

YOUR OBLIGATIONS AS AN ASYLUM SEEKER

- You are obliged to respect Bulgarian laws.
- You are not allowed to leave Bulgaria without valid papers and at a place other than Border Control Checkpoints. Any attempt to irregularly leave Bulgaria is considered a crime.
- You are obliged to ask permission from the RRC Director if you want to move outside of the area of movement indicated on your green card.
- If you are accommodated at one of the SAR RRCs/TC, you are obliged to respect the internal rules of the camp.
- You are obliged not to damage property in the RRC where you are accommodated.
- You are not allowed to spend a night outside the RRC without the permission of the RRC director.
- You are obliged to attend your interview at the RRC whenever you receive a notification.

CONTACT US



You do not need an appointment to meet with us.

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LEGAL COUNSELLING AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES TO ASYLUM SEEKERS IN BULGARIA

Project № BG65AMNP001-1.006-0001-C01



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The “Legal Counselling and Interpretation Services to Asylum Seekers in Bulgaria” project aims to address asylum seekers’ need for information about the prospects of receiving international protection (generally called ‘asylum’) and the stages

of the asylum procedure. The information is provided to asylum seekers in a comprehensible form in the language they speak with a view to being gender-sensitive.

WE PROVIDE

- Legal counselling to asylum seekers in the Registration and Reception Centres (RRCs) of the Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees (SAR) in the country (Sofia, Harmanli, and Banya) and in the Pastrogor Transit Centre (TC);
- Information materials on asylum seekers’ rights and responsibilities and possibilities for access to legal aid;
- Information sessions on asylum seekers’ rights and responsibilities, including sessions meant for unaccompanied children.
- Verbal and written interpretation services to asylum seekers;



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RIGHT TO REMAIN IN BULGARIA DURING THE ASYLUM PROCEDURE

While your asylum application in Bulgaria is being examined by the competent authorities you have the right to stay in Bulgaria, irrespectively of whether you entered regularly or irregularly and whether you have valid national documents for travelling abroad.

RIGHT TO RECEIVE A REGISTRATION CARD

You have the right to receive a registration card. You must have it with you at all times. If you damage it, you need to pay for a new one.

The registration card does not allow you to:

- Open a bank account
- Visit the border areas or travel outside the country
- Marry



RIGHT TO FREE LEGAL AID

During your asylum procedure you have the right to be represented by one of the lawyers of the National Bureau for Legal Aid who provide legal assistance free of charge.

RIGHT TO AN INTERPRETER

During your interview(s) for asylum you are entitled to have an interpreter who speaks a language you understand. You must tell if you do not fully understand the interpreter. SAR may appoint another one.

RIGHT TO HEALTH INSURANCE

During your asylum procedure, you are medically insured. The Bulgarian Government pays your health insurance monthly instalments to the National Health Insurance Fund.

In principle, health insurance provides for visits to a general practitioner (GP) for a nominal fee (2,90 leva) and to a dentist under certain conditions (see below).

You have the right to enroll with a family doctor/GP. To find one and enroll yourself, you can ask social experts of the State Agency for Refugees or IOM to assist you.

If you need to visit the dentist, your health insurance only covers a maximum of four (4) dental manipulations. The cost of any and all further dental assistance must be covered by you.

If your procedure is suspended, your health insurance will be suspended as well. If at some point it is resumed, you may have to pay your health insurance instalments for the months while your procedure was suspended by yourself.

If your procedure is terminated, your health insurance will be suspended as well. If at some point you are allowed to a new (subsequent) procedure, you may have to pay your health insurance instalments for the months while you were out of procedure by yourself.

RIGHT TO ACCOMODATION AND FOOD

During your asylum procedure you and your family have the right to receive food for free (distributed three times a day) and to live in one of the SAR RRCs in Sofia, Harmanli, or Banya, or in Pastrogor TC.

Alternatively, you can opt to make your own living arrangements and move in with relatives or friends, or rent a private accommodation. However, if you first move in an RRC and then move out to an external address, you would lose the right to move back in the RRC.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Children seeking asylum in Bulgaria are entitled to free education in state schools. SAR social experts should assist with enrolling the child in a suitable school as soon as possible and no later than 3 months after the submission of the asylum application.

RIGHT TO WORK

During your asylum procedure, you may legally work in Bulgaria 3 months after the start of your procedure. It is indicated on your (first) registration card. You do not need a work permit. However, your employer may want to see a certificate confirming your right to work. You can apply to SAR for this certificate.

You may legally work during your appeal proceedings, as well as if you are later granted international protection/asylum

(i.e. refugee status or subsidiary protection). However, if your procedure is terminated you may no longer work legally.

You may work whatever you want as long as it is legal (you have signed a contract). You can work both part- or full-time under the same conditions as Bulgarian citizens.

As an asylum seeker you are not entitled to any financial support or welfare benefits from the state other than shelter and food.

YOUR RIGHTS AS AN UNACCOMPANIED CHILD

If you are an unaccompanied child seeking asylum in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian authorities must appoint you a representative who will protect your interests and be with you at your interview and, if applicable, your court hearing.

You are entitled to receive food three times a day.

You have the right to be accompanied by a lawyer, an interpreter, a social worker and your representative during your interview(s) for asylum.