

## **Asylum interview with a child seeking asylum with their family at the Finnish Immigration Service**

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

### **What is the purpose of the interview?**

- Your family has applied for asylum in Finland. The Finnish Immigration Service will investigate the reasons for why you seek asylum in Finland and why you cannot return to your home country.
- Your guardians will speak in their own asylum interviews about their own and your family's shared reasons for seeking asylum.
- The purpose of this interview is to give you a chance to talk about things that are important to you. If something bad has happened to you or if you are afraid of something, you can talk about it in the interview. It is important that you tell us

about everything you know during this meeting. Talk freely and tell things in your own words. If needed, the interviewer may help you by asking questions.

## Your rights and obligations during the interview

- Your guardian will usually be present at the interview. You will also be interviewed without your guardian present for a short period of time.
- 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.
- If you need a counsel, your guardian will find one for you for the interview. If your guardian 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 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.
- 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 give false information, this makes it more difficult to believe your story.
- Give your real name and date of birth in the interview. 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.
- Providing false personal information to an authority or giving false information to be entered into an official register is a punishable offence. In Finland, persons who are aged 15 or older have criminal liability.

## How to prepare for your interview

- Read through the instructions and brochures you have received from the authorities with your guardian 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 have a justified reason to ask that the interpreter or interviewer is a man or a woman, tell an employee of the reception centre about this well before the interview. The reception centre will forward your request to the Finnish Immigration Service. The Finnish Immigration Service will assess if the reason is justified.
- If there is something about your health that may affect the interview, tell your guardian or a reception centre employee in advance. With your consent or that of your guardian, the reception centre may contact the Finnish Immigration Service concerning the matter before the interview.

## **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, you or your guardian must let your reception centre know about it at once. Your guardian or counsel 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.
- Please arrive on time.
- When you enter the premises of the Finnish Immigration Service, you may have to go through a security inspection.
- If you have a customer card that you received from your reception centre, show it 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 guardian 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 and your guardian from the waiting area.
- The interview will be recorded. In addition, the room is equipped with a CCTV camera.
- We will take breaks as required. You can ask for a break any time you wish.

## **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.
- The interviewer will ask you general questions, such as what your life was like in your home country, and what it is like in Finland. They will ask you to explain why you have had to flee your home country and why you cannot go back there. The interviewer may also ask follow-up questions. Answer honestly. Do not invent answers. Let the interviewer know if you do not know or cannot remember something.
- 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 say 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. The interviewer will review the protocol with you in part or in full if the Finnish Immigration Service considers this necessary. Tell the interviewer if you notice any errors. If the interviewer does not check the protocol with you in full during the interview, you will be given a deadline by which you can make additions or corrections to the protocol. A copy of the protocol will be given to your guardian.

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

- Based on your family's application, your family may be granted international protection or residence permits on other grounds.
- The Finnish Immigration Service will make a decision based on information provided by your guardians and other evidence presented in your case. What you have told in your interview will also be taken into account when making the decision.

- If your family's application is rejected, your family may be deported and prohibited from entering Finland and other countries that are party to the Schengen Agreement.
- (Persons over the age of 15) 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.