Practical Guides and Tools

euaa
EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR ASYLUM

Practical Guide on Information Provision in the Asylum Procedure



November 2026

EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR ASYLUM

Practical Guide on Information Provision in the Asylum Procedure

November 2026

On 19 January 2022, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) became the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). All references to EASO, EASO products and bodies should be understood as references to the EUAA.



Manuscript completed in September 2026

Second edition.

Neither the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) nor any person acting on behalf of the EUAA is responsible for the use that might be made of the following information.

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2026

Print	ISBN 978-92-9418-697-3	doi:10.2847/6464410	BZ-01-26-055-EN-C
PDF	ISBN 978-92-9418-696-6	doi:10.2847/3799362	BZ-01-26-055-EN-N

© European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), 2026

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EUAA, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective rightholders. The EUAA does not own the copyright in relation to the following elements:

Cover page illustration amended from SiberianArt © iStock, 2021

About the guide

Why was this guide created? The mission of the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) is to facilitate and support the activities of EU Member States and the Schengen associated countries (EU+ countries ([1])) in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). In accordance with its overall aim of promoting the correct and effective implementation of the CEAS and of enabling convergence, the EUAA develops common operational standards and indicators, guidelines and practical tools.

How was this guide developed? The first edition of this guidance was published in 2024. It was the result of a joint effort between experts from the EU+ countries, the EUAA and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. In addition, valuable input was provided by the European Commission, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles ([2]). Before its finalisation, a consultation on the guide was carried out with all EU+ countries through the EUAA Asylum Processes Network.

This second edition integrates the relevant provisions of the new or reformed pieces of legislation of the new Pact on Migration and Asylum ([3]). All publications are available online on the practical guides and tools page of the EUAA website: https://euaa.europa.eu/practical-tools-and-guides.

The EUAA would like to extend its thanks to the members of the working group who contributed to the development of the second edition of this guide: Martina Hellwagner, Genevieve Hennessy, Martina Matarrelli, Rebecka Siöland and Giovanni Godoli Spadolini.

Who should use this guide? This guide is primarily intended for first contact officials, dedicated information providers, registration officers, case officers and policymakers in the national authorities. Additionally, this guide is useful for any other person or organisation working or involved in the field of information provision in the context of the asylum procedure in the EU context.

How to use this guide. This guide is structured in 6 chapters. Chapter 1 presents the legal basis to information provision. Chapter 2 provides guidance on how information should be given to applicants. Chapter 3, 4 and 5 respectively explain when to provide information, where and by whom. Finally, Chapter 6 presents 'what information should be provided' in the form of information topics.

([1]) The 27 EU Member States and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

([2]) Note that the finalised guide does not necessarily reflect the positions of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or the European Council on Refugees and Exiles.

([3]) European Commission: Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, 'Pact on migration and asylum', European Commission website, 21 May 2024, accessed 12 May 2026.

This practical guide on information provision in the context of the asylum procedure is based on the standards of the CEAS. It should be seen as a complement to other available EUAA tools, particularly the practical tools for access to the asylum procedure ([4]) and the *Practical guide on the registration and lodging of applications for international protection* ([5]). The consistency of this guide with other tools has been a primary consideration, especially in relation to the EUAA training curriculum module 'Communication and information provision to asylum seekers' ([6]).

Disclaimer

This is a soft convergence tool. It is not legally binding and reflects commonly agreed operational guidance and standards as adopted by the EUAA Management Board in November 2026.

This guide was prepared without prejudice to the principle that only the Court of Justice of the European Union can give an authoritative interpretation of EU Law.

References to judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Union that interpret provisions of the 2013 Asylum Procedures Directive have been added in this guide where there is an understanding that they remain valid for the application of the provisions of the Asylum Procedure Regulation, in particular where the text of the relevant articles and the context remained (largely) unchanged. This is, however, without prejudice to different interpretations that might be provided by the Court in future case-law on the Asylum Procedure Regulation.

([4]) EUAA, 'Practical tools for first-contact officials: Access to the asylum procedure', EUAA website, n.d., accessed 12 May 2026.

([5]) EUAA, *Practical guide on the registration and lodging of applications for international protection*, 2025.

([6]) See EASO, *Training Catalogue*, 2021, p. 14.

Contents

List of abbreviations **8**

Introduction **10**

1. Legal requirements **12**

2. How to provide information **15**

2.1. EUAA mandatory information brochure 15

2.1.1. Information brochures provided physically or electronically 16

2.1.2. Information brochure provided orally 17

2.2. Good practices related to providing information 17

2.2.1. Basic communication techniques 17

2.2.2. Oral communication 22

2.2.3. Adapt your communication techniques to the applicant's personal circumstances 28

2.2.4. How to convey information 36

3. When to provide information **49**

3.1. Access to the procedure 50

3.1.1. Procedural steps 50

3.1.2. Providing information during the procedural steps 51

3.2. Examination of the application 53

3.2.1. Procedural steps 53

3.2.2. Providing information during the procedural steps 54

3.3. Other opportunities during the asylum procedure 55

4. Where to provide information **57**

4.1. Providing information during the making of an application 57

4.2. Providing information during the registration, lodging and examination stages 62

5. Who provides the information **64**

5.1. Determine which organisations should provide information 64

5.2. Coordinate among organisations that provide information 65

6. What information should be provided? Information topics **68**

6.1. Core concepts and principles of the asylum procedure 74

6.1.1. What is international protection? 74

6.1.2. What is the asylum procedure? 76

6.1.3. Confidentiality 80

6.1.4. Principle of the best interests of the child 82

6.1.5. Complaints mechanism 83

6.2. Procedures to be followed 85
6.2.1. Registration 85
6.2.2. Responsibility determination procedure 89
6.2.3. Lodging an application 92
6.2.4. Lodging an application on behalf of a dependent adult 97
6.2.5. Lodging an application by a child or on behalf of a child 99
6.2.6. Medical examination 100
6.2.7. Age assessment 101
6.2.8. Admissibility examination 102
6.2.9. Personal interview 105
6.2.10. Notification 112
6.2.11. Appeal 114
6.2.12. Duration of the procedure 116
6.2.13. Detention 118
6.3. The rights of applicants for international protection 121
6.3.1. Right to remain 121
6.3.2. Access to an interpreter 122
6.3.3. Free legal counselling 123
6.3.4. Legal assistance and representation 125
6.3.5. Material reception conditions 126
6.3.6. Withdrawal of an application for international protection 127
6.4. Rights concerning (unaccompanied) children 128
6.4.1. Appointment of a representative 128
6.4.2. Family tracing 130
6.5. Rights concerning applicants with special needs 131
6.5.1. Adequate support to benefit from their rights and to comply with obligations 131
6.6. Obligations of an applicant for international protection 132
6.6.1. Cooperate with the authorities 132
6.6.2. Be subject to a personal search 134
6.6.3. Have biometrics taken 135
6.6.4. Communicate contact details and any changes as regards contact details 136
6.6.5. Accept any communication from the competent authorities 137
6.6.6. Obligation to report or to remain in a geographical area 138
6.6.7. Submit the elements and documents to substantiate the application 138
6.7. The consequences of not complying with obligations 141
6.7.1. Implicit withdrawal of applications 141
6.7.2. Assessment of relevant elements in the asylum claim may be affected 143
6.7.3. Asylum procedure will be accelerated 144
6.7.4. Material reception conditions may be reduced or withdrawn 145

6.8. Special procedures....146
6.8.1. Accelerated procedure....146
6.8.2. Asylum border procedure....147
6.8.3. Subsequent application....150
6.9. Additional topics....154
6.9.1. Right to communicate with UNHCR and other organisations providing legal advice or other counselling....154
6.9.2. Family reunification (under the Family Reunification Directive)....155
6.9.3. Voluntary return....156
6.9.4. Right to work....157

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AMMR	**Asylum and Migration Management Regulation** – Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on asylum and migration management, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1147 and (EU) 2021/1060 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 604/2013
APR	**Asylum Procedure Regulation** – Regulation (EU) 2024/1348 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a common procedure for international protection in the Union and repealing Directive 2013/32/EU
CEAS	common European asylum system
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
Eurodac Regulation	Regulation (EU) 2024/1358 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on the establishment of 'Eurodac' for the comparison of biometric data in order to effectively apply Regulations (EU) 2024/1351 and (EU) 2024/1350 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Directive 2001/55/EC and to identify illegally staying third-country nationals and stateless persons and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes, amending Regulations (EU) 2018/1240 and (EU) 2019/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EU) No 603/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council
EU+ countries	EU Member States and Schengen associated countries
Family Reunification Directive	Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification
LGBTIQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer persons

Abbreviation	Definition
QR	**Qualification Regulation** – Regulation (EU) 2024/1347 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection and for the content of the protection granted, amending Council Directive 2003/109/EC and repealing Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council
RCD (2024)	**Reception Conditions Directive** – Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection
Refugee Convention	The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (referred to in EU asylum legislation and by the CJEU as 'the Geneva Convention'
Return Directive	Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals
Screening Regulation	Regulation (EU) 2024/1356 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 introducing the screening of third-country nationals at the external borders and amending Regulations (EC) No 767/2008, (EU) 2017/2226, (EU) 2018/1240 and (EU) 2019/817
THB	trafficking in human beings
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VIS Regulation	**Visa Information System Regulation** – Regulation (EC) No 767/2008 concerning the visa information system and the exchange of data between Member States on short-stay visas

Introduction

This practical guide has been developed in the context of the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) **'Let's speak asylum'** project, the aim of which is to provide a standardised set of practical tools for the implementation of information provision activities during the asylum procedure, the responsibility determination procedure and within reception and resettlement processes. This practical guide is intended for any person involved in providing information to applicants for international protection and policymakers who coordinate information provision activities during the asylum procedure.

In accordance with the Asylum Procedure Regulation (APR) ([7]), an applicant for international protection has the right to be informed about the asylum procedure in a timely manner. The provision of information enables applicants to enjoy their rights and comply with their obligations. The right to information is one of the core guarantees provided in the APR, aiming to ensure a fair and effective asylum procedure. Delivering information to the applicant is in the interest of both the applicant and the authorities ([8]).

Information provision is effective when the applicant comprehends what the information means in practice. This practical guide aims to support information providers in reaching this goal.

This guide introduces the legal requirements related to information provision in the asylum procedure (Legal requirements). It outlines how information should be provided to applicants and the basic principles of information provision (How to provide information).

The guide further presents when (When to provide information), where (Where to provide information) and by whom (Who provides the information) information is delivered to applicants for international protection. Finally, it describes in detail what information should be provided, presented in the form of information topics that need to be covered in the context of the asylum procedure (What information should be provided? Information topics).

This last chapter provides background information on each of these topics, focusing on what the information provider needs to know about the topic and the message that needs to be delivered to the applicant. Practical tip boxes on how to deliver the information complement the information provided on each topic. The practical guide does not aim to provide specific formulations that should be directly conveyed to the applicant. Rather, it outlines the messages that need to be conveyed.

This practical guide is part of a toolbox on the asylum procedure that supports efficient information provision across the EU Member States and Schengen associated countries (EU+ countries). Besides the practical guide, the toolbox includes information material and templates for the direct provision of information to applicants at the early stage of the asylum procedure, during the making, registering and lodging of an application for international

([7]) Recital 31 and Article 8(1) and (2) APR.

([8]) Recital 16 APR.

protection. Further support and information is provided on the 'Let's speak asylum' portal, which hosts all the products developed under the 'Let's speak asylum' project.

Finally, as stated above, the reception stage and the responsibility determination procedure are not covered by this practical guide. Material on information provision related to reception can be found on the 'EUAA Products' page of the Let's Speak Asylum portal, while material on information provision related to the responsibility determination procedure can be found on the portal here.

1. Legal requirements

The right to information is one of the core guarantees provided in the APR to ensure a fair and effective asylum procedure. Information should be provided to applicants in a timely manner, to enable them to exercise their rights and to comply with their obligations ([9]). Particular attention needs to be given to the situation of persons with specific needs and persons in detention to ensure that they receive the necessary information ([10]).

Article 8(2) APR regulates information provision in relation to the asylum procedure. It states what information needs to be given to the applicant, at what stage and how.

Article 8(2) and (7) APR – general guarantees for applicants

2. The determining authority or, where applicable, other competent authorities or organisations tasked by Member States for that purpose shall inform applicants, in a language which they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand, of the following:

(a) the right to lodge an individual application;

(b) the time limits and stages of the procedure to be followed;

(c) their rights and obligations during the procedure, including those under Regulation (EU) 2024/1351, and the consequences of not complying with those obligations, in particular as regards the explicit or implicit withdrawal of an application;

(d) the right to free legal counselling for the lodging of the individual application and to legal assistance and representation at all stages of the procedure pursuant to Section III of this Chapter and in accordance with Articles 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19;

(e) the means by which they can fulfil the obligation to submit the elements as referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1347;

(f) the decision of the determining authority in accordance with Article 36.

([9]) Article 8(2) APR.

([10]) See Article 30(1) APR.

All the information referred to in this paragraph shall be provided as soon as possible to enable applicants to exercise the rights guaranteed in this Regulation and to enable them to adequately comply with the obligations set out in Article 9. The information referred to in the first subparagraph, points (a) to (e), of this paragraph shall be provided to the applicant at the latest when the application for international protection is registered. That information shall be provided by means of the leaflet referred to in paragraph 7, either physically or electronically, and, if necessary, orally. Information shall be provided to children in a child-friendly manner and with the involvement of the representative or the person referred to in Article 23(2), point (a), of this Regulation.

The applicant shall be given the opportunity to confirm that he or she has received the information. Such confirmation shall be documented in the applicant's file. If the applicant refuses to confirm that he or she has received the information, a note of that fact shall be entered in his or her file.

[...]

7. The Asylum Agency shall, in close cooperation with the Commission and each Member State, draw up leaflets containing the information required by this Article. Those leaflets shall be drawn up in such a manner so as to enable Member States to complete them with additional information specific to the Member State concerned and shall take into account the specificities of vulnerable applicants such as children or disabled persons.

Article 8(2) APR lists a number of key topics that the applicant should be provided information on. This information, to the extent it is available, must be provided at the latest at the registration stage. The obligation to provide information is not necessarily exhausted at the point of registration. Indeed, where information is not yet available at the time of registration, or where circumstances relevant to the information provided subsequently change, the necessary information should be provided at the earliest possible stage, once it is available. For example, it may only be known after the registration stage whether the application is a subsequent application or whether its examination will be accelerated.

The information must be provided by means of the **information brochure** (i.e. the leaflets as defined under article 8(7) APR) developed by the EUAA, either physically or electronically, and, if necessary, orally, and in a language that the applicant is reasonably supposed to understand.

Information should be given in a manner that considers the applicant's **individual circumstances** and ensures it is understood and effective access to rights and the ability to comply with obligations. Individual circumstances include specific vulnerabilities, such as age health conditions or disabilities. For example, child-friendly information provision considers the age and maturity of the child in order to communicate information in a manner that makes it as easy as possible for the child to understand.

Moreover, the applicant's individual circumstances may also require the provision of additional information. EU Member States are obliged to inform unaccompanied children on matters that relate to the procedure and to their rights, such as the right to a representative and the role of the representative during the procedure ([11]).

Besides the information provision, Member States are required to organise the provision of **free legal counselling** to applicants for international protection upon their request. The right to free legal counselling during the administrative procedure and during the responsibility determination procedure was introduced in the CEAS through the APR and the AMMR. It complements information provision and forms part of the safeguards for the applicant to exercise their rights and comply with their obligations. Legal counselling helps to ensure that applicants understand their rights and obligations and are able to act in a timely manner in accordance with them. It includes tailored advice and support based on the applicant's profile and contributes to ensure the principles of fairness, efficiency and accessibility ([12]).

In addition, Article 36(3) and (4) APR also regulate information provision on the specific topic of **notification**. Indeed, additional information needs to be provided when notifying an applicant of a negative decision ([13]): as well as providing the mandatory aspects of the decision in writing, the applicant should be informed about how to challenge a negative decision.



Article 36(3) and (4) APR – decisions on applications

3. The applicant shall be informed, in writing, of the result of the decision and of how to challenge a decision rejecting an application as inadmissible, as unfounded or as manifestly unfounded with regard to refugee status or subsidiary protection status, or as implicitly withdrawn. That information may be provided as part of the decision on an application for international protection. Where the applicant is not assisted by a legal adviser, that information shall be provided in a language that the applicant understands or is reasonably supposed to understand.

4. Where the applicant is assisted by a legal adviser who legally represents the applicant, the information referred to in paragraph 3 may be provided solely to that legal adviser without being translated into a language which the applicant understands or is reasonably supposed to understand. In such a case, the fact of whether or not international protection is granted shall be communicated, in writing, for information to the applicant in a language which he or she understands or is reasonably supposed to understand, together with general information on how to challenge the decision.

([11]) Article 23(5) APR.

([12]) For more information, see the EUAA, *Practical Guide on Free Legal Counselling*, October 2025, https://www.euaa.europa.eu/publications/practical-guide-free-legal-counselling.

([13]) Article 36 APR.

2. How to provide information

The first part of this chapter introduces how information should be provided as per the APR. Article 8(2) APR prescribes that the required information should be provided by means of information brochures developed by the EUAA. The brochures should be provided physically or electronically, and, if necessary, the information in them should be explained orally. These prescriptions are set as minimum requirements, and Member States may complement this information provision with other information material and other channels and methods of communication.

The second part of this chapter presents good practices related to communication that can be applied when providing the mandatory information brochure and in the context of complementary information provision by Member States. These good practices can also be used when developing national information material, in addition to the mandatory information brochures.

2.1. EUAA mandatory information brochure

Article 8(2) APR lists a number of topics and prescribes that information on these topics should be provided to applicants by means of the information brochure developed by the EUAA.

The information brochure on the asylum procedure is available on the Let's Speak Asylum portal. It is complemented by brochures addressing specific applicant profiles:

- applicants who have submitted a subsequent application;
- applicants who are subject to the asylum border procedure;
- applicants who are unaccompanied children.

These brochures are available on the Let's Speak Asylum portal at the following links: subsequent application, asylum border procedure and for unaccompanied children.

Information materials for vulnerable applicants are available on the portal here.

The information brochures have been customised by Member States to include information specific to their national context.

Information should be provided to children in a child-friendly manner, with the involvement of the representative ([14]) or person designated to safeguard their best interests and general well-being ([15]) (in accordance with Article 23(2)(a) APR).

([14]) Article 23(2)(b) APR.
([15]) Article 23(2)(a) APR.

The information needs to be provided in a language that the applicant understands or is reasonably supposed to understand.

It is important to ensure that the applicant has understood all the information they have been provided. If in doubt, it is good practice to have the applicant repeat or summarise, in their own words, the information that was provided.

The brochures should be provided either physically or electronically, and, if necessary, the information in them should be explained orally.

The applicant must be given the opportunity to confirm that they received the information, and such confirmation must be documented in the applicant's file. If the applicant does not confirm having received the information, a note of that fact must be entered in their file ([16]).

The APR does not prescribe the form of such confirmation. A possible practice is to have the applicant sign a note confirming that they have received and understood the information provided. If the information is provided orally, the interpreter would also sign the note. The information provider would then date and sign the note.

2.1.1. Information brochures provided physically or electronically

Article 8(2) APR prescribes that information must be provided by means of the EUAA brochures, either physically or electronically. This can be done each time the applicant interacts with authorities, for example during the making or the registration. Providing the brochures physically ensures that the applicant was indeed provided with the information.

The disadvantages of this method are that it requires the applicant to be literate and that the applicant may lose the brochure.

The brochure can also be provided electronically (e.g. online via websites or mobile apps).

This offers several advantages, as explained below.

- Websites and mobile apps provide access to the information in different languages on the same platform.
- A voice-over can be added to read out the text displayed on screen. This is particularly useful for illiterate applicants and/or applicants with a low level of literacy.
- The information is available at all times and at any location.

However, as prerequisites to access the brochure provided electronically, the applicant must have the digital skills required to use the online information platforms and have access to the relevant equipment (i.e. internet connection and a computer or mobile phone).

([16]) Article 8(2) APR.

2.1.2. Information brochure provided orally

Article 8(2) APR states that the information in the brochures should be provided orally, if necessary.

When necessary for the applicant's proper understanding, information provision should not be limited to providing the brochures but should include oral explanations. This is particularly important given the different degrees of literacy of applicants and any impairments applicants may have (e.g. blind people or people who need visual aids). Providing the information orally allows you to adapt the information to the particular circumstances of the applicant.

Providing information orally also enables you to verify that the information has been understood. It provides the opportunity to establish two-way communication between the information provider and the applicant.

At the same time, keep in mind that providing information orally is not suitable for certain people, such as applicants with a hearing impairment. In such cases, other, more appropriate, methods of communication should be prioritised.

2.2. Good practices related to providing information

The good practices presented in this section can be applied both when providing the mandatory information brochures and in the context of complementary information provision by Member States.

They can also be applied by Member State authorities when developing national information materials, in addition to the EUAA mandatory information brochures.

2.2.1. Basic communication techniques

A long list of topics could be covered when interacting with the applicant. However, the applicant may not be particularly receptive to this information. They may have only recently arrived and/or have other, more urgent, concerns, such as missing family members or unfulfilled basic needs, or they may find it challenging to process new information due to trauma. If you deliver all the information to the applicant at once, you risk overwhelming them. However, if you reduce the amount of information too much, you may not be able to supply applicants with enough information for them to effectively participate in the procedure.

This section covers basic communication techniques that you can use to mitigate this risk.

(a) Reduce complexity

Reducing complexity refers to communicating your core message clearly by using accessible language. This means that all legal and abstract concepts should be explained in non-technical language. Information can also be made relatable by using practical examples from

the sphere of the applicant's life to illustrate what a certain piece of information means in practice. However, reducing complexity should not make the message incomplete or incorrect.

Practical considerations

- Write as you speak and talk about abstract concepts using plain language.
- Make the information clear by using examples and visual aids.
- Start with the most important information; take out unimportant details.
- Use relatively short and clear sentences that include primarily only one idea.
- Use direct language and active verbs.
- Avoid acronyms.
- Explain cultural differences, when necessary.
- Summarise core information.

(b) Consider the number of information topics

By limiting the number of different topics that are covered at the same time, you allow the applicant to focus on information that is directly relevant to them at that point in time. For example, at the beginning of the procedure, it is necessary for the applicant to understand what international protection means and what happens during the asylum procedure. Once this is understood, further information topics can be added within this basic framework.

Practical considerations

- Firstly, provide information that is directly relevant for applicants at that moment, including information on the step of the asylum procedure that they are at and how to prepare for the next step.
- Group information topics around related themes; for example, when talking about the obligations of the applicant, you can provide information on several topics at the same time.
- Let the applicant know that they will receive more information. Guide them on how to find further information on their own. Inform the applicant of when the next oral information provision session will take place.

(c) Consider the level of detail

The level of detail provided corresponds to what is necessary for the applicant in order to participate in the procedure meaningfully and effectively. At the beginning of the procedure, delivering fewer details on later steps in the procedure will make it easier for the applicant to absorb the basic information. This core information will be complemented with further details afterwards, once the applicant is familiar with the basic information.

Practical considerations

- Provide detailed information only on topics that are directly relevant to the applicant, taking into account the stage they are at in the procedure and their personal circumstances.
- Provide additional detailed information on other topics after ensuring that the applicant has already received the basic information at an earlier stage.

(d) Repeat information

Repeating information during the asylum procedure helps the applicant to remember the core content. Identify the central messages of each information topic and repeat them several times, for example through different information provision channels.

Practical considerations

- Use consistent terminology when providing core information.
- Expand on the central message by providing additional information at a later stage.

(e) Use a visual style for written communication

Visual communication techniques can help organise the information content, thus making it easier to understand and retain. Formats that are visually clear allow applicants to access and understand the key messages that are relevant to them.

Practical considerations

- Break up long blocks of text into short paragraphs.
- Use headings and subheadings.
- Use highlighting to make central messages stand out.
- Summarise the main information in bullet points at the beginning.
- Add self-explanatory visual aids, such as pictures, drawings, pictograms and flow charts.
- Where possible, use colours and patterns such as stripes or dots in your visual aids, flow charts and graphs.

Practical tip: visual blueprint

Use visual aids, colours and patterns consistent with the core information that is repeated to the applicant. Reuse the same visual aid in different material to refer to the same information topic. This will help the applicant to remember the key content.

Avoid using letters, dates or any other temporal elements in the visual aids. Doing so means that your illustrations will not need to be modified for other material and language versions.

Make sure that your visual aids are as self-explanatory as possible. This will help make the information easy to understand.

Practical tip: easy-to-read formats ([17])

Use **easy-to-read** formats to ensure that information is accessible to persons who have difficulty reading and in understanding written information, including people with low literacy, reduced vision, cognitive and learning difficulties, and limited knowledge of a given language.

Easy-to-read formats make it easier to understand information by using simplified language, explanatory pictures and a specific visual layout.

Information can be provided in an easy-to-read format by simplifying the content and applying the appropriate visual style.

For an **easy-to-understand** text:

- use simple words;
- use proper nouns rather than pronouns such as ‘it’, ‘he’ and ‘they’;
- start a new sentence on a new line;
- include only one idea per page;
- accompany text with explanatory pictures, where possible.

([17]) For more information on easy-to-read formats, see, for example, Inclusion Europe, *Information for All: European standards for making information easy to read and understand*, 2010, and Inclusion Europe, ‘Easy-to-read Checklist: Checklist to make sure your document is easy to read’, 2010.

For an **easier-to-access** text, apply a specific visual layout as follows:

- align all text to the left and keep all the images to the left of the writing;
- use a plain sans-serif font, such as Arial or Calibri;
- use a large font size of at least 14 points;
- use wide spacing of at least 1.5 between lines;
- avoid underlining, italics, writing in colour and a special writing design;
- use wide margins;
- use a large page size of at least A4, where possible;
- include wide, white spaces by presenting only a limited amount of content on each page.

Easy-to-read material is often much longer than other material because of how it is formatted; it may therefore be beneficial to shorten the text of the key messages that the applicant needs to know.



Practical tip: translation of information material

The basic communication techniques presented in Section 2.2.1 facilitate the translation of information into different languages. For example, presenting information and explaining abstract terminology in a simple way makes it easier to translate accurately.

When information is to be translated, it is recommended that details about how the material is meant to be used are provided to the translator. For example, it is useful to inform the translator about the target audience (e.g. children or persons with special needs) to ensure that the language is translated according to the needs of this target group. Inform the translator about the required style of language, whether formal or informal, to ensure that the translation reflects the same style.

Having translated material proofread by native speakers who are familiar with the asylum context helps ensure that the translation is accurate and the information is correctly understood.

2.2.2. Oral communication

Oral communication is the oldest form of information exchange among humans. This makes it, in many cases, the preferred option for information provision. Oral communication should be provided as much as possible, even when written information is available, since, for example, not everybody may be able to read.

At the same time, keep in mind that providing information orally is not suitable for certain people, such as applicants with a hearing impairment. In such cases, other, more appropriate, methods of communication should be prioritised.

This section presents techniques and methods of oral communication that can be used to verify that the applicant correctly understands the information that is delivered to them.

Practical considerations

Building trust and ensuring a confidential space for information provision facilitates effective information provision. It allows the applicant to ask questions that are relevant to them and which can sometimes be sensitive or personal. Informing the applicant about the set-up for information provision and how confidentiality is ensured also contributes to building this trust.

(a) Oral communication techniques

The basic communication techniques presented in Section 2.2.1 Basic communication techniques also apply to oral communication.

There are, however, additional techniques that help to deliver information orally in a manner that makes the message easier to understand.

Start with an informal discussion

Starting an information provision session with an informal discussion helps build trust and makes it easier for the applicant to ask questions during the session.

Speak at a slow and steady pace

When speaking to an individual or a group, **do not speak too fast**.

You have probably shared your information many times before but the applicant will be hearing it for the first time. Speaking at a slower pace can also help interpreters understand what you are saying, which in turn improves the quality of the message. Pausing while speaking also allows the applicant to ask questions.

Use an appropriate volume

It is important that the applicant can hear you properly when you speak.

As a basic rule, use the volume required to make yourself heard but not louder than this. Speaking very loudly or shouting can be seen as aggressive, especially when addressing an individual. Asking the question 'Can you hear me well?' before you start providing information can help you assess whether you need to adjust your volume.

Use tone effectively

The tone of your voice matters. It can help you to emphasise a message or to connect with the applicant. For example, you can indicate that a message is important by using a serious tone. A friendly tone communicates empathy and respect, which can help make the applicant feel more comfortable and safer with you.

Plan more time or take a break

The applicant may have difficulty understanding you or may find it challenging to stay focused for a long time. Set aside time for questions and to take one or more breaks. It can help the applicant process what you have said and increase their understanding.

Working with interpreters

Your communication techniques should take working with interpreters into consideration. You may need to explain to the interpreter the terminology you use to ensure correct translation to another language. You may also need to allocate more time for information provision so that the interpreter can translate what is being said.

You should clearly explain your own role and the role of the interpreter to the applicant at the beginning of the information session. Your role is to provide the information and the interpreter's role is limited to translating what you and the applicant say. It is also important to note to the applicant that the interpreter is bound by the principles of confidentiality, impartiality, neutrality, integrity and professional conduct, in a similar manner to you.

When working with an interpreter, you are responsible for the communication context. For example, you should not allow the interpreter to interact with the applicant on their own behalf, as this would result in you losing control of what information is passed on to the applicant. If this happens, it is advisable to promptly remind the interpreter of their role.

Practical tip: working with interpreters

- Be aware of how certain terms are understood in a given language and explain clearly what you mean. For example, the term 'health' should be understood as including both mental and physical health, the term 'family' should be understood as the nuclear family rather than the extended family and the term 'brothers and sisters' refers to siblings only.
- Verbally verify that the applicant and the interpreter understand each other.
- Be aware of signs indicating that the applicant and the interpreter do not fully understand or trust each other, for example the applicant is hesitating when answering questions or they are providing longer answers than the interpreter is translating.
- Address the applicant directly when you are speaking, by looking at them and using the second person ('you'), even when they cannot understand your language.
- Pause after every one to three sentences to allow for accurate interpretation.

Good practice

It is important to make sure that the interpreter knows the correct and appropriate terminology to use during information provision. Multilingual glossaries can facilitate correct interpretation. Such glossaries should include terminology related to the asylum procedure that is commonly used during information provision sessions or specialised terminology used when delivering information to applicants from certain groups (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer persons (LGBTIQ+)).

The EUAA terminology project aims to establish a multilingual glossary of terms and definitions that are relevant in the asylum context. The glossary can be accessed here.



Related EUAA training

The EUAA offers a training module on **interpreting in the asylum context**, which explains the role of the interpreter in the asylum procedure and the principles of interpreting in the asylum context.

If you are interested in attending EUAA training courses, contact the person responsible for training within your authority to receive additional information.

(b) Verification methods to ensure understanding

The applicant should be encouraged to ask questions during information provision. This is particularly important in order to clarify any doubts and to dispel any rumours or false information that the applicant may have heard or received.

To ensure that your audience has understood the information you have shared with them, you need to actively check that they understood your message correctly.

Verbal feedback from your audience

The applicant may truthfully respond 'yes' when you ask if they have understood what you have explained; however, there are several reasons why they may answer 'yes' even though they did not actually understand. You can tackle this by applying different verification methods.

- **Summarise in your own words**

  After covering a section of information, you can summarise what you have said by highlighting the main points and dividing the information into small units. This allows for short discussions/questions before you continue.

- **Have the applicant repeat the information in their own words**

  You can ask applicants to repeat in their own words what you have just said. In this way you will be able to determine if there are any misunderstandings or if the applicant has missed important information. It will also help the applicant to better remember what you have said.

- **Ask a test question**

  Without 'quizzing' the applicant on their knowledge, you could ask a more detailed question to see if a particular point has been understood. For example, after informing them of an upcoming appointment, you can ask 'Can you tell me where you need to be?'.

Give room for further questions

You can proactively ask the applicant if they have any questions. This is a good way to show early on that you are interested in their feedback and questions, and can also give you an idea of the applicant's main concerns.

Break information down into segments

Repeat the suggested verification methods while the information provision session is ongoing. Do not ask all the questions at the end of the information session. The applicant may be discouraged from telling you that they have not understood everything after you have given a lengthy explanation. Therefore, explain at the beginning of the session that questions can be asked at any time throughout information provision, and divide your message into segments followed by a question-and-answer session.



Practical tip: counter misconceptions

You may come across many falsehoods related to the asylum procedure. It is important that you counter these misconceptions, but it is as important that you do so tactfully.

Do not say outright that the applicant is wrong, as this may reinforce any mistrust that the applicant already feels. Instead, invite them to explain what they have heard about (an aspect of) the procedure and try to address the source of the falsehood. Then, you can say that the information they heard is wrong and **counteract falsehoods by explaining the real situation or procedure**. You can support what you say with information material, such as a brochure, a map or other forms of support material.

Non-verbal feedback

When you communicate with the applicant, use a combination of verbal and non-verbal cues. Be alert for non-verbal signs with which the applicant (unknowingly) lets you know that they did not understand what you said. Look out for the following signals:

- facial expressions like frowning or yawning,
- looking around the room or staring,
- change of mood or change in tone of voice,
- crossed arms,
- shaking head.

You can counter these reactions by using basic non-verbal communication techniques, including the following.

- **Say 'hello' with a smile**

  When greeting the applicant, have a positive and empathetic attitude.

- **Try to keep your facial expressions neutral**

  Use neutral, open facial expressions. This helps you to convey the message without confusing the applicant and leave room for their response. You can adapt your facial expression to the response you receive but should retain a professional attitude.

- **Give non-verbal feedback to the applicant**

  When listening to the applicant, you can signal that you hear and understand what they are saying by nodding.

- **Indicate with your body language that you are paying attention to the applicant**

  When communicating with the applicant, make sure that you have an open posture, facing them directly, and that you make appropriate eye contact with them. When possible, try not to have any objects (such as a table) between you and the applicant.

- **Use your hands**

  Neutral hand gestures can help explain what you mean. Due to potential cultural differences, it is recommended that you also explain verbally what is meant by your hand gestures.

Practical tip: be aware of cultural differences

Non-verbal feedback from the applicant can indicate that they have understood what you have said, for example nodding when you were speaking. However, this can also be done out of respect, while the message itself was lost.

Your non-verbal signals matter as well. Your message may seem like good news to you, but it can be received as something negative by the applicant. Leave room for their emotional response by maintaining a professional and neutral attitude.

Keep in mind that smiling, maintaining eye contact and handshakes have different connotations in different societies. If the applicant does not smile back or avoids looking at you, this may be a sign of respect or modesty rather than uncooperative behaviour. Moreover, as widely known, in some cultures shaking the head means 'yes'.

2.2.3. Adapt your communication techniques to the applicant's personal circumstances

Communication techniques that are adapted to the applicant's personal circumstances will allow the applicant to understand the message better. Thus, tailor-made communication techniques enable the applicant to fully exercise their rights and comply with their obligations.

When adapting your communication techniques, consider what kind of communication will ensure understanding in light of the applicant's personal circumstances. In the context of the asylum procedure, the most common circumstances to consider include the following:

- culture
- education and level of literacy
- gender
- age
- cognitive and learning difficulties
- vision and hearing impairments

(a) Culture

Culture affects a person's communication style – the way they understand, interpret and retell information. However, one should not assume that all persons of a certain culture behave or interact in a particular manner. Factors such as age, gender and societal status also play a part.

Culture may influence applicants' communication style in several ways.

- Certain concepts may have different meanings: dates, seasons, distances and notions about close family and age can vary depending on the culture. Many abstract concepts may also be new to the applicant, such as fundamental rights and legal assistance.
- Body language and gestures may express different meanings depending on the culture.
- Notions related to appropriate behaviour, customs and involvement in public life can vary depending on the culture.
- Communication in collective cultures, such as in Africa, often puts an emphasis on common routines, social relations and interaction, while in individual cultures, such as in Europe, communication typically focuses on individual experiences, roles and emotions.

Practical considerations

- Explain concretely any abstract concepts used in information provision.
- Familiarise yourself with different communication styles in the culture of the applicant, including the level of directness, manners of greeting and body language.

Good practice

Cultural mediators can facilitate understanding of the cultural context of both your country and the applicant's country of origin. They can help explain terminology and provide examples that the applicant can relate to. They can also advise on body language and gestures that may have differing meanings across cultures. Cultural mediators are primarily used in addition to formal interpreters in contexts where precise translation is not needed, such as during community-based activities. Cultural mediators should not be confused with interpreters, who are required to certify sufficient language knowledge and are bound by professional conduct principles related to their role in the asylum procedure.

(b) Education and level of literacy

Applicants' level of education may affect their ability to access information and comprehend information relating to certain matters outside their personal sphere of life. Limited or lack of (formal) education may affect their communication style in several ways, as explained in the following points.

- Since most people learn to read and write at school, lack of formal education may lead to limited or no literacy and digital literacy. This limits the ability to access information provided in writing or through digital platforms.

- Formal education develops our capacity for abstract thinking in logical sequences and our understanding of concepts like size, distances, proportions, time and causality. Applicants with limited education may not be able to comprehend abstract terminology.
- Formal education supplies us with general knowledge about the world, such as historical, geographical and scientific knowledge. Limited or lack of (formal) education may mean that the applicant has little knowledge of matters outside the scope of their personal sphere of life, such as how administrative procedures work.

Practical considerations

- Explain any abstract terminology.
- Provide information in a manner that relates to the applicant's personal living environment or experiences instead of general knowledge.
- Use visual material to illustrate your message and ensure that the visual aids used are as self-explanatory and understandable as possible without accompanying text.
- Ensure that illiterate applicants and applicants with a low level of literacy have access to information provided orally and to visual and audio information material.
- Ensure that visual and audio information material is easy to find on the digital platforms, even for persons with limited digital skills. Show the applicant how they can find this material by using a computer.

(c) Gender

Gender refers to socially constructed roles of females and males. These social roles may exclude persons who are assumed to be women and girls from decision-making within their family and community. Thus, these roles also affect information provision to female applicants, as they may not proactively ask questions in front of their family or community members, particularly if these questions relate to their own personal situation.

Women and girls may have more limited access to communication channels than men and boys. Male applicants may have better access to digital information through computers or mobile phones, if they are more digitally literate and educated than female applicants. Thus, providing information orally is particularly important when communicating with female applicants.

Women and persons whose gender (and/or sexual) identity does not conform with social norms may have a particular need for information provision activities to be carried out in safe spaces. Their questions and concerns relating to the asylum procedure may be particularly sensitive and personal, thus requiring confidentiality.

Practical considerations

- Provide information to female applicants directly, either individually or in an all-women group session.

- Organise information sessions and offer information material in spaces where women spend their daily lives, such as in women-only spaces at reception centres.
- Pay particular attention to ensure confidentiality during information provision, for example by explaining what confidentiality means, delivering information only in small groups and offering information provision sessions for individuals.
- Provide female interpreters for information provision sessions.

Good practice

Women and girls may have limited access to information due to their social role or may be in a vulnerable situation. For this reason, it is a good practice to reach out to them in areas where men have restricted access. For example, by placing posters or brochures with specific information in the women's bathrooms.

Information materials to be provided in the waiting area(s) can be compiled into one general document covering all topics. Compiling the information into one document is advised as opposed to separating the (sensitive) information into different documents as the applicant may be reluctant or afraid to collect the information directly relating to their situation (e.g. matters concerning LGBTIQ+ issues or domestic violence)

(d) Age

Child-friendly information refers to information that is tailored to a child's age, maturity level, gender and culture ([18]). You should adjust the complexity of the information according to the child's situation, such as using simple and direct words instead of abstract concepts. You should also adjust your communication style according to the attention span of the child; for example, a series of short sessions with many breaks is preferable to one long session. Your communication should also take into consideration the child's background, including their gender and culture, to make your language as easy to understand as possible. The younger and less mature the child, the more your communication needs to be adjusted ([19]).

The age and maturity of a child similarly affect their ability to access to information. A child may not be able to read or may not have the patience to focus on written text. For accompanied children, it is necessary to deliver information to all family members, including children who may have their own asylum claims from their family members. For

([18]) See Council of Europe, *Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice*, 2010, p. 21.

([19]) For more information on principles and practical tips relating to child-friendly information provision, see European Commission, *Creating Child-friendly Versions of Written Documents: A guide*, 2021; Council of Europe, *How to convey child-friendly information to children in migration: A handbook for frontline professionals*, 2018, pp. 15–30; and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Technical Guidance: Child-friendly procedures*, 2021, pp. 13–16.

unaccompanied children, it is important to note that they need to receive specific information that is relevant to them. They also need more support in accessing relevant information material, as they do not have parents (or other guardians) continuously available to them to assist them in the procedure or explain the information provided.

In some cultures, individuals are considered and see themselves as adults before the age of 18. Moreover, following the experience of their migration journey, they may feel more mature than their actual age. It is therefore necessary to deliver information to the child by using language that is adjusted to their maturity level, while explaining the information thoroughly enough to ensure their understanding.

Practical considerations

- Simplify information and use easier to understand terminology than you would normally use.
- Explain difficult words and give examples.
- Repeat core information, verify their understanding and allow more time and breaks than you would normally do.
- Use information material that keeps the child's attention and provides information in the form of a game, such as an activity book, to make the information interesting.
- Share information in formats that children normally use, including digital tools, visual aids and games.
- Create a safe space for information provision without distractions.
- Make the child feel comfortable with you, for example by starting with a topic that the child feels comfortable talking about.
- Consider one-to-one information provision sessions instead of in a group setting.
- Allow enough time for information provision and planned breaks.

You may need to adjust your communication techniques when talking to not only children but also elderly persons. In this case, their personal circumstances may involve limited digital literacy, declining hearing or eyesight or cognitive difficulties. For more information, see the Sections 2.2.3(e) Cognitive and learning difficulties and 2.2.3(f) Vision and hearing impairments.

Good practice

When providing information to children, it is important to consider their age and maturity level. It is recommended that appropriate information provision materials are developed for different age groups, such as:

- school-aged children (up to 12 years old)
- adolescents (12 to 18 years old).

Materials for the first group need to be based on visual aids. Furthermore, when developing materials for children it is necessary to pay attention to the level of detail provided and the complexity of the information.

Preschool children are normally informed individually and in an age-appropriate way by their guardians.

(e) Cognitive and learning difficulties

Applicants' cognitive and learning difficulties may not be visible at first glance. However, you may notice that the applicant has difficulty in giving clear and coherent statements, memorising information or focusing on the information provision. Cognitive and learning difficulties may be associated with medical issues such as intellectual disabilities, depression, brain injuries or addiction to drugs or alcohol, or may be a side effect of strong medicines.

Depending on the severity of the cognitive and learning difficulties, it may be necessary to provide information orally to ensure that the message is conveyed. As providing information to persons with cognitive and learning difficulties can be challenging, support from specialised services can also be considered. Individual information provision is also recommended.

It is important to **note that exposure to traumatic events can cause post-traumatic stress**, which may also affect the applicant's memory and behaviour. Traumatised applicants often have poor memory. They may be on constant alert – which decreases their ability to concentrate – and may avoid information that relates to their trauma – which can include asylum matters. They may also feel numb, which can appear as unresponsiveness. Thus, similar communication techniques to those used for persons with cognitive and learning difficulties may be needed for highly traumatised applicants, depending on the behaviour and reactions of the applicant.

Practical considerations

- Focus on the core messages by using short sentences and simple language.
- Repeat information more often than you would normally.
- Use easy-to-read formats for information material.

- Do not provide too much information at once.
- Use techniques to verify the applicant's understanding.
- Listen actively and engage the applicant in the discussion to enhance their concentration.
- Use a neutral tone and adopt a non-judgemental attitude.
- Pay particular attention to providing information in segments and pause often to allow time for the applicant to process information and ask questions.
- Plan more time and breaks than you would normally.
- Allow the presence of a trusted support person, if the applicant wishes.

(f) Vision and hearing impairments

Vision and/or hearing impairments can vary from mild deficits to blindness and deafness. Any applicant may experience such impairments; however, they are more common among elderly persons. Your communication techniques should be adapted according to the severity of the impairment(s).

Information provision to applicants with impairments may require specialised skills and knowledge. Depending on the severity of the impairment, you may wish to consider using specialised services, such as sign language interpreters, to support the information provision. Individual information provision may be necessary.

The applicant may not be able to access information in certain formats, such as information provided orally, in writing or in visual and/or audio formats. Thus, it is necessary to make information available in various forms to ensure that relevant messages can be conveyed to applicants with different types of impairments.

Speech impairments may also affect your communication if the applicant is not able to ask questions and express matters that are relevant to the information provision. Alternative methods of communication should be based on the usual form of expression used by the applicant.

Practical considerations when communicating with applicants who have a vision impairment

Depending on the degree of vision impairment, the following tips may be applicable:

- consider recording the information provision session so that the applicant can access the information again;
- make easy-to-read information material available that has a sufficiently large font size and uses visual aids;
- use other methods besides communicating in person to provide information, including audio material.

Practical considerations when communicating with applicants who have a hearing impairment

Depending on the degree of hearing impairment, the following tips may be applicable:

- talk slowly and clearly;
- avoid using a high-pitched voice, as it is difficult to hear;
- face the applicant directly at eye level so that they can lip-read and pick up visual cues;
- keep your hands away from your face when you speak;
- be aware that background noises can decrease the ability to hear;
- use a notepad to write down what you are saying, noting important/key terms;
- let the applicant know when you are changing topic, for example by pausing briefly;
- use a sign language interpreter, when appropriate;
- use written and visual material along with other methods of information provision, instead of oral communication.

Make sure that you adapt your messages in addition to your communication techniques

As well as adapting your communication techniques to the applicant's personal circumstances, you need to adapt the information content to include the messages that the applicant needs to receive.



Practical tip: providing information to a family

- Make sure that all family members are individually provided with information that is specifically relevant to them.
- Adapt your communication techniques to children and/or women as appropriate.
- Children should be handed the information brochures specifically designed for them (see Section 2.2 Good practices related to providing information).
- Women may require a space for information provision that ensures confidentiality, to make sure that they can ask all the questions that are relevant to their application.
- Proactively observe other potential circumstances to which your communication techniques may need to be adapted.

The content of the messages that need to be delivered to the applicants is described in Section 6. What information should be provided? Information topics.

2.2.4. How to convey information

As mentioned above, Member States may establish additional means of information provision, to complement the mandatory information brochures.

This complementary information provision includes the use of oral communication, printed information material, digital material and audiovisual material to convey information to applicants. As each communication channel reaches applicants in a different way and conveys certain types of information more effectively, it is advisable to provide information through several communication channels at the same time. It is also often necessary to support the delivery of information by using information material.

This section outlines different communication channels to convey information, the benefits of using several communication channels at the same time and how information material can support the delivery of information.

(a) Consider which communication channels to use

Not all communication channels are the same. A certain channel can be a better fit for a certain category of applicant, while other channels can be a better fit for the specific message you are seeking to communicate at a given time. It is therefore important to choose the most appropriate communication channel(s) to deliver information.

When choosing your communication channel(s), make sure that it is **fit for your purpose** (e.g. takes into account how detailed or complex your message is) and that it is **fit for the applicant** (i.e. takes into account their personal circumstances).

Brochures and other printed materials

Printed materials are written forms of information, including brochures and booklets, which can be supported by visual aids, such as infographics, cartoons and flow charts. For this reason, printed materials can communicate detailed messages and an extensive amount of information.

Printed materials are a one-way communication channel that is primarily intended for literate applicants. At the same time, some of the core messages can be illustrated using visual aids to communicate content to applicants who are illiterate or have poor reading skills. Printed communication materials can be made available to the applicant at all times.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Reach large audiences • Are available to applicants at all times • Can be in several languages • Save time in the information provision process	• Very limited use for illiterate persons / persons with a low level of literacy • Hard to fully adapt to the applicant's personal circumstances • Need tailored to communicate different information to different applicants • Not possible to verify the applicant's understanding • Costly to print and keep information up to date



Practical tip: illiterate persons and persons with a low level of literacy

- Use simple summaries and self-explanatory illustrations.

People with limited reading skills do understand the importance of written information and in many cases have developed techniques to access it. They can often access the content of written material if it contains simple summaries, such as a box with a short summary at the beginning of each chapter.

An illiterate person will take and keep printed materials if they recognise that the information is relevant to them. This can be achieved by using self-explanatory cover illustrations.

People with limited reading skills and illiterate persons will often ask others from their community to read more extensive texts out loud to them.

Oral communication

Oral communication allows you to double-check that the information has been understood. For this reason, complex information should be communicated to applicants orally, accompanied by appropriate explanations.

You should adapt your communication techniques to the personal circumstances of the applicant and provide information that is directly relevant to them. You can also apply techniques to immediately verify whether the applicant has correctly understood your

message. For these reasons, it is recommended that information is delivered orally to each applicant at least once during the asylum procedure.

For more information on oral communication techniques, see Section 2.2.2 Oral communication techniques.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Reaches all applicants • Communicates complex information • Communicates information that is directly relevant to the applicant • Enables communication techniques to be adapted to the personal circumstances of the applicant • Can ensure confidential discussions • Can ensure understanding	• Time-consuming • Can address only individuals or smaller groups • May not be available to applicants at all times • May require interpretation



Practical tip: create groups of applicants for information provision

- Form groups of applicants for oral information provision sessions by looking into their personal circumstances.

Sometimes larger groups can be formed, for example when general information is being delivered to applicants who have similar backgrounds in terms of language, nationality and culture. In other cases, smaller groups or even individual information provision needs to be considered, for example when applicants need to receive specific information and/or the information needs to be communicated to them in a specific manner to ensure their understanding, for example for children or persons with cognitive and learning difficulties.

- Consider the group's size and composition to ensure effective information provision.

The group's size should not be so large as to make it difficult for an applicant to ask questions or for you to apply verification methods to ensure that they have understood the information. The group composition should take into account what is needed for an applicant to feel safe to raise questions. For example, women may not speak or ask questions that are relevant to them while in the presence of men.

During information provision in a group setting, it is advisable to inform the applicants explicitly that they can also ask questions privately and in a confidential manner.



Practical tip: support oral information with information materials

- Support oral information sessions with printed materials or links to digital sources so that the applicant can revisit the information at their own pace.

Oral information provision has many advantages, but it is fleeting by nature. For the applicant, it can be challenging to absorb and retain large amounts of new content in the given time span. This is why you need to support your oral information sessions with written material.

Digital communication

Information can be disseminated via digital platforms so that it is available to the applicant at all times. However, this assumes that the applicant has the digital skills required to use the information platforms and access to the relevant equipment (i.e. an internet connection and a computer or smart phone). Furthermore, information platforms need to be accessible in a language that the applicant can understand.

Digital platforms can be used to store different types of information material, including material with a high level of detail on various information topics. In this way, the applicant can find detailed information on all topics that are relevant to them.

Information can be distributed via a variety of digital platforms, some of which enable interaction with the applicant.

One-way digital communication

Information material that is disseminated digitally is often intended for one-way communication. However, it can be adapted to the personal circumstances of applicants and include written text, visual communication items and audio.



Practical tip: use digital tools to make information available in different formats

- Use text-to-speech systems to make your written information available in audio format.

This is useful both for persons with limited reading skills and for those with limited fluency in the language used.

Two-way digital communication

Digital communication can include interactive platforms, such as dedicated mobile applications for information provision, social media and chat facilities embedded in websites. These platforms enable the applicant to contact the information provider in order to receive more information or clarifications.

Call-in and messaging services can also be used to communicate directly with the applicant. These include hotlines, emails, phone calls and mobile applications such as WhatsApp. These channels can be used to disseminate specific information or announcements. Interpretation or translation needs to be available to ensure effective communication.

Although digital interaction is not a replacement for face-to-face oral information provision, the abovementioned means can be used to answer the most pressing questions or concerns that the applicant may have in between in-person information provision sessions.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Reaches large audiences • Information can be tailored to the needs of applicants, including text, visual aids and audio • Enables interaction between the applicant and the information provider • Available at all times • Can be made available in several languages • Can provide specific and up-to-date information • Not time-consuming or costly to provide information	• Only for applicants with the necessary digital skills • Only for applicants who have access to an internet connection and the required equipment • Specialised materials need to be developed to communicate information according to the personal circumstances of applicants • Limited opportunity to ensure understanding



Practical tip: frequently asked questions

- Prepare frequently asked questions and answers for each information topic. It will facilitate information provision for both the provider and the applicant.

Frequently asked questions functions can be automated in digital platforms by using chatbots that 'talk' to the applicant about the most common questions on the asylum procedure and refer to relevant information materials. Chatbots can be programmed to communicate in different languages. They function 24/7 and can be made available in public spaces at reception centres and in waiting areas at asylum service facilities.

Audiovisual communication

Audiovisual communication refers to broadcast media, including loudspeakers, video screens, television and radio. This one-way communication channel is intended for communicating simple messages or announcements that need to reach applicants within a short time limit. Broadcasting is often used in an environment with distractions, which makes this type of communication less suitable for delivering detailed, complex or personalised messages.

Although broadcast media can reach large audiences, this channel is most effective when it is used to target a well-defined audience. For example, loudspeakers are a useful channel for making announcements and video screens can be used to disseminate videos and animations in reception facilities.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Reaches large audiences • Can be made accessible for applicants regardless of their personal circumstances • Not time-consuming to provide information	• Only for targeted messages or announcements, not for complex, detailed or personalised information • Target audience reachable only in certain contexts, such as operations, refugee camps and reception centres • Difficult to make available in several languages • Not possible to verify applicants' understanding

(b) Use several channels at the same time

It is desirable to disseminate the same information through different communication channels for various reasons, as follows.

- Information is more accessible when it is made available through several channels. Different channels suit the personal circumstances of each applicant, depending on their level of literacy, education, cognitive capacity and maturity.
- By engaging more senses (listening, watching, speaking), it is easier to understand and retain new information.
- Repeating content increases the applicant's understanding of and trust in the information being provided.
- By using additional channels, you increase the chance of reaching the applicant.

Therefore, using different channels to distribute information helps you to reach the applicant and strengthen the message.

Applicants must be given the opportunity to receive personalised information. This can be done through oral communication by adapting your communication techniques according to the applicant's personal circumstances, enabling you to deliver messages that are directly relevant to them. Oral communication can be combined with other communication channels to ensure that the information is available to the applicant at all times.

When the information is made available in several channels, it is necessary to ensure that it is consistent.



Practical tip: establish a link between printed and digital channels

- Use printed materials to direct the applicant to online information. To do so:
  - make all your printed materials accessible on digital platforms;
  - include a link and/or QR code in your printed material.

(c) Support information provision with different types of information material

In order to disseminate information through different communication channels, you need to have information material available. You can choose from numerous types of information material to deliver information in written, visual and/or audio format. Most material types enable you to combine different formats, which increases applicants' access to the information.

Table 1 lists the most common information material types, grouped by communication format, along with their advantages and disadvantages.

Table 1. Examples of information material types

Material type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Written communication that can be supported by visual aids		
Brochure/newsletter	• Enables targeted messages • Can communicate general and detailed information • Can communicate information on a number of different topics • Can be distributed through oral information provision sessions, printouts and digital platforms	• Suitable for complex messages only if they can be simplified • Not suitable for delivering extensive explanations or lots of details
Booklet/guide	• Suitable for complex messages and information on a specific theme • Can communicate an extensive level of detail • Can communicate information on many different topics • Can be distributed through oral information provision sessions, printouts and digital platforms	• Extensive and detailed information may be difficult for the applicant to absorb • Time-consuming to read

Material type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Visual communication that can be supported by written information		
Poster	• Suitable for simple messages and announcements • Can be used to highlight or give visibility to a particular information topic • Can be distributed through printouts and digital platforms	• Only suitable for simple core messages • Limited space for information; not suitable for delivering detailed information • Only suitable for a maximum of two information topics • Requires a large wall space
Flow chart	• Suitable for messages that can be illustrated as a chronological timeline or process • Can be used to explain or simplify complex information • Can communicate detailed information • Can be distributed through oral information provision sessions, printouts and digital platforms	• Can cover only one information topic or a limited number of topics • Only suitable for information that can be presented as a chronological process

Material type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Cartoon / picture book / colouring book / activity book	• Suitable for core messages • Can communicate emotionally charged messages • Can communicate several information topics • Suitable for children • Can be distributed through oral information provision sessions, printouts and digital platforms	• Primarily for simple messages; no space for explanations • Only suitable for messages that can be communicated through a limited number of picture frames • Not suitable for detailed information
Audio communication that can be supported by written information		
Audio file / podcast	• Can communicate complex messages • Often suitable for information on a specific theme • Can communicate general and detailed information • Can cover several information topics • Can be converted from written information • Can be distributed through different communication channels, such as oral information provision sessions, screens in waiting areas and digital platforms	• Applicants may find it difficult to focus on long audio files • Detailed explanations may be difficult to follow without visual aids or a script • Cannot be distributed as a printout (although transcripts of audio files can be printed)

Material type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Combination of written, visual and audio communication		
PowerPoint presentation	• Suitable for targeted messages • Can communicate general and detailed information • Can communicate information on a number of different topics • Accessible to all applicants when combining written text, visuals, audio and even video • Catches the attention easily • Information can be modified and updated without considerable costs • Production is less costly than a video/ animation • Can be distributed through oral information provision sessions, printouts and digital platforms • Can be dubbed into many languages at little additional cost	• Primarily for core messages with a limited level of detail • Not suitable for extensive explanations or details • Suitable only for information that can be communicated through a limited number of slides

Material type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Video/animation	• Suitable for simple core messages • Can communicate emotionally charged messages • Can communicate general and detailed information • Accessible to all applicants when written text, visuals and audio are combined • Catches the attention easily • Can be distributed through oral information provision sessions and digital platforms • Can be dubbed into many languages at little additional cost	• Primarily for one information topic or a limited number of topics • Primarily for core messages with a limited level of detail • Cannot be distributed as a printout • Requires technological readiness, including sufficient bandwidth • High production costs; difficult to update content

Further training on information provision

The provision of information to applicants is generally considered a special expertise. Methodologies for the provision of information are briefly explained in this chapter; however, to understand the full complexity of the subject and to be able to use that knowledge in practice, the EUAA recommends following a dedicated training module on the subject.

Related EUAA training

The EUAA offers the module '**Communication with and information provision to asylum seekers**', which outlines the skills needed in designing, planning and implementing cross-cultural communication strategies. The aim of this module is to enable practitioners to assess the information needs of persons in need of international protection, applicants and potential beneficiaries of international protection. After attending this training, you will be able to adapt and disseminate accessible messages through the appropriate channels.

If you are interested in attending EUAA training courses, contact the person responsible for training within your authority in order to receive additional information.

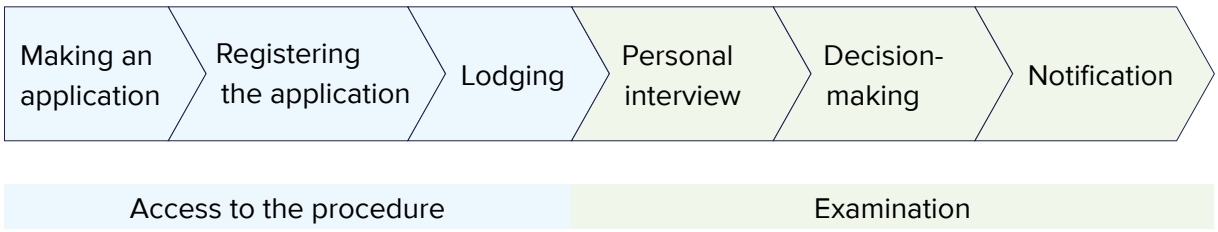
3. When to provide information

The APR stipulates that EU+ countries should provide information to applicants as soon as possible to enable them to exercise their rights and comply with their obligations; information should be provided **at the registration stage at the latest** ([20]).

Some rights and obligations apply from the moment an application for international protection is made; information on these should be given at the very beginning of the procedure, even before registration.

In addition, **information provision is not necessarily exhausted at the point of registration**. Indeed, information may not yet be available at the time of registration, or circumstances relevant to the information provided may subsequently change. In such cases, the necessary information may be provided after registration, as soon as possible once it is available.

Below is a summary of the steps of the asylum procedure at first instance. An explanation of each step can be found in Sections 3.1 Access to the procedure and 3.2 Examination of the application.



The information to be provided and the level of detail of the information will depend on which step of the asylum procedure the applicant is at. It is important not to overwhelm applicants with too much information and to limit the information to what is required or necessary at the given step of the procedure.

In the information provision process, it is recommended that you distinguish between:

- when you need to provide core information;
- when you can provide further detailed information.

As information can be delivered in phases, you can first deliver basic information on each topic and then complement it with further details, as follows:

- identify the core messages related to each information topic;
- repeat the core messages during the different steps of the procedure;
- accompany the core message(s) with further details as appropriate.

([20]) Article 8(2) APR.

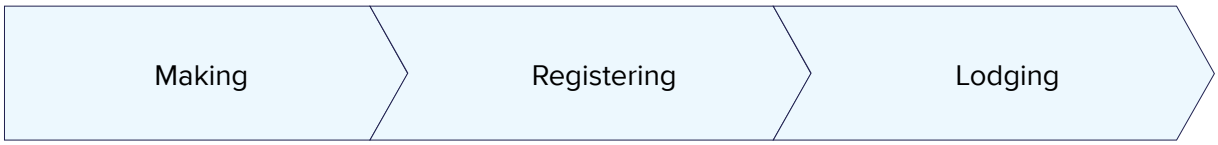
3.1. Access to the procedure

Core information can be provided to the applicant several times, at each step of the access to procedure phase. Building on the core information, more details can be provided each time that you interact with the applicant.

Keep in mind that information can also be made available to applicants at all times through digital platforms and printed materials.

3.1.1. Procedural steps

The access to the procedure phase contains three steps: making, registering and lodging an application. Depending on the national set-up, the three steps can be merged and conducted at the same place and at the same time, or they may be conducted separately.



Making an application ([21]) refers to the act of expressing to an authority the wish to receive international protection. After this step, the third-country national or stateless person is considered to be an applicant and enjoys the rights and is subject to the obligations attached to this status.

Registering an application ([22]) refers to establishing a record of the applicant's wish to receive international protection, thus recording that the applicant is an applicant for international protection.

Registration should happen within a certain time limit after the application is made, as follows.

- A maximum of five days in the case of applications made to the authorities responsible for registering them.
- If the application was made to an authority that is not competent to register it, that authority will have three working days to inform the competent authority. The competent authority then has to register the application within five days from the day it received the information.
- A maximum of 15 days in the event of a disproportionate number of people making an application within the same period of time, making it unfeasible to register all applicants within the deadline.

([21]) Article 26 APR.
([22]) Article 27 APR.

Lodging an application ([23]) typically refers to the stage when applicants are required to submit all the elements and documents at their disposal that are needed for substantiating their application.

The applicant should lodge their application within a certain time limit:

- as a rule, as soon as possible and no later than 21 days after registration, provided that they are given an effective opportunity to do so;
- as an exception, no later than two months after registration, in the event of a disproportionate number of people making an application within the same period of time, making it unfeasible to give each applicant an appointment within 21 days.

3.1.2. Providing information during the procedural steps

Article 8(2) APR states that information on the following topics should be provided as soon as possible and **at the registration stage at the latest**:

- the right to lodge an individual application;
- the time limits and stages of the procedure to be followed;
- the applicant's rights and obligations during the procedure, including those under the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation (AMMR), and the consequences of not complying with these obligations, in particular with regard to the explicit or implicit withdrawal of an application;
- the right to free legal counselling for the lodging of an individual application and to legal assistance and representation at all stages of the procedure;
- the means by which the applicant can fulfil the obligation to submit the elements as referred to in Article 4 of the Qualification Regulation (QR).

Further details on these information topics are presented in Chapter 6.

Information on these topics should be provided to the applicant during the registration stage at the latest, to the extent it is available. Hence, it, or at least some of it, can also be provided during the making of an application.

Information provision during the **making** of application stage often takes place in a situation where the person seeking international protection has recently arrived in the country and may have little knowledge of the asylum procedure. The person may have limited ability to absorb information, since they may have other pressing needs. Stress can limit their ability to absorb information. For this reason, it is recommended that only core information is provided, which is less detailed.

The registration step offers the opportunity to provide information to the applicant both in writing and orally (remember that information should be provided as a minimum by means

([23]) Article 28 APR.

of the mandatory information brochures (see Section 2.1 EUAA mandatory information brochures).

Basic details are collected from applicants during registration; this allows the information provision to be tailored to the personal situation of each applicant. This could include information on topics such as the support available in relation to potential special procedural or reception needs, or the special examination procedure to follow if the application is channelled to a particular procedure. These steps also provide an opportunity to verify the applicant's understanding and allow them to ask questions and clarify any doubts.

The application is lodged in person (unless derogation provisions apply in your national context). Hence, there is an opportunity to provide the applicant with further explanations and detailed information, notably on the lodging itself but also on the upcoming steps of the procedure.

Chapter 6 provides further guidance on the information topics to cover and on the appropriate level of detail when providing information.

Related EUAA training

The EUAA and European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) 2026 publication *Practical Guide on Access to the Asylum Procedure* supports first-contact officials in their role of guaranteeing effective access to international protection in the first contact context, for example by providing information.

This practical guide provides information about the core obligations of first-contact officials, the rights of persons in need of international protection and the procedural guarantees, and the support that is provided in the first-contact context.

The EUAA's *Practical guide on the registration and lodging of applications for international protection*, published in 2025, supports officials in their daily work of registering and lodging applications for international protection, and adhering to common EU registration standards.

This practical guide lays down the legal framework related to the three steps of the access to the procedure phase, including detailed information on the rights and obligations triggered at the different stages of registration. The guide describes, among other things, the main steps of registering and lodging applications, and provides information on identifying applicants with potential vulnerabilities and on the responsibility determination procedure.

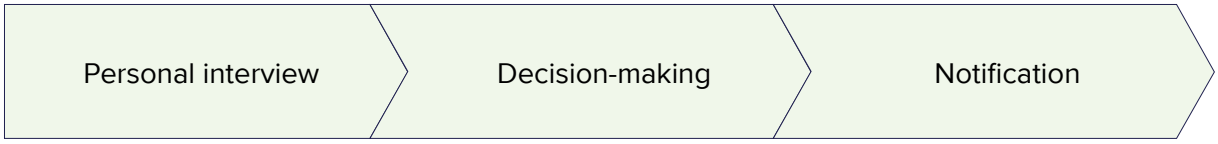
3.2. Examination of the application

The examination is the phase during which the determining authority assesses whether an applicant should be granted international protection.

3.2.1. Procedural steps

Usually, the examination phase comprises three stages:

- a personal interview,
- decision-making,
- notification of the decision at first instance.



(a) Personal interview

The applicant is given the opportunity to attend an interview before a decision is made on the inadmissibility ([24]) and before a decision is made on its merits ([25]).

The admissibility interview and the substantive interview can be conducted at the same time ([26]), provided that the applicant has been informed in advance and has been able to consult with their legal adviser or legal counsellor.

The interview may be omitted in the following situations, as set out in the APR ([27]):

(a) *the determining authority is able to take a positive decision with regard to the refugee status or the subsidiary protection status on the basis of the evidence available, provided that the subsidiary protection status offers the same rights and benefits as refugee status under Union and national law;*

(b) *the determining authority considers that the application is not inadmissible on the basis of the evidence available;*

(c) *the determining authority is of the opinion that the applicant is unfit or unable to be interviewed owing to enduring circumstances beyond his or her control;*

(d) *in the case of a subsequent application, the preliminary examination referred to in Article 55(4) is carried out on the basis of a written statement;*

([24]) Article 11(1) APR.
([25]) Article 12(1) APR.
([26]) Article 12(1) APR.
([27]) Article 13(11) APR.

(e) *the determining authority considers the application inadmissible pursuant to Article 38(1), point (c).*

Children are also provided with the opportunity of a personal interview, unless this is not in the best interests of the child ([28]).

(b) Decision-making

Following the personal interview, the determining authority will assess the evidence gathered, establish the factual circumstances and assess whether the conditions for granting international protection have been met. Before deciding on whether the conditions for granting international protection have been met, the determining authority may also decide on the admissibility of the application. For further information, see Section 6.2.8 Admissibility examination.

The determining authority will then make a decision on the application.

(c) Notification

The applicant should receive notification of the decision in writing ([29]). The applicant must be notified of the decision as soon as possible ([30]). Where a representative or legal adviser legally represents the applicant, notification may be given to the representative or legal adviser instead ([31]).

The applicant must be notified in a language that they understand or is reasonably supposed to understand ([32]), unless they are represented by a legal adviser ([33]), and, if relevant, the applicant should be informed in writing about how to challenge a negative decision ([34]).

The notification ends the asylum procedure at first instance.

3.2.2. Providing information during the procedural steps

Information is provided to the applicant during the personal interview and the notification stage.

During the personal interview, information is provided directly by the determining authority. During the notification stage, applicants will receive information either directly from the authority or indirectly via their representative or legal adviser, notifying them of the decision.

([28]) Article 22(3) APR.
([29]) Articles 8(6) and 36(1) APR.
([30]) Articles 8(6) and 36(1) APR.
([31]) Articles 8(6) and 36(1) APR.
([32]) Article 36(3) APR.
([33]) Article 36(4) APR.
([34]) Article 36(4) APR.

The decision-making stage does not necessarily imply interaction between the applicant and asylum authorities; hence, information will not necessarily be provided to the applicant during this step. Interactions may however occur, for example if the applicant spontaneously approaches the determining authorities to request information or submit additional elements or documents. On such occasions information can be provided to the applicant.

3.3. Other opportunities during the asylum procedure

There are other opportunities to deliver information to the applicant apart from during the procedural steps.

During the access to the procedure phase, opportunities may occur:

- in the arrival context, including during activities conducted during first contact at the border;
- during medical screening;
- during the collection of biometrics;
- in meetings with the applicant's legal counsellor or guardian;
- during referral to specialised actors for second-line support;
- when receiving support services.

Moreover, if the applicant is subject to the screening process (see the description of the screening process in Section 4.1 Providing information during the making), the activities and checks that are conducted in the context of the screening are also opportunities to deliver information to the applicant. These activities and checks include:

- the collection of biometrics,
- the vulnerability check,
- the health check,
- the identification or verification of identity,
- the security check.

These opportunities within the access to the procedure phase and/or the screening process enable you to provide more detailed information on the step at hand, for example what the medical screening entails or what can be expected from second-line support.

In addition to the above, you can deliver any information related to the asylum procedure, including general procedural information and information that focuses on a particular topic, during:

- intake at the reception centre;
- community activities;

- the applicant's stay in the reception centre.

You can use these opportunities to complement the information provided during the procedural steps and to repeat and explore further information shared previously.



Practical tip: make information available at all times during the asylum procedure

As well as these opportunities for delivering information in person, information should be made available to the applicant at all times through different communication channels. For more information, see How to provide information.

4. Where to provide information

This chapter focuses on practical aspects related to where information is provided.

The context in which information is delivered varies depending on whether you are in an operational environment, responding to a large number of arrivals, or in an office environment that enables individual meetings with a smaller number of applicants.

The making of an application can occur in various operational settings, as it may take place upon the applicant's arrival (including in the context of a mass arrival). For the subsequent steps (registration, lodging, personal interview and notification), information provision generally takes place in an office environment or at a reception centre.

For this reason, this chapter is divided into two sections: providing information during the making and providing information during the registration, lodging and examination.

4.1. Providing information during the making of an application

The making of an application can occur in different contexts, depending on whether the individual is subject to screening.

The Screening Regulation introduced screening at external borders ([35]) for all third-country nationals who do not fulfil the entry conditions and who:

- are apprehended in connection with an unauthorised crossing of the external border of a Member State; or
- are disembarked in the territory of a Member State following a search and rescue operation; or
- who have made an application for international protection at external border crossing points or in transit zones.

Moreover, the Screening Regulation also introduced screening within the territory ([36]) for third-country nationals who:

- are illegally staying within a Member State's territory; and
- have crossed an external border to enter the territory of that Member State in an unauthorised manner.

([35]) Article 5 Screening Regulation.

([36]) Article 7 Screening Regulation.

Screening at external borders should be completed within a maximum of seven days, while for screening within the territory it is a maximum of three days.

Hence, the making of an application can occur in the following contexts.

- **Before screening**, when the application is made at external border crossing points or in transit zones.
- **During screening**, that is, when an individual makes an application while undergoing screening.
- **Outside screening**, when the individual is not subject to screening. The making can take place within the territory or at border crossing points (where the individual fulfils the conditions to enter). Moreover, an application can also be made following the screening.

Following the introduction of the screening process, information provision during the making stage is likely to take place in an office environment or at an accommodation centre, except in cases where the application is made at external border crossing points or in transit zones.

The Screening Regulation stipulates that all individuals subject to screening should receive information on:

- the screening process;
- their right to apply for international protection;
- their rights and obligations during the screening;
- their rights related to data protection.

If the individual made an application during screening, the screening information described above can include, or be merged with, the information that is provided to applicants as per Article 8(2) APR.

In most cases, information provision during the making of an application often takes place in a situation when the person seeking asylum has recently arrived in the country and has little knowledge of the asylum procedure.

One of the main aims of information provision during the making stage is to ensure effective access to the asylum procedure.

Related EUAA tool

For more information on how to recognise a potential applicant for international protection, see EUAA and Frontex, *Practical Guide on Access to the Asylum Procedure*, 2026.

The practical aspects of providing information are strictly linked to the operational setting where the making of an application takes place.

Usually, the information provision component is part of a broader workflow that regulates the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the asylum procedure. A workflow such as this depends on the operational setting. For example, the information flow established in a location receiving a large number of applicants will be different from that taking place in an office space where applications for international protection are processed individually.

When dealing with a large number of arrivals, it is important to distinguish between:

- operational settings where applicants are supposed to be hosted in the same location as the arrival until the conclusion of the administrative process (e.g. the individual is subject to screening and the screening takes place at the place of arrival);
- situations where applicants are quickly moved from the port or harbour of arrival to a screening centre quite far away.

In the first case, the relevant authorities and operational partners can take advantage of applicants' longer stay to convey more detailed messages. This will allow for the clarification of any doubts and the activation of relevant referral pathways.

In the second case, due to time and space limitations, the responsible first-contact officials need to ensure that core messages are clearly and efficiently conveyed to applicants, particularly with regard to what happens next in the procedure.

The operational setting is another key aspect to consider when it comes to securing a confidential environment to interact with applicants, particularly with certain profiles such as unaccompanied children, LGBTIQ+ persons, victims of gender-based violence, victims of human trafficking, persons with health problems or a disability. Confidentiality is a prerequisite when interacting with such persons, in order to ensure their protection and foster cooperation with the authorities.

To ensure effective information provision during first contact, you need to take into account the particular challenges related to information provision in this context.

Table 2. The challenges and possible solutions for ensuring effective information provision

Challenges	Possible solutions
Distracting environment An influx of applicants can create time pressure and coordination challenges in receiving new arrivals. Reception or screening centres may be crowded and distracting environments, thus limiting the communication channels available for the dissemination of information and the time available for information provision.	**Coordinate and establish workflows** Advanced levels of coordination and workflows can be established to deliver information effectively during times of high numbers of simultaneous arrivals, for example following search and rescue operations or arrivals in large numbers at land borders. Implementing partners can be contracted to provide information.
Limited ability to absorb information Before their arrival, applicants have often completed a long and precarious journey, during which they may have been exposed to exploitation and abuse or other ill treatment. This can affect their physical and mental state. They may have pressing needs that do not necessarily relate to asylum. Stress can limit their ability to absorb information. Applicants may also have little or no knowledge of international protection and asylum procedures or how administrative procedures are conducted in Europe. This lack of knowledge can limit their ability to absorb large amounts of new information and understand legal terminology.	**Provide less detailed information** Information needs to be provided by means of the mandatory information brochure (see Section 2.1 EUAA mandatory information brochures). Information provision can focus on the core information, with fewer details provided in environments that are distracting and when applicants may have a limited ability to absorb information. This core information can later be complemented with more details and information on additional topics.

Challenges	Possible solutions
Limited opportunities to meet each applicant individually and provide interpretation The arrival context, even when applicants are referred for screening, may limit the ability to arrange individual appointments with applicants. In the context of new arrivals, it is also not possible to predict all the languages that would need interpreted at a given time.	**Disseminate information via different communication channels** Information needs to be provided by means of the mandatory information brochure. In addition, information can be disseminated via different communication channels to increase the efficiency of information provision. Use the mandatory information brochures, which combine written text with self-explanatory visual details on how to find more information on digital platforms and on interactions with the authorities. A pool of remote interpreters can be made available to provide ad hoc information provision in the less common languages.

Practical tip: large numbers of arrivals

Disembarkation. Third-country nationals who are disembarked following a search and rescue operation will most likely be subject to screening (unless they fulfil the conditions of entry). If they make an application upon their disembarkation, the following can be applied.

- **Provide the mandatory information brochure physically and complement it with audiovisual materials or QR codes linking to digital material** when providing information about the asylum procedure. This material can complement the information that was provided orally at the time of disembarkation.
- **Group the applicants by language**, based on the available information about nationalities on board. Provide information to the groups on the asylum procedures in the country of disembarkation.
- **Look out for vulnerabilities.** If vulnerable persons are pre-identified based on the available indicators, make sure that they are provided with the relevant information. Take confidentiality requirements into account as much as possible, for instance by gathering these persons in a separate group.

Hotspot-like settings. As the applicants can be hosted until the completion of the asylum procedure, the information flow can be structured by taking into consideration the standard methodological recommendations described in this guidance document.

- **Look after vulnerable persons**. If available, use **safe zones and/or child-friendly spaces** to provide information on asylum procedures to vulnerable persons and unaccompanied children. This will help meet confidentiality requirements while allowing for a more participative interaction, as you can use information materials tailored to the communication needs of vulnerable persons and children.



Practical tip: individual interactions

- **Adjust your workflows to overcome space limitations and ensure confidentiality.**

  The administrations working in operational settings may be confronted with temporary or permanent space limitations, including in screening centres, which may make it difficult to ensure that confidentiality requirements are met.

- **Install visibility barriers or hold registrations online.**

  Confidentiality can be further ensured by installing visibility barriers so that the applicants cannot see each other.

Processing asylum registrations online is also an option in cases where the availability of adequate physical space is an issue. However, the authority concerned should make sure that the IT equipment and technical requirements for remote processing are in place and that the principle of confidentiality is respected.

A safe and calm environment is particularly important and should be guaranteed for vulnerable applicants and applicants in need of special procedural guarantees.

4.2. Providing information during the registration, lodging and examination stages

During the registration, lodging and examination stages, information is usually provided in an established setting, such as an office environment or an accommodation centre.

An established setting allows for a potentially calm environment in which to provide information. This context often involves an individual appointment with the applicant in an environment that ensures confidentiality and security. However, meetings with groups of applicants can also be held in this setting. The context often allows for information to

be distributed through several communication channels, at a minimum via the mandatory information brochures (see Section 2.1 EUAA mandatory information brochures) and also through oral communication, printouts and digital platforms.

Applicants attend **individual appointments** in order for their personal data to be collected during the registration and/or lodging stage. These appointments are a good opportunity to provide personalised information to the applicant according to their circumstances. It is also an opportunity to determine which information material, in addition to the mandatory information brochure, will be the most effective.

Related EUAA publication

For more information on the registering and lodging settings, see EUAA, *Practical guide on the registration and lodging of applications for international protection*, December 2025.

5. Who provides the information

Article 8(2) APR stipulates that the determining authority or other competent authorities or organisations tasked by Member States for that purpose must provide the required information to applicants.

Moreover, Article 4(2) APR states that other national authorities must be entrusted with the task of informing applicants as to where and how to lodge an application. This article adds that these other national authorities must, at least, include the police, immigration authorities, border guards and the authorities responsible for detention facilities or reception facilities.

Hence, you are probably not the only person providing information to the applicant. The responsibility of securing and coordinating information provision lies with the authorities. At the same time, all involved stakeholders have a responsibility to engage in field coordination and ensure that their information provision is coherent.



Practical tip: counter misinformation received from informal sources

Applicants from certain cultural backgrounds may be drawn to seek advice from members of their own community, for example because they are not used to seeking information from authorities. This may result in the applicant being, unintentionally, provided with inaccurate and/or incomplete information that they rely on instead of institutional information.

Disinformation may also come from the deliberate attempts of smugglers or traffickers to mislead applicants by feeding them fabricated and manipulated information.

You can counter this by providing consistent information from authorised sources and repeating it frequently, through different communication channels.

5.1. Determine which organisations should provide information

Information is primarily given by the determining authority, the police, immigration authorities, border guards and the authorities responsible for detention facilities or reception facilities.

Information may also be provided by the applicant's legal adviser or counsellor. Applicants have the right to request free legal counselling in the administrative procedure ([37]) and as a general rule have the right to free legal counselling. Where exceptions apply, Member

([37]) Article 15(2) APR.

states may, however, exclude the right to a free legal counsellor (see Section 6.3.3 Free legal counselling).

For unaccompanied children, information is provided in a child-friendly manner. Moreover, information is also provided to them by their representative ([38]).

Free legal counselling includes the provision of ([39]):

- guidance on and an explanation of the administrative procedure, including information on rights and obligations during that procedure;
- guidance on the lodging of the application and guidance on:
  - the different procedures under which the application may be examined and the reasons for the application of those procedures,
  - the rules related to the admissibility of an application,
  - legal issues arising in the course of the procedure, including information on how to challenge the decision to reject an application.

Information provision can also be delivered by other authorities or organisations that interact with applicants during the asylum procedure. These include:

- the representative of an unaccompanied child;
- civil-society organisations;
- international organisations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration;
- EU agencies.

The list above is indicative. In your national setting, the organisations involved in the asylum procedure may not always be the same. Moreover, it is worth highlighting the valuable contribution of civil-society organisations to information provision.

It is also good to keep in mind that not all organisations necessarily have the capacity to provide information on a wide variety of topics, some of which may be beyond their specialisation.

5.2. Coordinate among organisations that provide information

It is of utmost importance that all authorities, service providers and civil-society organisations involved deliver a consistent message.

([38]) Article 23(6) and (8) APR.
([39]) Article 16(2) APR.

As multiple organisations can be involved in delivering information during the asylum procedure, coordination may be needed to ensure the delivery of coherent messages to applicants and to guarantee that information reaches all applicants. Keep in mind that different coordination may be needed for first-contact situations.

When coordinating information provision, you will need to consider at least the coordination of content and accessibility.

Coordination of content relates to the systematic delivery of coherent messages to applicants. The core information is the information contained in the mandatory information brochure, which must be given to all applicants. Additional messages need to be consistent with the content of the brochure, and with that of other information materials, if additional ones are developed. Coordination may be needed to keep the information up to date and consistent over time.

Coordination of accessibility refers to ensuring that all applicants receive information. Considerations include which organisations are responsible for delivering certain information at each stage of the asylum procedure and how an appropriate skillset can be ensured so that the communication style can be adapted to the audience.

Coordination includes the following mechanisms:

- a centralised system where information is delivered by one organisation;
- standard operating procedures;
- referral mechanisms;
- formal partnerships with authorities;
- framework agreements.

Good practice

In complex operational contexts, information provision can be coordinated through thematic working groups. Each working group coordinates several organisations involved in information provision activities around the same theme. Daily coordination can be organised through liaison points assigned to each working group.

The following practical arrangements can be used to deliver information to different locations, by one or multiple organisations:

- mobile/roving teams travelling to different locations where applicants arrive or reside;
- information booths installed in locations where a high number of applicants are located;

- hotlines that enable applicants to reach you in multiple locations; hotline numbers should be widely announced in locations frequented by applicants.

If information is provided by multiple organisations, make sure that the applicant understands the role of the organisation that is providing information to them. If the information provider is not the determining authority, the applicant should at least receive information on how they can contact the determining authority if they have questions about their application.

6. What information should be provided? Information topics

This chapter provides an overview of information provision topics in the context of the asylum procedure.

According to Article 8(2) APR, the following information should be provided to the applicant:

(a) *the right to lodge an individual application;*

(b) *the time limits and stages of the procedure to be followed;*

(c) *their rights and obligations during the procedure, including those under Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 [AMMR], and the consequences of not complying with those obligations, in particular as regards the explicit or implicit withdrawal of an application;*

(d) *the right to free legal counselling for the lodging of the individual application and to legal assistance and representation at all stages of the procedure pursuant to Section III ['Provision of legal counselling and legal assistance and representation'] of this Chapter [II 'Basic principles and guarantees'] and in accordance with Articles 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19;*

(e) *the means by which they can fulfil the obligation to submit the elements as referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1347 [QR];*

(f) *the decision of the determining authority in accordance with Article 36.*

The guidance presented in this chapter also includes complementary information points, for use in cases when they may significantly enhance the applicant's understanding of the administrative process.

The boxes below provide an overview of the information provision topics that are considered to cover the minimum information that should be provided to applicants for international protection during the asylum procedure. EU+ countries can further complement the information listed below with topics that are relevant to their national set-up. Each box corresponds to one of the core steps of the asylum procedure at first instance (i.e. making, registration, lodging, personal interview and notification).

You can click on the hyperlinks in the boxes to be directed to the complementary guidance that comes with each information topic.

The guidance for each topic contains:

- **background information** on what the information provider needs to know about the topic;

- **an information provision message** on the information to be provided to the applicant ([40]).

The guidance is further complemented with **practical tip boxes** on how to provide this information in practice: what to emphasise, what to be cautious about, how to explain the information and how to ensure it is understood, etc.

Remember to tailor all information provision topics to your national setting so that they are compatible with your national legislation and established practice.

Remember also to adapt the level of detail of the information to each specific step in the procedure and adapt your communication style to the personal circumstances of the applicant.

Making
Core concepts and principles of the asylum procedure What is international protection? What is the asylum procedure? Confidentiality Principle of the best interests of the child (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Complaints mechanism **Procedural information** Registration Responsibility determination procedure **Rights of an applicant for international protection** Right to remain Access to an interpreter Free legal counselling Material reception conditions Withdrawal of an application for international **Rights concerning (unaccompanied) children** Family tracing (only if relevant in the personal circumstances of the applicant)

([40]) This practical guide does not aim to provide specific formulations that should be directly conveyed to the applicant. Rather, it outlines the information provision messages. For concrete examples of formulations that should be directly conveyed to the applicant, see the repository of templates available in the EUAA's 'Let's speak asylum' portal.

Making
Rights concerning applicants with special needs
Adequate support to benefit from their rights and to comply with obligations (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)
Obligations of an applicant for international protection
Cooperate with the authorities
Be subject to a personal search
Have biometrics taken
Accept any communication from the competent authorities
Obligation to report or to remain in a geographical area
Submit the elements and documents to substantiate the application
The consequences of not complying with obligations
Implicit withdrawal of applications
Additional topics
Right to communicate with UNHCR and other organisations providing legal advice or other counselling

Registration and lodging
Core concepts and principles of the asylum procedure
What is international protection?
What is the asylum procedure?
Confidentiality
Principle of the best interests of the child (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)
Complaints mechanism
Procedural information
Registration
Responsibility determination procedure
Lodging an application
Lodging an application on behalf of a dependent adult (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Registration and lodging

Lodging an application by a child or on behalf of a child
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Age assessment
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Admissibility examination
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Personal interview

Duration of the procedure

Detention
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Special procedures
(only if the applicant is channelled to a special procedure or if the application is a subsequent application)

Accelerated procedure
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Asylum border procedure
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Subsequent application
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Rights of an applicant for international protection

Right to remain

Access to an interpreter

Free legal counselling

Free legal assistance and representation

Material reception conditions

Withdrawal of an application for international

Rights concerning (unaccompanied) children

Appointment of a representative
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Family tracing
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Rights concerning applicants with special needs

Adequate support to benefit from their rights and to comply with obligations
(only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Registration and lodging
Obligations of an applicant for international protection Cooperate with the authorities Be subject to a personal search Have biometrics taken Communicate contact details and any changes as regards contact details Accept any communication from the competent authorities Obligation to report or to remain in a geographical area Submit the elements and documents to substantiate the application **The consequences of not complying with obligations** Implicit withdrawal of applications Assessment of relevant elements in the asylum claim may be affected Asylum procedure will be accelerated Material reception conditions may be reduced or withdrawn **Additional topics** Right to communicate with UNHCR and other organisations providing legal advice or other counselling Family reunification (under the Family Reunification Directive) (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Voluntary return Right to work (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Personal interview
Core concepts and principles of the asylum procedure What is the asylum procedure? Confidentiality Principle of the best interests of the child (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) **Procedural information** Lodging an application on behalf of a dependent adult Admissibility examination (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Personal interview
Personal interview Notification Duration of the procedure **Special procedures** (only if the applicant is channelled to a special procedure or if the application is a subsequent application) Accelerated procedure (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Asylum border procedure (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Subsequent application (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) **Rights of an applicant for international protection** Free legal counselling Free legal assistance and representation **Rights concerning (unaccompanied) children** Family tracing (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) **Obligations of an applicant for international protection** Cooperate with the authorities Communicate contact details and any changes as regards contact details Accept any communication from the competent authorities Obligation to report or to remain in a geographical area Submit the elements and documents to substantiate the application **The consequences of not complying with obligations** Implicit withdrawal of applications Assessment of relevant elements in the asylum claim may be affected **Additional topics** Family reunification (under the Family Reunification Directive) (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Right to work (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

Notification
Procedural information Notification Appeal (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) **Rights of an applicant for international protection** Right to remain Free legal counselling (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Free legal assistance and representation (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) **Rights concerning (unaccompanied) children** Family tracing (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) **Obligations of an applicant for international protection** Cooperate with the authorities Communicate contact details and any changes as regards contact details Accept any communication from the competent authorities **Additional topics** Family reunification (under the Family Reunification Directive) (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Voluntary return (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant) Right to work (only if relevant to the personal circumstances of the applicant)

6.1. Core concepts and principles of the asylum procedure

6.1.1. What is international protection?

(a) Background information

International protection is a substitute for national protection. When a state fails to protect its own citizens against persecution or serious harm or when the state itself is the actor of

persecution, the need for international protection arises. International protection includes refugee status ([41]) and subsidiary protection ([42]).

The 1951 convention relating to the status of refugees (the Refugee Convention) ([43]) and Regulation (EU) 2024/1347 (the QR) ([44]) provide five reasons for persecution, on the basis of which refugee status is recognised. These are race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group and political opinion.

Subsidiary protection is granted when applicants are facing a real risk of serious harm, which is defined as the death penalty or execution, torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or serious harm resulting from indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict ([45]).

The reasons for applying for asylum can be very sensitive and personal. This can be the case, for example, when the applicant is a victim of domestic violence, trafficking in human beings (THB), torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, or if the persecution is linked to the age of the applicant or to the expression of the applicant's sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics. In such cases, the applicant may hesitate to share information openly. It is important to be aware of these possible situations and to take them into account when providing information.

Related EUAA publication

For further guidance regarding qualification for international protection, consult EUAA, *Practical Guide on Qualification for International Protection*, June 2026.

([41]) The definition of a refugee is provided in Article 3(5) QR: '"refugee" means a third-country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it, and to whom Article 12 does not apply'.

([42]) The definition of a person eligible for subsidiary protection is provided in Article 3(6) QR: '"person eligible for subsidiary protection" means a third-country national or a stateless person who does not qualify as a refugee but in respect of whom substantial grounds have been shown for believing that that person, if returned to his or her country of origin or, in the case of a stateless person, to his or her country of former habitual residence, would face a real risk of suffering serious harm as defined in Article 15, and to whom Article 17(1) and (2) does not apply, and is unable or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country'.

([43]) See UNHCR, 'The 1951 Refugee Convention 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees', UNHCR website, accessed 4 May 2026.

([44]) Article 3(5) QR.

([45]) Article 15 QR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- Everybody has the right to apply for international protection ([46]).
- The need for international protection arises when a person is unable to return to their home country because they would be exposed to a risk of persecution ([47]) or serious harm ([48]) and their country would not protect them ([49]). The risk of persecution or serious harm includes threats to life, freedom and physical integrity.

Explain these additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging:

- the two forms of international protection: refugee status and subsidiary protection;
- if relevant in your national context, provide information on national humanitarian protection.



Practical tip: explaining relevant terminology to the applicant

Applicants may be familiar with the terms 'asylum' or 'refugee protection' but not the term 'international protection'. When referring to international protection, it is therefore advisable to explain that international protection is the same as asylum. Explain furthermore that in a legal sense, international protection can mean either refugee status or subsidiary protection status as laid out in the QR. Once this is explained, it is important to remain consistent in your choice of words.

6.1.2. What is the asylum procedure?

(a) Background information

The asylum procedure is the administrative procedure through which a Member State determines whether an applicant for international protection should be granted international protection.

The asylum procedure consists of a first instance and an appeal. The first instance has two phases: access to the procedure and the examination procedure.

([46]) See the Refugee Convention and European Union, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (OJ C 326, 26.10.2012), p. 391.

([47]) Article 9 QR, 'Acts of persecution'.

([48]) Article 15 QR, 'Serious harm'.

([49]) Article 7 QR, 'Actors of protection'.

Access to the procedure

To ensure respect for the principle of *non-refoulement* ([50]) and for the right to asylum to be effective, every person who may be in need of international protection must be ensured **access** to the asylum procedure ([51]).

The access to the asylum procedure phase comprises three steps:

- making an application;
- registering an application;
- lodging an application.

Making an application is the act of expressing, in any way and to any authority, one's wish to receive international protection ([52]). Then, the application is registered ([53]). Finally, lodging ([54]) an application refers to the applicant providing information/documents to complete the file created at the time of registering the application ([55]). Lodging an application triggers the start of the first-instance examination. These three procedural steps can be conducted concurrently or separately, depending on the national set-up. Even if the three steps are done at the same time, all procedural guarantees should be ensured.

Examination procedure

The asylum procedure then continues with the examination phase ([56]), with the **personal interview** as the core component. The personal interview provides an opportunity to the applicant to explain why they cannot return to their home country, even when they cannot provide documentary evidence of the feared persecution or serious harm ([57]). During the interview, the applicant can submit additional elements and documents (Article 12(2) APR). The applicant can submit additional elements until a decision is made on their application (Article 28(7) APR).

After the personal interview, the application is assessed and the decision on the application is made.

The decision can be:

- that the applicant is granted refugee status;

([50]) The principle of *non-refoulement* is the obligation of states to refrain from returning a person in any manner whatsoever to a situation where they may face persecution and/or torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

([51]) Article 6 APD (recast), 'Access to the procedure'.

([52]) Article 26(1) APR.

([53]) Article 27 APR.

([54]) Article 28 APR.

([55]) Article 28(6) APR.

([56]) Articles 34–35 APR.

([57]) Articles 11–12 APR.

- that the applicant is granted subsidiary protection;
- that the application is rejected ([58]);
- that the applicant is excluded from international protection ([59]).

The decision on the application has to be in writing and a negative decision must state the reasons for the decision in fact and in law ([60]).

The **notification** of the decision ends the asylum procedure at first instance. The applicant, or their representative or legal adviser, is notified of the decision ([61]).

If the applicant is granted international protection, they will have access to several social rights regarding their integration into the local community/country ([62]).

Appeal

In the event of a negative decision, the applicant has the right to an **effective remedy** before a court or tribunal (an appeal) ([63]).

Figure 1. Asylum procedure infographic



([58]) Article 39(3) APR.
([59]) Articles 12 and 17 QR.
([60]) Article 36(3) and (4) APR.
([61]) Article 36(1) APR.
([62]) Articles 28–35 QR.
([63]) Article 67 APR.

(b) Information provision messages

Explain these messages to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging:

- the asylum procedure is a process that determines whether an applicant will be granted international protection or not;
- the asylum procedure is free of charge;
- unless any exception applies, the applicant has the right to remain following the making of an application for international protection ([64]);
- the application first has to be registered and lodged (for more information, see Sections 6.2.1 Registration and 6.2.3 Lodging an application).

Explain these additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging:

- the authorities will assess whether any other EU+ country is responsible for the examination of the application in accordance with the AMMR ([65]) (for more information, see Section 6.2.2 Responsibility determination procedure)
- after the lodging is completed, the applicant will be invited to a personal interview, where they can explain why they cannot go back to their country (for more information, see Section 6.2.9 Personal interview).

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- After the personal interview, the authority will assess all available information and decide if the applicant will be granted international protection or not. The result can be that the applicant is granted refugee status, the applicant is granted subsidiary protection, the application is rejected or the applicant is excluded from international protection.
- The applicant will be notified of the decision and, if they disagree, they can appeal against the decision (for more information and additional information provision messages, see Sections 6.2.10 Notification and 6.2.11 Appeal).

([64]) Article 10 APR.

([65]) Regulation (EU) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on asylum and migration management, amending Regulations (EU) 2021/1147 and (EU)2021/1060 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 604/2013.

Practical tip: introducing information gradually, starting with an overview of the procedure

In the early stages of the asylum procedure, the applicant should be provided with only a basic overview of the asylum procedure in order for them to be aware of the steps that it entails. The applicant should not be overwhelmed with detailed information during the first contact. More detailed information will be provided at each stage of the asylum procedure. For example, you may adapt the information on the procedural steps and explain which step the applicant is currently at, which steps have been accomplished and what comes next. Remember to tailor the information to the applicant's needs.

It is advisable to support the information provision with a visual aid explaining the asylum procedure.

6.1.3. Confidentiality

(a) Background information

The principle of confidentiality underlies the whole asylum procedure. Many applicants come from countries in which there is no presumption that a government will guard the privacy of its citizens. Therefore, it may be difficult for some to understand the concept of confidentiality ([66]).

It is important that the applicant understands that confidentiality is guaranteed by the authorities: information provided by the applicant is not disclosed to any party beyond the competent authorities without the permission of the applicant ([67]). In practice, this means that data provided by the applicant are not shared with anyone who does not have the right to access them, that the case management system has appropriate data protection rules and that the facilities where the applicant is heard ensure adequate privacy.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the making, registration, lodging and personal interview.

- Authorities treat all data given by the applicant with the utmost confidentiality. This means that data are not shared outside the authority without the consent of the applicant.
- Data given by the applicant are under no circumstances shared with authorities in the country of origin.

([66]) EASO, *Practical Guide: Personal interview*, December 2014, Section 2.4.4 'Information on confidentiality'.
([67]) Article 7 APR.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The principle of confidentiality also applies to how data are managed and stored.
- Data provided by the applicant can be shared with other national authorities or authorities of EU+ countries, under limited circumstances. Access (with some exceptions: see Article 18 APR) to the applicants' data are available to:
  - the applicant,
  - the representative of the unaccompanied child,
  - UNHCR, with the applicant's consent (Article 6(1)(b) APR),
  - the applicant's legal adviser, who legally represents them unless an exception applies under national law ([68]).
- Accompanied children have the right to apply in their own name, if they have the legal capacity ([69]). If they apply in their own name, their data will be treated confidentially, including in relation to their family members.



Practical tip: providing information on confidentiality

- If there is a camera in the room, explain to the applicant that the camera is in the room only for security reasons. Explain that the security personnel can see through the camera but they cannot hear anything that is being said.
- Explain that the transcript and the recording of the interview is being taken for the purpose of decision-making. Similarly, confidentiality is ensured by specific arrangements during the interview, such as separate interview rooms.
- When interviewing applicants who belong to certain vulnerable groups (e.g. individuals who may have been subjected to THB, gender-related persecution or other forms of domestic violence), it may be advisable to repeat information regarding confidentiality during the course of the interview. This is also important when there are indicators of abuse towards an applicant by relatives who are also in the process of applying for international protection or are otherwise also present in the Member State.
- As the interview is conducted in the presence of an interpreter, explain that the interpreter is also bound by confidentiality rules.
- The interviewer should fully ensure that the applicant has understood the information about confidentiality by asking them. Provide the applicant with the opportunity to ask any follow-up questions about the information provided.

([68]) Article 18(1) and (2) APR.

([69]) Article 32(1) APR.

6.1.4. Principle of the best interests of the child

(a) Background information

If the applicant for international protection is a child, their best interests are a primary consideration ([70]). The principle of the best interests of the child means that at every step of the asylum procedure, the specific circumstances of each child should be taken into consideration. These include the child's protection and safety, well-being and social development, identity and background, family situation and family unity, and their views, depending on their age and level of maturity. Specific procedural safeguards and guarantees must be in place to ensure that the principle of the best interests of the child is applied ([71]).

This means that a child applicant needs to receive specific information related to the special guarantees that are provided in the application of the principle of the best interests of the child.

Related EUAA publication

For more information see EUAA, *Practical guide on the best interests of the child in the framework of international protection*, 2026.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to child applicants and families with children during the making, registration and lodging.

- In Europe, everyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child and thus is entitled to certain protection and safeguards. If the applicant is under the age of 18, or if they are not sure if they are, they should inform the officials in order to receive appropriate support.
- Any unaccompanied person should inform the authorities if they are younger than 18 (or if they are not sure if they are). Unaccompanied children are entitled to special protection and assistance. For more information, see Section 6.4 Rights concerning (unaccompanied) children.
- Offer guidance on how child applicants can express their views regarding their application and how they can report any incidents of harm, abuse or discrimination.

([70]) Article 22(1) APR.

([71]) Articles 22 and 23 APR.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The child's best interests and well-being are the primary considerations during all steps of the asylum procedure in order to ensure their safety, welfare, social development, etc.
- The child has the right to express their views and opinions (concerns, fears, wishes). These will be taken into consideration if they are in their best interests and in the interest of their well-being.
- When considering the child's views and opinions, their age and level of maturity will be taken into account.
- The child can share views and opinions with the asylum administration, either through their parents or representative or directly, according to your national practice.
- If unaccompanied, the child may be obliged to participate in a personal interview with their representative, depending on your national laws and policies. The interview is when the child can share their views and opinions.
- Accompanied children may have the opportunity to attend their own personal interview.

Explain the following additional messages during the personal interview.

- If the interviewer has reservations about the age of the applicant (e.g. about whether the applicant is over 18), information should be provided to the applicant about the option to declare that they are over or under 18.
- The risks related to THB that the applicant could be exposed to and the warning signs of THB. By raising awareness about this issue during the interview process, applicants can be better equipped to protect themselves and seek help if they encounter any suspicious behaviour or situations.

6.1.5. Complaints mechanism

(a) Background information

Complaints mechanisms ensure that the fundamental rights of applicants are respected. The applicant can submit a complaint if they are negatively affected by the actions of the EU, national administrations or a person representing the administration. This is the case especially when an institution does not act in accordance with the law or the principles of good administration or violates their fundamental rights. Depending on the character of the violation and the administration concerned, the applicant can submit a complaint, for example to a regional or national ombudsman ([72]). If the national administration is supported by an EU

([72]) European Ombudsman, 'Members of the European Network of Ombudsmen', European Ombudsman website, accessed 30 April 2026.

agency, such as the EUAA ([73]) or Frontex ([74]), and the misbehaviour concerns support teams sent by these agencies, specific complaint mechanisms are in place. For more information regarding your national complaints mechanism, follow your national law and practice.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- Applicants can raise a complaint in different situations, for example, if:
  - their fundamental rights have been violated,
  - a state authority treated them inappropriately or unethically.
- How to submit the complaint, to whom and in which format and language, including relevant addresses or links.
- Submitting the complaint is free of charge.
- What information it is necessary to provide in the complaint (e.g. name, contact details, case file number). It is not possible to follow up on anonymous complaints.
- Reassure the applicant that submitting a complaint will not negatively influence the outcome of their application.
- A complaint is not an appeal against the decision on the application for international protection. A complaint may be raised before a decision on the application has been made.
- If applicable, provide information about deadlines.



Practical tip: providing information on the complaints mechanism

- **Reassure the applicant that it is safe to make non-anonymous complaints.**

Applicants may hesitate to provide personal and contact details in the complaint. You may explain that the information is needed in order to be able to inform them about the result or in case additional information is needed, etc.

- **Explain the difference between a complaint and an appeal.**

To avoid any confusion, it is useful to explain that complaint procedures are distinct from appeal procedures. The complaint procedure should not be used to request a review of the decision.

([73]) Article 51 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2303 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2021 on the European Union Agency for Asylum and repealing Regulation (EU) No 439/2010 (OJ L 468, 30.12.2021, p. 1).

([74]) Frontex, 'Complaints mechanism', Frontex website, accessed 30 April 2026.

6.2. Procedures to be followed

6.2.1. Registration

(a) Background information

Once an applicant has made an application for international protection, the competent authorities must register it.

The objective of this phase is to make an official record so that the applicant can be identified and effectively benefit from their rights and comply with their obligations ([75]).

Time limits

The competent authorities must register an application within **five days** of the date when it is made ([76]).

If an application is made to an authority that is not competent to register it, the receiving authority must inform the authority competent to register the application within **three working days**. The competent authority must then register the application within **five days** of the date they received the information ([77]).

If there is a disproportionate number of persons making an application in the same time period, which makes the abovementioned deadlines for registering the application unfeasible, the application must be registered within **15 days** of the date when it was made ([78]).

For applicants who are subject to screening on the grounds of an unauthorised border crossing or disembarkation, the application must be registered only after the screening is complete.

Recording data

During registration, the competent authority will **register specific information** ([79]):

- the applicant's biodata, including:
  - their name,
  - their date and place of birth,
  - their gender,

([75]) Article 9 APR.
([76]) Article 27(1) APR.
([77]) Article 27(3) APR.
([78]) Article 27(5) APR.
([79]) Article 27(1) APR.

  - their nationality or nationalities, or the fact that the applicant is stateless or there are indications of statelessness,
  - their family members ([80]),
  - in the case of child applicants, whether they have siblings or relatives present in the Member State,
  - other personal details of the applicant relevant to the procedure for international protection and the determination of the Member State responsible;
- the applicant's documents, including:
  - the type, number and period of validity of any identity or travel document,
  - the country that issued the document,
  - other documents provided by the applicant that the competent authority deems relevant for the purposes of identifying the applicant or relevant to the procedure for international protection and the determination of the Member State responsible;
- additional information, including:
  - the date of the application,
  - the place where the application was made,
  - the authority to which the application was made,
  - the applicant's location, place of residence or address,
  - where available, a telephone number and an email address that can be used to reach the applicant,
  - if applicable, the fact that the applicant claims not to have a nationality; this fact should be clearly registered pending the determination of whether the individual is stateless.

For applicants who have undergone the screening process, this information (or some of it) may have already been collected during the screening, and the registration information can thus be collected from the screening form.

Moreover, if the registration is conducted by the determining authority (or another authority assisting it for the purposes of the examination of applications), additional information necessary for the examination can be collected during the registration.

Upon registration, the **biometric data** (i.e. fingerprint data and facial image) will be collected of all applicants aged six years and older ([81]). Depending on the national set-up, additional types of biometric data may be collected, such as an iris scan or voice recording.

([80]) As defined in Article 2(8) AMMR.

([81]) Article 15 and 17(1) Eurodac Regulation.

Documentation attesting that the application was registered

Upon registration, the applicant is provided with a document ([82]) that indicates:

- their name;
- the date of registration of the application;
- that an application for international protection has been made and registered.

Following the registration, the applicant has **21 days** to lodge their application.

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the making:

- once a person expresses the wish to receive international protection, you need to provide practical information on how the application will be registered, including:
  - the location where the registration process will take place and how the applicant can get there,
  - the time of the appointment and opening hours of the competent office,
  - what can be expected from the registration process (submitting a form, a short interview, etc.),
  - which documents to bring and who should accompany the applicant if there are family members or dependents,
  - that biometrics will be taken (for more information on the applicant's obligation, see Section 6.6.3 Have biometrics taken),
  - that security checks may be carried out (for more information on the applicant's obligations, see Section 6.6.2 Be subject to a personal search,
  - that medical checks may be carried out.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration.

- Specific information will be collected from the applicant regarding their personal details and documents (see the list above in 'Background information').
- The applicant's biometric data (i.e. fingerprint data and facial image) will be collected (unless the biometrics have already been collected during screening). Depending on your national context, additional information may be collected, such as an iris scan or voice recording.
- The applicant will receive documentation certifying that their application was made and registered. This is a personal document. It cannot be shared or given to anyone else. Provide further information in line with your national practice, for example:
  - how the document will be delivered,

([82]) Article 29(1) APR.

- the duration of the document's validity – depending on your national context, the document is valid until the lodging of the application, up to 12 months or until the applicant is transferred,
- that the document is renewable so as to cover the period during which the applicant has a right to remain on the territory,
- the consequences of the applicant failing to renew the document,
- which steps the applicant needs to follow if the document is damaged or lost,
- the obligation, depending on national legislation, to carry the document with them at all times,
- that the applicant should check if the personal data on the document are correct,
- how to inform the authorities if the data on the document are not correct.



Practical tip: providing information on the registration procedure

- **Ask test questions to make sure that the applicant has understood the message.**

For example, you can ask the applicant to repeat where and when they need to report for the registration of the application.

- **Collect all relevant contact information of the applicant.**

The applicant's contact information (e.g. the address of their accommodation and telephone number) can be used to reach out to the applicant when needed to complete the next step of the procedure in a timely manner.

- **Call out for persons under 18 years old when providing information to a large group of applicants after arrival.**

During group information provision sessions, it is advisable to establish that any person younger than 18 years of age is considered to be a child. For this reason, persons below 18 years who are without parents or an adult responsible for them should inform the authorities to ensure that they receive appropriate support.

6.2.2. Responsibility determination procedure

(a) Background information

Overview of the responsibility determination procedure

The AMMR establishes the criteria and mechanisms for determining the EU+ country responsible for examining an application for international protection.

Only one EU+ country will examine the application, and this will be the state determined as responsible under the AMMR. The responsible state may be different from the state where the applicant is currently present.

Competent authority for the responsibility determination procedure

Every EU+ country has a specific competent authority responsible for conducting the responsibility determination procedure.

The responsibility determination procedure is conducted by an Asylum migration management unit (formerly referred to as the Dublin unit).

Mechanism for determining the responsible EU+ country

Once the application has been registered, the time limit to determine the EU+ country responsible for examining the application start to run ([83]).

- Take charge request

If the determining Member State considers that another EU+ country is responsible for examining the application based on the hierarchy of criteria laid down in the AMMR, a **take charge request** is submitted to this Member State within two months; within one month if the request is based on a hit under the Eurodac Regulation ([84]) or the Visa Information System (VIS) Regulation ([85]); or within two weeks if the applicant is detained ([86]).

In order to determine the responsible Member State for examining an individual application for international protection, the determining authorities must organise a dedicated personal interview to gather and clarify information related to determining the responsible EU+ country. Where there are indications of the presence of a family member on the territory of another EU+ country the Family Tracing template should be provided to the applicant. The AMMR allows for the omission of the personal interview by the determining authority under certain conditions ([87]). In cases of abscondence, the determining Member State is obliged to continue

([83]) Article 38(1) AMMR.
([84]) Articles 22 and 24 Eurodac Regulation.
([85]) Article 21 VIS Regulation.
([86]) Article 45 AMMR.
([87]) Article 22(2) AMMR

the procedure for determining the responsible Member State in the absence of the applicant's presence on the territory ([88]).

Failure to send the take charge request within these deadlines means that the responsibility lies with the EU+ country where the application was first registered. However, a failure to meet the two-month deadline to send a request to take charge in relation to an unaccompanied child does not result in the requesting Member State assuming responsibility, this is without prejudice to the obligation on EU+ countries to prioritise all cases involving unaccompanied children.

The requested EU+ country must **reply** within one month of receiving the request, or within two weeks if the request is based on a Eurodac hit or a VIS hit. Not replying within the deadlines mentioned above, by means of a reply setting out substantiated reasons, is tantamount to accepting the request.

- Take back notification

If a Eurodac hit result indicates that:

- another EU+ country has been indicated as responsible in Eurodac for examining the application,
- another EU+ country is determining the responsibility for the application but the responsibility has not yet been determined,
- another EU+ country accepted to admit the person under the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission framework, or admitted them under a national resettlement scheme,
- another EU+ country has confirmed that the person concerned is to be relocated and the transfer to the member State of relocation was not carried out.

A **take back notification** must be made within two weeks of the Eurodac hit. Failure to make this notification within the two-week deadline does not affect the obligation of the other EU+ country to take back the person.

The notified Member State must confirm that it is responsible within two weeks, unless the notification was made based on an incorrect indication in Eurodac or if its responsibility ceased. Failure to respond within two weeks is tantamount to confirming receipt of the notification. The two other cases where the take back notification procedures apply are laid down in Articles 38(4) and (5) AMMR.

- Response from the requested EU+ country

If the requested EU+ country accepts the request to take charge, or confirms the notification to take back, a transfer decision must be made and the person will be transferred to that country, and that country will examine the application for international protection.

([88]) Article 38(2) AMMR.

Related EUAA publications and training

For more information, refer to:

- EASO, *Practical guide on information provision in the Dublin procedure*, December 2021. Information about the Dublin criteria is provided in Section 1.7 'The criteria used to determine responsibility and their hierarchy'.
- EUAA training module on identification of Dublin cases, and
- EUAA, *Operational standards and indicators on the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation*, March 2026.

Member States must inform applicants about topics listed in the AMMR by means of common information material developed by the EUAA ([89]). The mandatory information materials can be found here.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- The responsibility determination procedure is an EU system to determine which EU+ country is responsible for examining their application for international protection. This means that they cannot choose the country in which they apply for international protection. The authorities will determine which country will be responsible for the examination of their application.
- The applicant must not leave the country responsible for the examination of their application and move to another country on their own initiative before the end of the procedure. If they do so, they will be transferred to the country that is responsible for their application. They will also not be entitled to certain material reception conditions from the moment they were informed of the decision to transfer them to the responsible country provided they were informed of their obligations and consequences of non-compliance ([90]).
- The importance of cooperating with the authorities and providing relevant information, in particular if they have a family member in another European country, since they may be reunited with them through the responsibility determination procedure.

Explain these additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging:

- the criteria for establishing responsibility;

([89]) Article 20(2) AMMR.
([90]) Article 18(1) AMMR.

- a list of the countries that apply the responsibility determination procedure;
- if responsibility determination triggers are detected, provide additional information about the responsibility determination procedure, including the common information material developed by the EUAA for this purpose.



Practical tip: acknowledging the sensitivity of the topic and encouraging the applicant to ask questions

This information provision topic can be sensitive, as it includes the prospect of being reunited with relatives. For this reason, encourage the applicant to ask questions. This will help to clarify any misunderstandings and avoid any expectations that are not in line with the responsibility determination procedure.

6.2.3. Lodging an application

(a) Background information

Depending on your national context, the registration and lodging may take place at the same time or separately.

Time limits

If conducted separately from registration, the applicant must lodge their application no later than **21 days** from the date of registration of their application. In the case of a transfer, the application must be lodged within **21 days** from the day the applicant identified themself to the competent authorities of the EU+ country responsible. Under exceptional circumstances (a disproportionate number of applications), the time limit may be extended to two months after registration.

If upon registration the applicant is channelled to the asylum border procedure, the lodging should be completed within **five days** of the day of the registration (for more information, see Section 6.8.2 Asylum border procedure.

If the applicant refrains from lodging their application without good cause, their application will be considered as implicitly withdrawn. Good cause may refer here to events independent of the applicant's will, such as hospitalisation.

The examination procedure of the application starts from the moment of the lodging.

Elements to submit

During the lodging, the applicant must submit as soon as possible all the elements and documents at their disposal that are needed for **substantiating their application**.

These elements include:

- the applicant's statements;
- all documentation at the applicant's disposal indicating:
  - the applicant's reasons for applying for international protection,
  - the applicant's age,
  - the applicant's background, including that of relevant family members and other relatives,
  - the applicant's identity,
  - the applicant's nationality or nationalities,
  - the applicant's country or countries and place or places of previous residence,
  - any previous application(s) for international protection,
  - the result of any resettlement or humanitarian admission procedure relating to the applicant as defined by the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework Regulation (the Resettlement Regulation) ([91]),
  - the applicant's travel routes,
  - the applicant's travel documents.

Moreover, if the registration and lodging take place at the same time, applicants are allowed to submit all the elements and documents listed above during their personal interview ([92]).

Special case: lodging a subsequent application

If the application is a subsequent application, the applicant must submit new elements that:

- significantly add to the likelihood of qualifying as a beneficiary of international protection; or
- relate to an inadmissibility ground previously applied, where the previous application was rejected as inadmissible.

A new element is an element that the applicant was unable, through no fault on their own part, to present in the context of the previous application.

Hence, an element that the applicant could have presented earlier should not be taken into account unless:

- that element significantly increases the likelihood of the application not being inadmissible;

([91]) Regulation (EU) 2024/1350 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a Union resettlement and humanitarian admission framework, and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1147 (OJ L, 2024/1350, 22.5.2024).

([92]) Article 28(7) APR.

- that element significantly increases the likelihood of the applicant qualifying for international protection; or
- if the previous application was rejected as implicitly withdrawn.

For more information, see Section 6.8.3 Subsequent application.

Completion of the lodging

Depending on your national context, lodging takes place:

- in person on a designated date, at a designated place and, if communicated, time; or
- through filling in a form.

If the lodging takes place in person, inform the applicant in writing about the exact place and time the application can be lodged. If the lodging is through a form, the form is made available to the applicant upon registration or as soon as possible thereafter. Also, inform the applicant about how to transmit it to the competent authority within the 21-day time limit.

Documentation attesting that the application was lodged

As soon as possible after the lodging, the applicant is provided with a document ([93]). This document replaces the one issued during registration, unless the document issued after the registration is identical to the one described below. In this case, the applicant is only issued with one document after registration.

The document indicates:

- the applicant's:
  - name,
  - date and place of birth,
  - gender,
  - nationality or nationalities or, if applicable, an indication of statelessness,
  - facial image,
  - signature;
- the issuing authority;
- the date and place of issue;
- the period of validity of the document;
- the status of the individual as an applicant;
- that the applicant has the right to remain for the purpose of the asylum procedure and an indication of whether the applicant is free to move within the territory;

([93]) Article 29(4) APR.

- that it is not a travel document and that the applicant is not allowed to travel without authorisation to another EU+ country.

The document is valid for up to 12 months or until the applicant is transferred. If the issuing Member State is the responsible Member State (within the meaning of the responsibility determination procedure), the validity is renewed to cover the period during which the applicant has a right to remain on its territory. The period of validity does not constitute a right to remain where that right was terminated or suspended.

In cases where the applicant is in detention:

- it is not necessary to issue any documents as long as the applicant is in detention;
- upon release from detention, the applicant is provided with the abovementioned document.

In cases where the applicant is an accompanied child:

- the documents issued to one of the parents or responsible adult may also cover the child, if appropriate.

This document is not necessarily a proof of identity; however, it is sufficient for applicants to be able to identify themselves and to access their rights for the duration of the asylum procedure.

These documents state the date of registration of the application.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- The applicant must lodge their application no later than **21 days** from the date of registration of their application (or two months if exceptional circumstances apply).
- If upon registration the applicant is channelled to the asylum border procedure, the applicant must lodge their application within **five days** from the date of registration.
- If the applicant refrains from lodging their application without good cause, their application will be considered as implicitly withdrawn (see Section 6.7.1 Implicit withdrawal of applications).
- Good cause may refer here to events independent of the applicant's will, such as hospitalisation.
- During the lodging, the applicant must submit as soon as possible all the elements and documents at their disposal needed for substantiating their application, including:
  - the applicant's statements;
  - all documentation at the applicant's disposal indicating:
    - the applicant's reasons for applying for international protection,
    - the applicant's age,

- the applicant's background, including that of relevant family members and other relatives,
- the applicant's identity,
- the applicant's nationality or nationalities,
- the applicant's country or countries and place or places of previous residence,
- any previous application(s) for international protection,
- the result of any resettlement or humanitarian admission procedure relating to the applicant as defined by the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework Regulation (the Resettlement Regulation) ([94]),
- the applicant's travel routes,
- the applicant's travel documents.

- If in your national context the registration and lodging take place at the same time, inform applicants that they are allowed to submit all the elements and documents listed above during their personal interview ([95]).
- Explain how the lodging takes place in your national context, that is, either in person or through a form.
- If the lodging is done in person, inform the applicant in writing about the exact place and time the application can be lodged.
- If the lodging is done through a form, explain how to get the form and how to transmit it to the competent authority within the 21-day time limit.
- If applicable, the applicant will receive documentation certifying that their application was lodged. This is a personal document. It cannot be shared or given to anyone else. Provide further information in line with your national practice, for example:
  - how the document will be delivered;
  - the duration of the document's validity – depending on your national context, the document is valid for up to 12 months or until the applicant is transferred;
  - the fact that it is renewable, so as to cover the period during which the applicant has a right to remain on the territory;
  - the consequences of the applicant failing to renew the document;
  - which steps the applicant needs to follow if the document is damaged or lost;
  - the obligation, depending on national legislation, to carry the document with them at all times;

([94]) Regulation (EU) 2024/1350 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a Union resettlement and humanitarian admission framework, and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1147 (OJ L, 2024/1350, 22.5.2024).

([95]) Article 28(7) APR.

- the need for the applicant to check if the personal data on the document are correct;
- how to inform the authorities if the data on the document are not correct.

6.2.4. Lodging an application on behalf of a dependent adult

(a) Background information

In principle, adult applicants should lodge their application themselves.

However, some adult applicants may be unable to exercise legal capacity. Legal capacity is the ability of a person to take legally valid decisions and to enter into binding contractual relations ([96]).

The inability to exercise legal capacity can be due to a variety of reasons. Persons unable to exercise legal capacity include:

- elderly applicants affected by age-related illnesses (e.g. Alzheimer's disease);
- adults of any age who live with physical or mental disabilities, an impairment or insufficiency of their personal faculties.

Applicants unable to exercise legal capacity are unable to protect their interests and personal affairs. The inability to exercise legal capacity can be temporary or permanent and total or partial.

Such applicants (hereinafter 'dependent adults') require assistance to exercise legal capacity. The assistance is provided by an adult responsible for them either by law or in line with national practice. The applicable rules in terms of who can act as the responsible adult vary among Member States.

The responsible adult may lodge the application on behalf of the dependent adult ([97]). The dependent adult should nevertheless be present for the lodging, except if they are unable or unfit to be present or if the national law provides that the application can be lodged by means of a form.

Regarding the examination phase, the responsible adult participates in the interview as well as the dependent adult ([98]), unless the competent authority considers that the dependent adult is unfit or unable to be interviewed ([99]). In this case, the applicant is provided with the opportunity to submit further information in writing.

([96]) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Legal capacity of persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with mental health problems*, 3 October 2013.

([97]) Article 31 APR.

([98]) Article 13(2) APR.

([99]) Article 13(11)(c) APR.

Regarding the decision, the determining authority may take a single decision covering both applicants (i.e. the responsible adult and the dependent adult), if their applications are based on the exact same grounds. However, if doing so would lead to the disclosure of particular circumstances of an applicant that could jeopardise their interests (e.g. in cases involving gender-based violence, THB or persecution based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or age), separate decisions will be taken and the applicants will be notified separately ([100]).

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging:

- in principle, adult applicants should lodge their application themselves; however, some adult applicants may be unable to exercise legal capacity;
- applicants unable to exercise legal capacity require the assistance of an adult who is responsible for them either by law or in line with national practice;
- explain the applicable rules in terms of who can act as the responsible adult in your national context;
- the responsible adult may lodge the application on behalf of the dependent adult ([101]);
- the dependent adult should nevertheless be present for the lodging, except if they are unable or unfit to be present or if the national law provides that the application can be lodged by means of a form.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- The examination will take into account all the reasons for applying for international protection stated by the responsible adult and the dependent adult.
- The responsible adult will participate in the interview, as well as the dependent adult, unless the latter is unfit or unable to be interviewed. In this case, the dependent adult is provided with the opportunity to submit further information in writing.
- Regarding the decision, the determining authority may take a single decision covering both applicants (i.e. the responsible adult and the dependent adult), if the applications are based on the exact same grounds.
- However, if doing so would lead to the disclosure of particular circumstances of an applicant that could jeopardise their interests, authorities will take separate decisions and notify the applicants separately.

([100]) Article 36(5) APR.

([101]) Article 31 APR.

Practical tip: providing information to dependent applicants individually

- Make appropriate arrangements in order to be able to provide information to the dependent adult individually and in a place that ensures sufficient privacy.
- Pay particular attention to actively identifying applicants to whom this information is relevant, such as women and elderly people. In such cases, make sure that the (perceived) dependent applicant has an opportunity to take an independent decision without anybody intervening or speaking on their behalf.

6.2.5. Lodging an application by a child or on behalf of a child

(a) Background information

If the applicant for international protection is a child, the application for international protection can be lodged in at least one of the following ways:

- on their own behalf (if they have the legal capacity, in accordance with the national law of the Member State);
- through their parents;
- through an adult responsible for them, if this is in accordance with the national law or practice;
- through a representative ([102]).

The best interests of the child should be considered when examining the possibility of making the application on their own behalf or through their parents ([103]).

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the child applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

In the case of an accompanied child, explain the following message.

- Children can lodge an application for international protection through their parents, through another adult responsible for them or on their own behalf, if the child has the legal capacity to do so, in accordance with the national law of the Member State. Explain any further conditions as stipulated in the national legislation.

([102]) Article 33(1) APR.
([103]) Recital 23 APR.

In the case of an unaccompanied child, explain the following messages:

- if a person under 18 years old has arrived alone, without a parent or another responsible adult (including where a child is left alone after their arrival), they are considered an unaccompanied child ([104]);
- the application can be lodged on their own behalf if the child has the legal capacity to do so in accordance with the national law of the Member State, or through a representative.

For more information, see Section 6.4.1 Appointment of a representative.

6.2.6. Medical examination

(a) Background information

The applicant may be requested by authorities to undergo a medical examination, subject to their consent ([105]). If the applicant is a child, the medical examination will be carried out only where the parent, or the responsible adult or representative, and the applicant consent. The medical examination is free of charge.

Applicants may also undergo a medical examination on their own initiative and at their own cost.

In both cases, the medical examination would highlight any signs and symptoms that may indicate past persecution or serious harm and the applicant would be informed of the results.

The results of the medical examination will be assessed by the determining authority along with the other elements of the application.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and the personal interview.

- The authorities may ask the applicant to undergo a medical examination to establish any signs of past persecution or serious harm.
- The examination is free of charge and the applicant will be asked to give their consent to it.
- The applicant will be informed about the results of the examination, which will be taken into account in the assessment of their application.
- If no examination is requested by the authorities, the applicant may request the examination at their own expense.

([104]) Article 3(7) APR.
([105]) Article 24 APR.

6.2.7. Age assessment

(a) Background information

If, after considering the available information, there are substantiated doubts as to whether an applicant is an adult or a child, the authorities may conduct a multidisciplinary age assessment, including a psychosocial assessment. If the multidisciplinary age assessment is inconclusive, the authorities may decide to continue the age assessment and request a medical examination as a last resort and under strict conditions.

When a medical examination is carried out, it must be conducted in the least invasive manner possible, in full respect of the individual's dignity. In this case, the applicant and their parents, or the adult responsible for them or their representative, are required to provide consent to the examination ([106]). The results of the medical examinations must be analysed in a holistic assessment together with the other findings, such as the outcome of assessments conducted by other professionals (multidisciplinary approach), to ensure the most reliable outcome ([107]).

The least invasive method should always be used.

Related EUAA publication

For more information, see EUAA, *Practical Guide on Age Assessment*, November 2025.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- The applicant should provide any available documents or other evidence that may help to establish their age.
- The applicant may be asked to undergo an age assessment to determine their age, if there are doubts about their age.
- Age assessment does not determine if an application should be accepted or rejected; it helps to determine which guarantees an administration has to put in place.
- The age assessment is performed by qualified professionals while respecting the dignity of the applicant. The procedure does not cause harm or pain.

([106]) Article 25 APR.
([107]) Article 25(3) APR.

If an age assessment is conducted, explain the following additional messages to the applicant.

- The purpose of the age assessment.
- The multidisciplinary nature of the assessment, which may include interviews, an assessment of available documentary evidence and other relevant information.
- A medical examination may only be considered when the multidisciplinary assessment does not provide a sufficiently reliable conclusion regarding the applicant's age.
- Information about the method(s) of examination and the procedure to be followed.
- Practical information related to the appointment (address, date, time).
- For an age assessment involving a medical examination, inform the applicant and their parent, or the adult responsible for them or their representative, of the requirement to provide consent to the examination and the possible consequences of a refusal, which will not in any case lead by itself to a rejection of the application.
- Pending the outcome of the age assessment procedure, the applicant should benefit from the same care arrangements, reception conditions and procedural safeguards as other children, in particular where the applicant claims to be an unaccompanied child.
- Inform the applicant that where the outcome of the age assessment, including any medical examination, is inconclusive with regard to the applicant's age, or where the assessment results in an age range that includes an age below 18 years, the applicant will be presumed to be a child.
- The possible consequences if the applicant is considered an adult as a result of the age assessment procedure. The guarantees for unaccompanied children will be lifted and a special procedure may be applied, where applicable (see Section 6.8.1 Accelerated procedure and 6.8.2 Asylum border procedure).
- The possibility of appealing the decision and procedure for doing so.

6.2.8. Admissibility examination

(a) Background information

In some situations, there will be a pre-examination of the application, to determine whether the application is admissible. If the application is admissible, it will be further examined on the substance. If not, the application will be rejected as inadmissible and will not be examined on the substance.

Inadmissibility grounds

An application **must be rejected** as inadmissible where the application is a subsequent application where no new relevant elements have arisen or have been presented by the applicant ([108]).

Moreover, depending on the national context, an application **may be rejected** as inadmissible if one of the following grounds apply) ([109]):

- a country that is not a Member State is considered to be a first country of asylum for the applicant (unless it is clear that the applicant will not be (re)admitted to that country);
- a country that is not a Member State is considered to be a safe third country for the applicant (unless it is clear that the applicant will not be (re)admitted to that country);
- the applicant was granted international protection by a Member State other than the one examining the application;
- an international criminal court or tribunal has provided safe relocation for the applicant to a Member State or third country, or is in the process of doing so;
- the applicant was issued with a return decision and made their application only after seven working days from the date on which the applicant received that return decision.

If an application is rejected as inadmissible it will not be examined on the substance of the claim.

Duration of the admissibility examination

Except for the ground described in the final point above (i.e. the applicant making their application seven working days or more after reception of a return decision), the admissibility examination is concluded within **two months** from the date of the lodging ([110]).

The time limit may be extended by a maximum of two months where ([111]):

- there are a large number of applications made in a Member State within the same period of time, making it unfeasible to conclude the procedure within the two months;
- complex issues of fact and/or law are involved;
- the delay can be clearly and solely attributed to the applicant's failure to comply with their obligations.

([108]) Article 38(2) APR.
([109]) Article 38(1) APR.
([110]) Article 35(1) APR.
([111]) Article 35(2) APR.

In the case described in the final point in the preceding list (i.e. the applicant making their application seven working days or more after receiving a return decision), the admissibility examination must be completed within **10 working days** ([112]).

The applicant is given the opportunity to attend a personal interview on admissibility ([113]), in which the applicant should provide reasons as to why the inadmissibility grounds would not be applicable to them.

The admissibility interview can be merged with the substantive interview, that is, the interview during which the authority determines whether the applicant qualifies for international protection. If the two interviews are merged, the applicant should be informed of this beforehand and should have the opportunity to consult with their legal adviser or with a person providing legal counselling ([114]).

Time limit for lodging an appeal

The exact time limit for lodging an appeal depends on the national context. However, in the case of decisions that reject an application as inadmissible, the time limit to lodge an appeal is between 5 days and 10 days ([115]).

During the appeal, the applicant will not have the right to remain if the application was rejected as inadmissible under the following grounds ([116]):

- the application was a subsequent application where no new relevant elements have arisen or have been presented by the applicant,
- a country that is not a Member State is considered to be a first country of asylum for the applicant,
- an international criminal court or tribunal has provided safe relocation for the applicant to a Member State or third country, or is in the process of doing so,
- the applicant was issued with a return decision and made their application only after seven working days from the date on which the applicant received that return decision.

The applicant can request, within a time limit of at least 5 days, to be allowed to remain on the territory pending the outcome of the appeal.

([112]) Article 35(1) APR.
([113]) Article 11 APR.
([114]) Article 12(1) APR.
([115]) Article 67(7) APR.
([116]) Article 68(3)(b) APR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- The admissibility of the application is going to be assessed (and explain for which particular reason(s)). The authority will assess only the inadmissibility ground(s). It will not assess the merits, that is, the reasons for which the applicant left their country and cannot return there. The merits will be assessed only if the application is considered admissible.
- Applicants have the right to present their views with regard to the reason(s) why the inadmissibility grounds are not applicable to them during a personal interview.
- Whenever an application is considered inadmissible, the applicant's eligibility for international protection will not be examined further and therefore the administrative procedure will come to an end.
- The applicant has the right to appeal against an admissibility decision.
- Inform the applicant of the duration of the procedure. Depending on the particular case, it can be up to 2 months, 4 months or 10 working days (see above).

Explain these messages to the applicant if the application is inadmissible:

- the examination will end and the application will not be further examined;
- the applicant will be notified of the decision that explains why the application will not be further examined;
- the possibility to appeal and the time limits;
- if applicable, explain that the applicant does not have the right to remain during the appeal, and the possibility to request to be allowed to remain on the territory pending the outcome of the appeal and the time limits.

Explain these messages to the applicant if the application is admissible:

- the application will be examined on the merits;
- the applicant will be given the opportunity to attend another personal interview, which will focus on the substance of their asylum claim (except in cases where the substantive interview was merged with the admissibility interview).

6.2.9. Personal interview

(a) Background information

The personal interview is the next procedural step after completing the lodging of the application.

The personal interview is conducted under conditions that ensure appropriate **privacy and confidentiality** ([117]). The applicant is obliged to be present at the personal interview and to respond in person to the questions asked ([118]).

The interview will be **audio recorded** ([119]). In addition, a **report or transcript** of the interview (or of the recording) will be made ([120]). The applicant will be given the opportunity to make comments or provide clarification on the report or transcript, at the end of the interview or within a specified time limit ([121]). If there is doubt as to the statements made during the interview, the audio recording will prevail ([122]).

The Member State selects an **interpreter** to ensure appropriate communication during the interview ([123]). Before the interview, the applicant can express specific requests regarding the interview, including the wish to be interviewed by a case officer and/or an interpreter of the same sex ([124]). If appointed, the presence of the applicant's **legal adviser** at their personal interview is assured ([125]).

If the applicant is a **dependent adult**, the adult responsible for them is given the opportunity to attend an interview. The dependent adult has the opportunity to participate in the interview ([126]).

If the applicant is an **accompanied child**, the personal interview is conducted in the presence of an adult responsible for them and a legal adviser, if appointed. However, based on the best interests of the child, the determining authority may decide to conduct the interview without the presence of a responsible adult ([127]).

If the applicant is an **unaccompanied child**, the representative of the child and the legal adviser (if appointed) are present at the personal interview ([128]).

In exceptional cases, the personal interview can be held by **video conference**, where duly justified by the circumstances ([129]).

([117]) Article 13(3) APR.
([118]) Article 13(12) APR.
([119]) Article 14(2) APR.
([120]) Article 14(1) APR.
([121]) Article 14(3) APR.
([122]) Article 14(4) APR.
([123]) Article 13(5) APR.
([124]) Article 13(9) APR.
([125]) Article 13(4) APR.
([126]) Article 13(2) APR.
([127]) Article 22(4) APR.
([128]) Article 23(8)(e) APR.
([129]) Article 13(10) APR.

Also in **exceptional circumstances**, national authorities can decide **not to conduct a personal interview** ([130]). This can occur in the following cases.

- The available information is considered enough for the authority to grant international protection.
- The determining authority considers the application non-admissible based on the available evidence.
- The authority deems that the applicant is unable or unfit to attend the interview (e.g. due to long term medical reasons). If in doubt, a doctor is consulted to establish whether the applicant is expected to recover or whether the medical condition is of an enduring nature.
- In the case of a subsequent application, where the preliminary examination is examined on the basis of the written statements.
- Another Member State has already granted international protection to the applicant.

If the applicant is **unable to attend** the interview for reasons beyond their control, the interview should be rescheduled.

Concerning the focus of the personal interview, it can be an **admissibility interview** ([131]) or a **substantive interview** ([132]). The admissibility interview focuses on whether the inadmissibility grounds may apply (see Section 6.2.8 Admissibility examination), while the substantive interview focuses on the merits of the application. The admissibility interview and the substantive interview can be conducted at the same time, provided that the applicant has been informed of this and has the opportunity to consult with their legal adviser or with a person providing legal counselling ([133]).

During the personal interview, the applicant is given an opportunity to explain why the inadmissibility grounds are not applicable to them (in the case of an admissibility interview) or to present all the elements needed to substantiate their application (in the case of a substantive interview).

The case officer has an important role during the interview in enabling the applicant to fulfil this duty and, consequently, also fulfilling the duty of the Member State to cooperate with the applicant in order to assess the relevant elements. Providing information during the interview regarding the rights and obligations of the applicant, and on the format and the aim of the interview, is therefore also important to enable the applicant to understand the asylum process ([134]).

([130]) Article 13(11) APR.
([131]) Article 11 APR.
([132]) Article 12 APR.
([133]) Article 12(1) APR.
([134]) EASO, *Practical Guide: Personal interview*, December 2014, Section 2.4 'Provide information to the applicant'.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- Upon completion of the registration and lodging, the applicant will receive an **invitation to a personal interview**. It should be specified how the applicant will be informed, in accordance with national practice. If the interview is omitted, information should be provided to the applicant regarding the reasons for the omission.
- Explain what a personal interview is.
- Explain that during the personal interview, the applicant will have an **opportunity to explain** in detail the reason(s) they left their country and why they are not able to return. If the admissibility of the application is assessed, explain that the applicant will have an opportunity to explain why the specific inadmissibility grounds are not applicable to them.
- The interview will be in the **language** preferred by the applicant, or otherwise in a language that the applicant can understand and in which they are able to communicate clearly.
- An **interpreter** who is able to ensure appropriate communication between the applicant and the person conducting the interview will be provided for the personal interviews ([135]).
- If applicable in your national context, the presence of a **cultural mediator** may be provided during the personal interview ([136]).
- The interview is organised in conditions ensuring **privacy and confidentiality** and without the presence of family members, unless their presence is considered necessary ([137]). If relevant, inform the applicant that they will need to arrange childcare for their children or if it will be provided during the interview in line with national practice.
- The interview will be audio recorded.
- If the applicant is an **accompanied child**, the personal interview is conducted in the presence of an adult responsible for them and a legal adviser, if appointed. The authority may however decide to conduct the interview without the responsible adult ([138]).
- The option of having a **legal adviser** present during the interview and the role of the legal adviser ([139]).
- The opportunity to ask for **special arrangements**, including the wish to be interviewed by a case officer and/or an interpreter of the same sex.

([135]) Article 13(5) APR.
([136]) Article 13(5) APR.
([137]) Article 13(3) APR.
([138]) Article 22(4) APR.
([139]) Article 13(4) APR.

- The applicant is **obliged to appear** at the personal interview and to respond to the questions asked.
- The applicant should also bring and present the relevant **documents and/or any other evidence that can substantiate the application**, including documents relating to the applicant's identity and background ([140]), unless the applicant has presented these documents already during the registration or lodging. For more information, see Section 6.6.7 Submit the elements and documents to substantiate the application.
- The **consequences of not appearing** at the interview without providing a valid explanation to the authority and of not responding to questions, in line with the national law or practice. For more information, see Section 6.7.1 Implicit withdrawal of applications.
- If the information is available, inform the applicant about the **time and place of the personal interview**. Other practical information can be included, for example how to get there and the approximate length of the interview. If it is not possible to provide a date or an exact time frame in your national set-up, provide at least an approximate time frame in order to enable the applicant to prepare for the interview and collect relevant documents.
- Those in need of **special procedural guarantees** will be ensured adequate support ([141]). Encourage the applicant to declare additional special needs that the authority does not yet know about. Depending on the applicant's special need(s), a broad range of support measures may be taken, for example special medical assistance, special arrangements for the interview and prolonging the interview.
- In exceptional cases, the personal interview can be held by **video conference**.

Explain the following messages to applicants during the personal interview.

- The **aim** of the interview, as follows.
  - If the interview is an admissibility interview, the aim is to give the applicant the opportunity to explain why the inadmissibility grounds do not apply to them,
  - If the interview is a substantive interview, the aim is to give the applicant the opportunity to explain to the authority in detail the reasons why they left their country of origin and why they are not able to return there. Any type of violence, harm or threats – physical or psychological – or restrictions of their freedoms and rights by authorities, certain groups in their society, individuals or even family members may be relevant to their application.
- The applicant is **obliged to cooperate** and tell the truth during the personal interview ([142]).

([140]) Article 4 QR.

([141]) Article 21 APD.

([142]) Article 13(12) APR.

- If the applicant refuses to respond to questions, the application can be considered as being **implicitly withdrawn** (for more information, see Section 6.7.1 Implicit withdrawal of applications).
- Provide information about **confidentiality** (for more details, see Section 6.1.3 Confidentiality).
- Present the **individuals who will attend** the interview and inform the applicant about their roles.
- Ask and encourage the applicant to indicate any communication/comprehension difficulties during the interview. This aims to limit the potential effects of factors of distortion ([143]).
- Prior to the start of the interview, inform the applicant that the interview will be audio recorded and inform the applicant of the purpose of the recording ([144]).
- Inform the applicant that a report (or transcript) of the interview will be made ([145]) and about the opportunity to make **comments and/or provide clarification** orally or in writing with regard to any mistranslations or misconceptions appearing in the interview report/transcript ([146]). Such comments or clarifications can be made at the end of the interview or within a certain time limit. Specify this time limit if it applies in your national context.
- Provide other practical information, such as information about the opportunity to ask for a **break**.
- At the end of the interview, depending on the material acquired, provide detailed information about the **next steps of the procedure**. This may include the time needed for the authority to assess the applicant's statements and any other available information, issue a decision and its notification. See Section 6.2.10 Notification for additional information messages to be conveyed during the personal interview.
- If, once the interview is over, the applicant remembers information that they consider important or they have access to documentation that is crucial for the resolution of the case, they can provide it to be considered, provided a decision has not yet been taken.

([143]) EUAA, *Practical Guide on Evidence and Risk Assessment*, 2024.
([144]) Article 14(2) APR.
([145]) Article 14(3) APR.
([146]) Article 14(4) APR.



Practical tip: information provision on the personal interview

- At the registration and lodging, it is advisable to share only basic information and focus on topics that are relevant at that stage, for example how the applicant can prepare for the interview. At the same time, avoid providing details that are not relevant at this stage and will be elaborated on once the interview appointment takes place, such as detailed information about the step after the personal interview is completed.
- When providing information during the interview, you should also use language adapted to the individual and contextual circumstances of the applicant (e.g. age, gender, education, social background). This is important in order to reach a mutual understanding of the interview situation and to safeguard the applicant's legal rights ([147]).
- At the beginning of the interview, it is advisable to inform the applicant about the time frame of the interview.
- The case officer should explain why providing all the relevant and correct information will help ensure that a sound decision is reached. When addressing the obligation to tell the truth, the case officer may stress the fact that this is explained to everybody. In doing so, the case officer avoids being perceived as insinuating that the applicant intends to lie. It is also important to make clear that it is only if the applicant knowingly provides false information that it may have negative consequences.
- The case officer should also advise the applicant that if they do not know the answer to a question, they should simply say so and not try to provide an answer by guessing ([148]).



Good practice

Because of the delay between an invitation to interview and the date of the interview, sending a reminder of the appointment (e.g. via SMS, email) before the interview helps the applicant to remember it. It is preferable to send the reminder several days before the interview, so that the applicant has time to make all necessary travel arrangements.

([147]) EASO, *Practical Guide: Personal interview*, 2014, Section 2.3.4 'Encourage the applicant to indicate any communication/comprehension difficulties'.

([148]) EASO, *Practical Guide: Personal interview*, 2014, pp. 8–9.

6.2.10. Notification

(a) Background information

The notification is the next procedural step after the personal interview. It is the transmission of the decision on the application. The decision is given in writing and is notified to the applicant, or to their legal adviser, as soon as possible ([149]).

The applicant must be notified of the decision in a language that they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand ([150]). If the decision is notified to the applicant's legal adviser, the decision does not need to be translated into a language that the applicant is expected to understand. In such cases, the result of the decision can be communicated, in writing, to the applicant in a language that they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand, together with general information on how to challenge the decision ([151]).

The decision should state the result of the decision. If it is a rejection, it should also state the reasons in fact and in law for the rejection and information on how to challenge it.

The date of the decision notification should be clear, notably because the time period in which an appeal can be lodged starts from the date of the notification ([152]). The notification ends the asylum procedure at first instance.

The exact **time limit** for lodging an appeal depends on the national context. However, the time limit is:

- between 5 days and 10 days for cases rejected as inadmissible, cases considered implicitly withdrawn and if, at the time of the decision, circumstances constituting grounds of the accelerated procedure ([153]) apply;
- between two weeks and one month in all other cases ([154]).

For more information regarding the types of decision and decision-making, see Sections 6.1.1 What is international protection? and 6.1.2 What is the asylum procedure?.

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the personal interview:

- the date or approximate date of the notification;
- the means of notifying the applicant regarding the decision (i.e. by post, in person, via a digital account).

([149]) Articles 8(2) and 36(1) APR.
([150]) Article 36(3) APR.
([151]) Article 36(4) APR.
([152]) Article 67(8) APR.
([153]) Article 42(1) and (3) APR
([154]) Article 67(7) APR.

- The applicant will receive the decision in writing. In the event of a negative decision, the reasons will be stated, and the way to challenge the decision will be explained (including information concerning the suspensive effects) ([155]).
- The applicant is informed of the result of the decision and how to challenge it in writing in a language that the applicant understands ([156]).

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the notification stage.

- The outcome of the decision (positive or negative). In the event of a negative decision, explain the reasons.
- The opportunity to appeal, the deadline to appeal and from which day it is counted (see Section 6.2.11 Appeal).
- The consequences if they do not appeal or appeal outside the time limit (i.e. that the decision becomes final).
- If in accordance with the national practice, how their passport and other original documents will be returned.
- The next steps of the procedure, including the following points, depending on the decision.
  - Decision granting refugee status or subsidiary protection. Provide information on or refer the beneficiary of international protection to where they can receive information about the procedure for obtaining the resident permit and travel document, and information concerning the rights and obligations attached to the individual's protection status, such as the right to social welfare, access to education, access to employment and family reunification. Provide information on other consequences related to their protection status.
  - Decision granting subsidiary protection. In addition to the information above, the applicant should be informed that, despite being granted international protection (i.e. in the form of subsidiary protection), they can appeal the decision, as the application in relation to refugee status was rejected.
  - Negative decision. Provide information about the following.
    - The appeal procedure, especially concerning the deadline and the consequences of missing the deadline.
    - The possibility of accessing legal aid.
    - The right to stay in the country and the impact of the decision in this regard, and, if relevant, the effects that the negative decision has on their daily allowance and other economic benefits and on access to the accommodation provided to them.
    - Voluntary return and the available assistance.

([155]) Article 36(2) and (3) APR.
([156]) Article 36(3) and (4) APR.

- The fact that the procedure is not yet terminated and therefore the fulfilment of obligations must continue. If there are any changes in their contact details, the authorities should be informed.

For more information, see Sections 6.2.11 Appeal, 6.3.1 Right to remain, 6.3.3 Free legal counselling, 6.3.4 Free legal assistance and representation, 6.3.5 Material reception conditions and 6.9.3 Voluntary return.

Good practice

In some Member States, in the event of a positive decision, where international protection is granted because the applicant is a member of a particular social group and is at risk of undergoing female genital mutilation/cutting, the applicant/parent(s) are informed that female genital mutilation/cutting is illegal. At the same time, the applicant/parent(s) are informed that a medical report must be sent after a certain period and then repeatedly after that to prove that the applicant and/or their children (if applicable) have not since undergone female genital mutilation/cutting.

6.2.11. Appeal

(a) Background information

The applicant has the right to an effective remedy before a court or tribunal against a decision rejecting an application. This includes a decision rejecting an application as inadmissible, unfounded or implicitly withdrawn ([157]).

Although it is important that an applicant is aware at an early stage of the right to appeal a possible forthcoming negative decision, providing the applicant with detailed information about this right is evidently important at the notification stage.

The exact **time limit** for lodging an appeal depends on the national context. However, the time limit is:

- between 5 days and 10 days for cases rejected as inadmissible, cases considered implicitly withdrawn and if, at the time of the decision, circumstances constituting grounds of the accelerated procedure ([158]) apply;
- between two weeks and one month in all other cases.

([157]) Article 67(1) APR.

([158]) Article 42(1) and (3) APR

For more information about legal assistance, time frames and the right to remain, see Sections 6.3.1 Right to remain, 6.3.3 Free legal counselling, 6.3.4 Free legal assistance and representation and 6.2.12 Duration of the procedure.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the notification stage.

- The right to appeal a decision.
- How to appeal a decision in the Member State. Include information about the time limit for submitting the appeal, the possible requirements regarding the format of the appeal and where the appeal should be submitted.
- The right to submit new documents and elements in the appeal.
- The right to free legal assistance and representation at the appeal stage ([159]).
- The right to remain in the territory of the Member State during the appeal process ([160]), unless exceptions apply ([161]).
- If relevant in the applicant's case, information on the return process and the applicant's rights and obligations regarding return ([162]).
- Basic information about the appeal process, for example about which court or tribunal is responsible, any contact information relevant at this instance and information about the general proceedings at the court or tribunal and relevant actors in the process.
- In the appeal, the court or tribunal will examine the application based on the elements and situation as they exist at the time of the appeal.



Practical tip: explaining the appeal concept

Since 'appeal' is a legal term and may not be easy to understand, you may provide a simple explanation to the applicant. For example, an appeal means that if you receive a decision and you do not agree with it and you believe that a mistake was made, you can ask a court/ judge to review your case (look at your case again).

([159]) Article 17 APR.

([160]) Article 68(2) APR.

([161]) Article 68(3) APR.

([162]) For more information, see Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals; and Regulation (EU) 2024/1349 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a return border procedure, and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1148.

6.2.12. Duration of the procedure

(a) Background information

Principle

The examination on the merits (i.e. not including the appeal) in the regular procedure is concluded within **six months** of the lodging of the application ([163]). The examination on the admissibility is concluded within **two months** of the lodging of the application ([164]).

Extension of time limits

However, the time limit can be extended, by a maximum of six months for the examination on the merits in the regular procedure ([165]) and by a maximum of two months for the examination on the admissibility ([166]), in the following circumstances:

- when there are a large number of applications made in a Member State within the same period of time;
- when complex issues of fact and/or law are involved;
- when the delay can be clearly and solely attributed to the applicant's failure to comply with their obligations.

If the applicant makes their application seven working days or more after receipt of a return decision, the admissibility examination must be completed within 10 working days ([167]).

Postponement

Finally, in cases of an uncertain but temporary situation in the country of origin, concluding the examination procedure may be postponed where the determining authority cannot decide within the time limits stated above ([168]).

However, in any event, even if the conclusion of the examination is postponed, the examination must be concluded within **21 months** of the lodging of the application ([169]).

([163]) Article 35(4) APR.
([164]) Article 35(1) APR.
([165]) Article 35(5) APR.
([166]) Article 35(2) APR.
([167]) Article 35(1) APR.
([168]) Article 35(7) APR.
([169]) Articles 35(7) APR.

Special time limits

A different time frame applies if the applicant is subject to a special procedure, as follows.

- The accelerated examination procedure is concluded no later than **three months** after the date of the lodging ([170]).
- The asylum border procedure is concluded within **12 weeks** (extendable to 16 weeks in cases of relocation) of the date of the registration ([171]).

Prioritisation of cases

In specific cases, the examination of an application may be prioritised and the decision is issued within a shorter time limit ([172]). These include situations when:

- the application is likely to be well founded;
- the applicant is vulnerable and in need of special procedural guarantees, particularly in the case of unaccompanied children;
- there are reasonable grounds to consider the applicant a danger to national security or public order of the Member State;
- the application is a subsequent application;
- the applicant has been subject to a decision reducing or withdrawing the material reception conditions after having breached the rules of the accommodation centre, or has behaved in a violent or threatening manner in the accommodation centre, has been involved in causing public nuisance or has engaged in criminal behaviour.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following message to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- Inform the applicant of the applicable time limit depending on the **applicable** procedure and type of examination, as follows.
  - Regular procedure: **six months** from the lodging (extendable by another six months).
  - Accelerated procedure: **three months** from the lodging.
  - Asylum border procedure: **12 weeks** from the registration.
  - Admissibility examination: **two months** from the lodging (extendable by another two months), except if the applicant made an application after seven working days from the date of receiving a return decision. In this case, the admissibility examination is concluded within **10 working days**.

([170]) Article 35(3) APR.
([171]) Article 51(2) APR.
([172]) Article 34(5) APR.

Practical tip: providing an additional explanation and reassurance regarding the length of the procedure

The waiting time to receive a decision may vary, depending on a broad range of factors. An applicant who arrived later may receive a decision sooner that those who arrived before them. You should reassure the applicant that this is not a reason to worry; every application is different and is examined individually. In specific cases, when it is very likely that the assessment will take a long time, information concerning the time frame for the decision notification may be provided during the personal interview.

It is also recommended that you stress to the applicant that they should not leave the Member State, as leaving the Member State will have consequences. For more information, see Section 6.7 The consequences of not complying with obligations.

6.2.13. Detention

(a) Background information

Detention is the confinement of an applicant to a particular place, where they are deprived of their freedom of movement ([173]).

An applicant may be detained for the following purposes, when these cannot be achieved without detention (including when there is a risk of absconding) ([174]):

- determining or verifying the identity or nationality of an applicant;
- determining elements of the application when these cannot be obtained without detention, in particular when there is a risk that the applicant will abscond;
- ensuring compliance with a decision assigning the applicant to reside in a specific place and where the applicant has not complied with such obligations and there continues to be a risk of absconding;
- deciding on the applicant's right to enter the territory in the context of the asylum border procedure;
- preparing the return or carrying out the removal process when the applicant is subject to a return procedure in accordance with the Return Directive ([175]), and where there are reasonable grounds to believe that the applicant is making the application for

([173]) Article 2(9) RCD (2024).

([174]) Article 10(2) and (4) RCD (2024).

([175]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (OJ L 348, 24.12.2008).



international protection merely in order to delay or frustrate the enforcement of the return decision ([176]);

- for national security or public order;
- in accordance with Article 44 AMMR.

An applicant can be detained only for as long as the grounds are applicable and for as short a period as possible ([177]).

Detention is a measure of last resort that may be applied only in the absence of effective less coercive alternatives. It is applied based on an individual assessment. At the same time, certain rules and conditions need to be fulfilled. These rules are set down in Articles 11 and 12 of the RCD (2024) and are as follows.

- The applicant needs to be immediately informed in writing of the reasons for their detention ([178]) and the remedies, and of the opportunity to request free legal assistance and representation ([179]).
- The lawfulness of the detention should be reviewed *ex officio* or at the applicant's request, as follows:

when conducted *ex officio*, such a review must be concluded as speedily as possible, taking into account the circumstances of each case, and no later than 15 days or, in exceptional situations, no later than 21 days from the beginning of detention;

when conducted upon the request of the applicant, such a review must be concluded as speedily as possible, taking into account the circumstances of each case, and no later than 15 days or, in exceptional situations, no later than 21 days from the launch of the relevant proceedings ([180]).

- Where the judicial review is not concluded within 21 days, the applicant concerned must be released immediately.
- The applicant must have access to free legal assistance and representation for the judicial review of the detention order ([181]).
- Applicants should be detained, as a rule, in specialised detention facilities, separated from ordinary prisoners ([182]).
- Applicants should have access to open-air spaces ([183]).

([176]) Article 10(4)(e) RCD (2024).
([177]) Article 11(1) RCD (2024).
([178]) Article 11(4) RCD (2024) and Article 5(2) European Convention on Human Rights.
([179]) Article 11(4) RCD (2024).
([180]) Article 11(3) and (5) RCD (2024).
([181]) Article 11(6) RCD (2024).
([182]) Article 12(1) RCD (2024).
([183]) Article 12(2) RCD (2024).



- Access should be given to family members, advisers or counsellors, and representatives of UNHCR and non-governmental organisations in conditions that respect privacy. Limits to access may be imposed by national law, provided that they do not severely restrict such access or make it impossible ([184]).
- Applicants must be informed of their rights, obligations and the rules in the detention facility, in a language they understand or are reasonably supposed to understand ([185]).
- For specific groups, such as vulnerable persons, (unaccompanied) children and families, certain rules and detention conditions apply, in accordance with Article 13 of the Reception Conditions Directive (RCD (2024) ([186]).

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during registration and lodging:

- the reason(s) for their detention and the maximum duration envisaged by national law, if any (information to be provided by the authorities in writing);
- how to challenge the detention order and how to request legal assistance and representation that is free of charge (information to be provided by the authorities in writing);
- how to contact organisations or groups of persons that provide legal assistance;
- that they are able to communicate with family and legal advisers;
- that they are able to communicate with a UNHCR representative and how to contact a UNHCR representative;
- their rights and obligations in the detention facility;
- that the same guarantees and standards apply for the examination of the application as for any applicant who is not detained.



Practical tip: clearly explaining that detention is not prison

Explain the entire notion of detention and the difference between prison and detention, as this may be a new concept for some applicants and may trigger traumatic memories.

([184]) Article 12(4) RCD (2024).

([185]) Article 12(5) RCD (2024).

([186]) Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (OJ L, 2024/1346, 22.5.2024), http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1346/oj.

6.3. The rights of applicants for international protection

The applicant's rights apply from the moment of the making of the application ([187]). Therefore, it is important to provide information on these rights as early as possible ([188]).

6.3.1. Right to remain

(a) Background information

Principle

Applicants for international protection have the right to stay in the country during the examination of their application. The right to remain is a key principle of the asylum procedure. It applies as a general rule during the examination of an application ([189]).

Exceptions

There are limited exceptions to this right (under very strict circumstances), which are different during the administrative procedure and the appeal.

During the administrative procedure, the following exceptions ([190]) may apply:

- the applicant made a first subsequent application merely to delay or frustrate a removal order and no new elements have been presented in the application;
- the applicant made a second or further subsequent application following a final decision rejecting a previous subsequent application as inadmissible or unfounded or manifestly unfounded;
- the applicant will be extradited, surrendered or transferred to another Member State, a third country, the International Criminal Court or another international court or tribunal, in full compliance with the principle of *non-refoulement*;
- the applicant is a danger to public order or national security, provided that applying this exception does not give rise a violation of the principle of *non-refoulement*.

([187]) Judgment of the Court of Justice of 25 June 2020, *VL v Ministerio Fiscal*, C-36/20 PPU, ECLI: EU:C:2020:495, paragraphs 90–92.

([188]) EUAA, *Practical guide on the registration and lodging of applications for international protection*, 2025, p. 23.

([189]) Article 10 APR.

([190]) Article 10(4) and (5) APR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following message to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- The applicant has the right to stay in the country for as long as their application is being examined at first instance. Alternatively, and if relevant, provide information about the exception(s).

Explain this additional message to the applicant during the registration, lodging and notification:

- In the regular procedure, the right to remain ends when a final decision rejecting the application is taken, that decision is not (or no longer) subject to the possibility of an appeal, and the right to remain was based solely on the fact that the applicant had made an application.



Practical tip: providing details on the exceptions only if relevant to the applicant

There is no need to inform all applicants about the details of the exceptions. Information detailing the exceptions should be given only to those applicants to whom these exceptions may apply.

6.3.2. Access to an interpreter

(a) Background information

If proper communication cannot be ensured without interpretation, the applicant has the right to receive the services of an interpreter free of charge whenever necessary and at least during the personal interview ([191]), for the purposes of submitting their case to the authority. The applicant will, when needed, be assisted during the personal interview by an interpreter of the language of their preference or at least of a language they understand and in which they can communicate clearly ([192]).

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging:

- the applicant will, when necessary, be assisted by an interpreter;
- interpretation is provided free of charge;

([191]) Article 8(3) APR.
([192]) Article 13(5) APR.

- the applicant should always mention if they have any difficulties understanding the interpreter or if the interpreter is not acting in a neutral way.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- The role of the interpreter is strictly limited to translating what is being said, without adding or omitting information.
- The interpreter is bound by the principles of confidentiality and impartiality. They cannot talk about anything that was said during the interview outside the interpretation situation. The interpreter has no influence on the outcome of the decision.
- It is possible to ask for a male or female interpreter if it helps the applicant to present their claim. The request will be accommodated if possible ([193]).



Practical tip: clarifying that the right to interpretation only applies to the asylum procedure

If the applicant asks for interpretation for personal purposes, explain to the applicant that the interpreter is available only for matters related to their application for international protection when dealing with authorities. This means that the support of an interpreter does not include, for example, help in a medical appointment. For such queries, provide advice on where the applicant can obtain support, according to your national practice.

6.3.3. Free legal counselling

(a) Background information

Applicants have the right to consult a legal adviser or other counsellor on matters relating to their application at all stages of the procedure ([194]), this includes the applicant's right to choose their own legal adviser or counsellor at their own cost.

Applicants may request free legal counselling during the administrative procedure. Free legal counselling is provided by legal advisers or other counsellors, as specified by national law. Information on access to free legal counselling should be provided to the applicant as soon as possible and, to the extent it is available, at the latest during registration ([195]).

([193]) Article 13(9) APR.
([194]) Article 15(1) APR.
([195]) Article 15(2) APR.

The provision of free legal counselling may be excluded where ([196]):

- the application is a first subsequent application lodged merely in order to delay or frustrate the enforcement of a return decision;
- the application is a second or further subsequent application;
- the applicant is already assisted and represented by a legal adviser.

Free legal counselling includes the provision of ([197]):

- guidance on and an explanation of the administrative procedure, including information on rights and obligations during the procedure;
- assistance with the lodging of the application and guidance on:
  - the different procedures under which the application may be examined and the reasons for the application of those procedures,
  - the rules related to the admissibility of an application,
  - legal issues arising in the course of the procedure, including information on how to challenge a decision rejecting an application.

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the making, registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The applicant can consult a legal adviser or counsellor on matters related to their application at all stages of the asylum procedure. This includes the right to choose their own legal adviser or counsellor at their own cost.
- the applicant has the right to request free legal counselling during the administrative procedure.
- the applicant has the right to be provided legal counselling during the administrative procedure. If exceptions exist in your national context and if any such exception is relevant in the applicant's case, explain the exception(s).
- explain what legal counselling entails.

([196]) Article 16(3) APR.
([197]) Article 16(2) APR.

6.3.4. Legal assistance and representation

(a) Background information

Administrative procedure

Applicants have the right to consult a legal adviser or other counsellor at their own costs on matters relating to their application at all stages of the procedure ([198]).

Depending on the national context, applicants may be provided with free legal assistance and representation in the administrative procedure ([199]). Consult your national legislation regarding the availability of free legal assistance and representation in the administrative procedure, the specifics and what it consists in.

Appeal procedure

Applicants have the right to request free legal assistance and representation during the appeal stage. Free legal assistance and representation is provided by legal advisers or other counsellors.

Such free legal assistance and representation include, as a minimum, the preparation of the procedural documents required under national law, the preparation of the appeal and, in the event of a hearing, participation in that hearing before a court or tribunal.

However, the provision of free legal assistance and representation may be excluded where ([200]):

- the applicant has sufficient resources to afford legal assistance and representation at their own cost;
- the appeal has no tangible prospect of success or is abusive;
- the appeal or review is at a second level of appeal or higher;
- the applicant is already assisted and represented by a legal adviser.

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview:

- the applicant has the right to consult a legal advisor or other counsellor at any stage of the asylum procedure at their own costs;

([198]) Article 15(1) APR.
([199]) Article 15(3) APR.
([200]) Article 17 APR.

- if applicable in your national context, inform the applicant that they have the right to free legal assistance and representation in the administrative procedure; if free legal assistance and representation is available at first instance, explain what it consists in;
- how they can access the free legal assistance and representation.

Explain these messages to the applicant during the notification:

- the applicant has the right to free legal assistance and representation during the appeal;
- explain the exception(s) if they apply;
- the available forms of legal assistance and representation during the appeal in your country, for example private lawyers, dedicated lawyers cooperating with the asylum service and legal aid provided by civil-society organisations;
- how they can access the free legal assistance and representation during the appeal.



Practical tip: explaining the notion of legal representation

Explain the entire notion of legal assistance and representation, as this may be a new concept for some applicants. Include an explanation about the role of the legal adviser in your country and what kind of services/support the legal adviser can provide, for example legal advice about the applicant's case and the procedures, preparing the applicant for an interview and assistance with the preparation of appeal and other official documents.

6.3.5. Material reception conditions

Depending on the applicant's situation, they will receive accommodation, food or money to buy food, basic and necessary medical care, social assistance and education for children. The RCD (2024) lays down the right to the material reception conditions.

The applicant is entitled to the full set of material reception conditions as envisaged under the RCD (2024) only in the EU+ country in which they are required to be under Article 17 AMMR.

Further information on the right to material reception conditions is provided on the 'Let's speak asylum' platform, which hosts all the products developed under the 'Let's speak asylum' project ([201]).

([201]) The EUAA 'Let's speak asylum' portal is available here.

Member States must inform applicants about topics listed under the RCD (2024) by means of a template developed by the EUAA ([202]). The mandatory information materials can be found here.

6.3.6. Withdrawal of an application for international protection

(a) Background information

An applicant has the right to withdraw their application at any time during the procedure. A withdrawal can be implicit or explicit. Explicit withdrawal happens when the applicant or their legal adviser explicitly informs the administration that they wish to withdraw their application ([203]). The applicant's request needs to be presented in writing. A withdrawal is implicit when the applicant abandons the asylum procedure without informing the authorities or the withdrawal is warranted due to the actions of the applicant; for instance, if a person refuses to provide their biometric data ([204]). For information about implicit withdrawal, see Section 6.7.1 Implicit withdrawal of applications.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following message to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- An applicant can withdraw their application for international protection at any time and for any reason. This is called explicit withdrawal.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- After the application is explicitly withdrawn, the examination procedure ends. Consequently, the access to rights that are provided to applicants, including the right to remain in the Member State, will end (unless there are other grounds for staying in the country).
- To withdraw the application, the applicant needs to express the intention to withdraw their application in writing.
- It is possible to receive assistance with voluntary return (for more information, see Section 6.9.3 Voluntary return).

([202]) Article 5(1) RCD (2024).
([203]) Article 40 APR.
([204]) Article 41 APR.

6.4. Rights concerning (unaccompanied) children

6.4.1. Appointment of a representative

(a) Background information

Unaccompanied children are to be provided with a representative as soon as possible and no later than 15 days (in exceptional cases extendable by 10 days) from the date when the application is made.

A person acting as a temporary representative may be designated before a representative is appointed. The child should be immediately informed about the appointment. For specifics regarding the appointment of a representative, the procedure and deadlines, refer to your national law. Specific provisions regarding reception apply to unaccompanied children ([205]).

A representative acts on behalf of the child in line with their best interests and assists the child throughout the asylum procedure, ensuring that the child is able to benefit from their rights and comply with the obligations. A representative ensures that the best interests of the child are considered, including making sure that their legal, medical and other needs are appropriately addressed throughout the asylum procedure ([206]).

The representative must have the required expertise to carry out their duties and will be replaced only when necessary. Organisations or natural persons whose interests' conflict or could potentially conflict with those of the unaccompanied child must not be appointed as representative ([207]).

The representative meets with the unaccompanied child and carries out, inter alia, the following tasks, where appropriate together with the legal adviser:

- provide the unaccompanied child with relevant information in relation to the asylum procedure;
- assist with the age assessment, if applicable;
- assist with the registration of the application;
- assist with the lodging of the application or lodge the application on their behalf;
- assist with the preparation of and be present for the personal interview and inform the unaccompanied child about the purpose and possible consequences of the personal interview and about how to prepare for the interview;
- provide information and assist the unaccompanied child in relation to the responsibility determination procedure and the collection of biometrics data in Eurodac;

([205]) Article 27 RCD (2024).
([206]) Article 23 APR.
([207]) Article 23(9) APR.

- if applicable, assist with the appeal.

The representative is replaced only if the authorities consider that the representative performed their tasks inadequately.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- A representative will be appointed to assist the unaccompanied child and act on their behalf throughout the asylum procedure.
- The role of a representative is to stay in contact with the authorities and accompany the unaccompanied child during appointments, including the personal interview, to inform the child about the procedure, ensure that the child's needs are addressed and ensure that the unaccompanied child's views are taken into consideration.
- The unaccompanied child may refer to the representative if they have any concerns or questions at any time during the asylum procedure.
- Taking into consideration the child's age, provide additional explanations regarding the procedure for appointing a representative.
- The unaccompanied child should inform the authorities if they have any concerns or complaints regarding cooperation with the representative. Information should be provided on how to reach out to the authorities and file a formal complaint and on the option to change the representative.



Related publication

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Guardianship for Children Deprived of Parental Care – A handbook to reinforce guardianship systems to cater for the specific needs of child victims of trafficking*, 2015.



Practical tip: being very clear about the role of the representative

Ensure that the child understands that the role of the representative is to support them and their well-being. They should not hesitate to tell the representative their views, needs, concerns, wishes, etc. At the same time, explain what is not in the representative's competences. For example, the representative does not live with the child or provide money. You may inform the child about their accommodation and the benefits they will receive.

6.4.2. Family tracing

(a) Background information

The QR highlights the principle of family unity. If the applicant does not know where their parents or the adult responsible for them are, or is unable to contact them, the administration will initiate a procedure to find out where the family is and contact them. The tracing of family members must be launched as soon as possible after the application is made ([208]). Family members include at least the mother and father. Consult your national legislation regarding who is considered a family member for the family tracing process in your country.

Collecting information about the applicant's relatives must be conducted in line with the principle of confidentiality, notably in order not to expose the child or their close relatives to any threat against their life or integrity.

The applicant is handed a family tracing form for them to complete. Where possible, the applicant should complete that template before the personal interview.

The outcome of the family tracing is guided by the best interests of the child ([209]).

Related EUAA publication

For more information, see EUAA, *Practical Guide on Family Tracing*, April, 2025.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the making, registration, lodging, personal interview and notification stage.

- It is important that the applicant provides any information about the whereabouts of their parents or the adult responsible for them, their contact details and any other relevant information.
- The child should complete the EUAA family tracing form.
- The child should inform the authorities about any reasons not to contact their parents or guardians. It is important that the applicant shares any concerns and reasons why they would not want their parents or guardians to be contacted.
- Reassure the applicant about confidentiality. The information they provide about family members will not be shared with people not entitled to know, for example in their home country. The family members will not be put in danger.

([208]) Article 27(10) RCD (2024).
([209]) Article 27(10) RCD (2024).

6.5. Rights concerning applicants with special needs

6.5.1. Adequate support to benefit from their rights and to comply with obligations

(a) Background information

Certain applicants may be in need of special procedural guarantees due, inter alia, to their age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, serious physical or mental illness or disorders, including when these are a consequence of torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical, sexual or gender-based violence. It is necessary to assess whether any individual applicant is in need of special procedural guarantees ([210]).

The authorities are obliged to assess if the applicant is in need of special procedural guarantees. When this is the case, applicants should be provided with adequate support and time, and the appropriate conditions to ensure effective access to the asylum procedure and to ensure that they can benefit from their rights and comply with their obligations ([211]). Where it is not possible to provide adequate support in the framework of an accelerated examination procedure or a border procedure, an applicant in need of special procedural guarantees should be exempted from those procedures ([212]).

The procedures related to the identification of special needs and the nature of the support will depend on the individual procedural needs of the applicant and on national practice ([213]). This may include specific services for specific groups, such as:

- medical and psychological assistance for disabled applicants or applicants with health problems;
- support for victims of THB, such as the national referral mechanism for victims of THB;
- specialised social services for children, such as childcare.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following message to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- It is in the applicant's best interest to inform the authorities if they have any special needs, for example if they are unwell, if they need psychological or medical support, if they are pregnant, if they have had serious traumatic experiences, such as torture, rape and serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, in order to receive adequate support. This should also include informing the authorities about any protection concerns in the host country.

([210]) Recital 17 APR.
([211]) Article 21(1) APR.
([212]) Article 21(2) APR.
([213]) Article 20(1) APR.

Explain the following additional message to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- If the applicant has special needs, explain how these needs will be addressed, the available support and relevant procedural safeguards in accordance with national practice. This may include referral to specialised service providers, providing additional time, appointing specialised staff to the case and the option to request a male or female case officer and interpreter.



Practical tip: considering the need for special arrangements for the personal interview

Specific profiles (e.g. disabled applicants, single parents with children) may need additional information regarding specific arrangements for the personal interview.

6.6. Obligations of an applicant for international protection

The applicant's obligations apply from the beginning of the asylum procedure. Therefore, it is important to provide information on these obligations as early as possible.

Inform the applicant that if they cannot comply with one or more obligations, they should immediately inform the authorities and explain the reasons.

6.6.1. Cooperate with the authorities

(a) Background information

The applicant is obliged to cooperate with the authorities. As part of their obligation to cooperate, the applicant must perform the following:

- provide their personal details – their name, date and place of birth, gender, nationality or nationalities or the fact that they are stateless, family members and, in the case of children, siblings or relatives present in a Member State, and other personal details relevant to the asylum procedure and the responsibility determination procedure;
- provide information related to their ID and travel documents;
- provide their address and contact details, and any changes concerning these (see Section 6.6.4 Communicate contact details and any changes as regards contact);
- provide an explanation if the applicant does not have an ID or travel document;
- provide biometric data (see Section 6.6.3 Have biometrics taken);

- lodge their application, notably within the applicable time frame, and remain available during the procedure;
- hand over as soon as possible documents in their possession relevant to the examination of the application;
- attend the personal interview;
- remain on the territory of the Member State where the applicant is required to be present.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the making, registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The applicant has to cooperate with the authorities to enable the authorities to process their case.
- The applicant should appear in person before the authority if they have an appointment. Explain what to do and which steps to take if the applicant cannot attend the appointment.

Explain this additional message to the applicant during the registration:

- applicants are also obliged to lodge their application, notably within the applicable time frame.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The applicant must provide the authorities with:
  - their personal details;
  - information concerning their documents;
  - their address and contact details and any changes to these;
  - if applicable, an explanation if they do not have an ID or travel document;
  - their biometric data;
  - the documents in their possession relevant to the examination of the application.
- Applicants are also obliged to:
  - attend the personal interview (where applicable);
  - remain on the territory of the Member State where the applicant is required to be present;
  - remain in a designated geographical area or location if imposed by authorities;
  - remain available to the authorities throughout the asylum procedure;

  - report to authorities at a specified time or at reasonable intervals (where applicable);
  - respond to requests for information and not provide false information to the authorities;
  - during the interview, provide information concerning the reason(s) they applied for international protection and answer the questions asked;
  - fulfil other obligations that may be applicable in your national context.
- How applicants can, in practice, provide information and submit documentary evidence to the authorities. This includes to which office the information should be provided and by what means (e.g. by mail, by email or by appearing in person).
- The authority will record the interview. The recording will be stored and used in full respect of the principle of confidentiality ([214]).

Explain this message to the applicant during the notification stage:

- if they are notified of a positive decision, there are possible further obligations to cooperate with the authorities based on national practice (e.g. submitting documents from their country of origin if this has not yet been done).

Practical tip: information provision on cooperation with authorities during the interview

- When providing information about obligations in the presence of an interpreter during the interview, ensure that the applicant has understood the information by asking them. Consider also giving the applicant an opportunity to ask follow-up questions about their obligations.

6.6.2. Be subject to a personal search

(a) Background information

The competent authorities may search the applicant and the items they are carrying ([215]).

([214]) Article 13(3) APR.
([215]) Article 9(5) APR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- Applicants may be subject to a personal search, including a search of the items they are carrying.
- The search of their person will be carried out by a person of the same sex, without prejudice to any search carried out for security reasons.
- The search will be conducted with full respect for the principles of human dignity and physical and psychological integrity. Their personal belongings will be handed back to them.

6.6.3. Have biometrics taken

(a) Background information

Upon making the application (for applicants at border crossing points) ([216]) or upon registration (for all other applicants) ([217]), biometric data, that is, fingerprint data and a facial image, must be collected from all applicants aged six years and older ([218]). These data must then be transmitted, together with the data laid down in Article 17 Eurodac Regulation, to the Eurodac database within 72 hours.

Depending on the national set-up, additional types of biometric data can be collected, such as an iris scan or voice recording.

Related publication

Consult the brochure European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Right to information – Guide for authorities when taking fingerprints for Eurodac*, 2019. It assists officers and authorities in informing applicants for international protection in an understandable and accessible way about the processing of their fingerprints in Eurodac.

Member States must inform applicants about topics listed in Eurodac Regulation by means of a common brochure developed by the EUAA ([219]). The mandatory information materials can be found here.

([216]) Article 15(1)(b) Eurodac Regulation.
([217]) Article 15(1)(a) Eurodac Regulation.
([218]) Articles 15 and 17(1) Eurodac Regulation.
([219]) Article 42(3) Eurodac Regulation.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following message to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- The applicant will have their fingerprints and photo taken. The applicant is obliged to allow their fingerprints and photo to be taken ([220]).

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- All fingerprints and their photograph will be taken ([221]).
- At the time when biometric data are taken, explain where, when, why and by whom the fingerprints are taken. To make the information less overwhelming, when explaining the reason why biometric data are taken, you could tell the applicant, for example, that biometric data are taken to see if they are already known to the authorities and to assist with determining which EU+ country is responsible for examining their application.
- If the applicant refuses to have their biometric data collected, explain the consequences of such refusal: if the applicant refuses to provide their biometric data, the authorities will conclude that the applicant implicitly withdraws their application, and the applicant's procedure will stop ([222]).
- The biometric data will be stored and used in full respect of the principle of confidentiality.

6.6.4. Communicate contact details and any changes as regards contact details

(a) Background information

The applicant is obliged to provide information on any changes concerning their place of residence, address, telephone number or email address ([223]).

If the applicant refuses to provide their address, the application is considered implicitly withdrawn and will not be further examined ([224]).

([220]) Article 13(1) Eurodac Regulation and Article 9(2)(d) APR.
([221]) Article 13(1) Eurodac Regulation and Article 9(2)(d) APR.
([222]) Article 41(1)(b) APR.
([223]) Article 9(2)(c) APR.
([224]) Article 41(1)(c) APR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging, personal interview and notification stage.

- Although the applicant may move freely within the territory of the Member State, or within an area assigned to them by the Member State, the applicant must inform the competent authorities of their current place of residence, address and telephone number or email address, and of any changes thereof as soon as possible so that the authorities can reach them. This is very important because if the applicant is not reachable, it may be considered as a failure to appear before the authorities.
- Authorities may decide on the residence of the applicant or put restrictions on where the applicant may stay and access their material reception conditions.



Practical tip: remind the applicant about the obligation to provide their contact details at different stages

- Remind the applicant about their obligation to communicate their current place of residence, address and telephone number or email address to the authorities. Verify these data and update them, if relevant, during the interview. This may also be relevant at the notification stage, if in direct contact with the applicant.

6.6.5. Accept any communication from the competent authorities

(a) Background information

The applicant is obliged to accept any communication from the authorities at their most recent place of residence or address, via the telephone number or email address they gave to the authorities ([225]).

The method of communication depends on the national context. This can be, for example, by post or email, complemented by text messages and/or phone calls. The moment that the communication is considered to have been received by the applicant also depends on the national context.

The applicant needs to be informed of the method of communication and the moment at which a communication is received.

([225]) Article 9(3) APR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages during the making, registration, lodging, personal interview and notification:

- the applicant must accept all communication from the authorities at their most recent place of residence or address, via the telephone number or email address that they gave to the authorities;
- inform the applicant of the method of communication that the authorities will use to communicate with them;
- inform the applicant of the moment at which the authorities will consider that the communication has been received by the applicant.

6.6.6. Obligation to report or to remain in a geographical area

(a) Background information

The authorities may impose on the applicant an obligation to report to them at a specified time or at reasonable intervals, or to remain in a designated geographical area ([226]).

(b) Information provision message

Explain this message during the making, registration, lodging and personal interview:

- depending on the obligation imposed by the authorities, inform the applicant that:
  - they must report to the authorities at a specified time or at reasonable intervals (inform the applicant of these specified time or intervals),
  - they must remain in the designated area where they are assigned to stay.

6.6.7. Submit the elements and documents to substantiate the application

(a) Background information

The applicant has a duty to substantiate their application for international protection and submit all relevant elements ([227]). During the lodging, the applicant must submit as soon as possible all the elements and documents at their disposal needed for substantiating their application. Depending on the national context, 'as soon as possible' means both as soon as the elements are available and as soon as the applicant has knowledge of such elements.

([226]) Article 9(4) APR.

([227]) Article 4(1) QR.

If the registration and lodging take place at the same time, applicants are allowed to submit all the elements and documents listed above during their personal interview ([228]).

Moreover, an applicant is allowed to submit elements until a decision is taken at first instance. However, depending on the national set-up, specific deadlines to submit such additional elements may apply ([229]). The authorities must explain how these new elements can be presented (e.g. by mail, by email, in person). The authorities must also explain until when these new elements can be presented in order to be taken into account in the assessment of the claim.

Elements and documents needed for substantiating an application include:

- the applicant's statements;
- the documentation at the applicant's disposal indicating:
  - the applicant's reasons for applying for international protection,
  - the applicant's age,
  - the applicant's background, including that of relevant family members and other relatives,
  - the applicant's identity,
  - the applicant's nationality or nationalities,
  - the applicant's country or countries and place or places of previous residence,
  - previous applications for international protection by the applicant,
  - the results of any resettlement or humanitarian admission procedure relating to the applicant,
  - the applicant's travel routes,
  - the applicant's travel documents.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following message to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging.

- The applicant's duty to cooperate includes an obligation to submit elements and documents to substantiate their application for international protection (as soon as possible). The elements and documents include:
  - the applicant's statements, including the reasons for applying for international protection;
  - all the documentation at their disposal, including personal/ID documents, documents related to their application and medical/psychological reports and attestations;

([228]) Article 28(7) APR.
([229]) Article 28(7) APR.

- other evidence such as social media content, videos or other digital material.

Explain the following additional messages to the applicant during the registration and lodging.

- How to submit evidence, including where to submit it (addresses), who to submit it to and by when, according to your national laws and policies.
- Explain the following points regarding documentation.
  - The applicant must not submit documents that are false or have been forged, as this may negatively affect their application (unless they inform the authorities that the documents are false or forged and explain the reason).
  - Destroying ID documents may negatively affect their application.
  - The applicant should provide the original documents, if available.
  - Relevant documents should be submitted as soon as possible to the relevant authorities.
  - There is no need to present documents that only contain general information about their country of origin.
  - The applicant is obliged to obtain any missing documents to the extent feasible. You should, however, make it very clear that the applicant is not expected to expose themselves or any other person to risk by attempting to obtain documents, including by contacting the authorities of the country of origin if this would entail a risk.
  - How original documents will be dealt with (e.g. whether the authority will keep them, whether they will be copied and how and when they will be returned).
  - It is not a problem if the original documents are in a foreign language.

Explain these additional messages to the applicant at the beginning of the personal interview:

- explain why providing all the relevant and correct information will help ensure that a sound decision is reached and that not doing so may result in the application being considered as implicitly withdrawn (Section 6.7.1 Implicit withdrawal of applications).
- address the obligation to tell the truth, stressing the fact that this is explained to everybody;
- explain that it is only if the applicant knowingly provides false information that it may have negative consequences;
- advise the applicant that if they do not know the answer to a question, they should say that they do not know and not try to provide an answer by guessing.



Practical tip: the submission of elements to substantiate the application

- **Advise the applicant to make a copy of original documents.**

If the applicant is submitting original documents, they should make a copy for themselves to keep.

- **Use communication techniques to cover this complex topic.**

As information regarding the applicant's obligations is rather complex, after providing the information, you can summarise the information and highlight the main points again. It is also practical to break up the information, allowing for short discussions / questions before you continue.

6.7. The consequences of not complying with obligations

The consequences of not complying with obligations may apply during the registration, lodging and the examination phase. As such consequences may be applied at the beginning of the asylum procedure, it is important to provide information on these consequences as early as possible.

6.7.1. Implicit withdrawal of applications

(a) Background information

An application is declared as implicitly withdrawn ([230]) if the applicant:

- failed to lodge an application despite having had an effective opportunity to do so;
- refused to cooperate by not providing the information they were required to give, relating to personal details and documents, during the registration;
- refused to cooperate by not providing their biometric data;
- refused to provide their address, if they have one, unless housing is provided by the competent authorities;
- failed to appear for a personal interview;
- refused to respond to questions during the interview, making it not possible to take a decision on the merits of the application;

([230]) Article 41(1) APR.

- did not comply with their reporting duties or other obligations to communicate;
- did not remain available to the competent administrative or judicial authorities;
- lodged the application in a Member State other than the Member State provided for in the AMMR and did not remain present in that Member State pending the responsibility determination procedure.

If the applicant is present, the authority will, at the time of the withdrawal, inform the applicant of all consequences of the withdrawal in a language that the applicant understands or is reasonably supposed to understand ([231]).

Depending on the national context, the authority may suspend the procedure in order to give the applicant the possibility to justify or rectify omissions or actions before a decision declaring the application as implicitly withdrawn is made ([232]).

In the event of an implicit withdrawal, the determining authority will:

- declare the application as implicitly withdrawn; or
- reject the application as unfounded, if the determining authority has, at the stage that the application is implicitly withdrawn, already found that the applicant does not qualify for international protection ([233]).

(b) Information provision message

Explain this message during the making.

- If the applicant does not cooperate with the authorities, (permanently) leaves their accommodation without informing the authorities or does not appear for appointments, the application will be considered as implicitly withdrawn. This means that they will lose their status as an applicant for international protection and all the related rights.

Explain these additional messages during the registration, lodging and personal interview:

- the application will be declared as implicitly withdrawn if the applicant does not comply with their obligations;
- more precisely, the application will be declared as implicitly withdrawn if the applicant:
  - fails to lodge an application,
  - refuses to cooperate by not providing their personal details and documents,
  - refuses to cooperate by not providing their biometric data,
  - refuses to provide their address (unless housing is provided by the authorities),
  - fails to appear for a personal interview,

([231]) Article 41(3) APR.
([232]) Article 41(4) APR.
([233]) Article 41(5) APR.

- refuses to respond to questions during the interview,
- does not comply with their reporting duties or other obligations to communicate,
- does not remain available to the competent administrative or judicial authorities,
- does not remain present in that Member State pending the responsibility determination procedure.
- in the event of an implicit withdrawal, the determining authority will reject the application.



Practical tip: providing examples to understand non-compliance and its consequences

- It is useful to provide practical examples; for example, if an applicant has an appointment to lodge their claim and does not show up despite being invited multiple times, this would be considered failure to conclude lodging unless there are valid reasons for not following the lodging process (e.g. medical reasons).
- Emphasise that the applicant must also be aware of their obligations after the interview stage.

6.7.2. Assessment of relevant elements in the asylum claim may be affected

(a) Background information

The applicant is required to submit all elements and documents at their disposal that are needed to substantiate their application as soon as possible. Such elements include facts and circumstances relevant to their claim along with all the supporting evidence at their disposal ([234]).

The provision of incomplete or false information or evidence may lead to a rejection of the application. If the applicant misrepresents or omits facts, including the use of false documents, which were decisive in the granting of protection, the refugee status and the subsidiary protection status can also be withdrawn ([235]).

([234]) Article 4(1) and (2) QR.

([235]) Articles 14(1)(c) and 19(1)(c) QR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The applicant should bring forward all relevant elements and documents at their disposal.
- If the applicant provides misleading information, statements or documents related to their identity or reasons for applying for international protection, this will negatively impact the assessment. Incomplete or false information will affect the credibility assessment of the application, and lack of credibility may be a reason to reject the application for international protection. Also, the asylum procedure will be accelerated (see Section 6.7.3 Asylum procedure will be accelerated).
- The provision of misleading information, statements or documents related to the applicant's identity or reasons for applying for international protection could be considered as a refusal to cooperate with the authorities.
- If an applicant previously applied for international protection in another Member State, the applicant should be informed that they may be asked to accept the transmission of information concerning previous applications for international protection in other Member States ([236]).

6.7.3. Asylum procedure will be accelerated

(a) Background information

In certain circumstances, the authorities will apply the accelerated procedure ([237]), in which case the application is examined within three months from the date of the lodging ([238]).

Among the circumstances in which the accelerated procedure is applied are cases where the applicant does not comply with their obligations, namely when the applicant:

- makes clearly inconsistent, contradictory or false representations or representations that contradict relevant and available country of origin information ([239]);
- misleads the authorities by presenting false information or documents or by withholding relevant information or documents ([240]);
- has, in bad faith, destroyed or disposed of documents to prevent the establishment of their identity or nationality ([241]);

([236]) Article 51(3) AMMR.
([237]) Article 42(1) APR.
([238]) Article 35(3) APR.
([239]) Article 42(1)(b) APR.
([240]) Article 42(1)(c) APR.
([241]) Article 42(1)(c) APR.

- makes an application merely to delay, frustrate or prevent the enforcement of a removal decision ([242]);
- is a danger to national security or public order ([243]);
- did not present themself to the competent authorities or did not make an application as soon as possible ([244]).

For the information messages to provide see Section 6.8.1 Accelerated procedure.

6.7.4. Material reception conditions may be reduced or withdrawn

(a) Background information

Material reception conditions may be **reduced or withdrawn** if the applicant ([245]):

- abandons the geographical area to which they were allocated or leaves without permission the place of residence designated by the competent authority;
- does not cooperate with the competent authorities, or does not comply with the procedural requirements established by them;
- conceals financial resources and unduly benefits from material reception conditions;
- has lodged a subsequent application;
- seriously or repeatedly breaches the rules of the accommodation centre or has behaved in a violent or threatening manner in the accommodation centre;
- fails to participate in compulsory integration measures.

(b) Information provision message

Explain this message to the applicant during the registration and lodging:

- depending on your national laws and practice, the possible consequences of not cooperating with the authorities, of not being reachable by the authorities and of misleading the authorities include the reduction or withdrawal of reception entitlements.

([242]) Article 42(1)(d) APR.
([243]) Article 42(1)(f) APR.
([244]) Article 42(1)(h) and (i) APR.
([245]) Article 23 RCD (2024).

6.8. Special procedures

6.8.1. Accelerated procedure

(a) Background information

Accelerated procedure grounds

An application is examined within the accelerated procedure if at least one of the following conditions is met:

- the issues raised are not relevant to international protection needs;
- the applicant made clearly inconsistent, contradictory or false representations or representations that contradict relevant and available country of origin information, making the applicant's claim clearly unconvincing;
- the applicant has intentionally misled the authorities by providing false information or documents, or by withholding relevant information or documents, or the applicant has disposed of identity or travel documents;
- the applicant has made the application merely to delay, frustrate or prevent their removal;
- the applicant is from a safe country of origin;
- there are reasonable grounds to consider the applicant a danger to national security or public order;
- the application is a subsequent application deemed admissible;
- the applicant has entered the EU or prolonged the stay unlawfully and has not made an application as soon as possible;
- the applicant has entered the EU lawfully and has not made an application as soon as possible without good reason;
- the applicant is from a third country for which the recognition rate is 20 % or lower.

The accelerated examination procedure shall be applied to **unaccompanied children** only where:

- the applicant is from a safe country of origin;
- there are reasonable grounds to consider the applicant a danger to national security or public order;
- the application is a subsequent application;
- the applicant has intentionally misled the authorities by providing false information or documents, or has, in bad faith, destroyed or disposed of identity documents;
- the applicant is from a third country for which the recognition rate is 20 % or lower.

Duration of the accelerated procedure

The accelerated examination procedure is completed as soon as possible and no later than **three months** after the date of the lodging.

Time limit for lodging an appeal

The exact time limit for lodging an appeal depends on the national context. However, in the case of applications that were rejected within the accelerated procedure, the time limit is between **5 days and 10 days**.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The application is going to be assessed under an accelerated procedure (and explain for which particular reason(s)). This means that the time frame for deciding on the application is three months from the date of the lodging. If possible, inform the applicant about the exact time frame in line with your national practice.
- Except for the shorter time frames, their application will be assessed with the same standards, rights and obligations as the regular procedure.

Explain this message to the applicant during the notification:

- inform the applicant about the exact appeal deadline in line with your national practice.

6.8.2. Asylum border procedure

(a) Background information

Conditions for applying the asylum border procedure

Following screening, an application can be examined within the asylum border procedure if the following conditions are met ([246]):

- the applicant has not yet been authorised to enter the territory of a Member State;
- the applicant does not fulfil the conditions for entry to the territory of a Member State;
- one of the following situations applies:
  - the application was made at an external border crossing point or in a transit zone,
  - the applicant was apprehended in connection with an unauthorised crossing of the external border,

([246]) Article 43 APR.

- the applicant was disembarked in the territory of a Member State after a search and rescue operation,
- the applicant was relocated ([247]).
- The circumstances of and the grounds for applying the asylum border procedure depend on the individual characteristics of the applicant and/or their application.

Mandatory circumstances in which the asylum border procedure should be applied

An application must be examined within the asylum border procedure in the following circumstances ([248]):

- an applicant is of a nationality (or a former habitual resident in case of stateless person) of a third country with a low recognition rate (20 % or lower);
- an applicant is considered to be a danger to national security or public order;
- an applicant is considered to have intentionally misled the authorities ([249]).

The border procedure does not apply to **unaccompanied children** unless where they constitute a danger to the national security or public order of the Member State ([250]).

Optional circumstances in which the asylum border procedure can be applied

Depending on your national context, the asylum border procedure can also be applied in the following circumstances:

- in grounds for rejecting an application as inadmissible (see Section 6.2.8 Admissibility examination;
- in the following circumstances for the accelerated examination procedure:
  - the applicant, in lodging their application and presenting the facts, has only raised issues that are not relevant to the examination of whether they qualify as a beneficiary of international protection,
  - the applicant has made clearly inconsistent or contradictory or clearly false or obviously improbable representations or representations that contradict relevant and available country of origin information, thus making their claim clearly unconvincing as to whether they qualify as a beneficiary of international protection,
  - the applicant makes an application merely to delay, frustrate or prevent the enforcement of a decision for their removal from the territory of a Member State,

([247]) Article 67(11) AMMR.
([248]) Article 45 APR.
([249]) Articles 45(1), 42(1)(j), 42(1)(f) and 42(1)(c) APR.
([250]) Article 53(1) and recital 62 APR.

- a third country may be considered to be a safe country of origin for the applicant within the meaning of the APR.
- the application is a subsequent application that is admissible.

Time limits

The following time limits apply.

- Applications subject to a border procedure must be lodged no later than **five days** after the date of registration or after the applicant arrives in the Member State of relocation (in the case of a transfer).
- The border procedure will be completed within **12 weeks** of the date of registration. This time frame includes the appeal. The time frame may be extended to **16 weeks** in the case of a transfer ([251]).

No authorisation to enter the territory

Applicants subject to the border procedure are not authorised to enter the territory of a Member State ([252]). This means that during the examination, the applicant is required to reside in a designated location and remain available to the authorities.

The applicant may be required, when necessary, to report to the competent authorities at a specified time or at reasonable intervals and/or limit the hours of the day when they can move outside the facility ([253]).

If there is no decision within the 12-week time frame, applicants will be allowed entry to the territory of the Member State ([254]), unless exceptions apply ([255]).

Related EUAA publication

For further guidance on the asylum border procedure, see EUAA, *Practical Guide on the Asylum Border Procedure*, March 2026.

([251]) Article 67(11) AMMR.
([252]) Article 43(2) APR.
([253]) Articles 9(1) and (2), recital 19 RCD (2024).
([254]) Article 51(2) APR.
([255]) Article 43(3) APR.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- Explain the individual conditions and circumstances based on which the applicant is subject to the asylum border procedure. There is no need to give the full list of the conditions and circumstances of the border procedure. Only the ones that apply in the applicant's case.
- Explain the specific deadlines as follows.
  - The applicant has five days to lodge the application from the date of the registration.
  - The total duration of the procedure is 12 weeks from the date of registration. This time frame includes the (potential) appeal stage. The duration can be extended to 16 weeks in the case of a transfer.
- During the examination, the applicant is obliged to reside at a designated location and remain available to the authorities. Inform the applicant of the location where they are required to reside and if there are any specific requirements (e.g. reporting obligation).

6.8.3. Subsequent application

(a) Background information

If a final decision has been made on a previous application, a new application is registered as a subsequent application ([256]) and a preliminary examination will be carried out to assess the new elements.

New elements ([257])

A new element is an element that the applicant was unable, through no fault on their own part, to present in the context of the previous application.

An element that the applicant could have presented earlier should not be taken into account:

- unless that element significantly increases the likelihood of the application not being inadmissible;
- unless that element significantly increases the likelihood of the applicant qualifying for international protection;
- if the previous application was rejected as implicitly withdrawn.

([256]) Article 55(2) APR.
([257]) Article 55(5) APR.

Preliminary examination

The new application will first be subject to a preliminary examination to determine whether it is admissible.

The subsequent application will be admissible ([258]) if:

- new elements have arisen or been presented by the applicant;
- these new elements:
  - significantly add to the likelihood of qualifying as a beneficiary of international protection, or
  - relate to an inadmissibility ground previously applied, where the previous application was rejected as inadmissible.

Depending on the case and on the national context, the preliminary examination can be carried out on the basis of written submissions or a personal interview.

If the subsequent application is admissible, it will be further examined on the merits ([259]).

If, on the contrary, the subsequent application is not admissible, it will be rejected.

Examination within the territory or within the asylum border procedure

A subsequent application is examined either within the territory or within the asylum border procedure, as follows.

- **Within the territory.** If the subsequent application is deemed as admissible, the examination on the merits is conducted within the accelerated procedure (see Section 6.8.1 Accelerated procedure).
- **Within the asylum border procedure.** If the asylum border procedure is applied, both the preliminary examination and the examination on the merits are conducted within the asylum border procedure (see Section 6.8.2 Asylum border procedure).

Exceptions to free legal counselling

The provision of free legal counselling may be excluded where ([260]):

- the application is a first subsequent application lodged merely to delay or frustrate the enforcement of a return decision;
- the application is a second or further subsequent application.

([258]) Article 55(3) APR.
([259]) Article 55(6) APR.
([260]) Article 16(3) APR.

Exceptions to the right to remain

At first instance, depending on your national context, the right to remain during the examination of a subsequent application **may** be restricted if:

- the applicant has already benefited from a thorough examination of two or more applications that were rejected ([261]); or
- the subsequent application was lodged merely to delay or frustrate the enforcement of a return decision ([262]).

During an appeal, the applicant **will not have the right to remain** if the subsequent application was rejected as inadmissible on the ground that no new relevant elements have arisen or have been presented by the applicant ([263]).

The authorities can only proceed with the enforcement of a return decision if the return does not lead to a risk of direct or indirect *refoulement*.

An applicant can make a request to a court or tribunal to be allowed to remain on the territory of the Member State ([264]).

Consult national legislation regarding the time limits applied in the case of an appeal against a subsequent application or when requesting the right to remain.

Related EUAA publication

For more information, refer to EUAA, *Practical Guide on Subsequent Applications*, March 2026.

(b) Information provision message

Explain the following messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview.

- The previous application has been concluded and the new application is going to be assessed as a subsequent application.
- The subsequent application is not another chance to appeal against the previous decision but an opportunity to present new elements.

([261]) Article 56(b) APR.
([262]) Article 56(a) APR.
([263]) Article 68(3)(b) APR.
([264]) Article 68(4) APR.

- Explain what a new element is. A new element is an element that the applicant was unable, through no fault on their own part, to present in the context of the previous application. An element that the applicant could have presented earlier should not be taken into account unless the element significantly increases the likelihood of the application not being inadmissible or the applicant qualifying for international protection, or if a previous application was rejected as implicitly withdrawn.
- Explain the procedural steps. The new application will first be subject to a preliminary examination to determine whether it is admissible. The subsequent application will be admissible if:
  - new elements have arisen or been presented by the applicant; and
  - these new elements:

significantly add to the likelihood of qualifying as a beneficiary of international protection, or

relate to an inadmissibility ground previously applied, where the previous application was rejected as inadmissible.

- The preliminary examination can be carried out on the basis of either written submissions or a personal interview.
- If the subsequent application is admissible, it will be further examined on the merits; otherwise, it will be rejected.
- Stress that it is important that the applicant tells officials as soon as possible of any new information as to why they need protection and cannot return to their country, and provide all documents or evidence that support their need for protection.
- Explain how the new elements and explanations can be submitted in line with national practice.
- The applicant has to explain why the new elements were not submitted earlier and how, if applicable, the new elements relate to their previous application(s).
- If relevant in your national context, the right to remain in the host country may be restricted.
- If relevant in your national context, the reception conditions can be reduced or withdrawn.
- Depending on the case and on your national context, whether the applicant has the right to remain.

6.9. Additional topics

6.9.1. Right to communicate with UNHCR and other organisations providing legal advice or other counselling

(a) Background information

Applicants have the opportunity, as soon as possible and before the deadline for lodging an application, to communicate with UNHCR or with any other organisation providing legal advice or other counselling to applicants in accordance with national law ([265]). Almost every country is covered by UNHCR representation and there will usually be a UNHCR website covering your country, providing contact details and information regarding UNHCR's persons of concern.

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the making, registration and lodging:

- UNHCR is the United Nations agency mandated to protect asylum seekers, refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless persons worldwide;
- the right to communicate with UNHCR;
- the right to communicate with other organisations providing legal advice or other counselling to applicants depending on the national context.



Practical tip: explaining what UNHCR is, what it does and how to access UNHCR services

The role of UNHCR may be unclear to the applicant and they may not understand to what extent UNHCR is relevant to their situation and what to expect or not expect. For this reason, explain the position of UNHCR and what kind of support UNHCR can provide, for example legal advice about the applicant's case and the procedures, preparation of the applicant for the interview and assistance with the preparation of official documents.

To facilitate the opportunity to communicate with UNHCR, provide information on how to access UNHCR services, including the organisation's contact details.

([265]) Article 8(4) APR.

6.9.2. Family reunification (under the Family Reunification Directive)

(a) Background information

The possibility of family reunification applies to third-country nationals who have been granted refugee status ([266]). Consult national law to determine whether family reunification may be applied to persons other than those with refugee status.

Family reunification applies to members of the nuclear family (the spouse and the children of the sponsor and/or the spouse). Consult national law to determine whether family reunification may concern other family members, such as unmarried partners, dependant parents or adult children who are dependent on their parents due to their state of health ([267]).

In the case of a polygamous marriage, where a spouse already lives in the territory of a Member State, the Member State concerned must not authorise the family reunification of a further spouse ([268]).

An application needs to be submitted to the competent authorities together with documentary evidence of the family relationship ([269]). Where this cannot be provided, the Member State must take into account other evidence. A decision rejecting an application cannot be based solely on the fact that documentary evidence is lacking ([270]).

Additional conditions (proof of sufficient accommodation, sickness insurance and sufficient resources) may be requested if the application is not submitted within a period of three months after the granting of refugee status ([271]). Consult your national law regarding the competent authorities and additional documents and evidence.

(b) Information provision message

Explain this message to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview:

- if the topic is raised by the applicant, provide an explanation regarding family reunification, including when it is possible to apply and which family members can be reunited, and possible time limits.

Explain this message to the applicant during the notification stage:

- if refugee status is granted and if applicable, provide information on:

([266]) Article 3(1) and Chapter V of Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification (OJ L 251, 3.10.2003) (Family Reunification Directive).

([267]) Recital 10 and Article 4 Family Reunification Directive.

([268]) Article 4(4) Family Reunification Directive.

([269]) Article 5(2) Family Reunification Directive

([270]) Article 11(2) Family Reunification Directive.

([271]) Article 12 Family Reunification Directive.

- which family members qualify for family reunification,
- how to apply for family reunification and where to receive further information,
- what documents need to be submitted,
- possible time limits to benefit from exemption from integration requirements (proof of sufficient accommodation, sickness insurance and sufficient resources).

6.9.3. Voluntary return

(a) Background information

A successful voluntary return process starts with tailored outreach and dialogue between a counsellor and a third-country national, during which the person receives timely, up-to-date and relevant information on their status and the offer to receive voluntary return support. This is called return counselling. This dialogue should take place at the earliest possible stage of the migration process, including during the asylum procedure if appropriate, for instance in the case of people coming from low-recognition-rate countries ([272]).

Providing information on voluntary return is meant to advise applicants about return and reintegration options. It is not intended to encourage the applicant to pursue voluntary return and should not be understood in this way by the applicant. However, voluntary return may respond, for various (personal) reasons, to the needs of the applicant, including those who have recently arrived.

Applicants can leave voluntarily at any point during the asylum procedure and return to their country of origin or habitual residence, or to another third country that will accept them. Applicants may face doubts and uncertainties when it comes to the possibility of return and often receive conflicting information. Timely information about the possibility of return should feed into the person's reflections on whether to stay in the asylum procedure and/or in difficult circumstances on the territory of the host country for an unnecessarily long time.

If the applicant decides to return, depending on national practice, they may be able to obtain return and assistance from the administration, Frontex or other organisations ([273]). They can provide, where applicable:

- general information and advice on voluntary return;
- procurement of the necessary travel documentation;
- flight booking and travel organisation;
- the financial cost of the travel;

([272]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – The EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration, COM (2021) 120 final of 27 April 2021.

([273]) The International Organization for Migration is one of the most important organisations assisting in returns. Assistance can also be provided by other organisations and non-governmental organisations (e.g. Caritas International) or directly by state authorities, etc.

- a small integration grant upon return;
- enrolment in a reintegration programme.

(b) Information provision message

Explain these messages to the applicant during the registration, lodging and notification:

- the possibility to return voluntarily;
- the availability (upon certain conditions) of programmes for supporting return and reintegration;
- the main elements of the assistance programme;
- which authorities or organisations to contact for further information on the assistance programme for voluntary return.

6.9.4. Right to work

(a) Background information

During the asylum procedure, if a decision at first instance is not taken within a certain period from the date of the registration and this delay cannot be attributed to the applicant, then the applicant must be granted the right to work. This period is defined in your national legislation, but in any case, is not longer than six months from the date on which the application for international protection was registered ([274]).

During the appeal, the applicant retains the right to work as long as they have the right to remain on the territory during the appeal procedure ([275]).

However, the applicant is not granted the right to work if their case is examined within the accelerated procedure on the following grounds:

- the applicant raised only issues that are not relevant to international protection ([276]);
- the applicant made clearly inconsistent, contradictory or false representations or representations that contradict relevant and available country of origin information ([277]);
- the applicant misled the authorities by presenting false information or documents or by withholding relevant information or documents ([278]);
- the applicant is considered to have destroyed or disposed of documents to prevent the establishment of their identity or nationality ([279]);

([274]) Article 17(1) RCD (2024).
([275]) Article 17(9) RCD (2024).
([276]) Article 42(1)(a) APR.
([277]) Article 42(1)(b) APR.
([278]) Article 42(1)(c) APR.
([279]) Article 42(1)(c) APR.

- the applicant made an application merely to delay, frustrate or prevent the enforcement of a removal decision ([280]);
- a third country may be considered to be a safe country of origin for the applicant within the meaning of the APR ([281]);
- the applicant is a danger to national security or public order ([282]).

Regarding beneficiaries of international protection (i.e. refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection), they are granted the right to work immediately after protection has been granted ([283]).

(b) Information provision message

Explain this message to the applicant during the registration, lodging and personal interview:

- the right to work and when the applicant can start working according to your national legislation.

Explain this message to the applicant during the notification stage:

- if the decision grants refugee status or subsidiary protection, the individual is immediately granted the right to work.

([280]) Article 42(1)(d) APR.
([281]) Article 42(1)(e) APR.
([282]) Article 42(1)(f) APR.
([283]) Article 28 QR.


Publications Office
of the European Union

euaa
EUROPEAN UNION
AGENCY FOR ASYLUM