

BTF Project:
Help in our country
The Netherlands



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Asylum seekers and refugees

There is a big difference between Asylum seekers and refugees and which resources the government gives them. Before we get into the things that they actually get the difference will be explained first.

- **Asylum seekers:** States are under international obligation to consider claims for asylum and not to immediately return asylum seekers to the countries they have fled from. The refugee convention states that they must be given access to fair and efficient asylum procedures and measures to ensure they live in dignity and safety while their claims are processed.
- **Refugees:** People who has fled armed conflict or persecution and who is recognised as needing of international protection because it is too dangerous for them to return home. Refugees should not be expelled or returned to situations where their lifes and freedom would be under threat. Once someone has been recognised as a refugee, they are supposed to be given access to social housing and welfare benefits and helped to find a job and integrate into society.

If you wish to come to the Netherlands for more than 90 days, you have to apply for a Provisional Residence permit and/or a residence permit at the Immigration- & Naturalisation Service in the Netherlands. all the refugees and asylum seekers have to sign up at the immigration department. If there is any possibility for an asylum seeker to return to his or her own country, they won't get an asylum and they can only stay for a short while, depending on the situation.

When refugees and/ or asylum seeker arrive they're sent to the National Admission Centre where they get a medical screening specifically focused on infective diseases. This screening is registered in a national medical file. So that when there are any health issues the Dutch doctors have the necessary information. Also there are financial differences. Asylum seekers don't pay for their health insurance because in general they don't have the supplies to do this they get a basic Dutch health insurance with small adjustments.

How to apply for asylum?

the 5 steps explained

1. To apply for asylum, you first have to report at the Aliens Police in Ter Apel. The Aliens Police will verify your identity and register your personal details. They will also search your clothing and baggage. In addition they will take your photo and fingerprints. You will be required to hand over your documents, such as your passport, any tickets or diplomas etc. for examination.
2. After you have registered in Ter Apel a rest and preparation period of at least six days will start. During this period you will be provided with information about the asylum procedure by the Dutch Council for Refugees. You will be assisted by a lawyer and an appointment will be made for you with a nurse for medical advice (who, if you wish, will examine you). If necessary, the nurse will refer you to a doctor for a more detailed medical examination.

During the rest and preparation period you will stay at a reception location in the vicinity of the IND office. There you are going to submit the application for asylum. **(The IND is a Dutch organisation regarding refugee and asylum seekers assessments)**

3. When the application is submitted the following steps will be taken:
 - a. The initial interview
 - b. The detailed interview
 - c. The intention
 - d. The decision
4. If the IND needs more time to complete the assessment, your application for asylum will be processed within the framework of the extended asylum procedure. This means that you will be transferred to a different reception location and that a decision will be taken within a maximum period of 6 months. This decision will, in principle, be taken based on the initial and the detailed interviews that have taken place in the general asylum procedure. It may, however, be that the IND will arrange another meeting with you during this period if there are any remaining questions.

The deadline for a decision can be extended for a maximum period of 6 months if further investigation is needed for the assessment of the application.

5. If the IND has granted you asylum, the IND will issue a temporary residence permit. In principle, this residence permit is valid for five years. This status entitles you to family reunification. Special conditions apply if you request their transfer within three months after you have acquired your asylum status.

When issued an asylum residence permit you must attend an integration course. You can now also perform paid work, on the residence document you will see your indication of work status. This employment status tells you are allowed to work in the Netherlands without the need for a work permit. You are entitled to accommodation, which will be arranged by the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers. At your local municipality you

can apply for a refugee or aliens passport (this passport then has the same validity as your residence permit).

You can apply for Dutch citizenship if you have lived in the Netherlands for at least five years based on a valid residence permit and you now have a permanent residence permit or another residence permit which is not temporary in nature. When this is done you are entitled to education.

If the IND does not grant you asylum, you can appeal against this decision or you need to leave the Netherlands (see appeal and departure from the Netherlands for more information).

Detention centres

Refugees who stay in an emergency shelter only get 3 meals a day and a place to sleep, asylum seekers in a detention centre who have started a procedure (step 1-4) on the other hand get a lot more and reside in a detention centre.

Money

Asylum seekers get a specific amount of money based on the size of the family which they came with. (€ per week)

Detention centre where asylum seekers don't get any meals

Size of the family	Money per adult (18+)	Money per child (18-)
1 or 2 people	€44,60	€34,68
3 people	€37,07	€28,93
4 or more people	€33,05	€25,80

Detention centre where asylum seekers get 3 meals a day

Size of the family	Money per adult (18+)	Money per child (18-)
1 or 2 people	€27,72	€19,11
3 people	€23,01	€15,86
4 or more people	€20,51	€14,14

Asylum Seekers also get €12,95 per week to spend on clothing and other things. They get this money from the state's asylum seekers department and it's transferred to a bank account which they also got from the state. If an asylum seeker has his own capital he gets less money from the state as they give this money to them to buy things like a bed, couch, fridge and a table.

Work

After being in the asylum procedure for 6 months asylum seekers get the right to work for a maximum of 24 weeks and a maximum of 40 per week. A part of their salary is returned to the detention centre, they can also do small tasks in the detention centre which they can earn a maximum of €14,- per week with.

Scholarship

Because they have the duty, children have to go to school. Every detention centre is related to a school but parents may make the choice to put their child in a different school. They're placed in an international class where they'll stay until their Dutch is good enough to go to a normal school. The adults get Dutch classes and a program which will help them finding a job.

Healthcare

An asylum seeker's health insurance is almost identical to the basic-insurance for a Dutch citizen. Doctor visits, antibiotic treatments and maternity care. An example of something which is not included in an asylum seeker's health insurance but is in a basic-insurance for a Dutch citizen is help to quit smoking.

However a visit to the doctor or any of these thing listed above aren't as easy for asylum seekers. The Dutch asylum seekers department and health insurer have selected specific doctors to the asylum seekers. If you want to go and see a specialist you have to ask for permission because they'll always check if you are really ill.

Duties

Asylum seekers have to regularly report themselves at the aliens police. They have to register themselves in the town where they live within 6 months. And of course there are rules in the detention centre which they have to obey.