



The “Human Rights for All!” Project is funded by the European Union under the Cypriot Civil Society in Action programme V and implemented by RRA in partnership with KISA.

The overall aim of the three year project is to combat racism and to ensure that human rights of refugees are respected.

Main project activities include trainings on asylum, standards of detention, protection from ill-treatment and torture; thematic reports on human rights of refugees; workshops for refugees on their rights; awareness raising campaigns on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; panel discussion on migration and asylum policy in a unified Cyprus; summer volunteer programmes and advocacy for legal change in the northern part of Cyprus.



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# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS !

Rights of refugees and asylum seekers in the northern part of Cyprus

## RIGHT TO EDUCATION

As per the current legislation, regardless of their status and gender, all children have the right to compulsory education in the northern part of Cyprus.

Compulsory and free education in the northern part of Cyprus is 8 years and comprises two stages: 5 years of primary school (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade), starting from age 6 and 3 years of lower secondary school (6th, 7th and 8th grade).

For all children aged 4 and 5, free public preschool education is available. Attendance is not compulsory but it is highly recommended.

Children who have successfully completed 8 years of compulsory education are entitled to enrol in high school. 4 years of public high school (9th 10th 11th 12th grade) are also free. In high schools both general as well as vocational-technical education is provided.

Children with special needs also have the right to free access specialised educational institutions in Lefkoşa/Nicosia and Girne/Kyrenia during the compulsory education period.

Children may be enrolled in public schools at their place of residence with a documents confirming residence (bills or a document issued by the Mukhtar), identification documents of children and parents and protection letters issued by UNHCR.

The language of instruction in public schools is mainly Turkish with the exception of Türk Maarif Colleges where it is English.

All students who have successfully fulfilled requirements in public schools are entitled to receive a diploma.

## RIGHT TO HEALTH

Refugees and Asylum Seekers have the right to access free healthcare services provided by following public health institutions.

You have the right to access free access initial diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation services at primary healthcare institutions at Lefkoşa/Nicosia, Akdoğan/Lysi, Güzelyurt/Morphou, Maraş/Varosha, Mehmetçik, İskele/Trikomo, Serdarlı/Tziaos, Yenierenköy/Gialousa, Geçitkale/Lefkoniko, Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso, İnönü/Sinta, Değirmenlik/Kythrea, Esentepe/Agios Amvrosios, Lapta/Lapithos, Tatlısu/Akanthou, Lefke/Lefka, Akıncılar/Louroujina, Çamlıbel/Mirtu and Dilekkaya/Agia.

You also have the right to access secondary and tertiary healthcare services at Dr. Burhan Nalbantoğlu State Hospital in Lefkoşa/Nicosia, Gazimağusa/Famagusta State Hospital, Dr Akçiçek State Hospital in Girne/Kyrenia, Cengiz Topel State Hospital in Güzelyurt/Morphou.

In order to access this right, you have to obtain a letter from RRA certifying that you are registered with the organisation and with this letter register as 'refugee' at one of the public health institutions listed above.

If you do not speak Turkish, you need to be accompanied by an interpreter. Interpretation services are not provided at the institutions. If you cannot provide for your own, please approach RRA for assistance.

You have the right to access free medication, provided that it is prescribed by doctors and available at the relevant public healthcare institutions' stock. In cases of unavailability, if you do not have financial means to purchase, please approach RRA with your written prescription for further assistance.

## ACCESS TO LABOR MARKET

Refugees and asylum seekers have the right to obtain a work permit and work legally in jobs in which third country nationals can be employed. It is legally prohibited to work without a work permit. If done so, both the employer and employee may face administrative fines.

Upon presenting an international protection letter issued by UNHCR to Labour Office, refugees and asylum seekers are exempted from prior authorisation required from other third country nationals.

Work permit applications are made by employers and they are granted for a particular workplace (or household). The work permit is issued in the travel documents.

If you leave your job, your work permit will cease to be valid, regardless of its duration. Similarly, you cannot work in multiple workplaces with a single work permit. Thus, if you wish to undertake a job in a different workplace, your new employer is required to make a new application on your behalf.

Legally, maximum working hours are 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week. In certain situations you may be asked to work overtime, totalling to no more than 14 hours a day. Overtime has to be paid. You have the right to have at a minimum one full day off each week as well as paid annual leave for 14 days starting from the sixth month of your employment.

Your employer cannot pay you a wage lower than the legally determined minimum wage. Your employer is also under the obligation to pay for your social security premium and provident fund on a regular basis. Failure to do so results in fines.

Work-related accidents are those that take place while you are doing a work-related task at or out of workplace. Your employer may be responsible for immediate or subsequent physical and/or psychological injuries arising from such accidents. Your employer is obligated to report the accident within three days to the Labour office. Should your employer fail to do so, you may also report it in person.