



**Maahanmuuttovirasto
Migrationsverket
Finnish Immigration Service**



**ASYLUM, MIGRATION AND
INTEGRATION FUND**
Supported by the European Union

Information for asylum seekers



Adults

YOU HAVE FLED YOUR HOME COUNTRY AND SOUGHT PROTECTION FROM FINLAND.

You may be granted international protection if you are subjected to serious human rights violations in your home country or because you can not return to your home country due to its current security situation. It is also required that you can not avail yourself of the protection of your home country.

During the processing of your asylum application, an investigation will be carried out to decide whether you can be granted a residence permit on compassionate grounds, or because you cannot be removed from the country or because you are a victim of human trafficking.

This brochure describes the process of applying for asylum and informs you of your rights and obligations during the process.

Border control authorities may refer you to the border procedure

The Finnish Immigration Service may apply a border procedure to an asylum application when the grounds presented in the application suggest that the Finnish Immigration Service can consider the application inadmissible or use an accelerated procedure to process the application.

You will be given a separate instruction leaflet about the border procedure containing information about your rights and obligations during the procedure.

The border procedure differs from the normal procedure for processing asylum applications as follows:

- During the border procedure, you are not allowed to leave the area of the reception centre in which you are ordered to reside without specific permission.
- By law, the Finnish Immigration Service must issue a decision on your asylum application within four weeks of the date on which you applied for asylum if the border procedure is applied to your application. The border procedure will continue until you receive a notification of its termination from your reception centre.

For more information, see the Finnish Immigration Service website at migri.fi/border-procedure.

AUTHORITIES ARE OBLIGED TO MAINTAIN SECRECY

- In Finland you can trust the authorities, including the police and the employees of the Border Guard and the Finnish Immigration Service. They are professionals who act according to law.
- All employees who process your matter are bound by the obligation of secrecy. This means that they are not allowed to talk to outsiders about anything they hear in their work. Employees at reception centres, interpreters and your legal counsel are also obliged to maintain secrecy.





PROCESS OF APPLYING FOR ASYLUM

1. Tell the border control authorities or the police that you want to apply for asylum.

You need to be in Finland when you apply for asylum in Finland. When you arrive in Finland, tell the border control authorities or the police that you want to apply for asylum. The authorities will register you as an asylum seeker, enter your basic details in the Register of Aliens and take your fingerprints, signature and photograph. If you have a passport or some other identity document, show it to the authorities.

Please note that it is a crime to give false information about your identity to the authorities in Finland.

While your application is being processed, you have the right to reside and move freely in Finland.

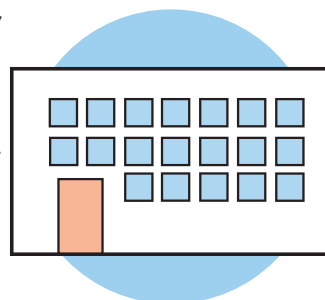
2. The authorities will direct you to a reception centre.

You can live at a reception centre while your application is being processed. You can also live with relatives or friends. In either case you will be registered as a client at a reception centre. The reception centre provides you with social and health care services and may also pay you a reception allowance, if needed.

You are required to take part in the work and study activities arranged by the reception centre.

Children between the age of 6 and 16 have the right to go to school.

The reception centre can not influence the processing of your asylum application.



3. The Finnish Immigration Service investigates whether your application will be examined in Finland.

Once your asylum application is registered, it is referred to the Finnish Immigration Service for processing.

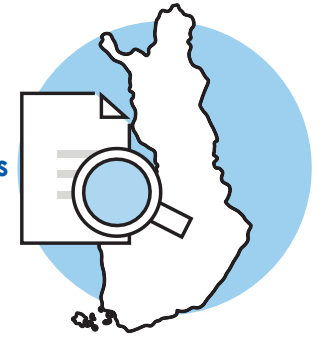
The Member States of the European Union as well as Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein follow the Dublin Regulation. Your application can be examined in only one of these countries. That is why the Finnish Immigration Service investigates whether:

- you have relatives in another country
- you have a visa or a residence permit in another country
- you have previously resided in or passed through other Dublin countries
- you have applied for asylum in another country.

If one of the above applies to you, the Finnish Immigration Service will invite you to a Dublin interview. After the interview, the Finnish Immigration Service decides whether some other country is responsible for examining your application and whether you will be transferred to that country.

Your asylum application may be dismissed in Finland also in the following situations:

- You have already been granted protection in a safe country.
- You have arrived in Finland from a safe country where you could have received protection.



4. Your reasons to apply for asylum are established at the asylum interview.



The Finnish Immigration Service will invite you to an asylum interview. Please read carefully the invitation and the enclosed documents. The employees at the reception centre will tell you how to get to the interview. Your legal counsel may also be present at the interview if necessary. Talk with your counsel about it in advance.

During the interview, the authorities will establish who you are and how you have arrived in Finland. You need to give precise and correct information about your family members. If you provide false information, it may later be more difficult for you to get your family to Finland.

You will be asked about why you have fled your home country and why you can not return to your home country. Bring with you all possible proof that supports your story.

Speak bravely about everything you know and what might influence your asylum application. Mention also if you do not know or remember something. Tell the interviewer if you do not understand the interpreter.

It is important that you present all grounds for your application at once. If you later present new grounds, you must have a reason why you have not stated these grounds earlier. The reason must be one that you personally have not been able to affect.

A transcript is drawn up of the asylum interview and you will receive a copy of it.



PROCESSING TIME

- It will take 6 months at the most to process your asylum application. Please wait patiently for the decision.
- If the application can not be decided within 6 months, the Finnish Immigration Service will notify you of this and give you an estimate of when the decision will be made.
- You can also check the expected processing time at the website of the Finnish Immigration Service.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- You can submit additional documents to the Finnish Immigration Service after your asylum interview. You can do so if, for example, your situation has changed considerably due to recent events in your home country, or if you forgot to mention something important during the interview.
- You can ask for advice from your legal counsel and the employees at your reception centre.

5. You receive a decision.

The Finnish Immigration Service will continue examining your application after the asylum interview. If needed, you will be asked to provide additional information. When your application has been decided, you will receive a written decision.



The decision is made on the basis of the Aliens Act, the information you give during the asylum interview, other data presented in the matter, and the information that the Finnish Immigration Service has about the situation in your home country.

The decision may be positive or negative. The police or the Finnish Immigration Service will serve you with the decision. You may also receive the decision by post. Inform the employees at the reception centre when you have received your decision, and they will tell you what to do next.

POSITIVE DECISION

You are granted a residence permit, which means that you can stay in Finland. You are automatically registered in the Finnish Population Information System and you will get a personal identity code.



A residence permit may be granted on different grounds. These grounds are:

- 1) asylum,
- 2) subsidiary protection,
- 3) compassionate grounds,
- 4) a case where a person cannot be removed from the country or
- 5) a case where a person is a victim of trafficking in human beings.

Your decision will state the grounds on which you have been granted a residence permit. To learn more about the different grounds for granting a residence permit, see the website and videos produced by the Finnish Immigration Service.

If you are not satisfied with the decision, you can appeal the decision to an administrative court. You need a legal counsel to make an appeal.

RESIDENCE PERMIT CARD

You will receive a residence permit card together with the decision. The card is proof of your right to reside in Finland. The card is valid as long as your residence permit is valid.

IDENTITY CARD

In Finland, an identity document is needed for example to open a bank account. A passport issued by your home country or a Finnish identity card are accepted as identity documents. You can apply for an identity card from the police.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

By law, you need to have a valid travel document. If you are granted asylum, you can apply for a refugee travel document. If you are granted subsidiary protection status or a residence permit on other grounds, you can apply for an alien's passport. You can travel abroad and return to Finland with these documents.

MOVING TO A MUNICIPALITY

When you get a residence permit, you get to move to a municipality. The employees at the reception centre will answer your questions concerning the move. They will also tell you which matters you need to take care of with different authorities when you move.



NEGATIVE DECISION

You are not granted a residence permit, which means that you can not stay in Finland.

Together with the negative decision, the Finnish Immigration Service issues you with a decision ordering that you must leave the country.

You can also be issued with an entry ban. It means that you are not allowed to return to Finland or the Schengen area. The ban is valid for the time being or for a limited period.

ACCELERATED PROCEDURE

If your application is considered manifestly unfounded by the Finnish Immigration Service, a negative decision will be issued faster than in other cases. You will also be removed from the country faster, usually within 7 days of receiving the decision. Your application is considered manifestly unfounded if, for example:

- the reasons for your application are not related to international protection
- your claims are clearly implausible
- you have deliberately given false information
- you have submitted your application only to avoid leaving Finland
- your home country is safe and you can return to your home country.

LEAVING FINLAND

If the final decision is negative, you must leave Finland. If you return to your home country voluntarily, you may apply for assisted voluntary return. If you do not return voluntarily, the police will return you to your home country.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

If the police have reason to believe that you will try to prevent your removal from the country, the police may oblige you to report at regular intervals at a police station or at the reception centre. The police may also decide that you are to be held in detention. The detention units are closed areas which you can not leave.

APPEAL



- You have the right to appeal against the decision of the Finnish Immigration Service to an administrative court. Appeal instructions are attached to the decision, including the time limit for making the appeal. Your legal counsel will draw up the appeal document. If you do not have a counsel, the employees at the reception centre can tell you how to get one.
- The administrative court may confirm or change the decision or refer your matter to be re-examined by the Finnish Immigration Service.
- You can apply for a leave to appeal against the decision of the administrative court from the Supreme Administrative Court. It does not, however, examine all appeals. After this, the decision is final and you can no longer appeal against it.
- Please note that the Finnish Immigration Service is not able to give you any details of the processing of your matter during the appeal process. Only your legal counsel is able to give you information during this time. The decision will also be sent to your counsel.

YOUR RIGHTS

You may ask for advice from your counsel.



You have the right to get legal aid, meaning that you can meet a legal counsel during the entire asylum process. The employees at your reception centre will tell you how to get a counsel. If you are of limited means, you do not have to pay for your legal aid.

Your legal counsel will help you with your application process but not with any other matters.

An interpreter will be present at appointments with authorities.



The interpreter will speak a language that you understand. He or she will interpret on-site, over the phone or through a video link. The interpreters are impartial and bound by the obligation of secrecy.

You will get information about your case.



You have the right to access documents that concern you. You may request documents from the Finnish Immigration Service in writing concerning, for example, your decision or interview. Details concerning your application can not be given over the phone.



You do not need a separate permit to work.

You have the right to work without a separate permit. You have the right to work:

- after three months from submitting the asylum application if you have a passport or
- after six months from submitting the asylum application if you do not have a passport.

Your right to work will be valid at least until you get a decision from the Finnish Immigration Service. The decision will always state whether your right to work will end or continue.

To learn more about the right to work, see the enclosed document. More information about the right to work can also be found at the website of the Finnish Immigration Service at migri.fi.

You can return to your home country.



You can cancel your application and return to your home country at any time. You can apply for financial assistance to return to your home country. The employees at the reception centre can give you more information on voluntary return.

You can make a new application if necessary.



If your circumstances have changed significantly after you have received your final decision, you can submit a new asylum application. Tell about how your situation has changed and present your new grounds immediately when you make a new application. If you do not have any new reasons to apply for asylum, you will get a decision stating that your application will not be examined.

YOUR OBLIGATIONS

Contribute to the investigation of your matter.

You must be honest with the authorities and contribute to the investigation of all matters concerning your application. This means that you, for example, must state all the reasons why you are applying for asylum during the asylum interview. If you give false information, your permit may be cancelled later.



Stay in Finland during the processing of your application.

You cannot leave Finland while your application is being processed. Your application will expire, meaning that it will no longer be processed if:

- you can not be contacted for at least two months or
- the authorities find out that you have left Finland.

Attend all appointments.

You must attend all agreed appointments. If you fail to appear at your asylum interview without a valid reason, your application can be decided without conducting an interview.

If you become ill, notify the employees at the reception centre as soon as possible. You will need a doctor's certificate for your non-appearance. Submit it to the Finnish Immigration Service afterwards.

Submit all documents that concern your application to the Finnish Immigration Service.

If you have a passport, an identity document or some other documents relating to your application, submit them to the Finnish Immigration Service. Remember to include your customer number when you send documents to the Finnish Immigration Service.

Make sure your contact details are up-to-date.

Make sure that the reception centre has your current contact information so that you can be contacted at all times. Let the reception centre know if your telephone number, address or legal counsel changes.

WATCH THE VIDEOS ON THE FINNISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE YOUTUBE CHANNEL ABOUT APPLYING FOR ASYLUM



- Applying for asylum in Finland
- On what grounds can you receive a residence permit?
- Who does what during the asylum process?
- Legal aid in the asylum process
- Asylum interview
- Waiting for the decision
- Positive decision
- Negative decision

migri.fi/videos-for-asylum-seekers



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Finnish Immigration Service
postal address: PO Box 10,
FI-00086 Maahanmuuttovirasto
telephone: +358 295 419 600
email: migri@migri.fi
migri.fi

Non-Discrimination Ombudsman
postal address: PO Box 24,
FI-00023 Government
telephone: +358 295 666 817
email: yvv@oikeus.fi
www.syrjinta.fi

The nearest regional office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR
address: Wenner-Gren Center,
Sveavägen 166,
11346 Stockholm, Sweden
telephone: +46 10 10 12 800
email: swest@unhcr.org
www.unhcr.org

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