children have to go to school*

Yes! In Greece, as in all European countries minor children aged 4-15 years have to go to public school according to law. As a parent you have the responsibility and the obligation to enroll your child to a public school. For enrollment usually you need to provide: a copy of asylum applicant card or residence permit, a vaccination booklet, a health certificate and proof of address. Enrollment takes place every year from June 1 to 15, but applications may also be accepted after those dates, if there are available places in the school. You need to go to the school that is nearest to your residence and say you want to register your children at the school. Often schools have no more

free places, so in case your child cannot be enrolled there you have to ask at other schools for enrollment. Camp staff help you subscribe your child/ren to public school. If you don't live in a camp, seek the help of a social worker to find a school for your child. (See contacts bellow)

If you live in a camp, small children visit the kindergarten inside the camp. If you don't live in a camp you can apply for a place in a public child center (Greek: „paidikos stathmos“) if your child is aged between 2,5 and 5 years. From the age of four children can attend a pre-primary school (Greek: „nipiaghoghio“), which is compulsory after the age of five. From the age of six children are enrolled in the first grade of primary school. Primary school lasts 6 years in Greece (Greek: „dimotiko sholio“), secondary education is for three years (Greek: „gymnasio“) followed by another 3 years of high school (Lyceum). In total children can go to school for 12 years in Greece. Children who graduate from secondary education in Greece (Greek: „lykio“) may participate in examinations in order to enter Universities or Higher Technological Institutions, or register in the Institutes of Vocational Training (IEK). For children with special needs (i.e. with disabilities) there are special schools. For enrollment in special schools, the Centres for Diagnosis, Evaluation and Support for Persons with Special Needs (KE.D.D.Y.) issues the relevant recommendation and makes the referral.

Attention: For more information on the educational system in Greece, afternoon schools for teenagers, education for adults such as “second chance schools”, university and the recognition of foreign educational diplomas please consult a social worker.

Attention: There is a specific system in Greek schools to integrate non-Greek speaking children, in order to receive special support for language learning and further help. The system is complicated, it is applied differently in each school and does not always work well. We have heard from many mothers that their children were enrolled to school but stopped going for different reasons, either because they felt they were “not learning anything”, “other children were ignoring them or even treating them badly”, “feeling unsafe or unwell to go to school”, “lacking money for the purchase of necessary school items or food” etc. We know that often going to school, especially in the beginning when children don't know Greek yet, is no fun or feels like a waste of time to them. But as explained above there is a legal

obligation for the children to go to school, so you as a parent have to convince them to continue visiting school. Seek the help of responsible persons in the camp you live or a social worker to solve any problems your child/ren may face at school and explain to your child/ren that they have no choice as you as their parent may face legal problems if they don't go to school. Also explain that it is important for their development to be in an environment with other children of their age, to try to learn new languages and other skills and that it is their right as a child to go to school.

Attention: For every year of attendance, ask for a certificate of enrollment from the school your child visits and keep this along with the annual grades document safe in one file. You may need these documents during your asylum procedure, to get social benefits and to document the educational path of your child.

Attention: If your child/ren don't go to school although they could (they are enrolled in school) or if you didn't even try to enroll them in school you may face legal problems for "child neglect" or face negative results if applying for custody.

Find a social worker to help you for school enrollment for example here:

Lighthouse Relief - Athens

The offices are located in the Victoria Community Centre, Filis Street 68 (near Victoria Square) where you can find an Info-Point on Mondays-Fridays 10:30-16 and social service Monday- Wednesday and Thursday 11-16. In any case, better you contact first directly on WhatsApp by message from Monday to Friday at 10:30-16:00: Arabic +30 6940919938 - Farsi +30 6946130898 - French +30 6949241496

Red Cross Multifunctional Centre for Refugees - Athens

Enrollment to school, psychosocial support, help booking appointments and interpretation at hospitals, classes and activities. Address: Kapodistriou 2 (1st floor), Athens, Monday-Friday 9:00-15:00. For some services appointment is required.

Contact: Whatsapp / Viber: +30 6934724893.

Blue Refugee Center of Solidarity Now- Thessaloniki


Psycho-social support and legal advise for parents and their children, help for enrollment to school, homework support, referrals to medical services and employability support. Address: Ioanni Koletti 25D, Monday-Friday 9:00-17:00. For appointments, call or visit directly. Tel: +30 2310555263 or +30 2310555264.

IRIDA women centre - Thessaloniki

Support to enrol children to school and safe space for children. Address: Venizelou Street 59. Tel. +30 2311296392 or message on WhatsApp on +30 6907289836. Email: irida@iridacenter.org. Languages spoken: Arabic, Farsi, Ukrainian, French, Greek and English

How do I register the birth of my child in Greece

If your child is born in Greece, you need to declare the birth in the nearest registry office in the municipality where the child is born. Hospitals usually have their own civil registry office of the municipality within their premises. After birth you visit the office showing your asylum applicant card / residence permit, to ensure the correct spelling of your name. For the registration of the baby's father, submit his documents too and show your marriage certificate and also tax and social security (AFM and AMKA) documents (for the Greek writing of names). You will be issued a birth declaration from the hospital thereafter. Usually, the birth declaration is sent directly from the hospital to the local registry office, so that the registry office issues the birth certificates in a timely manner. Be careful to check all names and dates are written correctly and according to your Greek identity documents. Within ten days after birth you should visit the competent civil registry office of your residence (i.e. in central Athens) to submit the document, declare the name you are giving to your child and receive the birth certificate. Once you receive this, register your child also at the Asylum Service to issue their asylum documents at an appointment by sharing the birth certificate.

 **Attention:** Often there are only limited or no translation services both in the hospital's registry office and the civil registry. Bring along somebody to translate if possible!

Attention: If any information of you or the father is registered incorrectly or no name of the baby was stated, it may become a time consuming and complicated procedure to correct the birth certificate that you will most likely need a lawyer for. If the mistake is simple the correction may be made by a Public Prosecutor's order. If the mistake is more complicated, it will need to be corrected by a Court decision.

Attention: If the father of the child is not in Greece during the birth, if you are not married or you don't present his information in the registry office of the hospital you gave birth, in practice, his details are usually not included in the birth declaration and the child is considered to be born out of wedlock, unless an official marriage certificate is presented. The name of the father can be added later, following a voluntary acknowledgment of parentage on behalf of the father, which is done at a notary and you must usually pay privately for.

You can apply at the nearest municipality office (KEP) for a copy of a birth certificate. To contact the Civil Registry of Athens call +30 2105277934 or send an Email to: t.genniseon@athens.gr. Address: Liosion Street 22 (near Omonia). To contact the Civil Registry of Thessaloniki visit: Vassilis Georgiou 1, 1st floor, call +30 2313317420 or +30 2313317485 or send an Email to: lix@thessaloniki.gr - currently no appointments are necessary but this may always change. To contact any civil services in Greece such as also the Civil Registries, you can call the general number: 1502.



HEALTH

? *What rights do I have as a woman receiving healthcare*

In general, you decide if you need to visit a doctor and which doctor and which treatment is ok for you. You can ask to see a female doctor, but there are not always female doctors available. Often waiting times for medical appointments in public hospitals can be weeks or even months (this is the same for Greek people too). Requesting a female doctor may create further delays.

You decide who is allowed to touch you, when and how. During medical examinations doctors in public hospitals are not always sensitive to cultural differences or individual issues connected to privacy/shame and your body. For a competent examination you will need to cooperate with the instructions of the doctor as long as they are reasonable. You may need to take off your scarf or make parts of your body naked for short periods during examination or x-rays.

? *Who has access to public health care and under which conditions*

To access public health care in Greek hospitals for *medical emergency cases* you do not need a social insurance number (PAYYPA or AMKA) and you also do not need to have valid papers!!! You also do not need to pay for emergency health care! In any case, if you are undocumented there is always a risk that hospital employees may report you to the police, while this is not common practice. To call an ambulance for a medical emergency contact 166 and be ready to share information on the address where the patient is to be found, the name, family name and age/sex of the person as well as a short description of the medical emergency case (i.e. fever, epileptic crisis, birth pain in proceeded pregnancy, heart pain, breathing problems, injury etc.). It's best if the person who calls speaks Greek or English. If you live in a camp, inform the employees present about the emergency and ask them to make the call. Be

ready to send one person along with the patient who speaks Greek or English if possible and have in mind that they will have to return at their own cost i.e. by public transportation after treatment or hospitalisation. They should also not forget to take their asylum applicant cards or residence permits with them as well as any prior medical documents of the patient - if they exist. Be aware that after emergency health care no medical papers are shared with patients generally.

Any regular medical examinations, treatment, therapy in public hospitals (other than emergencies) can be only accessed with a social insurance number (PAAYPE) that you get once you applied for asylum and hold an asylum applicant card. If you are recognised as a refugee, your PAAYPE number should be changed into an AMKA. Public health care for insured patients is free of charge! Only in a few cases special examinations have to be paid by the patient. Check the electronic prescription for the examinations (handed to you as a paper by your examining doctor) for possible charges!

With the PAAYPE or AMKA number you can call 1535 for booking appointments in public hospitals or 14884 to book appointments in smaller local hospitals (called PEDY). You need to speak Greek to follow the instructions of the call system or talk directly to an employee! Larger hospitals often provide broader technical equipment, more specialised staff and options for examinations. They also usually provide for translation, however the translators are not always available and not all languages are provided. The smaller hospitals often give quicker appointments but do not offer translation services. You need to bring along a person speaking Greek.

Children are treated up to the age of 13 in child hospitals and from 14 years and above in the regular hospitals. The large hospitals provide also for social workers that may get involved to assist you or your child if needed. If a social worker has been introduced to you, ask for the name and contact number in case you may need to stay in contact after leaving the hospital.

If you live in a camp, the doctors, nurses and psychologists of the National Public Health Organization (EODY) offer first medical care for residents. Usually the medical services are very basic and only little medication can be provided. Address the doctor with your medical needs and ask for a referral to a public hospital for specialised examinations and therapy and prescriptions

of medicine. The doctor will book you an appointment at a specific hospital. The date, time and address will be shared with you. If your camp provides buses, ask for a ticket to be able to attend the medical appointment. Many women report problems when trying to follow up their medical problems such as transportation costs, orientation problems, lack of translators etc. Despite all these difficulties, try to uphold those appointments in hospitals and keep all your medical documents safe and together. Specialised medical help can be provided also for free from different NGOs (see below). Addressing additionally one of those NGOs may be helpful for you as you will have a trusted specialised doctor following up on your medical history and professional accessible translators. It is specifically helpful if you have currently no access to the public health system (as you have no valid documents and/or no functioning social insurance number) but urgently need treatment. Prescriptions for medication are issued on your social insurance number and handed to you in printed form. Always make a photo with your phone of any prescription you got before visiting a pharmacy as they may keep it.

Attention: Any medical examination gets the best results if you share all relevant information with the doctor. Once the doctor comes, explain by yourself: the symptoms, how long you suffer from them and in which times of the day or under which circumstances they appear and with which frequency. Inform the doctor if you already have any medical diagnosis (also psychological problems may be relevant), show all medical documents you may already hold and if you visit a pediatrician always bring along your child's vaccination booklet! It's easier if you think about this information before going to the doctor so you are ready to share it during the visit from the very first moment as often there is not so much time. Try also to recall if when the symptoms appeared first something extraordinary had happened in your life, for example if the symptoms were noticed from birth or small childhood, if you had an accident or there was a very emotional/traumatising event in your life shortly before or after the first symptoms, if you were living in this period under very poor conditions (homeless, no regular access to food/water or toilets/showers) etc. Bring along also any medication you are taking or explain what you were taking. The doctor may also ask you if you have any allergies and if you are currently possibly in a pregnancy or breastfeeding as this information is crucial to understand which examinations can be conducted and which medication you cannot take.

Attention: Since the Corona pandemic there are more restrictions as to who and how many persons can accompany you to a medical appointment. In many cases, you cannot bring along your minor children and there is also no place inside or outside the hospitals to leave them protected while you have your medical appointment. If possible, arrange beforehand for a safe place to leave your child/children protected during your medical appointments.

Attention: Your health has priority at all times. If possible, prioritise your health over shame or other issues, or seek further help to find the best possible option for your health care in respect of your wishes and needs.

Attention: Doctors have sworn an oath to protect health and it is their job to aim for your best. If you are advised urgent medical treatment, stay in hospital or even an operation don't hesitate to seek a second opinion by another doctor (if possible) and latest when you get the same medical opinion again follow the advice. Sometimes we hear women hesitating because they don't know what to do with their children during their treatment or because they are about to leave Greece. You can discuss solutions on where to leave your children protected with a social worker or trusted friend. Concerning the idea of undergoing the treatment in the country you aim to move to, discuss this option with your Greek doctor to understand the urgency and with your lawyer to better estimate when you will be actually able to leave Greece.

Attention: When moving to another EU country it's important to bring along your Greek medical documents and show them to authorities and doctors there in order to enter faster medical care or therapy. In any case, authorities in the other EU country may proceed only slowly with your referral to doctors and doctors may insist on making their own examinations, so your treatment may not start as soon as you expect and you should consider this when making your decision for the best of your health. If you are sick or your health is in danger you cannot take good care also of your asylum procedure and - in case you have children - you may not be in the best situation to fulfill your obligations towards them in their best interest.

? *I am pregnant, what can I do*

If you assume or know that you are in a pregnancy it is crucial to conduct all necessary medical examinations and follow doctor's / midwife's advice for the best of your baby and yourself! Do not forget also postnatal medical care, that supports you and your baby the first weeks after birth!

If you have no valid documents in Greece as you just arrived newly and haven't managed to register your asylum claim or because you have received a rejection and haven't filed yet an appeal or subsequent application successfully, you can still access emergency medical care in public hospitals if you have pain during pregnancy or need to check on the babies medical situation for other reasons or if you suffer from postnatal medical emergencies. You can also address specialised NGOs such as AMURTEL or Doctors without Borders. (See contacts bellow) More regular follow-ups are available in public hospitals upon holding an active social insurance number (PAAYPA or AMKA).

First it is important that you visit an obstetrician / gynecologist or midwife to get a first check-up and a written confirmation of your pregnancy with the calculated current pregnancy weeks, the expected delivery date and any comments on you or your baby's health or possible pregnancy risk factors. For this, a brief medical history will be taken. You will be asked when was the first day of your last period, how many times you have been pregnant and how many births you gave and if these were natural births or cesarians. Additionally you have to mention if to your knowledge you suffer from any chronic or transmittable diseases or allergies. Most likely you will be prescribed some food supplements such as Iron and folic acid or also magnesium for the time of your pregnancy. Regular ultrasounds will be conducted to follow-up on your pregnancy.

When you are closer to your due date your doctor or midwife will check which hospital is on duty during that month. Upon first signs of labour call an ambulance on 166 and try to be accompanied by somebody who speaks Greek or English. If this is not possible, it is good to have a paper with you with basic information on your pregnancy weeks and any complications you may have experienced written in Greek or English. Also bring along all medical test

results and certificates you have collected during your pregnancy. Depending on if you give birth naturally or with a caesarean and your and your babies health condition after birth you will be hospitalised usually between 2-4 days. If your child or you need further medical care, you may either both or one of you remain in hospital longer. After leaving hospital visit your midwife or doctor regularly for proper follow-up.

Attention: After birth and while hospitalised you will receive instructions from doctors, nurses and/or midwives on the proper care and hygiene for you and your baby. As often there are no translators available, know that they always advise to carefully clean the bellybutton of the baby daily. Wash your hands first, then use proper disinfectant liquid and sterile compresses (get them from a pharmacy if possible) and pat it dry (don't rub it). If you notice red spots, swelling or ulcerous liquids/crusts show the bellybutton to a nurse or doctor.

Attention: If you are homeless and give birth in a Greek hospital, the social workers are obliged to act in the best interest of the child. That means that they cannot let the baby become homeless (leave the hospital with you and have no shelter), so they will have to take it under provisory care in an orphanage until you manage to find housing and can provide the relevant proof to the competent public prosecutor who has taken temporary custody for your child. You have a right to know where your child is sheltered and you can ask for a permit from the social workers in the children's home to visit it. If this has happened to you, seek support from an NGO to find a shelter for yourself, for assistance to communicate with the involved child care actors and the responsible public prosecutor, regain child custody and take your baby back.

Attention: You decide if and when you wish to have kids. If you are pregnant and wish to stop your pregnancy, you have the right to access safe abortion care. Abortion in Greece is allowed within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, if there are signs of serious embryo abnormalities the time limit is within the first 24 weeks and if you are a survivor of rape, child sexual molestation or incest within the first 19 weeks. In this case you will need an official decision of a public prosecutor. An abortion can be conducted in public hospitals for free. If you don't want to get pregnant you can ask a doctor for advice on contraceptives and family planning. In Greece common

contraceptive methods are: condoms, pills, spiral or intrauterine devices. You can decide for yourself if you want to use contraceptive methods.

? *I am a survivor of female genital mutilation (FGM), where can I get help*

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. While today it is estimated that 200 million girls and women in more than 30 countries are affected, in Greece (likewise other EU countries) any form of it is considered a human rights violation and, thus, in asylum law it is included as a category of “vulnerability”. At the same time, practicing female circumcision is punishable by law.

If you have undergone female genital mutilation, you may suffer in mid and long-term from problems while urinating or during menstruation, scar tissue and keloid, cysts, frequent infections or even infertility as well as psychological problems (i.e. depression, post traumatic stress disorder - PTSD). Further, female circumcision can create sexual problems (pain during intercourse, decreased satisfaction, etc.) and increased risk of childbirth complications (difficult delivery, excessive bleeding, caesarean section, need to resuscitate the baby, etc.) as well as increased risk of newborn death.

If you notice any of the above-mentioned symptoms or medical problems and/or if you wish to get more information on this topic as you are affected, you can contact a doctor and seek consultation and probably treatment. Ask for an appointment with a (female) gynecologist for example at the Doctors without Borders (MsF) in Athens (see contacts bellow) where translation is secured in many languages and doctors are well-informed on FGM.

? *Where can I vaccinate my child*

If your child has a social insurance number (PAAYPA or AMKA), you can access vaccinations at public hospitals and public medical centers. Vaccinations can also be accessed at MotherChild centers or at different NGOs (see contacts below).

Attention: You will be asked to show your child's vaccination booklet. Bring along any booklets you have from your country of origin, country of temporary stay and/or Greece. If for whatever reason you have no vaccination booklet, you will be asked if your child has already been vaccinated before and when was the last time. This is because child doctors want the best for your child and thus try to avoid double vaccination. Sometimes they deny vaccination when proof of prior vaccination is not available as they feel a lack of sufficient information to do the best for your child. In this case, consult one of the NGOs named below for further help. Generally, when your child is of younger age and frequency for vaccinations is higher, it is anyway good to follow-up through one of the NGOs below. If vaccination appointments are booked by camp doctors for your child, tell them to always book in the same hospital if possible. Also try to bring along somebody to translate to Greek or English for you in case your appointments are booked in smaller hospitals (PEDY) where translation is not available.

Contact the following organisations for (additional) health care:

Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders, MSF)

(General doctor, medical services for sexual and reproductive health and care for new babies and family planning, medication and care for non-communicable diseases like diabetes, asthma and epilepsy, care for survivors of sexual violence, psychological support). Clinic in Athens, but do also visit camps in the surrounding area. Address: Solonos Street 140, Athens. Open 9:00-15:030 Monday-Thursday, Friday 9:00-12:00. Can contact by WhatsApp message: Farsi + Urdu +30 6956609762 - French, Lingala, Swahili + Kirundi +30 6951936455 - Arabic, Kurdish, English and other languages +30 6956609760 - Ukrainian + Somali +30 6952350920

- ◆ **Medicins Du Monde (Doctors of the World, MDM)**
 (Athens: General doctor, gynecologist, cardiologist, neurologist, orthopedics, pediatrician, dentist, physiotherapist; Thessaloniki: General doctor, pathologist, cardiologist, dermatologist, gynecologist, psychologist/psychiatrist, ophthalmologist, urologist, orthopedic, diabetes, endocrinologist, pulmonologist, gastroenterologist, pediatrician). Athens, address: Sappous 12, By appointment only, call +30 2103213485. Thessaloniki, address: 29A Ptolemaion Street, 3rd floor, by appointment only, call +30 2310566641, open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 16:00.
- ◆ **Medical Volunteers International (MVI) - (initial consultations from international volunteer doctors)**
 ATHENS and surrounding camps. WhatsApp message only for enquiries/appointments. Do not call but send text or voice messages introducing yourself and your health problem you seek help for. Tel. +30 6947486324.
- ◆ **Amurtel – (medical and social support for pregnant women and new mothers, educational and group activities)**
 Contact directly by WhatsApp message: English +30 6909935228 - French +30 6906860158 - Arabic +30 6998772432 - Farsi +30 6939440225 to ask for an appointment.
- ◆ **Babel - (psychological and psychiatric support in Athens)**
 Go directly to request support. Address: Ioannou Drosopoulou 72. Tel.: +30 2108616280.
- ◆ **Positive Voice - (medical and psychosocial support for people living with HIV)**
 Address, in Athens: Ag. Anargiron 13, open 10:00-14:00
 Address, in Thessaloniki: Egnatia 112, open 10:00-14:00
- ◆ **Checkpoint - (sexual health counseling, information provision and testing for HIV and Hepatitis)**
 In Athens: Ref Checkpoint: services are provided in 9 languages: Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Dari, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian and English. Address: Michail Voda 200, Thursday + Friday 16:00-20:00, Saturday 10:00-14:00. In Thessaloniki not a refugee specific service but open to everyone. Address: Egnatia 112. Open Tuesday-Saturday 12:00-20:00

Attention: If you reside in a camp the government's competent health service EODY is providing for doctors.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

? *When can I get financial help from the government while I am in the asylum procedure*

As soon as your asylum application is registered and you are assigned to a camp, you will be provided with a Cash-Card through which you get a monthly allowance according to the number of persons in your family. (See also section “Upon arrival”) Sometimes it can take weeks until you get the Cash-Card and more weeks until it is the first time charged with money.

Attention: Before registering your asylum claim you have no access to the Cash-Card or other financial help of the state. Once you get a positive asylum decision your Cash-Card will not be charged anymore with money.

Attention: Once you receive a negative decision and if you do not appeal or file a subsequent application and thus remain without a valid asylum seeker card your allowances will be cut and only re-started once you enter the asylum procedure again and are issued a valid asylum seeker card.

? *I got a positive decision and my cash assistance ended; where can I get financial support*

Currently the only state help you can apply for is the HELIOS program or the “minimum guaranteed income” (former KEA). For detailed information and contacts please check the section “Upon receiving a positive asylum decision”!



? ***Are there (other) social welfare allowances available for me after receiving my positive decision***

Once you get asylum in Greece, you have the right to apply for special welfare allowances and you can seek help for the procedure by the above-mentioned municipality offices (KEM). Realistically, the only one accessible after collecting all necessary documents and if you haven't been already more than 5 years in Greece are:

- ◆ **Disability benefits** (Greek: „epidoma anapirias“), which are conditioned upon examination by the Disability Accreditation Centre and establishment of over 67% of disability for a person to be eligible for the severe disability allowance. The disability benefit includes amongst others also persons with HIV, Down-Syndrome, Amputees, transplant recipients, Autism Spectrum Disorder, severe mental illness, Diabetes (1) etc. - if the respective degree of disability is certified by the competent government service.

Find more information on who gets disability benefits in English here: <https://ypergasias.gov.gr/en/persons-with-disabilities/>

If you already legally and permanently living in Greece since five years you can also apply for:

- ◆ The **housing allowance** (Greek: „epidoma steghasis“) is available to households of recognized refugees living in rented accommodation or paying a mortgage on their main family home. (submit: residence permit(s), valid legal rental contract, proof of legal residence in Greece of 5 years without interruptions, tax declarations etc.).
- ◆ The **monthly child support allowance** (επίδομα παιδιού) – ranging from 28 € to 70 € per child according to income and household size.

If you are already legally and permanently living in Greece since 12 years:

- ◆ The **one-off child-birth allowance** (Greek: „epidoma genesis“) is available to mothers who are third-country nationals, including beneficiaries, upon condition that they establish twelve years of permanent and

uninterrupted residence in Greece, as demonstrated through the submission of tax declarations.

If you are already legally and permanently living in Greece since 15 years:

- ◆ The uninsured retiree benefit, up to a maximum of €360 for an uninsured person aged 67.

? *Is there any other place I can get help when I am without state support*

There are a couple of organisations and solidarity groups that offer support in food, hygiene items or even shelter to a very limited degree. However, these services change often and it's best to ask other refugees or social workers if they know where to find such help currently. You can also check here for some contacts: <https://w2eu.info/en/countries/greece/contacts>



WORKING WOMEN

? *Am I allowed to work*

In Greece, women have the same rights to work and payment as men. Women also have equal access to education, vocational training, employment and work development opportunities. As a refugee, two months after registering your asylum application and getting an asylum applicant card, you have automatically the right to work. Once you get asylum you have the same labour rights as Greek citizens, so you can even start your own businesses.

Attention: In order to work officially, you will need: a tax number (AFM), a social insurance number (PAAYPA or AMKA), a unique ID number (AMA) from the National Service for Social Insurance (EFKA), and a Greek bank account. You will also need to report to your future employer your contact details (phone and address) and some other details. For the issuance of the AMA you generally need to hold a refugee passport as well as for opening a bank account.

Attention: If you are aged 15 years or older, and you have the consent of your parents, the persons who exercise your parental care, or your legal guardian, you may be legally employed in Greece. Under the age of 15 years work is prohibited with only very few exceptions.

? *Where can I find support for work related issues*

You can seek help in Athens for work related questions, for finding a job or classes/trainings here:

◆ Employability program for women in Athens, GENERATION 2.0, Book an appointment: Tel.. +30 2130884499, E-mail: k.kapnisi@g2red.org (Monday-Thursday 10-17) - Greek, English, French

- ◆ Employability program for young women (18-35 years), Action Aid, Petras Street 93, Athens, Tel. +30 2155557345 (Tuesdays 16-18) - in Greek or English
- ◆ Employability program and legal representation for work related issues, Solidarity Now, Domokou Street 2, Athens (opposite the Larissa train station), Call +30-210 8220883 or visit directly on Monday-Friday 9-17 - English, Greek, French, Arabic, Lingala, Dari, Ukrainian, Urdu, Pashto, Farsi
- ◆ Employability program, ADAMA centre run by Caritas, Paraskevopoulou Street 3, Athens, book an appointment here: +30 6945267788 - English, Arabic, French, Farsi, Sorani, Ukrainian
- ◆ Employability program for persons using the social services in the Social Centre Caritas in Neos Kosmos, Rene Pio Street 2a, Athens, book an appointment here to register with the program: neoskosmoscenter@caritas.gr - Greek, English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Ukrainian
- ◆ Employability program, Pyxida Intercultural Center (belonging to GCR), Solomou Street 20 (Exarchia area), Athens, contact in Whatsapp: Arabic +30 6936543493, Farsi / Dari +30 6907035832, Lingala/ French +30 6948065771, Kurmanji / Sorani +30 6907035845, Turkish +30 6936543491
- ◆ Employability support at the IRIDA women centre, Venizelou Street 59, Thessaloniki. Tel. +30 2311296392 or message on WhatsApp on +30 6907289836. Email: irida@iridacenter.org. Languages spoken: Arabic, Farsi, Ukrainian, French, Greek and English

? *What are my rights as a worker in Greece*

Women should be treated without gender discrimination equal to men. Your employer is responsible to take necessary measures for the protection of your health and safety. You have a right to receive the agreed amount of money (wage) in exchange for your work and you have a right to the regulated days of vacation as set in your contract.

The work relationship between you and the employer is manifested in a work contract setting out the work times, working hours, your role/profession, the

place of work and that includes the period of employment with the starting date, the salary and extra benefits and the information of your boss and you. Both of you have to sign it and then it is filed to the competent government offices.

As for all employees in Greece, a full-time job should not exceed 40 hours per week and employees should get paid overtime if they work more than this as well as extra rates for night work, work on Sundays or public holidays. There is part of your wage that will be reduced for the tax rate. You have a right to sick pay and pensions and an annual leave of minimum 20 working days. Also law provides that in case of work that exceeds 4 hours per day, the employee is entitled to a break of 15-30 minutes that is not considered working time and is not paid.

Attention: Any work should be paid. To have an orientation, the official minimum wage for a full-time job in Greece (40 hours per week) is currently: 780 Euros - including insurance fees. Yet, even many Greeks are paid less.

Attention: Many employers try to prevent any possible costs and thus declare either none of your work officially or only parts of it (less hours). If you work unofficially or partly unofficially you have no health insurance, maternity leave and childcare support, no Christmas/Easter presents (extra money) or receiving your normal wage during the annual leave/sick leave. You are less protected in case of a labour accident or rights violations at work. You may not have also regulated holidays, get no pension once retiring, and do not get the paid insurance stamps that prove your total of work days (in Greek: “ENSIMA”) that are crucial if you plan to stay in Greece also in future and apply for long-term residency or Greek nationality one day. Also uninsured / unofficial work can be prosecuted by law - affecting possibly both the employer (boss) and the employee (you).

? *What else should I know if I want to start working in Greece*

If you have an income and are legally residing in Greece, you have the obligation to make an annual income tax declaration and submit it for the previous year. You should make a tax declaration starting from the second year of stay in Greece even if you have no job and income as you may need this to open a bank account, for HELIOS program, to apply for the Minimum Income (social benefits) or other bureaucratic steps. You can submit the declaration online but you have to be registered in the TAXISnet (online Greek tax statement system). So even if you already have a Greek tax number (AFM), you will first need to apply online for internet access codes. You need those codes also for registering as unemployed, receiving an unemployment card and getting a free metro card for Athens. If you need help, the following organisations have accountants assisting people with their tax codes and tax declarations:

◆ **Caritas Social Spot - Athens**

You have to make an appointment by emailing first at: neoskoposcenter@caritas.gr

Services are available in Greek, English, French, Ukrainian, Farsi and Arabic.

◆ **Action Aid - Athens**

Visit here: Petras street 93, near the train station in Athens, Monday-Friday 9:00-17:00 or call Tel. +30 2155557345. For services, appointments must be booked - in person or by phone. You should speak Greek or English or bring along someone to translate.

◆ **IRIDA women centre - Thessaloniki**

Visit here: Venizelou Street 59, [Thessaloniki](#). Tel. +30 2311296392 or message on WhatsApp on +30-6907289836. Email: irida@iridacenter.org.

Languages spoken: Arabic, Farsi, Ukrainian, French, Greek and English

Sometimes a special license or additional formalities are necessary for certain types of employment. For instance, if you wish to work in a store that ensures hygienic standards, such as restaurants, taverns, cafeterias, you will be expected to have a health certificate and a special work permit issued by a police department.

? I work officially but was mistreated by my employer. What can I do

As an employee in Greece, you have the right to report any mistreatment in terms of payments, bonuses, overtime payments, violence or sexual harassment and benefits (amongst others) to a Department of the Greek Ministry of Labour called “Labour Inspectorates” (Σώμα Επιθεώρησης Εργασίας, in Greek). Complaints can be submitted anonymously but should include basic information about the employer such as: name and tax number of the company or employer, address of the place of inspection and the issues/problems to be investigated during the inspection. You can submit your complaint anonymously by calling the citizen service line 1555 (best in Greek language!), online here: <https://apps.sepenet.gr/portal/anonymous> or in person by visiting or calling the competent Inspection Department. You can also complain before the Greek Ombudsman office. (See section „Reporting rights abuses by the state“)

! Attention: Not being paid (salary, presents, insurance etc) is considered a crime and you have the right to report your employer, in order to put more pressure on them, and get what you legally deserve. Remember that the burden of proof is on your side. Consult a lawyer specialised in work law or an employability advisor in order to understand how big or small your chances are and whether or not it makes sense for you to invest time and money to file a complaint and/or to bring your case to the court.

? I work unofficially (without a contract) and didn't get paid. What can I do

Even if you worked irregularly you have rights as a labourer and you can try to claim them with the help of a lawyer. Also undocumented workers have a right to be paid their wages! You can access the government's complaints mechanisms such as Labour Inspectorates or the Greek Ombudsman and legal procedures to reclaim your wage or your rights on safety and health protection at work, maternity leave and non-discrimination etc. (see answer to the above question). However, before court the burden of proving the existence of a working relationship still largely falls on you (the worker).

Furthermore, specific residence permits should be issued to workers who experienced serious exploitation at work. (See section „Reporting a crime“)

? *I am a single mother but need to work. Where could I leave my children while working*

You can subscribe your child to a public kindergarten, but there are not sufficient places in Greece, which also leaves many Greek mothers without help. Seek the help of a social worker to get information and help you with the procedure. However, if you live in a camp it may be more difficult to find a place nearby or even impossible.

! Attention: Never leave your small children alone and unattended at home. They won't be safe and you may be reported and charged for "child neglect".
■ (See section „Reporting a crime“)

? *Do I have a right to take time off from work as a mother with minor children*

Yes! If you officially employed in Greece, Greek law provides amongst other things for:

- ◆ 17 weeks of maternity leave starting eight weeks before the expected delivery date while maintaining full insurance from her employer
- ◆ a newborn's mother is entitled to breastfeeding and childcare leave, which includes different options of reduced work time or more vacation days
- ◆ special maternity leave for up to 6 months
- ◆ limited unpaid childcare leaves while the child is still a toddler
- ◆ 4 days of paid leave per year per child to attend teacher-parent meetings if your child is younger than 16 and attends school in Greece between kindergarten and high school level

SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE AND TRAFFICKING

? *I am a survivor of SGBV (in the last 6 months), are there safe places I can find help and/or shelter*

! **Remember:** Violence can be physical, but also psychological, verbal and financial, where the perpetrator deprives you of resources, opportunities, goods and services (they don't allow you to work or they control your income).

The first thing you need is to speak with somebody about what is happening to you (and your children). What happened to you is not your fault but could happen to anyone. You are not alone, unfortunately a lot of other women experience violence in Greece and all over the world. Do not feel shame but seek help from friends and professionals so that you can face the situation with support!

If you are in immediate danger you can call the police on 100 or if you cannot speak send an SMS message (in Greek or English) including your exact address, full name and the type of emergency (i.e. “my life is in danger” or “i am being abused by my spouse”).

You can also contact government support number 15900 in order to make an appointment with a specialised advice centre near your place of residence. You need to have someone at your side speaking Greek or English, as no translation is available for this support hotline. You can describe your circumstances and request an appointment to seek legal, social or / and psychological support in person. Within the appointment a first assessment is made and you may also request emergency shelter for you (and your children).

You can also one such organisation here:

❖ **DIOTIMA (legal aid and psychosocial assistance for victims of sexual and gender based violence)**

Supports survivors who faced violence (the last time within the last six months) with professional translators. Offices in Athens, Thessaloniki and Lesvos. Contact: Farsi +30-6988587846 - French +30-6988587809 - Arabic +30-6986921161 - Sorani +30-6988528460 or the Helpdesk (in English) here: <https://diotima.org.gr/en/helpdesk>

Attention: It is important to document any rights abuses you and/or your children suffer in case you want to file a complaint with the police in future.

IF possible without putting you in danger, try to collect evidence such as photos of injuries, screenshots of threats and abusive language in social media. In cases of physical injury or rape, you should visit a doctor for immediate examination and treatment, explain the circumstances truthfully and ask for a medical reports. If you report (domestic) violence and/or rape in the hospital, health professionals have to report the incident to the police. You will then be referred to a forensic doctor (probably also a forensic psychiatrist) for proper medical documentation of the crime. The investigation will soon include taking your (and probably your children's) testimony at the police station. Even if you don't want to report the abuser, authorities may investigate themselves independently.

For survivors of trafficking, the Greek state provides for another emergency number. Operators in English and Greek can connect to interpreters as required: 1109.



SUPPORT FOR LGBTQIA+

? *Why is this info guide “for women”*

Our goal is to provide information specifically directed to all people who are affected by patriarchal oppression and violence. We have decided to use the term women because this is an internationally understandable term. Generally, we see gender binaries as part of the problem and overcoming them as essential, because we believe every individual should be free to be who they are, without fear, stigma or suffering.

? *I am LGBTQIA+ where can I find support and/or connect to a community*

LGBTQIA+ is an acronym used to express people with different gender identities and sexualities.

Lesbian: A woman who is attracted to other women

Gay: A man who is attracted to other men (though can also be used to describe lesbians too)

Bisexual: Someone who is sexually attracted to people of more than one sex and/or gender

Transgender: someone whose gender expression or identity is not congruent with the sex assigned at birth

Queer: a political term that suggests someone who rejects gender and sexual norms and binaries

Intersex: someone born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not fit into the sex binary

Asexual: someone who generally doesn't have sexual desire towards others

“+” : this is designed to signal that these categories are not fixed or exhaustive. Anyone who feels they do not fit into the categories of gender or sexuality dominant in society, may be included.

As an LGBTQIA+ person, you can contact any NGO supporting refugees in Greece, as they all offer their services without discrimination, but here you find also two initiatives offering specialised assistance for LGBTQIA+ people:

◆ **Emantes – (support line for LGBTQIA+ persons)**

WhatsApp +30-6971693446. Email: info.emantes@gmail.com

<https://www.emantes.com/contact>

◆ **Safe Place International – (Activities and support for LGBTQIA+ persons)**

Tel. +30-6986752325

◆ **Intersex Greece - (Support of people with innate natural differences in sex traits or reproductive anatomy)**

Sometimes children are born with a body that does not fit within the usual definitions of “male” and “female”. If you identify yourself or your child/ren as belonging to this group of people, you can contact Intersex Greece for more information. Contact: Rinio Symeonidou

Tel. +30-6977660860. Email. info@intersexgreece.org.gr

◆ **Transgender Support Association - (not specifically for refugees)**

Tel: +30-2109210697. E-mail:

transgender.support.association@gmail.com and www.transgender-association.gr

? ***What are my rights as LGBTQIA+ person in Greece***

People with different gender identities and sexualities are legal in Greece and have gained increasing rights. Amongst others, same sex sexual activity was legalised already back in 1951. Marriage is not legally possible, but cohabitation agreements among same-sex couples have been possible for almost one decade and include the same legal rights as marriage. Nowadays, same-sex couples can also foster children. Also, in recent years a number of anti-discrimination laws were passed in Greece - including gender, as well as laws against hate speech and hate crimes. Moreover, transgender people have the right to have their gender identity recognized and to change their legal sex without having to undergo surgical alteration of their genitals in order to have key identity documents changed, but a court decision is needed.

However, despite these positive developments LGBTQIA+ people may still encounter discrimination and racist violence in daily life and at work.



REPORTING A CRIME

? *Which crimes are punishable in Greece (a non-exclusive list)*

We cannot list all possible crimes here, but we want to mention some to give you an idea. In general, as you know it probably from your country of origin all crimes have distinct level of severity (petty offences, to misdemeanour up to felonies), are accordingly handled by different courts and can result under certain circumstances in a sentence of acquittal or be punished with a little monetary fine up to life long prison sentences.

Foreigner specific charges that could lead to court proceedings in Greece are “entering or exiting Greece irregularly”, which is punishable by law. In practice, most of the legal proceedings (courts) refugees are affected with concern the charge of “(attempted) illegal exit of Greece” and/or “use of false documents”.

Law also forbids third persons to “help” a person to irregularly enter/stay/exit the country. Practically this also means that persons supporting someone who is undocumented in Greece (in exchange of money or even without benefit) can face legal charges amongst others for transporting them, housing them or even just giving out food and water. We don’t mention that in order to scare you off seeking help when you lack documents. You can always contact refugee support and human rights NGOs once you are in Greece for advice and aid, but you should be aware about possible limitations or even fear individuals but also organisations face as Greek law in practice has been lately very strict in this matter and a number of people who only wanted to help (without gaining any benefits) have faced legal proceedings for such reasons.

In general, refugees as well as all other foreigners and Greeks can face charges and sentences based on criminal law such as amongst others fraud, theft, drug selling, prostitution, arson, extortion, physical harm, kidnapping, smuggling, murder, being a member of a criminal organisation etc.

Be aware that many common forms of survival economies can be punished even though Greece has a large black economy and it is very common practice to work unofficially. One example is street vending without a special permit, another is working in any company without a work contract, health insurance etc. In the latter case both employer and employee can face legal proceedings.

Another important thing to know is that “child neglect” and “child abuse as a form of discipline” are punishable too. In Greece, as in all of Europe, children (under the age of 18) should be taken care of in their “best interest” and protected from any harm to their wellbeing. When professionals such as teachers, social workers, psychologists or others involved with children in daily life observe that a child does not receive enough food, attention, proper clothing, health care, love, is not sent to school or is exposed to dangers due to the (mental or physical) absence of its parent(s), they have the obligation to further investigate if the parents are adequately taking care of their child/ren. In the worst case, this may result in the temporary extraction of the child/ren from the family and a placement in a public care shelter until the parent(s) can prove to be able to take proper care of the child again.

Lastly, where child custody is shared, both parents have to inform each other and agree for any change of the child’s country of permanent residence as well as for traveling abroad. If one parent is considered to have disappeared together with the child/ren without consent from the other parent, this can be punished by law. This is why you should seek the other parent’s written consent or when this is not possible an official document proving sole custody before traveling out of Greece.

? *What I maybe don't know about when law protects me from crimes*

Any form of discrimination, racism, sexism and hate crimes are forbidden in Greece. That means, if you are insulted, attacked or mistreated in any form because of your origin, culture or gender, you can report this as a crime.

Any form of forced labour, work exploitation or work with a payment in the form of food or housing (instead of money) is illegal. It is also illegal for an employer not to hire a woman because she is pregnant or a mother. Also, an

employer cannot terminate a contract of a pregnant woman while working and for 18 months after she gives birth.

Offering or promising you a shelter (in a house or flat), food or other basic needs items or free transportation to another country in exchange of sexual services / a sexual relationship is not permitted but can be punishable according to law as coercion, exploitation or other charges.

If you have come to Greece with the help of an individual or group that brought you for less or no money in exchange of a future payback through work or even prostitution you are a survivor of work or sex trafficking. These forms of exploitation are forbidden and punishable. You may seek specialised help here: [National Human Trafficking Resource Line 1109](#).

Stalking and internet crime, sexual harassment (this includes any unfair treatment in response to you rejecting or resisting an unwelcome verbal, non-verbal or physical act of a sexual nature.), threats, assault, violence, or any forced sexual act (i.e. rape) from any men (including your husband/partner) is a criminal offence.

In marriage, abuse is also when a husband leaves their wife with no money for essentials such as food and clothing or doesn't give them access to their own bank accounts, or withholds her legal document and passport without her consent.

The use of violence is prohibited by law also within the family. Parents are not allowed to use violence against children; or in front of the children. According to Greek law, children shall be protected from witnessing violence in their family, also, regardless of whether the violence is performed against them directly. So, if one parent abuses the other parent in front of their child, this is considered as the crime of domestic violence against both the parent and their child. Anyone can report such incidents and take the parents to court. Any type of violence is prohibited both against children and between parents, from any family member to any other.

Also forced marriage is illegal in Greece. A wedding that has been officiated because of threat, deception or fraud can be annulled by a court decision. Marriage between minors is also illegal. According to law, only people aged 18

and over can get married. However, exceptions can be made if a court considers the best interest and opinion of the underage couple.

Female genital mutilation is also considered a crime and prohibited in Greece. Anyone who encourages or convinces a girl or woman to suffer genital mutilation in any way is punished by imprisonment.

? *I have been the survivor of domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, exploitation or other forms of abuse and rights violations in Greece. Can I report this*

You can report a crime to the police or the judicial authorities. You have a right to report a crime independent of your legal status in Greece (even when you have no documents), but if you lack (valid) documents you could be arrested and detained for “illegal stay” in Greece. However, law theoretically protects victims of domestic violence and trafficking when they report a crime. You will need a translator with you and in any case it’s better to not go alone to the police station but with your lawyer, social worker or doctor/psychologist or at least someone Greek. Refugees and migrants especially when not speaking Greek often report of racist behaviour in police stations or a lack of interest and cooperation if you are all alone. As a victim of a crime you are probably already in a bad psychological state and you don’t need to have more negative experiences.

You can report a crime also with a complaint lodged before a public prosecutor directly. You need the help of a lawyer to write the complaint in Greek and inform you about this procedure and the differences to a complaint filed at the police station.

! Attention: In some cases where you have been the victim of a crime, you may not have reported it to the police but others may (for example neighbours or other witnesses). It’s possible even without your report that the police and judicial authorities will investigate and press charges against the perpetrator.

? *Are there specific residence permits issued for victims or witnesses of specific crimes*

Yes. Under very specific circumstances Greek law (4251/2014 article 19a) entitles you to apply to the Minister of Interior for a residence permit on humanitarian grounds on the condition that the competent Greek prosecutor has initiated a criminal prosecution in case you are a victim of trafficking, domestic violence or severe work exploitation or if you attend a government recognized mental health addiction treatment. Also victims or witnesses of other severe crimes may apply for humanitarian residence permits. This is a separate procedure from the asylum application, and you can not run both procedures in parallel.

! **Attention:** So seek information and advice from a specialised lawyer about this possibility.



REPORTING RIGHTS ABUSES BY THE STATE

? *Where can I report rights abuses by the state*

- ◆ **Greek Ombudsman:** You can report any human rights violations by Greek authorities here in this independent institution. Greek authorities include staff of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum (for example in the camps) or the Asylum Service whose staff interview you, decide your claim for asylum or generally work in the asylum offices. They also include public services such as the tax office, municipality offices, civil registry or public hospitals etc. Your complaint will be documented and followed-up. It is important to note that the Ombudsman will not intervene unless you have first tried to resolve the issue directly with the authorities first. You can file a complaint in person here: Address: Chalkokondyli 17, Athens. On Monday – Friday 08.30-14:00, and every Wednesday to 16:30. You can also file a complaint online: <https://www.synigoros.gr/en/anafora/ipovoli-anaforas>
- ◆ **Racist Violence Recording Network:** This is a network of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) collecting information on incidents of racist violence occurring in Greece. A great number of NGOs supporting asylum seekers and refugees in Greece are part of this network and you can report to them in order to document what happened to you and learn your rights as a victim/survivor. Note: This does not substitute a formal complaint before the police. The internet page of the network can be found here: <https://rvrn.org>
- ◆ **Recording Mechanism of Informal Forced Returns:** This is another initiative by NGOs. If you have experienced one or more forced (unlawful) returns from Greece to Turkey or elsewhere, you can contact one of the Greek NGOs participating in this network to document (if you want anonymously) what happened to you. Again, this does not substitute a formal complaint to the police. To know where you can report this, contact the network here: Email: recordingmechanism@nchr.gr. Tel: +30 6947977706 or +30 2107233224

- ◆ **Border Violence Monitoring Network:** This is a transnational network documenting pushbacks and border violence. Again, it is unrelated to the government and operating independently. You can contact them directly on WhatsApp +30 6989133548
- ◆ **Fundamental Rights Complaint Mechanism:** This has been newly established. It is a mechanism of the state's fundamental rights officer (FRO), where you can submit a complaint if you believe that your fundamental rights have been violated by the state during your attempt to reach Greece, or in the reception and asylum procedures in the country. Submissions are possible currently only in Greek or English. Seek help from a lawyer to make a proper submission. Find the form here: <https://migration.gov.gr/en/fro-complaints/>



COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND HOW TO PREVENT THEM

Core family = In European law there are different rights connected to the core family (wife and husband and minor children) and others for the broader family (parents of adults, adult siblings, adult children, uncles, aunts, cousins etc.)

Family name/ last name = During the asylum procedure you will be asked for your personal information from the very beginning. This includes your “name”, your “family name/last name”, your “fathers name” and your “mothers name”. The “name” is for example Maryam, Aida, Huda, Jenny. It is given to one individual by her/his parents. The “family name/last name” in Europe is often attached to all of the core family, also passed on by our parents to us and sometimes changed/ taken newly after marriage. In some countries outside of Europe this idea of family names/last names doesn’t exist, but people hold their “name” plus the “names” of their fathers and grandfathers.

“Credibility” = this is whether the Asylum Service trust what you’re saying and believe you, based on the information you provide (when answering questions in interviews and in any documents submitted as part of your case). In order to succeed in your claim for asylum, you should be internally consistent (not contradict yourself) and externally consistent (if the Asylum Service search online or ask experts, will what you say be backed up and verified?) Not everything from your personal story can be verified by external sources, so it’s important to be clear and detailed in order to be believed. If you state facts / events and hand in documents that contradict each other (for example in the dates or other information), then you may not be considered credible. If you are generalising and not sharing a lot of information but only a summary of your story while looking bored or amused this is also not helpful. On the other hand, if you are able to explain the main events, your thoughts, beliefs etc. with detail and in your own personal way while also showing your emotions honestly, you are more likely to be considered

credible. Try to remember anything relevant with all your senses including what you saw, smelled, heard, felt to be able to describe well.

Psychological problems = Psychological problems refer to mental conditions that may show themselves in symptoms such as stress, problems to sleep, often feelings of fear or panic, pain or numbness of body that have no physical origins, fainting not connected to any physical disease or neurological condition, hearing voices, severe ruminations etc. Only the difficulties you may have experienced on your way to Europe may be sufficient to cause you such symptoms. In Europe, it is very common for people to see psychologists (who are qualified professionals keeping information confidential) in order to cope with negative experiences and feelings or symptoms that cause you to feel bad. As you may come from a country where it is uncommon to seek therapy from a psychologist or even perceived shameful it is crucial to understand that talking openly about psychological problems is crucial and helpful for your asylum procedure, for your mental health and it won't deprive you from any rights - it will also not deprive you from your rights as a parent!

Are you fine? = When being asked if you are fine during the asylum procedure, this is not just meant as an act of polite conversation but it is a question meant to understand if you have any sickness and/or psychological problems. This is important information as it may determine if you are vulnerable and it will allow the case worker to understand how to treat you during the interview and how to estimate your credibility.

What is your religion? = In Greece, you can choose to be religious or not and you can also choose what you believe in. The question within the asylum procedure is asked from that perspective of freedom of choice. It is meant to understand your current religiousness or non-religiousness or choice of religion. So even if you have been born into one specific religion, or if your country only allows specific religion(s), you should freely state your current choice/religious belief or your doubts on the topic, if you haven't cleared your mind on that yet. It is especially important, if you have converted your religion, to state your current chosen religion.

To which ethnic group/nationality do you belong? = Please name both your ethnic and national origin from fathers and mothers side. Both may be relevant to your case.

Where are you born? = Be specific even if you come from the smallest village on earth. Google map finds them all! State the village/city name, the region or prefecture, the country. If they cannot understand where the place is, show it on google maps yourself.

When did you leave your home country? How long did you stay in X (transit country)? = The lawyer/asylum service case worker here wants to understand the date (day) you crossed the border from your home country and stepped on another countries territory. Specify when you left your home town or village in order to escape and separately when you actually left your home country's territory. When asking how long you have been in one country you may have crossed on your way to Greece such as Turkey, the lawyer/case worker wants to know the period from the date you actually managed to step your feet on the country's territory (earth) until the date you stepped on the next country's territory. Periods you have been in one country attempting (repeatedly) to move on to the next country are still considered days/weeks/months you were actually still there. For example: "I managed to reach Turkey in 5. May 2023 and I stayed there for around 20 days. In these 20 days I was trying to leave Turkey for about 14 days, crossing the border to Greece but being sent back several times."

■ **Attention:** It is not important to remember exact days (if you cannot), but at least months or seasons and years.

■ **Attention:** The chronology of events that lead to your escape from your home country but also of your journey to Greece are important to be clear, so that the Asylum Service / your lawyer understands your reasons of persecution better and that they believe you (credibility).

Importance of exact terms and information = If you have been "tortured", use the term and don't say instead I experienced "violence". If you survived "rape", try to use the term even if it's hard to say it out loud. If you speak about your second husband, clarify that you married twice.

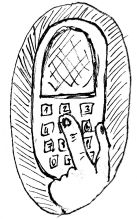
■ **Attention:** Anything connected to your story may be of importance. The more carefully you listen to the questions and answer precisely, the better for you! Your lawyer or the case worker of the asylum service or the

translator do not know anything about you beforehand. Help them understand for your own sake!

Attention: Only the words coming out of your mouth will be written (recorded) in your case. You have to speak and explain to increase your chances to be well understood. What is maybe a common experience or “normal” for you, may be something absolutely unknown and new to the person sitting in front of you.



CONTACTS OF ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORT REFUGEES



1. LEGAL AID IN ATHENS

Greek Council for Refugees - GCR (legal and psychosocial support and educational program)

The largest and oldest Greek NGO working with refugees. Ask for support by calling their helpline. Via direct contact, WhatsApp or Telegram, Monday from 9 to 12 o'clock:

Arabic +30 6936543493

Farsi / Dari +30 6907035832

Lingala/ French +30 6948065771

Kurmanji / Sorani +30 6907035845

Turkish +30 6936543491

<https://www.facebook.com/GCRhelpdesk>

Office phone.: +30 2103800990-1.

Address: Solomou 25, Exarchia, Athens

Refugee Support Aegean - RSA (individual legal and social support)

Offices in Athens, Chios and Lesvos. The small organisation supports individual cases during all levels of the asylum procedure or family reunification (specially with Germany and

Switzerland). Also supports specifically beneficiaries of international protection sent back from other EU-countries and survivors of shipwrecks or family members in search for their relatives at the Greek borders. Contact general email for your help requests. If you are a supporter fill in the referral form (here). Email to info@rsaegean.org or call the central office: Tel.:+30 2271100466

Refugee Legal Support - RLS (legal support in Athens)

Office in Athens mainly provides preparation for interviews and assistance with family reunification.

Contact +30 6940662583 – only able to answer in English, interpreters available in all languages if appointment offered. If outside Athens, information and signposting only!

E-mail:

coordinator@refugeelegalsupport.org

Equal Rights Beyond Borders (legal support)

Specialising in family reunification cases to Germany. Offices in Athens, Kos and Chios.

Contact directly on WhatsApp:

French +30 6944707738

Arabic +30 6946941716

Farsi +30 6946716406

English / Turkish +30 6946210994

HIAS

(legal aid and psychosocial support)

Offices in Athens and Lesvos Island.

Focus on supporting children, survivors on torture or gender-based violence and other highly vulnerable groups. First contact via phone, WhatsApp / Viber call or message:

Farsi +30 6944134160

Arabic +30 6944134335

French and Ukrainian +30 6942248387

**Solidarity Now
(legal, psychosocial, employability/
accounting support)**

Go directly to their office to be registered and explain your needs.

Open: Monday-Friday 9:00-17:00.

Address: Domokou 2, Athens.

Email: athens@solidaritynow.org

**European Lawyers in Lesbos - ELIL
(legal aid for first instance asylum
procedure)**

Offices in Athens and Lesbos. In Athens you can find them on Mondays 10-17 in the Victoria Community Centre.

Address: Filis 68, Victoria Square, Athens

WhatsApp contact: +30 6946234282

**Generation 2.0 for Rights, Equality
and Diversity**

**(legal advice about immigration
residence permits and citizenship,
employability, career counseling)**

For immigrants and beneficiaries of international protection only! By appointment only!

Tel. +30 2130884499

Email to info@g2red.org

Weekly listings of relevant job vacancies for all Greece: [https://g2red.org/el/
category/job-adverts-thursday/](https://g2red.org/el/category/job-adverts-thursday/)

**Greek Forum of Refugees
(community and information
provision)**

No legal representation and advice only by appointment!

Email to info@refugees.gr

[https://refugees.gr/information-
awareness/?](https://refugees.gr/information-awareness/?)

[lang=undefined¤cy=undefined](https://refugees.gr/information-awareness/?lang=undefined¤cy=undefined)

**2. LEGAL AID IN NORTHERN
GREECE / THESSALONIKI**

**Greek Council for Refugees - GCR
(legal and psychosocial support and
educational program)**

Request support by contacting their Helpline – direct call, Viber or WhatsApp:

Monday-Friday 9:00-16:00:

Arabic +30 6936543485

Farsi / Dari +30 6936543501

Somali +30 6936543431

<https://www.facebook.com/GCRhelpdesk>

Office phone for Thessaloniki: +30 2103800990-1.

Address: Danaidon Street 9.

**Solidarity Now
(see above)**

Open: Monday-Friday 9:00-17:00.

Address: 29A Ptolemaion str.,
Thessaloniki.

**Equal Legal Aid
(legal support in Northern Greece for
all levels of the asylum procedure)**

Thessaloniki based. Contact directly on WhatsApp +30 6970017915.

Open: Monday-Friday, from 9:00-18:00

**3. LEGAL AID ON THE GREEK
ISLANDS**

Lesvos Island (Mytilini)

Legal Centre Lesbos

Contact directly on WhatsApp: +30

6949618883, call +30 2251040665 or

email to info@legalcentrelesvos.org.

Address: Sapfous 2, Mytilene, Opening

hours: Monday – Thursday, 10:00-14:00

Greek Council for Refugees - GCR
Contact: Farsi / Dari +30 6945841229
during Monday-Thursday 9:00-16:00

Refugee Support Aegean - RSA
Email to: info@rsaegean.org

HIAS

First contact via phone, WhatsApp /
Viber call or message:
Farsi +30 6944134160
Arabic +30 6944134335
French and Ukrainian +30 6942248387

METAdrasi

Kara Tepes (Pedio Volis), Mavrovouni
81100, Lesbos - Container of Metadrasi -
Protection Hub
Wednesday + Thursday 09.00-13.00,
Office: E. Vostani 9, Mytilini, 81100 -
appointments upon request,
Tel: +30 6908091425 or + 30 6908091403
(both WhatsApp) or email to
reflegalaid.metadrasi@gmail.com

Samos Island

I Have Rights

Contact directly on WhatsApp:
+30 6973528096 or email to
samos@ihaverights.eu
Address: Gimnasiarchou Katevaini 3,
Vathy

METAdrasi

Reception and Identification Center of
Samos, Zervou area, Vathy, Samos, 83100
- container 30
Tuesday + Thursday 10.30-12.30
Tel: +30 6908091384 (WhatsApp)
Email to
reflegalaid.metadrasi@gmail.com

Chios Island

Equal Rights Beyond Borders

For legal aid on Chios Islands contact
directly on WhatsApp:
French, Arabic + English +30 6945531748
Farsi +30 6947799438
Email to chios@equal-rights.org

METAdrasi

Reception and Identification Center of
Chios (VIAL), Chalkeios, Chios, 82100
(Chalkeios, Chios, 82100) - container is
inside the VIAL building, next to asylum
service's containers
Tuesday + Thursday 12.00-14.00
Tel: + 30 6908091403 or +30 6986074125
(both WhatsApp) or email to
reflegalaid.metadrasi@gmail.com

Kos Island

Equal Rights Beyond Borders

For legal aid on Kos Island contact
directly on WhatsApp:
French + English +30 6989887971
Arabic +30 6987461732
Farsi +30 6987462602
Email to kos@equal-rights.org

METAdrasi

Reception and Identification Center of
Kos, Pyli, Kos, 85300 - UNHCR container
for actors in accommodation zone
Wednesday 10.00-12.00 A1 section,
12.00-14.00 A2 section
Tel: +30 6908091404 or +30 6908091377
(both WhatsApp)
Email to
reflegalaid.metadrasi@gmail.com

Leros Island

METAdrasi

Visiting days and hours at the Closed Controlled Access Center of Leros: Tuesday and Wednesday, 10:00-13:00, office 307, Administration Domain. Tel: +30 6908091427 (direct and WhatsApp)
Email to: reflegalaid.metadrasi@gmail.com

4. SOME EXTRA ORGANISATIONS ONLY FOR WOMEN

Action for Women (psychosocial support, activities and education)

Athens based. Contact directly by WhatsApp message for an appointment: +30 6945039807,

United African Women's Organisation

Athens based. Email: https://www.africanwomens.gr/?page_id=26

JRS Women's Day Centre (community centre, showers, laundry, activities, social support).

You can come directly to the centre in Athens. Address: Smirnis 27. Open: 14:30-17:00, Tuesday and Thursday 9:30-13:00 only. Message on WhatsApp for appointments/information: +30 6947697830

IRIDA women centre

(legal advise, psycho-social support, medical referrals, language and computer classes, child safe space and creative workshop, school enrollment, employability support)

Venizelou Street 59, Thessaloniki. Tel. +30 2311296392 or message on WhatsApp on +30 6907289836. E-mail: irida@iridacenter.org. Languages spoken: Arabic, Farsi, Ukrainian, French, Greek and English

The following organisations also offer support but are currently more difficult to access. You can still try contacting them directly or through your lawyer or social worker:

Melissa Network

(safe space for women, integration program including language classes, psychosocial support and community activities)

Address: 18 Feron, open Monday-Friday 10:00-17:00. French Arabic and Farsi/ Dari interpreters. Tel. +30 2108218486. <https://www.facebook.com/Melissanetworkgreece33/>

Amina Centre, by SAO Association

(Psychosocial support, different workshops for women, language classes, humanitarian aid.) **Note: ONLY upon referral by partner organisations!**

Monday-Friday 9:00-17:00. Tel: +30 6907496550. <https://www.facebook.com/SAOassociation/>

5. SERVICES FOR UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Call the government's emergency hotline for unaccompanied minors on WhatsApp/Viber +30 6942773030, if you are in need of accommodation or other essential support.

Network for Children's Rights (legal and psychosocial support and help applying for accommodation for homeless minors, creative and educational groups)

Minors can come directly to the address: Alkamenous Street 11A, Athens.
Open Monday-Friday 9:00-19:00. <https://ddp.gr/en/contact-us-2/>

Velos (activities and support for young people aged 16-25, including legal and social support, employability services, English classes, showers, laundry, hot food)

Young people can come directly to the address: Tzortz Street 26, Athens.
Open Monday-Friday 11:00-17:00.
<https://www.facebook.com/veloyouthathens/>

Faros (activities and support for minors, including social support, showers, clothes, laundry, food)

Young people can come directly to the address: Elpidos 7, Athens.
Open: Monday-Friday 9:00-18:00.
<https://www.facebook.com/farosgreece/>

ARSIS (legal, psychosocial and support for minors including request for accommodation)

They have street workers and you can also come directly to the office: Address: 6 Orfanidou Street, Thessaloniki.
Info desk Monday-Friday 10:00-18:00, also accepting calls between 18:00-22:00.
Contact on WhatsApp: +30 6908070490 or office +30 2316015307

6. EMERGENCY NUMBERS FROM THE GOVERNMENT

European Emergency Number: 112
Police: 100
Fire Service: 199
Medical Emergency: 166
Coast Guard: 108

Registration of Asylum Claim

ONLY FOR NATIONALS FROM SYRIA, AFGHANISTAN, SOMALIA, IRAQ AND BANGLADESH, PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

admissibility interview

Negative decision

Positive decision

Appeal

Negative decision

Positive decision

Subsequent application

Positive decision

Negative decision

Court Appeal

asylum interview

Negative decision

Appeal

Negative decision

Subsequent application

Positive decision

Negative decision

Court Appeal

Positive decision

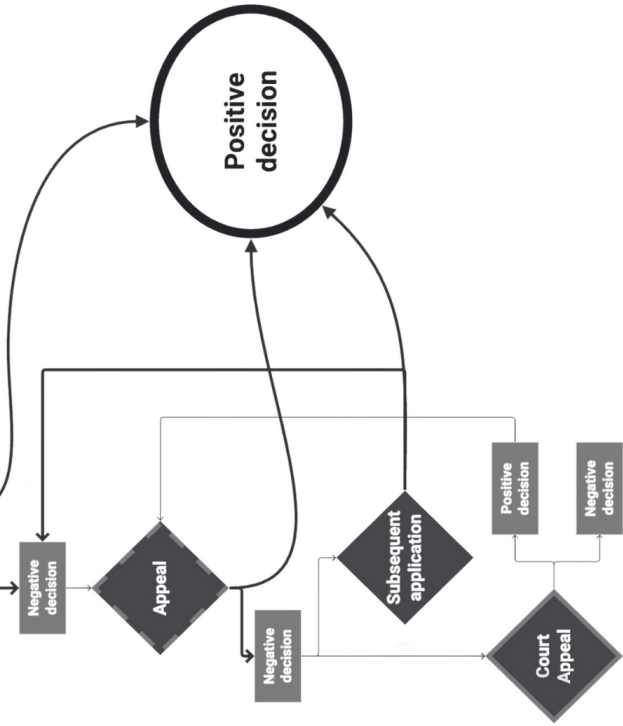
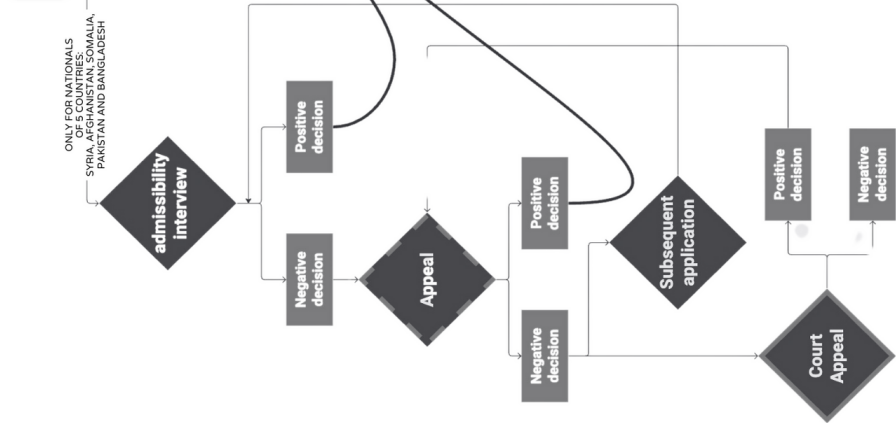
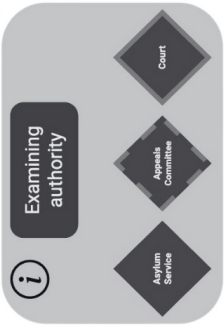


Examining authority

Asylum Service

Appeals Committee

Court



Thanks to all women asking us many questions! You are the ones who planted the seeds to grow this info guide!

Thanks also to all other comrades and friends who helped in many ways to translate, to put the information together, to verify it, to illustrate, visualise and print it!

Solidarity with women on the move and all those standing with them and in memory of those who didn't make it!



IMPRESSUM

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December 2023

We wish you good luck!

