

Available services

Registration of asylum requests

Monday and Tuesday every two weeks.

Monday for English-speaking and Arabic-speaking asylum seekers,
Tuesday for French-speaking ones.

Renewal of certificates

Wednesday and Thursday

Wednesday for English-speaking persons,
Thursday for French-speaking ones.

Reception of recognized refugees

Friday morning (08:00 - 12:00)

Notification of decisions

Monday and Tuesday afternoons, every two weeks (14:00 - 16:30)

*The refugee status determination interview
are conducted from Monday to Friday upon appointment.*

*When you come to the office, for a quicker answer,
it would help if you explain precisely your situation
and the reason of your visit to the staff at the entrance.*

Do not forget to bring all your documents with you.

**All the services of the UNHCR
are free of charge and confidential.**

The UNHCR in Morocco

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GUIDEBOOK FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS IN MOROCCO

According to article 1A(2) of the **Geneva Convention** of July 28, 1951, concerning refugee status, a refugee is: **“Any person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country”**. Morocco acceded to the Geneva Convention on November 7, 1956 and to its Protocol on April 20, 1971.

The statute of the UNHCR maintains almost the same definition. In addition, the UNHCR's mandate is extended to any person who is outside of his country of origin and unable to return there owing to serious and indiscriminate threats to life, physical integrity or freedom resulting from generalized violence or events seriously disturbing public order.

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Are you a refugee ?

According to the 1951 Geneva Convention and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), you are a refugee if:

- ▶ You have a **well-founded fear for your personal safety** in case of return to your country of origin,
- and ▶ you have been or you fear being persecuted:
 - for reasons of **race, religion, nationality**, membership of a particular **social group**, or **political opinion**.
 - for reasons of a situation of **generalized violence or serious disorder**,
- and ▶ Your country of origin cannot or does not want to protect you against such threats.

Therefore, not all persons leaving their country of origin are refugees.

If you think that you may benefit from refugee status, you have to submit an asylum application. In Morocco, according to the national law, the Bureau des réfugiés et apatrides (BRA) is the competent authority to examine your request⁽¹⁾. However, in the absence of a functioning national procedure, it is the office of the UNHCR in Rabat which deals with these requests, in accordance with its mandate.

1 – 29 August 1957 decree relating to the implementation of the Refugee status Convention.

How does the Refugee Status Determination procedure work in the office of the UNHCR in Morocco?

1 – The registration procedure at the office of the UNHCR in Rabat

You have to introduce yourself, with all the members of your family, during registration days. You need to bring all documents that are in your possession (you keep the originals).

▶ Registration form

A registration form will be given to you, available in French, English, or Arabic. If necessary, a UNHCR staff member will help you to fill in the form.

You will be asked information about your civil status, your nationality, your personal situation and the reasons for leaving your country of origin.

▶ Registration interview

You will be then received by a UNHCR official who will ask you further questions about the information that you have provided in the form. You will be able to give more detailed information about your request for asylum.

If you need one, you can ask for an interpreter.

At the conclusion of the registration procedure:

► If the UNHCR thinks that the reasons for which you are claiming asylum suit those listed in the Geneva Convention or UNHCR's mandate, a **receipt of asylum seeker** will be handed out to you.

A Protection Officer will then give you an appointment for an interview. During this interview you will be able to explain your case in further detail.

► **In the opposite case**, if the reasons why you are asking for asylum do not, in any manner, fit those listed in the Geneva Convention or UNHCR's mandate, your request will be rejected. **You can still make an appeal against this decision within 48 hours.**

The receipt of asylum seeker is valid for 3 months. It is renewable until the final decision on your application is taken.

It is important to inform the UNHCR of any change in contact details as soon as possible.

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2—The refugee status determination interview

You will be interviewed by one of UNHCR's protection officers.

► The purpose of this interview is to understand the reasons why you have left your country of origin and why you fear to return there. You will be asked to be as precise as possible on facts, places, dates, reasons of your fear of persecution, and events having led to your departure, as well as your passage to Morocco.

It is important to be sincere. False declarations during the interview will affect the credibility of your request.

During this interview, you can have an interpreter. All your statements will remain strictly confidential.

You can indicate whether you prefer being interviewed by a man or a woman.

3—The UNHCR decision

Your request will then be examined by the UNHCR.

Information that you have given will be checked and cross-referenced with several sources of information. Your request will be legally analyzed. A decision will be taken as soon as possible, and this decision is then communicated to you in person.

► If the answer is positive, a certificate of refugee status is delivered to you.

► If the answer is negative, the UNHCR will explain to you the reasons of this decision as well as steps to take if you wish to submit an appeal against this decision.

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4—The Appeal Process

Every asylum seeker whose request has been rejected in first instance has the right to appeal against this decision.

If you want to appeal against this decision, you should:

- Lodge an appeal request at the office of the UNHCR in Rabat within 30 days.
- Communicate all new information or evidence that you did not communicate to the UNHCR in first instance.

If the UNHCR deems it necessary, it will invite you to come for an appeal interview in its office. You will be interviewed by a new protection officer.

When the decision regarding your appeal has been made, the UNHCR will inform you through the billboard in front of its office.

► If your appeal is accepted, the UNHCR will give you a **certificate of refugee status**.

► If your appeal is rejected, a final decision will be communicated to you and the UNHCR will explain to you the consequences of this rejection in terms of your situation in Morocco.

The certificate of refugee status is valid for 6 months and renewable upon request after a simple verification.



UNHCR protection

Every asylum seeker is under the protection of the UNHCR until a final decision is taken on his or her claim.

Every person recognized as a refugee is under the protection of the UNHCR. This protection is extended to members of his/her close family.

You are especially protected against expulsion and refoulement. If you are arrested while you are asylum seeker or refugee, it is important that the UNHCR is informed as soon as possible of your identity, the place of arrest, and the reasons of your arrest in order to act quickly.

In case of emergency



In case of extreme urgency (especially in case of imminent risk of refoulement), you can contact the UNHCR at the

037 76 76 06,

7 days per week, and 24 hours a day.