



## ASYLUM INTERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLIENTS

You have been invited to an asylum interview by the Finnish Immigration Service. Carefully read these instructions on your rights and obligations during the interview. If you have any questions about these instructions, you can ask them at the start of your interview from an employee of the Finnish Immigration Service.

### What is the purpose of the interview?

- You have applied for asylum in Finland. The reasons for why you seek asylum in Finland and why you cannot return to your home country will be discussed at the interview.
- It is important that you explain all the criteria for your application in this interview. If you have new criteria after the interview or you wish to provide new information relating to your earlier criteria, please inform the Finnish Immigration Service or the court processing your appeal about the matter immediately.
- Only your asylum application will be discussed during the interview. If you wish to apply for a residence permit based on other grounds, you must submit a separate application and pay the processing fee. Grounds for a residence permit include work and family ties, for example.

## Your rights at interview

- You have the right to bring legal counsel with you to your interview. The legal counsel will participate in the interview at their own discretion.
- An interpreter will attend the interview. The interpreter is to objectively interpret everything that is said during the interview. The interpreter will either be present in the interview room or will interpret by telephone or through a video link.
- The interviewer, interpreter and legal counsel are bound by confidentiality, meaning that they must not disclose anything they hear during the interview to outsiders, not even to your family members.
- As a rule, all documents concerning you are confidential.

## Your obligations at interview

- You have the obligation to discuss and provide information about your reasons for seeking asylum. It is in your interest to tell us truthfully about all factors affecting your case at the interview.
- It is also in your best interest to discuss difficult issues. They may be crucial to your application.
- If you cannot remember, or if you do not know something, do not try to invent an answer. Providing false information will make your story less credible.
- Provide your correct personal information at the interview. You will need a reliable identification document issued by an authority in order to later change the personal information you have provided.
- Providing false personal information is a criminal offence punishable under the law.
- Please note that providing false personal or other information or concealing information may lead to the cancellation of a permit that has already been issued and complicate any other cases you may have.

## How to prepare for your interview

- Read all the instructions and brochures you have received from the authorities before your interview. It is important that you also read our brochures about the Dublin procedure. If you do not have these brochures, you can find them on the website of the Finnish Immigration Service at [migri.fi/en/brochures-and-publications](https://migri.fi/en/brochures-and-publications), under the headline 'Asylum and Dublin procedure'.
- If you want the interpreter to be either female or male, please inform a reception centre employee well in advance of your interview. The reception centre shall forward your request to the Finnish Immigration Service.

- If your physical or mental health may affect the interview, please notify a reception centre employee. With your consent, the reception centre may contact the Finnish Immigration Service concerning the matter before the interview.
- Bring something to eat or money for lunch with you.
- Bring any medication you need during the day with you.
- Bring all documents and evidence related to your application with you.
- Do not bring children with you, unless they have been invited to the interview. If you need someone to look after your child during the interview, please let the reception centre know well in advance.
- Arrive on time. Reserve enough time for travel to the interview. Your reception centre will provide instructions on how to get to the Finnish Immigration Service office.

## **What to do on the day of your interview at the Finnish Immigration Service office**

- When you enter the premises of the Finnish Immigration Service, you may have to go through a security inspection.
- Present your reception centre resident card to a security guard of the Finnish Immigration Service.
- Only people invited to an interview and other people approved in advance by the Finnish Immigration Service are permitted to enter the waiting area.
- If you wish to bring a support person with you, s/he should send a written request to the Finnish Immigration Service in advance. Otherwise, the interviewer will decide at the start of the interview whether your support person is allowed to attend the interview. Your support person is not your legal counsel and will not participate in the investigation of the case.
- Your interview will be conducted by an employee of the Finnish Immigration Service. The interviewer will collect you from the waiting area.
- The interview will be recorded. In addition, the room is equipped with a recording security camera.
- The interview may last all day. There will be a lunch break and other breaks, if necessary. You may ask for a break any time you wish.
- If necessary, the interview will be continued another day. In such case, you will receive a new invitation to an interview after some time.

## **What happens during the interview?**

- First, the interviewer will tell you what happens during the interview and make sure that you have understood your rights and obligations. If you do not understand something, please ask. If you do not understand the interpreter, please let the interviewer know.

- If your detailed personal information has not been previously collected, the interviewer will first ask for this information. The interviewer will ask who your family consists of, where you have lived, and what route you travelled to Finland.
- You will then be interviewed about why you had to flee your home country and why you cannot return there. Speak honestly and in as much detail as possible about everything that has happened to you.
- The interviewer will ask you follow-up questions about events you have discussed. Answer honestly. Let the interviewer know if you do not know or cannot remember something.
- Certain general questions will be asked from all asylum seekers. The interviewer will also ask you questions such as how you would feel about being removed from the country and being prohibited to enter.
- At the end of the interview, the interpreter will read you the protocol that the interviewer has written down. If you notice any mistakes in the protocol, you must notify the interviewer. You can also make additions to the protocol. The protocol will then be signed, and you will receive a copy of it.

## **How will the Finnish Immigration Service make the decision?**

- Based on your application, you may be granted international protection or a residence permit due to a personal humanitarian reason or because you have been a victim of human trafficking.
- The Finnish Immigration Service will make a decision in your case based on the information you have provided in your asylum interview as well as other evidence presented in your case.
- If necessary, the Finnish Immigration Service may contact your home country to verify the validity of your documents. Authorities will not know about this and the verification process will not cause danger to you or your family.
- If you wish to provide additional information at a later date, please do so in writing. We will not discuss your case over the telephone, because we cannot ascertain the identity of callers.
- If your application is rejected, you may be deported and prohibited from entering Finland and other countries that are party to the Schengen Agreement.
- If you have new criteria to apply for asylum after the Finnish Immigration Service's decision concerning your present application has become legally valid, submit a new application promptly. You should have a reason for not telling about the new criteria earlier. The reason should be something that you were unable to affect yourself. The Finnish Immigration Service will then assess whether it will investigate your new application.