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Abbreviations:
OCMA Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs
Border Guard State Border Guard
Centre for Asylum Seekers Centre for Asylum Seekers
EU European Union
SSIA State Social Insurance Agency

This booklet is prepared within the framework of the project No. PMLP/PMIF/2016/1 “Support measures for persons in need of international protection, reception and accommodation in Latvia” of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (2014 – 2020) implemented by the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs.
REQUESTING FOR ASYLUM IN LATVIA

You may express a wish to receive asylum in Latvia and to submit an application by personally turning to the Border Guard:
- at the State border crossing places;
- in the transit area of an airport;
- if you already are in Latvia, at the closest territorial unit of the Border Guard.

Besides, you have the right to express your wish to receive asylum in Latvia also at the OCMA at the State Police at the place of imprisonment These authorities will contact with the Border Guard within three working days, so that you could submit an application.

Remember:
After the submission of the application your asylum procedure in Latvia will be commenced – you will be an asylum seeker until the day when the final decision will be made during the examining of your application – to grant or to refuse the asylum.

If you are an unaccompanied minor (without parents or adult relatives), the State will appoint a guardian for you.
AFTER REQUESTING FOR ASYLUM

Your fingerprints will be taken, which is an integral part of the asylum procedure.

Your personal identity and travel documents have to be delivered to the Border Guard until the day when the final decision regarding asylum is made - except for the case when you have any other legal grounds to stay in Latvia, for example, a valid visa or a residence permit.

A personal document of an asylum seeker will give you the right to stay in Latvia - you cannot travel to other countries with it. Your exit from Latvia during this period of time may be considered as a wish to revoke your application and your asylum procedure in Latvia may be terminated.

If you are not detained, a personal document of an asylum seeker will be issued to you.

The Border Guard will perform negotiations with you in order to obtain information about your individual situation and circumstances. Information provided by you will be recorded in the minutes (the written record).

The information provided by you will be recorded by audio or video technological means, regarding which you will be informed separately.

Remember that border guards have the rights:

- to perform inspection of your possessions;
- to seize objects and documents if they may have a significance in examination of the application or if they may pose a threat to the asylum seeker or those around him/her;
- if you are an unaccompanied minor asylum seeker, to perform inspection of your possessions in the presence of your representative;
- to determine expert-examinations and inspections of documents, your belongings, language knowledge and medical condition, and other expert examinations and inspections;
- to take a photograph of you.
Rights of an Asylum Seeker

To receive information about the progress of your asylum procedure.
To receive an explanation of the decision made in your case, procedures to appeal it and of the conditions for assigning State ensured legal aid in language you understand — except the case when you have a representative or legal aid is already being ensured.

If you have a personal document of an asylum seeker and you have not received the decision of the OCMA regarding granting or refusing to grant refugee or alternative status within a time period of three months, you have the right to be employed in Latvia until the day when the final decision in your case will come into force. In order to commence labour relations, you have to turn to the Border Guard to include a notice of the rights for employment in your personal document of an asylum seeker.

To receive State ensured legal aid in certain amount during the procedure for appealing. To receive an explanation of the decision made in your case, procedures to appeal it and of the conditions for assigning State ensured legal aid in language you understand — except the case when you have a representative or legal aid is already being ensured.

When communicating in a written or oral form with authorities involved in the asylum procedure you can use a language which you understand or which can be reasonably supposed to be understandable for you. You may submit documents, regarding your application and/or the claim submitted to the court (if needed a translation will be provided).

In order to determine the responsible Member State, several circumstances of your case will be considered, such as, whether you have any family members in any of the EU Member States, whether you have already requested for asylum in any other EU Member State or stayed there, or whether any EU Member State has issued a residence permit or a visa to you, the route of your trip after departure from the country of origin etc.

The Border Guard will send the information provided by you to the OCMA and it will assess, which of the EU Member States will be responsible for examining your application. If it will be determined that any other EU Member State is responsible for examining your application, you will be transferred to the relevant Member State. In accordance with the legal acts of the EU, only one EU Member State will review your application.

If it will be acknowledged that Latvia is responsible for examining your application, the OCMA will continue the asylum procedure. You will receive more detailed information about the criteria for determination of the responsible Member State at the moment of requesting for asylum from the Border Guard.

Guideline for asylum seekers in Latvia
RIGHTS OF AN ASYLUM SEEKER

To receive medical assistance in a certain amount.

During the asylum procedure the officials will pay attention to your special needs, however, you also have the right to inform about them.

If the Border Guard or the OCMA has established that you have special procedural or reception needs, you will have the right to receive suitable and proper support for exercising your rights and fulfillment of obligations throughout the asylum procedure.

The following person may be considered as an asylum seeker, having special procedural or reception needs, for example:

- a minor;
- a person with disability;
- a victim of human trafficking;
- a person being in need of special care;
- a person who has suffered from violence.

To communicate with relatives, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or other organizations, providing legal or other type of advice to asylum seekers.

You or your representative have the right to get acquainted with the information contained in your file, except cases when disclosure of such may prejudice the national interests of Latvia or may prejudice the safety of the persons who provide information or the safety of the persons to whom the information relates or may affect the investigatory activities of the institutions involved in the asylum procedure, which are connected with the examination of the application.
OBLIGATIONS OF AN ASYLUM SEEKER

To co-operate with institutions involved in the asylum procedure - for example, the Border Guard, in order to be able to take your fingerprints, identify and photograph you with the OCMA, in order to provide all information being at your disposal, which is required for examination of the application.

To give fingerprints if you are at least 14 years old.

To participate in negotiations and the interview, to answer personally the questions asked and, as soon as possible, provide all information* necessary to examine the application and take a decision - also in the case if your representative is participating in the negotiations and the interview (the obligation to provide all information as soon as possible also applies to the representative).

- regarding the documents being at your disposal;
- about your identity;
- family members;
- previous activities and previous achievements;
- regarding the reasons why the asylum has been requested.

To perform health examination in the interests of public health - mandatory pulmonary radiography for diagnostics of tuberculosis and, if necessary, also to diagnose infection diseases.

*for example, regarding the documents being at your disposal;
OBLIGATIONS
OF AN ASYLUM SEEKER

To observe the internal order, while residing in the accommodation premises or detention facilities.

To inform the OCMA and the Border Guard regarding the address of the place of residence and its change. If you are not accommodated at the Centre or you have not been detained - the last address of the place of residence indicated by you will be used by the authorities to communicate with you.

ACCOMMODATION
OF AN ASYLUM SEEKER

When arriving at the Centre, you have to present a personal document of an asylum seeker.

If you do not have sufficient means, you may be accommodated at the Centre of an open type.

An unaccompanied minor asylum seeker may be accommodated at the Centre, in the child care institution or at the guardian appointed by the Orphan’s Court. A decision regarding accommodation will be adopted by the Orphan’s Court, coordinating it with the OCMA and considering the interests of the minor.

The Centre is located within the distance of 17 kilometers from Riga, the capital of Latvia. The bus No. 16 goes from Riga to the Centre. Schedules of the public transportation are available at: https://saraksti.rigassatiksme.lv/
**Employee of the Centre:**

- will introduce you with the internal order of the Centre and fire safety rules (available in the lobby of the Centre, translated into several languages);
- will show you a room, a kitchen, where you will cook meals for yourself and your family, as well as show other premises of the Centre, hand out the access card and other necessary items;
- will introduce you with the schedules of cleaning the shared premises, according to which you will have to take care of maintaining order in these premises.

The responsibility for keeping the shared premises clean is distributed between all adult inhabitants of the Centre.

**ACCOMMODATION OF AN ASYLUM SEEKER**

Living rooms in the Centre are furnished with bunk beds, closets, stools, tables as well as blankets, pillows, bedclothes (sheets, pillowcases) and dishes. Rooms for people with disabilities are furnished with single-deck beds.

Families with preschool children, are accommodated, as much as possible, in rooms equipped with WC and shower. Other asylum seekers have to use shared showers and toilets.

4 to 10 persons may be accommodated in one room.
The following are available at the Centre:

- kitchens and cooking appliances
- laundry room (washing machines, dryers and clothes irons)
- Wi-Fi and computerized training class with an internet connection*
- library
- leisure area
- gym *
- interior play corner and children play ground in the territory of the Centre

* In order to use the computer room or the gym, you have to register with the responsible employee of the Centre, receiving the key for this room, which has to be returned after the work or workout.

Asylum seekers, accommodated at the Centre, who have insufficient means for food, shall be entitled to receive means of support and a daily allowance - in total €3,00 per day and night for each asylum seeker (regardless of the age and family status).

In order to receive this daily allowance, you have to write a submission addressed to the OCMA. You can submit the application also to employees of the Centre.

Your duty is to inform an employee of the Centre, if you wish to leave the Centre for longer than 24 hours!
ACCOMMODATION OF AN ASYLUM SEEKER

An employee of the Centre hands out the granted daily allowance to the asylum seeker once per week as an advance payment (for 7 days). In order to receive the money, a valid personal document of an asylum seeker has to be presented.

An employee of the Centre will provide the payment of the daily allowance to the asylum seeker who stays in the Centre and is under the age of 18:

- to his/her adult family member;
- to the legal representative of an unaccompanied minor.

If you stay outside of the Centre for longer than 48 hours without a permit of an employee of the Centre, the employee, by evaluating the actual circumstances of your absence, will have the rights to suspend the payment of the money for the period of your absence.

While staying in the Centre, you have the following obligations:

- to take care for cleanliness and order in the living room and shared premises; to throw waste into the containers and not to leave it outside your room or in the lobby. You may receive cleaning aids at the administration of the Centre
- to take care for cleanness and order in the living room and shared premises; to throw waste into the containers and not to leave it outside your room or in the lobby. You may receive cleaning aids at the administration of the Centre
- to keep quiet between 23:00 and 7:30 o'clock
- not to leave the dish you are cooking without attendance and to clean the kitchen after cooking
- to take care for the possessions given to you (bedding, dishes), which have to be returned before departure from the Centre
- when departing from the Centre - return all issued possessions, including keys and access cards, and leave your room clean
**DETENTION OF AN ASYLUM SEEKER**

You have to take into account that during the asylum procedure you may be detained and accommodated at the specially equipped premises of the Border Guard in Daugavpils (or Liepaja) in cases, when:

- it is necessary to ascertain or verify your identity or nationality;
- it is necessary to ascertain the facts for reasons why you requested asylum, but this can be done only by detention (for example, you crossed the State border without an obvious reason evading border controls);
- it is necessary to decide about your rights to enter Latvia;
- there are grounds for assuming that you requested asylum in Latvia in order to hinder your expulsion;
- there are grounds for assuming that you present a threat to national security or public order and safety;
- a procedure for your transfer has been initiated to the EU Member State, which is responsible for examination of your application.

Initially you may be detained for six days and nights, but pursuant to the court decision the period of detention may be prolonged for the whole period of the asylum procedure.

The Border Guard will draw up the minutes (written record) regarding your detention and will explain your rights and obligations. Before accommodation at the detention facility procedures for health examination and sanitary treatment will be performed.
ACCOMMODATION OF A DETAINED ASYLUM SEEKER

You will be accommodated at the detention facility in conformity with your fundamental rights and safety, individual traits and psychological compatibility, and also in conformity with the following conditions:

- If you have any health disorders, you will be accommodated in premises specially equipped for such purpose.
- If you are an unaccompanied minor, you will be ensured with accommodation premises, in which there will be age-appropriate equipment and personnel.
- If you have been declared for international search, you will be placed in premises specially equipped for such purpose for not more than 72 hours.
- If you have any health disorders, you will be accommodated in premises specially equipped for such purpose.
- Men and women will be accommodated separately.
- If you are a minor, you will be ensured with a possibility of education.
- In certain cases, when you violate the internal order or endanger the safety of other asylum seekers, you may be placed separately in premises specially equipped for this purpose for a time period up to 10 full days.
- If you are an unaccompanied minor, you will be ensured with accommodation premises, in which there will be age-appropriate equipment and personnel.

If you are a minor, you will be ensured with a possibility of education.

In the detention facilities the Border Guard will provide asylum seekers with food, drinking water at any time, as well as hygiene, essential items and medical assistance.

While staying at the detention facility, you have to take into account the internal rules you will be introduced to.
EDUCATION

A minor asylum seeker will be entitled to acquire elementary education and secondary education, as well as to continue the commenced education, when majority (the age of 18) has been attained.

In Latvia education is mandatory from the age of 5 to 17, which includes child preparation for elementary education, acquisition of the elementary education or the continuation of it until attaining majority (the age of 18).

In order to enrol the minor asylum seeker in school, his/her parents or the legal representative has to submit an application to the Centre or, in case of detention, to the Border Guard.

The school to be attended by the minor asylum seeker will be appointed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Attendance of the school is mandatory, in case of unjustifiably missed classes the school can invite the guardians of the rights of children – the police or the Orphan’s Court for inspection. If a child becomes ill, he/she has to turn to a doctor, in order to justify the non-attendance.

Please, observe the rights of a child and plan his/her evening in a peaceful manner, to avoid any worries the following morning at school!
If you need any medical assistance while staying at the Centre or at the detention facility of the Border Guard, you have to contact with the employees of the institution or a nurse who will organize your health care.

If you have applied for a visit to a doctor-specialist, please, take into account that the reception hours are strictly determined - in case of a failure to appear during them you will have to apply for a doctor’s visit once again, thus failing to receive assistance in a timely manner.

Emergency medical care, consultations of a general practitioner and other health care services are available to you also if you live at the place of residence chosen by you. If your health is in danger, you have to call the ambulance to the phone number 113.

You have the right to receive the State ensured:
- emergency medical assistance;
- pregnant women care and childbirth assistance;
- dental care in case of an emergency;
- primary health care (such as consultations of a general practitioner);
- medicine and medical equipment provided for outpatient treatment; to be compensated from the means of the State budget;
- psychiatric assistance;
- medical support for minors;
- immediately required secondary outpatient health care;
- services in cases of dangerous infection diseases and medicinal products necessary for the treatment of tuberculosis.

If you have not been detained, you have the right to also live outside of the Centre at the place of residence chosen by you, informing the Border Guard on that and also the OCMA in case of changing the place of residence.

For the place of your chosen residence you have to pay by your own means. While living outside of the Centre you will not receive daily allowance for the food as well as daily allowance.
SUPPORT OF THE SOCIAL WORKER AND SOCIAL MENTOR

Both, asylum seekers as well as refugees and persons with alternative status, are entitled for the services of the social worker and social mentor.

Social workers and social mentors will be your advisors and consultants, they will encourage you and be your support providers and defenders. They will cooperate with you and your family, will help to find solutions for any issues and will help you to get accustomed to the society of Latvia.

You will be able to receive the support of social workers and social mentors during the asylum procedure. If refugee or alternative status will be granted to you, you will be able to receive this support for another 12 months.

Key tasks of the social worker and social mentor:

● to understand your needs and wishes for commencement of life in Latvia;
● to organize negotiations with you and your family members on average within 3 working days after your arrival to the Centre;
● to develop an individual plan for socio-economical inclusion, to regularly meet and discuss with you and your family members the progress of implementation of the plan;
● to help to find alternative solutions of various issues, to attract and to recommend necessary resources;
● to provide support for dealing with daily situations, helping to create understanding about the life in Latvian society;
● to help acquiring skills necessary for daily life;
● to establish and expand the social support network;
● to provide support for the search of a dwelling from available resources and to help concluding a lease agreement;
● to help register with the Employment State Agency and with a general practitioner;
● to represent your interests and rights in other institutions;
● to attract interpreters for implementation of the plan on socio-economical inclusion.

The support of the social worker and social mentor will be available to both, asylum seekers who stay at the Centre, as well as asylum seekers who live outside of the Centre.

The services of the social worker and social mentor are provided under the project “Promotion of Diversity” implemented by the Society Integration Foundation. In case of any questions or uncertainties, please, contact with the Society Integration Foundation.
THE INTERVIEW

After the acceptance of your asylum application for examination, employees of the OCMA will perform the interview with you.

You will be introduced with the procedure of the interview shortly before it. Besides, you will be introduced with the person, who will participate in the interview.

In order to give you the opportunity to provide information in the language you understand, during the interview you will be provided with an interpreter.

During the interview you will have an opportunity to provide detailed information on the reasons you have left your country of origin or the country of your previous residence and why you ask for asylum. You will be able to submit additional documents and evidence which can confirm the information provided by you. You will have the right to freely express your opinion about the circumstances of your case, but you will also have the duty to reply to the questions asked.

After the interview you will be provided with information regarding the further progress of your case, and you will also be able to ask additional questions regarding the subject you are interested in.

If you are an unaccompanied minor asylum seeker, the interview with you will be performed in the presence of your representative.

Your representative also has the right to participate in the interview.

The interview with you will take place in the absence of your family members, unless it will be presumed that their presence is necessary.

Other representatives of the institutions involved in the asylum procedure also have the right to participate in the interview and to ask additional questions to you.

The information provided by you will be recorded using audio or video technical means and you will be informed on that separately.
Guideline for asylum seekers in Latvia

**EXAMINATION OF THE APPLICATION FOR ASYLUM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme No.1</th>
<th>10 workdays</th>
<th>1 month</th>
<th>3 months</th>
<th>1 month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>after the receipt of documents by the OCMA from the Border Guard</td>
<td>after taking the decision to accept the application for examination</td>
<td>after the interview, but not later than six months after the submission of the application. The period of examination may be prolonged for another 9 months</td>
<td>Decision regarding refusal to grant refugee or alternative status</td>
<td>Decision regarding refusal to grant refugee or alternative status can be appealed to the court within a time period of one month from the day of its coming into force</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Scheme No.1 describes the examining of the application for asylum in accordance with the regular procedure.*

- Decision regarding the acceptance of your application for examination
- Personal interview
- Decision regarding granting refugee or alternative status
- Application may be submitted to the court within 15 workdays after the day of the decision coming into force
- Acquisition of refugee or alternative status
- Examination in the court
- Examination in the court
- Refused by the court
- Application is accepted for adjudication

Exit from Latvia

Application
PROCEDURE FOR APPEALING A DECISION

As an asylum seeker you are relieved from the payment of the State fee when submitting the application to the court.

You can dispute the OCMA decisions to the Administrative District Court (see Scheme No.2) according to the address of the place of your accommodation or the place of residence, or dispute to the Ministry of the Interior (see Scheme No.3).

You have to submit an application addressed to the Administrative District Court to the OCMA, which will forward it, including the whole materials of your case file, to the court within one workday.

The court judgements are final and not subjects to be appealed.

Scheme No.2

If you do not agree with the OCMA decision regarding:
- your transfer to another Member State
- leaving of your application without examining
- a refusal to grant refugee status, granting of alternative status
- a refusal to grant refugee and alternative status according to the regular procedure
- discontinuation of the examination of the application
- a refusal to resume the examination of your application
- regarding the revocation or loss of refugee or alternative status

You may dispute it to the Administrative District Court

When disputing the decisions adopted by the OCMA to the Administrative District Court, the State ensured legal aid will be provided to the asylum seeker upon evaluating his/her financial status.

The court judgements are final and not subjects to be appealed.
PROCEDURE FOR APPEALING A DECISION

If you do not agree with the OCMA decision regarding:

- Prolongation of the term for examination of the application
- Prolongation of the term for performance of the personal interview
- Refusal to grant financial means and daily allowance
- Refusal to payout a one-off support after receipt of the status

You may dispute it to the Ministry of the Interior

- If you also are not satisfied with the decision made in your case by the Ministry of the Interior
  - You may dispute it to the Administrative District Court

* You are due to the State ensured legal aid, when disputing the decision of the Ministry of the Interior to the Administrative District Court

If you do not agree with the Border Guard’s decision regarding:

- An obligation to register within a set period of time at the territorial unit of the Border Guard

You may dispute it to the head of the Border Guard

- You may dispute it to the district (city) court

When disputing the decisions made by the Border Guard to the district (city) court, an asylum seeker is provided with a State ensured legal aid, without evaluating his/her financial status

* You are due to the State ensured legal aid, when disputing the decision of the Ministry of the Interior to the Administrative District Court
Decisions in your case can be adopted by the SSIA - regarding the payout of the benefit after receipt of refugee or alternative status.

If you do not agree with the decision of the SSIA:
- You may dispute it to the Ministry of Welfare
- If you are not satisfied with the decision of the Ministry of Welfare, you may dispute it to the Administrative District Court

You may dispute it to the Ministry of Welfare

In case if you do not have sufficient financial means, you have the right to request and to receive the State ensured legal aid.

The State will cover legal aid within the framework of one case in the following amount:
- in the stage of extrajudicial and court proceeding legal consultation of not more than five hours;
- in the stage of extrajudicial and court proceeding for preparation of not more than five procedural documents;
- representation at the court for not more than 40 hours.
PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING FOR THE STATE ENSURED LEGAL AID

In order to receive a legal aid you have to submit a written request - completed questionnaire, where you have to specify the information about yourself, about the decision you want to dispute; the fact that you do not have any free financial means, therefore you need the State ensured legal aid. (Questionnaires are translated into different languages, and you may ask to issue the questionnaire in the language which is reasonable supposed to be understandable for you).

If you are not detained, you have to submit the questionnaire to the OCMA, which will forward it to the Legal Aid Administration, as well as provide an interpreter for your communication with the provider of the legal aid.

When the Legal Aid Administration will assign a legal representative for you, it will inform the OCMA regarding the fact where and when his/her meeting with you will take place, in order for the OCMA to organize an interpreter for your communication.

If you are detained, you have to submit this questionnaire to the Border Guard.

You may dispute the decisions of the Border Guard regarding detention to the district (city) court. In order to dispute such decisions you are due to the State ensured legal aid and services of an interpreter for communication with a legal representative.

You may dispute the decisions of the OCMA regarding granting a status or refusal to grant a status to the Administrative District Court corresponding to the address of your detention facility. The Border Guard will organize the assignment of the provider of the State ensured legal aid on the basis of your request.
AFTER ACQUISITION OF THE STATUS

Refugee status:
- A travel document (passport) will be issued to you, which is going to be valid in all countries, except of the country of your origin.
- You will receive the first travel document and the residence permit free of charge.
- A permanent residence permit will be issued to you, which has to be registered every five years at the OCMA.
- You shall have the right to unite with your family members who stay abroad.
- If you do not have sufficient means, you have the right to receive a support payment (one-off benefit) and a benefit for covering the expenses of your stay. Benefit; a refugee has the right to receive the benefit for 10 months and a person acquiring alternative status for 7 months.

Alternative status:
- If you cannot receive a travel document issued by your previous country of residence, a travel document (passport) will be issued to you.
- A temporary residence permit will be issued to you. In order to prolong your stay in Latvia, you will have to turn to the OCMA every year one month before the expiration date of the residence permit. The OCMA will assess whether a temporary residence permit is to be issued to you repeatedly.
- A valid residence permit in Latvia gives you the right to employment in Latvia without any restrictions.
- Family members of a refugee will be issued permanent residence permits, while family members of the person who has acquired alternative status will be issued temporary residence permits for the equal period of time as the person with alternative status.
- After you have resided in Latvia for two years you will have the right to unite with your family members who are residing abroad.
- A travel document issued in Latvia will be valid in all countries, except of the country of your origin.

In order to receive a one-off support and/or benefit, you have to open a personal account at any credit institution of Latvia or Latvian Postal Office.

A one-off support and/or benefit for a minor will be transferred to his/her legal representative.

The amount of a one-off support for an adult person is €278.00 and for a minor - €194.00, but if you are a husband and a wife, then the amount of the one-off support for one of you will be €278.00, but for the other €194.00, about what you have to agree between yourselves and specify that in your submissions. This support will be paid out by the OCMA.

In order to receive a one-off support, you have to turn to the OCMA in person with a submission within a time period of one month from the day of acquisition of refugee or alternative status has been adopted. In order to receive a one-off support, you have to turn to the SSA with a submission within a time period of 12 months from the day of acquisition of refugees or alternative status. In the submission regarding both, receipt of a one-off support as well as a benefit, you have to confirm that the financial means being at your disposal do not exceed the amount of the minimum monthly salary determined in Latvia per each person for which a one-off support or a benefit is being requested.

In order for you to receive a one-off support and/or benefit, you have to open a personal account at any credit institution of Latvia or Latvian Postal Office. A one-off support and/or benefit for a minor will be transferred to his/her legal representative.

The amount of the benefit for an adult person is €139.00 per month, for a minor - €97.00 per month, but if you are a husband and a wife, then for one of you - €139.00 per month, for the other - €97.00 per month, about what you have to agree between yourselves and specify that in your submissions. This benefit will be paid by the SSA.

Alternative status:
- If you do not have sufficient means, you have the right to receive a support payment (one-off benefit) and a benefit for covering the expenses of your stay. Benefit; a refugee has the right to receive the benefit for 10 months and a person acquiring alternative status for 7 months.

In order to receive a benefit, you have to turn to the State Employment Agency, you may turn to the relevant authority (also to the Centre) or to the social mentor.

The amount of the benefit for an adult person is €139.00 per month, for a minor - €97.00 per month, but if you are a husband and a wife, then for one of you - €139.00 per month, for the other - €97.00 per month, about what you have to agree between yourselves and specify that in your submissions. This benefit will be paid by the SSA.

Alternative status:
- A permanent residence permit will be issued to you, which has to be registered every five years at the OCMA.
- You shall have the right to unite with your family members who stay abroad.
- A temporary residence permit will be issued to you. In order to prolong your stay in Latvia, you will have to turn to the OCMA every year one month before the expiration date of the residence permit. The OCMA will assess whether a temporary residence permit is to be issued to you repeatedly.
- A valid residence permit in Latvia gives you the right to employment in Latvia without any restrictions.
- Family members of a refugee will be issued permanent residence permits, while family members of the person who has acquired alternative status will be issued temporary residence permits for the equal period of time as the person with alternative status.
- After you have resided in Latvia for two years you will have the right to unite with your family members who are residing abroad.
- A travel document issued in Latvia will be valid in all countries, except of the country of your origin.

In order to receive a one-off support and/or benefit, you have to open a personal account at any credit institution of Latvia or Latvian Postal Office.

A one-off support and/or benefit for a minor will be transferred to his/her legal representative.

The amount of a one-off support for an adult person is €278.00 and for a minor - €194.00, but if you are a husband and a wife, then the amount of the one-off support for one of you will be €278.00, but for the other €194.00, about what you have to agree between yourselves and specify that in your submissions. This support will be paid out by the OCMA.
If you have been refused refugee or alternative status (the OCMA or court decision, if you have disputed the OCMA decision to the court) and you do not have any other legal grounds to stay in Latvia, a removal order will be issued to you or a decision will be adopted regarding compulsory expulsion.

A term of 7 - 30 days can be determined for enforcing the removal order. You have the right to exit earlier than the term has been set in the removal order. You have the right to apply for a support from the program implemented by the International Migration Organization, in order for you to voluntary return to your home country.
GUIDELINE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS IN LATVIA

USEFUL CONTACTS

1. **Non-governmental organization “Shelter “Safe Home”**
   - Nevalstiskā organizācija “Patvērums “Drošā māja””
   - Lāčplēša iela 75 - 9/10, Riga, LV-1011
   - Tel.: (+371) 67898343 (+371) 28612120, (+371) 25565098
   - E-mail: drosa.maja@gmail.com
   - www.patreums-dm.lv
   - www.beglis.lv/www.refugees.lv
   - www.patverums-dm.lv

2. **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**
   - IOM Riga Office
   - Starptautiskā Migrācijas organizācija (IOM) Rīgas birojs
   - UN House, Pils iela 21, LV-1030, Riga
   - Tel.: (+371) 67503627
   - E-mail: im.lv@iom.int
   - Facebook: facebook.com/IOM
   - Twitter: twitter.com/UNmigration

3. **UNHCR Representation for the Nordic and Baltic Countries**
   - Wenner-Gren Center, Sveavägen 166, 15th floor
   - 11346, Stockholm
   - Telephone: +46 10 10 12 800
   - Fax: +46 8 457 48 97
   - E-mail: swest@unhcr.org
   - www.unhcr.org/neu/
Guideline for asylum seekers in Latvia