

## **1. What are the rights and obligations of persons with granted international protection?**

The rights and obligations of asylum seeker and alien under subsidiary protection are regulated by the Law on International and Temporary Protection (“Official Gazette“, number: 70/15, 127/17).

A person granted asylum and an alien under subsidiary protection is entitled to:

- work (no residence and work permit or work registration certificate required)
- accommodation
- health care
- education
- freedom of religion
- free legal aid (assistance in drafting a lawsuit and representation in front of the first-instance administrative court in the case of granting an application in the part granting subsidiary protection and in cases of termination or annulment of international protection)
- social welfare
- help with inclusion in society
- family reunification
- ownership of real estate in accordance with the 1951 Convention
- acquisition of Croatian citizenship in accordance with the Croatian Citizenship Act

An asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection are obliged to respect the Constitution, laws and other regulations of the Republic of Croatia and within 15 days to register their residence, have a residence permit with them and show it to persons authorized by law, as well as attend Croatian language, history and culture courses.

## **2. How long is the approved international protection valid?**

Approved international protection has no time limit, but ceases or is revoked under legally prescribed conditions. The methods and conditions for termination or annulment of international protection are prescribed by Articles 49 and 50 of the Act on International and Temporary Protection (“Official Gazette“, number: 70/15, 127/17), which can be found at the link: <https://mup.gov.hr/gradjani-281562/moji-dokumenti-281563/stranci-333/zakon-o-medjunarodnoj-i-privremenoj-zastiti/653>

## **3. What is a residence permit and how to obtain it?**

A residence permit (polycarbonate card) is an identification document by which persons with approved international protection prove their identity, confirm their status and regulate their residence in Croatia.

An asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection are obliged to have a residence permit with them and to show it to persons authorized by law.

The application for a residence permit is submitted to the competent police administration/ police station according to the place of residence of the asylum seeker/ alien under subsidiary protection.

Along with the accompanying form, the application is accompanied by a 3 x 3,5 cm photo that faithfully shows a person without a head covering, a certificate of approved protection (at the first application) and the applicant's card, two fingerprints and the person's handwritten signature. Exceptionally, a photo of a

person with a head covering may be attached if the cover is worn for religious or medical reasons, provided that the cover does not cover the cheeks, chin and forehead.

The costs of issuing **the first** residence permit for an asylum seeker/ alien under subsidiary protection are provided from the State Budget and are free of charge for You, while **for all subsequent issuances costs in the amount of HRK 240,00 are paid**, in accordance with the Decision on determining the residence permit for asylum seekers and aliens under subsidiary protection (“Official Gazette“, number: 98/16, 102/16).

A residence permit is issued for a period of 5 years for asylum seekers, or for a period of 3 years for aliens under subsidiary protection.

#### **4. What do I have to do if I change my residential address or my residence permit expires?**

In case of a change of residential address, the asylum seeker and the alien under subsidiary protection are obliged to register/ deregister the residential address and obtain a new residence permit within 15 days of the change of residence (*see the answer to question 3 for details*).

Furthermore, if the asylum seeker/ alien under subsidiary protection has a residence permit that cannot serve its purpose (due to change of personal data/ residential address, expiration date, loss of residence permit, damage), the person is obliged to report to the police station according to the place of residence and submit an application for a new residence permit. The police station will revoke the previously issued residence permit.

Also, an asylum seeker or an alien under subsidiary protection are obliged to report **without delay** the loss, disappearance or theft of a residence permit to the police administration/ police station according to the place of the event or knowledge.

#### **5. Do I have the right to a travel document and how to get it?**

An asylum seeker is entitled to a travel document for an asylum seeker, while an alien under subsidiary protection is entitled to a special travel document for a third-country national.

The application for the issuance of a travel document for an asylum seeker or a special travel document for a third-country national is submitted to the police administration or police station according to the place of residence.

Along with the accompanying form, the request is accompanied by a photo measuring 3,5 x 4,5 cm which faithfully shows a person without a head covering, and two fingerprints and the person's handwritten signature are taken. If a person wears a head covering for religious or medical reasons, the cheeks, chin and forehead must be seen in the photo.

A travel document for an asylum seeker is issued for a period of 5 years, and the issuance will be refused if the asylum seeker:

- avoids the execution of a judgment in criminal proceeding
- avoids fulfillment of due property obligation from the marital relationship or parent-child relationship, tax liability or other statutory property obligation for which there is an enforceable title
- if required by reasons of National security or protection of public order

The price of issuing a travel document for asylum seekers is regulated by the Decision on determining the price of a passport issued in accordance with the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951 ("Official Gazette", number 98/16, 102/16) and amounts HRK 320,00.

A special travel document for a third-country national is issued for a period of 2 years. It is issued in accordance with the provisions of the Aliens Act ("Official Gazette", number: 133/20), which says that it will be issued if a person is unable to obtain a foreign travel document with no fault of his or her own.

An application for the issuance of a travel document for a third-country national will be denied to an alien:

- against whom criminal or misdemeanor proceedings are being conducted, unless there is the consent of the public body conducting the proceedings
- who has been sentenced to imprisonment or has been fined in a misdemeanor or criminal proceeding, until he has served the sentence, or until he has paid the fine
- who has not regulated his due property obligation for which there is an enforceable title
- if required by reasons of protection of public order, national security or public health

The price of a special travel document for a third-country national is regulated by the Decision on determining the prices of document forms for foreigners ("Official Gazette", number: 94/13) and amounts HRK 320,00.

In case of loss, disappearance or theft of a passport for asylum seekers or a special travel document for a third country national, the person is obliged to report **without delay** the loss, disappearance or theft of the residence permit to the police administration/ police station according to the scene or knowledge.

The travel document cannot be issued in an urgent procedure.

#### **6. What to do when my residence permit/ travel document is lost or destroyed?**

An asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection are obliged to report **without delay** the loss, disappearance or theft of a residence permit, passport for an asylum seeker and special travel documents for a third-country national to the police administration/ police station according to the scene or knowledge.

In case the residence permit/ travel document cannot serve its purpose (due to change of personal data/ residential address, expiration date, loss, damage), the person is obliged to report to the police station according to the place of residence and submit a request for a new residence permit/ travel document (*for more details see the answer to questions 3 and 5*).

#### **7. How can persons with international protection be entitled to family reunification?**

The right of an asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection to family reunification is regulated by the provisions of the International and Temporary Protection Act ("Official Gazette", number: 70/15, 127/17) and the provisions of the Aliens Act ("Official Gazette", number: 133/20).

Family reunification of an asylum seeker/ alien under subsidiary protection means reunification with:

- spouse or common-law partner, life partner or informal life partner,
- minor joint children of spouses and extramarital partners, life partners or informal life partners, or their joint minor adopted children who are not married

- minor children and minor adopted children of a spouse, common-law partner or life partner or an informal life partner who provides parental care for an unmarried child
- adult unmarried children who are unable to take care of their needs due to their health condition
- a parent or other legal representative of the child
- a first-degree relative in the straight line with whom he lived in a joint household and cared for him.

The family reunification procedure is initiated by a family member of the asylum seeker/ person under subsidiary protection in the competent diplomatic and consular mission of the Republic of Croatia, by submitting an application for a temporary residence permit. If the application for temporary residence permit is approved, the family member submits an application for a visa, and upon arrival in the Republic of Croatia in the competent police administration/ police station submits an application for a residence permit to which a photo is attached with copy of valid travel document which will be certified by an official after inspecting the original travel document and proof justifying the purpose of the stay (*for more details see the answer to question 3*).

A family member - a minor child who has not started his/ her own family follows the legal status of a representative who has been granted international protection. Other family members regulate their stay in Croatia in accordance with the provisions of the Aliens Act ("Official Gazette", number: 133/20).

More details on the procedure and conditions can be found in the [leaflet](#) "Family Reunification in Croatia - Information for Persons with Approved International Protection", which was prepared by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, UNHCR and HPC. (\*HPC = Croatian Legal Center)

### **8. What is the procedure for regulating the further status of minor children of persons with approved international protection who arrive in Croatia on the basis of the right to family reunification, i.e. children born in Croatia?**

When a minor child of a person with granted international protection arrives in Croatia, i.e. when the child was born in Croatia, the parent who has been granted protection submits an application for approval of international protection for the child. The application is submitted in writing in shelters for applicants for international protection and must contain a signed application of the parent requesting approval of international protection for his minor child in the Republic of Croatia, proof of acquired status (decision granting asylum or subsidiary protection) and the child's birth certificate or other document showing the relationship with the requested child and full and accurate personal data, including personal name, date of birth and citizenship, and place and country of birth.

A minor child of an asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection who has not started his own family, follows the legal status of a legal representative granted international protection, which in practice means that he is granted asylum or subsidiary protection depending on the status of his parents.

### **9. Learning Croatian language, history and culture**

Pursuant to Article 74 of the International and Temporary Protection Act ("Official Gazette", number: 70/15, 127/17), asylum seekers and aliens under subsidiary protection are required to attend a course in Croatian language, history and culture in order to be included in Croatian society. In case of non-fulfillment of the obligation, the asylum seeker and the alien under subsidiary protection will reimburse the costs of the course to the ministry in charge of education.

The implementation of the course is the responsibility of the Ministry of Science and Education and is carried out in accordance with the Decision on the Program of learning the Croatian language, history and culture for asylum seekers and aliens under

subsidiary protection for the purpose of inclusion in Croatian society (“Official Gazette“, number: 154/14). The program lasts 280 hours and is conducted on two levels: 70 hours first level and 210 hours second level.

The course is conducted in cooperation with the Zagreb Open University in the cities: Vinkovci, Osijek, Slavonski Brod, Požega, Kutina, Bjelovar, Varazdin, Krapina, Zapresic, Zagreb, Velika Gorica, Sisak, Karlovac, Pula, Rijeka, Gospić, Zadar, Šibenik, Split, Metković and Dubrovnik.

All questions or requests for inclusion in the Croatian language, history and culture course can be sent to the e-mail address: [amif@mzo.hr](mailto:amif@mzo.hr) or submitted to the office of the Ministry of Science and Education, Donje Svetice 38, Zagreb, every working day from 9:00 to 15:00.

#### **10. Where and how can I translate a certificate/ diploma and how can it be recognized in Croatia?**

An asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection exercise the right to the recognition of foreign educational qualifications under the same conditions as a Croatian citizen. Procedures related to the translation of certificates and diplomas (for continuing education or inclusion in the labor market) are the responsibility of the Ministry of Science and Education.

All questions or requests for translation of certificates and diplomas can be sent to the e-mail address: [amif@mzo.hr](mailto:amif@mzo.hr) or submitted to the office of the Ministry of Science and Education, Donje Svetice 38, Zagreb, every working day from 9:00 to 15:00, where authorized civil servants and employees will receive documentation that will be translated into Croatian by a certified court interpreter.

More detailed information is available on the website of the Ministry of Science and Education [www.mzo.gov.hr](http://www.mzo.gov.hr), in Croatian, English, Arabic and Turkish.

Recognition of certificates/ diplomas in Croatia: After translating a certificate or diploma that a person wishes to use for the purpose of further education or employment, it is necessary to conduct a formal confirmation of the value of a foreign educational qualification, i.e. period of education - recognition of foreign educational qualifications.

Depending on the type of qualification for which recognition is sought, it differs: a) Recognition of primary and secondary school qualifications and periods of education and b) Recognition of higher education qualifications and periods of study.

The above are the competent professional organizations, other competent bodies or organizations that are authorized by special regulations to conduct the procedure and determine the conditions for the recognition of professional qualifications, or the ministry in whose jurisdiction the regulated professions are determined. More detailed information can be found at the link: [https://www.uljppnm.vlada.hr/UserDocsImages//dokumenti//Vodic%CC%8C%20kroz%20integraciju\\_HRVATS\\_KI.pdf](https://www.uljppnm.vlada.hr/UserDocsImages//dokumenti//Vodic%CC%8C%20kroz%20integraciju_HRVATS_KI.pdf)

#### **11. Do persons with approved international protection have the right to health insurance and how do they exercise it?**

The Law on Compulsory Health Insurance and Health Care of Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia (“Official Gazette“, number: 80/13, 15/18 and 26/21) stipulates that an asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection exercise the right to **health care** on the basis of a valid document issued by the ministry in charge of internal affairs, in health care institutions and with private health care workers in the network of the public health service, in accordance with the general acts of the Institute.

The costs of health care for persons with approved international protection are paid from the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia from the position of the ministry responsible for health affairs.

The competent police administration or police station is obliged to inform the ministry in charge of health about the fact of acquiring the status of international protection of a person.

If a person with approved international protection is provided with compulsory health insurance or health care on another basis (for example, if the person is employed), funds for health care will not be provided from the state budget.

A residence permit issued by the Ministry of the Interior, by which persons prove their status in the Republic of Croatia, also proves the identity of the person who requested medical assistance or the issuance of medicines.

## **12. How long does the right to accommodation last and do the persons participate in the costs of accommodation?**

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 67 of the International and Temporary Protection Act (“Official Gazette“, number: 70/15, 127/17), persons with approved international protection have the right to accommodation for a maximum of two years from the date of service of the decision on granting international protection. After the expiration of the two-year period, persons with approved international protection have the right to accommodation in accordance with the regulations governing the field of social welfare.

Persons granted international protection are entitled to accommodation if they do not have the means or property to support themselves. If the competent social welfare center, to which the request is made, determines that the person with approved international protection has funds or property with which he/ she could participate in the payment of accommodation costs, the decision on the recognition of the right to accommodation will determine that the person participates in the payment of accommodation costs.

## **13. Who and where finds suitable accommodation?**

Based on the decision on recognizing the right to accommodation of the competent social welfare center, the Central State Office for Reconstruction and Housing provides accommodation for persons with approved international protection in housing units owned by the Republic of Croatia or housing units used by the Office on the basis of a lease agreement with third parties.

The place of accommodation depends on the available capacities of housing units at the time of accommodation and for persons, except in Zagreb, accommodation is provided in other cities, such as Sisak, Karlovac, Slavonski Brod and other cities.

## **14. What if I leave the Republic of Croatia?**

Pursuant to the provisions of the International and Temporary Protection Act (“Official Gazette“, number: 70/15, 127/17), persons granted international protection in the event of absence from the Republic of Croatia for more than 6 months must notify the Ministry of the Interior of the fact of leaving Croatia.

Also, in accordance with the currently valid legal provisions, the right to stay of an asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection in Croatia will be revoked if the asylum seeker or an alien under subsidiary

protection moves out of the Republic of Croatia or continuously stays abroad for more than 6 months without prior notification to the Ministry of the Interior.

If an asylum seeker or an alien under subsidiary protection leaves the Republic of Croatia for the duration and use of the right to accommodation and/ or other rights (for example cash benefits), he is obliged to inform the bodies where he exercises his rights (for example social welfare center).

The right to two-year accommodation, as well as to three-year assistance in joining Croatian society, begins to run from the day of delivery of the decision on acquiring the status of international protection and is not extended due to absence from the Republic of Croatia.

An asylum seeker/ alien under subsidiary protection who wishes to live in another Member State of the European Economic Area (EEA) is obliged to regulate his/ her stay abroad in accordance with the applicable legal provisions of that Member State.

If a person who in Croatia has the status of asylum/ alien under subsidiary protection wants to regulate his status in another Member State by submitting an application for international protection (asylum/ subsidiary protection) in that country, in accordance with the Return Directive, the Aliens Act and readmission agreements, through cooperation of the states may be returned to the Republic of Croatia.

**15. I live outside Croatia and my residence permit and/ or travel document expires. How and where can I restore them?**

The application for the issuance of a residence permit, as well as the application for the issuance of a travel document for an asylum seeker or a special travel document for a third-country national, shall be submitted to the police administration or police station according to the place of residence.

Residence, in accordance with the Residence Act (“Official Gazette“, number: 144/12, 158/13) is the place and address in the Republic of Croatia where a person has permanently settled in order to exercise his rights and obligations related to life interests such as family, professional, economic, social, cultural and other interests.

Persons with approved international protection may not apply for a residence permit and/ or travel document at the diplomatic mission or consular post of the Republic of Croatia abroad.

Also, in accordance with the provisions of the International and Temporary Protection Act (“Official Gazette“, number: 70/15, 127/17), persons with approved international protection, in case of absence from the Republic of Croatia for more than 6 months, must inform the Ministry of internal affairs about leaving Croatia.

**16. After my stay abroad, I want to return to the Republic of Croatia. What are my responsibilities?**

Persons with approved asylum or subsidiary protection upon return to Croatia are required to find accommodation, register their residence and issue a residence permit (in case of change of data, expiration date, damage or loss/ disappearance/ theft of the card).

If the person is unable to provide accommodation on his or her own or the two-year period of the right to accommodation has not elapsed, the person may contact the competent social welfare center according to the place of residence, which,

in accordance with the legal conditions, makes a decision on accommodation. In the case of the expiration of the two-year period of the right to accommodation, i.e. until the decision on accommodation is made, the person independently finds and pays the accommodation costs.

The right to two-year accommodation, as well as to three-year assistance in joining Croatian society, begins to run from the day of delivery of the decision on acquiring the status of international protection and is not extended due to absence from the Republic of Croatia.

Asylum seekers and aliens under subsidiary protection after their absence and after return to Croatia cannot be provided with accommodation in the Shelters for Applicants for International Protection in Zagreb and Kutina.

### **17. What is the role of the Ministry of Interior in the integration of persons with approved international protection?**

Pursuant to the provisions of the Law on International and Temporary Protection (“Official Gazette“, number: 70/15, 127/17), an asylum seeker and an alien under subsidiary protection have the right to assistance in joining the society for a maximum of three years from the service of the status decision.

Integration assistance activities are carried out by the Ministry of the Interior directly and/ or through a selected partner organization with which it concludes agreements/ contracts on the implementation of integration activities. Assistance in joining the society includes:

- Development of an integration plan with regard to the individual needs, knowledge, abilities and skills of the person
- Providing assistance to implement the developed plan
- Supervision over the execution of the plan

The right to three-year assistance in joining Croatian society begins to run from the day of delivery of the decision on the acquisition of international protection status and is not extended due to absence from the Republic of Croatia. The integration process is a complex, time-consuming and two-way process. In addition to the activities of the Ministry (and other state and public bodies), it requires the engagement of persons who want to integrate, but also the openness of society and access to all rights guaranteed to persons with approved international protection.

For more detailed information, people can contact the e-mail: [sluzba.za.medjunarodnu.zastitu@mup.hr](mailto:sluzba.za.medjunarodnu.zastitu@mup.hr)