

Forms of protection - Cyprus

Overview

Relevant EU legislation

Cyprus is bound by the recast Qualification Directive (Standards Qualification Regulation) and has transposed its provisions through the Refugees (Amendment) Law of 2014 N. [58\(I\)/2014](#) and The Refugees (Amendment) (No 2) Law of 2014 N. [59\(I\)/2014](#).

National legislation

Refugee status	Refugees Laws: Article 3(1) (2)
Subsidiary protection	Refugees Laws, Article 19 .
Temporary protection	Refugees Laws, Article 20 (1) .
National forms of protection	Article 18 OH (4), Chapter 105 Aliens and Immigration Law (transposing the Returns Directive) : residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

Competent authority and stakeholders

Refugee status	Asylum Service Υπηρεσία Ασύλου
Subsidiary protection	Asylum Service Υπηρεσία Ασύλου
Temporary protection	Asylum Service Υπηρεσία Ασύλου
National forms of protection	Migration Department - Deputy Ministry of Migration and International Protection Τμήμα Μετανάστευσης - Υφυπουργείου Μετανάστευσης και Διεθνούς Προστασίας

Renewal and withdrawal of international protection and national forms of protection

Refugee status

Legal provisions relating to review, renewal and withdrawal of refugee status: Article 18 A (2)(c) refers to the Head of the Asylum Service as the authority competent to revoke or refuse to grant or renew a permit to a person to whom refugee status was previously granted.

Length of the first and subsequent residence permits: Based on Article 18A of the Refugees Law: First: 3 years, residence permit valid for three years (renewable). Subsequent: 3 years with no possibility of issuance of residence permit for longer period.

Review of the status: There is no systematic review of protection status in Cyprus. Legal basis for cessation of the refugee status: Article 6 of the Refugees Laws. Legal basis for withdrawal of the refugee status: Article 6 A (1) of the Refugees Laws. Legal basis for exclusion of the refugee status: Article 5(1) of the Refugees Laws

Renewal of the status: There is no renewal of status taking place in Cyprus. Refugee status remains valid independently from the renewal of the residence permit associated to it.

Withdrawal of the status:

Procedure: Cessation cases are examined under the Regular Procedure. The procedure is triggered by the Head of the Asylum Service if new evidence or findings come to light indicating that there are substantial grounds for re-examining the refugee status, granted to a beneficiary. During the cessation procedure, the Asylum Service examines whether the circumstances have changed significantly and are of such nature that the refugee's fear of persecution can no longer be considered as well-founded. According to the national legislation, the Head of the Asylum Service shall obtain precise and up-to-date information from various sources, such as, where appropriate, such as EUAA and UNHCR, as to the general situation prevailing in the countries of origin of persons concerned.

Interview: The national legislation specifies that a person concerned during a cessation or withdrawal procedure shall be given the opportunity to testify in the context of personal interview or by written statement before the Asylum Service on the reasons the status should not be ceased or withdrawn. Decision: Upon examination of a cessation case, the Head of Asylum Service shall issue a decision and shall inform the person concerned in writing about the intention and the reasons that decided to review international protection status. Decision shall include legal grounds and facts on which the decision is based. The Head of Asylum Service shall also inform the person concerned about the right to appeal the cessation decision, the nature and form of the remedy and

the deadline to submit the appeal in line with national provisions.

Appeal: The national legislation provides for an appeal against the first instance decision in the cessation procedure. The procedure for appeal against a cessation decision is identical to that in the regular procedure. The person concerned may submit an appeal before the IPAC and has suspensive effect. The appeal examines both substance and points of law and the persons concerned has a right to remain in the areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus.

Legal aid: There is no access to free legal assistance during the cessation procedure before the Asylum Service. In limited cases free legal assistance may be provided by civil society organisations. Legal aid is offered by the state only for the judicial examination of the cessation decision before the IPAC.

Grounds for withdrawal of the status: The Asylum Service may withdraw the refugee status when:

- becomes aware that the person recognised as refugee has misrepresented or omitted facts or provided falsified documents, which were decisive for the recognition of the refugee status.
- there are grounds of exclusion of the person concerned from the refugee status pursuant to the exclusion clause under Article 5 of the Refugees Laws.
- there are reasonable grounds for considering the person as a danger to the security of the Republic of Cyprus;
- the person constitutes a danger to the Cypriot community, having been convicted by a final judgment of a particularly serious crime.

The Asylum Service may decide to cease the refugee status if a refugee:

- has voluntarily re-availed himself or herself of the protection of the country of nationality;
- has voluntarily re-acquired previously lost nationality;
- has acquired a new nationality, and enjoys the protection of the country which granted him/her the new nationality;
- has voluntarily re-established himself or herself in the country which he or she left or outside which he or she remained owing to fear of persecution; or
- can no longer continue to refuse the protection of the country of nationality or habitual residence because, the circumstances that led to recognition as a refugee have ceased to exist.

In the case of a stateless beneficiary, refugee status ceases to exist when the person concerned becomes able to return to the country of his or her previous habitual residence because, the circumstances which led to his or her recognition as a refugee have ceased to exist.

An applicant may be excluded from the refugee status when:

1. has received protection or assistance from institutions or bodies or offices of the United Nations other than UNHCR and such protection or assistance has ceased for a reason without any final settlement in accordance with relevant resolutions and conventions.
2. it is acknowledged by the competent authorities of the country in which a beneficiary has moved that the beneficiary has the rights and obligations arising from the possession of the nationality in that country or the rights and obligations equivalent thereto; or
3. There are serious reasons to believe that the person concerned:
4. has committed a crime against peace, a war crime or a crime against humanity, as defined in international conventions drawn up for the purpose of countering them; or
5. has committed a serious non-political crime in another country before issuing a residence permit based on the recognition of refugee status; In this regard, the concept of serious non-political crime includes particularly cruel acts, even if committed with an alleged political purpose; or
6. has been found guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations as defined in the Preamble and Articles 1 and 2 of the United Nations Charter;
7. is an instigator or otherwise involved in the commission of any of the offences or acts referred grounds for exclusion.

Consequences of the withdrawal of the status: Consequences for withdrawal are not specified in the national legislation. After the withdrawal of the status, the applicant has a certain number of days to appeal the decision. Eventually, when the deadline to appeal lapses, the applicant is considered to stay in the Republic of Cyprus irregularly.

Subsidiary protection status

Legal provisions relating to review, renewal and withdrawal of subsidiary protection: Article 19 (3)(a), Article 19 (3A) Refugee Laws designate the Head of the Asylum Service as the competent authority to terminate or revoke subsidiary protection status.

Length of the first and subsequent residence permits: Based on Article 19(4) of the Refugees Laws: First: 1 year, residence permit valid for one year (renewable). Subsequent: 2 years, residence permit renewable for two-year periods for the duration of the status.

Review of the status: There is no systematic review of protection status in Cyprus. Legal basis for cessation of subsidiary protection status: Article 6(1A-bis) of the Refugees Laws. Legal basis for withdrawal of subsidiary protection status: Article 19(3A) of the Refugees Laws. Legal basis for

exclusion of subsidiary protection: Article 5(2) of the Refugees Laws.

Renewal of the status: There is no renewal of status taking place in Cyprus. Subsidiary protection status remains valid independently from the renewal of the residence permit associated to it.

Withdrawal of the status:

Procedure: The same procedure is followed to examine cessation of refugee status and subsidiary protection. In both cases the Head of Asylum Service shall examine whether the change in circumstances is of such a significant and non-temporary nature that the person eligible for subsidiary protection no longer faces a real risk of serious harm. However, cessation shall not apply to a beneficiary of subsidiary protection who is able to invoke compelling reasons arising out of previous serious harm for refusing to avail himself or herself of the protection of the country of nationality or former habitual residence.

Interview: The national legislation specifies that a person concerned during a cessation or withdrawal procedure shall be given the opportunity to testify in the context of personal interview or by written statement before the Asylum Service on the reasons the status should not be ceased or withdrawn.

Legal aid: There is no access to free legal assistance during the cessation procedure before the Asylum Service. In limited cases free legal assistance may be provided by civil society organisations. Legal aid is offered by the state only for the judicial examination of the cessation decision before the IPAC.

Grounds for the withdrawal of the status:

The Asylum Service may decide to withdraw the status of a beneficiary of subsidiary protection with retrospective effect after granting the status, when the person concerned has omitted or misrepresented facts or used falsified documentation which was decisive for the granting of subsidiary protection status. Article 19(3A) of the Refugees Laws

The Asylum Service may decide to cease the status of subsidiary protection when the circumstances which led to the granting of subsidiary protection status have ceased to exist or have changed to such a degree that protection is no longer required. Article 6(1A-bis) of the Refugees Laws

An applicant may be excluded from the subsidiary protection status when there are serious reasons to believe that a person concerned Article 5(2) of the Refugees Laws

1. has committed a crime against peace, a war crime or a crime against humanity, as defined in international conventions or a serious crime;

2. has been found guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations as defined in the Preamble and Articles 1 and 2 of the United Nations Charter;
3. constitutes a risk to Cypriot society or to the security of the Republic;
4. is an instigator or participated in commission of any of the offenses or acts under previous grounds for exclusion
5. has committed, before entering the Republic, one or more crimes which do not fall under the previous categories, and which would have been punishable by imprisonment if they had been conducted in the Republic of Cyprus and left his/her country of origin solely to avoid sanctions as a result of the crimes committed.

Consequences of the withdrawal of the status: In case of cessation, residence permit granted to the beneficiary of subsidiary protection is cancelled and the person concerned must surrender the identity card and travel documents.

National forms of protection

Legal provisions relating to the review, renewal and withdrawal of national forms of protection:

Article 18 OH (4), Chapter 105 Aliens and Immigration Law : residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

Length of the first and subsequent residence permits: Residence permit on humanitarian grounds is issued with a validity of 1 year.

Renewal of the status: Information is currently not available.

Review of the status: Migration Department - Deputy Ministry of Migration and International Protection. Information is currently not available.

Withdrawal of the status: Information is currently not available.

Grounds for the withdrawal of the status: Information is currently not available.

Consequences of the withdrawal of the status: Information is currently not available.

Content of protection

Overview

Rights and obligations of beneficiaries of international protection are set out in Part IV of the Refugee Laws. Article 19(6) states that from the recognition of subsidiary protection status, a person who has been granted subsidiary protection has the same rights as recognized refugees under articles 21, 21A and 21C.

Provision of information on the content of protection

The beneficiaries are informed for their rights and obligations upon the announcement of the positive decision granting them international protection status from the officer who examined the case.

Residence permits

Refugees:

The residence permit based on a Length of first and subsequent residence permits is 3 years, renewable up to additional 3 years.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection:

Length of first and subsequent residence permits is 1 years, renewable up to additional 2 years.

Travel documents

Refugees:

Geneva Travel Document has a validity up to 3 years.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection:

Laissez-passer with validity up to 1 year.

Freedom of movement

Beneficiaries of international protection enjoy freedom of movement in all territory controlled by the Republic of Cyprus.

Access to employment and employment-related education

Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection:

Article 21A Refugee Law envisages that immediately after the granting of international protection, each beneficiary is entitled to engage in an employed or independent professional activity according to the rules generally applicable to the profession and to public administration. Thus, there is no restriction to access work in any sector. There are no restrictions either to access to procedures for recognition of qualifications. Time limits to access the labour market were increased from one month to nine months since October 2023 for all asylum seekers, both those that come from safe countries of origin as well as those who do not (like Syria).

Access to education

There is access to education and vocational training for beneficiaries of refugee status and subsidiary protection.

Access to procedures for recognition of qualifications and validation of skills

Information is currently not available.

Social security and social assistance

Refugees:

Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection can access social assistance in the same conditions as Cypriot nationals. Beneficiaries of international protection can apply to the [Minimum Guaranteed Income Scheme](#).

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection:

Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection can access social assistance in the same conditions as Cypriot nationals. Beneficiaries of international protection can apply to the [Minimum Guaranteed Income Scheme](#).

Healthcare

Information is currently not available.

Access to accommodation

Refugees:

Information is currently not available.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection:

Information is currently not available.

Access to integration measures

Refugees:

Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection can access mainstream support and targeted support. There is no time-limit set for targeted support.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection:

Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection can access mainstream support and targeted support. There is no time-limit set for targeted support.

Family reunification for beneficiaries of international protection

Refugees:

Right to family reunification for refugees: According to the Cyprus Refugee Law, only persons granted refugee status are allowed to apply for family reunification.

Time period for which exceptions apply for refugees: Information is currently not available.

Eligible family members:

- Spouse, provided that they have both reached the age of 21 years old.
- Dependant unmarried children of the refugee and his wife, including a child adopted either by a decision taken by a competent authority in the Republic or by a foreign decision which is automatically enforceable under the international obligations of the Republic or bondage recognizable in accordance with the international obligations of the Republic. (It is understood that, in case of polygamous marriage, a child of the refugee and his spouse is excluded from this paragraph, in addition to the one already living with him in the Republic.)
- Dependant unmarried child, where the refugee has sole custody and responsibility for his/her maintenance.
- Dependant unmarried child of the refugee spouse, in case the wife has sole custody and responsibility for his maintenance.
- By blood and first-degree relatives, in case the refugee is an unaccompanied minor

Conditions for family reunification: A family reunification request might be rejected based on reasons of public order, public security or public health. However, the residence permit shall not be removed (or its renewal refused) solely because the family member suffers from an illness or disability after the residence permit was issued.

Brief description of the procedure to follow (documents from country of origin, fees and costs, procedure: If a family member applies for international protection after arrival and if the reason for granting international protection is the same as for the beneficiary, then the status of beneficiary of international protection is granted. If not, then the application is examined on an individual basis. In all situations, the principle of family unity is applied, especially for dependent persons (i.e. spouse, minor children).

Reunified family members' rights (in particular, length of first and subsequent residence permits, access to integration programmes/measures): Accommodation, residence permit for the family member valid for one year and renewable with validity up to 3 years. (The residence permit granted shall not exceed the expiration date of the refugee's residence permit). No further information.

Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection: Not applicable.