

## FRANCE

**This information sheet outlines key information for people seeking legal help who are impacted by the crisis in Afghanistan.**

This includes people who are currently:

1. In France seeking asylum/protection;
2. In Afghanistan (or another country) and want to relocate to France.

This information is collated by a collective of legal actors to support legal needs arising from the crises in Afghanistan. Should you have any updates or resources you would like included please contact: [grfpledge@pilnet.org](mailto:grfpledge@pilnet.org).

PILnet, APNOR, APRRN, and AMERA are unable to provide direct legal assistance or referrals, but if you are an asylum seeker, refugee or stateless person in need of legal assistance please see the list of local legal aid providers and their contact details [below](#). In addition to this contact information, you can find further details about local legal aid providers in the countries covered on the country pages of [UNHCR Help](#) or AMERA's [Rights in Exile](#) platform.

## PEOPLE ALREADY IN FRANCE

**People who are in France and wish to apply for asylum can find information about their options here:**

### Asylum application

- In France applications for refugee status are determined by the *Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides* (OFPRA, French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons). Appeals of its decisions are brought forth by the asylum focused *Cour Nationale du Droit à l'Asile* (CNDA, National Court of Asylum), which is the last opportunity for successful refugee status determination.
- First of all, contact must be established with a reception structure for asylum seekers (SPADA : *structure de premier accueil des demandeurs d'asile*) whereupon information about necessary paperwork can be obtained and an appointment can be made with a single-desk contact point (GUDA : Guichet unique pour demandeurs d'asile) in the territorially competent prefecture, depending on the asylum seeker's address.
- After registration as an asylum seeker and submission of required paperwork to the prefecture, an asylum application certificate is issued.
- During your appointment to the GUDA and after registering your asylum application with the prefecture, an Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) agent will assess your specific needs with regard to reception.
- The prefecture would have given you an asylum application form that you must complete

and send to OFPRA within 21 days by mail. OFPRA will then send you a summons for a personal interview (which is a crucial and sensitive phase) after which a decision will be made.

- Should there be a negative decision, an appeal **under a month post-decision** can be brought forth to the *CNDA*. You will need to hire a lawyer who can intervene with legal aid if the request is made in time.
- For a helpful, French language diagram summarizing the asylum procedure, please see the following [resource](#).
- **A detailed official guide in English language, detailing the entire asylum procedure can be found [here](#).**
- **Another very detailed guide can be found [here](#). It is made by one of the foremost refugee assistance associations and may have more pragmatic information than the “official” guide.**
- It is highly advised to gather more information on the procedure and most notably on the problematic “Dublin III” European Union rules. Detailing information on this arduous process can be found [here](#). This procedure can result in asylum seekers being deported to another EU (or associated) country deemed to have jurisdiction and, should asylum be denied, a return to Afghanistan.

### Subsidiary Protection

- In France some demands can also result in obtention of “*Protection Subsidiaire*” (Subsidiary Protection). These are determined via the same procedure as regular asylum obtention. Subsidiary protection only allows refugees one to four years renewable protection in France.

For help with the application process, please see the ‘free legal help’ section [below](#).

## PEOPLE WISHING TO RELOCATE TO FRANCE DUE TO **RISK OF HARM**

**Afghan nationals who are currently at risk of harm can apply for a visa for asylum:**

- The visa application must be initiated on the France-visas [website](#).  
NB: the mention "visa application for asylum" is not proposed by this platform, it is necessary to indicate another reason such as "family or private installation".
- Applications for visas for asylum should then be sent to the following e-mail address:
  - For the applicant residing in Iran: [afghans-visas.teheran@diplomatie.gouv.fr](mailto:afghans-visas.teheran@diplomatie.gouv.fr)
  - For the applicant residing in Pakistan: [afghans-visas-asile.islamabad-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr](mailto:afghans-visas-asile.islamabad-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr)
- In the e-mail, the following information and document must be attached:
  - Copy of passports of all family members;
  - Copy of the identity document and their sworn translation;

- Birth certificate, marriage certificate, family record book and their sworn translation;
- WhatsApp contact details of the main applicant;
- Contact email address;
- Work contract; and
- Any other document to support the application for a visa for asylum: detailed statement of fears, evidence of persecution.
- For the guarantor in France (person who guarantees the reception and accommodation of the family):
  - Copy of identity card;
  - Proof of address;
  - Declaration of reception and accommodation, ideally an official certificate from the the town hall;
  - Telephone number; and
  - E-mail address.
- By return e-mail, the embassy will send a questionnaire to be filled in and returned
- Upon receipt of the complete file, an appointment will be proposed for an interview prior to the admissibility of the application. This interview will be held in person at the visa department of the French Embassy in Iran.
- Attention: this visa is very hard to obtain. It is therefore necessary to detail and source as much as possible the fears of persecution and find supporters who can attest to these risks.

For help with the application process please see the 'free legal help' section [below](#).

## PEOPLE WISHING TO RELOCATE TO FRANCE WITH **FAMILY LINKS**

**People currently in Afghanistan (or other countries) who have family members in FRANCE and want to relocate:**

As the Afghan embassy is currently closed, Afghans who wish to obtain a visa for France must turn to the French embassies in Iran or Pakistan.

### **Visa application for family reunification**

- People who have been granted asylum in France have the right to bring their family, which was constituted before their arrival in France and which is abroad.
- Eligible family members are:
  - For a protected adult in France: his/her spouse and unmarried minor children.
  - For a protected minor in France: his/her parents and minor siblings. The first step in this process requires opening an account on the [France-Visas portal](#) to register the visa application of each family member wishing to come to France (one

registration per person).

- Then an appointment should be made to submit the application in the country of residence by sending an email to:
  - For Iran: [iran.apptfrance@vfshelpline.com](mailto:iran.apptfrance@vfshelpline.com)
  - For Pakistan: [afg-ofpra.fra@aeg.com.pk](mailto:afg-ofpra.fra@aeg.com.pk)
- This email must be written in English and contain the following information:
  - Last name:
  - First name:
  - FRANCE VISAS Number: FRA1
  - OFPRA file reference Number
  - Passport Number: P0
  - Passport Expiration Date:
  - Gender:
  - Date of Birth:
  - Category of Visa: Family Reunification
  - Telephone Number:
  - Email:
- Applicants then go to the visa center on the date of the convocation to submit their application.
- The protected family member in France then receives a letter from the refugee families' office (BFR: Bureau des familles de réfugié) at his/her postal address in France (make sure that the address registered with OFPRA is the correct one).
- The embassy then sends an email when the decision is ready to be collected from the visa center.
- Further detailed guidance on the process can be found [here](#).
- You can get help with this application by contacting one of the associations dedicated to asylum related issues, of which contact information can be found [below](#).

### Visa application for family reunion

- Persons who have a residence permit in France may be joined by certain family members under certain conditions. This may include refugees who have married **after** obtaining protection in France. This procedure must be initiated with the OFII. For more information, see: [Family reunion - Ofii](#)

For help with the application process please see the 'free legal help' section [below](#) .

## FREE LEGAL HELP

The following organizations or legal service providers can support with free legal help:

### GISTI

- **Types of services or specialization:** This is one of the major private associations offering help and various types of resources destined for asylum seekers.
- **Criteria for referrals:** None.
- **Website:** [www.gisti.org](http://www.gisti.org)
- **Email:** None currently, the association seems to primarily work by mail, though it can answer very detailed legal questions. For more urgent requests it is advised to contact them by phone.
- **Contact number:** +33 184609026.
- **Hours:** (Phone availability) 3PM to 6PM Monday to Friday 10AM to 12PM Wednesdays and Fridays.

### Several officially habilitated organizations for help during asylum interview process

- **Types of services or specialization:** These associations can accompany asylum seekers in France during the course of their application and can directly assist them during various stages of the procedure.
- These associations can notably offer the help of lawyers or that of their experienced members **specifically during the interview in front of the OFPRA** (see asylum application process above).
- **Criteria for referrals:** One must be an asylum seeker.
- **Website:** Full list [here](#).

## OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

### WATIZAT Guide

- It is a guide for people arriving in France with many useful contacts: <https://watizat.org/guide/>. It is available in several languages, including Pashto and Dari.

### OFPRA website

- This is the official website of the agency overseeing most steps of asylum applications and consequently allows access to several useful guides.
- [Page d'accueil | OFPRA](#)
- *It is nevertheless strongly recommended to practitioners to acquire more pragmatic information from GISTI and other such associations. The guides and information presented on the referred website, though helpful, are deemed incomplete.*

### ADDE (Avocats pour la Défense des Droits Des Étrangers / Lawyers for the defense of alien rights)

- The ADDE is a network of lawyers with a special interest in immigration law. They are

very likely able to offer help in getting a lawyer, in questions relative to the asylum process or the appeal process for the CNDA (they are affiliated with the Parisian order of lawyers).

- Contact information of this association can be found [here](#).

### Utopia56

- This association is among many others that can provide pragmatic help like shelter, basic supplies or food to asylum seekers currently in France and devoid of help or resources. Widespread presence in various regions of France.
- The association lists several email addresses on their website, depending on the region in which one is located. Their contact list can be found [here](#).

### La Cimade

- This association is also very active, reliable and effective when it comes to assisting asylum seekers or, in turn, their own helpers. Its field of action is very widespread and it also deals with more general immigration law. The scope of its help can go from legal assistance and information to direct assistance during the asylum application process.
- [This page](#), on their website, displays their contact information.

## DISCLAIMER

This information sheet outlines key information on French asylum and immigration law and does neither intend to provide a comprehensive overview nor replace legal advice in the individual case.

Please note the draft was prepared by the Leitner Center on 21 October 2021 and reviewed by Safe Passage on 14 October 2022.

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