



■ You have been given the refugee status *or* a complementary protection (protection subsidiaire) in France.

■ What do you have to do?

The Card of Residence

Go to the Prefecture with the OFPRA or CNDA decision according you the refugee status or a complementary protection (protection subsidiaire).

If you are recognized as a refugee : Within 8 days, the Prefecture will deliver you a three months “récépissé” mentioned ‘recognised refugee’ before giving you a ten years resident card. This récépissé allows you to work in France. To deliver this first ‘refugee récépissé’, the prefecture may ask you for the address of your residence. If you do not have a stable residence in France, explain them your situation. In this case the prefecture should accept the ‘attestation of domiciliation’. After three months, the prefecture will again give you another récépissé, (with the permission to work) for either three or six months.

To get your 10 years residence card –carte de séjour: you have to give to the Prefecture the “birth certificate”, issued by OFPRA and the medical certificate issued by OFII as well as a proof of your address.

If you have been given a “complementary protection” (protection subsidiaire): Within 8 days, the Prefecture will deliver you a three months “récépissé” before giving you a one year resident card called (carte de séjour « vie privée et familiale). This récépissé allows you to work in France. To deliver this first récépissé, the prefecture may ask you for the address of your residence. If you do not have a stable residence in France, explain them your situation. In this case the prefecture should accept the ‘attestation of domiciliation’. After three months, the prefecture will give you another récépissé, (with the permission to work) for either three or six months.

To get the carte de séjour « vie privée et familiale », valid one year, renewable:

You have to present the Prefecture your identity card/civil status document and the medical certificate issued by the OFII as well as a proof of your address.

Your right to “the complementary protection (subsidiary protection) can be renewed each year if the situation of your country does not change. After 5 years, following the integration criteria, you may be given a 10 year residence card.

Remember!

Certain prefecture do not issue the ‘resident card’ if one does not have a home address. It is an illegal practice. If you don’t have a permanent residence address and having trouble to get your card, please report it to your centre of domiciliation.

Registration of the civil status

If you are recognized as a refugee: You will receive a *form* from the OFPRA for establishing your “civil status document”. You should fill in this form carefully giving your surname, first name, date and place of birth, and the details of your parents. If you are married, give the details of your husband/wife as well as the information about your wedding (even if it was only a wedding following local customs) and the identity of your children if you have one.

You have to join to this form your birth certificate, marriage certificate, your identity card and the travelling document (passport) of your country. If you don't have one or all these documents, you have to simply explain in a letter why it is not possible for you to provide these documents. It won't block the procedure.

The OFPRA will establish the document of your civil status ‘*état civil*’ with the help of all the information it has in its possession. This document is considered as a “birth certificate”. If you are married you will be issued a document concerning your marriage.

If you have been granted the complementary protection (protection subsidiaire): if you don't have a document of your civil status (*état civil*) and it is impossible for you get one from your country, then the OFPRA can establish the document of your civil status.

Visit to the OFII (French Immigration and Integration Agency)

As soon as you receive your birth certificate from the OFPRA, you must show it to the Prefecture. The OFII will receive your file via the Prefecture and give you an appointment for a medical visit, a day of civil instruction, a French test and to sign the Welcome and Integration Contract.

You **MUST** go to this appointment, as it is obligatory to get the residence card. You also have to attend the session of the civil instruction, sit the French test and sign the contract. If you haven't received the appointment to go to OFII after 4 or 5 months, don't hesitate to contact them and make sure the Prefecture has sent the OFII your file.

The family of the refugee.

Family regrouping for refugee, when the husband or wife, and children under 18 have remained in their country of origin The request for family regrouping is done at the French consulate in the country your family is staying in. The members of your family must ask for a long stay visa (« visa long séjour »). It can be worth making the same visa request (by registered mail) to the Visa Section in Nantes (France). Normally, it takes 2 months to proceed the visa request but as the verification of the civil status and family bonds is long it

may take up to 8 months. Once your family has a visa, they can come to France. The OFII can pay for part of the price of the tickets for the family that is arriving via family regrouping, (depending on their means and the composition of the family). On arrival, your family must apply for a residence card. There are two conditions to get the residence card:

Principle of “family reunification”.

The principle of *reuniting the family* means your spouse and your children can get the refugee status (if they apply) in condition that your spouse has the same nationality as yours and you were married before you got the refugee status and that the children were recorded in OFPRA when you filed your case.

In practice, once your spouse and/or your child/children are in France, they should go to the prefecture to submit the asylum demand as the spouse or /and child of a refugee. Thus the spouse and the child will be accorded the refugee status and receive the residence card.

Your family members can be accorded the resident card.

If your spouse and /or your children did not ask for the refugee status as per the principle of ‘the family reunification’ they are nevertheless eligible for the card of residence on the condition that they came to France legally (with visa) and you were married before being accorded the refugee status. For the children the condition of age is 19 years or less.

Social rights

Access to medical care

As a refugee or the beneficiary of the ‘complementary protection’ (protection subsidiaire) you can access the general health care system. You can also ask for complementary health care CMU-C depending on your means.

Social benefits : Revenu de Solidarité Active (RSA)

If you are a recognized refugee or you have been given complementary protection, you can get the RSA if you are over 25 years old and have little or no income.

This age criterion does not come into account if you have children (at least one child) or expecting a child. If you do not fit into these criteria, you must get in touch with the « mission locale ». There may be other social benefits they can offer you.

To ask for RSA, you should contact the *social services* where you live with:

- 1) Your récépissé
- 2) Proof of address (a postal domiciliation is accepted. In this case see « useful addresses »)
- 3) Your ATA notification.

The RSA amount is reassessed every three months. It is roughly 483 Euros per month per adult and 725 Euros for a couple (amounts in 2013).

Social benefits for the family (Allocations familiales)

Recognized refugees and beneficiaries of the “complementary protection (protection subsidiaire) are entitled for the ‘social benefit given to the families (allocation familiale). Contact a social worker for more information.

Solidarité Transports (help for the transport expenses in Ile de France)

If you get the RSA, you are entitled to benefit from the Carte Solidarité Transport. Through 'CST' you can get a pass to travel free of cost in the public transport (in ile de France). Those who have CMU « complémentaire » are also entitled to get 50% off "loose" transport tickets and 75% off weekly or monthly subscriptions (on Navigo Pass).

To benefit the transport help, call the "carte solidarité transport" on 0 800 948 999 (free call) to subscribe yourself.



Employment

Being a recognized refugee or beneficiary of the complementary protection you have the right to work, this is specified on your récépissé.

Employment centre (Pôle Emploi)

You must register at the "employment centre" (Pole Emploi) to find a job or trainings. Call 3949 to make an appointment.

You are a refugee and you are less than 26 years old – the Mission locale- may have some thing for you!

Refugees those who are under 26 years are not entitled to benefit from the RSA. They nevertheless can register at the « mission locale » close to their residence to get the assistance for professional insertion. The « mission locale » can, sometimes, offer social benefits to those who don't get the RSA.



Access to accommodation

To get an accommodation you can apply to the CPH (Centre provisoire d'hébergement= Temporary Accommodation Centre). Fill in the file with a social worker or an association entitled to do that and send it to the OFII. You may get accommodation for 6 months, renewable.

The social worker can also do an SIAO accommodation request. You can ask for HLM accommodation at the local town hall (mairie).



Driving licence

You can ask to swap your driving licence within one year from the date you are recognised as a refugee. For this, contact the prefecture of your department with your driving licence (and its translation in French) and your residence card/refugee récépissé.

Important: There are only certain countries that have the mutual agreement with France for the exchange of the driving licence. Your country must have the agreement with France to swap the driving licence. Please check the list of the countries before going to the prefecture. You can check it on internet.

Document for travelling

If you wish to travel abroad after you have been given the 10 years or the temporary residence card, you must fill in a form asking for a travel document at the Prefecture where you live.

Remember: If you are a refugee you cannot go back to your home country. If you do so, you will lose your refugee status. You can nevertheless, ask the prefecture to allow you to go to your country under some exceptional circumstances - death of a member of the family, serious illness of a relative etc. The prefecture may give you (exceptionally) a document to leave and come back to France « laissez-passer ». For this, go to the prefecture with your travel ticket.

Losing the refugee status

The refugee status is not permanent. This can be taken back in two cases:

Voluntary loss of the refugee status: If you go back to live in your country; or acquire the nationality of another country or you decide to live under the protection of your own country.

The 1C5 clause (cessation clause) of the Geneva Convention stipulates that the refugee status can be taken back if the circumstances that had led to accord the status no longer exist. However the Geneva Convention does specify **that the refugee can stay** if he can invoke « compelling reasons arising out of previous persecution » for refusing to return to the country of his former habitual residence.

The Loss or withdrawal of the refugee status does not necessarily have consequences if you have legal documents to stay in France.

The complementary protection (protection subsidiaire) is reconsidered every year and if the circumstances that had led to give this status no longer exist, it is withdrawn (as it is the one year residence card).