VLUCHTELINGENWERK VLAANDEREN

English

Startpunt

You have made an application for international protection. What happens next?

This flyer is written and distributed by Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen, an independent, non-governmental organisation defending the rights and interests of refugees and asylum seekers.

This is the first time you have made an application for international protection in Belgium.

Accommodation

On the day you apply for international protection at the arrival center (Immigration Office (IBZ)), you are present at 8.30 am. Fedasil's Dispatching service will assign you a reception centre. You are entitled to an accommodation for the entire duration of your asylum procedure. Usually you will stay at the arrival centre (Petit-château) for a few days and will then be assigned a permanent reception centre. You will receive the address, a map and a train or bus ticket.

You can also choose not to go to a reception centre. In that case you will not receive accommodation or any other material aid. You do have the right to a refund of medical costs.

Upon the arrival at the reception centre, a social assistant will give you more information about the procedure and about the centre's house rules. At the reception centre, you have the right to material support and social, medical and psychological help. We strongly advise you to ask the social assistant to help you find a lawyer.

It is important that the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS) and IBZ know were you are residing at all times. You should report any change of address to both the CGRS and IBZ as soon as possible. You or your lawyer can inform them by registered letter or you can visit the CGRS or IBZ offices in person. You should report your current address to both authorities so they can always inform you about the decisions made on your application. You can use this form: https://www.cgra.be/sites/default/files/formulieren/formulaire_changement_domicile.pdf

IBZ interview

Following your demand to apply for international protection, you will receive an invitation to register your application for international protection. You should always tell the truth during these interviews. Ask for an interpreter. You can ask for a male or female interpreter. If you face problems with the translation during the interview (for example because you do not understand the translator or you have the feeling he/she does not translate your statements correctly), immediately tell this to the officer. If you don't feel well (physically or mentally) during the interview, tell the officer. He/she can take this in account. If you feel that you are not able to do the interview at the given time, you can ask for a new appointment. The officer will write a report. Make sure to read the report carefully before signing it. If the information is incorrect or incomplete, you should report it to the officer immediately.

During the interview, you will be asked about:

1. Identity and country of origin

You will be asked to submit all official documents that could be relevant to your asylum application. It is important to bring all relevant documents to the interview (identity, travel documents, medical reports...).

2. Your travel route to Belgium

The Dublin Regulation prevents people from making an application for international protection in more than one European country and makes sure that only one country is responsible for examining an application. When you apply for international protection, the authorities will first determine which country is responsible for your asylum application. Based on fingerprint evidence and information to be gathered during interviews, Belgium will check whether you have administrative (i.e. a visa) or family ties with another European country or whether you have travelled through other European countries on your way to Belgium. If that is the case, Belgium can decide to return you to that other country, responsible for examining your asylum application. Make sure to explain your reasons for coming to Belgium as detailed as possible to the IBZ (for example: the presence of family members in Belgium, health problems or mistreatment in other countries). You should also try to submit as much evidence as possible, for example a medical certificate issued by a doctor.

Attention: consult a lawyer even before the IBZ has made its decision. The lawyer is not allowed to assist at the IBZ interview, but can send additional information and evidence relevant to your interview to the IBZ. He/she can also make an appeal should the IBZ decide to transfer you to another EU Member State.

3. The reasons why you left your country of origin.

You will have to answer questions about your reasons for fleeing your country of origin. This questionnaire is very important, because the information will be used as the basis for the interview at the CGRS. Mention all the important events that led to the decision to leave your country of origin. Take all relevant documents with you to support your story (identity, medical reports...)

CGRS interview

If Belgium is the country responsible for your asylum procedure, you will be invited to a more extensive interview at the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS) following your initial interview at the IBZ. The protection officer will examine the IBZ report and check if there are any contradictions in your story. It is important to prepare well for this interview with your lawyer and social assistant. Your lawyer may attend the interview. If there are things that the protection officer should take into account during the interview (for example medical or psychological problems or impaired concentration...), let the CGRS know beforehand.

Attention: Always tell the truth and make sure your story is as complete as possible. Take all relevant documents with you to the CGRS to support your story.

This is not the first time that you have made an application for international protection in Belgium (subsequent application for international protection)

Procedure

In the case of a subsequent (new) application it is important to provide new elements, such as new documents supporting your first asylum application or a change in the situation in your country of origin.

The IBZ will register your new application and conduct a short interview in which they will ask you about the new elements. Your file will be directly sent to the CGRS.

The CGRS will inform you by post if the new elements have proven to be sufficient to take your new asylum application into consideration. Always report your address to both the IBZ and the CGRS by registered letter or in person.

Accommodation

In the case of a new application, you may lose your right to a reception place from Fedasil (code 207 no show). Talk to your lawyer or social assistant about shelter before making a new application. If you do not receive any accommodation, consult your lawyer as soon as possible to see if you can make an appeal.

Important: If the new elements were sufficient and the CGRS decides to take your asylum application into consideration, you can present yourself now at Fedasil's Dispatching service to receive a reception place.

Lawyer

During your asylum procedure you have the right to a lawyer. This can be free of charge (pro deo) if your financial means are insufficient. The lawyer works independently of the government and has to fully defend your rights. Your lawyer can help you prepare for interviews and may attend the interview at the CGRS. Your lawyer can make an appeal if necessary.

The social assistant at the reception centre can help you find a lawyer. If you are not staying at a reception centre, you can request a lawyer at the Legal Aid Bureau https://fedasilinfo.be/en/need-legal-advice

If you have any problems with your lawyer, you have the right to request another one. Ask your social assistant for help or consult the Legal Aid Bureau.

Duration of the asylum procedure

The duration of the asylum procedure varies from a few months up to over a year. At the end, you will receive a positive or a negative decision. Your lawyer can always help you appeal against any negative decision at the Council for Alien Law Litigation (RVV-CCE)

Useful addresses

ARRIVAL CENTRE - IMMIGRATION OFFICE (APPLICATION) & FEDASIL (ACCOMODATION)

Klein Kasteeltje - Petit-château

Rue de Passchendaele 2

1000 Brussels

Infopunt T 02 227 41 51

Fedasil (accomodation) 8.30am

Fedasil Infopunt (all questions) 8.30 -12.30 am

IMMIGRATION OFFICE (BY INVITATION)

Avenue Pacheco 44

1000 Brussel

Tel: 02 793 80 00

CGRS

EUROSTATION

Rue Ernest Blerot, 39

1070 Brussels

T 02 205 51 11

COUNCIL FOR ALIEN LAW LITIGATION (RVV-CCE)

Rue Gaucheret 92 - 94

1030 Brussels

T 02 791 60 00

LEGAL HELPDESK VLUCHTELINGENWERK VLAANDEREN

(information on asylum procedure, reception, support during detention)

T 02 225 44 35

Wednesday and Friday: 9am - 12.30pm

info@vluchtelingenwerk.be

More info?

www.fedasilinfo.be

VLUCHTELINGENWERK VLAANDEREN VZW

T +32 (0)2 225 44 00

INFO@VLUCHTELINGENWERK.BE

WWW.VLUCHTELINGENWERK.BE

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