

## **Asylum interview of an unaccompanied minor at the Finnish Immigration Service**

You have been invited to an asylum interview by the Finnish Immigration Service. These instructions provide information about your rights and obligations during the interview. Go through them with your representative. If something is unclear to you, ask for more information from your representative or 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 in 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.

### **Your rights during the interview**

- Your representative will come with you to the interview.
- You have the right to bring legal counsel with you to your interview.

- If you need a counsel, your representative will find one for you for the interview. If your representative does not find you a counsel for the interview, the interview can go ahead without a counsel.
- An interpreter will attend the interview. The interpreter will 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, representative and legal counsel are bound by confidentiality, meaning that they are not allowed to talk about anything they hear during the interview to outsiders. All documents concerning you are also confidential. However, matters you tell us about at the interview may have an impact on the processing of your family member's application. In these cases, we will take the matters into account in your family member's case. However, we can keep information secret from your family member if giving the information to them would put you or your loved one at risk or harm you. You can tell us what you think about this in the interview.
- The Finnish Immigration Service may attempt to find or trace your actual guardian. Actual guardian means a person who has looked after you in your home country. Only information necessary for tracing will be used for the tracing of your actual guardian. The Finnish Immigration Service will carry out the tracing in a manner that does not cause any damage or harm to you or your family.

## Your obligations during the interview

- You have the obligation to discuss and provide information about your reasons for seeking asylum. Talk about everything related to your application during the interview.
- It is also in your best interest to discuss difficult issues. They may be crucial to your application.
- Tell the truth. If you cannot remember, or if you do not know something, do not try to invent an answer. Tell the interviewer that you do not know or cannot remember. If you don't tell the truth, this can make it more difficult to believe your story.
- Give your real name and date of birth at the interview. If you do not have any documents to confirm your identity, you must try your best to get these documents and give them to the Finnish Immigration Service. Examples of such documents are identity documents or a travel document. However, the Finnish Immigration Service cannot make you do anything that would put your safety, or the safety of your loved ones, at risk to get the documents. If you want to change your personal information later, you will need a passport or other official certificate of identity.
- The Finnish Immigration Service saves your personal information and the grounds for your application in the case management system for immigration matters, which is an official register. Giving false information for an official register is a punishable offence. In Finland, persons who are aged 15 or older have criminal liability.
- Providing false personal information to an authority is a criminal offence punishable under the law. In Finland, persons who are aged 15 or older have criminal liability.
- 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 through all the instructions and brochures you have received from the authorities with your representative 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](https://migri.fi/en/brochures), under the headline 'Asylum and Dublin procedure'.

If you have a justified reason to ask that the interpreter or interviewer is a man or a woman, tell your representative about this well before the interview. They will inform the Finnish Immigration Service about your wishes. The Finnish Immigration Service will assess if the reason is justified.

- If there is something about your health that may affect the interview, notify your representative or a reception centre employee in advance.
- Your reception centre will make sure that you get to your interview. Plan your travel arrangements with instructors well in advance.
- Ask your reception centre to give you a packed lunch or money for lunch to bring with you.
- Bring any medication you need during the day with you.
- Bring all documents and evidence related to your application with you.

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

- You cannot change the date of the interview without a good reason. If you are sick on the day of the interview, tell your reception centre about it at once. Your representative must send a report given by the nurse or doctor at the reception centre to the Finnish Immigration Service at the latest one week after the date of the interview. If you fail to come to the asylum interview without a justified reason, a decision can be made without interviewing you.
- Your representative and counsel will be at the interview with you.
- When you enter the premises of the Finnish Immigration Service, you may have to go through a security inspection.
- Show the customer card you received from the reception centre to the security guard at 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 would like to bring a support person, your representative or support person must ask the Finnish Immigration Service about this in writing before the interview. 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. This employee will either be there in person or interview you via a video link.
- The interviewer will collect you, your representative and your legal counsel from the waiting area.
- The interview will be recorded. In addition, the room is equipped with a CCTV 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. They will also ask you about information that affects the decision about examining your application in Finland, or not processing it.
- 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. Do not invent answers. 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 or being prohibited to enter.
- Your representative and legal counsel may not answer questions on your behalf. They can give you advice during the interview and remind you of important things you have told them earlier.
- In the interview, you can give the Finnish Immigration Service information that may affect the decision in your case. For example, if you are suspected of an offence in Finland, or if you have been convicted of an offence in this country, this may affect the processing of your case at the Finnish Immigration Service. If necessary, the Finnish Immigration Service will give you an opportunity to give your opinion about the matter during the interview.
- The interviewer will make notes on a computer of what is said during the interview. These notes are called a protocol. At the end of the interview, the interpreter will read the protocol to you. If you notice any mistakes in the protocol, tell the interviewer. You can also make additions to the protocol. The protocol will then be signed and a copy of it will be given to your representative.

## 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 and other evidence presented in your case. The Finnish Immigration Service may also use public sources to look for information that supports its decision.
- If necessary, the Finnish Immigration Service may contact your home country to verify the validity of your documents. Authorities in your home country 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 later, give it to your representative or counsel, who will deliver it to the Finnish Immigration Service. 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.